

Culture Club



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UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM



Antiques Roadshow



Pop-Up Performances



Heritage Hub



YOUR BUZZ

Edited by Kate Pritchard

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Front and back cover: L–R above, Clare Mullett and Alison Darby, see pages 8–9.



Vice-Chancellor's View

University culture

Last year we awarded an honorary doctorate to Barry Everitt, now Professor of Behavioural Neuroscience and Master of Downing College, Cambridge. Barry did his PhD at Birmingham, remembered his time here with great affection, and asked if the lunchtime concerts at the Barber continued. They were, he said, one of the highpoints of his time here. He would walk across the campus from his lab to hear Ivor Keys and others talk and perform. Yes, I assured him, they did.

I also explained that the University was making a fresh commitment to promoting the cultural life on campus. Ian Grosvenor's appointment as Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Cultural Engagement has been a key part of this, and Ian's leadership has both galvanized cultural activities on campus and led to a new relationship between the University, the City, and the wider community.

Many have contributed to this cultural renaissance around our campus. Winterbourne thrives, the Barber's visitor numbers are buoyant and its exhibitions make national headlines. Our state-of-the-art home for Special Collections was formally opened this year, and many see the fascinating displays in the foyer of the Muirhead.

We now have our own Blue Plaque trail which combines a celebration of the remarkable academic history of our university with its remarkable architecture. A wonderful booklet has been produced, and I live in hope that all our students (and staff) will walk the trail at least once.

Much of this was on display at the Community Day, when a staggering 12,000 visited the University, had fun,

visited the Lapworth, savoured the spectacular architecture, and glimpsed something of our research achievement and academic impact. And that in the same week as performances were popping up around campus, a novel initiative which will be repeated.

Amidst new ventures, new exhibitions, and new facilities there is much that we perhaps take too easily for granted. Does any university have as many fine statues adorning its campus? Lectures, productions, and performances are part of the rhythm of our University life as staff and students perform both on campus and in the city. A highlight this year was a remarkably committed and moving performance of Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* at the Town Hall.

So much is done so well that it merits still better attendance. Student drama is outstanding, and the Cadbury Theatre an intimate and involving venue to enjoy it. In June music students produced Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. Not an easy opera to stage, but their setting in Second World War London was inspired. Never have the witches – here as enemy agents – been as menacing, and Dido's suicide was as affecting and tragic as I have seen it. Like many in the audience, I was moved to tears. It was a pity that the Barber Concert Hall wasn't sold out. Perhaps next year it will be.

As Barry Everitt remembered long after he had moved on, **the cultural life of the University is as profound as it is memorable.**

*Vice-Chancellor,
 Professor David Eastwood*



Professor Ian Grosvenor

Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Cultural Engagement

It has been just over a year since I became Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Cultural Engagement. As I said early on, culture is at the heart of the Birmingham experience. It not only informs the University's past but is central to shaping its future. So what have been the highlights of the last twelve months? Things started slowly as I spent the first few months meeting staff and visiting arts and heritage organisations in the city. This was followed by Clare Mullett, Deputy University Curator and Alison Darby, Head of Winterbourne joining the 'Culture team' on a part-time basis. For those who like structures we have now put in place two new committees – the Cultural Engagement Committee and the Cultural Programming Committee. The former addresses issues of governance and the latter is really a discussion forum for planning future events that highlight the breadth of our cultural assets on campus.

Having structures and people in place, we then started on a series of projects including designing new web pages to better promote our cultural collections and sharing information about cultural events on campus. With regards to the 'On campus' events page, which went live in June, it is one thing to have a page, but it is totally another to regularly populate it.

This is where the Programming Committee came into its own and things moved apace with the launch of the Blue Plaque trail, the 'Arts versus Science' debate, *Court on Canvas* at the Barber and the very successful Community Day. June was also the month in which we organised a mini arts festival – *Pop-up Performances* and everyone who attended the Friday night session in the Underground will fondly remember the enthusiasm and talent of the Aston Performing Arts Academy and especially their rendition of *Thriller*, including zombies dancing.

One of the elements of the Culture strategy is to bring the city into the University and vice-versa. *Painted by Rust*, in the Aston Webb Rotunda until the end of August, is an exhibition by Birmingham photographer Brigitte Winsor. At first sight it appears to be a collection of abstract art, but look closely and what you see is rusting ironwork in vivid close-up. But the exhibition is more than this – it is also a collaborative venture with the School of Metallurgy and Materials. City and academy brought into a conversation through a common interest in the beauty of corrosion and seeming imperfection.

In the opposite direction, images from a collection of photographs taken by Phyllis Nicklin, a former member of staff at the University, are displayed in the current Gas Hall exhibition *Home of Metal: 40 years of Heavy Metal and its Unique Birthplace* to illustrate 1960s Aston where Ozzy Osbourne grew up.

So what about the next twelve months? The big events will be the *Children's Lives* exhibition in the spring in the Gas Hall (a joint event between the University, Birmingham City Archives and Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery), the Cultural Olympiad in the summer, a music festival in the autumn to mark the opening of the stunning new Bramall concert hall and in December, the launch of the Barber Institute of Fine Arts' 80th anniversary celebrations. There will also be a lot of smaller events, so keep a regular eye on the 'On Campus' page and if you have an idea for a cultural event please write to us at culture@contacts.bham.ac.uk and we can discuss it at the next Programming Committee.

ANTIQUES ROADSHOW

During April we welcomed BBC's Antiques Roadshow to campus. Among the diverse array of objects that day were three presented by University staff.

YMCA Album Special Collections

'Paul Atterbury invited Special Collections to showcase an album from our YMCA archive when the Antiques Roadshow visited the campus in April. The album was compiled by a young teacher, Jean Cook, during her voluntary work in World War 2 as a photographer for the YMCA's *Snapshots from Home League*. This imaginative scheme, first operated in World War 1, exemplifies the YMCA's major contribution to welfare provision for the troops in both wars. A soldier requested photographs of his family, and the nearest photographer enrolled in the scheme took the photographs and posted them to him.

Jean's album contains the completed request forms she received, with copies of the snapshots she took and the many letters of appreciation from their recipients. These photographs are wonderful images of families in their home surroundings shown just as the soldiers might imagine them. The letters of thanks are extremely touching and, in some cases, very humorous, making reference as one does to his wife's figure and hairstyle!

The real value of this album is its social history significance, something Paul said was impossible to assess in monetary terms, but he suggested a valuation of £100–£200.'

Philippa Bassett, Special Collections



Paul Atterbury with Philippa Bassett

The Wheatstone Wave Machine University Collection of Historic Physics Instruments

'For the Antiques Roadshow we produced an object called the Wheatstone Wave Machine. This was devised by the ingenious scientist Professor Sir Charles Wheatstone of King's College London around 1850 to demonstrate features concerning the wave nature of polarised light. Only a few were made and less than 20 are known to have survived. Many of these are incomplete or not working. After a baffling year or two, I had managed to understand what our machine should do and to get it working only a few weeks before the Roadshow. I was therefore thrilled to be able to demonstrate it to the expert Hilary Kay. By pushing wooden bars through the machine, arrays of small white beads are made to produce a variety of travelling wave patterns. These are both instructive to a physicist and spectacular for anyone. Wheatstone liked the machine so much that it features at the centre of a stereo portrait of his family, and a copy of this is included in the Roadshow. It is difficult to attach values to rare items that are not currently on the market; our machine is not in perfect condition, but even in its restored state Hilary Kay thought £7,000 would be realistic.'

Robert Whitworth,
Research and Cultural Collections



Hilary Kay (left) with Robert Whitworth

'Miss Clara' Barber Institute of Fine Arts

'Staff at the Barber Institute knew they had uncovered a star in the making when they were researching the gallery's statuary for the exhibition *Carved, Cast and Modelled: Sculpture from the Barber Collection*. But little did they know that a humble bronze cast of a rhinoceros would have Barber Director, Professor Ann Sumner almost speechless at its valuation.

Recent research by Head of Collections and Learning, Robert Wenley, had highlighted the significance of 'Miss Clara' – the world's first (and possibly last) celebrity rhinoceros.

'Miss Clara' was purchased for the Barber's collection in 1942 for £575, although last valued at £20,000. On a hunch that she might be worth more than her weight in bronze, if not gold, Professor Sumner accompanied her to the Antiques Roadshow. Professor Sumner said: "I was determined not to react in that clichéd Antiques Roadshow way, where the person is amazed by some ludicrously high valuation. But, when he named his price, my jaw dropped. It was noisy in there, so maybe I misheard him – but I'm looking forward to seeing the programme just to make sure!"'

Andrew Davies,
Barber Institute of Fine Arts



Professor Ann Sumner with Clive Stewart-Lockhart

Joseph Chamberlain's vision for the University was 'A school of universal instruction, not confined to any particular branch of knowledge but taking all knowledge in its province.' The University's Blue Plaque Trail, launched in May, by Research and Commercial Collections, demonstrates how Chamberlain's vision has been realised. It celebrates those who have helped shape our heritage as a research university and showcases the University's broad cultural offer and its range of unique museum artefacts and archives.

The blue plaques around campus serve as reminders of the immense accomplishments of men and women who have worked here in the past. It is hoped they will inspire those who pass by and will encourage yet greater achievement in the future. Among the 23 blue plaques that celebrate Birmingham's achievement are:



3 Sir Norman Haworth (1883–1950)

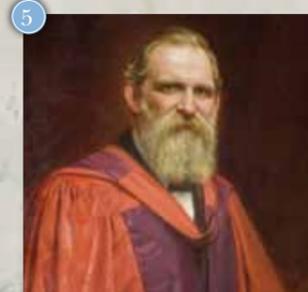
Norman Haworth, Mason Professor of Chemistry at Birmingham from 1925 to 1948 made his life's work the study of carbohydrates. He made extensive discoveries, culminating in the synthesis of vitamin C in 1933. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1937.



T B Huxley-Jones Plaque of Sir Norman Haworth. Bronze 1963

5 Charles Lapworth (1842–1920)

Charles Lapworth FRS was the first Professor of Geology at the University and a highly significant figure across a wide range of geological fields. The Lapworth Museum of Geology at the University houses his geological collection and archive.



Bernard Munns Portrait of Charles Lapworth. Oil on canvas, 1914

7 Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934)

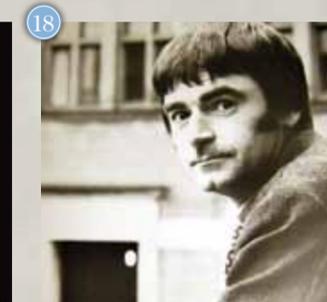
Composer, Sir Edward Elgar became the University's first Professor of Music in 1905 and founded its Music Library. Born near Worcester he is regarded as the greatest late Romantic composer in Britain.



Sir Edward Elgar

18 Professor David Lodge CBE (b. 1935)

Professor David Lodge CBE is a renowned literary critic and award-winning novelist. He is Emeritus Professor of English Literature at the University and is best known for his 'campus novels' which bear an uncanny resemblance to Birmingham.



David Lodge at the University of Birmingham

20 The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies

The Centre, the focus for British cultural studies, was founded at the University in 1964 by Professor of English, Richard Hoggart. The Centre made a point of recruiting students from backgrounds under-represented at the University, many of whom would go on to be leaders in the field.

Learn more

www.birmingham.ac.uk/collections/blueplaque.aspx



CCCS publication 'Annual report 1969



Professor Lord Robert Winston from Imperial College, London joined panel members to debate *Arts vs Science; Can one exist without the other?* to launch The Blue Plaque Trail during May. You can watch this panel debate at the University's YouTube channel www.youtube.com/unibirmingham



COMMUNITY DAY 2011

**Fantastic!
We loved it all!
Please do more!**

The words of one happy visitor to this year's Community Day on 19 June. It is estimated that 12,000 visitors descended on campus, an increase of over 50% from last year. The, now annual, Community Day is a huge success and could only be delivered thanks to a huge amount of hard work from staff and students. Thanks for making 2011's event memorable, the only question is... how will we beat that in 2012?

During the event we asked some of the general public visitors about the Community Day and engagement with the University.

- 58.8% agreed or strongly agreed that 'the University communicates well with its local community', 31.9% neither agreed nor disagreed and 9.2% disagreed
- 96% agreed or strongly agreed that 'the Community Day is an effective way for the University to communicate with its local community'
- 66% agreed or strongly agreed that they 'understand more about the work taking place at the University having attended the Community Day'
- 78% agreed or strongly agreed that they 'know more about University facilities available to them having attended the Community Day'
- Over a quarter of visitors, 27.8%, had never been to the University before

During one week in June a variety of events popped up on campus, often in some surprising places. *Pop-Up Performances*; a week long mini arts festival ran from 13-19 June. Stand-up comedy routines in the Main Library and a performance of film shorts in Chancellor's Court were among an array of music and drama performances and, exhibitions and installations.

This year's event was a pilot scheme organised by Clare Mullett from the Cultural Engagement Team with help from staff and students. A student, member of staff Victoria Watts was instrumental in organising the programme of events.

Pop-Up Performances will return in 2012. If you have an idea for a *Pop-Up Performance* contact the team culture@contacts.bham.ac.uk





L-R: Clare Mullett, Professor Ian Grosvenor and Alison Darby

Thinking outside the frame

Kate Pritchard learns how culture at Birmingham is set to take centre stage

If you stroll around our Edgbaston campus you could not fail to see symbols of the University's rich and diverse cultural heritage. From the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Winterbourne House and Garden, the Lapworth Museum of Geology to the University's Special Collections there is a wealth of music, sculpture, art, objects and artefacts to explore and enjoy. Further afield there is our internationally renowned Shakespeare Institute and our partnership with the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust in the Ironbridge Institute. Teaching and research at Birmingham includes subjects such as heritage management, music, art history and archaeology.

A strong heritage helps Birmingham build for the future. Special Collections recently moved to a new state-of-the-art home; the Cadbury Research Library in Muirhead Tower and the new Bramall music building will open in 2012. The Heritage and Cultural Learning Hub is collaborating within the University and beyond, pioneering research to digitise our cultural artefacts and make them interactive for heritage visitors.

Many of these symbols of our cultural pedigree are easily identifiable, a painting, an object or perhaps a blue plaque marking a cultural achievement. However, individually it is impossible for them to demonstrate the breadth of cultural activity at Birmingham where our staff and students are creating cultural moments, be it through innovative research, creative learning, internships, partnerships with cultural organisations, engagement with the local community or extra curricular activity such as Guild performances or societies.

The Cultural Engagement Team

The Cultural Engagement Team has been developed to help bring this activity together under the umbrella of a cultural strategy and solidify Birmingham's position as a culturally-significant presence locally, nationally and internationally.

The Team is led by Professor Ian Grosvenor who was appointed to the role of Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Cultural Engagement in 2010, and includes Alison Darby as Cultural Partnerships Manager and Clare Mullett as Cultural Initiatives Manager.

Collaborating with colleagues across the University, the Cultural Engagement Team aim to:

- Develop a coherent cultural strategy and make it easier for partners and potential partners to engage with the University
- Increase student, staff and visitor engagement with the University's cultural collections
- Significantly enhance the cultural offer for students and staff
- Support research knowledge transfer and impact through accessible, customised displays

- Develop strong relationships and partnerships with Birmingham's arts and cultural communities

Collaboration and coordination

The **Cultural Engagement Team** will develop a coherent cultural strategy that will guide and facilitate activity across the University. The introduction of this team will enhance the already excellent work being carried out at Birmingham and help to identify and explore potential new collaborations and partnerships, both internally and externally.

A new **Cultural Engagement Committee** made up of representatives from across the University develops, implements and monitors the strategy on an ongoing basis. They work together to explore new ideas for research, teaching, community engagement, partnerships, events and projects. A key part of their role is encouraging collaboration, whether internally, through cross-discipline or department initiatives or externally, with existing and new partners in the region. The Committee will produce an annual report of cultural research, teaching, events and engagement activities.

In addition, a new **Cultural Programming Committee** has been established which is coordinating a University programme of cultural events, effectively promoting the variety of existing events across the University and developing and enhancing the University's 'cultural offer'. By coordinating the wide range of cultural events that take place it will be much easier to demonstrate how culture at Birmingham is realising its strategic ambition.

Culture and the Strategic Framework

Culture plays a pivotal role in the University's ambition to be a leading global university. The University collections are a major resource for building research partnerships, supporting teaching, enhancing the student and academic experience, promoting knowledge exchange, educating new audiences, and supporting global engagement.

The future of Culture at Birmingham

The Cultural Engagement Team is in its infancy but has already made an impact. It has recently agreed internships with key cultural partners such as Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. It launched the Blue Plaque Trail and held a week long arts festival; *Pop-Up Performances*. Whilst culture is certainly not new for Birmingham a more coordinated and collaborative approach may be. I, for one, will be eager to see what's next for the Culture Club.

Have a cultural idea?
Contact the Cultural Engagement Team
culture@contacts.bham.ac.uk

The Culture Experience: Heritage career opportunities with the University of Birmingham

More than ever before, curators and archivists at the University are developing museum and heritage opportunities which both benefit students in terms of hands-on experience and the University in terms of useful museum projects.

Opportunities... ...on campus

The Barber Institute of Fine Arts offers six museum internships a year, designed to provide work experience for graduates from the History of Art department who are seeking a career in museums and galleries. There are opportunities to gain experience in curating and learning, marketing, press and PR and exhibitions. Interns work under the direction and close supervision of the Barber Institute's staff, and each intern is also funded to attend a relevant seminar, workshop or conference, as agreed with their line managers.

This summer **Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections** is hosting a pilot project to offer three University of Birmingham student internships for two separate schemes: the first to improve research access to the athletics materials; and the second scheme to enable a student to acquire more in-depth experience of the work of libraries, archives and conservation which will include the opportunity to work on small independent projects across the spectrum of the service. The Cadbury Research Library also host external student placements.

The Lapworth Museum of Geology currently offers six scholarships for one month over the summer vacation. The scholarships give students the opportunity to gain a wide range of museum experience, including documentation, conservation and display, and the students then work on a part-time basis through the following academic year. Some years the students have the opportunity to work in Dudley Museum to gain experience of a municipal museum. The scheme is open to all students enrolled on geology single Honours or joint Honours programmes and is highly successful in introducing students to the museum profession. A large proportion have gone on to PGR and PGT degrees in palaeontology and other aspects of geology, and around 10% have entered the museum profession over the 12 years that the scheme has been running.

Research and Cultural Collections hosts placements for students from different disciplines across and outside the University, developing projects which are mutually beneficial. The students work on solo projects and in groups to gain valuable work experience for developing careers in the heritage sector. Projects are available across a broad range of arts, cultural and science collections. Since 2002 many undergraduates and postgraduates have developed museum knowledge and skills and the majority of them now work in the heritage business, in institutions such as the Tate, the National Trust, Manchester Museum and the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists.



Opportunities... ...with our Cultural Partners in the West Midlands

This autumn we are launching an innovative new **Cultural Intern Scheme** sponsored by the University and its core Cultural Partners. There are five placements available for a six month paid internship; each offering real opportunities to gain high quality work experience undertaking meaningful projects at leading cultural organisations in the West Midlands region. These internationally renowned institutions include **Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Birmingham Opera Company, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, Library of Birmingham and Sampad South Asian Arts**. Exciting projects which the successful applicant may work on include: new and digital media, content production, arts performance and production, collections management, communication and, learning and access.

The programme is open to University of Birmingham students who have graduated with a first class Honours degree or Masters degree since 2009. Each placement is designed to increase graduates' knowledge and skills, and for interns to gain an interesting and valuable introduction to the workplace which will enhance their future employment prospects. The structure of the programme includes joint training sessions based at the University, a six month work-based placement and individual mentoring. A residential and midterm training sessions will focus on core communication and business skills, as well as offering an insight into the cultural industry through expert speakers and visits. There will also be the opportunity for interns to discuss projects and experiences with each other and learn from other's experiences.



THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM



Opportunities... ...with our International Partners



We also offer the opportunity for our students to work with university collections overseas, giving them the chance to learn how our international colleagues use and work with their collections. **The U21 International Student Projects Program: Museums and Collections Award** constitutes a month placement for students from the University of Birmingham and the University of Melbourne, and is unique in that it involves working across a broad range of cultural collections with various staff. The student works on a variety of museum-related projects such as exhibition display, education, digitisation, documentation, research and conservation. They also record a short film about the experience which is shown on the University's website and the Universitas 21 site. Students get to work directly with curators, conservators, collections managers, archivists, academics and the media teams – offering exposure to a broad range of museum skills. We hope that this scheme will soon be opened up to include other universities with museums and collections from around the world.



Learn more
www.birmingham.ac.uk/collections/opportunities.aspx

The Heritage and Cultural Learning Hub

Dr Richard Clay describes how academics at Birmingham are collaborating with the heritage and creative industry sectors to bring the past to life.

The Heritage and Cultural Learning Hub was originally developed by academics in Birmingham's IBM VISTA centre and the Department of History of Art. It has, however, quickly become a large, research-driven, cross-disciplinary and cross-sector network harnessing leading edge technologies to enhance the ways in which we learn about the past.

Smart ideas

The Hub is currently finalising contracts for a £2.4m European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) project that involves collaboration between academics in the Colleges of Arts and Law, Engineering and Physical Sciences and Social Sciences and, creative industry businesses and internationally significant heritage institutions within the West Midlands. Together, these partners are combining their expertise to create innovative, augmented-reality applications for mobile devices. Potentially a user could hold their smartphone camera in front of an object in the Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery (BMAG), or one of the city's historic buildings and have information appear on screen that can be navigated by touch. Visitors could then be guided

through tailor-made, interactive heritage tours with augmented reality bringing the past to life in their hands.

Exploring with touch

The Hub's ERDF teams will also be designing software for multi-user, multi-touch tables. These will be used in BMAG, the new £192m Library of Birmingham, the World Heritage Site displays of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and the new £60m Hive; a partnership between the University of Worcester and Worcestershire County Council to develop a new library and archive centre. Touch-tables are like enormous iPhones allowing visitors to browse any number of high quality digital images, or 2D and 3D scans of objects that may have previously been kept in storage for conservation or due to a lack of display space. Expanding, contracting and rotating such content with intuitive hand gestures, users can simultaneously have films running on the touch-table or wall, navigate maps, and access texts that allow them to 'touch through' to the information they seek. Visitors can pass whatever they are browsing across the table or wall to another user, download information onto a smartphone or upload their own

feedback, helping inform organisations and other users. At one end of a touch-table someone might be playing an educational game, while at the other people can be exploring historical documents and images. Multi-user, multi-touch technology enriches visitor experiences, making it even more exciting and sociable to access previously hidden heritage riches.

A new home for the Hub

The Hub's ERDF outputs will be informed and shaped by Birmingham research and tested in the new Prototyping Hall based in the ERI Building on the Edgbaston campus, due to open in late-2011. The Hall will include the world's largest 3D touch table, purchased with generous alumni donations through the Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO). A £165k alumnus donation and a £150k Garfield Weston Foundation grant, made possible by DARO and with significant support from the College of Arts and Law, has assisted in funding the Prototyping Hall, contributing to the purchase of its 3m x 2m, 3D, multi-touch wall, six wall mounted multi-touch screens, and 40 smartphones and tablets. Whilst the technology will be impressive,

perhaps the Hall's most innovative feature is its user tracking system that will map and digitally analyse visitors' movements, the direction of their gaze, and their interactions with the various screens. New software can be tested with user groups from our region's diverse, heritage audiences, ensuring that the project's completed digital outputs suit visitors' learning needs and styles

Growing potential

Earlier this year, even before the ERDF success, Hub researchers from History of Art and the Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) group in Computer Science had already begun work on new multi-touch software in collaboration with heritage organisations. With Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funding they are transforming the hundreds of texts and images developed by academics, curators, archivists and libraries for the AHRC Suburban Birmingham: Spaces and Places 1880-1960 project for delivery on multi-touch screens in the Cadbury Research Library, the Central Library,

and in BMAG's £10m Birmingham History Galleries that will open in 2012. Working in partnership with the University of Wales, they are using another AHRC grant to develop 3D multi-touch tools to explore the medieval Newport Ship recently discovered by archaeologists. At the same time a JISC-funded team from the Colleges of Arts and Law and Engineering and Physical Sciences is working on a multi-touch programme that allows researchers and students to use touch tables to magnify and collaboratively annotate digitised versions of the rare and fragile Islamic manuscripts in the Cadbury Research Library's Mingana Collection. Another Hub group is just beginning to develop a learning and teaching tool for languages; using touch-tables in ways that will enhance learning for Birmingham students studying numerous subjects. That nascent initiative hints at how the Hub's culture of collaboration has benefits far beyond heritage and has future potential to offer innovative tools for seminar rooms across the University.

Learn more

www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/hclh/index.aspx

The Hub's rapid development has been possible thanks to academics, heritage sector professionals and businesses recognising that they can achieve more together than they can apart. As a result, Birmingham academics are gaining new tools for research and, learning and teaching and, are getting to grips with new research questions in collaboration with an expanding network of non-academic partners regionally, nationally and internationally. In the process, staff from across the University are finding new ways to impact positively on the learning experiences of diverse publics and, at the same time, contribute to the UK's burgeoning, creative and visitor economies. Birmingham has always been a home of innovation and in that respect it appears that its future rather resembles its past.

My favourite piece

Staff and students involved in the University's cultural collections have picked a piece of art, sculpture or an artifact that they particularly enjoy.



Drinking tea at Esbehiah
YMCA collection

'I am currently on a six week intern placement with the Cadbury Research Library (CRL). I applied for the place because I am considering a career in archives and heritage and I thought this would enable me to gain experience and to see if this area was for me. So far it has been absolutely fascinating!

As part of my internship I have worked on producing an online exhibition using photographs from the YMCA collection. The YMCA collection contains over 4,500 photographs charting their work during the First World War. All of these photographs have been digitised by the CRL and will be made available to the public in 2012 together with my exhibition.

I decided to base my exhibition around the theme of 'tea drinking', this allowed me to show a wide range of the YMCA's activities and the countries they worked in. I particularly like this image which shows a fete that was given for convalescent soldiers by the YMCA on Whit Monday 1917 at Esbehiah Gardens in Cairo, Egypt. It shows the importance of tea within the English culture, how it can bridge social divides and unite in a time of conflict.'

Sian Evans, Second year Medieval English and History student

The Harvest Wagon 1787 Thomas Gainsborough

'My favourite Barber Institute painting is still *The Harvest Wagon* by Thomas Gainsborough – the work I most admired long before I came to work here. It was the first major loan I ever negotiated for an exhibition back in 1987. I came here to discuss the loan with then director Hamish Miles and included it in the Gainsborough in Bath show in 1988 at the Holburne Museum.

The painting reminds me of home and autumn in the West Country, my favourite time of year there. Gainsborough's work is set just outside Bath, in the Shockwick valley where he loved to ride and sketch. His favourite white horse is shown in the painting, as are his two beloved daughters, who modelled for the figures in the wagon. They lived on Lansdown for a while, where I grew up. My work on Gainsborough has involved reading many of his letters and I feel I would really have liked him, had I met him, and I relate nowadays to his love for his two daughters, as I have a couple of my own!

The muted colours and feathery brushwork are masterly. Despite the obvious beauty of the work, it did not sell and, when he moved to London he gave it to his friend Walter Wiltshire, a successful carrier who helped transport Gainsborough's paintings to London for exhibitions. I like to think of his large pictures travelling in wagons, and think how very different it is today with climate-controlled cases when we move works to exhibitions!

Seeing it in our galleries is still a thrill for me.'

Professor Ann Sumner, Director of the Barber Institute
Barber Professor of Fine Art and Curatorial Practice



The Japanese Bridge

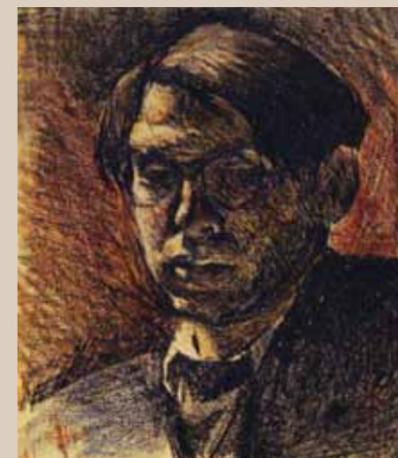
'My favourite feature at Winterbourne is the Japanese bridge. It represents early 20th century western gardens that were heavily influenced by the Japanese ideal of manicured nature. The bridge was introduced by John Macdonald Nicolson who purchased the property in the early 1930s. He was a keen gardener with a passion for alpine gardening and developed many rockery areas with an eastern influence within the garden, adding the bridge at that time. Visitors' memories and photos of Winterbourne often include the bridge and the complementary planting of the huge rhubarb like leaves of *Gunnera manicata*. The bridge is a gateway to the wilder areas of Winterbourne which neighbour the wet woodland. Here native woodland plants such as Butterbur can be seen

thriving in their natural habitat.

The bridge fell into disrepair in the latter part of the 20th century and had to be closed to the public. Thanks to the fundraising efforts of our supporters we were able to commission a replacement in 2007. We managed to salvage the original timbers as templates for the

replacement which was carved from local oak. The bridge has given great delight to many visitors to the garden and I am sure that it will continue to do so for many years to come.'

Lee Hale, Curator, Winterbourne House and Garden



Drawings by Hans Schwarz

'The University's Research and Cultural Collections have been very generously presented with a group of 23 drawings by the Austrian-born artist Hans Schwarz. In 1939 Schwarz came to England, aged 17, forced into exile by the Nazis. His father, as a central European Jew, was sent to Auschwitz where he died. Briefly interned on arrival, Hans found a home in Birmingham, and it was Birmingham's warm-hearted welcome that prompted

his family to make his magnificent gift.

Among the drawings are some made in his hostel in Bournville – but it is the portraits and figure subjects that stand out. As a portrait painter Schwarz soon found his voice and his metier. His wife Lena, whom he met and married in Birmingham, became his lifelong muse and model. The collection includes some studies of Lena, self portraits, landscapes, and portraits including a group of studies of John Betjeman.

Hans Schwarz is well represented in the National Portrait Gallery, his subjects including Sir Nikolaus Pevsner and the anti-nuclear campaigner Bruce Kent. These and the University's new collection of his works reflect Schwarz' expressionist use of vivid colour and interlocking form. One admirer said of his work: "He got the colour all wrong but it looks right."

Dr James Hamilton, University Curator



THE STORY OF A HOUSE

Kate Pritchard charts the history of a University House that became a home.

It stands on the periphery of the Edgbaston campus; an impressive Grade Two listed building, surrounded by beautiful gardens. The story of University House starts in 1906 when a University committee, chaired by Neville Chamberlain, the son of the University's first Chancellor Joseph Chamberlain, discussed building a permanent hall of residence for women. By 1907 they had raised enough funds and appointed architect Herbert Tudor Buckland, known for his Arts and Crafts houses in Birmingham. The minutes of these committee meetings are cared for by Special Collections in the Cadbury Research Library and they provide an interesting insight into the planning process of the new building.

A first for women

University House became the first purpose built hall of residence for women in Britain. It was a house that became a home with a rich atmosphere of academia, social interaction, and a feeling of close community. The first warden was Margery Fry who encouraged social debate and communication, using painting, literature and acting to create a lively community. Fry left the University in 1914 to organise a Quaker service for soldiers in France. Following the war she worked with prison reform and in 1921 became one of the first female magistrates. She was succeeded by Beatrice Orange, Hilda Walton and Janet Carpenter who, between them, had to deal with student evacuations, coal strikes, food shortages and air raids, through the years

1914–1951. Julia Friend became warden in 1964 when the House, yet again broke new ground, by becoming one of the first mixed halls of residence in Britain. From 1974 onwards all wardens were male.

The war years

Community spirit was the backbone of University House during the war years and residents and wardens worked closely together to help during these hard times. In 1915 the House was commandeered as a nurse's home and students were evacuated. Undeterred they took up vocational work such as nursing and held sewing parties to make garments for Belgian refugees and sun blinds for soldiers. They returned to the House in 1919.

During World War II students played an even more active role. They took part in lookouts on the roof and evening ground walks to ensure blackouts were complete. They provided a fire watching service for the House and the Law Library. As student Laura Guest remembered 'for a whole term in 1940 we didn't sleep in our beds more than three nights. We fire watched in pairs, drank soup at 2.00am and wrote entries in a log book.' The logbook is part of the University's archive held by Special Collections.

University House today

The House is now home to the internationally acclaimed Birmingham Business School. In 2004 an extension, with state-of-the-art facilities for teaching and research, was added to the House and this year a Blue



From top: Margery Fry by Charles Haslewood Shannon, Residents of University House and The House as it looks today

Plaque was installed at the Business School to recognise Sir William Ashley who created Britain's first Faculty of Commerce at the University in 1902.

Alumni who spent time at the House were kept part of the community by the University House Association which ran from 1914 to 2008. The Development and Alumni Relations Office now help to keep former students in touch with each other and many were in attendance at a recent event to celebrate the history of the House.

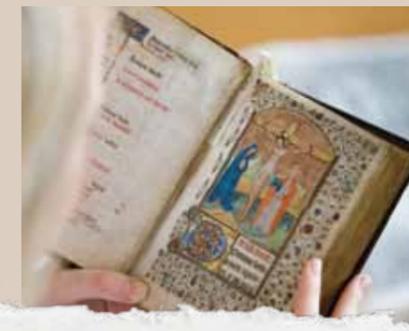
University House combines past and present almost seamlessly. The gardens also bear traces of their past life, such as the bird bath installed in 1921 as a memorial to Rose Sidgwick, the first female lecturer. Memories of a House that, to the many exceptional staff and students who passed through its door, was more a home.

Learn more

www.rcc.bham.ac.uk

Learn more about
Birmingham Business School
www.business.bham.ac.uk

Lucy Wheeler, a Birmingham graduate has produced a historical introduction to University House.



Holding the past in your hands

Kate Pritchard learns how the Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections is bringing history to life.

At the heart of the University's Edgbaston campus is a library like no other. It holds approximately 120,000 books dating from 1471 and three million manuscripts. It offers unique opportunities. Where else could you read Joseph Chamberlain's thoughts about his meetings with Hitler, immerse yourself in the beauty and elegance of Persian manuscripts dating back to the 12th century or browse first editions of Charles Dickens.

A new home

The University's Special Collections and Archives are now housed in the purpose-built, Cadbury Research Library in Muirhead Tower. This new home provides a climate controlled environment to protect the collections for future generations to enjoy. It also enabled the previously disparate collections to come together in one location with facilities for viewing, teaching and research.

The role of the collections in University life

The collections bring history to life for staff, students and visitors and they play an important role in supporting research and, learning and teaching at Birmingham. It is one thing to read about history but another to hold the past in your hands and the collections can inspire staff and students from a wide range of disciplines.

Special Collections is also responsible for the University's own heritage archive

collection including records of the founding and growth of the university dating back to 1828 which is important for the 'corporate memory' of the institution.

The collections themselves wouldn't be accessible without the hard work and enthusiasm from a team of experienced staff and volunteers. They provide a friendly and knowledgeable service that helps visitors engage with, and learn from, the rich and diverse collections. An unseen room in the Cadbury Research Library is the conservation studio where staff and volunteers meticulously care for the collections, protecting them for use by future generations.

The Cadbury Research Library welcomes all interested researchers, whether a student, member of staff or an external visitor. The team often organise guided tours of the facility including their popular lunch time tour, ideal for staff and students.

Projects and acquisitions

The Mingana Collections of Middle Eastern Manuscripts cared for by the Cadbury Research Library and designated by the government as a 'collection of national and international importance' includes a very early fragmentary Qur'an, written in kufic script, recently redated as possibly end of seventh century. Special Collections has received funding as part of a consortium with Oxford, Cambridge and Yale university libraries, the School of Oriental and African Studies and the Wellcome Library to

create a gateway for Islamic manuscripts in Islamic scripts. *Fihrist: The Gateway to Manuscripts in Arabic Scripts* aims to improve access to Islamic resources www.fihrist.org.uk. Items from the Mingana Collection will be included as part of this project to create detailed catalogue records online, this project compliments the earlier JISC funded development of the Virtual Manuscript Room where digitised versions of the manuscripts are made available for research www.vmr.bham.ac.uk

Special Collections regularly acquires rare books, archives and manuscripts, and University Archives. Recent acquisitions include the archive collection of charity Save the Children, the archives of the Youth Hostel Association and the records of the Guild of Students which includes minutes, photographs and publications from the 1880s onwards. Whether by purchase, gift, deposit, bequest or transfer these collections find a welcoming new home within the Cadbury Research Library. Here they are preserved and protected by a team who ensure that they will continue to inspire and educate future generations.

Learn more

www.special-coll.bham.ac.uk

You can view a video of the Cadbury Research Library on the University's YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/unibirmingham>

Learn more about cultural events on campus visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/oncampus/index.aspx

The BARBER Institute of Fine Arts



Exhibition
**Court on Canvas;
Tennis in Art**
27 May to 18 September

Learn more about Barber exhibitions
www.barber.org.uk/exhibitions.html

Evening concert
**Orchestra of St Paul's
Schoenberg's Pierrot lunaire
Walton's Façade**

Friday 30 September, 7.30pm

In association with the
Department of English

Learn more about Barber concerts
www.barber.org.uk/music.html



Visit the Lapworth Museum of Geology

Monday to Friday, 9.00am–5.00pm,
Saturday and Sunday,
2.00pm–5.00pm,
Aston Webb Building

Learn more
www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/lapworth-museum/index.aspx

The museum is open to staff, students and the public and can organise group visits for schools, colleges, adult education and community groups. Admission is free. If you would like a tour, talk, access to additional collections or are organising a group visit contact the museum prior to your visit.



PAINTED BY RUST

An Exhibition of Photography
by Brigitte Winsor

2 June - 31 August 2011

The Rotunda | Aston Webb Building
University of Birmingham | Edgbaston | B15 2TT

Open: Monday - Friday 9am-5pm. Admission Free
Contact: Research and Cultural Collections 0121 414 6750

SUPPORTED BY THE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM RESEARCH & CULTURAL COLLECTIONS

On The Suburban Front: World War I in South West Birmingham

Until Sunday 31 July
Muirhead Tower foyer

The exhibition features archive and rare book material from the Cadbury Research Library selected by members of the Suburban Birmingham: Spaces and Places, 1880–1960 research team. It explores the involvement in the 1914–1918 conflict of individuals and organisations living in Birmingham's south west suburbs.

This research project, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and led by the University, is a partnership initiative produced by Birmingham Archives and Heritage, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, and University of Birmingham Special Collections Cadbury Research Library.

Learn more about exhibitions
from Special Collections
www.special-coll.bham.ac.uk



Summer holiday fun

For the kids...

Garden Discovery Trails

A different garden activity trail every week during the holidays. £1 each

For the adults...

Afternoon Tea Offer

Throughout August enjoy a free second cup of tea when purchasing our everyday tea. (from 2.00pm, please show staff cards)

Learn more

www.winterbourne.org.uk
more events at Winterbourne visit
www.winterbourne.org.uk/whats-on

WINTERBOURNE
HOUSE AND GARDEN

Question Time

Clare Mullett

Cultural Initiatives Manager

1 What's the best aspect of your job?

Being inspired by our world class cultural assets and having the opportunity to work with fantastic colleagues, students and partners who feel the same way.

2 How do you unwind?

Cooking, running, drawing, reading, films, Trivial Pursuit...writing lists.

3 Which book is on your bedside table?

The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay by Michael Chabon.

4 What makes a good night out?

It would include a great exhibition, live music, tasty food, fine wine and friends.

5 What is your favourite song or piece of music?

I'm going to feel guilty for the hundreds I have to leave out. I recently saw Mozart's Requiem at Symphony Hall and Arcade Fire at the NIA. They were both incredible.

6 Where in the world would you like to be right now?

Melbourne and Tokyo are two of my favourite places on earth, but the ultimate has to be Cornwall. So I'd be by the sea, eating fish and chips with my family in Cornwall.

7 Who are the top three people on your fantasy dinner party list?

Jarvis Cocker, Bill Murray, and David Sedaris – with Michael Caines (the chef) in the kitchen.

8 If you had to pick a favourite piece of art what would it be?

I'll pretend that I didn't hear the question and mention more than one. I'll never tire of Rembrandt's soul-bearing late self portraits, and Olafur Eliasson's *The Weather Project* was moving, soothing and engaged thousands in the Tate who sunbathed and picnicked in front of it. Closer to home, I would choose Van Gogh's toiling *Peasant Woman Digging* in the Barber and Peter Lanyon's *Arts Faculty Mural* which brings the Cornish seascape to campus.

9 Describe yourself in three words

Really big hair.

10 What is your personal motto?

'Brick by brick': sage advice from my dad when faced with a daunting task.



Alison Darby

Cultural Partnerships Manager

1 What's the best aspect of your job?

Having the chance to introduce people to the huge diversity of cultural offerings in both the University and the city. People don't necessarily think of Birmingham when they think culture but our whole region is really rich in brand name arts organizations and venues which are known globally.

2 How do you unwind?

My guilty pleasure is computer games, nothing trendy, just sudoku and puzzles. I read a lot and lose hours in books.

3 Which book is on your bedside table?

I don't have a bedside table, I have a bookshelf. I've just finished *The Hare with Amber Eyes* by Edmund de Waal, but I always have *What Ho!* by PG Wodehouse to hand for when I need to switch off. The second hand book stall at Winterbourne is costing me a fortune!

4 What makes a good night out?

Staying in.

5 What is your favourite song or piece of music?

It changes all the time and depends what mood I'm in but my car stereo is always tuned to Kerrang.

6 Where in the world would you like to be right now?

If it was sunny – Exmoor. If not, one of the barrier islands off the Carolinas.

7 Who are the top three people on your fantasy dinner party list?

Stephen Fry, Agatha Christie, William Dampier.

8 If you had to pick a favourite piece of art what would it be?

The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple by William Holman Hunt. I first saw this painting many years ago at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and I'm always drawn back to it.

9 Describe yourself in three words

Driven, committed, stubborn.

10 What is your personal motto?

Who Dares Wins!

and finally...

