



## E-mail Newsletter December 2009

Dear Royal Commission Alumnus,

2009 seems to have passed very quickly and it certainly has been a busy year for the Royal Commission, as I hope our earlier newsletters have illustrated. On 2 December our Commissioners held their Board of Management meeting, which was then followed by a well-attended Annual Reception – our last major event of the year.

Highlights of our year, as usual have been taking our awards programmes forward and identifying the usual highly impressive candidates to whom we awarded our Research Fellowships, Industrial Fellowships and Industrial Design Studentships. Full details were in our last newsletter and are also posted on the Commission's website.

The office will be closing for Christmas from 17 December and I hope that you, like us, will be able to enjoy a good winter or summer break - depending which hemisphere you're in!

### Alumni Science Evening

As soon as we return to the office in the New Year we will be arranging the details of the 2010 Alumni Science Evening, to take place at The Gallery, in the City of London, on 9 February. Following the usual form and after starting with presentations by final year Research and Industrial Fellows, the keynote address will then be given by Professor Lorna Casselton FRS, who is Emeritus Professor of Fungal Genetics at Oxford University and Foreign Secretary to the Royal Society as well as herself being a distinguished Royal Commission alumnus.

It promises to be a very good evening. Invitations will be sent to all Commissioners, Committee Members and current award holders, but as it is an alumni evening, we would particularly welcome any previous award holder. So if anyone would like to attend **please** e-mail us your contact details and we will send you an invitation.

### Alumni Stories

As usual, our award holders have been busy and you may be interested to know of some of their activities and achievements:

Since completing their Industrial Fellowships our congratulations go to Martin Birkett (Welwyn Components Ltd) 2006 and Andy Turner (Ricardo) 2004, who have been awarded their PhDs.

Victoria Hickman, 2007 Built Environment Fellow, studying sustainable building design for developing communities for a PhD at the University of Cambridge, has been in Kenya collecting data for her first two major case studies. Based in the UN-Habitat (Human Settlements Programme) offices in Nairobi she has been able to work with the stakeholders involved with slum upgrade projects. Victoria made a video in Kibera with an aspiring video journalist living in Mathare slum which you can see at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRI7nh6KjDQ>. Hopefully we will hear more from Victoria in later newsletters.

Congratulations to Yusuf Muhammad, a 2007 Industrial Design Student, for winning the 2009 International James Dyson Award for "*Automist*", an automatic fire suppression system which is designed for the kitchen, where 60% of domestic fires originate. Full details can be seen at <http://www.jamesdysonaward.org/Projects/Projects.aspx> and an article in the Daily Telegraph at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/yourbusiness/brightideas/6208896/A-smart-alternative-to-calling-fire-brigade.html>.

2005 Industrial Design alumnus Duncan Fitzsimons continues his efforts to develop prototypes of his folding wheel for bicycles and wheelchairs <http://www.folding-wheels.com/press.html> and in the meantime has launched "*Monster Monster Notebook Stand*" <http://design-milk.com/monster-monster-notebook-stand> to keep the wolf from the door.

Finally, congratulations to Katie Davidson (née Goodwin), an Industrial Design Student from 2004, for winning the Mercury

Award for Innovation at the International Travel Catering Association Awards for Quodpod™ a new and innovative travel catering solution, designed to improve the quality and appeal of passenger dining while also minimising the throwaway packaging, <http://www.quodpod.com>. This has now gone into production.

There's a great deal of alumni activity going on out there, so please let us know what you've been doing – we would like this section to be a regular feature of our newsletters.

### **Commission's Archive**

Over the summer we digitised nearly 200 items, mainly plans and drawings, from our Archive. Thanks to our close links with the Photographic Unit at the Victoria and Albert Museum, this was carried out to a very high standard and with the minimum of inconvenience. Already these pictures are proving to be useful, as researchers can use them instead of the paper versions thereby reducing wear and tear on the originals, and we can supply top quality copies. It has also meant that we have been able to use them in publicity material, presentations etc.

We have also been progressing putting our catalogue online. This should be available to access via our website by the end of the first quarter 2010. Watch this space for more details!

The Archive is used regularly by Researchers, an activity we welcome. Recent enquiries have included research into alumni from Adelaide University, PhD research into the Urban Environment, MA research into the Victorian view of the working classes, research for the Expo in China re exhibits at the Great Exhibition and research for a museum in Scotland re Shetland's exhibits at the Great Exhibition.

### **Record of Alumni**

It is nearly 10 years since our Record of Alumni was produced and many of you have said how much you have enjoyed looking at it. Alumni from the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century deserve to be recorded as well and we plan to publish a supplement for 2001-2010. We are also looking into better ways to keep that information current and consequently, during the next year, we will be sending an electronic form to those of you receiving your awards from 2001 to date. We would be very grateful if you could fill it in and return it to us so that we can ensure that the Record is as complete as possible.

### **From the Archive**

We never cease to be amazed how quickly and efficiently the Great Exhibition of 1851 was organised with nearly 14,000 exhibitors and over 100,000 exhibits. The number of problems and complaints was incredibly small. However we do have two letters in our archive which raise a problem with the exhibits from Shetland. James Copland wrote to say that a box of items mainly manufactured by "poor females" was sent from Shetland to the Exhibition. On arrival it was "entered as received in the books kept at the Exhibition" and admitted by the Superintendent. When Dr Copland arrived to exhibit the goods the box could not be found. It was only located a month after the Exhibition had opened and at that stage 8 of the 12 exhibits were found to be missing. Dr Copland wanted to claim £15 compensation but, after reviewing the case the Commission sent £10. Thankfully letters like this were very rare.

With best wishes from all of us at the 1851 Royal Commission,

Malcolm Shirley  
Secretary.

Amahl Smith  
Accountant.

Jenifer Parkyn  
Senior Administrator.

Angela Kenny  
Archivist.