The Big Idea

- BUSINESS BRAINS: Students scoop top prize
- ASBO TO ACADEMIA: From crime to criminology
- TRANSAT TALES: Voyage of discovery
- TOP OF THE CLASS: Outstanding Ofsted results

NEWS FEATURES REGULAR COLUMNS & MORE
Welcome to the summer edition of UPfront

This edition includes an article on student Charlie Taylor, who – having turned away from crime – is helping young people from similar background to his own follow his good example.

If you have any ideas or contributions for future editions of the magazine, please email me at paola.simoneschi@plymouth.ac.uk.

The copy deadline for the autumn edition is 22 August 2008.

Paola Simoneschi
Editor

Front cover: Winners of the first prize in this year’s Business Ideas Challenge, (l to r) Ella Romanos, Chris Browne and Alexandra Matthews. See article on page 7

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If you require any part of this magazine in larger print, please contact: Disability ASSIST Services on ext 32289
email: das@plymouth.ac.uk

The university is committed to the promotion of equality and diversity. Our policies are available on the website: www.plymouth.ac.uk/equalopportunities

news in brief

Equality update

The university’s revised Race Equality Scheme, covering 2008 – 11, is now available at www.plymouth.ac.uk/equality. It has three major sections: the race equality statement, which focuses on the university’s progress in race equality so far, plus gathering and using information, the legislation and how we put the scheme into practice; the race equality policy – a stand-alone policy detailing the university’s core values, responsibilities, strategies and monitoring and publishing arrangements, and the race equality action plan, a detailed and specific plan for delivering race equality objectives, broken down into specific areas of the university.

“It’s important that everybody is both familiar with the scheme and committed to the general principles and specific actions relevant to their area of work and study,” said Mel Landells, Head of Equality & Diversity.

Getting the message

Did you know that the university’s staff portal is updated daily to keep staff abreast of all the latest news and events happening within the institution?

Whether you want to issue an invitation to an event or flag up important information about your area, a brief message on this part of the intranet can help you communicate with colleagues across the university and direct them to further online information when appropriate.

The protocol and request form for staff announcements is available on the Marketing & Communications community on the staff portal. (Requests for announcements to be published on the student portal should be sent to Dr Anita Jellings at anita.jellings@plymouth.ac.uk.)

Campus landscape

Staff and students are being invited to get involved in the new Campus Landscape as a Learning Resource project.

Led by Centre for Sustainable Futures Centre Fellow Mhairi Mackie, the project aims to join up and add to the ways in which the campus is currently being used as a sustainability learning and teaching resource.

For more information, email mhairi.mackie@plymouth.ac.uk or paula.jones@plymouth.ac.uk

Landlords wanted

With the number of students on the Plymouth campus set to rise by 1,200 from this September, the demand for all types of student properties is set to increase. The university’s Accommodation Office is keen to expand its database of privately owned accommodation and is particularly interested in hearing from prospective landlords in the popular areas of Mutley, Greenbank, Lipson, St Judes, Pennycomequick and Peverell.

Mannnamead, Mount Gould, Stoke and Stonehouse are growing in popularity among students, and properties further afield are also of interest as long as they are on a frequent bus route. Properties on bus routes to Derriford will be of interest to students whose courses are based there.

All properties must have all the necessary fire precautions and, if there are gas appliances, hold a current gas safety certificate.

For more information, call 01752 23 2062, email landlords@plymouth.ac.uk or visit www.plymouth.ac.uk/ accommodation/landlords
But today, the 19-year-old has turned his life around and has just completed the first year of a degree in criminology and criminal justice studies in the Faculty of Social Science and Business.

Charlie, from Hampshire, started to get in trouble at the age of 14 when he began to hang around on street corners with friends, drinking.

He admits that he went off the rails and was convicted for a range of offences. After several years of being a persistent troublemaker, police decided to apply for a five-year ASBO against him.

It meant a total of 15 restrictions including a curfew, not being allowed to be with more than three people and not being allowed to carry alcohol in the street.

It took a few weeks for the news to sink in but when it did, Charlie and his friends decided to make some changes.

The idea they came up with was to start a youth café in the small town where they lived so that other youngsters wouldn’t need to hang around the streets as they had done.

After winning the backing of youth workers, Charlie and his friends began applying for funding - a process which saw them giving presentations to various organisations including the Local Network Fund, the local authority, businesses and the National Lottery.

They were successful and Charlie will spend part of his summer holidays this year helping to get the café up and running.

Because of his work in the community, Charlie successfully applied to have his ASBO removed two years early, allowing him to come to the University of Plymouth – which he chose mainly because of its location.

News of his turnaround has attracted attention from the national media and Charlie has had interview requests from The Sun, the BBC and GMTV.

So, how does news of his past go down with his fellow students?

“Some people don’t need to know so I don’t mention it. Some people I tell if it comes up – they question it and some people act a bit weird but most people are OK,” he said.

And chief amongst Charlie’s supporters are his parents. “My dad’s well proud of what I’m doing,” he said with a grin.
Associate Lecturer Wayne McIntosh (Law and Social Sciences) and Lecturer Mike Turner (Hospitality Management) were among a select gathering at an evening reception for the British hospitality industry, hosted by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh.

Just 40 people were invited to the event at the palace, one of a number of receptions the Queen hosts during the year for different sectors of society. So surprised was Wayne to receive the invitation – which followed his PhD research into tourism and crime, focusing on holiday and residential parks in the South West – he thought someone was pulling his leg! “I was convinced it was a practical joke,” he said. “It is a fairly big honour to be invited to an evening reception rather than a garden party as they are often for hundreds of people and only a few select people actually get to meet the Queen.”

Mike’s invitation was recognition of his long and distinguished service to the hospitality industry, which has spanned more than 40 years, particularly the work he has done for awarding bodies such City and Guilds and the Institute of Hospitality (IoH).

“Recently, he was invited to chair the External Examiners Committee of the IoH, having played a significant part in the development of a suite of brand new qualifications introduced by the institute early this year. “It was a real surprise to be invited to such a prestigious event, but equally it is nice to gain some recognition and reward for my contribution, one I have thoroughly enjoyed making over the years,” said Mike.”

Dr Jon Shaw, Reader in Human Geography and Director of the Centre for Sustainable Transport, will be featuring in a major new BBC documentary series due to air this summer.

Called Britain from Above, the series reveals the secrets, patterns and hidden rhythms of our lives from a striking new perspective. Jon features in the first programme, which looks at transport links. He filmed his contribution in April, when he took to the skies with presenter Andrew Marr to examine what the morning road and rail commute into London looks like from the air. For more information, visit www.bbc.co.uk/britainfromabove.

By royal appointment

Two lecturers rubbed shoulders with royalty recently, when they attended an exclusive VIP event at Buckingham Palace.

The secrets, patterns and hidden rhythms of our lives from a striking new perspective
The university and fellow members of the Plymouth Marine Sciences Partnership recently welcomed one of Europe’s most senior political figures, demonstrating the city’s position at the forefront of world marine science, education and technology expertise.

Joe Borg, EU Maritime & Fisheries Commissioner, visited the historic South Yard, where the university’s Marine Institute and other key players united to outline the future potential and development of marine science in the city, showcasing exciting current projects such as PRIMaRE, the Peninsula Research Institute in Marine Renewable Energy.

It is hoped that the Commissioner took back an important message to Brussels – that Plymouth should be the location for the proposed UK Marine Management Organisation.

“World-class marine research is being conducted right here in Plymouth, increasing fundamental knowledge, providing practical solutions to problems and understanding and managing human impacts on the environment,” said Professor Laurence Mee, Director of the Marine Institute. “We have all it takes to develop a knowledge economy but this must be linked to a regeneration agenda in Plymouth.”

South Yard was chosen as the reception venue as it is hoped that it can be redeveloped into a state-of-the-art marine science research facility that would include business incubation facilities and spin-out opportunities.

The visit formed part of a wider South West itinerary organised by the South West Regional Development Agency.

AWARENESS WEBCAST

In celebration of International Nurses’ Day, the Faculty of Health & Social Work hosted a live webcast to raise awareness of one of the most important nursing healthcare issues affecting professionals and patients alike.

Hundreds of people logged on for the Medications Management for Care Homes ‘webinar’ in May, which was aimed at nursing staff and other health professionals working in care homes.

Dr Ann Humphreys, the university’s Head of Nursing & Community Studies, organised the event. “Medication errors remain a major concern in care homes,” she said. “In 2005, the Commission for Social Care Inspection received around 800 complaints about medication, with approximately 22 per cent related to drug error. “Problems include the wrong medicine being given to patients, and medicine being stored incorrectly and handled inappropriately.”

As well as being accessible from people’s offices and homes, it was also broadcast in the Stonehouse Lecture Theatre, where many students, university staff and local health professionals took advantage of the opportunity to network and discuss related issues face to face.

The Faculty of Health & Social Work has considerable experience in medication management and has run courses for all levels of staff over many years. It is also at the forefront of new methods of online learning and hosts regular webcasts and online discussions covering a range of health education issues.
The very best in art and design work by final-year students from the Faculty of Arts was on display at the annual degree show in June.

For the first time, the event was held solely in Plymouth, with venues including the award-winning Roland Levinsky Building, the Scott Building and the Mills Bakery site at the Royal William Yard. The diverse range of work by students of architecture, fine art, graphic communication with typography, illustration, media arts and 3D design, attracted hundreds of visitors. Exhibits included the tentacle light (left), which was designed by student Chris Pepler.

Meanwhile, student Pauline Chee-A-Nam chose a venue with a difference to showcase her art. She teamed up with Stagecoach to use the LED display on one of their buses to exhibit her work, entitled Art Movement.

To find out more about the Faculty of Arts, visit www.plymouth.ac.uk/arts
Students are the business!

The winners of this year’s Business Ideas Challenge were announced in late May, with a team of Plymouth students scooping the top prize.

When they heard the news at the prize-giving event, which took place at the Tamar Science Park, final-year digital arts and technology students Ella Romanos, Alexandra Matthews and Chris Browne (pictured on the front cover) were amazed and delighted to receive such high-level recognition for their innovative business idea, Level Harmony. This is a computer game that helps players to relax and reads their biometric information as they do so.

Developed by the team as part of the games module on their course, the idea has secured them a tailor-made £2,500 support package for their business, Yoghurt Games, as the prize.

“We had to develop a working prototype with a business model,” said Ella. “When we finished it, our Head of School liked our idea and we decided to enter the competition – I’m amazed to have won.”

“The judges found choosing a winner in all of the different award categories extremely difficult,” said Dr Susan Boulton, Knowledge Exploitation Manager at the university.

“All of the finalists showed clear evidence of exactly the sort of enterprise and innovation that this competition aims to find and all of them handled the Dragons’ Den aspect of the competition well, showing commitment to their ideas and a strong sense of the commercial possibilities involved.

“The eventual winner, Yoghurt Games, was very well-deserved. Ella, Chris and Alexandra have come up with an idea that has a lot of potential in what is a huge growth area.”

Further details about the annual competition, including sponsors and winners of the various categories, can be found at www.plymouth.ac.uk/businessservices

For the second year running, the Plymouth Undergraduate Shadowing Scheme (PLUSS) has been a hit with pupils, parents and students alike, providing a unique opportunity to experience higher education firsthand.

This year, 119 Year 11 and 12 pupils from 15 schools in the South West took part, shadowing student ambassadors on courses ranging from media arts to civil engineering. The wide variety of activities included diagnosing the illness of a pretend patient and creating short films.

Feedback was glowing, with 92% of the pupils saying they found the day useful. “It has completely changed my view of university,” said one participant. “I hadn’t realised how hard students work or how much fun they have. I’ve learnt loads and it has inspired me so much that I just can’t wait to go to uni!”

“A big thank you to everyone who made these shadowing days possible,” said Widening Participation Administrator Brendan Lane. “The next ones will take place in the autumn so I’m keen to hear from academic staff who want to be involved.”

Brendan can be contacted on 01752 587958 or by email at brendan.lane@plymouth.ac.uk.
The management and quality assurance of the Faculty of Education’s secondary teacher training provision was deemed ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted.

The faculty works with over 35 secondary schools in the region to provide the training and currently has 71 students who will teach a range of subjects, including art and design, citizenship, drama, English, geography, maths and music, when they qualify. The intake of trainees for 2008-09 will also be able to study science by learning about biology, chemistry and physics teaching through working with the Faculties of Science and Technology.

The high degree of collaboration between the university and trainers based in partner schools, the effectiveness of the training provided to meet the needs of individuals, and clear, well-organised course procedures and documentation were among the strengths highlighted by Ofsted.

The inspectors’ report also praised the way that the university works to encourage trainees from a broad cross-section of the community.

“We are very proud of the excellent work that staff do to make sure that teacher training courses at the university are second to none,” said the Dean, Professor Michael Totterdell.

“It is heartening to see that these strengths have been recognised and praised by Ofsted. When the faculty moves into the £25-million Rolle Building in September, it will allow us to improve facilities even further.”

Ofsted has recently assessed the faculty’s provision of primary teacher training courses. At the time of going to press, staff were waiting to hear the official outcome but have already received feedback that the inspectors were impressed with what they saw.
Ofsted’s report on the nursery found the quality and standards of the care it provides to be ‘outstanding’, the highest accolade possible. The inspectors were particularly impressed with Freshlings’ work in helping children to be healthy, protecting them from harm and helping them stay safe, as well as encouraging them to achieve and enjoy what they do.

The nursery’s partnership with parents and carers, its organisation and its work in helping children to make a positive contribution were also highly praised.

“This achievement is a clear indication of the skill and dedication of the nursery employees, who work tirelessly and enthusiastically to care for and stimulate the children,” said Freshlings Childcare Manager, Barbara MacPherson. “It is also very reassuring for the parents, who know that their little ones are in the best possible hands. I am incredibly proud of my staff.”

Freshlings

Freshlings, which opened in 1990, provides full day care for children of staff and students of the university. It is based in purpose-built premises on the Plymouth campus, has 26 staff and currently looks after 117 under-fives, including babies.

The university has been celebrating not one but two very impressive Ofsted results in recent weeks, with both Freshlings Nursery and the Faculty of Education receiving high praise from the government’s inspectors.
Mentoring matters

A special event to mark the success of an employer mentoring scheme for students with disabilities took place recently, with the students, staff and business mentors (above) celebrating together.

The scheme, which has been running for a year, is funded by the Regional Development Agency as part of a wider project, Graduates for Business, which aims to support graduate retention and utilisation in the region. The mentoring programme gives extra help to disabled students, with firms such as Plymouth Music Zone and Bond Pearce solicitors providing an insight into their sectors, plus guidance on job hunting, CV writing and the skills required by employers.

The programme isn’t about finding the students a job but assists them in establishing networks that might help them secure work experience, work shadowing or possibly future employment. And the good news is spreading – another six students have signed up for the programme after hearing from students who have already participated.

For further information, email Kate Colechin, Careers Adviser, at kate.colechin@plymouth.ac.uk.

Baby talk

Researchers in the School of Psychology’s pioneering BabyLab unit are appealing for help – from youngsters aged between about three months and ten years.

The unit is one of only 50 such centres in the world. It opened last year and focuses on the study of language development in babies, toddlers and children. To allow staff to carry out this research, they need parents to volunteer their children to take part in studies.

Parents stay with their children for the whole time and, researchers say, most mums and dads find the experience an interesting one.

So far, the BabyLab has worked with 310 children who were put forward by their parents but it needs a constant flow of new recruits so that researchers can continue to work with younger children.

Staff are currently hoping to recruit more young volunteers for studies about accents and how toddlers learn words.

“One for the accent studies, we look at very young infants, from around five months,” said Dr Caroline Floccia, Lecturer in the School of Psychology. “We simply present them with different sets of sentences uttered with different accents - Plymothian, Welsh, Scottish and French - and measure how long they spend listening to each of these. Most babies enjoy this short study - they listen very carefully to the sounds, and their parents, who stay with them all the time, find it very interesting, surprising and fun.”

The team has recently started looking at how children perceive accents by using a new technique called Evoked Response Potentials, which records electrical brain activity while the child is listening to various sentences in different accents.

For this study, 10-month-old babies are fitted with a cap covered with 32 electrodes to record the electricity produced by the brain in a given location on the head. This is harmless and non-invasive and has been used in BabyLab centres around the world.

A visit to the BabyLab lasts for about an hour, with travel expenses of up to £3 refunded. Anyone interested can call 01752 238209 or email info@plymouthbabylab.org. For more information, visit www.plymouthbabylab.org.
A marquee on the Mayflower Steps was the port of call where staff from the Faculties of Science and Social Science & Business welcomed the young visitors, giving them the lowdown on the history and technology of the race and showing them what life is like on an ocean yacht. The pupils also found out about the university’s marine and ocean courses, plus those in geography, languages, tourism and hospitality.

The excited visitors had the opportunity to try out a helicopter simulator and see some of the oldest diving gear around on a tour that took in the university’s Diving & Marine Centre at Coxsand and the National Marine Aquarium.

“As far as we know this was the first time an education strand was delivered as part of any yacht race and it was a great pleasure to provide this exciting and thought-provoking element,” said Beau Le Bredonchel, Widening Participation Officer for the Faculty of Science.

“It was a fantastic opportunity for young people to engage in the race and all the excitement that went on while hearing about fulfilling careers associated with, and by, the sea.”

Six hundred school pupils went on a voyage of discovery thanks to the university’s interactive and inspiring displays at the race village during the run-up to the historic Artemis Transat Race in late spring.
The university’s Diving & Marine Centre at Coxshe is well known to most staff for its support of both teaching and research activities. But did you know it boasts a national and international reputation as a centre of excellence for scientific diving?

The centre’s standing in Europe has recently been recognised by the award of a €315,640 grant under the European Commission TEMPUS programme. The aim is to use the funding to develop an undergraduate course in underwater science and technologies based at the University of Zadar in Croatia.

This exciting project brings together staff from several Croatian universities as well as the country’s Ministry of Sea, Tourism, Transport & Development. The National Institute of Biology in Piran, Slovenia, is also actively involved.

“This is a great opportunity to work with a team of enthusiastic staff from many university departments, research institutes and industry in Croatia,” said Professor Steve Hill, Academic Director of the Diving & Marine Centre and project grant holder. “It uses our experience in training students to Health & Safety Executive (HSE) professional SCUBA level while ensuring the training is relevant and well integrated into our academic courses.”

The Diving & Marine Centre is the largest scientific diving centre in the UK and the only university-based, HSE-approved training school in the country. Many students from the Plymouth-based courses go on to use their diving skills professionally and it is hoped that this will be a key feature of the new course resulting from the TEMPUS programme.

For further information, contact Professor Hill at steve.hill@plymouth.ac.uk

Diving development

Recent walks have included those around Bantham, Thurlestone and Bovisand – and plenty more are planned!

“We hope to be able to build on this with more ideas for walks and more people who want to join in,” said Dave Furniss of the Recreation Service. “Using the form on the Staff Club community on the portal, staff can suggest a walk – perhaps a personal favourite they would like to share with others. The more varied the programme the better: Including a pub, café or picnic spot at the end of the walk or along the way is a definite plus!”

For more details, contact Dave on x32265/email: dfurniss@plymouth.ac.uk

STEP OUT

The Staff Walking Group launched earlier in the year has got off to a great start, with staff and their families and friends getting together to take in magnificent scenery while getting plenty of fresh air and exercise.
Students on the Education Studies degree course recently teamed up with their peers at the University of York to produce their very own textbook about education, researching and writing about a wide range of topics including bullying.

The project was made possible thanks to one of the university’s Teaching Fellowship Awards. The students took on responsibility for all aspects of research, writing, editing and production, requiring them to work as a team to support each other and critique and edit each other’s work in a way that mirrors the processes of real-life textbook production.

Dr Suanne Gibson and Dr Joanna Haynes, who hold the Teaching Fellowship Award, oversaw the year-long project and have worked with the students to prepare a conference paper addressing developments in relation to effective learning and teaching at undergraduate level.

“The book celebrates the voices and perspectives of our students, vividly expressing and challenging opinion in matters of authorship and the legitimacy of the academic voice,” said Dr Gibson.

“Making their work public has taken courage and the students’ tutors have had great pleasure in observing the growth in their knowledge and confidence, as well as their ability to find positive ways to support and challenge one another.”

For further information or to obtain a copy of the book, Making Waves in Education, contact Dr Gibson at suanne.gibson@plymouth.ac.uk.
THE ECO-FRIENDLY CHAIR designed by Plymouth graduate Claire Danthois has been snapped up by top London store Liberty, as reported in The Western Morning News. The ‘once a door’ chair, which is made from recycled timber and a simple steel cable, is selling at around £1,200 and has been featured in Marie Claire magazine as well as being named one of the top ten eco-furniture pieces by The Guardian.

A STARK DROP in honeybees and bumblebees could be due to the shrinking of grasslands and hay fields with plants which produce pollen with a high protein content, according to Dr Mick Hanley, Lecturer in Terrestrial Ecology in the School of Biological Sciences. This news appeared in The Independent in May.

A NEGATIVE MOOD in children can have a positive effect on their learning, according to research led by Plymouth’s Dr Simone Schnall. As The Sunday Telegraph and other media - including Medical News Today and Science Daily - reported, a negative or neutral mood can help improve children’s concentration skills. Dr Schnall emphasised that the research shows there are contexts in which a positive mood is beneficial for a child, such as when creative thinking is required.

A ‘TIME BOMB’ for the NHS was how George Giarchi, Professor in Social Care at the university, described the dramatic rise in the number of Alzheimer’s sufferers in an article in The Plymouth Herald. “We need an increase in research funding four-fold and we need more support for carers night and day,” he said.

IN THE NEWS

The university’s growing number of media stars continues to keep the Press Office phones ringing. Here’s a round-up of recent news that has hit the headlines...

Before they achieved global fame, two of the world’s most respected rock musicians were taught by a professor who now works at the university.

Pete Townsend of The Who and Brian Eno, one-time member of Roxy Music and producer of best-selling albums including U2’s The Joshua Tree, were taught by Roy Ascott (left), Professor of Technoetic Arts at Plymouth, when he worked at Ealing School of Art in the 1960s.

It was at the school – now part of Thames Valley University (TVU) – that Roy carried out much of his pioneering work with cybernetics in art education. An account of his teaching there appears in the recently published books Re-Make/Re-Model - Art, Pop, Fashion and the Making of Roxy Music 1953-1972 by Michael Bracewell, and Educating Artists for the Future, edited by Mel Alexenberg.

Roy carried out much of his pioneering work with cybernetics in art education

Roy, who was recently appointed an Honorary Professor of TVU, is the author of Telematic Embrace, Visionary Theories of Art, Technology and Consciousness, which has just been re-issued in paperback by the University of California Press, and editor of New Realities – Being Syncretic (Springer).

With versions published in Japanese and Korean as well as English, Telematic Embrace is required reading on campuses across the world. The ideas expressed within it formed the basis of research in art technology and consciousness that led Roy to establish the Planetary Collegium, which now has around 60 PhD students.

It is based at Plymouth and has linked centres in Milan and Zurich (with São Paulo and Seoul to follow). To find out more, visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planetary_Collegium

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Leading British artist Susan Aldworth found inspiration for her amazing work from an unlikely source – a brain scan.

Susan – whose prestigious national Arts Council touring exhibition, Scribing the Soul, will be at the Gallery in the university’s Roland Levinsky Building until 18 July – was fascinated by the experience of observing her brain live on a monitor during the diagnostic scan in 1999.

The artist was given a clean bill of health following the scan, but the experience triggered an ongoing desire to explore the nature of consciousness through her art and look at the relationship between the physical brain and the sense of self.

In the past two years, she has witnessed more than 100 brain procedures with the permission of the patients involved and translated those operations into individual works of art, mainly through etchings.

“This exhibition is the result of my tracking consciousness over the past seven years and the chemical processes I use in creating etchings basically mirrors the function of the human brain in the way it fires neurons,” said Susan.

“The brain is a strange and marvellous thing…although it is flesh, it is not like a heart or a kidney or a bowel. It is thinking flesh. Making sense of the relationship between the brain and personal identity is central to my art work, in whichever medium I am working.”

As well as etchings, Susan also works with animated film, digital print and light installations to capture the essence of the consciousness in her work.

Admission to the Scribing the Soul exhibition is free and the Gallery will be open from 10am to 5pm daily (11am - 4pm on Saturdays). A full colour catalogue to accompany the exhibition, costing £7.99, will be available from the Gallery and the University Bookseller on North Hill.

This edition, the last word goes to Karen Ellis, Human Resources Administration Manager.

The last...

Place I went on holiday
New York – what an experience! It was snowing and Central Park looked beautiful.

Film that had me riveted
I really love chick flicks, so it would probably be Bridget Jones.

Time I really laughed
Watching the Peter Kay DVD for the first time. I could relate to everything he said so we must have grown up in the same era.

Person I hugged
My daughter, India. She is adorable (most of the time!)

Thing that bugged me
Rude people. Manners don’t cost a thing.

CD I bought
100 Greatest Country Hits. I’m a big Dolly Parton fan and love nothing better than being with friends singing ‘9 to 5’ at the top of our lungs!

Item I put on my credit card
I’m a bit of a shopaholic so can’t remember a specific thing, but no doubt it was an item of clothing or make-up.

Time I celebrated
I went to Edinburgh for my birthday this year. We had a brilliant time but the flight out was very turbulent.

If you’d like to feature in this regular column, email Paola Simoneschi at paola.simoneschi@plymouth.ac.uk
Journey to the heart of Russia

Respected television journalist Jonathan Dimbleby (above) will be sharing his journey to the heart of Russia with an audience at the university on 15 July.

The only European journalist to have interviewed President Mikhail Gorbachev while in office, Jonathan returned for the first time to Russia after the collapse of the old Soviet Union to find a country much changed. His epic journey resulted in a deeply revealing book, Russia: A Journey to the Heart of a Land and its People.

Jonathan will be signing copies of the book as well as giving his talk.

Tickets for the talk are £10 each (£5 each for staff and the over 60s). Admission is free for University of Plymouth students and members of Peninsula Arts Friends Plus.

For more information, contact the Peninsula Arts box office on 01752 585050 or visit www.peninsula-arts.co.uk

Deadline for the next edition is 22 August 2008

Please send all items to Paola Simoneschi, Marketing & Communications Department, Hepworth House, Plymouth campus paola.simoneschi@plymouth.ac.uk

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