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Issue 9 Volume 4

# UniLife

## Young scientists explore genetic medicine



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## Letter from the President



One of the advantages of having just four Faculties and fewer than 30 Schools in The University of Manchester is that I can visit each School fairly often, characteristically spending a couple of hours listening to colleagues talk about their scholarly achievements, aspirations, problems and concerns.

Listening has been an exhilarating experience over the past two years. Remarkable progress has been achieved in every School. A powerful sense of common purpose has prevailed across the new University while the fabric of the campus has continued to be transformed by the largest capital programme ever undertaken in UK higher education. Strong concentrations of distinguished scholarship have been strengthened across virtually the full range of scholarly disciplines, and there has been a welcome openness to interdisciplinary collaboration. Manchester has been an innovative, exciting, progressive place to be.

Targeted investment in quality people and infrastructure - deliberately timed to capitalise on the high institutional profile created by the merger and to have maximum effect in the forthcoming Research Assessment Exercise - has, however, come at a price. Our Capital Programme has been funded by loans as well as grants, and a proportion of our investment in staffing has been deficit funded. As always, such financing, however sensible, now requires a period of belt tightening.

In a University that has recently experienced a dramatic net increase of around 20 per cent in front-line research, research-and-teaching and academic support staff, the belt-tightening feels especially frustrating. Relative deprivation can sometimes cause greater disenchantment than absolute deprivation.

The measures we are taking have been designed to get the University into operating surplus by 2008-09. We have launched an Early Retirement and Voluntary Severance Scheme to help us reduce the over-provision of staff that we inherited from the merger, and that (as a result of a formal agreement with the campus unions) we undertook not to tackle for the first two years of the new University. In tandem, we are managing appointments and re-appointments carefully, minimising the use of temporary staff and

tightening vacancy management generally. We are advertising more administrative and academic support positions internally. Most contentiously, perhaps, we will for some time be making fewer new academic appointments. Recruitment is not stopping, but these other, more painstaking strategies are for a time taking pride of place.

The University has thus arrived at perhaps the most challenging stage of the Manchester 2015 Agenda. But the discipline associated with consolidation and slower growth represents a major opportunity, not just to build a more efficient, cost-effective institution - although that is vital - but also to concentrate on nurturing excellence in a superb university community. We have always known that a majority of the people upon whom the success of the Agenda depends were here already in October 2004. Some of the best of them will have retired before 2015. Others may take appointments elsewhere after achieving great things here. Many will by 2015 have achieved immense stature internationally after long careers in Manchester; one or two may have become Nobel Laureates. Together, all such people will have enhanced the reputation of Manchester as their own scholarly virtuosity has grown.

Manchester will in the end be all the stronger for having managed the current period of consolidation professionally and collegially, and for ensuring that the University remains a nurturing environment in which talented, dedicated people can realise their full potential. I am looking forward to hearing how colleagues are meeting these new challenges as I visit and re-visit all parts of the University over the next couple of years.

Professor Alan Gilbert  
President and Vice-Chancellor





## Exploring genetic medicine

**Almost 1,000 sixth formers from all over North West England took the opportunity to explore cutting edge 'genome' techniques with university postgraduates as part of an outreach programme organised by the North West Genetics Knowledge Park (Nowgen).**

The A-level students visited Nowgen on Grafton Street from January to March this year where they experimented with DNA, heard about groundbreaking science and discussed controversial issues associated with DNA technologies.

Nowgen – whose Executive Director is Professor Dian Donnai – is a partnership between the Universities of Manchester, Liverpool and Lancaster and the Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust. This innovative project has established a Centre for Genetics in Healthcare with an active research programme, as well as a commitment to public engagement. One of its core objectives is to provide a forum for education and dialogue around human genetics; these workshops with sixth form students are an important part of this work.

Nowgen's Director Helen Middleton-Price said, "We have trained ten postgraduates to work with sixth form students using techniques employed in

the sequencing of the human genome. They have been enthusiastic and professional ambassadors in explaining their research work at the University as well as introducing new practical skills to the sixth formers."

The majority of these students attended a hands on workshop in Nowgen's teaching laboratory, in which they analysed their own DNA, used research-quality equipment and met research scientists who brought to life some of the topics studied at A-level.

Nowgen also ran three study days for A-level students in conjunction with The Manchester Museum this Spring. These centred around Genetic Medicine and gave students the chance to hear about the latest developments in the field and talk about their views on these technologies.

Helen added, "We have received very positive feedback from these events and we're keen to build upon this experience next year. It is valuable

for young people to be involved in the dialogue about the issues associated with genetic medicine - they are the future scientists, writers, policymakers, and patients; they learn so much and we learn about their hopes and fears about emerging technologies."

Postgraduate research student Hannah Musgrave, said, "I've really enjoyed the challenge of running these workshops. It's made me far more confident presenting and I've learnt how to talk about my research in a more meaningful way."

Helen added, "It was rewarding to see how much they got from the experience and many of them left feeling excited about studying biomedical subjects at university."

Postgraduates interested in getting involved or anyone who wants to know more about these events or about collaborating with Nowgen, should contact Kate Mathieson at [kate.mathieson@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:kate.mathieson@manchester.ac.uk)

## In brief



### Rylands re-opens

The John Rylands Library on Deansgate re-opens to the public on Monday 14 May after a three and a half year closure to carry out extensive refurbishment and redevelopment work.

Opening times are 10am to 5pm on Monday and Wednesday to Saturday and 12 noon to 5pm Tuesday and Sunday.

The Library is closed to the public on Good Friday, Easter Sunday and during Christmas week. Reader opening hours are Mon-Sat 10.00-17.00 with the exception of Easter Saturday, all Bank Holidays and the public closure dates listed above.

For those with a deeper interest in the collections, reader services are available. The new Reading Room offers comfortable surroundings for quiet study and one of the best views of the original building.

Registration is free of charge. For more information, contact Reader Services on 0161 275 3764 or [jrul.special-collections@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:jrul.special-collections@manchester.ac.uk).

Visit the website [www.manchester.ac.uk/library](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library) for more information or call 0161 306 0555.

For full details of the re-opening see next months issue.

[www.manchester.ac.uk/library](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library)

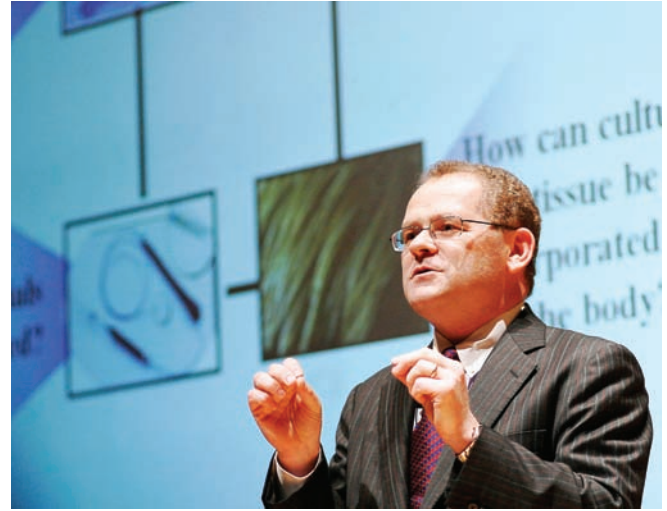
### Cabinet Visit

Sir Gus O'Donnell, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service, visited the University of Manchester in March to deliver a talk about the future of the Civil Service. The event, organised by the Institute for Political and Economic Governance (IPEG) and the Herbert Simon Institute, took place in the Whitworth Hall and included a Q&A session.

## Alumni Association

Last month, alumni of the University enjoyed an exclusive networking lunch aimed at raising the profile of the Manchester professional community to the London business community. It also provided the opportunity for alumni based in London to begin or continue to develop relationships with professionals from Manchester as well as each other.

The event was held in the Mansion House, London and principal guest of honour was the Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman John Stuttard who said: "Manchester's financial and professional firms are a key part of the UK's global standing as the world centre for international finance. I see that Manchester is part of the Square Mile and the Square Mile is part of Manchester.....working together in this way will ensure that the UK remains at the forefront of the financial and professional service world."



The event was organised by Pro Manchester, the agency responsible for promoting the range of professional skills in the North West.

March also saw the Cockcroft Rutherford Lecture and Dinner take place. Alumni filled the Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall at the University to hear alumnus

Professor Alan Russell (BSc Hons Biochemistry 1984) present a lecture entitled "If newts can do it, why can't we?" Professor Russell (pictured) is Director of the McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine, Pittsburgh. A dinner following the lecture, was attended by Rutherford and Cockcroft family members.



## Orchestra wins gold

**The Manchester University Wind Orchestra has won a Gold Award at the National Concert Band Festival in Gateshead.**

The Orchestra was invited to the National Festival final after receiving a gold award at the regional heats last November. It is the Orchestra's first ever Gold Award at the national final.

Musical Director Philip Robinson said: "This Gold Award is a great tribute to the time and energy that the players have put into this wind orchestra over the past ten years. The band is in a better position now than it has ever been and it's an extremely exciting time for all of us. I truly could

not be more thrilled with this award and what it means to us."

Philip led the band through two pieces in their 25-minute slot: Ernest Tomlinson's Suite of English Folk-Dances, and a fun five-minute piece by Percy Grainger, Children's March.

Manchester University Wind Orchestra was formed in October 1996 by Philip Robinson and, from a core of 40 players, the group has now grown to 70 players and includes students, alumni and staff from The University of Manchester, and others from around the region.





Photo courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox



Dr Brian Cox

## Making movies

**A physicist from The University of Manchester has played an important role in bringing the \$45 million film 'Sunshine' to the big screen.**

Dr Brian Cox, who can usually be found investigating how the universe was formed at the Centre for European Nuclear Research (CERN) in Switzerland, has been working with Sunshine scriptwriter and University of Manchester alumnus Alex Garland (The Beach) and director Danny Boyle (Trainspotting and 28 Days Later).

Dr Cox has been acting as scientific advisor to ensure the dramatic storyline retains some degree of plausibility and isn't simply a far-fetched flight of fantasy. He was also on hand to give the cast and crew a better understanding of advanced physics

and worked intensively with Cillian Murphy, who plays Capa, the ship's hero physicist.

Sunshine is set 50 years in the future. The sun is dying and the earth is in permanent winter. Lead character 'Capa' is the physicist in an eight-strong team of astronauts who are on a mission to reignite the sun with a huge nuclear bomb. Ultimately, it is left to him and his knowledge of physics, to save the planet.

Part of Cox's role was to come up with a plausible explanation of why the sun is dying well ahead of schedule in the film. It will expire eventually but not for another five billion years or so.

The explanation offered in the film is that a so-called 'Q ball' has got itself lodged in the sun - although

Cox admits that our own sun is not dense enough and it would fly straight through. The hypothetical Q ball would eat through normal matter, ripping apart the Sun's neutrons and protons.

It's not yet known whether Q balls actually exist but Dr Cox says that CERN are planning to search for them using their £4bn atom-smashing Large Hadron Collider (LHC) on which he is a leading researcher, which is due to be switched on later this year.

"The science is extremely sound in the film," explains Cox. "You can tell Alex Garland is a fan of science as well as a science fiction fan. There were a few edges we ironed out but basically it was the back story rather than the plot that my expertise was needed for."

## A Place For Everything

**A new exhibition at The Manchester Museum will provide some answers to 'How do people classify the world?' and 'Who named the animals and plants around us?'**

*A Place for Everything: Making order out of chaos*, celebrates the 300th anniversary of the birth of the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus. New exhibits will examine Linnaeus's work, showcasing objects from the collections that have not been on display before and include the return of the amazing Spider Crab (see back page).

During the 18th century western museums developed from private 'cabinets of curiosities'. As vast quantities of material flooded into Europe from colonies and empires it became increasingly important to know how to sort this huge quantity of material. In the natural sciences, the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus devised a system of naming that gave each species a unique scientific name, for example *Homo sapiens* which still shapes science today.

Museum displays will examine the usefulness, and otherwise of names and categories and a number of new exhibits exploring the ways museums

collect, classify and name objects will be located throughout the Museum.

Henry McGhie, Curator of Zoology said: "Our Giant Spider Crab with its 11 foot leg span will be making a special appearance. We will also be displaying an original copy of Linnaeus' ground-breaking book, the *Systema Natura* published in 1758, alongside a number of strange but fascinating exhibits which seem to defy classification!"

Artist Fred Langford Edwards will also be exhibiting new work in the Museum reception. Based on photographs of the Museum's fascinating natural history collections.

To mark the 300th anniversary of Linnaeus' birth, The Manchester Museum will be hosting a programme of special events and activities during May - October.



## In brief

### Ian Morison

Ian Morison of Jodrell Bank Observatory has been appointed to the post of Gresham Professor of Astronomy for a three-year period starting on August 1st this year and will become its 35th holder.

Gresham College, in the City of London, was founded in 1597 by Sir Thomas Gresham who became very wealthy through his activities as a Mercer and Royal Agent. When he died in 1575, part of his wealth was used to transform his house into a college with an endowment to support seven professors to lecture on astronomy, divinity, geometry, law, medicine, music and rhetoric - Christopher Wren was astronomy professor from 1657 to 1660.

The success of the lectures led to the incorporation of the Royal Society there in 1663 and the society's activities remained at Gresham College until 1710. The link is still strong with two of its recent astronomy professors, Lord Porter and Sir Martin Rees both becoming Presidents of the Royal Society. One other radio astronomer, Sir Martin Ryle held the position in 1968.

The duties of the professors are to provide six public lectures per year in the College. These are web-cast and apparently reach a very wide audience. Ian will also hold an annual astronomy weekend in the Cotswolds to encourage observational astronomy.

### Dental appointment for Prof

Professor Kevin O'Brien of the School of Dentistry and Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, in the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences, has been appointed Chair of the General Dental Council's Specialist Dental Education Board.

Specialist dental care is provided by hospital-based NHS consultants and specialists working in high street dental practices, in fields like restorative dentistry, oral surgery and orthodontics. The Board is a new strategic body set up by the General Dental Council to advise on their education and training and develop and approve curricula.

The Board will also establish guidelines to make access to specialist training more flexible, and work towards greater transparency so that members of the public can be confident of seeing an appropriately qualified person.

"I am delighted to be taking up the role of Chair in such an important new organisation for dental education," Kevin said. "Specialisation is a significant and growing feature of modern dentistry, and it is crucial that appropriate education and training structures are available."

## Vice-President's View

**It cannot have escaped the attention of many staff that the deadline for the University's submission to the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is closing upon us very fast.**

By 30 November 2007 countless hours of preparatory activity will have resulted in the transfer of a vast range of information to the UK funding councils detailing the University's research activity since 2001 and its plans for the future across at least 54 Units of Assessment (likely to represent the broadest range of coverage in the UK).

This information will be reviewed in depth by RAE panellists (of whom 35 derive from this University) throughout 2008 before the results are finally announced in December of that year.

Given the huge importance of the exercise, not only as a basis upon which HEFCE funding is allocated but also as a benchmark of the quality of the University's research in pursuit of the 2015 agenda, preparation for the RAE has been given very close attention at all levels and has been overseen by a Steering Group comprising the Vice-Presidents for Research and the Associate Dean for Research from each faculty.

Activity over the last year has included the agreement of a

Code of Practice governing the selection of staff for inclusion in the submission, the preparation of full draft submissions and the review of data on research income and research students from 2001 to date.

Over the coming months the Steering Group will receive final draft submissions from all Units of Assessment, including full details of the selected publications from each member of staff, and oversee the completion of the data review exercises. The Library will also be engaged in the unenviable task of collecting and storing copies of all of these publications (in excess of 7000) ready for transfer to the RAE panels at the end of 2007.

In the light of all information received and a thorough review of institutional strategy, the Steering Group will be responsible for the making the

final decisions about the composition of the University's submission.

We should also note, of course, that the Government has declared that the 2008 RAE will be the last such exercise and that assessment of research will proceed in future largely on the basis of quantitative or 'metric' measures of institutional performance. Mindful of this, the University's Research Group is giving substantial thought to the consequences of these changes, not least in terms of the incorporation of 'bibliometric' indicators into the new assessment and funding methodology. The first assessment exercise under this new regime will commence in 2009 for subjects in science, engineering and technology.

Professors Nancy Rothwell and Simon Gaskell, Vice-Presidents (Research).



Professor Nancy Rothwell



Professor Simon Gaskell

## New insights into the genetics behind autism

**Researchers from the School of Medicine have played key roles in the international Autism Genome Project, which has scanned the genomes of the largest collection of families with multiple cases of autism ever assembled.**

The mammoth project was carried out by more than 120 scientists across 19 countries, including molecular geneticist Dr Janine Lamb, statistician Professor Andrew Pickles and child psychiatrist Professor Jonathan Green who led the fieldwork in Manchester. Preliminary results were published in the March issue of *Nature Genetics*, and provide new insights into the genetic basis of autism.

In 2002 researchers from around the world decided to come together and share their samples, data and expertise to facilitate the identification of autism susceptibility genes. Working with an unprecedented sample of 1,200 families, they used 'gene chip' technology to look for genetic similarities in autistic people.

The project also scanned the families' DNA for 'copy number variations' (CNVs) or sub-microscopic genomic insertions and deletions, which scientists believe might play a part in this and other common diseases.

Combining these two approaches has implicated both a previously unidentified region of chromosome 11 and neurexin 1, a member of a gene family believed to be important in the communication of neurons. The neurexin finding pinpoints a group of neurons called glutamates and the genes affecting their development and function, and suggests they may play a critical role in autism spectrum disorders.

"Autism is a very difficult condition for families," Professor Green said. "Communication is taken for granted by parents of healthy children, but is greatly missed by those with autistic children."

"We are working to investigate the basic science and develop and test new treatments, and hope that these exciting results may represent a step on the way to further treatment approaches in the future."



# Research Spotlight

The new NIHR (National Institute for Health Research) School for Primary Care Research, was launched last October as a national initiative under the direction of Professor Martin Roland with NHS funding of £3 million a year for five years. It brings together the five top-rated centres of primary care research in the country - Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge and Oxford.

Over the past 12 years, since this University was selected as the site for the National Primary Health Care Research and Development Centre (NPCRDC), Professor Roland and his team have established and maintained a high reputation for their research. Funding of £2 million a year supports their work in evaluating NHS policy.

"Whereas our research work at NPCRDC is policy-related, the new School will focus more on clinical research designed to increase the evidence base for primary care practice," says Professor Roland. "It gives us the opportunity to develop the work between the five leading centres, enabling us to be more ambitious in scope than we could have been on our own. I am, naturally, delighted to have been given the task of directing the new School."

The two aims of the School are to produce new knowledge to underpin clinical practice and to provide leadership for the development of primary care research. The School has five major programmes: prevention and early diagnosis of serious disease; monitoring and managing patients with long-term conditions, particularly cardiovascular disease, metabolic disease and mental health; co-morbidity (where a patient has



Professor Martin Roland

more than one problem); new approaches to patient-practitioner interaction; and the development of new research methods.

The co-morbidity and mental health projects are being run under the leadership of two of Manchester's professors, Bonnie Sibbald and Helen Lester respectively.

Co-morbidity is becoming the norm rather than the exception as the population ages, and more and more people have more than one thing wrong with them. Different conditions may interact in ways which cannot be understood within a "single disease" approach. The co-morbidity programme,



Professor Helen Lester

which involves Manchester, Bristol and Cambridge researchers, will focus on how the delivery of health care and the assessment of patient outcomes need to adapt to this changing environment.

Mental health problems have a major influence on morbidity in primary care. Primary care management of patients with mental health problems is increasingly important, particularly as the NHS shifts care away from hospitals. The School's initial work will be to investigate how formal befriending schemes may be a cost effective approach to the management of mental health problems in primary care.

## UK Biobank starts recruitment drive

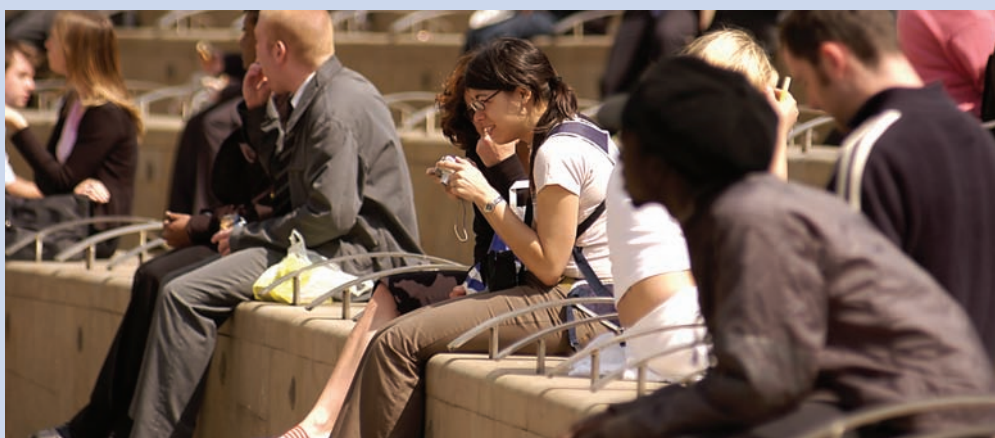
UK Biobank, the multi-million pound project that will help improve knowledge of life threatening and debilitating diseases, is now underway in Manchester. Hosted by the University, the nationwide project will recruit 500,000 people aged 40-69 and track their health over at least the next 30 years.

UK Biobank is one of the biggest and most detailed public health research initiatives ever undertaken. It will provide a valuable resource for research into a wide range of diseases, including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental illness and dental diseases.

A successful pilot study to check the feasibility of the project took place last year, and around 35,000 letters have now been sent to Greater Manchester residents asking them to take part in the real thing.

Although the project may not directly benefit those who take part, it should help future generations to live longer, healthier lives, by helping untangle the complex interplay of nature and nurture (non-genetic factors such as lifestyle) in the development of diseases.

People who agree to take part will attend a 90-minute assessment, where they will be asked about their current health and lifestyle. They will



also have measurements such as blood pressure, weight, lung function and bone density taken, and be asked to give small samples of blood and urine.

Around 15 million samples will eventually be stored in specially designed laboratories. Participants will be asked to allow UK Biobank to follow their health records over the coming decades, and will leave with a list of personal measurements and an indication of how they compare to standard values.

The University's Professor Alan Silman, a leading scientist in the project, said: "We are asking people to help us build a fantastic resource for future research, that will help scientists understand what causes some people and not others to develop a particular disease. This is a great opportunity to do something that will have a positive effect on our children and our children's children."

## In brief

### Symposium

An "International Symposium on Calcium Channels and Transporters" and will take place 7-9 June 2007 at Chancellors. The programme includes invited speakers from the United States and across Europe. The conference is being organised by researchers from the Faculties of Life Sciences and Medical and Human Sciences.

Further details can be found at:



[www.calcium2007.manchester.ac.uk/default.htm](http://www.calcium2007.manchester.ac.uk/default.htm)

### Volunteers sought for research on hearing voices

Psychologists are seeking more volunteers for their research into hearing voices, and why some people consider it a positive experience while others find it distressing.

The team would like to hear from people aged 16 and over who have heard a voice in the last two weeks and have been hearing voices for at least six months, particularly those who have never accessed mental health services.

A one-off meeting of an hour and a half will be carried out at a location to suit the volunteer in complete privacy. Participants will also be asked to complete questionnaires about their experiences, travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Those interested should call 0161 306 0405 or 07708 755 634, or e-mail [voicesresearch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:voicesresearch@hotmail.co.uk)

### Sum success

Two MSc Mathematics students have scooped prizes in new student awards sponsored by the Numerical Algorithms Group (NAG).

Rudiger Borsdorf won the NAG Prize in Applied Numerical Computing, while Kevin Chisholm took the NAG Prize in Mathematical Finance in recognition of their excellent performance in the January exams.

Each winning student received a cheque for £750.

The University of Manchester is one of the founder institutions of the NAG project and there has been a longstanding relationship between NAG and The School of Mathematics.

## Revealed: the real Dad's Army

**Home Guard volunteers were a bizarre mix of left wing anti-fascists, unauthorised armed women, badly trained amateurs and genuinely competent soldiers, according to a new investigation.**

Professor of Modern History at The University of Manchester Penny Summerfield said the lovable but useless group of part-time combatants portrayed in TV's Dad's Army is only a fraction of the truth.

The academic examined oral histories of men and women who served in the force for a book she co-researched with Lecturer in Cultural History at Lancaster University, Corinna Peniston-Bird.

Professor Summerfield said: "The official establishment line portrayed the Home Guard as an all inclusive body in which anyone could volunteer their services just as the Dad's Army characters did.

"Corporal Jones the Butcher, Captain Mainwaring the Bank



Manager, undertaker Private Frazer and even the Cockney Spiv Private Joe Frazer all joined the Walmington-on-Sea Home Guard as part-time soldiers. But in reality, recruitment practices were much more selective and were heavily criticised by some of those who weren't allowed to join.

"Left-wingers inspired by international anti-fascist movements trained Home Guards in unauthorised guerrilla techniques. And as women were officially excluded, they formed their own armed organisation, sometimes helped by defiant Home Guard commanders.

"Many saw the Home Guard as a questionable military organisation which failed to turn civilian men into effective soldiers. Others - including Winston Churchill - saw it as a pillar of the British war effort. "Others still, like George Orwell, thought it was a 'People's Army' and a harbinger of future radical change.

"Our research shows why it was understood to be all these different things. The Home Guard was a novel creation in wartime which attracted enormous interest."

## Love not in the stars

**Lonely hearts who turn to horoscopes to find their perfect partner are wasting their time, according to the largest test of astrology ever carried out.**

Dr David Voas from The University of Manchester said that zodiac 'love signs' have no impact on our chances of marrying – and staying married.

The Senior Research Fellow at the University's Centre for Census and Survey Research analysed the birthdays of all 20 million husbands and wives in England and Wales. The investigation – using 2001 census data – failed to reveal any evidence of attraction between star signs.

David said: "If the more than 20 million married people in England and Wales are any guide, there's no special compatibility between people of particular signs.

"If there is even the smallest tendency for Virgos to fancy Capricorns, or for Libras to like Leos, then we should see it in the marriage statistics.

"When you have a population of 10 million couples, then even if only one pair in a thousand is influenced by the stars, you'd have ten thousand more couples than expected with certain combinations of signs.

"There's no such evidence, though: the numbers are just what we'd predict on the basis of chance."

He added. "Astrologers are likely to argue that full birth charts are needed to predict personality accurately. But what ordinary people talk about is sun



signs; if those are useless when it comes to sizing up a mate, then that knocks a big hole in everyday belief.

"In any case, the basic sun signs are important even in professional charts. If they had any influence at all, however small, the giant magnifying glass of this huge sample would detect it. There's nothing there."

But Dr Voas, from Manchester's School of Social Sciences, believes the popularity of astrologers such as Mystic Meg, Russell Grant and Jonathan Cainer will continue – whatever the evidence.

He said: "I'm under no illusion that these findings will undermine astrology's popularity. The public appetite for horoscopes makes media astrologers wealthy.

"These results won't put them out of business. When it comes to love, people will try anything."



# Arthritis pain processed in the brain's 'fear zone'

**Researchers in the School of Medicine's Division of Medicine and Neurosciences have discovered that arthritis pain is processed in the parts of the brain concerned with emotions and fear.**

A team led by Dr Bhavna Kulkarni of the Human Pain Research Group has captured the first images of how the brain processes arthritis pain, using positron emission tomography (PET) scanning.

In a study published in *'Arthritis and Rheumatism'*, they compare the brain areas involved in processing arthritic and experimental pain in patients with osteoarthritis of the knee. Twelve patients underwent PET brain-scanning during three different pain states: arthritic knee pain, experimental knee pain and a pain-free state.

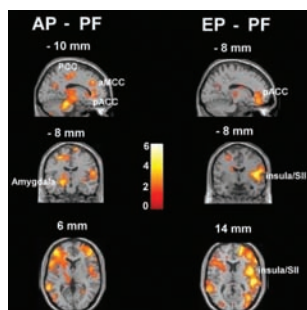
Bhavna said: "We knew that experimentally-induced pain is processed in at least two brain

networks; the 'medial pain system' processing the emotional aspects such as unpleasantness while the 'lateral pain system' processes intensity, location and duration. We wanted to see whether the same applied to the clinical pain suffered by people with conditions like arthritis.

"Although arthritic and experimental pain each activated both the medial and lateral pain systems, arthritic pain prompted increased activity in the parts of the medial system concerned with processing fear, emotions and aversive conditioning.

"This suggests that arthritic pain has more emotional salience than experimental pain for these patients. The increased activity in the areas associated with aversive conditioning, reward and fear, which are less commonly activated during experimental pain, suggests they might be processing fear of further injury and disability associated with the arthritic pain."

Supervisor Professor Anthony Jones said: "It seems that



studying experimental pain alone doesn't provide a complete picture, and that PET scanning patients experiencing different types of clinical pain can reveal subtle changes in brain activity.

"Importantly, this study has also demonstrated the importance of the medial pain system during arthritic pain, suggesting it would be a good target for both new analgesics and non-pharmacological interventions. The body's own pain-killing chemicals could even be modulated, to target pain in the areas we have identified."

## Nuclear agreement

**The Dalton Nuclear Institute has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a leading Chinese nuclear research centre.**

A senior delegation from the Institute of Nuclear and New Energy Technology (INET) at Tsinghua University visited the University in March. During the visit, the institute's Director, Professor Zhang Zuoyi, signed the Memorandum of Understanding to create a more strategic environment for the two parties to work together.

Technical discussions also took place on the challenges the Chinese delegation face and areas where the University can support INET in their nuclear research and development programmes

INET is China's leading base for nuclear research and experimentation, and the country has ambitious plans to significantly expand its use of nuclear power. To this end, it is looking for key technical collaborations to support its ambitions.



The University has existing links with INET, and the Dalton Nuclear Institute is building on these links to establish a wider collaborative framework within which to undertake research and education activities.

Following the signing of the MoU, work will now commence on the preparation of a joint research proposal in the field of nuclear graphite.

Professor Richard Clegg, Director of the Dalton Nuclear Institute, said: "This MoU is another

example of the Dalton Institute's commitment to developing close relationships with the world's premier nuclear science and technology research centres.

"We look forward to developing the MoU into joint research proposals and working closely with our colleagues in China - particularly supporting China's civil nuclear power programme expansion and development of high temperature reactor technology."

## In brief

### Peace Lecture 'Thresholds Of Humanity'

**Norman Geras  
Wednesday 23rd  
May at 4.00 pm  
Basement Lecture  
Theatre  
Dover Street**

**Free admission -  
everyone  
welcome**

Norman Geras is  
Professor Emeritus  
in Politics at The  
University of



Manchester. He has been on the editorial boards of *New Left Review* and the *Socialist Register*. His books include *Marx and Human Nature* (1983), *Solidarity in the Conversation of Humankind* (1995), *The Contract of Mutual Indifference: Political Philosophy after the Holocaust* (1998), and *Men of Waugh: Ashes* 2001 (2002).

The Peace Lecture was inaugurated in 1984 with the aim of providing informed scholarly analysis of issues relating to war and peace, as an educational contribution to world peace. Previous lecturers have included Sir Edward Heath, Zygmunt Bauman, Paul Rogers and Noam Chomsky.

### 10th RAI International Festival of Ethnographic Film

The 10th RAI International Festival of Ethnographic Film will be jointly hosted by the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology (School of Social Sciences) and the Centre for Screen Studies (School of Arts, Histories and Cultures) at The University of Manchester, 27 June - 2 July 2007.

It will aim to bring together not only academic anthropologists and professional film-makers but also members of the public, particularly from Manchester and the North West.

The festival will include more than 70 new films shortlisted for various prizes and special screenings; a special programme of Chinese films; the 2007 Forman Lecture sponsored by ITV Granada; panels and workshops.

Registration fees will be from £49 for the screening days of the Festival and from £79 for the conference days, with the lowest rates being offered for early registration. Concessionary rates are available.



[www.raifilmfest.org.uk](http://www.raifilmfest.org.uk)

## In brief



### Student Team Working Awards - national success!

**Once again, the Annual Student Team Working Awards (STWA) has highlighted the impressive standard of projects in which students are engaged. Many outstanding applications were received this year with a number having received national and international recognition.**

Now in its ninth year, the STWA continues to recognise the significant, often unrecognised, impact that students have on the external image of the University. The selection panel were once again impressed by the standard of entries submitted commenting that 'this is the highest quality of entries the awards have ever received'.

A significant number of entries have already received national and international recognition including: Kaizen, a team of Accounting and Finance students who came 2nd in the UK final of 'Hobson's Global Management Challenge'; a team of undergraduates from Manchester Business School (MBS) who were invited to the UK finals of 'University Business Challenge'; a team of six students, three from MBS and three from UCL came second in the Defi Bouygues in France and; a group of students were invited to participate in the Marshall International Case Competition at USC in Los Angeles.

The culmination for all teams who entered the STWA will be the prestigious 'Annual Students as Partners Presentation Evening' held on 3 May where the short-listed teams will find out who has won. At this event, students will be recognised for the valuable, voluntary contributions made to 'Students as Partners' and related activities including Manchester's internationally recognised 'Peer Assisted Study Scheme' (PASS), Peer Mentoring and the University's flagship Manchester Access Programme.

The awards are coordinated by 'Students as Partners', Teaching, Learning and Assessment Office, sponsored by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

## Online PhD

### The School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work has developed the University's first fully online PhD.

Also known as a Distributed Learning (DL) PhD, all components of the PhD programme, including supervision, can be conducted online using WebCT and other Web 2 technologies. Four PhD students are doing their PhD fully online this academic year.

A core component of the DL PhD is online supervision using webcams, enabling videoconferencing to be combined with document sharing and text chat. Macromedia Breeze, Skype, as well as a videoconferencing tool developed in-house are all available for this purpose. Web logs (blogs) are used to keep an online record of supervisions and have to date proved very popular with students and supervisors.

Dr Gunn Grande, Programme Manager, says: "The development of the programme was driven by the profile of our students who often have family or clinical commitments and so therefore cannot spend time on campus, as well making it more accessible to international students. Students are required to take part in an intensive on-campus Induction Week, everything else can be done online"

However, as all components of the PhD programme have had to be translated into online format for DL PhD students, other postgraduate students have also been able to benefit from the greater flexibility



afforded by increased online provision.

Research Methods Modules, student presentations, Transferable Skills Training and Research Support Seminars are all available online, utilising a range of interactive tools. The School's Research Forum seminars for staff and students go online on the day of the seminar, enabling online participation through Discussion Boards.

Dr Grande added: "Current development efforts are focused on making the online student social area better adapted to students' needs and wishes as well as streaming live seminars."

Dr Grande, explains: "We have taken enormous strides in the last year. We worked hard to get the

## Change for the better



### The Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) is pioneering a unique sustainable development unit with third year students to encourage them to be agents for positive change.

The initiative aims to equip graduates to tackle problems of sustainability and make them responsible members of today's global society while enjoying successful careers.

The 'Sustainable Development for Engineers and Scientists' unit is elective and interdisciplinary - and the University believes it's the only academic institution in the world offering this type of option.

Forty eight undergraduates drawn from four EPS disciplines have been working in small interdisciplinary groups, tackling complex problems and taking on the role of teams of professionals working for real organisations.





technology and online materials right before the start of the academic year, but are also learning how much time we need to invest into making students and not least, supervisors, proficient in interacting with the technology, to ensure we can accommodate the different levels of IT literacy that participants bring to the task. Starting off with a small number of students has made this relatively easy, and we are learning valuable lessons for improving the PhD programme to run with an increased number of DL PhD students next year”.

The DL PhD management team consists of Gunn Grande, Andy Hall, Laura Shaw, Peter Callery, Christi Deaton and Kinta Beaver.

Challenges the students have addressed so far range from improving the sustainability of a tyre manufacturing company, to devising a strategy to provide medium-term shelter post-earthquake in Kashmir, to analysing the impact of new European directives facing the electronics industry.

Academics and other specialists from a wide variety of backgrounds have contributed to developing the course material and have been impressed by the quality of the reports the students have produced.

The course unit is developed in Teaching Support and Development (TSD), hosted by the Manchester Science Enterprise Centre (MSEC) and the sessions take place in the Centre for Excellence for Enquiry-Based Learning (CEEEL).

Eight Post Doctoral Research Associates have taken on the role of facilitators for the groups of students, and this provides them with valuable training and experience in teaching and learning.

The Royal Academy of Engineering is funding the development of the course through their employing Professor Charles Engel and Project Officer Helen Dobson to work with the EPS team.

The aim is to continue offering the course unit to more students in EPS, and ideally, eventually, to include students from across the University to provide them with a broader experience of interdisciplinary and sustainability literacy.

For further information please contact Rosemary Tomkinson (Project Leader) on [rosemary.tomkinson@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:rosemary.tomkinson@manchester.ac.uk) or [helen.dobson@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:helen.dobson@manchester.ac.uk) (Project Officer)

## Myconostica labs launched



**Spin out biotechnology company Myconostica has launched its new laboratory complex. President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Gilbert officially opened the complex in Sharston, which allows the company to house its development and production in one location.**

Myconostica specialises in molecular diagnostic tests for life-threatening respiratory fungal infection, and having secured venture capital funding from Amphion PLC is set to launch its first product this year. The company was founded by Professor of Medicine and Medical Mycology, David Denning (pictured left), with assistance from The University of Manchester Intellectual Property Limited (UMIP).

Professor Gilbert praised the remarkable teamwork between Professor Denning, UMIP and the local business community in attracting venture capital, and related it to the University's 2015 agenda.

“Myconostica perfectly illustrates how the University can contribute to the local and national economy, in this case providing new diagnostic products to improve health worldwide,” he said.

UMIP CEO Clive Rowland, added: “The growth of Myconostica as a business in such a short space of time, coupled with its success in attracting venture capital funds, shows how successful the University model for IP commercialisation can be. It is crucial that we continue to work positively with academics and entrepreneurs to help commercialise research; the contribution these ventures make will have a lasting, beneficial effect on the North West and international economies.”



[www.myconostica.co.uk](http://www.myconostica.co.uk)

## Stocking success

**A new medical system that knits made-to-measure compression stockings has been named as one of the top 100 innovations of the last year.**

Future Materials magazine declared The University's Williamson Lee Innovation Centre's Scan2Knit system as one of the leading textile-related innovations for 2007.

The system uses a 3D limb scanner and produces stockings for the treatment of leg ulcers. The stockings are made from a combination of fibres, which can be slipped on and off.

At present, the only treatment for venous leg ulcers is to apply constant pressure by tightly

wrapping elastic bandages around the affected area of the leg. These are often uncomfortable and have to be applied by trained staff.

The Scan2Knit system has been developed in partnership with the Vascular Studies Unit at South Manchester University Hospital which is directed by Professor Charles McCollum and with major funding from the Wellcome Trust.

The William Lee Innovation Centre is one of the UK's leading centres for technical textiles teaching and research. It is part of The University of Manchester's School of Materials.



# Pimblott's Progress

Had he not become a leading radiation chemist, recognised by the Radiation Research Society as the top radiation research scientist under 40 in the world, Professor Simon Pimblott might well have been happily running a B&B in Bowness-in-Windermere.

As it is, having been persuaded to return to the UK from the US after 20 years to help to establish the Dalton Nuclear Institute here, he and his wife now live not far from Bowness, in Carnforth. Happily for them, the Institute centres on a new £20 million research facility being built near Sellafield in West Cumbria, a joint project between the University and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) set up by the government in 2005.

Simon and his American wife, Nancy, spent their honeymoon in the Lake District. "We were drawn to this B&B in Bowness," he says. "It even had daffodils around it. I was almost persuaded to buy it and settle down there."

But it wasn't to be. "Everything in my life has been a matter of chance," he says. He was destined to spend 20 years or so very successfully – and very happily – at the University of Notre Dame, one of the leading centres of radiation sciences.

So, it had to be something special to bring him back. "It was a big deal for me to be invited to come to this University, which was a founding centre for radiation chemistry under Professor John Baxendale," he says. "Now, the setting up of the Institute and building the new research facility is an exciting prospect. It will enable us to look at the effects of radiation and to be the source of fundamental information to support or to disprove the damage it causes."

The central thrust is the decommissioning of Sellafield and the process of decontamination. Cleaning up after nuclear power is a costly business, calling for careful management. "It is all about good stewardship," says Simon. "There is always a price to pay for any fuel we use – you never get something for nothing. I am a strong believer in the continued use of nuclear power, but we need to develop the science for the good stewardship of nuclear waste as we do for all sorts of waste. After all, we don't want to create or leave behind areas of

Cumbria or anywhere else that people can't live in and enjoy. We want to have our own expertise in the UK and we want to educate young people in radiation science."

It is significant that we had to turn to the US, albeit to one of our own, to find the expertise to take on this task. The fact that Simon has come from one of the best places for radiation science in the States gives the new Institute a real advantage. "We are building from scratch," he says. "So, we will have modern equipment and avoid any mistakes that have been made."

He believes in an information-based approach. "We want a mechanistic understanding rather than an empirical one," he says. "That is more difficult, but the results are much easier to deal with."

His overall view of fuel supply is typically level-headed – "we need to take a balanced approach with a mixed economy."



His own interest in radiation started, by chance, at Oxford. Born in Derby in 1962, he came from a working class family – his dad was a railwayman – he won a scholarship which took him from the local comprehensive, Lees Brook, to public school at Uppingham. From there, he won another scholarship, this time to St Peter's, Oxford. Between school and university, he had nine months' work experience with the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB), sparking his interest in energy. Ironically, he worked on acid rain, the fallout from coal power. That gained him a CEGB scholarship.

He read Chemistry and, unusually, it was a four-year degree course, with the fourth year being designated for research. "After my third year, I decided that I wanted to be an accountant," he says. But chance changed all that. He came under the tutelage of Professor Mike Pilling, now Chair of Physical Chemistry at Leeds. "I was lucky - he turned my life around."

Pilling had worked with Professor Fred (later Lord) Dainton's research group and now had his own. Simon was one of his 20 research students, but one of only a pair being put to work on radiation. That was in the mid-1980s – "radiation science was beginning to die off in the UK, since nuclear power was not high profile."

So, Simon jumped at the chance to go to Notre Dame "for a year" when he got his PhD in 1988.

Not only did he enjoy it there, but he met his wife – Nancy "Hedge" Harridge - at a conference in Tennessee. The year stretched into two decades, give or take. He settled in South Bend, Indiana, he and Hedge, as she is known, had two girls, Robyn and Erin, and he enjoyed life. Having inherited an enthusiasm for cowboys from his dad, he got a real kick out of visiting John Wayne's birthplace and Apache Junction and the like.

Academically, he established his international reputation for developing models of radiation effects.

In 1999, when he was 38, he won the prestigious Michael Fry award as best young radiation scientist, presented at the international conference in Dublin. He also became a Counsellor for the Radiation Research Society. And the US government, in the form of their Department of Energy, turned to him for position papers, recognising his ability – and his ability to deliver.

Now, he takes on the new challenge. But he wears his responsibilities easily. "It's all fun," he says. And he is a fun-loving man. He and his wife love living adjacent to the Lakes, enjoying country life, gardening, dog-walking. And he is also quite an expert on wine. His significant collection of about 1,500 bottles, mainly French and American, is still in the cellar he built in the States. So, that's another challenge – getting them over here. When he gets them here, he might just open what could be the best B&B ever.



## Name

Simon Pimblott

## Current Post

Chair of Radiation Chemistry  
The University of Manchester

## Education

BA, St Peter's College,  
University of Oxford 1981-85

MA, St Peter's College,  
University of Oxford 1985

D.Phil Physical Chemistry Laboratory,  
University of Oxford 1988

## Career History

### Academic Employment History:

- 2004-2006: Concurrent Research Professor,  
Department of Physics,  
University of Notre Dame
- 2002- 2006: Prof. Specialist,  
Radiation Laboratory,  
University of Notre Dame
- 1992- 2006: Member, Center for Applied Mathematics, University of Notre Dame
- 1998 & 1999: Visiting Scientist, Interfacultair Reactor Instituut,  
Technical University, Delft
- 1996-1998: Visiting Scientist,  
Department of Chemistry,  
King's College London  
(NATO Collaborative Research Grant with Prof. N.J.B. Green)
- 1992-2002: Assoc. Prof. Specialist,  
Radiation Laboratory,  
University of Notre Dame
- 1990-1992: Assist. Prof. Specialist,  
Radiation Laboratory,  
University of Notre Dame
- 1988-1990: Research Associate,  
Radiation Laboratory,  
University of Notre Dame
- 1981: Research Technician,  
Central Electricity Generating Board, Leatherhead, U.K.

### Teaching:

- 2003: Lecturer, Advanced Physical Chemistry,  
University of Notre Dame
- 1986-1988: Junior Demonstrator,  
Physical Chemistry Laboratory,  
University of Oxford
- 1987-1988: Teaching Assistant,  
Junior-level Physical Chemistry, Jesus College,  
University of Oxford
- 1986-1987: Instructor, Quantum Chemistry,  
Theoretical Chemistry Department,  
University of Oxford

# Schools open up MLP to more students



Biology and MLP graduate Anna Bryant with children in Tanzania

### Schools across the University are providing greater access to the Manchester Leadership Programme (MLP) for their students in 2007/08.

The MLP is an initiative which helps students understand the importance of leadership that promotes social, economic and environmental

sustainability through volunteering and an accredited degree course unit Leadership in Action.

The Division of Psychology is now allowing their students the opportunity to take the MLP as part of their formal studies and have successfully reaccredited their degree programme incorporating the MLP as an option. Previously students had to

take the MLP's Leadership in Action unit for additional credits.

Professor Geoff Beattie, Head of the School of Psychological Sciences said: "Staff and students from the school have been impressed with the breadth and depth of the MLP and by the transferable skills and knowledge that students developed as a result.

"Many of our students go on to careers in various kinds of management, and the skills and knowledge they develop on the MLP will be of immense benefit to them in these careers."

Jane Ratchford, Director of the MLP who said: "This is great news for the MLP and for psychology students. We know from experience with other schools such as Manchester Business School and the School of Law, that uptake of the MLP is greatly increased when students are able to take the unit for credits."

Other schools and faculties are also enhancing access to the MLP and are seeing their students reap career benefits from taking the programme. Dr Peter Eccles, Director of

Undergraduate Studies in the School of Mathematics said: "Next academic year students taking single honours Mathematics programmes and students on several of our joint programmes will be able to include the MLP in the second or third year. Participation in MLP will enhance the value of their degree programme for many of them. We are particularly keen to increase our links with local schools and students on MLP can help with this."

Dr Liz Sheffield, Senior Tutor in the Faculty of Life Sciences spoke about Anna Bryant (pictured) a Biology and MLP graduate who has recently set up her own ethical travel company, [www.theethicalprojectcompany.com](http://www.theethicalprojectcompany.com) "This beautifully combines Anna's love of the natural environment with altruism and sustainable practice. The MLP was influential in giving Anna the confidence and inspiration to set up her new enterprise."

Registration for the MLP in 2007/08 opens 14 May 2007.

For further information visit the web address below.

[www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/mlp](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/mlp)

## University tests teenage talkers

### Fifteen secondary schools from across Greater Manchester took part in the annual Schools Debating Tournament on 9 March which was held in the Whitworth Hall.

Now in its third year, the Tournament aims to encourage more young people develop their confidence and skill in oral communication and logical argument whilst also experiencing the fun, extra-curricular side to University firsthand.

The Tournament is organised by the University's Widening Participation Office and the Manchester Debating Union (MDU) and preparations began in December when the pupils came into the University to learn the ins and outs of formal debating structures used in University competitions. Thereafter, Ben Moore, the Schools Liaison Officer at MDU,

organised his fellow debaters from the University to spend time in schools running workshops in preparation for the grand final.

Widening Participation Officer Stephanie Lee, said: "The quality of debate gets better each year and you can see the pupils' confidence increasing throughout the Tournament. Through these fun activities, pupils get a chance to hone their skills in presenting logical arguments, which will help in all aspects of their academic work. Importantly, they also get a chance to come onto our campus and mix with positive student role-models."

Parrs Wood High School emerged the winners and Trinity High School won the prize for best individual speaker.

The Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP who was on the judging panel said: "I know that many of the pupils involved in the Tournament have never debated before and I was very



Julian Skyrme, Head of Widening Participation and the Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP

impressed by the high standard of the debating. Debating is an invaluable skill as not only does it boost the pupils' confidence in terms of expressing themselves more effectively, but it will also be of huge benefit in later life."

Further information: Stephanie Lee, Widening Participation Officer, Student Recruitment, Admissions and International Development Division [stephanie.lee@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:stephanie.lee@manchester.ac.uk) 0161 275 7544





## Dig this!

**The Manchester has launched a new branch of the Young Archaeologists' Club (YAC).**

Young people who join will have the opportunity to take part in the latest Dig Manchester excavation and to see and handle the latest finds. Staff from The Manchester Museum, Dig Manchester and the National Trust will be running the branch, so there will be no shortage of interesting things to see, places to visit and fun things to do.

Nick Merriman, Director of The Manchester Museum said "I am delighted that The Manchester Museum will be hosting a new branch of the Young Archaeologists' Club. There

is a huge interest in the past out there amongst young people and we are very happy to be able to offer something to inspire them to get more involved."

Any young people interested in joining The Manchester Museum branch of the YAC should come with a parent or guardian. The club is aimed at young people aged 8-16. There is a small charge for each meeting to cover expenses. Meetings will be held on the third Saturday of every month between 1pm and 3pm. Anyone who is interested in joining should contact Bryan Sitch, Head of Humanities on 0161 275 2648 in advance because numbers at each meeting are limited to 20.

## Medical students spread the word

**The Medical Students in Primary Schools scheme, which takes trainee medics into local primary schools to deliver health science sessions, has completed its second successful year.**

Originally set up at Belfast Medical School in 2002, the scheme was introduced here in 2005/06 by a committee of fourth year students. Around 100 students and nine inner city primary schools are now involved, with sessions covering everything from basic life support to healthy lifestyle choices.

The scheme also introduces the idea of university and medical school to pupils who might not have considered it, and, on the students' side, aims to improve communication, team work, time management and creativity. The students also gain first-hand experience of teaching and working with children, and reinforce their own basic knowledge.



"The scheme helped me improve my communication skills so much. Seeing the pupils enjoying learning about the body and teaching them basic lessons like saying 'no' to smoking and drugs was one of my most rewarding feelings of the year," one first year student commented.

All participating students were presented with certificates at a presentation meeting in March,

attended by the Medical School's Curriculum Director Dr Caroline Boggis and the University's Vice President for Teaching and Learning Professor Bob Munn.

Dr Boggis said: "This is a great student initiative, which contributes significantly towards the Faculty and University's widening participation and community responsibility goals."

## Could you be 'Volunteer of the Year'?

**The valuable efforts of students, staff and alumni who contribute to the community are being recognised in a new "University of Manchester Volunteer of the Year Awards" scheme.**

Nominations are currently being taken for Student Volunteer of the Year, open to undergraduates and postgraduates; Alumni Volunteer of the Year, open to graduates, including those of the former UMIST and Victoria University of Manchester, and Staff Volunteer of the Year, open to current employees of the University.

In each category, the first prize is £500, second prize is £300 and third prize is £200. Cheques will be made payable to the organisation where the winners undertake their volunteering, and come courtesy of the Awards official sponsor, BP.

To qualify, the volunteering activity must address the needs of disadvantaged groups or deprived communities. Nominations must be taken by May 11, with winners to be announced at an official Awards Ceremony on June 7.

The scheme is managed by the University's MLP Careers & Employability Division, which also runs the Manchester Leadership Programme, encouraging undergraduates to develop a sense of socially responsible leadership via a taught academic module and community volunteering.

Jane Ratchford, Director of the MLP, Careers & Employability Division, said: "The Volunteer of the Year Awards recognise the efforts of the many members of this University who make a real difference in the community through volunteering, and represent the University's commitment to encouraging social responsibility in all its members.

"We hope that everyone connected to the University will support the Awards and take pride in the valued achievements of our colleagues and community."

For further information, or to nominate a suitable candidate, visit:



[www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/volunteeroftheyear](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/volunteeroftheyear)

# What's On

## The Whitworth Art Gallery

### DISPLAYS/COLLECTIONS

#### **IA Secret Service: Art, Compulsion, Concealment** 5 May – 29 July 2007

The human fascination with secrets is explored in this exhibition featuring the work of 15 international artists whose practice centres on the creation of secret worlds or the exposure of hidden facts.

#### **Walter Crane and the Illustrated Book** 26 May – April 2008

Focusing on the book illustrations of Walter Crane, this exhibition will span Crane's entire career, incorporating a range of illustrations from his early commissions to his world famous Toy Books, Grimm's Fairy Tales and private drawings created for his children.

#### **The Uncertainty of Identity: The Biographies of Things** to March 2008

This exhibition explores the contexts in which the identity of an art or design object is formed and destabilised – creating its 'life history' or 'biography'. Where does the object come from and who made it?

#### **Featuring Walls: celebrating three centuries of wallpaper decoration** to 30 Sept

Featuring Walls shows off some of the Gallery's most visually stunning and inventive decorations to explore wallpaper as a signifier of social status, a source of imaginative inspiration and a reflector of our cultural preoccupations.

#### **The Textile Gallery**

The new displays are arranged thematically around subjects such as Rites of Passage, Inspiration for Design and Recycling, with each highlighting the wide geographical and historical range of the collection.

#### **TOURS AND EVENTS**

Every Saturday at 2pm there is either an Exhibition Tour or an Eye-Opener Tour.

#### **Collection Exhibitions Archive Now Online**

The Whitworth's online 'Collections Catalogue' now allows you to browse and search selected exhibitions held at the Gallery over the past 10 years. Follow the link from homepage at: [www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk)

**Oxford Road,  
0161 275 7450  
email: [whitworth@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:whitworth@manchester.ac.uk)**

## Burlington Society

The Society of Mature Students and Postgraduates in the Universities of Greater Manchester.

**Burlington Rooms, Schunck Building,  
Burlington Street (next to JRUL)  
0161 275 2392  
[www.burlington.man.ac.uk](http://www.burlington.man.ac.uk)**

## Chaplaincies

### **St Peter's House Chaplaincy SUNDAY WORSHIP**

11am Holy Communion  
12.15am Bible Study  
12.45 Lunch (1st Sunday)  
6.30pm Evening Worship (term-time only)

#### **FOYER** 10am - 5pm

An area where students and staff can relax and meet friends. A tea/coffee machine is available.

**Precinct Centre 0161 275 2894  
email: [sph.reception@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:sph.reception@manchester.ac.uk)**

### **RC Chaplaincy, Avila House**

Mass Times (term-time only)  
SUNDAY: 7pm (in the Holy Name Church) next door to Chaplaincy  
Mon, Wed, Fri: 6pm in the Chaplaincy Chapel  
Tues, Thurs: 12.15 pm in the Chaplaincy Chapel

**Oxford Road (opposite the Students' Union)  
0161 273 1456  
email: [info@rc-chaplaincy-um.org.uk](mailto:info@rc-chaplaincy-um.org.uk)  
[www.rc-chaplaincy-um.org.uk](http://www.rc-chaplaincy-um.org.uk)**

**The Jewish Student Centre and Synagogue  
Hillel House, Greenheys Lane.  
0161 226 1139  
email: [rabbiiy@hotmail.com](mailto:rabbiiy@hotmail.com)  
[www.rabbiiy.com](http://www.rabbiiy.com)**

## International Society

Sat 12 May	<b>Lake District visiting Aira Force Waterfall and Ambleside</b>
Sun 13 May	<b>Robin Hood's Bay and Whitby</b>
Sat 19 May	<b>Oxford (with guided tour)</b>
Sun 20 May	<b>Yorkshire Dales visiting Ingleton Waterfalls Walk</b>
Sat 26 May	<b>North Wales visiting Conwy Castle and Llandudno</b>
Sun 27 May	<b>Trentham Monkey Forest and Little Moreton Hall</b>
Sat 2 June	<b>Alton Towers</b>

#### **Opening hours**

Mon-Fri 9.30am – 7.00pm (during term time)  
Mon-Fri 9.30am – 5pm (during vacation)

**327 Oxford Road (next to Krobar)  
0161 275 4959  
email: [int.soc@anchester.ac.uk](mailto:int.soc@anchester.ac.uk)  
[www.internationalsociety.org.uk](http://www.internationalsociety.org.uk)**



## Contact Theatre

**Fri 11 May to Sat 12 May 7pm and 10pm  
Waylaid**

**Sat 19 May to Mon 21 May 7.30pm  
Passion Pit Theatre & Theatre Tours  
International present  
Child of Biafra**

**Tue 22 May to Wed 23 May 8pm  
Frogman**

Written by award winning Mick Martin, and directed by Jude Wright

**Wed 30 May to Sat 2 June 7.30 pm  
Manchester University Drama Society present  
Europe** by David Grieg

**Oxford Road, Manchester  
Tickets/Info: 0161 274 0600  
[www.contact-theatre.org](http://www.contact-theatre.org)**

## Jodrell Bank

The facilities at Jodrell Bank are going through a period of redevelopment. The Visitors Centre currently has a café, an exhibition space and a 3D theatre open, and visitors can still explore the various trails and the natural habitats of the Arboretum's 35 acres with its 2000 species of trees and shrubs and National Collections.

**Jodrell Bank Observatory  
Macclesfield, Cheshire 01477 571339  
[www.jb.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.jb.manchester.ac.uk)**

## John Rylands University Library (Deansgate)

The John Rylands Library, Deansgate is coming to the end of a three year, £16.5 million transformation. The Library re-opens to the public on 14 May 2007. Special Collections reader services will re-open on Tuesday 10 April 2007 in the John Rylands Library, Deansgate. If you have any queries about Special Collections reader services, please telephone 0161 275 3764 or visit our website at [www.manchester.ac.uk/library](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library)





## Music and Drama at Manchester

Wed 9 May 2007, 7pm

### BBC Philharmonic

For the second concert in the series Principal woodwind players will perform Mozart Piano Quintet in E flat K 452.

Fri 11 May 2007, 7:30pm

### Quatuor Danel with David Fanning

Beethoven pushes the envelope, Prokofiev gives a lesson in how to use folk-idioms, and the season ends with a chamber work so sensual that even the composer's wife was embarrassed.

Fri 25 May 2007, 7:30pm

### Mike Solomon-Williams

Mike Solomon-Williams premieres works by six very different composers showing the sheer richness and diversity of the song in the twenty-first century.

For further information contact:

### The Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama

Bridgeford Street  
Manchester M13 9PL  
0161-275 8951/8950

email: [boxoffice@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:boxoffice@manchester.ac.uk)

[www.manchester.ac.uk/martinharriscentre](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/martinharriscentre)

## Tabley House

Small conference and meeting rooms available year-round. Licensed for weddings and baby-naming ceremonies.

### Tabley House

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## The Manchester Museum

### SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

#### Wild Britain extended until 27 August

Ben Hall is rapidly developing a reputation as one of the UK's best young wildlife photographers. In this, his first major exhibition, you will see the outstanding quality of his pictures of Britain's wildlife and also learn something of the craft of nature photography.

#### After Life

Contemporary products and artworks in amongst the Ancient Egyptian displays show some personal reflections, and potential options, for funerals and remembrance today. Includes artworks by Christie Brown, Nadine Jarvis and Julian Stair. Supported by AHRC.

#### A Place for Everything – Making order out of chaos 5 May-31 Oct

How do people classify the world? Who names the animals and plants we see around us? Western Museums developed from private 'cabinets of curiosities' during the 18th Century.

### FAMILY EVENTS

Sat 19 May

Screenings at 3.30pm, 6pm

#### Museums at Night

Ever wondered what it would be like if Stan, our T.rex came to life? Watch a dinosaur rampage through a museum by joining us in a special screening of the movie blockbuster, Night at the Museum. You can wander around the Museum and look at the real thing until 8pm and take part in Night at the Museum-themes art activities in the Discovery Centre. Come in fancy dress for the chance to win a prize.

Book £1.50 (5+)

#### Half Term

Mon 28 May – Fri 1 June 11am-4pm

#### Festival of Nature

Celebrate nature near and far, in our week long Festival of Nature. Explore our Wild Britain exhibition, get close to insects and make an insect hotel, learn about wildflowers and make a bird feeder to take home.

All ages

#### Opening hours

Open: Tues-Sat 10 - 5pm

Sun-Mon (and Bank Holidays) 11- 4 pm

FREE Admission

Oxford Road, Manchester

0161 275 2634

[www.manchester.ac.uk/museum](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/museum)



## Gig Guide Manchester Academy

MANCHESTER ACADEMY 1, 2 & 3

Thu 10 May

### Rise Against 65DaysofStatic

Sat 12 May

### Nick Harper

Fri 18 May

### The Jeff Healey Blues Band

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### Magnum

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# Giant spider crab

Look out for the special appearance of the Giant Spider Crab from 5 May.

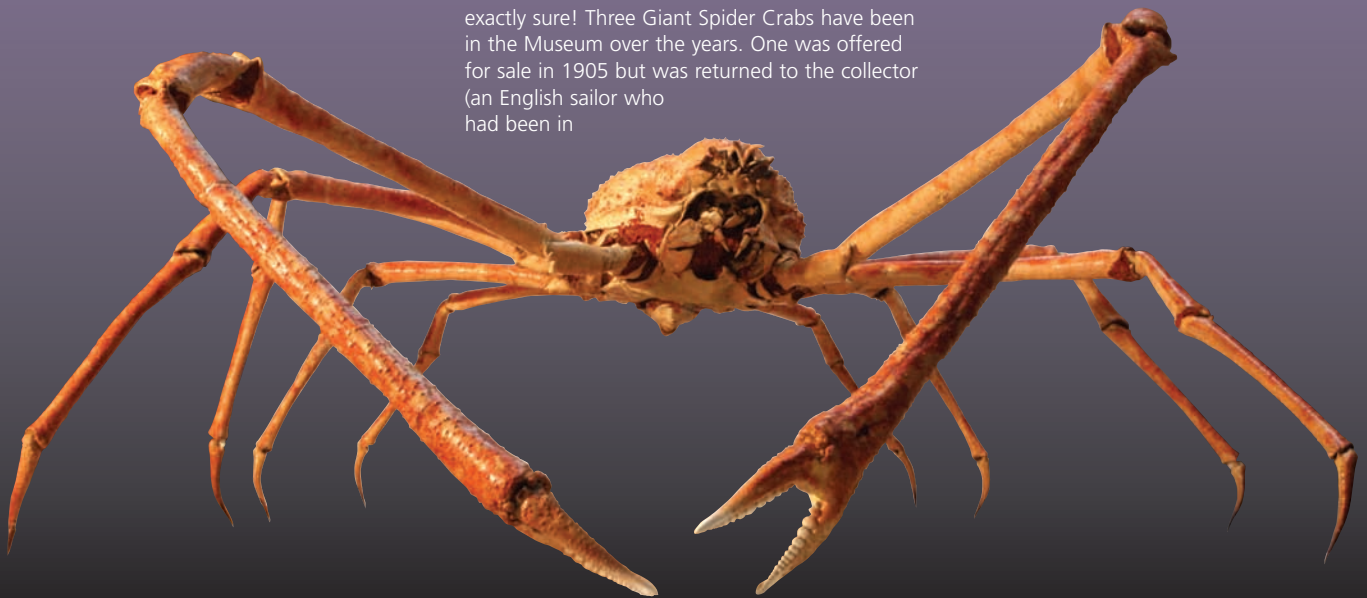
As the world's largest crustacean (and largest living arthropod), the Giant Spider Crab's body (the 'carapace') can measure up to 14 inches across. The Museum's is even larger than usual measuring over eleven feet when its claws are stretched right out. There is an unconfirmed record of one measuring about 20 feet across.

Originating from Japan, (the home of the species) they are not uncommon and can usually be found on the Pacific side of the islands, mostly 300-400 metres down. Living for up to 100 years they are sometimes referred to as living fossils. Quite often fished for, they are kept in aquaria where they are gentle creatures. They can be sexed from the shape of the abdomen, which is 'flipped' underneath the body, so the Museum's is thought to be male.

How did it come to the Museum? We're not exactly sure! Three Giant Spider Crabs have been in the Museum over the years. One was offered for sale in 1905 but was returned to the collector (an English sailor who had been in

Japan). Two more specimens became part of the collection: one in 1904, exchanged for other specimens with a 'Dr. Ashworth'. The other came from the British Museum in January 1907.

Although many large museums have them, they are usually displayed flat against a wall, (as if they have been run over by a steamroller). The Giant Spider Crab at the Museum is special because of its size and shape. Keep an eye on it when you visit!



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Next issue is 4 June 2007

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