

A new Imperial College School of Medicine

Imperial College is poised to become one of the largest and most important providers of medical education and research.

Just before Christmas, the governing bodies of the College, the Royal Postgraduate Medical School (RPMS) and the Charing Cross and Westminster Medical School (CXWMS) agreed, in principle, to merge. Earlier in the year the National Heart and Lung Institute (NHLI) agreed in principle to merge with the College and has been affiliated with IC since last October, with the intention to merge from this coming August.

RPMS is based at the Hammersmith Hospital, CXWMS is at the Charing Cross and Chelsea Hospitals and NHLI is located at the Royal Brompton Hospital.

The intention is to form a single, unified School, integrated within itself and the rest of College. The new School will be about a quarter of the College in terms of student numbers and about half in terms of staff, finance and research.

Rodney Eastwood, Deputy Managing Director and coordinator for IC in the merger discussions, spoke of the present situation and the plans for the future: "The details have to be worked out, but all the mergers

should be completed by 1997 or 1998. We are also talking to the Institute of Cancer Research (ICR), located at the Royal Marsden Hospital, to see if they could also be a part of the new Imperial College School of Medicine.

"There will be exciting prospects for medical education and research, with interactions between medicine, basic science, engineering and management adding strength to the whole enterprise. We should be able to attract the very best staff to work in this milieu."

New building

As a condition for the scheme to proceed, the College has made it clear to Government that, for educational reasons, there will need to be provided a basic medical sciences building on the South Kensington campus. This will house medical students for a total of about three years of their course. The existing pre-clinical departments at St Mary's and CXWMS will move into this building, which will be located between Chemistry and RCS I, and which is expected to be ready for occupation by October 1998. Sir Norman Foster has been appointed as the architect,

Turn to page two



Lord Bramall representing HM The Queen presented the 1994 Queen's Award for Export Achievement to the Rector on 2 February at 170 Queen's Gate. The Chairman, Rt Hon Sir Frank Cooper is also pictured. The College won this second Award for a 40 per cent increase in overseas earnings, derived from overseas student fees, research contracts and grants.

Insurance claim met in full

The College has recently received a full settlement from its insurers following a claim under its Employee Fidelity Policy.

This claim arose from a very serious shortfall of cash and bank deposits which was discovered in August of last year and resulted in the dismissal of the Medical School cashier and subsequent police involvement.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England has been kept fully informed throughout and is fully supportive of the remedial actions taken by the College.

A major independent firm of accountants has been commissioned by the Audit Committee to examine the circumstances which led to the occurrence and to review the current procedures across the College.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

Governors' lecturers join Imperial

Dr Brian Robertson takes up his new lectureship in the Department of Biochemistry.

Brian is a neurophysiologist, interested in the biophysics and pharmacology of potassium channels. He will complement Professor Oliver Dolly's well-established research in molecular neurobiology, particularly the oligomeric and subunit structures

of potassium channel subtypes from the brain.

Brian, a Scot, graduated from the University of Aberdeen, then went to the Australian National University where he obtained his PhD in neurophysiology.

After two years of postdoctoral research at the Sandoz Institute for Medical Research in London he joined Wyeth Research (UK) Ltd.

A specialist in patch-clamp techniques, he has acquired an international reputation for studies on the biophysical properties of neuronal cation channels.

Dr Kerry Gallagher joins the Department of Geology.

He graduated with a Geology degree from the University of Nottingham in 1981 and went on to do an MSc in Geophysics at the University of Durham.

At the Australian National University Kerry gained his PhD on the subsidence history and thermal state of the Eromanga and Cooper basins in Australia.

He worked as a Research Fellow with a Fission Track Group at La Trobe University, Melbourne, The Open University and University College London until 1993.

Kerry joins IC from Kingston University where he was a Research Lecturer and Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Earth Sciences.



Dr Brian Robertson



Dr Kerry Gallagher

IN BRIEF

170 Queen's Gate refurbished

Refurbishing the basement of 170 Queen's Gate has enabled the provision of additional accommodation for academic visitors. The flat has initially been let to an academic visitor from the University of Central Florida and his family.

Sherfield security

Sherfield security control is currently undergoing a face lift to provide space for new security alarm equipment and consoles. On completion it will also provide an enhanced reception area for visitors and guests to the College.

MRE renamed

Earth Resources Engineering is to be the new name for MRE. Professor John Woods, Head of the Department, says this title "reflects the broader range of interests covered by the Department's research and teaching." The name comes into effect from 1 October this year.

Chairman yields

Chairman of the Governing Body, Sir Frank Cooper, is expected to stay in office for at least one more year. Sir Frank, Chairman since 1988, yielded to representations from his colleagues and allowed his name to be put forward to the Privy Council to extend his appointment. A search committee has been formed to identify a possible successor. Suggestions are welcomed.

Fellowship

Professor Anthony Kinloch (Mechanical Engineering) has been selected as a Robert L. Patrick Fellow of the Adhesion Society, Inc.

Prize

Professor Michael Hassell has been awarded the Weldon Prize for 1994, by the University of Oxford for his outstanding contributions to biomathematics.

IC novelist

Mark Lee, a former student of the Department of Materials, won the 1993 Stafford Morgan Prize for best first novel. *Exquisite Specimens* is a tale of scientific fraud set in London: it has been praised by critics as an 'hilarious account of student campus life in the nineties'.

Excellent rating boosts morale

The quality of teaching in the Department of Geology has been declared excellent following a visit from the HEFCE assessment team.

"I am most pleased because of the effect success in such an exercise has on morale," said Michael Worthington, Head of Geology. "We are all acutely aware that the College simply expects excellence, which is just one of the pressures associated with working in a top quality institution. So relief is probably the dominant emotion."

The other College departments to achieve this rating so far are Chemistry, Computing and Management.

In April HEFCE are introducing a revised method of assessment, whereby all academic departments in each subject will be visited. Chemical Engineering will be the first IC department assessed using the new method.

Media mentions

Cystic fibrosis cure?

St Mary's Hospital Medical School doctors have been involved in administering healthy genes tests to cystic fibrosis sufferers. This breakthrough in the search for a cure was reported in the *Daily Mail* on 31 December.

First place for IC Chemical Engineers

An article entitled 'Imperial is untouchable' appeared in *The Times Higher Education Supplement* (6 January), reporting on a US survey into the quality of chemical engineering departments in the UK. It stated that the Department of Chemical Engineering and Chemical Technology at IC has remained in the top position for the last three decades.

Merger shock waves

The Independent (23 January) ran an article on the medical merger plans headlined 'London medical schools in £60m hi-tech merger'. Professor Peter Richards, Dean of St Mary's Hospital Medical School, told the paper: "The traditional loyalties to individual medical schools will inevitably decline. There will be an institutional ethos cost and the merger will cause shock waves at Imperial College, but on balance there is enormous potential."

Hidden expedition broadcast

A half-hour radio programme recorded by IC students will be broadcast on BBC Radio 4. The programme documents the Imperial College *Hidden Garhwal Expedition* which visited a little-explored area of the Indian Himalaya last summer. The expedition carried out an environmental impact assessment and made three first ascents of mountains in the region. The programme will be broadcast on 28 February at 10.00 and 5th March at 17.00.

Prize for IC student

Physics student Karen Yates was a runner-up in *The Daily Telegraph* Young Science Writer of the Year competition. Karen won £100 and a year's subscription to the magazines *New Scientist* and *Nature* for her 750-word essay 'Dark Matter of the Universe'.

Business stress

Professor Sue Birley (Management School) spoke to BBC Radio GLR about her recent research into the stress caused by owning a business. The report was also covered by *The Guardian* and *Daily Mail*.

Jubilee tube safety

A team from Imperial College, including Professor John Burland (Civil Engineering) are looking into tunnelling safety on the Jubilee line extension. This story caught the attention of the press on 16 January when it was reported on BBC's Breakfast News, Kilroy and BBC Radio GLR.

If you have any interesting research you would like publicised please contact the Press Office on extension 46701.

Medical school (continued)



Model showing proposed site of basic medical sciences building, between the existing Chemistry building and RCS I.

Continued from front page

so Rodney Eastwood anticipates "a building of some distinction."

Integrated teaching

Rodney Eastwood explained the concepts behind the integrated pre-clinical teaching at South Kensington. "Medical students will follow a new curriculum which will take advantage of the strength of science, engineering and management departments on the South Kensington campus. We can expect some medical options for scientists and engineers too. About the only thing that is certain for doctors practising in the next century is that the technology, techniques, procedures and resources they will use will be different from that used, or even known about, today. Their education must equip them to meet this challenge."

Campus changes

These plans have implications for other buildings and departments at South Kensington. "The opportunity

will be taken of moving the Department of Biology from its existing ill-fitting accommodation to the new building," said Rodney Eastwood. The Departments of Basic Medical Sciences, Biology, Chemistry and Biochemistry will create "an intellectual complex of international stature".

Rodney Eastwood continued, "Beit will be converted to student residences, a much better use for the building, and will provide enough additional student rooms to cope with the increased numbers. Central Libraries will be extended upwards with a medical floor and, with separate access, a lecture theatre. With Read and Pippard in Sheffield this will form a small group of central theatres."

Funding

The building project depends on sufficient funds being provided for the College to make a decision about whether to proceed with the overall scheme. Rodney Eastwood expects to know about the funding before Easter.

School	No. of students (FTE)	No. of academic staff (FTE)	Research rating
St Mary's	764	157.9	3.0
CXWMS	884	168.5	2.73
NHLI	112	78.7	4.2
RPMS	277	158.4	5.0
ICR	140	79.7	4.4

Student numbers are for 1993-94; academic staff are those returned as research active in the 1992 Research Assessment Exercise from which the research rating is derived.

The view from the tower by Don

"The Queen's Tower has one major distinguishing feature: from the top, one can get a nice superior perspective on Sheffield. Just in case anyone should think that *IC Reporter* is yet another organ which Sheffield has dreamt up to keep the average Don in check, this is the average Don's revenge.

While medics are merging, Bennis are blustering and the Rector is rectifying, the daily chores of the average Don still need to be done. Lectures have to be perfect or the LEQs will give us sleepless nights. How can it be that six students found me inaudible when the other 36 thought I was shouting too much? Who is it that consistently marks every sheet as VP?

And then there is the Research Assessment Exercise. Everyone in the hierarchy is telling me to publish in the best journals and bring in lots of money in the next few weeks. Has the fact that you can only publish if you've done some sensible research slipped people's minds? Research needs time and money. The powers that be seem determined to deprive the average Don of both. So RAE = Rush And (try not to) Expire. We are told to regroup so as to achieve maximum strategic advantage. I'll do my best although having one or two good ideas may be more effective than regrouping in the long run. Will the old days of

doing things because they were interesting ever come back? Answers on a postcard please! So am I excellent or am I excellent? I am excellent we are excellent but they are not. These are the grammatical rules of the day. Market forces they call it. Research into regrouping rules OK?

But enough of the pessimistic air. There have been good things around. I thought that Ernst Gombrich's performance at the Colin Cherry Memorial Lecture was astounding [see page three]. Not much perambulation but the mental acrobatics on the subject of art and surprise were breathtaking. Cabaret: another good thing. You missed it? Be sure to support stage and music in the future - they are some of IC's other signs of excellence, and means of relaxation.

A Don's life would not be complete without a bit of gossip and irritation. The gossip: on page 12 of the annual accounts there are figures showing that some highly paid individuals operate in the College. Who are they? Will there be a media hunt like that which found the £18 million lottery winner? It is sure, however, that the average Don is not in the elite group so whatever the answer is, it's not very interesting. The irritations? Well, why not write to, or email, Don about them?"

You can reach Don via email to vbrowning@ic.ac.uk

New Graduate School of the Environment

The Office of Imperial College's new Graduate School of the Environment (GSE) is now open.

It is the focal point for information relating to environmental studies at Imperial; so aims to provide information for the departments and centres within the College, outside organisations and visitors to the School. A new database will be set up to provide on-line information to network users.

Umbrella

As many of the College's departments and centres are involved in environment related teaching and research the School's role will be to act as an umbrella for these activities and to develop an overall strategy for environmental studies at Imperial.

Staff appointments

Janice Hanks, the GSE Administrator, explained, "The GSE will offer an exciting opportunity for the College to establish itself further as an international centre for excellence in environmental teaching and research". Janice joins the College from The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants where she was Research Manager. The first Dean of the School is Professor John Woods. An ex-student of the College himself, Professor Woods is also Head of the Department of Mineral Resources Engineering.



Janice Hanks, Administrator for the Graduate School of the Environment

Public opening

The public opening of the GSE is planned for June 1995. It is the first Graduate School at Imperial College and its creation reflects the College's commitment to environmental science and technology.

Office location

The GSE Office is situated in room B348 of the Bessemer Building, level with the ground floor of the Royal School of Mines. The office extension number is 47460. Visitors to the GSE Office are most welcome.

REVIEWS

'An Art Historian's Debt to Colin Cherry'

Ernst Gombrich

Introduction by Professor Bob Spence and review by Carrie Golus

Colin Cherry, a man of wide scholarship and deep intellect, was Professor of Telecommunication in the Department of Electrical Engineering.

He made profound contributions to fields as diverse as electrical circuit theory, psychology and the social effects of communication. He was among the first to identify the emerging field of information theory and to point out that the human being is an integral part of a communication and should be studied for that reason. Following his untimely death in 1979 it was proposed that an annual memorial lecture should be presented to commemorate his

life and work. Cherry interpreted 'communication' in its widest sense, and this is reflected in the choice of speakers.

The first two speakers were technical directors of UK and US telecommunication companies. Later speakers included Richard Gregory, author of the classic *Eye and Brain*; Nicholas Negroponte, Director of MIT's hugely successful and stimulating Media Lab; and, presenting the latest 'Cherry Lecture,' the eminent art historian Professor Sir Ernst Gombrich OM. The lectures are organised by Professor Spence of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering and take place approximately at yearly intervals.

An Art Historian's Debt to Colin Cherry: a review.

In the abstract, it is difficult to imagine how a professor of telecommunication could influence the work of an art historian.

The fact that the professor in question was Colin Cherry, and the art historian is Sir Ernst Gombrich, one of Britain's most distinguished theorists of art, explains a great deal. In their insistence on breaking down the boundaries between academic disciplines, both men were decades ahead of their time.

During his lecture on Tuesday 24 January, Gombrich described how Cherry's theories of communication inspired him to think about art in a new way. After all, art, like the telephone, is a medium for one person to communicate with another person.

This does not mean that art is made of a combination of easily deciphered symbols, however. As Gombrich explained, "Symbols do not convey information as railway trucks carry coal" - a point Cherry made in *On Human Communication*. For example, Gombrich continued, the colour red in itself has no universal meaning: think of the red of a child's balloon, a traffic light, a bank statement. The person who is perceiving the colour must choose from a range of possible meanings.

Gombrich also borrowed the concept of 'redundancy' from

Cherry: the idea that in speech, very little is essential to convey the basic message. "Perhaps I understood this idea so well because for six long years of war I received foreign radio transmissions at the BBC," said Gombrich. Just as speech depends on redundancy and convention, so does art. Any gap in a work of art can be filled in by what we expect to be there - as an archaeologist might reconstruct a broken jug.

"Genres of art depend on this principle of expectation," Gombrich continued. "Each style looks natural in its own context." To the ancient Egyptians, the human form drawn in flat profile probably looked natural; it only appears unnatural in the context of later Greek sculpture. Each generation of artists surpasses the expectations of the previous generation, by finding new artistic possibilities. Rembrandt and Picasso are prime examples of painters who created art that no one had previously thought possible.

In conclusion, Gombrich brought up a slide of an abstract painting, which seemed to violate all his earlier theories of pattern in communication, conventions, and redundancy. "This brings us to a conundrum," Gombrich said. "If the unexpected is the expected, what are we not to expect?" Doubtless more than a few practising artists have lost sleep over this question.

Rector discourages secrecy

Members of the Board of Studies should communicate better to departmental colleagues what happens in the meetings, Rector Sir Ronald Oxburgh said last Wednesday.

"People have muttered to me that they don't know what goes on at the Board of Studies, and this astonished me," the Rector told the group. He urged members of the Board - which includes professors as well as elected departmental representatives - to spread the word about issues affecting their colleagues.

The Board of Studies' papers are not confidential, the Rector continued, but are actually held in departmental libraries. The Rector stressed that he would like to encourage interested parties to consult the papers, and communicate their views to their departmental representatives.

In an informal poll of the College, it was clear that non-members rarely consulted the

Continued on back page

Tony Benn

Alison Short reviews

The Rt Hon Tony Benn addressed ICU's Labour Club on 1 February.

In a witty and impassioned speech Benn chose to ignore the lecturn and sit casually on the front bench whilst delivering a speech which encapsulated his own particular brand of hard-line socialism. Condemning modern society as being conned by the propaganda machine of the media and not standing up for its rights, Benn suggested that activism was the key to social change.

His personal reservations on the European Union lay in transferring power to a non-elected body. Benn's choice would be to create a 'treaty of London' which would harmonise all European countries, not just those currently involved, by democratic consent.

Whilst condemning government, Benn attacked the Labour party for offering no real alternative. Mentioning that he was at loggerheads with David Blunkett, Shadow Education Secretary over a proposal to introduce a graduate tax, Benn quipped "I believe in life-long education - we should raise the school-leaving age to 95".



The Rt Hon David Hunt, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Minister of Public Service and Science, with the Rector and Professor Richard Kitney at the Bagrit Centre for Biological and Medical Systems on 1 February.

Hail and Farewell

Eric Stables

"The last issue of *Network* was distributed in May last year. Several readers have been kind enough to ask when the next issue was coming out and to say that they actually missed reading the paper.

The fact is that after seven enjoyable years, with the inevitable highs and lows, both editor and publication were starting to run out of steam. It had become more than apparent that the College needed a newspaper which could appear at frequent and regular intervals, which in turn meant having an editor who was able to devote more time to the job than I could.

As I did not take a proper leave of *Network* readers and contributors in May, I am grateful for the chance to do so now, belatedly but with affectionate memories.

The *Reporter* is starting life at a time in Imperial College's evolution when things are happening, or are about to happen, which will profoundly affect the life and work of many members of staff. A two-way flow of information and comment will be vital if the metamorphosis is to take place as we would all wish.

For a campus newspaper to be more than a sheet of bulletins emanating from the Administration, its editor has to have genuine freedom of control over content and style. I think *Network* was quite rare among such publications in having an academic editor with full powers, and in being set up and distributed almost as far away from 'Sherfield' in body and in spirit as it is possible to get.

Although the *Reporter's* editor will work in Sherfield she will be able to draw on the advice and help of an editorial board, all of whose members are determined that it shall not become a bland official sheet, describing what one might call 'the view from Level 5' (though I'm sure it's a most interesting view).

There is no point in controversy for controversy's sake. But as well as knowing what's going on around us, we need healthy debate and comment and for this the cooperation of readers and correspondents in departments is essential.

If I could be the editor's Fairy Godmother, I would confer on her the power to extract long-promised (and well-written) copy from the minds of would-be contributors without it having to pass physically through their word processors. A sort of psychic email.

Victoria, may you get as much pleasure, friendship and satisfaction from your paper as I did from mine. You can take strength from the knowledge that you set out with the wholehearted support and good wishes of all your readers."

Rector's comment

Sir Ronald Oxburgh outlines newspaper's aims

"I am delighted to have this opportunity of contributing to this first issue of *IC Reporter*. Since arriving at the College eighteen months ago I have felt that there was gap in College life that I hope the *Reporter* will help to meet.

It seems wrong to me that the first that many members of the College may know of some major achievement or event in the life of the College is when they read about it in a national newspaper. If there are important things happening in College, I think that IC staff could reasonably expect to hear about them first.

Second, it is often hard to find out sufficiently far in advance about future events in the College. There is a great deal going on. I suspect that I am not the only one who only after the event, or worse, shortly before the event but too late to do anything about it, discovers some seminar or lecture that they would really like to have attended. For that reason I hope that as many College events as possible can be publicised well in advance on the Diary page of the *Reporter*.

Finally, there seems to me that we have a real need for a forum where members of the College can raise issues of general interest by writing short articles and generate debate through correspondence. Perhaps I'm making a rod for my own back here!

The *Reporter* will therefore encompass the functions of *Network* - over which Eric Stables laboured long and hard, all too often without much help. *Network* will therefore no longer appear and I am sure that I speak for everyone in the College community in expressing our gratitude to Eric for his major contribution to communications within the College and all his hard work over the years. Fortunately we shall still have the benefit of Eric's experience as a member of the *Reporter* Editorial Board which is chaired by Igor Aleksander.

By appearing fortnightly during term and, for the time being, less often during vacation, the *Reporter* will have an immediacy that was not possible for *Network*.

So, the *Reporter* is a new experiment; let's all see if we can make it work!"

D I A R Y

February

DEPARTMENTAL EVENTS

Wednesday 15 February
St Mary's Hospital Medical School VI Form Conference
Programme for prospective students from 10.00 to 16.00. Further information from the Medical School.

Friday 17 February
Department of Geology Open Day
Prospective applicants for MSc Petroleum Geoscience with major options in geology and geophysics are invited to meet staff and students in an informal setting. Room 3.39/3.40 from 11.00 to 17.00. Refreshments served 12.00-14.00.

LECTURES

Wednesday 15 February
Inaugural lecture
'Deafness and Dystrophin - Mouse Models for Human Disease'.
Stephen Brown, Professor of Genetics. To be held in the Cockburn Lecture Theatre at 17.00.

Wednesday 22 February
Inaugural lecture
'Alive, but not kicking: Mysteries

and Mechanisms of General Anaesthesia'.
Nick Franks, Professor of Biophysics. To be held in the Blackett Laboratory Theatre 1 at 17.30.

Thursday 23 February
City & Guilds Centennial Lecture 'Adhesives in Engineering'.
Professor Anthony Kinloch (Department of Mechanical Engineering). To be held in the Clore Lecture Theatre at 18.00.

MEDICAL

Thursday 23 February
Stop smoking group
Held weekly for five weeks from 12.15 to 13.15. Further information from Margaret Reddoch at the Health Centre, extension 49375.

MUSIC & HUMANITIES

Wednesday 15 February
Art presentation
Josh Kirby (illustrator of Terry Pratchett's novels) presents and discusses his work. To be held in the Conference Room, Central Libraries Level 2 at 17.30. Admission free, all welcome. Further details from Dr Janet Smith, extension 48812.

March

COLLEGE EVENTS

Friday 10 March
St Mary's Gazette
Deadline for copy. Please send your contributions to Patricia Dymond at the Medical School.

Friday 17 March
The launch of *National Science Week 1995* will be held in Prince's Gardens. Further information from Melanie Thody, Schools Liaison Office, extension 58042/3.

17 - 18 March
BAYS DAY
Further information from Melanie Thody, Schools Liaison Office, extension 58042/3.

DEPARTMENTAL EVENTS

Tuesday 14 March
Management School Alumni Association AGM
To be held in Room 202, Management School at 18.30. Further details from Helen Frewer, extension 49135.

Wednesday 22 March
Wellcome Research Centre Symposium - 'From Epidemiology to Molecular Biology, Five Years

of the Wellcome Research Centre for Parasitic Infections'. The symposium will take place in the Clore Lecture Theatre from 10.30 to 17.45.

27-29 March
Interdisciplinary meeting 'Structural Geology in Reservoir Characterisation and Field Development'.
Further information available from Professor Coward, extension 46460.

29 - 31 March
Biology 2000 - a special series of lectures, demonstrations and visits designed for first year A level biology students. Organised by the Department of Biology with support from ZENECA PLC. Further information from Dr Ava Yeo, extension 45375.

LECTURES

Thursday 16 March
Eighth Schrödinger Lecture
'Should Science Studies be X-rated? Revisiting the Pasteur Case on the Centenary of his Death'.
Professor Bruno Latour. To be held in the Great Hall, Sherfield Building at 17.30.

MUSIC & HUMANITIES

Friday 10 March
Imperial College Symphony
Elgar's Violin Concerto.
Britten Sinfonia da Requiem.
Ravel Daphnis and Chloe Suite No.2.
Conductor: Richard Dickins.
Soloist: Madeleine Mitchell.
To be held in the Great Hall at 20.00. Ticket price: £2 (in advance) or £2.50 (at the door) for students; £5 for non-students. Available from members of the Orchestra or room 440 Mechanical Engineering.

Friday 17 March
Imperial College Choir
Bach Mass in B Minor.
Conductor: Eric Brown.
To be held in the Great Hall at 20.00. Ticket price: £2.50 for students; £5 for non-students. Available from members of the Choir or at the door.

April

CONFERENCES

20 - 21 April
T.H. Huxley: Victorian Science and Culture. To be held in the Huxley Building. Booking forms available from Dr David Edgerton, extension 49351.

Continued from page three

Secrecy

papers or minutes. John Oakeshott, Departmental Administrator for Electrical and Electronic Engineering, said that he couldn't recall anyone asking to look at the minutes. "Those on the Board - Igor Aleksander, John Cozens, and Richard Clarke - are fairly good at communicating essential information to people in the department," he said. Not everyone is convinced that the minutes are useful. Dr Chris Phillips, a lecturer in the Department of Physics, has had the minutes circulated to him in the past. "Every time I got the mail shot, I thought there had been a mistake," he said. "It meant absolutely nothing to me. What I would like is if someone could

predigest the minutes, and produce a one-page handout of the major decisions."

Students also seem to be ignorant of the Board's functions and activities. "I've heard of it, but I don't know what it is," said Philip Wickens, a postgraduate in the Department of Biology. He thought this was probably typical of the student body as a whole. "I would say more people have not heard of it than have heard of it." The Board includes seven student members.

Among the issues discussed at Wednesday's meeting were the recent teaching quality evaluation in the Department of Geology, the timing of the MPhil to PhD transfer examination, and the fact that not all departments would have their own lecture theatres in future.

San Francisco to host alumni weekend

Plans are well advanced for a second alumni weekend programme, to take place in San Francisco, 8-10 September this year.

Last September IC held its first weekend gathering for alumni in Washington DC. Over 80 senior alumni and their partners attended the programme which opened with a reception hosted by The British Ambassador and Lady Renwick. A seminar 'New technologies and life in the 21st century' was introduced by the Rector.

More than 100 alumni are expected to attend the September programme. Distinguished alumni and academics will lecture on biomedical, environmental and management subjects. One or more of the presentations will be topical - for instance, Imperial College has acknowledged expertise on earthquake engineering.

Any members of staff who anticipate being in the San Francisco area around 8-10 September are invited to contact Clive Oakley on 46125.

Balloons, bubbles and boomerangs

March 17 sees the launch of the 1995 National Science and Engineering Week, SET95, by the Minister of Public Service and Science, Rt Hon David Hunt MP. The official launch will take place in Prince's Gardens where the Technology at Work exhibition will be staged.

Thousands of young people are expected to attend the many hands-on events based at Imperial College and the Science Museum for BAYS DAY on Friday and Saturday, March 17 and 18. BAYS DAY is staged annually by the British Association for the Advancement of Science for Young Scientists.

There will be a balloon launch on the Queen's Lawn by Helen Sharman, the UK's first female astronaut, on Friday afternoon at which 1,000 distinctive silver balloons will be released by young participants.

National Science and Engineering Week was launched last year by the government in an effort to stimulate more sustained interest in science and engineering amongst young people.

For more information please contact the Schools Liaison Office on 58042/3.

Are you going to Japan?

South Kensington Kai, the informal College alumni association in Tokyo, is anxious to raise the profile of IC in Japan and promote research collaboration between the College and Japanese industry.

The association has a number of members in influential positions in Japanese industry and government.

IC Forum

The group is keen to organise a programme of talks at three- to four-month intervals in Tokyo. Entitled IC Forum, the talks would be given by College members visiting Japan. The Rector said, "It should be possible to cover any additional costs incurred through staying on a day or so longer than otherwise".

Research funds

"This seems to me to be a very good and relatively painless way of promoting the College and possibly finding new sources of research funds," he continued.

"As many of you know we have several alumni working for the British Council in Tokyo and Tony Cox, the Science Counsellor at the Embassy is also an alumnus. They are very supportive of an initiative of this kind and will help to make it work."

If you do have a Japanese trip planned within the next six to nine months and would be willing to give a talk on your work, please drop a note or email to g.willis@ic.ac.uk or telephone her on 071-594 6133, extension 46133.

ANNUAL REVIEW

Copies of the *Annual Review 1993-94* are now available from the Press and Public Relations Office, room 553, Sherfield Building. Extension 46704.

BOOK REVIEWS

Books written by staff members will be reviewed by *IC Reporter*. If you would like your book reviewed please contact Victoria Browning on extension 46697.

IC Reporter

IC Reporter will be published fortnightly during term time. Contributions for the next issue should be received by **Tuesday 21 February**. These can be sent via email (v.browning) or internal post (Rm 546b, Sherfield Building). Extension 46697. Fax 071-594 6700. Please note the editor reserves the right to cut or amend the articles as necessary.

Information correct at time of going to press.