

1851 Royal Commission Alumni

E-mail Newsletter August 2007

Dear Royal Commission Alumnus,

A Year of Anniversaries

As mentioned in my March newsletter, 2007 is a year of anniversaries in the Commission's legacy South Kensington cultural estate, and these are now well under way. A glitzy party was held and several exhibitions opened last month to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Victoria & Albert Museum. Among the exhibitions is a display of original water colours of interior views of the Great Exhibition, purchased with the help of a Special Award from the Royal Commission. Commissioners also held last month's Board of Management meeting at the museum.

At the same time the Royal College of Art (which was created from the V&A) used the anniversary to stage a major Summer Show in a marquee opposite the College in Kensington Gardens. Dubbed 'The Great Exhibition of 2007', it was even more impressive than its regular graduates' summer shows, and included displays by the 6 Royal Commission Industrial Design Students completing their courses at the College.

No less spectacular has been the year of centenary events of Imperial College, which culminated on 9 July with a visit by Her Majesty the Queen to mark the College's withdrawal from the University of London and establishment as an independent university. At a splendid reception the College conferred its first honorary degrees under the authority of its new Royal Charter to five eminent supporters of science, engineering and medicine, including the Commission's own President, His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh.

2007 Royal Commission Awards

2007 has been another bumper year for applications for the Commission's three core awards programmes – particularly Industrial Fellowships, where competition was fiercer than in recent years.

For the first time this year, our Science Research Fellowships application and assessment process was fully on-line, a huge step forward from the old, cumbersome paper-based system. As we announced last year, an additional research Fellowship – the Brunel Fellowship – for an engineering project, was awarded. This was hotly contested and to mark its introduction the award was presented to Dr Anna Carruthers at a dinner in the House of Commons of the All Party Parliamentary Engineering and Information Technology Group.

The full list of award holders, shortly to be announced in the press, is as follows:

Research Fellowships

Applied Science or Engineering

Dr Anna Carruthers*	Biomechanics	University of Oxford
Dr Kristofer Thurecht	Polymer Synthetic Chemistry	University of Nottingham
Dr Deanna D'Alessandro	Physical Inorganic Chemistry	University of California, Berkeley
Mr Dominic Vella	Mathematics	Ecole Supérieure de Physique et de Chimie Industrielles

* Brunel Fellowship

Other Science Projects

Dr Winston Fairbairn	Mathematics	University of Nottingham
Mr Owen Davies	Molecular Biology	University of Edinburgh
Miss Amanda Seed	Psychology	Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology
Miss Rachel Smith	Astronomy	University of Cambridge

Industrial Fellowships

Mr Nadim Ashraf	SAB Miller / University of Nottingham On-line systems approaches to flavour development during brewing fermentation.
Mr Paul Bassarab	International Paint Limited / University of Northumbria Novel synthetic approach to controlled release of quaternary ammonium based biocides.
Miss Zoë Broadbent	Nexia Solutions Ltd / University of Manchester Treatment of colloids formed in the processing of radioactive wastes.
Mr James Coleman	Lotus Engineering / Loughborough University Investigation into the relationship between active front and rear steer control system strategies and the controllability of vehicle response and stability.
Mr Harish Khajuria	Parametric Optimization Solutions Limited / Imperial College Advanced control and optimization of a hybrid PSA energy system.
Mr Gareth Moore *	Rolls Royce plc / University of Nottingham Investigation of electro-mechanical interactions in aerospace gas turbines.
Mr Peter Nordberg	Siemens Molecular Imaging / University of Oxford Simultaneous motion correction and quantification in PET imaging.
Mr Tim Rawlinson	Warwick Warp Ltd / University of Warwick Automated face recognition invariant to pose and illumination variation.

* ERA Foundation Fellow

Industrial Design Studentships

Mr Daniel Mason	Royal College of Art / Imperial College
Mr Nicholas Reddall	Royal College of Art / Imperial College
Miss Rebecca Pilditch	Royal College of Art / Imperial College
Miss Margaret Rees	University of Central England, Industrial Design (Products)
Mr Andrew Stordy	Royal College of Art / Imperial College (2 nd Year Only)
Miss Grace Davey	Royal College of Art / Imperial College (2 nd Year Only)
Mr Stefan Dzisiewski-Smith	Royal College of Art / Imperial College

Fellowship in the Built Environment

Following the inauguration of the Commission's new Fellowship in Design last year, 2007 sees the competition for the seventh Fellowship in the Built Environment, awarded every other year and first introduced in 1995. This year's award will be for research into "Climate Change – The Future for Building Design" and applications are now being assessed. The Fellowship will be awarded in November.

The Commission's Estate

Having earlier mentioned the anniversaries taking place this year, there continues a high level of activity across all corners of the Commission's South Kensington estate. Development of Exhibition Road goes on as core funding is awaited and under the auspices of the Exhibition Road Cultural Group, activities and events are burgeoning. These include an annual summer Exhibition Road Music Day.

At the same time new legislation allowing residential tenants to buy their freeholds may result in the disposal of some of the Commission's residential property freeholds. The Commission's long leases for the colleges and the Royal Albert Hall remain firmly in place, however, and this year the Royal Albert Hall's ground rent of a shilling was formally presented to the Commission's chairman at a Council lunch at the Hall. These generous ground rents represent a major invisible part of the Royal Commission's continuing cultural benevolence.

Royal Commission Staff

2007 has seen a 50% turnover in the Commission's staff of four. Martyn Moore ACA has assumed the role of Accountant and Angela Kenny succeeded Valerie Phillips as our Archivist. Valerie left after nearly 19 years with the Commission during which time she completely re-stowed and rationalised the archive and wrote the full catalogue of every archive item. Now printed, the catalogue will be invaluable for scholars and researchers and copies have been lodged with the National Archive, the British Library and the V&A. The completion of the Record of Award Holders, published in 2001, was also part of Valerie's invaluable contribution.

2008 Alumni Science Evening

Planning is now under way for next year's annual Alumni Evening which will be based on the popular formula of presentations by current Royal Commission Fellows and a keynote speaker, followed by supper. We hope more and more alumni will be able to attend, so please note in your diary that the 2008 Alumni Evening will be on Tuesday 12 February in The Gallery, Cowcross Street, London E1. Further details will be in the next newsletter.

Last word from the Archive

The problems of policing international events are nothing new. The Great Exhibition of 1851 attracted visitors and exhibits from all over the world and, from a very early stage in planning, the Commissioners realised that policing would need careful consideration. They left the detailed planning to the police themselves but agreed to pay the full costs incurred policing inside the 'Crystal Palace'. An average of 350-400 police a day were employed, keeping order and guarding the exhibits. This rose to a peak of 650 a day for two days in May 1851. In addition 26 police from overseas and 24 from the British provinces were seconded to the Exhibition to point out 'criminal characters' from their areas. The total cost to the Commission was £19,647 17s 9d which included a contribution towards policing the immediate vicinity. One student was jailed for 6 weeks for stealing small samples of grain, wool, cotton and metal ores for his own studies but on the whole the Exhibition was crime-free. Of the over 6 million visitors only 21 were arrested! *[From the Commissioners' correspondence, Minutes of the Commission, Commissioners' First Report to parliament and the Illustrated London News.]*

Finally, Commissioners and staff send you every good wish – and hope you will keep in touch; we are always delighted to hear from you.

Malcolm Shirley
Secretary to the Commission