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Better by degrees!



In 2005/06 58.3 per cent of new workers in Birmingham with degree level or higher qualifications were University of Birmingham graduates, according to the results of an economic impact report from the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies. See full story below.

Big bucks for Brum: University contributes £779 million to region

The University has put a figure on the economic impact it makes to the local and regional economy: a startling contribution of £662 million to the City of Birmingham and £779 million to the West Midlands region.

The results of a detailed report carried out by the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, in collaboration with GHK, were revealed to key city and business leaders.

The research measured the scale of the economic impact attributable to University activities in 2005/06 and also looked at the effect of its staff and students on the general economic, social and cultural life of the region.

Professor Michael Clarke, Vice-Principal, said: *'Governments and commentators often argue the importance of higher education in the development of regional economies, but we haven't previously had an understanding of just how great a figure it is for the University of Birmingham. The £779 million result is staggering.'*

'This University was born out of the city by Joseph Chamberlain in 1900, who had a long term view that the University should feed back into the regional economy. I think that, 106 years on, Joe Chamberlain would be justly proud of the report's findings!'

Key issues such as job creation, graduate retention and the University's impact on civic society were highlighted at the event:

Job Creation: the University employs 5,900 members of staff, and for every one of those University jobs, there is a second job in the local economy supported by spending attributable to the University.

Senior women in jobs: at the University, 50 per cent of managerial and professional posts are held by women – this compares with only 36 per cent in the region.

Graduate retention: the University's total student population numbers more than 31,500, of which 20 per cent are recruited locally. With 44 per cent of Birmingham graduates taking up their first employment in the region, the University acts as a net attractor of labour and talent for the City's workforce. In 2005/06, 58.3 per cent of new workers in Birmingham with degree level or higher qualifications were University of Birmingham graduates.



News



A quick word

Buzz's spies report unusually high spirits at last month's degree congregations, with the Chancellor, Sir Dominic Cadbury, receiving a surprise hug from an over-zealous student while another recipient apparently performed an impromptu jig on stage.

Did such unconventional antics spoil the dignity of the occasion? Not one bit. In fact, observers suggest, there may well be a moral to be drawn from such visible celebration of academic achievement, ie, let's have more joy in life!

Meanwhile, an email is dispatched to the newsdesk: *'Obviously entering these fictional competitions is a waste of time if your answer is deleted without being read!'*

If, like the correspondent, you track your emails, you might be interested to note that university-buzz emails are routed to more than one person as a back-up measure. Be assured though, our competitions are genuine and entries are afforded the same respect as editorial submissions. December's competitions proved hugely popular, by the way, so congratulations to the lucky winners.

Finally, next month heralds the 100th issue of Buzz, and to mark this publishing milestone, we are planning a few changes to the staff magazine. Watch this space for details!

Happy New Year

Jenni Ameghino, Acting Editor

Corporate Services festive quiz night

The Pritchatt's Park Social Centre was a great venue for the Corporate Services festive quiz and what a fantastic, atmospheric night it was.

On 29 November, 150 staff filled the student venue with 22 teams competing against one other from different areas of Corporate Services for the fourth quiz title.

The Guess the Santa round bemused some teams when they tried to identify which senior manager/officer was hidden under Santa's beard and hood! All in all, the quiz rounds were varied, fun and festive.

The top three teams were very close with the VC's Office Angels coming third, Down Town (from Academic and Student Administration) coming second and the winners (by one point) went to the Rockin Robins, made up of staff from

Telecoms, HR, HAS and Public Policy. Well done to all teams who took part.

The best themed prize went to the Development and Alumni Relations Office who were impressively dressed as the nativity scene.

A tremendous £139 was raised from the raffle and all proceeds are going to support the Three Peaks Challenge-nominated charities.

The Corporate Services Social Working Group will be in touch in the New Year with information about the next event.



Alex awarded VC's Medal

Alex Smith, a third-year MEng student in Electronic, Electrical and Computer Engineering, receives the prestigious Vice-Chancellor's Medal at a ceremony on December 13.

Alex made the headlines when he was awarded the \$25,000 Wolfram 2,3 Turing Machine Research Prize for a 40-page 'constructive proof' demonstrating how the machine can be programmed to solve any problem, making it a universal computer.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Sterling, said: *'Alex's achievement is remarkable for someone at this stage in his career, and reflects great credit on to the University.'*

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Big bucks for Brum: University contributes £779 million to region

Research income: in 2005-06, the University's research income exceeded £76 million, representing more than 46 per cent of higher education research and development income to the region.

Civic impact of the University in the region: while the research concentrated on spending power in the region, the report also gave promising indicators of a high level of civic engagement by its staff and students. University staff sit on regional advisory groups and governing bodies across a wide range of sectors, including schools and healthcare trusts, and are involved in a wide range of social and cultural organisations and activities. Student volunteering is at all time high – in 2005/06, student volunteers were engaged in projects involving 85 different charities in the region including Childline, Help the Aged and Oxfam.

Key facts and figures from the report:

- Economic impact was £662 million and £779 million to the city and region respectively
- Annual income of over £388.6 million
- £64 million of disposable income received by staff resident in Birmingham
- In one year, Birmingham graduates from the previous ten years contributed £146 million to the City's economy
- Eighth largest employer in the Birmingham/Solihull sub-region, representing 1.2 per cent of total West Midlands employment
- Potential £525 million additional input via research activities over the next ten years, including over 2,000 jobs by 2015
- £10 million estimated visitor expenditure attributable to the University in 05/06

www.bham.ac.uk/about/regionalimpact.shtml

Engineer wins scholarship

A talented engineer has been awarded a prestigious scholarship to study for a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) at the elite INSEAD Business School in France. Salam Al-Rawi, who graduated from the University, is one of nine talented young engineers who will benefit from more than £290,000 in funding awarded by the Royal Academy of Engineering on behalf of the Sainsbury Management Fellows. The SMF was set up by Lord Sainsbury to help the country's top engineering graduates acquire the skills that will take them into the boardroom of Britain's blue chip companies or set up enterprises that will boost the UK economy. www.smf.org.uk.



Parking notice south car park

There will be limited parking available in South Car Park on the following Wednesdays:

9, 16, 23, 30 January
6, 13, 20, 27 February
5, 12, 19 March

This is to accommodate visiting applicants who will be attending visit days and interviews.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Bob's *Tireless* efforts leave him all at sea



Professor Bob Stone is used to rough seas – in November, he spent a chilly weekend in a small boat, riding waves up to three metres high to conduct a remotely operated vehicle survey of the HMS Scylla artificial reef.

Little did he realise, however, that he was destined to return to the English Channel just south of that same reef a week later, to experience storm-force winds and even higher waves! The only difference this time was that the trip was safely on board one of Her Majesty's Trafalgar Class submarines: HMS *Tireless*.

The submarine visit was part of the University's ongoing involvement with the MoD-funded Human Factors Integration Defence Technology Centre project, now in its fifth year. In particular, Professor Stone and his team at the Department of Electronic and Computer Engineering are developing a range of 'serious games' training programmes for the Armed Forces, one of which, SubSafe, relates to spatial awareness and safety systems training for the Submarine Service.

During the 34 hours Professor Stone was on board, he was invited to take the helm while the submarine was submerged and, later in the journey, to survey the storm-swept seas from the bridge. He even observed the behaviour of dolphins swimming around the search periscope while the boat was close to the surface, courtesy of closed-circuit television cameras mounted in the submarine's fin.

'Sleeping on a makeshift bunk, attached to a launch rail next to a Spearfish Torpedo and Tomahawk Cruise Missile in what the submariners affectionately call the "Bomb Shop" was a unique experience,' said Professor Stone. *'However, the severe weather ensured that the experience was short-lived, as it was impossible to stay in the bunk for longer than a few minutes at a time!'*

Heads you win...again!

Professor Anne Pauwels has been appointed Head of the new College of Arts and Law, which will incorporate the schools of Humanities, Historical Studies and Law. Her most recent position was Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Western Australia, and Chair of the Group of Eight Deans of Arts in Australia.

Anne completed a degree in Germanic Philology and a PhD in German sociolinguistics. Since then, she has held various senior positions at Australian universities, including Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Wollongong and Head of the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics at the University of New England. She is an elected Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.

Her primary research interest is the relationship between language, identity and culture. She has also focused on strengthening the position of foreign language study in higher education. Her most recent book (2007) focuses on the maintenance of minority languages in a transnational context.

Anne said: *'My vision for the College is to build upon the current strengths to achieve international excellence and recognition for its commitment to innovative and high quality approaches to student*

learning, for its groundbreaking research that enhances our understanding of the human condition and society and for its global outlook.'



Help to celebrate golden bio-anniversary

Biochemical Engineering at the University is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year, and past and present staff and students are commemorating the event with a symposium and dinner on 25 April.

'We are trying to contact all graduates, technicians and academic staff, but it is inevitable that some will be missed,' explains Alvin Nienow, Emeritus Professor of Biochemical Engineering. *'So we are inviting all those who read this to contact us and to pass on the information to any of their peers who may have missed it, and invite along anyone else who is interested as well.'*

The discovery (in the UK) and subsequent bulk manufacture of penicillin (first in the US) highlighted the need for specialist biochemical engineers who would understand the biology, chemistry and engineering of production and purification processes for this and similar drugs.

Advocates of the need to diversify chemical engineering education included Harold Hartley, President of IChemE, and Frederick Warner, who wrote an article to this effect in the 1953 issue of the *Birmingham University Chemical Engineer*. In 1956, Frederick Garner, then head of Birmingham's chemical engineering department, responded by asking Glaxo's Norman Blakebrough to set up suitable facilities – a brief that was completed in 1958 with the establishment of a state-of-the-art laboratory, a pilot plant and an MSc course in Biological Engineering.

From the start, the broadly-based course embraced not just biological processes for the production of drugs and other products, but also food process engineering and biological aspects of handling wastes and preventing pollution.

Birmingham started its MSc in September 1958, awarding its first MScs in 1959, followed by its first PhDs (to Ray Brookes and Geoff Hamer) in 1962. Birmingham has since produced some 550 MScs and 200 PhDs in biological (later renamed biochemical) engineering.

Anyone wishing to attend the fiftieth anniversary symposium and dinner should contact Alvin Nienow (a.w.nienow@bham.ac.uk; +44 (0)121 414 5325)



Research excellence

New figures released show that Birmingham is one of the top HEIs in the UK and Europe for graduate-level science programmes*. The study, commissioned by CHE (an independent German educational research institute) focuses on medals awarded to departments for: number of research publications; number of internationally cited authors; frequency of research citations and number of research projects accepted into the EU's Marie Curie Research Promotion Programme.

Birmingham was admitted into the 'Excellence Group' for Biological Sciences – one of only seven UK HEIs to do so – by achieving three silver medals in the quality and frequency of their cited publications. Physics also achieved 'Excellence' status – one of only five universities to do so – with two silver medals, plus a gold medal for the number of internationally cited research authors. Chemistry makes it into the 'Top Group' with two bronze medals and a gold for frequency of research citations.

*source: The Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE) Ranking of Excellent European Graduate Programmes in the Natural Sciences and Mathematics, December 2007

Spin Cycle

Not even Christmas revelry could stop a flood of media inquiries coming in during the last month.

Student Alex Smith, winner of the Turing Machine Prize and the Vice-Chancellor's Medal, spoke about his experiences on Radio 4's *More or Less* show.

David Bailey, from Business, was interviewed by a number of media outlets, including Sky News and BBC Midlands Today, on the unveiling of the first Jaguar XF to roll off the production line at Castle Bromwich. He also spoke to the *Manufacturer Magazine* about private equity.

Chris Ham from HSMC was interviewed by BBC Radio 4's *You and Yours* programme about the state of the NHS.

The University's ongoing contribution to the Large Hadron Collider project in CERN was featured in *The Birmingham Post* and on BBC Midlands Today with contributions from physicists David Evans and Pete Watkins.

Simon Green, of the Institute for German Studies, was interviewed on immigration and cultural integration in Germany, by *Deutsche Welle* radio and BBC4.

Derek Averre discussed the current political situation in Russia with BBC Radio WM, BBC Northern Ireland, and also with Polish daily newspaper *Rzeczpospolita*. Ingrid Van Biezen, from Social Sciences, discussed the ongoing political party funding controversy on BBC Radio 4

John Hunter spoke to Nicky Campbell on Radio 5 Live, and Jeremy Vine on Radio 2, and to BBC Scotland about the use of forensics in archaeology.

Philip Amis, from the Institute of Public Policy, spoke about the link between urbanisation and poverty to Italian TV station RAI, and Australia's SBS Radio

John Fender, of Economics, was interviewed on the state of the British economy for ITV News and GMTV.

News in brief

Philosophy conference

The Philosophy Department is to present a one-day conference on Science and Pseudoscience, sponsored by the Royal Institute of Philosophy and the British Society for the Philosophy of Science. The event will be held on 15 March 2008 in the Arts Building and will feature Professor John Worrall (LSE) on *'How not to react to pseudoscience: an unintelligent intervention in the Intelligent Design debate'*; Professor Chris French (Goldsmith) on *'Is Parapsychology a Pseudoscience?'*; and Professor Steve Fuller (Warwick) on *'Pseudoscience: Philosophical Fabrications in search of an Imaginary Object'*. To register go to: www.philosophy.bham.ac.uk/events/Pseudoscience.shtml. Registration closes on February 14.

Congratulations...

... to Anna Mitchell, Press Officer, Communications office, who won silver in the Young Communicator of the Year category at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations awards 2007-08 in Birmingham on November 30.

Correction

Professor Lawrence Young was appointed Chair of Cancer Biology in 1994, not Biology, as stated in the December issue.

Academic promotions marked

Members of staff who gained academic promotion to Senior Lecturer, Senior Research Fellow, Associate Professor, Reader and Professor during 2007 attended a special celebration in the Rotunda of the Aston Webb Building last month.

The event – now in its fourth year – marked the achievements of a total of 77 members of staff. Among them were 30 new Senior Lecturers, four new Senior Research Fellows, 23 new Readers, a new Associate Professor and 19 new Chairs.

At a reception beforehand, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Sterling, said: *'I am delighted that we have an opportunity to celebrate your achievements and show them off to others. I hope you will all have further promotions and recognition of your achievements but for the present, on*

behalf of all your colleagues across our campuses, I congratulate you on all your promotions.'

Among those promoted were: Dr Mark Sterling (Civil Engineering) – promoted to Senior Lecturer; Professor Julian Bion (Medicine) – promoted to Chair of Intensive Care Medicine; Dr Paramjit Gill (Medicine) – promoted to Reader in Primary Care Research; Dr Michele Schweisfurth (Education) promoted to Reader in Comparative and International Education; Mrs Claire Whittle (Health Sciences) promoted to Senior Lecturer; Dr Steve McCall (Education) promoted to Senior Lecturer.



High fliers: (from left) Dr Mark Sterling, Professor Julian Bion, Dr Paramjit Gill, Dr Michele Schweisfurth, Mrs Claire Whittle and Dr Steve McCall

Highlighting diversity in U21 event

Birmingham is to host the Universitas 21 Summer School this year. This is shaping up to be a fascinating event that will highlight the University as an inspirational centre of learning, teaching and research; as well as showcasing the city as a diverse, creative and multicultural environment of international standing.



The Summer School theme of 'Embracing Diversity' has created interdisciplinary interest; and colleagues from the Business School, Public Policy, the Medical School and other centres of expertise are joining forces to provide a stimulating, thought-provoking, creative and innovative academic programme.

Professor Roger Sugden from the Business School concludes: *'The School is an exciting opportunity to promote inter-cultural dialogue and understanding within the University of Birmingham, the region, and amongst U 21 partners. It is an occasion to highlight the University's international expertise. Students will be faced with an innovative and thought-provoking curriculum, and staff will lay the foundations for lasting research and learning*

initiatives that address crucial issues in diversity, creativity, culture and innovation.'

The sub-theme of creativity, culture and innovation aims to appeal to students from all academic backgrounds across 20 other institutions within the U21 worldwide network. It also plays to the strengths of the city as a vibrant, young, multicultural and creative environment in which to work and socialise.

The Summer School is scheduled for June 30-July 12. Colleagues interested in participating should contact Professor Sugden on ext 46695.

www.u21.bham.ac.uk/Summer-School.htm

Inspirational service

The University Carol Service on 10 December raised £807.23 in aid of the local charity Karis Neighbour Scheme, working with refugees and asylum seekers and other people in need in parts of Birmingham. A solemn and inspiring service

was held, as is customary, in the Great Hall. It was organised jointly by the University Chaplaincy Ecumenical Team and the Music Department. Attended by the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellor, the Vice-Principal, and nearly 900 members of the University community, it featured many favourite readings and carols, as well as some more modern ones.

Engineering excellence in teaching

Dr Claire Davis, from the Department of Metallurgy and Materials, has won an ExxonMobil Excellence in Teaching Award.

Claire has been a member of staff in the School of Engineering for 11 years and is an expert in materials used in structural applications such as rails, aerospace and construction. She is particularly interested in developing resources for use in teaching; and, as part of the National Teaching Fellowship project she was awarded in 2001 she developed good practice guides for case study teaching.

The award is given to those who show a strong and continuing commitment to teaching, professional activities, and who promote engineering as a rewarding and creative career, as well as establishing industrial-academic links.

Claire said: *'It is fantastic that excellence in teaching in engineering is being recognised and rewarded. I am delighted to have been selected for an award, and look forward to benefiting from it over the next year.'*

She will receive £10,000 as well as opportunities to create links with ExxonMobil and to continue her work in developing new teaching resources and good practice guides.



Winning team: (from left) Damien Walmsley, Giles Perryer and Deborah White.

Dentistry scoops THES award

Dental School staff are celebrating winning a prize at the prestigious *Times Higher Education Supplement Awards*, which took place in London.

The prize in the Outstanding ICT Initiative category, sponsored by JISC, focuses on the School's newly-developed Content Management System, which complements traditional learning and teaching environments and materials.

The new system allows students to create their own content online as well as giving staff a way of delivering interactive learning and teaching materials. This includes a range of educational podcasts, which are available through iTunes, and video content, which helps students prepare for clinical problems at short notice.

Giles Perryer, who leads the e-courses team, said: *'We have a diverse student body, who are based away from the University's main campus and also spend a significant period of time in clinics. This makes interactive learning particularly important to make sure we give students a high quality experience. This open environment also encourages a stronger sense of being part of a student community even when our students aren't in the school.'*

Giles has an additional reason to celebrate after winning the national Dentist Teacher of the Year award at the Caledonian Club in London on 7 November.

Professor Damien Walmsley, of the Dental School, said: *'This initiative was student-driven: we embraced new technologies to provide an interactive style of communication, which has really captured the interest of both students and staff. It was this innovation, combined with the students' imagination and enthusiasm, which impressed the judging panel and sealed our success last night.'*

Recently the School's content management system has been enhanced further by the development of a component-free virtual microscope, allowing students to view slides remotely.

The system will also allow staff to create virtual patients with a variety of dental conditions to simulate the experience of testing and applying knowledge in the clinic.

Christmas anti-drink campaigns 'do not deter young people'

Christmas anti-drinking campaigns may not be working, according to research by Birmingham Business School in a major UK study into young people and alcohol.

The study has discovered that extreme consumption of heavily marketed alcohol brands plays a key part in identity formation and social bonding for young people. In light of these findings the researchers suggest that a radical rethink of national alcohol policy is needed, which takes into account the social character of alcohol consumption and identity implications for young people.

The research revealed that tales of alcohol-related mishaps and escapades were key markers for young people's social identity. These 'drinking stories' deepen bonds of friendship and cement group membership. Not only does being in a friendship group legitimise being very drunk – being the subject of an extreme drinking story can raise esteem within the group.

The researchers found that inebriation within a friendship group is often part of a social bonding ritual that is viewed positively and linked with fun, friendship and good times, although some young people can be the target of humiliating or risky activities. One implication of these findings is that some anti-drinking campaigns, such as

the current Diageo 'the choice is yours' campaign, may be misconceived. Adverts which portray drunken incidents such as being thrown out of a club, being carried home by a friend, passing out in a doorway or vomiting in public can be seen in terms of a typical story of a 'fun' night out rather than as a cautionary tale.

Professor Isabelle Szmigin, from Birmingham Business School, says: *'These adverts imply that being very drunk with friends carries a penalty of social disapproval, when in fact, for many young people, the opposite is often the case. Extreme inebriation is seen as a source of personal esteem and social affirmation within a friendship group when it results in becoming the subject of a story of a night out.'*

The researchers suggest that, in developing future anti-drinking campaigns, new thinking is needed in the battle against extreme alcohol consumption. Professor Szmigin continues: *'While many young people recognise the damage that drinking too much can do to their health and the associated risks of physical and sexual assault, few view these as more than short term problems.'*



Priorsfield: remembering past and present



Past and present staff from the School of Public Policy were invited to a celebratory event at one of its most loved buildings – Priorsfield, the impressive old manor house on Edgbaston Park Road – to remember key figures from the School.

Several teaching rooms in Priorsfield have recently been renamed in honour of a number of key figures, including the University's own Vice-Principal, Professor Michael Clarke (pictured), who was Professor of Public Policy and Head of School in 1993. Rooms have also been named after the late Doctor Malcolm Norris, Emeritus Professor John Stewart, the late Professor Kieron Walsh, Penelope Mullen and Barbara Smith.

Photographs and short biographies have been included in the teaching rooms so that current and future students and staff can take a moment to reflect on the many people who have been instrumental at the School of Public Policy. As well as reflecting on the academic and teaching achievements of the individuals, Edward Peck, Head of the School of Public Policy (and Head of the new College of Social Sciences from January) also invited colleagues to share stories about the key figures remembered. Fond memories included randomly encountering ex-colleagues on family beach holidays



(reading academic texts in full suits while their children played in the sand) and the rather surprising encounter between Doctor Malcolm Norris and John Wayne over a game of chess!

Priorsfield is building G8 on the main Edgbaston campus map and is a busy teaching centre for several departments within the School of Public Policy. If you would like to take a look at the photographs contact Jodie Eagles: 0121 414 5010 for room availability.

Fresh Steps

Susan Rex, Academic Practice and Organisation Development (APOD) Consultant, has recently become a licensed in-house trainer to run a new programme called Fresh Steps, which is a personal and work development programme that has been researched, designed and developed specifically for more experienced people at work.

Sue is the first in-house licensed trainer within the University sector and the world! Two years ago, University staff took part in the research for this programme, undertaken by the Springboard Consultancy. The University was the first organisation to pilot this programme last autumn.

The programme has been designed to respond to the issues facing older workers and their employers as identified by extensive research inside 14 differing organisations. The format is pragmatic: a two-day workshop followed by further one-day workshop with individually-tailored project work done in between.

Topics covered include; discovering successful change strategies, clearing out things that might be holding you back, building on your successes, reviewing your priorities, presenting your self positively and designing new futures by setting objectives.

The programme will be offered for the first time in early 2008. If you are interested in being a participant or finding out more about the programme, please contact Sue Rex by email s.a.rex@bham.ac.uk or by phone ext 43692



Visitors from Beijing

The Centre for Contemporary Citizenship and Governance in the UK (CenConUK) hosted an official delegation from Beijing. Led by Yin Xuelong, of the Office of the Committee of the Cultural and Ethical Progress of the Capital City, 28 representatives of the Beijing Municipality came to Birmingham to discuss governance and citizenship.

They were welcomed by CenConUK's two directors, Professor Matthew Hilton and Dr Nicholas Crowson, before Dr James McKay gave a presentation on non-governmental organisations and citizenship in Britain.

The visit is connected to the British Government's recognition that there is a top priority of helping the Chinese Government to achieve 'best practice' in a variety of standards and areas. This group of senior officials from Beijing are responsible for the development of 'civil society' and 'moral standards'. Gordon Brown will be on his first official visit to China as PM from 17 January and will reiterate Britain's support to China in achieving higher standards of governance and in learning from our model.

After the members of CenConUK had informed the delegation of the work being done at the University (and particularly in the History departments) on these issues, they were presented with official memorabilia from the Beijing Olympics. For further information about CenConUK's work on NGOs, visit: www.dango.bham.ac.uk

Birmingham leads the way

The latest key published statistics show that Birmingham is the leading player among the West Midlands Region's 12 Institutes of Higher Education*

The statistics show that of all the HEI's in the region, Birmingham educates the largest number of students, and secured the lion's share (47 per cent) of research grants and contracts in the West Midlands for 2005/06. Within the West Midlands, Birmingham has the greatest capacity to undertake research as expressed through absolute staff numbers and in terms of the number of research groups given the highest possible rating in the last RAE exercise.

Enterprise Marketing Manager Alison Beare, who compiled the key statistics document, said: *'These statistics reflect the tremendous amount of hard work that goes on here at Birmingham and everyone involved should feel very proud.'*

*The University of Birmingham, Warwick University, UCE, Wolverhampton University, Coventry University, Staffordshire University, Keele University, Birmingham College of Food, Tourist and Creative Studies, Aston University, University College Worcester, Newman College and Harper Adams

To view to statistics see: www.bham.ac.uk/keystats/wm

Cram and Curbishley on campus!

One of the world's most successful middle-distance runners visited campus to help promote an event taking place here in March.

Former English athlete turned presenter and commentator Steve Cram came to Birmingham with his partner, alumna Alison Curbishley; also a successful athlete.

The 'University Challenge' event being promoted by Cram is being organised and hosted by the University Sport Birmingham Athletics Club. Open to university athletes and primary school children, the event will involve athletes running in teams to try to break various British records – including one of Steve's.

University students will be in groups of ten, running 2.6 miles each to challenge Paula Radcliffe's marathon record; while

teams of 15 primary school children will run 100 metres each, taking on Kelly Holmes' and Steve Cram's 1,500-metre records.

Cram was one of the most dominant middle-distance runners in the 1980s, setting records in the 1,500 metres, 2,000 metres and the mile in 1985. He also won silver at the Olympic Games in 1984, along with numerous gold medals at the Commonwealth Games, European and World Championships.

Alison graduated from UoB when she was already a senior British international. As well as reaching the final at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, she went on to become British Champion over 400 metres, representing Britain at the Commonwealth Games and European Championships, winning silver and bronze respectively.



French tag rugby cup challenge

'La couleur, c'est le bleu! Le rugby, c'est le jeu! Rawlett allez! C'est sûr on va gagner!' This was how supporters cheered on their team at the *Coupe de l'Ovalie*, a French language tag rugby cup.

270 Year 9 pupils from ten Midland schools joined French undergraduates from Birmingham and Aston Universities to fight for the coveted *coupe* on the day before the Rugby World Cup Final in Paris.

The event was organised by the Centre for European Languages and Cultures at the University in collaboration with the Rugby Football Union to highlight rugby as an 'ambassador' for the French language.

Fourteen pupil teams and four undergraduate sides played dynamic rugby in the seven-a-side tag tournament. The final saw Kingstone High School, from Hereford, take on Lacon Childe School from Shropshire, while on the other pitch *Les Grenouilles*, from Birmingham, fought the team from Aston for the undergraduate competition. Kingstone and Birmingham were crowned French rugby kings and queens and received the winning cups.

The *Coupe de l'Ovalie* was made possible by the generous support of the Rugby Football Union, University Sport Birmingham and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.

The Results:

Pupils' semi final: Tupton Hall School, Chesterfield 3 vs Kingstone High School, Hereford 4; Lacon Childe School, Shropshire 4 vs Smith's Wood Sports College, Birmingham 3.
Pupils' final: Lacon Childe 2 vs Kingstone 4

Home teams triumph in campus relays

University Sport Birmingham Athletics Club continued its successful season when it held the seventh annual RLF Campus Relays and clearly dominated proceedings.

The women's competition, involving three laps of the 3km course, saw Birmingham's A and B teams finish in first and second place, leaving Loughborough to be relegated to third.

Former student Nicky Archer ran all three legs herself, finished fourth over all out of the 38 competing teams and ran the second fastest leg of the race to boot.

Meanwhile, the men's race, involving four laps of the course, saw Leeds Metropolitan University finishing in the top spot. However, as their team involved a club runner, Birmingham's A team was the first legitimate student side, finishing a close second overall. Current University of Birmingham student Tom Penfold ran the second fastest leg out of the 216 athletes competing.

More than 100 teams entered, as well as university athletics clubs and city clubs. Teams from other University of Birmingham Athletic Union clubs were also involved.

Head Athletics coach, Bud Baldaro said: *'The club worked tremendously hard to ensure the success of the event. Special thanks must go to Becky Townsend, Sam Perkins, Liv Kenney and Sam Crutchley, but it was a great all-round effort. We must also thank our sponsors RLF. We now look forward to the European and Irish trials next weekend.'*

Climb every mountain?

Enterprising University staff hope to raise £20,000 for three local, national and international charities by climbing the three highest peaks of England, Scotland and Wales - Scafell, Ben Nevis and Snowdon - within 24 hours.

Staff team co-ordinator of the Three Peaks Challenge, Marcus Williams, comments: *'University Sport Birmingham has been incredibly supportive, from providing fitness and nutritional advice to allowing us to train at the Priestley Centre as part of the Active Lifestyles Weekend. We all hope it will not only raise a lot of money for the three charities*



concerned, but that it will also raise the issue of fitness and wellbeing across the University.'

Staff and students are invited to take part in a 'Superstars' challenge in spring 2008. A fortnightly blog will be posted on the University Sport Birmingham home page www.sport.bham.ac.uk.



Birmingham leads the way in battlefield archaeology in Europe

Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity Research Fellows John and Patricia Carman are leading an international team dedicated to promote the study and preservation of pre-20th-century sites of conflict across Europe.



In from the cold: field archaeologist Glenn Foard (The Battlefields Trust) relaxes over coffee with other members of ESTOC at a press conference for the Oudenaarde commemoration

The international and interdisciplinary ESTOC group set out its plans at a meeting partly funded by the Collaborative Research Network in Heritage, Cultural Production and Interpretation and was held in November in Oudenaarde, Belgium – which commemorates with a major exhibition next year, the 300th anniversary of an Anglo-Dutch victory over French occupying forces.

The group – in full, European Studies of Terrains of Conflict, and named for a medieval short sword (a 'tuck' in English) – comprises historians, architects, archaeologists and heritage experts from various organisations in eight European countries. Future plans include compiling a Europe-wide database of conflict sites to aid researchers and policy-makers.

ESTOC was born, in part, out of the Oudenaarde commemoration project – for which John and Patricia act as specialist advisors. By meeting in Oudenaarde, the group was able to endorse the significance of the commemoration, which includes not only a major exhibition related to the battle and the town of Oudenaarde, but also the first opportunity to study the archaeological evidence for a major battle of the early 18th century in 'the cockpit of Europe'. Previous such work has been largely limited to the UK and Ireland, with some work in Sweden and the former Soviet

Union. Results of ongoing research will go far towards gaining insights into the expected level of preservation of evidence for 17th and 18th century conflict in the region.

The interest of the ESTOC group in the site was recognised by the presence at a public meeting of reporters from major Belgian newspapers, including leading Flemish paper *De Standaard* for which John provided an interview.

'ESTOC works to promote the study of sites and preservation of conflict across Europe,' says John, 'which – whether we like it or not – is an important part of Europe's history. We focus especially on sites prior to the 20th century because these are the sites most at risk in the modern world. They are often subject to systematic looting for memorabilia by metal detectorists who do not record their finds, but also from rural and urban development that will destroy any evidence that will allow us to reconstruct warfare in the past. We hope that by bringing leading European colleagues together, ESTOC will be able to convince policymakers that this heritage is an important one and deserves their attention.'

The IAA's new MA course in Conflict Archaeology will take in its first students in October 2008.

Tributes as Pat retires

Colleagues and friends of Professor Pat Wrightson gathered to wish her well in retirement. The Vice-Principal, Professor Michael Clarke, said Pat had served the University as Head of the School of Health Sciences for more than ten years – a remarkable achievement, given the major demands of such a post, and the fact Pat was charged with growing the School from relatively small beginnings (30 staff in 1997), to almost 100 staff in 2007. This reflected a growth in student numbers from 250 to over 700.

Pat is well known on the national golfing circuit, having played from her home club of Huddersfield for almost 40 years. At Birmingham she has been a member of the Edgbaston Golf

Club and the University's Staff Golf Society

Pat thanked colleagues who had contributed to the growth and success of Health Sciences, including those who had supported her in developing physiotherapy as a degree programme and bringing it into the University in the early 90s.

She will continue her affiliation with the University as she has been awarded the title of Emeritus Professor.

Pat's relatively early retirement has been carefully planned over a few years, spurred on by her selection to represent the successful English Ladies Senior Golf Team in the Home International Matches in 2005, 2006 and 2007.



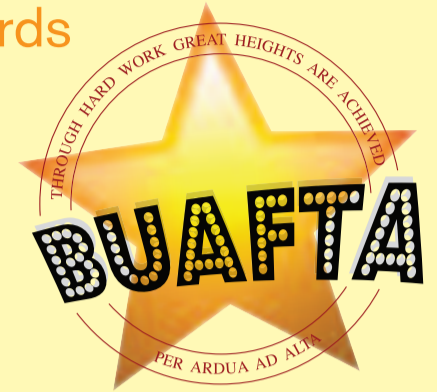
400-plus nominations for awards

The 2008 Corporate Services BUAFAs got off to a flying start in November with more than 400 nominations.

'We're really pleased the

awards scheme has had such a good response,'

said Geoff Pringle on behalf of the BUAFAs organising committee. 'We'd like to thank everyone who took the time to nominate – your votes will mean a lot to those who have been nominated.'



The nominations reflect Corporate Services' strengths in customer service and teamwork. The most popular award categories were Best Customer Service (90 nominations), Team of the Year (67 nominations) and Team Player (59 nominations). New staff members are clearly making an impact, as the Best Newcomer award generated 53 nominations.

Nominations for the other award categories were as follows:

Manager of the Year: 40

Lifetime Achievement: 28

Outstanding Contribution: 18

Vision and Values: 15

Idea of the Year: 15

Best Contribution to the Environment: 10

Project of the Year: 9

The independent external judging panel met in December to agree the shortlist for the awards. Those who have been shortlisted will receive their invitations to the awards ceremony, which will take place in the Great Hall on Thursday 28 February.

UK Nanoforum 2007: from Rome to Birmingham

The University hosted the UK Nanoforum 2007. The event was organised by UK Trade and Investment, and Advantage West Midlands, and was sponsored by the Nanotechnology and the Molecules and Materials Collaborative Research Networks led by their respective Professors, Jon Preece and Mike Adams.

Birmingham's research in nanosciences and nanotechnology was showcased as well as academic expertise and the work of spinout companies based at the University. Delegates toured the University's facilities and attended presentations on all aspects of nanoscience and nanotechnology, such as metal nanopowders, nanofabrication and how nanotechnology can be used in drug delivery. Nick Stuart, Head of UK Trade and Investment Science and Technology Team said that 'the programme at the University of Birmingham has given the international delegates a real flavour of UK excellence, and that the new connections made will open opportunities for wealth creating partnerships.'

For further information about working with the Collaborative Research Networks of Nanotechnology and Molecules and Materials, please contact Professors Jon Preece j.a.preece@bham.ac.uk or Mike Adams m.j.adams@bham.ac.uk, or Dr Milla Shah m.shah@bham.ac.uk

New Year resolutions



Professor Edward Peck talks to Ros Dodd about his plans for the new College of Social Sciences.

New Year is the perfect time to make a fresh start in a new job, so it's appropriate that Professor Edward Peck officially took up his latest post as one of the five new Heads of College on January 1.

'All the signs are that it's going to be very exciting, but also quite challenging,' he declares.

Edward relinquished his positions last month as Director of the School of Public Policy and as Head of Department to embrace his new role as Head of the College of Social Sciences. As well as the School he previously ran, the College also incorporates the current Schools of Business, Education and Social Sciences.

It is a job that might have been created especially for Edward, who is Professor in Public Services Development, Director of the University's Health Services Management Centre and a former NHS manager.

'I suppose the reason I landed the job is that I have a background which spans most of the areas of academic interest of the Schools in the College. Also, I think, because of my previous career in NHS management; what I've managed in the past was not dissimilar in terms of staff numbers to the new College.'

'I think I've been quite successful in managing a Department and then a School to meet a number of strategic and operational challenges. I think I appreciate where the university sector is going and how Birmingham may want to respond to those challenges.'

Such challenges – like the development of interdisciplinary collaboration to take the University to greater heights on the international academic stage – are partly behind the reorganisation at Birmingham that led to Edward's new role.

'There are some tremendous strengths in Social Sciences at Birmingham, but I don't think we've been helped by the fragmentation of Social Sciences across four Schools,' explains Edward, who has been in Birmingham for five years.

'So the idea is to create a much more strategic and coherent vision for Social Sciences, which builds on the strengths we have. For example, we are already putting together a College-wide approach to research methods training that will build on areas of excellence in particular Schools.'

The first thing the new College of Social Sciences has done is to set in motion a consultative approach to decide how to deploy its extensive academic resources to the College's advantage.

'The way we've handled the consultation process has been informed by what I know about organisational mergers through my research, and so far it's proving useful. It is certainly helping me to think about the way we structure the processes we're putting in place.'

'We are also formulating a College research strategy and a College teaching and learning strategy,' says Edward. *'We are looking at these issues from a College perspective. At the same time, we are looking at our horizontal structures – College Research Centres – to build in cross-College collaboration right from the outset.'*

If Edward is enthusiastic about the new set-up, so too are the members of the College Co-ordinating Committee who are working with him on the changes. Already, he says, academic communication between the Schools has improved. *'We've seen a lot of goodwill for what is happening and the consultation process has sparked a lot of new conversations.'*

It is still rather too early to predict what the new College will be known for, but Edward is confident the different Schools will be more effective in showcasing their achievements through being part of a body that is greater than its individual parts.

'We will have a much more unified story about Social Sciences in Birmingham to tell to our academic colleagues both inside the University and internationally. We will be focusing on some particular areas of interdisciplinary research excellence in which to become outstanding as a College.'

What those areas are have yet to be identified. *'We are asking academic staff to suggest research areas and already lots of suggestions are starting to emerge. We are looking at where our strengths are; and we are looking at the future of social sciences, such as what the Government and other bodies will want to fund in the next few years, as part of our Research Strategy.'*

The College will also be looking to develop a portfolio of activity to encourage more knowledge transfer to government bodies, business and third sector agencies.

It is a chunky task that Edward has taken on, but he appears to be relishing it, even though he has also been commissioned to write a book for January 2009 on 'performing leadership', which builds on his work on leadership development programmes in public services. *'I want to continue an academic role, albeit one that will be much reduced from my current contribution. I will also continue to do limited amounts of teaching; I came into the University because of my commitment to these areas and I do not want to give them up entirely.'*

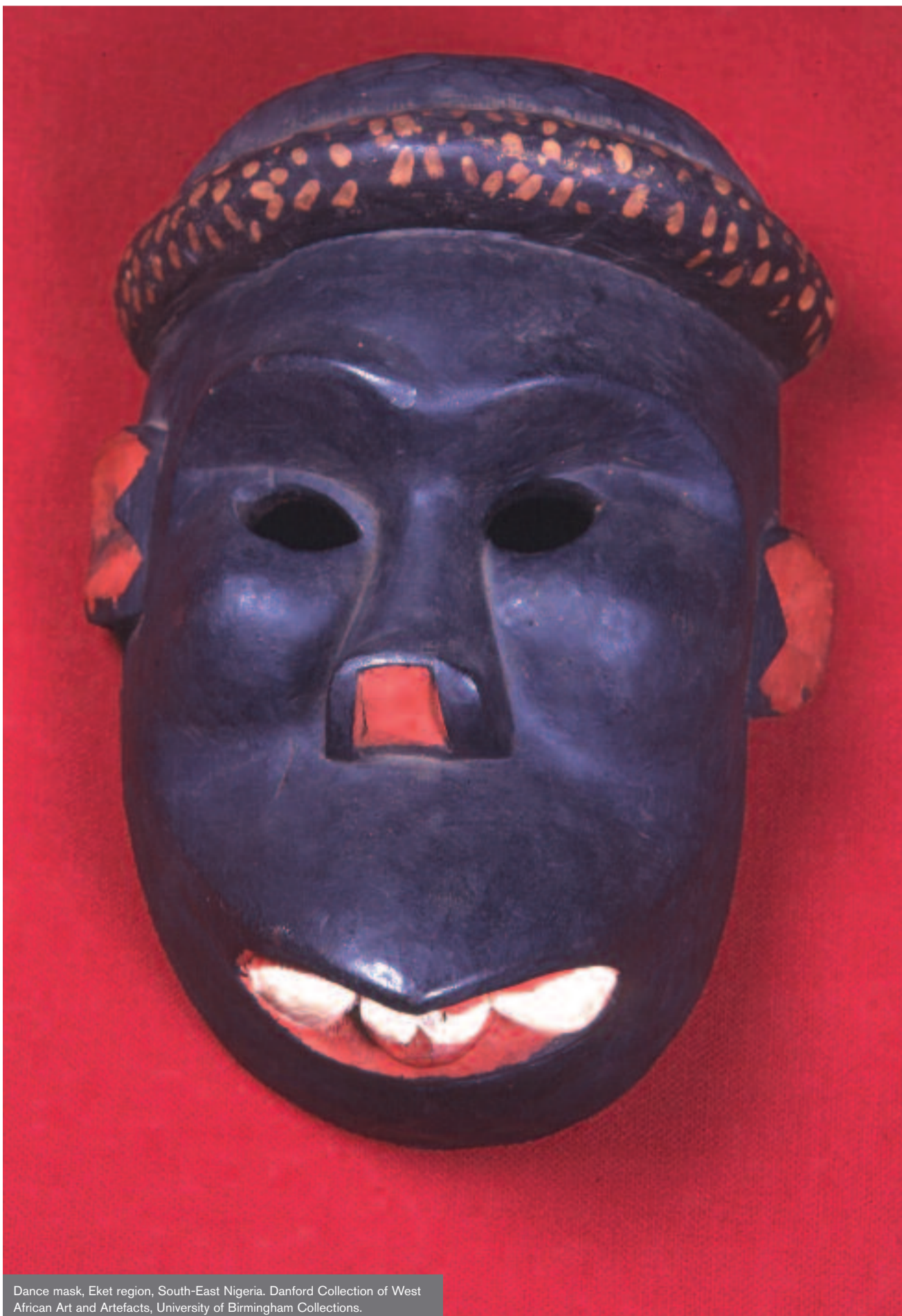
To a point, though, the two tasks should go hand in hand, as Edward's performing leadership skills will be tested as never before. Also relevant is the fact that some of his work has been about organisational mergers.

'The way we've handled the consultation process has been informed by what I know about organisational mergers through my research, and so far it's proving useful. It is certainly helping me to think about the way we structure the processes we're putting in place.'

He concludes: *'So this job appealed to me because it brought together, at the right time and in the right place, all my past experience and a number of strands that the University wanted in a Head of College.'*

Online collection takes treasures to a global audience

The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, the Lapworth Museum of Geology and the University of Birmingham Collections have launched an online searchable database, which has been growing steadily over the last few months, writes *Clare Mullett, Assistant Curator of the University Collections*.



Dance mask, Eket region, South-East Nigeria. Danford Collection of West African Art and Artefacts, University of Birmingham Collections.

Did you know...?

- The University has hundreds of thousands of artefacts in its collections and thousands are now online
- We are the first UK site to use the new Mobius software to provide an internet presence for our collections
- We are one of the few university museums groups to have a searchable database for our collections
www.collectionsonline.bham.ac.uk
- Special Collections has a separate database where you can search their rare books, manuscripts and archives online. This can be found at:
<http://calm.bham.ac.uk/DServeA>

This month the collections will be adding another large batch of records for Internet users to browse through, and we encourage visitors to check periodically as we release more records on a regular basis.

Since the late 1990s, the Barber, Lapworth and University Collections have been using a digital museums management system called MIMSY, one of the most sophisticated collections management tools on the market. This is also used by institutions such as the Science Museum, English Heritage and the National Portrait Gallery.

MIMSY provides a master catalogue of all our artefacts and accompanying data such as essays, reports, and many types of image. The system is supported by IT Services (formerly Information Services), and for just over two years the project has been overseen by Carole Sparke, who has brilliantly reorganised the software, and customised it to suit our needs. Carole has also applied a web interface, opening up records of our collections to a much larger audience.

Collectionsonline gives access to the records from our combined collections and allows you to search for specific records or browse through categories such as 'culture', 'institution' or 'named collection'.

There are specific objects featured in the 'In Focus' section which each represent a selection of topical, unusual or interesting records selected by curators. There are also details about particular people associated with our artefacts, and publications such as books, exhibition catalogues, journals and newspaper articles.

The high quality images uploaded onto the web allow a researcher or keen virtual visitor to 'zoom in' to study, say, the surface of a Roman vase or the brushwork in an Old Master painting.

'This is the fruit of at least 12 years' work, and fully justifies Birmingham's early interest in MIMSY, when we were the



Thomas Gainsborough, *The Harvest Wagon*, circa 1767. The Barber Institute of Fine Arts.

first British university collection to explore its potential,' says James Hamilton, University Curator; while Paul Spencer-Longhurst, Senior Curator of the Barber Institute, says: 'The site is very useful in opening up the treasures of the Barber Institute to a much wider, worldwide audience than was possible before.'

Jon Clatworthy, Curator of the Lapworth Museum, adds: 'The searchable database provides valuable access to the collections and associated information for a wide range of users, including, the public, schools and colleges, students and staff, through to international research workers.'

The benefits of having our collections online are manifest. Our museums and collections can reach a wider audience of students, researchers and the general public irrelevant of location and opening hours. By having records more widely accessible more people will get to know our collections and be drawn to visit them in person. As more information is added into MIMSY, Collectionsonline will become a rich learning environment for our online visitors.

Museums and collections of international importance are to be found at the University. Besides the priceless Old Masters and Impressionist masterpieces in the Barber Institute, the Edgbaston campus is also adorned by an outstanding collection of modern and contemporary paintings, murals and sculpture.

The seasonal glories of Winterbourne Botanic Garden are there for all to see, as are the historical and geologically important minerals and fossils in the Lapworth Museum.

In the Special Collections at the Main Library and Selly Oak is a varied collection of illuminated manuscripts, rare books and archives. The University Collections also comprise the portraits in the Aston Webb Building. Elsewhere, we have the Danford Collection of West African Art and Artefacts, the Medical School collections of anatomical specimens and medical waxes, the Physics School's collections of historic physics instruments, and collections in the Schools of Ancient History and Archaeology and Biosciences.

With the relaunch of our joint website this January, we hope you will take the opportunity to explore online the wide variety of treasures housed in our museums and collections and then drop in and pay us a visit. Go to www.collections.bham.ac.uk



Amputated hand of pioneer radiologist Dr John Hall-Edwards showing radiation damage (1898). Medical School Collection.



Multiple Agates, Lapworth Museum of Geology.



Egyptian Anthropoid Wooden Coffin Lid of Ahmose. From Beni Hasan, Egypt. After 550 BC. The Ancient History and Archaeology Collection.



Fossil fish - *Priscacara liops*. Green River Formation, Wyoming, US. Approximately 50 million years old. Lapworth Museum of Geology.

Honorary graduates take centre stage

More than 1,500 students graduated at the degree congregations held in the Great Hall in December. As well as graduating students, the following received honorary degrees:



Mr Desmond Kelly OBE, Doctor of Letters

Desmond Kelly is Assistant Director of Birmingham Royal Ballet. Born and trained in Zimbabwe. He began his professional career with London Festival Ballet (now English National Ballet). He joined the Royal Ballet Company in 1970, dancing the principal roles in all major classical repertoires and partnering many of the world's leading ballerinas.



Mr Steve Walker, Doctor of the University

Steve Walker is Chief Executive of the Aston Reinvestment Trust (the Community Development Finance Institution for Birmingham). ART has now lent over £6 million to enterprises, creating or preserving 2,900 jobs. He is a member of the West Midlands Regional Finance Forum and also co-chairs the Birmingham and Solihull Social Economy Consortium.



Professor Hans-Paul Schwefel, Doctor of Science

Hans-Paul Schwefel is the former Chair for Systems Analysis at the University of Dortmund. He was spokesman for the collaborative research centre on computational intelligence and from 1998 to 2000 was as Pro-Rector for Research and Junior Scientists at the university. In 2007 he was made a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. He also co-founded one of the most influential conference series: Parallel Problem Solving from Nature.



Dr Alan Folwell, Doctor of Science

Alan Folwell is a businessman with a range of experience in manufacturing and technology-based industries, where he has spent most of his time in Chief Executive roles. Alan's particular interests are in fostering, growing and developing technology and knowledge-based activities. He advises management teams and sits on the boards of several organisations – ranging from university spin-outs to large organisations - in both the private and public sector. He was the first Chief Executive of the Central Technology Belt.



Dr Hany El Banna OBE, Doctor of the University

Dr Hany El Banna is co-founder and President of Islamic Relief Worldwide, an international relief and development organisation. Dr El Banna is a trustee of the Disasters Emergency Committee (UK) and a member of The Advisory Group to the International Department of the Charity Commission (UK). He was awarded an OBE in 2004, receiving the Ibn Khaldun Award for Excellence in Promoting Understanding between Global Cultures and Faiths in the same year.



Professor Bengt Saltin, Doctor of Science

Bengt Saltin was Director of the Copenhagen Muscle Research Centre until 2003 where he is now a senior researcher. He is also a Professor at the August Krogh Institute and the Panum Institute. He is the Founder of the Danish Society for Physical Activity and Health and was its Chairman until 2004. He was awarded the Order of the Dannebrog, first degree, in 1995 and King Carl XVI Gustav's Gold Medal in 2002.

Win tickets to see *Rafta Rafta...*

Would you like to join the cast of *Rafta, Rafta...* for an exclusive press night production at The REP on Friday 1 February?

From Ayub Khan-Din, the author of hit British film *East is East*, comes a touching new comedy about Indian family life in England. Starring Bollywood actor Harish Patel as the head of a troublesome family, *Rafta, Rafta...* is the story of a traditional Indian wedding and its unexpected aftermath.

A comic exploration of family values and generational clashes, *Rafta, Rafta...* is staged by the renowned National Theatre and is directed by Nicholas Hytner.

Buzz readers are being given the chance to win two tickets to the press production, simply answer this question.

What else is Ayub Khan-Din famous for writing?

- a. **North and South**
- b. **Go West!**
- c. **East is East**

Please email your answer to: university-buzz@bham.ac.uk, or send to Buzz Competitions (see Buzz on the Street for details) by January 21. Usual terms and conditions apply.

Rafta, Rafta... opens at The REP on 31 January and runs until 16 February.

For more information and to book tickets, call 0121 236 4455 or email tickets@birmingham-rep.co.uk



Obituary

Professor Michael Butler (1935-2007)

Michael Butler, Emeritus Professor of German Literature, died on 25 November 2007.

Michael Gregory Butler joined the German Department as a lecturer in 1970. Originally from Nottingham, he studied Modern Languages at Cambridge, before teaching at the King's School, Worcester, and Ipswich School. He taught and published on an impressive range of German poetry, drama, and prose fiction from 1750 to the present, and was an authority on Swiss-German literature. As Head of Department from 1984 until 2001, he played an active part in the life of the Faculty of Arts, the School of Modern Languages, and the University as a whole. He was awarded a personal chair in 1986, and in 1999 received a DLitt from the University of Cambridge, and the *Bundesverdienstkreuz* (Cross of the Order of Merit) from the German government in recognition of his services to Anglo-German cultural relations. He was instrumental in persuading the German government to site a National Institute for German Studies at the University.

Mike's boundless energy did not diminish after his official retirement in 2001. As an Emeritus Professor, he loved teaching new generations of students, who in turn loved being taught by him. He continued to support colleagues by reading and commenting with great insight on their research. And from 1997 to 2005, he officiated, with some flair, as Public Orator at the University's degree ceremonies. In last month's *Buzz*, he listed some of the qualities needed for this office: 'a loud voice, a genuine interest in people, and a mild taste for the theatricality of the occasion. A dash of wit will never go amiss.' He had all of these qualities in abundance, and they will be sorely missed.

He is survived by his wife Jean, son Julian, and daughter Emma.

Professor William Dodd

University spin-out wins major funding boost

The University's newest spin-out company Celentyx Ltd has secured significant new venture capital funding to extend its work in developing novel therapies for diseases of the human immune system.

The new investment will come from the Mercia Technology Seed Fund (MTSF) and the Spinner Matched Investment Fund and, as part of the investment package, Dr Mark Payton (Fund Principal, MTSF) will join the Celentyx Board.

Celentyx was officially launched in March 2007 to commercially develop research from the University's Medical School.

The company uses a novel technology developed by the founders, called NCIP (Novel Clinical Identification Profiling), to assess the suitability of existing drugs in the treatment of new illnesses. The process uses only human tissues and cells to identify potential drugs, which adds to the clinical relevance of the results.

Previous research from the Birmingham team has already shown the potential of medicines such as Prozac and drugs used to treat Parkinson's disease as possible therapies for certain types of lymphoma and leukaemia.

Blood pressure checks urged for men over 40

Men aged over 40 in Birmingham are being urged to get their blood pressure checked by their GP, local pharmacies or by health professionals from the Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Partnership. Levels of high blood pressure in Birmingham men are thought to be greater than the national average (one in five), contributing to lower life expectancy.

There are no visible symptoms of high blood pressure but it can lead to many problems. A check only takes five minutes. Diseases of the circulatory system are the most common causes of death for men in Birmingham, with coronary heart disease posing a major threat. Hypertension or high blood pressure is a major risk factor.

Since 2006, the Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Partnership has been committed to promoting initiatives known to improve life expectancy for people at greatest risk of coronary heart disease.

Blood pressure can be maintained at a healthy level in most people through regular exercise, low salt consumption and low alcohol intake.

Visit www.getyourschecked.co.uk



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Active Lifestyle
book online

New for '08, you can now sign up to Active Lifestyle classes online. Check out www.sport.bham.ac.uk/alp or come to the Munrow reception.

The feel good factor

Holocaust Memorial Day 2008

27 January, The Great Hall, 2.30pm
Remembering those lost to holocausts around the world. Speakers include Jewish Holocaust Survivor Kitty Hart-Moxon and Director of charity CORD Michael Godfrey. Attendance is free.

Information

January events highlights

The Events pages highlight the variety of events and activities taking place across campus. You can access a full list of events at www.events.bham.ac.uk or find specific details about an event by phoning the events team on 0121 414 7254.

For details/queries on any University event please contact Eleanor Leftwich, Events Administrator, on 0121 414 2950 or e.g.leftwich@bham.ac.uk

Conferences and Seminars

Friday 18 January 2008, 9.30am – 4.30pm
Members' Allowances: Post 2003 Regulations- Approaches, Patterns and Issues
 Cost: £299
 Contact: Fay Wilson, Email: f.e.wilson@bham.ac.uk,
 Tel: 0121 414 4999

Tuesday 22 January 2008, 9.30am – 4.30pm
Outcome Based Commissioning and Contracting
 Cost: £299
 Contact: Fay Wilson, Email: f.e.wilson@bham.ac.uk,
 Tel: 0121 414 4999

Thursday 24 January 2008, 5pm
George Morland's erotic drawings
 Venue: Barber Photograph Room
 Cost: FREE
 Contact: Deborah Clements - d.clements@bham.ac.uk,
 0121 414 2218

Monday 4 February 2008, 9.30am – 4.30pm
Business Process Improvement for Local Services
 Cost: £299
 Contact: Lisa Moody, Email: l.moody@bham.ac.uk,
 Tel: 0121 414 7407

Inaugural Lectures

Thursday 31 January 2008, 5.15pm
A Tale of Three Sectors: Organising Not For Profit Housing
 Professor David Mullins, Professor of Housing Policy
 Venue: Lecture Theatre, Barber Institute of Fine Arts.
 Reception in foyer afterwards
 Contact: Tiffany Rawlings, Email: t.rawlings@bham.ac.uk,
 Tel: 0121 414 5469

Thursday 7 February 2008, 5.15pm
The Death of Consumer Society
 Professor Matthew Hilton, Professor of Social History
 Venue: University of Birmingham, Lecture Theatre, Barber Institute of Fine Arts
 Cost: Free
 Contact: Tiffany Rawlings, Email: t.rawlings@bham.ac.uk,
 Tel: 0121 414 5469

Events in Staff House

Thursday 24 January – 'The Sock Man'

Lecture Series

Issues in Criminal Law Theory Thirteenth Annual Series – Spring 2008

Friday 15 February, 4pm
Self-Control and the Law of Provocation
 Professor Stephen Shute, Birmingham Law School

Friday 29 February, 4pm
What Justifies Sexual Penetration?
 Mr Jonathan Herring, Fellow in Law, Exeter College, University of Oxford

Friday 7 March, 4pm
Understanding Paradigm Shifts in Criminal Law: Criminal Perspectives on Criminalisation
 Professor Lindsay Farmer, School of Law, University of Glasgow

Papers will be given in the Senior Common Room at the School of Law, University of Birmingham

If you wish to attend, it would be helpful if you could contact: Miss Chloe Howell, Birmingham Law School, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, B15 2TT
 Tel: 0121 414 6282 email: c.j.howell@bham.ac.uk

Miscellaneous

Wednesday 23 January 2008, 12.30pm
What's new in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP)?
 The Undercroft, School of Biosciences
 Refreshments included.
 For more information, contact Matthew Wasley on ext 48246 email: m.r.wasley@bham.ac.uk

Wednesday 23 January 2008, 9am – 2pm University Farmers' Market

Award-winning farmers selling top-quality produce will once again set up shop at the University. Ostrich burgers, seasonal vegetables, cheese and wine are just a few examples of what will be on offer. This is a hugely popular event so get there early!
 Venue: Staff House Square
 Cost: Free
 Contact: Erika Malone, Email: e.j.malone@bham.ac.uk,
 Tel: 0121 414 3362

Birmingham University Teaching Fellowship scheme

Two awards of £10,000 are on offer each year to encourage excellence and commitment in university teaching and to disseminate the expertise of the University's best teachers and supporters of learning across the University. These awards enable the successful Fellows to undertake learning and teaching related projects or professional development activity.

The Birmingham University Teaching Fellowship scheme contributes to raising the profile of teaching at the University and recognises and celebrates individuals who make an outstanding impact on the student learning experience. For example, last year's winner is employing a part-time Research Fellow to develop good practice guides for case-study teaching. Alternatively, you might want to negotiate



***NEW* JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP**
£40 per year for children aged between 9 & 15

Includes: **swimming pool use, court bookings* + 15% discount when booking Active Kids Comps & all swimming courses**



*when available, at an additional cost of £400 per year. All you need to do to come and see the centre. All our membership fees and our court fees. Our membership will then cover all 12 months. All our court fees will also cover you when it is used for members of your family very special offers call 0121 414 7747 www.usb.bham.ac.uk

Innovative thinking

Research and Commercial Services (RCS) along with VIN and the IXC all represented the University on a joint stand at the Festival of Innovation at the NEC.

Sponsored by AWM, the Festival was held to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Lord Stafford Awards and aimed to bring together businesses in the West Midlands region with university know-how to create innovative products, processes and services. There were also seminars, workshops, demonstrations and displays with participation from a wide range of public sector, educational and industrial organisations and companies. The University also hosted two tables at the Lord Stafford Awards Dinner. This prestigious event recognises successful collaborative relationships between West Midlands Businesses and Universities.

For further information :
 Alison Beare (a.a.beare@bham.ac.uk) x 48101
 Jayne Rowe (j.rowe@bham.ac.uk) x 48100

with your School to buy out some of your time for 'pedagogic study leave'.

To apply, you need an application form and should read the guidelines and additional notes for applicants, which are available from: www.hr.bham.ac.uk/development/courses/landt/reward/bhamfellowship.shtml.

Small ads

Accommodation to let

North Edgbaston/Bearwood: Large comfortable room, private kitchen/dining and bathroom on top floor of family house. Wireless internet. Close shops and buses. Suit visiting staff/postgrad. Non-smokers only. Short or long let. £40 per night, £150 pw, £500 per month. Longer lets negotiable. Tel: 0121 434 4640.

Moseley. Room with ensuite bathroom and private study in large house. Good location, broadband, share with one other. Suit postgraduate/staff. £350 per month inclusive. Tel: 0121 449 7277

Selly Park: Room to let: We have a bungalow in Selly Park, in quarter acre of mature garden, shared by three young professionals. The largest room has fallen vacant and would be ideal for a young member of staff. For further details please contact Tony Clewett: 07836 526 777 or tony.clewett@virgin.net

Acocks Green. Two bedroom period house available now, 20 minute drive from University. Furnished (also includes washing machine, microwave etc.). Lounge, kitchen, bathroom, garden and two good sized bedrooms. Off-road parking and close to shops and buses. Rent £500 per month for long or short-term let. Tel: 07717 533 827.

Selly Oak: Single room close to University, eating/shopping places, travelling networks. Rent £200. Available now. Short period stay possible. Email: househunting55@yahoo.co.uk.

Selly Park: Four-bed house, Selly Wick Drive. New kitchen/bathroom. GCH. South-facing garden. Off-road parking. Available January 2008. £1,000 per month. Tel: 07624 307638.

Selly Oak: Room for rent, very close to University and shops. £282 pcm. Share a big house with other students. Tel: 0208 346 9868. Mobile: 07968 616669.

Bournville: Room in peaceful private house. Share kitchen and bathroom. Staff/postgraduate, £240 pcm. Weekdays only considered. Tel: 0121 459 1479, email: jackie.spearpoint@virgin.net

Northfield: Double Room in lovely private house, just off Bristol Rd South. Share kitchen and bathroom/shower. TV and internet access and off road parking. Staff/postgraduate - Weekdays only considered £85pw – rent negotiable. Email: d.p.cunningham@bham.ac.uk or 07817 433435

Kings Heath: Family house with three double bedrooms to let for 12 months from February. Close schools, shops, parks and on public transport routes to the University. £750 pcm. Contact j.a.smith.20@bham.ac.uk or Alison Smith on 07747 170732.

Accommodation for sale

Bournville: Extensively renovated, spacious, terraced family home close to train station. 2 reception rooms and re-fitted kitchen/breakfast room. 4 bedrooms and luxury re-fitted bathroom with roll-top bath and separate shower. Gas central heating and double glazing. Front and rear gardens. £265,000. Tel: 07931 160138.

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Publication Date:
5 February 2008
Deadline: 15 January 2008
mid-day

Publication Date:

4 March 2008
Deadline: 15 February 2008
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Obituary Martin Strawson (1977-2007)

Martin Strawson, Student Appeals Co-ordinator and Project Officer in Academic and Student Administration, passed away unexpectedly on 3 December.

Martin first came to the University as a student, gaining a First in Biological Sciences with Study in Continental Europe and was awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Prize in 2001. While at Birmingham he was Residences Liaison Officer for the Guild of Students and was active in many University societies.

After working for Macclesfield Borough Council, Cardiff University, the Wales Gene Park and Sheffield University, he came back to Birmingham in October 2006 to manage the student appeals process. More recently, Martin had been working on the review of academic legislation and further developing mitigations procedures.

Martin put 110 per cent into everything he did, whether this was revising a policy or procedure, managing the

progression of a student appeal or cooking up samples from his Indian cookery course to bring in for his colleagues. His attention to detail, tenacity and uncanny knack for spotting things that were not quite right were much valued by staff and students across the University. His fondness for trivia made him the hero of the ASA quiz team; indeed, the team took home the quiz trophy at the Association of University Administrators annual conference last year.

Martin was an exceptional colleague – interesting, engaging, and cheerful. He tried to make the most of every moment of every day. He put others first and was a delight to work with. He will be sorely missed.

Sophie Bowen



Picture of the month

Oskar Kokoschka: *Self Portrait with Cap*, 1932.

This painting (below), which is on long-term loan to the Barber Institute, features as part of the forthcoming exhibition *Behind Closed Doors: Birmingham's Private Collections from Van Dyck to Cornelia Parker* (read more about the exhibition right).

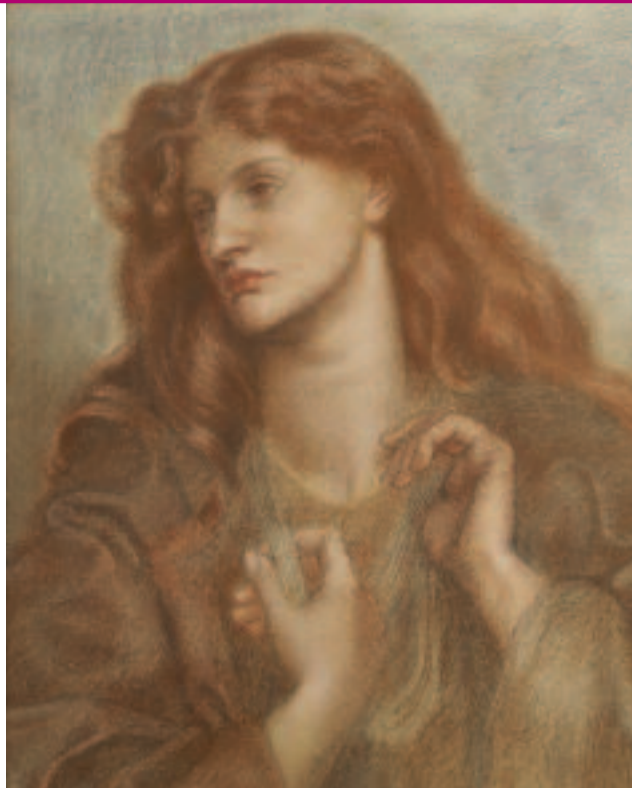
Traumatised by his experiences of the First World War and a broken love affair with the widow of Viennese composer Gustav Mahler, Oskar Kokoschka (1886-1980) reveals his psychological unrest through his art. Kokoschka had travelled widely around Europe after the war, finally settling in Paris in 1932, the year in which this self-portrait was painted. After the war, Kokoschka could no longer tolerate the brutality he had witnessed in humanity and resigned himself to an almost insular artistic lifestyle, painting introspective portraits such as this one.

This incisive self-appraisal has a chilling and uneasy energy as the artist stares out past the viewer into the distance behind us. Kokoschka's Viennese Expressionist style is both raw and brisk, sketching out the personality of a sitter before ever considering the incidentals. From about 1908, he developed an innovative and subjective approach to portrait painting, capturing his emotive response to the sitter.

This painting, in the style of an Old Master, pictures the artist amongst his tools and canvases, even denoting a model in the background that is perhaps a symbol of his former lover, Alma Mahler. The artist's loaded palette itself represents the activity in which he seeks most comfort, that of painting.

□ New, weekly Lunchtime Gallery Talks, focusing on individual works and small exhibitions in the Barber, are now being held in the galleries on Thursdays at 1.30pm. Hear more about this Picture of the Month in the Barber's Beige Gallery on Thursday 17 January. For further details of other gallery talks and all Barber Institute exhibitions and events, visit the Barber's website at www.barber.org.uk.

Provided by Sarah Brown, Gallery Assistant, the Barber Institute of Fine Arts.



Danté Gabriel Rossetti, *Alexa Wilding*

Barber looks behind closed doors

What hangs on the walls in the homes of Birmingham's private collectors? Do the city's art aficionados favour David Hockney over Damien Hirst, Picasso over Cornelia Parker, or Monet over Marc Quinn?

The exhibition *Behind Closed Doors: Birmingham's Private Collections from Van Dyck to Cornelia Parker* opens at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts on Friday 25 January, providing a privileged peek behind the front doors of homes in the city and revealing a wealth of previously little-known masterpieces dating from the fifteenth to the twenty-first century.

Over the past two years, the Barber's Senior Curator Paul Spencer-Longhurst, together with guest curators Dr Michael Cullen and Tessa Sidey, have visited homes all over the city to research works bought by private individuals for their own enjoyment.

Appeals in the regional media and to the Friends of the Barber Institute also attracted a flood of visitors, bearing works of art of all kinds, for 'drop-in' sessions at the Barber and at Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, where the curators assessed the works for possible inclusion in the exhibition.

The research has resulted in an exhibition that holds a litmus paper to taste in the city, and includes a highly impressive list of paintings, watercolours, drawings and prints by a roll-call of major artists, spanning centuries, schools and styles.

The works range from a c.1505 engraving by Dürer, through an impressive oil painting by Anthony Van Dyck and watercolours by Turner and Delacroix, to a beautiful drawing by Rossetti and an attractive Impressionist painting by Boudin. Unusually for the Barber, the exhibition will feature a host of 20th-century pictures by the likes of Picasso and Barbara Hepworth and even works by living artists, such as David Hockney, Paula Rego and Cornelia Parker. Paintings by Birmingham's David Cox, Walter Langley and William Gear are also included.

Dr Spencer-Longhurst said: '*Birmingham has a strong tradition of private art collections, many of which were built up in the nineteenth century on the foundations of industrial*

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George Clausen, *Head of a Young Girl*, 1890 © the Clausen Estate.

wealth. This exhibition seeks to redefine the nature and status of collecting in Birmingham today.'

The exhibition will be accompanied by an illustrated catalogue and a full programme of lectures and events for adults and children. The first of three weekly lectures, 'Behind Closed Doors' is on Wednesday 30 January at 1.10pm in the Barber Lecture Theatre. For information on more connected events, visit www.barber.org.uk.

Behind Closed Doors:

Birmingham's Private Collections from Van Dyck to Cornelia Parker

25 January – 27 April 2008