

BIG IT UP BULLETIN

Major news and updates for Leicester and Leicestershire

July 2009

Here is the latest update for Big It Up campaigners on major projects and good news stories for Leicester and Leicestershire, brought to you by Leicester Shire Promotions.

If you have any more Big It Up stories to tell of how you, your colleagues or organisation have championed the cause of Leicester and Leicestershire, please feed appropriate details through to Simon Gribbon at Leicester Shire Promotions on 0116 225 4001 or email simon.gribbon@l-p-l.com

"This year's British Games in Leicester... the biggest ever"

Said Sarah Brown, wife of Prime Minister Gordon Brown, about the Special Olympics which took place in Leicester in July. The couple and their two children joined over 25,000 excited spectators at the opening ceremony - the first time a British Prime Minister has attended the Special Olympics in its history. The Leicester Games was the biggest multi-sports team event to be held in the UK before 2012 with over 2,700 athletes representing 19 Special Olympics regions across the UK visiting the city, along with 1,200 coaches and 1,500 volunteers.

The Independent on Sunday newspaper commented that "the other Olympics in 2012 may be 10 times as big but from what we saw last week they'll do well to be half as special". Gary Lineker, Patron of the Games added about his home city: "It is terrific and Leicester has done a great job. A lot of parents have come up to us and said this is the best thing that has happened to their families' lives."

Rugby World Cup comes to Welford Road in 2015

England's successful 2015 Rugby World Cup bid means that Leicester Tigers' redeveloped Welford Road has been confirmed as one of ten venues to host pool matches. The IRB Council backed the RFU's bid to stage the Rugby World Cup for a second time ahead of tenders South Africa and Italy.

Leading the region at tourism Oscars

Twelve local tourism businesses are celebrating after being shortlisted to go forward to the final of the sixth East Midlands Tourism Enjoy England Excellence Awards. With support from Leicester Shire Promotions, this means that Leicester and Leicestershire lead the region in the total number of shortlisted businesses.

They include: Foxton Locks, imago, Leicester City Football Club, Conkers, National Space Centre, Hotel Maiyango, Kilworth House Hotel, Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre, Horseshoe Cottage Farm, The Grey Lady, Launde Abbey and Leicester Visitor Information Centre. The businesses will go head to head with other finalists from Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland to compete for the title of the 'region's finest' in October.

De Montfort University sweeps board at research competition

De Montfort University (DMU) research students swept the board at a recent research competition winning three out of a total of nine prizes available. At the final of the Vitae Midlands Hub Regional Poster competition for research students, DMU students won the second prize, the Researcher's Choice and Best Poster Summary for non-specialist audience prizes.

Melton 'one of healthiest places to live'

Official health profiles released by the Department of Health show Melton residents generally enjoy better health and live longer than the England average. The annual health profiles examine a wide range of health indicators such as life expectancy and causes of death. Overall, Melton performed above the England average in 13 of the 32 indicators and was a top 10 performer in three indicators. Melton's life expectancy for men is 79.3 years and for 82.4 for women, compared to the average for England of 77.7 years for men and 81.8 for women.

Local university athlete sprints to the top

Loughborough student Harry Aikines-Aryeetey has become Britain's first-ever athlete to win Gold at major youth, junior and U23 championships with his latest 100m victory at the European U23s in Lithuania. Aikines-Aryeetey was one of six Loughborough athletes to win medals. Four struck Gold for Britain at the three-day event - hurdler Lloyd Gumbs, sprinter Elaine O'Neill and discus thrower Eden Francis all took the top spots whilst women's team captain Sarah Holt and distance runner Emily Pidgeon also reached the podium with a bronze medal apiece.

Local band heads prestigious Mercury Prize shortlist

Kasabian - the four-piece rock band from Leicester - are the most established performers in this year's line-up for the Mercury Prize - one of the country's most established music industry awards which recognises the most outstanding album produced by a UK or Irish artist. The band's third album, West Ryder Pauper Lunatic Asylum, was hailed by the award judges as having "explosive songs that fill epic rock spaces with absolute authority". They were named co-favourites to win by bookmakers William Hill, sharing 5/1 odds with Florence and The Machine's debut, Lungs. The 2009 winner will be announced live on BBC2 on 8 September in an awards show hosted by Jools Holland.

Phillip is top of the class

A business graduate from De Montfort University (DMU) is celebrating a hat-trick of successes. Phillip Bott has just graduated with a first BA (Hons) degree in Advertising and Marketing Communications from Leicester Business School based at DMU. He has also won The Institute of Direct Marketing (IDM) Award for being the top ranked student in both the direct marketing module of his degree, scoring an average of 90 per cent, and has also completed the IDM Certificate in Direct and Digital Marketing.

Kilworth House - 'best-kept secret in British theatre'

The Daily Telegraph recently rated the Kilworth House Theatre in Leicestershire as a 'total delight' in a glittering review in the paper. Dominic Cavendish's article described the Harborough open-air museum as 'perhaps the best-kept secret in British theatre' and the theatre's adjoining hotel, Kilworth House Hotel as 'fit for visiting royalty'.

Transformation recognised

The £19 million transformation of Leicester's city centre and shopping area has scooped a top national award. Leicester City Council won the Walking and Public Realm Award - sponsored by the Department for Transport - at the National Transport Awards. The award recognised the work done as part of Leicester's City Centre Development Project, which involved extensive improvements to the city centre roads and public spaces, created pedestrianised areas and a retail circuit linking up the city's key shopping areas.

Royal Infirmary nurse in Pride of Britain bid

A Leicester nurse has been nominated for a top national award by the wife of a grateful patient. Specialist nurse Lisa Osborn works at the Leicester Royal Infirmary dealing with diseases affecting the face and neck. She has been nominated for a Pride of Britain Award by Anne Brown, whose husband Carl has been receiving support for mouth cancer at the hospital from the 'boundlessly energetic' nurse. The Pride of Britain Awards, which recognise unsung heroes and heroines, were launched 10 years ago.

Top honour for academic is mark of distinction

One of the UK's greatest academic honours has been bestowed on a University of Leicester Professor as a mark of his distinction. Professor Colin Haselgrove, Head of the School of Archaeology and Ancient History, joins a select number of scholars who were recently announced as Fellows of the British Academy - a 102-year-old national academy which recognises scholars who have achieved distinction in any branch of the humanities and social sciences.

Legend Lineker graduates in home town

England legend Gary Lineker returned to his home town to receive an honorary degree from De Montfort University (DMU). One of the greatest players to ever pull on an England shirt, Gary was made an Honorary Doctor of Letters.

Corgi to make models for London Olympics

Model car maker Corgi is to create a range of products for the London 2012 Olympics. The company, which is based in Braunstone and employs eight staff, will launch the products before Christmas. A licensing agreement with the Olympics was confirmed by owner Hornby, which bought Corgi for £7.5 million last year. Earlier this year, the firm also won back the licence to produce models for future James Bond films.

Award for entrepreneur

An entrepreneur who came to the UK from Kuwait during the invasion by Iraq nearly 20 years ago has won an award for his business achievements. Vic Sethi of Hyundai Corp, which employs 30 people in Meridian Business Park, picked up the industry prize at The India International Federation awards in London.

Major leap for Intelligent Energy

The first men to set foot on the moon used last week's 40th anniversary of the historic event to air their frustration that not enough had been done to capitalise on their heroic endeavour. At around the same time, a Leicestershire company received an £18 million funding injection to help it develop an emission-free energy source used in the very space capsule the astronauts travelled in. Intelligent Energy, in Loughborough, which has its origins in a Government-funded Loughborough University research programme based on technology used in the

Apollo missions, has successfully made a space-age device work in everyday products.

Pioneering research into biocontrol

Researchers at the University of Leicester have paved the way for the first-ever use in Europe of an insect (biocontrol) to combat an invasive plant species in Britain. University of Leicester biologists established that the Japanese Knotweed in Britain was one of the biggest females in the world - a clone of cuttings brought into Britain in the 1850s. Costs of controlling it in Britain have been put at £1.5 billion. Defra's Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera) has now launched a public consultation exercise into plans to control the Japanese Knotweed using a highly specialist sap-sucking insect - or psyllid - called *Aphalara itadori*.

Jackson wins world silver in record-breaking race

Loughborough swimmer Joanne Jackson has won World Championship silver with a record-breaking performance in the 400m Freestyle in Rome. The former world record holder set a new British record of 4:00.60 in the fastest race in history. Jackson was joined on the podium by Britain's Olympic champion Becky Adlington, who trains with her in Loughborough three times a week.

Firms scoop regional business awards

Two Leicestershire businesses have taken home trophies from a regional awards contest. The founder of Bright Ideas Global in Melton, Jeff Gunn picked up the Entrepreneur of the Year honour and Samworth Brothers, also based in Melton, won the Growth Strategy of the Year at The National Business Awards Regional Programme.

Software company's 'breakthrough' is ready for launch

A university spin-out company has attracted the interest of the British Library, and broadcasters BBC and Sky with a 'breakthrough' system for creating film and sound archives. Fiteris, based at the Innovation Centre at Leicester's De Montfort University, said its technology could revolutionise the way companies and libraries store media. The business, set up by academics Dr John Cowell and Dr Scott Linfoot, is launching its Ami product to market after a year in development. The software has also helped the firm reach the shortlist of the Lord Stafford Award for innovation in development.

Design firm hits jackpot

A design firm has hit the jackpot after winning a major contract with the National Lottery. Checkland Kindleysides of Cossington has designed a plastic shop stand for Lottery operator Camelot, to be put in 27,500 shops across the UK. The company beat off competition from two London rivals to secure the contract.

Discovering new class of black hole

A new class of black hole, more than 500 times the mass of the Sun, has been discovered by an international team of astronomers including researchers at the University of Leicester's Department of Physics and Astronomy. The new discovery is the first solid evidence of a new class of medium-sized black holes. The team, led by astrophysicists at the Centre d'Etude Spatiale des Rayonnements in France, detected the new black hole with the European Space Agency's XMM-Newton X-ray space telescope.

And finally...

The Big It Up Bulletin is produced in conjunction with Leicester Mercury's 'The

Business' supplement. For the latest business news in Leicester and Leicestershire, visit www.thisisbusiness-eastmidlands.co.uk/News/Leicestershire.aspx

