

# DICK VET *news*



VET SCHOOL  
ON TV

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## MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

Welcome to our May edition of the Dick Vet News. You will have seen from the cover page that the School has been featured in a new television series on STV (Scottish Television), "Vet School", which goes behind the scenes to follow the stories of our staff and students, along with our patients and their owners. Those of you who do not receive STV can view the series on Scottish Television's website, STV Player (<http://player.stv.tv/>) This has been a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase to the public the work that Dick Vet clinicians are doing in our excellent facilities, such as the Equine Hospital and the Hospital for Small Animals, which were completed in the late nineties under the leadership of Professor Richard Halliwell.

We have also had confirmation that Beechgrove Garden on BBC Scotland will participate in creating a new garden next to the Hospital for Small Animals. The project, which has evolved into a collaborative activity with the Edinburgh College of Art, the Scottish Agricultural College, The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and Balfour Beatty, has been driven forward with characteristic energy and enthusiasm by one of our Development Board members, client Caroline Freedman.

Fundraising for the new teaching facility and for the clinics continues apace with, most recently, the MacRobert Trust confirming a gift towards video technology to fund a "Virtual Post-Mortem Room". This adds to the growing numbers of gifts and pledged support from other Trusts and individuals, alongside Class Gifts from alumni and students. Our Development Board, chaired by George Gunn, met in March and we had a very constructive meeting, with a number of the Board members giving examples of their leadership in different areas. This will be an activity which continues to grow in our School, as in many others across the globe, and we are very fortunate to have excellent help with this both within the School and throughout the wider University.



We are delighted that Dr Billy Karesh will join us on October 8th to deliver this year's Charnock Bradley Lecture. Billy is Vice-President of the Global Health Programme of the Wildlife Conservation Society, based at the Bronx Zoo in New York. He is a popular international speaker on 'One World, One Health', and leads projects in over 50 countries in the developing world. Please make a note of this date in your diaries and email [neil.wilson@ed.ac.uk](mailto:neil.wilson@ed.ac.uk) if you would like to join us in Edinburgh for this event.

In this issue we have news of some of the many activities that our staff, students, alumni and clients are engaged in, and I do hope you enjoy sharing some of your time with us as you read this edition. As always, news, articles and comments are welcomed as we look forward to our next edition in November.

Professor Elaine Watson

## VET SCHOOL ON TV

Members of staff at the Small and Large Animal Hospitals have found themselves in the limelight with the airing of a five part, fly-on-the-wall documentary series called simply "Vet School".



Vet Jo Hedley treats a swan.

The series, made by STV (Scottish Television), focuses on the Small and Large Animal Hospitals following the stories of staff, patients and their owners, making compelling viewing.

According to Ronnie Soutar, Director of Veterinary Services, approaches had been made to film in this way before, but had never gone ahead. However, the STV team were co-operative and flexible and, following detailed discussions, became the first film crew to be given access to all areas.

"We didn't want something that would get in the way of the day-to-day functioning of the Hospitals. It was really important that staff and students were able to go about their normal business." Ronnie continues: "Naturally some people were nervous before the filming, but we met with the producer and he explained it was really just two teams of two people and that we would soon forget they were there. It turned out to be a good partnership, they really got into the team

and even came to the Christmas party."

Series Producer, Richard Higson, agrees that it was a very positive partnership: "It was amazing having access to all the cases coming in. There was a huge array of animals and owners every day and they, and the vets, were brilliant. It was a real privilege to follow the process right through from arriving to leaving - everyone is so hugely qualified, the Vet School really gets the cream of the crop staff-wise."

"Our aim was to show the wide range of cases treated by the School and we worked closely with staff throughout the process to make sure we were getting things right."

However the filming was not without its difficult moments. Says Richard: "There were tragedies as well as animals being saved, there was one horse with a bad stomach condition and it became clear that it wasn't going to make it and that was really sad."

"There was also a time we went down

to Langhill Farm to get some shots with cows," he continues. "After a while we realised they had surrounded us, so we picked up our things and very slowly started edging towards the gate, seconds later we were running at full pelt carrying the camera!"

"There's some wonderful footage," agrees Ronnie Soutar. "There was this one little dog, a papillon, who just wanted to bite everyone and it was very hard to get the muzzle on. Then there was the nerve-wracking process of trying to treat a crocodile at Five Sisters Zoo in West Lothian."

The series is broadcast on TV this Spring and is available to view online at <http://player.stv.tv/>.

■ **The Dick Vet will be back on TV later this year when BBC Scotland's Beechgrove Garden create a garden at the back of the Hospital for Small Animals.**



# PETER DOHERTY VISITS SCHOOL

Nobel Prize-winner gives inspirational talk.

On 25th February Nobel Prize-winning alumnus immunologist Peter Doherty visited the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies to address staff and students. Edinburgh was the fourth vet school he had visited in as many days, but it was particularly special as he did his PhD in Edinburgh in 1970, before embarking on his Nobel Prize-winning research on how T cells recognise their target antigens in combination with major histocompatibility complex (MHC) proteins.

The speaking tour was funded by The Wellcome Trust's Veterinary Research Scheme, which aims to inspire vets to explore careers in science. Jacqui Matthews, Moredun Professor of Veterinary Immunobiology, and the Dean and Head of School Professor Elaine Watson took time before the lecture to tell Professor Doherty about Edinburgh's Research Track initiative, which is similar to the Wellcome Trust scheme. Our Research Track began in 2008 and has been highly successful in getting young vets interested in scientific research. There have been 50 summer scholars since 2008 and an increasing number of students doing intercalated degrees.

Jacqui Matthews told the Dick Vet News that Professor Doherty was an ideal choice as a role model for students. "He graduated as a vet in Australia. He was then a research scientist at Moredun and did a PhD at the University of Edinburgh after which he launched himself into basic immunology back in his native Australia," she explained. "His research had a huge impact."

The Dick Vet News caught up with Prof Doherty once he had returned to Australia and asked him how he had enjoyed his tour.

"We went to all seven vet schools and ended with a dinner at the House of Lords, then a Wellcome Foundation symposium," he explained. "The trip was a bit exhausting and I felt something like a parrot giving the same lecture over and over, but I enjoyed meeting with bright, young students afterwards and there was

always an interesting reception, often with students as well as faculty members."

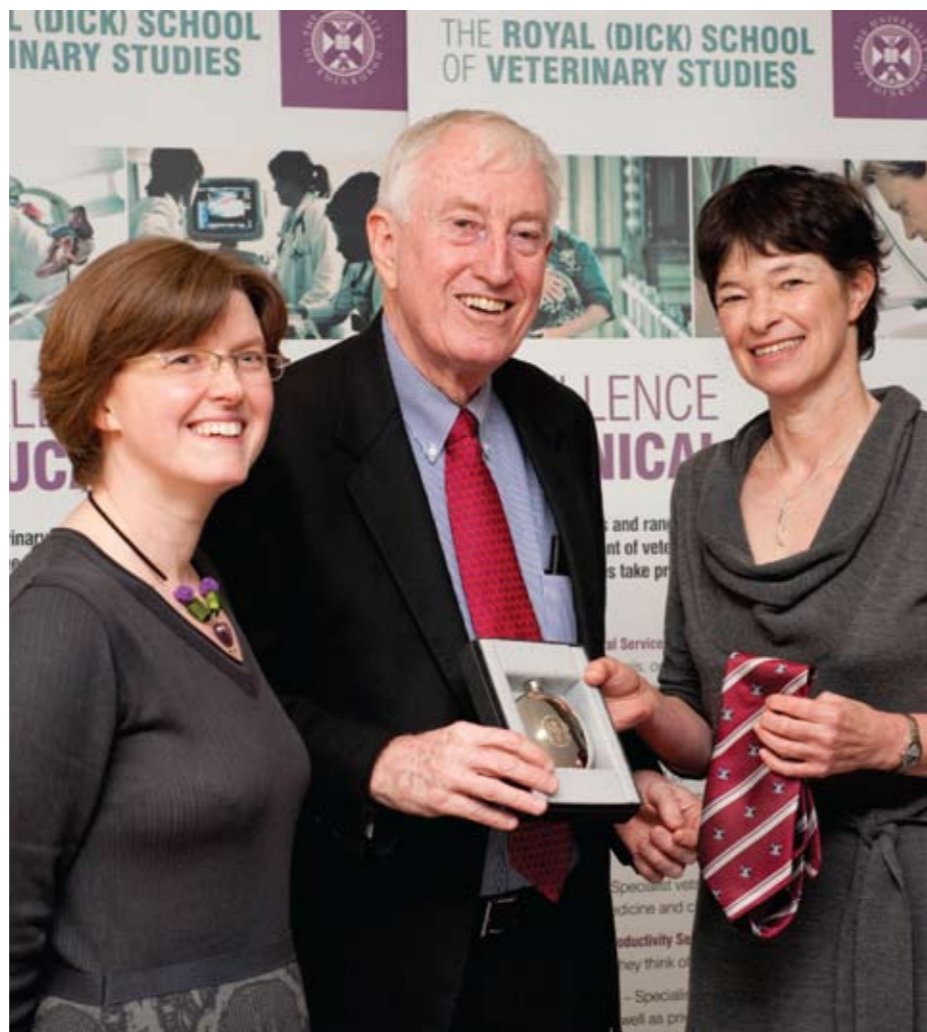
He made it very clear how important it is that young vets consider science careers.

"People who train in veterinary science and medicine can end up doing a lot of different things, from stock-broking, through politics, to acupuncture, to university administration to being top research scientists," he said. "We tend to make decisions concerning career paths very early: sometimes our ideas change, and it's useful to have other possibilities in mind."

"Also, even if we remain in practice, vets are among the few people in the

community who have a solid science training and are used to dealing with evidence-based reality. It's important to put those views forward when, for example, discussing issues like vaccination or serving on local community bodies."

Some 60 people attended the talk, which was held at the Easter Bush Veterinary Centre. The guest list included students, staff and also some old friends and colleagues who remembered Professor Doherty's days in Edinburgh. He was presented with a hip flask by the Dean, who in turn received a copy of his book, "The Beginner's Guide to Winning the Nobel Prize", for the library.



Professors Jacqui Matthews, Peter Doherty and Elaine Watson.

# DONKEY WELFARE PIONEER HONOURED

Honorary degree for Dr Elisabeth Svendsen.



The Principal, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, Dr Elisabeth Svendsen and Professor Elaine Watson.

Dr Elisabeth Svendsen, best known for her pioneering work at the Donkey Sanctuary was awarded the degree of Doctor Honoris Causa by The University of Edinburgh on Wednesday 25th November.

In her lauration address, the Dean and Head of School, Professor Elaine Watson said: "Dr Svendsen, or Dr S as she is affectionately known, is one of the most extraordinary people I have ever had the privilege to get to know."

The Donkey Sanctuary is one of the world's most successful animal charities and in addition to the Sanctuary, The Elisabeth Svendsen Trust for Children and Donkeys was founded in 1989 to provide riding therapy for children with special needs and disabilities.

Speaking of her honorary degree, Dr Svendsen said: "I was very honoured, I'm semi-retired and over 80 years old and I

thought these honours were in the past for me."

"The day itself was perfect, they looked after us so well," she continues. "I was also extremely delighted because as I was sitting at the front of the platform waiting for my turn I saw one of my vets, Alex Thiemann, receiving her Masters. I didn't know it was going to be then and it really made my day. Quite a few of our vets are from the Dick Vet and I'm also very proud to be on the Development Board for the School."

For health reasons Dr Svendsen no longer travels as widely as in the past, but her influence continues to be felt all over the world. "We work world-wide for donkeys now," she explains. "We have projects going on in India, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mexico and we're lecturing all over the world, including China where they have a lot of donkeys."

## FOR THE LOVE OF DONKEYS

Elisabeth Svendsen was brought up in Yorkshire, trained as a teacher and taught for a short time before becoming a successful businesswoman and eventually a Director of Thorn Electrical Industries.

Her love of donkeys dates back to her childhood and in 1966 she decided to establish a donkey stud in the grounds of the family's hotel in Devon. Looking for breeding stock she visited a local market where the state of a pen of donkeys was so shocking it changed her life forever giving her a deep passion for donkey welfare.

By 1972 she had founded the Donkey Sanctuary in order to provide for the 38 donkeys she had in her care. Shortly afterwards she discovered she had been left a legacy, which turned out to be 204 donkeys! With the purchase of more land and farms the Sanctuary grew. It now cares for over 12,000 donkeys and is a major funder of research into donkey health and welfare.

Recognition of the appalling plight of donkeys in developing countries resulted in Dr Svendsen founding the International Donkey Protection Trust to provide professional advice, training and support on donkey welfare.

Since 1989 the Elisabeth Svendsen Trust for Children and Donkeys has been providing riding therapy for children with special needs and disabilities.



## PRINCESS ROYAL VISITS

Tricia Hart reports on a special day at The Roslin Institute.

The Princess Royal's November visit, her first since the Institute was incorporated into the Dick Vet in 2008, began with a warm welcome from the Principal of the The University of Edinburgh, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea. The Princess was then introduced to The Roslin Institute's Director, Professor David Hume, who took her on a tour of the Institute during which she met researchers and learned more about the ground-breaking research that is being carried out there.

The Princess, who is Patron of The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, then went on to the ARK Genomics facility where the Institute's researchers have been involved in international collaborations to sequence and analyse

genomes for chickens, pigs, sheep and cattle with a view to understanding disease better. Next she learned about pioneering work involving the manipulation of genes to help chickens resist infectious diseases, which have a devastating effect on chicken populations.

During the visit Professor Hume was pleased to be able to share the Institute's plans to move to the £60 million building opposite the Dick Vet's new teaching building at the Easter Bush Campus. Professor Hume said of the visit, "It has been wonderful to show Princess Anne round The Roslin Institute and we hope to repeat the honour in the future as we expand the new Easter Bush Campus."



The Princess Royal is welcomed by Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea.

## NEW BUILDINGS FOR THE BUSH

Despite the snowy weather of the New Year, the new building project continues apace, writes Dr Tudor Jones.



The William Dick statue moves to its new home.

The programme of works to construct the new school building, being conducted by Balfour Beatty Construction Ltd, continues on time despite the difficulties posed by the persistent bad weather between December and February, in particular for the rendering. Balfour Beatty Construction remain confident that the building will be completed on schedule at the end of October 2010.

The outer envelope of the building is now complete and weather-tight so the contractor is able to progress with the internal fit-out of the more complex areas on the ground floor such as the post-mortem suite, anatomy dissection room and teaching laboratories.

The building programme will be followed by a 12-16 week fit-out period. This is when the audio-visual and IT installations will take place along with the commissioning of the building management system, which controls heating and ventilation throughout the building.

Outside the new building a footpath and cycle path have been installed to provide a safe walking and cycling route to and from the campus. The paths join the north and south ends of Easter Bush Farm Road and will be open for public use at all times. Improvements to the junction between Easter Bush Farm Road and Seafield Moor Road took place in April 2010 resulting in better and safer traffic flows at this junction.

Last but not least the William Dick statue, carved in 1883 and located in the William Dick Room in the EBVC main building was moved with great care to his new home in the atrium of the new veterinary school building on 24th March 2010. This is the third time that the statue has been moved - the first time from Clyde Street to Summerhall in 1916 and a second time from Summerhall to Easter Bush in 2000.

## ZOONOTIC DISEASE FOCUS FOR EU VET WEEK

Alessandro Seguíno and Arvind Mahajan report on the highly successful 2009 European Veterinary Week.

Four enthusiastic 5th year students took on EU Vet Week as part of their Veterinary Public Health (VPH) rotation. Iain Senior, Ann Signorella, Kate Stephenson and Katherine Surguine were directly involved in delivering the main objectives of the project and set up a permanent stand at the upper level canteen, aimed at fellow students, with posters and other visual aids promoting the role of veterinarians in VPH.

The students were working closely with the staff members promoting the event – Susan Rhind, Alex Seguíno, Arvind Mahajan, Ruth Zadoks, Mark Bronsvort and Lorna Hume.

EU Veterinary Week, created by the European Commission in collaboration with the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), highlights the important

role played by veterinarians in Europe, in particular safeguarding the health of farmed animals, as well as human health through safe food and the prevention of zoonoses. Many vet schools in the UK and in Europe celebrated EU Vet Week.

The students also visited St. David's High School in Dalkeith to promote the importance of the role of the veterinary profession, the importance of animal welfare and the hygienic way to handle animals among the school children.

In addition to this they visited the Medical School at Little France where they organised a stand with posters and actively engaged the medical students on the "One Health – One Medicine" concept and the importance of zoonotic diseases.

Lastly, there was a visit to an abattoir to promote within the food industry the

strict cooperation that is needed between vets and food business operators to produce safe food and so ensure the highest standards of protection of public health.

The event was met with overwhelming interest not only from the vet students but also from medics and school children. Following this initiative, other events with a similar theme have been planned to popularise veterinary science in schools and to bring the veterinary and medical professionals together to promote the concept of "Animals + Humans = One Health".

EU Veterinary Week 2010 is to take on the theme "Identification and traceability along the food chain". Laura Wilant (4th year student) has been nominated to represent R(D)SVS in Brussels.

## ONE HEALTH IN HONG KONG



In December 2009, The Dean and Head of School, Professor Elaine Watson was invited to Hong Kong's City University for a "One Health International Workshop", the first of its kind, organised in association with the World Veterinary Association. Professor Watson (pictured above fifth from left) gave a talk entitled "One Health – The Edinburgh Experience".



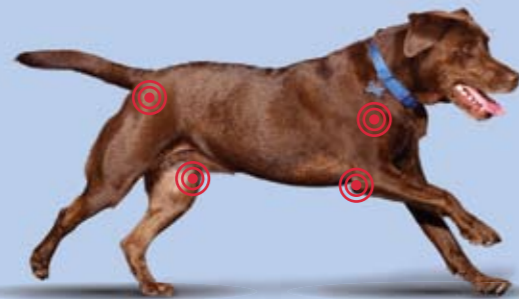
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- \* Study conducted on dogs.  
\*\* 28 days for cats.

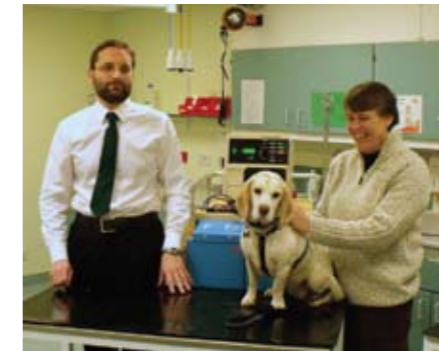


# RAISING FUNDS FROM GREENLAND TO BARCELONA

Lady clients have been getting sporty to help the Hospital for Small Animals.



Fiona Davidson, her dog Zena and vet Nick Bommer along with the ECG Monitor she funded.



Rebecca Stewart with her dog Bracken, vet Donald Yool and the defibrillator she funded.



Stevie Matthews at the finish line in Greenland.

Stevie Matthews, a local government worker, ran a full marathon in Greenland last year. Her involvement with the Dick Vet began back in 1995 when her American Cocker Spaniel was diagnosed with Hodgkins Disease.

"Jimmy Simpson and the team at the hospital were so wonderful and they bought us another year of life," explains Stevie. "We were overwhelmed and decided we'd be Friends and we have supported it ever since."

And Stevie, who is 60 next birthday, is no stranger to adventure: "I've done a lot of adventure running. I've run on all seven continents and the North Pole and

my preferred distance is 100 miles."

The run in Greenland took her across the Kangerlussuaq Ice Cap. She reminisces: "There was a thick covering of snow that was hard packed but it was very easy to run on. We all had little spikes on our shoes and thermal underwear. It was -15 degrees centigrade but was a very dry cold and so actually quite favourable with sunshine and no wind."

Stevie hopes to run again for the Dick Vet in New Zealand next year.

Congratulations also go to Fiona Davidson, who has raised money for the Hospital for Small Animals by doing the "Ironman Triathlon" near Barcelona



## DRAWING FOR INSTRUCTION

The School made a major contribution to this Talbot Rice Gallery exhibition.

Examining the role of drawing in academic contexts past and present, "Drawing for Instruction" ran for a month at the University of Edinburgh's Talbot Rice Gallery to some critical acclaim. The R(D)SVS contributed one of the oldest groups of drawings, a collection of studies of horse anatomy by Charles Landseer, older brother of Edwin (Monarch of the Glen). The Scotsman newspaper described his work as "exquisite and occasionally gruesome, his pencil a scalpel which pulls aside flesh and studies the workings of muscles." Another Dick Vet contribution was a collection of diagrams on cloth painted by Vet School staff in the 19th century, used to demonstrate the structure of subcutaneous tissue.

in October. Fiona, who works for NHS Scotland, raised the funds in memory of her German Shepherd dog, Kayla, who sadly passed away after a long illness. Fiona came 100th out of 122 women with a time of 13:57:26 and raised enough money to buy the Hospital an ECG Monitor.

And finally, well done to Rebecca Stewart, who ran the Great North Run raising funds to buy a defibrillator.

**■ If you would like to support the School please visit [www.vet.ed.ac.uk/fundraising](http://www.vet.ed.ac.uk/fundraising), call David Rider on 0131 650 8833 or e-mail [David.Rider@ed.ac.uk](mailto:David.Rider@ed.ac.uk) for further details.**





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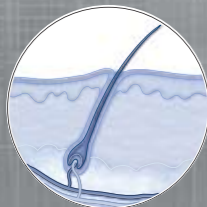
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Dr Catriona Bell.

## “DRIVING LICENCE” FOR STUDENT VETS

A new online learning tool is set to help students prepare for “the real world”.

Dr Catriona Bell of the Veterinary Teaching Organisation has created a new online learning tool to prepare vet students for extramural studies (EMS) placements. It resembles a driving theory test and was created by Dr Bell in collaboration with Dr Sarah Baillie and Tierney Kinnison of the Royal Veterinary College, with design by Andrew Cavers from the E-learning Unit at the Dick Vet.

The “EMS Driving Licence” is full of tips and checklists of things to do, things to avoid and things to remember. It also has a handy FAQ section with advice on issues such as confidentiality and other aspects of professional behaviour.

Dr Bell said: “We know that EMS placements are incredibly valuable learning opportunities for our students, and want to optimise them for both students and the vets who kindly provide them. Simple solutions, such as modifying their body language, can make a huge difference to how interested and enthusiastic students appear. This in turn often influences how much they are allowed to do during a placement.”

[www.vet.ed.ac.uk/ems\\_driving\\_licence](http://www.vet.ed.ac.uk/ems_driving_licence)

### NURSING SUCCESSES

Congratulations go to Veterinary Nurses Claire Ramsay and Susan Campbell (nee Hammer) who have both successfully passed their Nursing Diploma exams.

Gemma Bruce has also passed her portfolio and written exams. Aileen Brown, Clinical Services Co-ordinator said: “Carrying out nurse training is an important aspect of work of the Hospital for Small Animals and we hope to become more involved with this in the future as the structure of veterinary nurse training evolves.”

### ONCOLOGY PRIZE

At the European Oncology Meeting in Turin in March 2010, resident Shasta Lynch was awarded the Wim Misdorp prize for overall best research abstract for her work on the characterisation of glioma stem cells.





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## A FIRST FOR EXOTICS

The Dick Vet has created the UK's first specialist training facility for veterinary students.

The Hospital for Small Animals has opened an exotic animal teaching facility, where students can learn about the best way to care for exotic animals.

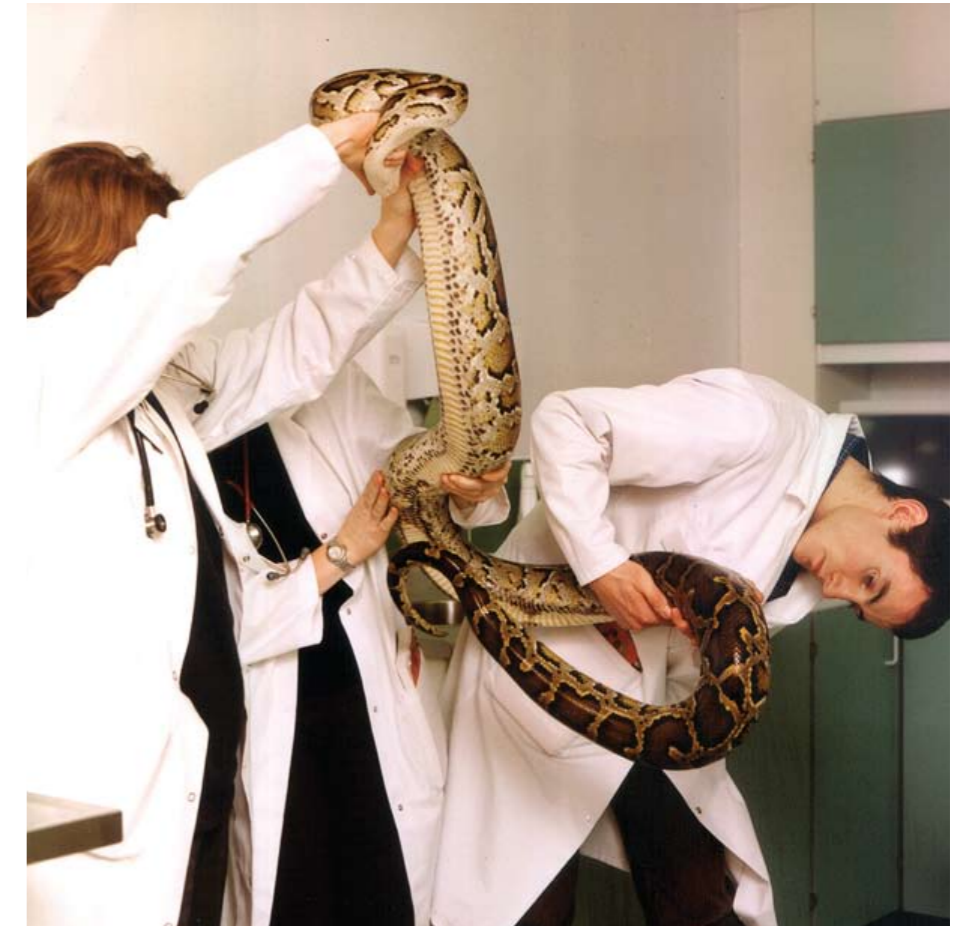
The unit houses a range of animals, including rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, chinchillas, rats, lizards, snakes and tortoises. Students will also learn about the correct environment to keep these exotic pets and their dietary requirements. Animal handling classes are held to compliment the taught course. One-to-one sessions will be available for students who have phobias about snakes or rats to help them overcome their fears.

Students will also be able to carry out supervised placements, which are compulsory for a veterinary degree, at the new unit.

Gidona Goodman, Lecturer in Exotic Animal and Wildlife Medicine, said:

"Students do not often get much exposure to handling exotic animals until they start treating them under supervision in clinics in their final year. However, exotic pets are on the increase and this unit will mean that students will be much better equipped to handle such animals. Giving students this experience early on is important as it provides them with the skills and confidence to treat animals with a variety of problems."

It is estimated that there are 1.4 million



The facility will give students valuable training to treat a range of exotic animals.

pet rabbits in the UK, making them the third most popular pet after cats and

dogs. About 100,000 households have snakes and 80,000 homes have pet rats.

## LECTURES FOR THE PUBLIC

For the first time Veterinary Services have presented lectures for the general public on preventative health care for animals.

The four lectures, funded by money donated to the University, were held throughout the Spring and have focused on some of the most popular pets and animals.

The series opened with Brigitte Reusch speaking about rabbits, followed by Daniëlle Gunn-Moore's lecture on

understanding cats entitled "It's all about me". These were followed by a lecture on horses entitled "Why the long face?" presented by equine specialist Matt Hanks and the series concluded with Victoria Macklin's talk "It shouldn't happen to a dog."

The events were free and held on the central area campus of the University of Edinburgh. Some 350 people attended.

Director of Veterinary Services Ronnie Soutar said: "The lecture series has been really popular. It's allowed us a great opportunity to give something back to the public, educating them about how best to care for their animals."

"We are delighted that so many people took the time to come along and hopefully they will be able to use these tips on preventative health care at home."





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# TRACHEAL RESECTION

Champion Graf's carriage driving career was saved by an innovative tracheal resection.

Graf was a driving horse that had competed at a very high level and was otherwise a picture of health until one day he suddenly began making an abnormal respiratory noise and was unable to exercise. His owner's veterinary surgeon, Malcolm Stewart of Wilson and Partners in Fife referred him to the Equine Hospital where it was discovered that he had suffered a serious injury to his trachea.

Says Prof Padraic Dixon, Professor of Equine Surgery: "We believe that he must have had a kick on his trachea or had run into a fixed object, thus breaking some tracheal rings. The injury had later caused scarring of the tracheal airway so that it ended up about 20% of the size it should have been."

"Therefore he was able to breathe comfortably at rest but during exercise, when the airflow increases by 60 times, his trachea just could not cope," he continues. "Our radiographic and endoscopic



Image courtesy of Carriage Driving Magazine [www.dickyjim.co.uk](http://www.dickyjim.co.uk).

examinations showed that there was so much damage to one of the tracheal rings and much adjacent scarring that we would have to fully remove that ring and then rejoin the trachea together."

This unusual and difficult procedure was successfully carried out but Graf still was not out of the woods. The scarring led to the nerve that innervates the larynx

being damaged during the surgery and so he also had to have his larynx wired open ("tieback procedure"). Thankfully both operations were successful and Graf is now national champion again. Such is the rarity of this case, it is being submitted to a journal for publication.

## CLINICAL LABORATORY OBTAINS EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY CLINICAL PATHOLOGY APPROVAL

The Clinical Laboratory of the Veterinary Pathology Unit (VPU) at Easter Bush Veterinary Centre has recently been approved by the European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology (ECVCP) to allow training of clinical pathology residents for the ECVCP examination. The approval process is rigorous to ensure that only laboratories with the best management of quality, personnel, health and safety and facilities are allowed this status. Professor Elspeth Milne, Head of the VPU, commented "This is an important development for us and we join a very select group of labs in Europe with this status. It is a testament to the hard

work of all the staff that this has been possible".

The Clinical Pathology Service consists of Elspeth Milne as Senior Clinical Pathologist, her two Residents Helena Ferreira and Pia Formisano and Laboratory Managers Yvonne Crawford and Neil MacIntyre and their teams of technical staff, although all the VPU staff make a contribution. It provides a wide range of services including Haematology, Biochemistry and Cytology to support the Dick Vet's large and small animal hospitals and first opinion practices, research workers and external practices.



## NEW CAT WARD

Sarah-Ann Dickson reports on developments in feline care at the Hospital for Small Animals, not least her own appointment as Dechra Feline Nurse.

There are exciting developments at the Feline Clinic at the Hospital for Small Animals. The Hospital has a new, specially-designed cat ward, a cat only area in the waiting room and we have become one very few centres to offer radioactive iodine therapy. In addition, I am delighted to have been appointed as a dedicated feline nurse.

The new feline ward has been designed to be more calming, cat friendly and removed from dog noise. There will be more walk-in kennels with different levels within them, allowing cats to choose the height that they feel most comfortable at. This creates a more stimulating environment for the cats both mentally and physically and is user-friendly for

ward staff and cats alike.

The new cat section of our waiting area, to the right of the main reception, is being revamped and has been designated a "no dogs allowed" area. This creates a quiet, calm area for our feline and exotic patients away from the excitement and stress of the dogs. In the waiting area there'll also be information about developments at the feline clinic and other points of interest, such as unusual cases.

Radioactive iodine ( $I^{131}$ ) treatment is a one-off injection used to treat hyperthyroidism in cats. The injection eradicates the abnormal cells within the thyroid gland which cause an excess of thyroid hormones. The patients are then cared for in one of our isolation wards,

also currently being refurbished, for around three days, then moved into our new cat ward. After seven to ten days they are usually able to go home.

Very few centres offer this treatment and we are the first centre which can perform this with such a short hospitalisation period.

I myself have been given the pleasure of becoming the new dedicated feline nurse at the hospital and am looking forward to this new and exciting job. I love working with our feline friends and trying to make their stay with us as homely and relaxed as possible.

■ We are grateful to Dechra for funding this post.

## CLINICAL CASE STUDY AWARDS



The School had two finalists in the Dogs Trust and Cats Protection Clinical Case Study Award 2010. Jenny Ellis was runner-up in the Cats Protection Award for her report entitled "Feline hyperthyroidism: diagnosis, treatment and complications in three domestic short-haired cats", and Katie Wu came 3rd in the Dogs Trust Award for her report on three dermatological cases.

Jenny and Katie were presented with their awards by Chris Laurence, Veterinary Director at the Dogs Trust and Maggie Roberts, Director of Veterinary Services for Cats Protection.

## A FITTING MEMORIAL FOR SOOTY

Nicki Reed has fond memories of a feline friend.

I first met Sooty in 1999 when he attended the Small Animal Clinic at Summerhall. Initially his problems were bladder related, due to his reluctance to eat 'wet' food and drink enough. Despite being a gentleman in all other respects, Sooty would not take pills, therefore his problems required a little bit of imagination to address. The bladder situation was remedied by increasing his water consumption, but he then went on to develop pancreatitis and inflammatory bowel disease. This was controlled by a change in diet, but at this time he was diagnosed positive for feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV). The FIV caused one of his irises to change colour but apart from this he showed very few signs and it did not stop him leading an active lifestyle. That was, however, until he sustained a severe trauma, which left him nearly dead. Intensive stabilisation

was necessary before his broken limbs could be repaired. He required two blood transfusions and went into heart failure, but despite this, refused to be beaten. On recovery, he continued to use up his nine lives by developing hyperthyroidism, asthma and chronic kidney disease. With all these medical problems, it is no wonder that Sooty was a regular attendee at the Hospital for Small Animals. He patiently let many students over the years examine him, and they were invariably surprised at how, despite his extensive list of problems, he always looked so happy and healthy.

Sadly, Sooty died after becoming very anaemic with an infection related to his FIV. We have gratefully received a donation from Sooty's Mum and Dad (Carol and Philip Brodie), which will be used for equipment in the new feline ward.



The late Sooty Brodie

I suspect I am unlikely to meet another cat quite like Sooty.

## BENGIE: ONE REMARKABLE CAT!

Kerry Simpson reports on treating a cat with a gunshot wound.

Bengie, a one year old male neutered Bengal cat, was presented to his referring vet for a wound on the bridge of his nose. A few days earlier his owners had heard him scream from outside. He came in bleeding profusely from a hole in the right side of his nose. X-rays taken by the referring vet showed that Bengie had been shot in the head with an airgun rifle. Bengie was sent to the Feline Clinic. A 4mm diameter hole could be seen on the right side of his nose, extending into the nasal chambers. Further X-rays confirmed the presence of an airgun pellet, which had clearly travelled through the right nasal chamber, leading to extensive destruction. The pellet was located within the pharynx. Using an endoscope we were able not only to remove the pellet but many of the bone fragments from within

the back of the nose. Bengie was given anti-inflammatories, antibiotics and pain killers. After treatment, Bengie returned home and is now doing fine.

■ If you would like to support the School please visit [www.vet.ed.ac.uk/](http://www.vet.ed.ac.uk/) fundraising, call David Rider on 0131 650 8833 or e-mail [David.Rider@ed.ac.uk](mailto:David.Rider@ed.ac.uk) for further details.



X-rays of Bengie's skull showing bone fragments and an airgun pellet.



# RESISTANCE IS NOT FUTILE

Researching the worms that turned.



Diseases caused by roundworms (nematodes), not only have a detrimental effect on productivity, but can greatly impact the quality of life of affected animals. The R(D)SVS's Moredun Chair of Veterinary Immunobiology, Jacqui Matthews, leads a research group who investigate roundworms of horses and ruminants. Their externally-funded research focuses mainly on equine gut parasites. World-wide, these worms affect most grazing equids, with many animals failing to develop immunity to re-infection. Drug resistance in managed horses is common, especially in the small redworm group (cyathostomins), and is now a major threat to equine health and welfare. There are ~50 cyathostomin species that affect horses, sometimes causing severe colitis, which can be fatal in up to 50% of cases. The Matthews' group has led in developing and using DNA-based tools to identify species of accessible worm stages. The availability of these tools has meant that cyathostomins could be studied without the need for experimental infections. This work has provided important insights into how proportions of worm species relate to disease and to how they affect patterns of drug resistance. The research group was also the first to identify macrocyclic lactone (ML) drug-resistant cyathostomins. ML drugs are by far the most commonly used and preservation of their efficacy should be a primary target of all equine health programmes. To facilitate this, the group is developing new and improved tools to

make detection of ML resistance easier in the field. These will become important management tools for veterinary surgeons and for people who manage and own horses. Alongside these tools, the group is developing a diagnostic blood test that will allow numbers of cyathostomin gut wall larvae (worm stages that cannot currently be detected outside of horses) to be estimated. This test utilises worm-specific serum antibody responses as a marker of infection and will be a much-needed aid to diagnosis of these 'hidden' parasites. The group also works on development of vaccines for roundworms of cattle and sheep. This has focussed on molecules necessary for worm survival in the host. It has analysed secretions of the bovine lungworm and the sheep brown stomach worm and identified components likely to play key roles in worm growth and development and in their ability to evade immune responses.

It is vital that research outcomes are fed back to relevant end-users and Jacqui and her team play an active role in regularly translating their research findings. They write lay articles and deliver training to vets, horse owners and individuals registered to sell dewormers, and work with equine charities (The Horse Trust and Donkey Sanctuary), and with the Horserace Betting Levy Board and Thoroughbred Breeders Association to disseminate practical information resulting from the evidence based research. Each of these organisations funds the group's research in some way.

## E. COLI STUDY

Thanks to funding from the Wellcome Trust, Prof David Gally of The Roslin Institute and the Centre for Infectious Diseases will be working with Prof David Tollervey of the Wellcome Trust Centre for Cell Biology in the School of Biological Sciences to determine which E. coli 0157 strains are most likely to infect humans. The scientists, along with a group from the Scottish Agricultural College, are already collaborating to try and discover why particular strains of E. coli are more likely to be associated with human disease. The grouping has made good progress recently in developing a vaccine formulation for use in cattle.

## COMBATting EAST COAST FEVER

Ivan Morrison of The Roslin Institute and the Centre for Infectious Diseases has received funding from the BBSRC, DFID (Department for International Development), SERAD and CIDLID (Combatting Infectious Diseases in Live Stock for International Development) through a scheme to investigate new leads for improved vaccines against *Theileria parva*, a parasite which leads to East Coast Fever in cattle. This disease, which is spread by ticks, has an enormous economic impact in sub-Saharan Africa, with an estimated US\$300million loss per annum to the economies of endemic countries. Prof Morrison's group along with colleagues at the University of Glasgow and ILRI (International Livestock Research Institute), Kenya will examine the immune response to certain strains of the parasite. The live vaccine which is currently used has been found to have mixed efficacy, partly due to problems associated with distribution, but also due to the vaccine itself not engendering a robust immune response. Finding new vaccines is therefore a key priority for this disease, as well as defining methods for improving quality control of the current vaccine.

## ANIMALS NOW GET BUGS FROM PEOPLE

We often read about diseases making the jump from animals to humans. Now a study at the R(D)SVS's Roslin Institute has shown that globalisation and industrialisation are causing diseases to spread from humans to animals.

The research has shown that a strain of bacteria has jumped from humans to chickens and spread between animals. This is the first clear evidence, since animals were first domesticated 10,000 years ago, of bacterial pathogens making such a jump.

The study, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, identified a form of the bacteria *Staphylococcus Aureus* in chickens that originally came from humans. Genetic testing showed the jump happened about 40 years ago when intensive poultry

farming became widespread.

The findings could have a huge impact on poultry farming and if bacteria cross from humans to other livestock, there could be implications for food security. Further research is set to establish if this is the case.

According to Dr Ross Fitzgerald: "Half a century ago chickens were reared for their eggs, with meat regarded as a by-product. Now the demand for meat has led to a poultry industry dominated by a few multinational companies which supply a limited number of breeding lines to a global market – thereby promoting the spread of bacteria around the world."



## HBLB FUNDS PhD

Dr Kirstie Pickles, Lecturer in Equine Practice, has been awarded a veterinary research training scholarship of £95,000 by the HBLB (Horserace Betting Levy Board).

The award will fund a three year PhD studentship at Edinburgh University, due to start in October 2010, jointly supervised by Professor Jacqui Matthews and Tom McNeilly at the Moredun Institute. This will investigate the involvement of mast cells in cyathostomin (small red worm) infections in horses. Further insight is needed to develop better methods of control of the parasite and improved treatments for horses with severe gut inflammation caused by these worms.

Dr Pickles and team will investigate the number of mast cells and the enzymes they contain in different parts of the intestine of cyathostomin-infected horses and relate these to the worm burden. Diagnostic tests that could estimate the size of cyathostomin burden would help identify horses at risk of disease. It is hoped this will lead to minimally invasive tests for estimating worm burden. If successful, this project has the potential to substantially improve horse health and welfare.

## CLINICAL RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

In 2008, The Roslin Institute was incorporated with the Dick Vet and joined The University of Edinburgh.

Bench researchers at The Roslin Institute and clinicians from the Hospitals at the Dick Vet are now to be encouraged to work together thanks to a new programme, reports Patricia Hart.

Professor David Hume, Director of The Roslin Institute, has established the new programme of interaction and a group of 14 Dick Vet clinicians have become Clinical Research Associates (CRAs). The CRAs will bring to the bench researchers in Roslin a wealth of experience in veterinary science and expertise in a number of companion and production animal diseases that can be compared to similar diseases in humans, thus bringing the College mission of "One Health" one step closer. Also discoveries made in the research labs will be translated much faster into cures in the clinics for life-threatening diseases in pets such as cancer.

Professor Hume is delighted with the expansion of the research interests at the Institute noting that, "There are a large number of clear benefits to the

existing Roslin researchers as well as the CRAs in combining their research programmes. Bringing the clinical element to the Institute's existing basic research will increase capacity and momentum of projects leading to the fast tracking of commercialisation targets."

Professor Brendan Corcoran undertakes research focused on understanding the aetiology of myxomatous mitral valve disease in the dog. The disease shares some characteristics with mitral valve prolapse in people and is a good example of research that will also be of considerable comparative interest to human medicine. Professor Corcoran said of becoming associated with basic researchers at The Roslin Institute, "The CRAs see this as a great opportunity to advance our research by introducing many of the genetic and molecular aspects of animal bioscience that have been refined at The Roslin Institute."

For further information go to [www.roslin.ac.uk/research/divisions.php/ClinicalSciences](http://www.roslin.ac.uk/research/divisions.php/ClinicalSciences).





The agreement was signed by Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, Professor Weigang Fang, Vice-President of the Peking University Health Science Centre (pictured on the right) and Mr. Quanren Li, Deputy Mayor of Wuxi City (centre).

## ROSLIN GETS CHINESE LINK

The Roslin Institute is working with Chinese scientists to develop a training and exchange programme.

An agreement between The University of Edinburgh and Chinese partners – Peking University and Wuxi City – is set to benefit researchers at the Dick Vet's Roslin Institute.

The agreement establishes links between The Roslin Institute, The University of Edinburgh's MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine and the Chinese partners. Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, Professor Weigang Fang, Vice-President of the Peking University

(PKU) Health Science Centre, and Mr. Quanren Li, Deputy Mayor of Wuxi City attended the signing in Edinburgh. The agreement provides the foundation for the development of a training and scientific exchange programme in stem cell biology and regenerative medicine.

Sir John Elvidge, Permanent Secretary at the Scottish Government, said: "Scotland already enjoys close ties with China and this collaboration strengthens our relationship. Our life sciences sector is world renowned and this agreement

further cements Scotland's reputation. The First Minister was also delighted to hear of developments since his visit to China in April 2009 and we look forward to this collaboration producing cutting edge research."

Professor David Hume, Director of The Roslin Institute, said: "This is an extremely exciting opportunity to establish close links with colleagues in China and to develop new and powerful scientific interactions that will progress our own stem cell research."

## RESEARCH TRACK POSTER DAY

On 9th October, Research Track held its annual poster day when the 15 students who had done projects the previous summer had a chance to present their research and compare their experiences with other undergraduates. Some 40 people attended. The students had been placed throughout the Easter Bush Campus including the Vet School itself, Moredun Institute and The Roslin Institute. Two students who had gone to Colorado State University to undertake

equine and sheep projects also presented their posters.

Research Track Co-ordinator and Moredun Professor of Veterinary Immunobiology, Professor Jacqui Matthews said: "The posters were of a universally high standard and all the students seemed to have enjoyed themselves. Cheese and wine were served and it was a chance to talk about their projects and also see their supervisors again."



Pictured from left: Robert Palmer, Mike Davies (representing Mark Price, RABDF President), Lady Byford (Chairman), Lyndon Edwards, Rachel Mather, Sarah Ritter, Steve Williams.

## DICK VET STUDENT SCOOPS INTERVET BURSARY AWARD

Hayley Harwood has won a prestigious bursary award for her research.

Eight veterinary students were nominated for the award for their exceptional work under the financial backing of Intervet / Schering-Plough Animal Health's Connect Bursary Awards, which are designed to provide financial assistance for students for research on animal health.

Hayley Harwood was awarded the main prize jointly with Charlotte Cockburn from the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) at a presentation day at Intervet in Milton Keynes.

"I carried out my project last summer at Colorado State University," explained Hayley, describing the research that so impressed the judges. "It was exciting to be working in one of the most internationally recognised establishments for equine reproduction. The aim of my project was to investigate the possibility of shipping frozen-thawed stallion semen to clients to be used for artificial insemination, and to find a thawing protocol that would allow this to be done successfully. I was delighted to have been awarded a bursary to help with my project and was invited to Intervet in Milton Keynes for a presentation day in November."

David Hallas, General Manager at Intervet / Schering-Plough Animal Health, said: "The fact that we awarded a record number of Bursaries this year and elected joint winners is testament to the refreshingly high standard of work being undertaken by veterinary undergraduates."



From left, David Hallas (Intervet / Schering-Plough Animal Health) with winning students. Hayley Harwood is pictured in the centre.

## SARAH RITTER, RABDF FINALIST

Final year student Sarah Ritter was a finalist for the RABDF (Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers) Farm Planning Award. She was presented with a certificate along with other finalists at the Dairy Event and Livestock Show, Stoneleigh Park, Coventry on 16th September.

This is the first year the competition has been open to vet students as well as students of agriculture. The award was

introduced as part of the Farm Health Planning (FHP) initiative, a proactive approach to farm health planning in the cattle sector developed in the last three years by a group of farmers, vets and specialist advisors, working in partnership with Defra.

The entrants were required to prepare a 1,500 word essay demonstrating their understanding of proactive farm health planning on dairy and or beef units.

## SCOTIA AGRICULTURAL CLUB PRIZE

Postgraduate Hanna Miedema has won a prize for her PhD thesis, entitled "Investigating the use of behavioural, accelerometer and heart rate measurements to predict calving in dairy cows". The thesis has earned Hanna the 2009 Scotia Agricultural Club Student Prize. A presentation ceremony was held at the Moredun Research Institute in November.

Hanna's research, supervised by Dr Alastair MacRae, used observations from video recordings at Langhill Dairy Farm to identify consistent behavioural changes occurring the day before calving that could be used to predict the onset of calving. Cows were also fitted with collars incorporating 3D movement sensors to see if specific behaviours could be detected, which would therefore have the potential to be used as the basis of an automated monitoring system to predict calving.



Hanna Miedema receives her prize from Professor Donald MacRae.



## JAPAN EXPERIENCE

Prof Jeremy Bradshaw, International Dean for the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, reports on the September 2009 vet student trip to Japan.



Dick Vet students from a range of years in Japan.

As we emerged, weary and jetlagged from the underground station, we were met with the view of a massive rollercoaster that swooped and soared round, and even through, the tall buildings in the heart of Tokyo city. We knew that Japan was going to be quite unlike anything we had experienced before.

Trips like this give our students the opportunity to see how their profession is taught and practiced in different cultures. This gives them a deeper understanding of what they have learned at the Dick Vet and how to apply it in a range of different settings. Veterinary medicine is now truly global; experiences such as this prepare our students to practice their profession wherever in the world they end up.

We visited two of Japan's top vet schools (Tokyo University and Hokkaido University), and took a behind-the-scenes look at Asahiyama Zoo, including trying out tranquilizer darting - the plastic polar bear never stood a chance!

We saw sperm whales from a small boat, spent two days tracking bears with the rangers at Shiretoko World Heritage

Site. We visited beef and dairy farms, where the students interrogated the farmers about animal husbandry. We also learned from the vets at the Japanese Racing Association, and visited Japan Animal Referral Medical Centre.

We saw active volcanoes, and even stayed in a replica Scottish castle, complete with turrets and a kilt hanging over the fireplace. Two busy weeks flashed by all too quickly. I'd like to thank the staff and students of both universities, who made us welcome with a level of hospitality that would be difficult to match in the UK. Special thanks to Prof. Takashi Umemura (Hokkaido University) and Prof. Hiroyuki Nakayama (Tokyo University), and to Hokkaido University who generously supported our visit.

## FALLING IN LINE WITH A LAVA VETERINARIAN

An unusual placement for fourth year student Laura M. Wilant.

The first morning of my LAVA (Laboratory Animal Veterinary Association) placement began bright and early, as I met up with the vet I was to shadow for a week.

LAVA was formed in 1988 with the purpose of promoting veterinary knowledge and disseminating information concerning laboratory animals throughout the veterinary community and public at large. All of the animals I saw on my LAVA placements were born and bred for specific purposes: their physiology and how their cognitive function contributes to understanding drug pharmacology, learning and memory exercises in psychology and for the creation of specific genetic lines.

We worked with such a diversity of

animals. Looking back, even if much of it seemed like just small furry work, I am reminded that each colony strain of mouse or rat had some pretty specific differences to any other mouse or rat I had worked with in practice.

In clinical practice, we don't seem to ask ourselves or try to justify the term "working animal" whenever a shepherd's collie dog or a police force German Shepherd comes in for treatment. Even in our conversation with horse owners, we include the questions "what kind of work does your horse do?" and "how long has it been out of work?"

Perhaps because laboratory animals fall outside of our traditional understanding of "working animals",

we focus on the work they're not doing rather than the work they do. Our role as veterinarians is fundamental to keeping them healthy for work, just the same as for any guide dog that walks through our door.

In the course of my two weeks, I shadowed four incredible veterinary surgeons who each had their own specific area of responsibility and expertise and my LAVA placements also gave me a collection of case studies that got me thinking about the role that Named Veterinary Surgeons play under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 and the ethical, moral, and scientific questions they are faced with on a daily basis.

## STUDENTS LEARN TO CRAWL TO RAISE FUNDS

Hannah Johnson of the Dick Vet Student Fundraising Committee (DVSFC) tells the Dick Vet News about stretcher races with the medics and supermarket bag packing - all for a good cause.



Medicine and Veterinary Medicine students on their pub crawl.

Thanks to the enthusiasm of first and third years, it has been possible to organise some really exciting and innovative events this academic year. Following the success of the Vets vs Medics pub crawl last March, it only seemed fair to give the medics another shot at claiming victory. The event was once again a huge success with an even higher turnout than last year. Highlights of the night included a 3-legged race, bandaging challenges and a stretcher race. With the medics victorious this year, it's a level playing field for round three next year.

Our next exciting event was to hold the vet school's very first Agricultural Day designed to help second year and GEP students further their knowledge and practical skills in certain aspects of livestock husbandry. The day was made up of a series of lectures given

by senior students with an agricultural background, followed by a series of competitions and demonstrations. With the help of staff and local farmers there was breed identification, estimation of age, weight and height, lameness scoring, stock-judging, sheepdog training and confirmation scoring. Special thanks go to Kay and Archie Aitchison, Lawrence Hodgson-Jones, Sandra Grant, Ann Laird, Wilson Lee and the other Langhill employees, for making this event possible.

With Christmas coming up, we decided to bring out the festive cheer in everyone and go bag packing. It's always great for fundraising and it's a brilliant opportunity to keep the local community informed about the goings-on at the Dick Vet. There is such warmth and appreciation for our work and genuine interest and support

from the public.

Thanks to the efforts of staff and students the DVSFC has raised in excess of £1000 and many areas will benefit from this money. Current plans include the purchase of training models for the clinical skills lab, a bench for the new vet school garden, some home comforts for the ICU accommodation and a contribution to the set-up costs of the new Wildlife Emergency Clinic.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has made DVSFC possible. I never imagined that so much could be achieved in such a short time.





# Your pets' lives in their hands.



Follow the work of vets, based at The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, in a five-part documentary. And you'll see what their expertise, care and dedication means for their patients, and their owners.

Watch online at [www.stv.tv/vetschool](http://www.stv.tv/vetschool)



ADVERTORIAL

## EDINBURGH – YOUR PAST, YOUR PRESENT, YOUR FUTURE?



What's your abiding memory of your time studying in Edinburgh? Chances are your answer will be inextricably linked to your time at University, and rightly so as the city is renowned as being a fantastic location for students.

While you're still a student, it feels like you have all the time in the world to explore the city you live in, but it's only when you make your way into everyday life that you realise there was so much left undiscovered. Ask yourself - what do you really know of Edinburgh?

As the UK's favourite short break destination, and a fabulous gateway to explore the rest of Scotland, perhaps you should consider rediscovering the city.

Now a World Heritage Site and first ever UNESCO City of Literature, Scotland's inspiring capital is a compact, cosmopolitan city. Much has changed in just a few short years, but the essential heart of the place remains untouched and tradition and history sit comfortably with modernity.

Edinburgh's world class events and festivals give the city its unique atmosphere. Events this year include the Emirates International Rugby 7's, Taste of Edinburgh and a Super September of Sports including both the World Championships of Archery and Duathlon.

The multi-million pound refurbishments of both the National Portrait Gallery and National Museum, the redevelopment of top arts venue the Usher Hall and the arrival of new Tattoo stands in 2011 will ensure that the Edinburgh visitor experience remains world class.

A great place to do business or to stage a conference, Edinburgh is the most popular UK city after London for hosting international association meetings.

Earlier this year the city was awarded the accolade of Europe's top location for economic potential and "best small city of the future" by the Financial Times Foreign Direct Investment (fDi) magazine.

Major investment and development is underway around the city, with more planned for the future.

To the north, Edinburgh's Waterfront is one of Europe's most significant regeneration projects and to the west, the area around Edinburgh Airport is being developed as a new international business gateway zone.

In the city centre itself, more than £1 billion is currently earmarked for development. At the east end of Princes Street construction will begin in 2011 on the £850 million redevelopment of the St James Quarter by Henderson Global Investors.

South of the city developments will build on Edinburgh city region's reputation as one of Europe's top ten locations for science and technology. Edinburgh BioQuarter will host new facilities including the £60 million Scottish Centre for Regenerative Medicine and the proposed £150 million relocation of Edinburgh's Royal Hospital for Sick Children.

The area also includes one of the world's leading animal bioscience groups in the Easter Bush Research Consortium. Over £100 million is being invested in the redevelopment of the Easter Bush Campus, with a new teaching building for The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and a new research facility for The Roslin Institute nearing completion, as well as the planned expansion of Pentlands Science Park, home of the Moredun Group.

Edinburgh really is moving forward in the 21st century. There's never been a better time to revive those fond memories. Rediscover your Edinburgh – it might just surprise you.

See [www.edinburgh-inspiringcapital.com](http://www.edinburgh-inspiringcapital.com) and [www.eventsedinburgh.org.uk](http://www.eventsedinburgh.org.uk)



The newly refurbished Usher Hall.



Edinburgh Castle and Financial District.



# DICK VET MUSICIANS TAKE TO THE STAGE

On Saturday 21st November 2009 in the Reid Hall, an audience was entertained by the first ever performance of the Dick Vet Musicians, reports Alastair Macdonald.

A group of students and staff at the School recently got together at the suggestion of fifth year student Betty Chow to perform orchestral and choral music for fun. This was the conducting debut of their musical director Chris Hutchings, a PhD music student in composition (University of Glasgow). Led by their Concert Master, fourth year student Katie Denholm, the orchestra performed pieces by Beethoven and Britten, and popular compositions were sung by the choir. The concert ended with Christmas carols with the audience singing along. Introduced by third year student Gayle Moore, the evening was a great success.

New though the venture is, it has its roots in history. The Dick Vet archive holds a photograph of an earlier students' orchestral performance, conducted by Henry Dryerre, Professor of Physiology, on

the stage of the Main Hall at Summerhall. The caption tells us that the performers were first year students, the session was 1935-6 and that they played Hayden's Toy Symphony. The Principal at this time was Prof. Orlando Charnock Bradley, himself a cellist in a Dick Vet musical group called



The Quaverers who performed from 1925 to 1934.

■ For more information about their upcoming rehearsal and concerts, please send an email to [dickvetmusicians@gmail.com](mailto:dickvetmusicians@gmail.com), or visit <http://groupspaces.com/dvm>



Photos by Alastair Macdonald and the Dick Vet Archive.

# OUR MAN IN AFRICA

Countdown to rinderpest eradication: a role model or a lucky break? Professor Brian Perry reports from his base in the Rift Valley of Kenya.



Professor Brian Perry refuelling his aircraft when flying vaccines around Ethiopia in 1971.

2010 will likely be the year that the world declares freedom from rinderpest. Rinderpest has not been seen since 2001 and the freedom accreditation process is now underway, leading to the first global elimination of a disease since smallpox in 1979. The ancient disease of rinderpest has plagued cattle over the millennia, and was endemic in Europe as recently as the 18th Century. As Europeans built empires in the 19th Century, it moved with them. Indonesia and the Philippines were colonised by the Netherlands and USA respectively in the late 1800s, introducing rinderpest from mainland Asia. Rinderpest entered Eritrea in Africa in 1887 with cattle from India and swept through the continent with huge cattle mortality. Progressively it was brought under control in Asia, but Africa has remained the last bastion of this infamous murrain.

The momentum to eradicate rinderpest from Africa came in Kano, Nigeria, in 1960

when African veterinary services directors agreed to embark on a multinational programme called Joint Project (JP) 15, put forward by W.G Beaton. This was based on mass vaccination using a goat-adapted vaccine, soon replaced by the tissue culture vaccine developed by Walter Plowright, who died in February of this year. After completing my DTVM at the Dick Vet in 1971, where I had met the retired Beaton then editing the journal Tropical Animal Health and Production, I cut my tropical disease teeth on JP15 in Ethiopia, supervising annual vaccination campaigns in different regions of the country and flying Plowright's vaccine to my teams.

The JP15 was an innovative milestone in disease control in Africa, from which its successors the Pan African Rinderpest Campaign and the Pan-African Control of Epizootics learnt the need for indigenous ownership, capacity building and

sustainability, qualities in which JP15 was arguably deficient. It then took the FAO's Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme, under the determined leadership of Peter Roeder, to bring us to where we are today.

Some argue that rinderpest was an easy target because of the unique disease characteristics; geographically focussed in regions of Africa; no latent or persistent infections; transmission only by close contact; only one serotype; rapid diagnostic tests available; and good vaccines which establish life-long immunity. But many of these characteristics are shared by measles of humans (which probably evolved from rinderpest), and how curious that this was not tackled first. The WHO considers it biologically and technically feasible to eradicate measles, and has its eye set on 2020, but some are concerned that the resources and the resolve required for eradication might detract attention from other priority diseases, and want to ensure that any such initiative also sustainably increases health services capacity.

Over the last few months I have been leading an independent team evaluating the FAO's global avian flu programme, a fascinating process which took me to Nigeria, Egypt, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand, and in which eventual eradication was mentioned occasionally by some. While rinderpest eradication is undoubtedly a cause for major celebrations, in the complicated settings of many developing countries, lets not get carried away with by the 'E' word when we go back to work on the other diseases confronting us. Instead let's focus on ways to progressively reduce the burden of diseases, and contemplate eradication only when all the ducks, including the essential golden goose, are in a row.



## A VIEW FROM OUTSIDE

Dr Bob Moore (Class of '67) is a retired vet and past RCVS President. Here he reflects on happy days at the Dick Vet.

A few days before Christmas, my first term at the Dick Vet completed, I was waiting at a station to meet someone off the train. My Dick Vet scarf, a square yard of maroon with white stripes and college crests, was wrapped around my neck against the cold. An elderly gentleman (he must have been forty!) stopped in front of me and put his suitcase down. Shaking hands with me vigorously he said, "It's always good to meet a Dick Vet man at any time." Picking up his case he moved off with the crowd. That small incident showed just what the Dick Vet Spirit is all about.

I remember my years at the Dick Vet with great affection. We had a large number of tutors who were great men and a few women. Tommy Graham who, besides teaching anatomy, recounted his experiences of caring for the horses in WW1 and would say things like - "Imagine I'm the stomach coming into the abdomen ...". Jimmy Speed whose knowledge

of Exmoor ponies was unsurpassed. Peter Eyre who taught pharmacology. Prof Spreull, the last of the practitioners to be appointed directly as Professor of Surgery, and whom I assisted at my first ever surgery, lavaging the middle ear of a rat from the medical school psychology department. Dr Raisky, the ambidextrous Polish parasitologist. Major Ferguson who conducted our equitation exam. At least I know how to construct a bridle from a selection of leather straps, but why would my horse never stand square? There were others who cannot be mentioned for lack of space.

I remember getting my head around drachms and scruples, learning ounces per pound and pounds per hundredweight, only to start work and find that the new SI system was the new way. Milligrams per kilo, litres instead of pints and gallons, Celsius instead of Fahrenheit. I never did crack that and still think in degrees Fahrenheit: 37°F is only just

above freezing for goodness sake. And all Dr Paver's efforts to get us to understand starch equivalents were of no avail as that system rapidly went out of fashion and I had to learn FME, DCP and all that.

I wonder if those who taught us ever realised the enormous impact and influence they had on the lives of all of us who learned our skills from them? I wish I had told them at the time, or in my early years of practice. Do the present day staff realise how much of a role model they are for their undergraduates?

Did the Dick Vet prepare me for a life in practice? If I thought I had completed my education when I graduated, I soon realised that at that point I was just beginning to learn. But my training at the Dick Vet prepared me to learn from experience in practice, and for that I am very grateful. I remember my days in Edinburgh with great affection and gratitude.



Bob Moore on his boat 'Jaunty Jane' near Plymouth.

## PAULINE TAYLOR CLASS OF '78



I was at the Dick Vet from 1973 - 1978. I'm from Galashiels and after graduation I went to work in my local practice, now called the Merlin Veterinary Group.

By 1985 I really got an urge to travel as I'd only managed to go from Galashiels to Edinburgh and back! So I went to New Zealand and stayed for about ten years running my own mixed practice.

In 1995 I completed my membership of the College of Australian Veterinary Scientists in Small Animal Medicine. That was a big turning point because I knew I really had to put it to good use and decided I was coming back to the UK. I came to Hong Kong for three months on the way and 15 years later I'm still here.

I remember my father on the phone saying to me: "Right so you're in Hong Kong, how far is that from Galashiels?" It was the first time in my life I'd lived in a city!

At first I was in private practice in a clinic in Wanchai. Then I ran the welfare department for the Hong Kong SPCA, rising to Executive Director.

Towards the end of 2004 I got the opportunity together with Vet Colleagues to put together what is now called "Pets Central". We opened our first Pets Central Clinic in 2006 and we now operate in four locations and have a mobile clinic.

It's still early days and there's a lot to do but we're providing what we feel is very good quality vet medicine and surgery. I was very proud when a visiting professor from Australia came to see us and said the quality of the practice was equal to the top five in Sydney.

The next challenge is to open up in China and we're also working in other countries now and looking towards a practice involving vets in the US, Australia, HK, China and maybe even the UK.

## ALEXANDER TREES CLASS OF '69



but someone who was clever enough to not pick the patients who were going to die anyway!

There'd been an expedition to Africa of vet graduates two years before us. I, and five others, were inspired to do the same. I'd been watching things like Armand and Michaela Dennis on the television. They were glamorous and French and they would drive around in battered vehicles being charged by rhinos.

So we raised some money and spent six months in Kenya working on a fabulous project for a British team of researchers living in the Masai Mara carrying out vaccine trials for a cattle disease. It was a hugely influential experience for me. I got turned on to Africa and turned on to research.

Then I came back and went into practice in Derby in England. It was very enjoyable although a bit less exotic. I decided I didn't want to spend my career in practice so I took up a PhD opportunity in Edinburgh.

I worked for five years as a Research Assistant in Edinburgh and that also took me to Nigeria - at that time the CTVM had a collaborative agreement at the National Veterinary Research Institute in Central Nigeria. I stayed there for nearly two years and got my PhD on tick borne disease in 1977.

I was offered a post as Veterinary Advisor for the Middle East and Africa for an American pharmaceutical company. The job was originally in Beirut but there was civil war in Lebanon so the office was relocated to Rome which was by no means unpleasant. It was fantastic experience flying off to Casablanca, Algiers, Cairo, Istanbul - it was all in my patch.

Then a lectureship came up in Liverpool in parasitology in 1980 and I've been there ever since. I became Dean in 2001 and did that for 7 years. Then I was asked to stand as President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. It's all been pretty busy!



## COLIN BARWISE CLASS OF '67 AND LESLEY BARWISE-MUNRO CLASS OF '86



Lesley Barwise-Munro in action.

She was a mature student studying to be a vet, he was a lecturer in large animal obstetrics. They were destined to fall in love and marry and yet they barely noticed each other when they were both full time at the R(D)SVS!

"I didn't get to know Colin until we were in 4th and final year when he began to teach us and it wasn't until after I'd graduated that we started to see one another," explains Lesley Barwise-Munro.

And far from bonding over some veterinary challenge it was their strong shared spirit of competition that attracted them to one another, according to Colin.

"We met through total 'I can walk up hills faster than you can' rivalry," explains Colin. "It was hillwalking and then she persuaded me to start running and we ended up doing Karrimor Mountain Marathons together. I'd egg her on and she'd egg me on."

"Lesley ran and did orienteering for Scotland so she was well used to it, but I despised people who ran on hills," he quips. "She got me converted."

"On these two day mountain marathons you had to carry everything you needed to survive for two days. There was great sporting rivalry and a lot of

walking!"

It wasn't long before the couple's professional lives also became intertwined and after they married in 1989 Colin became a partner in the Aln Veterinary Group, now Aln Northumbria, where Lesley was also working.

"I graduated expecting to go and do specialist equine practice but you had to spend two years in a mixed practice first so I took a job in what was then a small mixed practice in Alnwick," she explains.

"I saw a gap, no-one had taken a hold of the horse work so I concentrated on expanding that. There was a huge opportunity for development in Northumberland."

Lesley passed her certificate in Equine Practice in 1992 and found out she was pregnant with their first child, Rebecca now 17, during the exams. Their second child Suzie, now 13, was born in 1996.

Since then the practice has expanded dramatically and Lesley is a partner. In 1998 Lesley became a member of BEVA Council, remaining a member for nine years and becoming President in 2005. She remains very much involved in equine welfare and the drive for livery yard licensing.

Colin is now semi-retired enjoying more time to indulge his passion for mountain biking.

"When you do retire you miss people," he explains. "You go from talking to 30 or 40 people a day to talking to sheep and ponies – it could put you in an early grave!"

"So I decided to do some locum work which I thoroughly enjoy. The plan ultimately will be for us to both stop working but that will not be tomorrow!"

Both Colin and Lesley remember their time at the Dick Vet with great fondness.

Says Lesley: "We just had great fun and were a great group of people. We were a small year, about 42 of us graduated, and we were a very close year. Since then we have met at regular intervals for reunions with a good percentage turn out."

Colin adds: "I thoroughly enjoyed my time, when you go back you realise what a fine and vibrant place the Dick Vet is and I am delighted at the way things are going under the very capable leadership of Elaine Watson."



## YOU ASKED...WE DELIVERED

It's new, it's exclusive and it's what vets want. Hill's™ Science Plan™ VetEssentials is an exciting product range from Hill's Pet Nutrition that has been developed based on the opinions of 600 vets and 1100 pet owners<sup>1</sup>.

### A LIFESTAGE RANGE

The range is tailored across the top five essential health needs of pets in each lifestage and made to the same high nutritional standards of all Hill's™ products. VetEssentials is designed to be concise and includes puppy, large breed puppy, kitten, adult, adult mini, mature adult and mature adult mini; across cat and dog.

### UNIQUE BENEFITS

The Young and Mature Adult lifestage products have clinically proven benefits including Hill's mono-directional natural fibre technology, where the unique parallel alignment of fibres allows the teeth to be wiped clean before the kibble shatters. Together with a larger size kibble across the range, VetEssentials ensures that teeth are kept cleaner: in one clinical trial of the kibble technology used in VetEssentials, dogs accumulated 25% less bacteria laden plaque over a 7 day period than dogs eating a typical dry food<sup>2</sup>. Daily teeth cleaning supports the dental care protocols clients aspire to and makes a significant contribution to systemic health.

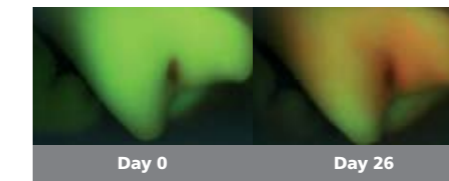
The higher levels of dietary fibre also support healthy digestive motility and promote satiety. For those worried that larger kibbles might be a bit of a mouthful, acceptability is high with the larger kibble size 91 per cent preferred by dogs over standard sized kibbles<sup>3</sup>.

### REVOLUTIONARY VISUAL DENTAL DIAGNOSTICS

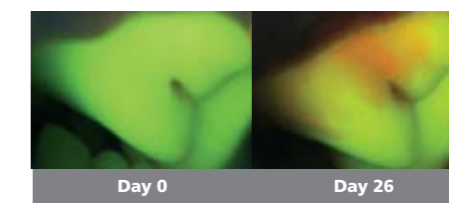
As VetEssentials core feature is tooth cleaning technology in all kibbles, Hill's have developed a diagnostic torch to help demonstrate dental plaque build up to pet owners. The torch emits light at a specific wavelength which causes bacteria laden plaque to fluoresce red/orange. As well as being used in the clinical proof supporting the product launch, field testing with vets

and pet owners has confirmed this striking demonstration reinforces the product and health benefits. Torches will be available soon, so please contact your veterinary territory manager for a demonstration.

#### Control food



#### Hill's™ Science Plan™ VetEssential kibble technology



Pictures show accumulation of plaque 4 weeks after dental cleaning using light induced fluorescence

### SIMPLE TO STOCK

The VetEssentials range is relevant and easy to stock with only 9 bag sizes and bespoke racking available. It's a great way to avoid those low turnover products that can take up valuable shelf space. Each pack size is affordable and represents great value. Hill's support is designed to fit veterinary needs: there are single meal trial packs because the proof is always in the eating and adaptable slim line product racking to fit even the smallest spaces.

### VETERINARY EXCLUSIVE

Pet owners will only be able to buy VetEssentials from their veterinary practice. Those who buy high quality super-premium pet foods are also more likely to stay loyal to the brand their vet recommends but they sometimes drift into other channels to make their subsequent



Adrian Pratt BVSc MRCVS, Veterinary Affairs Manager for Hill's Pet Nutrition introduces a new product range.

purchases<sup>4</sup>. With 97% of pet owners rating the new range as 'good' or 'excellent'<sup>5</sup>, your recommendation will be appreciated, assuring a return visit to re-purchase.

### SEE AND TELL

There are tools to help communicate the benefits and promote trial, including a kibble technology plaque removal demonstration kit. A 'try me free' mechanic is also available that refunds the cost of a 1.5 or 2kg bag purchased at full price on receipt of proof of purchase. No practice should be without VetEssentials.

For further information about VetEssentials contact your Hill's Territory Manager or contact 0800 282438.

#### References

1. Hill's Prophet Research 2008- Retail Environment Study 2008
2. Hill's data on file 2009
3. Hill's In Home Use Test 2009
4. AAHA Compliance Study 2003
5. Hill's™ Science Plan™ VetEssentials Exclusive Range Product Test, overall opinion data, 2009



## DOUBLE ACCOLADE FOR BANGALORE ALUMNUS

Congratulations are in order for Dr Malleshappa Rajasekhar, who did his PhD at the R(D)SVS in 1981. Dr Rajasekhar has been appointed as Advisor to the Government of India in the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying and also been made an expert panel member of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council.



Northern Irish alumnus Dr Ernie Logan (Class of '59) has generously funded rugby shirts for the Men's Rugby XV student team. "I'm a Dick Vet through and through, and am delighted to be able to support the Rugby Team," said Dr Logan.

## BILL STONE CLASS OF '56

Alumnus Bill Stone, Class of '56, was delighted when his wife gave him a set of personalised car registration plates for Christmas inscribed 'RDVC 56'. Bill, who lives in Alberta, Canada said: "These plates were a wonderful surprise and are a constant reminder of the many happy memories I have from my time at the Dick Vet."



### HOW TO CONTACT US

We depend on your support to maintain our high standards and fund new developments. You can help us to deliver the future of veterinary medicine. Here's how to contact us:

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### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Saturday 5th June, 4th September and 2nd October 2010 10.00am – 12.00noon**  
Alumni Tours of Summerhall, followed by a talk given by Colin Warwick MBE on the history of the Dick Vet.

**Thursday 24th June – Sunday 27th June 2010**  
See us at the Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh!

**Saturday 24th July 2010** | Reunion for the Class of 2000.

**Saturday 4th September 2010** | BSAVA Scottish Veterinary Congress 2010, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh.

**Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th September 2010**  
Class of '70 Reunion. Class of '80 Reunion.

**Thursday 23rd – Saturday 25th September 2010**  
BVA Congress, Glasgow.

**Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd October 2010**  
Class of '60 Reunion.

**Friday 8th October 2010** | The Charnock Bradley Lecture 2010. The Lecture will be presented by Dr Billy Karesch, Vice President of the Global Health Programme at the Wildlife Conservation Society in New York.

**Thursday 19 May 2011** | Opening Event for the New Teaching Building.

For further details of these events, please visit our website at [www.ed.ac.uk/vet/events](http://www.ed.ac.uk/vet/events) or contact [neil.wilson@ed.ac.uk](mailto:neil.wilson@ed.ac.uk) or phone 0131 650 6261.