

Recruitment Update

Registry's Paul Tebbutt makes an early assessment of the recruitment position. Although applications were considerably up on last year, firm acceptances which are now starting to come through, are distributed amongst popular courses so that we are unlikely to benefit fully from the gain in applications. It looks increasingly likely, therefore, that we will find ourselves in a similar recruiting position as last year.

Paul has just completed an MBA Research Project on applicants, the results of which will be available in full in June. He comments "Personal recommendation counters our lack of university status. Library and Information Technology facilities also help. In short, the success of our recruitment depends on the quality of experience we give to the students."



"I'll go anywhere for a student..."
Head of CAMs, Geoffrey Middleton,
reports back to colleagues from holiday
in Scotland.

Research Funding Success

A team of Nene's Geographers, headed by Research Director Professor David Briggs, has won a major grant to investigate the effects of traffic management schemes on air pollution and health in the town. The two year project, funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, will be carried out jointly with Imperial College, London and Leeds University and in close collaboration with Northampton Borough and County Councils.

Commenting on the rationale behind the study, David Briggs said. "Recent years have seen a rapid growth in levels of asthma and other respiratory illness, especially amongst the young. Much of the blame for this has been leveled at pollution from road traffic. As a result, the government is bringing in tighter controls on air pollution and passing much of the responsibility for improving air quality to local authorities. Sustainable transport initiatives are seen as one of the obvious ways of reducing air pollution as well as tackling congestion and other problems. Remarkably little research has yet been done into the effects of traffic management schemes, or modal shift, such as bus prioritisation or traffic calming, on air quality or health."



Grounds Supervisor Ken Marlow receiving the College Court Award from Sir John Lowther, Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire. They were joined by Chairman of Governors, Air Marshall Sir John Sutton (far left) and Dr Gaskell.

Spotlight Expose-

Annie Kent, Postroom Supervisor



Annie Kent with Lance the guide dog

I have seen Ann Kent at a loss for words - all it took was a notebook and a few questions. The following is taken from a short interview, undertaken with reluctance which I am grateful to her for letting me print.

Born in Hinwick, Bedfordshire, Annie Kent moved to Northampton in 1971 in what was to be her first - and last - career move. She started work on the 13 April that year ("the same day as Anne Gilkes") as a Clerk/Typist at the then City of Leicester College of Education, Northampton Annexe. She is arguably now a more familiar sight around the college (if she'll forgive the comparison) than all of the furniture and most of the buildings. Her own education was conducted at the Harold School in Bedfordshire where she was destined, she says, for "nothing - I didn't like school" and which proved to be her last experience on the learning side of the fence. "I probably should have taken a degree years ago." Her early days at the College are remembered with fondness - "When I started, all the students were the same age as me. We had such a fantastic time. We used to organise trips, go to parties. It was a very friendly, caring place." She still keeps in touch with those students - "every one of them has a good job. A degree meant something then." She was a keen horsewoman and continues to be a keen walker. At work, she maintains a close involvement with special needs students, a job she used to do under Gwyneth Hood.

How do you relax?

"Walking, the Mail on Sunday crossword (Monday morning, nobody is safe) and horse racing. Living in Hinwick, you either cycled or walked; there was no bus. I've always walked for pleasure. I've always had other people's dogs to walk. A lot of people think you're mad, walking, but to me, the housework can wait. It's just being in the fresh air, doing your own thing. The longest walk I've ever done is Offa's Dyke. It took two weeks. I'm finding out more about Northamptonshire now I'm walking than I ever did before." Those of you who know Annie will know that she is no stranger to county long distance walks. The appeal of the crosswords lies in "trying to win the prize if there's a prize involved (no success yet) and the satisfaction of finishing it."

Who, or what do you most respect?

"I only like horses, dogs and Garth Brooks*."

Do you enjoy your job?

"Because I've been at the College so long, I've done more time than a murder sentence. I don't mind it - I like meeting students (sometimes)."

What is your greatest achievement?

"There are three. Getting a new car, visiting Nashville and going to France to watch the Prix de L'Arc de Triomphe. I set my own goals, then achieve them."

What is your next ambition?

"To make a million."

What virtues does your job require?

"Patience - of which I have very little. You've got to be friendly. (I'm not always friendly.) You have to stand back a lot of the time."

Any memories of the 'old' College?

"We had a sculpture commissioned from Dame Barbara Hepworth where reception is now. It lasted a day, then ended up on Brixworth tip. I remember serving tea to Margaret Thatcher. When I came, the College was very different."

And the new...?

"Academics are getting younger."

Favourite film

"The Yellow Rolls Royce' with Rex Harrison."

Favourite book

"The Good Earth' by Pearl S Buck. I remember reading that at school. It was very sad."

* Country and Western singer to the uninitiated.

Honorary Degrees

At the University of Leicester degree ceremonies to be held in Northampton on the 7-8 July 1997 the University will confer the following Honorary Degrees:

Rt Hon Sir Stephen Brown	Doctor of Laws
Mr Patrick Coldstream	Doctor of Laws
Sir Richard George	Doctor of Laws
Commander Michael Saunders Watson	Doctor of Letters
Mrs Anita Tasker	Master of Laws

The Right Honourable Sir Stephen Brown (LLD)

Sir Stephen Brown is president of the Family Division of the High Court of Justice and the father of former SU President Alex. He was educated at Malvern College and Queens' College, Cambridge. He was called to the Bar in 1949, became one of Majesty's Counsel in 1966. He became a Bencher of Inner Temple in 1974. After serving as Recorder of West Bromwich and Deputy Chairman of Staffordshire Quarter Sessions, he was appointed a High Court Judge in 1975 and served in the Family Division and Queen's Bench Division. He was presiding judge on the Midland and Oxford Circuit from 1977 to 1981. In 1983 he was appointed a Lord Justice of Appeal and in 1988 became President of the Family Division. In this capacity he has presided over a number of high profile cases, including Airedale NHS Trust v. Bland concerning the withdrawal of treatment to a victim of the Hillsborough disaster.

Mr Patrick Coldstream, CBE (LLD)

Mr Patrick Coldstream was, from 1986 until June 1996, the Director of the Council for Industry and Higher Education, a body of heads of large companies and universities which aims to agree and promote their common long-term interests. He was educated at Oxford and has been an officer in the Royal Marines and a columnist on the Financial Times. He was joint-founder of Fullemploy and South East Training, charitable companies set up to encourage business to take responsibility for training in inner city areas. He is an occasional broadcaster and journalist and has lectured on the relations of higher education and industry in Britain, continental Europe and the USA and Australia.

Sir Richard George (LLD)

Sir Richard George is the Chairman and Managing Director of Weetabix Ltd based in Kettering and is Chairman of Whitworths Holdings Ltd. He was educated at Repton School and Kansas State University. He joined Weetabix Ltd in 1968 and was Deputy Managing Director between 1976 and 1982. He is a Member of: the Board of the Environment Agency; the Executive Committee of the Association of Cereal Food Manufacturers and was Chairman from 1983 to 1985; the Council, Food and Drink Federation and was President between 1993 and 1995; he is Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Institute of Food Research. He is also a Member of the Management Board of the Prince's Trust and is Vice-Chairman of the Northamptonshire Prince's Youth Business Trust.

Commander Michael Saunders Watson, CBE (DLitt)

Comdr Michael Saunders Watson is the owner of Rockingham Castle, on the border of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. He was Chairman of the British Library Board between 1990 and 1993, and is Chairman of Kettering Hospital NHS Trust. He was educated at Eton and BRNC Dartmouth. He joined the Royal Navy and became Commander in 1969, retiring in 1971 on succession to Rockingham Castle Estate. He was President of the Historic Houses Association 1982-88, Chairman of: Northampton Association of Youth Clubs 1977/91; National Curriculum History Working Group 1988/90; Heritage Education Trust 1988-; Friends of the British Library 1994; Northampton Board of Country Landowners' Association 1981/84, Vice-Chairman of Northamptonshire Small Industries Committee 1981/84 and was a Trustee of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Key 1983/91.

Mrs Anita Tasker, OBE (LLM)

Mrs Anita Tasker was appointed as a Magistrate in 1963 and is one of the longest serving Magistrates in Northamptonshire. She was a member of the Lord Lieutenant's Advisory Committee on the selection of Magistrates between 1984 and 1990 and was Chairman of the Northamptonshire Bench between 1984 and 1989. She was Chairman of the Northamptonshire Police Consultative Committee and was appointed Deputy Lieutenant in 1989.

Art Exhibition to Aid Ukraine Visits Northampton

Ukrainian-born artist Iryna Prudnyk exhibited her work at Nene College's Avenue Campus Gallery in April in aid of the Northampton based Ukraine Relief Project (URP). The URP is a voluntary organisation established in 1993 by two podiatry (chiroprody) lecturers from Nene College. It aims to establish proper foot care facilities for diabetics (who are prone to complications of the lower leg) in the Ukraine in order to reduce the number of leg amputations. To date, three foot clinics have been established in Kiev, Kharkov and Vinnitsa and a fourth will be opening shortly in Lviv. In addition to helping to equip the clinics, the URP has run short courses to train the doctors in basic podiatric care and arranges UK placements for Ukrainian doctors and Ukrainian placements for British podiatrists.

Léger's Circus Touring Exhibition at Nene

Fernand Léger (1901-1985) was one of the great innovative artists of the twentieth century. His lifelong passion for the circus led him to produce a book, *Cirque*, illustrated with original lithographs and a hand-written text by the artist. The National Touring Exhibition from the Hayward Gallery which makes its next stop at Nene, comprises 37 of these beautifully printed lithographs. The exhibition can be viewed from 21 April - 16 May as a respite from election fever during usual Gallery opening hours.

'IT' Girl Brings Art to Nene



Ray Maguire (Estates Office) with artist Stephen Palmer (r) and his paintings.

Flushed from the success of the impromptu exhibition of local sculptress Susannah Oliver's work last year, Avenue IT Services Receptionist Julie Lawrence has inveigled yet another artist to lend works to the worthy cause. Stephen Palmer, who studied at West Surrey College of Art and Design and Winchester School of Art has 'donated' two paintings for a couple of months to liven up the walls of the Avenue IT Centre. Stephen's personal philosophy of art is straightforward. "Through the use of certain structures and proportions, I hope to create paintings which can bypass an intellectual rationale and have a direct effect on the emotions of the viewer. By exploiting the physical nature of the substance of paint and the structure of colour, and through colour interrelationships and proportional means, I find parallels with the physical nature of the universe and the spiritual nature of human experience."

Energy Conservation at Nene - where do YOU fit in?

The following is written by the Energy sub-group of the College's Environmental Management Executive Working Group.

Do you believe that it costs more to switch a fluorescent light on than it does to leave it on all day?

Do you cool your office down by opening a window rather than turning the radiator down?

Do you switch your PC on in the morning but use it only once during the day?

The government's Energy Efficiency Office estimate an organisation can save over 10% of its energy bill by making the people within it more energy aware. So, if you switch the lights off as you leave a classroom, switch your office lights off if you are going to be out for more than 15 minutes, turn your radiator down a notch and only switch your computer on when you need to use it, you will be helping the College in its quest to become more energy efficient and helping to save the earth's energy resources.

Energy conservation, for reasons of environmental benefit or economic necessity, is an issue which most organisations have had to become more aware of in recent years. Nene is no exception, with our total energy consumption increasing from 145 million kilowatt hours in 1990 to 248 million kwh in 1995. So ensuring efficient use of fuels must be a high priority.

Of course, this increase is due to the rapid expansion of the institution; however, we have not been sitting idly by, watching our energy use spiral ever upward. New buildings not only meet the statutory requirements for energy conservation, but, where budgets allow, we exceed them. Additional measures on new buildings have included the specification of energy efficient boilers and heating controls and the use of solar gain through good design. Energy efficiency has also been an important consideration for refurbishment and renewal projects, for instance: the replacement of old windows with thermally efficient double glazed units; specifying a high degree of insulation for flat roof renewals; upgrading insulation on pipe work; improvement in heating controls and more. One of the most significant projects has been to network the individual Building Energy Management Systems at Park Campus (22 in all) to a central management PC point which has enabled more effective control of heating and ventilation - at a cost of £40,000 this represents a substantial investment and is an indication of the College's commitment to energy efficiency and conservation.

Whilst it is difficult to quantify exactly how much energy has been saved by these projects, due to the dynamic nature of the College's built environment, a conservative estimate based on a few known facts is that

our current consumption is 10-15% lower than it would have been if we had not taken these positive steps. With commercial gas prices set to rise by 50% in the coming year, the pressure this will put on our already stretched budgets will only serve to heighten our awareness of energy conservation even more. In Nene's case a 50% increase in gas prices represents an additional £65,000.

On 13 December 1993, the inaugural meeting of the Director's Environmental Management Executive Working Group was convened. Those members present were sub-divided into groups, concentrating on the following aspects of College life: Waste management, energy use, transport, car parking, open spaces, paper usage and purchasing. Since then, a policy document on environmental procedures for Nene College has been approved by Directorate and is slowly being put into practice by the same sub groups who have evolved responsibility for implementing the management of the practices concerned.

Chron and Echo discover humour.

The April 1 edition of the Northampton Chronicle and Echo contained a news feature concerning the proposed establishment of a wildlife park (the 'Bradlaugh Wildlife Kingdom') on Bradlaugh Fields at the back of Nene's Park Campus. The Park, allegedly, would be stocked exclusively with "plant-eating creatures, like elephants and rhinos, which will roam free [inside, of course, a 40' electrified fence]" Nene College, it was stated "is likely to use the park as a research base for students studying animal behaviour." Together with Moulton College, who, with their extensive knowledge in the field of small animal management, were the natural choice to care for the parkland, Nene "will also be monitoring the effect the elephants and rhinos will have on wildlife currently living in the park."

STUDENT News



Paul Russell (l) with Leah Evans of the Rowing Club

Nene students need your help for Moscow Children's Hospital

Second year Psychology and Human Biology student, Paul Russell (who also runs the College Parachute Club, rows, enthuses, persuades....) is undertaking to co-organise and participate in two physical challenges to raise money for London based charity, Friends of Russian Children. The first will be an attempt on the UK's three highest peaks from Friday 6 - Sunday 8 June. This entails scaling the highest mountains in Scotland, England and Wales within 36 hours (including travel). The team will consist of 20 walkers from Nene plus support crew who will head off for Ben Nevis in Scotland on Friday night then work southwards via Scafell Pike to Snowdon on Sunday. All walkers will raise a minimum of £50 in sponsorship as well as sharing the costs of the trip. The event is being jointly organised by Nene's Parachuting and Rowing Clubs and the local branch of Raleigh International.

The second event, undertaken by Paul is a 440 mile cycle ride from Helsinki to St Petersburg in July as part of a longer trek which will eventually take the cyclists on to Moscow. Paul does not consider himself to be a cyclist, but optimistically comments "I will be."

Paul's involvement with the Friends of Russian Children charity came about through school friends who saw at first hand the appalling conditions in Moscow hospitals. The charity raises funds for Children's Hospital number 9 in Moscow, the main burns referral hospital for Russia. Since its inception in 1990, it has provided regular supplies of pain relief, burns dressings, antiseptics and disinfectants. All these are taken so much for granted in the UK but are essential prerequisites for both comfort and health.

Anyone wishing to help out by sponsoring Paul and his colleagues can contact him on (01604) 36268. All help would be very welcome.

Simon Douglas

1st year BA Visual Arts student, Simon Douglas, is off to the Lahaul Himalaya in northern India this summer with a British Schools Exploring Society Expedition. Simon was one of sixty students nationwide picked from several hundred applicants to accompany the expedition to record the trip and its scientific research through his art. Simon will be in India from the 18



Simon Douglas

July to the 29 August, working his way up from Delhi to an acclimatisation and training site in the Chitkul valley. After two weeks the expedition will move to the higher Chandra valley. In contrast to the acclimatisation site this valley is much drier and devoid of most vegetation. Here, further project work and trekking will be completed and an attempt on one of the peaks - KR3 (6132m) will be made if conditions permit.

Simon started at Nene on the BTEC Diploma in Foundation Studies in Art and Design and successfully progressed on to the Visual Arts degree. He is complimentary about the Foundation course - "it is a good opportunity to try a bit of anything and everything" and the degree - "You're meant to be completely self-motivated." Course leader Clive Ramsdale adds "It gives students a chance to find out where their direction lies."

If anyone can help Simon out with funding his expedition, he can be contacted through the School of Art and Design.

BABS in Canada

The last issue of Nene News reported the imminent departure of a team of five BA Business Studies students to Canada to participate in the Championship round of the NIBS Case Competition. The qualifying round which took the Nene students to Newfoundland had seen the students beat both South Bank and Sheffield University entries from the UK and many others from all over the world. Corri Farquarson, Economics Lecturer accompanied her charges - the following article is her impressions of the week spent in Newfoundland.

Preparations were made for the trip. Team tactics were discussed and decisions were made regarding the choice of reference books to be taken. The teams were to be allowed one book each for the Championship Round. The Championship Round was a "round robin" for two pools of four, the top two teams to go through to the semi finals at the end of the week.



Corri with the BABS team in Canada

The Championship Round

Nene were in the same pool as the hosts (and last year's winners) Memorial University, Newfoundland, Limburg University (Belgium) and the University of Miskolc (Hungary). For each of the pool matches, the teams were given four hours to prepare their response to a given case study. The response was to be presented as a 20 minute oral presentation, with computer graphics backup. There would then follow a ten minute question period. Each 'match' was a head-to-head affair with judges from local and provincial Newfoundland industry and commerce deciding the outcome.

The first Nene match, against Miskolc, was very close, although the Hungarians were named victors after a split decision by the judges. The second match, against Limburg, was very clear cut; the Nene team were relaxed and presented powerfully. They were easily the victors. The final pool match was against Memorial. Nene had to win this to ensure their place in the semi-finals. The presentations by both teams were excellent. The decision was marginal, but in favour of the reigning Canadian champions, Memorial. Nene now had to hope that Limburg beat Miskolc in the other pool match of the day. Again, although another marginal decision, it was not one which helped Nene. Miskolc had defeated Limburg and joined Memorial as semi-finalists. Nene had missed qualification by one point....

Thursday was a day off for all competitors which was a good job, since it was Jason Hubbard's birthday and he was taken out for a celebration meal and drinks by all eight teams!

The final was fiercely contested. The champions were named as Memorial University, Newfoundland - for the second year running. The finals next year will be held in Oslo; the victors took the opportunity provided in the rules to pass up on organising them for a second year consecutively.

A very full day was rounded off with an official awards ceremony and reception. An alternative awards ceremony also took place later, with each of the eight teams presented with photos from the week's social activities. As well as playing (competing) hard all week, the teams were provided with a full and varied social calendar. The NIBS case competition is as much about learning from others and developing an understanding of their culture as it is about the case analysis and presentation. The whole week was a learning experience and the Nene team learnt as much as everyone else.

Newfoundlanders, or Newfies, are extremely friendly by nature and a non-academic highlight of the week was the Honorary Newfie status bestowed upon all visitors. 'There is no such thing as a free lunch' and the price of being 'Screeched in' as it is known locally was that each person had to take a shot of the local rum; 'Screech', chant in local dialect and kiss a cod - the symbol of the once thriving fishing industry of the Island. Historically, the cod was freshly caught, but now it is professionally stuffed and preserved!

I was proud to accompany the Nene team to this competition. They performed so well in the round robin and really were unlucky not to qualify for the semi finals. The Dean of the Business Faculty at Memorial also commented to me that they were such good ambassadors for Management and Business at Nene; not least because of their professional attitude towards the competition but due to their desire to mix with the members of the other teams and their readiness to get involved in the social programme too. I'm looking forward to next year's competition already and if Nene qualifies for the Championship Round again, the team will be invited back to Nene to advise the Championship team on tactics and approach.

Sport Students Raise Funds for Former Lecturer

On Tuesday 18 March, Dr Gaskell handed over a cheque for £800 on behalf of Sport and Recreation students to former Senior Lecturer in Economics, Don Willis, who, since his retirement in 1987 has suffered a series of debilitating strokes. The money will be used by Don and his wife to build an accessible summer house in their garden. The students were required as part of their course to organise and run a series of leisure events achieving at least a break-even financial situation. When approached by Mike Hermann, Accounting and Finance Lecturer and a friend of Don's, they readily agreed to donate any profit. A series of thirteen events ranging from the SU hosted Irish Night to a three-legged basketball tournament proved so successful that there was a clear profit of over £800. Staff from the Faculty of Management and Business topped up the donation by a further £200. Shy and retiring student spokesman, Niall McCann commented "Credit must go to everyone involved who helped to raise the money. The high point, dare I say it, was the Irish Night. A year on, people are asking us for a sequel."



The students with Don Willis (centre front) and his wife (standing, second from right)

STAFF News

Red Noses all round - and not a drink in sight

Several events were organised by members of staff and students to raise money on Red Nose Day. M&B correspondent Matthew Watson, followed M&B staff during their fundraising efforts.

Management and Business staff adorned football kits, Madonna wigs and red noses on Friday 14 March. No, this wasn't a new uniform for Nene employees before you ask.

It was all in the name of Comic Relief as the Faculty of Management and Business became the Faculty of Fun for the Day [please note not Ministry of Fun-ed]. M&B staff enjoy having fun and now they had the perfect excuse to be very silly.

Course Administrator Lesley Haynes had the bright idea of holding a sponsored walk in fancy dress. Dressed in an ensemble of stripy trousers and straw hat and calling herself 'Girl Friday', intrepid Lesley set out the route of the walk around the former golf course that now boasts the name of 'Bradlaugh Park'. This she did by scattering copious amounts of loo roll everywhere. I hasten to add that Lesley did pick it all up later!

At 12.30pm a motley crew of M&B staff set off from the main car park to walk the treacherous route. Ann Comerford donned her son's Newcastle United kit and draped herself patriotically in the Union Jack. John Crane raised a few eyebrows to say the least. The M&B porter braved his goose-pimples by not wearing very much: trainers, shorts, a Father Christmas hat and very little else to be precise! Julie Raven wore her furry red nose and brought along her boyfriend, who put the pain of a broken arm to one side in the name of a good cause. What did I wear? I opted for my trusty Madonna wig although several people suggested that I looked more like Vera Duckworth. Charming. Other staff, (perhaps wisely) opted to come as themselves with walking boots, warm jumpers and

waterproofs being the order of the day. Well.....it can be a bit bracing out there on Bradlaugh Park.

The walk took half an hour, although the walkers were distracted halfway along by the raunchy activities of some frogs in a pond. At times, we were also confused by the loo-paper trail blowing in different directions. We had to try and keep Cottesbrooke on the horizon otherwise we could have ended up in Safeway looking a bit silly! First to finish were John Crane and Course Administrators Sylvia Semple and Sam Bishop who had opted for the sporty approach and whooshed off as if it was the London Marathon. Of course, the real winner was Comic Relief. The comic capers of M&B staff raised approximately £100 which just shows what you can do with loo roll, a Newcastle United football kit, a very bad blonde curly wig and a pond of....ahem...busy frogs.



* Unmistakeably staff from Central Registry (and friends) Registry staff contributed in their own inimitable way - rousing staff to dig deep through the wearing of silly hats, imposing fines for the non-wearing of silly hats and demanding money with menaces and raffle tickets. A total of £174 was raised.

* Performance Studies students raised £37. Somehow.

STAFF News

Obituary - Rodger Alder

Rodger Alder lost his fight against cancer on 5 March this year. Rodger had worked at Nene for 27 years, the last 18 months as Senior Lecturer in Industrial Archaeology, a subject which he had been instrumental in developing at Nene. He is remembered by former colleague, Geoff Simms as a "quite unique" man. "His delight in a quaint turn of phrase, coupled with ready if sometimes caustic wit, was a privilege to share. I feel his greatest asset was in his ability to acquire, hold and update an encyclopaedic knowledge of the social structure of the College. Everybody knew him, and he knew of, and about everybody both academic and support." Rodger was well known, too, in Northampton through his Deputy Leadership of the Borough Council. Council Leader, John Dickie, described him in the Chronicle and Echo as "a passionate, vigorous and enthusiastic advocate of Northampton who wanted above all a quality town for everyone. He believed nothing but the best was good enough for the people he represented. He believed the best was always possible." This positive spirit was demonstrated in his epitaph - 'It's quiet without him' - and in his instructions for those attending the celebration of his life, both of which he wrote himself. "Only people wishing to look slim or who happen to have a smart outfit in black allowed, otherwise black actively discouraged. Ladies in large hats very welcome." He will be missed.



Rodger Alder in *The Chron's* Tribute



Stewart Jones



Bob Smith



Bob Southwell



Alan Ashworth



Dene Warren

Built Environment

Despite the sad occasion, spirits were lively and it was good to see that so many people had turned up to give the Built Environment boys a good send off. Geoff Otley marked the event by recounting his wife's summing up of the quins' departure in two words "Lucky buggers!". Speeches and gifts were received gracefully alike and there was an impromptu speech given by Sandy Gilkes on behalf of all the women at Nene who had had the good fortune to have been treated with such courtesy and gentlemanly manners by the departing quintet. It was a pleasure to have worked with them and they will be missed.

Wendy Vreony

Arts & Social Sciences

A buffet lunch was held on 21 March to mark the early retirement of a number of senior, long-serving staff members from the Faculty. Many past and present staff enjoyed a happy get-together. Speeches included some reminiscing of special occasions and events which had taken place in the College's early life. Gifts were passed to retirees, including Peter Davies, Dorothy Rice, John McDonald, Jill Spiby, Jim Bassett and Eunice Fisher, together with many warm wishes for the future and a small note of sadness that they will be missed.

Pat Ellis

Staff Leaving - Ethna McCloy

Nene recently said a handkerchief-wringing goodbye to Ethna McCloy, formerly PA to the Deputy Director. Ethna left to take up a new - and very well deserved - position in Corby on the 14 March. A heartfelt farewell speech was given by David Halton, who alluded to Ethna's keenly felt qualities of sound judgement, calm and rational thought in the jaws of crisis, and unsurpassed babysitting skills. He spoke of her staying power through a part time undergraduate degree and MBA whilst bringing up three sons and coping with the Deputy Director (at which point Diane Hayes added her sincere congratulations). The generous range of gifts contributed by Nene staff and organised by Chris Wilson bore evidence of the regard in which Ethna was held. DJH's own gifts remained - initially, at least - unopened with the suggestion that she should "open them in your own time" bringing the response "I'll have plenty more of that now"! We wish Ethna (and new PA Debbie Edwards) all the best in their new careers.



David Halton with Ethna on her last day.

RESEARCH News

Spice Girls meet Lonely Hearts

Two papers presented at the April Annual Conference of the British Psychological Society by Nene College psychologists aroused a great deal of media interest. The first, presented by graduate Mark Mason (Combined Honours Psychology, 1993 - 1996) looked into the language of lonely heart ads. Findings included the increase in the numbers of men wishing to be portrayed as possessing caring qualities. Mason explains "It could be that men are changing into new men and are less shy of advertising their expressive qualities. Or it could be simply an attempt to gain more replies." Women, however, are more traditional in their self-portrayal, concentrating on physical and emotional attributes rather than financial status. The most commonly used word by both sexes was 'genuine'.

The second Nene paper was researched by Tony Cassidy and Kirsty Waugh. This studied the psychological shortcomings of people who continued teenage-style idol infatuation into their adult years. Hero worship itself is a natural part of adolescence but something which children should grow out of. However, according to Dr Cassidy "it moves into obsession when people start having fantasies about having a relationship with their idol or become jealous if the idol has a relationship with someone else." In adult life, those who continue their obsession were more likely to have measurable psychological problems including an increased tendency towards anxiety, depression, eating disorders and relationship difficulties.

Peter Brooker, Professor of Modern Literature and Culture has published "Postmodern After-Images: A Reader in Film, Television and Video jointly written with Will Brooker. This explores "the rich and diverse nature" of postmodernism and "combines now classic statements from Jameson, Baudrillard and Creed with new perspectives on youth, gender and ethnicity which extend the debates 'beyond postmodernism'".

Funding has been obtained by the School of Environmental Sciences, to undertake a project entitled 'Exploring the fourth Environment: young people's use of places and views on their environment.' The grant of £137,000 will be used to investigate the environment as children and adolescents (9-16 yr olds) see it and how they make use of place. Attention will focus on the 'fourth environment'; those public places beyond the home, school and playground. The contention is that only through consultation of this kind will young people become full and integrated users of, and participants in, their local environments.

Minister visits DTI - ISI Support Centre at Nene

On 13 March, Minister for Science and Technology the Rt Hon Ian Taylor, his Parliamentary Assistant Secretary, the DTI - ISI Programme Director Bob Wiggins, DTI East Midlands Director of Business Support Brian Drescher and local figures including Tony Marlow MP, Martin Wylie and John Thorpe (from the Northamptonshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise) and Business Link Northampton visited the DTI - ISI Support Centre opened in November last year.

Atta Badii, Reader in Information Systems, demonstrated his Multi-Media Information System on the DTI-ISI Centre Services and Business Systems Support. This system, developed for the opening of the Centre, is the only system of its type across all UK ISI Centres.

This system has been well received by our visitors and Atta has been invited by the DTI - ISI Programme Director to release it to all UK DTI - ISI Support Centres through DTI distribution as a de facto standard information system for business awareness and education about the ISI programme, the Centre Services and Information Technology Support for Electronic Commerce Systems. The Minister and DTI - ISI Directorate generally expressed much satisfaction with the setting and the facilities provided by the Centre through the Collaboration between Nene, Northamptonshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise, Business Link Northamptonshire and DTI - ISI.

This collaboration has already resulted in the formulation of new project proposals under the EU-funded ADAPT Programme for Information Technology training and career resilience. This is a virtual learning network concept for on-site customised training in a range of Information Technology and Management skills particularly for SME's throughout Northamptonshire.

The DTI - ISI (Information Society Initiative) Support Centre continues to attract local industrial and commercial interest in its range of Business Information Systems and Information Technology Services particularly in the area of Electronic Commerce and Internet-worked Business.

Atta Badii



Atta Badii (out of shot) demonstrating the Multi-Media System to Ian Taylor, Anne Grahamslaw and others.

ALUMNI *News*

Bronwen Jones



Bronwen Jones

Bronwen Jones, now Midlands Regional Director of Barkers (the second largest Human Resources and Advertising Agency in the UK), originally came to Nene in 1982 to train as a teacher. However, she remembers, "I just realised having been sent into a classroom of kids that it wasn't for me."

Undaunted, she swapped to Combined Honours, majoring in Psychology with an eclectic combination of Education, Law and Ceramics throughout the rest of her degree. "I really enjoyed my time here. I left a pretty confident individual."

"The summer of graduation, somebody told me they'd seen someone in the middle of Debenhams selling jewellery - this awful, awful job. I went along with a friend, desperate for money and did it for eight or nine weeks. We were really quite successful - we both found that we could sell." From there, as jobs were scarce, this being the tail end of the recession, Bronwen took a job selling advertising in London for a computer trade press journal, now defunct. "It was quite manic - big red braces and sell, sell, sell." She "eventually managed to get a job back in the Midlands" but remained loyal to advertising as a career. "I love it. It's extremely harsh, tough and competitive, but it's exciting. There's always something different and it's very creative. I

was lucky enough to find something that suits me down to the ground. It's good to find yourself in a business that your skills seem to match."

Bronwen is now responsible for two advertising agencies in Birmingham and Nottingham. In summing up her job in an organisation that has "grown quite a lot over the last few years", she comments "ultimately the buck stops with me. I've got to deliver a decent share price for the PLC. I see the core functions of my role as new business development and client retention." Her job entails responsibility for profit margins and growth strategy, although she is quick to acknowledge "the many people who work with me to support that."

- Lee Fascione, HND Graphic Design, started off as a freelance designer to get his face known and was offered employment within a few months. He now works as a professional graphic designer (CAAD) in the printing industry. Lee was featured in a Hereford and Worcester Careers publication aimed at 6th formers and GNVQ Advanced students.
- 1996 Environmental Science Graduate, Joanne Fuller, took an initial voluntary position with the Royal Geographical Society to launch her career, and has recently taken up a position as Groups Officer for the Institute of Electronic Engineers.
- Congratulations to Patricia Wells (1st class, Combined Maths, Computing 1988-91) who has just completed her PhD at Cranfield University. Her Doctoral Dissertation was entitled "Angle of Arrival Estimation using Artificial Neural Networks".

SPORT

The Sports Hall at Park Campus will be available as usual for lunchtime sport* between 1.00 and 2.00pm for the first two weeks of the Summer term. Thereafter, as exams will be upon us, there is no alternative but putting on your running shoes and escaping to Bradlaugh fields to battle it out with the wildlife.

*

Monday and Friday	Badminton
Tuesday	5-a-side Football
Thursday	Circuit Training

Experts List

Nene is increasingly being called upon by local and national media to provide access to people who can offer an 'expert' opinion both on current news issues and areas which can be covered less immediately, but in greater depth. I am in the process of updating and widening the circulation of Nene's experts list and am keen to include as great a variety of subject areas as possible. If you are prepared to include your name and area(s) of expertise on an externally circulated list, or if you happy for your details to be held by the Marketing Department but released only with your prior consent, please fill out and return the questionnaire below. If there are some fields (eg home contact number) which you would rather were not circulated, please mark them as such or leave them blank.

The list is of value in two ways. Those of you with research work or areas of expertise which would benefit from a wider audience get the opportunity to have your work noticed in useful places. Nene also benefits from all positive exposure.

Name Title

Dept

College ext. number Home contact number

Area(s) of expertise (eg languages, civil liberties, 19th century transport systems.....)

.....
.....
.....
.....

Any media you would not consider (eg published media only, no TV, no radio..)?

.....

For Marketing use only For Publication

Please return to Amanda Black, Marketing, Top Lodge, ext. 2486, email
amanda.black@nene.ac.uk

Many Thanks!

HEFCE News

***Teaching and Research Funding** from the HEFCE for the academic year 1997/98 has been announced. A total of £3405 million is to be distributed between 137 higher education institutions and 72 further education colleges providing higher education courses. Of this money, £704 million has been earmarked specifically for research. There have been **changes made in the method of distribution for research funding**, with 97% of funding now allocated selectively, according to quality (established by the 1996 Research Assessment Exercise). World class excellence is rewarded by providing a funding premium to the highest rated departments. The size of subject allocations is being adjusted over three years so that they will reflect the volume of research being carried out in universities and colleges and the relative costs of each subject.

***Total MASN**s (Maximum Aggregate Student Numbers - upon which all institutions set their recruitment targets) are unchanged for 1997/98 at 747,000.

***Dr Gaskell has been appointed** a board member of the new Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. Of the fourteen members of the Agency, four were nominated by the sector's representative bodies, four by the higher education funding bodies and five will be independent. The Agency was incorporated (with no sign of a smile) on 1 April this year.

HEQC News

Nene is represented on the HEQC's Quality Enhancement Advisory Committee by Dr Gaskell. The HEQC states "A central focus of QEG's activity has been to clarify, explain and codify approaches to quality assurance in an expanded and diversified higher education system." It is concerned to "integrate internal and external approaches to quality assurance wherever possible". The Group has completed the work requested by CVCP (and subsequently endorsed by HEQC's other parent bodies), which includes:

- identifying ways to strengthen external examining
- investigating ways of describing 'what makes a graduate'
- undertaking a survey of awards as the basis for developing a typology
- exploring what might constitute threshold standards for degrees/diplomas

Nene was also represented last year on the list of Audit Secretaries by Kathryn Powell (Central Registry).

NEWS in BRIEF

Five students, all first time voters, were interviewed by BBC TV East on their thoughts about the electoral process and their own perceived levels of involvement in national politics as a part of the BBC's election coverage.



David Allsop (l) presents Nigel with his award

The Gotch, Saunders and Surridge Architectural Award was presented to top HND Architectural Technology student Nigel Holt at the Awards Ceremony on 8 February. Commenting on Nigel's prize of two specialist books on architecture, GSS Practice Partner David Allsop said "I have given Nigel two books because one book is an opinion whilst two allows for research!" Lecturer Dominic Kramer added his congratulations. "This year, we hope to validate a degree in Architectural Technology. Nigel represents one of the many successful students who have encouraged the development of the degree in response to the needs of professional bodies."

Work has started on a £500,000 building to rehouse the Northampton based Leather Conservation Centre. The Centre will be based behind the Leathersellers building on Park Campus and will offer up-to-the-minute laboratories and workshops. It is hoped that the physical proximity of the Centre to Nene's own School of Leather will lead to a continued productive research relationship.

for anyone who wondered what the joke was in the last edition, herewith the full cartoon - plus punchline!



NENE News

Designed by
Mark Anderson

Printed by
Futureprint

Editor
Amanda Black

Copy and photographs welcomed.
Please send to Amanda Black, Top Lodge, phone ext. 2486, or email amanda.black@nene.ac.uk.