



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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Dolly fans flock to pay tribute to star sheep 20 years on

People are being invited to share their memories of Dolly the Sheep as part of celebrations to mark the twentieth anniversary of her birth.

Dolly was the first animal to be cloned from an adult cell, capturing imaginations across the world.

Members of the public – including scientists involved in Dolly’s creation – are being asked to share their reflections on the world’s most famous sheep. The project aims to record people’s ongoing hopes for what the research might achieve as well as their personal memories of Dolly.

Dolly’s birth turned scientific thinking at the time on its head. She proved that cells from anywhere in the body could be made to behave like a newly fertilised egg – something that scientists previously thought was impossible.

The breakthrough paved the way for researchers to develop methods of producing stem cells from adult cells, offering hope of therapies for a wide-range of diseases.

Dolly was produced at The Roslin Institute in Midlothian – now part of the University of Edinburgh. The goal of the research was to develop methods of introducing genetic changes into animals.

Twenty years later, researchers at Roslin are building on Dolly’s legacy by using the latest gene-editing technologies to alter animals’ DNA. Their aim is to improve the health and welfare of farmed animals.

Anyone can submit their memory of Dolly by visiting <http://dolly.roslin.ed.ac.uk/dolly-memories/>.

Professor Sir Ian Wilmut, who led the team that created Dolly, said: “When Dolly was born we knew that we had achieved something extraordinary. But I don’t think any of us would have predicted the level of public interest in our research, or that people would still be enthralled by Dolly and her legacy twenty years later.”

Ranked among the top universities in the world

Dolly the Sheep will be returning to display from Friday 8 July at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. She will be one of 3000 objects being unveiled in ten new galleries devoted to science, technology, decorative art, design and fashion.

For further information, please contact:

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Additional memories:

Dr Bill Ritchie, an embryologist on the Dolly project, said: “When Dolly was born we were excited to see that she had a white face because that meant that the experiment had worked. She was cloned from a Finn Dorset which has a white face but both the egg and surrogate mother were Scottish Black-face ewes.”

Mrs Karen Walker, an embryologist on the Dolly project, said: “I was at a wedding in the Highlands when Dolly was born and received the news by fax. We were supposed to keep the news quiet until the study was published but I couldn’t help myself. We had an extra celebration that night.”

Tim King, one of the vets who cared for Dolly during her life, said: “Dolly was more like a dog than a sheep in many ways – she would come when you called her name. Mostly because she knew there might be a treat involved. We had to put her on a diet at one point as she had so many visitors, she was becoming quite fat.”

Upcoming events:

Dolly the Sheep: Major Discovery or Minor Distraction?

(Cabaret of Dangerous Ideas, Edinburgh Fringe Festival)

Thursday 25 August, 3pm | The Stand in the Square, St Andrew Square

Speakers: Professor Helen Sang (The Roslin Institute), Dr Tilo Kunath (MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine), Dr Miguel Garcia Sancho Sanchez (University of Edinburgh)

Coming of Age: The Legacy of Dolly at 20 (Public lecture and discussion)

Thursday 1 September, 7pm | Surgeons’ Hall, Edinburgh

Speakers: Professor Sir Ian Wilmut (University of Edinburgh); Professor Shinya Yamanaka (Kyoto University), Professor Angelika Schnieke (Technical University Munich)

Coming of Age: The Legacy of Dolly at 20 (Scientific Symposium)

Friday 2 September | The Roslin Institute, University of Edinburgh Easter Bush Campus

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