



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Alumni and Supporters Magazine SPRING 2016

GRADUATES' REVIEW

**A YEAR AT
LEICESTER**

**ROYAL ALUMNA
GRADUATES**

**THE ALL NEW
'LEICESTER
WEEKEND'**

**UNIVERSITY
WELCOMES HOME
Sir David
Attenborough**

Editor's Welcome

The past twelve months have been every bit as exciting as you might imagine here at the University of Leicester. With the launch of our new Strategic Plan, the ongoing success of our Centre for Medicine Appeal and the commencement of a spectacular feat of engineering to replace the glass roof on the listed Engineering Building, it would be difficult to select a highlight!

Once again, the Development and Alumni Relations team is delighted to be able to share our latest news and successes with the University of Leicester Alumni Family. As has become the tradition now, we have, once again, invited a fellow alumnus to act as guest editor and offer a personal introduction to this years' Graduates' Review. I hope you will enjoy reading this special preview of your latest alumni magazine from Leicester graduate and BBC News Presenter, Julian Worricker.

Many thanks for your continued support and ongoing engagement with your University. If you return to Leicester during the next 12 months and visit the University, we should be very pleased to hear from you. We would also be thrilled were you able to join us at one of our events in the coming year.

Very best wishes,

Chris Shaw

(BA Combined Studies, 1979, MA Modern English and American Literature, 1981)

Assistant Director of Development and Alumni Relations



Guest Editor

As a University of Leicester graduate myself, I am delighted to welcome you to the latest edition of our alumni magazine, Graduates' Review. I have very fond memories of my time as a student at Leicester, especially as my three-year degree course was only the start of my relationship with the city. A year after I left, I was back as a reporter at the BBC local radio station, and I worked there in a number of different roles until 1991. So for me, Leicester is not just my university city but the place I got my first full-time job too.

It is a pleasure to be asked to follow in Julie Etchingham's footsteps to become the second guest editor of Graduates' Review and I read, with great interest, about the many exciting developments, past present and future, taking place at our university.

It is clear to see from a 'Year at Leicester' on page 4 that 2015 was a busy year, with a huge breadth of activity taking place on and off campus. I was particularly interested in the reference to the ITV programme 'Code of a Killer' because I remember interviewing Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys about his discovery of DNA fingerprinting when that criminal investigation was at its height.

Leicester's involvement in a variety of wide-ranging research projects, just a few of which are put 'in the spotlight' on page 14, is clearly something for us graduates to be proud of. The innovative and unique technologies developed by the University's Space Research Centre, featured on page 6, are not only ground-breaking but really spark the imagination...and I'm an English graduate!

It was fascinating to learn more about the life of a Student Union President from both Rachel and Jane in their interview on page 10, and I enjoyed reading about the changes and challenges faced in this role across different eras. But perhaps the real highlight of this issue for me is the story on page 12 of the Attenborough family's long history with the University and Sir David's recent visit to Leicester. If you've worked at the BBC for thirty years then Sir David's name is hugely revered. And of course, as an English student, tutorials for me meant the fourteenth floor of the Attenborough Tower.

When reading the magazine, it seems that there is much to be proud of as a member of the University of Leicester alumni community and I hope that you will enjoy reading this issue as much as I have.

Julian Worricker

(BA English, 1984) BBC News Presenter



On the cover

Sir David Attenborough during his visit to the University in January 2016 – see page 12.

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Leicester in Toronto and New York

In October 2015, members of the Development and Alumni Relations Team made the trip ‘across the pond’ for a jam-packed visit to the United States and Canada to further develop our international alumni relations activity in these two countries. Accompanied by President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Boyle CBE, the DARO team hosted two high profile alumni networking events in Toronto and New York and met a number of alumni in these two cities as well as in Washington DC and Princeton.

The theme of the visit was alumni engagement and practical support for the University’s philanthropic efforts in North America. Feedback about the University’s proposals to establish alumni groups and charitable foundations in the two countries was exceptionally positive. So much so, that DARO will return to the United States and Canada in June 2016 to continue the conversations.

The visit also gave Professor Boyle the opportunity to meet with key partners

involved in the HeForShe campaign and to develop partnership opportunities linked to Museum Studies and the College of Medicine. The University was hosted by UN Women in New York to discuss our leading role in HeForShe while development meetings took place with Waterloo, Carnegie Mellon and Stony Brook Universities as well as with New York’s Bank Street College of Education.

Alumni attending the two networking events were able to hear Professor Boyle speak about the University’s new Strategic Plan and our exciting future ahead. Special thanks must go to Toronto based graduate Allan Bonner, who kindly hosted the Toronto networking event at his home in the city, where alumni were joined by Kevin McGurgan, the British Consul General in Toronto, and the British Council’s Salman Cheema.

- If you are based in Canada or the United States and would be interested in finding out more about our plans please contact us – alumni.relations@le.ac.uk



Alumni networking in Toronto

A Year at Leicester 2015

was another exciting year for the University. Here, we highlight just a few of the most interesting events.

January

PhD Student Eugenie de Silva, who started her postgraduate studies at Leicester aged just 15, became the youngest person to graduate from Harvard University.



March

A ceremony took place on campus to mark the departure of the mortal remains of King Richard III, who was found and identified by leading researchers at the University.

May

President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Boyle CBE, announced that the University had joined the UN Women's HeForShe solidarity movement as an IMPACT 10x10x10 champion committed to achieving gender equality within and beyond the University.



February

Construction started on the New Gallery at the Attenborough Arts Centre which was funded by donations from over 1000 of the University's benefactors, including many alumni. A groundbreaking ceremony, led by Professor Paul Boyle CBE and Michael Attenborough CBE, marked the occasion.

April

ITV aired 'Code of a Killer' – a gripping two-part drama, set on the University's central campus, retelling the story of a dramatic criminal investigation involving one of the University's greatest discoveries: DNA fingerprinting by Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys.





August

Daniel Hurst, a local Leicester cancer survivor, did a sponsored skydive to raise money to support the Ernest and Helen Scott Haematological Research Institute based at the University of Leicester. Daniel is pictured here with Professor Martin Dyer, who leads the Institute.



November

The eighth annual University of Leicester Literary Festival took place exploring the magic of Wonderland, the mystery of Jack the Ripper and the genius of James Joyce. The discussion with Linton Kwesi Johnson and Caryl Phillips (pictured) was a particular highlight.

June

Former Universities and Science Minister, the Rt. Hon. David Willetts, delivered the inaugural event in the Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series entitled, 'The future of the UK Science and Innovation System'.



October

The new Unit for Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement (DICE) which is part of the Department of Sociology was launched with a lecture by Lord Herman Ouseley.



September

Professor Kamlesh Khunti, Professor of Primary Care Diabetes and Vascular Medicine, was ranked as one of the most influential GPs in the UK by Pulse's Power 50 list.



Professor Paul Boyle launched the University's new strategic plan following a comprehensive consultation programme involving staff, students, alumni and external stakeholders and unveiled the University's new logo.



December

President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Boyle and Professor Melanie Davies from the University of Leicester's Department of Health Sciences were awarded CBEs in the New Year's Honours List.

July

UoL Racing, a team of more than 30 students, built their very own electric car and competed at the annual Formula Student competition.



Space at Leicester

From lobster-inspired technology to the launch of a National Space Park – exciting developments are taking place in Leicester’s Space Research Centre.



Research scientists at the University of Leicester have a long and distinguished record of discovery in space science. Every year since 1967, there has been at least one instrument designed at the University of Leicester operating in space.

There are over 150 academics in the University’s Space Research Institute working in a variety of areas including the design and building of hardware for space crafts, the writing of software to process data on the ground and ‘in flight’ and the interpretation of this data to study certain objects in space. The University of Leicester also leads the National Centre for Earth Observation (NCEO) which collects data about the earth and environment through comparing observations from spacecraft, aircraft and ground observations.

Perhaps one of the most notable and innovative technologies to be developed at the University is the so-called “lobster-eye” concept applied to X-ray imaging, developed by the late Professor George Fraser. This clever concept, based on a lobster eye, enables production of super lightweight Optical X-ray Telescopes with a wide field of vision and is the basis of novel X-ray instruments proposed for several future space missions, including the BepiColombo mission, for which George was Principle Investigator before his sudden death in March 2014.

BepiColombo is one of the cornerstone missions of the European Space Agency

(ESA) in co-operation with Japan. Due to launch in 2017-2018, the craft will include two X-ray telescopes built by the University and a plaque acknowledging George’s contribution to the mission and the development of this unique technology which will allow for the most complete exploration of Mercury to date.



George Fraser Plaque

The lobster-inspired technology has also led to the production of a super lightweight mirror for a telescope to be flown on an orbiting observatory to be launched in 2021. The Space Variable Objects Monitor (SVOM) is a joint Chinese-French satellite observatory, designed to study the most powerful explosions in the Universe. Traditional X-ray mirrors for space telescopes are made of solid glass or metal and weigh tens of kilograms or more. The new ‘Lobster’ X-ray mirror for SVOM weighs just one kilo, and so is much easier to launch into orbit.

Professor Julian Osborne, who is leading this work at Leicester, explained: “Lobsters and similar animals use reflecting mirrors to focus light in their eyes, unlike the lenses used by people.

We can make man-made Lobster-type mirrors with the very high degree of smoothness needed to focus X-rays, and make them robust enough to survive the rigours of a rocket launch.”

SVOM will locate hundreds of gamma-ray bursts signifying the deaths of massive stars. Scientists at the University have been making world-leading breakthroughs in the discoveries of gamma-ray bursts and are looking forward to the new capabilities that SVOM will bring.

Finally, the most recent mission incorporating this technology to be selected is the Solar Wind Magnetosphere Ionosphere Link Explorer (SMILE) - a joint collaboration between scientists from the UK, Europe, Canada, the US and China. The University of Leicester has a major role in SMILE and will lead the development of its largest instrument; a soft X-ray imaging (SXI) telescope using the unique technology developed by Leicester scientists which has not previously been applied on earlier missions studying the Sun-Earth interaction.

SMILE aims to understand how the Sun affects the Earth’s magnetic environment and space weather. SMILE differs from previous missions looking at space weather as it will study what happens globally in the Earth’s magnetosphere, as well as the ionosphere and aurora which are closer to Earth. This will provide more detailed information which will hopefully enable scientists to reach a complete



Artist impression of National Space Park

Dr Joe Hill-Kittle



understanding of how the Sun influences events on Earth by interacting with its magnetic environment.

These important and fascinating missions are just a few examples of Leicester's pioneering contributions to space science, earth observation and space engineering. From this, stems the University's ambition to create The National Space Park – an exciting new development, which will build on our international reputation and boost skills and growth in the sector through a collaborative 'space community'.

Our vision is to see the National Space Park become home to the Leicester Institute for Space and Earth Observation Science. Based on land encompassing the iconic National Space Centre, it will become Europe's leading site for innovative research, teaching and enterprise in these disciplines, attracting businesses, researchers and students from across the globe.

This unique setting will see research and commercial activities take place side-by-side. Businesses will benefit from access to new ideas, skills and expertise, allowing them to test ideas more quickly and respond to market demand. Students will benefit from innovative teaching by leading experts in space science, as well as being able to gain commercial experience in a dynamic setting. There can be no doubt that there are exciting times ahead for space science in Leicester!

Dr Joe Hill-Kittle

NASA Astrophysicist and Leicester Alumna

As a seven year old growing up in the tiny village of Caldecott, Rutland, Dr Joanne (Joe) Hill-Kittle watched Han Solo captain the Millennium Falcon in Star Wars and dreamt of one day becoming the first woman on the moon. Keen to pursue this dream, Joe was drawn to the promise of Leicester's Physics with Space Science and Technology course. Despite being inclined to gain her independence and study at a university further from home, the unique nature of this course (which was formulated by Professor Ken Pounds and makes full use of the University of Leicester's Physics and Astronomy Department's research and expertise) persuaded Joe to stay in the East Midlands.

Having graduated from the University with a BSc in Physics with Space Science and Technology, Joe was looking to pursue a PhD in the hope this would bring her closer to being qualified as a NASA astronaut payload scientist (back then there were very few, if any, European Space Agency astronaut opportunities). Having considered several options, she read an X-ray instrumentation PhD at

the University of Leicester under the supervision of Professor Martin Turner. This was during a very exciting time for the research group as they were building the Joint European X-ray Telescope (JET-X) and the European Photon Imaging Camera (EPIC) that would later fly on the XMM-Newton space observatory.

In 1998, Joe accepted a research scientist position at Pennsylvania State University (PSU), USA, to work with NASA-funded sounding rockets. She was unaware that PSU and the University of Leicester had a pending proposal to collaborate and build the X-ray Telescope (XRT) for the Swift Mission that studies bursts of gamma rays. Gamma-ray bursts are thought to be the birth cries of black holes, and the joint proposal by PSU and the University of Leicester for the Swift Mission's XRT was later accepted. Joe led much of the XRT instrument's development including the assembly, integration, and test of telescope on spacecraft at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Centre (GSFC). The Swift mission was launched successfully in 2004. Over the last decade, Swift has captured more than 1000 gamma-ray bursts.

Following the successful launch of Swift, Joe followed her love of building instruments to GSFC where she currently works as an astrophysicist. Joe joined a team to develop a first-of-its-kind Time Projection X-ray Polarimeter that will determine the structure of matter, magnetic fields and space-time itself near black holes. The Polarimeter for Relativistic Astrophysical Sources (PRAXyS) is currently competing with two other missions for selection a year from now. If selected this would be the first flight of this type of instrument and will enable NASA to make measurements that have never previously been possible.

MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

FOR LEICESTER SCHOOLS AND DEPARTMENTS

90 *Years of Chemistry*

In June 2015, the Chemistry Department started its 90th birthday celebrations as part of the University's Summer Reunion. In 1925, University College Leicester took in its first three students to study Chemistry and in the intervening years over 3500 students have graduated from the Department. It was therefore fitting that 90 graduates, many from the 1960s, attended our latest reunion.

Graduates were treated to a trip down memory lane with photographs and documents from the archive as well as a tour outlining current research and teaching activities. As part of our celebrations, Head of Department Professor Emma Raven (also a Leicester Graduate) talked about the legacy of the Department and cut a cake to mark the event.

Professor Peter Atkins, a 1960's Chemistry graduate himself and author

of Physical Chemistry – a text book used by chemists across the world – also returned to the University as part of the celebrations to give a lecture entitled "Inspirations of Leicester: byways of thermodynamics and quantum theory".

During his visit, Peter reflected on his time at Leicester and said "The best thing about coming to the University of Leicester as an 18-year-old undergraduate was discovering a whole new world of intellect and liberty. I'm really glad I chose to study chemistry because it's a subject that puts you right in the centre of the sciences. In order to understand it fully, you need some knowledge of physics; in order to express it, you need mathematics; and many of its applications these days are in biology, so by becoming a chemist, you can be right at the intellectual core of all of the sciences.'



50 *Years of Media and Communication*

The Department of Media and Communication has its origins in the Centre for Mass Communication Research which was established at Leicester in 1966. The first of its kind in the UK, the Centre was created to develop research and postgraduate training in the study of all aspects of the media, taking a specific focus on the operations of media institutions and on the influence and effects of the media on society. Initially the Centre took a broadly critical, sociological approach to the study of the media, but over time opened up to a more multi-disciplinary approach, acknowledging that media and communication – or 'mass communication' – is more a field of study than the focus of a single academic discipline.

Soon after its foundation, the Centre became known internationally as a site of academic excellence and was for many years (1972-1987) the headquarters of the International Association of Media and Communication Research. As the field of research expanded, the Centre widened its academic horizons to draw on the work of those trained in economics, language and linguistics, political science, psychology and many other disciplines. The first taught postgraduate degree in the field in Britain – the MA Mass Communications – was launched in 1978 attracting students from all over the world.

The Department celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year and will also host the prestigious International Association for Media and Communication Research conference (IAMCR) in July. The theme for this year's IAMCR conference is 'Memory, Commemoration and Communication: Looking Back, Looking Forward' and so it is fitting that this will take place here at the University during this milestone year for the department.



Professor Peter Atkins with Professor Karl Ryder from the Chemistry Department

50 Years of Law

We celebrate the 50th anniversary of our Law School this year – our Golden Jubilee. 1965 saw the arrival at Leicester of our Founding Professor, Jan Grodecki, in time for the first LLB intake of 28 students in October 1966. Unsurprisingly, much has changed since then. Yet there is also a remarkable degree of continuity in our history.

We have grown into a much larger community. This year, there are more than 1000 LLB students, taught by a full-time academic staff complement of 56, and supported by a dozen professional services staff members. Post-graduate degrees have been offered since 1975, and today there are 159 LLM students and 50 PhD candidates. This has been accompanied by an increase in diversity of all kinds, among students as well as staff, not least in terms of nationality.

These developments can be traced back to seeds sown in 1965-66. Professor Grodecki's vision of legal studies as more than mere vocational training lies at the heart of our research-led teaching and the thriving variety of our post-graduate offerings. Having been founded by someone who came to the UK from Poland via Romania and France during World War II, our international ethos was there from the start. No wonder that we became one of the first UK universities to offer a Law with French degree, pioneered European Law as a compulsory element of the LLB degree, and were at the forefront of welcoming Senior Status students from Canada. These strong roots nourish our commitment for the next 50 years and beyond.

- We would love to re-connect with our graduates: please email law.alumni@le.ac.uk



Museum Studies students working on an exhibition project

50 Years of Museum Studies

When the Department of Museum Studies (as it was then) was established in 1966, it had just one lecturer, one member of technical staff and 20 students. Today, the School of Museum Studies is recognised internationally for its world-leading research and teaching and is home to more than 350 masters and PhD students from over 40 different countries, studying on campus or on one of the School's flexible learning programmes.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary we are delivering a number of new programmes, events and projects. In April the School is hosting a large international conference, *Museums in the Global Contemporary*, featuring keynote speakers from the School and around the world. In 2016 we are also launching brand new curricula on our campus-based post-graduate programmes in Museum Studies and in Art Museum and Gallery Studies.

The School is also launching a new flexible learning programme, *Socially Engaged Practice in Museums and Galleries*. This brand new course draws on the work of the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries in exploring how museums can make a socially purposeful contribution to their communities, exploring issues including how museums can support the promotion of social justice, human rights and contribute towards healthier communities.

Finally, as part of a suite of activities which prioritise our values of equality, diversity and inclusivity, in 2016 we are offering special anniversary scholarships for students wishing to begin studying in Autumn 2016. Six awards are on offer, including four Diversity Scholarships targeted specifically at people from communities which are underrepresented in the museum workforce in the UK.

- You can find out more about the School and its celebratory plans for 2016 on the School's website – www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies

40 Years of Medicine

Leicester's Medical School has been celebrating its 40th anniversary during the 2015-16 academic year. In October 1975, the first 50 medical students joined the University – 34 men and 16 women; 7 were graduate entrants.

As the Dean, the late Robert (later Lord) Kilpatrick, wrote "seldom can a group of students have received a warmer reception, not only from those immediately concerned but also, most generously, from the local medical community".

That link with the local community has been at the heart of the celebration of the anniversary, thanks to a programme of joint lectures with the Leicester Medical Society, organised by Kevin West, one of those first students and the current President of the Society.

Speakers have included several other Leicester alumni: Dr Mark Porter – at the eye of the storm over junior doctors' contracts as Chairman of the BMA; Dr Stuart Maitland-Knibb on emergency helicopter medicine; and Professor Anne Mortimer on guns and psychiatry.

When the Medical School opened, its new building, later named in honour of Sir Maurice Shock, was not finished, and the students had to share with Biological Sciences in the Adrian Building. It is appropriate that the anniversary year has seen the completion of the magnificent new Centre for Medicine building, just across Lancaster Road from the old MSB.

The new Centre for Medicine



Law Alumni gathering in Canada



Then & Now

Women Presidents in an Age of Austerity



Jane Esuantsiwa Goldsmith was the first female president of the University of Leicester Students' Union in 1975. She now works as a high energy strategist and facilitator, with more than 30 years' experience in women's human rights worldwide. She received an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the University of Leicester for her contribution to Human Rights and Development in 2015.



Rachel Holland completed her studies in Ancient History and History in 2015 and was elected as Students' Union President that year. She has recently been re-elected for a second term.

In conversation earlier this year, Jane and Rachel shared their personal accounts of their time in office and provided an insight into the world of an SU President, comparing and contrasting their experiences. Despite a forty year gap between them, there are some common themes.

Q: What are, or were, the key issues facing students during your time as President?

RACHEL: This is a really big year for students and student issues: a potential further rise in fees, the removal of maintenance grants and the disabled students' allowance, and issues around the affordability and quality of student housing. Young people face challenges in terms of wages, cost of living, and finding jobs.

JANE: You're right Rachel – austerity, cuts, student fees, grants, and good quality affordable student housing were all big issues in the 70s too. The mid-seventies was a period of great political turbulence – the miners' strike, the 3-day week, cuts in real wages and services, unemployment on the rise, soaring inflation. We were always on the march down in London waving placards.

RACHEL: One big difference between then and now is the increasing levels of student debt. These days, students are definitely focused on getting a job after graduation, so I think the non-academic experience is a lot less important to a number of students than it was.

JANE: We were lucky in that respect; most students got a means-tested grant, so no debt and less pressure to get a job. Unemployment was on the rise, but less so among graduates; there were fewer of us and more graduate jobs to go round. That left more time to explore the world and engage actively in the student movement and the world of politics.

Q: What was, or has been, the biggest change during your Presidency?

JANE: There was an increase in racism and the rise of the extreme right, which often happens in a hostile political and economic climate. Students started to engage in local politics, joining local demonstrations against the National Front, in solidarity with the growing Asian community in Leicester.

RACHEL: I have definitely seen a change in the attitudes of students which I think is mainly linked to increased fees. Since the £9,000 fee was introduced we've seen a lack of engagement from a Students' Union perspective, perhaps because, the more you pay, the more you value your academic experience.

JANE: I am sure the fees issue has an enormous impact. Young people lost faith in conventional political parties in the 1970s; but what we had was hope. In spite of political and economic upheaval, ground-breaking legislation was being put in place during the decade on equal pay and anti-discrimination on grounds of race. In many cases our generation was first in our families to go to university – perhaps we were more idealistic, and optimistic that change could happen.

RACHEL: My experience of being Student President is almost the opposite. Students are increasingly disenchanted with local and national government. Disengagement with student politics

leads to disengagement in wider national politics. Students have become very concerned with the value of the academic experience but less so about the non-academic, more holistic education you get from university, and that's a pity because it's very rewarding.

Q: What was, or has been, your biggest challenge as SU President?

JANE: Encouraging students' involvement was really important for me too. Perhaps my biggest challenge was being the first female president in a largely male environment; to find my own way, develop a different kind of leadership, women were breaking ground everywhere, it was the height of the women's liberation movement.

RACHEL: The challenges for women students and women leaders are still very much with us. In a modern Students' Union context, there are challenges from every level. The impact of government decisions, but also from the local community whose residents don't always have positive attitudes towards students. There has been a huge increase in student numbers; in your day Jane, there were 3,500 – now it's 25,000. I think there's very much an 'us and them' mentality with the local community – we're working really hard to build bridges.

Q: What are you most proud of achieving during your time in office?

RACHEL: My time in office hasn't finished yet. But so far I'm most proud of my focus on women's rights. This year the University agreed to undertake an institutional review of sexual harassment, something we have never done before. I've also been working on access agreements and created a grant for low income students to get involved in student activities, because they're getting more expensive. Priorities for the year ahead include demanding a living wage for all our staff, including student staff, and capping increases on accommodation prices.

JANE: I'm proud of my contribution to equalities and rights in the students' union – anti-sexism, a new international students society, postgraduate representation, gay rights, University nursery, scholarship for a refugee student, students' hardship

fund, the first multicultural week, and exhibitions on anti-apartheid. When I first started, women were often prevented from speaking at Union meetings, facing a barrage of sexist comments and shouts of 'Off, Off, Off'! During my Presidency things started to change, more women were active, proposing motions, developing brilliant new initiatives.

Q: What impact do you think your Presidency had, or will have on your career?

JANE: It had an enormous influence, one of my most exciting experiences. At age 23, I managed a budget of around £70,000 – big money in those days! I had 20 staff, was responsible for running the Percy Gee building, representing students, and had access to key decision makers at the highest level in the University – and I learned how to do public speaking in front of really tough audiences...

RACHEL: I certainly wasn't expecting to be managing an organisation with £1.2m turnover at this age. That is something that not many others of my age can say, besides all the other SU presidents out there, obviously. It's been an amazing experience for me so far and understanding the impact that you have on an organisation is really powerful, and having that level of impact makes you want to take it to a wider scale.

JANE: You learn a lot of leadership skills that you can build on throughout life. I now help to develop strategies for huge international development organisations and coach other leaders, and play a leading role in the women's movement.

RACHEL: I'd agree you get a huge amount of skills from this role, like

public speaking and management. It's an incredible thing to be doing at the age of 23.

Q: What do you think has been your legacy Jane? And what would you like yours to be Rachel?

JANE: I hope I helped to make lasting connections with what is happening in the world. Injustice and inequality is still everywhere, in an increasingly globalised world – the rise in sexist attacks on women on the internet, the rise in islamophobia, increased racism and hostility towards migrants and refugees, the rise in the use of food banks in the UK.

RACHEL: Higher education is changing rapidly and we're venturing into totally uncharted waters in the way education is being shaped. We are currently writing our Students' Union strategy and I am going to spend the next year making sure that we are prepared, as a Union, for those changes. As the University changes, the Union has to change also and ensure it represents its students to the best of its ability. I'm hoping that I can look to the future and best prepare us for what's coming next.

JANE: Rachel, you must be one of my biggest legacies! To know that more women Presidents like you followed on is really inspiring. Though I am the first black woman president of the University's Students' Union, we have recently discovered that our Union was founded by a woman when Leicester was a University College; we have a woman to thank for the very existence of our Students' Union, so we are working on ways to remember her legacy. Women have come a long way, but there's still more to do!

It's clear from spending time with Jane and Rachel that despite their time at Leicester being four decades apart, they felt an instant connection and have become good friends, recognising that there is a bond between women in politics despite the generation gap. They are both obviously very proud to be among the handful of women Presidents in the ninety-plus year history of the University's Students' Union and actively support the University's involvement in the HeForShe campaign and the diversity work taking place at Leicester.





UNIVERSITY WELCOMES HOME SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

The University celebrated its long-standing relationship with the Attenborough Family through a series of events on campus earlier this year.

Sir David Attenborough has always had a special connection with the University of Leicester. At the age of five, his family moved onto the campus of what was then University College Leicester when his father Frederick Attenborough was appointed as Principal. David and his brothers, Richard and John, were educated at Wyggeston Grammar School for Boys (now Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I College) and lived in College House, which remains at the centre of campus today as part of the University's Department of Mathematics.

David left Leicester in 1945 after gaining a scholarship to study at Cambridge and Frederick retired as Principal in 1951, but the family's connection with the University has endured.

In 1997, his brother, the late Lord Richard Attenborough, a filmmaker, actor and lifelong patron of the arts, founded the University of Leicester's Attenborough Arts Centre. The Centre encapsulates Richard's vision to include everyone in art, culture and learning, regardless of their ability or background and offers workshops, contemporary art exhibitions, theatre, dance, live music and activities for children and families. It proudly champions emerging talent and disability-led artists to an audience of 57,000 people a year.

The patronage has now been passed to Richard's son, Michael, who proudly opened the first exhibition to be installed in a new £1.5m extension to the Centre in November 2015. The exhibition, entitled 'Art, Life, Activism: Contemporary art and the politics of disability', provided a thought-provoking insight into art and disability through sculpture, film and drawing.

The New Galleries Wing has been part-funded by generous donations from over 1,000 friends, staff and supporters of the University's Breaking Barriers Appeal. The extension, which comprises of three new exhibition spaces, an outdoor sculpture court and flexible creative space, doubles the size of the Centre, making it the largest contemporary art gallery in Leicester.

Art is often about breaking down barriers. Lord Attenborough certainly believed in the power of art to transcend cultural, political and geographical boundaries, and the potential to inspire, inform and entertain – but only when accessible to all. The new gallery space increases the Centre's ability to engage with more people across the city, the county and beyond and is a lasting reminder of Richard's commitment to enabling access to the arts for all.

Sir David Attenborough has visited the University on numerous occasions; most notably in 2006 when he and Richard, returned to campus together to be given the titles of Honorary Distinguished Fellows – the University's highest honour.

At the end of January 2016, just a few months before his 90th birthday, the University welcomed Sir David back to his hometown once again. During this most recent visit, Sir David gave a lecture, entitled 'Beauty in Nature', as part of the Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series. Sir David delivered an hour long presentation which explored the subject of beauty in the natural world interspersed with fascinating clips from his BBC documentaries. His iconic delivery was not only natural, but enthusiastic and joyous – conveying his pleasure at returning to his hometown in front of an audience of almost 1,500 at De Montfort Hall.

The following day, Sir David officially opened the New Galleries Wing at the Attenborough Arts Centre. After interviews with local and national press, guests gathered in the Garfield Weston Gallery for the unveiling of the opening plaque. Sir David's speech was passionate and emotive; he produced a handwritten letter that his father, Frederick, had sent to the Leicester Mercury many years ago and read aloud "a university should be an institution that cares not only about commercial success but about those things of the mind and spirit which are the distinctive mark of an educated and cultured people" – a touching statement reflecting Richard's vision for this important Centre.

The ceremonial opening also marked the official preview of the 2nd exhibition to be installed within the new gallery by internationally acclaimed artists, Lucy and Jorge Orta. The exhibition was derived from the artists' research expeditions to the South Pole and the Peruvian Amazon and questioned the social and ecological sustainability of our planet. Reflecting on the exhibition, Sir David emphasised that art has a strong influence on environmental debate, commenting that "science provides one language in which you can investigate things, which perhaps doesn't make an immediate appeal to the emotions. But art does it the other way round".

With the Attenborough legacy embedded in the very fabric of the University, the family's influence will be sustained for many years to come. Their belief in the importance of education, accessibility and philanthropy underpins the University's strategic mission today.

▼ David with his brother Richard.



▼ Michael Attenborough, CBE in front of his father Richard's picture.



We know that many alumni were left disappointed when applying for tickets for Sir David's Lecture. During this year's Leicester Weekend, alumni will have the chance to attend a VIP screening of the lecture on campus. See back cover for more information and book today to avoid missing this and a host of other activities!

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR WORLD- LEADING RESEARCH

At Leicester, we deliver world-class research, changing the way we think about the past, present and future.

Our researchers are leading the way in many fields, generating new knowledge, creating significant contributions to society, influencing decision-making, stimulating enterprise and driving economic growth.

Our interdisciplinary approach and the international reach of our work empowers us to deliver better research across the sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities, addressing significant questions to make a real impact on the world's global challenges.

Interdisciplinary collaboration leads to pioneering diabetes research

Your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and obesity is linked to how close you live to fast food outlets, according to a new study led by the University. The research revealed that there are twice the number of fast food outlets within 5000 metres of inner-city neighbourhoods described as non-white and in socially deprived areas, than elsewhere in cities. The findings have important implications for diabetes prevention and for those granting planning permission for fast food outlets. "Our study suggests that for every additional two outlets per neighbourhood, we would expect one additional diabetes case, assuming a causal relationship between the fast food outlet and diabetes", explain Professors Melanie Davies and Kamlesh Khunti, Co-Directors of the Leicester Diabetes Centre. The research was carried out by a team from the University's Diabetes Research Centre, Department of Health Sciences and Department of Geography, in collaboration with the Leicester Diabetes Centre based at the Leicester General Hospital.

► Professor Kamlesh Khunti and Professor Melanie Davies, CBE

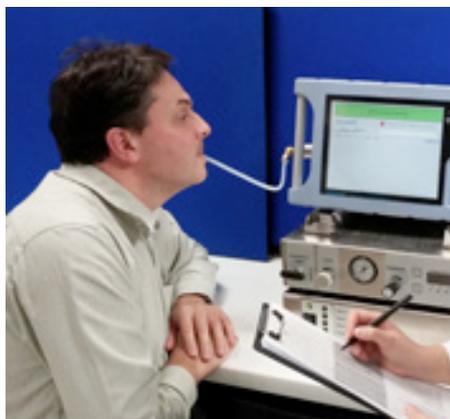




Revolutionary new treatment for healing scars

More than one hundred million patients in the developed world heal with a scar as a result of surgical procedures, trauma or burn injuries. A team at Leicester are working on a novel treatment after an extensive research programme in Dr Christine Pullar's lab in the Molecular and Cell Biology Department revealed that salbutamol – a therapeutic used in inhalers for asthma sufferers – vastly improves the formation and healing of scars when applied topically. The potential of the treatment was recognised by the Medical Research Council (MRC) in March 2015 when they awarded Christine's lab a £2.3 million Biomedical Catalyst grant. This funding is being used to develop an approved formulation of topical salbutamol for use in clinical trials.

◀ Dr Christine Pullar's Team



Pioneering breath test for lung cancer in clinical trial

A clinical trial led by the University's respiratory experts into a potentially ground-breaking 'breath test' to detect lung cancer has been taking place at the Glenfield Hospital in Leicester. It is hoped that the LuCID (Lung Cancer Indicator Detection) programme will lead to a non-invasive method of diagnosing lung cancer in the early stages. The company behind the device, Owlstone Nanotech Ltd, carried out a health economic analysis and determined that detection of early-stage lung cancer could be increased from the current 14.5% to 25% by 2020. It is estimated that this could save 10,000 lives and £250 million of NHS money. The device works by measuring volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at low concentrations in a patient's breath and offers a more cost effective alternative to existing detection technologies.



University archaeologists uncover evidence of Roman and medieval Leicester

Archaeologists, led by John Thomas and Mathew Morris from University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS), have unearthed new evidence of Roman and medieval Leicester after recently completing the excavation of two areas at the former Southgates Bus Depot, on the corner of Southgates and Peacock Lane in the centre of Leicester. The team have been investigating a series of medieval and post-medieval backyards dating from the 12th century through to the 16th century. These

are likely to be associated with densely packed houses and shops which would have once fronted onto the important medieval street of Southgates. The site lies at the heart of Leicester's historic core, close to significant Roman and medieval sites such as the Roman forum, the Jewry Wall Roman public baths and the site of Grey Friars, the medieval Franciscan friary where the remains of King Richard III (d.1485) were discovered by University archaeologists in 2012.

Your support is life-changing



A thousand donors build a gallery

Thanks to our supporters, Sir David Attenborough was able to officially open the new gallery extension at the Attenborough Arts Centre, the University's inclusive, multi-use arts venue on Lancaster Road. The Attenborough Arts Centre is now the largest contemporary art gallery in Leicester and one of the largest in the East Midlands.

Over 1,000 University alumni, parents of students and local philanthropists supported the Breaking Barriers Fundraising appeal, raising nearly one million pounds and helping to secure a crucial Arts Council England grant of £600k.



First alumnae-sponsored scholar graduates

Emily Durham was the first recipient of the *Women of Influence Scholarship for Postgraduate study*, commencing her MSc in Green Chemistry in 2014. Emily successfully completed her Masters in January 2016 and has now graduated, moving straight into a career at a stockbroking company in London.

Emily spoke about where she is now and how her scholarship, funded by alumnae of Leicester, has helped her secure her new role:

"It was an amazing opportunity to study for a Masters. I would not be where I am today without your support, thank you."



Grab your shiny new sponsorship pack

Over the past few years many more alumni, friends and family have been supporting the University by competing in marathons, obstacle races, bike rides and even skydives.

Why not get involved too? If you are thinking about running a race but are not sure where to donate then we are likely to be working on something close to your heart – including heart research, cancer, childhood mental health, the arts and disability and many other good causes.

We are launching new sponsorship packs to support all your wonderful fundraising efforts – sign up for yours today!

■ www.le.ac.uk/donate

Every donation matters

34 students were supported last year through the Student Opportunities Fund:

11  Hardship awards

10  Music award scholarships

10  Sports award scholarships

3  Post-graduate scholarships

100% of your donation received goes to the cause

1,006 alumni supported causes close to their heart in 2014/15

The University received its first founding donations in

1918 and has charitable status

Gift Aid your donation and add

25% to the value



Did you know you can now update your contact prefe

So whether you prefer things by post, email or a quick phone call, make sure you are kept up to date about upcoming events, news and ways to support the University in the way you want.

Local community at heart of the Centre for Medicine Appeal

The £42m Centre for Medicine will transform the training of doctors and revolutionise the care offered to patients.

The University has invested £32m into this pioneering project and we are in the midst of the £10m Centre for Medicine Fundraising Appeal that will account for the remainder of the funding. Over the past 12 months, we have been working with communities, in and connected with Leicester, including our alumni, to generate the philanthropic funds we need to complete and equip this state-of-the-art facility. The Appeal has generated an amazing £8m and we are now preparing for the final push to meet our target.

The Centre for Medicine Appeal is the most successful consolidated fundraising effort in Leicester's history. Donors have contributed to our work in this area for a number of reasons but, for many it has been the Centre's absolute commitment to the community within which it will sit.

An important strand of this is the community engagement strategy that will be an integral part of the way the Centre for Medicine engages with the various communities in Leicester, such as young people and our richly-diverse BAME populations.

Through the Centre, the University is hoping to attract a new cadre of medical students from a diverse range of backgrounds, especially those from less affluent areas who traditionally might not see a medical education as a natural route for their professional ambitions. There are few health institutions, let alone universities, that are striving for inclusivity in this way. We want to make health, medicine and the underpinning science accessible to all.

The Centre will actively engage with BAME communities to understand and support unique cultural issues that create pressures on healthcare services, such as lifestyle choices and family-care traditions. The communities of Leicester are some of the most varied in the UK and the Centre will support this diversity by addressing specific needs and ensuring improved local health and wellbeing for generations to come.

The Edith Murphy Foundation, a long-standing supporter of the University, believes in our community engagement aspirations and has chosen to offer their most recent generous donation in support of this area of work. The Edith Murphy Community Engagement project will enable the University to secure the resources required to engage thousands of people in a number of innovative ways through campaigns, activities and outreach work. The Community Engagement Project will be the vehicle that takes both the work of the Centre out into our communities and facilitates numerous opportunities for local residents and alumni to come to the Centre and see the impact this facility is delivering.

- To find out more visit www.le.ac.uk/savinglives

◀ ▼ The Centre for Medicine near completion.





*Love
at
Leicester*



▲ Crysta and Corey on their wedding day, May 2015. Courtesy of Amy at Take Aim Photography

▲ Crysta and Corey at university

One of the most popular posts on our alumni Facebook page this year was our Valentine’s Day ‘shout out’ to all of our alumni who found love on campus. Many of you shared your stories and it would appear that love has stood the test of time with anecdotes from the 1960s all the way through to 2015.

Many congratulations to Crysta and Corey who will be celebrating their first wedding anniversary this year. Tradition states that the first year of marriage is celebrated with paper, so it’s fitting that they be featured in this edition of Graduates’ Review!

♥ If you found love in the Percy Gee, in your lecture theatre or on campus here in Leicester, then get in touch – we’d love to hear more Leicester love stories...

Crysta Campbell, LLB Law, 2009 and Corey Still, BA Hons Ancient History and Archaeology, 2009, owe their meeting to their shared delay in getting their accommodation papers in. We asked Crysta a couple of *love at Leicester* related questions and here’s what she had to say:

Q: When did you and Corey first meet?

A: We met on our first day at university. Both of us had procrastinated when sending in our accommodation forms, and so we were put into the same self-catered house in Mary Gee. The girls were upstairs, unpacking our rooms, getting to know one another when two of the guys came upstairs. The first one was our friend, Joe, who remarked that the girls floor smelt a lot better than the boys floor. As he walked through the door to the upstairs, a grinning, cheeky faced man appeared behind him. That was Corey.

Q: Can you remember your first date?

A: As we were in the same house, we never really dated! In fact, neither one of us asked the other out. We became friends and began to like each other without the other realising, until he kissed me one night! The first date that I remember was at Bella Italia in the Hatfield Galleria, after I met his parents for the first time. He tried to do all the things guys are ‘supposed’ to do. He went to open the car door for me, but I’d already gotten out of the car. He pulled out my chair for me at the restaurant, but I thought that meant he was sitting there, so sat down on the opposite chair. Finally I shook my head as the man selling roses went from table to table. Corey had been about to take out his wallet to pay for one.

Q: What was your favourite thing about coming to the University of Leicester?

A: My favourite thing about coming to Leicester was definitely the friendships I made. I didn’t really make many friends on my course, but my house mates were great. We were a group of people put together mostly because we were too lazy to fill out and send in our accommodation forms on time (from what I remember!). Even though I’ve lost touch with a few of those friends, they’ve really helped me become the person I am today. It was wonderful seeing many of them at our wedding last May.

A trip down memory lane...

Dark, dusty and dank; lofts aren't the most inviting of places. However, as we've discovered time and time again in the Alumni Office here at the University of Leicester, these far away storage rooms at the top of the traditional British house can be home to some magical memories.

In spring 2015, alumnus David Francis, BA Sociology 1963, made the ascent. Whilst sorting through books, notes and papers, he came across a box that had not been opened for a very long time. Intrigue got the better of him and David found a vast collection of film negatives; his memories of his time as Ripple Photographer came streaming back.

In the early 1960s the idea of always having a mobile phone in your pocket, using this to take a digital photo and instantaneously uploading that photo onto an online social media platform were incomprehensible. Photography back then involved view finders and dark rooms.

In the summer of 2015 the Alumni and Special Collections teams joined forces to embark on a project of discovery. David generously donated his negatives for digitisation, and each one was individually scanned, uploaded and documented, before the originals were returned.

Photographic experiments using a Zeist Super Ikonta saw David capture images of fellow students in protest, their comradery at graduation, and provide proof that the self-portrait was around long before the selfie.

It is well documented that the 1960s were a time of social change and experimentation. Traditional ways of being and doing were challenged in a way not previously witnessed. The David Francis Ripple Collection captures these changes in photographic form.

- **For the Love of Photography – an exclusive exhibition of this work is currently under curation and you, your friends and family are invited to enjoy this showcase at the Leicester Weekend in June. We can't wait to see you there.**



David Francis, 1961, self-portrait



Graduation, 1963



Student protest, 1963

Have something to share?

Our Special Collections hold an extensive collection of rare books, manuscripts, historical photographs, engraved portrait prints and personal archives – all of which add to the historic fabric of our university and indeed Leicester as a whole. Each document is strictly assessed before a decision is made by our Archivist as to whether or not it is suitable to deposit.

If you have something in your loft that you would like to share with your fellow alumni you can:

- Post a picture to our official alumni Facebook page – www.facebook.com/leicesteralumni

OR

- Bring your items along for assessment at the 'Your Memories' Station on Saturday 18 June during this year's Leicester Weekend

Unfortunately, the University is unable to accept every suggested deposit due to space and replication, for example we are unable to deposit degree gowns and repeat examples. The good news is that we do have gaps in our collection that you may be able to help us with, so keep your eyes peeled for specific requests in the future!

ROYAL ALUMNA GRADUATES

The University welcomes Her Imperial Highness Princess Mako of Akishino as one of our newest alumni.

Princess Mako of Akishino, the first-born granddaughter of Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko of Japan, took her place alongside her fellow Leicester graduands for her Graduation Ceremony at De Montfort Hall in January 2016. The Princess graduated with a Master of Arts degree, having completed her course in Art Museum and Gallery Studies in Leicester's pioneering School of Museum Studies the previous September.

From September 2014 Princess Mako lived a quiet, studious life in Leicester, a world away from her usual life of official royal engagements in Japan. Most of her fellow students were none-the-wiser to the Princess's regal status, and like any other student, Her Imperial Highness lived in University halls of residence and attended classes with her course mates. As part of her studies, the princess also completed placements at Coventry Museum and Leicester's New Walk Museum, and was described as "a pleasure to teach" by Dr Suzanne Macleod, Head of the School of Museum Studies.

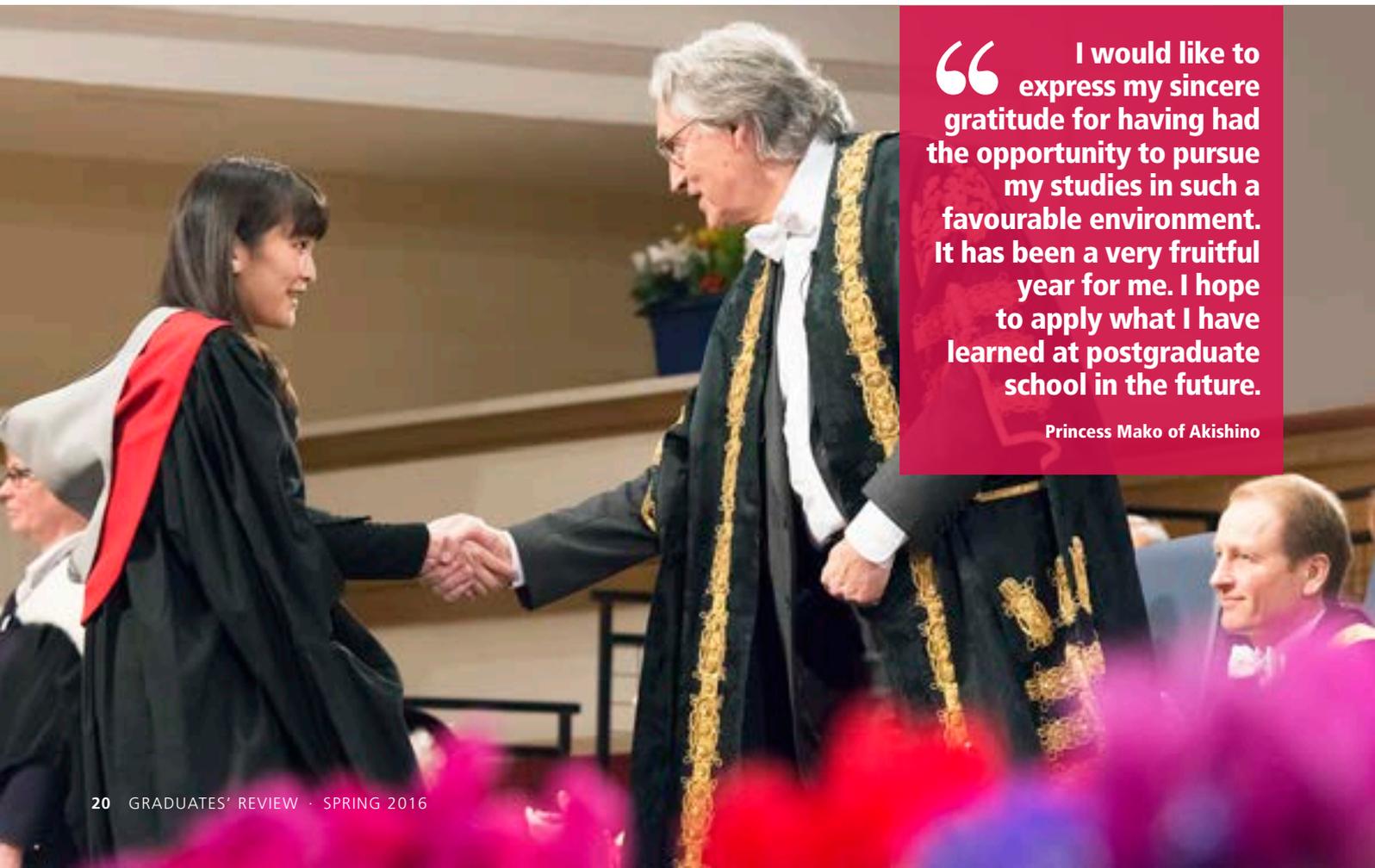
Speaking of the School's international reputation, Dr Macleod continued, "We have a strong connection to the cultural

profession in Japan with many students graduating from our School to take up posts in museums and galleries there and so it felt very natural that Mako should come and follow her interests with us."

The School and the University's Development and Alumni Relations Office were delighted to celebrate Princess Mako's achievements and welcome her to the Leicester Alumni Family at a special Reception in September 2015 which marked the completion of her studies. Professor Paul Boyle CBE, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester said "We are delighted that Princess Mako chose to study with us and trust that she had a wonderful time in Leicester".

Speaking of her experience at the University, the Princess said "I would like to express my sincere gratitude for having had the opportunity to pursue my studies in such a favourable environment. It has been a very fruitful year for me. I hope to apply what I have learned at postgraduate school in the future."

The University of Leicester is honored to welcome Her Imperial Highness and all of our 2015 and 2016 graduates to the Alumni Family.



“ I would like to express my sincere gratitude for having had the opportunity to pursue my studies in such a favourable environment. It has been a very fruitful year for me. I hope to apply what I have learned at postgraduate school in the future.

Princess Mako of Akishino

Your Alumni Association: Stay in touch, get involved

There are many ways that you can stay in touch and remain involved with your university, from attending our events, to hosting your own, through to volunteering to support current students.

You can keep up to date with all of the opportunities to be involved through our social media channels and by ensuring that your contact details are updated. You can update your details and let us know how you would like to be involved online at www.le.ac.uk/alumni or by returning the enclosed *Stay in Touch* form. Do so before 30 June 2016 for your chance to win an iPad, a £100 John Lewis Voucher or £20 Next Voucher!*

*Terms and conditions apply and can be found on the enclosed update form and online.

A visit to the University of Leicester – 40 years on

In July 2015 a group of friends who would agree wholeheartedly with that sentiment in relation to the time that they had spent at the University of Leicester between 1967 and 1976 returned to visit the University Road campus. Between us we had undertaken a range of undergraduate courses and some of us had stayed at the University to gain postgraduate qualifications. Our experiences at Leicester in the early '70s enabled us in many ways to achieve our ambitions and to pursue interesting and fulfilling careers. But most importantly we had become lifelong friends and in several cases, marriage partners!

Although we now live as far apart as County Durham and Sussex, we still gather annually to exchange news and reaffirm our friendships. We were delighted when the University agreed to provide us with a tour of the campus during a visit to Leicester.

We were met by student ambassadors, Alice and Ana and University porter Andy who accompanied us to visit the buildings which we had studied in and showed us around the many new facilities. We visited the Adrian Building where the biologists amongst us recalled night-time visits along the dark corridors to check the progress of growing cultures in petri dishes. A visit to the Attenborough Building brought back memories of the



'Those were the best days of my life'
Sang Bryan Adams about the Summer of '69'

paternoster which, to the relief of some of us, was inactive over the weekend.

We were struck by the vast growth of the campus. The Centre for Medicine, Attenborough Arts Centre, and the fitness centre were amongst new additions and we were struck by the way in which the new and old features of the campus combine so successfully to provide a sense of the continuity of the University and its community over the years. And we reflected with pride on the evidence we saw of the way in which our university has made major contributions to new discoveries, such as in the field of genetic fingerprinting and investigations in space.

Above all, we agreed that the very warm welcome we received from our charming and knowledgeable guides, who went out of their way to enable us to revisit the wonderful times we had at university, made our tour a really enjoyable and memorable experience.

Written by Lis Stock (nee Roberts), English BA, 1973

- If you are organising a reunion and would like to visit the campus, contact us at alumni.relations@le.ac.uk

Alumni giving back

A number of alumni returned to the University in early 2016 to share their experiences and offer careers advice. The Alumni Networking events, organised by the University's Careers Development Service, the Development and Alumni Relations Office and academic departments, offered current students the opportunity to speak to alumni at varying stages of their careers about the possibilities that are open to them and how to make the most of the opportunities that arise post-graduation.

We are incredibly grateful to the graduates who shared their expertise with students in this series of networking events and look forward to welcoming more alumni to similar events in the future.

In fact, later this year, we will be launching our Alumni Ambassador Programme which will enable our Alumni Family to help us mentor current students, recruit new ones and provide other forms of assistance post-graduation such as career networking, event organisation and fundraising through a number of volunteer roles. Update your details to ensure that you don't miss out on hearing more about the scheme.



Thank you for joining us at...

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Save the date for some of
our upcoming events!**

The Leicester Weekend
17 – 19 June 2016

Legacy Guild Afternoon Tea
(invitation only)
Friday 17 June 2016

Benefactors' Reception
(invitation only)
Saturday 18 June 2016

Red Leicester – The Re-Union 2016
Saturday 18 June 2016

Team Leicester Games
Sunday 19 June 2016

Leicester Business Festival
24 October – 4 November 2016

Literary Leicester
16 – 19 November 2016

Legacy Guild Carol Concert
1 December 2016

Alumni Black Tie Dinner 2017
16 March 2017

For more information,
news and events visit
www.le.ac.uk/alumni

The Summer Reunion

June 2015

Over 500 graduates, and their families and friends, came back to campus for Summer Reunion 2015 which included activities for all the family; from mini-lectures, workshops, face painting and rides to a 1960s exhibition and swinging sixties evening.

Guests heard from the President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Boyle CBE, took part in celebrations surrounding the 90th anniversary of the Department of Chemistry and embarked on tours of the Centre for Medicine.



Alumni Networking Events

February-March 2016

The Career Development Service and the Development and Alumni Relations Office worked together to host a series of alumni networking events that took place in February and March 2016. The events provided current students at the University with an opportunity to ask alumni questions about various careers and routes into Media, Criminal Justice, Politics and Sociology, Accounting, Banking and Finance, with guest speakers including alumna and Green Party Leader, Natalie Bennett, in attendance. We hope that our alumni in waiting enjoyed the events! We hope to do more of these events in the future so if you would like to be involved, please let us know using the *Stay in Touch* form included with this magazine.

Alumni Dinner

March 2016

Almost 200 alumni and friends came together for a memorable evening of celebration and fine dining in the luxurious surroundings of Claridge's at the University of Leicester's 7th Alumni Black Tie Dinner.

Guest speaker, alumna and Young Poet Laureate for London 2015, Selina Nwulu, spoke passionately about the impact that the University of Leicester has had on her personally, and measures and notions of success. Selina graduated with a degree in Modern languages in 2008 and has since gone on to become highly respected and accomplished in the literary world.

Dr Mark Sims was announced as the winner of the 2016 Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award and guests generously donated over £7,000 to the Student Opportunities Fund which supports some of the most talented and deserving students at Leicester.



Mark with his award the day after the Alumni Dinner

Dr Mark Sims

2016 Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award Winner

“ **Having stage 4 melanoma not only changes the important things in life, it changes everything in your life, your priorities, your outlook, you have to worry only about now, because the future is so uncertain. You only have one life.** ”

In 2003, aged 15, Mark was diagnosed with nodular melanoma after discovering a lump on his scalp. Eager to learn as much as possible about the disease as well as help others, Mark later enrolled on a Medicine and Surgery course at the University of Leicester, graduating with a Medicine MBChB in 2013, and began his career as a Doctor.

However, in February 2015, Mark was admitted to hospital and sadly diagnosed with stage four malignant melanoma. Almost immediately after his diagnosis, and refusing to let the cancer get the better of him, Mark started chronicling his story on his blog, Wrestling Melanoma ([www.wrestlingmelanoma.com](#)) and has raised almost £60,000 for Cancer Research UK through his Just Giving page (www.justgiving.com/Mark-Sims5).

In 2015 Mark was awarded the title of Twitter Doctor of the Year by the British Medical Association for sharing his story through social media and has spoken at numerous events including the National Nursing Conference. Mark has also fulfilled his 'bucket-list' aim of returning to Leicester numerous times, giving a

speech to Leicester University Students Union Medical Association and running the Leicester Half Marathon. It was on one of these return visits to Leicester that Mark met fiancée and fellow Leicester Medical School student, Georgie.

In recognition of Mark's courage in promoting open discussion about melanoma and the impact of the condition and his selfless determination to benefit others through his own diagnosis, the University of Leicester Alumni Association awarded Mark the 2016 Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award at the Alumni Dinner in March. Unfortunately, Mark was unable to receive his award on the evening as he had been admitted to hospital, but twin brother, Dave Sims, accepted the award on his behalf and reiterated that it has been Mark's aim to turn his negative fortune into a positive. The University of Leicester is immensely proud to count Dr Mark Sims amongst its alumni and humbled by the bravery and selflessness he has shown in the face of such adversity.



The Leicester Weekend

17–19 June 2016

This year, the Alumni Association is delighted to invite alumni, family and friends of the University to our very first Leicester Weekend! Taking place over 3 days, the event will feature all of your favourite activities from our popular Summer Reunion day, and much more.

Book ONLINE* now
at www.le.ac.uk/alumni

*If you are unable to access the internet please call
+44 (0) 116 223 1071

#LeicWkd16

Highlights will include:

Friday 17 June 2016

- *Tour of the King Richard III Visitor Centre with Dr Turi King and members of the team who made the ground-breaking discovery – your chance to hear all about ‘What happened next!’

Saturday 18 June 2016

- Keynote Lecture by the President and Vice-Chancellor and key academics on ‘The Buzz about Leicester’
- VIP Screening of Sir David Attenborough’s recent lecture at the University which is not available anywhere else!
- Departmental Showcase and Exhibition of news, research and activities from across the University
- *University of Leicester ‘Quiz Night’ at College Court
- *Red Leicester – The Re-Union 2016 returns to the Students’ Union for a night of floor fillers!

Sunday 19 June 2016

- *‘Team Leicester Games’ bringing together alumni, students and staff to compete in a range of team and individual sports

*There is a ticket price attached to these events. Please visit our website to find out more!

Stay in touch

Follow us to stay informed:

 @leicesteralumni

 /leicesteralumni

 University of Leicester Alumni Association

Contact details:

e: alumni.relations@le.ac.uk

t: +44 (0) 116 223 1071

w: www.le.ac.uk/alumni



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