

# THE graduate

UNIVERSITY OF TEESIDE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

AUTUMN/WINTER 2008

## BIG SCREEN DREAM COMES TRUE

for concept artist Norman Walshe

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UNIVERSITY OF  
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Opinions expressed in *The Graduate* are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the University.

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Cover picture by Adrian Butler, courtesy of the *Limerick Leader*

## PRIZE DRAW **Win a fantastic Harvey Nichols hamper.**

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# HELLO ALUMNI

## And congratulations to all our new graduates.

This year, the Alumni Office has been very busy supporting all your varying requests. From helping you to organise reunions to locating lost friends or lost certificates – you really keep us on our toes!

We've also launched a new initiative, the Friends and Family Programme. It's designed to provide the friends and family of students and alumni with regular updates about the University. To find out more visit our website.

This issue of the magazine includes a great pictorial feature showing the campus in years gone by alongside some of our new buildings. There's also lots of University news and some great alumni stories. We're always pleased to hear from you, so do keep sending us your news. We'll do our best to feature as many of you as possible in the magazine or e-Graduate.

Thousands of you are already receiving our regular e-Graduate, which provides more up-to-date news from the University. If you haven't done so yet, visit the association website and register your e-mail details. As an added incentive, if you sign up before 1 January 2009 you'll be entered into our prize draw to win a fantastic Harvey Nichols hamper.

And finally, thank you to all who completed our recent postal survey. Please remember that if your details change, you can update them online or via email too.

Best wishes for the rest of the year.



Sarah Irving  
Alumni Relations Office

## HOW TO CONTACT THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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# WELCOME

**I am delighted to have this opportunity to offer my warmest greetings and best wishes to all members of our thriving Alumni Association. The alumni of any organisation are a very special group of people and it is always a great pleasure to meet graduates from our institution, both here in Teesside and elsewhere around the world.**

Since the last edition of *the Graduate*, the University has had another highly-successful year, characterised by further change and development. We were delighted to open three new University buildings – Athena, Phoenix and Cook – and planning work has already begun on our next four buildings – three in Middlesbrough and one in Darlington. It was particularly pleasing that the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, John Denham, visited the University in June to open the Athena Building which provided us with an excellent opportunity to showcase the work of our Schools of Computing and Arts & Media to government and our local community.

Also, for the fourth year running, the University has achieved another excellent performance in the National Student Survey. I am delighted to be able to report that the University now ranks in the top ten in the UK for overall student satisfaction in no less than eight major subject areas – indeed our work in Media Studies and in Design was rated ‘number 1’ in the country. This year also found the University achieving recognition from the *Times Higher Education Supplement* as the highest ranked modern university for student satisfaction. Both of these

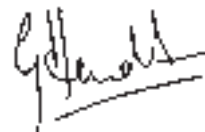
achievements are, I believe, strong endorsements of the increasing importance that we attach to making sure that the students here at Teesside get the very best, and most well-supported, experience possible.

As you will be aware, our University was originally established in 1930 to provide support to the industries on Teesside, and work is now underway on planning a series of events to celebrate our 80th birthday in 2010. Although the institution has changed massively since then, we have always continued to place a high level of importance on ensuring that our courses are informed by the skills and aptitudes necessary to succeed in the workplace. It is therefore pleasing to be able to report that we are now seen by many as amongst the national leaders in working with employers, a fact that was recently recognised by us receiving the second largest funding council grant ever awarded to a university for workforce development and employer engagement activities – money which is being used to develop the higher-level skills that will assist the competitiveness and prosperity of the Tees Valley and regional economy. It is a project we are extremely proud to be engaged in and you can read more about it elsewhere in this magazine.

Over the past year we have also taken forward our links with schools and colleges to support and assist students progressing into higher education. I recently visited all of the colleges in the Tees Valley to celebrate the strong and almost unique partnership that exists between us and to sign up to an even more ambitious and exciting future with them.

So, as I reflect on the past year and the progress that we have made, and I talk to our friends and partners, I am constantly struck by the ‘transformational’ power of the University – its ability to transform the physical infrastructure of Middlesbrough, to transform the lives of individuals and communities across the Tees Valley, and to transform the economic competitiveness of organisations and businesses for the greater social, economic and cultural benefit of our community. This gives me the confidence to look forward to a bright future for this – your University.

Very best wishes to you all.



**Professor Graham Henderson**  
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive

# TEESSIDE LANDS

## £5.13m to work with business

**The University has landed a £5.13m funding boost to develop new relationships with employers and support business growth and workforce development in the region.**

The grant is by far the biggest announced by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

The funding follows Teesside's success in developing new courses for major organisations such as the health service, police and chemical industry. The £5.13m award will fund a significant institutional change programme designed to develop our role as a leading business-facing institution and deliver more employer-supported courses. Over the next three years, we expect 3,000 students to take advantage of the new learning opportunities that result.

HEFCE will provide additional funding of around £4.5m to support these new learners and the University expects a further contribution of £3.3m from employers – making the total package worth £13m.

HEFCE is supporting a range of projects across the higher education sector in order to increase the ability of universities to respond to employer needs and generate co-funding. The projects will deliver tailor-made courses for collaborating companies. Most will be for part-time study, often delivered in the workplace.

Professor Cliff Allan, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Development) at the University said, 'The Strategic Development Fund grant is a key element in our strategy to become a leading business-facing university. We'll be working with employers on a wide range of professional programmes, particularly in leadership and management, and developing new courses with process industry partners to keep workforce skills and qualifications at the cutting edge.'

The University of Teesside's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Graham Henderson, commented, 'This is a £13m vote of confidence in our strategy to become a leading employer-facing university'.

Teesside Business School and the School of Science & Technology are expected to play key roles in developing new programmes with employers.



Top: Dr Briony Oates and, above left, Professor Paul van Schaik

## Double National Teaching Fellow success

**Two Teesside lecturers have been awarded prestigious National Teaching Fellowships in recognition of their excellence in learning and teaching.**

Dr Briony Oates, a reader in information systems in the School of Computing, and Paul van Schaik, a professor in psychology in the School of Social Sciences & Law, received the accolades from the Higher Education Academy.

In total seven Fellowships have now been awarded to lecturing staff from the University.

UNIVERSITY

NEWS

# New campus development for sport and health sciences

**The University of Teesside is planning to open a new £16m sport and health sciences building in the summer of 2010.**

Vice-Chancellor Professor Graham Henderson said, 'I am delighted to announce our plans for the new sport and health sciences building. The facility will not only support our fast-growing provision in health and social care and sports

therapy but also allow us, for the first time, to deliver programmes for dental therapists and dental nurses. It will be a first-class addition both to the University campus and the whole Tees Valley. I am very much looking forward to seeing it rise on the Middlesbrough skyline and to welcoming our first students in 2010.'

The impressive four-storey facility will be linked to the Centuria Building, home to the School of Health & Social Care. It will feature a series of laboratories, including specialist dental, biomechanic and hydrotherapy facilities, and a number of general teaching rooms and academic offices. The building will also offer clinical facilities for the local community in both dental care and sports therapy, providing a much-needed community resource.

The North East Strategic Health Authority along with Stockton-on-Tees, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland Primary Care Trusts will be contributing £1.3m towards the building's dental equipment.



Visualisation of the new building supplied by CPMG architects

## NEW INITIATIVE TO FIGHT FRAUD

**The head of the City of London's Economic Crime Department was among several high-profile speakers at a conference to launch the University's new centre for the investigation of fraud this summer.**

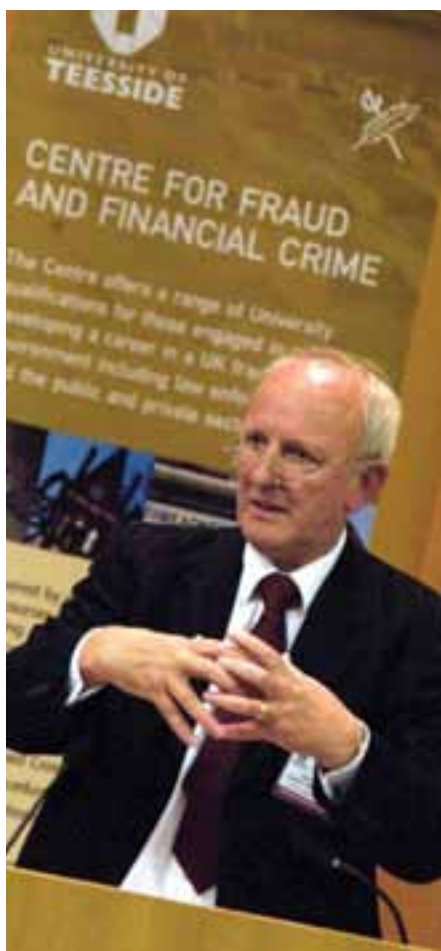
The Centre for Fraud and Financial Crime, based in Teesside Business School, will provide a range of training and education programmes for police officers and specialist investigators from both the public and private sectors.

The Centre was officially opened by Judge Leslie Spittle at a ceremony attended by Detective Chief Superintendent Steve Wilmott of the City of London Police. Fred Hutchinson, Director of the Centre, said, 'This initiative builds on Teesside's

established reputation in the field. Fraud is becoming a big concern because of its links with organised crime and suggestions that it is being used to finance terrorism.'

The new Centre will continue the work started by Professor Alan Doig, who recently retired. This includes accrediting the National Fraud Training programme, delivered by three UK police forces, and a similar course for civilian fraud investigation officers from banks and other large financial organisations. The Centre will also run the successful MA Fraud Management.

In addition, the Centre is developing courses in partnership with the National Police Improvement Agency, the Department for Work and Pensions and CIFAS, the UK's only not-for-profit membership association dedicated to the prevention of fraud and financial crime.



Left: Judge Leslie Spittle

# MOON WALKING IS A PIECE OF CAKE

**Leading lights from the Royal Television Society's (RTS) North East and the Border Centre found themselves virtually walking on the moon when they visited our digital TV and sound studio, complete with sophisticated visual special effects.**

Situated in the new Phoenix Building, home to the University's Institute of Digital Innovation, the state-of-the-art broadcast-quality video production facilities are amongst the best in the North of England.

And the RTS big-wigs were certainly impressed, especially after being invited to take centre stage in the studio's green

screen set for an out-of-this-world experience. For while they appeared to have their feet firmly on the ground, the special effects video recording facilities transported them to the surface of the moon!

Tony Edwards, a producer and director with a string of broadcasting credits and

honorary secretary of the RTS Centre, said, 'It is really earth shattering what the University of Teesside has developed here and the RTS is proud to be associated with this venture. This is as good as anything I have seen in the region and means students and independent film makers here in North East England have unique sound and vision facilities on their doorstep.'

Among the facilities is a £75,000 high-definition, track-based, motion control camera system, capable of creating amazing visual effects from simple crowd duplications to highly-detailed live action-based sequences.

And that's not all. The facility doubles as a sound studio and includes a top-of-the-range mixing desk created by Digidesign, the leading name in digital sound technology. This is one of the most advanced hi-tech recording and editing systems available and catapults Teesside into the elite of educational organisations.

Eric Joseph, Managing Director of Mediaspec who installed the studio, said, 'Teesside has created a wonderful studio that will be the envy of educational establishments up and down the land. We're sure that students and others using it will benefit from having the leading technology in the world right at their fingertips.'



## Our man in Havana

**Alan Clements, Professor of Computing, has a new role in Cuba. He has been appointed Visiting Professor to the University of Information Sciences in Havana – the first Western academic to be awarded the role.**

Professor Clements, 59, delivered a number of lectures in Havana earlier this year. He said, 'It is an exciting opportunity to be working in a developing country which has overcome many of its problems. I was impressed by the quality of the University buildings and the standard of education appears comparable to Europe. The staff are incredibly young, very, very enthusiastic and keen to make contacts with British and European organisations and companies.'

'All education is free in Cuba; a vast effort has been put into public education despite the shortages. The government has a different system as they aim for their student population to reflect the gender balance, so there's a much closer male to female split. I was given a lot of freedom while I was there, to go where I wanted and take photographs.'

Alan has started to learn Spanish in preparation for future visits. He said, 'I'm beginning to make sense of the average Cuban newspaper article. Although I can't speak any Spanish yet!'



# DEBUT FOR PERFORMING ARTS DEGREES

**The University is introducing two new degree courses, headed by women with a real passion for bringing the creative arts to the Tees Valley.**

Dr Sarah O'Brien has returned to her home town of Middlesbrough to oversee the BA (Hons) Performance for Live and Recorded Media. And Heike Salzer moves from her international career in choreography and dance education in Germany and the Netherlands to take charge of the new BA (Hons) Dance and the Community.

Heike, 35, is originally from Eppingen in Germany. She first studied dance in Cologne and then moved to explore dance education at the Dance Academy Arnhem in the Netherlands. She has also taught choreography and dance at Iceland's National Ballet School, where she developed a contemporary dance programme.

She said of the new dance degree, 'To be involved in the design of this new course and see the first cohort of students is a really exciting opportunity. Other places I've worked have a huge tradition of dance and this is entirely new, which is very rare. Through this degree, students can learn to work as a team and apply their skills in areas such as education and health.'

Dr Sarah O'Brien, 30, joined youth theatres in her early teens, at Middlesbrough Theatre and the former Dovecot Arts Centre in Stockton. She went on to achieve a BA (Hons) in Performing Arts in Hertfordshire, followed by a master's and PhD in Lancaster.

She said, 'I'm delighted to be programme leader for these exciting new courses and to return home and be near my family. Students can develop their performance skills to a much higher level, in various media, such as film, theatre and radio presentation. The creative world is changing so quickly, where the arts can be accessed on mobile phones and lap tops and we can equip students with the required skills for this environment.'

The degrees will be taught at the University and the state-of-the-art theatre and dance studios at Middlesbrough College's new Middlehaven development.



Left to right, dancer Karen Stone and Heike Salzer, course leader for the BA (Hons) Dance and the Community.



# West Mercia officers graduate

**West Mercia Constabulary police officers were the first from their force to graduate from the University with a Foundation Degree in Professional Policing this summer. The 34 officers received their awards from Chief Constable Paul West at a graduation ceremony at their force headquarters in Worcester.**

The degree was introduced as part of the new Initial Police Learning and Development Programme in 2006. The two-year course equips students with the skills they need to be effective police officers. They work with specialists from various police departments as they progress through the course, as well as with lecturers from the University, community groups and organisations.

Cliff Allan, Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University, said, 'The staff at West Mercia Constabulary and at Teesside have been fully committed to the programme and it is wonderful to see the first group of officers graduating'.



## MAJOR DRIVE TO IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH

**Leading scientists from the University are joining forces with others in the North East in a bid to improve public health in the region.**

A £5m investment in a centre of excellence in public health to tackle some of the biggest health challenges in the area has the backing of all the main regional agencies. A new lectureship in physical activity and several full-time research studentships will come to Teesside as part of the goal to improve health.

The Centre for Translational Research in Public Health will bring together scientists from all five North East universities as well as professionals who will focus on putting the latest research into practice.

## MBA TO CELEBRATE COMING OF AGE

**The University's prestigious Master of Business Administration (MBA) celebrates its 21st birthday this academic year. Teesside Business School are planning to mark this milestone with a special graduate event next summer and are appealing for alumni to get in touch.**

You can update your contact details at [www.tees.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.tees.ac.uk/alumni) or by emailing [alumni.office@tees.ac.uk](mailto:alumni.office@tees.ac.uk). In order to ensure that you get your invite for this exciting event, please make sure to include an email address. If you've kept in touch with any fellow MBA graduates, please let us have their details too.

## STOP PRESS Student vote of confidence

**Our Design and Media students are the most satisfied in the UK, according to this year's National Student Survey.**

In the same Survey, Teesside ranked second in the country for overall student satisfaction in Law and in the top ten for History, Medical Technology (Radiography), Nursing, Social Work and Forensic Science.

Library resources and services also received an outstanding score of 91%, placing us joint third in the UK for full-time undergraduate students, just behind Oxford and Cambridge.

# IN THE SADDLE AT RALEIGH

**Mark Gouldthorp does not believe he would be anywhere near his current job running one of Britain's most evocative brands if he had not been a student at the University of Teesside.**

Gouldthorp, Managing Director of Raleigh (UK), explained, 'I did a degree in Business Studies from 1984 to 1988.

I enjoyed it. The course was solid and the lecturers professional – you could say "it did what it says on the tin". But I really found my feet in the third year, which I spent on placement at ICI. I wasn't terribly studious or academic – my brain doesn't work in an academic way. But going to ICI, I found something I could succeed in. It was the making of me.'

In his early 40s, Gouldthorp is brisk in thought, speech and movement, the accent a reminder of his South Yorkshire origins. His office at Raleigh's headquarters in Eastwood, the Nottinghamshire town best known as the birthplace of novelist DH Lawrence, is plain and unpretentious, the manner that of a boss who is approachable, but best only approached when you are clear about what you want.

That placement didn't just give him new confidence. It also launched his working life, with a job at ICI when he graduated. 'It was as good as you could get in terms of graduate jobs and I was well outside their usual academic profile – they could ask for Oxbridge, first-class honours, four As at A level. But they knew that I was competent, enthusiastic and got on with people and that overcame my lack of those credentials.'

One reason for his success was that he enjoyed working with Teessiders. 'They were great – friendly, honest and straightforward.' So he was happy that his first ICI jobs were at Billingham and Wilton. 'In total I spent about eight years in the area and regard myself as something of an adopted Teessider. I suspect my life may still take me back there one day. I love the North York Moors and the coastline.'

Another legacy, formed in part by two years living close to Ayresome Park, was becoming a Middlesbrough FC supporter. 'I was a season-ticket holder for four years, but now you'd have to call me a passive fan.'





Fond memories are, though, clouded by the way ICI declined. 'When I joined it was an immensely-strong company with 130,000 employees. It was wrecked by the decision to split it into two, purely to make a quick buck and without any thought as to the consequences for those companies.' After nine years he realised that every section he had worked for had been sold off. 'I no longer had any history.' Jobs at ICL Computers and Cordwell Group followed before he joined Raleigh as Finance Director in 2002, becoming Managing Director a year later.

Having a famous name cuts both ways. 'The great advantage is that there is a huge affection for the Raleigh brand – it hits lots of sweet spots. A bicycle is more personal than chemicals and computers and has all sorts of happy associations. At the same time there are high expectations, particularly from people who remember Raleigh as it used to be.'

How it used to be was one of Nottingham's industrial giants, employing 12,000 people at one time. They were in their final year in Nottingham, a vastly reduced shell of their former selves, when Gouldthorp joined. Raleigh was, he recalled, 'Still thinking of themselves as a big company and making decisions on that basis when they were really a small one'.

The huge psychological step of outsourcing manufacturing had already been taken. Much more, though, remained to be done. 'We have re-engineered pretty much every part of the business – relocating, bringing in new IT systems and adjusting to the realities of a brutally-competitive market.' That once huge workforce is now a mere 180, but financial stability has been restored. 'We made £1.4m on a turnover of £33m last year. Those numbers need to be £2.5m on £40m', he explained.

Only now are 20 years of relentless downward pressure on prices apparently easing, but Gouldthorp said, 'It is still possible for anyone to bring in cheap frames from the Far East and undercut the competition'.

The British market is particularly tough. 'The average price paid for a bike in Germany is three times the British average, because in Germany cycling is built into people's lives and a bike will be used every day of the week, while in Britain it will go into the garage for six months of the year.'

Nor is he a great fan of British cycle retail – reaction to disparaging comments in a *Guardian* interview last year rumbled for months. To push his company's three brands – Triumph for supermarket sales, Raleigh and the 'weekend warrior' Diamondback range – they have set up their own franchised network of Cyclelife stores. 'We set up four years ago with about 40; we've got 107 now and hope eventually to have 250.'

Gouldthorp continues to drive the process, mixing close attention to detail – 'It has become something of a running joke, but it is known that I will always ask questions before signing off the stationery bill' – with trust in subordinates who have done the right things. 'Not long ago our IT manager wanted to buy a new server. Before he came to see me he produced a memo explaining why we had to do this and analysing the performance and cost of each option. I signed it off straight away, saying, "If you've gone to all that effort and asked the right questions that's good enough for me". I want people to put the effort in and treat the company's money as though it were their own. They are allowed to fail. What is not allowed is not trying.'

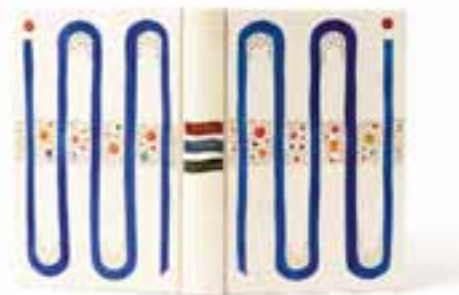
Outside working hours 'I pretend to be 20 years younger than I am by going to as many rock concerts as possible', gardens and looks after his four daughters aged between 6 and 10. 'They keep me busy, and poor' he said, joking that 'when they get into their teens I'm moving out into my shed'.





# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF TOM SAWYER

by Nic Mitchell



Above and below, William Morris's *News from Nowhere*  
 Binder: Lester Capon, Photo: Sussie Ahlburg  
 Copyright: Designer Bookbinders



Left, Tom Sawyer outside the House of Lords

**It was a day to savour and remember. Thirteen of the country's leading bookbinding craftsmen and women came together, first in the ornate surroundings of the Royal Gallery at the House of Lords and then in the wonderful library of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers overlooking St James's Park in London.**

Their host was Lord Sawyer of Darlington, Chancellor of the University of Teesside, and for many years an influential figure in Labour politics who worked closely with Neil Kinnock, Tony Blair and Rodney Bickerstaffe of the National Union of Public Employees.

The event was the result of Lord Sawyer's desire to produce one of the finest new collections of hand-bound books to celebrate the 400-year rise of the British socialist ideal and give a massive vote of confidence to the traditional British bookbinding craft which, despite the age of the internet, remains alive and well.

Lord Sawyer, or Tom as he is much better known, has ploughed a considerable amount of his time and energy into the project. It began, he recalls, with a chance meeting with leading Yorkshire-based bookbinder Stephen Conway at a book fair in Pudsey. 'Stephen encouraged me and my wife to visit a major European bookbinders convention in Brussels about six years ago and a seed was sown', said Tom. 'I asked Stephen if he would like to bind one or two of my favourite editions and things took off from there.'

The project grew as Tom found other volumes of the great works of literature that laid the foundations for British socialist thought up to the 20th century. Works like *Utopia* by Sir Thomas More, the earliest in the collection which was first published in English in 1551, *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan and *Rights of Man* by Thomas Paine.

And what started as an idea to get one or two volumes bound for posterity grew until Tom decided on the 15 books he wanted for the collection. Once he got the green light from his wife, Liz, Tom embarked on a mission to find the right bookbinders. The result is a magnificent collection that not only celebrates the best of radical English writing but also the cream of a traditional British craft which goes back over a thousand years.

When the collection was finally unveiled in the House of Lords in October, parliamentarians of all persuasions flocked to see what all the fuss was about as news of Tom's exhibition spread like wildfire around the Palace of Westminster.

Baroness (Brenda) Dean, president of the print workers' union SOGAT in the late 80s, was among the many bowled over. She loved the pierced vellum binding used by Lester Capon for William Morris's classic, *News from Nowhere*, and the depiction of the River Thames in blue goatskin, sprinkled with gold and colour on the cover fading into the darkness of real-life Victorian Britain on the inside cover.

Glenn Bartley's treatment of William Cobbett's *Rural Rides* attracted plenty of attention, as word circulated that he had come hot-footed from celebrations the night before at the Man Booker Prize. He hand bound a copy of Aravind Adiga's winning novel, *The White Tiger*.

Leader of the House of Lords, Baroness (Jan) Royall, who worked closely with Neil Kinnock and Tom Sawyer in the 90s, said, 'This is an extraordinary collection of books. Immensely beautiful! I would never have imagined bookbindings could be so visually inspiring. There's a clear link to the text and great vision and amazing craftsmanship here. I have never seen anything quite like this before and it's great for a socialist to be doing this.'

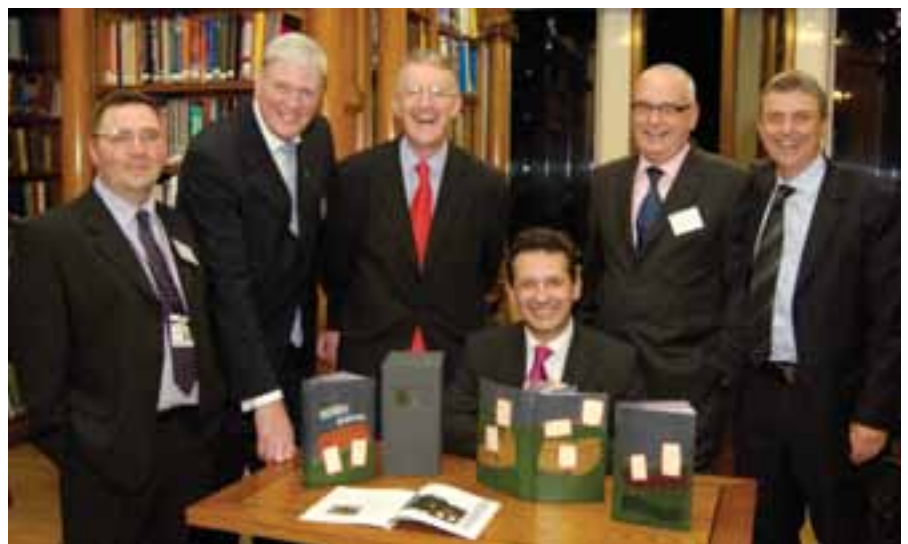
It was a theme taken up by leading socialist historian, Lord Morgan, in his keynote address and echoed by Middlesbrough's Labour MP, Sir Stuart Bell, who said, 'I think Tom has rendered a huge service to the Labour movement in reminding us who our forbearers were,

what they dreamed of and what our dream should be. I would like to help get this exhibition up to the North East.'

And it wasn't just Labour parliamentarians who were impressed. Fellow avid book collector, Lord (Kenneth) Baker of Dorking, who as Tory Education Secretary officially opened the independent Teesside Polytechnic in 1989, said, 'I think bookbinding is one of the great crafts of our country and it's wonderful the way Tom has had all these books on socialism bound in such an immensely sympathetic way'.

Later at a reception held in the magnificent surroundings of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers, there was further delight and praise for the effort and determination behind Lord Sawyer's collection from Dave Prentis, General Secretary of the trade union Unison, and Hilary Benn, MP Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. They both gave short speeches, along with Stephen Conway on behalf of the Designer Bookbinders society.

Last word to Tom Sawyer: 'I consider these to be works of art and not simply books with rather fancy bindings and I would love to bring them up to Middlesbrough to show, perhaps at the new mima art gallery. I really love books and this is my contribution to helping the craft of bookbinding'.



Left to right, Stephen Conway; Professor Graham Henderson, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Teesside; Hilary Benn MP; Glen Bartley; Lord Sawyer; and Dave Prentis

# NEW DEAN REALLY MEANS BUSINESS

by Andrew Hebden

**Universities and businesses have not always enjoyed the best of relations, but that is changing according to Alastair Thomson, the new Dean of Teesside Business School.**

The Glaswegian – a giant of a man at 6ft 5ins – has been out of what you might call the ‘traditional’ business world for about a year, after a career which has taken him from the offices of a top London accountants to the challenge of running a firm in the highly-competitive world of commercial printing. He made his name as managing director of a hugely-successful call centre business, owned by a FTSE100 giant, which grew rapidly, winning countless awards.

Thomson knows a thing or two about business, and his most recent role saw him advising a host of corporate giants on issues such as customer service. Now he’s offering those insights to students at Teesside as the University looks to build on its impressive reputation as an institution tuned into the requirements of the business community.

He’s arrived at his new desk in Middlesbrough in good time. The University has just landed £5.13m from



the Higher Education Funding Council for England to help it become even more 'business facing'. The size of the investment indicates just why universities are keen to tune into the requirements of the business world. And increasingly there's a willingness from the other side too, with business organisations such as the CBI calling for better collaboration between business and higher education to tackle the region's skills shortage and keep talented people in the North East.

Convincing businesses that universities are serious about developing links remains a tough nut to crack, as Thomson acknowledged. 'I don't doubt that it will take some time to get that message across, but I have the obvious advantage that I come from a business background and I know what the end product has to look like', he said. 'I can talk to businesses in their own language.'

The son of a doctor and a nurse, Thomson grew up in Glasgow during a difficult time

for the local economy which was hit hard by the closure of the shipyards and the mines. 'Business interested me from early on', he recalled. 'When I was 14 I asked for a subscription to *The Economist* as a Christmas present.'

Under strict instructions from his parents to make sure he qualified in a 'proper profession', Thomson studied law at Strathclyde University in Glasgow before taking Norman Tebbit's advice and getting on his bike to seek employment in London. He landed at accountancy giant Thomson McClintock, since subsumed into the KPMG empire, where he enjoyed a good few years in the City before moving north in 1988.

Although he was Group Financial Controller at Intermarketing Group, such was the nature of life at a small advertising agency, he was expected to turn his hand to any aspect of the business. Indeed it was his hard-nosed commercial instincts when dealing with suppliers that earned him his next move, to one of the companies he had previously negotiated with.

After turning around the fortunes of Watmoughs plc's packaging business in Bradford and becoming its Managing Director, he moved onto a Leeds advertising firm before landing a key role with Kelda, the FTSE-100 listed owner of Yorkshire Water.

Thomson was brought on board in 1999 to head up a new project which would see the water firm's customer services operation hived-off from the main business and compete for contracts to supply customer service functions to other firms. When the new business – known as Loop – went live in 2000, he was appointed Managing Director.

It was a huge success. Within three years, the company had doubled in size and new contracts were won to provide customer services for a range of clients including the National Blood Service, the Wales Tourist Board, B&Q and EDF Energy.

And at the heart of its success was keeping the staff happy – the company was featured in *The Times* 100 Best Places to Work listing for three successive years. 'If we were to deliver a great experience to our customers, we had to deliver a great experience to those who worked for us', said Thomson. 'You can't hit people over the head with a stick and then expect them to be nice to your customers.'

'Lots of people who do this kind of thing think that all you have to do is be wacky and get people dressed up as chickens. We did a bit of that, but the difficult thing is doing it day in, day out. The staff have got to trust the ethos of the business. Dressing up has to be the exception rather than the rule.'

From 2004 until joining Teesside last year, Thomson ran a successful consultancy from his North Yorkshire home, offering business advice to blue-chip companies around the country on issues such as customer service.

He's delighted to have landed a job on his doorstep after his time spent travelling the country. He's also extremely passionate about the North East and the Tees Valley in particular, which he predicts is capable of replicating the kind of renaissance enjoyed by his own home city.

He believes that the University of Teesside has a key part to play in transforming the area's fortunes by helping local people and local businesses and by ploughing investment into its campus. Thomson acknowledges it's a quite different challenge from the type he has taken on before, although he draws some parallels. 'We are a people business', he said. 'We employ people and people are our end product. I want people who come here to look back at their time at Teesside as being very pivotal in their career. It is a very privileged position to be in when you can help people to make that transition.'

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEESSIDE HAS A KEY PART TO PLAY IN TRANSFORMING THE AREA'S FORTUNES BY HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE AND LOCAL BUSINESSES AND BY PLOUGHING INVESTMENT INTO ITS CAMPUS.**

# BIG SCREEN

## DREAM COMES TRUE





**Concept artist Norman Walshe is by his own admission a bit of a film buff and was fascinated with the film industry from an early age. 'I always wondered about the process of getting things onto the big screen and I wanted to make my own movies', said the Limerick-born rising star of the film world.**

Norman's big break and first industry pay cheque came courtesy of the blockbuster *Stardust*, starring Robert de Niro and Michelle Pfeiffer. 'It's a difficult industry to get into and it took a long time to get my first job. Movies cost a lot of money, so working with someone unknown is a big risk', he explained. After a lot of phone calls to industry big-wigs, production designer Gavin Bocquet – best known for his work on the most recent *Star Wars* films – sent Norman the *Stardust* script and asked him to work on a couple of designs. They went down so well that he was promptly hired and Norman was on his way to living the dream.

It's a career that he says owes a lot to his studies at Teesside – Norman graduated with a BA (Hons) Industrial Design in 1998. 'I loved the degree, it was fascinating. It gave me the ability to think in 3D, even when I'm drawing in two dimensions.' But Norman knew that designing everyday objects wasn't for him. He wanted to work in an environment with no limits, something which the fantasy-adventure film genre he specialises in certainly provides.

'The work of a concept artist is very varied and can involve anything from designing a prop like a sword, sci-fi vehicle or even a king's bed, through to conceptualising the look and feel of an entire film. On a big budget movie there can be five or six of us coming up with sketches or I can be working with the filmmaker at a very early stage, before there's even a production team in place.' Which is exactly what Norman's doing at the moment. The project is at such an early stage that he can't say much about it, except that he's been working on ideas for a magic whirlpool and has been offered a trip to the film set in Bali.

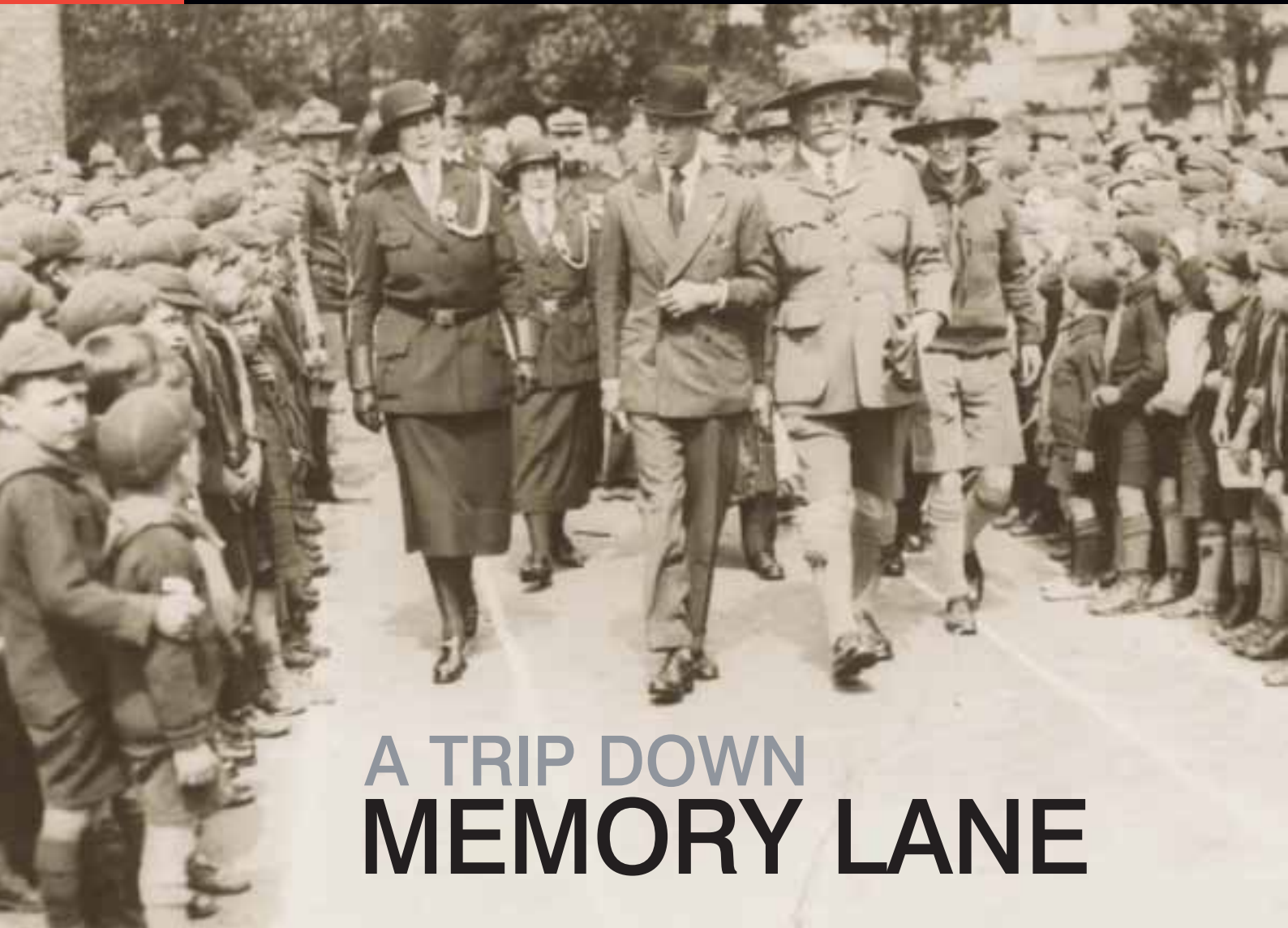
'It's a really varied job because you could be designing almost anything. It certainly never gets boring. It can also be very intense, sometimes doing as many as 60 or 70 different drawings.' His first design to make the big screen was a sword for the character Septimus (played by Mark Strong) in *Stardust*. 'When it came back from the prop-makers at Pinewood I couldn't believe my eyes.'

He was also responsible for the crown worn by Tristan Thorne (Charlie Cox) at the end of the film. His concept was brought to life by the only film-jeweller in England, who made the piece in 18-carat gold. 'It was so intricate and detailed and stuck to my drawings exactly', said Norman.

His film credits include *Fred Claus*, starring Vince Vaughn, and fantasy-adventures *The Dark is Rising* and *Inkheart*. And no doubt there are many more exciting projects ahead for the 35-year-old. Norman eventually wants to make the move into production design, like his role models the Oscar-winning Dante Ferretti, who has worked with Federico Fellini and Martin Scorsese, and of course Gavin Bocquet.

'The downside of being a production designer is the paperwork and budget management', he said. 'I wouldn't want to lose touch with the creative process. What I absolutely love is being able to get my vision across and onto the big screen and I don't want to give that up.'

**'I LOVED THE DEGREE, IT WAS FASCINATING. IT GAVE ME THE ABILITY TO THINK IN 3D, EVEN WHEN I'M DRAWING IN TWO DIMENSIONS.'**



## A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE



Above: The Constantine Building, 2008



Above: Official opening of Constantine Technical College by the then Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VIII, 1930

**The University has come an awfully-long way since it was first established as Constantine College in the 1930s. Here we take a look at some of the highlights. How many do you remember?**

Left: Athena Building, opened 2008



The Learning Resource Centre, 2007



The Learning Resource Centre under construction, 1996



Student in the original library, 1970s



The Waterhouse Building, 1940



Past versus Present Sports Tournament, 1995

Middlesbrough Tower under construction, 1964



Students on a trip to Florence, Italy, 1968



Students enjoying Rag Week, 1979

Students' Union, The Hub, 2008



The Refectory, 1974





Students model work from the Association Clothing and Footwear Institute Course, 1985

# SEE FOR YOURSELF

If you're in the region for business or pleasure, why not drop in and find out for yourself how much the University has changed? Contact [alumni.office@tees.ac.uk](mailto:alumni.office@tees.ac.uk) to arrange a tour.



Phoenix Building, housing the Institute for Digital Innovation, opened 2008

ROUND-UP

research



Left to right, Judith Brown, Rob Macdonald and Carl Ditchburn at Stockton Community Campus

## Inspirational approach to helping the homeless

**A remarkable social enterprise project, about to celebrate its 21st anniversary, is attracting interest as far away as Japan because of its hugely-successful approach to helping the homeless.**

Community Campus '87 is a Stockton and Middlesbrough initiative which now employs 36 people, has 30 volunteer workers and an annual turnover of £1.2m. And since the late 1980s it has housed over 5,000 young people and now owns 50 houses on Teesside.

Sociologists at the University of Teesside are analysing why the enterprise has worked so well so that others can consider replicating it elsewhere. 'We want to elicit the success factors of Community Campus '87 – and consider the constraints on its future effectiveness', said Rob MacDonald, Professor of Sociology and a key member of the University's Youth Research Group.

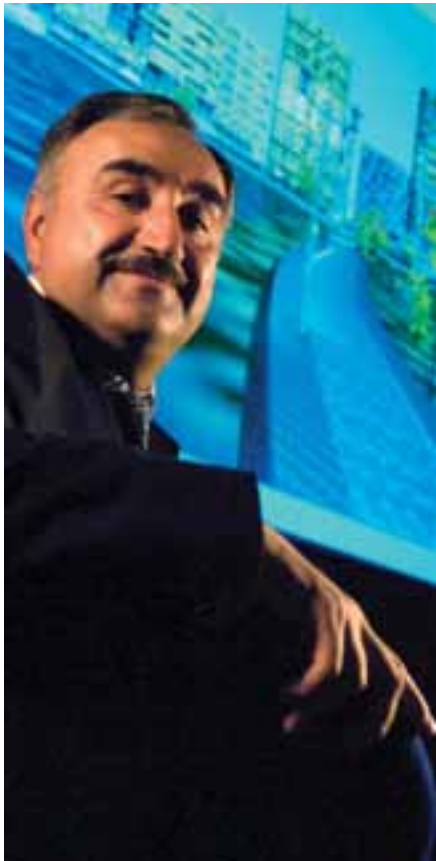
Professor MacDonald said the idea came from young professionals disillusioned by working in the social welfare field and wanting 'to do good and get back at Thatcher'. And although Community Campus '87 is now much more business orientated, it hasn't lost its people-centred approach.

Fellow researcher Judith Brown agrees. 'Community Campus '87 is one of the North East's most long-standing social enterprises and is an excellent example of how to combine business principles with strong moral and ethical values. It is a real inspiration and when a group of Japanese academics came to Teesside last year to look at social enterprises they were very keen to see the project.'

Carl Ditchburn, Project Co-ordinator, said, 'Looking back over the last 21 years, I am astounded by the vision, resolve, dedication and courage that has enabled us to build and sustain the size and scope of the current activity. I believe Community Campus '87 has thrived on the sense of involvement and ownership of the young people we house and the leadership role they play in an organisation that is making a difference to the life chances of hundreds of young people across Teesside.'

The report, *Growing up with Campus*, by Professor Rob MacDonald and Judith Brown, is due out in November. It will also be available online from [carl@cc87.co.uk](mailto:carl@cc87.co.uk).

# PROMOTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACROSS EUROPE



A ten-strong team from Teesside are part of a £3.2m research project working to improve energy efficiency in the construction industry and the European Union (EU) by 20% before 2020.

The energy used to heat homes and offices consumes almost 40% of the total energy used across Europe and the current energy crisis, which has seen oil prices rocket and gas supplies dwindling, has set alarm bells ringing in Brussels.

Professor Nashwan Dawood, the University's Cecil M Yuill Professor of Construction and Director of the Centre for Construction Innovation and Research, and his research team are contributing to the project known as IntUBE – Intelligent Use of Buildings' Energy Information.

IntUBE has brought together researchers and business partners from nine countries with the aim of helping the construction industry and the EU vastly improve energy efficiency. Professor Dawood was invited to join the project because he is an international expert on using virtual technologies to examine energy efficiency.

He said, 'Part of the answer is to use IT technology to intelligently analyse and

**Academics from the University are playing a key role in a multi-million pound project which aims to improve energy efficiency in homes and offices without compromising comfort.**

control the consumption of energy, not just in new buildings, but also in existing homes and offices. Of course, we could simply tell everyone to cut down on heating and lighting, but that is not likely to work. If our offices become unbearably hot, people will reach for the air-conditioning or, if it gets too cold at home, hit the central heating button. The key is to give the individual more information about his or her energy consumption and more intelligent control systems that will allow people to use their energy in a much more efficient way.'

Professor Dawood stressed that the EU will never reach its ambitious 20% target to improve energy efficiency if it only concentrates on new and renovated buildings – and that's where IntUBE comes in. 'We want to increase the life-cycle energy efficiency of buildings without compromising the comfort or performance. We will achieve this by integrating the latest developments in the ICT field into intelligent building and neighbourhood management systems and by presenting new ICT-enabled business models for energy information related service provision.'

## Satellite technology transforms MFC training

**Satellite technology is playing a key role in a joint sport performance project between the University and Middlesbrough Football Club.**

The Club has shared a researcher with the University since 2006 to explore the impact of Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) technology in evaluating players' performance. During training sessions, players wear a GPS device in a harness between their shoulder blades. Data from the device allows players' work volume and intensity during training to be computed. Results are presented in terms of movement speed and distances covered. This data is then compared with the actual

match performance to objectively appraise the effectiveness of training. Middlesbrough FC was the first club in the UK to buy GPS technology for this purpose.

Matt Portas, Senior Lecturer in Sport and Exercise, worked with colleagues to analyse the data. He said, 'This project is very exciting. To date, clubs and coaches had to rely on heart rate and players' perceptions for feedback on the intensity of training sessions. Now we can use the GPS data to manipulate training drills so they are more match specific or more accurately meet the stated physical goals of training. The technology also has other applications, such as player rehabilitation, where training loads and exposure can be carefully controlled and progressively increased.'



Two other UK clubs, Chelsea and Celtic, have now bought GPS and the system has potential for other sports, such as athletics and orienteering.

# Adopting a healthy lifestyle

## More than a thousand people living in Teesside have signed up for the 'Get a better life' project by pledging to improve their diet and do more exercise.

Participants have promised to eat less fat and more fruit and vegetables, whilst increasing their physical activity. And there are early signs that it is improving people's lives. The volunteers who signed up with the University's Centre for Food, Physical Activity and Obesity have been asked to keep records throughout the year-long project. These records will be analysed by the Teesside research team.

The results will be important because people in parts of the Tees Valley suffer from poor health compared to the rest of the country. It has been estimated that, on average, they can die 12 years earlier than they should. Heart disease, strokes, smoking and alcohol abuse are some of the biggest problems.

Project manager Frances Hillier explained that many people were already responding well to the project. 'Nine months into the initiative we've received some encouraging feedback', she said. 'Although the project has not yet been completed, some people have been telling us that they are already making changes to their lifestyles. This is very positive and fits in with our aim of bringing about an improvement.'

When people first signed up earlier this year, researchers found that very few of them were eating five portions of fruit and vegetables or taking 30 minutes of exercise each day as recommended by government health experts.

The £500,000 research project for the Food Standards Agency is being supported by Middlesbrough's *Evening Gazette* newspaper, which has helped to get the message out to local residents, and by the Middlesbrough NHS Primary Care Trust (PCT).

University researchers are also working with the PCT to talk face-to-face to 500 people to see if that is a better way of getting the living healthily message across.







Stuart Varrall, above left, and Richard Mairs

## FINDING INSPIRATION IN THE US

**When University of Teesside graduate and DigitalCity Fellow Stuart Varrall, MA Computer Animation, 2007, was chosen as one of 12 young entrepreneurs for a six-month sabbatical in the US, he was understandably excited – if not a little daunted by the prospect.**

It meant leaving behind his business and everything familiar in exchange for a once-in-a-lifetime mentorship and voyage of discovery courtesy of a National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship and Kauffman Foundation Fellowship. This prestigious award is hotly fought for and Stuart beat many candidates to reach the final selection. He was the only successful North East candidate last year.

Speaking to the founder of Middlesbrough-based mobile phone wallpaper and games specialist Fluid Pixel Studios shortly after his return, it's obvious that the experience has had a powerful effect on any future business plans and personal ambitions. Stuart admits that although it took him a few days to acclimatise to both the Kansas weather and the feeling of being thousands of miles away from his business and home, adjusting to two months of gruelling lecturers and seminars wasn't an issue. 'It was a bit like being back in University, although it was very intense', he recalled.

Stuart and the other Fellows then embarked on a lightning tour of the US, stopping off at Stanford University to meet the spin-out team which set Google on its path to glory, plus visits to Harvard, MIT, and Microsoft and Adobe's Californian offices.

For Stuart, it was his internship with internet marketing specialist SoftVu that proved to be the most invaluable part of the tour. 'What really made it for me was spending time with the firm's founder, understanding why he made the business decisions he did and how he turned SoftVu into a multi-million-dollar turnover business.'

Indeed, it is the US's attitude to entrepreneurialism and business which has left a lasting impression on the 24-year-old. 'They have a "can do" attitude, which is contagious. It's left me very keen on doing business with the US and I've no fears about opening an American office some time in the future.'

His enthusiasm will certainly reassure Richard Mairs – the North East's second Kauffman Fellow in as many years and another graduate from the University. The founder of multimedia development firm Gizmo Visual Studios is counting down the days until he too whisks off to the US, for what he describes as an unbelievable and somewhat unexpected opportunity.

The farmer's son, who graduated from Teesside with an MSc Multimedia Applications, 2005, runs his enterprise from one of the University's business incubator units. He says he's looking forward to learning new ideas.

Both Richard and Stuart have recently been given Apple iPhone Developer status, allowing them to develop iPhone content and applications.

ARE THEY  
NOW?

# where

# Leading film producer returns to Middlesbrough



**Film producer Roger Shannon, 55, graduated from Teesside Polytechnic in 1976 with a BA (Hons) Humanities. He went on to enjoy a highly-successful career in the British film industry, working as a producer, executive producer, financier, film festival director, writer and broadcaster.**

He has worked with a range of big-screen British acting talent, such as Bill Nighy, Rita Tushingham, Ricky Tomlinson and Samantha Morton. Films he has financed or executive produced have won awards at major international film festivals and include *Butterfly Kiss*, *Under the Skin* and *Beautiful People*.

Roger returned to the University recently to give a guest lecture about his film career and to tour the campus. He said, 'In some ways I started my career here, as I set up a film society. I also made some long-term professional contacts with a group of film makers in Newcastle, some of whom went on to form Amber films.

'I very much took to the North East as a whole. The whole town [of Middlesbrough] has changed now. The mima art gallery is a fantastic development, really inspiring. I'm impressed by the changed campus; it's much bigger than I thought. And there was no Students' Union in the early 70s, we used to socialise in a building called the Buttery.'

Roger is now Professor of Film and Television at Edge Hill University.

# Tough challenge for Jim



**Jim Horn, MSc Rehabilitation Science, 2004, is planning an epic journey to raise money for St Mary's Hospice in Birmingham. He will row 3,000 miles from the Canary Islands to Antigua as a competitor in the Woodvale Atlantic Rowing Race. The event, which will take place in December 2009, is described by organisers as one of the world's toughest rowing races.**

'My motivation for taking part is difficult to pinpoint', said Jim, who is a physiotherapist at University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust. 'I genuinely have a desire to seek out challenges, to push myself and to look for adventure. I'm also fascinated to find out

what it feels like to be surrounded by thousands of miles of ocean in a seven-metre-long rowing boat!'

Jim, who is taking part in the race with friend Jono Vaughan, is already training hard. 'I'm using an indoor rowing machine and carrying out a weights' programme – the aim being to do some sort of training five days per week and increasing that to six or seven days early next year. I'm also taking advice from a dietician about nutrition before, during and after the race.

'We've bought a boat from a couple of Royal Marines who competed in last year's race. So far we've had to fund it ourselves but we're actively seeking corporate sponsorship to cover our expenses – the boat alone cost £25,000.'

**Anyone interested in sponsoring Jim or finding out more about the event should visit his website at [www.atlanticrace2009.co.uk](http://www.atlanticrace2009.co.uk).**

# A first-class prize donation

**Brian Ward graduated from the University in 2006 with a first-class BA (Hons) History. Last year, aged 69, his quest for knowledge resulted in the**

**achievement of an MA History. To mark his double success, Brian has donated an annual prize to a graduating history student.**

A retired television engineer, Brian said, 'I had such an enjoyable time on my two degrees, donating the prize was my way of thanking the University. Going to university had long been an ambition of mine and any reservations I had proved to be completely unfounded. I got on well with all the students and my time at University was a thoroughly-enjoyable experience.'

Suzanne Pearson was the first recipient of the Brian Ward Prize. She graduated with a first-class BA (Hons) History in 2007 and said, 'I always wanted to do a history degree when I was younger but going to university wasn't something you automatically thought about, as teenagers do now. When I got the opportunity later in life it was wonderful. I was thrilled and honoured to be the first person to receive the Prize. The plaque is lovely and has pride of place in my house!'

**If you're interested in sponsoring a prize, please contact Mark White on [m.white@tees.ac.uk](mailto:m.white@tees.ac.uk) or 01642 342004.**



# GLYNN ENJOYS UNIQUE INDUSTRIAL EXPERIENCE

**Few graduates can have been given such an opportunity as Glynn Jones. For the 30-year-old has spent the past year working on the first large-scale wood-burning biomass power station to be opened in the UK.**

Glynn's journey to become Utilities Maintenance Manager for Sembcorp UK on the Wilton International chemical complex near Redcar began at the age of 16, when he left school and secured an engineering apprenticeship with Elementis Chromium at its plant near Eaglescliffe.

It was there that he first showed his commitment to lifelong learning by taking an HNC Mechanical and Production

Engineering followed by a BEng (Hons) Mechanical Engineering at the University. After graduating in 2002, Glynn went on to achieve chartered mechanical engineer status.

His current job allows him to put the theory to good practical use, as he is responsible for maintenance work on the new Sembcorp Biomass Power Station, as well as the site's conventional Wilton Power Station and associated water treatment plant. The £64m biomass station generates electricity for the National Grid, burning about 900 tonnes of timber a day, and Glynn and his team have to continually monitor and maintain the operation, learning as they go along.

Glynn said, 'I have been able to use what I learnt at the University in my work. Although biomass is an established technology, the new station was the first of its kind in the UK, and it does throw up particular challenges. It's great to work on something that's innovative and such a large investment.'





# BRIGHT LIGHT SHOWS THE WAY

**Product designer Gordon McWilliam, MA Design, 2005, is the brains behind Spear & Jackson's new Predator Laser-Guided Saw. With no fancy fixing and no power leads, this revolutionary product is a basic handsaw with a laser concealed in its plastic handle. Using a beam that shows where the saw will go, you can start your very first stroke knowing exactly where the last one will end. Even the most hopeless DIYer will see any deviation from the right line.**

Gordon is currently working as an industrial designer in D-Lab, the University's centre for research, development and innovation in design. He said, 'It was the idea of accuracy that really set me thinking. I realised that to gain accuracy you usually put down the handsaw and move to a laser-guided power tool. I jumped on that thought and within an hour I had strapped a couple of batteries and an off-the-shelf laser onto one of the company's saws.'

'This is the first time I have seen a product go from the crudest prototype to a fully-manufactured and marketed product and it is such an amazing feeling. What's more, we are working with Spear & Jackson on other products which we hope will have a similar impact.'

# California Dreaming

**Rob Noble, BSc (Hons) Media Technology and Production, 2000, remembers great times and a lot of hard work at Teesside. 'Apart from the odd pint, I pretty much kept my head down for the last two years of the course to ensure that I had the opportunity to join a company with potential', he said.**

That company was a small web agency called Lightmaker Internet Publishing Services, above a carpenter's workshop in a Kent village. Now simply known as Lightmaker, the company has evolved into one of the top 20 independent web agencies in the world, employing over 200 staff across the globe. The company provides digital and interactive services for some of the world's best-known brands including Manchester United, JK Rowling, Electronic Arts, Adobe and Microsoft.

Starting as project manager, Rob rose rapidly within the company to become a shareholder and member of the board of directors. He's currently living in California having opened the group's seventh office in San Francisco in September 2007.

During his time with Lightmaker Rob has won pretty much every accolade for web and interactive design that the industry has to offer including many Favourite Website

Awards, three Baftas and a Webby for the Best Sports Website in the World. The company still maintains links with the University and employs a number of other Teesside graduates.

Rob said, 'I feel very lucky to be here with Lightmaker, living in San Francisco. If someone had told me 12 years ago when I started at Teesside that the hard work and dedication would bring the rewards I have experienced I would have thought they were crazy. San Francisco is a place I always dreamed of living, having visited the city during a summer work abroad programme whilst at Teesside. Not only is Silicon Valley the epicentre for our industry but also one of the most beautiful places on the planet.'

Rob, his wife Gemma and two young children (Max, 3, and Ava, 7 months) live in Mill Valley, Marin County, California.



## Fire fighters on the road to recovery

**Kathryn Osborne, BSc (Hons) Sports Therapy, 2004, is working as an exercise therapist at the National Fire Service Rehabilitation Centre in Penrith, Cumbria. Kathryn works as part of a multidisciplinary team to aid the recovery of fire fighters following injury and illness.**



She said, 'I work with a group of 15 fire fighters and rehab them in the pool, gym and with tailor-made individual programmes. I also deliver hands-on treatments such as deep tissue massage and passive stretching. The role can be demanding and requires a lot of knowledge but it's very rewarding.'

In her spare time, Kathryn works as a sports therapist for local rugby league side the Carlisle Centurions – a role she first undertook as part of her studies at Teesside.

## Adil returns to Teesside

**Adil Al-Busaidi is working as a power control engineer for Petroleum Development Oman. He left Teesside in 2004 with a first-class BEng (Hons) Electrical Engineering to study for a master's at the University of Manchester. He is currently studying for a PhD at Teesside through distance learning.**

'I liked Teesside from the first instant I saw it', said Adil. 'I gave priority to my studies, but I also worked hard with my colleagues to set up the Omani Society, which organised many events to promote Omani culture. My days at Teesside are memorable and can't be forgotten. That's why I decided to join the University again for my PhD in the field of power systems control', he added.



## A firm foundation for success

**A foundation course in accountancy was the start of a successful career for Joanne Regan, now a client partner with one of the biggest accountancy firms in the country.**



After completing the Foundation Course in Accountancy in 1991, Joanne was offered a training post with local firm, Walkers. After qualifying as a chartered accountant, she progressed rapidly, taking up her current job in 2002. In the same year, Walkers became one of the founders of Vantis plc, now the 12th largest accountancy firm in the country.

Joanne said, 'I picked the University of Teesside because I didn't want to move away and leave my friends and family. The Tees Valley is a great place to live and I'm keen to stay here and develop my career. I really want to promote the services of Vantis throughout the North East as an alternative to the "big four" accounting firms.'

## Lifelong friendships

**When Richard Potter started an engineering diploma at Middlesbrough's Constantine Technical College in June 1943, he forged links which would endure more than six decades.**

Constantine College was the forerunner of Teesside Polytechnic, which became the University of Teesside.

The 82-year-old, known as Dick, remains in contact with all the surviving members of the Engineering Cadetship Diploma

course, whom he first met when they were fresh-faced 18-year-old students.

Dick, who now lives in Hartlepool, said, 'It was wartime, so the course had been set up by the Ministry of Defence to provide more engineering officers. I applied in the hope of coming out as an engineering officer in the Army or Navy, as well as gaining a qualification'.

After his final exams, Dick joined the Royal Engineers, before transferring to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, eventually serving as a Lance Corporal in Tripoli, Libya. When he left the forces in 1948 he returned to Constantine College where he gained a BSc Eng (Lond) Mechanical Engineering degree in 1951. He went on to work as an engineer.

Dick, looks back with fondness on the time he spent at Constantine College, saying, 'We were thrown together from all over the country and we stuck together. They were a great bunch of lads'.



## MSc put Lyndsey on the fast track

**A love of science led Lyndsey McPartland to a first-class BSc (Hons) Applied Science and Forensic Investigation, 1997. It was, she said, 'Science with a twist'.**

Studying modules in radiological protection and medical imaging as part of the course, as well as a visit to a local radiology department, convinced Lyndsey to take her studies in a different direction. After graduating with first-class honours, she signed up for the University's MSc Diagnostic Radiography, which she completed in 2007.

Lyndsey is now working as a diagnostic radiographer at Newcastle General Hospital. She said, 'Having the master's qualification has really helped my career.'



I was able to apply for a senior post after only nine months. Normally, it would take about two years to get to this level.'

She has fond memories of Teesside. 'I spent lots of time in the Students' Union socialising with friends between lectures and letting off steam on an evening. They did great food and organised really good student nights. I worked in the University gym and through that made lots of very good friends.'

## A new career for Frank

**A Teesside master's course opened up a whole new career for former police officer Frank Nesbitt, MA Fraud Management, 2005. 'I met Professor Alan Doig through the North East Fraud Forum. He encouraged me to develop my credentials as a fraud investigator', said Frank.**



'My time at the University was initially rather frightening; a mature student I think is the terminology. I had to balance studying with the day job. It was also quite an experience mixing with the younger students.'

In 2006, Frank retired from Northumbria Police after a 30-year career. He is now working as a forensic service manager for Tait Walker Chartered Accountants in Newcastle, where he has been instrumental in developing the forensic service team.

## Radical programmer

**Canadian Brian Davis, BSc (Hons) Computer Games Programming, 2005, was introduced to the University of Teesside by some friends who were studying here. 'I grew up playing video games and was interested in how they were created', he said.**



He returned to Canada after graduating with first-class honours to take up the post of gameplay programmer with Vancouver-based Radical Entertainment. Amongst other things, Brian worked on *Crash of the Titans* for the Wii, PS2 and Xbox 360, which was nominated for a Children's Bafta award last year.

He said, 'Teesside gave me the support I needed to be successful in my academic career. The teachers were always available and accommodated my need to travel to and from Canada at different points in the year.'

## Teesside skills in Uzbekistan

**After graduating, Sanjarbek Toshbayev, BA (Hons) Combined Studies, 2001, returned to his home in Uzbekistan to take a master's degree in Law at Tashkent State Institute of Law. He's now working as a chief consultant at the National Human Rights Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan and undertaking pre-doctoral research in human rights.**

Sanjarbek remembers the excellent atmosphere and facilities at the University, the supportive academic staff and the politeness of local people. 'The knowledge I gained at Teesside has helped me in my working life today, especially modules in human rights and international law. I also developed the ability to speak English fluently, which is extremely useful', he said.





SEEKING

## desperately



Claire Long and Steven Jones

John Townend and Madeleine Adams

**2007**

**Kitty Grove-Stephensen**, MA Local History, has raised £1312 for Macmillan Cancer Support abselling from the Transporter Bridge in Middlesbrough. If that's not impressive enough, Kitty was 75 years old at the time – the oldest person to that date to have done so. Kitty would love to hear from any old colleagues at [kitty@bloodaxe.co.uk](mailto:kitty@bloodaxe.co.uk)

**Craig Wilson**, BA (Hons) Fine Art, is studying for his Postgraduate Diploma in Fine Art at the Royal Academy Schools in London. He has exhibited works throughout England and the USA. His most recent exhibition was at Newcastle/Gateshead Art-fair, his next is at ACT ART 6 in London in November. Old friends can contact him at [para\\_noir9@hotmail.com](mailto:para_noir9@hotmail.com) or [www.kraig-wilson.blogspot.com](http://www.kraig-wilson.blogspot.com).

**2005**

**Steve Doran**, BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise (Coaching Science) is Head of Sports at John Scottus Secondary School in Dublin. In March this year he was part of the Glenanne hockey team, which won the European Men's Hockey Cup in Paris. He would like to thank the University for the support of the Elite Athlete Bursary Scheme which has enabled him to compete at this high level. Steve's new venture, OneSourceSport, a hockey, rugby and soccer specialist shop, opened in Dublin in August. Anyone wishing to contact him can email [steve@onesourcesports.com](mailto:steve@onesourcesports.com).

**David Gatenby**, MSc Information Technology, works as a Product Manager at Achilles Ltd in Oxford. He would love to hear from old friends at [gingenby@hotmail.com](mailto:gingenby@hotmail.com).

**2002**

**Timothy Guy**, MSc Process Manufacturing Management, now works for Marlow Foods in Billingham as an engineering manager. He would love to hear from old colleagues, in particular friends from his MSc Process Manufacturing Management via [timothy.guy@bopenworld.com](mailto:timothy.guy@bopenworld.com)

**Stephanie Wolsey**, BA (Hons) English married fellow graduate Luke Pawley, BA English, 2003, in August. She would love to hear from old friends at [stefny\\_w@hotmail.com](mailto:stefny_w@hotmail.com).

**Richard Butler**, BSc (Hons) Media Production, recently married Alex Morris, BA (Hons) Youth Studies, 2004. Richard works at the University's School of Arts and Media as a Media Technician and Alex is an anti-bullying co-ordinator for Durham County Council.

**2000**

**Madeleine Adams**, BSc (Hons) Criminology, married **John Townend**, BA Marketing, 2001. She is now a procurement manager with Birmingham City Council and John is a loss adjuster dealing with corporate risk. They would both love to hear from any old friends particularly those in the Students' Union. You can contact them at [maddyadams@hotmail.com](mailto:maddyadams@hotmail.com).

**1998**

**Michelle Lawson (now Patmore)**, BA (Hons) Social Policy, works for the Criminal Justice System as a community liaison and partnerships officer. Any old colleagues can contact her at [michellepatmore1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:michellepatmore1@yahoo.co.uk).

**1997**

**Claire Long**, BA (Hons) Marketing, married **Steven Jones**, Diploma in Management Studies, 1998, in August. Claire works at the University in the Marketing team and Steven is a site engineer for Balfour Beatty.

# REUNION ROUND-UP

**Nicola Deegan**, BSc (Hons) Information Technology, 2001, organised a reunion event last autumn which proved a great success. Everybody really enjoyed themselves, as is evident by the picture! The group, who have been friends since starting at Teesside in 1997, usually meet up once a year. Last year marked the tenth anniversary of their friendship, so they decided to come back to Middlesbrough. They watched the rugby in The Hub (although it will always be The Zoo to them) and then visited some of their old haunts.

If you want to catch up with old classmates, sports team or year group, then get in touch with the Alumni Office. We can put you in touch with your friends, help you to select a venue, recommend hotel accommodation and even provide a tour of the campus.



## Honorary & Professorial Public Lecture Series

Thursday 4 Dec 2008 6.30pm  
**Judge Peter Fox QC**

Senior Circuit Judge and Recorder of Middlesbrough, Judge Fox is an eminent member of the legal profession who has served the community of Teesside for many years.

**Current threats to the independence of the legal profession**

Wednesday 4 Feb 2009 6.30pm  
**Professor Martin Narey**

Now Chief Executive of Barnardos, Professor Narey has had a long and distinguished career with the Prison Service and Home Office.

**Child poverty – a challenge for the UK and a challenge for Teesside**

Wednesday 4 March 2009 6.30pm  
**Professor Simon Hodgson**

Professor of Advanced Materials and Dean of the University's School of Science & Technology.

**Size matters? Engineering materials and performance from the nanometric to the macroscopic**

Wednesday 13 May 2009 6.30pm  
**Professor Cliff Allan**

The University's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Development), Professor Allan's career has included posts at the Higher Education Academy and ActionAid.

**'From "More means different" to "Higher Education at Work": reflections on some key policy shifts in higher education'**

Wednesday 10 June 2009 6.30pm  
**Professor Paul van Schaik**

Professor of Psychology at the University of Teesside, Paul van Schaik is a leading academic in the field of psychological research methods and human-computer interaction.

**The human in human-computer interaction**

Lectures are held in the Centuria Building from 6.30pm - 7.45pm. To book a place contact the Alumni Office or visit [www.tees.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.tees.ac.uk/alumni).



Peter Fox

Martin Narey

Simon Hodgson

Cliff Allan

Paul van Schaik

ON  
**what's**

# Past v Present

**Saturday 22 November 2008**

The 17th annual Past Versus Present Sports Tournament will see teams of graduates battle it out against current students. This year we're hoping even more of you will respond to the challenge and ensure that the Past team retains the Vice-Chancellor's Cup for the fifth year in a row. Sign up for a team or simply come along and cheer them on – all are welcome. The day is rounded off by an evening buffet in the Students' Union and for those with energy to spare a club night in The Hub from 10.00pm – 3.00am.

Sports currently on offer are:

Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Climbing, Cricket, Football, Gaelic Football, Golf, Hockey, Netball, Rugby, Squash and Ten-pin Bowling.

If your sport isn't on the list, let us know. We're open to suggestions. For more information contact the Sports and

Recreation Office on 01642 342267 or email [sport@tees.ac.uk](mailto:sport@tees.ac.uk).

The club night is open to all alumni – whether participating in Past v Present or not. Tickets are £3 in advance or £5 on the door. Advance tickets are available from the Terrace Bar in the Students' Union by calling 01642 382234.



# Celebrating 10 years of Animex

4 - 9 February 2009



**Over the past decade, Animex has become one of the biggest festivals of its kind in the world – bringing the cream of international animation and computer games talent to Teesside.**

From animation legend Ray Harryhausen, whose stop-motion artistry revolutionised a genre, to Pixar's Mark Walsh, who worked on *Finding Nemo* and *Ratatouille*, Animex has brought the best in established and emerging industry talent to Teesside.

Other notable speakers have included Nancy Cartwright, the voice behind Bart

Simpson, and Oscar and Bafta winning Bob Godfrey – creator of *Roobarb and Custard* and *Henry's Cat*.

Plans for the tenth anniversary of the Animex International Festival of Animation & Computer Games are now being drawn up with announcements expected as the event approaches.

Organiser Chris Williams said, 'Once again we've got some big names lined up, and because it's our tenth year, we're being very ambitious. We want to make it a spectacular and memorable occasion for all involved.'

**To find out more and book your place visit [www.animex.net](http://www.animex.net).**



Ian Butchart

## Ian Butchart

**Ian Butchart, Director of Library & Information Services (L&IS), retired at the end of August after 22 years' service.**

Since arriving at what was then Teesside Polytechnic in 1986 as Chief Librarian, he has seen immense changes in technology and the construction of a wonderful new Learning Resource Centre (LRC). He said, 'The LRC has become quite an icon. It was a proud moment to have someone as charismatic as Mo Mowlam open the building in 1998. She charmed everyone.'

His many memories include Teesside making the transition to university status in 1992, seeing the University's building programme get underway and the National Student Survey which placed Teesside as having one of the top four university libraries in the country.

He also recalls one blustery morning in 2005 when severe weather blew part of the LRC roof off. He said, 'Within a week we were open for business, which is a great example of staff going beyond the call of duty'.

Born in Sunderland, Ian spent the first years of his life in Aruba in the West Indies, where his father worked for an oil company. His family returned to Sunderland when he was eight. He is married to Judy, who runs the Graduate Teacher Programme at Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council. They have four sons.

## Su Reid

**Su Reid retired from her role as Director of Higher Education Projects at the University on 31 August 2008.**

Having studied English Literature at Oxford University, Su spent seven years teaching English at the University of Aberdeen, where she met and married her husband George.

She said, 'In 1973 George got a lectureship in sociology at Teesside Polytechnic. Two weeks later Teesside advertised a lectureship in literature in the Department of Humanities and I got that post. For 12 years I was the only woman in the 30-strong Department of Humanities. At first George and I intended to stay at Teesside for only a short time



Su Reid



Richard Lewis

but we had three children quite quickly and decided to build our careers and our family life together here.'

Su became Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer and Head of the English Section. She published books and articles on women's writing, especially Virginia Woolf, and also taught a range of literature and theory. She became Associate Dean in the School of Human Studies and in 1996 was appointed Deputy Director and later Director of what is now the School of Arts & Media.

She said, 'During my time at Teesside I have worked with a wide spectrum of subject areas and colleagues across the University, and this has been helpful over the last four years when, as Director of Higher Education Projects, I have researched a number of projects and proposals for members of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive. The last of these has been the development of a culture strategy, which I hope will be implemented after my retirement. I believe passionately that people need opportunities to become creative and that the University must be a hub where such opportunities are developed.'

## Richard Lewis

**Dr Richard Lewis, Deputy Dean, School of Arts & Media, also retired this August after 34 years' service at the University.**

He joined the then Teesside Polytechnic in September 1974 to lecture in British political history. He subsequently became Head of History, then Deputy Director/Deputy Dean of the School of Arts & Media.

Richard, from Nunthorpe, said, 'In the 34 years that I've worked here I've seen massive changes. In my own field I've seen history emerge as a very strong area of provision, both in terms of its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, but also in terms of its research. And the institution has evolved over the last three decades too, 'from a time when not many people knew of the Polytechnic's existence, to today's University which continues to change the character of the town', he added.

His wife Ruth is also retiring from her job this year as Head of English at Ian Ramsey School in Stockton. Richard and Ruth have two children, Jennie and Daniel, who both live and work in York.

# Dr Raymond Brunskill

by Dr Derek Simpson, Dean, School of Computing



Above: Dr Raymond Brunskill

**Ray spent his early career in the Tees Valley, working for Thorn Electrical, where a number of patents were taken out on his work, and Whessoe Engineering, where he helped to develop some of the first microprocessor applications for both agricultural machinery and shipping. He obtained his MSc by research from Durham University in the 1960s, undertaking a dissertation on the construction of a working core store system.**

Ray joined the then Teesside Polytechnic as a senior lecturer in 1970. He became Head of Department and then Dean of the School of Computing and Mathematics before retiring in 1996. Under Ray's exceptional leadership, the School grew enormously in size, scope and standing. In 1994 Teesside became the only modern university to be awarded an Excellent rating for the quality of computer science education by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

In the 1970s, Ray and two associates founded Alan Puddick Ltd (named after one of his research students). Their projects ranged from developing novel 'tractor board' microprocessor systems, which were used in such practical applications as estimating the water content in potato crops, to a microprocessor-based 'gin pourer',

which Customs and Excise refused to accept, saying it could not be relied on to be accurate.

Outside work, Ray was a very active member of both the British Computer Society (BCS) and the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE). When the BCS introduced its accreditation programme in the 1980s, Ray was an early panel member and joined the BCS Board of Examiners in 1981. He remained a member until 2006. He was also the driving force behind the development of the BTEC Industrial Computing HND curriculum and subsequently became a moderator for the examinations.

The effect of Ray's practical experience was seen most obviously in the continuing professional development courses on microprocessors and real-time systems run under the banner of Infotech International across Europe. At the time, these courses led the field.

Ray was particularly proud of his work at UNESCO where he helped to develop courses in computing in Sri Lanka, Hong Kong and Singapore. His service to the University and the wider computing community was recognised by the University of Teesside in 2002 when it awarded him an honorary Doctorate of Science.

Ray loved his cricket and was delighted when Durham became a county cricket club. He had many interests and passions but his greatest love was for his wife, Mary, and his family. For those fortunate enough to be entertained at Ray's house (and there were a great many), it was always a great social occasion and a tour of his garden and a talk to the llamas over the fence were not to be missed.

A professor colleague from Edinburgh once said of Ray, 'He is one of those people of whom one can truly say he is the salt of the earth. He has always been absolutely straight, always continued to do right by every student and his opinion was always worth listening to, as were his jokes and humorous stories.' Ray is sadly missed by all those who had the pleasure to know and be affected by him. His influence will last for many years to come.

**Ray Brunskill died on 29 August 2007.**

obituary



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