From the Chairman
Reflections on my term of office

I took over the chairmanship of the Friends from its founder, Reg Davies. He set it up in a very different university world in many respects, and saw a role for a small organisation which could bring together like-minded graduates and friends of the University to meet socially, make visits to departments and facilities, hear lectures and talks about current developments, and circulate a newsletter about topical events in the University. Perhaps, too, they might distribute funds, when they accumulated, for good causes and for the enrichment of activities not yet defined.

Since his day the whole alumni network has grown and a much more powerful relationship has developed between the University and its graduates, as well as sophisticated fundraising activity to help counteract the shrinking government grant. Student funding has also changed quite radically and the university world generally has become more competitive and international in its approach.

The Friends have lived through all of this and survived with a clear profile and a slowly defining role in a different world. We thought, at one point, that we would cease to have a place in the evolving scheme of things, but it has become clear that our tailored support, in small amounts, could benefit and enrich the life of the Institution and particularly it could help student extra-curricular activities.

In my time we have had generous support from our graduates and friends and we have spent over three quarters of a million pounds on causes we deemed worthy. In the process we have generated a lot of goodwill and done a surprising amount of useful pump priming and enrichment.

Continued on page 2, first column
Annual dinner

Following the Annual General Meeting at Carnatic Halls, Friends gathered to enjoy a meal together.

In a relaxed and convivial atmosphere, committee members and their guests exchanged memories of the developments and achievements of the Friends over recent years under the Chairmanship of Professor John Tarn and indeed since its foundation by Reg Davies so long ago.

All agreed that the organisation had gone from strength to strength under John’s Chairmanship and there was relief to know that he would still be taking an interest in activities in his retirement and that members would not be losing contact with him.

It was a dinner with a difference in that there was no formal speech making, but rather an evening of shared friendship with lots of laughs, and not least, good food.

Leaving with happy reflections

by Maureen Jones

This year, 2013, I retire from the Committee of the Friends after a million years (actually 29 years!) of willing and rewarding service.

The pressures of Newsletter deadlines and the demands and activities programmes passed from me some years ago to other willing Friends, so the last few years on the Committee have been stress free.

I go with a myriad of happy reflections, including attending events with the great and the good, to cooperate with indispensable management staff. Our founding Chairman, Reg Davies, became a personal friend who inspired me to work ceaselessly - as he did - for our University. I could not have achieved anything without the help of so many others: the supporters of our programmes, the members of staff who have given their time willingly and made their scholarship fascinating and entertaining, the supplicants for grants who opened my eyes to academic areas that I knew not of, the delightful invitations to the corners of the campus and student activities redolent of boundless energy and imagination.

Of the many memorable visits we made, an outstanding one must be our annual visit to Thornton Hough, the home of the former Chancellor, Lord Leverhulme. He took his Presidency of the Friends very seriously, chairing the AGMs and then inviting many Friends to an afternoon tea and the freedom of the gardens, which were breathtakingly rich in May flowers. I shared with Reg the honour and pleasure of showing our appreciation to him by taking him to lunch at the Athenæum Club.

Other unforgettable visits include one to Fort Perch Rock, New Brighton, when record numbers turned out on a glorious June day in 1994. The Fort was at that time owned by a Liverpool architect graduate, Norman Kington, who had engaged Circumnavigators Club in New York. A Liverpool graduate who was a governor of the Club, Jack Roberts, left Friends a handsome bequest. From this contact arose the Club’s spectacular offer of a scholarship for Liverpool students, the first of which was taken up in 2011.

I shall continue to enjoy my association with the Friends of the University of Liverpool and offer my grateful thanks to all colleagues and my good wishes for the future.

Secretary of the Friends, Rachael Airey, Corporate Communications, Foundation Building, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool, L69 7ZX.

Telephone: 0151 795 4609, email: rachael.airey@liv.ac.uk

Goodbye and Hello

The Committee has been blessed with wonderful secretarial support from Joy Vogt, PA to the Director of Corporate Communications, over the past four years. Her welcoming smile, efficiency and organisational skills have literally made her a ‘joy’ to work with! We give grateful thanks for the invaluable assistance she brought to the Committee.

Although she is not leaving the Committee, Frances Thomson has retired from the job of producing the Newsletter. Frances has done a wonderful job over the years and we are hugely grateful for her untiring efforts towards producing high-quality editions twice a year for our members and supporters. Peter Rogan, Editor, summed up Frances’s skills very succinctly: ‘She is proving to be a very hard act to follow!’

Rachael Airey, Development Officer in the Philanthropy and Alumni team, will be taking over as Secretary of the Friends. Rachael moved to the University from a post with a Mersyside cancer charity and has settled down very comfortably with us. We look forward to what will be a very happy working relationship with Rachael.

John Tarn, Chairman of the Friends
In this section, those who have received grants from the Friends recently have been asked to report back on how the money has been used.

Surfing towards success

Surfing in our cold coastal waters, particularly in the winter months, can be not only difficult but also dangerous if the surfers don’t have the correct clothing to take part in the sport. The equipment is prohibitively expensive for many students who want to join in, so a request was made to the Friends to assist with the purchase of kit in order to increase levels of participation.

We were asked to help finance the purchase of winter wetsuits, hats, gloves and one or two surf boards, with a grant of £2,500 to help to accommodate wider participation, particularly amongst those who could not afford the necessary gear.

Herdman Society Symposium

On behalf of the Herdman Society, Richard Evans made an application to the Friends for assistance in funding the 2013 Herdman Symposium. It is the largest student symposium in the North West, having grown in reputation since it was first held 30 years ago.

Over those 30 years, organisers have attracted prestigious, highly respected scientists from all over the world and the symposium has been well supported by science students from across the length and breadth of the country. Recently attendance was offered to school groups free of charge.

Ticket sales do not meet the running costs and in these tough economic times sponsorship is becoming increasingly difficult to come by. The Society turned to the Friends to help present this year’s symposium and secure its continuance for future generations.

Richard successfully applied for a grant of £5,000 which was used to meet immediate costs for this year’s symposium and to invest in the creation of a brochure which will help bring in more sponsorship in the years to come.

This year’s symposium was a huge success, not least because of the generous support of the Friends.

Improving skill and efficiency

The University Archery Club is very successful, having grown from an initial 35 members to more than 135 active members to become one of the biggest Archery Clubs in Lancashire.

The case for assistance was powerfully presented to the Committee by Dine Hein-Hartman and it was unanimously decided that the request be granted in full. Here’s hoping that the new gear will greatly enhance the Club’s activities by kits out those who might never have taken part in the sport and, who knows, lead them towards high levels of competitive surfing against other universities.

The Friends were asked to match fund a £2,000 grant it had received from Sport Liverpool, and Stuart Wads, Sports Development Manager, attended a committee meeting to make a successful appeal for the grant.

The netting has since been purchased and installed and is being put to good use.

Spreading the message of infection control

The Friends made one of its largest ever grants of £16,120 to the Institute of Infection and Global Health to encourage wider engagement with the public. Professor Tom Solomon, who made the application, said: “It is essential for us to explain our science to the public and learn how the public feels about it.”

Staff from the Institute were able to purchase two LCD screens which display a slide highlighting the important work being undertaken and advertising public events, with one of the screens prominently on show to the passing public and one in the foyer of the building.

A case was made by the Club for the Friends to fund the cost of a new system whereby the nets could be simply rolled out on the back wall of the sports hall with the added advantage of increasing the shooting distance over what was previously available.

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Making a grant application

The main function of Friends is to allocate grants from the funds at its disposal, and which are accumulated from subscriptions and requests.

Guidelines for grant requests are:

- They must be to enhance the life and work of the University, at its disposal, and which are accumulated from subscriptions and requests.
- They are intended to be for new projects, for improvements and for pump-priming.
- Grants will not be made to cover salary costs.
- Grants are normally required to be paid into University accounts.
- Grants are not made for recurrent items.
- Grants are not made to individual students.
- Loans are not normally available from the Friends.
- Grants are no longer made for research work.

The process for making an application for a grant could not be simpler. An application form can be obtained from Rachael Airey (please see details for Rachael on page 2), and should be completed and returned to her.

Applicants are then invited to attend a committee meeting to present a case for funding and, later the same day, are informed if the application has been successful.

At the last meeting six applications were made.

Dr Iain Yung and Dr Anthony Baxton make a successful application in a lively and welcoming atmosphere for a grant of £30,000 to fund the purchase of aquaria which will enhance student experience in the Institute of Integrative Biology and Electrical Engineering and Electronics. In addition, the aquaria will be used to enhance awareness to the general public of how the University is addressing the globally important challenge of securing safe, sustainable food sources for the future from the seas.
summer exhibition of the Royal Society. Professor André Brown had small models of work at the School of Architecture which were made of paper! His machine is similar to a photocopier, but with cutting power instead of photography. It cuts, separates and glues together whole reams of paper into solid models. He showed us a model of the Guggenheim museum.

A tour of the light and spacious building brought us into the ultra modern laboratories. No Bunsen burners! We also found out that students in different years can study simultaneously in one laboratory. Outreach programmes also introduce schoolchildren to the wonders of chemistry by letting them wear white overalls and do real experiments.

Student involvement in societies

Well, one can get involved in societies, volunteer in Liverpool, with student callers overalls and do real experiments. I also found out that students in different years can study simultaneously in one laboratory. Outreach programmes also introduce schoolchildren to the wonders of chemistry by letting them wear white overalls and do real experiments.

Doctoral meeting

Donor meeting

Report from Maureen Jones

On 3 May 2013, donors to the Benefactors’ Fund, many of whom are Friends, were invited to the new Central Teaching Laboratory to view the projects funded through the Benefactors’ Fund, featured in our last Newsletter.

Reading of a ‘portable planetarium’ is surprising enough, but to actually sit inside its dome and have astrophysics students explaining what it does is quite astonishing. Professor Rolf-Dietmar Herzberg showed how renewable energy systems operate, including those derived by the wind with a portable atom cooling system. It was only the size of a kitchen table and yet it is capable of cooling several million atoms of rubidium close to a temperature of absolute zero. With missionary zeal he has showcased science to MPs at the Hall and Morton House, on the University’s Carnatic site - a sometimes exhausting experience, but one that gave me the chance to work with some excellent colleagues and wonderful students. But you also found time to undertake research?

Thanks to the chance discovery of some documents in a cupboard in Edge Lane, I became very interested in the history of voluntary social work, and was fortunate to be appointed to a post in Kirkdale and then, later, in Toxteth, so our five children grew up in the inner city. Some of them still have strong memories to prove it, something my parents never quite came to terms with!

After completing a BA in Medieval and Modern History and researching a thesis on ‘Aspects of the Christian understanding of the nature of peace in the Middle Ages’ for a PhD at the University, I worked on a variety of research projects, and taught part-time at Liverpool as well as at the University of Manchester, what is now the University of Chester and occasionally at Liverpool Institute for Higher Education and Liverpool Polytechnic (both of which have new names now, of course!).

More recently my time was divided between teaching in the School of History here at Liverpool, working with a great team of colleagues in Combined Honours (Arts), and managing the School of History Continuing Education programme. CE seems to me to be a really important aspect of the University’s work for its community and it was exciting to be part of it, in spite of recurrent anxieties about continued funding.

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Annual Financial Report

Roger Bickerstaff, the Friends Treasurer and a member of staff in the Finance Department, reported a strong financial position at the AGM.

The bedrock of our annual income is by subscription from members, amounting to £10,996 in the year ending December 2012. For a minimum subscription of £10 a year, members receive two Newsletters and the opportunity to take part in events organised throughout the year.

This year, expenditure exceeded income by £48,888, which is fine while we have a strong balance. However, it would be marvellous if we could fund grants through income rather than capital and members can help in two practical ways, first by seeing if you can introduce new members, and second give thought to making a bequest to the Friends in your will (see box).

Thanks are offered to Roger for his stewardship and continued wise counsel.

Our hosts need to know how many people to expect, so if you'd like to be part of either of these events, please email Pat Starkey (details at the top of this page.)

Wednesday 26 February 2014, 2.30pm.

At its last meeting, the Friends committee awarded a grant to the Victoria Gallery & Museum for equipment to be used, in the first instance, for an important new exhibition supported both by National Museums Liverpool and CERN, entitled ‘It’s a world a-Particle’. This exhibition, which is scheduled to open in February 2014, will focus on the major contribution made by University of Liverpool’s physicists in the field of particle physics, and will explore the development of the discipline alongside the personalities of the scientists and the technological developments that have been produced by their work.

Artifacts from each era - from the bubble chamber to the 156 inch Cyclotron - will illustrate significant changes, all leading to the discovery of the Higgs boson in 2012. The Friends have been invited for a guided tour of this important exhibition.

Meet in the entrance of the Victoria Gallery & Museum.

Bequests

Many Friends have already remembered the University in their will. We are most grateful for such remembrance and we hope that many more Friends will follow the trend. It is a simple matter to arrange, and requires the following form of words:

I give to Friends of the University of Liverpool (registered charity 516059) the sum of £………, free of capital transfer tax and all other duties and taxes (if any) payable by reference to my death, and I direct that the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the said charity shall be sufficient discharge to my Executors.

For more information contact Rachael Airey (address details on page 2).