Give. Volunteer. Change 10,000 Lives

The thinking man’s boxer

Youth mental health
This special edition of your Old Joe magazine marks the launch of 10,000 Lives, a new appeal with the ambitious aim of changing 10,000 young lives through your support. This exciting initiative, which forms the first phase of our next campaign, is unique because its success will be measured on the number of lives it changes, not a monetary target. It will raise aspiration in 11–18-year-olds, develop confident and employable students, and support our young alumni as they start their careers.

Our aim is for any student bright enough to come to Birmingham to be able to study here and go on to a successful career, regardless of their circumstances. Whether it is donating towards scholarships, volunteering your time to be a mentor or offering careers advice, there are many ways for you to get involved. To find out more, please turn to pages 14–17.

Change is a theme elsewhere in this edition where you can read how building projects including our new library and sports centre, both generously supported by donors, have transformed the University and read about our plans for the future of campus. Continuing the theme, the alumni interviews reflect how graduates like you are leading change in areas ranging from tourism to boxing and medical research. Hearing their stories makes me proud of our alumni community.

I hope you enjoy reading your magazine and it brings back fond memories of your time at Birmingham. If studying here changed your life, I would be deeply grateful if you could extend that opportunity to others by supporting 10,000 Lives in any way you can.

Thank you

Best wishes,

Professor Sir David Eastwood,
Vice-Chancellor and donor
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Cover image: Tommy Langford (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2011) is British middleweight boxing champion and a former sports scholar at the University. Read more on page 18.
YOUR YEAR IN PICTURES
1. SHOW ME THE MONET: Visitors to the Barber Institute of Fine Arts were able to view Claude Monet’s famous *Water Lily Pond* of 1898. The Impressionist landscape was on loan from the Art Institute of Chicago.

2. PUTTING DOWN ROOTS: A major experiment into the effects of climate change officially began at the Birmingham Institute of Forest Research (BIFoR) in Staffordshire in June. The Free Air Carbon Dioxide Enrichment (FACE) research facility, made possible by a £15 million gift from the JABBS Foundation, will assess the impact of rising carbon dioxide levels (CO₂) on forest ecosystems.

3. NIGHT AT THE PROMS: Students raised the roof at the Royal Albert Hall when the University of Birmingham Voices ensemble sang at the BBC Proms. As part of the BBC Proms Youth Choir, singers performed John Adams’s *Harmonium* alongside the BBC Symphony Orchestra on the opening night of the world’s largest music festival.

4. BLAST OFF: Birmingham residents had the chance to get hands-on with the University’s research discoveries at the Community Festival. Guests had more than 100 events and activities to choose from, ranging from travelling the globe in a day to blasting off into outer space.

5. HONORARY BONDS: The University’s most recent Nobel Laureates were given a warm welcome when they were awarded honorary degrees during the summer degree congregations. Professor David Thouless and Professor Mike Kosterlitz received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2016 for their work over more than four decades into the discoveries of the properties of matter, including during their time at Birmingham in the 1970s.

6. BEAR NECESSITIES: The hunt was on for three bear sculptures hidden on campus as part of The Big Sleuth, a free public art event taking place across Birmingham and the West Midlands. The three bears were part of a trail inspiring residents and tourists to uncover cultural gems and areas of the city they may not have explored before.
The University may not have any alumni resident in Antarctica, but researcher Manuel Dall’Osto (PhD Geography and Environment Sciences, 2006) has spent months there examining cloud formation.

He says: ‘Antarctica is the most magical place to have a coffee in the afternoon, watching the huge birds and looking out at the whales, it is such a landscape of wonder. It is hard work as you are confined in a small space with limited contact back home but it’s an unforgettable experience.’

When *Old Joe* spoke to Manuel, an honorary research fellow at Birmingham currently based at the Institute of Marine Science in Barcelona, he was about to take a trip to the Arctic for a research mission based on a Korean icebreaker ship. Preparing to work on the open ice, a personal bodyguard was employed to protect the crew from polar bear attacks.

Manuel’s research aims to identify the sources responsible for making aerosols (tiny little particles) in the polar regions, which are the key players in cloud formation. This is important to better predict climate change.

‘The climate of our planet is changing. We know it’s warming but we have an uncertainty in how much and we don’t know enough about how clouds are formed and how they are cooling our planet.

‘Our research will be a success when we reduce those uncertainties,’ he adds.
GOOD PRACTICE

Birmingham Law School has been recognised for its services to the local community, providing free legal advice and education to members of the public, schools and charitable organisations.

The School won the LawWorks and Attorney General Pro Bono Award for Best Contribution by a Law School for 14 separate projects, which see student volunteers work with professional partners to gain valuable experience of law in practice.

ANYTHING BUT MONKEY BUSINESS

An innovative chimpanzee research project at Twycross Zoo has heralded an expansion of its strategic partnership with the University.

Dr Susannah Thorpe, Senior Lecturer at the School of Biosciences, worked with the zoo’s former Director of Life Sciences Dr Charlotte Macdonald to develop software to design zoo enclosures for apes.

The impact of the project has led to further research, student placements and graduate careers, with the partnership expanding to include the School of Psychology and the Birmingham Business School.

NEW PATHWAYS

Educational opportunities for young people in the city and region have been expanded thanks to a new partnership with University College Birmingham.

It will see the two Universities work together in a range of areas to strengthen Further Education (FE) to Higher Education (HE) pathways, including developing degree apprenticeships.
A new organisation has been launched for those who love art and music – and the Barber Institute in particular.

Succeeding the former Friends’ group, the Barber Association was officially launched at a reception in July with almost 300 visitors and guests.

The reception also celebrated the loan to the gallery of Claude Monet’s famous Water Lily Pond from the Art Institute of Chicago, with specially organised talks and free entry to Winterbourne Garden.

The Association acts as a community for those who want to support the Barber financially, providing vital funds to enhance the Institute’s engagement programme. It will support internships for young graduates pursuing a career in the arts, as well as other special projects.

Upcoming Members’ events include an evening of 17th-century music and a curator’s introduction to the Jan Steen exhibition, Pride and Persecution.

To learn more about the Barber Association, visit www.barber.org.uk/support-us or contact David Powell, Memberships Manager, on 0121 414 7598 or Association@barber.org.uk

Youngsters BOOST THE ELDERLY

School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences Lecturer Dr Melrose Stewart was one of three experts involved in an ambitious televised intergenerational experiment this summer.

Channel 4’s Old People’s Home for 4 Year Olds followed the daily lives of ten four-year-olds over six weeks as they shared school lessons with 11 elderly people in a Bristol retirement village.

While the experiment was inspired by a similar scheme set up 25 years ago in the USA, this was the first in the UK looking at the impact on the health and happiness of older people when children visited their residence.

Results showed a positive effect on the behaviour and mood of the adults and Melrose says: ‘The sense of worthlessness and isolation that some older adults experience can be offset by participation in organised intergenerational activities.

The groundswell of goodwill and empathy triggered by the programme is laudable, but insufficient in managing the problem.

The opportunity exists for government and local authority to take action and to make intergenerational activities part of mainstream education, health and social care strategy.’

Image: Joss Barratt, Channel 4
Jean Kelly (née Riley) (BA Medieval and Modern History, 1969) and Linda King (née Parry) (BA Medieval and Modern History, 1969) were among the stories shared.

‘Linda and I met in the Spring of 1966 when we went for our interviews at the Medieval and Modern History Department. We travelled home to Manchester together and I was delighted to see her again when term started in September. Although we now live in different parts of the country, we have kept in touch and have children and grandchildren of similar ages. We go on holiday together now and find places to suit our interests in history. We have met up in Belgium to visit the Belgium World War I battlefields and in Malta to visit the war tunnels. Here is a photo of us at our 50th anniversary meet up in 2016 in Jersey.’ Jean

Marianne Daniels (née Mead) (MEng & Man Mechanical Engineering Manufacture & Management with Language, 1995) and Steve Daniels (MEng Manufacturing Engineering, 1995).

‘We met at the University during a Sainsbury’s Trust Engineering Scheme week in the summer before our final year at school. We both attended the University the following year. After graduation, Steve went to work at Ford in Essex and I joined Rover. We married in 2000 and now live in Warwickshire with two children. We have very fond memories of our time at the University.’ Marianne

JOY PURITZ (BA (Hons) German and Geography 1972, Certificate of Education 1973)

I enjoyed my time at Birmingham very much, and think Birmingham is truly one of the great universities in the country in terms of academic excellence, facilities and groundbreaking research. My donation is supporting access to education. Having had my tuition fees paid by my borough, and now enjoying some of the advantages that we ‘baby-boomers’ seem to be having, I feel that the least I can do is to help finance cash-strapped students to get through university.

Do you have a tale of campus romance?
Send it to alumnicommunications@contacts.bham.ac.uk and find more contributions online at oldjoe.co.uk

Who was the first student you met? Are you still in touch?
Share your story with us on social media @birminghamalum
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

From the latest breakthroughs in cancer research to some famous names training at the Sport & Fitness club, here’s what has been happening across a number of projects that alumni and friends supported at the University.

A new chapter

One year on from opening, the new University Library has proved an enormous success, as the following statistics show:

**Available resources:**

- Number of ebooks available from library: **700,000**
- Journals we subscribed to (ejournal and print): **51,955**
- Journal article downloads last year: **5,789,903**

**Footfall/entrances:** have increased **32.32%**


**Most used ebook:** *Stylistics: A Resource Book for Students* by Paul Simpson with 71,000 section requests

**Laptop loans:** **32,182** by November 2016

**Books borrowed:** **285,179** by November 2016
**Roaring success #Lapworthrocks**

Since its transformational redevelopment and expansion, the Lapworth Museum of Geology has gone from strength to strength, more than doubling visitor numbers and gaining national recognition.

The Arts Council England named the Lapworth a National Portfolio Organisation, which included a funding grant of £418,984 over the next four years. This will fund two new, four-year posts which will increase the education and digital provision at the museum.

This summer the Lapworth was also named a Runner-Up for the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017, the world’s largest and most prestigious museum award. It was shortlisted alongside the Tate Modern, the National Heritage Centre for Horseracing & Sporting Art, Sir John Soane’s Museum and The Hepworth Wakefield, which won the award.

**Welcome back**

Members of the Sport & Fitness club found themselves training alongside international stars of track and field this summer as the Jamaican squad prepared for the 2017 World Athletics Championships.

Following their successful stay at the University ahead of the London 2012 Olympics, the Jamaican team returned to campus in July.

They stayed in the Chamberlain hall of residence while training at the Sport & Fitness club and used the brand-new international-standard athletics track on Edgbaston Park Road, built on land leased from the Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham.

A team of 70 student volunteers were on hand to help with setting up equipment and provide transport and security around campus.

Ian Forbes, the First Vice President of the Jamaica Athletics Administrative Association, says: ‘The University of Birmingham has tremendous facilities. The accommodation, hospitality and welcome have been excellent and the new Sport & Fitness club is second to none.’

**Putting pen to paper**

A University campaign to combat maternal sepsis had a tremendous response from supporters, helping raise funds for a specialist life-saving kit for healthcare workers in low-income countries.

Globally, maternal sepsis is one of the top three killers of mothers. Researchers at Birmingham, working in partnership with the World Health Organization and local health practitioners, developed the ‘FAST-M’ bundle to quickly identify and treat sepsis.

‘FAST-M’ is set to form a key component of the World Health Organization maternal sepsis initiative. A large multi-national randomised clinical trial is planned, starting this year, to further develop the bundle.

Dr James Cheshire, a Research Fellow with the Institute of Metabolism and System Research, has been in Malawi as part of the trials and faced some unexpected practical issues while training local healthcare workers.

He says: ‘We discovered that to save on costs, we needed to bring pens and paper to write notes and update patients’ medical charts over from the UK.

‘Part of the training is for “sepsis champions”, who are integral to the study and perfectly placed to provide immediate support and supervision of their colleagues.

‘We wanted to get them branded t-shirts and lapel badges, but they are very expensive and poor quality. It may be we bring those over from the UK as well!’
**Stunning results from innovative trial**

One of the world’s largest clinical trials for prostate cancer has identified a new treatment that dramatically improves survival.

The University’s Professor Nicholas James, chief investigator of the Cancer Research UK-funded STAMPEDE trial, led the investigation adding Abiraterone to standard hormone therapy at the start of treatment.

Prostate cancer cells usually depend on testosterone to grow. Standard hormone therapy blocks the action of testosterone, halting the disease. In addition, Abiraterone also shuts down production of the hormones that fuel the cancer’s growth.

The trial results showed a 37 per cent increase in survival, prompting Nicholas to say: ‘These are the most powerful results I’ve seen from a prostate cancer trial – it’s a once-in-a-career feeling.

‘This is one of the biggest reductions in death I’ve seen in any clinical trial for adult cancers. I really hope these results can change clinical practice.’

The Abiraterone results are one part of the STAMPEDE trial, which is combining standard hormone therapy with other treatments to see which works best on prostate cancer that has spread outside of the prostate gland. The trial is ongoing.

**The next step in immunotherapy**

Support from alumni and friends allowed University scientists to buy a cutting-edge machine that is providing a step forward in research into new cancer treatments.

Previously, researchers had to visualise markers of a tumour tissue sample one at a time to analyse how immune cells were reacting to cancer cells. The automated tissue stainer, worth £60,000, allows for up to six markers to be created at a time, and 20 times faster than manual staining methods.

Ben Willcox, Professor of Molecular Immunology and Director of the University’s Cancer Immunology and Immunotherapy Centre, says: ‘This machine is proving a massive success.

‘In combination with other cutting-edge equipment, we have been able to visualise tumours in far greater depth and use sophisticated software to analyse the results. It has led to an industry-partnered trial of one of the most promising immunotherapy drugs for a patient group led by Professor Gary Middleton.

‘The support of donors made this possible, and we’re extremely grateful to them. The results are helping unlock the full power of the immune system to fight cancer.’
Jed Mercurio (MBChB Medicine, 1991) is a television writer, producer, director and novelist. He left his job as a junior doctor to take up writing for television, creating Cardiac Arrest, Bodies, and the acclaimed Line of Duty. He has also written the novels Bodies, Ascent, and American Adulterer.

Blood Meridian
by Cormac McCarthy

In prose that’s as brutal as it is beautiful, McCarthy creates a revisionist portrait of the Old West, following a teenage boy’s travels with a vengeful gang of white men hunting Native Americans near the Mexican border. Their de facto leader, the Judge, is one of literature’s most disturbing characters, and the novel’s themes grow deeper as the story progresses.

Atomised
by Michel Houellebecq

I’ve enjoyed all Houellebecq’s novels for their frankness and humour. This was the novel by which I discovered his writing. Though not as politically provocative as his most recent, Submission, this is no less pointed. Houellebecq depicts in an amusingly matter-of-fact style the nihilistically loveless lives of two French half-brothers.

The Damned United
by David Peace

Unusually for a literary novelist, Peace takes as his subject a footballing icon, Brian Clough, and explores his career through his infamously short-lived tenure as the manager of Leeds United in the early 1970s. The author employs abundant artistic licence to create an intensely enthralling psychological portrait of Clough.

Catch-22
by Joseph Heller

Heller’s satire of a World War 2 American bomber base is funny, sardonic, and disturbing. With a large and vivid cast of characters, it’s one of the all-time great war novels. The protagonist, a bombardier named Yossarian, challenges the paradox of a military regulation that excuses insane aircrew from flying duties, yet any airman claiming insanity to avoid combat is deemed sane for not wishing to risk his life.

The Hunters
by James Salter

Set during the Korean War, this debut novel originated from an American fighter pilot who progressed to a lauded literary career with such works as A Sport and a Pastime. It follows a crack Air Force pilot whose unlucky streak raises doubts in himself and in others regarding his ability. Salter explores the fine margins of success and reputation among an elite corps of fighting men and in so doing addresses much larger themes.

For your chance to win these five books, answer the following question:

Which famous football manager is the subject of The Damned United?

Email your answer with your name, address and telephone number to alumnicommunications@contacts.bham.ac.uk by 31 December 2017.
GIVE. VOLUNTEER. CHANGE 10,000 LIVES.

This edition of your Old Joe magazine celebrates the launch of the University’s 10,000 Lives appeal.

10,000 Lives has the ambitious aim of changing 10,000 young lives over the next few years through the support of our donors and volunteers.

Over the next four pages, our appeal ambassadors share how the University changes lives. With your help we can reach thousands more young people like Brandon, Ioana, Niamh and Hannah. Together we can raise aspirations in 11–18-year-olds, develop confident and employable students and support our young alumni as they start their post-University life.

Helpful definitions
Access to Birmingham: The A2B scheme recruits the most able pupils from schools in the West Midlands with low rates of progression to university and helps them to apply to Birmingham. A2B scholarships and bursaries ensure that financial support is available to those who have shown a commitment to achieve at university but who otherwise may not move into higher education.

Academic Enrichment Programme summer schools: Week-long residential summer schools for Year 12 pupils in the West Midlands region. Students stay in University halls of residence and are mentored by current undergraduates.
Brandon Doherty (BA Philosophy, Religion and Ethics, 2016) received several different scholarships that enabled him to study at Birmingham. He is now on the Lloyds HR Graduate programme. ‘I wouldn’t have had the opportunities I’ve received without the support of my scholarships. I’m from a low-income family and before University I didn’t really get the chance to do anything outside my group of friends. When I came to Birmingham, I studied a great course and met people from all over the world in a unique place.’

Niamh Wilson is studying for her A levels and attended the 2017 Academic Enrichment Programme summer school. ‘The summer school definitely changed my life in that I have a different perspective on what I need to do to get where I need to be. You can’t just hope for the best, you have to put the extra hard work in. I’m definitely going to be applying for university and especially the University of Birmingham.’

Aspiring solicitor Ioana Chiva (LLB Law, 2016) was mentored by Luciana Berger MP (BCom Commerce with Spanish, 2004) on the Alumni Leadership Mentoring Programme. ‘The most valuable advice I received from my mentor was if you don’t try, you won’t know if you have a chance to succeed. I took her advice, ran with it and now I have my dream job. I’m very happy.’

Caroline Doherty is Brandon Doherty’s very proud mum. ‘Brandon has worked very hard to get where he is and it’s well deserved. Knowing he had the support of his scholarships gave him confidence to push forward and he’s done really well.’

Donovan Simpson is in the fourth year of his medical degree. ‘I’ve had so many brilliant experiences at Birmingham. I’ve met some great people, have overcome challenges and have grown in ways that I never thought I could. I’m very excited to take what I’ve learnt and become the best doctor I can.’

Hannah Green started at Birmingham this September after attending a summer school in 2016. She is studying Biomedical Sciences. ‘The summer school changed my life dramatically; my mentor was and still is really important. He stayed in touch with me throughout my final year at school, even helping me move into my accommodation. I wouldn’t be here without doing the summer school, as I wouldn’t have met my mentor nor had any of that support.’
What happened when we gathered eight different groups of people connected with the 10,000 Lives appeal and asked them about their lives and their views on education?

Without giving too much away, here are some photos from the day and please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/10000Lives to watch the video. The appeal’s official launch will be at the House of Lords on Friday 3 November.

**How can I help?**

**Give**

You can change a life by making a donation to help young people achieve their potential at the University. There are a range of inspiring areas that you can support, from young carer scholarships to work experience and international internships.

One particular area of focus is expanding the support offered to our Access to Birmingham students with increased scholarships and first year bursaries to help with the costs of transitioning into University life.

To make your donation, please complete the form enclosed with this magazine, give online at www.birmingham.ac.uk/10000Lives or call our team on +44 (0)121 414 8894

**Image:** Alumna Judy Dyke (LLB Law, 1975) has been a loyal donor and volunteer since 2001 and supports student scholarships.

**Volunteer**

Giving your time could have a life-changing impact on a young person. From mentoring to hosting a work experience placement or internship, there are numerous ways to get involved.

If you are interested in volunteering, please email alumni-volunteers@contacts.bham.ac.uk or call our team on +44 (0)121 414 6862
Run 10K for 10,000 Lives

Step forward and help fund life-changing opportunities for 10,000 young people by taking part in the Birmingham 10K run next May.

We’re working in partnership with UBSport and by joining our team of runners you’ll receive a discounted race fee, a t-shirt and plenty of advice. This includes access to a weekly running club around campus and even more chances to support your training with free ‘Great Run Local’ races.

Last year, current student Gideon Walker was inspired to put on his running shoes to take part and raised £170 for a University research project. He says: ‘I’d encourage anyone considering it to take part. I ran for antibiotic resistance research after being inspired by one of the academics I met while filming for Guild TV. I hope I can be an inspiration to others and that you will sign up to join the team to support the 10,000 Lives appeal!’

Anyone can take part and whether you walk, jog or run, by raising funds you’ll be giving young people in Birmingham the chance to access higher education.

Register your interest: www.birmingham.ac.uk/birmingham10K

The 10,000 Lives Challenge Fund

In the run-up to the launch of the appeal, a number of donors – loyal and new – have already given £350,000 to 10,000 Lives.

Not only has their generosity helped to kick-start our fundraising, it is the long-standing legacy of charitable support given to our students by the supporters that inspired the appeal itself.

10,000 Lives celebrates the impact our donors have on the lives of young people through the time and money they donate. We wish to thank them all for their contributions to the appeal so far.

Alumna Carol Kennedy (BSc Chemical Engineering, 1972) is a founding donor for the 10,000 Lives appeal. She says: ‘I strongly believe that gifted youngsters, whose families cannot afford to pay fees, should have the same opportunities I was offered.

‘When I studied at Birmingham in the 1960s, we were supported by government grants; my father was a clergyman and we couldn’t have afforded to pay fees. It’s a pleasure to support gifted students and I hope my donation will enable today’s young people to share the fantastic experience that I had.’

www.birmingham.ac.uk/10000Lives
Middleweight boxer Tommy Langford (BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences, 2011) chose to study for a degree before pursuing a career in the ring – and believes he has benefited as a result.

While boxing is known as ‘The Sweet Science’ by many fans, higher education is seldom seen as the basis for a career in prize fighting. Alumnus Tommy Langford decided to do things differently.

The British middleweight champion has established himself as a leading contender in his weight class.

Before turning professional, however, he spent four years at the University on a sports scholarship, where he combined lectures with a gilded amateur career that included multiple titles and his appointment as captain of the England team.

Having taken up boxing aged 11, the teenage Tommy faced the question of how to make the most of his ability. His parents encouraged him to think about mixing sparring with studying.

He explains: ‘My Mum and Dad are both teachers and they have always been really hot on education. They said to me: “If you’re really serious about boxing and want to take it as far as you can, you’ve got to carry on to university.”’

Following their advice proved a wise decision. Living in Birmingham allowed him to team up with coach Tom Chaney, who he had met through an England teammate and who still works in his corner today.

His enrolment at Birmingham also brought other benefits: the scholarship gave him time for the punishing training regime required of elite fighters, while his degree offered valuable guidance on paring his six-foot frame down to the middleweight limit of 11 stone 6 lbs.

He adds: ‘I learned loads through sports science that has helped me in my career.

‘The nutritional side was particularly important: I’m in a weight-making sport, and knowing about the level of fuel that you need and identifying the things to cut back on helps massively.

‘I also use the psychology to this day. I feel that I am quite mentally strong, and that comes from the stuff I learned at university.’

In addition to talent and toughness, success in the boxing ring is built on discipline. For Tommy, this meant missing out on certain aspects of student social life. ‘The lads who I lived with were great – they understood that I often couldn’t go out, although they thought I was mad. I’m still pals with all of them and they come to watch me fight,’ he says.

His former flatmates are invariably joined in the audience by Tommy’s wife Leanne (BSc Psychology, 2010), who he met on his first day at the Hunter Court hall of residence. They are now proud parents to son Freddie and are expecting their second child in January.

‘Without university, I wouldn’t be who I am today,’ says Tommy. ‘I would recommend anyone who really wants to pursue sport to carry on to university.’
I also use the psychology to this day. I feel that I am quite mentally strong, and that comes from the stuff I learned at university.
I was given this flag by the Maoist party High Command after a ceremony to hand over three other sets of flags to the Government of Nepal during the peace process in 2009. It is one of a pair, and in the interests of neutrality, I also have a Nepali national flag hanging in my office!

This pair of flags is one of a set of four that were paraded at the cantonment of Chitwan by a Maoist brigade, as control of the Maoist army was handed away from the Party itself to the official government of Nepal. As such it was a hugely symbolic moment and one of the key moments of the peace process, as a militarised group of fighters officially gave up being a threat to the stability of Nepal and gave itself over to democratic control by the Government. By this time, the Maoist Party had also reinvented itself away from a military leadership and into a successful democratic party, which in itself is unusual in the post-conflict world. Indeed, the Maoists had been so successful that since the war they have had three Prime Ministers.

The ceremony at Chitwan was a big affair with several foreign dignitaries as well as senior Nepali politicians. At this time I was the adviser to a technical committee of the Nepali Parliament advising on the demobilisation of the Maoist army and their transition to civilian life. At Chitwan I was also treated as one of the committee, being ushered in to the Nepali tent rather than the tent reserved for foreigners. I had, in fact, spent much of my time explaining the meaning of the language used by the international community, and what they meant by a series of technical approaches that they had failed to explain to the Nepalis going through the process. I was in a position of trust as someone who could explain the core issues to the Nepali political parties, the military and the police without prejudice. As a neutral, or at least, impartial, academic, the Nepalis trusted me to provide an honest answer.

This trust and the friendships I still have in Nepal are partly represented by this flag. At Chitwan, when they presented the sets of flags to the Nepali Government, they also presented me with a set as a token of friendship, so it hangs, in a position of honour, in my office.

Professor Jackson is Professor of African Politics in the International Development Department
Terrific teachers

Many alumni hold fond memories of their academic teachers here at Birmingham. The trio of stories below highlights professors who have made a lasting impact.

Recognising JOE

Professor Joe Biddlestone (BSc Chemical Engineering, 1958; PhD Chemical Engineering, 1961) has made a huge impact on the University since he arrived as an undergraduate more than 60 years ago. At our Alumni Reunion on 30 September, Joe’s contribution to campus was recognised with the main lecture theatre in Chemical Engineering being renamed in his honour.

Joe says: ‘I was genuinely surprised and honoured to discover that a lecture theatre in which I spent so much of my working career was to be named after me. Thank you very much.’

Joe has worked in various departmental and leadership roles, is a Birmingham stalwart and an Emeritus Professor. He has made a huge difference to the lives of the students he has taught and this new space will recognise that for years to come.

Alumnus celebrates TUTOR

Byung Won Park (BSc Chemical Engineering, 1971) remembers his time at Birmingham fondly and the impact Dr David Lihou (PhD Chemical Engineering, 1963; BSc Chemical Engineering, 1960), made on him.

Mr Park honoured Dr Lihou by making a substantial and generous donation towards the new Collaborative Teaching Laboratory.

‘I will always appreciate what Dr Lihou did for me,’ he says. ‘He really helped me to grow my confidence. One memory that sticks with me is being invited on a weekend canoeing trip, which meant a lot as I was far from home. I feel very fortunate and proud to be able to recognise him in this way.’

Mr Park returned to campus this summer for a reunion with friends of more than 50 years who he met at Birmingham. They also had a special reunion with Dr Lihou, who says:

‘It was such a surprise to be honoured in this way. I was here to turn out successful chemical engineers and Byung is an exceptional example of this.’

Image: Byung Park, Dr David Lihou, Dr Youn Lee (PhD Chemical Engineering, 1969) and his wife and Mrs Joungsook Oh (widow of Dr Saewoong Oh (PhD Physics, 1969))

Remembering PROFESSOR FREDDIE BAKHTAR

Professor Farhang Bakhtar (1929–2015), affectionately known as Freddie to many staff, students and alumni, first came to the Department of Mechanical Engineering in 1949. He spent most of his life at the University, first as a student and then as part of the faculty. Birmingham became like home to Freddie. Over the years he touched many lives as a compassionate and humorous teacher, mentor, and colleague.

To remember Freddie, his cousin Kay Bakhtar (BSc Civil Engineering, 1959) has founded the Professor Bakhtar Memorial Prize in Mechanical Engineering. Funded entirely by donations in Freddie’s memory, the inaugural prize was awarded this year to the highest performing student in Thermodynamics.

The inaugural prize was awarded to Weifan Song (Second Year, BSc Mechanical Engineering).

We’d love to hear your memories of your favourite professors at Birmingham. Email alumnicommunications@contacts.bham.ac.uk to share your story.

If you have a story to share about Freddie, or would like to make a gift in his memory, please call 0121 414 7957 or email legacies@contacts.bham.ac.uk.
It was the autumn of 1964 and The Kinks were top of the hit parade singing You Really Got Me, when ten of us arrived at the University of Birmingham to study Chemical and Mechanical Engineering. We came from all over England. Little did we know that this was to be the beginning a beautiful friendship.

Most of us stayed in Manor House, Lady Cadbury’s splendid country residence set in parklands just off the Bristol Road. We threw bread at the house’s single telly in the common room while watching Top of the Pops. We had a ball and the occasional Ball.

While we were at Birmingham the 60s became ‘The Sixties’. Our social life blossomed. Five of us are still with the girls we were walking out with while we were there. By some miracle, we did enough work to get our degrees and then left to work in engineering companies, with the exception of Eggy who became a pilot.

The years passed. We married, set up our homes, had children and pursued our careers. Then in 1987, somebody had the bright idea to hold a 20-year reunion. It was the first time that we had been together as a group since we left. We met under Old Joe and retraced our steps on the campus, walking round the engineering buildings and revisiting Manor House.

Later on we exchanged memories and got out our photo albums. One of the photos was of a human pyramid that we had built in the grounds of Manor House. Naturally we immediately decided to build another one.

The first reunion was such a success that we decided to repeat the event every five years, and that we have done. Each time a different location and organiser is chosen. Of course, at each event despite our growing builds and ageing limbs, we build the pyramid. It has become an unmissable tradition.

Not all of us could make it to every reunion and one of us, Norman, is no longer with us. We toast him every time we get together.

As 2017 approached, we realised that our ‘50 years on’ reunion had to be special. Three of us volunteered to organise a reunion at Birmingham and we spent many happy hours planning the event and chatting about old times.

In April, we gathered outside the Barber Institute for an excellent guided tour. From there we went to the foot of Old Joe and despite every one of us being over 70, we managed to build our beloved pyramid.

We all think the world of the University and city. We’re incredibly grateful that it brought us together and that our friendship has lasted 50 years. Here’s to our next reunion in 2022.
OF COURSE, AT EACH EVENT DESPITE OUR GROWING BUILDS AND AGEING LIMBS, WE BUILD THE PYRAMID. IT HAS BECOME AN UNMISSABLE TRADITION.


Alumni Reunion 2017

9.45am Registration with tea or coffee and a welcome address in the Great Hall

10.30am Guild of Graduates and Alumni Association AGM

11.00am Visits to departments

1.00pm Buffet lunch, two-course for those celebrating 50 years

2.30pm Class Photos

3.00pm Guild of Graduates Lectures
   - Inflammation and Ageing by Professor Janet Lord
   - Gravitational Waves by Professor Alberto Vecchio
   - Immunology and Immunotherapy by Professor Ben Willcox

4.00pm Activities such as:
   - Minibus campus tour led by current students
   - Walking campus tour led by current students
   - Visit to the Barber Institute of Fine Arts
     - Visit to Lapworth Museum
     - Tour of the Guild of Students
   - Visit to Winterbourne House and Gardens
   - Free time to explore campus at your leisure
   - Viewing new developments (eg, Library, Sport & Fitness club, etc)

5.30pm Drinks and Canapés with a performance in The Bramall music building

7.30pm Reunion Dinner

Our 2018 Reunion will follow a similar format. To sign up to attend, return the booking form on the back page.
THE UNIVERSITY’S PIONEERING APPROACH TO TEACHING AND RESEARCH WAS HIGHLIGHTED AGAIN THIS SUMMER WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF OUR NEW DUBAI CAMPUS.

OPENING A CAMPUS IN DUBAI DEMONSTRATES OUR AMBITION AS AN OUTWARD LOOKING, WORLD-CLASS INSTITUTION.

A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

If you would like to learn more about the University of Birmingham Dubai, please send your questions to dubai@contacts.bham.ac.uk or visit the website www.birmingham.ac.uk/dubai

Join the conversation: Facebook | Twitter | @unibirmingham | @birminghamalum | #UoBDubai
THE DUBAI ALUMNI COMMUNITY

We have hundreds of alumni living in Dubai and a new alumni group has recently started that will hold regular events in the region.

Do you live in the Middle East, or have a connection with the area? Could you help students at the Dubai campus to support their career and employability prospects through lectures, workshops and mentoring? If so, please contact alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk

The bold announcement of the University of Birmingham Dubai campus again demonstrates our status as a truly global university, continuing a legacy of connecting talent from across the world. We will be the first top 100 global university and member of the Russell Group to establish ourselves in the Emirate’s international education hub.

A new, full-scale campus based at Dubai International Academic City (DIAC) will be teaching 4,500 students by 2024. Its establishment builds upon the existing teaching activity in Singapore and China, plus extensive international research collaborations.

Alongside a new partnership with Jinan University that will allow Chinese students to study in China and receive degrees from both institutions, the news demonstrates the scale of our international plans.

Speaking at the announcement, Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir David Eastwood highlighted Birmingham’s existing strategic partnerships in the USA, Australia, China and Brazil and adds: ‘Opening a campus in Dubai is the next step in our global mission and demonstrates our ambition as an outward-looking, world-class institution.’

Degrees will be taught, examined and accredited to the same recognised high standards as those delivered in Edgbaston. An initial range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, including Economics, Teacher Education, Computer Science, Mechanical Engineering and Business will be offered to the first cohort of students, who will arrive in September 2018.

The new campus offers a great opportunity for innovative methods of teaching and assessment, as Director of Educational Enterprise Ian Myatt explains: ‘This is an exciting opportunity to try out new ways of working, which we believe will have a real benefit for all of our students.

The core syllabus and learning objectives will be consistent with the existing Birmingham-based programmes.

‘But we will carefully consider the student experience and expectations, and maximise the use of technology enhanced learning (TEL) during the course development process.’

While world-class teaching facilities will be vital to the campus, research will also play a key role and suitable areas of study that can be distinctive and excellent in Dubai are currently being assessed.

The ambitious international vision of the University is also clear from the new partnership with Jinan. Chinese students will be receiving a full Birmingham undergraduate programme in Mathematics, with a physical presence on the Jinan campus.

Professor Robin Mason, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International), says: ‘Both Dubai and Jinan are a natural extension of what we’ve been doing for many years already as a leading university; extending our reach outside of the UK.

‘The best universities in the world take their foundations and spread them to work internationally.

‘To tackle global issues and challenges, we must have the capacity to address them up close.’
Mental health, particularly young people’s mental health, has become a critical issue in society. Stories of patients being treated in hospitals miles from home due to lack of services and social media use leading to depression and even suicide are repeatedly in the headlines.

Professor Matthew Broome (MBChB Medicine, 1997), Director of the Birmingham Institute for Mental Health, wants this to change.

‘On one hand, there is a shocking amount of stigmatisation of people with mental health conditions. On the other, people with severe mental health conditions, such as psychosis, are experiencing real distress and often need more support than they and their families can access. These services are underfunded in the NHS, despite recent calls for parity of provision in physical and mental health care,’ he says.

‘The Institute will bring together academics, policy makers, and clinicians from across the University, NHS Trusts and third sector to make a step change in the mental health of our young people and society.’

Birmingham’s population is among the youngest and most diverse in Europe, and appropriately the Institute’s research will focus primarily on young people. Three-quarters of lifetime mental disorders begin before the age of 25 and Matthew says recent years have seen a marked increase in young people accessing mental health services.

One factor in this rise may be the economic recession, as suicide rates have increased since the downturn.

‘We’re seeing more young people troubled by self-harm, eating disorders, and depression and anxiety. Young people are experiencing more stress at school and can be at risk of developing body image disorders after spending time on social media,’ he says.

‘As a civic University, we’re keen to help local young people. There’s currently a great concern about young people and their families. It’s important to intervene and help people before they get very ill.’

The Institute has created a unique research-led partnership with Forward Thinking Birmingham, the city’s mental health partnership for 0–25-year-olds. This is the only organisation in the UK to offer continuity of service throughout the adolescent years into adulthood. Previously there had been a breach in services at a time when young people were most likely to be looking for help.

The Institute also benefits from a strong ongoing collaboration with Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust, a key provider of adult mental health services across the city.

The partners will work together to deliver the aspirations of the NHS Five Year Forward View. The strategy aims to increase funding, improve services and reduce waiting times for mental health patients in England.

Teaching will be another focus, and the Institute will run interdisciplinary PhD and Masters programmes, joint PhDs with the University of Melbourne, and will integrate youth mental health themes into our undergraduate courses.

The new Institute is unique in its interdisciplinary approach and the high
quality of its cognitive neuroscience (the study of how the brain enables the mind). A Medical School alumnus, Matthew was drawn back from the University of Oxford because of the opportunity to work with colleagues from other disciplines across campus.

‘We’re keen to use discoveries from neuroscience and psychiatry and translate them into improved patient care,’ he says.

An example of this is research into the links between childhood trauma and subsequent mental illness involving Dr Rachel Upthegrove (MPhil Psychiatry, 2001; PhD Psychiatry, 2011), Clinical Senior Lecturer in the Institute of Clinical Sciences.

‘For some people, early adversity can activate inflammatory pathways in the brain that are associated with psychosis later on in life. So trauma may actually change the brain’s biology,’ she says.

Rachel is working to identify early clinical and biological markers of developing mental health problems, including psychosis. Ultimately, this could lead to clinical trials of new medication or other therapies to treat mental illnesses.

Rachel’s main research area is symptoms and early intervention in first episode psychosis, which is most common in people aged 16–25.

‘If you get really good treatment really early on, you can ameliorate the impact, reduce hospital admissions, decrease risk of completed suicide and improve young people’s chances of returning to work or study,’ she says.

‘In an ideal world, a full package of treatments would be available quickly in non-stigmatising ways.’

She is calling for a more positive dialogue around mental health in society: ‘The way the media portrays mental health is just not right. Yes, there are people who have long-term problems, but there are also many people who get better, just like any other branch of medicine.’

Academics in Social Sciences will help the Institute’s aim of making a sustained impact on public mental health policy. Work in this area has already begun with Professor Paul Burstow, former Minister of State for Care Services, chairing the 7th University of Birmingham policy commission, due to report in spring 2018.

The commission’s focus is on mental health promotion and illness prevention across society. Children and young people are a particular target and the report will be making recommendations on building resilience and early interventions in schools.

‘The costs of failing to deal with mental illness land primarily within our education system. There is a huge dividend to be had by investing upstream early in tackling mental health problems,’ Paul says.

‘We need to move away from an approach that’s primarily based on treating the illness and shift to focusing on prevention.’

Dr Karen Newbigging, Senior Lecturer in Healthcare Policy and Management, whose research focuses on how mental health services are designed and delivered, agrees. She describes mental health as a complex area with no ‘magic bullet’ but says dialogue to date has neglected to recognise the impact of people’s backgrounds on mental illness.

‘We have to consider people’s foundations. The quality of parenting, early relationships and the conditions in which they live are really important,’ she says.
‘Happy mum, happy baby,’ is a saying that alumnus Dr Giles Berrisford lives by.

As Associate National Clinical Director for Perinatal Mental Health for NHS England, Giles is leading on improving mental health services for women during pregnancy and in the first year after birth.

Currently 40 per cent of pregnant women have no community perinatal mental health provision whatsoever. And 23 per cent of women who die during the six weeks after giving birth do so due to mental health reasons.

The NHS has committed to spend £365 million over five years to tackle the issue. Giles’s ambition is to improve community services to see mental health checks become as standard for pregnant women as urine tests for diabetes. The money will also increase the number and geographical spread of special inpatient beds for mothers with severe mental illness to be admitted with their babies for treatment.

‘Women need to be identified and receive treatment to avoid long periods of illness that could have a huge impact upon them and their babies,’ Giles says.

‘There’s so much hope that things are really going to change. My job is really fascinating and it’s the most amazing area to work in.’

**HOW TO ACCESS SUPPORT**

If you or a loved one are experiencing mental health issues, Dr Rachel Upthegrove’s advice is to go and see your GP, as early intervention is key. Early warning signs of potential mental health problems are social isolation, excessive worrying, feeling very sad, confused thinking or difficulty concentrating, and extreme mood changes. The website www.youthspace.me has mental health information aimed at young people.
Ever wondered how your gas, electricity, water and broadband are supplied to your house? Or what those workers digging a big hole in the road are looking for? Most utility services, including water, gas, electricity and telecommunications are distributed via buried cables or pipework of some kind. Much of this utility infrastructure, which can be more than 200 years old, lies under the nation’s roads; plus there are old sewers, some dating from Roman times, redundant mineshafts and foundations on brownfield sites. With so much infrastructure under our feet, it can be a big problem trying to locate pipes and cables when something goes wrong or if they need to be replaced, which can lead to excavations in the wrong place and traffic congestion.

Many civil engineering constructions and interventions also require us to open up the ground. This can be a risky procedure because, as well as not knowing precisely where to dig, we also often don’t know the condition of the ground (ie, density variations, water content, strength). This is why we carry out site investigations.

Current sensing technologies are limited in terms of resolution and depth penetration. At Birmingham, a collaboration between civil engineers – like myself – and physicists is bringing a new capability to underground sensing by exploiting quantum technology (QT). The new sensors we are developing, especially the Quantum Technology Gravity sensors, promise to add to our arsenal of sensing technologies and fill a potential gap.

This work is part of research that will be carried out in our new world-leading National Buried Infrastructure Facility, which will support research, education and training to allow our academics to carry out work at almost full scale.

With better knowledge of where existing infrastructure is, what condition it is in and the ground it is buried in, we will be able to use our underground space much more sustainably, reduce the risk of inadvertently damaging buried assets during excavation (with potentially dangerous consequences), reduce delays due to unnecessary work and reduce costs due to project over-runs. By using underground resources such as groundwater, heat and minerals more effectively, and freeing space above ground for green corridors and sustainable transport, our cities of the future could offer us a better quality of life.

Dr Nicole Metje on how the University’s pioneering infrastructure research could influence the sustainable cities of the future.
Mention a Clan Chief and you may think of a great warrior leading his troops in battle but David is keen to clarify ‘that’s a bit feudal,’ to contemporary Scots.

You’re more likely to find him hard at work on the family estate, near Crieff in Perthshire, where he and his wife Alexandra run three holiday cottages and a joinery business, and are currently developing two more holiday properties. They’ve also recently become parents to baby Charles.

Amongst breath-taking scenery, the couple are grafting to ensure the estate remains sustainable. There are 1,500 sheep, 200 cows and a hydroelectric power station built by David’s grandfather in 1952 that needs daily attention. They have a small team of staff but are very hands on, doing everything from cutting firewood to refilling hot tubs, sewing curtains or doing paperwork for the joinery.

Until four years ago the couple were based in London, where David worked in the City and Alexandra still has a PR firm. When they returned to Scotland to run the estate they promised to give it six years; now they can’t imagine ever going back. They’re developing their holiday business further and hope to eventually run a wedding venue.

‘Scotland has amazing ambience and individual elements such as golf, whisky and Highland Games add up to create an exciting alternative culture. Clans are part of that. They’re iconic,’ David says.

‘We need to focus on tourism and particularly on experiences. People want to stay in special places. It’s great to be able to offer them somewhere a bit “wow”.'
David remembers his time at Birmingham with affection, particularly the support he received from friends and the University when his father died during his first year.

‘It meant a lot when people who I’d just recently become friends with made a huge effort to look after me. Some of them are still friends now and are chipping in with bits of advice years later,’ he says.

As a clan chief in the 21st century, he says historic responsibilities manifest themselves in new forms, from helping people get hold of the tartan to explaining the genealogy and allowing them to trace their Scottish roots. He also enthuses about clan castles which are open to the public, including Crichton Castle near Edinburgh and Blackness Castle in Rosyth, a former prison jutting out into the Firth of Forth that he gleefully describes as ‘absolutely vile.’

The Crichtons have been based at Monzie (pronounced without the z) since the 1850s. David’s mother now lives in the castle, and guests who stay in the holiday cottages are offered complimentary tours.

While clan chiefs may no longer engage in physical combat, David is battling to make the estate more attractive to visitors and help its more traditional businesses find a niche in the modern world.

Agriculture in particular is vital to help maintain the stunning backdrop.

‘It’s quite a juggle, but having become parents we’re conscious that we need to make this work for the next generation. It concentrates the mind,’ he says.
Researchers at Birmingham cover a wide range of pioneering topics that have a global impact. *Old Joe* asked a few of the University’s postgraduate researchers to explain their research in just a sentence.
I’m analysing how Elizabethan and Jacobean styles feature in 21st-century stage and costume design to better understand the cultural significance of Shakespeare today.

ELLA HAWKINS, Shakespeare Institute, College of Arts and Law

My research investigates the effects of elevated carbon dioxide on plant roots.

CLARE ZIEGLER, School of Biosciences, College of Life and Environmental Sciences

I’m developing cheap and efficient catalysts to make hydrogen fuel cell technologies more commercially viable.

JAMES WALKER, School of Chemical Engineering, College of Engineering and Physical Sciences

My research explores the experiences and needs of family carers affected by harmful behaviour from the older person for whom they care.

LOUISE ISHAM, School of Nursing, College of Medical and Dental Sciences

My research considers how corruption changes as a result of armed conflict by exploring the everyday experience of corruption in Nepal, following the end of the 1996–2006 Maoist ‘People’s War.’

THOMAS JARVIS, School of Government and Society, College of Social Sciences

At what University Institute is Clare Ziegler’s research taking place?

To win University merchandise, send your answer, name and contact details to alumnicommunications@contacts.bham.ac.uk by 31 December 2017.

WIN

Want more?
Visit oldjoe.co.uk to watch videos of each researcher explaining their research in 60 seconds.
I’m delighted to have been selected as the overall winner of #TechniciansMakeitHappen, a national photography competition celebrating the UK’s 1.5 million technicians. My photo captures a sunrise over the Mount Wilson Observatory in Los Angeles. I work on robotic telescopes, like the one in this picture. There’s often very little recognition of the people working behind the scenes to build new technology or help make groundbreaking discoveries. Campaigns such as these run by the Gatsby Foundation are really important to raise the public profile of technicians and showcase the diverse and exciting opportunities for young people who choose a technical career.

Steven Hale (MSci Physics with Astrophysics, 2001; MPhil Physics and Astronomy, 2003) BiSON Instrumentation Engineer, School of Physics and Astronomy
Image: Back row: Dr Nahid Turan (BSc Medical Biochemistry, 1998; MSc Toxicology, 2002; PhD Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, 2008), with brother Moeen (MEng 1989; BEng Metallurgy and Materials, 2012), father Mohammad Yaqub Turan (PGDip Development Finance, 1989; MScSc Accounting and Finance, 1988), brother Farrid (BEng Chemical Engineering, 1998), sister-in-law Susie (BSc Chemistry, 1990), and brother Ahmad. Front row: nephew Theo, long-time family friend and Mohammad’s English tutor at Birmingham, Diane Houghton (BA English, 1971; MA English, 1976), mother Diljan, twin nephews Temur (Second year, BEng Chemical Engineering) and Iskander, and nephew Oliver.
Dr Nahid Turan’s expertise in the human genome was nurtured at Birmingham.

As part of a family whose parents and grandparents were both forced to flee from their homes as refugees, Birmingham proved something of a sanctuary for Nahid (BSc Medical Biochemistry, 1998; MSc Toxicology, 2002; PhD Biosciences, 2006).

While her distinguished career has seen her spend more than a decade in the USA as a postdoctoral research fellow and in a senior position at the Coriell Institute for Medical Research in New Jersey, the University remains very much a focal point for the Turans.

Her father, Mohammad (PGDip Development Finance, 1980; MSocSc Accounting and Finance, 1983), began his studies here 40 years ago and the ninth member of her family is currently studying in Edgbaston.

Nahid explains: ‘I chose Birmingham because it was near and dear to my heart. My father had taken our whole family out of Afghanistan as refugees from the war, following on from my grandparents fleeing Uzbekistan after the communist takeover in the 1920s.

’We kept on coming back and while I was offered places at three other universities, I felt it would be more comfortable there, and I loved the campus, greenery and environment.’

It meant she was following in the footsteps of her second oldest brother Farid (BEng Chemical Engineering, 1989), the first of her generation to choose to go to university.

He met his wife Susan [née Aylward (BSc Chemistry, 1990)] while studying here – and their son Temur (Second year, BEng Chemical Engineering) is continuing the family tradition currently.

Brother Masood Turan (MEng 1995; DEng Metallurgy and Materials, 2012) also met his wife Liang Qiang (PhD Metallurgy and Materials, 2006) on campus, and cousins Freschta Temouri (BSc Accounting & Finance, 2003) and Yama Temouri (BSc Economics with German, 2003) are also alumni.

Nahid’s degrees developed her interest in the sciences and diseases, which she has pursued into her professional career at Coriell.

Her role includes overseeing all of the extensive laboratory and biobanking operations, as well as managing the scientific operations of the world-renowned Human Genetic Cell Repository – the world’s largest and most diverse biobank of samples of human genetic diseases available to researchers across the globe.

Sponsored by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS), the repository contains samples representing more than 1,000 genetic diseases and chromosomal abnormalities (eg, Down’s syndrome), with tens of thousands of biospecimens distributed from the collection every year to researchers in more than 70 countries.

She says: ‘Coriell is a world-famous biobank with high-quality biospecimens that have purposely been made publicly available in order to enable research.

’We’ve been continuously funded by the government and other sources because they recognise the need to push research forward.

’For many of these types of samples, we’re the only ones in the world that have them. So there will be scientists at Birmingham who will be using our samples, as well as colleagues across the globe.’
For more than a century, Birmingham has been home to some of the most prominent minds in higher education, dedicated to creating pioneering research that improves the world we live in.
Here, we detail just some of the ideas born in Birmingham that have gone on to make a real impact. Looking back . . .

More than words

Brainchild of the esteemed Professor John Sinclair, COBUILD (Collins Birmingham University International Language Database) is the definitive dictionary for foreign learners of English. The research eventually led to the 450 million-word Bank of English, along with a number of other dictionaries and grammar guides published based on evidence from the pioneering work.

Easing the suffering of coeliacs

In 1952, Professor Charlotte Anderson and her team began work investigating gluten fraction of wheat, being the first to demonstrate that these glutens cause coeliac disease. The discovery led to the introduction of gluten-free diets, easing the pain of millions of sufferers worldwide.

The friend of forensics

Forensic science owes a debt to Francis William Aston (BSc Applied/Pure Science, 1910; DSc Applied/Pure Science, 1914), whose research led to the development of the mass spectrometer. Put simply, his machine sorts and detects the mixed up atoms of unidentified substances, allowing scientists to figure out what’s what, and led to Aston receiving the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1922.

A city of inventions

Birmingham has long been known as a city that turns scientist’s ideas into reality and our researchers have been at the forefront of this inventiveness. For example, the first microwave power oscillators (used in the microwave oven) were developed here during World War 2, while Mary Lee Woods (BSc Mathematics, 1945) developed programs that aided the invention of the first commercially available computer.

Josiah Mason – the ‘write’ stuff

Founding father of the University, Mason was a local philanthropist and pen manufacturer who developed the first slip-in nib that could be added to a fountain pen. Mason’s invention revolutionised the pen trade and helped bring literacy and education to the masses.

Looking ahead . . .

The friendly, helpful robots

Mirroring the subject matter of Channel 4’s futuristic drama series Humans, our computer scientists are at the forefront of building robots that are able to work intelligently and independently in real-world working environments, such as prisons and care homes. A key part of the project centres around the robots learning from their experiences, rather than just completing automated, pre-programmed tasks.

Training for the new trains

We will be playing a key role in training the engineers working on projects in the new ‘rail revolution’, such as the HS2 rail link, which will cut travel times between London and Birmingham to just 49 minutes. The Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education (BCRRE) is providing the brains behind the new National College for High Speed Rail.

If the shoe fits . . .

The Prince Charming of the future will save a lot of time when searching for the owner of the glass slipper, thanks to researchers from the School of Computer Science. They have developed a unique 3D imaging engine that scans your foot and determines your shoe size to an accuracy of millimetres within seconds. The device has attracted significant funding from China and is about to enter prototype production.

UN’s apology for cholera outbreak

After a cholera epidemic in Haiti left 10,000 people dead and nearly 1 million sick, research by Dr Nicolas Lemay-Hubert was instrumental in orchestrating a rare apology from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. The disease was not present in the country before the UN’s peacekeeping force arrived, and Ban Ki-Moon said the UN was ‘profoundly sorry’ for the outbreak and subsequent handling of the epidemic.

Were you involved in any of these projects? Are there any inventions that we have forgotten? Share your memories with us by emailing alumnicommunications@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Ask Darren Ryemill (BEng & BCom Manufacturing Engineering and Commerce, 1999) what the future holds in IT and recruitment and the Alumnus of the Year is unequivocal – Artificial Intelligence is coming.

The founder and CEO of Opus Recruitment Solutions has always emphasised the need to keep abreast of upcoming trends in the market and he does so by maintaining strong networks and contacts with industry leaders.

He says: ‘Artificial Intelligence is absolutely flying and AI computers are doing incredibly clever things. ‘Anything currently being done by a human being relating to IQ will eventually be phased out, whether that happens over the next 20 or 100 years. We can replicate IQ through robots and computers: anything can be modelled better and with more accuracy by a computer than probably even the human brain.

‘Where people survive and add value that a computer simply cannot is through EQ – emotional intelligence. People will still be the puppet-masters as long as they can make sure their EQ skills are enhanced and developed. Ultimately, people will still be behind every decision made by a machine.’

Since founding Opus nine years ago, Darren has seen the business grow incredibly quickly. Turnover for 2017 is projected to exceed £100 million and with international offices in New York, Sydney and Amsterdam, he has ambitious plans to establish Opus as ‘the world’s leading strategic talent consultancy’.

This success means he has a number of business awards on his mantelpiece but in his words: ‘This is the one that’s hit me the most. ‘To think I’ve gone to the same institution as heads of state, Nobel Prize winners, lawyers, surgeons and athletes is humbling enough. I was really taken aback when I was named alumnus of the year, and very, very proud.

‘My time at University was all about friends I made. I was skiing earlier this year with two people I met here, so that’s how I remember Birmingham – being around great people and making lifelong friendships.’
Featured FUNDRAISERS

From a five marathon challenge to open mic nights, there are many ways our supporters raise money for the University’s life-changing projects.

LOUISE FERRIMAN AND FAMILY

Dedicated fundraiser Louise Ferriman and the Fight for George Charity are supporting childhood cancer research at the University because it is a cause close to their hearts. Louise’s son, George, was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia aged two. Louise says: ‘Research by Dr Frank Mussai and his team means so much to me and to my family. George is now in remission. If it wasn’t for researchers like Frank, he might not be alive right now.’

The Ferriman family launched the University’s Christmas bauble campaign last year and Louise and her friend recently completed five marathons in just a month. Together they have raised more than £6,000.

48 HOURS TEAM

The 48 hours challenge was a collaborative project between the University of Birmingham and the University of Nottingham. Students from each university spent a weekend learning all about fundraising before being tasked to go back to their universities and put it to action.

Through selling Krispy Kreme doughnuts, hosting an open mic night and a Zumba-thon, the enthusiastic team of Birmingham students raised more than £1,000 for childhood cancer research at the University and helped raise awareness about the cause on campus.

GEMMA LANDER

With live music, a cocktail bar, boho face painting and street food, ‘An Evening of Wishes’ charity gala was a fun-filled evening that raised £930 for Braf Mutation Bowel Cancer research at the University and £930 for The Wedding Wishing Well Foundation.

Gemma says: ‘I was inspired to raise money towards research into Braf Mutation Bowel Cancer after learning an ex-colleague of mine, Laura Brooks, was battling the disease. She was a fighter and did so much fundraising on her own, she was a super-woman.’

GUNG-HO TEAM

Staff members from across the University joined together to tackle the Gung-Ho Challenge, a 5km run with an inflatable obstacle course. Heather Owen (BA International Relations, 2010) says: ‘Working at the University, we’re constantly inspired by the truly life-changing research happening here. Taking part in the Gung-Ho Challenge allowed us to give back and raise more than £500 for a range of unique research projects giving hope to couples experiencing miscarriage.’

Feeling inspired? Join our team of staff, alumni and friends running the Great Birmingham 10k in April. You’ll be helping to raise money to create life-changing opportunities for 10,000 young people! Find out more on page 14 or visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/birmingham10k

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**Image:** Shivani Bansal, Georgia Chandler, Bhavik Gehri, Isabelle Watson, Josephine Chadband, Karolina Jagodzińska

**Image:** Gemma (right) with event helper Tracy

**Image:** Claire Palmer, Emily Nash, Joanne Lafferty, Heather Owen and Rebecca Vowles
Let us know what you have been doing since your time at Birmingham and celebrate your success with fellow alumni. To contact the alumni office email alumnicommunications@contacts.bham.ac.uk, use the enclosed contact form or tweet us using #wearebrumalum.

1970s

NICK DAVIES (BMus Music, 1976)
I graduated in 1976 but now I can’t play anything musical, as Multiple Sclerosis makes it impossible. I write concert reviews (including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra) for my local paper, the Newbury Weekly News. Non-musically, I have a food blog on Facebook and website called My Easy Suppers, which inspires people with meal ideas. My Facebook page started from nothing in June 2015, and now has more than 21,000 fans. I never expected to attract so many people! www.myeasysuppers.com

1970s

JANINE TURNER (BA German Studies, 1979)
I recently received the German Embassy’s Lifetime Achievement Award for services to German, which was presented to me by the author John le Carré. I won a DAAD scholarship in 1977 to study at Freiburg University and went on after Birmingham to do a PGCE at Durham. Here I taught German and French until 1985 when we had our first son. Soon after the birth of our second son, we went to live in Chile where I also taught German – through Spanish. I have taught German since then at many schools, while also publishing three A level textbooks on literature and I deliver film workshops in arts cinemas in the North West.

2000s

SARAH LEAVESLEY (Cert HE, Creative Writing, 2003)
My short novella, Kaleidoscope, published by Mantle Lane Press was launched at Leicester’s States of Independence independent presses fair. The book contains thanks to Elsa Braekkan Payne, who taught me at Birmingham. Kaleidoscope is ‘a compelling and disturbing tale of a disintegrating life.’

2010s

DR JOSHUA ANDY (MA Russian and East European Studies, 2005; PhD, Russian and East European Studies, 2011)
I have just been recognised with the Educator of the Year Award from the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh. The prize is for ‘dedication to inspiring critical thought and personal growth among students through lessons of the Holocaust’.

I am a history teacher at Pittsburgh’s Winchester Thurston School and have worked with many students to understand the impact historical events have had on our lives and culture. holocaustcenterpgh.org

Find more stories and share your update at oldjoe.co.uk
EVENTS

For full event details or help organising your own alumni event or reunion visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/events, email alumnievents@contacts.bham.ac.uk or call +44 (0)121 414 8904

NOVEMBER

GOLD, SILVER AND BRONZE IN BYZANTIUM
Discover Byzantium – the once-great empire whose glittering capital was the city of Constantinople (today’s Istanbul) – through this intriguing exploration of its coinage and economy.
Until Sunday 18 March 2018, Barber Institute of Fine Arts

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT
A festival of music and readings led by one of the University’s choirs.
Monday 4 December, 6.15pm, Great Hall, Aston Webb Building

ALUMNI CHRISTMAS GATHERING
Join us for some festive fun in Birmingham.
See www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/events for more details. December date TBC

EPS CHRISTMAS LECTURE
Join science and maths writer Simon Singh on a whistle-stop tour through his best-selling books.
Thursday 7 December, 6.00pm, Elgar Concert Hall, The Bramall

JANUARY 2018

AN AUDIENCE WITH... MATT DAWSON
Spend the evening with the former England and Lions rugby union star Matt Dawson, who won 77 caps for his country, including nine as captain.
25 January, 7.30pm, Elgar Concert Hall, The Bramall

MARCH 2018

ARTS & SCIENCE FESTIVAL 2018
A week-long celebration of research, culture and collaboration across campus and beyond.
12–18 March, Edgbaston campus

MAY 2018

BIRMINGHAM 10K
Find out more on page 14.
6 May, Birmingham city centre

DONT MISS...

2018 ALUMNI REUNION
29 September 2018, Edgbaston campus
For details, see page 47 and the back cover.
Happy to improve health care

‘Amazing staff and inspirational patients’ motivate the healthcare leader named among seven outstanding individuals awarded honorary degrees this summer.

Sarah-Jane Marsh (MA Russian and European Studies, 2000; PGDip Healthcare Management, 2002; MSc Healthcare Management, 2005) has led Birmingham Children’s Hospital since 2009, when she became the youngest ever NHS chief executive.

She successfully managed its merger with Birmingham Women’s Hospital last year, and is proud to have achieved a partnership that is the first healthcare trust of its kind in Europe.

The focus of Sarah-Jane’s job is making the hospital a great place to work for its 6,000 staff.

‘Organisations don’t have two cultures so if we’ve got happy staff who are working well together we’re going to get happy patients,’ she says.

‘I want families who come here to be confident that they’re receiving some of the very best care in the world.’

Sarah-Jane is also chair of the NHS England Maternity Transformation Programme, and is working hard to make maternal care safer, including additional support for women with mental health issues.

She describes her role as the ‘the most amazing job on the planet.’

‘It comes with its challenges as you have to make difficult decisions, but it allows you to make a difference every single day,’ she adds.

Other graduands were:

- **Professor David Thouless and Professor Mike Kosterlitz** (see page 5) – winners of the Nobel Prize for Physics 2016 – Doctors of Science
- **Tony Garnett** – Actor/producer – Doctor of Letters
- **Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla** – City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra music director – Doctor of Music
- **Joan McGregor** – Conflict transformation specialist – Doctor of the University
- **Cilla Snowball** (BA French, 1981) – Advertising industry leader and founder of the University’s Alumni Leadership Mentoring Programme – Doctor of the University

The East Lodge Gatehouse (pictured) is a gorgeous turreted gatehouse at the entrance to Monzie Castle, the most recently finished of four unique holiday cottages on the Monzie Estate.

Featuring octagonal rooms, with two bathrooms, a kitchen recently refurbished by Monzie Joinery and an open fireplace, the house sleeps four and is surrounded by beautiful countryside.

For your chance to win a three-night stay, simply answer this question: **In which year did David Crichton design a clan tartan for Homecoming Scotland?**

Please email your answer to alumnicommunications@contacts.bham.ac.uk by 31 December 2017.

For more information about staying on the Monzie Estate, visit www.monzieestate.com/holidays

KEY TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The break must be taken in 2018 outside of the school holidays
- After you enter this competition, you will be asked if you wish to opt in to communications from the Monzie Estate

For a full list of University of Birmingham terms and conditions, visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumnicompetitions

To view the Monzie Estate’s data protection statement, visit www.monzieestate.com

**A MINIBREAK IN SCOTLAND**
Your reunion day

Booking form

Name ....................................................................................................................................
Address and contact numbers ........................................................................................
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Year and subject of graduation .......................................................................................
Job title ............................................................................................................................
Company name .................................................................................................................
Your name as it should appear on literature ..................................................................
Guest name as it should appear on literature ............................................................... 

Dietary, accessibility and other requirements

My requirements are ........................................................................................................
My guest’s requirements are ...........................................................................................
Please add my/our name/s year and subject to the online [ ] print [ ] list of attendees

Payment details

Please return your completed booking form, with payment by Friday 7 September 2018. Payments after this time will incur a £10 administrative fee.
Please state how many of each ticket you would like to purchase:

☐ Reunion Day Ticket – £47 each (£42 each if booked before 1 June 2018)
☐ Reunion Day and Dinner Ticket – £87 (£82 if booked before 1 June 2018)
☐ Reunion Dinner Ticket Only – £40
☐ I enclose a cheque for £ ........................................................................................................ made payable to the University of Birmingham or
☐ Please charge my Visa/MasterCard/Amex (delete as applicable)

Amount £ ...................................................
Card number   /   /   Expiry date   /   /   Issue number (if applicable) .........................
Name on card ......................................................................................................................
Start date   /   /   Expiry date   /   /   Issue number (if applicable) .........................

Signature ................................................................. Date .............................

Please return to:
Anniversary Reunion 2018, Development and Alumni Relations Office,
University of Birmingham, Birmingham Research Park, Vincent Drive, B15 2SQ.

Data protection

You are in control of your data. We want to stay in touch with you and keep your personal information in accordance with your wishes. You will be kept updated with news from our campus, including research, educational activities and courses, events, alumni activities, and opportunities to support our fundraising and volunteering programmes. Depending on your preferences, you will receive communications via post, email, telephone, SMS text messages, and social media. We would like to ensure that our interactions with you are appropriate and cost-effective. We will pay attention to your responses (including e-tracking) and, from time to time, may use your data for profiling, wealth screening, targeting, and research purposes. Your information will be held securely by the University of Birmingham and will only be made available to our academic and administrative departments, recognised alumni groups, and trusted agents acting on behalf of the University. We will never sell your personal data or share it for non-University of Birmingham programmes. If you decide to donate to the University, you can choose whether to give anonymously or be recognised on our Donor Roll of Honour. Information on how your data is held and used is set out in our Data Protection Statement at www.birmingham.ac.uk/dataprotection. If you wish to opt-out of any contact or have any questions about your personal data, please contact Luke McGarrity on Lmcgarrity@bham.ac.uk. Our Inland Revenue charities reference number is X7237.

For more information call +44 (0)121 414 8904. For our cancellation policy, please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/alumni/cancellation-policy.pdf
We will be celebrating with the classes of 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983 and 1993, as well as alumni from our ‘Golden classes’ (Class of 1967 and beyond). However, all alumni are welcome to attend.