

Dick Vet News



Newsletter for the Alumni & Friends of
The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, The University of Edinburgh

Issue No.15 Autumn 2003



3 Virtual reconstruction.



5 High achievers.



5 Moving story.

New Head

Contributed



*She is the first woman head of
the Dick Vet since the School was
founded in 1823 by William Dick.*

The Dick Vet has a new leader. Professor Elaine Watson took up her post as the new Head of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies on 1 August. She is the first woman head of the Dick Vet since the School was founded in 1823 by William Dick.

Professor Watson graduated from Glasgow Veterinary School, and stayed to complete a Master of Veterinary Medicine in Reproduction. She then completed a PhD at the University of Bristol, before working at the University of Pennsylvania for five years as Assistant Professor in Equine Reproduction. In 1991, Elaine moved to the Dick Vet as head of reproduction, and was promoted to a personal chair in 1999. She was awarded FRCVS by thesis in 1991 and a DSc from the University of Edinburgh in 2003. Professor Watson's research interests are endometritis in the mare and control of ovarian function in the mare. She has published more than 250 papers and abstracts. On the clinical side, her interests include assisted reproduction in mares, clinical infertility problems in mares and stallions, and equine obstetrics.

HEAD OF SCHOOL NEWS

Contributed



Nowhere else in the University has self-help been so much to the fore and we are still raising money in the continuing spirit of self-help.

In the summer of 2002, just before the 'last' Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Richard Halliwell, retired, the University was restructured into three Colleges: Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (MVM), Science and Engineering, and Humanities and Social Science. The three Colleges comprise 21 Schools with, in MVM, three Schools of Medicine plus the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. No longer are there any Faculties, Deans of Faculties or Faculty meetings. Instead there are Schools, Heads of Schools (HoS) and School meetings. Whilst there is more autonomy for the School in its budgeting and management, the many roles within the University that Deans fulfilled are now subsumed by the three Heads of College. From a management perspective these changes may help the University to respond rapidly to change, but one of the potential casualties of this reorganization is the loss of democratic decision making that was the role of Faculty and its Dean.

Other changes for the School are on the horizon as the University rationalises its estate, which is some 20% larger than that of any other University of equivalent student population. Much of the estate is scattered in a wide variety of listed buildings, which are no longer fit for purpose, and are very costly to maintain. Summerhall falls into this 'high cost' category with an estimated £8 million for roof repairs alone in the next few years. The School is, therefore, presently planning for estate rationalization. We shall ensure that the R(D)SVS retains its identity long into the future.

We are actively evaluating two options for relocating the preclinical years, with decisions anticipated soon. The resulting changes are unlikely to occur before 2006, during which time several million pounds will be invested to accommodate the relocation. In preparation for these changes, £970,000 has been spent this summer on rebuilding the two lecture theatres at Easter Bush and this work is now completed.

Between 1996 and 2003, if one includes the upgrading of the two lecture theatres, there will have been a remarkable £14 million investment at Easter Bush. This began with a £1.5 million Wellcome Trust award for Clinical Research, resulting in major laboratory refurbishment and state-of-the-art clinical research facilities. It was

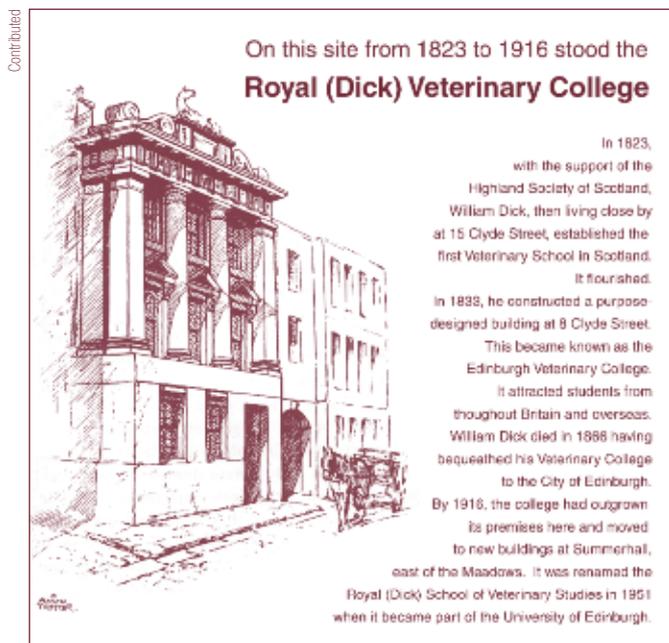
won in competition with the five other vet Schools in 1995. The new Hospital for Small Animals (£7.5 million), the Equine and Large Animal Hospitals (£1.8 million) and the refectory refurbishment (£900,000) were completed in 1999–2000. This year a further £1 million of Government money was invested in new laboratories for Tropical Animal Health as well as £250,000 for the Equine Hospital's Client Reception area.

Much of the drive for these huge improvements to the School's infrastructure came from the efforts of Richard Halliwell who had both the vision and sheer force of personality to convince the University that it would be possible to build anew. With the help of Brian Singleton he set up the 'Friends of the Dick' and raised a quarter of a million pounds from those generous alumni and other supporters of the school who became 'Friends of the Dick Vet'. This generous seed-corn funding enabled the Council of the Friends and the staff of the R(D)SVS to launch a fund-raising campaign. More than half of the money raised was through the efforts of staff at the R(D)SVS, the Friends of the Dick Vet, and alumni as well as many generous corporate sponsors. Nowhere else in the University has self-help been so much to the fore and we are still raising money in the continuing spirit of self-help.

Over the last 18 months, the Dick Vet, with the enormous help of Caroline Freedman, a volunteer fundraiser, raised sufficient money to purchase an £87,000 Laser Doppler Imaging machine for the Hospital for Small Animals. This achievement highlighted that there is still much to be done. We have to think, before Summerhall is closed, of the many treasures we have. The statue of William Dick and recently the horse have already moved to Easter Bush. Others, like the War Memorial Library and Polish Veterinary School plaques, the Stained Glass Windows in the Entrance Hall and our splendid portraits will have to be gathered up and found a new, permanent and secure home in the Dick Vet. Hopefully by the time of the next newsletter, we will be able to report that funding has been identified, and that the site of re-location of these important items is in-hand.

Professor Elaine Watson
Head of School

Clyde Street Veterinary College – Virtual Reconstruction



Top: a view of William Dick's Veterinary College in 1865.

Above: the commemorative plaque which was unveiled at the St. Andrew Square bus station by the Princess Royal.

Most of the alumni of the Dick Vet will recall details of student life at Summerhall. We suspect, however, there will be many fewer who will have memories of the earlier site of the Veterinary College on Clyde Street, just off St Andrew Square. Before that site was turned into the St Andrew Cinema in 1923, the buildings there had housed William Dick's Veterinary College from 1823 to 1916. The area is currently occupied by the recently reconstructed St. Andrew Square bus station. So what is known of this early life of the Dick Vet? There is a very informative and readable *History of the Edinburgh Veterinary College*, published in 1923* by one of our former Principals, O. Charnock Bradley, which gives some information. However, recent research in the archives around Edinburgh and beyond has been greatly adding to our knowledge and providing new insight. It has also stimulated the production of a commemorative plaque which was unveiled at the bus station by the Princess Royal on the 2nd October this year.

William Dick was born on the 6th May 1793, and by 1815, he and his older sister Mary had moved with their parents, John and Jean Dick, to 15 Clyde Street. John Dick was a farrier and both he and his son worked at his forge in the stable courtyard opposite their house. Interestingly, for some ten years before William's birth, there had been discussions within Edinburgh society about establishing a veterinary school in the city. Inspired and befriended by Dr John Barclay, the famous anatomist at the College of Surgeons and a Director of the Highland Society of Edinburgh, William went to London in the winter of 1817. After three months attendance at the London Veterinary College he confidently applied for, and on the 27th January 1818 obtained a diploma. Very shortly after his return to Edinburgh that year he



Contributed

William Dick with his staff and students in the north end of the Veterinary College courtyard.

began lecturing on 'the veterinary art'. It was several years later, however, on the 24th November 1823 that we consider that Edinburgh Veterinary School was officially founded. This was when William's lectures came under the patronage of the Highland Society of Scotland. Practical instruction was carried out at his father's forge in the Clyde Street courtyard. In 1829 William's lectures were transferred from the Calton Convening Rooms to rented accommodation in Clyde Street, where in 1833, at a cost of £2,500 William Dick constructed the imposing, purpose-designed Veterinary School building at 8 Clyde Street. Significantly the carved heads of deer, ram, ox, dog and horse high on the front of the building powerfully represented the breadth of species that William Dick used for the education of his students.

Over the subsequent years William Dick, now Veterinary Surgeon in Scotland to Queen Victoria, rented and/or purchased most of the other buildings around the courtyard. These he modified progressively for the use of his expanding veterinary school, the finances being derived from his extensive private veterinary practice. One of our photographs, taken in the early 1860s, gives a view of William Dick with his staff and students in the north end of the Veterinary College courtyard.

William Dick died on the 4th April 1866, and the management of the Edinburgh Veterinary College passed in trust to the City of Edinburgh. Staff and student numbers continued to increase in such a way that twenty years later there was a clear need to redevelop the veterinary college site to improve the facilities available. This was completed in 1887. The recent rediscovery of these plans during our investigation of the history of the Clyde Street College has enabled two students of architecture in the University, Ketan Lad and Val Hunzinger, sponsored by a small project grant from the Development Trust of the University, and a Summer Scholarship from the Dick Vet, to tackle the 'virtual' reconstruction of the College building. This illustration of the south end of the inside courtyard is an example of their work, which has helped us glimpse for the first time in almost 100 years where and how veterinary teaching was conducted in the Dick Vet, Edinburgh.

All alumni have, and know of, additional bits and pieces of



© C. E. McWilliam

Image modified by Colin Warwick from photograph ED 1447/27, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.



Ketan Lad and Val Hunzinger

information, in the form of photos, illustrations and recollections. These would assist the historical project and add more substance to our collective memory of the Dick Vet. Please send copies for the Dick Vet archives to either Colin Warwick (Colin.Warwick@ed.ac.uk) or Alastair Macdonald (Alastair.Macdonald@ed.ac.uk) at Summerhall, Edinburgh EH9 1QH.

* Facsimile copies of the book (£8.50 P&P) can be obtained from Fiona Brown, Librarian, Summerhall, Edinburgh EH9 1QH.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Joyce Kent

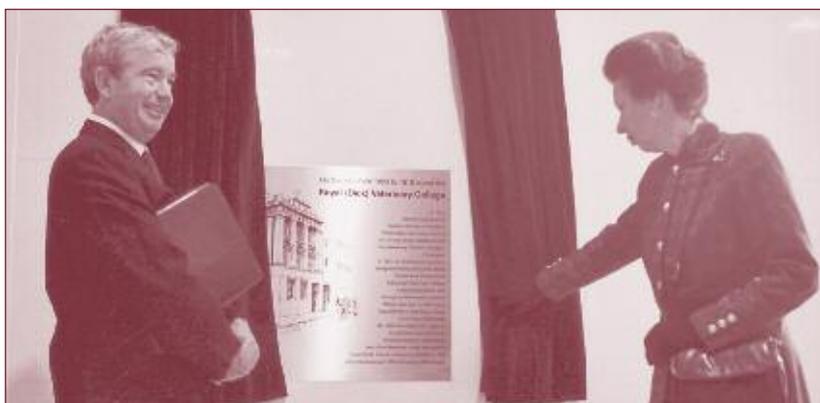


Two major and quite different achievements are being celebrated in the Dick Vet this year. **Colin Warwick** is now the longest serving staff member of the University. He joined the Dick Vet in 1958 as a junior technician, and has worked as photographer in Veterinary Physiology which then became an integrated component of Preclinical Veterinary Sciences. Long a student of local history he is now contributing more to the history of veterinary medicine in Edinburgh.

Caroline Freedman, our enthusiastic volunteer, has just succeeded in raising £87,000 for the first Laser Doppler Imaging machine of its type to see service in small animal medicine in Europe. As will be seen from the enclosed insert with this issue of the *Dick Vet News* the bulk of the money was raised from sponsored dog walks and other charity events supported by the animal-loving general public, staff and students of the Dick Vet, all of whom gave very generously.

Princess Royal's visit

Jonathan Littlejohn



On the 2nd October our patron, HRH the Princess Royal came to Easter Bush to open the new Large Animal Hospital reception centre. She was then invited to see the new scanner and to meet members of the public who had helped with the fund raising. She also viewed the three-dimensional computer model of the long gone Clyde Street Veterinary College which had been created by Ketan Lad and Val Hunzinger, students of Architecture at the University. Later that morning, at the new St Andrew Square Bus Station, Her Royal Highness unveiled a plaque, designed by Frank Hinds of the Comprehensive Design Group, commemorating the site of the Clyde Street Veterinary College.

Colin Warwick



Horse moving

The stone horse which once sat high on top of the Veterinary School in Clyde Street (1833-1916), was then carefully moved to the Summerhall site in 1916 to sit on the MacCallum archway outside the old large animal clinic, was moved again in 1971 from the arch to the roof of the small animal clinic at Summerhall. This summer it moved yet again, and was transported from Summerhall to the front of the newly opened reception centre at the Large Animal Hospital, Easter Bush, Midlothian.

CONTACTS

Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies

The University of Edinburgh
Summerhall
Edinburgh EH9 1QH
Scotland, UK

Head of School

Professor Elaine Watson

Directors

*Research and
Postgraduate Studies*

Dr Jeremy Bradshaw

*Undergraduate Admissions
and Student Affairs*

Mr Colin Stead

Veterinary Teaching

Dr Susan Rhind

Admission Enquiries

Undergraduate

0131-650 6130

Postgraduate

0131-242 6478

School Office

Fax: 0131-650 6585

Email: Dick.Vet@ed.ac.uk

Hospital for Small Animals

Easter Bush

0131-650 7650

Large Animal Hospital

Easter Bush

0131-650 6253

The **Dick Vet News** is distributed free to over 4,500 Alumni and Friends of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies world-wide. The next issue will be published in **Spring 2004**.

Dick Vet News

Editor: Dr Alastair A Macdonald
Email: AAMacdonald@ed.ac.uk

Design

Susan Halcro,
Communication and Public Affairs,
The University of Edinburgh

BVA/AVS Survey 2002

The results of the third survey of student views to be conducted by the Association of Veterinary Students since 1996 were published in February this year. Among the points of specific interest was the finding that almost one third of all veterinary students are experiencing severe financial problems, and over 70% indicated that their debts would have some effect on their choice of job. We were pleased to see that Edinburgh students rated the relevance of the course highest, with over 88% classifying it as 'good' or 'very good'. Edinburgh students gave

the highest score (80.7%) for their interest in the course. Our students also rated most highly (79.6%) their satisfaction with the coverage of the subjects in the course. The quality of practical teaching at Edinburgh scored most highly, with 70.7% of students rating it in the 'good' or 'very good' range, and the balance of lectures and practicals was also rated highest at Edinburgh, at 77.9%. These results are very encouraging, and serve as further stimuli to maintain and further enhance our levels of excellence in teaching at the Dick Vet.

Students from overseas

The Dick Vet continues its long and proud tradition of providing a veterinary education to students from overseas. Many of our graduates have gone on to practice overseas. Our records show that the first undergraduates from North America came in 1835, those from Ireland first enrolled in 1840, those from Russia began to come in 1844, and students from Norway started to come here in 1845. This year we have undergraduate students from 15 countries, and postgraduate students from 23 countries, contributing to a total of 106 students from overseas. Here are a few of them.



This issue of the Dick Vet News was sponsored by

The Mary Milburn Bequest

Contact Mrs Beverley Montgomery at the School Office for information about gifts and bequests on 0131 650 6150 or email Beverley.Montgomery@ed.ac.uk.