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STUDENT COMMENT AND NEWS

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Week 10, Michaelmas Term, Tuesday 8th December, 2009

Election turnout increases 30% with divisive new E-voting system

- **Over 3000 vote inside 24 hour election period**
- **Volume of demand causes delays in first few hours of voting**
- **Student opinion still divided over new system**

**Sam Newsham
Stephen Ashby
Andrew Pillow**

THE INTRODUCTION OF e-voting led to minor problems but an unprecedented increase in voter turnout in the Week Eight elections, especially for JCR officers.

The JCR and LUSU Part-time Officer elections replaced paper ballots with a new e-voting system, allowing students to vote anywhere from a computer or phone. Public laptops were also available in porters' lodges throughout the day. For the first time voting was open for 24 hours, from 2.00 on Thursday afternoon to 2.00 on Friday.

Throughout the entire 24-hour vot-

ing period a total of 3007 votes were cast, the highest voter turnout in LUSU records. When compared to the previous election this showed an increase in turnout by over 30%.

"The turnout was definitely a lot higher than we had hoped, and was a testament to how well the JCRs really did [as well as] all the Chairs, Social Secs for putting on the events, and the Chief Returning Officer Kat Goulding," said Andy Johnston, LUSU VP (FEDS). Along with Goulding, Johnston was responsible for overseeing the elections.

Over 20% of students in every undergraduate college voted. Lonsdale led the way with 36% of their students voting in at least one of the elections, followed by Cartmel and Pendle with around 30% each. The only exception to this trend was Graduate College, whose turnout fell to 2.6% (108 votes). This may have been due to the fact that the main GSA election was in Week Four and most of the positions up for election in Week Eight were uncontested.

For the first two hours of voting, however, things did not go quite as smoothly as expected; when polls opened the servers were overloaded with students wanting to vote. With each voting page taking, in some cases, up to 10 minutes to load, people began to get frustrated. This clearly affected

voting numbers, with the first position on the list of Part Time Officers, Academic Council Chair, getting nearly twice as many votes than the final few positions.

"It's so slow people can only be bothered to vote for the ones they really care about," one student said.

Once the problem was noticed MiVoice, the company running the e-voting system, and LUSU worked together quickly to resolve the issue and ensure that it shouldn't be a problem again. The website began to speed up and by the early evening students were able to vote quickly and easily. By Friday afternoon when the voting closed most votes had already been counted electronically, saving current officers across campus a huge amount of time.

"One good thing to come out of the slow system from our point of view was the number of people who persevered to make their vote," said Goulding. "It's inspiring to know that so many people care about the union and the officers elected that they will wait however long it takes to vote. I want to assure those who did that next time the system will be much faster."

Another problem was that a small number of people didn't receive emails with their voting codes or had accidentally deleted them. Johnston and the MiVoice team

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Winterfest kickstarts the festive season



Full Story on page 3

Tuition fees campaign boosted by support of party parliamentary candidates

**Lizzie Houghton
Assistant Editor**

LUSU'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST rising tuition fees continued to receive further support last week, as two parliamentary candidates signed up to the union's pledge to vote against any increase in fees.

Stuart Langhorn, the Liberal Dem-

ocrat candidate, visited campus last Tuesday to sign the pledge. Langhorn, a former student at Lancaster, said: "The Liberal Democrats have long been against tuition fees [...] I campaigned on this issue in the last election and will be doing so again. I am happy to sign [LUSU's] petition."

Langhorn's support follows on from Ben Wallace's earlier last month. The current Lancaster and Fleetwood MP

signed the pledge following a strong debate with LUSU President, Michael Payne.

Clive Grunshaw, the candidate for Labour has also pledged his support to the union's campaign.

In a letter in SCAN's last issue Grunshaw wrote: "I 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."

Payne, who has contacted the local party parliamentary candidates asking them to support the union's stance against rising fees, has been pleased with the response so far. He said: "The pledged support of two prospective parliamentary candidates and the local MP for our fairer fees and funding campaign is a step forward not be underes-

timated. Thanks to continuing support from students and key decision makers this campaign will continue to grow from strength to strength as we approach the general election." Payne has contacted the local party parliamentary candidates, asking them to support the union's stance against rising fees. He is still waiting a response from Eric Ollerenshaw, the candidate from the Conservative Party.

Students paying price as hard times hit higher education

As the recession bites, rent prices rise and tuition fees threaten to double, what on earth is happening to the student experience

Universities appear to have irrevocably changed since the onset of top-up fees in 2006.

A different breed of students now attend university. This changing demographic is clear to see at Lancaster University. As the institution has become more prestigious and international links are further developed, so too the character of campus also shifts.

This current generation of students is affected on several fronts. Firstly, students have become more reliant on their parents for funding than they have done previously. However, the effects of the recession is already being felt with some parents becoming much more cautious and frugal in supporting their child's experience at university with increased finances.

Students are also being squeezed

due to greater pressures in the job market, again caused by the recession. In Lancaster, many opportunities are given to permanent residents rather than the student body.

The rising cost of rent on campus and decrease in standard accommodation also means that a student loan no longer covers the cost of living, resulting in students tapping up parents or working long hours (if they're lucky enough to land a job) to survive.

The current fiasco with student loans not being paid out only exacerbates the problem further. The administrative incompetence of that company is causing grief and stress for a lot of students. In fairness to the university, their support structures have ensured that very few, if any students, have slipped through the welfare net and have been supported until the loan has

come through.

These financial pressures have a deep impact on how students spend their time at university. Many are pressured by parents, due to their vast outlay on education, to knuckle down and focus on their degree. Many more no longer live on campus, but commute to the university from nearby in the region.

University is all about the experience and life skills you can gain. In a crowded job market, employers want people who can stand out from the crowd. Whilst a first in Physics is admirable, a person who has completed the Lancaster Award, sat on a college JCR or been a member of clubs and societies will have demonstrated a variety of skills that mere academic excellence unfortunately does not cover.

Students are less inclined to spend money, simply because they do not

have it. This has been evidenced in recent years by a decrease in takings in college bars as students prefer to explore cheaper options of buying alcohol from supermarkets.

However, the situation appears to be worsening. This year's Christmas Balls across campus appear to have struggled to attract numbers when looking at figures in general. What should be the best night of the college year and an event not to miss is being sidelined due to prohibitive costs. Largely, it is second and third years attending with freshers opting out. This is a worrying trend. Three years into top-up fees and we finally seem to have hit the generation who are here for degree only, accelerated no doubt by the recession. For the sake of the vitality of the college system, this is why a further rise in fees could be destructive.

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Holidays are coming: As Christmas approaches Winterfest kickstarts the festive season

- Ice rink in Alexandra Square
- Money being raised for Cumbria flood victims
- LUVU Voltage Project also has stalls at the festival

Steve Feekins

THE LUSU ORGANISED event began on Wednesday Week Nine, when the event's centrepiece, the ice-rink opened at 12pm. Skaters were able to enjoy the plastic 'ice' for all three days of Winterfest, to the background of festive music.

Andy Johnston, VP (FEDS), who played an important role in organising the event, was present in the Square throughout some of the week's events. "I went down at about 3pm [on the Wednesday] and people seemed to be really enjoying it," he said. "I heard that at the start we had a little bit of a problem with the 'ice' not being slippery enough, but then the issue was resolved in about ten to 15 minutes."

Any original difficulties with the ice were soon sorted out, and it soon seemed very popular with students. Lisa Chadwick was one of the first to try out the ice, saying: "In comparison to proper ice it's easier to stand up, but harder to move... it's actually slipperier than real ice!" She also mentioned how much she had enjoyed Winterfest, saying: "It's a great idea, and it's definitely something we'd want to see annually."

Johnston later went on to speak of his hopes that the event will become an annual occasion. "This year we've got a few new different ideas [for seasonal events] set up, and this one is great. There's no pressure on getting it through every term, as it's obviously Winterfest, so we can organise it far in advance," he said, adding: "As this is the first one, we're really setting a precedent for next year and it's something you can see growing year



Skating on thin ice: The LUSU organised event Winterfest has proven a big hit with students and staff alike, running for three days during Week 9 (Photo: John Porter)

on year."

On Wednesday evening, a brass band entertained a crowd gathered in Alexandra Square from 5pm. Chris Osborn, a member of the music society and one of the event co-ordinators, said: "I was walking down the spine and you could hear the band all the way over in Fylde! I'd say there was a pretty good crowd and everybody was enjoying themselves."

Entertainment took place every day of Winterfest, with the main focus being on Friday evening's 'Extravaganza', which included performances by societies such as LUDANS and the Debating Society.

The week also saw fundraising for the Cumbria Flood Recovery Fund and Cancer Care charities. A number of charitable stalls were set up by

CEEC's 'Insight into Project and Event Management' initiative, around the ice-rink, along with a stall set up by LUSU selling cakes and mulled wine.

The fundraising stalls present at Winterfest on Wednesday and Thursday and had a variety of ideas, including 'Pin the Nose on Rudolph', 'Guess the Teddy's Name' as well as selling various cakes and biscuits.

LUVU's Voltage Project also had several stalls at Winterfest on Thursday, with Heysham High School Sports College, Blackpool & Fylde College and Lancaster & Morecambe College all sending young entrepreneurs to represent their respective schools.

All three colleges had notable causes to which the fundraising contributed. Heysham High School Sports

College donated the proceeds of their stall to The Make A Wish Foundation, Blackpool & Fylde College contributed to the Blackpool Victoria Hospital, and Lancaster & Morecambe College donating to the school's own hardship fund, which allows students - who may not otherwise be able to afford it - to attend school trips.

Chris Nulty of Blackpool and Fylde College said of their stall: "We're selling stockings and hats which we've made, it's a bit cold but we're raising money for a good cause so we don't mind."

In addition to the stalls, the events also included 'The Great Big Giveaway' at the Sugarhouse on Friday evening, with over 15 companies contributing to the prizes, which concluded the week's events.

Christmas Party for students staying over vacation period

Hannah Price

FRIDAY 18 DECEMBER will see the Graduate Common Room transformed as it hosts the family Christmas party for students and their children over the Christmas period.

The party, organised by LUSU and the GSA (Graduate Students' Association), will give parents and children alike the chance to celebrate and enjoy the festive period.

Davey Garland, Social Secretary for the GSA said, "activities like this, for all students staying over the Christmas period is important, and gives an opportunity for them to mix with others and leave their possible isolation."

Although the party is still in the final stages of organisation, it promises to include festive food, music and exciting party games. There have also been rumours that Santa may pay a visit to deliver presents to the children.

What makes events like these so potent is the effect for parents as well as children. Aimed in particular to overseas students, the party will provide the opportunity to socialise and have fun at a time which can often be lonely and isolated. "It looks like it will be a good event for children and parents alike, as all too often we overlook our families on and off campus and focus on the traditional students" said Torri Crapper, VP EWD, who is organising the event in collaboration with the GSA.

Going by the success of last year's Christmas party, it is hoped that this year is even better. "It went down a storm last year...campus can be a lonely place, certainly for children over the Christmas period, so getting the chance to meet Santa and generally get that attention at a special time is important" said Garland. "Giving some fond memories is important for both parents and children during their stay here."

The party will start at 5pm on Friday 18 December in the Graduate Common Room, and is a must for parents and children to begin the fun and festive celebrations.

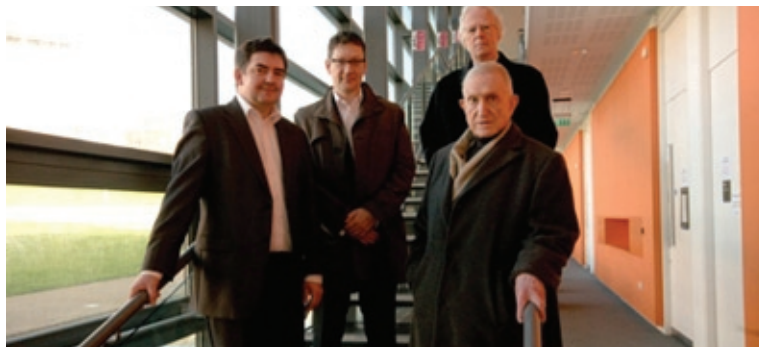
Original architects return to survey campus

Hannah Price

THE ORIGINAL ARCHITECTS of Lancaster University have returned to the campus 40 years after it was first opened.

During their visit, Professor Gabriel Epstein and Peter Hunter toured the campus and admired the developments that had taken place in their absence, as well as meeting with those architects currently working on the site.

Lancaster University was first established in 1964 with just two original colleges- Bowland and Lonsdale. The first on-campus student residences opened two years later in 1968. The original



Building links with the past: The original architects return.

campus design was based on the need for a sheltered and compact campus.

Buildings were strategically placed

to encourage the mixing of people from different faculties and interspersed with green spaces. Since that time, the

University has been transformed from a place with just 13 professors and 8 Library staff to having an annual income of £149 million and 2,250 staff.

On his return to Lancaster campus, Professor Epstein, now aged 91, said that the visit was 'a very magical experience'.

Over this 40 year period, the original campus has seen extensive changes and huge amounts of renovation; in the last five years alone, £300 million had been spent improving spaces for learning, recreation and accommodation. One of the newest and most noticeable of these transformations has been along the south side of Alexandra Square where the Learning Zone now stands; this was described by Hunter

as 'a modern edition which enhances a classic design'.

The Vice Chancellor of Lancaster University, Professor Paul Wellings, held a dinner in honour of these visiting guests. Peter Hunter said "I have so much admiration for what has been achieved since I was last here", adding that "the campus has been transformed and it is incredible that there are now 17,500 students".

Current plans for future development on the campus include the Waterside development for the Management School, a new building for the Lancaster Institute of Contemporary Arts, new facilities for the School of Health and Medicine and a new £20 million Sports Centre.

In Focus: JCR & LUSU elections

JCR votes surge despite slow start u

continued from front page

responded to these issues as they came in. Around 10 people needed to be sent new codes entirely, a tiny percentage in comparison to the total voting population.

Nevertheless Johnson felt that the JCR and LUSU Part-time Officer elections weren't the final test of the e-voting system. "Sabbatical Elections are where it will be really tested," he said, adding that "It was a big positive for the first time it was run."

Student opinion on the new system was divided, with some criticising the slowness of the system and the lack of atmosphere on campus and others embracing it wholeheartedly. One of the most popular aspects was the opportunity to view a candidate's manifesto and photograph before voting.

"The manifestos and optional information are good, it means people are making a more informed decision," one candidate said.

Despite an increase in voter turnout, though, only JCR elections had an observable increase in votes counted. The amount of votes cast in the LUSU Part-time Officer (formerly non-sabbatical) elections remained at the same level as the last election. Although the exact reason for this is unknown, students have said that they wished to vote for people they knew, and were uncertain what some Part-time Officers' roles actually were.

In the Part-time Officer elections the most contested position was Chair of Socials and Events Committee. With three candidates running, Matt Windsor was eventually elected with 474 votes.

Another well-contested position, Welfare Campaigns Officer, was one of the most closely fought. Pete Mac-

millan finished just 72 votes ahead of Hannah Sauer, a close margin for a campus-wide election. Chair of Elections was also won by a tight margin, with Samantha Johnson beating Mike Clarke by 89 votes. The largest margin was for the position of Student Trustee, with Tom Skarbek-Wazynski winning by almost 450 votes.

In the JCR elections, the most contested presidency was County, which had four candidates and was won by Matthew Saint. The most controversial, however, was Pendle; eventual winner David Kennedy was reprimanded for comments made against other candidates in his hust. Kennedy has run for college President for three consecutive years, finally triumphing this year despite being warned for his conduct.

Furness and Fylde's positions were both contested by two candidates, with Luke Anderson and George Gardiner winning respectively. Lonsdale will be the only college run by joint Presidents, Katie Kitney and Matthew Power, who also beat one other candidate to the position. Bowland, Cartmel and Grizedale's positions were all uncontested.

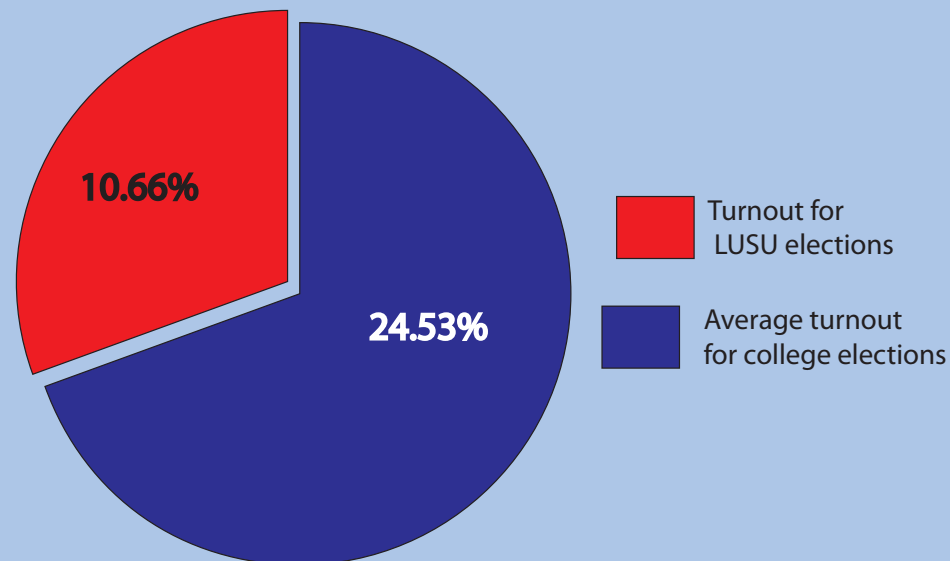
However, the closest battle of the day came from Cartmel. With two candidates running for Vice President, Jessica Horsfield and Michael Benson, Horsfield won the contest by just three votes, 159 to 156. The new JCR execs will take office from January.

In an attempt to promote elections to students across campus, Johnston, Goulding and JCR teams worked together to run a series of election parties in college bars on the Thursday night. JCR and Part-time Officer candidates were in the bars answering questions from students and a variety of activities were put on.



Elections breakdown for JCR and Union elections

College	Eligible voters	Voted	Turnout
Bowland	917	212	23.12%
Cartmel	1128	334	29.61%
County	1206	352	29.19%
Furness	888	240	27.03%
Fylde	956	232	24.27%
Graduate	4041	108	2.67%
Grizedale	1028	225	21.89%
Lonsdale	1231	447	36.31%
Pendle	1107	295	26.65%
LUSU elections	12541	1337	10.66%



Up, but union still left behind



Fylde held a 'Race to Elections' event, whilst Lonsdale put on a karaoke night, 'Lonnie Idol', and Furness threw an American-themed party. Many colleges invited their JCR candidates to make 30-second husts throughout the evening for the benefit of students who had not yet voted.

Students and JCR candidates liked the idea of the parties and felt they would be successful in increasing turnout. "I think it's brilliant, it gets loads of different people into the bar," said Victoria Buxton from Pendle.

Some felt, though, that an earlier event would make voter turnout even greater. "It would be better if it was held before voting started, maybe after hustings," commented Grizedale student Holly Johnson.

LUSU Officer candidates, however, struggled to get round all the bars in one evening. "It's a really good idea but it's a bit difficult for people running in campus-wide elections," said Sarah Newport, candidate for Part-time LGBTQ Officer. "You are going to miss a lot of people."

In addition, some college parties clashed with previously-arranged events. As well as an election party Grizedale Bar hosted a fundraiser for the British Heart Foundation organised by students from CEEC's Insight into Projects and Events Management course, and Cartmel was booked out for the Week Eight Comedy Night.

President of Cartmel JCR Robbie Pickles was disappointed that his college was unable to participate more fully in elections promotion. "For Cartmel next year the JCR and elections sub-committee will need to work more closely to ensure that it doesn't clash with an established LUSU event," he said.

Election Analysis

Liam Richardson
Editor

THE SHIFT TO E-voting was the subject of much conjecture and controversy. Now, with the first online election having been and gone, it is a good time to assess the process.

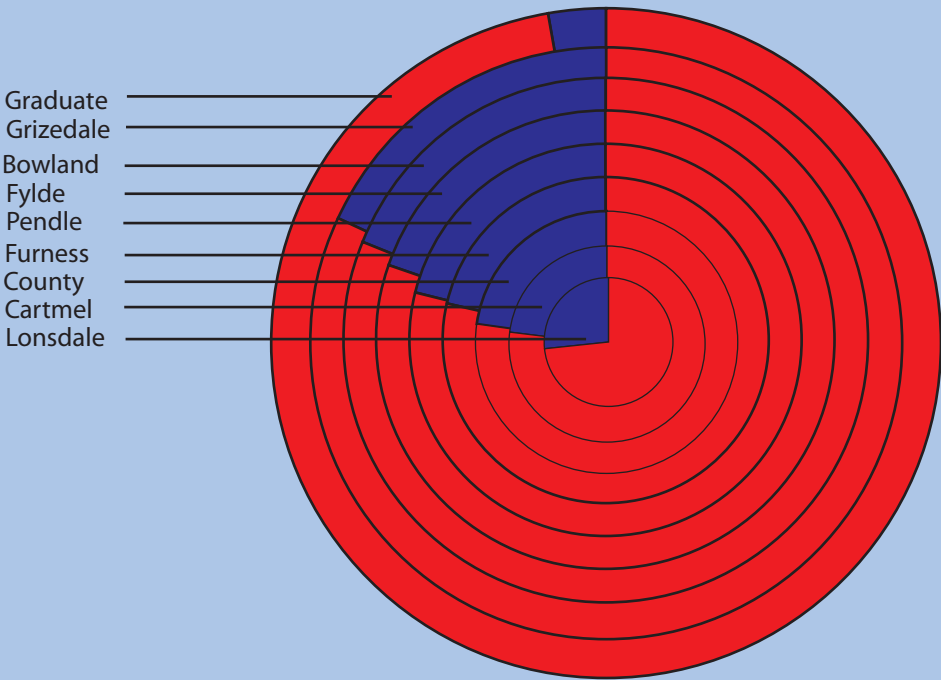
Firstly, as far as I am concerned, the success of any democratic process has to be judged on the number of people who are engaged and exercise their right to vote. The headline figure of over 3000 people voting and utilising their unique voter code via email highlights that the system does have appeal, making the elections much more accessible. Secondly, the idea of having events in Alexandra Square and in the college bars was inspired. Many fans of the paper ballot system complained that the buzz of visiting a polling booth would be lost but this was replaced by the unique atmosphere on both the Thursday and Friday nights. My tour of the college bars allowed me to see first hand that election fever was merely manifesting itself in new ways.

Another positive note is that this set of elections outlined just how important college JCRs are to ordinary students. Using Lonsdale as an example, a typically poor voting college, it succeeded in getting 1 in 3 of the overall college members to participate. Other colleges, whilst not matching Lonsdale's impressive tally also witnessed similar positive returns. However, although the headline figures are certainly eye-catching, it would be all too easy to sit back and think the elections were a complete success. The system was very slow on the first day of the election period and this will have fostered some negative perceptions of E-voting with some people no doubt disengaging from the whole process as a result.

Also, E-voting was a novelty this time round, something completely different and untested. There is now a real challenge to match or surpass that figure in the Sabbatical elections and it would be foolish of those involved to believe that is a simple challenge. Another worrying trend is that although JCR elections are more popular than ever, the LUSU Part-time officer elections were severely underwhelming. The recent review of the previous non-sabbatical structure was carried out to replace irrelevant officers and outmoded positions to make them more appealing to the average student. Hopefully, one year from now, these elections will have much-improved turnout to justify the changes that were made.

E-voting is the start of a brave new era for LUSU, and this positive start must be built upon without people getting carried away. However, for the critical voices, remember, it was the first time this system was used in a real election and it will take further elections to refine and perfect the new method of doing things.

Percent of those who voted in college elections



NEWS

Lancaster Band Week a success despite difficulties

Liam Kay

WEEK NINE SAW live bands performing non-profit gigs in on and off-campus venues, at events organised by a student from the University.

Lancaster Band Week included events at a variety of venues with the aim of providing live music entertainment for both students and the public.

The event did, however, meet many challenges in its organisation. The week of events, which was originally meant to benefit the charity SIFE Lancaster, faced major problems just one week before the live events began.

The plans for the Thursday - a live music night at the Sugarhouse - had to be rearranged to take place at Elements, due to the Sugarhouse pulling out of the event. This then meant that SIFE Lancaster pulled its backing from the events.

SIFE (Students In Free Enterprise) is an international non-profit organisation which works through higher education and businesses to encourage students to help the communities around them, whilst also learning skills that will benefit them in later life and in the world of business. The Lancaster University branch was founded in 2004, and is currently conducting 18 projects with University students in order to give them important skills for running a business.

Ben Robins, the student who organised the events, explained his motivation in organising the original events: "It started primarily from organising the Thursday gig [originally at the Sugarhouse] for the charity SIFE, then wondering if I couldn't just add a couple of days either side of it to drag it on for as long as I could."

"Wherever I can, I'll try to make entrance to places free; I want this to be more about an introduction to live music rather than pre-recorded PA music in nightclubs. Open access to the general public is important," said Robins, speaking before the week's events.

Bands such as Tape, Guernica and Boo Boo Kiddy Fonc were the first to perform at Revolution on Monday Week Nine, also making them the first live acts to perform at the Lancaster bar, something which Robins described as a "groundbreaking" event in the bar's history.

Performances on Tuesday at Lounge, Thursday at Elements, Friday at Pendle bar followed, with the week ending on the Saturday at Grizedale bar. The wide range of locations was chosen in order to showcase what Lancaster can offer in terms of live music.

"In terms of how I've been organising the week, it's been mainly a process of going to venues around town directly and finding out when [and] if they'd be able to accommodate a live band; I've had an even balance of success and failure on that front," Robins said of his success at organising the week.

"Considering the amount of problems I've had in organising the event, it's gone remarkably well," said Robins. "I hope to rectify these issues [of bands and venues pulling out] for Lancaster Band Week mark two, which I hope will take place next term."

Catered accomodation on the menu for next academic year

- **Cartmel, County and Lonsdale colleges to pilot scheme**
- **Catering to add nearly £1500 to student costs**
- **Only incoming students surveyed on plans**

Jack Smith

FROM NEXT YEAR, Lancaster will offer catered accommodation to first year students. It will be provided on a pilot basis in Cartmel, County, and Lonsdale colleges.

It is thought that prices will be in the region of £6.60 per day for two meals each day, breakfast and dinner. Based on this pricing, catered accommodation would add an extra £1405.80 on to the total accommodation cost for a year.

This substantial cost is an issue highlighted by Robbie Pickles, president of Cartmel JCR. "Although I do not have the figures to hand, I have heard it will be expensive. In Cartmel, we have entirely superior en-suite accommodation, so there will be a high cost for students who already find themselves paying around £100 a week."

"Cartmel has massive kitchens, so I think it's a strange choice as we are a college with plenty of provision already for self-catering", Pickles added, also saying, "There have been conversations between us [the JCR] and the SCR, but I think it was more a case of the decision being made and then us being asked for feedback, we didn't have an opportunity to say no to the idea."

It is expected that in Cartmel College, the emphasis for receiving catering will be on the Barker House Farm facility. It is unclear whether students will have the option of using other University Catering outlets, although



Can't cook, won't cook: Catered accomodation will result in students opting out from self-catering. The cost of the provisional two meals is expected to be in the region of £6.60 (Photo: Ben Robins)

it appears that at the original intention was to allow students to eat from a wide choice of food outlets on campus – highlighted by the fact that the scheme is being implemented with the assistance of David Peeks, of the Hospitality Division.

Hillary Simmons, Head of the College and Residences office, assures that the opinions of incoming students have been taken into consideration. She said: "There were face to face surveys at Open Days in September and an online survey went out to incoming first years early in September. The surveys explained that the University was considering a catering scheme and gave various options to gauge student interest. The demand was high, with about 50% of students expressing an interest."

Around four to five years ago, the University did offer a Dining Card

scheme, allowing students to prepay to purchase food on campus. Simmons adds that "about 20% of students used to opt in [to the Dining Card scheme], but students used to leave the scheme because they were housed in flats with students who were self catering – inevitably they made friends in their flat and wanted to eat with them. That is why the new scheme would set aside specific 'catered' houses."

"Prices are not yet finalised but the indicative price given in the survey for breakfast and dinner was £6.60 a day. This was the option which was most popular in the survey," said Simmons, confirming that "it is intended to introduce the scheme on a pilot basis for next year, with some houses in Cartmel, Lonsdale and County and also part of Ash House."

Current students seem to be satisfied with the self-catering accommo-

dation they already have and are dissuaded by the high price of the catered offering.

Annie Barsoum, a first year student in Lonsdale College, says: "I would not choose it at that price. Maybe I would consider it if it was cheaper."

Paul Hannah, also of Lonsdale, agrees: "we're already spending far too much on rent and it's going to go up again next year. Most people spend far less than £46 a week on food anyway. It's just another money-spinner."

Similarly, Robbie Pickles adds: "I would definitely not have chosen catered accommodation if I had the choice, especially as it is only breakfast and dinner. What if you turn up at your flat in freshers' week and seven people don't have catering? Do you convince them, or secretly not go at the expense of your parents who think you are getting the catering?"

Library considering extended opening hours in time for exam period

Charlotte Urban

AFTER YEARS OF requests from students the library is looking into extending its opening hours over the exam period in summer.

Head Librarian Clare Powne and library staff will shortly be having talks with the University to assess whether the extension could come into place this summer. Although it has not been determined exactly when the extended hours programme will be implemented, library staff feel confident that it will eventually be put in place. It seems likely, however, that it will not come into action until the Summer term of 2011.

Danny Ovens, LUSU VP (Aca-



demical Affairs), will also be involved in the discussions and supports the introduction of extended hours. "The thing that's most important is to take it one step at a time and go for extended opening hours during the summer term when people need it most," he said. "Even if it's just a few extra hours either side I think it will help people."

It has been suggested that if opening hours are extended the library will not be accessible around the clock but perhaps two or three hours later than its current closing time of midnight. However, as the newly established Learning Zone is currently open 24 hours it has been suggested that there may not be a need for the introduction of later library closing times.

Ovens feels, though, that both are

needed. "Even though the Learning Zone is up and running a lot of people still want to use the library, either because they're used to it or because its resources are better for them, so I still think there'll be a demand for it."

Before the extension can be enforced there are practicalities which need to be taken into consideration such as funding for the excess in lighting and heating utility bills, cleaning and the issue of security. As the library is an open facility it would be easy for a person not belonging to the university to come onto campus and enter after the departure of library staff. Ms. Powne suggested that this could lead to the eventual refurbishment of the library in order to make it a safer and more accessible facility.

Rent rise not as steep as initially feared

Sam Newsham
News Editor

CAMPUS RENT RISES next year have been set at just 1.9%, compared to an original suggestion of 5%.

Price rises for 2010-2011 were adjusted to take into account the university's overestimation of RPI (Retail Price Index, a measure of inflation) for 2009-2010.

RPI is just one factor affecting rent rises but is the most significant. Last year the overall rise was 5.25%, based on RPI levels in September 2008. However, as inflation has fallen consistently since then, 3.1% has been deducted from this year's rise. In effect students are being paid back for having paid too much last year.

The full breakdown of the rise includes 3% RPI, 1.5% from the contract between the university and UPP (University Partnership Programme), who own a considerable amount of accommodation on campus, and 0.5% for utilities. The 3.1% deduction from last year leaves 1.9%, which equates to a rise of £1.80 per week for superior en-suite rooms, the most expensive accommodation.

Whilst the contractual 1.5% is fixed and will make part of the rent increase until 2013, the remaining 0.4% of the 1.9% total comes from utilities usage



and is open to negotiation. Michael Payne, LUSU President and one of the four key figures involved in price setting, is adamant that any utilities-related increase is as small as possible.

"I've asked for some more figures about the utilities charges to make sure that that 0.4% is absolutely as small as it can be considering all of the energy-saving initiatives that are going on at the moment in the students' union and university," he said. "I'm told that the volume of energy consumption has declined but that the price per unit of energy has increased." Payne feels that

energy consumption is key to keeping rent increases to a minimum in future.

Although Payne admits that the 1.9% increase is 'not too unreasonable', opinions differ amongst JCR Presidents.

"I welcome the drop in rise, as anything's better than 5%, but it's still not OK to just say it's less than it's going to be," said Robbie Pickles, Cartmel's President. "Is it just a way of making money out of students who don't have it?"

"It's not ideal but I was expecting higher," added Chaz Ginn, President of Grizedale. "Raising it at all is incon-

siderate but at least they've kept it to a minimum."

In addition to the overall percentage increase plans have been laid to differentiate more heavily between standard and superior accommodation. Many of the university-owned standard rooms are in need of refurbishment and are, according to Payne, 'dilapidated and poor quality'.

Under the new plan, there will be a slight further increase, around £1, in UPP-owned accommodation rent. This includes all rooms on Alexandra Park and the County and Grizedale town-

houses. There will also be a decrease in rent of around £6 for university-owned accommodation, leading to a planned difference of £8 per week.

Payne supports the proposed differential. "I think it's a good principle," he said. "It allows students to make a financial budgetary choice – do they want good quality accommodation for an extra £8 or would they prefer the extra money?"

Ginn, however, disagrees. "I think that's awful. We're lucky in Grizedale in that we have the option of both superior and standard," she said. "There are a lot of students who will be outpriced and now might have to get a part-time job to support themselves."

Whilst agreeing that the move could be seen as students in standard accommodation being subsidised by those in superior, Payne feels instead that the move will prevent UPP accommodation from becoming oversubscribed.

"When the university took on the UPP stock they pitched the pricing levels wrong, or weren't willing to drop the level of their own accommodation for fear that everyone would pick UPP accommodation," he said.

Given that the contract between the university and UPP allows UPP a proportion of the rent, too many students choosing superior accommodation would affect the university's budget and investment into its facilities.

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Temperatures rise over pharmacy relocation

Jenni Day

THE UNIVERSITY PHARMACY is caught in the middle of a struggle over its location, with its owners unable to make a compromise with university management on terms.

In an attempt to provide a better service to students, the university has offered the pharmacy the opportunity to move to a more central location on campus, where the current LUVU office is situated. However, the pharmacy declined, preferring to remain isolated at the far end of north campus in Bailrigg House.

Whilst both parties agree that the pharmacy needs to move to a more accessible location the terms under which the university wants it to move are not viable to maintain the running of this business. Without the move the problems of inaccessibility, lack of custom and frustration of both patients and health care officials remain.

The pharmacy's owners, Eion Martin and Alasdair Kenny, have been in talks with both the university and Bailrigg Health Centre about changing their location. They are aware of the benefits of being in a more prominent position yet have been frustrated by unrealistic terms made by the university. This has been an ongoing battle since 2003 with both the university and the owners try-



Out on a limb: The pharmacy is difficult to get to, located away from the main campus (Photo: Ben Robins)

ing to find a solution to suit everyone.

When asked to comment on the situation, Martin told SCAN that "the terms were unreasonable. The University wanted to take a cut of our turnover, not profit but turnover, and wanted to increase the rent which would have ended up killing us. It would have been as if I was paying to go to work."

Martin went on to reveal that a break clause had been written into the agreement which allowed the university to kick the pharmacy out with only six months' notice. 'Although the uni-

versity claimed they would not use this clause, why [else] would they write it into the agreement?' he said. "Had we kitted out the new location, [at a cost] of £50,000, and then been told that we had to leave, we would have had nowhere to go."

Mark Swindlehurst, Director of Facilities, spoke out in defence of the university's terms. "The current location is not accessible and is not supportive of the wider University. It is hidden away and was originally located there as the medical centre itself was in Bail-

rigg House," he said. "The pharmacist should have moved when the medical centre was redeveloped in 2001. This did not happen and we are still keen to explore how this relocation can now take place. We would welcome any further discussions with the pharmacist."

The issues relating to a move are complex. Firstly, rent would increase, something the doctors' surgery does not have to worry about since their rent is paid by the health authority. In addition the pharmacy receives a small grant without which it would not sur-

vive. When this runs out in 2011 the pharmacy will have to close since it will no longer be able to support itself.

"It is a nice little business, but it is never going to pull in the big bucks," said Martin.

Lynn Jones, Practice Director of the health centre, is in favour of a relocation, believing that the pharmacy and surgery should be under one roof. "I would like the pharmacy to be closer to the surgery since it is a long way for sick patients to go, and is hard to find particularly when it gets dark," she said.

Jones continued by saying that meetings had been held to discuss a takeover by the health centre in order to improve the service provided to patients. However, these meetings have come to a stop, creating the feeling that nothing is moving.

Pharmacy employee Diane Waite said: "I like the present location, yet if we were more central then we would certainly have more custom. Some students haven't got a clue where the pharmacy is after two or more years of living on campus."

This feeling was reiterated by second year student Sophie Unsworth who said: "When you are ill the last thing you want to do is walk all the way up to the pharmacy. It should be nearer the doctors'. Sometimes it is easier to go into town and pick up a prescription than walk to Bailrigg."

Christmas Vacation Health Information

24th December 2009 – 4th January 2010

If you are staying in Lancaster over the Christmas Holiday period remember to find a flu friend.

If you develop flu like symptoms call the pandemic flu line on **0800 1 513 100** or go on line <https://www.pandemicflu.direct.gov.uk/>

Opening times of the GP Practice on campus and at King Street, the anti-viral collection point located in Dalton Square pharmacy are provided.



GP Practice Opening Hours

Bailrigg Health Centre on Campus will be closed from 6pm on 23rd December 2009 and reopens on 4th January 2010.

King Street Surgery located at 38 King Street in Lancaster will be open on 24th, 29th, 30th and 31st of December 2009. Tel: **01524 541651**

All students registered at the Health Centre on campus are also registered with the King Street Practice and are able to use either surgery.

NHS Direct

This service is open 24 hours on **0845 4647** or on the web at www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/

Anti-viral Collection Point (ACP) Opening Times

The ACP is located at Dalton Square Pharmacy Tel: **01524 32310** and the opening times are as follows:

24th December - to 6pm	29th December - 8am to 10.15pm
25th December - 10am to 1pm	30th December - 8am to 10.15pm
26th December - 10am to 1pm	31st December - Open to 6pm
27th December - Closed	1st January - Closed
28th December - 12pm to 3pm	

Bowerham Pharmacy (on Bowerham Road) is the designated out of hours pharmacy when Dalton Square Pharmacy is closed.

Social scene improving at Lancaster

Lauren Hirst

DESPITE THE ECONOMIC climate, student nightlife in Lancaster is booming. Lancaster University Student Union's nightclub, the Sugarhouse, has witnessed a growth in both income and attendance in comparison to this time last year.

This term, Sugarhouse attendance records have been demolished. Friday Fury, an event involving a bar crawl around campus which finishes in the nightclub, achieved the highest attendance on record in Week Three with over 1,800 students through the doors. This record stood for just two weeks until 2,000 students turned up on Saturday 31st October to join in with the Halloween festivities. The huge success of the Halloween night has paved the way for an entire Halloween weekend to be planned next year.

Andy Johnston, LUSU VP (Finance, Events, Democracy and Societies), commented on the Sugarhouse's success: "It is quite evident that a lot of clubs in town are closing [Walkabout Night Club ceased trading last month due to financial difficulties] and finding it really hard. It's not the fact that the Sugarhouse isn't finding it hard too, because we're hit with the same problems as other clubs are. It's just the fact that

we have got a good student base, a really loyal fan base."

With weekly socials taking place, the Sugarhouse is able to build direct relationships with students as well as

organising meetings with JCR officers to generate feedback from the student community so they can meet expectations and create the right service.

When asked why he believes the

Sugarhouse's popularity is on the rise, Johnston stated: "It's just a mix of different things. We've really struck a cord this year with really good value but also really good entertainment and atmos-

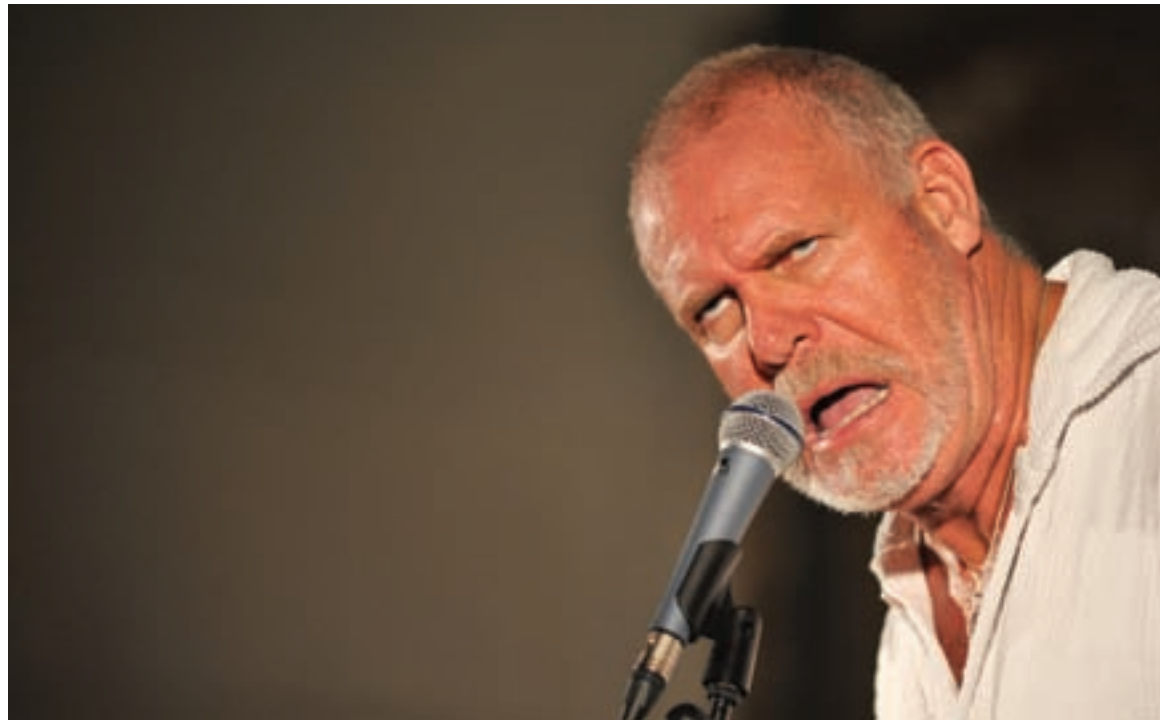
phere."

Events on campus have proved popular with Lancaster students too. The Comedy Central Nights, hosted in Cartmel Bar, allow Lancaster students to enjoy comedy from all over the UK. Tickets for the events frequently sell out with up to 400 students in attendance each night. Next term, the comedy nights are to be continued by popular demand with a bigger star joining the line-up in week 5.

This term also saw the launch of an International Night in Fylde Bar, which was established to problems with international students engaging with the university lifestyle. The night welcomed over 400 international students with plans to make the event into a monthly social next term.

In contrast to this, college Christmas balls have had trouble selling all their tickets; some are struggling to meet the minimum number required to cover costs. With some colleges' tickets costing up to £40, it seems that students are not willing to spend such a high price for one night of entertainment.

With just one week left before students depart for the festive season, the Sugarhouse has made sure to end the Michaelmas term in high spirits. On Friday 11th December, Sugarhouse will be hosting a Festive Snow Party followed by the legendary 'Drink The Bar Dry' on Saturday 12th December.



Comedy gold: The comedy nights have been a hit in Barker House Farm, whilst the Sugarhouse has seen takings rise and more people come in at the door (Photo: Fred Thomas)

WEDNESDAYS

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Back 2 Skool

Commencing 7th October

- Week 1 - Back to Skool**
Wednesday 7th October
- 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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Alex Harris

Comment Editor

Improved technology has resulted in overproduced musical artists

The urgency and authenticity which inspired Dylan and Lennon is missing from the charts today

It's generally accepted that the 'Day the Music Died' was a plane crash which occurred on February 3rd 1959, which resulted in the simultaneous deaths of three much-adored musical icons: Buddy Holly, Richie Valens and The Big Bopper. Tragic though this incident was, music was most certainly alive, or at least ready to be revived. The Beatles were yet to form, Led Zeppelin had never been heard of and Jimi Hendrix had only just been bought his first guitar.

The three or four decades since were the best time for music. Black Sabbath and Deep Purple gave birth to a genre, Pink Floyd released 'Dark Side of the Moon' and Nirvana got the chance to release 'Nevermind', effectively killing off the pretentious flamboyancy of 80s hair metal (which, to be fair, had its moments). In my opinion, the real day the music died was a much closer time in 1998, when Cher's 'Believe' dared to use the relatively new technology of the auto-tune.

If you don't know what auto-tune is, you've definitely heard it. It's that overly-synthesised sound that makes



singers' voices that are slightly off-key suddenly jump back to the correct pitch. Although it was used fairly sparingly in Cher's case to add an aural gimmick to a fairly terrible and cheesy song, producers ran wild with the concept of creating music that was no longer contingent on artistic capability or individual virtuosity. Instead, mediocre or even downright terrible singers could be transformed on record into a mathematically precise robovocalist

that could conserve their energy for their dance routines and their cash for advertising. Less time spent recording, more time spent packaging.

It was fairly obvious at the time where the logical conclusion of all this studio manufacturing would end up. A large portion of the mainstream charts nowadays is rife with overproduced cacophony in which real, impassioned musicianship has been replaced with drum loops and the clicks and whirrs

of whatever the producer felt like doing that day. It used to be such that the producer would compliment the artist whom he or she was producing. Now, the producer has become the artist.

A lot of the problem is the cost of good musicians. It's no secret that the music industry is a much less lucrative business than it once was. For a thrifty record company looking for a way to maximise profits, it simply makes sense to hire a cabaret performer to mime lyrics over a backing track programmed by a single person, when the vocals can be touched up later after a single take. The alternative is to employ expensive session musicians and spend hours and hours working on that ever elusive 'perfect take'.

But then what is the result? The one thing that seems to permeate throughout all the great music of the last few decades, and certainly the 60s, was a sense of urgency about what the artist was trying to say. When listening to John Lennon's 'Imagine', it really feels like he couldn't have waited any longer to deliver his tirade against the religious and political tragedies of his time. Such was the passion of a mixture of an op-

timistic cultural revolution, great songwriting and great musicianship. But crucial to the emotional quality of the music itself was the translation of the artist's message through the recorded performance, with all its imperfections only serving to add depth and charm to the overall feeling. Don't believe me? Consider this: how would Bob Dylan have sounded through auto-tune?

Maybe I'm just a sucker for some kind of marketing strategy that likes to pretend that things were 'so much better back then', but it really does feel like in recent years music has been steadily losing something that we really cannot afford to let go. If the trend continues and our singles and albums charts are continually filled up with music that emphasises bland performances, gimmicky sexuality and computerised musicians, there probably won't be another Lennon and McCartney. It's a sad thing to consider that, had The Beatles been around today, there is a chance modern record companies wouldn't give them a second hearing. The thought of that scenario having actually happened and not knowing about it, is genuinely depressing.



Michael Payne

LUSU President

Partnership, collaboration and external funding make a jolly good Christmas

Winterfest highlights that not everything students unions do is necessarily gloomy

Advent calendars surely lay on the shelves of most students, the days are colder and the nights are longer; all signs that Christmas is well and truly on its way. But this year an even bigger sign of this is the arrival of Winterfest 2009.

Winterfest 2009 is untried, untested, new and innovative. It is the product of creativity, innovative thinking and partnership bids for external funding from LUSU and the university. But this project was truly brought to life by the students performing at it, the pupils from local sixth form colleges and schools who made and sold festive product to raise money for charities and the dedicated LUSU staff who have worked tirelessly to make sure everyone can enjoy a skate on the ice. (or a cautious sidle round the edge of the rink if you're like me).

The truly impressive thing about showcasing our campus in the way Winterfest has is the involvement

by the local community, staff and students that has been attracted as a result. Local press coverage on radio and in newspapers demonstrated the delight from Lancastrians when our university reaches out and delivers for those who live in the area as well as those who live and work at the university.

Concerted efforts by LUSU, supported by the university Facilities department mean that Winterfest is only the first in a series of seasonal events to hit Lancaster University in the coming year. Spring will see student societies and hopefully university staff involvement in a Societies' Festival; showcasing a range of talents within our institution. But by far the jewel in the crown of our programme of events will be Roses 2010. Roses is set to be the biggest event it ever has been and with true partnership and collaboration with the university, along with external funding we have secured we will truly be able to deliver a stellar, sporting pinnacle

for the North West in 2010.

The political landscape may look gloomy for students, the advent of a general election in the next six months may seem a bore to many studying at university and the repeated news coverage of recession, recession, recession and difficult a graduate jobs market may be depressing, but Winterfest 2009 proves that Students' Unions are about much more than political campaigning and bearing bad news.

The scale and professionalism of Winterfest was enough to rival any festive celebrations in city centres celebrations across the U.K. If it were not for events similar to Winterfest the talent of our students would otherwise be hidden under a bushel. Were it not for opportunities and events like Winterfest; orchestrated by students and supported and jointly delivered by enthusiastic staff, the direct benefits of a Students' Union may be solely perceived as a 10% discount with your SU card.

Students' Unions are facilitation organisations, they are about saying yes to you as students. However strange, unique, bizarre or unconventional your ideas are we will always work to provide a realistic option and deliver what you, the membership wants. We shouldn't be about always saying no, we aren't about denying students opportunities to be creative or get involved and we aren't just about politics and politicking. Students' Unions must have many strings to the bow if they are to be relevant, representing and sustainable in the years ahead. So the challenge is set; if you have any ideas, suggestions or otherwise over the Christmas break come and share them with your Students' Union.

With Christmas Balls, society and AU club Christmas parties and the thought of spending some well deserved time to relax over the vacation. It simply remains to say – Happy Christmas from LUSU and have a blooming good New Year.



Will McDonagh

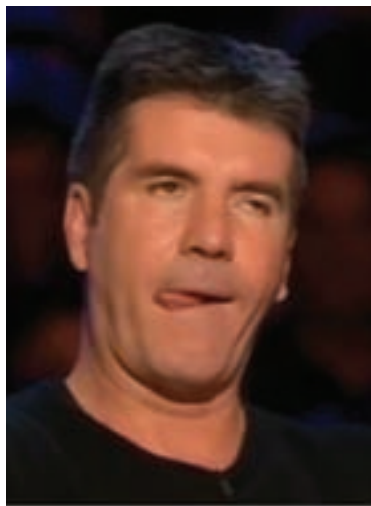
The X-Factor winners are the TV executives

Contestants are merely pawns in network ratings battles with their personal welfare held in low regard

The idea of showcasing 'talent' has been embedded within our psyche from an early age, from the days where you would be crammed into your stifling primary school gymnasium to listen to fellow classmates sing out of tune to a crackling CD player, or watch them fumble through a rather dodgy and scarily slutty dance routine, or painfully watch a rather awkward fall from an attempted back-flip gone wrong. Those were the innocent good old days, such performances were enjoyed by all involved, and it was harmless and sincere, not forced and unhealthy.

Such innocent days seem to be no more, overtaken by the rise of reality television and its hungry thirst for 'raw talent'. With shows such as The X Factor and Britain's Got Talent dominating our mass media each and every week, it begs the question – is the classic talent show in reality dead, replaced by nothing more than a corporate manufacturing machine?

At the moment The X Factor overshadows many of our media outlets. Devouring the weekend television schedule, mapping its stories across various forms of media, as well as giv-



ing birth to a countless supply of internet resources – both in support and opposition to the show's contestants, the X Factor pits a group of unknowns in front of millions to showcase their 'talent' every week. Don't get me wrong – I do believe the show harbours some amazing talent and contestants that hold great potential for the future, but it is the exploitation of these people that de-brands this self-proclaimed

'talent competition'.

The undeniable stars of this year's competition were the lovable 'Jedward' twins, christened with their title by the large legion of fans supporting them and the press itself. They were two innocent teenage boys whose dream of fame landed them on the X-Factor stage. There was just one problem for these two: they were talentless. On the UK's biggest self proclaimed talent show. For me this just doesn't seem to add up. But the worst thing was the backlash received from many viewers. Greeted with boos from the audience on a weekly basis, and targeted with soul destroying campaigns across the internet and newspapers. Had it not been for the optimism these two shared then their successful story might have been a much less promising one.

Bound by an eighty page contract contestants simply become pawns in a ratings battle between competing networks and executives, who have taken the heart of a lovable genre of 'talent shows' and made it into an unstoppable manufacturing machine.

The effect of this on the people itself can be seen in Susan 'SuBo' Boyle, who dreamed a dream of performing her

music to the world, the effects of such nearly defeating her in the process. She sunk into a nervous depression, and watching her onstage it was apparent that the growing demands that had been violently and suddenly dropped onto her shoulders was becoming too much to bear. Because the media, and we the public, treat such contestants with an unhealthy obsession, removing any protection of privacy from their lives. We forget that we are meant to be enjoying a talent show, and these people are just like you and me, and the second we give them any sort of risen status, we open them up to the vicious onslaught that is the showbiz obsessed world we live in, and for many this is simply too much. I don't know about you, but I don't enjoy watching a ten year old girl disintegrate into tears under the frightening demands put upon her to sing a song that she loves.

I say bring back the stuffy school gymnasium, even if it means having to watch yet another mimed rendition of 'S Club Party', because at least those days were fun and safe, and the world was our oyster already, without having to chase fame on some corporate talent show.

Is The Masterplan such a good idea?

Years of chaos and upheaval but have new builds addressed the key issues writes **Sam Newsham**

It is six years since I first came to Lancaster as an undergraduate. In that time I have witnessed the university grow and change beyond all recognition. I have seen the building of the Infolab and the migration of Cartmel and Lonsdale to Alexandra Park. I have seen countless buildings change their names and new accommodation blocks pop up by the dozen. Throughout disruption and chaos there has been just one reassuring constant: the presence of building works. Successions of students have come and gone but the scaffolding remains.

The idea behind the upheaval is simple: the pursuit of the Masterplan. What is the Masterplan? For the uninitiated, the Masterplan is a ten-year strategy for improving the look of the university whilst opening campus out; reducing its feeling of restraint.

Running from 2007 to 2017, the Masterplan began with the Learning Zone and the eco-residences in County and Grizedale and continues with the refurbishment of County South and the Waterside development.

With an abundance of shiny new buildings everywhere we look, it's easy for us to be dazzled. If we're not careful the gleam of the latest additions can distract us from what's been left behind.

Take Bowland Bar, for example. Renovation of Lancaster's oldest bar has been pushed back twice. For reasons of finance, of course; the university is reluctant to spend the £1m it promised after bankrolling the creation of the Learning Zone.

And then there's accommodation. Refurbishment of rooms on campus has been an ongoing task for the university and its bedfellow UPP for several years now. Spun out in phases, the fourth and last to be completed was the building of the eco-residences. A fifth phase, which would have seen all accommodation leased off to UPP, was shelved twelve months ago. Like Bowland Bar, Phase Five was a victim of the recession.

As anyone who has had opportunity to compare old and new university accommodation will agree, refurbishment is desperately needed. All that can be said now, though, is that the university hopes to bring everything up to standard in the next six years.

It goes without saying that the university's finances are many-layered and complex; money saved on one project will not automatically go towards another. That said, one can't help but compare the vast sums spent on Lancaster's public face – £3m on the Learning Zone, £10m on new performance space for LICA – with the projects that fell through and wonder how the decisions are made.

With a decade and a half of building work behind it, we have to ask if the disruption the Masterplan will cause is worth the eventual gain. It may provide us with some fantastic facilities but I can't shake the feeling that it's a series of shiny sticking plasters over a much deeper problem.

We need to realise that the future of the planet is the issue that effects our generation the most

If you took a poll of the issue most concerning the general public today, you would be likely to discover that the issue of global warming and the destruction of our environment ranks very highly amongst their chief concerns. People have come to realise the damage we are doing to our planet and the common viewpoint is that more must be done to recover from the brink of devastation. Even the coverage of the climate change conference in Copenhagen tells how vital this issue is, with the world's leaders scrambling to reach a consensus.

However, whilst this issue is rightly assuming pre-eminent status on a national and local stage across the country, more must still be done. This must start from home and from the workplace, meaning we must first look how to further the positive work done on campus by the variety of interest groups that exist here; most prominently the Students' Union and the university.

Whilst great strides have been made on our campus, more must still be done. The subject of paper wastage is one that has been raised time and time again. It must be a prerogative of both LUSU and the university to reduce the amount of paper used on campus. How many times have you been given print-outs of power-point presentations in a lecture or received leaflets about a club night from people on campus? Neither

is necessary but both are utilised frequently as methods of communication to the student population..

There has to be more done. Simple things like having presentations and meeting agendas online can help reduce the amount of paper used. Even encouraging people to use dictaphones in lectures could dramatically reduce the amount of paper that is utilised in the process of note-taking, allowing for a huge reduction in the usage of paper at Lancaster.

But paper is not the only issue that needs to be dealt with. How many times have you seen kitchen lights and lecture lights left on overnight? We must all take a greater responsibility for energy consumption and look to, where possible, ensure that energy is not wasted.

However, whilst you may feel that these are relatively minor issues, there are huge local issues that need to be dealt with, namely how the university gains its energy. You may recollect plans last year to build two turbines to power the university; providing green, sustainable energy to power the entire campus. It is imperative that they are built as soon as possible; whilst arguments can be made for their impact on local bird populations and the scenery, they are far outweighed by the reduction of emissions that they would bring to the university. And it would be rec-

ognition of the potential we have if we can harness sustainable energy on a local basis to reduce our dependence on non-sustainable pollutant energy sources.

Whilst it is congratulatory that the university has invested so much in new buildings, it must ensure that all future building works are as environmentally neutral as can possibly be. We must, as an academic institute, show that we are at the forefront of developments in environmentally-positive technology and utilise it to the best of our abilities. We must prove that the environment is at the top of our agenda if we are to convince our governments to do the same at the Copenhagen summit.

Business, politics, architecture and art are all temporary. Whilst their effects can be felt over many years, eventually they are all superseded by other ideas, other ways of doing things, new traditions to fit the time they belong to. The environment, and the planet, will always be important to mankind. The importance of the environment cannot be understated: it is the one important issue that our generation must overcome by any means necessary. We have the power to influence not just the generations that will appear after us but the entire future of mankind. We must accept this challenge on both a wider and a private level if our species is to survive the next millennium.



Liam Kay

Comment Editor

Lancaster University and LUSU have made great strides on being environmentally friendly but more needs to be done



Robbie Pickles

Cartmel JCR President

Pharmacy location out on a limb

Is a trek across campus too much to ask of sickly students?



good health, is a small, unmarked blue door set into the back of what looks like a private mansion.

It has to be said, the actual pharmacists are very friendly. After braving the risk that you might burst in on a long lost family eating their dinner in the eerily old-fashioned pharmacy

building, the overall experience is fairly pleasant. Certainly it bears up in comparison to most pharmacy visits, which you wouldn't expect much more from than an exchange of money and perhaps a friendly smile. However, the effort required to get there does not justify the experience.

Let us imagine you are given the following scenario: you are ill and feeling like you need to stay in bed forever. You have no desire to leave your room whatsoever. However, you are told that the way to feel better is to go out into the cold and walk around for much longer than you can possibly bear. Would you do it? Of course not. Most students won't walk long distances at the best of times, let alone when they are feeling their worst.

How the pharmacy is commercially successful I will never know. Why they have chosen to remain in their location, rather than move closer to campus, remains a puzzle. Can the

pharmacy owners possibly think that inaccessibility means profitability? Maybe, against the odds, some students actually enjoy the inappropriately long walk. More likely, they have no choice. It is all very well to suggest that students do make the walk to the pharmacy when they are in desperate need of drugs, but does this mean they want to? They hardly have very much choice and there is no rival nearer to campus to demonstrate the clear lack of sense and planning that the Bailrigg pharmacy presents.

At a time when universities are focussing more and more on student satisfaction, it seems crazy that Lancaster have ignored the constant calls by students for a pharmacy closer to home. Obviously this move will not happen overnight, but I would ask University management please, for the sake of ill people who genuinely want to feel better, sort out this dire error and bring us the provision we deserve.

Politicians may be bad, but is the general population really that much better

Our elected officials may inspire almost universal hatred, yet many are in it for the right reasons writes

Tom Leach

In this place we call the world people just seem to hate certain things; sex offenders, people on strike who do an easy job, hearing about other people's non-sexual dreams, poverty, overly enthusiastic dogs to name but a few. Yet there seems to be a unifying, common enemy we are all united against: politicians.

I remember the fine day when I took my driving test; the whole world was in front of me (and technically behind me, the world is a ball you see), yet my dreams were shattered. The examiner asked me 'so what are you going to do at University?' 'Politics' I answered. 'Politics? I hate politics!' Turns out he simply had an all-encompassing hatred for politicians. If that anecdote isn't enough to prove everyone hates politicians (and it should be) I might mention the names Lincoln and Kennedy; idealists killed simply for being the most famous and obvious politicians of their day (somebody neglected to tell them that social movements are bigger than Presidents). Furthermore, when John Lennon was writing songs about love nobody even thought about shooting him, but as soon as he writes 'Imagine' and decides to sleep through the Vietnam War (or something like that) all of a sudden he gets shot. Coincidence? Impossible.

But boys and girls of the world, hatred towards politicians is totally the wrong emotion. Despite making mistake after mistake, I'm convinced that most British politicians are in it to make the world a better place. And if we were going to hate people who had the right intentions but make mistakes, we'll have to start hating a lot more people; the trainers at Sea World who looked after Shamu, Thierry Henry, and yes ladies and gentlemen, even myself, Tom Leach.

People are always on about how evil politicians are with the expenses row, but the entire population is far more corrupt. Shed loads of people claim benefits they don't need, or if they're given the wrong change they don't correct the shop assistant, or even lie on their tax forms. I do far worse things for before 9am every day.

The only people who ever seem to achieve what they actually want in politics are people with particularly awful intent. Look at Joseph Stalin; he was ugly, uncharismatic, and disrespected by all the other players in the Politburo but got everything he wanted out of politics.

So here's our choice, the world is either made worse by people trying to make it worse, or people trying to make it better. At least people trying to make it better, make it worse at a slightly slower rate. We're probably going to get hit by a comet sooner or later anyhow.



Sarah Newport

LGBTQ Social Sec

Q Week will highlight minorities within minorities

Week nine saw LUSU's LGBT association change to LGBTQ, adding Queer to the membership, a decision which was passed in a constitutional review last term. Other policy changes included removing the need to define your sexuality or gender identity to hold a committee position, and the addition of two Open Place campaigns and welfare officers who can represent any MSAGI (Minority Sexuality and Gender Identity) student. This broadening of the LGBTQ's membership was welcomed by many students as "long overdue" and "a definite step in the right direction". However, some people have been left confused over the idea of Queer as an identity, or still associate it with homophobia. To counter this, Q week events are happening throughout week ten, providing information, socials and campaign events following the recent changes and allow people to express their views on the name change and understand the motives behind it.

So, what is 'Queer'? In essence, it's exactly that question. It can be used as a self-definition term by anyone who doesn't want to define into any of the other MSAGI boxes, who doesn't feel that the existing labels accurately describe their gender or sexuality status, or who believes that their status is fluid or changeable. It's supposed to leave you guessing, not let you feel you can 'sum up' the person by their MSAGI status.

But why all the fuss over a letter?

What is its importance to the LGBTQ association? Well, in April the NUS LGBT annual conference voted to include Queer in the defined membership, but turned down an amendment to add it to the acronym, proving once again that even liberation groups still struggle in the face of minorities within minorities. This is a phenomenon not exclusive to the LGBTQ association; on our own campus, dyslexic students have access to excellent provisions for exams, whilst wheelchair users struggle to access the Learning Zone. Perhaps we're terrified of biting off more than we can chew. Perhaps the economic crisis has forced us into a position where our budgets will only go so far, and inevitably someone gets forgotten. But let's not forget, Trans representation only fought its way into the LGB in recent years, and since then numerous universities have managed to overhaul their provisions, implementing gender-neutral toilets and Trans equality statements.

The LGBTQ will attempt to tackle this throughout Q Week. The Q week events will include the LGBTQ association handing out information and answering questions in Alexandra Square throughout the week, and a Coming Out Workshop on Wednesday. LGBTQ students will be able to share their experiences of Coming Out, discuss reactions they've encountered, and find support and ideas if they're preparing to come out to friends or family over the Christmas holidays and beyond. This is a prospect which especially concerns those

first-year LGBTQ students who have had their first experiences of an open, accepted LGBTQ community since coming to university, and may find the transition back home difficult. Friday night will see the LGBTQ association Anti Hate Crime fundraising bar crawl across campus, helping to promote the work of and collect donations for 'Broken Rainbow', a charity providing support for LGBTQ victims of domestic violence. A talk on Queer theory is also planned during the week to clarify more of the issues brought up by the association's name change.

This student union's welfare groups are about individual empowerment and shared opportunities; for every individual and shared by all. The worn-out excuses of officer remits and budgetary constraints have hindered real representation for too long. Following the infamous part-time officers review, incoming officers have been warned that their remits will broaden. Campaigns needn't be overly expensive when you've got people power. And students' university experiences must not be damaged for the very uniqueness we should be celebrating. In becoming the LGBTQ, the association has opened the door to the unacknowledged, the undefined and the indefinable. 'Q' isn't just about Queer, it's a move towards opening up to our full union membership and a public statement that there is a place for them no matter who they are or whom they love. LUSU isn't there yet for minorities within minorities. But we're making steps.

Queer is not a derogatory term. It is a word for those who do not want to be defined to leave their status ambiguous

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,

As an American student only here for a term, it's been quite a refreshing experience reading SCAN. What first caught my eye was the edition regarding the merger of the Political Science, Religion, and Philosophy. One of the pieces had the phrase "Heads should roll" in it, and I was shocked to see that title. Another piece that I enjoyed was seeing two interviewees argue with each other in the front page article, one of whom being the LUSU President. Why, you may ask, do I find this refreshing?

Two years ago, a good friend of mine raised money for impregnated bug nets for families in Africa. By himself, he raised \$1,300, which, at \$10/net, is 130 nets. This was much more than any of the so-called "advocacy" groups on the campus of my home university had done, and I wanted to write a Letter to the Editor expressing my frustrations with these groups. However, I was told not to by my friends because I may "upset people". Ultimately, I gave in to my friends' advice, and didn't write the letter. If I would have written the letter, I am fairly confident that it would have been rejected by the editors for fear of "upsetting people".

In conclusion, I just wanted to say thank you to you and everyone who makes SCAN possible, including the students who voice their opinion in your fine paper. Articles and honesty such as the ones I have had the pleasure of reading in SCAN are never seen in my campus newspaper. As such, I will write a Letter to the Editor about my experiences with SCAN once I return home. Please keep up the wonderful work, and keep encouraging students to write in, because not every university campus has this freedom.

Best wishes in the future,

Kyle M Rodgers
Grizedale College

Atheist Bus Campaign irritates Christians and Agnostics alike

Dear Sir,

Re Mr Harris' article (25th November) concerning religious 'outrage' towards the atheist bus campaign. We are Christians and we're all for free speech and people voicing their opinions. However, we have to admit that when we saw the first banner on the bus, we were mildly offended. It was not the apparent highlighting of where the probabilities lay but rather the implication that our belief in God meant that apparently we spend our lives worrying about our religion, rather than enjoying it.

Also, concerning the issue of bringing up children - The way children are brought up reflects their parents' attitudes, cultures and, in some cases, religions. Those who bring up their children in a religious home may find the final banner used a slight that questions their parenting skills. The campaign that was highlighted in the article seemed to denounce this type of upbringing and belittle the ideals that families intend to instill in their children. However, that is just our take on the matter.

Norine Njege
and **Sarah Kelly-Olatunji**
County and Cartmel Colleges

Dear Sir,

Alex Harris' article on the Atheist bus campaign is fairly judicious in part, and by no means offensive, but does make some highly questionable assertions. It's one thing to acknowledge that science cannot provide evidential grounds for belief, which is true, another thing to boldly assert that God 'probably doesn't exist'.

It seems to me, a humble agnostic by the way, that these atheists pick and choose which potential implications of religious belief to focus upon in order to best serve their arguments, and then present these 'potentials' as 'actuals'. Faith may be a 'crutch'. It may be 'oppressive'. It may conceivably be neither. Why the simple-minded generalisation?

In short the campaign provided a case study in shallow reasoning and inept emotional politics in the space of a dozen words. Impressive. Aside from objections by agnostics such as myself, it may be true that certain fundamentalists vent their spleen at the campaign in a more reactionary way. The majority of believers however, in my experience couldn't care less about it.

Mark Goulden
Fylde College

Dear Sir,

I am confused as to how an article as poorly written and ill-informed as James Anderson's recent unscientific, pointless piece ('The theory of evolution?') came to be published in SCAN. Perhaps if Anderson had decided to spend three minutes researching scientific terminology, he would have realized that a scientific theory is not the same as a hypothesis.

Gravitational theory, heliocentric theory, and the theory of evolution are all 'theories'. They remain theories because they have been proved, not because there is 'insufficient data'. With his example of 'the theory of relativity', one wonders whether Anderson means special relativity, which has been verified, or general relativity.

I found Anderson's last paragraph, a speculation on whether "demoting" humans to animal status absolves us of responsibility, to be both banal and condescending. We are great apes, we are multicelled organisms, and we are mammals. We belong in the animal kingdom. The false dichotomy between human and animal has nothing to do with evolution, and if he honestly thinks that we have complete mastery over all animals and the environment, I'd like to see how well he'd get along in the world without his fellow-creatures to maintain the ecosystem he enjoys.

Hazel Monforton
Bowland College

Dear Sir,

I was once a news editor of SCAN, in the 2003/4 academic year under Amy Elliott. I've been receiving copies of this year's run of SCAN, or rather my parents have.

I've been very impressed with what I've seen by flicking through SCAN under your editorship. It's a hell of a lot better looking than in my day.

As you can tell by my use of the

phrase "in my day" I am now an old fart at the age of 28 and rather removed from the youth and vigour of your intended audience.

For what it's worth working on SCAN does stand one in good stead. I am now local government editor of the Express & Star. Despite being based in Wolverhampton it is the largest selling regional newspaper in Britain, which isn't bad going for a paper that covers areas most people haven't heard of.

Anyway, I think it is fair to say the paper's in safe hands and if I'm honest it just depresses me to see how young you all are.

All the best with the rest of your year in office. And please ignore the chap from Pendle in the last issue on the letters page who clearly doesn't know what he's talking about.

Dan Wainwright
SCAN News Editor 03-04

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

Page 26



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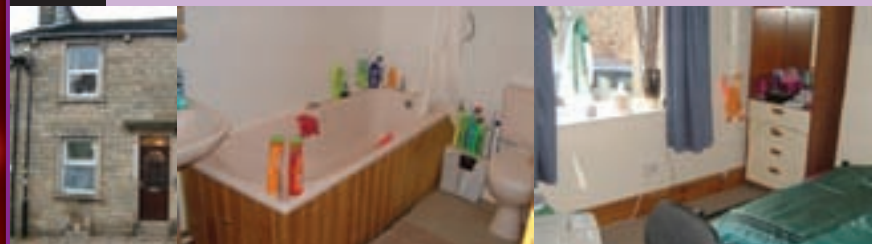
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FAIRFIELD

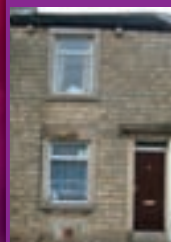


4
bed

33 Wingatesaul Rd
£72.50 per week (utilities included)

A large terrace with good sized bedrooms, a large lounge, kitchen and dinning room. Well maintained throughout like all our LUSU Let houses.

BULK

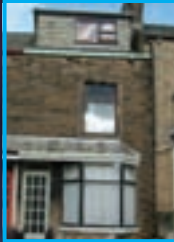


4
bed

41 Devitre St
£71.50 per week (utilities included)

Close to No:13 these houses would be ideal for a group of 8. Located near to the sugarhouse. Property has excellent cellar/utility room.

MOORLANDS

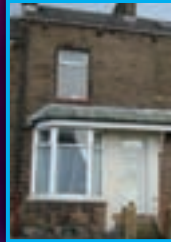


4
bed

9 Kirkes Rd
£71.50 per week (utilities included)

An excellent mid-terraced house offering great access to both the city and Williamson Park. This property includes a utility space and washroom.

MOORLANDS



4
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FAIRFIELD



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FEATURES

Pumpkins, cranberries and falloons. Not just another day in November

Kristina Beanland

WHAT DID YOU do on November 26 this year? Maybe writing that last minute essay, nursing a banging headache from the night before, or doing your hovering for the first time. And what about November 25 next year? And November 24 the year after that? Absolutely no idea? Well no, of course you wouldn't, because in England the fourth Thursday in November is just another Thursday. At best you're starting to think about buying Christmas presents and wondering when you can get the decorations up. But in America, the fourth Thursday of November is not just any other day: it's Thanksgiving.

So, for a lot of people we have only heard of Thanksgiving because every year an episode of Friends is based around it, and we just sort of go along with the idea that it's a Christmas-ish sort of a day. However, Thanksgiving is a really a day about the very first settlers, or the Pilgrims, that arrived in America. The majority of people recognise the first Thanksgiving feast to have been in 1621 in Virginia. It was said to have been a traditional harvest festival celebration that the British colonists, or Pilgrims, shared with the Native Americans, because they had taught the Pilgrims to plant crops and hunt animals. Without their help, the Pilgrims may not have survived the harsh winter that ensued once they arrived on American soil. The Pilgrims gave thanks to God both for their safe arrival and for their healthy yield of crops. The feast they enjoyed



together was not one, big, sit down meal, in fact, it was several meals that took place throughout the colony for almost a week. This weeklong meal is the basis for the tradition at 'Thanksgiving' for eating as much food as you

possibly can. Almost 200 years later, President Abraham Lincoln declared the fourth Thursday in November to be an official national holiday.

Eating a huge meal with all of the family is definitely central to Thanks-

giving. Some of the traditional foods eaten include turkey with all the trimmings, cranberries, and pumpkin pie (even though none of these foods would have been eaten in 1621). According to the National Turkey Fed-

eration, about 46 million turkeys were eaten on the day. Other traditions include the Thanksgiving Day Parade. The most famous parade float is organised by Macy's in New York, with massive falloons (a float-based balloon) and balloonics (self-powered balloon vehicles) of different cartoon characters, such as Spongebob Square Pants, Shrek and even Ronald McDonald. Famous performers make an appearance, marching bands perform, and finally at the end of it all, Father Christmas turns up. The parade is so famous that it's aired on national television, and more than 44 million people tune in every year. People also tune in to watch the (American) football, as games are always played on the day itself.

Thanksgiving is also said to be the start of the Christmas season, in particular the dreaded Christmas shopping. The day after Thanksgiving has been nicknamed Black Friday. This is due to the ridiculously great door buster sales that go on from as early as midnight in stores across the country, which have been known to injure and even kill people every year.

Aside from the crazed shoppers, Thanksgiving is a day that all Brits ought to be jealous of. We have to wait a whole extra month before we get to eat as much food as we want without feeling too guilty about it. As one very clever American writer, Erma Bombeck said: "What we're really talking about here is a wonderful day set aside on the fourth Thursday of November when no one diets. I mean, why else would they call it Thanksgiving?"

Roma and ready for change

Poppy Goodbrand
Features Editor

MARIA STEKA IS 33. She has three children and earns £400 a month; just enough to cover the rent of her two bedroom home in Blackburn. Whatever is left over she takes back to her disabled mum in Maria's native Romania. The journey takes three days by bus and she comes back to the UK sobbing because she can't afford to bring her mother back with her. Though it may seem a tough life to some, Maria isn't about to complain, she is grateful for the fact she has a job and is relatively integrated into the community, something she was never able to achieve in her own country.

As I pondered about how to begin asking Maria about her life and experiences here in the UK, she waited no time in gulping down the large cappuccino and cake I'd got her, obviously glad to get out of the cold from her regular spot on Penny Street selling the Big Issue, she insisted she couldn't spare much time, she had a job to get back to. "One less paper sold means one less carton of milk for the kids" she pointed out. "I'm so grateful for this job" she says, "they have provided me with work

so that I can avoid becoming homeless, I couldn't do that with the children being so small."

The registered charity the Big Issue offers homeless and vulnerably housed people the opportunity to earn a legitimate income by buying a weekly entertainment and current affairs magazine for 75p and selling it to the public for £1.50. In doing so they keep 75p for themselves and gaining control of their lives by addressing the issues which have contributed to their homelessness. The organisation currently supports over 2500 homeless and vulnerably housed people across the country. The magazine is read by over 670,000 people every week throughout the UK.

Roma gypsies like Maria flee the Balkans in their thousands due to corruption, violence and lack of responsibility from the politicians of their governments who see the Roma as a social aberration.

Roma gypsies like Maria flee the Balkans in their thousands due to corruption, violence and lack of responsibility from the politicians of their governments

who see the Roma as a social aberration. With the collapse of the Communist bloc entire populations suffered lack of food, resources, heating and clean water forcing many people to claim asylum in the West. Eager to find salvation in the rich states of the European Union, they did not always achieve what they came for. Indeed, though the Roma are Europe's oldest minority group, the European council says they are also the most discriminated against. Often accused of swamping the labour markets and even of committing sometimes violent crimes, the Roma are pushed to the fringes of our societies, 60% living below the poverty line in this country and rarely gaining access to a stable and well paid job.

It would seem that the main factor holding the Roma back is their lack of literary skills. 80% have had no formal education mainly because 80% of Roma families choose not to place their children in schools. According to Roma tradition, all basic skills can be learnt in the home and social skills by trading. Though the Roma have an extremely strong oral tradition, they have hardly any written artefacts, their culture and history are passed on orally and the numerous Roma communities communicate solely by word of mouth. When the first Roma nomads arrived in the

Byzantine Empire from India over 800 years ago, they relied on talents that

According to the laws of the Roma, it is not a crime to take what is not theirs since they do not accept the notion of possession, believing in a common wealth to be shared amongst all.

enabled them to contribute to the economies of the time, as craftsmen, artists, traders and independent workers. Societies came to rely on the Roma for temporary manpower on farms and the majority of the Roma were able to make a living in this way, forming an important link in the production of goods. But with the development of many changes in consumer tastes, the restriction of trading laws and more sophisticated production methods, the Roma communities delved deeper into poverty. They increasingly became criticised and ostracised for what was perceived as a wayward and anti-social lifestyle. The image of an idle, roaming and often dangerous group has now become well instated in western society, and is often used as a device to forge national identity and to guard borders.

Today, the Roma are often prevented access to employment and settling down because of their negative reputation, and despite various NGO's efforts to push housing programs ahead, the real battle seems to lie within society who continues to keep them at bay. According to the laws of the Roma, it is not a crime to take what is not theirs since they do not accept the notion of possession, believing in a common wealth to be shared amongst all. Though this idea forms a part of their tradition one obviously cannot condone theft and allow the Roma to ignore the laws of the country in which they reside. Indeed, it would seem that the Roma code of conduct is in need of renovation if the minority is to gain access to employment and society's respect. In the UK, most state schools are open to any child resident in the country; it is therefore up to the Roma to allow their children to gain access to education and most probably, a more rewarding life and career. Maria is the first to admit this, acknowledging that it is because of her lack of education that she is barred from many worthwhile forms of employment. She insists: "My children will go to school for sure." Hopefully the next generation will be permitted an education previous generations were denied by their community laws.

The amazing rise of the bear who cares

Claire Hazel

IT BEGAN WITH a simple five minute radio broadcast on Christmas day 1927, from this broadcast £1,143 was raised, equivalent to £47,335.65 in today's money, the donations were then distributed amongst four children's charities. This was the start of a yearly tradition, known as Children in Need. Yet we must ask how did such a huge appeal rise from its humble origins to becoming a house hold name? And when did our faithful friend Pudsey first bound onto our screens melting the hearts of Children in Need viewers everywhere? One thing is for certain though; Pudsey and his pals have already demonstrated that they will be with us for years to come.

Children in Need is the one night in the BBC's calendar when everyone joins together, regional and national, television and radio all unite for the work of this charity event. From its origins in 1927 the Radio appeals continued every Christmas day, even through WW2, until 1979, raising £625,836. With the money raised the radio show was able to provide presents and holidays for unprivileged youths. The radio appeal was presented by a variety of famous faces including, Terry Hall and Michael Aspel. The man who many consider to be the face of Children in Need today (apart

from Pudsey, of course) is Terry Wogan, who made his first five minute debut in 1978. Wogan went on to present the last ever radio appeal in 1979 and soared to new heights as he presented his first ever television appeal in the same year, making children in need 2009 his 30th television appeal. We can be sure, that just like Pudsey, Wogan will be appearing on Children in Need for a while yet as he was recently quoted as saying "I will be doing it [Children In Need] until hell freezes over, or at least until the public get fed up of me."

1955 saw the appeal first broadcast on Television, back then it was known as Children's Hour Christmas Appeal

and was presented in the same way as the radio show. It was not until 1980 that the format changed and Children in need became what we know and love today. Presented by Terry Wogan, Sue Lawley and Esther Rantzen, a night of entertainment was provided in return for public donations. The show was an immediate success and the public were captivated, for the first time ever donations reached over a million pounds and the appeal continues to be a success with the audiences. In 2008 11.5 Million tuned in for a night of entertainment and in return provided £19,089,771 of donations. The people

at home were able to donate online or phone one of 55 call centres with nearly 3,000 phones.

Children in Need did not become a registered charity in England until 1989 (number 802052) and much later in 2008 Scotland gave the appeal the charity status it deserved (number SC039557). Nevertheless, Children in Need guarantee that every penny donated will be given to charity, as all of their operational costs are covered by investment income. As well as this, all royalties from the Pudsey range go to the charity. The 2008 appeal which raised £38 Million, distributed all contributions between 1,343 charities.

Possibly the most important individual involved with Children in Need is Pudsey bear. When the BBC realised that a mascot was needed for the Children in Need appeal, Joanna Ball, a BBC Graphic designer set to work, creating a Brown cuddly bear and naming him after the West Yorkshire town in which she was born. Terry Wogan was to provide Pudsey with his debut in 1985 when he presented the bear to the audience. Pudsey proved to be all the rage, and returned the following year as the official Children in Need mascot, now yellow in colour. Pudsey also wore a white bandana with Red Polka dots, as an iconic symbol Pudsey's bandana underwent a makeover in 2007 incorporating brighter colours for the digital age. Pudsey is now a well known celebrity receiving fan mail of young children and getting himself photographed with many of the world's elite.

Every year the nation gathers together to dance, to laugh and to raise money, all in the name of this dedicated appeal. The charity still continues to grow and gain support, and since the launch of the appeal, over £500m has been raised to help disadvantaged youths and children across the UK. This is only the beginning for Pudsey bear, the plucky Children in Need mascot, and his ever faithful fundraisers, as it is hoped that they will continue to do good for Children Nationwide for years to come.



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STUDENT LIFESTYLE

Have yourself a Coca Cola Christmas

Ellen Clayton

WHEN IT COMES to Christmas, many of us have particular traditions we like to uphold. It might be champagne with breakfast, opening stockings at 7am sharp, or a particular family member finding a terrible joke from a cracker far too funny. It is that moment when you feel the warm glow of Christmas surround you – or, if you're a self-confessed Scrooge, you remember why you hate it and want the whole charade to be over.

It seems that for many people the festive season really begins when they hear 'the holidays are coming' and the images of the Coca Cola truck splashed across TV screens, accompanied by the red Santa Claus we have come to understand as the icon of modern Christmas. In fact, when in 2001 this advertising campaign was not aired, the company had so many complaints that 'it never really felt like Christmas without it', that they weren't left with much choice but to bring it back.

The term Santa Claus in itself has caused contention; in the United Kingdom the term Father Christmas was the traditional icon, while the United States preferred to use Santa Claus. Most of us use both terms, but

they were significantly different at one point in time. Father Christmas was more of a positive, religious symbolism of good cheer, while Santa Claus was the bringer of gifts for children.



Legend has it that the generic Santa Claus we all know and love (round belly, jolly red face, white beard, red and white suit) was in fact an entirely different character. People claim that he was dressed in green in the traditional pictorial depictions, before Coca Cola marketed him as red and white to fit in

with their product's colours. However, there is no real evidence to support this; the figure of Father Christmas/Santa Claus has changed and evolved over time to become the figure we now see. There are of course variations between cultures but the Coca Cola prototype is certainly the most recognisable icon for many of us.

But it is important to remember that Christmas has not always been about commercialisation, bright lights and booze. Traditionally in the UK the stockings left by Father Christmas were small socks filled with fruit and small treats; now many parents buy huge furry sacks barely resembling a stocking, shoving them with all kinds of toys, books, games and confectionery.

Despite all these negative changes to the way Christmas is celebrated in our country, it's not all bad. Christmas), and the chance to share all these lovely treats with the people we care most about. It's the perfect excuse, and the only time of year we all have off work, to play board games with our families, watch the best TV, eat copious amounts of food, and drink notoriously expensive soft drinks. Perhaps then, it is this commercialism and excessive living which has become the tradition of Christmas, the thing that excites us and makes us continue to celebrate Christmas in a big way, year after year.



Student protests and unive

Ralph Guth

VIENNA, BERLIN, ZURICH, Munich, Cologne, Basel, Dresden, Hamburg, Hannover. No, this is not a simple list for your next city trips. It is an extract of cities where hundreds, sometimes thousands of students occupy main lecture theatres of their universities to protest against unbearable conditions for learning, free thinking, and personal development. What is happening on the continent at the moment? What are these thousands of students fighting for? And could the same happen here in Great Britain? The following article tries to capture this new student movement which caught deans, politicians, and journalists totally by surprise.

It is hard to spot a point where it all began because the sometimes precarious conditions and the restructuring of higher education in the EU called the Bologna Process has sparked off numerous protests lately. Last summer thousands of students and teaching staff took the streets in Germany, Slovenia, and Croatia. Early this autumn, students squatted a lecture theatre in Barcelona. What is different in these new series of protests is the astonishing force behind it, the unbridled creativity in trying new forms of organisation, and the amazing international dissemination of the movement. On the October 22 hundreds of students, lecturers, and professors of the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna tried to stop the dean to sign a newly formulated contract with the Austrian Ministry of Education and Research. This new contract would implement a re-orientation leading towards a more job-oriented training rather than general education of young artists. Under the umbrella of higher employability the soon-to-be artists

would then be trained for example to become web-designers rather than multimedia artists. Against the unity of university staff and students the dean signed the contract. On the very same day in October the students decided to squat the main hall of the Academy - and they are still there. Four days later students of the University of Vienna spontaneously decided to occupy the Auditorium Maximum (short 'Audimax'), the university's biggest lecture theatre. They too are still there. The maximum capacity of the Audimax allows approx. 1,500 people and it was absolutely packed. It was decided to stay, to form working groups, and to have a plenum every day where the students can democratically decide on every issue on a daily basis. The working groups formed around different aspects ranging from putting forward a list of demands to setting up a kitchen. Through Twitter, Facebook, a live stream from the Audimax, and other media the news and the atmosphere of the occupation spread through the country. Eventually occupations started in almost every major university in Austria following

Through web 2.0 the outreach of the Austrian students was enormous. Especially Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, and the Audimax-live stream made it possible to spread the word internationally.

the same ideas. One week later the first national demonstration in a series of rallies took place with more than 15,000 protestors in Vienna alone. The working groups set up a national and international press centre; an extensive website (www.unsereuni.at); a wiki-



CAPTAIN BONNY'S WORLD OF FOOD

So what is the Borough Like?

ON REQUEST FROM the Scan Editor, I ventured back to familiar haunts and popped into the Borough Inn to find out more about their student deals and their 'school dinners menu'. We went at lunch time on a Saturday (get there early, we got there about 12-12.30 as it does get a little busy) and delved into their menu. I chose from the school dinner's menu while my colleague went for something from the main. For those who don't know, the school dinners menu offers two dishes for £6.95, with a good range of meat, fish and veggie. I chose the stuffed peppers, chips and salad, while my friend went for the steak and ale pie. With food being served on wooden or slate platter, then it does give an unconventional appearance, and at times you cannot work out if you have a lot to eat or not. The steak and ale pie had more meat than anything elsewhere, while the stuffed pepper was a bit on the small side, though scrumptious. The chips were pretty awesome.

For dessert, then I chose the traditional apple crumble with custard and my friend went for the over indulgent pancake with chocolate sauce, choc chip cookies and dribbled in hot choc sauce. Both again were lovely, though

I do recommend the crepes menu for sweets as they are pretty extensive, and the plate was swollen to overflowing.

Though I would have liked a bit more on my main, the argument could be made that you are getting a cheaper version for school meals and hence may not get the full monty as you would with the main menu, however this was countered when I looked at the club sandwich which was absolutely massive, and I asked myself why there wasn't a veggie club sandwich. So hit and miss there a bit possibly. Talking to other customers, then sharing either the Lancashire hot pot or the local muscles is a very good deal, and there does seem to be some quite appetizing options for the Xmas menu.

One way to satisfy your appetite is to go for the student deals which are 2 meals (from the main menu) for 1 between 2.30 and 5.30. This seemed like a way around it, and runs between Monday and Saturday, so a late lunch is a perfect idea for students going shopping in town and want to spoil themselves.

Overall, the Borough is one of my favourite places, because of the decor (etched glass snugs) giving it an oldie worldly appearance, which goes with its theme of traditional English and European fayre. With such a wonderful range of real ales, ciders and Euro-

pean beers, which to savour a glass (in its original) of Belgian Duvel, is just to die for, the pub is able to tick most of the boxes one requires for a good night out. As always, it is important that students take advantage of these deals and enter these pubs more often, mainly because others we hope will follow suit and make it more affordable for us to eat in town. If students are here over Xmas, then the Borough may offer that atmospheric ingredient we need to round off a night out.

As it is the festive season, SCAN and the Borough have teamed up to give one lucky winner a fantastic present. A £50 voucher to use at the inn.

All you have to do is answer this one simple question: "During what time of day can two people get two courses for £6.95?"

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ni?

University occupations sweeping through Europe!

page for discussion and co-ordination; a free weekly newspaper with a print run of 10,000 copies; of course a Facebook group; a kitchen that prepares free food and drinks 24/7 next to the Audimax; the list could go on. All this work is based on spontaneous actions by students who want to do something – for their education. Through web 2.0 the outreach of the Austrian students was enormous. Especially Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, and the Audimax-live stream made it possible to spread the word internationally. From the early beginnings the actions were keenly observed by German students. Sharing the same language and similar problems it was only a matter of time until the first universities in Germany were occupied by its students. They picked up the same slogans, similar forms of organisation, and remained in close contact with the Austrian students. After another two weeks, their Swiss counterparts did the same and occupied the Auditorium Maximum of Basel's University. At the time of writing, more than 70 universities in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland are or were occupied by students.

What are they fighting for? Every plenum of every university put forth its own list of demands. Surprisingly (or unsurprisingly) the demands of students in three different countries are almost completely equal: academic formation rather than simple job-training; abolition of tuition fees; free access to universities; more individual freedom instead of inflexible modules consisting of a set of predefined courses; re-democratisation of the university bodies; an end to precarious working conditions of external, junior, and senior lecturers. In general, the movement in all countries is fighting against the ongoing commercialisation turning universities into businesses rather than free places of research

and education. The subordination of education under the logic of the free market partly has had disastrous effects. In all affected countries, universities are less controlled by academic staff

Unsurprisingly the demands of students in three different countries are almost completely equal: academic formation rather than simple job-training; abolition of tuition fees; free access to universities; more individual freedom instead of inflexible modules consisting of a set of predefined courses; re-democratisation of the university bodies. In general, the movement in all countries is fighting against the ongoing commercialisation turning universities into businesses.

and students but more and more by external managers; shortened BA, MA, and PhD programs are introduced to make universities more competitive but are downgrading a general and critical education; the percentage of students from low-income families is dramatically decreasing; the average student leaving university in debt is a rising new phenomena. With slogans such as "Whose University? - Our University!", "Education is not for \$A£€!" or more humorous ones like "Rich Parents for everyone!" the students are trying to fight a more general and broad trend in society to subject every aspect of social life to a constant economic tribunal. One might say that they are fighting against windmills. They might but as more and more people are affected by this trend, more and more people show their solidarity. In Austria for example

teachers from nursery school and secondary school joined the protesting students. Letters of solidarity flood in from all sides of society and suddenly the public discourse knows only one topic: the country's educational system. The deans of the concerned universities actually share the opinion of the students as do teaching staff and professors. The president of the Austrian Deans Conference Dr. Badelt, who is also the dean of Vienna's University for Economy, said that the universities are missing 1.1 billion Euros just to keep up their standard, and that Austria's government is spending less on education compared to other EU countries. For the first time in years people are thinking about what education is worth to society. What should a society spend on education? Can we expect the students (and their parents) to carry the burden? Should universities be run as a business? So far the biggest success of the students has been to open up this wide field of public discussions. Their next steps will probably be citizens' initiatives, a kind of direct democratic tool in all three countries to force the National Assembly or Parliament to deal with this issue if enough signatures are collected. The new Lisbon Treaty would even allow such an initiative to be staged on an EU level, forcing the Commission to address the issue. Working groups have been formed to discuss this possibility and prepare first steps.

It cannot be said what these protests will change. At least more and more people critically think about structures that seemed to be out of question, like tuition fees. It cannot be said how long the occupations will last either. Well, in Vienna's Audimax, the epicentre of the new movement, a new group is already feverishly at work. It named itself Christmas in the Audimax.

TOP FIVE

BEST VALUE ON-CAMPUS SNACKS

In the honest opinion of Erica MacLeod:



◀ **Flapjack, 39p, Spar**
Critics may devalue the Spar flapjacks because they're so small, but size doesn't matter. Not when it's so dense with oaty goodness that it will completely satisfy that snack-sized hole on your tummy!

▶ **Belgian Buns, 2 for £1, Greggs**

This deal has been on for a while at Greggs, but is just as deliciously tempting as when it first arrived! These buns are bigger than your palm and are worth more than 50p each as a luxury sugary treat.



◀ **Chips, £1.20, Uni Chippie**

They may be unhealthy, but they fill you up and keep you warm in the winter months. You get a lot of chips in a small portion for your money, and what chips they are: thick, chunky, greasy, tasty!

▶ **S!Up, £1.85, LUSU Shop**

'Souped Up' provide soup for campus from their base in LUSU Shop; healthy, delicious hot winter lunch on your doorstep at a low student price.



◀ **Sandwich Meal Deal, £2.50, LUSU Shop**

Change from three quid will get you a sandwich, crisps and a drink. The sandwiches are healthy and tasty and there's a quorn selection available for the veggie.

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The best winter warmer films about

Lauren Randall

SO, IT'S THAT time of year again folks and you have an important question to ponder. No it's not the 'is he called Santa Claus or is it Father Christmas' query. It's the 'what film can we watch that will cause the less friction and mince-pie throwing' question. This is where I step in, providing a list of festive films suited to all your stereotypes out there.

Christmas is all about goodwill and general happiness (supposedly) so for those needing a pick-me-up after stressful deadlines I suggest the sentimental yet uplifting *It's A Wonderful Life*. True, it begins with a suicidal man but don't let that put you off. It transpires into a completely Christmassy story including guardian angels, hope and the importance of every person. Not only is it one of the best films for Christmas, it's one of the best films of all time.

Similarly, *Miracle on 34th Street* is for the believers out there. Be it the 1947 original or the 1994 remake, the film shows how a little hope, faith and belief goes a long way. The plot is simple: a man claiming to be Father Christmas is subsequently institutionalised. It's up to



Everytime a bell rings: *It's a Wonderful Life* is a classic Christmas movie

a lawyer to argue the man's sanity thus saying he is Santa. It's surprisingly real; a single-parent mother discourages her child's belief in Santa to prepare her for life's disappointments. It's touching, thought-provoking and suspenseful. Is it the real Father Christmas? What happens to Christmas if he is? I'd recommend the original for the beautiful performance of Edward Gwenn as Kris Kringle but this

is one of those rare occasions where the remake is nearly as good.

For those of you who are big kids at heart you should watch *Muppet's Christmas Carol* and *Home Alone*. Three reasons why *Muppet's Christmas Carol* is so unbelievably amazing: muppets, Dickens and Sir Michael Caine. Yes, the living legend and Oscar winner Caine playing Scrooge with relish, belting out

songs alongside Kermit et al in a Dickens story. As Gonzo says, "it's culture". Then there's *Home Alone*. Penned by the late, great John Hughes and featuring a brilliant performance by Macaulay Culkin, the film is harmless fun. Left alone at Christmas after his parents forget him (hello social services) Culkin has to protect his house from robbers. The film is genuinely funny and there's a fabulous

supporting cast of Catherine O'Hara, Joe Pesci and John Candy. Hell, put the sequel on afterwards. Yes, his parents really are that careless.

If the guys and girls want to watch something completely different then the easiest suggestions are *Love Actually* for the girls and *Die Hard* for the guys. 'They're not Christmas films', I hear you say. I beg to differ. Let's not forget, *Love Actually's* better scenes are Christmas-orientated: Billy Mack's Christmas number one, the school nativity and that Christmas present. *Die Hard* has Bruce Willis on a one-man mission to save his wife and her colleagues after a terrorist hijacks their Christmas party to rob them of their billions. Not Christmas enough for you? Bruce shoves an inflatable Santa into a lift with a sign saying "Now I have a machine gun. Ho Ho Ho." Doesn't get more festive than that.

So there you go. A handy 'what-to-watch' list for after your flat-cooked Christmas dinner (always an experience, believe me). And, for those of you who hate Christmas with an absolute passion yet have persevered through this article, there's the alternative. Stick on *Nightmare Before Christmas*, pretend it's Halloween and rewind the 'Kidnap the Sandy Claws' song. See, there really is something for everybody.

Paranormal activity is a well established fact

Hannah Fearon
Culture Editor

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY HAS rapidly become a box office phenomenon. Screened in 2007 at Screampfest Film Festival, Director Oren Peli shot the entire film in his own house. Costing less than \$15,000 to make, it has become the most profitable movie in film history and has already made over \$107,000,000 worldwide. So is it worth all the hype?

The film is based on the idea that video footage has been "found" by the police, reminiscent of the style that made *Blair Witch* a huge success. The film follows young couple Katie and Micah as they film the supernatural occurrences they experience in their house. After Katie suspects paranormal activity in the house, Micah decides to set up a camera at the foot of their bed in order to film what goes on whilst they sleep, or at least try to. As the time code ticks away in the corner of the screen, we start to see subtle occurrences that build up throughout the film. From the typical whispers and moving objects, the activity progresses to something much more disturbing as the couple document it.

The story is incredibly simple and far from original, but none of that matters. The ingenious use of the time code speeding up as the couple sleep, then slowing to a natural pace indicating that something is about to happen is what gives this film its suspense and creates an unsettling feeling. There are no high budget special effects, but something that many of us can relate to, hearing things go bump in the night. We as the audience act as voyeurs, observing the footage of paranormal activity that

Katie and Micah are often unaware of until the next day when they watch it back. They see what we have already seen, making them appear even more vulnerable.

Whilst I enjoyed the film, and it certainly made me feel rather uneasy, I felt as though it was not as "scary" as it has been advertised to be. There were no high-pitched screams in the cinema, no one walking out too unnerved to continue and little to suggest why Mr. Spielberg almost needed to change his pants. What gives *Paranormal Activity* such a creepy atmosphere is rather the build up to night-time rather than the occurrences themselves. As an audience, we empathise with the characters, as they are reluctant to go to bed.

The first hour or so of the film is quite slow, consisting mostly of footage of the couple talking about the occurrences rather than us witnessing them. However, the last half an hour and climax of the film is definitely worth the wait. The ending of the cinema version is very different to that of the original 2007 film, in fact Peli was advised by his idol, Steven Spielberg, to change it. Whilst it is considered scarier, it raises the question of why it needed to be changed in the first place.

It is difficult to describe the film without giving away any details, and I strongly advise against watching any trailers for those planning to see it. If you aren't easily creeped out, then *Paranormal Activity* is probably not for you. However I'm sure that it will at least give you a little fright and it's definitely an interesting film to watch, mostly because of its ingenious simplicity. For those of you with a nervous disposition, or who scare easy, beware, you'll be sleeping with the light on.

Journey through the looking glass



Kelsey Leljedal

TIM BURTON HAS only become stranger since his directorial debut with Pee-Wee's Big Adventure in 1985. Twenty five years after his first film, Burton will be releasing an ambitious pseudo-sequel of a classic English novel with his *Alice in Wonderland* coming out in 2010. Finally going beyond the looking glass, this film takes place several years after the book was set, with Alice on the verge of adulthood, who must save Wonderland from the Jabberwock and Red Queen, enemies she had faced years before on a visit that she no longer remembers. If the trailer is any indication, this version of Lewis Carroll's tale looks to be the most sinister and highest grossing to date, not that we would expect anything less from seasoned director Burton.

Burton began his career right out of the California Institute for the Arts as an animator for Disney, working uncredited alongside such presently well-known animation directors as Don Bluth (*Anastasia*), Brad Bird (*The*

Incredibles), John Musker and Ron Clements (both from the upcoming *The Princess and the Frog*). Not very fond of animating as a career, but unwilling to leave the film industry, Burton found his calling in the director's chair. From Pee-Wee, Burton moved through a series of blockbuster and award nominated films with examples of the former being the first two Batman films, *Beetlejuice*, *Mars Attacks!* his version of *Planet of the Apes*, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and the latter being *Edward Scissorhands*, *Ed Wood*, *Big Fish*, *Corpse Bride*, and *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. He proved his mettle in adapting children's literary classics with the well-received *James and the Giant Peach* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Unafraid to experiment with new technologies, as exhibited in his foray into stop-motion animation in *Corpse Bride* and *Oompaloompa* duplication in *Charlie*, Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* relies heavily on CGI, particularly for animating Helena Bonham Carter's Red Queen.

Since his short film *Frankenweenie* (soon to be directed again by Burton as

a full-length film coming out in 2011), the director has yet to shy away from eccentric, even gory stories, the sickest perhaps being his take on murderous musical Sweeney Todd. With Burton regulars Johnny Depp and Bonham Carter on board, as well as highly regarded stars like Anne Hathaway and Stephen Fry, *Alice in Wonderland* is guaranteed to be another Burton box-office smash!

If you cannot wait until *Alice* hits cinemas, may we suggest you ask Santa for *The Art of Tim Burton* with hundreds of pages filled with his own illustrations and bon mots from his friends and colleagues. Or if you happen to be in Manhattan this winter you could visit the Tim Burton retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, which features his drawings, paintings, story-boards, costumes, puppets, and film clips, the opening of which Burton himself called one of the most surreal moments in his life. Who would have thought you would hear that comment from a man who brought the Headless Horseman, an underhanded bio-exorcist, murderous Martians and a razor-wielding killer to our screens?

CULTURE

Terry's Old Geezers & Gals

Chris Housden

TERRY WOGAN IS a broadcasting legend. Even those who don't like his off-the-wall, grumbling manner cannot deny he has done a lot more than simply present a show in front of a microphone or camera. He is the Career Broadcaster that is vast becoming extinct.

Terry recently announced that he was going to retire from Wake Up to Wogan, the Radio 2 breakfast show he presented for sixteen years has raised ostensibly half of all Children In Need donations thanks to its dedicated fan-base of TOGs.

Terry's Old Geezers or Gals, a sort of army of followers recruited almost exclusively from the middle aged and geriatric population, serve to further show this almost extinct type of broadcaster as a titanic part of people's lives. Presenters of today don't have the same career potential as these stalwarts. Could you see Jonathan Ross or Graham Norton in their seventies eating a cooked breakfast on air while grumbling with listeners about things that in lesser hands would be gibberish?

Michael Parkinson is probably the best example of someone who saw presenting and interviewing as a career, a job, not simply a three year contract to read an autocue and smile. The Vernon Kays of this world will not become veterans simply because their pay is good enough to retire on long before half their hairs are grey and they have to think of something intelligent to say because they no longer get away with simply looking the type (yes, I mean you Tess Daly, Holly Willoughby, and especially you Fearne Cotton).

The worst example of presenters are the faux-enthusiastic models who read the clues and take calls on generic 'Quizzone' style late night shows. The questions are simple. The viewers are simpler, and normally drunk. Watching them 'presenting' might well make men and women who worked hard for their shows and had talent to present cry.

On the other hand, there isn't such a crushing sense of defeat for broadcasters just yet. Stuart Maconie and Mark Radcliffe are on the right side of age and sensibility to continue for another twenty or thirty years and become the giants of their decade as Wogan, Walker and the rest are now. They have the character and enthusiasm for their work and their listeners that is sorely missing from many commercial DJs and TV 'personalities' now. And there are younger people still.

The name Chris Evans, ten years ago, would have given people images of a reckless man who was as much an unreliable and arrogant jackass as he was a good showman. Recovering from his big headed rampage around the 90s media, he now has a successful drive-time show with beloved features and a fan base that carries no moniker but is still comparable to Wogan's TOGs. All is not lost then for the career broadcaster once these greats follow Wogan and hang up their headphones. There are, apparently, people to fill their shoes, for now at least, and perhaps we could even go so far as to say that some old timers should learn from this and stop for their own sake. Mr Forsythe, please leave Miss Daly and our television screens alone.

What's that coming over the hill?

Hannah Baines

THE AUTOMATIC'S WARM-UP tour prior to their third album release takes place in the strangest of venues. Lava Ignite, Preston's equivalent of Toast, is not exactly your typical concert hall. But then again, The Automatic isn't your typical band.

By ten o'clock they ought to have been half way through their set - but the doors aren't even open. Over two hours later, Paul Mullen, guitarist, keyboardist and backing vocalist, formerly of yourcodenameis:milo, saunters on stage. He's shortly followed by lead vocalist and bassist Rob Hawkins, guitarist James Frost and drummer Iwan Griffiths. Kicking off with old single Steve McQueen, they promptly follow with new song Run and Hide.

The Automatic continue unfazed, well aware that most of the crowds weren't expecting to see them but nevertheless working just as hard. By the end of the third song, Magazines, there's a reasonable sized crowd. James swings his guitar over his shoulders to play it behind his head in what appears to be an effortless manner. Paul crouches down between tracks to listen to a couple of girls hovering at the front of the stage, whilst he takes a sip of something from a mug that he swears isn't tea.

Cutting their already short set down to less than 10 songs, the band manages to mix older classics such as Raoul together with some of their newer material. The crowd may have been a little unsure beforehand, but barely a few songs in and their only uncertainty is whether they should be dancing or moshing.

So why the hold-up? At 8pm the guys should have been completing their sound checks, doing interviews and preparing for the gig. Instead, they were squeezing in a last minute charity performance in Cardiff for Children In Need. The guys are enthusiastic about

having been asked to perform for the charity, commenting that, "In the position that we're in, sometimes we can do certain things."

And they do, although not necessarily taking advantage of their musical abilities. Rob recently ran the Cardiff half-marathon whilst Paul is growing a moustache in order to raise money for prostate cancer.

what he's talking about.

When discussing downloads, James points out, they earn more from in live performances. Their light-hearted approach is unsurprising, considering that the acknowledgement of digital downloads brought earlier hit Monster back into the charts in 2007.

Paul offers me another beer, sweetly embarrassed that there are no

the Automatic don't necessarily identify with the angst filled approach, calling themselves happier and "more upbeat" in their music than other Welsh rockers.

Their new music has taken a turn from previous albums Not Accepted Anywhere and This is a Fix. Unlike the personal and social themes of the last two albums, this time the guys say the



Above: Rob Hawkins, James Frost, Iwan Griffiths, Paul Mullen

In a back room upstairs, other talents of the band begin to make appearances. The sleeve cover for their upcoming album, Tear the Signs Down, was inspired from an abstract painting of Rob's. He's shy and dismissive, crediting the final artwork to the input of graphic designers, despite the other guys' eagerness to compliment his abilities, and Paul in particular, and as a former art student who narrowly missed the opportunity to work with Anthony Gormely, he knows

chilled ones. There are no bottle openers around so expertly flips the top off with an upside down bottle of Evian whilst singing along to the Futureheads follow-up DJ set blaring through the walls.

This brings us to the topic of influences and the inevitable comparison against other Welsh rock bands such as Lost Prophets or Funeral for a Friend. Whilst they do site the Manic Street Preachers as a source of inspiration,

"stories are not necessarily what we've been through".

Interstate will be the first release on their own label. They've had trouble with the past two albums including the record company remixing tracks without consulting the band. Rob claims the move is due to the lack of control over their own material, particularly the fact that they didn't get to choose their own singles. As James puts it, "It's got to be more personal than just spreadsheets."

Purgatory is beans on toast and Delia Smith for mundane hero of modern times

Simon Bulmer
Culture Editor

THOMAS WOGAN IS a tragically lonely character, ostracised from society, whose life consists of nothing more than working his dead-end job at Perriman Plastics in Chudley and in his spare time harbouring a rather unhealthy obsession for Delia Smith. The sole moment of happiness in his life seems to be the special occasions when he enjoys his favourite meal of beans on toast followed by a fruit cocktail and a cup of tea, but remarkably this desperately sad character is the centre of a grotesquely quirky and yet uniquely melancholic story.

After a brief glimpse of the mundane everyday life that Thomas Wogan leads, the story takes a somewhat bizarre turn away from the depressing mediocrity. We find our humdrum hero waking up naked



Off the wall: Front cover featuring our humdrum hero Thomas Wogan

in a cold sterile waiting room with a numbered ticket and a menagerie of new acquaintances including a natter jack toad, a bat, a fish, an egg, a cuckoo and a sea urchin. The varied selection of fauna ponder their individual existences and we soon find that, after a few rather graphic and grisly stories from each of the creatures, it is clear that they all have one thing in common. They are all dead.

The story does not rely on the characters solving the mystery of whether or not they are in fact in purgatory, the intricacies of the tale are found in each of the characters monologues recalling their final moments and the events that led to their untimely and often rather brutal demises. The depth and variation of these different tales is fascinating as are the characters who tell them. The stories range from the heroic; with the tale of a bat sacrificing himself to save his family, to the darkly

humorous involving the recollection of a fish's final memories being the view of the pyloric sphincter from inside the digestive tract. Thomas's story of his final hours is also the story of the happiest day of his life, but in keeping with Thomas's character, this joyous day involves him ditching work and going for a day out in Morecombe. As you can expect Thomas's story reaches a climax that is perfectly fitting with the rest of his monotonous life, but by this point one can't help but feel a sympathetic attachment to Thomas which makes the tale of his end all the more poignant.

Thomas Wogan is Dead is an imaginative and unique piece of storytelling that is seriously deserving of attention, with gruesome characterisation and a penchant for dark humour throughout David Hughes looks to be ready to make a big impact on the indie comic scene.

Time's up for Tennant in Doctor Who Christmas special

Liam Richardson
Editor

DOCTOR WHO CAN be a little bit overblown from time to time. In recent years this can be evidenced by the apocalyptic episode titles for the series finales: The Parting of the Ways, Doomsday, Last of the Timelords and Journey's End. For those living in the North Pole for the past year, David Tennant is leaving the show this Christmas in a two part special ominously titled The End of Time.

For many David Tennant has been the quintessential Doctor, and so his exit after five years will upset a lot of fans. However, we shouldn't begrudge Tennant for wanting out. He has already outlasted five of his immediate predecessors in the title role. The impact he has made is comparable with Tom Baker's bohemian fourth incarnation of the Time Lord. Baker's era coincided with enormous viewing figures and the programme developing and cementing its cult status.

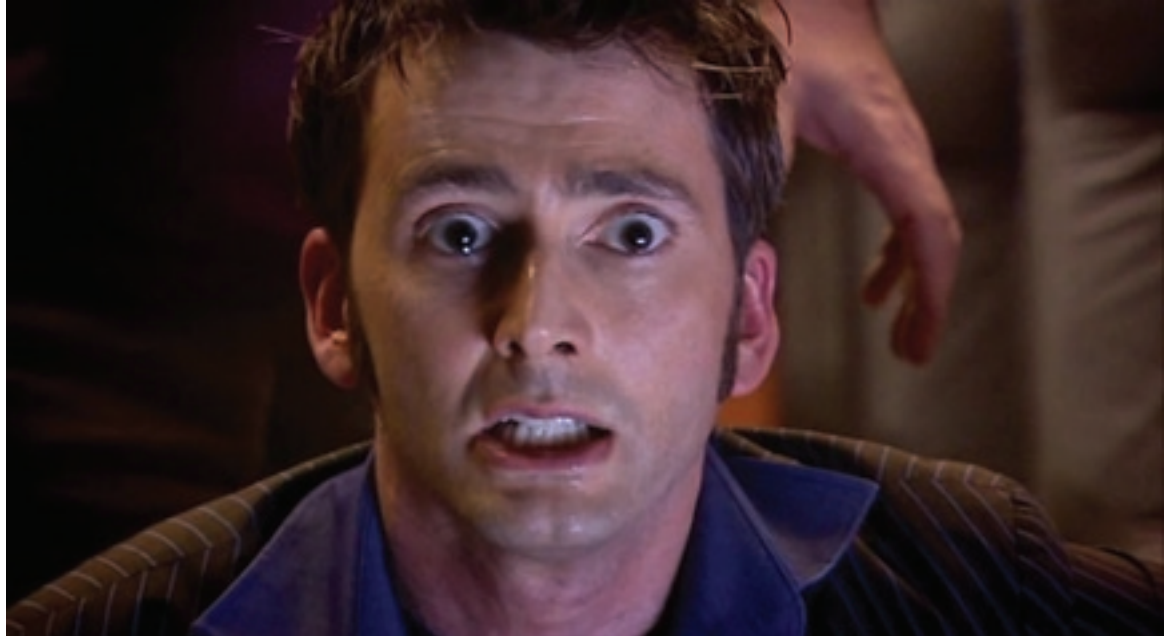
The Tenth Doctor was ushered into the programme on the back of Christopher Ecclestone's shock decision to quit after one series back in 2005. Ecclestone was a big name actor and some were left pondering who on earth David Tennant was when he was announced as taking over the title role. Fast forward five years and viewers are

asking similar question of Matt Smith, the 26-year old who begins his tenure in the TARDIS in March as the Eleventh Doctor.

So what does The End of Time promise this Christmas? Well, a plethora of familiar faces seem certain to return in some capacity for Tennant's swansong. Billie Piper. Check. Catherine Tate. Check. John Barrowman. Check.

As well as old companions, an infamous foe also threatens on the horizon. John Simm will return as the renegade Time Lord The Master, this time as seen in trailers, complete with shocking dyed blond hair. The last we saw of Simm's madcap portrayal of The Master, he was shot by his wife following his doomed attempts to enslave humanity in the future to conquer the universe in our present. Still following?

The Master will no doubt have a major part to play in the Doctor's eventual regeneration. There is also the suggestion amongst some fans that Russell T. Davies, producer and lead writer of Doctor Who since it returned in 2005, will utilise a reset button to give his successor Steven Moffat a clean slate to do what he likes with the programme. This could possibly mean the return and resurrection of the Doctor's own race the Time Lords and perhaps even his home planet of Gallifrey. Former James Bond Timothy Dalton features in the upcoming special with his role currently unspecified. Rumours are al-



Is there a Doctor in the house?: The Tenth Doctor bows out this Christmas

ready flying around the geekiest internet forums that he is in fact portraying a Time Lord.

This Christmas promises to provide a heroic and tragic end for the popular Tenth Doctor. It will be interesting to see how the show survives another change of lead actor after Tennant has dominated for so long. It is easy to point out that the show has replaced

its lead actor eleven times now, but it is a difficult conjuring trick that doesn't always pay off, as any fan who watched Doctor Who in the 1980s will testify.

Steven Moffat has been a great writer for Doctor Who, penning some of the best episodes such as Blink and The Girl in the Fireplace. He has put together a promising team but the challenge in front of him is enormous.

After all, how can you possibly follow a Doctor who has battled the Daleks three times, taken on the Cybermen twice and locked horns with evil geniuses such as Davros and The Master. Tennant's era in Doctor Who has provided some truly epic moments and this Christmas will be an ideal opportunity to reflect and pay tribute to arguably the greatest Time Lord of all.

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In Focus: Karate Club a knock-out success

Kim Megson

FORMED IN 1967, Lancaster University Karate Club (LUKC) is one of the oldest and most established clubs at the university. The club offers training to students with different levels of experience throughout term time.

Members from the club talk up the mixture of things that karate offers. Peter Schroder said: "Karate involves a fair amount of skill and as it is a martial art it has real life use. As well as that it's a good work out."

Oliver Feather, a third year student who started recently added: "It is good fun and exercise, and you can take what you want from the experience."

This year has seen many people join the club as beginners, and they have already shown a massive improvement, due to their hard work and commitment, and with their guidance from their sensei (teacher).

Instructor Lee Carradus praised the effort made by everyone at the club. He said: "They really are a very enthusiastic bunch. Many of them had never ever done this before, but they all wanted to have a go, which means I enjoy teaching."

"They have given me the chance to prove what I promised them at the start of their training, and now they are all making progress. We have a good mix



Karate chop: Members have impressed the quality of teaching the club offers (Photo: Ben Robins)

of all experience here and we find a way for everyone."

"I would like to thank Tim Cottis and Kris Welsh, my sempai (assistants) for all their help."

Karate is recognised as a sport by the International Olympics Committee, though it is not currently part of the programme in the Olympic Games. In Karate, two of the main components of training are Kumite and Kata, both of which can be used in competition. The first of these sees one competitor

sparring against an opponent, aiming to strike more blows. The second is primarily focused on detailed patterns of movement.

The club have impressed in the competitive side of things recently, with achievement coming in the recent Student Nationals where three students won bronze medals. The successful competitors were Amy Wadsworth (Individual Kumite), Simon Albright (Individual Kumite) and Amy Valach (Individual Kata).

There has also been great success in the grading, in which a pupil has the chance to progress to a higher rank. Team Captain Tim Cottis was recently awarded his Nidan (the second degree black belt) following two and a half years training.

Cottis praised the teaching he received along the way. He said: "Earning my second dan was a great personal achievement of mine, but it wouldn't have been possible without the support and guidance of the club and its mem-

bers."

He added: "Special thanks to Keith Robson and Mike Kilbourne, the two senior instructors, whose expertise thoroughly prepared me for the grading, and to all those who helped me train and pushed me to be better than I was before."

The club is a tight-knit group, with members supporting each other and several friendships being formed. Jennifer Scarna, one of the clubs social secretaries, stressed the importance of relaxing outside of training. She said: "Being a part of the University Karate Club isn't all about the dedicated training and hard work that goes into competitions and gradings."

"The social scene is very important too, we have about three or four socials every term which bring variety into socialising with the club, whether it be a lazer quest tournament, a fancy dress night out or going for a nice meal. There is something for everyone to enjoy."

The club is always happy for people to join, and at the start of the Lent term the first training session is being offered for free to any new members, as a trial session.

To become a member, students will have to buy a karate license, costing twenty pounds. After that there is a charge of two pounds per session. Training takes place in the Sports Centre on Mondays and Wednesdays, 7-8.30 for beginners and 8.30-10 for advanced.

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SPORTS

Eat Sport, Sleep Sport, Read Wynes



In the first column that I wrote, I was giving praise to the University for their latest investment in sport, the money they had spent and their change in attitude that showed a willingness to improve the facilities on campus for the sports people here. However, in light of more recent developments this term, I now realise that the new £20 million sports centre isn't an investment to improve the facilities for students here, it is a money making scheme, which they are using to attract more potential students to the University and impress those who like the look of fancy glass buildings. Ok I admit I was as pleased as anyone that the new sports centre was given the go ahead, but although it will benefit students to some extent, I can also see the transparency of their ulterior motives. One thing that sealed this suspicion to me was when they decided to re-fence the tennis courts, but not resurface them, even though they are clearly in a poor condition. The tennis courts are right by the University driveway so forgive me for being a cynic, but to me the re-fencing is simply there to be aesthetically pleasing to visitors. I don't see it being a practical improvement when the courts themselves are just as shoddy as before.

While we're on the topic of the tennis courts, during busy days of the year, the parking office decide to use the tennis courts as a 'last resort' overflow car park. I am unaware of the other options they investigated before coming to the tennis courts as a last resort, but even regardless of last resort or not, is it still acceptable? I wonder as I write this how students feel about them being used as a car park. Obviously those that are in the tennis club are furious about the crap hand they've been dealt, but surely other students must have a fundamental problem with it. If the sports facilities are so poor that it makes no odds whether they are used as a car park, then what does that say about the state of sports at Lancaster and what kind of priority sports is being given here? I also wonder what impression this gives to visitors, especially those that have been directed to park on the tennis courts. These are parents and students who are thinking of enrolling at Lancaster, if any of them are tennis players, it is spelt out instantly how valued their sport will be during their time here. I think investment needs to go deeper than superficially luring students here with pretty glass buildings and smart new fencing. If students are going to come here there needs to be an actual improvement in all sports facilities, full stop.

Competition builds as Carter Shield heads towards finals day

Nick O'Malley

WITH JUST ONE week left until Carter Shield finals day, Sunday the 29th of November marked the final sport of the Carter shield this term, Korfball. The event saw a great turn out, with every college able to field a full team, except for Lonsdale, who had to begin each match with 3 girls and 4 boys, one girl short of a full allocation. This was an unusual allowance in the carter shield; however in a sport where man-marking is the key it posed no advantage to the team.

The event began with an uninspiring first match between Cartmel and Furness that provided no goals and no clear-cut chances as each team reduced their opponents to shooting from range. In the second game, Pendle were quick to make their one man advantage count over Lonsdale, scoring within thirty seconds, and running out 3-0 winners. The next game saw last year's winners Fylde completely outclass County winning 6-0, with Vanessa Gifford, the University Korfball coach controlling the game, provided by quality support in Houston, and University netballer Davies.

Bowland secured a 2-1 win over Grizedale in what was an extremely close encounter, with Grizedale looking livelier and more likely winner's right up until the last minute of the game. Fylde then beat Cartmel 2-0, with two key players scoring the goal. Gifford had a clever underarm shot unique to Korfball, while Houston scored over his head while running away from the goal. Bowland versus Pendle was an extremely close game with Pendle needing an extremely late equaliser to gain a 1-1 draw. Furness drew with County 1-1 to gain their second draw and second point of the day.

The next encounter saw Grizedale against Lonsdale with the former team all sporting yellow war paint across their faces. Grizedale easily dispatched their opponents 2-0. County gained their first win of the day over Cartmel courtesy of an outrageous long range



Building to a conclusion: The Korfball event was the final sport before finals day. (Photo: H Jones)

effort. Although the result was only 1-0, it was one of the more exciting games of the day with numerous shots rebounding off the rim of the korf. Grizedale against Pendle saw a first of the day, with University squash captain Ben Holden, hitting the roof of the sports centre with an attempted long pass. Grizedale came out on top 2-0 with Braybrook scoring both goals in a style that more closely resembled basketball than korfball, it was nonetheless effective.

Fylde the continued their fine form

with a 2-0 win over Furness, with Gifford scoring both goals underarm, one from open play and the other from a penalty shot. Bowland met Lonsdale in the final game of the day. Bowland needed a win to top their group, and Lonsdale were clearly dejected, knowing that they could already not make it to finals day. This was reflected in the score line, with Bowland securing the second biggest win of the day 5-0.

Group 1 saw Fylde finish top after winning every game without conceding, and County going through to finals

day in second with a win a draw and a loss. In Group 2 Bowland went through so play County in the first semi-final, and Grizedale came second so have the tough task of scoring the first Korf against Fylde this year.

The third event in the Carter Shield this year was volleyball and saw Lonsdale top Group 1 with a perfect three win record. Grizedale qualified in second place with two wins and a loss to Lonsdale. Group 2 saw Pendle and Fylde both win two and lose one but Pendle ended top, on point difference. This sees Pendle matched up against Grizedale, and Lonsdale versus Fylde in the semi-finals.

Women's football preceded volleyball earlier on in the term and saw Fylde's usual domination in this sport, with them topping Group 1 with three wins out of three and a superb goal difference. Lonsdale came second in Group 1, while Grizedale and Bowland qualified first and second respectively in Group 2, both winning two and losing one. This means Fylde will play Bowland, and Lonsdale have Grizedale in the semi-finals.

The first sport of the term was Dodgeball, with Group 1 seeing Bowland and Grizedale in first and second respectively, with Fylde and Cartmel qualifying from Group 2. This sees the match up of Fylde versus Grizedale and Bowland versus Cartmel on Sunday 6th of December for finals day. The overall points for the Carter Shield so far show Grizedale and Fylde leading the way on 36 points, each having qualified for finals day at every sport. However following close behind are Bowland and Lonsdale on 30 and 27 points respectively.

Inter-College chair, Marc Handley said that 'originally I was disappointed with the turn out for the Carter Shield taster sessions, with far fewer attending than last year. However, the sports representatives have clearly done their job well and I am impressed with the turn out for each of the events so far'. Handley also thanked all these representatives and captains for their hard work this term and for making the Carter shield a success.

LUSU unhappy to play ball over tennis court parking

from the authorities in 2010."

Wynes, however, feels that this isn't a good enough excuse. "I think it's unacceptable that they're palming off the problems they've had in parking onto the already big problems that we have with lack of sports facilities."

The Sports Executive has discussed resurfacing the courts to bring them back up to match standard, and it is hoped this will happen before the completion of the sports centre in 2011. This raises the question, though, of whether they will be used as overflow car parks once money has been spent on their restoration.

"I have a feeling that once they're resurfaced [Facilities] won't want people to park on them," said Wynes. "But parking problems will still be there. I don't see what their plans are in the



Match point: Wynes is unhappy with the state of the tennis courts anyway

future."

With facilities unacceptable for playing on there are concerns that Lancaster's chances in Roses and other sporting competitions will be limited.

The Roses tradition is that all events are held on campus so the courts will be in use then, despite being deemed unsuitable for BUCS matches.

"It's going to be embarrassing at

Roses, the courts are in such a bad state," Wynes remarked. "I think our facilities have held back our teams."

Poor courts will not only affect competition chances but their use as car parks may deter some students from studying at Lancaster.

"If you're a decent tennis player who's debating between two universities and find at one you're parking on your tennis courts when you come for an open day, you're not going to pick Lancaster," said Wynes.

She feels that an improvement in facilities would increase Lancaster's chances of winning Roses by attracting better sports players to the university.

"It wouldn't have an instant effect on our rankings but gradually we'd start getting better tennis players and that would have a real effect," she said.

Robert Payling



Long season could haunt Capello

WHEN YOU READ this, England will have learned their group stage opponents for the 2010 World Cup. And yet, regardless of who Fabio Capello's side have to face in South Africa, their greatest antagonist comes not in the form of any team or player, but the English Premier League itself.

Unlike other top leagues in European football, English teams will play through December and January without a winter break. Players in the Spanish, Italian and German leagues will benefit from the chance to recharge while English players slog it out during a congested festive period.

Of course, the person who will fear the consequences of this the most is Capello. For November's friendly against Brazil he was without nine of his first choice 11 players because of injuries so he will be dreading the outcome of a long and arduous league calendar.

One can't help but think that the Italian would have had a wry smile as Liverpool went crashing out of the



Champions League. A disappointment for their manager, but the fact that such an influential player as Steven Gerrard will take no further part in the Carling Cup or Champions League, can only mean he will be fresher.

Just four months in to the new sea-

son and the demands of the division already seem to be taking effect. After 14 games there have been 423 goals scored in the Premier League. Compare that with 328 goals scored in La Liga, 352 in Serie A, and 369 in the Bundesliga and suddenly the reliability of an English defence seems a little shaky.

This brings us to the question of who is looking better suited for success at next year's tournament. Brazil for their devastating counter attacking some will say, Spain for their clinical passing style, and Italy for their catenaccio defensive structure. And, meekly hanging around in their shadows is England, for no other reason than, their passion.

It is a sad truth that England's claim towards winning the competition come not from a firm belief in their footballing ability, but from their tendency to display high levels of emotion. Everyone remembers the images of Gazza's tears in Italia 90 and Rooney's rampage in 2006. Their counterparts on the other hand, have much more to offer.

To comment on Brazil as lightweight players with skill and flare is now an injustice to their greater qualities. Their Head Coach Dunga has built a team that does indeed have fantastic attacking prowess; however, he has also integrated a pack of true behemoths to match their aesthetic beauty.

Perhaps the most devastating example of these immensely impressive athletes is the right-back Maicon. The 28-year-old Internazionale star is just one of the incredible players on course to flourish at next year's tournament.

Similarly, you cannot help but groan when watching Joleon Lescott lump the ball towards Emile Heskey during matches when Capello is left with little else option. The alternative first XI isn't that much more promising either. It seems inevitable that relying on our talismanic players like Gerrard or Rooney, will end in despair as they either lose their position, or their head, and leave the rest of the team vulnerable.

That vulnerability has been high-

lighted each time Capello's side have gone up against top opposition. Against Spain, England's defensive fragilities were exposed by Spain's masterful midfield play from Xabi Alonso, Andres Iniesta and Xavi Hernandez. The England defence could not cope with such a World Class pedigree and David Villa was able to carve open the central defenders with ease whenever he felt like it.

Capello's side may benefit from having faced top sides like France, Holland and Brazil so close to the tournament and all away from home. Yet there are other footballing giants who will arrive at the World Cup who are more than capable of making England look ordinary. Those same old adversaries Portugal, Argentina, and the in form African teams of Ghana and Ivory Coast will provide uncharted territory for the national side.

The sooner the World Cup arrives the better for Capello. Preferably without the metatarsal misfortune that hampered his predecessors.

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Facilities provided by Lancaster University Sports Centre

LUSU unhappy to play ball over tennis court parking

- Courts used for visitor parking two weeks in succession
- VP Sport speaks out against Facilities
- University blame wider issue of parking on campus

Julian Surface
Sam Newsham

THE USE OF tennis courts for overflow car parking has left university teams unable to run sufficient practices. Due to a shortage in parking spaces, the courts are used for visitors' cars on graduation and open days. As such, teams have no option but to cancel practices. The courts are already in such a poor state that matches cannot be played on them. Instead teams must travel to Bowerham and pay to use the



Court battle: Visitor cars parked for PG open day (Photo: Ben Robins)

courts there. "I think it's shocking that we have tennis courts yet we can't play matches on them," said Sue Wynes, LUSU VP (Sports). "The surface is awful. Facilities have said they think acceptable but the club objects. They're not acceptable

to play BUCS matches on." In addition to poor surfacing the courts have no floodlighting, which limits the times they can be used for practice.

As well as encouraging the university to resurface the courts, Wynes tried to intercede in the matter of the car parking but failed. After receiving an email informing her that the courts would be used as a car park for Postgraduate Graduation Day on 9th December she sent a reply objecting strongly. Her only response from Facilities staff was a further email informing her that the courts would be used again on 2nd December for a Visit Day.

"I really don't think it's acceptable to do this. I know there's a problem with parking but I don't think that they should use sports facilities to park their cars on," she said. "I argued against it but it wasn't like I got a say in the matter."

Wynes feels the issue shows how low sport is on the university's agenda. "If they really cared about sports they would improve the actual facilities for the players who are currently here."

She believes the university is reluctant to spend more money on sports by resurfacing the courts when it is currently investing £20 million in a new Sports Centre.

The university has only a limited amount of space for car parking and is prevented by council regulations from building any more, so the tennis courts have traditionally been used as overflow.

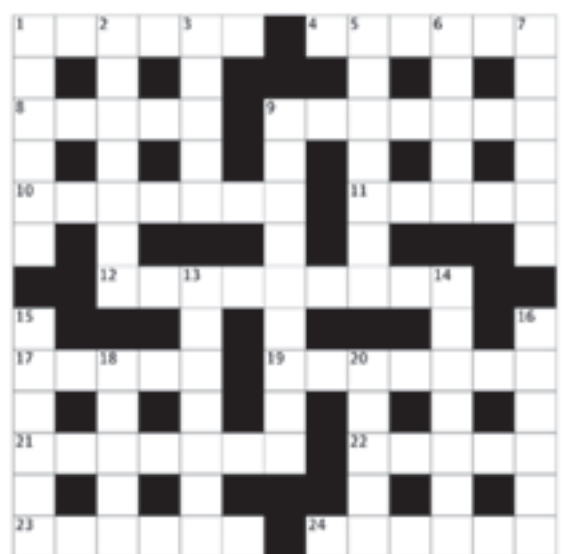
"We have always used the hard standing tennis courts for temporary parking on important University days such as Visitor and Graduation days," Mark Swindlehurst, Director of Facilities, told SCAN. "Over the past six years we have been unable to secure more parking spaces on campus as we are restricted by the County Council Highways department. This is currently under review and we are awaiting approval

Carter Shield heads towards finals day



The big showdown awaits: Fylde and Grizedale are trailblazing the Carter Shield ahead of finals day (Photo: H Jones)

Quick crossword no 12,112



Across

- 1 Safeguard given against financial loss (6)
- 4 Squirm in pain (6)
- 8 Fairy-like (5)
- 9 Apparatus to perform a specific function (7)
- 10 Coiling shoot of climbing plant (7)
- 11 Garden flower from bulb (5)
- 12 Copy – teacup lid (anag) (9)
- 17 Devastation (5)
- 19 Set aside for specific purpose (7)
- 21 Quick sharp reply (7)
- 22 Belief in the existence of God (5)
- 23 Disreputable person (3,3)
- 24 Vegetables (found on golf courses?) (6)

Down

- 1 Damp with perspiration (6)
- 2 Genteel (7)
- 3 Male voice (one of three?) (5)
- 5 Soft Italian cheese (7)
- 6 Fabric with distinctive weave (5)

- 7 Free from liability (6)
- 9 Many-legged creature (9)
- 13 Spanish artist, 1881-1973 (7)
- 14 Inspect closely (7)
- 15 Little angel (6)
- 16 Cuts corners (6)
- 18 Dull (5)
- 20 Range and direction finding equipment (5)

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