Welcome from the Director of Development

I have enjoyed meeting many hundreds of Leicester alumni in the last year, spanning the early graduating classes of the 1950s to the most recent, as part of our growing programme of alumni events. It’s been wonderful to see how passionate you are about your University and that you continue to share those values which make Leicester ‘elite without being elitist’.

It’s easy to stay connected after graduation. Leicester alumni increasingly show their support in many different ways, from providing student work placements to supporting the Annual Fund, which reached record-breaking heights in 2011 thanks to your fantastic generosity.

We are facing tremendous changes in Higher Education and your active support will help to ensure that your University is in the strongest position to respond and continue to grow and flourish. I look forward to welcoming you to one of our many alumni events in the year ahead.

Steve O’Connor
(BA Combined Studies 1979)
Director of Development
email: sjo18@le.ac.uk

P.S. If you have alumni friends who do not receive the Graduates’ Review then please put them in touch with us at alumni.relations@le.ac.uk

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COVER IMAGE: Graduates from the years 1958-65 at the recent Degree Certificate Award Ceremony. See page 15.

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The Development and Alumni Relations Team


Contact: Development and Alumni Relations, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RH · email: alumni.relations@le.ac.uk · tel: +44 (0) 116 252 2418 web: www.le.ac.uk/alumni
In October last year I was delighted to welcome back hundreds of Leicester graduates, from the class years of 1958 - 1965, to a special degree ceremony. This memorable event not only provided an opportunity to celebrate the success of our alumni from across the world but also highlighted the tremendous changes in Higher Education in the intervening years.

Currently, the Government’s response to Lord Browne’s report on Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education presents what is arguably the most significant challenge to universities in half a century. Teaching grants are to be cut by as much as 80% and higher student fees will mean student choice will play a greater part than ever in determining the success of our institutions in the future.

What is reassuring, however, is that the University of Leicester enters this turbulent environment in the strongest shape in its history. The University now has more than 300 degree programmes and over 23,000 students. In the last year, student applications to Leicester rose to their highest ever level; my academic colleagues secured record grant awards from competitive sources to fund their research; and the University rose to its highest ever league table position – ranked 12th out of Britain’s 120 universities. The University also achieved a record financial surplus in 2009-10 which will be used to invest in new high-quality developments, some of which are featured in this issue of the Graduates’ Review.

We have continued to invest in new facilities as part of our ambitious £1 billion Estate Development Plan and alumni returning for Homecoming in July 2011 will have an opportunity to experience the newly refurbished Percy Gee Building, home to the Students’ Union, which is central to providing a high-quality student experience at Leicester. In addition, a new £1.4 million Space Research Centre extension was officially opened by David Willetts, Minister for Universities and Science, in January and we are currently committed to building a state-of-the-art Cardiovascular Research Centre due to open in Spring 2012. This flagship project will not only drive internationally significant research but will help to improve the prevention, treatment and care for thousands of patients suffering the effects of heart disease.

I know that Leicester alumni are very proud of the growing reputation of their University and share in our commitment to world-leading research, high-quality, inspirational teaching and attracting talented students regardless of their background. Leicester continues to be the most inclusive of Britain’s top 20 leading universities with the greatest proportion of students from under-represented groups. Growing numbers of alumni have supported our initiatives to provide the very best facilities, widen participation and fund more postgraduate research by choosing to donate to the recent Annual Fund Campaign. I would like to thank all our alumni donors and long-standing University friends listed on pages 22 and 23 for their continuing support.

I hope you will continue to feel great pride in your University, which may be very different to the Leicester you knew, but is ‘elite without being elitist’. The support of the alumni community will be ever more important as we look ahead to the future with self-confidence, clarity of mission and a strong track record of financial and academic achievement.
Professor Jeremy Levesley sees one of the great strengths of mathematics at Leicester as a desire to interact and explain the world at the intersection of mathematics with physics, engineering, chemistry, geology and economics. Over his seven years as its Head he has steered the department towards working with other scientists, and through that work to influence people’s lives.

Much of this expertise is concentrated in the Mathematical Modelling Centre under the directorship of Alexander Gorban, where mathematics is used in various endeavours, including Nicolai Brilliantov’s international work on the icy plumes of Saturn’s moon, Enceladus, and Alexander Gorban’s part in the development of a highly efficient helical turbine for use in power generation.

In the future, Professor Levesley expects to see the Mathematics Department developing its already internationally renowned strengths in the theory of tiling and its links with physics, as well as biology and earth science.

He said: “We cannot understand the world around us without mathematics and statistics. Reliable statistical understanding is required for us to recognise whether certain sorts of food are good for us; deciding whether or not there is man-made global warming; understanding how best to use the airwaves for the increasing amount of telecommunications which are air-borne. Everywhere we look there are complications which require some mathematical sophistication to understand and solve.”

Leicester mathematicians and chemists are collaborating on a unique project to enhance fingerprints etched by sweat on metal objects such as bullets, door and window handles and weapons. Traditional methods cannot clarify the prints well, but at Leicester mathematicians have been helping Professor Robert Hillman and his team in the Department of Chemistry remove extraneous signals from fingerprint images so that they get a clearer view of the true image.
Sea-slides and tsunamis

Methane is a harmful greenhouse gas that turns to ice on the ocean bed. But how much is there? What would happen to it during global warming? How would it affect the sea-bed and transoceanic cables? Working with Leicester geologist Professor Mike Lovell, mathematicians are producing a simple model of how methane hydrates behave, in instances where a more complex model with lots of variable numbers will often fail to predict future events.

This project has been funded by NERC (Natural Environment Research Council).

Rich pattern of Life

Leicester is one of the main international centres of mathematical tiling and Professor John Hunton and his colleague Edmund Harriss (now at Arkansas) have had the distinction of an exhibition at the Royal Society Summer Exhibition, which drew on leading scientific research of interest to the public and the media as well as to government policy makers. Currently, the greatest interest is in shapes that fit together in highly regular ways that do not simply repeat. These are associated with understanding viruses; minerals with novel properties; and metal alloys which are exceptionally hard, rigid and smooth. Among the uses for these alloys is a non-stick coating for cooking utensils.

Professor Hunton’s research has been funded by EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council), The Leverhulme Trust and The Royal Society.
The Staffordshire Hoard

Dr Kevin Leahy’s work on the largest hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold ever found
Kevin Leahy is the author of:


The Anglo-Kingdom of Lindsey, Tempus, Stroud 2008

Anglo-Saxon Crafts, Tempus, Stroud 2003

The full data set for the Cleatham cemetery is available online at: http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/resources.html?cleatham_cba_2007

1. The function of this highly decorated gold and garnet object is unknown. Before it was crushed it was conical and bears, in addition to the garnet filled cells, panels containing a pair of one-legged animals biting each other.

2. This gold strip was probably part of a cross. On each of its faces is a Latin inscription from the Vulgate Bible (Numbers, chapter 10, verse 35 ‘Arise up O Lord and may Thy enemies be dispersed and those who hate Thee driven from Thy Face’).

Surge domine et dispersetur [dissempetur] inimici tui et fugent [fugiant] qui odorunt te a facie tua.

3. Gold altar or processional cross decorated with interlaced animals in a style typical of the seventh century.

4. This gold mount bears the figures of two eagles clutching a fish in their talons. While it is impossible to be sure, this object is likely to have come from a shield.

5. This small mount is in the form of an eagle, its head with a down-turned beak is to the right, below which are its talons. It has not yet been cleaned but is a powerful image, despite its covering of earth.

6. This ring was fitted to a ‘seax’, a single edged sword/knife. The decoration consists of two confronted serpentine animals (the blue glass eye of one can be seen, just to the right of centre).

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In 1997 Kevin retired from the museum although he continued his work with the PAS. In July 2009 he received an email from Duncan Slarke, the PAS Officer covering Staffordshire and the West Midlands. It was simply headed ‘Wow!!!!!!!’. One look at the attached images showed that still more exemplation marks would be appropriate. A man who was metal detecting at Ogley Hay, just to the north of Birmingham, had discovered an incredible hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold and silver objects. The following week an emergency meeting was held in Birmingham to decide what to do; the museums at Birmingham and Stoke-on-Trent were represented, as were English Heritage and Staffordshire County Council. Dr Roger Bland, the Head of the PAS came up from London. Kevin will never forget that meeting, the feelings of excitement, amazement and sheer terror - this was England’s Tutankhamun and the responsibility was overwhelming.

Decisions were quickly made; an excavation started on the site to recover the rest of the hoard; security was vital, no one outside the group was to know about the discovery. As there would have to be an inquest to decide if it was ‘Treasure’, the Coroner would need to know what had been found. Consequently Kevin, assisted by his wife Dianne, were two of the first people to examine the Staffordshire hoard. For the next seven weeks they worked on the catalogue for two days a week, opening bags, weighing, measuring and describing each piece then entering the data on the computer. The finds were incredible: intricate garnet settings, fine filigree objects bearing strange animals, but most impressive was the craftsmanship; the Anglo-Saxons were consummate metalworkers and the hoard represented the best that they could do. It was the stuff of kings.

The hoard is odd, consisting mainly of war-gear, particularly sword hilt fittings stripped from the iron blades. These hilts would have been worn with fine buckles and other fittings – where were they? There was no women’s gold jewellery, which is more common elsewhere than sword fittings. There were three Christian crosses and some highly-decorated plates and strips that can’t yet be identified. These objects had been carefully chosen; it wasn’t just bullion.

The public response to the hoard was amazing; it received worldwide media coverage and over 90,000 people queued for up to five hours to just see part of it. An unprecedented £900,000 of the £3,285,000 needed by the museums to buy the hoard came directly from the public. Kevin says that the most important and satisfying thing about this find was the response of the public, who showed that they cared about the past. To work on something like this was a great privilege.

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### 1. Gold Mount

- **Title:** This gold strip was probably part of a cross.
- **Description:**
  - Each face contains a Latin inscription from the Vulgate Bible (Numbers, chapter 10, verse 35).
  - It features three Christian crosses and some highly-decorated plates and strips.
  - The inscription is from the Vulgate Bible.

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**Kevin Leahy**

Kevin Leahy graduated in 1977 and was one of the first three Leicester students to receive a single subject degree in Archaeology. He stayed on at Leicester for a certificate in Museum Studies before becoming Keeper of Archaeology at Scunthorpe Museum where he spent the next 29 years working on Lindsey, a little known Anglo-Saxon kingdom in the north of Lincolnshire. He excavated some important sites including Cleatham, (England’s third largest Anglo-Saxon cemetery) which formed the basis of his Nottingham PhD. As part of his work on Lindsey he started recording finds made by metal detector users; it was this that led to his second career with the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). This is a national scheme, administered by the British Museum, which records archaeological finds made by members of the public and has a network of locally based Finds Liaison Officers covering England and Wales. Kevin became a National Finds Adviser dealing with Anglo-Saxon metalwork.

In 1997 Kevin retired from the museum although he continued his work with the PAS. In July 2009 he received an email from Duncan Slarke, the PAS Officer covering Staffordshire and the West Midlands. It was simply headed ‘WOW!!!!!!!’. One look at the attached images showed that still more exemplation marks would be appropriate. A man who was metal detecting at Ogley Hay, just to the north of Birmingham, had discovered an incredible hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold and silver objects. The following week an emergency meeting was held in Birmingham to decide what to do; the museums at Birmingham and Stoke-on-Trent were represented, as were English Heritage and Staffordshire County Council. Dr Roger Bland, the Head of the PAS came up from London. Kevin will never forget that meeting, the feelings of excitement, amazement and sheer terror - this was England’s Tutankhamun and the responsibility was overwhelming.

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Leicester: Leading the Field in Cardiovascular Research

The University of Leicester plans to build and equip a new £12.6m Cardiovascular Research Centre at Leicester’s Glenfield Hospital. The new Centre will radically transform the scale and quality of research undertaken, and tackle vanguard challenges in cardiovascular disease.

Cardiovascular disease kills over 198,000 people in the UK each year. It is one of the major causes of illness and the main cause of death in this country. Each day, in the East Midlands alone, nine people die prematurely of heart disease with profound effects upon their families and friends. Each year Cardiac Services at the Glenfield Hospital see over 16,000 patients. These harsh facts mean that cardiovascular research is, and will remain, the highest priority for the University of Leicester’s College of Medicine and Biological Sciences, and the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust.

The quality of patients’ lives and advances in treatment and care are negatively affected by the current deficiencies in dedicated laboratory space and specialized equipment for cardiovascular research. This reduces time for focused research and leads to delays in converting results into improved risk reduction and patient care.

The University of Leicester is appealing for funds to build and equip the new Cardiovascular Research Centre (CRC), so that more people with a susceptibility to, or suffering from, cardiovascular disease, will benefit from greater understanding, prediction, treatment and care.

The planned new building is a 2,200m² extension over four floors which will be linked to the existing Clinical Sciences Wing at Glenfield Hospital and will comprise:

- **The Leicester Biobank**, which will be equipped with state-of-the-art robotic equipment capable of processing and storing biological samples from up to 100,000 individuals
- **The Cardiovascular Research Unit**, which will provide much expanded laboratory space that will enable the Cardiovascular Research team to fully exploit its potential
- **The Clinical Research Informatics Unit**, which will capture and code information on patients attending cardiovascular services at Glenfield Hospital and enable the scaling up of research
- **The Data to Knowledge Unit**, which will accommodate the advanced IT link between the University and the Hospital and provide researchers with a dedicated research database of clinical information linked to a collection of samples from patient volunteers.
The Cardiovascular Research Centre will:

- Be established as a leading international genetics centre for cardiovascular research
- Revolutionise and enhance the quality of ongoing research
- Build on the University's position as a world leading centre for the treatment of high blood pressure
- Speed the translation of research from “bench to bedside”
- Help to develop new treatments to improve outcomes in coronary and vascular intervention
- Most importantly, help to improve the health and life expectation of patients and the public in Leicester, the UK and ultimately worldwide

The Department of Cardiovascular Sciences at the University of Leicester has developed an enviable reputation in research with a multidisciplinary cadre of principal investigators and a prestigious British Heart Foundation Chair in Cardiology which is held by Professor Nilesh Samani, one of the foremost researchers in cardiovascular genetics in the world. The University of Leicester has committed over £8million of its scarce capital resources to this major project, and has launched an appeal to raise a further £4million to complete and equip the CRC building.

To support the CRC Appeal and make a donation visit www.le.ac.uk/crcappeal or call +44 (0)116 223 1071.
£1 Million Appeal to Expand Embrace Arts

The University has announced plans to build a stunning new extension to the Richard Attenborough centre with the launch of a £1 million Fundraising Appeal. According to Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Robert Burgess, “This exciting new development is critical to the University’s commitment to bring contemporary art and particularly sculpture to the University and to Leicester, as well as to diversify and expand our range of cultural offerings.”

The innovative gallery will provide space for a fully accessible programme of sculpture and installations and encourage new ways to explore art through touch and the use of the latest technology.

It will be the only purpose-built sculpture gallery in the East Midlands and aims to build connections with internationally known venues such as the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the Tate to bring the very best of contemporary and historic work to Leicester.

Support of Alumni will be essential in helping to create this much needed arts space. Please contact Deputy Development Director Ave Vinick on arv4@le.ac.uk or +44 (0) 116 252 2176 for more information.

Engineering Materials Technology Integration Centre

Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Robert Burgess opened the Materials Technology Integration Centre (MaTIC) on Tuesday 2nd November 2010 in the University of Leicester’s iconic Stirling/Gowan Engineering Building.

The aim of MaTIC is to provide expertise and know-how of advanced technology that can be used to solve complex engineering and scientific problems. The Centre will also engage in forensic work which has an impact on the way in which violent crime is understood and interpreted.

The Centre includes a range of advanced specialist equipment for the understanding of materials behaviour.

Examples of this equipment include:

- A Raman spectroscope for understanding chemical bonding in materials
- A micro-computed X-ray tomograph for tracking solidification reactions in alloys used for aerospace applications and studying micro-fossils
- The Centre also houses equipment to quantify the sharpness of knives and other weapons which have been used for inflicting injury.

A Building Worth Celebrating

The Museum Studies Building, refurbished at a cost of £1.5 million, provides a resource for the whole University, with experimental, high-quality teaching spaces and includes a set of unique features tailored to the specific needs of Museum Studies teaching and research.

The Collections Room, for example, houses objects from the School’s own collections and a facility which, by meeting strict security and environmental conditions, enables the School to borrow objects from other museum collections. The first set of loans has already been negotiated from Leicester Museums. There are also dedicated exhibition spaces in which students will mount their own exhibitions and where experimental modes of display that feed into a host of research and teaching activities can be trialled.

The Learning Studio is another new feature of the building which transforms the way Museum Studies is taught. The Studio is flexibly configured and fitted with a range of teaching technologies designed to meet the needs of students with a wide range of learning styles.
New **Space Research**
Facility Unveiled at the University of Leicester

A £1 million facility that will launch Leicester into a new era of space research was formally opened by David Willetts, Minister for Universities and Science, on Thursday 13th January 2011. The new Space Research Centre extension, in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, represents a continued investment by the University of Leicester in its future in space science.

The 575m² building provides five additional state-of-the-art laboratories, all of which will be immediately utilised for new and recently started projects.

The new labs include discreet space for Earth Observation Science, high-energy gamma-ray astronomy and high-speed detectors and electronics.

The Centre is involved in six current flight hardware projects, with funding from the UK Space Agency (UKSA), Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC), European Space Agency (ESA) and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), among other organisations. The missions are:

- **BepiColombo** – leading the MIXS experiment for the European/ Japanese mission to Mercury (2014)
- **Exomars** – building three distinct experiments for the European Mars lander (2018)
- **The James Webb Space Telescope** – where Leicester has a lead engineering role in the Mid-InfraRed Instrument. The James Webb Space Telescope will be the successor to the Hubble Space Telescope
- **Astrosat** – India’s first national X-ray astronomy mission will carry a Leicester focal plane CCD camera.

**Percy Gee Building**

“The extensive £16.5 million redevelopment of the Percy Gee building home to the Students’ Union, is now complete. Leicester’s new building is arguably the best Students’ Union in the country and provides students with a wide range of services and support throughout their time at university. The Students’ Union and the new redevelopment are central to our mission to provide a high-quality student experience.

The new building is already making a big difference and usage has soared. At the centre of the new development is ‘The Square’, providing a light-filled space for students to relax, study or socialise (photograph below).

We have also incorporated a new restaurant (called 1923 to mark the establishment of the Students’ Union) in order to offer students a greater choice of eating options and to attract a wider audience including staff and postgraduate students. One of the key attractions is the new 2,000 capacity O2 Academy, which will not only serve the student population but also the wider Leicester community.

I am proud to be building on the legacy of former Sabbatical Officers and I look forward to welcoming back visiting alumni.”

**Alex Nutt** - Academic Affairs Officer, Students’ Union (BA American Studies, 2009).

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Stunning new Atrium and ‘The Square’ in the refurbished Percy Gee Building.
News from the University

Robo-op that is armed with knowledge

Cardiologist André Ng achieved a world’s first in May 2010 when he conducted a pioneering procedure – using a ‘robo-arm’ for a heart operation.

Dr Ng became the first person to use the Catheter Robotics “Amigo” Remote Catheter System in a heart rhythm treatment procedure. The system allows a doctor to carry out a common heart treatment procedure remotely using a robotic arm.

The operation involves inserting thin wires, called catheters, into blood vessels at the top of the patient’s groin and advancing these into the heart chambers. Electrodes on the catheters record and stimulate different regions of the heart to help the doctor identify the cause of the heart rhythm problem, which usually involves an abnormality in the electrical wiring system of the heart. Once this area is identified, one of the catheters is placed at the location to ablate or ‘burn’ the tissue to cure the problem. Dr Ng followed up this procedure six months later in November 2010 to become the first in the world to use 3-D technology for this treatment.

Dr Ng said: “We are the first centre in the world to use this new Amigo system and hence the first to be able to combine the two cutting-edge technologies together for the ablation procedure.”

Santander

Santander Universities announced a three-year funding Programme worth £175,000 for the University of Leicester when it opened a branch in the newly refurbished Percy Gee Students’ Union Building in September 2010.

Under the new three-year package, scholarships will be made available for postgraduate students - beginning in 2010 - from any of the Santander Universities in Spain, Portugal and Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Uruguay & Venezuela). Santander will also provide funding for travel awards for undergraduate and postgraduate students and academic staff.

New Year Honours 2011

Members of the University community have been recognised in the Queen’s New Year Honours list:

Emeritus Professor Tudor Bowden Jones, from the Department of Physics and Astronomy, has received an MBE for services to science. Professor Jones was Head of the Physics and Astronomy Department 1993-98 when the University received the Queen’s Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education for its work in Physics and Astronomy.

Bill Bolsover, who was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree by the University in 2009, has been made a CBE for services to the construction industry.

University benefactor Dr David Wilson has been appointed CBE for his services to young people. He was presented with an honorary Doctor of Laws in 2004.

Richard Everard, awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws in 2009, has been appointed OBE for services to the community.

Dr Peter Ellwood, honorary Doctor of Laws 1984, has been knighted for his services to business and the public sector.

Graduate Patricia Bacon, BA English 1973, has received a DBE for services to local and national Further Education.

Graduate Keith Paves, Education 1989, has received an OBE for his work with academy schools.

Graduate Miss Jean Floodgate, BA Combined Studies 1979, has received an MBE for services to continuing professional development.
The University is looking at new and innovative ways of supporting graduates by developing relationships with graduate recruiters.

The launch of the Employer Forum in May 2010 created an opportunity for a range of graduate recruiters to share their views on employability with University staff and students.

“It was extremely useful to hear directly from a range of employers and what they have to say about the recruitment of our graduates into their businesses. The session generated a lot of new ideas for how the University can work with employers.”

Professor Annette Cashmore

Your Employer Forum Needs You!
Are you a graduate employer?

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Five Facts about your University:

1. Leicester rises to its highest ever position in the Guardian University Guide (12th out of 120 universities)
2. New Government data reveals Leicester is the most socially inclusive of Britain’s top-20 leading universities
3. Cross-disciplinary research at Leicester produces new ways of measuring happiness and the quality of life between countries
4. New world ranking of universities places Leicester in the top 2% of institutions worldwide
5. Leicester academic authors groundbreaking story of the translation of the King James Bible, marking its 400th anniversary

New Asthma Research Breaks the Mould

Scientists investigating the allergic reactions that asthmatics suffer towards a common mould have discovered that many people with asthma actually had the mould growing in their own lungs.

The research, led by University of Leicester scientists at Glenfield Hospital, has been published in the December 2010 issue of the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine.

Professor Andy Wardlaw from the University of Leicester said: “Asthma is a very common condition where the breathing tubes (bronchi) can go into spasm making it difficult to breathe. Around a fifth of adults with severe asthma, which they have had for a long time, get permanent (fixed) narrowing of their bronchi. It is known that A. fumigatus (usually found in soil and compost heaps), can grow in the lungs of some people with asthma and mould allergy, which can cause severe lung damage.

“This problem is thought to only affect a very small number of people with asthma; however, about half of people with severe asthma have evidence of allergy to moulds like A. fumigatus.

“Treating individuals, from whom A. fumigatus is detected, with antibiotics against the mould may prevent fixed narrowing of the airways.”

90th Anniversary

The 90th anniversary of the founding of University College, Leicester will be celebrated this year. The occasion will be marked by several events, including Homecoming and a lunch for graduates from University College days with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Robert Burgess.

Please Contact: Paul Jackson, Director of Student Support and Development at: pmj7@le.ac.uk or 0116 229 7757
A Relationship that Lasts a Lifetime

A message from the Chairman of the Alumni Association

The last twelve months have been hugely successful for Alumni Relations with a growing range of events and activity. These have included a very popular Homecoming reunion in June, our first events in North America, a dinner for the first graduating class of Medics and a special Degree Ceremony for the graduating classes of 1958 to 1965, to name but a few. In addition, we held our very first Alumni dinner at the prestigious Mandarin Oriental Hotel, hosted by the Vice-Chancellor, which is set to become an annual celebration for Leicester graduates.

The Alumni dinner in 2011 was also the showcase for the inaugural Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award. The profile of leading Leicester graduates has never been higher, be it in academic and professional life, business or the community and the Vice-Chancellor presented the Award to a very fitting recipient, Professor Nilesh Samani of the Class of 1978. Nilesh is an inspirational product of the University of Leicester experience and now heads the Department of Cardiovascular Sciences and is also British Heart Foundation Chair of Cardiology. He is internationally renowned for his research in cardiovascular genetics and his clinical work has helped improve the treatment and care of thousands of heart patients across the UK.

Times are changing in Higher Education, particularly with the Government’s proposals to increase tuition fees and to significantly cut teaching grants. Leicester is widely praised for its work in attracting talented students from a broad social mix and the increase in costs will no doubt act as more of a deterrent for some students as they consider the pursuit of a university education. Looking ahead, I can see that Leicester alumni will have a bigger role to play in supporting scholarships for future students. I know that this will be a particular consideration for the many alumni, like me, whose access to university was eased by a more generous system of financial support. I am sure you will continue to take the opportunity to ‘give back’ where you can.

Alumni will have an ever more important role to play in the continued success of our University, from ambassadors to supporters and the Alumni Association is ready to fully play its part. The Association has recently been strengthened by new members and is committed to engaging with more graduates and developing our programme of events and activity in partnership with the Development and Alumni Relations Team. Our plans include informal social gatherings in London, a Beaumont reunion dinner in September and international events.

I would welcome your views on alumni activity and communications so do let us know of alumni in your network with whom we have lost contact. Please feel free to contact me via email at pmulvihill@le.ac.uk. I look forward to your continuing involvement in 2011.

Patrick Mulvihill
(MBA 2002, BA Economics 1987)
Chairman Alumni Association

Support Leicester Students

We are all aware that the current economic climate has made it more difficult for graduates entering the job market. Are you in a position to offer opportunities for internships, placements or work shadowing? Are you able to visit the University to give a careers talk or to participate in practice interviews? If so, your former Department would welcome offers of help for present students. You can contact the Development and Alumni Office at alumni.relations@le.ac.uk giving your details and if known the Department you are interested in supporting.
Degree Certificate Award Ceremony

On Saturday 30th October, 2010 the University held a special event for alumni who graduated between 1958 and 1965. During this time graduates did not receive a degree certificate at their graduation ceremony. This special event offered alumni a unique opportunity to revisit the University and receive their degree certificate at a graduation ceremony officiated by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Robert Burgess.

Over 500 people, including 240 alumni, attended the event. In addition to two ceremonies, there were academic lectures, tours of the campus and opportunities to sit and reminisce with friends from past times.

Homecoming 2010

Over 500 graduates, guests and staff attended last year's Homecoming event at the University of Leicester on 26th June. The Keynote Lecture was given by Dr Jeff Hoffman, a real-life astronaut with over 1,000 hours of flying time. Dr Hoffman presented an engaging lecture on the ‘Hubble Telescope and the Future of Human Space Flight’ and was received with rapturous applause by a full house.

Alumni were able to enjoy a range of mini-lectures, hands-on demonstrations, tours and workshops available throughout the day.

Donors to the Annual Fund were welcomed to a special preview of the refurbished Percy Gee Building as part of the Benefactors’ Reception. They were also given the opportunity to meet and hear from current students who have benefited from scholarships and bursaries supported by our alumni.

The day concluded with the Vice-Chancellor’s Review and a chance for quests to try out The Scholar, the new Students’ Union bar.

Homecoming 2011

Keep the date free! Come along to this year’s Homecoming on Saturday 2nd July.

For the first time, the Maurice Shock Building will open its doors for Homecoming and will host lots of activities. There will also be a range of lectures, demonstrations and workshops across the University campus, suitable for all ages. So bring your family and give them a taste of the University as it is today.

Our Keynote Lecturer this year will be the inimitable Professor Gordon Campbell. Gordon’s entertaining and eclectic lecture is entitled “The King James Bible and the English Language”. Gordon will show us how the language of this version of the Bible lives on in the hundreds of phrases we still use today; how often do you say ‘see eye to eye’, ‘fall by the wayside’, or even ‘eat, drink and be merry’.

There will also be lots of entertaining workshops, mini-lectures and behind the scenes tours from other departments throughout the day.

You can make your booking on our website at www.le.ac.uk/alumni. Don’t miss out! Book early.

Medical School Reunion Dinner Saturday 2nd July 2011

Are you a graduate of the Leicester Medical School from the Class Years 1983 to 1989? This year the Medical School is hosting a special reunion dinner on the evening of Homecoming for your Class Year. Come for the day, enjoy the scintillating lectures, demonstrations and entertainment at Homecoming, then stay for the evening meal and meet up with fellow graduates and academic staff.

You can book today at www.le.ac.uk/alumni.
Toronto and New York Reunions

It was a great pleasure to see so many Leicester graduates at our first ever Alumni Receptions in Toronto (27th October 2010) and New York (28th October 2010). Alumni and guests greatly enjoyed both evenings, meeting friends old and new as well as hearing the latest University news from Professor Douglas Tallack (Pro-Vice Chancellor, International), Suzanne Alexander (Director of the International Office) and Steve O’Connor (Director of Development).

The enduring passion for Leicester was very motivating and we were delighted at the warm reception we received in both cities. This has encouraged us to establish two special Funds: The Canadian Alumni Fund for Leicester and The United States Alumni Fund for Leicester. You can make a donation at www.le.ac.uk/alumni/supportus or contact Sue Rees for more information on +44 (0) 116 223 1071 or email sr266@le.ac.uk.

Beaumont Hall Reunion 2011

On Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th September 2011 we will be holding a special reunion for all graduates who stayed in Beaumont Hall as students. There will be a meal on the Saturday and optional tours on the Sunday. Further details about this special event will be available on our website in spring.

If you are a former “Beaumontonian” you may have photos and memorabilia of Beaumont. If so we would be very pleased to hear from you as there will be a nostalgia display on show at the event. Please email alumni.relations@le.ac.uk or call + 44 (0) 116 252 2418.

10th Anniversary of Sculpture in the Garden

This summer will mark the 10th Anniversary of the Sculpture in the Garden Exhibition at the University’s Botanic Gardens in Oadby. Look out for further information about this remarkable event at the University website www.le.ac.uk.

2011 Alumni Dinner

Over 185 alumni and guests were welcomed by the Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Robert Burgess to the Alumni Dinner at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, London on 17th February.

This special black tie dinner proved eventful and full of surprises as a power cut plunged Knightsbridge into darkness. Leicester alumni showed their resilience and determination to have a good time as the pre-dinner reception was extended until power was restored. The event provided a great opportunity for guests to meet friends old and new and to enjoy a delicious three-course dinner, prepared by the Mandarin’s renowned chefs.

The second surprise of the evening was reserved for the recipient of the inaugural Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award, presented to Professor Nilesh Samani, in recognition of his distinguished academic and professional career spanning over 30 years in Leicester. Professor Samani is Head of the University’s Department of Cardiovascular Sciences and the British Heart Foundation Chair of Cardiology. He was acclaimed for his world-leading research in the field of cardiovascular science, and the life-changing difference he has made for thousands of patients and families suffering from cardiovascular diseases in Leicestershire and across the UK.

See pictures from the Alumni Dinner 2011 on our website: www.le.ac.uk/alumni.
Rosemary Fernandes
(LLB Hons, 1988).

Rosemary is a Senior Legal Advisor to the Attorney General. She is one of five Legal Advisors on the Criminal Team and advises the Law Officers (the Attorney General and the Solicitor General). “I lead in cases where sensitive information cannot be disclosed to the defence and an independent barrister needs to be appointed to protect the interests of the defendant. I also lead on war crimes cases, Official Secrets Act cases and terrorist prosecutions.” She was formerly a prosecutor with the Crown Prosecution Service and worked on the Counter Terrorism Division.

Rosemary remembers her time as Vice-President of the Law Society in 1987-88 and the experience of working with fellow students from different backgrounds and with so many political views: “It was an interesting experience and stood me in good stead for the future.”

She would advise today’s students to follow their hearts in terms of their career choices. “The financial remuneration in working for Government Legal Services may not be as great as some of my counterparts in commercial firms, but the amazing thrill you get from issuing a European Arrest Warrant, or succeeding in opposing bail in a terrorist bail application cannot be measured in pounds and pence.”

When Rosemary retires she plans to write crime fiction.

Paul Surtees (BA Hons Philosophy, 1981).

Paul is the Founder & President of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Overseas League (ROSL). A key objective of ROSL is enhancing international understanding and encouraging international friendship. “I am involved in fundraising for various charities and organise social and cultural functions in which local and Commonwealth citizens come together.” He has arranged a number of functions for visiting members of the Royal Family, including Prince Edward, Princess Anne and Princess Michael of Kent.

He is also an adviser to the Hong Kong Federation of the Blind, where he organises fundraising and day trips.

At Leicester, Paul was President of the American Society; a member of the Staff-Student Council; a Catering Committee member, and represented the University on University Challenge, in debates, and in horse riding competitions with other universities.

Paul has retained his links with Leicester and recently helped arrange a reunion in New York.

Chris Aslan Alexander
(BSc Communications and Society, 1997).

Chris is the author of A Carpet Ride to Khiva – Seven Years on the Silk Road which tells of his experiences working with UNESCO and the British Council in Uzbekistan. Chris set up a workshop focussing on 15th century carpet designs found in Persian illuminated manuscripts and another workshop focusing on dyeing techniques. “The two workshops are still going strong and are the largest private employer in the region” says Chris.

His work has also taken him to Tajikistan where he worked with yak herders and helped them start an adventure knitwear company called ‘Yak Yak’.

Chris recalls how his degree helped him in his life and career choices: “My degree focussed a lot on cultural imperialism and understanding how this can manifest itself in overseas development work. When I came to Khiva I was determined to learn the local language, live with a local family and for my project to promote the culture and history of the region.”
**Lost Alumni Profiles**

**Lost - but now found!**

The very fact that you are reading this magazine indicates that you are a member of the Alumni Association. However, just over a year ago, the same could not be said for many of your fellow alumni who graduated during the 1970s. During this era membership of the Alumni Association was not automatic as it is today and consequently around 8,250 graduates had lost touch with their University. In October 2009, we embarked on a project to find these ‘lost’ graduates.

The ‘Lost Alumni Project’ was launched, with the aim of getting back in touch with as many graduates as possible. A variety of methods were used to contact lost alumni and, by September 2010, we could proudly claim to have reconnected with 2,886 graduates so far. The personal stories of some of these graduates can be read below.

We are now looking for ‘lost graduates’ from the 1980s. If you know of any alumni who graduated in that decade and who have lost touch with the University, please encourage them to email the Alumni team at alumni.relations@le.ac.uk.

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**Barbara Nicholls (BA Combined Studies, 1971 & PGCE, 1972).**

Barbara is a freelance broadcast lighting camerawoman and director. Barbara lights and films documentaries, arts promos and drama as well as commercials, principally for television, cinema and web release. “I travel all over the world and have filmed in many difficult and sensitive locations such as specialist hospitals, Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps, shelters and prisons as well as recording in remote corners of the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia and the Far East.”

After graduating from Leicester, Barbara was a lecturer in Further and Higher Education and she continues to educate others to this day. “I have always trained others in broadcast skills between jobs as I love encouraging the next generation. If I can do it, they can!”

Remembering her time at Leicester, Barbara commented “I think that Leicester was a defining moment for me in many ways; leaving home and being independent, opening up to all kinds of ideas and influences. It was a window on the world. It taught me a lot about research and structuring written work, now useful to me when I go out alone as a shooting director anywhere in the world, making sense of a story for the BBC.”

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**Richard Hayes (BA Sociology, 1973; PGCE, 1975).**

Richard is currently undertaking his third Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) placement, and is working in Ethiopia as a teacher trainer at Wollega University. He and his wife, a fellow Leicester graduate, have also been running their own language school in Spain for the last 28 years, which has expanded from five students to over 500.

Whilst at Leicester, Richard was the Vice-President, and then Deputy President, of the Students’ Union, and he says that his experiences at the University helped him “incalculably”, and shaped him into the person he is today. It was at Leicester that he undertook his teacher training which, he says, “has become my life’s work.” Since leaving the University, Richard has also undertaken VSO placements in Egypt and Saudi Arabia where he worked as an English language instructor.

In looking to the future, Richard is unsure of what adventure to embark on next and even which country to call home, though a distance learning MA, could be in the pipeline. He would, however, recommend teaching English abroad if, like him, “richness of life experience is more important to you than material comfort”. Richard says that being an English teacher is “a great way to see the world and you will always be in demand!”

Graduate Manjula Sood’s accomplishments read like a list of ‘firsts’ – the first Asian woman to be elected to Leicester City Council in 1996, the first to hold a Cabinet position, as well as being the UK’s first female Asian High Bailiff and Lord Mayor.

Her involvement in numerous charitable and community organisations, both locally and nationally over almost four decades, earned her the award of an MBE and an honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Leicester.

Manjula is passionate about health issues, both as a patient and widow of Councillor Paul Sood, who died prematurely of heart disease several years ago. When the University of Leicester recently announced an appeal to build and equip a new £12.6 million Cardiovascular Research Centre at Glenfield Hospital - to which the University has committed over £8 million - Manjula was the first person to make a gift to the £4 million Appeal.

“This Appeal is very close to my heart”, she said, in urging friends and colleagues to support research into the causes and treatment of heart disease – the killer of over 198,000 people in the UK each year and the main cause of death in this country.

Dominic Luckett (BA History, 1987).

Dr Luckett was educated at the University of Leicester and Magdalen College, Oxford. He spent eleven years at Harrow School, where he taught, latterly as Head of History and an assistant housemaster before moving on to Worth School as Deputy Head. In 2007 he was appointed Headmaster of Mill Hill School in London.

Recalling his time at the University he commented: “The teaching in medieval history was riveting, absolutely extraordinary with a level of academic rigour I had never experienced before. I was determined to do as much medieval history as I could. Leicester taught me the true importance and value of academic endeavour.”

Dr Luckett became a donor to the University in 2009. “There is a vast amount of untapped academic and intellectual potential in this country from those where there is no history of attending university within the family, or for those who feel university is too expensive. Donations to the University’s Student Opportunities Fund allows people from disadvantaged backgrounds to have the same sort of experiences that I had at Leicester and the opportunities that a first-class education enabled me to enjoy.”

Campbell McMurray (BA Social Sciences, 1970).

Campbell was the former Director of the Royal Naval Museum (RNM) at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard before retiring from full-time employment in 2006. Despite retiring, Campbell continues to participate in numerous maritime and heritage-related activities and is a member of the Advisory Committee on National Historic Ships, Trustee of the SS Great Britain in Bristol and President of the Society for Nautical Research (South).

Campbell began his museum career in 1970 as a Caird Research Fellow at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, later becoming an assistant keeper in the Department of Printed Book and Manuscripts in 1978. In 1983 Campbell established the Scottish Maritime Museum in Ayrshire before joining the RNM in 1989.

It was Campbell’s experience at Leicester which led him to meet the late Professor Ralph Davis. “As well as being Head of the Department of Economic History at the time, Professor Davis also just happened to be a Trustee at the National Maritime Museum. It was through his considerable influence, I’m sure, that I was able to secure the interview with the Director of the National Maritime Museum which led to my first appointment there in 1970.”
Annual Fund

Your help will make an immediate and lasting difference

Student Opportunities Fund

The Student Opportunities Fund, supported by alumni, enables the University to respond quickly to students in need and to recognise individual potential. All donations received have a profound and enduring impact upon the lives of our students.

The University is committed to doing everything it can to provide support to the most deserving and talented students, so that they have the opportunity to study at Leicester or to continue with their studies. However, we will only be able to help more students if more people, like you, are willing to offer us their support.

Life-changing experiences

Last year, generous and compassionate support from our alumni for the Student Opportunities Fund provided vital assistance to 16 students who had nowhere else to turn and who were facing exceptional financial hardship.

Alumni Hardship Awards made from the Fund enabled these students to continue their studies. Support varied between £500 and £2,000 per student. These included:

- Priya, who was left to care for her younger sibling following the death of a parent. She received funds towards housing and living costs in lieu of parental support.
- David, a young student with a terminally-ill parent, who was assisted with travel and telephone costs.
- Helen, a young student suffering from domestic violence, received housing costs to enable an urgent move into safe student accommodation.

Join in and make a BIG difference

We receive more urgent and worthy calls for funding than we have funds available. If you haven’t yet joined in with our Annual Fund, you may be interested to know that, currently, every pound that you give could be turned into £1.70 thanks to Gift Aid and the Matched Funding Scheme, a Government-led initiative that adds a third to any donation made.

Time is running out as the Matched Funding Scheme is set to finish on the 31st July 2011. So, this is the last year that any donation you make will be worth considerably more and achieve a great deal more.

As well as being acknowledged in our next issue of Graduates’ Review, all donors are invited to our annual Benefactors’ Reception, held on campus each summer.

To make your donation to the Student Opportunities Fund please complete the enclosed donation form and return it to the Development and Alumni Relations Office.

For more information about leaving a Gift in Your Will please visit www.le.ac.uk/alumni or call Kathy Whitehurst +44 (0) 116 252 2195


Charlotte Carroll

MA student Charlotte Carroll received an alumni-funded Research Scholarship to allow her to continue her MA in Country House Studies. “Before I was awarded the scholarship, I struggled to keep up with two jobs and also the amount of work and research that my MA demanded.

“The Scholarship is a fantastic opportunity for students who, without the means of support, would not be able to continue on to postgraduate education, and would not be able to gain skills which will give them an edge in the working world."

To read about more of the students who have benefitted from the Student Opportunities Fund, visit www.le.ac.uk/supportus/

Evi Christofidou

Evi was given the opportunity to study for a PhD in Cardiovascular Research thanks to the Student Opportunities Fund. Her work and future career could have a major impact on our lives. Evi researches coronary artery disease and is helping to develop new diagnostic treatment solutions for one of the biggest causes of premature death in the UK.

“The Alumni Scholarship has allowed me to facilitate my long-term ambition of becoming a successful researcher in cardiovascular genetics. Thanks to the scholarship I can focus on my research and produce high-quality work without being distracted by financial worries.”

Student Callers – getting to know you

In the Autumn Term, a team of 46 students came together to work on the 2010-11 Annual Fund Campaign. Their goal was to raise funds and invest in world-changing research and inspirational teaching; and to help students who need our support most.

The team of student callers spoke to over 2,500 alumni and parents during this year’s Annual Fund Telephone Campaign, raising over £135,000 in donations ranging from £5 to £2,000 for the Student Opportunities Fund. The Fund will have a profound and enduring impact upon the lives of our students thanks to the support of our alumni. Not only were the student callers seeking support for the Student Opportunities Fund, but they were also keen to share the latest University news and information about alumni events with graduates.

Danny, an Engineering student, enjoyed getting to know our graduates: “I really enjoyed talking with our alumni. They shared their experiences and offered valuable advice. The best part was feeling that my efforts raised awareness and essential funds that will help students in hardship.”

Fellow caller Emily, a second-year English and American Studies student, joined the team with the intention of making a difference: “Becoming a student caller was one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had. Knowing that you are raising money for such an important cause made me feel like I was helping to give back to the University.”

If you missed your opportunity to speak to a student caller and would like to receive a call in the next campaign, then please email annualgiving@le.ac.uk.

Danny, Emily and all of the Annual Fund Team would like to thank our alumni and friends for their generous support.

World-changing experiences

Alumni support for the Student Opportunities Fund in the last two years has also helped to provide life-changing Research Scholarships to 27 talented postgraduate students. Every one of these students is now benefitting from a first-class Leicester education.

To read about more of the students who have benefitted from the Student Opportunities Fund, visit www.le.ac.uk/supportus/

Evi Christofidou

Evi was given the opportunity to study for a PhD in Cardiovascular Research thanks to the Student Opportunities Fund. Her work and future career could have a major impact on our lives. Evi researches coronary artery disease and is helping to develop new diagnostic treatment solutions for one of the biggest causes of premature death in the UK.

“The Alumni Scholarship has allowed me to facilitate my long-term ambition of becoming a successful researcher in cardiovascular genetics. Thanks to the scholarship I can focus on my research and produce high-quality work without being distracted by financial worries.”

Personalia 2011

We also publish our Personalia which contains short updates from our graduates which we have received over the past year. It can be downloaded at www.le.ac.uk/alumni

A printed copy is available upon request from the Development and Alumni Relations Office.
ROLL OF BENEFACTORS

Thank you to the 1,260 benefactors listed below, and to the 224 anonymous donors, who made a gift to the University of Leicester Annual Fund between 1st January 2010 and 31st December 2010.
Thank you for your generous support
The Floor is Yours – Join the Debate at Leicester Exchanges

We are proud to bring you a new, dynamic way to shape public policy in Britain. Leicester Exchanges unites our academics and critical thinkers with the UK’s highest profile opinion formers and members of the public to seek new approaches to some very real issues.

The issues span areas such as ‘Climate change – deny, prevent or prepare?’; ‘Is Britain broken?’; ‘Should we punish or reform offenders?’ and ‘Should Man go to Mars?’ We want your opinions on these topics and more.

Leicester Exchanges will include live debates and discussions with leaders of opinion on a specific topic, as well as a strong online presence through blogs and other social media outlets.

The debates will ultimately be summarised into a Green Discussion Paper with a view to creating a White Paper where a clear outcome can be identified.

So, the floor is yours. Will you make the most of it? To make your opinion count, join the debate at www.leicesterexchanges.com

If you would like to suggest a topic for future debate or would like to write a blog piece please email lexchanges@le.ac.uk

The implication is that if Britain is broken, someone must have broken it and that usually draws our attention towards whoever or whatever is ‘new’ or ‘different’ – unruly youth, immigrant communities, benefit claimants, unmarried mothers, the unemployed.

Dr Angus Cameron, Department of Geography