

SUMMER 2014

From Stoke to Spielberg

The dramatic rise of
Amit Shah



*/for alumni and friends of
Staffordshire University/*

Inside:
*100 years of
Staffordshire
University*
Your special
Centenary
supplement

Ready for
kick off

Our experts look
ahead to football's
greatest spectacle

Also inside:

Rugby (re)union
Tapping into the mind
In search of Shakespeare
The Potteries and the past



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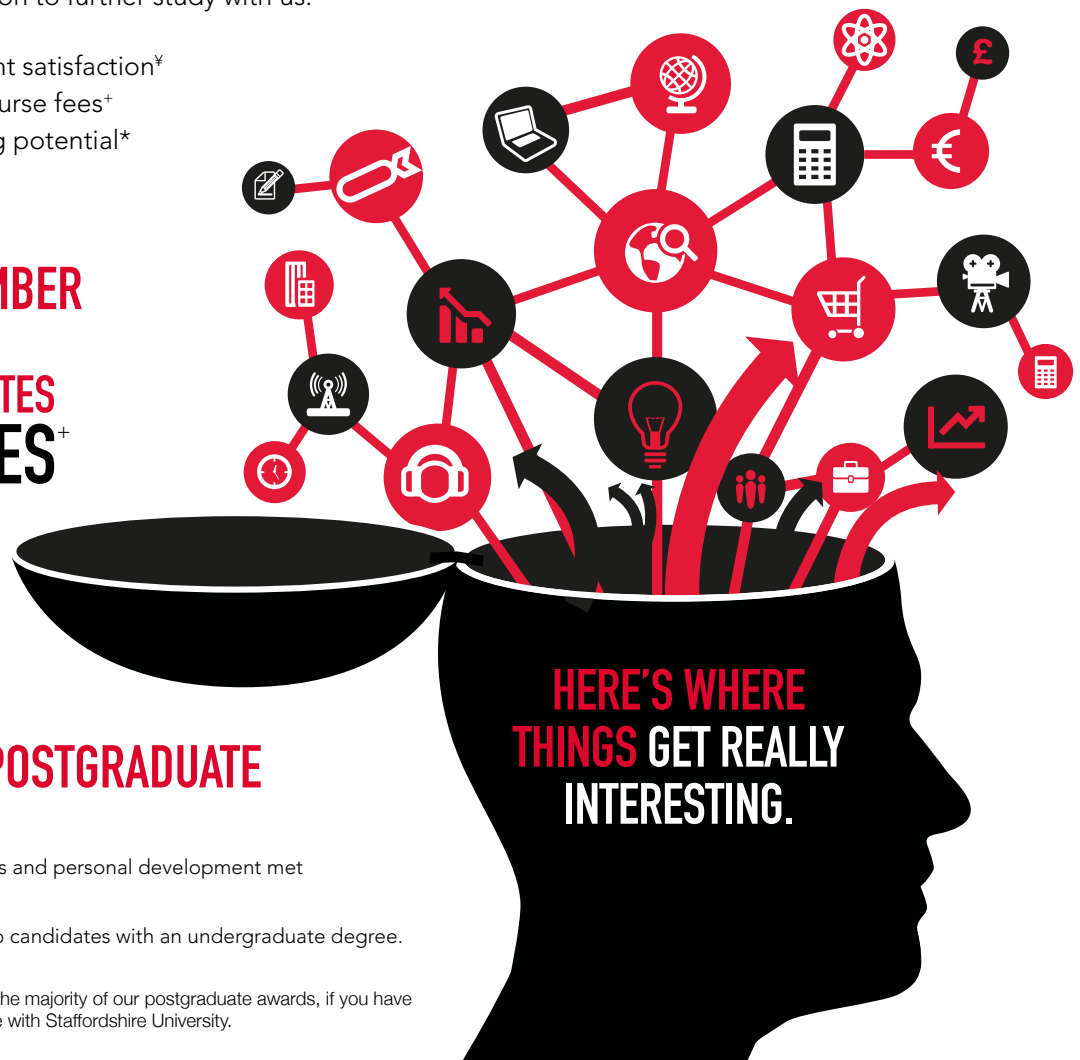
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**HERE'S WHERE
THINGS GET REALLY
INTERESTING.**

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Professor Michael Gunn

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive

As I write this introduction to the third issue of SA, there is much to celebrate at Staffordshire University. The celebrations to mark our 100th anniversary are well under

way. You will have noticed the special Centenary supplement enclosed with this magazine, which looks back on the rich and eventful history of the University and its predecessors. Under a variety of different names, this institution has maintained a constant commitment to excellence and accessibility in higher education. I believe that's something we can all look upon with a lot of pride.

It has also been a very agreeable duty to reveal the identity of our new Chancellor. Lord Stafford is only the third holder of this important ceremonial role, and I am confident that we will benefit greatly from his support, advice and ability to act as an ambassador for the University.

In this issue of the magazine you'll read the latest news from the vibrant learning and research environment we have developed, over the century since the Cadman Building first opened its doors. There is much about our interaction with the world beyond Staffordshire (including a certain football tournament that is taking place this year) and stories of how our Graduates are making an impact all over the world.

I hope you enjoy the magazine – and here's to the next 100 years.



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We are always delighted to receive your emails, letters and messages on social media. If you'd like to share your experiences at the University, comment on the magazine or suggest topics for us to cover in a future issue, please contact us at:

SA Magazine, Graduate Relations,
Staffordshire University, College Road,
Stoke-on-Trent ST4 2DE

Please mark your message "for publication". Letters may be edited for length.



An inspirational figure

I was very pleased to see the interview with Fabrice Muamba in the last issue of SA. The way he bounced back from such a life-changing trauma marks him out as an inspirational figure, and it's wonderful to learn that he is passing his wisdom on to younger sportsmen and women.

Catherine Penny Evans

Cheers to Team Staffs

Is cheerleading really a sport? I'd never thought so, but all I knew about it was from cheesy American movies. Your article in SA has changed my mind – I loved reading about the dedication of the University squad, and hope they win the national championships. Go Staffs!

Meirion Morgan

Showcasing Staffs talents

My sister and I are Staffordshire University alumni who receive SA, and I am writing to congratulate you for your unique work in producing the magazine. I am especially impressed with the quality of the latest issue, concentrating on a brilliant list of topics ranging from the genius of Lichfield and "Doing it for kicks" on cheerleading to computer games and Show and Tell. It is a pleasure to see so many Staffordshire University talents showcased in your magazine.

Dr Imren Markes



SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

If you're a graduate of the university, would you like to help current students and recent alumni to achieve career success? Would you like to be able to network with fellow alumni and maintain your contact with the University?

The Ask Staffs Alumni networking group on LinkedIn is a new forum for Staffordshire students past and present. It's a great way to network and share career-related knowledge and information across geographic locations and different industries. Members can post opportunities, ask for advice or offer insight into their career field. It's an exclusive and supportive environment in which members can learn from each other.

All Staffordshire University students and alumni are welcome to join. We just ask that the group is respected and members adhere to its protocol. So before joining, please ensure that you have read through our membership guidelines, which include useful tips on how to network effectively and professionally. They also suggest how to use LinkedIn in a way that enhances your experience within the group.

If you have any questions, just email askstaffsalumni@staffs.ac.uk.

For further information and to register, visit www.staffs.ac.uk/careers/alumni. Ask Staffs Alumni will be launched to our 2014 graduates in July, when you will be able to respond to their queries via the group. The launch to current students will take place in September.





THE GIFT OF OPPORTUNITY

There's no shortage of inspiring stories about Staffordshire Graduates making a difference in all walks of life. By donating to the University's Annual Fund, you will be helping more talented students realise their educational potential and become the successful Staffordshire Graduates of tomorrow.

Staffordshire University's mission is to transform people and communities by delivering accessible, high-quality higher education. In doing so, we aim to raise aspirations, further increase learning opportunities and promote social inclusion and mobility.

In giving to the University, you are investing in this ambitious plan – supporting our students so that when they leave, they are work-ready and able to make a positive impact upon the world.

The Annual Fund

The Annual Fund supports Staffordshire students with bursaries, scholarships and

opportunity awards. These forms of financial assistance are of vital importance to many members of the University.

A bursary, for example, may be the deciding factor between an applicant from a disadvantaged background taking up a place or not; or it may allow an undergraduate in financial difficulties to continue studying rather than withdraw from higher education. Scholarships help the University to attract and retain the most able students, who pursue world-class research.

How to donate

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For information, see www.staffs.ac.uk/gifting, email developmentoffice@staffs.ac.uk or call 01782 295702.

Don't be a stranger...

As a Staffordshire Graduate you'll always be part of the University community, and we'll do our best to keep you informed of what's happening. The easiest way to keep in touch is to visit Staffordshire University Alumni Online, an online portal for all our graduates: sign up today at alumni.staffs.ac.uk.

You can also check out the latest University news and forthcoming events at www.staffs.ac.uk/news. And to get in touch with Graduate Relations, email graduate.relations@staffs.ac.uk, call 01782 294942 or write to Graduate Relations, Staffordshire University, College Road, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 2DE.


Staffs on social media

Social media is an excellent way to keep up with us and network with other Staffordshire Graduates. You can follow us on Twitter, sign up for our official alumni group on LinkedIn or watch the latest videos from the University on our YouTube channel. Simply go online at www.staffs.ac.uk/socialmedia or use the following:

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Throughout the year, the University hosts a wide range of public events, including lecture series, workshops, film screenings, degree shows and exhibitions. All are free to attend.

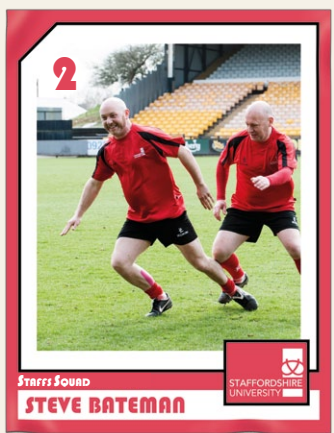
To see what's coming up, visit www.staffs.ac.uk/events. For our "be inspired" events please visit www.beinspiredatstaffs.ac.uk.



POSITION: Associate Dean, School of Psychology, Sport and Exercise

A WINNING TEAM

Throughout this summer's competition in Brazil, Staffordshire University's team of experts will be analysing the action. Here, they reveal their tournament predictions



POSITION: Lecturer, School of Psychology, Sport and Exercise



POSITION: Head, School of Psychology, Sport and Exercise



POSITION: Head, Business School



POSITION: Senior Lecturer, Journalism, Humanities and Social Sciences



POSITION: Professor of Paediatric Exercise Physiology



POSITION: Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Psychology



POSITION: Senior Lecturer, Journalism, Humanities and Social Sciences



POSITION: Associate Professor, Psychology, Sport and Exercise



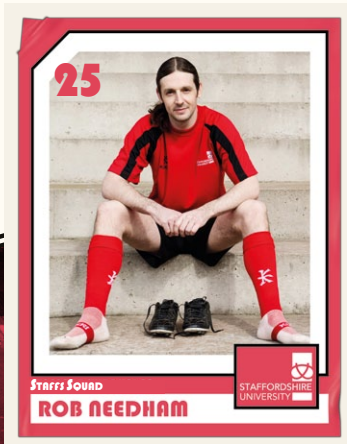
POSITION: Enterprise Reader, Business School



POSITION: Senior Lecturer, Law School



POSITION: Lecturer, School of Psychology, Sport and Exercise



POSITION: Lecturer, School of Psychology, Sport and Exercise

Do host teams such as Brazil really enjoy a 'home advantage'?

MARC JONES: Yes. Generally, teams that play at home tend to do better than teams that play away. There are lots of factors that come into play here.

One of the reasons is that they're playing in stadiums that are familiar to them; though in the case of the Brazilian national team, most of them play in Europe, so that won't necessarily apply. Also, players tend to get confidence from playing at home – there's an expectation of success. And managers will tend to adopt more offensive tactics. At home they're set up to achieve, while in away games they're set up to avoid defeat.

The crowd seems to play a big role in affecting home advantage. It does this in two main ways. First, it creates confidence and support for the players – when we compete in front of a supportive audience, we feel more confident. More crucially, referees will tend to favour the home team, and we think they do this in response to crowd noise. Something about the crowd noise may indicate whether a foul has occurred, for example, and referees will be harsher on the away side. They'll use it as a shortcut to decision making, though this is a subconscious process. In laboratory studies, when you remove crowd noise from a video tape and show it to referees, the home advantage tends to disappear and they don't favour the home team.

Studies have also shown that when the home team is losing or drawing, referees – and even the fourth official – will tend to add more time on to the end of the game, giving the home team the chance to equalise or win. There's also research to suggest players' physiological states differ when they play at home. In particular, athletes tend to show higher levels of testosterone. This hormone is linked to dominance and motivation, and to a successful outcome in a competitive environment.

There's one caveat to all of this. What's quite interesting is that there's another hormone that's important: cortisol, the stress hormone. When people play at home in a very important game, cortisol is higher. That tends to suggest that something more complex is going on than "when you play at home, you will do better".

Psychologists have talked about this idea of there also being a home disadvantage in these crucial matches, and some studies indicate that the team playing at home tends to perform a little worse than it normally would. This interaction between cortisol and testosterone is interesting, because the beneficial effects of testosterone tend only to be seen when cortisol is low. So if Brazil are very nervous or worried about a particular game, you may not see them perform to their level. That's all very speculative, though!



How will the media deal with the world's biggest sporting spectacle this time round?

MITCH PRYCE: Since its modest inception in 1930, the World Cup has grown like leylandii – or more aptly, Japanese knotweed, entwining itself around modern life. So whether you love or hate football, you won't be able to ignore it this summer.

Like many of us, the Beautiful Game has grown a lot uglier with the passage of time. Since that first tournament won by Uruguay, the power of FIFA has grown to multinational proportions. Sponsorship has embraced the game – some would say, squeezed the life out of it. And the media have been willing accomplices, shaping, packaging and delivering a product that pumps billions into the world economy.

Given the recent battle for TV rights to the Premier and Champions Leagues, you could be forgiven for thinking the fight to win the World Cup rights is fierce. You'd be wrong. The main reason is that Sky and BT are not allowed to bid for them. The World Cup is one of the shrinking number of big sporting events still free to air, by law. That may change in future, and Sky have been lobbying for years to change it. But for now, it's either BBC or ITV for your live match action.

The two terrestrial channels have already met and divided up the matches. While ITV like to get some early England action to boost ratings and revenues (they have two of England's group matches) the BBC are content to pick up the England matches as they progress – a bit of a risk this time, perhaps.

In spite of ITV's constant attempts to bring freshness to the content and presentation – and they do suffer undue press criticism, in my view – the BBC will be secure in the knowledge that whenever they go head to head with ITV, they will always win by a ratio of three or four to one. Now that's a safe bet.



Match fit: this page and overleaf, Staffs Squad are put through their paces on a training day at Vale Park, home to Port Vale FC



With the Premier League having taken such a toll on the England players, how will they recover for the World Cup, both mentally and physically?

VISH UNNITHAN: There are probably two strategies that England will be employing. First, they'll have given the players a week off after the end of the Premier League season. Then they'll collect a whole lot of information from the Premier League clubs, with respect to existing injuries that the players are carrying with them, and the rehabilitation strategies that they will have to employ to keep the players fit during the tournament.

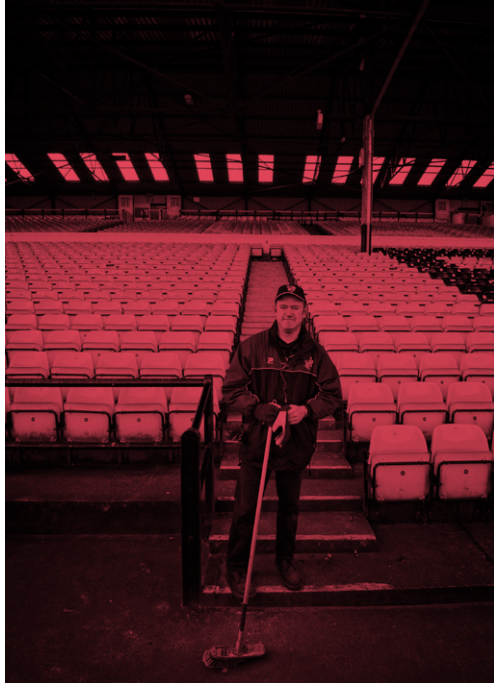
The humidity is going to be very high, so England will be going to Miami first to acclimatise to the air temperature, humidity and time zone. What they'll do is increase their fluid intake, and find ways to help the players adapt to those conditions, such as wearing pre-cooling vests before training sessions to bring down the core temperature. Once the session begins, the ice vests will go off, and that hopefully will help them maintain a low body temperature during training.

To monitor the intensity of the training sessions they'll be using global positioning systems, which are small monitors that go on the back of the jerseys. These monitors provide information on total distance covered, acceleration and deceleration. This will basically give them a complete profile on how the players are dealing with the conditions while training in Brazil.

What measures are being taken against the use of performance-enhancing drugs?

KRIS LINES: There's a new doping-control system for this World Cup. Football has had doping tests for a long while, but this time there's a biological passport scheme. This is a series of blood tests carried out by the FIFA medical doctors and it's designed to catch a number of substances such as EPO [erythropoietin – a drug that improves oxygen delivery to muscles] that traditionally wouldn't have been picked up on the normal tests. It's not a brand-new test across sport: it has already been used in cycling and tennis, but this will be the first time it has been used in football and the World Cup.

We don't know how much of a problem doping is in football. The sport has been hit by a number of recreational drug scandals such as those involving cannabis, but we don't know the extent of doping. What we do know is that substances like EPO are performance enhancing, so any player caught taking them will have a significant advantage over others. With the implementation of these tests, football is not just being clean, it's being seen to be clean.





How will sports psychologists have been helping the teams at this World Cup?

JAMIE BARKER: Psychologists will have been working at three levels with the teams. Firstly, they'll have been working with the players individually – helping them deal with their expectations and deal with the expectations from outside, such as the media attention. They'll also be helping them cope with pressure: how they approach the game and how they deal with successes and failures.

They'll probably also have been working through the coach. If you were working with Roy Hodgson, for example, you'd be talking to him about how he can communicate effectively, the key messages he can get across to his players, and maybe how he conducts himself in the media and around the players, because that can have a big impact.

Thirdly, the psychologists are probably working at team level. They'd be thinking about the dynamics and the key responsibilities that the captain, the goalkeeper and senior players need to take on board, in terms of the body language and the communication they have with others.



As captain of Liverpool, Steven Gerrard missed out on the Premier League title. How will this affect him psychologically when he leads England at the World Cup?

MATT SLATER: We know from the research that we do that confidence is a really important psychological attribute, in terms of how a player can perform. If Steven Gerrard had gone in to the England football team having won the Premier League, he might have been full of confidence, and that would have helped our chances – particularly if his team-mates looked up to him as a winner.

Instead, he'll be turning up as a runner-up. So from a psychological point of view, what we'd say to him is to approach this game as you would approach every game. When we work with elite athletes, it's very important to get them to warm up psychologically as well as physically. We'd work with him to come up with strategies to get him to prepare for each game psychologically.

We've got many players from different clubs coming together as part of the England team, just as other nations have with their national side. We've got Manchester United players coming in, we've got Arsenal players coming in... and when they're part of their own identity at a club, they're used to playing in certain ways and they're used to living and breathing certain values. When they all come together in England, those values may contrast with those of the national team – there may be some divergence there.

So it's really important that we understand everyone's values, and don't just negate them; that we get to know them a little more. If we can do that, we've got a better chance of bringing the players together to perform as best they can under the umbrella of the England football team.





LIMBERING UP WITH A LEGEND

In March, the Staffs first team headed to Port Vale FC for a training session with a very special guest. Gordon Banks OBE played in goal for England when the team won the 1966 World Cup, and is widely considered one of the best keepers ever to play at international level. In 2009, Staffordshire University recognised his lifetime achievement with an honorary doctorate, its highest distinction. He was happy to make a cameo appearance in the team video!

SO WHO WILL LIFT THE WORLD CUP TROPHY?

MARC JONES: I think it'll be Brazil – there are a lot of reasons why they should win, on top of the home advantage. They have some excellent players.

MITCH PRYCE: If I were a betting man, I wouldn't be looking beyond the usual suspects. Brazil will be tough to beat at home, but it could be another South American team: Argentina will not be fazed by playing in Rio.

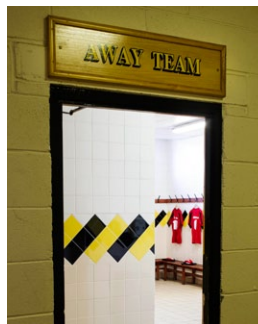
Spain will be hard pressed to maintain the high standards of the past four years, having ridden their luck at Euro 2012. Germany, as ever, will have a system to help them reach the semis at least. Holland are strong again but their predilection for self-destruction is a worry. Luis Suarez and Uruguay will be a threat.

One team that won't be winning it is England. So save your optimism for the Rugby World Cup as we move towards 50 years of hurt...

VISH UNNITHAN: I'm going to go for the most obvious one: the home nation, who have got all the support and the advantages of knowing the country, the environment and the pitches. And they've got one or two really good footballers. So I don't think you need look further than Brazil!

*** For more information about Staffs Squad, including full player statistics and an exclusive video, visit www.staffs.ac.uk/worldcup**

Reporters: Jon Gill, Samuel Parr, Gabriella Saper and Alex Sarwar of the MA Sports Broadcast Journalism programme.





Q&A: AMIT SHAH

Interview by Rin Simpson

He's already hailed as one of Britain's most promising young actors after acclaimed performances at the National Theatre and in TV series including *Lilyhammer*, *The Smoke* and *Fresh Meat*. Now Amit Shah is destined for Hollywood stardom with a role in this autumn's Steven Spielberg blockbuster. We caught up with the Staffordshire Graduate during a break in filming



Brit flick: Amit in the 2010 UK comedy *The Infidel*



Servant of evil: as the wicked Oswald in *King Lear*



Erring role: with Lenny Henry in *The Comedy of Errors*

SA Magazine: What are you up to at the moment?

Amit Shah: Well, right now, I'm helping out at my parents' shop – they have a coffee shop, in the sense that they roast fresh coffee in the shop and sell it as beans. I've been working here since I was nine, and whenever I'm on a break, I go back to help out. It keeps me grounded. One day you're filming and the next day you're serving!

SA: You studied Drama and Theatre Arts at Staffs. What are your fondest memories of your time here?

AS: Staffordshire University built up my confidence and made me aware of the possibilities open to me. It wasn't just the course. I got involved with the drama society, and pretty much all my time at Uni was focused on that. When I wasn't studying, I was rehearsing a play, sometimes from nine in the morning until 10 at night. It was a good place to find my passion and immerse myself in what I wanted to do.

SA: What are the most important lessons you took away from the drama degree?

AS: To do something that you really want to do and do it well, you have to be extremely passionate, committed and determined. I was lucky enough to discover what I was passionate about during those three years. Also, to have confidence in yourself. I was quite an awkward, geeky student: there was no point pretending to be someone else. I just had to embrace that and find confidence in it. When you do that, you gain confidence and become very attractive as an employee.

SA: What work have you most enjoyed since leaving?

AS: I've worked on big studio films in America, British independent films, TV

programmes and commercials. Sometimes it's the smaller jobs that are most satisfying, when you're working on a very good script. But I'm not going to lie, getting a big break like *The Hundred-Foot Journey* – produced by Steven Spielberg and Oprah Winfrey, and with Helen Mirren in it – is extremely satisfying. When you get those offers, all that stress you've been through is erased for a bit. You think: "OK, I've been working towards this." That's so satisfying.

SA: How did you feel when you secured that role?

“Never stop learning or never think that you've learnt enough. The moment you think that, you've failed!”

AS: You get the call when you least expect it. I think I was at my mum and dad's shop, probably doing some stocktaking, and my agent called. We talked about something else, and then he said: "Oh, by the way, it's an offer from *The Hundred-Foot Journey*. So anyway..." He was quite blasé about it! I was in shock. It takes a long time for it to sink in, and then you question it. You think maybe they made a mistake or they'll cut me out, or maybe the film will be a flop. The industry is almost built to make you feel insecure.

SA: Are there any actors you look up to in particular?

AS: I admire Lenny Henry a lot. He in recent years has done a lot of campaigning to make things more equal for ethnic actors. If you look at his career, he's reinvented himself a lot, going from winning a talent show on TV

to being a comedian and comedy actor, and then he learned about Shakespeare and started tackling more serious roles and concentrating on writing and did a degree in screen writing. He taught me that however old you are, however long you've been in the business, you never stop training and learning.

Also, Sylvester Stallone – his big break was *Rocky*. He was an out-of-work actor who had never written a film script before. Out of desperation he wrote *Rocky* and tried to sell it to one of the big studios. They liked it but wanted Robert Redford or someone to play *Rocky* and he said no, this is my story. And he ended up doing it and it became a big hit. I really admire people like that who stick to their principles and don't give up.

SA: What are your hopes for the future?

AS: I was going through some stuff at the weekend because we were clearing the loft and I found a booklet that I had written when I was about nine. It was called a passport to the future and I had written that I would like to be a comic actor, do sketch shows and have my own sitcom. So yes – if I was very ambitious, I would love to be in my own successful sitcom. But really, it's to continue working with new people, to push myself and make sure I've done all I can in order to get the work and to do the work well.

SA: And what would be your advice to current Staffs students hoping to emulate your success?

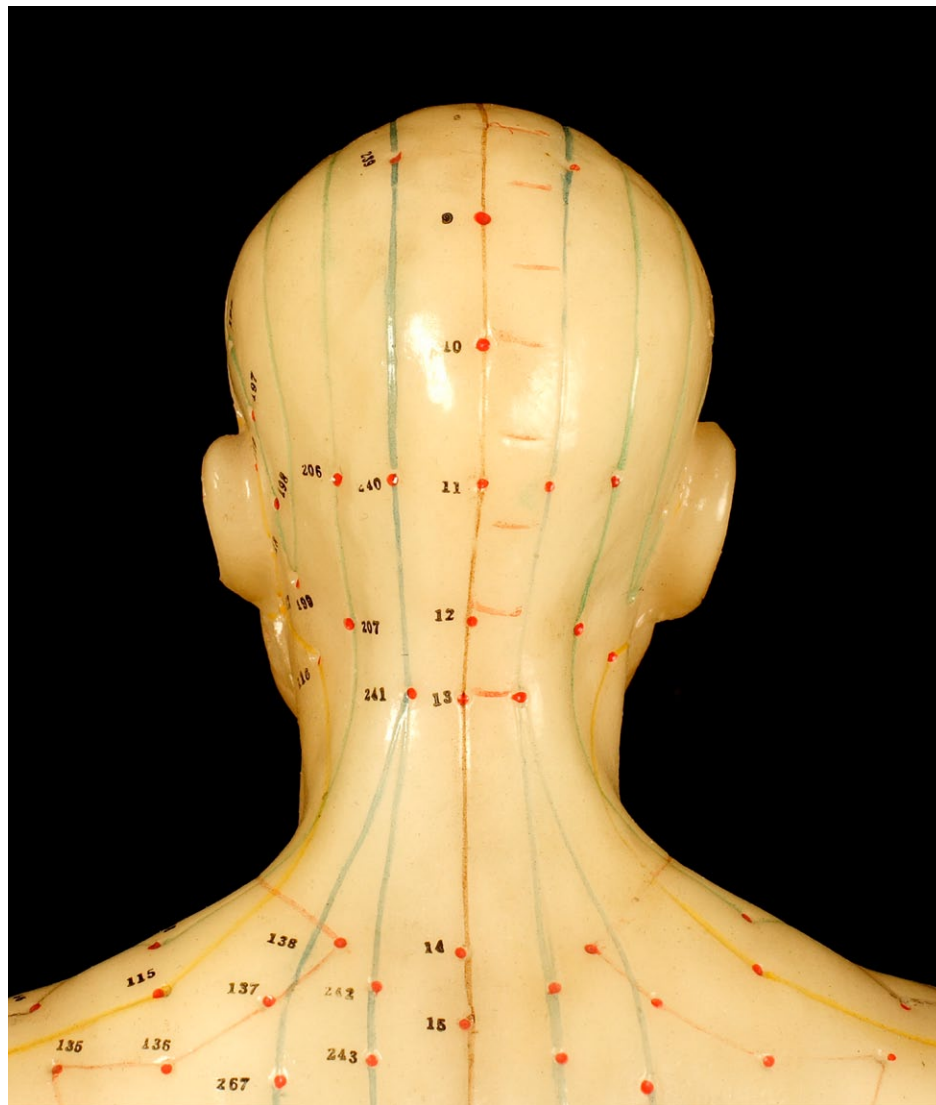
AS: Be unique. The only way to be unique is to be yourself and embrace your strength, your personality and your talents. Look at other actors, learn from them and be inspired by them; but the only way you're going to be successful is by being yourself. And never stop learning or never think that you've learnt enough. The moment you think that, you've failed!



TAPPING INTO THE MIND

Few senior academics manage to combine as many different roles as Professor Tony Stewart, but one area of his research has made headlines around the world

By Hannah Davies



By any standards, Tony Stewart has enjoyed a fascinating career. Now Professor of Public Health at Staffordshire University, he has combined work as an NHS consultant with academic research, producing an award-winning textbook on epidemiology. He has established a private practice as a clinical hypnotherapist, worked as a systematic reviewer and founded a Masters in Public Health course, while presenting a variety of radio music shows in his spare time.

And yet, during our chat I find myself repeatedly returning to just one aspect of his work: Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT). "I'm used to it now," he laughs. "EFT is actually a small part of what I do at Staffordshire, but

because of all the hoo-ha, it's what everyone wants to hear about."

The "hoo-ha" in question is the controversy that followed Stewart's feasibility study on the use of this complementary therapy in the NHS. "EFT involves the patient tapping gently on acupressure points, mainly on the head and hands, at the same time as repeating statements that are related to the emotional problem they're experiencing," he explains. "You can use EFT for anything that's emotional: anxiety, anger, depression, fear, phobias, and also for any physical pain that may have an emotional basis."

Having developed an interest in the technique, Stewart gained ethical approval to carry out a study in the West Midlands by

“EFT is actually a small part of what I do at the University, but it’s what everyone wants to hear about”



setting up a clinic and monitoring patient responses. “We got clinical significance in that on average, people were clinical cases at the start of the EFT sessions and by the end they were normal,” says Stewart. “Of course, you have to be careful how you use the word ‘normal’ – to an extent, that can be subjective – but I used accepted scales and constantly evaluated the data.”

Local and national press reported on the resulting paper – leading, Stewart says, to a basic misunderstanding. “My co-authors and I didn’t make any outlandish claims; after all, this was just a small study. What we actually said was that it would be nice if other NHS organisations would study EFT. This was unfortunately taken as my saying that it was a proven therapy and that everyone should start using it in the NHS.”

Stewart understands why EFT provokes scepticism in some quarters. After all, his own initial reaction to the process was far from enthusiastic. “In 2007 I had several instances of stress-related illness while working as an NHS consultant. A doctor friend told me about EFT and asked whether

I’d like to try it. I said: ‘Of course I wouldn’t! What a waste of time.’”

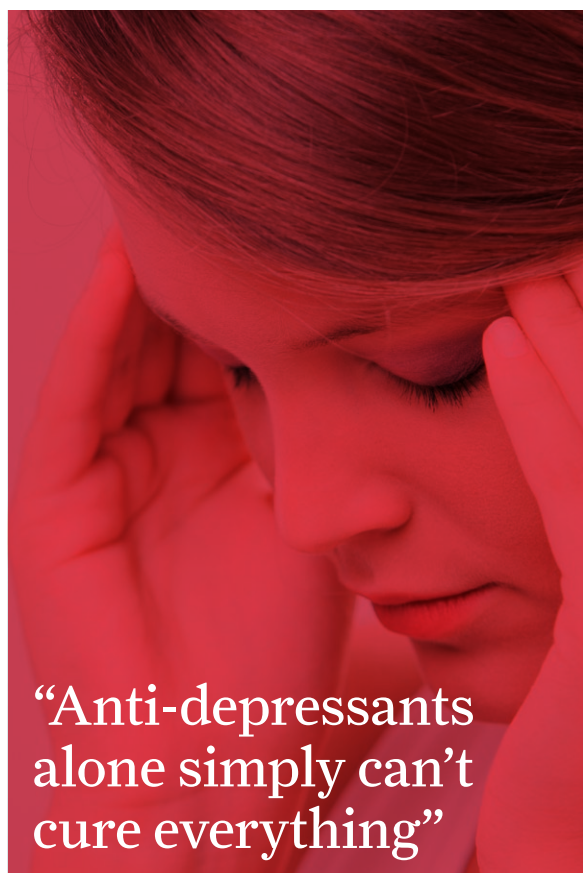
Stewart eventually agreed to a session and found that his symptoms abated. He went on to train as an EFT practitioner and then as a trainer, teaching other health professionals how to use the technique. However, Stewart is quick to point out that far from turning him into an EFT evangelist, his personal experience was the starting point for scientific enquiry. His background is very much in evidence-based medicine: he has worked in public health since 1993, with a particular interest in epidemiology.

He says: “Complementary therapies have always suffered from the problem that they’ve not had a very good evidence base, or in some cases no evidence base at all. EFT needs more research, there’s no doubt about it. If it’s going to be accepted, it’s got to have high-quality studies, such as randomised controlled trials. Unfortunately, they can easily cost half a million pounds each, and we don’t need just one, we need several.”

Stewart believes there’s a clear need for new approved therapies on the NHS to deal with

emotional issues, particularly in the context of the increase in anti-depressant use in the UK. According to the Health and Social Care Information Centre, 50 million prescriptions for anti-depressants were issued in 2012 – the highest-ever number. “Anti-depressants simply can’t cure everything,” says Stewart. “I think there’s a need to find something else. I’m not saying EFT is the answer, but it’s another therapy to try. If there’s a new tool in the therapy toolkit that may help, that’s a good thing – so long as it’s not a load of nonsense and it does not do harm.”

It seems that part of the problem with gaining funding and indeed acceptance for EFT research is the implausibility factor. How can tapping and talking help with emotional difficulties? “Over the years there have been lots of medical innovations that seemed implausible. Take John Snow. People used to believe that cholera was spread through the air, but he focused on contaminated water. It wasn’t until years later that his thoughts were adopted. So if EFT currently seems a little improbable, as far as I’m concerned that in itself isn’t a major issue.”



WHAT IS EFT?

Emotional Freedom Techniques is based on the idea that the body contains different energy pathways, known as “meridians”; this is also the basis of acupuncture and shiatsu. The process involves using your fingertips to gently tap on your body (mainly on the head and hands) while repeating statements relating to a personal emotional issue.

“I’m not saying I necessarily agree with the meridian points theory, but something happens,” says Stewart. “You start to access the subconscious mind. The idea is that you’re working on the

intensity of an emotion or pain. You’re not taking people back into a traumatic situation, you’re neutralising the emotional charge. A patient doesn’t have to tell the therapist anything about their experience if they don’t want to; they can just concentrate on their feelings. They don’t even have to name the emotion out loud.”

According to Stewart, one of the strengths of EFT is that it can also be a takeaway therapy. “As soon as someone has learned to use EFT by having a session with a trained therapist, they can use it on anything they experience, as often as they want to.”

Illustrations are not intended as a guide to EFT, which should only be carried out by recognised practitioners.

PARTNERS IN EUROPE

A strong partnership with ESERP lets students gain a Staffordshire University degree in Barcelona, one of Europe's liveliest and most cosmopolitan cities

By Rin Simpson

Historic architecture, world-renowned beaches, a thriving nightlife... there are few better places to study tourism management than Barcelona, one of the most visited cities in Europe. That's why Staffordshire University student Abigail Parker decided to undertake the final year of her degree programme at the Barcelona campus of one of Spain's leading business schools, Escuela Superior de Ciencias Empresariales Marketing y Relaciones Publicas – better known as ESERP.

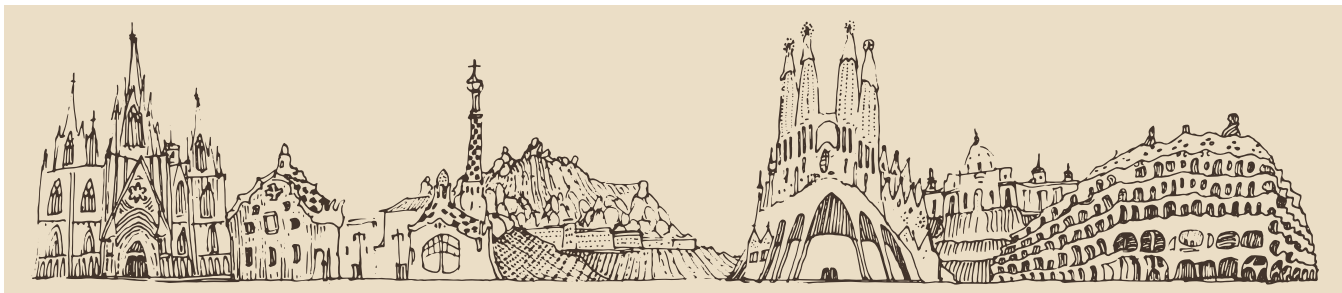
"After taking a year out to do a work placement, a lot of my friends had already graduated and I thought it would be a fun place to live abroad and meet new people," the 24-year-old explains. "As it's a franchise of Staffs, I knew I would be getting the same degree. And I was already used to the study structure, which made the transition easier.

"At ESERP we have classes in the evening, which means the day is free to go out and about and really enjoy the city. The mix of students is very diverse – that's good socially, and it gives greater depth to class discussions, particularly for a subject like tourism. It is certainly different from studying in England, but for me it has been a fabulous experience and I have really enjoyed my time."

Staffordshire University's relationship with ESERP is 20 years old, though the roots of the family-run Spanish business school go back to the late 1800s. Originally, the aim of the link-up was to give local students the opportunity to gain an accredited British degree, and all the prestige that comes with it, on home soil.



Hot in the city: main image and top right, Barcelona and its Antoni Gaudi architecture. Bottom right, city scenes and Ricky Llamas Tarrafeta



“It really works in the students’ favour to develop their knowledge, international skills and language competence,” says Anni Hollings, who has been a programme advisor at Staffordshire University for the last six years. “They’re being taught and assessed in English, and the value of an English degree in terms of their global currency is high.”

Soon after it was first piloted, the programme became so popular that it began attracting students from around the world. The latest cohort has representatives from Denmark, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Mexico and France, as well as the UK and Spain.

“You get such a diverse class; it’s a fantastic learning environment,” says ESERP’s international programmes manager, Dawn Hiscock. “It’s not just about what the teachers are delivering but what the students bring and share amongst themselves. What started off as a course just for Spanish students just to broaden their prospects has turned into a multinational course with global reach and lots of networking.”

Today, second-year Tourism Management

students at Staffordshire University can take part in a week-long residential study tour in Barcelona, further strengthening the relationship with ESERP. For everyone else, ESERP offers three Staffordshire University level 6 BA(Hons) “top-up” courses in Tourism Management, Marketing and Business Management, the last of which is also offered at their Madrid campus.

In order to gain a place on the course, Spanish students must have completed the first three years of a relevant ESERP programme, while international students need two years’ academic experience at university level (120 ECTS credits, on the Europe-wide credit-transfer scheme) and all need to have passed an English language test.

Last year there were more than 100 students on Staffordshire University programmes across the two campuses, one of whom was Ricky Llamas Tarrafeta, 22, from Spain, who followed the Tourism Management programme in Barcelona.

He says: “I chose ESERP to improve my English and to study tourism – and thus,

“You get such a diverse class; it’s a fantastic learning environment”

when leaving university, be more competent in respect to other students when it comes to finding a job.

“It’s important to learn subjects focused not just on tourism but also on its related areas, and Staffordshire University offers that to you. Besides, Barcelona has what many students want: good weather, the beach, parties at night, a wide range of good prices for food and accommodation.

“The opportunity to study in Barcelona is a unique experience and often students don’t want to return home. They feel that Barcelona is their new home!”



PLAY ON!

For more than 60 years, a Stoke rugby club has helped Staffordshire Graduates stay in touch and carry on playing the game. We catch up with some of its stalwarts

By Victoria James



Rocket Man!

Derek Walker says: “On the TV, in sitcoms such as *Friends* and the like, people become *friends* at university and stay that way for the rest of their life. But I’m not sure it just happens like that. I think that often there’s a second link.”

The second link that Walker is thinking of connects not just a single cohort of students from Staffordshire University, but reaches back to the days of what was then North Staffordshire College of Technology. It’s a rugby club, and not the University’s own club, either – that would be formed by Walker himself when he joined the staff as a lecturer in Electrical Engineering in 1968.

Longton Rugby Club is today a member of the sport’s National Leagues. Its visitors have included legendary England captain Bill Beaumont, and a number of its players have trialled for their country. But 60 years ago, it was a side made up mainly of former grammar-school boys. “I first played for the school team in 1956, when I was in sixth form,” Walker recalls. “It had just properly got off the ground a few years earlier.”

In the early 1960s, rugby-mad boys leaving Longton High School began to beat a path to the recently expanded North Staffs College of Technology in Stoke-on-Trent, but found they had nowhere there to play their beloved sport. One of them was Mick Wheat. “I started my studies in 1963, in Chemistry,” he says. “The buildings were so new, they only opened the year I started.

“When we took our finals, we had to do the practicals in Birmingham because there weren’t the facilities for all of us. Four seven-hour exams spread over four days – and yes,

What happens in Longton



Stays in Longton

with the odd evening out in between. We’d go down the pub and listen to some music.”

With its academic buildings still going up, developing sports facilities wasn’t a priority at the College. “There was supposedly a PE-type session in the timetable on a Friday morning,” Wheat recalls. “But really we’d just go and kick a ball round Hanley Park.” So during his studies – which, he insists, “always came first” – Wheat continued to play for Old Longtonians.

If he’d attended the College just a year later, his path would have crossed with that of fellow Old Longtonian Derek Walker, a former rocket scientist who – as rocket scientists do – had a genius idea. The College, soon to become part of North Staffordshire Polytechnic, needed its own rugby team.

“I formed it the day after I got there, in 1968,” recalls Walker,

who remained on staff for three decades. “It was a slow build. Plenty of weeks it was just 13 men, a dog and a football player. That was because the polys were new – we

didn’t have the hundreds of years of tradition that the established universities had. But I wanted to show students that there was more to their education than just a qualification.”

Rugby at the university went from strength to strength. Soon it had two teams, one on the main College Road campus, and another on the Beaconside site at Stafford, 17 miles away. And the flow of ruggers enthusiasts between the school and the Polytechnic started to go both ways. While Old Longtonians like Derek and Mick found their way to the Poly, Polytechnic students who liked the area settled locally after their graduation, and those among them who played rugby could continue their pursuit of the sport at Longton.

Barry Lye was one of these graduates, who came to the Poly to study Ceramic Technology. North Staffs was then, “as it quite rightly should have been, at the centre of world ceramics”, he says.

As with Wheat and Walker, his connection with Longton continues to this day. Lye describes the club both then and now as “a great place with great people”. But it seems that what happens in Longton RFC stays in Longton RFC. “There are many anecdotes and memories I would like to share, but not in print,” he says diplomatically.

Even as rugby at the Polytechnic boomed, Longton faced a new challenge. In 1970, Longton High School became a



comprehensive and its ethos subtly altered. Suddenly rugby was no longer as pre-eminent as it had been, and the supply of suitable players began to dry up. “Mick Wheat was literally going out and getting people in off the street to play,” recalls Derek.

Some of those players came from the Polytechnic. “There were people doing a variety of different courses: engineering, physics,” says Wheat. “Then on a Saturday, they’d come and play for the Longtonians.”

Over the decades, the informal relationship between the two institutions continued to develop. In 1992, North Staffordshire Polytechnic became Staffordshire University. Among the intake the very next year was another rugby-playing Old Longtonian, Tony Wheat – Mick’s son.

Like his father, Tony had played to a high standard, trialling for England at under-19 and under-21 levels. While a student, he played for both the University side and for Longton, and confesses to giving rugby a higher priority in his student work-life balance than his father admits to. (The fact that he was studying for a BA in Sport and Leisure may have helped.)

“I had rugby six days out of seven,” he says. “It wasn’t disastrous for my studies. Rugby came first in the pecking order – at least until the last six weeks before exams.”

Many of Tony’s closest friends from the University were fellow players. He offers the example of one friend who exemplifies Derek Walker’s idea of the “second link” that binds old classmates together. “My friend Ed moved back to Oxford after graduating,” Tony says. “But we played together at Longton for another four years. He’d drive up at the weekend, play the match, have a drink and stay overnight, then drive back down again.”

In recent years the Wheats, father and son, have served as Longton’s chairman and director of rugby respectively. And it is perhaps not surprising that during the past two years, at the instigation of Derek Walker, relations between the club and the university have moved on to an official footing. “The Vice-Chancellor has come on board,” says Walker with enthusiasm. “There has always been a link, but that formalised it.”

If Walker gets his way, in the years to come even more Staffordshire University students will be able to forge their own links to the club – and through it, with each other.

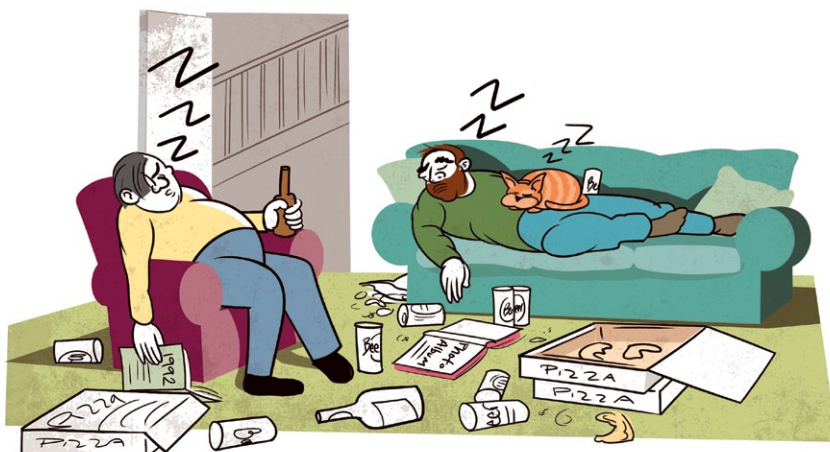
“The media-studies students already record our matches. The English students could come and write about us, and the animators could do cartoons of us. There’s a hospital attached to the University now – the nursing students should come and look at our injuries! The possibilities are endless.”



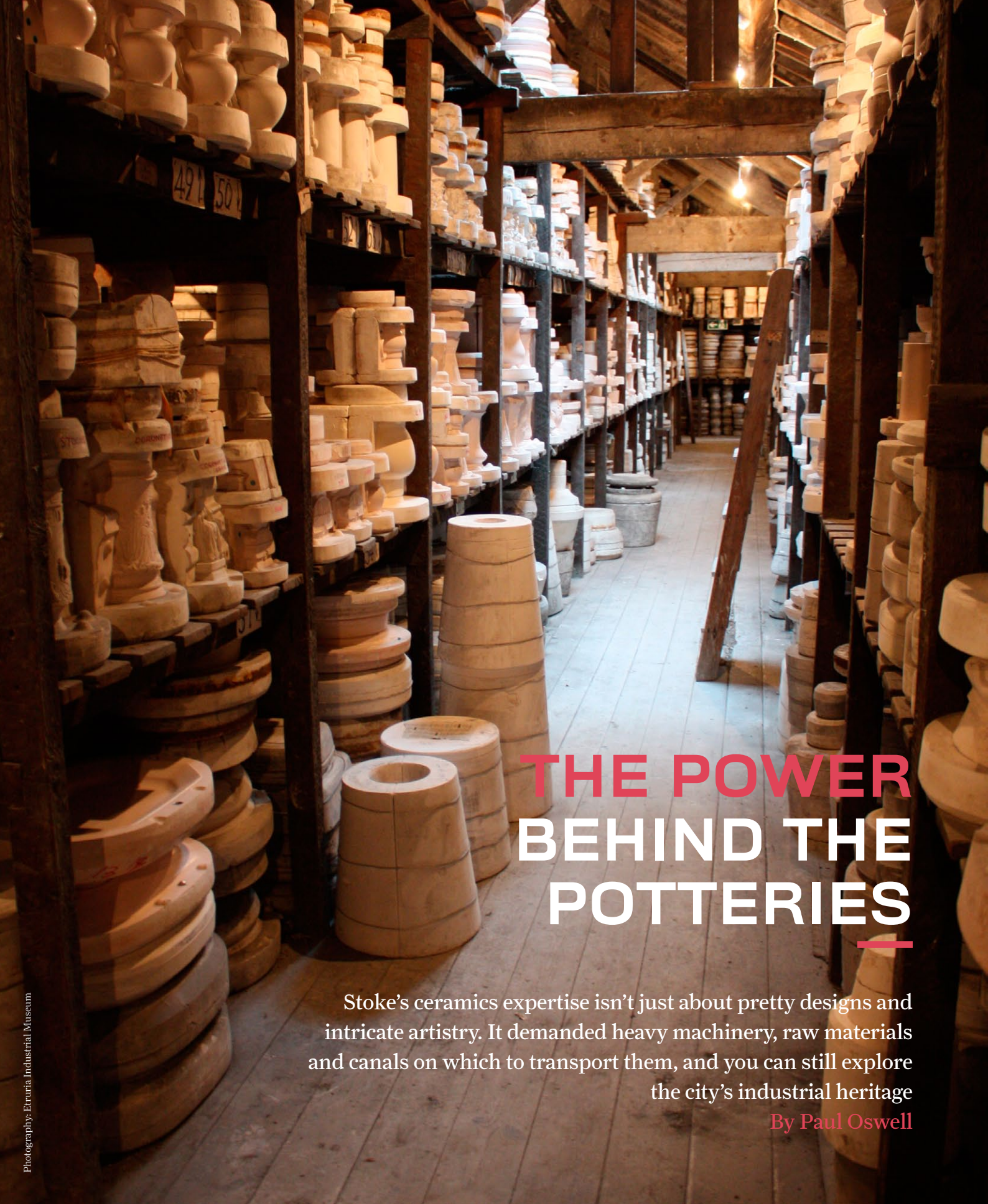
A COMMUNITY CLUB

Longton RUFC was formed in 1952 as an old boys’ club for Longton High School. First known as Old Longtonians, it led a nomadic existence until it gained a permanent base at Weston Coyney in 1976. Facilities were still limited, and in 2008 the club opened a new ground at Trentham Fields with five pitches, a floodlit training area and a £1.5m clubhouse. Its facilities are often used by local businesses, voluntary groups and social functions.

The club now runs three senior men’s teams, a ladies’ team and a popular junior section. The men’s first XV plays in National 3 Midlands, the highest division reached by any team in the county.



The Reunion



THE POWER BEHIND THE POTTERIES

Stoke's ceramics expertise isn't just about pretty designs and intricate artistry. It demanded heavy machinery, raw materials and canals on which to transport them, and you can still explore the city's industrial heritage

By Paul Oswell

In 2013, Stoke-on-Trent unveiled its civic tribute to an industry that has proudly defined the region for 300 years. The Ceramics Trail links some 23 factories, museums and visitor centres to give an educational context to the manufacturing processes employed by, among others, the famous ceramic giants of Wedgwood and Spode.

The trail celebrates the craftsmanship and technical flair of the city's foremost pottery makers, and gives modern-day artists a chance to reap the benefits of a heritage that saw Stoke become the world capital of ceramics. Visitors are led through historic and regenerated areas, and into studios and outlets that still produce beautiful works by talented potters. It's difficult to walk away without an earthenware souvenir to add to your collection.

Look around the Gladstone Pottery Museum, the Moorcroft Heritage Visitor Centre or the Middleport Pottery Factory on a guided tour, and you'll see china tableware and historic ceramic artefacts like nowhere else in the world. But all this is the result of a thriving, innovative pottery industry – and underlying the seductive glazing and subtlety of the colouring, it's still an industry, with all the industrial components that entails.

Peek behind the delicacy and artistic detail and you'll see what production on this scale needs to sustain it: hulking warehouses, large factories and busy mills filled with the large, ungainly machines needed to produce and refine the artists' raw materials. Every dextrous flourish on the potter's wheel is the result of heavy machinery and industrial processes, and although these workings don't have the visual finery of the end product, they are just as important a part of the region's prized heritage.

Oil, dust and huge iron cogs driven by water and steam power were essential to the burgeoning ceramics industry in Stoke, and these grisly

innards can be seen in their full glory at the Etruria Industrial Museum and Heritage Centre. The museum sits on Lower Bedford Street in Etruria, at the junction of the Mersey and Caldon Canals.

Flint and bone were essential elements of earthenware products, but grinding them manually exposed workers to a fatally dangerous dust. It was here, in the early 1800s, that a game-changing wet pan grinding method was implemented on a large scale, with Jesse Shirley's Bone and Flint Mill becoming the leading supplier of the vital ingredients.

Today, you can tour the sinisterly named crusher room, along with the calcining kiln, which was another industry leader in its day. The huge, brutish ironwork of the gear, boiler and engine rooms are genuinely impressive. Restoration of the site began in the mid-1970s, and it was opened to the public by Fred Dibnah in 1991.

The canals themselves were the lifeblood of all industry in pre-electrical days. Many of Stoke's most welcoming green spaces are now linked by these scenic waterways, from the elegant Victoriana of Hanley Park to the natural splendour and birdlife of Westport Lake. Simply walking or biking alongside the canals gives you a sense of the logistical challenges of an age that needed to transport ugly necessities such as cattle bone in order to dazzle the world with its ceramic creations.

It's worth seeking out these prosaic, unglamorous elements of the industry that put the region on the map. It's this largely unseen heritage that allows the city to today present itself as a European capital of advanced materials technology – and we can be sure that it will play a part in an economic renaissance that goes far beyond china tea cups.

• Etruria Museum will be open to visitors in 2014 on August 2-3, September 13-14 and December 6-7. See www.etruriamuseum.org.uk



All fired up: main picture, the Middleport collection of historic pottery moulds. Above from top, factory tour at Middleport Pottery; Gladstone Pottery Museum. Below, the furnace at Shirley's Bone and Flint Mill



UNCOVERING THE BARD

By Anne Wollenberg

There are few traces left of Shakespeare's last residence, but research by the University's new Centre for Archaeology is revealing the true history of the New Place in Stratford-upon-Avon

The man who built it became the Mayor of London, the Bishop of Chester was exiled for demolishing it, and it once housed 80 bushels of barley malt belonging to Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's wife. The playwright's last house was once the second-best residence in Stratford-upon-Avon, but nobody knows exactly what it looked like, or what it was like to live there. Today, the site is just a garden.

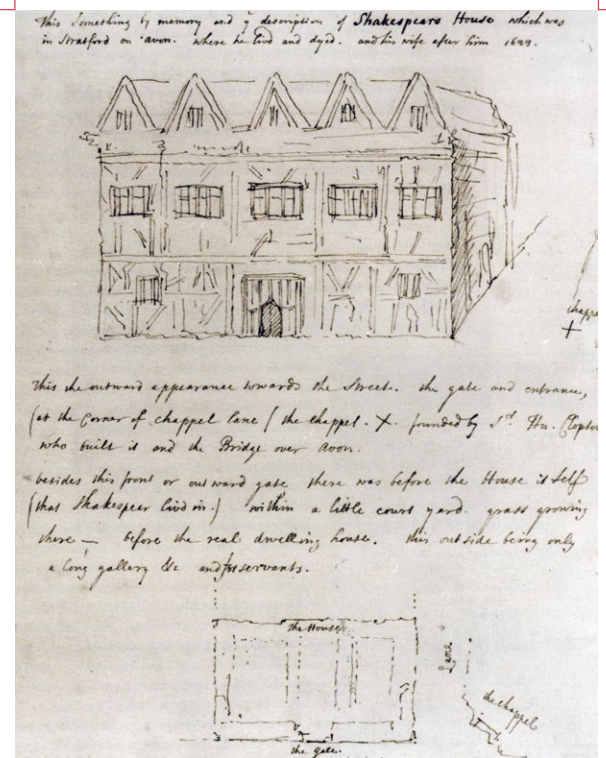
Archaeologists from Staffordshire University have now unearthed new information about New Place, Stratford, where Shakespeare spent the last six years of his life. They are managing the Dig for Shakespeare project for the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, which owns the site. The Trust also owns the adjoining Nash House, once home to Shakespeare's granddaughter, Elizabeth Hall, and her husband, Thomas Nash.

Excavations at the New Place site

have now been completed. "But there's still plenty of work to do," says Kevin Colls, lead archaeological project manager at the University's new Centre for Archaeology. He is now planning to co-author a book about the findings with Paul Edmondson, the Trust's head of research.

According to Colls, people often don't realise what's involved in the process of archaeology. "It's partly down to the Time Team effect where they turn up, excavate a site in three days and move on to the next one," he says. "They don't show what happens afterwards."

A week-long dig might yield many months' worth of research and writing-up before it appears in a journal article. Artefacts are sent to individual specialists around the country, such as pottery or metalwork experts, for assessment. The items are then taken to museums for display or storage. "The end of the project isn't



when the report goes out, but when you hire a van and drive all these things to a museum," he says.

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust plans to build a formal space alluding to what was on the New Place site, without actually recreating the house. This should be completed in 2016, which will coincide with the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. "We're acting as archaeological consultants, making sure we look after the archaeology and use it to help explore what the site might be like in the long term," says Colls.

Dig for Shakespeare began as a collaboration between the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the University of Birmingham, moving to Staffordshire University when Birmingham closed its archaeology department. It has attracted considerable media attention, and the excavations have featured on Channel 4's *Time Team* and BBC2's *Digging for Britain*.

The site was open to the public while digging took place, so visitors could watch the archaeologists at work and ask questions. Community volunteers also carried out some of the work – anyone who was interested could turn up on a daily basis and help excavate the site.

"This approach is a good way of bringing archaeology into local communities," says Colls. "It's something we want to develop at Staffordshire."

Exact details of their findings are being kept under wraps for now, but they include



"Archaeology is really all about finding out people's stories"

structural evidence, pottery from the period immediately after Shakespeare's occupation, medieval pottery and material from the 18th and 19th centuries. "We found plenty of items that predated Shakespeare, going back to the Iron Age. There was previously an archaeologist on the site in 1861, so it was interesting to see signs of those previous excavations. We were looking for anything that would tell us more about what life was like at New Place," says Colls.

Finding archaeology for a single person is always difficult, he adds. "Shakespeare

owned the house for just 19 years and only lived in it for six. We were looking for evidence of what the household might have been like and we found things that will help with that."

And as with all work carried out by the Centre, the aim was never simply to publish academic articles. "We do lots of TV work and public workshops, and we go into schools to talk to children about archaeology," says research lead Dr Caroline Sturdy Colls. "Archaeology is really about finding out people's stories."

A family affair

Based at Staffordshire University's Science Centre, the new Centre for Archaeology is headed up by Dr Caroline Sturdy Colls, lecturer in forensic investigation, alongside her husband Kevin Colls. It acts as an umbrella for research projects, as well as offering consultancy, commercial and community services. It draws on expertise from across the University, including specialists in engineering, geology and geography.

Dr Sturdy Colls' high-profile research at the Treblinka extermination camp site has attracted a huge amount of media interest, and was last year profiled in the Channel 5 documentary *Treblinka: Inside The Murder Factory*. Its findings will be exhibited in Poland later this year and then in a travelling exhibition that will spend time at the Staffordshire University Science Centre.

The department currently offers a forensic archaeology module for forensic and crime science students. It also runs workshops, summer schools and Chartered Institute

of Personal Development (CIPD) courses, and a Masters programme is currently in development. Four doctoral students – the first to work on archaeological-based projects at the University – will join in September.



Digging it: Caroline Sturdy Colls and Kevin Colls

University appoints its third Chancellor



Lord Stafford has been named as the University's third Chancellor, as part of its centenary year celebrations. He fills an honorary position that has been vacant since the retirement of Lord Morris of Handsworth in July 2011.

A former High Sheriff of Staffordshire, Lord Stafford was sponsor of the influential Lord Stafford Awards, which recognised and encouraged relationships between businesses and universities. Expressing his delight at the honour and his admiration for the University, Lord Stafford pledged to act as an "ambassador to the outside world", creating links with business and international partners. He added: "It's vital that students have access to higher education so that they can go on and enhance their careers, because an educated workforce is essential – not only for ourselves, but for the country so we can compete internationally."

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Gunn, said: "From my personal experience of him, I know that Lord Stafford is a great supporter of the University and takes a lively interest in what we do. He is very well known for his work to promote innovation and to get universities and businesses to collaborate. We hope to benefit from Lord Stafford's many influential networks."

• For a profile of the new Chancellor, see page 19 of our Centenary supplement.

One University, one campus



Stoke-on-Trent will become home to nearly all Staffordshire University courses, in a move that aims to provide "the best possible student experience". Programmes that are currently delivered at Stafford's Beaconside campus will be moving to Stoke by 2016 at the latest.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Michael Gunn says: "Students generally show a preference for an edge-of-city campus with brilliant learning and teaching facilities, good public transport links and social activities – all of which we have in Stoke-on-Trent."

The decision was made at a special meeting of the Board of Governors, and comes after extensive consultations with students, staff, education and local authority partners and the local business community. The Beaconside site, which currently acts as a base for 2,750 students and 413 staff, is to be vacated within two years.

All computing and entertainment-technology degrees that are currently delivered in Stafford will soon be relocating to Stoke-on-Trent. However, a small number of health-related courses such as nursing, midwifery, paramedic science and public health will remain in Stafford. Staffordshire University Business Village, located on Stafford Technology Park, will also remain open as a facility to support graduates setting up their own businesses.

Steve Burgin, Chair of the Board of Governors, adds: "The competitive nature of higher education today, coupled with the need to be highly efficient, means we must direct our valuable resources in the most effective way towards our students."

The news comes in the wake of the successful relocation of the University's engineering programmes to Stoke-on-Trent earlier this year.

Diabetes research to save limbs

Four out of five foot amputations among diabetic patients could be prevented, according to scientists at Staffordshire University. A team led by Nachiappan Chockalingam, Professor of Biomechanics,

has discovered links between blood sugar levels and stiffness of the heel pad, which makes the foot more susceptible to ulceration.

The ground-breaking research will allow more accurate and effective assessment and treatment of "diabetic foot syndrome", and could see a reduction in the number of people who have limbs amputated as a result

An inspiring space for science

A Staffordshire University programme aimed at inspiring A-level and BTEC students to take up science degrees has been lauded in this year's Guardian University Awards. The UNIQ educational regeneration project, run in conjunction with Stoke-on-Trent College and Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College, was awarded runner-up position in the Facilities Project category.

Located at the University's £30m Science Centre, which also houses 140 researchers and other staff, the initiative allows 16 to 18-year-old science students to experience formal and informal learning at the heart of a University, gaining insights into the potential study opportunities ahead of them.

Steve Wyn Williams, Director of Academic Policy and Development at the University, said: "Architecturally, we worked to ensure the concept was iconic but also an attractive environment, which would be full of light, interest and open spaces so that everyone from everywhere would feel welcome the moment they entered the building."

of the condition – currently around 100 per week across the UK.

Dr Roozbeh Naemi, Associate Professor of Biomechanics, says: "The results of this study, along with the mathematical models that we are currently developing, have the potential to improve the quality of life for millions of people around the world."

The research, which was presented at the 12th

Staffordshire Conference on Biomechanics at the Stoke-on-Trent campus, has been welcomed by the scientific community.

Professor Mike Edmonds of King's College Hospital, London, said: "This is an important finding, which will lead to further understanding of the mechanical changes in the tissues leading to ulceration, which in turn will help develop a new and patient-focused clinical intervention programme."



Jumping Jack's cash for charity

A Staffordshire University student has raised £2,000 for charity by completing the Greater Manchester Marathon on a pogo stick. Jack Sixty, 24, completed the 26-mile course in just over 16 hours, with his sponsorship money going to Alzheimer's Research UK and the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital.

Jack, who is currently taking his masters in Journalism, was verified as a record holder by Guinness World Records in two categories: "Farthest distance bounced in 24 hours" and "Fastest marathon on a pogo stick". Four fellow Staffs students filmed his journey to confirm the record-breaking attempt.

The accolade came at a cost. He says: "Afterwards, I had a weird feeling in my head, almost like pins and needles, from bouncing around for 16 hours straight. But the pain subsided quicker than I expected, and I was in uni a couple of days later editing all the footage for verification – albeit with some pretty impressive blisters."

It's not the first time Jack has taken to a pogo stick for charity. His first challenge, when he was just 13, saw him hop to school for Comic Relief. He's now hoping to break the world record for the fastest mile on a pogo stick at the Xpogo World Championship Grand Final event in Helsingborg, Sweden, this August.



STEM success for Paul

A member of the Staffordshire University Psychology department has been named as one of the STEM technicians of the year, at the annual Higher Education Academy annual conference in Edinburgh. Paul Gallimore, himself a graduate of the University, received his award and £250 worth of vouchers from Professor Iain Stewart, presenter of the BBC's *Earth series*, at the event in May.

The Technical Skills Specialist was nominated in recognition of his support and guidance of students in all aspects of experiment design and application, his work in designing an online technical learning resource, and his contribution to the design, development and operation of the University's £30million Science Centre.

Paul expressed his surprise at the honour, adding: "These awards help to raise the profile of the work of technicians who put themselves out for the students and who are being more proactive within their departments.

"My aim is to get the psychology technology into the core teaching, because if we can give students the practical skills that they can take with them and provide students with the means to design and run their own experiments, then it may give them the edge in an interview or career situations."



Staffs drama is a quality act

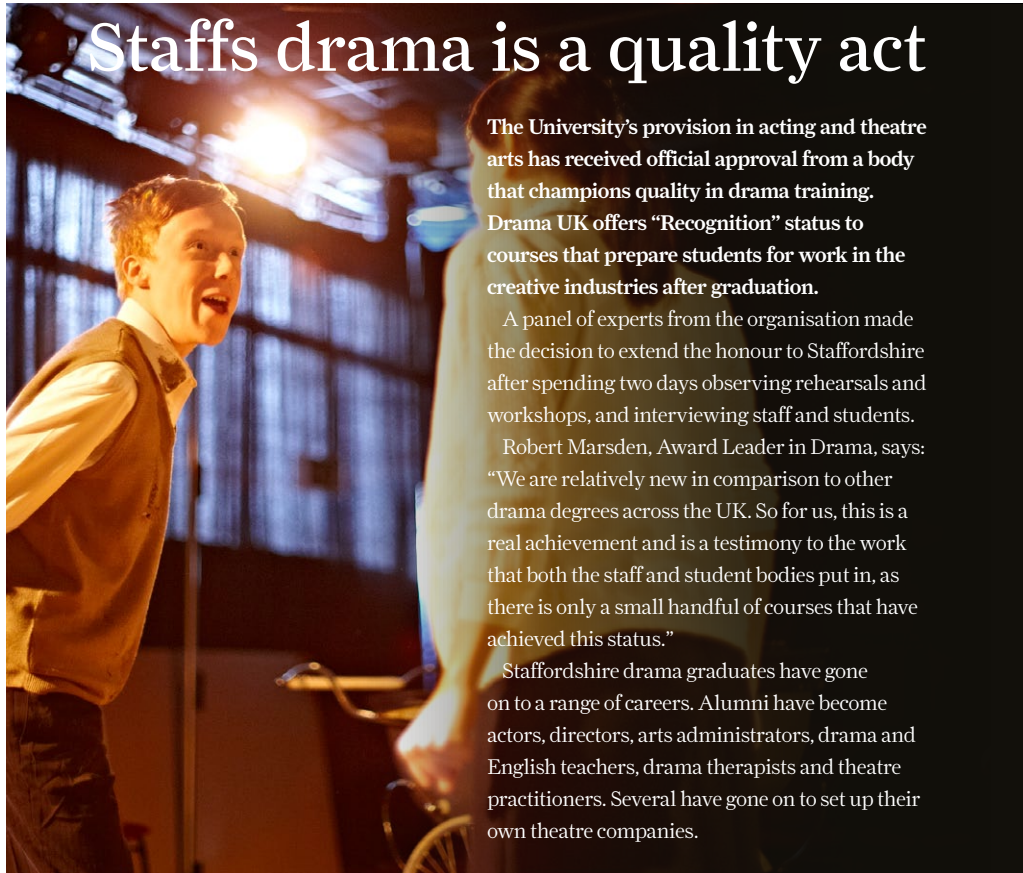
The University's provision in acting and theatre arts has received official approval from a body that champions quality in drama training.

Drama UK offers "Recognition" status to courses that prepare students for work in the creative industries after graduation.

A panel of experts from the organisation made the decision to extend the honour to Staffordshire after spending two days observing rehearsals and workshops, and interviewing staff and students.

Robert Marsden, Award Leader in Drama, says: "We are relatively new in comparison to other drama degrees across the UK. So for us, this is a real achievement and is a testimony to the work that both the staff and student bodies put in, as there is only a small handful of courses that have achieved this status."

Staffordshire drama graduates have gone on to a range of careers. Alumni have become actors, directors, arts administrators, drama and English teachers, drama therapists and theatre practitioners. Several have gone on to set up their own theatre companies.



Design students exhibit their talents

Decorated tiles and upcycled ceramics were among the creations on show at the Wedgwood Museum as part of an exhibition of Staffordshire students' work. Eight second-year 3D design students took part in the display of work, which was inspired by the historic home and lifestyle brand's most iconic designs of the 20th century.

Contributor Fiona Cox, 20, who produced tiles and jewellery boxes, says: "My tiles took around three weeks to decorate, but I was very excited to be able to have them on display. It's such a big museum and such a prestigious company."

Fellow student Sarah Betts, 30, created two jewellery lines, one of which featured fragments of ceramics found at the University

campus. "It's nice to look at the pieces and think about their history," she says. "People have used these, chosen them and loved them in the past."

The exhibition is likely to provide a useful boost to the students' future careers, and some have even had work commissioned by the museum for sale in the gift shop. Sarah adds: "It's really important getting your name out there, not only for promoting the University and the course itself but for students to promote themselves. It's quite difficult in a competitive market to get yourself known – so the earlier you can start doing it, the better."





Dick Strawbridge's BIG ideas

Businesses must combine creativity and innovation with sustainable practice in order to succeed, according to TV eco-expert Dick Strawbridge. The presenter and inventor offered his insights to

local companies at a free sustainability event hosted by Staffordshire University's Science Centre, highlighting the importance of British innovation and new efficient technologies.

The morning was organised by Bringing Innovation in Growth (BIG), a business consortium that also includes Keele University, Staffordshire

Chambers of Commerce and Keele University Science and Business Park.

John Adlen, from Staffordshire University's Enterprise and Commercial Development team, says: "Dick Strawbridge gave a fantastic, wide-ranging and inspirational talk about innovation and sustainability. It was a call to arms for all of us to be more creative and innovative at the same time as considering the real impacts of our decisions.

"Dick is a shining example of that long-tradition of British inventiveness which combines creativity and ingenuity that comes from genuine independent thinking – traits which we try to instil in all our graduates at Staffordshire University."

He went on to say: "Sustainability is a key goal for Staffordshire University and as one of the top 20 greenest universities in the UK, it was particularly pleasing for us to have one of the country's leading sustainability experts speaking to so many local business leaders."

Marc takes centre stage

He's only been playing the guitar for two years, but Staffordshire University student Marc Williams has already had a taste of fame – as Gary Barlow's warm up act. The 21-year-old singer from Basford was talent-spotted after uploading a video to YouTube, and found himself playing in front of 16,000 at Birmingham's LG Arena in April.

It was a "dream come true" for the Sports Science undergraduate, who first picked up a guitar after breaking his leg at a music festival in 2012. "Going from playing in small pubs to playing in front of thousands in an arena was completely surreal," he told the Stoke Sentinel. "I love Take That. Gary is such an inspiration because he is one of the best music producers in the world."

After his accident with his leg, Marc was given a guitar by a neighbour who was moving to Dubai.

His grandfather, who used to be in a band, taught him how to play. And though Marc hopes to follow him into the music industry, he still plans to finish his degree. "I am being realistic about the future," he said. "If music fails, I am thinking of becoming a PE teacher."



Piper film hits the right note

A Staffordshire University student has been named Bradford Filmmaker of the Month after documenting the life of a local bagpiper. Michael Cockcroft, 34, will now see his five-minute film featuring the life of musician Sean Jones previewed on Big Screen Bradford, where it will be viewed by around 300,000 people a month.

The third-year media and film production student, who is from Bradford himself, will also go head to head with 11 other finalists for the Filmmaker of the Year award, which carries a £1,000 prize.

He says: "Initially when I heard about the competition, I told some of my friends who were



doing more experimental films to enter. I put mine in on the offchance but didn't expect it to do much. It was a nice surprise to be chosen.

"The winner of the annual competition gets a chance to showcase future work on the Big Screen in Bradford so that could

be very exciting. It could be a very good platform to build on, and a chance to get my work out there."

Michael's documentary has also been screened in America at the Short Short Story Film Festival in Rhode Island, where it was among 19 pieces selected from around the world.



ALUMNI NEWS

Presidential seal of approval for Tim

Many Staffordshire Graduates have to deal with high-profile clients as part of their work, but very few have the bragging rights of Tim Carder. As Vice-President of Design for the American ceramics company Lenox, he has been involved in designing the dinner services for two Presidents of the United States. "I spent a lot of time at the White House," he says. "I worked with Mrs Clinton for about two years, and then also for Laura Bush."

What's more, the company also produces the engraved glassware presented to US Presidents on the day of their inauguration.

"Every time there's an inaugural, a gift is presented by Congress to the incoming President at a special luncheon. We've made the last six of them, I believe," he says.

As designer, Carder has been granted the privilege of attending these functions - and he remembers the first inauguration of President Obama with particular fondness and pride. "It was a day I'll never forget, looking down the mall and seeing thousands and thousands of people. I was sitting about 20 feet away from the President. I felt very lucky."

Tim Carder's career began in 1975, after graduating from

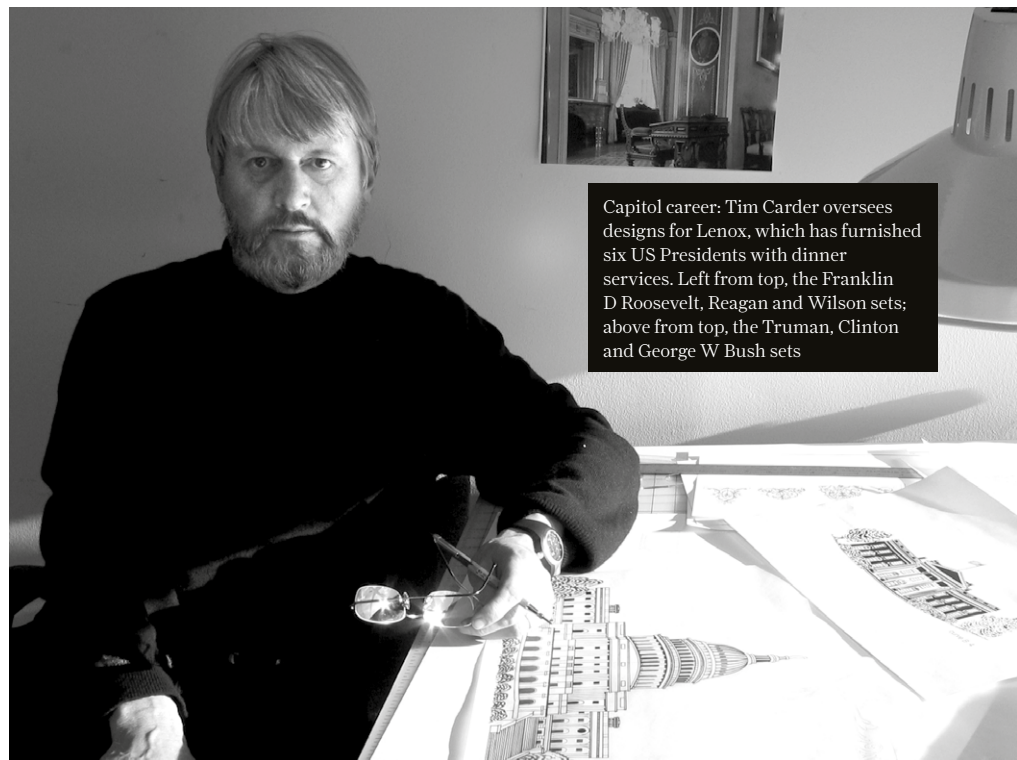
the MA programme in Ceramics at North Staffordshire Polytechnic. He believes that the practical nature of the course has proved invaluable throughout his working life. "I think I received some of the best training," he says. "There was nothing quite like what we went through. There was a focus on manufacturing techniques - we learned things such as how decal printing comes about, and how to configure moulds and run jiggering machines."

"Some of us found this boring at the time, but it became pivotal. I was able to move into a job and converse with the manufacturing wing of the organisation in a coherent way. And to this day, I enjoy that aspect. We work with many different factories around the world as well as our own, so to be able to help them and to solve problems is a great asset."

Lenox has been supplying fine tableware to the White House since the early 20th century. Every President has commissioned his own set of china, and the company has been responsible for six of them - Woodrow

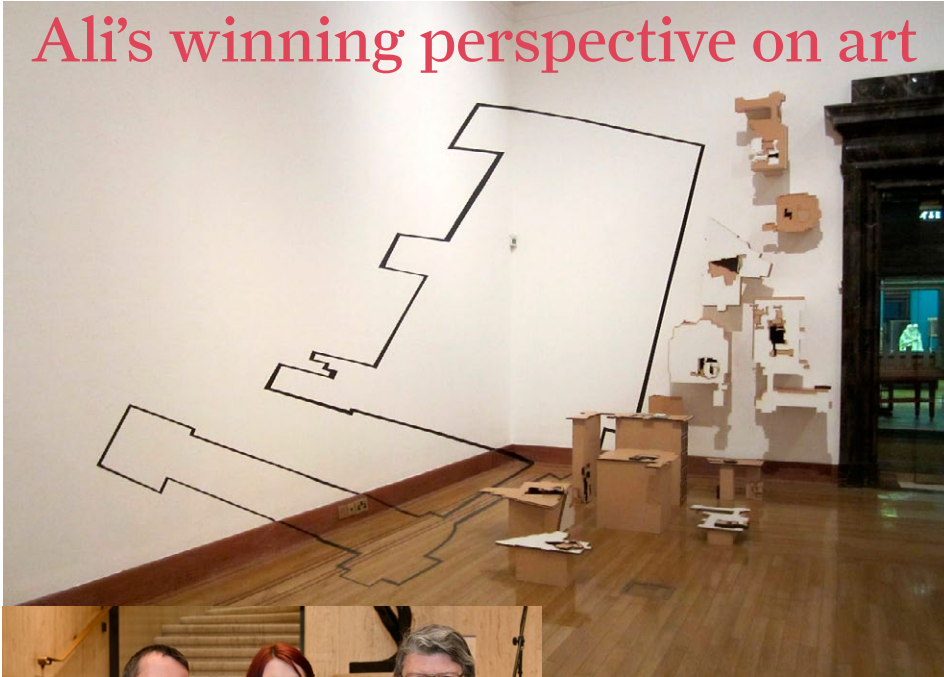
Wilson, Franklin D Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton and George W Bush. Being a part of this tradition is what Carder cites as his greatest professional achievement.

"Designing the White House dinner services is the thing I'll always come back to," he says. "You're put in the position of coming up with something that becomes a national treasure - it stays in the mansion for all time. And, of course, there are no limitations on expense. You're really doing something that becomes part of history."



Capitol career: Tim Carder oversees designs for Lenox, which has furnished six US Presidents with dinner services. Left from top, the Franklin D Roosevelt, Reagan and Wilson sets; above from top, the Truman, Clinton and George W Bush sets

Ali's winning perspective on art



New Art West Midlands featured the work of 24 artists, all of whom had recently graduated from the region's Fine Art degree courses. Reed's winning entry was an installation at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. By drawing directly on the walls and using materials such as tape, geometric blocks and stacks of laser-cut wood and card, she created an artwork that appeared to mirror and distort the shape of the building's interior with its playful use of perspective.

Fellow Staffordshire University fine art graduate Sikhander Pervez was also among the five prizewinners, who received their awards at a ceremony at The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham. He was awarded the New Art Gallery Walsall Prize and £1,000 in cash.

Wendy Law, Director of Turning Point West Midlands – the arts organisation that runs the competition – said: “The prizes awarded today will place the five artists in respected galleries and help to boost their careers as they work with curators to develop their work and make new contacts.”



A Staffordshire Fine Art graduate has scooped a prestigious regional art prize. Ali Reed (middle left) was named overall winner of New Art West Midlands in March, securing a £1,000 cash prize and the chance of a residency at A3 Project Space in Digbeth, leading to a solo exhibition in the future.

Snow news is good news

Bringing coverage of this year's Winter Olympics from Russia into the world's homes was a vast undertaking, and one in which several Staffordshire alumni played important roles.

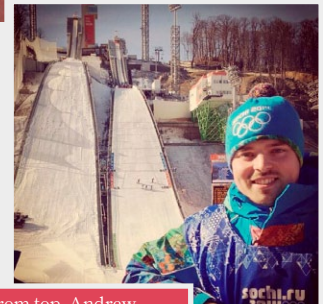
Andrew Rowell, who graduated from the BA(Hons) in Film, TV and Radio Studies in 2004, covered the Games with Junction 15 – the Stoke-based company he started with fellow alumnus Darren Teale. He says: “I was working on the world feed, which we produce live and is given to every country around the world. I worked on the opening and closing ceremonies, the speed skating and the curling. We provided mini-cameras for the American athletes to wear at the opening, so when they walked into the stadium, viewers could see things from their point of view.”

Sochi 2014 represented the third time Rowell has covered the Olympic Games. He first did so for

American broadcaster NBC in Beijing 2008 – for which he received a prestigious Emmy Award in the “Outstanding Technical Team Remote” category.

Elsewhere in Sochi, three graduates of the University's acclaimed Sports Journalism programme were involved in media operations. James Fielden covered ski jumping and curling for the Olympic News Service, while Joe Hewison performed the same role at the ice-hockey events. Meanwhile, Beth Moorley worked at the Sliding Centre, which hosted the bobsleigh and skeleton events.

Sports Journalism course leader Mitch Pryce says: “Our graduates continue to operate at the highest levels of the sports media industry. James, Beth and Joe are typical of the talent we attract and nurture at Staffordshire.”



Peak performers: from top, Andrew Rowell, Beth Moorley and James Fielden

Graduates KEEN for success

A pioneering scheme is proving invaluable both to local businesses and to Staffordshire alumni – including Marketing Management graduate Atia Bukhari (right).

The Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise Network (KEEN) works by placing recent graduates in small and medium-sized enterprises, where they can work on strategic growth projects such as developing new products, breaking new markets or improving business practices. They receive ongoing support from the University and benefit from partial funding by the European Regional Development Fund.

Atia Bukhari, who graduated in 2009, was employed by Stoke-on-Trent sheet-metal fabricators Grenville Engineering as a KEEN Affiliate. She made an immediate impact by completing a marketing and customer analysis and overseeing the design of a new company logo. After this, she went on to establish the company's presence on social media and began redesigning its promotional literature and website.

Now employed as the company's marketing manager, she says: "The KEEN programme is a fantastic opportunity for graduates to enable a strong footing on the career ladder. The support provided through the University and Grenville Engineering was invaluable in driving marketing activity forward. As a result of the KEEN programme I pursued further professional development which benefited both the



company and my career prospects."

Dali Dong, operations director of Grenville Engineering, says: "We were extremely pleased with the progress of the KEEN programme, which showcased a number of new initiatives to build the presence of the company. The implementation of a new rebrand and website helped to boost the profile of our business, strengthening its success for the future."

A magazine is born

An enterprising Staffordshire Graduate has launched the UK's first magazine for young parents. Kimberly Bond is the mastermind behind *Visit from the Stork*, which provides advice for under-25s getting used to parenthood. After starting life last October as a website, it was spun off into a fully fledged print magazine this year.

Bond had the idea while on a Journalism degree at the University. She noticed that the major parenting magazines were all aiming at parents between 25 and 40, leaving a gap in the market. She explored the concept further as part of her final-year project, and set up the business with help from the Speed Plus scheme. This offers specialist consultancy and support to graduate entrepreneurs in the Midlands.

She says: "The new *Visit from the Stork* magazine offers in-depth articles on subjects such as weaning, post-natal bonding and pregnancy sickness, all with exclusive interviews, and targeted at young parents. It's intended to complement the website, and will also be used to showcase new and exciting products in the parenting market.

"Contrary to what the bigger magazine owners may think, our parents are just as keen to read and learn about pregnancy and parenting as any other parents. We have created somewhere younger parents can turn to without feeling judged or isolated – which is what many mums and dads tell us they experience throughout pregnancy and in the early years of being a parent."



Proud parent: Kimberly Bond, left, created *Visit from the Stork* for mums and dads under 25



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