



Doctor in more ways than one

By **Lyndsay Jameson**

INCREASINGLY working with the University of New England (UNE) with teaching and research in health service management has led to David Briggs obtaining a philosophy doctorate.

Tamworth-based Dr Briggs, who also works overseas in Thailand and Indonesia to help with health education, received his doctorate at a UNE graduation ceremony in March.

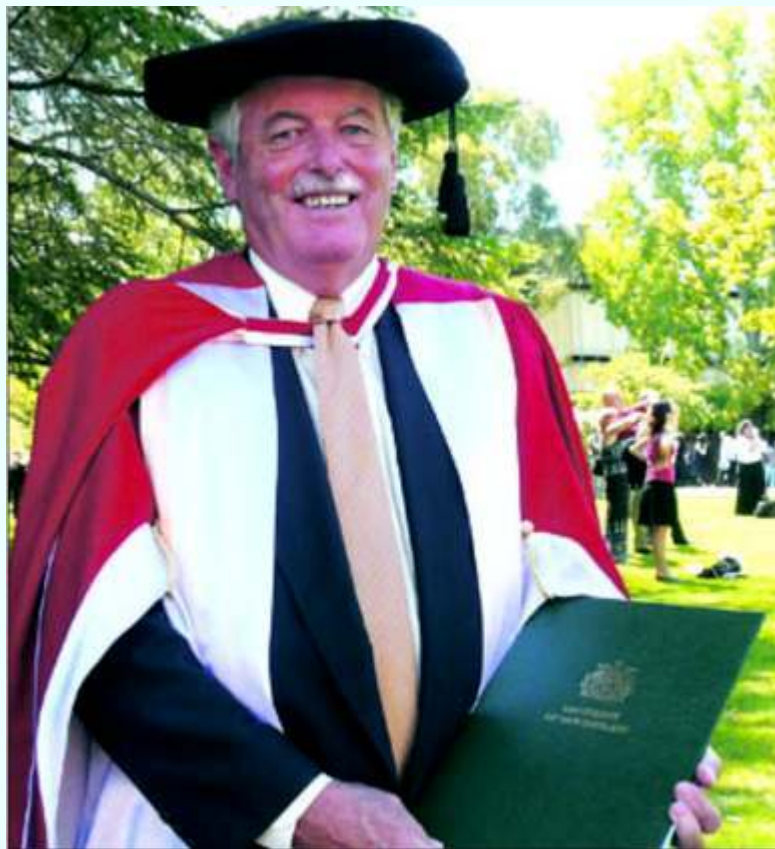
A past chief executive officer of the New England Area Health Service, which controlled the Tamworth hospital and surrounding towns' hospitals, he has 40 years' experience as a health manager and is a senior lecturer and co-ordinator of health management and gerontology programs at UNE's School of Health.

His thesis was based on the experience of health service managers, their role, how they became health managers and their perception of the health system.

"(The thesis) brought me up-to-date with contemporary health management theory and practice and allows me to do the sort of things I'm doing now, working for the university and working in the Asia Pacific in developing future health professionals and health managers," Dr Briggs said.

"It's very relevant to what I do.

"Working with the university has given me the opportunity to contribute back to the system and help younger health professionals develop their skills and gain from my experience."



Doctor of philosophy: Tamworth-based UNE senior lecturer David Briggs at the graduation ceremony in March.

He said the thesis took him three years.

"It's very intensive, hard work. It sort of takes over your life," he said.

"I think it was worth it. I enjoyed it in the end."

Dr Briggs is also an editor of the *Asia Pacific Journal of Health*

Management and is an advisor to the Centre of Expertise at the Naresuan University in Thailand.

He is a life member and past national president of the Australian College of Health Services and a director of the North-West Slopes Division of General Practice.