BUILDINGS NAMED

The prize-winning names for the new student accommodation have now been announced. The winning name for the Kelsey development is Brighthelm, while Lewes Court has been chosen for the Bradford & Northern housing.

Kingston Court was the runner-up for the Bradford & Northern competition, while for Kelsey, second place was taken by The Laines and third place by Ashbrook Terrace.

The prize winners are being notified by the Residential Services Area and more details will appear in a future issue of the Bulletin. The chosen names are subject to Post Office approval and the allocation of post codes.

BEQUEST FOR RACE RELATIONS STUDIES

A man whose son spent “happy years” as a student at Sussex in the 'sixties has left the University £1,000 in his will.

Mr. Lionel Lawrence, a Polish Jew who had lost his family in the Second World War, requested that the money be used for race relations studies or to any purpose for the improvement of such relations.

His daughter Mrs. Celia Wallace explained that her father had an affinity with minority groups and had chosen to bequeath the money to Sussex because it was the place where his son Peter had studied (SOCS 1963-66 and MA 1966-67). “My brother tells me his friends at Sussex were from all over the world and included Thabo Mbeki [ANC],” said Mrs Wallace.

The University is now carefully considering how the bequest can best be used in keeping with Mr. Lawrence’s wishes.

A familiar face on ITV's News at Ten, Sussex graduate Julia Somerville pictured last week on campus with her former Personal Tutor Tony Inglis (left) and Terry Diffe (Dean of CCS) when she accepted an invitation from Media Studies to speak on 'Reporting of the Elections: The Future of Opinion Polls'. Julia read English in EAM from 1966-69.

UNIVERSITY BUYS ISLE OF THORNS

The University has secured the long-term future of its conference centre in Ashdown Forest — the Isle of Thorns — by purchasing the freehold of the 76.5 acre estate. The purchase includes all the land and property (including the White House, residential buildings and the playing fields) which had been previously rented to the University on a 21 year lease.

After lengthy negotiations, an agreement has just been reached which will ensure that the White House Training Centre and the extensive facilities, which include a biology field station, are enjoyed by the University for many years to come.

The outcome of the negotiations with the former owner, the Manor Charitable Trust, had been in doubt up to the beginning of this year when the Vice-Chancellor and senior University officers were able to agree favourable terms. It was evident that a purchase was the only realistic option for retaining this unique facility.

The news that the estate has been saved for use by the University has been welcomed by the staff and the many regular users. Dr. Leuan Griffiths said: “All groups that use the Isle of Thorns will be delighted at the news. It is particularly welcome to subjects such as Geography which uses the Isle of Thorns each October.”

Commercial Manager Charles Dudley, who has overall responsibility for the estate, commented: “The purchase of the Isle of Thorns secures a year-round residential training centre for the growing number of University students. This is a significant step forward for the University.”

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groups who wish to use such a facility. It will also promote the University's interests in the wider community."

The advantages of securing the long-term future of the estate, which is 19 miles from the University in the village of Chelwood Gate, were highlighted by consultants in 1988 after a detailed look at our conference and training facilities. However, it was only recently that the market conditions and other factors moved so decisively in the University's favour.

"The development of a long-term plan for the Isle of Thorns has been held back, for obvious reasons, pending the outcome of the negotiations. In consultation with users and other interested groups we can now firm up the strategic plan for the estate for consideration by the Trading Services Committee in the Autumn Term," Charles Dudley added.

The Isle of Thorns lies within the ancient Forest of Ashdown. The forest was a 15,000 acre hunting ground, possibly formed as early as

The White House, Isle of Thorns

the 13th century and encompassed by an earthen bank topped with wooden stakes with a deep ditch on the inside and a slope on the outside. This fence made it difficult for deer to break out but allowed them to leap back in.

For several centuries the forest belonged to the Crown whose tenants enclosed parts for farming. The Isle of Thorns is one such enclosure on the south-west edge, formed in the 17th century, or even as early as 1564 when the name 'Isle of Thonesgill' appears; that it is almost surrounded by water courses no doubt explains why it is called an Isle.

In 1928, Mr. Alfred R. Wagg purchased the estate with the object of providing, through the Manor Charitable Trust, a holiday camp for schoolboys, members of clubs for working men and boys, scouts and similar organisations. The Trust had close connections with the Eton Manor Boys' Clubs which grew up in the East End of London in the early 1900s. The estate was developed "In order that the health and happiness of an open air holiday may be forever available for those who need one, and in particular for those whose homes are found in some big city."

The University continues to fulfil some of the original purposes of the Trust — groups continue to camp in the grounds and the facilities are regularly used by schools from inner-city areas.

If you want to find out more about the Isle of Thorns and what it has to offer, contact Charles Dudley at the University (ext. 8222) or Mary Ticehurst at the White House, Isle of Thorns (tel. 0825 740283).

ISLE OF THORNS POOL

The pool will be open to staff and students of the University at weekends and the August Bank Holiday from Saturday, 13 June, to Monday, 31 August, from 11.00 am to 6.00 pm. Users of the pool do so at their own risk.
THE TWO SUMMER GRADUATION CEREMONIES

A reminder that for the first time, two Summer Graduation Ceremonies will be held at the Brighton Centre. The great day is Tuesday, 14 July, and the planned schedule for the day is:

**Morning graduands — BIOLS, CCS, ENGG, EAM, SOC, ICAPE**

- 8.30 am Brighton Centre opens
  - Gowns available for morning graduands
- 9.15 am Auditorium opens
- 9.30 am Photographic services open
- 10.00 am All graduands must be seated in Auditorium
- 10.15 am Ceremony begins
- 12.30 pm (approx.) Ceremony ends

**Afternoon graduands — AFRAS, COGS, EURO, MAPS, MOLS, SPRU**

- 11.00 am Gowns for afternoon graduands available from the Brighton Centre
  - Photographic services available
- 1.30 pm All graduands should have collected their gowns by this time
- 2.00 pm All graduands must be seated in Auditorium
- 2.15 pm Ceremony starts
- 3.45 pm (approx.) Ceremony ends

**NOTES:**

Photographic services will remain open until 5.30 pm.

Gowns must be returned to the collection point by 6.00 pm.

Bars and catering facilities will be available in the Centre throughout the day and will not, as in previous years, close during the ceremonies.

[Graduands who wish to collect their gowns in advance of the graduation day, may do so on the previous Friday (10 July) from the Gallery, Mandela Hall, Falmer House, between the hours of 10.00 am - noon, and 2.00 - 4.00 pm.]

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**PROFESSOR TOWNSEND APPOINTED WEI LUN PROFESSOR**

Professor Peter Townsend pictured above (right) with Professor Charles Kao, Vice-Chancellor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (and an honorary graduate of Sussex), and Professor Ian Wilson, Head of Electronic Engineering, during his recent visit to the Chinese University. This followed his appointment to the prestigious title of Wei Lun Visiting Professor. This title is given each year by the Chinese University of Hong Kong to a distinguished scholar and includes a visit to Hong Kong to deliver the Wei Lun public lecture.

Peter Townsend, who is Professor of Experimental Physics at Sussex, chose as the theme for his lecture 'The Need for Imperfections', in which he demonstrated that, far from being undesirable, imperfections are essential for virtually all the physical technologies which we use. In addition to the obvious examples of semiconductors, photographic processes and optical fibres, defects have been crucial in every technology from flint knapping to modern metallurgy.

In total he gave three lectures in the Chinese University and also lectured in the Hong Kong University. From Hong Kong he went on to China and visited several institutes in Shanghai and Suzhou where he gave a further set of lectures. "The side visit to China resulted in access to some excellent new crystals and a planned set of experiments in collaboration with the Academica Sinica," he said. "There was time for some tourism, not least to a Chinese theatre where the highlight was the stage curtains catching fire," he added.

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**Around the Schools — in brief**

**MAPS**

It has just been announced that Professor John Barrow has been awarded a one-year Royal Society Leverhulme Fellowship. This will enable him to spend a year doing research.

**MOLS**

Dr. Kosmas Prassides has been appointed as a Visiting Fellow to The Royal Institution of Great Britain for a period of three years.

**SOC**

Professor Jennifer Platt has become Secretary and Vice-President of the Research Committee on the History of Sociology of the International Sociological Association.

James Thomson gave a paper on 'The American Market and 18th Century Catalan Industrialisation' at the Economic History Society Conference session on 'The impact of the Discovery of the Americas on Europe' in April.
HOVERFLIES DON'T PLAY CHESS

by JOHN GRIFFIN

Isaac Asimov may be dead, but he still has a lot to answer for. Mention the word 'robot', and most people still think of a humanoid, metal bodied creature with an electronic brain, capable of human-like interactions with the real world. Although the humanoid body shape is almost entirely a product of science fiction, efforts to develop artificial intelligence have suffered for decades from the idea that 'human' intelligence is the only kind worth bothering about, and that an artificial intelligence should be able to interact with a wide variety of environments in as versatile a manner as we do.

But since the mid-1980s this approach has been challenged by the initially almost heretical suggestion that the right way to approach the problem is not from the 'top down' (using ourselves as the archetype) but from the 'bottom up', designing simple machines that perform specified tasks very well, and then adding these specialities together to make more complex systems.

This approach is now one of the most promising lines of attack on the problem of creating real robots. And one of the centres of such research is in the School of Cognitive and Computing Sciences at Sussex.

Dave Cliff came to Sussex in 1987, attracted by the group's high international reputation, obtained his PhD this year and is now a Temporary Lecturer in Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence. His interest is in vision. But rather than trying to mimic human vision and cognition in the computer, he models the way in which an insect, the hoverfly Syritta pipiens, interacts with the world.

This creature has two eyes, like ourselves, and it shares with us the 'foveal' imaging system, where only part of the field of view is sharply imaged and the focus of attention, and the eyes scan the view in search of interesting — or threatening — objects.

Like all living things, the life of the hoverfly revolves around survival and reproduction. The basic biological imperatives are sometimes referred to as the '4Fs' — Fleeting, Fighting, Feeding and Fornication. The last of these is what matters most to the male hoverfly, and which is partly modelled by Cliff's computer simulations.

So far, Cliff has not built a real robot that mimics the behaviour of the hoverfly. Instead, the computer simulation of the fly's vision and its response to a 'target' which moves like a female hoverfly operates within another computer simulation — what is now called a 'virtual reality'. The computer creates a simulated world in which female hoverflies fly around, and the simulation of the male hoverfly looks for females and approaches them cautiously. The resulting flight path of the simulated male fly is very much like those of the real thing, cautiously approaching the females and lurking just out of range of her inferior eyes, ready to pounce when the time is ripe (no, the simulation does not include the pouncing).

At one level, this work is telling researchers how to design the systems that will be built in to genuine robot 'insects'. But there is

BUSY TIME FOR ENGG SPACE GROUP

This year has been a busy year for the Space Group in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (ENGG), with up to three teams in the field at one time: supporting the Cluster project in Holland; the Mars94 project in Orleans, France; and the Shuttle Tether project in Houston, Texas.

GROUP LEADER DR. PAUL GOUGH has been at NASA's Johnson Space Centre, Houston, taking part in pre-flight simulation training in preparation for this July's flight of the shuttle Atlantis with a satellite tethered up to 20km from the orbiter. A diagnostic instrument, jointly developed with the Phillips Geophysical Laboratory, is located in the shuttle bay during the flight to monitor the interaction of the combined orbiter-satellite system with the earth's near space environment, the earth's magnetosphere.

Included within the instrument is the first non-military artificial neural network to fly in space. Designed in ENGG, this neural network analyses data, passing its conclusions via telemetry to the payload operations control centre in Houston. In this way the operation mode of the instrument can be optimised from the ground in real-time. It is the only link with the instrument's data during the mission as the 5 Gigabytes of data generated by the instrument are stored on-board until after the orbiter lands. Another unique feature of this instrument is the first use of particle correlators to provide an 'electron radar' to probe the wake produced by the orbiter. Last week, Dr. Gough heard of new funding for the Tether mission of £32,000 from the SERC.

EXPERIMENTAL OFFICER DR. PETER DAVIES has lead a team including Simon Davis and Toby Champion to the European Space Technology Centre in Noordwijk in the Netherlands in support of the European Space Agency Cluster mission. A corner-stone mission of the ESA Horizon-2000 science plan, it comprises a cluster of four identical satellites flying in formation in the earth's magnetosphere.

Cluster will separate spatial and temporal effects for the first time as the satellite formation crosses magnetosphere boundaries. At ESTEC the engineering model of the Wave Experiment Consortium (VEC) instruments for Cluster are undergoing initial testing prior to being
The simulated hoverfly spends most of its time inside a cylinder which has stripes painted on its inner surface (figure A). Computer graphics techniques can be used to visualise the view from inside the cylinder that would be seen through a conventional camera with a wide-angle lens (figure B). Using a mathematical model of the hoverfly’s eye, the view ‘through the eyes’ of the hoverfly can also be visualised (figure C). Another aspect to this work, which may provide insights into the way intelligence has evolved in the biological world. On earth, evolution has proceeded from simple systems to more complex ones, and it is arguable that our kind of intelligence has emerged naturally as a result of increasing complexity, with more and more systems working together.

At present, even a simple robot using the hoverfly ‘intelligence’ developed by Cliff would have to be wired up to a sizable computer, which is one reason why these models have been developed in a virtual world. But as the size and cost of the hardware keeps coming down, he sees the possibility of fully mobile, self-contained robots of this kind within 10 years, and intends to be ready with the software to make these robots run as soon as the cheap computer hardware is available.

Such robots would be restricted to specific tasks, but within their limits they would act intelligently, avoiding danger and keeping out from underfoot. ‘Bugs’ that creep in all the nooks and crannies of your room to gather up dust and dump it in a central tip are one possibility, while Rodney Brooks, of MIT, has suggested that a colony of tiny robots might live on your TV screen, getting their energy from the electrons in the beam that paints the picture, and quietly going about the task of keeping the screen clean.

It’s a far cry from the kind of intelligence represented by a chess playing humanoid robot, that can also wash the dishes and mend a fuse. But as Brooks points out, it is unfair to claim that an elephant has no intelligence worth studying just because it does not play chess. Hoverflies don’t play chess, either; but Dave Cliff and his colleagues are convinced that by studying the flight of simulated hoverflies within a computer generated virtual reality they can learn things about the way brains in general (including our own brains) work. And they are also pointing the way to a world of robotic servants based not on Asimovian humanoids but on insects. Perhaps it’s just as well that Asimov hasn’t lived to see it!

MEANWHILE IN ORLEANS, postgraduate students Miguel Montero and Jorg Bruckner were making the first tests with the engineering model of the CIS spacecraft, Mars94, Elisma instrument scheduled to fly to Mars in 1994. The ENGG group is responsible for the instrument’s central computer. An array of transputers is constructed in such a way as to be fault-tolerant, essential for such a deep space mission where the radio communication time with earth can take up to 30 minutes. Because of the high data rates of modern instruments and the low telemetry data rates possible over such long distances, most of the Elisma data will be compressed in this computer, by a factor of eight before transmission back to earth.

The ENGG SPACE GROUP INSTRUMENTATION currently involves collaboration with some 30 research institutes located in the (wider) Europe, CIS and the US. Much of this work requires interfacing ENGG-constructed space hardware with equipment constructed by the various institutions and ensuring the correct inter-operation once launched into space.

Some of the recent scientific results of the group have been presented at international conferences this year:

Postgraduate student Helano Castro de Souza presented papers on his design for the Mars94 fault-tolerant hardware and similar systems to the European Workshop on Parallel Computing, Barcelona, in April, and to Transputers 92, Saline Royale d’Arc et Senans, in May.

Postgraduate student Yavuz Senol is presenting a paper on his instrument for a sounding rocket at the International Conference on Parallel Computing and Transputer Applications, Barcelona, in September.

In February, Paul Gough presented a paper on automatic feature recognition for space databases at the International Space Year conference on Earth and Space Science Information Systems held at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena. This summer Paul has been invited to Brazil by the Ministerio da Aeronautica Centro Tecnico Aerospacial to give a course of lectures. Closer to home he gave a talk on campus in April to the Institution of Electrical Engineers (Southern Region Branch) about the ENGG instrument on the forthcoming July Atlantis Shuttle mission.
ENTERPRISE LIFTS OFF!

The Sussex Enterprise Unit, now up and running, is starting to fulfil its Year One objectives. Operating on Employment Department, University and outside employer funding totalling almost £2 million over five years, these aims are to enable students to develop work-related skills by enhancing the curriculum, encouraging employer involvement and instituting a programme of staff development.

The early projects started under the scheme are now well under way, as these accounts from Project Co-ordinators indicate:

SHADOWING THE NETWORK
A Southwark Probation Officer, a Times photographer, Lloyds of London's Personnel Officer, a manager of Mental Health Services in Hove, an Oxfam fundraiser. These members of the Sussex Graduate Network, the Careers Advisory Service’s contacts scheme, have just been shadowed in a project designed to give undergraduates a glimpse of the future.

Workshadowing isn’t new; using it systematically to enable students to explore capabilities developed in their courses and those used in careers, is.

This pilot scheme aimed to provide 20 places for second years. In the event we did so well with offers from our graduates that we placed 31 drawn from across the University. From a 5.00 am start with a Channel 4 newsreader to a day spent on the Africa desk of the Overseas Development Administration. Students have been busy. Next — debriefing. And then, of course, evaluation. Watch this space! — Carolyn Morris, Careers Advisory Service.

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY
The project relates to two Social Anthropology courses: Observation and Exploration (OE) (1st year, 3rd term) and Language, Meaning and Power (LMP) (2nd year, 3rd term). Students involved in both of these courses have the opportunity to become engaged in work at the Brighton Ethnography Museum, through liaison with the Curator, Anthony Shelton.

For OE students the museum component involves up to four groups of three to four students developing projects concerned with areas such as how visitors read culture as represented in the displays and surveys of what the public image of the exhibition is. For LMP the Enterprise component has added a ‘Critical Museography’ component to the course, involving critical analysis of museum representation, particularly classification and power/knowledge relations, which may lead to extended essays for individual students.

Anthony Shelton has given a series of talks related to both courses attended by students and faculty, on the role of project work in the museum and on issues in critical museography. A further element of staff development has been a number of fruitful sessions for anthropology faculty with Andrew Hood, Staff Development Officer. — Brian Street, School of Social Sciences.

RADIO PLACEMENTS
Sussex Media Studies ran a specialist course on radio for the first time this year. In order to integrate practical and vocational elements into this from the start, EHE has subsidised two weekend workshops as well as placements with Brighton’s Festival Radio. The aim was to show how the social, ethical and political aspects of radio broadcasting studied in the academic course emerge as professional problems in the everyday routines of production and editorial decision-making.

The workshops were run by Community Radio Open Workshop (CROW). They were taken not only by the five students on the Major course, but by two other Media students with an interest in the area as well as representatives from faculty and MU. On their placements, Sussex students Isabelle Greenwood and David Heame were responsible for compiling and presenting Festival’s daily listings of up-coming events. Others contributed features, reviews and interviews to the station’s arts programme Sausel.

The plan for the future is to build on this initiative by providing an ‘in-house’ version of the radio workshops. If Festival is successful in its bid for a community franchise, we also hope to consolidate our links with them through regular placement and shadowing schemes. — James Donald, School of Cultural and Community Studies.

As well as this selection, there are a number of other ‘live’ projects running throughout the Schools, and many others waiting to take off, including proposals for School Enterprise Development Officers.

□ For more information on Enterprise please contact William Locke in the Enterprise Unit, Arts D422, or telephone ext. 8543/8533 (answerphone).

'ENGLISH RURAL COMMUNITIES' COURSE LEADS TO MAJOR BOOK
A cause for celebration in CCS is the publication this month of a major book based directly on the popular School course 'English Rural Communities'.

Each chapter in the book, The English Rural Community, is based on lectures given during the course, and in the true Sussex interdisciplinary tradition, they bring to bear a variety of academic disciplines on a set of issues. These include the development of contrasting communities, the nature of rural religious practice, the portrayal of rural labour and the ideal of the rustic within a predominantly urban society.

There is no doubt that the notion of rural arcadia is very strong within English culture and it can, according to Brian Short, editor of the book, be a bedevilling myth. "So powerful is the idealised picture of the English village that it can get in the way of rational planning: all too often planners project their own ideas of what a village ought to be like rather than looking at what real village communities actually need."

The book, which is fully illustrated with accompanying maps, paintings and photographs, is published by Cambridge University Press.
IDS ASSOCIATES WIN ESSAY PRIZES

David Leonard, former Visiting Fellow, and Teddy Brett, Research Associate, of the Institute of Development Studies, have won first and joint second prize respectively in the first round of the RAWOO (Dutch Advisory Council for Scientific Research and Development Problems) essay competition.

David Leonard's essay was entitled 'Structural Reform of the Veterinary Profession in Africa and Theories of Organisational Choice', and Teddy Brett's was on 'Competence and Accountability in the Voluntary Sector: Organisation Theory, Adjustment Policy and Institutional Reform'. It is gratifying that out of the 37 entries work done at IDS should receive two of the prizes.

The follow-up to David Leonard's award will include an opportunity for him to act as an adviser to a group of young African researchers working on PhDs in their own universities on themes related to the winning essay.

ACCOUNTANCY POST

Noel Sladen, Senior Assistant Finance Officer, has been re-elected to the Council of the Association of Accounting Technicians for a further three years.

First elected in 1989, he has been closely involved in the new education and training scheme, based on units of competence, which has put the Association in the forefront of developments in accountancy training. The Association, formed 12 years ago, has a world-wide membership of 20,000 and 75,000 students.

HEALTH CENTRE PRIZE

Sussex University Health Centre won joint first prize (with the Main Street practice in Northiam) in a competition organised by East Sussex Family Health Services to find the best information leaflets published by doctors. Since last year, GPs are required to publish leaflets explaining the services their practices have to offer.
GERONTOLOGY
AT
SUSSEX

A wide variety of activities is taking place at the University involving gerontology—the study of ageing.

The Diploma in Gerontology, started in September 1991 as part of the Centre for Continuing Education’s programme, attracts professionals and lay people from a wide range of backgrounds.

The 16 students include nurses and social workers, of whom two are Homes Inspectors. The oldest student, a former social worker now disabled by ME, wants to understand the social and psychological processes she now experiences as a result of her illness and to prepare herself for a second career in voluntary work.

Other recent CCE activities include study days which have been held in conjunction with the Sussex Gerontology Network on dementia, sheltered housing and death and dying.

These educational activities have developed alongside the Sussex Gerontology Network. This informal grouping has grown from strength to strength since its first meeting over two years ago. It brings together providers of services for older people, consumers of those services, and academics.

It builds bridges across the statutory, private and voluntary sectors in both counties and helps to shape the provision of community care. Its regular meetings and study days have been addressed by figures of national and local distinction, drawing audiences of up to 150 people.

The Network is beginning to develop sub-groups to carry its programme forward. The first is on sheltered housing. Another is planned on Ageing in Europe. The Network already enjoys links with the Centre Pluridisciplinaire de Gerontologie in Grenoble and is collaborating with Brighton & Hove Health Authority in a European project.

Academic interests here at the University encompass biology, experimental psychology, history, sociology and social anthropology.

Dorothy Jerrome (CCS) has concentrated on friendship, family and peer relationships in later life. Fellow anthropologist Peter Lloyd (SOC) has a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship for a study of social organisation and interaction in two sheltered housing schemes. He is being assisted by Amelia Mills, a recent Sussex social anthropology graduate.

John Austin Locke—one of Peter’s students—is engaged in doctoral research on social policy in relation to housing provision for older people. Sociologist Jenny Shaw (CCS) is being funded under the ESRC’s current Ageing Initiative to study the Pace of Life.

In the history group, Harry Gaston has just completed a history doctorate on the closure of long-stay hospital beds in East Sussex. More postgraduate research is being formulated by Pat Young, former editor of Geriatric Medicine, on representations of old age in drama.

Scientists in the Network include Jenny Rusted, Mike Tribe (both BIOLS) and Ruth Maxwell. Jenny has just been awarded a Wellcome Trust grant for a study of residual memory for the activities of daily living in Alzheimer’s patients. Two postgraduate research students of experimental psychology will be working with her. Mike Tribe’s interests include the biology of human ageing.

In the Trafford Centre the biologist Ruth Maxwell is conducting research on the cause and progression of the pathology associated with Alzheimer’s disease.

With this range of expertise, members of the Network are in demand outside the University.

Assistance is sought by a variety of agencies (not least the media) for comments, training and consultancy work. In the latter capacity two members of the group have undertaken separate pieces of work for the Sussex Rural Community Council.

Dorothy Jerrome produced a report on the support strategies developed by old people in rural Sussex. Peter Lloyd currently acts as the Council’s Community Care Policy Adviser.

Dorothy Jerrome

KISS ME KATE

The newly-formed Sussex University Musical Society (SUMS) will be staging its first production—Kiss Me Kate—later this month.

Carl Porter’s well-known musical is based on Shakespeare’s The Taming of the Shrew and the all-student cast includes University Chaplain Gavin Ashenden, who is himself studying for a DPhil.

The show, which runs from 17 to 20 June at the Gardner Centre, is being directed by Paul Tully with Richard Fox as musical director.

Anne Burrell
A NEW GRANT TO STUDY THE MASS-OBSERVATION PROJECT

The ESRC has just recommended for an award a one-year research proposal submitted by Dr. Brian Street of SOC and Dorothy Sheridan of the Mass-Observation Archive. Dorothy Sheridan describes how the award will enable them to examine the writing practices of the people who currently contribute to the contemporary Mass-Observation project.

As readers of the Bulletin will know, the Archive has been augmenting its original collection (dating back to 1937, but ending in the early 1950s) with writing by volunteers about everyday life in Britain in the 1980s and 1990s. This new collection now comprises about one fifth of the whole Archive and is continuing to grow. Already it has attracted considerable interest and is being used both in Sussex teaching and in research.

This increasing interest inevitably compels us to consider some of the theoretical and methodological questions about the way the data can be used. Many of the questions relate to the volunteer contributors themselves. What do we know about these writers? Who are they and how do they compare with the population as a whole? What kind of writing is it that they do? Why should they contribute on a voluntary basis? What does taking part mean to them? How does their writing for the Archive fit with their other activities? What else do they write? What does writing mean for them?

It was with these questions in mind that Brian and I decided to apply for a grant from the ESRC. Brian had for some time been interested in the possible insights the material could offer into the practice of writing. His own work (see his latest book Cross-cultural approaches to literacy, CUP 1992) focuses on writing as a social practice. He recognised in the M-O material an opportunity to study people’s writing practices away from the educational context. Existing work on literacy has tended to concentrate on people who have ‘problems’ with writing and we do not have much evidence of how regular and confident writers (outside of the ‘literary’ context) actually think about the process and what they take it to mean.

The distinctive feature of the Mass-Observation writers is that, while the majority of them would not claim to be professional writers, they are self-consciously asserting confidence and pleasure in their writing skills by taking part in the project. The aim of the research, then, is to examine the uses and meaning of literacy through a description and analysis of the literacy practices and conceptions of the people who write to the Mass-Observation Archive.

The research is designed to take one year, starting, we hope, in September 1992. During that time, Brian will interview a selection of the writers to explore their participation in Mass-Observation with them and to talk with them about the role writing and reading plays in their lives generally.

We will use the results of the interviews to complement the material we already have in the Archive. Information about the writing process is embedded within almost everything that is sent to the Archive, from the diaries kept during the period of the Gulf War, to views on the General Election, and even including reports on personal hygiene habits (a topic commissioned by BBC Radio for a series called ‘Keep it Clean’ to be broadcast later in the summer). However, we did also want to get people’s direct reflections on their participation in the project and, in Spring 1991, we sent all 700 volunteers an open-ended questionnaire. This set them several tasks: the first one was to describe their formal education, the second was to keep a diary of their reading and writing activities over a three-day period, and the third asked them a series of specific questions about their writing for Mass-Observation itself: how and where they wrote, as well as broader questions about their motivation and what they thought the value of the project was, both for themselves, and in terms of what it could offer for the readers and the researchers of the future.

We intend to develop the theoretical work which Brian has already begun in understanding more about literacy and its place in people’s lives. This view of writing and reading as a set of social practices is the cornerstone of the New Literacy Studies which challenges the view of literacy as a narrowly defined set of ‘skills’ which can be taught or learned in any simple fashion or as a series of ‘problems’ to be ‘put right’. We expect our conclusions to be of interest to researchers and educators at every level and to have policy implications for literacy programmes because it will place people’s needs for reading and writing within the ordinary context of their everyday lives.

We hope that another important outcome will be the elucidation of the nature of the Mass-Observation material itself so that other researchers using the Archive will be in a much better position to relate their own interpretations of the data to the different kinds of writing in the whole collection.
NOTICEBOARD

☑ VACANCIES
The Personnel Office has issued the following summary of posts to be filled. Advertisements for these vacancies have been placed in local and national papers as appropriate, as well as being circulated as relevant to Section Heads and union representatives for circulation to staff and noticeboards. Copies of these advertisements, further particulars if available, and application forms can be obtained from the Personnel Office, Room 227, Sussex House. The list was compiled on 1 June and is subject to revision.

Teaching Faculty
Lectureship in European Studies and Languages, 3 years fixed term
Lectureship in Human Geography, 1 year fixed term
Chair in Environmental Science
Other Faculty
Counsellor/Psychotherapist
General Manager, Students’ Union
Clerical, Secretarial and Related
Graduate Assistant (with degree involving sports studies or recreational management), Sports centre, grade 6, 2 years fixed term

☑ FULBRIGHT COMMISSION

SCHOLARSHIPS 1994-95
The Fulbright Commission plans to fund three scholarship awards (one in American Studies) to enable US scholars to spend three months in this country engaged in teaching. An application from our institution is invited. Further details are held by Deans and other offices or may be obtained from Catherine Reive, Fulbright Commission, tel. 071-486 7697. The closing date for receipt of completed application forms is 23 October 1992.

COLLOQUIUM 1993
As in previous years, the US-UK Fulbright Commission expects to support at least one colloquium. Support of up to £5,000 will be awarded to the successful applicant. (Sussex promoted the April 1991 colloquium on Writing a National Identity.) Closing date: 14 August 1992. (Further details as above.)

☑ WORKS BY THE ESTATES DIVISION

The following work is being undertaken by the Estates Division. You are asked to take care in the vicinity of the work and stay outside the safety barriers.

Works in progress:
Graduate Institute for Contemporary European Studies — new construction to the north of Arts A due for completion end of September.
Replacement gas main — in the area between Refectory, EAPS I and the Boiler House.
Road drainage improvement — Refectory Road and Boiler House Hill.
External timber repairs and redecoration to: Arts A, MOLS II, EAPS II, Biology and Lancaster House.

Planned future works:
Meeting House — external concrete repairs (June until end of August)
Park Village — Phase I: replacement windows to Blocks 1-12; Phase II: new pitched roofs and external redecoration to Blocks 51-70 (July - October)
MOLS III and EAPS II — replacement fire escapes
Car park resurfacing — East Slope and Refectory Terraces

☑ RECENT BOOKS

New publications by Sussex authors include:
In the Midst of Life. Affection and Ideation in the World of the Tolai by A. L. Epstein. California UP. £37.80.
Food Scarcity and Famine: Assessment and response by Helen Young. Oxfam. Paper, £5.95.
Camus’s L’Etranger: Fifty Years On, edited by Adele King, with a contribution by Rosemarie Jones. Macmillan. £40.00. All available from Sussex University Bookshop.

☑ CLOSURE DATES

The University will be closed for the August Bank Holiday on Monday, 31 August, 1992. The 1992-93 University closure dates are:
Christmas and New Year — Thursday and Friday, 24 and 25 December, and Monday to Friday, 28 December to 1 January.
Easter — Thursday and Friday, 8 and 9 April, and Monday and Tuesday, 12 and 13 April.
Bank Holiday Mondays — 3 and 31 May and 30 August.

☑ TERM DATES

Next academic year:
Monday, 5 October - Friday, 11 December
Monday, 4 January - Friday, 12 March
Monday, 19 April - Friday, 25 June

☑ CHARLESTON TRUST

The Bloomsbury Bicycle Ride — from Russell Square to Charleston — will take place on Sunday, 30 August, in aid of the Charleston Trust. The Trust is dependent on subscriptions and donations to maintain Charleston Farmhouse (near Firle, Lewes) which is the only complete example anywhere of the decorative art of Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant. To find out more, ring the Trust on 0323 811626.

BULLETIN

A vacation issue of the Bulletin, will be published on 8 July. Copy for this issue must be received by Pauline O’Reilly in the Information Office, Room 230, Sussex House, by no later than 1 pm on Friday, 26 June. If you have any news items or ideas for feature articles, she would be pleased to hear from you (ext. 8209).

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