Environment Day at IC

The first Environment Day at the College was held on 14 June. Environment Day was the official launch of the Graduate School of the Environment, set up in November 1994, as the main recommendation of a review of environmental activity at the College, chaired by Sir John Mason, FRS.

The role of the Graduate School is to promote and coordinate the wide-ranging environmental research being carried out across all disciplines at the College.

In his introduction to the talks given by prominent environmental ecologists, the Rector paid tribute to the foresight of Lord Flowers, who set up the Centre for Environmental Technology (ICCET) in 1977. "The Centre now runs what is arguably the best MSc in environmental technology in the UK," said the Rector. The presentations made during the Day reflected the depth and breadth of environmental research at Imperial.

Among the speakers were Professor John Lawless, Centre for Population Biology, who spoke on biodiversity and climate change; Prof Roger Perry, Centre for Environmental Control and Waste Management, who outlined aspects of research into waste management and Dr Shuna Haselkorn-S McCarthy, who described her work on the skin absorption of chemicals.

The Rector summed up the approach to environmental science at Imperial: "Those of us who are genuinely concerned about this issue do have an important responsibility not to oversell and to deliver sober and considered judgments. Until we can argue that it is something of a scary train, we should not allow all sorts of other programs can be hitched."

More than 150 guests had the opportunity to view a new exhibition illustrating the main threats of environmental activity at the College.

A brochure and contact sheet have also been produced and both are available from the GSE Office in the Besier room.

Professor John Woods, Dean of the Graduate School of the Environment, pictured above, left, with Dr Roger Wiley of the Meteorological Office.

Seminar on health and environment held at ICCET

A one-day Symposium on Environment and Health, organised by Professor Iain Thornton for the Centre of Environmental Technology (ICCET), was held at Imperial on Wednesday 7 June.

More than 100 delegates attended from a wide cross section of interests - including research councils, government and industry. "The aim of the meeting was to bring together the main researchers on health and the environment at Imperial and neighbouring institutions, in order to explore links and identify future training and research needs," said Professor John Bridgland, Head of ICCET.

Talks at the Symposium ranged from the assessment of exposure to air pollution, to the toxic effect of precious metals. Dr Karl Venables of the National Heart and Lung Institute, in a lecture on asthma epidemics, told the meeting how dust storms can put asthma sufferers at risk of serious attacks. A service should be set up to warn asthma sufferers when weather conditions could trigger attacks, he said, so they can remain indoors with windows at hand.

Professor Julian Peto said the painting of Cancer research at Surrey guessed that asbestos-related deaths would triple in the next 25 years. In the past, he said, research had focussed on workers in the asbestos industry. Now scientists are beginning wider research on building materials which have been using asbestos in an uncontrolled way.

In the final session of the day, participants from NERAC, the Medical Research Council, the Department of the Environment, the Department of Health, Imperial College and Glaxo Wellcome gave their thoughts on future priorities.

A briefing document of research activities in Environment and Health has been compiled by the Centre directly from submissions sent in by those attending the Symposium. It is planned that a final version with additional entries will be produced and sent to interested parties. Anyone who would like to be on the mailing list or who wishes to put in a submission should contact Diana Patrick-Fox, ICCET Administrator.

IN BRIEF

TV challenge

A team representing Imperial College has been selected to take part in the new series of University Challenge, the popular TV student quiz. The members of the team are: captain Mark Pollen, PhD in biochemistry; Nicholas Bradshaw, PhD in neural systems; En-bao Ang; Jim Totty, PhD in mathematics/physics; and reserve Chris Hardacott, student on Computing Information Technology. The first round matches will be recorded during the summer and the series will be screened in the autumn of this year.

Kendo medal

Mervil Spalding, who works in the Chemical Engineering department, was awarded the bronze medal for the British Kendo (Japanese sword fighting) team, at the 1995 European Championships.

President of statistics

Professor Adrian Smith, Head of the Department of Mathematics, has been elected President of the Royal Statistical Society for a period of two years, from 14 June.

Norburn elected to board

Professor David Norburn, Director of the Management School, has been elected to the Board of Companions of the British Institute of Management.

Treecycler success

The new wastewater recycling scheme is now in operation in the Sheffield Building (IC Reporter issue 2). Called the Treecycler, the system collects all wastewater, including computer paper, newspapers, envelopes and junk mail. The results are similar, with 80-90% of black recycled each week. There are plans to extend the service to other areas of the College later in the year.

City and Guilds fellowship

Professor Igor Aleksandrov, Head of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, has been awarded a Fellowship of the City and Guilds of London Institute.

Double medal win for MRE

Staff in the Department of Mineral Resources Engineering have achieved a unique double by being awarded the John Phillips Medal in 1994 and 1995, by the Mineral Industry Research Organisation (MIRQO).

The medal is awarded for innovation and application of technology which in the opinion of MIRQO most reflects the spirit, imagination and determination of the late Dr John Phillips, in research and development for the benefit of the mineral industry.

The 1994 medal was awarded to Dr Bill Dalladay for his work as part of an international team developing clean technology for the removal of iron from industrial minerals. The 1995 medal has been awarded jointly to Dr John Momborny and Peter Smith for their research on stable water-soluble compounds for the safe disposal of arsenic in the environment.

AWISE launch

The inaugural meeting of the South Kensington branch of the Association for Women in Science and Engineering will be held at the Science Museum on Wednesday 19 July (16.00-19.00 hours) by Anne Barrett, Imperial College Archives on "Huxley and his attitude to women," and by Wendy Sheridan, Science Museum Pictorial Curator. The charge of £2 to both members and non-members includes tea, served in the Feltwell Room, an entrance to the exhibition. Details and tickets from Margie Bell (e-mail l.m.s.bell)
Media mentions

Management School professor to head University of Cambridge business school

Professor Sandra Dawson, Management School, will be leaving Imperial, and becomes director of the Judge Institute of Management Studies, Cambridge University, on 1 October. Sandra has worked at Imperial for over twenty-five years, holding the post of Professor of Organisational Behaviour since 1990. Sandra will be the first woman to head a business school at one of the traditional universities — a fact that has not escaped the notice of the media. Stories have appeared in The Times, The Financial Times and The Daily Telegraph, as well as local and trade press.

"I've been enormously proud and happy to have worked at Imperial," said Sandra. "All other things being equal, I would have expected to complete my career here. It's just that the wonderful opportunity arose of going to Cambridge to be director of the Judge Institute. It is an opportunity which is immensely exciting and could not be passed up."

"Of course I'm sad to be leaving colleagues, and a lot of extremely good work," she continued, "but I think that the work will continue, and relationships with colleagues, and friends that I've made over the years will stand the test of time."

"I've been a good administrator at Imperial, Sandra lists her attempts to relate the work of the Management School to other departments and the manner in which I worked with people in Chemical Engineering and also in construction on matters of occupational health and safety. It was very important to have an integrated approach with management input and engineering input," she said.

Sandra has collaborated in a similar way with the Medical School. "I provided expertise in such areas as management development for doctors, the impact of changes to the Health Service on health service management, and the role of doctors and nurses in the Health Service." In the last three years, she has had the opportunity to pursue what she perceives, as chairman of the Riverside Mental Health NHS Trust, a complex organisation with an income of £22 million last year.

In addition to her academic work, Sandra has also held managerial and administrative positions at IC, from 1986 to 1990, she was College Tutor, with particular responsibility for women's affairs. From 1990 to 1994, she chaired the Imperial College Health and Safety Committee.

Sandra has also been closely involved with the Day Nursery, "I've had three children while I've been here. The nursery was extraordinary important to me in enabling me to continue with my professional life," she said. During the early 1980s she was the parent representative on the Day Nursery Steering Group, and then chairman from 1984 until 1990.

"In addition to her new post," Sandra has also been appointed by the National Endowment for Science, Engineering and Technology.

The view from the tower by Don

Scene: A June day in the Tower Office. In a very long queue to open a new account at the same department store.

"About Dr Simpkins. What will it be this year? A keynote in Khartoum or a plenary in Paduana, what?"

"To tell you the truth Professor Lexington, I regret it's only a poster in Portsmouth. At the Symposium for Interactive Computer Systems, Posh SICK95, to be precise. My bus tickets need collecting."

"A poster in the UK. That's a bit international, anti-Research-Assessment, would you not say?"

"Well, the trouble is, I've had virtually no time to do any research this year. Mind you, I'm not complaining - loved the 120 hours of lectures Imperial is requiring for the 11 projects. But, what with the wife having a baby and having to move house and all, I think it's taken a bit of a dive. Actually I did respond to the invitation to do a plenary in Perth, but they sent the paper back. Said that it's what I said in Paris last year, despite the fact that I put "perspective from one year on" in the title."

"Hmmm - can't say I'm very happy with this state of affairs. Perhaps we should start a series of discussions on the subject of early retirement?"

"What an interesting idea! Would the fact that I'm only 55 not get in the way? Would it also be an embarrassment that I was appointed to a Governor's Lectureship less than a year ago?"

"Oh to you were - don't time get the most of us?"

"I've got my airline tickets to collect now."

"Going anywhere nice Professor Lexington?"

"Actually I turned down the invitation to open the world congress in Washington. Am going to Perugia instead - an amusing poster, but convenient for the house in France you know. Do come and visit, we'll be there for the next six weeks or so ..."

(Apologies to Laurie Taylor)
BOOK REVIEW

The quest for quality
Review by Professor Alan Swanson

The Quest for Quality: Silver Pen's book by Heavenly Education

Norman Goldsmith 1995

IE Education

£15.00 hb £13.99 pb

Silver Goldsmith is known to many in the College for his leadership of the various forms of guidance offered to academic staff to help them in the educational part of their work; there are few who do not admire him for what he has achieved in his early years attended one or more of his workshops. For much of his career here he has contributed to the national literature on higher education, and this book is his latest contribution.

The word 'heavenly' in the subtitle is a deliberate overstatement by the author, who is well aware of the historic meaning of the word and how untruthful it might be in some situations in order to make people think.

In this book, 'heavenly' represents too large a depiction from the origin of a pair of rectangular axes, one that includes the individual and the other from theory to practice. In respect of, in turn, the curriculum, teaching methods, research and college organisation, a position near the origin of the pair of rectangular axes which is desirable from the point of view of one who holds, in the author, that research is worth anything (over and above professional persons should be a primary concerns of people engaged in higher education). Sixteen excursions from the origin have been selected from the Continued on back page

New IC teaching space catalogue

Do you need a room for lectures or a seminar? Do you know which rooms might be suitable? Do you know whom to ask?

As part of the College drive to make effective use of its space resources, the departments on the South Kensington Campus have been collaborating to produce a catalogue of teaching space. This includes 18 rooms, each with a contact name, ranging from the Great Hall to a seminar room with nine.

We all know that the distribution of teaching space between departments is far from fair, for all sorts of explainable historical reasons. But those departments short of space have until now had to rely on sheer knowledge and goodwill to 'borrow' space from other departments, even in theory in all space is a College resource. The year to improve on this situation came with the need to demolish the RCS II building in preparation for the construction next year of the new basic medical sciences building. A mimimal pilot scheme, including information about room bookings, was developed by Peter Cloot (many years ago a senior lecturer, now employed as a part-time consultant to the College) which enabled the departments agreed to locate and negotiate suitable alternatives for the 1995-96 session.

The new catalogue, which has just been issued by Val Store, the Facilities Manager in Estates Division, is only a temporary measure, since it does not yet contain the room booking information which would make it much more effective. However, the aspect of a multi-departmental working party has set up teams led by Alan Vosper (Aesthetics) and Alan MacNaughton (Chemical Engineering) to choose an automated booking system which will not only make the annual departmental change of timetables preparation much easier, but also produce automatically a by-product of the room booking data needed for the central catalogue.

Several departments have experience of such systems, which is being used in a starting point, and the cost of the necessary software will be borne centrally by the College. The intention is to have the automatic system available for use in departments by May 1996, so that effective use of teaching space should become a comparatively painless reality for all.

If you would like to know more about what is going to be available in any of these named above. If you would like a copy of the catalogue, please apply to Val Store on extension 40901.
Harkness Fellowships

Applications for Fellowships for 1996 are invited from men and women with wide and substantial experience in their own professional fields, to enable them and their families to spend up to one year in the USA. Applicants must be British citizens.

For applications forms and further details of appointments and programme contents, send a stamped (36p), addressed envelope measuring 107 x 150 mm to the Harkness Fellowships, 28 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3EG.

Applications forms must be submitted by 16.00 hours, 18 October 1995, for receipt by 1 December 1995. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed in London in January 1996. Fellowships begin their tenure in August 1996.

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