Welcome to Steps. It’s been another very successful year for Lancaster; there isn’t space here to share all our good news!

A few highlights: we received a Queen’s Anniversary Prize last November, for work conducted by Professor Tony McEnery and his team in the Centre for Corpus Approaches to Social Science, presented at Buckingham Palace on 26 February. Lancaster has also retained its place in the UK’s Top 10 Universities in the recently published Complete University Guide; and we have moved up to 121st in the QS World University Rankings.

Welcome to Steps. It’s been another very successful year for Lancaster; there isn’t space here to share all our good news!

A few highlights: we received a Queen’s Anniversary Prize last November, for work conducted by Professor Tony McEnery and his team in the Centre for Corpus Approaches to Social Science, presented at Buckingham Palace on 26 February. Lancaster has also retained its place in the UK’s Top 10 Universities in the recently published Complete University Guide; and we have moved up to 121st in the QS World University Rankings.

We continue to grow, both at home and overseas. The Ministry of Education in Beijing has approved the establishment of a joint institute with Beijing Jiaotong University. The new campus, called Lancaster University College - Beijing Jiaotong University, will be located in Weihai, Shandong province. Meanwhile, at Bailrigg, we have exciting plans to redevelop the Management School’s main buildings; more news of this important project will be released over coming months.

2015 also threw up some big challenges. The Morecambe Bay area can be wet; but on 5th-6th December the rain fell on an entirely different scale. A UK record flow of water was recorded in the River Lune, bursting its banks and flooding an important electrical sub-station. This knocked out power to both city and campus. After providing emergency accommodation to 6,000 students over that weekend, we ended term early, no easy undertaking to evacuate so many people in such a short space of time. I was tremendously proud of the way staff and students responded to adversity.

Lancaster is a famously modest institution; but we have plenty to be proud about. While we’ll never rest on our laurels, I hope that you will help us to spread the message about our quality and ambition. To get the latest from Lancaster keep a regular eye on our website. And we want to celebrate your successes, too; so please stay in touch, whether through Facebook, LinkedIn, the alumni website or by contacting the Alumni Office.

Professor Mark E. Smith
Vice-Chancellor

The articles printed here, to the best of our knowledge, were correct at the time of going to press. We cannot guarantee that all articles submitted have been printed and we reserve the right to edit material where necessary. Furthermore, the views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Lancaster University or the Editor. If you require this magazine in another format, please contact the Alumni & Development Office.

Welcome to Steps. It’s been another very successful year for Lancaster; there isn’t space here to share all our good news!

A few highlights: we received a Queen’s Anniversary Prize last November, for work conducted by Professor Tony McEnery and his team in the Centre for Corpus Approaches to Social Science, presented at Buckingham Palace on 26 February. Lancaster has also retained its place in the UK’s Top 10 Universities in the recently published Complete University Guide; and we have moved up to 121st in the QS World University Rankings.

We continue to grow, both at home and overseas. The Ministry of Education in Beijing has approved the establishment of a joint institute with Beijing Jiaotong University. The new campus, called Lancaster University College - Beijing Jiaotong University, will be located in Weihai, Shandong province. Meanwhile, at Bailrigg, we have exciting plans to redevelop the Management School’s main buildings; more news of this important project will be released over coming months.

2015 also threw up some big challenges. The Morecambe Bay area can be wet; but on 5th-6th December the rain fell on an entirely different scale. A UK record flow of water was recorded in the River Lune, bursting its banks and flooding an important electrical sub-station. This knocked out power to both city and campus. After providing emergency accommodation to 6,000 students over that weekend, we ended term early, no easy undertaking to evacuate so many people in such a short space of time. I was tremendously proud of the way staff and students responded to adversity.

Lancaster is a famously modest institution; but we have plenty to be proud about. While we’ll never rest on our laurels, I hope that you will help us to spread the message about our quality and ambition. To get the latest from Lancaster keep a regular eye on our website. And we want to celebrate your successes, too; so please stay in touch, whether through Facebook, LinkedIn, the alumni website or by contacting the Alumni Office.

Professor Mark E. Smith
Vice-Chancellor

The articles printed here, to the best of our knowledge, were correct at the time of going to press. We cannot guarantee that all articles submitted have been printed and we reserve the right to edit material where necessary. Furthermore, the views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Lancaster University or the Editor. If you require this magazine in another format, please contact the Alumni & Development Office.
The Science Behind Predicting the Northern Lights

"Where should I go to see the northern lights? It’s a question I get asked a lot, usually just after I say that I study the physics of the aurora borealis. More often than not, it is followed by “When’s the best time to see them?”

“It’s not surprising. The northern lights are one of nature’s most beautiful spectacles. So where is the best place to see them and when is the best time?

Aurorae are caused by the interaction of the Earth’s magnetic field with the solar wind, the stream of electrically charged particles constantly emitted by the Sun. Because the solar wind is electrically conductive, it drags remnants of the Sun’s magnetic field out into interplanetary space. When it arrives at the Earth, the magnetic field in the solar wind can couple with the Earth’s own magnetic field. Ions and electrons in the region of near-Earth space known as the magnetosphere are energised by this coupling and some, guided by the shape of the terrestrial magnetic field, are funnelled down towards the magnetic poles. Collisions with atoms in the upper atmosphere cause them to glow, with the characteristic green and red colours of the aura emitted by oxygen atoms at altitudes between 100-200km above the ground.

This process generates aurorae in crown-like ovals surrounding the magnetic poles. Although the solar wind is continuous, changes in the efficiency of the solar wind-magnetosphere coupling process modulates the auroral activity. Nevertheless, residents of northern Scandinavia, Iceland, northern Canada and Alaska regularly witness stunning natural light shows, weather and darkness permitting. But what about closer to home?

During periods of increased solar activity, the aurora can occasionally be seen at much lower latitudes than usual, but a particular chain of events need to occur. Typically, it starts with an eruption of material from the Sun known as a coronal mass ejection (CME). An average CME can include a billion tonnes of solar material moving at a million miles an hour, crossing the interplanetary space between the Sun and Earth in just a couple of days. If the CME is aligned anti-parallel to the Earth’s magnetic field, then the coupling is weak whereas if it is antiparallel the coupling is strong. Unfortunately, this crucial parameter cannot be measured until the CME passes the ACE spacecraft located approximately 1.5 million kilometres upstream of the Earth, only one hour before the CME arrives at the Earth. Finally, even if all the other factors are favourable, cloudy skies or light pollution can put pay to any aurora being seen from the ground.

We know from historical data that the “perfect storm” scenario, where each element of the chain is maximally geoeffective, can push aurorae as far south as the Caribbean, but these occur less than once each century. Geomagnetic storms that result in aurorae visible from the south coast of England are more common, perhaps occurring once every twenty years or so.

So why are auroral displays from the UK so hard to predict? Although they can occur at any time, the CMEs that cause them are most common during solar maximum, the peak of solar activity that occurs every 11 years. They can be fired outwards from the Sun in almost any direction, so the geometry has to be just right. If it is Earth-bound, predicting a CME’s time of arrival at Earth is not straightforward. Uncertainties of around 10 hours are not unusual meaning that a CME could arrive and trigger aurorae during daylight instead of darkness.

This heightened geomagnetic activity causes the auroral oval to expand, pushing aurorae southward. If the skies are clear and the geomagnetic storm coincides with the height of darkness, mid-latitude observers including those in the UK can be treated to auroral displays. So why are auroral displays from the UK so hard to predict? Although they can occur at any time, the CMEs that cause them are most common during solar maximum, the peak of solar activity that occurs every 11 years. They can be fired outwards from the Sun in almost any direction, so the geometry has to be just right.

If it is Earth-bound, predicting a CME’s time of arrival at Earth is not straightforward. Uncertainties of around 10 hours are not unusual meaning that a CME could arrive and trigger aurorae during daylight instead of darkness.

The orientation of the magnetic field inside the CME is crucial. If it is aligned parallel to the Earth’s magnetic field, then the coupling is weak whereas if it is antiparallel the coupling is strong. Unfortunately, this crucial parameter cannot be measured until the CME passes the ACE spacecraft located approximately 1.5 million kilometres upstream of the Earth, only one hour before the CME arrives at the Earth. Finally, even if all the other factors are favourable, cloudy skies or light pollution can put pay to any aurora being seen from the ground.

We know from historical data that the “perfect storm” scenario, where each element of the chain is maximally geoeffective, can push aurorae as far south as the Caribbean, but these occur less than once each century. Geomagnetic storms that result in aurorae visible from the south coast of England are more common, perhaps occurring once every twenty years or so.

Set against this background, auroral displays visible from northern Scotland are relatively common, occurring a few times a year. So if you want to try and see aurorae from the UK, you might want something to tip the odds in your favour. Fortunately, Lancaster University’s free AuroraWatch UK service – aurorawatch.lancs.ac.uk - alerts users to heightened activity in the UK via email and social media. When I’m asked what’s the best way to see the northern lights from the UK, it’s what I recommend. That, patience and a bit of luck.”

Professor Jim Wild teaches on our MPhys and BSc Physics, Astrophysics and Cosmology programmes.
Alumni in Print

HELEN BARBOUR
PhD Sociology, 1997, Sociology 1997 'How to Laugh, You Buggers, Laugh'

MICHAEL PICKERING
PhD Linguistics, 1990, French Studies, 1986 'Designer British Silver'

JOHN ANDREW
PhD History, 1991 'Frontier of Fear'

TIMOTHY McCracken
MA 18th Century English, 1978 'Imperfect Strangers'

BRIAN TERRY
Accounting & Finance, 1972 'Dark Pools'

REV AUGUSTINE KANJAMALA
MA Sociology and Religion, 1974 'The Future of Christian Mission in India'

DR CHAITANYA NIPHAHKAR
Development & Consulting, 2002 (and Derek Styles) 'Bright Stars'

DR MICHAEL KENT
Marketing, 2007, Cartmel married JUNE HUI YING LAI English Language and Sociolinguistics, 2007, Cartmel

DR DAVID GOSLING
PhD Politics, 2005 'Brand Command'

DR DAVID WAINWRIGHT
MA Economic and Social History, 1972 'Too Much Toothache'

JASON HUGGINS
MA 18th Century English, 1978 'The Unity of Knowledge'

AALIYA BAWA
PhD Geography, 2012 'The Unity of Knowledge'

ALAN DENT
PhD Education, 1978 'The Unity of Knowledge'

DIMITRIS MITROMARAS
MSc Information Technology, Management and Organisation, 2008, Graduate married CLARA MALMROS MSc Management, 2008, Graduate.

SUZANNE HEPWORTH
MA 19th Century English, 1978 'Imperfect Strangers'

GARETH PATTENDEN

JAMES WEBSTER

PETE MORGAN
Psychology, 2008, County married JOELLE-MARIE ALLEN English Literature, 2006, County

JAMES WIGGINS
Current married

MARK LORD

MARK HAYWOOD

SAMANTHA COLETT
MSc Contemporary Sociology, 1998, Sociology 'How to Buy Property in Auction'

WENDY JONES NAKASHI
MA 19th Century English, 1978 'Imperfect Strangers'

NIGEL GRAY
English, 1971 'Laugh, You Buggers, Laugh'

MIKES AMBERRY
Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1997 'The Last Plantagenet'

OXY JIN
Accounting and Finance, 2005, Cartmel married JENNY BENNETT Management, 2005, Cartmel

JOEY BOSWELL
MEng Mechanical Engineering, 2008, CCIS married LUCY COULTER MSc Information Technology, 2008, Cartmel

JESSICA LLEWELLYN
BA Fine Art, 2008, Grizedale married CAROLINE LEDG Media and Cultural Studies, 2008, Furness

KATIE GROCOTT

JACOB HINCHLIFFE
English Language and Italian, 2008, Cartmel married KATIE GROCOTT Media and Cultural Studies, 2007, Furness

SAMANTHA HALE
BA English Literature, 2006, County married MATT GROVES Economics, 2006, Grizedale

JUNE HUI YING LAI
English Language and Sociolinguistics, 2007, Cartmel married JAMES WIGGINS

JAMES MICHAEL KENT
Marketing, 2007, Cartmel married JUNE HUI YING LAI English Language and Sociolinguistics, 2007, Cartmel

EDWARD RIGBY
Geography, 2011, Fylde married HOLLY ENGLISH 2013, MSc Business, 2013, County

JAMES KERR
History and Politics, 2011, Lonsdale married ELEANOR BLANC History, 2012, Fylde

MIKE CLAYTON-JONES

JESSICA LLEWELLYN
BA Fine Art, 2008, Grizedale married CAROLINE LEDG Media and Cultural Studies, 2008, Furness

ADAM LOMAS
Physics with Medical Physics, 2012, Cartmel married KATIE GROCOTT Media and Cultural Studies, 2007, Furness

JOE PAULINE
Physics with Medical Physics, 2012, Cartmel married KATIE GROCOTT Media and Cultural Studies, 2007, Furness

KATIE GROCOTT

MARK LORD

DEAN HAYWOOD
English Language and Italian, 2008, Cartmel married KATIE GROCOTT Media and Cultural Studies, 2007, Furness

CHRIS HARRISON
English Literature, 2011, Lonsdale married REBEKAH JANE Photography

JULIAN HARTLEY
English Literature, 2011, Lonsdale married REBEKAH JANE Photography

ZEBRA WILKINSON
English Language and Italian, 2008, Cartmel married KATIE GROCOTT Media and Cultural Studies, 2007, Furness

JESSICA LLEWELLYN

KATIE GROCOTT

JACOB HINCHLIFFE
English Language and Italian, 2008, Cartmel married KATIE GROCOTT Media and Cultural Studies, 2007, Furness

SAMANTHA HALE
BA English Literature, 2006, County married MATT GROVES Economics, 2006, Grizedale

JUNE HUI YING LAI
English Language and Sociolinguistics, 2007, Cartmel married JAMES WIGGINS

JAMES MICHAEL KENT
Marketing, 2007, Cartmel married JUNE HUI YING LAI English Language and Sociolinguistics, 2007, Cartmel

EDWARD RIGBY
Geography, 2011, Fylde married HOLLY ENGLISH 2013, MSc Business, 2013, County

JAMES KERR
History and Politics, 2011, Lonsdale married ELEANOR BLANC History, 2012, Fylde

MIKE CLAYTON-JONES

JESSICA LLEWELLYN
WHAT DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT YOUR WORK?

Alan – I’m now retired, but in my career I felt I thought I knew life, until I did social work. You’re then amazed when you can make some difference to someone’s life – to help them fix themselves, even if it’s just a little bit.

Cat – In my role as an MP everything’s different and you see the best and worst in people. If you can’t actually help them yourself you can hopefully point them in the right direction through your networks. Entering Parliament was strange and I felt like a ‘fish out of water’. It’s taken me a little while to realise that I deserve to be there!

WHAT MADE YOU CHOOSE LANCASTER UNIVERSITY FOR YOUR DEGREE?

Alan – I made my first connection with Lancaster 45 years ago when I came to see a Pink Floyd concert in the Great Hall in 1971. I then came to study social work from 1988-90 before returning to do an MA in History between 2008 -2011 after retirement from my career with the Youth Offending Team in Cumbria.

Cat – I recall my Dad bringing home a prospectus for me to look at when I was 15 and reading it from cover to cover. Originally I was looking at sciences, but was intrigued by the whole range of options available. I first came onto campus at the age of 2 or 3 to visit Dad and recall wrestling with my sister on Waterstones floor – though I am much better behaved now! I wasn’t really aware there were any other universities; my Dad had planted the seed and loved his experience so much that I had to come with my Mum to the Open Day to avoid his bias!

WHAT IS YOUR FONDEST MEMORY OF YOUR TIME HERE?

Alan – I was so amazed that I got a place as I had failed my 11 plus years ago at school that I enjoyed every single minute of it. I remember being overwhelmed at having a former Oxford student sitting next to me in a tutorial. I loved the general camaraderie, evenings at the Waterwitch etc.

Cat – I particularly enjoyed the first year, the feeling of independence. Limited pressure regarding exams and the chance to figure out who you were and no curfews. I was the first one in the family to have the full university experience living away from home.

DO YOU KEEP IN TOUCH WITH OTHER ALUMNI SINCE YOU GRADUATED?

Alan – I lost touch a bit during the 90s after my first stint at Lancaster, when career and family took over, but the advent of the internet has enabled me to reconnect and a number of my peers from both the Social Work and the MA History groups regularly keep in touch.

Cat – I met my husband-to-be at Lancaster University (Ben) and through my constituency work I am frequently between Lancaster and London, so have visited the University several times since graduating (bathroom for talks about my work!) I also keep in touch with alumni through the annual Labour Club reunion dinner.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO TODAY’S STUDENTS?

Alan – Enjoy every minute, it will go faster than you think. And remember, whatever happens next, you are always a Lancaster graduate.

Cat – Don’t waste time worrying about revision and exams. I remember some students tried to work themselves into the ground.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT SO FAR (IN ANY ASPECT OF YOUR LIFE?)

Alan – In my case, my greatest achievement has been to survive in a house with four women! I am also proud of the fact that I obtained an MA in History after failing my eleven plus in 1958.

Cat – That a 29 year old working class girl from Barrow could be elected as a Labour MP in a marginal constituency.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT YOUR WORK?

Alan – I’m now retired, but in my career I felt I thought I knew life, until I did social work. You’re then amazed when you can make some difference to someone’s life – to help them fix themselves, even if it’s just a little bit.

Cat – In my role as an MP everything’s different and you see the best and worst in people. If you can’t actually help them yourself you can hopefully point them in the right direction through your networks. Entering Parliament was strange and I felt like a ‘fish out of water’. It’s taken me a little while to realise that I deserve to be there!

WHAT MADE YOU CHOOSE LANCASTER UNIVERSITY FOR YOUR DEGREE?

Alan – I made my first connection with Lancaster 45 years ago when I came to see a Pink Floyd concert in the Great Hall in 1971. I then came to study social work from 1988-90 before returning to do an MA in History between 2008 -2011 after retirement from my career with the Youth Offending Team in Cumbria.

Cat – I recall my Dad bringing home a prospectus for me to look at when I was 15 and reading it from cover to cover. Originally I was looking at sciences, but was intrigued by the whole range of options available. I first came onto campus at the age of 2 or 3 to visit Dad and recall wrestling with my sister on Waterstones floor – though I am much better behaved now! I wasn’t really aware there were any other universities; my Dad had planted the seed and loved his experience so much that I had to come with my Mum to the Open Day to avoid his bias!

WHAT IS YOUR FONDEST MEMORY OF YOUR TIME HERE?

Alan – I was so amazed that I got a place as I had failed my 11 plus years ago at school that I enjoyed every single minute of it. I remember being overwhelmed at having a former Oxford student sitting next to me in a tutorial. I loved the general camaraderie, evenings at the Waterwitch etc.

Cat – I particularly enjoyed the first year, the feeling of independence. Limited pressure regarding exams and the chance to figure out who you were and no curfews. I was the first one in the family to have the full university experience living away from home.

DO YOU KEEP IN TOUCH WITH OTHER ALUMNI SINCE YOU GRADUATED?

Alan – I lost touch a bit during the 90s after my first stint at Lancaster, when career and family took over, but the advent of the internet has enabled me to reconnect and a number of my peers from both the Social Work and the MA History groups regularly keep in touch.

Cat – I met my husband-to-be at Lancaster University (Ben) and through my constituency work I am frequently between Lancaster and London, so have visited the University several times since graduating (bathroom for talks about my work!) I also keep in touch with alumni through the annual Labour Club reunion dinner.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO TODAY’S STUDENTS?

Alan – Enjoy every minute, it will go faster than you think. And remember, whatever happens next, you are always a Lancaster graduate.

Cat – Don’t waste time worrying about revision and exams. I remember some students tried to work themselves into the ground.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT SO FAR (IN ANY ASPECT OF YOUR LIFE?)

Alan – In my case, my greatest achievement has been to survive in a house with four women! I am also proud of the fact that I obtained an MA in History after failing my eleven plus in 1958.

Cat – That a 29 year old working class girl from Barrow could be elected as a Labour MP in a marginal constituency.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT YOUR WORK?

Alan – I’m now retired, but in my career I felt I thought I knew life, until I did social work. You’re then amazed when you can make some difference to someone’s life – to help them fix themselves, even if it’s just a little bit.

Cat – In my role as an MP everything’s different and you see the best and worst in people. If you can’t actually help them yourself you can hopefully point them in the right direction through your networks. Entering Parliament was strange and I felt like a ‘fish out of water’. It’s taken me a little while to realise that I deserve to be there!
STUDENTS’ UNION
THEN AND NOW

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY STAY THE SAME.

That may seem a hackneyed phrase, but it’s certainly true of Lancaster University Students’ Union, writes Communications Manager Bob Hart.

Since it was formed just a few years after the University itself, the Union has made a huge impact on life at Lancaster, combining dedicated political campaigning, a deep commitment to student welfare, a passion for education and an irrepressible sense of fun. That said, some of the things that go on these days might not look quite the same as you remember them. Changing times mean changing fashions, a barely recognisable campus and a way of doing things that’s moved on from the DIY spirit of yesteryear.

If you’d like to find out more about what the Union gets up to, visit the website at www.lusu.co.uk or follow www.facebook.com/lancastersu or www.twitter.com/lancastersu

SUN ON THE STEPS

One thing that hasn’t changed at Lancaster is that Alexandra Square is THE place to be on a sunny afternoon. But it might not be quite as you remember it. The phrase ‘it’s grim up north’ was created for this grainy image from the ’70s with its brooding sky and austere fashions. These days it’s brighter, whiter and glossier, with the Learning Zone replacing the cubicle seminar rooms of Bowland.

HAIR TODAY GONE TOMORROW

Bob Hart arrived at County College as a fresh-faced youth back in 1998 - the year many of this year’s intake of new students were born.

He graduated from Lancaster with a degree in English in 2001. After leaving to pursue a career in journalism he returned older, wiser and balder in 2014 as the Students’ Union Communications Manager.

WHAT’S A ‘SABBATICAL OFFICER’?

Known as Sabbatical Officers or ‘Sabbs’ in old money, these days they’re called Full-Time Officers.

Politics, protests...and posters

The Union still loves to campaign on a wide variety of issues, but the social media age has changed how and where it takes place.

Politics, protests...and posters

The Union still loves to campaign on a wide variety of issues, but the social media age has changed how and where it takes place.

Here are a bunch of student protesters in the city centre in the mid-’70s, bemoaning cuts to grants. These days protests are much more likely to be made on campus and broadcast on Twitter. But as you can see from the photo, one thing that hasn’t changed at Lancaster is liberal use of posters.

EPIC EVENTS

You may remember attending one of the many events organised by the Union during your time at Lancaster – many of them still exist, but have changed in character over the years.

Freshers’ Fair has become an epic experience sprawling out of the Great Hall and into the surrounding buildings.

Improving facilities, improving equipment and a greater understanding of the mental and physical benefits of exercise mean there’s never been a better time to do sport at Lancaster.

Compare this shambolic football match at Fylde in the ’70s to the professionalism you’ll see at Lancaster these days. 2016 is a home Roses year, which meant building a stadium for the Women’s Football 1st clash with York at the opening ceremony and for other fixtures.

Sabbatical Officers or ‘Sabbs’ in old money, these days they’re called Full-Time Officers.

Here’s the SU Executive 1983/4 from bottom left, clockwise: Andy Arnfield, Jackie Cawkwell, Andy Broom, Morton Geppert, Sam Walker, Dave Lightman, Charlie Blueglass, Jayne Williams. Centre is President Bernard Hughs.

Now pared down to six (and looking a lot less like Littlewoods catalogue models) is the 2015/16 team – from left, back: VP Union Development Tom Stapleton, VP Education Ben Harper and VP Welfare & Community Anna Lee; front: VP Activities Natalie Sutcliffe, VP Campaigns and Communications Katie Capstick and President Will Hedley.

Grad Ball has changed a bit too – check out this civilised bunch gathered in the Great Hall way back in 1989. This year’s event will be in Blackpool Tower Ballroom, featuring a number of live performances including the Hit Parade’s Fuse ODG.

One thing that hasn’t changed at Lancaster is that Alexandra Square is THE place to be on a sunny afternoon.

Moving the goalposts

The more things change, the more they stay the same. That may seem a hackneyed phrase, but it’s certainly true of Lancaster University Students’ Union, writes Communications Manager Bob Hart.

Since it was formed just a few years after the University itself, the Union has made a huge impact on life at Lancaster, combining dedicated political campaigning, a deep commitment to student welfare, a passion for education and an irrepressible sense of fun.

That said, some of the things that go on these days might not look quite the same as you remember them. Changing times mean changing fashions, a barely recognisable campus and a way of doing things that’s moved on from the DIY spirit of yesteryear.

If you’d like to find out more about what the Union gets up to, visit the website at www.lusu.co.uk or follow www.facebook.com/lancastersu or www.twitter.com/lancastersu

EPIC EVENTS

You may remember attending one of the many events organised by the Union during your time at Lancaster – many of them still exist, but have changed in character over the years.

Freshers’ Fair has become an epic experience sprawling out of the Great Hall and into the surrounding buildings.

Improving facilities, improving equipment and a greater understanding of the mental and physical benefits of exercise mean there’s never been a better time to do sport at Lancaster.

Compare this shambolic football match at Fylde in the ’70s to the professionalism you’ll see at Lancaster these days. 2016 is a home Roses year, which meant building a stadium for the Women’s Football 1st clash with York at the opening ceremony and for other fixtures.
Here is a small selection of the events that have taken place over the past 12 months. The alumni office continues to extend its range of events for Lancaster graduates in conjunction with our alumni group representatives from all over the world. Visit www.lancaster.ac.uk/alumni/groups to see if there is an alumni group near you or contact alumni@lancaster.ac.uk if you are interested in helping co-ordinate one. Keep in touch with all our events online www.lancaster.ac.uk/events

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Mumbai February 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016

Alumni Private View Art Exhibition June 2015

Dubai October 2015

Alumni Dinner June 2015

Abuja Alumni Dinner June 2015

Chicago Alumni Dinner June 2015

Media Event, London October 2015

House of Lords Reception April 2016
He said: “At the completion of this study we now have a standard diagnostic test which can be distributed to labs around the world so, in the event of another suspected outbreak, we can very rapidly tell whether the suspected cases are true positives or not. This is a major step forward in Ebola virus diagnostics and what we hope is that in the future we won’t have any more large Ebola virus outbreaks like the one we had in West Africa over the last couple of years.”

The Ebola reference reagents produced by the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC) and endorsed by the WHO can now be used in laboratory tests by the scientific community around the world. NIBSC was asked by WHO to produce 2 standard tests for Ebola reference reagents. The first detects active Ebola infection. The second measures Ebola antibody levels following infection, and helps to find out who has had the virus and recovered. The Ebola antibody standard will be used around the world to screen for potential new outbreaks.

Similarly, the Zika virus, carried by Aedes mosquitoes and previously a slow pandemic, is on the rise across the Americas and its rapid spread is causing serious concern to health officials. Researchers at the Universities of Glasgow and Lancaster (led by Prof Steven Sinkins) are stepping up work on mosquito-borne viruses into the study of the Zika virus (Flaviviridae), a much neglected illness, and aim to develop improved diagnostics, therapeutics and a vaccine in the absence of no current treatment.

Dr Derek Gatherer has hailed ‘a major step forward’ in the diagnosis of the disease after working with the World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO Expert Committee on Biological Standardisation organised an international study to produce a standard test for Ebola virus infection and Dr Gatherer from the Faculty of Health and Medicine at Lancaster was a member of this study team.

Dr Alan Kohl, from the Medical Research Council-University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research, is leading the work, along with colleagues from Brazil at Fiocruz in Recife, into how the Zika virus interacts with the cells, and understands the virus genetics to support these efforts. Dr Kohl’s review paper on Zika is also co-authored by Dr Derek Gatherer. Although the virus is not particularly life-threatening, current data suggests the Zika virus is behind a recent tenfold increase in the number of cases of microcephaly – a serious brain birth defect – in parts of Brazil. And as more and more people are infected, different symptoms emerge.

First discovered in Uganda in 1947, the Zika virus arrived in Southeast Asia by mid-century. It then spread across the Pacific Islands, reaching South America around 2013. Since then, it has spread rapidly northwards.

Its clinical profile has symptoms resembling a dengue-like febrile illness and Chikungunya viruses, but some recent cases have also displayed microcephaly and Guillain-Barré syndrome.

Dr Gatherer states “There are many unanswered questions – has the virus changed in some way to be more infectious? Were the newly observed symptoms merely unnoticed before due to low case numbers? Do the new observations of sexual transmission and the presence of virus in non-symptomatic blood donors mean that the virus could sustain itself in a human population without the need for mosquito transmission?”

Dr Gatherer believes that in the next 12 months they hope to have at least preliminary answers to some of these questions. “In the meantime, we can only urge normal precautions are observed when visiting mosquito-infested areas of the Americas, especially for pregnant women.”
大学新闻

以北京交通大学联合开设新校园

兰卡斯特大学收到了教育部的批准，可以与享有国际声誉的北京交通大学（BJTU）合作，共建新校园。这个新校园，称为兰卡斯特大学学院-北京交通大学（Lancaster University College - Beijing Jiaotong University，简称LUCBJTU），将会位于中国山东省的威海市。

兰卡斯特大学学术副校长Mark E. Smith教授欢迎这一新发展：“我很高兴中国的学生能够亲身感受到兰卡斯特大学和北京交通大学联合这件事所带来的益处。两个机构有非常强大的课程交付能力和教育研究成就，这将为学生带来的更多的学习和发展机会。”

兰卡斯特大学是与北京交通大学联合开设新校园的第二所英国大学。此前，曼彻斯特大学已经在江苏省的苏州市开设了校园。

与中国和国际学生都将被提供在兰卡斯特大学的学术和研究资源。这些资源将包括计算机科学、工程和环境科学等课程，以确保学生在接受严格质量保障教育的同时还可以进行自评估和自我改进。

兰卡斯特大学校长Mark E. Smith教授对这一消息感到欢欣鼓舞：“我很高兴兰卡斯特大学的博士生和BJTU的博士生能够在一个结合了两个机构优势的校区里进行学习和研究。”

兰卡斯特大学希望通过与北京交通大学的合作，为学生提供一个既富有创造性又富有功能性的学习环境，让他们能够在这个环境中学习、工作和合作。

兰卡斯特大学与北京交通大学的合作将包括联合课程的开发和实施，以及联合学术研究项目的开展。这两个机构的合作将有助于推动中英两国在高等教育领域的交流和合作。

兰卡斯特大学也会为在中国的学生提供与英国学生同样的学术支持和服务，包括学术评估和反馈。兰卡斯特大学也会定期向中国学生通报其在英国的学习和研究情况。

兰卡斯特大学和北京交通大学的合作还将包括在兰卡斯特大学学院-北京交通大学设立一个联合学术委员会，以监督和协调两个机构的合作项目。

兰卡斯特大学和北京交通大学的合作将有助于推动中英两国在高等教育领域的交流和合作。两个机构的合作将有助于推动中英两国在高等教育领域的交流和合作。
Filming and co-writing a feature-length biopic about Manchester music icon Morrissey is the kind of break for which most young writers would give their eye teeth.

This Charming Man?

William Thacker finds himself juggling that challenge at the same time as preparations begin for the launch of his second novel, Lingua Franca. Speaking from Manchester during the filming of Steven, William (English Literature/Creative Writing 2008) acknowledges the confidence and self-assurance he gained as an undergraduate.

He says: "It was about meeting other young people from all walks of life, and being free to be myself. And there were a lot of talented people to learn from. Discipline and hard work has got him to the point where he’s co-written Steven with director Mark Gill (Oscar-nominated for The Viscount of Steak) with whom he also co-wrote the short film, Full Time, winner of the Best Film award at the 2014 Shanghai International Film Festival.

In part his pragmatic attitude comes from having an artistic family background – his father David Thacker is a theatre director and his mother Margot Leicester a stage actress. William had always wanted to write and saw leaving North London to attend a semi-rural university campus in the North West as a way of broadening his experience.

But perhaps the defining characteristic of William’s experience at Lancaster was the activities which had nothing to do with his course. He worked at the Oxfam bookshop, where he encountered memorable characters; he volunteered as the assistant editor of the student newspaper Scan, dipped his toes into university radio and loved to explore the surrounding countryside.

Alongside a rich social life, and the demands of his studies, he still found time to write; the feedback and encouragement he received from Lancaster persuaded him to push his writing ambitions to a new level and to go to Manchester University to do an MA in Creative Writing. To pay the rent, he took a part-time job assisting disabled students, which brought him into contact with Mark Gill (then teaching Film at Salford University) and another job with an online news agency churning out 25 articles a day. "Looking back, it instilled a certain discipline and focus, I managed my time more effectively and of course, drank lots of coffee."

The high-pressure job meant he would write his first novel, Charm Offensive, in the dead of night when the need for focus was absolute. His second novel Lingua Franca, published in May 2016, is about a branding agency that renames towns under corporate sponsorship. It is set in Stella Artois (better known to most of us as Milton Keynes) and sees Barrow-in-Furness become Birdseye-in-Furness.

Lancaster is one of the few places to escape William’s black comedy, “perhaps out of loyalty,” he explains. William came up with the idea during a late-night chat at Lancaster, where he would hash and re-hash ideas with fellow students from diverse backgrounds. He posited the dystopian idea to a sceptical audience that towns could one day sell their name in order to manage spiralling debts. His later experiences working as an agency copywriter would affirm his prediction. "PR, branding and marketing get a gentle bashing," he says of the novel. "It’s a world stuffed with jargon and with special names for very simple things."

Shooting the Morrissey film has the potential to open all sorts of doors for William. The cast includes Jessica Brown Findlay (Downton Abbey) and Jack Lowden (War and Peace) whom William describes as “an actor whose charm and depth brings something really exciting to the role.”

He adds: “We’re confident the story will connect with many people, not just Smiths’ fans.”

For more Steps features visit www.lancaster.ac.uk/steps
FRANK WAREING RETIRED IN JULY 2015 AFTER 9 YEARS AS FYLDE COLLEGE PRINCIPAL.

He had worked at the University since 1992 in the School of Independent Studies, Department of Applied Social Science and the Alumni Office. He graduated from Lancaster in 1976 (Politics and International Relations, Fylde College). He was appointed Principal of Fylde in 2006. For the last eighteen months before he retired he was appointed Senior College Principal with responsibility for co-ordinating preparations for the first review of the college system at Lancaster since 1997.

1992  I WOULD NOT HAVE MISSED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE WORLD!  2015

IT’S BEEN FUN!

AMONGST OTHER THINGS (MAINLY THE UNLOOKED FOR “FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITIES” MASQUERADING AS ALMOST INSUPERABLE PROBLEMS) IN THE COURSE OF HIS APPOINTMENT, HE ESTIMATES HE WILL HAVE:

- Welcomed about 3,000 first year students to Fylde College.
- Presented around 2,600 final year students to the Chancellor at their Graduation.
- Acted as Area Safety Officer for 9 College Extravs. (as a pirate, wizard, castaway, cowboy, A&E assistant, etc.).
- Taken part in 9 Roses Principals/Provosts competitions (bowls, archery, petanque, more bowls, bar sports, clay pigeon etc.).
- Worked with 10 JCR Execs and 12 JCR Presidents (we got carried away with the democratic process one year).
- Acted as college photographer at (lost count) Carter Shield competitions and inter-college matches.
- Welcomed back a lot of Fylde alumni who wanted to re-capture lost youth for a weekend or two.

LOTS OF MEETINGS!

BUT IT HASN’T ALL BEEN AS TOUGH AS THE ABOVE – THINK OF THE FUN TO BE HAD IN:

- Attending 32 meetings of the Senate (which represents about 100 hours of your life you’d never get back).
- Attending 27 meetings of the Colleges and Student Experience Committee (or whatever it was called at the time).
- Attending 25 meetings of the College Principals’ Group.
- Chairing 5 meetings of the College Principals’ Group (but his therapist says the nervous twitch will eventually diminish).
- Chairing 30 meetings of the College Syndicate.
- Preparing 2 bids to the University’s new strategic and financial planning system and preparing one college self-evaluation document for the College Review in 2014.

ALL CHANGE

THERE HAVE BEEN ONE OR TWO CHANGES:

- At the start of his Principalship the colleges still ran the bars (but not at a profit level required by the university). Today they are run centrally as part of the University’s retail services. The old Fylde residences had just been demolished (no, not an Extrav that had got out of hand) and a reduced number of on-campus Fyldeans were housed in accommodation in Pendle and Grizedale. Now Fylde offers high quality accommodation to nearly 500 students in its new residences.
- That statistical excerpt from one Principal’s experience probably encapsulates the main responsibilities of the role, but it doesn’t quite capture those aspects which made the appointment tremendously enjoyable and rewarding (if at times a little frustrating).

THE HIGHLIGHTS

THE ROLE OF THE COLLEGE PRINCIPAL AT LANCASTER IS A CHANCE TO:

- Share the lives, hopes, aspirations (and anxieties), successes (and failures) and personal development of some of the most creative, intelligent, dynamic and motivated young people you are ever likely to meet.
- Work with some of the most committed and motivated staff in the University.
- Contribute to the University’s strategic aims relating to student engagement and involvement, international integration and student welfare.
- Be part of something which helps distinguish Lancaster from most other Universities.
- Feel part of something which is constantly developing, but which has managed to maintain its ethos of putting concern for student well-being at the top of it priorities across all 50 years of the University’s life.

ATTENDED

OF THE SENATE

(ALMOST 100 HOURS!)

ATTENDED

OF THE COLLEGE AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

PRESENTED AROUND

2600 STUDENTS

TO THE CHANCELLOR AT THEIR GRADUATION

TAKEN PART IN

9 ROSES PRINCIPALS/PROVOSTS COMPETITIONS

PROVIDED ACCOMMODATION TO

500 STUDENTS

IN THE NEW FYLDE RESIDENCES
### Honorary Graduates

Each year, Lancaster awards honorary degrees to people with an outstanding, international or leading national reputation in their field. The following awards were made in 2015:

- **Professor Dieter Bimber** of the Technical University of Berlin, is a leading European figure in the field of semiconductor physics and nanoscience.
- **Professor Roy Harrison** is an atmospheric chemist, is the Queen Elizabeth II Birmingham Centenary Professor of Environmental Health, at the University of Birmingham.
- **Inthakob Alim Khan** is an internationally renowned and widely respected Pakistani cricketer who made his first-class cricket debut at the age of 15.
- **Professor Georgina Mace** is Professor of Biodiversity and Ecosystems at University College, London.
- **Richard Watts-Tobin**, retired member of staff, sadly passed away on 26 April 2016 after a long illness. Richard started with the Physics Department in 1967 and retired in 1996, however, he continued to work on a part-time basis until 1999.
- **Dr Mo Ibrahim**
- **Dame Fiona Reynolds**
- **Tessa Ross**

### Alumni Awards

The University’s Alumni Awards recognise Lancaster graduates who have made a substantial contribution in their field and have developed an outstanding international or national reputation amongst their peers. The following awards were made in 2015:

- **Manan Kumar Awargi** (BSc Management, 2000) a President and Director of Dynamic Drilling, a family-run business which operates six rigs with ONGC, The Fortune 500 National Oil Company of India.
- **Barbara Daniels** (BEng, 1988) Funnell represented England in woman’s cricket from 1993 to 2000, and was part of the World Cup-winning side of 1993.
- **Dr Hugh Reeve** (MA Management, 1998) is a Conferred Honorary Officer of the NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group.
- **Kathleen Reid OBE** (Geography, 1996) is the Deputy Head of Office at the Department for International Development’s mission in South Sudan.
- **Paul Stewart** (English, 1977) Bowland is one of the most successful and popular children’s authors working in Britain today.
- **Elaine Dodson** (swim Smith) - Educational Studies, 1977, Funnell passed away on the 15 December 2015 at the age of 60. After graduating she went on to complete a graduate diploma in Library and Information Science at Birmingham Polytechnic. From 1995 she was as the Learning Resource Centre Manager at Myton School, Warwick.
- **Rob Dunkley** (Accounting and Finance, 2001) Pendle passed away suddenly on 13 December 2015. Rob was a valued mentor on the Lancaster Career Mentoring programme and his enthusiasm towards helping his mentees was much appreciated. He will be missed by fellow mentors and all those who knew him at Lancaster.
- **Charlie Potting** (History, 1973, Funnell) passed away on 15 September 2015. Charlie came to Lancaster in 1969 and was a part of that generation of working-class mature students, with a strong grounding in left-wing politics and trade unionism, which had a major impact on the culture of the new university. He was also a gifted organiser and was instrumental in establishing the Socialist Society on campus. His blog can still be accessed www.randompottins.blogspot.co.uk
- **Dr Andy Bailey** passed away on 29 June 2015 following a short illness. Andy was a former Head of Department of the Management Development Division and subsequently Director of the Centre for Strategic Management at Lancaster in the Management School (LUMS).

For full obituaries please visit www.lancaster.ac.uk/steps/obituaries
YOUR ALUMNI NETWORK

ALUMNUS (PL. ALUMNI, FEM. ALUMNA) N. A FORMER STUDENT

KEEP IN TOUCH
Register on our website, like our Facebook page and join the alumni LinkedIn group. Keep your details up to date to receive newsletters, Steps magazines and invitations.
www.lancaster.ac.uk/alumni

GET INVOLVED
Come back to campus, give a talk, mentor students or help to organise alumni events – there are plenty of ways to keep your links with Lancaster.
www.lancaster.ac.uk/alumni/help

JOIN OUR ALUMNI NETWORK
We have over 138,000 graduates in over 180 countries. Join your local group and come to events or contact us about starting your own!
www.lancaster.ac.uk/alumni/groups

BENEFITS AND SERVICES
Lancaster continues to offer ongoing careers support, discount at the sports centre, use of library services, scholarships and competitive accommodation rates (on campus and at Lancaster House Hotel).
www.lancaster.ac.uk/alumni/benefits

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

3 SEPTEMBER
BEIJING
Alumni and students speaker event

22 SEPTEMBER
NEW YORK
Welcome to new graduates

22 OCTOBER
LANCASTER
Law Reunion

7 DECEMBER
LONDON
Sir Roland Smith lecture

Our events programme is continually updated. Make sure we have your email address and location so we can send you notification of events in your area.

You can also check online at www.lancaster.ac.uk/alumni/events