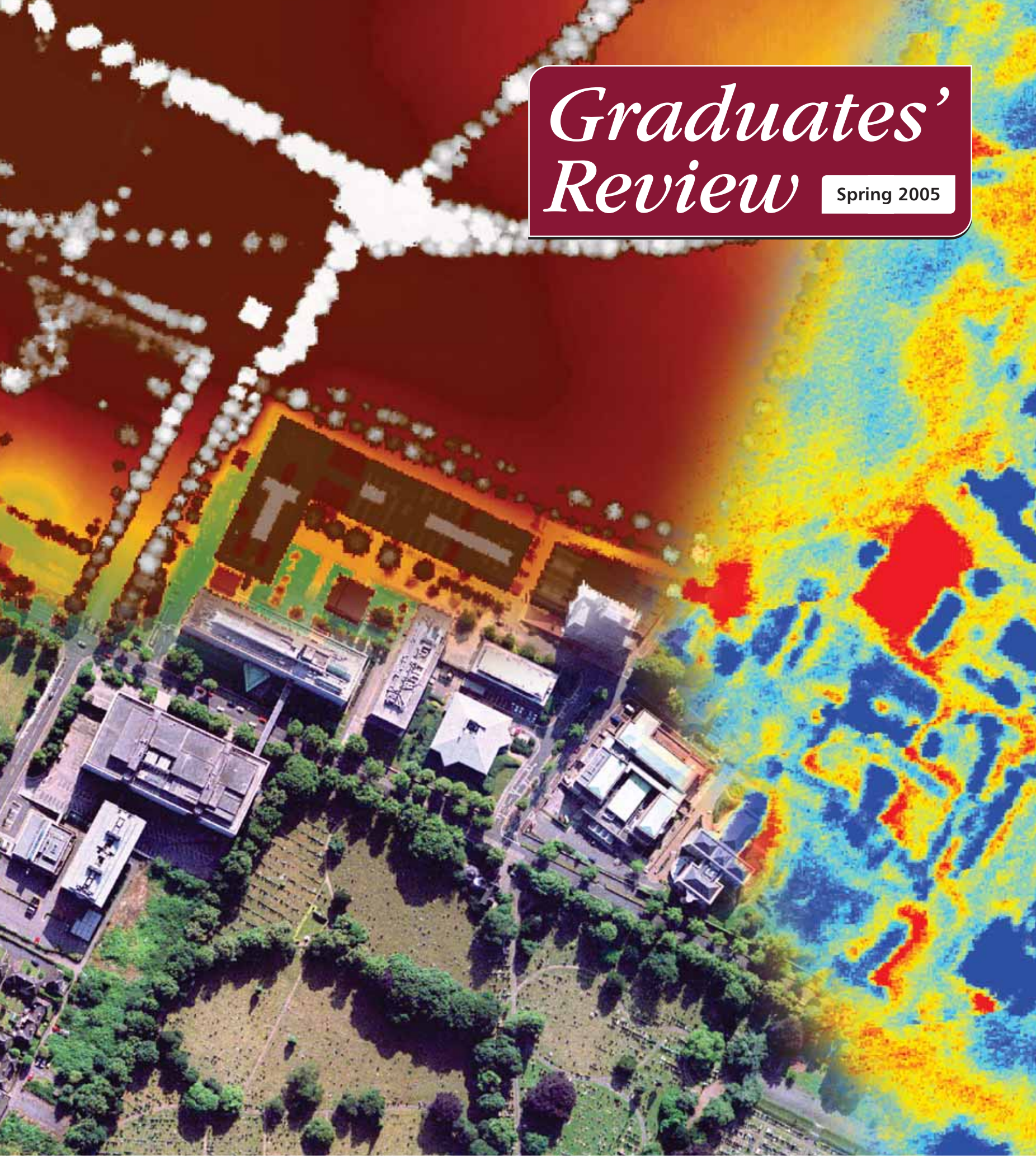


Graduates' Review

Spring 2005



Modelling the World
Building on Leicester's Success
The Gene Genius
Britain's Golden Age



University of
Leicester



March 2004 Leicester scientists develop techniques to identify individuals by the uniqueness of their ears.



April 2004 University archaeologists find the earliest remains ever to be uncovered in the county.



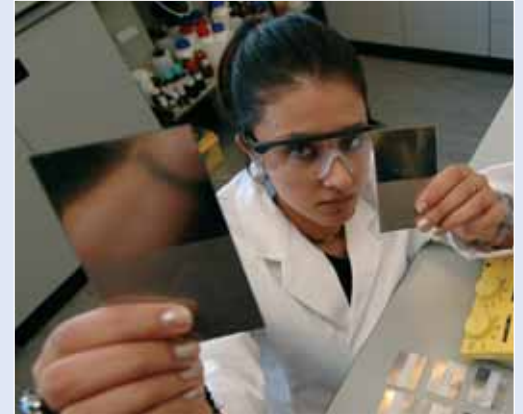
May 2004 Women's Rugby team become the first females to play at the *Leicester Tigers* ground.



June 2004 Professor Alan Wells, Research Director, National Space Centre, lectures at the *Homecoming*.



July 2004 Elizabeth Owen triumphed against the odds to gain her degree in Biological Sciences.



August 2004 The *Guardian* names Leicester as a top 20 research university based on research income.



September 2004 The 20th Anniversary of the discovery of DNA genetic fingerprinting.



October 2004 Dr Simon Møller receives recognition for research into leaf chloroplasts.



November 2004 Student *Contact* volunteers help with mural painting at a local school.



December 2004 17th century Italian work of art is an early political billboard says Leicester academic.



January 2005 The University of Leicester Islamic Society won the award of *Islamic Society of the Year*.



February 2005 Dr Adam Hart-Davis gave the Alumni Association and Haldane Society lecture.



Front cover: Aerial view of the University of Leicester campus, showing the heights of surface structures and forms, acquired by a LIDAR sensor (top section), the heat signals from land surfaces and buildings acquired by a thermal sensor (right section) and the visible aerial photograph (bottom section). An example of Geographical Information Science for which the University has an international reputation. Full article *Modelling the World* on pages 6-7. Aerial photography © UK Perspectives 2005, courtesy of Infoterra Ltd: LIDAR and Thermal Imagery is courtesy of and © Infoterra Ltd 2005.

Editor's Welcome

► Welcome to the 2005 issue of the Leicester Graduates' Review.

In this issue we look back over the distinguished career of Sir Michael Atiyah, who retires this summer after ten years as Leicester's Chancellor. In his own words, Sir Michael has seen the University "grow bigger and better" and has appreciated the opportunity to meet members of staff across the faculties and see some of the world-class research that is being carried out.

At Leicester, we have always believed that teaching and research go hand in hand. The following articles are testament to the international research that is taking place across all faculties; featured are Genetics, Geography and Victorian Studies.

One of our graduates also made international news last year, although not the kind anybody would wish for. On his travels abroad, Mark Henderson was kidnapped by rebel guerrillas in the Colombian jungle and held captive for 102 days. He describes his ordeal and eventual release and return to the UK.

The international makeup of our student body and alumni – who come from more than 100 countries – is one of the distinguishing characteristics of Leicester. The multicultural nature of the University is one of the things that the Chancellor has enjoyed most about his role at graduations. He feels that the best thing universities can do in the future is to educate people from different countries together, which he says is already happening at Leicester.

For graduates, the end of this year brings an opportunity to sample some of the best speakers and latest research the University has to offer at the *Homecoming* on 25 June.

Why not use this occasion to meet up with old friends and see some of the physical changes on campus that have helped to place Leicester amongst the UK's top 20 research-intensive universities?

We look forward to seeing you on the 25th for what we know will be a most enjoyable day.

Kathryn Whitehurst

Kathryn J Whitehurst
BA Combined Studies 1970

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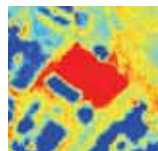
www.le.ac.uk/alumni

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Building on Leicester's Success

Leicester is one of only 17 British universities to feature in the world's top 200 and scored well on the number of times our researchers were cited by the worldwide academic community. Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess reflects on the past year.

► This year has been an important one for the University of Leicester. It has been a year in which our position as a leading teaching and research university was enhanced with success in key areas. In January the University was delighted to discover that we had won a competitive bid to host two of the new national Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) and were to play an important part in a third. Leicester's two centres are based around Genetics education (for which Leicester is internationally renowned) and Geography (where our strong record of work with Geographical Information Systems is globally respected). The award of these two centres was particularly pleasing because just 15 universities were successful with more than one bid for these very important centres. The centres will place the University at the forefront of teaching in these areas and will have a real impact on the student learning experience. You can read more about our successful Centres of Excellence and the work that they will be engaged with on pages 6 and 7.

The recognition of Leicester as a leading teaching University through the award of CETLs came just weeks after data published by Cambridge University placed Leicester amongst the UK's top 20 research-intensive universities. The University's position in this table, which is based on research income, was correctly described by the Guardian as "confirming (Leicester's) ambitions". The high quality of the University's activities was further evidenced by a study of international universities published by Shanghai Jiao Tong University. In this study Leicester was one of just 17 British universities to feature in the world's top 200 and scored particularly well on the number of times our researchers were cited by the worldwide academic community.

As a broadly based civic university Leicester's research is particularly rich and diverse. You can read in these pages details of our exciting work across our six faculties. On pages 8 and 9 you can find out about the work of the Victorian Studies Centre. Established in 1966 the Centre was the first of its kind and continues to be at the forefront of research on this important period. This multi-disciplinary Centre is an excellent example of the high quality research carried out in the Faculty of Arts at



Professor Robert Burgess

Leicester. You can also read about the University's new Centre for Diplomatic and International Studies, which this Easter hosted a major international conference on American Foreign Policy.

Last September saw celebrations to mark the anniversary of what is the University's most famous scientific discovery and arguably one of the greatest scientific inventions of all time. In September 1984 Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys discovered DNA Genetic Fingerprinting at the University of Leicester. The twentieth anniversary focussed on this event and on the ongoing research of the Department such as that of Professor Kyriacou on clock genes and their effect on sleep and Professor Dubrova's work on inheritable genetic mutations.

This success is more remarkable because the challenges we face are great. Let me give you one example. From next year undergraduates at English universities will have to pay variable tuition fees of up to £3000 for the first time. This poses a difficult issue for the University of Leicester. We have a strong track record of admitting those who are the brightest and best regardless of background. Indeed, amongst leading universities the proportion of our students from disadvantaged backgrounds is high. Yet if we are to remain a leading university the additional resources that higher fees will bring are very important. In March the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) informed Leicester that we could charge the higher fee of £3000 but on condition that we provide a significant number of

bursaries and scholarships to protect access for our students. Here the support of our graduates is critical. It is through the generosity of our graduates that we are raising funds to provide scholarships for the students of tomorrow.

In the previous issues of the *Graduates' Review* I told you how we planned to transform our campus through our exciting and ambitious £300m development plan. I am delighted to tell you that the last 12 months have seen us complete work on two important new buildings as part of this plan. The £3.7 million Michael Atiyah Building is home to cutting edge research from a number of disciplines in the Faculty of Science and will strengthen links between them. Named after the Chancellor it is peopled by staff from the departments of Engineering, Mathematics and Physics & Astronomy and also houses two research centres whose work is of international significance: the Space Research Centre (in phase one) and the Multidisciplinary Centre for Mathematical Modelling (in phase two). Our five-storey Henry Wellcome Building is home to cutting edge work in the biomedical sciences. This new landmark on the Leicester skyline contains state-of-the-art facilities for more than 200 scientists.

Work has now commenced on an exciting project to refurbish and double the size of the University Library. £19.5 million of the resource for this project has already been secured with the combined generosity of our friends and supporters over the previous twelve months making a significant contribution. At the time of writing we are just £5.2 million short of the sum needed to complete this work and are talking to a range of possible sponsors. On pages 24 and 25 you can read how your support for the Library and student bursaries can help your University at this critical time. We also list the names of the friends and graduates of the University who have supported us this year. I have written to each personally to thank them but I also want to take this opportunity to thank them publicly.

At Leicester we are fiercely proud of our graduates and the successes they have gone on to enjoy. We are always delighted to hear from you and I hope to meet many of you at this year's *Homecoming* event on Saturday 25 June.



Finally I want to pay tribute to our Chancellor, Sir Michael Atiyah, who after 10 years of excellent service in this role is stepping down this summer. Sir Michael has been a fine Chancellor and a splendid ambassador for the University of Leicester. As you can read in the piece on Sir Michael in this *Review* his warmth for the University is real and I can assure him that his commitment and dedication has been very much appreciated. He steps down as Chancellor of a University that is confident about itself, has much to celebrate and is clear in the direction in which it is headed. ■

“I am delighted to tell you that the last 12 months have seen us complete work on two important new buildings as part of our development plan.”

Images (clockwise from left): The Michael Atiyah building, artist's impression of the University Library development, the Henry Wellcome building.



Modelling the World

You may not have heard of the technology of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and the associated academic science behind this technology (known as Geographical Information Science), but you can be sure it has had some impact on your life.

► From the identification of sites for locating supermarkets to direct mail marketing, from the identification of areas prone to flooding to emergency planning, GIS technology has a key role to play. The University of Leicester has been at the leading edge of its development and application for over 20 years.

So what exactly is a GIS? Dr Nicholas Tate of the University's Department of Geography explains "a GIS is a computer system for the modelling and visualisation of geographical (i.e. spatial) data. A GIS stores information about the world as a collection of thematic layers or objects. These data contain either an explicit spatial reference, such as latitude and longitude coordinates, or an implicit reference such as an address, postal code, or road name from which the location can be derived. To work, a GIS requires explicit references and it can create these explicit references by tying implicit references to a specific point on the earth through a process called geo-referencing. Linking different geo-referenced data together provides a powerful decision support tool to solve real-world problems.

"For example, let's say you are examining the geographical accessibility of the population living in rural Leicestershire to GP services. Information on where people live, the location and capacity of existing GP practices and transport links between the two are all important elements of the task. By placing these data into a GIS it would be possible to identify the proportion of population within certain travel distances or travel times to their nearest GP. On this basis we could identify communities that may be unacceptably remote from such services: a powerful step in planning any changes in provision."

Leicester's work in GIS is particularly special. It is one of the few geography departments in the country to have maintained a Chair in Geographical Information Science, and has been one of the pioneers of research and education in Geographical Information Systems and Science. The MSc in GIS which started in the Department of Geography in the late 1980s was the first such degree of this type to be set up in England. This success was rewarded in January 2005 when the Department was awarded £3.9 million funding for the SPatial Literacy IN Teaching Centre (SPLINT).

SPLINT is part of the government's new, prestigious Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) development. SPLINT will take GIS and develop its application throughout the higher education curriculum, as well as improve the learning outcomes for students on a range of existing MSc programmes in this area.

GIS is a technology that cuts across the many different strands of geography. Students and researchers studying the physical environment make as much use of the technology as those studying the human/social environment. As an example Kate Moore, GIS specialist in the Department of Geography described a recent research project in the department using GIS. In collaboration with the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, English Nature and the Forestry Commission, the goal was to "identify and prioritise areas suitable to restore the ancient

Leicester's work in GIS is particularly special. It is one of the few geography departments in the country to have maintained a Chair in Geographical Information Science.

woodland of Leighfield Forest, from its fragmented remains. The GIS could be used to identify suitable land parcels and stretches of hedgerow that could be best employed to maximise the habitat value of the restored woodland. This is a very important piece of research for practical restoration of our heritage in Leicestershire and innovative within the area of conservation. The effects of different planting schemes on existing habitats could be easily and flexibly mapped, together with realistic costing, and the system provided a useful tool to help both plan and promote the Leighfield Forest project".

And it is not just the Geographers who use GIS. Another academic area at Leicester where GIS is highly relevant is Archaeology.

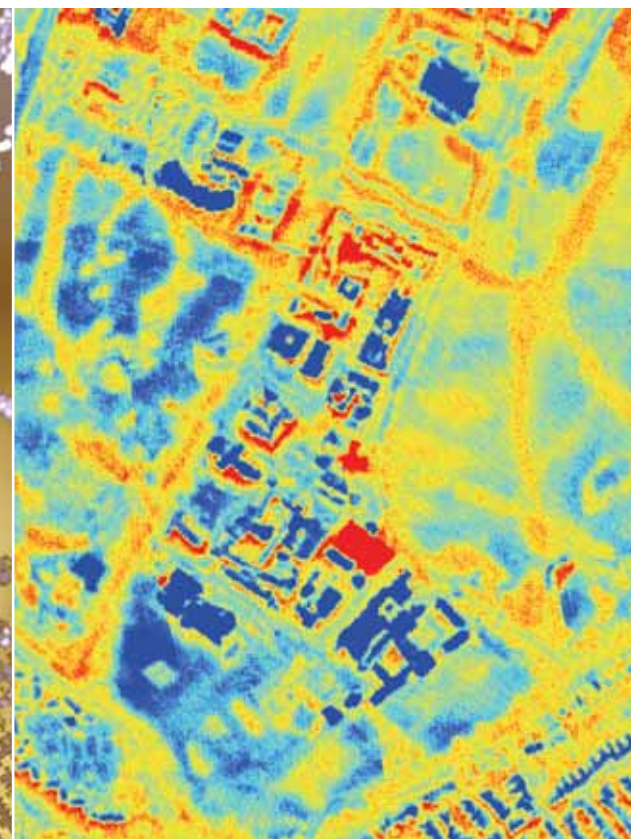
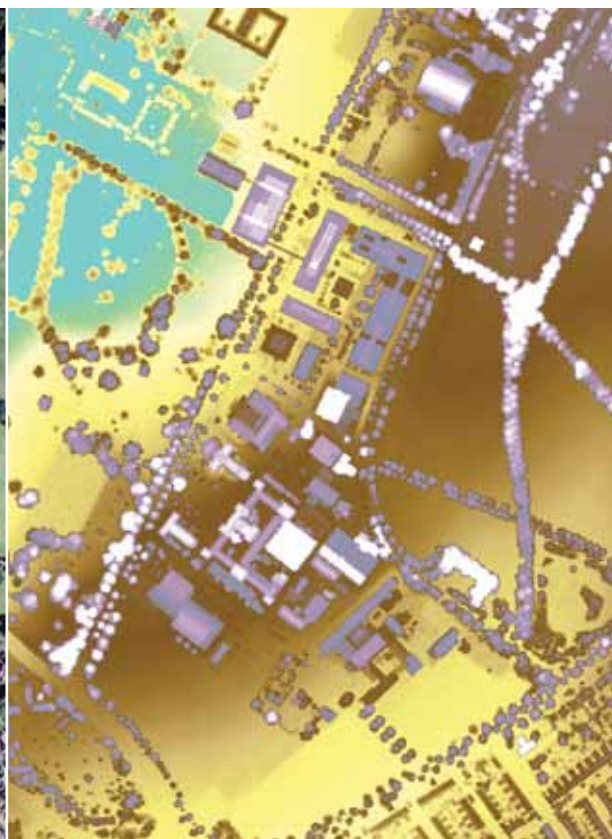
Dr Mark Gillings from the University's School of

Archaeology and Ancient History explains; "Archaeology is a profoundly spatial discipline, nowhere more so than in the study of past landscapes, a particular research strength here at Leicester. Landscape archaeology seeks to understand the broader spatial contexts of past people's lives, thinking beyond the settlement to consider how communities understood, altered and exploited their surroundings.

GIS provides us with a crucial set of approaches for exploring these relationships. For example, GIS is currently being used to unpick the sequence of remarkable standing stone, earthwork and timber monuments erected some 5000 years ago at Avebury in Wiltshire. Many of these monuments are now lost, surviving as subtle traces in the ground, or have been badly denuded over the years. By using the GIS to effectively re-erect these monuments and simulate the contemporary landform and vegetation patterns at the time of construction, we are able to explore the spatial and visual relationships that existed between these remarkable features for the very first time, shedding important light upon the functioning of this ritual complex".

Another good example of the department's GIS activity is their work on the first farming communities in the Hungarian plain. "Using GIS the team has been able to take the contemporary landscape and effectively turn back the clock" says Dr Gillings, "re-flooding the now dried riverbeds and backswamps and, using the results of pollen analyses, populating this with the species of tree and plant growing during the early Neolithic period. Integrating this with the results of archaeological excavation and survey, the locations of early settlements and activity areas have also been determined. With these in place a study has been initiated to explore what everyday life was actually like on the Neolithic floodplain. We now know for example that settlements were located close enough to one another so as to be within earshot, yet out of direct sight, places that needed to be deliberately visited. We also see how central the floodplain was to the citing of settlements, the seasonally flooded channels and swamps forming the beating heart of this landscape".

So how will the new CETL help? The Archaeologists are clearly as excited as the



EXAMPLES OF THE USE OF GIS

Left: aerial photograph of the University of Leicester campus (© UK Perspectives 2005, courtesy of Infoterra Ltd).

Centre: this image has been acquired by a LIDAR sensor (Light Detection and Ranging) and shows the heights of surface structures and forms. The colour scale goes from green, representing the lowest height, through yellow, brown, blue, purple and finally white (courtesy and © Infoterra Ltd. 2005). You can readily identify the Attenborough Tower and Charles Wilson building in white and the curved roof of De Montfort Hall at the top of the image.

Right: this image has been acquired by a thermal sensor. Essentially we are observing the thermal (or heat) signal from land surfaces and buildings. The colour scale goes from blue, representing the coldest surfaces, through green and yellow to red (courtesy and © Infoterra Ltd. 2005).

Geographers by the University's success in obtaining this new centre. The CETL will give staff and students access to world-class cutting-edge GIS technology. It will also bring together researchers and teachers from different disciplines using GIS in their work to share their experiences.

Geographical Information Systems and Geographical Information Science is a fast growing area with scores of applications across commerce, academia and beyond. The award of the CETL further cements Leicester's reputation as a world leader in its development and application. ■

The CETL (Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning) will give staff and students access to world-class cutting-edge GIS technology. It will also bring together researchers and teachers from different disciplines using GIS in their work to share their experiences.

CETLs

The Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) initiative has two main aims: to reward excellent teaching practice, and to further invest in that practice so that CETL funding delivers substantial benefits to students, teachers and institutions. There are 74 CETLs. Leicester is one of only 15 universities to be awarded more than one CETL. The CETLs SPLINT and GENIE are Leicester-based. Leicester is also involved in a third CETL with the Open University in Physics.

SPLINT (Department of Geography)

SPLINT (SPatial Literacy IN Teaching) is a resource for setting national and international standards for the learning and teaching of spatial literacy, fundamental to answering the question 'where?' activities such as environmental disasters or terrorist activities occur. Leicester is the lead partner in SPLINT which is a collaborative centre with the University of Nottingham and University College London.

GENIE (Department of Genetics)

GENIE (Genetics Education – Networking of Innovation and Excellence) builds on existing expertise and synergy between world-class science genetics education. We will lead the development of innovative approaches and establish a network of institutions engaged in teaching genetics, promoting the sharing of resources and experience. Intrinsic to the philosophy is the embedding of generic skills and the application of generic approaches to broader fields, for example, biotechnology, medicine and law.

Innovative Physics Teaching (Department of Physics)

This CETL is a collaborative venture between the Open University, the University of Leicester and the University of Reading. These Physics departments will work together to extend their established reputations as innovators in areas such as problem-based learning, skills-based lab teaching and multimedia teaching. By harnessing the power of new technology, and sharing science teaching resources, the centre will offer students new learning experiences that will make clear the power and fascination of cutting-edge physics and astronomy.

BRITAIN'S GOLDEN AGE

So much British culture today derives from that period seen as the golden age of Britain – the age of the Victorians. At Leicester the first ever Victorian Studies Centre was established to study one of Britain's greatest moments in history.

► The 'great' British railway, the British seaside holiday, the British 'bobby', great feats of engineering, and some of our best-loved novels derive from the nineteenth century. At the University of Leicester the first ever Victorian Studies Centre was established in 1966 with a grant from the Leverhulme Trust, at a time when the notion of studying the Victorian era was just beginning.

Professor Joanne Shattock, Director of the Victorian Studies Centre, explains its beginnings: "There were a number of pioneers in the country at that point and three were at Leicester – Philip Collins a renowned Dickens scholar, HJ Dyos an eminent social historian and Joe Banks a sociologist whose research on the history of family planning had nineteenth century foundations. At the same time in the USA the University of Indiana also established a centre, making the one here and in North America the only two in the Anglo-American scholarly world. I think it is a great feather in the Leicester cap that the British Centre was founded here."

The Centre is unique in that it is interdisciplinary in nature. When it was established it enjoyed input from experts in English, history, education, politics, sociology, English Local History, history of art, history of science and economic and social history. In fact the Centre became a symbol for interdisciplinary research in the arts. Today the Centre has members from the English, School of Historical Studies and History of Art departments. To support their research, the Library holds a very rich collection of nineteenth-century printed materials, as well as several specialist collections.

"Of our special collections the HJ Dyos collection is one of the best. It is a collection of books about London from the nineteenth century. We also hold a very rich collection of Victorian periodical press," says Joanne, "In those days much was written and published in the weekly, monthly or quarterly periodicals. The intellectual debates of the day took place in periodicals – for example Ruskin and others first wrote in them. Much of what we know about the Victorians and their thinking comes from the periodical press."

It is rare not to see a novel from that period dramatised on the large or small screen. This alone



testifies to the popularity of the period. Joanne says: "I think the Victorians are still so very popular with people today because they are part of a recognisable past. We instinctively relate aspects of the period to our time: the difference between rich and poor, the increasing pace of life and the increasing focus on women – and on women's writing particularly."

"Gaskell's *North and South* was dramatised and was actually a very good rendering of the book. *Middlemarch* was serialised on the television and as a result the book reached the bestseller list. I think serialisation is an excellent way to celebrate the Victorian era."

Along with the periodical press, Joanne's other interest lies with female writers from the period. She has just finished editing the first collected edition of the complete works of Elizabeth Gaskell.

Joanne says: "It was also the golden age of women's writing. It was one of the few areas where they had equality with men and was one of the few possibilities for paid work for middle class women. They were reviewed as women though and the writers themselves were aware of this and felt very ghettoised. A lot of women writers used initials only or a pseudonym."

The Centre currently has eight members from various departments; Professor Robert Colls, Dr Gowan Dawson, Professor Richard Foulkes,

Professor Vincent Newey, Dr Julian North, Professor Richard Rodger, Professor Keith Snell and Dr Joan Crossley. Richard Rodger is the Director of the Centre for Urban History and has taken on the mantle of HJ Dyos, Keith Snell researches nineteenth century rural England, among other things, and Rob Colls looks at the social and cultural history of England. Gowan Dawson researches literature and science, Julian North's work includes nineteenth century biographies and Vincent Newey has recently published a book on Dickens. Richard Foulkes is expert in the Victorian theatre, a comparatively rare speciality. Joanne co-edits a book series, with Vincent Newey, called *The Nineteenth Century* at Ashgate. She says: "We have published 70 volumes so far, which makes the Centre very well known."

The nineteenth century saw many changes – most of all in the sciences and the way people thought about science. Dr Gowan Dawson from the Centre is interested in how this increasing emphasis on the sciences was expressed in various literary forms. He says: "Scientists used literary ideas and techniques in their writing about scientific concepts. Darwin's *Origin of Species* draws upon familiar novelistic formats such as that used in Dickens's *Bleak House*. In turn fictional literature employed Darwin's ideas to explain things like family and blood relations. In George



Professor Joanne Shattock, Director of the Victorian Studies Centre

Eliot's *Middlemarch* the recurrent imagery of webs is taken, in part from, from Darwin."

Gowan is currently writing a book *Aestheticism, Obscenity and the Victorian Debate Over Darwin*. This discusses how the Obscene Publications Act of 1857 had serious implications for physiology textbooks, because of the graphic depictions of human anatomy within them, and even the works of Darwin were not immune from such concerns.

Gowan says: "There were genuine fears that some readers of Darwin's work might be titillated and excited by his work. The Victorians are known for their evangelical self-restraint, but beneath this was a vibrant substratum of obscenity and pornography that was often closely connected with the science of the period. In *The Descent of Man*, which discusses sexual selection, sex is a predominant theme. Darwin's publisher became increasingly uncomfortable with this and in private and unpublished letters he instructed Darwin to take out some of the more explicit passages. Footnotes were translated into Latin to avoid embarrassment."

Despite Darwin's efforts however, journalists were less shy about using his theories to add interest to their articles. *Punch* magazine often took great pleasure in drawing out in its cartoons the more ribald implications of Darwin's work.

Gowan adds: "What is intriguing about the

Victorian period is that in less than a century Britain witnessed the transformation of a society that travelled on horseback and in which most people were involved in farming – a past that seems like a different world to us today – to a society that used telegraphy to call America, travelled on train and in motorcars; a world that we can recognise."

Always a popular subject the Victorian Studies Centre has seen many students of its Masters course go into further academic work and into academic careers. Joanne says: "The MA is now nearly 40 years old. It attracts students from a variety of backgrounds including international students. We have had several Japanese Rotary scholars, Commonwealth students, a number of students from North America and our first Chinese student. This mix adds value to the course and the group. The varied background of students on the course means that the seminars work very well. They come as mature students or straight from a degree – usually English, History, History of Art or a combination of those degrees."

Many graduates have gone on to work in areas such as teaching, academia, heritage or museums. More recently graduates from the MA course have been staying on to do PhDs within either the English or Historical Studies departments. Joanne says: "We are always keen to hear from our graduates and they are welcome to come and visit us, attend one of the seminar series that the Centre holds during the spring semester, or our conference on the Victorian actor-manager Henry Irving, in July."

You can check out which seminars are running this spring, and details of the July conference, by visiting www.le.ac.uk/ee/vs/ or by contacting the Victorian Studies Centre by email: vicstud@le.ac.uk ■

"Of our special collections the HJ Dyos collection is one of the best. It is a collection of books about London from the nineteenth century. We hold a very rich collection of Victorian periodical press."

The Gene Genius

September 2004 marked the 20th Anniversary of the discovery of DNA Genetic Fingerprinting at the University by Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys. Here we highlight the impact of that revolutionary discovery and take a glance at the innovative research that continues within the Genetics Department.

► “In science it is unusual to have such a ‘eureka’ moment,” says Jeffreys. “We were getting extraordinarily variable patterns of DNA, including from our technician and her mother and father, as well as from non human samples. My first reaction to the results was ‘this is too complicated’, and then the penny dropped and I realised we had genetic fingerprinting.”

This momentous discovery, accidental as it was, opened up a new area of science and some extraordinary stories that followed...

“The Angel of Death”

Josef Mengele was a Nazi war criminal notorious for grotesque human experiments that he carried out at the Auschwitz concentration camp. After the Second World War he fled from the Allies and escaped to South America. The fugitive succeeded in living out the rest of his days without being caught.

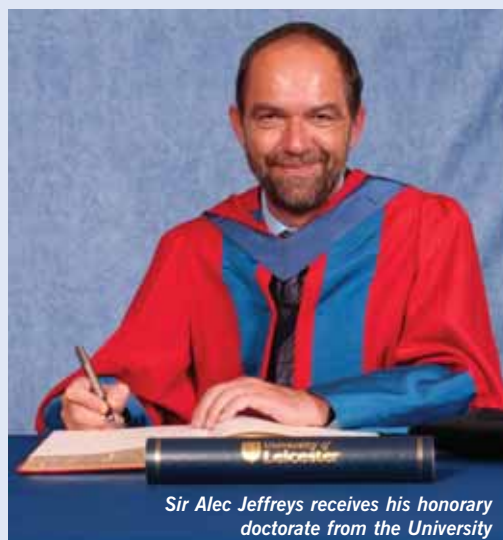
In 1985 investigators went to the cemetery of Nossa Senhora do Rosario in the small Brazilian town of Embu to dig up the skeleton of a man who had been drowned in a swimming accident six years previously. He had been buried under the name Wolfgang Gerhard, but the investigators had information that the deceased individual was actually Mengele.

Various forensic investigations took place – indicating that the body was the war criminal.

However, the Israeli authorities were sceptical and in 1988 they suggested that DNA analysis should be used to provide an alternative approach to identification.

The German government, keen to close this chapter of their history agreed and asked Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys and Dr Erika Hagelberg, then of the Institute of Molecular Medicine at Oxford, and an expert at extracting DNA from bones, for their help in determining whether or not the skeleton was that of Mengele.

The alleles of variable loci, isolated by PCR from the DNA of Mengele's wife and son were compared to eliminate maternally derived alleles. Paternally inherited alleles were now compared with those of DNA extracted from the femur of the skeleton. All were present in the bone DNA, exactly as predicted if the skeleton was that of Mengele.



The chance that these alleles could have been inherited by chance from someone other than Mengele was less than 1 in 18,000, making it more than 99.994% certain that the skeleton was that of Mengele. This evidence convinced the German and Israeli governments and the case of the fugitive war criminal was closed.

Cloning mammals

DNA fingerprinting was used by the University's Department of Genetics to independently authenticate the origin of the sheep Dolly, the first mammal ever to be cloned.

Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys and his team proved ‘beyond reasonable doubt that Dolly is indeed derived from a cell of the mammary tissue taken from the adult donor ewe’, said Dr Esther Signer who carried out the analysis.

The Genetics team – Professor Jeffreys, Dr Signer and Dr Yuri Dubrova – were asked to perform DNA fingerprinting on samples from Dolly and the donor sheep, plus additional sheep as controls. This followed concerns about Dolly's origin – whether she could have been derived not from a mammary cell of the adult donor sheep, but from a contaminated sheep cell culture or from a foetal cell in the udder of the pregnant donor.

Comparisons of DNAs from Dolly and the donor ewe were indistinguishable in terms of band number, position and relative intensity. They

found that each control sheep had a clearly different pattern.

The team concluded that from the estimated probabilities that an unrelated sheep or an offspring would have, by chance, an identical DNA fingerprint as the donor ewe, that it was extremely unlikely that Dolly could have been derived from a contaminated cell culture or from a foetal cell.

The Leicester geneticists verified that Dolly the sheep was the first living clone.

The discovery that altered destinies

Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys last year met a man whose life he helped to save from death row. Kirk Bloodsworth was the first man ever to be exonerated from death row through DNA Genetic Fingerprinting and his meeting with the University of Leicester pioneer was caught on national TV at the 2004 *Pride of Britain Awards*.

At the Awards Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys was given a Lifetime Achievement Award for his discovery of genetic fingerprinting. As Professor Jeffreys took the stage he was introduced to Kirk Bloodsworth.

In March 1985 Kirk Bloodsworth was convicted of sexually assaulting and murdering a nine-year old girl. The victim had been found dead after having been raped, strangled and beaten with a rock in July 1984. Bloodsworth was convicted on the basis of the accounts of five witnesses who claimed to have seen him with the victim earlier that day. A shoe impression found near the victim and testimony that he had said to someone that he had done something terrible that would affect his relationship with his wife, were also used as evidence by the prosecution.

Bloodsworth was sentenced to death for these crimes and served eight years in prison, two of which were on death row. However, in 1992 the prosecution allowed for DNA testing to take place. These tests proved that Bloodsworth had not committed the crime and he was released from prison in June 1993 and pardoned in December of the same year.

At the *Pride of Britain Awards* he said: “In 1984 I sat in a prison cell waiting to die for a crime I didn't commit. I read about the work of Sir Alec

Jeffreys and I had an epiphany: this could prove my innocence and set me free!"

Human diversity

Professor Jeffreys is now researching alternative ways of detecting inherited rearrangements in DNA, including mutation and recombination, and their effect on human DNA diversity.

We are all genetically unique, thanks to the many sites of inherited variation within the 3,000,000,000 bases or chemical letters in our DNA that make up the human 'book of life'.

The origin of all this inherited variation in human DNA remains the focus of Professor Alec Jeffreys' research.

Variation ultimately arises from two processes: mutation and crossover. Mutation and crossover are fundamentally important processes. An analogy can be drawn with a deck of playing cards: without mutation, all the cards will be identical, and without crossover, there is no shuffling between games. Both are needed to play the game of human evolution. However, both processes are very difficult to study in humans. The traditional approach is to compare children with their parents to look for mutations or places of crossover.

Professor Jeffreys said: "Even if you have ten children, you will get at most only one or two minisatellite mutants. We needed families of millions of children, particularly to study other modes of DNA instability, so we started to use minisatellites to find an alternative way of research. Using the most sophisticated methods, we found we could type the DNA of a single molecule or cell as an alternative approach to studying inherited DNA rearrangements."

Once able to dispense with children in favour of cells, Sir Alec turned to the study of sperm.

"A single ejaculation will produce one hundred million sperm, equivalent to one hundred million offspring.

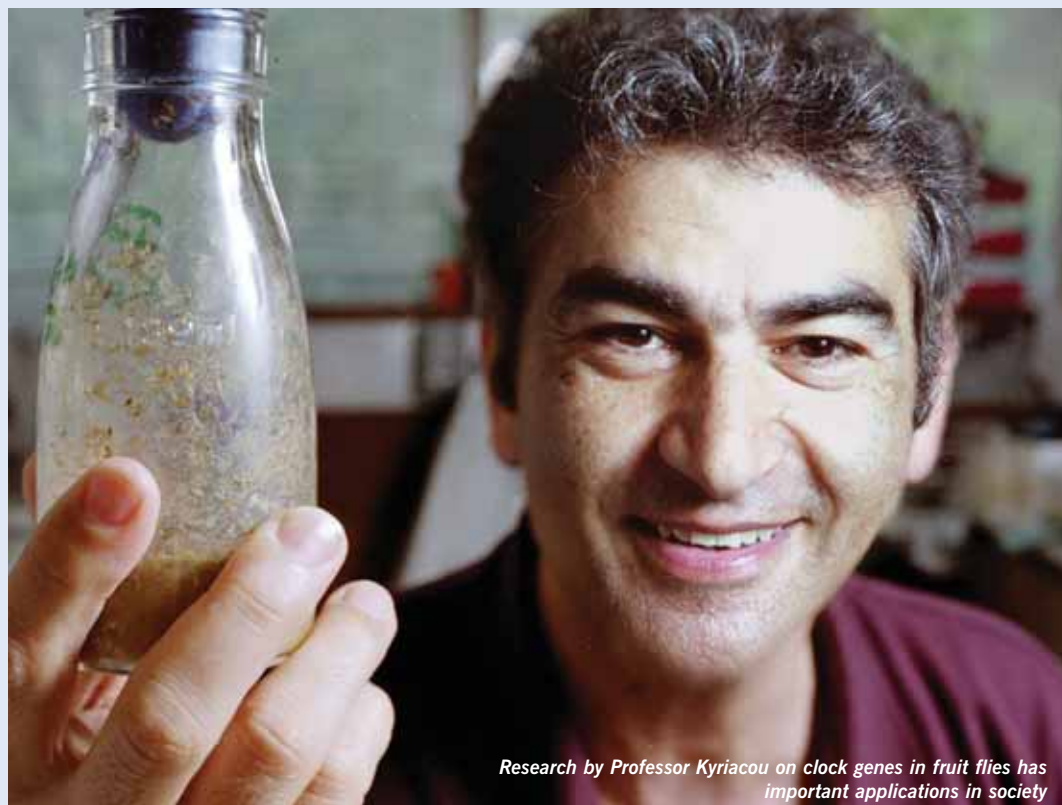
"Our recombination work is important for understanding how human DNA diversity is organised, and underpins international efforts into trying to analyse common human diseases," Sir Alec said.

This is fundamental research that will illuminate the dynamics of human DNA evolution and the factors that influence the integrity of our DNA as it is transmitted from generation to generation. It will also help throw new light on the nature of human genetic diversity and of the origin of our species, of populations and of pathological changes in our DNA.

Twenty years on from the momentous discovery the Genetics Department, that celebrates its own 40th anniversary this year, still carries out groundbreaking research. The Department was awarded a 5* rating in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise making it the top-rated genetics department in the UK for research. And research in the Department of Genetics has clear and important applications to modern society.

Resetting the biological clock

The major industrial accidents of the last century,



Research by Professor Kyriacou on clock genes in fruit flies has important applications in society

Chernobyl, Three-Mile-Island and Bhopal, were all caused by human error during shift work – 25 per cent of the workforce in the industrial world works shifts.

In addition, sleep problems, particularly in older people, can lead to depression, and anyone who flies across time zones understands the misery of jet lag.

There may not appear to be a link between all this and the fruit fly but, as research by Professor C P Kyriacou at the University of Leicester Department of Genetics and Dr E Rosato in the Department of Biology shows, genetically speaking, humans and fruit flies are more alike than you might imagine.

The discovery of clock genes in the fruit fly led to the identification of these same genes in humans, and in turn to the development of therapies that attempt to alleviate some of the medical problems associated with issues such as shift work, jet lag and insomnia.

The importance of this research will increase in the future, with the growth of airline, and even space travel, and the acceptance of the 24-hour society.

The Chernobyl legacy

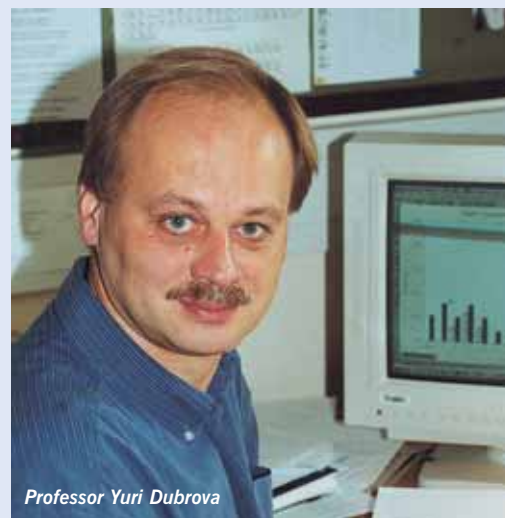
In 1986 the nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Ukraine contaminated the surrounding regions – and beyond – with radiation. The world waited with baited breath to see what the long-term effects of this would be. Geneticists at the University of Leicester began to investigate, and their work continues today.

Predicting the genetic consequences for humans

of exposure to ionising radiation and chemical mutagens has become one of the most important issues of human genetics. Dr Yuri E Dubrova and Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys developed a new system for monitoring radiation-induced mutation in the germ line of mammals.

Tests have shown for the first time that those families from Belarus and Ukraine who were exposed to the Chernobyl radioactive contamination, and families from Kazakhstan exposed to the fallout from nuclear weapon tests, are significantly more likely to pass on mutations to their children.

Their research continues, including looking at the genetic risks of ionising radiation for humans from accidental or occupational exposure and radiotherapy. In the long term the hope is to be able to develop recommendations for establishing a mutagen-free environment. ■



Professor Yuri Dubrova

At the *Pride of Britain Awards 2004* Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys was given a Lifetime Achievement Award for his discovery of genetic fingerprinting.

Issues in American Foreign Policy

March saw an international conference at the University of Leicester devoted to Issues in American Foreign Policy. Arguably this topic has never enjoyed such a high profile in the media.

► The conference, which launched the University's new Centre for Diplomatic and International Studies (CeDIS), was a great success and drew delegates from across the world with speakers from the US, France, Pakistan, and Poland, as well as the UK.

The University of Leicester is home to a strong team of academic staff involved in international and diplomatic studies. The Centre has its home in the Department of Politics but draws on the work of colleagues across the social sciences. Although CeDIS has five themes: African Politics, American Foreign Policy, Diplomacy, European Union Politics and Feminist International Relations, it is in American Foreign Policy that it is making its strongest mark.

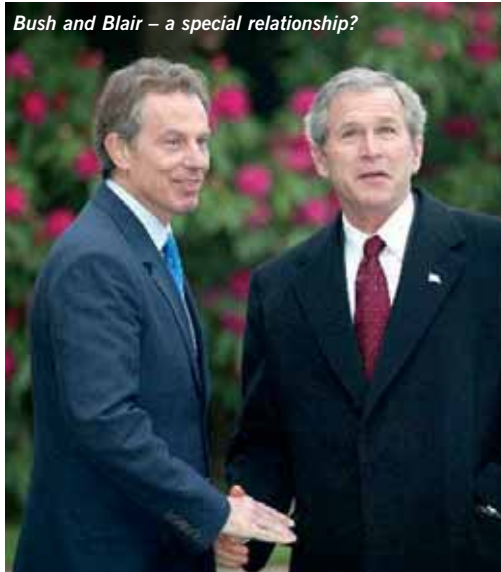
Director of CeDIS is Professor John Dumbrell: "It is an interesting time to work in this field. International relations has never had more prominence in the media in recent times. American Foreign policy post 9/11 has clearly changed and you can't study international security issues without studying the US.

"The first Bush administration was controversial. Its unilateral approach brought an unprecedented split with Europe. The ideological approach to foreign policy adopted by the Bush administration is largely responsible for this. There is a faction – the so called neo-cons who believe America's role is to export and impose democracy. They are not absolutely dominant but they have had tremendous influence since 9/11. They were responsible for persuading Bush to invade Iraq."

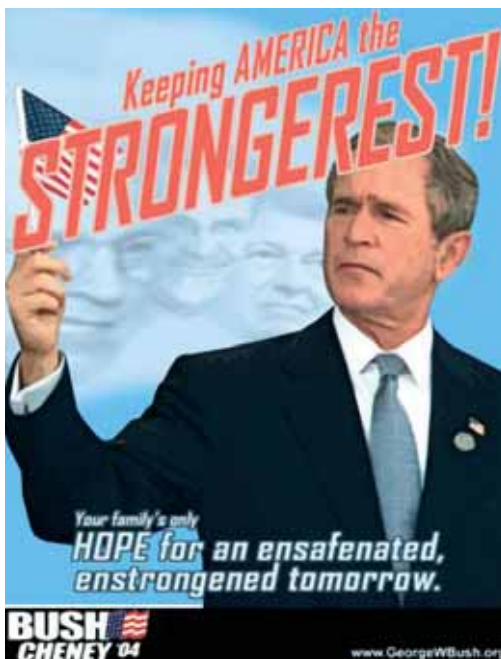
But, argues Professor Dumbrell, it would be a mistake for people to see American Foreign Policy as purely ideological. "America's approach to China is very pragmatic. It has for example, proceeded carefully over the issue of Taiwan which China sees as a rebel province. Early in the Bush presidency there was real concern that an ideological approach to this issue would speak confrontation but since then the administration's approach has been very pragmatic."

And what of Britain's role? Are we a bridge between Europe and America as the Prime Minister would aspire? "There is something in America called the Blair doctrine. It basically means seeing the world in moral terms. It is humanitarian and

Bush and Blair – a special relationship?



"Bush is not an idiot. European's underestimate him because they don't like him." Professor John Dumbrell



interventionist in its approach. So clearly Blair has had some impact." Dumbrell is also very clear on another issue. "Bush is not an idiot. European's underestimate him because they don't like him. President Chirac sees France's role as leading Europe in an anti-American direction with its own European foreign policy. This idea of Europe as a counter-balance to American power is unrealistic because at the end of the day it does not have the military strength to back up its diplomatic position.

"It was always wishful thinking on the part of Europeans that John Kerry would win the 2004 election. This election was more about foreign policy than any since 1968 but even then the issue was not dominant. Americans vote on domestic grounds. And if Kerry had won it's difficult to see what he would do differently. His approach would probably have been a more traditional diplomatic one but he would still have wanted the Iraqi elections to proceed and power to be gradually ceded to the Iraqi Government." And of the view on the controversial BBC documentary *The Power of Nightmares* that the threat to the West from terrorism has been exaggerated by politicians to gain more control of society; "America doesn't need to invent enemies" says Professor Dumbrell.

One of the strengths of the new Centre is that it brings together academics with differing views. "The study of America is skewed by anti-Americanism" says Leicester's Dr Tim Lynch. "The critical, liberal European perspective is usually dominant. This makes getting a fresh approach on matters difficult. At Leicester students are taught from different perspectives. I am broadly sympathetic to Bush. I see him as forcing the pace of democratic change in the world. There is no reason why American decisiveness should not spread freedom as it did following the Second World War and Cold War. I am not saying American Foreign Policy is wholly idealistic. It can be hugely cynical. In fact one of the reasons I think America went into Iraq was so it didn't have to go into Pyongyang or Tehran. Deal with Saddam decisively and other non-democratic nations are more likely to take American demands seriously."

Lynch is also critical of French policy towards the US. "I am sceptical of the notion that France somehow embodies morality in foreign policy. Take

Kosovo and Iraq. Both lacked UN approval yet the French supported the first and not the latter. Why then is the first seen as moral and multi-lateral and the second is seen as unilateral despite support from a range of nations?"

So has American Foreign Policy shifted post 9/11? In contrast to Professor Dumbrell, Tim Lynch doesn't think so. "American foreign policy is cyclical and you need to understand Bush by his predecessors. If you compare America's reaction to 9/11 and to Pearl Harbour, if anything Bush's response was more restrained than Roosevelt's! I can't see how a Clinton or Gore presidency would have reacted any differently to such an event."

The underlying principle at the heart of the new Centre is that one cannot study international relations without studying the contemporary reality of American power. CeDIS academics bring a range of perspectives to the issue: Marxist, Liberal, Realist, but each has this outlook at its heart. This is reflected by the launch of a new MA programme at the University in American Foreign Policy. This specialist programme is only one of a handful on offer in the UK and benefits from the distinct approach to the topic taken by CeDIS. The strength of CeDIS has also led to the launch of a popular undergraduate degree in International Relations which receives hundreds of applicants.

American Foreign Policy then will remain controversial as long as American power is strong. The foreign policy of a weak power is of little interest. And CeDIS will remain at the forefront of research and teaching on this topic. ■



The Centre for Diplomatic and International Studies (CeDIS) exists to provide focus for international political research across a range of five programme areas.

It provides a focus for a substantial programme of postgraduate research at MA and PhD levels in the Department of Politics. The Centre is staffed by academics in the Department of Politics, and other related departments at the University.

For more information on CeDIS visit <http://www.le.ac.uk/politics/cedis/index.html>

- **African Politics** – In development terms Africa remains a marginalised continent, but its condition has attracted increasing attention since the mid-1990s because of the wider security implications of the continents failed states; the importance of the oil reserves in the Gulf of Guinea; endemic conflict in the DRC, Sudan, and West Africa; the new development compact with the West, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); and, finally, the emergence of a strong and respected democratic South Africa.
- **European Union Politics** – The programme carries on the work of the Centre for European Politics and Institutions (CEPI), which was incorporated into CeDIS in 2004. It builds on the research expertise of staff in a number of departments in the University. Some of the current research projects are looking at EU eastward enlargement and the integration of the new Member States; the British Conservative Party and the EU; the EU as an international actor; and European Parliament committees.
- **Diplomacy** – the peaceful conduct of relations between sovereign states and others by officials based at home or abroad – has been an important thrust of research and teaching at the University for at least twenty years. In 1994 this was given formal shape when the Centre for the Study of Diplomacy was created within the Department of Politics. At the end of 1996 this Centre was flagged for special merit in the British Universities' official Research Assessment Exercise, and a number of its members have gone on to achieve prominence in Diplomatic Studies.
- **American Foreign Policy** – The international reach of the United States is now so large that US foreign policy impinges on almost every part of contemporary International Studies. The interests of various members of the Centre for Diplomatic and International Studies relate to a variety of aspects of the subject including: contemporary security issues, the foreign policy of the Clinton Administration, theories of American international power, the history of American public diplomacy and the history of US reactions to international threat.
- **Feminist International Relations** – The Feminist International Relations and Politics research cluster brings together a range of critical work on the state and market, globalization and information society. Sovereignty, the state in theory and practice, and feminist critiques of political and economic space are key areas of focus, as are investigations of property and gendered power, and the role of gender in understanding information society and information and communication technology developments.

Leicester's Chancellor

looks back over a distinguished career

Sir Michael Atiyah, OM, FRS, has been Chancellor of the University of Leicester since December 1995. It has, he says, been a happy association for him and he values the chance it has given him to get to know well both the current Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Burgess, and his predecessor, Dr Kenneth Edwards.

► He has also appreciated the opportunity to meet members of staff across the faculties and see for himself some of the research they are carrying out. He has seen the University grow bigger and better over the past decade, which – in his role, as he points out – has meant a lot more hands to shake.

Ten years is, however, a long time, and Sir Michael, who is also an Honorary Graduate of the University, now feels it is time to step down from the Chancellorship.

The role of Chancellor in a British university is a ceremonial one. “I am the monarch to the Vice-Chancellor’s prime minister,” he said. “They bring me out on state occasions and put on my crown. My main function is to officiate at graduation ceremonies. I am also asked to open buildings from time to time, though less so since my move to Edinburgh.”

Most recently, in October 2004, Sir Michael opened a building on campus which now bears his name and houses staff from the departments of Engineering, Mathematics, and Physics and Astronomy, as well as two national research centres: the Space Research Centre and the Multidisciplinary Centre for Mathematical Modelling.

One of the things he has appreciated most about his role at graduations is that he has presided over a hall packed with young people from all around the world. He said: “One point I would like to make about Leicester is that it is a multicultural institution. In part, this reflects the city of Leicester itself, but it is also because the University has so many international students.

“Cosmopolitan education is so important in the modern age, as a means of bringing different communities together and helping them to get to know each other. The best thing you can do in the future is to educate people from different countries together, and at Leicester I have seen that happening.”

Born in London, Sir Michael’s early education was at Victoria College, Egypt and the Manchester Grammar School. At Trinity College, Cambridge, he took a BA and PhD, before becoming a lecturer at Cambridge University in 1958. A few years later he became a Professor at Oxford University, later taking up a Chair in Mathematics at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, USA. He then



With current Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Burgess, and his predecessor, Dr Kenneth Edwards

returned to Britain, again as Professor at Oxford University.

He has been credited with ‘rejuvenating’ mathematics during his years at Oxford, and this he modestly attributes almost to an accident of birth. “I was one of the first of the post-war generation of academics,” he said. “After my PhD I went to the United States, at a time when a lot of innovative things were happening in mathematics, both there and in France. In the US I met people in my field and brought back new ideas to Britain which were rather different from the ideas that had prevailed during the war.

“I was of the right generation and went to the right place at the right time and was therefore able to bring these ideas back to Oxford and Cambridge. I taught them to my students and the students multiplied and these ideas spread. Nowadays, of course, information spreads much more quickly because we have means of instant communication like the Internet, but in the 1970s interaction between people was slower.”

In 1990 Sir Michael became Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, where he remained for seven years, during almost the whole of which he was also Director of the Isaac Newton Institute for Mathematical Sciences, an institution which he was instrumental in founding. For much of the same period (1990-95) he was President of The Royal

Society. Since 1997 he has held an Honorary Professorship at Edinburgh University.

Sir Michael Atiyah has a long list of prestigious awards to his name, two of which – the Fields Medal, International Congress of Mathematicians, and the Abel Prize – have been hailed as the equivalent in the mathematics world of the Nobel Prize. The Fields Medal he received at the start of his career, in 1966, and the Abel Prize in 2004.

“The first award I got when I was quite young,” he said, “and of course it was a great boost. It is still good to receive an award towards the end of your career, but it doesn’t mean the same as when you are younger.” Another honour he is particularly proud of is the Order of Merit, for which there are only 24 members. However, he feels that rewards and prizes are “the icing on the cake”.

He explained: “I don’t think prizes are of enormous importance. People working in mathematics and science do their work because they like it, and the acknowledgement of peers means a great deal, but we are not competing all the time for prizes. That’s not the point of what we do.”

The Abel Prize was awarded to Sir Michael Francis Atiyah and Isadore M Singer for the discovery and proof of the Index Theorem and the resultant links it built between mathematics and physics.



Main: Sir Michael, by a statue of Sir Isaac Newton, opens the Michael Atiyah Building
Below: Sir Michael in his ceremonial robes

The Index Theorem is a major piece of research which has spanned more than 15 years and has developed into a significant theory. Sir Michael explained what it means: “It is used in the study of certain kinds of linear differential equations (a linear equation is one where the sum of two solutions is also a solution).

“You want to know how many independent solutions the equation has. It is not usually possible to find the solutions explicitly but, by using general methods, you can find out how many solutions an equation has without calculating each one. It gives you some hold on the problem you are solving. It uses a deformation method – you stretch the form and bring it back again.

“Applications occur across a wide range of situations, and solving equations is fundamental mathematics and has a long history. So a result like the Index Theorem becomes a building block for all sorts of ways of solving problems in mathematics and physics. In fact Singer and I are as well known in the physics world as in the mathematics community.

“The Index Theorem brings together algebra, analysis, geometry and topology, across a whole range of disciplines, which is one of the things I most enjoy in mathematics.”

Enthusiasm for his field is one of the distinguishing features of the out-going Leicester

Chancellor. “I think people who work in academic life are very fortunate,” he said. “They are people who do something they really enjoy. You appreciate the intellectual stimulus, you can choose the things you work on and you are educating young people. It is a very satisfying career for someone with academic interests.

“I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time. I had many gifted undergraduates and research students and I have worked in some of the best universities in the world. At the start of my career I would never have thought I was going to be so fortunate. I retire gratefully and content with my life.” ■



“It has been one of the greatest moments of my career to meet and talk with Sir Michael about mathematics. It was like being invited to play football with Pelé. His work has had a huge impact both in the mathematics and physics communities and so he has helped build important links between these groups of people.”

Professor Jeremy Levesley, Head of Department of Mathematics, University of Leicester

Kidnapped!

102 days as a guest of the Colombian ELN

Mark Henderson (BA French and Politics, 1995) has always enjoyed travelling abroad – he had spent a year in Paris while studying at Leicester – but he could never have imagined the trip that saw him kidnapped by rebel guerrillas in the Colombian jungle.

► On the 12 September 2003 Mark Henderson was in Colombia, on a tourist trek to the famous *La Ciudad Perdida* – “The Lost City” – with 15 other tourists. At 4.30 in the morning they were awoken by men claiming to be paramilitaries, saying they were there for the tourists’ protection and that they were going to take them safely out of the jungle. Suspicious, but compliant, they followed them but their fears grew as they seemed to be moving further into the jungle. They soon realised things were very wrong.

“The next morning we were told that we had been taken hostage. It was difficult for me to understand at the time – simply because of the language barrier. My Spanish wasn’t fluent and a Spaniard also taken hostage struggled to find the English for the word ‘kidnapped’.”

It was an ordeal that would last 102 days. “We were hoping it would be 101 days,” Mark jokes, “it sounds better somehow – catchier – like the 101 Dalmatians.” Despite his joviality Mark admits it was very hard at times. Marched through the jungle for miles and miles on end, in difficult terrain, Mark estimates they covered about 700 – 800 miles in those three and a half months.

Initially all 15 tourists had been taken hostage, but seven were released immediately while the remaining were taken further into the jungle. These hostages had been judged best to withstand the physical hardship the ensuing journey would make on them.

The kidnapping hit the British headlines again just two weeks after they were taken hostage when fellow captive, Matthew Scott, was found barely alive wandering in the jungle, having made his escape on the first day, 12 days previously.

The hostage-takers were the ELN, the National Liberation Army, a Marxist insurgent group formed in 1965 by urban intellectuals inspired by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. They specialise in kidnapping and extorting money from the oil industry – two lucrative sources of income. The ELN are the biggest kidnappers in Colombia and took over 800 hostages for ransom in 2001.

In stark contrast Mark is a TV producer and has worked on shows such as *Popstars: The Rivals*. After graduating Mark moved to London and started working as a tea boy in an editing company.

“While I was there I met various TV producers and I managed to get some work experience with one of them. I moved on to work as a runner for Clive James’ television company. It was exciting seeing famous people – I saw people like Catherine Zeta-Jones – if only from a distance – she wouldn’t talk to me!

“In 2001 I produced my first TV documentary: one on Britney Spears – the other on Geri Halliwell. I didn’t get to meet Britney but I did meet Geri – she was... let’s just say ‘interesting’.

“It is a word of mouth industry and you get jobs by hearing about them from friends. Usually the contracts are for about three months and then you move on to the next project. I had decided to take some time out from working, which is easy to do in the TV industry.”

Mark left to go travelling in South America on 12 May 2003 – exactly four months before he was taken hostage.

“We weren’t treated too badly, it was more psychological than anything.”

“I had an amazing time starting off in Mexico and travelling through South America,” says Mark, “I’d done loads of great things like diving and trekking. I looked at a map and saw Colombia – I had a cousin working there teaching English so decided I would travel through.”

It was Mark’s cousin who suggested the trek to the Lost City as it was highly recommended. It was a six-day trek and it was on the fourth day, as the soon-to-be hostages – two Brits, four Israelis, one Spaniard and one German – were leaving to go back from *La Ciudad Perdida*, that the kidnapping happened.

“We weren’t treated too badly, it was more psychological than anything. We just didn’t know what was going on, where we were going, why we’d been taken and when we would be released. That was the hardest part, not knowing how long it would last; days, weeks or months.

“Another hard part was the boredom – killing time was not easy. Getting up at 5am and going to bed at 6pm meant 13 hours of nothing to do. We talked a lot with each other and also spent a

lot of time not talking to each other. We mostly stayed in abandoned Indian huts – our captors stayed in tents.”

There were between a dozen to 18 hostage-takers at a time, some as young as 16 or 17 although the majority were in their early twenties. Perhaps most surprising was the presence of some women.

“We tried talking to them to find out what was going to happen to us. It was difficult because of the language barrier. The Spanish hostage did a lot of the translation. Because our captors were young they would play with our minds and probably didn’t realise the effect this had on us – if they thought we wanted to hear it, they would say we were going to be released soon. Then we wouldn’t be. It was very hard to accept. I think the worst bit was the total lack of power.”

The ELN’s self-appointed role is to represent the rural poor and decrease the foreign presence in Colombia. Their goal was to take power from the Colombian Government and replace it with a more egalitarian ‘popular democracy’ that would represent all Colombians equally under the law. However history has seen the movement gravitate increasingly towards violence.

“There were a couple of leaders who would come and see us occasionally – they were more intelligent than the younger hostage-takers and we tried to have a discussion with them. We tried to argue that if they were doing this to draw attention to the humanitarian needs of the Colombian people, weren’t they being contradictory by taking away our basic human rights?

“We did fear for our lives. Sometimes they would get annoyed with us and then they would start pointing guns and loading the barrels. I had a gun put to my head and you really do think: ‘I might die now’.”

Mark’s time in captivity was spent walking through the jungle and the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Often they set up camp and would stay there for some time – the longest period was a whole month. But they would be moved on if there were rumours of the army getting close.

“The jungle was very hard to live in – it was always quite dark and if you got wet and your things got wet it would be impossible to dry them out. And of course I got bitten a lot. But in the

mountains it would get very, very cold at night. It was warm in the day though and I did spend a lot of time sunbathing!"

In late December, after having been marched continuously for five days, Mark and his fellow captives were sat down one morning and told they would be freed.

"Like every time they had told us this we believed them," says Mark. "The Roman Catholic Church in Colombia had negotiated our release and they had arranged the meeting point in secret from the Colombian Army."

It took three days to reach the rendezvous point on a mountain where the helicopters would land to take them home. Two of the hostages had already been released back in November, when in return for their freedom the ELN had requested that the Colombian Government send a delegation of Catholic priests to Northern Colombia to witness the humanitarian crisis there.

The Colombian Military had agreed to hold back a rescue mission of Mark and the remaining captives to allow a handover to take place peacefully. The rebels had warned that any attempt by the army to intervene would result in crossfire in which the hostages may be killed.

"We were kept there for an hour or so talking to the media who had been allowed to come along," says Mark.

The ELN read a statement on radio about the release suggesting they wanted to find a political alternative to the conflict.

"I spoke to my family an hour after leaving the mountainside. That was strange because it wasn't how I imagined it to be. I wasn't emotional and crying. It's like you're not in your own body. I look back on it now and it doesn't feel like it's happened to me, it seems like a long, long time ago – I feel like I'm telling someone else's story."

Mark arrived home in England on Christmas Eve amid glaring media attention. "I went to New Zealand in the New Year after my release to see my brother who lives out there. That was really just to get away because things did feel strange. Even people I knew and were friends with – I just didn't want to have to answer all their questions.

"I am worried about only being known as 'that person who was kidnapped'. I really want to put a lid on it.

"It was the longest three months of my life. We all knew from day-to-day how long we'd been in there. The time went so slowly. I counted 102 days from when I was released and it was March when those 102 days were finally up! That seemed like an incredibly long time.

"I speak to the other four hostages who were left with me to the very end quite often. We did get close during that time and there really is no one else who knows what it was like and what we went through.

"I'm not sure how or if it's changed me. I suppose my outlook is slightly different, but when I hear other people talking about the bad things in their life I don't ever think 'well you were never kidnapped'. I really don't think about it all that often.

"I'm going to go travelling again, and in South America, probably Argentina – not Colombia though." ■

"We did fear for our lives...
I had a gun put to my head and you
really do think: 'I might die now'."



The Ripple

through the ages

The Ripple has been a cornerstone of the University of Leicester Students' Union since the University received its Royal Charter in 1957. Looking through a sample from each decade we see that while the tone of the newspaper may have changed, there are some issues that remain close to students' hearts.

► The Ripple Office is fairly quiet despite the impending deadline for its eighth issue of the academic year. Nick Mashiter, current Editor and final year Mass Communications and Society student, reclines in a faded chair – overseeing the work of his Music Editor.

"I can't remember what we decided the headline of this issue would be... oh yeah it's the tsunami disaster concert appeal," says Nick. He himself admits he is quite a laid-back editor. "Except when it's 8pm the day before our deadline and we still have pages to fill – then I insist we stay until it's done – even if we stay late into the night."

The Ripple has been the University of Leicester Students' Union newspaper since it was first printed in 1957. The Editor was Brian Abbs and the first headline read: 'Gee Building Opens in May'. This headline in itself testifies to the age of the newspaper as the Percy Gee Students' Union building is now well established on the University campus – an integral part of the University's history.

So would it be fair to assume that a student newspaper reflects the concerns of its student population? Can we see a change in those concerns over the years as reflected in the content of *The Ripple*?

This year *The Ripple* headlines have included: NUS asks Students to Pay for Card; Arctic Climate Change Uncovered; Degree Classification System to be Reviewed; New Building Brings About New Era in University Research.

Nick feels that nowadays there are some fairly clear issues that students are concerned with: "I think fees are the issue of the day for students, along with their courses, exams and their departments and how well they are treated. That's what students care about – that and the price of beer!"

In fact Nick's Editorial in issue 7 – the first after Christmas and exams this year – focused on an exam misprint and exam stress: "In an already pressured environment students do not need the added stress of misprints in their exams," wrote Nick. But this is a concern that, not surprisingly, is not new. Rewind to June 1957 – *Ripple*'s sixth edition bears the headline: 'Exam Inquiry – The New Degrees'. The article focuses on whether students have to take too many exams and reports that "College Hall felt a wave of nervous depression."



The Ripple online: www.theripple.co.uk

Looking through back editions of the newspaper, there are a number of stories that keep hitting the headlines. Campus developments often make the front page. The very first headline concerned the opening of the Students' Union Building. January 1968 saw the headline: 'The Shape of Things to Come' – with an image of architect's plans for the then, new main Library. This is mirrored in the headline of the first issue of this academic year – 'Library to Undergo £25m Refit' – again concerned with University plans for the Library redevelopment. And new buildings hog the headline limelight again in October 2004 – 'New Building Brings about New Era in University Research' – reported the opening of the Henry Wellcome Biomedical Sciences Building.

Sabbatical elections, union presidents, manifestos and the odd controversy surrounding them have remained a headline grabber throughout the years. In November 1987 'Election Chaos' was reported as four of the 14 candidates for open seat representatives on the union council were disqualified and voting abandoned, as the ballot box had not been properly staffed. 1977 witnessed the resignation of half of the SU Executive only two months into the academic year. And long before the Students' Union presidency was made a sabbatical position, the front page of *Ripple*'s October 1963 issue declared: 'Dictator for the Union?' when the Students' Union president Mike Judge pushed through a motion "requiring

the Union to support his pet idea of a free year for the President... In his usual monotone, he explained the great amount of work which the president had to perform... Ian Partington speaking against the motion, in what was by far the best speech of the afternoon, stressed the danger to the Union if the wrong man became President under this system..."

RAG – the Students' Union organisation Raising and Giving – has also claimed the headlines and pages throughout the years. In a spat with the Students' Union in December 1977 RAG was threatening to sue the Union over the hundreds of Rag Mags accidentally thrown away during the summer. In March of 1962 the headline ran 'RAG Pram Sham: Winter the Winner'. Icy conditions had made the annual pram race from London to Leicester even more perilous than one would imagine, and before the pram racers had reached Northampton "the road had claimed its first casualty, fresher John Stevenson who slipped, sustaining head injuries and temporary blindness". The race raised £200 – a significant amount in those days – but one which now seems small compared to the '£27,000 and Still Counting' boasted by *The Ripple* last November.

However there are changes to *The Ripple* over the decades, in both its look and pitch. The tone of the newspaper has become less serious – this can be detected most strongly in that newspaper essential – the Editorial.

One of Brian Abbs first Editorials stated that *The Ripple* should "perform its true function as an outlet for vigorous argument and new ideas". Editor Catherine Read in her October 1967 issue debated the argument for mixed halls and visiting hours saying the University should either condemn immorality outright or turn a blind eye completely, instead of enforcing some rules and not others.

The late 1980s and the tone significantly lightens. First editor of the academic year 1987/88, Gethin Chamberlain, opened his Issue 4 Editorial with an account of an amusing story.

Current Editor Nick Mashiter's most recent Editorial reads: "Unfortunately not much has been happening in The Ripple Office in the last couple of weeks, so my chance to embarrass the Section Editors for this Issue has gone." It is this informal,

GEE BUILDING OPENS IN MAY



The New Building—picture by courtesy of the "Evening Mail"

AS the Percy Gee building nears completion, most students are still unaware of what facilities will be available to them when the building is opened next May.

In an attempt to clear up some of the rumours, discord, and uncertainty current in the Union, "Ripple" staff have been inquiring into the intended uses and administration of the building.

The President, Mr. B. Wilcox, M.C., has said that the idea of the building is similar to that of the Portland Building at Nottingham University, in that it is to be for the joint use of the students, the academic and the administrative staffs.

Maladjustments

This is a reasonable proposition, but it should be emphasised that the students have a primary claim to enough accommodation to satisfy their needs—only fair when one considers the maladjustments and frustrations they have suffered in the past due to lack of space.

Many students fear there will not be enough space for their Union activities.

Bar for the Boys

There is provision for an alcoholic bar, but there will be no still room. The bar and the coffee bar will both be in the same room, but the issue that has been raised is who is to manage them.

If management is to rest with the University authorities, then all our present difficulties will continue. If we are going to control it, we must make it very clear to the University authorities that we are capable of doing the job properly. There are other problems as well. The Great Hall is one. If a licence cannot be obtained, then the present fracas and confusion over the hops will continue. It will probably not be licensed, owing to the legal question of the number of exits.

A portrait of the University Visitor, the late Gilbert Murray, O.M., has been purchased for the University.

Continued on page 4

Answers to 'Ripple' spot check

"GOWNS? NO!"

TO gown or not to gown. That is the problem troubling everyone at the moment. The controversy has reached as far as the Professorial Staff. One faction believes that, as we are a new Red Brick University without much tradition, we should not try to copy traditions of the older universities.

W. U. S. LINK

LEICESTER NOMINEE

Dr. E. F. Primrose, lecturer in Mathematics, is being invited to stand as candidate for one of the vacancies on the Co-operating Committee of W.U.S.

Because of Leicester's new-found interest in this international body, it was felt that a Leicester nominee would be favourably received. Dr. Primrose has amply demonstrated his interest in the foreign students at Leicester.

The Co-operating Committee serves to raise funds for foreign students and to promote student activities in Britain.

NEW CHAIR OF PHILOSOPHY

Mr. P. H. Nowell-Smith, M.A. (Oxon.), A.M. (Harvard), has been appointed to the new chair of Philosophy which has been set up this term.

He was educated at Winchester and at New College where in 1937 he gained a first-class Honours degree in *Latine Humaniorum*.

For
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Grand Hotel
is
Your Rendezvous

The other side thinks that the wearing of gowns will do much to raise the morale of the student body and will help us over the difficult breach from collegedom to universityship.

Now, what are the facts? Authority, and most Union officials are falling over backwards in an effort to be non-committal, but it is almost general knowledge that gowns will be a compulsory feature of our university life after Christmas.

With these salient points in view, we decided to carry out a spot check among students from various faculties throughout the University. The question we asked was: "What do you think about the possibility that we shall be made to wear gowns after Christmas?"

Most people were opposed to the wearing of gowns.

Miss Anne Knight, winner of last year's English Prize, commented, "I think gowns will be a good thing. I have never been able to understand why we haven't been made to wear them before—after all, we are university students and they will help us to behave like them."

"Ridiculous"

Then we met Tony Neeson, popular Athletics Association President, who said, "I feel that the present system is quite adequate. It would be ridiculous to try and emulate the system of Oxford and Cambridge in a city that does little to realise that a University exists within its boundary."

Ash-blond Miss Dawn Cager said, "I really can't afford £5 for a gown, especially after Christmas. If the County pay for them I think I'll have one, because I do think it is rather a good idea."

Continued on page 4

K

Your
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topcoat...
the short
answer

It's the answer to getting the parking up under the overhanging wheel! It's the answer to reaching the flames without the legal! It's the answer to a hundred occasions! It is beautifully tailored in luxurious fabric.

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Knight's
55 years under the
Grand Hotel
of Leicester

Kilton & Blagden NORTHAMPTON

majority of news pieces come from students sending them in." Features Editor Julia Ellis says: "The features pages are a space really for students who have an opinion about something and want to express it. Articles are chosen on quality and so that we can have a balance of issues."

Seemingly, or at least temporarily, gone are the days when *The Ripple* reported the various society in-fighting that took place. When the Film Society back in 1977 refused to give up their booked space in the Students' Union for one evening and the Entertainments Committee were therefore unable to host an up-and-coming band *The Clash*, what ensued was a battle of words between the two and printed, of course, in *The Ripple*. 'No Clash' read the headline that week, while the Editorial the next month focused on the ongoing dispute between Film Society and Entertainments Committee and the "petty ripping down of each other's posters". The Film Society fought back in a following issue with a strongly worded letter about their rights to not have to give up rooms that they had previously booked.

So what lies ahead for *The Ripple*? Nick is confident about its future. He hopes to enter the newspaper for the *Guardian Student Media Awards*, specifically the Small Budget Publication category. And now *The Ripple* has entered a new realm of newspaper publishing with its new online version up and running on *The Ripple* website.

"At the moment we are getting *The Ripple* on the web. The web-site is there but some of it is still under construction. I think this will be great for students who are on an Erasmus placement so they can keep up-to-date with what's going on. But it won't be completely finished until the end of the year. We've had meetings with *BBC Leicester Online* and they often publish the stories that we print in *The Ripple* on their website," says Nick.

The student population at the University of Leicester has expanded over the years, and with it so has *The Ripple's* readership. While the tone of the newspaper may have changed, it is clear that there are some issues important to students of every generation, and the student voice at Leicester will always have a platform in *The Ripple*.

In the final edition of the first year of print for *The Ripple*, the Editor Brian Abbs wrote: "The duty of *Ripple* is to present a rational case in Union affairs and present an independent outlook. I think after a year of office I can safely say that the printed *Ripple* is here to stay." ■

Sabbatical elections, union presidents, manifestos and the odd controversy surrounding them have remained a headline grabber throughout the years.

almost chatty feel that characterises modern day *Ripple*.

When asked if he feels *The Ripple* has an objective or a mission Nick's response is unsure: "I don't feel that *The Ripple* really has a voice as such. We're not political – we don't have that kind of an audience. Our mission is to inform and entertain."

Perhaps this air of neutrality and hesitation reflect the times in which we now live. *The Ripple's* most recent Christmas issue had its front page pulled at the last minute on advice from University lawyers: "We had done an exposé on a local pub but the lawyers told us it could be libellous. So we had to find a new headline quickly – it was a

University press release about climate change that we used in the end," says Nick.

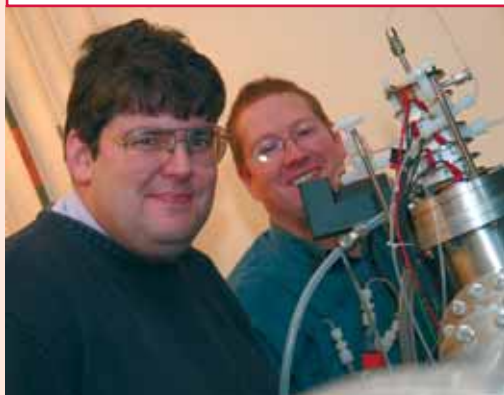
Yet only seventeen years previously *The Ripple* headlined with 'Studio Veto Pronto!' The article called for a picket outside a local nightclub. The *Studio*, which *The Ripple* accused of sexist and racial discrimination against students "and acts of unnecessary violence committed by 'bouncers' at the club".

In fact 'scandal' and dispute don't really abound the pages of today's *Ripple*, although the student voice is still heard it is perhaps less controversial. News Editor Claire McGowan says: "We do use a lot of press releases but I always try to encourage our writers to take a fresh angle on them. The

You can read *The Ripple* online at www.theripple.co.uk

Around the University

Fingerprinting Air



► Scientists in the Department of Chemistry, Dr Paul Monks and Dr Andrew Ellis, have developed a new 'air fingerprinting' technique which has revolutionised the speed and accuracy by which the 'ingredients' of air can be tested, including that of an individual's breath or perfume.

This technique has potential applications in the environmental, industrial, and medical worlds. Scientists also believe the new development may have applications in the forensic field.

Dr Monks said: "Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are produced naturally in the body and some are expelled in our breath. The presence or absence of specific VOCs may be a rapid indicator of certain illnesses. Other VOCs are emitted from man-made resources and these can have a damaging effect on the environment and on human health."

Scientists discover ancient Sea Spider – complete with pincers

► The digital reconstruction is enough to make some people break into a cold sweat as the ancient sea spider's prominent pincers show that today's sea spiders are properly grouped with chelicerates, which include the true spiders (arachnids) as well as scorpions and horse-shoe crabs.



A British sea spider fossil from 425 million years ago has also helped its modern-day descendants claim their rightful place on the tree of life.

University of Leicester Geologist, Professor David Siveter said: "For over 400 million years fossil sea-spiders have had very little 'press'. Evidence from this very rare, exceptionally well-preserved fossil uniquely informs us about the palaeobiology and affinity of the group."

Swift X-ray Telescope's first Gamma-Ray Burst

► Only one month after its November 2004 launch, NASA's Swift X-ray Telescope (XRT), with key involvement from scientists at the University of Leicester, has discovered its first gamma-ray-burst 'afterglow'. During its first view of the cosmos it captured a dazzling image of Cassiopeia A, a well-known supernova remnant in the Milky Way galaxy.

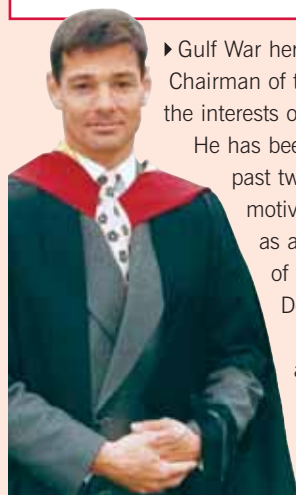
The XRT will help scientists unravel the mystery of gamma-ray bursts – the most powerful explosions known in the universe – emitting more than one hundred billion times the energy that our Sun emits in one year.

"Speed is crucial, because clues to what caused the burst may disappear quickly" said Professor Alan Wells, leader of the XRT development effort at Leicester. "In the past it has taken hours to view the afterglow with a high-quality telescope. Now we'll be on the scene within minutes."



Professor Alan Wells accepts exceptional achievement award on behalf of Leicester's Swift Science Team

Gulf War hero and Leicester graduate heads Association of MBAs



► Gulf War hero and University of Leicester graduate John Peters has been appointed as Chairman of the Association of MBAs, the international membership organisation representing the interests of MBAs, business schools and employers.

He has been a member of the Association's International Management Board (IMB) for the past two years and is a strong advocate of the MBA. He is also a leading speaker on motivation and runs his own performance development consultancy which he set up as a result of the MBA and following his experience as a Gulf War pilot and prisoner of war. In 1991 he was shot down, tortured and held for seven weeks during the Desert War.

He recalls his time at Leicester: "The course at Leicester has given me all the advantages of distance learning with three very enjoyable summer schools. I was surprised how practical the course was. It was a stimulating two years and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend Leicester to anyone who wanted to progress by taking an MBA."

Botanic Garden celebrates with Fibonacci pavement

► Three Fibonacci pavement designs have been incorporated into the herb garden at the University's Harold Martin Botanic Garden.

The designs, by *Scenic Blue* of Rugby, feature a shell, a hopscotch court and a pine cone. The numbers on the hopscotch will be those of the Fibonacci sequence: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144 etc. This set of numbers was named after a 12th century Italian mathematician from Pisa, who discovered them while considering how rabbit populations might increase in number.

According to Dr Richard Gornall, Director of the Botanic Garden, many plants show Fibonacci spirals in the arrangement of leaves around a stem, an arrangement that allows them to capture light more efficiently, and of flowers in a flower head. "The paving designs will form an important component of the mathematics activity offered to schools by our education programme, SEED", he added.

Professor Jeremy Levesley, Head of the Department of Mathematics, shows Fibonacci spirals in a sunflower



Lord Mayor undergoes DNA test at University of Leicester

► The Lord Mayor of Leicester helped to mark an historic anniversary during a visit to the University of Leicester – by giving his DNA.

The Lord Mayor visited the world-famous Department of Genetics where he provided a mouth swab in preparation for the Department's 40th anniversary celebrations.

The Department, Britain's only 5*-rated Genetics department, is celebrating a double anniversary – 40 years since it was founded and 20 years since the discovery of revolutionary DNA genetic fingerprinting. To mark the occasion, the Department held an Open Day on Saturday 9 April, from 11.00am-4.00pm.

The inventor of genetic fingerprinting, Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys, was among the speakers during the day. One of the events included an analysis of DNA fingerprints of 40 Leicestershire people – representing one for every year of the Department.

Head of Department Dr Annette Cashmore said: "This Open Day provides a forum for the public to engage with experts at the cutting-edge of genetics."



Rowing to victory



► A women's coxless four has built on the success of last year's crews to become the first University of Leicester Students' Union crew ever to win a gold Championship medal at the British Universities Sports Association Head of the River.

The coxless four, comprising **Vicky Tatman, Kate Evans, Sasha Stevenson** and **Helen Gilbert**, rowed to victory against the top female university crews in the country, beating the silver medal winners Bath by a massive 1 minute and 7 seconds over the 5km course and beating the course record, previously held by Imperial College, who came third. The events took place on the River Trent in Nottingham.

University reopens Leicester Breast Cancer Research Unit

► The University of Leicester Breast Cancer Research Unit was formally opened in its new venue by the Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and MP for Leicester West.

Originally opened at Clinical Sciences, Glenfield Hospital, in 1990, the Research Unit was established at a time when many changes were occurring to breast services, with the introduction of breast screening and subsequently the foundation of dedicated breast units. Glenfield Hospital (now part of University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust) became the centre for breast services in Leicestershire.

Recent changes to the organisation and structure of the School of Medicine at the University, with the formation of a small number of research focussed departments, has seen the Breast Cancer Unit as a natural component of Cancer Studies and Molecular Medicine.

The Head of the Research Unit, Professor Walker explained that the aim of bringing together all groups undertaking cancer research is to facilitate collaborations and maximise expertise.

Patricia Hewitt commented: "This fantastic centre will build upon Leicester's outstanding reputation as a leader in breast cancer research. I am honoured to be involved in this official opening."



Leicester academic re-interprets Italian work of art

► A recently-discovered medieval mural full of surprising images and symbolism has been re-interpreted by a scholar at the University.

George Ferzoco, Director of the Centre for Tuscan Studies, claims the thirteenth-century mural is in fact among the earliest known political billboards.

The painting, found four years ago by a fountain in the Tuscan town of Massa Marittima, was first thought to portray fertility as it depicts a tree with 25 phalluses. But Mr Ferzoco, who has analysed the history and symbols of the mural, claims the artwork is the work of medieval spin-doctors and is a coded attack by one Italian faction against another.

The 7 by 5 metre mural, featuring a phallus tree along with women and eagles, depicts scenes of heresy, in-fighting and sexual perversion. It is also the earliest known work portraying witches and their emasculation of men. The Director of the Centre for Tuscan Studies – the only one of its kind in the world – believes the artwork has broken new ground in understanding the politics and witchcraft of medieval times.

Alumni *News*



A day to look both forward and back

Homecoming 2004 on Saturday, 26 June offered much more for University of Leicester graduates than a chance to look back on student years and old friendships.

More than 200 graduates representing six decades from 1944 to 2004 converged on the University of Leicester campus. They travelled from all areas of the UK – including Lancashire, Cornwall, Gloucestershire, Kent and the Midlands for this annual *Homecoming*. As in the past few years, two graduates made a long-distance nostalgic trip – from Miami!

All took the opportunity to catch up on recent discoveries and to discuss with the experts some of the issues facing the world in the 21st century.

The varied programme for the day included:

- A keynote lecture on the highs and low of space research at Leicester, by Emeritus Professor Alan Wells (pictured above), Research Director at the National Space Centre and Founding Director of the University's Space Research Centre,
- A sneak preview of the Library's multi-million pound extension and refurbishment, part of the University's £300m development to transform the University campus,
- What life is really like for a forensic pathologist,
- An exploration of science/arts links,
- A political analysis of America, 9/11 and George W Bush,
- A historian's viewpoint of what it means to be English,
- A focus on a lost Middle Eastern civilisation,
- And a look at the hidden dangers faced in an age of science and technology.



As in previous years, this annual event proved popular with graduates of all tastes and ages – some of whom have been coming back for several years now. The challenge remains to design a programme each year that attracts graduates who span seven decades, live in more than 100 countries and whose interests range from geology to space science and from politics to art history.

Graduates' reception at the Palace of Westminster

► University of Leicester graduate and MP for Ilford North, Linda Perham (BA Classics 1969) was the host of a reception for former students of the University and their guests at the Palace of Westminster on Thursday, 21 October.

Members of the Alumni Association and staff from the University mingled with London-based graduates on the Terrace Pavilion of the House of Commons. The location with its magnificent views over the River Thames and Westminster Bridge was an ideal setting for this social occasion.

In his welcome, Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess invited graduates to return to Leicester and see how the £300m development programme is already transforming the University's physical surroundings. Plans to refurbish and extend the main library to twice its size in 2005 – at a cost of £25m – are central to the University's academic excellence.

In previous years, the annual London event has attracted graduates from every decade and from every Faculty since the 1960s, and this year was no exception.



Homecoming: 25 June 2005

► All graduates, friends and family members are welcome to the summer *Homecoming* and Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 25 June 2005. The theme of this year's programme is *Crime and Discovery*. Full details are listed in the enclosed flyer and booking form.

The 2005 Alumni Association Lecture



► The Alumni Association's 2005 Lecture, held jointly with the Haldane Society, was given by freelance photographer, writer and broadcaster Dr Adam Hart-Davis.

The producer of such series as *Scientific Eye* and *Arthur C Clarke's World of Strange Powers*, Adam Hart-Davis is known for his popular series *What the Victorians Did For Us* and *Local Heroes*. He is a prolific author, whose books include *The World's Stupidest Inventions*; *What the Tudors and Stuarts Did For Us*; *Henry Winstanley and the Eddystone Lighthouse*, and he has been used recently by Inland Revenue in their latest ad campaign.

In his presentation at the University of Leicester, Dr Hart-Davis delighted an overflow audience using his own photographs to demonstrate how some scientific snapshots can be taken, and how they can provide answers to scientific questions.

His latest TV series *What the Ancients Did For Us* is currently being aired on BBC2 and covers the Chinese invention of gunpowder, the Sumerian invention of writing – and therefore written history – Egyptian pyramids and mummies, a Greek computer, and the vital Meso-American discoveries of rubber and chocolate.

Annual Meeting of the Leicester Alumni Association

► A name change from the **University of Leicester Graduates' Association** to the **University of Leicester Alumni Association** was formally adopted at the AGM on 26 June 2004.

If you have a few hours to spare and would like to get involved in running the Alumni Association and take part in University business, why not get in contact with us?

The Association's Standing Committee of Convocation is the main channel of communication between the University and its graduate members. It also offers advice and support on the Alumni Relations programme. Members take an active part in helping to arrange and host events.

The Committee meets four or five times per year. All its members are also members of the University's Court and the Chairman has the right to serve on the University Council.

Six memberships will become available in September. The elections will take place at the AGM on 25 June 2005. All Leicester graduates, and other members of Convocation, as defined in the Statutes, are eligible to stand. Membership is for three years (from 1 October) in the first instance. Travel expenses are available for attendance at committee meetings.

If you are interested in serving on the Committee, your nomination must be received at the Alumni Relations Office by 20 May 2005.

For further information tel. 0116 252 2195 or e-mail kw42@le.ac.uk, or visit the web site at www.le.ac.uk/alumni.

Graduates celebrate in Italy



(l-r): Michael MacLagan, Barry Wilkinson, Jane (Lloyd) Wilkinson, Liz (Kirby)Carlin, Carole (Bull) Sayers, Pat (Balderston) MacLagan, Paddy Carlin.

► A group of more than 40 friends who first met at Leicester in the 1960s and still keep in touch with one another regularly is the largest and most active network of graduates known to date. Their shared experiences during their university days were special and helped to form close bonds that have lasted over 40 years.

One recent get together was to celebrate Carole (Bull) Sayer's 60th birthday. It was Carole's idea

to mark the occasion in Tuscany, in a farmhouse near Camaiore. Six of her Leicester contemporaries whom she had known the longest – Michael and Pat MacLagan, Paddy and Liz Carlin and Barry and Jane Wilkinson – spent the time with her and her husband sightseeing, visiting a marble quarry and the museums in Lucca, did some hill walking and listened to lots of 60s music.

Wanted!

► The University Archives is looking for Degree Congregation brochures between 1959-62. Help by donating your copy (or sending a photocopy). Please contact the Alumni Relations Office at the address below.

Mountaineering Club

► For existing members, and anyone who would like to register with the group for the fourth reunion of the Mountaineering Club, please forward your details to John Penniford at tel: (01895) 442 116 or at his new e-mail: john.penniford@btinternet.com

Personalia and obituaries

► Entries for the Personalia and obituary notices are available on the Alumni Relations web-site at: www.le.ac.uk/alumni. This information is also available on request in hard copy from the Alumni Relations Office, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RH or e-mail: kw42@le.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

Annual Fund



The buildings that form the nucleus of the university campus proudly bear the name of former philanthropists who have helped to shape the University.

► The University of Leicester has always been fortunate to count on private support to help provide the best education for its students.

The buildings that form the nucleus of the university campus proudly bear the name of former philanthropists who have helped to shape the University. This tradition continues today. Over the past decade generous support from graduates and friends has made it possible to begin the vital work of transforming our library facilities and creating scholarships.

Both these initiatives become a reality in 2005. Building work begins in August on a \$25 million project that will transform the Library into a major support for teaching and research. At the University of Leicester we believe that high quality research and teaching go hand in hand. Our world-class research informs and inspires the educational experience that students receive. Leicester students are taught by academics at the cutting edge of their disciplines.

The University of Leicester has always attracted the best students, regardless of their financial circumstances, from a wide social and ethnic spectrum. The introduction of higher tuition fees across England, from 2006 onwards, will put the onus on universities to provide a full or partial grant to both existing students and around half of all new students. Increasingly, Leicester must look to its friends and supporters for help and assistance – during the past year, the University has been involved in a range of fund-raising initiatives.

Students get involved in raising funds for tomorrow's students

► One scheme has seen a team of current students talking to graduates to find out how Leicester has changed over the years and to invite graduates to support one of two key funding priorities, namely the *Student Opportunities Fund* and the *Library Development Fund*. For the callers, it has been at times a daunting, but rewarding, experience facing the prospect of phoning graduates, but once students had explained the reason for the call the response from graduates has been very generous. The reasons for giving are many; some expressed the desire to "give something back" to Leicester as a measure of their loyalty, others had benefited from their years here and gone on to successful careers and a few just wanted to make a difference.

The University of Leicester and the Annual Fund team would like to thank all our graduates for your generous support.



"When I first started calling I did not realise that I would learn so much from other people's experiences at the University and discover how much the University had changed over time. At first I was a bit apprehensive about talking to graduates and asking them to pledge a gift to the Annual Fund but after the first few calls it began not to faze me. Graduates who did the same degree as me were especially helpful because they gave me advice about how their degree helped them and through this they helped me to reassess what I want to achieve when I graduate. It's not all about asking for money!"

Overall I've really enjoyed working for the Annual Fund Telephone Campaign and have been surprised with the number of gifts I have received from graduates. This must show how much they enjoyed their time here and how they want the students of tomorrow to share the same experience as they did at Leicester."

Adam Piplica (BA History and Politics, 2007)



£25 Million Scheme for University Library

► The University has received planning approval for a £25 million scheme designed by Associated Architects to refurbish and extend the main library.

The scheme provides a total of 15,500 sq metres of space that will be achieved by an infill extension linking the existing 1970s Library Building and the 1830s Fielding Johnson Building. Plans for the new library, which will double in size, are central to developing the University’s academic excellence. Study spaces will be increased to 1500 seats, eleven group study rooms will be provided along with a Special Collections suite, Graduate School area, increased IT facilities, café, bookshop, and Careers Library. The use of natural finishes and state of the art lighting will ensure that students are able to study in a comfortable working environment.

The existing library will be refurbished incorporating a new atrium circulation space, designed to increase natural light at the heart of the building and help students find their way around the collection of over a million volumes – if placed on their fore-edge the collection would stretch from here to Nottingham! Long-term plans are to increase self-service and ultimately operate a library that is open 24 hours per day every day of the week. The building’s new façade will be designed to bring in additional natural light to the perimeter reader spaces and increase the overall energy efficiency of the building.

A ground-breaking ceremony in May 2005 will mark the start of



construction with completion scheduled for April 2007, in the 50th Anniversary Year since the awarding of the University’s Royal Charter.

A range of named-gift opportunities exists for graduates who would like to invest in the University’s future by supporting the *Library Development Fund* or the *Student Opportunities Fund* (which provides bursaries and scholarships for students). For further details contact the Alumni Relations Office at University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH or by telephone at 0116 252 2195.

ROLL OF BENEFACTORS 2004-2005

Thank you for your generous support

Thank you to all those benefactors listed below, and to our 87 anonymous givers, who have made a contribution to our Annual Fund as at 1 April 2005.

Mrs Elizabeth Abbott	Mr Paul Cartledge	Mr Richard Fensom	Miss Yvonne Hawtin	Ms Pauline Lee	Mrs Diana Newsome	Mr Peter Saunders
Mrs Marion Adams	Miss Michelle Cavanagh	Mr Stephen Fern	Mr Mark Hayes	Mr Micheal Leeson	Mrs Veronica Nicholas	Mrs Madeleine Savage
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Creating Opportunities for Students



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Name and address of Bank/Building Society _____

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Please transfer the sum of £ ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually
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Beginning on _____ 20 _____ ☐ for _____ years (we recommend 3)
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Please return your completed form to:
Alumni Relations, University of Leicester,
University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH.

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► With over 50 items, the Students' Union Shop has an extensive range of crested items and gifts. Some selected items are shown here with their catalogue numbers, but the full range can be viewed online and in the Percy Gee Building.

For further details and orders (phone, fax and e-mail) on all of our products, please contact Elke Pickard, the shop Manager on:

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Fax: +44 (0) 116 223 1138

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Leicester Alumni Association

All graduates are automatically members of the *University of Leicester Alumni Association* and of the University. For recent graduates, here's a summary of the main benefits you can get from your membership.



Graduates' Review – our annual publication that brings you up-to-date on developments at the University and contains news about staff and student achievements.

Contact Service – if you have lost contact with members of your department or friends from your year we can help to put you in touch again.

Reunions and Events – the Association organises reunions of graduates in Leicester, other areas of the UK and overseas. We can also help you plan get-togethers with old friends and colleagues.

Conference Office – the University has excellent conference and accommodation facilities for all types of functions at competitive rates. Whenever possible, we will provide extra benefits for graduates.

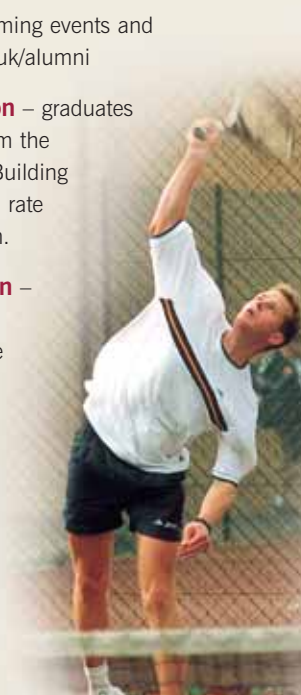
Library – graduates have free access to consult reference facilities and pay a reduced fee of £30 to borrow up to four standard loan books at a time. The fee does not include computer services in the Library.

Web-Site – contains the latest news about upcoming events and reunions of the Alumni Association at www.le.ac.uk/alumni

Lifetime membership of the Students' Union – graduates are able to purchase a Graduate Card for £10 from the Union. Benefits include access to the Percy Gee Building and events, special discounts, such as a graduate rate for a University sports card, news and information.

Associate Membership to Sports Association – full use of the University's Sports Facilities at Manor Road and on the main campus is available to all graduates at a special annual subscription of £110.

University E-mail for Life – current students will soon be issued with a free "e-mail for life" on graduation. This will enable them to keep in contact with the University and with fellow classmates. Full details of this new service will appear on the web-site.



For information on all our services, contact the Alumni Relations Office at 0116 252 2195 or e-mail: kw42@le.ac.uk

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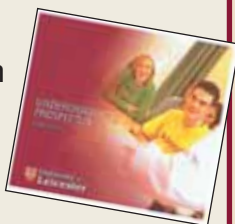
To find out more visit
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