

# nonesuch

CELEBRATING  
25 YEARS OF  
EPIGRAM





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## Welcome



Many happy returns to *Epigram* – Bristol's student newspaper – which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

I hope you enjoy reading about Bristol University and journalism, and then take up your own pen or keyboard. Denis Burn (BSc 1975), Bristol's Chair of Council, is seeking alumni, staff, student and Court members' views about the University's future.

Alumni responses now will inform the search for the University's next Vice-Chancellor, who will take over from Professor Sir Eric Thomas (Hon LLD 2004) in autumn 2015. Please visit [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/future](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/future) by Saturday 31 May.

You can also support Bristol today by standing for a range of volunteer posts in the Alumni Association (Convocation) and I hope to see you soon at one of our forthcoming alumni events in Bristol, London or further afield (p29).

*Bill Ray*

**Bill Ray** (BSc 1975)  
Chairman of the Alumni Association (Convocation)

## Keep in touch

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 bristol.ac.uk/alumni/linkedin

## The nonesuch

The red nonesuch, the 'Flower of Bristol', gave its colour to the University's academic hoods and its name to the University's first student magazine, *The Bristol Nonesuch*, in 1911. *Nonesuch*, in its current magazine form, was first published in 1991 for 'all those who share a common interest in the University of Bristol'.



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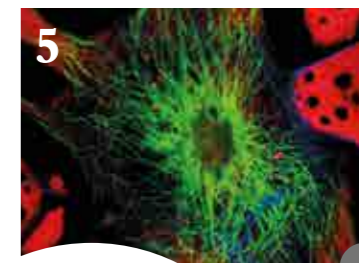
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## nonesuch

Spring 2014

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## Brick by brick

### Campus

This year, some of Bristol's buildings will receive a much-needed facelift, while others open their doors for the very first time.

In April, the School of Biological Sciences will move into the new, five-storey Life Sciences Building on Tyndall Avenue (pictured above). Not only will the building provide state-of-the-art laboratories for teaching and research, but it will also boast some impressive eco-credentials, including solar panels to heat water, 'living' walls, and bat roosts.

Gary Foster, Professor of Molecular Plant Pathology, said: 'The new building will enhance the undergraduate experience by facilitating research-led study and staff-student interaction, making Bristol the first choice for research and teaching.'

Meanwhile, a £30 million refurbishment of the Richmond Building, home to the Students' Union,

the Anson Rooms, and the University swimming pool, is due to finish in October. The renovations, co-designed by students, will completely transform the 1960s concrete building to prepare it for the future. New facilities include social spaces, seminar rooms and quiet areas for private study.

Slightly further afield, Brunel's original train station, the Engine Shed, opened its doors last December as the city's new enterprise hub. Thanks to a partnership between Bristol City Council, the University and the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, the Grade I listed building, built in 1841, will be managed by Bristol SETSquared – the University's award-winning business incubator – which will use a third of the space for early-stage technology businesses.

## Size doesn't matter

### Health

Treatment for high blood pressure could be as simple as removing one of the tiniest organs in the body, and may be more effective than existing therapies.

A small nodule (no bigger than a grain of rice) found on the side of each carotid artery is a major culprit in the development and regulation of high blood pressure. The discovery, led by Professor Julian Paton from Bristol's School of Physiology and Pharmacology, could revolutionise the treatment of hypertension, the world's biggest silent killer, and the results of a human clinical trial are expected next year.



## A bird's eye view

### Alumni

Presenter Miranda Krestovnikoff (BSc 1994) has been elected as the new president of Europe's largest nature conservation charity, the RSPB.

Krestovnikoff, a wildlife expert on BBC One's *The One Show* and *Coast*, will lead the charity's governing body for the next five years with the aim of securing a healthy environment for birds and other wildlife. After graduating from Bristol with a Zoology degree, she volunteered with various wildlife organisations and trained as a diver before becoming the popular presenter we know today.

## In numbers

# 30

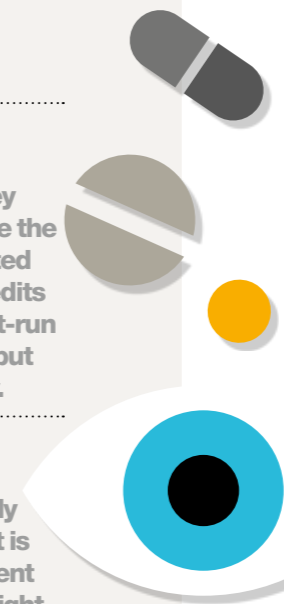
Bristol's position in the 2013 QS World Universities rankings.

# 20,000

The number of applicants Lindsey Russell (BA 2013) beat to become the 36th *Blue Peter* presenter, as voted for by CBBC viewers. Russell credits her success to UBTV, the student-run television station, which helped put together her show reel and entry.

# £84,500,000

What the NHS could save annually by using an anti-cancer drug that is cheaper than the current treatment but equally effective in treating sight loss, according to a nationwide study involving the Bristol Clinical Trials Evaluation Unit.



Miranda Krestovnikoff © Jim Lemon // Illustration © Alberto Antoniazzi



## A royal seal of approval

### Neonatal research

Bristol has been awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize in recognition of its leading research in obstetric and neonatal practice that has saved babies' lives all over the world.

Three strands of research carried out at the University have made giving birth, and the early stages of life, safer for mothers and their babies. Since the late 1980s, Professor Peter Fleming and Dr Pete Blair's 'back to sleep' advice has reduced the occurrence of cot death and saved the lives of more than 15,000 babies in the UK alone; Professor Marianne Thoresen's more recent pioneering cooling treatment for babies who suffer oxygen shortage at birth saves more than 1,500 babies from death and disability each year; and an obstetric emergency training programme known as PROMPT, led by Tim Draycott, has reduced hypoxic injuries (where the brain is starved of oxygen) by 50 per cent and brachial plexus injury (a result of nerve damage) by 70 per cent.

Research like this has been made possible thanks to generous donations from alumni and friends of the University. The Centenary Campaign aims to raise £100 million by the end of 2014, ensuring that Bristol's second century is even more impressive than its first.



## Wanted: Bristol's future leader

### Vice-Chancellor

Professor Sir Eric Thomas (Hon LLD 2004) is to retire as the University's Vice-Chancellor in August 2015.

After 14 years in the role, Professor Thomas said: 'I believe it will be the right time for a new leader to take Bristol on to the next stage. My time at Bristol has been the most enjoyable, challenging and fulfilling of my professional career and I am fiercely proud of our students and graduates. There is still much to do in the next 18 months, including finding my successor.'

To help the University in its search for a new leader, we want to know what you think makes Bristol so unique, and what qualities you think are important in our future Vice-Chancellor. Please share your thoughts via our online survey at [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/future](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/future) before Saturday 31 May.



**1 Key to the universe // Physics**

Professor Peter Higgs (Hon DSc 1997) and Professor François Englert were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for predicting the existence of the Higgs boson particle, discovered at the CERN Large Hadron Collider almost 50 years later.

**2 Flower power // Biological Sciences**

Bright colours and enticing fragrances aren't the only features flowers use to attract pollinators. Bristol researchers, led by Professor Daniel Robert, created a buzz when they revealed that flowers also produce electrical signals to attract bumblebees to their pollen. Moreover, when a flower is running low on nectar, it changes the voltage of the signal to alert approaching insects.

**3 Pitch Perfect // Alumni**

Fans of author Rachel Joyce (BA 1983) can now enjoy her latest novel, *Perfect*. In 2012, Joyce wrote the international bestseller, *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*, which was longlisted for the Man Booker Prize.

**4 Conquering cancer // Health**

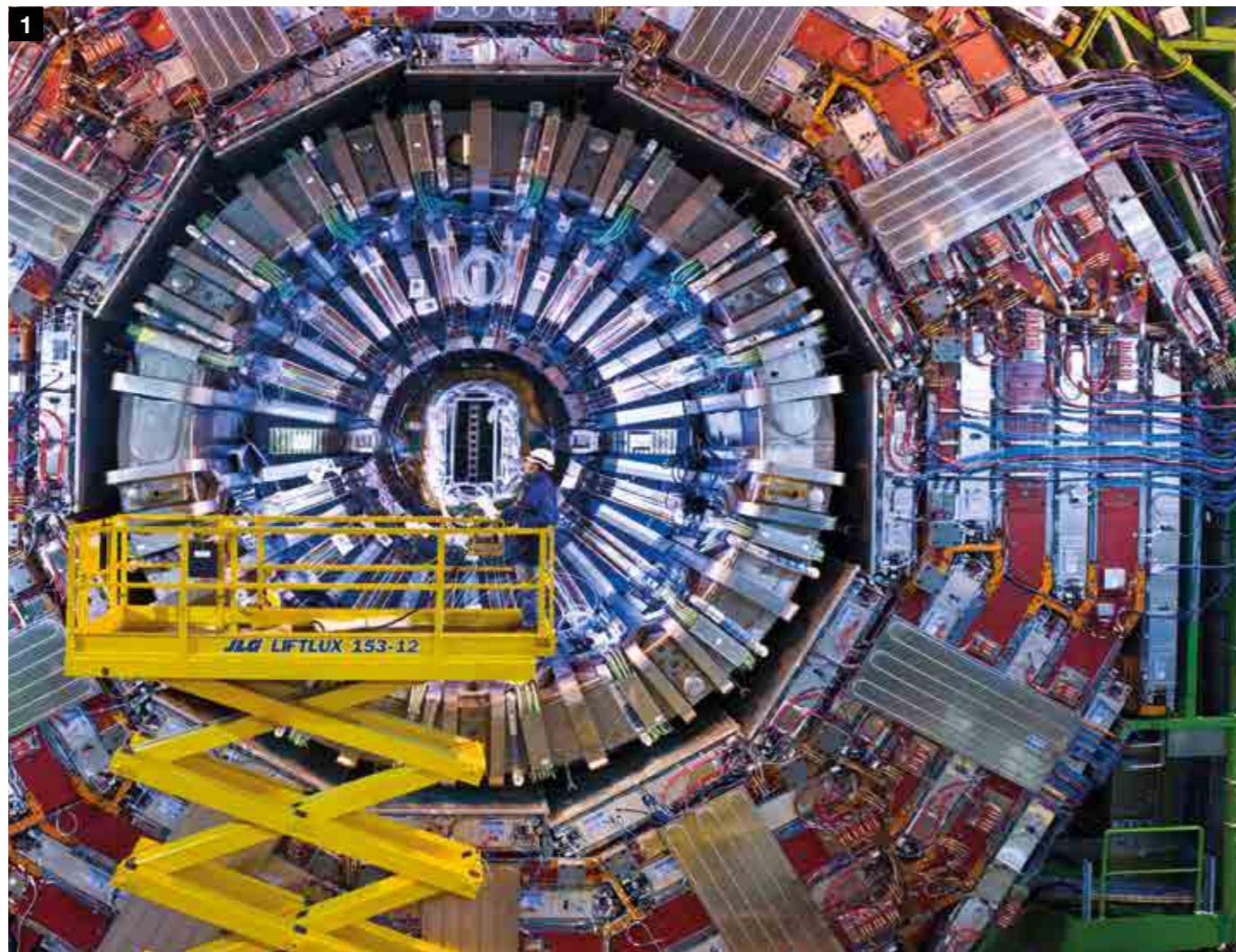
In the future, cancer could be prevented from spreading by manipulating the levels of a particular protein, known as PRH, in individual cells. The role of PRH is to interact with DNA and 'switch' particular genes on or off. Research from the School of Biochemistry suggests that changing PRH levels could stop cancer cells moving from their original location.

**5 Raising the flag // Alumni**

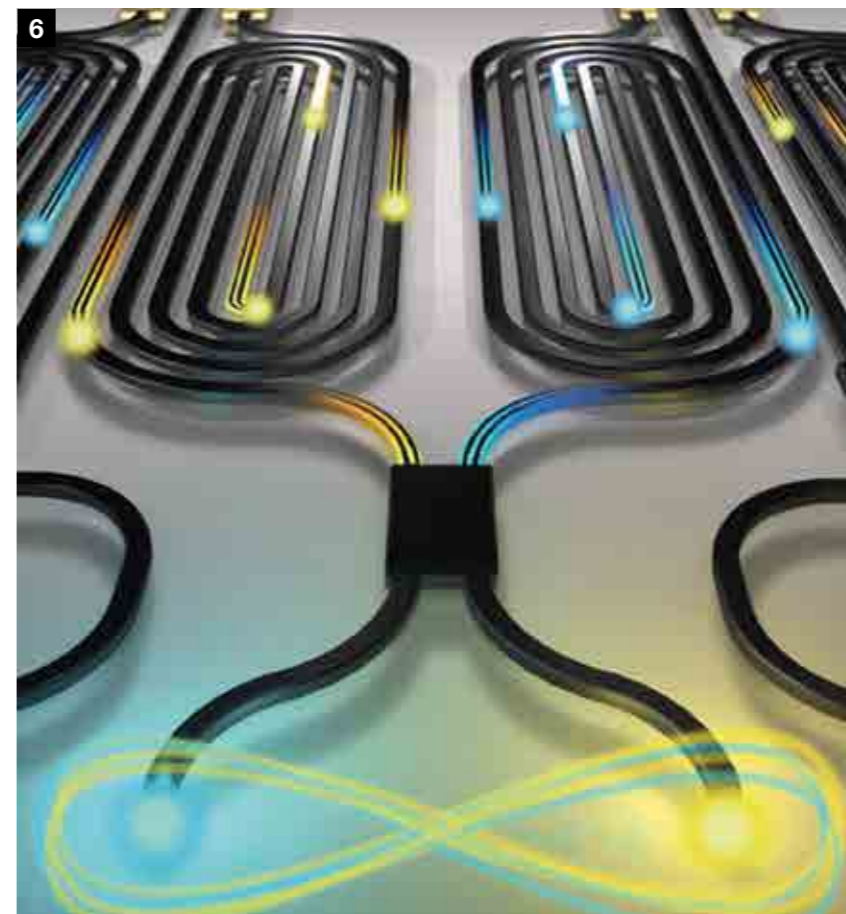
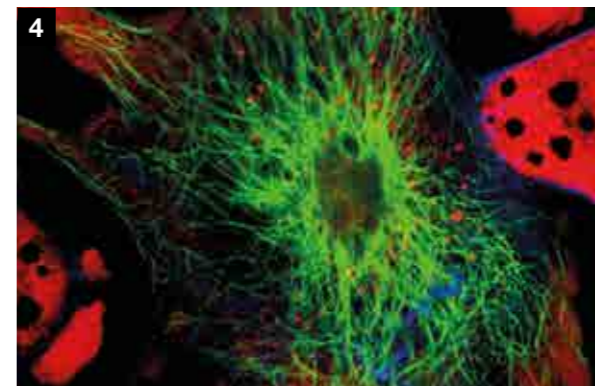
Matthew Baugh (BA 1994, MSc 1997), former HM Ambassador to Somalia, received an OBE in the Diplomatic Services and Overseas List of the 2013 Birthday Honours for promoting peace and security in Somalia. You can hear Baugh speak about his experiences of working in countries affected by conflict at the Best of Bristol Alumni Weekend on Saturday 5 July (bristol.ac.uk/alumni/events).

**6 Quantum computer // Engineering**

Scientists and engineers led by Dr Mark Thompson have, for the first time, generated and manipulated single particles of light (photons) on a silicon chip – a major step forward in the race to build a quantum computer. In the future, quantum computers will use light (photons) to carry information, rather than electricity, but harnessing the photons has remained a challenge until now.



Top Professor Peter Higgs  
Above Professor François Englert



**In brief  
Alumni**



**Will Dean (BSc 2003)**, founder and CEO of the popular military-style obstacle event series, Tough Mudder, has been named the National EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2013 Emerging Award winner.

**Nishtha Chugh (MSc 2011)**, featured in the autumn edition of *Nonesuch*, won *The Guardian* International Development Journalism Competition 2013 for her reports on attempts to change attitudes towards gender in Rwanda.

**Paul Stebbings (BA 1977)**, Artistic Director of ADG-Europe and TNT Theatre Britain, has received an MBE for his services to theatre.

**Sri Nazir Razak (BSc 1988)**, Group Chief Executive of CIMB Group, was named CEO of the Year by the Minority Shareholder Watchdog Group at Malaysia-ASEAN Corporate Governance Index Awards 2013.

Key to the universe © CERN // Flower Power © Dominic Clark





## Rowing into the record books

### Students

Final-year student, Jamie Sparks (2011-), and best friend Luke Birch, have become the youngest pair to row across the Atlantic.

Fewer people have rowed the Atlantic than have travelled into space or climbed Mount Everest. But after 55 days at sea, Sparks and Birch, also known as 'Two boys in a boat', crossed the finish line of the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge in fifth place.

During the 'world's toughest endurance race', the pair encountered 30-knot winds and battled powerful waves, often surviving on just 80 minutes of sleep at a

stretch. Rowing 3,000 nautical miles non-stop, they each lost more than a stone-and-a-half of weight, suffered blistering salt sores, and even had to contend with flying fish. But their endurance paid off when they not only broke the world record to become the youngest pair to complete the race, but also became the biggest ever individual fundraisers for their chosen charity, Breast Cancer Care.



## Preparing for the Pacific

### Students

On 7 June, Elsa Hammond (PhD 2012-) will begin her attempt to row 2,400 miles in the first ever Great Pacific Race.

Hammond, the only woman from the UK registered in the race, will aim to break the solo women's record while raising money for the Plastic Oceans Foundation. The race is the first to cross the world's largest ocean from California to Hawaii.



## Leading the way

### Science

Two scientists from the University and an alumnus have been named in the Science Council's list of the top 100 practising scientists.

Professors Max Headley and Judy Harris (pictured above), both from the School of Physiology and Pharmacology, and Professor Cecil McMurray CBE (PhD 1970), Managing Director of SciTec Consulting, were recognised by a range of organisations, including the European Commission, the NHS and the government, for their contributions to UK society and the economy.



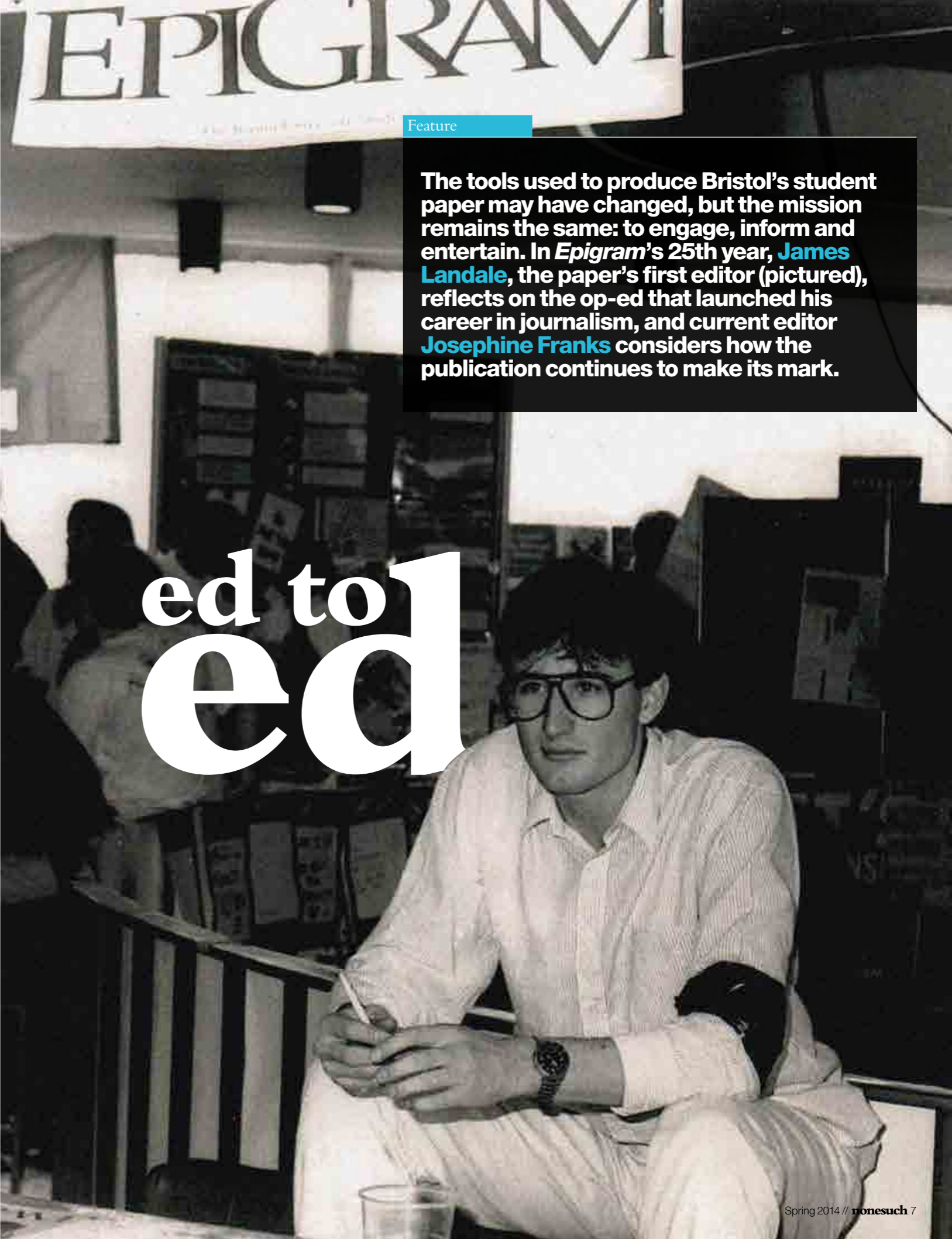
## On the fast track

### Alumni

Richard Branson has praised two businesses, founded by Bristol alumni, that feature on *The Sunday Times* Fast Track 100 league table for 2013.

Branson applauded the number of businesses founded by young entrepreneurs on the 2013 list, including online food retailer, graze.com (Edd Read, MEng 2007, above left), and translation services provider, Language Connect (Ben Taylor, BSc 2001, above right).

*The Sunday Times* Fast Track 100 league table ranks Britain's 100 private companies with the fastest-growing sales in the previous three years.



### Feature

The tools used to produce Bristol's student paper may have changed, but the mission remains the same: to engage, inform and entertain. In *Epigram's* 25th year, James Landale, the paper's first editor (pictured), reflects on the op-ed that launched his career in journalism, and current editor Josephine Franks considers how the publication continues to make its mark.

# ed to ed



**James Landale (BSc 1990, MSc 1992, Hon LLD 2013) wrote his first op-ed for *Epigram* (reproduced below) in 1989. Now Deputy Political Editor for BBC News, he looks back at his student offering and discovers some home truths.**

### Epic - Gram?

Most student politicians are on power trips. That is to be the first comment of this newspaper. *Epigram* is not for such people, but for students themselves. It does not represent the news, the 3rd floor of the Union, or any specific group of students. In fact, it represents no-one. Its aim is to interest, inform, amuse and stimulate the student body of Bristol University as well as provide a forum for their own views to be expressed. That is, of course, if they have a view to express. Bristol University has a reputation of general apathy and indifference, buoyed up by middle class affluence that excludes concern about grants, loans and the Poll Tax – the sort of issues close to home that a student normally worries about.

*Epigram* does not want to bridge the divide between a self-important Union and an apathetic student body. It merely wishes to engender amongst the student body a knowledge of what it is to be a student. It is not just doing a certain course. It is not just living in London, dashing down to Bristol for a couple of mid-week lectures. It is not just the next stage after A-levels. University is a specific way of life, a communal existence [sic] that joins together some very different people, like it or not, by their very student status.

Many have lost sight of this. *Epigram* aims to chage [sic] this, because it believes that students will profit from knowing more about what is going on in the University.

A further aim is to act as a watchdog on the Union and University hierarchy. This doesn't mean endless critical editorials. It means that you, the student, have a letters page in which to voice your opinions, to praise as well as to deflate a few egos. Some student politicians may be on power trips, but that doesn't mean they cannot further student interest. The Union has a wide range of services (on the whole, very well run) that help and bring together students in an invaluable way.

*Epigram* has set its sights high. It will be a challenge, not only for those who organise it and contribute to it, but also for you, the student. It's your paper. Read it, write for it and eat your fish and chips out of it. Remember, the editor is on a power trip too. Whether he can also produce a good newspaper depends on you.

## NEWS

Friday 13 October 1989

# Chancellor Thatcher

### Epic - Gram?

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### I'm alright Jack

"Come back earlier next year". That's the advice of Don Carleton, the information officer. Paradox of use to a student with nowhere to live. The University is partly to blame for the housing crisis through accepting too many students. We need houses, not hordes.

# EPIGRAM

3rd Floor, University of Bristol House, Queens Hill, Clifton, Bristol, B8 3JA  
0222 777 226  
Copy Dates: Fri 20 Oct, Fri 3 Nov, Fri 17 Nov, Fri 1 Dec  
All copy should either be on Word Document File Pro

### Mrs Thatcher was one of the names suggested as a possible new chancellor, *Epigram* can reveal today.

The general opinion of the committee was that if Mrs Thatcher was available, she would be an ideal choice. Nevertheless, it was felt that an active politician would not be a good choice as they would be too busy to work for the University.

It was also suggested that Mrs Thatcher would be unacceptable at the moment because of the controversy her appointment would provoke, but that this would be less so if she was no longer Prime Minister. Alas, Mrs Thatcher's name was removed from the list.

### Student Union Reprieve

Government plans to legislate for student unions have been shelved.

The bill would have included curbs on the use of union funds for political campaigns and a banning of the supposedly 'closed shop' operated by the NUS. This was to have been part of the package of legislation concerning students 'top-up' loans, but Ministers feared that such a 'hybrid' bill would prove difficult to steer through Parliament.

A recent government survey has established that only a small proportion of union funds are spent on political groups. The survey covered all 71 unions and found that 69% of them had spent less than 0.5% on political groups, with no union going above 2%.

In the latest edition of NISM, Maceve Sherlock, President of the NUS, claims that "the Government has always rejected the analogy between the industrial closed shop and membership arrangements for student unions... why should they change their minds now?"



### Obituary Graham Chapman

Murray Pythian is no more. Just as the Beatles were no longer the Beatles on the death of John Lennon, Murray Pythian will never be the same again. The death of Graham Chapman last week brings the end of an era of the comedy. It has ceased to go on a better way.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATES

The Investment Banking Division of Morgan Stanley International will be giving an open presentation at 6.30pm, Thursday 26th October, 1989 in the Senior Common Room at Senate House, University of Bristol.

### Twenty-five years on

*Epigram* was born in a different age. Margaret Thatcher was prime minister, the Berlin wall stood and tweeting was for birds. There was no email, no internet. Contributors wrote their articles in longhand and then typed them into the *Epigram* computer or arrived at the office bearing a floppy disc. We blagged some desk-top publishing software and copied the publication's style from other papers.

I would hand-deliver the final disc to the printers, who would chuck it on their to-do pile between the freesheets and smutty magazines. A few days later I would pick up the printed copies and distribute them round the halls from the back of a car.

Early editions were strewn with my own caprice. The humour is too arch, the copy in need of subbing and the pictures ropery. But there are some good stories, the listings are comprehensive and the sum is greater than the parts.

My first leader is a touch self-important, and the typos still stands today – that university should be more than just the next stage of life after A-levels. It should be savoured as a rare moment when you can live a life of unrestricted intellectual discovery, unencumbered by the responsibilities of family, mortgage and job. As a student, you should be able to talk pompously about truth, beauty and justice, because if you don't do it then, you never will.

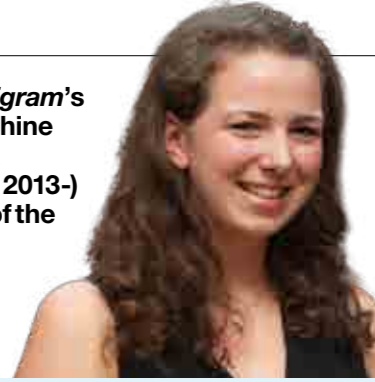
At Bristol, I had just that opportunity. The Politics Department invited visiting speakers to explore issues that ranged far beyond the core syllabus. Seminars would segue into a discussion over drinks that would, in turn, become a pub crawl. It was an opportunity to unleash the mind in a way that would not have been possible on a more rigid course.

The task I set *Epigram* was to interest and inform students, and make them aware of what they could find and do outside of the library. I hope it will keep working at the same task. At a university, as in society, newspapers can play an important role.

James Landale will speak at the London Branch of University of Bristol Alumni Annual Lecture this November. [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/events](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/events)



**Nonesuch asked *Epigram*'s current editor Josephine Franks (BA 2013, MA European Literature 2013) to reveal the secret of the paper's success.**



### Voice of today

Throughout its history, *Epigram* has stood as a publication by students, for students. Along the way, it has brought stories into the national limelight, weathered the storm of potential closure, provoked changes in University policy, and entertained and informed countless readers.

From humble beginnings, *Epigram* has grown to a 56-page publication with a print run of 5,000 and a readership of over 10,000. Its 50-strong team of writers and editors changes each year, so the paper is continually evolving and relevant to students' concerns. It also means that writers can experiment knowing that failure will be temporary and success can be consolidated, a vital experience for those who go on to a career in journalism.

One major change since 1989 is the shift towards online media. We launched a new website last year to bring the quality of our virtual output in line with the print publication and offer enhanced content. Of course, our competitors also seize the opportunities presented by online media, which challenges us to seek out new angles and ways of engaging readers. But I believe *Epigram*'s future will be defined by the print publication. The prestige of getting one's name into print has if anything increased as a result of the ease of online publication. Readers may be drawn elsewhere for one-stop entertainment and updates, but *Epigram* carries an assurance of quality journalism with the authority of a 25-year history.

Our core values have remained constant. We are committed to providing a platform for students to discuss issues they feel passionate about. *Epigram*'s strength comes in part from its independence, and it seeks to uphold James Landale's vision of the paper as a medium through which students discover what is really going on at the University. That's not to say that we expect our readers to agree with everything we publish; on the contrary, we encourage them to engage online and to pen their own responses.

While *Epigram* will no doubt have to continue to adapt to the changing world of journalism, I feel confident that its integrity will prevail. Here's to a future of inspirational writers, engaged readers and the power of the student voice. ● [epigram.org.uk](http://epigram.org.uk)



# Climate of opinion

Feature

**When it comes to an issue as emotive as climate change, can we rely on journalists for accurate information? Here, two academics from the Cabot Institute, and four alumni working in journalism, campaigning and industry, discuss some of the factors influencing the portrayal of climate change in the media.**

**Tessa Mayes (BSc 1989)**  
is a journalist, film director and producer

**A**s the River Mole breaks its banks, flooding villages near my parents' home, climate change is front-page news. So, too, are the confusing messages surrounding it.

In the first Prime Minister's Questions of the new year, David Cameron said he 'suspected' that the 'abnormal weather' was linked to climate change, while critics called his comments 'casual'. Lord Stern, author of the Stern Review on climate change, commented at the Davos World Economic Forum that he had 'underestimated the risks'. And yet the UK Met Office has forecast that temperatures are unlikely to rise significantly until at least 2017.

You'd think by now that a subject with a long record of scientific scrutiny would be clear. But its politicisation – and the speculative nature of some scientific studies – makes it difficult for journalists to cover climate change accurately.

The way climate change is discussed is as controversial as the subject itself. Prince Charles, for example, is one of many to describe those who dispute climate change science as 'deniers'. But rather than clarifying the debate, this label precludes discussion, leading to studies with less alarmist interpretations of the data being dismissed.

So how should journalists cover climate change? Like any news reporters, they should stick to the facts. I would also argue that they should have more expertise. Unless you know how UN climate reports are received by scientists and debated by politicians, how can you put them into context? Not all studies are equally valid, but how can journalists assess what's important if they know little about the science? News articles can all too easily lead to scaremongering rather than enlightenment.

The media should air opposing views on climate change, but journalists should be expert enough to assess the scientific and political importance of those views without being accused of bias. Otherwise audiences will believe that all views are equally important when they aren't. That's propaganda, not news.

Illustrations © Paddy Mills



IT'S HARD REPORTING THE TRUTH. YOU HAVE TO PUT PREJUDICE ASIDE'

Overwhelming scientific evidence and mainstream political views dominate the media and so they should, but that doesn't mean alternative views should be censored. Minority views may overturn orthodox thinking, and if and when they do, journalists will report that too. It's not the place of journalists to predict the future, just report current truths. Anything else is campaigning journalism.

It's hard reporting the truth. You have to put your prejudice aside. But it's vital that news journalists are aware of the context and meaning of what they're reporting so as to avoid creating panic and confusion. If not, how can we get accurate information? We don't want to live in a world where people end up disbelieving all reporting because of the kind of hype expressed by one character in the movie *Ice Age: The Meltdown*: 'The five-day outlook is calling for intense flooding followed by ... the end of the world! And a slight chance of patchy sunshine later in the week'.

tessamayes.com

## Climate change certainties

Findings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2013 report

Each of the last three decades has been successively warmer at the Earth's surface than any preceding decade since 1850.

In the Northern Hemisphere, 1983-2012 is thought to be the warmest 30-year period of the past 1,400 years.

Over the period 1901-2010, the global mean sea level rose by 0.19 metres.

Atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations have increased by 40 per cent since pre-industrial times, primarily from fossil fuel emissions.

Over the past two decades, the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets have been losing mass, glaciers have continued to shrink almost worldwide, and Arctic sea ice has continued to decrease in extent.

ipcc.ch







**Professor Richard Pancost is Director of the Cabot Institute and Professor of Biogeochemistry**

**C**limate change is one of the most profound challenges facing humanity. However, it is one associated with uncertain and complex consequences, with the most pernicious concerns not necessarily being climate change itself but how it exacerbates other issues, such as extreme weather events, food security, access to resources, and the spread of disease and conflict. It cannot sit in isolation from the rest of the news, but demands nuanced exploration that facilitates the responsible formation of opinion and policy.

Experts, the public and the media form a triangle around policy-makers, influencing political decisions. Most government decision-makers want to enact beneficial policies, but they must do so in a storm of (mis)information, opinions, ideology and short-term political imperatives. We must therefore work together, and members

of the Cabot Institute who provide advice to government should also help foster a political climate that encourages evidence-based decisions.

To ensure this, the media and the academics must improve how knowledge is shared. Debate is important but too often focuses on well-established physics rather than the wider issues. This has led the discussion to ossify into unhelpful patterns: scientists versus sceptics, environmentalists versus business. These are poor representations of the topic. Insurance companies are concerned about climate change. Our military believes it could exacerbate future conflicts. Religious leaders maintain that preventing climate change that disproportionately harms the poorest is an ethical issue. The media has a duty not only to report the debate, but also to frame it in a useful, enriching manner. Similarly, I would urge scientists to broaden their areas of expertise and build coalitions of knowledge with colleagues.

Another challenge is that the news cycle is fickle and climate change is often covered in an ad hoc manner. Climate change should not be sporadic headline news but a continuous part of the news cycle, reflecting its widespread impact on our lives. This also requires a change within academia. As scientists, we tend to think about engagement in the same way that we think about our other academic outputs – discrete results that lead to discrete press releases. With a few notable exceptions, we are less skilled in commenting on the wider issues. Reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change go some way to addressing this, but they alone are insufficient because they are an infrequent synthesis of the literature, making them less engaged with current events or ongoing policy decisions.

In short, academics who research climate change need to recognise their roles as well-informed experts and enter the debate. We should be injecting climate change into the conversation on topics as far-ranging as flooding, land use and planning, sustainable energy, global insecurity and agricultural strategies. We don't have all of the answers. Sometimes our most important contribution is raising unasked questions. But no matter how we do it, we must work with all parts of the media to share what we have learned.

<http://cabot-institute.blogspot.co.uk>

Professor Pancost will talk at the Cambridge Branch Summer Lecture on Saturday 31 May. [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/events](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/events)

### **Dr Tony Juniper (BSc 1983, Hon DSc 2013), former Director of Friends of the Earth, is a writer, campaigner and environmental adviser**

**D**uring many years of environmental campaigning I came to believe in keeping emotion on the right side of science. Straying across the line could invite negative consequences, including loss of credibility and momentum toward campaign aims. So it is that much of the campaigning on climate change has been about science, but times are changing.

Despite rising scientific evidence and political acceptance of the need to cut emissions, there has been a shift in emphasis. Political support for shale gas has risen, while support for renewable energy sources and policies for low-carbon living have diminished, in part propelled by media coverage of opinions expressed by climate change sceptics.

There are several reasons for this change, including the hostile editorial positions of several media organisations, the effect of recession and a change of government. Despite the temptation to raise the volume of emotional messages as scientific ones flounder, most campaign groups have

remained faithful to the facts. But is this the best use of their time and resources? After all, many others now speak up for the science.

Indeed, it is notable how some of the most alarming messages on climate change now come from mainstream organisations. For example, in 2012 the World Bank published a report that pointed out how a failure to cut emissions would lead to unprecedented heat waves, severe drought and major floods, with serious impacts on the economy.

Another 2012 report from global management consultants PWC – hardly a voice for radical environmentalism – told of the dangers that would come with the six degrees of warming that could occur during the 21st century. And even Christine Lagarde of the International Monetary Fund said in 2013 that ‘without concerted action, the very future of our planet is in peril’.

Having raised the alarm to the point where the mainstream and science consensus is on their side, what should campaign groups do next? As damage from extreme weather becomes more pronounced, the science will become less important as societies struggle with how to stage an effective response. In turn, this will require an increase in public demand for low-carbon energy, food and transport solutions, and that is where more work is needed.

The challenge for campaign groups now is not only about winning technical arguments, but also about building cultural acceptance of the changes we need to make. It is not for lack of science that we are failing to change, but because that change is widely seen as being all about sacrifice.

Environmentalists are used to being led by science, but increasingly the work that must be done is linked more with communications and psychology than atmospheric chemistry. This is a hard nut to crack, not least because it is all about emotion, and thus outside many campaign groups' comfort zones. So is it time to rebalance the effort, to see the need for more emotion and less science? I think it might be.

[tonyjuniper.com](http://tonyjuniper.com)

**'CHANGE IS WIDELY SEEN AS BEING ALL ABOUT SACRIFICE'**



**Angela Knight CBE (BSc 1972) is Chief Executive of Energy UK**

**T**he climate change debate is a confused one. Media articles abound, with opinions ranging from denial through scepticism to alarmism. The one thing they have in common is insufficient scientific basis, with ‘public accessibility’ being the usual justification. This is a cop-out. It's clear that climate does change – witness the vineyards planted by the Romans in York and the Victorian penchant for ice-skating on the frozen Thames. The question we should be asking is what to do about climate change, regardless of whether or not it is man-made.

Environmental campaigners have made their points, politicians have listened and with this winter's flooding still a major concern, more action is inevitable. Energy companies are responding to the challenge to reduce carbon emissions – widely considered to be a prime cause of climate change – and have been for some time.

As CEO of a trade association that represents the industry, I can tell you that coal-fired power stations are being replaced by cleaner gas-fired facilities, nuclear plants are being rebuilt and wind farms are up and running. But no sooner than we attempt to tackle the UK's carbon footprint, another set of conflicts arises, fuelled by the lack of clear communication about the complexities

**'THE NEWS CYCLE IS FICKLE'**



of meeting emissions targets and arguments about the benefits of renewables over other energy sources.

Members of the public, for example, may champion renewable energy but object to having a wind turbine behind their house. Many campaigners and journalists fail to explain that a wind farm doesn't run all the time and so needs a conventional power station to back it up. Like it or not, nuclear power is one of the options we need to consider if we're going to be able to support cleaner energy solutions.

And what about the cost? It will require a vast amount of money to 'decarbonise' the UK's power-generation system. People may blame energy companies for their rising gas and electricity bills, but it's impossible to make the changes needed without some sacrifice. Any business that has to invest in the future has to pass that cost on.

'THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE MEDIA IS SELECTIVE AND PEOPLE ARE ONLY EVER TOLD A PARTIAL STORY'

The problem is that the media is selective, and people are only ever told a partial story. Household bills are discussed in isolation from power-generation changes and yet they are linked; the wholesale costs of energy are primarily set in the international marketplace and are not controlled by governments or companies; policy-makers have driven carbon-reduction targets originally aimed at all industry but borne mainly by energy companies. Current energy policy was evidently never properly explained to the public when it was decided.

What we need is a more open and honest debate, not one that seeks to divide society into those who favour renewables (the good guys) and those who raise the questions (the bad guys). We need to put our emotions to one side and get down to explaining the practicalities of tackling climate change. I'm trying, but no one is reporting. Anyone out there?

[energy-uk.org.uk](http://energy-uk.org.uk)



**Professor Stephan Lewandowsky is a member of the Cabot Institute and Chair in Cognitive Psychology**

**The US Secretary of State John Kerry recently called climate change a 'weapon of mass destruction' – emotive words that hark back to the contentious rationale for the 2003 Iraq War and the misreporting that accompanied it. In an ironic twist, segments of the media are getting it wrong again when they report on climate change. Except that this time they are downplaying rather than exaggerating the risk.**

Witness this *Daily Mail* headline: 'And now it's global COOLING! Return of Arctic ice cap as it grows by 29% in a year'. The fact is that Arctic ice has lost 40 per cent of its cover since 1980, and has likely been lower during the past few years than at any time during the previous 1,500 years. The media matters. And if it misinforms about climate change, that has consequences.

Research has identified people's worldviews as the major determinant of whether they accept the basics of climate change. People who endorse unregulated free markets tend to reject the fact that the globe is warming. Their worldviews are more threatened by a possible response to climate change – which might involve taxation or regulation – than climate change itself. These people also choose to rely on media sources that are more likely to misinform about climate change than to disseminate scientifically accurate information.

'PREFERENTIAL MEDIA SELECTION LEADS TO POLARISATION'

Personal worldviews can therefore enter into a positive feedback loop, in which predispositions are reinforced by selective exposure to misleading media sources. Of course, the same feedback cycle can emerge among people with opposing worldviews, who also preferentially select their media sources, but these sources happen to be more likely to report accurately on climate change. The result: increasing polarisation on an issue of fundamental importance to us all.

The problem is compounded by the journalistic ethos to strive for 'balance'. A commendable goal in political coverage, it can lead to bias in coverage of science. *USA Today* recently fell into this trap when its editorial endorsement of the scientific consensus on climate change was accompanied by an opposing piece by lobbyists infamous for comparing people who accept climate science with the Unabomber. The same outfit attempted to sow doubts on the adverse health effects of smoking on behalf of the tobacco industry.

This so-called 'balance' in the debate on climate change has had identifiable consequences. It has misinformed the public about the strength of the scientific consensus: people tend to think that only around two thirds of scientists agree on climate change, when the true proportion is more than 95 per cent. The US National Academy of Sciences calls it a 'fact' that the globe is warming and that humans are responsible. These facts are accepted by around 97 per cent of scientific articles on this topic, and they require a mature discussion of how best to meet the challenges posed by climate change.

The media matters. And because it continues to get it wrong at times, we must approach its coverage with scepticism.

[bristol.ac.uk/cabot](http://bristol.ac.uk/cabot)

## Cabot Institute: leader of the pack

Climate change affects the food we eat, the energy we use, the homes we live in, the work we do and how we travel. It can even affect our health. The Cabot Institute brings together scientists from across the University to tackle these interrelated issues. Research areas range from flood-hazard modelling to mapping the wheat genome to deliver new high-yield, drought-resistant crops.

4

faculties support the Cabot Institute's operations: Science; Social Sciences and Law; Engineering; and Medical and Veterinary Sciences

600+

members across the University

£15m

funding that the Cabot Institute has helped secure for research, fellowships and postgraduate training since 2010

The Cabot Institute is hosting an international workshop in September on strategies for adapting to climate change. Speakers include Michael Mann, Director of the Earth System Science Center, Pennsylvania State University, and climate historian Professor Naomi Oreskes from Harvard University. [bristol.ac.uk/cabot](http://bristol.ac.uk/cabot)

## Rebecca Frayn (BA 1984) is a writer and film-maker

What do any of us in the media or arts have to offer but stories – in fact or fiction – told as imaginatively and compellingly as possible? The media has a duty to communicate climate change to ensure we have an electorate capable of making informed decisions, while those in the arts can help audiences imagine the unimaginable, through the magical realism of films such as *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, the biblical grandeur of novels like Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, or the polemical passion of documentaries such as *The Age of Stupid*.

'CELEBRITIES WIN THE BATTLE FOR COLUMN INCHES'



Yet anyone tackling climate change faces an immense challenge, because it is an abstract issue that can overwhelm and terrify us. We are all implicated in the problem and the solutions are not clear-cut. Not surprisingly, many of us find it easier to close our minds and simply hope for the best.

We Can, the environmental lobbying group I co-founded in 2008, wrestled with this dilemma. Environmental campaigners are often seen as young and radical, so We Can attempted to plug the demographic gap and give middle-aged, middle-of-the-road citizens a voice. And since we were film-makers, writers and journalists, we decided to use our skills to lobby the government to take urgent action on climate change in the run-up to the 2009 UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. But how best to achieve this was the subject of much debate.

We concluded that the younger generation was the most eloquent and touching embodiment of the future. So our children often accompanied us on vigils outside Parliament, even dressing up as endangered species to lobby MPs. We organised a competition, One Minute to Save the World, asking for short films on climate change, and showed the winning entries at the House of Commons. We got more press coverage than we expected to, but it quickly became apparent that association with celebrities was by far the best way to win the battle for column inches. Far fewer journalists would have attended our first vigil in Parliament Square had it not been for the bizarre rumour that Victoria Beckham was going to turn up to launch a new underwear range. And it wasn't until a toothy celebrity agreed to put her name – and picture – to the article I had ghost-written that my long battle to get the *Daily Mail* to cover our campaign was won.

We Can ran its course and I soon became demoralised by how paltry my contribution felt. It was a wildflower scheme I helped establish in the London suburb where I live that inspired me to tackle climate change in other, more tangible, ways, and plant what seeds I could in a metaphorical sense too. So I accepted an offer to direct the Green Party's political broadcast, before setting to work on a novel that obliquely tackles the theme.

Our individual contributions as storytellers may be modest, but climate change is the story of our times. So tell it straight or tell it sideways. Tell it long or tell it short. But tell it. ●

[rebeccafrayn.co.uk](http://rebeccafrayn.co.uk)



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Feature

Information is everywhere. But who are the journalists and editors deciding which stories make the headlines? And what do digital advances mean for the traditional press? *Nonesuch* asked four Bristol alumni for their take on British journalism today, and their predictions for the future.

# Lines of duty



## Dr Alison Smale (BA 1977, Hon LLD 2009) 'the correspondent'

Dr Alison Smale is Berlin Bureau Chief for the *New York Times*, where she started as Weekend Foreign Editor in 1998. In 2009, following her appointment as the first female Executive Editor of the *International Herald Tribune*, she was described as 'the most powerful British female journalist working outside of London'.

I specifically wanted a career in foreign correspondence – the chance to speak languages and get to know different cultures – in what was a pre-digital age with almost no hint of today's possibilities of communication. I wanted to be the eyes and ears of readers not fortunate enough to travel the world and report on what they found.

I have been lucky to have witnessed some very important events: the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, when I crossed from East to West Berlin with the first East German citizen to come across Checkpoint Charlie; the explosion of the Chernobyl reactor in 1986; the tragic wars of the Balkans in the 1990s; 9/11 in New York City; the exciting expansion eastwards of the European Union that culminated in the Euro crisis; the effects of the 2008 global banking collapse. If I achieved something in explaining those events to many readers or viewers, I would consider that to be a justification for choosing journalism.

Journalists find stories. These usually depend on human beings behaving in ways that are unusual, wrong, funny, hugely influential, or politically, economically, socially or culturally significant.

Every day, you look for the story you might tell your friend or family member, and you look for how to do that in a way that informs but also entertains, or a way that makes people laugh, cry and think. Your responsibility to your audience is to find such stories and, above all, to tell or show the truth – in so far as the latter can be determined. Sometimes it's just as important to make sure the reader understands what you don't know, as to show what you consider you do.

Journalists have always looked for new means to spread their stories. In the digital world, that spells constant change, because technology is developing so fast. Today, we can involve and engage millions more people in constructing and appreciating those stories.



Krissi Murison © Paul Stuart / Alastair Stewart © ITV News

## Will Hutton (BSc 1972, Hon LLD 2003) 'the pundit'

Will Hutton began his career as an investment analyst, before joining the BBC as an economics correspondent in 1978. He spent four years as Editor-in-Chief of *The Observer*, for whom he continues to write regularly. He is now Principal of Hertford College, Oxford University.

If I'm honest, I chose journalism because I wanted to make opinion-formers, and the British public, aware of how deeply destructive our financial system was. I was (and still am) a zealot about changing it.

In 1978, when I first started on *Financial World Tonight*, there was more seriousness of intent, and more attempt to separate news and comment. Broadsheets were more influential, but then newspaper circulation was probably twice as high as it is now. There was just more written word to be read. I can see continuity as well as difference today. British journalism has always had a readiness to make trouble, a willingness to debate, and a glorious desire to entertain and inform.

Information is power, and you have to get as much information into the public domain as possible. It's not enough for a journalist to get news; they need to impart that news in a way that's understandable and useful.

Journalism is about holding truth to power. But in Britain, it's housed in a very ideological framework. The vast bulk of the press is incredibly centre right. Their choice of story, and how they present information, makes the British public think in certain ways. And in that sense, it's actually rather sinister. I've no doubt that anti-European sentiment, and distrust of public expenditure and immigration, are all higher because of journalism – but journalism that's concerned with influencing thought, rather than imparting information.

'BRITISH  
JOURNALISM HAS  
ALWAYS HAD A  
READINESS TO  
MAKE TROUBLE'

Fantastic work goes on at universities, and academics are starting to make their research more user-friendly. But newspapers don't have the money to support journalists like they used to – they have fewer staff, with less time to read research. Public debate is circumscribed thereby. I believe academia should be hard-wired into the media, and that people, like me, should do our best to help that process.

Digital is the future. It's going to be all about apps, mobiles and tablets. I'm not sorry about that, but I do worry that information will become more siloed. If you go online and only see information that confirms your existing prejudices, you'll rarely be challenged. That's problematic. One of the great things about newspapers is coming across the unexpected.

When I started as a journalist, the internet wasn't invented, and the mobile phone didn't exist. You can be certain that in the next 30 years, we'll see new platforms for amazing journalism emerge. Human beings want it. Democracies need it. We'll find a way.



## Krissi Murison (BA 2003) 'the editor'

Former *Epigram* Music Editor, Krissi Murison, joined *NME* as Staff Writer in 2003. Six years later, she became the first female editor in the magazine's 57-year history. In 2012, she moved to the *Sunday Times Magazine* where she is now Associate Editor.

I've heard journalism described as 'writing the first draft of history'. I'd certainly apply that to some of my colleagues who are doing extraordinarily important work, from exposing Britain's modern-day slavery rings, to reporting direct from civil war-torn countries.

As their commissioning editor, I like to bask in that grandeur too!

Deciding what stories to cover is usually as simple as asking the question: does it spark my interest? If I read or overhear something that makes me want to find out more, the chances are I'm not alone. Others will be curious too.

A journalist's responsibilities to the reader are to inform, to entertain, to grip, to surprise and to make damn well sure you're accurate.

When I started on magazines, digital publishing was a complete afterthought. The online team (for 'team', read 'individual' in most cases) was usually relegated to the furthest end of the office, and systematically ignored. Once it was clear there might be a future in the internet, most magazines ran around like headless chickens for a few years, trying to make their pages look more like websites. They were simultaneously throwing all their content away for free online, then wondering why physical sales were going down.

Now the dust is settling and we're beginning to see how to make it work. *The Sunday Times'* online subscription model was controversial when it was first introduced, but it's definitely working: our paid-for circulation – print combined with digital – is now stable. It won't be long before it's rising again.

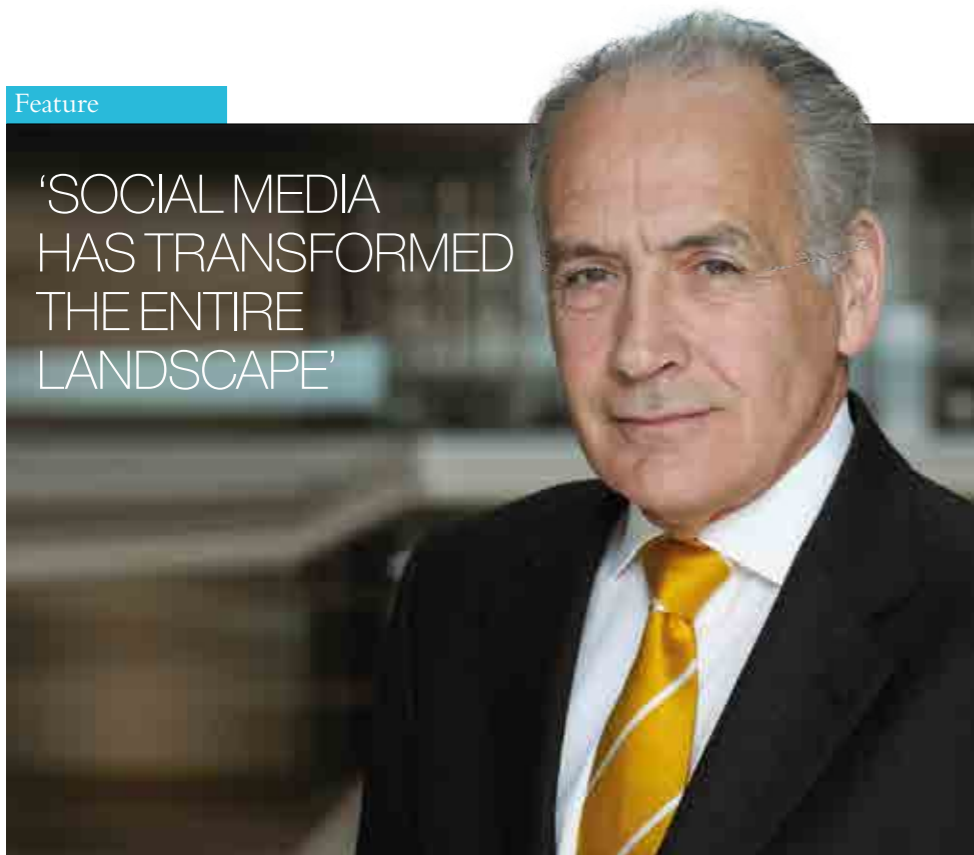
People are coming to accept that great content has to be paid for. For me, subscription models are clearly the future. Anyone looking for trusted, in-depth journalism will sign up to their preferred media outlet, in the same way I already do with Spotify for my music and Netflix for my box sets.

There'll always be an audience for quality journalism, regardless of the medium (paper, iPad, website, phone app or something that hasn't been invented yet). The basics – world-class words, photos, opinions and information – will never change, only the way people access them.



Feature

'SOCIAL MEDIA HAS TRANSFORMED THE ENTIRE LANDSCAPE'



**Alastair Stewart OBE (Hon LLD 2008) 'the broadcaster'**

Alastair Stewart was offered a job after a chance appearance on Southern ITV while Deputy President of the National Union of Students. He joined ITN as Industrial Correspondent in 1980, and is the longest-serving newsreader on British television.

At its heart, 'journalism' is what the French root of the word (*de jour*) implies: what happened today? In TV and radio, the role of journalism is to provide facts. You then invite the viewers or listeners to make their own minds up.

Impartiality is a challenge. But it's a limitation I cherish and one I think is at the heart of our liberal, pluralist democracy. Bad societies have bad, biased media. Good societies elevate honesty and balance in journalism.

Factoring out emotion matters. At the Beslan siege and bombing, off camera, I was weeping. On camera, I was stoic. It's not for me to lead you in an emotional response – it's for me to give you the facts.

Social media has transformed the entire landscape. From gossip to vital tip-offs, it's changed the way we engage with the facts, our contacts, our competitors, our colleagues and, of course, the public. It's a 'heads-up' –

the 'jungle drums' of a medium one cannot afford to ignore.

Choosing which stories to cover is a huge and difficult responsibility. It's a collective process – from the editor down. The stories we choose are those that surprise, shock and provoke. By definition, 'news' is the novel, the unexpected – it is 'new'. There is service information too, but the beating heart of news is the story that prompts a response between 'I didn't know that' and 'OMG' (as they say on social media).

There is a risk of a period in the doldrums for newspapers as they work out what they must do to stay alive. We need to think about how megaliths like the BBC influence local media, their websites and social media.

Newspapers are second cousins these days to TV and radio, especially 'rolling news'. I think 'appointment-to-view bulletins', like ITV's 6.30 pm offer, have good prospects. People still like honest, balanced reporting that has been well considered before transmission.

It's a precarious time for all of us when everything you need is on the internet. Like the classic Eric Morecambe sketch featuring Grieg's piano concerto – we're 'playing all the right notes – but not necessarily in the right order'. ●

These pieces are extracts from longer interviews. To read more, and find out about other alumni working in journalism, please visit [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/nonesuch](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/nonesuch)



**Others in the field**

**Sue Lawley OBE (BA 1967, Hon LLD 1989)** // Former TV and radio broadcaster

**David Jordan (BSc 1975)** // Head of Editorial Standards and Policy, BBC

**Paul Appleby (BSc 1977)** // Chair of Bristol Media; Director, VID Communications

**Misha Glenny (BA 1980)** // Freelance journalist

**Martin Clarke (BA 1985)** // Publisher, *Mail Online*

**Alexandra Frean (BA 1985)** // Washington Bureau Chief, *The Times*

**Dr Wendy Darke (BSc 1986)** // Director, BBC Natural History Unit

**Sarah Montague (BSc 1987)** // Presenter of the *Today* programme, BBC Radio 4

**Susanna Reid (BSc 1992)** // Presenter of *Good Morning Britain*, ITV

**Isabel Oakeshott (BA 1996)** // Political commentator

**Darren McCaffrey (BSc 2007)** // Reporter, Sky News

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Wallis Rushforth (Law 2010-) (pictured)

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Feature

# Changing faces

No celebration of *Epigram* would be complete without mention of its editors – the students with the vision and courage to break new ground, challenge authority and court controversy in pursuit of a story. And what memorable stories some of them were...



## 1992/93

**Michael Gomulka (BSc 1995)**  
Criminal defence and media crime barrister, 5RB

I came across a story that a cabinet minister was secretly funding a Eurosceptic campaign using the address of a launderette around the corner from his constituency office. They were distributing leaflets that campaigned against government policy. If verified, it would cost the politician a career.

I called the *Daily Mirror* and spoke to a Mr Alastair Campbell, who politely told me exactly how many thousands of pounds the story was worth, depending on whether it made page one, two or three. The problem? My source. I would have to tell the *Mirror* that it was my friend's father who was printing the leaflets. I couldn't. Mr Campbell took it well. Not.

The year was a whirl. Hundreds of students contributed; many were writing published pieces for the first time and many have gone on to stellar success. Gideon Lichfield (BSc 1994) was with *The Economist* for 17 years. Adam Speker (BA 1997) is a

leading media and defamation lawyer. Kirsty Walker (BA 1995), an *Epigram* editor herself, fulfilled her ambitions to become a leading political journalist. Barney Wyld (BSc 1994), my deputy editor, became a speechwriter and then a communications director. Tom Morton (BSc 1995) and James Moody (BSc 1994), a fine double act, are now sitting atop brand management and advertising on either side of the Atlantic.

We had no idea what would become of any of us. But whenever I see Jim [Landale] reporting, Pete [Hyman, BA 1991] reflecting on his years as Tony Blair's speechwriter, or the bylines of others, I'm proud to have been part of the same tradition.

Towards the end of my term, a former *Epigram* editor came to see me. She needed a double-spread article to boost her application to the Cardiff School of Broadcast Journalism. Could I find the space? Any reluctance was quickly dispelled by the warmest of smiles. I've always wondered what happened to Susanna Reid (BSc 1992).



## 1997/98

**Andy Dangerfield (BSc 1998)**  
Development Manager, British Heart Foundation

I arrived in Bristol as a raw 19-year-old with ambitions to change the world, and started writing for *Epigram* immediately.

Interviewing Goldie was nuts. We both grew up on council estates in Birmingham, yet here he was, a mega-star dating Björk. I asked him for his political opinions and he gave me the best copy I could have hoped for.

I'd lightened up a touch by the time I became editor, but I still wanted to shake things up. On the whole, I was supportive of the Students' Union. I believed you needed to use it or lose it. But I wrote an editorial on how an independent student newspaper should be free to ask any questions, and publish anything it wants.

The Union told me I couldn't publish. I called the *Epigram* team and they piled into the office. We refused to leave until the Union guaranteed we could go to press unchanged. The deal was that I would resign. I wrote one final editorial outlining my reasons – uncensored, of course – and left.

## 1998/99

**Michael Shaw (BA 1999)**  
Director, Times Educational Supplement (TES) Pro

An editor once told me that a journalist's articles are never anywhere as good, or as bad, as they remember them. I look back at the pieces we ran in *Epigram* with a mixture of fist-in-mouth embarrassment and happy surprise that we managed to get a newspaper out at all.

We certainly attempted serious journalism. Our reporting on the Clifton Suspension Bridge suicides played a part (if only a small one) in the campaign to add the safety barriers and *The Guardian* reprinted a piece by a student who visited his father in jail in Rio.

But it's the silly stuff that sticks in the memory. Like the night we spent in Leigh Woods failing to find the group of Satan worshippers who were supposed to meet there every Wednesday. Or our story about a student who 'overdosed' on pesto – a tale quickly picked up by the tabloids.

I still see a face from *Epigram* every day. She wrote a few music interviews and chaired the disciplinary committee for my predecessor, but after university, I rarely saw her until, a decade later, she invited me to her birthday party. We got married in 2010.

## 2002/03

**Murray Garrard (BA 2003)**  
Communications Officer, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership

In 2003, the term 'top-up fees' first entered the student consciousness. Bristol was ranked among the lowest universities in the country for social diversity. And hundreds of thousands of student protesters were ignored when the UK joined the invasion of Iraq. Yet the story I remain most proud of publishing was 'Queer Off', about the expulsion of a gay couple from a student nightclub.

Compared with some of the issues we tackled, the story might seem trivial, not least in light of the shifts in attitude towards homosexuality in Britain today. But in January 2003, Section 28 (which banned educational establishments from promoting homosexuality – a law not dissimilar from that recently passed in Russia) had not yet been repealed. The story itself changed little. But social tolerance is built incrementally, and it's thanks to this story and thousands like it in the grassroots press that, ten years on, the opposition to gay marriage legislation in England and Wales was so marginal.



Feature



**2003/04**

**Craig Woodhouse (BSc 2004)**  
Political Correspondent,  
*The Sun on Sunday*

Bristol was thrown into the eye of an international media storm when an 18-year-old science student, Rosie Reid (BSc 2008), decided to sell her virginity on the internet to cover her debts. I'd chosen to take *Epigram* in a tabloid direction (a sign of things to come, as it turns out), so this was the perfect story.

Public interest was piqued further because Rosie was a lesbian. We met Rosie and her partner, who told us they'd dreamed up the story to sell, rather than it being a serious ploy for Rosie to sell her body. We splashed the story as an exposé, though Rosie did later claim that she had sold her virginity to a 44-year-old man for £8,400. Whether that was just another story to sell to the papers, I guess we'll never know.

**2007/08**

**Josh Burrows (BA 2008)**  
Sports Writer and Editor,  
*The Times*

The idea that the University was planning to take over the Students' Union was unpalatable, and unprecedented. When we covered the story, I worried that the University would exact terrible revenge. That never happened, but we did receive, and print, a stern letter from the Vice-Chancellor. Just when the story looked like it would run and run, the Union AGM barely reached quorum and nobody seemed to care.

With hindsight, discovering cocaine in just about every toilet we tested is perhaps not surprising. But it was an example of what student papers tend to do badly: investigative journalism. I had badgered our news team to generate front-page stories. Here, they came up with the goods.

Harry Byford (BA 2008), now at *The Week*, won *The Guardian's* Student Columnist of the Year Award for his 'insights' into student societies. 'What did I get for my efforts?', he wrote. 'Hundreds of offensive comments, calls for my "sacking", and countless awkward conversations with people who I'd been mildly rude about. And, like a first sexual experience, it was worth every second.'

**2010/11**

**Ellen Lister (BA 2011)**  
Lawyer, *Linklaters LLP*

I'm particularly proud of our coverage of the fee increases proposed by the coalition government. Two thousand students marched from Senate House down Park Street, and our Comment Editor, Luke Denne (BSc 2011), was interviewed on Sky TV at national protests in London. *Epigram* covered it all.

We also covered the violent riots in Stokes Croft – the worst riots Bristol had seen since 1980. Not entirely a 'student' issue, but we did become more engaged with the local community as a result.

We ran some great interviews (Feame Cotton, Julian Fellowes and Major General Chris Wilson) and expanded the music section hugely – Bristol being, as every fresher knows, 'the home of drum 'n' bass'. I also loved our Sports section, where we featured a quote from Ian Holloway – 'everybody's favourite Bristolian' – in every issue. ●

These pieces are extracts from longer interviews. To read more, and hear from other *Epigram* editors, please visit [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/nonesuch](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/nonesuch)

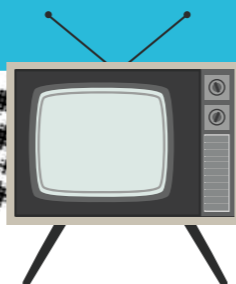
**Mixed media**

*Epigram* isn't the only media to be documenting student life in Bristol.

**Burst Radio**  
Bristol students first hit the airwaves in 1995, and have been broadcasting as Burst Radio since 1997. Former Burst DJs include Heart FM presenters Paris Troy (LLB 1995) and Nicola Bonn (BA 2003), comedian Marcus Brigstocke (Drama 1995-1997) and magician Chris Cox (BA 2005). [burstradio.org.uk](http://burstradio.org.uk)

**Inter:mission**  
Committed to capturing Bristol's cultural scene, *Inter:mission* is an online arts and listings magazine, featuring interviews, reviews, blogs and features written by students. [intermissionbristol.co.uk](http://intermissionbristol.co.uk)

**UBTV**  
UBTV is the latest student-run venture to be 'Broadcasting Bristol'. As well as covering campus news, the team produces regular features showcasing Bristol's drama, comedy and music talent. [ub-tv.co.uk](http://ub-tv.co.uk)



Feature

Modern ideas of journalism and the Fourth Estate have both a prehistory and an uncertain future. Among the academics at Bristol who study the media in various contexts are three who, taken together, cover the modern press from its medieval antecedents to its current crises.

# The continuing story







By Nick Riddle

### Ruling the waves

Dr Simon Potter in the Department of Historical Studies has studied the history of the British press and British broadcasting, both of which are bound up with the rise and fall of the British Empire. His most recent book, *Broadcasting Empire: The BBC and the British World, 1922-1970*, is based on eight years of archival research and draws on collections in Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the USA. Before that, he examined the preceding era in *News and the British World: The Emergence of an Imperial Press System, 1876-1922*.

‘Right from its foundation, the BBC was actively trying to promote the unity of the British Empire in the face of foreign rivals and internal dissent,’ says Potter. ‘Radio was seen as a technology that could link Britons at home with “overseas Britons” in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.’

The BBC’s Empire Service – the forerunner of the World Service – was founded in 1932, and broadcast the first Royal Christmas message (written by Rudyard Kipling and read by King George V) the same year. From the 1930s onwards, the World Service broadcast British music, drama, sport and comedy to promote British cultural connections with the dominions. Potter describes the BBC’s role on behalf of the state as that of ‘a sub-contractor for cultural diplomacy’; and it’s a role that has continued up to the present, although the government is due to withdraw funding for the World Service this year.

### Bulls, bishops and Benedict

Centuries earlier, medieval Europe recognised only three estates: clergy, nobility, and commoners. Reputations were made and broken, and master narratives woven, through the mass media of the Middle Ages, which was delivered mostly via the pulpit and the painted image.

‘Sermons were the mass medium par excellence for many centuries,’ says George Ferzoco, Research Fellow in the Department of Religion and Theology. ‘That was the only time when everyone in a community would be gathered in one spot to hear what someone in authority had to say about something.’

Bishops and priests would often draw upon documents sent by the papacy for the content of their sermons. Bulls of canonization, for example, provided material for preaching on relevant feast days for new saints. Ferzoco has made a particular study of Celestine V, the only pope until Benedict XVI to resign voluntarily (in 1294), and the way his ‘official portrait’ was constructed through these bulls, and various hagiographical works and testimonies, as part of the process of making him a saint.

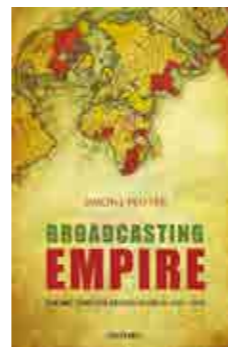
‘He spent most of his life as an almost superhumanly austere hermit who would go for weeks on bread and water and would genuflect 500 times a day,’ says Ferzoco. ‘But that stuff doesn’t make it into the official portrait. They created an image of him that was more mainstream – a nice, pious guy who quit for all the right reasons and deserved to be made a saint.’

Ferzoco’s research into the workings of the 13th-century media led to a flood of requests from the 21st-century media for his comments after Benedict XVI resigned – ironically assigning Ferzoco himself a small role in the formation of Benedict’s public image.

‘The media has always relied on people perceived as authoritative,’ he says. ‘In the Middle Ages, it was individuals of elevated or “holy” status, because they were considered infallible. Today, authority arises out of a combination of speed, verifiability and quotability.’

### Data drive

In the accelerated world of the modern media, traditional journalism must compete with the online communities of bloggers, hacktivists and other networked individuals that, inevitably, have been called the Fifth Estate.



Nello Cristianini, Professor of Artificial Intelligence in the Faculty of Engineering, studies the creation and consumption of online news and other media using the only tools that can handle such a vast output: algorithms and pattern recognition.

‘Social scientists have been doing content analysis for decades – “coding” every article in a newspaper by hand – but one person can only manage a few hundred articles,’ says Cristianini. ‘We teamed up with colleagues at Cardiff University to see whether that coding could be automated.’

And it could, thanks to the digitisation of the news media. What once required highlighter pens and many hours of human concentration can now be accomplished on a vast scale through artificial intelligence and data mining. ‘We’re monitoring 1,100 newspapers, and we’ve developed a process that can machine-translate 22 languages into English,’ says Cristianini. ‘That enables us to study macroscopic patterns in the world’s media.’

Projects conducted so far include comparisons of the news agenda across the European Union, a study of gender bias and readability in news articles, and an enquiry into what makes online readers favour certain stories. By and large, the findings are what one would expect (news articles tend to be male-biased, though less so if the topic is fashion or entertainment; public affairs articles are less readable, and less popular, than entertainment articles), but the work demonstrates the potential of Big Data to detect patterns and relationships in the world’s media – not just via news outlets but on Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms ([mediapatterns.enm.bris.ac.uk](http://mediapatterns.enm.bris.ac.uk)).

As more and more historical material is digitised, the potential of large-scale, automated analysis as a method of study in the arts and social sciences is becoming evident. Meanwhile, Cristianini has recently been awarded an EU Fellowship for a major study of Big Data, data mining and pattern recognition, and its ethical and practical dimensions ([thinkbig.enm.bris.ac.uk](http://thinkbig.enm.bris.ac.uk)).

Illustrations © Lee Woodgate

### Press on

Historians of the Western media have tended to describe its evolution through the 18th and 19th centuries towards a kind of late-20th-century culmination, with professional journalists and powerful editors working for national newspapers and international corporations. But, says Potter, ‘That’s starting to look like just one phase in a continuing process. Big institutions are starting to have serious funding problems, the BBC is under attack from all quarters including the government, and new media are challenging them.’

How things will play out in the future remains uncertain. Potter suggests two possibilities: ‘a diverse media ecology, with big organisations like the BBC and the Guardian, living side by side with the Huffington Post and other online journalism outlets and blogs,’ or the disintegration of corporate news media, ‘leaving a sea of unprocessed, pick-your-own, online journalism’.

If this leaves the notion of the Fourth Estate looking somewhat imperilled, Potter argues that it’s often been a vague and self-serving concept anyway. ‘In the late 19th century, WT Stead and other pioneering journalists built up the idea that the press is there to focus public opinion and keep parliament in line,’ he says. ‘In the aftermath of the Leveson Inquiry, many people are wondering whether the press has ceased to fulfil this function and succumbed to a lust for sensation. But a lot of newspaper editorials used Fourth Estate rhetoric in their responses to Leveson, declaring “You can’t regulate us, because our independence from government authority is absolutely crucial to modern democracy”.’

Can the press still make such a claim, with the unruly Fifth Estate challenging its supremacy? The debate continues, but studying the history and development of the media – from medieval sermons, to BBC broadcasts, to trending topics on Twitter – makes a crucial contribution to our understanding of politics and society in the modern world. ●



# Alumni in memoriam

The University extends its sincere condolences to the friends and families of those listed below for whom we have received notification of death.

**Raymond Hill**  
(BSc 1934) died December 2013, aged 101

**Dr Geoffrey Kellaway**  
(BSc 1936, DSc 1973) died September 2013, aged 99

**Elizabeth Price**  
(BA 1938, Diploma 1939) died April 2013, aged 96

**Phyllis Sims (née Howker)**  
(BA 1938, Diploma 1939) died September 2013, aged 96

**Desmond Rexworthy**  
BSc 1940) died October 2013, aged 93

**Raymond Wallis**  
(BSc 1944) died May 2013, aged 88

**Sister Valerie Cook**  
(BA 1946) died November 2013, aged 89

**Edna Thomley (née Smith)**  
(BSc 1946, Cert Ed 1947) died September 2013, aged 88

**Brigadier Denys Begbie**  
(BSc 1947) died January 2014, aged 92

**Eur Ing Barry Laight**  
(MSc 1947) died October 2012, aged 92

**Dorothy Clark (née Hill)**  
(BSc 1948, Cert Ed 1949) died January 2014, aged 87

**The Rev Mr Francis Dennett**  
(BA 1948) died August 2013, aged 89

**Dr Harold Elliott**  
(PhD 1948) died September 2013, aged 93

**The Rev Mr Arthur Hall**  
(BSc 1948, Cert Ed 1949) died January 2014, aged 90

**Mary Mallard (née Davies)**  
(BA 1948, Cert Ed 1949) died June 2013, aged 85

**David Thorning**  
(BSc 1949) died November 2011, aged 87

**Clifford Bridge**  
(BSc 1950) died July 2013, aged 92

**Terrence Ford**  
(BA 1950) died February 2014, aged 91

**The Rev Mr Derek Jefferson**  
(BA 1950) died October 2013, aged 90

**The Rev Canon John Martin**  
(BA 1950) died September 2013, aged 89

**Kenneth Matthews**  
(BA 1950, Cert Ed 1951) died August 2013, aged 88

**David Norris**  
(LLB 1950) died October 2013, aged 83

**Martin Duchesne**  
(LLB 1951) died 2013, aged 85

**David Wiggell**  
(BSc 1951) died May 2010, aged 85

**Peter Wiggell**  
(BSc 1951) died December 2013, aged 88

**Kathleen Wilkinson (née Lloyd)**  
(BA 1951, Cert Ed 1952) died September 2013, aged 83

**Jack Worrall**  
(BA 1951, Cert Ed 1952) died September 2013, aged 85

**Jean Clifford (née Pearson)**  
(BA 1952) died May 2013, aged 83

**Betty Diprose (née Mitchell)**  
(BSc 1952, Cert Ed 1953) died July 2013, aged 83

**June Wilcock (née Gibbons)**  
(BA 1952) died July 2013, aged 85

**Ruth Woollons**  
(BA 1952, Cert Ed 1954) died August 2013, aged 82

**Ralph Wyatt**  
(BA 1952) died July 2013, aged 82

**Dr Kenneth Hibbitt**  
(BVSc 1954, PhD 1960) died October 2013, aged 85

**Estelle Morgan (née Wilson)**  
(BA 1954, Cert Ed 1955) died 2014, aged 81

**Emeritus Professor Ronald Board**  
(BSc 1955) died March 2013, aged 81

**Dr Abayomi Claudius-Cole**  
(MB ChB 1955) died April 2012, aged 87

**Dr Tudor Edwards**  
(BSc 1955, PhD 1959) died 2013, aged 79

**Peter James**  
(BSc 1955) died December 2013, aged 79

**Dr William Hobbs**  
(MB ChB 1956) died 2013, aged 86

**The Rev Mr Trevor Davis**  
(BA 1957) died December 2013, aged 82

**Lois Godfrey (née Featherstone)**  
(BA 1957) died August 2013

**Vivian Horn**  
(BA 1958) died November 2013, aged 76

**Alan Meredith**  
(BDS 1958) died October 2013, aged 78

**John Brown**  
(BSc 1959) died November 2013

**George Kaps**  
(BSc 1959) died May 2013, aged 75

**Hazel Stringer**  
(BA 1959, Testamur 1960) died September 2013, aged 75

**Michael Bedingfield**  
(BSc 1960) died December 2013, aged 74

**Kenneth Blake**  
(BVSc 1960) died May 2013, aged 75

**Michael Gorman**  
(BA 1960) philanthropist and editor, died September 2013, aged 76

Michael Gorman's journalistic leadership helped to shape the modern Chinese media. He was editor and publisher of the *Bangkok Post* from 1971-1983, steering the paper successfully through a turbulent period in Thai history. He also set up the *China Daily*, the country's first English language newspaper. Michael was a trustee of the Thomson Foundation, having worked with the Thomson Organisation Ltd for a decade after graduating from Bristol.

Michael's career in journalism was seeded at Bristol where he edited *Nonesuch News*, the then-student paper which preceded *Bacus* and *Epigram* and which lent its name to this magazine. At Bristol, Michael also met his wife Christine Gorman (BA 1958, née Wilson), who survives Michael together with their three children.

Michael was a dedicated Bristol University volunteer and supporter, and was a member of Court. He was featured in *Nonesuch* (Autumn 2006), which is available to read online at [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/nonesuch](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/nonesuch).

**Dr Eur Ing Michael Farrington (née Koussoulos)**  
(BSc 1960, MLitt 1974, PhD 1991) died May 2013, aged 76

**Dr Graham Neale**  
(MB ChB 1960) died October 2013, aged 84

**Geoffrey Akerman**  
(BSc 1961) died September 2013, aged 73

**Ronald Cowie**  
(BA 1961) died January 2014, aged 75

**Dr Andrew Crossland**  
(BSc 1961) died November 2013, aged 73

**Anthony Stuart**  
(BVSc 1961) died December 2013, aged 74

**Patrick Ivory**  
(BA 1962) died October 2013, aged 72

**Professor Lawrence Wilson**  
(PhD 1963) died December 2013, aged 79

**Dr Robert Gurney**  
(MB ChB 1964) died June 2013, aged 73

**Dr Esther Robb (née Morton)**  
(MB ChB 1964) died October 2013, aged 75

**Dr Stephen Reynolds**  
(BA 1965, PhD 1971) died 2013, aged 70

**Dr Timothy Leedham**  
(BSc 1966) died November 2013, aged 68

**Susan Hodgkinson**  
(BSc 1967) died October 2013, aged 68

**Deborah Cullen (née Henderson)**  
(BA 1968) died November 2013, aged 67

**Dr Trevor Gibbons**  
(BSc 1968, PhD 1971) died October 2013, aged 66

**Professor Charles McKean**  
(BA 1968) died September 2013, aged 67

**Adrian Morris**  
(BSc 1968) died January 2014, aged 67

**Dr James Tiles**  
(BA 1968, MSc 1969) died January 2014, aged 69

**Hilary Gould (née Jones)**  
(BA 1969) died June 2013, aged 67

**Dr David Hobson**  
(BSc 1969, PhD 1972) died December 2012, aged 64

**Michael Pimley**  
(BSc 1969) died December 2013, aged 66

**Professor Peter Daniels**  
(BSc 1972) died April 2012, aged 61

**John Phipps**  
(BA 1972) died 2013, aged 67

**Anna Corsan (née Cembrowicz)**  
(BVSc 1975) died November 2013, aged 62

**Dr Pamela Davies (née Daldorph)**  
(MB ChB 1975) died September 2013, aged 61

**Dr Yon Mayhew**  
(PhD 1975), former staff member, died 2013, aged 89

**Christopher Holtom**  
(MA 1976) died November 2013, aged 86

**Philip Newman**  
(BSc 1976) died March 2013, aged 58

**David Jermyn**  
(LLB 1978) died August 2013, aged 57

**Dr Joyce Miles**  
(MLitt 1979) died January 2013, aged 85

**William Allan**  
(MEd 1983) died July 2013, aged 91

**Michael Colwill**  
(BSc 1984) died 2013, aged 51

**Lesley Mabon**  
(BA 1984) died 2013, aged 50

**Dr Bojan Flaks**  
(DSc 1986) died October 2013, aged 72

**William Swabey**  
(BSc 1986) died 2013, aged 50

**Dr Antonio Teles da Silva**  
(PhD 1989) died September 2011, aged 59

**Timothy Sullivan**  
(Hon LLM 1990) died June 2013

**Jerome Blight**  
(Diploma 1995) died August 2013, aged 46

**Dr David Leakey**  
(Hon DEng 1995) died September 2013, aged 81

**Caroline Spokes**  
(BSc 1999) died December 2013, aged 35

**Dr Christopher Scanlan**  
(BSc 2000) died May 2013, aged 35

**Graeme Price**  
(MEng 2002) died July 2013, aged 33

**David Twomey**  
(LLB 2002) died July 2013, aged 33

**Chi-ho Chan**  
(MEd 2003) died July 2013, aged 50

**Nicholas Leak**  
(BSc 2004) died November 2013, aged 32

**Adam Davis**  
(BDS 2010) died July 2013, aged 29

**Emeritus Professor John Kent**  
died October 2013

**Dr Derek Parsons**  
former staff member, died August 2013, aged 80

**Emeritus Professor Richard Peace**  
died December 2013

**Tony Philpott**  
former staff member, died 2013, aged 75

**Charles Jeffrey Spittal**  
former staff member, died October 2013, aged 89

**Donald Whaley**  
former staff member, died September 2013, aged 80

**Dr John Wilson**  
former George Wills Senior Research Fellow, died October 2013

Due to an administration error, the death of Timothy Jackson (BSc 1982) was mistakenly announced in the Autumn 2013 edition of *Nonesuch*. He is alive and well, and we apologise for any distress caused to friends and family.

Please email any notifications of death to [alumni@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@bristol.ac.uk)

Calendar illustration © Alberto Morozzi

# Calendar May to December 2014

Make sure you're invited to relevant events in your area by updating your details at [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/mydetails](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/mydetails).



## May

**Monday 12 May**  
**University of Bristol talks**  
Speaker Professor Bruce Hood, Professor of Developmental Psychology in Society // London

**Saturday 31 May**  
**Cambridge Branch Summer Lecture**  
Speaker Professor Richard Pancost, Cabot Institute // The Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge

## July

**Friday 4 to Sunday 6 July**  
**Alumni Weekend 2014: Best of Bristol** // Bristol

Catch up with old friends, reminisce about your university years and rediscover the beautiful city of Bristol. Enjoy an exclusive tour of the new Life Sciences building, hear from Matthew Baugh OBE (BA 1994, MSc 1997), former HM Ambassador to Somalia, and enjoy a commemorative lunch in the magnificent Great Hall of the Wills Memorial Building.

For more information and details of how to book, please visit [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/events](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/events) or call +44 (0)117 394 1049

## September

**Friday 19 to Sunday 21 September**  
**Eastern Canada Reunion** // Quebec

## October

**Wednesday 8 October**  
**Pioneers' Reception (invitation-only)** // London

**Saturday 11 October**  
**Cambridge Branch Annual Dinner** // Cambridge

**Thursday 23 October**  
**Wills Hall Association Annual Reception** // London

## Vote now

Don't miss your chance to vote for your Alumni Association (Convocation) representatives on Court, and on the Alumni Association Committee. You can find out who's standing for election, and vote, at [bristol.ac.uk/alumni/take-part](http://bristol.ac.uk/alumni/take-part).

Online and postal voting close at midnight, Friday 4 July 2014. If you would like a paper ballot form, please contact the Alumni Relations team on +44 (0)117 331 8210.

You will also be able to vote in person at the AGM on Saturday 5 July, part of the Alumni Weekend 2014.

## November

**Thursday 6 November**  
**London Branch of University of Bristol Alumni Annual Lecture**  
Speaker James Landale, Deputy Political Editor, BBC News // London

## December

**Thursday 11 December**  
**Alumni Association Annual Reception and Student Awards** // Bristol

**Monday 15 December**  
**London Branch of University of Bristol Alumni Carol Service** // London



‘Ernest would be so happy to know that part of his legacy has made this life-saving research possible.’

Mrs Ethel Brook



Ernest Brook (BA 1952) left a legacy to help fund an oxygen chamber, a vital piece of equipment that will be used to examine how oxygen levels in the placenta affect unborn babies. Dr Patrick Case, from Bristol's School of Clinical Sciences, hopes his pioneering research in this area will help reduce brain damage in unborn babies, and incidences of autism, attention deficit disorder and schizophrenia in later life.

## Everyone can leave a legacy

**Contact:**

Ella Searle, Planned Giving Manager, University of Bristol,  
Senate House, Tyndall Avenue, Bristol, BS8 1TH  
**T:** +44 (0)117 394 1045 **E:** ella.searle@bristol.ac.uk

[bristol.ac.uk/centenarycampaign/how/legacies](http://bristol.ac.uk/centenarycampaign/how/legacies)

Exempt charity number: X1121