

Leicester Graduates' Review



SUMMER 2002

A Celebration of 80 Years

Team Spirit

A Journey of a Lifetime

Face to Face With History

Student Debt: Myth or Reality?

Space, Stars and Everything

Have Lemur, Will Travel

Homecoming 2002



University of
Leicester

GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION



University College campus, 1948

Message from the Vice-Chancellor



Dear Graduate,

I am delighted to introduce this edition of the University alumni magazine in the 80th Anniversary year. This is a very important milestone in the life of the University and reminds us that there is much to celebrate building on the strengths of the past. The small beginnings in University College in 1921 with nine students has given rise to a large and complex University with 18,500 students this year. However, it is important that the University adheres to core values that are demonstrated through high quality research and teaching and a strong commitment to Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

The University of Leicester continues to have a strong presence locally while developing its work nationally and internationally. In the 2001 research assessment exercise the University had 84% of its staff graded as national and international (a considerable increase from 1996 when 56% were in this category). In terms of teaching quality we were delighted to have fifteen subjects receiving a grade of 22 or more out of 24 (and in the last year Economics, Education, Museum Studies, Archaeology and Ancient History all received the top score). These achievements lead the University to be a popular choice among students as we filled all our places last October.

There is much to celebrate in the 80th Anniversary year with new research, new teaching programmes and new buildings being developed.

I shall look forward to welcoming you to the University's 'Homecoming' event in June to tell you more about the University's work and its success.

**With best wishes,
Yours sincerely**

**Professor Robert Burgess
Vice-Chancellor**



Welcome

Welcome to this special 80th Anniversary Year edition of the Leicester Graduates' Review.

What a year it's been! You will be able to read about some of the year's many highlights in the centre-page article "Happy Anniversary".

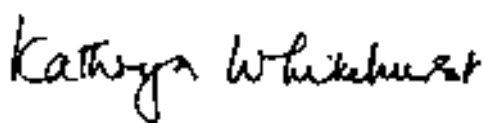
In this issue we reflect on some of the developments that made the University what it is today – one of the top 20 universities in the UK – as well as look to the future. Leicester is embarking on a £31 million expansion that will provide new research centres for biomedical research, space science and mathematics and the construction of a new building that will house, amongst others, the Mathematics Modelling Centre.

Our 'In Person' feature profiles Professor Peter Jackson, who tells us about the development of the Management Centre from its beginnings, its current position nationally and internationally and its aim to achieve world-class status within the next ten years. On other pages, graduates talk about the influences that Leicester had on their present careers – from author to zoo educationalist. In the wider world, another graduate gives us a front row seat in the Balkans war, an ever-present reminder of the many conflicts we face in the world today.

The **Homecoming** (on 22 June) is about anniversaries too. We are offering a full and varied programme of events that will both inform and entertain you, whether you are here to catch up on the latest research, bask in nostalgia or renew old acquaintances over a relaxing drink or supper. In our mini-lectures we'll be taking a look at real-life issues, such as crime solving, football violence, curing jet-lag or dealing with the aftermath of the terrorist acts of 11 September.

There's no predicting what our world will look like in another year but we do know that the campus will have a different air, as new buildings take shape. Stay in touch!

Thanks go to all those who contributed to the magazine, especially Chris Ward, the designer, Ian Hickman for printing and especially to the Press and Public Relations Office for their invaluable help and contributions.



Kathryn J. Whitehurst
(BA Combined Studies, 1970)

Credits

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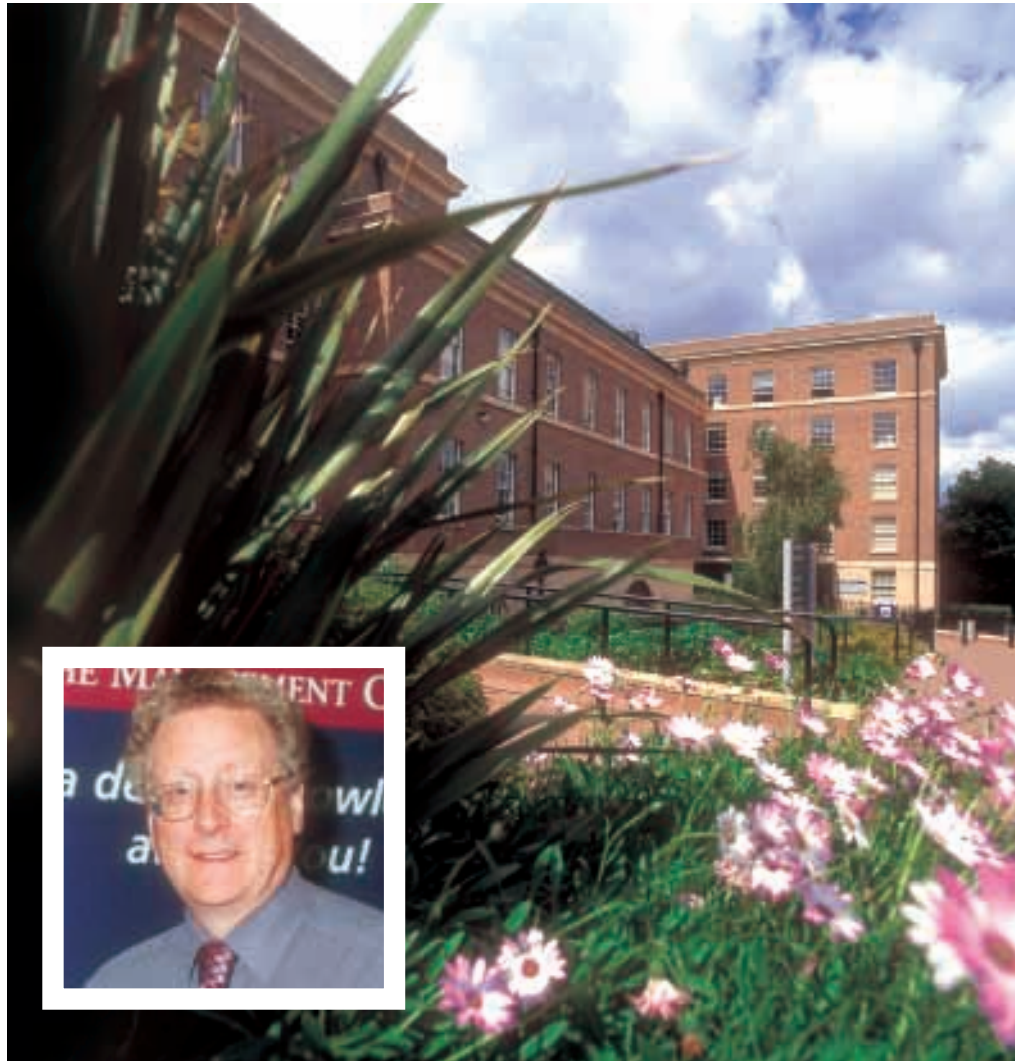
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The opinions expressed in the features are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views held by the University.

A series of accidents and opportunities that all occurred at the right time and in the right place – this is how Professor Peter Jackson sums up the creation of the University of Leicester Management Centre. As it happens, this also characterises the academic career of Professor Jackson himself, the Director of the Management Centre and its Head of Department.

*Inset: Professor Peter Jackson;
Main: the University of Leicester
Management Centre situated in
the Ken Edwards Building;
Far right: inside the
Management Centre*



Odyssey of a polymath

► “I did not set out to become an economist.

Having been brought up in a traditional Scottish school I went to Glasgow University to study maths, physics and chemistry with the intention of becoming a chemist, partly as a result of Professor (now Lord) George Porter’s television series in the early 1960s – little did I know that I would eventually meet George Porter at the University of Leicester.

I have never been a pure breed economist – more of a polymath social scientist.

It was whilst I was at Glasgow that my

interests turned from the physical to the social sciences. In 1969 I graduated from the neighbouring University of Strathclyde with a joint 1st class honours degree in Business Economics and Organisation Theory.

I have never been a pure breed economist – more of a polymath social scientist. Strathclyde in the mid to late 1960s was a wonderful place to study as an undergraduate. I was able to explore a wide range of subjects – economics, sociology, industrial psychology, statistics and economic history. Strathclyde also allowed me to study jointly my two main interests – economics and organisation theory – at

honours level. I am told that in the thirty-three years since graduating only two others have ever studied this combination.

At the Treasury it was my great fortune to work directly to Wynne Godley, the Deputy Chief Economic Adviser.

The economics that I studied was not pure but was instead business economics. I was never formally taught econometrics – a fact that I still regret. My economics education really began when I joined HM Treasury in 1969 as a young economist assigned to a project that was examining the growth, management and control of UK public expenditure. This is a general topic which



The cultural diversity of our students has opened our minds and their successes have been our successes

remains one of my central research interests and about which I have written much.

Whilst at the Treasury it was my great fortune to work directly to Wynne Godley, the Deputy Chief Economic Adviser at the time. Wynne taught me many things not least to work out the essentials of a problem for yourself before looking at how others have perceived it. Second, to respect data and to ensure that you fully understand its origins (i.e. how it was collected and what it is meant to represent).

If you want to learn a subject then teach it.

My real intellectual development happened when I joined the economics department of the newly created University of Stirling in the early 1970s.

This was a hothouse of economic research. Andrew Bain, the foundation Professor of Economics had assembled an impressive group of young economists. Of the group of which I was a member, nine of us went on to occupy Chairs in British universities; one ended up as a Vice-Chancellor and one was awarded an FBA.

Of the students we taught I know of seven who now hold Chairs in British universities. It was a fantastic period of my life. I learned economics by teaching it. Over a five-year period I had to prepare new courses in monetary economics, public finance, general equilibrium micro theory, environmental economics and public policy. I still remain a strong advocate of the view that if you want to learn a subject then teach it.

Over a ten-year period we raised the equivalent in today's money of over £2 million.

I almost did not arrive in Leicester. It was two close friends who encouraged me to apply for the post of Director of the Public Sector Economics Research Centre (PSERC) – they more or less filled in the

application form for me. My intention had been to accept a post at Cambridge University which my collaborator, the late Professor Gordon Cameron, had arranged.

Once at Leicester I set about building up PSERC. At one point we had 14 contract research staff on the books. It was hard work and great fun chasing research grants. Over a ten-year period we raised the equivalent in today's money of over £2 million.

The research focused on my public expenditure interests; the growth of the public sector (funded by the ESRC), the efficiency of the public sector (Leverhulme funded), and public sector infrastructure

investment (Nuffield funded).

EU and UK Government appointments.

During that period I became the British representative on the European Union's Biehl Commission which involved visiting Brussels once a month for two years. I also worked on commissioned research for the Department of the Environment examining the fiscal crisis of UK inner cities and for the OECD (Paris) on urban public finance.

Whilst managing PSERC I also spent a six-year period as Head of the Economics Department. Again I learned more economics by teaching it.

One of my compelling interests has been to establish intellectual links between economics and organisation theory. This began during my undergraduate days greatly encouraged by my teachers Dick Davis, Roy Wilkie and Peter Lawrence. I remain in close contact with all of them today. In 1982 I published, *The Economics of Bureaucracy*, which I am pleased to say was well received by senior figures in the field namely Herbert Simon, Ronald Coase and Oliver Williamson.

The proposition was ridiculous to the point of being a joke.

My life of accidents could not be better illustrated than the morning in 1988 when I received a phone call from Carolyn Hall, who then headed up the University's Centre for Enterprise (LUCENT).

The proposition that she presented me with was ridiculous to the point of being a joke. She knew that I had been having discussions with Maurice Shock, then Vice-Chancellor, about developing an MBA at Leicester and more generally building up management education and training. Unfortunately, there were no resources to do this.

"Now you have an opportunity to realise your ambitions", said Carolyn. "I have a contract from a consortium of UK and Singaporean interests to deliver a British MBA in Hong Kong and Singapore". My reply was simple and to the point – we don't have an MBA on regulations at Leicester, we don't have any

Continued on next page...

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distance learning materials, we don't have any infrastructure and we don't have anyone who could teach it. Apart from that we are well positioned to respond!" "Think about it", Carolyn replied.

We face the challenge over the next ten years of creating a department which is world-class – nothing less will do.

I was at that time looking to move from Leicester and join a university which would enable me to develop my interests in what has come to be known as the "new institutional economics". Instead, I thought about Carolyn's proposition and I stayed and have spent the last 13 crazy years building up a series of international distance learning Masters courses including the MBA delivered throughout a network of 25 plus centres.

The Management Centre now has a presence on the local university, national and international landscape. We obtained departmental status in 2001 and face the challenge over the next ten years of creating a department which is world-class – nothing less will do.

The University of Leicester has taken calculated risks and been imaginative in responding to opportunities.

As one of the "Entrepreneurial Centres" of the University of Leicester the Management Centre has often been viewed with suspicion. Entrepreneurs are associated with spivs, Del Boy type activities, or something that is not proper. The economist Joseph Schumpeter, however, had a more accurate view of the entrepreneur as someone who sees gaps in the market (opportunities) and takes risks to fill them.

The University of Leicester has certainly been entrepreneurial, in Schumpeter's sense of the word. It has taken risky decisions (calculated risks) and it has been imaginative in the way in which it has responded to opportunities. In this regard Keith Julian, the University Registrar, has been a key player. Without the support of Keith, the entrepreneurial centres, including the Management Centre, would never have developed.

I have always had the good fortune in my career to be given a clean sheet of

paper on which I might write my future.

The last thirteen years have been hectic and challenging but also great fun. We have a strong team and we have an exciting future. I have always had the good fortune in my career to have been given a clean sheet of paper on which I might write my future. My first academic appointment was to a new department in which we created our future, the same applied to the PSERC and also the Management Centre. I thoroughly enjoy the entrepreneurial life. In the mid-1970s I set up the (SSRC/ESRC) Public Sector Study Group, in the mid-1980s I created the Public Finance Foundation in London jointly with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and I also established the Social Studies Review.

The culmination of a forty-year odyssey.

The past few years have also been extremely rewarding. The students that we have encountered have brought a wealth of experiences that have stimulated our thinking. The cultural diversity of our students has opened our minds and their successes have been our successes.

Our journey has just begun. Over the next years others will join us in our venture to create a world-class Management Centre whose full range of education and training programmes will be grounded in solid research. As for my own research – I will complete a trilogy on the growth management and control of public expenditure. You could say the culmination of a forty-year odyssey. I also hope to find the elusive link between the economists' approach to organisations and those approaches adopted by organisation theorists.

I am excited by the emergent literatures of the "new institutional economics" and the "new institutional sociology". This is a fertile ground for an incurable polymath.

We fool ourselves if we search for deterministic management solutions.

Another hope is that Leicester graduates in management will not be narrow-minded technocrats but will instead have a keen appreciation of the important role that the social sciences have to play in defining

management problems and proposing options. We live in a complex, dynamic and uncertain world and our knowledge about it is extremely imperfect. We fool ourselves if we search for deterministic management solutions.

Also, our students need to explore and be critical of the social values that underpin our social institutions and the managerial solutions that are advocated. This requires students to be exposed to ethical discourses within their degrees.

I hold in the highest regard the disciplined thinking that economics brings to theoretical and empirical problems.

Have I fallen out with economics by moving into management? Certainly not! Although I am not a mainstream economist and have always existed at the outer limits of the subject I do, nevertheless, hold in the highest regard the disciplined thinking that economics brings to problems both theoretical and empirical. Whenever possible I do draw upon central economic principles to illuminate these problems which interest me. Economics does provide a good foundation for thinking about a wide range of management problems.

Whatever I personally have achieved in the past and might achieve in the future will, as always, have benefited greatly from the stalwart support given to me by Pat Greatorex whose unstinting devotion to realising our joint dreams first for PSERC and then for the Management Centre cannot go unrecorded."

Overseas Agents

The University's Management Centre appoints overseas agents in many countries to provide assistance and guidance to its distance learning students. Based in Kenya, Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Greece, Spain, Italy, USA, Indonesia, Dubai, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Malta, Thailand, Denmark and Cyprus, the agents handle applications and provide support and information about the courses offered at Leicester.

Editor's Note: Professor Jackson has recently been appointed Dean of The Faculty of Social Sciences.

Exceptional contribution to Cartography



► Miss Margaret Wilkes (BA Geography 1959, MA Geography 1961) has been awarded The Bartholomew Globe of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, in recognition of her “exceptional contribution to cartography in Scotland over a long period of years”.

Miss Wilkes is Convener of the Society’s Library and Information Committee and a well-known authority on all things related to maps and mapping. After leaving Leicester, she became a Map Curator at the University of Sheffield and later at the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. This is not the first time her work in the field of cartography has been recognised. In 1991 she received the International Map Collectors IMCoS/Tooley Award and in 1998 the British Geographic Society’s Alan Godfrey Award.

Queen’s Award for graduate

► Graduate Margaret (Wignell) Dight (Diploma in Social Work 1979) has been made an MBE for her services to adopted children and their families. After qualifying as a social worker at the University, she began her career in the education department of Leicester City Council. Her work in helping children in the care of social services departments nation-wide to be placed with would-be adoptive families in the East Midlands landed her the accolade. The charity, which was established in the 1940s, has helped to place 2,000 children with new families.



2002 ABA Spirit of Excellence award



► Peter Herbert (LLB 1979), barrister of Law in the London-based Chambers of Michael Mansfield QC, has received a 2002 Spirit of Excellence Award from the American Bar Association Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession in Philadelphia.

The Awards are presented annually to honour minority lawyers who have demonstrated outstanding achievement, despite facing societal barriers to success, and other lawyers who have helped to create opportunities for minority advancement in the profession. “Peter Herbert is renowned as one of the United Kingdom’s foremost advocates for human rights and racial justice”, said Charisse R Lillie, chair of the ABA Commission.



Donald and Bertha English window

► The memorial window, commissioned for Wesley’s Chapel Leysian Mission, was created to commemorate the life and ministry of Rev Dr Donald English (BA History 1952, PGCE 1953) and Mrs Bertha English. Dr English was said to be one of his generations finest Christian communicators in putting across the timeless truths of the Christian message. The window’s motif of God as fire runs through the five engraved pictures, which make up the whole. The aim is to celebrate the life of a man and his wife “dedicated to evangelising, encouraging and building up the Church”.

First class student wins honours competition

► A Leicester European Studies student, Nicola Bartlett, not only graduated in 2001 with a first-class degree but also beat more than 100 competitors to gain first prize in an annual translation competition sponsored by Oxford University Press. The variety of courses offered by the Leicester School of Modern Languages is enormous, ranging from medieval Italian poetry and Spanish classical drama to contemporary culture of all forms.

Music to remember

► University of Leicester Research, featured on BBC TV's *Child of our Time*, revealed for the first time that babies remember sounds they hear in the womb and can recognise them in later life.

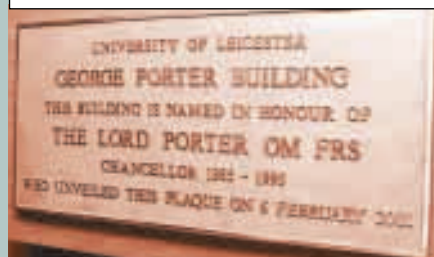
Dr Alexandra Lamont, from the Music Research Group at the School of Psychology, showed how one-year old babies could recognise music they heard up to three months before birth. She said: "We know that the foetus in the womb is able to hear fully only 20 weeks after conception. Now we have discovered that babies can remember and prefer music that they heard before they were born, over 12 months later."

Babies are not the only ones to react to music. Dr Lamont's colleagues, Dr Adrian North and Liam Mackenzie, proved that dairy cows produce up to three percent more milk when listening to slow music such as REM's *Everybody Hurts* or Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*.

Record recruitment

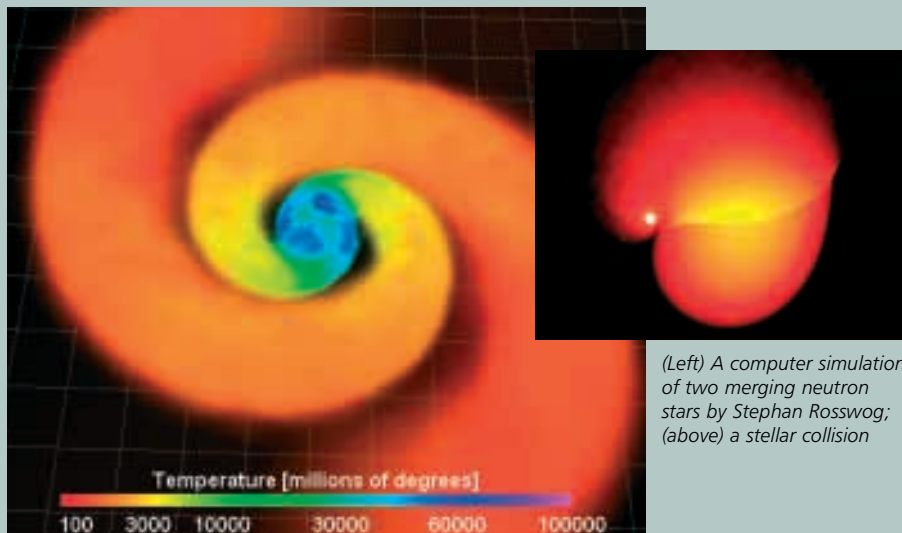
► More applicants than ever are selecting the University of Leicester by accepting the offer of a place. For the 2001 entry the University exceeded its admissions target, with recruitment up 23% on the previous year. This reflects the prestigious research and teaching rankings reported in the national press coupled with the University's excellent accommodation, academic and student facilities and student support services.

Building honours former Chancellor



► The Chemistry teaching building was named the George Porter Building last year in honour of the former Chancellor of the University.

Lord Porter, Chancellor between 1985-1995, was the University's third Chancellor and shared the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1967. He is a former President of the Royal Society and was awarded the Order of Merit in 1989 and made a Life Peer in 1990.



(Left) A computer simulation of two merging neutron stars by Stephan Rosswog; (above) a stellar collision

Turning stars into gold

► A cosmic mystery may be solved by Leicester physicists working on a new supercomputer at the UK Astrophysical Fluids Facility (UKAFF) based at the University.

While common elements such as oxygen and carbon are made in stars and scattered through the Universe when a supernova explodes, normal stars cannot produce heavy elements like gold and platinum.

The world's press took up the story when Dr Stephan Rosswog, with colleagues from Leicester and Switzerland, suggested that heavy elements were formed in violent collisions of neutron stars, a million times heavier than Earth but the size of London.

Dr Rosswog said: "This is an incredible result. It's exciting to think that the gold in wedding rings was formed far away by colliding stars."

Success of Leicester Warwick Medical School

► The Higher Education Funding Council has awarded our Medical School the largest allocation of additional student places anywhere in England. By 2003, our annual intake of 403 medical students will make us the largest medical school in England.

The Leicester Warwick Medical School will be making a very significant contribution towards the creation of substantial numbers of new doctors, as outlined in the NHS national plan. This is a phenomenal success story reflecting the very high quality medical education, which is offered by the Leicester Warwick Medical School.

Consulting the experts

► Scarcely had the dust settled after 11 September when University experts in all faculties found themselves in demand from the nation's press, none more so than Professor Nick Cull, head of the Centre for American Studies. Other – happier – signs of the Centre's national standing have come from *The Guardian*, which names the Leicester Centre as one of the top five American Studies programmes, and from a recommendation in the *Daily Telegraph*.

Cracking crime solving

► The nation at large had a chance to see for themselves the work of a real criminal profiler when psychology lecturer Dr Julian Boon was featured in the Channel 4 television series *The Real Cracker*. Dr Boon is one of only twenty experts in the country who works with the police in this way and the series highlighted some of the cases he consults on. Graduates will have an opportunity to hear Dr Boon lecture at the 2002 Homecoming.

Breakthrough in cancer treatment

► *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Express* were among the newspapers to report on work by the University's Dr Ken O'Byrne with Professor Angus Dalglish of St George's Hospital, London. Originally published in the *British Journal of Cancer*, their research indicates that not just inflamed tissue but long-standing over-activation of the immune system is the key to many forms of cancer. This could lead to a new approach to treatment and prevention of the disease, with anti-inflammatory drugs, currently used for arthritis and some bowel conditions, adopted to keep cancer at bay.

In addition, two University researchers produced findings on the treatment of advanced cervical cancer, which reduces the death rate significantly. Hailed as "the most important advance in the treatment of cervical cancer in 40 years" by a member of the M D Anderson Tumor Institute in Houston, Texas, chemoradiotherapy has been shown to reduce the chance of death by 29% for women with cervical cancer too advanced for surgery.



Teaching quality recognised

► When the Government's Quality Assurance Agency awarded the School of Archaeology and Ancient History full marks in its assessment of teaching quality, it became the 18th subject at Leicester to achieve the 'excellent' rating. The University now has the rare distinction of being awarded 22 points and above, out of a maximum of 24, equating to 'excellence' in all subjects reviewed since 1998.

Festival of Science

► Some of the most prestigious names in science will be at the University of Leicester from 9-13 September, for the British Association (BA) Festival of Science.

Coinciding with the University's 80th anniversary, the BA is holding its annual festival at the University. This is the UK's biggest science festival, and has been running since 1831. The Festival attracts some 400 scientists from the UK and world-wide to discuss the latest developments in research and stimulate debate on pressing science issues. This year's theme is "Science and the Quality of Life", which will include sessions on healthy brains, cancer, the science of sport, animal welfare, plants as factories and psychology and the arts.

The Festival is open to everyone and tickets are available for an evening, a day, or all week. Full programme details are on the web-site at www.the-ba.net or call on: 020 7973 3062, e-mail: festival@the-ba.net

Engineering celebrates its 40th anniversary

► To mark the 40th year since the first students were admitted to read Engineering, some of the first graduates came back to the University to attend the 4th Annual Industry Lecture called "Location Information: Systems and Applications". Given by Professor Andy Hopper,

University of Cambridge and Managing Director of AT&T Laboratories Cambridge Ltd, the lecture attracted graduates, industrial sponsors, academics and current undergraduate, postgraduate and MSc students.



Professor Ian Postlethwaite (Engineering), Geoff Jones, David Yates and Professor Andy Hopper

Criminals also victims of crime

► Research by two Senior Lecturers in the Department of Economics has revealed new insights on criminal behaviour and victimisation. A study by Dr Ziggy MacDonald and Mr Derek Deadman shows how victims as a group are not always as distinct from offenders as you might imagine. The economists analysed national data on almost 5,000 12-30 year olds, showing that people who had been involved in crime were more likely to be victims themselves.

Investing in the future

► A £31 million expansion and improvement programme will provide new research centres to house biomedical research, space science and mathematics. Investment in laboratories and equipment will enhance the University's reputation in areas such as heart research, green technology, archaeology, human genetic research and chemistry.

A new building will house the Mathematical Modelling Centre and its £350,000 supercomputer, linking researchers in various disciplines, such as Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Engineering. The 64-processor shared memory parallel computer will give Leicester a computational facility that is among the best in the world.

Team spirit – the secret of success?

Tackling financial challenges and sports issues are all part of life for Jeff Herdman (BA Economic History 1974). He talks to Jane Pearson about reaching new heights of success in rugby and business.



► We end up spending rather a long time chatting about the arts – but that’s because Jeff Herdman is such a good all-rounder and far too courteous to insist we keep to the point. I have really come to talk to him about his dual career in international rugby and as a successful businessman.

You could say the road to his success started down a mine when he was ten years old. The son of a miner, he was born in Neath in South Wales, the youngest of four boys. Before he was due to sit the Eleven Plus examination, his father took him down the mine, and told him: “You have a choice – it’s either come down here and work with me or get your exams.”

“I can remember it vividly,” Jeff said. “At the age of ten, imagine being taken down 500 feet in a horrible, dirty lift, going faster than I had ever been before, walking into the mine and seeing all the workings. My father turned on the machinery so that I could hear the noise and then he told me to turn off the lamp on my hat. The darkness was so black and thick, it was tangible. My father was a man of vision. He felt there was a better world for the four of us than to work down the mine. That was quite unusual, because many miners liked their sons to follow in their footsteps. I owe him a lot. He gave me his competitiveness and vision and positiveness.”

Passing the Eleven Plus, Jeff went to Neath Grammar School, where he discovered a love for rugby. Though limited in the range of sports it offered, it certainly gave him the training he needed, and he captained Wales under 15s and under 18s.

In 1971 he came to the University of

Leicester, and began to play during the vacations as a hooker for Swansea Rugby Football Club, continuing to play for them until 1984, when he became coach until 1987. “I had a super time because I was playing with the best players in the world. The team won four grand slams and three triple crowns during that time. Sometimes I have to pinch myself to believe I was part of that.”

While an undergraduate in Economics and Economic History, he also captained the University of Leicester Rugby Club and went on to play for Leicestershire County and for the Leicester Tigers, continuing in

Training is the route to success for any company... People have got to see where the company is going, then they can share that vision

these teams when he graduated and went to Loughborough College.

“I have very fond memories of certain individuals, as well as of Leicester itself. I think my course was particularly interesting, and I remember especially Peter Fearon’s fascinating series of lectures on American Economic History – the American dream. I was transfixed.” He also remembers Sid Holloway, a lecturer in Social Sciences and Chairman of the Rugby Club.

Life at Leicester, however, was not all sport and economics, and it was here he met his wife, Susie, an English graduate. Returning to Wales with Susie, Jeff taught in Cardiff, firstly in a private school and later a technical college. But he became

depressed and disillusioned by too much bureaucracy and too little teaching.

Indirectly, rugby came to his aid. When the Birmingham Midshires Building Society was looking for sports personalities to open and run local branches he applied. “I didn’t understand the first thing about what building societies did, but I got through to a second interview. The building society was brilliant, it gave me the best training you could have.”

He started the Swansea branch from nothing in 1979, negotiated two mergers, built the business from £0 to £9m profit, and ended up with five staff working for

him. “The building society gave me a lot of support. It also helped that I had a great many former rugby contacts in the business. It enabled me to get a foot in the door.”

Alongside this financial wizardry, Jeff began a long association with the Barbarians, making six appearances with them before becoming their coach. Again, he enjoyed working with some of the world’s top players, giving up only in 1999. “It is a club made up of invitation players, but since 1948 it has upheld the tradition of playing the last game of any major touring team’s programme, for instance New Zealand and South Africa. To coach the best players in the world was just wonderful.”

Then, in 1981, he played for the Wales



(Left) Jeff Herdman, Director of the Year; (main) running to score the winning try for Swansea against Newport in the 1978 Welsh Cup final

B team against France. “That was fantastic. It is the ambition of all players to play for their country and every young Welsh rugby player wants to put on that red shirt as I was able to.”

Five years later Jeff started up his own company in Swansea, Jeff Herdman Financial Services. Once again his network of contacts gave him a solid foundation to build on, and the company grew until he had six staff.

“But I had ambitions to deal with large organisations like the Gas Board and Welsh National Opera. My contacts were welcoming but uncomfortable dealing with a small company. I asked if they would do business with me if I went into partnership with a bigger company and they said yes. So I approached Willis Corroon. We made our first deal together on a one-off basis and got on so well that we made the partnership permanent.”

He became Managing Director for the

South Wales branch of the company, during which time Willis Corroon began to specialise in risk management. Jeff moved to Birmingham as Regional Managing Director for the Midlands in 1997, leading the UK Corporate Marketing and Communications Directorate. The branch increased its profit margin from 7% to 32% at a time when the average was 16%.

The move towards risk management, however, involved some painful decisions. “If you are working with people who have done one thing for 10-15 years and you ask them to try and look at another system, it can take them out of their comfort zone. Tough decisions have to be made, but you have to be fair to the organisation that you work for. There are many companies that deal in insurance, and we wanted to offer something extra.”

Jeff returned to Leicester five years ago to take up his current role as Managing

Director of Bland Bankart (UK) Limited, a division of insurance and financial services group Bland Bankart PLC, and in 2001 the nine company directors voted him Director of the Year. “I deem it an honour,” he said simply.

“This organisation has got huge potential and has some very good people who are adapting and taking on change very enthusiastically. One thing that differentiates us from some other financial organisations is that we are customer orientated.”

“Training is the route to success for any company. People here are incredibly enthusiastic about that,” he said, “People have got to see where the company is going, then they can share that vision. Since I have come I have tried to find out what the staff want the company to be and what they want it to become, so they feel part of it and they know how they can affect that vision.”

“I like working in teams, which has probably come from my sporting background. I haven’t got the arrogance to feel I have the answers to all the problems on my own, and I need a good team around to help me to achieve what I want to achieve.”

I ask him what his next rugby challenge is. “My son, David, plays a lot of rugby and I am coaching his team. It’s a good team of lads who are doing very well,” he answered.

As I put away my notebook we chat about families. Jeff and Susie have three teenage children (two being twins). Enthusiastic theatre-goers themselves, they have introduced the family to some of the theatre productions at Stratford, near where they live. Jeff’s taste in the arts is eclectic. “I love opera, ballet, theatre, heavy rock and pop. I find music to suit my mood. When I am working I play classical music.”

During his undergraduate years in Leicester he remembers going to the Haymarket and the Phoenix Theatres. Now he lives in the West Midlands and is more likely to attend the Birmingham Hippodrome or Symphony Hall, as well as the Royal Shakespeare Company. We compare notes enthusiastically about favourite productions.

Which is where we came in.

A year of discoveries

Andrew Harvey (BSc Mathematics 1994) found love and adventure while travelling around the world. He describes the journey of a lifetime.

► On 2 January 2000, while many others were still nursing post-Millennium hangovers, I found myself sipping a gin and tonic on the shores of the Red Sea. I was spending the week at a Diving College in Egypt in order to master scuba diving. Here, amongst the corals and brightly coloured fish, I made the decision to make this year special to me.

Using savings originally intended as a deposit for a house, I planned a year abroad, to travel and to broaden my horizons. I resigned from the best job I've ever had and caught a plane to Bangkok. Do I make it sound easy? In many ways, it is!

For months, I toured South-East Asia, crossing borders, exchanging currencies, dealing with very different people and languages. I made new friends, found out who my true friends were amongst the old ones, and found new things in me.

I left England during one of the longest stock market rises in history, a country enjoying a boom, where we are bombarded with messages about investment, technology, pensions, and home ownership. I left behind the "Dome" and "Eye" long before the Foot and the Mouth crisis.

Instead I uncovered the treasures, the natural wonders, the charm and the dangers of the Oriental East.

I crossed Thailand, through recently opened Laos to Vietnam. I saw the horrors and the beauty that characterise Cambodia. I sampled the many cultured cuisines of Malaysia and Indonesia. I was reminded of the materialistic West in Guam, and encountered the dragon in Hong Kong and China. An all too brief visit to the Philippines preceded my arrival in Australia. New Zealand, Fiji and the almighty US were next on the list but an initial plan is exactly that, isn't it?

There's simply not enough space here to



I was humbled by the generosity of polite, respectful, mostly poor, people in all countries

describe what I experienced, that'll be in the book, but I will try to give you a flavour of it.

I walked the Great Wall of China and stood in awe of the great temples of Angkor in Cambodia. I stared down the mouth of smoking volcanoes in Java and Bali and admired the great Hindu temple of Prambanan and the Buddhist temple of Borobudur. I joined long lines of Vietnamese school children filing respectfully past the tomb of the great Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi. I relaxed under the flying kites of Chinese children in Beijing's Tiananmen Square unable to comprehend the rebellious demonstrations that took place here more than a decade ago. I wondered at the master builders of the Forbidden City, amazed at Shanghai's

numerous gleaming towers and the world's tallest building, the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur. I climbed quietly up the steps to the looming, massive seated Buddha on Lantau Island in Hong Kong. The scale and size of the Three Gorges Dam Project in China, constructed to harness the mighty flow of the Yangtze River, takes your breath away. As does the massive army of terracotta warriors assembled in battle formation beneath the earth near Xi'an in China.

I enjoyed spectacularly good food along the journey. I slept on trains, boats, and beaches, and in huts, jungle lodges and hotels. I rode elephants, swam under waterfalls, sang Karaoke, encountered a shark, swayed with a Balinese dancer. I was humbled by the generosity of polite, respectful, mostly poor, people in all countries.



Top left: banana lady;
above: Zhouzang

I fell in love with the frantic swarm of people in cities such as Jakarta, Beijing, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Vientiane, Shanghai. Even more seductive were the quiet moments, a deserted mountain, an unspoiled beach, a valley of rice paddies tended by women in cone hats and their oxen, a bicycle ride through a landscape of limestone karsts.

A world unlike the one I am used to. Where community is strong, people often share all that they have, where people treat you with respect, where belief and faith is unwavering, where good deeds are rewarded in the next life. Where hot water, toilet paper, a sprung mattress, fresh clothes, cling film wrapped chicken pieces, fresh cold milk, a TV, and a roof over your head are considered luxuries beyond the means of many.

I got lost in a jungle with two travelling companions, finally being rescued long after the sun had set, our torches were failing and our food was gone. I almost drowned when a strong current swept me out to sea whilst snorkelling. I had a moment then...

And I met the woman I am going to marry, an Australian I met in Cambodia who was sitting quietly on the verandah of a hotel in Phnom Penh the day I arrived from Vietnam.

I'll certainly remember this year!

In Brief



Botanic Garden

► After the feature "Around the world in 16 acres" appeared in the 2001 Review, Professor and Mrs Konrad T Elsdon wrote in appreciation of the work of Mr Hopkins, who was such a seminal influence on the gardens. Once the subject was raised a number of others were quick to come forward to praise his early influence.

As part of the University's 80th Anniversary celebrations, an Open Day,

organised by The Friends of the Botanic Garden, will welcome the public, on Saturday, 7 July from 11.00am – 4.00 pm. Visitors have the opportunity to take part in a guided tour of the gardens and greenhouses, with a range of plant stalls, and specialist groups will be on hand. The guided tour will include the Water Garden, tropical and sub-tropical zones, Alpine House, and the Herb and Sunken Gardens.

For information call 0116 2712933.

The Search for Truth in the Criminal Justice System

► Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir John Stevens who is both a graduate and Honorary graduate of the University (LLB 1980, LLD 2000) returned to the University on 6 March to deliver the Graduates' Association and Haldane Society Public Lecture to a full house. In his lecture, *The Search for Truth in the Criminal Justice System*, he argued that the balance of the scales of justice had swung too far in favour of the defendant and that, as a result, victims and witnesses were afraid to come forward for fear of being put through the criminal justice system. Sir John did not blame the practitioners of law but the system in which they are obliged to operate. A full transcript of his speech is available on: <http://www.le.ac.uk/press/press/scalesofjustice2.html>

Overseas graduates

► University of Leicester staff visit many countries throughout the year, to attend Schools Exhibitions, staff British Education Exhibitions and promote the University. They will be delighted to meet graduates on location and provide information about some of the exciting

new courses available by distance learning. Scheduled for the coming year are countries as far-flung as Norway to Kenya and Mexico to China. For up to date information on visit dates and venue, please consult the website at www.le.ac.uk/international/trips.html

Face to face with history

As this goes to press, Slobodan Milosevic is on trial for war crimes, while Mladic and Karadzic narrowly escaped arrest by NATO on the same charges. Most of us thankfully never find ourselves dealing with the alleged perpetrators of such atrocities, but for Law graduate David Austin OBE (LLB with French 1986), a defining moment led him into the most serious disturbance in Europe since the Second World War.



► “My moment of truth came when the US Air Force bombed the Libyan capital, Tripoli, in 1986.

I was studying a Law with French degree. During a seminar on the legality of the bombing it suddenly dawned on me that I wanted to be involved in the decision-making process of whether or not to take such action. I had already been considering a career in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The US Air Force made up my mind to go for it.

Several months later I joined the FCO and in 1993 I left for the Balkans. When I arrived at the British Embassy in Belgrade that autumn, Slobodan Milosevic was all powerful, in control of everything from the media to the security forces.

Milosevic's destructive vision had already led to wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia. By autumn 1993, the war in Croatia was on hold, with Serb rebels, supported by Milosevic, in control of one third of Croatia's territory. The war in Bosnia was in full swing. Milosevic's allies Karadzic and Mladic had from their “capital”, the sleepy mountain village of Pale, “cleansed” most of Eastern Bosnia of non-Serbs and were shelling towns such as Sarajevo on a daily basis. Serbia was an international pariah.

At first my job was to support and help build up domestic, Western-oriented opposition to Milosevic. This meant working closely with anti-Milosevic politicians such as Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica and the independent media to help ensure that the people of Serbia had access to a point of view other than Milosevic's. I had the privilege of working with some very brave people who, at considerable risk to their own safety, laboured to spread a message of peace and tolerance in Serbia and Montenegro. Their time would come, but back in those dark days it seemed a long way off.

Peace efforts in Bosnia

In 1995 the former Prime Minister of

Sweden, Carl Bildt took over from Lord Owen as EU negotiator for Bosnia and recruited me as a key adviser on handling negotiations with the Serbs. Milosevic could be both a charming and a chilling figure. At Bildt's first meeting with him, Milosevic – to my great surprise – asked me about my baby daughter, on the face of it, a gracious and disarming question, in reality a warning that his intelligence services were keeping a close eye on me and my family.

Milosevic was a welcoming, if rough, host and a confident and very tough negotiator. Our talks were made more difficult by his ambivalent relationship with the truth.

European efforts were joined by those of the United States and over the next three months, our joint endeavours went sufficiently well for peace negotiations to begin in Dayton, Ohio.

During the Pre-Dayton period, Bildt had little personal contact with the Bosnia Serb leaders, focussing instead on Presidents Milosevic, Tudjman and Izetbegovic. He delegated this not especially pleasant task to his team. The Pale clique used every trick in the book – including bullying, lies and pathos – to avoid making political progress, while their forces on the ground continued to kill and maim arbitrarily.

On 28 August, a single Bosnia Serb shell landed in Sarajevo, killing 37 people and injuring almost 100. The UN and NATO planned massive air strikes against Bosnia Serb installations along with a sustained bombardment by British and French artillery based above Sarajevo. It fell to my lot to tell the Pale leadership that NATO would attack them, possibly within hours, but that we must keep moving the political process forward. Karadzic himself was away from Pale that evening and I spoke instead to his chief adviser, aware that this was one of the worst criminal cliques in post-war Europe, about to



Milosevic was a welcoming, if rough, host and a confident and very tough negotiator. Our talks were made more difficult by his ambivalent relationship with the truth

receive what they had been dishing out to others for three years.

At Dayton my job was to find out what the Bosnian Serbs were thinking, involving hours poring over maps and documents and drinking endless coca-colas with the Bosnian Serb delegation leader Momcilo Krajisnik (now awaiting trial in The Hague charged with war crimes). The Dayton negotiations led to the signing of a peace agreement on 14 December 1995 and the

end of the Bosnian War.

Over the next twelve months we worked to ensure that the peace agreement was implemented on the ground. This was extremely frustrating in the early days with the physical hardship of living and working in a war-damaged city, often without electricity and water.

Kosovo on the brink

During 1996, it became clearer than ever

that Kosovo, with its 90 per cent ethnic Albanian population, was likely to be the next Balkan flashpoint. With a senior German diplomat, Ambassador Martin Lutz, we began talks with both sides.

While the Kosovo Albanians were interested Milosevic was not. His Foreign Minister, Milutinovic, eventually urged me to forget any diplomatic initiative over Kosovo. Serbia would “solve” Kosovo when the time came. And he left no doubt as to the methods Milosevic would use.

After a break I returned to Yugoslav issues when Kosovo erupted into serious violence in the spring of 1998, this time as the Head of the FCO’s Section dealing with the Kosov crisis.

Over the next year I was part of a small UK team working closely with our Contact Group partners (United States, Russia, France, Germany, Italy and the European Commission) towards a diplomatic solution. But violence continued to escalate. Following a massacre at Racak in January 1999, the Contact Group persuaded both sides to attend peace negotiations at Rambouillet in France. In spite of our proposed peace agreement offering Kosovo enhanced autonomy and genuine self government, Milosevic rejected the deal, burning Kosov Albanian villages and killing civilians.

This time Milosevic had miscalculated the determination of the West. NATO responded with massive air strikes throughout Yugoslavia. I continued to work on a settlement for Kosovo until these ended, an international military force entered the province and the refugees went home.

As Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Zagreb since 1999, my work now is thankfully far removed from the crisis management of those years, being more involved in establishing a strong bilateral relationship.

I feel privileged to have played at least a minor part in the break up of Yugoslavia and proud to have received from HM The Queen in October 1999 an OBE in recognition of my contribution towards peace in Bosnia and Kosovo.”

Happy Anniversary

Milestones and highlights in the University's 80 year history



From top: the College Council, 1926 (back row – Dr. R F Rattray, Sir Samuel Faire, C J Bond, Thomas Fielding-Johnson, W G Gibbs. Front row – Sir Jonathan North, the 9th Duke of Rutland, Dr Astley Clarke); college entrance; Fielding Johnson Building; the first College intake; the chemistry building under construction; the first college students celebrate their graduation

► In October 1921 nine young women were admitted to Leicester's new University College. Eighty years later more than 4,000 men and women enrolled at the University of Leicester, including some 2,400 undergraduates – the highest student intake in its history.

They arrived in very different worlds. Those nine young pioneers embarked on their academic careers just three years after an estimated 10 million had perished in the First World War, most of them young people of student age. The building had previously been a wartime hospital and the College was established to commemorate the victims of the war.

College rules were strict. One student felt obliged to hide a bottle of sherry under her gown when a member of staff walked into the kitchen during the making of a trifle, and by today's standards accommodation was spartan even as late as 1957 when the University College received its University Charter. Dr Wendy Hickling (née Baldwin) – the first graduand to be presented with a University of Leicester degree rather than the London degree offered by the University College – admitted: "In our rooms with outstretched arms you could touch each wall. You were allowed five items on your dressing table and nothing on the radiator. If you contravened this rule your surplus items were confiscated and you had to pay to get them back." A rising bell awoke the students at 7.30am during the week and 8.00am at weekends.

The University's history is enshrined in the names of the buildings, from its founding fathers, including Mr Thomas Fielding Johnson, Dr F W Bennett, Dr Rattray and Dr Astley Clarke, to the Ken Edwards, Maurice Shock and Robert Kilpatrick Buildings, commemorating two more recent Vice-Chancellors and a Dean of Medicine.

The novelist C P Snow was the first in a long line of famous people to have studied at the University over the years. Others include another novelist, Malcolm Bradbury, who was later to write in glowing terms in the *Times Literary Supplement* about the late founding Professor of English, Arthur Humphreys. Other prestigious former students include the Chief Medical Officer Sir Liam Donaldson, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Sir John Stevens, British High Commissioner to India Sir Rob Young KCMG, City businesswoman Carol Galley, war correspondent Michael Nicholson OBE, television presenter Sue Cook, comedian Bob Mortimer, travel writer and broadcaster Pete McCarthy, Astronomer and broadcaster Heather Couper, Gulf War hero John Peters and international landmines campaigner Chris Moon MBE.

Sir Liam Donaldson and Sir Rob Young were among eleven public figures to receive honorary degrees from the University in its 80th Anniversary "honours" in July 2001. Speaking of the pleasure this gave him, Sir Rob said: "The University of Leicester has had a very formative influence on my life and career. I feel deeply privileged to be receiving an Honorary LLD. It will strengthen my links with – and affection for – the University." Mrs Jean Humphreys, wife of the late Professor Humphreys also received an honorary degree for her commitment to the University spanning 50 years. She said: "It has been a rare pleasure and privilege to be in at the birth of a university and to see it grow through succeeding stages to the large and flourishing institution it is today. I have known some of the people whose generosity and vision created the University College, and all of the Principals and Vice-Chancellors who guided it on its way from 1947 to this day."

The actor and film director Lord Attenborough and his naturalist brother Sir David Attenborough grew up on campus during the years their father was Principal of the University College and still retain a lively interest in the University, while the poet Philip Larkin was a librarian at the

University during the late 1940s.

But if some of the University's people have become famous names, its research record is no less prestigious. It was here, in the Department of Genetics, that Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys discovered DNA genetic fingerprinting, techniques which have revolutionised crime investigation and paternity cases across the world.

The University is home to one of Europe's biggest space research groups and since 1967 not a year has passed without some Leicester-built instruments being launched into Space. The National Space Centre, the Millennium Landmark Project for the East Midlands was founded by the University and the City Council, while the University plays a major role in developing Beagle 2, the Mars Lander which may discover life on Mars.

The University's Law Department has been cited by the country's leading 100 law firms among the top ten in the country, while the Management Centre has received the much sought-after AMBA accreditation for its MBA degrees. Leicester houses 60 specialist centres. The School of Historical Studies is one of the largest in England and Wales, while the departments of English Local History and Museum Studies are unique in their fields worldwide. The Centre for Mass Communications Research is one of the oldest of its kind, while the School of Archaeological Studies is renowned internationally for its research.

During this anniversary year, the University has been acclaimed among the top 20 in the country by both the *Financial Times* and the *Sunday Times*. It has continued its record run of Excellent teaching scores from the Government's Quality Assurance Agency, with a total of 18 subject areas now deemed to be excellent for teaching.

Research funding has exceeded £33 million and in the national Research Assessment Exercise 84 per cent of all staff were considered to be conducting research of national and international quality.

In the presence of Lord Puttnam and Lord Attenborough, the Richard Attenborough Centre, named its hall after

An anniversary is not just a time for looking back with pride – though it is good to do that – but it is also important to look to the future.

Diana, Princess of Wales, who visited it in 1997. During celebrations of the 140th anniversary of Vaughan College and the inauguration of the Leicester Institute of Lifelong Learning, Secretary of State for Education Estelle Morris commended the University as a "national leader" in widening participation and social inclusion, which still maintained a high quality of education and research.

Now one of the county's biggest employers, the University has an annual turnover of over £130 million. Its six faculties span more than 220 undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes, and it is Britain's largest provider of postgraduate education.

An anniversary is not just a time for looking back with pride but it is also important to look to the future. Addressing the University's Court, the Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess outlined £31 million development plans that will result in two new buildings for space and biomedical research, the creation of new laboratories and the provision of state of the art resources. A £3 million refurbishment programme will also be carried out, benefiting a number of departments including Archaeology, Chemistry, and Psychology.

The Vice-Chancellor said: "The University of Leicester plays a pivotal role in raising the profile of the city, county and region. In celebrating our 80th Anniversary, we stand at a pivotal point in our development. I have every confidence that this University, thanks to its staff and students, is going to be an even greater success."

You can find out about the University's 80th Anniversary events on:

<http://www.le.ac.uk/press/80th/university80th.html>



From top: Lord Attenborough and Lord Puttnam with VC Robert Burgess at the naming of the Diana Princess of Wales Hall; cutting the cake at the 2001 London Reunion; the ceremonial sod-cutting for the new building; Leicester graduate Sue Cook; an artist's impression of the new Biomedical Sciences building; Estelle Morris inaugurates the Institute of Lifelong Learning

Taking disaster out of crisis

For those facing genuine hardship at University, there is help at hand. Senior Welfare Officer, Clare Taylor (BA Economic and Social History 1987) tells Jane Pearson about the realities of financial difficulties faced by students – and how a little support goes a long way.

► The population at large seems divided between those who think students have an easy time and those who see them as teetering on the breadline.

In fact, as any graduate knows, the reality generally falls somewhere in between and most students manage to strike a viable balance between academic study, earning capability and the potential to have fun.

For some, however – often through no fault of their own – financial hardship does become a reality, and for them the University's Hardship Fund can make all the difference.

Funded partly through the Beneficial Visa Card, whenever a card is used for a purchase Beneficial makes a donation to the Fund. The need for this help has never

been more imperative, as the head of the Welfare Service, Clare Taylor, explains.

"Funding has changed for undergraduates. People assume tuition fees are all paid, but that is no longer true, we live in a loan-based society. One third of undergraduates pay their own tuition fees in full, one third pay part of the fees and only a third are funded through their Local Education Authority. International students don't have any support at all.

"There is a Government Hardship Fund, but we are only allowed to give so much from this, and sometimes students – for instance single parents and students with disabilities – are stuck. Those are the cases we can help from the University Hardship Fund.

"Take a situation I'm dealing with at the moment. There is a student from India who has been very sick for four weeks. He had intended to earn money to supplement his income, but because of his illness he hasn't had time to go out to work and catch up on his studies and we have been able to give him £500 to help him through this bad patch." This sum is generally the maximum the Fund can offer.

Not all the money comes from the Beneficial Visa Card. Some is also paid through wills and trust funds, while Clare and her colleagues spend much of their time applying to charities and trusts for needy students, which is very time-consuming for what can be an uncertain outcome.

"Most of the money we give from this fund is necessary because students find themselves in an unforeseen situation, for instance when parents die or – in the case of international students – when a disaster such as an earthquake or economic collapse affects their country."

Funding is not just there for the asking, and the Welfare Service is not a soft touch, as Clare is keen to point out. "All cases are researched very thoroughly. We ask to see bank statements or other proof of hardship. Then we write a recommendation which goes before a committee chaired by a University Pro-Vice-Chancellor. A decision is made by that committee, not by us.

"It's very rare that we would help a student who had come to University knowing they would be in difficulties, so we only reckon to deal with those facing exceptional circumstances. For instance some people find they don't fit into the standard student loan criteria and wouldn't get Government funding. We may then consider funding them from the University Hardship Fund."

Clare estimates that the University Fund helps twenty students every year, though the need is actually greater and she regrets not being able to help more. "For instance the Turkish currency devaluation of 63 per cent. Turkish students really struggled during that period and many were forced to return home halfway



The Beneficial Visa Card

The University of Leicester Visa Card was launched in 1990. For every credit card issued and every time a card is used, Beneficial makes a royalty payment to the University's Hardship Fund. This vital income stream is used solely for the Hardship Fund, which provides advice and direct assistance to students in need. So far, over 1,400 cards have been taken up and over £52,000 contributed in this way.

Taking out the credit card is free and a simple way of benefiting students in need. For enquiries on how to apply for the University of Leicester Visa Card tel: 0800 0152204 and quote reference P054.

through their course of study.

"When you are in the middle of your final year it is difficult to balance paid work with completion of studies, however no income often means no food. Financial hardship is especially relevant to medical students whose courses are so long. The University is very helpful and the Students' Union has some funds which sometimes enables us to obtain matched funding from charities for deserving cases."

One way in which the Welfare Service helps is with advice. "Students do find it useful to receive advice on how to manage money that comes in three large chunks – as Student Loan cheques do. At 18 you are expected to cope with budgeting for what may seem quite major sums of money, yet which may barely pay your accommodation costs.

"In those cases students will often request a bank overdraft. Here we can

observe a class divide. "Middle class" students whose families have probably taken out car loans and mortgages are not as scared of debt as the "working classes", who frequently exist far more in a cash-based economy. Thus the debt incurred in the Higher Education process can deter those from the lower socio-economic classes."

Over the years Clare has seen a number of changes in student circumstances. Now there is a stark division between poor students surviving only on their Student Loan and earnings from part-time and vacation work and rich students with a generous parental contribution.

Even so, the average level of student debt on graduation – £12,000-£15,000 – might well frighten even the affluent middle classes. For those with no family wealth to fall back on the Hardship Fund can really make the difference between getting a degree and giving up.

Funding has changed for undergraduates. People assume tuition fees are all paid, but that is no longer true, we live in a loan-based society

The Student Experience

Carl Iszatt, BA Politics 1998

"The reason I needed the Hardship Fund was because I had mismanaged my finances," Carl Iszatt admitted candidly. "I had got a Visa card, I had never before come into contact with the amounts of money students have to handle, I was living away from home and I hadn't managed my finances before. I enjoyed student life too much, I suppose, but also the day to day living – food clothes, books and rent – got out of hand and I got in a bit of a pickle.

"A friend of mine had sought advice from the Student Welfare Service, and suggested it might help me. So I went along there and saw one of the officers, Jean Baxter. The kind of advice and help she gave me was invaluable. It helped in the short term, in that the Hardship Fund enabled me to survive for that month, but most importantly, the advice that Jean gave me really sorted me out. I began to budget and learned how to manage money. My philosophy had always been to spend until it ran out. She taught me to think long term and this enabled me to live within my means.

"Thanks to that help I got my degree. If I'd not gone to the Welfare Office I might have left and not graduated. Again, thanks to Jean Baxter I did some telephone fund raising as a part-time job while I was studying. This led to my first graduate job in the University of Leicester Graduate Relations Office and now to a career as Alumni Relations Officer at the University of Bath."



Annual meeting of the Graduates' Association

► In addition to the programme of events planned for the Homecoming, the Annual General Meeting of the Graduates' Association will be held at 4.30pm on 22 June 2002.

Would you like to help run the Graduates' Association and take part in University business?

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

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

The Chairmanship and 5 committee memberships will fall vacant in September. The elections will take place at the AGM on 22 June 2002. All Leicester graduates, and other members of Convocation as defined in the Statutes, are eligible to stand. Membership is for 3 years (from 1 October) in the first instance. Travel expenses are available for attendance at committee meetings.

If you are interested in serving on the Committee, your nomination must be received by the Graduate Relations Office by Friday 31st May 2002. Please contact the Office if you would like more information, or visit the web site:

www.le.ac.uk/alumni

Star Attraction

► They call it a homecoming, but for some it will mean a journey very far from home – further than the mind can stretch. A journey to the edge of the universe.

Or at least, those Leicester graduates who sign up for a visit to the National Space Centre during the June *Homecoming* can travel there in their imagination, transported by the rockets, space artefacts, cinema and interactive displays that have made the Space Centre such a huge tourist attraction since its launch in June 2001.

The fact that the £52 million National Space Centre landed in Leicester was due in no small part to the reputation of the Department of Physics and Astronomy and the commitment of Professor Alan Wells, now Director of what has become the Space Research Centre, along with the then Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Ponter and Principal Assistant Registrar Nigel Siesage.

Alan Wells first told Ken Pounds, Professor of Space, about the proposed project in the early 90s. The journey from inspiration to launch was to take more than half a decade. In 1994-5 the University and Leicester City Council put forward a bid to the Millennium Commission and became one of 550 projects under consideration. Several times the venture nearly foundered, particularly when a rival bid from Derby emerged, but again the reputation of the University's space research carried the day and the National Space Centre, of which the University Space Research Centre is a fundamental part, became the East Midlands Millennium Landmark Project.

Since 1967 the University of Leicester has had instruments in space every year, and it is inevitable that this expertise should be represented in the National Space Centre, along with examples of the international drive to explore Space and to understand the origins of the

One of the country's newest tourist attractions since its opening in June 2001, the National Space Centre has proved to be hugely popular, drawing crowds of children and adults to interactive displays and walk-through simulations of space travel. For early registrants to the 2002 Homecoming, a limited number of places are available for you to visit the Centre.



PHOTOGRAPHY: WWW.JIMCARTWRIGHTPHOTOGRAPHY.CO.UK

Universe.

Its five themed galleries include *Into Space*, with simulated space capsules to sit in, a model of the International Space Station to walk through, real rockets and satellites, a close look at space suits and a range of interactive displays.

Exploring the Universe looks at some of the big theories, such as the origins of life, how the Universe began, stars, aliens, and how it will all end, while *Planets* combines the latest Space science with ancient folklore, and *Orbiting Earth* shows how life on Earth is enhanced by space research. When merely walking through infinity becomes too much you can sit back in the *Space Theatre* and speed through the rings of Saturn to the edge of the Universe, considering with Lord (Richard) Attenborough exactly "how big is big?"

The first Challenger Learning Centre to be built outside North America was the initial part of the Space Centre to be built. There school groups learn science through simulated space missions which link with the National Curriculum, half the group running Mission Control, while their fellows pile into the shuttle carrying them out to the space capsule where they will "Rendezvous with a Comet" or "Voyage to Mars".

The National Space Centre is not a passive monument to the past. Its role changes as our knowledge of the Universe changes, and in January this year the Science Minister Lord Sainsbury announced that the Space Centre would be the home of the UK's Information Centre on Near Earth Objects. The University's Space Research Centre, on the other hand, is looking further afield, and the Beagle 2 Mars Lander designed here as part of the European 2003 Mars Express mission, may yet be able to confirm whether life really does exist on the Red Planet. You will have to find that out on your next visit.

Word Play

There is more going on between the covers than meets the eye in author Adele Parks' (BA English 1990) sexy prose. Journalist Janet Murray (BA English 1996) pulls back the sheets to uncover more about the author.

► Clutching my copy of her first novel, I set out to meet author and fellow Leicester graduate Adele Parks. We've arranged to meet at Covent Garden and I want to be able to check her author's photo one last time before we meet. I'm half-expecting to meet a woman as steely as her heroines who'll dodge my questions, biting back with terrifying one-liners.

I'm glad to say I'm wrong. Adele greets me with a huge smile and immediately I know I'm going to like her. Dressed in leather trousers and high-heeled boots, she's casually glamorous and very petite. Warm and open, there is something distinctly girl-next-door about her, but there is a sharper edge. Mix the wholesomeness of Felicity Kendall with the verve of Gail Porter and you'd get Adele Parks.

Her first novel *Playing Away* sold over 200,000 copies making her the top selling debut novelist of 2000. Her second novel *Game Over* was published in February 2001 and her books are now published worldwide "I always thought I'd be a novelist," she says, with certainty.

Born in 1969 in the north East, Adele day-dreamed her way through school, always preferring subjects like English, art and drama to science and maths. Is daydreaming a prerequisite for the would-be novelist? I ask her. She nods vigorously, "Oh yes. I make stories up in my head all the time. I consider it the greatest indulgence to make up stories for a living." Nevertheless, she gained the necessary qualifications to read English at the University of Leicester, although things could have turned out very differently. She was accepted on an art foundation course, but realised it wasn't for her when she noticed the girl next to her sketching the lecturer. Adele had been writing about the way the light was hitting his head!

Adele started at Leicester in 1987. "I took myself far too seriously in those days," she admits. "I was far too concerned with what people thought of me and what I should be doing." She spent her first year in Gilbert Murray Hall, but admits she wasn't there very often because of her involvement with Leicester University Theatre (LUT). She took roles in a number of LUT productions, including *Blue Remembered Hills* and *A Man For All Seasons*. She also worked for ENTS and, for a brief time, became a member of the sailing and wine societies.

Adele clearly loved her time at Leicester. "I just loved that feeling that there were endless possibilities," she says with animation. She graduated with a 2:1 degree, having completed her dissertation on the subject of seduction. Very apt, considering her novels are some of the sexiest on the shelves.

After university, there was a year teaching English in Taranto, southern Italy. Then a brief stint in accounting followed by a much longer career in advertising both in England and Botswana. "But I wasn't ever really happy in any of these jobs," she says, "All the time there was this thing that I wanted to write." The rest is like a fairytale: Adele started to write in the evenings and weekends. Within the year, she was signed up to Penguin and immediately gave up her day job. Adele is now one of Penguin's fastest rising stars. She has just sold TV rights for *Game Over* to Carlton and the BBC are looking at *Playing Away*.

She does admit she was slightly worried about her parents' reaction to her books—despite dealing with serious issues they're unashamedly sexy. "The worst thing you can do when writing a book is imagine your mum is reading it," she tells me. I



couldn't agree more.

Adele is quick to acknowledge that writers of popular fiction are often criticised for not being "literary" enough. "In every genre, there are books that are well written and poorly written. Mine are well written and I'm proud of my books," she says. She pauses for moment, considering how to put it: "I like to think mine are the 'comedy of manners' of their time."

"That's what's so good about Leicester", she says. "It's not elitist. It's the kind of place where you're encouraged to find your own way. My time at Leicester gave me great confidence. I really felt I could achieve anything I set my mind to". And no one could say she hasn't done just that.

• *Larger than Life* was published by Penguin Books in March 2002

• Old friends and commissioning editors can contact Janet Murray on janmurray26@hotmail.com

The University Bookshop Summer Special Offers

The University Bookshop and the Graduate Relations Office are pleased to offer graduates the following books for the summer season at special prices. All the titles are due for publication in spring 2002. These books are available either from the Bookshop in person or post free to your home*.

If you wish to purchase any of these titles you can place an order in a number of ways: by mail, telephone, fax or e-mail to The University Bookshop at University Road, Leicester LE1 7RD. Tel: (0116) 2522000, fax: (0116) 2525029, e-mail: bookshop@le.ac.uk

The summer selection below can also be viewed on the Graduate Relations web site at: www.le.ac.uk/alumni. It is hoped that a further selection of titles will be available in autumn 2001.



Jane Adams
Angel Eyes

The new novel in the 'Angel' series. On a cold Sunday morning, ex-copper Ray Flowers has little more to worry about than tackling the unwieldy honeysuckle in his garden, but his weekend peace is suddenly interrupted by an unexpected phone call.

Publisher's Price £16.99
Bookshop Offer Price £14.99

William Boyd
Any Human Heart

Written in journal form spanning the 20th century and four continents, the ordinary and extraordinary life of Logan Mountstuart, a novelist who experiences both acclaim and neglect, and rubs shoulders with the great and notorious. The diary construction of the novel should give reviewers plenty to

get their teeth into.

Publisher's Price £17.99
Bookshop Offer Price £15.99

Fritjof Capra
The Hidden Connections

The author extends the framework of systems and complexity theory to the social domain and uses the extended framework to discuss some of the critical issues of our time – the management of human organizations, the challenges and dangers of economic globalisation, the scientific and ethical problems of biotechnology, and the design of ecologically sustainable communities and technologies.

Publisher's Price £19.99
Bookshop Offer Price £17.50

Robert Colls
Identity of England

The English are now in need of a new sense of home and belonging, and a re-assessment of who they are. This is a history of who they were, with present needs in mind. The book connects how the meaning of England has changed and changed again in the past, with how it is changing now. Robert Colls is Senior Lecturer in the University's Department of Economic and Social History.

Publisher's Price £25.00
Bookshop Offer Price £21.99

Amy Dempsey
Styles, Schools & Movements: An Encyclopaedic Guide to Modern Art

A highly visual book, illustrating the distinctive features of each movement. Arranged chronologically with a foldout timeline giving an overview of periods, each article has suggestions for further reading and gallery guides.

Publisher's Price £28.00
Bookshop Offer Price £25.00



Guy Cooper, et al
The Curious Gardeners' Six Elements of Garden Design

The book ties with the second series of *The Curious Gardeners* shown on BBC2 in April 2002. Each programme tackles an individual theme, exploring the key design components that are part of many gardens: water,

materials, form, sculpture, planting and time. Illustrated with inspirational photographs of classical and contemporary gardens.

Publisher's Price £25.00
Bookshop Offer Price £21.99



Lonely Planet
Greek Islands

Wander through the medieval villages of southern Chios, relax on a beach in Ikaria, dance the night away in Los or marvel at the Acropolis in Athens – this guide has got it all. There is a special section on Island Hopping providing an overview of the different islands, the ferry systems and a suggested itinerary of where to go.

Publisher's Price £11.99
Bookshop Offer Price £9.99

Byron Rogers
The Last Englishman: J.L. Carr

From the man who wrote such cult classics as *A Month in the Country* and *Carr's Dictionary of Extraordinary Cricketers*. Byron Rogers' biography tells the life story of this fascinating, utterly original man. From war service on a West African flying-boat base to a strange interlude teaching in the heart of South Dakota, discovering a headmaster who would hold arithmetic contests on sports day, a novelist whose fiction is more thoroughly autobiographical than anyone has hitherto realised. He was someone different to everyone who met him.

Publisher's Price £14.99
Bookshop Offer Price £12.99

Oxford**Oxford Companion to Music**

This new edition of *The Oxford Companion to Music* is a comprehensive and authoritative reference work, which will be invaluable to both professional and amateur musicians, and general music lovers. Distinguished and international contributors cover subjects ranging from composers and performers to instruments and genres.

Publisher's Price £35.00
Bookshop Offer Price £30.00

Jessica Sachs**Time of Death: The Story of Forensic Science and the Search for Death's Stopwatch**

The story of forensic science's attempts to discover a foolproof method of establishing the time of death. Despite repeated claims



and breakthroughs, forensic scientists are little better equipped to establish with precision the exact time at which a victim of crime died. Death is a gradual and highly variable business, dependant on a myriad of factors. Gloriously written and ghoulishly fascinating, this is true crime at its most fascinating.

Publisher's Price £14.99
Bookshop Offer Price £12.99

Carol Shields**Unless**

A new novel from Carol Shields, author of *The Stone Diaries* (winner of the Pulitzer prize) and *Larry's Party* (winner of the Orange prize). *Unless* is a dazzling and daring novel from the undisputed master of extraordinary fictions about so-called "ordinary" lives.

Publisher's Price £16.99
Bookshop Offer Price £14.99



Publisher's Price £12.99
Bookshop Offer Price £10.99

Anita Shreve**Sea Glass**

The year is 1929 and Honora Beecher and her husband, Sexton, are just settling into a new marriage and a cottage on the coast of New Hampshire. Shreve unfolds interlocking lives, each with its own share of love, loss and challenge. This is another gripping and unforgettable story of the human heart from one of the most accomplished novelists of our time.

Graeme Wright**Cricketers Almanac 2002**

Latest edition of the Bible for Cricket Enthusiasts, edited this year by New Zealand's Graeme Wright.

Publisher's Price £35.00
Bookshop Offer Price £30.00

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All Systems Go!

Browsing through the Library could now mean moving a mouse and travelling beyond its confines to check out the word on the World Wide Web. University Systems Librarian Mary Bettles (BA Combined Studies 1971) describes the chapters of change that have taken the Library into the information age.



► “There were no such things as computers in my day!” This was certainly true for me as a graduate in the 1970s, but now my job is to keep the Library’s computer systems going. What was it like using the Library when you were a student? Was the place full of putty-coloured machinery? Or did you have to fill in issue slips in your best handwriting? For those who graduated before 1982, the Library had no computers on show, let alone to use; those graduating in the summer of 2002 won’t have escaped without using one in the course of their studies. There is a very small team of people within the Library responsible for maintaining and developing the services that rely upon computing technology. These include the Unicorn library management system, the Sentry card access system, and the Library’s Web pages.

Over the past 20 years, the following have been major milestones in library computing here at Leicester:

- **1982** first student loan books issued via a computer;

Who are we?

Systems Team – Mike Garner, Library IT Support Officer; Janet Guinea, Assistant Systems Librarian; Mary Bettles, Systems Librarian and acting University Librarian.

- **1984** books first catalogued in machine readable form;
- **1988** users able to look up the catalogue for themselves using computer screens, and catalogue available outside the Library;
- **1998** users able to use the Web to look up catalogue now available world-wide.

What does the Systems team do?

Unicorn is a software package developed in the United States. It deals with all aspects of library housekeeping: it controls the issuing of books, sends overdues, calculates fines, recalls items from users that others need, places orders, manages funds, chases overdue journal issues, receives requests for material not in stock and sends those

requests on to other libraries. It has a large database of users and over 600,000 catalogue records for 1,800,000 items. The system functions 24 hours a day and 365 days of the year, apart from the times when it has to be backed up by the Computer Centre.

Every year Unicorn is upgraded to fix bugs and to add new developments. So each year the staff, Mary and Janet, will investigate what is new, and implement what we want. We are not programmers, so we don’t actually write the software, but instead we have to set up policies so that the software does what we want it to do. Luckily, we have a test server, which lets us try most things out beforehand. For example, we have to alter when books are due back during the Christmas holiday, so we start to think about this in October, just when we have finished dealing with the start-of-term rush. Data on new students are loaded at the beginning of the session from other University databases, so that they can use the Library as soon as they arrive.

Whilst data are important, we also rely upon the hardware to keep things going and the Library turns to Mike for this. We have over 200 PCs in staff and public areas in over 3 sites, including a CD-ROM network and the Sentry card access system. All PC owners will be familiar with the spaghetti trails of wire and the frustration of the blue screen of death. Thankfully, Mike comes up with solutions slightly more technical than “Have you tried switching it off and on again?” Which is nevertheless a most useful piece of advice!

Current developments

Electronic journals are a major step forward for libraries. Users can get full

access to the text from their desktop. Unfortunately, technology here is way ahead of publishing and legal technicalities, so there is still some way to go before access to everything is at the click of the mouse. Electronic books are also increasing in number, and we do have access to a few. However the same legal obstacles apply, and for many undergraduates print on paper will still have to be the medium most readily available for text books in the short term.

We will shortly be sending our notices out to users via email – just bear with us while we get all the addresses in. But perhaps we should be investigating sending them as text messages to the ever-present mobile phones? Users want the technology to work for them. It would be nice to have a reminder that your short loan book is due back in 10 minutes, but even better for you to be able to view it, download the bits you want and manipulate them into your essay wherever you are. Further developments here depend upon smaller devices with better screens and improvements to battery technology. Remember how large mobile phones were when they first came out?

Future developments

But what will the Library be like in another 20 years time? What will the undergraduate of 2022 do for library services? The short answer is that we don't really know! Whilst knowledge exists in recorded form, there will be a need to organise it. Computers increasingly talk directly to one another but experience shows that human intervention gets the best out of them. Users want to do things for themselves, and librarians as such may no longer exist – or may be orang-utans as in Terry Pratchett's Discworld. But until then there is a role for the Systems team in keeping abreast of developments and helping other members of library staff in using the current technology to offer services to our users wherever they are.

• **Take a look at our webpages or try Unicorn for yourselves at www.library.le.ac.uk**

Reunions

Leicester link renewed at Oxford

► A reception at Lincoln College on 9 April 2001 attracted more than 120 graduates and guests from both the Oxford area and many other parts of the country. Among the guests who gathered in the medieval hall of Oxford's eighth oldest college were Sir Maurice Shock, Leicester's former Vice-Chancellor, who was subsequently Rector of Lincoln, and Professor Peter Atkins (BSc Chemistry 1961), who is a fellow of the College.

Also present were a number of honorary graduates, including novelist Mr Colin Dexter (Honorary MA 1996), and several members of the Family Programme.

In addition to fine food, for which the College is renowned, graduates enjoyed tours of the College's 15th century kitchen, the 17th century Chapel and the 18th century Library.



(L-R) Professor Peter Atkins, Professor Robert Burgess, Sir Maurice Shock

Reunion of 1971 Law graduates

► A spirited "30 years on" reunion took place for graduates of Law 1971 in response to an invitation from Stephen Levinson, (LLB 1971), to return to the University on 6 October 2001.

Those attending enjoyed a full programme of activities beginning with a tour of the Faculty of Law and presentation by the Dean, Professor Robin White on the remarkable development of the

Faculty of Law over the intervening years. The 1971 graduates had been only the third intake of undergraduates into what had then been a department of the Social Science Faculty and since those days the expansion of legal studies at Leicester has been dramatic. After a (compulsory) photograph, the group visited the Richard Attenborough Centre and swapped stories over afternoon tea.

The group were joined by guests and members of the academic staff, including Professors Jan Grodecki, Professor Graham Barnsley and Professor Robin White, John Woodliffe and John Whitmore, at an evening reception and reunion dinner in the University's Gartree and Rutland Rooms, which brought a successful day to a close.

Stephen Levinson said: "It was a real great day and we were all very pleased to get together again after so long. Robin White did us proud and we were all very impressed at the progress of legal studies at Leicester – we shall return!"



(L-R) Ros Macleod, Stephen Levinson, Trevor Bloom, Kelvin Dent, Chris Gowers, Janet Grey, Professor Robin White, Dennis Matthews, Peter Birkett QC, John O'Hare



Mountaineering Club

► Last September, the Mountaineering Club from the early 1970s held a reunion at Hay-on-Wye in South Wales. A few more "old" members had been traced since the last reunion, bringing the number to 50 former members and their families. The event began in the hotel bar on Friday with old tales and mountaineering reminiscences. The following day, people went on a variety of walks and met up in the evening for a reunion dinner, followed by slide shows and talks about their mountaineering exploits of the 1970s and since. On Sunday, everyone said their farewells before going off on a variety of walks, sightseeing or bookshop-browsing.

The Mountaineering Club's next reunion is planned for autumn 2003. For details contact John Penniford at tel. 01895 442116 or e-mail: john.penniford@cgey.com

Graduates celebrate 50 year friendship

► Thanks to Mrs Joan (Mason) Hodges (BA Combined Arts 1954), a group of graduates who first met at College Hall in 1951 came together last year to celebrate their fifty-year



friendship at a reunion in Leicester on 21 July 2001. The group, all from different disciplines, found plenty to reminisce about over lunch and during their afternoon tour

of the campus. Plans to meet again in 2002 are underway and anyone wishing to join them is asked to contact the Graduate Relations Office at 0116 252 2195.

The other members of the group are: Miss Rubina Curtis, Mrs Kathleen (Davies) Griffin, Mrs Joy (Stockdale) Mottershead, Mrs Annette (Wynne) Cheeseman and Miss Pat Corrigan.

Explosive night for Leicester graduates

► Amid a riot of explosive colours and bangs ironically commemorating Guy Fawkes in Westminster, generations of graduates of the University of Leicester met 10 feet below ground at the Cabinet War Rooms for the 2001 London Reunion.

It was a night of nostalgia and renewing acquaintances for the 200 graduates who attended. They were treated to tours of the famous tourist attraction by guides who included a graduate as well as a current student of the University.



TV personality Sue Cook attending her first reunion since graduating in 1971 said the occasion brought memories of her time in Leicester flooding back. She said, "my experiences at Leicester have stood me in good stead for future years – being away from home for the first time, doing things on your own and meeting different people were a great part of growing up."

There was praise too from Ian Bell, a graduate the University College in 1957. He noted: "It was a university in the making. I remember sitting in the Library while earth-moving equipment constructed the new Union building. Reunions like this are very interesting – and the venue is great."

Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess highlighted the University's 80th Anniversary and recounted the many successes that had been achieved, including record recruitment; success in the *FT* and *Sunday Times* league tables where Leicester was listed in the top 20 UK universities and a student population of 17-18,000.

The gathering included former Executive Pro-Vice-Chancellor and honorary graduate Gerry Bernbaum and MP for Ilford North Linda Perham.

Reunion in Cyprus

► A reception on 8 March 2002 at the Hilton Hotel provided graduates and the families of current undergraduate students with an opportunity to meet with staff attending the British Council Education Fair in Nicosia, and to hear about the latest developments at the University.

The Education Fair, that is held over three days, aims to recruit new students for full-time and distance learning courses at the University. International Officer, Pat Baxter hosted the reception along with Professor of Law, Mark Thompson.



Cain's Brewery tour

► A Liverpool landmark since 1850, The Robert Cain Brewery, made for an innovative and interesting meeting place for a Merseyside reunion on 20 February 2002. The event, which attracted graduates from every Faculty between 1956-2001, members of the Family programme and guests, began with a vigorous tour of the original Victorian brewhouse buildings and culminated in a reception in the Brewery Tap – where there was an opportunity to sample some of the Brewery's award-winning ales. The event was hosted by John Alcock (BA Geography 1965), and Dr Bernard Kingston, Chairman of the Leicester Graduates' Association.



Coming Home to Leicester

► We reinvented the annual reunion for the 21st century to make sure that graduates had a warm welcome and an opportunity to go back to the classroom and sample some of the best the University has to offer. But it was not just the name change and move to the fine summer weather, which attracted over 350 graduates, friends and parents to the campus. The Homecoming was much bigger, involved almost every department and offered a choice of 50 events throughout the day.

There was music, a film, a quiz, demonstrations and departmental tours, a visit to the Botanical Gardens and mini-lectures on a host of topics, from genes and diabetes to archaeological fieldwork. At the end of a busy day, graduates were able to relax and meet staff at a reception in their old departments, before getting ready for the evening activities – a dinner at Beaumont Hall for graduates from the 1950s and a barbeque on campus.

Mr Nigel Stokes, a geography graduate of 1975, was enthusiastic in praise of the day's activities – a view shared by most. He said it was "a very good idea to provide short, varied and interesting sample lectures – made me feel a part of the university again. Please do same next year." And that's exactly what we plan to do on 22 June 2002.

Reunion of University College and King's College graduates in 2003

► Following the successful weekend reunion of University College and King's College graduates in April 2001, the organising committee has booked another reunion at Beaumont Hall on 29-30 March 2003. All former students at the College before 1957 are invited, and partners are also welcome. Programme details will become available later this year, but this early notice will give ample time to schedule the dates in your diary and plan your 2003 holidays around them.



If you are not already on the mailing list, or know of other 'missing' graduates between 1940-1957, you can make sure you receive full details by contacting either: **Mrs A Cooper (nee Weston)** at tel. 0116 270 3066 or **Mrs A Simons (née Robinson)** at tel. 01509 413483.

A notable feature of the last Reunion was a display of photographs and memorabilia loaned by former students. To expand this collection an appeal is being made to all former College students to search out material and loan it for display at the next Reunion. Send material to: Mr Ron Kinns at tel. 01603 867675 or by e-mail: ronkinns@btinternet.com

College Hall – forty years on

► Professor Angela Thody writes: "Eleven University entrants from 1961 enjoyed a reunion in September 2001, hosted by Dr Young, Warden of College Hall.

When we arrived at the University, College Hall had just opened to architectural acclaim and our amazement at the wonders of central heating, matching curtains and bedspreads and fitted wardrobes.

There was no bar, no arboretum and no men (in residence at least). We sang carols at Christmas around a huge tree in the foyer; had formal, served meals each evening; used the Hall sewing machine to make those oh-so-fashionable A-line shift dresses and each had our named napkins for dinner every day and attended sherry and sewing evenings with the Warden.

In the intervening forty years we've produced thirteen children (virtually all of whom went to University – whereas we were almost all first generation graduates), eleven grand-children, the holder of the Welsh women's breast stroke record, a writer of five books, a church organist, and an amdram singer.

We've coped with illnesses, divorce and one widowhood; and we've walked everything from Offa's Dyke to the NZ Milford Track. And of course we have travelled – to many countries, such as Zimbabwe, USA, South Africa, Singapore, Peru, Malaysia, Italy, Crete, China, and Barbados.

We met through being in adjacent rooms in A wing. Despite studying very different disciplines, we've stayed in touch over the years – we can recommend it and coming back to College Hall too."

Social Studies Grads plan to meet in 2003

► It has become something of a tradition for a group of Social Studies graduates, who first came together in 1953, to meet informally and they have been doing so for the last 30 years. Sylvia White (née Dellow) and Anne Klar (née Sykes) are planning the next get-together on the occasion of their 50th anniversary in 2003 and would like to hear from anyone interested in attending. You can reach Sylvia at tel. 01784 432740 and Anne at tel. 020 8567 8112.

Have lemur, will travel...

From a Leicester arts degree to a teaching career, how on earth did Mark Norris (BA English, 1990) end up in a zoo? It's a long tale...

► Inching warily forward, the pair of lemurs stopped to sniff the air. Rising up on back legs, they advanced uncertainly towards me, swaying like marionettes, their wrists upward and tails high, ready to run or fight.

This was about territory, crossing boundaries, beyond the protection of their family group. They appeared to be trying to recognise – perhaps rescue – the strange ring-tailed lemur I was holding. I remained crouching, only moving to twitch my lemur's tail hypnotically to tempt them closer. Close enough for a cursory sniff, then they stepped back, unsure – not a lemur scent they recognised.

Someone behind me moved to reload film. The lemur pair returned to the safety of their group, sunbathing in a nearby bush. I slowly placed the lemur hand puppet safely back inside my jacket. For a few seconds I had been a part of their

question has always been, which Attenborough? Having spent four years with the University of Leicester Theatre (LUT), then trained and taught drama, I expected to follow in the artistic footsteps of Richard Attenborough – whom I nearly got to act with on a university promotional video. Instead, I find myself in his brother David's territory, trying to communicate a passion for the natural world.

The teamwork involved in LUT is much the same for those of us who run the events and education programme at Newquay Zoo. Curtain up at ten each morning, five minute calls for talks throughout the day and fellow “actors” with unpredictable minds and bladders of their own.

Evening lectures and press interviews often start with the funnier side of working with animals in public, those “Blue Peter” elephant moments when life seems more like a Gerald Durrell book each day –

hand puppets, or a zoo visit, we would undoubtedly learn much about ourselves.

Gandhi wrote that “a nation is judged by how it treats its animals”. It can also be judged by how we value or view ourselves through nature. This is a complex practical and ethical issue I'm challenged by every day, whether talking to visitors of all ages, more formal teaching, introducing hissing Madagascan cockroaches to schoolchildren or unsettled by animal welfare conditions in zoos elsewhere.

Creative thinking skills along with a curiosity about unexplored territory have helped me to continue learning. A fascination with language and narrative – finding and telling the connections and stories behind things – is at the root of this, sharing or stealing ideas from many disciplines. This has helped me to take an active role at local level in EPIC (Education Providers in Cornwall), a network of galleries, gardens, museums, and wildlife organisations. At national level, I sit on the Zoo Federation Education Committee.

I've visited zoos in Ireland, Europe and the USA, returning with photo albums full of information signs or enclosure design ideas rather than of the animals themselves. Set design and graphics experience from theatre work and learning to write for an audience have been invaluable in creating exhibitions, interesting spaces and intriguing trails about plants and animals around the zoo.

Rich in language and landscape, Cornwall was a culture shock after the multicultural Midlands. Yet it was a move which seemed strangely blessed by Leicester connections. Arriving to work the first day, I heard Ken Phillips on the radio, a former tutor and “Proper Cornishman” who died shortly after his retirement to Bodmin Moor. I've been interviewed on the same radio programme many times

Communicating the serious side of running a commercial business with a conservation aim also needs to be done without the eyes glazing over at yet another mention of the “greenhouse effect”

world, in touch with one of most rare, curious and beautiful creatures on Earth.

This encounter took place not in Madagascar but at Fota Wildlife Park in Ireland, preparing to give a talk on a foreign language learning project at my Zoo in Newquay, Cornwall.

I sometimes wonder, gazing at my fellow creatures, what a Leicester arts graduate is doing in a world of zoologists, scientists, and marine biologists. Puppet shows in dodgy French to teach schoolchildren about lemur conservation is one answer.

You might call my lemur encounter an “Attenborough moment,” after that famous gorilla encounter – but for me, the

snakes disappearing down my shirt or unfortunate spoonerisms when talking about prickly stick insects or fruitsuckers. Yet communicating the serious side of running a commercial business with a conservation aim also needs to be done without the eyes glazing over at yet another mention of the “greenhouse effect.”

My academic studies at Leicester have been prophetically helpful here. Researching images of the natural landscape by obscure Great War poets or the use of animal characters and invented languages in anthropomorphic literature made me aware that we only seem to value nature as it disappears or as we become more remote from it. If we could view the world with animal eyes (or noses) through fiction,



since then, usually on “weird science” topics. I suggested we contact Leicester’s Sir Alec Jeffreys to DNA test dung samples from the supposed “Beast of Bodmin.” The eclipse and local sea serpent stories brought other TV interviews. Embarrassingly, many people have seen these interviews, though not the sea serpents.

I’m frequently asked what my favourite animal is. If reincarnation were possible, sloths would be one obvious choice, dung beetles another. Perhaps it would have to be one of our retired bachelor pair of ring-tailed lemurs, Larry and Norman, the most laid back John Le Mesurier animals I’ve ever met.

As for questions about the strangest animals I’ve worked with, these must include the 250,000 visitors I meet each year. When I left teaching to work at the zoo five years ago, some of my pupils thought I was going to teach Shakespeare to monkeys. If only they knew, after several years of sulky teenagers communicating largely through grunts and body language...

My interesting and unpredictable life outdoors means I’ve never regretted the change, in spite of the old theatrical adage suggesting you should “never work with children or animals”.

I hope one day my path from Leicester to Cornwall will lead me to the forests of Madagascar – and I’ve promised Jules my lemur hand puppet he’s coming too.

“The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The pathways to it are not found, but made. The making of these pathways changes both the maker and the destination.” (Australian Commission for the Future).

• *Mark Norris is part of a team that has helped to win awards for modernising the small 1960s Newquay Zoo, now under the new ownership and investment of Zoo director Mike Thomas.*



A celebration of the life and work of

Professor Leslie Sykes

► With the death of Leslie Sykes from lung cancer on 27 February 2001, the University has lost the last of the founding fathers who oversaw the transformation of the fledgling University College of Leicester into the University of Leicester in the late 1950s and guided its development through to the end of the 1970s.

Born in Sheffield in 1912, he came to Leicester, after distinguished war service, as the first Professor of French in 1947, the same year as his close friend Jack Simmons, and immediately set about turning what was then a small and undistinguished Department into one of the best in the country. In 1952, no fewer than four of the first cohort of eleven students chosen by him obtained Firsts in the University of London external French degree. Over the next twenty years, the Department grew and flourished under his inspired guidance. A tall and imposing figure, instantly recognizable on photographs of the period, he was always fiercely protective of the staff and students in his care while concealing beneath his somewhat gruff Yorkshire exterior a profound sensitivity and an often mischievous sense of humour.

Although, by his own estimation, he was never a particularly distinguished scholar (his only book, based on his doctoral thesis on the early nineteenth-



century sentimental novelist Madame Cottin, was published by Basil Blackwell in 1949), he was an outstanding teacher and administrator. Having served as Dean of Arts on the Charter Committee which, in the words of Jack Simmons, "laboured hard and long" between 1955 and 1957 when university status was eventually achieved, he was in the early 1960s one of a small group of academics and industrialists involved in the planning of Warwick University, so named it is said, despite its location, because it was Leslie who pointed out that you couldn't expect parents to consider "sending their children to Coventry"! In 1969, he was elected Pro-Vice-Chancellor and, a year later, the post of Deputy Vice-Chancellor was created specifically for him in order to make the best use of his extensive experience at the highest level. Perhaps his most significant

contribution in this role lay in preparing the ground for the Medical School, which opened its doors in 1975. The University Bookshop, on whose Management Committee he continued to serve well into the 1990s, had also been the brainchild of himself and Professor Simmons.

Following his retirement in 1978, he devoted much of his energy to voluntary and community work, becoming chairman of the Leicester Citizens' Advice Bureau and sitting on both the East Midlands and national councils of Arthritis Care. He was also a distinguished Chairman of Convocation in the early 1980s. As a committed left-winger (he was a one-time member of the Communist Party and later joined the SDP), his longstanding interest in electoral reform bore fruit in 1990 in a small privately published pamphlet entitled *Proportional Representation: Which System?*, which attracted widespread attention at the time.

A celebration of his life and work, consisting of selected songs, readings, and reminiscences, took place in the Richard Attenborough Centre on 12 May 2001, attended by his second wife, Patricia, whom he married in 1967, the daughter of his first marriage, Helen, and about 80 of his former students, colleagues and friends. A fund has now been set up in his memory to provide scholarships and prizes for students reading French. Anyone wishing to contribute is invited to write to Professor Sharon Wood, School of Modern Languages, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH.

Dr Peter Fawcett

Professor G H McWilliam

► Emeritus Professor Harry McWilliam died of a long-standing heart condition at his home on 1 January 2001. Scholar, educator, translator, opera-lover and a kind and genial man with a wicked sense of humour, Harry McWilliam worked tirelessly for the furtherance of Italian studies throughout a long and distinguished career.

The route which took him to his appointment as the newly-established Chair of Italian at the University in 1972 was not easy or obvious. He was born on 11 June 1927 in Wallasey, Cheshire. After school and a spell with the RAF, he went to the University of Leeds in 1949 to read for a

general degree. The syllabus required a foreign language, and he initially thought of reading German, but was attracted by the infectious enthusiasm of one of his first teachers, Frederick May, he chose Italian instead. After spending a year at the Collegio Borromeo in Pavia he returned to Leeds, where he graduated with a First in Italian in 1953. He began his teaching career at Leeds, then moved to Bedford College and to Trinity College, Dublin. In 1966 he was appointed to a Readership at the University of Kent, where he worked on and published his universally-acclaimed translation of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. To this he added, in 1995, a lengthy

introduction and notes which are a further major contribution to Boccaccio scholarship.

Throughout his fifteen years as Head of the Department of Italian at Leicester his service to Italian studies and his encouragement to colleagues and students were unfailing, as was his work for the Leicester branch of the Dante Alighieri Society. After his retirement in 1987 he was honoured with the publication of a Festschrift.

Julie Dashwood

Professor McWilliam



Reflections on the life and work of

Miss Monica M B Jones

► Monica Jones, who died on 15 February 2001, came to University College, Leicester, in 1946, when the one-person departments which had taught the entire University of London syllabus in their subjects during World War II were each augmented by a young Assistant Lecturer. Educated at Kidderminster Girls' High School, she was a State Scholar and an Open Exhibitioner at St Hugh's College, Oxford, prior to graduating in 1944 with a First Class degree.

She taught for a time at Brereton Hall, a girls' day boarding school. Monica had a perceptive appreciation of literature of all periods. She taught with individuality and panache. Her lectures were gripping. She was striking to look at, with long golden hair which she tossed back as she spoke, and her dress was colourful and of the latest fashion.

As a tutor she was demanding but not intimidating. She would take up with enthusiasm a student's hesitant remark and widen its implications until it became a major contribution to the discussion. Her written comments on essays were conversational and memorable, dissecting the author under discussion with matter-

of-fact directness and contributing an original viewpoint. Her students spoke of her with admiration and affection. A number of them went on to academic careers, among them Malcolm Bradbury.

She was very good company, lively in conversation with a wicked sense of humour. Her colleagues within and outside the English Department became her life-long friends. She took a full part in everything that went on, acting in staff-student plays and collaborating with students in their cultural activities. She was memorable as Tilburina in Sheridan's *The Critic* (with Rupert Evans as Don Whiskerandos), going mad in white satin while her confidante went mad in white linen. Equally memorable was her appearance as Addison's Fair *Rosamund*, with Professor Leon as Henry II, Professor Humphreys as the Angel of Peace and Professor Simmons as the Angel of War.

Monica Jones, as photographed by Philip Larkin. By kind permission of the publishers, Faber & Faber.



Nationally she was known as the long-time companion of the poet Philip Larkin (a friendship begun in Leicester when Philip was Assistant Librarian from 1946-1950). She shared his interests and influenced his writing. He dedicated *The Less Deceived* to her in 1955.

She was happiest in the aspiring two decades after the War, when the revived university world required broad knowledge rather than concentration on one area of a subject. In an interview for *Ripple* in the late 1960s she remarked that students didn't seem to laugh as much as they used to.

Dr A K B Evans

'Monica Jones was one of the most fictionalised real people of the last half-century. As well as featuring in Philip Larkin's novels and poems, she also appears in two 1950s novels set in University College, Leicester; as lecturer Margaret Peel, 'small, thin and bespectacled, with bright make-up' in Amis's *Lucky Jim*, and the sophisticated, provocative Dr Viola Mansfield, smoking cigarettes 'through a long jade holder' in Bradbury's *Eating People is Wrong*.'

War Memorial Unveiled

► Roger Anderson and a small group of former students from the war years held a memorial ceremony in the University's Council Chamber on Friday, 20 April 2001, as a tribute to six old University College students who forfeited their lives while on military service for World War II.

In his welcoming address, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Robert Burgess, said that it was a pleasure to have University College Leicester's 1940s students visiting the University. During the ceremony, the families, relatives and friends paid tribute to each of those remembered: Jack Bramley, George Eades, Jack Gibson, Leslie Lewin, Ronald Shuttleworth and Graham Wright.

Afterwards guests made their way to the grounds in front of the Fielding Johnson Building to formally hand over to the University a bench with a plaque containing

the names of the six. Professor Burgess said that the bench was a splendid gift by which to remember the lives of these former students and that it would give great benefit and pleasure. The location was particularly fitting as the Fielding Johnson building had originally been purchased for the University College as a memorial to the Leicester dead of the 1914-18 War.

The Memorial Team wishes to express its thanks to the following contributors to the Memorial Bench Fund, whose generosity made the gift possible:

Dr Roger Anderson, Mrs Audrey (née Weston) Cooper, Mrs Gwen Dunn, Mr Henry Hand, Mr A E Jennings, Dr Roy and Mrs Muriel (née Law) Johnson, Mr Ronald S Kinns, Mrs Rowena (née Sumpton) Lord, Dr Bryan E Plunkett, Dr Frank and Mrs Joan (née Whorlton)



The Memorial Team with the Vice-Chancellor

Rodwell, Dr J Kenneth H and Mrs Audrey (née Templeman) Rose, Mrs Pat Ruddick, Mrs Daphne Rumball, Mr Michael Russell, Mr E Norman 'Bish' Sharpe, Mr Clive Shuttleworth, Mr Robert and Mrs Audrey (née Robinson) Simons, Mr Raymond and Mrs Doris (née Savage) Venables, Mr Derek E Walton and Dr Duncan Wilson.

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