Premiere for student film of Brighton’s naughty past

A documentary history of Brighton’s ‘dirty weekend’ culture, made by four Sussex graduates, has just been shown at the London Raindance Festival.

What the film students saw: Taking a peek at Brighton’s naughty but nice side. A themed bedroom at the Pelirocco hotel in Regency Square.

It is the first time that a student film from Sussex has been screened at the festival, the biggest of its kind in the UK. The film, Kiss Me Quick: Brighton and the Dirty Weekend, is also the debut work of its four student creators – Stella Sims, Adriano Majocchi, Indira Maya Ganesh and Mahmoud Muna.

The 15-minute documentary was originally the final project last year for the students’ MA course in Video Documentary in Contemporary History. However, Stella decided to enter it for the Raindance Festival, which features the dramas, short films and documentaries of up-and-coming film-makers. The film was accepted as part of the festival in August, much to the students’ surprise, and was screened on Wednesday (3 October) in London’s West End.

The academic aspect of the degree helped the film to clinch a big-screen spot, believes Stella. “Our film has received compliments for being a really well-researched story, so I think our academic research skills played a large part in our success.”

As part of their coursework, the students looked at video, documentary and contemporary history as sources of inspiration. Stella says: “We finally came up with the idea of the dirty weekend, which has a very long history in Brighton, stretching back to King George IV. It’s a recurring theme in popular culture and is closely associated with Brighton’s image.”

“Nowadays it’s about fun and it’s less furtive. It’s just people escaping their everyday lives. But there was a time when people would ‘stage’ dirty weekends to get a divorce on the grounds of adultery.”

The film features interviews with Sussex academics Andy Medhurst (Media and Film) and Dr Claire Langhamer (History); street interviews with visitors to Brighton; footage from the Screen Archive South East; and photographic archive material from Brighton’s lesbian and gay history project, Our Story.

Stella, who wants to continue film-making while studying for a media DPhil, attended the premiere. She says: “This was the first film that we all made so it was quite a challenge. We had great support and advice from our lecturers and the Media Services Unit.”

Sussex graduate named physics student of the year

Sussex graduate Paul Skrzypczyk has been named physics student of the year in a national science competition.

The Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) awards are organised by the World Leadership Forum to reward and highlight excellent achievement by science students. This year saw record numbers of entries from every major university in the UK and Ireland.

Paul received the National Physical Laboratory Award for the Best Physics Student at a special dinner at London’s Alexandra Palace on 20 September.

After the ceremony, he said: “I’m very honoured and also very surprised to have this award. It was great to make it to the final and to be invited to attend the evening ceremony.”

Paul, who this year earned a first-class MPhys in Theoretical Physics at Sussex, added: “I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Sussex. The Physics department is great, and all of the lecturers are friendly, approachable and supportive.

“I need to say a big thank you to Dr Claudia Eberlein, for all of her advice and encouragement over the past few years. I would also like to thank my project supervisor, Professor Gabriel Barton, who guided me along the way.”

Paul was entered for the competition because he impressed both Claudia and Gabriel with his outstanding research and exceptionally high marks throughout his four-year degree programme.

Paul was shortlisted for the prize with fellow Sussex physics undergraduate Robert Zietal. Claudia said: “Getting not just one but two students recognised as the best in the country is an outstanding achievement for the department.”

It is not the first time that the Sussex Physics department has seen success at these awards. In 2000, Emma King made history by winning both the Physics Student of the Year award and the overall SET Student of the Year award.

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New book looks at comedy, class, culture and the English

What makes the English laugh? Why is our humour still steeped in class distinctions? And does analysing comedy really ruin its pleasure?

In his new book, A National Joke, Andy Medhurst (left), Senior Lecturer in Media, Film and Cultural Studies, focuses on some of his favourite comedians, comedic genres and gags of the 20th century in an attempt to unravel how comedy and Englishness are related.

From the traditions of Victorian music hall through to The Royle Family, via Ken Dodd, Frankie Howerd, Victoria Wood and the controversial Roy "Chubby" Brown, Andy puts English comedy into its social and cultural context, and takes the risk of asking himself why it makes him laugh.

"One key index of the power of any comic text, performance or moment is its ability to withstand analysis and emerge not only still funny, but actually funnier for being better understood," he explains. "Weak comedy, lazy comedy, over-hyped and merely modish comedy may buckle and crumble under sustained study."

Things that still leave him helpless with mirth after closer analysis include the 1960s radio series 'Round the Horne', Les Dawson and Roy Barraclough's Cissie and Ada sketches, the comic acting of Maggie Smith and Kathy Burke, and Julian Clary's stickiest moments.

He devotes separate chapters to comedy institutions such as the male double act ("It's a way of heterosexual men proving they are not gay, but testing out how close they can be"); the enduring popularity of the Carry On films ("We keep coming back to them through cultural nostalgia"); and the essential Englishness of the work of Mike Leigh, Victoria Wood and Alan Bennett.

Most controversially, Andy writes in defence of our tradition of offensiveness, particularly the foul-mouthed comedy of Roy "Chubby" Brown. Brown is derided by many as racist and sexist, but Andy insists that he is other things besides, using his humour to become a figurehead for that most unfashionable of minorities, the white Northern English working class.

In realising that the subject area was vast, Andy has selected some of the less-well analysed strains of comedy – and avoided the things he doesn't like. These include the surrealism of Monty Python and the Eighties period of alternative comedians, "who believed that all comedians before them were rubbish".

There is also a serious academic element to the book: "Comedy is a barometer of social change. What we choose to laugh at, and who we feel able to make fun of, reveals an enormous amount about social status and cultural power. Jokes are miniature manifestoes."

Sussex Lectures for the autumn

During the course of the autumn term you can enjoy a wide variety of lectures given by visiting speakers and Sussex academics, all eminent in their various fields.

The series begins on Wednesday (10 October) with the inaugural lecture of the Centre for the Study of Sexual Dissidence and Cultural Change. Professor Ruth Vanita from the University of Montana will talk about female couples in Indian texts and traditions.

There will be three professorial lectures, from Andrew Liddle, Professor of Astrophysics (16 October); Jane Cowan, Professor of Social Anthropology (6 November), and Jim Rollin, Professor of European Economic Integration (27 November).

Professor Keith Middlemas will also be talking about the European Union when he delivers the Founding Historians' Lecture on 30 October.

Children's health is the focus of the Sussex Development Lecture on 8 November, when Professor Lawrence Haddad (director of the Institute of Development Studies) will speak about child malnutrition in South Asia and Africa.

And children will also be under the spotlight on 7 November, during a lecture on the educational attainment of looked-after children by Professor Sonia Jackson from the Institute of Education.

The series concludes on 5 December, when the president of the Royal College of Physicians, Professor Ian Gilmore, will deliver the South Downs Annual Discourse, on 'Alcohol and health'.

The lectures are free of charge and everyone is welcome to attend, but you are asked to RSVP as indicated for each lecture. For details of each lecture, see www.sussex.ac.uk/events.

Podcasts of selected lectures will be available online a couple of weeks after the event and can be found at www.sussex.ac.uk/sussexlecturesarchive.

The Sussex Lectures are co-ordinated by the Development and Alumni Relations Office as part of a programme of activities aimed to promote Sussex's excellent research and teaching, and to provide opportunities for alumni and friends to celebrate and support this work.

FIRST CLASS

Professor Fred Gray's history of seaside architecture from the 18th century to the present day is in line to win a major non-fiction book award. Designing the Seaside is one of six shortlisted books for the 2007 Sir Banister Fletcher award, which is named after the architect and architectural historian and is presented annually for the most deserving book on art or architecture. Past winners have included Sir Kenneth Clark, Sir Nikolaus Pevsner and Sir Ernst Gombrich. The award ceremony will be at the Arts Club in Mayfair on 12 November, when the guest speaker will be renowned potter Grayson Perry.
Sussex the “best place to be” in England

Sussex is the “best place to be” in higher education in England, according to the latest survey of international student opinion. Survey results show the University provides a safe, multi-cultural environment, with good language support. 150,000 international students at 56 leading institutions in the UK and other mainly English-speaking countries took part in the summer wave of the International Student Barometer (ISB), conducted by i-Graduate.

Sussex first decided to take part in the autumn wave of the survey in 2006. The measure has since been adopted as the official measure of the international student experience by the UK government and funding bodies.

More than 1,000 overseas Sussex students responded to the two surveys in 2006-07, providing a detailed snapshot of where Sussex is performing well and where it can improve.

Complementing the National Student Survey (NSS), the ISB covers all areas of the student experience – such as catering and accommodation – as well as the academic aspects.

The University has already made use of the autumn 2006 findings. For example, the arrival experience of international students has been strengthened by sending a welcome team to Gatwick and Heathrow airports, and the reception for new international students has become a major event at the Brighton Dome.

The survey also reinforces the need to make improvements in areas where Sussex is already putting action in hand, such as the provision of library and catering services on campus.

Among the findings of the summer wave 2007 were:

• Sussex continues to be highly rated as a “good place to be” – coming second out of all 56 institutions taking part and top among English universities, with a safe campus, a good host culture and a place to make friends;

• Academically, students rated the expertise of lecturers very highly, and above the 1994 Group average. Sussex is also seen as a more multi-cultural place, and with better language support than many other leading institutions.

• Well over 85% of overseas students believe the time spent on their course of study has been worthwhile, and 77% – the same as the 1994 Group average – would encourage people to apply to Sussex.

However, in common with those at many UK universities, overseas students have very high expectations about work experience and careers support. And they have concerns about financial support and living costs in Brighton, perhaps expecting much lower costs outside London.

Pilot scheme for student study space

A new suite of rooms for student study has been created in the Russell building, which is mainly used for teaching seminar groups.

Each room is different in feel but there is a combination of soft seating areas, café-style tables and chairs, meeting areas, and desks for quiet study. The largest room also has a couple of vending machines.

Each room has at least one computer kiosk; desks for study have been located next to power points and network connections where possible; and each room has wireless connectivity so students can use their laptops.

The rooms are all on the ground floor of the Russell building, by the main entrance.

The new study suite is a pilot scheme and staff will monitor its popularity. Liz McVeigh, Head of Estate Planning, says: “We want to see how students use the space, and the furniture and the facilities provided, and will use questionnaires and surveys to gain feedback.”

Giving our students the best academic experience

Getting the student experience right at Sussex is critical to our success as a university.

The results of the National Student Survey (NSS) tell us something real about how students experience our university. They can’t be ignored as a blip or the result of one-off factors – and I’m pleased that no-one is taking this position.

The NSS results can be turned around quickly if addressed with determination – other universities and our own best-performing departments have shown this really is possible.

All departments will be looking at what they can do. It’s something where each person can make a difference. Students’ experience is affected by their latest contact with their tutors; whether their assessment was returned in good time; and if their feedback helped them to understand their subject better.

I’m heartened that the message from our new USSU sabbatical team is one of partnership working – facing issues together and finding solutions together.

Getting under the skin of the NSS findings is just one of many areas we will be working on over the coming year.

I was also heartened by the first meeting of the new Teaching and Learning Committee in September – with its mix of Deans, Directors of Taught Programmes, Heads of Department and Students’ Union sabbatics and officers. The mood of the meeting was that we could make a difference.

Across the University we are building upon the work begun last year. This is based on the teaching and learning strategy which we developed for Sussex over the course of 2006–07, and which was approved by Senate and Council in March 2007.

I am struck by how thoroughly it seeks to address student concerns. Through systematic engagement with staff and students, we developed a framework which addresses the issues that matter.

Our newly designed internal student survey will be rolled out this year to all second years – to help us understand the student experience better and more quickly, and take more timely action. I also believe the new Student Experience Forum will be important. This brings together academic faculty, students and Professional Services staff to consult, monitor and share good practice on matters affecting the welfare and well-being of students.

And as part of the Professional Services Review, we are creating a new Student Support & Experience team. They will be responsible for joining up and improving the student support services that complement students’ academic experience. We can also continue to make the physical environment better, which has a boosting effect on everyone. Students returning after the summer said the simple fact that the outside of Faimer House had been cleaned has made a difference to how they feel coming in to the Union.

Upgrading our teaching space is a key part of this work. This term sees the delivery of suites of new teaching space in Bramber House and the Arundel building. The Arts A1 and A2 lecture theatres have also received a full make-over.

And I’m excited by the opportunities provided by the commitment we now have to create a new teaching building, alongside the Swannborough residences in the heart of campus. I want that to be a 21st-century building fit for Sussex’s ambition and our students’ needs.

In the events for student induction and welcome week this year, I encountered individual members of staff and students making a difference to the lives of our new students from day one. Whether it was helping students find their feet in the new residences, or providing inspiring school lectures as a first academic taste of Sussex, that personal engagement was what counted.

Looking forward to 2008 and beyond, I firmly believe that we have all the right elements in place to create a vibrant and rewarding student experience across all academic arenas at Sussex.
Former creative writing student shortlisted for Man Booker Prize

Alumni from the Centre for Continuing Education's popular Certificate in Creative Writing have achieved spectacular success over the last year.

Indra Sinha's novel Animal's People has been shortlisted for the coveted Man Booker Prize. It is contesting the top spot with, among others, On Chesil Beach by Sussex English graduate and celebrated author Ian McEwan.

Indra took up writing full-time after completing the Certificate in Creative Writing ten years ago and Animal's People is his third published novel to date. Set in the town of Khairpur, a fictional rendering of the city of Bhopai, it tells the story of Animal, a beggar boy, whose spine has been so damaged by a disastrous chemical leak from an American-owned factory that he is forced to walk on all fours.

While a student at Sussex, Indra was already involved in fundraising for the Bhopal Medical Centre, which provides free medical treatment to victims of the Union Carbide factory gas leak that occurred in 1984.

The winner of the Man Booker Prize will be announced on 16 October.

Societies Fair comes to campus

Society: As part of Freshers' Week, the Societies Fair took place across campus on Wednesday 26 September. The 70 different student societies were keen to sign up new recruits.
New international students welcomed at airport

This year for the first time the University had a team at Heathrow and Gatwick airports welcoming new international students, answering their initial questions and assisting them to onward travel connections.

Pictured at Heathrow on 23 September are (L-R) student helpers Jackson Heddy, Hannah Peters and Anna Pigazzini, with Dr Philip Baker, Head of International Liaison.

Philip said: "It was great to be able to offer a welcome to our students as soon as they entered the country. Those we met really seemed to appreciate it, especially those arriving with rather a lot of baggage.

"We learned a lot on this occasion and will review how we might offer the service next time."

Student reception down at the Dome

Brighton Dome replaced Bramber House this year as the venue for the international students' welcome reception.

The function on 30 September began with welcome drinks, followed by short speeches from the Vice-Chancellor and the Mayor of Brighton and Hove. A local jazz band entertained guest and there was a light buffet.

"The event went really well," said Joanne Chee, International Students' Advisor. "Everybody agreed that the Dome was a magnificent venue."

Early feedback suggests that the event went down much better than previous welcome parties on campus, as students could chat to academics and network with other new students.

LETTERS

Is Freshers’ Week too long?

I wonder whether anyone feels, as I do, that Freshers’ Week is actually far too long? Most students have about eight hours or so of actual business to do – introductory lectures, meet your tutor, etc. – but the rest of the week is effectively empty.

For those extrovert souls who are happy to rush out and say hello to lots of strangers, fine. However, there are many here who are away from home for the first time, perhaps quite shy, and who just wish they could get on with some learning.

Given most students’ amount of contact time, there would still be plenty of opportunity to join in the usual activities - Societies Fair, etc. – even if lectures had started.

My own memory, from back in the dark ages, is of arriving at university on a Thursday and starting lectures on the following Monday.

Interestingly, the new International Study Group now based on our campus here have started their lectures on the Tuesday of Freshers’ Week, precisely to avoid the sense of lostness and boredom felt by many new students. Perhaps we should emulate them.

Dr Roger Luther, Mathematics

Daniella Salvagi, who co-ordinates induction, replies:

An extensive review of the University’s induction arrangements was conducted in 2002, seeking views from students in all schools of study who had experienced the kind of concentrated induction experience Dr Luther remembers from his own student days.

The week-long programme that has been in place since then addresses the strong concerns those students had about information overload, particularly for undergraduates to whom the whole experience of leaving home was in itself a large thing to process.

Essential orientation activities – school welcomes, departmental talks, completion of registration, library and IT inductions, personal tutor meetings – are now scheduled in the order they are needed, with time in between for students to absorb or act on information received.

The induction timetable is also designed in consultation with the Students’ Union to avoid, wherever possible, clashes with their equally important social orientation activities.

In such a diverse community there will always be some new students who would prefer to start work more quickly, because they are already used to studying away from home or because they feel in need of the structure academic study brings to their week. Finding new ways to identify and support students in that latter group is of course important to us, and we will again be raising this as a topic for discussion in the post-event focus groups that we conduct annually.

VC meets and greets freshers

Getting to know you:
Throughout Freshers’ Week the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farrington, met with freshers at a variety of events including introduction talks and the VC's reception for students and parents.
Sixties alumni revisit Sussex

Nearly 400 alumni who were at Sussex from 1961 to 1967 returned to campus last month at the invitation of Catherine Boyd and Helen Pennant-Rea (better remembered as ‘the Jay twins’), who kindly championed the reunion.

But alumni weren’t the only special guests; many of their former tutors were also present to mark the occasion and catch up with their old students.

And to everyone’s delight, former Vice-Chancellor Lord Asa Briggs and his wife, Lady Briggs, were the guests of honour. Lord Briggs spoke movingly about those first few years at Sussex and about how the University, with its innovative interdisciplinary approach to teaching and research, pioneered a new ‘map of learning’.

His speech was followed by a few words from the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, who hosted the reunion. The Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone back to the campus and outlined his vision for Sussex over the next few years.

As well as enjoying seeing old friends and tutors, alumni also had the opportunity to reacquaint themselves with their alma mater by taking part in guided tours of the campus led by current students.

After the requisite group photograph, alumni made their way to the newly refurbished Arts A lecture theatre to participate in a debate on climate change led by two leading Sussex academics, Professor Sue Hartley and Professor Gordon Mackerron.

And although this brought an end to the official celebrations, for many the party carried on both at Falmer and in Brighton.

Obituaries

Stephen Medcalf, Emeritus Reader in English, died on 17 September at the age of 70. He will be greatly missed.

After undergraduate and graduate study at Oxford and a brief spell as a schoolmaster, he taught at Sussex from 1963 until his retirement in 2002.

Passionately committed to Sussex and its pioneering of interdisciplinary study, particularly in the rich School of European Studies, he taught and published over a very wide range, interested not just in ancient, medieval and modern literatures but in religion, philosophy, cosmology and the history of science.

He was an outstanding and stimulating teacher who believed in teaching not books but students, responding generously to individual interests and needs and disposed to find value in even the most unpromising work.

He could be an enthralling lecturer, effortlessly supplying extensive and telling quotations in several languages from memory, so absorbed in his subject that he could take off a shoe to remove a small stone without ever faltering in his delivery or being aware of what he was doing.

Famously eccentric, at times chaotic, he nevertheless faithfully and effectively chaired the English Subject Group (as it then was) and was a mainstay of the Meeting House and of the University’s academic community.

Professor Norman Vance

David Wall, former Reader in Economics, died on 16 August at the age of 66. David joined Sussex in 1965 and stayed until 1996.

A development economist, he was far ‘ahead of the curve’ in seeing how global trends – in economics and in the economy – would change the requirements for economics at Sussex, and indeed in Britain. He was active and effective in helping the University and the profession to adapt.

While his initial area of specialism was Latin America, he was in the vanguard of those who anticipated, and helped Sussex and economics to adapt to, the opening and expansion of China. From the 1980s he trained a succession of doctoral students at Sussex, and formed links to several of today’s leading Chinese economists.

In his later years David moved increasingly from economics towards international-relations issues, and started working on new areas: central Asia and North Korea.

As with China, he sought both to develop contacts and to prepare British thinkers for the inevitable large changes that will come with economic opening.

As a teacher, David is fondly remembered by many students (including over 20 DPhil scholars) for his patience, informed and often inspiring. He helped many new arrivals, first from Latin America and later from Africa and especially China, to adapt to quite different conditions of both life and study. His successes are embodied in many women and men who carry forward his work and analytical spirit around the world.

Professor Michael Lipton

Memorial fund celebrates contribution to Mass Observation

Staff and students are invited to contribute to a memorial fund for Sandra Koa Wing, project officer for the Mass Observation Archive on campus.

Sandra, who died in May 2007 (see Bulletin 18 May), had a great many friends and colleagues from the Mass Observation Archive, in the Library – where the Archive is housed – and from her time as a student at Sussex.

Her family and colleagues have established the memorial fund to recognise this as well as the enormous contribution that Sandra made to the work of Mass Observation (www.massobs.org.uk).

The fund will be used to buy a lasting and fitting memorial that will be valued by visitors and researchers using the Archive. The exact nature of the memorial will be decided once the fund closes to contributions on 31 October.

To contribute, send a cheque (payable to the Mass Observation Archive) to the Chair of the Trustees, c/o Alison Timoney in the Library. If you would like a receipt, enclose your postal address or email address.
Sussex rated one of healthiest workplaces

The University has been recognised as having one of the healthiest workplaces in Brighton and Hove.

More than 130 companies entered the 16 categories of the 2007 Brighton and Hove Business Awards (BABHAS) and Sussex was a finalist in the Healthiest Workplace category.

The University’s entry stood out, according to the judges, because it addressed not only the physical health of the 2,000 members of staff based on campus but also their mental, spiritual and financial health.

The awards ceremony took place at the Hilton Metropole in Brighton on 20 September and was hosted by GMTV reporter Marcella Whittingdale.

Terry Cooper, Health and Fitness Development Officer, nominated the University. He said: “I felt the work we do here deserved recognition, particularly the Healthy Campus initiative.

“We try very hard to ensure Sussex has a healthy workplace and do this by providing many different sports and activity classes and opportunities, as well as a great deal of initiatives for all on campus.

“As well as ensuring our staff are healthy in mind, body and spirit, we’re very keen for students to take advantage of all the health benefits we have to offer.”

He added: “It was great for us to be a finalist in the Healthiest Workplace Award. Who knows, maybe next year we’ll win it!”

With such a large audience, one of the main tasks is to effectively communicate the services available and provide opportunities for people to experience new activities at regular intervals throughout the year.

The main event is the annual Health Week, which takes place from Monday 18 to Friday 22 February next year. It allows people to try their hand at new physical activities, consider their diet and remove stress from their lives.

For more information on Healthy Campus go to the University’s sport pages, www.sussex.ac.uk/sport and follow the links. Alternatively contact Terry Cooper on ext 8345 or email t.cooper@sussex.ac.uk.

Careers service wins diversity award

A welcome pack for visually impaired students has won the University careers service a national diversity award.

The Career Development & Employment Centre (CDEC) led a project to develop an audio resource pack for visually impaired students joining the Universities of Sussex, Brighton and Chichester.

The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS), the professional association of careers professionals in higher education, was so impressed that it gave the welcome pack its 2007 Diversity Award. CDEC received the award at the AGCAS biennial conference in Birmingham on 6 September.

The project to develop and produce the welcome pack was funded by the Blatchington Court Trust, a local voluntary organisation that has a long association with the University of Sussex in providing support to visually impaired young people.

Feedback from students and from the Blatchington Court Trust led to a focus on developing accessible ways to provide information, advice and guidance for new visually impaired students in higher education.

The result is a welcome pack made up of two CDs. Disc 1 is a guide to each of the careers services at the Universities of Sussex, Brighton and Chichester. Disc 2 provides an outline of the career planning process and inspiring but realistic case studies from six visually impaired graduates.

The Director of CDEC, Linda Buckham, says: “In addition to developing accessible information for new students, the project has increased knowledge among careers staff of the issues facing visually impaired students and a greater awareness of their learning needs in relation to career development.”

For further details, contact Linda on ext 3376 or l.g.buckham@sussex.ac.uk.

A walk on the wild side

Welcome to our first column of the new academic year. These regular jottings about the wildlife of campus depend on our readers: please email david@sussex.ac.uk to report your sightings and ask us questions.

The natural history of campus reflects its location: a south-facing, dry valley in the chalk of the South Downs, six kilometres from the English Channel. For example, it is a good site for spotting bird migration: late Swallows are still drifting south over campus.

The wildlife of campus also reflects the area’s history. Today, campus consists of buildings (best viewed by naturalists as cliffs), car parks and gardens set in mature parkland. If you stand near the top of Boiler House Hill, our valley looks impressively wooded; just three centuries ago it was almost treeless.

Sir Henry Pelham purchased Stannar Manor in 1713. This included the area now occupied by Lewes Court and the copse called Botes, north of Brighton.

Most of what is now campus was a large open field called Tenant Laine, belonging to Falmer manor. Henry’s grandson, Thomas Pelham, bought it in 1776. He and his son, also called Thomas, had their purchase extensively re-landscaped between 1778 and 1817. Tenant Laine was divided into four fields with hedgerows, and trees planted along tracks. They even had Falmer Windmill dragged 400m across a field to a new location, which is now under our tennis courts.

In past years we have often commented on the autumn berry harvest, not only on account of its aesthetic impact but also because of its significance as bird food. This year the dreadful wet weather in the early part of the summer does seem to have contributed to an unusually heavy berry crop. The hedgerows are laden with hips, haws, blackberries and sloes. A less familiar sight is the abundance of white berries on some of the campus shrubbery.

Plantings round the car parks near the Manteil Building and at the north end of campus have much Red-osier Dogwood, Cornus sericea. This is a North American relative of the familiar Dogwood of the Downs but, unlike our native shrub, it has white rather than black berries. It was first cultivated in Britain around 1893 and since the beginning of the last century has become naturalised in woodlands and along river banks, where it can produce extensive thickets.

Another white-barked shrub is Snowberry, Symphoricarpos albus (left), prominent in the shrubbery around Bramber House. Originating from the west coast of North America, this was a later introduction from about 1817. Not only is it widely planted in shrubbery but it has also been used as game cover and can now be found commonly in hedges throughout the British Isles. The berries are a centimetre or more in diameter but, like most white fruit, are not popular with birds unless the weather turns cold.
TUE 9 OCT

1pm Biochemistry and Genetics & Development seminar: Mick Tuite (Kent). Epigenetic control of translation termination in yeast: A novel role for a prion. Chown Lecture Theatre, BSMS.

2pm SEI seminar: Jaroslav Petras (Warsaw), Reforming the EU budget: Frequently asked questions, rarely given answers. Arts C233.


TUE 10 OCT

2pm Politics seminar: Kim Judd (International University Brussel and Sussex). Political marketing in Britain and Germany. Arts C233.


4.30pm Social work seminar: Jan Fook (Southampton), Using critical reflection for research. Arundel 1B.

6pm Sexual Dissidence and Cultural Change lecture: Ruth Vanita (Montana). At the heart of the family: Researching female couples in Indian texts and traditions. Chown Lecture Theatre, BSMS.

THU 11 OCT

4pm History seminar: Christian Wiese (Sussex). Challenging cultural hegemony: Jewish studies, liberal Protestantism, and anti-Semitism in Wilhelmine and Weimar Germany. Arts A105.

4pm Psychology seminar: John Prescott (James Cook University, Australia, & Oxford). The role of learning in flavour perception. Pevensey 1, 183.

2pm Research seminar: Nat Copsey (Sussex). Alan Mayhew (Sussex) and Christopher Hillion (Linden). Roundtable on ‘European neighbourhood policy’. Arts C233.


6.30pm Professorial lecture: Andrew Liddle (Sussex). Fingerpointing the Universe. Chown Lecture Theatre, BSMS.


WED 17 OCT


THU 18 OCT

4pm Psychology seminar: Gert Westermann (Oxford Brookes). Title TBA. Pevensey 1, 183.

Details of all events can also be found on the web at www.sussex.ac.uk/events

Small ads

Link Romania Family Shoebox Appeal: Fill a shoebox as a Christmas gift for a family in Romania. Call ext 7889 for a leaflet.

Wanted: New members for staff PAG badminton club. Meets Thu eve 8-10pm, Sport Centre. Contact Ben du Boulay: E b.du-boulay@sussex.ac.uk, ext 8324.

For sale: Black leather biker boots with straps & buckles, size 8. Never worn. E ejc.robinson@sussex.ac.uk, ext 8002.

To let: Studio flat nr London Rd station/Fiveways. Available 2-19 Nov. Suit visiting singles or couples. E U55@sussex.ac.uk.

For sale: i990 Mark 1 Golf Cabriolet. 1.8 automatic. Electric roof. New MoT, tax Jan. 66k miles. £1,300 oono. E db67@sussex.ac.uk, T 07725 191964.

For sale: Pentium Cenovo laptop. 1.6GHz, 1GB RAM, 40GB hard disk, DVD, CD writer, WiFi, webcam, microphone & headphone, Windows XP Office XP, bag. £300. T 07703 933927, E brightonlinks@yahoo.com.

To let: Bed-sitting room + en-suite shower room, own cooking facilities & entrance. Nr Lewes station. Stu N/S mature student, PG or faculty. £100 p/w incl. Available end Oct. T 472006, E rosemary@sussex.ac.uk.

Arts events

PERFORMANCE

Tue 9 Oct

7.15-9.30pm

Brighton Festival Chorus open rehearsal

Rehearsal chorus from Mozart’s ‘Requiem’ and Handel’s ‘Messiah’. All voices welcome. BSMS.

Thu 11 Oct

2pm

Motherland

Talk by photographer Simon Roberts, who travelled throughout Russia between July 2004 and August 2005, Orgd by Dept of Media and Film/Russian Society. EDB 121.

All articles are also featured on the internet at www.sussex.ac.uk/press_office/bulletin

Open day 13 October

Campus will be very busy on Saturday 13 October when the undergraduate open day is expected to attract 2,500 prospective students and their families. Visitors will arrive from 9am and the event ends at 3pm. Science, Biology and Manta Park will be open only for visitor parking.

Open staff forum

This term’s open meetings for staff will take place on two dates: Tuesday 23 October, from 2–3.30pm in the BSMS lecture theatre; and Wednesday 24 October, from 2–3.30pm in Arts A2. Staff will have the opportunity to discuss developments at Sussex with the Vice-Chancellor and other senior managers. If you want to suggest an issue that should be covered or ask a question in advance, email internalcomms@sussex.ac.uk

Library book sale

The Library is holding a sale of withdrawn books. Education books and children’s stories will be on sale on Wednesday (10 October); and politics, literature and philosophy will be on sale on Thursday (11 October). The books are extra copies that have been withdrawn following a detailed evaluation of usage figures. The sale takes place in the Library foyer.

Hotel competition

‘Four Acres’ in Fulking is one of the hotels and guest houses with which the University has negotiated special rates; see www.sussex.ac.uk/about/hotels. To be in with the chance of winning a night’s accommodation for two, name two of the property’s ‘green’ credentials. See www.fouracres.org.uk. Email your entry to hotelcompetition@sussex.ac.uk; include your name, designation (staff/student/graduate) and contact details. The closing date is 31 October.

University. The next issue will be out on 19 October, with a copy deadline of 1pm on 12 October. Please contact the Press & Communications Office in Sussex House, ext. 8888 or email bulletin@sussex.ac.uk.