

Graduates' Review

Spring 2006



Leicester's Teaching
ranked top in the UK

What makes your Brain Cells Tick?
Stalking: Cause and Effect
Talking with the Dead
RAG: A Tradition of Giving



University of
Leicester



March 2005 Leicester academic re-interprets Tuscan medieval mural.



April 2005 Press and Marketing Campaign receives Heist Gold Award for Education Marketing.



May 2005 Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess performs ground breaking ceremony for new Library.



© Mark Purnell, Geology, University of Leicester

June 2005 Evidence from fossil fish (sitting on a pinhead) casts doubt on evolutionary theory.



© ESA/Anneke Le Flo'h

July 2005 Leicester students experience weightlessness on European Space Agency Flight.



August 2005 Royal British Society of Sculptures celebrates centenary at Botanic Garden.



September 2005 Leicester ranked first in the National Student Survey.



October 2005 Geneticist Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys wins Lasker Award for Clinical Medical Research.



November 2005 Sabbatical team accepts 'UK Students' Union of the Year' Award.



December 2005 Success for men and women's teams at first Varsity Football Match at Walkers Stadium.



January 2006 Dr Engelbert Humperdinck receives Honorary Doctor of Music.



February 2006 Leicester scientists detect unique Cosmic Explosion using data from NASA's Swift satellite.



Front cover: The University of Leicester was ranked joint first in the 2005 National Student Survey for teaching quality, personal development, academic support and overall satisfaction among universities teaching full-time students.

Editor's Welcome

► Welcome to the 2006 issue of the Leicester Graduates' Review.

This academic year has been a year of extraordinary accolades, including a succession of "firsts". The year began on a high with the exciting news that Leicester had been voted the number one place to study in the UK, in the first ever National Student Survey.

One of the contributory factors to our success was the high quality of teaching at Leicester, where students are taught by leading research academics. Our teaching will go from strength to strength as staff are now able to experiment with new e-learning techniques and assess new applications to enhance their teaching, thanks to the expertise provided by our 'Beyond Distance' team (see page 12).

The thrill of discovery – an underlying theme in our articles – has helped to make Leicester what it is today: a research institution of international standing. In this issue we discover: how medieval literature contributes to our understanding of modern culture; the way perceptions and memories are represented in the brain; how human beings and the landscape have shaped and influenced each other; and how to "speak for the dead" by interpreting clues left behind by the deceased.

This year we are breaking with tradition. On 28 June 2006 Leicester graduates are invited to gather, not at the customary *Homecoming*, but instead at one of the UK's prime visitor attractions, based in Leicester – the National Space Centre (full details appear in the enclosed flyer). But we shall be back at the University for the *Homecoming* in 2007 to celebrate a landmark occasion in our history – the University's Jubilee and 50th anniversary since the granting of the Royal Charter in 1957. As always, all our graduates are invited to join in the celebrations.

For graduates and friends who will be with us on 28 June, we look forward to taking a journey with you – to the very edges of the Universe, in fact.

Kathryn Whitehurst

Kathryn J Whitehurst
BA Combined Studies 1970

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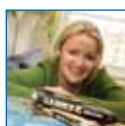
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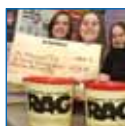
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Leicester:

"A strong research institution with excellent teaching"

► These are not my words but the words of *The Times Higher Education Supplement* when shortlisting the University of Leicester for the award of University of the Year 2005. Reflecting on the last year it is possible to see why the THES chose these words to describe us. This has been a year of real achievement for the University of Leicester and one I am sure that every graduate will feel proud of.

As graduates I am certain that evidence of the quality of a University of Leicester education comes as no surprise to you. Nevertheless the results of the 2005 National Student Survey published in September were a tremendous achievement for the University. Designed to be the cornerstone of the Government's new quality assurance process in higher education and to inform prospective students about what and where to study the National Student Survey was a major initiative across the higher education sector. Over 60% of final year students responded to detailed questions about their universities and study experiences. Amongst universities teaching full-time students Leicester was ranked joint top in the country on the important categories of teaching quality and overall satisfaction. Leicester also headed two of the other five categories.

The success in the National Student Survey came just a few months after Leicester became one of just 16 universities to be awarded more than one prestigious national Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (as reported in the last *Review* our Centres are in Geography, Genetics and Physics). Twelve months on, work on the CETLs is going well and it seems clear that they will be the fine showcase of our high quality teaching we intended them to be.

But why is our teaching so strong? For the key reason you need to turn to our world-class research. Here at Leicester our high quality teaching and research go hand in hand. To refer to our mission statement, we believe in the synergy between research and teaching. Students at Leicester are taught by staff at the cutting edge of their academic disciplines and this brings real intellectual excitement to the classroom. To be taught genetics by members of the UK's only top 5* research rated Genetics department (including Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys), space science by leading space scientists (including members of NASA teams and the *Beagle 2*

Mars Probe mission team) is inspiring. To study medieval English with the Leicester team who are leading the definitive study of English manuscripts 1060-1220 brings not just the latest thinking but real passion into the subject. It is this synergy between high quality teaching and world-class research that makes Leicester special. It's an approach that sets us apart from many in the sector and the evidence of its success is clear from the results of the National Student Survey. In this issue of the *Review* you can read about our cutting edge research work (including Professor Treharne and Dr Da Rold's work with medieval manuscripts) and also, in some cases, how it is being applied in the classroom.

Professor Gilly Salmon is a good example of how research impacts on teaching. Her Beyond Distance research team is leading the way in which new technologies such as podcasting, blogs and wikis can be applied in teaching and learning. Her work is ensuring that Leicester's teaching activity is innovative and exciting. Cited as one of the top 100 science discoveries in the world last year, Leicester bioengineer Dr Rodrigo Quián Quiroga's discovery of the "*Aniston*" cell shows how Leicester's leading edge science can capture the public imagination and be communicated in an exciting and accessible way.

Although the high quality of our work has remained consistent, the same cannot be said about the funding arrangements for new students. You will probably have followed the debate about higher tuition charges for undergraduate students in the national media. At Leicester we faced a difficult choice. I am sure you would agree with our determination to maintain our position as a top 20 university and continue to improve the high quality of our work. Yet we are also determined to attract the brightest and best students regardless of background. Leicester is a very inclusive university. Of the top 20 research universities in the UK only 2 meet their funding council benchmarks for admissions from lower socio-economic groups and state schools – Leicester is one of these. The University, together with the generous support of friends and graduates, has worked hard to put in place a comprehensive system of scholarships and bursaries guaranteeing financial support to able students who may otherwise have been deterred by the cost of study. Through this we will succeed in our determination to remain an inclusive leading university.

You will have read in previous issues about the launch and progress of the University's ambitious £300m development plan that is transforming our campus. By the close of this academic year we will have invested over £90m in new buildings as part of the plan. The centrepiece of the plan is the £27m University Library project. Our new University Library will double in size and provide a first-class resource for the important research and teaching we carry out as a University. Progress with the Library would not have been made without the combined generosity of our friends and supporters. On pages 25 and 26 you can read how your support for the Library and student scholarships can help your University at this critical time. We have also printed the names of the friends and graduates of the University who have



(L-R) Installation of Sir Peter Williams as Chancellor. Pictured with Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess.

supported us this year. I have also written to each individual personally to thank them but I also want to take this opportunity to thank them publicly.

One recent happy occasion was the installation, in December 2005, of Sir Peter Williams as the fifth Chancellor of the University. Sir Peter was a student of Trinity College, Cambridge where he trained as a physicist. He initially pursued an academic career in Cambridge and at Imperial College, London before pursuing a career in business. Sir Peter was previously Master of St Catherine's College, Oxford, Chairman of the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council and president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. He became Chief Executive of Oxford Instruments in 1985. His distinguished career includes honorary degrees from nine universities, including the University of Leicester, that honoured him in 1995. Sir Peter is a great supporter of the University's work and I am very much looking forward to working with him.

Higher education faces tremendous challenges in the twenty first century as we respond to the global environment in which we operate. Leicester is well placed to deliver. We are determined to maintain our reputation for high quality and relevant teaching and research. We are tremendously proud of our University, our students and you, our graduates. I hope as you read about the important work we are carrying out at Leicester that you feel proud of your University. ■

Professor Robert Burgess
Vice-Chancellor



Data released in 2004-5 reveals the University of Leicester is a top 20 university for research. Our research grant income per academic places us in 19th position amongst UK universities.

Top 20 Research University



The University of Leicester is one of just 2 of the top 20 research universities to meet their Government benchmarks for widening participation for students from lower socio-economic groups and state schools.

The Best Regardless of Background



Our excellent teaching and high quality student support services combine to produce the UK's 9th best student completion rate according to Government performance indicators for higher education. 95% of students who start studying at Leicester exit the sector with an award.

Top 10 for Student Completion



Leicester graduates are highly prized by employers. In 2004-5 over 19 out of 20 Leicester graduates were employed or within further study six months after graduating. A rate amongst the best in the country.

Top 20 for Graduate Employment



Beating off competition from over 200 institutions Leicester reached the final shortlist of 4 for the Award of Higher Education Institution of the Year in a competition organised by *The Times Higher Education Supplement*.

Shortlisted for University of the Year



The University of Leicester's Students' Union won the award of Students' Union of the Year for 2004-5. The Union's combination of excellent facilities, strong student societies and good quality welfare provision saw it beat off competition from the rest of the UK to claim the title.

Students' Union of the Year

Leicester ranked Top for Teaching

The University of Leicester has always enjoyed a strong reputation for the quality of its teaching but the results of the new National Student Survey were impressive even by Leicester's high standards.

► Early in 2005, research company IPSOS, working on behalf of the UK funding councils contacted every final year student studying in higher education across the country. Students were invited to complete a questionnaire about the quality of their educational experiences. The National Student Survey is to be the cornerstone of the new national quality assurance process and is intended, in the words of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, "to inform prospective students about what and where to study".

Institutions were assessed by their students on seven key factors with scores being given out of 5. The response rate from Leicester proved high with over 75 percent of students completing – one of the highest rates in the UK. But a high response didn't necessarily mean a good performance. In the words of Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess "our performance in quality assurance inspections prior to the National Student Survey had been strong. We had recorded 14 consecutive ratings of 'excellent' stretching back to March 1998 – this was a record of consistently high scores matched by just one other UK university. We were therefore confident, but not complacent about how we would perform in the NSS."

The results of the NSS were published by the funding councils at a press conference in the autumn term of this year. Leicester scored exceptionally well finishing joint top amongst universities in the UCAS system in four of the seven categories including the final category of overall satisfaction.

Teaching Quality: **1st**
Assessment & Feedback: **3rd**
Academic Support: **1st**
Organisation & Management: **3rd**
Learning Resources: **15th**
Personal Development: **1st**
Overall Satisfaction: **1st**

So why had Leicester performed so well? Pro-Vice-Chancellor for teaching and learning Professor John Fothergill explains: "At Leicester teaching and research go hand in hand. Our students are taught by leading research academics at the cutting edge of their

disciplines. This brings an intellectual excitement to the classroom that may be less prevalent where teaching and research are not so closely linked. At Leicester our high quality research informs our high quality teaching. Leicester's size and campus atmosphere is also a factor. Our own work tells us that our students think that Leicester is a very friendly place with approachable, high quality staff."

It wasn't just the University that scored well. Over two thirds of Leicester departments featured in the top ten nationally. Two departments, Economics and Media & Communications, were rated joint top in the country for these subjects by students. Other highly ranked subjects include Politics (joint 2nd), Physical Sciences - which includes Chemistry, Physics and Geology - (joint 3rd), English (joint 3rd), Law (joint 7th), Medicine (joint 7th), Psychology (joint 7th) and Biological Sciences (joint 9th).

The results of the survey are particularly important this year as students entering in 2006 will be the first to be affected by the new tuition fee arrangements which see annual fees of up to £3,000 per year for courses. The results of the National Student Survey is evidence of the University's commitment to its students and high quality teaching.

So what now? A new National Student Survey will run in 2006 and the University is looking to build on its success. The results will be out in September. Are we confident of maintaining our position? "Yes" says Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess "but we aren't taking anything for granted."

The success in the NSS is further evidence of the University's growing strength on a range of teaching and research indicators. The academic year also saw Leicester rise to 9th place for student completion rate, enter the top 20 for graduate employment and retain its top 20 place for research grant income per academic. In addition the University was one of four universities shortlisted for the award of 'University of the Year 2005' by *The Times Higher Education Supplement*. During the awards Leicester was described as "a strong research institution with excellent teaching that hides its light under a bushel". "In 2006 we decided to change just one thing" says the Vice-Chancellor, "no more bushels". The first place results in the NSS are testament to the University's excellent teaching and articles like this are part of a process spelling the end of bushels. ■

Third Year Economics and Law student explains why his department was ranked top for Economics

"Economics department staff have been invaluable in providing information and support whenever I have required it. The Learning and Teaching Committee staff members are particularly responsive to student concerns and act upon them at the earliest opportunity. Department members are always willing to offer praise and constructive criticism, where appropriate, to ensure a fair balance of views.

"In terms of career and educational support, the facilities provided both by the libraries and the student development centre, coupled with the excellent Education Unit in the Students' Union, are second to none, with the staff all making special efforts to find information when it is not so readily available. In particular, the guides produced by the Student Development Centre are extremely helpful from starting University right through to writing final year assignments. The interaction between the University and the Union is particularly important as it encourages continuity of support.

I am looking forward to my final year at Leicester and want to ensure that I can continue to make the most of the opportunities that are offered."



Parras Majithia

Top universities teaching full-time students for Overall Satisfaction

University

Satisfaction Score (out of 5)

University of Leicester **4.3**

Loughborough University **4.3**

University of York **4.2**

University of Durham **4.2**

University of East Anglia **4.2**

University of Exeter **4.2**

University College London **4.2**

Lancaster University **4.2**

Royal Holloway, University of London **4.2**

University of Hull **4.2**

University of Wales, Lampeter **4.2**

University of Wales, Aberystwyth **4.2**

University of Wales, Swansea **4.2**



Students enjoying interactive lectures



- Attenborough Building ←
- Mathematics Building ←
- Library ←
- Engineering Building ←
- College House ←
- Space Research Centre ←
- Astley Clarke Building ↑
- Security Lodge ↑
- Fielding Johnson Building ↑
- Fielding Johnson Building - Law ←

Unravelling the Mystery of Past, Present and Future

Few places in the country are better equipped than Leicester to delve into the mysteries of medievalism. The University of Leicester Department of English has one of the largest groups of medievalists in the UK and recent major funding has established research into our past that is both tantalisingly remote yet strangely relevant.

► Medieval English - attractive to boffins, perhaps, but not relevant to the rest of us. Right?

Wrong. Absolutely wrong, according to Professor Elaine Treharne and Dr Orietta Da Rold in the University of Leicester Department of English. Together with Dr Mary Swan at the Institute for Medieval Studies, University of Leeds, they have received major funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to examine all manuscripts containing English and written in England during the period 1060-1220.

It is a prospect they find immensely exciting in terms of the mysteries it will uncover about our past, its culture, its beliefs and the people who lived during that turbulent period in our history. These people are, after all, our ancestors and laid the foundations for everything that has followed across the centuries.

Medieval literature and the society it reflects is both alien and familiar at the same time, says Elaine Treharne, Professor of Medieval Literature at the University. "The human psyche doesn't change with the age we live in. From earliest times you can trace through literature – particularly through literature – the anxieties, concerns and intellectual state of the society at that time.

"Literature both reflects and contributes to life generally. Medieval literature contributes significantly to our knowledge of the past in a surprisingly flexible and open way. We know so little about the authors and readers that the texts themselves become very open to interpretive possibilities."

The fact that literature is a window into any period in history is emphasised by Dr Da Rold. "Look at any movie, any contemporary book, and you will see something there that relates to our own times. The very fact that we can tell people about ourselves through our literature is part of our heritage. Much modern literature is influenced by medieval literature."

The more you consider modern culture, the less obscure medieval literature becomes. Think of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and Bernard Cornwell's latest novel, *The Pale Horseman*, his second book about Alfred the Great. T S Eliot, W H Auden and Ezra Pound have all been directly influenced by



Medieval manuscript from the Library's Special Collections

medieval culture, while – at the other end of the scale – so have the *Star Wars* movies. Hollywood is filming two movies based on *Beowulf*, while *The Kingdom of Heaven* is currently peddling its saga of the Crusades round cinemas to popular acclaim.

The Medieval ethos clearly continues to have a great influence on our 20th and 21st century forms of entertainment, but what of reading the original itself? Can those of us with no knowledge of Early English really savour in translation the literature of the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries, as the people for whom it was written presumably did?

Professor Treharne believes we can. "Many scholars would claim that you only get the real

meaning of any literature from reading it in the original, and that, obviously, is the ideal. But this shouldn't prevent anyone from accessing it in translation. It's much better to read a good translation than not to read the poetry and prose at all. Think of Seamus Heaney's acclaimed translation of *Beowulf*. He translated it on a 'sense for sense' basis, rather than word for word, so what you end up with has become a new work of art in its own right that is profoundly resonant of the intellectual and cultural milieu of which Heaney is a part. Issues of understanding medieval literature are not based on old or new language, but on careful reading and empathetic interpretation."

Medieval literature, often written in times of conflict, seems to express, more freely than we are used to, human issues and concerns. Deep down, as Orietta Da Rold points out, there is always the kernel of something that we don't know – 'the other' – a mystery we don't understand and need help with: something that could be a threat. "The only inevitable in life is that we will die and to medieval writers it was inconceivable that this is all it amounts to. They are searching for what life is about."

Elaine Treharne agrees. "We often define ourselves by what we are not. Medieval literature is much less fearful than we are in addressing issues about being lost, searching for answers to everything, exploring trial, separation, exile and return, love, loss, and always a quest, carried out with great stoicism."

Few places in the country are better equipped to delve into the mysteries of medievalism. The University of Leicester Department of English has one of the largest groups of medievalists in the UK. In the mid-1990s the Department made a commitment to medieval literature, a courageous decision at a time when other institutions were cutting their medievalists. Its six medievalist members of staff now make up a quarter of the entire Department.

Already closely associated with the University's inter-disciplinary Medieval Research Centre, the English Medievalists are establishing a Centre for Early English Studies, bringing early literary sources and the Medieval heritage of the region to a wider audience through public outreach. They hope, too, to translate the dynamism and vibrancy of their research base into conferences and symposia for the academic community, and possibly to set up a new range of masters' degrees and other courses.

For now, they are concentrating on establishing the AHRC-funded research project: *The Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220*. Its aims are nothing if not sweeping. They will identify and analyse all manuscripts containing English written in England during this period and analyse it in relation to other contemporary texts. The questions it raises are both formidable and fascinating. How does the English language material relate to the other written languages in the period? When and where was it produced? How accurately can it be dated? Who were the scribes? Did they travel from one source to another? Was copying English manuscripts as 'mainstream' as copying Latin and Anglo-Norman texts? Who sanctioned it and who paid for it? Who wrote it, for whom was it written, and why?

When the five-year project is finished, Professor Treharne, Dr Swan and Dr Da Rold will have the first ever full and accurate record of these texts, an exceptionally valuable resource for researchers. But one aspect of the project, they feel, is very special. Everything will be reported online as the project progresses. Other scholars will be able to see from the end of the first year how the research is progressing and can engage in a dialogue, creating a wider and richer community of scholarship. ■



Elaine Treharne, Professor of Medieval Literature

"We often define ourselves by what we are not. Medieval literature is much less fearful than we are in addressing issues about being lost, searching for answers to everything, exploring trial, separation, exile and return, love, loss, and always a quest, carried out with great stoicism."



LOCAL INTEREST



In the midst of death you can learn a lot about life.

Graduate and journalist Sara Smith-Peterson (BA Economics and Social History, 1995) finds out more about Leicester's Centre for English Local History – the birthplace of the academic study of local history.

► Where better to begin researching the lives and times of previous generations than among their gravestones and their parish records?

It's one of the routes taken by students working on postgraduate research at the University of Leicester's Centre for English Local History.

"Graveyard projects are one avenue of research for our students", says Professor Christopher Dyer, who heads the Centre, based in Salisbury Road, Leicester. But the Professor is at pains to stress that this is not a dead end area of research.

"Local history is universal history and total history, not a dark corner of the subject. It moves with the times, including landscape history and using scientific methods, working with other disciplines such as archaeology and geography to find out more about the countryside and its past. And local history at Leicester is known world wide. The "Leicester School" is unique in the study of local history: it's been around for a long while and it has a number of features that set it apart from any other.

"When W G Hoskins founded the School in 1948, local history tended to be rather despised and disregarded as just a hobby for retired vicars. People looked down on it, so Hoskins really went out on a limb in establishing it as an academic subject in its own right.

"One of Leicester's unique characteristics has been that we don't specialise exclusively in our own local history. Hoskins was a Devon man and researched that part of the country. We recognise that we have students from other parts of the country and that many of them will want to research areas outside Leicestershire and the East Midlands. From the students' point of view, it means we can always be comparative and not narrowly focussed. We can often learn from the differences between one place or region and another."

Indeed, the Centre has links with Western Europe and the United States and has assisted the research of students visiting from as far away as Japan.

"We have many contacts with western Europe, the USA and other areas," says Professor Dyer, who recently gave a keynote talk to the North American Conference on British Studies in Philadelphia. "Local history is international, and Leicester has international recognition."

The Leicester Centre is the only specifically postgraduate and research centre of its kind in Britain and, unlike most other local history centres, it is almost entirely serviced by its own staff. Professor Dyer, a specialist in rural, urban and social history and landscape history for the interval 400 to 1550, is joined by Professor Harold Fox, who specialises in medieval agriculture, topography and landscape, and Professor Keith Snell, specialist in modern rural society, religion and cultures.

Although a small proportion of the Centre's students are postgraduates, pursuing masters degrees for career purposes, the majority are mature students who Professor Dyer says appreciate the breadth and relevance of local history and tend to study for their own personal interest. Applicants are normally expected to have a good degree in History, Economic History, Geography, Archaeology or a related subject. In some cases, a qualifying test to degree standard, such as a long essay, may be sufficient.

"The average age of students is about 35 and they tend to be highly motivated. Some of our students are retired and others are working. Although some will use the degree to help in their work, most of our mature students are not doing their degrees for career purposes, but out of personal interest. They have a very strong enthusiastic commitment and they are doing it for no reason other than their own satisfaction."

The Centre offers a Master's degree course, full-time over one year or part-time over two. The course provides a perspective on the changing organisation of provincial societies in England between 410 and 1650, using source material including manorial court records, charters and the Domesday Book. The MA also looks

comparatively at the development of regional societies since 1650. The sources used include the Census, welfare records, the poor law and those churchyard memorials. Also covered by the course are modern regional cultures, landscape history and the field course, which lays particular emphasis on the personal development of observational skills and could put the student back in the churchyard, onto the streets or out on a hillside, teaching an appreciation of how human beings and the landscape have shaped and influenced each other.

Leicester, says Professor Dyer, has always "made a thing of the land and its impact on human society." The Centre applies different disciplines, including anthropology, archaeology, architecture and geography, in its approach to research.

Apart from the one-week field course, MA students attend Saturday schools and classes on Monday mornings and/or one evening a week.

A 20,000 word dissertation is the final element to the degree. Here Professor Dyer admits that he and his colleagues have had to meet some challenges. Recent dissertation subjects have been as varied as evacuation from Leicestershire in World War II, based on oral evidence, to the origins and purposes of the stone crosses of the North York moors, the localisation of the Robin Hood legend in Nottinghamshire to superstitions concerning the female life cycle in south Lincolnshire in the first half of the 20th century.

Professor Dyer confessed: "Sometimes we do have to supervise a dissertation subject that is new ground to us and it is a challenge, but an interesting one. I recently saw one student through a dissertation on 18th century domestic remedies for ailments and ill health. Her research material was largely based on contemporary diaries, account books and advice manuals published at the time. It was very interesting, but new to me."

The Leicester Centre's distinctive characteristic of working on local history throughout England and





Leicester's Welford Road Cemetery

Wales and not just in its own backyard makes it sympathetic to the needs of students who don't live in that backyard. For students who live a long way from Leicester and would find the twice-weekly commitment to lessons too much to fit in, the Centre offers an MA course with less emphasis on the taught element and giving more credit for the dissertation.

The MA by Individual Supervised Study offers a week's intensive course at Leicester and another week's field course in Devon. These give the students a Leicester Centre local history training and credits towards their degree. The remainder is made up by a 35,000-word dissertation, which is the main assessed work, accounting for two thirds of the credits for the degree.

The Centre also caters for students working for research degrees at PhD and MPhil. These students are individually supervised in research on a wide range of periods and topics. They receive training by attending the relevant classes of the MA course and produce a thesis not exceeding 80,000 words. Recent research subjects have included the impact of economic change and the Reformation on small towns, internal migration in the 19th century, rural housing conditions and the operations of the new poor law.

Ideal location

Home for the Centre for English Local History is in the comfort of the Marc Fitch Historical Institute. Housed in the discreet elegance of Victorian villas in Salisbury Road, close to Upper New Walk, it's the sort of place a Leicester estate agent would consider giving his back teeth for.

Within sight of the Attenborough Tower and easy access of the massive resources of the University Library, the Centre feels nevertheless agreeably distant from the rush of university life. Cross the tessellated tiles of the hall floor and nod to the bust of Marcus Aurelius at the foot of the stairs, and you can access a number of rooms for study and housing the Centre's own library and map collection.

Men and women from earlier generations of the Fitch family gaze down from large and imposing portraits on students absorbed in quiet research. The Marc Fitch Fund Library provides a collection of records and works relating to regions and counties. The map rooms offer a complete coverage of England and Wales at Ordnance Survey scales as well as facsimiles of historical maps and original 18th and 19th century county maps and



W G Hoskins

early OS maps. The Centre's archives also house the W G Hoskins working papers, several bequests of slide collections and a countrywide collection of topographical prints.

Add to these the University Library's own local history collection, which includes volumes dating back to the 16th century, and Leicester offers the local history student an unrivalled English provincial university facility.

The Centre has a Friends group, whose members spread the Leicester approach to potential new disciples and organise conferences, the most notable recent example of which was the July 2005 English Heritage sponsored *W G Hoskins and the Making of the British Landscape*, organised to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the publication of Hoskins' book of that title. The conference paid tribute to Hoskins, but also looked at recent developments and forward to new approaches. The Friends also go on group excursions to places of such varied interest as the Charles Rennie Mackintosh decorated former home of W J Bassett-Lowke in Northampton and the marshlands of Kings Lynn.

They help raise funds to assist students at the Centre and advice is available on grants from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. ■



Devon coastline



Marc Fitch Historical Institute

WANTED: Zookeeper

at University of Leicester, all enquiries to Professor Gilly Salmon



Gilly Salmon, Professor of e-learning and Learning Technologies

► Let me allay your concerns, the University hasn't turned the Fielding Johnson into a menagerie or the Library into a big cat compound. Elephants don't roam the campus and chimpanzees aren't swinging through the trees in Victoria Park. Yet. Who knows what effect global warming will have...

The Zookeeper, is an exciting new role, 'taming technology', in the Media Zoo, a high tech domain in the Beyond Distance Office, presided over by Head Keeper, Gilly Salmon, Professor of e-Learning & Learning Technologies. Professor Salmon has been joined in the Beyond Distance team by Dr Palitha Edirisingha, Lecturer in e-Learning, Jaideep Mukherjee, Research Associate and Louise Lubkowski, PA.

The Beyond Distance Team, aptly enough, high up in the clouds at the top of the Attenborough Tower, are committed to: leading research into e-learning ("the use of electronic technology to deliver, support and enhance teaching and learning") and providing guidance

to senior staff and committees on the development of e-learning.

It may sound ambitious but the Media Zoo and the Beyond Distance team are putting Leicester at the cutting edge of e-learning techniques for the 21st century. Before arriving at Leicester Professor Salmon spent 15 years working at the Centre for Innovation, Knowledge and Enterprise at the Open University Business School and has been teaching on-line since 1989. She's also in demand at conferences all over the world presenting on online teaching, learning and e-learning scenarios. She has also written two highly acclaimed texts: E-Moderating and E-tivities.

The Zookeeper will manage the Media Zoo, a space where teaching staff and support staff can experiment with new technologies and assess how new applications will add value to their teaching and interaction with students. The Zookeeper will also showcase and demonstrate new media and innovations, throughout the university, facilitating the creation and mediation of ideas directly related

to education provision.

To further the development of e-learning practice and technology Professor Salmon has gathered together a global 'family' of researchers and teachers under the umbrella of the Beyond Distance Research Alliance to work together on a variety of projects, sharing research through regular seminars and conferences. Professor Salmon's current research projects include: 'IMPALA', a mobile learning and podcasting pilot (or slender, medium sized antelope from Africa!) Podcasting, for the uninitiated, is when an audio file is uploaded, in an MP3 format, to a website and then downloaded by users to an MP3 player so they can listen to it whenever they want.

The Beyond Distance team is also researching the use of 'wikis' – the most famous wiki is of course wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia which anyone can contribute to. The project aims, in part, to focus on the potential of wikis to share knowledge to meet professional development needs.

Stalking: Cause and Effect

Dr Lorraine Sheridan, a Chartered Forensic Psychologist and Senior Lecturer in Forensic Psychology heads cutting edge research into the effects and causes of stalking.

► On the 4 January 2006 Reuters reported on the case of a man who broke into a woman's house on five different occasions, he washed her dishes, did her laundry and left snacks for her. He was arrested after he was caught leaving her house with one of her bras, an MP3 player and photos. The court pardoned the man because he said "(I took) her bra and photos out of love..."

Sounds relatively harmless? A lonely man, bereft of company, sees a woman and, too shy to talk to her, follows her around and breaks into her house, he does nice things for her, doesn't threaten her or attack her. A little odd perhaps but nothing life-threatening. But what if you were that woman, how do you think you would feel if someone was watching your every move, that they could easily gain access to your home, your friends, family, and your life?

Most people think that stalking is something that will never happen to them but unfortunately anyone can become the victim of a stalker. The National Stalking Survey, conducted by University of Leicester Psychologist, Dr Lorraine Sheridan, shows that out of the 1,051 respondents half of them had a prior intimate relationship with their stalker, a further third had some prior acquaintance with their stalker – as a friend of a friend, a neighbour or work colleague, and one in 10 victims did not know their stalker.

Dr Sheridan, a Chartered Forensic Psychologist and Senior Lecturer in Forensic Psychology, is a renowned expert on stalking, a subject she became interested as an undergraduate and decided to study for her PhD thesis. At the time there was a paucity of research on the subject: "Our programme of research has identified that virtually anyone can become the victim of a stalker, and virtually anyone can be a stalker. Stalkers are not all mentally disturbed, shadowy figures. Many will be educated professionals who will outwardly appear to be charming and well adjusted."

Results from the National Stalking Survey found that 86% of stalking victims are female with the majority of stalkers being male. Women are generally stalked by men, and men—who account for 5% of cases overall—are stalked equally by both sexes. Female stalkers are usually less violent than men, though Catherine Zeta-Jones may wish to dispute this – she was the victim of a stalker who threatened to slice her up "like meat on a bone and feed her to the dogs". Fortunately the stalker was later jailed for three years.



Dr Lorraine Sheridan

Her research has allowed her to identify four distinct types of stalkers:

- **Ex-Partner Harassment** – bitterness/hate linked to the past relationship; new relationships engender jealousy and aggressive behaviour; abuse of family and friends (verbal and physical); high levels of physical violence/ threats/property damage; anger and impulsive activity leads to lack of concern about potential police attention
- **Infatuation Harassment** – target is 'beloved' rather than 'victim'; world events interpreted in relation to beloved; beloved is focus of fantasy; low levels of danger; perpetrator age typically teenage or mid-life
- **Delusional Fixation Stalking** – high risk of violence and sexual assault; perpetrator likely to be known to police and mental health professionals; with a history of stalking and sexual offences; belief in relationship although no prior contact; stalkers tend to couch their statements of love in terms of sexual intent towards victim
- **Sadistic Stalking** – can target family and friends in an attempt to isolate victim and further enhance control; initial low level acquaintance; communications are blend of loving and threatening (not hate); progressive escalation of control over all aspects of victim's life (social/historical/professional/financial/physical); offender is sadistic, gratification rooted in desire to extract evidence of victim's powerlessness with inverse implications for his own power; emotional coldness, deliberateness and psychopathy; stalker could be highly dangerous; victim made to feel fear, loss of privacy and of a social life, lack of confidence, humiliation, disgust and general undermining of self-esteem.

However, a custodial sentence for a stalker is the exception rather than the norm. Whilst there have been changes in the law, most notably the Protection from Harassment Act of 1997, many victims and their

families and friends still feel that stalking and its effects on victims are not taken seriously enough. A tragic example of this is the murder in September 2005 of Clare Bernal, a 22 year old beauty consultant, shot dead by Michal Pech, a man she had a short relationship with earlier in the year. Pech was on bail having been found guilty of harassing her at the time of the murder. After shooting Clare he turned the gun on himself. Clare's mother has spoken out about the events leading up to the murder – Pech had been arrested twice by police for stalking Clare, and had also threatened to kill her but was let out on bail and allowed to leave the country. He returned to his native Slovakia and, after undergoing firearms training, purchased a Luger, smuggled the gun back into Britain and used this gun to kill Clare and then himself.

As identified by Dr Sheridan, perceptions of stalking need to change; to define the offence in relation to the experience of the victim and not the intentions of the stalker. Stalking has left many victims with symptoms similar to post-traumatic stress disorder with family, friends and work colleagues suffering as well.

Some stalkers have been known to continue their persecution from prison. Tracey Morgan, whose case was instrumental in the implementation of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 was harassed by her stalker, Anthony Burstow, whilst he was in jail.

The results of the National Stalking Survey have found that greater awareness of stalking and its effects on victims are essential to increase understanding by the general public and agencies, to emphasise that stalkers aren't necessarily mentally ill or simply lonely individuals and that it's not only celebrities who are stalked; it could be anyone.

As Dr Sheridan notes: "Many health and legal professionals I have met have stated that of all the client groups they have ever worked with, stalkers are by far the most frightening. The public perception of a stalker, however, is of an obsessive but perhaps harmless individual who is encouraged by the victim. This is simply not true. Stalkers can be extremely dangerous and many will simply increase their stalking activities following polite rejections from the victim." ■

Talking With the Dead

Over the past few years a storm of television dramas and books have surrounded the intriguing world of the forensic pathologist. At Leicester Professor Guy Rutty, Head of the University's Forensic Pathology Unit, does what the actors on *CSI* and *Silent Witness* pretend to do – only it is far less glamorous, the hours are far longer and the job description doesn't include solving crimes and arresting people.

► "CSI is scientifically very accurate," says Professor Rutty "but we certainly don't go to crime scenes armed with guns! My work is nothing like it is portrayed on the television. The nearest TV drama I suppose to what I do would be *Silent Witness* as it's based on a real person – but it is very over-dramatised."

Forensic pathology is a high profile career but there are actually very few Home Office forensic pathologists in the UK. Forensic pathology is the discipline of pathology concerned with the investigation of deaths where there is a medico-legal implication – so for example suspected homicides such as shootings, stabbings and head injury. Professor Rutty was also involved in the Tsunami forensic investigation last year and has assisted the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia with war crimes in Bosnia, and has worked with the International Commission on Missing Persons in the former Yugoslavia.

"This Unit is unusual in that we are employed by the University of Leicester. There are only four university units left in the country. Most Home Office pathologists are self-employed. In my role my job is split between the clinical and the research. With the clinical aspect the majority does relate to the dead – although not exclusively – I did see a live patient for an injury assessment on the ward the other day," says Professor Rutty.

"I work for the Coroner and not the police – which a lot of people get confused. There are three people in this Unit and we cover the five counties of the East Midlands as well as the Falkland Islands. I'm on call pretty much all the time – 24 hours a day, seven days a week. My duty is to answer four questions for the Coroner: Who is the deceased? Where did they die? When did they die and how did they die? Sometimes it is very easy. A man dies in a pub drinking with his friends. We easily know who he is, where he died, when he died so the only thing to ascertain is how he died. However a body in a field is a different matter. I won't often know the answers to any of those questions immediately. It's what makes the job a challenge.

"I go to scenes of crime at the request of the police. My role at a crime scene is to start to make a medical assessment and to advise generally on



Professor Guy Rutty with East Midlands Tsunami Exhumation Team, Sri Lanka 2005

the medical part of the investigation. I drive myself to scenes – and that's at all hours of the day and in all weathers. All the investigators will meet before we go to a scene – which on some occasions may just be me, the senior scene of crime officer and the lead police investigator. I make a medical assessment of the body; assist in collecting the medical evidence and removal of the body, and then perform the autopsy. This can take a very long time. For example yesterday I had to go to Lincoln, which was a one and a half hour drive, and then perform the autopsy which took three and a half hours and then drive myself home again. And that was without attending the scene.

"Scenes can involve one body or mass fatalities – I treat them all in the same way – it's really a process based system. In essence I am the Coroner's representative. I examine the dead and

the dead tell me things and I interpret those things and speak for the dead."

As well as attending crime scenes and performing autopsies, attendance at court to give evidence is another essential aspect of the job. However the perpetrator of a crime is of no interest to a forensic pathologist. "I have to be a completely unbiased medical person in these investigations," Professor Rutty says, "I have to walk a very straight line and sometimes it's hard as the pressure is put on. Going to court is part of my job and when you're told that your medical evidence forms the main part of the case that does add to the pressure.

"I don't go to every scene, for example when a person is taken to hospital and dies there. In fact the fewer people who do attend the crime scene the better as it lessens the chance of contamination. Most of the research written about

contamination at a crime scene has been written from this Unit. When you see crime scene investigators dressed in white suits on the telly that is because of the research we did in the late 1990s.

"I do like to go to as many crime scenes as possible though. It allows me to put it into context. The police may be looking for evidence and evidence alone at a scene, whereas I look at the person and how they interacted with the environment in which they died."

The research element that Professor Rutty undertakes into improving methods at crime scenes and autopsy is only possible because he works as part of the University. "There isn't much funding in Pathology. People assume that the Home Office must give us a lot of money but in fact they don't. They recently gave us two grants but in this area money runs out quickly. Unfortunately there are no charities for the dead - but medicine doesn't stop when people die. Private forensic pathologists can earn a good income but that money doesn't get put back into research. I think it's vital that it is though, which is one of the reasons why I work for the University."

It is only because of this research that medical forensics can evolve.

"I am personally researching contamination of DNA at a crime scene. It is about questioning current protocol and looking at the evidence for doing it that way and questioning whether it is the best way to do it. So, for example, police protocol might say that you must swab a body from head to foot for DNA. But now-a-days we are able to identify people from minute pieces of DNA. My research shows that you can pick up other people's DNA on your body very easily without even having any contact with them. With talk about a national DNA database with everyone's DNA on it the situation may arise where people may start having to prove that they *weren't* at the scene of crime rather than the police having to prove that they *were* at the scene of a crime. It may seem unlikely but it could become an issue."

At an International Association of Forensic Sciences meeting in Hong Kong recently Professor Rutty was able to demonstrate the potentially powerful implications his work on DNA contamination could have. He tested just how easy contamination is by asking a volunteer to repeat a single phrase whilst standing, sitting, kneeling or walking around a sterile room. Rutty was able to retrieve the person's DNA even though the man had been in the room only a few seconds.

Creating a national earprint database has been another area that Rutty and his Unit have been involved in. Earprints may be as unique as a person's fingerprints and often an intruder will leave their earprint on a window when they listen in to see if anyone is at home.

"Unfortunately the funding for creating the database has run out. And a couple of years ago there was a bit of bad press about the technique of earprinting when a man was convicted of murder on the basis of his earprint. When the case went to the court of appeal, the judge (rightly so) criticised the evidence because DNA that didn't belong to the convicted man was found on his earprint. What my contamination research would show however is that lots of other people's DNA can get on to



Professor Guy Rutty, Head of Leicester Forensic Pathology Unit

another's ear and this may be what has happened. This research will probably cause some controversy!

"The less invasive autopsy is another area that I am working on. The technology in modern CT and MRI scanners will give enough internal imagery, certainly in forensic pathology, to effectively perform an autopsy without invasion. It is far quicker and undoubtedly is the future of autopsy. The mortuary that is proposed to be built in Leicester will be equipped with CT scanners so we can work in this way. Ultimately I see a time when we will be able to take equipment out with us to scenes and autopsy there and then."

Less than a month after this interview Professor Rutty's predictions had begun to come true when a forensic first was announced after Rutty and his team were the first to use a mobile MSCT scanner at the mortuary for the examination of the victims of a vehicle mass fatality incident.

But all this groundbreaking research means that Professor Rutty's time is not often his own. "I don't get much time off. At weekends I will work until 1pm in the afternoon writing for journals, unless I am called out. My days are usually very long. Last year I went on holiday with my wife in August and

then, apart from passing each other in the house didn't see her for any length of time again until November. We have to be prepared that there is a strong possibility that anything we plan will have to be cancelled. I think it is hardest for the partners – not being able to plan anything like going to the cinema or dinner, and the fact that I will often be home late – if I come home at all."

Providing a pathology service to the Falkland Islands means that there can be long journeys to and from the Falklands to undertake an autopsy. "The saddest case I went to in the Falklands was the case of a female scientist who had been attacked and killed in the Antarctic by a leopard seal. I've dealt with several bodies that have come from the Antarctic without ever having been there myself, although it is a life ambition to go there one day.

"I enjoy the scene work and the writing most; I despise the politics that surround it all. I admit that I do get a buzz from my job – I feel I am helping people; the relatives, the public in general. I find out how and why people died, I help find the missing, retrieve people's loved ones and contribute to criminal investigations. I guess you could call that job satisfaction." ■

"Scenes can involve one body or mass fatalities – I treat them all in the same way – it's really a process based system. In essence I am the Coroner's representative. I examine the dead and the dead tell me things and I interpret those things and speak for the dead."

What Makes Your Brain Cells Tick?

The work of a University of Leicester scientist, Dr Rodrigo Quian Quiroga, has been cited as one of the top in the world for 2005. His groundbreaking international research into how the brain responds to images was one of the top 100 international science stories of 2005 by *Discover* magazine and challenges the beliefs of most neuroscientists.



► We all know the images that fire our imagination, whether they are of film stars, musicians, actors, or a monument or feature of landscape with special associations for us.

Scientists have long thought that recognition of such concepts was the result of huge numbers of neurons (nerve cells) reacting to very basic details – such as colour of hair, width between the eyes, height – fragments of information which all combine to recognise a complex pattern or concept.

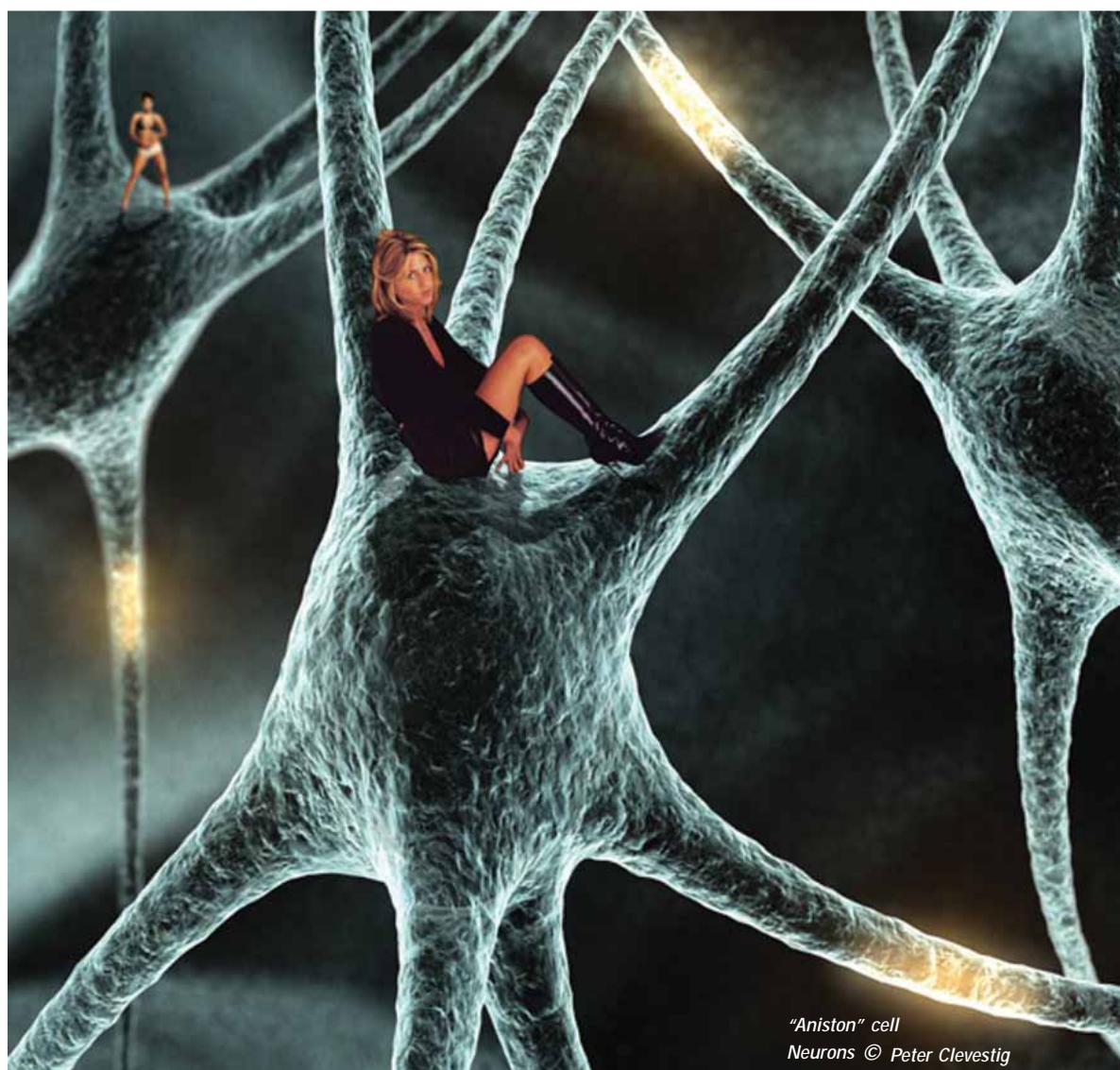
Research by a University of Leicester bioengineer, however, suggests that this is not the case and that a single neuron is able to respond to an entire concept. The visual representation of a person will be achieved in an abstract way by single neurons and not by a huge neural population, as science previously thought. To recognise a person, for example *Friends* star Jennifer Aniston, does not require a whole army of neurons to each register minute pieces of detail like pixels on a television screen. Lots of neurons will fire but just one will recognise the whole concept.

Furthermore, these 'intelligent' neurons are able to respond to the name of the film star and are fired through association. In some individuals the 'Aniston' cell fired when an individual saw an image of Lisa Kudrow – Aniston's co-star on *Friends* – because they associated these two people with one another. Associations are different for each person. For one individual a neuron might fire when they see the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of Pisa, whereas another person might associate the Eiffel Tower with the Colosseum, depending on their experiences and memories.

This study is important in understanding how memory is created and how we gain our understanding of the world.

The scientist behind these findings is Dr Rodrigo Quian Quiroga, a Reader in bioengineering at the University of Leicester, who carried out the research at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), where he is a visiting associate in biology and at UCLA, where he is a visiting researcher at the department of Neurosurgery. His main research interest is in Neuroscience and the analysis of electrophysiological data.

What he has discovered will challenge the view



held by most neuroscientists that individual cells are not clever enough to make sense of a concept which the world's fastest supercomputers would have difficulty in interpreting. Now, confronted with Dr Quian Quiroga's evidence, neuroscientists may be forced to overhaul their view of how the human brain works.

Dr Quian Quiroga and his colleagues at Caltech and UCLA studied how visual perception interacts with the neural network of the brain. He said: "For this we analyze single cell recordings in people who are awake. These recordings are taken from

epileptic patients, who are studied with electrodes temporarily implanted into the brain to monitor seizures. Ideally, the electrodes will pinpoint the neural defect triggering seizures so it can be surgically removed." Such research is quite rare as neuroscientists have few opportunities to gather data from inside a living human brain.

He added: "We found a remarkable type of cell responding selectively to different pictures of the same individual or object.

"For analyzing these data, I developed specific methods for extracting as much information as

possible of the neuronal responses. These results have implications for the development of neuronal prostheses."

While the study provided new insights in possible treatments for people with epilepsy, it also confirmed a theory put forward in the 1960s by neuroscientist Jerry Letvin that suggested neurons respond to single concepts, such as a person's grandmother. This 'grandmother cell' theory was disregarded by most of the scientific community but the concept, it seems, is essentially correct.

Dr Quian Quiroga's study shows results that are very similar – that certain neurons fire in response to specific images. In his research he chose famous people, such as Jennifer Aniston and Halle Berry, to test the neuron reactions of his patients and at first he was not able to establish whether the neuron had fired because of other stimuli, such as colour or shape. So he showed different images of the same person and when the results were the same – showing that only one neuron was firing strongly – it confirmed that a single cell was able to recognise a person or fictional character even in many different forms.

Dr Quian Quiroga's interest in this area began in his native Argentina when he was working with epileptic patients more than a decade ago. He continued his studies in Physics and Applied Maths in Germany before working in the US and for the past two years in the UK. His discovery of 'intelligent' neurons that represent abstract concepts was the fruit of 3 years of hard work, particularly in devising mathematical formulae that would filter out the noise or firing of a single neuron from the readings.

In scientific terms this work will have huge clinical applications for research in epilepsy, Alzheimer's and schizophrenia and memory. Of the impact, he said:

"We were also very happy to see the large repercussion of our work within our colleagues and in the media, including a recent article in *Scientific American*. Our results end up being interesting to many colleagues because they go against what was previously thought. Indeed, very few people would have predicted we will find this type of neurons.

"I think our results are a good step forward in our understanding of how perceptions and memories are represented in the brain. But we are just scratching the surface. There are so many things we still have to understand and we are currently running several follow up projects to do this. How our brain manages to perceive things, to store and recall memories, to create associations and think is something that has puzzled me for some time. I hope to be busy dealing with these questions in the next few years."

Reported in the science journal *Nature*, Dr Quian Quiroga's findings confirm and extend a theory put forward decades ago and dismissed as "science fiction", linking individual neurons to individual concepts. Science fiction, it seems, has become science fact. ■

Binge Thinking

Leicester Graduate Anne-Marie Bunting (BA History, 2001) is 'Young Thinker of the Year'.



► As graduate Anne-Marie Bunting (BA History, 2001) discovered at the University of Leicester, making the most of what is on offer can open doors, kick-start your career and gain you national recognition.

Following the successful completion of her course in 2001 with a first-class degree in history, Anne-Marie Bunting gained her dream job at the Prison Reform Trust, where she works hard to change the penal system for the better.

As Anne-Marie explains, her success and the development of her views is in no small part the result of studying at the University of Leicester. "The course enabled me to develop my written and verbal communication skills to a very high standard. It also gave me the advantage of being able to conquer a very wide subject and present it effectively, in a digestible and persuasive manner. These abilities have been invaluable.

"My tutor was a great influence and source of support. He taught me how to think differently and approach issues in a range of new ways. This is reflected throughout the University, which I found had an emphasis on intellectual development and thought rather than a rudimentary 'ticking of boxes' in order to get a degree."

Ultimately, it is this focus that has enabled Anne-Marie to develop a clear understanding of the world and how it might be changed for the better through organisations such as the Prison Reform Trust.

It was while working for this registered charity that Anne-Marie was nominated by its director to compete for the 'Young Thinker of the Year' award. Held every year, the award is designed to stretch the minds, stir the consciences and broaden the horizons of young people between the ages of 19 and 32, from a wide variety of backgrounds, who have left full-time education.

Utilising skills gained from her degree, she began navigating a myriad of gruelling activities, discussions and debates. The first round consisted of a residential week culminating in the presentation of petitions prepared by each nominee – it was a real thinking binge.

Anne-Marie's speech focussed on the right of prisoners to have the vote, for which she won the 'Speaker of the Week' award, and she went through to the next round where competitors

were required to present papers on subjects of major influence to their lives.

Without hesitation, Anne-Marie returned to her time at the University of Leicester and chose the book *Ordinary Men*, by Christopher Browning as her focus. Read for a seminar during her degree course, Anne-Marie cites the novel as a key factor behind her current outlook.

"It is this text in particular that influenced my decision to work in the voluntary sector, and particularly the Prison Reform Trust," she continues. "It is unrelenting in its scepticism – a scepticism that dares to think the unthinkable and to ask difficult questions of those in power. It made me realise that changing perceptions by making your case from the stable platform of knowledge, rather than shouting louder than the next person, is the key to success."

Once again, Anne-Marie beat off stiff competition and was selected to prepare a 'roadmap' paper – a plan to change the course of the UK – for the final round.

Judged by Magnus Magnusson among others, Anne-Marie's paper, entitled 'Prison as a sanction of last resort – changing attitudes to crime and punishment', won her the highly regarded national award.

"Without the help and support of the University and the Students' Union, which provided help with my accommodation while living in Leicester, I would not have been able to take the time to develop my views to such a degree of clarity, develop my career or win the award," says Anne-Marie.

Martin Cullen, University of Leicester Students' Union President adds, "People are significantly changed by their university experience. It is a prime opportunity for students to develop academically, intellectually and socially, and all of this leads to them leaving University as well rounded individuals. Anne-Marie's experience illustrates just how strongly universities and their students' unions can shape the views and thoughts of those who attend them."

Anne-Marie is now considering undertaking a MA in Criminology at the University of Leicester before building a future in politics, where she hopes to turn her ideas into actions. ■

By Patrick Southwell

RAG

a Tradition of Giving

Times change but the spirit remains.

► 2005 was a big year for Leicester RAG (Raising And Giving). In November they celebrated their sixtieth anniversary with a week of events including a limbo contest, international food fair and the staple fancy-dress pub crawl. Leicester has also just hosted the RAG conference, an annual forum that takes over a year to organise.

"The conference was brilliant," says Helen Redmond, Leicester RAG president and third year Law student. "32 RAGs came including some of the smaller ones. We had to bid to host it, so to win it with all the birthday celebrations was great."

In such a celebratory year it is fitting that when Leicester recently earned the prestigious 'Student Union of the Year' award, judges highlighted the importance of the work of Leicester RAG to local and UK charities, praise that Redmond describes as "a massive boost".

RAG started when a group of students collected money for the homeless and raised awareness by wearing rags. The organisation is now a fixture in most UK universities and has raised over £2m for charity. Last year Leicester RAG collected £50,000 for charities including Banardos, Cancer Research and the Glenfield Breast Care Unit Appeal. This academic year over £17,500 has been raised already. "We are hoping for 50 grand, same as last year," says Helen. "The conference alone raised 2 grand."

The early days of RAG at Leicester can be charted in old copies of *Ripple*, the Leicester student newspaper. Though RAG at Leicester started officially in 1945, there is evidence of fundraising activities in 1931 and curiously, RAG magazines date back to 1941.

Over the years the activities that make up RAG have changed significantly. In the fifties and sixties, RAG week engulfed the whole of Leicester in a whirlwind of hectic fundraising and was a major highlight in the city's calendar. Accordingly the events were on large scale. The London to Leicester pram race was an anticipated athletic event, where relay teams of students from as far afield as Oxford, Manchester and even Edinburgh raced from Leicester Square to Leicester Town Hall.

The students would also bring Leicester to a standstill with a fancy-dress parade around the city, vigorously encouraging locals to buy the *Lucifer* RAG magazine or to buy tickets for the Car Competition. The Leicester RAG parade became the longest in the UK.

Today these events have disappeared in favour of more frequent, smaller scale activities. The Beer



Counting the cash for RAG 2006

Festival, Three-Legged Pub Crawl and Fashion Show are incredibly popular and raise thousands of pounds. There is also the spectacular Battle of the Dances, in which dance groups from local universities battle it out, X-factor style, in front of a panel of professional judges.

With the campus-based parties replacing the all-city extravaganzas, I wonder if there has been a breakdown of the bonds between the residents of Leicester and its students. Helen disagrees. "Awareness of what we do is still very good. We raise money for local charities, including LOROS (Hospice care for Leicestershire and Rutland), which people appreciate. We do Raids (fundraising) in the city every other week and people always give. People know who we are." Similarly, Helen believes that TV fundraising marathons such as *Comic Relief* and *Children in Need* have not dented the locals' capacity and willingness to give to the RAG students.

And most importantly, the current format is raising more money than ever. The objective of RAG has altered little over the years. As Peter Jackson, 1960 RAG president, wrote "In the midst of the inane activities...do not forget that the aim of all our efforts is to raise money for those who

need...cash even more...than those who live in the mixed common room."

Another constant over the years has been the sense of fun and imagination in students. As a result of RAG there have been a number of "stunts" that have attracted media attention, such as the kidnapping of Labour politician Reg Prentice in 1977 and the 1978 hoaxed trip to Russia, where a group of students hoodwinked the media into believing they had been expelled from Russia whilst on a RAG trip to the embassies. The University has also made it into the *Guinness Book of Records* on three occasions thanks to RAG; in 1973 for constant yo-yoing, in 1988 for the biggest drinking boatrace and in 2002 for the biggest tequila slam. Suffice to say that alcohol has also been a consistent presence in many RAG activities. Great stories have also appeared over the years. In December 1963 the Beatles played at Leicester University and bought and signed extra tickets for the 1964 RAG Week Car Competition. Their presence caused one RAG team member to have hysterics, while a more impassive observer commented, "This is the kind of fanatical spirit we hope will sell tickets. We hope the Beatles are still popular at Easter."

There have also been some serious achievements. In 1959 the *Ripple* reported the founding of the OAP



1937



1943



1952

1957



homes in Severn Street, which RAG helped co-ordinate. Over the years RAG has constantly raised funds for the homes and they still exist today.

Yet RAG has not escaped controversy. In 1973 the mayor refused to write the traditional letter in *Lucifer* because of its lewd content. Allegations of sexist and racist jokes in the magazine have occurred more than once. There have also been tensions between RAG and the Union over the years, with allegations of apathy from RAG and of disorganisation and secrecy from the Union. In 1959 J H Bolton from RAG wrote aggressively in *Ripple*, "I don't know whether the union wants a RAG but so far we have had to stuff it down your throats and will continue to do so." Happily all is well in the current RAG office. "Relations are good at the moment ... during the conference the Union were fantastic," says Helen "You can get clashes, but it's all about good communication. It's mutually beneficial for all of us."

So what is behind a successful president and RAG? "Time, definitely," says Helen without hesitation. "You have to juggle RAG and your studies – it's not a sabbatical position. There's so much more than you first think like risk assessments, liaison, but it's such a worthy cause. It's tough but I wouldn't change it." And

personality? "You've got to be outgoing, but even if you are shy you get brought out with RAG."

There lies the simple beauty of RAG that has propelled it over the past 60 years. Anyone can take part and fundraise in no end of ways, and they willingly do. In a tongue-in-cheek retrospective of RAG weeks, the 1964 team remarked that they were "struck by the number of times (students) were afflicted by the desire to remove their clothes... It is either a sign of the way in which

Victorian prurience has affected the bourgeois outlook... But more likely it is the last vestige of the older folk memory of the rites of spring".

"Well it is a quick and easy way to raise money," laughs Helen "We raised 300 quid when we did it!"

The short term future for RAG is busy, with RAG Raids to Liverpool and London on the horizon. However the long term future looks bright too. RAG has had a colourful and action-packed sixty years at Leicester – long may it continue.

"Awareness of what we do is still very good. We raise money for local charities, including LOROS (Hospice care for Leicestershire and Rutland), which people appreciate. We do Raids (fundraising) in the city every other week and people always give. People know who we are."

Around the University

Library Ground Breaking Ceremony marks momentous occasion in History of University of Leicester



► A landmark event in the University's history took place on 23 May 2005 when Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess took the helm of a mechanical digger and performed the ground breaking ceremony for the new Library development.

"The last time the University of Leicester built a Library was in 1974," said Professor Burgess. "I am very enthusiastic about this development – this building is crucial for the success of the University in terms of research, teaching and learning - it heralds a new era for the University of Leicester."

The new building will be completed in 2007 providing a centrepiece for the University's Jubilee celebration, marking 50 years since the granting of the Royal Charter.

Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys of the Department of Genetics, wins prestigious Awards



► The 2005 Lasker Award for Clinical Medical Research has been presented to Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys of the University of Leicester, and Edwin Southern of the University of Oxford. The Lasker Awards are the US's most distinguished honour for outstanding contributions to basic and clinical medical research and public service on behalf of the medical research enterprise. They are often called "America's Nobels".

Dr Joseph L Goldstein, Chairman of the selection committee explained:

"Occasionally scientists take special note of an observation or interpret it in a novel way. These 'eureka moments' can profoundly alter the course of scientific progress.

The Lasker Clinical Research Award honours two investigators who transformed human genetic analysis. Their work eventually led to the mapping of the human genome."

Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys has recently been awarded the **Dr H P Heineken Prize for Biochemistry and Biophysics 2006** by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences "for his discovery of the genetic fingerprint". The award will be presented in the Netherlands where he will be the guest of the Heineken Foundation for one week. During his visit he will give a series of lectures at different university research institutes.

Centenary celebrated with Sculpture Show

► The Royal British Society of Sculptors held a special event **Sculpture in the Garden; a Celebration of the RBS Centenary** at the University's Harold Martin Botanic Garden during the summer. The sculptures were on show to the public, free of charge from July to September 2005.

Forty-four UK and international artists from countries including Iceland, Switzerland, Germany and Hungary exhibited their work in the peace of the gardens three miles from Leicester's busy city centre.

Professor Bill Forster worked with members of the RBS, Helaine Blumenfeld, Vice-President, and Jacquelyn Murphy to coordinate the contributions of the University and the Society at the exhibition. He praised the University for taking the opportunity to make available to the community "the imagination and talents of the RBS and thus promote an interest and delight in the highest quality of sculpture".



Archaeologists uncover one of biggest Medieval Graveyards

► University archaeologists have begun to examine the largest discovery of medieval skeletons found outside London from the graveyard of the lost church of St Peter's, which was demolished in 1573 and recently rediscovered.

Around 1,300 skeletons were uncovered by a team from University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) working at the site of a former swimming pool - St Margaret's Baths - which is being redeveloped as part of a £350m expansion of the Shires shopping centre.

Richard Buckley, Director of ULAS, said the stunning discovery would provide new insights into medieval life in Leicester. Previously archaeologists had built up a picture of medieval Leicester using evidence from medieval rubbish, such as food and pottery. He said: "This group of burials represents the first opportunity to examine the medieval population itself, in terms of life expectancy, stature and health."

Archaeologists also discovered the remains of the church and evidence of a bell casting pit within the tower after digging more than two and a half metres at the city centre location which will eventually be occupied by a John Lewis store.



New Lecture Theatre named after Frank and Katherine May



► A ceremony held on 26 May 2005 marked the opening of the new lecture theatre, named after Dr Frank May and his wife, Katherine in the Henry Wellcome Building.

The 130-seater Lecture Theatre is part of the new £20m Henry Wellcome Biomedical Sciences Building, designed to provide modern, well-equipped laboratories and bring together research scientists working in related fields. The building provides state-of-the-art accommodation for the School of Biological Sciences and the School of Psychology.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess thanked the Mays for their inspirational support since the 1980s and said that it was fitting that their names were associated with this building. The inaugural lecture was delivered by Professor of Cardiology, Professor Nilesh Samani.

City-scale Air Pollution measured for the first time

► For the first time, scientists at Leicester are able to measure air pollution on the city-scale using a single instrument, designed and built in their labs.

Situated on the rooftop of the University's Space Research Centre, the instrument captures the sun's rays, by means of nine telescopes that point in different directions, and uses these to build up a 3-D picture of the city's air pollution. The trapped sunlight is bounced by mirrors inside the instrument into the mouth of a device that measures its properties, which is used to work out how much light has been absorbed by air pollutants before reaching the instrument.

Importantly for Leicester, the instrument can measure levels of nitrogen-dioxide in the air, 90% of which is caused by road traffic. Dr Paul Monks, lead scientist on this project explains that since the instrument looks at the whole city, it can identify and predict pollution hotspots caused by increases in the volume of traffic, for example on match days and he warns that pollution on hot, sunny days when the air is still, can cause health problems to residents.

This technology has applications for all UK local authorities to ensure that objectives for key pollutants are being met. As well, because of its success and compactness – the size of a suitcase – scientists plan to mount it on a satellite next year to keep an eye on global pollution too.



Fossil Fish challenge Gene Theory



© Mark Purnell, Geology, University of Leicester

► New evidence based on fossil fish, hundreds of millions of years old, has cast doubt on current ideas about evolutionary theory and set palaeontologists - Dr Philip Donoghue of Bristol University and Dr Mark Purnell of the University of Leicester - on a collision course with geneticists. Their research appears to have solved a scientific riddle by using the fossil record to explain evolutionary "leaps" between species.

Geneticists argue that the evolution of humans and other vertebrates - animals with backbones - was driven by sudden changes in their genes. The researchers claim that these "leaps" are not real, but are just gaps in the evolutionary tree or "missed" links. When fossils are put back in place in the evolutionary tree, a very different picture emerges.

Dr Purnell states: "The major changes in anatomy didn't occur suddenly, as a result of a gene doubling; they took place over 70 million years or more, through a series of intermediate, but now extinct fossil fish."

Lecturer has won National Teaching Fellowship

► Lecturer Dr Chris Willmott of the Department of Biochemistry has won a National Teaching Fellowship worth £50,000 for his outstanding commitment to teaching and learning.



Dr Willmott is among the core team of four academics responsible for a multi-million pound award to Leicester to establish a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning for Genetics Education. Honoured to receive the award, he said it was "a manifestation of the growing professionalism in University Teaching in the UK".

Among the many examples of Dr Willmott's commitment to teaching is his invention of a novel activity on plagiarism that teaches students to learn about appropriate and inappropriate uses of source materials. He has also initiated a course on web authoring and bioethics, encouraging students to engage in the ethical issues related with biomedicine.

Run for Leicester at the Edinburgh Marathon



► When Anita Linsell became Chairman of the Alumni Association in 2003, she soon became aware that the Association had few funds at its disposal. Its available funding came from a previous fundraising appeal and a legacy from William Ruddick, a former Chairman of the Association.

The Alumni Association has extended its responsibilities within the University and is now actively involved with students as soon as they arrive through the Family Programme.

To raise its campus profile, and additional funds, the Alumni Association has registered a team of staff and students to run in the 2006 Edinburgh Marathon on Sunday 11 June. Monies raised through sponsorships will be used to set up a fund "to assist student projects and student research activities".

All Leicester runners have guaranteed places and the Association will cover the costs of taking part in the race - registration fee, overnight accommodation and transportation from Leicester to Edinburgh and return. Runners, in turn, are expected to raise £500.

Places are still available for runners and volunteers, to assist at the event and receive an attractive package from the Edinburgh Administration. For information visit the website at www.le.ac.uk/alumni, or if you are not a runner why not support a good cause by making a donation on the 'Just Giving' website at www.justgiving.com?

Alumni News



HOMEcoming 2005

A day to look both forward and back

► Three special events held on 25 June combined to give graduates a good reason to come back to Leicester – and they did in record numbers. More than 450 alumni on campus took part in the annual *Homecoming* or two “special interest” reunions – a reunion of 1940s graduates from University College Leicester and a farewell dinner to mark the closure of College Hall as a university residence.

The University was transformed into a virtual crime scene during the day, as graduates explored all manner of criminal disclosures linked to the day’s theme of “Crime and Discovery”.

Dr Julian Boon, one of the country’s very small band of psychological profilers, delivered the Keynote Lecture to a packed audience on “Myth and Reality in the Psychological Profiling of Serious Crime”. He successfully whetted everyone’s appetites for a series of twelve mini-lectures held throughout the day. Topics varied from the new law on magic mushrooms, and money laundering to high street crime and football hooliganism and demonstrated the diversity and wealth of research throughout the University.

The ‘discovery’ theme continued over lunch with the Vice-Chancellor’s overview on the latest developments at the University, and for graduates who had become strangers to the city there was an opportunity to rediscover Leicester on a guided city bus tour. The *Homecoming* ended on a more relaxing and familiar note at the Harold Martin Botanic Gardens.

University College Reunion

A group of over sixty former students of University College Leicester met over lunch and dinner at the University to renew friendships. After lunch, UCL graduate Ken Rose (1941) gave a vote of thanks to Audrey Cooper and Audrey Simons for organising another successful reunion.



(L-R) Organisers Audrey Cooper and Audrey Simons

A superb 4-volume Memorabilia Collection, compiled by Ron Kinns, was on display throughout the day and was much admired. The collections documented a fascinating period in the Institution’s history and represented several years of research and dedication. At the end of the day the Collections were gifted to the Alumni Association. Professor Robert Burgess, Vice-Chancellor, was the guest of honour at the dinner.

College Hall Farewell

College Hall was a special place for many generations of graduates – a “home from home” at what was an important time of their lives. It was no surprise therefore that when news of its closure came that around 180 graduates chose to return for a last visit to familiar haunts.

There was a warm welcome on arrival from current warden Dr Johnathan Young and members of staff. A party atmosphere prevailed all evening from the reception, through dinner and a sixties disco. In the early hours of the morning, Leicester alumni proved they still knew how to enjoy themselves.

Annual Meeting of the Leicester Alumni Association

► 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 usually 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.

The Chairmanship and four memberships will become available in September 2006. Elections will take place at the AGM on Wednesday 28 June 2006 at the National Space Centre. All Leicester graduates, and other members of Convocation as defined in the Statutes, are eligible to stand. Membership is initially for 3 years (from 1 October). Travel expenses are available for attendance at committee meetings.

If you would like to serve on the Committee, your nomination must be received by the Alumni Relations Office by Wednesday 7 June 2006. For information, please contact the Office at tel 0116 252 2195 or visit: www.le.ac.uk/alumni

University of Leicester Alumni Travel Programme



► We are delighted to announce a new partnership between the University of Leicester and IMA Travel that will offer graduates a choice of exciting and entertaining tours with a strong educational component, exclusively for University of Leicester graduates and friends. Our first tours will include the Greek Islands and Galapagos beginning in 2007.

Further details are available on page 27 of the *Graduates’ Review*, the Alumni Relations website at www.le.ac.uk/alumni/ and www.imatravel.com

Is there a Doctor in the Park?



► There was no shortage of doctors in Victoria Park on Saturday 23 July, as medics from the class of 1995 met to celebrate their 10-year reunion from Leicester.

The event was instigated by Dr Jason Smith (MB ChB 1995) who cajoled fellow medics to come to a picnic in Victoria Park, accompanied by family and friends.

The fine weather and choice of location was a real incentive to more than 50 medical graduates who came to Leicester from all parts of the UK – Portsmouth to North Yorkshire and Oxford to Wales – to rekindle old friendships and share news about family and careers.

Dr Jason Smith and his wife Helen travelled from Portsmouth with their three young children. Everyone agreed that the day was an unqualified success - thanks to Jason's enthusiasm and drive in compiling a class newsletter with photos and short résumés about each member.

Celebrations from Surrey to Northumberland

► Well before the *Friends Reunited* website became popular for individuals trying to trace old friends, many Leicester alumni were actively maintaining and building up their own circle of friends from their university days. One group of graduates from 1958 who had regularly kept in touch decided to mark their 25th anniversary in a special way - by holding a reunion "weekend". It proved such a success that they have continued the tradition ever since and now take turns to host this annual event. Graduate Veronica Nicholas said that an unexpected bonus was that "we get to know unfamiliar parts of the country as we cover five counties – from Surrey to Northumberland. We see the sights, (and) talk incessantly". She added that the group would love to hear from any of their contemporaries.

In a survey conducted by *Friends Reunited* in 2005, the University of Leicester was named the 5th friendliest university in the UK in the University Friendship League Tables! Not surprising really.



(L-R) Veronica (née Gerrard) Nicholas, Suzanne (née Harper) Frost, Myrna (née Terry) Richmond, Eileen (née Gissing) Gray and Joan (née Mallon) Galea meet in Lincoln.

Alumni Association 2006 Annual Lecture

► The Bishop of Leicester, the Rt Revd Tim Stevens, delivered the 2006 Leicester Alumni Association and Haldane Society lecture on 8 March on: *Religion: The Root of All Evil or Moral Guide?*

In his talk he looked at the role of religion in modern society and the way in which faith shaped the demography of cities and the concerns of politicians. Following the attacks on New York and London the media and the public had focussed on religious fundamentalism and its connections with terrorism.

Drawing on his experiences in Leicester and the response of local religious groups to the London bombings, Bishop Stevens made his case that a peaceful world can be created in troubled times. He said that in spite of its history and capacity to



L-R Lady Jennifer Gretton, Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess, The Rt Revd Tim Stevens, Bishop of Leicester, Anita Linsell, Chairman of the Alumni Association

incite hatred "religious faith is the richest, most enduring and most dynamic source of social goods. It is a vital resource in the building of relationships and communities".

Personalia and Obituaries

► Entries for the Personalia and obituary notices are available on the Alumni Relations website 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 tel 0116 252 2195 or email: kw42@le.ac.uk

Reception for Leicester Alumni at the National Space Centre



► Graduates are invited to a special evening reception on Wednesday 28 June 2006 at the National Space Centre. Sample space cocktails on arrival and take the opportunity to meet the Vice-Chancellor, staff members, members of the Space Crew, and fellow graduates as you wander around the exhibits. The programme also includes a 20-minute viewing of BIG – an introduction to the Universe - in the Space Theatre. Ticket price includes entrance, refreshments and buffet. Registration and full details are on the enclosed flyer.

Mountaineering Club

► Spurred on by the enthusiasm of fellow graduates, John Pennifold, co-ordinator and driving force behind the Mountaineering Club reunions, has organised the Club's fourth event on 27-29 October 2006 at The Shap Wells Hotel, Cumbria.

Traditionally held every two years, these weekend gatherings attract more than sixty graduates - walkers, hikers, and campers – and new recruits are always welcome. Together, they tackle walks of varying difficulties in the Lake District and the hills around Shap.

The Shap Wells Hotel remains a popular choice for Leicester's alumni, given its easy access from various parts of the UK, a flexible choice of accommodation and the capacity to offer excellent service to large groups.

To be sure of a place with the group, please register soon with John Pennifold at tel (01895) 442116 or by e-mail: john.pennifold@btinternet.com



Annual Fund

► It has been an outstanding year at the University of Leicester. Students have celebrated a string of firsts - from academic achievements to distinctions in sports, volunteerism and awards for societies, including the prestigious *Student Union of the Year for 2005*.

Literally hundreds of students find time to work as volunteers at the University and in the community and almost every student needs to hold down a part-time job to fund their studies or supplement their income.

It came as no surprise therefore that when we asked students to help us raise money for two university priorities – the *Student Opportunities Fund* and the *Library Development Fund* – that there was no shortage of individuals from all years and subject areas wanting to join the Annual Fundraising team.

Forty students were selected to contact Leicester alumni by phone and find out about their years here and the ways in which the University had changed. Graduates were also invited to support one of the two priorities above, in areas where gifts would have the greatest impact for current and future students.

For most of the team, making the first call was a daunting experience, but as they progressed and gained in confidence students found the experience of talking to graduates both rewarding and educational.

Fair Access to Higher Education

► Leicester has always admitted the brightest students, regardless of background – almost one quarter of its students come from the lower socio-economic groups – as we believe that the cost of studying should not prevent anyone who has the ability from entering university.

From September 2006, a new fee structure will be implemented in universities and colleges throughout the UK. This will result in a variable increase in tuition fees up to £3,000 per year. In place of upfront fees, the new system will provide higher levels of grants and loans to ensure that every student, who has the potential to benefit from higher education but who may be deterred on financial grounds, has fair access, especially those from under-represented groups.

A percentage of this additional fee income will be directed to new bursaries, maintenance grants and other forms of financial support packages.

Support from the Student Opportunities Fund will allow the University the flexibility to respond to the needs of individual students, and to provide top-up funds in unforeseen situations.

New Fee Structure

From 2006, tuition fees for home (UK and EU) students at Leicester will be £3,000 a year.

Most home (UK) students can apply to their Local Education Authority to be assessed for a range of statutory support, including loans to meet the cost of both fees and living expenses, plus a range of grants, most of which will depend on individual financial circumstances. Most EU nationals will be entitled to apply for a loan to cover their fees but no additional loans or grants for living costs. For information on the availability of statutory funding visit: www.direct.gov.uk

The University of Leicester also offers support for students who meet certain criteria. This includes means-tested bursaries (of up to £1,300) for students from low income families, plus scholarships of £1,000 linked to academic achievement for students on certain specified courses. For information visit: www.le.ac.uk/fees.

Support from our friends and graduates is making this possible.

Landmark building in tune with the aspirations of the University

► One area of the University campus is currently “out of bounds”, as construction on the new £25 million Library development, designed by Associated Architects, moves on apace.

The transformation of the Library, which was opened in the 1970s to serve a student population of 6000, is key to the University's ambitious £300m development plan. The new building will effectively double the size of the existing Library building, which now serves a population of close to 20,000 and will bring together print and electronic collections, a choice of study environments and a range of new facilities.

In relatively few years, the University Library has experienced a revolution in scholarly communication, has adapted to and embraced its changing role in the era of e-learning and kept pace with the growing success of the University.

Several new facilities will be housed within the construction, such as the Careers and study resources library, the Student Learning Centre, the AccessAbility Centre (for students with specific learning difficulties and disabilities), academic accommodation, a café and bookshop, providing a superb new academic facility.

University Librarian Christine Fyfe said: “We’re really excited about building an innovative library for the 21st century which is both inspiring and accessible”.

Construction began on site in August 2005 and will be completed in two phases to allow student access to the collections throughout the project. The new Library will be opened during the 2007-08 academic year.



Thank you to all those benefactors listed below, and to our 92 anonymous givers, who have made a contribution to our Annual Fund as at 1 April 2006.

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Mrs June Wilkes (née Rowlands)
Dr Glenn Williams
Mr Philip Willis
Mr Brian Withington
Mr Donald Wix
Mrs Anne Wood (née West)
Professor Diana Woodward
Mrs Gillian Wyse (née Courtney)



From the 2005-06 student callers

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Dr Martin Davies
Mr Raymond Davies
Mr John Davis
Mrs Denise Dawe (née Paterson)
Mr Glenn Dawson
Mr Stephen Dewey
Mrs Emma Dillsworth (née Purt)
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Miss Valerie Hemmens
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Mrs Philip & Alison Heppell
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In the words of one Annual Fund caller, Maxine (BSc Psychology, 2007):

“Working with such a friendly, co-operative team has been so enjoyable that it hardly seems like work. I have gained valuable people skills and feel much more confident in dealing with people one on one, even when I am not sure of the response I will get. The confidence I have gained and the people I have met along the way are the two most valuable things I will take with me from working on the Annual Fund team.”



What will the new Main Library be like?

► Key elements include:

- 1,500 high quality reader places
- group study rooms
- dedicated area for postgraduates
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- space for 20 years' growth in the printed collections
- rational arrangement of the collections
- incorporation of the Education Library
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Ways to contribute

► If you would like to make a contribution, please fill in and return the form to the address below.

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5. What your gift will achieve I would like my gift to be directed towards

☐ The Student Opportunities Fund ☐ The Library Development Fund

☐ Please indicate if you wish to be omitted from the published list of benefactors.

Thank you for your support

Alumni Travel

► Two exceptional tours for graduates, family and friends herald the arrival of the Alumni Travel Programme in 2007.

What could be more stimulating than travelling with like-minded individuals to exotic parts of the world and experiencing an in-depth look at the scenery, wildlife, history, geography, ecology, archaeology and culture? That's exactly what the University of Leicester is offering in our new Alumni Travel Programme.

Alumni tours represent a tried and tested formula and we have teamed up with IMA Travel, Britain's leading specialist in Alumni Travel, to offer a number of exceptional tours for our members.

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A Greek Island Odyssey: May 2007

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Contact IMA for a full colour brochure by email at ima@templeworld.com, tel 020 8940 4114, or check out their website at: www.imatravel.com. If you have ever wanted to join an Alumni tour, now is the time. Experience that vital combination of learning and leisure that characterises these tours.



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.

Website – 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 Email for Life – a free "email for life" is available to all students on graduation. This will enable them to keep in contact with the University and with fellow classmates. Full details of this new service appear on the website.



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

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