MISSION ACCOMPLISHED IN STRATFORD

Unique new campus hailed a success

BIRKBECK’S NEW PRESIDENT
Joan Bakewell champions part-time study
A year of new beginnings

2013 was a year of new beginnings at Birkbeck. University Square Stratford (pictured on the front cover) opened its doors to students and widespread acclaim in the autumn. The distinctive, state-of-the-art, 23m campus is now offering courses at all levels to meet the growing aspirations of the people of east London (pp6–7).

Its completion marks a watershed in the college’s 190-year history that Birkbeck has had its own dedicated building outside central London. The campus is also an example of an innovative collaboration, as it is a partnership between Birkbeck and the University of East London.

Also in 2013, Baroness Joan Bakewell DBE became the President of Birkbeck. She has championed part-time study in her new role – from speaking in the House of Lords to her appearances in the media. These new beginnings, however, do not constitute a breach with the past, but demonstrate the continuation of the College’s ideals and traditions.

Birkbeck’s initiatives to widen access to the College’s ideals and traditions. Birkbeck is only one of the subjects in a feature about Birkbeck’s historic paintings (pp18–19). Baroness Bakewell writes about her support for part-time study (p9), and alumna Luciana Berger MP; one of Labour’s rising stars, also praises the opportunities offered by Birkbeck (p48).

Many of Birkbeck’s female academics share their research in these pages, including Dr Kate Loughlin in the work of women writers in the First World War (pp10–11); and Professor Sasha Rosenfield on the impact of women protesters at Greenham Common (p19).

Students are at the heart of Birkbeck, and that is why it was pleasing to hear from so many alumni following the launch of the national ‘Part-Time Matters’ campaign (pp5–11). Alison Stamps (BA Film and Media, 2007) responded and summed up the experiences of many, when she wrote: “My degree gave me confidence and opened doors professionally, and I could wax lyrical about Birkbeck and what it did for me. It changed my outlook on life and gave me goals and ambition.”

If you would like to share your story, please do get in touch.

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BBK readers are alumni and donors, Fellows and staff, students and friends, or any combination of these. Relationships with Birkbeck often evolve over many years. Whatever your current connection to the College, we want to ensure you can stay connected with our news, campaigns and community throughout the year.

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The academic year 2012–2013 was a year of major change for higher education in the UK, with government funding being withdrawn for the great majority of courses and a consequent need to greatly increase student fees. For institutions teaching part-time students, such as Birkbeck, the change was even greater with the availability, for the first time, of loans for part-time students.

As I said last year, there were significant problems with the introduction of these loans, leading to misunderstandings about their terms and availability. Moreover, there was considerable reluctance among mature part-time students to take on additional debt. These factors led to a 40% downturn in enrolments for part-time courses across the sector, and Birkbeck was not immune from this, suffering a similar downturn in enrolments in our four-year part-time courses.

Fortunately, this was mitigated by an increase in enrolments in 2012–2013 on our intensive courses, in which undergraduate degrees can be completed in three years during the day and finish in the same way and following up, for example, when they do not respond to an offer of a place. This has resulted in actual enrolments stabilising at a level similar to that of last year. Moreover, both applications and enrolments on our three-year programmes have continued to increase, and students on these programmes now constitute the majority of our new intake for 2013–2014. This is an amazing outcome, given that such courses were only introduced in the 2010–2011 academic year.

Once again, our initiative in Stratford, east London, has made a significant contribution to our student numbers. This is likely to increase further as we fully utilise our magnificent new building, which operates jointly with the University of East London and was opened by Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London, in November 2013.

Although we have successfully stabilised the numbers of our four-year part-time students, it is vital that we continue our campaign to improve financial support for part-time students and the institutions that teach them. This year, there has been considerable attention devoted to this issue. Universities UK, the Confederation of British Industry, and the Higher Education Policy Institute have all issued reports indicating the importance of part-time study and have made recommendations that further attention should be devoted to this specific issue. It is now vital that we maintain the momentum and convert these positive reports into real policy changes that benefit part-time students.

In this regard, our new President, Baroness Joan Bakewell DBE, has initiated several debates in the House of Lords in which significant numbers of peers have spoken strongly in favour of improved support. Joan has already proved herself a worthy successor to our previous President, Professor Eric Hobsbawm, whose memory is being perpetuated at Birkbeck via our ongoing appeal to support the Eric Hobsbawm Scholarships for Postgraduate History Students (p32).

Eric was the personification of Birkbeck’s commitment to flexible teaching combined with high-quality research, and this dual commitment is central to the mission of Birkbeck today. At the end of 2013, all universities in the UK, including Birkbeck, were required to make submissions to the Research Excellence Framework, which determines government funding for university research. Following rigorous assessment, both internally and in many cases by external assessors, the College submitted over 80% of eligible staff (pp22–24). Although the final verdict on our submission will not be given by the assessment panels until the end of 2014, the fact that we can submit such a high proportion of eligible staff is a clear indication of the high-quality of our research activity.

Overall, therefore, the College is in a good position in terms of its academic and financial sustainability. Obviously, significant challenges lie ahead, for example the recruitment of Master’s students in 2015–2016, when new graduates will be burdened with considerably increased debt, and the development of novel e-learning platforms such as Massive Open Online Courses (known as ‘MOOCs’).

As we move towards our 200th anniversary in 2023, I believe the College is well-equipped to meet future challenges, by continuing the pattern of innovation combined with loyalty to our mission, so that Birkbeck can continue to flourish and fulfill its unique role in higher education.
A FANTASTIC NEW CAMPUS
FOR BIRKBECK
IN EAST LONDON

Birkbeck’s second home is attracting enthusiastic students as well as praise for creating new educational opportunities.
As President, I follow in the steps of one of the most illustrious historians of our day. Professor Eric Hobsbawm (1916-2012) had a profound grasp of what history was about and how understanding it could bring insight and wisdom to the contemporary world. But on a personal level I am touched to be his successor.

In the 1950s, when I was a very eager, but native, student at Cambridge, he was my history supervisor. This meant I visited his rooms once a week and had one-to-one tuition in nineteenth-century British history. Together we examined the social and political mood of those times, the changing industrial face of the country and its shifting power structures.

Eric Hobsbawm loved Birkbeck and had a 65-year-long association with it. As one of the world’s most prestigious centres of part-time study, Birkbeck is ideally suited to meet the challenges of the future.

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Unprecedented support for disadvantaged students

Birkbeck’s commitment to widening participation in higher education is opening doors for many non-traditional students.

Innovative outreach activities and generous bursaries at Birkbeck are transforming lives. The support that Birkbeck offers is recognised as being among the best in the university sector. In keeping with the founding principles of the College from 1823, Birkbeck continues to provide opportunities for busy people who would otherwise be unable to access higher education.

In 2012-2013, a total of 40% of Birkbeck’s undergraduate students – from households earning less than £25,000 per year – were eligible for financial support from the College. For 2014-2015, the College expects to provide a record-breaking total fine agreement package of £3.6m, including 1,300 cash bursaries of £3,000 and 600 fee waivers worth £3,000 each.

Student have praised Birkbeck for its clear explanation of the College’s financial support, the straightforward bursary application process, and the benefits of this financial assistance. Bursary recipient and part-time History student Robin Snowden said: “Receiving the bursary has been vital. I decided to come to Birkbeck because I wanted a practical education, wanted to be taught by the world’s leading historians, and study with mature students. It has transformed my life.”

The verdict on Birkbeck’s activities, which include inspirational outreach activities, pre-entry support and retention projects, is also positive from the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) – the independent watchdog that helps to safeguard and promote fair access to higher education.

OFFA assesses and monitors the access agreements submitted by all English universities and colleges to describe their efforts to ensure fair access, support students and improve retention. An approved access agreement means that institutions can charge more than £6,000 per year in tuition fees.

And I share his outlook. For all these reasons, I was delighted to spearhead the national ‘Part-Time Matters’ campaign to champion the benefits of part-time study, when it was launched in May 2011. I also spoke in the House of Lords in July 2013 about the importance of part-time study for the economy and social mobility.

There is an increasing groundswell of opinion that part-time study is not only a desirable, but desirable, way of learning. In 2013 I have been doing my utmost to champion part-time study since then. It seemed to me as a child an impressive thing to do. So, when I learned that Birkbeck itself had begun as the London Mechanics’ Institute in 1823, I immediately identified it as a place I already knew as important in transforming many lives.

As President, I know it as the place where aspiring historians and social scientists first encountered the world as a historian. For me, it is one of the most impressive buildings on the high street was the Mechanics’ Institute.

It is an appointment with very special meaning for me. I grew up in a modest street was the Mechanics’ Institute.

Above: Scholars’ Evening

In July 2013

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Leading the campaign for part-time students

Part-time study often grabbed the headlines last year thanks to Birkbeck’s community.

In 2013, many of you supported the ‘Part-Time Matters’ campaign, launched by a coalition of organisations, including Birkbeck, to promote the benefits of part-time higher education.

Thanks to the letters that you sent to your MPs, an Early Day Motion was signed by 68 MPs from across the political spectrum, recognising the “vital role of adult learning” that part-time study plays, and its “transformative effect”.

Many of you shared your own stories via the campaign website. Each of these adds weight to our arguments about the value and importance of the part-time sector.

A renewed focus on part-time study

2013 saw unprecedented levels of attention being paid to part-time study.

David Willetts, Minister for Universities and Science, commissioned a review that brought together vice-chancellors from universities across the UK, senior figures from business and representatives of the National Union of Students, under the leadership of Sir Eric Thomas, Vice-Chancellor of Bristol University and former President of Universities UK.

The resulting report, published in October 2013 and called The Power of Part-time, gave a strong and positive representation of the part-time sector’s contribution to the economy, to society and to social mobility.

It clearly outlined the areas that government, universities and other sector organisations need to focus on, in order to protect and support part-time study.

In July 2013, the Confederation of British Industry published a report entitled Tomorrow’s Growth: New Routes to Higher Skills, which called for more opportunities for students to work while they study, and which recognised the need for those already working to have opportunities to reskill and to upskill.

This recognition of the economic importance of part-time study from the UK’s top business lobbying organisation was strongly welcomed by the College.

The report left no doubt that part-time study opportunities will be key to the future economic growth of the country.

New policies

As a result of sustained calls for the Government to protect part-time study, we have seen two key commitments made by Mr Willetts.

The first was to address poor communication about part-time study and student loans, by extending the ‘student finance tour’ run by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to include information about part-time study options and to visit further education colleges as well as secondary schools.

BIS also launched a national communications campaign in October 2013, which incorporated part-time messages and moved towards more inclusive language and messages to communicate the benefits of higher education to all prospective students.

In October 2013, Mr Willetts announced that the Government would be making student loans available to students studying part-time at university for the second time on engineering, technology and computer science courses.

This is a welcome step in the right direction, as we know that part-time education is vital to students wishing to reskill or change career during their working lives. We are calling on the Government to extend this loan availability to second-time students studying a broader group of subjects.

Strong communication from the College and Government, inspiring stories from our alumni community, and policies that provide opportunities for people to develop their skills are all vital to Birkbeck’s ability to recruit students and provide the life-changing benefits of part-time study.

This year has seen encouraging support for, and recognition of, the importance of part-time study. We will continue our work to ensure that the part-time sector thrives.

Hundreds of you shared your stories for the ‘Part-Time Matters’ campaign in 2013

Monique Zahavi, BSc Psychology (left)

“M...
**AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS**

The contribution and impact of Birkbeck academics have been recognised by major grants and by national and international academic institutions.

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**Awards**

Researchers at the Centre for Multilingual and Multicultural Research, Department of Applied Linguistics and Communication, have been awarded an Arts and Humanities Research Council Large Grant. They will study multilingual interaction in Newham, a linguistically and culturally diverse borough of London, as part of an interdisciplinary research project looking at how people with different languages and cultures communicate.

The four-year, £1.9m Translating Cultures programme is a collaboration between four UK universities and will generate new knowledge about communicating in changing urban communities. The Birkbeck team will be led by Zhu Hua, Professor of Applied Linguistics and Communication, and Li Wei, Professor of Applied Linguistics and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Postgraduate Studies.

A C.1.5m European Research Council grant has been awarded to Dr Matthew Longo, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychological Sciences, to investigate how the brain constructs body imagery. Dr Longo (right) said: “Several types of sensory signals provide information about our body, making the body the multisensory object par excellence. Little is known, however, about how the body is represented from the central and peripheral nervous systems. The central and peripheral nervous systems are represented as a field, and our vision is integrated to construct the rich body representations we all experience. This five-year project will provide fundamental insight into how we come to represent our body.”

Other accolades for Dr Longo include the 2013 American Psychological Association Distinguished Scientific Award for Early Career Contribution to Psychology in the area of perception and motor performance, and the 2014 Experimental Psychology Society Prize Lecture.

Dr Emily Jones, Research Fellow at the Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development, has been awarded one of four 2013 Leverhulme-UNESCO UK and Ireland For Women in Science Fellowships in recognition of her work on the role of automatic control and social learning in the field of cognitive psychology. For Women in Science was founded to promote the greater participation of women in science, by offering awards to outstanding female postdoctoral researchers.

The Contemporary Poetics Research Centre and its partner the Text Festival inbury have been awarded a Cultural Engagement Grant by the Arts and Humanities Research Council to establish a National Text Archive. The Text Festival had a leading position in the global practice of poetic writing and the archive, featuring exhibitions, public art commissions, publications and performances. The collaboration with the Contemporary Poetics Research Centre will archive and document the three Text Festivals so far.

A research team in the Department of History, Geography and Environment has been awarded funding by the Science and Technology Facilities Council to source the issuencences of lunar meteorites obtained from NASA. Principal investigator Ian Cranwell, Professor of Planetary Science and Astrobiology, said: “This project will enable us to build up the UK lunar science community, ensuring that we remain active in this expanding field, as well as providing an opportunity to add valuable knowledge to our understanding of lunar geological evolution.”

Dr Dominic Jones, Senior Lecturer in the Department of History of Art and Screen Media, has been awarded a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship for a project on queer visibility at the end of the nineteenth century. The research explores the ways in which homosexuals were depicted – and visually presented themselves – before and after the trials of Oscar Wilde in 1895.

Susan James, Professor of Philosophy, has been awarded a Laurence Rockefeller Visiting Faculty Fellowship at the Center for Human Values, Princeton University, for 2013–2014. While she holds this fellowship, Professor James will be working on a new book, Spondeo on Learning to Live Together.

**Recognitions**

Martin Eimer, Professor of Psychology, and Gabriel Waksman, Head of the Department of Biological Sciences, have both been elected to the Leopoldina – the German National Academy of Science. Election to the Leopoldina, the world’s oldest continuously existing academy of medicine and the natural sciences, is the highest academic honour awarded by an institution in Germany.

Professor Eimer’s election is in recognition of his work on perception, attention and the control of action in Birkbeck’s Brain and Behaviour Lab. The recognition follows the award to Professor Eimer of the 2014 Experimental Psychology Society Mid-Career Award, which recognizes an experimental psychologist who has a distinguished research record over a substantial period.

Professor Waksman’s election is in recognition of his research into the structural and molecular biology of secretion systems in bacteria. The honour follows his earlier election as a Fellow of the Royal Society and major funding awards for his research, including a £2m Medical Research Council grant, and a five-year European Research Council Advanced Grant of just over £2m for the project ‘Structural biology of Legionella’s effectors and secretion system’.

Anthony Bale, Professor of Medieval Studies, has been awarded the 2012 Beatrice White Prize for his book Feeling Persecuted: Christians, Jews and Images of Violence in the Middle Ages. The prize is awarded for outstanding scholarly work in the field of English literature before 1500.

The Jan Michalski Prize for Literature 2012 has been awarded to Dr Julia Lovell, Lecturer in the Department of History of Art and Screen Media, for her book The Opium Wars: Drug, Disease and the MAKING OF MODERN CHINA, which explores the contrast between Chinese and Western reactions to the Opium Wars of 1839–1842, and 1856–1860. Dr Lovell’s book is the first non-fiction book to win the prize.

Dr des Eddie Bruce-Jones, Lecturer in the Department of Psychological Sciences, has been awarded the 2005 Signal Engineering Fellowship by the Higher Education Academy in recognition of his research into the ‘Effectors and secretion system’ of General and Applied Linguistics (UCLG). UCLG provides a unified voice on public policy matters for linguistics.

Birkbeck’s work to promote and support women in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine has been recognised with an Athena Swan Bronze Award. The awards, largely funded by the higher education sector’s Equality Challenge Fund, were set up in 2005 to help improve the representation and career progression of women in science.

One of three inaugural British Academy Medals, which recognise landmark achievements that transform understanding of a particular subject or field of study, has been awarded to Dr Richard Cooper, Reader in Cognitive Science in the Department of Psychological Sciences. The medal was awarded jointly to Dr Cooper and Professor Tim Shallice of the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience at University College London and the International School for Advanced Studies in Trieste, Italy, for their ground-breaking book The Organisation of Mind.

Joanna Bourke, Professor of History (left), has been appointed College Master at Birkbeck. Professor Bourke’s recent research has included a cultural history of fear, the history of sexual violence since the 1860s, human–animal relations, and the history of pain.

Professor Bourke said: “I am thrilled to be able to take up this role, in part because it will allow me to participate in an even greater variety of interactions with past and current students as well as the wider Birkbeck community.”

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Our Year in Review 2013

The contribution and impact of Birkbeck academics have been recognised by major grants and by national and international academic institutions.
**£3.7m facility to advance leading autism research**

Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab set to give researchers a better understanding of autism

Breakthrough discoveries made at Birkbeck about the early development of autism and other behavioural disorders will be furthered at a new laboratory designed to study toddlers. Research at the £3.7m Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab will increase the understanding of developmental disorders and will potentially generate a programme of interventions and life-changing prospects for future sufferers.

Work on the new building in Torrington Square, Bloomsbury, is expected to start next year, and the Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab is due to open in spring 2016.

To date, discoveries have been made with young infants in the BabyLab at Birkbeck’s Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development (CBCD). Scientists at the CBCD have lowered the age at which differences in brain development can be detected to just six to eight months, and they were recognised as making the “top autism discovery of 2012” by the Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative.

The research in the Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab will help to develop and assess the efficacy of early interventions, which have considerable scope for success compared to treating conditions when they emerge, by which time they are deeply embedded.

According to research in the Netherlands, even expensive early intervention can save more than £660,000 per individual with autism during a lifetime.

Professor Mark Johnson, Founder and Head of the CBCD, is leading the development of the Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab. He said: “The more we understand the early signs of autism, and how they unfold into the full syndrome over the first years of life, the better we can target support services and help children and their families. The research conducted at the Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab promises to change the lives of future autism sufferers.”

The Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab, which will adjoin the existing CBCD offices at 32 Torrington Square, is being made possible thanks to generous donations from the Maurice Wolf Charitable Foundation and the Wolfson Foundation.

**Kazuo Ishiguro enthralls students with literary insights**

The internationally acclaimed author described his influences and writing process at a major event

Prize-winning author Kazuo Ishiguro visited Birkbeck to discuss his most recent novel, Never Let Me Go, with more than 1,000 students and alumni.

The popular event was organised under the auspices of the Booker Prize Foundation’s ‘Universities Initiative’, which facilitates visits by highly acclaimed authors to UK universities, in order to introduce students from all disciplines to high-quality contemporary literature. This was the second time that Birkbeck has hosted an author as part of the Universities Initiative, following a visit from award-winning novelist Sarah Waters, in 2011.

In front of a full-capacity audience, Ishiguro, who was born in Japan and lives in Britain, discussed his Man Booker Prize-shortlisted novel, Never Let Me Go (2005), as well as earlier works, including The Remains of the Day, which won the Booker Prize in 1989. Never Let Me Go, set in a disturbingly skewed version of England in the late 1990s, is a story of love, friendship and memory, charged throughout with a sense of the fragility of life.

Prior to the event, which took place in November 2012, all first-year undergraduate students were offered a free copy of Never Let Me Go.

The discussion with Birkbeck’s Professor of Creative Writing Russell Celyn Jones, a former Booker Prize judge, encompassed topics such as how Ishiguro chooses his narrators and the way that their voices develop, attempts in his early writing to capture the Japan of his childhood, and how the relationships between characters are more important in his writing than individual characters in isolation.

Ishiguro then took questions from an enthusiastic audience and was asked about his writing processes as well as the science behind Never Let Me Go.

Professor Hilary Fraser, Executive Dean of Birkbeck’s School of Arts, said: “We were delighted to welcome Kazuo Ishiguro to Birkbeck. Just as the Man Booker Prize opens up the finest contemporary literature to the widest possible audience, so Birkbeck is an elite research university whose mission is to give a broad and diverse spectrum of students the best higher education, and we are pleased to have this opportunity to work together as partners to co-sponsor The Man Booker Prize at Birkbeck. It is wonderful for our students and alumni to have the chance to hear first-hand from distinguished authors such as Ishiguro.”

For more information, visit: www.cbcd.bbk.ac.uk/babylab

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“... It is wonderful for our students and alumni to have the chance to hear first-hand from distinguished authors such as Ishiguro.”

Professor Hilary Fraser

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Eric Hobsbawm memorial

More than 400 guests attended the moving memorial to Professor Eric Hobsbawm (1917-2012), the late President of Birkbeck. Leading figures from academia, left-wing politics and journalism attended the celebration of Professor Hobsbawm's life and paid tribute to the remarkable achievements of this influential Marxist historian, one of the intellectual giants of the twentieth century. They shared their memories of his inspirational teaching, wit and friendship.

At the event, held at Senate House, University of London, in April 2013, Professor Roy Foster, Fellow of Birkbeck and Carroll Professor of Irish History at the University of Oxford, said the memorial demonstrated “the extraordinary emotional and magnetic man that Eric was and the way the force field of his mind and personality endures”.

Describing him as a “great enthusiast”, Julia Hobsbawm spoke of her father’s passion for many different interests, including his love for his family, nature, sweets, friendship.

In October 2013, Birkbeck’s Annual Law Lecture drew an audience of 600-plus to hear US scholar and political activist Angela Davis on the subject ‘Freedom is a constant struggle: closures and continuities’. Davis traced a global struggle from the emancipation proclamation of 150 years ago to the civil rights movement in mid-twentieth century America, current political issues and the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

Social Sciences, History and Philosophy Week

A diverse selection of readings, discussions, lectures and film screenings made up the School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy’s first-ever ‘SSH Week’ in June 2013.

The series of events, entitled ‘To seek, to find, to live’, examined the past and future of society and the environment. Highlights included a lecture on ‘Multilingual swearing’ by Professor Jean-Marc Dewaele, Professor of Applied Linguistics and Multilingualism. Professor Miriam Zukas, Executive Dean of SSH, said: “The week of events really demonstrated well the range of work being undertaken in the School”.

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Business Week

The final event of a highly successful Business Week 2013, held in June, saw Willie Walsh, CEO of International Airlines Group, deliver the first Lord Marshall Memorial Lecture to a capacity audience. Walsh paid tribute to the late Lord Marshall, CEO and Chairman of British Airways, and Chairman of the Board of Governors at Birkbeck from 2003 to 2010. He spoke of the challenges facing the aviation industry, citing increasing fuel costs, CO2 emissions and political ‘interference’.

Science Week

Research into climate change, the fight against pathogens such as Chlamydia, a new hypothesis on the causes of autism, and how people live with the impact of genetic information were showcased during Birkbeck’s Science Week in April 2013.

Professor Nicholas Koup, Executive Dean of the School of Science, said: “Colleagues gave six really fascinating lectures, demonstrating how their research at Birkbeck has an impact on matters that affect people’s health and well-being”.

Arts Week

Can anyone make a film? This was the challenging question discussed by film-maker Mark Lewis and students on Birkbeck’s MA Film, Television and Screen Media at a public screening of his work during Arts Week in May 2013.

The week’s lively series of events also included an exploration of the Victorian fascination with dolls, and a roundtable discussion on the intersection between science and creative writing.
A collection of 26 oil paintings owned by, or on loan to, Birkbeck, has been published on the BBC’s Your Paintings website as part of an initiative showcasing the UK’s oil paintings.

Chris Terrey, Archivist at Birkbeck, said: “The paintings all add to the narrative of the College’s history, whether by depicting key events or individuals in the development of the College, or through the shared history of the buildings in which we now house our teaching and research. We are very pleased to be able to share them more widely via this important catalogue of publicly owned paintings.”

**BIRKBECK’S PAINTINGS ONLINE**

**GEORGE BIRKBECK (1776–1841)**
by Samuel Lane, c.1830

In 1823, George Birkbeck founded The London Mechanics’ Institute, which later became Birkbeck College, to make education available to working Londoners.

**H. GORDON JACKSON, MASTER OF BIRKBECK FROM 1943 TO 1950**
by Sam Morse-Brown, 1940s

H. Gordon Jackson carried out fire watch duties from the roof of the College during the Second World War.

by Peter Douglas Edwards, 1997

During Baroness Blackstone’s decade as Master, the College expanded, with the formation of departments of Law, Management and Business Studies.

**DAME HELEN GWYNNE-VAUGHAN CBE DSc**
by Philip Alexius de László, c.1910

Birkbeck’s first female professor, Dame Helen Charlotte Isabella Gwynne-Vaughan CBE DSc, was a prominent botanist and mycologist, as well as serving as Controller of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps in France and Commandant of the Women’s Royal Air Force during the First World War.

For more information about Birkbeck’s paintings, visit: www.bbk.ac.uk/news/birkbeck-paintings

For more information about the BBC’s Your Paintings website, visit: www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings
The first major exhibition explored embossed writing systems for blind people

The new Peltz Gallery was opened in Birkbeck’s School of Arts in Gordon Square in 2013. Generously funded by Birkbeck alumnus Daniel Peltz (MA Renaissance Studies, 2009) and his wife Elizabeth, the venue will host digital and material displays, small-scale performances, lectures and meetings.

During the nineteenth century, before Braille emerged as the dominant embossed writing system, writing systems were developed largely by sighted people, often fuelled by their desire to make the Bible accessible to blind people. However, these early systems used the Roman alphabet in a raised form – a format which is much friendlier to the seeing eye than the touching finger. “The first embossed writing systems were developed by blind creators and co-existed for a while, each with their own group of ardent supporters. The exhibition took visitors through the journey which culminated in the widespread adoption of Braille, and the near extinction of other embossed writing systems.”

Professor Annie E. Goombes, Acting Director of the Peltz Gallery, said: “The Touching the Book exhibition demonstrated the extraordinary potential of the Peltz Gallery as a gallery and exhibition space, which showcases the various intersections between research and the broader public that are possible not only within the School of Arts but in Birkbeck as a whole.”

Part - time higher education continues to be buffeted by changes to the funding regime and the wider economy. It has seen sharp reductions in enrolments nationally, and has been the subject in recent months of several reports by organisations within our own sector, Business and government. There is widespread agreement that part-time higher education must be protected and supported. At Birkbeck, we will continue our active advocacy work to ensure that this rhetoric becomes a reality.

College finances
Given Birkbeck’s special offer and focus, we have weathered these conditions well. We have seen our three-year undergraduate courses go from strength to strength, with many younger learners keen to earn while they learn and gain the work experience that employers look for in today’s graduates.

As a result of healthy growth in student numbers, a responsive offer, and robust control over expenses, the College has returned a surplus for the year of £6.7m (compared with a surplus of £5.5m in 2011–2012).

Total College income increased by £2.7m (2.8%) and total expenditure increased by £2.2m (2.9%). Income from academic fees and support grants continues to increase, reflecting the growth in our student numbers.

Development and alumni relations
Over the last year, we have continued in the Development and Alumni team, and philanthropic income in 2012–2013 totalled £3.3m. Gifts ranged from £5 to £1.3m, and projects included support for undergraduate student bursaries, support for capital projects and funding for PhD students.

People do not always immediately recognise universities as charitable causes, yet education is one of the most important gifts that a person can give or be given. We are extremely lucky to have such a generous group of supporters, who recognise that no other institution provides what Birkbeck does, and who give back to whatever extent they can afford.

Indeed, more alumni, friends and governors than ever before are supporting the College with gifts of £1,000 a year or more – there were 82 donors giving this amount in 2012–2013, up from 37 in 2010–2011.

These gifts are critical to allowing us to offer bursaries to students who otherwise may not be able to afford to study. We are grateful to all our donors for their generosity, and we will continue to demonstrate to you the impact of your support.

Alumni have supported the College in other ways too. As well as attending open evenings to talk about their experiences at Birkbeck, they now also support prospective and current students through one-to-one mentoring and employability schemes.

Our new international students are paired up with alumni who have had similar experiences, while a mentoring scheme for our business students aims to help them find the right job on completion of their studies. A total of 121 students benefited from these schemes this year, and the initiatives have received positive feedback from both the students and alumni.

For a digital version of Touching the Book, with regularly updated articles, visit www.bbk.ac.uk/touchingthebook
For current exhibition information, visit www.bbk.ac.uk/peltzgallery

The green agenda
Birkbeck was awarded ‘Fairtrade University Status’ in April 2013. This is due to ongoing commitment to various Fairtrade products, raising awareness of Fairtrade and setting up reporting structures to discuss Fairtrade issues.

The College moved up places in the People and Planet Green League table 2013, thanks to improvements in sustainable food policies and the Fairtrade accreditation. This is very positive news and shows that the College is on the right track with its environmental programme.
Helping parents to look after their children

Scientific advice about raising children is valued greatly, and the latest child development research is reaching millions of parents across the world. Guidance from Annette Karmiloff-Smith, Professorial Research Fellow in the Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development at Birkbeck, is included in parental information material (booklets, podcasts, web-based articles) produced with Procter & Gamble (P&G) on topics such as fetal development, sleep, mother/child interaction and sibling rivalry.

Most of these findings are available globally across Pampers.com web sites. For Western Europe alone, recent web site statistics indicate some 840,000 visitors per month.

In 2010, Professor Karmiloff-Smith developed a large-scale questionnaire and answer programme for P&G, sent out by text message to parents in developing countries.

Professor Karmiloff-Smith’s work with P&G demonstrates how collaboration with a multinational company can facilitate communication of scientific insights into child development to a wide international audience.

Claude Ehretmann, a senior manager at P&G, said: “The millions of parents worldwide who proactively continue to subscribe to our parenting information are a tribute to the quality and relevance of the content developed by Professor Karmiloff-Smith”.

Professor Karmiloff-Smith’s consultancy work with P&G is informed by her research on genetic disorders and from studies by a European Infancy Research Consortium.

Creating new forms of artistic expression

Singers have become poets, and poets have contributed to musical scores, as part of an innovative cross-arts collaboration called Voiceworks. This original and transformative programme was established by Carol Watts, Professor of Literature and Poetics, and William Rowe, Anniversary Professor of Poetics – both directors of the Contemporary Poetics Research Centre at Birkbeck.

Voiceworks was created with colleagues from the composition and vocal departments of Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2006 after an approach from the Wigmore Hall, London’s international venue for song. The aim has been to transform the thinking and practice of cross-arts collaboration, creating a twenty-first-century song repertoire for a new generation of artists and audiences. Professor Watts and Professor Rowe opened up a range of poetic practice and research, including sound, visual and digital forms of poetic material.

What makes Voiceworks unique is the experience of working closely with the voice of a singer from the outset. This encounter with voice is central to the reflective experiment of the collaborative process. There are now over 130 alumni of the Voiceworks programme, many of whom have used it to launch or develop their creative careers. New work has appeared in venues across the UK and internationally, and is a strong part of the Wigmore Hall’s showcasing of song, with the addition now of a Voiceworks alumni concert in May each year.

Continued overleaf
Researchers at the Birkbeck Sport Business Centre have been investigating governance within the sport industry since 1999, and have been helping to shape policy debates ever since. Their findings about the football industry have contributed to parliamentary inquiries, most recently to the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee’s inquiry (2011) into the governance of English football.

Research on the broader sports sector has been used by the Sport and Recreation Alliance, the representative body for England’s sport governing bodies, to improve governance practices across national governing bodies of sport. In particular, the research informed the development of the Voluntary Code of Good Governance for the Sport and Recreation Sector, a best practice guide that has been adopted by more than 60 national governing bodies of sport in the UK.

The great success of the London 2012 Olympic Games has illustrated the enormous value that well-organised sports, and sporting events, can add to the life of a country – both economically and socially. The UK is a particularly relevant context in which to study the governance performance of sport organisations, as recent years have seen rapid commercial growth and a shift from amateur to professional structures across many sports. Research at the Birkbeck Sport Business Centre will continue to analyse these factors and more, including the need for sport organisations to demonstrate their accountability, transparency and improved management performance.

From only three courses and 28 students in 2010 to 40 courses and 1,010 students today, Birkbeck’s new degrees are expanding to meet demand. The growth of Birkbeck’s three-year evening degrees continues to be a resounding success. In 2010, for the first time, Birkbeck offered undergraduate degrees taught in the evenings over three years – the same timescale as a traditional full-time degree. The undergraduate degrees on offer were BA Philosophy, LLB Law and BSc Psychology. Today, 40 courses are offered as three-year degrees, and from September 2014, 50 courses will be offered as three-year degrees. As with Birkbeck’s traditional four-year, part-time programmes, many students on the three-year courses did not go to university at the age of 18. However, after starting careers or families, they felt it was the right moment for them to get a degree, to help them advance in their careers. Increasing numbers of younger students are also signing up to the three-year courses: this year, 28% of new students were aged 18-20. Evening study enables students to work throughout their course and build up a bank of experience that will give them the edge when they graduate.

Charity Mapfeka, LLB Law
Charity Mapfeka did not really consider university when she left college. Instead she went straight into work in administrative and secretarial roles. Having her first baby at the age of 27 made Charity think again about getting a degree. She was working for a legal firm, and when she discussed studying with her boss he was very encouraging, so she decided to go for it. She chose Birkbeck’s LLB programme, which would enable her to continue working and to get a degree in three years, Charity said: “I felt that it was now or never – I needed to throw myself into it, so I enrolled on the three-year programme at Birkbeck. It wasn’t an easy ride during my first year; I was suffering severe headaches as a result of complications during the birth of my daughter, and then in my final year I fell pregnant again! The tutors supported and encouraged me throughout. When I had my second baby in April, just before my exams, and had to stay in hospital until mid-May, they arranged for me to sit my exams in September. I don’t think that I could have managed the difficulties of combining work, family and university, if the tutors hadn’t been so accommodating. They really understand that Birkbeck students are often juggling lots of things in their lives.”
New professors

Seven members of Birkbeck staff were promoted to the post of Professor in 2012–2013

ANDREW CARTER
Professor of Earth Sciences

Professor Carter develops and applies thermochronometry, a form of radiometric dating, to understand the mechanisms and feedbacks that affect the Earth’s surface region, which is important to explain tectonic processes, and past climate and ecological change. Much of his research is directed at the Himalaya-Tibet mountain belt and surrounding areas affected by the India-Asia collision. Recent fieldwork has been in northern Vietnam, Tibet and western China.

LINDA TRENBERTH
Professor of Management

Professor Trenberth’s research and consulting interests include the management of the employee–employer relationship, women in management, work stress and wellbeing, career management and workplace bullying. She is particularly qualified and interested in working in the areas of training and development, career management, human resource management and stress management.

GEORGE ROUSSOS
Professor of Pervasive Computing

Professor Roussos conducts experimental systems research in pervasive computing. He explores human dynamics as a core ingredient of urban and social pervasive computing systems, and is particularly interested in the implications of this new computing paradigm for society at large, for example in creating Smart Cities, in extending the museum experience and in retail. His team is currently involved in the development of a low-cost vaccine-tracking solution combining mobile phones, sensing and cloud computing for countries sponsored by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation. The aim is to reduce vaccine loss, which can be as high as 50% in some cases.

SARAH HART
Professor of Mathematics

Professor Hart is a group theorist, with particular interest in Coxeter groups. She has also published work on commuting graphs and sum-free sets. She currently holds a London Mathematical Society grant researching mathematics at the interface with computer science. She has been instrumental in introducing a single honours BSc and MSc in Mathematics at Birkbeck, and recently took part in a Newton Institute series of interviews with female mathematicians.

JOHN KRANIAUSKAS
Professor of Latin American Studies

Professor Kraniauskas specialises in Latin American literary and cultural studies, cultural theory and political philosophy, with particular interests in relations between state and cultural forms. He was a founding co-editor of the Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies. His most recent publication is Políticas literarias: acumulación y poder en la literatura y el cine latinoamericanos (The Politics of Literature: Power and Accumulation in Latin American Literature and Film). He is currently completing an English-language version of the book for Texas University Press as well as a companion volume. Professor Kraniauskas also continues to work and publish on the figure of Eva Perón in Argentine literature, film and thought, on contemporary Latin American literature and politics, as well as on cultural theory and political philosophy more generally.

COLIN TEEVAN
Professor of Playwriting and Screenwriting

Professor Teevan is an award-winning playwright and screenwriter, whose stage work includes Kafka’s Monkey, The Bacchae, The Lion of Kabul and How Many Miles to Basra? (winner of Clarion Best Play 2007) as well as translations of The Bacchae for the National Theatre and an adaptation of Peer Gynt for National Theatre of Scotland and the Barbican. He has written original feature-length episodes for ITV’s Single Handed, Vera and Foyle’s War and BBC’s Silk. His original mini-series Charlie, about notorious Irish political leader Charles J Haughey, starring The Wire’s Aidan Gillen, was shot in Dublin in autumn 2013 and will be broadcast on RTÉ in September 2014. He has also written many dramas for BBC Radio 3 and 4. He is currently developing two original series for BBC Television and new theatre projects for actress and theatre director Katheryn Hunter and The Young Vic Theatre.
New intensive Law Master’s courses judged a success

The innovative and flexible provision of higher education is all-important for busy professionals who are unable to study by attending university each week.

Recognising the importance of a postgraduate qualification, many high-flying employees are seeking ways to improve their career prospects and broaden their horizons while still working. Birkbeck’s School of Law responded to this desire for flexible learning opportunities by launching two intensively taught Master’s degrees in 2012–2013. They were taught over four weeks (two weeks in April and two weeks in June/July) in Bloomsbury, thereby providing face-to-face teaching with minimal disruption to work and family life.

Reading and learning materials were provided months in advance, to enable students to prepare for the classes. A compulsory supervised dissertation also enabled students to develop their own interests, once the teaching was finished.

Fourteen students in the first cohort successfully completed their degrees and nearly all of them will go on to work in areas of law and justice that have unexpected outcomes for this mode of study. They were enrolled on either the LLM/MA in Human Rights or the LLM in International Human Rights Law. An impressive 80% of those who applied for the Master’s courses judged a success and numbers are expected to grow. An additional new intensive Master’s degree in Human Rights has been added for the coming year (2013–2014), and numbers are expected to grow.

An additional new intensive Master’s degree is also being offered – an LLM in Economic Law in conjunction with the School of Business in Melbourne University, Australia. This Master’s degree builds on the School of Law’s unique interdisciplinary and critical approach to legal studies.

The women-only protest began in 1983, after the agreement of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987, which banned the use of cruise missiles. This led, early on, to a decision to make the camp women-only.

Professor Roseneil said: “As part and parcel of this, a decentralised, non-hierarchical and feminist model of organising and making decisions developed. Over the years, hundreds of thousands of women, from a variety of political and social backgrounds, made Greenham the focal point for anti-nuclear and feminist politics. Their activism had wide-ranging cultural and political consequences.”

Most significantly, the immediate objectives of the women were realised: Cruise missiles, which arrived at the base in 1983, were removed following the agreement of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987, the nuclear base was closed and the area was returned to the people as common land in 2000. Professor Roseneil added: “During this period, Greenham Common women were part of the changing zeitgeist across Europe, which increasingly rejected the polarisations of the Cold War and contributed thereby to its end. Since then, many social movements, from the anti-road protests of the 1990s to Occupy in the 2010s, have adopted the Greenham ‘method’ of taking up long-term residence in public space, and seeking to operate according to the principles of non-hierarchy and collective action which were pursued at Greenham. And while mainstream politics remains male-dominated at every level, there is now, thanks to Greenham, far greater recognition on all sides of the political spectrum that women’s voices matter and that women should have a say in global politics.”

Sasha Roseneil is Professor of Sociology and Social Theory at Birkbeck, and Director of the Birkbeck Institute for Social Research.
Dr Kate McLoughlin reviews the First World War poetry inspired by the front line and highlights the works of lesser-known women writers.

The First World War centenary anniversaries, which begin in 2014, are set to be a national exercise in commemoration. For many people, the literature most associated with the war is the poetry produced by soldiers serving in the trenches on the Western Front. Trench poetry is the poetry of horror, anger, grief and despair. In Siegfried Sassoon’s ‘The Dug-Out’ (1918), for example, an officer finds it unbearable to watch a young soldier sleeping:

You are too young to fall asleep forever
And when you sleep you remind me of
the dead.

And in Wilfred Owen’s ‘Dulce et Decorum Est’ (1917), those supporting the war are given some graphic details:

the blood ... gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues.

Birkbeck’s own trench poet was Isaac Rosenberg, who attended the institution’s Art School in Chancery Lane in 1907 and 1908 and enlisted in the army in 1915. In his most famous poem, ‘Break of Day in the Trenches’ (1916), Rosenberg notices a ‘queer sardonic rat’ crossing No Man’s Land. He makes the poignant point that this rat, with its ‘cosmopolitan sympathies’, has a better chance of survival than the young men who are fighting:

Sassoon’s, Owen’s and Rosenberg’s are sobering, deeply felt poems by men who knew the Western Front first-hand: though Sassoon survived the war, never ceasing to write about its horror and futility, Owen and Rosenberg were both killed in 1918. But the soldier-poets are not the only ones to have written about the Front. Some no less vivid and compelling poems survive by women writers. As it happens, two are about the same subject: mud.

Born in 1865, Helen Saunders was an avant-garde artist, trained at the Slade and at the Central School of Arts and Crafts. In 1915, she published a poem entitled ‘A Vision of Mud’. The previous year, Rupert Brooke had written the famous sonnet in which he entreated:

If I should die think only this of me
That there’s some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England.

The previous year, Rupert Brooke had written a poem entitled ‘A Vision of Mud’.

I [discover] with what I think is disgust, that
there are hundreds of other bodies
bobbing about against me.

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Two research projects in Chennai, capital of the state of Tamil Nadu in India, have uncovered the major contribution made by older people to the Indian economy.

Between 2007 and 2013, Dr Vera-Sanso and her collaborators at the Centre for Law, Policy and Human Rights Studies in Chennai carried out research in five low-income settlements in the city. Their research showed that the assumed tradition of family support for older people does not exist in poorer families, as families, including older people themselves, prioritise education of the youngest generation. Dr Vera-Sanso’s findings demonstrated the need for a policy framework focusing on older people’s rights and choices, including a new approach to pensions, and caught the attention of policy makers and activists.

Social pensions in Tamil Nadu rose by 125% between 2010 and 2011. In 2012 a campaign network, the Pension Parishad, was set up, making pensions a key issue in Indian national politics, and between 2010 and 2012 a leading international non-governmental organisation, HelpAge International, developed a new agenda on livelihood security.

The projects were part of the UK New Dynamics of Ageing Programme, an eight-year, £21m initiative funded by five UK research councils. Professor Alan Walker, Director of the programme, said: “Penny Vera-Sanso’s project on South India was the smallest in budget but, so far, has had the largest impact.”

By examining the resource and labour flows within family networks, and older people’s paid and unpaid work, Dr Vera-Sanso demonstrated that their labour helps families to bridge the gap between declining real incomes and inadequate government services. She found that older people’s work plays a significant role in India’s national economy, by expanding the workforce and keeping costs down. This is because older people take on the unpaid and low-paid work that younger people are no longer willing to do.

Older people provide low-cost inputs to industry and low-cost services to workers, and their paid and unpaid caring and domestic work underpins a chain of women that ends with women working for the global market in IT services, pharmaceuticals and others.

Further, as the final point in the distribution network of vegetables, fruit, flowers and milk, older vendors play a critical role in linking the agricultural economy to the urban economy. From the start, Dr Vera-Sanso and her collaborators undertook innovative projects to extend the scope of their research beyond the 800 households studied in the five Chennai slums.

A photo survey of other Chennai workers resulted in a photo essay, “We’re Still Working”, which was exhibited in Chennai, Delhi, London and Dublin between 2009 and 2013 – and was widely reported in the Indian media.

This led to their two documentaries, We’re Still Working and The Forgotten Generation, shot in rural Rajasthan, tribal Maharashtra and Chennai, and also to a national photo competition in the summer of 2013 on the working elderly undertaken with The Hindu, one of India’s most widely read newspapers.

Dr Vera-Sanso said: “The photo competition turned into a people’s project that produced a permanent online gallery of nearly 3,000 photographs of older people working across the length and breadth of India, and garnered over 34,000 public votes. Our innovative methods of research, engagement and dissemination played an important role in raising awareness, and spurred a national debate in India on the widespread nature of older people’s work, their lack of rights as workers and the need for a meaningful pension.”

Dr Penny Vera-Sanso is a Lecturer in Development Studies and Social Anthropology at Birkbeck. She was Principal Investigator for the research projects Ageing, Poverty and Neoliberalism in Urban South India, 2007–10 and Ageing and Poverty: the Working Lives of Older People in India, 2012–13.

For more information about the photography competition in The Hindu, visit http://bit.ly/16QQqRt
Economists like to quantify things. However, while measuring concepts like income and prices is relatively easy, measuring more subjective concepts – like happiness and well-being – is more challenging and is often sidelined.

A three-year project involving distinguished Birkbeck economist Professor Ron Smith is now helping to redress this imbalance, by assessing the relationship between the ‘capabilities approach’ (developed by Nobel prize-winning economist Professor Amartya Sen) and subjective well-being.

Professor Smith’s vory into such an important research area was born out of serendipity, proving the value of academics investigating new disciplines or interests outside their original specialism. He was the second supervisor for Dr Graham Hunter, a Birkbeck alumnus (MSc Economics, 2001), who completed his PhD on happiness and capabilities at the Open University with Professor Paul Anand. Professor Smith advised on the econometrics required by Dr Hunter to analyse the British Household Panel Survey, which asked questions about both happiness and capabilities. This experience whetted Professor Smith’s appetite for more research and led to his involvement in the current project, called ‘Capabilities and Human Well-being’, which is led by Professor Anand and funded by £200,000 from the Leverhulme Trust.

Professor Smith emphasised the necessity of the research by highlighting the limitations of conventional thinking about happiness. He said: “Economists have traditionally assumed that individuals maximised their utility, and that the main source of utility was the pleasure they got from the goods and services they consumed. How much they could consume was largely determined by their income – the resources available to them. Thus many people tended to assume that utility, happiness or well-being could be equated with the resources available – namely income and wealth.”

Extending this traditional view to national-level data involves using Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – the main measure of the income of a country – and is problematic for many reasons.

Professor Smith added: “GDP is a very bad measure of well-being and has been subject to a lot of criticism, including from the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress established by former French President Nicolas Sarkozy and chaired by Professor Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen and Jean-Paul Fitoussi. The problem with GDP is that it ignores a lot of things. It ignores the distribution of income, and distribution is very important for well-being. It ignores non-market activity, and environmental effects like pollution. If I’m stuck in traffic, for example, this is good for GDP as my car is consuming fuel, but bad for the environment, my well-being and that of others.”

The ‘utility approach’ was challenged by Professor Sen’s much more comprehensive ‘capabilities approach’, which emphasises the importance of capabilities, freedoms and rights – what people can do, rather than what they actually do, their activity or functioning. For instance, starving and fasting may look similar in terms of functioning – not eating – but they are quite different. The person fasting can eat, but chooses not to for health or religious reasons; the person starving does not have that choice or capability. Therefore, a person who fasts is better off because they can eat, even if they choose not to eat.

Professor Smith emphasised the importance of context with regard to reported well-being; as well as other socio-demographic and personality characteristics. The questions include ones like:

- Are you able to socialise?
- Does your health limit your activities?
- Are you able to have children?
- Are you free to practise your religious and political views?
- How safe do you feel going home at night?

Although the analysis has not been completed, some findings confirm earlier research: marriage, work and good relationships all increase happiness. Professor Smith said: “The ability to interact with others is crucial to well-being. Also, being unemployed is one of the worst things that can happen.”

Some counter-intuitive results have been spotted as well: old people are happy, and being a parent makes you unhappy, because of the time and effort required to care for children.

Professor Smith said: “One well-known case where capabilities decrease and happiness tends to increase is with age. There is a lot of evidence that there is a U-shaped pattern in relation to happiness throughout a person’s life. The young and old are fairly happy, but the middle-aged are miserable.”

Above all, Professor Smith stressed the importance of content with regard to reported happiness. People of certain nationalities are known to be happier than others, and some people are naturally cheerful, while others tend to be miserable. Although there are exciting emerging findings, there is still a degree of mystery regarding what makes us happy and why.

Ron Smith is Professor of Applied Economics at Birkbeck. The ‘Capabilities and Human Well-being’ research project will be completed in 2015.

Happiness, economic growth and political priorities – beyond GDP

Happiness, economic growth and political priorities – beyond GDP

Understanding happiness

Work, marriage, youth and old age are all keys to well-being, according to emerging research from a multi-country study

The young and old are fairly happy, but the middle-aged are miserable.
Demographic research rarely dominates the headlines, but the comparison of the last two censuses has proved to be an exception. From The Daily Mail to The Huffington Post, Professor Eric Kaufmann was quoted extensively when he released his findings about London’s population.

Professor Kaufmann’s analysis showed that the proportion of white Britons in London’s population fell from 58% to 45% between 2001 and 2011. During the same period, the share of ethnic minorities reached 40%.

The media were excited by the concept of ‘white flight’ to explain the fact that 600,000 white Britons left the capital in a decade. However, Professor Kaufmann is anxious to explain that the decline in the white British population – both in relative and absolute numbers – is not the result of a new phenomenon of ‘white flight’, but the consequence of long-term demographic trends.

He describes how, ever since the late nineteenth century, more people have migrated out of London than in, as people have prospered. This pattern was altered by the surplus of births over deaths in the capital until the Second World War. London’s population then declined from 1939 to the 1990s by more than a million. Since the 1990s, London’s population has grown, largely due to immigration.

Professor Kaufmann said: “I would not call it ‘white flight’, that is white British people being uncomfortable and therefore leaving London. The white British are migrating at historic rates and the ethnic minorities are not. Ethnic minorities and those that are not white British are considerably less inclined to leave London, and it is that gap that has driven a lot of ethnic change in the capital.”

The ethnic composition of London is set to continue to change in future, especially because of the age profile of the population, with higher proportions of white British residents among older people and more people from ethnic minorities among younger age groups.

The effects of this unprecedented demographic change in London are profound, and have widespread implications for community cohesion and identity. National politics are affected as well, especially as experiences at local level in relation to immigration influence voting patterns. Consequently, there is significant interest in Professor Kaufmann’s ongoing 18-month, £197,000 research project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

One of the opportunities to discuss this research was the ‘Diversity and the White Working Class’ conference, organised by Birkbeck and the think-tank Demos in April 2013. In addition to Professor Kaufmann, other speakers included Frank Field, Labour MP for Birkenhead, and Gavyn Barwell, Conservative MP for Croydon Central.

Professor Kaufmann said: “There is a lot of public policy interest and interest from politicians for a whole series of reasons. Part of it is the whole crisis in the white working class – a traditional base for the Labour Party, but whose votes are increasingly going elsewhere. For the white working class in Britain there is a sense of alienation, and immigration in particular is a big issue. There is also a lot of interest in the question of national identity and integration.”

Interestingly, while there is a perception that white British culture is under threat, Professor Kaufmann says that people from ethnic minority backgrounds are increasingly able to successfully combine their multiple identities with their ethnicity, nationality and locale. As a Canadian who has lived in Britain for more than 20 years, he also knows something about multiple identities.

Professor Kaufmann added: “In many cases, people from ethnic minorities have a stronger attachment to Britain than white British people, who tend to be orientated towards England or Wales, for example. A hyphenated British identity seems to work quite well. You can be Pakistani and British quite easily.”

Encouragingly, the white British population in ethnically diverse areas is more tolerant, because of increased contact with people from different backgrounds.

The policy recommendations from these insights are still being developed, but thoughts so far favour avoiding housing or schooling decisions that accelerate white British departure from diverse neighbourhoods. Professor Kaufmann is also against forcing or incentivising ethnic minorities to be dispersed across Britain, or into rural areas. He says that ethnic minorities initially opt for the support structures of their own communities in large cities, and that moving people of ethnic backgrounds into predominantly white British areas can be problematic for both sides.

Professor Kaufmann encourages a broad and personalised interpretation of what it means to be British. He added: “There should be flexibility. As long as there are certain things in common, everyone may see Britain through their own lenses and that provides a unity in itself. Not only can you have multiple identities, but you can have multiple versions of the national identity.”

Eric Kaufmann is Professor of Politics at Birkbeck. The final report based on the Diversity and the White Working Class research project will be launched in March 2014.

Listen to a podcast interview with Eric Kaufmann at: www.bb.ac.uk/birkbeck/voices/episode14

In many cases, people from ethnic minorities have a stronger attachment to Britain than white British people, who tend to be orientated towards England or Wales, for example.
Every year, over two million people worldwide still die from tuberculosis (TB). TB is a serious public health threat worldwide, due to an alarming increase in the rates of Mycobacterium tuberculosis strains that are resistant to current drug treatments. In May 2013, Dr Sanjib Bhakta published a study in the British Medical Journal, which looked at whether common medicines, such as ibuprofen, could play a role in the development of new anti-TB drug treatments.

The disease is difficult to treat, because patients need to follow at least a six-month daily course of chemotherapy, and in cases of multi-drug-resistant strains, effective treatment can take up to two years. Failure to complete the full course leads to increasingly drug-resistant strains of the disease developing.

There are now several strains that are multi-drug resistant – and a few defined as being totally drug resistant, meaning that treatment with current therapies is not possible. No new antibiotics have been developed since the 1960s, and TB treatments have focused on new combinations of the existing drugs.

Dr Bhakta said: “Efforts to develop new drug compounds have not yet been successful. As a result, there has recently been a renewed interest in repurposing existing drugs for the treatment of infectious diseases. This also offers an innovative screening technique known as the HT-SPOTi technique, which was developed by the Mycobacteria Research Laboratory in the Institute of Structural and Molecular Biology at Birkbeck and UCL.

The team also found that ibuprofen and its analogues are effective at attacking the TB pathogen. They tested a number of over-the-counter non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), including ibuprofen, carprofen (currently used in veterinary medicine) and a synthetic derivative of ibuprofen. Dr Bhakta has described this group of drugs as “one of the safest over-the-counter drugs available – including for children”.

The research team tested the ibuprofen and other compounds against replicating, non-replicating and drug-resistant forms of the TB-causing bacteria grown in vitro. In vitro testing provides the bacteria with optimum growth conditions, without the immune responses that would be provoked by a host cell infection. The results showed for the first time that ibuprofen, carprofen and the ibuprofen derivative were all effective at specifically killing the TB pathogen.

“Other research groups have shown that these compounds are also effective at treating TB in mice,” said Dr Bhakta. “However, in vitro testing enables us to focus on endogenous mechanisms of action of this group of over-the-counter medicines that exist within the TB pathogen.”

By targeting several types of bacterial pathogens, including TB, with the same compounds, the team was able to ascertain that the antibiotic properties displayed by ibuprofen and the other compounds are specifically anti-TB, rather than being effective against a broad spectrum of bacteria.

Using an interdisciplinary approach, the research team now hopes to identify the specific molecular target within the TB pathogen that the compounds interact with, and the biological process which it interrupts in order to inhibit the pathogen’s growth. In further tests, the team found that administering ibuprofen and its analogues in combination with existing antibiotics provoked an even higher death rate in the bacteria than either of the drugs were used alone, opening up the possibility of new combination therapies for TB.

The team also found that ibuprofen and its analogues can successfully target both active and dormant TB cells. Dr Bhakta added: “When in the active state, TB bacteria are multiplying within the host and causing disease – and this is the state when treatment is normally initiated. In around 70% of all TB infection cases, the host cells spontaneously heal in response to initial invasion by the pathogen. In 90% of the remaining cases, a complex host immune response triggers the TB pathogen to enter a dormant state, in which cells do not multiply, but remain fully viable. Around one-third of the world’s population is believed to carry the dormant TB bacteria – and these can become active at any time. Therefore, developing treatments for dormant TB would eliminate the chances of regular reactivation cases reported worldwide and is an exciting area for further investigation.”

With TB cases in the UK now almost on a par with levels in the whole of the US, at around 9,000 new cases per year, controlling TB infections represents a pressing challenge for both the UK government and international health bodies such as the World Health Organisation, which issues regular reports on global infections.

Dr Bhakta and his team’s work represents an important new avenue of research, which will further our understanding of this global killer, and might well lead to effective new treatments that could save millions of lives.

Dr Sanjib Bhakta is Senior Lecturer in Microbiology and Director of the Mycobacteria Research Laboratory at Birkbeck and UCL.
Defendants who had never been to court before articulated similar fears and concerns to those expressed by witnesses – with the additional anxiety about their likely sentence and, in some cases, about the possibility of press coverage of the trial and their identification in the media. We tend to think of the criminal court as a place where ‘what really happened’ is established. In fact, court proceedings are a highly ritualised process of managing conflict between alleged wrongdoers and those allegedly wronged, in which the ‘truth’ often remains unknown and unknowable. The process itself entails a highly ritualised public performance, within which elaborate formalities coincide with informality; matters of the utmost seriousness are dealt with alongside the most trivial and mundane issues; and an emphasis on objective ‘facts’ is subverted by a dependence on subjective interpretations.

Our study, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, aimed to understand what it is like to appear in Crown Court as victim, witness or defendant, and what factors determine whether proceedings are seen as fair and legitimate by the participants. Fieldwork, conducted in two Crown Courts, included in-depth interviews with 90 victims, defendants and witnesses, observations of trials and sentencing hearings, and 55 interviews with court staff, judges and barristers. By these means, we assessed victims’, defendants’ and witnesses’ comprehension of court proceedings, how fair they perceived the proceedings to be, how respectfully they felt they were treated by court staff, judges and barristers. By these means, we assessed victims’, defendants’ and witnesses’ comprehension of court proceedings, how fair they perceived the proceedings to be, how respectfully they felt they were treated by court staff, judges and barristers.

Court proceedings are often characterised by an intermingling of incongruous elements and a degree of chaos. And yet, the vast majority of witnesses, victims and defendants conform with the expectations and social rules of the process. This ‘reluctant conformity’ seems to reflect an implicit belief in the legitimacy of proceedings. Verdicts or sentences thought to be unfair can undermine, but tend not to erase, the perceived legitimacy of the court process.

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Our interviews with witnesses found that attending court can be terrifying, humiliating, upsetting or frustrating, and many aspects of the process can be difficult to understand. Most witnesses were anxious about meeting the defendant or the possibility of reprisals for giving evidence. Despite this, they tended to go to court voluntarily, citing their motivation as being a sense of duty to protect others from victimisation or to secure justice for themselves and others. Chance encounters with defendants did occur, and were reported as being one of the most distressing aspects of the witness experience.

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A selection of titles authored or edited by staff and students

**Story of a Death Foretold: The Coup against Salvador Allende, 11 September 1973**

Oscar Guardiola-Rivera, Bloomsbury

On 11 September 1973, President Salvador Allende of Chile, Latin America’s first democratically elected Marxist president, was deposed in a violent coup d’état. Why Allende seemed such a threat in the political and economic context of the time and how the coup was engineered is the story told by Dr Guardiola-Rivera, Senior Lecturer in Law, who draws on sources including phone transcripts and documents released as recently as 2008. It is a radical retelling of a moment in history that shocked the world and continues to resonate today.

**Hauntings: Psychoanalytic and Ghostly Transmissions**

Stephen Frosh, Palgrave Macmillan

Frosh’s book extends from Jorge Luis Borges to HP Lovecraft’s core ‘classic’ fiction, and explores how recognition and forgiveness can arise from this.

**REVIEW OF CRITICISM AND TEACHING 2013**

Professor Roger Luckhurst

My Lovecraft edition was spawned in unholy laboratories of horror. Birkbeck students will take any fiction we throw at them and always generate amazing insights and splendid debate. It’s the perfect fusion of teaching and research.

**The Criminal Justice System in Europe**

Jessica Reinisch, Oxford University Press

In 1945, Germany was a country with no government, little functioning administration. The colonial policy of elites was to move towards land markets, individualisation of land tenure and the demise of customary tenure. Jessica Reinisch, Lecturer in History and Gender Studies, and Dr Cook, Senior Lecturer in History and Gender Studies, considers how the four occupiers – Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the United States – attempted to keep their own troops and the ex-enemy population alive. She uses the public health problem as a powerful lens through which to reflect on the post-war period.

**Documentary Culture and the Laity in the Early Middle Ages**

Matthew Innes, Warren Brown, James Costambeys and Adam Kosto (eds), Cambridge University Press

Many more documents survive from the early Middle Ages than from later periods. Although ecclesiastical archives may account for the dramatic growth of written culture, numerous surviving documents, this new investigation, co-edited by Matthew Innes, Professor of History, reveals the scale and spread of documentary culture beyond the Church. Throughout Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, people at all levels – whether laity or clergy, landowners or tenants, farmers or royal functionaries – needed, used and kept documents. The story of documentary culture in the early medieval world emerges not as one of its capture by the Church, but rather of a resistence by those who needed documents, as they reacted to a changing legal, social and institutional landscape.

**The Mechanics’ Institute Review**

Birkbeck students, MA Creative Writing, Birkbeck

This literary anthology, produced, edited and published by students on Birkbeck’s MA Creative Writing programme, celebrates its tenth anniversary, by showcasing the brightest emerging talent at Birkbeck alongside new work from award-winning authors Evie Wyld, Adam Marek, Colin Grant and Jackie Kay. The collection takes the reader around the globe: a quest across Cyprus, a mission to India, segregation in South Africa, adolescence in Australia. Each story offers a unique perspective on the world and our place in it.

**Investigations into Living Systems, Artificial Life and Real-World Solutions**

George Magoulas, Information Science Reference

Research on living systems, human-level artificial systems, and machines that exhibit intelligent behavioural characteristics is fundamental to tackling complex and dynamic issues in nature and creating applicable solutions. George Magoulas, Professor of Computer Science, provides original research on the theoretical and applied aspects of artificial life, and addresses scientific, psychological and social issues.
Chris Corbin (right)
Certificate of Higher Education in History of Art/Restaurator
“I found the gallery visits incredibly revealing, as standing in front of a picture with your fellow students and discussing it is a very good way to measure your connoisseurship. I was pleased to discover that I had become more discerning and a better judge of what art means, as a result of my studies.

“You begin to see things in everyday life which you respond to differently, because of what you’ve learned. “I think that Birkbeck is terrific. It was originally set up as an institution offering adult education on a part-time basis, and that is exactly what it achieves to this day. If you enrol at Birkbeck to learn about a new subject or area, you will achieve what you’re looking for, as long as you’re prepared to put in the work.”

Natalie Jackson (centre, right)
BSc Economics and Social Policy/Actuarial analyst, Bank of England
“While I was studying, a lot of the things that we were learning about at Birkbeck were really useful in my job. It helped me to understand how my role fitted into the broader picture and the context that I was working within. I definitely don’t think I could have done my job the way I do without studying at Birkbeck.”

Jimmy Marlow (far right)
BA Spanish and Latin American Studies/Painter and decorator
“I found the course really hard going to begin with, as I had left school at 16 with few qualifications. With support from the tutors – and a little perseverance – I improved greatly and learnt to really enjoy the process. “The course was a real eye-opener for me. Not only did I learn Spanish, I learnt how to look at everything in a different way. I enjoy films, books and art so much more after my course, and constantly find myself asking ‘why has the author, director or artist decided to produce their work like this?’”

Merlyne Yolamu (below, left)
MSc Public Policy and Management
“I broke my leg three months into the course and I required two operations. At one point, I didn’t think that I would be able to complete the course, but I spoke to my tutor and she said that they would help me to continue. The level of support that they gave me was really overwhelming and beyond anything that I could have imagined. Also, the relationship that I built with the other students was marvellous. “In Malawi, we have been transferring policies to our country from other countries, but we needed specialists who could analyse the policies before they were implemented. I am now able to understand why policies succeed or fail, and will be able to undertake feasibility studies and take into account the local environment, resources and other variables. This course has given me the confidence to know that I can really deliver in this area. “My experience in London has been an eye-opener. I have enjoyed it and I don’t have any regrets whatsoever. I’m really happy, but I owe it to Birkbeck – they made everything possible for me.”

Vicky Garfield (above)
BSc Psychology
“It was difficult combining work and study, but the benefits definitely outweighed the disadvantages. Your social life suffers, but being able to work and study at the same time is beneficial. The teaching style was very interactive and encouraged interesting discussions. The support from the tutors and lecturers was really good. I would not be studying my PhD now, if it was not for my studies at Birkbeck. “Many of the students were older than your traditional college learners, and came from very different backgrounds. All of my friends who have studied at Birkbeck are now successful. I have stayed in touch with both friends and academics at Birkbeck.”
Honorary Fellowships are awarded to individuals who have attained distinction in the arts, literature, science or public life; have rendered exceptional service, which may include philanthropic support, to Birkbeck; or who have, or have had, a close association with Birkbeck.

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Our Community Review 2013

Weir has an OBIE for services to the arts and a BA History of Art from Birkbeck. “The thing I am most proud of is having got my degree,” she said. “Birkbeck gave me confidence, it made me believe I had an intellectual ability I didn’t think I possessed and helped me gain a much broader way of learning. It taught me to think laterally, and I have used that ever since. Being invited to be a Fellow of Birkbeck is wonderful – I am just so honoured. In the current climate I think choosing to study for a degree is about adding more value to your life. Certainly for me, Birkbeck added more than having a degree – it changed my life.”

For profiles of all Birkbeck’s Fellows, visit: www.bbk.ac.uk/about-us/fellows
Labour’s rising star

Birkbeck alumna Luciana Berger MP is possibly only one election away from government office.

There seems to be no stopping Luciana Berger. Since being elected as an MP in 2010, she has swiftly risen through the ranks of the Labour Party. Only five months after entering Parliament, Berger was appointed Shadow Minister for Public Health. Clearly, the next general election will be a key moment for the political career of the impressive, industrious and young MP.

Born in 1981, Berger grew up in Wembley, north-west London. Even as a child, she remembers Tory rule and has described it as a “nasty, spiteful, shameful period in our history”. Her motivation for her political work dates back to the era. Her political education, she felt the need for her political activism to be informed by the “theoretical backbone” of politics, and she decided to study an MSc in Government, Policy and Politics at Birkbeck. She completed the one-year, full-time postgraduate qualification in 2005. The course proved to be valuable for, and relevant to, her future political career, particularly the seminars about modern British politics, which covered the struggle for female representation in British democracy.

After completing her studies, Berger worked for the management consultancy Accenture and the NHS Confederation, before becoming the Labour Co-operative MP for Liverpool Wavertree in 2010 with a majority of 7,167. Since entering Parliament, Berger has worked hard and has campaigned on many issues, including against food poverty, on toughening up laws on dangerous dogs, and on the Green Deal energy efficiency scheme. According to the web site TheyWorkForYou.com, she has spoken in 80 debates in the past year - well above the average for MPs.

When asked about Birkbeck, Berger is overwhelmingly positive, praising the diversity of the student body, and the benefits of part-time study for the average MP. When asked about Birkbeck, Berger is overwhelmingly positive, praising the diversity of the student body, and the benefits of part-time study for the average MP.

Delivering the 2013 Bernal Lecture at the College, distinguished scientist Professor Glaucius Oliva declared that Birkbeck had changed his life. It was a welcome return for Professor Oliva, who gained his PhD in protein crystallography in 1988 from Birkbeck, where he worked with the renowned scientist Sir Tom L. Blundell, then Head of the Department of Crystallography (which has now been amalgamated into the Department of Biological Sciences).

Back at Birkbeck in May 2013, Professor Oliva outlined the work of his research group on major lethal global infectious diseases, including Chagas disease and schistosomiasis, during his lecture entitled ‘From structural biology of neglected diseases to Brazilian science’.

He also spoke about his memories of Birkbeck, enormous changes in Brazil, thanks to investments in science and technology, and his leadership of the prestigious Science without Borders programme, a £2bn Brazilian government initiative to enable young scientists to study abroad.

During his visit to Birkbeck, Professor Oliva said: “Birkbeck is where I started my scientific career. Many things have changed at Birkbeck since I arrived in 1984, but I received a very warm welcome, and when I say that Birkbeck changed my life, I wasn’t aware that this is now a motto of the College!”

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The 1980s were a time when Brazil wanted to build up its science base, and to promote change in the country. Brazil sent many people abroad to pursue careers in science and we were here to learn everything we could.”

Today, Professor Oliva is the President of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) Brazil and oversees the promotion and quality of science and technological research across Brazil. He leads a team of 80 researchers, including physicists, biologists and chemists. His main research interests are focused on the structure and function of biological macromolecules and their application to planning and development of new drugs, with particular emphasis on tropical and infectious diseases.

Since becoming President of CNPq in 2011, Professor Oliva has reinvigorated the country’s programme of sending students abroad.

Birkbeck’s Department of Biological Sciences (as well as the former Department of Crystallography) has long-standing links with Brazil. In 2012 it was delighted to receive Dr Jose Luiz Lopes as one of three inaugural recipients of the Science without Borders fellowships in biochemistry/biophysics for postdoctoral research in the UK.

For more information about Science without Borders, visit: http://sciencewithoutborders.international.ac.uk/
Emeritus Professor John Cloudsley-Thompson
(1921–2013)

Emeritus Professor of Zoology

Born in 1921 at Murree in India (now in modern-day Pakistan), Dr Cloudsley-Thompson was stationed in North Africa in the Second World War. It was here that he began to develop a great interest in desert wildlife, and he adopted some of the native animals, including a baby fox - for which he had bartered with overripe bananas and some loose change.

He became a tank commander by the time he was 21 and went on to survive an ambush on his tank, in which all of his crew were either injured or killed and which left him with a severe leg injury.

John came to Birkbeck in 1972 as Professor of Zoology. His motivation was simple: he was fascinated by animals and how they interacted with their environment. While at Birkbeck he was known to be not only a passionate teacher, but also a great listener, nurturing and engaging with his students, often sitting on a lab bench and chatting to students long after the lecture had finished. He would turn up to the College on his 70cc motorcycle, wearing a leather flying jacket, a helmet and goggles.

Professor Cloudsley-Thompson was a prolific writer, whose best-known works were Zoology of Tropical Africa (1969), Insects and History (1976) and Toth and Chau: Defensive Strategies in the Animal World (1986).

He was president of the British Arachnological Society, of the British Society for Chronobiology and of the British Herpetological Society. In 1993 he won the Peter Scott Memorial Award for outstanding services to our understanding of natural history.

Professor David Hamlyn
(1924–2012)

First Head of Birkbeck’s Department of Biology

Professor and Head of Philosophy at Birkbeck since 1974, was Professor David Hamlyn, a lecturer in biology at Birkbeck since 1969, and a close friend. He said: “John was a paleontologist with a particular knack of finding new or important dinosaur fossils in various parts of the world. He was very tall, over 6’ 5”, with a personality to match. A spellbinding raconteur, he was also an inspired teacher in the lecture theatre, laboratory and in the field.”

Geoff Coast, another former colleague and friend, added: “There will be generations of students who will recall his lectures, and his contribution to numerous marine biology field courses”.

For more obituaries, visit: www.bbk.ac.uk/obituaries

Biologist and raconteur John Attridge, inspirational teacher John Cloudsley-Thompson, and philosophy father-figure David Hamlyn are remembered by former colleagues.

Obligations

of the Board of Examiners for the University of London External System’s BSc Degree in Zoology; President of the Senior Common Room; and President of the Tetrapods Club, a club for paleontologists and anatomists that dates back to the era of nineteenth-century biologist Thomas Huxley.

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**Why I give**

Leading psychoanalyst and writer Susie Orbach explains why she is supporting the Eric Hobsbawm Scholarships for Postgraduate History Students at Birkbeck

Education is magic. It explodes our minds and hearts, giving us ways to understand that we didn’t even know were possible. It changes our relationship to ourselves and to our world.

My experiences of academia, including 10 years as a Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics and Political Science, have shown me how education inspires and changes lives. Like love and friendship, it is one of the great gifts of living.

Adult education is an even more special gift, and this is why I applauded Birkbeck’s provision of evening education, enabling busy Londoners to combine work and study. When you consciously begin to know that you want to learn, it can be exhilarating, but it can also be difficult and scary. It means breaking out of the known and taking risks. It is an opening up of your own life and the lives of those around you to challenges that can be as perplexing as they are exciting.

In particular, studying history – the history of our culture, of political movements, of groups and individuals grappling with, and acting in, historical time – allows one to re-situate oneself both in one’s own life and times and in historical time, recognising the significance of the particular moment as well as the trajectories that it is both a part of and a break from.

Being able to give a small bit of support to a postgraduate History student in the name of Professor Eric Hobsbawm is to acknowledge the great contribution that he made throughout his 65-year association with Birkbeck. Beginning in 1947, when he became a lecturer in History, Eric rose to the position of Birkbeck’s President. He was involved in College life until his death in 2012. As one of history’s greatest intellectuals, Eric helped to shape our thinking about history and touched many lives as a dedicated teacher.

The Eric Hobsbawm Scholarships have been created to encourage the next generation of talented historians. I’m sure they will inspire all adult learners to keep on learning and being curious, as did Eric for all of his life, discovering new interests and deepening accustomed ones.

I hope that any student who has the opportunity to become a postgraduate student in history at Birkbeck will feel immersed in the love of the subject that the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology holds. They will also be part of Birkbeck – a world-class research and teaching institution that I admire and respect.

Applications for the Eric Hobsbawm Scholarships for Postgraduate History Students are open for research degrees beginning in October 2014.

To donate to Birkbeck, to volunteer or to find out more, visit: www.bbk.ac.uk/alumni/

To apply for the Eric Hobsbawm Scholarships, or to find out more, visit: www.bbk.ac.uk/ hobsbawmscholarships

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**Student statistics 2012–2013**

**Students**

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<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
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<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
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<td>Postgraduate taught</td>
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**Gender**

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<th></th>
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<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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**Age**

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<th>Age Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>21–29</td>
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<td>30+</td>
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**Qualifications awarded**

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<th>Qualification</th>
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<td>Foundation degrees</td>
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<td>Bachelor’s degrees</td>
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<td>Postgraduate taught</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research degrees</td>
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Source: HESA Student Return 2012–2013
As he prepares to stand down as Vice-Master of Birkbeck in summer 2014, Professor Philip Dewe reflects on the magnificent new campus.

Just over 190 years ago, George Birkbeck called a meeting at the Crown and Anchor tavern on the Strand in London, to discuss the idea of establishing a Mechanics’ Institute to educate London’s working population. That Institute went on to become Birkbeck College, and George Birkbeck’s rallying call that ‘now is the time for the universal benefits of the blessings of knowledge’ is as powerful and relevant today as it was nearly two centuries ago.

Our 190th anniversary – a significant milestone in our history – seemed like an auspicious moment to launch a major new initiative. Along with our partner, the University of East London, we formally opened University Square Stratford (USS) in the presence of Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London, on 5 November 2013.

This has been a long journey for Birkbeck. Beginning eight years ago, even before the Olympics were announced, we identified Stratford as a place to take our research-led, part-time evening teaching model.

The success of this venture is a tribute to the whole College and all those who have contributed to our work in Stratford and east London. Together, we have worked hard to develop our own unique presence, by engaging with the community, tirelessly exploiting opportunities for widening participation, developing programmes that capture the aspirations of those living in east London and which complement their ambitions and hopes, and teaching in ways – and in places – that allow people to study in their own community, achieve their ambitions and become part of the wider Birkbeck community.

This has been accompanied by our desire to build relationships within the community, by establishing our presence in the heart of that community, adding to (and becoming part of) a regenerative process, and contributing to the change that continues to add to the vibrancy and diversity of Stratford today.

All this while we watched USS grow into the magnificent building that it is now. We worked in groups, established teams, developed partnerships, managed, administered and taught to ensure that we could now celebrate our part in this success.

This achievement is a tribute to the courage of our governors, the leadership of our Master and the work of all those across the College who simply believe in what Birkbeck stands for and the unique contribution that we make to higher education.

Birkbeck has constantly adapted and changed to face many challenges over the years, and I think that we can confidently say that we have stayed true to the founding mission. I am proud that we are a college that George Birkbeck would still recognise and that the new USS building breathes new life into our established traditions.

I am certain that this is not the last word on our important work in east London, even if these are the last words that I may write on a project that has been very close to my heart in my time as Vice-Master at Birkbeck.

Philip Dewe is Vice-Master of Birkbeck and Professor of Organizational Behaviour.
KEEP INFORMED AND KEEP IN TOUCH

We hope you have enjoyed reading about our year in this edition of BBK. There are many ways that you can stay connected with us throughout 2014 and beyond.

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