



The
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The
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Education.



Alumni Newsletter 2009.

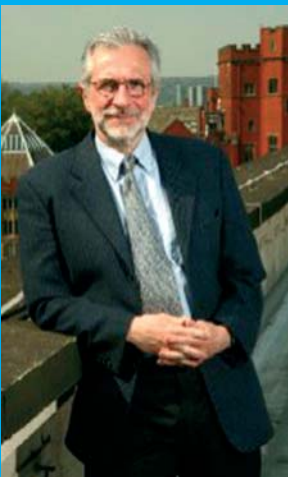
We want to keep in touch with our alumni and so this newsletter has been produced in order to inform you about exciting new developments in the School and to feature updates about our past students.

Welcome to the School of Education Alumni Newsletter 2009

I am delighted to welcome you as a reader of our 2009 alumni newsletter. This is now in its third year and we have been very pleased by the response to previous issues. The newsletter is a great way to keep in touch with all of you and for all of us to be informed about each others' experiences and successes. The School's research continues to flourish. We are also proud of the high standards of teaching that we maintain. We constantly strive to find ways of enhancing the student experience, and so you will find details of our use of Web 2.0 technology on our programmes in these pages. This is my final year of my term of three years as Head of School and I will soon be handing over to my successor, Professor Jackie Marsh who begins her term of office from 1st September. Jackie will already be known to many of you through the numerous roles she has already undertaken in the School. One of the pleasures of being Head of School that she will discover is having a bird's eye view of the exciting work being carried about by both students

and staff. I am glad that some of it can be celebrated in the newsletter and I look forward to seeing plenty more in the years to come.

**Professor Peter Hannon
Head of School**



**A few words from the
incoming Head of School,
Professor Jackie Marsh**

On behalf of the staff and students of the School, I would like to thank Peter for his outstanding work as Head of School. We have seen many exciting developments under his leadership and the School is a vibrant place to work and study. It is a pleasure for me to take on the role of Head of School at this time and I look forward to hearing from past students on your achievements over the next few years - do keep in touch with us!

Retirement

This year has seen the retirement of Professor Wilfred Carr, who has worked in the School of Education since 1989 and undertook the role of Head of School twice. Professor Carr will be missed greatly by his colleagues and former students but we wish him well in his retirement. We asked Professor Carr to write about his time as Head of School.

Professor Wilfred Carr, Head of the School of Education (1996-2002; 2005-6)

It was my privilege (and it really was a privilege) to serve as the Head of the School of Education on two separate occasions. The first of these was the period 1996-2002, a time when all university departments had to deal with the many major changes that were happening to education in general and universities in particular. As I saw things, my job was to help the School to come to terms with this situation by introducing new ways of working that were consistent with the academic and educational values that had always provided the School with its sense of purpose and direction. Although some of these changed ways of working were regarded as 'controversial', they have now all become fully integrated into the life and culture of the School. They include: producing and implementing a five year Strategic Plan, modularising degree courses, creating a Research Office, introducing for the first time a staff development policy, a workload policy and staff appraisal procedures. It was also during this period that many of the courses now offered by the School (such as the Certificate in Learning and Teaching for new university lecturers, the MA in Early Childhood Education and the Caribbean EdD) were introduced. It was also during my time as Head of Department that what, in 1996, was called the 'Division of Education' was renamed the 'Department of Educational Studies' which, in turn, was merged with the 'Institute of Lifelong Learning' to become 'the School of Education'. It was also during this period that the University closed down the Faculty of Education and relocated the School within the Faculty of Social Sciences.



As well as being Head of School during a period of rapid change, it was also my good fortune to be Head of a School that achieved much in teaching and research, not least the achievement of a 5A in the RAE Exercise of 2002 and the award of the top 'excellence' grade in the Teaching Quality assessment exercise of 2001. It goes without saying that these achievements were not my achievements. They were the achievements of the School's very able and highly committed academic and non-academic staff. Their recognition of, and creative responses to, the need for change, made my job as Head of School less difficult and more enjoyable than it would otherwise have been. For this, and for so much more, I will always owe them a very special debt.

Professor Wilfred Carr

EdD: Now offered in Malta as well as Sheffield, the Caribbean and Dublin!

The School of Education is proud of its EdD programme, which continues to flourish in a variety of countries. We are pleased to announce the introduction of an EdD programme in Malta, which will be directed by Professor Cathy Nutbrown and which is launched in October 2009. As with all of our EdD programmes, it will offer students a thorough grounding in the philosophy, principles and practice of educational research and enable students to undertake doctoral research in a supportive programme that meets individual needs. If you are interested in our EdD programmes, please contact ShefEdD@sheffield.ac.uk

MA Applied Professional Studies in Education (APSE)

Building on our highly successful PGCE programme, which received the highest grade of '1' in an Ofsted inspection, the MA APSE programme enables teachers to undertake modules that build on their engagement in continuing professional development in schools and local authorities. The programme enables teachers to undertake the modules at a distance and we utilise e-learning pedagogies as well as offer face-to-face sessions. If you would like to find out more about the programme please contact MAAPSE@sheffield.ac.uk

Achievements of our Past Students

Let us know about yours! Send stories and photographs to c.a.worboys@sheffield.ac.uk



Dr Ann Clare
Early Years Foundation Stage Consultant, Trafford

I finally graduated in January 2009 and have found myself looking for something to do with all those spare hours now that my research has come to a close. Well I have been busy, I had an article published in EYE Magazine looking at the question of caring for children in mixed age groups and I am working on a proposal for a book based on my case study of a boy from birth to three. I was privileged in November to be asked to speak at the book launch of Professor Cathy Nutbrown and Jools Page's book, 'Working with Babies and Children: From Birth to Three'. I was really nervous speaking in such illustrious company but thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Perhaps because of my doctorate I have been asked to deliver training to practitioners and consultants in other local authorities, as well as at an Early Years Professional Conference. I have enjoyed this opportunity as it brings me into contact with groups of people who are interested in the same things as I am.

So is this filling my time? The answer to that is that I am currently trying to recruit families with new babies to take part in some research about the impact of experiences within the first year. If anyone knows of any babies and mothers who would like to help me with this I would be delighted to hear from you.

I found my experiences at The University of Sheffield life changing and now feel much more confident in my work, especially my training. The only problem is that I would love to spend all of my time reading and researching but unfortunately the day job sometimes gets in the way.



Barbara Allan

I started my career as a student in the School of Education when I enrolled on the MEd Networked Collaborative Learning in September 2000. Two years later at the graduation ceremony, it was fascinating to meet friends and colleagues who I'd worked with online for two years. I juggled this programme with my full time work at the Hull University Business School and I subsequently became Director of the *EMPATHY Net-Works* Project which supported women into employment through a combination of blended learning and e-mentoring. I also began working on publications and produced a number of articles based on my thesis and a couple of books: *Blended Learning* (published by Facet Publishing); and writing with Dina Lewis *Virtual Learning Communities* (Open University Press).

I decided to maintain my momentum by signing up for the Doctorate in Education and I loved the format of three residential weekends a year and this enabled me to fit it round my busy working life. The residential weekends were great – super company, wonderful food as well as interesting lectures. I began my thesis on *Organisational Temporal Landscapes and Individual Timescales* and this provided me with the opportunity to focus on temporal issues in e-learning and e-mentoring based on the *EMPATHY Net-Works* project. I worked through my thesis at a steady pace and welcomed the comments on draft chapters from my supervisor, Jerry Wellington, as this helped me to keep motivated and on-track. Taking part in the EdD really demonstrated the importance of social aspects of learning and I appreciated the friendship and support that came with being part of a lively cohort of students. I completed my thesis in January 2009 and I'm looking forward to attending the graduation ceremony in July 2009.

My time at Sheffield has had a major impact on my career and certainly contributed to my promotion to Director of Learning and Teaching within the Business School in October 2007 and my award of a National Teaching Fellowship by the Higher Education Academy in 2008. It also motivated me to establish a Centre for Learning Innovations in the Business School and this has been running for three years and provides a lively mix of events aimed at enhancing the student experience. I am now focused on converting my thesis into a number of academic articles and I am writing a book on *Supporting Research Students* for Facet Publishing.

Judith Roads

The second half of my working life was changed by studying for a Masters in English Language Teaching through distance learning in 1993. In the early 1960s when I trained as an oboe player and teacher at the Royal College of Music you didn't expect to get a degree – the three years study was deemed sufficient. When I wanted to change career to teach English as a foreign language, I found I needed a proper university degree. Fortunately, Sheffield believed in me enough to allow me onto a post graduate course without a first degree. After getting my Master's I found it much easier to apply for better paid higher education jobs and to escape from the slave labour that Language Schools in Oxford Street can often resemble.

So where did I go? First, a lovely job back at the RCM where I had first trained but this time as the English Language Professor for international music students. At this time I was also working in the summer on pre-session courses at Middlesex University in London; a few years ago I was offered my first and last full time post in academic management at Middlesex, a job which would have been unthinkable without my qualification from Sheffield. After all, I was supervising lecturers teaching post graduate international students who needed better English for academic purposes. In another part of the university I was teaching final year TEFL undergraduates, again impossible for a mere oboe player! I finally retired in 2007 except that I am still teaching one UG module at Middlesex and have a small job at another conservatoire in London working with international singing students needing help with their sung pronunciation of English. I seem to have found a way of combining my music with my university TEFL expertise. Thank you Sheffield for making all that possible.

Dr Mark Vicars

After completing my PhD in 2006, supervised by Jackie Marsh and Pat Sikes, I was offered a Senior Lectureship in Literacy at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia and Tallulah (a most remarkable Staffordshire bull terrier) and I made the move 'down under' in 2008. Reflecting on my time at Sheffield, with Jackie and Pat, I realise how fortunate I have been to have had supervisors who went that extra mile in terms of sharing their expertise, and knowledge. Starting my PhD, I felt somewhat of an imposter and I was convinced that sooner rather than later I would be discovered. I benefited greatly from the constant academic guidance and support of Jackie, Pat and the generosity of time and knowledge that other staff members freely offered. The experiences I had during my time as a PhD student in the School of Education were, in many ways transformative. I never imagined that I would end up in Australia and since starting at Victoria University, I have drawn on the wealth of knowledge and experience I amassed during my time at Sheffield.



In 2008, I was fortunate to have the opportunities to present my research in Adelaide, Hong Kong, and Korea. In 2009 I have been asked to co-edit the journal of the Association of Qualitative Research and I will be presenting papers at the Fifth International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry conference in Chicago, the Australian Literacy Educators Association National Conference in Tasmania and the Sixth International Drama in Education Research in Sydney. In the School of Education at Victoria University,

I teach literacy on the Bachelor of Education degree and qualitative research methodology on the Masters programme in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam. I also co-ordinate the off-shore EdD programme in Thailand, run in conjunction with Burapha University and I am supervising two PhD students.

When I am not doing all of the above, Tallulah and I spend time on the beach which is five minutes from my house in St Kilda, Melbourne. I am working my way through the fine dining establishments of the city and then working the calories off with a personal trainer at the gym which is one of the many new experiences I am having in 'Oz'. The recent 40 degrees plus temperatures took some getting used to as did seeing my first snake slithering under a bush, having a possum stuck down the chimney or eating plum pudding cooked on a barbeque.



Steve Donohoe EdD

It was all my wife's fault. She did the Sheffield MED by distance learning when we lived in Singapore from 1993-2002. When we returned to the UK after a brief stint in Africa, she noticed an advertisement for Sheffield's Doctor of Education (EdD) programme and said "you could do that, Steve!" Was it an excuse to get rid of me for a couple of weekends? I've often wondered but to cut a long story short – I applied, my application was accepted and I joined the programme in October 2002.

My EdD didn't exactly start brilliantly for me. At the first residential weekend I was asked by one of my fellow students whether I knew Derrida. Tales of my supposed reply to this question have subsequently entered the annals of folklore and legend of the EdD, but what I actually said was "is he in the second year?" which was greeted with a mixture of either gasps of astonishment or howls of merriment. Ah! Hindsight is a wonderful thing. I now *know*, that Derrida is a premiership philosopher often greeted by the refrain "There's only one Jacques Derrida!" echoing from the terraces.

After completing my doctoral thesis on teaching law to non-lawyers, lots of exciting things have been happening to me. I was asked to write a forum paper for the American Society of Civil Engineers which will be published in the autumn (2009). This is a great honour because as a former colleague of mine remarked "Steve, I've been trying to get something published by them for the last twenty five years. You've cracked it, man!" I'm not so sure whether I've cracked it or not, but completing the thesis has inspired me to apply for funding for a research

project at the University of Plymouth, where I currently work. The project involves looking at how inquiry based learning might be used in Construction Applications and Management which is one of the modules that I teach at the University. I have also been invited to write a book on Surveying which I propose to work on between the hours of 2am and 6am as I'm not normally doing anything between those hours other than sleeping!

Looking back on the EdD, I particularly enjoyed the camaraderie of my fellow students wrestling with difficult educational concepts but learning together. We were well supported by knowledgeable and committed staff to facilitate the whole process. I owe an enormous debt to all of the staff at Sheffield but particularly to Dr Jon Scaife, my thesis supervisor, who not only inspired me and guided me, but took me to a fabulous family run Indian restaurant where I gorged myself in a frenzy of gluttony. This particular establishment produced the best garlic naan bread I've ever tasted (home made on the premises). The restaurant does not have a drinks licence so one has to bring one's own. Fortunately the pub opposite the restaurant has a selection of succulent ales, which one can purchase in four pint pitchers! My particular favourite is a golden brew named "Moonshine" but, purely in the interests of research, I've had them all and they're all good! I'm not going to tell you where these places are otherwise they'll be swamped, but I'll be back there next time I'm in Sheffield.



Advancing Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL) in the Department of Educational Studies

Chris Winter, Julia Davies and Jason Sparks

We've had a busy year of staff training and the introduction of new technologies into our teaching and research activities. Staff development sessions have focused on the University VLE (Virtual Learning Environment - known as MOLE), plagiarism detection software (Turnitin), video and recording communication systems (Skype and Pamela), the Library's Web 2.0 technologies project and Findit, the new e-journal search facility. Still to come during the summer months are sessions on e-portfolios, e-theses and the electronic qualitative data analysis software nVivo.

Some very innovative practices have been developed in teaching programmes too...

In October, 2008 the MA in Education Policy and Practice programme developed the MAEPP Inquiry Space, an online learning environment using Ning, a social networking website similar to Facebook and My Space. Providing a flexible space for communication and

collaboration across the whole range of programme activities, its primary purpose is to link students and staff within a community of research practice. Dr Jason Sparks and Dr Tim Corcoran made an impressive start in their new academic posts in the Department by securing project funding from CILASS, the Centre for Inquiry-Based Learning in the Arts and Social Sciences. The MAEPP Inquiry Space was developed through collaboration with Paul Jinks, the Department's Learning Technologist and the team is currently evaluating the project in preparation for the new MAEPP cohort beginning in October 2009.

Another state-of-the art innovation in the Department is the MA in New Literacies directed by Dr Julia Davies. This online programme gives access to top-class Masters level study for students living anywhere in the world through the University VLE. Following the same structure as all our other Masters programmes with four taught modules and a dissertation, teaching occurs through the regular posting of new materials and interactive discussions. Materials include articles specifically written by the course team, pdf articles from journals and video and PowerPoint (with audio) presentations. Students experiment using a wide range of Web 2.0 technologies, such as contributing to a wiki, setting up blogs and using a range of sites beyond the VLE, such as Slideshare, YouTube and Blogger. Thus students acquire expertise and knowledge in a range of web based applications as well as gain a Masters (and have fun too!). Some students took part in a unit of work in the virtual world Second Life, where they learned to undertake virtual ethnography. You can see our School of Education building in *Second Life* here – if only our 'real life' building looked like this!

Final Words...

We hope that you have enjoyed reading this newsletter. We aim to produce the newsletter on an annual basis, so please do let us have your news for the next one. If you have any contributions or questions for us, or wish to talk to us about further study in the School, please contact us using the details below.

Carole Worboys
School of Education
388 Glossop Road
Sheffield
S10 2JA
c.a.worboys@sheffield.ac.uk



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