Friends who haven’t visited the campus for some time may be quite surprised by the transformation that has taken place in recent months.

The University has invested £600 million in its facilities as part of its commitment to providing a world-class student experience and research environment.

The largest investment is a £250 million redevelopment of the University's student accommodation, including new residences at Vine Court, which sits on the corner of Myrtle Street and Grove Street, and Crown Place which is under construction on the site of the old Veterinary Sciences Building.

Other major developments on campus are the £23 million state-of-the-art Central Teaching Laboratories (CTL) (pictured left), which were formally opened in October last year by Nobel Prize Winner and honorary graduate Sir Paul Nurse, and the Ronald Ross research facility, home to the University’s Institute of Infection and Global Health.

The Guild of Students will see a £10.8 million investment (see box on page 5) and the Sports & Fitness Centre has undergone a £4 million revamp.

Speaking of the changes on campus, Steve Dickson, Director of Facilities Management, said: “We’re making these investments to support our Strategic Plan with particular emphasis on enhancing the student experience and research excellence.”

Continued on page 4
Dr Helen Whelan

Dr Helen (Betty) Whelan, who died in late 2011 aged 86, was the widow of Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Whelan. She was also a Friend. She was born in Scotland. She trained as a nurse in Glasgow and Belfast where she met her husband.

The following tribute to Dr Whelan has been kindly contributed by Dr Herbert Burchnall, who served as University Registrar from 1962 to 1984, and is himself a founding member of The Friends.

It is now twenty eight years since Professor Robert Whelan, our Vice-Chancellor from 1977 to 1994, died suddenly while talking to students in the foyer of Senate House. Helen Whelan, his widow, died just before Christmas 2011. Many present members of the University will not have known Betty Whelan - everyone called her Betty - but those who did will remember her with great affection. She had a warm, friendly, caring, and yet forceful personality, and she carried out the varied duties of a Vice-Chancellor’s wife with distinction.

Bob and Betty Whelan had had considerable experience of academic life before coming to Liverpool, for in 1958 Bob had been appointed to the Chair of Physiology and Pharmacology in the University of Adelaide, and in 1971 he became Vice-Chancellor of the University of Western Australia in Perth. Bob and Betty both loved Australia, contributing much to its academic and social life, and we are told by a friend that there were ‘many occasions arranged by their presence, by their sense of fun, and a feeling that life was something of an adventure’.

So we were indeed fortunate to inherit all this experience and enthusiasm when Bob and Betty came to Liverpool in 1977. It was a difficult time for universities - when has it ever been anything else? - but life was still an adventure, and while Bob was developing a strategy to meet austerity and prepare for future developments, Betty was unsurprisingly active: looking after the family, welcoming visitors from home and abroad to the University, giving large dinner parties at the Lodge for staff and many students, presiding at meetings of the University Women’s Club - so dear to her heart - and visiting the Students Union to attend, among other things, the Annual Guild Ball.

All this activity suddenly came to an end when Bob died in November 1984. For seven years he had been a distinguished Vice-Chancellor for Liverpool. In addition to his university duties he had important commitments in London - he had been Vice-Chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, and Chairman of the Council for Postgraduate Medical Education in England and Wales - and he and Betty bought a small flat in London which they could use as necessary. Later they moved to a maisonette in Devonshire Place, and it was there that Betty retired after leaving Liverpool in 1984, though ‘retirement’ is misleading for ‘inactivity’ was a word that found no place in her vocabulary. The Royal Society of Medicine, of which Bob had been a member, extended membership to her, and here she entertained her family, visitors to London - many from Australia - and friends old and new. She became a volunteer teacher at an inner London school helping children to read. She continued her interest in the University Women’s Club, and indeed continued to visit Liverpool, often to see her dentist, though an excellent dental practice occupied the ground floor of the house in London in which she lived. Lately she moved from central London to Sutton to be nearer her daughter Janet and her family, so opening another, and final, chapter in her long life and making many new friends, but least among the many things for which Betty will be remembered are the resilience and fortitude she showed in the twenty seven years after Bob’s death.

It is not unknown for the wife of a Vice-Chancellor to receive an honorary degree from the university she has served, but it is very rare. Betty’s friends and family were delighted when in 1986 the University invited her to accept an Honorary LL.D. It was a fitting tribute to the contribution she had made and the esteem in which she was held. She occupies a firm place in our history and will be long remembered.

Herbert Burchnall

Notice of Friends Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby also given that the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the University of Liverpool will be held on Friday 12 July 2013 in the Herculaneum Room, Carnatic House, Mosley Hill. The meeting will commence at 6pm, tea will be available from 5.30pm. The AGM will be followed by dinner.

The Agenda, together with the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 13 July 2012 will be available at the meeting, but can be posted on request to any member unable to attend.

Your attention is drawn to the following:

Committee Membership

Membership of the Committee is as follows:

Ex-officio members:
• The Chairman of the Friends
• The Secretary of the Friends
• The Treasurer of the Friends
• The President of the Guild of Students

Appointed members:
• Two Representatives of the Council
• The Director of Finance

Six elected members:
Elected for three years and eligible to be re-elected for a further three-year term

Elected in 2010
Mrs Dorothy Cockeill (retired 2012), Miss Maureen Jones

Elected in 2011
Mrs Kathleen Gibson, Dr Pat Starkey and Ms Frances Thomson (replacing Mr David Winstanley until 2012)

Elected in 2012
Mr Philip Barton (replacing Mrs Dorothy Cockeill until 2013), Mr Neil Lewis, Ms Frances Thomson

Mr Philip Barton and Miss Maureen Jones are due to retire from the Committee. Mr Philip Barton is eligible for re-election. Miss Jones is not eligible for re-election.

Any nominations for new Committee Member’s which should indicate that the nominee is willing to serve if elected, and should include brief biographical details of the nominee, together with the names of the proposer and seconder, must be submitted in writing to the Secretary not later than 21st June 2013. In the event of more than two nominations being received, a ballot will be held at the Annual General Meeting.

Notice of Motion

Any notices of motion should be submitted in writing to the Secretary not later than 21st June 2013.

Emeritus Professor John Tarn

Tickets for the dinner are priced at £22 exc.增值税 (with a £2 booking fee per ticket bought online) and the AGM is FREE to attend. Please register your intention to attend with Caroline Stanley by emailing: caroline.stanley@liverpool.ac.uk or call +44(0) 151 794 2280.

When booking please inform Caroline of any specific parking requests and if you are joining us for dinner please include any special dietary requirements you may have, or book online at: www.liverpool.ac.uk/alumni

To pay for the dinner by cheque please make cheques payable to ‘Friends of the University of Liverpool’ and send to: Caroline Stanley, Corporate Communications, Foundation Building, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool, L69 7XZ.
Student accommodation

Vine Court, which opened in September 2012, provides 710 ensuite rooms with a mix of catered and self-catered accommodation located on land adjacent to the Management School.

The award-winning accommodation has a 250-seat restaurant and a large student chill-out mezzanine and outdoor spaces for socialising.

Building work is also well underway at Crown Place. The 1,259 unit development is scheduled for completion in August 2014 and will feature a mix of studios and en-suite bedrooms in clusters of five to eight rooms. It will also include 29 larger studio apartments for occupation by live-in pastoral ‘tutors’, who will be full-time residents on site to provide support to students.

Steve continued: “Sustainability is a key feature in both developments, aiding the University in meeting its commitments to reduce its carbon footprint and deliver high-quality, sustainable buildings. The ‘environmental specification’ of Vine Court, which helped the building achieve its BREEAM Excellent status, includes green roofs and a heating system that will run off spare capacity from the University’s existing district heating infrastructure.”

Central Teaching Labs

With seven laboratories that can accommodate more than 1,000 students the Central Teaching Laboratories are a new innovation in the higher education sector and are set to change scientific teaching provision across the UK. They bring together a variety of different science disciplines under the same roof to demonstrate to students the benefits of learning from other related scientific subject areas.

School of Veterinary Sciences

The University has invested £10 million in the development of the Veterinary School which has been designed to provide School offices, a social learning zone for students, a committee room and an open space for staff and student meetings and events such as open days and is based in the Thompson Yates Building. A new Veterinary Teaching Suite at Great Newton Street has been opened for up to 150 students and a new clinical skills area enables the School to develop the BVSc curriculum in line with the requirements of the accrediting body.

The new facility has been designed to achieve a BREEAM very good rating and will provide modern facilities for staff, students and clients.

Sports & Fitness Centre

The brand new facilities are part of the multi-million pound transformation of the University’s sport and leisure facilities, which includes a fully refurbished swimming pool and new changing village, fitness suite, weight training area, dance studio, state-of-the-art bouldering wall and a new café, offering a wide selection of fresh food.

Pete Sampara, Sports Operations Manager, said: “What has been achieved has undoubtedly placed the University of Liverpool’s sports provision at the forefront of some of our main competitors.”

Kath Gibson, who is a member of the Friends Committee and a keen swimmer, has contributed to the assessment of recent major improvements to the swimming pool in the Sports Centre: “Over the past eighteen months, the University of Liverpool Sports Centre has been upgraded and renovated. The first phase, which commenced in summer 2011, involved closing and refurbishing the swimming pool area. The changing areas were increased in size and now boast cubicles and lockers with space for everyone. They include a large TV screen to keep up with the latest news and plenty of hairdryers. The pool side and the window area have been smartened up.

Phase two involved a new mezzanine floor over the former sports hall/examination room. Now it houses a sports café, extra space for new sports and the completion over the last few weeks of an ‘Honours Walk Way’ LGF corridor leading to the pool. This is a gallery devoted to displaying an array of sporting achievements. It includes individual and team efforts and looks impressive with displays of photographs, certificates, cups, and a splendid central Honours Board.

Finally the entrance area has been extended and brought up to date with a separate entrance and exit and a slick card admission system.”

The Guild of Students has secured a £13.4m investment in its building this year, to fund a comprehensive refurbishment. This will ultimately deliver a much more usable space, which will have a long lasting positive impact on the experience of students at the University of Liverpool.

The Guild President, Sam Butler, describes this important and exciting development and its timetable as follows: “To enable the significant aspects of this work to take place, on the 14 December 2012 we moved into temporary premises in numbers 3/5 Abercromby Square until the new academic year.

We’ve been in contact with the groups that might have specific needs during this period, for example societies, volunteering projects etc, and we will be running a number of consultations with students on what the new building should look like in the coming months.

Details of these will be sent out via email to the specific student groups.”

The following services will continue to operate from the Mount Pleasant site throughout the time at Abercromby Square:

- The Guild Shop
- A Guild Reception Service
- The Advice Centre
- The Stanley Theatre

The following services will be provided from the Abercromby Square site:

- A Guild Reception Service
- A café from the ground floor
- A licensed bar
- Student Representative Officers
- Student Representation and Campaigns Support
- Student Activities Support

The Friends send their best wishes for the smooth progress of the work and look forward to viewing the refurbished Guild.

Ronald Ross Building

The Ronald Ross Building is the first phase of a £70 million investment into facilities for the Institute of Infection and Global Health. Opened by David Ross of Ross the grandson of Sir Ronald Ross the 1902 Nobel Prize Winner and University of Liverpool scientist, and the Director of the Wellcome Trust Sir Mark Walport, the new research facility provides laboratory space for 200 scientists studying infectious diseases and other global health problems.

It contains core technologies such as genomics, proteomics and imaging, as well as enhanced facilities for Containment Level Three viruses to allow for the study of diseases, such as Tuberculosis, HIV and West Nile Virus.

The Ronald Ross Building is the first phase of the £70 million investment in its building this year, to fund a comprehensive refurbishment.

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Grants

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.

Report from Sam Dauney

Last June, the Friends very kindly made a grant of £7,000 to the University of Liverpool Motorsport team. We asked for the money to keep the 2012 car intact so it could be used as a testbed for future components, as well as to equip, and make use of, a rolling road and engine workshop facility. This facility, already in the School of Engineering, was recently made available for the team to make use of. With the Friends’ support, the team intends to equip it to allow them to make the most of the facilities.

By purchasing a new engine and new suspension components, the team will be able to build their current year’s car without having to remove components from the previous car. This is ideal for the team as it has meant they have been able to test new components intended for use on the 2013 car without risking damage to those that will be taken to competition. It has also allowed the team to increase driver experience prior to the racing season, ensuring they perform at their best when it really counts.

The money will also be used to buy new specialist tools and equipment for the rolling road and engine workshop. This will provide the ideal environment for the team to work on their own engines, as well as allowing team members a chance to learn about the workings of internal combustion engines with a very hands-on approach. In years gone by, the team were forced to do a complete engine rebuild in far from ideal locations, but now, thanks to the Friends, we have a practical, safe, and secure location within the School of Engineering that will enable us to make the most of our engines as both performance and educational tools. The team cannot thank the Friends enough for this grant and their continued support of the University of Liverpool Motorsport team.

Report from Hayley Rushton-Davis

The Friends’ grant of £1,750 enabled the Disability Support Team to pull together and advertise a number of activities aimed at raising disability awareness through the annual event of Disability History Month (DHM) in December 2012. DHM is a national event, focuses on the history of the struggle by disabled people for equality and human rights, providing an annual focus for the wider community to develop a more positive attitude towards disabled people.

Activities

The School of Health Sciences organised an exhibition called ‘Celebrating Differences’ which was open to the general public throughout the week commencing 3 December at Vine Court. The Disability Support Team also contributed to the exhibition by displaying a local disabled artist’s work, in addition to the work of the national cartoonist Cripper; a thought tree for visitors’ comments relating to the exhibition and literature highlighting the disabled students’ voice were also included.

The grant enabled the Team to print the student voice contributions in an engaging information booklet, produce posters; and provide disability awareness raising promotional materials throughout the week.

Other activities included the big quiz, a disability-related debate, a fundraising music event, a film show relating to hate crime, a theatre production performed by people diagnosed with a learning disability, the handshake pledge, staff training in mental health crisis situations and guiding training when supporting blind people etc. The grant allowed us to highlight these diverse activities in one place through a comprehensive events guide and posters which were produced for this aim and distributed.

Evaluation

Many of the activities drew in significant interest. The Wheels for All music event saw 150 attendees, staff training activities were all fully booked receiving excellent feedback, the big quiz drew in eight teams and the Debating Society hosted a disability related debate which was well attended and reported in the Sphinx, the Liverpool Student Media Newspaper under Disability History Month.

Overall approximately £650 was raised for local charities, disability related literature distributed and the goal of Disability History Month was highlighted in a positive way via community and University-based activities.

Sincere thanks to the Friends of the University for making this possible.

Report from Dr James Wilson

A grant of £2,200 to purchase a Statebourne Biorack 3000 liquid nitrogen container was made to Dr James Wilson of the Department of Molecular and Clinical Cancer Medicine in the School of Dentistry. This piece of equipment has enabled us to initiate the development of a unique storage bank for primary cell lines derived from patients suffering from head and neck cancer. This facility has the potential to be utilised by both researchers and students for years to come.

A third group that will benefit from this equipment is the community. Oral cancer is the commonest form of Head and Neck cancer with more than 300,000 cases per annum globally and here in the UK the incidence of oral cancer has risen by 24% in the last decade. Merseyside and Cheshire has the highest incidence of oral cancer in England and Wales (CR-UK data). Utilising these patient derived primary cell lines initiates an exciting new area for research and will improve our understanding of the aetiology and epidemiology of head and neck cancer ultimately providing a means for investigating possible treatment options.

Many thanks to the Friends.

Recent Grants

The following grants were approved at a meeting of the Friends Committee on 5 December 2012. Reports on how the grants have been used will be included in the Autumn Newsletter.

£2,500 to the Sport Liverpool Surf Club for wetsuits and other equipment.

£2,800 to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Society for equipment for expeditions.

£2,000 to Sport Liverpool for the purchase of an archery safety net.

£4,000 to the Heavy and Electric Lift Aircraft Teams to enable the construction of a more technologically advanced aircraft.

£5,000 to the Herendom Society to help with the running costs of the Herendom Symposium.

Report from Dr Amara Nwosu

A grant for £10,000 was gratefully received by myself, a Clinical Research Fellow in Palliative Medicine in the Marie Curie Palliative Care Institute Liverpool (MCPCL), for my PhD research project: ‘Hydration in advanced cancer: the testing of a new assessment method’.

Why is hydration in cancer important?

As cancer advances and patients near the end of their life, many patients eat or drink less. Accordingly, levels of hydration are likely to be different in people with advanced cancer compared to those without cancer. Currently there is a lack of evidence to guide health professionals in the assessment and management of dehydration in advanced cancer. This study aims to improve the scientific knowledge of hydration states in advanced cancer through the use of a device called a ‘body analyser’. This is a small, portable, hand-held machine which provides a simple, safe, bedside method to measure water content in an individual.

The funding has been used to purchase the body analyser and the software required for the data analysis. We are pleased to announce that the study is underway in the Marie Curie Hospice Liverpool with many of the hospice patients eager to participate.

This study will act as the first step in improving knowledge of hydration states in advanced cancer, to facilitate future work and ultimately improve patient care.

• The Marie Curie Palliative Care Institute is a collaboration between the voluntary sector, the University and the NHS.
The final Friends event for this academic session will be a visit to the newly-refurbished Garstang Museum, at 1 Abercromby Square on 8 May at 2.30pm.

Named after Professor John Garstang (1876-1956), Professor of the Methods and Practice of Archaeology in the University from 1907-1941, the museum houses material collected during his excavations in Egypt, Sudan and the Levant between 1904 and 1914. This material made a vital contribution to the understanding of the earliest phase of Egyptian history. Our guide will be the Egyptologist, Dr Glenn Godenho, who may allow us to handle some of the artefacts and will arrange for us to talk to members of the department about their research. If you would like to visit the museum with us, please let Pat Starkey know by telephone: 0151 709 9087, or email: p.m.starkey@liv.ac.uk.

In addition, Dr Godenho has invited Friends to a day school on Egypt and the Bible on 4 May 2013, 10am to 4.30pm. The principal speaker will be Professor James Hoffmeier from Trinity International University, Deerfield, Illinois. The special rate for members of the Friends will be £18, which will include coffee and lunch (full price £30). If you would like to attend, please email Dr Godenho at ggodenho@liv.ac.uk or telephone 0151 794 2475.

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