

Bulletin

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This Issue • Business Champion to Spearhead Fundraising • Triple Commonwealth Fellowships • Arts Week

POET, PIANIST AND INTERFAITH CHAMPION HONoured

► Three distinguished figures received honorary degrees from the University of Leicester on 5 February.

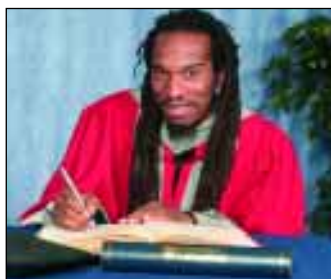
They were honoured at degree congregations where 850 postgraduate students also celebrated as they received their degrees. They were amongst a total of 1,550 successful Leicester postgraduate students from around the world who gained their qualifications at this time.

The honorary graduates of the University of Leicester are:

- **Mr Benjamin Zephaniah** (pictured below left), poet and writer – Doctor of Letters
- **Mr Peter Donohoe** (below centre), internationally acclaimed pianist – Doctor of Music
- **Mr Indarjit Singh** (below right), advisor to the Commission for Racial Equality, Editor of the Sikh Messenger and regular contributor to Radio 4's Thought for the Day – Doctor of Laws

In May 2003 the Financial Times placed the University of Leicester at the head of "a league of their own" for the level of taught postgraduate provision. As the largest provider of taught postgraduate courses in the UK, Leicester has consistently topped the FT league tables in this respect for the past three years.

Currently, the University has more than 8,200 taught postgraduate students, of which more than half come



from 165 countries round the world. Almost 7,000 of these study by distance learning.

The Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess commented at the time of the ceremonies: "I am delighted to congratulate so many graduates on their splendid achievements. It is good to be able to welcome many of our international postgraduates together with their families and friends, many of whom are visiting Leicester for the degree ceremonies.

"It is also a great pleasure to honour Benjamin Zephaniah, Peter Donohoe and Indarjit Singh, who have each in their own field made such a valuable contribution to society. They offer excellent role models for the University's students."

Benjamin Zephaniah said: "I am accepting this honorary degree because the University of Leicester knows exactly why it is giving it to me. It is an inclusive institution, and its ethos is cool."

Indarjit Singh said: "Leicester has long set a positive lead in harmonious living between different faith communities. Because of this I was delighted when, during her Jubilee year, HM The Queen chose Leicester for her first ever visit to a Sikh gurdwara.

"It is, then, a real honour to be invited to accept the award of an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from a University that has done so much in promoting this greater respect and understanding." ☺



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University of
Leicester



BUSINESS CHAMPION TO SPEARHEAD FUNDRAISING DRIVE

► An industrial leader and a champion of the East Midlands business community is to work closely with the Executive of the University of Leicester to spearhead a major fundraising initiative.

Mr Nicholas Corah OBE DL has been appointed Special Pro-Chancellor of the University and Chairman of Fundraising from January 2004. His appointment will considerably boost the University's drive to link with corporate and professional sectors as well as key investors in education.

He is a significant figure in both the business and community life of Leicestershire, Rutland and the wider East Midlands, bringing to his appointment a lifetime of expertise, with an excellent track record in

fund-raising.

For over twenty years, he chaired Corah plc, based in Leicester – a major supplier of knitted clothing to Marks & Spencer, employing 5000 people across the Midlands and the North of England. Following a period of six years as Deputy Chairman of East Midlands Electricity, he became Chairman of East Midlands Development Company – the Regional Development Organisation for the East Midlands responsible for successfully attracting inward investment into the region from overseas. He was a non-executive Director of Alliance & Leicester for twenty-three years. He was also a member of the Council of the Industrial Society.



Nicholas Corah

UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO ENHANCE LIBRARY FACILITIES

► The University of Leicester is inviting people to play a part in – quite literally – enhancing its role as a seat of learning.

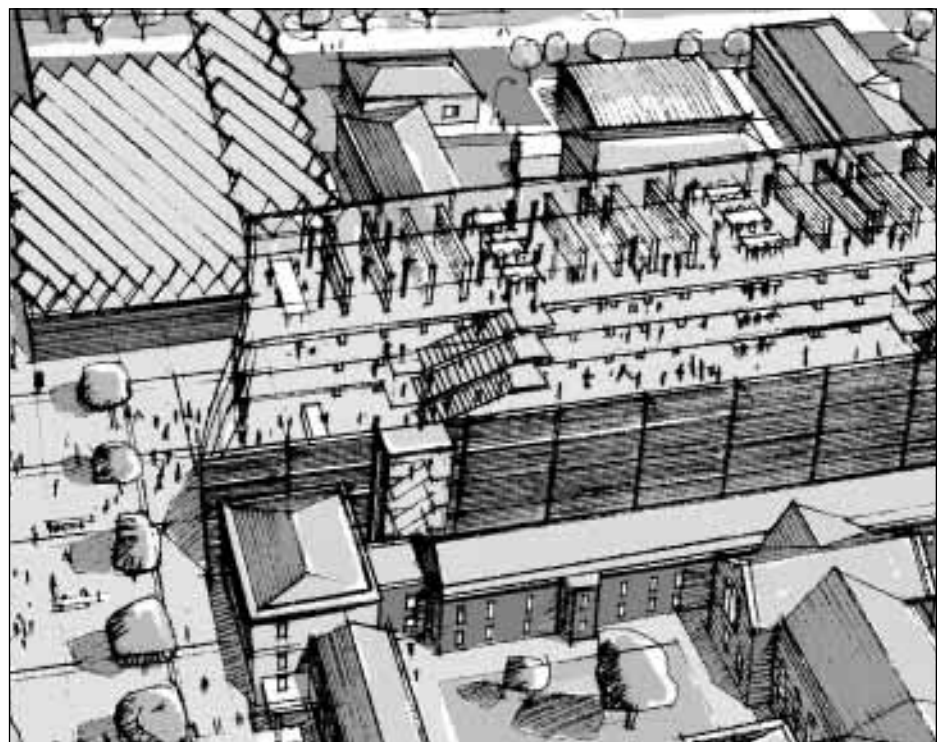
It has launched a 1,000 Library Chairs Campaign which is a part of the overall University plan to extend and refurbish its Library.

The University recently unveiled a £300m expansion plan over the next 30 years of which over £30m was committed in the first year. As part of this plan, the University intends to invest £10m million in its Library to double its size and equip it with state-of-the art technology.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess said: "The University Library is at the heart of Leicester's intellectual life. Thousands of individuals have used its resources to advance their learning and research. Our ambitious programme to extend and refurbish our library is moving forward and we would like people to join us in realising this exciting vision.

"The purchase of 1,000 high quality library chairs is an integral part of this major project. A gift of £115 (which with Gift Aid amounts to £147) will sponsor a chair for the Library to support student learning for years to come."

A plaque will be mounted on the back of each chair to acknowledge the donor's generosity- people can name a chair for themselves, or celebrate a friend, colleague or family member. Smaller donations will be pooled together to purchase chairs



with a "Friends of the University Library" message.

Christine Fyfe, University Librarian, said: "With people's donations, the new chairs will provide an inviting and comfortable work place for students

and researchers within a distinctive building. They will be produced to the highest quality to a design specially commissioned by the University for this very important project."



BATTLE AGAINST RARE CANCER

► Scientists at the University of Leicester are involved in an international hunt for the cause and treatment of a rare but deadly form of cancer.

The University of Leicester researchers have joined with the BC Cancer Agency in Vancouver, Canada and Kiel University in Germany in a \$2.1 million hunt for the causes and new treatments for mantle cell lymphoma.

The Lymphoma Research Foundation (LRF), a U.S.-based health research funding organisation, made the award. The LRF received a \$12.8 million anonymous donation to support international MCL research.

Lymphoma is a general term for cancers that develop in the lymphatic system. MCL belongs to a group of diseases known as non-Hodgkin's

lymphomas. Professor Martin Dyer, of the University Department of Cancer Studies and Molecular Medicine, based at the Leicester Royal Infirmary, said: "MCL is currently incurable in the great majority of cases.

"The University of Leicester's contribution to this international collaborative effort will be to annotate and characterize all the proteins expressed on the cell surface of mantle cell lymphomas.

"We hope that some of these will provide targets for novel therapeutic approaches using monoclonal antibodies. We have previously done this type of analysis in a related disease (chronic lymphocytic leukaemia) and identified a number of new cell surface molecules.

"In collaboration with our colleagues in

Vancouver and Kiel, we shall be performing experiments that will shed light on the pathogenesis of this disease and hopefully result in new and more successful therapeutic approaches. This prestigious award will allow this work to proceed rapidly."

The international team will conduct eight closely linked projects, over a three-year period. Researchers hope the projects will culminate in clinical trials being conducted in North America and Europe.

"While we are studying the disease at the most basic scientific level, our goal at the end of the three years is to translate those discoveries into more effective treatments for patients," said Professor Dyer.

WOMEN MARRYING YOUNGER MEN

► Research led by the University of Leicester has found more women are marrying younger men than ever before.

The research was funded by the Nuffield Foundation and reviewed nuptial patterns in England and Wales. It was led by Ruth Hancock, Professor of Economic and Social Gerontology in the University Department of Health Sciences. The study found that the proportion of all marriages where the man was younger than the woman almost doubled between 1963 and 1998, from 15 per

cent to 26 per cent. There was also a marked increase in the proportion of first marriages in which the man was younger than the woman. The study of age differences at marriage appeared in the Winter issue of Population Trends, published by the Office for National Statistics.

Other findings from the project show that cohabiting partners typically have a greater age difference than do marital partners. Second or subsequent marriages, at least for men, show larger age gaps than first marriages.

PAYING FOR LONG-TERM CARE

► There is a wide range of uncertainty about future public spending on long-term care for older people, according to new projections from researchers at the University of Leicester and the London School of Economics.

Under one set of assumptions about trends in drivers of future costs, public expenditure on long-term care could fall as a proportion of Gross Domestic Produce (GDP) over the next fifty years, while under another set of assumptions it could nearly double as a proportion of GDP. This so-called 'funnel of doubt', even with no change

in how long-term care is financed, is one of the greatest challenges that confronts long-term care policy-makers. The projections were published in Fiscal Studies.

University of Leicester Professor, Ruth Hancock, co-author of the paper, said "The real challenge for policy makers is to design a long-term care funding system that gives older people some clarity about what the state will pay for, while being responsive to the uncertainties of the future costs of care, the numbers of older people needing care and the availability of family care."

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO BREAST FEEDING

► Most young mothers believe breast-feeding is best for their babies, yet many of them end up bottle feeding their children because external factors intervene, with young mothers from low-income families among those least likely to breast-feed.

This was among the findings of a recent in-depth qualitative research study carried out by researchers from the Universities of Leicester and Coventry.

Dr Rachel L Shaw, Research Associate at the University of Leices-

ter Department of Health Sciences, who was involved in the study, commented: "Awareness of breast-feeding as a healthier alternative to bottle-feeding is growing. However, this research has shown that explicit messages regarding the health benefits of breast-feeding for both baby and mother are required to further raise awareness. Young mothers are aware that "breast is best" they now need to know why this is so in order to influence future infant feeding decisions."

CONCERN OVER TV TIPPLE

► Top TV soaps are setting a bad example to British boozers warns Alcohol Concern following research by the University of Leicester. Mass communications expert Anders Hansen, of the University of Leicester Department of Politics, found that alcohol drinking scenes appear every 8 minutes in prime time television soaps. The research also reveals that drinking scenes in soaps have almost doubled over the last 20 years – from 3.9 per hour in 1983

to 7 per hour in 2003.

The research shows that popular television programmes are guilty of portrayals that make the frequent and regular consumption of alcohol appear normal, expected and unproblematic, without adequately balancing that view with storylines showing the more problematic side of alcohol. While drinking is invariably shown as part of 'having a good time', the realities of excessive alcohol consumption are rarely seen on our screens.



KEY DEVELOPMENTS FROM MARS MISSION

► The University of Leicester involvement in Beagle 2, part of the European Space Agency's Mars Express Mission, marks a triumph of collaboration between universities and industry.

The Beagle 2 project involved 110 organisations, led by the Open University, with the University of Leicester and EADS-Astrium (Stevenage) as principal partners.

Technology developed for Mars can have life-saving applications here on Earth. The Leicester-built X-Ray Spec-

trometer, one of the instruments on the Beagle 2 PAW, is now to be adapted to detect industrial spillages and pollution in the developing world.

Professor George Fraser, Director of the Space Research Centre, has received funding of 75,000 euros from the European Space Agency to develop a terrestrial version of the X-Ray Spectrometer (XRS).

Designed to determine the elemental make-up and carry out radiometric dating of Martian rocks, development of the terrestrial version of XRS

will take into consideration safety factors, such as the eradication of radioactivity, which would not be a problem operating remotely on Mars. It will also need to be repackaged to form a hand-held tool.

A key development from the project is the creation of an Operations Centre in the University of Leicester research suite at the National Space Centre – this was developed for the Beagle 2 project and will play a role in future space missions. Uniquely, it allows visitors to the Centre to watch

University of Leicester space scientists working on actual projects.

No contact has been made with the Beagle 2 lander, despite repeated efforts to communicate via the Mars Express and Mars Odyssey spacecraft and the Jodrell Bank radio telescope in Cheshire, UK. Meanwhile, the academia-industry 'Tiger Team' at the National Space Centre in Leicester is concentrating on detailed analysis of the possible causes for failure of the mission and the lessons that can be learned for future missions.

ASPIRIN TRIAL LAUNCHED

► A major trial led by a Professor at the University of Leicester will test if aspirin and an anti-ulcer drug can prevent thousands of cases of cancer of the oesophagus – also known as the foodpipe.

At least ten per cent of the UK population are expected to have endured heartburn over Christmas and the New Year. For some long-term sufferers this heartburn is a symptom of a precancerous condition that is responsible for around half of all oesophageal cancers.

The Cancer Research UK funded trial will aim to prevent a precancerous condition of the oesophagus developing and its subsequent switch to cancer. Five thousand men who are at risk of the cancer will be recruited for the trial from 100 UK centres.

One of the main predisposing factors causing this cancer is a condition called Barrett's oesophagus. It is caused when stomach acid regularly ebbs back from the stomach into the oesophagus – one of the symptoms of this being heartburn.

The acid damage causes a change to the cells in the lining of the oesophagus. These cells are not cancerous, but they can become so later. Barrett's oesophagus affects up to two per cent of the UK population.

The trial's lead researcher, Professor Janusz Jankowski, based at the Digestive Diseases Centre, University of Leicester, says: "Only a small proportion of those with Barrett's oesophagus will develop oesophageal cancer.

"However in the UK the number of those

developing this cancer because of Barrett's oesophagus is very high compared to the rest of the western world – three to four times the level seen in Europe or the US.

"By successfully treating Barrett's oesophagus we could prevent up to a half of cases of oesophageal cancer in this trial."

The researchers will use aspirin and a drug that prevents acid formation in the stomach called esomeprazole to try and prevent Barrett's oesophagus.

Professor Jankowski added: "The UK is at the epicentre of an explosion in this cancer. We hope drug treatments will offer a simple method of preventing this particularly aggressive form of the disease."

PSYCHOLOGISTS STUDY THE CULT OF CELEBRITY

► David Beckham is young Britain's most popular celebrity – over twice as popular as Brad Pitt and Justin Timberlake combined – and more than a match for Angelina Jolie, Keanu Reeves and Britney Spears put together, according to a new study into celebrity worship by the University of Leicester.

A survey of over 2,500 young Britons led by Dr Adrian North of the School of Psychology has revealed a list of top 10 celebs.

The survey was also interesting for who was not in the top 10, or just outside it: "Nelson Mandela (14th) polled as our top politician and arguably the first person on the list to represent a clear moral / political ideology," said Dr North.

"Tony Blair polled as many votes as master of illusion, David Blaine. Not a single person voted for Michael

Howard or Charles Kennedy. Jesus got exactly the same number of votes as George Bush Jr."

The researchers are extending their survey and are appealing for more people to fill in their on-line questionnaire. It is available on <http://www.celebritystudy.com>

The study will help the researchers find out why people are so fascinated by celebrities. The first stage in this process was to find out exactly which celebrities people do worship – now the psychologists hope to find out why.

Dr North said "Although people could have voted for great political thinkers or artists, their top 10 comprised Hollywood stars, pop musicians and a footballer. What links all the names in our top 10 is not their great minds but their great looks."

DAZZLING HALOS

► The discovery of a unique phenomenon: a beautiful set of expanding X-ray halos surrounding a gamma-ray burst which have never been seen before has been announced by an international team of astronomers led by Dr Simon Vaughan of the University of Leicester. The research has been accepted for publication in the *Astrophysical Journal*.

Gamma-ray bursts (GRB) are the most energetic form of radiation in the Universe and can be used to probe any material between Earth and the burst. In this case, the GRB lies behind the plane of our Galaxy, so its light has to travel through the gas and dust in the Galactic disc to reach us.

ESA's gamma ray observatory satellite 'Integral' detected the 30 second long GRB 031203 on

December 3rd 2003 and the halos were discovered in a follow-up observation that started 6 hours after the burst with ESA's 'XMM-Newton' X-ray space telescope.

The fading X-ray emission from the GRB – the afterglow – is clearly seen in the image from the X-ray cameras on XMM-Newton. Uniquely, two rings centred on the afterglow were also seen. Dr Vaughan said "These rings are due to dust in our own Galaxy which is illuminated by the X-rays from the gamma-ray burst. The dust scatters some of the X-rays causing the rings, in the same way as fog scatters the light from a car's headlights."

He added "It's like a shout in a cathedral; the shout of the gamma-ray burst is louder, but the Galactic reverberation, seen as the rings, is more beautiful."



NEW DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY ESTABLISHED

▶ A distinctive centre at the University of Leicester, which has carved out an international niche for its research into crime and policing, has gained departmental status and has been launched as the Department of Criminology.

The former Scarman Centre, established in 1988, became the Department of Criminology on 1 January. This reflects the importance of the department within the University as a whole – it has one of the largest distance learning programmes anywhere in the field of crime, criminal justice and policing, community safety, risk and security management and allied areas in emergency planning and health and safety management with more than 800 students at any one time.



NEW ACCOMMODATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANCIENT HISTORY



Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Burgess and staff at the opening of the refurbished facility.

▶ The first building to be formally opened in 2004 as part of the University of Leicester's £300m expansion plan was the prestigious School of Archaeology and Ancient History.

One of the top ranked departments in the country with an international reputation, the School now has dedicated facilities in a refurbished building designed for its needs.

The School's new, self-contained home will provide a teaching and research environment for staff and stu-

dents that includes state-of-the-art laboratories, administrative and support facilities, with staff offices large enough for teaching small groups. There will also be exhibition space for students and staff.

Funding for the project was partly provided by the Higher Education Funding Council, England (HEFCE) through the Science Research Investment Fund (SRIF). The building has improved facilities for people with disabilities.

NEW BREAKTHROUGH IN BLOOD VESSEL INFLAMMATION PROBE

▶ Medical scientists at the University of Leicester have announced a breakthrough in their understanding of blood vessel inflammation – a serious condition which underlies health problems like organ failure in sepsis, the ability to recover from burns, and transplant rejection.

The team in the Department of Cardiovascular Sciences at the University of Leicester announced the new development in the medical journal *Blood*.

Funded by the Wellcome Trust and led by Dr Nick Brindle, senior lecturer, the team was responsible for discovering a new protein three years ago – but have only now been able to establish the new mechanism by which blood vessel inflammation is controlled.

Dr Brindle said: "The protein is called ABIN-2 and it appears to suppress expression of inflammatory genes in vascular cells and block inflammation in blood vessels.

"Blood vessel inflammation underlies a range of serious health problems. In extreme cases, vascular inflammation is accompanied by cell death and regression of vessels, often with fatal consequences.

The University medical team now hopes to define exactly how ABIN-2 works and identify ways in which this mechanism can be activated therapeutically.

ROADSIDE DANGER

▶ Young children living near a major road suffer more coughing attacks according to research presented to the British Thoracic Society.

Researchers from the University of Leicester presented findings that show that for every 100m closer to a main road the child lives, the level of cough increases.

The study, which concentrated on children aged 1 to 5 years, reported an increase of two per cent of dry cough at night and three per cent of cough without a cold for every 100m closer to the main road that the child lived.

The research investigated the link between how much a child was exposed to particulates (microscopic particles produced primarily by diesel engines) at home and what level of respiratory difficulties they had.

Dr Jonathan Grigg, Senior Lecturer in Paediatric Respiratory Medicine and member of the British Thoracic Society, from the Leicester Children's Asthma Centre, University of Leicester said: "We know that small particles from diesel exhaust are one of the most dangerous air pollutants – since they can penetrate deep into a child's lungs. Our study into the health effects of living near road traffic has provided clear evidence that particles from vehicles are a significant irritant on the airways of young children".

"This finding is robust since re-analysis of our data using the Leicester City Council's computer model of air pollution found a similar association between exposure to particles and cough."



Why Learning Makes Business Sense

► A study by the University of Leicester has revealed that firms can directly link productivity and performance with learning opportunities in the workplace.

Firms that encourage learning – both informally from co-workers and from formal training – can increase sales of products and motivate staff to achieve better results.

The findings, presented to government departments and available on the DTI website, demonstrate how businesses that promote learning can reap financial rewards.

The study cites the case of a hairdresser's salon where product sales increased five-fold after managers made more of the informal learning of their employees.

The report by the University of Leicester's Centre for Labour Market Studies follows a 10-month investigation into 'informal' learning at work. The study was funded by the Department for Trade and Industry and conducted by Professor Lorna Unwin, Professor Alan Felstead, Professor David Ashton, Dr Alison Fuller, Dr Sally Walters and Martin Quinn.

• Copies of the report are available from the following location on the DTI website: <http://www.ecdti.co.uk/>

Learn As You Earn

► The model organisation of the future would make it easier for you to learn as you earn simply by the way it is run. Investigations by the University of Leicester in a new Economic and Social Research Council-funded study aim to establish what kind of workplace structure best facilitates learning at work.

Public and private sector organisations will come under scrutiny in the four-year study, Learning as Work: Teaching and Learning Processes in the Contemporary Work Organisation.

The study is being carried out by researchers at the Centre for Labour Market Study at the University of Leicester and will report directly to representatives from business, industry, the professions and policy makers. The research, is being carried out by Professor Alan Felstead, Professor Lorna Unwin, Professor David Ashton, Dr Alison Fuller, Dr Sally Walters, Dr Peter Butler and Dr Tracey Lee.

TRIPLE FELLOWSHIP AWARD

► The international excellence of the University of Leicester has been further recognised through the award of three Commonwealth Fellowships – the first time they have been awarded simultaneously to the University.

The prestigious Fellowships will fund posts for three international academics in different disciplines. They will work alongside University of Leicester experts in important research projects. Two of the Commonwealth Fellows are from India and one from Pakistan and the work they will do in Leicester will have important implications for their projects in South Asia.

The two Indian Fellows are Dr G S Bajpai (pictured top) and Dr H K Chaudhary (middle). Dr Muhammad Farooqui (below) comes from Pakistan.

Dr Bajpai who is an Assistant Professor at Department of Criminology and Forensic Science of University of Saugar, Madhya Pradesh, India is based at the University of Leicester Department of Criminology (formerly Scarman Centre). He is working with Alison Wakefield and Jackie Schneider focusing on 'Situational Crime Prevention'. He is analysing the opportunity reduction model in crime prevention and intends to develop some practical ways of crime reduc-

tion for Indian police.

Dr Chaudhary is Associate Professor at the Department of Plant Breeding & Genetics, Himachal Pradesh Agricultural University, Palampur. He will work with the University of Leicester's Department of Biology where he will study the application of molecular cytogenetics techniques especially in situ hybridization. This will assist him in obtaining and developing the targeted genotypes with enhanced precision and accelerated efficiency. This knowledge will assist him in its application in Indian contexts. Dr Chaudhary is working with Professor Pat Heslop-Harrison and Dr Trude Schwarzacher of the University of Leicester.

Dr Muhammad Farooqui is Associate Professor at the Centre of Excellence in Mineralogy at the University of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan. He is working with the University of Leicester Department of Geology working on the sedimentology, provenance and depositional environment of the Miocene-Pliocene Talar Formation in Southwest Makran, Pakistan. The Talar Formation is one component of the Makran accretionary prism. The area has been little studied since the early 1960s and Dr. Farooqui's research is in association with Dr. Sarah Davies of the University of Leicester.



CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE CLASSES IMPROVE PUPILS' ABILITIES

► Attending extra classes after school to learn 'mother tongue' languages adds value to other educational contexts, a study led by the University of Leicester has found.

Researchers found that pupils who spent time in schools learning their mother tongue also picked up valuable skills that applied in mainstream schools – study skills, respect

for teachers, discipline, politeness and dealing with exams.

The study into complementary schools, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, revealed other benefits for pupils including:

- Skilful and spontaneous use of two languages
- Translations skills

- Different ways of expressing words
- Handwriting improvement
- Community cohesion
- Enhancing sense of identity

The study was jointly conducted by Dr Peter Martin of the University of Leicester with Dr Angela Creese, University of Birmingham, Mr Arvind Bhatt, Crown Hills Community College, Leicester, Ms Nirmala Bhojani.

CONSULTATION SKILLS

► At a meeting organised by the University of Leicester, Chief Medical Officer Sir Liam Donaldson – a graduate and former member of the University staff – highlighted the

importance of the consultation in health care and the support available in the NHS to ensure communication is effective and meaningful between patient and

doctor. The event was organised by the University of Leicester's Clinical Consultation Research and Development Unit in the Department of Health Sciences.



New honour for Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys in 20th anniversary year of discovery of DNA genetic fingerprinting

► University of Leicester scientist and pioneer of DNA genetic fingerprinting, Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys, of the University of Leicester, is to receive an international accolade during the 20th anniversary year of his revolutionary discovery. Professor Jeffreys, who is the Royal Society Wolfson Professor in the Department of Genetics, is co-recipient of the 2004 Louis-Jeantet Prize for Medicine.

The award honours scientists who are distinguished for the highest quality of biomedical research in Europe.

A spokesperson for the Louis-Jeantet Foundation for Medicine said: "The award encourages further projects of excellence in the prize-winners' laboratories. Professor Jeffreys receives the prize for pioneering work on developing methods to

analyse human genetic variation and mutations. He developed genomic fingerprinting, a method widely applied in legal medicine for the identification of individuals."

With the prize Professor Jeffreys plans to study the mechanisms of DNA recombination, gene conversion, and other types of mutagenesis, all of which are important to understand the origins of genetic diseases.

Co-recipient of the prize is Hans Clevers (Utrecht), who receives the prize for elucidating cellular signalling pathways implicated in normal tissue development and in cancer, notably of the intestine. He now intends to analyse the cause of juvenile polyposis, a disease that provokes a predisposition for intestinal cancer.



The two prize-winners receive a cumulative sum of 0.8 million euros to carry out their new research projects. In addition each prize-winner receives a personal award of 75,000 euros.

Top prize for MBA achiever

► A University of Leicester graduate Tim Wright gained a top national prize for work he did while he was a student at its Management Centre. At a prestigious prize-giving event at the Law Society in London, Tim Wright was presented with a cheque for £3,000.

Tim entered a competition organised by Ashridge Management Col-

lege and the Guardian newspaper, which was open to all AMBA accredited MBA programmes.

The prize was £3,000 and publication of the essay in *The Guardian*. The topic was The Changing Role of Business in Contemporary Society, and Tim wrote a piece on Corporate Social Responsibility.

The Management Centre offered to

match the prize and Tim has been presented with cheque for £3,000 at the University. Tim, who has worked for a number of 'blue-chip' firms, lives in Kettering. In his speech of acceptance for his Ashridge/The Guardian Prize, he praised University of Leicester Management Centre for allowing him the opportunity to study topics critically so that his ap-

proach to Corporate Social Responsibility was highly questioning of its utility.

Director of the Management Centre Professor Gibson Burrell said: "It is a rare distinction indeed to win this accolade and we are delighted for Tim. One assessor said the panel of judges saw his work as refreshingly different and as the clear first prize."

Leicester Postgraduate Wins Award for Project to Develop Better Future Materials

► Mark Fuller, a 24 year old post-graduate engineering student has won the East Midlands Professional Engineering Institutions' Masters Prize for Engineering Projects 'To Change the Future', held at Ford College Loughborough.

Mark won the prize in competition with projects from De Montfort, Loughborough and three other East Midlands universities. Awarding the prize, leading engineer and industrialist Sir Robert Malpas CBE FREng, past chairman of Powergen and chairman of the judges, said "Mark's project will lead to better design and testing of future materials, particular-

ly reinforced plastics."

Presenting his project, Mark said: "The materials making up today's jumbo jets require high safety factors because they contain over 1 million minute cracks. The methods of crack-modelling I am working on will help future materials to be even safer and more cost-effective."

Dr David Rhodes, Vice Chairman of organisers East Midlands PEI, said "This has been another opportunity for our universities to show to industry, government, development agencies and the public the innovations which are being created in engineering departments in the region. Pro-

jects like these will change the future of our economy, and this year's master's graduates reach a very high standard".

The Prize is funded by the East Midlands Professional Engineering

Institutions, the Institution of Electrical Engineers, Catapult Venture Managers Ltd, managers of the East Midlands Venture Capital Fund, and Connect Midlands, the fast track for technology business.

Cambridge appointment for Pro-Vice-Chancellor

► The University of Cambridge has appointed Professor Graeme Barker Disney Professor of Archaeology and Director of the McDonald Institute of Archaeological Research from October 1, 2004. Professor

Barker's many roles in the University have included Head of the School of Archaeology and Ancient History and founding Dean of the Graduate School. He is presently a Pro-Vice-Chancellor.



► APPOINTMENT

New Company Incubation Manager to encourage entrepreneurial spirit

► The Research and Business Development Office at the University of Leicester has put in place a number of initiatives to encourage and support research staff to exploit the commercial potential of their work.

Appointed on October 1, 2003, the Company Incubation Manager, Tim Maskell, brings to the University 15 years' experience of technology transfer and of the management of university spin-out ventures and early stage companies. He is keen to help Leicester academics make the most of commercial opportunities arising from their research and related activities, and reap the personal and corporate advantages they can offer.

He sees his role as providing support to academics who aspire to spin out commercial ventures as well as to those university spin-out companies who are in the first two or three years of their existence.

Tim would like to meet anyone who has an idea for commercial exploitation, however far-fetched or undeveloped the idea may seem. Harnessing his commercial

experience to the research expertise of members of departments, together they can decide whether an idea has potential, whether it has commercial validity, whether any external funder is likely to invest in it and whether it is likely to make money itself.

"You need to understand the market and what the end-user wants," he says. "Academics are expert in their own area of research, but perhaps don't know too much about commercial matters, especially company-related commercial matters. This is where I can help.

"From a University point of view we can provide a range of support and, where necessary, mentoring or training so that academics can become more aware of what is needed and be helped to succeed. They may be able to provide an idea, but without investment it is not going to get anywhere, and my role can also help with advising and putting together external funding applications."

One helpful source of funding is the LACHESIS fund, which provides seed money for spin-out ventures in

East Midlands universities.

Tim said, "We need to understand better the commercial relevance of the excellent research that is being undertaken in the University departments and we need to be able to help identify opportunities to develop its full potential. We also need to identify external sources of support and establish links with individuals, organisations and companies that are prepared to work with the University to help with the commercialisation process. Effective collaboration is key to success."

"The University has a lot of untapped potential arising from its excellent research base, and the challenge is to realise the full commercial value that this represents.

"We already have a handful of early stage spin-out companies that are beginning to establish themselves and make their commercial mark, and we are supporting several opportunities for new ventures arising from engineering, chemistry, biology, physics and astronomy, oncology



Tim Maskell

and clinical biochemistry and several other departments. The future looks very exciting."

• *If you have an idea that you think could have commercial potential, or just want to know more about the steps that need to be taken to evaluate and develop an opportunity contact Tim Maskell, Company Incubation Manager, Research and Business Development Office, Fielding Johnson Building, telephone 0116 223 1372, fax 0116 252 2028, email twom1@le.ac.uk*



► Historians David Johnson (left) and Graham Smith, are pictured with Professor Richard Bonney (centre), former Head of the History Department, at a joint retirement reception on November 27, 2003. David Johnson's career at the University spans 38 years. His wide-ranging contribution has included the Deanship of Arts from 1988-96, thereby creating a record as the longest serving Dean of Arts in the University's history. Graham Smith joined the department from Loughborough University and pioneered its highly successful Computing for Historians course. Both are continuing their association with the University and its School of Historical Studies as University Fellows. Professor Peter Musgrave, Head of the School of Historical Studies, presented them with gifts to mark the occasion.

University honour marks Emeritus Professor's contribution to Centre

► The University of Warsaw recently honoured Emeritus Professor J K Grodecki for his contribution to the founding and development of the University's Centre for English and European Legal Studies and for his lectures there over the last 12 years.

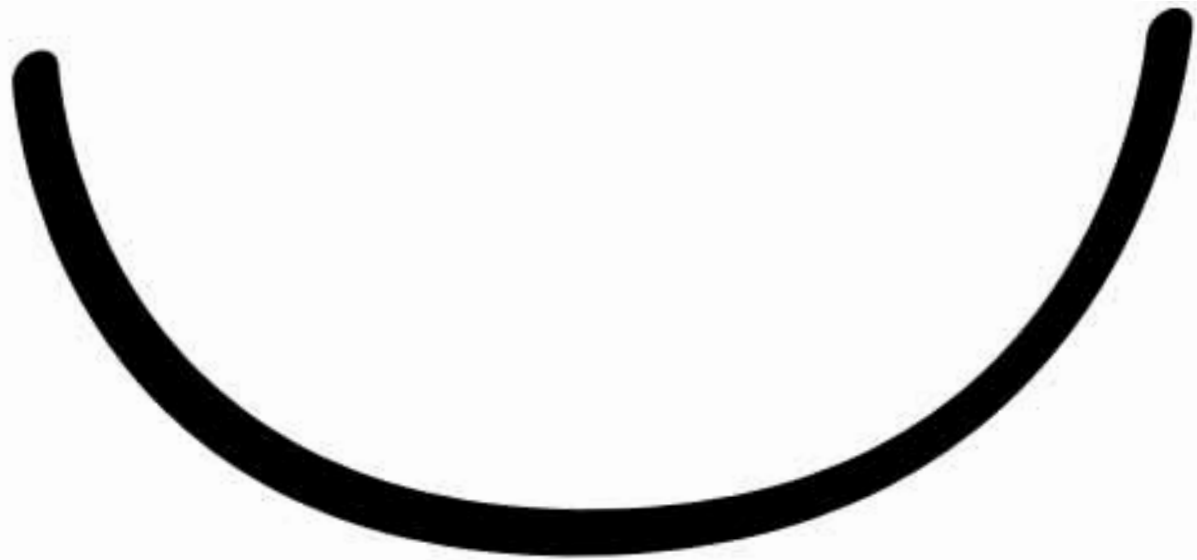
At the ceremony in Warsaw during which Professor Grodecki was presented with the medal of the University of Warsaw, the Rector stressed the Centre's pioneering aspect and its unique character. The success of this Centre has led to the launch of other similar centres, notably French, German and American.

Professor Grodecki was Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Law at the University of Leicester from 1973-76. Appointed a Professor in 1965, he was Head of the Department of Law from 1968 to 1973.

Correction

► In announcing Professor Gary Koop's appointment as Professor of Economics from 1 September 2003, his department was incorrectly reported (December/January issue of Bulletin, page 8). It should read 'Department of Economics'.

Let Arts Week Make You Smile.



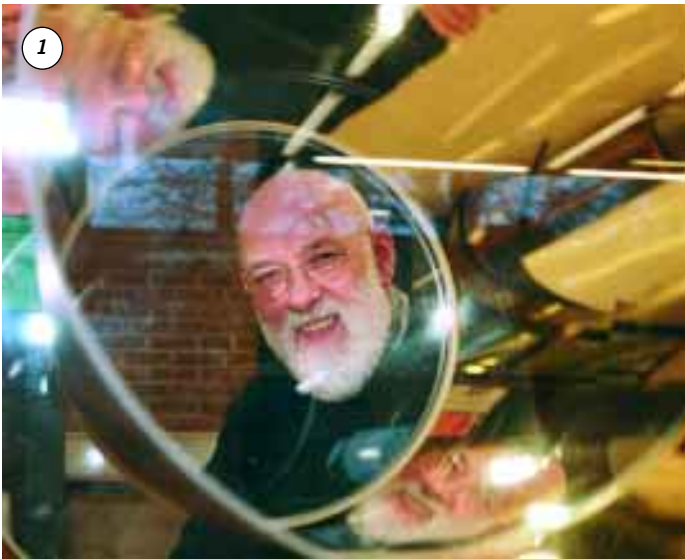
Friday 5 to Saturday 13 March 2004

An exciting programme of music, poetry, film, drama and the visual arts for students, staff and the general public.

Tickets are available in advance from the University Bookshop. For more information about Arts Week visit www.le.ac.uk/arts/artswEEK, email jb74@le.ac.uk or call 0116 252 1381.



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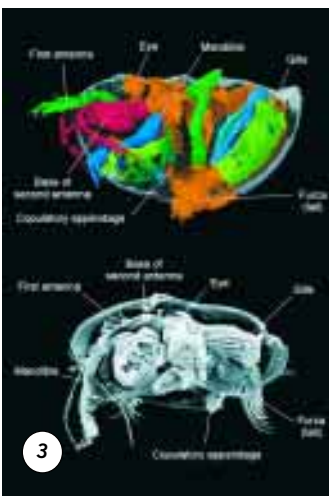
1

(1). Dr Martin Turner, Principal Research Fellow in the Department of Physics and Astronomy (CBE for services to X-ray astronomy) was one of five people associated with the University cited in the 2004 New Year Honours List. Also honoured were Professor Eileen Baker, lately Principal, Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln, (OBE for services to higher education), Timothy Appleton, Manager, Rutland Water Nature Reserve, and Honorary Graduate of the University (MBE for services to wildlife and nature conservation), Professor Alan Dashwood, Professor of Law (1980-86) at the University, and a former Head of Department and Visiting Professor of Law (CBE, Diplomatic and Overseas List, for services to European law and to the Convention on the Future of Europe), Professor Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, Director, British School at Rome, a former lecturer in Ancient History (OBE in the Diplomatic and Overseas List for services to UK-Italian cultural relations).



2

(2). At a prestigious prize-giving event at the Law Society in London, Tim Wright was presented with a cheque for £3,000. Tim, a member of the 2002-03 year at the University of Leicester Management Centre, entered a competition organised by Ashridge Management College and the Guardian newspaper, which was open to all AMBA accredited MBA programmes. The prize was £3,000 and publication of the essay in The Guardian. The topic was The Changing Role of Business in Contemporary Society, and Tim wrote a piece on Corporate Social Responsibility.



3

(3). Scientists have discovered a fossil water-flea-like relative of the prawns and lobsters – called an ostracod – 425 million years old, complete with its soft anatomy preserved in three dimensions. Professor David Siveter of the Department of Geology at the University of Leicester, together with colleagues from the Universities of Oxford and Yale, USA, made the discovery at an undisclosed site in Herefordshire in the Welsh Borderland. The fossil shows fine details of the body, its limbs, eyes and gills for breathing. Even the sexual organs are preserved, which allows identification of the specimen as a male. It is believed to be the oldest example of a male sexual organ ever discovered.



4

(4). A rare opportunity for Leicestershire and Rutland people to view the life and works of one of the county's foremost artists recently took place at the University of Leicester. The University, in conjunction with Goldmark Gallery of Rutland, invited people to the free film premiere of Irish Voyage, a 50-minute film on artist Rigby Graham. The film viewing was preceded by a short talk by the film's director Charles Mapleston and was followed by a reception and exhibition of Rigby Graham's paintings. A number of woodcuts were also donated to the University of Leicester and are now located in the foyer of the Charles Wilson Building.

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