News from Head of School

Chris Connolly Retires Today

Today is Chris’s last day at work after 35 years working for the School.

Chris joined the School on 17th June 1979. On his first morning he went to the Establishment Unit (HR these days) for a familiarisation course for new starters, but nobody else turned up and was sent back to the school, so on his first day he arrived at 09.30am (late).

He started as an electronics technician and became part of the technician pool for a number of years, until he joined the school signal processing/simulated environments group, "I never really understood what all that meant", where he remained until 1996 when he was invited to join the Environment Group. He stayed there for a couple of years until joining the ‘duty office’ (CSIS).

He says "I've had a very happy time here at the university and would always advise anyone to apply here for work before looking elsewhere, there are many benefits to be gained through working here".

After retirement, during moments of sobriety he intends to further his interest in calligraphy and to avoid any possible involvement with decorating, DIY and home improvements of all kinds. "Calligraphy is an occupation you can enjoy using the minimum of effort, whilst sitting in comfort!"

Animation 14 is bigger than ever!

Animation14, the 7th annual UK Schools Computer Animation Competition, closed for entries last Friday. We received a record-breaking 1,337 entries from 182 schools across the UK, from 1,765 students. The next job is for the Animation Team to watch them all, and shortlist for the panel of external judges who visit in late April. Awards will be presented at the annual Animation Festival and Inspirational Computer Science Day at the Martin Harris Centre, on 11 July.

Accreditation

Following the joint BCS/IET accreditation visit in November 2011 we have finally had confirmation of BCS accreditation for all of our UG and PGT programmes and IET accreditation for all of our Masters programmes (including MEng). This has been a long haul, requiring heroic perseverance from the whole team. There will now be a brief interlude of a few months before preparations start for the next accreditation visit.

President’s Award Scholarships

Three PhD applicants have secured President’s Award Scholarships in the latest round. Congratulations to the applicants, and thanks to Xiaojun Zeng, Ke Chen and Matthew Harrison for their efforts in preparing and presenting the cases.

Code First Girls

Last weekend the School hosted Code First Girls, organised by Entrepreneur First and Ciprian Tomoiaga (Y2, CSwIE). 22 attendees spent two days learning HTML, CSS, Javascript, and Bootstrap. This fabulous event was possible thanks to the hard work and commitment of students Neha Agrawal (Y3, CSE), David Buckley (PhD), Marios Katsakioris (Y1, CSwIE), Alexandru Mihailescu (Y1, CS), Francesca Popescu (Y1, SEwIE), Teo Taylor (Y1, CS) and PGT students Moss Abdelkhalik, Soldier Dey,
Hamizah Badrul Hisham, Mamatha, and Vivek Vijayan. Well done all, and thanks to Duncan Hull, Mabel Yau, Tony McDonald and David Rydeheard for their support.

Raspberry Jam

...and at the same time in a busy weekend the School hosted the monthly North-West Raspberry Jam meeting. Lots of people -- young and not-so-young! -- had great fun with their Pis in LF31.

Events

President’s visit (note time changes) 31 Mar 2014

The times of today’s meetings are:
10.30 – 11.00 – Student meeting in 2.19
11.00 – 11.30 – SLT meeting in 2.15
11.30 – 12.00 – Staff meeting in 2.15
Staff are not invited to the student meeting. All staff are invited to the staff meeting and Nancy will take questions as usual.

**Westminster Health Forum Keynote Seminar**

1 Apr 14

Central London

Timed to follow the release of NHS England’s 10 year technology strategy Unleashing the Power of People, due in March 2014, this seminar will provide an opportunity to consider next steps for IT in the NHS. The government and NHS organisations will invest £1 billion in IT over the next 3 years as part of the ‘Safer Hospitals, Safer Wards’ Technology Fund, so the role of new technologies in providing improved patient care will be considered, including utilising informatics in the delivery of health and social care services.

Planned sessions focus on challenges in increasing access to electronic patient records, and supporting the workforce in engaging with information systems towards the delivery of a paperless NHS by 2018. Many high-level NHS individuals will be in attendance.

Registration required (£190 plus VAT) – remember funding support from the School may be available. Contact Sarah Chatwin or Robert Stevens for more details.

**Magnetism and spintronics in nano-scale materials**

2 Apr 14

Christopher Morrison – University of Warwick

11:00, Atlas 1, Kilburn building

Magnetic and spintronic phenomena are already utilised in several key technologies, and exciting future applications have been proposed and explored in recent years. Spintronics is a branch of electronics in which both the charge and the spin of the electron are used to carry information. The field of spintronics research was launched in the late 1980s with the discovery of giant magnetoresistance (GMR), for which Albert Fert and Peter Grünberg were awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 2007. The GMR effect can be used to make very sensitive magnetic field sensors, and was implemented into hard disk drive read heads to dramatically improve storage density.

**All-metallic spin transport and magnetic devices at the nanoscale**

2 Apr 14

Liam O'Brien – University of Cambridge & University of Minnesota

15:00, Atlas 1, Kilburn building

The field of spintronics—where not only the charge, but the spin of an electron is manipulated—is one of the most rapidly developing and exciting areas of nanoscience. Through the giant magneto-resistance effect, the discipline previously revolutionised the data storage industry and, in conjunction with the field of nanomagnetism, offers promising new technological applications from data storage to microwave field generation. Despite this promise, much remains to be understood in the interaction between nanoscale magnetism and spin polarised currents.

**Digitisation, you and the University Library**

2 Apr 14

Benefits for research and teaching

Lunch: 12:30-13:00, Classics foyer, Samuel Alexander building

Event: 13-15:00, A101 theatre, Samuel Alexander building

Digitisation provides valuable opportunities to improve the range and reach of your research and teaching.

Specifically created for those involved in teaching and research, this event highlights the experience of academic colleagues who have already engaged in the digitisation process, illustrating the processes and demonstrating the benefits of doing so.

Participants will learn how to:

- promote their specialist area of work;
- increase the range and depth of materials available for teaching;
- improve resource access for students;
- make specialist materials more easily available;
- associate their work, and the University, with international provision of unique resources;
• achieve better integration of the teaching process with Library provision.

Speakers:
Mary Begley – SALC
Laurence Brown - SAHC
Carol Burrows – The University of Manchester Library
Martin Dodge – SEED
David Denison – SALC
Martin Snelling – The University of Manchester Library

Booking required.  Click here to register.

Spintronic oscillators trends and challenges 3 Apr 14
Giovanni Finocchio – University of Messina
10:00, 2.19, Kilburn building

Oscillators are the basic components of many communication, navigation, and measurement systems. There is a strong interest, driven by cost and performance, to develop improved microwave oscillators for on-chip integration, and the spintronic oscillators are promising candidate for this due to their combination of characteristics such as frequency tunability, nanoscale size, broad range of working temperature, and relatively easy integration with complementary metal-oxide-semiconductor (CMOS) technology. This seminar will discuss about the "state of the art" of spintronic oscillators. In detail, recent advances and remaining challenges of spin-transfer torque oscillators and spin-Hall oscillators will be discussed.

Funding Opportunities

Research Support Office
Please contact us through researchsupportcsm@manchester.ac.uk.

There is information about support for grant writing, submission and successful examples at http://staffnet.cs.manchester.ac.uk/reso/ and through EPS. The EPS blog The Word contains features News, Events and comment relevant to Postgraduate Researchers, Research Staff and Supervisors or PIs.

Important: Changes in EU Funding Opportunities
More detailed information is available now that for Horizon2020 has started (the successor of FP7 EU programme). EU research funding is important for the School and it’s important to understand what’s available http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/index.html

Reminder - H2020 information available
EU funding-related documents are placed by the University's EU team at: http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/search.aspx
The easiest way to find these documents is to search using the keyword: 'Horizon 2020'

A great resource recommended by the ICT National Contact Point is http://www.ictic.org/, which also provides handy overview documents. Details on upcoming events are available, including focuses on graphene, HBP and FET.

Featured Research Outcomes

Did you know... papers featured in the newsletter also go on display in the Kilburn Building (outside 2.7)? Send your new publications to Robert Stevens so that more people get to know about your research.

http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/tocresult.jsp?isnumber=4357935

Have we missed something? If you have some award news that you would like us to know about please contact Sarah Chatwin.