

A Timely Proposal

Alumni Richard Watson and Anita Kushe were on top of the world last month after Richard surprised girlfriend Anita by proposing at the top of the Chamberlain clocktower in an intimate moment overlooking the University's Edgbaston campus. For the full story see page 2.

Lost World Discovered Under the North Sea

News



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Birmingham Scientists are using seismic data to reveal a spectacular prehistoric landscape previously unknown to science where early man roamed more than 10,000 years ago, deep beneath the North Sea.

With the aid of new high-powered computing facilities at the HP VISTA (Visualisation and Spatial Technology) Centre, a team of archaeologists, geologists and engineers are beginning to explore and visualise this hidden landscape, which, during the period from 8000 - 18,000 years before the present day, was a large plain on which humans hunted animals and gathered plants.

The team is revealing some amazing secrets as they reconstruct the lost environment, including evidence of a large river comparable in size to the Thames or Rhine, which was buried when its valley was flooded some 7,000 years ago due to glacial melting. The river channel, which has provisionally been named the Shotton River after the

University's pioneering geologist and archaeologist Professor Fred Shotton, is over 600 metres wide and has so far been traced for a length of 27.5 kilometres travelling in a north west-south easterly direction.

Engineers have produced preliminary virtual reconstruction images of the river and its surrounding environment prior to the area becoming flooded. Bob Stone, Head of Engineering's Human Interface Technology Team said, 'This is the most exciting and challenging virtual reality project since Virtual Stonehenge in 1996. Not only are we working with our colleagues in Archaeology to ensure the visual accuracy of this very rich environment, we are basing the topography of the virtual landscape on actual seismic data

and the computer-generated flora on pollen and plant traces extracted from geological core samples retrieved from the sea bed'.

Vince Gaffney, Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity and lead investigator on the project comments, 'This pilot project has great significance to the whole of the quaternary research community, both in its environmental, geological and archaeological forms. We intend to extend the project to visualise the whole of the now submerged land bridge that previously joined Britain to Northern Europe as one land mass, providing scientists with a new insight into the previous human occupation of the North Sea.'

A Quick Word...



Love was definitely in the air when alumnus Richard Watson arranged a special return to the campus where he met his now fiancée Anita Kushe. Richard waited until they had reached the top of Old Joe to make his surprise proposal on bended knee and happily Anita accepted. See the front cover and opposite for full details.

This year's Baggs lecture was given by respected scientist and broadcaster Professor Lord Robert Winston. Tickets to the annual lecture on the theme of Happiness proved to be so popular they 'sold-out' in record time. For more details see page 3.

The University last month played host to a group of twelve senior managers from Iraqi Universities including Baghdad and Basra as part of a course run in partnership between the University and the British Council aimed at assisting administrators and academics in reconstructing higher education in Iraq. For the full story see opposite

A recent media campaign has attracted interest from over 500 people interested in taking part in a smoking trial. 900 volunteer smokers are being sought to take part in the first large study in the world combining a well-established anti-depressant with nicotine replacement therapy to help quit. The trial is supported by Cancer Research UK and links local Smoking Cessation Services with the University's Department of Public Health and Epidemiology. If you are interested in taking part, details can be found on page 4.

And as we went to press some colleagues and students were taking part in national protests over academic pay and tuition fees.

Sam

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Lovestruck Couple Scale Dizzy Heights

Love was in the air for two former students who said 'I will' last month. Biosciences graduates Richard Watson and Anita Kushe were all smiles despite the bitter cold after Richard surprised girlfriend Anita by proposing at the top of 'Old Joe'.

Birmingham-born Richard wooed partner Anita to the top clocktower to make the surprise proposal on bended knee. And to his joy, Anita happily accepted - much to the approving pre-wedding bells of Old Joe himself!

'I'm delighted Anita's answer was 'yes', said Richard. 'The University obviously holds many fond memories for both of us, so I thought the top of Old Joe would be an extremely romantic place to propose.'

'I was very nervous on our journey to the top of the clocktower as I knew this was the moment of a lifetime - and I know my heart skipped a beat. But I'm pleased to say Anita has agreed to be my wife, which makes me a very happy man!'

Anita is delighted to become Richard's fiancée. She said: *'What a beautiful surprise. I had no idea what he was planning, but I'm over the moon. It was the perfect setting, made extra special as we stepped back in time to where we first met. This a truly memorable day - I always knew Richard was an old romantic at heart!'*

The couple first clocked eyes on one another at the University's Sub-Aqua Club in 1993 when Richard was studying for a degree in Biological Sciences and Anita was taking a degree in Biochemistry. However, it took a little more time for love to blossom...

Richard continued his studies at Birmingham, completing a PhD and a Post-Doctorate in plant physiology. Anita also returned to the University to train as a Physiotherapist. It was at this point that the couple started dating - and they haven't looked back since!

Birmingham Teams Up with Baghdad and Basra

Twelve senior managers from Iraqi Universities including Baghdad and Basra visited Birmingham last month for the first of three training courses to assist administrators and academics in reconstructing higher education in Iraq.

Organised by the University and the British Council, the courses are designed to provide senior administrators and academics with a greater depth of knowledge and understanding in areas of administration and to facilitate research links between Birmingham and Iraqi higher education institutions.

The looting and fires shortly after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime destroyed many of the universities' classrooms, libraries and laboratories from Baghdad to the southern regions in Iraq. Classrooms, administration buildings, computer centres and academic record facilities were burned to the walls. On many campuses every computer, light fitting, ceiling fan, and every piece of furniture has been stolen.

Professor Mohamed Al-Rubeai, now at Birmingham's School of Engineering, studied at Baghdad University. After graduation he worked there as a Demonstrator. Seconded to Iraq last year to advise the Government on the reconstruction of higher education in Iraq, Professor Al-Rubeai is working with colleagues at the University and the British Council to co-ordinate the training programmes.

Professor Al-Rubeai said: *'Iraqi academics have been cut off from the world of international higher education for over 20 years. Most have never visited world-class research laboratories, or been exposed to modern management techniques.'*

'Iraqi universities are bravely trying to cope with minimal or non-existent facilities. They desperately need the proper tools of instruction. Even text

books are largely missing. Collaboration with experienced academics and other professionals is vital to the regeneration of this important part of Iraq's infrastructure.'

'After seeing the looting and fires on television news, I wanted to return to Iraq to serve my homeland after liberation. I am delighted that the University is taking such a major role in the reconstruction of Higher Education in Iraq.'

During their 3-week stay the Iraqi administrators and academics will take part in lectures and seminars on a range of issues including marketing, public relations, estate management, information services, business development, working with industry, resources, personnel, managing research, funding strategy, planning, policy and financial management.

Seminar Praises Priestley

The University recently hosted a one-day seminar titled 'In Praise of Priestley' - celebrating the life and times of Joseph Priestley who died two hundred years ago.

The seminar celebrated Joseph Priestley's achievements as a Unitarian minister, scientist, political commentator, philosopher and educationalist. Priestley lived in Birmingham from 1780-91 and was a member of the Lunar Society, making important discoveries about properties of air, water, plants and static electricity - he synthesised water, discovered oxygen and identified photosynthesis. However his radical political views

led to a mob destroying his scientific papers and equipment in 1791. He died in America after he emigrated there in 1794.

Dr Gron Tudor Jones from the Centre for Lifelong Learning explains: *'Priestley was a remarkable man with an international reputation. His influence gives us fascinating food for thought even two hundred years after his death.'*

Physicists Help Engineer Chocolate and Icecream

To understand industrial processes such as the production of foods, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, paints, detergents and many other products that feature in our daily lives scientists need to be able to see inside manufacturing equipment. Birmingham physicists and engineers are achieving this by using a modified form of 'body scanner'.

Chief Executive of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, John O'Reilly recently launched the University's new cyclotron, a machine that will help scientists to do this by making the radioactive tracers that track the flow of fluids within manufacturing processes.

The cyclotron accelerates sub-atomic particles which bombard the tracer in order to make the radioactive isotope. The resulting tracers are then used in a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Scanner which is set up around the process. The tracer can then follow the flow of substances such as oil through an engine or chocolate and ice-cream as it flows inside machinery during production. This technology will help industry to understand and therefore streamline its manufacturing processes making them more efficient, safer and improving product quality.

The Positron Imaging Centre which houses the scanner and the cyclotron is the only centre in the world to use this equipment for non-medical applications.

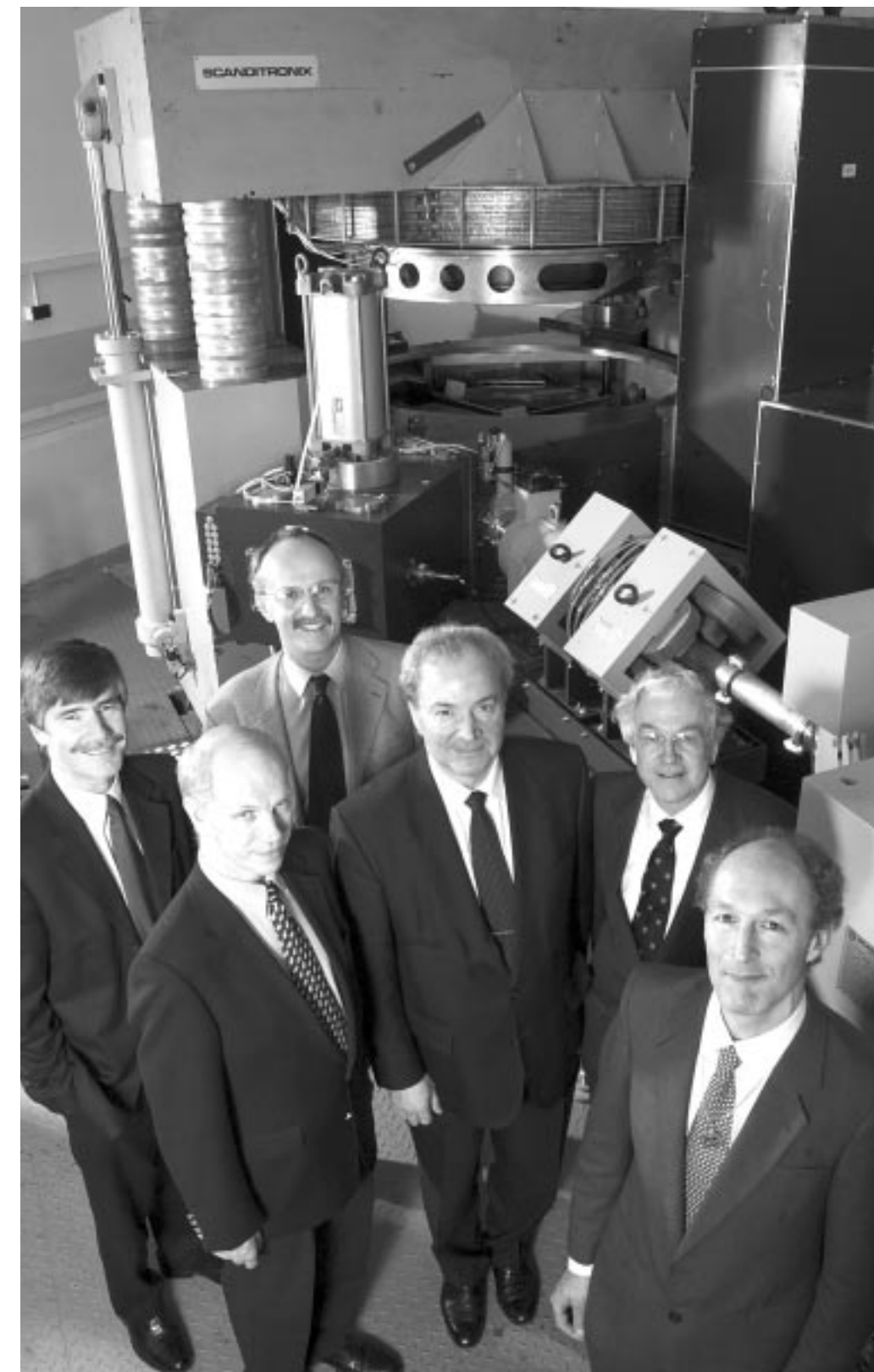
Dr David Parker, Director of the Positron Imaging Centre and EPSRC Senior Research Fellow, says, *'Birmingham is a pioneer of positron emission particle tracking - the tracking of the flow of fluids and granules through machinery or operating equipment by labelling one particle with a radioactive*

tracer. We are delighted to launch the cyclotron officially as it is an integral part of our work within the Schools of Physics and Engineering.'

Professor Jonathan Seville, Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering, says, *'Formulation Engineering is strongly consumer-led, for example, scientists now have to think about the way in which taste chemicals in food-stuffs are released and perceived or how an active chemical of a drug is released into the body. To produce these materials efficiently requires combined understanding of their chemistry, processing and materials science and the cyclotron, in combination with the PET scanner, will allow us to do this.'*

The cyclotron was bought in a sealed bid internet auction from the American Government's General Services Administration (GSA). Once the purchase had been agreed, the School of Physics worked closely with procurement staff at the University to work through the logistics of bringing the cyclotron to Birmingham - no small task given the size and weight of the shipments and the fact that radiation, albeit a small amount, was involved.

The purchase was made possible through money awarded to the University from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC).



(L-R) Graham Davies, John O'Reilly, Jonathan Seville, Vice Chancellor Michael Sterling, John Nelson and David Parker at the launch of the Cyclotron last month.

Happiness Lecture is Sell-out Success



Acclaimed broadcaster and scientist Professor Lord Robert Winston visited the University last month to give the annual public Baggs Memorial Lecture on the theme of 'Happiness'. The free event proved to be so popular that tickets went in record time.

Lord Winston is Professor of Fertility Studies at Imperial College, London University, and Director of NHS Research and Development for Hammersmith Hospital NHS Trust. His contribution to clinical medicine includes developments in gynaecological microsurgery and his team has established various improvements in reproductive medicine. He regularly writes or hosts science programmes for the BBC and the Discovery network. His BBC series include: *The Human Body*, *Walking with Caveman* and the recent *Child of our Time*. Lord Winston was recently appointed Chairman of the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology.

The Baggs Memorial Lecture has been an annual event since 1976. Thomas Baggs was an alumnus

who went on to become a teacher, journalist and a war correspondent for *the Daily Mail* before pursuing a successful career in advertising and publicity for the USA automobile industry. When he died in 1973 he bequeathed a substantial sum to the University to provide for an annual public lecture on the theme of 'Happiness - what it is and how it may be achieved by individuals as well as nations.'

This annual event has seen many distinguished speakers tackling the topic from their personal viewpoint, including Yehudi Menuhin, David Attenborough, Peter Ustinov, Maureen Lipman, David Lodge, Professor Anthony Clare, Rabbi Lionel Blue, James Naughtie, and most recently, Dr Adam Hart Davies.

Spin Cycle

A real mix of local, national and international media coverage this month. Biosciences' **Tim Blackburn** recently had an article published in *the New Zealand Herald* where he is on a period of study leave; Social Sciences' **Colin Rowat** gave an interview to SAGA FM's *Drivetime* on the latest bombings in Iraq and also spoke at an industry conference on electricity in Iraq organised by The CWC Group; The School of Physics and Astronomy's **Peter Borcherds** had an explanation printed in *the Times*' Question and Answers column and a letter in the Public Agenda letters page also of *the Times*; the School of Education's **Ranjit Sondhi** was profiled and listed in *the Independent* as a member of the BBC's Board of Governors; Sports Sciences' **David Jones** spoke to the Reuters Sports Desk about the use of steroids; Public Policy's John Raine was interviewed by *the Guardian* about the Public Service MBA; The visiting Iraqi delegates were interviewed by the *THES* and *the Birmingham Post*. News stories about their visit also appeared in *the Independent*, *the Birmingham Evening Mail*, *the Western Mail* and *the Express and Star* series; The Association of Business Schools (ABS) newsletter featured an article on the Business School's MA in *Marketing*, written by **Chris Hackley**; **Jonathan Michie**, new Director of the Business School, was interviewed by *Vision Magazine*, while the ABS newsletter featured an article on his appointment; Humanities student **Frank Tickner** spoke to *the Independent* about his life as a Birmingham student; The School of Law's recent lecture by Lord Falconer gained media coverage in a number of publications, including *the Financial Times*, *the Birmingham Evening Mail* and *the Birmingham News*; **Gisela Stuart's** visit to the Law School was reported in *the Birmingham Post*; Security's **Clare Fentham** was profiled in *Professional Security Magazine*; INLOGOV's **Peter Watt** gave two interviews to Radio 5 Live on the subject of Council Tax; **Graham Davies**, Head of the School of Engineering, spoke to *Professional Engineer* about Top Up Fees; Archaeology's **Simon Fitch** and Electrical Engineering's **Bob Stone** spoke to *the Guardian* about the North Sea Visualisation project; **The VC** spoke to the *THES* about HE funding and the Russell Group; **Mike Ward** of Mechanical Engineering spoke to *the Birmingham Post* about Microengineering and Nanotechnology; Immunity and Infection's **Mark Pallen** profiled Darwin Day on Radio WM; **Paul Aveyard** recruited smokers to his nortriptyline trial by appearing on BBC Midlands Today, Ed Doolan's WM show, the Wolf, Bear and Beacon radio stations and BBC 5 Live; **Mike Hawkins** discussed his research on discrepancies in long-term care of childhood cancer survivors in national media including BBC News and Sky News; **Gary Woods**, the Centre for Lifelong Learning's psychologist, talked to Radio 4's *You and Yours* about superstitions surrounding Friday 13th; **Delyth Chambers** appeared on BBC News and spoke to *the Birmingham Post* and 5 Live about the Tomlinson report into changes to 14-19 education; the Institute for German Studies' **Charlie Jeffery** was interviewed on Deutschlandradio's equivalent of Radio 4's *Today Programme* on Tony Blair, the recent HE Bill vote and the Hutton Report. Law's **Stephen Shute** was interviewed by Radio 4 journalist, Marcel Berlins, as part of a programme on parole.

An International Highland Fling

The International Office took the opportunity over the winter vacation to take a group of 45 students from six different continents to Edinburgh for a taste of Scottish culture. The students took the opportunity to view the sights of Edinburgh from ground level in the day, on a walking tour of the Royal Mile and later the amazing views of the city and castle from the top of the Ferris wheel in the winter market.

During the trip the international students joined current students and alumni from the 1960's, 70's and 80's enjoyed refreshments and danced to the music of a Scottish folk band at a Christmas meal and party organised by the Birmingham University Graduates in Scotland (BUGS).

The International Office runs a programme of social events for international students. For more information please contact Yvonne Haines Tel: 0121-414 6901 Email: Y.M.Haines@bham.ac.uk



Trial Helps Smokers in Quest to Quit

Staff and student smokers are invited to take part in the first large study in the world combining a well-established anti-depressant with nicotine replacement therapy to help quit. People who smoke more than 10 cigarettes a day are needed by the Department of Public Health and Epidemiology to join in the trial. A 'stop smoking' group runs on the Edgbaston campus and attendance at that or another local group gives support to participants.



(L-R) Quitters Hotline: The team behind the trial; Research Nurse Carol Johnson, Dr Paul Aveyard and Research Administrator Sally Fillingham

The trial is supported by Cancer Research UK and links local Smoking Cessation Services with the University's Department of Public Health and Epidemiology.

A media campaign has attracted interest from over 500 people - 900 are needed in total. The study involves participants taking nortriptyline once an evening, which is available free of charge. Placebo tablets will be given to half the participants in this double-blind study. Nortriptyline is a tricyclic anti-depressant that has been widely used for around 30 years. It is believed the drug will reduce nicotine withdrawal symptoms that are particularly acute for a month after quitting. The tablets would be taken for 8 weeks.

Group support through attendance at smoking cessation groups is an essential partner to the capsules, and through which nicotine replacement products will be used. South Birmingham Smoking Cessation Service is setting up a group at the Guild, hopefully to meet on Wednesdays after Easter. For more information telephone Jane Beach, Smoking Cessation Advisor

on 07970 971338 or contact Emma Lloyd at the Guild. Jane will be at the Guild on National No Smoking day, 10 March, from 10.30 until 1.00 pm to give advice.

Participants will be assessed for suitability on health grounds and will be supported throughout the study. The team behind the trial (pictured with their frantically ringing phones) are Dr Paul Aveyard, research nurse Carol Johnson and research administrator Sally Fillingham.

Dr Paul Aveyard explains: 'This is an exciting chance to get a little extra help in stopping smoking while taking part in this major study. This is a structured, controlled trial subject to ethical and medical quality markers with support offered from our team and your local smoking cessation group. Previous evidence suggests we can be confident that this drug will make giving up smoking easier.'

Smokers interested in taking part should call Sally Fillingham ext 46759 or Email: S.C.Fillingham@bham.ac.uk All enquiries will be treated in complete confidence.

Stirring the Languages Melting Pot

By Ros Dodd

To the untrained ear and eye, the Chinese and Japanese languages are almost indistinguishable. To Janet Wong (pictured below), they are very different. And she should know. The 22-year-old student from Hong Kong is in her final year of a Bachelor of Commerce with Japanese degree at Birmingham. As part of the course, she spent a 'wonderful' year abroad, studying at Hitotsubashi University in the city of Kunitachi, near Tokyo. As well as vastly improving her language skills, the experience boosted her understanding of the country and its people.

But what made Janet, whose native tongue is Cantonese Chinese, decide to study Japanese alongside commerce?

'I did a bit of Japanese at secondary school, and when I came here I thought it would be nice to do it again,' she says. 'Also, Japan is really big in Asia so when I return to Hong Kong I'll look for a job in a company that has a market in Japan or a Japanese firm operating in China.'

Janet is one of a growing number of students coming to Birmingham who opt to study - sometimes from scratch - one of 12 available modern languages in conjunction with a non-language subject, such as law, accounting or engineering.

'One of Birmingham's strengths is that you do get all kinds of ways of combining modules: you can major in a language and do a bit of something else, or major in something else and do a bit of language,' explains Dr David Hill, director of the Centre for European Languages and Cultures (CELC).

'In terms of joint honours degrees, Birmingham is unusual in offering a language with maths or business studies or music - subjects that might not seem obvious companions. We're becoming more flexible now.'

The reason for this increased flexibility is in large part due to the decline in language teaching in schools (studying a foreign language is no longer compulsory between the ages of 14 and 16), which means fewer youngsters being educated to A-level standard.

Even those who do obtain a foreign language A-level are less likely than in the past to have knowledge of a second modern language. To accommodate such under-graduates, Birmingham offers degree courses allowing students to study - on a 70/30 ratio - the

language in which they obtained an A-level and another one in which they didn't. There is even an option to study three languages.

'The number of people taking A-levels in a foreign language is declining, with the exception of Spanish, which remains constant, so our market for potential students is also declining,' says Dr Hill. 'As a result, we are having to develop various strategies to ensure our numbers don't go down.'

These strategies are working. Although many university language schools across the country are struggling - some have even closed - Birmingham's numbers are 'buoyant'.

The CELC, which encompasses the departments of French, German, Hispanic and Italian Studies, works closely with the Centre for Modern Languages (CML), with both centres operating within the School of Humanities.

'The CELC teaches the culture and history and sometimes the politics of the particular country, as well as the language, while we are more of a specialist, dedicated language department,' says Professor John Klapper, who heads up the CML.

A BA modern languages degree might be taught across both centres, with the CELC providing the teaching for, say, French, and the CML tutoring on a language the CELC doesn't offer, such as Japanese or Chinese.

Unlike the CELC, the CML offers courses, through its Open Access Programme, to a wide range of people, including university staff and the general public.

'At the moment we have 1,100 people on the programme, about a third of whom are from the general public,' says Professor Klapper.

Last year the CML launched Birmingham International Business Communications (BIBC), which incorporates language training and translation and interpreting skills aimed at helping companies, public bodies and individuals communicate effectively in the ever-expanding world of international business.

'We're collaborating on this with the English for International Students Unit to provide a broad range of language services for businesses in the West Midlands,' explains Professor Klapper. 'What we offer is primary training, usually on a one-to-one basis, for people such as the managing director of a company.'

For students like Janet Wong, being able to master a foreign tongue in addition to graduating in their main academic field is a valuable bonus. *'Doing Japanese sometimes means more work,' she says, 'but it also means more fun.'*



Final year commerce student Janet Wong.

English at Home and from Afar

By Ros Dodd



It's not only the building that evokes memories of another era in England's history: in a cupboard in Centre Director Chris Kennedy's office is a set of croquet balls. *'We have a lovely lawn at the back and we like to think this is the only place in England where you can get an MA and learn to play croquet at the same time,' says Chris with a smile.*

What CELS has to offer, though, is far from traditional. The Centre provides cutting edge postgraduate training in a variety of linguistic subjects, the most popular of which is the MA in TEFL/TESL (Teaching English as a Foreign or Second

Language). Other Masters degree courses include Applied Linguistics, Lexicography, Translation Studies and Corpus Linguistics.

Relatively few of the Centre's students actually study at Westmere: about 220 of the 260 scholars currently enrolled on courses live overseas, nearly 100 of those in Japan. *'We have two sorts of programme,' explains Chris. 'The first is in-house, where students come here for a year to get their*

Masters. Then, about five or six years ago, we saw it would be a good idea to give people, particularly native English speakers living abroad, the option of studying in their own country rather than having to give up their jobs to come here. So we started to offer two Open Distance Learning programmes.'

More recently, the Centre added to its portfolio a distance modular PhD, which is proving more popular than the standard doctorate programme.

'In terms of future development, we're hopefully getting a new distance Masters in

Applied Linguistics and, in September, a new MA in Discourse, Culture and Communication.'

Another move towards expansion is to set up a distance programme in China.

'Two of us have been there and we have a couple of potential partners, so it depends how long the negotiations take, but hopefully that will be up and running within the next year to 18 months.'

A large part of the CELS' distance administration is handled at Westmere, and almost all its tutoring, but local administration centres situated in Japan, Korea, Canada and Brazil help to ease some of the workload.

'Distance students need a lot of looking after,' says Chris. 'A lot of people think distance learning is an easy option, but it isn't. Everything is more complicated and there is also the isolation of the distance learner to consider, although the Internet and email have made a huge difference because it means overseas students can even link into our library.'

So what sorts of people does CELS have on both its distance and in-house courses? *'It varies. Some of them have just left university and want a further degree, while others are more vocationally-*

orientated: perhaps they are already English teachers but need the MA in TEFL in order to get further up the career ladder.'

One distance student is Sydney-born Joseph Havlena, who gave up a career in manufacturing technology four years ago to teach English as a foreign language. After spending a year in South Korea, he is now in Peru, teaching at a new, small university in Chachapoyas, high in the Andes.

As he works towards finishing his dissertation, the 55-year-old is also getting to grips with the Peruvian way of life. *'The 'very simple matter' of opening a bank account, to deposit my money 'tomorrow', now involves a number of officials and friends and is stretching into a second week,' he says. 'Plans must be viewed more as whimsical thoughts that, on the odd occasion, happen to work out.'*



Fairtrade Fortnight

The University will mark Fairtrade Fortnight (1 – 14 March) with a series of events, organised by the Ethical Trade Society, including a sale of Fairtrade products (food, drink and clothing) in the Guild, a Man-o-Man competition (rugby vs hockey) and a fashion show featuring Fairtrade clothing. Contact the society at ethicaltrade@guild.bham.ac.uk for further details

There will also be a coffee break event in Staff House with a display in the foyer of information on the Fairtrade Foundation. The University's Central Kitchen will bake some special cakes using Fairtrade ingredients and Fairtrade tea coffee and confectionery will be available.

In order to achieve Fairtrade status, the University had to meet the following five criteria:-

- Create a Fairtrade policy incorporating these five goals (Guild and University authorities)

- Fairtrade foods to be made available for sale in all campus shops and Fairtrade foods used in all cafés, restaurants and bars on campus. Where this is not possible, there should be a commitment to use Fairtrade foods in these establishments as soon as it becomes possible to do so

- Fairtrade products such as coffee and tea to be served at all meetings hosted by the University and the

Guild and all University and Guild management offices

- A commitment should be made to campaign for increased Fairtrade consumption on campus

- Set up a Fairtrade Steering Group

The Fairtrade Organisation was formed to improve the position of poor and marginalized producers in the developing world. Fairtrade ensures that the price of goods covers the producers' costs and a premium for producers to invest in their communities and also guarantees long-term and more direct trading relations. Find out more about the Fairtrade Organisation on their website www.fairtrade.org.uk.

All catering outlets on campus offer Fairtrade tea, coffee, snack bars and confectionery. Budget Centres that wish to purchase Fairtrade beverages may obtain them from the Central Catering Stores using a purchase order.



A Very Educated Guess

Civil Engineering students Thomas Coon and Michael Hughes fought off tough competition from both their own department and other engineering departments at the University to win the inaugural Estimation Challenge competition. The competition was initiated as a reward for providing solutions to a range of estimation problems and the winning topic was 'When will the world run out of usable fresh water?' (The answer is 2075)

Co-ordinator of the 1MCT Modelling Concepts and Tools module, Professor Colin Thomas, said: 'The ideas developed and presented by the students in the Estimation Challenge were excellent, and often the assumptions were very thought provoking. This new approach to teaching estimation has been very successful, and seemed to be popular with the students. We expect it will help the students as they develop their engineering judgement over the next few years.'

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The Wolfson Applied Technology Laboratory in the Department of Medicine has facilities for producing specialised equipment to your requirements. From microscope accessories, to timers and temperature controlled cabinets, to tailor made stands and tables:

For further details contact John Gibbons Tel: 0121-627-2573

Email: J.E.C.Gibbons@bham.ac.uk

Introductory Courses in the Alexander Technique

Saturdays 13 March and 3 April
2.30-5.00 pm

School of Education

The Alexander Technique provides a practical means for change, brought about by improving balance and co-ordination and therefore general functioning. The Technique teaches us how to use ourselves in the most efficient way.

The course fee is £20. Further information and booking forms, (prior booking essential) are available from the Professional Association of Alexander Teachers.

Tel: 0121-248 1133 Email: btp@paat.org.uk

Investigating Western Muslims and the Future of Islam

Highly respected Muslim thinker Tariq Ramadan gave a public lecture at the University last month on the subject of Western Muslims and the Future of Islam. The lecture focussed on the issues surrounding how faithful Muslims can live as fully integrated members of Western societies and demonstrated how already in the West, Muslim men and women are re-shaping their religion into one that is faithful to the principles of Islam, whilst dressed in European and

American cultures, and fully rooted in Western societies.

Tariq Ramadan was named in 2000 as one of *Time Magazine's* 100 most important innovators for the 21st century. He is Professor of Philosophy at the College of Geneva and Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. He is also author of the new book *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* recently published by Oxford University Press.

Charity Auction

Part of Munrow Charity Week

Framed Rugby World Cup Final Programme

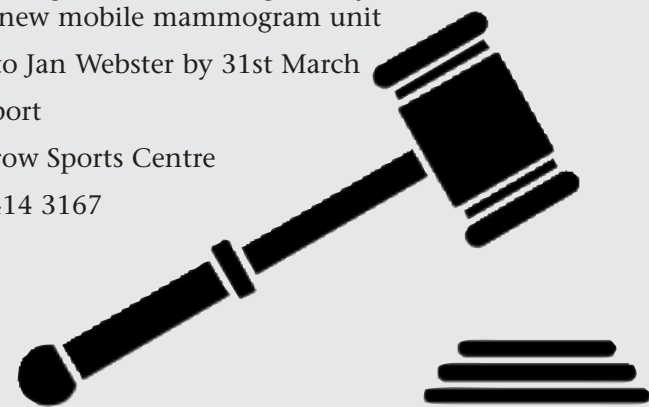
Proceeds go towards raising money for a new mobile mammogram unit

Bids for Jan Webster by 31st March

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Debating Darwin



Professor Mark Pallen (right) is pictured with poet Benjamin Zephaniah at the Darwin Day symposium held at the Medical School last month. 75 people attended a day of lectures and debate celebrating the work and influence of Charles Darwin. This was the first of what will be an annual event, and this year was organised jointly by the Medical School's Centre for the History of Medicine and Division of Immunity and Infections

Is Another World Possible?

Local people in support of global justice took the opportunity to discuss current issues when the University brought elements of the World Social Forum, held in Mumbai, India, to Birmingham. The free public event, *Impressions from Mumbai*, at the Centre for the Study of Global Ethics featured reports, a film screening, a photo exhibition and a discussion forum.

More than 135,000 activists from around the world gathered in Mumbai for the five-day World Social Forum to discuss issues such as imperialist globalisation; militarism and peace; communalism, religious fanaticism and sectarian violence; racism, casteism, and discrimination. The World Social Forum, is founded on the belief that 'Another World Is Possible' and brings together mass organisations and social

movements to build alliances to create a more just world and to oppose unfair patterns of globalisation.

The Birmingham event featured key speakers including Naima Bouteldja, a French Algerian Muslim activist and freelance journalist and Oscar Reyes, regular contributor to radical left magazine, *Red Pepper*.

Emma Dowling, Outreach Officer from the Centre for the Study of Global Ethics, said, 'We were delighted to be able to offer people a local platform to debate issues from the World Social Forum, on their doorstep. Understanding global issues is crucial if we are to combat injustice and poverty, both at home and abroad.'

The Huxley Lecture

Thursday 25 March
5.15 pm

Genome Sequences, Structural Biology and Drug Discovery: Opportunities and Challenges

Professor Sir Tom Blundell,
Sir William Dunn Professor
of Biochemistry

Large Haworth Lecture Theatre,
The School of Chemistry

Midlands Women Help MND Research

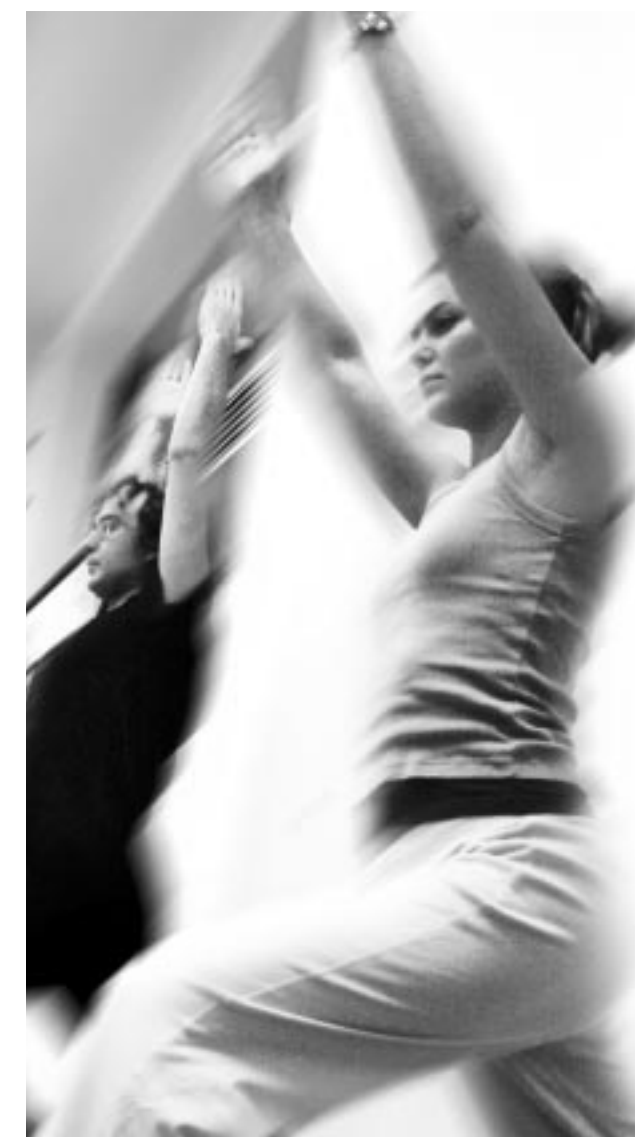
A women's group has proved to be hot stuff when it comes to fund raising.

Eleven Asian women based in the Midlands have got together to form a registered company, Caritas UK, and in the course of one evening raised over £1,000 for the University's Motor Neurone Disease Research. Dr Nitti Pall hosted a house party in aid of the Birmingham Motor Neurone Disease Care and Research Centre.

The Centre is a specialist clinic offering the whole spectrum of experts that MND patients from all over the West Midlands need. In one visit they can see a nurse and consultant, physiotherapist, speech therapist, dietician, occupational therapist and regional care advisor. It is run by Professor Karen Morrison and Dr Hardev Pall (Nitti's husband) and nurse Heidi Jew, who is pictured receiving the cheque at a subsequent fundraising event at Jimmy Spices restaurant.



5, 6, 7, 8 – Everybody Donate!



Staff and students donned their tracksuits and trainers for a mammoth six-hour aerobathon session last month in aid of breast cancer charity The ABC Group (After Breast Cancer). The aerobathon was one of a range of activities on offer in a week of charity events at the Munrow Centre that included charity car washes, gym challenges and a race night at Fat Paddy's.

The ABC Group became an invaluable source of strength to Munrow Sports Centre Memberships Officer Pam Vanderstam, when she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001. Pam, who came up with the initial idea to hold an event, faced her own challenge by swimming one mile – 65 lengths of the Munrow pool – to add to the cash total.

Pam comments, 'This event has grown from my initial idea for a day of fundraising to a whole week of charity activities, thanks to the wholehearted support and enthusiasm of my Munrow Centre colleagues. I'm delighted to be able to put something back to support ABC, who have helped me enormously throughout my own illness by providing advice and giving me the opportunity to meet other sufferers, many of whom were cheering me on from the poolside!'

£1,130 was raised towards a mobile mammogram unit for the Women's Hospital.

Spinning Hutton: In Search of the Big Picture

A highly topical conference investigating the relationship between politics, security and the media – post Hutton Report and the war on Iraq – was held by the European Social Research Council at the European Research Institute last month.

Spinning Hutton presented a team experts from the fields of academia, politics and journalism, including MP Gisela Stuart, with the opportunity to address some of the implications of recent national events, both for democracy and for the political future of the country.

The conference addressed issues including:

- What is the proper relationship between the Government and the news media?
- Can Government function properly if under permanent hostile media scrutiny?
- Are the public in a position of knowledge to assess the rights and wrongs of important issues?
- How has/can the BBC report and reflect critically on new events when it is itself the 'story'?
- What are the likely consequences of the Hutton Report for the future of the BBC?

Stuart Croft, Event organiser and Professor of International Relations said: 'In the immediate aftermath of the publication of the Hutton Report there were a number of emotional responses. Now it is time for deeper reflection on the implications for political life, and for public life. This conference is the first opportunity for deeper reflection.'

Exciting Exchange Opportunities

Through a new series of scholarships, Birmingham students have the opportunity to take part in exchange schemes with two other Universitas 21 partners, the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Hong Kong University (HKU).

The National University of Singapore is offering Birmingham students a scholarship of 4,000 Euros over a four-month period as part of its DUO - Singapore Exchange Fellowships. The scholarships are intended to fund students' travel and living costs while on exchange (monthly living costs for Singapore exchange students are estimated at 380 Euros).

The fellowships are awarded on the basis of merit and open to both undergraduate and postgraduate students studying in any academic field. The DUO Fellowships require that students are sent on the exchange programme in pairs to create extra opportunities for exchange and to ensure that students have the support of travelling with fellow students from their own university. The closing date for applications for the Duo Scholarships is March 31.

Studying abroad is becoming increasingly popular with students all over the world. Exchange programmes not only broaden students' cultural experiences, but also enhance their employment prospects with increasing amounts of employers looking for a wider range of skills from graduates.

Heidi Hoi Yi Hung, a politics and law graduate at the University of Hong Kong, found that the exchange experience opened up exciting opportunities for her. Heidi took advantage of a Universitas 21 exchange scheme to spend a year studying at Birmingham and would recommend the exchange scheme to all students:

'My exchange year at Birmingham was an eye-opening experience for me and I enjoyed every minute of it. I encouraged all my friends to join the U21 student exchange programme as it really broadens your horizons and opens your mind to different cultures. Students from the UK would really enjoy studying at HKU as they will get the best of the East and the West - Hong Kong is such a dynamic and exciting city to live in.'

Further information on both the Hong Kong and Singapore Exchange Programmes are available at: www.hku.hk/liaison/oise and www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/prospective/nongraduating.html

For more information about exchange opportunities contact the Study Abroad Office: studyabroad@bham.ac.uk



The attractive campus at the National University of Singapore, offering a home away from home for Birmingham students

Call for Papers

Academics are being given the opportunity to submit papers to an innovative online conference by the National Evaluation of the Children's Fund (NECF).

NECF is a three-year research programme being undertaken by the University, in partnership with the University of London Institute of Education. The researchers are evaluating what works in the prevention of social exclusion for children and young people, and why it works. Specifically, the team is doing this by evaluating the Children's Fund, a complex intervention aimed at

reducing social exclusion for children and young people aged 5-13.

On 17 June, NECF are running an online conference, *'Understanding prevention: Children, families and social inclusion'*. The call for papers, and free delegate registration, is open now at www.ne-cf.org/conferences

For further information about the NECF please visit www.ne-cf.org

Guided Tour of the Lapworth Museum of Geology

Tuesday 9 March 5.30pm

The Lapworth Museum of Geology, based in Earth Sciences, dates back to the early days of Mason College, the forerunner of the University, and is one of the oldest geological museums in the UK and has the finest and most extensive geological collection in the Midlands region.

In addition to the fossils, minerals and rocks, it houses important collections of

early geological maps, equipment, archives, zoological specimens, and Stone Age implements.

The tour will be followed by wine in the museum.

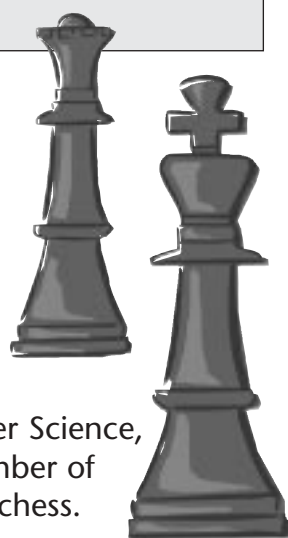
For more information, contact the curator, Jonathan Clatworthy ext: 47294 Email: J.C.Clatworthy@bham.ac.uk

Computers Play Chess

Research Fellow, Colin Frayn at the School of Computer Science, recently set an official world record for the largest number of computers working together to play a single game of chess.

The ChessBrain project utilised the power of over 2000 computers connecting over the internet. Colin collaborated with Californian based veteran programmer Carlos Justiniano on this non-profit experiment and was responsible for dealing with the chess-playing aspect of the game - his engine 'Beowulf' evaluated the millions of individual board positions required. It also collected and analysed the mountain of information from participating computers so that a decision can be made on which move the computer will play.

The team encountered many challenges before and during the event, but held its own against one of the strongest players in the world. By doing so it demonstrated the enormous potential of distributed computing to solve highly complex analytical problems. The team are already working on a number of improvements which will increase the playing strength of ChessBrain and allow more efficient use of participating machines. A rematch has been mooted for March 2005.



Going abroad this summer?

Feel you need to brush up those language skills? Why not join one of the Centre for Modern Languages' 8-week summer courses in:

French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish and Turkish Courses are available in a range of levels

- Absolute beginners
- Near beginners
- Intermediate
- Advanced

Learn with highly qualified tutors, most of them native speakers, in a friendly and fun atmosphere. The courses run for 2 hours per week from 27 April - 17 June. Places are limited and you will need to enrol by Wednesday 21st April.

Fee: £40

For further details and an enrolment form contact Beverley Picariello Ext: 43324 Email: B.A.Picariello@bham.ac.uk

An Expression of Birmingham's Botany

Gordon Lynch met University Artist-in-Residence, Lesley Whelan:

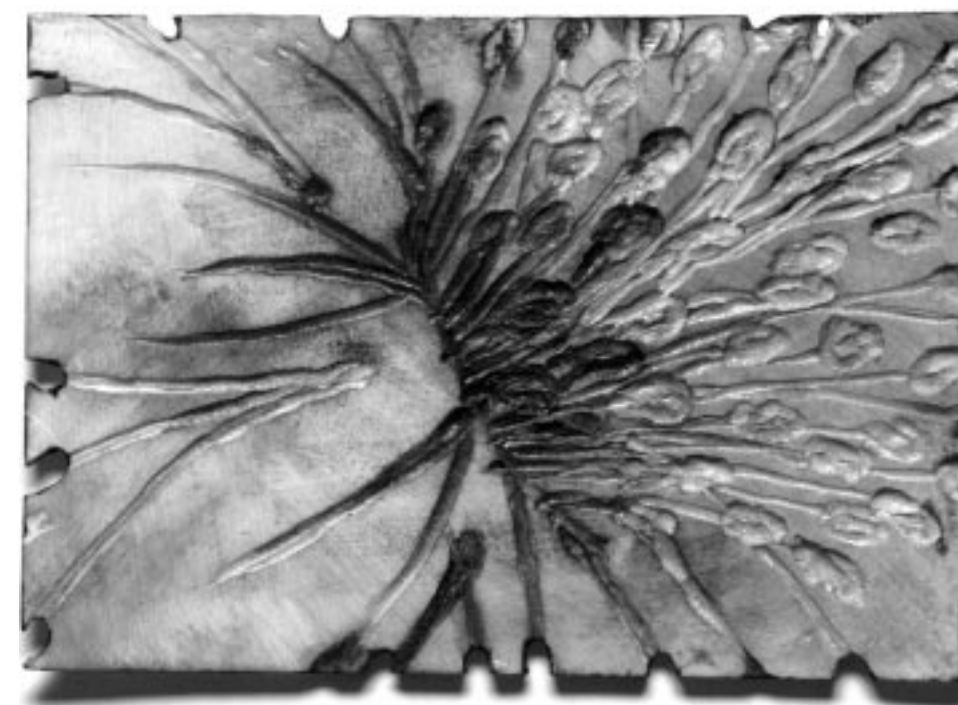
Birmingham-born artist Lesley Whelan has used her new position as artist-in-residence at the University Botanical Gardens at Winterbourne to produce a series of works that draw attention to the shapes and colours of plants that are important to the local area.

Lesley first became interested in the link between art and botany when working on a previous project.

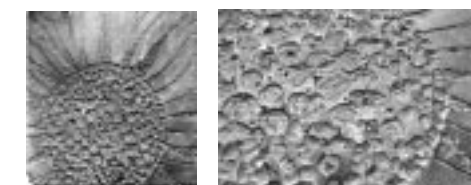


'I was given a commission to do work based on Coventry, and decided to focus on the history of the city', says Lesley. 'I discovered that Coventry was originally named after a tree, the Cofas tree, and began to find out more about the range of plant life that had influenced the city's history. This got me interested in the relationship between plants and the local environment, and spending time at Winterbourne has helped me to study this in much more depth.'

Lesley's work is based on an innovative approach in which she distresses the surface of boards to reproduce the organic patterns and textures of plant-life and uses a range of bright, sometimes discordant, colours to evoke the vivid and changing colours of the natural world. The result does not resemble traditional botanical drawing, but is more of an expression of the shape and form of a particular plant. *'If I wanted to show what the plant looks like I could take a photograph', she comments. 'Through this work, I'm trying to say more about the texture of the plants and the play of light on their colours.'*



The role of artist-in-residence is part of a one-year scheme funded by Winterbourne with additional support from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust. Lesley will be holding a series of open studio sessions in which people can come and observe her at work. The sessions will be held at Winterbourne on April 1 and 29, May 20, June 17, July 15 and August 19. Further details are available from Catharine Clarke on 0121-414 3832. Lesley's work is also on display in the Staff House foyer until the end of March.



Lesley Whelan can be contacted on 07762 139 438 Email: lesley.whelan@virgin.net

Britain's Changing Role in Europe

In January the European Research Institute and SJ Berwin, a leading corporate and commercial law firm based in London, co-hosted a roundtable of the current and all of the former UK Representatives to the EU. Stephen Kon, Head of the EU and Competition practice at SJ Berwin chaired the discussions while Professor Anand Menon, Director of the ERI introduced the event. The permanent representatives: Rt Hon Sir Michael Palliser; Sir Donald Maitland; Sir Michael Butler; The Lord Hannay of Chiswick (Pro-Chancellor of the University); Sir John Kerr; Sir Stephen Wall; Sir Nigel Sheinwald; and John Grant, all gave a

short talk on their experiences in Brussels before answering questions from an audience of over one hundred lawyers, academics, policy-makers, diplomats and students from across the UK and Europe including the Vice-President of the European Commission, Neil Kinnock and Her Excellency Dr Kaja Tael, the Estonian Ambassador to London.

The formal discussion and the question and answer session was followed by a drinks reception and was generally agreed to have been a great success. For more images from the event see: www.eri.bham.ac.uk/Britains-Role-gallery



Standing (L-R). Sir Nigel Sheinwald, Professor Michael Clarke, Professor Anand Menon, John Grant, Sir Stephen Wall, David Harrel, Stephen Kon. Seated (L-R). Sir John Kerr, Sir Donald Maitland, Sir Michael Palliser, Sir Michael Butler, The Lord Hannay of Chiswick.

Department of Theology

Cadbury Lectures 2004

Religion, Politics and Conflict in the Contemporary World

MONDAY 15 MARCH

The enduring presence of religion and politics in American history

Professor Mark Knoll (Wheaton College, Illinois)

TUESDAY 16 MARCH

Does the Bush era represent an 'Evangelical Movement' in American history and politics?

Professor Mark Knoll (Wheaton College, Illinois)

WEDNESDAY 17 MARCH

'For the Land and the Lord? The religion and ideology of West Bank settlers

Dr Lisa Kaul-Seidman (Birmingham)

THURSDAY 18 MARCH

Israel's Religious and Secular divide: is there space for dialogue?

Dr Emanuele Ottolenghi (St Anthony's College, Oxford)

MONDAY 22 MARCH

Religious Foundations of the Iranian Revolution

Syed Amir Akrami (Organisation for Islamic Culture and Communication, Tehran)

TUESDAY 23 MARCH

Post-Revolution Iran from a Religious Point of View

Syed Amir Akrami (Organisation for Islamic Culture and Communication, Tehran)

WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH

Protestantism and Political Violence

Professor Steve Bruce (Aberdeen)

THURSDAY 25 MARCH

Anti-Pygmalion: religion as a cause of politics

Professor Steve Bruce (Aberdeen)

All lectures will take place between 5.30 and 7.00 pm in Lecture Theatre 3 of the Arts Building

Hospital Discharge Policy Under the Microscope

A report delivered to the Department of Health by Birmingham researchers suggests that the current government policy to fine social services departments for delayed hospital discharges is not necessarily the answer.

Academics from two centres of excellence – the Health Services Management Centre and the Institute of Applied Social Studies – undertook an examination of existing research into delayed hospital discharge (21 documents from 1993 onwards) as part of the Department of Health's current package of research on services for older people.

Historically, there have been 5 key problems that cause delayed hospital discharge for older people:

- Poor communication between hospital and community services
 - Inadequate notice of discharge
 - Lack of assessment and planning for discharge
 - Inadequate consultation with patients and their carers
 - Problems with community services not being in place in time for the discharge
- The 2002 report by the House of Commons Health Committee into delayed discharge suggested that in England, there are over 7,000 people who

are delayed in hospital at any one time (occupying 6% of all acute beds) and that delayed discharge costs the NHS around £720 million per annum. Following this critical report, the government put in place a reimbursement policy, where social services departments are charged for patients who unnecessarily block beds and are not taken into social services care quickly enough; a system which has been in place one month.

The Health Services Management Centre's Dr Jon Glasby, lead researcher on the study comments, 'The current literature is full of methodological problems, so it's impossible to see how current policy can be said to be evidence-based.'

'This study shows that delayed hospital discharges have a range of causes and that the nature of the problem varies from area to area. As a result, we need a solution that involves all the relevant agencies working together locally – social care, the NHS, housing and the voluntary sector – not an oversimplistic and heavy-handed policy like reimbursement which merely blames one partner agency for problems that often aren't its fault.'

Information Services Trade Fair

Information Services recently hosted a trade fair to provide staff with the opportunity to find out about new structures within divisions, divisional remits and the roles of teams. It gave staff the opportunity to meet colleagues across the service who they do not work with on a daily basis and was the first of its kind to be held within IS, following the recent change management programme built around a new collective vision for the service.

The event took place in the new computer facility at the rear of the Main Library with each division allotted space to display material and undertake interactive demonstrations. Throughout the day, staff were able to talk to colleagues to find out about new projects and developments and take part in interactive demonstrations that showed how equipment is operated and used to support not only Information Services, but staff and students within the University.



Identifying Economic Promise in the West Midlands

A report focussing on identifying areas of national and international excellence in medical and biomedical research in the Midlands has been commissioned by Midlands MEDICI. The report has been undertaken in close association with Medilink West Midlands and was made possible through funding from Advantage West Midlands.

Midlands MEDICI, a two-year innovative pilot programme, aims to improve the awareness of and support for the commercial development of research within the Medical and Biosciences Academic Departments of five Midlands Universities, Aston, Birmingham, Leicester, Nottingham and Warwick – with Birmingham taking the lead role. It has been designed with the aim of fostering a climate of entrepreneurship, particularly in relation to research that has commercial applications in medicine and biosciences.

The report aims to identify areas of national and international excellence within the regional research community rather than mapping the totality of medical and biomedical research projects in place in the region and while it will offer some inter-regional comparisons it will not attempt to formally benchmark the region.

The medical technology sector is a potentially important driver of regional development. Growing healthcare expenditure both in the UK and globally, driven by factors such as the ageing population and the rapid introduction of new technologies, position this sector as a source of economic growth with significant promise. This promise has been identified within the

West Midlands where efforts are underway to enable regional firms in sectors such as automotive, polymers and ceramics to gain access to healthcare markets.

Within the report there is a clear focus on identifying research activities that are of national or international importance and areas of medical and biomedical research with commercial potential. It is also hoped that the study will highlight resources within the regional research base with the potential to support indigenous medical technology firms and non-medical SMEs in the region in diversifying into healthcare markets. The work will also feed into the design of regional economic development initiatives by AWM and other local agencies.

The research has been carried out by Alex Burfitt, John Gibney and Stewart MacNeill who are members of the economic development and planning research group at the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies. For more information please contact John Gibney Tel: 0121-414 3051/5029 Email: J.Gibney@bham.ac.uk; or Catherine Alexander, Director Midlands MEDICI Tel: 0121-414 5888 Email: C.M.Alexander@bham.ac.uk

Want to Learn How The Media Works?

The BA Media Fellowship Scheme offers professional scientists and engineers the opportunity to experience first hand how the media works. You will spend 3 to 8 weeks on a summer placement with a media organisation learning how science is reported in the media.

Previous host organisations have included the Guardian, BBC Radio, Nature online and Countryfile.

You are eligible to apply for the scheme if you:

- are a scientist, social scientist or engineer
- have a minimum of 2 years postgraduate experience in your field
- are a resident of the UK
- work at any level in an academic or research institution, industry, civil service or any other similar organisation

For further information and online application visit www.the-ba.net/mediafellows

South Central Birmingham Credit Union Scheme



The University has created a new partnership with South Central Birmingham Credit Union to offer University staff an easy way to save, access to low cost loans and free life insurance on all loans and savings. Many large companies in the UK are providing the advantages of credit union membership to their staff, such as British Airways, RICOH and many local authorities and police and fire services.

The scheme allows staff to save as little or as much as they can afford on a weekly or monthly basis with savings attracting an annual dividend. Payments into the scheme are taken directly from payroll. After three months, regular savers are eligible to apply for a loan of twice their savings for a first loan, and up to 3 times savings for second and subsequent loans.

For example:

A loan of £200 repaid over 23 weeks at £9.31 per week
Total repayment £205.75
APR 12.7%



(L-R) Helen Ingiby (Development work), Pauline Mallen (University Pensions Manager) and Eliot Wright (President SCBCU)

Application Forms are available from:
Finance Office Reception, LG 13
Aston Webb Building, B Block.
Ext: 46090/46091

Please send 2 forms of Identification with your application. A Photocopy of your university ID card and a photocopy of one of the following, showing your current address: driving licence, benefit book, bank statement, gas, electric, council tax or telephone bill.

For more information contact the Credit Union Office:

Tel: 0121-464 5751
Email: admin@scbcu.co.uk
Opening hours: Monday 9.30am-4.30pm, Tuesday 1.30-4.30pm and Wednesday 1.30-8.30pm.

An answer machine is on at all other times.

South Central Birmingham Credit Union (SCBCU) is a non-profit company, regulated by the Financial Services Authority and subject to the same stringent controls that apply to all banks and building societies.

MSc Training for Dairy Crest Managers

Fifteen members of staff from Dairy Crest manufacturing sites around the country will take an MSc in Food Process Management at the Department of Chemical Engineering.

The programme, known as Operational Excellence, is aimed at Dairy Crest's line management staff to enhance the company's operational management capability and develop future operational leaders. The course uses a combination of work based learning, class teaching, workshops and work-based projects to enable students to learn and apply new skills and techniques in the workplace. It features nine intensive modules including customer service, dairy science and technology, energy management, food safety, quality and health, safety and the environment.

Professor Peter Fryer, Course Director stated 'We are delighted to have been chosen to run this work-based programme for Dairy Crest. We are keen to work with companies to create professional development programmes for their staff that fit in around

their work commitments and can become a part of an ongoing relationship between the department and the company.'

Mark Allen, Executive Director of Dairy Crest, said: 'This is an important new initiative for Dairy Crest and we are delighted to be working with the University. We expect to see real benefits to the company by providing participants with technical and academic learning and getting them to apply this to workplace projects.'

Delegates will take part in seminars and lectures over the next two years at Dairy Crest sites throughout the country. Completing and passing the modules will give delegates a postgraduate diploma and a further six months work-based study will enable delegates to obtain an MSc.

Security Warning

Staff are advised to be vigilant after a recent spate of thefts was reported at the European Research Institute. Several unattended wallets were stolen and in one case money was successfully withdrawn using stolen bank cards. The thieves have also attempted to call the owners of the stolen cards claiming to be from their

bank/card issuer in order to attempt to get the owner of the card to reveal their pin number. In both cases the caller has given the name of Peter Ellis/Allis. Staff are advised to be extra vigilant and not leave valuables unattended. Any theft should be reported to the police and University Security immediately.

Joint European Research for a Better Railway

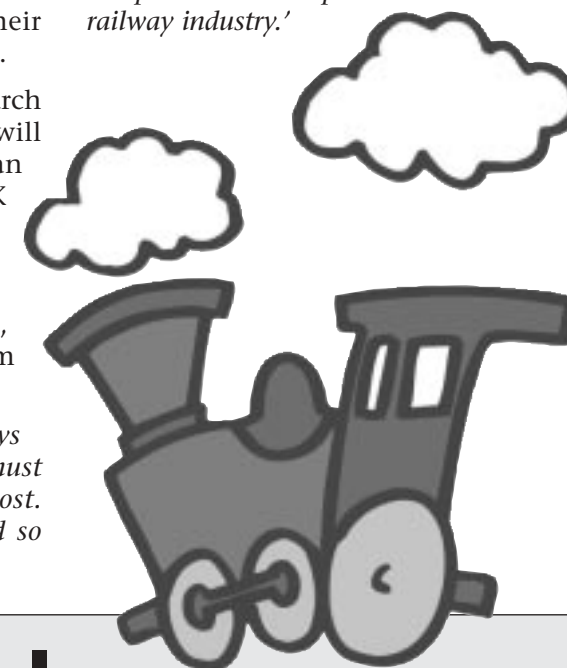
Rail Research UK, based at the School of Engineering, has secured funding from the European Commission to be a key part of a European Rail Research Network of Excellence called EUR²EX.

The Network will comprise of six regional groups and three main European railway associations and will be controlled by a council of nine members, chaired by Professor Keith Madelin, Head of Rail Research UK. World leading European rail research groups will bring together most of the rail research taking place throughout Europe. This will benefit all groups as they will be able to share their resources, equipment and expertise.

Over 60 universities and 600 research staff specialising in rail research will work closely with the European railway industry. Rail Research UK will head up the UK/Benelux group which includes Southampton, Manchester Metropolitan, Sheffield, Imperial, Leeds, Loughborough, Nottingham and TU Delft Universities.

Professor Madelin says, 'The railways in the UK and throughout Europe must deliver a better service at less cost. National systems must be integrated so

that passengers and freight can move more freely across Europe. EUR²EX will play a key role by providing an integrated world class research organisation to support the European railway industry, sharing our current knowledge, establishing new technologies and planning new joint research. The aim is a sustainable railway system and a strong competitive European railway industry.'



Statistical Advisory Service

Help and advice are offered to staff and postgraduates from any part of the University who make use of mathematical statistics as part of their research. Queries can be accepted by email or a consultation can be arranged by appointment. Appointments can be made by phone on 44750 or by email to A.P.White@bham.ac.uk.

For small queries, this service is provided free. However, for more substantial queries, an element of cost recovery is expected. Dr White is particularly keen to be involved at a collaborative level in the planning and execution of major research projects involving a statistical component, including the preparation of research proposals.

CBSO Director Takes Leading Role at University

Music Director Sakari Oramo last month gave a special performance event at the Barber Institute to mark the commencement of his role as Honorary President of the University's Music Society.



Audience members were given the rare opportunity to hear Oramo, formerly Concertmaster of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, performing Dvorák's *Sonatina for violin and piano in G major*, as well as a talk by the acclaimed conductor and the opportunity to ask questions.

Sakari Oramo (pictured above) has made a huge impact on both Birmingham audiences and critics alike since taking over the baton from Sir Simon Rattle as Music Director of

the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in September 1998. He arrived as a relatively unknown conductor outside the Nordic countries, and has experienced a meteoric rise to fame and taking his world-class ensemble to new heights.

Each year the University Music Society (UMS) invites a prestigious musician to act as a figurehead of the society. Past presidents include Emma Kirkby, David Owen Norris and Evelyn Glennie.

Beyond the Theory of Everything?

Andy Schofield, Professor of Theoretical Physics will explain how this topic of his inaugural lecture relates to his Christian faith

1.00 pm Cadbury Room, St Francis Hall

BEAST and the nature of sound

BEAST (Birmingham ElectroAcoustic Sound Theatre) presents its second weekend of the current season in the series at the CBSO Centre this month (5-7 March). The title of the weekend, *De Natura Sonorum*, is taken from a major work by French electroacoustic pioneer Bernard Parmegiani who is visiting Birmingham for the first time as guest composer for the event. For many years associated with the Groupe de Recherches Musicales in Paris, the spiritual home of musique concrète, Parmegiani has also achieved something approaching cult status in the 'crossover' domain of electronica.

Bernard Parmegiani will give performances of four of his works over the weekend; *Capture éphémère*, *Son-jeu*, *La mémoire des sons* and *Espèces d'espace*. Lasting just over half an hour, this new version of *Espèces d'espace* is receiving its world premiere on this occasion.

The weekend will feature electroacoustic and computer music from Birmingham and beyond in concerts, installations and live sound events, performed on BEAST's multi-channel sound system. It finishes with

an informal session on Sunday afternoon, where the theme of 'the nature of sound' will be explored, discussed and illustrated.

For further details, visit www.beastmusic.co.uk or see the March diary on page 14. Tickets can be bought on the door or at the Symphony Hall Box Office. CBSO Centre Ticket Hotline: 0121-767 4050. Admission £12 (£6 concessions) Friday and Saturday. Admission to Sunday's event is free.

Expanding International Horizons

As the current host of the Universitas 21 Secretariat, the University's commitment to the internationalisation of its teaching, research and student body is evident on a global scale through its participation in a wide range of activities including student and staff exchanges, the development of learning resource tools and the delivery of collaborative programmes.

This collaboration will be taken a step further with a new teaching and learning pilot project run in association with Lund University, Sweden. A web-based undergraduate certificate programme in autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs), developed by the School of Education, is currently being piloted in Sweden. The programme, which is the only one of its kind, is taught to students via the web in the UK, Channel Islands and Ireland, and its expansion into Sweden may lead to future links with Lund University under the Universitas 21 banner.

For more information on Universitas 21 contact:
Claire Dignon
Email: C.Dignon@bham.ac.uk or
Heather Kirkwood
Email: H.Kirkwood@bham.ac.uk

For more information on the web-based Autism course contact:
Brian Murdoch
Email: B.P.Murdoch@bham.ac.uk

Privatisation, Power and Poverty

4 March 6.00 pm

Find out how aid, loans and debt relief are being used to open poor country public services to multinational companies and meet the people fighting to stop it.

Lecture Theatre 101,
Haworth Building.

For more details go to
www.waronwant.org/ppp

Trio Gitano Performance

Tuesday 16 March
8.00 pm - 11.00 pm

TC's, Coronation Road, Selly Oak

With special guests:

Ray Butcher (Trumpet)

Quelle Fromage
(vocals, guitar and flute)

Entry £2.00

Email: info@triogitano.co.uk

Tel: 07813 217 414

www.guitartrio.com

New Music's Human Face

21-year-old music student Ben Palmer heard his music played alongside compositions by a stellar lineup of established composers when Birmingham Contemporary Music Group gave the World Premiere of his award-winning work *Volatile Substances* at the CBSO Centre at the end of February.

Ben, who is currently studying composition with the Music Department's Vic Hoyland, won the 2003 COMPASS Composition Prize awarded by the University. The award carries the chance of a public premiere by Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, which has close links with the Music Department though its annual residency. Ben says that BCMG's creative relationship with the Music

Department was 'the crucial factor in [his] choice of University'.

Volatile Substances will be heard in the context of music by BCMG's extended family of composers – Julian Anderson, Judith Weir, Colin Matthews and Denmark's most prominent living composer Poul Ruders, known to British audiences for his opera *The Handmaid's Tale*.

All internationally established composers, they have a close association with Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, and their music forms an important part of its repertoire. They also regularly meet the BCMG audience through pre-performance talks and workshops.



Discrepancies in Long-term Care of Childhood Cancer Survivors Exposed

Important variations in the levels of long-term care given to survivors of childhood cancer have been revealed by experts from the University. A new study has been carried out in the Department of Public Health and Epidemiology and supported by Cancer Research UK, the UK Children's Cancer Study Group, and the Kay Kendall Leukaemia fund.

The study recommends that national guidelines need to be implemented more effectively, so all childhood cancer survivors are followed up appropriately.

In their new study, researchers surveyed 71 clinicians responsible for long-term care of children and found that nearly half discharged some of their patients after treatment, in contrast to the rest, who followed up all of their patients for life.

The authors believe regularly updated guidelines that are easily accessible to clinicians are necessary to ensure standardised care for survivors of childhood cancer across the UK and Ireland.

Study author Dr Aliko Taylor, a Cancer Research UK Training Fellow at the University, says: 'The treatment for childhood cancer has been so successful that now more and more patients are surviving the disease. Long-term follow-up is essential as survivors can still experience health problems many years after treatment has finished.'

The length of follow-up for specific groups of survivors largely depends on the treatment they received as a child. Clinical guidelines developed by the UK Children's Cancer Study Group (UKCCSG) on long-term follow-up have been available since 1995, but the new study suggests they are not universally followed.

Researchers designed a questionnaire to assess the levels and nature of current long-term follow up practices. Questions related to discharge policy, the types of clinics available to survivors and the involvement of nurses in long-term follow up.

They sent the survey to clinicians involved in long-term follow up of childhood cancer survivors in each of the 22 UKCCSG treatment centres in the UK and Ireland. They received 71 replies, a response rate of 77 per cent.

Of the 71 clinicians, 68 (96 per cent) followed up all survivors in a hospital clinic until at least five years after the end of treatment. Only two reported discharging before this period but always to the patient's GP.

After this five-year period, they found that 37 (or 52%) of the clinicians continued to follow up all

their patients for life, but 32 (or 45%) discharged some of their patients, nearly always to the patients' GP.

The majority of patients discharged subsequent to five years after treatment had either benign or stage 1 tumours or were treated with surgery alone. However, there were five (or 7%) of the clinicians who indicated that they had discharged all or most of their patients.

Study author Dr Mike Hawkins, Director of the Cancer Research UK Centre for Childhood Cancer says: 'Our study found important variations between clinicians in decisions on who should be discharged and when.'

'It's clear we need a system to improve the implementation of national guidelines, to ensure that survivors don't miss out on long-term surveillance should there be evidence they require it.'

Dr Hawkins adds: 'Around one in 1000 young adults in the UK is a survivor of childhood cancer, which means they are no longer the tiny minority they used to be. It's therefore crucial we address the levels, nature and quality of long-term care for survivors and establish systems for maintaining best practice.'

In the new report, researchers also analysed preliminary data from the British Childhood Cancer Survivor Study (BCCSS), which is looking at the long-term effect of anti-cancer treatments in survivors of the disease.

Researchers contacted some 11,000 GPs of adult survivors and asked them whether their patients were on regular hospital follow up. Over 60 per cent of the GPs reported that this was not the case.

Co-author, Dr Gill Levitt, Consultant in Paediatric Oncology and Late Effects at Great Ormond Street Hospital, says: 'The requirement for long-term follow-up should be evidence-based in relation to treatment received.'

'There is a need for more evidence, but the requirement for all survivors to remain on hospital consultant led follow-up is unlikely to be supported and discharge to general practice and nurse-led surveillance is likely to be appropriate for specific groups of survivors. Communication might be improved by wider use of patient held records summarising diagnosis, treatment received, potential side effects and suggestions for monitoring.'





March Diary

TUESDAY 2

University of Birmingham Women's Club – Literary group - *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier. Contact Ann Vernallis. Tel: 0121-472 5783

4.00 pm Psychology Seminar – *What is an acoustic object?* – Tim Griffiths (Newcastle upon Tyne). Training Room 120, Psychology Hills Building

4.30 pm Environmental Biology Seminar – *Catchment-scale issues in river ecology* – Professor Steve Ormerod (Cardiff). Host: Professor Jeff Bale. NG08 Ground Floor – School of Biosciences

WEDNESDAY 3

University of Birmingham Women's Club – Coffee in the home of Anne Whitworth. Tel: 0121-475 3589.

1.00 pm Plant Genetics and Cell Biology Seminars – *Genetics of spring barley at SCRI* – Dr Luke Ramsay, Scottish crop Research Institution. Host: Professor Mike Kearsley. NG08 Ground Floor – School of Biosciences.

1.00 pm Cancer Research UK Institute for Cancer Studies external seminar – *Checking out the cell cycle; how Chk1 keeps DNA damage and replication under control* – Dr David Gillespie (Beatson Laboratories, Glasgow). Host: Professor Michael Wakelam. S104, Cancer Studies.

4.30 pm Molecular Microbiology seminar – *Staphylococcal plasmids: replication, transfer and antibiotic resistance in under Skb* - Christopher D Thomas (Leeds). Host: Professor Chris Thomas. LG32 - Learning Resource Centre.

5.15 pm CELC - Cultures in Dialogue research seminar - *Friedrich Schiller and the Repertoire of the Mannheim National Theatre: The Legacies of Lessing and Diderot and the Influence of opéra-comique* – Professor Lesley Sharpe (Exeter). LR6, 4th floor, Muirhead Tower.

University of Birmingham Women's Club Tea in the home of Wendy Sterling. Tel: 0121-454 6565.

THURSDAY 4

1.00 pm Molecular Cell Biology Seminar *Still running on MT! Using polyoma virus middle T-antigen to study signalling pathways* – Stephen Dilworth (Imperial College). Host: Professor John Heath. LG32 – Learning Resource Centre.

1.00 pm Clinical Genetics Seminar – *BMT at BCH – what are we doing in 2004 – an update* – Sarah Lawson, Birmingham Children's Hospital. Seminar room, Regional Genetic Laboratory.

FRIDAY 5

7.30 pm BEAST Opening concert. CBSO Centre, Birmingham.

9.30 pm BEAST Installations by Bjørn Askefoss and Jon Aveyard, Bar event by Asbestos (Pete Batchelor and James Bentley). CBSO Centre, Birmingham. Admission £12 (£6 concessions). Season tickets for all events: £20 (£10 concessions). CBSO Centre Ticket Hotline: 0121-767 4050.

12 noon University of Birmingham Women's Club - Lunch at Debenhams, 1st Floor Restaurant, City Centre. Contact Eileen Mellor. Tel: 0121-472 2001

SATURDAY 6

6.00 pm BEAST – Bernard Parmegiani presents *La mémoire des sons*.

8.00 pm BEAST presents an international programme of recent work, including the world premiere of a new version of Paarmegiani's *Espèces d'espace*. Admission £12 (£6 concessions). Season tickets for all events: £20 (£10 concessions). CBSO Centre Ticket Hotline: 0121-767 4050.

SUNDAY 7

2.00 pm BEAST – *On the nature of sound* – an informal event around the weekend's theme. Admission free. Season tickets for all events: £20 (£10 concessions). CBSO Centre Ticket Hotline: 0121-767 4050.

TUESDAY 9

12.30 pm *International Development Department Seminar* – Islamic Relief – *Muhammad Imran. G22, J.G.Smith Building.*

WEDNESDAY 10

University of Birmingham Women's Club – Coffee in the home of Janet Emery. Tel: 0121-472 4390.

Henry Thomas Memorial Lecture (*speaker and title to be announced*).

4.30 pm Molecular Microbiology seminar – *Being mycelial: aspects of growth and development in Streptomyces* – Keith Chater (Norwich). Host: Professor Chris Thomas. LG32 – Learning Resource Centre.

4.30 - 6.00 pm Joint Sociology/Polis Seminar – *Towards a Cultural Political Economy* – Bob Jessop, Professor of Sociology (Lancaster). Conference Room, G51, European Research Institute.

THURSDAY 11

1.00 pm *Beyond the Theory of Everything?* Andy Schofield, Professor of Theoretical Physics will explain how this topic of his inaugural lecture relates to his Christian faith. Cadbury Room, St Francis Hall.

1.00 pm Molecular Cell Biology and Molecular Pathobiology Joint Seminar – *Calcium signalling, excitability and function in smooth muscle* – Professor Susan Wray (Liverpool). LG32 – Learning Resource Centre. Host: Dr Mark Wheatley..

4.30 pm Environmental Biology Seminar – *From gene expression to behaviour: circadian clock mechanisms in birds as model systems for integrative animal biology at the whole-organism level* – Dr Roland Brandstaetter (Birmingham). Host: Environmental Biology Theme. NG08 Ground Floor – School of Biosciences.

MONDAY 15

5.30 pm Department of Theology Cadbury Lecture – *The enduring presence of religion and politics in American history* – Professor Mark Knoll (Wheaton College, Illinois). Lecture Theatre 3 of the Arts Building.

TUESDAY 16

12.30 pm *International Development Department Seminar* – Localise West Midlands Karent Leach. G22, J.G.Smith Building.

4.00 pm Chemical Biology Seminar – *Selective Palladium Catalysts for the Stille Reaction – Exploitation of a Serendipitous Discovery* – Dr Ian Fairlamb (York). Host Dr Liam Cox. Room G26, Mechanical Engineering

4.30 pm Environmental Biology Seminar – *Putting the hey! back in behaviour: how we find out about fish movements and behaviour in the open sea* – Dr Julian Metcalfe, Head of Fish Populations and Behaviour Research, CEFAS. Host: Professor Pat Butler. Room 301 – School of Biosciences.

5.00 pm Department of Sociology visiting speaker seminar – *Globalisation and Britain* – Luke Martell, Head of Sociology (Sussex). Ground floor lecture room, School of Social Sciences Building, 31 Pritchatts Road. All welcome.

5.30 pm Department of Theology Cadbury Lecture – *Does the Bush era represent an 'Evangelical Movement' in American history and politics?* – Professor Mark Knoll (Wheaton College, Illinois). Lecture Theatre 3 of the Arts Building.

WEDNESDAY 17

University of Birmingham Women's Club – Coffee in the home of Eileen Mellor. Tel: 0121-472 2001.

1.00 pm Cancer Research UK Institute for Cancer Studies external seminar – EBV and the cell cycle – Professor Martin Allday (Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, London). Host: Professor Lawrence Young. S104, Cancer Studies.

4.15 pm Department of Hispanic Studies Cultures in Dialogue research seminar – *La inquisición por dentro: pervivencias ilustradas en la literatura anti-inquisitorial del siglo diecinueve* – Daniel Muñoz (Birmingham). Room 214, 2nd Floor Muirhead Tower.

5.30 pm Department of Theology Cadbury Lecture – *'For the Land and the Lord'? The religion and ideology of West Bank settlers* – Dr Lisa Kaul-Seidman (Birmingham). Lecture Theatre 3 of the Arts Building.

THURSDAY 18

5.15 pm Inaugural lecture – *Researching Private Lives and Public Policies* – Professor M Barnes, Professor of Social Research. Barber Lecture Theatre. Followed by a reception in the Foyer.

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5.30 pm Department of Theology Cadbury Lecture – *Israel's Religious and Secular divide: is there space for dialogue?* – Dr Emanuele Ottolenghi (St Anthony's College, Oxford). Lecture Theatre 3 of the Arts Building.

MONDAY 22

5.30 pm Department of Theology Cadbury Lecture – *Religious Foundations of the Iranian Revolution* – Syed Amir Akrami (Organisation for Islamic Culture and Communication, Tehran). Lecture Theatre 3 of the Arts Building.

TUESDAY 23

4.30 pm *Environmental Biology Seminar – Food and breeding performance of the Florida Scrub-Jay: the advantages and disadvantages of exploiting novel food sources* – Dr Jim Reynolds (Birmingham). Host: Environmental Biology Theme. Room NG08, Ground Floor – School of Biosciences.

5.00 pm Department of Sociology visiting speaker seminar – *Growing Old Disgracefully? Popular Music and Older Generations of Fans* – Andy Bennett, Lecturer in Sociology (Surrey). Ground floor lecture room, School of Social Sciences Building, 31 Pritchatts Road. All welcome.

5.30 pm Department of Theology Cadbury Lecture – *Post-Revolution Iran from a Religious Point of View* – Syed Amir Akrami (Organisation for Islamic Culture and Communication, Tehran). Lecture Theatre 3 of the Arts Building.

WEDNESDAY 24

University of Birmingham Women's Club – Coffee in the home of Mary Hallam. Tel: 0121-440 2184.

1.00 pm Cancer Research UK Institute for Cancer Studies external seminar – Regulation of human papillomavirus transcription and replication by DNA damaging and response proteins – Dr Iain Morgan (Glasgow). Host: Dr Sally Roberts. S104, Cancer Studies.

4.15 pm Department of Hispanic Studies Cultures in Dialogue research seminar – *Travel Writing – Isabel Mateos (Birmingham). Room 214, 2nd Floor Muirhead Tower.*

4.30 pm Molecular Microbiology seminar – *Visualising chromosome segregation in vivo and in vitro* – David Sherratt (Oxford). Host: Professor Chris Thomas. E102 – School of Biosciences.

5.15 pm Department of German Studies Cultures in Dialogue research seminar – *Provisional title: Foreign language acquisition and teaching styles: Some research findings* – Professor John Klapper, (Birmingham). Room 334, 3rd floor Muirhead Tower.

5.30 pm Department of Theology Cadbury Lecture – *Protestantism and Political Violence* - Professor Steve Bruce (Aberdeen). Lecture Theatre 3 of the Arts Building.

6.00 pm University of Birmingham Women's Club – Evening meal for members only, Selly Park Tavern.

THURSDAY 25

1.00 pm Clinical Genetics Seminar – B Med. Sci Project Presentations. Seminar room, Regional Genetic Laboratory.

5.15 pm The Huxley Lecture – *Genome Sequences, Structural Biology and Drug Discovery: Opportunities and Challenges* – Professor Sir Tom Blundell, Sir William Dunn Professor of Biochemistry. Large Haworth Lecture Theatre, School of Chemistry.

5.30 pm Department of Theology Cadbury Lecture – *Anti-Pygmalion: religion as a cause of politics* – Professor Steve Bruce (Aberdeen). Lecture Theatre 3 of the Arts Building.

Diary

TUESDAY 30

4.00 pm Chemical Biology Seminar – *Building the Building Blocks for Supramolecular Chemistry* – Dr Andy Cammidge (UEA). Host Dr Jon Preece. Room G26, Mechanical Engineering.

WEDNESDAY 31

University of Birmingham Women's Club Coffee in the home of Bridget Wallace. Tel: 0121-472 6345.

1.00 pm Cancer Research UK Institute for Cancer Studies external seminar – TBA – Dr Martin Noble (Oxford). Host: Dr Ben Willcox. S104, Cancer Studies.

4.00 pm Cancer Research UK Institute for Cancer Studies external seminar – *Structural Biology of RNA Interference* – Professor Dinshaw Patel (Sloan-Kettering Institute, New York) Host: Professor Michael overduin. S104, Cancer Studies.

Staff News

Director Receives Prestigious Award

Social Sciences' **Ralph Thomas** has been presented with a prestigious award for his outstanding contribution to social care. Ralph, who is the Director of Social Work Education at the University and Chair of the Birmingham branch of the Social Care Association was honored with the Kathleen Lewis Memorial Award by the Social Care Association at the Association's Annual General Meeting and conference.

The Social Care Association represents the interests of the 1 million social care workers in the UK. It aims to promote best practice and good standards in the social care area.

Ralph, who has worked in the area of social care and social work for 36 years, said: *'I'm stunned – I did not expect to receive an award for work I am already doing! I'm very honored and this recognition from the membership is very important to me.'*

Kathleen Lewis was a prominent figure in social care and the Memorial Award is presented annually in recognition of work for SCA.

Vacancies

S13850

Lecturer

School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences – Academic:

Research and Teaching

Closing date: 12/3/2004

M32882

Research Fellow

Division of Neuroscience - Neurology Academic: Research and Teaching

Closing date: 5/3/2004

S13402

Senior Lecturer/Lecturer

School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences – Academic: Research and Teaching

Closing date: 19/3/2004

G19341

Centre Manager

School of Engineering (Electronic, Electrical and Computer Engineering) Administrative and Other Academic Related

Closing date: 4/3/2004

F34368

INTERNAL

Part Time (50%)

Academic Support

Consultant

(Maternity Cover)

Information Services

Administrative and Other Academic Related

Closing date: 3/3/2004

For a full and up to date list of current vacancies see www.punit.bham.ac.uk/vacancies/vacancySearch.htm

H32831

INTERNAL

Research Manager

School of Biosciences Administrative and Other Academic Related

Closing date: 4/3/2004

C31412

Senior Fellows

Health Services Management Centre Administrative and Other Academic Related

Closing date: 12/3/2004

Y25147

INTERNAL

Clerical Assistant

Admissions and Recruitment Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 3/3/2004

G36684

INTERNAL

Communications Officer

School of Engineering (Civil Engineering) Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 3/3/2004

M32876

Financial Analyst

School of Medicine Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 4/3/2004

F15834

Information Assistant

Information Services Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 3/3/2004

C30732

MTS Secretary

Health Services Management Centre Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 3/3/2004

T15422

Nursery Officer

Day Nursery Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 5/3/2004

M32818

Personal Assistant

Division of Medical Sciences - Cardiology. Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 4/3/2004

T7573

Postal Assistant/Driver

Postal Services. Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 4/3/2004

T30040

Second Chef

Conference Park Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 3/3/2004

M32875

Secretary

Primary Care and General Practice – Support: Technical, Clerical, and Manual

Closing date: 11/3/2004

Small Ads

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South Lakes – lovely 2 bedroom holiday cottage in secluded rural location, ideal for couples or families. www.firkincottage.co.uk Tel: 07787 824462

Relax in the Quantocks – cosy, self contained, period accommodation in village centre. Choice of 3; sleep 2 / 3 / 4. Private parking. Tel 01278 732 392. www.theoldhouse.ision.co.uk

Cornwall – small self-contained holiday flat for 2. On beautiful Roseland Peninsular. Sandy beaches close by. £100 per week. 0121-414 3619 or 01872 501 440

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Controls required for Brain and Behavioural Sciences Group, Psychology. Males and Females aged 55 upwards. £6.00 per hour. Tel: Elaine Fox 4-4931 for details and appts.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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Buzz on the Streets

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Printed Version

Publication Date: 17 March 2003

Deadline: 02 March 2003

Please send all your items for the web or print versions to the Public Relations Office (1st floor Aston Webb, by the rotunda) by email, post or why not in person? We'd enjoy meeting you!

A full list of copy deadlines and publication dates will be published in the next edition.

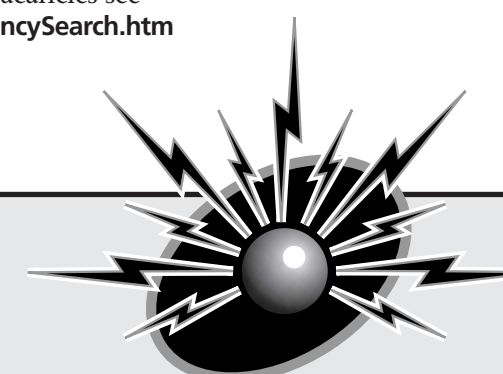
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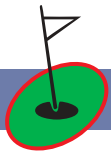
Diary, Notices and Adverts

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Small Ads

University members:
£5.00 for up to twenty words



Picture of the Month

This month Vigée-Lebrun's engaging *Portrait of Countess Golovine* graces the Barber Institute's galleries once again after five months away from the public eye. It features in the recently opened exhibition *The Great and the Good: Judging Quality in Art*, an exercise in connoisseurship in which visitors are invited to compare a variety of works from the collection. Vigée-Lebrun's portrait of the Russian countess is the first Picture of the Month by a female artist and is therefore a fitting choice for the celebration of International Women's Day on 8 March. As it is a public holiday in Russia, the date is the perfect occasion for an appreciation of one of the Barber Institute's favourite women.

The story behind this masterful painting is as fascinating as the sitter is intriguing. Vigée-Lebrun was the leading female artist of her day, producing beautiful and flattering portraits that won her the favour of aristocratic patrons, most famously Queen Marie Antoinette. Such associations proved to be dangerous at the onset of the French Revolution, causing the artist to flee Paris for Russia. It was here that she met Countess Golovine, who was also in exile as she had been the unfortunate victim of scandalous rumour in St Petersburg. Vigée-Lebrun clearly became very fond of the countess, describing her friend in her memoirs as 'a charming woman, full of wit and talent' who took pleasure in literature and the composition of love songs at her piano. All of Golovine's qualities are strikingly evident in this portrait and we

do not need the artist's description of her friend to see that she was a charming and colourful character with a sparkling personality.

The closeness of these two women is apparent in the intimate nature of the portrait. Golovine's relaxed and comfortable pose, with her hair loosely arranged and tumbling over her shoulders, allows us to imagine the informal atmosphere in the room in which this was painted. The sweep of her posture and clothing gives a feel of the spontaneity of her character. The countess holds a shawl tightly to herself as a child would hug a comfort blanket, perhaps in defence against the Russian climate. The bond between the two women is encapsulated in Golovine's warm and playful gaze upon her artist

friend, which now captures and seduces us as we stand in the gallery. Vigée-Lebrun not only beautifully portrays her subject but also invites us to paint our own picture of the personality and charm of the countess. It is this quality which makes the portrait a great work of art, and one of the true gems of the Barber Institute's collection.

Portrait of Countess Golovine can be seen in the exhibition *The Great and the Good: Judging Quality in Art* at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts until 9 May. Opening hours are 10.00am-5.00pm Monday to Saturday and 12.00pm-5.00pm on Sundays. Actors will be bringing the artist and her sitter back to life in a family *Art Alive!* performance in the main galleries on Saturday 24 April and 1 May. Admission free.

Portrait of Countess Golovine
by Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun
(1755-1842)



Provided by Jo Wilson, Gallery Assistant, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts.

Spotlight on Scholars



Clare Neeson

Second year Medicine student Clare has represented Senior England B at Lacrosse.

She is hoping to move up into the full senior England Lacrosse team, so that she can take part in the 2005 Lacrosse World Cup to be held in Annapolis, USA.



Jason Palmer

Jason is in his first year of the Applied Golf Management Studies degree course at the Selly Oak campus and Belfry. He has been awarded one of this year's four Royal and Ancient/University of Birmingham golf bursaries. Jason has represented England Schoolboys and has an outstanding handicap of +1.3. All Royal and Ancient golf scholars will compete against each other at St. Andrews in Easter 2004.



Emily Parker

Emily is currently ranked 5th at senior level for triple jump, and is in her first year of a degree in Sport and Exercise Sciences. She represented Great Britain at senior level in Barcelona in 2002 and finished runner up to Alison McAllister at the English Schools championships last Summer. Emily trains with Alison under coach Aston Moore at the Birmingham High Performance Centre, at the Alexander Stadium. The future certainly looks bright for triple jump at the University.

MP Supports Athletes in World Record attempt



The University Athletics Club

This month (Friday 12) the athletics team will embark on a mammoth world record attempt; running 240 miles in 24 hours in a round trip from the clocktower to the American embassy in London. The continuous relay will involve 24 of the University's athletes, each running between 3 and 15 miles at a pace equal to Paula Radcliffe's current marathon world record.

The runners will set off at 9pm on Friday and are aiming to complete the challenge by 9pm the next day. The run will start at the clocktower with a Chariots of Fire style race around Chancellor's Court to see if any athlete can make it round before the final bong. All spectators are welcome to come along and cheer them on.

The Rt Hon Richard Caborn MP (Minister for Sport and Tourism) sent this message to the Club: 'I would like to express my full support for the University of Birmingham's Athletics Team in their meritorious world

record attempt. To run 240 miles in 24 hours will be a strenuous task and will require an enormous amount of effort and dedication, however, I have the utmost confidence that the University will be successful. Let me take this opportunity to send my highest regards to all involved, in what will truly be a fantastic team effort'

The event is being staged to raise funds for the forthcoming tour of Ivy League universities in America; a tradition which has been going for over 50 years. The tour will include competitions against Pennsylvania, Cornell, Harvard and Yale over two weeks and will provide fantastic competition for some of Britain's most promising young athletes including several Great Britain internationals.

The club is looking to gain sponsorship from the event. They are offering the opportunity for companies to put their logos on items of kit and the tour minibus. To make the tour as successful as possible the team is looking to raise £30,000, which will enable the University to field a full team to challenge America's elite. For more information contact Jo Aitken on ext 47526 or email J.Aitken@bham.ac.uk