



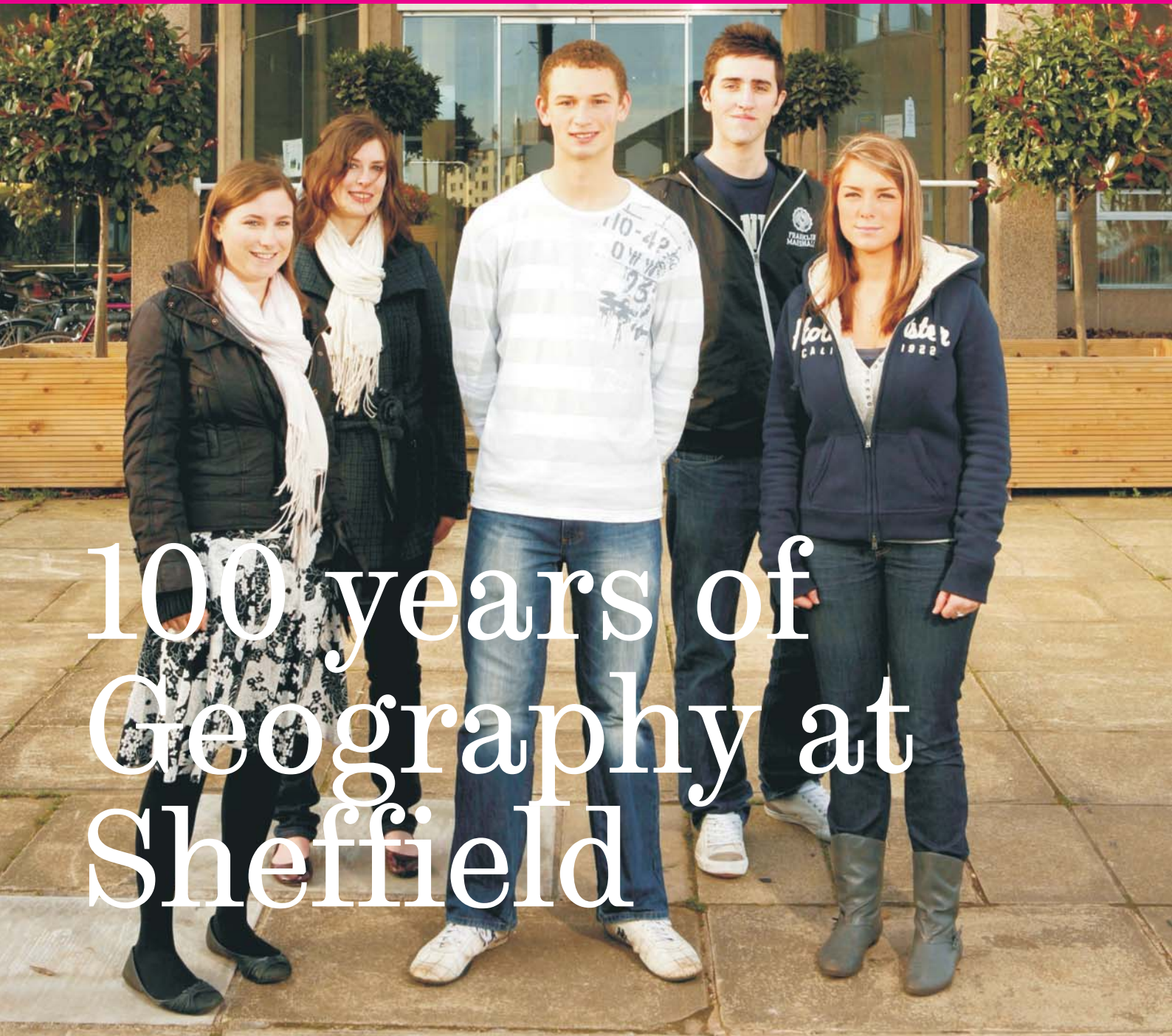
The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Department
of
Geography.

Update...

Spring 2009

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A group of five young adults, three women and two men, standing in a line on a paved walkway in front of a building with large glass windows. They are dressed in casual, contemporary clothing. The woman on the far left is wearing a black jacket and a white scarf. The woman next to her is wearing a dark jacket and a white scarf. The man in the center is wearing a white and grey striped long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. The man next to him is wearing a dark jacket and dark pants. The woman on the far right is wearing a dark blue hoodie with 'Hollister Cali 1982' on it and dark pants.

100 years of
Geography at
Sheffield

Celebrating 100 years of Geography at Sheffield

2008 was the Department's centenary year, which we celebrated with a series of lectures by alumni and a Centenary Open Day and Dinner to raise funds for undergraduate and postgraduate bursaries.



From humble beginnings in 1908, the Department of Geography has grown to become one of the largest and most respected in the UK, with over 30 full time staff and an international reputation for research.

The highlight of the year was a Centenary Open Day, attended by over 450 alumni, former colleagues, and friends. A brass band provided entertainment, whilst visitors toured the city and the Department's modern research and teaching facilities.

The Open Day was followed by a Centenary

Dinner, where Vanessa Lawrence – Director General of the Ordnance Survey and a former Geography undergraduate at Sheffield – was amongst those who gave speeches celebrating the value of a University of Sheffield Geography degree.

The year also saw public lectures from alumni, including Richard Leafe (Chief Executive of the Lake District National Park Authority) and Graham Farmer (Officer-in-Charge, UN Food and Agriculture Programme, Somalia), plus distinguished guests, including Professor Doreen Massey (Open University) and David Lambert (Chief Executive of the Geographical Association).

Another notable event was the publication of a fascinating and comprehensive history of the Department by Professor Paul White.

The £30,000 raised during the year will provide support for our undergraduate and postgraduate students, including bursaries for undergraduate field class attendance.

Information for applicants

Open days for applicants holding offers from UCAS

If you have applied to us via UCAS and have received an offer of a place on one of our degree courses, you should also have received an email inviting you to visit us on an Open Day, where you can gain a fuller picture of life and work at the University of Sheffield.

To book onto an Open Day, follow the link given in the email. If UCAS have notified you of an offer from us, but you have still to be invited to an Open Day, please let us know (details of how to contact us are on the back page). Open Days run from December 2008 to late March 2009.

Thinking of studying Geography at Sheffield?

If you are interested in studying Geography or any of our related degrees at the University of Sheffield and have not yet applied to UCAS, you can visit the University to find out more on any of the following Summer Open Days:

Saturday 20 June 2009
Monday 6 July 2009
Tuesday 7 July 2009
Monday 7 September 2009

For further information, or to book onto a Summer Open Day, please visit:

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/opendays/>

New Undergraduate course brochures

The Department has published new brochures for our Geography and Environmental Science degree programmes that detail the exciting range of courses that are available and outline their diverse and very flexible nature.

As ever, the brochures include details of our very popular international field classes that are available to students on most courses. New for this year is the professional accreditation of our Environmental Science degrees received from the Institute for Environmental Sciences.

Visitors to our Open Days receive a brochure on arrival. You can also download a copies of our brochures here:

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/prospectiveug/brochures.html>



Centenary Expedition 2009

How did a Sheffield mining venture in the high-Arctic go so disastrously wrong? 100 years later, students and staff of the department will go there to find out.

The city of Sheffield has a long mining tradition, but not always a successful one. 100 years ago, Robert Neal Rudmose-Brown, the first Head of Geography at the University of Sheffield, visited a mining venture that had gone disastrously wrong.

The venture was Advent City, a high-Arctic mining outpost at 78 °N in Spitsbergen, the largest island in the Svalbard archipelago. A lack of safety legislation and harsh physical environment made work there very difficult. At one point, the Navy had to be called upon to restore order among the workforce.

Inevitably, the mine closed after just a few years, and Rudmose-Brown saw only rapid deterioration upon his arrival. Dr Andy Hodson, who is leading the 2009 expedition, believes that marked changes in the climate of the high-Arctic were partly responsible for making conditions so unbearable.

We now know that these changes were caused by the end of the so-called Little Ice

Age, since which time the glaciers of Spitsbergen have experienced rapid retreat.

Students and staff on the expedition will witness these changes in glacial dynamics first-hand. In so doing, they will learn that glacier retreat is a complex process. Such insights are not readily accessible from what is an almost hysterical reporting of the phenomenon by the world's media.

Retracing the footsteps of Rudmose-Brown provides an excellent opportunity to reflect upon the department's relationship with the city of Sheffield and our proud polar-science history, which continues to this day.

Part of this history are the achievements of Fritz Koerner (1932–2008), a graduate of the department and noted glaciologist, who was in the first team ever to reach the North Pole on foot. Peary claimed to have done this some years before, but is thought to have missed the Pole: evidence perhaps of the value of a Sheffield Geography degree!

Degree news

Department announces new Masters courses

The range of taught postgraduate courses open to our graduates will swell greatly over the next two years, with the addition of four new one-year Masters courses. These are:

- Social and Spatial Inequalities (MSc)
- International Development (MA)
- International Development (MPH - Masters in Public Health)
- Environmental Change and International Development (MA)

The range of Masters courses already offered by the department comprise:

- Human Geography Research (MA)
- Social and Cultural Geographies (MA)
- Polar and Alpine studies (MSc)
- Environmental Analysis of Terrestrial Systems (MSc)

PhD opportunities are also available in both Physical and Human Geography.

For further information about the department, including our current Undergraduate and Masters courses, please visit:

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/>

Environmental Science Undergraduate courses win IES accreditation

Both of the Department's Environmental Science Undergraduate courses have been awarded professional accreditation under the Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES) and Committee of Heads of Environmental Sciences (CHES) Accreditation Scheme.

The Department's Undergraduate Masters in Environmental Science (MEnvSci) and BSc in Environmental Science are taught by staff from two of the University's leading departments: Geography and Animal & Plant Sciences. Students studying these degrees now become an Accredited Student Member of the IES and on graduation they automatically qualify to become Associate Members of the IES.

The Accreditation panel commented "this is a strong department with a commitment to Environmental Science, and that the Environmental Science programme is a very good one". They also highlighted "the emphasis on active learning, including fieldwork", "the input from environmental professionals and employers", "the attention to the development of a wide range of skills including practical, laboratory and research skills" and "the attention to professional planning".

The Department's Personal Development Portfolio (PDP), a scheme undertaken by all students that forms the basis of their curriculum vitae after graduation, was also highlighted as "an excellent initiative and a good basis for continuing professional practice."

California field class 2008

The Dryland Environments field class will be one that Year 3 student Tom Cropper will always remember.

There was a feeling of excitement as we departed Sheffield as many of us hadn't been to America before. Moreover, our first destination, for two weeks, was the remote Zzyzx Desert Studies Field Centre at the foot of Soda Mountain in the Mojave Desert.

After a night in California, we journeyed to Zzyzx, stopping to examine landscapes unique to North America. These included the San Andreas Fault, the huge basin and range topography and alluvial fan systems that characterise much of the desert, and the famous "cat" climbing dune.

The next day had a similar sight-seeing theme with the aim of understanding the processes that shaped the Mojave Desert. However, the next three days involved project work at various field sites to collect data needed for group presentations to be given at the end of the week.

The first project day was spent sorting through equipment and experimenting with sampling methods. A small group of us also decided to climb Soda Mountain to watch the sunrise, with the aim of being back in time for breakfast. The view from the top was truly amazing; not even the sound of the breakfast bell – which sounded when only halfway down our descent – could dampen our great sense of achievement!



The days following the project work included a two-day trip to Death Valley. Venturing to the bottom of the valley, which is 90m below sea-level, the temperature was almost unbearable – even in November.

Our group presentations, a day later, signalled the end of the academic part of the trip. The celebrations commenced with a visit to the Kelso Dunes, which provided ample opportunity to roll about in sand, before a very rapid 200m descent of the steepest side of the dune system!

Most of us opted to stay in the US for a week longer, spending four days in Hollywood and three days in Las Vegas, where we spent two days on Venice beach, saw the Kaiser Chiefs in Hollywood, and visited the Grand Canyon. It had been a fantastic trip that I will never forget.

About the Geography Society

Geography Society President and year 2 student Dan Brewer explains the important role the Society plays in creating a strong Geography student community.

The Geography Society is a long-established undergraduate society run by students that aims to make your time at Sheffield the best time of your life. As one of the largest and most popular of all societies at Sheffield, we offer an exciting programme of events that ensure you will make friends fast.

The Society hosts many events each year, ranging from our formal end-of-year ball, to barn-dances and an annual trip abroad (this year we're going to Amsterdam).

Our events aim to offer something for everyone, whatever your degree course or year, providing opportunities to take a break from academic life, whilst building a strong Geography undergraduate community.

Our committee structure is also an important feature of the society, helping to form lasting friendships amongst those who choose to get more involved in the organisation of the Society and its events. The Society is also very democratic, with

elections for society committee positions – which can be very competitive – held at the beginning of April every year.

The University of Sheffield is one of the top universities in the UK and the Department of Geography is a great place to study. We wish all applicants the best of luck and hope that we will see you at Sheffield in the near future. We look forward to ensuring that your undergraduate experience is the most exciting and memorable time of your life.



Our research highlights of 2008

Volcanologist wins Rolex Award for Enterprise

Dr Andrew McGonigle has received a prestigious Rolex Award for Enterprise after impressing the judging panel with an innovative device that will help predict volcanic eruptions and therefore save thousands of lives.

The Award will finance the development of an unmanned, small-scale helicopter that can measure the gases that emanate from active volcanoes, eliminating the often deadly task of measuring volcanic gases manually.

Department wins €2.5M to study arctic nitrogen

Dr Andrew Hodson has received a €2.5M Marie Curie Initial Stage Network award to lead a multidisciplinary study of the role of atmospherically-deposited nitrogen in Arctic terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and its potential to exacerbate ecosystem response to climate change.

The project, which will be based at the Ny Ålesund research station in Svalbard, will integrate expertise in atmospheric sciences, snow physics, hydrology, biogeochemistry and aquatic/terrestrial ecology from institutions in the UK, Norway, Sweden, Germany and Austria.

Dimitris has the answer to where we are happiest

Dr Dimitris Ballas of the Social and Spatial Inequalities Research Group generated intense media interest in Geography when he presented his analysis of happiness data for 273 UK districts at the Royal Geographical Society/Institute of British Geographers' Annual Conference in August 2008.

A district in mid-Wales was found to have the highest well-being in the UK. A further eight of the top-ten happiest places were in Scotland and the North of England, with Sutton in London completing the top ten. Edinburgh came out bottom as the unhappiest place to live.

Being Bigg is FRUGAL in a changing climate

Professor Grant Bigg has been awarded £14,216 to take part in a Rapid Climate Change Model Intercomparison Project funded by one of the UK's major research councils. The project will compare the results from different climate models that are able to simulate future climate under increasing carbon dioxide emissions and freshwater inputs to the oceans from melting ice caps. The project will include the University of Sheffield's very own FRUGAL (Fine Resolution Greenland And Labrador) model.

Mapping the Way We Live – Mapping the Way We Die

Staff and researchers from the Social and Spatial Inequalities Research Group published two new atlases in 2008. The first uses 366 cartograms to depict the countries of the world – not by physical size – but by importance on a vast range of subjects, from population to pollution. The second is the result of an analysis of over 14 million deaths in the UK from 1981 to 2004, providing a comprehensive overview of the geographical pattern of mortality, from heart attacks and cancer to suicide and murder.

Download the full set of cartograms from the *Atlas of the Real World* (Thames & Hudson) at <http://www.worldmapper.org/>. The *Grim Reaper's Road Map* is published by Policy Press.

Changing Families, Changing Food ends

October 2008 saw the Department's £1.2M study *Changing Families, Changing Food* – funded by The Leverhulme Trust – come to a successful conclusion with a conference at the British Library in London. Approaching family life through the lens of food, the study tackled many commonly-held beliefs, including the 'decline of the family meal' and the 'difficulties of healthy eating' in everyday family life.

Stop press • Stop Press • Stop press

Graduation news 2008

Over 200 students graduated from the Department in 2008 and a record 25 were awarded firsts. In addition, the following prizes were awarded:

Hart Human Geography Prize: Mark Thompson (year 1 BA Geog), Thomas Cropper (year 2 BSc Geog), Nicola Dodd (year 2 BSc Geog), Tom Croll-Knight (year 3 BA Geog); **RS Waters Physical Geography Prize:** Isabelle Winder (year 3 BSc Geog); **Accenture Prize for Geography:** Tom Croll-Knight (year 3 BA Geog); **Laverick-Webster-Hewitt Prize for Geology:** Madeleine Bristow (year 3 MEnv); **Alice Garnett Dissertation Prize:** Tom Croll-Knight (year 3 BA Geog), Isabelle Winder (year 3 BSc Geog); **Hart Prize for best Extended Geographical Essay:** Alexander Moxon (year 3 BA Geog); **Alice Garnett Prize for Dual Honours Geography:** Luke Temple (year 3 Geog/Politics); **LR Moore Prize for best Geological field project:** Christopher Pembroke (year 3 BSc Geog), Christopher Clark (year 3 BSc Geog); **Fearnside Prize for the best Geological field work report:** Alexander Dunhill (year 3 MEnv). Congratulations to all!

Centenary public lectures

Our public lecture series celebrating 100 years of Geography at Sheffield concluded on 7th December 2008 with a well-attended lecture by **Professor Doreen Massey** (Open University). The other speakers in the series were: **Richard Leafe** (Chief Executive of the Lake District National Park Authority), **Dr Graham Farmer** (Officer-in-Charge, UN Food and Agriculture Programme, Somalia), **David Lambert** (Chief Executive of the Geographical Association), and **Dr Bill Schlesinger** (the Department's 2008 Hart Fellow and President of the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Millbrook, New York).

Building improvements

In addition to a £1 million investment in state-of-the-art physical geography and biogeochemistry facilities within the Department, the University has completed its redesign and refurbishment of the Geography Undergraduate IT Suite. The University is now studying how to further improve the utilisation of space in the building with the aim of providing improved facilities for teaching and research and a social area for staff and students.

Find out more...

About the Department

The Department of Geography, founded in 1908, is one of the oldest departments of its kind in the country, and enjoys an international reputation for research in physical and human geography. To find out more, please visit:

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/>

About our degree courses

Degrees awarded by the University of Sheffield are highly valued and respected throughout the world and those offered by the Department of Geography enjoy a long-standing reputation as being amongst the best of their kind in the UK. To find out more, please visit:

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/prospectiveug/>

About your application

If you have applied to us through UCAS or are thinking of doing so and have a question you would like to ask, please contact us as follows:

Telephone: +44 (0)114 222 7970

Email: geog-ug-applications@sheffield.ac.uk