

## Just what the doctor ordered

Could gardening help people's health and well-being to grow?

Doctors could soon be prescribing or recommending a course of gardening to some of their patients, thanks to pioneering new research being carried out at Loughborough on behalf of national horticultural therapy charity Thrive.

The Centre for Child and Family Research, based in the Department of Social Sciences, and Thrive – the leading national charity promoting the use of horticulture for training, therapy, employment and health – have been awarded a grant of £322,526 from the Lottery's Community Fund to examine the benefits of horticulture as a tool for improving the quality of life of older, disabled and other vulnerable people. Around £270,000 of the grant will go to the University research group to undertake the three-year study. The research will be conducted by a small team, working closely with Thrive representatives, under the directorship of Saul Becker, Professor of Social Policy and Social Care.



"This is an exciting and innovative study – the first of its kind in the UK – to look at the ways by which gardening and horticulture can help promote vulnerable people's health, well-being and their wider participation in local communities," says research director Professor Becker.

### *Models of good practice*

"The study will have important implications for future policy, not just with regard to environmental management and horticultural issues, but

also in health and social care. We need to think creatively. In years to come, some people may be just as likely to turn to the land to help their own health and general well-being, as they would be now to seek help from health, social services or other agencies," he adds.

The research project will provide a map of existing therapeutic horticulture projects, and measure, using in-depth case studies, interviews and focus groups, how and why people benefit from such schemes. It will also provide models of good practice to inform the development of future schemes, and raise awareness of the potential benefits of therapeutic gardening and horticulture.

"Gardening is known to benefit a wide range of people, from older and disabled people to those with learning difficulties or mental health problems," says Tim Spurgeon, Advisory Services Manager for Thrive. "Projects operate in a wide variety of settings including day centres and hospitals, allotments and prisons. Most clients are referred by social services departments but an increasing number of GPs are recognising the benefits of horticulture as a therapy. It increases self-esteem,

builds confidence, offers basic and social skills and, for some, even leads to qualifications and the opportunity to move into employment."

### *Benefits of gardening*

"This isn't a new idea. The benefits of gardening, especially for those with mental health problems, have been catalogued as far back as the Middle Ages. We know it works, we now just have to prove it," he adds.

Loughborough University was this year ranked in the top five of social sciences departments in the country. The Department also gained a coveted top-rated 5\* grade in the Research Assessment Exercise, conducted in 2001.

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# HEFCE funding for 2002-03

On 6 March, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) announced the grants for the sector, for next academic year (2002-03). This includes, for the first time, funding from the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The results for Loughborough are shown in the table:

Activity	£s 2002-03	£s 2001-02
<b>Teaching funds</b>		
Core	30,717,441	29,438,809
Additional mainstream funded places	999,299	778,535
<b>Widening access and participation</b>		
Widening full-time participation from disadvantaged backgrounds	261,518	255,159
Widening part-time participation from disadvantaged backgrounds	0	887
Additional funds for widening participation	96,184	
Widening access for students with disabilities	134,431	97,184
<b>Total teaching funds</b>	32,208,872	30,570,575
<b>Research funds</b>	10,975,201	10,452,056
<b>Rewarding and developing staff</b>	1,252,272	848,613
<b>Total grant</b>	44,436,345	41,871,263

HEROBC (Higher Education Reach Out to Business and the Community) collaboration with business is announced separately. The overall increase of 6.1% is the largest for at least eight years. It is boosted by our success in bidding for additional funded places and in the RAE 2001, for which I warmly congratulate staff, as well as by the increase in money for rewarding and developing staff, for which we must deliver an HR (Human Resources) policy to HEFCE. The actual increase in funding per student is only 1.7%.

The following table shows the increases for other universities in the East Midlands, before and after allowing for additional funded numbers, and including the £1,075 means tested fee per student, which is not in the table above.

Institution	Change adjusted for volume	Change in total resource
<b>De Montfort University</b>	4.0%	4.0%
<b>University of Leicester</b>	1.9%	2.2%
<b>Loughborough University</b>	3.5%	5.5%
<b>University of Nottingham</b>	3.2%	8.2%
<b>Nottingham Trent University</b>	1.9%	1.9%
<b>Average for sector</b>	3.5%	4.9%

Note that De Montfort has actually had the largest increase in research income, while Nottingham's increase depends strongly on the additional students on their Jubilee campus.

HEFCE income represents less than 40% of our total income of around £120 million. Our budget for 2002-03 is crucially dependent on other income, particularly research grants and contracts and fees from overseas students. The former is continuing to rise encouragingly, and applications for overseas students are up again by 70%. It is vital for intellectual vitality and international culture as well as financial health, that every department maximises these activities.

**David Wallace**  
Vice Chancellor

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# Sleep research helps to launch driver tiredness campaign

The horrific consequences of falling asleep at the wheel are being highlighted in a hard-hitting new advertising campaign, which was launched on 27 March by Road Safety Minister David Jamieson. The campaign, featuring television and radio advertising and posters and leaflets, shows the devastating outcome when a driver falls asleep, and is based on research carried out by the UK's leading sleep research centre at Loughborough University, on behalf of the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR). From now on, the Highways Agency will be using their variable message signs on the motorway network to display the message 'Think: Don't Drive Tired'. The Sleep Research Centre has shown that people involved in these particular crashes are twice as likely to die or be seriously injured, compared with the 'average' road crash.

David Jamieson said, "This is a powerful advertisement, aimed at highlighting the potentially tragic consequences of falling asleep at the wheel. Exact figures on this are difficult to quantify, but our research suggests that drivers falling asleep could be a factor in one in ten of fatal and injury accidents on our roads – resulting in some 300 deaths and many thousands of injuries a year."

"I'm delighted that the Highways Agency will be using their 394 motorway message signs to reinforce and highlight this. It is something which every driver should consider seriously, on every journey. Falling asleep at the wheel is something which could happen to any driver, of any age on any journey."

Professor Jim Horne of the Sleep Research Centre, who carried out the research with his colleague Dr Louise Reyner and their team, offers these useful tips to reduce the effects of tiredness. "Never start a journey if you're already feeling sleepy, and try to avoid making long trips between midnight and 6 am when natural alertness is low," he states. "Stop for a 15 minute break every two hours on a long journey, and if you start to feel sleepy, find a safe place to stop – not on the hard shoulder. Then drink two cups of coffee, or a high caffeine drink, followed by a short nap or doze before the caffeine takes effect, and resume your journey 15 to 20 minutes later."

Dr Reyner continues, "All these crashes are preventable as drivers don't just fall asleep

without experiencing worsening symptoms of tiredness. But remember – opening the window or turning up the radio will do little to stop you falling asleep at the wheel."

Recent changes on driver sleepiness in the Highway Code were also initiated by the Centre's findings, and it's no coincidence that the first three permanent motorway signs – 'Tiredness Can Kill: Take a Break' – were sited near Loughborough. These can now be found all over the UK.

The Centre is continuing with this research and is also studying sleepiness combined with low alcohol intake, medicines causing unwanted sleepiness and their warning labelling, motorway design and crashes, and work hours and shift-working.



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## Seb Coe launches athletics match

Former Loughborough student and Olympic champion Seb Coe has urged sports fans in the East Midlands not to miss the start of the outdoor athletics season at the University next month.

The Aqua-Pura International, the traditional curtain raiser to the summer's athletics action, this year takes place on Saturday 18 May at the University's Athletics Stadium. The meeting kicks-off a mouth-watering few months for the sport, with two major championships taking place this year – the Commonwealth Games in Manchester and August's European Championships in Munich.

Launching the University-based event, Seb Coe said, "It's great that Loughborough is once again playing host to the opening shots in the domestic outdoor season. It's always a match I take a particular interest in given my links with the University, and there's an extra edge to the meeting this year with so much at stake for British athletes in the coming months. With places up for grabs in the home nations' Commonwealth Games teams and the Norwich Union GB team going to the European Championships, a good start to the season is vital for so many of our athletes. All eyes will be on Loughborough next month to see what sort of shape the contenders for those teams are in."

"Being on their doorstep, this meeting is always brilliantly supported by the students here, but with so much at stake this year, I would

urge the East Midlands public to come and enjoy what's sure to be a great day's athletics."

The Aqua Pura International brings together teams from England, Scotland and Wales, as well as teams representing Loughborough Students (past and present), British Universities and GB Juniors. As well as being the first competitive run-out for many of the established stars of British athletics, the meeting has traditionally offered a chance for up-and-coming hopefuls in the sport to make a name for themselves in front of a live television audience.

Tickets for the match at Loughborough on Saturday 18 May are now on sale and can be purchased through the 24-hour Ticketmaster hotline on 0870 444 4440 or online at [www.ukathletics.net](http://www.ukathletics.net)



Ian Hebdon

Last year's Aqua-Pura International showcased a number of the country's leading athletes, including Christian Malcolm, Dwain Chambers and Mark Lewis-Francis, as well as Loughborough's Chris Rawlinson and Tara Kryzwicki, who is pictured here setting a new British record of 6:29.79 in the 2,000m steeplechase.

# John triumphs over Bill and Ben and Bob!

An episode of the children's TV programme *64 Zoo Lane*, scripted by Loughborough's John Grace, has won a British Animation Award. Beating off competition from *Bob the Builder* and *Bill and Ben*, *64 Zoo Lane: Kevin the Crocodile* picked up the award for best pre-school children's series at the ceremony held on 15 March.

This is the second prestigious award in less than eighteen months for John, who is a research fellow in animation studies at LUSAD. In 2000, *Pablo – The Little Red Fox*, for which John has written 26 episodes, picked up the BAFTA award for Best International Programme at the British Academy Children's Film and Television Awards.

## New talent

"The project was great fun to work on. The production team that created the series are all exceptionally talented people," said John. "The public's ongoing fascination with the medium bodes well for the centre of excellence in animation studies that we're creating at LUSAD." Funded by the Higher Education European Social Fund, the Centre, with its animation archive, will be a gatekeeper for traditional animation skills, a platform for experimentation in new technology and a launch pad for new talent. Animation workshops run by LUSAD will provide a rich archive of flexible interactive learning materials for use by industry and on further and higher education courses via CD ROMs and the internet.

Created in 1996, the British Animation Awards (BAA) are a biennial event and



64 Zoo Lane.

Courtesy of Millimages UK Ltd

cover all aspects of UK animation, from student work to commercials, children's entertainment, short and experimental art films, and new technologies, scenario and craft. The award-winners are selected by a panel of UK animation experts, with input from an international jury. However, there are also three public choice categories – Favourite Film, Favourite Commercial, and Favourite Music Video – voted for by cinema goers.

## Unique artworks

The awards themselves – which are known as 'baa' awards and depict one or more sheep to reflect the title of the accolades! – are unique artworks created specially for the occasion by a range of leading international and UK animation artists. Artists who have previously created awards include Tim Burton – director of, among others, *Batman*, *Sleepy Hollow* and the animated film *The Nightmare before Christmas* – Wallace and Gromit creator Nick Park, and Alison Snowden, co-creator of the animated TV series *Bob and Margaret*.

As well as *64 Zoo Lane*, John has worked on numerous other children's animated programmes. He devised, designed, scored and scripted all episodes of *The Adventures of Portland Bill*; and co-created *Reboot*, which was broadcast on 28 networks around the world, including Meridian Broadcasting in London and the ABC Network in the USA. Other projects John has contributed to are *Boris the Bat*, *Big Hug*, *Ethelbert the Tiger*, and *Kipper*. *64 Zoo Lane* and *Kipper* were also nominated for a BAFTA in 2000 in the Best Pre-School Animation category.

Other winners at this year's British Animation Awards – which were hosted by comedy performer Linda Smith at the National Film Theatre, London – were *Hamilton Mattress*, which took the Best TV Special award, *Chicken Run*, which was named as the Best European Animated Feature Film, and the video for the Gorillaz single *Clint Eastwood*, which received the Best Music Video award. The video to Coldplay's *Don't Panic* was named as the Public Choice Favourite Music Video.

## Revised plan for Harry French site submitted

A revised proposal for the Harry French student accommodation on Ashby Road has been submitted to Charnwood Borough Council by the University and its partner in the scheme UNITE.

The new plans, which have been drawn up following extensive consultation with local residents' groups, were put on display firstly at Loughborough Town Hall on 21 March and then

at Loughborough Library until 28 March, to enable all members of the public to see and comment on the proposals.

### Long-term master plan

"Discussions with local residents' groups over the University's plans for the Harry French site have resulted in significant changes to the original proposals," said Director of Estates Services Roy Hill.

"For instance, as a result of residents' feedback, we've separated the block fronting on to Ashby Road into two smaller blocks, and also reduced the height and orientation of some of the blocks. The proposed buildings have been completely redesigned to complement the surrounding architecture and there has been a large reduction in the numbers of bedrooms proposed. Also, plans to include a bar have now been dropped."

Also on show in the town was the University's long-term master plan, which aims to give a ten-year perspective for the development of all the University's off-campus accommodation. Developed by the University in conjunction with a local planning consultant, the plan is designed to indicate the possibilities for the future of these properties and to enable informed discussion with local residents.

# Sculptor's work marks opening of National Forest's new Westminster Woodland

The new Westminster Woodland at the heart of The National Forest was officially opened by the Father of the House of Commons, Tam Dalyell MP, on 18 March, and to mark the occasion Mr Dalyell unveiled a specially commissioned sculpture by Loughborough graduate Malcolm Revill.

Mr Dalyell was joined by fellow Parliamentarians at the wood, which has been created within CONKERS, at the heart of The National Forest – an area covering 200 square miles of the counties of Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Opening the woodland Mr Dalyell said, "All those members of both Houses of Parliament who made donations will, I know, be proud to be associated with this unique woodland. It will be a lasting symbol of their concern for the environment and for the communities of this country."

Malcolm Revill, who graduated from LUSAD in 2000, was selected from a very strong field to create the centre-piece for the new woodland. Featuring tapering spires of stainless steel and glass, Malcolm's work

evokes the geometric forms found within the portcullis – the emblem of the Palace of Westminster. The sculpture uses glass to symbolise the transparency and openness of the governmental process and stainless steel to represent durability and timelessness – qualities shown by the strength and long history of the Houses of Parliament. At five metres high, the sculpture is an impressive addition to the undulating woodland.

"I was delighted to be chosen for this commission," says Malcolm, who served his apprenticeship as a mechanical fitter in the 1960s. Since then he has gained a Technology and Design degree in 1992, had two prestigious sculpture commissions and is an associate member of the Royal Society of British Sculpture. "I've been interested in sculpture all my life and this has been a wonderful commission to achieve in my sixtieth year," he concludes. Mr Dalyell praised Malcolm's sculpture, describing it as "a striking and thought-provoking work that will enhance the new woodland and make us consider deeply all that the Mother of Parliaments represents".

Steve Doherty



Malcolm Revill with his sculpture.

The Westminster Wood project was launched in 1998 by John Major MP, the former Prime Minister, and has raised funds through donations from staff and members of both Houses of Parliament between 1998 and 2001. The project has created a woodland on what was a derelict mine site. The names of all the donors who have contributed to the Westminster Wood fund are recorded in a special wood-covered book, which is to be kept in the main building at CONKERS.

## The legend of Dusty Springfield lives on

Two of the University's Drama students were in 'Sunny Scunny' last month, after being selected to perform a piece of their own original work at the esteemed 47th National Student Drama Festival in Scunthorpe. *I was almost Dusty Springfield* was performed and sung by Elizabeth Boorman and directed by Alexandra Ashwell, who are both in the third year of their degree programme. The piece was devised from Elizabeth's own experience of auditioning for the part of Dusty Springfield in a musical based on the life of the 60s pop icon.

"The audition was so ridiculously embarrassing that it inspired me to devise a short play which would document what actually happened," explained Elizabeth. "I created *I was almost Dusty Springfield* in response to shows such as *Pop Stars* and *Pop Idol*. It explores the danger of losing yourself in order to comply with show business ideals; if you're not everything to everybody every time, then you're nothing. Dusty Springfield definitely represents a warning to us all: her life was so difficult because of the destructive burden of stardom."



Alexandra (above) and Liz.

Sponsored by the Sunday Times, the National Student Drama Festival (NSDF) is a showcase for the country's best contemporary student and young people's theatre. Throughout the year, a team of the NSDF's professional selectors visit student theatre companies, universities, colleges, schools, theatres and youth theatres around the country to assess a host of new productions, ranging from newly devised work and modern classics, to musicals and classic dramas of the past. A select handful of these productions are then invited to showcase at the week-long festival held annually in Scarborough. This year's event attracted over 160 entrants from the UK and USA, and just 16 shows were chosen to perform at the festival.

"I'm absolutely delighted that Elizabeth and Alexandra's production was selected for the festival. It's the first time in many years that Loughborough Drama students have received such an accolade," said Drama lecturer Jessica Naish. "I set up a performance, back in early February, entitled *Fourplay*, at which we profiled the four shows, devised by our students, which had been entered for the festival. All were extremely well received, and then to hear that one had been selected for this prestigious national festival, amid such fierce competition, was the icing on the cake."

## **Aeronautical and**

### **Automotive Engineering**

ANTLE Annular Perspex  
Prof JJ McGuirk  
£56,996 Rolls Royce plc

CFD for Fuel/Air Premixing  
Dr P Denman and Dr JF Carrotte  
£22,000 Rolls Royce plc

ANTLE Injector Flowfield Investigation  
Dr P Denman and Dr JF Carrotte  
£48,696 Rolls Royce plc

Adaptive Throttle Design  
Dr M Passmore  
£63,500  
Ford Motor Company Ltd

Experimental Measurements and CFD Studies of Modified Trailing Edge Wake Flow  
Prof JJ McGuirk  
£51,010 Rolls Royce plc

LOTUS Research Fellow  
Dr G Wigley  
£56,405  
Royal Academy of Engineering

Laser Anomometry Measurement Programme  
Dr G Wigley  
£49,406  
Ford Motor Company, Aachen

**Business School**  
Research Sponsorship  
Ms C Hart  
£15,000 Waitrose

IMRC Award: Design and Technology  
Prof V Wong and Prof J Saker  
£97,728 EPSRC

**Chemistry**  
A Palladium Catalyzed (3+2) Route to Heterocyclic Compounds  
Dr GJ Pritchard  
£60,577 EPSRC

Dispersion Viscosity Modifiers  
Prof JV Dawkins  
£30,450  
Lubrizol Limited

## **Civil and Building Engineering**

IMRC Award Civil and Building  
Prof AN Baldwin and Prof A Thorpe  
£790,719 EPSRC

RAE Travel and Research Award  
Dr J Wright  
£24,096  
Royal Academy of Engineering

## **Computer Sciences**

IMRC Award: Computer Science  
Prof PW Chung and Dr S Acar  
£92,898 EPSRC

Design and Implementation of Intelligent User Interfaces in Ubiquitous Computing Environments  
Prof R Kalawsky  
£82,000 DTI

**Design and Technology**  
IMRC Award: Business School  
Prof M Porter  
£81,031 EPSRC

Dexterity Research CASE Award  
Mr G Torrens  
£9,000 Dexterity Research

## **Electronic and Electrical Engineering**

Low Power Consumption, Compact, Autoselective Diesel Particulate Trap Regeneration System  
Dr J Harry  
£143,467 Caterpillar

Non Explosive Canopy Opening System  
Prof IR Smith  
£23,220 QinetiQ

SMDS Performancing Monitoring System  
Dr DJ Parish  
£120,000  
British Telecom

Electromagnetic Protection  
Prof I Smith  
£14,693 DERA

Micromachined RF Front Ends  
Prof J Vardaxoglou  
£40,505 CCLRC

Assessment of the Effect of Tide, Sea State and Atmospheric Stability on Offshore Winds  
Dr SJ Watson  
£63,219 EPSRC

Centre for Mobile Communication  
Prof JC Vardaxoglou  
£206,100 Sarantel Ltd

**English and Drama**  
Aspects of Japanese Theatre Practice as they relate to Western Performance  
Prof C Hanson  
£54,000 AHRB

**Human Sciences**  
Driver Sleepiness: Comparison of Red Bull with Coffee  
Dr L Reyner  
£52,962 Red Bull GmbH

## **Information Science**

WAICENT Information Bus Prototype  
Prof R Summers  
£55,000 UN

Information Needs Project  
Mr M Hepworth  
J Harrison and Prof R Summers  
£8,715  
Multiple Sclerosis Trust

**IPTME**  
Dispersion Viscosity Modifiers  
Prof DJ Hourston  
£30,450 Lubrizol Limited

Development of New Casting Technology for Sustainable Ceramic Production  
Prof J Binner  
£70,851 EPSRC

Electrochemistry and Deposit Characterisation of Copper  
Prof D Gabe  
£66,100  
Technology Development Associates Operations Limited

PhD Sponsorship  
Mr J Harper  
£37,500  
Great Lakes Chemical Corporation

**Mathematical Sciences**  
Synaptic Travelling Waves  
Dr S Coombes  
£235,145 EPSRC

The Painleve Property for Difference Equations  
Dr RG Halburd  
£62,242 EPSRC

Reconstruction of an Interface in an Inhomogeneous Medium  
Prof YV Kurylev  
£104,392 EPSRC

Long Time Dynamics of Localised Structures in the Modified NLS and Massive Thiring Models  
Dr V Rothos  
£5,366 EPSRC

Travel Award  
Prof Roger Smith  
£9,200 Royal Society

**Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering**  
Fundamental Standards for Accoustics based on Optical Methods  
Dr JR Tyrer  
£68,000 NPL

IMRC Award Rapid Manufacturing  
Prof P Dickens  
£790,000 EPSRC

IMRC Award: Manufacturing Engineering  
Prof CJ Backhouse and Dr S Rothberg  
£2,210,830 EPSRC

Granular Material Behaviour at the Single Particle Level  
Dr R Wildman  
£219,664 EPSRC

Low Power Consumption, Compact, Autoselective Diesel Particulate Trap Regeneration System  
Dr C Garner  
£143,467 Caterpillar

Visiting Professors in Engineering Design for Sustainable Development  
Prof CJ Backhouse  
£14,750  
Royal Academy of Engineering

Teaching Company Scheme with PAL International  
Prof R Parkin and Mr DR Whitby  
£94,320  
Teaching Company Directorate

**PE,SS and RM**  
Sedentary Behaviour among Scottish Youth  
Prof S Biddle  
£19,258  
Health Education Board for Scotland

**Physics**  
Visiting Professorship by Professor D Khomskii  
Prof L Kusmartsev  
£27,950  
Leverhulme Trust

**RSEHF**  
BOSCO  
Mr P Thomas  
£75,145 DLTR

Recidivist Risk Takers  
Mr D Hitchcock  
£75,000 HSE

IMRC Award: RSEHF  
Prof L Damodaran and Dr S Richardson  
£92,898 EPSRC

Smart Homes under the Applications Home Initiative  
Mrs M Galley  
£85,000 DTI

**Social Sciences**  
THRIVE Project  
Prof S Becker  
£270,000 THRIVE

# Roll of honour

Mathematical Sciences' **Dr Steve Coombes**, and **Dr Ricky Wildman**, from the Wolfson School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, have been awarded 2001 EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council)

Advanced Research Fellowships. These highly prestigious Fellowships are designed to support outstanding young researchers at various stages of their careers, enabling them to pursue their research interests full-time and make the most of their talent. On average 220 applications are made each year for the Fellowships, with just 40 being awarded to those considered to be future leaders of world class independent research groups. "I'm absolutely delighted that Ricky and Steve have been awarded these prestigious fellowships," said Professor Neil Halliwell, Pro Vice Chancellor (Research). "This is testimony to the world class research being undertaken at Loughborough."



**Lorna Marshall** has been appointed as a Fellow in the Creative and Performing Arts by the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB). The three-year appointment will enable Lorna to investigate how elements of Japanese theatre practice relate to Western performance in terms of concepts, physical techniques and training. Her aim is to produce methods of using these insights to benefit performers, directors and devisors. The AHRB Fellowship scheme was established in 1999 and is designed to support both the development of individual researchers and the research infrastructure of practice-based arts.

**Professor Charles Oppenheim**, from Information Science, has gained the stamp of approval from his peers, having been voted as one of the top ten librarians in the country, as reported on the *Independent on Sunday*. Professor Oppenheim, who is also head of LISU (Library and Information Statistics Unit), joined the University in 1998, having previously worked in the private sector for companies such as Derwent, a patent-searching service, the news agency Reuters, and Pergamon Infoline, an early online service. "The secret of my success? Enthusiasm, communication skills and an urge to help other people," he says.

## Graduate Maddy makes TV debut

A Loughborough graduate becoming a TV presenter? That's nothing new. But a virtual graduate, becoming a virtual presenter...?

Maddy, the UK's first digitally-animated presenter – who apparently has a sports degree from Loughborough! – made her debut on the BBC1 programme *Tomorrow's World* on 27 March. Every aspect of Maddy's virtual background has been developed, and in addition to her degree from Loughborough, the 28 year old, who was born in Glasgow, has a sister who works as a nurse in Australia and a brother who is a crofter. Her parents divorced 17 years ago.

Maddy is an avatar – a three-dimensional representation of a real person – who can hold conversations in twenty languages,

take part in studio discussions and answer any question on science, and she will be seen introducing features and chatting with other presenters on the show.

According to her creators, Glasgow-based Digital Animations Group, Maddy is sporty, sharp and unflappable under pressure. She never tires, is available to work 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is able to do anything a human presenter can do but without the need for an elaborate wardrobe, numerous make-up artists or an autocue. And unlike her human equivalents, she will never go to work for a channel or demand a hefty pay increase!

# Six in a row

BEng Chemical Engineering finalist Jonathan Nixon has been awarded the Salters' Graduate Prize 2002. Jonathan is the sixth Loughborough student in succession to receive the prestigious award and the eighth student from the Department of Chemical Engineering to win an award in nine years.

The Prize is sponsored by the Salters' Institute of Industrial Chemistry in London and is awarded every year to the graduate students most likely to succeed in industry. "This award is a great credit to Jonathan and is a recognition of the success he enjoys in meeting the exacting standards he sets for himself. Everyone in the Department wishes him well in his future industrial career," said Professor Richard Wakeman, Head of Chemical Engineering.

Jonathan will be presented with his prize on 5 December 2002 at the Salters' Institute.

## A taste of university life

Loughborough University at Peterborough opened its doors to around eighty year 9 and 10 pupils last month, as part of an initiative to give students from local schools an insight into higher education. Pupils from Bushfields Community College and Walton Comprehensive took part in workshops at the city-based University centre to learn about the variety of opportunities that a university can offer and give them a taster of student life.

"The taster days were used to encourage pupils to think about the increasing accessibility of university life and the variety of courses and levels of study available, including Peterborough's very own higher education provision right in the heart of the city," explains Helen Coundon, Student Services Officer for Loughborough University at Peterborough.

The taster sessions are the latest initiative that Loughborough University at Peterborough has undertaken with local schools to encourage participation in higher education. The University already operates a successful mentoring scheme within the area in partnership with twelve local schools.



## Welcome

With the new Olympic-sized swimming pool nearing completion, a new manager has now been appointed to oversee the running of the pool.

**Sam Pittham** joined the University's Sports Development Centre team on 1 February, having worked at the local community college King Edward VII in Coalville for seven years, where she managed the sports and leisure facilities and put together programmes of classes and events including summer activities for children and a large 'Learn to Swim' programme. She also taught swimming for two years in the USA, and is a former national league water polo player and member of the Loughborough University team.

Looking forward to the opening of the new pool, Sam is also keen to dispel a few myths. "Yes, the pool will be a British Swimming High Performance Centre but contrary to rumours currently circulating in some parts of the University, the new pool *will* be open to staff and students at certain times, and members of the local community will also be able to use it," she stresses. "Recreational swimming sessions will be available every day, and local clubs and associations will be able to book individual lanes or the pool as required. The swimming lesson programme will also be expanded and will work to the ASA National Plan for Teaching."

"And," smiles Sam, "the new pool really *is* 50 metres in length, and not an inch short as has been rumoured!"

The EHB and Sports Hall pools will close once the new pool is up and running. If anyone has any questions about the pool, Sam can be contacted on ext 8446 or by emailing [S.C.Pittham@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:S.C.Pittham@lboro.ac.uk)

## Success in the sun for cricket centre aces

The best of Loughborough's cricketers returned from South Africa in March, having provided the same sort of lessons for South Africa's representative national student side as Australia gave their senior test players.

Six of the British Universities tour party came from Loughborough University's ECB Cricket Centre of Excellence and all played key roles in overcoming their South African counterparts. John Francis, a promising bat with Hampshire, scored an unbeaten 187 in the first innings of the 3-day student test match.

In the second innings Loughborough's Rob White and former England wicket keeper Chris Reed, who is also now studying at the University, scored 100 and 98 respectively as British Universities set South Africa 401 to win. Although South Africa clung on for a draw in this match, there was no hiding place in the One Day International, which British Universities won by seven wickets. Here, Loughborough's 'Player of the Year for 2001' Steve Selwood, who recently won a playing contract with Derbyshire, scored a quick fire 51 to secure victory, after Loughborough's opening paceman Mark Tournier had torn through the South African batting with three top order wickets.

The success follows the announcement that Metrobrook Highland, the company developing Loughborough's former bus station site into a modern shopping



(L-R) John Francis; Loughborough Cricket Centre's Graham Dilley; Metrobrook Chairman Michael Gruber; and Steve Selwood.

complex, is supporting the University's Cricket Centre of Excellence in a two year deal. The investment is being used to prepare Loughborough's elite cricketers as they once again put the town on the First Class cricket map as they take on Kent, Hampshire and Derbyshire 1st teams this year.

"Half the 1st team returning in great form from South Africa is a great bonus," said the University's Director of Cricket Guy Jackson, who managed the touring team in South Africa. "Although it's a tough ask, the performances against Leicestershire last year, which included a century for Francis and a six wicket haul for seamer Fraser Watts, show that at the top of their game, these young professionals can compete with the best."

## Footballers Europe bound

Loughborough Students' Football Club has beaten Rushden and Diamonds Reserves 3-1 in a friendly fixture at Nene Park. The match on 25 March gave the students their second win against Diamonds this year; the last time they met was in February when Loughborough Students won 2-0. The matches are part of a series of fixtures against professional clubs that started with a 1-0 win over an Aston Villa squad that included Paul Merson and Jay Lloyd Samuels.

Loughborough's Director of Football, Darren Robinson, is pleased with the experience that these professional reserve fixtures are giving the players alongside their academic studies and football training at Loughborough. "To come here and win once was great but to return and do it again is a great boost for the team," Darren said. "Playing against some of Diamond's top players was an excellent experience that we will take with us to the BUSA semi-finals in a few weeks time."

It has been a successful season for the student club, which has won all the BUSA Midlands Leagues with four teams winning four separate league titles. The 1st XI are now through to the semi-final of the national BUSA knock-out, playing against Exeter University.

Their quarter-final 4-0 win against Greenwich also qualified them for next year's inaugural Students' European Championship which will kick off in Barcelona.

# Dear editor...

A note to say 'thank you' for my incredibly generous leaving present. I was overwhelmed, both by the gift and all the good wishes that I took with me to the University of Leicester. Part of the gift is already earmarked for a garden seat, and this summer's project is to create the gravel area on which it will stand. With any luck, Dave and I might actually get to sit on it before the summer's out! With a garden that's 100 feet long, I can see the rest of the gift ending up in a garden centre or nursery, too!

I've brought a lot of happy memories away with me and the many good friends I have left in Loughborough are often in my thoughts.

With many thanks and best wishes,

Alison Hall  
Formerly of Personnel Services

## In brief

Audio Visual Services (AVS) has changed its name to **Media Services**. The Design, Multimedia and Lecture Support teams are still located in the Bridgeman Centre, and the Print and Mail services in the Manzoni Building. All contact numbers remain the same.

"This change of name reflects our up-to-date service which we offer to the University," said director Anne Mumford. "It also comes at an exciting time for the service which has just been accredited as an Investor in People. This award reflects the commitment of all Media Services staff to offer a professional and value for money service closely linked with the mission of the University."

Media Services offers support for teaching and conferences, design services for print and web, video conferencing, video production, tape copying and conversion, print services and mailing services including envelope stuffing for large mailings. Further information can be found on the web at [www.lboro.ac.uk/mediaservices](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/mediaservices) or by emailing [mediaservices@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:mediaservices@lboro.ac.uk)

The first ever **East Midlands Foundation Degree Conference** will be held on 24 May at the University of Leicester. It will aim to consider some of the key issues around Foundation Degrees, from development to delivery, and will cover all aspects from market research and creating partnerships between higher education, further education, national training organisations and employers, to issues of funding and progression.

"Foundation degrees are a new higher education qualification intended to be designed together with employers to meet the growing demands for highly skilled people who know their subject and can apply it in the workplace," explains Celia Neale from the East Midlands Universities Association (EMUA), which was established in 1999 to promote and facilitate cooperation between the ten higher education institutions in the East Midlands.

Anyone interested in attending the conference, which costs £90 per delegate, should contact Celia Neale on ext 8699 or email [C.R.Neale@lboro](mailto:C.R.Neale@lboro) for further information. Booking forms and additional details can also be found on the EMUA web site at [www.emua.ac.uk](http://www.emua.ac.uk)

# Obituary

## Sir Frank Cooper GCB

The role of the Visitor is, among other broader duties, to act as the ultimate arbiter between the University and its employees, and from 1988 until his death on 26 January this year, this most senior University appointment was held by Sir Frank Cooper, the former Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence. It is a credit to Loughborough that only once was Sir Frank called upon to assist in the resolution of a dispute, which he did in his own inimitable and charming way. Notwithstanding this he took a close interest in our affairs and in the process became a firm friend of our previous Chairman of Council – Dick Morris.

Born in 1922, Sir Frank was educated at Manchester Grammar School and Pembroke College Oxford, serving as a Spitfire pilot during the war. He toyed with becoming an accountant but instead joined the Air Ministry, where he was to remain for nearly 20 years. He transferred to the Northern Ireland Office in the mid-1970s serving as Permanent Secretary under Willie Whitelaw and later Merlyn Rees, with whom he had seen wartime service in Italy, where he was captured and was a POW for 24 hours before he escaped. He was involved in the talks with Sinn Fein which led to the Provisional IRA ceasefire in 1975, facing the wrath of Unionists for allegedly negotiating with terrorists.

Given Sir Frank's background it was no surprise when he returned to the Ministry of Defence in 1976. His 'finest hour' was the Falklands conflict, when he was instrumental in the decision to send the Task Force to recover the islands from Argentina. He was also required to implement the results of the 1974-75 defence review which led to a major cutback in defence staff, liberating money to be spent on equipment.

After retiring at the end of 1982, Sir Frank became a director of Rothschilds, deputy chairman of Babcock International and chairman of United Scientific Holdings. He became a frequent broadcaster on defence matters and current affairs generally.

Dick Morris comments that Sir Frank was one of the most amusing and approachable senior civil servants and later a successful businessman with whom he worked, and it was as a consequence of this that he proposed, with Council's support, Sir Frank's name as Visitor to the Privy Council. Sir Frank's puckish sense of humour coupled with a very sharp intellect experienced in so many aspects of Government and business made him a valuable friend to the University who was always available and interested in our affairs. He will be missed.

## Remembering...

**John Lee**, a former member of staff in the Department of Chemistry, who died on 7 March after a long illness. John had originally joined Loughborough College in 1962 and had been retired from the University for some years.

Our thoughts are with his family and friends.



# Did you know...?

This year's National Science Week took place between 8 and 17 March. Here are just a few examples of the many questions – ranging from the intriguing and the trivial to the just plain bizarre! – that the media ask, and which our experts at Loughborough have helped to answer!

## Why does hair turn grey?

Professor Noel Cameron from Human Sciences says: "Variations in hair colour reflect variations in the pigment produced by melanocytes at the root of the hair (the papilla). Whilst these are genetically determined they are influenced by hormonal and environmental factors. As pigment production decreases with age the hair colour lightens towards grey. White hair results from a combination of a lack of pigment and the presence of air bubbles within the medulla of the hair shaft."

## How long does decomposition of a buried body take?

"Depends on where the body is buried. Decomposition requires warmth and oxygen. The more of both, the quicker the decomposition. In cold, dry conditions, where dessication (loss of water) takes place rapidly, it may never decompose (eg the dessicated but not decomposed 3,000 year old body of a man found in the Italian Alps). Similarly in extreme cold it may become frozen and also never decompose (eg Mammoths found in Siberian ice). Also in some boggy conditions where there is no oxygen decomposition may be slow or virtually non-existent."

Finally that perennial, and extremely trivial, question...

## Where does belly button fluff come from?

"The fine dust etc that collects in our clothing. The contour of the abdomen naturally causes the "fluff" to collect in the navel!!"

So now you know!

# Farewell

Thursday 21 March saw the last Senior Technician Forum to be organised by **Ernie Miller**, Associate Director of Staff Development, who retires in September. At the Forum Ernie gave a brief talk on the history of Loughborough University, and afterwards John Spray from Chemistry presented a bottle of wine and a book token to Ernie, on behalf of all of the Senior Technicians, in appreciation for all of his work over many years for both the Forum and the technicians.



Courtesy of Staff Development

Ernie Miller (far left) receives his gifts from John Spray and some of the University's technicians..

# Are you a budding Botham?

This season the Staff and Postgraduates' Leicestershire Saturday League side will be playing its cricket on the University's Haslegrave pitch, which is widely recognised as the best wicket in the county outside of Grace Road. So if you want to play your cricket in a grand style, why not become a member?

All staff and postgraduates are welcome to join the club, which also plays in the Loughborough Thursday Evening League and provides Sunday Friendly Cricket complete with tea and cakes for those enthusiastic but non-elite players!



more information, email Martin Kerry at M.R.Kerry@lboro

"As well as hopefully getting some new cricketers out on the pitch," says Martin, "I'd also like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the club committee,

Provisionally, outdoor net practice will be on Wednesdays, at the Brockington nets outside the PE Centre, from 5.30pm to 7.30pm from now onwards. For

to express our thanks to Penny Rowe and Guy Jackson of the Sports Development Centre, and to Mark Freeman and his ground staff for their continuing support for staff sport."

## ads@lboro

news@lboro small advertisement section is a service offered free of charge to members of the University

### Miscellaneous wants

**Room wanted** for female visiting scholar from China, needed from Sept 2002 for one year, if you can help please contact Anne Goulding, Tel 223056 or email A.Goulding@lboro.ac.uk

**Nissan Sunny** Inspiration 1.4, 1994, 12mths MOT, 6mths tax, silver, 74,000 miles, electric windows, sunroof, ex. cond., 2 owners from new – £2,100; Darren, Tel 0781 0123 777.

### Houses for sale/rent

**Loughborough**, 4 bedroom detached property, 3 reception rooms, parking for 5 cars (incl. double garage), 5 minutes walk from the University on the town side of campus, no upward chain; email LauraMason@lborosu.org.uk

### Vehicles for sale

**Peugeot** 406 GLX, '97 R Reg, MOT and tax til Sept '02, 57,575 miles, metallic grey, extra front lights, sun roof, ex. cond. – £5,500 ono; email D.Bass@lboro.ac.uk or Tel 223276.

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# what's on@lboro

A more comprehensive 'What's On' diary is available on the University web site at [www.lboro.ac.uk/service/publicity/whatson/](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/service/publicity/whatson/)

**Wednesday  
1 May**

## **University String Orchestra**

Music Centre. Further details from the Arts Centre on 222899.

**7.30pm**

## **Lunchtime Concert**

Music Centre. Further details from the Arts Centre on 222899.

**12.45pm**

**Thursday  
2 May**

## **European Question Time**

J.O.01, Edward Herbert Building. Further information from Dr Maurice FitzGerald on 223659.

**5.00pm – 7.00pm**

**Tuesday  
7 May**

## **Loughborough Students' Concert Band**

Sir Robert Martin Theatre. For tickets and further information contact the Arts Centre on 222899.

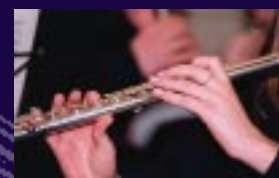
**7.30pm**

**Saturday  
11 May**

## **Orchestra da Camera**

Music Centre. Tickets: Adults £7, Students £5, Concessions £8. Further details from the Arts Centre on 222899.

**7.30pm**



what's on@lboro

## Question Time – European style

On 2 May, the University, in conjunction with the East Midlands Eurocentre and the UK Office of the European Parliament, will host a European Question Time, with Members of the European Parliament from the East and West Midlands answering questions posed by staff, students and local residents.

The panel will consist of Nicholas Clegg (Liberal Democrat), Malcolm Harbour (Conservative), and Phillip Whitehead (Labour), while Professor Mike Smith, who is Head of the Department of European Studies and the Eurocentre Director, will chair the event. Also attending will be Edward McVeigh (Acting Head of the UK Office of the European Parliament).

"As we speak, the Future of Europe is being decided," says Professor Smith, "so, this is a fantastic opportunity for staff and students from across the University, as well as the people of Loughborough and the Midlands, to have their voices heard and to find out more about how the European Union actually works."

"Britain and the euro, EU enlargement, the war against terrorism, trade disputes, the future of our environment, the European Parliament

elections in 2004, these are all key issues which face us," he adds.

Loughborough's Department of European Studies was last year selected as the administrative base for the new East Midlands Eurocentre – a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence, which aims to bring together the talents, activities and resources of those teaching and researching European Union studies in the East Midlands region, and to make these available to audiences within and outside the region.

European Question Time will take place in room J.O.01, Edward Herbert Building, from 5pm to 7pm on Thursday 2 May, and will be followed by a buffet and refreshments. For further information on the event contact Julie Robinson on ext 8801, email [J.Robinson@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:J.Robinson@lboro.ac.uk)

