Timely support for cancer research

Through her generous legacy, Jean Smith – a popular member of staff in the Department of Finance for over 30 years from 1952 – has ensured that new cancer treatments are developed more effectively at the University.

Jean bequeathed 50 per cent of her estate – over £112,000 – specifically to aid cancer research and, following discussions amongst the relevant departments in the Medical School (founded in 1828, the oldest part of the University), we are now able to announce how these funds will be spent.

Professor Claire Lewis, Professor of Molecular and Cellular Pathology and Head of the Academic Unit of Inflammation and Tumour Targeting, explained, “We will use £25,000 of the legacy to purchase an IVIS Lumina II imaging system. This is highly sensitive and can be used by our researchers to accurately monitor the key events in tumour growth and spread, as well as the effects of new anticancer drugs being developed at the University. It has the advantage of being non-invasive and it can detect even tiny primary and metastatic tumours.”

The remainder of Jean’s legacy has been used to set up the Jean Smith Cancer Research Fellowships. These will provide an extremely valuable source of funding for students spending a year of research in oncology. It is intended that the recipients will be taking a BMedit degree or the MMedSci degree in Human Nutrition. Jean’s generosity is undoubtedly making a real difference to the facilities and research opportunities available to the Medical School. Another significant development for cancer research at the University is the launch of the Sheffield Cancer Research Centre (SCRC), which took place on 25 October 2011. It is the latest link in a chain of Cancer Research UK centres established across the country. The partners in this exciting initiative are Cancer Research UK, the University of Sheffield, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Yorkshire Cancer Research (YCR).

The Centre has its clinical base at Weston Park Cancer Hospital – one of only three dedicated cancer hospitals in the country – and links in with laboratory facilities across the University.

The Head of SCRC, Professor Rob Coleman, YCR Professor of Medical Oncology, said, “The new Centre will help build on Sheffield’s world-class research and bring together a variety of researchers and clinicians to improve the lives of cancer patients across South Yorkshire and beyond. By building closer links between scientists and doctors we want to increase the pace of research, leading to improved treatments for patients.”

Visit www.sheffield.ac.uk/oncology for more information about cancer research at the University.

Your continued support and enthusiasm make a tremendous difference to our students and staff.”

Celebrating our benefactors

Welcome to the latest issue of our Legacy newsletter. We have selected a few of this year’s benefactors to tell the stories behind their decisions to support their University. This also gives us the opportunity to report on how their legacies are spent.

Legacy giving continues to be of enormous importance, with almost 500 people having confirmed that they have very generously chosen to support the University through a gift in their Will. Thank you – your continued support and enthusiasm make a tremendous difference to the lives and work of our students and staff.

Miles Stevenson
Director of Development
We reported in the 2010 issue of this newsletter that the University had received a generous legacy gift of almost £115,000 from Peter Glover (BA Prehistory and Archaeology 1974). These funds have now enabled the Department of Archaeology to create a new laboratory, which is named after Peter – the Glover Laboratory for Digital Osteology.

Sheffield is one of the top universities for osteology research; the Department of Archaeology provides advanced training in the archaeological study of human bones. The new laboratory contains high-quality scanning and imaging equipment, and software and data storage facilities.

Peter’s legacy has also allowed Archaeology to buy a minibus and fossil cast collection equipment, as well as providing funds for student recruitment initiatives. His generosity has meant that his old department has had the opportunity to enhance their facilities for the benefit of current and future students and staff.

PhD students Lauren McIntyre and Isabelle Heyerdahl-King consider a sample for investigation by a laser surface scanner in the new Glover Laboratory for Digital Osteology.

Peter’s generosity has meant that his old department has had the opportunity to enhance their facilities for the benefit of current and future students and staff.

“A small donation makes a big impact”

Please take a moment to consider our Alumni Foundation when you think about how you can help your University now. Established in 1989, the Alumni Foundation provides grants (between £100 and £2,000) to assist sporting, musical, dramatic and cultural projects across the campus and beyond. We spread the resources as widely as possible but can only distribute as much money as we receive in donations – and so the success of the Alumni Foundation is completely reliant upon the generosity of our donors. In the last nine years we have distributed nearly £300,000. We keep in touch with representatives from each project and know they are always extremely grateful for the support they receive from this source.

Please visit www.sheffield.ac.uk/alumni/foundation for details of how you can make a difference.

“Amounts which may appear small to you can be added to existing funds to help our students and staff.”

Managing legacy gifts into the future

All endowed funds left to the University are responsibly managed by our Department of Finance and listed in the University’s Calendar. This safeguards their effectiveness into the future. An example is the legacy of over £862,000 which we received from Doreen Worthington (BA Classics 1939) in 1999. These funds have allowed the University to award two Harry Worthington Scholarships – named in memory of Doreen’s father, Harry Worthington, a local steel manufacturer – each year.

The Harry Worthington Research Scholarship provides the successful applicant with £12,300, plus tuition fees; the Harry Worthington Travelling Scholarship provides funds of up to £2,000 a year for travel to the great international classical music festivals. Mark Lindquist was a recipient of a Harry Worthington Research Scholarship in 2010–11. He explained, “I would not have been able to undertake my PhD research without this funding. I am a Canadian who has practised landscape architecture and urban design in Canada and the US. One significant factor in my decision to come to Sheffield was the level of excellence available for PhD supervision; Professors Eckart Lange and Jian Kang are world leaders in the research areas of visualisation and acoustics.”
We are always very happy to talk to anyone considering leaving the University a bequest about how their gift may be spent.

The Rev Dr Albert Brown-Lawson (PhD Modern History 1974) was passionate about access to higher education and he included a £1,000 donation in his Will to go towards helping Sheffield students suffering financial hardship. Indeed, his Will included bequests to 28 charities. Although a busy Methodist minister, he also found time to teach at local primary schools.

Albert’s donation has now been allocated to the funds available to the University to support our students who struggle to cover their living costs. Donations from alumni and friends for this type of support are always very welcome as we want to ensure that access to the University is not barred by financial constraints. A legacy is obviously a way in which you can help us – amounts which may appear small to you can be added to existing funds to help as many students as possible. A scholarship of £1,000 has a tremendous impact on the life of a new student.

Dates for your diary 2012

Heritage Circle Luncheon for Legacy Supporters
Friday 19 October

Reunion Luncheon for Classes of 1953 and 1963
Saturday 23 June

Engineering Alumni Day
Saturday 7 July

Annual Alumni Reunion
Saturday 8 September

Law Alumni Dinner
Friday 19 October

To reduce costs not all event invitations are sent by post. To ensure you receive future invitations, please email alumni@sheffield.ac.uk or call 0114 222 5592.

Boost for local history

Research into the history of Sheffield has enormous potential at the University. Existing initiatives include the Witness project or the work being done around Stories of Activism by the Centres for Democratic Cultures and Peace History. There is also the possibility to develop new areas such as the history of manufacturing or housing and housing policy. One exciting development has been made possible by a generous legacy of over £33,000 left to the University by Dorothy Phillips (BA History 1954, BEd Education 1956).

A keen local historian, Dorothy wanted her gift to be used for historical research and, following discussions within the department, it has been decided to devise a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of History. The recipient will focus on the creation of a lasting, web-based local history resource. The University’s Humanities Research Institute has a worldwide reputation in digital historical research and the fellowship will make a useful contribution to this work.

It is inspiring when we are able to use a legacy to further develop areas of expertise within a department – and the outcomes from Dorothy’s support should provide a wonderful resource for the many local historians in the city and further afield.

Gerry’s affection for Sheffield

He may have travelled and worked in many exotic places, but Dr Gerry Holmes FRCS (MB ChB Medicine 1954) always looked back fondly on his years at the University. After his graduation, he did his National Service in Malaya and it was here that he developed his love of hot climes. His successful medical career took him to Nigeria, Fiji, South Africa, Bahrain and Dubai. He chose to retire back in Britain to be near his family and kept in touch with the University in recent years, attending the 175th anniversary of the Medical School in 2004 to reconnect with old friends.

Gerry sadly died just one day after his 80th birthday in January 2011; it was shortly afterwards that we learnt that he had generously left £10,000 to the University in his Will.

Discussions are underway with the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health as to the most effective way to use Gerry’s bequest: we will identify a special project within the major refurbishment of the Medical School which will take place in early 2012. We are very grateful that Gerry’s affection for his Alma Mater led him to remember the University in his Will.
Legacies play a huge part in developing the University

Since its earliest days, legacy gifts have provided a vital source of funds for the University. This is one of the most simple and flexible ways of giving – and yet it is often the most significant gift a person ever makes. David Meadows is our Development Officer for Legacies and is your first point of contact for details of how to include the University in your Will.

He says, “You may wish to support your old department or contribute to student scholarships. I am available to discuss the possibilities, in confidence and with no obligation. In the first instance, you may find it useful to visit the University and discover the ways in which a legacy gift can provide support. Or you may simply wish to get in touch with your department. I enjoy meeting our alumni and friends, either on campus or at a place convenient to you, or talking to you on the phone. As a Sheffield graduate myself (BA 2006), I share your affection for the University.”

David is experienced in the technical aspects of Will preparation, and can provide the most effective draft wording for you to discuss with your solicitor. He is studying for a Certificate in Legacy Administration: “I appreciate that making a Will is a very significant event and I do my utmost to help supporters express their bequest intentions with clarity. The University really wants to make sure it can fulfil the wishes of our supporters.”

Please contact David by calling 0114 222 1073 or email d.meadows@sheffield.ac.uk.

We have a section on our website devoted to leaving a gift in your Will: www.sheffield.ac.uk/alumni/support/wills

From April 2012, any estate that leaves at least 10% to a UK registered charity will be able to take advantage of a 4% cut in Inheritance Tax (down to 36%).

Benefactors’ Board graces Firth Court

We now have a prestigious location on campus where we acknowledge the generosity of the University’s major donors. Every visitor to Firth Court passes our new Benefactors’ Board, which hangs on the wall just inside the main doors. This public ‘thank you’ is where we recognise the contribution of both our major leadership donors (£500,000 and more), starting with our original benefactors, such as local steel magnate Mark Firth and the Citizens of Sheffield through their penny donations in 1904–05, and also our legacy donors since 2001.

The board was in place in time for the celebrations of this year’s Heritage Circle Lunch on 21 October. The Heritage Circle is a gift club that we have established to recognise the special commitment of people who choose to support the University through a planned gift in their Will. Richard Hollox (BA Geography 1965) and his wife Teresa Cattell-Hollox were two of our guests.

Explaining why he has chosen to support the University through a bequest, Richard said, “The University of Sheffield was truly the creation of its city, being founded on the generosity of local people from all walks of life. One of the original objectives was to ‘bring the highest education within the reach of the child of the working man. That purpose is still relevant and the University continues to encourage local children from less privileged backgrounds to set their sights on a university education. I believe that it is a privilege to help the University in this noble cause.”

Richard Hollox with his wife Theresa on their wedding day.

The Vice-Chancellor holds the University crest that appears at the top of the Benefactors’ Board. It is in English oak and was carved by local craftsman Nick Hunter, of the Vulcan Works in Sheffield.