



Quentin Blake

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100 YEARS OF ROALD DAHL

The Welsh roots of one of the world's greatest story tellers

CARDIFF TO RIO

Meet the Cardiff University Olympic hopefuls

DECODING THE BRAIN

Breakthrough gene discovery

Get involved



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Cardiff Connect Spring 2016

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Gravitational Waves

Researchers from Cardiff University's School of Physics and Astronomy were part of the international team which directly observed gravitational waves – tiny ripples in space-time that are emitted as a result of violent cosmic events.

The detection will allow Einstein's theories to be tested further, and give researchers a new window to observe extreme cosmic events that are occurring in the universe.

This picture offers a numerical simulation of two inspiralling black holes that merge to form a new black hole.

Image credit – Numerical-relativistic Simulation: S. Ossokine, A. Buonanno (Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics)
Scientific Visualization: W. Bengel (Airborne Hydro Mapping GmbH)

Read more: cardiff.ac.uk/cardiff-connect

News

AWARDS

Aadarsh Mishra (Mechanical Engineering 2014) has been elected Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in London. He is one of the youngest fellows in the Society's 196-year history, and the youngest Indian to become a Fellow.

The Guardian has ranked Cardiff's School of Dentistry as the best place to study the profession in the UK according to student satisfaction levels.

Cardiff University's Symphony Orchestra have released their latest CD featuring the world premiere recordings of two works by Claude Debussy.

The University has scooped four prizes, including University of the Year, at the Insider Business and Education Partnership Awards.

The University's National Software Academy has been awarded the Collaborative Partnership Prize at the fourth annual ESTnet Awards in recognition of its close collaboration with leading businesses in Wales.

Optometry graduates from the University are significantly ahead of the national average in gaining their professional qualifications, according to the Research Excellence Framework results.



© Vincent Knight

TRAINING NAMIBIA'S FUTURE SCIENTISTS

EDUCATION

Cardiff University has helped organise an intensive maths school in Namibia in a bid to combat high dropout rates amongst the country's future scientists.

The University's Phoenix Project teamed up with the University of Namibia to offer a two-week mathematics course to its science students, who must pass a mathematics qualification in their first year. A lack of maths knowledge has

led to many of these students failing to complete their courses, and consequently great potential has been lost.

Dr Robert Wilson (**GCert 2007**), Director of Learning and Teaching at Cardiff's School of Mathematics, said: "The aim is to provide a refresher in essential mathematical topics and also to increase confidence and reduce the maths anxiety that some students may have."

RESTORING VISION

HEALTH

Scientists from Cardiff's School of Optometry and Vision Sciences, in collaboration with Osaka University in Japan, have successfully grown human eye tissue and restored vision in rabbits following stem cell transplantation.



Study co-author Professor Andrew Quantock said: "Our work not only holds potential for developing cells for treatment of other areas of the eye, but could set the stage for future human clinical trials of anterior eye transplantation to restore visual function."



Images courtesy of Professor Ian Hall, Head of School, School of Earth and Ocean Sciences; @IanHall_CU

SCIENCE AT SEA

EARTH SCIENCES

Professor Chris MacLeod from Cardiff's School of Earth and Ocean Sciences has recently led an expedition to drill into the Earth's mantle for the first time.

The international team of scientists set sail for the Indian Ocean as part of the prestigious International Ocean Discovery Program with the aim of testing a 100-year-old theory that supports our current

understanding of the Earth's structure. Remarkably, the next part of the program is also being led by a Cardiff scientist. Head of School Professor Ian Hall (**MD 2004**) is supervising a separate expedition in South Africa to study the impact of one of the world's strongest ocean currents on global climate change. Both expeditions have the potential to have profound implications for our current understanding of the planet.

MAKING MUSIC HISTORY

ALUMNI

Sir Karl Jenkins (BMus 1966, Hon 2005) has become the first Welsh composer to receive a knighthood.

Sir Karl was awarded this honour for his dedication to composing and crossing

musical genres. One of his best-known pieces, *The Armed Man*, is still performed more than a 100 times a year around the globe since its original performance in 2000.



© Jason Alden

CHANGING THE STUDENT WORLD

ALUMNI

Simon Blake (BA 1995) has been appointed National Union of Students chief executive, representing the UK's seven million students.



A SWEET DISCOVERY

NATURE

Cardiff researchers have discovered a 'Welsh Manuka honey' in an amateur beekeeper's garden in Gwynedd.

In a joint study with the National Botanic Garden of Wales, researchers from Cardiff's School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences analysed honey created by bees from over 200 different Welsh hives. This led to the discovery of the two hives in beekeeper Chris Hickman's garden, whose bees have created North Welsh honey with antibacterial power as potent as New Zealand's renowned Manuka.

The discovery was only made possible because Wales is amongst the first countries to DNA barcode all 1,143 of its indigenous flowering plants.



BATTLING THE BRAIN

HEALTH

Cardiff scientists believe they may have discovered a new way to aid recovery in patients with traumatic brain injuries.

Over one million people in the UK are admitted to hospital each year as a result of a head injury. Patients with brain injuries are susceptible to life-threatening infections and inflammation of the brain. This condition, called 'complement', is caused by the body's immune system which may view damaged tissue as foreign disease.

Now, scientists from Cardiff's School of Medicine have engineered a new 'homing' treatment which, when tested on mice, inactivates the complement system, reduces inflammation and aids recovery.

"If our findings can be translated into humans this could be life-changing for patients with head injuries," said Professor Claire Harris, who led the research.

MIND AND MATTER

INNOVATION

Cardiff's School of Engineering has won a competition, backed by the NFL, to develop a material to protect against brain injuries.

Known as C3, the multi-layered elastic has the potential to reduce brain injuries and permanent damage sustained by American football players. It can be tested and tailored by super computers for specific impacts, before being

manufactured through cost-effective state-of-the-art 3D printing technology.

Project leader and senior lecturer Dr Peter Theobald (PGCert 2010) said: "Our ultimate goal is to achieve a material that provides a step-change in head health and protection, whilst achieving metrics that ensure commercial viability."

A CUBRIC MILESTONE

TECHNOLOGY

Europe's most powerful MRI scanner has arrived at Cardiff University's Brain Research Imaging Centre (CUBRIC) and is set to offer scientists unprecedented access to the brain.

The first of its kind in Europe, and only second of its kind in the world, the specially-adapted MRI scanner will help scientists gain better understanding of conditions such as schizophrenia and Alzheimer's disease.

Professor Derek Jones, Director of CUBRIC, said: "Ultimately we hope that this will help provide new targets for treatment and improved healthcare for people with mental illness."



BREAKFAST IS SERVED

HEALTH

A direct and positive link between pupils' breakfasts and their grades has been demonstrated for the first time in a ground-breaking study carried out by experts from the University.

The study, which was conducted on 5000 pupils from over 100 primary schools, sought to analyse the link between breakfast consumption and quality and subsequent academic performance. Results revealed that those who ate a good breakfast achieved higher grades.

Dr Graham Moore (PhD 2011), who co-authored the report, said: "There is good reason to believe that where schools are able to find ways of encouraging young people who don't eat breakfast at home to eat a school breakfast, they will reap significant educational benefits."



LEADING CHANGE

LEADERSHIP

Cardiff University alumnae have been featured in a list of leading women at the helm of the professional services sector in Wales.

Helen Molyneux (LLB 1987), Alison Hoy (PGCE 2001), Lynn Pamment (BScEcon 1989) and Carol Warburton (BSc 1990) have all been included in the list of 19 notable executive women in Wales.

Women are reportedly under-represented at executive level in most business sectors, but these University alumnae have made a big impact in sectors previously dominated by male professionals.



Ms Pamment said: "Cardiff University opened my eyes to my potential for the future. The degree gave me confidence in my ability and helped me develop links to business so I could make the right choices for my future career."

NEWS

Blogger Alice Gray (BSc 2013) has been listed in the BBC's 100 Women for 2015 for her dedication to discussing issues women face in science, technology, maths and engineering industries.

Gemma Aboe (MSc 2013) was awarded The Pilgrim Trust Student Conservator of the Year 2015 for her research and conservation of a 115-year-old shield.

Dr Beatrice Berthon (PhD 2015) has won the Manufacturers' Award for Innovation from the Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine for her novel approach to improving radiation treatment for cancer patients.

Dr Tim Canning (PhD 2014), Professor Steve Cripps and Professor Paul Tasker from Cardiff's School of Engineering have been awarded the 2016 Microwave Prize for their research paper and contribution in the field of microwave theory.

Professor Karen Holford FEng (BEng 1984, PhD 1987) and Wendy Sadler (BSc 1994) have been shortlisted for the Womenspire Awards, a new series of awards which celebrates the extraordinary achievements of Welsh women.



GOLD

A new gold catalyst discovered by Cardiff University experts has been successfully commercialised by UK chemicals company Johnson Matthey.

Dr Hazel Prichard from the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences has discovered consistently high levels of gold in Britain's sewer systems as part of a collaboration with Thames Water.

Professor Graham Hutchings, Director of the Cardiff Catalysis Institute, has been named one of the world's 'most influential scientific minds' by leading information provider Thomson Reuters.



BOOST FOR WELSH EMERGENCY CARE

MEDICINE

Professor Tim Rainer (BSc 1983, MBBCh 1986) has been appointed as the University's first Professor of Emergency Medicine.

Professor Rainer, who has returned to Cardiff after nearly 20 years at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, will play a vital role in delivering improved emergency care across Wales.

He said: "Coming back home to Cardiff fills me with excitement. I can sense the desire of people in the University, the Health Board and the emergency department to face the challenges of this age and to become world leaders and world providers in emergency medicine."



© Literature Wales 4 Aug 2013

A NEW VOICE FOR WALES

LITERATURE

Ifor ap Glyn (Welsh 1983) was appointed the fourth national poet of Wales on St David's Day 2016.

Succeeding Gillian Clarke, Ifor will take on the responsibility of promoting Welsh poetry on a global scale.

MATHS SAVES LIVES

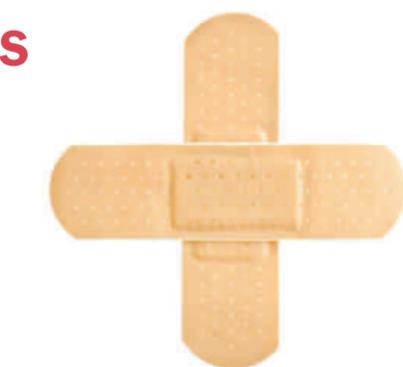
INNOVATION

A Cardiff University project has helped cut stroke mortality rates by 60% at a London hospital.

Led by Professors Jeff Griffiths and Paul Harper from Cardiff's School of Mathematics, the project has been commended for producing major benefits in hospitals across England and Wales in regards to both money saved and deaths prevented.

Dubbed 'Maths Saves Lives', the model analyses and unravels the complex reasons behind hospital delays in order to cut waiting times and ultimately save lives.

Mathematician Julie Vile (PhD 2013), who is part of the project, said: "Maths isn't just about numbers, and politicians are beginning to recognise the benefits modelling can offer



to patients as part of a systematic approach to service improvement. Hopefully, modelling will shape the future of the NHS."

The project has since picked up a Times Higher Education award for 'Outstanding Contribution to Innovation and Technology'.



President and Vice-Chancellor Colin Riordan and Professor Sir Michael Owen receiving the Queen's Anniversary Prize on behalf of Cardiff University

A ROYAL ACHIEVEMENT

AWARDS

The UK's most prestigious academic award, the Queen's Anniversary Prize, has been awarded to Cardiff University's world-leading mental health research facility, the MRC Centre for Neuropsychiatric Genetics and Genomics.

Since its launch in 2009, the Centre has made a series of landmark discoveries ranging from the identification of a genetic link between intellectual disability and mental health to the discovery of the first new Alzheimer's disease risk genes in over 17 years.

KEEPING AN EYE OUT

TECHNOLOGY

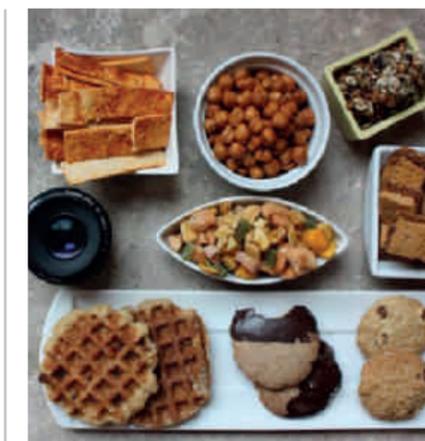
Specsavers, co-founded by alumni Doug Perkins (BSc 1965, Hon 2005) and Dame Mary Perkins (BSc 1965, Hon 2005), has funded the development of a vision-screening software in order to detect eye problems amongst children.

The software, dubbed 'SchoolScreener EZ', has been sent to over 27,000 schools after research found that nearly four

million children in the UK have never had their eyesight tested at school.

Dame Mary said: "A child's eyesight will continue to develop right up to the age of eight and a number of eye care issues can be corrected by an optometrist if detected before this time."

The test is available to schools across the UK free of charge.



CARRY ON SNACKING

BUSINESS

A Mumbai-based food subscription service, launched by Aditya Sanghavi (BSc 2013) in 2015, aims to deliver healthy snacks straight to a customer's doorstep.

Snackible was born after Aditya noticed a lack of affordable nutritious snacks available on the market. Having been inspired by subscription boxes during his time as a student at Cardiff University, Aditya adopted a similar model and introduced the concept in India. ■





James Goldston

President of ABC News **James Goldston (PgDip 1991)** is known for revitalising some of America's most iconic current affairs programming.

I was hooked on journalism from the very first minute. My career began with work experience at the *Richmond and Twickenham Times*, and it became my passion and my vocation from that day onwards. I loved meeting extraordinary people with extraordinary stories and that is as true today as it was back then.

I was fortunate enough to get a place at Cardiff's School of Journalism. We had great leaders on the Newspaper course, such as John Rees and David English. It was one of the most important experiences of my life; I came out of there with a much deeper understanding of the craft and a hunger to tell the most important stories in the world. Not only did I meet my wife, Laura Trevelyan, while in Cardiff, but I also made many life-long friends with whom I have shared all kinds of adventures in the years since.

I fell in love with the city, and the people of Cardiff. I even felt affection for the barely habitable house I shared with a gang of fellow journalists in Pontcanna. We spent a lot of time at Cardiff Arms Park, on the city's many terraces, and of course, in the many excellent pubs.

I was fortunate enough to get a classic current affairs education at the BBC. I worked on *The Money Programme*, *Newsnight* and *Panorama* with some of the best minds in television journalism: Jeremy Paxman, Gavin Esler, Kirsty Wark and Mark Mardell. I learned as much as I could from all of them.

My career has provided me with the opportunity to travel the world – from covering the end of the troubles in Northern Ireland to the start of the war in Kosovo. Best of all, my life in journalism has continued to lead me to meet people with amazing stories all over the globe – and people who have shown the most amazing grace in the face of truly terrible circumstances.

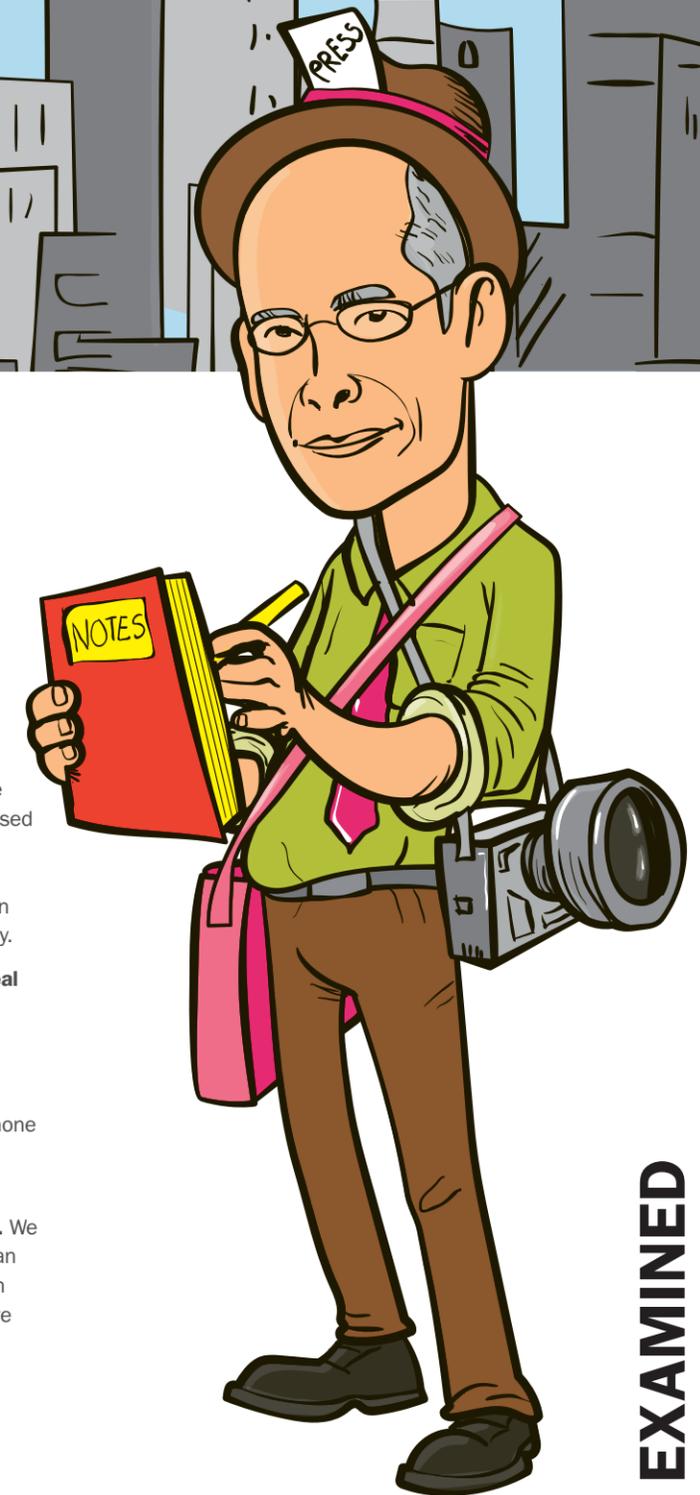
I moved from the BBC to ITV to join the exciting launch of *Tonight with Trevor McDonald*. Sir Trevor is one of the all-time greats, and one of the true gentlemen of broadcasting – I was lucky to get to know him. I was also re-united with previous colleague Martin Bashir while there.

I will never forget Martin calling to tell me "we are going to Neverland", which was the start of an extraordinary two-year journey with Michael Jackson. The documentary that followed caused quite a stir, and led Martin and I to a new adventure in the United States.

I have been privileged to work at ABC News for the past 11 years – first as Senior Producer, then Executive Producer and now as President of ABC News. I am blessed to work with the most extraordinarily talented anchors: Barbara Walters, Diane Sawyer, Robin Roberts, George Stephanopoulos, David Muir and all the remarkable men and women of ABC News who drive us forward every day.

It is an exhilarating and thrilling job at a moment of real and historic change around the world. Last summer I travelled to the Vatican to do a special broadcast with Pope Francis and this year we have a fascinating and consequential election in store. I am always grateful to the great team at the Cardiff School of Journalism, as none of this would have been possible without their help and guidance.

We are having the adventure of a lifetime in New York. We came over with two small boys – they now have American accents, and we have a third son with his own American passport. Their roots are in the UK. They're lucky to have the best of both worlds. I feel very fortunate indeed. ■



EXAMINED



100 years of Roald Dahl

Dahl of the Unexpected

Professor Damian Walford Davies, Head of the School of English, Communication and Philosophy, explores the Welsh roots of one of the world's greatest storytellers.

Half a mile north of Llandaff at the Danescourt roundabout – from which you can see Cardiff (and on a good day, the Bristol Channel) spread out beneath you – take Danescourt Way and follow it round past Heol Aradur to Rachel Close. Resist the charms of the newly refurbished Radyr Court Pub and cross into the still peaceful acre of St John's church.

Once islanded by meadows, the church is now surrounded by modern housing, which makes the visit faintly uncanny. Continue to the west boundary wall of the churchyard, and you'll find a granite wheel-head cross, pink-brown in colour, taller than the surrounding monuments. Its Celtic decoration is weathered. It is the grave of Harald Dahl and his beloved daughter Astri.

For some reason, I feel closer to Harald's son, Roald Dahl (whom I never met, but with whose books I grew up), in this spot than anywhere else in Cardiff, where the author – now known as 'the world's number one storyteller' – was born on 13 September 1916 (in Villa Marie, Llandaff, to be precise). Dahl's official biographer, Donald Sturrock, remarks that the bold Celtic cross marks "perhaps a public commitment the Dahl family had made to the Welsh soil in which they had put down their roots".

An enterprising Norwegian, Harald Dahl had set up as a successful shipbroker with his partner, Ludvig Aadnesen, in booming Cardiff Docks, and Roald was to spend the first nine years of his life in some luxury in

rural Radyr and in distinctly upper-middle-class Llandaff (not incorporated into Cardiff until 1922). The place went in deep and in ways that are difficult to calibrate. Dahl's relation to Wales is as complex and intricate as the Celtic knotwork on his father's headstone.

Roald Dahl: Cardiff boy. With the blessing of the Roald Dahl Estate, 2016 will see the capital city become the global focus of centenary celebrations that promise to tap into Dahl's brand of radical unruliness and unsettling oddness, and harness his commitment to emancipating young readers' imaginations.

But how can Cardiff claim Dahl? In so many ways, Dahl resists any attempt to pigeonhole him. A master of comedy (of various hues), he experienced a series of personal traumas from the early 1960s whose magnitude makes his achievement all the more remarkable. He was both a successful writer of adult fiction and children's author extraordinaire (indeed, it is more accurate to say he blurred those categories in innovative ways). He was the Shell employee in Tanganyika who soon became a fighter ace in the skies above Greece, Iraq and Syria and then a British intelligence agent, operating covertly in the interests of an embattled Britain in the early 1940s at the heart of the British Embassy in Washington D.C.

Always regarded as an outsider – what Sturrock calls a "rural maverick" – by the London literary set, he thrived on being dissident, even though he craved the



© Quentin Blake 1982



Roald Dahl centenary events

Cardiff Children's Literature Festival

Saturday 16 April–Sunday 24 April

The festival will feature world-famous children's authors such as Jacqueline Wilson, and several of its events will be dedicated to Dahl's centenary, including the Roald Dahl Party.

A Welsh Dahl?

**Thursday 21 April
Cardiff University Main Building**

As Cardiff celebrates the centenary of one of the world's greatest storytellers, the University will be hosting a discussion examining the Welsh roots in Roald Dahl's imagination and writings. Hosted by Professor Damian Walford Davies, this special event aims to untangle Dahl's complex and intriguing relationship with Wales and its culture.

Roald Dahl Walking Tour with Dewi Pws

**Sunday 24 April
The Old Library, Cardiff**

Walk in Roald Dahl's footsteps as Dewi Pws takes you on an interactive tour around Cardiff, where Dahl's imagination comes to life.

Land of Song

**June 2016
Cardiff Bay**

Wales Millennium Centre is helping schoolchildren across Wales learn songs inspired by Dahl's writings for a celebratory performance in June for both children and adults alike.

Inside Stories

**July–November 2016
National Museum Wales**

This popular exhibition will be coming to Cardiff in July and will feature Sir Quentin Blake's distinctive artwork.

City of the Unexpected

Saturday 17 September–Sunday 18 September

National Theatre Wales and the Wales Millennium Centre will be joining forces to create a city-wide celebration of Roald Dahl's work. Directed by Nigel Jamieson, director of Sydney's Olympic opening ceremony, the events will include public performances, large-scale spectacles, theatrical productions and art commissions from Welsh artists in locations such as Cardiff Castle and the shopping arcades.

The Wondercrump World of Roald Dahl

**Friday 12 August– Saturday 31 December
Wales Millennium Centre**

An exhibition which displays artefacts from Dahl's personal life.

Find out more:

cardiff.ac.uk/alumni/events



Sir Quentin Blake (Hon 2006) Illustrator of Roald Dahl's books

There are one or two things to say about illustrating Roald Dahl: you start with reading. You have to bathe yourself, to soak yourself in the text.

It actually guides you through what you have to do. When trying to capture the evil nature of the crocodile in *The Enormous Crocodile*, I did a lot of experimental drawings. However, I realised that this was someone you loved to hate – he reminded me of the crocodile in Punch and Judy shows. So his teeth are nothing like crocodile's real teeth. They are teeth for eating children with.

Equally, I think the moments you choose to illustrate vary. With a short text, like *Esio Trot*, you are showing practically everything that happens. One of the great things of working with Roald was that he wanted you to show it happening. However, with longer texts it is a question of picking the right moments.

In *Matilda*, Bruce Bogtrotter eats a piece of chocolate cake when he is not supposed to. He undergoes the punishment of having to eat a whole chocolate cake in front of the whole school, and of course he is supposed to conk out half way through. But the little blighter finishes it, and that awful headteacher, the Trunchbull, lifts the plate and crashes it over his head (although by then he is anaesthetised with chocolate cake, he is beyond pain really).

I thought, you have to hold back – that wonderful end belongs to the author. It is Roald's end of chapter, and so I got as close as I could to it. That way, if you were just leafing through the book, that would raise your expectations. But it wouldn't tell you everything.



Decoding the brain

In September 2015, Cardiff researchers made a breakthrough discovery – identifying a “Rosetta Stone” gene that could hold the key to decoding the function of all genes involved in schizophrenia.

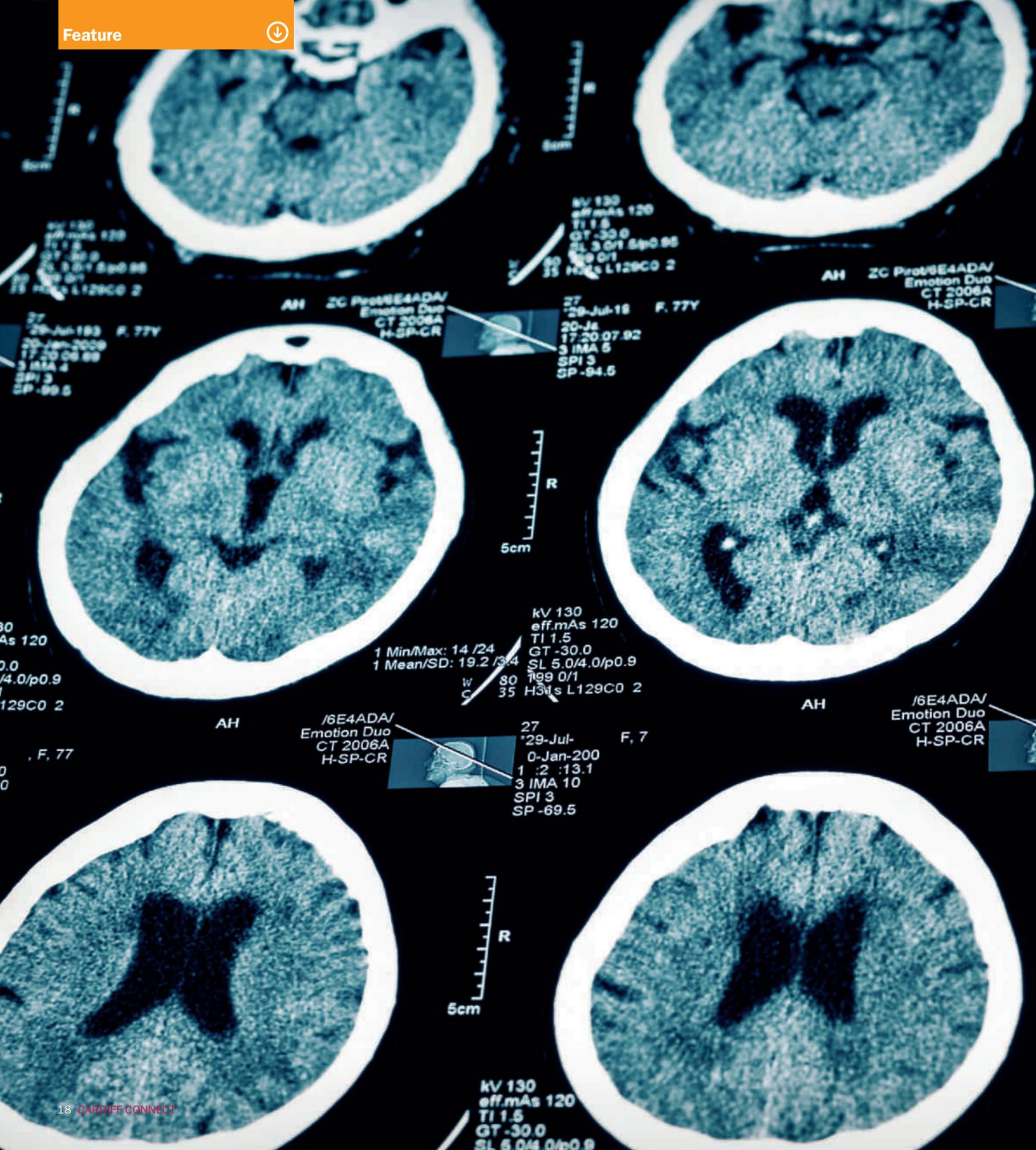
The discovery shed new light on the role of the Disrupted in Schizophrenia 1 (DISC-1) gene in the early development of the brain. The study, led by Professor Kevin Fox and Neil Hardingham, found that if DISC-1 signalling is disrupted during a specific window of time during early growth, it provokes a lifelong lack of synaptic plasticity in the barrel cortex. As an adult, this could cause problems in perception that are symptomatic of schizophrenia.

Whilst the influence of DISC-1 has long been the subject of scientific debate, it is the pinpointing of a key period of development – which equates to the

third trimester of pregnancy – that could prove hugely significant in the future treatment of schizophrenia and other neurological diseases.

Professor Jeremy Hall, Director of Neurosciences & the Mental Health Research Institute, feels that as well as providing important insight into schizophrenia, this new discovery opens up opportunities to look at the development of other conditions and discover pathways to treatment.

Diseases currently under the spotlight include dementia, and its most common variant, Alzheimer's disease – a key area of research at Cardiff University.



“Whilst the influence of DISC-1 has long been the subject of scientific debate, it is the pinpointing of a key period of development – which equates to the third trimester of pregnancy – that could prove hugely significant in the future treatment of schizophrenia and other neurological diseases.”

“Early brain development seems to be important in all of them,” said Professor Hall. “It changes the way the brain learns for life.”

“In addition to recognising the role of synaptic plasticity, what we’re increasingly seeing now is that immune function is important in the neurosciences. That’s particularly the case in Alzheimer’s disease.”

Behind the development of this theory is a team led by Professor Julie Williams CBE (PhD 1987), Professor of Neuropsychiatric Genetics & Genomics and Chief Scientific Adviser for Wales.

She said: “For a hundred years, since the time of Alois Alzheimer himself, we have associated immune response with Alzheimer’s disease, but it has always been thought of as a passive response and therefore not particularly focused upon.”

“We now know that it is actually a significant component of the disease.”

Plasticity may well have an effect – but this is a result of the cell death that takes place with the onset of the disease.”

So, how likely are we to detecting risk factors for diseases such as schizophrenia or Alzheimer’s? According to Professor Williams: “These are very complex diseases. However, we are now at a stage where we can produce a biological algorithm – based on 80,000 genetic variants – in order to give individuals a risk score on their potential to develop Alzheimer’s disease.”

Professor Hall added: “We’re very eager to build upon what we now know. In the last 50 years, the knowledge surrounding diseases such as schizophrenia, dementia and Alzheimer’s as a whole has advanced massively and will continue to do so. We’re very proud to be part of that process and to be able to carry out life-changing research that will have real impact in Wales and beyond.”



WHAT IS THE BARREL CORTEX?

The barrel cortex is part of the somatosensory cortex processing touch from the whiskers. The somatosensory cortex processes touch and tactile perception from the whole body – touch is one of five traditional senses.



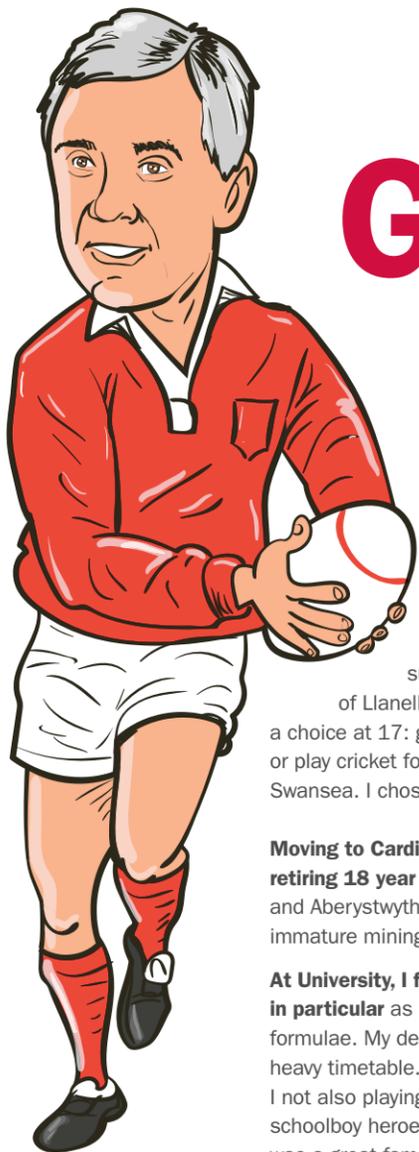
WHAT IS SYNAPTIC PLASTICITY?

Synaptic plasticity is the brain’s ability to adapt its structure and function.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR CARDIFF UNIVERSITY?

Psychiatry and immunology are both areas of strength at the University. The increased linkage of immune pathways to these psychiatric disorders is a new area of research and may represent a new route for treatments pioneered by Cardiff researchers.



Gareth Davies

Gareth Davies (BSc 1977) is Cardiff RFC's record points scorer, former Wales captain and the current chairman of the Welsh Rugby Union.

As a child, my favourite sport was cricket. However, the early seventies were exciting for a rugby fan, with successful Lions tours and my hometown of Llanelli beating the All Blacks. I had to make a choice at 17: go on a Welsh WRU coaching course or play cricket for Wales' schoolboys against India in Swansea. I chose the former and the rest is history.

Moving to Cardiff was a huge step for a shy and retiring 18 year old. I was offered places in London and Aberystwyth, but Cardiff was the closest. For an immature mining village lad, that made a difference.

At University, I found that I enjoyed organic chemistry in particular as it revolved around problem solving and formulae. My degree was quite tough as there was a heavy timetable. It wouldn't have been a problem were I not also playing in the Wales squad alongside my schoolboy heroes, such as Phil Bennett. However, there was a great family feel between staff and students so whilst we occasionally found the going tough we all enjoyed a fantastic experience at University.

Playing for Cardiff RFC was a genuinely life-changing experience and made me mature more quickly than perhaps I would have done otherwise. I had a great time, and made some friends for life. We still meet up every year – 40 years on.

At Cardiff RFC, we built unquestionably the best club side in the UK – if not Europe. We had a great team – Terry Holmes, Robert Norster, Alan Phillips, Jeff Whitefoot, Mark Ring and Bob Lakin. Highlights include beating the Wallabies twice, including the 1984 Grand Slam teams.

I dropped a goal at Twickenham to win the UAU for UWIST, making us the first Welsh university to win the tournament. For me, that's just as memorable as captaining Wales and playing for the Lions. My playing career had many highlights – and in every age group. At ten years of age, I dropped a goal in extra time of a county sevens tournament to win

the event – my primary school's first trophy. All carry great significance for me, for different reasons.

I wish I had made the move to Australia earlier. Working with the Welsh Government in Australia was a great life experience. It may not have been possible with a growing family or ailing parents but I loved my three years down under and felt enriched by the experience.

The relationship between the Union and the regions was desperate a year ago – it was a broken down, dysfunctional scenario. The situation is now 100% better. Things are very tough for the regions when you look at the financial clout of France and England, but we are all working diligently to find solutions. There are still tensions but hopefully we understand each other's problems and as long as we are open with each other then we can work together.

I had no ambitions to become a board member, let alone Chairman [of the WRU]. But circumstances dictated otherwise and I feel very proud to carry the responsibility. The early days were difficult as the Board was looking for new leadership, but were probably not quite sure of my presence or contribution, whilst the executive team had been involved in a very nasty battle with the regions, of which I had been a member for a few months.

Looking back at the World Cup, I think Wales performed heroics. Even the All Blacks would have been depleted minus so much of their first choice starting line-up, and not once did they ever complain. That is great credit to them. However, I also look back in frustration; Australia should have been cleaned out when they were two men down for nearly ten minutes and I felt that the refereeing went against us in the quarter final with South Africa.

The greatest challenge that all Northern Hemisphere sides face is extending our horizons beyond winning the 6 Nations. Despite the significance of the 6 Nations and the high profile of the tournament in Europe, there is a bigger world out there. ■



Cardiff to Rio

**MEET THE CARDIFF UNIVERSITY
OLYMPIC HOPEFULS**

Photography by
Paul Hindmarsh





“ The journey to winning Commonwealth gold was made easier thanks to the massive support I received from Cardiff University and Sport Wales. ”

**NATALIE POWELL (BSC 2015)
COMMONWEALTH GOLD MEDALLIST
JUDOKA, TEAM GB**

I chose Cardiff University to study Biomedical Science not only because Cardiff is a great city but also because, crucially for me, it has a full-time judo academy.

Although Olympic qualification is a huge ambition of mine, from a young age my aim was to be a Commonwealth champion. The Commonwealth Games are extra special for Welsh athletes because it is the only opportunity you get to represent Wales. So winning gold in 2014 was a dream come true, making a few tough years balancing studies with full-time training more than worthwhile.

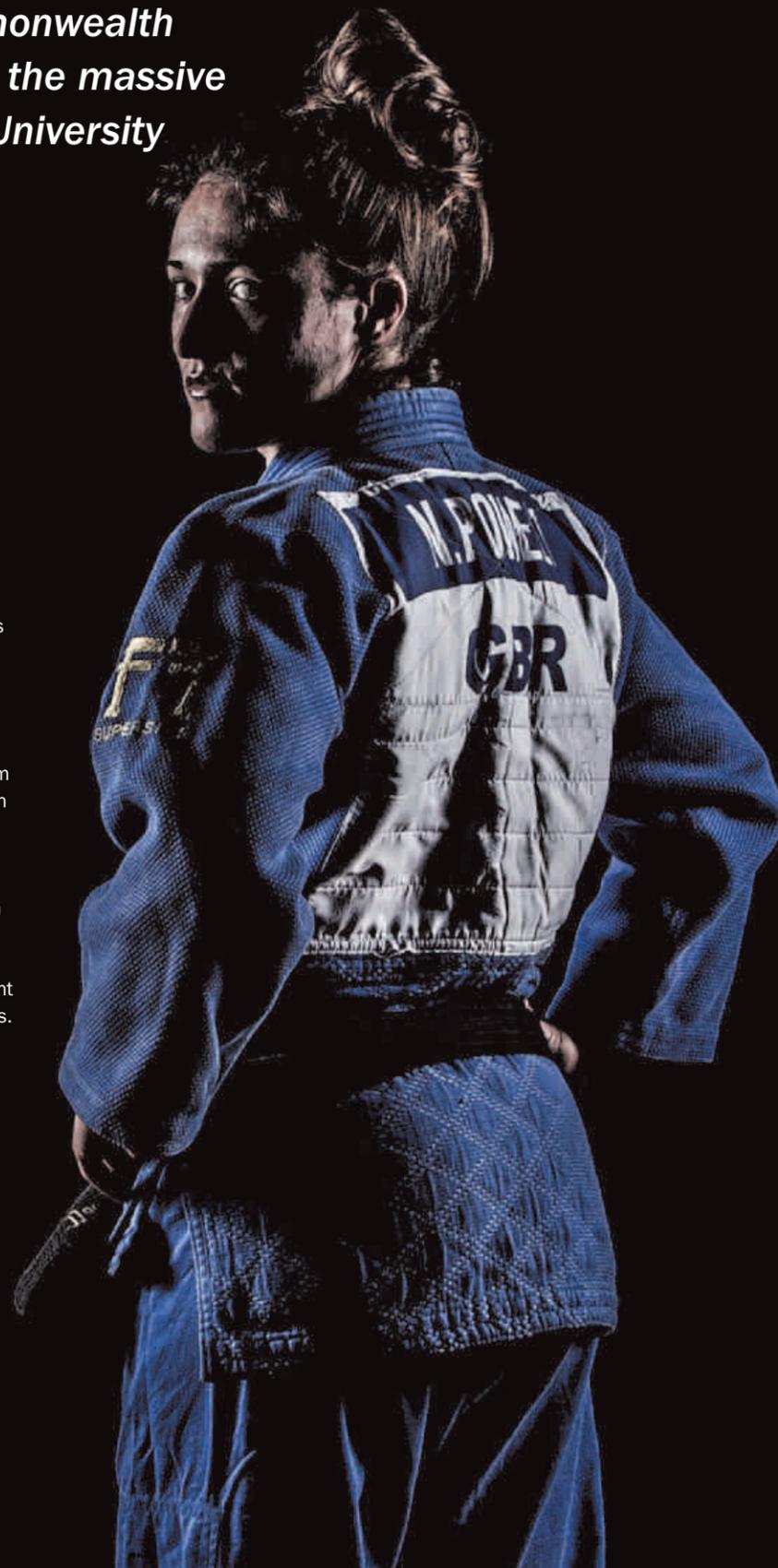
I was even able to take a year off from my studies to prepare, something which would not have been possible without the University's support.

Such a huge result gave me a massive confidence boost. Overcoming the Olympic silver medalist, Gemma Gibbons, in the final made my dreams of

going to Rio far more realistic. Qualification for the Olympics is decided over a two-year period, with the top 14 players in the World Rankings at the end of the period making the Games.

The catch: only one person from each country can be selected in each weight category. However, I have won numerous Grand Prix medals and my best result came in May 2015, when I won a silver medal in the World Masters Championships in Rabat, contributing to my current placing of eighth in the rankings. It's something I'm looking to improve further in time for the selection date in May.

Six years after coming to Cardiff, I'm still based in the city. I train full-time at the Sport Wales National Centre and, having finally graduated, I am now able to focus solely on judo which I hope puts me in good stead for Rio.



**PROFESSOR
LAURA MCALLISTER
(PHD 1995, HON 2013)
FORMER WALES
INTERNATIONAL
FOOTBALLER AND CHAIR
OF SPORT WALES**

Sport, not just football, has given me so much in life. Aside from learning about myself and what makes me tick, I couldn't be prouder of my 24 caps for Wales and being team captain. When I retired from playing, I didn't feel I had the time to go down the coaching route so becoming involved in sports governance was an obvious and attractive route for me to follow.

In my role at Sport Wales, I attempt to drive and challenge the leadership to become even better and achieve more successful results. Clearly, there are regular, practical things such as chairing the Board and driving Board improvements with the recruitment of new members and ensuring there is proper induction and Board development. I am also there to assist and be a critical friend to the CEO and the Senior Management Team; we meet regularly and talk almost every day to ensure our strategies are on track. I am the first point of liaison with the Sports Minister at Welsh Government and sit on the Board of UK Sport. I also do a lot of media and keynotes, with the intention of driving up the profile of sport and making it more accessible to a wider audience.

I'm hugely excited about Wales' prospects in Rio! We're a proud sporting nation which has consistently punched above its weight on the elite sporting stage. But things have changed – we are no longer surprised when we medal. We expect it and we work hard for it. Our home grown talent has behind it a well-oiled machine of expert coaches and support teams.

“ Swimming, like most sports, has a whole body requirement – but performing over a million arm revolutions a year can take its toll on the soft tissue and joints in the shoulders... ”

**RHYS SHORNEY (BSC 2004, MSC 2014)
BRITISH SWIMMING PHYSIOTHERAPIST**

Prior to competition, the role of a sports physiotherapist will vary with different athletes. Some want assistance with preparation, others not. In most cases, our role is very delicate – we are often the last people to see the athlete before competition.

When it comes to the competition itself, the most pressing factor is an immediate time pressure. We often find ourselves working in situations where the available treatment time is limited, and decisions need to be made quickly and accurately.

Swimming, like most sports, has a whole body requirement – but performing over a million arm revolutions a year can take its toll on the soft tissue and joints in the shoulders. Spinal complaints are equally common as athletes attempt to control rotational forces at intensity whilst suspended in a changeable environment.

These areas are particularly susceptible to injury, and the quality of treatment can make or break a competitor's event.

Every decision that is made regarding the development and management of the athlete is calculated, discussed and integrated into the overall training plan – often with target competitions years away. This requires support staff who completely understand their roles and professional remit and have a mutual respect for how their interventions affect the input of others.

This summer, I am once again part of the swimming team heading out to Rio. I'm hugely excited to be able to help the team and the athletes prepare for competition and recover optimally – and, hopefully, to play a small part in helping our competitors to realise their full potential when it absolutely matters most.



“ During my first year, I was selected to represent Team GB at the 2012 Paralympics. ”

**JENNY MCLOUGHLIN (PHILOSOPHY 2011-)
BRITISH PARALYMPIAN TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE**

My athletics career began in 2006, when I joined Cwmbran Harriers at the age of 14. I had always enjoyed running but this was my first experience of formal coaching and competitions. Shortly after, I was scouted by Disability Sport Wales and asked to join their Athletics Academy.

I soon found myself competing against international athletes both in the UK and overseas, and was selected to join the UK Athletics High Performance Programme in 2007. My performance improved dramatically under a new training regime – just two years after taking up running, I found myself on a plane to Beijing to compete at my first Paralympics.

From there, I went on to represent Wales at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi – I was delighted to come away with a 100m silver medal.

In September 2011, I commenced my Philosophy course at Cardiff University. Combining a degree with an athletics career was difficult but the University was hugely supportive.

To compete at a home Olympics and be part of London 2012 was an unforgettable experience. In front of capacity crowds, I made the finals of the 100m and 200m and won a bronze medal in the 4x100m relay.

I am currently training hard in order to achieve selection for the Rio 2016 Paralympics in September. My current routine consists of track sessions and twice-weekly strength and conditioning sessions. I follow a strict diet that has been tailored to ensure my nutritional intake supports my physical schedule.

I am hugely fortunate to be able to do what I do – competing at the highest level in Paralympic sport.



**TOM BARRAS (BSC 2015)
U23 ROWER, TEAM GB**

I had just competed at the Junior World Rowing Championships when I began applying for university. I wanted an institution that would satisfy both my academic and sporting ambitions. I hadn't really considered Cardiff but my careers advisor encouraged me to attend an open day – and I was very pleasantly surprised.

I sat down with Paul Jones, Head of Performance Sport, and he convinced me that the University's facilities, coaching, support and ambition matched my needs. I haven't looked back since.

The University has a partnership with Welsh Rowing which enabled me to train with world-class coaches and athletes. It allowed me to achieve immediate success – winning the National Rowing Championships and Home International Regatta in my first year and subsequently representing Great Britain at the U23 World Rowing Championships, and England at the Commonwealth Rowing Championships.

Yet as my final year approached, I was worried about combining my rowing and my studies. However, the support provided by both the School of Healthcare Sciences and the Sport department was incredible.

Although I am now ranked as the top U23 sculler in the UK, I feel Rio 2016 may come a tad too soon. Rowing is still one of Great Britain's top performing sports, and following their successes at last year's World Championships, the selectors will be hoping to keep their team consistent.

Despite this, I feel that the system in place at Cardiff University has pushed me closer to achieving my dream of being selected for the Olympic Games. I'm hoping that in the next couple of years, with a bit more experience under my belt, I can break into the line-up. ■

“ As a result, I became the first rower from Cardiff University to win the Championship Men's Single at BUC's regatta and was again selected to compete for GB at the U23 World Rowing Championships. ”



Find out more:
cardiff.ac.uk/cardiff-connect





Nathalie MacDermott

Dr Nathalie MacDermott (MBBCh 2006) received a medal from Prime Minister David Cameron after repeatedly risking her life to battle the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

I loved living in Wales and in Cardiff.

I felt welcome from the moment I arrived for my interview at medical school, having just turned 17, fresh faced and in my last year of school. I wanted to be somewhere I would feel safe and at home, and I always felt that way in Cardiff.

I loved going for walks round Roath Park, to the beaches by Ogmore and Three Cliffs, and for coffee in the city centre.

It was the patients that made the experience what it was, and I am very grateful to them. From the person who in death volunteered their body, to the patients on the ward and in my exam sessions who so willingly gave of their time, it is to them I owe a huge debt of thanks.

I have been involved in disaster and epidemic response since 2011, working on a short term, voluntary basis with international non-governmental organisation Samaritan's Purse International Relief. I responded to the cholera epidemic in Haiti in 2011 and to the Philippines following the devastation left by Typhoon Haiyan in 2013.

In July 2014, Samaritan's Purse contacted me to see if I was able to respond to the Ebola epidemic in Liberia. I didn't hesitate. I knew what was happening and I could see what was potentially coming – I could not sit back and do nothing. By responding to the crisis, I could help with trying to mitigate what was unfolding.

When I first arrived in Liberia the situation was dire. We simply did not have enough beds or trained staff to treat and contain the numbers of patients. There was also a huge sense of fear and denial in the communities around us and it was resulting in rioting and sporadic violent outbreaks.

Unfortunately, my colleague contracted the Ebola virus.

When our medical director, Kent Brantly, contracted the virus, it fell to me to become the clinical team lead. At the time, ours was the only Ebola treatment facility in the Liberian capital city of Monrovia. It was a huge responsibility as the epidemic spiralled out of control, but there was simply no choice and I had to get on with the task at hand.

The Ebola epidemic is now under control and the threat is now significantly reduced to the rest of the world. What remains are the lessons we must all learn. We live in an increasingly inter-connected world and can no longer ignore what happens in another nation, particularly one that is struggling to contain the situation. This epidemic has been a wake-up call for the world.

I recently spent three weeks in Macedonia and Greece assisting with the refugee crisis. I still volunteer with Samaritan's Purse and so, at short notice, I may be requested to travel to further disaster or epidemic situations.

I will go to Sierra Leone next year for the fieldwork component of my PhD research – I am investigating how human genetics impacts outcomes from Ebola virus infection.

Medicine is a very challenging but fulfilling career. It is an opportunity to work with people at a time when they are extremely vulnerable. It is a privilege, but with it comes great responsibility. For those willing to embrace that responsibility and the hours and sacrifice to social and family life that entails, I wholeheartedly recommend it. ■

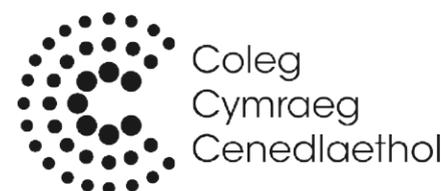
EXAMINED

“Mynnwch ddysg yn eich iaith”

(William Salesbury, 1520-1584)

Edrycha **Dr Hefin Jones**, uwch-ddarlithydd o'r Ysgol y Biowyddorau, ar effaith y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol ar Brifysgol Caerdydd.

Ar hafan gwefan Prifysgol Caerdydd ceir is-bennawd: 'Astudiwch eich cwrs yn Gymraeg.' Faint ohonoch sydd wedi mentro dilyn y trywydd am fwy o wybodaeth? Pan symudais o weithio yng Ngholeg yr Imperial, Llundain i Ysgol y Biowyddorau, Prifysgol Caerdydd yn 2000 cymharol fychan oedd y nifer o fodiwlau a phynciau a ellid eu dilyn trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. 'Roedd cyfleoedd ar gael mewn rhai disgyblaethau – hanes, ac un modiwl mewn meddygaeth, er enghraifft; ond dibynnai llawer o hyn ar frwydredd unigolion yn hytrach na strategaeth benodol gan y Brifysgol. Erbyn hyn, mae'r rhod wedi troi, ac i fyfyrwr fydd yn ymrestru yn y Brifysgol yn 2016 bydd cyfleoedd mewn ystod eang o ddisgyblaethau lle bydd yn bosibl dilyn, o leiaf rhan o'r cwrs, trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.



© Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

Daeth llawer o'r newid hwn yn sgil sefydlu'r Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, fel canlyniad i bolisi Llywodraeth Cymru, yn 2011. Yn genedlaethol, mae dros £30m wedi eu buddsoddi mewn datblygiadau cyfrwng Cymraeg, y rhan fwyaf ar gyfer penodi darlithwyr. Yn ychwanegol, mae yna ystod helaeth o weithgareddau eraill wedi cael eu cefnogi ar draws y sector addysg uwch. Canlyniad hyn oll, ledled Cymru, yw bod dros 1,000 yn fwy o fyfyrwr llawn amser bellach yn astudio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg nag oedd ar ddechrau'r degawd.

Beth mae hyn wedi ei olygu ym Mhrifysgol Caerdydd? Apwyntiwyd 18 o ddarlithwyr

newydd o dan nawdd Cynllun Staffio'r Coleg Cymraeg; hynny ym meysydd meddygaeth, gwyddorau iechyd, newyddiaduraeth, y gyfraith, mathemateg, athroniaeth a fferylliaeth. Cymaint yw'r cynnydd yn y ddarpariaeth fel ei bod bellach yn bosibl i nifer o fyfyrwr israddedig dderbyn ysgoloriaethau'r Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol mewn nifer o bynciau am astudio o leiaf 40 credyd y flwyddyn trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg; mewn rhai achosion mae'n bosibl astudio o leiaf 80 credyd y flwyddyn ac, mewn ambell ddisgyblaeth, y radd gyfan. Eleni, cynigiwyd rhyw 120 o fodiwlau trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg i israddedigion ar draws campws Prifysgol Caerdydd. Datblygiad cyffrous arall yw'r Porth; mae'r llwyfan e-ddysgu hwn yn galluogi myfyrwr y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol i gael mynediad at eu holl fodiwlau cyfrwng Cymraeg, gan gynnwys modiwlau a ddysgir ar y cyd â phrifysgolion eraill.

Nid mewn dysgu yn unig y gwelwyd datblygiadau. Dros y pum mlynedd ddiwethaf, cyllidwyd 11 myfyrwr ôl-radd mewn amrediad o brosiectau ymchwil: o astudiaethau llenyddol i lywodraethiant Cymru, ac o ddadansoddiad cymdeithasol o ymagweddiad disgyblion ysgol i addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg i astudiaethau ecolegol ar bysgod a chimychiaid! Canlyniad hyn oll yw magu cenedlaeth o ysgolheigion sy'n medru trafod a chyflwyno eu gwaith yn gwbl ddeheuig yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg, ac yn ychwanegu i'r corpws adnoddau cyfrwng Cymraeg mewn erthyglau ysgolheigaidd, cyfrolau academaidd a chyflwyniadau cyhoeddus.

Mae Cangen Caerdydd o'r Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, gyda'n Swyddog Cangen, Elliw Iwan, yn rhan allweddol o drefniadaeth datblygiadau addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg ym Mhrifysgol Caerdydd. Bydd y Cangen yn ystyried cynlluniau Prifysgol Caerdydd ar



Carwyn Williams (Hanes, 2013-)

I mi, mae'r gallu i ddysgu yn Gymraeg wedi bod yn fantais fawr, ac yn gynorthwyol iawn i mi wrth astudio.

Yn yr ysgol, roeddwn yn astudio bron pob pwnc yn Gymraeg, ac felly yn amlwg mae fy sgiliau iaith yn well yn Gymraeg, ac roedd gallu astudio yn Gymraeg yn bwysig i mi wrth ddewis prifysgol. Mi fyddai astudio pob modiwl yn Saesneg wedi bod yn anodd.

Fel myfyrwr Hanes, mae wedi bod yn bleser gallu dysgu am hanes Cymru a'r Cymry yn Gymraeg, i allu defnyddio ffynonellau gwreiddiol heb ei chyfieithu a'i thrafod gyda'r darlithydd. Mae gan yr adran sawl darlithydd sydd yn gallu ar y Gymraeg yn dda, sydd hefyd yn gwneud i fyfyrwr deimlo'n gartrefol yn ogystal a'r manteision academaidd.

Hyd yn oed yn y modiwlau sydd ddim ar gael yn Gymraeg, mae'r opsiwn yna i gymryd arholiadau a chyflwyno gwaith cwrs yn Gymraeg, sydd yn fanteisiol iawn. I mi, dwi lawer mwy cyfforddus yn ysgrifennu traethodau yn Gymraeg, ac felly mae hwn hefyd yn dangos yn y marc a rhoddwyd.

Mae'n wych gweld Prifysgol Caerdydd yn manteisio ar y ffaith ei fod ym Mhrifddinas Cymru, gyda'r nifer o fyfyrwr Cymraeg mwyaf yn y byd.

gyfer datblygu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg ac yn cyflwyno argymhellion i'r Rhwydwaith Polisi Addysg a Myfyrwr a phwyllgorau eraill y Brifysgol. Yn ôl yr Athro Patricia Price, Dirprwy Is-ganghellor dros Brofiad Myfyrwr a Safonau, "Bwriad Prifysgol Caerdydd yw cynyddu'r ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg ac o wneud hynny, sicrhau fod ein myfyrwr yn medru cyfrannu er lles cymdeithasol ac economaidd Cymru." ■

To read this article in English, visit cardiff.ac.uk/cardiff-connect



Alumni in memoriam

Cardiff University extends its sincere condolences to the friends and families of those listed below for whom we have recently received notification of death.

**Mervyn Burtch MBE (BA 1950)**

Died May 2015, aged 85

Mervyn Burtch, a Welsh composer from the Rhymney Valley, passed away in May last year. After completing his studies at Cardiff University, Mervyn went on to compose operas for musicians in and around Wales, and his most successful work, *The Raven King*, was performed all over the world. In 2003, he was awarded an MBE for his services to music and education in Wales.

If you would like to share the news of someone's recent passing, please contact us at alumni@cardiff.ac.uk

Mervyn Burtch (BA 1950)

Died May 2015, aged 85

Dr Joan Whiteleggs (MBBCh 1953)

(née Evans)
Died July 2015, aged 85

Dr Huw Thomas (MBBCh 1966)

Died January 2015, aged 73

Derek Tilley (BEng 1971)

Died March 2015, aged 70

John Gavin (LLB 1977)

Died March 2015, aged 59

Derek Barter (BEng 1979)

Died January 2015, aged 58

Dr Barrie Evans (MBBCh 1981)

Died July 2015, aged 68

Jeremy Norgan (PhD 1982)

Died March 2015, aged 55

Dr Peter Hirskjy (MA 1993)

Former staff member
Died October 2015, aged 60

Alan Canton (MBA 1994)

Died February 2015, aged 72

Reverend Albert Pomfret (BSc 1995)

Died September 2015, aged 91

Richard Donnelly (MBA 1998)

Died February 2015, aged 53

Roy Fisher (MTh 2001)

Died October 2015, aged 92

Midori Matsui (Hon 2003)

Died February 2016, aged 80

Professor Chris McGuigan (PhD 2007)

Former staff member
Died March 2015, aged 57

Ellen Hitchings (BSc 2009)

Died June 2015, aged 28

Tom Wedrychowski (BSc 2010)

Died December 2015, aged 26

Kayleigh Brown (LLB 2015)

Died December 2015, aged 24

Hugh Carre (BN 2015)

Died March 2015, aged 54

Dr Margaret Prowse

Died May 2015, aged 83

Professor Alan Clarke
Former staff member

Died December 2015, aged 53



Calendar

Save the dates for our upcoming events or to learn more, visit cardiff.ac.uk/alumni/events →

**Welsh Varsity**

Wednesday 20 April
Swansea Liberty Stadium

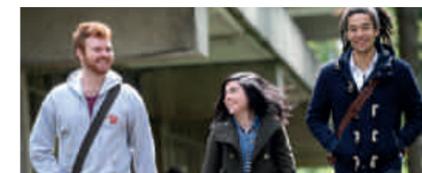
Celebrate the 20th anniversary of Welsh Varsity with Team Cardiff as they return to Swansea Liberty Stadium for one of the biggest events on the University calendar. Register now and support your team to another year of victory.

**National Eisteddfod**

Friday 28 July–Saturday 6 August
Abergavenny

Join Cardiff University at this year's National Eisteddfod in Abergavenny as we celebrate Welsh language and culture during a week of festivities and competitions.

Further details to be released nearer the time.

**Cardiff Day**

Autumn 2016
Cardiff

An invitation-only event celebrating our latest and most exciting projects and research made possible thanks to our generous donors, and an opportunity to hear from the staff and students involved.

**Cardiff Law School lecture**

Thursday 17 November
Cardiff

Dominic Grieve QC will provide a public lecture at Cardiff Law School. Attendance will be via ticket only.

Further details to be released nearer the time.

**Summer of Innovation**

Cardiff

The Summer of Innovation is a celebration of the University's innovative work with a range of engaging events planned over several months.

Various speakers being added now.

**John Simpson lecture**
Hadyn Ellis Distinguished Lecture
Cardiff

In memory of the late Professor Hadyn Ellis, the Hadyn Ellis Distinguished Lecture Series brings speakers of international distinction to Cardiff University to deliver prestigious public lectures.

Run the Cardiff University/Cardiff Half Marathon

Run in the footsteps of champions this October and fundraise for cancer research, or dementia and mental health research at Cardiff University.

Limited free spaces are available for Cardiff alumni and supporters who pledge to raise funds for Cardiff University. By running for Cardiff University you can help save, change and enrich lives in Wales and beyond.

Join #TeamCardiff now: cardiff.ac.uk/cardiff-half →



CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

Everyone can leave a legacy

Please consider leaving a gift to
Cardiff University in your will

A smiling man with a goatee, wearing a white lab coat, is shown from the chest up. He is holding a pink dental model of a human jaw with teeth. The background is a blurred indoor setting with warm lighting. The text is overlaid on the image.

A gift can make a lasting difference to
future generations – inspiring students
to enquire, innovate, and bring real
change to the world we live in.

Please contact: Caroline Semmens, Cardiff University,
Development and Alumni Relations Office,
Deri House, 2-4 Park Grove, Cardiff CF10 3BN

t: +44 (0)29206 88310 e: semmensc@cardiff.ac.uk