About Time

A year behind schedule, 100% over cost: the Channel Tunnel is renowned as a planning fi-
asco. But compared to Sydney Opera House, the tunnel looks positively efficient. In a saga worthy of Neighbours, the Opera House took ten years more time and 1300% more money to build than people predicted.

Sussex psychologist Dale Griffin is in-
trigued by our failure to complete tasks to schedule. “It’s not only the big schemes that confound expectations,” he says. “Every day in all kinds of ways people are overly optimistic about how long their tasks will take them.”

Task completion wishful-thinking is all too familiar. How many times have you planned the day’s tasks, only to go home with the whole list outstanding? It’s this familiarity that Dale finds fascinating. If we persistently fail to complete tasks on time, why don’t we learn from past experience and adjust our future predictions accordingly?

Together with Canadian colleagues, Dale asked a group of students with thesis deadlines to think out loud as they predicted their completion dates. He found that their thinking focused almost exclusively on the future, disregarding the relevance of previous failures to meet deadlines. The team concluded that individuals tend to treat target tasks as unique cases rather than as an instance of a range of similar problems.

For the perennially behind schedule, there is some consolation. Optimism about task prediction can encourage people to complete tasks more quickly than if their original estimate had been realistic. Dale gave people a one hour task, and asked them to estimate how many days would elapse before they completed it. Participants were asked to base their estimate on a starting figure drawn, apparently at ran-
dom, from a set of cards. In fact, the cards were rigged so that some people drew a high initial estimate of 17 days, and some drew a low one of four. When the subjects came to complete their task, those who had been encouraged to make a low estimate in fact completed the task far more quickly than those who had made a high one. In some cases then, people’s ‘unrealistic’ optimism exerts a causal in-
fluence over actual task completion times.

Perhaps Peter Cook was onto something with his classic line: “I’ve learned from my mistakes, and now I can repeat them exactly.”

Dale is eager to hear from anyone with anecdotes, amusing or otherwise, on this subject, and from people making planning decisions in organisational contexts. Please email: daleg@eogs.
**LETTERS**

**Soup and things**

**Dear Cyril Squirrel**

Thank you for a special mention in your article of 9 February. I'm sure you must have many more important things to be doing (such as gathering your nuts, for example) than to be bothering with the vagaries of our simple little operation.

We put numbers on our soups in order not to upset the small minority of our customers that might find the names distressing. For example, do you REALLY want to know when we have squirrel or dormouse soup on the menu? I think not. We had one very upset little carrot the other day, who, clearly not as dyslexic as most of our carrot customers are, found out that her little cousins were not only boiled and pureed but were being asked to share a pan with the coriander. Boy, that was a tough one to explain!

For those more conventional customers, we do cunningly name the soups on the back wall with a reference to the soup numbers on the counters. Most of the time we refrain from mischief by actually putting the right names to the correct soups. Perhaps it is time we reviewed this policy, it might be so much more fun.

Finally, I might just point out that if we were to catch Cyril Squirrel attempting to enter a food area to collect his daily soup, friend or no, we would have to fulfil our Food Safety responsibilities and pounce on the little pest.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!

**Phil Gassman, Catering Manager**

**Moat infilling**

**Dear Editor**

I see from the recent list of planned future works (Bulletin 9 February) that it is planned to infill the Falmer House courtyard moat. Surely shone mistake?

Falmer House is now a Grade I listed building and any such work self-evidently needs both planning permission and the agreement of English Heritage - and I have seen absolutely NO sign of the statutory notices.

When these buildings were listed it was noted that it was not only the fabric of the building itself that was covered by the Statutory Orders, but also the setting. Specifically this includes the landscape setting and the immediate context of the buildings - and this must therefore include the moats.

It is bad enough that we have lost the Debating Chamber moat but to lose the courtyard moat in this way would be well - unfortunate! Maybe I could ask through your columns for some reassurance that the due legal process is indeed about to be started and that the notice in the Bulletin was simply an accident of abbreviation?

**S.D. Carter Founding Secretary, Former Sussex Students' Association which later evolved into the University of Sussex Society**

**Rob French, Quality & Standards Manager, replies:**

Listed building consent for the infilling of the Falmer House courtyard moat was granted in November 1993. Three months prior to this, the requisite public notice of the proposed infilling was displayed for two weeks on the outside of Falmer House. The Bulletin did not start announcing such applications until last year, however, which perhaps is why you were not aware of this particular application.

Our licence to infill the moat expires after five years, and at that time, November 1998, it must be renewed to remain valid. If anyone can come up with a better solution in that time, this could be considered by the Borough and there would be an opportunity to impose it then.
Cultural Encounters
Cultural Encounters: Communicating Otherness, an exhibition in CulCom’s Theme Year, opened on 9 February in the Cultures Gallery at Brighton Museum. The research materials of five faculty from the School of Cultural and Community Studies are displayed in order to address issues surrounding visual and textual representations of otherness in university, archive and museum contexts. The exhibition was curated by Elizabeth Hallam (Lecturer in Social Anthropology) and Nicky Levell (Assistant Keeper of Non-Western Art and Anthropology at Brighton Museum). A design group from Brighton University created the installations and mounted the researchers’ materials within the museum gallery. The exhibition is open on Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri and Sat 10am–5pm; Sun 2–5pm and continues until 30 April.

HE overhaul
Gillian Shephard, Education and Employment Secretary, has ordered the most comprehensive inquiry into the future of higher education since the 1963 Robbins report which led to the setting up of Sussex. Sir Ron Dearing will chair the national committee of inquiry on the size and funding of the university system for the next 20 years.

“I welcome the inquiry as evidence that the government is taking seriously the crisis facing our universities,” says Vice-Chancellor, Gordon Conway. “However, the expected timing of the report (1997) means that neither Conservative nor Labour will have to commit themselves before the next general election. What the inquiry does not do is address the issue of the current cuts, in particular the savage 50% cut in our equipment money. We remain insistent that the government should restore this in the next few months.”

In brief

Research in Europe Opportunities
Framework Programme IV Training & Mobility of Researchers – Research Training Grants Funding for post-docs (6-24 months) and postgraduates (6-36 months) to work on research projects for an institution in a second EU member state. Deadline 15 June.

EU – Bio-medicine & Health Funding for trans-national EU research projects in the following areas of the work programme: Area 1: Pharmaceuticals Research Area 2: Biomedical Technology/Engineering; Area 3: Brain Research; Area 4.2: Research on Aids, Tuberculosis and Other Infectious Diseases; Area 5: Human Genome Research. Deadline 15 June 1996 (Call for Proposals 15 March).

EU - Information Technologies, New Call for Proposals – 15 March The following areas of IT will be included for research projects: Software Technologies Area 1.34: Distributed Systems and Database Technology; Technologies for Components and Subsystems Area 2.1: Semiconductor Components and Subsystems Area 4.2: Reactive Long Term Research; Area 4.3: Pro-active Long Term Research Open Microprocessor Initiative Area 5.1: Systems Technology Tasks 5.1, 5.4, 5.7, 5.8, 5.14, 5.15 + Task 5.9 – Systems Integration and Applications; High Performance Computing and Networking Area 6.2: Embedded Systems; Area 6.5: Development and Execution Environment; Technologies for Business Processes Area 7.10: Business Best Practice Pilots. Deadline: 15 June 1996 (Call for Proposals and Previous Deadline: 15 March)

EU – Agriculture & Fisheries: Deadline 15 March. Areas 1.4,5,6,ELSA

EU – Information Technologies Deadline 15 March. Areas 1.2,3,4,2.5,6.7.

EU – Industrial & Materials Technologies Deadline 17 April. All areas except Area 3A (Aeronautics).

OPERATION PAVILION
Simon Tunley makes his mark
Simon Tunley, the new Sports Pavilion Operations Manager, arrived at Sussex in October – just in time to see the University put in its first bid for National Lottery money. The bid, and an application to the Foundation for Sports and the Arts, were master-minded by Jan Thole, Director of Sport, and Development Officer, Robin Street. If the University’s bid is successful, National Lottery profits will help fund a pavilion revamp which includes a synthetic pitch and health and fitness facilities.

“We’ll be finding out any day now if we’ve been awarded the money,” said Simon. “To be successful, you must be able to demonstrate that the local community will benefit from the development. Luckily the Pavilion is already a dual-use site. School football clubs and companies all use our facilities, and Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club train here almost every morning.”

Simon joins Sussex after several years experience as Assistant Sports & Fitness Centre Manager at Hull University. His brief is to keep every aspect of the pavilion up and running as efficiently as possible. “The biggest problem I found when I arrived here was the need to raise the pavilion’s profile,” he says. “I’ve been busy organising events like quiz nights to attract people up here. Facilities are open every weekday lunchtime and every weekday evening bar Friday in term-time.” The pavilion boasts squash courts, outdoor pitches, tennis courts, courts, lunches, evening snacks and, of course, a well-stocked bar.

Simon himself is a fierce squash and tennis player who bemoans the fact that he might not improve any more. But as a man in the midst of house decorating chaos, there’s only one thing he’d really like now: “I’m finally looking forward to sitting down in a comfortable chair and not one of these hard plastic ones,” he says wistfully.
Monday 26 February - Sunday 3 March

Lectures, Seminars, Colloquia

- **Monday 26 February**
  2pm Feminism and... Lecture: Feminism in the field - an anthropologist at large. J. Cowan & M. Unnithan, Arts C133.
  2pm Particle Physics Seminar: Determining and constraining neutrino masses from CMB anisotropies. A. Stebbins (Fermilab), PB2A1.
  2pm Falmer Language Group: Some issues in the linguistic prehistory of Europe. R. Coates, Arts D410.
  3.30pm Women’s Studies Seminar: Gender and exile. German speaking women writers in Britain in the 1930s. A. Hammel, Arts C133.
  4.15pm Chemistry Colloquium: The art of brewing. M. Jenner (Harvey’s, Lewes). MSUT, MOLS.
  4.30pm Neuroscience Seminar: Animal light in the sea. G. Jones (Bristol), Biology Lecture Room.
  5pm Sociology/Social Psychology Seminar: Social identity, gender and participation in collective action. C. Kelly (Birkbeck), Arts D310.

- **Tuesday 27 February**
  3pm Sussex European Institute Seminar: Globalisation, autonomy, and sovereignty of the nation state. D. Goldblatt (Open University), Arts A71.
  4.15pm Biochemistry, Genetics & Development Seminar: Folding your sheets: studies of B-structure in globular proteins. P. Evans (Cambridge), Biology Lecture Room.
  5pm Social Anthropology Seminar: Social life on the flood plain: seasonality and social organisation in a Cambodian community in the Brazilian Amazon. M. Harris, Arts E419.

- **Wednesday 28 February**
  1pm IDS Seminar: Alternative forms of developmental democracy. R. Luckham, IDS Room 221.
  2.30pm South African Studies Seminar: Agrarian reform in South Africa: some historical and political issues. M. Lipton, Arts C337.
  4pm South Asia Workshop Seminar: Social networks and production behaviour in Sialkot, Pakistan. K. Nadvi, Arts C337.
  1.15pm Music Cultural Encounter: Piano Recital: non-European music from the 16th century, plus Finns' own Folklore. M. Finnissey, Gardiner Centre.
  4.30pm History of Art Seminar: Italian Renaissance palaces and the antique. G. Clark (Courtauld), Arts B151.
  4.30pm BIOLS Special Lecture: What makes a man? Professor Peter Goodfellow, FR.S (Dept of Genetics, Cambridge), Biology Lecture Theatre.

- **Thursday 29 February**
  11.30am Economics Seminar: External imbalances and instability in selected South American economies. R. Gottschalk, Portacable C.
  2pm History and Gender Seminar: 'Community' and 'management' in voluntary organisations in the post-45 period. A. Penn, Arts D510.

- **Thursday 29 February cont.**
  5pm Social & Political Thought Seminar: What's wrong with liberal individualism? J. Wolff (UCL), Arts A71.
  5pm History Seminar: Gandhi and Bhupat Singh: the reverse-image of Indian alterity. S. Gell (Cambridge), Arts A155.
  5pm French Seminar: Beyond the cinematic body: sensation and sentiment in Jean-Luc Godard’s Histori(e)s du cinéma. J. Williams (Kent), Arts A5.

- **Friday 1 March**
  2pm SPRU Seminar: New technology based firms in 16 European countries. D. Storey & B. Tether (Warwick), EDB Lecture Theatre 121.
  4pm Astronomy Seminar: What do we know about galactic clusters? B. Jones (Copenhagen), PB1A7.
  4.30pm Philosophy Society: Can consciousness be scientifically explained? M. Boden, Arts A155.

**Film at the Gardner**

- **Monday 26 February**
  7.45pm A Touch of Evil

- **Wednesday 28 February**
  11.30pm Rocky Horror Picture Show

- **Friday 1 March**
  7.45pm Braveheart

- **Saturday 2 March**
  6pm Babe
  9pm Short Cuts

- **Sunday 18 February**
  6pm Braveheart
  9pm Babe

**Meeting House**

- **Lunchtime Recital**
  1.20pm, Thurs 27 Feb: Jennifer Kim (Piano), Chapel.

**Sports News**

- **Quiz Night**
  The Ultimate Quiz Night 2, Thu 29 February, 8.15pm start, at the Pavilion. Superb prizes to be won, 4 entries max per team. To enter your team, tel: x3950 or x8230.

- **Volleyball Players Wanted**
  All levels welcome. The Sports Service runs intra-mural leagues on Monday lunchtimes and needs new players. Come along to practice sessions on Mon 4 Mar, 12-1, and Mon 11 Mar, 1-2. For beginners, there is a free coaching session on Mon 11 Mar, 1-2pm. Tel: x3947 for details.

- **Cricket Nets**
  Net coaching and practice on Friday 1, 8, 15 Mar, 2-3pm. 60p per person.

**Language Centre**

The Language Centre is considering putting on courses in more unusual languages from Oct of next year, eg: Russian, Portuguese, Chinese (Mandarin & Cantonese), Japanese, Czech and Polish. If interested, tel: Alex x8006 or email: langcentre@sussex.ac.uk.

**Small Ads**

**BIKE FOR SALE**: Raleigh Impact mountain bike, 21” frame, alloys, 15 speed, Shimano gears, Topeak carrier & light use panniers. V. g. condition, regularly serviced, need the space. £100 ono. Tel: x2764 or 749011 (eves), email: bnpn2.

**FOR SALE**: Roca Firepower 440 squash racquet. Oversize head, graphite composite. Little used. £10 ono. Contact: as above.

**ROOM TO LET**: furnished, in private house in Lewes, own shower and toilet. £55 pw incl. except phone. Tel: Frances x8046 or 478594 (eves).

**FOR SALE**: Toshiba notebook, 4 mega-RAM, vga screen, Windows 3.1, DOS 6.2, Word 6, lots of software, brand new case, charger, excellent condition, only £440. Tel: 602310.

**TV FOR SALE**: 24” Nican stereo colour TV. Modern, remote control, fast text, excellent condition. Cost £600 new, sell for £300. Tel: as above.

**VIDEO FOR SALE**: black modern slimline VCR. Remote control, excellent condition. £100. £375 for both VCR & TV. Tel: as above.

**BACKPACK WANTED**: Does anybody have a large-ish backpack to sell? Tel: 724729.

**EXCHANGE SOUGHT**: Belgian student, 20, would like to spend a few weeks with UK family, offers same for like-minded English student. Tel: x2012, email: m.gasioroski@sussex.

**Miscellaneous**

- **Cultural Evening**
  6pm-9pm, Sat 2 Mar in Mandela Hall: Sussex African & Caribbean Studies present: 'Young, Gifted and Black', a cultural extravaganza. Exotic African & Caribbean food, dance, music, singing, plays & recitals followed by DJs. Cost £7 in advance, £8 on the door.

- **Cheap Phone Calls**
  The Student Union Welfare Centre has launched a new system for international phone calls at up to 50% discount. Buy Ecomphone phone cards from the SU Shop from week 8, and use them in the Welfare Reception payphone. See leaflets there for more details.

- **MSF Branch Meeting**
  1pm, Wed 28 Feb in EDB 302.

**Bulletin**

The Bulletin appears every Friday of term with copy deadline the preceding Friday lunchtime. We welcome any suggestions for news, details of events, letters and small ads. Please contact the Information Office, Sussex House on ext. 8209 or email: Bulletin@sussex.ac.uk.