**Open Day at Imperial**

Imperial College's 1995 Open Day took place on Thursday 22 June. Held all over campus, the central focus of the day was a marquee on the Queen's Lawn. Over 1,500 sixth formers attended, many of whom are prospective students for 1996.

Most departments exhibited in the marquee, with by far the greatest contribution coming from the physicists: their five experiments on thermometry and sound in a continuous 'buzz' around the display.

This year, along with the usual guided tours of the departments, there was a visit to the rooms in a hall of residence and two UCAS workshops.

Contacts made between departmental representatives and visiting teachers were considered valuable. In the words of one headmaster, "All the queries I came with have been answered and I know now where to go for advice in the future."

The Open Day is always useful for potential applicants but this year the event was enhanced by good weather and an enthusiastic turn out by all departments.

Open Day was coordinated by the Schools Liaison Office.

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**IN BRIEF**

Appointment for St Mary's Dean

Professor Peter Richards has been appointed Medical Director of Northwick Park and St Mark's NHS Trust. He leaves St Mary's Hospital Medical School this month, after 16 years as Dean and Professor of Medicine.

ITCET lecturer lands top job

Dr Andy Rosenberg, who was the deputy director and lecturer for the Renewable Resources Assessment Group in the Centre for Environmental Technology, has been appointed as the regional director of the National Marine Fisheries Service in the USA, running a budget of $44 million a year.

Dr Rosenberg has the experience and expertise to lead this region during this critical time in the rebuilding of New England's natural marine resources.

Science in Print award

Dr Carl Norman gained a special merit award of £100 for his entry 'Through a Glass Brightly' in this year's Science in Print competition. A research associate in the Centre for Semiconductor Materials, Carl also entered the competition last year and won first prize.

The competition aims to encourage scientists to write for the general public. This year's winning entry by Tim Wheldon, Head of the Radiation Oncology Research Group at Beatson Laboratories, begins, 'Like a serial killer with a regular day-job, an isolated cancer cell too closely resembles the normal cells around it'.

Albertopolis rejected

The £100 million scheme to transform South Kensington into 'Albertopolis' has been rejected by the Department of National Heritage's Millennium Fund as insufficiently 'distinctive'. Projects that have been shortlisted are weighted in favour of environmental and community projects.
OBITUARY

Dean of St Mary's pays tribute to Madeleine Jinkinson

W ith deep sadness St Mary's mourns Madeleine Jinkinson, who died on 26 June. Madeleine was one of the few people with her finger on the pulse of St Mary's. She knew everyone from greatest to smallest, from best to worst, from strongest to weakest. She was convivial, believing that they had a contribution to make. Everyone knew her, either with or without fully realising that she knew more about them than they knew themselves.

Madeleine was down-to-earth, firm, fair and always prepared to listen. People went to talk to her, knowing that what they said would go no further. If she was sometimes prickly it was only through frustration with people who were incompetent, arrogant or unwilling to give just a fraction of the whole-hearted commitment she herself gave.

Madeleine was appointed Administrative Assistant at St Mary's in 1972. In effect, personal assistant (a term which had not been invented then) to the old-style, austere (but very efficient) School Secretary. Her tasks when appointed included supervision of the general office; enquiries; dealing with heads of departments, academic and confidential staff at the Hospital; orders for supplies; advertising for staff; arrangement of selection committees; student accommodation; servicing all the major committees of the School; registration of students; examinations; dealing with confidential matters; and, finally, car parking. Small wonder that she knew her later job of Personnel and Administration Manager back, white, the institution inward and outward, but feared a future in which she believed others would find her irksome, its complexity and sensitivity of her task of breathing continuity, humanity and quiet common sense into the daily life of a medical school which functioned more as a family than an institution.

With great courage she lived with her diagnosis for two years and worked to within ten days of her death. It was characteristic of her attention to detail that she planned a quiet, dignified, respectful smile in her closing days, every detail of her funeral.

References

The view from the tower by Don

6.45 a.m. What’s that racket? Ah, the alarm clock. Smash the off button. I’ve got to turn the thing off last night. Nice to lie in for a change.

10.20 a.m. Twenty minutes late for course planning meeting. Had made sarcastic remark about some scientists’ simultaneous desire for a greater presence within mainstream culture and their dissatisfaction with some of the more striking ways in which science has come to be represented in that culture. Part of the price that science must pay for a more central place within culture is a willingness to tolerate comment and criticism from outside the scientific community.

Aromatherapy warning

The Big Issue and The Evening Standard (3 June) reported the possibility that aromatherapy oils could cause cancer, epilepsy or miscarriages in pregnant women. Dr Sharon Hutchings, St Mary’s Hospital’s head midwife, went on to give a presentation at ICET’s Health and the Environment Symposium. On Environment Day entitled Skin Absorption of Chemicals’, was interviewed. She said: “People say it’s a new fad, that they don’t think themselves their skin will act like a rubber glove. But the shok is not just an intense piece of clingfilm - it’s poison.”

Biochemistry professor receives ROPA award

Professor Gordon Dougan, of the Department of Biochemistry, has been awarded £38,298 over two years by the Medical Research Council under the newly insti- tuted Rising Star Potential Award (ROPA) scheme adopt- ed by the research councils.

The project is entitled “Dominus of tetaus toxins for targeting the central nervous system”.

The scheme focuses specifically on researchers already working closely with UK industry and commerce on basic or strategic research projects.

The researcher can use the funding to carry out separate curiosity-driven research of their own choosing.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

In your issue of 7 June, you ask if Chris Townsend is ICET’s youngest ever professor.

Not by a long way.

When A.A. Hall (later Sir Arnold) was appointed Zahurud Professor of Aviation in 1945 he was 29.

He later went on to become the Royal Aeronautical Establishment and, later, Chairman of Armstrong Siddeley.

Yours faithfully,

G.K. Irving

Retired senior lecturer, Aeronautics

I have also been informed that Holbe Salim, the Nobel Peace prize winner, became a Professor of Mathematics in 1957, at the age of 29.

Ed
MEDICAL MERGER

National Heart and Lung Institute poised to become new Imperial College department

With four weeks to go before the much talked about merger, IC Reporter interviews the deans who run the NHLI

Professor Tim Clark, the Dean of NHLI, and Dr Marion Kimberley, the Administrative Dean.

The National Heart and Lung Institute is a postgraduate medical research institute which joins IC as a part of the new Imperial College. The NHLI's principal objective is to carry out research, development and education in heart and lung medicine. IC Reporter went to see this new Imperial College 'department' and meet the people who run the Institute.

A 15-minute walk from Imperial, the NHLI is just off the Fulham Road, housed in a converted convent which has been extended. Within the building the overall effect is light, modern and airy. Professor Tim Clark, the Dean, and Dr Marion Kimberley, the Administrative Dean, were very friendly and relaxed, happy to talk about their management of the NHLI and the decisions and events leading up to the merger.

"We have this relationship where I am head of the Institute, acting on behalf of my colleagues and doing the best I can for them and trying to make sure they perform well for the Institute," said Tim. "But Marion is the one who has had the toughest ride. I think it is a good combination and we have to work very closely together as a result."

"I see my role as managing rather than administering," commented Marion. "What I am doing in my position is trying to make sure that the institution is financially viable and efficiently run in order to support its academic mission. Sometimes that means things that academic staff want to do have to be constrained, because of the need to keep the place strong in all areas."

Professor Clark has been on the staff of the Royal Brompton Hospital, which is closely associated with the NHLI, since 1970.

He was Dean of UMDS, United Medical and Dental Schools of St George's and St Thomas's, until 1989. In 1989 he joined the NHLI full time to become dean. He commenced work as a physician at the Royal Brompton and his particular academic interest is the treatment of asthma. "My background is very straightforward," he said, "Marion's is more unusual!"

Dr Kimberley is a mathematician who has been within the University of London all her working life. She joined Goldsmiths as an assistant lecturer and stayed there for about 20 years. Eventually became head of the department of mathematics, then dean of science and mathematics. Being dean is a very interesting occupation. It's just as intellectually challenging, in my opinion, as doing research - you have to solve problems." Marion joined the NHLI in 1988. "It was actually asked by somebody I knew at the Brompton Hospital if I would be interested in this job. It was a wonderful change - totally reviving to actually move after being in the same place for so long."

"We have committed our staff to the place and this is a good combination and we have to work very closely together as a result."

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"Not only because it is geographically very close, but because of its excellent scientific environment."

Two academics working at the National Heart and Lung Institute describe their research to Carrie Golus. Dr Stephen Durham, a respiratory clinician, seeks to alleviate hay fever...

For people suffering from hay fever - the most common type of hay fever - summertime can be miserable. In the most severe cases, sufferers are forced to remain indoors with windows and doors shut. "It's something that you tend to be trivalised unless you happen to suffer from it," says Dr Stephen Durham, based in the Department of Allergy and Clinical Immunology. Patients are often extremely well informed if they happen to be a food packer, or a telephone, or a singer, it's not pleasant to have constant symptoms." 90 per cent of summer hay fever sufferers can be treated either with antihistamine pills or nasal sprays. However, for a minority of suffers these treatments don't work. Stephen is investigating another method of treatment: injecting patients with grass pollen protein to make them immune to the allergen.

Results of the immunotherapy are encouraging. Patients have shown decreased sensitivity to grass pollen with treatment, for over four years. Now Stephen is trying to determine if patients must continue to have injections, or if the effect is permanent. If so, this would be a definite improvement over tablets and sprays, which have some fairly obvious side effects.

He hopes the research will advance the understanding of allergy and asthma. Says Stephen: "Hay fever is a very good model, because it's a pure form of allergies, for us to explore. Patients suffer most of the year, then during the grass pollen season they develop symptoms. You can study that under very controlled conditions."

In collaboration with Professor Barry Kay, Stephen is also investigating the mechanism of immunotherapy. In future, the research could suggest treatments for more severe diseases, such as food allergies or asthma. Stephen's group has recently been awarded a National Asthma Campaign grant to extend the research to look at the effects of immunotherapy withdrawal.

...and Professor Alan Williams, a scientist in the Department of Cardiac Medicine, investigates structure and function in the heart.

One of the major questions of basic cardiac function is, how does the electrical activity of the heart link to the mechanical activity? Alan Williams, Professor in Membrane Biophysics, is researching one particular aspect of this question: how the calcium involved in the muscle contraction of the heart is regulated.

Muscle contraction - whether it is in a skeletal muscle or in the heart - is controlled by the calcium level in cells. These calcium ions are released from an intracellular membrane network. Alan's research concerns one particular protein that acts as an 'ion channel' - a pathway for the release of calcium.

This has been involved in discussions with Imperial College for nearly a year now, and Marion describes the College as welcoming and the people easy to work with. "It also has a very diversified model which makes it easier for other institutions to join and gradually become part of the College without feeling too threatened."

"People at the NHLI have thought for many years now that using Imperial College was the obvious thing to do," added Tim. "Not only because it is geographically very close, but because of its excellent scientific environment."
Three revolution’ offers opportunities

A report by Dr Anthony Cox examines Japan’s reassessment of its R&D policy and the implications for UK researchers.

Amongst industrialisation, there is concern that if the present trends continue Japan will lose its technological advantage. One prerequisite for the new creative culture called for is to match the USA, France and Germany. The quality of education in Japan is as inadequate. Limited research partners with universities and industries are a relatively unexploited source of ideas for Japanese industry, being largely a resource of exploitable technology. Industry’s contacts with the universities are primarily the result of a 60s graduate intake.

The universities ethos by which the academic economy is an obstacle to link with industry (although professors at the private universities have more freedom to work with industry than their counterparts in the national universities) the Ministry of Education had preferred to form associations with American and European institutions. However, the quality of Japanese research is highest and universities are changing closer relationships with industry as is in sight.

Japan’s R&D policy changes

MITI is opening up its domestic programmes to foreign participation and by the mid-1980s, MITI will be used by foreign firms for the development of the new Japanese technology, a way to get the advanced countries’ expertise and to support the idea of international research programme with as in 1985, the government had pasted the national research plan

The ISFP, which includes the major technologies for future industry, has been enlarged to include plants on non-technical science and technology. The main subjects of the ISFP Programme is the development of environmentally friendly technology for light industries in the future. These collaborations have highlighted the benefits of working with British universities and now other Japanese companies are looking to build partnerships with British institutions. Often these relationships are established in manufacturing and R&D facilities or strengthening existing investments in the UK. The Japanese seek to ride their modest reputation for original ideas. By recruiting a talented cadre of British researchers, MITI has managed to raise their reputation.

Dr Anthony Cox, an ex-student of Imperial College, is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Technology. He will be the main speaker at the seminars on Japan’s research and development competitiveness, to be held on 18 July. For more information, contact Suzanne Weisheit-Smith at 46580.

Weekly budget

7, 12, 19 July Courses for academic and research staff

Topics include course development for women academics. No charge. For further information ring extension 45520.

Thursday 6 July Course to develop personal effec- tiveness and management skills

Introduction to Imperial College. Morning course. No charge. For further information ring extension 45521.

Friday 7 July Course to develop personal effec- tiveness and management skills

Preparing for retirement. No charge. For further information ring extension 45521.

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