NENE News

NENE NORTHAMPTON College of Higher Education

NENE *College of Higher Education* **Issue No. 35, February, 1997**

NENE AWARDS FIRST NORTHAMPTON DEGREES FOR 700 YEARS

On Sunday 19 January, Nene exercised for the first time its right, conferred by the Privy Council in November 1993, to award its own degrees. Recipients of these ground eaking awards, the first to be awarded by a Northampton institution for at least 700 years, included Masters in Leather Technology, Women's Studies, Education, Management Studies and Office Systems and 'top-up' undergraduate degrees in Community Health Care Nursing and Business Administration and Management. Director, Dr Gaskell commented "With its degrees recognised by the Privy Council, Nene can now take its place along with all other universities in the country." Leicester's Vice Chancellor, Dr Kenneth Edwards, sent his congratulations to Nene "on the first occasion at which the College will award its own degrees." He added "The University is delighted at the successful partnership between our two institutions which has been in place for more than two decades...We look forward to continuing to work with Nene College in the future in the development of Higher Education in the East Midlands."

New Choreography Laboratory

Dance Lecturer Vida Midgelow has set up a series of three choreography workshops with backing from the Nene Centre for Research. The workshops, taken by leading practitioners, will run to the end of February. They are aimed at professional practitioners, and, Vida explains, "will provide practitioners with a place to experiment with a variety of different approaches, explore new ways of working and to consider fresh ideas. Sessions will include dance technique, improvisations, choreographic tasks /devising, sharings of work, feedback and discussions. The lab aims to offer a safe and supportive environment in which participants can take risks, make mistakes and ultimately gain new experiences, without the pressures of needing to create an end product." Charlotte Vincent led the first workshop over the weekend of 25/26 January. She will be followed by New Zealand born dancer/choreographer Carol Brown and Ana Sanchez-Colberg from the Laban Centre this month.

Spotted by Roger Prout (Head of Careers) whilst in Hawaai. The Nene bird, incidentally, is otherwise known as the Hawaaian goose and is the official state bird.

"Award Winning Journalist" Title to Ed McDonough

Social Work Lecturer Ed McDonough has been awarded the IMCO and Guild of Motoring Writers travel award for 1996//97. The most sought after prize in motoring travel journalism went to McDonough for his research on the former Mexican Grand Prix drivers, Ricardo and Pedro Rodriguez who were both killed early in their racing careers.
McDonough is a veteran race driver himself, currently a works driver for the Minardi sports car company, and chairman of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club. His work on the Rodriguez brothers was described at the award ceremony in London as having "impressed the judges with his commitment to and knowledge of the subject".
The cash award means McDonough will be off to Mexico this year to complete his book and develop a series of articles on sporting heroes in Mexico which will appear in national newspapers here in the UK. The award was presented to a delighted McDonough by IMCO's Marketing Director Robert Wood and the BBC's Murray Walker.
IMCO, a national motor industry warranty and financial services group, have supported original travel projects for motoring writers for sometime. Media director for IMCO, Mike Heath, said the judges had a hard time this year and any of the finalists could have won. He described his award as "the chance to go back in time and pick up a piece of undocumented history. Mexico lost its only well known sporting heroes a long time ago, and it's time to tell their story for them and for their country."

Ed McDonough in the Minardi Grand Prix car at Silverstone,
Photo: Peter Collins

Travel Shop Opens

The long promised Student Union Travel Shop finally opened on 9 December. For the first six months or so, the shop will run as a franchised operation with other ABTA/IATA agents and will then apply for its own license. Manager Jeannette Davitt has made the move back from the Students' Union office into travel through a one week, intensive, British Airways training course, having worked "many years ago" for Britannia Airlines. Her new role, she says, is "completely different" to the Students' Union, but nonetheless enjoyable. Christine Wells completes the permanent staff as Travel Assistant.
Offering comparable, if not better, rates to Yorks Travel, the Travel Shop should find no shortage of custom. Jeannette commented "I don't think we're going to need to offer the staff discount [as Yorks Travel]. If people come to us for the same holiday, we can be more competitive and offer a better deal. Being on campus, we can offer a more personal service. Whatever they want, we can find a way." On its first day of opening, 5 holidays were finalised and many more requests for information taken. Requests were not even for short haul destinations - Australia, Barbados, Singapore, Bucharest and Moscow all figured.

Christine Wells (l) and Jeannette Davitt (r)

International Update

Cliff Dedynski, Head of the International Office, sums up current international activity not forgetting the International MBA and the MA International Business Analysis which have been recruiting well.

There are approximately 250 overseas students at Nene College. They are studying in all three faculties and across a wide range of disciplines. The five most active areas are:

• The American Studies Exchange Programme.

Four of the American Exchange students

Initiated in January 1997. 31 Nene students are studying ar four American universities (Coastal Carolina, Charleston, Winthrop, Lander). 30 American students are now studying at Nene until April 30.

• The British Timken Programme.

Another 'new' programme - designed for a group of 16 middle and senior managers from some of British Timken's recent acquisitions in Poland. The focus is on English Language - Business English and English for Engineers. a six week tailor-made programme.

• The 'ERASMUS' Exchange Programmes.

We have an ongoing commitment in two major areas: European Business Studies and Education Programmes.
The European Business Studies Programmes accomodate 41 students from a variety of E.U. countries as follows: Diploma in European Business - 11; BA in European Business Studies - 16; BA in Business Studies - 2; MA in Business Analysis - 9; MSc in Management Studies - 2; Postgraduate Diploma in Management Systems - 1. At the same tim an equal number of British students are undertaking similar programmes in our partner EU universities.
The 'Education' Exchange Programme is similarly based on reciprocal exchanges. At the moment we have 13 EU students on a one semester placement at Nene College. (Scandinavian countries are particularly active in this exchange programme).

• The TEMPUS-PHARE Programmes.

This is the most active time of the year for these programmes. Our connections with a variety of Polish universities in the Poznan and Katowice regions. We have 44 Polish undergraduates and postgraduates taking part in three EU funded programmes: European Studies - 16 students; Public and Community Nursing - 16 students; Poland and the European Union - 12 students. Our library will also be involved in a library modernisation initiative funded by the TEMPUS-TACIS programme. The partner this time is a Russian University, Kaliningrad State University. We will also supervise 3 PhD placements in the disciplines of International Marketing and Environmental Science.

• Leather Studies.

This continues to be one of our strengths and, to date, there are over 84 overses students studying on four different programmes offered at Nene: BSc (all 3 years) - 45; BSc (foundation year) - 23; Nene Certificate in Leather - 12; MSc in Leather Technology - 4.

The Asian Diary of *Harris & Berry*

Elaine Harris (l) and Dr Berry (second l) at Nene with Horace Wong (centre) before the final signing.

Assistant Director Dr Berry and Elaine Harris, Head of the School of Professional Studies, undertook a whistlestop tour of Hong Kong and Malaysia to finalise the details of Nene's new Distance Learning projects. Their successful - if hectic- trip has endowed Nene with two 'overseas offices' and courses which will start running this year. Here, Elaine gives her impressions of doing business Far Eastern style.

Wednesday 30 October

5.10 Land Hong Kong airport, realise why they are building a new airport
7.30 Kowloon tour, look at harbour - Find bar, Japanese beer!!
10.30 Back to work. Preparation for meetings.

Thursday 31 October (after 3—4 hours sleep)

8.15 Meet Horace Wong
9.00 Depart on 'bumpy hover' across harbour to Central.
9.20 Arrive at office 20° too warm - politely decline coffee "not yet".
9.30 Down to Business - this is our agenda for today.
10.30 One or two potential problems emerge, plod on
11.30 Problems start to look rather fundamental "could do with coffee now but don't like to ask".
12.05 Grateful for respite as lunch is on the horizon.
1.30 Exit packed restaurant to busy street, escape into nearest bar (to drink German beer in Lebanese bar in Hong Kong) and to brainstorm a bit.
2.00 Back to office having 'brainstormed' a bit. This time do not refuse coffee when offered.
3.00 Make or break point reached. Devise 'best ship in a storm' plan and work to plan presentation.
5.25 Put slides in case and breathe (small) sigh of relief at having a campaign for evening. Ask 'what time is kick off' and gulp at '5.30' but find Chinese kick off means depart not start.
6.05 Arrive at venue to find faulty OHP and no glass of water.
6.40 Audience filter in sheepishly - enter one 'pally' Brit from CIM. Enter 2nd Brit (if looks could kill, 1st Brit, Assistant Director, HOS and certainly Horace, would die) who sat on font row with face of enemy at a funeral.
6.45 Horace demonstrates his weakness at presentation skills - he was not being modest, he cannot and should not be let loose in front of an audience.
6.47 Dr Berry draws in breath and faces the unenthused scattering of inscrutables and 2 Brits. 'This is Nene.....' Applause.
7.04 Hand over to Harris who focuses on only face in room without bad Karma (turns out to be Horace's HR man, not a Marketer at all). Recall M West school of presentation skills - 'enthuse your audience'. One or two nods or slight changes in inscrutable facial expression (call this feedback?) Best sales pitch manageable with 'competition' sitting in front row. applause.
Time to find out why 2nd Brit so miserable "Disappointed not collaborating with us?" For a head of marketing in Hong Kong most negative man encountered in the 'Colony'.
1st Brit enthusiastic but has to run off. 2nd Brit so surprised that he was impressed (as he really had not intended to like us at all). Horace senses this and invites him to dinner (yawn yawn, more food, this time ask for glass of wine, feel we deserve it).
10.30 Leave venue.
10.35 Star Ferry!! Hong Kong skyline, Sigh.....

Friday 1 November

9.00 Meet Horace in quite good spirits, ready to face the challenges of the day.
9.30 Coffee and gifts received gratefully, and down to business.
11.30 In danger of more information overload, but "brainstorming" well and coming to consensus.
12.00 Ready for lunch, food brought in.
1..45 Off to do field work - checking price/availability of essential texts in local bookshops. Assistant Director buys book on the clarinet!
3.00 Tie up business back in office after what seems far longer than one day and a half! Depart for tour of Victoria Peak with Horace.
5.15 Leave Horace to go sightseeing/shopping for a couple of hours - Western Market, tram back to Wan Chai, walk in 'authentic HK', find bus back to Star Ferry and well earned rest.
8.25 Arrive back at hotel , feel aching, absolutely shattered.
8.50 Amazingly recovered, meet for dinner and review of day/position, develops into full meaning of life/business generally.

Saturday 2 November

6.05 Wake up and think up something that needs jotting down - to work.
7.50 1 3/4 hours jottings later, go for swim.
9.00 Breakfast meeting with Horace. Discover more strings to his bow (fashion!).
10.00 SHOPPING! Exhaust all remaining cash.
1.40 Depart for airport for Kuala Lumpur

Getting in touch with the taxman

Further to the information published in Nene News last spring, the Bootle tax office has now issued a number of direct dial telephone numbers for use by employees who may have a query regarding their personal tax affairs. To contact the appropriate team at the tax office, College employees should telephone 0151 300 followed by the relevant extension number, according to the initial letter of the staff member's surname.

Employee Surname	Tel. Ext.	Inland Revenue Officer			
A-C	6368	Brian Blanchflower	M-R	6348	Gill Duff
	6371	Joanne Higham		6349	Alex Scott
	6370	Sue Donnelly		6346	Steve Thompson
D-H	6364	John Fidler		6347	Paula McHugh
	6367	Sylvia Johnson	S-Z	6345	Jill Dutton
	6366	Michelle Kennedy		6343	Tim Atkins
I-L	6360	Nikki Dawson		6340	Marie Till
	6363	Tony Price		6342	Michelle McMullen
	6358	Janet Massey			
	6359	Carol Dean			

For anyone wishing to write to the tax office, the address is:

Bootle Merseyview,The Triad, Stanley Road, Bootle, Merseyside L75 2YY

When contacting the Inland Revenue, employees should quote the reference number 083/ G22 and their National Insurance number.

Directorate *News*

The Common Academic framework

Below, the Director explains the rationale behind the move to adopt a Common Academic Framework throughout the College. A Project team chaired by Dean of Management and Business Diane Hayes has been set up. It aims to recommend a structure for taught undergraduate awards and will provide an initial report to the Director by Easter.

What is it?

The Common Academic framework is making sure that there is a framework within which there are common building blocks which people use for their courses. It enables modularisation without necessarily requiring it. It allows for the fact that not all courses want to adopt the same way of doing things. The credits in the framework would fit in with the sector wide Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme. We have to maximise the use of teaching to our best extent. We can learn from the good experiences of others. In the first instance, it is more to develop a clear and coherent teaching structure than to enable extended student choice, although this latter should be a natural benefit. It may be about the flexibility of the timetable, particularly given the needs of changing patterns of student recruitment.

Will it be a sea change for the institution?

It has come back to me that there is concern that there will be a lot of dramatic changes overnight. However, it is happening by default in various parts of the forest - I want to make sure it happens coherently. New courses would be expected to conform to the credit ratings that the framework adopts and there would be a requirement to adopt the framework as courses come up for review.

So how will it affect the College's academic and administrative structure?

Radical change is not necessary at all. We remain committed, as stated in the College's Mission Statement, towards good provision for students thorugh defined academic programmes with clear learning outcomes. What I hope this would allow is that there would be proper opportunities for sharing of courses, or elements within courses. The institution is not likely to move to a free choice modular scheme.

How would Combined Honours be affected?

I would have thought in some ways Combined Honours would not want to be the first to move as they have just come through a radical review. Interestingly, a lot of the pressure for activity has come in the areas of single subject degrees.

Would research play an important part in the formation of a common academic framework in becoming a more integral part of academic departments?

The success of the Research Centre will be apparent when it is no longer needed. There are no moves to deliberately set out to trade on research as part of the undergraduate teaching departments. Research, inevitably, needs to be a part of each academic department - this will not however be an official move through the implementation of the Common Academic Framework.

Will there be changes in our student market?

The CAF, although not introduced primarily with the needs of mature and part-time students in mind, can still help the institution meet those needs much more easily than previously.

Will the CAF lead to an increase in the numbers of students the institution can handle?

It would help, but of itself should not be seen as a signal that, were there to be further expansion nationally, that is necessarily something the institution would embrace. *[Government figures for the projected increase in FTE students nationally start at 936,000 in 1996/97 progressing to 951,000 in 1999/2000]*

Budget

The last Budget was not generous in its provision for higher education. A 0.5% efficiency factor for the academic year 1997/98 was the latest in a long line of cuts which look set to continue for the forseeable future. Dr Gaskell commented "this Budget deficit can continue as long as you like. But if you continue cuts of this order, then you would no longer be able to deliver higher education in this country in the way we understand higher education in terms of quality. It wouldn't be the kind of higher education we all believe in." This is probably true whatever the political persuasion of government. "Bryan Davies [Labour's shadow spokesperson on further and higher education] has said that there is no indication that there would be significant additional moneys if there was a change of government."

Nene, in looking to increase its numbers of postgraduate students, is at least in step with this Budget which announced an inflation linked increase in tuition fees for postgraduates but no corresponding increase for undergraduate tuition fees. Research funding, however, is more problematic. The results of the Research Assessment Exercise were not sufficiently good to translate into funding of any significance. Dr Gaskell affirms "if research remains a priority of the institution, which it does, then it will continue to have support from the revenue budget. We have got to have faith."

Other sources of income are still less reliable. An increase in overseas student recruitment is "absolutely vital", although, subsequent to the recent HEQC report on standards overseas, "we have to be careful of the pitfalls." Likewise "we are very aware of the limitations of the Private Finance Initiative. What people must be conscious of is the amount of preparation that goes into a PFI bid. The institution has done everything it can to explore every tax benefit to its advantage. We continue to run an extremely tight ship. The best thing we can do is to make sure we are hitting all our targets. Many institutions don't make it - Nene does."

Dearing Review submission

Nene's submission to the Dearing Review (aka the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education) made explicit Nene's thoughts about developments in Higher Education. The following is quoted verbatim from the submission.

- Nene recognises the hierarchy of HE institutions, but does not want to see this centrally determined in a way that could deter development, disadvantage institutional specialisms (in the case of Nene, for instance, research in Leather Technology, which does not exist anywhere else) or diminish financial support for quality wherever it may be found.
- Nene strongly believes that diversity in institutional mission is essential for academic freedom and progress. It considers that any nationally imposed structure would be a recipe for stagnation. Diversity between institutions must exist in terms of: qualifications offered; programme structures; subject range; student experience.
- We are strongly of the view that institutions must continue to be free to determine their own particular balance of roles, be it local, regional, national or international.
- We would strongly endorse the concept of a 'level playing field' of funding for all HE institutions.
- The College is committed to securing university status..... University title is an important issue for Nene, as it was one of the small number of university aspirants which remained Colleges of Higher Education after the 1992 Act. The institution has throughout been consistent in its goal of university level activity and thus university designation. Aided by its recent period of impressive academic development, Nene is close to satisfying the current criteria for designation. With three other institutions, its case for immediate university designation is being set out in a separate submission to the Committee....Nene recognises and fully supports the need to maintain the standards of British universities and the need to ensure that these are clearly demonstrable. It believes that it represents those standards and can realise them. This view is shared by its students and by its local community. Nene now looks to the Committee to re-examine the effect of decisions regarding criteria taken earlier which are now unnecessarily delaying legitimate institutional aspirations.

Senate Building

Dr Gaskell explains the background to the proposed new Senate Building.

The Senate Building at Park will be a significant addition to the College and one that reflects both the interests of the donors and the values of the College.

I am immensely grateful to the Trustees of the Horne Foundation for making this possible. Kenneth Horne, who died in June 1996, left a substantial legacy for the College, via the Horne Foundation, and this has subsequently been most generously and significantly added to by the Foundation Trustees. Kenneth Horne was a long-time friend and supporter of Nene. An extremely successful businessman, he had strong views as to how business should be operated as a partnership between employer and employees, and he followed his theory through in practice. He also had strong views about, and was a great supporter of, education. Unlike many businessmen of today he saw it not just as a mechanistic means to solving man-power planning, but rather as something that was good in itself, a right of all, a benefit to both the individual and society. With these strongly held views, it was inevitable, as I wrote at the time of his death that he was not an uncritical friend nor an unchallenging supporter. But for me, he was a better friend of the College for that, because it meant he challenged us and, if he supported us, it was because we had convinced him of the value of our work.

With this legacy, the Trustees of the Horne Foundation sought to do three things:

1 provide a building and a resource that might not otherwise have been possible for the College to build;
2 ensure that it was a building of the highest possible architectural value;
3 contribute a facility that would be available to and accessible to all staff.

In other words, the new Senate Building will not just be general meeting rooms or offices, but rather a centre for staff. I recognise that being at Park Campus it can not meet the everyday needs of all staff of the College, scattered across our numerous sites, but I hope it will become a central focus for staff from across the institution. The Senate Building will provide staff common rooms, meeting rooms and catering facilities, along with a 'board room' for the College (the Senate) and on the third floor there will be office provision for the Directorate.

As the College has expanded over recent years, the Directorate has moved from 'pillar-to-post', with currently the two Assistant Directors in Mobile accommodation from which we have removed most teaching staff. So I hope you will agree that the time has come to provide the Directorate with an appropriate central location.

But I am particularly pleased that the initiative of the Trustees of the Horne Foundation has led us to do this in a way which links 'management' with a staff building. For me, as Director, this reflects certain priorities and values in the College. I have long heard the concerns of staff that, given the expansion and the pressure on space, there has been a diminution of informal meeting spaces for staff. there has been little I could do about this given the pressing needs of the College and the unwillingness of the Funding Council to recognise that as a 'legitimate' use of space. So I am pleased that this benefaction enables us to do something about that (at least at Park Campus).

But more than that I am particularly pleased that the values and beliefs of Kenneth Horne and his Trustees have brought us a development that accords with the values and beliefs of the College. Under my Directorship Nene has sought, despite all the counter-vailing external pressures, to maintain a sense of collegiality and a belief in the collegium. The Governing Body, facing constrained economic circumstances and despite the need for sometimes hard and unpleasant decisions, has always backed the staff. As Director I know that people are our most valuable resource and I have sought to mitigate the divide between 'them' and 'us' that the necessary managerialism of current higher education requires. I still believe in the collegium, and I believe that this Senate Building will reflect not only the values that Kenneth Horne maintained in his business, but also the beliefs that I hold about this institution. That is not to 'make life easy', because in present economic and political climates it can not be; but I hope Nene College will continue to be an institutional society in which we can share those difficulties, and the opportunities, collectively.

I think the Senate Building reflects these aspirations. I hope it will be a resource which, in the future, better enables us to: act collectively; listen to the views of all staff (and I mean **all** staff); and go forward in these difficult and uncertain times as a 'College'.

STUDENT *News*

The five team members

FIVE GO OFF TO CANADA

A team of final year Business Studies students from Nene have won their way to the finals of an international competition for business schools. The competition is organised by the Network of International Business Schools (NIBS) and requires contestants to complete a 1,500 word report after analysing a business case study. All this has to be done in four hours. Nene's team are the UK's sole representative in the finals which are to be held at Memorial University, Newfoundland (last years winners). They will be competing against seven other teams from around the world. Nene's representatives are Jason Hubbard, Matthew Bythell, Richard Giles and Martin Hunt with a reserve Colin Barnett. They are off to Canada for a week, arriving on 23rd February. Commenting Jason said: "It was very challenging and involved us in all aspects of a model company and its business situation. We had to provide a strategy for the continued prosperous growth of the organisation. We worked well as a group under real pressure - I hope jet lag won't fray tempers."

Geoffrey Middleton

Fillip for Personnel

Former Institute of Personnel Diploma (IPD) student Alison Burridge was recently awarded the Fred Berry Award from the Society of Chief Personnel Officers in Local Government for obtaining the best Local Government results, nationally, in the May 1996 IPD examinations. Alison will be presented with her award at the SOCPO conference in Bournemouth in March. She commented "I think that the college should take some responsibility for this result as the standard of the tutoring enabled me to gain this award." Course tutor Dorothy Foote was delighted to hear of the award and has suggested to Alison the possibility of mentoring current of future students to pass on techniques for success.

Student Successes

At the Awards Ceremony on 8 February, HND Business and Finance diplomate ***Nicola Desmond*** received a special BTEC award as the top performing student in her year at Nene. She qualified for the award, one of only 60 awarded nationally as an outstanding student who had gained 16 Distinctions throughout the course. Her prize consisted of £100 worth of book tokens and a commemorative medallion.

Rita Gilbert, currently a health care assistant at the Howard Johnson Day Hospital, has been awarded one of only two silver 'Medals of Excellence' awarded by City and Guilds for students "who, through their work, demonstrate worthwhile and innovative practices." Whilst studying on the NVQ in Care Level 3 - Continuing Care, Rita was nominated for her contribution to and development of new approaches to the co-ordination of community care services through improved communication methods and improving recognition of ethnic groups in particular.

CONSTRUCTION AWARDS

Back row (l to r): Chris Gorse, Bob Southwell, Tony Wasikowski (Swallow Construction), Peter Kingham (Chairman, CIMTP), Stuart Jones and Bob Smith Front row: Past and present students Dave Woodward, Mark Hopkins and Steve O'Callaghan.

Past and present construction students at Nene were awarded with prizes for their work by the Construction Industry Management Training Partnership (CIMTP*) at a presentation ceremony in November. Former student David Woodward and current student Mark Hopkins (both HND Construction Management) were awarded leather briefcases as the top performing students in their respective years. A sponsorship cheque for his placement year was also presented to BSc (Hons) Construction Management student Steve O'Callaghan.

Dave Woodward is now doing a BSc in Quantity Surveying at Loughborough University. He commented on the award "When I arrived at Nene College, my confidence was low. Being involved with the Partnership, I was able to go out and experience the industry first hand. Winning this prize, I have been able to get into Loughborough and get a job with Costain." Dave, who joined Loughborough's degree as direct entry on to the second year, is currently working with Costain on the M4 building the second Severn Crossing. He is confident that his success on the course at Nene and his Costain placement will stand him in good stead when it comes to job hunting at the end of his degree. He remains grateful to the staff in the Built Environment, adding "the lecturers are very good because they have all been in the industry."

**The Construction Industry Management Training Partnership was set up in 1988 by Kier Ltd, Lain Homes Ltd, Norwest Holst Construction Ltd, Persimmon Homes (Midlands) Ltd, Wilcon Construction Ltd, Wilcon Homes Ltd and Nene. All were concerned about the manpower shortages in the construction industry. The Partnership provides work placements, specialist lecturers and venues for industrial visits and funds a one week outward bound management training week in Wales for students on the HND and (Hons) in Construction Management*

***Footnote:** Due to continued difficulties with recruitment to construction courses, the College will sadly be losing the services of Bob Smith, Bob Southwell and Alan Ashworth. Their valuable contribution to the College is more than adequately illustrated by the successes detailed above.*

SPORT

GOLF

Colin Bradbury hands over the trophy to Daniel Bailey

Nene's student Golf Society, represented by Daniel Bailey were presented with a handsome new trophy by Dean of Students Colin Bradbury to be awarded to the winner of the annual Staff v Students challenge match, now a regular fixture. This year's match take place at the beginning of next term, and with victory going to the students for the last two years, any members of staff who would like to help out the cause would be welcomed.

Nene's student team has had considerable success in the 2 years of its existence. Last year, the team reached the last 16 in the Universities League, and almost matched that this year. Despite having a consistently small budget to work within, Nene's team has been fortunate to have received generous sponsorship in kind from Cold Ashby Golf Club. The club has donated team jumpers and allows all members of the student team to use the course at a junior rate of membership.

FOOTBALL

The staff team at half time

The Students v Staff Football took place at the end of last term. More of a mudbath than a display of finely honed skills (and sadly missing Brian Caldwell, who at least looks the part) the staff team, ably captained by Environmental Science's Duncan McCollin, managed to hold the score to a draw. Congratulations to those members of staff who responded to the call to arms and joined in.

Future events

Events which will be attended by Nene's staff and students include the following:

Sun. 23 Feb	**The Ghoulie Grind Duathlon (bike and run)**
Sat. 8 Mar	**Peterborough 20 miles (any London Marathoners?)**
Sat. 16 Mar	**Warwickshire 1/2 Marathon**
Sat. 22 Mar	**BT Swimathon 97, Rushden**
Sun. 23 Mar	**Stafford 1/2 Marathon**
Sun. 18 May	**Duston Triathlon**

Details of events will go up on the Sports Hall notice board. If any members of staff would like to attend with a College group, please sign up. It may be possible to arrange transport if sufficient people wish to attend. Participators in the BT Swimathon will be raising money for charity - if you do not wish to swim, feel free to sponsor! Further details nearer the time.

ALUMNI *News*

Former Lecturer Don Panting has just written a humourous book about his wartime experiences at Avenue. He assures us that no names are mentioned but anyone who was around at the time should recognise the stories. The book is available at Weston Favell, priced £4.00.

Getting Back in Step

Helen York

Alumnus Helen York (Podiatry 1983-86) has set up her own business, *'Back in Step'*, offering manicures, pedicures, reflexology, massage, aromatherapy massage, biomechanical assessment and chiropody. Now living and working in Northampton and at Henlow Grange Health Farm in Bedfordshire two days per week, she is offering a special discount of 10% off a first visit for any members of staff. She can be contacted on her home phone number 01604 643948 or on mobile number, 0976 156487.

Families, and how to survive them*

Children can thrive in single parent families when their feelings and opinions are valued. And if they are encouraged towards intellectual and cultural pursuits, they can turn conflict into a positive learning experience and respond positively to challenge.

These were the findings of Tony Cassidy and Samantha Newport (Psychology) from a report presented at the British Psychological Society's London Conference in December. 169 adults and their family environments were assessed, in relation to how motivated they were to achieve. Achievers came from families where expressiveness and intellectual-cutltural activities were valued, and where some conflict had been experienced. This was especially so for those whose mother or father was absent for part of their childhood. "The actual composition of the family is less important than its cohesiveness," said Dr Cassidy. "But the more male siblings in the family, the less expressive and cohesive it tends to be."

The results of the research were well publicised both in the UK and abroad. In addition to being reported in the more mainstream newspapers, Tony Cassidy did a phone in spot on the Anna Raeburn show on Liberty Radio and even rated coverage in The Moscow Tribune, albeit behind 'Iffy jiffy seizure scares Hong Kong dongs stiff'.

**with apologies to John Cleese*

HEQC *News*

The Higher Education Quality Council have published a set of guidelines on research degrees covering procedural and pedagogical matters. These *Research Degree Guidelines* have been developed following wide consultation with those directly concerned from individual academic staff in a range of subject disciplines through to agencies and commercial and industrial organisations with an interest in sponsoring research activity and employing research students.

Sixty 7 & 8 year old pupils from Whitehills Lower School visited Park Campus earlier this month. They were shown around the campus by Nene's Teacher Education students. The visit formed part of the Whitehills pupils' Geography project work.

SMC Thanks Musicians

Nene's Flute Choir, a group of first year students led by Paul Egan, entertained diners in style at an invitation Christmas lunch at the Sunley Management Centre. Viv Sloane, SMC's Business Development Manager was delighted by their reception. "They performed incredibly well and made us proud to be part of Nene." She, along with her colleagues at Sunley, would like to extend her thanks to the musicians.

Waste Minimisation at Nene

Every 9 months, the UK produces enough landfill waste to fill a hole the size of Lake Windermere. This fact alone puts into context the value, both environmental and economic, of Nene's ongoing programme to reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill. Security Manager Mike Holt would like to thank all staff who have taken on board the sorting of waste at source. Your efforts have halved Nene's use of landfill. He would like to remind staff of the opportunities for recycling within the College. Green bags are now used for all paper waste, white and coloured, red bags for glass and orange bags for tins and plastic. Cardboard may be flattened and collected by the porters. Anyone requiring a supply of bags or wishing further information should contact Mike on ext. 2193.

Apologies

for the late arrival of this issue of Nene news, due to illness.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- Senior Lecturer in Environmental Science, Dr Paul Phillips, had a recent article published in the THES convincingly arguing the need for developing the relatively new subject of Equine Studies to national standards of excellence.
- Members of academic staff were canvassed for the top 10 excuses given by students for failing to attend lectures and tutorials. The results may be used for a new Channel 5 quiz show, 'Split Second', to be broadcast in March. Selected highlights include the following: Couldn't be bothered; Forgot; In love; Watching 'Call My Bluff'; Clothes all in the wash; Called away to be friend's birthing partner; My pet rat died and I was so upset I couldn't attend; Taking the dog to the vet; Daughter's guinea pigs ill, taken to the vet; Broke - out working at Macdonalds; Flat electricity runs on 50p pieces and I only had a £50 note; Haven't done the reading so no point coming, you'd only yell at me.
- Professor Joshua Bamfield met with Home Secretary the Rt Hon Michael Howard earlier this month prior to the publication of his report on 'Making the Shoplifters pay: retail civil recovery." There is every indication that the recommendations in the report meet with the approval of the Home Secretary.
- Nene's student law mooting team won the second round of the British Universities mooting competition against the University of Bristol. This second victory stands Nene in good stead against highly regarded 'old' universities - their first win was against Nottingham.

Nene's mooting team at Bristol

- The Assistant Director has asked me to bring to your attention the first meeting of the Academic Services Forum which replaces the Academic Services Development Executive Working Group. Have your opportunity to raise issues with the Chief Librarian and the Head of Information Technology Services at the meeti arranged for Wednesday 26 February 1997 in the Grendon Lecture Theatre at Park Campus between 1230 and 1330. If you require further information please let me know.
  Melva E Duley, Senior Administrative Officer
- The last in the series of poetry readings will be held on Tues 18 Feb and Tues 11 March. The poets will be John Kinsella and Jamie McKendrick. Both events will take place in the Small Lecture Theatre at 7.30pm. Admission is free.

NENE*News*

Printed by
Nene College Reprographics

Designed by
Future Print

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Amanda Black

Copy and photographs welcomed.

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