

bulletin

Friday June 2nd 1995



Published every Friday by the Information Office for staff and students of the University of Sussex

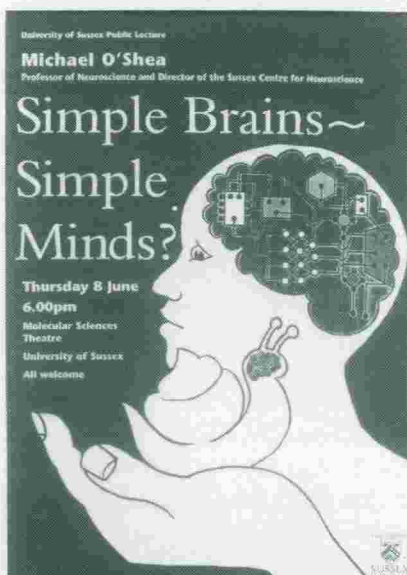
SIMPLE BRAINS — SIMPLE MINDS?

MICHAEL O'SHEA, Founding Director of the Sussex Centre for Neuroscience will give his professorial lecture *Simple Brains - Simple Minds* on Thursday 8 June at 6 pm in MOLS Lecture Theatre.

According to Michael O'Shea, trying to understand the brain is arguably one of the most exciting quests left in science and interdisciplinary studies here at Sussex are at the forefront of this endeavour. "One approach to this enormously difficult task is to start by examining the simpler 'brains' of animals such as worms, insects and molluscs. We have discovered an astonishing fact: the brains of such animals contain nerve cells and molecular components that are virtually indistinguishable from their counterparts in the human brain. But the components are far fewer in number, allowing us to study more easily how nerve cells work and interact. In this way, rudimentary 'minds' may help us figure out how the human brain works."



LOVE FROM HOME l to r: First-year student Molly Slaughter (EURO) and Rebekah Reid



Lucky Sussex students could soon be in for a pleasant surprise with the launch of a novel cake delivery service. The *Love From Home* scheme, organised in collaboration with Forfars the Bakers, enables families of Sussex students to treat their loved ones to delicious freshly-baked cakes and pastries, no matter how far away they are.

Order forms were sent to over 1600 families last week, and already the orders are flooding in. "We've had dozens of enquiries," says Rebekah Reid of the Alumni Office who helped dream up the service. "We've even had an order from Finland." Deliveries to the Falmer campus are made mid-morning, with the cakes coming straight from the nearby Forfars bakery at Home Farm. Students are sent a note two days before the delivery date telling them to go to the 24-hour reception desk in York House on the specified day to collect their surprise. Students living in town can pick their cakes up from their nearest Forfars branch.

"We're thrilled by the response so far. Families obviously think it's a nice idea, and I'm sure the students will. It's an extension of the Parent Programme which enables families to stay in touch," says Rebekah. "It's also excellent value. A fresh cream strawberry gateaux which serves ten is only £11.50, or there's the Chocoholics Dream – twenty cakes for just £15. When you think of the price of flowers it's a bargain, and you can't eat flowers."

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

The plans for the Lewes Road Cycle Route, recently on display in the Library, represent a wasted opportunity to provide an 'ecologically sustainable' route linking universities and town:

- The cycle path on the pavement will have no physical segregation from pedestrians, leading inevitably to conflict.
- The ESCC have dismissed an on-road cycle lane because "the consequent loss of (vehicle) capacity would greatly increase queues." However, there has been no study to assess the 'cost' to the motorist or the 'benefit' to the cyclist and environment.
- The numerous places where the cyclist is obliged to give way to pedestrians and cars, mean that the proficient cyclist will choose to cycle on the road instead. Look no further than the Victoria Gardens (Old Steine) cycle route for evidence of this.

I firmly believe it is better to have no cycle lane than a bad one. However, with a little vision, it should be possible to devise a fully integrated route which promotes both cycle and bus use, albeit with a small loss of convenience to other vehicles. Such a route would present a serious alternative to commuting to campus by car, helping to alleviate our ever worsening traffic crisis. I welcome any comments or ideas.

Rod Dorrell
(Transport Action Group)

Dear Editor

Each year on the anniversary of his wife's death, a floral bouquet is placed under a tree which was planted in her memory near the coffee shop. This lady was a great character who worked in the Refectory and I, along with many other colleagues, were proud to have known her. Her anniversary was on Monday 22 May and as usual I placed the bouquet from her husband by the tree. By Tuesday it was gone.

I would just like to point out to the person (or persons) who removed the flowers that this was a thoughtless and very upsetting case of vandalism which deserves the utmost contempt.

Peter Anning
Refectory Porter

What the papers say

Writing in the *Guardian* (18 May), Professor John Barrow discusses the mathematical study of chance and the possibility of predicting the unpredictable. He outlines the superstitious and practical reasons for 'the lack of any profitable ancient inquiry into the nature of chance and randomness', and explains how quantum theory can be used to disassociate chance and randomness from 'anarchy and total ignorance'. "One of the paradoxes of existence," he writes "is that whenever one sees stability and order, at its root is chance."

A profile of Professor Maggie Boden in the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (12 May) focusses on her groundbreaking work on computer programs' insights into human creativity. She acknowledges the scepticism which surrounds assertions that computers can be creative, and explains that in her opinion "computers can't be truly creative for moral and political reasons." She adds "If a computer literally has creativity then it

literally has desires and interests – it would be part of our ethical world. It would be a question of whether people wished to accord computers this type of respect."

In an *Observer* article (21 May) refuting the prejudicial attitude held by many job interviewers towards older applicants, Dr Lynne Mayne explains why it is impossible to generalise about the effects of age on work performance. Noting that, in retrospect, much of Ronald Reagan's behaviour was explicable as due to early Alzheimer's Disease, she calls for a regular review of a person's mental abilities for people, such as judges, in key positions of responsibility.

Joe Blair of the Sussex University Labour Club was called upon by the *Independent on Sunday* (14 May) to express his opinion of the new Labour in the face of charges of 'naffness'. Joe Blair (no relation to Tony) said "There is that kind of attitude, if you come out in favour of Blair. But if you're a Labour student you're used to that from the more left-wing organisations anyway...It's just a matter of degree."

£15,000 Boost for Medical Research

Dr Richard Vincent, Director of the Trafford Centre (standing) demonstrates the Centre's new Computer Network to Christopher Gohl, Finance Director of the Allied Dunbar Foundation. The Network, which enables access to worldwide databases, cost £15,000 to install, and was financed by a grant from the Allied Dunbar Foundation. It is seen as a crucial step forward in research activity into cell biology, heart attacks, Alzheimer's disease and the psycho-social aspects of health



Alumnus Sprout in Brussels

A reception was held in Brussels last week to launch the University's first alumni group in continental Europe. The event was attended by more than 40 former students – amongst them graduates from Sussex's early years as well as the '90s – many of whom now work for the European Commission.

The University now has alumni branches in various far-flung parts of the world – including Hong Kong, Singapore and the USA – but, despite its extensive links with Europe, there had not previously been any group on the continent. In addition to organising social events, it is hoped that the Brussels group will provide a network of useful contacts for the University. The Registrar, Dr Geoff Lockwood, told the guests, "Our graduates are our ambassadors and your recommendations of Sussex in the circles in which you live and work is important to us."

The reception was organised by former Admissions Officer, Penny Spelling, now working for the European Commission and herself a Sussex graduate (ENGG 1968-71). It was hosted by Hywel Jones, one of the University's first administrators, and now Acting Director General of DGV (Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs). Other participants included European Programmes Officer, Beatrice Merrick, and Alumni Officer, Sara Dyer.

AROUND THE SCHOOLS - EAM

Six visitors from the Political Science department and Law School of the University of Toronto, together with Sussex history, law, politics, international relations and American Studies faculty held a three-day workshop on issues of comparative constitutionalism at Sussex recently. The meeting, organised by the University's Cunliffe Centre for the Study of Constitutionalism and National Identity, inaugurated a plan for research collaboration between Sussex and Toronto. Wide-ranging discussions set the current world-wide interest in constitutions in historical perspective, considered how democracy, accountability and rights might be ensured in constitutional frameworks or overwhelmed by economic and social forces, and examined the experiences of Canada, Europe, South Africa and the transnational forces of globalisation. The workshop generated an agenda of important issues for future discussions between individual participants. Sussex will pay a return visit to Toronto in April 1996.



Professor Peter Russell of the University of Toronto (right) and Michael Hawkins from Sussex, speakers at the opening session of the Cunliffe Centre Workshop.

Jonathan Dollimore, Professor of English in EAM, has won a prestigious British Academy research award which will enable him to complete a book, *Death, Desire and Mutability* which is to be published by Penguin Books.

Drew Milne, English lecturer in EAM has been appointed, for the Autumn Term, the first Writer-in-Residence at the Tate Gallery. His book of poetry *Sheet Metal* was published earlier this year.

PEOPLE PEOPLE PEOPLE



Some readers will remember the late Ken Baker, formerly Principle Scientific Officer in the AFRC unit who died in 1990. An award in his memory is given annually by the Institute of Science and Technology for the best article published on the subject of 'Safety in the Workplace.' Pictured above is this year's recipient David Moore, Fellow of the Institute, being presented with the 1995 Baker Safety Shield plus a cheque for £100 by Pro-Vice-Chancellor David Streeter.

Emeritus Professor of Philosophy István Mészáros has just been elected a Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. István Mészáros says it is not only a most gratifying personal honour but also "it is something I owe to Sussex University. For nearly everything on the basis of which I have been elected, I have written during my three decades' long association with the University."

Two members of staff in the Nitrogen Fixation Unit won a bronze medal at the Chelsea Flower Show last week. Pete Gretton and Wendy Cannon, both members of the Small Dole Horticultural Society were awarded the medal for a hanging basket and a window box display. They would like to thank Professor Barry Smith for allowing them to use the Nit Fix greenhouse. For all you keen gardeners out there, one of the surprise ingredients they used was grass which together with geraniums, verbena and cineraria made up the winning displays.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

For more information, call Mylene Powell in the Research Office, ext 3812 (mornings only), email M.G.Powell@sussex.

CANCER RESEARCH GRANTS: Gunnar Nilsson Trust Fund offers £35,000 for research not funded by normal grant giving bodies. Closing date 30 July 1995.

MOTHER AND CHILD HEALTH: NHS R&D Programme with 21 priority areas, both clinical and social. Short outlined proposals invited. Closing date 11 July 1995.

UNDERSTANDING CELL DIFFERENTIATION: BBSRC co-ordinated initiative focusing on molecular and cellular events in the early stages of cell differentiation of microbes, plants and animals. Closing date 1 September 1995.

WEALTH CREATING PRODUCTS OF PLANTS: BBSRC co-ordinated research initiative. Proposals, especially for interdisciplinary teams, invited. Closing date 12 June 1995.

BRITISH ACADEMY SMALL RESEARCH & CONFERENCE GRANTS: applications invited for small research grants of up to £5,000 and funds for British, overseas and major international conferences. Closing date 30 September 1995.

RESEARCH TO TURN WASTE INTO PROFIT: EPSRC and DTI £11million programme on waste minimisation through recycling, reuse and recovery in industry. Outlined proposals invited by 4 August 1995.

ODA RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH STRATEGY: Areas of interest: High Potential, Semi-Arid, Peri-Urban, Hillside, Land/Water Interface, and Forest/Agriculture Interface. Capability statements invited by 23 June 1995.

Graduation Photographs

In addition to their photographic service at the graduation ceremonies, the University Photographic Unit is offering a high-quality graduation portrait service in its studio in Arts C109 over the summer. This service offers colour prints taken with appropriate background, gown, etc. Contact either Keith Wilson (ext 2233) or Keith Hunt (ext 2232) who will be pleased to discuss your requirements with you.

What's on...

Lectures, Seminars, Colloquia

Monday 5 June

12.30pm **Sussex Continuing Education Research Forum:** *Hobman Clubs - a model for integrational learning?* P. Coare, Arts D310.

1pm **Experimental Psychology Seminar:** *Eye Movements in Music Reading.* S. Furneaux, EP 3.9, BIOLS.

2pm **Falmer Language Group:** *Linguistic Context, Presupposition Failure and Communicative Break-down.* C. Taleb, Arts D410.

4pm **Women's Studies Research-in-Progress Seminar:** *National Movements and Citizenship Rights in Lithuania.* V. Popovski (Cambridge), Arts D410.

4.30pm **Neuroscience Seminar:** *Sensitisation Mechanisms in Benzodiazepine Dependence.* D. Stevens, EP 3.9, BIOLS.

Tuesday 6 June

1.30pm **Psychology @ COGS Research-in-Progress Seminar:** *Spatially Selective Attention: a role for proprioception.* P. Grossenbacher (Cambridge), PB2A3, MAPS III.

2pm **Condensed State Physics Seminar:** *Helium 3: Quantum Crystal and Magnetic Solid.* R. Dobbs (Royal Holloway), PB1A1, MAPS.

3pm **Sussex European Institute:** *US Foreign Policy and US-EU Relations.* J. Peterson (Glasgow), Arts A71.

4pm **COGS Seminar:** *Vision and the Road Ahead.* Prof. M. Land, PB5C11, MAPS III.

4.15pm **Biochemistry and Genetics & Development Seminar:** *Plantibodies: progress and prospects.* W. Cockburn (Leicester), EP 3.9 BIOLS.

Wednesday 7 June

2.15pm **Queory Seminar:** *Hermaphrodykey: Trans-Sex Self Portraits.* D. Grace, Arts A5.

4.30pm **GRC in CulCom Interdisciplinary Seminar:** *SCANDAL - The Role of Scandal in the Writing of Artists' Biographies.* N. Llewellyn, Arts A104.

Thursday 8 June

2pm **Statistics Seminar:** *Statistical Assessment of Reservoir Flood Safety.* C. Anderson (Sheffield), PB2A1, MAPS I.

2pm **Theoretical Physics Seminar:** *Quantum Cryptography.* S. Pheonix (BT Labs), PB1A6, MAPS I.

2.15pm **SPRU Occasional Seminar:** *Piecemeal Reforms in the US Electricity Sector.* Prof. C. Andrews (Princeton), Mantell 2A3.

5pm **Social and Political Thought Seminar:** *Derida, Wittgenstein and the Universal Ethic.* J. Morton, Arts D630.

5pm **History Work-in-Progress Seminar:** *Title and speaker to be announced.* Arts A155.

6pm **Professorial Lecture:** *Simple Brains - Simple Minds?* Prof. Michael O'Shea, Professor of Neuroscience. MOLS Lecture Theatre. All welcome.

Friday 9 June

2.15pm **SPRU Seminar:** *Software Innovation and Diffusion: what they don't teach you at the Hardware Business School.* P. Quintan (Open University), EDB 121.

4pm **Astronomy Centre Seminar:** *Determining and Explaining Quasar Evolution.* P. Goldschmidt (Imperial College), PB1A7, MAPS I.

4.30pm **Philosophy Society:** *Non-Conceptual Content: McDowell's Critique.* R. Chrisley, Arts A155.

Monday 5 June — Sunday 11 June

Cinema at the Gardner

Monday 5 June

6pm *The River Wild* & 9pm *Even Cowgirls Get The Blues.*

Wednesday 7 June

11.30pm *Pink Floyd: The Wall.*

Friday 9 June

11.30pm *Shallow Grave.*

Sunday 11 June

6pm *Three Colours Red* & 9pm *Quiz Show*
Tickets: £2.70 (£2.20 for Sussex students).

Sussex University Music Faculty

Lunchtime Recital

1.15pm **Norman Jacobs** (piano) & **Marie-Ange-lique Bueler** (flute). Falmer House Recital Room 120, Thur 8 June. Admission free, all welcome.

Meeting House Events

Lunchtime Recital

1.20pm **Charles Macdonald** (organ). Chapel. Tue 6 June. All welcome.

Barn Dance & Finalists Party

7pm "Eve of St. Norbett!" - Please bring a dish, we'll provide the wine! Mon 5 June, Meeting House. Further details from Barbara Barber on ext. 8217.

Career in Publications?

University Publications Office

A two-year internship has arisen in the Publications Office starting in September. Salary £11,500.

Duties

assisting with University publications; copywriting, copy editing, proofreading and indexing; liaising with contributors, photographers, designers and printers; picture research.

Candidates

must be genuinely interested in a career in publications, have excellent keyboard skills, an eye for detail, excellent command of English spelling and grammar and a good visual sense.

Further details

Further written information from Room 304, Sussex House. For an informal chat about the post contact Alison Field on (67)8523.

Closing date: Mon 12 June.

British Association

Festival of Science

This year's British Association Annual Festival of Science takes place at Newcastle University from 9-15 September 1995. Based on the theme of "Discovery and Invention", the week offers the opportunity to listen to, learn about and enjoy the world of science.

For further details, the Festival preliminary programme and tickets, contact the British Association Major Events Team, 23 Saville Row, London W1X 2NB, on 0171 973 3076.

Small Ads

FOR SALE: Golf clubs. 3, 5, 7, 9 & SW irons; 2, 3 & 4 woods plus bag. £50. Contact Mark on ext. 2841 or 386278.

FOR SALE: Vauxhall Chevette 1983, 3-door hatch, 1yr MOT, only 28,600 miles. Excellent condition, £850 ono. Contact Keith Hunt on ext. 2332.

FOR SALE: Conway Corniche trailer tent. £900ono. Contact 8067.

FOR SALE: Modern 4 bed house in Peacehaven. Double glazed, gas c.h., bathroom, cloakroom, garage, 2 reception. Moving away hence £69950. Contact ext. 2333 or 588326.

FOR SALE: Ford Fiesta Dash, 957 cc, C reg, 78,000 miles, red, sunroof, many new parts. Very reliable. £1095 ono. Contact Sue Whittingham ext. 8356 or 882661 (eves).

TO LET: Beautiful house in Central Brighton off Lewes Rd. 1-2 bed. £100 pw. Summer let only. Contact Glory on 701553.

TO LET: Furnished flatlets in private house in central Hove. £45/£55 pw incl. Contact Mrs Garland-Wells on 736025.

TO LET: Room in pleasant farmhouse from Sept. Very near campus. Suit mature non-smoker. Contact Madelaine on 685128.

TO LET: Quiet, self-contained flat near the Level (Lewes Rd). £70pw plus bills. Large bedroom/living area, kitchen, bathroom, gas c/h, own entrance. Contact 670903.

MATHS TUITION: Offered by maths doctorate with experience in teaching and private tuition. Contact Paul Courtney on 556699.

WANTED: Rabbit hutch & run in good condition. Contact ext. 4242 or 821630 (eves).

WANTED: Visiting Japanese Prof seeks accommodation. June 1995-March 1996 for himself, his wife and his 2 children. £500-700 pcm. Contact Matthew ext. 8101.

EXCHANGE: Mature student starting course at Portsmouth in Sept offers accommodation exchange with student from Portsmouth studying in Sussex. Possible let to mature n/s. Contact 01323 890739.

Bulletin

The *Bulletin* appears on Fridays with copy deadline the preceding Friday. Please send contributions to the Information Office, Sussex House on ext. 8209 or email: Bulletin@sussex.ac.uk.

Letter from the Vice-Chancellor

The following is the first in a series of occasional letters from the Vice-Chancellor to staff and students

As most of you will have heard, our grant settlement for 1995/1996 has been relatively good. The increase of 2.5% was the 9th largest among the old and new universities. Some very distinguished universities received only 0.5% and are having to implement cuts. Because of the size of the increase we are able to meet the recent pay award and to sanction deserved promotions without undue strain on the budget. This is all good news, but the government is continuing its programme of imposing further cuts in the unit of resource for both teaching and research. It is unlikely that the settlement for 1996/1997 will be as favourable.

The Times has published its annual set of league tables. They contain the usual mixture of useful and misleading information. As Kenneth Edwards, the chair of the CVCP points out, producing a final league simply by adding up the scores is nonsensical and mischievous, given the policy of both government and the CVCP to respect and encourage the diversity of our higher education institutions. Among the tables the Student/Staff Ratio attracts much comment, but as Edwards also remarks, the figures are largely meaningless because of the variation in the way they are calculated. For example our student figures include Foundation year students taught off campus by non-University faculty.

The increase in funding we received this year is a reflection of our growth in the late 80s and early 90s. We have achieved greater efficiency and, as a consequence, we now have funds to carry out much needed infrastructure and academic development and to reward staff for their efforts.

We are embarking on a £10 million building programme. Architects for a £3 million library extension have been appointed and work is to begin early next year. Later in 1996 we plan to start work on the new Student Community Building. This summer we will begin the conversion of Essex House to academic use and the transfer of the AFRC unit to chemistry laboratories. Work on the Innovation Centre and the student residences in Kings Road, Brighton, is to begin shortly; the Crèche has been delayed in order to give time to produce a more satisfactory architectural design, but I hope it can be completed by the Summer of 1996.

Our academic plans include a continuing search for outstanding individuals to lead our teaching and research. This year, subject to Senate and Council ratification, we will have made a significant number of promotions to the senior lecturer/reader grade, professorial promotions and external professorial appointments. Professor Chris Chatwin, the new Chair of Manufacturing Systems from Glasgow has arrived, and Professor Ed Hinds from Yale, who has recently gained grants totalling over £800,000 from the EPSRC, will be joining our physicists later in the year. I shall be asking the Senate and Council to ratify three further external professorships in Social Welfare Studies, Intellectual History, and Organic Chemistry.

These new chair appointments are part of our strategy for meeting the Research Assessment Exercise next year. We have done much to strengthen our research performance. Our top performing research groups are set to maintain or improve their performance, while there is a good chance that some of the weaker groups will go up a grade. With luck we will maintain our national standing, although we need to recognise that every other university is making similar investments. There is still time to make a difference, however. Imaginative forward plans from subject groups will be critical. Most important, everyone needs to ensure that critical papers and books are published before the deadline of 31 March 1996 (in press will not count, I am afraid).

Next year will also see the continuation of the Quality Assessments under the new system. The next assessments are in sociology, linguistics and languages and I hope they can repeat the equivalent of the "excellent" ratings achieved in the autumn term. The assessors are now paying more attention to our special interdisciplinary claims for excellence. It is also clear that many of the recent initiatives in teaching, learning and assessment, and in staff development funded by the EHE and TaLAG have begun to pay off.

This past year I have enjoyed meeting with faculty, on an informal basis, to discuss experiments in teaching and learning, or their research interests. If you would like to meet me on this informal basis please contact my office.

I should not conclude this letter without a brief mention of the campus and working environment. I am very aware that the problems of leaving the campus caused by the recent roadworks have given many of you considerable stress and inconvenience. As I write, the works are complete and leaving the campus has become easier. However, we will keep the situation under active review and press for further changes as necessary. Together with the University of Brighton and the local authorities, under the auspices of the Academic Corridor Group, we have commissioned a consultant's report to develop medium and long term solutions to our traffic difficulties. I am hopeful we can make some real progress.

As you will have noticed, we are also making progress with the lighting of the campus. New street lights are being installed and the existing lights will be moved to enhance the lighting of the pedestrian ways. By the start of next term we should have a well-lit and safer campus (I hope, by the way, that everyone has familiarised themselves with the location of the new emergency phones).

I am very pleased that we have been able to appoint an Environmental Advisor, Penelope Chapple, to the Estates Division. She will also be part of the Environmental Advisory Group, under the chair of Pro-Vice-Chancellor David Streeter. I know that they would welcome suggestions for environmental improvement on the campus, particularly if they save us money!

Finally, I would like to thank everyone for their hard work over the past year, often in difficult circumstances. I would welcome comments from any of you, staff and students, about ways we can improve the University.

Professor Gordon Conway
Vice-Chancellor
2 June 1995