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STUDENT COMMENT AND NEWS

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Week 5, Lent Term, Tuesday February 10, 2009

University must engage with LUSU, Court told

- LUSU president makes impassioned plea for more collaboration and compromise
- Vice-Chancellor eager for working party on colleges future to be established
- Other University officers still stifling discussion

by Dan Hogan
Editor

UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT HAVE been challenged to allow greater "collaboration, consultation and compromise" with the students union at the annual meeting of the University Court, last week.

LUSU president, Michael Payne, received plaudits for his report to the meeting of the University's stakeholders, held in the George Fox building on Saturday, January 31. The speech, which lasted 20 minutes, set out Payne's vision of how the University and the Union ought to work with each other to achieve mutual goals, instead of continuing the culture of "suspicion, secrecy and obfuscation" which he claimed characterises the current relationship between the two parties.

The report ruffled feathers on the top table at Court. Andrew Neal, Director of Finance & Resources, shook his head in visible displeasure as Payne told the Court of how Lancaster University's college system was being undermined. From the chair, Deputy Pro-Chancellor, Stanley Henig, who was clearly eager to move discussion away from the presidents report as soon as possible, allowed only three questions from the floor to the president, to the obvious frustration of many members of the Court.

Members of the court were thrilled by Payne's speech, with members who had been involved with the Univer-

sity since its inception praising it as the best presidential report they had heard. But less than a week after the Court meeting, proposals to improve dialogue between LUSU and the University are already encountering resistance. A proposal for a working party comprising LUSU, JCR, senior college and University officers to be set up,

**"a reasonable and
sensible proposal, and
the right way forward."**

that would consider and recommend a future direction for the colleges, was brushed aside at University Council last Friday when proposed by Mr Payne. Pro-Chancellor, Bryan Gray, who was chairing the Council meeting, allowed no debate of Payne's proposal, insisting that the working party on the future of the colleges was "not our [Council's] issue."

However, according to Mr Payne, Prof. Wellings had told him in a meeting earlier last week that the suggestion of a working party was "a reasonable and sensible proposal, and the right way forward."

Deputy Pro-Chancellor, Stanley Henig, in apparent deliberate contrariness to the LUSU president's call for better communication between Union and University that had been made at the Court meeting earlier that week (over which Henig had presided), instead called for the existing channels of

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Strictly fever hits Lancaster



Waltzer: AU President, Gareth Coleman, dancing with LUBDS President, Steph Kendle at the LUBDS's Strictly Come Dancing event. (Photo: Rob Miller)

THOUGH PERHAPS NOT quite as glamorous as the real *Strictly Come Dancing*, and lacking any stout former political correspondents to gently laugh at, Lancaster University's own take on the show came close compared to its prime time TV older cousin.

The event last Friday was part of the annual Charity showcase, which raised over £860 for Cancer Research UK.

Full story inside.

Lancaster does
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University Council signs off on £25m of new building works

- Work expected to cause disruption
- Campus electricity demand set to increase by 70% in eight years.

by Dan Hogan
Editor

BUILDING AND REFURBISHMENT works in County South and near the Management School totalling £23m were given the go ahead by University bosses last Friday.

The developments will mostly provide additional offices and some teaching space. County South will be refurbished to accommodate five departments of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, as well as providing a face-lift to the existing 14 roof-top residence flats.

The Waterside project, which will be sited between the southern side of the Management School and the building site that will one day be Grizedale College, is estimated to cost £11.2m, with an additional £761,000 set aside for contingencies. It will contain five seminar rooms and a 65 person lecture theatre on the ground floor, but the above three floors will be almost entirely utilised as open-plan PHD work-spaces and offices for Management School academics.

Work on Waterside will begin in May 2009 and run until May 2010, with County South refurbishment beginning next month. Although the risk of disruption to academics working amongst the works has been considered by the University and steps taken to negate the effects, no such consideration has been given to student residents in the areas surrounding the works. No mention of the possibility of disturbance of residents appears in the risk register for the County South project, and the only action in response to the disruption caused by the building of Waterside is to provide relevant notification. Disturbance to residents and

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Lancaster University Students' Union
Slaidburn House
Lancaster University
Lancaster
LA1 4YA

Editor

Dan Hogan
scan@lancaster.ac.uk
01524 592613

Assistant Editor

Rob Miller
r@robm.me.uk

News

Chris Davis
Liz Houghton

scannews@hotmail.com
Meets in Furness Bar,
Tuesdays, 4pm

Comment

Liam Richardson

scancomment@gmail.com
Meets in Bowland Bar,
Wednesdays, 5pm

Features

Daniel Ash
Christie Anderson

Meets in Furness Bar,
Fridays, 2pm

Arts

Richie Garton
Lizzie O'Brien

scanarts@hotmail.com
Meets in County Diner,
Wednesdays, 1pm

Music

Mark McGlashan
Simon Bulmer

scanmusic@hotmail.com
Meets in Pendle Bar,
Wednesdays, 1pm

Sports

Charlotte Parker
Oliver Holmes

scan_sport@hotmail.com
Meets in Fylde Bar,
Mondays, 6pm

Adverts & Marketing

Martin Ennis
m.ennis@lancaster.ac.uk
01524 593422

Cash for laws peer receives honour from University

by Samantha Newsham

A PEER AT the centre of the inquiry into alleged dealings by members of the House of Lords to manipulate the law for money has been made a life member of the Court of Lancaster University.

Lord Taylor of Blackburn, 79, was awarded the life membership in recognition of his services to the University. He was a member of the Executive Council for the Establishment of a University at Lancaster in 1963 and a Deputy Pro-Chancellor of the University from 1972 to 1995. He is also a life member of LUSU.

The Court of the University is a group of bodies who have an interest in the University, including local MPs, heads of local schools, academics and alumni. They meet annually, with their 2009 meeting taking place on Saturday 31st January.

It was alleged in The Sunday Times on 25th January that Lord Taylor, along with three other members of the House of Lords, was prepared to amend laws for his personal clients for fees of up to £120,000.

An undercover reporter, posing as a

lobbyist acting on behalf of a fictitious businessman from Hong Kong, recorded Lord Taylor agreeing to discuss the amendment with Yvette Cooper, chief Secretary to the Treasury, amongst others.

"I will work within the rules, but the rules are meant to be bent sometimes," he said, referring to the fact that peers may not promote the cause of a paid client.

He also claimed he had previously changed a law in favour of credit-check company Experian, also a client of his.

Lord Taylor, a former BAE consultant, apologised to the House of Lords for his part in the affair the day after the allegations were published, saying: "If I have done anything that has brought this House into disrepute I most humbly apologise." However, he followed this by stating that within his "own conscience" he had broken no rules.

The University's Press Office confirmed that Lord Taylor will still receive the award, which was approved by the University Council in November 2008. They did not wish to comment on whether his alleged corruption in the House of Lords would have any impact on his suitability for Court.

Speaking before the meeting began,



Weasel: Lord Taylor of Blackburn, here in his ceremonial ermine robes (ermine is made from the fur of a stoat or weasel).

Stanley Henig, the University's Deputy Pro-Chancellor and the Chair of Court, said that he was expecting no trouble over Lord Taylor's appointment. He told SCAN he would be "disappointed" if anyone felt the need to question what was happening and reiterated that the decision was made in November; the Court proceedings would be no more than a note of Lord Taylor's having received the award.

In addition to his life membership, Lord Taylor was to propose Sir Chris Bonington to be reappointed as Chancellor of the University. As yet SCAN has been unable to contact the University to confirm this will still take place.

It is not the first time that Lord Taylor – a close friend of Jack Straw, the Minister for Justice – has had to apologise for his actions as a peer. In October of last year he asked a question in the House of Parliament on behalf of

a paid client without first declaring an interest.

Since the 'cash for questions' row fifteen years ago, members of the House of Commons have been subjected to a considerable amount of scrutiny. This is not the case for the House of Lords, which is why its members are more likely to be targeted by lobbyists.

Despite peers not being elected, they have a considerable influence in the Government. Last year they threw out governmental plans to allow suspected terrorists to be detained for up to 42 days.

Although they are unpaid they enjoy a considerable amount of privileges – including a BlackBerry and two return trips to Europe each year – and when sitting in the House can claim expenses for overnight accommodation, office costs and travel.

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Call for better dialogue falls upon deaf ears

communication to be scaled down.

"Some of the committees might have outlived their purpose" he said, having noted the University and Students Union Joint Committee as an example.

Professor Peter Diggle, elected by University Senate to sit on Council, commented that "some aspects of the college system are distinctly unattractive, particularly to young academics" before Mr Gray, in the chair, urged an end to the discussion of Mr Payne's report.

The University and Students Union Joint Committee next meets on March 3, at which a formal motion to create the working group will be moved by the Mr Payne. Once created, it will most likely present its findings some time in the next academic year. Students who have campaigned recently to raise awareness and pressure the University on the issues of college bar management and college autonomy and space, may not have the patience for this slow pace of University bureaucracy.

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Building works to commence around campus

lectures, particularly at the Waterside site by Pendle and Grizedale, seems almost inevitable.

As well as the building and refurbishment, a £2.1m fund has also been approved to update the University's electricity supply. Currently the University electrical demand is, at peak times, 6.5 megawatts. By the end of 2010, that peak consumption is projected to top 8.5MW, exceeding the existing capacity of 8MW. Despite expected reductions in consumption due to energy saving strategies, the demand is projected to continue to grow, increasing by 70% in the next eight years.

The forecasted 11MW peak energy demand of the campus by 2017 is equivalent to that of 7,500 homes.

University Director of Finance & Resources, Andrew Neal said of the energy project: "This is about trying to provide for the peaks [in our energy demand]."

"There is a significant peak capacity issue surrounding ISS, for example, cooling."

The ISS building is expected to be completed later this year, although is currently running behind schedule.

Poor graduate employment fault of students, claims Uni

Edwin Burrows

GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT IS the "Achilles heel of this University", according to Vice-Chancellor, Paul Wellings. Currently ranked 75th in the country for graduate employment prospects by the Times Good University Guide, the chances for Lancaster alumni to find graduate-level jobs after university puts Lancaster a long way below other institutions in the top 20 overall.

Though significantly improved from its position last year at 104th, the University's position at 75th is "still not good enough," according to Professor Cary Cooper, Pro-Vice Chancellor for External Relations. Prof Cooper added: "It's one of [University Management's] top three objectives, getting students jobs. It's in our interest to improve. It is the biggest thing that holds us back on the league tables. I'm just being pragmatic but it's a win-win for everybody."

In trying to identify what it was that made Lancaster different from other universities higher up the employability table Cary responded: "We don't have what a lot of other universities have, which is a lot of subjects that naturally feed into a profession. Our subjects have a more academic slant which is why CEEC (Centre for Employability, Enterprise and Careers) is important." When asked whether Lancaster University's high ratings in research came at the expense of employability Prof Cooper disagreed reasoning that if research came at the expense of employability the University wouldn't



Job CEECer: Reflections of Alexandra Square in the window of the Centre for Employability, Enterprise and Careers on the ground floor of University House. The centre is open to students to walk in and speak to a careers advisor. (Photo: Liz Houghton)

have received as good student satisfaction statistics and also pointed out that despite the research figures still being high that "we are improving."

"We've moved CEEC to a better location and our facilities have improved but my real worry about [graduate employability] is that it is a two way track", Prof Cooper said. "The other week I think we had Tesco's going to come up, but we had to cancel as nobody had signed up for it. We've got to make sure the students turn up." He

finished by stating that the improvement process could be helped by student contribution as well. "If students could give CEEC and the Senior Management Team up here about ideas of what you think would help through the Union President, Michael Payne, and we think it's reasonable, we'd do it."

The problem stems from students not making the most of the available opportunities while they are at Lancaster, according to Wellings. "It is disappointing that we get top-flight employ-

ers on campus and people don't come to engage with that. I don't think that this is going to be a particularly sensible thing to do over the next two or three years."

Chris Little, the Careers Development and Guidance Co-ordinator for CEEC, confirmed that student apathy was having an adverse affect on employability talks and that three employer presentations had to be cancelled on the day of our interview due to no students signing up for it.

"We advertise in the Futures magazine that goes out on a regular basis, emails to students and on our website but sometimes it is difficult to get the message across of what we do to students," Mr Little admitted. "We've always been involved in the running of a number of programs such as those implemented within curriculums already; one of the best examples is a program being run in Physics with third years that has now spread to other programs such as Biology, Environmental Science, Engineering to name a few."

He added: "Our Directions program, which involves employers coming onto campus to show what students can do with various degrees, runs alongside the central core of what we do. This year we've started a second year program with Law but also we're going to run it with all the Arts [departments] in relation to getting students to self-reflect, to be thinking about what they're going to be doing in the future. This program will hopefully be going right across the University."

He felt that some academic departments haven't always been as inviting to some of these programs. This, Mr. Little felt, was partly due to timetabling issues which was a "little disappointing", as programs doing particularly well are "ones in which the tutors sit in on the session. It shows the department takes the prospect of employment for its graduates very seriously".

Mr. Little also agreed with Prof. Cooper that student input on how to improve was welcome and said that CEEC's door is "always open to work with the Students Union".

Universities warned to take on fewer applicants

by Chris Davis
News Editor

Universities across the country have been told to restrict their student recruitment over the next two years following a reduction in the availability of government funding.

In his annual letter to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the government Universities secretary, John Denham, stated that institutions which were seen to be

"over-recruiting" would face significant financial penalties.

Mr Denham's letter stated that between 2007 and 2008 there had been a 7 per cent increase in the number of accepted applicants to full-time undergraduate courses. This level of expansion was initially seen as positive, a reflection of the government's target of getting 50% of young people into Higher Education. However, problems emerged in October 2008 when dramatic miscalculations in the cost of funding students was revealed. 40%

of last year's students qualified for a full maintenance grant, which led to an unforeseen £200m "black hole" in the government's budget.

In an effort to reduce the deficit, the government has reduced HEFCE's funding by £19m. Universities have been told to stick rigidly to quotas for student recruitment drawn up by HEFCE, and have been warned that they will be financially liable for any extra students they take on. Previously, Universities have been able to 'over-recruit' without incurring any financial

penalties. This freedom was embraced by many, as tuition fees continued to provide growing levels of income for institutions prepared to accommodate higher numbers of students.

The news has been met with a mixed reception from important figures in the higher education sector. Many have questioned why, in the context of the global recession, the government are not actively encouraging young people to acquire the 'higher skills' that some say are needed to ensure the country's economic strength. Speaking to

the Guardian, Diane Warwick, chief executive of 'Universities UK', stated: "We note with concern the decision regarding additional student numbers for both 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. There is a danger in placing limits on growth - UUK believes strongly that the UK's knowledge-based economy needs more, not fewer, graduates - and we urge the government to discuss the impact of this and future decisions with the sector."

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University Court

Payne calls on Uni to listen, not just hear

• **Speech to annual Court gathering urges “collaboration, consultation and compromise”**

• **University chiefs remain unmoved by LUSU president’s stirring rhetoric**

by **Rob Miller**
Assistant Editor

ON SATURDAY JANUARY 31, LUSU President Michael Payne received a standing ovation from the delegates of University Court following a stirring speech that pulled no punches in its criticism of the University’s recent actions.

The University, Payne felt, had failed students on several important issues, and the damage was such that it warranted a careful re-evaluation of the relationship between the University and students. The university must be prepared not only to notice the

students’ concerns but also to listen to them, to react to them.

The Students Union, Payne argued, had already responded to students’ needs and concerns. “It is imperative that we [LUSU] too re-evaluate how we operate,” said Payne in his speech. “We have recently concluded a two year-long review of our constitution and senior officer roles, the first such wholesale review in 18 years.

“We are now in transition to a new set of democratic structures and full-time officer roles that are better suited to the demands of today’s students and to meeting today’s challenges.”

The policy, Payne argued, was a symbol of democracy in action: 600

students, in the same room as university court, gathered to debate the review and ultimately to pass it with an overwhelming majority.

“In spite of the nay-sayers, the pessimists and the cynics who say that young people are apathetic, that young people don’t care about politics, that young people are ignorant of the world around them: students, when they feel passionately about something, will say so, and will say so in numbers.”

Now was the time, Payne argued, for the University to step up to the plate and fulfil their side of the bargain, to listen to students in the same way that the union had done.

“It is collaboration, con-



Are you listening now? Students protest outside the Court meeting to make their voices heard. Right: LUSU President Michael Payne. (Photos: Rob Miller)

Inside the room, they weren’t listening either



Dan Hogan
Editor

COURT IS ALWAYS seen as something to look forward to by the assorted student officers, academics, alumni and local politicians who attend, in much the same as I imagine a matador looks forward to a bullfight. They anticipate the opportunity for tough questions they can put to the Vice-Chancellor, the verbal punch-ups that could transpire, and the embarrassment to the top table that could be delivered. And almost without fail, that excitement and anticipation leads to disappointment.

The Vice-Chancellor is incredibly shrewd when it comes to handling the “hardy perennial” issues that come up at court, deftly batting away questions that his would-be interrogators may have spent an inordinately long time mulling over; or alternatively, examining the minutiae of a queried issue in such mind-numbing depth, as to bore even the questioner into apathetic submission. It is a successful tactic. The matadors always prove to be lame.

Though his front-table henchmen aren’t quite so deviously clever at it, they are usually just as effective in quashing debate. And all of their powers of suppression of any hint of col-

lective cogitation in the meeting were deployed to great effect at the 45th annual meeting of the Court.

What stopped it from being the morale-sapping disappointment that Court usually is, was Michael Payne’s report. It jarred the audience awake after the best part of two hours of religious evangelising, doom-mongering then figure-spinning had reduced them to a state of coma. The first thing to hit them was that it was actually a *speech*, not another uninspiring, Powerpoint-assisted half-hour slab of arhythmic droning like what had preceeded it.

The second was the content. Nothing especially new in terms of the overall message: that the University ignores the students, and messes things up because of it; but that the delivery was neither an inoffensive, middle-of-the-road exercise in diplomacy (like Tim Roca’s report to Court last year) nor was it a faux-rage fuelled, bridge-burning rant (like Sooz Palmer’s report the year before). Instead, the University was given praise where it was due, but then was pilloried where appropriate.

The top table were not happy. Bryan Gray, the Pro-Chancellor, was almost red-faced with rage as he confronted Mr Payne at the end of the meeting, only to be humiliated by Lord Judd, who has been on Court since its creation, butting in to congratulate the president on setting a new standard for Court oratory.

Payne’s words may have come down upon the University bosses like steel rain – every part of Andrew Neal’s frame seemed to sag under the weight – but it was all quickly shrugged off. Within moments of Payne climbing down from the stage in George Fox Lec-

ture Theatre 1, to rapturous applause from the floor, had Stanley Henig, who was chairing the meeting, regained his composure and was back in the swing of hastening the advance of lunch.

The dubious Catering-provided feast had to wait a short while yet though. There was the small matter of appointments. One Lord Tom Taylor of Blackburn, currently under investigation for potential breaches of House of Lords rules on accepting payment for wielding parliamentary influence, was rubber-stamped, in his conspicuous absence, on to the Court as an honorary life member.

The University’s beloved Chancellor, Sir Christian Bonington, was also reappointed – completely outside the agreed procedure of such matters – but nobody in the room save for two ‘usual suspects’, was prepared to say so. Henig, upon again silencing the trouble makers (former Pro-Vice Chancellor? What would he know?), demonstrated his impressive powers of telepathy when he proclaimed that the “general consensus” of the room was to reappoint the Chancellor, without any debate or even a vote.

And so, nothing much changed, even if Court members had got their fill of entertainment. Expediency still got the better of doing things properly, and paranoia and heavy handedness still got the better of discussion and debate. Despite being the only talking point in the queue for the lunchtime Catering trough, Payne’s message may as well have been about Mother’s apple pie. The crowd from earlier had gone from the door, and were forgotten as quickly as the substance behind the president’s memorable rhetorical style.

Students brave morning

by **Chris Davis**
News Editor

ALMOST ONE HUNDRED students braved the cold on January 31 to protest over the future of the college system outside the annual meeting of University Court.

In the most active display yet students from all colleges turned out in an attempt to highlight the college bars situation to influential Court members.

Students met in Alexandra Square at half past nine in the morning, before moving on to take up a position outside the George Fox building, the venue for the meeting of University Court. The meeting, which includes a number of

prominent public figures such as local councillors, MP’s, and numerous other notable graduates of the University, provided the perfect opportunity for the group to showcase their feelings to those with potential influence over University Management.

Explaining the aims of the protest, Richard Bennett, one of the key figures in the organisation of the campaign, stated: “We have to try and hold discussions with members of court, explaining the way that the University has acted. A lot of members are ex-alumni who really value the college system. We need to inform these people of the current threat to the colleges and to student autonomy”.

There had been fears that, due to the timing of the event, there would be dif-



chill to support colleges

faculties ensuring significant participation. LUSU President Michael Payne, who stopped to talk to campaigners before making his way into the meeting, stated that the turnout was “excellent”, adding: “I am proud of all the students who have shown their commitment, and I will do my very best to represent them at the meeting today”.

The reaction to the protest by other members of the University Court was mixed. Senior lecturer Alan Whitaker called the protest “timely” and “well mannered”, commenting that it “seems to be about the student voice being heard, and students refusing to be dictated to”. A number of local councillors, including Labour councillor Eileen Blamire, also took a particular interest in the demonstration. How-

ever, many members, including the Vice Chancellor himself, arrived at the meeting through the back entrance of the George Fox building, therefore avoiding, whether intentionally or not, the group of protesting students.

The campaign to save the college bars, generated by the takeover of Cartmel, County, Grizedale and Pendle bars by University Commercial Services last year, gained significant momentum during the first weeks of the lent term. Over the past month there has been a demonstration outside University House, as well as the emergence of various posters and publications. Many express concerns that, beyond the centralisation of the college bars, the whole collegiate system could be under threat.

> sultation and compromise from both parties,” Payne stressed, “that makes changes work out for the better, and makes the fruits of these projects all the sweeter for it.”

Payne noted three particular areas where the University was lacking. The first, perhaps unsurprisingly, was the issue of college bars. Cartmel bar, the flagship of the University’s redevelopment, was to Payne an “embarrassment not just to [Cartmel] but to the whole University” and consisted of “the worst products of hare-brained unilateralism.”

“The problem with Cartmel,” Payne argued, “is that the students were given no say in its conception. They were allowed no say when their bar was designed with the needs of a corporate function suite in mind ... no say when it was taken out of direct college control ... no say when student staff were choked of working hours.”

The University’s attitude towards the college bars was, Payne argued, emblematic of their “contempt” for the college system that was the “bedrock” of students. To attack the college system, Payne claimed, was to attack, and to injure, the whole institution, and this was precisely what the University authorities had done over the course of

the last year.

Following the speech, the Court’s chairman, Deputy Pro-Chancellor Stanley Henig, made the controversial decision to take only three questions—despite there being many more hands raised.

“I did not see any more hands being raised,” Henig said, “but if I missed them then I apologise for that. There’s a constant difficult in these sorts of meetings ... once it gets to 12:30, people are itching to get out. I did the best I could.”

Although Payne’s speech received a rapturous reception from most of University Court, the Vice Chancellor, Paul Wellings, was one member who felt that Payne’s points lacked merit.

There were, Wellings claimed, already “a huge number of opportunities for communication” between the University and students. “Students are represented on council, senate, every committee of the University; they have the opportunity to be involved through the governance sectors of the University.”

Whether the University acted upon students’ concerns, Wellings claimed, was down to the “quality of the input” that came from students. “The University listens to all stakeholder groups,

whether they be students, staff, or other groups that have an interest in the University.”

Wellings also criticised the students’ bars campaign; he felt that it had descended into “personal insults” and that the University takeover of the bars “should not have come as a surprise to students.”

Although Wellings made it clear that he supported the existence of nine bars on campus, he conceded that this might not be possible, or even probable. “In a world where pubs are closing every day,” he claimed, “maintaining nine college bars would be a real trick.”

Nevertheless, Wellings felt that the centralised take-overs of college bars was not incompatible with the collegiate system. “[The protesters] are confusing college bars as places with the organisation and management of the bars,” Wellings said. What was needed was not the college ownership of bars, but merely the bars being “fully-populated.”

“Colleges at Lancaster are not autonomous,” Wellings tellingly revealed. “They do not own property. We run a single, indivisible estate and the concern is to get maximum value out of the facilities.”

Bars and colleges campaign

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Bars campaign

Is lack of clear leadership hampering the campaign?

- Campaign needs leadership for success
- Students blame poor information for lack of involvement

by **Liz Houghton**
News Editor

MOST STUDENTS ARE still in the dark over the cause and reason of the college bars campaign, a rough survey has revealed.

Although no students claimed to be unaware of the current situation in regards to the college bars, only 20 per cent said that they actively supported the campaigns. The other 80 per cent cited either a lack of information or just apathy for not being more involved, this despite 76 per cent expressing at least a passing interest in the campaign.

The survey - which included students from all colleges but not members of JCRs or active members of the Labour Club - highlights the information gap between those who are actively leading the campaigns and those ordinary students they claim to represent.

"I don't really understand how to get involved and would prefer to leave it to people who know what it's about and know what they're doing", Michael Reffold, a first year student from County, said.

This sentiment has been echoed by a number of students, in particular first years, who did not witness to rise of the 'Save Our College Bars' campaign last year. Many who we spoke to simply

didn't know "what it's all about".

When asked about the posters up around campus many said they don't understand them, or don't pay attention them. Similarly, most were unaware of the numerous Facebook groups set up to support the campaign. The fact that a number of these groups have to be 'secret' in order to protect those who set them up has not helped matters.

"I don't think normal students know enough", Cartmel student Katherine Ellis said. "If the University truly was a diplomatic, student influenced society - which it isn't, but it claims to be - then this secrecy wouldn't matter."

She added: "It's ironic really for the University to be doing this [taking over the college bars] since the main part of their advertising is to plug the college system, and how successful it is. They're contradicting themselves."

Even amongst those students who do feel they are well informed there is a general sense of apathy. These students tended to cite friends and flatmates as their sources of information, but the majority said they were just "too lazy" to be actively involved.

"I get my information from my flat mates," Sarah Green, a first year from Furness said. "Everyone else I know isn't really interested in it."

She added: "Most people don't know much about what's going on.



They've not been told properly. People know something is going on but they don't understand why it is a problem, and they don't believe you when you try and tell them. The posters for example are good, but only if you know what they're about."

Other students fail to see where the problem lies. "I actually quite like County", one Bowlander said. "I generally find the college system quite restricting and wouldn't mind seeing a few changes made."

Heather Thornton, a first year from County, gave perhaps the most accurate response in regards to an ordinary student's views on the colleges campaign. Said she: "I don't get it and, sadly, I'm not that bothered."

Opinion: An alternative way?



Jonathan Starr

In the previous issue of SCAN (27th January) I suggested that there is a way for the bars to be successful and make some degree of profit. However, is this the only way? A simple lesson in business studies tells us that there are for vital ingredients to profitability; place, promotion, price and product. Get all four correct and success, in theory, is just around the corner.

Place is already provided by being on campus making it suitable for students, that much is obvious. Promotion is provided through society socials and college loyalty. Price, as seen in my previous article, could be altered to be more attractive, but what about product? It seems obvious to say that the bars will sell beverages of varying types and tastes, but one wonders whether or not the University has missed a masterstroke with what being available where.

In the current situation we have a vast number of largely generic bars. They all serve largely the same drinks and the same prices. An analogy can be seen with the demise of Woolworths. Woolworths was a very diverse chain

selling anything from pick-a-mix to clothing. Almost everyone I talk to has different memories of Woolworths. Yet, it is this broadness that may be seen as one of the causes for its demise. Its desire to please a greater number of consumer groups moved it away from the quality available from competing high street stores.

At the moment the college bars are attempting to provide a variety of drinks to please all who enter. From traditional ale to vodka based fruit drinks. However, could it be said that the bars would be more successful if they were more selective in their drinks choice, possibly building a theme around their drinks menu. For example you could have one bar that focuses on its real ales, another which marketed itself as a wine bar and another being seen as more of a nightclub than a bar. There are a number of possibilities. Recreation of individuality among the bars may make them more appealing to students and help fight off the lure of town drinking. To maintain the business studies link, on economies of scale the bars would find themselves more successful as they would face less competition from each other due to the differences in personality.

This idea is by no means without flaw. Which college wants to have the non-alcoholic bar? Yet it does seem to provide a blue print for giving life back to the college bars that may see a much needed increase in unit sales. Individuality between the colleges is a key factor in a college system if they are not to be seen a glorified halls of residence. This individuality could begin with the bars.

Figurehead needed to push campaign forward

by **Chris Davis**
News Editor

THE PROTEST OUTSIDE of University Court by a group of over 70 students showed that when organised effectively, students can be motivated to support the College campaign. However, the lack of an apparent leadership figure has made some sceptical over how effective the actions of the campaign can be.

Many feel that the absence of a definitive leader has served to restrict the progress of the movement. "One of the main reasons the campaign has been losing momentum is the lack of any real leader", stated Cartmel JCR President Robbie Pickles. "We need someone prepared to take on that leadership role". Mr Pickles also suggested

that the perception of the Labour Club as heading the movement was potentially damaging, suggesting that "people with no political affiliations could have been put off". His concerns were echoed by Fylde JCR President James Duncan, who called the leadership of the campaign "poor", stating that "At the moment no-one is wanting to lead it, because of the amount of trouble it could land them in".

Criticisms have also been levelled at the lack of publicity that the campaign has received, and at the nature of the message put across to students. Mr. Duncan claimed that the publicity "hasn't been fully informative" and that he disliked the "bullying tactics" that he feels had been used against the Universities Director of Commercial Services, David Peaks. Mr. Pickles agreed that the publicity had so far been 'ineffective', questioning the use of the slogan 'Save Our College Bars'. "No bars are actually going to be closing, which is what the word 'save' implies", said Mr Pickles. "The actual message we need to be getting out, about how the bars are being run has got lost".

Many have agreed the need for the campaign to move beyond the issue of the college bars, and the much criticised Mr. Peaks, and to focus on the wider issue of how the collegiate system should be run. Current publicity, they feel, is damaging the scope of the movement.

There appears to be no immediate plans towards development of the campaign. Co-ordinated action by JCRs is difficult, with many colleges wanting to focus on different issues.

Uni calls students in for questioning over Peeks 'harrassment'

by Lisa Stallard

THE UNIVERSITY HAS been accused of heavy handed tactics after it is claimed they have been targeting members of the student body over the alleged personal harrassment of David Peeks.

Richard Bennett, the Lancaster University Labour Club's Campaigns Officer, claims he was contacted by the University's Director of Governance and Planning, Paul Graves over accusation that the Club had been .

Mr. Bennett, who denies the allegations, said: "Myself and Lancaster University Labour Club reject outright charges of harassment and think the actions of the University are a very un-subtle form of intimidation."

He added: "It is ironic that whilst falsely alleging a student-led campaign of personal harassment, they are re-

sorting to same practises they accuse me and other members of LULC of. LULC maintains that the criticism of the Commercial Director, David Peeks was legitimate scrutiny."

According to Fraser Welsh, the Labour Club Press Officer, the University's aims are to "round up the ring-leaders, intimidate their opposition and stifle criticism."

Mr. Graves is has also been in contact with another student. 'Lord Propaganda', who made the *David Peeks' Downfall* video until recently seen on YouTube, was also told by the University that his actions could be seen as a personal attack on the Director of Commercial Services.

"I was contacted last week by Mr. Graves from University House requesting an informal face to face meeting", Propaganda - who has asked that his YouTube pseudonym by used - said. "I diligently went to University House where upon I learnt that the Univer-



Out of line?

The re-subtitled clip from the movie *Downfall* that satirises David Peeks' reaction to the bars campaign was recently taken down after the creator was approached by the University. Management feels that too many personal attacks have been made against Mr Peeks.

sity had become aware of a certain viral YouTube video parodying the save the bars campaign. I was politely asked that as Mr. Peeks was merely 'flesh and blood', if it was within my power to take it down then I should, which I considered reasonable so down it came."

The video in question satirised a scene from the German film *Downfall*, which portrays Hitler's last days. The scene used in Propaganda's parody shows an angry Adolf Hitler ranting about the failure of his armies. The

English subtitles had been changed to show Peeks, as the Führer, ranting about LUSU.

Although some have commented that the comparison is distasteful, Propaganda maintains it was only drawn in the spirit of jest. "This was only meant as a simple joke portraying an angry man who isn't getting his way in the face of even angrier students", he said. "[I was] copying a popular internet meme. I replaced the subtitles to represent a certain Commercial Serv-

ices Director angry at the actions of the students.

He added: "Ultimately I decided it wasn't worth it to let this get out of hand so the infamous video no longer exists. Mr. Graves was perfectly cordial throughout the event. One thing however still perplexes me: my YouTube channel is anonymous, how did they know it was me?"

At the time of going to print SCAN could not contact Mr. Graves for a quote.

HARRY WITH EVERYTHING LUSU DOES? REALLY! OH, WELL LETS TALK ABOUT IT

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Lancaster researchers join battle against world hunger

by Liz Houghton
News Editor

RESEARCH COUNCIL UK has awarded Lancaster University a £1.33m grant to use towards tackling world hunger.

The University will be teaming up with a number of institutions from China to try and tackle the emotive issue. The award was given as part of RCUK's funding package, which encourages collaboration between British, Chinese, Indian and American universities.

Lancaster will be working with the China Agricultural University, Nanjing University, North West Agricultural and Forestry University and the Chinese Academy of Sciences. The main focus of their research will be securing adequate food supplies for an increasingly large, and hungry world.

The programme will run for three years, and will be led by Professor Bill Davies, of the Lancaster Environment Centre. His aim is to discover how to provide a secure water supply which is "vital not only for drinking water but also for agriculture, to ensure a reliable, stable source of food".

He said: "Now, possibly more than at any time in the past, is there a need for innovation to ensure we can successfully meet this global challenge. We need innovation in many areas to enable us to use water more efficiently in agriculture from more intelligent irrigation systems to better use of waste water. The technology is emerging – we need to capitalise on that progress.

"We have a strong track record of collaborative work with researchers in China – one of the countries which has been most affected by water shortage in agriculture and the WaterSci team brings to together world-leading scientists in the field of sustainable water



Not a drop to drink: China is one of the countries worst affected by water shortages

management."

Professor Kang Shaozhong, Director of Centre for Agricultural Water Research in China at the China Agricultural University, echoed this belief. He said: "Water shortage is an important limiting factor in crop production especially in the arid areas of Northwest China. Efficient water use is a great issue to ensure the food security of 1.3 billion Chinese people. We believe that a Sino-UK partnership in Water Science can add value by exploiting complementary strengths in our research communities.

In a separate collaboration, a Lan-

caster University ecologist has recently developed a biological pesticide which, it is hoped, will soon be ready for use against African Armyworms. The worms have been wreaking havoc in Liberia recently where more than 20,000 people have had to evacuate their homes.

Dr Kenneth Wilson, who also works at the Lancaster Environment Centre, has been working with other researchers from the UK, Canada and Tanzania.

He said: "Currently the only way to control these outbreaks is by spraying with chemical insecticides, but these

are too expensive for most farmers and can damage the environment. We are investigating radical new solutions using a naturally occurring virus in armyworms - Armyworm nucleopolyhedrovirus (NPV). It is harmless to humans and other wildlife but can quickly contain Armyworm populations.

"We are well on the way to understanding how best to use this new biological pesticide", he added. "The next stage is to secure the funding required to produce large amounts of the NPV for wide-scale use in Africa. We could then be in a position to help countries like Liberia if Armyworm do attack".

Students win big with small carbon footprints

- **Eco-residences competition launched**
- **County and Grizedale involved**

by Samantha Newsham

STUDENTS FROM GRIZEDALE and County Colleges are competing to reduce their carbon footprint and win cash prizes.

The competition has been initiated by GreenLancaster, a partnership between LUSU, Estate Management and property developers UPP. It is part of a pilot scheme to explore ways of encouraging energy reduction at the university.

Tom Roberts of GreenLancaster said: "With spiralling energy costs and the need to reduce carbon emissions we felt there was an educational opportunity to highlight the issue of climate change by linking it into students' everyday living practices.

"The Eco-residences use the latest technology to work with the occupants to cut their utility usage. The competition is a fun way of harnessing student rivalry and offering the chance to win prizes by saving utilities and cutting carbon emissions."

There are six cash prizes for the competition, with prize money totalling £1800. The Eco-Residence with the lowest carbon footprint will win the top prize of £600. Winners will be announced in Week 9.

State-of-the-art technology allows the carbon footprint of each townhouse in the new Eco-Residences to be calculated from its water, gas and electricity usage. The utility data is sent to the GreenLancaster website, where a calculation based on government figures converts the gas, electricity and water usage into an overall carbon footprint. The townhouse with the lowest carbon footprint wins. Residents can log onto the website and view utility use for their house as well as check on who is winning.

GreenLancaster has been providing advice to students to give them the best chances of cutting their carbon. Tips include switching off lights and equipment when not in use rather than leaving on standby, conserving water by boiling just the amount needed when making tea or coffee and using microwaves instead of ovens to save up to 70% energy.

The pioneering Grizedale and County Eco-Residences have won a BRE-AM award for their green features, including 70% heat recovery ventilation, sustainably sourced timber and lighting activated by movement sensors.

For more information about the competition visit greenlancaster.org.uk/carbon-competition

Departments who break 'free Wednesday afternoons' rule named and shamed

by Lisa Stallard

CERTAIN SUBJECTS HAVE come under fire after a member of Furness JCR found that certain departments within the University are holding lessons on a Wednesday afternoon. The NUS is currently campaigning to get this time nationally recognised as 'free-time' for students.

Jo Walker, Furness Vice-President, is resolved to "name and shame" those department involved, after hearing of seminars, practicals and lectures scheduled after 1pm on a Wednesday. Ms. Walker bought the issue to attention after finding out from students how many were affected by this. She said: "Wednesday afternoons are a time at which, nationwide, all students should be entitled to the opportunity to partake in student activities such as sports/societies, if they so wish. The

fact that some departments are having their students officially timetabled in is removing this opportunity from them, which is unfair."

Departments involved include Sociology, Law, Spanish and Italian. Another offender is Environmental Science, who have scheduled practicals. Jackie Pates, Director of Undergraduate Studies for Environmental Science, said that scheduling practicals is "only done as a last resort and with very specific conditions". The reason Ms. Pates cites for holding the classes is the high demand for them, and so the department "are obliged to run multiple repeats, and inevitably sometimes have to run practical classes every afternoon".

Ms. Pates went on to say that the department "always try to avoid Wednesday afternoons wherever possible and students are always given the option to chose which class they take. We never force students to take a Wednesday afternoon class".

Religious Studies (RS) have also been named as a department interfering with students' free Wednesdays. In response to claims that RS delivers Part I seminars up to 6pm on a Wednesday, Gillian Taylor, Department Assistant of Religious Studies, clarified that the "latest seminar for Religious Studies first years is 1-1.50 pm" and the department checks with students that their extra-curricular activities will not be affected. Ms. Taylor emphasised that students affected are always free to change their seminar time.

LUSU General Secretary, Janie Coleman, has come out in support of Ms. Walker. She said: "I think it's highly unfair that lectures and seminars are being scheduled on a Wednesday afternoon. Part of the reason students choose to come to university is to take part in societies, clubs and student politics, but students are finding they no longer have time to do this sort of thing. The university experience is in-

creasingly becoming just about exams and coursework."

The Wednesday afternoon idea was passed with other government Education Reform Policies in early 2002, after its success in a primary school which piloted the idea of giving pupils the time to participate in activities other than academic work. Since then, the NUS have been campaigning to make sure colleges and universities adhere to the policy with ongoing 'Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free' campaigns, and constitutional ratifications in 2005 in order to allow students to put extra-curricular activities above timetabled lessons.

Although Ms. Pates claimed: "our students have never raised this issue as a concern to the department," the fact that Ms. Walker has uncovered that students are dissatisfied with the current arrangements has raised doubts over how far the departments are really listening to their students.

Strictly charity as karate champion waltzes away with top prize

- **Lancaster University puts on Strictly Come Dancing**
- **Showcase evening raises over £800 for charity**

by **Liz Houghton**
News Editor

LAST FRIDAY SAW the return of the annual Lancaster University Charity Showcase. The show, which was held in aid of Cancer Research UK, ultimately raised £860 for the charity and included performances from the Lancaster University Karate Club, the Dance Society and the Cheerleading Society.

For the majority of the 200 people watching however, the highlight of the evening was the Ballroom Dancing Society's *Lancaster does Strictly Come Dancing*. Eight campus 'celebrities' were paired up with members of the Ballroom exec in a send up for the BBC's popular primetime programme. The line up included two LUSU Sabbatical Officers - Union President Michael Payne pulled out because of time constraints - along with representatives from the University's sports clubs, the University of Lancaster Music Society and Young Entrepreneurs.

"Within four weeks they've produced such fantastic routines. They've done wonderfully."

Amelia Phillips, President of ULMS, began the competition by dancing the Salsa with her 'professional' partner, LUBDS Treasurer, Alistair Mason. They were then followed by the Athletic Union President, Gareth Coleman, and his partner, LUBDS President, Steph Kendle, who were dancing the waltz.

Next was Dale Ward, Captain of the Pendle Football Team. His partner was Rachel Seal, LUBDS Social Secretary. Ms. Seal had originally been partnered with Michael Payne, before he was forced to drop out earlier in the week. This meant that Mr. Ward had only three days practice, unlike the other competitors who had been training for four weeks. This didn't appear to have hampered his chances, as his Rumba draw sighs and wolf whistles from most of the women in the audience.

Speaking after his dance Mr. Ward said: "Obviously I was a bit nervous at first, only having had a few days practice but I think it went really well."

Cai Halliday, the Tennis Club President, followed on with an equally passionate Tango, and he in turn was followed by Becky Clark. Ms. Clark, a world karate champion, was tipped as the favourite for the evening's top spot. She danced the Salsa with the other



LUBDA Social Secretary, Chris Hill.

After the Salsa came Young Entrepreneurs Events Officer, Doris Orizu, and her partner Barry Maydon, LUBDS Charity Officer, who together danced the Cha Cha Cha. The show was brought to an end with a Viennese Waltz by LUSU General Secretary, Janie Coleman, and her partner, LUBDS Vice President, Matt Dailey.

After all the couples had performed the audience were given the chance to vote for which performance they felt was best. As the votes were being tallied there was more performances from the two dance societies, the Lancaster Roses Cheerleading Squad and Lancaster University's Big Band as well as the charity raffle draw.

Once the votes had been counted, Becky Clark and her partner Chris Hill were announced as the winners, with Mr. Halliday and Ward in second and third place respectively. After collecting her prize Ms. Clark told SCAN: "I'm speechless. I've loved it so much. I'm definitely going on carry on dancing."

Bill Reader, one of LUBDS's teachers and host for the night praised all those who had given up their time to take part and raise money. "I thought they [the 'celebrities'] in particular did extremely well", he said. "Within four weeks they've produced such fantastic routines and done it with such style as well. The dancing was all fantastic. They've done wonderfully."



Twinkle toed: Clockwise from left: Winner Becky Clark; third place runner-up Dale Ward; second place runner-up Cai Halliday, and their partners. (Photos: Rob Miller)



Faithshare bridges gap between campus communities

by Rob Maidstone

ON THURSDAY FEBRUARY 5 various faith communities from around campus met in the main lounge of the Chaplaincy Centre to discuss ideas and teachings in Faithshare – a meeting help once per term to discuss the different aspects of faith.

The aim of Faithshare is to help people gain knowledge and understandings about other faiths. Jim Wood explained: “The aim of Faithshare is to provide an opportunity to explore how our faith supports us, and is challenged, by belonging to a university community which embraces those of my own faith, other faiths, or no faith.” Anyone is free to attend and most of the religious communities at the University represented.

This term the topic was ‘How does my faith affect my relationship with other faiths?’ Over the course of the evening the group delved into differences between faiths and the reservations some people have about learning about other faiths. There was a wide mix of opinions and perspectives represented in the group including Buddhists, Quakers, Christians and



Muslims. The representatives came prepared with their faith’s views and teaching on this matter.

The meeting took the structure of individual presentations by a representative of each faith group, followed by open discussion on the topic. During this open discussion only two rules applied; the first being respect and the second being confidentiality. After various angles have been examined the

groups went into informal conversations over tea, coffee and cakes. The groups then discussed the points in great deal, with each participant bringing both religious and personal views into the mix.

As the meeting wrapped up many participants were left with the feeling that they had learnt from this experience and somehow “grown as people.”

One person admitted into A&E every seven minutes due to alcohol

ONE PERSON EVERY seven minutes is admitted into hospital in the North West with an alcohol-related complaint, according to a recent NHS survey.

25,000 people from the North West took part in the Big Drink Debate. 26 per cent admitted drinking to harmful or hazardous levels, while 10.9 per cent said they didn’t drink at all. The remaining participants classed themselves as sensible drinkers.

The North West’s police lead on alcohol issues, Assistant Chief Constable Gary Shewan told the Lancaster and Morecambe Citizen: “The North West’s relationship with alcohol is one of the most unhealthy in the country. Each

one of us needs to question our own behaviour and ask ourselves why we buy and keep so much alcohol in the home.

He added: “The alcohol industry is facing a tough economic climate, but by employing price and promotional practices they are encouraging drinking to excess. We, as police officers, are then left to deal with the consequences of alcohol-fuelled behaviour within our towns and our communities.

Dr Ruth Hussey, Regional director of Public Health, also told The Citizen: “Alcohol consumption is taking its toll on the region’s health.

“The NHS is working around the clock, but we need public support to reverse this trend.”

Police to use Campus Watch meeting to help stop office burglaries

NEXT WEDNESDAY OFFICERS from the Lancashire Constabulary will be visiting the University as part of the Campus Watch initiative.

The initiative, part of PACT (Police And Communities Together), is, according to the Constabulary’s website, about “working together to find local solutions to local problems”.

The meeting, which will take place in the LUSU officers at 2pm, February 18, will focus on three main priorities; the safety of students and staff; the re-launch of the Campus Watch Scheme; and the ongoing burglaries in office and computer rooms on campus. One former student is thought to be behind these.



UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE 2009

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More info: supres@lancs.ac.uk

*To be part of the team you must be a student in 2009/10 and must not have appeared on the show before



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Brown praises work of LUVU at student 10 Downing Street reception



LUSU president, Michael Payne, leaving 10 Downing Street after the reception last week.

by a SCAN reporter

FOUR STUDENTS AND two LUSU Sabbatical Officers last week visited 10 Downing St for a reception with prime minister, Gordon Brown.

While at No 10, LUSU president, Michael Payne, had the opportunity to speak to the prime minister. They talked about the funding received by LUVU and by GreenLancaster for its projects from youth volunteering charity, V, which Mr Brown had a hand in setting up.

Payne said: "I was very humbled

to meet the prime minister. He took a keen interest in the V funding LUSU has secured to support youth volunteering."

Gordon Brown, speaking with Payne said: "V is very close to my heart, and is an excellent charity whose work is very important. You should keep up the good work of inspiring the students of tomorrow."

V is the successor to Millennium Volunteers, which was set up by the government with the aim of encouraging people between the ages of 16 and 24 to get involved in volunteering activities. V was launched in May 2006 after the government's Russell

Commission published the report, A National Framework for Youth Action and Engagement.

Also at the reception were four members of Lancaster University Labour Club: Fraser Welsh, Richard Bennett, Pete Macmillan and Steven McCann; as well as SCAN Editor, Dan Hogan.

The visit was organised by Labour Students, primarily for students who had travelled from across the country to campaign in the Glenrothes byelection on November 6 last year. Labour's victory at Glenrothes, in Scotland, was hailed as a turning point for Gordon Brown's government, ending a string

of byelection losses in previously safe Labour parliamentary seats, and student activists played a large role in the campaign.

Students from around the country attended the reception, including sabbatical and non-sabbatical officers from other students unions and from the National Union of Students.

One fairly recent Lancaster graduate, Claire Reynolds, who graduated from Lancaster in 2003, worked in the No.10 Policy Unit under Tony Blair. She is now one of eight Labour candidates standing for the North West region in the European elections on June 4 this year.

New sabbatical posts to be contested for first time as nominations open

by Liz Houghton
News Editor

NOMINATIONS FOR SABBATICAL positions open this Friday, with the new roles put forward in last term's Sabbatical review being properly tested for the first time.

The review, which was passed at the end of the Michaelmas term, saw changes made to the titles and emoluments of all the Sabbatical roles, with the exception of the Union President. In place of the old Sabb team there will be the Vice-President (Finance, Events, Democracy and Societies), Vice-President (Academic Affairs), Vice-President (Equality, Welfare and Diversity), Vice-President (Media and Communications / SCAN Editor) and Vice-President (Sports).

Unlike under the old constitution

anyone, regardless of gender, can stand for any position. This was not the case before the review, when the position of Women's Officer could only be occupied by a woman.

Janie Coleman, the current LUSU General Secretary, explains: "We had the Sabbatical review to try and improve the representation that we have within the Sabb team. So one of the most important differences we have this year is now anyone - no matter who you are - can have representation on the EWD front and for the first time ever we have a Sabbatical officer who is solely there for academic affairs."

When asked about the challenges facing the new Sabbatical team, Ms. Coleman commented: "I can only hope we get a good selection of candidates. There's a lot of pressure on the Union at the moment with the economic status of the country, and there's a lot that

still needs to be done from a constitutional point of view. There's still room for a non-sabbatical review and restructuring of the non-sabbatical officers. We're only on step one of the Sabbatical review so there's still so much work to do on that."

As well as the emoluments their job titles entail, the new Sabb team will also have to deal with the extra responsibility placed upon them as LUSU trustees. "There is actually a much larger legal and financial responsibility laid upon the shoulders of whoever takes that one board", said Ms. Coleman.

She added: "People who put themselves forward need to be aware of how difficult it is being a Sabb, how time consuming. Rewarding but difficult."

Speaking about her own position as General Secretary, which will be replaced next year by the Vice-President (Finance, Events, Democracy and So-

cieties), Ms. Coleman said: "A lot of my role is incredibly administrative. You're back and forth, back and forth. But the bonus of being a Sabb is that you meet so many people and go to so many places. You have the opportunity to do so many things."

"One of the best things is just being able to help people out and point them in the right direction. I don't regret it for a minute. I've really enjoyed my whole year."

The Sabbatical elections will be held on March 5, with hustings on March 2. Although elected then the new Sabb team won't begin work until the summer.

Positions also up for nomination are Block of Six non-sabbatical officers; part-time students non-sabbatical officer; students with disabilities non-sabbatical officer; and NUS annual conference delegates.

Inter-college debates begin

THIS MONTH THE Lancaster University Debating Society are running a series of inter-college debates. The debates, which started on Monday, are set to run until the final on March 9, when the winning college will be crowned.

All the debates will take place in Fylde Lecture Theatre 1, with drinks in Fylde bar afterwards.

For more information visit the society's website or Facebook group.

The science of romance

ON FEBRUARY 24 Richard Holmes, a leading figure in Romantic studies, will be giving a lecture on 'Romantic Science'. The event will take place in George Fox Lecture Theatre 1, and is free to all members of the public.

Mr. Holmes is an award winning author on the Romantic poets and the period which inspired them. His talk, part of the 2009 Wordsworth Lecture, will focus mainly on his latest work, *The Age of Wonder: How the Romantic Generation Discovered the Beauty and Terror of Science*

Good beer

A CHARITY BEER festival is being held in Lancaster Town Hall, Friday and Saturday of Week 8. The event has been organised by the Round Table - a national organisation which encourages men to get involved in community work. The pumps will be manned by Lancaster University RAG.

RAG - part of LUSU - is dedicated to raising money for local, national and international charities.

For more information about how to get involved visit their website (rag.lusu.co.uk) or the Rag office in the LUSU building on Wednesday afternoon between 1 - 4pm.

Public inquiry into Centros city centre plans

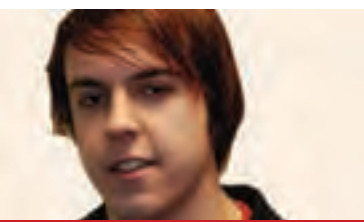
THE DEVELOPMENT OF Lancaster's Canal Corridor site in the city centre are surrounded in doubt after the plans for the site were 'called in' for a government planning inquiry.

Centros, the developer behind the planned £150m retail and cultural development to the East of Lancaster's main centre, have been reluctant to commit to appearing before at the planning inquiry, the Lancaster Guardian reports.

A spokesman for Centros will not confirm if Centros will be attending the inquiry, but did tell the Guardian: "The call-in will add dramatically to the cost and will delay the scheme and it's difficult to comprehend that decision in this economic climate. It goes against the Government's aim of getting the economy moving, and it puts a huge burden onto the developer."

The costs of the inquiry for the developer could reach hundreds of thousands of pounds. Centros however maintains that the project will go ahead, albeit slightly delayed.

scan:COMMENT



Joe Woolmer

Tobacco: 5,000,000. Alcohol: 2,500,000. Cannabis: 2. Which is more harmful?

Cannabis is no more a threat to society than it is damaging to users' health. So where is the sense in reclassifying it to 'B'?

The hypocrisy is unbelievable. Two weeks ago, and only five years since doing the complete opposite, the government reclassified cannabis from a Class C drug, to Class B. Not only is it an undeniable U-turn, but in doing so, they have invented what is essentially a B- (minus) Class for cannabis.

Offenders caught in possession of Class B drugs (excluding Cannabis) face court action, with the prospect of an unlimited fine or five years imprisonment. However, if caught with Cannabis, users are subjected to a 'Three Strike' system in which a warning is issued for a first offence, an on-the-spot £80 fine for a second, and arrest upon the third offence. This is sure to cause confusion among the few users who worry about the classification system. If the government wants to take the issue of cannabis seriously, they need to take a stricter approach.

But the question is, why make this move at all? It is estimated that 166 million people use cannabis worldwide, and numerous reports have identified that of the three, cannabis is less harmful than both tobacco and alcohol. Lib Dem MEP Chris Davies hit the nail on the head by saying "The reality is cannabis has been illegal for 80 years and it has made no difference whatsoever to its usage."

A review commissioned by Gordon Brown, carried out by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, concluded the drug should be kept as Class C, but Jacqui Smith, the Home Secretary, ignored this, going ahead with the reclassification. What is the point in hiring these bodies, commissioning these reviews and asking the opinions



of experts in the field, when the government simply ignores them? This reclassification also pre-empts the launch of a TV campaign warning of the dangers of cannabis, at a stunning cost of £2.2m. This sum of money, given the current economic climate, could be put to better use elsewhere, surely?

Many people suggest that in order to lower crime levels and stop the rise of harsher strains of cannabis, the government should legalise, control and tax the drug, while increasing sentencing for anyone unlawfully distributing it. Until recently this view has been dismissed as foolish, something held by student stoners who don't know what they're talking about. But the Beckley report, compiled by a group of academics and government advisors, and due to be brought before the UN in March, may be about to change that.

The basic outline states that the drug should be sold legally through licensed dealers. This would allow a strict age limit to be imposed to stop children using the drug, reduce criminal activity in the way of gangs who sell it and also finally dismiss the notion that cannabis is a 'gateway' drug. Dealers would no longer be able to offer people alternative, 'harder' drugs, and so eliminate this progression, the report says. It also offers some interesting statistics comparing deaths caused by legal and illegal drugs; Smoking causes 5 million annual deaths, alcohol 2.5 million annually, other illegal drugs 200,000 annually, and cannabis has caused a total of two documented deaths. Ever.

These figures raise the question, are we really prohibiting the right substances? The government claims cannabis can destroy lives and some

have linked it to schizophrenia in later life. Firstly, the schizophrenia concern only applies to a small amount of people who already have the gene in their system; cannabis merely triggers this, rather than being a direct cause. Secondly, any drug, legal or illegal can ruin lives. Users need to spend vast amounts of money and the majority of their waking hours smoking cannabis in order to either become psychologically addicted or have mental issues later in life. Of course, some people do. But what about people who spend vast amounts of money and hours upon hours drinking alcohol or smoking cigarettes? These are far more harmful, yet readily available to any member of the public over 18.

So the health risks are less, but what about social impact? Last weekend, a friend of mine came back from

a night out covered head to toe in mud. He could not speak and was barely able to walk, he came into his own house, threw over a dining table, passed out on the sofa and promptly threw up, everywhere. Compare this to another group of friends, who the other weekend stayed in, built a fort from their furniture, played a board game and watched old wrestling matches on YouTube. It's fairly obvious who had been drinking, and who had been getting high. The levels of violence across this country's towns and cities on Friday and Saturday nights is atrocious, and is mainly due to alcohol, whereas I've yet to come across one stoner who's in the mood for a fight.

I'm not saying everyone who drinks is a demon and everyone who smokes weed is a saint, far from it, but the general effect of cannabis on most people is a calming one, less conducive to violence and recklessness. Lots of people, me included, love a big night out on the town, or to drink enough in advance to forget you're about to go to the Carleton, and it's great that in this country we have that choice. Whereas this U-turn decision by the government is another example of a state which wants to dictate our private lives for us. There are just as many respectable members of society who come home after a hard day's work and relax with a joint, as there are who use a cigarette or glass of fine whiskey or wine, and who are the government to deny them that right? Let's hope when the Beckley report reaches Vienna in March, politicians take it seriously, weigh up the risks, and come to a sensible decision.



Amar Mahmood

This chemical romance is just a pleasant illusion

Valentine's Day is coming up shortly and I'm sure many Lancaster University students will be celebrating it with their partners. Whether Valentine's Day is celebrated by exchanging gifts, a romantic dinner, carnal gymnastics in the bedroom or a combination of more than one of these activities, there will be a feeling among amorous couples that romance is alive and well. Many of my friends also share a similar view that romance exists and it is possible for it to last forever.

I however beg to differ. I'm sure many lovers reading this will be a little surprised that I do not share their rather utopian ideas of romance. That however does not bother me. I do have

my reasons for being a cynic to this whole idea that romance is everlasting. Today we live in a society where the ideas of romance are constantly mocked in films, television and other media with good reason. Not only is romance mocked in fiction but it has also been given the same treatment in the real world.

Let's take the example of falling in love. The chances are that you will fall in love with someone who does not reciprocate that feeling. This is one example of Murphy's Law and in this scenario is interpreted as, 'the amount of love you feel for someone is inversely proportional to how much they love you.' This statement is true in a considerable number of cases; many

people have wasted their time trying to woo someone who is not interested in them. When they are constantly told that it won't work, they resort to drastic measures which only alienate the person they love even further.

From what I have said so far, you utopian lot will be probably be thinking, 'hang on a minute, it is possible for two people to fall in love I'm in a relationship with someone and we really love each other.' True, there is the occasional time when two people do love each other. So what does this mean about my cynicism in romance? Am I wrong to view romance as superficial? The answer is, not exactly. When two people 'fall for each other' what they are feeling is not love but infatuation. What

is actually going on is a complex set of chemical reactions whereby the brain develops an addiction for phenylethylamine, a 'love chemical.' As the brain develops an addiction for this chemical, the effectiveness reduces gradually thereby leading to people falling out of love. This is I'm afraid the stark reality of romance. It is nothing but a mere illusion, to which Valentines Day is a deluded celebration.

So, I have an idea: Let's do away with Valentines Day, borrow an idea from the far east and create in its place something far more deserving: Singles Awareness Day (SAD). So, instead of having a miserable, lonesome Valentines Day, have a happy SAD instead.



Eden Springs' water carries the taste of oppression

Tom Hastings
LU Friends of Palestine

EDEN SPRINGS IS an Israeli company which exploits the water resources of the Golan Heights, in the North of Israel, formerly a Syrian land which was seized in 1967 and illegally annexed from Syria in 1981. 90% of the Syrian population has been expelled by Israeli forces, and by purchasing water from Eden Springs for water coolers and fountains Lancaster University is complicit in the immoral and illegal actions of Israel in expelling citizens from their homelands.

Any Israeli company involved exploiting the natural resources of illegally occupied lands should not be rewarded contracts by Lancaster University. The fact that the contract is with a major spring water company adds insult to injury: Israel is notorious for its expropriation of water resources, including from the Golan Heights, at the expense of the occupied Arab population. By ending all Eden Springs' contracts, Lancaster will send a message that we do not condone Israel's illegal occupation and violations of international law.

Such a boycott would not be without precedent; many (mainly Scottish) universities and companies have already ceased to purchase from Eden Springs on ethical grounds, including Ben and Jerry's, East and West Lothian Councils, Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, Caledonian MacBrayne Ferries, Stevenson College, the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations, and a number of Scottish trade union and student bodies. This has had a significant impact on Eden Springs' business, causing the closure of a distribution centre and loss of profits.

As I am writing this, the situation in Gaza is truly dire, beyond description. Israel has come under much international pressure over this, and though the Golan Heights is a separate area, by boycotting Eden Springs we can show disapproval of Israel's behaviour. It was the disinvestment from South Africa is widely credited as pressuring the South African government to embark on negotiations which ultimately led to a dismantling of the grotesque apartheid system.

In partnership with the SPEAK society at Lancaster Uni and hopefully others, Lancaster Friends of Palestine will be seeking to gather as much support as possible for a boycott of Eden Springs. It is not expected to be easy considering the continual refusal of the university to disinvest from BAE systems, another company which is clearly involved in unethical practices, but try we must.

These issues have a very real impact on us in Lancaster and are important factors in determining whether our future will be that of war and violence due to the crimes that deepen inequality and injustice, crimes that are carried out by, supported and rewarded by our government and our institutions.



Liam Richardson
Comment Editor

The Heathrow plan won't get Labour's poll ratings soaring

Building a pointless and unpopular runway is not the way for Labour to get back in the game

Labour certainly knows how to create problems for itself. With the 'Brown bounce' diminishing and Britain now in the throes of a full blown recession, you would be forgiven for assuming the prime minister would try and avoid controversy in the run up to the 2010 general election. Instead, the expansion at Heathrow airport in the form of a third runway and new terminal (the size of Gatwick incidentally) certainly puts paid to that notion.

The Heathrow decision is a deeply unpopular and unnecessary one. The cabinet is divided, with Harriet Harman, the Milliband brothers, John Denham, Douglas Alexander and Hilary Benn all expressing severe doubts about the £8bn project. So Heathrow is left with transport secretary, Geoff Hoon, fighting its corner; hardly the sort of advocate Heathrow needs, such is his past record as defence secretary from 1999 until 2005.

There are two principal groups of opposition to the Heathrow expansion. The first group is comprised of residents living in the area who will have their homes and communities

destroyed. One MP for the area surrounding Heathrow, John McDonnell, vehemently expressed his disgust in the House of Commons pointing to the 700 homes that will be demolished, schools that will be closed and cemeteries that will be built over. Those left will have to deal with increased noise levels despite half-hearted and overly optimistic assurances from the government that new "green" aeroplanes will be used that are less noisy. Opposition from this community is expected to be particularly forceful and will surely cause a lot of discomfort for Gordon Brown over the next few months.

The second group demonstrating against Heathrow are environmental campaigners. They correctly point out that the government's commitment to reduced carbon emissions is in severe jeopardy already. With the persistent badgering of people to pursue a greener lifestyle and the constant reminders of climate change forced down our throats, it is galling that the Heathrow expansion will cause more damage to Britain's green credentials than anything else possible.

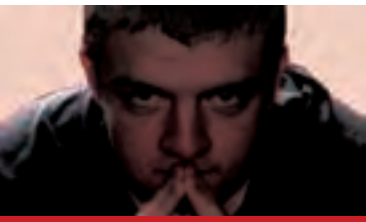
Ed Milliband apparently fought—

with mixed success—for sweeteners to be incorporated into the Heathrow plans. However, promises to get carbon levels to 2005 levels by 2050 is irrelevant due when that the target date is so far in the future. The second sticking point is that the new runway will run at half-capacity for several years initially, raising queries of the point in the expansion and all the associated hassle if the runway isn't going to be used in the first place? The need for a new runway is apparently great: therefore you would imagine the full 702,000 potential flights the runway can provide would have to be utilised.

Supporters of the expansion claim that increased air travel will add an extra £5.5bn to our flagging economy. And there are the employment opportunities to consider: 6000 permanent jobs would be created, complemented by a further 60,000 during the construction stages. But it appears that the environment trails a long way behind business on the government's list of priorities. It is far more concerned with the better access to world markets and improved connections that expanded air travel supposedly offers.

Despite the green light for the expansion—after allegedly being wooed and lobbied by powerful businessmen with a vested interest in the expansion—there are many potential setbacks on the horizon. David Cameron was unequivocal in his vow that a Conservative government would halt the Heathrow project, a clever move that could win over those floating voters already dismayed with Brown's handling of the economy. A commons vote looms large and legal action has been threatened by the London Mayor, Boris Johnson. Protests will undoubtedly be a nasty and poisonous thorn in Labour's side over the coming year.

At a time when a floundering Labour party are languishing in the polls and presiding over a recession that the country may take years to emerge from, the need to make popular and important decisions is greater than ever. Heathrow could be the final nail in the coffin: a move that is unpopular, unnecessary and disastrous for a country and a government that claims to want to tackle climate change head on. That message is sounding very hollow right now.



Paul Gauteng

Praise for Stalin? The Russian bear is stirring once again

Russia's growing boldness feeds the population's appetite for a strong, uncompromising state

The Russian populace are up in arms. Cries of 'vote-rigging!' and 'corruption!' fill the streets. Were this 1917, howls for revolution would echo through the air. Fortunately, this is not a revolution, this was a vote: a vote to award the title of 'Greatest Russian.' None of the 'big' names of the last hundred years won, instead the accolade went to Alexander Nevsky, the thirteenth century prince who protected the early Russian state from multiple invasions. But the protests are being held for one of the losers: Comrade Josef Stalin.

A slayer of more than fifty million people - a record second only to Chairman Mao's - Stalin orchestrated some of the worst crimes, abuses of human life and near-destruction of his own people that has, and probably will be seen in all of human history. Yet the descendants of his victims worship him.

It could be that many Russians see Stalin as having made Russia the great nation that defeated the Nazis. Certainly, the Russian people have an affinity for strong leadership and a still stronger state: each epoch of 'proud' Russian history has been under this kind of control: of governments with a strong grip on both populace and state. Whether that government is monarchic, totalitarian or democratic is not the issue: only that it has been strong.

For a recent example, look at the Russian public's different attitudes for president Gorbachev and prime minister Putin. Gorbachev, the herald of

peace and reform, the man who tore down the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain and freed his people. His achievements gave rise to a peace not seen in Europe or the globe since the beginning of the previous century. Yet he was held to ransom by those he wished to help, and as his government collapsed the USSR disintegrated into a pseudo-anarchy under his leadership. Putin, in contrast, is a different kind of politician: the ex-KGB agent has a tight grip on Russia, on its people and its politics. Now prime minister, he has the powers of the presidency in all but name. His foreign policy is more forceful than Gorbachev's. Actions such as the invasion of Georgia and repeated violations of British air space increase his popularity further. Worst though, is that, unlike Gorbachev, he has no real opposition, no-one of substance to stop him. The media seems to be as firmly under his thumb as at any time under Communism. Nobody is willing to challenge his bellicose politics.

Sadly, the international community is lax in its willingness to resist this new Russian Bear. The ex-Soviet Bloc has no means of defence; the former Warsaw Pact nations who have disagreed with Putin's Russia have been mercilessly crushed through invasion, repression, or the withholding of oil and gas. However, he has not simply restricted Ukrainian access to oil, but to all the oil in Eastern Europe. To withhold the resources of not just one, but thirteen nations, is nothing more

than a show of raw power.

Discontented with its quasi-superpower status, the Russian state is beginning to reassert its authority: Putin is tearing down the alliances that the Motherland's daughters have made with NATO and the EU, and is rebuilding the old Warsaw Pact, creating a new Russian hegemony.

And like the first Warsaw Pact, once the Russian Federation has its claws tightly wrapped around its satellites, it will begin to focus on its key threat - NATO. However, this pact is marked by some new complications: Russia now supplies a vast assembly of nations with oil; Russia is now a capitalist state, and under Putin's guidance the economy has tripled in six years: a colossal rate of expansion, matched only

by the growing ambition and pride of the Russian peoples.

Once more trouble is brewing in Europe, and once again the West is leaving it too late to deal with. As each day passes we come closer to a preventable reckoning. Russians are calling for Stalin to be crowned the Greatest Russian, while the Oligarchs of Russian Politics are growing in power. Yet there is faint hope: despite the rife corruption, despite the idleness of the international community, and despite the alarming potential for new war, Stalin was not crowned Greatest Russian, and only a few thousand, out of Russia's 140 million populace went into the streets. Hopefully, we have more in common with the Russian Bear than we previously thought.



Arctos horribilis: Russia has shown itself willing to use the power it has over Europe's oil and gas to its advantage. (Cartoon from the Economist, May 4, 2006)

A myth most real

Understanding of dyslexia must not be condemned to the shadows, writes
Carys Hepworth

DYSLEXIA AFFECTS APPROXIMATELY six million people in the UK. It is a condition that affects the sufferer's ability to read or spell, and has had among its number Albert Einstein, Pablo Picasso and Winston Churchill. But according to Graham Stringer, MP for Manchester Blackley, the condition is a "myth".

Stringer in a display of total ignorance and disregard for thousands of sufferers, describes dyslexia as a "cruel fiction" invented to excuse bad teaching, before going on to unconvincingly link illiteracy with crime.

His claim, that the "dyslexia industry" should be banished to the "dustbin of history", spectacularly misses the irony: that it is his half-baked prehistoric theories which should, in fact, be banished. Even rail bosses take dyslexia more seriously than Stringer. In 2004 Hove Station ticket clerk, Keith Smith, was sacked for using his popular daily joke board to write: "Hear about the dyslexic who went to a toga party? He dressed as a goat!"

Jenny Talbot of the Prison Reform Trust, in her project Know One Knows, has been investigating the experiences of prisoners with hidden handicaps such as dyslexia or dyspraxia. The words of a prison officer are telling: "The key issue is getting everyone adequately assessed on reception. Many are good at being able to function without anyone suspecting they have difficulties..." And herein lays the sting. You cannot see dyslexia, its symptoms are hidden. As a child in school you cannot verbalise or explain what's going on. What you will do through painful experience is develop survival techniques in order to disguise the problem.

So it is doubly of concern that a man who holds political influence could be so badly misinformed on a painfully real issue which causes sadness and distress for many families. Rather than using his political power to help tackle the problems faced by thousands of school children in their daily struggle with dyslexia, Mr Stringer instead throws around his clumsily formed and wholly unconvincing theories concerning a condition which is fully recognised by medical, psychological and educational professionals.

According to Stringer, the difficulties experienced by dyslexic children in learning to read and write at school are simply a product of bad teaching. If Stringer's patchy theory were true, how could he explain the majority of children who do not experience problems despite learning from the same teachers? Stringer said: "Children who cannot read or write find secondary school a humiliating and frustrating experience. Their rational response, with dire consequences, is to play truant." So far so good. But if this were the case, how is his proposal to "kill off" any understanding of the condition, make no allowances and give no special attention to dyslexic children going to improve the secondary school experience for them? It is hard to piece together his reasoning, to say the least. Maybe he's after a job at Hove Station?



Michael Payne
LUSU President

Relations between LUSU and the University need not mimic parliament

Criticism is an opportunity for progress

With the cyclical nature of certain "hardy perennial" student issues that arise at Lancaster University, and the tussling and bargaining with University Management over issues, you could easily be forgiven for thinking we were in the bear pit of the House of Commons.

Obviously the Students' Union and University have different concerns and their own unique key performance indicators, however we are both here for one reason; to serve the students and make sure their student experience is the best it possibly can be. Whilst the bravado, egos and political manoeuvring—which we are used to seeing in the House are often evident in on campus—campaigns on tuition fees, the future of the colleges, space for societies, etc. all lack one vital element: real discussion and debate.

I accept and realise that the Vice-Chancellor and his team cannot simply tick a weekly shopping list of student needs and thus satisfy us all, but proper consultation, collaboration and compromise, may, every once in a while throw up a beneficial policy or devel-

opment for both the institution and its students: improved contact time, a new plagiarism policy, improved assessment and feedback on coursework are but a few.

It is a great shame that discussions and campaigns often result in the low skulduggery of political point scoring and one-upmanship. When students highlighted Lancaster's chronic graduate employability record, the response from the centre is that when opportunities are presented, "students don't attend." This opposition mindset is reminiscent of the tiresome weekly exchanges in the Commons chamber: David Cameron will accuse Gordon Brown of in fact not ending 'boom and bust'; and Brown will counter that the Tories are the "do nothing party." And so on, and so on.

In difficult and uncertain times, students expect their universities to deal with, discuss and tackle the real issues, just as the population of the UK expects of its leaders. The more appropriate response from the centre would be to ask why the students aren't attending, to ask the students themselves what opportunities would most suit them.

So in a bid to move the campaign around the future of the colleges forward, I have proposed a proper opportunity for a meeting of minds in the guise of a joint working party on the future of our colleges. This is a chance to test whether the watchwords of consultation, collaboration and compromise really are salient or whether we, the students have got it all wrong. This is an opportunity to sit down and hear the opinions and views of a wide range of people. A critical, though constructive process like this one should be seen as an opportunity for reform and development, not as a chance to exercise our tendencies for habitual opposition.

Decisions made in isolated rooms by distant groups can, whether good or bad, often arouse suspicion and promote confrontation, so what is needed now is an open, transparent and frank debate on a wide range of issues within the college system. If Lancaster is to keep its collegiate system for 40 more years, it desperately needs to meet the challenge and reform some of the unsuitable relics of yesteryear that weaken the college system, and strengthen those pillars that support it.

Letters to the Editor



Send your letters to scan@lancaster.ac.uk together with you name and college (even if you would like your letter printed anonymously). Letters longer than 150 words (not including signature) will be shortened. SCAN reserves the right to edit your letters for publication.

We [LUMS] strongly encourage students to express their individuality in their CVs. Writing an effective CV is much harder than many people appreciate, especially as an employer may discard it after 30 seconds. Our Placements Manager spends a lot of time and effort with each student individually trying to tease out exactly what makes him or her stand out from other students and how best to express this on paper. We certainly don't deliberately remove notable achievements as implied – why would we?

Yes, there are rules and formats that students have to follow. These have been tried and tested very successfully over many years, in consultation with employers, and exist solely to benefit students – after all, if one Lancaster student submits a low-quality CV it may damage the chances of many other Lancaster students.

We all want the same thing: for every single student to secure the placement that is the best possible for her or him as an individual. This is our only "target".

Mike Wright
Associate Dean (UG)
LU Management School

After reading the Arts section last issue (Going Underground, Week 3), it's nice to see that Southern bias is alive and well even in student media. Perhaps the Lancaster University Arts Editor would like to review one of the museums in Lancaster, seeing how for many students it is far more local than say London. Or, if Lancaster isn't 'cultural' enough for SCAN Arts, maybe one of the many, many museums and art galleries in Liverpool and Manchester? Again, both score points for being local and, more importantly, affordable. A train ticket to Manchester costs only a fraction of the price of one to London.

Then again, maybe Arts doesn't count the cultural achievements of the North to be as worthy as the South's.

An Affronted Northerner

Ms Abraham has unfortunately confused fiction with fact when using Cat Smith's comment out of context in Scan Wk 3; Cat's comments were not directed towards any of this year's cast members. There was no 'hitting out' and to suggest that the money is going to 'battered Women's shelters' is stereotypically incorrect, if not slightly un-P.C!

My remit was also brought into scrutiny and rightly so. But for clarity, a large part of my remit is to campaign, raise awareness, co-ordinate

More Gaza outrage (all received since Jan 27)

I was very disappointed in the article in your previous edition that tried to justify the recent Israeli attacks on Palestine (Comment, Jan 13). Let's keep things simple: more than 1,000 people were killed, thousands more were injured, thousands more were left with no home, thousands more were prevented from accessing basic necessities like food and water, and thousands more will have been severely traumatised. Remember, this is in the context of a 60 year occupation where Palestinians have been made refugees in their own land and denied basic human rights. No matter what justification is offered up by those who try to support Israel the fact is that their recent attacks were outrageous and rather than trying to support Israel, we should be calling for the Israeli Government and Army to be put on trial for war crimes.

Reza Moosavi

I am pretty shocked and disgusted from the way SCAN has dealt with what has happened in Gaza.

The article "Swap Hamas for Al-Qaida" (Comment, Jan 13) gave justifications to a massacre that killed over 1200 Palestinians and injured thousands. Over half of the victims were children and women and most were innocent civilians. The article deliberately omitted the terrible siege on Gaza before the war has started, which caused several deaths and made the life conditions in the Strip more than miserable. In other words, the message was obviously clear: supporting and justifying mass-killing, siege, and the assassination of human workers

events and facilitate student interest and "The Vagina Monologues" is an educational and entertaining way of engaging people with the issues surrounding domestic violence.

This year's cast of 30 women have never been in the Lancaster performance before, breaking that ridiculous myth of 'feminist cliques'! We rely on students to get involved with this event in order to make our stance against domestic violence loud and clear.

This campaign should engage debate, empower those watching, producing & performing, and it will be a fine showcase of how students at Lancaster are able to give back to the community. I hope the student community will celebrate the campaign for the good cause that it is.

Sara Dunn
Sabbatical Women's Officer
LUSU

and journalists by the Israeli forces.

The article is highly non-academic, immoral and totally biased. It is the Scan staff's responsibility to check the fallacies and manipulation of facts before anything gets published, otherwise Scan would lose its credibility as reliable source of information

Amr Faham

There is an immense asymmetry between the Palestinians and Israelis when it comes to military power. The world is only now beginning to understand the inhumanity of the Israel's attacks against the entire population of Gaza. It baffles the mind that SCAN would allow the publication of the article by Paul Gauteng which somehow tries to justify this indiscriminate killing on a massive scale.

I'm also particularly offended by the image accompanying the article. What, may I ask, do veiled women have to do with this topic. The media's continued association of the veil with terrorism (alleged or otherwise) needs to stop. I urge the SCAN team to exercise better judgement on the implications of de-contextualising such images.

Bandar Al-Hejin

I would like to address how the Israeli-Hamas conflict is portrayed in the article in SCAN (Comment, Jan 13). Although I understand and empathise with the Israeli perspective, would it be possible to publish any article offering a response to the published article, which takes into account of Hamas and the Palestinian perspective.

I would appreciate the balance as it would clearly reflect the complex world we live in.

Summer Shammakhi

Editor's response

I apologise for any offence caused by Paul Gauteng's piece on Jan 13. It does not represent the views of SCAN, LUSU or myself. That being said, as a comment piece, it was clearly one person's opinion, and did not pretend to be entirely objective, nor devoid of bias. I see no obligation for such pieces to be 'neutral', indeed that would rather defeat the point of an opinion piece.

Most, if not all of the factual inaccuracies or omissions in the piece are due to the time at which it was written: at the very beginning of the three-week conflict. Therefore, it does not take into account later events, or the appalling final death-toll.

Protests against Israel's actions have received significant news coverage in the last two issues of SCAN. A response to Gauteng's piece, by Faye Almari, was printed on page 12 in the last issue of SCAN, on Jan 27. Since then, a number of letters have been received calling for a response - I urge them to find a copy of the last issue.

The Israel/Palestine situation is one of great controversy, with strong feelings across the spectrum. But anyone claiming that one side has sole possession of the truth or the morality of the matter, only serves to further the logic of conflict, instead of resolving it.

Dan Hogan
Editor, SCAN

'University Challenged' correction

I would like to correct some errors and misconceptions in the 'University challenged' article that appeared in SCAN in week 3.

The programme was first aired in 1962, and far from being 'an arena for Redbrick institutions like Oxford and Cambridge', these two universities suffer from the distinct disadvantage of having to compete as individual colleges, reducing the number of available contestants from many thousands to, in some cases, a few hundred. No Cambridge college has won the series since 1995, yet quotas are tacitly applied to qualifying teams to ensure that the competition is not dominated by these two institutions. It is almost unnecessary to point out that Oxford and Cambridge are not Redbrick universities.

Finally, your article ignores the

fact that the last Lancaster team to qualify for the televised stages was not in 2004, but in 2007/08, when the team reached the last 18 from around 200 entrants. I was the captain on this occasion.

Tom Fanshawe
Graduate College.

I'd just like to point out that the caption on page 2 of the Week 3 issue of Scan says the last time the University made it to the televised rounds of University Challenge was in 2004, however last year the University was in the first televised round of the year against Nottingham university. Unfortunately we lost, but I remember it as I was in the audience at the time.

K. J. Cheetham
Physics Department

Fellow cake-loving student (Letters, Jan 27), I'm sorry you find the idea of free cake unpalatable. More than that, I'm frankly surprised that you have attributed an item of delicious confectionary with theological values! While I have been a connoisseur of cake for many years, I have yet to find one that affected my religious or moral beliefs in any way. Accepting a leaflet for free drink at a club doesn't mean you're committing yourself as someone who drinks, nor does a flyer from a charity mean you care about the cause- and cake doesn't require commitment to be enjoyable! As for being late for lectures, I have been stopped more often by club reps or Pizza Hut advertisers than Christians. Perhaps I should forgo pizza?

Cake-loving Cartmellan

We would like to point out some aspects of the bar that have been overlooked in the SCAN coverage of the bar situation and its "significant price rises" (SCAN Jan 13, 2009). A main point is when looking at the bar prices SCAN always fails to mention the amazing offers that are on which cater for a huge range of people. Offers such as a 75p reduction on the price of Tetleys, £1.10 reduction on a bottle of Kronenbourg 1664, and bottles of wine are under a fiver. Not to mention the Purple Card offers which run Monday, Wednesday and Friday weekly. Granted some of these offers are 'January Sales' but due to their success, it would be unfair to assume there won't be any continuing offers.

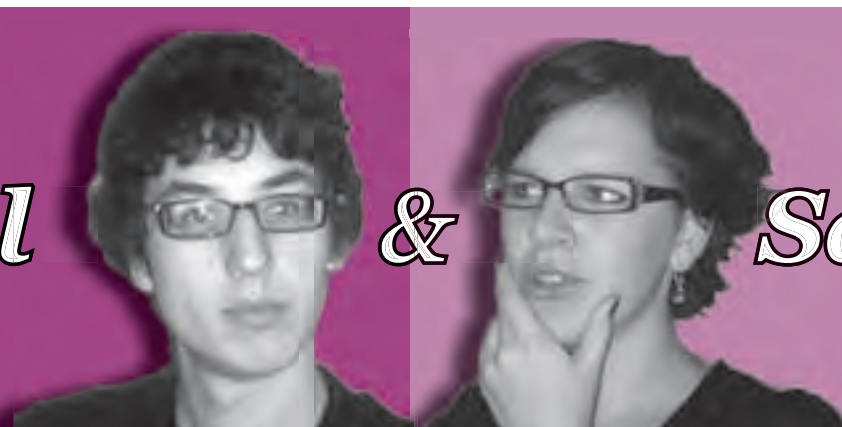
In conclusion, the bars ARE cheap. Drink in them.

three 'company' bar staff:
Jonny Morgan (County),
Stu Powers (County),
Phil Eveleigh (Pendle)

Rory O'Brien's letter in the Jan 27 issue is completely right, but he's only at the tip of the iceberg. Attempting to find practise space last year, I found that the University apparently does not own a drumkit and cannot provide practise spaces with amplifiers. And even if it could, I understand that music students are given cards to access practise rooms and are fined if anyone else uses them to get in. It isn't discrimination on the grounds of a science degree versus an arts degree, it's just a shortcoming of the University. Luckily, there are pianos all over the place, and the Music Co-op in town is cheap and reasonably good, but I'd love to see the University do more.

Reid Wason, Bowland

Michael & Sarah



A Woman who likes the finer things in life and a Young Man who has dumps like a truck devour the relationship issues of Lancaster University whole.

(Note: ...truck, truck, truck.)

Dear Michael & Sarah

They say that university is supposed to be the best years of your life. But I am in my final year and my life has never been in such a rut. Everyday is the same: ending in my flat, drunk, alone, playing videogames. I am a twenty-one year old male virgin and **I'm starting to think it will never happen.**

X

SARAH: You seem to have given up on the possibility of enjoyment and this is the first area you need to work on. You have allowed yourself to fall into this rut by accepting the commonplace activity of your life, so I'm afraid it is down to you to get yourself out. Change your routine by avoiding your flat and the boredom it signifies and spend more time with friends. Perhaps you could try something new together, trampolining or tapas might provide entertainment and break the stalemate that is your life. An image overhaul could make you more confident, attractive and less solitary, and furthermore could charm a potential partner. Stop moping, get out of your flat and make an effort to involve yourself in the frivolous abandonment of university. Soon enough you will be queuing in the job centre caught in the centre of a credit crunch. Make the most of now – in hindsight these will be good days! As for the sex, take tips from the final question...

MICHAEL: 'It ain't over till the fat lady sings'... this is exceptionally good advice as at your advanced stage of Virginosity finding that particular fat lady is the most expedient route to defloweration. For all its mythologizing losing your virginity is never as hard or as big a deal as you have built it up in your mind; A butterfly has a lifespan of about a week; it emerges from it's pupae, finds a mate and dies within the time-frame it takes to level up a few times on world of warcraft... As long as you are aware of your failings and the time you have left to rectify them you're already on the first step to salvaging what's left of the best years of your life. Get out there. Don't drink too much alcohol. Don't have unrealistic expectations of your own self-worth. Keep an air of calm and perspective and find that fat-slapper that you've always dreamed of!

Dear Michael and Sarah

Whilst I get plenty of dates, I am lacking in sexual confidence. I always attract attention and am happy to go after girls, but when it gets to sex I never know how to go about it. I mean, I know how to have sex but I'm never sure if the girl is as keen as me, so **more often than not I pretend to be a gentleman and just go to sleep.** How can I tell if a girl is as keen on the action as me?

X

SARAH: Presumably if you have got as far as the crucial moment of potential penetration then you've been doing something right. Presumably the young lady in question is enjoying the attention that you are lavishing on her and is allowing you to continue in your sexual attempts. Presumably you don't ask (NEVER a good thing to do!) 'do you want to have sex now?' I can only presume about your predicament as I fortunately have no direct involvement. You do. Instead of worrying about sex

try to enjoy everything that comes before and involve yourself fully in the scene as chances are your concerns are blocking the subtle hints women drop. If the girl is unwilling to take it further you will soon be informed. Either a slap or a stern 'no' will disrupt your fantasies. One attempt to break the uncertainty is to produce a condom, there can then be no confusion as to what you are wanting to do. Unless you boasted earlier in the evening of your talent for making balloon animals.

Dear Michael & Sarah

I find myself afraid to sleep at night; I keep having recurring nightmares wherein I have my eyes pecked out by **that awful scruffy goose that stalks the university duck pond.** The insomnia is beginning to severely affect my studies. It petrifies me so. What should I do!?

X

SARAH: Dreams about eyes often denote knowledge, understanding and exploring a perspective. Injured eyes tend to mean that you are not addressing an issue in your life and your repressed pain is manifesting itself in your goose nightmares. Is there any imminent problem in your life that involves knowledge, repressed pain and a goose? Firstly you need to address the nature of the dreams, examine your anxiety and try to locate the source of the nightmare: what could the goose be a representation of? Secondly, the dream need not impair you in your day to day life, and for goodness sake don't choose to remain in the university bubble that is campus, town is a vital part of your healing. Whilst I would not advise approaching the goose I would encourage sightings as this will help you to overcome the nightmares. Try to incorporate a bus journey into your week so that you can confront the fear you feel. Finally, visit a doctor about the insomnia and remove anything that reminds you of geese from your bedroom.

MICHAEL: Ah! The creature ye refer to be the 'Devil Goose' ('Ganso Del Diablo') legend has it that the creature used to be a normal Goose just like any other; had himself the most wonderful Goosey Wife she was the most beautiful Goose I laid eyes on in all my years, I woulda fluffed my pillows with her feathers, if you know what I mean. However a union so beautiful was never meant to last. Many moons ago when the Gypsies invaded the fields of Lancaster University back in the far flung days of 2007 the Gypsies barbecued and ate his Goosey Wife right before his very eyes. This sent the Goose into a spiralling madness; the University management like to keep this *hush hush* but allegedly the Gypsies didn't just leave, like in official accounts of the tale, I hear tell the Goose tore them all limb from limb that same night; but even revenge could not cool his souls anguish. I think that these dreams of yours are prophetic. Only you can bring peace to the beast's soul by appeasing his insatiable libidinal despair. Rent a Goose costume from a fancy dress shop and offer yourself as a carnal sacrifice to the goose. Email us next week and tell us how it went.

If you have an issue you'd like to ask Michael & Sarah about, write to them at michael_unt_sarah@hotmail.co.uk.

Anonymity guaranteed.

MICHAEL: It's time for a little solidarity brother. This is a problem that afflicts me. Sometimes the prospect to engage in sex appears so sparsely that when it does eventually come along I can get utterly caught in the headlights and have no idea where to even begin and instead just settle for the embarrassing compromise of sleep... This is not a tactic I recommend as you can spend the rest of your days kicking

yourself and trying to reclaim an opportunity that you will likely not be afforded again. Live by the creed of 'carpe diem'... Seize the day my friend. Next chance you get be honest and transparent in your attentions and afflictions... then stick your tongue in her fanny and go from there.

For official LUSU Advice, go to the LUSU Advice mini-site at advice.lusu.co.uk or pop into the Advice Centre (open 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday in the LUSU Building, underneath SPAR)

An Officer and not such a Gentleman



The foolproof guide to getting the girl, presented by **Rebecca Blackmore**

NOW GENTS, LISTEN up. Are you having trouble wooing that girl who makes your heart flutter? Not having the luck you expected with the opposite sex? It may be time to re-evaluate your romantic technique.

Firstly, some common mistakes. If you are in the habit of attempting to jump on women in clubs then we have our first problem. Don't do it. Just don't. You will look like a creep and repel women rather than attract them. Secondly, the old adage of treat them

mean, keep them keen'... nonsense. Don't even go there. Similarly, don't expect women to do all the work. Most of us are old fashioned creatures and like the man to make the first move.

But never fear, I am here to help, not shoot you down and leave you helpless and cowering faced with the prospect of a loveless future. Take heed to my words of wisdom and romantic bliss will soon be in sight.

You want to know how to make women happy? Pay attention to chick flicks. Don't blame them for giving women unrealistic expectations of romance. Watch. Listen. And act accordingly. I don't mean you have to come striding into our lectures in a white

suit and sweep us off our feet, but grab yourself a female friend, offer to watch a chick flick (they might just fall in love with you right there and then just for that) and watch what makes them smile/swoon/cry.

Take note and improvise using Hugh Grant/Freddie Prinze Jr/Tom Cruise as your guide. You will be surprised at just how romantic you can be. Then you will be well on your way to that perfect romance with the girl of your dreams.

Just be wary of which bits you pay attention to; grey pants may work for Rhys Ifans, but they won't for you. Trust me.

The effects of Blame Culture

Who's fault is it really, asks **Alexandra Lainsbury**

WE LIVE IN a coddled time. While many people in the world suffer the harsh realities of everyday life, in this country we fail to take responsibility for anything – especially our actions.

The world is dumbed down for us. Health and safety means we are warned that fire is hot and falling from great heights causes damage. Even supermarkets colour-code nutritional information, because we couldn't be expected to look at, let alone understand, the table on the side that tells us the same thing.

Is it any wonder when ordinary people cannot look after themselves? Is it the individual or their environment that has caused this worrying rise in stupidity? So many cases hit the news where people sue companies for not preventing them doing something stupid, that we could practically name an "age" after it. This isn't the Stone Age or the Iron Age; it is the Lawsuit Age.

Blame culture isn't new, but in recent years it has become much worse. It is easy to dismiss this as an American trend, but while it may have started in the United States, it is now a global phenomenon.

In America, there is a special set of awards dedicated to exposing the most ridiculous lawsuits of each year; the Stella Awards. Created by Randy Cassingham, it is named after the famous case of the woman who sued McDonalds when her coffee burnt her. Another entry was the case of a man from Indiana who was hit by lightning in an amusement park car park and sued,

claiming the amusement park had failed to warn him about the dangers of lightning. While it has been debated whether the specific cases mentioned in the awards actually happen, it is true that similar (if not as extreme) cases take place regularly.

This trend of suing leads to more dumbing down. Companies use labels like "Caution: hot" on steaming coffee and "May contain nuts" on packets of peanuts to cover themselves. The result is less individual thought, exacerbating blame culture.

Is it just us normal citizens? Or are governments as bad? Take global warming as an example: Britain had a period of huge industrial growth in the 1700s, pouring masses of coal smoke into the atmosphere, but fails to take the blame for global warming. In Brazil, the government allows the destruction of miles of rainforest, but no blame is taken. America and Australia refused to sign the Kyoto treaty (a promise to reduce emissions). China, despite being the world's biggest consumer of coal, refuses to acknowledge the dangers of polluting the world, thinking that as a growing country, it has a right to cheap, dirty fuel. So it is no wonder that blame culture filters down to us. Who can hold United Airlines passenger Yoichi Shimamoto responsible for getting drunk and beating his wife? It is the fault of the airline serving him the drinks. We don't need to think, because someone else will do it for us. So just remember: no matter what you do, it will never be your fault.

Society, Self-Invention and Scandal

Professor Terry Eagleton gives an insight into 'The Doubleness of Oscar Wilde', as related by **Christina Anderson**

ON MONDAY 26TH January, students and lecturers filled the Faraday Lecture Theatre to hear one of the world's leading literary critics give a public lecture on 'The Doubleness of Oscar Wilde'.

Terry Eagleton has been Chair in the English and Creative Writing department since October 2008. He is best known for his critical work and has been described in the press as the "punk" of literary criticism.

His position as Chair involves giving public lectures and seminars that are mainly for post-graduate study. Speaking after the lecture, he said: "I'm very grateful to Lancaster for being imaginative enough to allow me to

do various things" within this role.

Famous for his Marxist view of literary theory, it is fitting that the subject of Eagleton's lecture was an author who desired the abolition of private property. The focus of this lecture was Oscar Wilde's heritage and its effect on his life and work.

This aspect of Wilde's life is sometimes overlooked. Eagleton noted that upon viewing his play, Saint Oscar, one woman asked "Was Wilde really Irish or is he making that up?" In fact he came from Dublin, a city which was, like the rest of Ireland in the 19th century, a "parody" of metropolitan Britain.

Eagleton observed that most things about Wilde were "doubled, hybrid, ambivalent". He felt "both Irish and English", was "a socialist but only ate in the best restaurants", "socialite and sodomite", "upper class and underdog".

Descended from what Eagleton



called a "flamboyant bunch", Wilde inherited an Anglo-Irish consciousness from his father, but a non-conformism from his fiercely nationalist mother.

Eagleton spoke of Wilde's class background, describing his Anglo-Irish protestant status as "schizoid" because it rendered him "ruler and victim, cen-

tral and marginal" all at once.

This contributed to Wilde's infamous wit, evident in so many of his works. He came to England with the aim of being "more English than the English". He mastered the customs of Victorian England in what Eagleton described as a "look no hands way". Was

this flattery, mockery or conformity? Either way, it was because of his position as an outsider that he mastered English conventions while "recognising their absurdity".

Wilde used humour in many of his well-known plays like The Importance of Being Earnest, full of high spirits and characters without a care in the world. But Eagleton reminded us that Wilde's fiction contained darker subject matter of "shady origins, split personalities and oppressive patriarchal powers".

It was on the play's opening night that Wilde was arrested for "gross indecency" with other men and when the scandal broke the play was taken off the stage.

Wilde saw the norm as something to be immediately violated. Eagleton connected this cavalier attitude with his colonial inheritance. It was Wilde's instinct to experiment. He was the original self-inventor, so much so that even when he was sent to prison, he treated it as his "latest pose".

Eagleton closed with his view of Wilde as a "gentle and compassionate man" who once gave his coat to a shivering beggar on London Bridge. He identified his real crime as being too funny about that which Victorian society took seriously. The evening provided an intriguing insight into a fascinating literary figure.

Busking in a bookshop

Daniel Ash
Features Editor

THE FRIENDLY PEOPLE who make up the Northwest's Oxjam division have been tirelessly organising and running acoustic events for weeks. Being the charitable and giving person that I am I decided to offer up my services to add to their bevy of six-string strumming enthusiasts.

So on January 25 I found myself heading down to the local Oxfam bookshop, tatty guitar in hand, to assist in enticing people into the merry and generous world that is Oxjam. Dreams of becoming an exulted guitar virtuoso being left behind in my teen years, I have still always felt the desire to showcase my dubious talents in a public setting. To this end, I tactically enlisted the help of an old friend who had the useful skill of singing and the ability to let me know when I was screwing up. Together we were prepared to rock the Oxfam shop like it had never been rocked before.

On arriving we were allowed to take full advantage of the tea and coffee making facilities while we met our like-minded acoustic entertainers. First to take the stage, or the front of the shop where we were placed to draw in interested by-passers, was Kish, whose dextrous playing in the style of Nick Drake started making me and my friend nervous. If they were all this good, our plan to rock out would be seriously compromised. Joe Gillot, again possessed an impressive talent; his melodic voice sounded like a pleasant mix of Kate Nash and Jack Johnson. A local three-piece band called The Low Countries combined the elements of guitar, banjo, and a toddler with a xylophone, all to good effect.

A cold sweat broke out on my brow once the happy charm of The Low Countries had subsided. The previous singers had got everyone in the store into a very good mood with their cheerful songs, but now it was our turn. We took the mood in a slightly different direction with our set of *Good Riddance* (a song which got the remark

'vintage'), *Mr Brightside*, *Four Winds* and *House of the Rising Sun*. After encouraging as many people as possible to join in with our final song, and playing it with slightly more gusto than perhaps was warranted, we relinquished the floor to rapturous applause and universal approval (more or less). A lady of a blues-orientated nature was drawn into the event to fill our place, who in turn was succeeded by a man called John Newsham, who ended the event in light-hearted style.

The organiser of the event, Christina Donovan, was very pleased with the success of her series of Acoustic Sunday events, which she sums up as "busking in a shop" advocating it as "better than live radio any day." The events were designed to raise awareness of Oxjam and to inspire other people in the local community to organise their own events. To this end three more organisers were recruited, so look out for more events over February and March, including the chance for bands to compete to open the main stage at the Wickerman Festival this year.



The Manjushri Kadampa Meditation Centre (Photo: Daniel Ash)





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Panic for Graduates

How has graduate employment been affected in previous times of recession, asks **Christina Anderson**

GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT IS a concern for most students and planning a successful career is rarely easy. Now it seems it will be even harder for those graduating this year.

Martin Birchall, chief executive of High Flyers Research, described 2009 as "one of the worst years of the last two decades to be graduating from university". Despite the graduate job market appearing to stay strong until last August, it now emerges that after the summer of 2008 graduate employment was at its lowest for 5 years.

Recruitment targets for graduate entry level jobs are down 17% overall and 47% in the financial sector.

The recession is the main cause of this slump; it started in the financial services and the City, usually one of the main sources of graduate jobs. The sectors which are most affected are

banking, accountancy, engineering and retail.

Over the last 30 years graduate employment rates have generally grown. However, problems similar to those experienced this year have occurred in the past. Two such instances were in 1991/92 and 2002/03. So what happened in those cases?

During the last recession in 1991 graduate vacancies fell by 32%. A similar, but less dramatic, fall came in 2002/03 following the dot.com crisis. In such cases employers made dramatic cuts in graduate recruitment; however, by doing this they put their reputations in jeopardy and missed out on recruiting talented employees.

In 1991 Marks and Spencer dismissed 250 of the 300 graduates it hired. It is keen not to repeat this mistake and plans to invest in graduates,



Mansions, monasteries and meditation: Buddhism around Lancaster

Discover Conishead Priory, with **Daniel Ash**

TUCKED AWAY IN the lush greenery of the Cumbrian foot hills lies an old English manor house, known as Conishead Priory, visible from the A5087 you can see its dusty exterior blending seamlessly into the dramatic backdrop of the Lake District.

What you might not expect is that a short walk around the back of the renovated mansion will take you to a temple, built in a modern yet unmistakably Asian fashion, which belongs to the International Kadampa Buddhist Union. The site itself has had a settlement on it since the 12th Century when Augustinian monks founded a hospital for the poor. Since then the place has undergone many changes and reconstructions. The original building was destroyed during the Reformation, and the current one was built in 1836 as a family home.

In its time the house has been used as a spa, miners' convalescent home and a wartime military hospital, until it was bought in the 70's by a Buddhist organisation and renovated into the existing structure. Renovation work is

ongoing, and the centre has recently been granted funding by English Heritage to repair the roof of the mansion.

If you begin your tour at the front of the 19th Century, romantic Gothic mansion, the site looks very similar to the several other historic mansions in the area. The difference first arises when walking through the front door into the parlour, instead of the musty odour of dust and brick, a faint, underlying scent of incense grabs your attention. Looking through the doors into the house you can see a large golden statue of Buddha surrounded by gilt ornaments in an alcove at the bottom of a flight of wooden stairs. The juxtaposition between historic, dark English decor and bright, Asian ornamentation is surprising but bizarrely complimenting.

To reach the temple you go around the side of the mansion to the back of the sprawling manor house. On first sight, the visitor is greeted with white walls, large glass windows, sloping golden beams and golden statues, all of which compromise the Manjushri Kadampa Meditation Centre. This temple, consecrated in 1997, serves as the main meditation hall for practitioners of the New Kadampa Tradition. The centres

primary use is to house the events of the spring and summer festivals. The festivals draw a crowd of thousands, from people all over the world, who go to receive teachings directly from the Buddhist Master, Venerable Geshe Kelsang Gyatso. It is anticipated that the summer festival this year, which will run for two weeks from July to August, will draw the largest crowd since the event started running. The centre is also used to house numerous other events, such as meditation retreats and courses that range from instruction on Buddhist philosophy, to learning about Buddhist art.

Going through the doors of the temple takes you into a large open room with a very serene atmosphere. The wall directly opposite the door draws the eye, as it consists of a huge glass case with several large, gold painted bronze statues, including the largest statue of its kind of Buddha made in the West. All around the temple can be found numerous interesting artefacts of the Buddhist religion. In the left hand corner of the temple is a Mandala, which I believe is best defined as a three-dimensional representation of Buddha's celestial mansion. In the right hand corner of the temple is a large cabinet full of the teachings of Buddha and commentaries upon those teachings. In the middle of the roof is a Dharma Wheel, this contains precious scriptures and symbolises the teachings of Buddha spreading throughout the world.

At the back of the room are the many statues which flank the large golden Buddha, as I learnt whilst I was there, the surrounding statues are representations of different aspects of Buddha's mental and physical form. In the centre of the room, in front of the statue of Buddha, is the Teaching Throne, this is the seat of the Venerable Geshe Kelsang Gyatso for when he speaks in the centre.

As well as all the statues and paintings, scattered throughout the temple there are sets of seven bowls full of water, as well as bottles of orange juice, bags of Kettle crisps, Ferrero Roches, cookies and chopped up Battenberg

cake. The ritual of placing such things before figures and paintings is undertaken daily to help focalise the mind and traditionally consists of seven bowls full of water which represent offerings such as incense, drinking water, cleaning water, and other similar substances. On top of this, the Buddhists are also free to offer up anything that they find beautiful or welcoming, hence the Battenberg.

In the temple you will also find a guide or a monk on hand to answer any questions you might have about the temple, or about Buddhism in general. On the advice of the guide I bought one of Geshe Kelsang Gyatso's introductory books on meditation as a way to understand more about Buddhism as a religion. If you would also like an insight into Buddhism this is a brilliant place to go, it is friendly and welcoming, with lots of ways to learn and explore about Buddhism, and it is also very intriguing as a place of local historical interest. Be sure to check their website for dates to go, as whilst it is open all year round, some things are not open every day.

Alternatively you can get involved with the religion on campus. The university is home to several practising Buddhist groups who are always willing to take onboard new people. If you want to get fully involved with Buddhism, have an interest in the religious and philosophical aspects, or if you want to explore it as a beneficial addition to your ever-day life, the different traditions on campus can help you. Paul Taylor, a member of the Soto Zen tradition, advocated that Buddhism and meditation can be very beneficial to a person on multiple levels and that it is a very individual experience. Due to the fact that different traditions have differences in style and philosophy, Mr Taylor recommended that multiple traditions should be explored, so as to find the one that 'resonates' with you the best individually. If you are keen to get involved then a good route into Buddhism on campus would be to contact Jen Whitfield the Chaplaincy Centre Secretary, who will be able to give you the relevant information on the different Buddhist groups on campus.

ensuring it has a supply of future talent.

A similar sentiment has been expressed by the graduate recruitment manager at Lloyds TSB, Jonathan Mayes. He says they will hire graduates as they are "taking the long-term view and believe in graduate recruitment because we are building our future leaders. It is a long-term investment".

Mike Hill, chief executive of Graduate Prospects, supports this statement, saying that there are more graduate jobs than 10 years ago and many employers are running traditional graduate recruitment schemes. While many companies have been affected badly, the proportion of graduates who go into blue chip organisations is usually only 10%. The rest look to other areas of the economy.

Another consequence of the recession in 1991/92 was the rise in students continuing on to postgraduate study. More than 30% opted for this, hoping the market would have improved by the time they finished. However, recent reports indicate that this time students are not as keen on this option.

The situation is still worrying for Lancaster students. Even before the credit crunch many universities, in-

cluding Lancaster, had a high amount of graduates in "non degree level" jobs six months after leaving university.

But it is not only the recession which has had an effect. The government's target is for 50% of school leavers to go on to further education. By encouraging more teenagers to go to university the amount of graduates has risen from 206,000 to 300,000 in the last 10 years. The problem now is that there are more graduates and even fewer jobs for them to chase. This has meant that the advantage of having a degree has declined financially, with extra lifetime earnings of graduates falling from an estimated £400,000 in 2004 to £100,000 currently.

Nevertheless, the government maintain that it is worth pursuing this target because an educated workforce is the best way for the country to move out of the recession. Skills Secretary John Denham calls our generation "the children of the baby-boomers" and asks "what do we do with them?"

This has led to the development of the proposed National Internship Scheme, in which four companies, including Microsoft and Barclays, are taking part. The three month internship is paid, but at a lower rate than a



typical starting salary.

Denham claims the internships will improve graduates' skills and in some cases lead to full time work with the company, who won't want to let the best interns go.

However, critics have questioned how many graduates the scheme will realistically be able to help. The small number of businesses taking on a few hundred graduates may not match the scale of the problem. Barclays has said it is not planning to increase its number of internships, which is currently around 200 graduates per year.

Some students have said that it sounds better than being unemployed, but also identify another problem – those who have not participated in these internships will be at a further disadvantage. Also, many graduates will have already completed internships and could be disheartened by this option.

While this situation has occurred before, it still won't be easy. Advice from NUS and other careers services is to accept that there will be more competition, be prepared to take on unpaid work experience and look to smaller businesses as well as large companies.

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Simply Shakespeare

A Midsummer Night's Dream Propeller Theatre Company

by Hannah Mason

WHEN I DISCOVERED Propeller were returning to the Liverpool Playhouse to perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I was bursting with anticipation and excitement. Having seen Propeller stage *The Winter's Tale* and *The Taming of the Shrew* I knew their version of Shakespeare's most well-known and loved comedy would not leave me disappointed.

The story tells of four young lovers in Athens and a group of mechanicals rehearsing a play, and what happens one midsummer night when they stumble into a forest full of fairies, where the king and queen are arguing bitterly. The story is renowned, but the way Propeller perform it is distinct for one major reason: everyone, from the king of the fairies to the female lovers are played by men. Though this is undoubtedly how it would have been performed in Shakespeare's time, the image of a broad shouldered and bald man (no wigs here!) playing a thoroughly feminine woman can, at least at first, take you aback. How Richard Dempsey, who plays Titania (and previously played Peter in the BBC's adaptation of *The Chronicles of Narnia*) can walk so elegantly in a pair of heels I'll never know. But after you've got over the initial hesitation it really doesn't matter what gender the actors are.

The first time I saw the set I was dazzled. Draped in an ethereal white fabric with ornate white chairs suspended in mid air, a sense of dream and unreality was already cast over the production. The set was particularly complimented when two large sheets were pulled back to reveal and introduce Titania and Oberon (Richard Clothier) lounging on hanging benches at opposite ends of the stage in all their royal, unearthly magnitude. Accompanied with fervent and haunting music from instruments like harmonicas (performed by members of the cast) whenever fairies were



Puck drops some magic potion in Lysander's eye. All the cast are men: even fairies and young women were played by men, as of old! (Photo: Richard Termine/BAM)

about, the atmosphere was complete.

From the moment it began, the audience was quite literally spellbound, a great feat considering no fewer than four school trips were attending the performance. The actors successfully managed to embrace every possible funny situation with superior fluidity and understanding of the Shakespearean

language while combining physical theatre to help interpret the text to a modern audience. The dialogue was not performed in the expected cut-glass accents either with the mechanicals speaking in broad Northern accents, which especially worked in the absolutely hilarious climax involving their performance of *Pyramus and Thisbe*.

My only possible criticism is purely personal. The ensemble, with the exception of three out of the fourteen actors has changed dramatically from past performances, and some of the new actors do at times lack the polish and skill of the absentees. This is however a minor quibble, as it does not detract from the exceptional quality of

the performance. Director Edward Hall and his cast continue to impress with their unique interpretations of Shakespeare's works, and I only hope they will return to the Playhouse or even visit Lancaster soon.

Back to the 80s

Back to the Future at the Dukes

by Richie Garton
Arts Editor

WHO SAYS TIME travel isn't possible? Having paid a low 1980s ticket price for admission, I entered the cinema to find it thronged with people, their eyes glued to an enormous screen showing a flickering projection of *Back to the Future*. The atmosphere was phenomenal. Everyone there was really getting into the movie, which was a first for me; I've never been to see a film before where the audience cheered at certain moments or clapped at the end (I'm more used to fifteen-year-old chavs chatter-

ing on the back row). The fact that the film kept jumping and the sound went occasionally dodgy only added to the sense of being in 1985, when people actually enjoyed going to the pictures.

Now, onto the film itself. It can't be denied that *Back to the Future* is an iconic piece of cinema; along with *Ghostbusters*, it practically defines the 80s. This is slightly ironic because a lot of it is set in the 50s, but because of this the music, fashion and lifestyle of the 80s are even more exaggerated and pronounced. The film is fast-paced and thrilling, and features some truly likeable characters, but you tend to forget how downright hilarious it is. Most of



the humour comes from the demented yet brilliant scientist Dr. Emmet Brown (Christopher Lloyd), who invents the time-travelling DeLorean. His insane facial expressions, wild exclamations and back-and-forths with smart teenage hero Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) had me (and the rest of the audience, particularly the girls sitting behind me), in stitches. It's hard to believe a film can be this fun, it's like a roller-coaster ride (so much so that they actually made a ride of it in the Universal Studios theme park). Seeing it on the big screen was a wonderful, nostalgic experience.

All fired up

Time out at the ceramics cafe

by **Lizzie O'Brien**
Arts Editor

SOMETIMES THING GO a little wrong. There are days, weeks (months, years...) where our daily lives seem to go awry. Those ever-looming coursework deadlines cause one's mind to feel as though it is constantly on the brink of one almighty explosion. And in these desperate times, what one needs is a nice cup of tea and a sit down – somewhere outside the four walls of the pokey student bedroom with its towers of books and depressing reminders of work still not completed...

My little getaway is a small ceramics cafe tucked away on New Street, with a giant rocking horse above the door and a somewhat eclectic music selection. I think it has to be one of my favourite places to sit down and chill out with a spot of tea and a good book. But that is not why we are talking about it in the Arts Section!

First things first – you pick the thing you want to paint, be it eggcup, teapot, or piggybank. If you have never been before, someone will sit you down and explain how to create your ceramic masterpiece – basic little things like where are the stencils, and how to create a certain effect, or common mistakes to avoid. Then, if you are feeling



really brave you can leap straight into the paint, although I definitely prefer to draw mine out in pencil first. There is always a danger of being far too ambitious and not finishing in time, but your studio fee lasts two sessions so you can always go back and finish it off.

All Fired Up has a lovely, relaxing atmosphere, and the staff are always friendly and helpful – they have rescued me from what could have been traumatic pottery-related incidences many times. The only drawback is that on first glance, it may seem a little beyond the student budget. I think this

depends entirely on what you plan to paint. Tea coasters are 4 for £10 (good for a group!) or there are giant teapots for £18. There should be something to match your finances! I painted a huge mug on my first visit, and I think I spent around £13 with the studio fee. The way I see it, I would spend more than that on a night out and probably not remember it in the morning. Considering I get to spend an afternoon unwinding and having a giggle with my friends, AND I get an eggcup, teapot or piggy bank out of it, I consider it money well spent.

Cruise of the

Valkyrie

Dir: Bryan Singer
Starring: Tom Cruise, Kenneth Branagh, Bill Nighy

by **Iain Watts**

HAVING SURVIVED SEVERAL major production hiccups, *Valkyrie*, and with it the somewhat larger than life Tom Cruise, has finally hit our big screens.

Cruise plays Colonel von Stauffenberg, the real life orchestrator of the last internal Nazi plot to kill Hitler, a surprisingly little known but powerful story. It's a bold and fascinating premise and one that director Brian Singer (he of *The Usual Suspects* and *X-Men* movies) throws himself at with hearty, if slightly misjudged, gusto. It is firmly in the realm of the mass audience action thriller, which makes balancing the solemnity and gravity the subject matter demands with an exciting plot a little difficult.

The result is a somewhat half hearted attempt at emotional gravity padded over with a slick Hollywood exterior you might expect from *X-Men*, which for some critics has compromised the integrity of the plot. Complexity and subtlety are sacrificed for accessibility, but I found the result is actually very enjoyable, and after a clunky start it becomes an increasingly compelling thriller, surprisingly unhindered by an obvious knowledge of the outcome. Action is what Brian Singer does best, and the build up to the climactic scenes are vividly shot and nail-bitingly tense. Equally, the attention to detail is remarkable, with meticulous historical accuracy down even to the 1940s German pens clipped on the Nazi pockets.

The all-star cast of Cruise, Kenneth Branagh, Bill Nighy and the oddly chosen Eddie Izzard do deliver solid, convincing performances as the con-



spiring Germans, racked by pressure and anger, but you can't help but feel their characters lack necessary depth and are sold a little short by lack of attention to their moral complexity. Also a little distracting is the inconsistency in accents, and whilst it shouldn't be a problem, Tom Cruise's American and the rest of the cast's English accents aren't neutral enough not to be occasionally off-putting. It also takes

THE VAGINA TEST

WHAT'S YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR VAGINA LIKE? TAKE OUR QUICK'N'EASY TEST TO FIND OUT!

What do you think of tampons?
a) Scratchy and irritable, what's wrong with a bit of lubrication?
b) I just shut my eyes, grit my teeth, and up it goes.
c) I stick 'em up my nostrils when I have a runny nose

How often do you visit your gynaecologist?
a) Not as much as I would if they warmed up their instruments a bit beforehand!
b) I tend to forget most of my appointments for some reason...
c) Is a gynaecologist anything like a chiropodist?

How do you feel about thongs?
a) Ouch. No thanks!
b) I'm quite happy with my bulk-buy plain-white panties, thanks.
c) I like that song by Cisco...

What do you call your vagina?
a) Rocky
b) Call it? What, like a name??
c) "Vagina"

What does your vagina smell like?
a) Like pussy, damnnit!
b) How on Earth would I know that?
c) Um...Roses?

If your vagina could speak, what would it say?
a) "Leave me alone!"
b) That's a silly question, vaginas can't talk (thank goodness!)
c) "What am I doing here?"

WHAT DO YOUR ANSWERS SAY ABOUT YOU?

Mostly 'A's: Your Vagina is angry. Lighten up! Go see a good comedy - Like *The Vagina Monologues*. Have a laugh, relax and learn that your vagina is not alone.

Mostly 'B's: You seem scared of your vagina. You need a little one-on-one time with it, to realise its true beauty. Go see *The Vagina Monologues*, and discover how wonderful vaginas can be.

Mostly 'C's: You don't seem to even have a vagina! If you're a man, this is understandable. However, you can get in touch with your inner vagina by seeing *The Vagina Monologues*.

The Vagina Monologues

Comic. Tragic. Provocative. A bit naughty....

11th, 12th, 14th Feb at the Chaplaincy Centre
Tickets £5.00 from the LUSU front desk

PROCEEDS GO TO CHARITIES

This soon to be released game is set in the world of King Arthur and uses sword fighting system with the Wii remote.

Sonic the Hedgehog:

by **Hannah Fearon**

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG has been with us since the days of 16-bit video games when our lovable blue hero dominated the Sega Mega Drive and the platform genre. In fact, it was due to Sonic being created as a rival to Nintendo's mascot Mario that led to Sega's huge success in the '90s.

Sega's mascot even had his own comic book, manga and two television series. However, many people-includ-

ing myself-believe that with the release of *Sonic 3D* in 1996 the franchise began its downfall.

I'm a huge fan of classic platform games which are now a rarity in the age of PS3, Wii and Xbox360. There is an occasional effort by Nintendo to provide us with a meagre attempt at recreating the platform genre for the DS, however, these are all still usually tainted by a more 3D approach and there has certainly never been anything monumental to replace *Sonic*.

Some people may feel that the move away from the platform genre is an

Valkyries



Action is what Brian Singer does best, and the build up to the climactic scenes are vividly shot and nail-bitingly tense.

At first, Tom Cruise was banned from filming in Germany because of his religion, Scientology

a while to forget that it's Tom Cruise behind that eye patch and Nazi regalia, and if you're like me you'll suffer the occasional nightmarish flashback to that fateful night on Oprah.

This said however, *Valkyrie* is well worth a trip to the cinema. It tells a good story well, and for the most part is very convincing, edge-of-the-seat stuff. Just don't try and write your dissertation on it.



Christine Mackie and Amaka Okafor give strong, rounded performances as the accused 'witches'.

Sabbat at the Grand Theatre by Richard Shannon

by Christine Wilde

DURING THE SUMMER of 1612, ten people were tried and convicted of the crime of witchcraft here in Lancaster, evidenced through a combination of hear-say, aired grievances and the damning testimonies of a child. *Sabbat*, a play showing in the Dukes Theatre until February 21, is a dramatic retelling of these tragic events.

Though it is hard not to draw comparisons to Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, as the events depicted recall the same harsh injustices of a fearful community struggling with the hardships of 17th Century life, the play is more than merely an English version of Miller's 1960s allegorical play. Rather than focusing on the mass hysteria and

the court proceedings that lead to the deaths of the accused, *Sabbat's* writer Richard Shannon focuses more closely on the emotional and tragic events that take place in the lives of the four protagonists, showing how grief, desperation and a sense of moral and religious obligation shaped the belief in and pursuit of more sinister and supernatural explanations of the incidents that lead to the convictions of the accused.

Interestingly directed and well acted, the play, though small, was well formed. The Round theatre of the Dukes was creatively and effectively transformed into a representation of Pendle in the past. Simple but effective, the central space was roughly divided into quarters, clearly denoting the various dramatic locations of the house, the court room and the moor, whilst four hooks, symbolising the nooses,

hung above the space as an ominous reminder of the outcome of the events.

Utilising the space brilliantly, the cast of four delivered strong, coherent performances. Using an engaging combination of speech, song and sound accompaniments, the actors often contributed to the ambience of a scene even when they weren't centre stage, operating the simple instruments that provided the accompanying sound which was often integral to building the tension and atmosphere of the scenes. This worked quite well, but unfortunately I was sitting right next to the huge drum they used and it was so loud it practically deafened me, and stopped my heart for at least four seconds the first time it was struck.

The use of costume was also very clever and particularly effective in the final motif where the hooks that hung over the set were adorned with an item of clothing from the three female protagonists and used to symbolise the hangings that took place.

Though only a small performance, it was a solidly built, well written piece of drama on some very interesting, dark local history.

the fall of our Sega hero

advancement in the games industry but why are we finding all these new, 'advanced' versions of *Sonic* so disappointing? They may please young gamers who will have no idea what a Sega Mega Drive is, but we older gamers who are perhaps the key demographic of many games developers, long for the classics we grew up with.

There have been almost fifty different games in the *Sonic The Hedgehog* series with the most recent being *Sonic Unleashed* which was released for most consoles last year. *Sonic Unleashed* is far from the game many of us may have

Sonic's famous speed is replaced by strength

grown up playing on the Sega Mega Drive. The game focuses on Sonic being transformed into a 'werehog' for half of the game, and as a 'werehog', Sonic's famous speed is replaced by strength and flexible arms which results in the game being extremely slow and rather tedi-



ous. This game is another disappointing release and it won't be the last.

There's no doubt that recent *Sonic* games are failing to impress and with the release of *Sonic and the Black Knight* for the Nintendo Wii in March this year, it's only further downhill for the franchise. This soon to be released game is set in the world of King Arthur and uses sword fighting system with the Wii remote. This is so far from the classic *Sonic* games and the platform genre that it is hard to believe it's actually part of the series. The creators are using classic characters to rake in the

profit whilst changing the gameplay to fit in with newer gaming technologies.

Whilst the *Sonic The Hedgehog* series is suffering from new technology, Nintendo embraces it with Mario. Games like *Mario Kart* and *Super Mario Galaxy* are the undisputed heroes of Wii and DS, both of which are owned by Nintendo. Whilst *Sonic* falls, Nintendo combines classic gameplay with new ideas to keep the *Mario* series strong. It looks like we will soon have to bid farewell to our lovable blue hedgehog and for many of us; he died long ago.

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The interview: Frank Turner

Frank Turner Liverpool Barfly

by Daniel Jarvis

FRANK TURNER'S GIG did not disappoint the loyal fans who had been waiting since the cancellation of the original date in November. In light of Frank's recent popularity the venue had been upgraded to the main Barfly room, allowing over 100 extra tickets to be sold. The support acts were on fine form with the lovely Emily Barker performing some touchingly genuine folk ballads, including a duet with Frank himself, and the political Chris T who amused the audience with songs about religious conflict, felling trees as well as comedy banter about Radio 1 DJ Sarah Cox's gushing admiration for Frank. Frank himself performed a rock solid gig playing songs old and new combined with light hearted speaking between songs which highlighted the gig's relaxed and informal atmosphere at the end of his tour. Crowd favourites among his set list included the heartfelt *Long Live the Queen* and the anthem-like *Father's Day*. He even came back for a much desired encore. All in all a fantastic gig – tight music and an enjoyable atmosphere.

That night I met Frank:

DANIEL Jarvis: Hello Frank! It's good to finally meet you after your unfortunate cancellation in November, how are you feeling now?

FRANK Turner: I'm feeling much better thank you. I was gutted to have to cancel the last show, I'm usually a workaholic when it comes to my music but when I started vomiting on stage in Nottingham my band pulled me off and wouldn't let me back on stage. It was gutting. But I'm back now!

DJ: And hopefully without the audience risk of getting projectile vomit to the face! Excellent. I know one of the most annoying things about the gig cancellation is that whilst I missed out my parents got to see you supporting the Levellers! My mum enjoyed your music by the way...

F: Ha! Excellent, give your mum a high five from me. I like that parents can enjoy my music too. A lot of musicians try and focus on young audiences but I like to think anyone can enjoy my music, besides anything else you're not going to last long cos young people grow up...

DJ: The Levellers are quite a folksy band which I suppose you could describe your music as. Folk seems a bit of a random choice after your previous band, Million Dead's hardcore punk route. What made you choose punk?

F: Umm...I guess I've always enjoyed folk music, and I think folk and punk are a lot more similar than people think – both are very heartfelt and honest genres, and kinda...stem from the same roots – they're both very socially conscious genres. Also, I'm just not as angry as I was when I was younger and



in Million Dead...well some days I am... not all the time. There's something sad about older musicians trying to be young.

DJ: So is there no chance of Million Dead making a Spice Girls style comeback?

F: I'd say it's very unlikely. I'm not going to say never but I've been in contact with some of the other band members and we've discussed it but to be honest I can't see it happening.

DJ: Where would you like your music to be going in the future? Would you like to become huge or retain your loyal fan base? Do you think your intimacy and your relationship with the audience would be lost if you became huge? **F:** Well I'm not going to lie, I would like to be big—it would be nice to own a house and live comfortably instead of living day-to-day. I think there's a difference between selling out and being successful; so long as the music you make is genuine. And I don't think I'd lose the intimacy. Look at Bruce Springsteen: his performances are still amazingly intimate—it's all in the performance and how genuine the songs are.

DJ: So what can we expect from you in the near future?

F: Well I've recently released an EP of bonus material, live recordings etc but I'm hoping to bring out my third album in March or April. This is the album I'm relying on: make or break. If I make this album hopefully I can make a steady career out of my music so I'm spending all my time making sure that this album is the best it can be.

DJ: Have you any advice you can offer to students?

F: Study hard. That sounds obvious but when I did history at university it really annoyed me the amount of people who didn't care about their course and just did it for the sake of it. If you're at uni you should be passionate about what you're studying instead of just wasting people's time.

albums

Scarface Emeritus

by Meer Shah

LAST YEAR THERE were a few decent releases from the hip hop heavyweights, including The Roots, Nas and a return from Q-Tip. 2009 might be the most eagerly anticipated year for the game ever, with upcoming albums by the likes of Rakim, Jadakiss, Raekwon, Jay-Z, Mos Def and (a hopefully reborn) Eminem. But the biggest story of the last couple of months was this new – and final – album from one of the most influential MCs ever.

Scarface has been around for two decades, releasing material on a consistent basis, which has been consistently decent; something no other rap artist can match. While nothing has quite come up to the genius of his first solo effort, *Mr Scarface Is Back*, he goes out with a record of the sort of quality a true legend deserves to be remembered by.

Emeritus is filled with Scarface's

trademark narratives, all about his anger at the lack of respect for hip hop's origins – best heard on *Forgot About Me* – with beats as hard as anything in the modern game.

For an artist that's never really put together a complete album, however, Emeritus has its problems, mostly its focus on sex and women in the latter stages. But really, this is just Scarface being Scarface, a gangsta rapper being a gangsta rapper. If nothing else, at least the Southern USA's best-ever MC does this kind of thing better than anyone else.

This is a man who has clearly lost respect for his industry, bowing out with a brilliance to make the rest of us lament our loss and wonder why we maintain our naïve optimism in hip hop for the future.

Similar Artists: Outkast, Dr Dre, Ludacris



Franz Ferdinand Tonight

by James Barker

THIRD ALBUMS ARE notoriously difficult, even more so if you're a band as hyped as Franz Ferdinand.

Four years after second outing *You Could Have It So Much Better* we get *Tonight* which simply doesn't justify the hype, but is pleasant enough. The hype surrounding *Tonight* is pretty much the bands own doing, declaring on and off for the past two years that the album would see boundaries broken and genres crossed. *Tonight* doesn't do it at all. This is Franz Ferdinand; staccato guitar riffs and la-la-la sing alongs are basically what we would expect.

Not that it matters at all because we like Franz and in turn we like *Tonight*. Kicking off with *Ulysses* which is easily the best song on the album, we see that the only real change Franz have inflicted on their sound is a synth. The

ideas are the same: riff, la-la-la chorus, repeat. Instantly catchy but lacking in substance.

It is obvious why the album is called *Tonight*: it's a going out album, full of danceable tracks such as (again synth driven) *Live Alone* and *No You Girls* with it's sing along chorus.

The weirdest moment of the album comes on track ten. *Lucid Dreams* is a electro epic, and coming in at just under 8 minutes long it sees a hint at what the band appear to think the whole album ought to have sounded like. Starting up like another pop track it then goes completely off kilter into a wall of synth beat and clapping, very odd but not bad for a first attempt at breaking out of a genre. The album ends with the calm *Katherine Kiss Me* which is an acoustic and refreshing conclusion after all the electronics.

What Franz Ferdinand wanted to create was a defining third album, a new direction, a new sound that would cement themselves as indie gods. Inadvertently however they've created Franz

Ferdinand Part III, another good, danceable, quirky album. The modern classic they aimed for fails to surface but that isn't going to bother the public at large.

If you like Franz Ferdinand you will like *Tonight*. If your looking for lyrical prowess and new sound scopes this isn't for you. It's a slight progression, and certainly better than *You Could Have It* but it simply isn't memorable or great enough to live up to the bar which they set for themselves and that we thought they could reach.



SPORTS

Lancaster seize victory from MMU Cheshire



Lancaster beat MMU Cheshire 3-2 last Wednesday at home, putting Lancaster safely in third place in the Northern Conference Men's 2A league, two points away from second place. (Photo: Rob Miller)

Mixed day for men's tennis

by Robert Payling

The latest outing for both the 1st and 2nd men's tennis teams resulted in a loss and a draw against the 1st teams of UCLan and Liverpool Hope respectively. UCLan were the opponents for Lancaster's 1sts as matches began with a double's contest involving captain Craig White and partner Nick Price. Although the pair started strongly; their serve was broken in the 5th and 12th games leading to a 4-8 loss.

Things could have been different though during a well fought game in the 9th when a flurry of outstanding shots from White brought the game to 0-40 and a chance for the Lancaster men to break back. Unfortunately the pair were unable to capitalise on the opportunity and found themselves on the backfoot from then on. David Vance and Dan Dugmore made up the second pairing to face tough UCLan opposition resulting in a 3-8 loss.

The first of the men's 2nd team's doubles matches ended in similar fashion with Chris Blackburn and Akshaa Janakiran defeated. The Lancaster men showed true spirit throughout the match especially during one rally involving Janakiran diving through the air to reach a tight angle. Such last ditch heroics did not prove to be enough though with the men ultimately losing 2-8.

The day took a positive turn in the final match of the 2nds pairings with Felix Buchbinder and Cai Halliday.

The pair showed immense resilience in an 8-5 victory and sparked a sense of revival for those taking part in singles' matches later. First out to court for the singles matches in the 1st team were David Vance and Craig White. Vance took an early lead in his match winning the first set 6-3 as White lost out marginally in a tie break finishing 6-7.

Both men went on to lose the following set but Vance managed to regain his impressive 1st set form in the decider and stunned his UCLan opponent with a 6-0 drubbing. The 2nd team's singles matches began with Gray Randall and Chris Blackburn. Randall appeared unsettled in the first set losing 2-6 and made a great effort in the second set to get back in to the match but fell 5-7 in the end.

Blackburn had no such problem in the first set winning 6-2 comfortably and took control of numerous rallies with great ease. The Lancaster man became increasingly more relaxed in his shot taking though which allowed a determined Liverpool man to take the second set 6-1. Control was restored once more by Blackburn though as he switched to a more aggressive style of play which paid off in a comfortable 6-4 win.

The men's 1st went on to lose their remaining singles matches resulting in a 2-8 defeat in overall points to UCLan. The fightback continued with the 2nds though with Buchbinder producing an outstanding display in the final match of the day with a 6-2, 6-1 victory to give Lancaster a much deserved draw against fancied opposition.

Fishing for glory

by Simon 'Womble' Fox

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY'S Ultimate Frisbee team, The Fish, recently concluded a successful indoor season, including a trophy and qualification to the national stage. The year started with a large influx of new players who, after a week of introduction to the sport, were given the chance to compete in a series of introductory tournaments, focused on showing the new players what the sport is all about. The first of these was in Manchester, and was a sign of things to come, with Fish finishing 3rd in a field of 24 teams, losing a heartbreaking game to Loughborough in the semi-final. A second solid performance from the beginners in Sheffield a week later gave the club a strong set of players to add to the current set of experienced players.

The first indoor tournament of the season is arguably the most important, the open division regional qualifier. Fish took two teams to the event, with the 2nd team being made up largely of the beginners that particularly stood out from the first two tournaments.

The 1st team had the added strength of some American exchange students, alongside the most experienced players the club had. After two days of hard-fought play, the 1st team finished in 4th place, qualifying for nationals in



the process. The 2nd team managed to finish in 11th place in the 24 team field, the highest position the 2nd team has ever finished. Both teams finished above some quality 1st teams, such as

Hull, Sheffield Hallam and York, which could bode well for Roses, although anything could happen before that event.

Just before women's regionals, one of the already shorthanded squad was

injured, leaving the team with only four players. Although five players are required to play, the team still travelled to the tournament, hoping that they'd be able to find a way to compete. Luckily, the tournament organisers allowed the team to borrow a player from another team and still have their results count. This still gave the team a chance to qualify for nationals, and inspired the team to some amazing performances. Unfortunately, the team fell just short of qualification after an amazing run of play that moved them from the lower half of the tournament standings to just outside the top section.

After a pair of excellent performances in the open and women's divisions, hopes were high that the success could continue for mixed. However, due to it being in lent term, the Americans had left for, well, America, leaving the beginners to pick up the slack. Due to the squad having little time to prepare together, the first day of the tournament was spent gaining cohesion, and results were disappointing. However, the 2nd day of the tournament was spent using the team's new-found familiarity to tear through the opposition on the way to winning the Plate (given to the highest-placing team in the bottom half of the tournament). Our slightly less experienced squad was beaten by York this time around, just showing how much can change in a short time.

Running Club organising annual race for cancer charity

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY RUNNING Club are looking for competitors to take part in their flagship charity event Alexandra's Lap, which is taking place on Sunday 1st March. Sign-up is in the TV room above Pendle bar every Monday evening at 6.30pm until Monday 23rd February. If not, then runners can also enter on the day outside Lonsdale bar. The cost to enter is £3.

The club welcomes people of all abilities, from those who rarely even wear their trainers, to the more able long distance sprinters and runners. The 1 mile fun run consists of a lap of South West campus, starting at the bus stop on the Alexandra Park ring road and finishing outside Lonsdale bar. The route is fully marshalled by the club exec and is closed to vehicles during the race duration.

Last year, Alex Lap raised just over £140 for MacMillan Cancer Support. This year, the club are able to offer bigger and better prizes for those competing. Cash prizes will be given out to the first four male and female finishers, as well as random raffle prizes for everyone.

For further details and for sponsorship forms, please come along to a club session at 6.30 pm on Mondays above Pendle bar, or go to www.lurc.co.uk for more information.

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SPORTS

Last-minute victory over UCLAN in basketball



Storm in the air: Lancaster stole victory in the final seconds of the match. (Photo: Ben Robins)

by Julian Surface

LANCASTER'S FIRST BASKETBALL team came out on top after a hard fought battle against UCLAN. The game was heart wrenching as both teams kept close on each others heels throughout most of the game.

Although Lancaster won the tip-off they went in behind after the first quarter as UCLAN were quick on the counterattack. It seemed to continue in the second as the home team conceded a sequence of free throws that were all converted. However, with some fan-favourite three pointers and well-worked offensive movement they ended it with a 39-35 lead.

Lancaster were keeping steadily ahead of their rivals in the third quarter and looked to have found their flow.

Whilst most attempts in open play were stopped, the defence were con-

ceding free throws that kept UCLAN in the game, trailing 54-50.

The final quarter started with a superb winning mentality from Lancaster. They rapidly jumped to a 60-50 lead with Captain Dan Conway who was constantly racking up points. UCLAN called a time-out in a desperate attempt to regroup but the Lancaster defence was putting in fantastic blocks and interceptions with BK and Pambos retaining possession and keeping the points distance up. At 65-57, with only a few minutes to go, UCLAN called another time-out and managed to pull off two three pointers as the clock counted down. There was a minute left to go and Lancaster called their own time-out to calm the nerves that were showing. There was an immediate response as Lancaster stole away possession to finish the game 67-63. This win puts Lancaster second in the league behind the University of Bolton with only a point between them.

Lancaster to host 2012 Olympics



Gareth Coleman

AU President

YOU'RE NOT BUYING that are you? Well, with the way things are going with preparation for the Olympics at the minute, I'm waiting on Lord Coe to pick up the phone and ask him if he can use our pitches!

If you haven't heard the latest tale of woe regarding the build-up to 2012, basically, it is now doubtful if Team GB will be able to field a team in every event at the 2012 Olympics because of a £50m budget shortfall. As a result, funding for eight sports have been cut by as much as 50%! That is not a step forward in anybody's book.

In my opinion, this demonstrates the lack of intention to seriously compete at the 2021 Olympics. Judging by some of the other white elephants that this country has produced (Millennium Dome, anybody?), I'm wondering if Lord Coe will end up putting style over substance. By that I mean the 2012 Olympics will be spectacular, lavish and

possibly the greatest show on Earth, but even these wonderful connotations cannot hide the fact that living up to the standards of Team GB in China last year will be nigh on impossible. Team GB will already have a bullseye on its back due to its success in Beijing, and because of the home advantage (or disadvantage in our case) - and the added pressure of having to compete with the world's elite with only half the resources you previously had - makes competing for medals even more difficult. We may have world-class talent, but without the correct facilities and resources, Team GB will be more likely to prop up the medal table, rather than top it.

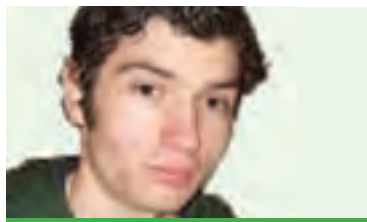
Facilities and resources are crucial to sports, whether that be at an Olympic-level, or a recreational level. Obviously natural talent is required from the beginning, but without the environment to hone that talent, an individual will never fulfil his/her potential. This notion can be applied to sport at any level, including the sport played here at Lancaster University. We're obviously not Loughborough (which is where half of Team GB are normally from), but we punch above our weight when we consider the facilities which we have available to us. Everyone knows about the condition of the inter-college pitches, has heard about the damaged astro-turf and has seen the unplayable rugby pitches - and that's without mentioning the sports centre project. I'm forever being asked, "are we ever going to get a new sports centre?" and to

tell you the truth, I'm asking the same question.

I doubt anyone is doing much business these days because of the recession, but I believe the University needs to prioritise any sports-related projects they have in the pipeline. It is incredibly frustrating, continuously struggling to meet the demand of recreational and competitive sport on campus, with a lack of available facilities - and I am only referring to the demand which we actually know about, as the amount of 'additional' people who actually would become involved in sports if more facilities were available is very difficult to measure. I can only anticipate that this situation will worsen over time as the University expands and its student population increases. Where will that leave us regarding sports facilities on campus? Can we handle more students wanting to participate in sports with the facilities we currently have available to us? Unfortunately, the answer to this question is 'no', and until the University manages to make some serious investment into sporting facilities, then the answer will remain 'no'.

The new Sports Centre has been one of the hot topics this year, and I just hope that the University now manages to put substance over style by providing adequate sporting facilities for one of the top 20 universities in the UK. Because right now, I think Lancaster will be a long way down Lord Coe's list of back-up plans.

German upstarts Hoffenheim are a footballing model



Steven McCann

NOW THE TRANSFER window has been slammed shut and clubs and economists alike take into account the money spent across the country, a story is developing in Germany that has, at least for this reporter, brought back my belief in the 'beautiful game'. While all the talk today seems to be how much money a club can spend, such as £100m for Kaka or Tottenham Hotspur spending £48m alone in the recent transfer window, a club is taking the Bundesliga (Germany's top division) by storm.

Yet like most stories today in football, money is involved. Little known TSG 1899 Hoffenheim were floating around Germany's fifth tier in 1990, when ex-player Dietmar Hopp became their financial backer. Hopp was the co-founder of software firm SAP and began to invest in the team and by the 2000/01 season they were in the Regionalliga (the third tier). Yet it was in 2006 when the club began to be really noticed, firstly by appointing ex-Schalke manager Ralf Rangnick who admitted he felt he had been "abandoned" after the failure to win the league in

2006. This appointment along with the signings of ex Bundesliga players allowed the club to gain successive promotions firstly to the 2. Bundesliga in 2007, reaching 2nd place in their first season in the league. The club entered the Bundesliga, Germany's equivalent of the Premiership this season.

While Hoffenheim's rise may seem the stuff of dreams, it got even better this season. Instead of fighting against relegation from the Bundesliga, Hoffenheim have exceeded all expectations and found themselves finishing before the winter break top of the league and 'Herbstmeister' (Autumn Champion). This included wins against Hamburg (3-0), Dortmund (4-1) and Hannover (5-2), all heavy-weight teams. Hoffenheim lost to Werder Bremen only 5-4, in what many fans consider one of the greatest games in the league.

Hoffenheim moved stadium over the winter break to the 30,000 capacity Rhein-Neckar-Arena, selling out for their 2-0 win over Cottbus which continued their great form. This is all the more amazing when you consider Hoffenheim's population is only 3,500. Their success can be attributed to their signing policy, which unlike some clubs avoids big 'marquee' signings in favour of young, hungry players. Two of the major success stories this season have been Tobias Weis and Vedad Ibišević.

Weis had been released by Stuttgart as a youngster before joining Hoffenheim in 2007. Now as their first choice right winger and with a national team call in the bag, Weis seems to be going from strength to strength. More amazingly is the story of Ibišević, who until this season had been a typical 'journey-

man' striker who floated around clubs and their reserves. Yet, it is Ibišević who leads Bundesliga scoring charts on 18 goals, 5 ahead of 2nd place and well ahead of regular strikers such as Luca Toni, Mario Gomez and Claudio Pizarro. While a cruciate ligament rupture may deny him the top scorer award this season, any repeat of this season's form would establish him as one of Europe's leading marksmen.

Despite all of this, many German football fans and neutrals looking in, do not like Hoffenheim and would rather see another title rival such as Hamburg or Hertha Berlin win the league. They point to Hopp's financial backing and also the fact that without his money, Hoffenheim would still be a mediocre team in the lower leagues at best. Other managers have also had their say, such as Freiburg's Robin Dutt, who after a defeat to Hoffenheim last season stated, "I wish this team would go up and then we can forget about this joke".

However, Hoffenheim must be congratulated for their success so far. They have not spend millions upon millions on players and wages, instead, buying young talent instead of big name stars. They also could not outspend clubs in the Bundesliga, with giants such as Bayern Munich, Dortmund and Werder Bremen all having more to spend. This contempt for little Hoffenheim may be as a result of jealousy at their sudden and rapid success.

However they finish this season, Bundesliga Champions or not, expect to hear more and more from them in the future. They may be playing a team near you in the Champions League next season.

Tasters give way to tournament in Carter Shield



Charlotte Parker
Sports Editor

AS LENT TERM begins, across campus students are once again giving up their Sundays for some Carter Shield action. What better way to shake Saturday night's hangover than helping your college battle it out for the Carter Shield?

The end of last term saw the league table looking as close as ever with only four points separating the first four teams. Currently, Fylde and Grizedale are joint top with 39 points, followed by County on 36 points and Bowland with 35. Lonsdale are 5th with 33 points, and then there is a substantial gap to 6th with Cartmel on 24 points. Furness are languishing at the bottom of the table with a paltry 18 points. With the competition runs throughout all three terms, there is plenty of time for every college to overturn last terms results and fight their way to the top of



the Carter Shield.

Lent term sees the colleges battle it out over aero ball, table tennis, pop lacrosse and men's basketball. As usual, the first two weeks of the term saw taster sessions in all sports, to give people a chance to learn the rules before the competition starts. Following last terms trend, the taster sessions were well attended and gave the sports reps chance to start picking out players for the term's activities. Along with the

usual Carter Shield faces it was good to see some new ones, a sign that college loyalty is still strong.

Pop lacrosse kicks off this terms fun, with the competition day taking place on the Sunday at the end of week five. Even if students did not participate in the taster sessions, they are welcome to come along to the event, and of course support is always needed to get the college banter going. The competition day sees the colleges

drawn into two groups, with everyone playing everyone in the group, with the top two teams from each group making it through to the knock out round, which takes place on Finals Day at the end of week nine. Pop lacrosse is an indoor version of the outdoor sport, with three girls and three men on each side and a mix of university players and total novices, it is bound to be an action packed event.

The other sports throughout this

term are table tennis, aero ball and men's basketball. It is impossible to judge which colleges will excel at which sports. Having many university sports team members in your college is obviously an advantage, but more importantly in Carter Shield is the enthusiasm to get involved, as most people are probably in the same boat of never having played sports such as pop lacrosse before. Sports like aero ball favour smaller colleges such as Fylde, whereas County are at an advantage for sports such as men's basketball, which require a larger turn out.

There were several shocks in last term's Carter Shield events, with Lonsdale and Grizedale both excelling far more than they have done in previous years and County's large turn out was a credit to their sports reps. With Fylde typically doing well in the first term but struggling in the second; the Carter Shield table could be looking quite different at the end of this term. No college can be written off this early, Pendle especially will be keen to make up for last term's poor performances. One thing is for sure, the Carter Shield will continue to bring more shocks and surprises throughout the term so get involved, starting this Sunday (week 5) in the sports centre at 12.30, you'd be surprised at how great a hangover cure pop lacrosse can be!

THIRST

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IC football kicks off again



Oliver Holmes
Sports Editor

THE A TEAM inter-college football league is now in full force following two action packed Wednesday afternoons crammed with all the pride, passion and performances the league has grown accustomed to over the years.

Following last term's frustrating postponements, week 12 saw Pendle smash seven past a Cartmel side who will want to forget the past two weeks while Furness beat Bowland in a scrappy affair. However, last term's cancellation of games still lingered as Lonsdale v Fylde was postponed due to a referee not being available.

Pendle 7 - 0 Cartmel

AFTER A CAGEY opening from both sides, Pendle soon found their goal-scoring form to cruise to victory against an injury savaged Cartmel team who left the field with their head's held low. Prior to the competitive action both teams had battled through a stalemate in a friendly match days earlier. However, Pendle clearly used the friendly match to their advantage as they took the game to Cartmel.

Following a loose pass from the Cartmel defence, Pendle stole in to cross allowing an easy tap-in to take the lead. Minutes later, Cartmel were two down following a well-taken free-kick after a needless foul was given away. Cartmel lost their voices and conceded a further three goals without reply before half-time.

Despite a rallying half-time team talk from the Cartmel captain it was not long before Pendle extended their advantage. Several substitutions from Pendle allowed them to rotate their squad in a game they would have enjoyed. One of whom got his name on the scoresheet as Cartmel failed to clear their lines after a cross into the area. Pendle finished off the rout with a seventh leaving Cartmel with lots to think about for the season ahead.

Furness 1 v 0 Bowland

IN A GAME that both teams had been looking forward to following the Christmas break, Bowland will find



Bewitched: Pendle 'A's hammered both Cartmel and County in their league games. (Photo: Rob Miller)

themselves disappointed that they did not escape with at least a point from the game.

Furness deservedly took the lead with a fine goal early on following good work in midfield. Nevertheless, Furness were dealt an immediate scare when Bowland went on the hunt for a quick reply. Straight from kick-off a series of passing moves resulted in a shot from Bowland that they will feel on another day would have brought the scores level. However, an extremely muddy penalty area resulted in the ball sticking to the ground rather fortuitously for Furness which enabled them to keep hold of the lead.

The game ploughed on with both sides cancelling each other out as Furness clung on to earn a valuable three points.

Pendle 3 v 0 County

FOLLOWING LAST WEEK'S thumping of Cartmel, Pendle went into the game against County full of confidence looking to build on such an impressive victory knowing that a win would put them top of the league and extend their

unbeaten run to three.

No more than five minutes had passed before Pendle took the lead.

This seemed to shock County and disrupted their match plans as the goalkeeper plucked the ball from the back

of the net. County tried to fight their way back but Pendle took a foothold in the game and tried to dominate the midfield area. A second goal was added giving Pendle a comfortable position in the game in which they could see out the rest of the game.

County pressured to try and claw a goal back, but this was to no avail as Pendle wrapped up the victory with a well-taken third as the County goalkeeper was left scrambling on the floor. Such a convincing display on the back of scoring seven the week before suggests Pendle could be in with a chance of securing the title this year.

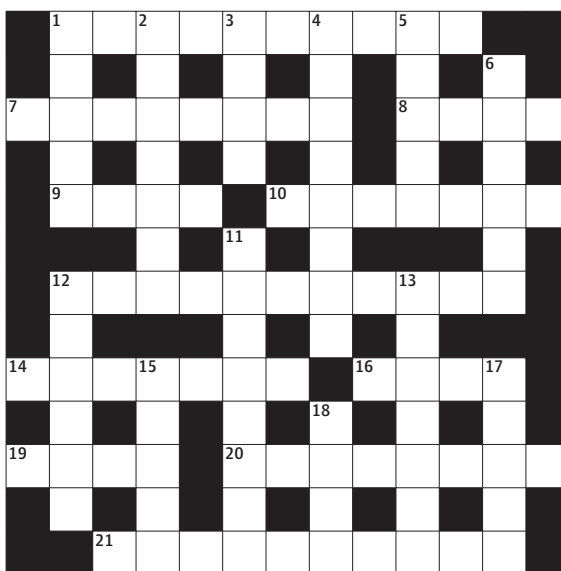
Cartmel 1 v 8 Furness

CARTMEL LOOKED TO put the previous week's mauling behind them and changed to a 4-4-2 formation in the search for goals. However, with fifteen goals now conceded in the past two games the defence must be a cause for concern.

Furness took the lead with an early looping effort before adding a second after rounding the keeper securing an easy tap in for the advancing striker. Cartmel tried to impose themselves on the game and passed their way around Furness without ever being clinical in the final third. A third was scored with a twenty yard curling free-kick following a last-ditch foul from the Cartmel centre-back in which he could consider himself lucky to stay on the pitch.

Furness appeared to score with every shot they took with conditions not helping the 'keeper's confidence. Furness were 6-0 up before Cartmel scored a consolation header from a clinical set-piece. A quick-fire double from Furness ensured a memorable victory which they will seek to build on.

Quick crossword no. 11,837



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Across

- 1 Ability to bounce back – Ely is nicer (anag) (10)
- 7 Refer to famous people in familiar way to impress (4-4)
- 8 Distribute – wood (4)
- 9 Intense dislike (4)
- 10 Largest bird (7)
- 12 Cocktail – tool (11)
- 14 Endure oppressive heat (7)
- 16 Pointedly rebuff (4)
- 19 Female peer (4)
- 20 Lift (8)
- 21 Mongrel (10)

Down

- 1 Freshwater fish (5)
- 2 Place of refuge (7)
- 3 Male peer (4)
- 4 Laying open to public view (8)
- 5 Alcoholic drink from apples (5)
- 6 Cup holder (6)
- 11 Implement for gripping small objects (8)

- 12 Big deal! (2,4)
- 13 Date of origin (of wine etc) (7)
- 15 Stratum (5)
- 17 It's said to be thicker than water (5)
- 18 Type of word indicating action (4)

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Solution No 11,836

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