

Bulletin

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VICE-CHANCELLOR HIGHLIGHTS UNIVERSITY SUCCESSES – AND KEY AIMS FOR THE FUTURE

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE DRIVES UNIVERSITY'S MISSION

► The University of Leicester is not only making rapid progress – it is making increasingly rapid progress. That was the conclusion of the Chairman of Council and Pro-Chancellor Mr John Foster OBE following the Vice-Chancellor's address at the annual meeting of Court on 10 February.

The meeting was being held for the first time in the Lecture Theatre of the £20m Henry Wellcome Building, providing a fitting example of the exciting new dynamic developments occurring at Leicester.

In his annual report to members of Court, the Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess reflected on the significant achievements of the year and looked forward to new initiatives.

Professor Burgess focused on plans for a new £25m Library that he said would be an 'iconic building' for Leicester. He added a new Hall of Residence would open in Oadby at a cost of £19m which would be 'a terrific development enhancing the student experience at Leicester.'

He described how Leicester was

on the threshold of establishing a new £20m Cardiovascular Research Institute and he intimated that discussions had begun with the Students' Union about a new Union building at some point in the future.

Progress and achievement were the keynotes of his address and Professor Burgess also described how Leicester sought to position itself nationally and internationally as a consequence of its pursuit of excellence.

"Leicester is seeking to distinguish itself by developing nodes of excellence," he said. "Our distinctive achievements and development of excellence in areas such as Genetics, Physics and Astronomy, Archaeology, English and Economics have helped to provide Leicester with world-class credentials.

"It would be absurd to pretend that everything we do is world-class, but by focusing on excellence within different disciplines – for example the work of English Local History or Cardiovascular Sciences – we can show how Leicester is distinctive." ☺



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: Higher Education Minister Dr Kim Howells and the Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess examine a scale model of the campus highlighting the Library expansion.



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**University of
Leicester**



SUCCESS FACTORS HIGHLIGHTED IN VC'S ADDRESS TO COURT

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S PRESENTATION TO COURT SPANNED A NUMBER OF AREAS INCLUDING:

LEICESTER IN THE LEAGUE TABLES

► Professor Burgess said Leicester had been cited in the UK top 20 for research income following a survey by Cambridge University and he thanked colleagues for their hard work in securing grant and contract income.


He indicated that media league tables were not content simply with producing national league tables- these were also now ranking universities on a global scale. In this respect, a table compiled by the THES (autumn 2004) ranked Leicester at 189. Professor Burgess said this was very pleasing – it was ahead of many UK universities and the survey included many leading US institutions.

A further distinction had been accorded to Leicester by a survey from China. Professor Burgess said this survey placed Leicester 153rd in the world – the University is one of only 17 UK universities to be ranked among the top 200 universities of the world. The study, carried out by China's Shanghai Jiao Tong University, examined research and academic performance.

“Rather you need to bring together groups of people working together in order to crack those problems. In that respect, we were very pleased to develop a Mathematical Modeling Centre that brings together researchers from Physics, Chemistry, Engineering and of course Mathematics.”

Professor Burgess said the new Michael Atiyah Building provided a focus for interdisciplinary research. He added that it was not only in areas of scientific endeavour that the University excelled.

“If one was talking about the world-class departments we have in the Humanities and Social Sciences then Archaeology, Economics and English would figure among them. Archaeology has developed over a number of years very distinguished work in terms of the arts. It is now, courtesy of refurbished laboratories, developing the scientific side of the study of Archaeology.”

Commenting on English, Professor Burgess said the department had always been a leader and was successful in attracting students to its courses. The standing of the Economics was such that it was able to attract international candidates who were at the very forefront of their fields. 

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

► Professor Burgess focused on the following areas of research excellence to illustrate world-class work with which the University was engaged. Amongst other departments, he cited the work of Genetics, which is celebrating a double anniversary - 20 years to the discovery of genetic fingerprinting and 40 years since the establishment of the Department.



Interdisciplinary Work

► Professor Burgess said interdisciplinary research was one of the most exciting areas of development holding the promise of new solutions for contemporary issues and offering advancement in new directions:

“This is really exciting work - if you consider the kinds of problems that confront the contemporary world, they do not turn up with disciplinary labels attached to them.





TEACHING DEVELOPMENTS

► Professor Burgess emphasized the close relationship between research and teaching and stressed that they were of equal importance. He added that the Government had signaled to universities that they needed to pay equal attention to this fact.

Professor Burgess commended the work of Dr Derek Raine, in Physics and Astronomy, winning a National Teaching Fellowship that brought great credit to the University.

Leicester was also a winner in a national competition to establish Centres of Excellence for Teaching and Learning. Indeed, Leicester was one of only 16 UK universities to be awarded more than one Centre:

- Genetics Education
- Geographical Information Systems (with Nottingham and UCL)
- Open University Centre in Physics (with Leicester and Reading)

Professor Burgess described the award of these Centres in a highly competitive arena as a great achievement for Leicester, bringing great credit to the University.

Achievements in research and teaching helped to attract quality students to Leicester and provided benefits to the region.



ESTATES DEVELOPMENT

► Professor Burgess described the milestones in the development of the University estate over the past year, including the Michael Atiyah Building and the Henry Wellcome Building. These new buildings allowed research clusters to flourish by promoting collaboration: "It is important to organise the work of the University in order to bring people together to work in a dynamic way," he said.

Improvements in the University estate, like the construction of a new Hall of Residence with 589 en-suite study rooms, improved the appeal of the University to students and parents and were essential for enhancing the experience of being at Leicester.

Turning to the Library development, Professor Burgess said: "You cannot have an excellent University unless you have an excellent Library. This refers not only to the physical building, but the electronic and other resources associated with it.

"We plan to construct an iconic building, double the size of the current Library, with state of the art technology. It will be able to accommodate two million visitors a year, and includes the careers service, bookshops, a café and a 400-500 seat lecture theatre in the basement with break-out rooms.

"This will be the real heart of the University. It will have specialist areas where students can engage in group activities and will be a building of the future. We have visited libraries in the US to see the kind of developments that have taken place in order to inform our own ideas."



SYSTEMATIC FUNDRAISING

► Professor Burgess said that, in order to turn this vision into reality, the University had engaged in a systematic fundraising drive.

With regard to the Library, £18m had been raised from a target figure of £25m while with regard to the £20m Cardiovascular Research Centre, £18m had been raised. Pro-Chancellor Nicholas Corah was spearheading fund-raising in this area while a systematic alumni fundraising programme had raised £50,000 in a matter of weeks. The University was also seeking legacies as a source of income for its projects.

Professor Burgess said Leicester was not only building for the future through enhancing its physical assets. Leicester would continue to seek to appoint world leaders in their respective fields. He said the University was also seeking to appoint 30 new positions at Professorial level.

Finally, Professor Burgess asked Court members to consider their network of contacts, and whether there were people there with whom the University could engage for the benefit of the institution as a whole. 🗣️





£19M HALL OF RESIDENCE

► The University is investing £19m in order to redevelop and refurbish part of its residential estate in Oadby, Leicester.

The move - part of the University's ambitious £300m Development Plan - will provide for first-class residential facilities for students, conference delegates and visitors. Leicester's residences - many of them historic Edwardian houses- are regarded among the best accommodation for students in the country and the new investment will further enhance the University's and city's reputation.

All the 581 rooms at the Villiers Hall development in Manor Road will become en-suite - a far cry from the stereotypical notion of a 'student dig'.

Mr Paul Goffin, Deputy Director of Estates, said: "The new development will enhance the existing street scene and retain the domestic flavour of the area with carefully designed rectilinear transitional and curved

'gateway' buildings to pavilions nestling in the leafy grounds.

The external appearance of the buildings will complement the existing environs with white render finishes fronting Manor road and predominately timber cladding within the development.

"The combination and scale of buildings negates the institutional aspect of a traditional hall of residence and provides a community feel to the development. Student units, with 4/5 study bedrooms and a kitchen-living area, will provide both the study and social environment essential to a successful University experience and to meeting the expectations of current and future students."

The whole site will be accessible to all and there will be 29 rooms capable of providing suitable accommodation for people with disabilities. Each room will have TV, telephone and Internet access along with sufficient power to meet student needs.



LEAFY SUBURB: Investment in a new hall of residence in Oadby will improve facilities for students

The management of the hall will be from the refurbished facilities building, which will also provide catering and social activities for the students.

Construction will begin after the University's examinations in June 2005, with the opening of the pavilions for the start of the new academic year in September 2006.

Mr Goffin added: "The University

has worked very hard to create this attractive development. The Pavilions concept is a new idea and helps to retain the setting of the Villiers Hall site whilst providing modern en-suite student study bedrooms within a community. They will provide a very attractive and much needed enhancement to the University's residential buildings."

£25M LIBRARY PLAN

► Planning approval has been received for a £25 million scheme designed by Associated Architects to redevelop the main library at the University of Leicester.

The project, by Leicester Academic Library Services Ltd (LALS) will form a major component in the University's £300 million Development Plan - one of the biggest and most ambitious investment programmes of any UK university.

The design respects the sensitivity of the site and complements the adjacent Grade II* Stirling and Gowan Engineering building and the Grade II Fielding Johnson building. Planning approval was obtained in little over eight weeks. Pre-application discussions with English Heritage and Leicester City Council were fundamental to the speed of the approval.

University Librarian Christine Fyfe said: "This is terrific news. We're really excited about building an

innovative library for the 21st century which is both inspiring and accessible".

The scheme provides a total of 15,500sq.m. of space. This is achieved by an infill extension between the existing 1970s library by Castle Park Dean & Hook and the 1830s Fielding Johnson Building a former hospital.

LALS's plans for the new library building, doubling its size, are central to developing the University's academic excellence. Study spaces will be expanded to 1500 seats, group study rooms will be provided along with a Special Collections suite, Graduate School area, increased IT facilities, cafe, bookshop and Careers Library.

The existing library will be refurbished incorporating a new atrium circulation space to increase natural light at the heart of the building and assist with navigating the collection of over a million volumes. The façade will be replaced

FUTURE OF LEARNING: An artist's impression of the exterior of the new Library. picture credit: www.uniform.com



to provide additional natural light at the perimeter reader spaces and to increase the overall thermal performance of the scheme to achieve a energy efficient BREEAM rating of excellent.

As part of a University research programme funding has been secured to incorporate photovoltaic cells within the triple glazed façade of the extension. The final part of the scheme includes a fully glazed atrium link to the existing Fielding Johnson building which is

refurbished to provide staff and student research offices and seminar spaces.

The project team is led by Project Managers and Quantity Surveyors Faithful & Gould and includes engineering and other technical services by FaberMaunsell. The project is due to start on site during the summer of 2005 and will be completed, to allow student access throughout, in two phases in 2007. The main contractor is to be Marriott Construction.



£20M BIOMEDICAL BUILDING

► The New Year saw the completion and occupation of the University of Leicester's new £20 million Biomedical Sciences Building development, which will provide researchers and postgraduate students in biomedical sciences with 9,500 sqm of extra space with state of the art facilities.

Work began in January 2002 to prepare the site of the five-storey Biomedical Sciences Building on ground behind the existing Maurice Shock Medical Sciences Building which had once been allotments.

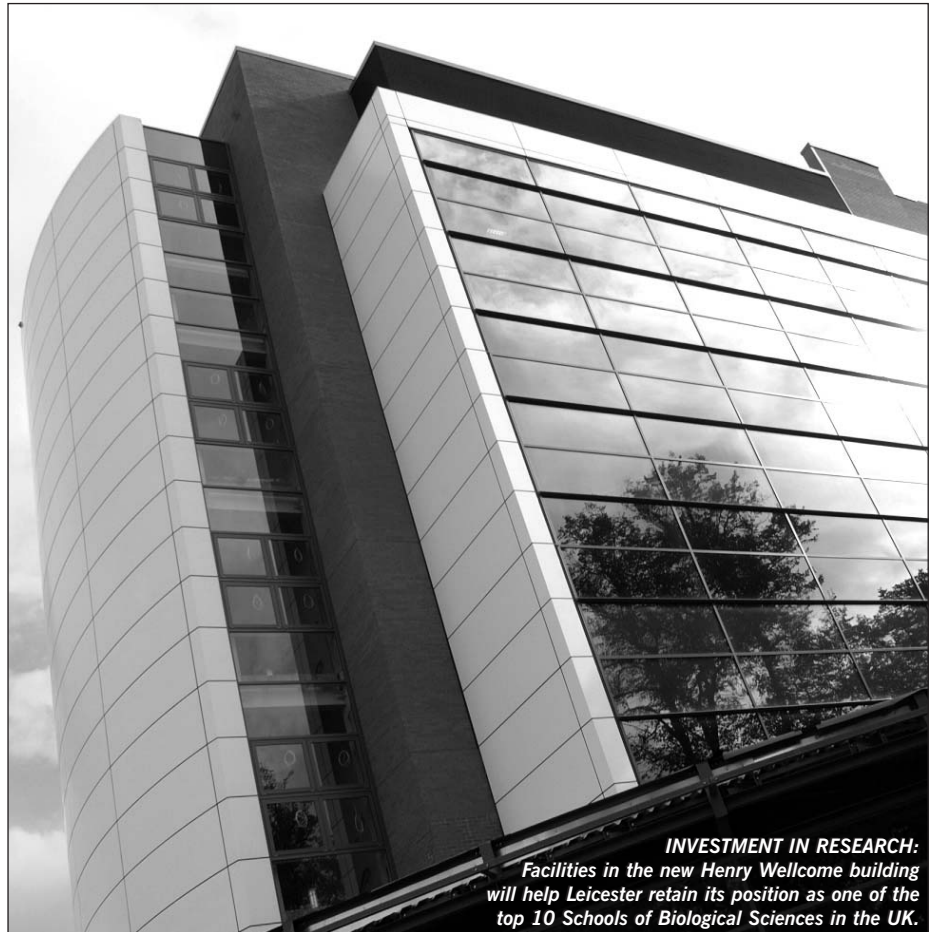
Paul Goffin, Deputy Director of the University's Estates Office, said: "This has been a very tight site to work on. It is incredibly close to other buildings and this has meant that the construction of the new building has had to be undertaken very carefully."

The main building contractors, Norwest Holt, part of Vinci PLC, have been working closely with the design team and in particular the architects, The Fairhursts Design Group, to produce a very attractive building with all the latest facilities.

Among the features of the building are: offices, meeting rooms, writing-up areas, 20 laboratories, a lecture theatre, cold rooms, dark rooms, instrument areas, cell culture facilities, NMR suites, autoclaves, stores, a research library and interactive areas. A clean and dirty corridor system will operate, in line with Health and Safety recommendations. The building is fitted with high security measures, including keypads on door entry and swipe cards, and there is a high-level link bridge to the existing Medical Sciences Building.

The Biomedical Sciences Building includes a traditional brick façade, glazed curtain walling, a sloping roof of pressed steel, sheet cladding panels, and double-glazed windows that are powder coated.

The external areas will be attractively landscaped with trees, bushes, shrubs and grassland and a car park with 72 spaces laid out.




INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH:
Facilities in the new Henry Wellcome building will help Leicester retain its position as one of the top 10 Schools of Biological Sciences in the UK.

The University of Leicester has the biggest number of taught postgraduate students in the UK and an international reputation for the excellence of its research in biological and biomedical science. This highly complex facility, part of a total £300 million University Development Plan to transform the campus, will allow the University to further develop its activities in these important areas.

Professor Gordon Roberts, Head of the School of Biological Sciences, said "This superb building is an enormously exciting new development for Biological Sciences in Leicester. The funding we received from the Wellcome Trust has allowed us

to create a building of state-of-the-art design, providing first-rate facilities for more than 200 scientists.

"The work in the building will be focussed on understanding in detail the function of biological systems in health and disease, at levels ranging from individual molecules to whole organisms, including man. Much of the work will have practical applications in the medium to long term, for example to drug design. The new facilities will ensure that we can maintain our position as one of the top ten Schools of Biological Sciences in the UK." 


ETHNIC HEALTH RESEARCH CENTRE LAUNCHED

► Health issues for ethnic minority populations are a major concern for the delivery of equitable health care in the UK. The investigation of disease patterns and disease progression in ethnic minority populations, and service delivery for the ethnic minority community are a priority for the NHS in Leicestershire.

Although there has been some excellent research by individuals and small groups, more can be done. The establishment of the Leicester Centre for Ethnic Health Research will enable a co-ordinated approach to ethnic health research for the first time enabling local researchers to work with local communities, which will bring

health benefits for our population.

The research centre is a joint initiative between the local NHS and universities, including Leicester.

Professor John Feehally, Honorary Professor of Renal Medicine at the University of Leicester, is Chair of the Leicester Centre for Ethnic Health Research. 



UNIQUE AGREEMENT

► UKHEP's Academic Agreement giving the UK Healthcare Education Partnership the power to make joint awards on behalf of City University, University of Leicester and the University of Ulster received formal approval from the Senates of each of the Universities.

The unique Agreement governs qualifications of the City University, London, The University of Leicester and the University of Ulster made jointly for the healthcare related Programmes of Study offered through the collaboration known as the 'UK Healthcare Education Partnership'.

The partnership and pooling of degree awarding powers is unique to UKHEP's programmes and represents the end product of three years preparation on the part of the partner universities.

Students of UKHEP now benefit from receiving an award from three prestigious Universities, and the professional leadership/involvement of the Royal College of Nursing. 🗨



POLYGRAPH TESTS DO LIE

► A report published by the British Psychological Society warns against relying on polygraph tests to detect guilt because the technique is inaccurate.

A working party was convened by the Society to examine academic research into the most popular polygraph tests and assess their use in real life situations. The report, entitled "A review of the current scientific status and fields of application of Polygraphic Deception Detection", concludes that the accuracy of polygraphs is not high and that the rate of incorrect decisions is too significant to ignore.

For example, a field study of one particular polygraph technique used in criminal investigations found that 10 to 17 per cent of guilty suspects 'cheated' the test and were classified

as innocent, while between 11 and 47 per cent of innocent suspects were classified as guilty.

Professor Ray Bull, of the University of Leicester and chair of the working party, said: "The polygraph is one of a number of procedures that could be used in attempts to detect deception and integrity but, like all procedures, it has inherent weaknesses. Error rates in polygraph deception detection can be high, so the belief that people who 'pass' a polygraph test are, therefore, cleared of suspicion is a false belief."

He added: "Polygraph procedures should not be ascribed a special status. We must not deceive ourselves into thinking there will ever be an error-free way of detecting deception." 🗨

STAFF ATTITUDE SURVEY – INTERIM RESULTS AVAILABLE

► Preliminary results of a campus-wide survey of staff attitude have been made available on the web and to relevant committees and unions.

The report acknowledges that, as a result of the changing external context in which the University operates, the University wishes to develop new areas, and to adopt new ways of working in traditional areas, in order to further enhance excellence in research and teaching whilst developing new income streams.

Reflecting the University's HR Strategy, the report states that the University "recognises that the whole-hearted commitment of its entire staff is fundamental to achieving those objectives." The Staff Attitude Survey was a key action arising out of that aspect of the Strategy concerned with gaining the commitment to all staff to the University's strategic aims.

Questionnaires were sent to 2700 members of staff in June 2004. 931 completed questionnaires were received by the closing date of 25 June 2004 (34%). The response rate was highest amongst academic related staff although levels were reasonable across all staff groups.

The primary purpose of the survey was to assess the effectiveness of existing means of internal communication in promoting knowledge and understanding of the University's aims and objectives.

However, it presented an opportunity to gain useful information about how staff feel about other aspects of working life at the University, including:

- The experience of working for the University
- Training and Development
- Work – life balance
- Image and culture

Key findings from the survey are:

Levels of job satisfaction at the University are high and compare favourably to national data on satisfaction levels.

Only two thirds of respondents felt they were provided with enough information to do their job well

Word of mouth and the Bulletin are the most common sources of information for what is happening in the university

Staff's experience of training and development provided by the University revealed high satisfaction rates with the quality and range of provision

Just over 50% of respondents indicated that they felt that the University provides good support to help them balance work and home, although this fell to 24% amongst academic colleagues

A clear majority of staff believe in

the overarching mission of the University – to become increasingly strong in providing leading teaching and research. Beyond this overall goal, though, awareness of objectives is less certain

Analysis of results in relation to gender, disability and ethnicity issues is due to be reported to forthcoming committees. The final report, including this further analysis and proposals for action to be taken as a result of the outcomes of the survey, will be submitted to the Staffing Committee and subsequently made available on the web.

The Interim Report on the Results of the Inaugural Staff Attitude Survey can be found at the Hot Topics section of the Personnel website. 🗨

STUDY INTO ASIAN EXPECTATIONS OF OLD AGE

► A new piece of research carried out to investigate the attitudes to, and financial planning for care, in old age revealed startling changes in the aspirations and expectations of life in old age among middle-aged Gujarati and Bangladeshi people in the East Midlands. The University of Leicester research was carried out by Dr Savita Katbamna, Research Fellow and funded by the Nuffield Foundation.

The current generation of middle-aged Gujarati and Bangladeshi people who arrived in Britain in the early 1970s and 1980s, and have spent much of their adult life in Britain, are now approaching retirement age. The research was based on discussion groups and face-to-face interviews with men and women aged 40-65 from the two communities and included people from a wide range of social and economic background. 🗨



HIGH PROFILE VISITS TO UNIVERSITY

THE UNIVERSITY HAS PLAYED HOST TO A NUMBER OF HIGH-PROFILE VISITS IN RECENT WEEKS:

► The University received a delegation of space scientists from India to discuss plans for collaboration over a future mission. The four-strong delegation of space experts from Mumbai and Bangalore spent three days at the University thrashing out plans for building a component for a telescope on India's *Astrosat Mission*, due for launch in 2007.

► The University hosted a two-week fact-finding mission for leaders from the new University of Gondar in Ethiopia. Staff at Leicester have 'mentored' three senior figures from the fledgling University who aim to influence development of their own University by what they have learnt at Leicester. The three visitors are the President Dr Yared Wondmikun, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Dr Gizachew Ashagire and Academic Registrar Dr Getachew Gebre Mariam. During their visit they met with the Lord Mayor of Leicester Councillor Piara Singh Clair, and 'shadowed' the Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess, and other senior members of the University. Members of the delegation also visited the Leicester General Hospital and the University's Medical School. The Vice-Chancellor is pictured with the delegation from the University of Gondar.



► Leader of the Liberal Democrats Charles Kennedy visited the University where he met with the Vice-Chancellor Professor Bob Burgess, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Bill Brammar (pictured) as well as members of the Students' Union. He addressed a packed Queen's Hall on diverse issues.



► His Excellency Professor Michael Omolewa, President of the General Council of UNESCO, visited the University to give a presentation on the past and future of Higher Education. He is pictured, second from right, with (from left) John Doidge, Director of Staff Development, the Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess and Derek Cox, Professional Development Coordinator (academic practice).



► The Director of Christian Aid Dr Daleep Mukarji delivered the University of Leicester Chaplaincy Lecture: *People, Politics and Making Poverty History*. Dr Daleep Mukarji talked about the Make Poverty History Coalition and why people must join a worldwide movement to push in 2005 for an end to the global injustices that sustain the existence of poverty on an unprecedented scale in today's world. 🗨️



► The Lord Mayor of Leicester, Councillor Piara Singh Clair, described how his visit to the University of Leicester had filled him with a sense of civic pride. He told members of the University and visitors that he had thoroughly enjoyed his visit to the Departments of Genetics, Physics and Astronomy (pictured) and the School of Archaeology and Ancient History.



► The University played host to a senior diplomat from Germany who also delivered a public lecture on issues relating to Britain and Germany. Hans-Henning Blomeyer-Bartenstein, Minister Plenipotentiary (Deputy Ambassador) at the German Embassy in London visited the School of Modern Languages at the University following his reception by the Lord Mayor of Leicester. He was welcomed by Professor Richard Littlejohns and Mr Peter Graves of the School of Modern Languages and met staff and students in the Department of German. As part of the visit, he visited the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust Studies (pictured) where he was presented with a book on the Holocaust and he handed over a cheque for a conference to mark the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps.



CONFERENCE CELEBRATES HOSKINS ANNIVERSARY

▶ A four-day international conference, WG Hoskins and The Making of the British Landscape, sponsored by English Heritage and organised by the University's Centre for English Local History, takes place from July 7-10, 2005 at the University of Leicester - an appropriate venue given its associations with the famous landscape historian.

WG Hoskins, was a distinguished former Professor and Head of the Department of English Local History at the University of Leicester, who, in the 1970s, became a familiar face on television for his appearances in the highly-acclaimed BBC series, Landscapes of England. His many

books included a pioneering and celebrated work, The Making of the English Landscape. This work has had an enormous impact on research and writing in the fields of history, geography and archaeology.

"The conference marks the fiftieth anniversary of Hoskins' landmark publication and is designed to honour him by celebrating the achievements of the interdisciplinary subject of landscape history which he inspired", said Professor Christopher Dyer, Head of the Centre for English Local History. "Speakers who were taught and influenced by W G Hoskins will be among over sixty scholars, established and younger, presenting

papers at the conference."

Taking Hoskins' contribution as a starting point, conference delegates will also have the opportunity of a

panoramic view of this dynamic subject - from the period before 500 AD up to recent developments and looking forward to the future. 📍



CRIMINOLOGISTS EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS OF CCTV



▶ Home Office national evaluation of CCTV undertaken by researchers at the University found that, for the most part, CCTV did not produce reductions in crime and it did not make people feel safer.

Of fourteen systems evaluated, only one showed a decrease in crime which could be attributed to CCTV - and that focussed on reducing vehicle crime in car parks. Now criminologists at the University are calling for lessons to be learnt from the study so that CCTV is not seen simply as a technical solution to a problem.

Professor Martin Gill, Professor of Criminology in the Department of Criminology, University of Leicester, led the evaluation of the study. He said: "For supporters of CCTV these findings are disappointing.

"For the most part CCTV did not produce reductions in crime and it did not make people feel safer. Following

the introduction of CCTV, support for its use decreased, not so much because there was a concern about intrusions of privacy but because they did not see cameras as effective. One scheme was very effective in tackling vehicle crime, and there were other successes, not least in bringing more offences to the attention of the police. Overall, areas have encountered real difficulties in using CCTV to good effect."

The Leicester researchers evaluated 13 Closed Circuit Television Camera (CCTV) projects (comprising fourteen separate systems) implemented in a range of contexts, including town centres, city centres, car parks, hospitals and residential areas. The projects were funded under Phase 2 of the Home Office CCTV Initiative. A main objective was to measure the impact of the CCTV projects on crime and fear of crime. 📍

captions for photostop (back page)

1. Glenn Huckerby, daughter Amy, wife Nicky and Professor Burgess at the opening of Glenn's "Landscape Disability" exhibition of personal photography at the Richard Attenborough Centre.

2. This Scanning Probe Microscope, which is able to image and manipulate structures as tiny as individual atoms, is one of a few in the country that can work at an ultra-high vacuum, such as in outer space and at temperatures as low as a few degrees above absolute zero.

The new instrument in the Department of Physics and Astronomy will ultimately enable doctors to administer a targeted delivery of drugs, diagnose cancer and even, in the long term, treat it. The same instrument will enable scientists to study the fundamental nature of space itself and improve our understanding of the Universe, as well as solving the most fundamental problems that prevent nano-machines from working.

3. Dr Adam Hart-Davis gave The 2005 Haldane Society and Alumni Association Lecture entitled 'Visions of Science'. Showing examples and demonstrating his techniques for photographing bouncing balls, burrowing beans and bursting balloons amongst other things; making us think differently about science.

4. Children enjoyed the City Schools & Colleges Exhibition for the University's Arts Week in March.

5. To support Fairtrade Fortnight in March, the Chaplaincy held a Pancake Lunch at the Gatehouse on Thursday the 10th and a variety of fairly traded fillings were available.

6. Steve Hoey (left) from psychology and Richard Hughes (right) from politics, economics & social history were rowing on Red Nose Day to raise money for charity. Using rowing machines, they were competing to see who could be the first to row 75 km in one day.



LEICESTER'S VC IS NEW CHAIRMAN OF UCAS

► The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) is delighted to announce the appointment of Professor Robert Burgess, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester, as the new Chairman of the Board of Directors. Professor Burgess will assume his new role in July 2005 on the retirement of the current Chairman Professor Bill Stevely, Principal of the Robert Gordon University.

Remarking on his appointment Professor Burgess said, "I am delighted to be appointed as Chairman of UCAS at this time. UCAS plays a pivotal role encouraging people into higher education and promoting British education internationally. I also see this as a terrific opportunity to place UCAS in a key position to


respond to qualifications and curriculum initiatives, to government policy and to other changes that affect progress in higher education."

Professor Burgess is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester and has served as Chair of the East Midlands Universities Association and the UUK/SCOP Teacher Education Advisory Group. He was Vice-Chair of UCAS as well as the Higher Education Funding Council's Learning and Teaching Committee. He is also a member of the British Library Board, a Trustee of the Higher Education Academy, a member of the Board and Council of the Institute for Employment Studies and an Academician of the Academy of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences.

He has been President of the British Sociological Association, President of the Association for the Teaching of the Social Sciences, Founding Chair of the UK Council for Graduate Education and has been a member of the Council and Chair of the Postgraduate Training Board of the Economic and Social Research Council. He was previously Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Director of CEDAR (Centre for Educational Development, Appraisal and Research) and Professor of Sociology at the University of Warwick.

Anthony McClaran, Chief Executive UCAS, commented: "We are delighted that Professor Burgess has accepted the Chair of UCAS. We see the next few years as exciting times for the organisation and its customers as we move over



to fully electronic application. Bob Burgess brings the experience and vision that will enable UCAS to build upon all that has been achieved under the excellent chairmanship of Bill Stevely." 

TEDDY BEAR HOSPITAL



► 'Teddy Doctors' at University of Leicester! Taking X-rays of Buzz Lightyear...

A new project that has been set up by University of Leicester Medical Students with the support of the Leicester Royal Infirmary Play Coordinators - and a bunch of teddy bears. The scheme aims to work with schools to lessen the fear children can feel in a hospital, whether they are there as patients or visitors. Through educational workstations and role-play with teddy bears they can explore some of the issues surrounding hospitals and hospital procedures.

The Teddy Bear Hospital has two main objectives:

1. Through role-play and educational stations children will become more familiar with the potentially intimidating surroundings and common practices of hospitals.
2. Medical students will gain valuable experience in communicating with children, which should have a sustainable impact on their interpersonal skills.

Since many children will come into contact with hospitals (either as a patient or as a relative or friend of a patient) the scheme hopes to reduce any unnecessary anxiety surrounding the unknown and often intimidating hospital environment. It is also an opportunity for children and student doctors alike to have some fun.

Steve Dyer, a University of Leicester medical student, who has been instrumental in setting up the project, described how the sessions will run: "There will be eight University medical students and one or two Play Coordinators from the Leicester Royal Infirmary who will offer support to the medical students. A medical student will head each of the educational stations (one on bandaging and plastering and the other on X-Rays). There will be display items for each workstation - for example teddies in plaster and X-Rays of Buzz Lightyear, etc.

The other six medical students will work as Teddy Doctors. Each child will have an opportunity to take teddy to one of the Teddy Doctors and role-play what is wrong. The Teddy Doctor will examine teddy, listen to the lungs or heart, perhaps take the blood pressure and, according to the problem, he or she may apply a bandage or a plaster or whatever seems best for teddy.

This is a really exciting project that benefits both school children and medical students, as well as being a lot of fun for everyone involved. It would be lovely if it became a permanent feature of extra-curricular activity for medical students."

Teddy Bear Hospital is a free service, and Steve would like to involve as many local schools as possible. Schools who are interested in becoming involved can email teddybear@le.ac.uk or contact Steve Dyer on 07904 310649. 



LEICESTER SPACE SCIENTISTS AMONG THOSE HONoured BY NASA

► Scientists and engineers from the University of Leicester were among British scientists whose valuable contributions to NASA's space programme have been recognised at a recent NASA ceremony.

Professor Alan Wells, formerly Director of the University of Leicester's Space Research Centre and now Adjunct Professor at Pennsylvania State University, received the 2005 Exceptional Achievement Award for the SWIFT Science Team on behalf of NASA's British and Italian partners, at the 2005 NASA Awards Ceremony at the Goddard Space Flight Center, in Greenbelt, Maryland, on March 9.

The SWIFT satellite was launched from Cape Canaveral on November 20 2004, to study the mysteries of gamma ray bursts - huge extragalactic explosions that accompanied the creation of black holes in the early life of the Universe.

After only three months in orbit, SWIFT has already discovered over 25 gamma-ray bursts. The X-ray camera, developed by the Leicester team, is playing a vital role in these discoveries.

Commenting on the Award, Alan Wells described the ceremony as:

"like the Oscars, only much more dignified. SWIFT swept the board, with awards in several categories going to SWIFT, including both the Science Team and Technical Team Awards.

"A number of colleagues from the Space Research Centre will be receiving individual awards, recognising their contributions as members of these teams. It was an honour for me to join my NASA colleague, Dr Neil Gehrels, the SWIFT Principal Investigator, to be presented



NASA Picture

The SWIFT Award presentation on March 9. From left to right, are Dr Edward Weiler, Director of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, Dr Neil Gehrels, SWIFT Principal Investigator, also of Goddard Space Flight Center and Alan Wells, SWIFT Associate Science Director and Lead Investigator for the SWIFT X-ray Telescope.

with this prestigious award."

SWIFT will be continuing its work for at least two years, although it could last in orbit for 6 years or more. Scientists expect to find at least 100 bursts a year, and the British universities' contributions to SWIFT - the X-ray Telescope

(Leicester) and the Ultra-violet/Optical Telescope (Mullard Space Science Laboratory of University of London) - provide unique measurements that will help to unravel the mysteries of these fantastic cosmic events called gamma ray bursts. 🌌

Frank Clark retires from the Department of Biology after 32 Years service to the University.

► On 31st December 2004 Frank Clark retired from the Department of Biology. Frank came to Leicester from University College Galway and before that he worked for the MAFF Fish Parasitology Unit. Originally employed as a technician, Frank worked his way up to Senior Experimental Officer and along the way gained a PhD. His doctorate was based on research into the ecology of fleas that live in house martin nests. This reflected Frank's life long interest in parasite biology and he had a considerable international reputation in the field.

Lately he appeared in a number of TV programmes about fleas and parasites.

Within the University and the Department of Biology Frank's contributions will be greatly missed. Over the past ten or more years Frank has done a great deal of undergraduate teaching and has co-supervised PhD students. For many years he assisted in the teaching on field courses. Those of us who worked with him in the field will soon notice the absence of Frank. He is a superb natural historian and knows just about any British species

one might care to put in front of him. He is also a source of very corny jokes, which became part of the fabric of being away in Slapton Ley.

In retirement Frank continues to be active in the Leicestershire Entomological Society and will, we hope keep contact with the Department of Biology.

On January 15th friends and colleagues gathered in the Adrian Building to say farewell to Frank and a lunch in his honour was held on March 6th together with close colleagues. 🌌





Staff Distinctions

► **Professor Richard Baker (Health Sciences)** has been invited to deliver the Patrick Byrne Memorial Lecture in General Practice at the University of Liverpool in 2005.

► **Sir Michael Atiyah (Chancellor of the University)** has been awarded the Golden Order of Merit by the President of the Lebanon.

► **Sir Martin Rees (Visiting Professor of Physics and Astronomy, Honorary DSc, Leicester)** has been awarded the Crafoord Prize 2005 by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences for 'contributions towards understanding the large-scale structure of the universe'. The prize recognises research in areas not covered by the Nobel Prizes.

► **Professor Gordon Campbell (English)** has been elected by the Milton Society of America as its Honored Scholar for 2005 (he is one of only four English academics to have received this award since World War II; one of the other recipients was C. S. Lewis). He has also, at the invitation of the Iranian Ministry of Health and Ministry of Science and Technology, given a plenary address to a Higher Education conference in Ahwaz, South West Iran.

► **Mr Neil Cox (Registrar's Office)** has been appointed to serve as one of only fifteen Assistant Panel Secretaries for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise.

► **Professor Nick Cull (Historical Studies)** has been elected President of the International Association for Media and History.

► **Professor David Ekserdjian (History of Art and Film)** has been made an Honorary Citizen of the town of Correggio for the work he has undertaken on the artist Correggio (one of only four people to have been honoured by the town in this way).

► **Professor David Evans (Cardiovascular Sciences)** has been awarded Honorary Membership of the British Medical Ultrasound Society.

► **Professor John Fothergill (Pro-Vice-Chancellor/Engineering)** has been elected a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers for his contribution to reliability methodology in the ageing processes of electrical insulation systems.

► **Professor Carol Jagger (Health Sciences)** has been appointed to serve as joint chair of a working group to prepare a world ageing survey.

► **Dr Simon James (Archaeology and Ancient History)** has been chosen by the Archaeological Institute of America as the Samuel H. Kress Lecturer in Ancient Art for 2005/06.

► **Ms Sara Kenyon (Cancer Studies and Molecular Medicine)** has been appointed to the Chair of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's Guideline Development Group for Intrapartum Care.

► **Professor Marilyn Palmer (Archaeology and Ancient History)** has been elected Chairman of the Association for Industrial Archaeology for a three-year term and Chairman of the Buildings Archaeology Group of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

► **Dr Jonathan Prag (Archaeology and Ancient History)** has been awarded the Premio di Studio Giuseppe Nenci prize by the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, for his Ph.D. thesis on the archaeology and ancient history of Sicily. Dr Prag is the first non-Italian to win it this annual prize.

► **Professor Richard Rodger (Historical Studies)** has been elected to the Academy of the Social Sciences (this brings the total of Academy members in the University to four).

► **Dr Mark Sims (Physics and Astronomy)** has been appointed by PPARC as Chairman of the Aurora Advisory Committee, which will coordinate and define the case for the future European programme in planetary science, and the UK's involvement in this.

► **Mrs Diane Thomason (Safety Services Office)** has been awarded the grade of Credit for her National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) Diploma in Health and Safety. This is in the context of there being only a 40% pass rate for the diploma.

► **Dr Jonathan Thompson (Cardiovascular Sciences)** is Assistant Editor of the British Journal

of Anaesthesia, and has recently been elected to its Editorial Board.

► **Dr George Jones, (Head of the University's Radiation & Oxidative Stress Group)** has been nominated by the Education Board of the Faculty of Clinical Oncology, Royal College of Radiologists, to serve as an Examining Board Member for the First Examination for the Fellowship in Clinical Oncology. Dr Jones will be an Examiner in Radiobiology, a considerable honour for a non-clinician.

Student Distinctions

► **Mr James Blight (PhD student, Geology)** has been awarded the Best Student Speaker Prize and the Best Poster Session Prize at the Mineral Deposits Study Group (MDSG) Annual Meeting in Belfast. This is the first time a student has won both prizes at the same MDSG meeting. Mr Blight's research involves the geological setting and evolution of a major copper-gold mineral belt in the Gobi Desert of Mongolia.

The University of Leicester Islamic Society has become the first winner of the title of Islamic Society of the Year. The 300-strong student society received the accolade at a celebration organised by the Young Muslim Organisations UK and the Muslmaat UK, attended by over 800 people.

UNIVERSITY INVOLVED IN DEVELOPMENT OF FLU PANDEMIC VACCINE

► The Health Protection Agency published its flu pandemic plan, which sets out how the Agency will protect the public's health in the event of a flu pandemic affecting the UK. The plan will operate alongside the Department of Health's influenza pandemic contingency plan, which has also

been published.

Professor Maria Zambon, part of a team co-ordinating flu pandemic planning at the Agency said, "We are confident that we have good surveillance in place in the UK to detect any new flu viruses; and our local and regional health protection teams are alert to the

possibility of patients who may be infected with a new strain of flu and the necessary precautions they should take.

"As part of our preparations we have also been working on the development of vaccines against pandemic flu. This work has been carried out in collaboration with

colleagues at the National Institute of Biological Standards and Control and The University of Leicester. We are one of the few countries who have successfully completed clinical trials on a vaccine against H5 influenza strains." 



Captions for photostop on page 8

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