



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

The Birmingham Magazine

Issue 23 2011–12



Burning ambition

Getting set for the London 2012 Olympics

Inside: A word from the wise – our Leadership Mentors are helping students stand out from the crowd
See pages 20–21



Circles of influence

The first word

The first phase of our Circles of Influence campaign has relaid the foundations of philanthropy at Birmingham. More than a century after our founding, we have, once more, successfully combined individual generosity with the financial power of the University to achieve extraordinary results.

Looking back at the beginnings of our campaign, it represented a slightly daunting but hugely exciting prospect.

Before its inception, a great deal of thought was given to every detail. With our goal to become a leading global university clearly in mind, we created themes and projects that would support our desire for research with international impact; a unique student experience; and greater engagement through strategic partnerships with the NHS, industry and major employers. This would be the University's biggest ever fundraising effort, and a cornerstone of our future plans.

What we couldn't know was whether it would work. Nothing like this had been tried for more than a century. How would alumni, friends, and supporters respond?

I am overwhelmed to say that you have surpassed our most optimistic wishes, and together we have already had a remarkable impact. We have developed sector-leading widening participation initiatives that have enabled more than 338 exceptional but disadvantaged students to succeed at university. We have improved breast cancer survival rates by 30%. We have carried out pioneering research in sustainable, clean fuel technologies. We have revolutionised the ways in which we interact with our cultural heritage through the use of cutting-edge digital technologies. We are transforming our iconic Chancellor's Court through the construction of the Bramall Music Building, complete with a 450-seat auditorium.

You – our alumni and friends – have made this possible and we thank you deeply. Encouraged



by your warmth, enthusiasm, and generosity, we will now build on this foundation. We are raising our sights still higher, continuing this momentum to have an even greater impact locally, nationally, and globally.

It is our goal to become a leading global university and each of you is vital to helping us achieve that ambition. I feel very proud of all we have already achieved and would like to sincerely thank you for the support you continue to provide – your time, money, expertise and advocacy. The value of each and every pound and hour you give us is never underestimated and always greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Professor David Eastwood
Vice-Chancellor and donor to the University

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With your news, memories and feedback

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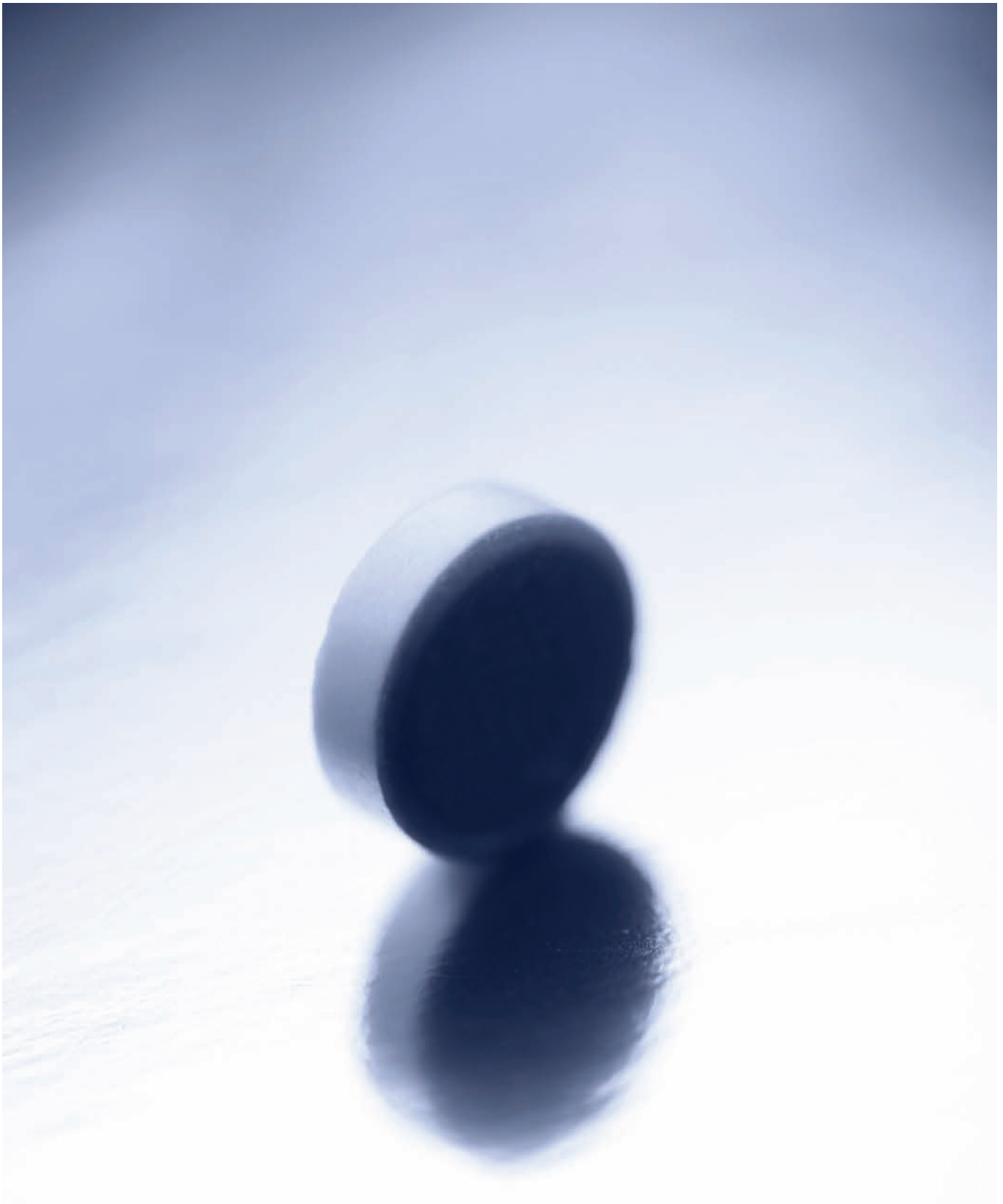
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Support the University

- Text giving – send a text to 70070 with CIRC02 followed by the amount you'd like to give eg, CIRC02 £5
- Direct Debit – making regular giving safe, easy and cost-efficient
- Online – visit www.justgiving.com/universityofbirmingham
- Via your tax return – you can give the University all or some of any tax refund through your tax return. Simply add the code FAH 59JG in section 19A.3 and call Fiona Newell on +44 (0)121 414 8893 for a donation form. You can also reclaim tax on the gift on next year's return
- Shares – most donors can claim tax relief via share gifts. Visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving/givenow.aspx
- Legacies – contact Martha Cass on m.cass@bham.ac.uk or +44 (0)121 414 6679
- Company matched giving – contact Laura Clark on +44 (0)121 414 8894 for details
- Giving from overseas – you can make a gift to the University from anywhere in the world. Visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving/givenow.aspx
- Our registered charity number is X7237

In focus

Scientists at the University have discovered a modified form of the drug MDMA – commonly known as Ecstasy – with 100 times more cancer-busting properties than the recreational drug and which they hope could be produced in a safe form to treat patients. Research results published in the journal *Investigational New Drugs* show significant success in redesigning the designer drug for potential use as a cancer-killing agent in the treatment of leukaemia, lymphoma and myeloma.



The year in pictures



Snapshot of the present for students of the future

Thousands of people from across Birmingham and the West Midlands visited campus for the University's annual Community Day. The event included the burial of a time capsule (seen above) to mark the forthcoming opening of the Bramall Music Building in 2012. The time capsule, containing a picture of our first Professor of Music Sir Edward Elgar; a photo of 2010's music graduates, and the score from a specially-composed fanfare, will be opened by future students of the University in 50 years' time.

Alumna crowned Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year

Birmingham Law Society named alumna Ruth Creed (UG Diploma Law, 2001) Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year in recognition of her work offering free legal advice to people who could not otherwise afford it. Ruth, who co-founded Birmingham Free Legal Advice Group (FLAG), said cutbacks to legal aid were her inspiration for offering free advice.

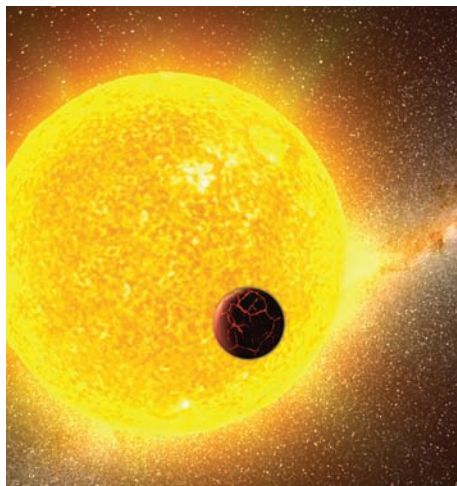


Garden party celebrates University House history

More than 50 former residents of University House returned to Birmingham to enjoy a traditional garden party celebrating the reopening of the Margery Fry room, complete with reproduction drawings, photographs and information panels tracing UH history. A brass plaque was unveiled by Marcia Davies (BSc Geography, 1974; MSc Engineering Production, 1975), with talks tracing the history of life at 'House' before residents viewed a display of heritage objects from UH, Research and Cultural Collections and Special Collections.

Speaking out for Birmingham

Sixty University experts from across the College of Arts and Law joined together to launch the Birmingham Speakers Programme, which offers free talks around the city on more than 100 subject areas. The initiative, which is open to schools, clubs and community groups across the city, features topic areas as diverse as history, politics, and drama. The programme follows the College's success in being named among the global top 50 places to study Arts and Humanities by the *Times Higher Education* supplement.

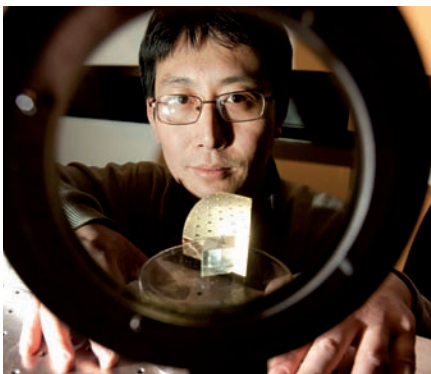


Music from the stars

A team of astroseismologists led by the University used data from NASA's Kepler Mission to listen to the sound made by 500 stars similar to the Sun. The research will be used to find planetary systems similar to our solar system in the hope of finding a planet able to support life. Dr Bill Chaplin, Reader in Solar and Stellar Physics, said: 'The sound inside stars makes them vibrate like musical instruments, [this is how] we can tell how big a star is – from its stellar music.'

Celebrating 25 years of Ironbridge

A quarter of a century since Ironbridge Gorge was made a UNESCO World Heritage Site was marked with a summer-long programme of events, including concerts, theatre and workshops, celebrating the museum's links with the industrial revolution and the University. The Shropshire-based site includes the Ironbridge Institute, a dedicated postgraduate research and teaching facility run in an equal partnership between the University and Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust (IGMT).



Now you see it...

Academics from the School of Physics and Astronomy led by Dr Shuang Zhang and colleagues at universities in London and Denmark attracted international headlines for creating something you can't see. An 'invisibility cloak' that can conceal an object the size of a paperclip through a process using a calcite crystal has been hailed as a 'huge step forward' by Dr Zhang for its potential to restrict the view of objects of a much greater size in the future. A demonstration of the cloaking crystal can now be seen in the School of Physics admissions suite, thanks to funding from two alumni.



VC medals awarded to alumni supporters

Alumni and friends who are among the University's greatest supporters were recognised for the vital role they play in Birmingham's success. Several members of the Development Advisory Council were given the rarely-awarded Vice-Chancellor's medal in gratitude for the large amount of time and financial support they have each given.



© Atlantic Productions



Birmingham in England's top dozen

Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) data places Birmingham in the country's 12 elite institutions. The University is one of the best performing institutions which share more than half of students with the highest A level grades. The data shows the highest number of AAB students attend Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Durham, Exeter, Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield, Southampton and Warwick; forming the English elite. In addition, no places at Birmingham went to Clearing again this year.

Flying Monsters swoop on BAFTAs

Two alumni were among the team who scooped this year's British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Specialist Factual award for *Flying Monsters 3D*. The documentary's presenter Sir David Attenborough (Hon DLitt, 1982), and co-producer Martin Williams (BSc Biological Sciences, 1997), were among the team that used cutting-edge 3D technology to uncover the truth about pterosaurs.

News



Innovative: The Redcrosse projects debuts at the Windsor Spring Festival in 2010

© Doug Harding

Curious about George

Debate about St George, Englishness and national identity is the inspiration for an innovative collaboration between the University of Birmingham and the Royal Shakespeare Company coinciding with next year's Royal Diamond Jubilee and London Olympics celebrations. The planned climax will be an innovative event combining fresh liturgy, poetry, art and music in Coventry Cathedral in 2012.

Redcrosse: A New Celebration of England and St George, which takes its title from 16th century English writer Edmund Spenser's epic poem *The Faerie Queene*, has ignited widespread discussion about the changing nature of national identity by presenting 'a new vision of Englishness and St George' in multicultural Britain.

The project, which debuted at the Windsor Spring Festival in 2010, is based on a text written by Professor Ewan Fernie, Chair of Shakespeare Studies at the University's Shakespeare Institute, in conjunction with the Canon Theologian Andrew Shanks and three major contemporary poets: the former Poet Laureate Andrew Motion, Costa Prize winner Jo Shapcott, and Michael Symmons Roberts.

Professor Fernie explains: '*Redcrosse* works with English identity in an historical sense, but

also tests and remakes it in a modern setting, reforging St George and Englishness for today's very different society. Many people are reluctant to wave the St George's flag because in recent times it's been associated with toxic versions of nationalism, but I hope *Redcrosse* will help reclaim English cultural identity as belonging to everyone.'

So far two major works commissioned for *Redcrosse* have been performed at Manchester Cathedral and St George's Chapel in Windsor, while music by the composer Tim Garland was also played at Romsey Abbey. Further events are now expected to feature in 2012 as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, Shakespeare's birthday on 26 April, and the Cultural Olympiad for the London Olympics.

'Talking about English identity has proved a hotter topic than we'd expected,' Professor



Contribution: Canon Theologian Andrew Shanks

© Doug Harding

Fernie admits. 'Even considering St George as anything other than a white male has caused howls of outrage; but he's the patron saint of many countries. These symbols belong to all of us and they're stronger because of that.'

Following the success of *Redcrosse*, the same writing team is also talking to the RSC about a '*Shakespeare liturgy*' for the important anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016.

Redcrosse will be published by Continuum Books in 2012, hopefully on the same day as its performance by the RSC.

Learn more

www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/research/projects/faerie-queene.aspx

Plant a mighty oak.



Leave a legacy to the University of Birmingham.

Contact Martha Cass on +44 (0)121 414 6679 or email: m.cass@bham.ac.uk

Manufacturing top-class graduates

Birmingham's role in training the next generation of highly-skilled workers and entrepreneurs is vital to ensuring the West Midlands' manufacturing industries continue to flourish.

Many companies across the West Midlands are forced into running at below their capacity because they are unable to recruit the high-calibre workers they require, according to John Bryson, Professor of Enterprise and Economic Geography.

He explains: 'Many manufacturing firms have an older workforce and find it difficult to replace key employees on retirement. Firms will close or send work overseas unless they are able to attract skilled workers.'

'The University has a major role to play in developing graduates in the region who are

entrepreneurial and understand how businesses run. Short-term strategies won't work, but the institution has the capabilities to meet the demands of the future local labour market.'

Steps being taken by the University to enhance student career prospects include greater emphasis on industry placements, and the launch of the Alumni Leadership Mentoring Programme (see pages 20–21).

Despite the perception of an overall downward turn in the West Midlands' manufacturing economy, Professor Bryson says there are countless examples of 'highly competitive' firms that have proved their resilience, including firms making locks, ceramics and in the foundry and casting sector.

He explains: 'The region's firms that have survived are in industries often deemed to

be unfashionable, mature or in decline. Stoke-on-Trent, for example, is often associated with a declining ceramics industry but there are more than 50 ceramics firms that are not competing on price, but design, quality and historical association.

'The firms that have succeeded have responded to globalisation and repositioned themselves. They are extremely well-managed and engaged in value innovation, but a key challenge is the difficulties they are experiencing in recruiting suitably skilled people.'

Find out more about Professor Bryson's research: www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/gees/bryson-john.aspx

Could you offer a student or graduate placement? Contact alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Lifesaving test identifies heart defects in newborn babies

A simple test to measure blood oxygen in newborns has been shown to identify babies with life-threatening congenital heart defects, according to researchers from the University of Birmingham and Birmingham Women's Hospital.

More than 20,000 mothers and babies from the West Midlands took part in the PulseOx study, the UK's largest investigation into screening newborns for congenital heart defects. Midwives used pulse oximetry to measure oxygen levels in newborns' blood via a small sensor placed on the skin of hands or feet. Babies with low oxygen levels soon after birth may be at increased risk of heart defects.

Current screening for heart defects involves ultrasound before delivery and routinely examining all newborns in the first 24 hours after birth, but this can miss babies with serious heart defects. PulseOx is an additional test carried out before discharge from hospital.

In the study, babies who failed the test were given a heart ultrasound. Of 195 babies with an abnormal result, 26 had a major congenital heart defect and a further 46 had problems which required urgent treatment.

Lead investigator Dr Andrew Ewer says: 'The test is usually performed within 24 hours of birth and is simple, painless and non-invasive. A small probe is put on the baby's hand and then the foot, the machine is switched on and you obtain a reading. It takes longer to undress the baby than it does to do the test.'

'This study has shown conclusively that the test is advantageous. I think we now have enough evidence to say that pulse oximetry screening should be incorporated into everyday clinical practice.'



Life-saving: Research has shown that a simple, painless test can detect major heart defects in newborn babies

Great Read ahead for new students

The University launched a new initiative for incoming undergraduates in 2011 called Great Read at Birmingham. All new undergraduates received a copy of the same book to encourage them to engage with academic ideas and create a shared experience for them as an incoming cohort.

The book selected for this year was *A Rough Guide to Evolution* by Professor Mark Pallen from the School of Biosciences. The book was selected due to exploring the impact of evolution from several disciplinary angles, meaning lecturers on the majority of courses throughout the University have an entry point to introduce the book into their teachings.

Students received a copy of the book in their welcome packs and were asked to read it before they arrived. There were then University-wide activities based around the book in Welcome Week and first term. The hope is that all students will be able to engage with each other over the material. If successful, the programme may be continued in future years using different books.

Find out more: www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/grab.aspx

News

The year in sport

After a successful year, the University was awarded second in the overall British University and College Sport (BUCS) leagues table for 2010–2011. UBSport had sat in the top three for more than 15 years but not in the first two since the mid-90s. Loughborough were overall winners, with Birmingham overtaking Leeds Met for the second place.

Alumna Hannah England (BSc Biochemistry, 2009) won a silver medal in the women's 1,500 metres at the 13th IAAF World Championships in Daegu. Hannah was with the main group of leaders on the final stretch before setting off wide and accelerating her way to a surprise second place.



Medallist: Hannah England

Alumni who represented Great Britain at the European Cross Country Championships in Albufeira, Portugal, included Sarah Waldron (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2009) who won a team gold in the under-23 womens race, and was the second Brit to cross the line. In the senior men's race, both Phil Nicholls (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2005) and Frank Tickner (BA French and English, 2007) produced strong performances to finish in 18th and 48th respectively.

Edmund Salt (BEng Civil Engineering, 2007), Luke Swain (BSc Geology, 2005) and Thomas Reader (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2005) completed the world's longest triathlon 'The Arch 2 Arc' as part of the team Urban Fitness GB. Along with three other teammates, they smashed the world record by one hour and 22 minutes to record a time of 35 hours and 53 minutes. By achieving this, the team raised money for various charities.

At the start of 2011, Luke Gunn (BSc Sports and Materials Science, 2006) was selected to represent Great Britain at the World Cross Country Championships finishing a credible 73rd in an African-dominated race.

Lucy Williams (BA Applied Golf Management Studies, 2010) won the 2011 English Women's Amateur Golf Championships in West Sussex. She played an incredible card coming back from one down after 16 to snatch the title on the 19th with a finish of birdie, eagle, birdie.



Champion: Lucy Williams

Several members of the Jamaican National Athletics Team, including the year's fastest man Asafa Powell and Olympic silver medalist Shericka Williams, visited the University athletics track and met current students and staff. The visit was in preparation for next year, when the University will host the whole Jamaican Olympic team in a pre-Games camp before London 2012.



On track: Members of the Jamaican National Athletics Team with Birmingham students

In July Chrissie Wellington (BSc Geography, 1998) set another world record, this time for the full Ironman event, finishing first female in a time of 8.18.13. She finished 5th overall with only one male running quicker than her marathon time of 2.44.35, which was a new world record in itself.



Lifesaving: Water testing must be fast to save lives when disasters like the Haiti earthquake strike

Technology quenches thirst for safe water solution

Thousands of lives will be saved by new equipment that can show in less than 60 seconds if water is safe to drink in disaster areas.

The global problem of preventing thousands of deaths each year from people drinking infected water supplies has sparked a lifesaving solution from a team of University academics.

Aid efforts are often hampered by the length of time up to three days it takes for standard tests to tell if water is safe to drink and these delays mean fatal diseases such as cholera continue to ravage communities.

The problem is now closer to being solved thanks to water treatment specialists in the School of Civil Engineering, who have worked with manufacturer STS Instruments to develop a simplified version of a process called fluorescence spectroscopy, which allows dangerous microbial activity to be identified in less than 60 seconds.

Dr John Bridgeman (BEng Civil Engineering, 1989), Reader in Environmental Engineering, says: 'The problem aid agencies face is returning water testing results faster than diseases spread. Over the past two years we have helped in the development of a piece of equipment costing £5,000 that's the size of a briefcase. It requires no specialist training to use so it's ideal for working in displaced communities and is now attracting interest from Oxfam, Water Aid and Save the Children.'

Learn more

www.eng.bham.ac.uk/civil/index

University to invest £175 million in Edgbaston campus

The University has announced a proposed five-year investment in facilities that will transform its historic Edgbaston campus and extend services available to staff, students and the local community.

Key developments include a new sports centre and library to join the Bramall Music Building, currently nearing completion.

The new sports centre plans will expand and significantly improve on current provision for staff, students, alumni and local residents and clubs. The centre will include Birmingham's first 50-metre swimming pool, a 215-station gym, a large sports hall, and various other sport and fitness facilities.

The proposed library development will provide outstanding facilities for a new generation of students and researchers, as well as an open access cultural hub for the University and city, with services available to the public.

Director of Estates Ian Barker says: 'Although we are very proud of the Edgbaston campus, these are exciting projects that will provide the high-quality environment and facilities essential to attracting and retaining the best staff and



students, and to delivering on our commitment to reduce the carbon footprint and environmental impact of the University.'

A public consultation has been taking place during the autumn and if you have queries regarding the development, please contact campusdevelopments@contacts.bham.ac.uk. To find out more, visit <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2011/08/09Aug-Estates-Development-FrameworkRelease.aspx>



Investment: Architect's visual of how the library could look

A snapshot of faith in Birmingham

Multimedia images and video footage featuring 600 places of worship across Birmingham is the focus of an ambitious new project celebrating the breadth of religious diversity in the city.

The Department of Theology and Religion has received £15,000-worth of funding from the University's Centre for Learning and Academic Development for the scheme, aimed at supporting student learning, local schools, and faith communities in Birmingham.

Dr Andrew Davies, Senior Lecturer in Intercultural Theology and Pentecostal Studies, explains: 'There are around 600 places of worship in the city. Just over half of them are churches but we have more than 100 mosques too. Representing this diversity is a challenge and our idea is to visually depict the vibrancy in Birmingham.'

Images banked by the department include photos of Sikh Gurdwara's Green Lane Mosque, and Birmingham Cathedral. Videos and pictures will be used by students during their courses, as well as by local schools teaching religious education, and by faith communities in the city.

Dr Davies adds: 'The project will strengthen cultural bonds in Birmingham, and enrich the student experience. The department is ranked first for personal development by the National Student Survey, and that's reflected in the broad range of careers our graduates move into.'

Learn more
www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/index.aspx

Did you know... that you can help us fight cancer?

Whether it's holding a bake sale, organising a 'Dress Down Friday', or running a marathon, you can raise money for our life-saving research.

Simply visit our 'Get Involved' web pages for more details:
www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/getinvolved





Alumni events calendar

Get together with friends and classmates, network with fellow professionals or simply come along for a chat. To find out more about any of our events, or for help organising your own reunion, please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/events, email alumnievents@contacts.bham.ac.uk or call the events team on +44 (0) 121 414 8904. Event invitations are usually sent by email – update your details at www.your.bham.ac.uk to ensure you don't miss out!



Antiques Valuation Day at Winterbourne, 19 November 2011

Bring along your prized antique items and see what they are worth. Collaborating with Biddle & Webb auctioneers and valuers, a team of experts will be on hand to take a look at your porcelain, paintings, jewellery, pottery and silverware to try and reveal the history of your treasures. Visit www.winterbourne.org.uk for full details.

Festive Drinks at the Birmingham Frankfurt Christmas Market, 9 December 2011

Come along after work for a complimentary glass of German beer or a mug of Glühwein while you soak up the atmosphere of the largest German market outside Austria and Germany. Your first drink is on us and we have reserved an indoor heated seating area in one of the traditional beer stalls. Please RSVP in advance, all alumni welcome.



Sacred and Profane: Treasures of Ancient Egypt, until 18 January 2012

Step back in time to discover life – and life after death – in Ancient Egypt at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts. Visit www.barber.org.uk for full details.



London Professional Network, March 2012

Network with fellow alumni from the fields of finance, insurance, property and legal related professions while enjoying wine and canapés. Further details will follow shortly but register your interest by email now.

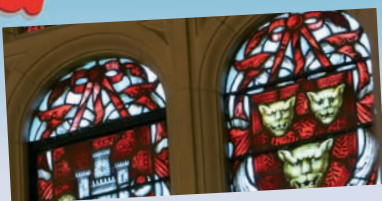
Alumni reception in Osaka, Japan, 25 November 2011

Join Professor Susan Hunston, Head of School of English, Drama and American & Canadian Studies, for an informal reception with fellow alumni living or working in Osaka.



Birmingham Heroes lecture – Cancer, February 2012

Hear one of our leading cancer researchers speak about the latest ground-breaking work taking place at Birmingham. The lecture, being held in London, will be followed by a networking drinks reception. Further details to be confirmed but register your interest by email now.



University Carol Service, 5 December 2011

This annual event, organised by the University Chaplains and the Department of Music, is a joyful Christmas celebration for staff, students and families. All are welcome, no booking or ticket is required. The service starts at 6.15pm in the Great Hall.



Behind the scenes at Winterbourne, 28 April 2012

Join fellow alumni for a look behind the scenes at Winterbourne House and Garden, one of the University's fantastic cultural assets. Round off your visit with afternoon tea and cake.

Birmingham. For life. Networking Workshop, 9 February 2012
Join current students and members of our student society, 'Birmingham. For life', for an informal drinks reception at Birmingham Business School and help them to develop their networking skills.

Distinguished Lecture Series – Sir Paul Nurse, 5 March 2012
Keep checking our website for more details of this exclusive lecture being given by Sir Paul Nurse, alumnus, Nobel Prize winner and President of the Royal Society.

Students v Alumni Pub Quiz, March 2012
Pit your wits against current students at the third pub quiz organised by 'Birmingham. For life' and held in Joe's Bar at the Guild. Further details to be confirmed.

Class of 1964 Medicine Reunion, 13 April 2012
Join the Class of 1964 Medicine in celebrating 47.5 years since graduation. This reunion will take place at the Haven Hotel in Poole, Dorset.



Come back on to campus to celebrate the anniversary of your graduation

30 Year Dentistry Reunion, 12 October 2012
Join fellow Dentistry graduates from the Class of 1982 for a reunion dinner on campus. The event is supported by the Sir Arthur Thomson Charitable Trust – partners are also welcome.

House of Lords, October 2012
Tickets for the ninth annual reception at the House of Lords will be available to book online in August 2012. All alumni in the UK will receive an email notification – update your details at www.your.bham.ac.uk to ensure we have the correct details for you.

Fab 'n' Refresh, 21 April 2012

Join fellow graduates from the past ten years for a special Guild night exclusively for alumni. Further details available in the New Year.

Alumni Sports Day, 9 June 2012

Meet up with old teammates to take on current students in one of 11 sports at the 11th annual Alumni Sports Day. Tickets include a day of sport, a free drink and your ticket to Fab at the Guild.

Happiness Lecture, July 2012

Keep checking our website for further details of the annual Baggs Memorial Lecture on the theme of 'Happiness – what it is and how it may be achieved by individuals as well as nations.'

Ironbridge Alumni Family Day, July 2012

Join fellow Ironbridge Institute alumni to enjoy exclusive use of the Blists Hill Victorian Town for an evening reception.

Save the date

Anniversary Reunions for the classes of 1987, 1977, 1972, 1967, 1962 and the pre-1962 'Golden' classes, 9 June 2012

Come back to campus to celebrate the anniversary of your graduation. Activities planned for the day include visits to schools and departments, a reunion lunch, campus tours, the chance to visit Winterbourne House and Garden and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, and an optional evening reunion dinner. There will also be plenty of time for you to explore campus and catch up with your classmates. To book your place please complete and return the enclosed booking form, visit the website or contact the events team.

Please note the change of date from 16 June 2012 as advertised in the previous issue of the *Birmingham Magazine*.

Community Day, 10 June 2012

Bring the whole family back to campus for the third annual Community Day. Get involved in the University's latest research, learn how our students support the local community and enjoy fun activities with our many student societies. Alumni of all years and subjects and their families are welcome.

COMMUNITY DAY



Groups and societies

For full reports and contact information for more than 30 alumni groups and societies in the UK and worldwide, visit www.your.bham.ac.uk

UK groups



Picturesque: A group of BUGS walkers

Birmingham University Graduates in Scotland (BUGS)

Following a highly successful AGM and Annual Dinner in October 2010, BUGS has had a very busy 2011. The Summer Awayday and Walk took place on 4 June in the Scottish Borders. A group assembled at the Glenholm Centre near Broughton for morning coffee, and a few non-walking members drove down to nearby Dawyck Botanic Garden. The day concluded with a traditional Scottish High Tea. New members are warmly welcomed. Contact Bill Sandham on +44 (0)141 339 5138 or w.sandham@scotsig.co.uk

Birmingham University Bristol Association (BUBA)

BUBA is a small, friendly and very active group that meets every month, often in members' houses in the Bristol area. At our Annual Dinner, Professor John Whenham, outgoing Head of the Department of Music, entertained us with a talk about Monteverdi and the new Bramall Music Building. New members are very welcome. Please contact Rene Thomas on 0117 973 6166, or Chairman John Smith via johningsmith@chyanmor.wanadoo.co.uk

Midlands Group

The Midlands Group holds regular meetings and events, and frequently invites alumni and academics to give speeches. In 2010–11, half of the talks were by staff or former students, including one hosted by Alex Jones from the University's Archaeology department. Other speakers have included committee member Steven Gregory on The Point of Obelisks, which discussed their significance in Egyptology, and closer to home in Birmingham Cathedral yard.

Please contact the Midlands Group via +44 (0)121 308 1363 or midlandschairman@bhamalumni.org



Speaker: Steven Gregory in Birmingham Cathedral yard

Reunions

Duannians

Duannians were students who took the teacher training course which ran until 1951. Next year marks 35 years since our reunions were first held. They now take place in the Business School on campus and, this year, eight of us met for a shared lunch. Mrs Betty Wright is stepping down as convenor of the group, and we wish her well for the future.

To join Duannians, contact Jocelyn Marshall on 0121 429 1370. For 2012 the group intends to meet on Saturday 9 June, and would also like to hear from its friends who are unable to attend.

International groups

Canadian Chapter

The Canadian Alumni Chapter had a very enjoyable Garden Party on Sunday 11 September at the home of Jonathan Dart, the British Consul General in Toronto. More than 30 alumni attended, years of graduation ranging from 1950 to 2009. Recognition and thanks to Sheila Cann who started the Chapter in 1998 and to Danny Linehan who has maintained the communication with alumni all over Canada. Contact Barbara Alexander on lxndr27@sympatico.ca

University of Birmingham Alumni in Greece (UBAG)

UBAG connects alumni who are either of Greek origin, or live currently in Greece. Since 2008, the group has identified and reconnected more than 160 alumni, organised a number of gatherings, and been engaged in occasional receptions organised by the University in Athens. For the future, UBAG aims to set up a legal entity in Greece with the aim of reaching even more alumni. Contact Nikos Megas on nmegas@ab.gr

Birmingham University Alumni Association Hong Kong (BUAAHK)

Since the AGM last year, BUAAHK has organised a number of social activities including a hiking tour on Lantau Island, and co-organised a drinks gathering with MBA students from Shenzhen University. The aim is to run more of these events in the future. The group also plans a Happy Hour gathering each month in a pub in Lan Kwai Fong. To find out more, visit Facebook and search for BUAAHK.

The University of Birmingham Ghana Alumni Group

In June representatives from International Relations hosted a launch party at the Golden Palm Hotel in Accra to celebrate the newly created alumni group in Ghana. Alumni were drawn from a variety of different backgrounds and graduating programmes, with some of the most prestigious graduating in the 1960s! The group now plans to formalise a management structure and arrange a number of events each year. Visit Facebook and search for University of Birmingham Ghana Alumni Group.

The University of Birmingham Nigeria Alumni Group

Following the Ghana Alumni Group launch, representatives from International Relations visited Nigeria to launch a similar group for Nigerian alumni. The launch event, in the Eko Hotel, Lagos, was a fantastic evening with nearly 50 people attending. Following the event, group leaders have split into regional chapters and are working towards holding regional events. Visit Facebook and search for University of Birmingham Nigeria Alumni Group.

Melbourne Alumni Group

After a couple of events promoted by the University, Melbourne alumni took the initiative and arranged a gathering in June at Federation Square in the city centre. Fifteen of us made it for drinks and most stayed on for a very enjoyable dinner. The attendees ranged from those who had been at Birmingham very recently to a graduate of 1967. Email Nick James nickcjames@hotmail.com or Josephine Tan josephine.tan@boq.com.au



Gathering: Melbourne alumni gathered for drinks

US Alumni Groups

There are currently more than 2,000 alumni in the US, and a number of local chapters organise get-togethers throughout the year. These have included the Chicago Chapter hosting a University professor, the California Chapter enjoying a wine tasting tour led by

an expert alumnus, and the New York Chapter meeting in a curry house in midtown Manhattan. The chapters are co-ordinated by the members of the Board of the University of Birmingham US Foundation. For more information on US events or general information, please visit www.bhamf.org, or contact the following people for each chapter: USA, Roger Pelham – RogerOPelham@cs.com; California, Andy Cottrell – Andy.Cottrell@truvantis.com; Chicago, Bob Bond – BBond32190@aol.com; New York, David Drinkwater – DaveDrink@gmail.com



Socialising: Former students meet up in New York

Is there an alumni group near you?

There are alumni groups and societies across the globe – to find reports and contact information for your local group visit www.your.bham.ac.uk

Alumni groups are an opportunity to socialise and share your memories of your time at Birmingham, and to widen your professional and personal networks. From time to time, alumni groups are able to support the University by hosting visiting academics and staff, and providing in-country support and advice to current or prospective students.

If you do not have a local group and are interested in setting one up, we can help to get you started. Contact us via alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Guild of Graduates and Alumni AGM

In the midst of a very well attended University Open Day on Saturday 10 September, the Annual General Meeting of the Guild was held in the Chemical Engineering building.

Holding the meeting on the same day as the open day again ensured that all the buildings were open, the whole campus was a hive of activity and alumni were able to mingle with aspiring students and their parents.

President Joe Biddlestone [BSc Chemical Engineering, 1958; PhD Chemical Engineering, 1961] welcomed those attending and then chaired the AGM. The following were elected: Guild representative on Court for a five-year period commencing January 2012: Tony Barbour. Guild Officers and Committee for 2011-2012: President, John Craggs; Vice-President, Joe Biddlestone; Secretary/Treasurer, Peter Borchers; Alumni Awards Officer, Norma Broadbridge; Committee members: Heather Cannon, Maureen Edge, Nick Emery, Arthur Lee and Christopher Smith. An update of the GGAA rules was approved.

After an excellent lunch there followed a very interesting talk from Chris Banks CBE, the Deputy Pro-Chancellor of Council. Chris provided an insight into current issues facing the University, future strategy and led a wide-ranging question and answer session.

your.bham



Find details of all alumni groups at your.bham

Learn more
www.your.bham.ac.uk

The greatest show on earth

From being the first university to offer a degree in physical education to present day strengths in sport research, learning, participation and performance; sport takes centre stage at Birmingham. Now, work is underway to make sure the University plays its part in the London Olympic Games and beyond.

As the UK's biggest ever sporting event, the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games mark a huge opportunity for the country to place sport firmly at the forefront of the population's consciousness.

For the University, with its rich heritage in everything from sport research to elite performance, it presents the chance to highlight its sporting excellence, and show the many ways in which Birmingham will play a part in London 2012 and beyond.

The new virtual Institute of Sport, Exercise and Health (ISEH) brings together existing and emerging strengths across research, teaching, leadership and performance to ensure sport at Birmingham has the greatest impact possible.

'ISEH is an exciting development for sport at Birmingham because it provides a single point of co-ordination for everything we do connected with sport, exercise and health,' explains Professor Edward Peck, who chairs the Institute. 'It will help us to promote collaboration across the many disciplines that touch sport at Birmingham, and maximise opportunities to engage with individuals, organisations and communities in the sporting world.'

'Through ISEH, we are looking at everything from undergraduate open days to how we can get involved with major sporting events such as the Olympics, and this is what will truly set us apart from our competitors.'

One of the most exciting ways in which Birmingham will play a part in London 2012 is by hosting the Jamaican Olympic team training camp in the crucial period immediately before the Games begin.

The team – including the world's fastest man, sprinter Usain Bolt – is relatively small (around 50 athletes and 20 coaches and other staff) but hugely successful and popular.

Zena Wooldridge OBE, Director of Sport at the University, says: 'It's a huge coup for Birmingham to have attracted both the US and Jamaican track and field teams to the city for their pre-Games camps next summer, and reflects our reputation as a leading international athletics city. The University is the chosen venue for the Jamaican team due to the ideal performance environment our campus provides, including the combination of accommodation, catering, athletics track and other essential training facilities.'

'This will be the first time the whole Jamaican team will come together in the same camp, which not only reflects the importance of the London 2012 Games to these athletes, but the quality of the camp provision. The camp will also provide an opportunity for some of our students and recent alumni to act as volunteers for the camp, helping the Jamaican team achieve their Olympic dreams.'

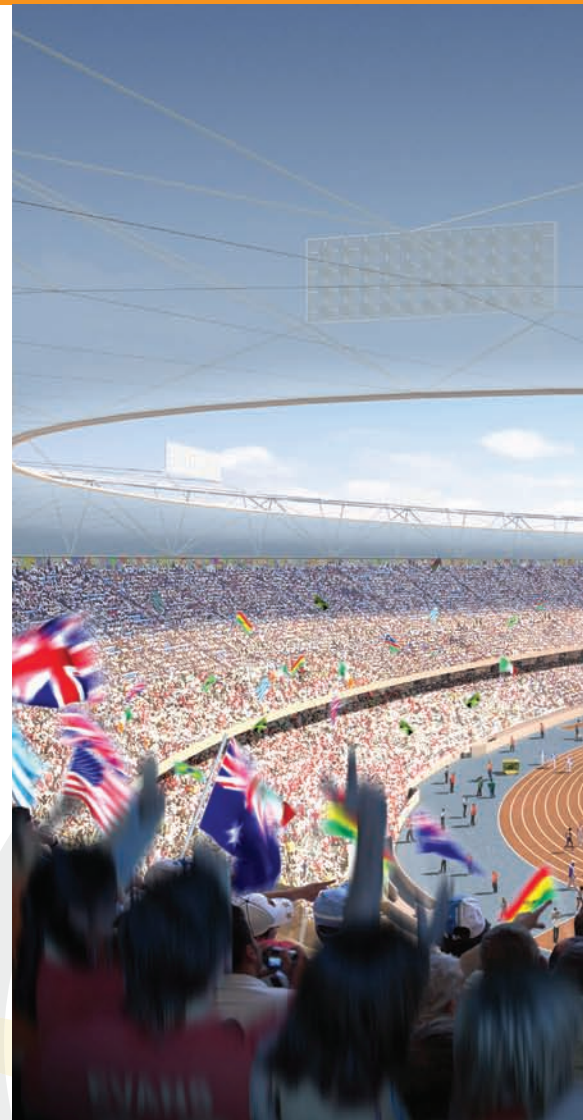
The Olympics beyond sport

The University's Olympic activity will encompass more than sport, with plans already in progress to play a part in the Cultural Olympiad – the largest cultural celebration in the history of the modern Olympics and Paralympics.

Designed to give everyone a chance to be part of London 2012 and inspire creativity across all forms of culture, the Olympiad aims to make London 2012 a Games for the whole of the UK.

'The Cultural Olympiad will be a major festival – a chance for everyone to celebrate London 2012 through culture,' explains Professor Ian Grosvenor, Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for Cultural Engagement.

The University's planned activity includes a collaboration with Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery on 'Style Africa' – due to open in summer 2012 – and an exhibition showcasing the University's Danford Collection of West African Art and Artefacts. There will be an Olympic-themed exhibition on campus, showing off relevant items from the Cadbury



Special: African mask from the Danford Collection

Research Library, Special Collections; plus creative and cultural 'Pop-up Performances'. This will form a free summer festival celebrating the talent of students alongside other artists from the city and beyond. Other exciting cultural events are also being developed to form part of the celebrations.



Excitement: How the Olympic Stadium will look

Sporting future

The Olympics may be a one-off event, but sport at Birmingham is a permanent fixture, as proven by a proposed major investment in a new sports centre on campus, announced in August (see more on page 9). The plans include a 50-metre swimming pool (the first in Birmingham), as well as sports halls capable of holding national events, and a specialist wellbeing and performance centre.

'This is a hugely ambitious project and when complete, the facility will truly reflect our status as a leading university for sport, as well as providing the perfect base to train future Olympians,' explains the University's Director of Sport, Zena Wooldridge. 'Our aim is to get more people, more active, more often and the new sports centre will enhance the sporting experience of everyone at the University, whether they want to keep fit, socialise, try something new or have higher aspirations'.

The University's academic and research connections to the Olympics are many and varied including:

- A research project entitled Sustaining and Securing the Olympic Neighbourhood – the impact of the 2012 Games led by Professor Jon Coaffee, Chair in Spatial Planning and Urban Resilience and Director of the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CURS)
- A group from the School of Civil Engineering assessed the wind conditions in and around the Olympic stadium being built in Stratford, London to ensure its safety as its design is finalised
- John Armit CBE (Hon DEng, 2008), Chairman of the Olympic Delivery Authority, gave the inaugural Clark Lecture in Civil Engineering in 2010
- One of the main research areas for the new Sport Pedagogy Department within the School of Education is the Olympic legacy for children and young people
- The School of Sport and Exercise Sciences (SportEx) helps elite athletes to achieve optimum performance through its unique expertise on motivation and nutrition among other areas
- A number of manuscripts exist in the University's Special Collections encompassing the area of athletics history and the Olympic Games

UBSport success

UBSport claimed second place in the 2011 British Universities and Colleges Sport overall BUCS championship. More than 4,000 teams compete in BUCS team sports and competitions each year and, while UBSport has been firmly in the top three for more than 15 years, it has not achieved second place since the mid 1990s.

'Second place overall in BUCS is a fantastic achievement for Birmingham students. In performance terms, the bar is constantly rising in university sport, so to achieve second place as we move into the Olympic year is fantastic.'

Director of Sport, Zena Wooldridge OBE



'Our new Institute for Sport Exercise and Health is an exciting development for sport at Birmingham. We are looking at everything from undergraduate open days to how we can get involved with major sporting events such as the Olympics, and this is what will truly set us apart from our competitors.'

Professor Edward Peck, Chair of the Institute of Sport, Exercise and Health

London 2012 – Birmingham's contenders

Across a whole range of sporting disciplines, University alumni and students are hoping to make their mark in next year's Olympic and Paralympic Games. From athletics to rowing and hockey, these are the ones to watch.

Alumni

Archery

- Naomi Folkard (BA Music, 2005) – Naomi represented Team GB at the Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008 Olympics and won team gold at the World Championships in 2007

Athletics

- Hannah England (BSc Biochemistry, 2009) – a middle distance runner specialising in the 1500m, Hannah was runner-up in the 2009 IAAF World Athletics Final and again in 2010 European Team Championships, following that up with a silver medal at the 2011 IAAF World Championships in Daegu
- Louise Hazel (BA French Studies, 2008) – the heptathlete's senior debut came in 2006 at the European Championships and she has since achieved Commonwealth gold
- Luke Gunn (BSc Sports and Materials Science, 2006) – the current UK steeplechase champion for the past three years and competed for England in the 2011 Commonwealth Games in Delhi
- Julian Adeniran (LLB Law, 2010) – sprint hurdler with a raft of BUCS gold medals under his belt, Julian was also the Guild Vice-President of Sport from 2010–11
- Dean Miller (BA Sport, Physical Education and Coaching Sciences, 2011) – having already competed at the Paralympic World Cup in Manchester, middle distance runner Dean now has his sights set on qualifying for the London Paralympic Games
- Ed Aston (BSc Mathematics, 2011) – 800m
- Alison Leonard (BSc Biological Science, 2011) – 800m
- James Wilkinson (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2011) – 800m

Boxing

- Tommy Langford (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2011)

Cycling

- Ciara Horne (BSc Physiotherapy, 2011) – represents Ireland in international track cycling
- Lora Turnham (BSc Physiotherapy, 2010) – won silver in both the paracycling Road World Cup and the paracycling Track World Championships earlier this year

Goalball

- Anna Sharkey (BSc Physiotherapy, 2010)

Hockey

- Susie Gilbert (BA Geography, 2011) – won gold at the Youth Olympic Festival in Sydney in 2009 and was selected for the British Olympic Association's Olympic Ambition 2012 Programme (CHK)
- Simon Mantell (BCom Commerce, 2007) – has 116 caps for Great Britain and England since making his international debut in November 2005
- Sophie Bray (BSc Psychology, 2011)

Marathon

- David Webb (BSc Economics, 2003) – competed for Great Britain at the 2010 European Championships and 2011 World Championships
- Phillip Nicholls (Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2005) – Phil twice made the World Cross Country Championships before moving up to marathon distance, and winning the 2011 Edinburgh Marathon

Rowing

- Lindsey Maguire (BSc Mathematics and Psychology, 2002) – a double European Championship medallist, who was part of the women's eight team that won one gold and two bronze medals during the 2010 World Cup Series

'Winning my first Olympic medal was the proudest moment in my career as it made me realise that winning medals was a real possibility and helped lead me to the highlight, which has to be the gold medal. I really appreciate the support and interest the University has shown me over the years.'

*Olympic gold medallist
Paul Manning MBE (BSc Geology, 1996)*

- Pam Relph (BSc Physics, 2011) – racing in the adaptive fours event, Pam was part of the team that took gold at the first World Cup of 2011 in Munich and the 2011 World Championships in Slovenia

Triathlon

- Non Stanford (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2010) – holds the UK under-17 3,000m record and is the Welsh 1,500m record holder for under-15, under-17, under-20 and under-23 age groups

Water polo

- Victoria Hawkins (BSc Chemical Engineering, 2010) – plays for the British Women's Water Polo Team

Students

Athletics

- Sara Treacy (MBChB Medicine) – 1,500m runner hoping to compete by representing Ireland in one of the running events
- Vicki Currie (MBChB Medicine) competes in modern pentathlon and was in the British squad last year

Badminton

- Alyssa Lim (BA English)



Alumni with Olympic connections

- Paul Manning MBE (BSc Geology, 1996) won gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics in the Team Pursuit track cycling event. The team broke the world record and Paul's gold joined the silver and bronze medals he claimed in Athens in 2004
- Barbara Slater (BSc Physical Education, 1981) is the BBC's first female Director of Sport and a former international gymnast who represented England at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal. Barbara will be responsible for overseeing the BBC Sport coverage of London 2012
- Olympic skeleton racer Adam Pengilly (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2000) is a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), one of just four representatives from Great Britain including Princess Anne. The IOC organises the Summer and Winter Games and aims to promote the Olympic movement around the world
- Sarah Cox (BCom Commerce, 1988) is Head of Business Planning and Programme Management at London 2012
- Former Olympian Allison Curbishley (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 1997) represented Scotland in the 400m before her retirement and is now a respected commentator for BBC Radio Five Live
- Charlotte O'Neill (BSc Accounting and Finance, 2004) is Aquatics Manager of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), the group responsible for preparing and staging the Games
- Electrical engineer Ryan Fisher (MEng Electronic and Electrical Engineering, 2009) worked on the initial bid, feasibility reports and concept design stages of the Olympic Handball Arena, which has already held its first event

If you are connected to the Games, or hoping to compete and we have missed you off the list, please email alumniconn@contacts.bham.ac.uk. We would love to hear about your achievements.

Olympic champions

Students at Birmingham will be urged to get into the London 2012 spirit by an enthusiastic team of Olympic ambassadors.

The Guild of Students has recruited four National Union of Students 'Be a Champion' ambassadors to excite their contemporaries about the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Ambassadors will be asked to create and run Olympic-inspired events and activities spanning sport, arts and culture. They will also highlight opportunities such as volunteering and paid work surrounding the 2012 Games to students.

Tim Smith, Vice President (Sport), is supporting the ambassadors. 'We want to ensure the Birmingham student community makes the most of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to celebrate world-class sport,' he says.

Further details of the events organised will be on the Guild's website next year. Visit www.guildofstudents.com for details.

'2012 is just the biggest event in the UK and I don't think it's any exaggeration to say in our lifetimes. It's a quite fantastic opportunity for sport and for broadcasting too; people will want to immerse themselves in the Games in a way they haven't done before.'

Head of BBC Sport, Barbara Slater (BSc Physical Education, 1981)

'The University really helped me to build confidence with planning my training. My goal now is to compete at the London 2012 Olympic Games.'

Heptathlete Louise Hazel (BA French Studies, 2008)

FASCINATING OLYMPIC FACTS

- The London 2012 Olympic Games will feature 26 sports including fencing, taekwondo, handball and BMX
- On its 70-day relay, the London 2012 Olympic torch will be carried by 8,000 torchbearers and travel through cities including Birmingham
- The five rings on the Olympic flag represent the international nature of the Games by symbolising the five continents from which athletes travel to take part
- University students and staff are expected to volunteer in a whole range of roles at London 2012, and were even offered the exclusive opportunity to become specialist sport volunteers in three events: handball, boccia and goalball
- The modern Olympic Games were initially an exclusively male preserve, with women's versions of different sports only gradually introduced – the most recent being women's wrestling in 2004
- Extra-long beds have been ordered by the University to ensure comfort and safety for the Jamaican Olympic team during their stay on campus. Many of the team are particularly tall, including 6ft 5in sprinter Usain Bolt



Doing her best for children

THE CHILD FIRST AND ALWAYS IS THE MOTTO OF GREAT ORMOND STREET CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AND IT'S A MAXIM DR JANE COLLINS (MBChB MEDICINE, 1978) LIVES BY. THAT'S WHY SHE HAS BEEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO PATIENTS AT THE WORLD-FAMOUS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL FOR MORE THAN A DECADE.



Dr Jane Collins
(MBChB Medicine, 1978)



As Chief Executive of both Great Ormond Street Hospital and the charity that fundraises for it, Dr Jane Collins is ultimately responsible for raising millions of pounds and overseeing care during 175,000 patient visits annually.

'It's a great privilege to lead a hospital like this but it's also a major responsibility because families have huge expectations when they come to Great Ormond Street. I have to ensure we live up to these expectations when we can and are open and honest when we can't,' she says.

Established in 1852 by Dr Charles West in reaction to the high rates of infant mortality in London, Great Ormond Street had only ten beds when it first opened. Today it is an international centre of excellence in child healthcare dedicated to finding new and better ways to treat childhood illnesses.

Jane became Chief Executive in 2001. During her tenure she has seen the hospital's turnover grow from £132 million in 2000–01 to £336 million in 2010–11 and is currently supervising the refurbishment of two-thirds of its estate to improve facilities for patients, parents and staff.

'I don't get out from behind my desk as much as I would like to but when I do, I really enjoy talking to families and to children,' she says.

'I made the choice to become Chief Executive because I felt I could make more of a difference in this role than seeing patients and hopefully I've done that. Over recent years my focus has been on patient safety and we are explicitly aiming for Zero Harm to patients, ensuring all children and their families are safe. I haven't missed clinical work, funnily enough. There's not a lot of time to miss clinical work; I think it's partly my personality and partly there are so many things you need to do as Chief Exec.'

It was while studying medicine at Birmingham that Jane was inspired to go into paediatrics, particularly after working with kidney specialist Dr Dick White during a placement at Birmingham Children's Hospital. 'I just decided it was more interesting than anything else I'd done,' she says.

The Children's Hospital obviously had a long-term influence on other alumni too, as a number of Jane's contemporaries went into paediatrics and several are consultants at Great Ormond Street.

'I remember the Medical School as a very happy place and believe working with numerous academics and clinicians, completing placements at several different hospitals, and treating all sorts of illnesses and diseases gave me a broad grounding for my career,' she says.

A highlight of her first year was visiting a coal mine to understand what life was like for people working in heavy industry. 'That was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. It hasn't been topped as it was just an extraordinary experience and a great privilege,' she says.

Jane believes there is currently a shortage of doctors going into paediatrics because the area is seen as hard work, and her advice to current medical students hoping to become paediatricians is to grasp the opportunity.

'It is hard work, and it's often challenging, but for the right person it's extraordinarily rewarding. If we don't sort out the health of sick children then we increase the burden of illness throughout life so it's incredibly important,' she says.

Great Ormond Street is famous for its child health research, and gene therapy has been just one groundbreaking area. In 2010 doctors were able to use stem cells to replace a child's trachea and earlier this year they identified a new way to help treat boys with muscular dystrophy by overcoming problems with the gene that creates dystrophin (part of muscle).

'Our research into more unusual conditions attracts attention but from the point of view of children and families some of the work we've done on pain research will make more of a difference,' Jane says.

The hospital is also renowned for its successful fundraising, and Jane describes leading the charity as the fun part of her dual role as she meets so many interesting people.

'I've been kissed by Johnny Depp three times and you can't underestimate the niceness of that but, joking aside, the charity's objectives are to benefit Great Ormond Street children so the two things are absolutely interlinked,' she says.

Current challenges for Great Ormond Street include applying for Foundation Trust status, so it can retain its independence and become a membership organisation, and developing a new building for translational research to ensure findings benefit patients more quickly.

A decade is a long spell for an NHS hospital Chief Executive and Jane is unsure when she will leave. 'It's hard to see how being Chief Executive of another hospital could be any better than this because, although we're not the largest hospital, the combination is hard to beat,' she says.

'The most rewarding part of my day is actually doing something that you know will make a difference to children and their families. Clearly as a Chief Exec one does spend a lot of time worrying about money and savings but the only purpose of money is to enable us to do the best we can for children.'

Learn more about Great Ormond Street at www.gosh.nhs.uk and www.gosh.org.

Dr Jane Collins at a glance

Career: Trained as a paediatric neurologist. Consultant paediatric neurologist at Guy's Hospital in London for four years before moving to Great Ormond Street. Served on the hospital's management board as Clinical Director responsible for Medicine and Urology before appointment as Chief Executive and held a Trust Board role as Director of Clinical Services

Family: Jane is married with two children aged 23 and 21

Interests: Gardening, the theatre and sustainability (she has been working to make Great Ormond Street more eco-friendly)

Did you know? Author J M Barry donated the copyright of his much-loved children's story Peter Pan to the hospital

With graduate employment a critical issue for all university leavers, today's undergraduates are not only looking to universities for academic knowledge, but for career guidance too. Alongside a whole programme of initiatives to improve employment prospects for Birmingham graduates, one new scheme will see top alumni help a select few students truly stand out from the crowd.

A word from

Imagine, as a student, getting first-hand career insights and personal support from some of the UK's highest achievers. Working alongside a professional who has faced all the same problems at university, and not only solved them, but gone on to make a great success of their career. Being able to turn to someone who is neither a parent nor a tutor, but who knows a thing or two about surviving the challenges of the modern workplace. Welcome to the University's Alumni Leadership Mentoring Programme: a brand-new scheme designed to help Birmingham students get the job they want after graduation.

Conceived by alumna Cilla Snowball CBE (BA French Language and Literature, 1981), Group Chairman and Group Chief Executive Officer of advertising and communications company AMV BBDO, the programme will give 15 final-year undergraduate students a once-in-a-lifetime chance to be mentored by high-profile alumni, all of whom have agreed to give mentoring time each month for 12 months to help the students find employment.

Participants include former Chief Medical Officer, Sir Liam Donaldson; *Green Wing* and *Black Books* actress, Tamsin Greig; Group Commercial Director of J Sainsbury's, Mike Coupe; former Editor of the *Wall Street Journal Europe*, Baroness Patience Wheatcroft; and *Mamma Mia!* director, Phyllida Lloyd CBE. The scheme is thought to be unique in the UK, and is already attracting the attention of other Russell Group universities.

The concept, unsurprisingly, proved popular with students, and the applicants were whittled down to a shortlist of 40. All of these students were asked to attend a presentation and interview before the final 15 were chosen.

'We'll ask the successful students to write their own biography, which we'll send to the mentors

by way of introduction,' explains Work Experience Manager Sue Welland, who is overseeing the project. 'The students will also do some training on the world of business, and then the mentor and mentee will agree between them how, when and where the mentoring will take place. As soon as the selections are finished, the students will have the whole of their final year to work with their mentors. It's a brilliant opportunity, and we'll be looking for students who will understand how to get the best out of the programme.

The mentors have been selected from three broad sectors: Business, Financial and Consumer; Media and the Arts; and Health and Social Care. A former President at the Guild of Students and current Chair of the Guild of Students' Trustee Board, Andrew Vallance-Owen (MBChB Medicine, 1976), is one of the mentors representing Health and Social Care. At present he is the Group Medical Director of Bupa and the Chair of Council for the Royal Medical Foundation of Epsom College.

'I really enjoy mentoring, it's always good being with young people because you get new ideas,' he says. 'I have found, in my own life, that being supported by older people with more experience is hugely valuable, so I think mentoring programmes can bring real benefit to both parties. Being able to support students and helping them in their careers is something that I'm really looking forward to.'

Mark Harrop, who is the current Guild of Students President, believes the initiative is a unique opportunity. 'We are always grateful to receive support from the University's varied alumni and it's great to see such a broad number of high-profile mentors onboard with the scheme already,' he says. 'Employability remains at the top of the agenda for the year ahead and a priority for the Guild. We want to ensure that Birmingham students are as

employable as they can be when they enter the job market.'

Sue adds: 'We're always helping students to get involved in work experience and other activities outside of their degree to develop skills that they can then transfer into the workplace, but being able to speak to someone who's been a student here and can give first-hand knowledge of the job that you dream of – it's really helpful.'

The Alumni Leadership Mentoring Programme forms part of a whole suite of opportunities for alumni to get involved in the University's activities, at whatever level they choose.

But the benefits are not all one-sided; mentors, for example, can stay involved with the University and keep up with current academic thinking in their subject area. Cilla Snowball, who is a member of the University Council, feels that it has been a rewarding experience, not least because she can participate in key decisions about the University's future.

'I chose to become a Council member as this was a valuable way of contributing to the University at the highest level. As an alumna of Birmingham it is a wonderful feeling to be able to contribute to senior decision-making at the University,' she says.

The University is planning to expand its mentoring activity throughout 2012 as part of its employability investment. If you would like to get involved in the future, please email alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Learn more

Turn to pages 24–25 to find out more about the University's employability programme.

the wise

Our Alumni Leadership Mentors:

Health and social care

- Sir Liam Donaldson – former Chief Medical Officer (MSc Anatomy 1976; Honorary DSc, 2005)
- Baroness Doreen Massey – Chair, The National Treatment Agency For Substance Misuse; (BA French Language and Literature, 1961; PGCE Education, 1962)
- Sir Charles George – Chairman, The Stroke Association (Interc BSc, Anatomy, 1962; MBChB 1965; MD, Medicine, 1974; Honorary DSc, 2003)
- Dr Andrew Vallance-Owen – Bupa Group Medical Director and Bupa Foundation Deputy Chair (MBChB, Medicine, 1976)

Business, financial and consumer

- Martin Devenish – Managing Director, Goldman Sachs International (BCom Industrial Economics and Business Studies, 1986)
- Mike Welton – Chairman, Premier Oil Plc (BSc Civil Engineering, 1968; Honorary DEng, 2008)
- Mike Coupe – Director, J Sainsbury's (BSc Physics, 1982)
- Tim Smart – CEO of King's College Hospital (BSocSc Economics, 1979)
- Andrew Fisher – CEO of Towry Law (BSocSc Economics, 1982)

Media and the arts

- Cilla Snowball CBE – Group Chairman and Group CEO, AMV BBDO (BA French Language and Literature, 1981)
- Phyllida Lloyd CBE – director of plays, opera and film including *Mamma Mia!* on stage and screen (BA, English, 1979; Honorary DLitt, 2009)
- Tamsin Greig – film, television, theatre and radio actress (BA Drama and Theatre Arts, 1988)
- Dr Simon Halsey – Chorus Director, City of Birmingham Symphony Choruses (Honorary DMus, 2008)
- Alan Davey – Chief Executive, Arts Council England (BA English, 1982)
- Baroness Patience Wheatcroft – former Editor of the *Wall Street Journal Europe* (LLB Law, 1972)

Thank you

Thanks to you, the biggest ever fundraising effort by a Midlands university is already having a major impact on campus and beyond.

More than 8,000

the number of people who have made a gift to the University since 2002

More than £60 million

the amount achieved in the Circles of Influence campaign to date

More than £1 million

the amount given to cancer research at Birmingham by more than 400 donors

Launched in 2009, the Circles of Influence campaign encompasses everything from lifesaving research to life-changing opportunities and the initial goal of £60 million has now been reached.

The campaign's success represents a new era for philanthropy at Birmingham, and forms the foundation of a permanent partnership of charitable, investment and core funding for the future.

This is only the beginning and in celebration, here are just a few examples of the difference your charitable support is making. To find out more about the impact of your gifts, watch our 'Thank you' video at www.youtube.com/user/unibirmingham

If you would like to make a gift to the University, you can complete the form on page 39 of this magazine, or give online via www.justgiving.com/universityofbirmingham



Experts: The CHASM team



Vital work: Brain Tumour Research Associate Jessica Edwards

Cancer research

'All cancers are terrible, but the effects on people's lives when diagnosed with a brain tumour are immediate and horrific. The medical and surgical interventions are very invasive, and five-year survival rates are poor – only around 13% in adults. Brain tumours are also the most commonly diagnosed solid tumours in children but despite this, brain cancer research receives less than 1% of all UK cancer funding.

'My role is to establish a brain tumour tissue bank with patient matched blood samples and hopefully primary cell cultures – a quite unique resource. During our remaining funding time (approximately another seven months), we will use the bank to model brain tumours, theoretically allowing us to test the effectiveness of drugs or risk factors affecting the tumours' severity, providing clinicians with crucial information about progress and treatment.

'I'm very grateful to The Traynor Foundation for funding this work, and would add a huge thank you to all the University's supporters. The more people donate to brain cancer research, the more patients will have a fighting chance.'

Dr Jessica Edwards, **Brain Tumour Research Associate**, funded by Ric Traynor (BCom Accounting and Finance, 1981) and his wife Zena through The Traynor Foundation

'We were told I had only a five per cent chance of seeing another Christmas. I found out about the Val/Aza trial at Birmingham, responded well and went into remission. I am one of the lucky ones.'

Ian Smith, who took part in a clinical trial at Birmingham after being diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia

The Centre on Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM)

'CHASM launched with the aim of harnessing the University's existing expertise to tackle financial issues which affect us all. One year on, we are poised to become a leading research centre in our field. Our achievements include publishing key studies on topics such as housing and economic inequality, occupational pension reform, and financial innovation and social welfare. We've received funding from the Leverhulme Trust as part of a major study of financial exchange within families, and begun to share our research more widely.

'CHASM now plans to expand its activities and build on its strong reputation over the next 12 months. We will employ new PhD students, post-doctoral fellows and research fellows to continue our work on areas including financial inclusion and taxation. We are also planning events in Europe to further expand CHASM's international reach.

'Financial support from donors has been crucial but, more than this, it has been donors' interest in our work and their general encouragement and support that has been vital. We are all extremely grateful.'

Professor Karen Rowlingson,
Director of CHASM



Nearly £1.4 million

the amount committed to A2B
by donors since 2007

More than £6 million

the amount given to the Bramall Music
Building by more than 230 donors

Access to Birmingham (A2B) Scholarships

'My A2B scholarship had a profound impact on both my university life and my career afterwards. The support really relieved the financial pressure while I was studying and helped ensure I could pursue my ambition and career as a lawyer.'

'I took part in the A2B scheme during my final year at school and completed an online study skills programme, a piece of academic work and a student shadowing experience. I received an alternative offer from the University through A2B, but was awarded the scholarship because I achieved the standard entry grades for the course.'

'Coming to Birmingham was special to me because I am the first generation of my family to attend university. After attaining a 2:1 Law degree and graduating in July 2010, I passed the Legal Practice Course (LPC) with a distinction. I started working as a trainee solicitor at Coley and Tilley in Birmingham this year and I'll qualify as a solicitor in 2013.'

'I think studying at Birmingham made me stand out from other applicants due to the University's status and prestige. Thank you so much for the scholarship. I hope one day I will be able to sponsor a student myself.'

Kimberley Anderson
(LLB Law, 2010), A2B scholarship recipient

'The scholarship helped me not to worry about money and to just focus on my education. Without it I believe I would not have been able to become a teacher and in turn help young people fulfill their educational aspirations and dreams.'

Anwara Choudhury (BSc Psychology, 2010), psychology teacher and A2B scholarship recipient



Taking shape: The dome of the new Bramall Music Building, seen in July 2011

'When the building is complete next year we're planning an incredibly strong opening concert; the early music soprano Carolyn Sampson has agreed to perform and we're hoping she'll be joined by some other star names. More details will be released nearer the time but a building of this magnitude deserves an opening that will make a powerful impression in the city and beyond. I hope you will be able to join us for a performance.'

Professor Andrew Kirkman,
Head of Music

The Bramall Music Building

'The Bramall Music Building and the city of Birmingham's strong history of performance compelled me to move from Rutgers University in New Jersey, US to become Head of Music here. I'm excited that our students and staff will have the opportunity to use state-of-the-art facilities in such an impressive, iconic new space.'

'As a performer as well as an academic (I conduct The Binchois Consort, a Renaissance vocal chamber ensemble), I think the building, and particularly the new

concert hall, will prove to be a major stimulus in attracting musicians from outside the University. City ensembles will have a new concert venue available and this will bring new audiences into the heart of campus.'

'I've already begun discussions with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra about potential involvement of their players as coaches in our own student orchestral concerts and rehearsals. We are also exploring potential projects with the Birmingham Royal Ballet, as its newly-appointed Director of Music, Koen Kessels, has just become an Honorary Professor here.'

'The department is incredibly lucky to be able to improve its facilities in a time when support for the arts is increasingly taking a back seat. I want to say a really huge thank you to the people who are making this happen.'

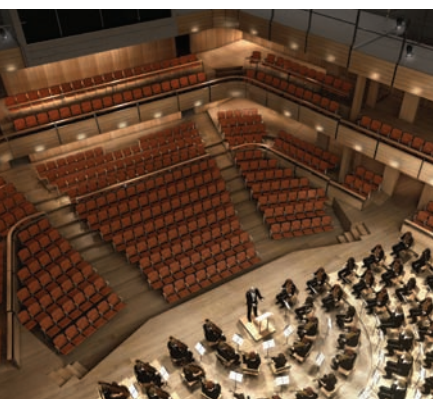
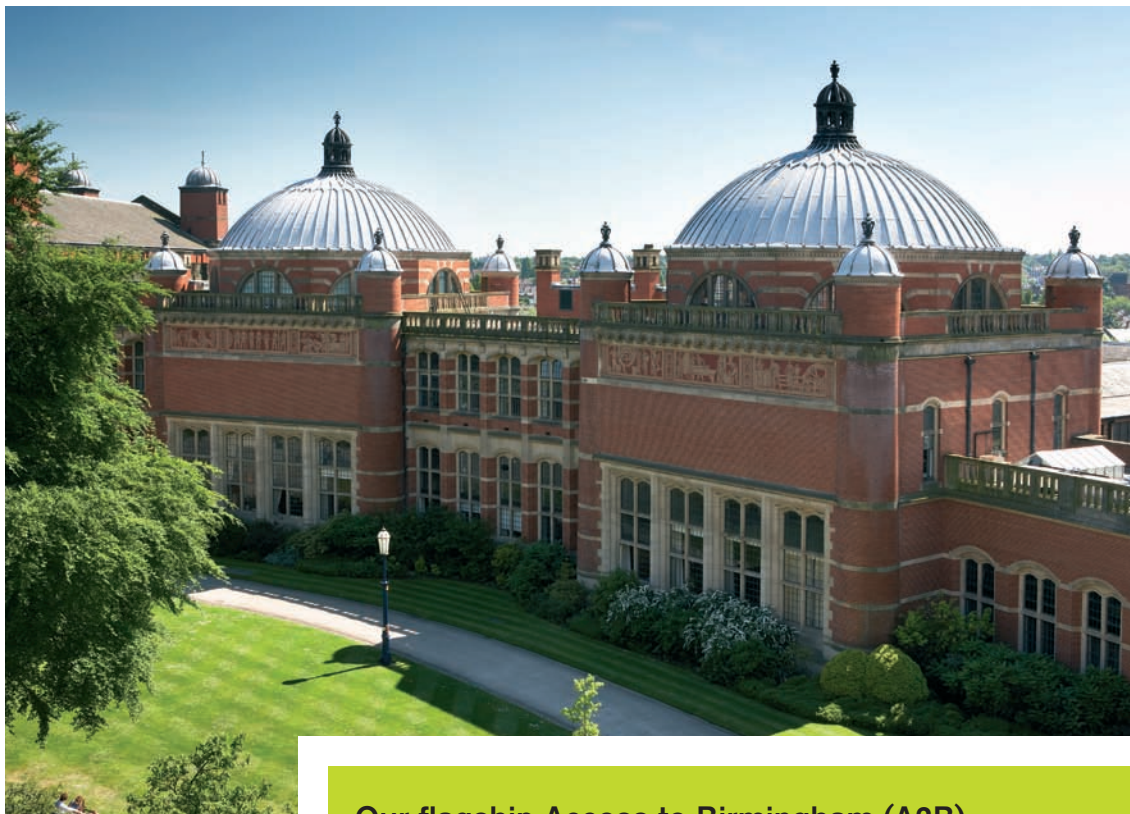
Leigh-Anne Janaway, BMus Music student and University Music Society Student President



Unique and ambitious, our Birmingham Fellowships scheme will attract the brightest postdoctoral talent from around the world. For the programme's first cycle, just under 1,400 applications were received from every continent, with only the very highest calibre candidates progressing further.



We will continue to invest in the student experience at Birmingham, with £175 million planned for a wide range of projects to transform our Edgbaston campus.



Our flagship Access to Birmingham (A2B) scheme will be expanded beyond the West Midlands. Through A2B, we partner schools to help students from families and communities with little or no experience of higher education. Since 2007, nearly £1.4 million has been committed to the scheme and 338 students have received scholarships.

In 2009–10 and 2010–11, 11 A2B graduates earned first class degrees, and 35 achieved a 2:1, showing the calibre of scholarship recipients.



A bright future at Birmingham

Higher education in the UK might be moving into uncharted territory but, believes Vice-Chancellor Professor David Eastwood, Birmingham will prevail.



The past few years have been challenging for UK higher education. From the new tuition fees regime to severe cuts in government funding, universities have found themselves compelled to adapt and respond to this unrecognisably transformed landscape.

The realities of the new status quo have often been reported rather selectively, leading to frequent misunderstanding. In the midst of so much controversy, spin and debate, the most vital point of all is often lost – most of us aspire to the same thing. A system that ensures sustainable funding for universities, and where a university education is free to all students while studying; where repayments are proportionate and affordable, and where all students can benefit from HE regardless of means. The system also means graduates only pay back for their university tuition when they can afford to do so, and once they are benefiting from their education.

The context of government funding changes is vitally important in understanding the reasons for setting the level of tuition fees, certainly in the case of our university. With support from government dramatically reduced and limited capital now available from funding councils and Research Councils UK, we have moved from a relatively secure funding base to a much more uncertain financial future. We have set our fees at the maximum level of £9,000; to generate the income necessary for daily operations, and, crucially, to combine with philanthropy in enabling a programme of investment to sustain excellence. Our investment is far-reaching; encompassing spending on teaching and facilities to enhance the student experience, and research that affects us all.

We will work to ensure the very best students come to Birmingham, whatever their personal circumstances; then continue to support them during their time at the University, and after graduation. From 2012–13 we will introduce enhanced financial support for students from lower income backgrounds and increase outreach activities to promote fair access.

Our progressive and targeted financial aid package will offer support to more than 4,000 students and increase our investment in widening access to more than £12 million by 2015–16.

Our flagship Access to Birmingham (A2B) scheme will be expanded beyond the West Midlands. Through A2B, we partner schools to help students from families and communities with little or no experience of higher education find out about university, and to support their applications. Exceptional students are eligible for financial support, and your generosity has funded 338 A2B scholarships since 2007. We are committed to continuing Aim Higher activities after government funding is withdrawn, and are seeking to expand our 'Forward Thinking' progressive programmes which work with gifted and talented students from lower income backgrounds over the course of their secondary education. Our summer schools will continue, targeting Year 12 students in the West Midlands who have the potential to attend university but face financial, social or educational disadvantage.

We will continue to invest in the student experience at Birmingham, with £175 million planned for a wide range of projects to transform our Edgbaston campus over the next three years. As well as state-of-the-art learning facilities and the soon-to-be-completed Bramall Music Building, other proposed developments include a world-class sports centre complete with sports halls and the city's only 50-metre swimming pool; and a new central library and cultural gateway, providing outstanding facilities for a new generation of students and researchers, with services also available to the public.

Helping to ensure that Birmingham graduates succeed beyond university, we are devoting almost £5.5 million to sector-leading employability services and internships. Our Alumni Leadership Mentor Programme is thought to be the first of its kind in the UK and offers students the once-in-a-lifetime

opportunity of one-to-one mentoring with some of our most high-profile and successful alumni. Birmingham Internships will encourage students to take on exciting, worthwhile, and potentially life-changing summer vacation projects without being inhibited by financial constraints; while our Cultural Intern Scheme will provide much sought-after training for our postgraduate students.

Unique and ambitious, our Birmingham Fellowships scheme will attract the brightest postdoctoral talent from around the world and the first round drew an astounding 1,400 applications. This will enable us to develop the next generation of global academic leaders at Birmingham and, alongside investment to increase the proportion of our research activity that is regarded as world leading. This will ensure our students continue to be inspired by academic colleagues of international repute, and our research has impact way beyond campus boundaries.

The list goes on and, while there are undoubtedly uncertainties and challenges ahead for us all in the coming months and years, these are just a few of the many reasons for us to be positive about our University's future. Universities are never complete. They develop as new challenges and opportunities occur. At Birmingham we innovate, we push the frontiers of understanding, and we will prosper through our ability to adapt even in the face of adversity – because that's what great universities do.

'We will work to ensure the very best students come to Birmingham, whatever their personal circumstances.'

*Professor David Eastwood,
Vice-Chancellor,
University of Birmingham*

Turning family values into business gold

A multi-billion dollar business with family at its heart has been Murugappa Subbiah's lifelong passion.

Over the past 110 years, one company has built its way from beginnings as a small family concern to become one of India's leading business conglomerates worth more than £3 billion. But what's exceptional about this corporate success story is that, from its foundation to the present day, family values and a strong moral code lie at the heart of the Murugappa Group.

Following in the footsteps of two generations before him, Murugappa Subbiah (Mechanical Engineering, 1958; Hon DUniv, 2011) wrote his own chapter in the group's lengthy story, with 43 years' service before he retired as Chairman. But joining the family firm wasn't always his plan. In his youth, Subbiah came to Birmingham to study mechanical engineering. 'My time at Birmingham changed my life and I have very happy memories of the University,' he remembers. 'I quickly got into the social rhythm on campus, playing a lot of tennis and winning a half blue in my first year.'

Even as a student, his capacity for leadership didn't take long to appear. 'When I arrived, I was surprised and disappointed to note that, among all the newspapers and magazines available on the racks in the Common Room, there was not one publication with an international horizon – no *Time Magazine*, no *Newsweek*.'

He felt strongly enough about this shortcoming to stand for election to the committee of the Junior Common Room. He was successful and went on to serve on the JCR Committee in his second year – and of course achieved a wider range of news magazines for succeeding cohorts of students at Manor House.

But, after Subbiah performed not especially well in his end of year exams, it was his Head of School, Professor Graham Mucklow, who suggested an alternative path. 'He asked if I was absolutely sure about doing resits, and suggested I might be better applying my leadership skills in business. I didn't think I had the capabilities for that but he said "Yes you do, look at how you led your fellow students through the JCR Committee. You could be just one engineer, or you could lead hundreds of engineers." His advice played a very key role in changing the course of my life.'

Subbiah returned home that summer to get married and came back to spend two more years in Birmingham studying at the College of Advanced Technology (now Aston University), and complete an internship on the shop floor with one of the Murugappa Group's local business partners, Tube Investments. The experience left an enduring impression, to the degree that the Murugappa Group will offer a place to a University of Birmingham student

in summer 2012 as part of the International Internship scheme.

'My internship on the shop floor in Birmingham was one of the best things to happen in my life and it made me respect and understand the people doing the job when I became a manager,' he says. 'I still believe internships are absolutely critical as a bridge between studying and employment. They give young people a great opportunity to understand markets, people and professional culture, and broaden their outlook on life.'

Over subsequent decades, Subbiah played a key role in turning around the group's acquisitions and in 1995, he took the reins as Chairman. He is credited as instrumental in turning a family-run business group into a modern, professionally-managed entity, bringing in external consultants to help restructure the company, and overseeing the adoption of corporate governance initiatives.

By the time the grandfather-of-four retired in January 2004, the Chennai-based group's turnover had passed the \$1 billion mark. As one of India's leading business conglomerates, it is a market leader in areas including engineering, finance, insurance, sugar, plantations, and many more. With 29 businesses spread across 13 states in India and five continents, and more than 32,000 employees, the group is working towards a turnover of more than \$7 billion by 2014–15.

Despite its commercial success, the business continues to follow the tradition of 'Mahemai', in which a fixed percentage of profits is devoted to the welfare of the community. 'In Indian culture, when you start earning money, you start giving back,' he says. 'Your profits come from the community so you share your wealth with them. When my grandfather made his first money in 1917, he built a house. Then he built a temple water tank for the whole community and later the village's first hospital. We still run that hospital, along with four more (seeing almost 750,000 outpatients every year) and four schools that educate 12,000 children.



Recognition: Subbiah (seen here with most of his family) received an honorary degree from the University this year

Murugappa Subbiah at a glance

Born: 2 February 1939 in the village of Pallattur in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu

Family: Married to Seetha, with two daughters Valli and Sivagami, son Vellayna and four grandchildren

Education and career: Completed two years of a mechanical engineering degree at the University of Birmingham and another two years of studies at the College of Advanced Technology (now Aston University) in Birmingham, along with an internship. On his return to India, he joined the family business, worked his way up to become Chairman before retiring in 2004 after 43 years with the Murugappa Group

Enjoys: Studying Indian culture, history and philosophy

Did you know? Subbiah's brother Murugappan is a fellow Birmingham alumnus. He graduated with a BSc in Civil Engineering in 1956



Balance: Subbiah believes business success can go hand in hand with family values

Writing a cheque is the easy part – it's the time you give back that is more important and gives real satisfaction.'

For his part, Subbiah has served on the board of the Global Family Business Network, a non-profit organisation that supports family-run businesses around the world with internship schemes, conferences and other activities; and is Chairman of the National Skills Development Corporation (a public private partnership) with a mandate to skill 150 million young people across India.

'This is so important for two reasons. India's population is very large and with globalisation, professions like agriculture are becoming much more mechanised. Vocational training used to pass down from father to son, but that has almost completely died out and with no vocational training in schools, we must provide that instead. Secondly, the global population is ageing but in contrast, 40% of the Indian population is below the age of 20. That gives us a big advantage and, if we give our young people the right skills, we can supply the world in professions like nursing for example.'

For Subbiah, this future focus goes hand in hand with a foundation of family ideals. 'I believe contemporary business challenges – responding to external change, innovating, and sustaining and developing the organisation in a global marketplace – must be balanced by respect for the rich traditions and values of family.'

Perhaps Subbiah's way of business, and way of life, is best summed up by the group's business philosophy, which is based on ancient Indian treatise the Arthashastra. Translated, it means: 'The fundamental principle of economic activity is that no man you transact with will lose, then you shall not.'

Learn more

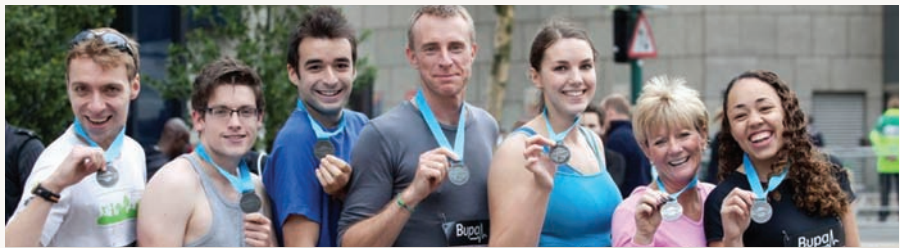
www.murugappa.com/index_home.htm

Great Run raises thousands for cancer research

A team of University staff and alumni completed the 13.1-mile Bupa Great Birmingham Run at the end of October to raise more than £4,200 for cancer research at the University.

Staff from the Medical School, the School of Dentistry, and the Development and Alumni Relations Office ran the half-marathon course alongside several alumni and former world marathon record-holder Haile Gebrselassie (Hon DUniv, 2010), who beat 15,000 other competitors to win the race.

Runner Simon Fairbanks (BA English, 2007) said: 'The Great Run was the perfect opportunity to give something back to the University. It was so much fun and I met some great people. It was even better knowing that



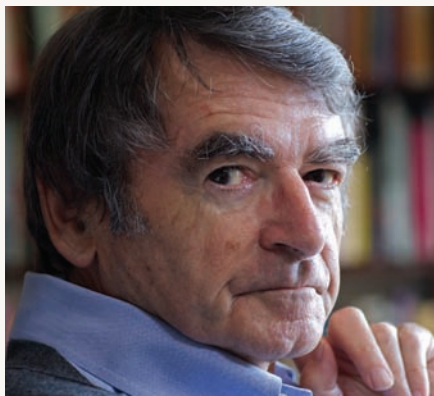
Great team: Some of the University runners show off their medals

the money raised would be benefitting the University's Cancer Research team. Hope to see everyone again for the 2012 half-marathon!

Alumni, staff, students, parents or friends can all now raise money for the University. Any fundraising ideas are welcome, from dress-down days or raffles to something

more quirky. In this, the first year of fundraising, staff have already raised money for brain injury research with a cake and book sale; and for cancer research by crossing the Scottish Highlands on foot, bike and kayak.

To find out more about fundraising for Birmingham, visit <http://www.justgiving.com/teams/uniofbirmingham>



Acclaimed: Professor David Lodge CBE

My favourite books

'The test of a great book is that it stands up to repeated re-reading,' explains Professor David Lodge CBE, the distinguished award-winning author and alumnus (PhD English, 1967) who has written 16 critically-acclaimed novels. Here, he talks about his top five recommended reads.

Emma, Jane Austen

'I am going to take a heroine whom no-one but myself will very much like,' Jane Austen said when she began it, and it is true that Emma has several unlikeable traits; but basically her heart is in the right place and like her creator, she is blessed with wit and intelligence, traits which make us wish for her eventual happiness.

On subsequent readings we appreciate new ironies and subtleties in the story which are never exhausted. It is Jane Austen's most perfect novel.

Ulysses, James Joyce

This novel is intimidating to the 'general reader', but invariably figures on writers' lists of their favourite books. It is the story of one day, 16 June 1904, in the lives of a group of Dubliners, who re-enact, often in a comic and parodic fashion, the adventures of Homer's hero Ulysses (aka Odysseus).

The idea of basing a modern story on a classic precursor has been much

imitated, by myself among others. Equally influential was Joyce's innovative technique for representing the 'stream of consciousness', and his unprecedented candour about sexuality. Reading this book attentively and with good guides is an education in itself.

Bleak House, Charles Dickens

This exemplifies the features of Dickens' genius – epic scope in its critique of Victorian society, memorable characters, hilarious comedy, powerful melodrama, the sense of nemesis working itself out in a complex plot, wonderful descriptions of places, people, weather – and also, uniquely in his work, two different narrative methods intertwined, one first-person, the other authorial. From the opening chapter with its vision of the Lord Chancellor presiding symbolically over the rain, mud and fog of London, it exerts an irresistible spell.

Vile Bodies, Evelyn Waugh

Waugh was obsessed with what he perceived as the ever-accelerating disintegration of civilised values in the 20th century, but instead of articulating this vision through myth and

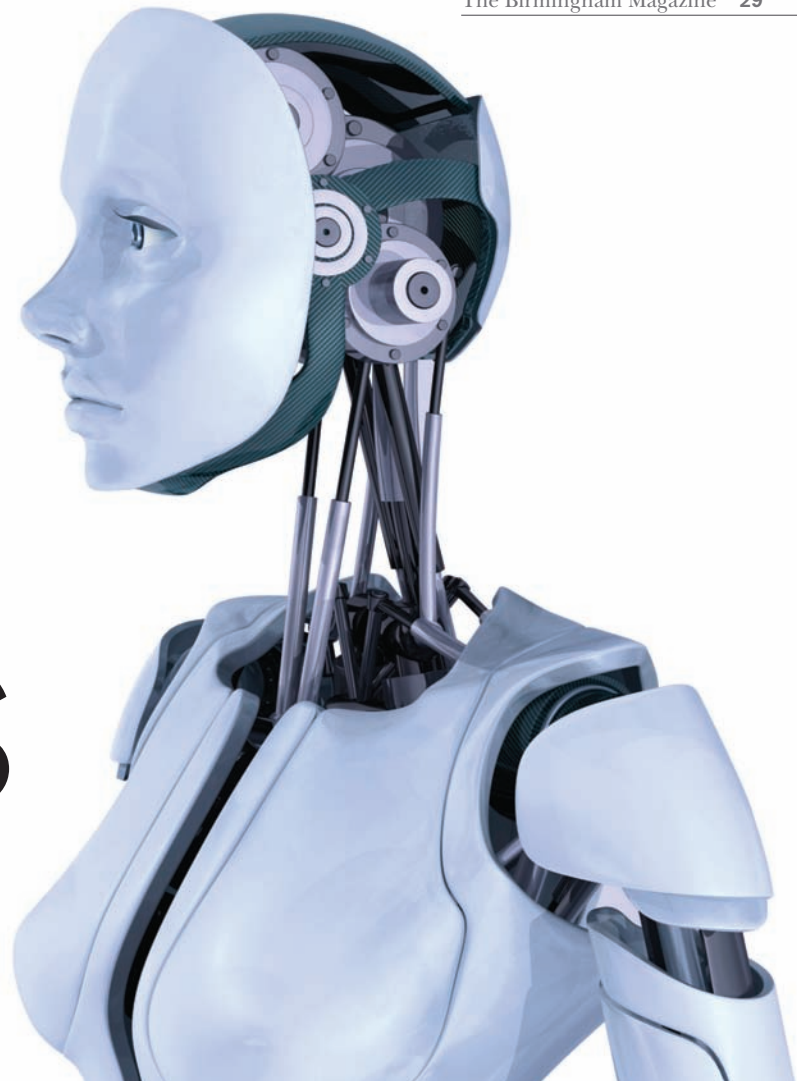
symbolism, he projected it in comic picaresque novels whose characters outrageously cheat, betray and hurt each other with stylish insouciance. The effect is both funny and shocking. I first read *Vile Bodies*, about the excesses of the Bright Young Things of the 1920s, when I was 15. It delighted me then, and has done ever since.

Slaughterhouse 5, Kurt Vonnegut

I was a child aged four to ten during the Second World War, but it left a trace on my memories and attitudes which is reflected in some of my novels. Kurt Vonnegut drew on much more dramatic and dangerous personal experience – of being a young American soldier captured in the Battle of the Bulge in late 1944, and a prisoner of war in Dresden when it was devastated in one of the last Allied air-raids. Daringly Vonnegut approaches this daunting subject through the mode of whimsical science fiction. Vonnegut also appears in the novel himself, making and breaking the illusion of reality. It is a novel about its own processes as well as the world – funny, moving and thought-provoking.

For a chance to win all five of Professor Lodge's recommended books turn to page 38.

RISE OF THE ROBOTS



The dream of one day having robots that think and act independently is a step closer thanks to the University's Intelligent Robotics Lab.

From machines that explore our oceans and the surface of Mars; to computers that drive cars, aid people's recovery from accidents, or clean up oil spills; the capabilities of intelligent robotics are only limited by the imaginations of their human creators.

The world of artificial intelligence is in a period of spectacular progress that will fundamentally change our daily lives, and 'further our understanding of the universe and our own world'. The School of Computer Science's Intelligent Robotics Lab is at the forefront of these discoveries, producing robots that can think autonomously, and independently develop new capabilities.

Co-led by Dr Richard Dearden and Dr Jeremy Wyatt, the Intelligent Robotics Lab has already produced Dora, a self-motivated robot who explores her surroundings and identifies objects as she develops her knowledge of the world.

Dr Wyatt says: 'In our lifetime robots will gradually continue to get smarter, which will

eventually have an enormous impact on our everyday lives.'

The University has invested £3 million in a new Centre for Computational Neuroscience and Cognitive Robotics (CN-CR), which will both help further technologies for intelligent robots, and also understanding of many aspects of neuroscience such as robots that can retrain the ageing brain. This centre, co-led by Professor Chris Miall in Psychology, has now recruited six world-leading professors and lecturers in neuroscience and robotics, a major investment by international standards that has caught the attention of roboticists and cognitive neuroscientists worldwide.

'The flow of information between robotics and neuroscience is two-way,' Dr Wyatt explains. 'Evidence about how the brain works provides inspiration for how to control robots more effectively, while robots can be used as test beds for computational models of brain function. This work also has practical benefits when treating brain injury, such as the development of robotic devices which

can be used as robot-physiotherapists to help stroke patients recover their motor skills more rapidly.' Many important advances in robotics will come from outside neuroscience.

Birmingham also has world-leading research in autonomous vehicles, led by Dr Dearden who previously worked on the planetary rover programme at NASA.

He adds: 'Some of the greatest scientific discoveries ahead will come from sending robots to hostile environments. Humans have already sent robots to Mars and they've been a great success; they've gone somewhere we can't and nobody cares if they don't come back.

'That's very important because if we want to know more about our universe, we need robots that are able to make some of the discoveries for us.'

Learn more

www.cs.bham.ac.uk/research/groupings/robotics_and_cognitive_architectures/

LEADING THE BATTLE AGAINST INFECTION

From *E. coli* in our food or superbugs in our hospitals to TB resurgent in our communities, infection remains a threat locally, nationally and globally. Our researchers are finding new ways to fight our most fearsome microbial adversaries.

In May 2011, a lethal outbreak of *E. coli* infection erupted in the heart of Europe, reminding us that pathogenic micro-organisms can devastate even the most advanced societies. The outbreak strain infected more than 3,700 people and resulted in more than 40 deaths, mostly in previously healthy individuals. But what kind of strain was this, where had it come from, and why was it so virulent?

To answer these questions, Birmingham's Professor Mark Pallen worked with groups in Hamburg and China to spearhead a pioneering 'open-source genome analysis' of a bacterium from the outbreak. As Pallen says: 'This project drew on a remarkable combination of rapid DNA sequencing, speedy data release and crowd-sourced analyses, powered by social networking tools. Instead of all the computer-based work being done in a single research centre, DNA sequences were released on to the internet, which triggered a flurry of analyses by bioinformaticians across the globe. Within a week, more than 20 entries had been filed on a collaborative website, revealing the strain's identity and evolutionary origins and priming the development of a new laboratory test specific to this strain.'

The emergence of resistance to antibiotics is another pressing problem, particularly in hospitals, where resistant 'superbugs' cost the NHS at least £1 billion a year. Although there has been recent progress in limiting the spread of MRSA and *C. difficile*, concerns remain over the potential emergence of a new superbug resistant to all antibiotics. A team led by Professor Laura Piddock is exploring the factors driving the emergence of antibiotic resistance and the molecular mechanisms involved, focusing not just on antibiotics, but also on disinfectants which, she suspects, might also prime bacteria to become multi-drug resistant.

'Twenty-first century medicine is very different from when antibiotics were developed 60 years ago,' she explains. 'The infections we are seeing now are unlike those we encountered even 25 years ago because we have more sophisticated medical techniques. If we want

effective cancer or transplant treatments, we have to be able to treat the infections these patients get with antibiotics that work. We are working to understand how bacteria develop resistance to drugs in the hope that we can prevent this happening in the future. We strive to raise public awareness about the need for urgent action in this area.'

Nearly 2 million people around the world die each year from tuberculosis (TB). Even with established combinations of drugs, TB is notoriously difficult to treat, but we now face the emergence of multi-drug resistance in this pathogen. Common to the fight against TB and hospital superbugs is the need to discover and develop new antibiotics, effective even against multi-drug resistant strains. However, not a single new class of antibiotic has been introduced into the market in more than 15 years and sadly, most major pharmaceutical companies have abandoned antibiotic development, leaving it to the academic and small-business sector.

So, how can we find new antibiotics? One way forward is to gain a better understanding of what makes microbes tick, in the hope of discovering new vulnerabilities open to attack. Professor Ian Henderson, who is working out how *E. coli* makes its cell wall, explains: 'I hope our work will lead to novel strategies for combating infectious diseases and to the identification of new treatments for bacterial infections. This progress is made possible by exploiting our strengths in disciplines from structural biology to chemistry. It is a collaborative endeavour to tackle one of the greatest threats to human health today.'

In the group of Del Besra, Bardrick Professor of Physiology and Chemistry, in the School of Biosciences, scientists are unpicking how the TB bacterium's cell wall is made in minute detail. 'By working out what enzymes the bacterium uses, we hope to be able to develop drugs that actually target some of those enzymes, resulting in better and more cost-effective treatments,' explains Besra. 'In a sense, we treat the enzyme as a lock and we try to design a key that fits it.'





Lethal: *E.coli* cells



Research: The University's Ion Torrent Personal Genome Machine

The jargon explained

Micro-organism or microbe: a microscopic living organism, such as a bacterium or virus

Pathogen: a microbe that can cause disease

Genome: the complete set of genes in an organism; written in a series of molecular letters, it provides a recipe book for life

DNA sequencing: a laboratory technology that allows scientists to read the characters in the genome

Learn more

www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving/circlesofinfluence/infections.aspx

An alternative is to adopt an empirical, trial-and-error strategy, for example, by screening of compounds for antimicrobial activity without worrying, at least at first, about how they work, so long as they are effective. This is analogous to trying lots of combinations in the hope of unlocking a safe, except that, instead of working through them one at a time, millions are tested in parallel. Besra points out: 'We are one of very few centres in the world with the combination of cutting-edge, high-throughput screening technology and a detailed understanding of how the bacterium works, so we are very well placed to make these breakthroughs in drug discovery.'

Birmingham microbiologist, Professor Chris Thomas is trying yet another approach to the creation of new antibiotics – a method called mutasynthesis. This line of attack exploits the pathways that naturally occurring micro-organisms use to produce antibiotics, but feeds them unusual compounds, so that the microbes produce antibiotics with novel properties.

Finally, we mustn't forget viruses, which cause infections but are not susceptible to conventional antibiotics. The focus of Professor Jane McKeating's research in the Medical School is the virus that causes hepatitis C, a long-term, potentially life-threatening infection of the liver, which affects around 180 million people worldwide. Her research group is using groundbreaking techniques to dissect the mechanisms that the virus uses to enter cells and spread between them, in the hope of finding new drug targets.

In closing, Professor Pallen explains: 'We are fortunate in Birmingham in having such a concentration of talent and technology on the same campus, attacking the problem of infection from so many different angles. It is clear that we are making our mark on global efforts to rid humanity of the scourge of infection. Together, we can make a difference.'

To support global infection research at Birmingham, contact Matt Mangan, Director of Fundraising, via m.a.mangan@bham.ac.uk or visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving/circlesofinfluence/infections.aspx

Heroic: The success of modern medicine in keeping critically ill patients alive lays them open to the risk of infection

The bonfire of the humanities

In the midst of the global financial crisis, arts and cultural organisations have suffered savage funding cuts, and these cuts are about to hit higher education. But, with a culture of excellence, ambition and investment, the College of Arts and Law has an exciting future ahead.

If the media is to be believed, we are entering a dark age for arts and humanities. The government's decision to phase out teaching grants to these subject areas will affect everything from literature to archaeology, with the greater share of cuts coinciding with increased tuition fees in 2012. These fees will entirely replace teaching grants in all but the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects.

Is this proof of a 'new philistinism' from the government? A rejection of the value of the arts to Britain's economy? Professor Michael Whitby, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Arts and Law, certainly thinks not.

'There's much misinformation about changes to government funding for higher education, with many people talking about an attack on the humanities on the basis that they appear to have had their funding removed. This is untrue,' he remarks.

'All subjects have had funding removed to the same extent, but those subjects that are inevitably much more expensive to teach (medicine; most of the sciences) are being allocated a top-up which is intended to preserve parity between disciplines. The new arrangements will constitute a major challenge to all our subjects, but it's vital that we don't talk ourselves into gloom and doom through false claims that the world is against us. We must be confident in the quality of what we are offering and assertive in proclaiming its considerable benefits.'

At the end of last year, the College of Arts and Law at Birmingham was named as one of the top 50 places in the world to study arts and humanities subjects in the *Times Higher Education Supplement's* World University Rankings. The College is determined to ensure that students continue to receive excellent tuition in the future, and has made substantial investments in the development of its teaching staff, as well as in student learning and development, with additional posts created in popular and successful areas such as English, Law, Music and History.





Renowned: The Centre of West African Studies has established an international reputation for research on Africa and its diaspora



Investment: This interactive 3D touch table was funded by alumni and trusts

The University is also investing substantial sums in its campus. The 450-seat Bramall Music Building – a state-of-the-art auditorium for music, drama and lectures – is fast taking shape in Chancellor's Court. The European Research Institute, where Philosophy, Theology and Religion are located, has benefited from an overhaul; and a complete makeover of the Arts Building is scheduled to start in 2013. Meanwhile, the refurbishment of the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon will be unveiled in autumn as part of its 60th anniversary celebrations; and the Heritage and Cultural Learning Hub is aiming to engage new audiences by opening up heritage through technology.

Research excellence remains a priority, with many projects attracting external funding. For example, since February 2010 the Visual and Spatial Technology Centre (VISTA) at the University's Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity has been using remote sensing and geospatial modelling to reconstruct the former onshore and offshore landscape environments in the State of Qatar. The Qatar Government has announced a further £400,000 investment in the project, which may be rolled out across the Gulf States.

Looking ahead, a series of prestigious international initiatives led by the University is being planned for 2014 to mark the centenary of World War One. Dr Pierre Purseigle, Senior Lecturer in Modern History, says: 'We are determined to use this opportunity to invite the British public to think differently about the experience of the First World War; about the different ways in which the belligerent societies contributed to the war; and the very complex legacies of this conflict.'

Of course, it's just as important to make the University's expertise available to a wider

audience, and with that in mind, the College of Arts and Law launched the Birmingham Speakers Programme in March of this year. Under this new initiative, clubs, schools and community groups in the Birmingham area can book one of 60 academics who have volunteered to give talks on more than 100 topics. In a similar vein, the University will be launching an Online Book Club in autumn 2012, open exclusively to alumni. Inspired by similar clubs offered by US universities, such as Johns Hopkins, this scheme is a first among UK universities and aims to highlight key research and stimulate debate.

There's support, too, for graduating students looking for a foothold in the job market. The alumni-funded Cultural Internships programme offers six-month paid placements in prominent arts organisations such as Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham Royal Ballet and Birmingham Opera Company.

'The University's vision and ambition will only be achievable in collaboration with our alumni,' adds Professor Whitby. 'Our graduates already provide funding for A2B [Access to Birmingham] scholarships, contribute to mentoring schemes and offer work experience placements for students keen to secure work experience in their preferred careers. Such contributions are vital. Our graduates are our best representation of the benefits of an education in the humanities and law, a constant demonstration of the variety of career options available to those with the confidence to seize the opportunities.'

To support these initiatives, visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving/circlesofinfluence

What impact do the creative industries have on the UK economy?

- Between 1997 and 2006, the creative economy grew faster than any other sector, accounting for 2 million jobs and £16.6 billion of exports in 2007 (source: Arts Council England)
- Arts and culture tourism in the UK was worth £86 billion in 2007 – 3.7% of GDP – and directly employed 1.4 million people (source: Arts Council England)
- The performing arts and film industry contribute more than £7 billion to the UK economy each year (source: *The Guardian*)

A force to be reckoned with

Standing accused of threatening the universe's very existence might faze most people, but Dr David Evans' belief in his science is unshakeable.

Despite being named by *GQ* magazine as one of the 100 most influential men in Britain, having an Appreciation Society on Facebook, and playing a lead role in an experiment that could revolutionise understanding of the universe; for Dr David Evans (PhD Physics, 1992), it's simply about the science.

He admits that the transition from his work colliding beams of subatomic particles to recreate conditions immediately after the Big Bang, to decorating the spare room or doing the weekly shop can feel a little strange. But over his 12-year involvement with ALICE (A Large Ion Collider Experiment), David has learned to take the enormity of the research in his stride, while still remaining as passionate about physics as the day he first discovered it.

'My favourite subject, even at infant school, was mathematics (and if you were naughty back then, as punishment you were given mathematics to do, so I was not a very well behaved child!),' says David, who is Head of Year 1 Physics at the University. 'I liked all the sciences, but when I found that physics had mathematics in it as well, I knew it was for me.'

'This is a ten-year programme and the data we gathered in all of last year will only be 1% of the total we gather for the programme as a whole.'

David had always planned to study mathematics at university but changed his plans at the eleventh hour. 'At the last minute, I applied to do physics instead because I thought there was more I could do with it, and more to learn in terms of how the universe works. So I read physics at Oxford and it was there that I really got interested in high energy physics and the fundamental forces of nature.'

His appetite for the subject growing, David came to Birmingham to complete a PhD in high energy physics. 'Before coming here, I had a

view of Birmingham as mines and pits and of being rather grey, so I was surprised to see such a beautiful campus. It was a relaxed and friendly group and I very much enjoyed my PhD – it was a fantastic experience.'

David's involvement with CERN (European Organisation for Nuclear Research) – which runs ALICE, among other experiments, at its Large Hadron Collider (LHC) – began while he was still studying. 'I chose to work on one of the smaller experiments – a brand-new area of physics which was trying to find evidence that a quark-gluon plasma (a state of matter believed to have been present soon after the Big Bang) actually existed and the idea was that if you collide nuclei together, you might be able to form this plasma. This was just starting and no one had done this before, and there were about 30 people involved in the experiment I was working on. Now ALICE has 1,000.'

The LHC is described by CERN as 'a gigantic scientific instrument about 100 metres underground near Geneva. It is a particle accelerator used by physicists to study the smallest known particles – the fundamental building blocks of all things.'

'We are creating the highest temperatures ever recorded which results in this quark-gluon plasma, or primordial soup,' David explains. 'It is 200,000 times hotter than the centre of the Sun and the only thing denser in the universe is a black hole. It's fascinating because the more we study this matter, the stranger it is. It behaves like a perfect liquid and something the size of an atomic nucleus can stop high energy particles in their tracks, which is equivalent to stopping a Boeing 747 dead in the air with a sheet of tinfoil. We are learning about this quark-gluon plasma for the first time, and we will undoubtedly discover new and unexpected physics too.'

But not everyone is positive about the experiments being carried out by CERN. 'Just before we started the collisions at LHC, there was a group in the States who published my name and contact information on a website saying I would be responsible for the end of

the world,' David recalls. 'The problem is that physicists are seen as either nerds or evil scientists and people think we are going to rip a hole in space and time and destroy the universe, but we never do anything without thorough research and consideration. We get some of the best minds in the world to look at everything – even what you might describe as crackpot theories – and work out whether it could possibly be true before anything is dismissed.'

Despite facing criticism from some quarters, David is passionate about what the work could achieve. 'As far as we know, there are four fundamental forces in nature – gravity, electromagnetism, the weak force (which controls some radioactive decays and how stars generate energy), and the strong force, which is the strongest force known. It binds nuclei together and quarks together and the energy stored within it generates 98% of nuclear mass. This is the force we know the least about, and ALICE will help us understand more than ever before.'

In his role at the University, David has proved so popular his students even set up their own Facebook Appreciation Society. 'That's the good thing about a top university like Birmingham – students are being taught by an international expert in the field and hopefully that inspires them. Our students really are outstanding and I believe this kind of research helps attract these bright and enthusiastic young people.'

So, with ALICE still in relatively early days, what does David hope to achieve in the long-term? 'This is a ten-year programme and the data we gathered in all of last year will only be 1% of the total we gather for the programme as a whole. I believe that this research is like Faraday studying electricity and people thinking it was purely an academic pursuit that would never have any real-life applications. Who knows what spin-offs there will be from this in 100 or 200 years time, but I genuinely believe we will change textbooks in the future.'

Learn more

www.aliceinfo.cern.ch/Public/Welcome.html



Gigantic: David at the ALICE experiment at CERN

Dr David Evans at a glance

Born: 10 January 1967 in London

Family: Married to Laura

Education and career: Read physics at Oxford before completing his PhD in high energy physics at Birmingham. Joined the University staff in 1994 after completing a two-year CERN fellowship and got involved with the ALICE experiment in 1999. Now Head of Year 1 Physics at the University and lead on the UK team in ALICE

Did you know? The David Evans Appreciation Society was set up on Facebook by students – 'for everyone who thinks David Evans is just a bit of a legend'.

Alumni of the Year



Sarah-Jane Marsh
(MA Russian and East
European Studies, 1999)

Born and educated in the Black Country, the winner of the Alumna of the Year, Sarah-Jane Marsh, has dedicated her career to the NHS since graduating from Birmingham in 1999.

Sarah-Jane joined the NHS National Management Training Scheme in 2000, working at both Worcestershire Hospitals and Redditch and Bromsgrove Primary Care Trust. She also enrolled on her second postgraduate degree at Birmingham, this time at the Health Services Management Centre.

From the Training Scheme she worked briefly at the Department of Health, before returning to the Midlands to take on a planning and development role at Walsall Hospitals. Her skills for bringing clinical and managerial expertise together were quickly recognised, and she was promoted to Head of Planning and Development in 2004, and Director of Planning and Productivity in 2005.

In 2007 Sarah-Jane became Chief Operating Officer at Birmingham Children's Hospital, where she immediately started a transformation programme to improve the way the hospital operated. When she became Chief Executive just 16 months later at 32, she was the youngest ever of a Foundation Trust.

In the two years since her appointment, Sarah-Jane is credited with a turnaround in the running of the organisation. She is also Regional Chair of the West Midlands Emerging Leaders Group, and has recently qualified as a Coach, supporting young women and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds to fulfil their potential.



Christopher Adams
(BA Russian Language
and Literature and Hispanic
Studies, 1992)

Christopher Adams is the Markets Editor at the *Financial Times*, where he manages and edits news, analysis, and commentary for worldwide audiences.

As a regular industry commentator, he often appears on the *BBC News* channel providing expert opinion on major breaking news stories.

He began his career as a writer for the energy industry publication *Petroleum Argus*, before joining international news service Reuters, where he worked as an energy correspondent.

Christopher joined the *Financial Times* in 1996, just four years after he graduated from the University, and after a decade in the company he was promoted to Leader Writer and Assistant News Editor.

Christopher is active in giving advice to graduates wishing to pursue a career in financial journalism, and advises people to 'look for the stories in the numbers, and read as much as you can from Europe's sovereign debt crisis to what's driving jet fuel prices.'

Nominate your Alumni of the Year 2012 by emailing c.f.osullivan@bham.ac.uk

Queen's Honours

Congratulations to the alumni listed below, who were awarded Queen's Birthday and New Year's Honours in 2011.

New Year's Honours

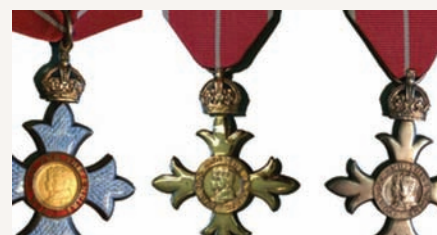
Marion Bennathan (BCom Social and Political Science, 1948) OBE
Linda M Chapman (BA Geography and Physical Education, 1964) MBE
Lindsay Cross (BMus Music, 1976) MBE
Norman Draper (ILGS Public Service) OBE
John Fisher (BSc Physics, 1976) CBE
Ali Hadawi (BEng Electronic and Computer Engineering, 1989) CBE
Sandra Horley OBE (Short Course Sociology, 1978) CBE
Professor Christopher Lowe (BSc Biochemistry, 1967) OBE
David Mant (MBChB Medicine, 1977) OBE

David Ovadia (MSc Geography, 1976) OBE
Dr David Pearson (MBChB Medicine, 1955) MBE
Sheila Rosenberg (MA English, 1963) OBE
Helen Sage (ACE Education, 1999) MBE
Stephen Simmons (MCDH Dentistry, 1980) MBE
Malcolm Wilson (BA French Language and Literature, 1949) MBE
The Reverend Canon Dr Andrew Wingate (PhD Theology, 1995) OBE
Professor Philip Woodworth (PhD Physics, 1974) MBE

Queen's Birthday Honours

Fiona M Adams (BSocSc Social Policy and Social Work, 1967) MBE
Rosemary S Barnes (BSocSc History and Social Science, 1967) OBE
Sophie C Churchill (PhD Education, 1995) OBE
Richard C Darton (BSc Chemical Engineering, 1970) OBE
Deborah J Fish (BSc Chemistry, 1991) OBE
Denis R Grey (BA German Language and Literature, 1975) MBE
Philip Hanson (PhD Russian Language and Literature, 1971) OBE
Annamarie Hassall (PG Cert Public Service Management, 1996) MBE

Peter J James (BA English, 1962) CBE
Rosemary C Jolly (BA English, 1961) MBE
Mervyn A King (Hon DSc, 2002) Knights Grand Cross of Order of the British Empire GBE
Rajinder K Mann (BEd Social Sciences, 1980) OBE
Christopher C Morrell (BA Physical Education, 1975) MBE
Kathryn M Morrison (MA Theology, 2008) MBE
Adrian Parton (PhD Cancer Studies, 1989) MBE
Mayank B Patel (PG Diploma Business Administration, 1990) OBE
Charles M Ridgway (BSc Geography, 1985) OBE
Robert C Stockdale (MBChB Medicine, 1967) MBE
Kent L Woods (Higher Clinical Training) Knights Bachelor



If you are a Birmingham alumnus or alumna who was awarded an honour in 2011 but your name is not included on the list, please accept our apologies and email alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk to let us know.

Honorary graduands

The exceptional alumni below were among those awarded honorary degrees this summer.



David Gill (BCom Industrial Economics and Business Studies, 1978) – Chief Executive of Manchester United Football Club



The Hon Chief Justice Geoffrey Ma (LLB Law, 1977) – Chief Justice of the Hong Kong Judiciary



Dr Terence Bramall (BSc Civil Engineering, 1964) – Director of Doncaster Rovers FC and Trustee of the Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation



Barbara Slater (BA Physical Education, 1981) – the first female BBC Director of Sport



Dr Murugappa Subbiah (Mechanical Engineering, 1958) – Chairman of the National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) in India



Dr The Hon Ahmed Rashid Beebeejaun (Interc BSc Physiology, 1959) – Deputy Prime Minister of the Mauritius Labour Party



Professor John Casken (BMus Music, 1970) – one of the UK's leading music composers



Dr Huqu Zhai (PhD Genetics, 1987) – President of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences



Professor Jo Bradwell (MChB Medicine, 1968) – Chairman of biomedical development company The Binding Site



Professor David Phillips OBE (BSc Chemistry, 1961) – Senior Science Ambassador for Schools and President-elect of the Royal Society of Chemistry in the UK



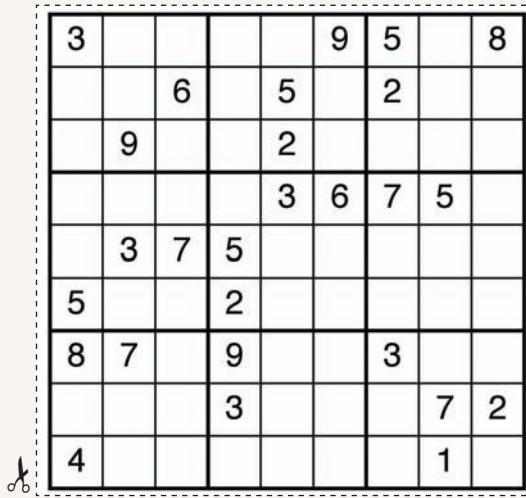
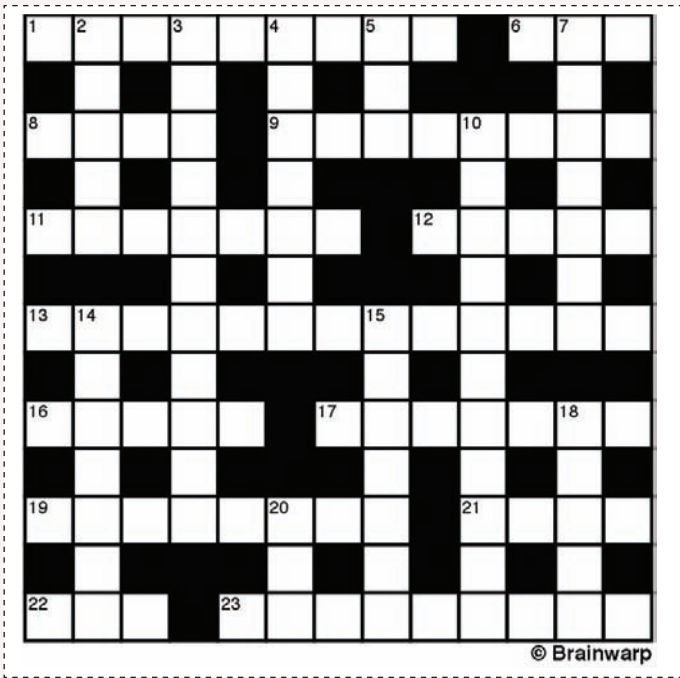
Dr Chris Henney (PhD Medicine, 1965) – recognised for his pioneering work in biotechnology



Professor Chris Pollock CBE (PhD Microbiology, 1972) – Chair of the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE)

Puzzles – Benefits – Giving

Competitions: Complete our tricky teasers for your chance to win some University merchandise.



ACROSS

1. Stringed musical instrument with a triangular sound box much used in Russia (9)
6. Town in Belgium, famous for its mineral springs (3)
8. One of the great lakes of North America (4)
9. Parasite, affecting the intestines of humans, usually by way of inadequately cooked meat (8)
11. West Indian folk song (7)
12. Surname of the American born poet who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948 (5)
13. Film actor who has specialised in character roles and won the Best Actor Oscar in 1988 (6,7)
16. The outer covering of a flower (5)
17. Part of the body between the diaphragm and the pelvis, containing several major organs (7)
19. Patron Saint of children (8)
21. Main ingredient of omelettes (4)
22. Large running bird, found in Australia (3)
23. Surname of the British doctor who, in 1954, became the first to run a mile in under four minutes (9)

DOWN

2. Major artery that carries blood from the heart (5)
3. Welsh town where the University College of Wales was founded in 1872 (11)
4. A craftsman or skilled workman (7)
5. Term for a round-topped hill (3)
7. A structure with climbing plants along a walk (7)
10. Plants cultivated for their fragrant red, yellow and bronze flowers in spring (11)
14. White, heavy metal, of vital importance in the production of atomic energy (7)
15. Surname of the American singer who had many hits in Britain including *It's Over* and *Oh Pretty Woman* (7)
18. Large bird of prey which in Britain is largely confined to the highlands of Scotland (5)
20. English river, flowing past Luton, Hertford and Ware to join the Thames at Blackwall (3)

Books competition

For your chance to win the five books recommended by Professor David Lodge on page 28, answer the following question:

In what year did Professor Lodge gain his PhD from Birmingham?

How to enter: To enter the crossword and Sudoku competitions, cut out and return your completed entry (photocopies will be accepted) to:

Magazine competition, Alumni Office, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT, UK

by 31 January 2012.

Entries for the books competition can be emailed to: alumniconmunications@contacts.bham.ac.uk or posted to the address opposite by 31 January 2012.

Please remember to include your name, address, contact telephone number, subject, and year of graduation.



Sign up now for the exclusive Birmingham Alumni Travel Programme 2012



Learn more

www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/benefits/services/AlumnitravelProgramme.aspx

Save money with the new Alumni Benefits package

The University's Alumni Benefits scheme is saving shoppers thousands of pounds.

Alumni Benefits has helped more than 1,600 users save more than £7,000 through exclusive deals from hundreds of retailers including John Lewis, Apple, Sainsbury's and Expedia. To register, visit:

<https://uobalumni.corporateperks.com/login>

Alumni Benefits is offered by a partner organisation that negotiates national and regional discounts for members.

The scheme is in addition to the Alumni Travel Programme, offering two-week long excursions to the Galapagos Islands, Morocco and Turkey accompanied by a University academic.

Find old friends and new ones through social networking groups

Track down old friends and find out about University news and events through our alumni Facebook fan page, called University of Birmingham Alumni.

You can also build useful networks and find out more professionally-focused information via our alumni group on LinkedIn, called University of Birmingham Alumni and Friends.

Sign up today!

Supporting the University is easier than ever



JustGiving

This is the quickest and easiest way to raise money for the Circles of Influence campaign. When you have decided how you would like to support us, let us know and we can help you to set up your own fundraising page online. Then, you simply email the link to all your friends and family so they can support you. Please visit www.justgiving.com/universityofbirmingham



Text giving

You can also give through text message by sending a text to 70070 with CIRC02 followed by the amount you'd like to give, for example, CIRC02 £5. Please remember to Gift Aid your donation so your gift is worth 25% more at no extra cost to you.

Fundraising

By organising an individual or group activity, you can make a contribution, however big or small, to your chosen project in the Circles of Influence campaign. For more information, contact +44 (0)121 414 8894 or alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk



Circles of influence

Donation form

Full name and address	
Postcode	Year of graduation
Tel no	Email
Relationship to the University	
Making the most of your gift (UK taxpayers only) By making a Gift Aid declaration, your gift will be worth an extra 25% to the University at no additional cost to you. To make your gift tax-effective in this way please sign this declaration.* I agree that the University of Birmingham can treat all donations I have made in the past four years and all future donations I make from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations.	
<small>* To make a tax-effective gift, you must have paid an amount of UK income tax or capital gains tax that equals or exceeds the amount of tax to be reclaimed. Gift Aid is calculated as 25% from the tax reclaimed. Find out more at www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving</small>	
Signature	Date
I wish to make a gift to: <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Lifestyle <input type="checkbox"/> Children and Young People <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage, Culture and Sport <input type="checkbox"/> Student Support <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation and Immediate Impact*	
If you would like to specify a particular project please do so here: _____	
<small>* To be distributed annually to invest in creative and innovative ideas that will have an immediate impact on the student and staff experience at Birmingham</small>	
Cheque/CAF voucher I enclose a cheque made payable to the University of Birmingham or a CAF voucher for <input type="checkbox"/> £25 <input type="checkbox"/> £50 <input type="checkbox"/> £100 <input type="checkbox"/> £250 <input type="checkbox"/> Other £ _____	
Credit/Debit Card Please debit £ _____ from my Visa / MasterCard / Maestro / AMEX (delete as applicable) Card number _____ CCV number* _____ <small>* The last 3 or 4 digits found on the signature strip on the back of your card.</small> Name on card: _____ Start date _____ / _____ Signature _____ Expiry date _____ / _____ Date _____ Issue number (Maestro only) _____	
Regular gift (UK bank account) <input type="checkbox"/> £2 <input type="checkbox"/> £5 <input type="checkbox"/> £10 <input type="checkbox"/> £20 <input type="checkbox"/> £50 <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Monthly/Annually commencing on 5th _____	
Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay Direct Debit	
To: The Manager Bank/Building Society _____ Address _____ Postcode _____ Name(s) of the account holder(s) _____ Bank or Building Society account number _____ Branch sort code _____ / _____ / _____ Originators ID Number: 830107	
Instruction to your Bank or Building Society Please pay the University of Birmingham Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee (to be sent with your confirmation letter). I understand that this instruction may remain with the University of Birmingham and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.	
Signature	Date

- Please send me information on making a bequest to the University of Birmingham in my will
 I would like to discuss making a gift with a member of the University's Development team
 I do not wish my name to appear on the list of supporters of the University of Birmingham
 Please send me information about fundraising for the University of Birmingham

Please return this form to: Development and Alumni Office, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT, England (and not to your bank). Please note a completed photocopy of this form is acceptable.

Thank you.

All data is kept in accordance with our data protection statement. A copy is available at www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/stayingintouch/data-protection.aspx or by ringing +44(0)121 414 2771.

'Monumental' step for global plans

Opening up a new era of partnership and opportunities, Birmingham has launched a new research centre and its biggest office outside the UK in Guangzhou, China.



Launch: The Birmingham Guangzhou Centre is officially opened by the Mayor of Guangzhou Wan Qingliang and Birmingham's Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood



Partnership: The launch builds on a decade of engagement between the University and Guangzhou

Representing a 'monumental development' in far-reaching plans for a truly global presence, the University of Birmingham Guangzhou Centre will help to identify, design and deliver research projects in collaboration with local partners, including hospitals and businesses. Launched on 6 September by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood, and the Mayor of Guangzhou, the initial stage of the Birmingham Guangzhou Centre is focused on five biomedical projects, but this will grow to incorporate other themes including energy, communications and language, and urbanisation.

With 150 staff – 50 from the University and 100 from local organisations – and 50 PhD students, the centre builds on a decade of engagement with Guangzhou, and the accompanying office will be the University's biggest outside the UK. It is expected the development will provide enduring benefits for Birmingham students and staff alike.

'This launch shows that we want to be more than just a British university with international links,' says Dr Edward Harcourt, Director of International Relations. 'We are taking global

engagement to a different level to ensure our research and teaching is better informed, and that more staff and students are given the opportunity to engage with these key countries through internships, periods of study abroad and research partnerships. The Guangzhou Centre and office will be the catalyst for further development of these plans, giving our students and staff easier access to other cultural environments around the world.'

The launch is an important step in the University's global engagement strategy, which is focusing on four key territories – China, India, Brazil and the US. The University continues to develop networks in its sister city of Chicago, including a recent visit to Edgbaston from the President of the University of Chicago. Birmingham's senior management team took part in a three-day conference with the universities of Chicago and Northwestern last March. In Brazil, Birmingham is investing significant funding alongside the University of Nottingham in developing links and research collaborations, and now co-funds an officer in São Paulo who is responsible for student recruitment and partnership development across the country.

'Our international plans are different from many other UK universities whose brands are firmly entrenched in their campus or city,' adds Dr Harcourt. 'We are adopting a sophisticated approach which is responsive to the particular characteristics of each country and region and that is how we will become not just distant friends, but part of each regional ecosystem. This will bring benefits to not just the citizens of these countries, but the University as a whole.'

Birmingham – a global university

- 150 nationalities on campus
- 27% of staff are non-British
- Alumni groups and chapters in 24 countries including Ghana, Japan and Australia. Visit www.your.bham.ac.uk for details
- Offices in Guangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing, China; New Delhi, India; Brussels, Belgium; and a shared office in São Paulo, Brazil
- To hear about developments in your country, update your details at www.your.bham.ac.uk or complete the enclosed form

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

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B15 2TT, United Kingdom

www.birmingham.ac.uk