Building work is progressing well, the building is now water tight and installation of the laboratory furniture has commenced with both the cold and warm rooms completed. We have now started to plan our move across to the new facility and over the coming weeks will be speaking with everyone about the process. Due to the inclement weather at the beginning of the year the contractors are forecasting a slight delay to the completion of the project with our moves occurring late September to early October.

In preparation for the move we would ask you all to start looking at your belongings and dispose of unwanted items/paperwork rather than leaving until the last minute. If you have a query on disposal arrangements, please discuss them with Anne Gregory, Lead Technician and Lorraine Henery, Lead Secretary respectively.

The Sheffield Institute Foundation for Motor Neurone Disease £178,885. Three year research fellowship in translational neuroscience to support Dr Richard Mead.

EU Framework 7 Health 2010 two stage grant. 2010 -2015 E8,688,402 (Sheffield component E679,106) Systems Biology in ALS. PJ Shaw and J Kirby.


EPSRC 2010-2013 (£964,752) Polymer nanomedicine: enhancing the translation from the lab to the clinic. Professor Mimoun Azzouz and team, Jointly with Dr Giuseppe Battaglia (PI), Prof Stephen Armes and Prof Nicola Brown.

Psychiatry has been awarded grants of £60K this month to support a Substance Abuse Curriculum Development Officer, a CLRN South Yorkshire Mental Health research conference in March 2011 and further research into delusions and lying.
New Starters and Leavers:

Academic Neurology:
We warmly welcome and sadly say goodbye to the following:

Said Welcome to:

Melanie Fox Specialist MND Clinical Studies Officer started on the 26th April working with Professor Shaw, Dr McDermott and Hannah Hollinger’s team

Daniel Fillingham has joined the neuroscience technical team

And a Sad Goodbye to:
Natasha Redhead, BMedSci student has now finished her 9 month project with Dr Tennore Ramesh and Professor Shaw and looking forward to her viva in September.

Academic Psychiatry Unit:

Said farewell to Dr Catherine Kaylor-Hughes, Dr Graham Pluck and Ms Rachel Findlay

and welcomed William Dyson-Sutton to the department. Robert Hoskins will be joining us later in the year to begin his PhD studies

New Positions:

Dr Richard Mead appointed to a 3 year SITraN fellowship.

Dr Johnathan Cooper appointed to a one year Peake fellowship.

Professor Neil Lawrence and Professor Magnus Rattray have been appointed as SITraN Professors of Machine Learning and Bioinformatics and will start 1st August and 1st September respectively.

Dr John Terry has been appointed to a Strategic Readership in the Faculty of Engineering. His expertise is in mathematical modelling of neurological disease processes and his research group will be based within SITraN which we expect will be a great stimulus to cross-faculty research initiatives.
**Prize Awards**

**Dr Daniel Tsoi**, formerly a Clinical Lecturer with the Academic Psychiatry Unit and currently studying for his PhD with Psychiatry was awarded first prize for his third year PhD study presentation.

Dr Oliver Bandmann’s student, **Victoria Franklin**, has been awarded the **Association of British Neurologists BMedSci Scholarship** for 2010. Her project will be on vesicular trafficking in PD (co-supervision with Prof E Smythe, BMS).

**Dr Janine Kirby** has been awarded a **Senate Award for Teaching** for her contribution to the MSc Molecular Medicine course as part of a Collaborative Award which also went to: Martin Nicklin (Infection and Immunity); François Guesdon (Infection and Immunity); Jon Shaw (Infection and Immunity); Ilaria Bellantuono (Human Metabolism); Helen Marriott (Infection and Immunity) and Jane Shields (Medical School).

**Papers/Books Published:**


- The state of tranquillity: Subjective perception is shaped by contextual modulation of auditory connectivity by Mike Hunter, Tom Farrow and Peter Woodruff in collaboration with colleagues from the University of Bradford has been accepted for publication in Neuroimage


**Work Presented:**
Psychiatry staff have presented research work at international conferences in Berlin, Jordan, Krakow and we had nine posters accepted for presentation at the recent 16th Annual Meeting of the Organization for Human Brain Mapping in Barcelona.

Neurology staff have presented their work at the Association of British Neurologists meeting in Brighton and at the International Neuromuscular symposium in Naples.

**PhD Awards**
Dr Dan Blackburn was awarded his PhD in April 2010, many congratulations Dan.
Press Coverage:

Duke in Sheffield to see progress on pioneering MND Centre – 27th May 2010

Professor Tony Weetman, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Medicine Dentistry and Health, Professor Pam Shaw and the Duke of Devonshire outside the back of the SITraN building site.

Article in the Sheffield Star 28th May 2010

The Duke of Devonshire KCVO, CBE, DL visited the University of Sheffield on Thursday 27 May 2010 to take a tour of the Sheffield Institute of Translational Neuroscience (SITraN) building site, which is set to become a world centre for research into Motor Neurone Disease (MND).

As the Honorary Patron of the Sheffield Institute Foundation for Motor Neurone Disease, which is raising funds for the new centre, the Duke wanted to view the progress of the building and show his support for the Institute.

During the visit the Duke met with Professor Pam Shaw, Head of Neuroscience at the University and an international expert in MND who will lead the team of staff at the new research institute. He was also taken on a tour of the site by Mike Woods, Project Manager from ISG.

Professor Pam Shaw said: “It has been a great honour to welcome the Duke of Devonshire to see the progress made on the Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience (SITraN) building. We are very excited that the Institute will be complete within the next 3 months. We have already attracted some world class researchers to come and join our team and we are in the process of purchasing the cutting edge scientific equipment needed for our work. The support and enthusiasm of the Duke of Devonshire and the Patrons of the Sheffield Institute Foundation have been inspirational – without them we would never have realised this dream. I believe that the resources and momentum we have been able to assemble for the SITraN development will enable us to make a real difference to people and families facing MND and related conditions affecting the nervous system.”

The Duke of Devonshire said: “The Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience (SITraN) will be a wonderful achievement for the University and city of Sheffield. I am very proud to be the Honorary Patron of the Sheffield Institute Foundation for Motor Neurone Disease which has played a key role, in partnership with the University, in making this project happen. Knowing that the SITraN building will be completed within the next 3 months, I wanted to come and see for myself the progress that has been made.

“Professor Pam Shaw has assembled a world class team which has already made significant progress in understanding the causes of Motor Neurone Disease and in developing new treatments. The SITraN development will enable Sheffield to attract clinicians and scientists from round the world to join in the endeavour to find a cure for this devastating condition and related neurodegenerative disorders. I am very much looking forward to seeing Professor Shaw’s team working together in the Institute and to hearing of the benefits for MND sufferers that will undoubtedly emerge from their work.”

New therapy offers hope to Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) patients

10 June 2010 - Sheffield University News Release

Children who suffer from the devastating disease Spinal Muscular Atrophy are set to benefit from a new breakthrough in therapy developments by researchers at the University of Sheffield.

The research, which was published yesterday (9 June 2010) in Science Translational Medicine, has shown that a novel gene transfer system has the potential to provide an effective therapeutic treatment for SMA patients.

SMA is a devastating motor neuron disease which affects children. It is caused by an abnormal survival motor neuron (SMN) gene, which leads to a reduction of SMN protein levels. The disease is currently incurable, and patients often require prolonged medical care as no effective treatments to alleviate the condition, currently exist.

The research team at Sheffield, led by Professor Mimoun Azzouz, tested whether a novel gene replacement therapy through a single injection was the most efficient way to treat the disease in a group of mice. They found that the injection, which expressed the SMN gene, successfully restored the SMN protein to normal levels and alleviated symptoms in the SMA model.

The new technique has the potential to develop a simple injection, without any requirement for risky and costly surgical interventions, and has achieved the highest therapeutic effects reported in the field to date. This has significant implications for the future treatment of SMA.

Professor Mimoun Azzouz, from the University’s Department of Neuroscience, said: “I am delighted by the outcome of several years of efforts to tackle this devastating disease. These results bring us one step closer to a successful gene therapy treatment for patients with SMA.”

Image showing the restoration of the SMN protein in motor neurons
Bounty Boat trip – finished on 15th June.

A four-man attempt to recreate Captain William Bligh's epic 4,000-mile open boat voyage succeeded today. The team, including gap year student Chris Wilde, 18, from Warwick, sailed the 25ft-long Talisker Bounty Boat on its journey across the Pacific.

Mr Wilde answered an appeal in a newspaper article to join the crew after another member withdrew suffering appendicitis.

Whilst we were all incredibly excited to get close to Captain Bligh and his crew, everyone on board the Talisker Bounty Boat was still aware that the experience would push us to the limit of endurance and survival.

"That said, it is one thing anticipating what the journey will bring and quite another going through it for seven weeks. Even with my experience, this has undoubtedly been one of the hardest but best things I have ever done."

The four men began their epic journey off the coast of Tonga on April 29 at the same location where Bligh and his sailors - refugees from the mutiny on the HMS Bounty started some 221 years ago.

After almost seven weeks at sea the boat landed in Kupang, west Timor, today.

Mr Wilde joined Don McIntyre, 53, sailor Dave Pryce and 48-year-old David Wilkinson - an Englishman who has lived in Hong Kong for the past 17 years.

Mr McIntyre said: 'Today we have made history and we are immensely proud of completing the Talisker Bounty Boat expedition.
The journey saw the crew face the same deprivations as those encountered by the original crew, which included no navigation charts, only two weeks of water and hardly any food. The crew hoped to raise about £150,000 for The Sheffield Institute Foundation for Motor Neurone Disease.

Visit to the SITraN site:

Don McIntyre visited the SITraN building site on Tuesday 6th July to see progress so far, the day after he was guest of honour at a dinner hosted by the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire at Chatsworth House. Don said he “felt privileged” to be involved in a project which is set to carry such groundbreaking work. It has been great to see the building. The thing that struck me as the most exciting part was it’s going to be a dynamic and exciting workplace, which is going to be a really inspiring place for researchers and scientists to do some amazing work.”

**Medical School Post-Doc Society (MSPDS) Update**

This society is for post-docs, contract research staff and anybody interested in issues relating to post-docs. Our main aims are to analyse and improve career development, represent post-doc views and improve communication/social interaction between post-docs.

Current MSPDS activities include: Championing the SRDS process, setting up a post-doc funding scheme, executive committee elections, science communication in the media opportunities, hosting a cheese and wine evening, setting up an alternative career workshop and of course continuing to arrange the coffee mornings which start up again in September.

If you would like to know more or have ideas on how the MSPDS can help you please don’t hesitate to contact your neuroscience representatives Heather (H.Mortiboy@sheffield.ac.uk), Scott (S.P.Allen@sheffield.ac.uk), Emily (E.Goodall@sheffield.ac.uk) and Laura (L.Ferraiuolo@sheffield.ac.uk).
A year long pilot has now been completed which invited and facilitated MND patients and their carer to access complementary therapies through the Cavendish Cancer Care Centre in Sheffield. The project provided, free of charge, a multidisciplinary service offering individual assessment of need and concerns, specialist help and support and complementary therapies. Although the service is short term, it is available at times of particular difficulty. This package of care was offered to patients in addition to and together with, whatever mainstream healthcare treatment they are currently receiving.

The project appears to have been valued, not only by patients and carers but also by the staff members working with them. Following the analysis of the service evaluation carried out during the pilot period, it has been decided to continue providing this access for MND patients to the Cavendish centre as a permanent service which has continued funding to support it until October 2011. This service has been made possible by collaboration between Cavendish Cancer Care Centre staff, Local MNDA branch members and clinical staff at the MND care centre. Thanks to all.

The MND Association has launched its latest awareness campaign “Incurable Optimism” featuring Patrick Joyce: a young artist, father, amateur neurologist and incredible optimist who has MND. Patrick has set himself the challenge to paint portraits of 100 optimistic people before he loses the ability to paint forever. His campaign will feature on billboards throughout the country to raise awareness of MND, please show your support by following this link: http://patricktheoptimist.org/. You may see a familiar face in the gallery!

SMND RAG recently held a competition with Birkdale School to design a logo for the group. We had nearly 200 entries and were overwhelmed with the high quality and imagination from everyone who took part. Following a very tough judging decision we would like to congratulate Dylan Bolum, aged 8 whose winning design will be submitted to a graphics team for formatting and feature on all future SMND RAG output. Dylan and the runners up were awarded prizes in school assembly, presented by Emily Goodall, and featured in the Sheffield Star.
For more information on how SMND RAG can help your research please contact Hannah Hollinger (H.Hollinger@sheffield.ac.uk) or Emily Goodall (E.Goodall@sheffield.ac.uk)

Elizabeth Wood and Natasha Redhead have successfully completed the half marathon and raised a total of £301.
The link to their just giving page is: http://www.justgiving.com/Natasha-Redhead
We have reached the end of the 2009/2010 academic year and what a year it has been. I would like to thank you all for your hard work, loyalty and support of the department and myself during the last year. Together we have made a lot of wonderful things happen I think. I wish you all a relaxing and revitalising summer holiday and I look forward to seeing us all installed in SITRaN in the early autumn.