

CELEBRATING
HER MAJESTY
THE QUEEN'S



Landmark

The annual news review of the
Royal Agricultural University
Issue 15 2016

90
YEARS



IN FOCUS:
Our Patron's
90th birthday

170 years of the Royal Agricultural University

Pioneering Farm491 agritech centre

New agritech and equine degrees

Read about our thriving alumni

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YOUR DETAILS

If you have moved house or job please let us know via the website below or by email alumni@rau.ac.uk

Royal Agricultural University,
Stroud Road, Cirencester,
Gloucestershire, GL7 6JS
+44 (0)1285 652531
www.rau.ac.uk

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Donor Report and Roll for 2015

Our donor report and roll has been included as an insert in this 2016 edition of *Landmark*. We'd like to say a very sincere thank you to all of you who have already donated to our Cirencester Fund, and report back on the impact it's having.





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Welcome...

Welcome to the 15th issue of *Landmark*, the annual review of the Royal Agricultural University. Dedicated to celebrating the outstanding achievements of our alumni, students, and staff, *Landmark* delivers our latest news, and showcases the success of our graduates throughout the world.

There have been lots of exciting developments at the RAU in the past year, and we've become particularly good at winning awards. In March 2016, we were named sustainability champion at The Guardian University Awards 2016, which recognised the huge progress we've made in embedding sustainability into all aspects of the University campus and curriculum. We were also runners up in the entrepreneurship category, celebrating our enterprise agenda at a national level.

It's also an exciting time for agritech innovation. As the agricultural and related industries are on the cusp of a technical revolution, our new Farm491 initiative provides start-up facilities for budding entrepreneurs and start-up businesses – a number of which are run by our talented and business-savvy students. 2016 marks a period of change for the University. Our Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell, and Deputy

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Davies, will be retiring this summer after years of dedication to the RAU. Their commitment and enthusiasm has driven the University forward immeasurably and we'll be very sad to see them go – although we did enjoy a jubilant staff lunch held in their honour. In September, we look forward to welcoming the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Jo Price, to the RAU, and starting an exciting new chapter in our prestigious 171 year history.

This year also marks our Patron, HM The Queen's 90th birthday, and we've dedicated this issue to Her Majesty with our retro front cover. We had a wonderful time celebrating HM's birthday at our Patron's Lunch for Cirencester street party. Joined by thousands of members of the local community, we recreated the festivities on the Mall in London and enjoyed picnics and Pimms galore. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition of *Landmark*. We value the input of our readers, so please continue to send us your feedback, news, and suggestions for stories via landmark@rau.ac.uk

Shelly

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A climate of change

Oumou Koulibaly is dedicated to improving the lives of millions of people in rural Africa.



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YOUR NETWORK

You can find out about alumni news by visiting the RAU alumni network

www.rau.ac.uk/alumni

It's now even easier to keep in touch with the University and your friends.

You can modify contact information, manage a personal profile, make online donations to the RAU's fundraising campaign, and view RAU alumni event information.

Greetings to all alumni



Last year marked 170 years of land-based study at Cirencester. The newly planted heritage orchard of apples and pears are preparing their first blossom at Harnhill Manor Farm, the steel barley sculpture next to the Bathurst Wing has 'ripened' to a lovely rusty brown, and the photos of HRH The Prince of Wales at Convocation, in his 30th year as our President, are on the wall. *Landmark* is replete with other events and coverage of what was a very good year; it seems to need a bigger edition each year!

And so to 2016. Every year seems full of anniversaries to be marked, but everyone acknowledges that a 90th birthday is special. We celebrated the occasion for our Patron, Her Majesty The Queen, with a Patron's Lunch for Cirencester. Our main drive doubled as the Mall in London, the playing fields on either side as the royal parks, and the whole a site for a tremendous outdoor party. The RAU has enjoyed royal patronage throughout its now 171 years, a mark not least of the value placed on agriculture and land management in this increasingly crowded island, where food production and environmental management go hand in hand. The skills, together with the social responsibility, are globally as well as nationally relevant.

Here at the RAU, there are two particular areas which are worthy of special mention. Enterprise and entrepreneurship, which has long been a hallmark of RAU students and graduates, is more vibrant than ever before. With the steady growth of support through the student Entrepreneurs Society, and the continued success of our Grand Idea business competition, we are becoming increasingly recognised as leading the way for student entrepreneurship in UK higher education.

Then there is sustainability. For the RAU as a land-based institution, the concept has to be embedded. It was such embedding, in areas such as the curriculum as well as the more measurable carbon footprint and energy usage, that was recognised when the RAU was named as The Guardian University Awards 2016 winner for sustainability in March. We wear that one with pride.

Of course, sustainability is not just about the environment. As a university, it is also about financial sustainability, and as a business, it is about growth and investment. One area of growth is the increase of technology within farming. Indeed, agritech is one of the Government's 'eight great' technologies that will pull the UK into renewed prosperity. It is relevant to remember that when the Royal Agricultural College was founded (in 1845), it was, in part, to apply the huge scientific and technological advances of the Victorian era to the land-based sector. In 2016, there are similarly huge advances being made, and it is beholden on the RAU to be part of that, as it was 171 years ago. Thus the links we have made with the Bomford Trust, who have sponsored academic posts, and the GFirst LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) are important.

The latter is bringing some £3m of funding for investment in agritech start-up facilities at Harnhill Manor Farm, and on the main campus, through the Farm491 initiative.

Hopefully, there is a direct connection between our work on enterprise and innovation, and these new developments. To this end, new teaching labs are planned to sit alongside the incubation facilities. Yet all of this takes capital; and while funds are being realised within the University, and through generous donations from the Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust and our philanthropic alumni through our Cirencester Fund, it remains a challenge. As recent reports in the national press have identified, successful Oxbridge universities rely heavily on their successful alumni to raise the large capital sums needed to remain competitive. Please do not hesitate to get in touch!

The strength of an institution lies in its students, its staff, and its alumni; the 'trick' is to provide the environment in which all can prosper. Cirencester has done this very well and will continue to do so, new laboratories and teaching facilities and all. 2016, despite all the challenges, is going well; and with the current student body, the staff – both academic and support, and a new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joanna Price, starting in September, the future looks even better. And of course, there are the alumni.

Professor Chris Gaskell
Vice-Chancellor, CBE

Celebrating 170 years

In 2015, the RAU celebrated its 170th anniversary with a series of special events.

A brand new barley sculpture was installed on campus (October 2015), designed and created by self-taught steel sculptor and former Graduate Diploma in Agriculture student, Will Carr (2015). The commemorative sculpture marks the institution's involvement in barley development over 170 years. The two-eared barley variety 'KWS Infinity'

structure took approximately 200 hours, and was designed to naturally rust and blend into the environment over time.

A heritage orchard of 170 trees was planted at Harnhill Manor Farm (February 2016), with 30 varieties from HRH The Prince of Wales' collection at Highgrove. The orchard includes Gloucestershire's rare Rose of Ciren, Ampney Red, and Siddington Russet. The apples will have a combination of uses including eating, cider, and juice production.

The University also commissioned internationally-renowned architectural artist, Andrew Ingamells to produce a limited edition line-plate etching of the RAU's iconic buildings. This includes a bird's eye view of the main quad and smaller studies of notable buildings such as the Tithe Barn and the Chapel.

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Left to right: Chair of Governors, Jeremy Lewis, Will Carr, and RAU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell

Staff and students gather for the barley sculpture launch



RAU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell (left) and Dr Ian Grange (right) at the heritage orchard planting





Professor Joanna Price has been appointed as the new Vice-Chancellor of the RAU.



“It’s a great privilege to be given the opportunity of leading an organisation that has been at the forefront of agricultural education for over 170 years.”

Professor Joanna Price

This year marks the retirement of the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Davies, after nine years and 30 years respectively. The University looks forward to welcoming the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Joanna Price, on 1 September.

Meet the new Vice-Chancellor

Professor Price is currently Head of the University of Bristol Veterinary School and Head of the School of Clinical Veterinary Sciences, a position she took up in 2009. Prior to this, Professor Price was Professor of Veterinary Anatomy at the Royal Veterinary College, University of London, and Chair of the College’s Basic Science Department, having previously worked at University College London, the University of Sheffield, and the University of Bristol. Professor Price qualified as a veterinary surgeon from the University of Bristol in 1983 and spent a number of years in clinical practice in the UK and overseas before entering research and academia.

Professor Price’s research has focused on deer antler regeneration and bone’s adaptation to mechanical loading.

Alongside her more fundamental research, Professor Price has for many years also worked on the pathogenesis and prevention of musculoskeletal injuries in horses, having a particular interest in biomarkers and fracture prevention and more recently on the epidemiology and genetic basis of fracture, joint, and tendon injuries.

Professor Price said: “I’m delighted and honoured to have been chosen to be the next Vice-Chancellor of the Royal Agricultural University. It’s a great privilege to be given the opportunity of leading an organisation that has been at the forefront of agricultural education for over 170 years. This will make a family hat-trick of association with the University, since both my father and son have been students there.”

A decade of development at the RAU

- The RAU celebrates its new status as a University in 2013, and Cirencester becomes a university town
- **50% increase in student numbers (now more than 1,200) from over 47 different countries, studying on 30 undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses**
- Launch of the new School of Equine Management and Science, opened by HRH The Princess Royal in 2014
- **RAU ranked in the top 10 in the UK for degree completion, academic services spend and facilities spend – recognising improved facilities across campus (*The Complete University Guide 2016*)**
- Graduate employability at an all time high: recent figures show 98.2% of undergraduates are in employment or further study within six months of leaving the RAU
- **Increased links with local communities, including annual Convocation ceremonies now held in Cirencester Parish Church – attended in 2015, in the 170th year of the RAU, by University President HRH The Prince of Wales**
- Restructuring of University farms including the mainly arable Coates Manor Farm; the purchase of 491 acres of mixed farmland at Harnhill Manor Farm; improved equine facilities at Fossehill Farm
- **£1.2m investment by the RAU and the Frank Parkinson Trust in the Rural Innovation Centre at Harnhill Manor Farm, sharing cutting-edge knowledge between agricultural production and applied research**
- RAU in the top 10 universities in 2015 for renewable energy production and biomass consumption, and ranked top university in England for carbon reduction in relation to income
- **Farm491 agritech incubator launched in 2016 with £5.5m funding from GFirst LEP (Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership), the Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust, private donations, and RAU investment**



Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell

Appointed as Principal of the (then) Royal Agricultural College in 2007, Professor Chris Gaskell made an immediate impact, having spent many years in increasingly senior positions at Liverpool University, including Dean of the Veterinary Faculty, and culminating as Pro Vice-Chancellor.

Chris soon created new opportunities for the institution; one of his first acts at the RAU was to restructure the farm enterprises for student teaching and research, including the mainly arable Coates Farm, and the purchase from the Oldacre Trust of Harnhill Manor of which the College had a company tenancy, a mixed farm which includes some organic. The RAU now has a jewel in its crown in the form of the Rural Innovation Centre, located at Harnhill Manor Farm, visited shortly after completion in

2013 and commended by the University President, HRH The Prince of Wales.

Other improvements have been made in the equine facilities, with the addition of the outdoor arena at Fossehill Farm, now an equestrian centre of excellence. Furthermore, the Principal instigated and developed the use of local farms, and also those further afield, for additional student learning.

One of the major highlights of his tenure was the achievement of university status for the institution in 2013, having been offered the opportunity by the Minister of State for Universities and Science. Despite some opposition at the time to the change of name, Chris drove forward the decision of Governing Council, and this has subsequently been deemed to be of great benefit to students and staff alike, and to the external perception and international reach of the RAU. Being a Royal institution, this change required the submission to, and permission of, Privy Council.

In 2016, student numbers and the employability of RAU graduates are at an all-time high, as is the institution's investment in facilities. Chris has worked with senior staff on the development of a number of new learning spaces and halls of residence, all of which have been built and managed in line with the University's commitment to sustainability. This is an ethos which is now also embedded throughout the

RAU's teaching and research activities, as it seeks to address the global issues of sustainable agriculture and food security.

As Principal, he significantly raised the profile of the University as a result of his involvement in national science and policy, through his roles with Defra, the Government's Food and Research Partnership, and the Welsh Science Advisory Council. Chris has also driven strongly local and regional links, reinforcing the RAU's relationships with communities and businesses, and culminating recently in the Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership co-funding the exciting new Farm491 agritech venture.

In 2015, Governing Council made the decision to create the position of Vice-Chancellor and bestow this on Chris, thereby making him the first recipient. On his retirement from the University, Governors have created him Emeritus Professor, in perpetuity.

Chris' vision and achievements for the RAU have been many; a good communicator, he has steered the institution with great skill, expertise, and passion. He has driven changes which have positioned the RAU as a leader in the sector and will continue to benefit the University for many years to come, and for all of this he has our profound thanks.

Jeremy Lewis
Chair of Governors

Simon Pott
Vice President



Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Davies

Professor Paul Davies retires from the Royal Agricultural University in August; to say that he will be missed does not capture the half of it.

For 30 years, Paul has committed himself to the development of the institution, but most specifically to the support, development, and progress of its students.

A graduate in agricultural botany from the University College of North Wales, Bangor University – where else but a Welsh university – Paul came to Cirencester in 1986 via the University of Exeter, University of East Anglia, and Harper Adams University. Paul was appointed by Vic

Hughes, the then Principal, as Director of Studies, Agriculture and has worked with, and most importantly supported, four further Principals, in increasingly senior positions, providing continuity and crucial institutional memory. He has seen the institution grow, weather tricky times, gain degree awarding powers and university status, build partnerships, and contribute to the development of agriculture. His enthusiasm for teaching is as great now as it was when he first started lecturing, and his contributions to crop science have been considerable and sustained, right from his early postgraduate work on carrots and their fungal infections.

Among Paul's many contributions, that to the standing of the RAU overseas, merit particular mention. The range of links and partnerships, projects, and consultancy programmes that have been as the result of Paul's work is legion;

that the RAU punches way above its weight around the world, from China and Malaysia to Africa and North America, owes much to Paul's international work and diplomacy. Our friends overseas will be as sad as us to see him retire.

Many students and alumni, as well as his colleagues on the staff, will know his warmth, friendship, and genuine interest in their progress, as well as his unending enthusiasm for his subject – or subjects, as his expertise range so widely. The University, and many students and staff over the years, owe Paul, and Janice who has been a crucial component in the contribution, a huge debt of gratitude and we all wish him (and, because it matters so much to him, the Welsh rugby team) well in the next phase of his life. And, again, to say that he, and his energy and drive, will be missed doesn't capture the half of it. Thank you from all of us.

**Vice-Chancellor,
Professor Chris Gaskell**

Diary dates 2016



4 – 7 August

BBC Countryfile Live

Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire
The RAU Entrepreneurs' Pavilion



26 – 28 August

The Big Feastival

Kingham, Oxfordshire
The RAU Herb Garden and the
RAU Entrepreneurs' Pavilion

8 September

Alumni visit to Birch Hall

Essex
Kindly sponsored by Lycetts
Contact alumni@rau.ac.uk

24 September

Alumni reunion

We are delighted to invite all alumni
back to the RAU for an annual black
tie reunion dinner
Contact alumni@rau.ac.uk

11 November

Cheltenham Countryside Day

Cheltenham Racecourse
Alumni drinks reception after
the last race

5 – 27 November

Telephone fundraising campaign

Strength in numbers
Supporting your RAU through
the Cirencester Fund





2017



3 – 7 May

Badminton Horse Trials

Badminton, Gloucestershire

26 May

May Ball

Royal Agricultural University

31 May – 1 June

Suffolk Show

Trinity Park, Ipswich

8 – 10 June

Royal Cornwall Show

Whitecross, Wadebridge

14 – 15 June

Cereals

Boothby Graffoe, Lincolnshire

16 – 18 June

Royal Three Counties Show

Malvern, Worcestershire

24 – 27 July

Royal Welsh Show

Builth Wells, Powys



23 September

Alumni reunion

Royal Agricultural University
We are delighted to invite all alumni
back to the RAU for an annual
reunion dinner

Contact alumni@rau.ac.uk

Please contact the alumni team
for more details about any of
these forthcoming events, or if you
would like to sponsor an event

alumni@rau.ac.uk

01285 652531



Driving agritech innovation

The Royal Agricultural University is pleased to present Farm491, our new agritech incubator which will provide state of the art facilities for budding entrepreneurs and agritech start-up companies.

Named after the 491 hectares of Cotswold farmland which will be available to members for research and testing, the project will reinforce the University's entrepreneurial focus and encourage students to start and develop their own agritech business by providing valuable start-up space. Businesses will have access to farming data, research, and equipment, and will be supported by a network of farmers, entrepreneurs, business advisors, investors, and academics.

Funded by the GFirst LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership), RAU investment, private donations, and funds from the Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust, Farm491 has been launched in response to the 2013 Agritech Strategy – in which the UK government identified agritech as a key player in the future of UK farming.

Angela Simkins, Farm491 Centre Director, said: "There is no doubt that the combination of agriculture and technology will be a significant contributing factor to feeding a growing global population. Farm491 will give a real focus for the Gloucestershire heartland in the development of agricultural technology."

The first batch of business start-ups, which range from drone mapping and land management tools to equestrian solutions, will move into the 'hub' at Trent Lodge this summer. The new facilities at Harnhill Manor Farm, and at the RAU campus, are due to open in the next twelve months.



"Farm491 is a unique offering of on-farm or in-field project spaces along with on-campus collaborative working for start-ups and companies with new ideas."

Angela Simkins, Director, Farm491

Get in touch

Farm491 would like to invite all those interested in being a part of the Farm491 community; in the form of sponsorship, mentoring, or becoming a member, to contact Angela Simkins.

Whether you're an agritech entrepreneur, an investor, interested in testing new technologies, or simply want to learn more about the initiative, we'd like to hear from you.

angela.simkins@rau.ac.uk
01285 889829
www.farm491.com



@farm491



Farm491



Take off for agritech imaging

Meet Guy Picton-Phillipps Founder of AgriSpectral

Guy has always loved the great outdoors, and believes this is an exciting time for agricultural development – especially when it comes to drone technology and image sensory. With a Masters degree in Remote Sensing and Image Processing, and a background in GIS and the application of satellite aerial imagery, Guy was well aware that drone technology is at the forefront of agritech innovation. Keen to develop a product which is able to provide farmers with more accurate drone surveying technology; he chose Farm491 to help

with his agritech start-up and subsequently founded AgriSpectral. He immediately began investigating multispectral, hyperspectral, and thermal imaging using the RAU farms. This ground-breaking new technology analyses hundreds of snapshots at a much higher resolution than traditional drone analysis; typically able to take just four or five snapshots, to build a more comprehensive picture of crop health.

AgriSpectral is just one of the many agritech start-ups thriving thanks to Farm491.

Visit www.farm491.com



Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP



Elizabeth Truss MP with Professor Meriel Moore-Colyer, Dean of SEMS, and BSc (Hons) Equine Management student Rachel Burroughes



Elizabeth Truss MP hears about agritech from Angela Simkins, Centre Director of Farm491

The future of farming

The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, paid a visit to our Rural Innovation Centre at Harnhill Manor Farm in February 2016, to discuss key matters of farming, food, and land management.

Discussions focused on attracting young people, particularly women, into agriculture as a career, recognising the attraction of an industry that is increasingly high tech. The opportunities created by apprenticeships, and the need for innovators in the industry

were highlighted, and the increasing range of practically-based RAU courses were discussed as examples of how this can be done.

The Minister then met with students to find out what attracted them to agriculture and the related industries. She was also keen to hear their thoughts on the impact of technology on farming, rural business diversification, and the part that Defra should play.



Cirencester celebrates HM The Queen's 90th birthday



On Sunday 12 June, the University celebrated HM The Queen's 90th birthday with a unique street party event, attended by thousands of people from the local community.

The RAU event mirrored the festivities on the Mall in London. On the same day, at the same time, the RAU lined its iconic driveway with tables and welcomed picnickers to use the playing fields that flank it.

Entertainment included a parachute display, a brass band, school displays,

the RAC Beagles parade, a police dog display, fairground rides, a farmers' market, food and drink stalls, and much more.

RAU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell, said: "We had a fantastic day celebrating HM The Queen's 90th birthday party, and her committed patronage of over 600 charities and organisations, including of course the RAU. Nothing could dampen our spirits, and despite the rainy start we were delighted to welcome so many members of the local community to celebrate with us."

The RAU received a contribution from Cirencester Town Council towards this event. The remaining 90% of the cost was funded by private sponsors and the University.

Proceeds will be donated to the Gloucestershire branch of Wooden Spoon, and the Watershed Riding for the Disabled Association.

www.woodenspoon.org.uk
www.watershedrda.org.uk





Award-winning RAU Wheat Project

The RAU's Wheat Project went down a storm at the 2015 Big Feastival over the August bank holiday, and was awarded The Extra-Festival Activity Award at the Festival Awards 2015. Shortlisted against some incredibly innovative pieces of content from the likes of Festival Number 6, Grillstock, Standon Calling, and Latitude, this award and recognition is a huge accolade.

In 2015, the University teamed up with two other local Cotswold businesses, FWP Matthew Millers of Chipping Norton and Hobbs House Bakery of Chipping Sodbury, to deliver the Wheat Project. The interactive activity for families and festival-goers of all ages taught children about the whole bread-making process from grain to loaf. Families picked ears of wheat and rye, milled them into flour with FWP Matthew Millers, and then made their very own flatbreads with Hobbs House Bakery.

The Festival Awards recognise the hard work, vision, and creativity of the festival industry. The Extra-Festival Activity Award celebrates the most creative initiative on the festival circuit.

Jen Noble, Event Director for the Big Feastival, said: "The Big Feastival is really proud to have partnered with the RAU to be the only UK festival growing its own food to be eaten on-site through this hands-on project, bringing to life the concept of 'grow your own' for little festival-goers."

Visit www.thebigfestival.com



PhotoCreditOxfordMail

Wheat planting for The Big Feastival



"The Big Festival is really proud to have partnered with the RAU to be the only UK festival growing its own food to be eaten on-site through this hands-on project."

Jen Noble, Event Director for the Big Feastival

Alex James, best known as the bassist of the band Blur, co-hosts the annual Big Feastival food and music festival on his farm in Kingham, Oxfordshire, with Jamie Oliver.

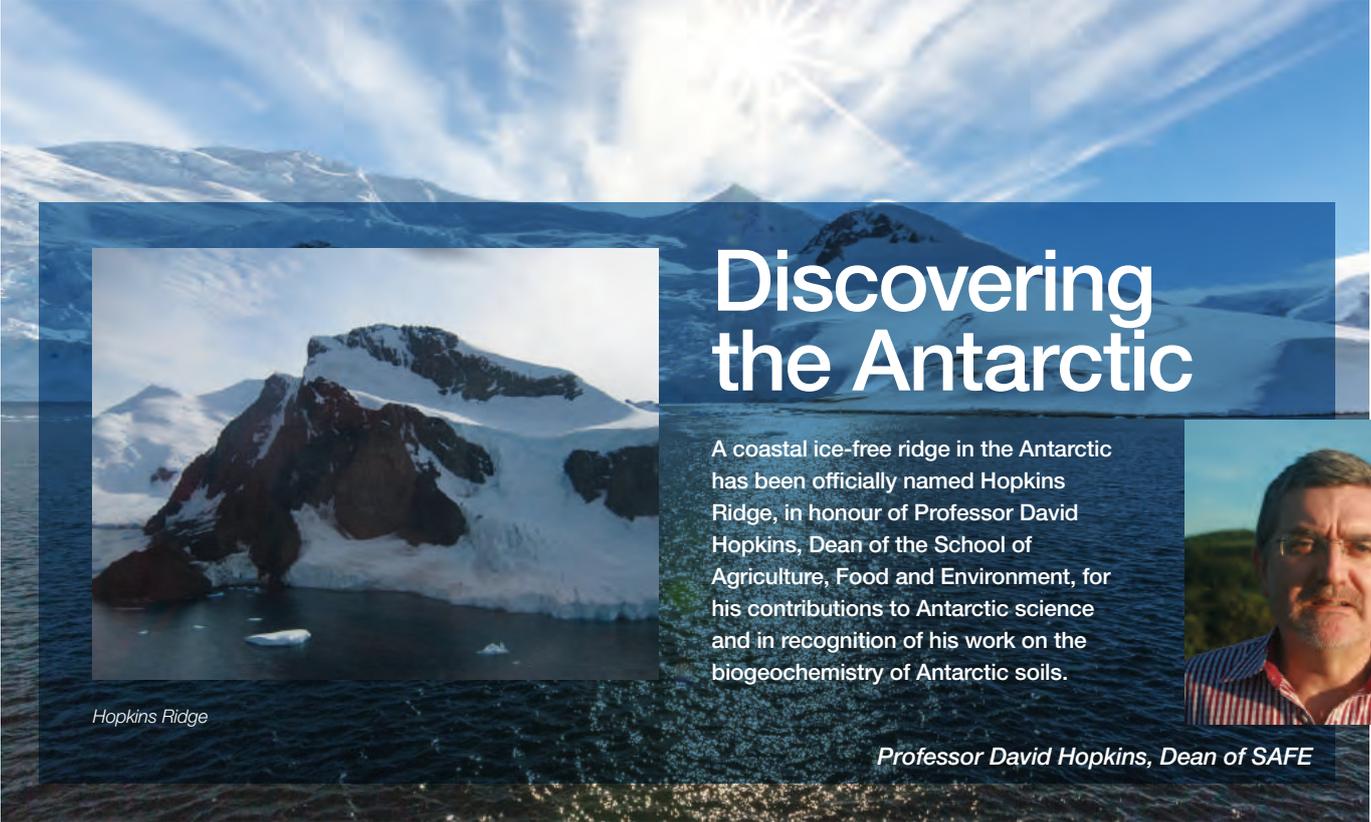


Alex James, Jamie Oliver, and Dr Nicola Cannon



The Extra Festival Activity Award





Discovering the Antarctic

A coastal ice-free ridge in the Antarctic has been officially named Hopkins Ridge, in honour of Professor David Hopkins, Dean of the School of Agriculture, Food and Environment, for his contributions to Antarctic science and in recognition of his work on the biogeochemistry of Antarctic soils.

Hopkins Ridge

Professor David Hopkins, Dean of SAFE

Chinese culture camp

Flora Amery and Harriet Mainds, first year BSc (Hons) International Business Management students studying Mandarin, took part in the Chinese Culture Camp in January 2016, organised by the Zhengzhou University of Light Industry (ZZULI).

During the two week trip, they visited a variety of cities and sites discovering both modern and traditional China. They started in Zhengzhou, where they experienced Chinese language and culture, and visited the Longmen Grottoes and the Shaolin Temple; where they were given a Kung Fu lesson.



Next they travelled by high speed railway to Xi'an and visited the Terracotta Army and the Big Wild Goose Pagoda. Finally, they voyaged to Beijing, where they climbed the Great Wall of China, visited the Forbidden City and the Olympic village, and toured around Hu Dong in rickshaws.

Flora and Harriet said: "We are truly grateful to have been given this amazing opportunity to practice our Mandarin and learn about other cultures. A huge thank you to ZZULI and staff at the RAU for making this trip such a big success."



"We are truly grateful to have been given this amazing opportunity to practice our Mandarin and learn about other cultures."

Flora Amery and Harriet Mainds, business students





“This unique BSc (Hons) degree will produce the innovators of tomorrow. It is a fantastic development for prospective students and the industry itself.”

Professor Meriel Moore-Colyer, Dean of SEMS



NEW bloodstock degree

The School of Equine Management and Science (SEMS) has launched an innovative new BSc (Hons) degree in Bloodstock and Performance Horse Management for September 2016 entry.

Primarily for students with a keen interest and career aspirations in the thoroughbred and sports horse industries, it will focus on the challenges facing the modern performance horse by studying horse physiology, ethics and production issues that challenge high performance horses.

Professor Meriel Moore-Colyer, Dean of SEMS, said: “This unique BSc (Hons) degree, created in consultation with the Thoroughbred breeding and racing industry, will produce the innovators of tomorrow.

It is a fantastic development for SEMS, prospective students, and the industry itself.”

Students will visit racing and performance horse enterprises, and complete a 20-week work placement. It is this combination of vocational and academic skills which creates highly competent graduates. With a proven track record for graduate employability, those who have previously employed RAU graduates include:

- Newbury Racecourse
- Blair Castle Horse Trials
- Juddmonte Stud
- Tattersalls
- Haygain
- Equinome
- Weatherbys
- The National Trainers Federation

Formed in 2014, research in SEMS is of international importance. Specialisms include equine nutrition, genetics, and behaviour.

Visit www.rau.ac.uk/ug-bphm



Crowned Business Innovator of the Year

Katy Duke collects the Business Innovation of the Year award



Cirencester Chamber of Commerce Business Awards 2016 winners and runners-up

Our fantastic Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Programme was named Business Innovation of the Year at the Cirencester Chamber of Commerce Business Awards 2016 (13 May) for its robust programme of support for student entrepreneurs.

The Business Innovation of the Year category recognised the company which

developed their business idea. The programme will be further enhanced with the opening of the new Trent Lodge Enterprise Centre in summer 2016. This forms part of our Farm491 initiative to provide incubation facilities for student businesses as they grow.

Katy Duke, Head of Enterprise at the RAU, said: "We're delighted to have

had developed a new or improved product, process, or service, and made a significant difference to their performance.

Our Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Programme provides support and mentoring for enterprising students, who wish to

won Business Innovation of the Year at the Cirencester Chamber of Commerce Business Awards. It means a lot to have our programme recognised by local business people. The support of local businesses means we can provide a mentoring and workshop programme, and for that we are truly grateful."

The Guardian
University
Awards 2016



It's been a fantastic year for enterprise so far. In March 2016, the RAU was runner up in the entrepreneurship category at The Guardian University Awards 2016, and in April 2016, student Theo Wasserberg was shortlisted for Student Entrepreneur of the Year by the National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs, for his clothing business Tahouts.

Great British Railway Journeys



Michael Portillo with RAU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell

Did you spot the RAU on BBC Two's *Great British Railway Journeys* earlier this year (January 2016)?

En route from Stroud to Bath, Michael Portillo alighted at Kemble Station and dropped in to explore our historic campus. He met with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell, who spoke about the University's prestigious history and the significant impact of the railway on agriculture in the 1800s.

Michael Portillo then paid a visit to Harnhill Manor Farm to find out more about modern agricultural practices. He spoke with Farms Director, Tom Overbury, and former student Megan Berryman, who graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Agriculture last summer.

Great British Railway Journeys is a BBC Two documentary in which journalist and presenter Michael Portillo travels along the rail networks of Great Britain and Ireland, with a 150-year old copy of George Bradshaw's Victorian railway guidebook.

From the archives

Botany class
1950s



Corn harvest 1935



Demonstrating the Lister Garden Hoe at the Royal Three Counties Show 1938



Royal Agricultural College hockey club



Students in the science lab

Tractor 1960s



Students outside the College building

The fight against hunger

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed KCMG, the 2015 World Food Prize Laureate and founder of the BRAC development organisation, focused on ‘Empowering the poor in the fight against hunger’ at the annual Bledisloe Memorial Lecture (11 December 2015).

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed opened with experiences from his own life; experiences which compelled him to leave his corporate oil industry career behind and dedicate his life to eradicating poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and exploitation in Bangladesh. Thus the non-governmental organisation BRAC was born.

Founded in 1972, BRAC introduced agricultural schemes, literacy programmes, health care and family planning, and credit support for landless farmers – encouraging them to invest in new seeds, fertiliser, and farming technologies. Bangladesh has now achieved self-sufficiency in food production, though its population has more than doubled since independence, to reportedly 166 million.

One of the biggest challenges was fertility and infant mortality rates. Rural women had so little confidence that their children would live to adulthood (one in four children died before their fifth birthday) that they were actively choosing to have more children. Through the introduction of a national immunisation programme and the use of education and family planning, the BRAC were able to bring about a steep decline in fertility; from an average of 6.4 children per woman to 2.1.

Sir Fazle found that, in large part, the key to change was the empowerment of women.



Village schools run by local housewives were opened across Bangladesh and an entire generation, more than 11 million children, were empowered to take care of their own needs and make changes from the bottom up – a local initiative on an international scale.

Awarded the 2015 World Food Prize Laureate for his life-long dedication to raising the poorest out of poverty, Sir Fazle wholeheartedly believes that, “defeating hunger does not depend only on the science of food production, but requires us to address the problem of powerlessness among the poor.”



Left to right: RAU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell, Sir Fazle Hasan Abed (centre right), and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Davies

Cereals Challenge

Elle Pace, Mollie Phipps, Rhys Jackson, and Kieran Vallance took part in the Cereals Challenge 2016, competing against five other universities and colleges to grow the best pea crop, and win that all-important £1,000 cash prize and £500 bursary.

For the first time in its seven year history, the Cereal Challenge was a pea crop – to mark 2016 as the International Year of the Pulses.

Rhys Jackson, Kieran Vallance, Mollie Phipps, and Elle Pace





Convocation royalty

HRH The Prince of Wales meets students at Convocation 2015

We were delighted to welcome HRH The Prince of Wales to our annual Convocation ceremony in Cirencester Parish Church on 23 July 2015. HRH The Prince of Wales presented students from the School of Agriculture, Food and Environment with their degrees, and addressed the congregation.

His Royal Highness has been President of the Royal Agricultural University since 1982.

RAU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell, said: "It is a great honour that HRH The Prince of Wales attended Convocation to award our degrees. 2015 is the 30th year since we welcomed His Royal Highness, President of the RAU, on his first visit to the University, and it made what is a very special day for our students, and Cirencester, even more memorable."

The RAU held three Convocation ceremonies over two days (23 and 24 July) for its four dedicated Schools. Honorary Fellowships were awarded to Tim Lawson and Tim Hadaway, while Lord Plumb was awarded the Bledisloe Medal, recognising his 'outstanding services to agriculture'.

Cirencester Parish Church provided the perfect backdrop for the traditional ceremonies.



Lord Plumb was awarded the Bledisloe Medal for services to agriculture





The James Buckman Presentation Cup

Convocation 2016: new prize marks excellence in education

We're delighted to announce a brand new prize for Convocation 2016. The James Buckman Presentation Cup, which recognises excellence in education, will be presented to Tom Overbury, RAU Farms Director and Principal Lecturer in Farm Mechanisation, at the School of Agriculture, Food and Environment Convocation ceremony on 21 July.

Tom was selected for his immense enthusiasm, and genuine passion for his subject. A helpful and inspirational lecturer, his open door policy ensures that students have all the help and support they need to succeed. His unique blend of practical and applied education, coupled with his substantial farming experience, provides students with an excellent learning environment in which to flourish.

Students and staff were invited to nominate the person they feel has made a significant contribution towards the students' educational progress, and students took part in the judging process.

The cup itself is an antique silver cup presented to Professor James Buckman upon his retirement from the Royal Agricultural College in 1863. The engraving on the cup reads:

Presented to Professor James Buckman by the students of the Royal Agricultural College and other friends upon his retirement from the Professorships of Geology and Botany in that institution as an expression of their high esteem

and in testimony of the fidelity and success with which he has discharged the duties of this position for 16 years and in acknowledgement of the important services rendered by him in the advancement of scientific agriculture.

This citation reflects the stature of Professor Buckman and it is fitting that it is now used to recognise attributes similar to those he displayed in the founding years of the Royal Agricultural College.

Professor Buckman was a keen advocate of Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection, and made significant contributions to the understanding of both plants and geology, at a time when soil science was in its infancy. He bred one of the commercial parsnip varieties still widely grown today, named 'the student', and established the Corinium Museum in Cirencester.

In 2015, Professor David Hopkins, Dean of the School of Agriculture, Food and Environment at the RAU, acquired the cup from the great-great-granddaughters of Professor Buckman now living in Vancouver – it appears that the cup travelled to Canada when descendants of Buckman emigrated.

The 2016 Convocation ceremonies will be held in Cirencester Parish Church on 21 and 22 July – congratulations to those students graduating, and all the best for the future. Do keep in touch!

Poldark film for new series

The University was delighted to welcome the cast and crew of BBC One's *Poldark* on campus in November 2015, to film for the second series.

The star-studded cast, including Aidan Turner (Ross Poldark), Eleanor Tomlinson (Demelza), Heida Reed (Elizabeth), and Jack Farthing (George Warleggan) descended upon the RAU Quad to film a Cornish market place scene, complete with markets stalls, vendors, and a local pub.



Aidan Turner on the set of Poldark

The popular Sunday evening drama, which is set in Bodmin, Cornwall in the 1790s, hit the small screen in 2015 and captivated viewers with the volatile relationship between the handsome Ross Poldark and his fiery wife Demelza.

It pulled in an audience of more than six million each week and is back due to popular demand – so be sure to tune in for the new series this autumn!



Delivering equine expertise

Simon Daniels, Lecturer in Equine Nutrition and Parasitology, presented at The Pan African Symposium in March 2016, in Zimbabwe, Africa.

The first of its kind in Africa, the symposium was organised by Kylie Shepherd, Director of Equine Performance, and the theme was the performance horse. Simon Daniels was invited to deliver three sessions; two on equine nutrition for the performance horse, and one on equine parasitology.

Simon said: "The event was a huge success. It was a pleasure to work with the other presenters to provide a rounded approach to performance horse management, especially as this approach has not previously been undertaken in Africa."



RAU lecturer, Simon Daniels (far right) at The Pan African Symposium

Raising and Giving 2016

RAG Week (Raise and Give) is a tradition at the RAU, which gives students the opportunity to come together and raise money for some fantastic charities.

In February 2016, students took part in a number of activities, including a charity auction, rugby match, games night, clay pigeon shoot, a gala dinner, and tractor pull. The profits from these events will go to three worthwhile charities selected by the RAG team; SSAFA, Cotswold Volunteers, and Young Epilepsy.

While the funds are still coming in, we'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone involved.



"The RAU has become well known for its RAG fundraising, and it's certainly a huge highlight in the year for many students. We are very proud to be able to support so many incredible charities with increasingly creative and diverse ideas. On behalf of myself and the RAG team, I would like to thank everyone who supported our 2016 RAG fundraising."

Mike Wilkins, RAUSU Chairman

Crack the Hat promotes riding safety



Equine students launched the 'Crack the Hat' riding safety campaign in January 2016, which received national coverage in *Horse and Hound* and *Eventing Worldwide*, and on BBC Radio Gloucestershire.

The 'Crack the Hat' campaign, which aimed to raise awareness of the importance of wearing a riding hat with the correct safety standards, was created by Alicia Lee, Grace Pugh, Megan Duffield, Anneli Ives, and Cordelia Marshall as a coursework project for one of their modules. The hard-hitting slogan 'Crack your hat, not your head' emphasised their campaign message.

The campaign encouraged people to get involved by filming themselves cracking an egg on their head, and then donating to the Injured Jockeys Fund. These videos were then shared to the official 'Crack the Hat' social media pages, to encourage more people to take part.

Alicia Lee said: "We hope that through the power of social media, we will raise awareness of riding hat safety standards, and encourage people to take part in the challenge. We hope to raise money for the Injured Jockeys Fund, a very important charity within the equine sector."

Find out more



Crack the Hat



@CrackTheHat2016



Cirencester's young entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurial students from the RAU and Cirencester College sold their wares at the first ever Cirencester youth market in March 2016, which was organised in conjunction with Cirencester Town Council. It was a successful day all round, with good sales and an excellent reception from the public.

The market gave local students the opportunity to sell products they had made or designed. Stalls included: RAU entrepreneur Lewis Steer and his innovative wool business Lily Warne Wool; RAU graduate Sophie O'Meara and her stunning

Sophie Cotton pencil drawings; Gabrielle Martin-Goff selling her beautiful Sew Little clothes; Olivia Harris and her creative home accessories; James Keen selling Bin Feet; and Casey Chard, Meghan Sugrue, and Sophie Adkins offering Seat Buddy.

Organised by the Cirencester E4 Education Group (the RAU, Cirencester College, Deer Park School, and Kingshill School), the event aimed to inspire young people to set up their own business, and encourage interaction between students and the local community.



Bradley Yates (16), Ewan Chapman (16), and Callum Trimmer (16) of Stroll in the Past educational programme



Gabrielle Martin-Goff (18) of Sew Little



Casey Chard (16), Meghan Sugrue (16), and Sophie Adkins (17) of Seat Buddy

Insight into rural land management

Jeremy Moody, newly appointed Visiting Professor of Rural Land Management and Policy at the RAU, drew attention to the enormous pressures on land use that would come from forecast population growth in the UK by the early 2030s, at his inaugural lecture in March 2016.

Jeremy Moody, Secretary and Adviser to the CAAV, said: "The increase of 10 million people is likely to be overwhelmingly in the southern and eastern areas of England, bringing

pressures for land use through increased demand for housing, employment, infrastructure, as well as competition for resources such as water, leisure, amenity, and so forth."

Professor Ali Parsa, Dean of the School of Real Estate and Land Management, said: "Jeremy is a highly respected policy advisor in the area of Single Payment System, farm tenancy, and valuation, and his appointment as Visiting Professor will be a real benefit to the RAU."

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Professor Ali Parsa, Dean of the School of Real Estate and Land Management

International links

Steve Finch, Principal Lecturer in Crop Agronomy and Head of Academic Quality at the RAU, recently visited Brunei and Malaysia to follow-up University links. Steve has been progressing our partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Agro-based industry in Malaysia, after a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in September 2014.

Steve started his visit by meeting with the National Agricultural Training Council (NATC) in Kuala Lumpur, before travelling north-east to the National College of Agriculture in Bukit Tanga, Kedah to deliver a lecture to more than 400 students and staff. This visit followed-up on a highly successful professional development programme with NATC and MoA staff at the RAU in November 2015.

The RAU has been working in Malaysia since the late 1980s, through high profile partnerships with government and the private sector. These have ranged from developing colleges and improving food supply business, to agribusiness training and establishing large modern farms.



Steve Finch visits Malaysia and Brunei



MoA and NATC staff take part in a professional development programme at the RAU

Badgers and biosecurity

Dr Rhiannon Naylor, Lecturer in Rural Land Use and Management, featured on BBC One's *Countryfile* in October 2015, to discuss badgers and the biosecurity trials being undertaken at Harnhill Manor Farm.

Dr Naylor has been working with farmers, vets, and the South West TB Farm Advisory Board, to design trough attachments which aim to reduce contact between badgers and cattle. During the show, Rhiannon spoke to *Countryfile* presenter Tom Heap about the troughs, which were built by RAU students and positioned next to a badger sett on the farm.

Dr Rhiannon Naylor said: "The trials we're running at the University are small scale, but provide important evidence to farmers thinking about implementing biosecurity measures on their farm. We are working with the industry to try to come up with practical solutions that can be adapted to different farming situations, whilst being cost effective."

Dr Rhiannon Naylor with *Countryfile* presenter Tom Heap

Dr Naylor also highlighted a recent trial of the TB Buster mineral lick holder, designed by Shropshire farmer Alan Hughes to prevent badger access to mineral lick buckets and blocks. The trial showed that the TB Buster could not be accessed by badgers but was robust enough to be used with cattle.



“

“The trials we’re running at the University provide important evidence to farmers thinking about implementing biosecurity measures on their farm.”

Dr Rhiannon Naylor, Lecturer in Rural Land Use and Management

Keeping the countryside green

At the RAU we don't just teach and research the principles of sustainability, we follow them too.

Named sustainability champion

We're thrilled to have been announced the winner in the sustainability category at The Guardian University Awards 2016 (March 2016).

The Sustainability Project award recognised 'an outstanding initiative that creates and champions a more sustainable living and working environment in the university and beyond'. Our award entry showcased how the University implemented its Environmental Action Plan, and embedded sustainability into the curriculum.

Pearl Costello, Environmental Officer at the RAU, said: "This is fantastic news for the University and recognises the progress we've made in creating a more sustainable campus and curriculum – receiving The Guardian University Award is the icing on the cake!"

The University was also runner up in the entrepreneurship category.



Pearl Costello (centre) collects the award for the sustainability category at The Guardian University Awards 2016

TOP performer for carbon reduction

The RAU is a top performer for carbon reduction and renewable energy production; ranked first of all English universities for decrease of carbon emissions in relation to income, according to the University Carbon Progress Report.

Recent results from the Higher Education Statistics Agency also place the RAU second for renewable energy produced per student, and ninth for absolute renewable energy production. The University had the 11th lowest carbon production per m² of floor space too.

International recognition

The RAU has been awarded the highest ISO14001 certification for its Environmental Management System, showing its dedication to sustainability across all operations.

The University has surpassed all of its environmental targets and seen significant progress across the board. It has installed solar panels and LED lighting, introduced smart metering projects, switched to a renewable electricity contract, replaced oil boilers with a low-energy gas alternative, installed waterless urinals, and introduced a more efficient halls of residence recycling system.

WWF funding for edible garden

The University has been awarded £500 by the WWF to put towards an edible and sensory garden for the benefit of students and staff. The WWF ran the Eco Challenge competition in the run up to Earth Hour (March 2016) and the RAU was crowned winner of the university category. We hope that the new garden area will become a pleasant and functional space for everyone at the University to enjoy.

CPRE award for Rural Innovation Centre

Our Rural Innovation Centre at Harnhill Manor Farm has been awarded a Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Gloucestershire Award for its use of sustainable technologies and sympathetic visual appearance within its rural setting.

Named an attractive training centre by the CPRE awards, the Rural Innovation Centre is clad in natural cedar boarding and fits well in the landscape.

It incorporates innovative energy solutions, including solar panels and air sourced heat generation, and reduces water use through rain water harvesting.



Rural Innovation Centre



Mystical May Ball

On Friday 27 May, students celebrated the end of term at the Arabian Nights themed May Ball 2016. It was a fantastic event and a great way to round off an excellent academic year.



Colin Cole, who studied agriculture at the Royal Agricultural University (1950-1952), visited our Cirencester campus whilst on holiday with his two daughters and three granddaughters in June 2016. He met the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell, and was given a tour by Teresa North, which brought back many happy memories.

Your stories

We're always interested in hearing your news. If you'd like to suggest a feature or be included in *Landmark*, please email landmark@rau.ac.uk

FEI work placement for equine students

Second year equine students Cordelia Marshall and Lydia Morrison helped organise the Longines FEI European Eventing Championship at Blair Castle (September 2015), as part of their 20-week work placement. Working in the organisers' office they gained a valuable insight into the running of a prestigious equestrian competition, which involved teams from all over Europe.

Cordelia and Lydia worked alongside a number of RAU alumni, including: April Clough on the media team, Jenny Meiklejohn, Lucie Charlton,

and Verena Smith on the organising team, and Charlie Egar who worked for Henson Franklyn on the branding.

Spectators enjoyed the familiar voice of Mike Tucker, international commentator and RAU alumnus and Governor. The whole event was given a royal finale with HM The Queen presenting the medals to the winning teams and riders.

In April 2016, hundreds of second year students entered the workplace worldwide, in a bid to gain valuable hands-on experience and key employability skills.



MSc Real Estate launched in London



Our well-established, RICS accredited MSc Real Estate degree course is now available to study part-time based at Regent's University London. Developed in consultation with our network of industry contacts, it produces high quality graduates with the knowledge and skills to excel within the real estate profession.

The course delivers a clear route to full professional status and prepares students for the challenges of becoming a Chartered Surveyor through completion of the RICS Assessment of Professional Competence. Our graduates have gone on to pursue a range of careers within international and national firms of chartered surveyors, including:

- CBRE
- Colliers International
- Hamptons International
- DTZ
- GVA
- Marsh & Parsons
- Strutt & Parker
- Jones Lang LaSalle
- Knight Frank
- Savills
- Valuation Office Agency
- Whitmarsh Lockhart

George Fox studied the MSc in Real Estate in 2014 and now works for Strutt & Parker. He said: "The insight and experience gained on the course gave me a solid foundation with which to begin



my career in the sector. The MSc offers a practical approach to learning structured around real-life case studies, which is good preparation for the industry."

Benjamin Toocaram, Head of Recruitment at Marsh & Parsons, said: "We've employed three RAU graduates who are all excelling in their roles as Lettings Negotiators in our central London offices."



Full-time Cirencester
www.rau.ac.uk/re
Part-time London
www.rau.ac.uk/rel



Speed networking success

For the second year running, the University hosted a business speed networking challenge (September 2015) which brought together more than 250 students from the RAU, Cirencester College, Deer Park School, and Kingshill School.

The speed networking event, which was held along the RAU drive, challenged participants to meet five students from another educational establishment, five members of staff, and two business people.



They also had the opportunity to get involved in a sponsored pitching competition, and pitch their business idea to a judge from the Federation of Small Businesses.

Katy Duke, Head of Enterprise at the RAU, said: "The networking challenge was a huge success and feedback from the event has been fantastic. It provided a platform for students from across Cirencester to come together and develop a key employability skill whilst interacting

with local businesses, which will hopefully stand them all in good stead in the future."

The speed networking event also served as the launch for the RAU Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Programme, which provides students and recent graduates with support at all levels of business start-up.

Visit www.rau.ac.uk/enterprise



© Kay Ransom Photography

Sport Relief 2016

Families and runners turned out in their droves for the Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile in March 2016. Over 200 amazing people took part in the one, three, or six mile run around the University's picturesque grounds.

Mark Long, RAU Gym Manager, said: "It was a fantastic day and everyone did themselves proud. A massive thank you to everyone who came along to walk, run, or jog their Sport Relief mile, and to the supporters who cheered them on every step of the way."



Best New Rural Start-up award



Lewis Steer at the Rural Business Awards

Lewis Steer, final year BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management student, won Best New Rural Start-up at the Rural Business Awards held in Leicestershire in October 2015, with his innovative wool company Lily Warne Wool.

Lily Warne Wool was also named the Rural Business Awards Champion of Champions, which is particularly impressive considering the big farms and established companies it was up against.

Lily Warne Wool was set up by Lewis Steer and his mother Paula in 2012, and named after Lewis' great-great-grandmother who was a sheep farmer at the beginning of the 20th century. They offer high quality and fashionable wool products, spun from their own flock of Greyface Dartmoor sheep and hand knitted by a team of

Did you catch Lewis on *Countryfile* earlier this year (8 May)? Anita Rani paid a visit to the Lily Warne Wool farm in Dartmoor, Devon, to meet the sheep and find out more about the business. Lewis also featured on *Escape to the Country* on 6 April.

local ladies, all within 40 miles of the farm. Lily Warne Wool products are stocked by the National Trust and have hit the shelves of John Lewis stores nationwide.

Lewis was also nominated for Young Farmer of the Year in the Devon Farm Business Awards, but impressed the judges so much that they created a brand new category for him; Best Young Entrepreneur. They were particularly impressed with his creative and imaginative methods of adding value to the wool and marketing it online.

On 2 June 2016, Lewis was named 'Grow it' winner at the RAU's annual Enterprise Awards, winning £2,000 to invest in to his business.

Read more about the Enterprise Awards on page 32.

Student satisfaction soars



Top 25%

Students at the RAU are among the happiest in the country, according to the latest National Student Survey (NSS) 2015.

Ranked within the top 25% of 160 UK universities, the RAU recorded 89% student satisfaction in 2015 and leapt a staggering 81 places up the NSS leader board.

Results showed that 89% of students were satisfied with their learning resources, 92% felt staff were good at explaining things, and 87% feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems.

The University continues to be recognised for its ongoing investment in student and staff facilities. Ranked in the top 10 in the UK for academic and facilities spend by *The Complete University Guide 2016*, it was also named University of the Year for Student Retention by *The Times Good University Guide 2016*.

TOP 10%

We're thrilled to be ranked in the top 10% in the UK for job prospects, according to the Whatuni Student Choice Awards 2016. A fantastic result for our debut entry.

New degree will drive agricultural technology

The RAU has launched a brand new MSc in Agricultural Technology and Innovation for 2016 entry.

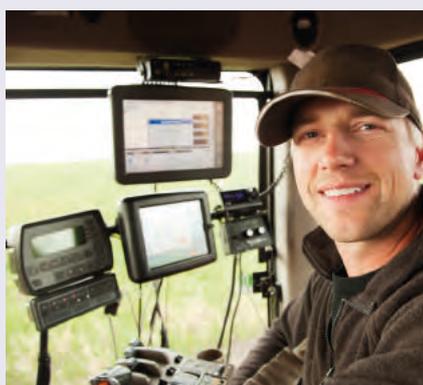
In the future, agricultural production will demand new intellectual and technological understanding. The new technologies of sensors, computing, data analysis, remote sensing, robotics, and drones, will allow for new and sophisticated ways of managing both productive and natural environments.

The MSc will equip graduates with the knowledge, and management and entrepreneurial skills necessary to make creative contributions to this dynamic and technical based sector.

Graduates with an MSc in Agricultural Technology and Innovation are highly likely to go on to pursue a career within:

- The high-tech agricultural / environmental sector
- Industries allied to crop and animal production
- Technical consultancy
- Government and international agencies

Visit www.rau.ac.uk/ati





2015 International Year of Soils



“The soil must be man’s most treasured possession; so he who tends the soil wisely and with care is assuredly the foremost among men.”

Sir George Stapledon

Research publication for student

Daisy Irons, third year BSc (Hons) Agriculture student, spent her 20-week work placement with researchers in the soil science department at Rothamsted Research, the world’s oldest and most prestigious agricultural research institute.

Daisy was involved in a project investigating soil management effects on earthworm ecology and their contributions to soil structure. She contributed to a peer-reviewed research publication ‘Lumbricus terrestris abundance is not enhanced after three years of compost amendments on a reduced tillage wheat cultivation conversion’ in *Applied Soil Ecology*.



*Daisy Irons,
agriculture student*

Breaking: Antarctic soil fungi

Professor David Hopkins, Dean of the School of Agriculture, Food and Environment and Professor of Soils, contributed to a significant journal article published in *Nature Climate Change*, reporting a direct relationship between temperature and the diversity of Antarctic soil fungi.

Remote and covered by ice for much of the year, the Antarctic Peninsula is home to hidden and dynamic communities of microbes. During the second half of the 20th century, surface air temperatures along the Antarctic Peninsula rose by up to 2.8°C. Among the numerous physical manifestations of this warming, an increase in plant growth was observed.

This new study, funded by the Natural Environment Research Council and the University of Queensland, investigated potential changes in a less apparent group of organisms; soil fungi.

It suggests that there could be a rise of up to 27% in the diversity of fungi in Antarctic soils by 2100 if temperatures increase by a similar amount again.

Soils at the ends of the earth

Professor David Hopkins gave his inaugural lecture (December 2015) on the soil processes which drive key environmental processes; including soil fertility in agriculture and the carbon balance in the atmosphere. Professor Hopkins considered soils in extreme environments, in particular the hot deserts and cold deserts, and how these systems and the organisms in them adapt and respond to changes in environment and climate conditions.

The lecture concluded with a quote from Sir George Stapledon, a distinguished member of staff who taught at the Royal Agricultural College at the turn of the 20th century: “The soil must be man’s most treasured possession; so he who tends the soil wisely and with care is assuredly the foremost among men.”



Student success at Enterprise Awards

The Royal Agricultural University celebrated its annual Enterprise Awards on 2 June 2016, recognising the entrepreneurial achievements of the students and graduates. The Awards were based around the University's nationally recognised enterprise model; 'Think it', 'Try it', 'Launch it', 'Grow it', which provides tailored support throughout the start-up journey.

The 2016 'Try it' champion was Jen Winnett with her innovative technology idea Find My Saddle. Jen received £500 funding from Muddy Wellies Drinks to invest in to her business. The judges were impressed with the progress Jen had made in such a short period of time and the commitment she showed to developing her idea.

Now in its ninth year, the 2016 Grand Idea business planning competition winner was also Jen. She received £1,000 to invest in to her business, as well as £1,000 of legal advice from Burges Salmon Law Firm and membership to the Institute of Directors. The runners-up were Christian Summers with Claytons Cold Brewed Coffee, and Sharon Smith with Define, both of whom received £500.

Jen said: "I'm over the moon and still in shock. Thank you to the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Programme for all of their support. Let the hard work and fun begin!"

This year, the University launched a new 'Grow it' award to recognise those who have been running their businesses for at least one year. The winner, who received £2,000 to invest in the growth of their business, was Lewis Steer from Lily Warne Wool – the 2015 Grand Idea winner. The 'Grow it' runner-up was Beaufort and Blake, the luxury shirt and accessory company founded by Sam Pullin and Harry Lovell.

Visit www.rau.ac.uk/enterprise



Lewis Steer, 'Grow it' winner 2016



RAU Grand Idea finalists 2016 (left to right): Lewis Steer, Lily Warne Wool; Jen Winnett, Find My Saddle; Sharon Smith, Define; Theo Wasserberg, Tahouts; and Christian Summers, Claytons Cold Brewed Coffee



Jen Winnett, Grand Idea winner 2016

Research and consultancy

The RAU continues to develop its research activities; both academic research creating new knowledge and applied research which is more closely aligned to the needs of our immediate constituency, farmers, and land managers. This year will see three PhD students graduate from the School of Agriculture, Food and Environment (SAFE), and continue the

trend of recruiting new PhD students, especially within the School of Equine Management and Science (SEMS). The consultancy team has also managed a wide range of projects for specific clients.

Dr John Conway

Director of Postgraduate Research Students

Thames Water

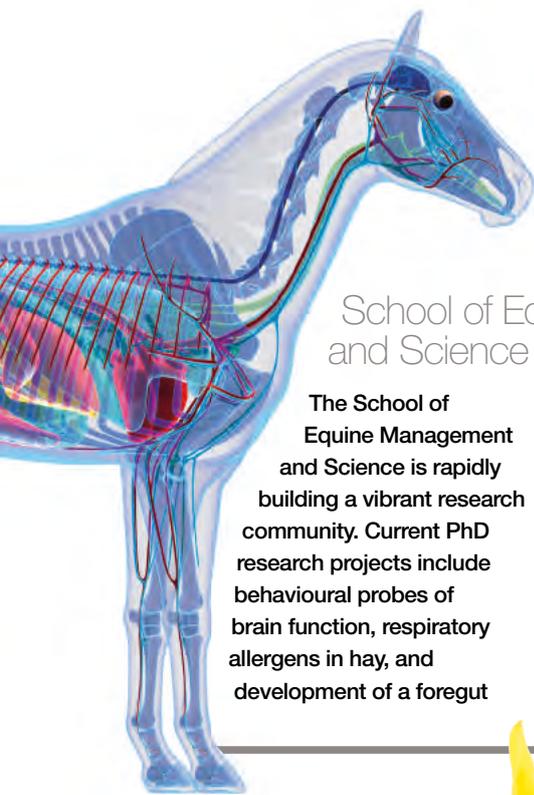
The RAU recently completed the first stage of a three year pilot study with Thames Water, to assess the mitigation of pesticides in field runoff through specially designed infield drainage systems called swales. Two swale sites, located at Harnhill Manor Farm, were monitored by BSc (Hons) Countryside Management student, Thomas Edwards. The aim was to determine whether natural processes of soil biota, infiltration, and sedimentation can reduce levels of pesticides (in particular metaldehyde) at a catchment scale before entering larger watercourses. Although results have varied across the two sites, early evidence suggests the interaction between soil and vegetation as a filtration system is key for reducing the level of pesticides that can be found in runoff from agricultural land.



Research development and the corporate plan

The 2015-2020 RAU corporate plan has refocused our strategic aims into just three; the first two dealing with taught students, the third focusing on the importance of research to the

strategic development of the University. Its key performance indicators include increasing the number and quality of research publications, increasing the number of academic staff publishing, and increasing the number of PhD graduates – all underpinning our aim of acquiring Research Degree Awarding Status.



School of Equine Management and Science

The School of Equine Management and Science is rapidly building a vibrant research community. Current PhD research projects include behavioural probes of brain function, respiratory allergens in hay, and development of a foregut

in vitro model for horses. PhD student Sam White is researching 'Detection, identification, and modification of a range of allergenic epitopes in hay fodder that cause respiratory disease in horses' as part of a wider international study investigating equine asthma. This study is working on the prevention of equine asthma, and will have real practical benefits for horse owners.



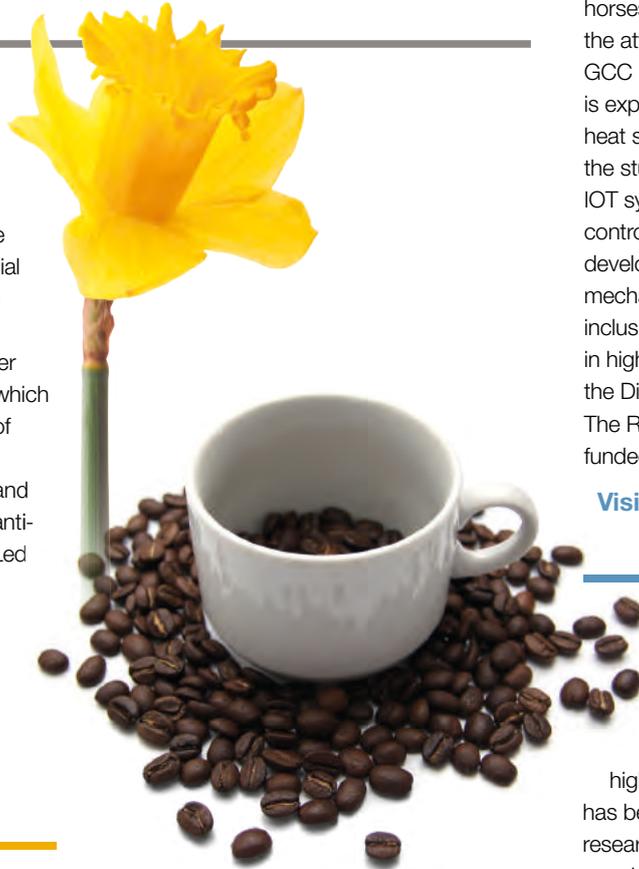
New PhD projects

The range of PhD projects being undertaken at the University continue to increase. There are two new research studies in SEMS, two new PhD students in RELM, and one new PhD student in SAFE. In SEMS, one student is developing an in vitro foregut model for horses, and the other student is working on the detection, identification, and modification of a range of allergenic epitopes in hay fodder that cause respiratory diseases when fed to horses. In RELM, one student is examining the attraction of London property to GCC investors, while the other student is exploring roofing systems to minimise heat stress in livestock housing. In SAFE, the student is developing a fully integrated IOT system with sensor detection and control of crop production. A new research development exploring the changing mechanisms and government policy on inclusion for otherwise disabled students in higher education, is being managed by the Disability Officer, Dr John Conway. The RAU is also offering two fully funded PhD opportunities for 2016.

Visit www.rau.ac.uk/research

Alkaloid Group

The RAU's newest research group, the Alkaloid Group, is exploring the potential of daffodils and narcissi. The UK is the world's largest producer of these cut flowers, but the plants also contain over 500 alkaloids; including galantamine, which has been approved for the treatment of early stage and moderate Alzheimer's disease since 2001, and narciclasine and haemanthamine, which demonstrate anti-cancer and anti-leukemia properties. Led by Dr Xianmin Chang, the group is developing good agricultural practices to reduce the costs and maximise the yield of alkaloids; ultimately to make the supply chain of daffodils for alkaloid extraction more sustainable for the UK pharmaceutical industry.



Greencycleit

The RAU is working in collaboration with GCI Corporation Ltd to develop a high quality growing medium, which has been formulated following a number of research phases and trials. The peat-free growing medium incorporates a blend of spent coffee grounds and other recycled materials, and will reduce waste going into landfill as well as creating a useful product for the horticultural industry. A pilot-scale project, led by Dr Hugh Martin, Principal Lecturer in Agricultural Science, is being run at Harnhill Manor Farm to test the potential for commercialisation of the product.



School of Agriculture, Food and Environment

PhD student Donwell Kamalongo is evaluating the potential of field bean and wheat variety mixtures as a home-grown forage for livestock. Bi-cropping is considered a low cost production system which can provide multiple ecological benefits to rejuvenate degraded environments for sustainable food and quality fodder production. It is also considered a more efficient use of ecological resources, such as land and nutrients, than sole cropping. Initial results suggest that up to 40%

greater production is possible with bi-cropping, compared with pure stands of wheat or field bean.

Donwell Kamalongo



Sports reports



Equestrian

This year, we have two strong equestrian teams. The 1st team, sponsored by Fairfax and Favor, has had a very competitive year; winning their home team competition and placing well all season. Individually, India Nichols has qualified for regionals and we are hopeful she will make it to nationals again this year. The 2nd team, sponsored by Equiboodle, has also had a successful year and is on track to qualify for regionals. We have also had a show jumping team represent the University at Hartpury College. The team won their class, and Beth Hams won individually.

Jessica Shiach

Team chasing

In the club's second year, we had a good start but we have struggled with the weather, with most of the competitions in the New Year being cancelled due to rain. After a shaky end to the season last year, with a fall at the Avon Vale Team Chase, we continued our run of success with a win for the RAU Mad Hatters at the Grafton Team Chase in October 2015. We also had some good rounds at both the Cotswold Team Chase and the Meynell and South Staffs Team Chase. Alas, we sadly came home without rosettes. We have two more competitions this year before the season draws to a close for the summer, which I hope will hold more luck for us.

Amanda Briscoe



Boat club

The 2015/16 year has been one of development and training for the RAU boat club. The number of socials has increased which helped us to create a tight knit team. As race season approaches, water training has increased, and we hope to enter boats into BUCS as well as some of the South West area competitions with Swindon Rowing Club. We suffered the devastating loss of one of our best male rowers, Michael Johnson, in February 2016, during adverse weather on a trans-Atlantic rowing competition. The team decided to finish the other half of the Atlantic row in his honour (2,112,907.74 metres) on rowing machines. The team had massive support from the student body and staff at the University, as well as Michael's family and Harper Adams University boat club. Over £1,200 was raised over the five weeks it took to complete.

Lydia Aldridge



Ladies' hockey

The ladies 1st XI have faced many tough matches this season, coming up against some stiff competition from the likes of Bristol 2nds. The commitment of the hockey team, from the freshers to the second years, has been outstanding. Although we haven't had a very successful season, as a team we never gave up and everyone kept their enthusiasm right through until the last match. We had a large number of talented freshers join this year, who have been consistently reliable and are a great asset to the team. We have bonded well which will hopefully carry on into a successful season next year.

Katherine Ridley



Men's hockey

Men's hockey continues on an upwards curve. Following last season's promotion into BUCS Western Conference Division 3B and facing potentially stiffer opposition, the squad excelled again. After finishing only two points behind this season's league winners, it meant we narrowly missed out on a second consecutive promotion in two years. The club's success was due to great team spirit and enthusiasm by the players, both on and off the field. Special mention must go to Hugo Segrave, Nick Moss, and Matt Van Der Torren for assisting with coaching, and their continued efforts to promote the club's success. The introduction of a permanent coach and possibly a second team in future will assist with the team's growth. With the majority of players staying on for the 2016/17 season, I believe that the men's hockey team will continue to go from strength to strength.

Campbell Saul

Netball

We recruited a good number of enthusiastic freshers this year, and had a high turnout at our Monday evening training sessions. Matches have gone well, and while we haven't won many, we have certainly had fun playing them and learning from other teams – hopefully teaching them a thing or two too! Due to such a high turnout, we try to play as many freshers as possible on the team each week. We've held a few more socials this year which have proved popular, and helped bring everyone closer together. I'm proud to have captained such an incredible team, and a massive thank you to Amanda Babos for vice-captaining the squad with me!

Izzy Darton



Snow sports

Back in November 2015, the snow sports committee took the ski team to compete at the British University Dryslope Championships in Edinburgh, which was a truly memorable occasion. We entered two teams into the dual slalom competition, as well as entering Sam Guinness, Hugo Pearson-Wood, and Sam Head into the freestyle Big Air. Although we didn't make the podiums, the commentator found it comical that the RAU team competed in John Deere overalls! The rest of the year has been full-on for the committee, organising the Easter trip to Alpe d'Huez, which was a huge success.

Charlotte Wickham



Sporting rifle club

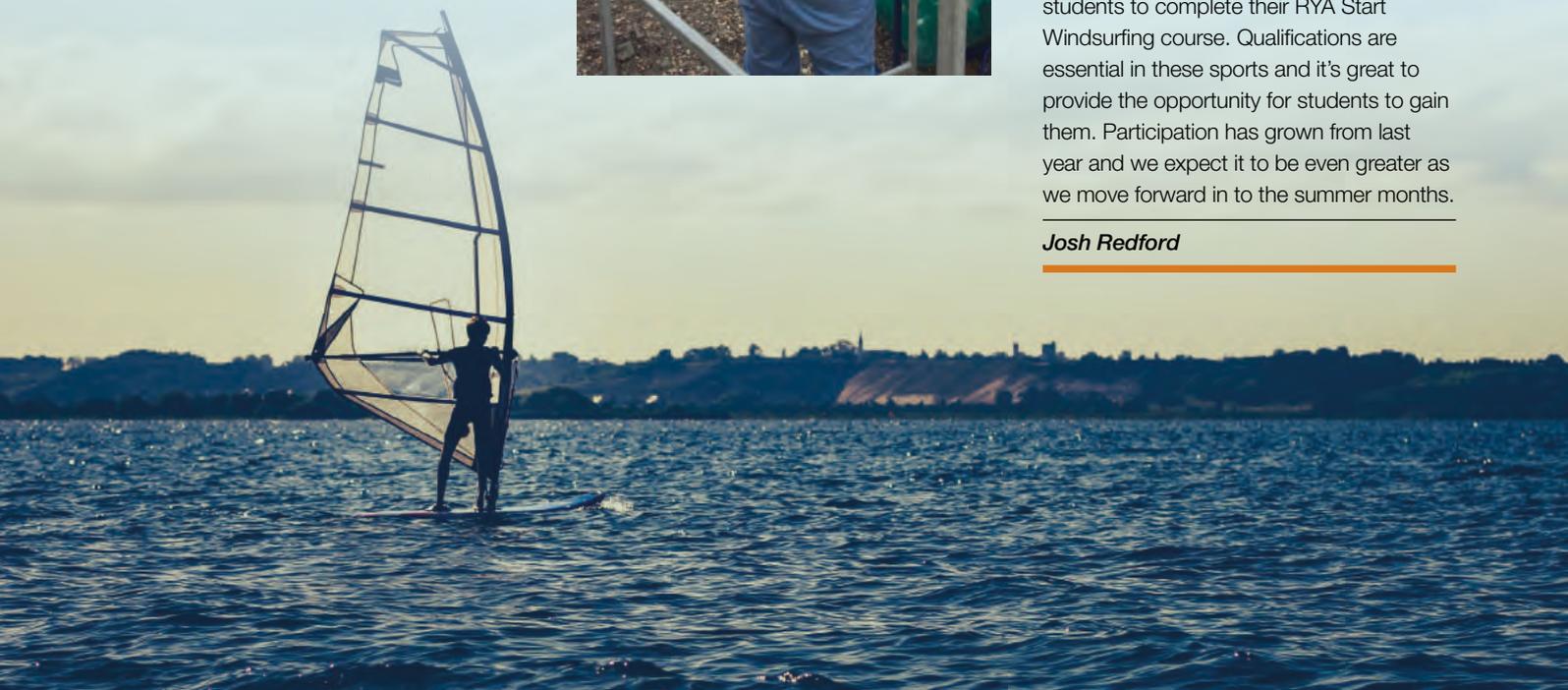
The club has once again enjoyed a successful year, despite getting off to a slow start due to poor weather conditions. Many of our new members had never shot before and were enthusiastic to try their hand at the sport of target shooting. However, our main focus once again has been on deer stalking and associated skills, with several members going on to undertake their DSC level 1 qualifications with success. Members have also had the opportunity to attend talks by both the British Deer Society and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation.

Morgan Williams and Kyle Shearer

Water sports

We have successfully provided water based activities for all students, from freshers to postgraduates, offering something different to do on a Wednesday afternoon. Having built a strong relationship with South Cerney Outdoors, we're now able to hire equipment at a reduced rate. Funding gained from Sportivate allowed seven students to complete their RYA Start Windsurfing course. Qualifications are essential in these sports and it's great to provide the opportunity for students to gain them. Participation has grown from last year and we expect it to be even greater as we move forward in to the summer months.

Josh Redford





Lacrosse

This season we have been lucky to welcome some great new players on the field, more than filling the shoes of the third year players we lost at the end of last year. A few of our new members had never played lacrosse before, but they've massively impressed us with how far they've come – our new goalie has surprised many teams with her skills! The first matches against Bath and Cardiff were tough, but we soon came together for strong wins against the University of Gloucestershire and Aberystwyth University. I'm hoping to see many of the second years again next season, they played such a strong part in the team that we couldn't have coped without them! Hopefully next season we can work our way up the league with our new captains, even though we must say goodbye to our lovely postgraduate players.

Harrie Fuller



Rugby

On Friday 22 April, the Royal Agricultural University 1st XV came face-to-face with the Harper Adams University 2nd XV, for the first time in seven years. It was a fantastic match, and despite the wind and the rain the RAU students turned out in force to support the RAU 1st XV. Both teams gave it their all, and, after a fiercely competitive match, the HAU 2nd XV pulled away and claimed the victory – with a final score of 31-40. Here's to the start of a new alliance, and a happy relationship between our rugby clubs and universities.

Tom Brown



Polo

The polo club had a good start to the year and gained a number of new members. We've continued our partnership with Inglesham Polo Centre, which has been a huge success, and as a club we have a lot to thank them for. We held two tournaments at Inglesham, a beginner and a novice tournament, which brought success to the competing RAU teams. We entered three teams into the SUPA arena nationals this year, and had much success. The 1st novice team placed third, coming up against some strong university sides, the 2nd team narrowly missed out on fifth place, and the beginner team did very well, only narrowly missing out on first place. Overall a great success this year, rounded off nicely with the brilliant May Ball polo.

Jamie Campbell



RAU XV versus HAU XV

2015-2016

alumni events

Photos from our programme of regular events

1 CLA Game Fair, 31 July 2016 – RAU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Gaskell with sponsor Pollock Associates



2 A course (1965-1967) reunion, 25 September 2015 – formal dinner, tour of the Rural Innovation Centre at Harnhill Manor Farm, and refreshments at The Tunnel House Inn



3 Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials, 5 May 2016 – Filming with Peter Morris, Professor Meriel Moore-Colyer, and Simon Daniels



4 66 Club reunion – 4 October 2015



5 Cereals, 15 June 2016 – Michael Hamilton, Ron Coaten, and Bill King





6 Royal Three Counties Show, 19 June 2016 – Adam Henson with Liam Derry (right), RAU graduate and founder of Coppernose Jerky

7 Royal Three Counties Show, 19 June 2016 – Adam Henson with Lewis Steer, RAU student and founder of Lily Warne Wool

8 Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials, 4 - 8 May 2016 – Jo Pitman and Chloe Howick meet Clare Balding whilst managing the media at Badminton Horse Trials

9 Alnwick Castle visit, 10 September 2015



Name: Jason Green

Course: BSc (Hons) Agriculture and Land Management

Class of: 1993

Out of Africa



A gap year in Zimbabwe sparked Jason Green's life-long passion for Africa, a passion which saw him embark on an exciting career developing sustainable agriculture programmes within global coffee and cocoa trading companies.

As Head of Cocoa Sustainability at Ecom Agroindustrial Corp. Ltd, Jason Green knows a thing or two about sustainable agriculture and social responsibility. Following a 20-year career in the African coffee and cocoa markets, Jason set up the department which currently works with more than 160,000 farmers in Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru, to market their crops and

increase productivity. "I spend half of my time talking to chocolate makers such as Nestlé, Mars, Lindt, and Ferrero about why they should be investing in sustainable

sourcing, and the other half travelling to these countries to supervise the projects and meet the farmers. It's really interesting work which I find incredibly rewarding."

Having grown up on a farm, and spent six months of a gap year tobacco planting in Zimbabwe, Jason always knew that he wanted to work within large scale farming or estate management. "After four glorious years at the RAU, I focused my attentions on getting back to Africa. Unfortunately, I

had no idea how to do this, so I decided to write to the African offices of the six largest global commodities traders, stating that I was travelling to their country so they might as well give me an interview!"

It was a long shot, but it paid off. Jason received the call he'd been waiting for and booked a one-way ticket to Nairobi. "As a Bush Coffee Buyer in southern Tanzania, I went into rural villages to negotiate with village elders to buy their crop. Coffee was stored in huge, broken-down warehouses until it went for auction. Coffee yields per hectare were very low, so farmer livelihoods were quite poor." After three years, Jason moved to Kilimanjaro to do a similar job, whilst also building a large coffee milling factory in Moshi. "This was a fantastic location to be buying coffee



“Pursue something that interests you. If you’re passionate about something you’ll be good at it, and if you’re good at something, eventually someone will pay you to do it!”



in,” he recalls. “Small villages built up the sides of the extinct volcano, with views looking out over the wildlife parks below.”

Two years later, Jason and his young family moved to Uganda, where he began buying cocoa and vanilla, as well as coffee, which were being produced by one acre smallholders. “We found that we were almost becoming a development agency, running projects to teach tens of thousands of farmers about sustainable farming practices and bringing them into our supply chain. I formed partnerships with DFID, USAID, development banks, the World Bank, and various Ugandan ministries, before a separate foundation was finally established. I then became Head of the Foundation for East Africa, which allowed me to expand these programmes into Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, and Ethiopia.”

After eight years living and working in Uganda, Jason’s personal highlight was setting up a 15,000 strong farmer co-operative. “Thanks to two years, five million euros from the European Union and the US Government, and a lot of patience, we launched an extensive training programme teaching farmers about good governance, target setting, and budgets, as well as sustainable agriculture techniques. I’m pleased to report that the programme is still up and running today.”

In 2008, Jason was appointed Managing Director of Tropical Farm Management Ltd which then managed 60% of Kenya’s coffee estates. “A lot of the estates were run down, and some were in the hands of the banks, so the job was to farm them back to profitability. This was largely achieved through a period of high coffee

prices, although I did have a six million dollar budget and access to some very advanced farm management software!”

Jason and his family moved back to the UK in 2013, and while he’s relishing the challenges of his new position, he’s also enjoying being back in contact with his old friends from Cirencester. Looking back at his career so far, Jason has a few words of wisdom for the next generation of RAU graduates. “Pursue something that interests you. If you’re passionate about something you’ll be good at it, and if you’re good at something, eventually someone will pay you to do it!”

Name: David Lopez

Course: MSc Business Management in the Agriculture and Food Industries

Class of: 1995

Grape expectations

Wine lecturer, researcher, and self-confessed wine enthusiast, Dr David Lopez is keen to embrace his latest role – Ambassador for Champagne in Spain 2016.

Dr David Lopez has always had a great passion for wine and viticulture, which stems from a belief that wine is an aspirational drink. “Wine should not be considered an alcoholic beverage, as it brings about other emotions. Wine tells you the story of a year, a landscape, people. It’s all about geography; you’ll travel around the world when you learn to decode that message.”

Specialising in wines of the world, David is interested in grape variety and geography. “The grape approach is the easiest way to learn about wine,” he explains. “Almost all wines are made from the same species of grape vine; *vitis vinifera*, so names such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, and Shiraz all refer to single varieties of the same grape vine. While grape variety is a key factor in determining how a wine tastes, different soils, sun exposures, and climates also play a part. Geography is important for gaining a deeper understanding of wine diversity.”

It was David’s love of Champagne wines in particular that prompted him to enter the European Champagne Ambassadors Awards. He was elated to be named Ambassador for Champagne in Spain 2016, commenting, “Champagne is the best wine in the world. It represents the joy of living and the joy of being alive, and I’m thrilled to be its Ambassador.

Within this role, I’m keen to learn more about Champagne, whilst giving presentations, and promoting knowledge.”

As Ambassador for Champagne in Spain,

David competed in the European Final in France in October 2015. “The nine European finalists spent a glorious week in Champagne; wine tasting, visiting, and learning, before competing for the ultimate title. For me, the prize was to be there. The awards ceremony was sheer perfection; the food was excellent and the Champagne was flowing.”

David first came to the Royal Agricultural University on a six month Erasmus scholarship in 1992, but leapt at the chance to become a fully-fledged Masters student within the School of Business and Entrepreneurship. “Coming to the RAU was the best decision. The MSc taught me more than just business management theory and practice; I learnt how to solve problems, how to face new situations, how to ask questions, and most importantly, how to challenge the conventions.”

Graduating in 1995, David was presented with his Masters degree by HRH The Prince of Wales, at a special Convocation ceremony marking 150 years of the RAU. He spent several years teaching mechanics, before embarking on a PhD in wine co-operatives in 2000.

“I wanted to challenge myself, and research is something that’s always interested me. My PhD ‘Success and failure of co-operatives’ focused on the objectives, profitability, and responsibility of wine co-operatives – I found myself tasting wines and visiting wineries, which was fantastic. I was awarded my PhD in 2003, which opened the door to the wine sector and led to my role as Ambassador of Champagne for Spain.”



Dr David Lopez (centre) at the Final of the European Champagne Ambassadors Awards

Name: Tom Allen-Stevens

Course: One Year Farming (1993) and Advanced Farm Management

Class of: 1996

A deep-rooted passion

Award-winning journalist and Editor of *Crop Production Magazine*, Tom Allen-Stevens was named a Director of the prestigious Oxford Farming Conference in 2016, and he's more than up to the task.

Tom Allen-Stevens was studying civil engineering when he realised that he wanted to be a farmer. "Growing up on the family farm in Oxfordshire, farming never seemed like an attractive career path. It wasn't until I was working on our 170ha arable farm during my university holidays that I started coming round to the idea."

Tom decided to leave engineering behind and enrolled on to the One Year Farming course at the Royal Agricultural University. "At first, I just wanted to develop the skills and knowledge to become a Farm Manager – but I soon realised what an incredibly diverse industry farming is. Cirencester opened my eyes to my own abilities and how I could apply these outside of the family farm."

His deep-rooted passion for agriculture, coupled with his natural flair for writing, saw him land a job as a Technical Writer for *Crops Magazine*, part of the Farmers Weekly Group, in 1999. "The move into agricultural journalism was the best I ever made – I often joke that it's easier to write about doing it right than actually doing it right! I've been privileged to visit the most innovative farmers, interview the most fascinating scientists, and pursue cutting-edge technologies."

It wasn't long until Tom was promoted to Arable Editor for *Farmers Weekly*

Interactive, where he was responsible for managing the arable content on the website and feeding arable news through to *Crops Magazine* and *Farmers Weekly*. He left to join PR

company Mistral in 2004, and worked with high-profile organisations such as Agrii, the Royal Show, LEAF, and AHDB Potatoes, to gain an insight into the ways in which commercial companies get their products and services in front of farmers.

After his stint in PR, Tom was keen to get back into journalism. "I had developed an interest in sponsored editorial, and decided to set up my own technical communications company in 2009 – which is still going strong. I write technical copy that aligns commercial interests with that of the reader." Meanwhile, he also leapt at the chance to manage Open Farm Sundays. "I'd always been concerned about the disconnect between the farmer and the consumer, so it was a privilege to work alongside farmers who have done truly inspirational work bringing the public onto their farms. Thanks to them, there's much more understanding and respect for farmers than when I started in the 1990s."

In 2011, Tom was offered the position of Editor at *Crop Production Magazine*. "As Editor, I spend a lot of time talking to people within the industry, that's how you find out where the stories are. I still get to do a lot of writing, and the on-farm articles give me a real buzz – there's no better story than a progressive and enthusiastic farmer. I get the same tingle when I meet scientists, there's some really exciting research going

on in the UK – especially at Rothamsted Research and the John Innes Centre. Agricultural journalism plays a key role in knowledge transfer, applying the latest research to field practice, and I find it really rewarding to be a part of that process."

As if all of that didn't keep Tom busy enough, he also runs his own farm with his wife, and is a Director of the Oxford Farming Conference. "I've been to the OFC every year since I left engineering for farming, and was thrilled to be chosen as a Director. There are nine of us on the council, each serving a three-year term. The highlight for me is organising the Arable Conference at Cereals."

Going forwards, Tom is optimistic about unlocking the potential of the farming industry. "It's on the cusp of great change, with huge leaps in science and technology on the horizon. Communication is a vital tool, and I'd like to see more enthusiastic young people enter in to agricultural journalism – if you've a love of language, a passion for farming, and a yearning to learn, there could be no more rewarding career choice."

An expert in his field, Tom Allen-Stevens has received two Guild of Agricultural Journalists awards; the Merial Business Award and the Perkins Power on the Farm Award, the British Society of Plant Breeders award for Innovation and Plant Breeding, and is a two time recipient of the Yara Journalism Award for best arable article.

Name: Sophie Knox

Course: BSc (Hons) International Equine and Agricultural Business Management

Mane Supplies

Recognised as one of the top Internet and Mail Order Retailers of the Year by the British Equestrian Trade Association, Sophie Knox's rapidly growing equestrian business, Mane Supplies, is going from strength to strength.

Opening two horses and being an avid rider herself, Sophie Knox instinctively knew there was a gap in the market for a knowledgeable online equestrian business. "Studying equine and agricultural business management at the RAU gave me a great insight into general business management, while being an event rider meant that I got to interact with people from right across the sector. I soon realised that there was an increasing demand for a reliable online retailer, capable of understanding its customers' individual equestrian needs."

Sophie seized the opportunity and launched Mane Supplies in 2013. "I decided to set up an online business because the internet is the future of retail. We specialise in products for the horse and rider; from supplements, bridles, jodhpurs, boots, and seat savers, to items for the smallholder and gifts for the horse-loving home, and everything we stock can be viewed on our website. Customers can contact us for more information, or even visit our large showroom for further assistance.

"In fact, I spend most of my time dealing with customers and that's the most rewarding part of my job – especially when you can offer them exactly what they're looking for. Our customers often tell us which products they'd like to see on our site, and we really value their feedback."

Licensed by the Government through the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, Mane Supplies have a Suitably Qualified Person to offer customers advice and guidance. "We keep abreast of the latest developments in the equestrian market by visiting trade shows and inviting companies to come and demonstrate their products. While we love seeing and stocking cutting-edge gadgets, we know that traditional items are always popular so they feature strongly within our collection."

Recently shortlisted for Internet and Mail Order Retailer of the Year 2016 in the British Equestrian Trade Association annual awards ceremony, Sophie's business is one to watch. "It was wonderful to be nominated by one of our customers, and I was thrilled to go up and receive the

runner up award. Everyone was so excited to hear the news, and I feel incredibly lucky to have such a great team."

When she's not busy with the day-to-day demands of Mane Supplies, Sophie keeps her second online business, Pets Perfect, ticking over. "I bought Pets Perfect back in 2008 when it was quite small. I saw the potential straight away and knew that I could develop it into something much bigger. Pets Perfect serves the cat and dog market and runs off the same principles as Mane Supplies – the two businesses are actually very complementary. Customers travel from all over the country to visit our showroom, and have their dogs fitted for coats and other seasonal gear."

Sophie's top tip for business management is to make sure you have a well-qualified team behind you. "From the operations manager to the computer experts and the buyers in the office, you need a dedicated group of people who also want the business to succeed. Customer service, knowledge, and good prices are the foundations of Mane Supplies, and with these in place I know I can grow it to become the biggest and most proficient online equestrian business."

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"It was wonderful to be nominated in the Internet and Mail Order Retailer of the Year category at the British Equestrian Trade Association awards by one of our customers. I was thrilled to go up and receive the runner up award."



Name: Chloë Brooks

Course: MSc Rural Estate Management

Class of: 2011



A head for hops

Overseeing the production of 15,000 pints of beer a week whilst creating innovative new recipes using locally sourced ingredients is a dream come true for conservationist and real ale fanatic Chloë Brooks, Head Brewer at Stroud Brewery.

Having attended her first Campaign for Real Ale meeting with her father when she was just a few months old, Chloë has always been a keen advocate of the traditional real or cask ale. So when the position of Assistant Brewer at Stroud Brewery came up, it was too good an opportunity to miss.

Having landed her dream job, Chloë got stuck in and soon knew the brewing process like the back of her hand. "I started with plenty of enthusiasm, but no practical experience, so it was an incredibly steep learning curve. The role was very demanding, especially physically, as there's a lot of lifting malt bags, climbing in and out of vessels, and manual cleaning."

Chloë was a natural, and it wasn't long until she'd passed her General Certificate in Brewing with the Institute of Brewing and Distilling, and worked her way up to Head Brewer, a role which she shares with one of her colleagues. "On a day-to-day basis, I'm responsible for managing the brewhouse. We brew two or three times a week, making around 15,000 pints worth which is split between cask, keg, bottled, and canned beer. The biggest challenge is keeping the brewery running smoothly whilst carrying out side projects and developing new beers – which I particularly enjoy."

Stroud Brewery offers a comprehensive portfolio of 20 different draught and bottled beers, including three core draught beers, at least one seasonal draught beer each month, and 15 varieties of organic bottled beer;

all of which are produced by a small but capable brew team of three. "We brewed 14 new recipes last year, which could be anything from a seasonal draught beer to a special brew for a one off event, or a contract brew such as the award-winning Gloucester Services Stout."

Winning awards is something Stroud Brewery is particularly good at. "We scooped 10 awards at the Cotswold Artisan Drinks Awards 2016, received a bronze award at the national, and a gold and two silver awards at the regional SIBA Beer Competitions 2016, and were named Stroud Life Food Business of the Year in 2015. Each award we pick up is extremely important for us. It recognises the high quality of our products, as well as the hard work that goes into creating and maintaining a sustainable business which benefits the local community."

Passionate about conservation, Chloë completed her undergraduate degree in geology and oceanography before studying for her MSc in Rural Estate Management at the Royal Agricultural University. "I wanted a qualification that would expand on my environmental background and lead to a rural career. Working in a brewery unites my passion for real ale with my scientific and agricultural background."

"Stroud Brewery appealed because of its environmental ethos. We use local and organic ingredients, with the malt coming from Cotswold farmers within 15 miles of the brewery. We send our spent grain to local farms as feedstuff for the animals, and keep custom local to reduce our carbon footprint. Our 'Your Pint, Your Place' campaign, which is supported by the Cotswolds AONB Sustainable Development Fund, allows us to build relationships with our farmers and communicate our local story. It also encourages people to embrace our beer as a valuable asset to Gloucestershire's rural economy.

"Looking to the future, I would very much like to increase awareness of the brewery at a national level, and continue to promote the links between the landscape, agriculture, and the finished pint of locally brewed beer that our customers enjoy."

Fantastic work Chloë, we raise our glass to you!



Name: Penny Parkes

Course: BSc (Hons) International Agribusiness Management

Class of: 1996

Plenty of practice

Newly published author Penny Parkes tells us how her debut novel *Out of Practice* grew out of the charming Cotswold towns she knows and loves.

Forever scribbling ideas in notebooks, on the back of receipts, and on an endless trail of post-it notes around the house, Penny Parkes had always talked about writing a book. An avid reader herself, she spent years attending local literary festivals and creative writing workshops before she finally took the plunge and penned her very own novel.

"It was the overwhelmingly positive feedback I received from various well-established authors that gave me the nudge to take my own writing to the next level," explained Penny. "Writing a novel was one of those 'one day' aspirations that could easily have been dismissed, yet when I started thinking about it seriously, the characters began developing in my imagination and there was no going back."

Based in the fictional market town of Larkford, Penny's debut novel *Out of Practice* is a romantic comedy, following the lives and loves of four rural doctors and their families. "The joy of writing about Larkford is that I can pull together all of the best bits from my favourite places. You might recognise the pastel buildings of Cirencester, the Georgian mansions of Bath, or the Cotswold stone cottages of Broadway. In *Out of Practice*, I wanted to capture the light and shade of a rural doctor's life, the humour and the heartbreak, and to explore the issues faced by the rural community. Certainly there are a few eccentric characters that are a joy to write!"

Before transitioning to become a full-time writer, Penny Parkes completed a BSc (Hons) in International Agribusiness Management at the Royal Agricultural

University in 1996, and, after a short stint as a Researcher for BBC *Countryfile*, set up and ran her own film location company, Location Seekers. Penny spent the next five years travelling around the UK and Europe, facilitating locations for films, TV series, and magazine shoots. "At Location Seekers, the property owners were the clients and we negotiated on their behalf. It was the organisation of these shoots that I found incredibly rewarding.

"My favourite movie location was *The Visitors*, which was filmed at Lydney Park Estate. There was a huge amount of set building and it was wonderful to watch the countryside transform. Likewise, filming *Vanity Fair* with BBC Drama was fabulous. They took the Regency streets of Cheltenham back in time and it was beautiful to behold." In 2001, Penny decided to sell the company and concentrate on starting a family with her husband Sam.

As a writer, balancing work and family life can be tricky, but Penny's found the perfect solution. "I'm unashamedly a term-time author. I find that committing to getting the words down every morning, before getting distracted by life in general, is the most effective way to work. As long as I have copious amounts of caffeine, and a certain amount of peace and quiet, I'm happy!"

Her advice for budding authors is not to be tempted to think that writing 'The End' means the hard work is nearly done. In reality, it's just the beginning. "It sounds obvious, but the first step towards publication is to write. Finish the manuscript and put it in a drawer for a few weeks, before going back with an objective eye



and an editing pen. Finding an agent who will approach publishers on your behalf is extremely competitive, and you only get one chance to make a good first impression."

Despite her first book being weeks away from hitting the shelves, Penny is as busy as ever. "*Out of Practice* is only the first in the series, so you'll often find me scribbling away in one of Cirencester's coffee shops. I've been pretty strict with myself about imagining where the series might lead, but I might have picked out a few locations already – just in case!"

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Out of Practice is available as an e-book from 23 May 2016, and as a paperback from 28 July.

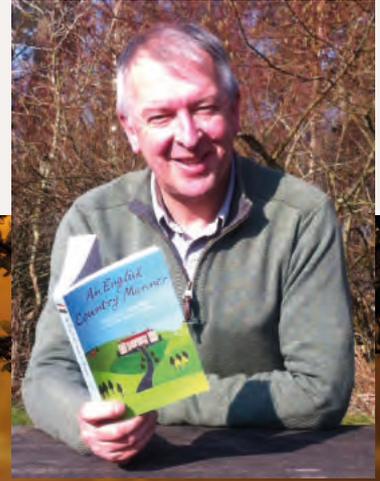
MORE FROM PENNY

Penny writes a regular column Notes from the Cotswolds for BooksandtheCity.co.uk You can also find her on Twitter @CotswoldPenny

Name: Rory Clark

Course: BSc (Hons) Rural Estate Management

Class of: 1984



Creative writing

Responsible for managing 35,000 acres of land across eight different counties, there's no such thing as a dull day in the office for Rory Clark, published author and Area Land Agent for the Forestry Commission.

Rory Clark was working for a small rural practice in Suffolk, heading up their rural professional work, when he first came in to contact with the Forestry Commission. When the practice was split and sold in 2002, Rory went self-employed and took on several of their rural clients, one of which was the Forestry Commission. After working together for a number of years, they offered him a position as a full-time Area Land Agent.

"The work was so diverse and interesting that I decided to take the opportunity. The Forestry Commission is a huge asset to the UK and owns the largest landholding in England, which is managed by a team of 15 extraordinarily passionate Land Agents. I'm responsible for 35,000 acres across eight counties, which range from farming, residential, and commercial lets, to traditional large scale forestry operations and community forests on urban fringes. The role of an Area Land Agent is surprisingly autonomous. Of course there are policies to follow, but we're each able to

manage our districts using our own initiative, which makes it a very demanding yet enjoyable role."

From the outset, Rory had always known exactly what he wanted to do.

"I wanted to be involved in farming but not get up at 5am every morning, so land agency seemed a good choice. The RAU stood out due to its outstanding reputation. Indeed, I had a fantastic time and made friendships for life."

He graduated in 1984 and began his career at the prestigious Badminton Estate in Gloucestershire. "I started as Junior Assistant Agent, and, being particularly good at property repairs, spent most of my time doing all of the things the Senior Land Agents didn't want to do! Within my first few weeks, I was asked to inspect a damp ceiling in the butler's house. I confidently advised that it was caused by the kettle steaming and suggested he opened the window – a week later the entire ceiling collapsed due to a leaking water pipe. That humiliation took a while to get over."

Rory then went on to become Deputy Agent of the Althorp Estate in 1987, where he managed 13,000 acres of beautiful countryside, as well as a small tenant farm of 300 breeding ewes. During his time

at Althorp, he helped set up the practice Samuel Rose – which is now much expanded – as one of its four directors, which included the Althorp Estate in its list of rural clients. He then moved to Suffolk where he set up his own rural estate agency practice, Clark and Willcocks, with one other partner in 1992, and ran it successfully for nearly a decade.

Then in 1999, inspired by the anecdotal situations he'd encountered over the years, Rory decided to take two years away from his rural practice and concentrate on his writing. Depicting the day-to-day life of a rural land agent, Rory has published three witty novels; *You've Done What My Lord?*, *An English Country Manner*, and *Style and Manors*, which have sold more than 60,000 copies. "I've always enjoyed the creative side of writing, and while the roles I've been in have provided me with ample fodder, the characters and situations described in my books are purely fictional. I set aside certain hours each day to write; without the routine it would be easy to let the work drift."

While Rory's current position with the Forestry Commission keeps him plenty busy, there are a few exciting new projects in the pipeline.

Name: Oumou Koulibaly

Course: MSc International Rural Development

Class of: 2009

A climate of change

Oumou Koulibaly is dedicated to improving the lives of millions of people living and working in rural Africa.

Growing increasingly concerned about environmental issues and the challenges these pose for vulnerable rural communities in Africa, Oumou Koulibaly decided to apply for the Royal Agricultural University's MSc in International Rural Development through the African Fellowship Trust.

"Rural communities are the ones feeding us," Oumou explains, "and yet they're the most fragile communities in the world because they are not resilient to climate change or prepared for natural disasters. I wanted to be able to help our rural communities face these difficulties, and thanks to the skills and abilities I gained through the IRD programme at the RAU, I'm able to do so. The University has helped to shape my career, and allowed me to develop into the person I am today.

"The multinational aspect of the course made it a very inclusive environment in which to study, and there was a wide range of modules to choose from – I still refer back to the management and development focused modules in my current role. During the course, I was also able to gain valuable hands-on experience through work placements with the International Institute for Environment and Development, and the Grampus Heritage and Training placement programme in Cyprus."

Since 2011, Oumou has been working as a Knowledge Sharing Officer at Enda Energie, a non-governmental organisation which aims to eradicate poverty and



bring about social and economic change. "Enda Energie appealed because they focus on helping vulnerable communities from the bottom up with grassroots projects and initiatives. One such project I've been involved in is the AfricaAdapt network, which aimed to facilitate the flow of climate adaption knowledge between researchers, policy makers, and those communities which are vulnerable to climate change across the continent. Although this project is no longer funded, the online platform remains active.

"I'm now involved in another programme called BRACED (Building Resilience and Adaption to Climate Extremes and Disasters) which aims to build

the resilience of more than five million vulnerable people through a three year, £92 million UK government funded grant scheme. I'm a member of the Knowledge Manager consortium, which is made up of seven organisations including Enda Energie, and am part of the communication team. My role is to ensure that knowledge generated from the project is communicated to the right people in a way that is clear and understandable.

"I've always been very concerned about the socio-economic conditions of vulnerable and marginalised people, mainly women and children, so my career goals are to better understand the implications of climate change and environmental issues,



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“The University has helped to shape my career, and allowed me to develop into the person I am today.”



to create sustainable opportunities for poor people in rural areas, and to help the most vulnerable populations live in dignity.”

Oumou leaves us with some food for thought. “In my professional experience, issues such as climate change, sustainable development, and poverty alleviation are not as complex as we are led to believe. If everyone made even the smallest contribution – be it financial, social, ecological, or physical – we could combat these global issues together. It’s simply a matter of will.”



Ciren weddings



▲ Will Witchell and Nicky Wallace

Will Witchell (BSc (Hons) Agriculture (Land Management), 2004) married Nicky Wallace on Saturday 11 October 2014 at Hambledon Church near Henley-on-Thames, followed by a reception at Greenlands, Henley. The wedding party of 160 guests, which included five decades from Cirencester, celebrated the union in a beautiful marquee overlooking the River Thames. Will and Nicky enjoyed their first honeymoon in the Outer Hebrides straight after the wedding, followed by a two-week 4,500km road trip around New Zealand in March 2015. They now live in Northern Ireland where Will is Estate Manager for Belmore Estates and Nicky is a freelance Event and Sponsorship Consultant.





◀ **Lisabeth Mary Grindrod
and James Richard Miller**

Lisabeth Mary Grindrod (BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management, 2013) married James Richard Miller (BSc (Hons) Agriculture, 2013) in an intimate ceremony at the Royal Agricultural University on 11 June 2016, followed by a reception at The Bear of Rodborough Hotel, near Stroud. The couple then enjoyed a week in the Algarve in Portugal for their honeymoon. On 9 July, they had the wedding blessed on James' family farm in Devon. A large party of 200 joined them for a hog roast in Hatherleigh Village Hall, and there were a few RAU alumni among the guests!

▲ **Alexander Wirtz and
Larissa Hornung**

Alexander Wirtz (BSc (Hons) International Business Management, 2005) and Larissa Hornung were married at the church of Nienstedten in Hamburg, Germany on 12 December 2015. The reception was held at Hamburger Golf Club, Falkenstein. They had a wonderful wedding surrounded by family and friends from the RAU.

The Ciren society pages

Inform

We'd love to hear what you've been up to since leaving Cirencester. Please send no more than 100 words to alumni@rau.ac.uk and remember to include the year you graduated and the course you studied.

1950s

Richard Widdowson
1950 NDA
MRAC (Ducie Gold Medalist)

In September 1948 I obtained a class B release from the RAF so that I could become a student at the first post war course at the RAC. When I had finished my course I became a Field Adviser for BOCM (now ForFarmers), the animal feed stuff company; later being transferred to their pig research division. The main difficulty in trying to assess a pig's carcass quality was the thickness of its back fat. The Americans speared the pig with a scalpel and then measured the distance from the skin to muscle – a method totally unacceptable to UK welfare standards. In 1954, together with colleagues, we used ultrasound to determine the thickness of the back fat in the pig, and in 1955, published our results in the first refereed scientific paper on the use of ultrasound in living tissue. Later, my team researched pig blood groups and I gave a paper on the subject at an International Congress in Prague. At the end of my paper I suggested that a method we were developing using starch gel electrophoresis would enable scientists to read the DNA of living creatures. I was mocked out of the hall, but I continued the work and the method we developed is the standard practice in the field of DNA mapping. Due to health problems I took early retirement. I now spend my time studying what I choose to call Holism, the relationship between soil, plant, animal, man, and God.



Richard Widdowson



Derek Bell

1960s

Derek Bell
1962 One Year Farming

British racing driver Derek Bell MBE has enjoyed a successful and diverse racing career, spanning over 40 years, and is considered the greatest Englishman ever to compete in endurance racing. Derek began racing as an amateur in a Lotus 7 at Goodwood, winning his first ever race in March 1964. He quickly progressed to Formula 3 and then Formula 2, with the backing of his stepfather's Church Farm racing team, turning professional within three years. Between 1968 and 1974 he competed in 16 Formula 1 Grand Prix, racing for Ferrari, McLaren, Surtees, and Tecno. Derek's real talent, however, lay in endurance racing – where he became a true legend. He won back-to-back World Sports Car Championship titles in 1985 and 1986, three 24 Hours of Daytona in 1986, 1987, and 1989, and five Le Mans victories in 1975, 1981, 1982, 1986, and 1987.

In 1970, Derek filmed the cult movie 'Le Mans' with Hollywood legend Steve McQueen. During the course of filming, Derek showed that motorsport can be a dangerous business, suffering burns to his face when the Ferrari he was driving caught fire following a racing sequence on the Le Mans circuit. Derek was at his prime during the 1980s and early 1990s, and was awarded the MBE for services to motorsport in 1986. At the peak of his career, Derek was one of the top sports car and endurance race car drivers in the world. He achieved 16 victories in the World Endurance Championship, and 19 in the IMSA Camel GT Championship, a total of 35 wins in seven years. Derek has never officially stopped racing professionally, and still enjoys driving at historic races.



Paul Temple

1980s

Paul Temple 1981 NDA

On leaving the RAC I joined the farming business, building the business up and adapting to the flow of the various CAP reforms, which at this point now has the farm heavily focused on environmental schemes. Wheat and barley is grown for seed, potatoes, oilseed rape, forage maize, and vining peas. We're members of Swaythorpe Growers Ltd, now producing it's own high quality branded Yorkshire pea pack. Suckler beef are an intrinsic part of environmental scheme management. Fascinated by agricultural science and being fortunate in travelling widely has given me a global insight into farming, markets, and politics across the world. This has enabled me to set up a group for EU farmers with a biotech interest, chair an EU farming organisation crop group, and hold the office of NFU Vice President. In April 2015, I joined the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board's (AHDB) main board as the Chair of the Cereals and Oilseeds Sector, recently re-branded from what was the HGCA. It's a particularly exciting time to be part of a rapidly changing organisation as the various levy sectors work closer together in new and innovative ways. Making sense of sustainability and all that it can mean, is one of my driving challenges. I see the AHDB as a people organisation determined to work in smarter ways for the benefit of all levy payers across the industry. I'm constantly reminded of a past RAC lecturer's wise words, 'Education is about knowing what questions to ask and where to find the answer'. This seems to neatly encapsulate what the AHDB needs to do in a fast changing world and it's fantastic to be part of it.

1990s

Stacey Mutkin 1995 MSc Business Studies for the Food and Drink Industries

Having thoroughly enjoyed my time at Cirencester, I started working as Marketing Director for our family business, Knight's Cider. At that time, we were at the height of production, producing over three million gallons for own label supermarket brands, the Royal Duchy organic cider, and our own brands Malvern Oak and Malvern Gold. I married my fiancé Laurence in 1998, the ceremony was held in the orchards – thankfully the blossom held, and the wedding toast was with cider. I found myself travelling between the farm and London, and it soon became clear that it wasn't an ideal lifestyle. It was with regret that I decided to stop working for the family business. I returned to my earlier passion of photography. I started up my own business, photographing artists, writers and many, many children! I became an Associate of the Royal Photographic Society and in 2000 won the BIPP Press and PR award. That year we had our first son Max, soon followed by Hugo. I continued doing the photography and bringing up the boys. Wishing to have a garden for them, we moved from Westbourne Grove over to Little Venice, where we still live. Three years ago I also became involved in a textiles company, Cosi, selling hand woven cashmere, alpaca and yak scarves, and blankets. The fibres were sourced in Mongolia and woven in Nepal for clients such as Bamfords and Browns. Although these businesses seem a long way from an MSc in the Food and Drink Industries, the experience at Cirencester has proven invaluable. I'm in contact with Victoria Ellis neé Birdwood and Gerald Theis, but would love to catch up with old fellow students at the alumni dinner this September.



Stacey Mutkin



Linzie Maycock

2000s

Linzie Maycock 2004 BSc (Hons) International Equine and Agricultural Business Management

After completing my course I gained a job at Fearing International, where I was liaising with the ministry and issuing sheep and cattle ear tags. I left Fearing after eight months when I gained a job at the NFU Mutual in Market Harborough. I quickly worked my way up within the office and became a self-employed appointed representative, specialising in estate and rural insurance. I also help clients manage their health and safety, and introduce financial services. The degree I studied has helped me enormously in terms of the RAU status, and the grounding I received in equine and agriculture, including the business elements. Without this, I'm sure I wouldn't be in the position I'm in today. I loved my time at the RAU and was an avid member of the polo team amongst other things. I left the Royal Ag with a fantastic qualification, having made some great friends and contacts, and wonderful memories.

2010s

Syed Shah 2015 MBA Business Management in the Food Industries

Prior to joining the RAU, I spent 20 years in the customer service and sales industries, and completed my law degree pre internet. For me, 2015 was life changing. I graduated with distinction in my MBA Business Management in the Food Industries, and then, after an application process spanning over a year, I joined the Metropolitan Police Service as a front line police officer for the Road Transport Policing Command in conjunction with Transport for London. Having settled into my exciting and challenging new role, I'm looking to build on my experiences sitting on the RAU's Inclusivity, Equality and Diversity committee and Academic Board, and fully utilise my MBA within the MET. To complement this, I'm already looking at a part-time doctorate (hopefully at the RAU). A big thank you to the wonderful people I've met and worked with at the University, my future looks bright and interesting to say the least!

Syed Shah



Thinking about a Masters?



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