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STUDENT COMMENT AND NEWS

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Week 8, Michaelmas Term, Wednesday 25th November, 2009

Students deal first blow to Vice-Chancellor in tuition fees battle



- Over 300 students turn out to protest at Lancaster House Hotel
- University Council pressured into issuing statement
- Vice-Chancellor ignores the crowd

Jenni Day
Collette McColgan

LUSU'S CAMPAIGN TO maintain the cap on tuition fees continued to inspire passion from students as they made themselves heard to the Vice-Chancellor, Paul Wellings during a University Council meeting.

Wellings, who is also the Chair of the 1994 Group - a group of UK research intensive universities - is one of the only university Vice-Chancellors in

the country to have spoken out in favour of an increase in tuition fees, and it is this that caused students to come out in protest on Friday Week Seven.

Heavy rain didn't prevent over 300 Lancaster University students turning up to the protest to have their voices heard. The protest began in Alexandra Square at 11am, where LUSU President Michael Payne gave a speech telling the students it is "our turn to make our position clear". This campaign is to protect student interests so that "we are not sold down the river by this Government and our Vice-Chancellor". The crowd then made its way to Lancaster House Hotel where the meeting was due to start at 1pm.

The crowd gathered behind a police line outside the room of the hotel where the meeting was taking place. Chants such as "Hey! Ho! Top up fees have got to go!" and "Listen to your students" could be heard inside the meeting room. Banners were being swayed to enforce the feelings of students, including "7K No Way!" and the ironic "I love debt" banner. Superhero costumes

were worn by Lonsdale's Azmi Sbaiti and Marc Handley, who said they were fighting against "criminally high fees."

The students had created a walkway between the crowds, for the hour preceding the beginning of Council, so that before the council members entered they could listen to the students' perspective. University Secretary Fiona Aiken was the first to walk through making it known that she was willing to listen to the views of the students. She was followed by Professor Peter Diggle, a Council member and Keith Davidson, the Lonsdale Principal, who showed his support of the student protest by encouraging the crowd.

The rest of the councillors chose to use the alternative entrance to the hotel, completely avoiding the student petition. The most controversial of these was the Vice-Chancellor, who did not even look at the students as he went in through the back door.

Furness JCR President Dave Prescott said that it is Wellings' job "to represent the students and their best interests, so he shouldn't be going through

the back door". He continued on to say that the Vice-Chancellor "must be having a serious crisis of confidence if he can't listen to his own students". This was supported by Lonsdale JCR President, Matt Windsor who commented that "only three people have walked through, so they are intimidated by the crowd, showing we are making an impact".

When asked to comment on Wellings' avoidance of the crowd, Michael Payne said it was "shameful... If he wants to have the debate let's have the debate. If he wants to have a debate he's going to have to come and talk to us". He went on to say how "exceptional" the crowd had been pointing out that 1,500 letters had been signed by students in contention with the Vice-Chancellor, adding that "this is an issue that matters to students".

The crowd turn out and enthusiasm was also commented on by University Council Representative and Cartmel JCR President, Robbie Pickles who said it was "excellent to see so many students have turned out to support

this absolutely vital campaign".

During the meeting, various members of the council came out in favour of the issue being discussed. After the meeting, Pickles said that Wellings "should make sure that when it goes to review, he is bringing both views [of the 1994 Group and the University] to the table and ensuring the student voice is heard." He added, "I don't think he can avoid doing that now."

Alex Hockin was one of the many who turned out to show his support for the campaign. When asked how he felt about the Vice-Chancellor's avoidance of the crowd he said "he should be willing to see the students and say his opinion to our faces, since so many people have something to tell him".

Before entering the hotel to attend the Council meeting Payne gave a few more words of encouragement to the crowd asking them to show their support and let their voices be heard so that student views cannot be ignored. This proved to be quite successful, as it was reported that at some points the meeting was drowned out

Your days may soon be numbered, Paul Wellings

As the twin threats of redundancy and funding appear, the Vice-Chancellor may think to choose his battles more wisely

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There have been four other Vice-Chancellors at Lancaster University. Apart from Sir Charles Carter, the first and most respected Vice-Chancellor this institution has had, they have all reigned for a period of roughly five to ten years.

The incumbent, Professor Paul Wellings, has occupied the role since 2002. Seven years on the good will of staff and students alike has steadily evaporated. Members of staff that oppose him are ostracised, marginalised and eventually removed. Students are herded in like cattle and are treated with a lack of respect by Central Services. This approach mirrors the style of leadership at the top of the table. And at that table Wellings sits counting the coffers and laughing at every penny he mugs off the students whom he perceives as customers.

In a 2004 interview with The Independent, a member of staff is quoted as saying that Wellings was "ruffling a few feathers." The interviewer also states

that Wellings perceives himself not as the typical top academic in charge of an institution but as a chief executive.

In this role, Wellings has changed the image of Lancaster University from a traditional university into a corporate money-spinning machine. His leadership style is one of micro-management and interference. When he speaks, it is rarely on behalf of this university, but always for his own vested interests.

For seven years he has got away with it, pontificating and posturing whilst belittling the ordinary student or staff member. He has prosecuted and villified students and repeatedly ignored and brushed aside the will of Senate, the main governing academic body of the institution. He has populated University Council with people too frightened to oppose him and his closest acolytes, the University management, are puppets there to do his bidding. When they speak, it is his words that magically appear.

The best example of this is Amanda Chetwynd, the Pro-Vice Chancellor for

Colleges and the Student Experience. Where was she when students protested? When does she ever truly represent the voice of the College Principals? Will she ever stand up to the Vice-Chancellor and support the groups she is supposed to represent? Of course not. She is in the Vice-Chancellor's pocket and serves him only. Her inaction only strengthens his hand when dealing with these awkward groups and he is well aware of this fact.

Perhaps events which threaten to boil over will change this forever. Statute 20, which aims to set out employment procedure and will lead to staff redundancies, was knocked back by Senate last week. Staff morale is reportedly low and the University and College Union (UCU) are practically mutinous.

Students as well, whipped up by LUSU, pounced on him at Friday's protest. The chants of "Wellings is a coward" and "VNC the VC" brought home to roost the dissatisfaction of students with their most senior repre-

sentative on a national level. For once, the attacks were aimed at him directly. There was no David Peeks, or others of his ilk for that matter, to be made the scapegoat. You can only pass the buck so many times, Paul.

What now needs to be made clear is that both staff and students share grievances and a common enemy: the Vice-Chancellor. Students need to mobilise against him and staff need to stand up and be counted. As a twin threat, both groups should be too much for him to handle, no matter how devious, slippery and cunning he may be. However, co-operation between LUSU and UCU is essential. Unilateral support from both sides is required if this Vice-Chancellor can finally be made to pay for his megalomaniacal regime over this university.

Paul Wellings, you have burnt all your bridges. Staff despise you and students loathe you. You speak only for yourself and no-one else. Seven years is a long time to walk a tightrope. With any luck, soon you'll be falling off.



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Students deal first blow to Vice-Chancellor in tuition fees battle

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by the chanting.

With a strained voice, Payne’s final words of inspiration to the crowd were “the fight does not stop today.” When the protest eventually moved on from the hotel, chants of “Don’t think this is over” made the opinion of the protesters very clear to those inside the meeting room.

In an unprecedented move, Council chose to issue a statement on Higher Education funding, and the discussions it will be prepared to take about the subject. Council said, in this statement, that it will return to the issue in February, after Lord Browne’s review. The statement also said that Council can “recognise and sympathise with the students’ concern over the future handling of HE funding and student finances,” and that “There is a strong view that HE should be free for all students at the point of delivery, and that HE should be available to qualified students, irrespective of background.”

It was decided that Council would issue this statement when the issue of the tuition fees review came up during the meeting. The protestors outside made the importance of this review in the eyes of students very clear to those inside the meeting, and many councillors are reported to have spoken out in favour of discussing the issue, despite some wishing to leave the discussion until after the publication of Lord Browne’s review.

One University Councillor commented that “If you took a straw poll around the room, everyone [in the Council] is fundamentally with them [the students].” Brian Gray, Chair of University Council and Pro-Chancellor of the University claimed that until Lord Browne’s review is published in February, that there was “nothing to respond to” and that Council should not discuss the review in great detail until more information had been released.

However, other council members were keen to stress that they feel the body of University should be proactive, not just reactive, and that there needed to be some acknowledgement of the students protesting outside the meeting.

Some Council members went as far as to publicly declare their political stance on tuition fees; one of these Councillors going as far as to claim that



Top: The crowd make themselves heard outside University Council. **Middle:** The University Secretary, Fiona Aiken, is one of only three Councillors to brave the crowd. **Bottom:** The police are present as a precautionary measure (Photos: Ben Robins)

they felt Higher Education should be free.

Payne, speaking after University Council, described the support of the students’ protest by these members of Council as “humbling and appreciated.” “One by one Council members made it clear that Council had a key role to play in laying out their stance on fees and funding at universities and we await this vital debate,” he said, adding “the sentiments and feelings of the majority prevailed and the students very real concerns about funding were given their due respect in a statement issued the same afternoon.”

At the beginning of this year, a Standing Redundancy Committee was set up by University Council in order to reduce the University’s academic staff. In a controversial move, the committee was set up before the need for redundancies was confirmed by a lack of external funding for academic staff was confirmed.

At the time of this being revealed to students - at the beginning of last year’s Summer term - senior members of Council had claimed that they did not want to make any redundancies, and that they were merely preparing for a scenario where this would be necessary.

The local UCU (University & Colleges Union) branch have opposed this action by the Council, claiming the setting up of the Redundancy Committee at this early stage would cause problems with staff morale, and is in fact illegal. They also claim that these actions did not fall into line with Statute 20, the section of the Council’s charter, which outlines employment and redundancy procedures. The UCU are directly opposing the proposed changes.

In light of the tuition fees review being conducted by the current government, this argument has been put into a new light. The UCU and LUSU are offering each other “mutual support” in their respective campaigns; UCU wish to prevent the unclear changes to Statute 20, and LUSU wish the Council to make a clear statement of support towards students in the upcoming tuition fees review. The two campaigns have chosen to support each other because of the way in which they directly correspond: the issues with redundancies have a long-term impact on students, while staff need students to have fees supporting them so that they may attend university.

Carleton raise money for Children in Need

Lauren Hirst

THE CARLETON DID its bit for charity this week when it hosted an event in aid of the BBC charity Children in Need.

On Wednesday 18th November, the weekly student night out included fundraisers held throughout the evening to raise money for the cause. The nightclub, renowned for its cheesy yet popular music, raffled off a gigantic teddy bear. Staff dressed up and the Carleton mascot, the Green Kangaroo, made an appearance as well.

“We are hoping to raise about £800; the staff dressing up alone has raised just under £400” said Stewart Aimson, the Carleton’s manager. “There will also be buckets on the bus to try and get last bits of change from people.”

With the resident DJ Carl and DJ Pep on the decks, keeping the partygoers in high spirits, there was a variety of shot offers at the bar in which ten pence from each shot was donated to Children in Need.

“We sell quite a few shots at the club so I can imagine that they should make quite a bit of money [for Children in Need],” said Aimson.

Aimson seemed keen to make the charity night a regular occurrence in future.

“Normally we bypass Children in Need. [However], we became aware of Lancaster’s RAG society and how students are getting involved and thought we should follow.”

Helping the homeless

LANCASTER’S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP group is holding a sit-in in Alexandra Square in Week Nine to raise awareness of homelessness.

On 30th November members of the society will be gathering in the square to sit-in and run a donations stall in aid of Christ Church Night Shelter.

“[We’re hoping] to raise awareness of the struggles faced by people living on the streets during the winter months,” said Tom Pickering, President of the Christian Fellowship.

The group would appreciate donations of hot drinks, canned food and blankets. They will be taking names of any students interested in volunteering with the Night Shelter.

Part-time officer candidates

Academic Council Chair

- Tom Mackrory

Academic Campaigns Officer

- Paul Lynch

Education, Welfare and Diversity Council Chair

- Neil Smith

International Students Officer

- Ashutosh Kumar
- Huneeza Mazari

Post-Graduate Research Rep

- Vasileios Pappas
- Mike Jenkins

Equality Campaigns Officer

- Aiden Williams

Welfare Campaigns Officer

- Hannah Sauer
- Pete Macmillan

Liberation Campaigns Officer

- Chaz Ginn

Student Campaigns Officer

- Terrie Crawford
- Sam Aldridge

LGBTQ Officer

- Sarah Newport

Student Media Board Chair

- Katie Jamieson

Communications Officer

- Sarah Strachan

Chair of Social and Events

- James Duncan
- Matt Windsor
- Stuart Walton

Chair of Societies

- Chris Osborn
- Ben Gibbins

Chair of Sports Exec

- Paul Denner
- Erika Vann

Chair of Elections

- Sam Johnson
- Mike Clarke

Green Committee Chair

- Simon Mair

University Council Representative

- Robbie Pickles

Student Trustee of LUSU

- Sahib Singh
- Tom Skarbek-Wazynski

Science & Technology Faculty Rep

- Kaushik Ghosh
- Robyn Akerman

Management School Faculty Rep

- Jessica Horsfield

School of Health & Medicine Faculty Rep

- Elise Bausseron

Arts & Social Sciences Faculty Rep

- Mark Lord

In Focus: Elections Special

Sit down and be counted: Stormy hus

- **Brand new positions contested for the first time**
- **Some candidates fail to appear at hustings**
- **Strong sign-up for college JCRs**

Collette McColgan
Stephen Ashby
Jack Smith

WEEK EIGHT WILL see the elections of the LUSU Part Time Officers, college JCR Exec officers, and the by-election for the remaining unfilled positions on the GSA Exec.

Coinciding with these elections will be the introduction of the new roles on LUSU that came in as part of the Non-Sabb review in Week Five, as well as the new system of e-voting, something never before attempted at the university.

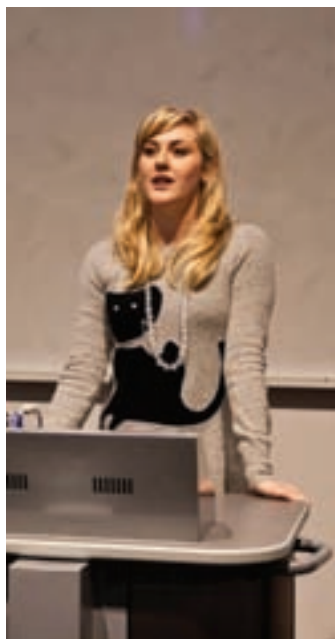
The hustings for the LUSU Part Time Officer elections took place on Thursday of Week Seven. The evening passed by without much controversy, however, there was some confusion about the people contesting some positions, when some candidates failed to turn up and to make their hust.

Only one of the candidates for Post Graduate Research Representative, Mike Jenkins, came to hustings, leaving it unclear to many as to whether the other candidate, Vasileios Pappas, would still be running for the position.

As well as this, only one of the candidates for Student Trustee, Tom

Skarbek-Wazynski, JCR President for Bowland, made a hust. The other candidate listed at the time of hustings, Sahib Singh, did not attend.

More surprisingly still, neither of the two candidates who had been nominated for Science and Technology Faculty Representative came to the



Katie Jamieson

hustings. Kaushik Ghosh and Robyn Akerman failed to attend and make a hust explaining their intentions for if they were elected, something which may affect the way votes are cast on Thursday.

The individual husts made by the candidates who did attend didn't cause much contention, but some

candidates were left answering difficult and somewhat unexpected questions, when the floor was opened up to the observers.

The more controversial questions seemed to relate to the recent changes that came to Union Council during Week Five's non-sabbatical review.

The failure to increase the number of societies representatives on Council through an amendment led to many people questioning the decision to replace the officers without portfolio on the Block of Six, with one position, that of the Student Campaigns Officer, when this is considered by many to be an unnecessary role.

The candidates of this position did come under some scrutiny when the audience were allowed to ask questions after the husts. Edwin Burrows, the current Societies Union Chair, quoted the editorial from the last issue of SCAN, by asking the candidates Terrie Crawford and Sam Aldridge what they felt to the opinion that their roles were considered by some to be "dangerous and should be rendered obsolete."

A question asked by LUSU President Michael Payne, then proposed a hypothetical situation, where Union Council may have to make the choice between having an extra societies representative in the place of the Student Campaigns Officer.

Both candidates said that they would feel that their position would be of more importance, as societies already had the representation of one person on Union Council, whereas their position would cover a remit that would otherwise not be represented – those campaigns that were not directly related to Academic, Liberation, Equality or Welfare issues,



Entertaining the crowds: Neil Smith husts for the position EWD Co

which are represented by the other campaigns officers – whilst also being able to give support to the other campaigns performed by LUSU.

Other unexpected questions were put to the candidate for Student Me-

dia Board Chair, Katie Jamieson. Wanting a more detailed understanding of her views on censorship in student media, Burrows asked another question.

The form of the hypothetical situ-

Out with the Non-Sabbs and in with the Part Time Officers

AFTER THE NON-SABBATICAL review that recently took place in Union Council, the newly revamped Part Time Union Officer positions will be closely fought in the upcoming elections.

The furore surrounding the recent shake-up of Union Council is what some people feel have caused the amount of candidates running for the positions.

There has been a lot of attention on the new positions and the changes that have been made over the last few weeks, and although the review was passed with overwhelming support, there were several complaints about the changes.

The most contested position is the new Social and Events Chair, with three candidates running (pictured right). The candidates are all current JCR Executive officers: Lonsdale JCR President Matt Windsor, Fylde JCR President James Duncan and Furness JCR Social Secretary, Stuart Walton.

Other popular positions included the International Students Officer, a role that three candidates were originally running for, before one pulled



out of the race. Now left in the contest for this position are Huneeya Mazari and Ashutosh Kumar.

Student Campaigns Officer is a newly created position and one that has attracted much excitement. Originally not part of the review, an amendment made in Union Council - sug-

gested by Helen Thompson, the Vice President of Cartmel JCR, - included this position being passed with the review.

The role has no specific remit and no single agenda, allowing the officer to help individual students run campaigns, or even other officers. This

position also had three candidates sign up originally, with one pulling out before hustings, now leaving Sam Aldridge and Terrie Crawford to face Thursday's elections.

The other new position of Communications Officer is uncontested, with Sarah Strachan being the only can-

didate. This position is the first part-time role to be directly related to the VP (Media & Communications).

Another new role, also affecting student media, is that of the Student Media Board Chair. Contested by only one person, Katie Jamieson, this position will play an important role in the Student Media Board, which was also newly introduced this year.

Societies have been left with one position to represent them on Union Council since the non-sabbatical review of Week Five, despite some controversy. Two people – Chris Osborn and Ben Gibbins – are running for this position in Week Eight.

Two positions from the GSA will also sit on Union Council, Post Graduate Taught Representative and Post Graduate Research Representative. The PGT Representative, Gboyega Adegbola, was elected in the Week Four GSA elections, and the role of PGR Representative, which was uncontested for the Week Four elections, will now be elected in Week Eight's Part Time Officer elections. Mike Jenkins is the only person standing for this position.

Hustings marks start of election season



Council Chair in front of a half-full Cavendish Lecture Theatre (Photo: Ben Robins)

making sure meetings did not go too off-track or get too heated, whilst also being able to advise the other people who sit on the board.

The crowd that attended hustings was smaller than may have been anticipated for university-wide elections, but this is something that has come to be expected from the part time officer elections for LUSU, which never seem to attract as much attention as the Sabbatical positions. Not quite filling the Cavendish Lecture Theatre at the beginning of the event, the crowd of people there seemed to thin out as the night went on.

Initial fears that the introduction of e-voting may reduce the awareness and turnout of elections at college JCR level have been disproved by the amount of people that have been nominated for positions in many of the undergraduate colleges.

Lonsdale College has 48 people standing in the elections, the most candidates for any JCR Exec out of all the colleges. The college with the second largest amount of candidates is Cartmel, with 36.

However, some colleges do have less people standing for positions than may have been preferred, leaving many candidates running for positions unopposed by anything but Re-Open Nominations. Pendle has only 22 people standing for election, and County, one of the largest colleges, has only 23 people standing for positions this year.

Though there have been fears within some colleges that the introduction of e-voting in the place of the system of voting in porters lodges would reduce turnout to the elections, there have been ideas to combat this.

All colleges will have a laptop in

their porters lodge during certain hours of the 24-hour period for which voting is open, so that people may still be able to vote whilst on campus. As well as this, all colleges have been asked to put on an event on the Thursday evening to make people aware that voting is going on, and to publicise the new e-voting system. Most colleges are expected to



Sarah Strachan

hotdogs, American music, and candidates giving 30-second mini-hustings to encourage people to keep voting. Fylde's event, Race for Elections, will be a race night, where people will be able to collect tokens to place bets on races. Lonsdale will be hosting Lonnie Idol, and Pendle will be having live music. Cartmel, though not having a specifically voting-related event, will be hosting the final Comedy Night of the Michaelmas Term.

In Week Four, the Graduate Students' Association held elections to fill its Exec after the changes to the constitution of Week One of this term. Despite an unprecedented amount of publicity for these elections, they did not manage to fill all the positions. At this point, three of the positions – President, VP (Sports) and VP (Postgrad Research) – were all uncontested, and so in Week Eight, the GSA will hold a by-election to fill these positions. Each of these positions has just one candidate running for them.

The Post Graduate Research role also sits on Union Council, and so the hustings for this position took place at the same time as hustings for other Part Time Union Officer positions, in Week Seven.

GSA has held two "Meet Your Candidates" events in Week Seven – one for on-campus students in Gradbar, and one for off-campus students. GSA has also set aside two computers for the e-voting on campus and will hold an event on the Thursday evening, like other colleges, to keep people voting.

It is hoped that these efforts to draw more attention to the by-election for the GSA Exec will make sure all positions are filled for 2010.

ation seemed to be a trend of the evening, with Burrows offering up a scenario to see how Jamieson would deal with a conflict of interest between the VP (Media & Communications) and a member of one of the

other media: LUTube.TV, SCAN and Bailrigg FM.

Jamieson responded by pointing out that decision making would not be part of her job should she be elected, she would merely be in a position of

have a laptop in their porters' lodge for the duration of these events, and some colleges will be having election themed events.

Furness College will host "Uncle Sam visits Trevor" in the college bar, an event that will include free

The launch of E-voting heralds new age for campus democracy

THIS YEAR, FOR the first time, part-time LUSU and JCR elections will be held electronically on the internet. The new e-voting system is one that has been met with overwhelmingly positive responses, with students calling it "essential" and "overdue".

Voting takes place on Thursday of Week Eight at 2pm at <http://democracy.lusu.co.uk/>, with polls staying open for 24 hours. It is expected that this will increase participation in this week's elections.

The recent Graduate Students' Association elections - most probably the union's last ballot paper election - had a very disappointing turnout with just over a hundred of the potential 3,500 strong electorate voting. It is hoped by LUSU that the adoption of e-voting will greatly improve the numbers participating in elections across the university.

Previously, voters would complete a paper ballot in the college porters lodges. Turnout numbers had been gradually decreasing as voters were disillusioned by a system seen by some as out of date and irrelevant. Spoilt ballot papers were also a major issue with the



previous system. E-voting removes the possibility of spoils and helps to make voting more convenient to all students, in particular those living off campus.

Any computer connected to the internet can be used to vote for candidates with the use of the voter's LUSU number for identification. The new website also allows voters to view a

photo of the candidate, as well as their full manifesto to describe what exactly the candidate will do should they be elected. This enables a more informed decision to be made, which is expected to increase the credibility of the elections by putting policy back at the forefront of the vote.

LUSU are hoping for the new sys-

tem to encourage further exploration of methods of engagement with the wider student body, while in particular attempting to rejuvenate the election process as a whole, which has been experiencing flagging interest amongst students.

Andy Johnston, LUSU VP (Finance, Events, Democracy, and Societies), suggests that it will allow students "flexibility to approach the elections process and look at a lot of additional information about the candidate, thus becoming a more informed voter."

The e-voting system was passed by the union council in June of this year, ending years of debate over the issue, with suggestions said to have been made for implementation of the idea as far back as 2003. Johnston believes that the system is "something that could really prove a turning point for engagement in Lancaster."

Students seem to appreciate the implementation of the system, with Ali Shaw, a first year in Lonsdale College, saying "I think it will increase participation, but it depends on the effectiveness of the system. If someone does

it and tells their friends it took them ages, they won't bother voting".

Another student, Paul Hannah, also of Lonsdale, believes that the previous system may have felt like more of an event than the new system might, saying "[while] some people could be more inclined to vote due to greater ease, some may be less inclined to vote due to lack of an event status."

LUSU held a 'trial run' of the e-voting system recently, promoted through posters on campus and via the internet. Students were encouraged to participate in the short test of the system by prizes being awarded. The trial allowed the e-voting team to establish where improvements needed to be made.

Johnston assures that they "have been able to sort [problems] out and improve it to make the system a lot more robust." As for the possibility that the system could come under pressure and have additional problems come election day, he adds that "we are as assured as we can be that the system will be fully functional in the voting period and the track record of the provider we use is excellent."

NEWS

GreenMeters measuring students' carbon footprint

Emma Newman

A NEW PROJECT has been set up by GreenLancaster this term to try and raise student awareness of energy consumption and carbon footprints. Electricity meters have been installed into flats in Pendle College to record the ongoing electricity use for each residence.

The project is being run as part of GreenLancaster's ongoing Carbon Competition. Mark Taylor, manager of GreenLancaster, described the competition as "an initiative which encourages students to reduce their energy consumption by providing prizes to the most energy-efficient flats."

Taylor stressed how successful the scheme has been so far, with all 552 flats in Pendle and 45 townhouses in Grizedale and County now online. There are currently over 950 students participating in the Carbon Competition, with hopes to expand the scheme into other colleges across campus in the future.

Previously restricted to the County and Grizedale eco-residences, the scheme has now been extended to include Pendle, where monitors are situated in each flat's kitchen. Students can view their current electricity use or reset to record individual weeks' consumption.

"[Thanks to the meter] I have been able to see just how much electricity my flat was using," one Pendle student said. "I was actually quite surprised at the meter reading as the seven of us had used £76.35 worth of electricity in five weeks. However, our overall position within Pendle College is a dismal 48th with 70.29kg CO2 per resident."

Lancaster's Facilities department also stresses that "the management of energy consumption and carbon emissions are arguably the two most important issues affecting the University." Preliminary information from their Carbon Footprint Report indicates that in the academic year 2007-08 Lancaster University was responsible for emitting approximately 71,700 tonnes of carbon dioxide. However, they aim to reduce the University's overall consumption of water, electricity and gas use by 10% each. The GreenMeters are just one of a whole range of initiatives set to roll out to both accommodation and faculty buildings.

GreenLancaster's Carbon Crusaders will also be visiting flats and townhouses soon to share hints and tips about how to reduce energy consumption in preparation for their Prize Giving Ceremony in week 10. Cash prizes for three awards are up for grabs – Trailblazers (best performing of the first few weeks), End of Term (best performing throughout the term) and Most Improved (biggest improvement over the second half of term).

'Tis the season to be jolly

- **Winterfest hits Alexandra Square for three days in Week 9**
- **Ice rink and 20ft Christmas tree to be centrepiece of event**

Mike Holmes

WEDNESDAY TO FRIDAY of Week Nine will see Alexandra Square play host to Winterfest, the university's brand new winter event, which will take place for the first time this term.

The event, funded jointly by The Friends Programme and UPP, will see all areas of Lancaster University join together to celebrate the start of the festive season, and begin to wind down for the Christmas holidays.

Andy Johnston, VP (FEDS), said, "the opportunity to utilise seasonal sentiment and put on a completely new type of event is a really exciting idea."

Though some events of the week are still unconfirmed, it is known that a 20ft Christmas tree will be gracing Alexandra Square and festive scenery including light garlands and a snow machine provided by the Engineering Society will be in place to turn Alexandra Square into a festive market place.

Wednesday Week Nine will see the event begin, with stalls selling festive treats – such as mulled wine, Christmas cakes and biscuits – being set up,

for the remainder of the week, in the Square.

Stalls selling cards and gifts, such as jewellery, Christmas decorations and ceramics, will also be present during the week. Friday will see a hog roast and roasted chestnuts stalls be added, to coincide with the climax of the week's events.

The main feature of the events will be an ice rink in Alexandra Square for all three days, with people being able to skate from 12pm until 6pm on Wednesday and Thursday, and until 8pm on Friday.

There may be a live broadcast on the Thursday from Alexandra Square by Bailrigg FM, which is subject to the station wishing to be involved in the event, along with performances by the University Brass Band and the Chaplaincy Centre Choir.

The Debating Society is also lined up to discuss the existence of Santa, and the Theatre Group are reported to be performing a pantomime as part of the entertainment being put on for the event.

On Friday, the Winterfest Extravaganza Show will see the Gospel Choir, Dance Society, Hip Hop and Breakdancing Society, Writers' Guild and Juggling Society all providing entertainment from 4pm, alongside various other acts.

Max Stannard, Brass Band Assistant Conductor said the band was looking forward to Winterfest, because "it will give us a chance to play for people who would not normally hear our society's ensembles."

The event is reported to have the support of Santa and his elves, who are



A Winter's Tale: The square will be transformed in week 9, with Winterfest providing enjoyment for students and staff alike

rumoured to be making an appearance during the Winterfest events.

Johnston mentioned how he hoped that this would become an annual event; placing it in Week Nine, he said, would "allow people to talk about it in Week Ten and hopefully build up more excitement for a similar event next

year."

The event, which has been planned for months, is being put on primarily thanks to the hard work and organisational efforts of the LUSU Activities Office and student helpers, who have been supported by the Activities Developer.

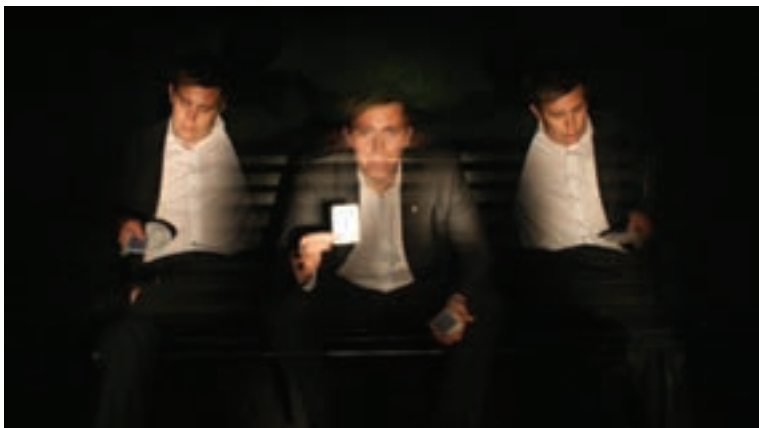
Create demonstrates magic touch

Hannah Smith

A LANCASTER STUDENT has achieved success in the magic business with help from Create. Close-up magician Adam Dadswell had already created a business for himself using his magic performances but approached Create for help to increase sales.

Create, a LUSU based organisation that provides entrepreneurial students with a platform to form a business, worked closely with Dadswell to help improve his venture. Create's manager Joe Buglass told SCAN that they discussed marketing techniques and business plans together. Buglass also said that Create supplied Adam with several opportunities to perform, something which is invaluable to a fledgling business such as Dadswell's.

In describing Create's role in furthering Dadswell's business, Buglass said, "we are working with Adam to



Playing his cards right: Dadswell adopts a 'personal approach' with his shows

discuss his future – whether he wants to continue performing, or if he would like to teach magic, or even be on television."

Dadswell's business provides a more 'personal approach' to magic by bringing the guests into the perform-

ance. Currently his client base revolves around occasions such as parties and weddings. With Create's help, the client base is expanding and business is flourishing.

Create assists and supports Dadswell in making crucial decisions with

regards to his business. In Week Ten he will be going up in front of Create's Dragons' Den style panel in the hope of securing funding to further his business.

The structure of the Create Panel alters from term to term, but it tends to be made up of professionals from areas such as law, accountancy, banking, and web design. Its function is not simply to decide on the allocation of funds, but to give professional advice and support to young entrepreneurs.

Through receiving help with marketing, sales and potentially a cash injection into his business, there is no doubt that Dadswell has benefited greatly from his experience with Create. In his own words, his business is now "much more organised."

"I would definitely encourage others to get involved with Create. I have been working with Joe for a while now; they welcomed my idea with open arms and I have never looked back since," he said.

University set to announce campus rent rises within the next week

Samantha Newsham
News Editor

RENTS ACROSS CAMPUS are likely to rise again next year, with an increased difference in price between new and old accommodation.

Prices for the academic year 2010-2011 are still under discussion but Dr Hilary Simmons, Head of the College and Residence Office, expects any rent increase to be 'low'. Preliminary reports suggest, however, that the increase could be in the region of 2% or even more. The rent briefing group is to meet within the next week, by which time it is hoped that figures will have been agreed upon.

The rent briefing group consists of Simmons, LUSU President Michael Payne, Paul Farley from the Finance Department and Professor Amanda Chetwynd, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Colleges and the Student Experience. To set rent rises each year, the group uses a formula, which takes into account a variety of factors, including utility charges, energy consumption by students and RPI. Although the group meets in November, the value of RPI used in the formula has ordinarily come from the previous September.

Payne said that a rent rise for the next academic year would be 'utterly unacceptable'.

"Any overall rent increase this year, after eight months of negative RPI, would be penny-pinching and unrealistic," he said. "It would be Scrooge-like of the university to ask for more money in the current economic climate."

RPI (Retail Price Index) is the most commonly used measure of inflation. It is calculated monthly and since March 2009 has been negative, reflecting the UK's current state of recession. Its value in September 2009, the value used in calculating rent rises for next year, was -1.4, compared to 5.0 in September 2008, yet prices are still presumed to be set to rise.

JCR Presidents from several colleges spoke out against the potential raise and its affect on students.

"I don't agree with the rent rise; however, I accept that the university is a business and needs to run like one," said Chaz Ginn of Grizedale. "As long as the raise matches RPI and is as small as it needs to be we can't complain."

Cartmel JCR President Robbie Pickles told SCAN that if rent is going to rise the university must show it is offering a better service to on-campus students.

"Charges at the end of the year sometimes seem quite ridiculous," he said, citing his own experience receiving charges of £12 for spot damage to a chair and £25 for 'excess cleaning'. "A lot of people have problems with accommodation. If they make rent higher it should include damages."

Whilst it is expected prices will increase across the board, there will potentially be a larger raise for rooms in the newest accommodation blocks, to reflect their higher quality.

University Partnerships Programme (UPP), a private sector housing pro-



Prices rises?: Accommodation across campus is set to increase in price for the year 2010-2011 (Photo: Ben Robins)

vider, owns the newest housing blocks on campus, mainly in Alexandra Park but also the townhouses in County and Grizedale and rooms in Furness and Fylde. Superior en-suite rooms in UPP-owned houses currently cost £95.90 per week, compared to £92.40 for basic en-suite rooms in Slaidburn House, Bowland Hall, John Creed and George Fox.

Again, no decision has been taken as yet, but potential outcomes include larger rent increase for UPP-owned buildings or an increase for UPP buildings and a decrease for university-owned accommodation. However, a rent increase would be added on top of that leading to an overall increase in price for all accommodation.

Despite opposing any projected rent rise, Payne welcomes the increased price differentiation between old and new rooms.

"Although an overall rent increase would be firmly opposed by students, a more noticeable pricing differentiation between accommodation according to its quality would be welcomed. A sensible pricing structure should reflect the marked difference between 'superior' and 'basic' accommodation," he said.

In addition to potential rent increases, JCR Presidents have criticized the amount of standard accommodation on campus. Just 24% of undergraduate rooms available are standard, meaning the vast majority of students are obliged to pay higher prices for en-suite accommodation.

"There's not enough standard accommodation [on campus]," said Dave Prescott, President of Furness JCR. "Some students would prefer to pay less for more basic accommodation. We can't say students don't want

it when they're not offered a choice."

Tom Skarbek-Wazynski of Bowland, a college with one of the highest levels of standard accommodation, agreed, saying "In Bowland we're lucky because we have such a lot. It's popular because of the price and also because of the social aspect – standard accommodation tends to have much larger kitchens than en-suite."

College and Residence Officers, who are responsible for allocating rooms, feel differently, saying that in their experience en-suite is more popular.

"I end up having to house people who wanted en-suite in standard," said Bowland's officer Alison Platt. "First years seem to prefer en-suite. Second and third years often change to standard but freshers initially like the idea of their own bathroom."

All officers agree that the universi-

ty offers the right mix, something that Payne feels is very important.

"The university must maintain a wide range of accommodation types on campus. Different students have different needs and different budgetary allowances and none of them should be priced out" he said.

Simmons defended the accommodation on offer, telling SCAN that "in recent years we have not had to place any undergraduate students who wanted standard accommodation into en-suite accommodation."

As well as Bowland, Pendle has a high number of standard rooms, whilst Furness offers a limited amount. County and Grizedale have the best variety of accommodation, with townhouse rooms as well as standard and en-suite, whereas Cartmel and Lonsdale offer nothing but superior en-suite.

In Focus: LUSU Fairer Fees & Funding Campaign

Mission accomplished: MP

- Over 200 students protest in front of Lancaster Town Hall
- Local MP cornered into signing pledge on tuition fees
- Ben Wallace lobbied with 1300 letters delivered by LUSU

Lauren Hirst
Emma Follis
Liam Kay

LUSU'S CAMPAIGN TO keep the cap on tuition fees began successfully with an endorsement from Lancaster's MP Ben Wallace.

As over 200 Lancaster University students protested on the steps of the Town Hall, Wallace signed a pledge to vote against a rise in fees under the current system.

Organised by LUSU President Michael Payne, the protest came after Lord Mandelson publicly announced a review on Higher Education fees and funding last week. The likely outcome of the review is an increase in tuition fees to as much as £7000.

The protest, held on Friday 13th November, was the first step in LUSU's campaign against rising tuition fees and for a review of the current

funding system. With a briefing from Payne and Andy Johnston, LUSU VP (FEDS), completed, students were transported in free buses from the



Ben Wallace MP
(Photo: Ben Robins)

underpass to the city centre where the protest commenced.

Students from all colleges and year groups marched through the city, laden with hand-made banners with words of warning: "Generation Bankrupt" and "Not a £ More". They made their presence felt with chants such as "Seven grand? You're having a laugh!" and "MPs, clean up fees" shouted in unison. Leaflets were distributed to members of the public to raise awareness of the campaign.

On arrival at the Town Hall, Payne addressed his fellow protesters, saying "Twelve years ago the Labour government swept to power with the promise of a focus on 'education, education, education'. Just five years ago Labour abandoned that promise. This government decided to turn its back on students." Despite his strained voice, Payne carried on to say "Today we must call on our MPs and prospective MPs to come clean," concluding with "MPs must vote with us or pay the price."

Clearly motivated by Payne's speech, the crowd took their stance outside the Town Hall, where Wallace was holding his weekly surgery. Payne had organised a meeting with Wallace with the intention of acquiring his vote against the rise in student fees. As well as the pledge, Payne took with him over 1,300 letters signed by Lancaster University students calling for Wallace's support on the matter.

Rhona Jackson, a second year student from Bowland College, attended the protest. When asked for her thoughts on the possibility of student



Driving a hard bargain: Over 200 students put Tory M

Students' Union quick off mark to launch fairer fees and funding campaign because of Vice-Chancellor's stance on the issue

SINCE THE GOVERNMENT'S announcement of a review of higher education, LUSU has taken a stand against the possible rise in fees which many students fear will be the result of the review.

Along with thousands of students across the country, LUSU is banding together to protest against the prospect of increased fees. One of its primary concerns is the lack of representation of students' views, despite the fact that it is students who will be most affected by the decision. It is because of this lack of representation that LUSU and other student unions feel forced to protest about such matters.

As current fees stand, the average student will leave university with around £20,000 worth of debt. Those that are lucky may find a job with a starting salary of the same amount, but most will have an approximate starting salary of £19,000. Paying back this debt is already a daunting prospect for students across the country, without considering an increase in fees.

If fees were to go up, students could be looking at leaving university with debt that is at least double what they will be earning annually. Many feel that this would stop them from going



to university at all.

LUSU President Michael Payne said "Our campaign on fairer fees and funding is aimed at raising awareness and fighting for students on the single

biggest issue affecting them in over a decade," adding, "Our campaign like many across the country aims to get the university to realise it must protect students' interests and not just allow

institutional policy to be created by one or two key people."

Although the campaign has only just begun LUSU has been quick to gain attention and support for their cause.

They pre-empted the Government's announcement of the review on 9th November, preparing the "£30,000 for a degree?" posters which were put up across campus first thing on the Monday morning.

In addition they readied a letter to local MP Ben Wallace, asking him to pledge his support to the campaign. Copies of this letter were distributed in porters' lodges across campus by 6pm that evening for students to sign. LUSU amassed 1,300 signed copies of these letters and took them to Wallace during the protest outside the Town Hall on Friday 13th November. After an hour of students protesting outside the hall, the MP emerged to sign a pledge to fight the system as it is now and to oppose an increase in tuition fees.

Spurred on from their early success, LUSU now plan to take the campaign to the next step. Last week a new letter circulated throughout the university, this time addressed to Lancaster's Vice-Chancellor, Paul Wellings. Wellings is one of the first to openly support the prospect of raised tuition fees, something which concerns LUSU as they fear it is not a view representative of the majority of students.

gives backing to campaign



MP Ben Wallace under pressure to sign a pledge backing campaign against tuition fees (Photo: Ben Robins)

fees increasing to £7000 per year, Jackson said "I think it's absolutely terrible. I don't know how I'm going to pay it off as it."

JCR members were also in attendance with many College Presidents vocalising their concerns about the plans to increase student fees. Bowland President Tom Skarbek-Wazynski stated "I think it's just unacceptable as the system doesn't work as it is and sticking it up isn't going to help. The government needs to look at the review process and find a better way of funding education." President of Lonsdale College, Matt Windsor, commented on the future of university if the rise in fees did occur, saying "University will be flooded full with people who can afford it off mummy and daddy's credit card and not those who actually want to learn."

After the meeting, Wallace came out to address the students, a signed pledge clearly in view.

"The current system has failed. It needs to be reviewed, but after the review there could be all sorts of other issues. However, under the current system I would not support an increase in fees," he said. "I am not raising the cap under the current system. You haven't got what you paid for."

The pledge signed by Wallace read: "I pledge to vote against any increase in fees 'under the current system', in the next parliament and to pressure the government to introduce a fairer alternative."

With the first protest of LUSU's campaign against increasing fees clearly a success, Payne commented on the turnout of Lancaster to students showcasing their support. "I think the turnout is absolutely brilliant but I don't think we should get complacent. There is a lot more to achieve in this campaign."

The campaign was commended by Ray Hill, Honorary Vice-Chairman of the NUS and a specialist in anti-fascism campaigns, who was present at the event. "This is an excellent campaign; I would like to congratulate all who had anything to do with it," he told SCAN.

The success of the campaign received national attention within hours of completion with press coverage on the BBC website and politics.co.uk as well as the Lancashire Evening Post. The protest also made top story on The Bay, and BBC Radio Lancashire.

This coverage has added to attention the Student Union's campaign has received on a national level. Payne, speaking in his position as Chair of Unions '94, told the BBC News website the importance of the review being "transparent", adding, "It should explore progressive alternatives to variable tuition fees and must address the problems caused for students by the disastrous bursaries system that is currently in place."

It is expected that the campaign will continue for the foreseeable future, with the review by Lord Browne not being released until next year.

Five years on and Labour facing another war over tuition fees as NUS mark battle lines

THE CURRENT ISSUE of the proposed rise in tuition fees has prompted intense debate and much controversy, with detractors of the argument believing that a further increase in fees would only serve to hark back to the days of elitism that was rife in universities back before the 1960s. The supporters of the raise believe that an increase in fees is necessary to increase the competitiveness of our universities against the best the world has to offer, such as Harvard and Yale. The battle lines have been drawn.

The background to the current debate begins with the introduction of top-up fees by Tony Blair's Labour government, accepted in 2004 with the passing of the Higher Education Act, which allowed the increase in the cap on tuition fee costs to rise to up to £3,000. The bill was only just passed in the House of Commons, scraping a five vote majority to win the vote 316 to 311. This was coupled with a review of the tuition fees system that was set up in the same year, intending to investigate the tuition fees system. The increase to £3,000 was completed in 2006.

The current debate over the issue relates to calls by many universities



to gain increased funds through the removal of the tuition fees cap. This, they argue, will enable universities in

the UK to compete with the world's best, despite the current placement of four British universities (Cambridge,

Oxford, Imperial, UCL) in the top ten list for international academic establishments. The tuition fees increase would allow fees to reach £7,000 per annum and enable a rise in interest rates for all student loans, effectively more than doubling university income from students' applications.

The review has been a key aim for many vice-chancellors around the country, especially Lancaster's Vice-Chancellor Paul Wellings. He has called out for an increase in fees to expand funding and allow for higher quality within universities. The review itself has been called to discuss the current fees system and debate whether it needs to be adapted.

Peter Mandelson's proposed review itself has led to claims of a whitewash on the fees issue. The strict rules for members of the review panel has all but forced the NUS to withdraw, citing its inability to be able to discuss developments and its stance in public.

The review's postponement of its decision until after the next general election has also caused a significant backlash, with accusations that the government has attempted to move the decision in the belief that the is-

sue is a potential vote-loser and political cyanide. It would be difficult for Labour to raise tuition fees when it knows full well that for many sections of the general public, and for students, a raise would prevent them supporting the party at the next general election.

The Conservatives too have supported the postponement of the release of the review's results, indicating a belief that a request to raise tuition fees above the current cap is most probably going to be announced in the summer when the general election is over. The desire itself for the current proposals to be bandied around comes from a report by the Confederation of British Industry, describing the current University funding in the UK as critical and proposing an increase in funding via the raising of fees, reduction of grants and increasing interest on loans taken out by all students at universities in the country. This is all indicative of one thing: the next few months will see prolonged debate.

The next step is how the review eventually takes place and whether the NUS and students' unions across the country can prevent the raise in fees taking place.

Learning Zone springs a leak

Lauren Hirst

DESPITE BEING OPENED less than three months ago, the Learning Zone has come across more problems with two of its MAC computers being sectioned off due to a leak from the ceiling.

On Thursday 19th November, after heavy rain fall throughout the week, bin bags and buckets were acquired from the Learning Zone staff to shelter the newly purchased equipment, situated to the side of the electronic doors.

Catherine Mclearie, a second year student from Furness College, said "There are very few MAC computers in here as it is and for them to be unavailable due to what seems to be poor construction is ridiculous."

The leaking ceiling is the most recent in a spate of problems encountered in the Learning Zone over the past months. Most notably the electronic doors have been criticized for locking in students unexpectedly.

Tom Counsell from Lonsdale College, currently in his second year, stated, "I think that the Learning Zone is a fantastic investment by the university but the fact that it has so many problems questions the building's durability."

Lancaster University make giant leap in latest graduate employment figures

Collette McColgan
News Editor

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY HAS been ranked top in the North of England for graduate employment, and 13th nationally, according to the Sunday Times University Guide.

Lancaster's recent improvement in graduate employment is expected to be furthered by 'The Lancaster Award', a new idea being put forward by the university's Centre for Enterprise, Employment and Careers (CEEC).

The award, which was advertised to students via email over the Summer, gives students an opportunity to get prepared for the job market by taking part in work experience, volunteering and other activities.

To successfully gain the Award, students must fill in a skills audit and job application form, and take part in a mock job interview. The interview panel consists of an employer, careers advisor and academic. The award acts as proof of skills for future employers.

The Award also includes a two-day course on Insight to Enterprise and Employability.

Over 400 freshers signed up to take part. Ten per cent of second and third years have also signed up to take part in the scheme.

CEEC has received a lot of praise for



its innovative projects to increase the future employability of Lancaster students from the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Service (AGCAS). The "Insight to Teaching and Enterprise" placement programme set up by CEEC was runner-up in the AGCAS Awards for Excellence for Innovation.

The scheme has also had success in the business sector: CEEC's Nucleargraduates scheme came 72nd in The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers 2010.

LUVU, the University's volunteering service is helping the scheme by letting students gain experience in voluntary work, something which they can draw off to help them with the Award.

Through work with Create, LUVU's partner organisation, LUVU was awarded the title of 'Work Experience Provider of the Year 2008' by the Na-

tional Council of Work Experience.

LUVU has helped 450 students into voluntary work, which has in turn affected the lives of 5,500 young people across Lancashire, in this academic year alone.

The Director of CEEC, Paul Blackmore said to LU News "The Lancaster Award will be invaluable when applying for a job because it provides real experience and preparation for the personal skills analysis, job application and interview process that all job applicants will go through when applying for jobs."

CEEC also gained second and third place for the AGCAS Awards for Excellence in the "Employer Award for Work-related Learning" category for its UNITE SME placement scheme and learning partnership with PepsiCo International.

Matt's mohawk raises £207 for charity

Samantha Newsham
News Editor

MATT WINDSOR, PRESIDENT of Lonsdale JCR, has shaved his hair into a mohawk to raise money for Children In Need.

Just the day before the event, Windsor managed to reach £207 of sponsorship, meaning he had to keep the promise to dye the mohawk shocking pink and keep it for twenty days, including for the Lonsdale Christmas Ball.

"I've never done anything big for charity and I thought it was time to," said Windsor. "Thanks again [to all my sponsors] for your support. I couldn't have done it without you."

Shaving his head in Lonsdale Bar at the college's 1940s night meant that extra interest was raised.



Winter Fest

two thousand and nine

activities.lusu.co.uk

Tough restrictions and limited space conspire to leave students and staff struggling over parking permits

Hannah Price

STUDENTS WISHING TO bring their cars to university have been struggling for permits to park on campus. Due to limited space, students who want to park their cars on campus must conform to very tight criteria.

Parking restrictions apply on campus between 8am and 6pm from Monday to Friday, making it impossible for students to leave their cars during the week without paying £3 a day.

Students and staff alike must apply for a permit to park on site and purchase this permit if they are eligible. For this academic year, a standard permit, limiting students to parking spaces on Alexandra Park, cost £52.

A spokesperson for the University said that restrictions on permits are put in place in an effort to “help manage demand for car parking on campus. The University tries to ensure that those with the greatest need for having a car on campus are eligible for a permit”. The number of parking permits issued to students to date for this coming academic year is 591.

Priority is given to students deemed to be most in need of a permit such as those with reduced mobility or family members who are ill, students who have recently been bereaved and stu-



dents with children. Other exceptions are made where the student carries out volunteering work as part of their course outside of the Lancaster “urban core”. Society membership and the need for a car to transport sports teams can also influence a student’s application. But many students have still had problems gaining permits.

One such student was Claire Pearson, a second-year Psychology student. After getting a job in an after school programme with a company called Mad Science, she thought she had found the

perfect accompaniment to her studies, as well as an ideal placement to help her into the teaching career she wanted to pursue in the future. However, the number of hours she worked over the course of a week did not meet the ten hours necessary to qualify for a parking permit, even though she was required to visit a variety of schools around the country. Without a parking permit she would have been unable to accept the placement. She took her argument as far as she could without any success before the careers service stepped in

to help.

“Luckily I have my permit now, but if I hadn’t have got it I wouldn’t be able to be doing pretty much my dream job. Careers really helped me fight my case, they are amazing and I’m so thankful to them,” she said.

Pearson was not the only student who had to struggle to get her permit. Another student, living off-campus, told SCAN that despite tutoring and working in her college bar for several hours a week she was not deemed eligible for a permit.

“I had to work the system a little bit to get it,” she said. “However, I think I should have been able to get one with much more ease. The people in the car parking office weren’t very co-operative when I explained [my situation].”

It is not just students who have to apply for car parking permits. A new scheme has been introduced for staff who are able to car share. Where two or more cars are registered for one permit, the cost is reduced and the permit is valid for parking zones closer to the main facilities.

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Research

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CATCH IT

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.



BIN IT

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.



KILL IT

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.

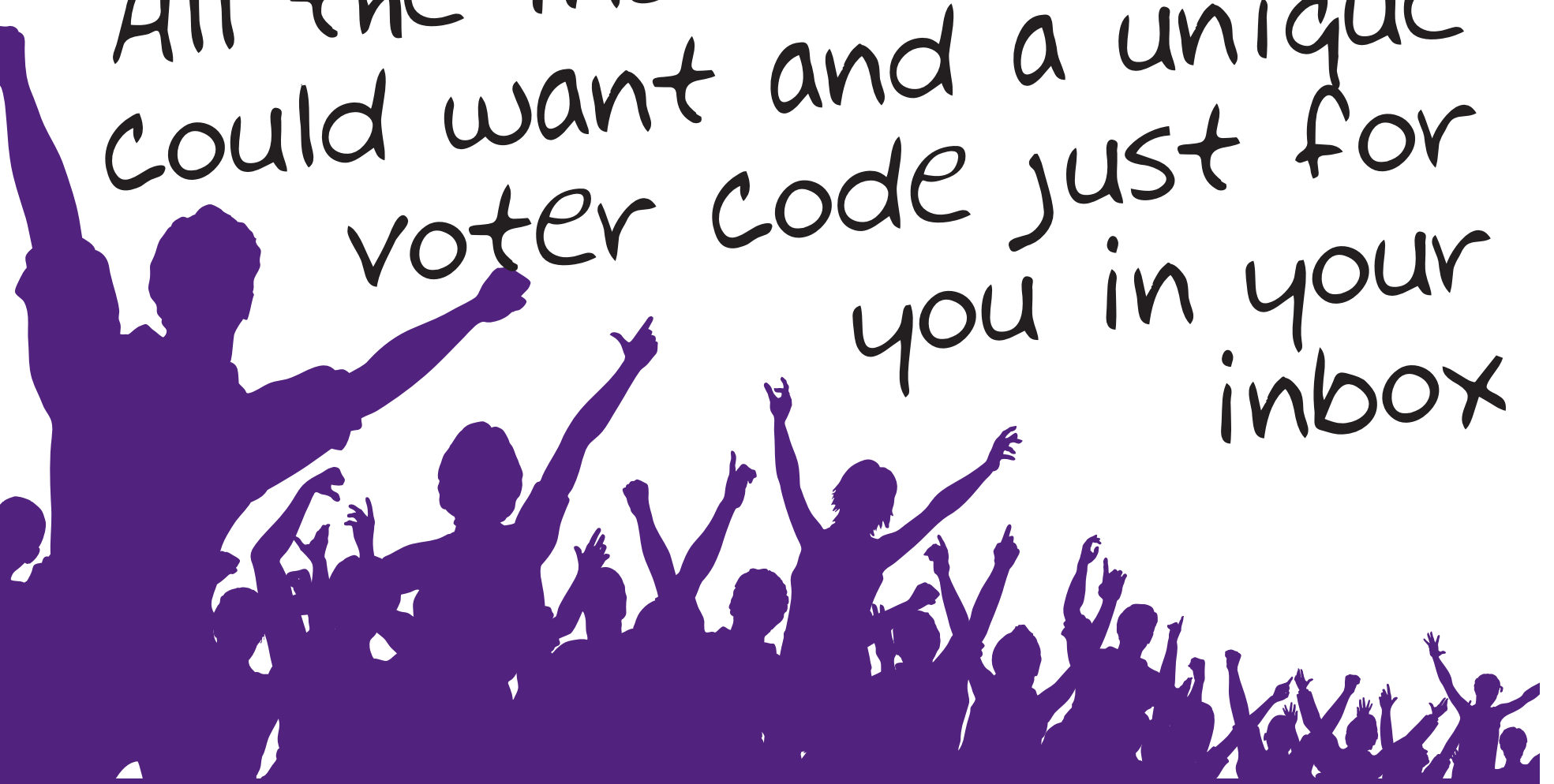


Sit down &!
be counted!



Voting Thurs
from 2pm

All the instructions you
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democracy.lusu.co.uk

scan:COMMENT



Liam Kay

Comment Editor

Where was the wider consultation in the Non-Sabbatical Review?

Union Council's decisions were to the detriment of democracy

The review of the student union's non-sabbatical structure has been approaching ever since the crucial changes to the make-up of the Sabbatical team a year ago. The major area of contention however is whether the review stands up to closer scrutiny. And was Union Council right to pass the bylaw, allowing the proposed changes to become cemented into LUSU's constitution.

Firstly, let me explain what the review's initial targets were. Ever since the remodelled Sabbatical team came into existence, it has been necessary to reform how the other democratically elected positions in the students' union work and set out new guidelines to define the roles the positions currently occupy in university life. This current set of bylaw changes has looked to remove many of the ineffective and outdated positions that existed before and replace them with more easily defined roles that cover a wider range of issues, with greater scope for a broader remit.

In complete honesty they are an improvement on the previous model. However, it is the way in which these



reforms were passed that should be subject to the most severe criticism.

Who was consulted on this particular issue? Who was asked what the review should change? Union officers, both sabbatical and non-sabbatical, were consulted as were many individuals within LUSU. But there was one vital component missing: the wider student body. The scenes within union council itself should serve as a worrying indicator of the way in which the

review came about and was turned into a permanent efface of the union, descending into farce as different groups debated the issue. We saw petitions, votes on how best to vote, amendment after amendment and saw petty rivalries spring to the fore. This is not how a council should run.

The existence of the petition conveys the surprise and dissatisfaction that the student body had on the lack of consultation it received. Was the

review shown even once to those outside of the LUSU officers before it was made into law? No. This is not true consultation if it opposed one of the fundamental pillars of the part-time officer's review: democracy. The review fails to properly take on board the views of the members of the union and therefore runs into dangerous territory. After all, a review like this should be made with the specific aim of improving LUSU's aid to its constituents. If its members are not consulted on critical issues such as this, how can it truly say that these changes were for the benefit of the students?

There are some important parallels with this situation. The merger of the Politics, Philosophy and Religious Studies departments was rightly condemned for its lack of consultation to the student population. Many students felt they were not properly allowed to give input into the decision being made and the problem we face with the part-time officer review is how similar the circumstances regarding the knowledge that the students had of the plans put forward.

This is where the part-time officer review fails. The sabbatical review last

year was battled over and debated at length and both sides had to make concessions. But whatever you think about the end results, you have to agree that the review was carried out in a democratic and fair process. We needed some consultation on this issue and we received it. The part-time officers review will be forever tainted with the sneaking suspicion that fear of similar events like the AU's protest at the projected loss of its sabbatical role was a key motive in the decision to take the review to union council as a bylaw. If the reforms are good enough, and believe me they are positive, why back down from democracy? The reforms would most likely come through in the exact same way they did now only with more societies representation, an issue that prompted students to sign petitions and attend union council to see the results of the voting taking place.

If you truly believe your ideas are correct, democracy needn't be pushed aside in the fear of changes being made to the grand plan. If we truly believe in the rhetoric we spout about equality and consultation, we have to apply it to ourselves regardless of its outcome.



Michael Payne

LUSU President

This institution is nothing without its people

Our University has been built upon the ethos and spirit of its people; the cutting edge academics, the hard-working workforce and the innovative and outspoken students. The economic turmoil that all universities will face in the next year and beyond will require tough choices and sensible stewardship if they are to survive. But it would be wrong to protect Lancaster University, the brand, at the expense of protecting and ensuring the satisfaction of those who make our institution what it is, the core staff and students.

Balancing tough managerial decisions (affected primarily by financial constraints) against the preservation of staff and student satisfaction is never an easy process. But a demoralized and unhappy workforce or an unsatisfied and dissident student population will not only lead to turmoil for the institution but outright stagnation, or in the worst case scenario regression whilst its competitors continue to improve.

If this university is to weather the

economic storm that lies ahead it needs strong leadership; a leadership that understands that those most affected by the storm will be those they lead, those who keep the institution running on a day by day basis and those who provide the majority of its income. A Vice-Chancellor with true leadership is one that can deliver an increased grant to the Students' Union whilst accepting direct criticism, through protest, about their proposed strategic plan on the other. A true leader is one that can uphold and protect the right to thorough and proper student consultation on the academic development of the institution, whilst facing outright opposition to such developments in Senate.

Vice-Chancellors' influence and power derived from those they lead; the respect, consensual support and satisfaction of their staff and students. But when this begins to crumble, so too does the precarious pedestal upon which Vice-Chancellor sits.

For too long the many in this university have been forgotten due to

the self-righteous pontificating and incredulous behavior of the few. Academics have been brushed aside in Senate, students have been prosecuted for challenging the morals of their institution and the labor force across the institution has put up with bullying from impatient and egotistical line managers. But the simple fact remains: without students our Learning Zone would be a lifeless, over-sized car showroom, without the diligent cleaning staff our university would be an unprepossessing tip and without our porters we wouldn't feel half as safe as we do on campus. It is also true that without our independent-minded academics Lancaster would have failed to push the boundaries of research in the way it has and without our college staff the college system would be nothing but a page in the prospectus.

With a defeat in Senate last week on proposals regarding university employment procedures and an overwhelming demonstration of intense student feeling on fees and funding just before the weekend, university

management must stop sleepwalking into chaos and political battles with those who it should be serving and begin to open their eyes to reality.

Those who dissent should not be dealt with like some criminal militants, they should be debated with and understood, only then can an informed judgment be made. Those who disagree should not be ostracized and marginalized but brought into the fold as honest critics rather than sycophantic yes men.

Our Vice-Chancellor and those afraid to criticize him should stop and listen or step down and leave.

Calling for heads to roll is never dealt lightly but nor is the hardship that students may face in coming years and nor will be the harsh prospects of possible job loss be for some staff, which may lie around the corner.

It is true that every university needs a leader but every leader needs supporters, and when those supporters become disenfranchised, the leader, now without followers is merely a man taking a walk.

Preserving the institution's future is a pointless task if the end product is only a hollow and lifeless shell



Paul Lynch

Vice-Chancellor, do you really speak for us?

In the pursuit of riches Wellings has forgotten the founding traditions Lancaster was built upon

Go online. Read a newspaper. Talk to friends and classmates and even people you barely know. There is one issue which dominates discussion at Lancaster, and that is tuition fees and why they might be rising for future students. The Browne Commission was opened by Lord Mandelson, the Innovation Secretary, on Monday 9 November to research the effects of changing the tuition fees system, probably based around an increase in the amount paid.

Over the summer, the Chairman of the influential 1994 Group of universities announced his support for an increase of fees to £7000 per year, leading to an overall debt for those students affected of £30,000 and feasibly a great deal more. Why would this be of particular interest to Lancaster University students? Because the current Chairman of the 1994 group is Professor Paul Wellings, the Vice Chancellor of Lancaster University since 2002.

Wellings and the student body of this university have had a fractious history at best. Throughout his time here he has summarily closed the Department of Continuing Education



without consultation, presided over the merger of Politics, Philosophy and Religious studies departments without consultation, and ignored the long standing affiliations with local and regional colleges that this university was built upon and instead concentrated on international partnerships to bring lucrative business to the University. Whilst this attitude might be at home in a private university this attitude shows a fundamental ignorance

of the history and culture of Lancaster University, an institution founded in 1964 to raise the bar of education in the North West.

However, I am not writing this to rehash old battles with the Vice-Chancellor; that would be both petty and counterproductive. Instead I simply wish to ask why he thinks that increasing fees to £7000 a year would be a good thing for Lancaster?

Firstly, if you explain to someone of about 16 or 17 years of age that the decision to go to university will land them in approximately £30,000 debt with a 4.3% rate of interest, most of them will instead look for school leavers training schemes instead, and ignore university. The vast proportion of Lancaster students are from the North West, and if they do decide to come to university even with that debt, most will try and alleviate the pressure by commuting and not taking a maintenance loan. To be honest Lancaster is not that easy to commute to. Whilst the university can counter that they provide generous bursary schemes for students from poor backgrounds, in 2007/2008 almost £200,000 was left unclaimed due to small print in

university contracts, such as the little known fact that if you are awarded both a scholarship for exceptional A level results and a bursary due to low household income it is the universities discretion whether you receive both.

The Vice Chancellor has also claimed that the extra money would allow Lancaster more research funding, allowing us to possibly reach the league table highs of the 'OxBridge' group (Oxford and Cambridge). Realistically it would take a lot more than money to raise us to this level and many students will ask where this money would be spent; would it be on the crumbling science labs or would it be on the Management school?

All in all, the position that I have taken is simple. Raising tuition fees and interest rates would discourage people from low income households from attending university. Those that could afford it would probably go elsewhere, either somewhere closer to home or somewhere with a better graduate employment record. Therefore Lancaster would fail at the job it was built for, and all due to the increase in tuition fees that this Vice Chancellor is the cheerleader for.

If tuition fees do rise then where will our money be going?

Students should not be so reliant on the government for support on fees writes Emily Robertson

On campus we seem to be surrounded by the threat of the impending rise in our tuition fees. We all know that seven grand a year is too much, that the majority of us will not be able to afford it and something needs to be done. But perhaps the best way to go about campaigning against the rise in fees is not to point out what is wrong with the increase, but rather what is right with what we are paying now?

Maybe what we pay now is too much, but if the question is 'do we get what we pay for?', I say 'yes'. If we divide the number of hours of teaching we get a week by what we pay, it works out at around £14.50 a session. A bit steep when you think about it and I'm sure the lecture theatres would be virtually deserted if we had to part with nearly £15 of our treasured cash at every lecture. And most students now don't want more lectures but more contact time and group work, so maybe £15 a lecture is not exactly value for money.

But then we have to take into consideration what else we get from the university experience: the library and access to thousands of resources, such as metalib, the rare books room and the expertise of the staff. We have an excellent welfare and support network from the counselling services, caring for us as people not just consumers. We get offered opportunities to better ourselves in readiness for the intimidating real world of work courtesy of CEEC. We get the much debated Learning Zone, with the latest technology for us to freely use. And we get all of this for just over £3,000. If fees are raised then questions should be asked on what extra services the government will be ensuring we are provided with.

However, some would argue, even though all the figures add up, the government isn't helping us enough. It seems that we have been supported fully until our departure from college and now we are being made to pay the full price. Our parents pay their taxes and they should not have to pay out again for us to attend university, surely our fees should be subsidised not raised. Yet we have already had thirteen years of education free from the government, paid with just those taxes taken from our parents, and this is an extra life choice we have taken and therefore must pay for what we receive, which it seems at the moment is the case. It is as a result of the benefit state we live in, that we believe the government should support us in all aspects of our lives.

Like all students I am outraged by the proposed increase of our fees, and I in no way support the movement. All I intend to put forward is that we should be focusing on what we do get for our money and realise that quality education does not come cheap, whilst we fight the increase next September. If we get what we pay for now then if we are forced to pay more to achieve a degree, then I want to know what £4000 worth of more education we are going to receive.



Alex Harris

Comment Editor

Religious communities should not attack those on board with the atheist bus campaign

Perhaps somewhere recently you have seen the following quote: "Please don't label me. Let me grow up and choose for myself". This is the slightly condescending mantra of the latest and final phase of the atheist bus campaign. If you're unfamiliar with the campaign, it began as a fairly humble attempt to accord atheism the kind of mainstream respect and recognition that other religions are accorded. The adverts, placed on the side of - you guessed it - buses, simply read "There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life." Though outrage erupted from various religious communities, on reflection, it's not really much of a controversial statement to make, is it?

After all, surely what makes the majority of religious believers' belief so special is the fact that what they believe is staggeringly unlikely. The definition of faith itself is 'belief in the absence of evidence' and there is by definition no evidence for God. If something is outside the laws of physics and not eligible for scientific inquiry, then surely the belief that it doesn't really exist is a fairly uncontroversial viewpoint that warrants some kind of faith to disagree with? On closer reflection, it seems the 'probably' part is something moderate believers and atheists should really agree upon. It's hard to see where the outrage could possibly come from.

Maybe it's the second part. 'Now stop worrying and enjoy your life'. It's possible to see how this could face opposition from a religious mindset. After all, the three main monotheistic faiths all require some kind of worrying, to a degree. Maybe it's the worrying that your atheist friend will end up in Hell for donating to the bus campaign? Or perhaps just worrying that maybe the campaign he donated to had a point (even Mother Theresa had doubts). And as for enjoying life, it's not too difficult to think of an example where a particularly strict religious mindset would be opposed to enjoyment.

Joking aside, it's more likely that the anger from the vast plethora of religious communities is more a reaction to what has been an increasingly popular movement of outspoken atheism. Over the past few years, a movement has existed of non-believers becoming increasingly vocal and strident in their non-belief. For a moment it seems quite absurd. After all, it's hardly necessary to be vocal about something that you don't do. I, for instance, have never considered getting a tattoo proclaiming the fact that I'm not an engineering student because it would be very, very stupid.

But I suppose religious belief is the default and when a positive act becomes the norm, it's only natural for those practising the opposite to organ-

ise themselves. After all, we have vegetarian and 'straight-edge' movements, it seems that atheist movements would be a fairly natural thing to exist, given the amount of atheists there are. The 2005 Eurobarometer poll showed that 20% of Britain are explicitly atheistic (believe in neither a spirit, God or life force) and 38% people that do 'believe in a spirit or life force'.

The latest instalment of the campaign, then, simply asks parents to not label their children as being part of any particular faith or denomination of faith. The reasoning is that questions regarding the existence of God and indeed the complexity of religious questions in general are impossible for children to understand and so labelling them as having already made up their minds is perhaps a bit cruel. Richard Dawkins, the brains behind the campaign and perhaps most responsible for the current atheist movement says "Nobody would seriously describe a tiny child as a 'Marxist child' or an 'Anarchist child' or a 'Post-modernist child'."

It's difficult to disagree with that sort of sentiment, and the fairly meek and reserved suggestion that parents let their children make up their own minds about metaphysics seems like something we should all agree on. With that in mind, then, here's awaiting the religious opposition. It's bound to be a corker.

According to atheism the respect it deserves is perfectly natural. It does after all represent the antithesis to religious belief



Campaigning to make a difference

It may be a thankless task but student activism is made worthwhile when it engages writes Torri Crapper

Campaigning is a career choice for an awful lot of people. Charities rely upon the support and dedication of campaigners and fundraisers to even make a dent in the ocean of people's minds. Campaigning itself is largely about belief in what you are doing and the potential differences you can make. It is a job like no other.

Ultimately, campaigning is about precipitating change, in what ever format this takes. It is about standing by the side of those people who advocate change for the better; to enhance their job prospects and their basic standard of living. Campaigning is, to me, first and foremost about altering perspectives and touching hearts and minds.

The student movement makes up a significant proportion of campaigning, supports charities to fight for equality, answers calls against racism, homophobia, discrimination and harassment. During the 60's and 70's students were the biggest force, the people that governments wanted to get on side to make sure they stood a chance of election. Now look at us.

LUSU is in the middle of the biggest campaign I have seen since my arrival here in 2006. The reason for its size is because it has been encouraged and supported by you; because you have got involved with it, because you have shown your enthusiasm standing on the steps of the Town Hall.

History proves that campaigning works, that in the end success is inevitable. For example, women won the right to vote in 1918. That took years to achieve, yet all those women stood up for what they believed in and achieved something remarkable. The government's review on fees may become another example of concerted pressure by a lobby group with a vested interest to establish whether political parties outline their stance on funding structures or whether they keep quiet and shy away from the issues at hand.

Basically I say this, when the LUSU President met Ben Wallace in the Town Hall on Friday morning, he didn't walk in with the Conservative MP's backing all by himself. It was achieved through the chanting, the pressure you placed on him through your letters, the media coverage and the campaign as a whole to date.

The thing I love about campaigning is the difference it can make to someone somewhere; that anyone and everyone has the skills to run effective campaigns on the things that matter to them. Campaigning is about being vocal on something you care about, often knowing that you will receive more criticism than thanks. However, it is important you keep trying and keep working at it, in the end you will reach your outcome. So I ask you this, next time you walk past a campaign poster – pause and evaluate how it would affect you if you were in that situation and continue on your way, maybe a little bit wiser or maybe feeling patronised but understanding someone cares about why that poster is there.



David Sykes

One year on and the US President faces challenges from congress and the right-wing media, which are scuppering many of his key policies from coming to fruition

The honeymoon period is now over for Obama

Astonishingly it has been a whole year since the Hawaiian-born Democratic Party champion took to the stage in Chicago to revel in his historic victory. There was so much hope, optimism and sheer thrill in the air that night and so much hype and excitement that built up over the course of his campaign the event will not be easily forgotten. That unusually warm winter night saw the public dancing in the streets around the US as others around the world pumped their arms and sat glued to the television with wide grins on their faces. But has Obama lived up to the sky-high hopes that many had for him?

The first thing to remember is that Obama is still finding his feet in the White House and has so far had only nine months in office. But while sometimes a lot can change in 9 months - in this case, not much has.

Unfortunately, and unavoidably, the man who appeared to represent a new, sparkling era of American politics has lost some of his lustre. It was inevitable because he was made out to be more than he really is. This isn't a jab at Obama, it is simply that nobody could satisfy the demands of everyone, especially when they have been viewed as a God-like figure as he was during his election campaign. The approval average has fallen to just 51% from the lofty 79% the Washington post measured just two days after taking office. So what has happened?

Firstly, Obama has been forced

into a battle with Congress over his plans for a reformed healthcare system to replace the terrible and cold-hearted elitist scheme it is currently ailed by. He has failed to unify the vast gulf that separated the two political parties during the Bush-era. His \$787 billion fiscal stimulus and attempts to support the automotive industry have angered Republicans, and right-leaning 'blue dog' Democrats. Every night Obama becomes a bizarre paradoxical Hitler/Stalin/Bin-Laden figure in the eyes of the right-wing media who lambast him for every step he takes, either labelling him on one night a fascist, and the next a communist- or even both at the same time. This has meant that American politics is just as divided as it was at the end of George Bush's reign. Obama's plans have hit the wall of political reality.

Guantanamo Bay is still open and the process of closure has slowed as the problem of what to do with its inmates is still undecided. Troops are still in Iraq, the economy has still not regained its feet, there have been no leaps forward made in the effort to combat climate change. Peace in the middle-east is still a long way off, and healthcare is essentially as it was before.

He has made efforts to combat all of these problems however. Shutting down Guantanamo would never be a quick and simple task due to the conflict between humanitarianism and security. One has to remember that the prisoners who are abused and

mistreated there are either suspected of being, or are, some of the most dangerous people in the world. But nonetheless, Guantanamo will be closed.

The healthcare reforms package, while reasonable, fair and desperately needed, has been bogged down by the paranoid, government-skeptic views that are so heavily engrained in the US system and thanks, once again, to the alarmist right-wing media and our old friend Sarah Palin.

The 'overseas contingency operations' that have replaced the 'war on terror' in official rhetoric has been scaled back in its no-holds-barred cage-rattling behaviour that characterised Bush's time in office, and soon the US will pull its troops out of the aftermath of that messy war of 2003. While Afghanistan is going badly and is yet another silly war, Obama's occasional troop surge may be what is needed to finish the job.

The main reason for the frustration and annoyance of democrats and admirers of the President is that as he describe himself in 'The Audacity of Hope' he was 'a blank screen on which people of vastly different political stripes project their own views...I am bound to disappoint some, if not all of them'

As mentioned earlier, nine months is not enough to evaluate a President, there is plenty of time for him to emerge from the political quagmire in which he is currently mired as a 'great' president- however the honeymoon period is certainly at an end.

Letters to the Editor



Send your letters to scan@lancaster.ac.uk together with your name and college (even if you would like your letter printed anonymously). SCAN reserves the right to edit your letters for publication.

Dear Sir,

I must say I am terribly disappointed with the way SCAN is going, I open this weeks issue to be greeted with a mass of uninformative, uninteresting and irrelevant articles.

May I remind you that SCAN is a student paper, it is not the 'New Statesman' nor a respected Broadsheet publication.

Where has the humour and student news gone? Whereas before I could find out about university goings on and laugh at the problems page, I am now confronted with boring and pointless, self indulgent articles about Naples and Goeth, and relentless coverage of Nick Griffin and the BNP (it's terribly patronising, and becoming almost a fetish for LUSU and SCAN).

Student life can be fairly depressing at times, and a publication like SCAN should be there to provide light entertainment and student-relevant news.

If I wanted to read about serious matters and pressing issues I would buy a reliable broadsheet for 40p from the newsagent.

Rory O'Brien
Pendle College

Dear Sir,

Following the article in the Scan Newspaper (11th November 2009) regarding the review of student fees announced by Lord Mandelson I would welcome the opportunity to outline my own position. The main issues, as I see them, are:

Cost of Higher education and maintaining standards: it is clear that there is a strong lobby for the limits on fees that students pay towards their higher education to be increased if not lifted altogether. In my view this is too simplistic and would be wrong. We need to look at all the options: government funding; business/private contributions; and individual's own circumstances when deciding on the limits. I do not believe that increased fees are inevitable.

Affordability: the present system seems to have had relative success in maintaining the number of students from working class backgrounds accessing higher education. This however is still woeful and we need to tackle any barriers that students from less fortunate backgrounds may have, be they: prior achievement; aspirational; or financial. We also need to look at the external costs of student life that

contribute towards the spiral of student debt. This is particularly significant for postgraduate and/or mature students who are more likely to have family commitments.

Fair and equitable funding: we cannot get away from the fact that the real beneficiaries of a higher education are the graduates who emerge from it. The future earnings that they are likely to achieve are significantly improved. In these circumstances it is only fair that they should pay a contribution towards their education - after all it cannot be right that a person who leaves school at sixteen and may be working for the national minimum wage should be paying for the higher education of others?

Finally I welcome the Browne Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance because it gives us the opportunity to debate these issues and find some answers. I also support the pledge that the NUS are asking politicians to sign. Clearly this debate has a long way to run but the important thing is to get the right outcome for future students and their families.

Clive Grunshaw
Labour PPC for
Lancaster & Fleetwood
(Graduate of Lancaster Uni)

Dear Sir,

I'd like to say a huge personal thank you to the many people in Lancashire who helped to make the recent Muscular Dystrophy Campaign collections at Tesco stores a huge success.

Almost 2,000 volunteers across the country gave their time on 25 and 26 September to help the charity collect an incredible £80,000 for our Tesco Charity of the Year Giving children equipment to be independent campaign. All the money raised will go to provide vital, specialist equipment for hundreds of children around the country whose lives have been devastated by muscle-wasting disease.

I have been President of the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign for the past five years and am constantly grateful for the hard work that our many volunteers put in, and the generosity of the members of the public who support our cause.

On behalf of the 8,000 children across the UK affected by muscle-wasting disease, thank you.

Sue Barker, MBE
President,
Muscular Dystrophy Campaign

Dear Sir,

The MA examination board for this year's Politics MA students met on Tuesday 20th of October to determine the results of our dissertations. The Politics Department was then informed and letters dated the 21st of October were made ready for dispatch or collection on Monday the 26th of October. However, our troubles begin when it became the turn of University House to take over the administration tasks. By the time a student Course Rep questioned the lack of communication and the fact we had still not received our transcripts, on the 5th of November, 16 days had passed since

the results were known. The Politics Department had completed their part by informing us that we had passed but the task of conveying our actual grades had become the responsibility of what seems to be the inept and inefficient University House.

Did we get passes, good passes or, dare one hope, distinctions? Can we tell our prospective employers or next universities how well we did? Quite simply, no we cannot.

To be frank Professor Wellings, I put it to you that if you want to turn my university, the one where I personally have put the last 5 years of my life into, and committed to a further 4, into a business then we shall benchmark you,

to borrow a business term, on your performance. I have paid over £3500 for my degree. I have earned my degree through my hard work, whilst working full-time you should note, and I would quite like my results. Please.

I feel it is not too much to ask and, as we live in a market-driven environment, only what one should expect from a "business" in return for my cash. If I were to buy a car for £3500 I would at least expect it to start in the morning and get me home at night. So far Lancaster University has started my degree, taken my money but it has failed to complete the transaction and finish my degree. Hardly the way to run a successful business is it now? Maybe

hiring some student staff to clear the backlog might help? Maybe allowing me to collect MY transcript instead of being told "it has to be posted" when it can be seen sat on someone's desk might help? Maybe using current staff, such as the guy who waters the hanging baskets on days when it is pouring down with rain, to clear the backlog might help? Just a few thoughts but I am sure you have it all under control. After all this is a contemporary business in a consumer-focussed, competitive environment that is striving to be a success, right?

Ady Gray
MA Politics & Int. Relations

**Eat
Sport,
Sleep
Sport,
Read
Wynes**

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Public execution: the final

Poppy Goodbrand
Features Editor

IN THE PAST few weeks, an urgent appeal was issued by Amnesty International to the Saudi Arabian authorities calling for the halting of the intended execution and crucifixion of a 22-year-old man, Muhammad Basheer al-Ramaly. Saudi Arabia's Court of Cassation recently confirmed the sentence of beheading following by crucifixion; in due course, his body and separated head are to be placed on a pole in a public square to act as a supposed deterrent.

Under Saudi procedures Muhammad Basheer al-Ramaly's sentence will be passed to the country's Supreme Judicial Council, led by the King. The Council can approve death sentences or send them back to the Court of Cassation for review. Al-Ramaly could be executed at any time if the Council approves his sentence. According to a Saudi newspaper report, the authorities in the northern city of Hail - where Muhammad Basheer al-Ramaly is held - have already begun to prepare for his execution.

Amnesty International UK Director Tim Hancock said:

"Crucifixion plumbs the depths when it comes to grisly punishment and we're calling on King 'Abdullah to halt this execution, which he has the power to do.

"Rather than approving countless executions, King 'Abdullah should declare a moratorium on all existing death sentences and order urgent reforms to the Saudi justice system. We must not continue to see cases where people face execution after trials where they were denied even a lawyer."

The man was convicted for the kidnapping and rape of four people in February 2009. In Saudi Arabia capital trials are extremely secretive and there is little information about this trial. However it is known that Al-Ramaly did not have access to a lawyer during his trial, and there are also reports that he may be suffering from a psychological disorder. If so, sentencing him to death would be in defiance of a UN Commission on Human Rights Resolution urging countries "not to impose the death penalty on a person suffering from any form of mental disorder.

So far this year at least 61 people are known to have been executed in Saudi Arabia - though the authorities do not release official statistics and the true number is likely to be higher. At least 102 people were executed in 2008, the third highest number of any country in the world. Amnesty has recorded over 1,700 executions in the Kingdom since 1985.

Whether such a brutal punishment fits the crime is of great speculation and deserves to be considered on various levels, independently of any religious beliefs. Firstly, it is to be questioned whether supporting and practicing the death penalty suggests fallibility of the legal system and in particular of judicially suspect legal systems. Committing a person to death surely implies a 100% certainty of their



Making an example: (Top left) Video still of Ahmed Al-Shamlani Al-Anzi's execution. (Centre) The city of Riyadh.

culpability, yet in numerous cases, absolute certainty is not possible and innocent victims have been unjustly put to death. Could a life sentence in jail not provide a viable alternative to the death penalty, allowing the chance for any significant proof of innocence to come to light or indeed for the prisoner to repent for his actions if proved guilty?

In the case of the child rapist Muhammad Basheer al-Ramaly, it has been argued that since pedophiles are not in control, they are not deterred by threats and will probably offend again after imprisonment. Orchiectomy (surgical castration) could be effective for some pedophiles, yet not for those less motivated by sexual compulsions

In Saudi Arabia capital trials are extremely secretive and there is little information about his trial. However it is known that Al-Ramaly did not have access to a lawyer during his trial, and there are also reports that he may be suffering from a psychological disorder. If so, sentencing him to death would be in defiance of a UN Commission on Human Rights Resolution

than by anger and power. Chemical castration requires compliance with long acting injections. Both solutions are voluntary in the USA and pedophiles do volunteer for the treatment as an alternative to imprisonment.

Some would undoubtedly argue that committing a terrible crime removes the right of choice from the offender, having taken the law into their own hands they must suffer the consequences by being subjected to whatever punishment the law deems right. However, apart from contradicting with human rights it would seem legally and ethically floored to punish violence by responding with violence; what kind of example does a self-conflicting punishment set?

Secondly, if one is to defend the death penalty, surely one needs to consider its long term aims as well as its means, and whether they are physically achieved or not. Does the death penalty truly act as a deterrent? To explore the question, researchers look at executions and homicides, by year and by state or county, trying to tease out the impact of the death penalty on homicides by accounting for other factors, such as unemployment data and per-capita income, the probabilities of arrest and conviction, and more. Naci Mocan, an economics professor at the University of Colorado co-authored a 2006 study re-examining data and found that each execution results in five fewer homicides.

deterrent?



Technically, commuting a death sentence means five more homicides. "The results are robust; they don't really go away," he said. "I oppose the death penalty. But my results show that the death penalty [deters] — what am I going to do, hide them?"

But in the Saudi Arabian case, doesn't the public display of a mutilated body go beyond acting as a warning that the Saudi government takes such violent crimes seriously? For many people, the existence of the death penalty itself is considered to have a deterrent effect. With a public display of the decapitated and crucified offender, the public is shocked, albeit fearful of the legal repercussions of criminal acts, acts that may appear

excessively barbaric in comparison with other ways of administering the death penalty such as the lethal injection. There seems to be a particularly sinister and barbaric message attached to a public execution where all sense of dignity is removed from the victim, whether this is considered to be just in proportion to their crime or not.

Taking pain levels into consideration, the kindness of the lethal injection used in certain American states is debatable in that doses are a standard amount regardless of proportions with the victim's body mass. This can result in extremely painful deaths for larger victims who will die more slowly while the fatal substance reaches the heart.

Decapitation may be quicker but to describe it as painless would be all too ludicrous.

There is another significant point that undeniably places the existence of the death penalty in Saudi Arabia in an even more menacing light. The Saudi government does not provide legal recognition or protection for freedom of religion and the law requires that all Saudi citizens be practising Muslims. Followers of any religion other than Islam are therefore constrained to worship in secret within their private homes, items and articles belonging to religions other than Islam being prohibited. These include Bibles, crucifixes, statues, carvings, and items with religious symbols such as the Star of David.

"Freedom of religion does not exist," the U.S. State Department's 1997 Human Rights Report on Saudi Arabia stated. "Islam is the official religion and all citizens must be Muslims. The government prohibits the public practice of other religions."

Likewise, freedom of speech and the press are restricted to forbid criticism of the government or endorsement of un-Islamic values. Trade unions and political organizations are banned, public demonstrations are forbidden and the Saudi Government is an active censor of Internet reception within its borders.

Saudi Arabia is one of a number of countries where courts continue to impose corporal punishment, including amputations of hands and feet for robbery, and flogging for 'lesser crimes'.

Saudi Arabia is one of a number of countries where courts continue to impose corporal punishment, including amputations of hands and feet for robbery, and flogging for 'lesser crimes'. The number of lashes is not clearly prescribed by law and is varied according to the discretion of judges, and ranges from dozens of lashes to several thousand, usually applied over a period of weeks or months. As for Muhammad Basheer al-Ramaly's punishment of crucifixion, the term does not strictly mean nailed to a cross such as in the Biblical term, but rather that the body is strung up and attached to either a pole or a tree in full public view. However, the connotations appear the same in that the offender is publically shamed in death, strapped naked to an cross shaped wooden structure serving as an example of the consequences of criminal offense but also of the power of the state to punish.

The fate of Al-Ramaly' is a harsh reminder of Saudi Arabia's policies and naturally retorts back to debates on the death penalty and its administration. Whether one considers it to be a just measure depending on the nature of the offender's crime varies from state to state, country to country and indeed, from person to person. Yet such a debate surely rests upon one major question: whether we hold the right to decide the fate of fellow human beings, and how they should die?

Heirs to Adolf



Claire Hazel

HOW DOES THE dictionary define fascism? 1) A right-wing system of government with extreme nationalistic beliefs. 2) An attitude which is very intolerant or right-wing. The Nazi party, Mussolini and his National fascist Party and the Iron Guard of Romania.

This does not sound like anything we have in British government, but what about the BNP? Its increased popularity throughout the country and far right policies raises many questions, the most important of which, where did Fascism arise from in Britain?

British Fascism can be traced back to before World War One when a group known as the Radical Right was formed. They feared that newly developed industrial nations would be plagued by liberalist Laissez-Faire economics and Britain's imperialist interests. In order to combat this, the Radical Right believed that an authoritarian and militaristic regime was needed. This became known as social imperialism.

Fear of communist style revolution racked Europe after the First World War. The British Fascists formed due to this in 1923, a paramilitary style group who wished to defend the law and order of Britain in the event of a Bolshevik style revolution. However their meetings frequently ended in violent clashes between the British Fascists and left wing protestors.

Due to a split in Party ideology the majority of British Fascists joined Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists in 1932. A former Labour MP, Mosley sought to improve British economics and stimulate a recovery. The BUF soon became a militaristic style group wearing Black shirt uniforms and adopting strict regimes. Like many other fascist organisations the BUF had adopted a strong anti-Semitic approach. BUF began to show increasing similarities to the Nazi party, changing its name to the British Union of Fascists and National Socialists in 1936. With the outbreak of WW2, Mosley and his wife, Diana Mitford were detained in 1941 under the defence regulation as it was feared fascist sympathisers would aid a Nazi invasion, the pair were re-

leased in 1943.

After WW2 fascism received a new surge of popularity as anti-Semitic riots filled the county, but this did not last long. In 1948 Mosley announced he was leaving Britain for Ireland and had no intention of return. Without Mosley's leadership the party began to age and decline, new fascist groups began to appear to replace BUF: the White Defence League, a group who openly told of their Nazism and the National Labour Party a racial nationalist group. These two groups joined forces creating the British National Party but this is not the same as the BNP that exists today. The group became increasingly militaristic staging violent rallies which resulted in many of the party leaders jailed. Their militancy prompted Mosley's return and after a series of failed Rallies his career in British Politics was finally over.

1967 saw the extreme racism of the BNP come to light with the formation of the National Front adhered to by over 64,000 people in its first 12 years, many of whom came from the conservative party. The NF reached a peak in 1976 polling well in certain areas, however this did not last long as the party's popularity soon plummeted, receiving only 1.3% of the vote in 1979. Due to this embarrassing defeat the party disbanded forming numerous different groups, one of these was the British National Party (BNP) formed in 1982. Through rallies such as the "Rights for Whites", the BNP emerged as the leading fascist contender by the late 1980's. In BNP concentrated areas, racial attacks were on the rise as they tried to appeal to more individuals. In 1999 current BNP leader and former NF member Nick Griffin took over leadership. The party has continued to gain support finally gaining two seats (North West and Yorkshire and Hum-ber) in 2009.

Britain is a nation rich in cultural diversity but Fascism and its extreme nationalist beliefs, militant behaviour and racist practices would destroy the true essence of our country. It is hoped that through Nick Griffin's recent appearance on Question Time and the people's strong reaction to this that the BNP will have been exposed for the extremist party that it is.

FEATURES

The theory of evolution?

James Anderson

IN SECONDARY SCHOOL I was taught the theory of evolution, and even at that time I asked: "why is evolution called a theory?"

At that point in time, the question was not posed because I had considered the scientific evidence completely, nor because I had an axe to grind. It was a question I asked because no other lesson taught theory.

Doubtless some will now say "music theory", and indeed this subject is taught, but not in mainstream education, and like physical education it is only a title used to separate the concepts from the practical application.

The theory of evolution first fully postulated by Charles Darwin in his book, 'The Origin of Species', published November 24 1859, is widely regarded as the most important scientific development in the history of biology.

Evolution is the adoption of advantageous characteristics, via a combination of random mutation and natural selection. Thus, these advantageous characteristics are expressed in the organism's genome. Put more simply it is the tendency for natural organisms to adapt traits, for example less body hair on humans, that have an advantage in propagating the species. An



easily discernible trait would be the preference for longer beaks on wading birds, which is confirmed by the fossil record.

In the intervening 150 years it has been scientifically proven beyond reasonable doubt that evolution occurs. By that I mean that living organisms have been shown to change their outward characteristics through forced selection.

There are many theories, such as the theory of relativity, whereby insufficient data is available to be certain beyond all reasonable doubt that the model is correct. Thus the concept remains a theory. Newton's concept of gravity has been proven beyond rea-

sonable doubt and is therefore a scientific fact. Most scientists generally acknowledge evolution to be science fact, far more in fact than those who support climate change, so why does it remain a theory?

The answer can only be one thing: people.

Darwin's postulated that the environment shapes us. The "us" being the living organisms that inhabit this planet. Therein I believe lies a part of the answer to why evolution is still seen as a theory. The statement implies that we human beings are mere animals, thus degrading humans. This is a notion that many people would find difficult to accept.

I cannot properly assess this topic without mentioning religion. It is my understanding that religion is not against the concept of evolution *par se*, but that certain bodies of religious people believe the religious texts that chronicle the creation of Earth are completely infallible in all details. Such as one day in genesis is actually the passage of one day. If these are taken to be the truth, then blatantly one cannot believe and agree with evolution. Then again, if one believes so devoutly then I suppose the scientific estimate for the age of the planet being at least four to five billion years old will also create some issues for them.

I believe that the perceived connotation to an acceptance of evolution as scientific fact is that it reduces human beings to animals. Which it does. But animals that have evolved to be the dominant force on planet Earth, with the capacity to reason and speculate. Humans may still be shaped by the environment, but due to the fact that we are collectively in control of our environment that is in our hands. Save for natural disasters that are beyond our control, we have the capacity to help to preserve the living organisms that inhabit this world.

Perhaps that is something else that people wish to escape: responsibility?

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The ghastly past of the Pendle witch

Kristina Beanland

GRIZEDALE HAS A boar, Fylde a windmill, and of course, Pendle has a witch – arguably the most recognisable symbol of all the college logos. I was not aware that the dragon looking creature associated with Lonsdale is in fact a lion, but the Pendle witch is rarely mistaken. So, in keeping with this current Halloween-ish time of year, this admittedly unqualified Furnessian is about to delve into the rather creepy past of the Pendle witch.

The logo of the Pendle witch comes from the infamous Pendle witch trials, which resulted in 12 people being sentenced, and 10 hung in Lancaster's very own castle. The story goes that a local man collapsed in a seizure after Alizon Device, a woman later to be hung for being a witch, was said to have cursed him. Device, her mother and brother were then forced to appear in front of the local magistrate where the three confessed to various eerie goings on. Alizon claimed that she had sold her soul to the devil and even bewitched a child; Alizon's mother Elizabeth, claimed that her own mother, known as Demdike, had a mark on her body left from when the devil gorily sucked her blood. The second family involved in the witch tri-

als were the Whittles. Chattox Whittle had long been regarded as a mysterious practitioner of magic. When the Devices were questioned about this family, due to bad blood between the two, the Devices claimed that Chattox had murdered five men through the use of witchcraft. After a series of interrogations, The Devices, Chattox, Chattox's daughter, and Demdike, were all held in Lancaster castle, to be tried for causing murder by witchcraft.

This would have been the end of the matter if it had not been for a subsequent meeting of the friends of the accused witches, at Malkin Tower in Pendle itself, believed now to have been a witches' Sabbath – a secret meeting where the devil himself is said to be present. When the local magistrate found out about the meeting, several people were questioned and a further nine people were also accused of witchcraft, giving a grand total of... thirteen witches. Of these unlucky thirteen, ten were hung in Lancaster tower; Demdike died awaiting trial, another witch was hung in York, and a final witch was convicted of witchcraft though not of murder and so carried out a prison sentence.

I confess this is all beginning to sound like a bit of a history lesson but it does start to get interesting when looking at the witches recorded confessions. The weirdest part of this



Something wicked: A Medieval woodcutting of witches and demons.

worn down with questioning or torture; they admitted their use of witchcraft almost immediately after being accused and under no particular duress, even going into gruesome detail about how to kill a person. So we are left with the question, is it possible that the logo of one of Lancaster's very own colleges is linked to Pendle Hill, a place less than 30 miles away from this very university, the home of thirteen witches?

Some people still wonder whether the spirits of these men and women still live on. Lancaster Castle itself is reportedly said to be haunted by four spirits, two of which are described as haggard old woman and one slightly younger. Could these be the ghosts of Chattox and her daughter, roaming around the Lancaster prisons ready to cast magic onto unsuspecting visitors? LivingTV's Most Haunted has even peered around various abandoned cottages around Pendle Hill to see if they could find the ghosts of Demdike or any of the other unlucky thirteen. I for one have been sufficiently creeped out by the whole tale, and for someone that's not a big believer in the supernatural the story even managed to give me goose bumps. But, casting my doubts aside, I still don't think I'll be visiting Pendle Hill anytime soon, and I'll try my best to stay on the right side of any Pendle students too.

whole saga to me was that these men and women were not simply accused of witchcraft and then subsequently killed. They actually came forward and

gave genuine accounts of their magical abilities – accounts that still survive today. Even stranger is the fact that they were not confessing after days of being

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- Week 2 - UV Party**
Wednesday 14th October
- Week 3 - Sports and Shorts**
Wednesday 21st October
- Week 4 - Halloween**
Wednesday 28th October
- Week 5 - Cowboys and Indians**
Wednesday 4th November
- Week 6 - Cops and Robbers**
Wednesday 11th November
- Week 7 - Children In Need**
Wednesday 18th November
- Week 8 - Dr and Nurses**
Wednesday 25th November
- Week 9 - Army**
Wednesday 2nd December
- Week 10 - Christmas Party**
Wednesday 9th December

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Queen Jesus storms Glasgay with help from tax collectors

Jo Taylor

GLASGAY! SCOTLAND'S LARGEST and most influential LGBT event has come to a close, and once again has raised some serious public questions.

The festival takes place every year throughout October and November at various venues across Glasgow, and mixes local, emerging talent with internationally renowned artists. Gay awareness is raised through various forms of expression, spanning comedy, music, film, theatre, visual art, performance art, literature, club nights and community arts projects. Over the last three years the festival has grown in scale and profile with audiences climbing to just over 24,100 visitors in 2005.

This year there have been a few controversial events that have caused public uproar. The first was with Dani Marti and his film exhibition. Marti was commissioned to create work for Glasgow's Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA), and his chosen subject matter was gay men's sexual health. His work tackled the stigma of HIV, but before his work was exhibited, it was dropped

by the CSG (Glasgow's Centre of Sport and Culture) owing to strong political pressure. GoMA is normally known however for its controversial work, as artists explore intimacy, disclosure, health and well-being.

The second and perhaps most

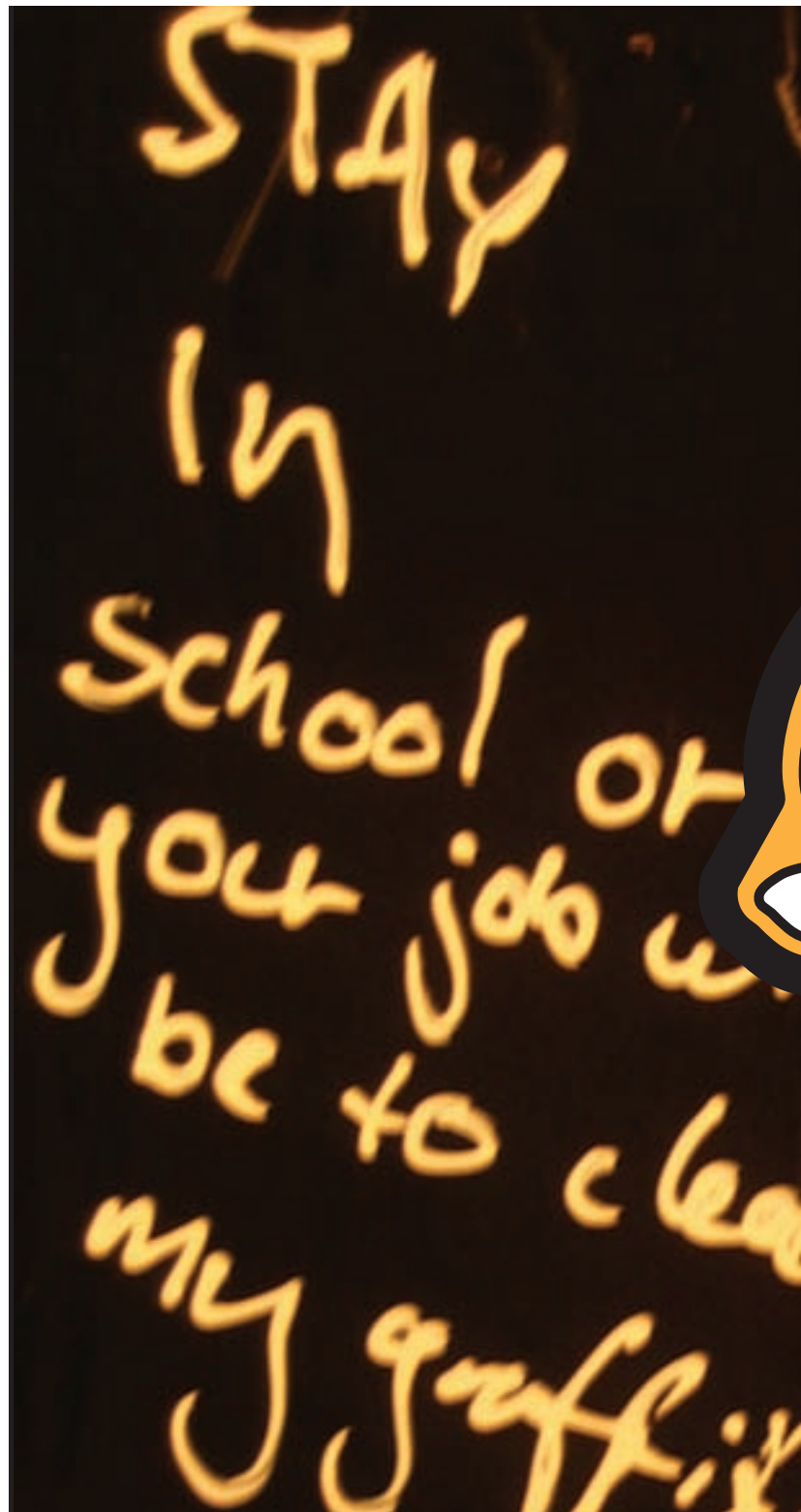
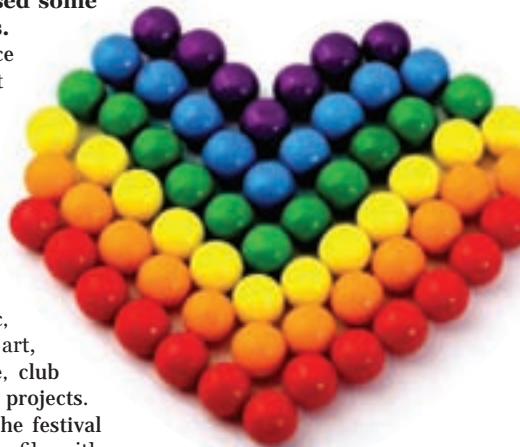
controversial form of expression so far was the Jesus Queen of Heaven theatrical piece by Jo Clifford, where Jesus was portrayed as a transsexual woman. The concern was not only over the content of the play, but of the fact that the piece was being funded by tax payer's money. The content was seen to be offensive to Christians, who held a candlelit protest to show their disgust. When Christians

protested though, Glasgay accused the protestors of being homophobic. Glasgay supports the right to freedom of expression and offers audiences a diverse view of LGBT life, and this piece of theatre was not intended to incite or offend anyone of any belief system.

Clifford, who is both a transsexual and a churchgoer, said she wrote the play to examine the roots of prejudice faced by gay people. It is very sad that the protest has enlisted Christians who have difficulties with gays and transsexuals. Ms Clifford wanted to point out that this does not have any foundation in the Bible. The Christian Institute, which is opposed to equality for gay people, described the Glasgay! festival as "further proof of an agenda to use taxpayers' money to fund assaults on Christian values".

2009 was not the only year to be controversial however. 2008 saw an exhibition that encouraged the general public to deface the bible. It asked those who felt excluded from the bible to write their way back into it. Comments included 'I am Bi, Female & Proud. I want no god who is disappointed in this'.

Whatever Glasgay has in store for next year, it will be sure to be contentious, but the main thing is that the LGBT community are having their say and making an impact. No-one should hide – long live Gay Pride!



CAMPUS ICONS

A glimpse into the life of Lancaster's famous faces, by Erica Macleod

NAME: Danny and Gav

PROFESSION: Stagecoach ticket sellers

Where are you originally from?

Danny: "Morecambe. I'm a local lad."

Gav: "Me too, we went to the same school, but I'm younger!"

Does this mean you know of the Carleton?

Danny: "Oh yes, it used to be £1 entry on a Thursday when you lot were still in pre-school."

Do you travel by bus outside of work?

Danny: "No, I have a car."

Gav: "Yeah I do actually, to get to the pub."

What do you do in your

free time?

Danny: "I play piano, and write some of my own new age dance stuff. Saturday nights they have a band at the Carleton so I go out. Last week I was giving it large on the stage, trying to impress the ladies and poured a pint over my own head."

Gav: "I build my own computers."

What did you do prior to this job?

Danny: "I used to throw stones in glass houses. Metaphorically, of course."

Gav: "I worked in a chicken factory. It was not nice but it's a job isn't it. Before that, McDonalds."

Do you have a favourite bus drier?

Danny: "Oh no, we're all great. We work as a team."

Gav: "I like Yiannis, he's funny and he's Greek."



David Guy

NEW DESKS, NEW seats, new screens, new carpets and all the necessities for lectures to take place are ready to greet you with a sparkle. The newly refurbished Faraday, Cavendish and Frankland building looks pretty plush, but it feels like the revamp has taken away the former charm and character of these lecture theatres. Sitting in those lecture theatres now, it feels like there is a noticeable absence of the things which formerly gave them character. The often wonky seating and the infamous seat-four-row-six of Cavendish, which produced a noise similar to flatulence every time it's victim dared move, has now disappeared. The single giant screen too, is gone, replaced by two screens, which oddly display the exact same slide. Maybe they could be useful with the aid of 3D glasses for a gripping lecture experience, where rows of students would reach out to touch the illusion of Marx's beard, three feet from their faces? If lecturers figured out how to keep the last slide up on the left hand

screen for those who can't keep up with rapid slide changes it would benefit a lot of the dozier students.

The graffiti highlighted the solidarity that came with knowing that other people had sat in your seat and had been similarly un-enthralled by a lecture. Each one was a little rebellious act and a call for you to briefly switch off from your lecture and join in the hand-carved debate.

Perhaps the biggest loss of character of the theatres is that of the old desks. Gone are those beautiful ramblings and statements which were skilfully and carefully carved into the wood over a period of fifty minutes. Maxims, which had become old adages by term three, are now replaced with an impersonal smooth white desk. I have fond memories of daydreaming during Keats lectures only took look down and discover an array of lines that said far more about the human condition.

Recommend your Campus Icons on the SCAN Facebook group



Maybe Keats himself, if studying here at Lancaster, would have chosen to address an ode to those scratched in musings?

The graffiti highlighted the solidarity that came with knowing that other people had sat in your seat and had been similarly un-enthralled by a lecture. Each one was a little rebellious act and a call for you to briefly switch off from your lecture and join in the hand-carved debate. Conversations between unknowns were built up, week by week, sometimes with a third or fourth person adding their remarks. I became particularly engrossed in the outcome of Faraday's cheese cracker debate but, alas, it is no more. Unless shielded by a thick pad of paper, your pen would sometimes fall into one of the grooves and you'd be forced to duplicate the proverb 'lectures are shit', when you actually meant to make a note about how such and such an era was a time of great change.

They lightened the seriousness of the lecture. The scribbles were sometimes childish yet often amusing. Lectures can become pretty heavy and those desks provided each

weary student with a rich source of unfiltered musings and philosophical contemplation. Did any man ponder more profoundly on the transience of life, than the anonymous individual who wrote: "I'd do a G.I.L.F."?

Ok, maybe not, but the graffiti seemed to provide an outlet for people. Often the sort of thing you wouldn't dare utter to even your best mates was happily pasted onto the desks.

Furness men's toilets are a reliable place of communal bog-blogging. Each year its walls fill up with the random musings of toilet dwellers. Alan Partridge quotes lined the walls, alongside a poll enquiring which political party you would vote for. An arrow, pointing to the toilet roll holder, suggested that Sociology degrees were available there and advised the reader to "please take one".

Similarly, Furness men's toilets are a reliable place of communal bog-blogging. Each year its walls fill up with the random musings of toilet dwellers; only to be whitewashed afresh, afresh, afresh year after year. Alan Partridge quotes lined the walls, alongside a poll enquiring which political party you would vote for. An arrow, pointing to the toilet roll holder, suggested that Sociology degrees were available there and advised the reader to "please take one".

To a visitor, those defiled desks may have looked old, outdated and abused, but to regular students they were a well-worn friend. They were an unfiltered artefact of the thoughts and fears of generations of students. The new lecture experience is a little more polished and clean cut but I for one am already missing the old theatres. It makes you wonder what old remnants of campus will survive the relentless cull of all the things that give Lancaster its character and individuality. Put down this paper and look around you for a second. One day, my friend, all of this will look like the Learning Zone.

TOP FIVE

DISNEY CHARACTERS

We tried to think of the most controversial Top Five possible. This is what we came up with:



Cruella De Vil
Street name: The Furry Godmother
Last seen in: 101 Dalmatians

Baloo
Street name: Bear in the Baloo House,
Last seen in: The Jungle Book



Timon and Pumbaa
Street names: T+P in da Jungle
Last seen in: The Lion King

Genie
Street name: Big Blue
Last seen in: Aladdin



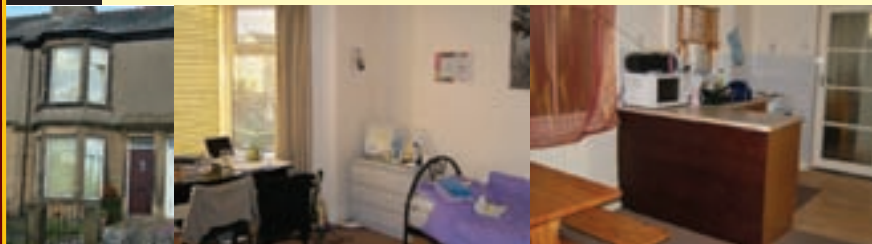
Buzz Lightyear
Street name: Shatner Jr.
Last seen in: Toy Story

FEATURED HOME

BOWERHAM

4
bed

95 Bowerham Rd
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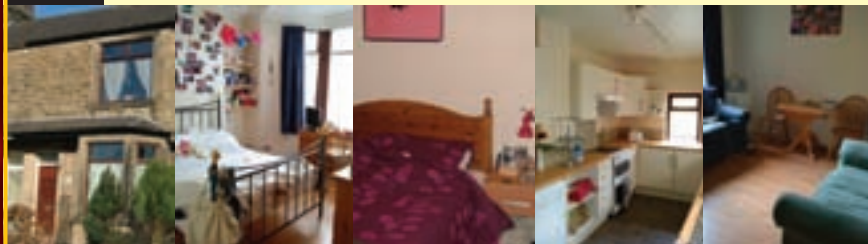
A great mid terrace property with large bedrooms, a good sized lounge and separate diner/kitchen.
Close to local amenities and main bus route.

FEATURED HOME

BOWERHAM

4
bed

55 Bowerham Rd
£71.50 per week (utilities included)



A nice mid-terraced house in a great location. Bowerham is the most popular of areas providing excellent access and amenities for both Lancaster University and University of Cumbria students.

GREAVES & SCOTFORTH

3
bed

21 Chatsworth Rd
£72.50 per week (utilities included)



Superb house situated in a popular location. This property is maintained to the highest of standards benefiting from good sized rooms and regular buses.

GREAVES & SCOTFORTH

4
bed

28 Brunton Rd
£74.50 per week (utilities included)



Situated next to No: 26 this lovely house is superbly situated in a popular location. Good access to city & Uni these properties are suitable for a group of 8.

FAIRFIELD

5
bed

35 Wingatesaul Rd
£71.50 per week (utilities included)



A nice house next door to another excellent LUSU Lets property. Providing high quality accommodation for 9 when linked with No: 33.

FAIRFIELD

4
bed

56 Sibsey St
£71.50 per week (utilities included)



A nice terraced house offering a good standard of accommodation. This property is close to the train station and city centre, plus good for parking.

MOORLANDS

5
bed

23 Kirkes Rd
£71.50 per week (utilities included)



Well proportioned property with 5 nice bedrooms. Modern through lounge/kitchen with a high standard of furnishings.

MOORLANDS

4
bed

25 Balmoral Rd
£71.50 per week (utilities included)



Large terrace providing a high standard of accommodation in a great location. 4 large bedrooms and a utility room. Nice yard.

PRIMROSE

4
bed

17 Dale St
£72.50 per week (utilities included)

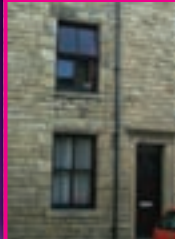


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PRIMROSE

4
bed

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Rejuvenated campus gallery plays host to ‘Looking Aside’ exhibition

Natasha Farnworth

THE PETER SCOTT Gallery on campus is experiencing a new lease of life with its second exhibition in the newly refurbished space. ‘Looking Aside’ is an exhibition celebrating the work of artists who aim to document a range of performance practises in their art, with the emphasis on taking a sideways view of the events they are recording. The exhibition, on display until the 11th of December, is open to the public with free entry to the gallery.

‘Looking Aside’ has been organised through the Public Arts, at the new cross-disciplinary organisation LICA, which combines the Nuffield Theatre, Lancaster international concert series and the Peter Scott Gallery. LICA are keen to establish links with the local community and the university.

Director Matt Fenton was pleased with the success of the night and the number and wide range of people visiting the exhibition. “We want to get more people involved and interested in what we’re doing here. Not just people within LICA but also people outside of the arts world.”

The works on display are all collaborative pieces that attempt to document live art forms of contemporary and classical music, dance and theatre and there is a definite focus on integration among art forms. The

SPILL Performance Tarot Exhibition, a limited edition of 78 tarot cards, has been designed with a definite cross-over in artistic disciplines. This world premier showing of the work features the cards, which have been made by ‘maverick’ artists from all over the world, working with photographer Manuel Vason to produce art that is both beautiful and powerful. The display was a talking point amongst guests at the gallery and provoked a strong reaction. There was also live Tarot readings using the cards, packs of which are on sale at the gallery.

Photographer and musician Tom Bangbala, who was present at the opening on Monday 9th November, had 15 black and white prints from his collection *Orchestral Life* on display. A long-standing friend of the University, Tom was impressed with the Gallery’s new look, “I really feel like the gallery can go places now. Make its mark.”

The collaborative work between Tim Etchells and Hugo Glendinning, entitled *Empty Stages*, features a series of photographs from around the world and shows empty stages in a variety of environments; from working men’s clubs and pubs to concert halls and theatres.

Lucy Cash’s work with Goat Island, a performance company, has produced a multi-media installation piece featuring a 10 minutes film playing over four screens. It is accompanied by music and a light display.

LICA are keen to promote all aspects of the Public Arts and The Nuffield theatre was also open to the public on the night for *A Family Double Bill*, two productions by father and son acting groups.

‘The Post Show Party Show’, written by Lancaster graduate Michael Pinchbeck, tells the story of how his mother and father met whilst performing in an amateur production of the *Sound of Music*. Performed by Michael and his father Tony Pinchbeck, the play was set to the soundtrack from the 1965 film version of the musical and showed the pair jumping from the 1970’s to present. The piece was witty and energetic and Tony Pinchbeck’s agility was impressive as he danced across the stage. Featuring live music, dancing and a hilarious mime atop a precariously constructed chair mountain, the play was quirky and entertaining.

‘Where We Live and What We Live For’, presented by the Kings of England theatre group was again performed by a father and son group Peter and Simon Bowles. The play was written by Simon, a friend of the University, documents his father’s life, focusing on a temporary bout of amnesia caused by a fall. The piece was sentimental and engaging, with a touching dance scene between husband and wife and a hilarious snapshot of the customary ‘dad’ dance. The piece again incorporated live music and dance.



The other side of the coin: Artists attempt to integrate various forms of art and in doing so, look ‘sideways’ at events

The Princess and the Frog heralds Disney’s return to the second dimension

Kelsey Leljedal

WHEN WALT DISNEY’S *The Princess and the Frog* premieres it could revive their hand-drawn 2D animated feature films. Their last foray, *Home on the Range*, was released in 2004, at a time when their 2D animation division was in decline and so the film received mixed reviews and lost money at the box-office.

What went wrong? The 1990s was full of 2D animated “classics” with great artistry and storytelling in such high grossing favourites as *The Lion King*. By 2004, Walt Disney Feature Animation had produced 44 animated films in 67 years. At that point the market was saturated and Disney had switched their focus on the live-action division after their unpredicted hit *Pirates of the Caribbean: the Curse of the Black Pearl*.

It is actually the computer, which enhanced 2D animation by bringing mobile dimension to the ballroom dance in *Beauty and the Beast* and cloning thousands of Hun soldiers in



The Frog Dimension: Disney are making a return to 2D animation this year

Mulan, that contributed to the demise. Pixar’s 1995 release of the first computer generated imagery feature film *Toy Story* delighted audiences. Excelling with lifelike replication of water and hair, Pixar portrayed stories that resonated with all ages using heart and

humour, as demonstrated in *Finding Nemo*. In 2006 the Walt Disney Company officially bought Pixar, who had been winning awards and earning millions, whilst disappointing Disney Digital 3-D films like *Meet the Robinsons* limped through the cinemas.

With *The Princess and the Frog*, Disney hopes to enchant with their 2D-animated-princess-musical-formula. This is about Tiana, the studio’s first African-American princess, who kisses a frog in order for him to return to prince form, but is transformed into an amphibian herself. As both work to change back into humans, they encounter eccentric creatures and voodoo in 1920s New Orleans. The way that Director of Animation at the Animation Academy and professor at Longborough University of Art and Design Paul Wells explains the film’s backstory is that “Pixar effectively [took] over Disney, and John Lasseter [became] the lead creative, bringing back 2D, and developing *The Princess and the Frog*, bringing back John Musker and Ron Clements (*Aladdin*, *Hercules* etc), his CalArts student colleagues, to drive a great story with high end classical animation.”

The film promises to charm, considering the pedigree of directors Clements and Musker who gave a little mermaid legs, making them the ideal choice to get Tiana’s frog legs hopping to jazz music. The music is composed

by Randy Newman who wrote “You’ve Got a Friend in Me” for *Toy Story* and the character, Tiana, will be spoken for and sung by Anika Noni Rose from the film, *Dreamgirls*. If this film is as beloved as is promised, Disney might choose to use 2D animation for *King of the Elves* and future features.

And even if *The Princess and the Frog* does not perform as well as is hoped, Wells points out that European studios still produce 2D animated films like *Persepolis*, while Hayao Miyazaki continues in the style of his *Spirited Away*. To Wells all of these international choices “[mean] that 2D [will] have a future parallel with 3D CGI, and animation in general would be seen in a positive and progressive light.” As with all types of art, animation will continue to evolve. No one mourns the loss of silent films and Disney itself is experimenting on a new CGI style, a blend of dimensionality with 2D softness, allowing 2010’s *Rapunzel* to resemble oil paintings. Only time and box office receipts will tell, but how *The Princess and the Frog* performs will affect how many Disney 2D animated films are made in the future.

Funeral For a Friend exhume back catalogue for new greatest hits album

Hannah Baines

AFTER ONLY FOUR studio albums, Funeral for a Friend (FFAF) are releasing a greatest hits CD. To some, this may seem a little presumptuous, however after listening to Kris Coombs-Roberts (guitarist and backing vocals) discussing with enthusiasm the hard work involved, it's hard to agree.

Your History is Mine, now available, contains the expected singles; Juneau, Into Oblivion (Reunion) and Walk Away. The other thirteen tracks are a mixture from their first two albums, the three EPs released prior to debut Casually Dressed and Deep in Conversation, and one track from 2008's Memory and Humanity. Does the lack of inclusion from more recent records have anything to say about their writing abilities?

After a few tense minutes spent trying to find signal in Peterborough, Kris finally came on the line to defend himself. "We felt that doing the first CD we'd primarily put singles on it, then for the second disc put the majority of b-sides and then there's a downloadable 3rd disc which has loads of self recorded demos that we've done". Their new release or 'anthology' as they like to call it contains "everything that



Fan orientated: The band respond to every fan forum post on their website

we've ever really recorded."

Also included are four new songs. Their style is considered a return to the earlier days of FFAF; however Your History is Mine is the first record to feature music involving bassist and backing vocalist Gavin Burrough. An accomplished musician, Gavin also performs on both vocals and guitar for drummer Ryan Richards' side-project

Ghostlines. His multi-talented approach to song-writing "just brings another string to a bow" and not to mention, a bit of eye-candy for the fans.

New titles include single Wrench, No Honor among Thieves, Built to Last and Kris's current favourite Captains of Industry. The latter, like single Wrench, is fuelled by the bands anti-capitalist views. Built to Last however

focuses on environmental issues such as sustainability, whereas No Honor among Thieves is an up-beat attack on the music industry. No doubt this is in reaction to Label Atlantic's response to their last album, Memory and Humanity. Deciding the lyrics were "too intellectual" for FFAF's fans to decipher, Atlantic requested vocalist Matt Davies to re-write the songs considered as possible singles. Kris described, in somewhat more colourful language, Matt's refusal to do so. "Anything you're doing in songs you have to really believe in, otherwise the sentiment of the song feels quite hollow."

Album art is also something the band feels passionately about. Kris reveals that the cover art for their latest release is actually one of Matt's old family photographs, featuring his father, uncle and grandmother. Kris describes the bands he used to listen to when he was younger as a major motivation for his involvement with the cover work. He feels that when a band's changes their label or creative direction, the album art should reflect this. "The artwork is a big piece of the record. It gives the listener something to delve into."

On the touchy question of genre, Kris hesitates over where to place the band. "I remember a time when it seemed like Emo wasn't a dirty word

like it is now. It's become the new Goth, I think, more about fashion than substance. I think we've always considered ourselves a rock band."

The difficulty is understandable. Genre groupings can be as restricting as they are descriptive. Kris wants fans to feel like they are "a part of something" without being pigeonholed into a genre that alienates other people. But the band doesn't seem to have had that much of a problem. "We've always got people who've stuck by us for the last 7 years and sort of grown up listening to us."

To say that fan loyalty is valued by FFAF is an understatement. The 'questions and answers' section on their fan club forum, currently spanning over 100 pages, ensures that every fan post is replied to, whether they're looking for merchandise overseas or requesting FFAF play at their wedding. It goes further than that. Through a voting system on Twitter, FFAF allowed the fans to have absolute control over the set list for their current tour. "We put the four records up and let the fans vote for the songs and the top 15 songs we chose for the set list."

FFAF's jam-packed tour and strong values ensure their commitment to providing for their fans remains strong.

CDs, tickets and the video for Wrench are available on <http://www.myspace.com/funeralforafriend>

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CULTURE

Theatre Group showcasing four new shows before Xmas

Michael Reffold

THIS TERM LANCASTER University Theatre Group has kept its members busy with rehearsals with four professional-quality shows, all of which will be performed in Weeks 8, 9 and 10 in venues both on- and off-campus.

First up is *The Crucible*, playing in the Dukes Youth Theatre, Friday and Saturday of Week 8, which promises to keep you on the edge of your seat with Miller's dark, intense re-imagining of the infamous Salem Witch trials. The Dukes Youth Theatre will be transformed into a gothic vista, accusations will fly and you'll be guaranteed an evening of top-notch entertainment!

Once you've recovered from the performance of *The Crucible*, you won't want to miss *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Playing in the Brandrigg Room, Cartmel, Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Week 9. It's a little play but it packs a punch, as two couples meet for drinks and dark secrets are revealed that they'd probably have preferred to keep hidden.

Meanwhile, the Dukes Youth Theatre will be hosting a production of *Our Country's Good* on Friday and Saturday of Week 9. The play is about the first group of convicts shipped to Australia, and explores the conflict between prisoners and officers and the empowering, redeeming force of theatre in what is sure to be a powerful, deeply moving production.

On top of that, don't forget to come to the Sugarhouse for *Animal Farm* at the beginning of Week 10 on Sunday 16th, Monday 7th and Tuesday 8th of December. George Orwell's allegorical treatment of the pitfalls of communism will be brought to life in this gripping production.

Please check out the Theatre Group website for more details: www.theatregroup.co.uk. Please don't hesitate to email us: theatregroup@lancaster.ac.uk. Details of show times and how to get tickets will be put up on the website shortly. We hope to see you in the audience for this term's four fantastic shows.

The return of the Supergroup: John Paul Jones, Josh Homme and Dave Grohl join forces



Steve Feekins

THE TERM 'SUPERGROUP' has been around in the musical lexicon ever since Clapton, Bruce and Baker teamed up to dominate the late-60s with Cream. Back then, band members would cross into each other's projects with little or no problems, with Cream's members working in Blind Faith and Ginger Baker's Air Force. This trend seemed to die out in the mid to late-70s due, in part, to the emergence of Led Zeppelin. From then on, there are a few notable mentions, including *The Firm* [circa 1984, not 1997], Audioslave, Monsters of Folk and Jack White's many efforts to relive the late-60s.

However, it is John Paul Jones who again looks set to put an end to any competing supergroups a good 30 years after his first efforts, but for a very different reason. He has teamed

up with Josh Homme and Dave Grohl to create arguably the most anticipated and technically gifted supergroup since Cream.

Them Crooked Vultures released their eponymous debut album in the UK on 16th November. The band made the album available to stream on YouTube, announcing the release via an e-mail to their mailing list with the simple message: "F*ck Patience. Let's Dance."

The band's first show closed with 'Nobody Loves Me & Neither Do I', which is the album's first track. Grohl's syncopated beat opens the album and he is quickly joined by Homme, who moans in expected Queens of the Stone Age fashion before a squeezed guitar tone plays a catchy riff.

Funky, smooth, fresh stuff, one might think. But what's all the fuss about? Why did their UK tour sell out after less than 12 minutes?

A little over 2 minutes in and the riff

changes, Jones and Homme produce a build up which gathers pace until a pause, the frontman grunts, and an absolute monster of a riff belts out.

Moments like this make up Them Crooked Vultures' debut album. As the track speeds up and finishes, the listener can only smile and look forward to the rest of an album which, it is fair to say, lives up to the massive hype surrounding it.

The album rattles along nicely with previously revealed *Mind Eraser*, *No Chaser* and *New Fang* upping the pace and maintaining the excellent riffs.

There is simply no filler material in this album, and other highlights include *Elephants*, which stomps around, noisily introducing itself as the long-lost hidden track from an early Zeppelin album and *Gunman*, a veritable funk-fest, with wah-wah licks and a strangled Bowie-like refrain.

The album concludes in epic fashion, with *Spinning in Daffodils*. Jones

introduces the finale on the piano, before a dirty guitar finally breaks through and the triumvirate unite with a solid riff that builds up to around the 5 minute mark, where a pause signals the beginning of the end of the album. Another cacophony of interweaving melodies builds before fading to give way to the strange climax of a lonely guitar crying itself to sleep with an ompa-like backing.

Many will try and compare this project, as is natural, with the bandmembers' own groups, which is something of a false dawn. All three bring something unique to the band and while one can be forgiven for thinking that this is mostly Homme-influenced, it is only his vocals that dominate. These three gods of rock all play off each other to marvellous success, the riffs, beats and ingenuity of this album make it a must-buy and their unfortunately sold-out tour a must-attend.

Expand your horizons with the cream of foreign language cinema

Aydan Savaskan

THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE Film Society will be screening *Paradise Now* in Week 9 and *Godzilla* in Week 10. Both screenings take place on Tuesday in Bowland lecture theatre at 6.15pm. Membership is only £3 and allows you to see all films for free.

Behind every suicide bomber there is a person with a life. That's what *Hany Abu-Assad* shows us in *Paradise Now*, the 2005 Golden Globe winner for best foreign language film. Unsurprisingly surrounded by controversy, the film was called 'Heart-stopping' by many, while others went as far as accusing it of Nazism.

The film tells the story of Said and Khaled, two childhood friends from Nablus recruited to carry out a suicide attack in Tel Aviv. We are shown the two friends living their day-to-day lives as workers and family members, whilst all the time being aware of the horrific attack they are preparing to carry out.

Paradise Now asks questions rather than offering opinions. Woven with discussion on the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine, it highlights the complexity of the situation and the lack of any easy solution. *Abu-Assad* is not asking us to sympathise with any one group over another, but suggesting we should acknowledge those involved as people, even the suicide bombers.

The plot might be criticised for romanticising the situation or being at

times hard to believe, but this doesn't keep it from being both a moving and sensitively told story. And despite the rather Hollywood good looks of the two main characters, we find that we become involved in their lives and relationships and strive to understand their motivations throughout the film.

Paradise Now is beautifully shot on location in Nablus and Tel Aviv, and the vast horizons and earthy colours give the film an unexpectedly tranquil feel. The suspense and plot twists are well structured and make this film a true thriller, though a slow moving and thoughtful one. The acting is very strong throughout the cast, with an especially graceful performance by Hiam Abbass as Said's mother.

Godzilla has gradually become a

household name in Japan and the rest of the world since the release of this film, his first, all the way back in 1954. Audiences at the time had been prepared for this type of film by other A and B monster movies such as *King Kong* and *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*, on which this film could be claimed to be partially based.

Godzilla is similar to many of those predecessors, with its sub-plot involving romance and moral dilemmas and its mixture of good and bad special effects. What makes this film stand out is its strong political undercurrent and chilling lack of fun. While previous monster movies invited the audience to marvel and enjoy the destruction and carnage put before them, *Godzilla* took a more sober approach.

Director Ishirō Honda, like the majority of his audience, had been personally shocked by nuclear attacks on Japan such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki and conveyed that shock and tragedy in his film. *Godzilla's* attack on Tokyo represents a sort of slow motion nuclear attack. Unlike previous monster films, the tragedy of the events is on display here. We are shown dead bodies, the wounded victims lining hospital floors and even weeping with apparently orphaned children.

Although at times the plot becomes vague and the scientific explanations are ridiculous throughout, there is something compelling about this film. Honda's directorial skill is evident in his perfect pacing and ability to create atmospheres of such drama and doom.

2012 a successful recreation of action film formula

Rebecca Pocklington

THIS FAST-MOVING ACTION film keeps you gripped from start to finish. Directed by Roland Emmerich, it has obvious similarities to his most famous films *The Day After Tomorrow* and *Independence Day*. Emmerich is known for directing disaster and action genres and he doesn't disappoint in 2012, with suspense and surprises throughout. The film begins with American scientist, Adrian, as he visits an old friend in India who is following the core temperature changes of the Earth. He reveals the start of the downhill slope that leads to the slow and dramatic ending of the Earth. He reports his findings to the President and slowly we see hints of a secret plot unfolding to save certain people, and works of art such as *The Mona Lisa*.

The story then focuses on Jackson (Cusack), a writer who immediately

presents himself as slightly lazy, by being late to pick up his two children from his ex wife's house. He takes them on a camping trip to Yellowstone where he stumbles across Charlie Frost (Harrelson), a crazy radio reporter who makes claims of a political conspiracy. Jackson laughs it off as madness to start with, but as the film progresses; it becomes clear that there is truth in the claims. Charlie hints at a map that will lead to the 'spaceships' that are waiting to save a select few, unbeknown to the rest of the world. There begins the first of the disasters, with Kate (Jackson's ex wife) and Gordon (her new boyfriend) in a local supermarket, and a large crater opens up as a huge earthquake occurs. Later Jackson returns the kids home and drives two Russian twins with a lot of money to a private plane, and finds out they have passes on to the 'spaceships'. It all becomes clear that no one will be saved other than those with passes, and Jackson rushes back and drives the whole family through LA as

it is being destroyed around them.

Arriving just in time at the airport, they find a plane, and Gordon, despite only having had a few lessons, flies them out of there just as the whole of LA disappears below them. From then on a series of natural disasters dominate the film, from the eventual eruption of Yellowstone, to large mega tsunamis. It follows the family's race against time to try and find the ships that are their only hope of survival.

This film is exciting and full of suspense, with the special effects used in the film being shockingly realistic. It often focuses heavily on a lot of disasters occurring simultaneously, so you must be prepared to follow a continuous succession of action, without losing the main plot. It has stark similarities to Emmerich's other film *The Day After Tomorrow*, so if you enjoyed that, then 2012 will be right up your street. The film is well worth seeing if you enjoy the thrill of constant action and adventure throughout.



The Day Three Years From Now: Director Roland Emmerich explores further the disaster movie genre in 2012

Twenty years on and The Legend of Zelda lives on



Hannah Fearon
Culture Editor

THE LEGEND OF Zelda is a hugely successful game series that has been around now for twenty-three years. Created by Shigeru Miyamoto and Takashi Tezuka, the series is like no other. With a combination of action, adventure, role-playing and puzzle solving, the game play varies in style with every installment. The series follows the character of Link, often with a goal of rescuing the Princess Zelda.

The first game, *The Legend of Zelda*, was released in Japan in 1986 on the Famicom Disk System. My first happy memories of playing the game come from the fantastic GameCube installment, *The Wind Waker*, of which *Phantom Hourglass* is a direct sequel. The game was released in 2003, before the beloved GameCube seemed to be wiped off the face of the earth. The graphics were cute and quirky, and the adventures always involved solving puzzles, fighting off enemies and exploring new worlds. With the sky rocketing cost for Nintendo to keep making the disks, the GameCube eventually faded into the background to make way for new consoles.

After the demise of the GameCube, Nintendo eventually turned to the Wii for their next installment of the Zelda series in 2006, *The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess*. When the Wii was first released, *Twilight Princess* was without a doubt one of the most popular games, and still is. The games were eagerly anticipated for several years and were originally to be released on the GameCube. With a new Wii sequel released in 2010, the franchise is ever changing. The graphics in *Twilight Princess* are stunning and whilst still fun, yet the game is more serious. In parts of the game, Link is transformed

into a wolf, which gives this installment new elements. The use of the Wii remote as a crossbow, sword and even as a fishing rod make this game even more enjoyable to play.

Phantom Hourglass was released in 2006 for the DS and returned to the earlier styles of the series. Featuring rather simple graphics similar to *The Wind Waker*, this delighted avid Zelda fans such as myself. The game returned to the puzzle elements of the series, which were lost beneath the beautiful graphics and new game play in *Twilight Princess*. Three years on, and *Phantom Hourglass* is still popular to fans old and new. The puzzle solving aspects of the game are very popular in DS games, and old fans enjoy the retrospective feel.

The Legend of Zelda: Spirit Tracks, is the upcoming fifteenth game in the ever popular series and will be released for the DS on 11th December. The game is a direct sequel to *Phantom Hourglass* with extremely similar game play and graphics. In this game, Link must travel by rail, a new feature of the game. It also features a sidekick, a playable character known as the Phantom, who is possessed by Princess Zelda.

With sequels released in 2009 for the DS, and 2010 for the Wii, it looks like this series can only continue to grow. Releasing different styles of games for both the DS and Wii, it has allowed the creators to please fans of the retro puzzle games as well as those of us who need a little more advancement in the technology to keep up with the other games on the market. As a fan of both the DS and Wii games, I will most certainly be giving them a trial. Who needs all these repetitive games such as *Modern Warfare 2* (I know many of you will hate me for that), or the 'ground-breaking' technology of *Project Natal*? Long live *The Legend of Zelda*.

Margaret Atwood at her very best with Booker prize winner *The Blind Assassin*

Tingxuan Ho

OF HER AWARD-WINNING, best-selling novel *'The Blind Assassin'*, Margaret Atwood, contemporary Canadian author, describes it as "essentially about two things: human sacrifice and writing." Indeed, plot lines for this novel exist on two levels. Firstly there's a stack of them content-wise; branches of family tree history and intertwining relationships drawn in words by Iris Chase Griffen, protagonist of the novel. Then we've got layers of meta-fiction, storytellers telling stories of storytellers.

'*The Blind Assassin*' is constructed like a Russian wooden doll; there's a

story within a story within a story. The main narrative focuses on Iris, who chronicles her life story as a sort-of memoir, centred on family. As a historical autobiography of sorts, Iris devotes pages to recounting the experiences of her elders, writes extensively of Laura, her sister, reveals less-than-pleasant relationships with her husband and her sister-in-law, and expresses intense concern for her granddaughter, Sabrina.

Then there is nested between these pages *The Blind Assassin*, a novel purportedly written by Laura, published by Iris after Laura's death. It describes a love affair between a disreputable young man on the run and an affluent young woman, who meet in dingy rooms and secluded corners. During



their trysts he tells her a science-fiction story about a blind assassin, who has been sent on a mission to kill his city's sacrificial virgin, but ends up falling in love with her instead.

The novel begins almost like a mystery: Atwood introduces, in the

first twenty pages of the book, the novel's eminent characters and its set of nested narratives. Immediately we feel distinctly a depth to the text below its descriptive surface - we know instinctively that somehow the three stories are connected. It's vague at first, though, but it builds up: we spot similarities and overlaps in the two stories of Iris's world and Laura's novel. Before long, we realise that the science-fictional world of Sakiel-Norn has an abstruse metaphorical function in the overarching story. This, I believe, is what draws the reader in, the desire to untangle Iris's cobweb of history. It is inevitable that we find ourselves attempting to do so: through Iris, Atwood plays cleverly the binaries of hiding and revealing, speech and

silence. What Iris says isn't exactly all that she's saying. You've got to search for clues within the book that she has published for her sister, you've got to keep alert for pieces of narrative puzzle scattered through the novel. You've got to pick apart what she says as well as picking up on what she doesn't.

Wry humour in Atwood's writing, combined with her aptitude for descriptions and talented craft of metaphors, makes for very comfortable perusal. Her attention to details and her masterful manipulation of character development create for the reader an inexplicable realness to her novel's world. Atwood's clever insertions of different narrative voices and non-chase newspaper commentary are effective tools that draw us in.

New Moon whets appetite of vampire lovers

Catherine Holdsworth

ON 20TH NOVEMBER, thousands of girls around the country will have flocked to cinemas to see the latest release in the 'Twilight' series: New Moon. Over the past few years, the books have slowly grown momentum, catapulting them into frenzy of fans and screaming teenagers. So what is it about the books that makes them so addictive?

The passionate love story between Edward and Bella is key to the success of the series, and why the books are loved. I first read the series when I was still in secondary school, around the time that all my friends were as well, and it took over our lives for the fortnight that we read all four books in the series: 'Twilight', 'New Moon', 'Eclipse' and 'Breaking Dawn'. We were all eighteen, yet fascinated by the stories and the characters.

The first film in the series hit movie theatres around this time last year and, to date, has earned over \$120 million from the box office and DVD sales alone. This might be just a craze, but it's an expensive one that people are willing to pay money for. Some fans have paid £195 just to have a private meeting with the minor stars of the movie, as was discovered at the recent 'Twilight' Convention in Northamp-



New Moon Dawning: The second film in the saga explores further the themes of obsession, love and, of course, vampires. A formula that has worked so well that millions of teenage girls idolise lead star Robert Pattinson

ton. This is no longer about the books and the romance that lies at the heart of it all; it has become an obsession.

It has, in effect jumped off the page into reality, with life now imitating art, with the constant debate over whether the film's main stars: Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart are dating each other. This question has been banned from all publicity tours for the new film. The entire cast, while shooting in Vancouver, Canada, was

plagued by fans, who go by the name of 'Twiards,' some travelling thousands of miles just to get a glimpse of their heroes.

But let's do a U-turn. What attracts one to read a book about teenage vampires and werewolves? It's simple, they're ultimately aimed at girls, those that love a good romance with a bit of violence and blood thrown in there just for fun. The main character of Edward is their ideal man: tall, hand-

some with "a face any male model in the world would trade his soul for" and, of course, a vampire, which adds to the willing suspension of disbelief that it could happen to them, given that Bella is an average and clumsy girl like most people out there at that age are. Ultimately, they are an escape from the dreary high school that most of us have to go through before entering the real world.

Was the first film any good? Not

really, the two main characters were like statues for the duration, never displaying much emotion except boredom. Will I be going to see New Moon? Absolutely! I can't wait to spend two hours in a movie theatre full of vampire-obsessed teenagers, it's all part of the whole experience. However, if you're still wondering what all the fuss is about, read the books and pretend you're a teenage girl. I'm on my third run through and loving every page.

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Stellar cast assemble for classic children's tale

Lauren Randall

AS A CHILD I was handed a book that captivated me (and countless others, I'm sure) beyond my wildest dreams. It was 'Where the Wild Things Are', a heavily-illustrated children's book written by Maurice Sendak back in 1963. A book of friendship, family and belonging, it was an instant success with both adults and children. Critics praised the psychoanalytic look at children's anger and imagination as well as the complex parts of the psyche; kids just liked the ugly monsters. Pretty impressive for a book that comprised of a mere ten sentences.

As its success soared, an estimated 19 million copies have been shifted world-wide, talk began of a film. A short animation was made as was, quite bizarrely, an opera. However, there was no sign of a feature film; hardly surprising for a book with so little language let alone dialogue. It took until the eighties for there to be an intense demand for it. Disney originally planned to release it as an animation coupled with computer-generated settings being developed at the time. Big names such as John Lasseter, who founded Pixar, were attached before Universal Studios stepped in 2001 with the intention of



Where the Wild Things Are: Maurice Sendak's novel has sold 19 million copies and captivated children world-wide

creating a computer animation with Pocahontas director, Eric Golding. This also fell through. With the film in dire need of energy, Sendak arranged for hot property, Spike Jonze, to take control.

Though Sendak was thrilled with the appointment of Jonze, it seems that Universal were not as convinced.

After much negotiation, Warner Bros took control and the film's pre-production prep finally got under way. Jonze, whose previous work consisted of Being John Malkovich and numerous music videos, kept close contact with Sendak and co-writer, Dave Eggers, to ensure that everything was to the author's liking.

Filming finally started in April 2006 in typical unorthodox Jonze fashion. Not content with having the voice actors read the lines in a recording booth, Jonze enlisted the cast to improvise being a 'wild thing' with microphones attached to their foreheads to record their voices. The thought of Oscar winner, Forrest

Whittaker, and hard-man, James Gandolfini, throwing bread at each other and knocking over foam trees should give you some sort of idea of Jonze's direction. Not only was this more realistic for the dialogue but it helped shape the film's effects. Whilst this was going on, shooting was taking place with the puppets that represented the monsters. Supplied by Jim Henson's Creature Shop and controlled by animatronics, the monsters look surreally real. This seemed to cause a problem in test screenings way back in late 2007, as the monsters were deemed far too frightening for children. With Warner Bros not happy and prepared to reshoot the entire film, Jonze was given more time and more money to create, according to producer Gary Goetzman, "the vision [Jonze] wants to make".

Finally, after a year long delay, it seems that the film's a winner. With a big name cast such as Whittaker, Gandolfini, Catherine O'Hara, and extensive hype, it's soared straight to number one in the US box office. Focusing its advertising more on adults than children, seems to have paid dividends for both director and studio. More importantly, the film's resonated with Sendak himself who said "he's nailed it". If that doesn't convince you to invest in a wild thing, I don't know what will. Let the rum-pus begin.

MASHED

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- Lastly, don't let the beer goggles take over - you never know what'll appear on Facebook the next morning.

pause for a soft drink



In Focus: As interest grows, a new Fencing Society is launched

Julian Surface examines the new found popularity of this sport on campus and is on hand to witness some swordsmen in action

The Background

A RAPIDLY EXPANDING sport at Lancaster University is the fencing. It always appears to be a game that people know but place with the likes of polo, as one for aristocrats and snobs. However, this could not be further from the truth.

Passion, determination and a phenomenal amount of energy is required to compete in this vigorous game. Therefore, various and diverse characters discover and compete around the country. Seb Wysk, one of the Lancaster team's stars, has been known for his cheers, roars and amusing victory celebrations. It is true that equipment is expensive but that is as far as it will go. The committee who run the society, Aaron Gardner (president), Chris Clark (treasurer) and Cat Clutterbuck (secretary) have done an impressive job on improving the image of the sport and getting enough funds to allow anyone to enjoy the thrill of the game.

It was a sad end to a passionate and unbelievable performance by the team to get right back into the game in the final round. The team had fearlessly attacked the top league and should be proud of what they have achieved.

Unfortunately, the amount they procure from the AU, although generous, was not sufficient to provide enough helmets, swords or sports-wear. The committee swiftly moved to do something about it. Tournaments, such as the 'Lancaster Open' have been organized and many students from numerous universities travel to compete. Although Gardner won the epee event, it was Ingvar Kraatz of Leeds who won the foil. Thanks go to 'Our Lady's Catholic College' who gave free access to their venue. The result of the tournament was 650 pounds raised for equipment, including an electronic scoring device. This event was fully covered in @Lancaster magazine.

Now that sufficient facilities are available, membership has only flourished from around thirty-five to fifty-two this year. Furthermore, the society would like to invite anyone to turn up to their training sessions on Monday 19:15 to 22:00 and Friday 19:00 to 21:00.

The team has launched themselves



En guard: Lancaster's Aaron Gardner, the President of the Fencing Society is pictured in combat

into the top league and, despite their loss this week, they remain positive for the future. More events are to be organized and with more students getting involved, the society will only prosper.

The Match

IT WAS THE early afternoon in the confines of the minor hall of the sports centre that Lancaster Fencing team played the most important game of the season. The newly promoted home side came up against an incredibly strong Manchester squad, which consisted of players who are borderline professionals at the sport.

The game consisted of three rounds with different swords; 'saber' in which target areas are slashed, 'foil' where a small area on the chest and back are the mark, and in 'epee' any contact with the opponent offer points.

This was a game that could make either Lancaster or Manchester champions of their league. All the more impressive was that the home side was completely new to the top division. So far this year, the team has only lost their first game to Manchester by a narrow margin of 123-126, whilst defeating Bangor University, Newcastle, Sheffield and Leeds comprehensively.

However, it seemed to be overconfidence and an early lack of focus

that led to Lancaster going behind in the saber round. It was 10-4 before a superb series of hits dragged it back to 13-15. Sadly for the passionate and vocal fans on the sidelines, Manchester simply bided their time. The visitors won many of their subsequent bouts 5-3 and the result of the saber was 36-45.

Next was foil and the team had hoped that this would be their saving grace. After playing the team earlier in the season, it was discovered that epee was what Manchester were excelling at. So the team rallied to try and win back the points in this matchup. Yet, Manchester had clearly trained well and focused on their weaknesses.

Passion, determination and a phenomenal amount of energy is required to compete in this vigorous game. Therefore, various and diverse characters discover and compete around the country.

Lancaster took an early lead in this event 14-11, led by the flamboyant war-cry of their captain, Seb Wysk. It was a fantastic racking up of points by Aaron Gardner, winning his bout 7-1 that allowed the home side to move ahead. Some unbelievable gaps were found

between sword and opponent, considering the diminutive size of Gardner's opponent. He even resorted to some flair filled flicks of the sword, over his back, as he charged the player down. One of which deserved the roar of applause, if not the disallowed point. Despite the mighty assault, Manchester remained calm and unshaken and won all of the remaining bouts. The round ended with Lancaster down 70-90.

Final round, where twenty-four points would have secured the title for Manchester and twenty five would claim the match. It was the sword preference for the visitors and they had proven unshakable so far. Lancaster stormed out in this round, right from the word 'En Garde'. An early win of 5-0 and two consecutive 5-2s for Lancaster brought them fully back into this match, down a mere eleven points. Manchester were helpless and struggled to even get any joint points from simultaneous hits. They shifted their game to a defensive stand off but with two bouts left the score was still 105-112. Up stepped Wysk, with composure that the rest of the team, and this reporter could not comprehend. The two fencers were on their toes, moving forward and backwards for what seemed to be an eternity. In the blink of an eye, they charged at each other and it was 1-1. Lancaster could not afford losing another point. Wysk

remained steady and with his opponent tiring he attacked and parried perfectly to win his bout 5-1. The final bout was here and there was no room for error. The atmosphere was beyond electric, just as Gardner's heart rate must have been when he put his helmet on, and stepped onto the piste. He was facing the cream of the crop from Manchester, who had given monstrous roars whenever he had won a point previously. It was over. A few early hits that Gardner could not protect himself against and Lancaster were defeated 115-119.

Now that sufficient facilities are available, membership has only flourished from around thirty-five to fifty-two this year.

It was a sad end to a passionate and unbelievable performance by the team to get right back into the game in the final round. The team had fearlessly attacked the top league and should be proud of what they have achieved. There are many tournaments still to come, and there is no doubt that Lancaster's team will be keeping their eyes firmly fixed on that top spot. Trophies have come previously and they will continue to come their way. It will be no less than deserved.

Eat Sport, Sleep Sport, Read Wynes



As a woman who has always played and been involved with sport, my understanding of why other women do not participate is perhaps somewhat lacking. However, I am aware how important it is to encourage girls from a young age to be active. When I was a youngster, I didn't need much encouragement. I'd be out in the playground with the lads at break time, kicking around a battered football, tearing holes in my school uniform. However, even back then, had I not been so vehemently into sport, I may have struggled to get involved. Nowadays, there is a lot more emphasis on inclusiveness for women in sport and I wholeheartedly support this.

Over the summer, I heard about the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation, whose ethos is based around making sport as appealing to women as it is to men. Although, quite often I don't agree with women being viewed as a minority, I do feel that when sport is concerned women need some support to get the best out of what they do. University sports clubs struggle sometimes to attract the girls they need in their team simply because they have perhaps not had much encouragement in the past. I feel now that we are beginning to catch up and those girls that have been supported in their school years are gradually arriving at university keen to continue their engagement, which will inevitably lead to much stronger women's teams and individuals.

Lancaster University have recently had some excellent sports women. For a number of years now, this university has had successful women's rugby and football teams as well as various other women's sports teams. This year is particularly good for women's squash players, as in the past the women's squad has struggled with lack of players, but this year with a bigger influx they are able to field a strong team. The only downside being that the league they are in now only has three teams due to other universities struggling to play. Again this emphasises the need for greater encouragement to get women playing the sport. On another note, we've had some successes in the recent short course swimming championships. Emma Gage from Lancaster came 9th in the women's 200m open backstroke against 36 competitors which got her to the final of the event. Lauren Cox from Lancaster came 5th in the Women's Open 50m freestyle out of a whopping 106 competitors, reaching the final and maintaining 5th position. My congratulations go out to both those swimmers for doing Lancaster proud and showing the strength of women in sport.

Life in the fast lane: Busy time for Lancaster University Boat Club



Creditable Performance: LUBC's first races of the year were fairly successful with the Men's 8s shining in particular (Photo: Aaron Sims)

- **First competition of the academic year in Chester**
- **Sponsored charity event staged in the market square**

Aaron Sims

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY BOAT Club's schedule is made up of consistent and demanding training in preparation for the occasional events that are dotted around the county. When these come about, the club goes into overdrive to get ready. Without a doubt, Weeks 5 and 6 were a busy time.

On the Saturday of week 6, LUBC travelled to Chester's Dee's Autumn Head for the first race of the academic year, taking with them a small fleet of senior boats. The weather was surpris-

ingly pleasant which exceeded everyone's expectations as it was expected to rain heavily.



All for charity: Sue Wynes joined LUBC in raising money for charity

The first division of racing over the 4km time trial saw the club send their top 2 men's 8s take 3rd and 7th place

in the IM3 division with the 1st 8 placing just behind Agecroft Rowing Club and Manchester University. The only women's boat of the day was the IM3 coxed 4 which placed 6th place in the rankings, not the most desired result but giving the crew a lot to build from in the coming months. The last boat of the division was the novice single scull rowed by newcomer Oli Gaskell which placed a modest 6th in the pack, not bad considering the opposition were twice his size.

The second division saw more action but in smaller boats with the club's coxless lightweight 4 suffering problems with the steering wire before even reaching the start line and as a result placed 2nd in the IM2 category. The heavyweight guys also did well, placing 2nd and 10th in the IM3 category. The novice 4 was the talk of the day however, scooping the victory over their opposition to win their category.

The following Tuesday, the club congregated together in the market

square in Lancaster for the term's sponsored event. The aim was between the 3 rowing machines, to cover the distance from Lancaster to London in preparation for the 2012 Olympics. The distance was reached comfortably despite the weather forcing the event to be called off 2 hours early and one of the machines being temporarily manned by an ill Sue Wynes who came to join the club for the event.

The club were raising money on the day on behalf of the Anthony Nolan Trust and managed to collect a delightful £70 in the buckets to go along with the sponsorship money raised by the club members and the generous donations of local businesses. The club would like to thank The Running Centre, Juicafe, Bar 1725, The Sultan of Lancaster and The Whaletail Cafe as well as their main sponsor Cityblock for their support throughout the event as well as any fancy dress costumes that were given to club members to wear throughout the event.

Demolition job for Korfball team, who humiliate Manchester Lions 10-0

Nick O'Malley

THE UNIVERSITY KORFBALL team demolished Manchester Lions 10-0 in their latest match held at Salt Ayre Sports Centre. The score-line reflected a resolute defence which frustrated the Manchester team throughout the game, and a strong attack that could easily have scored many more Korfs.

For those of you that don't know, Korfball was originally a Dutch game created by a schoolteacher so he could play his pupils in a game that did not differentiate over height and physical strength, so that everyone, regardless of stature is on the same level.

The rules of Korfball involve a team of 8 players comprised of 4 males and 4 females. 2 males and 2 females attack, and 2 of each also defend. Defenders and attackers are confined to their own half of the court. The roles of defenders and attackers switch after every 2 goals

are scored.

Korfball is similar to ice hockey as there is an area on the court behind the goal. However unlike ice hockey, you can score from behind the goal. It is also similar to netball with a restriction on movement when holding the ball.

This match saw a very impressive performance by Lancaster as a whole. However, the stand-out performance of the game was by Vanessa Gifford who scored 3 Korfs on the day and created numerous other opportunities for herself and her team mates.

James Whitehead also scored 2 Korfs, both resulting from running in shots where he was cleverly fed into a small gap and scored using an under-arm throwing technique that is unique to Korfball. The gulf in class became apparent as the Lions seemed to have no answer to Lancaster's attacking threat.

The stand out moment of the first half was one of two Korfs scored by

George Lincoln. Ian Pay attempted a running in shot, and as he drew in both male defenders he played a great cross court pass to Lincoln who was in acres of space and scored a speculative long range effort.

Pay and Jennifer Gorman also got on the score sheet after a free pass and Jessica McManus came on midway through the second half to score her first Korf for the team. All the more impressive when you consider she had never played Korfball before six weeks ago. She is definitely one to watch out for in the year ahead.

Rachel Taylor was another contender for player of the match due to her outstanding defending; combining excellent tight marking and a large number of interceptions. This visibly frustrated Manchester and on occasion saw them attempting shots with nobody ready to collect the misses, handing the advantage immediately back to Lancaster.

The hosts will have been extremely

pleased with the result, but will have also been left disappointed that they did not score more.

Team Captain, James Whitehead spoke to SCAN after the game. He said "I am very pleased with our new acquisitions to the team; they are performing very well considering none of them had played Korfball before coming to University."

"I am also excited by the creation of a second team, who have just won their first ever game against Manchester thirds."

"We will hopefully build on the second team's success this year to create a really strong squad for the future that can fill the void when most of the first team graduates at the end of this year."

There can be absolutely no complaints about the Korfball team's record so far this year, as they have racked up three wins from three games, making them one of Lancaster University's stand out teams.

Team of the Moment: Men's Hockey Firsts

Kim Megson

LANCASTER'S FIRSTS ARE enjoying a fine start to the season after a string of good results. They are currently joint leaders of the snappily named PricewaterhouseCoopers BUCS Hockey - Northern Conference, consisting of other university teams. They will also top the Kukri North West Hockey League, in which they play other local clubs, if they win their game in hand. Promotion is the aim in both.

There is a confidence within the group that all the teams they will play this season are beatable. Their biggest upcoming fixture is the crucial home tie against fellow leaders Bangor University. A weakened Lancaster side secured a good 2-2 draw against them away from home earlier in the season, and their next meeting in week nine is likely to be critical in deciding who wins the title this year.

Despite their promising start to the season, Team Captain Lyam Hollins feels there is more to come from a side who "haven't played to our best yet." However, as commentators are often inclined to say, winning consistently while not playing to your best is the mark of a good team.

The team will also compete in the Lancashire Trophy which they have a realistic hope of winning. Later in the



Early season pace setters: *The Men's Hockey 1sts have enjoyed an excellent start to the season*

year they will play in the Roses, as Lancaster seeks revenge for the drubbing it received from York last time around. On that occasion the hockey team were actually one of the few teams to return victorious, winning their game 2-1. They enjoyed the vibrant away atmosphere and were happy to put Lancaster on the score board at least. Hollis spoke about Lancaster's chances in next year's competition: "There is a big gap to overcome this year, but hope-

fully the home advantage will make a difference."

Lots of questions were asked about the University's approach to sport in the wake of the Roses defeat, and it is an issue that has refused to go away. Hollis added: "In the last few years the University didn't really seem to care about sport, but with the new Astro turf pitches and the Sports Centre, things are taking a step forward."

"The development of the new pitch

has meant that training hours have been greatly increased, and play is now not as affected by fixture congestion."

This year the Men's firsts consist mostly of established players, with a few people back from gap years and a couple of freshers. Many of the team started playing hockey at a young age and aim to continue playing at club level after leaving university.

There are six Hockey teams at Lancaster University, three for men and

three for women. They all train together and follow each other's matches closely.

Sam Quilleash, Goalkeeper for the Men's 1sts spoke on the camaraderie among the teams: "There is a really good social aspect here and it shows itself on the hockey pitch. Not many of the other clubs get the amount of people out that we do." They have weekly socials and are now the only team sponsored by Varsity in the difficult financial climate that has seen Walkabout pull out its backing of sports teams.

In this country field hockey is not a sport that is particularly well covered and is not really part of the national consciousness, despite its similarities with football. When asked about the appeals of the sport, Hollis replied: "It's fast paced, requires team work and it's quite a technical sport as well in its own right."

Hollis is hoping to score his 100th career goal this year, with his tally currently at 97. Along with promotions and success in the cup, that will hopefully be another achievement that Lancaster will be able to celebrate at the end of the season.

Lancaster Men's First team play their home games on alternative Wednesdays at 4.00pm. Fixtures, results, statistics, match reports and information on the hockey, and all other university sports, can be found at www.bucs.org.uk

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Graduate College sees purple

- Bar sports teams at loggerheads with AU over purple cards
- Resolution averts college abandoning George Wyatt
- Issue raises wider question of how purple card benefits Postgraduates

Robert Payling
Sports Editor

GRADUATE COLLEGE'S BAR sports teams have engaged in a heated debate with the Athletic Union over the necessity of members owning Purplecards to compete in Inter College competition. Students from the college criticised the requirement and questioned the plausibility of the rule, believing that the sanction has been newly introduced rather than a fixed rule that has applied in previous years.

The issue was raised after the Union requested all teams to register their members onto a new computer system introduced to decrease the administrative workload for LUSU. The new system makes it clear when students do not have a valid Purplecard, and helps LUSU stop ineligible players taking part in college competition.

Members from the college's Men's and Women's Darts teams, Men's Pool teams and Dominoes team, all failed to register their players until week seven of Michaelmas term, and only decided to do so after being given the ultimatum of registering their players or face exclusion from their leagues.

Players from the sports teams have argued that the card is not beneficial to Postgraduate students and is a financial burden for them. Dominic Duckett said: "This is a financial cost. Many students are struggling to make ends meet and they should not be excluded from free activities available on campus."

"If one bears in mind that students are full members of LUSU whether or not they have Purplecards, by what authority are they compelled to pay £12.50 to LUSU before they can join the Christian Fellowship, The Islamic Society or indeed the Grad Darts Team."

He added: "At a time when LUSU themselves are campaigning against 'hidden costs to being a student' with

their "Not a £ More" initiative, it seems a good time to ask them to get their own house in order."

Duckett also raised the issue of attracting future sports members to compete in Intercollege sport with the current rule. He said: "Struggling students will simply not join activities and will be deprived of inexpensive recreation."

"Has the Union Council ever ratified holding a Purplecard as an eligibility criterion for joining every single club and society registered with LUSU? Why would the Union Council ever think it was fair and reasonable to impose a charge on joining societies?"

Sue Wynes, Vice President of Sports for LUSU, refuted claims that the requirements have only recently been implemented. She said: "It was falsely believed by some Bar Sports captains that this rule had been newly introduced, however this not the case."

"A Union Council meeting held in 2004 specifies the rule that those members must have purple cards so there is no doubt that the rule exists."

She added: "We are simply bringing bar sports into line with all other LUSU activities, which require Purplecards to take part in."

"It is also a simple way to determine if someone is eligible to play in the intercollege leagues which makes the administration of the leagues much easier."

Wynes also highlighted that the money spent on Purplecards benefits each college's sports teams in the future. She said "Income from the purchase of purple cards is put back into funding LUSU activities; this includes all AU clubs, societies and Inter College Sport."

"I understand the arguments that Graduate students have for not purchasing purple cards, however, there cannot be one rule for Graduate College and a different rule for another as every other team have fully registered members with purple cards"

"If students feel they require some funding to take part in the George Wyatt leagues, they are able to request money from the college sports budget through their sports reps to fund things such as use of pool tables for matches or purchasing darts boards."

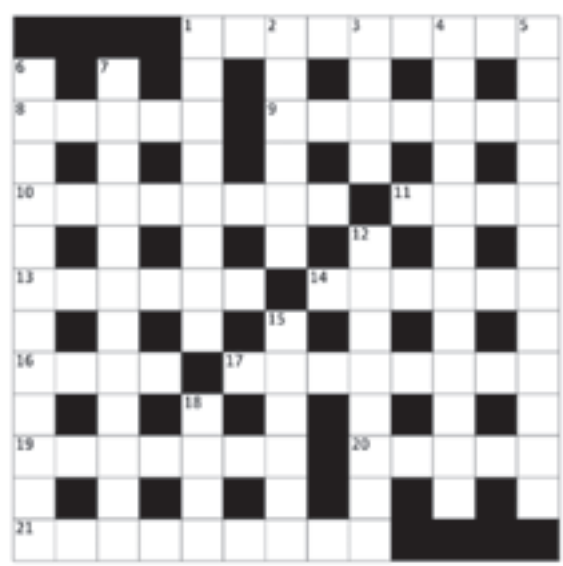
Graduate College's eventual co-operation seems to have brought an end to the row and the Athletic Union's stance on the matter remains unmoved.

"All students involved in activity run by LUSU must have a purple card and this includes any AU club or Society, any college team in Netball or Football leagues and Bar Sports leagues."



One foot out of the league: Postgraduate students were not happy at having to have purple cards to play bar sports

Quick crossword no 12,111



Across

- 1 Quadrangle (9)
- 8 Match (5)
- 9 Dried seedless grape (7)
- 10 Calamity (8)
- 11 Legend (4)
- 13 Rubber (6)
- 14 Lampoon (6)
- 16 South American plant from which a narcotic drug is obtained (4)
- 17 Equestrian sports event (8)
- 19 Japanese flower arranging (7)
- 20 Controller of aircraft (5)
- 21 Gone from memory (9)

Down

- 1 Pawns, queens, rooks etc (8)
- 2 Not observed (6)
- 3 Ceramic slab for roofs, walls, floors etc (4)
- 4 By studying the relationship between individual components (12)
- 5 Capital punishment (5,7)

- 6 Snot rag (12)
- 7 Pellucid (7,5)
- 12 Rotary movement contrary to direction of travel (8)
- 15 Powerful hereditary ruler (6)
- 18 Wood border running round room walls (4)

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