The Sussex cyborg recipe
One part burglar alarm to three parts human

A group of research students from the Centre for Computational Neuroscience and Robotics (CCNR) at Sussex will demonstrate next week how technology can endow humans with new sensory powers.

They want to reveal what happens to three volunteers when their senses are rewired to create ‘cyborgs’ – blends of flesh and machine – in a unique experiment starting on 8 June at the Cheltenham Science Festival.

“The devices are cunningly simple, hacked together from mobile-phone vibrators, burglar-alarm spares, metal detectors and so on,” says Sarah Angliss, a student on the MSc in Evolutionary and Adaptive Systems who is working with the group. “But in theory, this is all we need to transform a ‘naked’ human into an animal-machine hybrid with an entirely new experience of the world.”

One of the volunteers will acquire the ability to see backwards. This work is inspired by a classic experiment conducted three decades ago by an academic in the USA, who blindfolded people, put a camera on their heads, and routed the visual images from the camera to vibrators taped to their backs. Soon, they were able to see large objects using sensations from the vibrators. Even though the sense was tactile, this was seeing, not feeling; subsequent studies have shown that the stimulation sensed on their backs was processed in the visual cortex of the brain.

“This is an amazing example of brain plasticity; it challenges the classic idea of hardwired connections between the brain areas and sensory organs. You really don’t need eyes to see, just the right kind of changing, sensory signals,” says DPhil student Marieke Rohde.

Until now, most experiments in sensory substitution and adaptation have kept to the five senses. The Sussex team are also planning to equip one of the volunteers with a device that creates an awareness of magnetism – allowing them to extend the senses into territory familiar to other creatures (including eels and sharks).

“Our volunteers may feel confused by the sensations they pick up from the electronics at the beginning of the week,” says Marieke. “But we expect they’ll adapt to them within a few hours.”

The experiment will end on 10 June, revealing how long it has actually taken the cyborgs to use their new senses as naturally as conventional sight and hearing. Just as interesting to the Sussex team will be to find out how useful the cyborgs find their new senses and whether they can live and work in unimagined ways.

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Students have their bed in the clouds

Sky high: Laura Furniifer (left) and her teammates relax in their sleeper-seat designed for Qantas airline.

A group of second-year engineering students let their ambitions soar when they were set the challenge of designing a first-class airline sleeper-seat for the new Airbus A380 super-jumbo.

Despite the designs being only mock-ups, the Product Design students had to ensure they would exactly fit the dimension of the A380 and would take into account such things as electrics and the flow of air through the plane.

Craig Norman and his fellow students came up with the V-Pod, a strikingly modern flat-bed sofa which, with the touch of a button, turned into a desk and comfy armchairs. Another group came up with a two-seat design for Australian airline Qantas that transformed into a bed, complete with adjustable television, shoe rack and even a natty kangaroo-shaped cushion.

Student Laura Furniifer explained how the prototype was made from a heady ‘Changing Rooms’ style mix of MDF panels, a steel frame, blue foam and “lots of Polyfilla”. Laura even revealed that the snazzy leatherette sleeper cushions “actually came off the back of a van on Coombe Road”.

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BOOKMARK

**Gordon Finlayson** (Lecturer in Philosophy, SocCul)

**Habermas: A very short introduction**

Oxford University Press, £6.99 (paperback)
ISBN 0192840959

The publisher says: "Gordon Finlayson provides readers with a clear and readable overview of Habermas' forbiddingly complex philosophy using concrete examples and accessible language. He then goes on to analyse both the theoretical underpinnings of Habermas' social theory, and its more concrete applications in the fields of ethics, politics, and law."

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**Richard Pollett** (Lecturer in North American History, Hums)

**The Sugar Masters: Planters and slaves in Louisiana's cane world, 1820–1860**

Louisiana State University Press, £36.50 (hardback)
ISBN 0807130389

Peter Kolchin, author of A Sphinx on the American Land, says: "In this carefully researched volume, Richard Pollett provides an informative overview of the region's distinctive 'agro-industrial' order, and thereby significantly advances our understanding of both the diversity and common features of antebellum southern slavery."

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**Maria Greco** (Tutorial Fellow in Spanish, Hums) and G. S-Sanchez

**Foundations Spanish 2**

Palgrave Macmillan, £18.99 (paperback)
ISBN 1403943389

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**Darrow Schecter** (Reader in Italian, Hums)

**Beyond Hegemony: Towards a new philosophy of political legitimacy**

Manchester University Press, £55 (hardback)
ISBN 0719060885

The publisher says: "In addition to examining Marx's critique of Kant, Hegel, and liberalism, Beyond Hegemony investigates the reasons for the authoritarianism and breakdown of state socialist governments in Russia and elsewhere claiming to put Marx's ideas on democracy and equality into practice. What emerges is a new theory of political legitimacy which indicates how it is possible to move beyond liberal democracy whilst avoiding the authoritarian turn of state socialism."

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**Aleks Szczerbiak** (Senior Lecturer in Contemporary European Studies, Hums) and **Paul Taggart** (Professor of Politics, Hums) (eds)

**EU Enlargement and Referendums**

Routledge, £60 (hardback)
ISBN 0415360072

The publisher says: "EU accession referendums provide us with an excellent comparative opportunity to deepen our understanding of the integration issue and how it interacts with domestic politics, and of the dynamics of referendums in general. This book provides an authoritative analysis of the referendum campaign and outcome in each of the countries concerned by a leading specialist on the politics of that country."

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Mass-Observation goes to Madrid

Images from the Mass-Observation Archive are being exhibited for the first time ever in continental Europe, as part of an international festival of visual arts in Madrid. "Mass-Observation's photography is completely unknown on the continent," says art historian Professor David Allan Mellor, who has curated the show.

The Mass-Observation Archive, comprising photographs, written documents and numerous publications, is housed in the University of Sussex Library. Its images represent the minutiae and small stories of everyday working-class life in the UK from 1937 through the 1950s.

An exhibition curated by David for the Gardner Arts Centre in 1977 was the first public display of the material. He recalls: "It was fundamental to my doctoral research on British photography which I was then undertaking at Sussex, with Quentin Bell, and it helped historians revise the picture we had of the neglected documentary movement of the '30s."

Its inaugural showing in mainland Europe is as part of PhotoEspaña, whose theme this year is Ciudad (The City). The Mass-Observation show and the other 25 exhibitions are characterised, say the organisers, "by the use of documentary languages and the proximity of artistic work to common experience".

Benedict Burbridge, a postgraduate on the MA in Art History, flew out to Madrid earlier this week to supervise the installation of the images in the city's Conde Duque cultural centre. Ben has gained experience on exhibitions and photographic projects through his work with the Photoworks agency, which is based in Brighton.

The exhibition opened yesterday (Thursday) and runs until 17 July. David was due to give a lecture on the Mass-Observation collection today (Friday) at the Spanish Ministry of Culture.

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Grant for the Barlow Collection

The Art History department has been awarded £30,000 by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for the Barlow Collection of Chinese Ceramics housed on campus.

The aim is to update and put online the catalogue and add other primary source material to make an effective database both for research and for wider public access and enjoyment.

Professor Maurice Howard comments: "The collection of the late Sir Alan Barlow is a very special gathering of Chinese objects, chosen with great discrimination and reflecting prevailing taste in the arts of east Asia between the two world wars. "Present members of the family see the primary purpose of the collection as a tool for education and research. This project will further those objectives."

The Collection is housed at the entrance to the University Library and is open from 11.30am-2.30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
Finance and planning update

Work to implement the Savings Review Group (SRG) report for 2005-06 is being taken forward across the University, with Deans and heads of units regularly meeting Finance Division to monitor progress.

The SRG has now formally been stood down, with work to oversee the savings process and longer-term planning now being led directly by the Senior Management Group (SMG).

SMG and Finance Division are continuing work with budget managers across campus to identify the additional £500,000 improvement the SRG report called for. This is to be achieved from a combination of savings and extra income for 2005-06. An up-to-date position will be reported to the University’s main finance committee on 7 June.

This progress has allowed an additional £750,000 package of investment to be made in academic posts, teaching support and support for the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) across all schools for 2005-06.

For 2006-07 onwards, a series of groups reporting to SMG will be established to tackle specific issues facing the University, following on from the work of the SRG.

Part of this work will be aimed at identifying a substantial part of the further £1.5m reductions in planned spending that the SRG report deemed necessary for 2006-07. This work will underpin additional investment in academic posts planned for 2006.

The groups will look at issues such as:

- an improved annual planning process for the University;
- the creation of a new ‘Resource Allocation Model’ to support this, which will allocate funds to schools and administrative units;
- improving administrative processes and structures;
- science strategy;
- income generation.

The groups will be chaired by members of SMG, but will include a number of staff from across campus. They have an explicit remit to consult staff and students on ideas and options as they take work forward.

The groups should have completed the bulk of their work by spring 2006. Full details of the groups will be announced when they are established later this term.

A more detailed version of this update is available at www.sussex.ac.uk/finance/position.

LETTERS

‘VC’s voice’: A gross misuse of the Bulletin?

I wish to express my concern that ‘VC’s voice’ in the 6 May issue was used largely as a platform for the VC’s personal political views. This appears to me to be a gross misuse of a publication which is bound to be seen as reflecting the official view of the VC’s Office, if not of the University as a whole.

Mike Wylde,
Regional Development Office

Professor Alasdair Smith, Vice-Chancellor, replies:

I see ‘VC’s voice’ as an opportunity for me to communicate my views on a wide range of issues to the University community. Many issues relevant to higher education are necessarily political. I think it would have been odd to write a column in the week of the general election that made no mention of the politics of higher education. But if the readers of the Bulletin would prefer me to confine my comments to bland and uncontroversial issues, I’ll try to oblige.

Alison Field, Bulletin editor, replies:

It seems to me that the title of the Vice-Chancellor’s column makes it pretty clear that he writes in a personal capacity. It is accompanied not only by a byline but also a photo of the author.

However Mike Wylde may perceive the publication, I can assure other readers that the Bulletin seeks neither to reflect the ‘official’ view of the VC’s Office nor of the University as a whole. Indeed, on very many issues the University itself has no “view” – and long may it remain so in an institution that exists to encourage the free exchange of ideas.

We actively encourage all members of the University community, including Mike, to make their voices heard through the pages of the Bulletin and other channels of internal communication. So come on – how do you think the election result will affect higher education and its funding?
Plaudits for exceptional employees

Five members of staff are celebrating after hearing that they are to receive Chancellor's Awards in recognition of their exceptional contributions to the work and life of the University.

This scheme provides the opportunity, alongside the Teaching Awards, to acknowledge the wide range of work that goes into making Sussex the place it is. The awards are open to all members of staff.

The judging panel, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and including a number of senior staff and members of Council, chose Benedict Brook and Sally Hill (joint award), Dr Sue Collard, Sara McKernan and Pat Ringley as the winners for 2005.

The Chancellor, Lord Attenborough, will present awards of £500 to each of the winners at next month's summer graduation ceremonies.

Benedict Brook and Sally Hill will receive a joint Chancellor's Award for their role in the development of a strong lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community at Sussex.

This year Benedict and Sally have been instrumental in the formation of a network for LGBT staff, which already has more than 50 members and a full programme of events. Launched during campus Diversity Week and supported by the University's Equalities Unit, it was entirely their own initiative.

As they point out, "Sussex is a tolerant campus with a rich gay past, but that doesn't mean it will always be so. If something is important you should support and build it, and never assume someone else will do so instead."

The duo have a long history of championing LGBT causes on campus, initially as students and then as members of staff. As Students' Union officers, for example, they were heavily involved in 'Queer About Campus', an innovative exhibition that explored the history of LGBT staff and students at Sussex and Brighton universities.

Their activism has also strengthened relationships with local organisations and has contributed to bringing the University and the neighbouring community closer together.

Dr Sue Collard receives recognition for her devoted contribution over 16 years to the experience of study abroad for students of modern European languages.

During that period she has performed a wide range of functions and has played an important strategic role in the development of the European study abroad programme. Under Sue's leadership, students have been given increased support, more guidance and clearer objectives, with a more structured experience in academic terms.

In her latest role as Director of European Study Abroad (Arts), she maintains close relationships with partner institutions in Europe and provides caring pastoral support to students on their year abroad. Her colleagues testify that Sue carries out these duties with energy, efficiency and thoroughness.

What makes her stand out, though, is Sue's passionate personal and professional commitment to the principle of educational exchanges. "My own year abroad had been a truly life-changing experience in terms of both personal and academic development," she recalls, "and the lasting memory has always made me want to help our students to gain the maximum benefit from their own year abroad."

Over the last five years Sara McKernan has built up from scratch a project to persuade a broader range of young people to consider higher education.

Her work on 'widening participation' involves organising taster sessions for local school pupils at the three universities in Sussex; recruiting university students as mentors and tutors to teenagers from socially disadvantaged backgrounds; raising awareness internally; and convening a group of staff at Sussex who have responsibilities in this area.

Sara has recruited, trained and nurtured a large and socially diverse team of Sussex undergraduates who convey the student experience at taster sessions and open days.

She has also developed very positive relationships with teachers and pupils in local schools. "Sara is approachable and flexible and builds up an easy rapport with the students," says the deputy head of Longhill School in Rottingdean.

In going about this she has to be extremely pro-active and self-directing. "I love working with young people," says Sara simply. "My greatest satisfaction is seeing the work come full circle; many of my first cohort are now at universities around the country. An increasing number are successful Sussex students, providing invaluable role models for the new participants."
Student to report on Italian Grand Prix

A Sussex student is on track for a career as a motorsport journalist after winning through to the final stage of a European competition.

Mike Channell, a third-year undergraduate in English Language, beat off hundreds of entries from other young students across Europe to make it onto the shortlist of the e-reporter competition, organised by tyre manufacturer Bridgestone.

He wrote a 300-word article on safety in Formula 1, using the skills he has honed by writing reviews of video games for the badger (the Sussex student newspaper). "I probably wouldn't have entered the competition if it hadn't been for the badger," says Mike. "It trains you to write to a set length and for an audience."

Entries were judged not just on writing ability, but also background research, appreciation for the target audience, eye for a good story, enthusiasm for the sport, and creativity. The panel of judges, chaired by ITV's F1 studio analyst, Tony Jardine, clearly thought Mike's entry had the lot.

He is "extremely excited" about being sent to Monza in September for the Italian Grand Prix. Mike will get to hang out in the paddock, meet some racing drivers, see the international media at work – and then report on the experience for Bridgestone's website.

The six other finalists – from Belgium, Finland, France, Poland and the UK – will each report back from a different Grand Prix meeting.

The overall winner will be announced in the autumn. If Mike wins, he'll get a state-of-the-art laptop and a trip to Tokyo for a major motor racing event, as well as a useful foothold in the world of F1, possibly leading to a career as a motorsport journalist.

But by being shortlisted he's already achieved his aim, which was to experience the live atmosphere and excitement of a Grand Prix for the first time. "Anything else is a bonus," he insists.

FIRST CLASS

Baroness Kay Andrews, an alumna and former member of staff, has been appointed Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Baroness Andrews took an MA in Political Sociology and then a DPhil in History and Social Studies of Science; she was a Fellow of the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) from 1968–70.

Julie Carr, an administrator in the School of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies, has just been appointed chair of Lewes District Council. Julie has lived in Newhaven for 21 years; she is a Newhaven town councillor and was elected as a Lewes district councillor in 1999. The Sussex connections continue with the council’s new vice-chair, Marina Pepper, who recently completed an MA in Dramatic Writing.

The BA (British Association for the Advancement of Science) and the BPS (British Psychological Society) have awarded an A Level Prize for her top marks to Laura Convissir, a first-year undergraduate on the BSc in Psychology with American Studies.

Playwright and critic Bonnie Greer describes the debut novel from Valerie Mason-John as "luminous, funny and deeply moving."

Valerie completed the MA in Creative Writing, Arts and Education in 2002. In her new book, says Greer, "70s and 80s Britain becomes another country, a land of foster homes, squats, and worse. Borrowed Body – about a black girl growing up in care – has just been published by Serpent's Tail.

Professor Vladimiro Sassone, head of the Informatics department, has been elected a member of the UK Computing Research Committee (UKCRC), which aims to promote the vitality, quality and impact of computing research in the UK. Its members are internationally leading computer researchers from both academia and industry.

Sussex graduate Joseni Vitusagavulu, who did an MPhil Development Studies from 1984–86, is Fiji's new ambassador to the United States.

Over the past 36 years Pat Ringshaw has adapted to the widely differing styles and expectations of five successive Librarians in her work as their secretary.

Pat is described by the current Librarian, Deborah Shortley, as "self-effacing", "quietly loyal" and "totally committed". Deborah's predecessor, Adrian Peasgood, recalls Pat's "composure in the face of the occasional crisis" and her "discretion when handling sensitive matters".

Dorothy Sheridan, who has worked in the Library since 1974, also pays tribute to Pat's "great tact and discretion", while adding her "wicked sense of humour" and her unparalleled knowledge of the Library's history and of the University in general.

Library professionals elsewhere in the UK highlight an unusual attribute: a secret skill in mind reading. As well as answering their enquiries, it seems she anticipates what further help they might need even it hasn't occurred to them!

"She has the gift of making any enquiry seem welcome, however busy she is," says Toby Bainston from the Society of College National and University Libraries (SCONUL). "It's wonderful, and all too rare, to glimpse in the course of ordinary working transactions such a lively style and such a lovely personality."
Sports afternoon a big success

The original date for the staff sports afternoon was a washout, but the rescheduled competition a week later (27 May) was certainly worth waiting for.

The sun shone down on 150 sweating competitors from 12 different areas of the University as they demonstrated their sporting prowess (or not). And the scorching hot weather meant the barbecue and the bar were extremely popular.

Scores of spectators thrilled to the excitement as 10 teams battled it out on the rounders pitch. Life Sciences (pictured above receiving their trophy from the Deputy Vice- Chancellor, Professor Tony Moore) eventually beat IT Services by half a rounder in the final.

In the netball (pictured right), winners ‘Sussex Slammers’ from Sussex House pipped ‘Great Halls of Fire’ (aka the Housing Office) by one goal, scoring in the final seconds of a closely fought fixture.

Neil Pearson from Financial Accounts pocketed the pool title, while Howard Lindsay from Life Sciences kept a steady hand to take the darts championship.

Low-temperature physicist has high-spirited birthday

More than 40 people attended a lunch in the Meeting House this week to celebrate the 80th birthday of physicist Professor Douglas Brewer.

Douglas headed a large low-temperature research group at Sussex for many years and perhaps most notable among the guests were a good number of his former research students from the 1960s and 1970s.

Some of these now occupy senior faculty positions in the physics departments of other UK universities, while several others have held top positions in industry.

Also attending the lunch were Emeritus Professors Roger Bin-Style and Ken Smith, who were jointly running the physics department when Douglas was appointed as a senior lecturer in 1962.

Professor Sir Denys Wilkinson, a former Vice-Chancellor, and Professor Tony Moore, the current Deputy Vice-Chancellor, were also present.
Love of learning makes student a community champion

Despite the challenges of physical disability and dyslexia, a Sussex student has won an Adult Learner of the Year award.

Robert Brown, 51, has been studying with the University's Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) for the past ten years. Some short art history courses led to certificate courses in subjects as diverse as Biblical Studies and Voluntary Sector Management. He is now taking a Certificate in Creative Writing and is well placed to complete a full degree programme.

He has also learned to share the skills and confidence he has developed with others, acting as a volunteer for people with learning disabilities and as a representative for tenants in his Lower Bevendean neighbourhood. He also serves as the chair of the local community forum and is a church warden.

In recognition of his achievement, Robert was presented with an Adult Learner of the Year award by Brighton and Hove Mayor Bob Carden at a ceremony at the Jubilee Library on 26 May.

Robert’s tutor Jackie Parry, who nominated him for the award, says: “Robert has overcome many personal disadvantages and has demonstrated a real will to learn. He helps others who are in difficult positions and is an example to other students.”

Robert says: “Learning has been the greatest gift that anybody could have given me. I have done things I would never have done before. At school, being told you are thick and stupid, you tend to believe it. Everybody should have the opportunity to excel and improve themselves. It has been a privilege to find I have skills not only to help myself, but others too.”

CCE student is bright spark in sculpture project

A Sussex student has been influential in a public art project in Moulsecoomb, her Brighton neighbourhood. A Gaudi-inspired sculpture, called the Fairway Flame, now marks the entrance to the recently refurbished Fairway Business Park.

The work was a collaboration between students from Falmer High School and local sculptor Ben Thomson, with funding from eb4U – the regeneration project operating in east Brighton – and Brighton & Hove City Council.

When funding came in, Jannet Cook was on an eb4U group as a resident and at the same time a student on the Certificate in Arts and Cultural Management, run by the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE). She suggested the “percent for art” scheme, whereby developers devote 1% of their costs to the installation of a work of art to be displayed within the development and visible to the public. Jannet recalls: “The scheme had been discussed in a seminar, so I just happened to be in the right place at the right time.”

The resulting project took a year to complete. Five hundred students each designed and made a clay tile for the sculpture. “The Fairway Flame is public art that truly involves the community,” says Jannet, who was actively involved in the planning and continues to liaise on the maintenance and upkeep of the space.

Jannet has found her experiences on the CCE course very helpful in the process. “It taught me how to get people together and get them thinking creatively,” she says. “Persisting on a university course that I found academically challenging had long-term beneficial effects – it helped me to articulate my ideas and make sure that others could have their say too.”

Jannet is now on CCE’s Certificate in Life History Work and plans to undertake an oral-history project recording the experiences of people who took part in Moulsecoomb’s regeneration, including the Fairway Flame. “Those marginalised by society don’t have much of a voice,” she says. “I want to use this as an advocacy project to give the local people the recognition they deserve.”

• The Fairway Flame is on the corner of Moulsecoomb Way and Lewes Road (A270), just by the railway bridge.
Academic events

MON 6 JUNE
1pm Psychology colloquium: Vincent Walsh, The human frontal eye fields: Not really at the front and not all about eye movements. Pevensey I 1B3.

5.30pm BSMS seminar: Robin Ptnon (Kings College), Monocyte adhesion by immune receptor and lipid rafts: Relevance to atherosclerosis. BSMS lecture theatre.

TUE 14 JUNE
6.30pm Professioal lecture: Giuseppe Mather (Sussex), Fallacy and ph in the perception of moving pictures. BSMS lecture theatre.

FRI 10 JUNE
1pm IDS seminar: Julian Quen (Natural Resources Institute), Land access, inequality and territorial development. IDS 221.

THU 16 JUNE
4.30pm Social and Political Thought seminar: Juri Barmann-Prelis (Sussex), Foundationalisation of European law: Between nation state particularism and (Euro)universalism. Arts D630.

FRI 17 JUNE
1pm IDS seminar: Ben Gourls (Western Cape, South Africa), Agrarian reform and the ‘Two Economies’: Transforming South Africa’s countryside. IDS 221.

2.15pm SPRU-CENTRIM seminar: Alison Rowley (Westminster), Designers and innovation: Creativity problem-solving styles and organisational resistance to new ideas. Freeman Centre G24/25.

MON 13 JUNE
1pm IDS seminar: Klaus Deininger (World Bank), Unequal land access and gender discrimination: Some evidence from India. IDS 221.

2pm Psychology colloquium: Steve Dewhurts (Lancaster), Beyond the test: The role of inferences in false memory. Pevensey 1B3.

FRI 17 JUNE
1pm IDS seminar: Ben Gourls (Western Cape, South Africa), Agrarian reform and the ‘Two Economies’: Transforming South Africa’s countryside. IDS 221.

Small ads

To let: 2-bed flat in central B’ton. Block of purpose-built flats. 4th floor with lift, balcony, sea view, parking, entry phone. Available from mid June for summer or 1yr. Suit Uni visitors or faculty members. £1,000 pcm. T 07930 330258, E blasingam@yamho.co.uk.

To let: Room in 5-bed house, Fiveways. Suit student. Available now. £70 pw. T Ms Williams 565487 or Sue 494919.

To let: 3-bed house in Lewes + garden for visiting academic. £850 pcm. Available Jan for 5 mths. Roger Fenn, est. 7439.


For sale: Double divan bed, hardly used. Quick sale needed. Buyer collects. £50 ono (was £199). T 07921 824974, E ks35@sussex.ac.uk.

Arts events

PERFORMANCE

Wed 16 June
5pm John Shuttleworth - Fawn Again Comedy, Gardner Arts Centre (GAC).

FILM

Sun 5 June
Million Dollar Baby (12A), GAC.

Tue 7 June
8pm Ray (15), GAC.

Wed 8 June
8pm Hotel Rwanda (12A), GAC.

Thu 9 June
8pm Somersault (15), GAC.

Sat 11 June
8pm La Niaia Santa (15), GAC.

Sun 12 June
8pm Melinda and Melinda (12A), GAC.

EXHIBITIONS

Until Sun 19 June
Nancy Davenport - Campus

Video and photographs presenting the social spaces of a campus. GAC.

Sat 18 June
12 noon-2pm
Professor Nigel Llewelyn - '60s architecture and the University of Sussex

An opportunity to discuss the inspiration and social impact of ‘60s architecture within the context of the university environment. GAC.
This month we report on new patents for the University, grants to one of our spinout companies and a visit from potential American investors.

School of Life Sciences increases patent portfolio

Two new patent applications have recently been filed by Sussex IP on behalf of the School of Life Sciences. The first was developed by Prof Andy Smith and Dr. Wendy Doyle and relates to the engineering of 'lignin peroxidase activity' into a commercial enzyme currently marketed by Novozymes. This may give the enzyme new applications in the pulp and paper industry as an environmentally friendly alternative to chlorine bleaching of lignin. It may also be useful for the treatment of other environmental pollutants such as PCB's and waste dyes from the dyeing industry or as a bio bleaching agent for use in laundry detergent.

The second patent application has arisen from research by Drs Julian Thorpe, Lida Hashemzadeh-Bonehi and Roger Philips. They have developed a novel assay for the early detection of ageing-related disorders and late onset neurodegenerative diseases. Such an assay may aid in the early diagnosis of disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and the common eye disease Age Related Macular Degeneration enabling earlier therapeutic intervention and better patient treatment.

And a new patent for SciTech

Sussex IP has filed a patent application for a new type of highly sensitive magnetometer invented by Dr Ben Varcoe of the Department of Physics and Astronomy in the School of Science and Technology.

Magnetometers are often used in geophysical applications to detect mineral and oil deposits. Ben's ultra-sensitive magnetometer may enable medically important electro-cardiograms measuring heart performance and detecting defects.

Conventional magnetometers work by measuring intensity variations caused by the interference of two laser beams. But intensity measurements are dogged by low intensity detection problems. Ben's breakthrough is to bypass this problem and measure frequency rather than intensity. Frequency can be measured to a resolution of about $10^{-30}$ Hz, enabling portable magnetic field measurements to a sensitivity of about $10^{-15}$ Tesla - a major advance putting a portable instrument on a par with the most sensitive super-cooled laboratory instrument.

Not only does the technology have the scope for important commercial applications, Ben aims to use it for a groundbreaking test of the predictions of general relativity. If general relativity is correct, a mass will affect the speed of an electromagnetic beam that passes by it, an effect that is too small to be noticed under everyday conditions. But with the outstanding sensitivity of Ben's method, the relativistic effects should be measurable.

If you have an idea or invention that you think has commercial potential contact Sussex IP on extn 3000 or sip-info@sussex.ac.uk
NanoHoldings and NanoComposites visit the University

Representatives from NanoHoldings – an industry leading US-based investment company that licenses, develops, and commercialises university innovations at the nanoscale level – visited the University in March. Dr Daryl Bourdeaux, NanoHoldings’ Director of Technology Transfer was accompanied by Barry Drayson, CEO of NanoComposites (a company that NanoHoldings helped establish).

Daryl and Barry chose to visit the University because of its international reputation in the nanosciences and nanotechnology fields. They hope to foster relationships with UK universities such as Sussex with a view to developing collaborative R&D projects to bring technologies derived from basic research to market. In technology transfer language, the aim is to fund the ‘innovation gap’. NanoHoldings’ strategy is to identify promising opportunities emerging from fundamental research and fund the gap to develop the discovery into a technology that is near to market.

The visitors met a number of academic staff members from the Department of Chemistry who are engaged in relevant research and explored a number of possible collaborative opportunities. They left Sussex impressed with the ‘open and informative business meetings’ and look forward to developing links with a number of the research groups that they met.

UKTI awards grant to Pastel Bioscience Ltd to attend Canadian investor conference

Pastel BioScience Ltd (a company in which the University of Sussex was a founding shareholder) has been awarded a grant from UK Trade and Investment to attend the prestigious Biofinance OS’ conference in Toronto. There they will present the company to North American investors who may be interested in making further investments into the company’s development program.

Dr. Stephen Osborne, CEO of Pastel says ‘since the company was founded in 2002 we have made excellent progress in developing the Epimer technology using our first round of investment funding. It is important that we continue this by securing further funding to accelerate the development process’.

Pastel BioScience Ltd, currently operating out of laboratories within the School of Life Sciences, has developed a revolutionary enabling ‘Epimer’ technology. This will be able to perform complete human proteome mapping using a microarray format and immediately generate new diagnostic assays for previously unidentified targets for instance, a test for the SARS virus or future human pathogens.

Dr. Mike Shaw, CEO of Sussex IP and a Director of Pastel says ‘The prospect of involvement from the North American investment market in Pastel is very exciting and Biofinance OS’ will enable Pastel to meet potential investors and discuss future developments, which we hope will continue to be based at Sussex’.