

STAFF AND STUDENTS

The United Nations, at its General Assembly session on 22 December 2005, proclaimed 2008 as the United Nations International Year of Planet Earth. The UN press release reads as follows.

"By a draft on the International Year of Planet Earth, 2008, which the Committee approved without a vote on 11 November, the Assembly would declare 2008 the International Year of Planet Earth. It would also designate the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to organize activities to be undertaken during the Year, in collaboration with UNEP and other relevant United Nations bodies, the International Union of Geological Sciences and other Earth sciences societies and groups throughout the world. Also by that draft, the Assembly would encourage Member States, the United Nations system and other actors to use the Year to increase awareness of the importance of Earth sciences in achieving sustainable development and promoting local, national, regional and international action,"

This is the culmination of over four years' work by earth scientists in UNESCO and the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), led by Dr. Eduardo de Mulder (The Netherlands) who is Past President of IUGS. The Year's Science Programme is chaired by Professor Edward Derbyshire, and its Outreach Programme by Dr. Ted Nield of the Geological Society of London. The UN Year will make up the central year of a triennium of global geoscience activity 2007-2009.

Ed Derbyshire, together with Dr. Ted Nield (Geological Society of London) was commissioned a Colonel of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, USA, on 27 January; this is the highest Kentucky honour and is "bestowed because of the individual's service to mankind". Other holders include Whoopi Goldberg, Muhammad Ali, Edmund Nickless (Geological Society of London) the late Bing Crosby, Pope John Paul II - and Sir Winston Churchill. The honour was conferred by the Governor of Kentucky, Ernie Fletcher. www.kycolonels.org/

Becky Fox, who completed her ESRC-funded PhD in the Department last year, is beginning work this month as a Research Assistant on an 18-month Leverhulme Trust project based in the Health & Social Care Department at Royal Holloway, looking at women's attitudes to body image, eating and genetic inheritance during and immediately after pregnancy.

As part of her ESRC post-doc **Katie Walsh** organised a one-day workshop on 'Britishness Abroad: Historical and Contemporary Research on Internationally Mobile Britons' at Bedford Square. The aim was to examine the nature of British mobility abroad and to consider the continuities and discontinuities in British identities and experiences over time and space. There was a particular focus on examining the role of Empire in shaping these identities and how Britishness is played out in a post-colonial world. There were five papers, including **Katie Walsh's** paper 'Extraordinary and everyday Britishness in Dubai' and **David**

Lambert's "' Barbados - justly styled most ancient and most loyal': Aberrant Britons and the problem of West Indian slavery". Catherine Hall (UCL) acted as a discussant.

As a result of the College Council's decision to merge the Honorary Fellowship and Associateship awards **David Hilling** has now been made an Honorary Fellow of the College - an honour which he greatly values and which confirms his continuing link with the College and department.

OUTSIDE ENGAGEMENTS

Ed Derbyshire attended a meeting of the UK leaders of the four Natural Science Programmes of UNESCO, as part of the work of the UK Commission to UNESCO, at Burlington House, London, on 16 January.

David Simon served as external assessor on the interview panel for a Chair in Development Planning in the Bartlett School , UCL, on 6 February.

David Simon presented seminars on 'Separated by Common Ground? Bringing (post)development and (post)colonialism together' in the School of Geography , University of Plymouth on 8 February and the Dept of Town Planning, University of Sheffield on 15th February.

Tim Unwin in his capacity as external examiner and academic adviser of the Institute of Masters of Wine visited their training programmes in Napa (1-6 February) and Bordeaux (22-24 February) as part of an external review of their educational activities that he is undertaking.

Tim Unwin was working with the Commission for ICT in the Philippines from 15-27 January, during which time he undertook research with out-of-school youth, and led workshops on the use of ICT for teacher training and on the monitoring and evaluation of ICT in education initiatives.

Clive Gamble presented a paper at the Oxford University Continuing education conference on Human origins on 12 February. The paper was entitled 'The archaeology of the social brain: language, technology and global colonisation'

Clive Gamble presented a report on Dating Services in English heritage to the research Advisory Panel of English Heritage on February 22nd.

Clive Gamble attended a Council Meeting of the Society of Antiquaries of London on February 2nd.

Katie Willis gave a talk entitled 'Migration in Less-Economically-Developed Countries' to the Guildford branch of the Geographical Association.

Katie Willis gave a seminar entitled 'Coming to China changed my life: Gender roles and relations among single British migrants' at the International Gender Studies Centre, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford.

In February PhD student **Toby Butler** gave a paper entitled 'A walk of art: sound walks, oral history and landscape' to the Sussex University Centre for Life History Research.

VISITORS-MEETINGS IN THE DEPARTMENT

The Department's annual Careers' Evening on 7th February proved a very successful event, with five of our alumni returning to talk to current students about their careers and how their RHUL Geography degrees have 'worked for them'. The alumni were: Judith Pender (BSc 1966), Sarah Hibbin (BA 1992), Karen Man (BSc 1995), Sarah Creen (née Pearce) (BA 1995) and **Gemma Swindle** (BSc 1999, MSc 2002). Louisa Davies of the Careers' Service also spoke. The event was organised by **David Simon**, Departmental Careers and Alumni Officer.

Melissa Leach from the Institute of Development Studies , University of Sussex presented the CEDAR Annual Lecture on Monday, 20th February. The title of her presentation was 'Making Science and Technology Work for the Poor? Citizen Engagement in a Globalised World'.

Judith Pender from the Natural Resource Group, UK presented the CEDAR Seminar on Monday 6th February. The Title of her presentation was 'Development of Migrant Pest Information Systems for Africa and Central Asia '.

Dr. Wolfgang Mueller from the Geology Department at RHUL presented the QUISS Seminar on Wednesday, 8th February. The title of his presentation was 'High Resolution Environmental Records from Human and Faunal Teeth'.

Dr. David Brigdland from the Geology Department, University of Durham presented the QUISS Seminar on 22nd February. The title of his presentation was 'Quaternary Fluvial Archives - What Do They Tell Us?'

Adrian Palmer presented the Departmental Seminar on Thursday, 2nd February. The title of his presentation was 'Investigating the Sediment Stopwatch: microcospic analysis of high-resolution lacustrine sequences in the UK '.

Ruth Payne presented the Departmental Seminar on Thursday 16th February. The title of her presentation was 'Child-headed households in Zambia : From concepts to reality'.

Professor Izhak Schnell, of Tel Aviv University , visited the Social and Cultural Geography research group on February 28th. He presented a seminar to a group of staff and graduate students on senses of place in contemporary Israel , providing an overview of his on-going work on downtown consumer spaces, shopping malls, contested monumental and public spaces, and on Gaza settler place attachments and politics.

PUBLICATIONS

David Simon (2006) 'The world city hypothesis: reflections from the periphery' (edited excerpt from 1995 chapter in Knox and Taylor eds), reprinted, with editorial introduction, in N. Brenner and R. Keil (eds) *The Global Cities Reader*, pp. 203-209. London and New York : Routledge.

David Simon (2006) 'Separated by common ground? Bringing (post)development and (post)colonialism together' *The Geographical Journal* 172(1): 10-21.

Clive Gamble 2005 *Torralba, Ambrona y la nocion de la caza en el Pleistoceno. Plenitud, crisis y renovacion del concepto* In M.Santonja (ed) *Los Yacimientos Paleoliticos de Ambrona y Torralba (Soria)*. Museo Arqueologico Regional, Zona Arqueologica 5 Alcala de Henares.

David Lambert (2006) 'Making the past present: Historical wrongs and demands for reparation' in C. Barnett, J. Robinson and G. Rose (eds), *Living in a Globalised World: A Demanding World* (Open University, 2006).

BOOK REVIEWS - ABSTRACTS-CONFERENCE REPORTS

Clive Gamble 2006 *Musical chairs* *Cambridge Journal of Archaeology* 16: 108-9

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Richard Bailey has been successful in two grant applications to the Royal Society under the Society's International Short Visits scheme, to support visits to the Department by Dr Grzegorz Adamiec and Dr Xulong Wang to work on optical dating projects in the Geochronology Laboratories. The total sum awarded is £7,067

Danielle Schreve has been successful in her application for a NERC CASE PhD studentship, in partnership with the Natural History Museum , for a project on 'The evolution and palaeoecology of the woolly rhinoceros (*Coelodonta antiquitatis*)'.

ESRC have awarded the Department a quota of 2 Postgraduate Studentships per annum, to be allocated in 2006-7 and 2007-8. This is in addition to competition awards, CASE awards and other studentships linked to NERC, ODPM and other bodies. (News on outcomes of current ESRC CASE applications is expected in late March).

Congratulations to **Bertie Mandelblatt**, who has won the Andrew Hill Clark Award presented by the Association of American Geographers Historical Geography Specialty Group for the best conference paper by a PhD student in 2005. Her paper is entitled 'Irish boeuf sale under lock and key: material culture, transatlantic networks and Colbert's mercantilist experiments in the Franco-Caribbean'. The award will be formally announced at the AAG Annual Meeting in Chicago , March 2006.

ANY OTHER NEWS

Congratulations to **Alex Loftus** and Fiona on the arrival of their lovely baby girl Rosa (9lbs). Mother and baby are both doing well.

Congratulations to **Klaus Dodds** and Caroline on the arrival of their lovely baby boy Theo. Theo weighed in a 7lb 9oz.

Toby Butler's 'Memoryscape' website, where you can listen/download two audio walks along the Thames Path, reached 4,500 unique visitors this month. Around 10 per cent of the visitors download an entire walk to play on their MP3 players. The website can be seen at www.memoryscape.org.uk - CD versions of the walk and maps are also freely available for staff and students from the Geography Department office. The walks explore river culture at Hampton Court in West London, and the Greenwich Peninsular in East London . Following a request from David Pinder, an organised walk of the Greenwich route will be offered as a field trip at this year's RGS/IBG conference, and players will be available for delegates to borrow throughout the event for those who prefer to walk in their own time.

England Debut for Phil Wicks

Phil Wicks, who graduated from the Department last year, has made his debut running for England in an Under 23 team in Germany , finishing in fifth place and third out of five England runners in a 8.5k race. The competition included teams from England, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Holland and Belgium and the race was also open to local club athletes including two Kenyans. Phil, who was absolutely delighted with his run, was a member of the STARS programme at Royal Holloway. For more details, see the story and pictures at <http://www.belgraveharriers.com/>.