



# Felix

THE NEWSPAPER OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

## Anger at new building

Academics at Imperial have hit out against the University Funding Council's decision to allocate only £3.56m for an extension to the Chemistry department. They claim that the extension will not be large enough for the department's requirements and are concerned that safety standards will be compromised because of shortage of funds.

The building, which is due for completion by 1993 was given the go ahead two weeks ago, 20 years after the initial application to the University Grants Committee. As part of the deal, the 'volley ball' block and parts of the Old Chemistry building will be demolished.

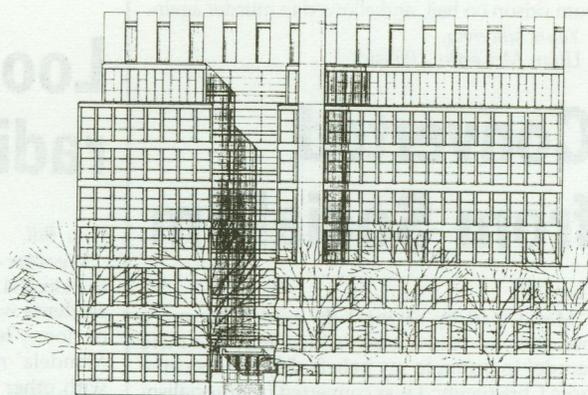
College officials are still negotiating with the Science Museum to retain possession of the lecture theatre block, as no provision for replacement theatres has been made by the UFC.

Head of the Chemistry Department, Professor Steve Ley has complained that 'There are no lecture theatres and it will severely damage our ability to recruit students.'

He went on to say that the building would not allow the department room for future expansion and pointed out that the money allocated by the UFC would not allow a sufficient number of fume cupboards to maintain current safety standards.

The department had originally applied for a building of 5000 square meters in 1965 to rehouse laboratories and lecture theatres held in the old chemistry block. Because the UFC award will only allow for a building of 2000 square meters the college will be unable to replace the labs and lecture theatres in the old blocks and plans to site an Interdisciplinary Research Centre for semi conductors in the new building have been dropped.

This has angered many academics



*An artist's impression of the controversial new Chemistry building*

who are concerned that the delapidated state of the lecture theatres will discourage top students and academics from applying to Imperial.

'We have lost three senior professors in two years' said Professor Ley.

The College has not undertaken any repair work on the old Chemistry building since the application for Chemistry II was made 20 years ago in the belief that the older buildings would be entirely replaced.

The nine storey extension will be constructed in two stages, with work on the foundations and an electrical sub-station due to begin in April.

Imperial's first application for a new Chemistry building was turned down in 1965 after the UGC had re-adjusted their assessment criteria. A second application for a smaller building was turned down in 1972 because the UGC were already fully committed financially. The College applied for a building of 4000 square metres of usable space in 1982 following recommendations by the Physical Science Sub Committee who were 'sympathetic with the conditions in the old buildings.'

This application was postponed until the College could produce an appraisal of the amount of free space available elsewhere in the College and had determined valid reasons for these being unsuitable for use by the department.

The UGC accepted that the department needed a building with 3000 square metres of floor space but reduced this figure to 2000 square metres when they applied assessment criteria more stringently.

Initially the UGC required the old Chemistry buildings to be demolished.

'It led us to the point where we couldn't see how to run the department with that amount of space' said a spokesman from the department.

The UGC relented in April, allowing the department to retain the lecture theatre block, subject to agreement with the Science Museum who own half of the land occupied by the building.

The department has tried, unsuccessfully to obtain extra funding for the building from industry.

'Industry is willing to invest in research, but not in buildings' said a spokesman.

## Senate Library to go

Senate House library may be forced to throw away thousands of science textbooks because London University lacks the money to redistribute the books to its constituent Colleges.

The library's 17,000 textbooks were due to be redistributed to Imperial, Royal Holloway and Bedford, Kings, Queen Mary, and University College, but neither the library nor the colleges are likely to be able to afford the costs of recataloging and transporting the books.

'It would be easier and cheaper for the colleges to buy new rather than to pay for recataloging new stock' said a spokesman from the Senate library.

Dr Bernard Lamb, a member of the library's Science Working Party, told FELIX that many of the books would have to be 'recycled for waste paper' because of the costs involved.

Senate house library is due to become an 'arts only' library in 1990 following the recommendations of the Ryan report on the library's future.

A working party is currently considering the future of the library's medical collection which is also due to be redistributed throughout the constituent colleges.

The University of London Union (ULU) headed a campaign last year to retain the science and medical collections of the library and to prevent the library from becoming reference only. Although the plans for a reference only library were dropped, ULU President, Ruth Benzimera told FELIX that there was nothing ULU could do to save the science and medical collection.

# The return of Saradakis

Dear Mr Goodwin,

I read with disgust in FELIX about the intention of the Union concerning the reduction of stocks and cleaning of 'unpopular recommended textbooks' from the Bookshop.

A students' union has to run some profit-making places and events in order to generate money for social and academic services, which are not run on a profit-making basis. In opposition to the current opinion in IC, I strongly believe that a library or, indeed, a bookshop is much more of a service to students than, for example, a pint of cheap beer and, therefore, that the Bookshop should remain a good students' bookshop, not a successful stationery shop.

Mr Baker and his Council have sold many things this year: they sold the ICU to NUS...the Anti-Loans Campaign to SWSS...and now, the ICU Bookshop to toiletries' merchants. I am glad to see them leaving.

Emmanuel Saradakis, Physics 1.

## Fusion

Dear Bill,

A generalised mathematics exists covering both the 'cold fusion phenomenon' and Stephen Hawking's 'time' (FELIX 834). Verification of this mathematics could be done by examining theoretically suggested similar phenomena, to that of the 'cold fusion', at room temperature with routine materials, as IC UROP projects. However the implications of success in this endeavour are all important.

In particular, and computer simulation verified this, this generalised theory leads to the possible creation of a three dimensional energy force shield through which 'solid objects' could not pass. In addition it would make possible the generation of entirely new sets of unstoppable weapons placed in outer space and targetted onto the earth.

Clearly the implications of all new developments need to be analysed in depth and military developments avoided...but how?

Yours sincerely,  
Harry Fairbrother.

## LSE

Dear Bill,

The recent events at the LSE must go down in history as testimony to the stupidity of the 320 people who, on Tuesday 2nd, voted against the motion to repeal the decision to elect Winston Silcott as honorary union president.

James Nathan claims Silcott is a hero. Silcott's letter of 29th April to *The Independent* maintains this illusion, that he is an innocent victim of institutionalised racism. 'I was locked up for thirty years...with no evidence that I had committed or been involved in any crime'. He describes himself as a scapegoat. 'This shame of

a case will always be a thorn in the side of the British judiciary.' One is moved to pity at his poignant tale of 'injustice and lies...a black man who has been used.'

The name Tony Smith probably means nothing to most of you. His father, George Smith, says about Silcott, 'I saw the way this gangster lived...He controlled people by fear and terror...this man is a monster.' Twenty year-old Tony was murdered by Silcott in early 1985. Despite strenuous police objections, Silcott was granted bail. Soon afterwards the Broadwater Farm estate erupted in violence. Silcott helped to murder the unarmed PC Blakelock, who died whilst trying to protect ambulance crews.

The O.E.D. says a hero is a 'man admired for great deeds'. I see nothing great, nothing heroic, in the senseless, violent murders of a young boxer and a young policeman. The real thorn in the side of the British judiciary is that Silcott was released from prison on bail, and allowed to murder again.

Yours sincerely,  
Ulta McCarthy, Physics 1.

## Converted from Socialism

Dear Bill,

May I start by saying I do exist; I am not a pseudonym. I did not use 'Christianity as a mere facade' to promote my beliefs. My beliefs come from Christianity; I was converted from socialism by US tele-evangelist Pat Robertson.

It is clear that the letter by J Healer and co. was not written by a Christian. True, the early Church 'held everything in common' but they chose to do so and it was not enforced by government. Free will is a central part of Christianity and we should choose to follow Christ.

The introduction of the Welfare State is not evidence that we cannot rely on charities. It was introduced by a socialist government after the war when the economy and country was in ruins. We have a very different situation today. The Welfare State causes people to feel the state looks after others and that they need only look after themselves. It is this, not Thatcherite wealth creation, that has led to our self-centred society. An indication of how generous a society is, is its level of personal charity and this has risen under Thatcher.

I challenge any Christian Socialist to a debate in a DebSoc forum.

Yours in Christ,  
Dylan James.

P.S. I resent being associated with the Bishop of Durham. He is a lefty, a liberal, and is trying to destroy the Church.

## Saradakis II

Dear Mr Goodwin,

I was shocked of the election of W. Silcott, a convicted murderer of a policeman, as the Honorary President of LSE's student union.

As a foreign observer, permit me to say that a youth that elects a murderer to lead them, might create some more wealth for the stockbrokers of their country but will certainly not create a future

for the nation.

Throughout history, wealth has been at most a measure of living standards, but, whether a country was rich or not, whenever basic traditional moral values such as respect of human life in all its forms, respect for the Nation and its representatives, respect to one's family and the elders, were not upheld, the country in question was eclipsed from the face of history.

When a country's future leaders (like the ones at LSE) elect a murderer to lead them, it's as if they spat on the face, not only of the dead policeman but of all his family, of the other youths who fight for life and against violence and of all the soldiers and policemen who die on the field of honour.

Yours sincerely,

Emmanuel Saradakis, Physics 1.

## Loonie-left radical sheep

Dear Bill,

We were dismayed to read James Nathan's letter in Felix 834. It was naive of us to believe that I.C. students were at a level above the general mass of loony-lefty, liberal minded, 'free Nelson Mandela' radical sheep that is often associated with other colleges.

It only proves what an idiot James Nathan really is that he agrees with the LSE Students Union in its decision to elect the police murderer, Winston Silcott, as Honorary President.

Racism is probably the most misused word in this country (and in most other western societies) today. As soon as a black man commits a crime (which statistically they seem to do more often) and gets put in jail for it; it's racial discrimination. If anything, the police should be given more power—and guns—so that law and order can be properly maintained. If PC Blakelock had been armed, he could have probably protected himself from these murderous Tottenham tribesmen and would be alive today.

These views are not borne out of prejudice against ethnic minorities, but have been developed from a genuine respect for law and order, which should be applicable to everyone, and should not be waived with respect to colour!

The police and courts have seen their active powers eroded away, partly due to the trite, fashionable, left-wing views of James Nathan and fellows.

If anything hanging (and even boiling) should be a statutory punishment for these sorts of crimes, and the sooner we develop a stronger and less tolerant attitude towards these vicious enemies of society, the sooner we will have a safer place for everyone to live in.

The use of the words 'working class' in Mr. Nathan's letter is itself the height of hypocrisy and just shows what a naive and gullible person he is, with no real mind of his own. He is exactly the type of fodder an effectively run left-wing (or right-wing) organisation would love to have as a pliable and manipulable.

James Nathan should grow up!  
Yours,  
Ole Lie and Bill Bailey MRE 4.

# IC—A Worse Class of Degree?

By Sydney Harbour-Bridge

I feel compelled to write a second article concerning the academic situation at IC. Over the past two weeks, following the last article, many people have spoken to me. With the exception of one person, who said it was depressing, everyone else liked it. Many have stated they are seriously considering leaving IC and a number had sent it home to their parents. Among other comments I was told 'I f\*\*king agree with everything you wrote' and someone else said 'Why didn't you write it last year, I'd have left if it wasn't my final year'. The biggest question people have asked is 'Is it all true?'. The answer is, of course, yes, but I have to admit picking the two most obvious examples of those friends who entered with me but did not graduate.

Considering the impact of that article I feel it important to outline the fate of the others who did not graduate. The only people I know, other than Giles and Caroline, who did not graduate from that year of entry in my department, were four men and one woman. We will call these people Simon, John, Robert, Chris and Sarah. Simon finished his first year with a third and promptly left to go to Reading, changing his course from Geology to Geophysics. When I spoke to Simon two months ago he informed me that he had graduated with a 2:1 and, although he said so himself, was unlucky not to get a first. He is presently earning a considerable sum of money with a geological firm in Africa. (Less than five of the original IC set got jobs in geology on graduation.)

John also got a third and left to go to Durham, a university he had qualified for through UCCA but had rejected in preference to IC. Although I hear this by word of mouth alone, I believe John also graduated with a 2:1.

Robert failed to complete his first year due to glandular fever and quit his resit year in March, becoming an accountant in the City, a job many of his fellows took up after graduation.

Sarah was resitting her first year as I entered and she eventually failed completely at the end of the year. Depressed and dejected she returned home to Sweden to restart her degree there. I have not heard from Sarah since.

## IC really screws you up

I have purposely left Chris until last as this is a rather different story. Chris entered the department as an enthusiastic and socially active character. He scored well throughout the first year, coming top nearly every week in one particular subject, despite being

dissatisfied with the course and the amount of work. By half-way through the year he had given up all sport, which he was very good, and, as exams approached, he became more depressed. He hardly attended more than an hour of any of his exams and continually suffered from bad migraine headaches.

Chris failed his first year exams, he did not resit or re-enter education elsewhere. He became a waiter in a London hotel and, when I last heard, was a heroin addict and unemployed.

IC rid Chris of all his faith in the education system and though many of his College friends tried to help him get off drugs he showed nothing but hostility towards them.

## What makes people leave?

Imperial College surveys all of its students six months after graduation to ascertain their success in finding a job. Outside of asking a student who is leaving why he is doing so, they do not make any attempt to find out anything about those who do not graduate. Surely these people hold the key to how to improve the standard of education here.

All of the people who fail at IC have passed the entry requirements and hence we can presume have achieved good enough 'A' level grades to enter almost any university in Britain. At the same time the vast majority of students entering IC enjoyed their work at 'A' level and have obviously developed a strong understanding of the subject.

The academic staff of IC have often told me that 'A' level grades are not a good indicator of success at degree level. If this is so, why are people chosen on the basis of these grades? If you managed to get good 'A' level grades and failed your

degree whilst someone with lower grades passed with flying colours at another university, there is obviously something wrong with the system and not you.

In my mind the problem lies in the amount of work that this college expects of its students. Compare your situation to that of your friends at home. Consider what they thought to be hard work at school and think about what they are doing now. In almost all cases you will find they are doing considerably less work—staff-student contact hours and private study.



## College ignores the facts

So, is it just the author's opinion that the amount of lectures and quantity of material covered at IC is stifling for an adventurous mind? Every five years each undergraduate course is reviewed and 'external assessors' are invited to comment. Almost every assessor suggested a dramatic cut in the lecture and other contact time. This point is ignored by the College. The College Undergraduate Studies Committee and Board of Studies have recommended a weekly contact time of twenty hours with a maximum of 25 hours. Nearly every department breaks this regulation; my department does so almost every week.

So, do we really work too hard? I believe so, having spoken to geologists from other universities. The best example of how hard we work was demonstrated in a convention to which IC invites teachers from schools to convince them of IC's excellence. During a discussion I was asked if IC was hard work. I said it was very hard and that it tended to squash one's

enthusiasm for the subject. I qualified this by saying that this prepared students for the outside world. Immediately three of the four teachers present said that I should wait to get into the 'outside world' and insisted I would find it even harder work. I retorted saying that I'd worked in industry twice for more than a year and it was easy and enjoyable compared to life at IC. They were obviously not convinced then the fourth teacher spoke up. 'I was at IC' (doing Maths, the course with the lowest contact hours). 'You work hard, you work bloody hard, you worked so hard I left and went to Southampton where I had a good time and got a good degree. I wouldn't recommend one of my students to come here unless they were absolutely brilliant, would walk through Oxbridge and didn't want a social life.' She hadn't even bothered reaching her exam term to leave IC. To her it just wasn't worth all that hassle.

## All work and no play

I believe that students at IC do want to work hard, they enjoy doing well and generally enter College filled with enthusiasm for their course, but the workload at IC rids them of this.

The College will tell you that it is impossible to cut the size of the course and contact hours. This is absolute rubbish. The courses that have to be approved by external bodies are described in one paragraph. The questions set in the exams rarely cover more than 15% of the course that is lectured, hence the same exam and course description could be applied to a lecture course half as long.

The lecturers of this College do not understand what they are doing to the social development of their students by making them work so hard. The year before I joined this college I played bridge every day and was involved in national competitions. I played hockey every day and badminton once a week. I still had the time to get four 'A' levels and gain entry to IC. Within one term at IC I found I could only afford to play hockey once a week and I haven't picked up a badminton racket since.

I was conned when I joined Imperial College.



# Editorial

## Chemistry

Imperial's Chemistry Department is one of the top five departments in the country. It has produced two Nobel prize winners and generates more research income per academic than any of the other departments within the College.

But, if you walked around the older parts of Chemistry you could be forgiven for thinking otherwise; the buildings are dank and miserable; the lecture theatres have not been redecorated since they were built in the 1900's; the labs suffer from leaking roofs; the buildings are overheated in Summer and too cold in Winter.

The University Funding Council's decision to allocate £3.6m for an extension to the Chemistry building should be welcome news. It should be, but £3.6 million is not enough to provide anything other than the most basic facilities. There will be no room for lecture theatres and no room for a planned Interdisciplinary Research Centre to research into semiconductors. But what is more worrying is the fact that the department will not be able to maintain its current safety standards, because the money allocated by the UFC will not provide an adequate number of fume cupboards.

Perhaps then, it is not surprising that the department has lost three senior professors in the past two years. Nor is it surprising that the Head of the Department is worried that top students will not be attracted to chemistry at IC.

## Trading places

In an effort to promote 'understanding' between FELIX and the Union, Union President Nigel Baker and I will be swapping jobs for a week from the 22nd of May. It should be an interesting experience.

In some ways Nigel has the better part of the deal. It is possible to achieve a great deal in a week as FELIX Editor, but very little in a week as Union President. Nevertheless the swap will provide a unique opportunity to look into the way the Union Office operates and I will take the opportunity to produce an in-depth investigation into the role of a student Union President.

Nigel and I have very different views on the way FELIX should be run. Nigel would very much like it to be a public relations vehicle for the Union Office, after all, he argues, FELIX is funded by the Union.

I take the view that the Union is much more than the handful of people who work in the Union Office; the Union is made up of the 5000 students, most of whom do not even know where the Union building is. It is those students who pay for FELIX, not the Union Office, and that is why I have tried to produce a FELIX which ordinary students will find interesting and informative.

Nevertheless, I have given the Union Office a page every week to use in whatever manner they wish. The fact that the Union President and the other sabbaticals have decided they cannot be bothered to make use of this facility rather diminishes their argument that FELIX does not give the Union (ie 'Union Office') a sufficiently high profile.

## Smallads

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

● **Anyone** going on the Frontier Tanzania Expedition please contact Simon Nuttall in Civ Eng III. Wendy and Steve needn't bother.

● **Peter Matthiessen** (naturalist, explorer and author) will be giving a talk at Kensington Central Library on Tuesday 16th May at 7.30pm. Admission is free. The talk will take place in the Lecture Theatre, Kensington Central Library, Campden Hill Road, London W8.

● **Keyboard lessons:** Rock, blues, improvisation, MIDI. Hammersmith/Clapham (24-track studio with modern keyboard) first ½ hour free. Isabel 498 0781.

● **Vacancies** exist for two assistant subwardens in Falmouth Keogh Hall, Application forms are available from the Student Accommodation Office. The deadline is May 16th.

### FOR SALE & WANTED

● **Bike** wanted: Men's racer, will consider anything. Phone Rose on 3515 (FELIX).

● **For sale:** JVC personal stereo in perfect working order. Auto

reverse, 2-B radio, 3-B graphic equaliser, metal facility. Price negotiable. Contact S Ghouse in Chem Eng.

### ACCOMMODATION

● **Luxury** one-bedroomed flat in Ealing Broadway. Fully furnished. £110 pw (plus bills). Would suit couple sharing. Phone A Curley on ext 5224.

● **Summer**—Fulham Broadway tube. 4 large double rooms with ensuite bathrooms. Fully fitted kitchenette w/m. £100 pw, per room (incl). Phone 384 2389 (this is the correct number).

### PERSONAL

● **Dear Panda**, (look no mention of the beastiality complex or the fact that you are Ready Anywhere Anytime for Any Animal)

● **Jif** trendy man about College.

● **Mme Jai Jay**—one down, one to go. Any offers?

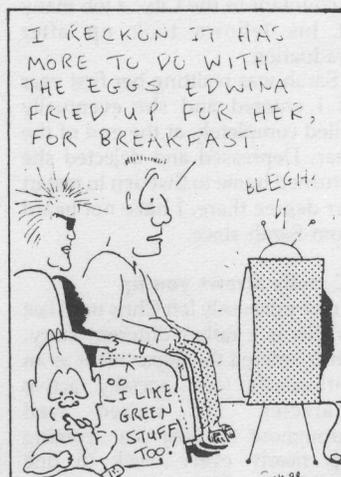
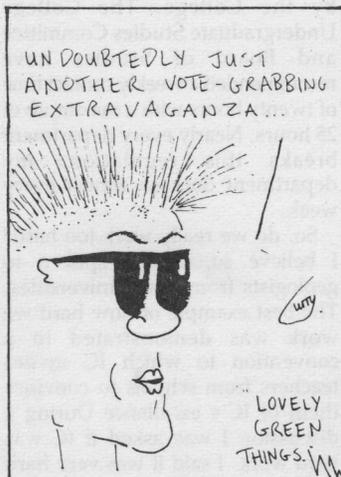
● **Hey Baff!** Comprenez-vous this one? Yoyoyoyoyoyoyo. Bug at! Zikkety-Twang! Joanie! TLMB. he. ast. ain. lock.

● **No, Nat**, don't jump! For my sake, pleezee!! Thunder TLMB.

● **The Last Main Block** would like to announce: 'Now'—coming soon to a time zone near you.

## Credits

*This issue nearly didn't come out. My thanks to Jason Lander for doing sod all, Liz Warren, Andy Clarke, Sumit Guha, Sydney Harbour-Bridge, Doug King, Adam Harrington, Penny Gamble, Stef, Sez Wilkinson, Gary Hastings, the ravenous bug blatter-beast of traal, Mike Morton, Dr Eric Yeatman, Rose, Dean and Eric, and all those people whose names I cannot mention for academic reasons.*





# The INDEPENDENT

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## i Viva India!

Bowel disorders are big topics of conversation amongst western travellers to India. Everyone has them but everyone gets over them. We were possibly a bit foolish in that we would eat anything anywhere and Malcolm paid for it by catching gardias. This made cycling slightly unpleasant, but nothing that a few days and lots of antibiotics couldn't cure.

At midday we got our first glimpse of the mountains rising abruptly from the plains. This sight filled us with enthusiasm but the seven kilometres and fourteen hairpin bends, that it took to climb the 900 metres to Nahan, soon knocked that out of us.

We pulled into a dhaba that was crowded with people listening to the cricket on a transistor radio. England were being soundly thrashed by India and there was a gleam of satisfaction on the faces of the men when they saw us. Indians seem to be very familiar with English cricketers and we were subjected to a continual stream of jokes about the quality of English play.

The dhaba wallah informed us that there would be a festival to celebrate the birthday of Guru Nanak so we decided to spend the day here. The interesting thing about the festival was a large female participation which we found rather strange as we hadn't, up to this point, seen any women taking part in any kind of activity.

Next morning we set out for Shimla. The road runs through deep forests and high passes. There is some incredible scenery to be seen on this road, especially on the stretch between Solan and Kasumpti. We booked into a HPTDC (Homadhal Pradesh Tourist Development Corporation) lodge (but only after the usual hassles with the local chowkidder). The lodge was built over the edge of a ridge and our room had the finest view I had probably seen to date. It is at times like this that we started ranting about the relative merits of taking a year off rather than going

straight into employment. We both felt that the experiences gained are worth a lot more than the advancement in a career.

On reaching Shimla by this route, there is a fine view of the town; pink rooftops against the dark green of the forest. The town is built on a very steep ridge between Jakko hill and Observatory hill. The first houses being built by Livet Kennedy in 1823. By 1928 the town was established as the favourite summer residence of the British. Indeed, the buildings surrounding the Mall are reminiscent of India's colonial days.

On arriving in Shimla we were swamped by touts insisting that we stayed at their hotel. Once the hotel was decided a crowd of coolies moved in and insisted that it was necessary that our baggage be carried for us. A few harsh words and a dominating personality never seem to do the trick in situations like this.

Eventually we got, what must have been, the shabbiest room in all of Shimla (even though we were assured that it had all 'mod cons').

The highlight of our stay in Shimla was a trip up Jakko hill (2455m) from which there are views of Shimla and the snow capped mountains. There is a temple at the top of the hill, dedicated to Hanuman—the monkey god. It is famous for the monkeys that haunt it and while here Malcolm was attacked by a monkey which stole a bag of peanuts out of his hand. While this was happening an old lady who was almost bent double with a child on her back, was being harassed by a monkey pulling at her handbag. She was screaming, what I assume were Hindi curses. Fortunately someone saw fit to hurl a stone at the monkey which then disappeared into the forest.

It was now late November and a man in a dhaba informed us that Kashmir would be covered in snow within the month, so we decided there and then to get a bus to Jammu.

Ten hours later we arrived in Jammu, only it isn't Jammu. We had

somehow managed to arrive in Pabhenkot which is in the Punjab. (A bit ironic considering we've spent days trying to avoid the area.) I am informed by the bus conductor that the bus was diverted from Jammu because of riots that have just taken place there. We are now expected to get a train to Jammu from here.

Getting a train ticket in India is difficult but slightly more so at four o'clock in the morning and getting a ticket for a bike as well is virtually impossible. I left Malcom with the bikes and picked my way carefully through the sleeping bodies that littered the platform to the ticket office. The technique to use in these situations is; head down and barge your way through.

After a great struggle I manage to get two tickets to Jammu but the ticket vendor was convinced that bicycles were never allowed on trains. We found the guard of the train and offered him a small bribe if he allowed us to put our bikes on but we were shocked when he refused the money.

As the train pulled out we decided to barge into the first class compartment, bikes and all. All the compartments were taken so we settled down on the floor in the corridor to sleep. At dawn we were awakened by an extremely mean looking army official wondering why we were there. We explained the previous night's events to him while he tinkered with our bikes. This seemed to satisfy him and he disappeared back into his carriage for another hours sleep.

At the station we were stopped by a guard who must have been given information on us from somewhere. We realised that this guard was only out to extract a little money from us

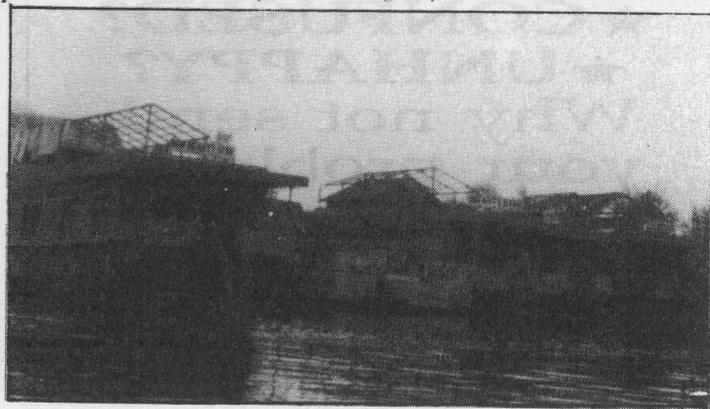
so we gave him fifty rupees and hurried on. Our next obstacle was to get past the ticket collector at the gate but this was nothing that 20 rupees couldn't solve. Leaving the station we were immediately pounced on by a group of touts trying to sell us bus tickets to Sringagar. We chose the most trustworthy looking tout and we were soon on the bus on our way to Sringagar, the summer capital of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The bus ride from Jammu to Sringagar is without doubt the most spectacular journey I've undertaken. Leaving Jammu to road begins to rise and continues upwards for the next four hours. Passing round a high mountain ridge at Pataitop the road starts to descend and the brown roofed mountains, peaked with snow come into view.

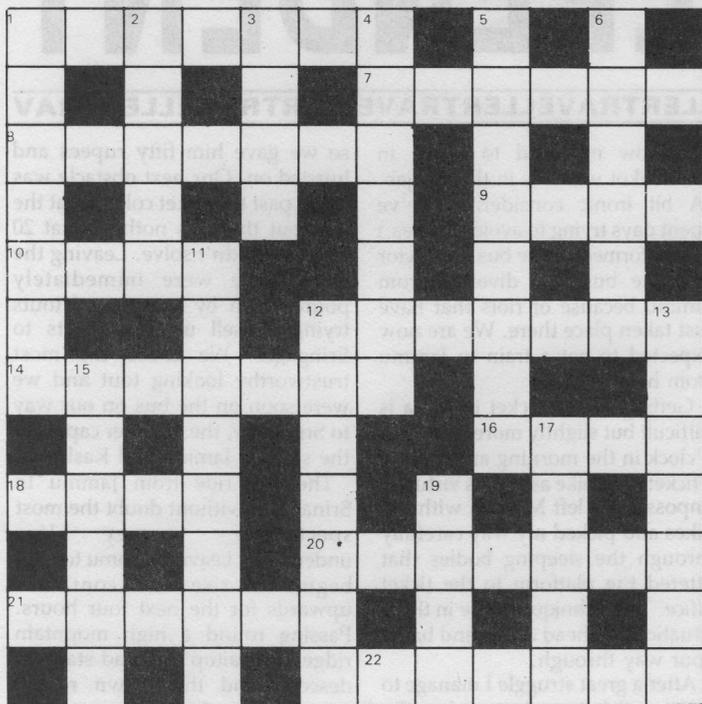
Arriving in Sringagar the house boat touts were out in force. Each one trying to convince us that they have exactly what we're looking for. The houseboats come to be in Sringagar because in the days of the Raj the British were not allowed to own land in Kashmir and a houseboat seemed the best solution. The boats are decorated in an Edwardian style and it is easy to spend days and days just lounging on the houseboat and occasionally going for rides in almost decadent luxury in one of the local Shikaras (a water-taxi).

Even in the middle of Dal lake it is impossible to get away from touts trying to sell you something. They paddle up in their floating hypermarkets and offer all kinds of souvenirs.

Perhaps the summer, when the tourist trade isn't so slack, one can get by with a lot less harassment.



# Cryptic Crossword



## Clues:

By Agamemnon

### ACROSS

1. Safe House? (7)
7. Acne backs off before member pitches tent (6)
8. Dieted in the USA (7)
9. Rome is greater! (4)
10. Tart part of bloodsucker? (4)
12. Pict on a heading! (7)
14. Number system (7)
16. A rare behind (4)
18. Jazz incites metallic element (4)
20. Separate same Greek tale (7)
21. So sané about time of year (6)
22. Algy shot the spooky part (7)

### DOWN

1. Royal Academy varied established position (7)
2. Evil moods destroyed by God (5)
3. Fate or fortune?
4. 14 rearrange health examination (7)
5. Smart ICI blade (8)
6. Baby roy, MBE (6)
11. NSS price royalty out of the market (8)
12. Vocation (7)
13. Community of nurses? (7)
15. Went out (6)
17. Precise Anglican tax (5)
19. Single (4)

**★ BORED?**  
**★ CONFUSED?**  
**★ UNHAPPY?**  
 Why not send  
 your problems  
 to Marge, c/o  
 the FELIX  
 Office.

Dear Marge



Dear Marge,

Last time I wrote to you about my....erm....problem with the....you remember...., and you wrote back and told me about the, uh, thingies. Well, I sent away to the address you gave me, and the 'package' arrived yesterday. The trouble is, I don't think I'm using it right—I keep getting electric shocks, and I can't get the 'attachments' clean afterwards. What should I do?  
*Confused in Computing.*

Dear Confused,

Perhaps you are putting the batteries in wrong. Anyway, latex should be quite harmless, although perhaps not considering your rare skin ailment. Try using less olive oil next time.

Dear Marge,

Ever since I came to Imperial from North Wales my sex life has been a disaster. What I want to know is, where can a guy meet a nice sheep in central London?  
*Eglannogg Llellywylln.*

Dear Eglannogg,

I think it's time you compromised. Find a nice English girl with a hairy wool jumper.

Dear Marge,

I am worried about my social life. Every time I have another party, fewer people come. I always go to other people's parties (although I sometimes leave early). What's the matter? Am I getting unpopular?  
*Dr David Owen.*

Dear Dr David,

Could be bad breath. Have you tried new 'bulldog grip' ointment? Guaranteed to keep your mouth completely shut.

Dear Occupant (Marge Maudlin),

The Community Charge will replace most present forms of local taxation in April 1990. Please fill out

the accompanying form giving personal details on all persons who live in your household or might conceivably take up residence there within the next fifty years, and return it to the Community Charge Registration Officer for your area.  
*City of Westminster.*

Dear City of Westminster,

I suppose you think that's funny do you? Sending people sick perverted prank mail—it's really disgusting. There are laws against things like that you know.

Dear Marge,

I am terribly worried about my daughter. I always thought we raised her well and now after just a few months away from home she has entered the most unseemly profession. What can I do?  
*Worried in Wigan.*

Dear Worried,

Leave it off, mother. You know I only do it for the money.

Dear Marge,

I am worried about the artificial intelligence program in the Computing Department.

Yours,  
*A small terminal in the Huxley Building*

**Marge says: Don't worry dear, life will improve. Eventually you will find yourself a nice little terminalette with which you can spend many happy hours interfacing. Remember to take precautions though—we don't want you catching any viruses.**

Dear Marge,

It's not fair—nobody likes me. Everybody ignores me and no one seems to care.

Yours,  
*Chas Brereton*

**Marge says: so why bother me?**

# The Gospel according to St. Felicitus

**1** "Many men did lie and the papers did write much bullshit for there was an election in the land"

And it came to pass in the land of Brit'ain in the year of one thousand nine hundred and seventy nine that there was chaos in the land. Many men did lie and the papers did write much bullshit for there was a election in the land.

And from the turmoil, there rose victorious a woman by the name of Margar'et who fought with the blessed Saachi's and she went to live in the palace of ten Dow'ning Street. And, lo, there was a little bit of joy-making and Margar'et did turn to face the Sun and sayeth unto them: 'Thank thee, Larry Lamb and have thee a Knighthood and thank thee Rupert Murdoch and have thee the rest of the press.'

And all was wonderful. But there was a voice crying in the wilderness saying 'look upon the land and thou will see a multitude with no work'. And this was Foot, the prophet of doom.

Many did believe the words of the false prophets and the people sayeth unto the government through the great MORI that sixty percent liked not their policies. And another election approacheth and yea did the people of Brixton and Toxteth rise up in revolt.

**2** "King Galti'eri arose from the south to do battle with Margaret."

Immediately from the Seas of the South came a great cry for help and, lo, King Galti'eri from the land of the Argentine walked upon the shores of the Falk'lands. And the sheep and both the inhabitants were very upset.

Margar'et did look upon the Falk'lands and she did blow her top and sayeth unto her advisers 'This is all thine fault. Get thee away Carrington, Knott and Pym.' And she did goeth on 'We will send a force of ships to smite the Argentine'.

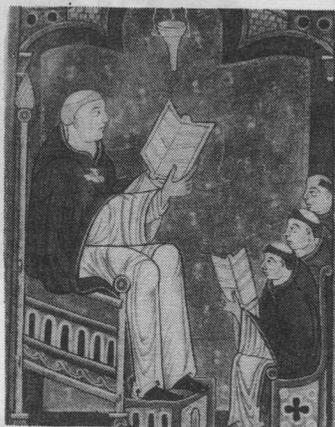
And Parliam'ent did reply 'Oh absolutely, Oh divine leader, whose handbag we are not fit to look upon.'

And the great fleet did sail for forty days and forty nights. But the general knew no law for he sent forth his finest boat, the General Belgrano. And the divine Margar'et did look upon this boat, saying 'Yonder boat may not enter the holy Zone of Exclusion for if it does it will feel my wrath'. And the Belgrano did not enter the Zone of Exclusion

but she sank it anyway.

It came to pass that Margar'et did beat the sh\*t out of the Argentines and there was much rejoicing and all the people did celebrate the great victory. But Tam Dalyel rebuked Margar'et saying unto her 'thou hast cheated.'

And the scribes of The Mail and the Express did say 'Maggie, thou art Wonderful' and the people did agree.



**4** "A great photo-opportunity" Now, the barbarians of the IR'A who kneweth no law and no honour did tryeth to blow up the divine Margar'et and lo, they did make a cock-up for Margar'et surviveth and there was a great 'photo-opportunity'.

And the Cabin'et was like a house divided for Hesel'tine, lord of the jungle, did fight with Britt'an the master of the trades over the great

St. Felicitus started life as a Tabloidian Monk and is perhaps best known for his visions. He frequently claimed to have seen such marvels as flying pigs and translucent pink elephants, especially after long days spent saving souls at local Inns.

He was also the author of the first Tabloidian Bible: a fascinating text, unique for its original interpretation of many of the Biblical Stories especially the highly imaginative accounts of what Adam and Eve did when God wasn't looking.

This article was originally written by the Saint for the 'Medieval Mail'.

**3** "And the Star of David Owen arose in the West"

Now, there arose in the west the shining star of David Owen. And the star did lead the three wise persons of the SDP to seek out the tribe of the Li'berals and they did make alliance with gifts of gold, commoncense and claret.

But still it came to pass that Margar'et did win the next election.

And the prophets of doom did say unto their leader Foot, 'Get thee lost' and he was banished to the land of the Back'benches.

There arose a new prophet of doom, Kinnock, a bag of wind from the land of the Dragon and he sayeth many things and lo, the people paid him no heed.

And there were rumblings from the Land of the Pits and Scargill, Lord of the Pits, did stand up and rebuke Margar'et saying 'Thou destroyeth the jobs of the men of the pits.'

But Margar'et did turn to Scargill and sayeth 'Piss thee off, for my disciple Mac'Gregor and the loyal hosts of the boys in blue will smite thee for thou art the enemy within' and yea, battle commenced.

For a year did the tribe of the pits fight the boys in blue until at last the men of the pits did cry, 'Alright, you win' and returneth to work. And lo, there was wailing and gnashing of teeth and the miners were indeed sequestered.

flying machines of West'land. And Hestl'tine did leaketh unto the Lord's of Fleet Street that the Ameri'cans did covet West'land and this was not right. For the Europ'eans did also covet West'land and, behold, they were our partners in the Community of Europe.

And Britt'an also leaketh and the Island was awash with leaks. And Bernard Ingham who was known as 'sources-close-to-the-Prime-Minister' did let the World know that this was not the fault of the divine Margar'et. And time did pass and Hestl'tine did resign and Britt'an was banished to the darkest depths of Bruss'els.

**5** "The people of the centre did fight one another on the field of the Guardian letters page"

Across the sea from Brit'ain was the old king Rea'gan who sayeth unto his people 'Okey-Dokey, we must - er - smite the Mad Dog Quaddafi of Lyb'ia for - er - he is a man without honour who knoweth no law'. And all save Margar'et did say unto him 'Well, we will help thee not'

But Margar'et, who knoweth all under heaven, did help Rea'gan for she gave him her country for his machines of war. And the machines of Rea'gan did fly out across the

world and did bomb babies and BBC Reporters. But they did miss the one known as the Mad Dog and Rea'gan sayeth unto the World 'Thou ain't seen nothing yet'.

And, yea, it was again time for another election and the followers of Margar'et did fight the prophets of doom, who were now called as the followers of the rose, and did fight the many headed people of the centre. And Owen, the prophet of the centre, did say unto the people 'Vote for me for I have no policies'. And Margar'et did smite the followers of the rose and the people of the centre and did again ascend the throne of Dow'ning Street. And, lo, the people of the centre did fight one another on the fields of the Guardian Letters Page and, yea, they were stricken never to rise again.

**6** "Let there be privatisation of gas, water and electricity"

On the other side of the Earth, a man by the name of Wright did go out among the people and did say unto them 'the lord's of intelligence in Brit'ain have been very naughty'. And Margar'et did say unto the Judges 'He cannot say that'. And the Judges of Brit'ain did agree. But, lo, on the other side of the earth the Judges did say 'thou art wrong'. And Margar'et sent forth Lord Arm'strong known as he who is economical with the truth to argue with the Judges but to no avail. And it came to pass that all the peoples of the World, save those of Brit'ain, did read the book of Wright and they found it to be of no worth.

And on a Rock in the Sea in the Middle of the Earth the barbarians of the IR'A did again plan a deed most foul. Yet they had no bomb. But this worried Margar'et not and the barbarians were slain by the divine warriors of the SA'S. And the warriors did say unto the people 'We cannot tell thou what happened for it is an Official Secret'.

Lo, Margar'et continued in power. And she did say let there be privatisation of gas and water and elect'r'icity, and lo, there was privatisation of gas water and the electri'city and there were many who made a killing on the stock market. And on the second day she did introduce loans for the poor and for the stud'ents. And the widow had to give up her mite to the poll-tax. And Margar'et went on and on and on, but on the seventh day she rested.

## Rag time rag fête

Tomorrow sees that great national institution that marks the start of the year for Rag, the **Rag Fête**.

This is the last opportunity to raise more money for Rag. The entertainment will be rather diverse and will include everything from viewing London from the top of the Queen's Tower to stalls and a chance to guess where the animal will dump (more of this later).

During the afternoon this year's charities will receive their share of the £25,000 raised at the Rag Reception.

The Fête itself starts at 2pm on the Queen's Lawn. You can sample the Roast Pig (which will have gone onto the spit earlier in the day) or possibly a curry or a burger washed down with a Pimms. After a quick game of Splat the Rat or pelting someone in the stocks you could try your luck at winning some of the mind-boggling prizes on offer.

There will also be a tombola, and

from Guilds the Human Fruit Machine, ICCAG the Coconut Shy and of course the Raffle with a first prize of a microwave oven (boring but practical).

The day winds up with what is soon to become an Olympic Sport, Mud Wrestling. This year's official mud-wrestling coordinator is Hal Calomvokis, so if you want to take part purely for the gratifying effect of getting covered in mud from head to toe or because you are a closet exhibitionist, get in touch with him via the Union Office.

After all the general muck has been cleared up, the Rag AGM will be held in the Queen's Tower where next year's offices and recipient charities are chosen.

Anybody involved with the Rag Fête should turn up at the meeting today in the Union Dining Hall and hopefully will attend the Rag Dinner on the evening after the Fête.

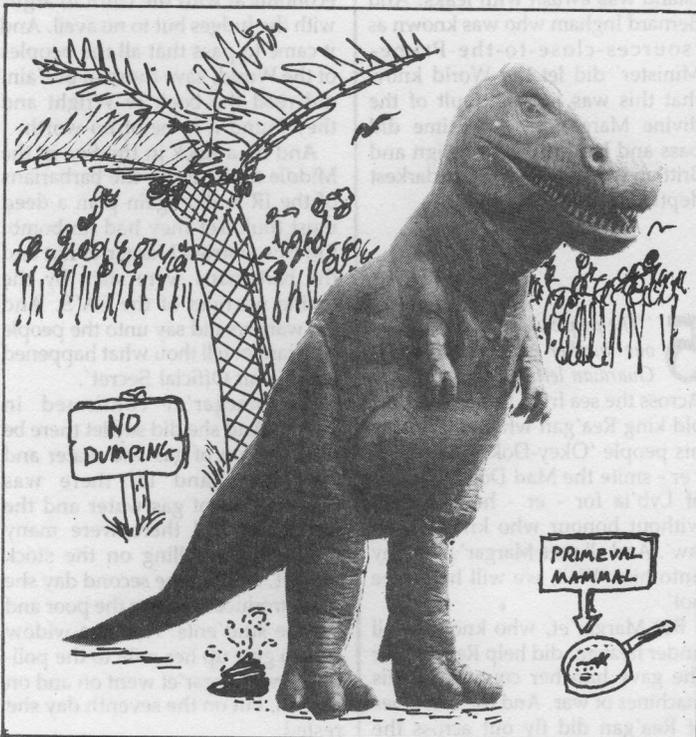
## This game is totally tasteless

Where will the animal dump?—devised by Links Club.

This competition involves an animal (breed to be announced) and a circular area which is divided into 360 points at 5°/1m intervals.

The animal is tied to a stake at the centre of the area and allowed to wander. Each point can be bought for £1 either in advance from the

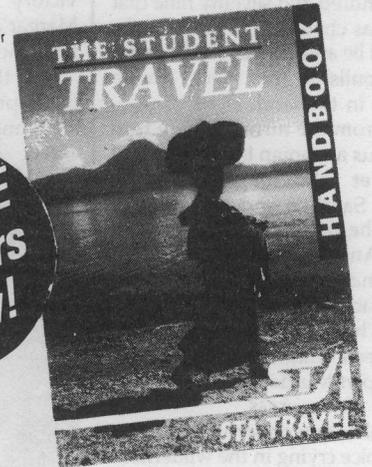
Union Office or on the day from Links members. The winner is the person whose point receives the first anal blessing from the aforementioned animal (there could be some collaboration with Chap's curries to ensure that the beast is needy). Prizes include a night out with a pig and an all-expenses-paid, turd clearing weekend.



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# Jokes Required

## for 1989/90 RAG MAG

Please drop a line to  
Hal Calomvokis  
John St Hill  
or Simon Heaps  
via the Union Office

# Lloyd's: the risk business

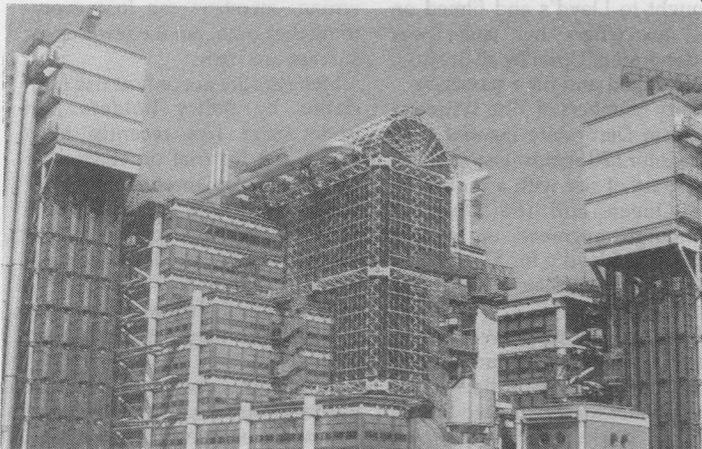
The name Lloyd's of London is synonymous with the high tech building in the heart of the City which you either love or loathe. But just what exactly goes on inside the Richard Rogers contentious creation? Liz Warren went to find out.

Lloyd's of London is not a company but a society made up of approximately 32,000 members or *names*, who undertake to insure anything from oil tankers to ballet dancers' toes. The members group together to form syndicates, of which there are currently about four hundred, ranging in size from a few names to several thousand. Each syndicate may accept part of a risk. It will receive that percentage of the premium and have to pay that percentage of any claims made.

## Underwriters and Brokers

Each of the syndicates is represented in the Lloyd's building by an underwriter (who may have several assistants). It is the job of the underwriter to decide on behalf of the syndicate which risks he will accept and how much of them he will take. The name underwriter comes from the fact that he or she will write their name under the first person to accept part of the risk. This person is called the leader and it is the leaders who decide on the size of the premium for the risk.

The risks are presented to the underwriters by brokers, who act as middlemen between the clients and the underwriters, and who receive a percentage of the premium as commission. They collect the premiums from the clients to pay the syndicates and, in the event of a claim, arrange a settlement and collect the money from the underwriters. There are currently 280 broking firms who are authorised to trade with Lloyd's underwriters.



*The present Lloyd's building*

## The Room

All Lloyd's underwriters work in one place—The Room. Originally one room in the Royal Exchange on Threadneedle Street, the Room now occupies the ground floor and three of the galleries in the impressive glass covered atrium that forms the centrepiece of the new Lloyd's building.

The underwriters sit on 'boxes', a group of desks for each syndicate, and it is a reflection of the origins of Lloyd's that the brokers still visit the underwriters personally to arrange their business.

When the broker receives the details of a risk from a client he puts them on a card, known as a slip, and visits an underwriter who specialises in that risk, for example oil tankers, whom he hopes will lead the risk. After questioning and haggling, a premium will be agreed and the underwriter **takes a line** by writing on the slip the share of the risk he is prepared to accept for his syndicate, together with the agreed premium. Once a leader is established, the broker can then approach other underwriters to take a share of the risk and write their names under that of the leader.

## The History of Lloyd's

Lloyd's is now an enormous institution, and the actual signing of policies and transferral of money between brokers and underwriters is carried out centrally by the Lloyd's Policy Signing Office. This is just one of the ways in which the Corporation of Lloyd's supports and services its members, others being

the leasing and administration of the Lloyd's building and the collation of news—both of shipping losses and important world events.

But where did this efficient and enormous marketplace emerge from? The origin of Lloyd's was in Mr Edward Lloyd's Coffee House in Tower Street in the late seventeenth century. Merchants, shipowners and captains would gather in the Coffee House to exchange news, and Lloyd's coffee house gained a

administration of Lloyd's which was chaired by Sir Henry Fisher, ex-chairman of Imperial College's Governing Body. This set up the Council of Lloyd's which today acts as both a managing group and a rule making and self regulatory body.

## The Lloyd's Building

Lloyd's has had several homes—Mr Lloyd's Coffee House; the New Lloyd's Coffee House and the Royal Exchange, followed by a move to a



*The old underwriting Room*

reputation for trustworthy shipping information—and also the recognised place for marine insurance.

With time, this informal gathering of Lloyd's became more established—although marine insurance went along hand in hand with other less respectable 'insurance'—bets on sick kings dying within a certain time, for instance. In 1769, the more reputable of Lloyd's customers broke away and formed 'New Lloyd's Coffee House' in nearby Pope's Head Alley, devoted solely to marine insurance. In 1774 the business moved into rooms in the Royal Exchange on Threadneedle Street and Cornhill and left its Coffee House associations behind forever.

The Society of Lloyd's was given a formal legal basis by the Lloyd's Act of 1871 and five subsequent acts have followed which have met the changing needs of the society. The most recent of these was in 1982 and was the result of an enquiry into the

new building in Lime Street, opposite the present site, in 1958. Each of these moves was the result of the ever-increasing number of underwriters as both the number of syndicates and the amount of business transacted increased.

By the time Lloyd's moved into its current site, the Richard Rogers building, in May 1986, the strain on the Lime Street building was such that two underwriting rooms were in use (contrary to the practise of having all the underwriting in one room, which was considered to be Lloyd's strength). The second of these rooms had formerly been an underground car park and, as it was painted yellow, was known by those who worked in it as 'The Yellow Submarine'.

The new building is constructed around a central atrium with a glass barrel roof which contains the Room and all the offices and meeting rooms. One end is filled with glass walled escalators that seem to crawl up and down like caterpillars and on

*cont. on next page*

the central floor are the three symbols of Lloyd's that have been moved from the Royal Exchange via Lime Street to the present site: the Lutine Bell, the Casualty Book and the Casualty Board.

The **Lutine Bell** hangs in the Underwriting Room and is used when important announcements are to be made: one stroke for bad news and two strokes for good news. The bell is not rung for every loss at sea: it was formerly sounded when an announcement of an overdue vessel was to be made, but is now sounded most frequently on ceremonial occasions. The bell originally belonged to a French frigate, the Lutine, which was captured by the British in 1793 and used to carry gold and silver to Hamburg in 1799. It was wrecked off the Dutch coast in a violent storm and the claim was paid in full by the Lloyd's underwriters who had insured it. The bell was raised in 1859 and has hung in the Room for ninety years.\*

The **Casualty Book** or Loss Book contains details of all vessels, whether insured at Lloyd's or not, which have become or are likely to become total losses. The entries are still made by quill pen and represent a unique history of nearly three hundred years of shipping. The sinking of the Titanic is recorded with the words:

*Tuesday 16th April:  
Titanic:  
isi British mail Southampton for New York founded April 15 about 2.20am in lat. 41.16 North long. 50.14 West after collision with ice. Reported by wireless from Olympic si to the Cape Race wireless station. Further reports state that the loss of life is very great.*

The **Casualty Board** contains the latest casualty reports in all areas relating to Lloyd's business. Marine casualties are printed on yellow sheets, non-marine on pink and aviation on blue. News of important world events is also posted on the casualty board.

Another source of information is **Lloyd's List**. This is a daily paper, one of the oldest still surviving in London, which is published by Lloyd's of London Press. It contains shipping movements, marine and aviation casualty reports and details of fires, strikes and riots. Regular reports also appear on ship sales, launchings and charterings. There are several other publications which deal in more specialist areas.

**Lloyd's Register of Shipping** is not actually produced by Lloyd's, although its origins go back to Lloyd's Coffee House and there are close links between Lloyd's Register and Lloyd's of London Press. The Register catalogues characteristics

## The 'Piper Alpha' Loss

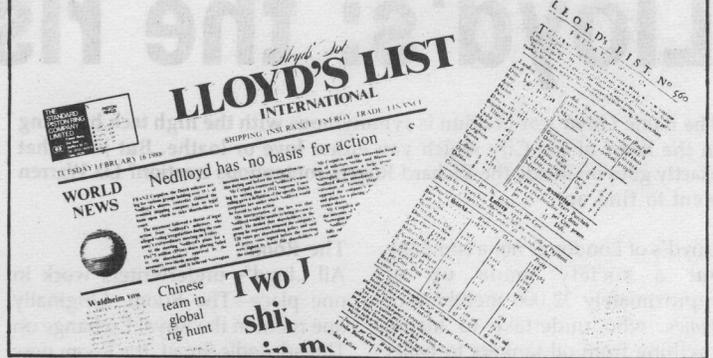
'Piper Alpha' was owned by four companies: Occidental Petroleum (36.5%), Texaco (23.5%), International Thomson (20%) and Union Texas Petroleum (20%). Estimation of the loss was hindered by each company having its own share separately insured at different total valuations. 80% of the loss was insured in London.

### Estimated value of loss

	(US\$ millions)
Physical damage	680
Cost of control	34
Seepage and pollution	4
Removal of wreck	85
Redrilling expenses	187
Damage to pipelines	26
Business interruption	275
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1291</b>

The effect of 'Piper Alpha', the largest man-made loss ever to hit the insurance market, was to force cash flow problems for the underwriters, 50-100% increase in premiums and a radical reassessment of the safety of platforms and operating procedures.

## Lloyd's List: the new and the old



and construction details of individual ships to help them in their insurance activities.

### What does Lloyd's insure?

There are four main areas, or markets, in which Lloyd's insures: marine, non-marine, aviation and motor. The marine market covers everything from oil production platforms (such as Piper Alpha, see box) to yachts. The non-marine market insures against such things as burglary, earthquake and loss of profits due to fire. The aviation and motor markets are offshoots of the marine market. The aviation market will cover Concordes to helicopters and passenger liabilities to communications satellites, while the motor market covers every aspect of UK and Commonwealth road transport.

Lloyd's has never been involved in life assurance; the nature of its operation makes it unsuitable for such long term risks and all life insurance is carried out by private companies.

Lloyd's is also famous for its willingness to insure almost anything. Strangely enough, most of the unusual risks are taken on by the marine market. Past risks have included:

- The 'Animal Magic' sea lion, Gemini, for £5,000. She was brought to Lloyd's and filmed on the box where her cover was underwritten. Upset by all the fuss, she escaped and bit a passer-by.
- Forty members of 'The Whiskers Club' in Derbyshire insured their beards for £20 against loss or theft.
- A grain of rice with a portrait of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh engraved on it was insured at Lloyd's for \$20,000.
- A whisky distiller insured his nose.
- Famous people covered by Lloyd's insurance include: Betty Grable's 'million dollar legs', Christopher Reeve, insured for \$20 million during the filming of 'Superman', Bjorn Borg and Pelé. Many English football teams are insured at Lloyd's under a special

scheme.

• Companies marketing Royal Wedding souvenirs were insured at Lloyd's against financial loss resulting from cancellation of the ceremony.

• Stuntmen are often insured at Lloyd's and actually represent a good risk because they take every possible precaution during stunts. For the filming of one *Cadbury's Milk Tray* advert, champion skier Jean-Claude Killy had to ski at high speed down a mountainside, pursued by a 'controlled' avalanche. He found himself racing for his life when the avalanche was detonated too soon.

Lloyd's is not the only underwriting market in the world, or even in London, but it is the oldest and most remarkable.

### How to become a name

Underwriting insurance is obviously highly profitable, but becoming a name is not so easy. To become a member, someone must be recommended by two existing Lloyd's members, undergo strict interviews by the Council of Lloyd's and prove that they are worth at least £100,000, 60% of which must be in liquid assets such as shares, cash or gold. The other 40% may consist of property or land, but not the candidates home. If things go wrong, members can lose everything they own, but the rewards for success are high.

Members are not only at risk from claims by policy holders. An underwriter has recently been committed for trial on charges of fraud and mismanagement of affairs, and, until outlawed quite recently, it was common for underwriters to have small, personal syndicate, called 'The Baby' for which they would take say 1/2% of a risk they felt was a good bet.

Lloyd's of London proves that insurance is a gamble for high stakes. It is unique in its history and the personal touch to business and moves into its fourth century stronger than ever.



## Koko

Author of more than a dozen horror stories, including *Ghost Story* and *The Talisman* (co-written with Stephen King), this marks Peter Straub's first venture into pure thriller territory.

A group of Vietnam vets, casually fronted by Michael Poole, reunite with a new mission objective. In South East Asia a string of murders has come to light, each victim mutilated and with a playing card stuffed in his mouth. The cards all have the word Koko scrawled on them.

Other than the four platoon members in New York there are only a couple of likely perpetrators, an author Tim Underhill thought to be in Singapore and Victor Spitalny, missing since during the war.

The murders duplicate incidents in a small Vietnam village, Ia Thuc, twenty years ago, and it appears that Underhill must be to blame. So three of the comrades fly off, hoping to catch the recluse writer, gain the syndicated mini-series rights and earn a packet, and the other stays in New York to get rid of his cockroaches, his restaurant open, and eventually killed.

In telling this tale, potentially a wild and racy chase across the world, the author has relied on changing location and dropping in a new clue now and then to provide the pace. This would be quite effective if only the need to supply comprehensive detail hadn't padded out the events so much.

The past is recalled here and there a piece at a time, but the intricate narrative again clouds the salient incidents, and having failed to put the clues together I needed it spelling out in the end.

The culmination of the search is fairly exciting, well written and cleverly constructed, but it takes a little long getting there. Straub certainly has a feel for his subject matter, and provides a convincing account of his locations, especially the brothels and bars of Bangkok. You may be surprised what can be done with a cigarette or a couple of ping-pong balls.

*Koko* is well written, at times stylish, and although its length makes it drag occasionally, it also makes for a thick, chunky book that's good to get your hands around. It will be out in paperback soon.

Andrew Clarke.



## Mississippi Burning

The last of the great Oscar nominees is here. Alan Parker, director of *Angel Heart* and *Midnight Express* presents us with a movie revolving around the suppressive bigotry of 1964 America.

Mississippi has a cancer, the danger of racial integration. Salvation for the rednecks comes in the form of the White Knights of the

Ku Klux Klan, determined oppose the infiltration of equality in their stolid anti-communist Anglo-Saxon world. Removing the threat involves removing three young civil rights workers—two white, one black—in a brutal murder.

Washington is suspicious of the Sheriff's 'missing persons' report, and J Edgar's finest are dispatched. When the Feds come to town a solution doesn't accompany them, as tempers fray, tension soars and the real cancer, equality's opponents, proves to be malignant.

The turbulence is reflected in the FBI also, as the uncooperative locals pressure their sensibilities and compromise their work ethic. Agent Ward (Willem Dafoe) is a straight, by-the-book lawman, in charge of the operation, but not of events.



STILL SHOWING

## The Tall Guy

Slammed by some, applauded by others, this directorial debut from Mel Smith is not the stuff of legend, but it never pretends to be. It's just a comedy, and a good one at that.

American actor Jeff Goldblum suffers on-stage at the hands of Rowan Atkinson, and off-stage through his own fumbling incompetence. But it gets him the girl, Emma Thompson, complete with nurse's uniform and a good stock of wisecracks. His disarray also lands him the lead in the RSC's musical version of *The Elephant Man*.

The script is so strong that when it flicks effortlessly to solemnity you're left embarrassed by a stifled laugh. Atkinson is at his most

Agent Anderson (Gene Hackman) is the natural snoop, digging deep and keeping wounds open with provocative, unerring proficiency.

Their tardiness causes Ward to call in more men, time and again, only fueling the situation. He only knows the rules, not the mentality. 'Where does it come from, all this hatred?'. But Anderson is a Mississippian emigré, and he knows the people. Ultimately it is down to his hard-nosed attitude and ball-squeezing tactics to sort the case out.

*Mississippi Burning* tries very hard not to be bracketed as a buddy movie. The abrasive relationship of the two leads, and their eventual unity infer the description throughout though. Nor does the film tackle its subject matter of racial hatred and obstinate bigotry with any real conviction. The events are used quite well as a backdrop, and often scrape a raw nerve, but the corruption and suffering are never pushed solidly as the pivot of the film.

There is one resounding victory for the movie however. The North-South divide is expressed very well. The good old boys from Dixie want to get on with drinking sour mash and making their own rules. They do not need the District of Columbia making decrees absolute, and they don't need the Hoover-boys.

At the bottom line though, this is just a cop story, albeit a tense, atmospheric and poignant example of the genre. It should be said though that it deserves its seven Oscar nominations, but I'm not surprised it was beaten to the post by *Rainman* and *Dangerous Liaisons*.

Andrew Clarke.

rubbery, and everyone concerned handles Richard Curtiss's (*Blackadder*, *The Young Ones*) script admirably.

## Rain Man

A heart-warming journey across America with brothers Charlie and Raymond Babbitt. Tom Cruise is the younger brother, up to his eyeballs in shit and in need of a break to save his sports car business.

He discovers his brother, his ticket to cash, and ultimately his past. Hoffman had no competition for his Oscar and he creates a shuffling nervous character providing a fixed point for the movie and benchmark for Cruise.

Barry Levinson, director of *Good Morning Vietnam* makes the film look good, awash with colour and emotion. Thoroughly deserving of all its awards. Don't forget the kleenex.

Andrew Clarke.





## Ghetto by Joshua Sobol

*Ghetto* tells the story of the Jewish ghetto in the Lithuanian city of Vilna under Nazi occupation, and of the desperate struggle for survival of its inhabitants. Since Jews who had employment survived, one of the schemes was the formulation of a theatre troupe, which, incredibly, played to packed houses throughout its few years of existence.

The play opens with the discovery by Kittel, the local SS commandant, of a Jewish singer in possession of some stolen beans. He insists that she repay the value of the beans in performances of which he will be the judge, since he is an art connoisseur, and it is true that the real Kittel patrolled the ghetto with a machine gun in one hand and a saxophone in the other.

Gens, the chief of Jewish police, and later the leader of the Jewish council that runs the ghetto supports the formation of the theatre group, as he does for anything which can save Jewish families, despite the idealistic Zionist, librarian Kurk who campaigns for 'No theatre in a graveyard!' Gens' stance was that of all the Jewish councils in general—they went along with the wishes of the Germans, although as Gens demonstrates, their main point was to save Jewish lives, since as Gens points out, the Germans kill more Jews if they resist. He is even willing to let the despicable entrepreneur Weiskopf become a millionaire on the backs of others, by repairing German uniforms because it gives employment.

The play is full of music and jokes as the inhabitants of the ghetto try to live their lives, and to maintain their moral standards, but, in its evocation of the Yiddish theatre, the action is faithful in that the laughter is tinged with tears, and the tears with laughter. All the time there is the threat of Kittel, the artistic, sadistic Kraut with the habit of popping up everywhere. Kittel, played by Alex Jennings, shares a curiously knowing rapport with Gens, a superbly gritty performance by John Woodvine, which makes it all the harder to accept the inevitable conclusion, which extinguishes the hope you share with the Jews.

All the songs—some of which survive from Vilna itself—are performed very well and some make

poignant set pieces, such as Hayyah singing of her sorrow that her man has been shot, whilst the Nazis enjoy an orgy with Jewish girls, a bribe to save families. The clever set gives a good impression of a cramped ghetto, and the performances are good, notably that of Linda Kerr Scott, as a ventriloquist's dummy.

The play also has a strong message in it, inasmuch as the ghetto is a microcosm of modern-

day Israel. The Jews are in conflict over whether to fight out against the Germans, and strive for their Zionist beliefs, or whether to follow Gens' path of passive resistance. Gens justifies the existence of the theatre to Kruk by saying that only through the pursuit of culture and moral behaviour in the ghetto will the souls of the Jews remain clean, not 'riddled with their filthy disease'. This ties in with the author's statement that, if the Jews in Israel

have taken on the beliefs of the Nazis, they are spiritually dead, and Israel is lost.

*Ghetto* perhaps introduces more themes than it can reasonably cope with in its three hours, but despite this, it is the most moving play I have seen about the Holocaust and is highly recommended.

*Ghetto*, Olivier Theatre, National Theatre, opened 27th April '89.

Michael Kirsch.



## Fletch Lives

With a four year break since his first adventure, investigative reporter I.M. Fletcher is back, determined to worm his way into some villainy and conspiratorial wrong doings whether he likes it or not.

News from Louisiana informs Fletcher of an inheritance; his recently

deceased aunt's eighty acre plantation called Belle Isle. Visions of a languid existence in the South attract him, and with typewriter and suitcase-load of disguises, off he goes.

The property is a tumble-down wreck, overgrown and worthless. Or so it seems, until a number of strange characters impede upon the tranquility and proceed to hound Fletcher into a sale. With a murder spicing the intrigue, our hero has something new to investigate.

Recreating his unpredictable, eccentric lead is Chevy Chase, swanning around the screen in numerous disguises worthy of Peter

Sellers, with his natural grin and benign charm shining through. *Fletch Lives* offers another ideal platform for Chase's brand of harmless wit and facetiousness, so characteristic of previous outings, *Caddyshack*, *National Lampoon's Vacation* and the like.

Director is once again Michael Ritchie (*The Golden Child*) and his experience through the original *Fletch* should enable him to bring out the best in Chase. *Fletch Lives* was a box office hit in the US recently, and promises to do the same here.

Release date: May 19

Andrew Clarke.

## ICSO

### Funk Master Chopin

Frederic Chopin was born. Years later he died. In between these two major events in his life, he wrote a large amount of music, particularly for the pianoforte. Among these pieces were his great works, *Piano Concerto No 1*, *Piano Concerto No 2* and a large number of sonatas, followed a year later by a large number of sonatas No 2.

Chopin was Polish, known in piano playing circles as Mr Sheen, though today, there are only a few surviving circles still able to play the piano. He did not ride a motorcycle nor did he play in goal for his native Poland at Wembley in 1974 in the World Cup qualifying match against England. He did however, lose the manuscript for his first piano concerto whilst on a journey from Warsaw to Paris. It was later found, unfortunately he had already published its sequel and called it *Piano Concerto No 1*. Luckily the two stories were not intertwined and only a few of the same characters were involved.

Chopin, being dead, will be unable to attend tonight's performance of his second (or first chronologically speaking) piano

concerto, by Imperial College Symphony Orchestra. The piano will be played by Yeoh Ean Mei. The oboe will be played by Emma Barrett

and the trumpet will be played by Eric Coker.

The concert starts at 8pm in the Great Hall.



## What's On

A guide to events in and around IC.

### FRIDAY

- Consoc Meeting**.....12.30pm  
ME569.
- Rag Meeting**.....12.35pm  
Union Dining Hall. All welcome.
- Friday Jamaa Prayer**.....1.00pm  
Southside Gym.
- Christian Union Meeting**.....5.30pm  
308 Huxley. Time for prayer, worship and discussion.
- Shotokan Karate**.....6.00pm  
Southside Gym.
- Poetry Readings**.....6.30pm  
University of London School of Oriental and African Studies Room G57.
- ICSO Concert**.....8.00pm  
The Great Hall. Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Rachmaninov. £2.50, £1.50 (£1 adv) from Haldane Library.
- Fencing Club**.....12.30pm  
Union Gym. Meeting also at 6 o'clock.

### SATURDAY

- Karate**.....10.00am  
Southside Gym. Beginners welcome. Build your fitness and confidence.
- Rag Fête**.....2.00pm  
Queens Lawn. Be there and have lots of fun (really). Rag AGM after fête at the top of the Queen's Tower.
- IC Kung Fu**.....4.30pm  
Southside Gym. Beginners always welcome.

### SUNDAY

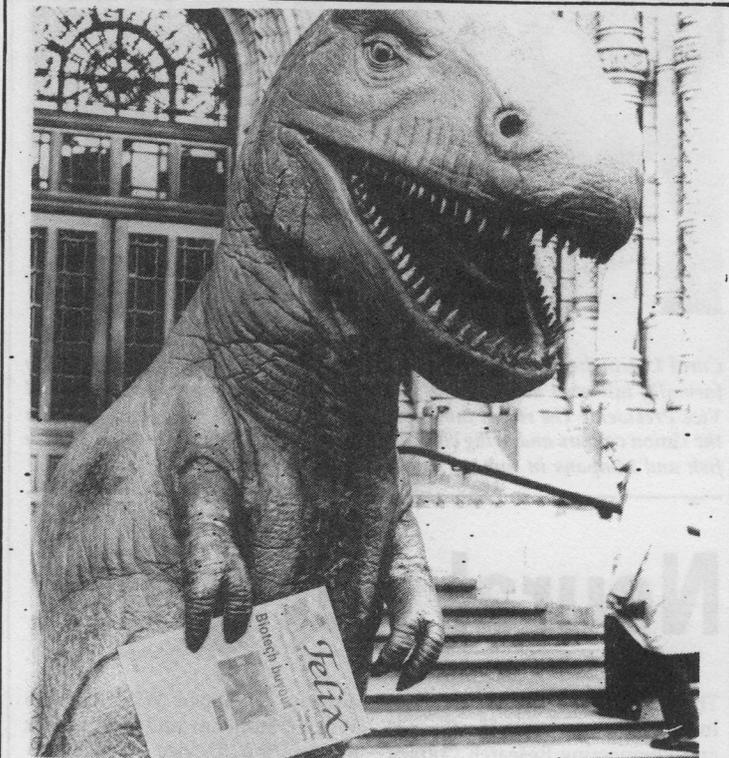
- Sunday Mass**.....11.00am  
West London Catholic Chaplaincy, More House, 53 Cromwell Road. Also at 6pm (followed by bar supper). All welcome.
- Shotokan Karate**.....1.00pm  
Southside Gym.
- Wargames**.....1.00pm  
Senior Common Room. All Welcome.
- Orchestra Rehearsal**.....3.00pm  
Great Hall.
- Kung Fu**.....4.30pm  
Union Gym. Beginners welcome.
- RCSU Night in the Bar**.....7.00pm  
Union Bar.

### MONDAY

- Rock Soc Meeting**.....12.30pm  
Southside Upper Lounge. Anyone interested in any form of rock music come along.
- Artsoc Meeting**.....12.30pm  
Union SCR. Sign up for shows. Membership £2.
- Yacht Club Meeting**.....12.30pm  
Upstairs in Southside.

- Recitation of Holy Qur'an**.....1.30pm  
9 Prince's Gardens (Basement).
- Keep Fit**.....5.30pm  
Southside Gym.
- IC Concert Band Rehearsal**.....5.45pm  
Great Hall. All players please.
- Improvers Ballroom**.....6.00pm  
JCR. 80p.
- Beginners Rock 'n' Roll**.....6.45pm  
UDH. 80p.
- Advanced Ballroom**.....7.00pm  
JCR. 80p.
- Karate**.....7.30pm  
Southside Gym. Build your fitness and confidence.
- Latin American Dance Class**.....8.00pm  
UDH. Cha, Samba, Rumba, etc. 80p

- Want to try racing? Come and find out more.
- 3rd World First**.....1.00pm  
4th Floor, Env Tech, 48 Prince's Gardens.
- Beatles Hour**.....1.00pm  
For all the best Beatle and Beatle-related material on Cd with Spenser Lane.
- Qur'an, tradition of Prophet**.....1.30pm  
9 Prince's Gardens.
- St Mary's Speaker Meeting**.....5.00pm  
Almroth Wright Lecture Theatre, St Mary's Hosp. Med. School. H Waldman (Cambridge University) on 'The therapeutic use of monoclonal antibodies.'
- Amnesty Meeting**.....5.30pm  
Brown Committee Room



### TUESDAY

- CU Prayer**.....8.15am  
308 Huxley. For those who think prayer is more important than sleep. Free.
- Remote Controlled Modelling Club**.....12.30pm  
Southside Upper.
- Sailing Club**.....12.30pm  
Meeting in Southside Lounge.
- Boardsailing Club**.....12.30pm  
Southside Lounge.
- Audiosoc Meeting**.....12.30pm  
Union SCR. Cheap records and tapes etc.
- Roman Catholic Mass**.....12.40pm  
Mech Eng 702. Mass followed by lunch. 50p.
- Ski Club Meeting**.....12.45pm  
Southside Lounge. Interested in learning to ski? Already hooked?

- Meditative Prayer**.....5.45pm  
Chaplain's Office, 10 Prince's Gardens. Come and join us for some peace and quiet. See West London Chaplaincy.
- Keep Fit**.....6.00pm  
Southside Gym. Stretch class.
- Beginners Ballroom**.....6.00pm  
JCR. 80p. All welcome.
- Judo**.....6.30pm  
Union Gym. Beginners welcome.
- Karate**.....7.00pm  
Southside Gym. Build your fitness and confidence.
- Intermediate Ballroom**.....7.00pm  
JCR. 80p.
- Caving Club Meeting**.....7.00pm  
Southside Upper Lounge. Everyone interested should come along.
- Improvers Ballroom**.....8.00pm  
JCR. 80p.

- Mountaineering Club Meeting**.....9.00pm  
Southside Upper Lounge. Beginners always welcome.

### WEDNESDAY

- Keep Fit**.....12.30pm  
Southside Gym.
- Sailing Meeting**.....12.30pm  
Outside Southside.
- Caving Club Meeting**.....1.00pm
- Micro Club Meeting**.....1.00pm  
Third Floor, Union Building. If you're interested in computers come along.
- Hamsoc Meeting**.....1.15pm  
Third Floor of Union Building. Amateur Radio Society regular weekly meeting.
- Intermediate Rock 'n' Roll Class**.....2.15pm  
UDH. 80p.
- Jazz Dance Class**.....3.15pm  
UDH. 80p.
- Karate**.....3.30pm  
Southside Gym. Build your fitness and confidence.
- Open Circle Study**.....4.30pm  
9 Prince's Gardens. See Islamic Soc.
- Orchestra Rehearsal**.....7.00pm  
Great Hall. Final chance to practice before concert.
- Kung Fu**.....7.30pm  
Union Gym. Grandmaster CK Chang's class.
- Basic Christianity**.....6.30pm  
Senior Common Room, 7th Floor. A meeting held by University Christian Outreach examining the life and claims of Jesus.

### THURSDAY

- Fencing Club**.....12.30pm  
Union Gym. Meeting also at 6 o'clock
- ICYHA Meeting**.....12.30pm  
Southside Upper Lounge. Everyone welcome.
- Audiosoc Meeting**.....12.30pm  
Union SCR. Cheap records, tapes etc.
- Ski Club**.....  
The Ski Club will only meet on Tuesdays this term.
- Debating Society**.....1.00pm  
Room 341 Maths (Huxley).
- Arabic Lessons**.....1.30pm  
9 Prince's Gardens. See Islamic Soc.
- Keep Fit**.....5.30pm  
Southside Gym.
- Prayer Meeting**.....5.30pm  
Chaplain's Office, 10 Prince's Gardens. All Christians in College are welcome to come and pray for the work of Christians in College.
- Judo**.....6.30pm  
Union Gym. Beginners welcome.
- Shotokan Karate**.....7.30pm  
Southside Gym.
- Soup Run**.....9.15pm  
Meet Week's Hall Basement (back by 11pm).

# Expelled RCS Initiation

Mr Jan Castelyn, the representative of the South African Government who addressed the Debating Society last December, had been expelled from the Country following South Africa's abortive attempt to steal a British Blowpipe Missile.

Mr Castelyn was one of three Embassy officials ordered out after French police uncovered a plot to smuggle a working model missile to the South Africans. The missile had earlier been stolen by Ulster Loyalists in Northern Ireland and had been offered to Pretoria in exchange for arms.

South African premier P.W. Botha has apologised for the incident and his foreign minister R.F. Botha has emphasised that the three officials were chosen at random and had not been involved in 'improper activities'.

# Plea

Chairman of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Professor Ewins has issued a plea to students to fill in the lecturer performance questionnaires which are being circulated throughout the departments.

Professor Ewins is concerned that the results of the survey will be rendered unrepresentative if enough students do not complete their questionnaire accurately.

'There are cases where only a third of the students on a course provide valid results', he said.

Although some departments have been conducting their own lecturer assessments for some time, the standardised USC surveys were introduced throughout the College last year.

The results of the questionnaire will be processed by the College registry and the results will be used by individual departments when considering changes in lecture courses.

# Bearman

Professor Bearman, Professor of Experimental Aerodynamics will replace Professor Davies as Head of the Aeronautics Department from September 1st.



Carol Luscombe, Gareth Smith (above) and Chas Randles were yesterday formally initiated as next year's RCS President, Honorary Secretary and Vice President. The ritual involves each being painted from head to toe in the Union colours and being covered in a mixture including old milk, smelly fish and tampons in tomato sauce known as The Mix.

# Display

The photosynthesis group in the Biology Department will be presenting a display at a Royal Society Soiree on June 21st. The group, which is the largest in the country, will be presenting an exhibition of their research into the photosynthesis reaction using pulsed lasers.

# Style

Style is now the word on everybody's lips, at least that's what Grolsch would have people think. They have now launched their 'Question of style' competition for the second year, and are trying to get as many participants as possible. Although the competition is sponsored by Grolsch, that is their only involvement; no advertising slogans or heavy purchases of beer are needed.

The competition is divided into four categories; creative writing, song writing, fashion design and photography. If you think that you might be any good at one or more of these, then an entry form can be obtained from

Grolsch Question of Style,  
Livewire,  
Garden House,  
The Cloisters,  
8 Battersea Park Road,  
London, SW8  
Or you could phone 622 4055.

# Neural net grant

The Department of Trade and Industry together with the Science and Engineering Research Council have announced a three year grant of a £365K for the development of logical neural nets to Professor I Aleksander of the Department of Electrical Engineering at Imperial. The programme is a collaboration with the Department of Electrical Engineering at Brunel University and Computer Recognition Systems at Wokingham.

The research is based on the development of the 'Probabilistic Logic Node' (PLN) which was invented at Imperial College. It uses existing computer technology to imitate the function of a human brain cell. When many PLN's are connected together to form a parallel network they can be made to perform complex recognition tasks.

The IC research group have

already developed WISARD, the Wilkie, Stonham and Aleksander Recognition Device which can recognise images in 1/25 of a second. The machine can drive a robot or express an opinion about the identity of an unknown image, and so it has a very wide range of applications in industry. The system has been used to recognise faces, expressions on faces, speech, presence of intruders in secure areas and production line parts.

The goals of the research programme include the design of a neural computer consisting of 16 million neural nodes, implemented on a chip, which would be among the foremost neural computers in the world. Such a machine would be able to operate in real time processing difficult visual recognition problems very rapidly. Research will begin in May.

# And Finally...

A new beer has been launched onto the market in France which is claimed by its brewers to contain special herbs with aphrodisiac qualities. It is not yet available in this country but when it is, FELIX promises to conduct a full scale scientific investigation into the claims. Anyone wishing to participate in the scheme should contact the FELIX Office. The Union Bar has not yet said if it will be putting in an order.