

# Dick Vet News



Newsletter for the Alumni & Friends of

The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, The University of Edinburgh

Issue No.16 Summer 2005



3 Vince Molony

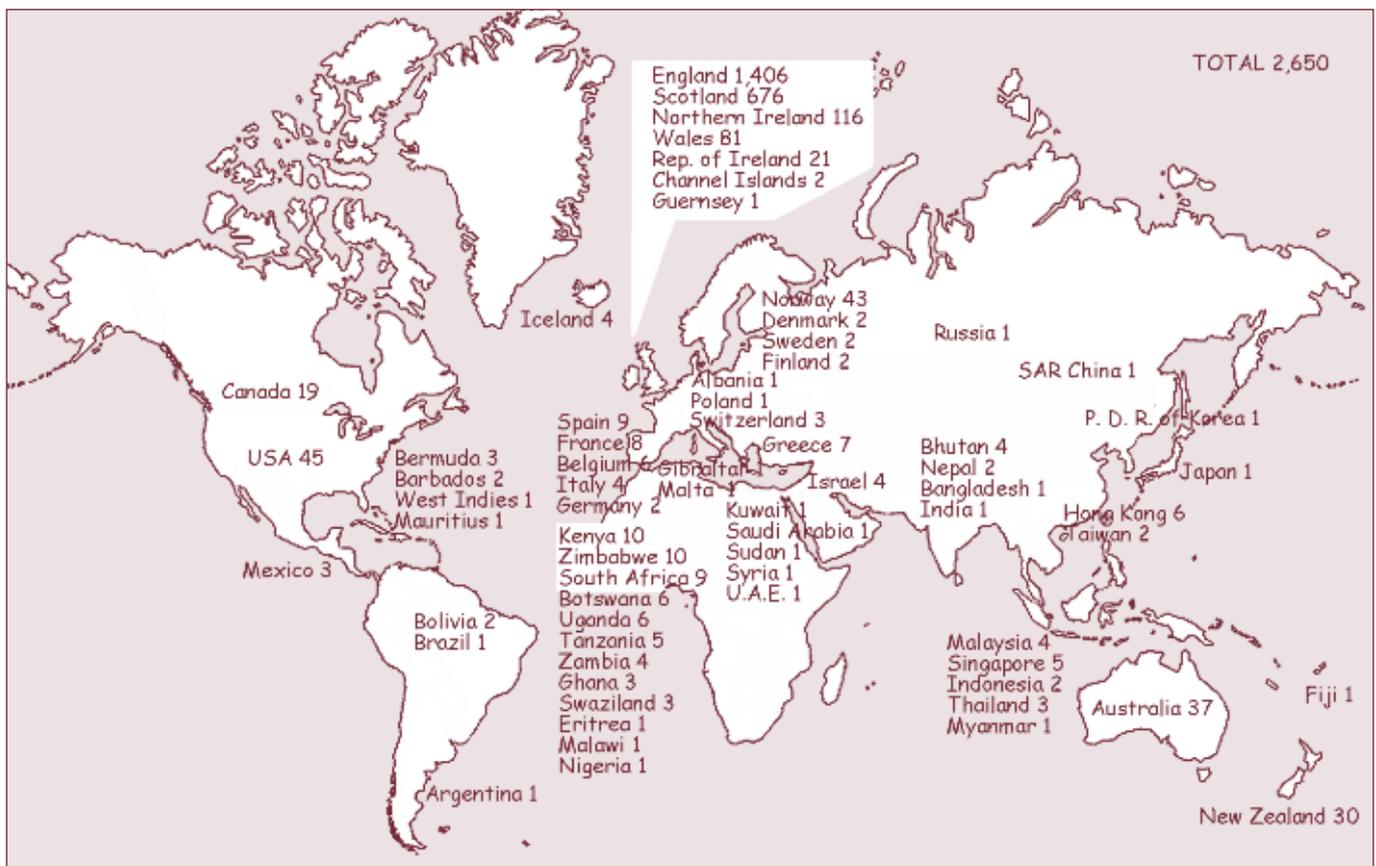


4 David Argyle



6 Multi-talented staff

## Foundations for a strong future



The current distribution of graduates of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

The top story in this issue is the announcement that the University Court enthusiastically approved our vision to build the Dick Vet adjacent to the modern clinical facilities at Easter Bush. This will be the third time that purpose-designed facilities have been constructed for the students and staff of the Dick Vet. The Summerhall College was constructed about 90 years ago (1916), and about 90 years before that (1833)

William Dick's Clyde Street Veterinary School was built. The alumni of the Dick Vet have always been central to these developments. They have played a significant role in each improvement. We are proud of the contributions that they have made in the past, and are continuing to make. The new facilities will enable us to further strengthen the world-wide success of Edinburgh-based veterinary research and education.

## HEAD OF SCHOOL NEWS



*The Royal (Dick) School is top of the national league tables for veterinary schools. I am confident that the growth of the School will attract even more top-quality staff.*

This is a time of significant change and opportunity for the School, virtually unparalleled in the history of the Dick Vet. In 2002, in line with University estate strategy at that time, it had been decided to move the preclinical division of the School into a central site, remote from the clinics at Easter Bush. After assuming my role as Dean (now called Head of School within the University), and following consultation with senior staff and other interested parties, a consultant-led options appraisal was performed. The choices were to move the preclinical element to the central site, to join the Medical School at Little France, or to consolidate the Veterinary School at Easter Bush. The compelling case was for consolidation adjacent to the veterinary clinics at Easter Bush. This would allow expansion of our teaching, clinical and research activities and provide the best possible educational experience for our undergraduates. It would give unprecedented opportunities; not only to move into a modern, purpose-built facility, but also to develop a cutting-edge vertically-integrated veterinary curriculum, to undertake close collaborative research with neighbouring veterinary research institutes, to grow and strengthen our own research base, and also to expand the breadth and depth of our clinical services.

After performing rigorous studies on the feasibility of the move, the University Court enthusiastically approved this vision for the future of the School in May 2005. Although we are looking forward to the move, many will feel some regret at leaving Summerhall. We intend to place high priority on utilising our historic artifacts from Summerhall, such as the stained glass windows, to enhance the design of the new School and to remind us of the proud heritage of the Dick Vet.

The new School building, adjacent to our modern clinical facilities, will include a post mortem suite and anatomy dissection area

linked to the library by a study landscape, integrating clinical, paraclinical, and preclinical aspects of teaching. The new facility will provide students with a learning environment specifically designed to supply the appropriate mix of social and study space. It will facilitate self-directed study using the most modern methods of teaching devised by the dedicated team supporting our Veterinary Teaching Organisation. The outcomes-based curriculum in the new facility will serve as a model for veterinary education for the 21st century. The £37M project has timelines based on entering the new facility in the autumn of 2008, with building starting next year.

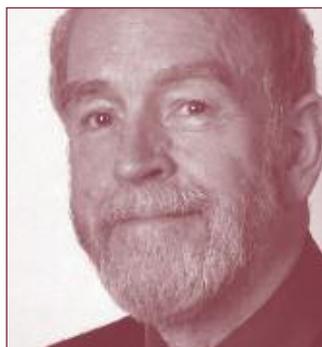
The Royal (Dick) School is top of the national league tables for veterinary schools. I am confident that the growth of the School will attract even more top-quality staff. Some recent examples are indicated elsewhere in this newsletter: for example, our new William Dick Chair in Veterinary Clinical Studies, Professor David Argyle, is an internationally-acclaimed cancer expert, and is due to take up post in August 2005; Dr Sionagh Smith, is a senior pathologist, who is returning to us from the University of Tennessee in October 2005; and Mr Ronnie Soutar, also a Dick Vet graduate, joined the School as Director of Veterinary Services in July 2005. He will work closely with all of our clinicians and referring practices to ensure that we complement excellence in teaching with first rate clinical services to practitioners and clients.

I look forward to your continuing support over the next three years as our ambitious plans for the future take shape. In the words of our Principal, Professor Tim O'Shea, in the University's Strategic Plan we will build on our 'great history through bold actions driven by a sharper vision of the future'.

**Professor Elaine Watson**  
Head of School

## Movers and Shakers: the movers

A number of the senior and long-serving staff are leaving us shortly or have recently left.



Vince Molony

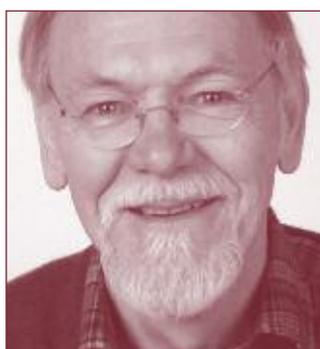


John McLelland

**Vince Molony** trained in Liverpool and came to us in 1976 from the Max Planck Institut fur Experimentelle Medizin in Gottingen, Germany where he was a visiting Research Fellow in the Department of Physiology. His research and teaching in Physiology took him from his lectureship through Senior lecturer and Reader to a personal Chair in Animal Welfare in 2000, and to Head of the Department of Preclinical Veterinary Sciences the following year. Many alumni will recall his patience in explaining how the bird breathes, his skill in preparing and explaining the topographical anatomy of the horse and ox, and his enthusiastic vocalisations in support of Dick Vet rugby teams.



Andrew Short



Colin Warwick

**John McLelland** qualified from the Glasgow Veterinary School in 1961 and came to the Dick Vet in 1972 after eight years as a Lecturer in Veterinary Anatomy at Liverpool University. He taught here for thirty-three years as Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Reader in the Departments of Veterinary Anatomy and Preclinical Veterinary Sciences. During this time he also published a number of books on structure and function in birds and chaired two Subcommittees of the International Committee on Avian Anatomical Nomenclature; in 1993 the *Nomina Anatomica Avium* was published. John has traveled widely and had spells of teaching in Turkey, Iraq, India, Tanzania, Zambia, the Netherlands and the USA. We all wish him well in retirement.



Claire Phillips



Janet Nicholson

**Andrew Short** trained in human medicine and came to us in 1972 from University of Keele where he was a Senior Research Fellow. He has been closely involved in a number of university committees and has been highly effective in library, computer and related teaching matters. Andrew has been instrumental in establishing the Dick Vet as a key player in the development of computer-aided learning through the CLIVE consortium of Veterinary Schools, and in establishing excellent computer facilities for our students at Summerhall and Easter Bush.



Peter Hill



Eileen Burdekin

**Colin Warwick** retired from the University of Edinburgh in May 2005 after 46 years of service; he was the longest serving employee in the University having worked in the Dick Vet continuously since the age of 16. He began his career in the physiology teaching labs before moving on to photography, graphics, audio/visual and latterly computer graphics. Alumni will recall his photos of class 'mug shots', Balls, sports teams, fund raisers etc. He is also well known for his musical abilities, entertaining staff and students at parties and other social events. As a keen bagpipe player Colin taught many Vet students the art of bagpipe playing and was a regular player in the Dick Vet Pipers. In his capacity as 'Dick Vet historian' Colin has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship from the University, and plans to continue his historical detective work on the Dick Vet, its buildings, staff and students. We are delighted that his services to Veterinary Medicine were recognised in June this year by the award of an MBE.

**Claire Philips** came to us from Barony College, Dumfries where she was a lecturer and tutor in Veterinary Nursing. In 1999 she was appointed Lecturer in Veterinary Microbiology, and in 2004 Lecturer in Food Hygiene and Veterinary Public Health. She is leaving us to return to clinical practice.

**Natalie Waran** completed her PhD at the vet school at Cambridge University, and joined Edinburgh University's Faculty of Science and Engineering in 1990 as course organiser for the Masters in Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare. In 2002 as Senior Lecturer in Animal Welfare she and the Masters course transferred to the Dick Vet. The following year she was made Course Director of our new MSc in Equine Science. At the end of 2004 she took on a set of new challenges by accepting the post of Professor of Animal Welfare in the School of Natural Sciences at Unitec in Auckland.

**Janet Nicholson** qualified from the Dick in 1969 and completed a PhD here in 1973. After spells as a Research Assistant and post doctoral Fellow, she joined the Department of Veterinary Surgery as a Lecturer in Obstetrics and Reproduction in 1976. She was Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs from 1995–98. Janet is a qualified pilot in both fixed wing aeroplanes and helicopters and regularly took staff on 'joy rides' over Edinburgh. Janet has retired to pursue these and other interests.

**Peter Hill** graduated from the University of Liverpool in 1986. After completing a PhD from Edinburgh in 1996, he went on to become a Lecturer in Veterinary Dermatology. In 2000, he was appointed the first Director of our new Hospital for Small Animals. He will be greatly remembered for his enthusiastic participation in one of our sponsored dog walks by dressing up as a dalmation. Peter left last year to take up the post of Senior Lecturer in Veterinary Dermatology at the University of Bristol.

**Eileen Burdekin**, one of our longest-serving librarians, joined the Veterinary Library in November 1971 as Marion MacIvor's secretary. She retired from her final post as Site and Services Supervisor for all three veterinary library sites in July. Eileen has seen the Veterinary Library be the first of the University Library sites to be fully automated, issuing all books and journal volumes online, and has taken to all the new developments with ease, helping ensure that students and staff became familiar with the new electronic resources available to them. Outside the library Eileen has worked with the School's Exmoor ponies – as an instructor, taking treks in Edinburgh and at Snoot, helping break in ponies for the trekking herd, and spending time with the young stock. We wish her a long and happy retirement.

## Movers and Shakers: the new shakers

We welcome the arrival of a significant number of new staff who have arrived in the last year or so to take on the teaching of our students and develop new lines of research and clinical expertise.

**David Argyle** is a Glasgow graduate with a Glasgow PhD. He stayed as lecturer, and then senior lecturer in Clinical Gene Therapy and Oncology before moving to the School of Veterinary Medicine in Wisconsin-Madison as Associate Professor in 2002 with full tenure. He will now return to Scotland as the William Dick Professor of Veterinary Clinical Studies to develop oncology as a clinical discipline within the Hospital for Small Animals, and we are planning to build a major new imaging/radiotherapy unit for our hospitals which will be sited adjacent to the Hospital for Small Animals. We feel that this is a key clinical area that will help us to improve services to our referring vets, as well as providing a valuable teaching facility.

in the '90s with Steve McOrist and then moved to become a resident at the University of Pennsylvania where she passed her American Pathology Boards. After a spell in a commercial lab, she became an assistant professor at the Tennessee vet school.

**Mary Diaz** obtained her veterinary degree from the Universidad Central de Venezuela in Caracas before moving to Liverpool to study for her PhD. Her research interests are in the area of cardiac physiology and she will be contributing to cardiovascular pharmacology teaching in first year and pharmacology teaching in third year.

**Giusy Pennetta** joined us in the Spring of 2004 from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute at Baylor College of Medicine in the United States. A graduate of the universities of Bari and Geneva, Giusy is also a member of the Centre for Neuroscience Research. She will be teaching in Veterinary Biomedical Sciences.



David Argyle

**Dr Sionagh Smith** has been appointed as a new senior lecturer in veterinary pathology, and is due to start in October. She completed her PhD here

*Continued on page 5.*

## RCVS visitation – ‘very positive’

The middle of March 2005 was the time when months of planning culminated in the School's seven yearly RCVS visitation. Work had started in the autumn of 2004 with the preparation of a 'self-evaluation' report in which the School was invited to review itself against UK and European criteria. Lead individuals were asked to compile the content of the areas for which they had responsibility, after which the document was finalised by the Head of School – all 120 pages plus 14 appendices!

A few weeks after the submission of the School's report the visit itself took place. The RCVS team, consisting of seven

specialists covering different interests, visited the School for a week. They met over 50 staff and 70 students both in formal sessions and over refreshments. In addition there were tours of Summerhall and the Easter Bush Veterinary Centre, together with a trip to the Langhill Farm. At the end of an exhausting week for all involved, the RCVS team met with the Head of School and the Principal of the University to deliver their findings – a very positive outcome for the School, with much praise for our staff, the facilities at Easter Bush and our course.

### ‘Movers and Shakers’ *continued*

**Ross Fitzgerald** is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and joined the School as a lecturer in Bacteriology in 2004 following research positions in Dublin and the United States. He is teaching in the Division of Veterinary Biomedical Sciences.

**Mark Bronsvort** joined us in 2003 as a lecturer in Epidemiology. He is a graduate of Bristol vet school after which he worked in a number of practices around the UK before studying for a PhD at the University of Liverpool. His research interests include the epidemiology of foot and mouth disease and infectious tropical diseases.

**Mark Eisler** is the current head of Animal Health and Welfare. Mark joined the School at the beginning of the 2003-04 academic session from the University of Glasgow. Mark gained his veterinary degree from Cambridge and obtained his PhD at Glasgow. His main research interests are diagnosis, epidemiology and control of tropical parasites in livestock of economic importance, which he studied as veterinary epidemiologist at the International Livestock Research Institute in Nairobi.

**Kerry Simpson** is a graduate of the Dick Vet and was appointed as the Feline Advisory Bureau Lecturer in Feline Medicine in 2004. After graduating in 1998 Kerry has worked in general practice and in recent years combined locum positions with studies for her PhD.

**Ronnie Soutar** has recently joined us as the new Director of Veterinary Services who will have overall responsibility for all commercial activities within the School. Ronnie is a graduate of the Dick Vet and has since gained significant commercial experience working in the aquaculture industry. In 1999, he took over a small animal practice in Inverness which has since expanded and is now the city's premier practice.

**James Tattersall** graduated from the Dick Vet, and after junior and senior clinical training scholarship positions within the School, was appointed to a Lectureship in Small Animal Surgery in 2004.

**Geoff Culshaw** joined the Hospital for Small Animals as a Lecturer in Cardiopulmonary Medicine in 2005 following a period in general practice after graduating from the Glasgow vet school.

**Jo-Anne Murray** joined the School early in 2004 with responsibility for co-ordinating the new MSc Equine Science course, which included a substantial lecturing element. Her research interests are in the area of equine nutrition, which was the subject of her PhD awarded by the University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

**Xavier Donadeu** joined us this Spring from the University of Wisconsin and will be teaching anatomy in Veterinary Biomedical Sciences. His research interests lie in the biology of reproduction.

**Catriona Bell** graduated with a BVetMed from the University of London in 1995 and went on to do a PhD at the University of Glasgow. She was a founding member of ViEW (Veterinary Education Worldwide), the first international association for veterinary education, promoting and supporting veterinary education at an international level. Catriona will join us in September to take up the position of Teaching Fellow in Veterinary Medical Education.

**Pauline Jamieson** graduated from the R(D)SVS in 1993 and undertook a five year Veterinary Research Fellowship in the Molecular Endocrinology Laboratories of the University of Edinburgh Medical Faculty, obtaining her PhD in 1996. She then worked in our Hospital for Small Animals before going in 2001 to the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California, to work on the biology of Corticotropin-Releasing Factor. She joined us in the Spring of this year.

**Simone Meddle** graduated in Zoology from the University of Bristol in 1991 and in 1995 with a PhD. She followed this with a post-doc at the University of Edinburgh investigating the neuroendocrine control of parturition before going to the University of Washington, Seattle to investigate the neuroendocrine control of reproductive behaviours, and adaptations to breeding in unpredictable environments in free-living wild birds. She has worked at the University of Edinburgh since 1999 as a research fellow and lecturer. She is now a lecturer in Veterinary Biomedical Sciences.

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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 2006**.

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All previous issues of Dick Vet News now on the web as PDF files at:

<http://www.vet.ed.ac.uk/DVnews/Pages/publications.htm>

## William Dick memorial lecture

This year, for the first time, the William Dick Lecture was held in conjunction with the Edinburgh International Science Festival. Professor John Speakman, the energy and obesity expert from Aberdeen University's Department of Zoology used the title 'Living fast – but dying when?' to speak about links between metabolism and lifespan. Many believe that bodies wear out with use, causing age and

ultimately death – the living fast/dying young concept. Others feel we have a fixed number of heart beats (a billion heartbeats per life), and that's it. However, recent scientific advances have indicated that the link between metabolism and lifespan is far more complex. One listener commenting on the lecture, 'The best of its kind that I can remember'.

## Dick Vet history

We are currently busy with veterinary history and are always very interested to obtain written and photographic information which relates to the Dick Vet. In April of this year Professor Elaine Watson was presented in Warsaw with a plaque on behalf of Polish Veterinary surgeons in appreciation of the Dick Vet for hosting the Polish Veterinary School during World War II. Some areas with which you may be able to help are: reminiscences of members of staff (academic, technical, administration, servitors, etc), buildings such as the 'Field Station' and CTVM in their early days, and aspects of Dick Vet social life e.g., 'digs', pubs, dances, 'shows' and sport. Please contact Colin Warwick at [Colin@warwick-1.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:Colin@warwick-1.fsnet.co.uk) and Alastair Macdonald at [Alastair.Macdonald@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Alastair.Macdonald@ed.ac.uk)

## Attention to artistic detail

Further indications of an ongoing University interest in the Veterinary School is the attention that is increasingly being paid to take care of and curate our collection of paintings, sculptures and former teaching artefacts. Further information explaining this can be found at: <http://tweed.lib.ed.ac.uk/audit/Web/UCA.html>

On this web site, June's 'Object of the Month' was a collection of anatomical teaching diagrams from the Dick Vet. Painted onto large cotton sheets, these coloured anatomical diagrams used to be hung at the front of the veterinary anatomy lecture theatres in Clyde Street, and illustrated the anatomy and physiology of animals dissected in the lecture theatre. <http://tweed.lib.ed.ac.uk/audit/Web/OTMJune.htm>

## Multi-talented staff

Gill McConnell, Educational Development Manager at the Dick Vet, has won this year's Callum McDonald Memorial Award for her poetry pamphlet, *Garden Party*. She has been attending the Office of Lifelong Learning course, Poetry in Practice, for the last three years, and has gone on to write the poems for her stylish booklet *Garden Party*. Gill has also done its design and illustrations, and has painted for many years and exhibited in VAS, RSA and RSW. A selection from Gill's pamphlet can be read at [www.clive.ed.ac.uk/news/gill](http://www.clive.ed.ac.uk/news/gill)

