

# Landmark

The annual news review of the  
Royal Agricultural University  
Issue 13 2014



In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row

*In Flanders Fields, John McCrae 1915*

A poignant last photo  
of the class of 1914  
before World War One  
broke out

The College  
and the War  
A commemorative  
edition inside

# Inside...

## 03-04

Diary dates 2014



## 06

### 97.5% employment rate marks one year anniversary

The Royal Agricultural University celebrates a year as a university with an impeccably high employment rate.

## 07

Stunning campus shots captured in aerial video



## 09

Starring on the BBC



## 14

Celebrating Convocation in Cirencester



## 18

Come and see the 'Bare Hare'



## 21-22

Check out the latest School news



## 24

Success at the Oxford Farming Conference



## 27-28

### Rural Innovation Centre opens for business

The Royal Agricultural University launched its brand new Rural Innovation Centre (RIC) at Harnhill Manor Farm on Thursday 27 March.

## 31

Sports reports



## 35

Research and Consultancy



## YOUR DETAILS

If you have moved house or job please email:  
alumni@rau.ac.uk

Royal Agricultural University  
Stroud Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6JS  
Telephone: +44 (0)1285 652531 [www.rau.ac.uk](http://www.rau.ac.uk)

Follow us on...



The Royal Agricultural University



@RoyalAgUni



TheRoyalAgUni



The Royal Agricultural University

## The College and the War – commemorative edition

In commemoration of the 100 year anniversary of the start of World War One, extracts from the December 1914 and July 1915 Agricultural Students' Gazette have been included in this 2014 edition of *Landmark* magazine as a centre page pull-out.





## 37-38

Alumni events



## 39

Press(ing) matters



## 41

From the agricultural to the sports field



Royal  
Agricultural  
University  
Cirencester



## Welcome...

Welcome to the 13th issue of *Landmark*, the annual news review of the Royal Agricultural University. Dedicated to celebrating the outstanding achievements of our alumni, students and staff, *Landmark* delivers the latest news from the University, highlights the innovative research and consultancy being undertaken by RAU staff, and showcases the continued success of our graduates throughout the world. To mark the First World War centenary, the centre pages of this edition include extracts from the RAC Agricultural Students' Gazettes of 1914 and 1915, detailing life at the College during the early years of the War. Earlier this year, the University launched its new Rural

Innovation Centre, opened by former Chief Scientific Advisor and RAU Governor, Professor Sir John Beddington. The centre was visited last year by HRH the Prince of Wales, RAU President, who viewed some of the more practical courses on offer at the new £1.2m centre (pages 27-28). Thank you to all of those who contributed to this edition of *Landmark*. We value the input of our readers, so please continue to send your feedback, news and suggestions for stories.

## 43

The fresh face of agriculture

Milking cows, building a business, inspiring young farmers, and campaigning for industry change.



## 49

A cut above



## 55

Ciren weddings



## 57

InForm  
The Ciren Society PagesYOUR  
STORIES

We are always interested in hearing your news.

If you would like to suggest a feature or be included in *Landmark*, please email:

[Landmark@rau.ac.uk](mailto:Landmark@rau.ac.uk)

YOUR  
NETWORK

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

[alumni.rau.ac.uk](http://alumni.rau.ac.uk)

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.



Jessica Taylor,  
Editor



Shelly Hampshire,  
Staff Writer

# Diary dates 2014

**18 – 20 July**

## CLA Game Fair

Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire  
 Alumni brunch **Friday 18 July**  
 10.30am – 12.30pm kindly  
 sponsored by Pollock Associates.  
 All welcome but please RSVP  
 to [alumni@rau.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@rau.ac.uk)



**21 – 24 July**

## Royal Welsh Show

Builth Wells  
 Alumni reception **Monday 21 July**  
 4pm – 6pm in the CLA Pavilion  
 kindly sponsored by Cleo  
 Tompkinson Francis

**14 November**

## Cheltenham Countryside Day

Alumni drinks reception  
 after last race



**10 September**

## Private tour and reception at Belvoir Castle

Leicestershire  
 Kindly sponsored by Lycetts.  
 Contact [alumni@rau.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@rau.ac.uk)  
 for details



**Date to be confirmed**

## Annual Bledisloe Memorial Lecture

Royal Agricultural University  
 Contact [vpsecretary@rau.ac.uk](mailto:vpsecretary@rau.ac.uk)  
 for more details

**4 December**

## Seasonal drinks reception at Melbury, Dorset

Courtesy of Mr and Mrs James  
 Townshend  
 Kindly sponsored by Lycetts.  
 Contact [alumni@rau.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@rau.ac.uk)  
 for details

# 2015

---

**7 – 10 May**

## Badminton Horse Trials

Gloucestershire

---



**June**

## Farm Walk

Strath Isle Farms, Perthshire,  
courtesy of Adrian Ivory (1997)

---

**27 – 28 May**

## Suffolk Show

Trinity Park, Ipswich

---

**22 May**

## May Ball

Royal Agricultural University

---



**18 – 21 June**

## Royal Highland Show

Scotland

---



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](mailto:alumni@rau.ac.uk)**

01285 652531



# Greetings to all alumni

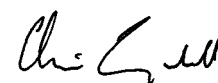


The themes that ran through the introduction to last year's *Landmark* still run strongly this year, but then they have for the best part of 170 years (that milestone comes up in 2015); students and graduates, serving our industries and the evolution of the institution. There are now nearly 1,200 students on campus, a figure achieved without any loss of ethos and collegiality; indeed if the graduate employment rates are any indicator of success – recent figures reveal that 97.5% of postgraduates and 96.3% of undergraduates enter employment or further study within six months, then we continue to do more than OK. BBC Radio Gloucestershire asked us how we explain this success in times of difficulty in the general labour market. The answer is of course a composite; good students, good teaching, a conducive environment are all important, but so too is the upturn in the value society places on food, its production, processing and retailing, and the importance of land and environmental management. Rewarding, vocational and useful careers are attractive to students, who also need to see a return on their commitment of money and time to an education. On this theme of value to society, I mentioned last year the Government's Agri-Tech Strategy for the UK, which was duly published last summer. There is some good stuff, and commitments, in the document,

but the most important thing about it is that it was written at all, and that three Government departments, BIS, DEFRA and DfID, claimed collective ownership. It is a while since agriculture received such public backing, that food was a government priority, and that the importance of science and its translation into best practice was placed in the centre of the stage. David Willetts, the Minister for Science and Higher Education in BIS, and a cosignatory to the report, emphasised the importance of mining the UK's basic science when he came to Cirencester in October to deliver the annual Bledisloe Lecture. Alongside a robust and candid appraisal of the mistakes in science funding over the past thirty years, he also spelt out clearly the opportunities, challenges, and responsibilities that institutions like the RAU now have, especially in the context of knowledge exchange between academia and industry. This was timely advice, not least because the new Rural Innovation Centre at Harnhill, trailed as an artists impression in last year's *Landmark*, is now a reality and was duly opened in March this year by Professor Sir John Beddington; Sir John was until recently government Chief Scientific Advisor and is now a member of the RAU's Governing Council. Old farm buildings that were used for lambing a year ago are, £1.2m and a lot of hard work later, now home to on-farm teaching and research, rural skills training, and the new Centre for Translational Research. It provides facilities for meetings and demonstrations, and links well with the working and research components of the lovely mixed farm that is Harnhill. Do take the opportunity to call in and see what has been achieved – and use it too; HRH the Prince of Wales did just that, as the paint was barely dry at the end of last year, to see young people supported in skills training by his Prince's Countryside Fund. Another component of the outdoor laboratories that are integral to the RAU is Fossehill, over towards Coates. Now home to the commercial polo yard, it

also provides livery for student horses and facilities for equine nutritional and behavioural research. It is 20 years since the then RAC first offered an equine course, and the graduates from these programmes are now established in positions of responsibility across the equine industries. This maturity of provision has prompted us to form a new, separate School of Equine Management and Science and appoint our first Dean, Dr Meriel Moore-Colyer. This is a great development in an area that is attracting excellent students and serving a growing industry, not only in the UK but abroad.

And the RAU has always been 'abroad'; this was emphasised in November when I was guest of both the Kenyan and Zimbabwean alumni associations on successive weekends. Beautiful countries, and it was very good to see everyone, some of whom who have of course had a difficult few years. Sub-Saharan Africa has sent many students to Cirencester over the years and they on return have contributed very significantly to agriculture in those countries. That tradition persists; for the past few years students from the region have been second only in numbers to Chinese students. If the world is to feed itself towards 2050 and population of 9 billion plus, a disproportionate number of whom will be in Africa, agriculture in the region will have to provide. All part of a rich heritage that doesn't change; some thought the move to university, from RAC to RAU, would bring unwelcome change. One year on the only change is more opportunities, and more responsibilities. The new 'Corporate Plan' for 2014-2019 picks these up; like all plans it will evolve and comments are welcome, take a look at [www.rau.ac.uk/corporate-plan](http://www.rau.ac.uk/corporate-plan). No one has a monopoly of good ideas; fortunately those who went before us had some pretty good ones for us to build on.



Professor Chris Gaskell – Principal, CBE

# 97.5% employment rate marks one year anniversary

# 97.5%

The Royal Agricultural University celebrated a year as a university with high employability figures across the board. Ranked top within the land-based sector, the RAU is also in the top 10% of UK universities and colleges for graduate employability. Recent surveys of 2013 graduates have shown that 96.3% of undergraduates and 97.5% of postgraduates are in employment or further study within six months of leaving the RAU. The official statistics for undergraduate students are produced for the annual national survey, organised by HESA (the Higher Education Statistics Agency). The survey focuses on UK graduates who studied full-time. The statistics reveal that 96.3% of RAU students who graduated in 2013 are now either in work or full-time study. In fact, only 3.16% were still seeking work. Information from the 2013 undergraduates also revealed that the majority (75%) had also secured more senior positions – classed as ‘professional or managerial roles’. RAU graduate Katherine Meacham said:

“The degree really set UK agriculture in a global context for me, and as a result I have been propelled into an amazing opportunity. I had four job offers before graduating, all in very different agricultural fields, and my degree from the RAU was fundamental in creating these opportunities.” Graduates of postgraduate degree courses at the University also continue to be highly employable and the most recent statistics reveal 97.5% are in employment or further study six months after graduating. In fact, just 1.4% of graduates were still seeking work. The University was granted full university status on 18 April 2013, and has since strengthened its reputation as a world-renowned provider of specialist education and research. It continues to be at the forefront of education relating to agriculture, food, agri-business, equine, and property and land management. “We are very encouraged indeed by this latest survey,” reports Professor Paul Davies. “The Royal Agricultural University (and

RAC previously) is known, nationally and internationally, for good student employability following degree studies at Cirencester – and this reputation justly continues. The applied nature of our courses; their relevance to the world of work, and the University’s continuing close links and connectivity to employers, through the efforts of our careers service and academic staff, remain the key. “Student employment six months after graduating has been high for very many years at the RAU – but the figures this year are particularly pleasing. Employers clearly find RAU graduates attractive, and long may this jobs record for Cirencester continue.”



## RAU welcomes record number of students



The RAU achieved record-high student numbers as applications continue to increase year-on-year. Since 2008, the total number of students enrolled at the University has risen by a staggering 49%. These figures correlate with a recent UCAS report, released towards the end of 2013, which stated that a record number

of applicants had been accepted into UK higher education.

“Applications across all courses have been increasing year after year for some time now at the Royal Agricultural University, which is very pleasing, and gives us confidence that our continually revised degrees are attractive and relevant,” commented Vice-Principal, Professor Paul Davies. “Our high graduate employability record also helps, of course!”

“...gives us confidence that our continually revised degrees are attractive and relevant...”

*Vice-Principal, Professor Paul Davies*

## Stunning campus shots captured in aerial video

It was a warm sunny day, the first of spring, when a small plane flew over the RAU to create a beautiful video of the main building and grounds. BBC Radio Gloucestershire's Mark Cummings can be seen making his way along the tree-lined drive in his campervan, before aerial filming and photography specialist, Benjamin Kenobi, flies the small remote controlled piloted system over the main building. The RAU was filmed as part of a series of recordings of notable places in the county.

Watch the video 'The RAU from above' now on our YouTube channel – The Royal Ag Uni.



## Meet the 'new look' Alumni Relations and Development Team

*Left: Victoria Thirlwell,  
Development and  
Alumni Relations Officer  
Right: Scarlett Crew,  
Office Administrator*



This year, the RAU took a step forward with its Alumni Relations and Development activities by bringing the two functions together into a single office, with investment in a 'new look' team and an enhanced programme of alumni events and fundraising projects. The Alumni Relations and Development Office has two key roles: cultivating long term relationships with our alumni, supporters and friends, and securing additional resources to support the RAU's strategic development objectives. The RAU has a justifiably ambitious vision for its future as a leader in land-based learning and research. We're looking to improve and enhance our current teaching, social and sporting facilities; to build up our funds for student support, especially for postgraduates; to grow our resources for new research and teaching posts and ultimately to undertake some major building projects on site. Heading up the new team is Kate Love. As Director of Development, she

has overall responsibility for the office and the RAU's growing programme of engagement with its alumni, friends and well-wishers. Originally a corporate PR consultant for an international firm, Kate has ten years' experience in Higher Education: first at the University of Aberdeen helping to launch the second phase of its Sixth Century Campaign; then establishing a Development Office for Brasenose College, Oxford and most recently at Murray Edwards College, Cambridge (previously New Hall) where she built up the Development function following a £30m endowment gift. After eighteen months as Alumni Assistant, Victoria Thirlwell (2002) has a new role as Development and Alumni Relations Officer. An RAU alumna, and a well-known face to many, Vics now has responsibilities for specific areas of activity such as events strategy, regular giving, and a legacy programme. Scarlett Crew has joined the team as Office Administrator. A local resident,

Scarlett has excellent previous experience having worked in event management for the Countryside Alliance and organising the Marlborough Cup and Country Fair. She is responsible for the day to day running of the office and is the initial point of contact for alumni. Kate, Vics and Scarlett are very lucky to have Ron Coaten and John Alliston to call upon; both still supporting the Development Office on a regular basis.



# A big thank you!

To all those generous alumni who supported the Cirencester Fund this year. You've helped us:

- Unlock matched funds, doubling the amount you gave, to enable our young entrepreneurs to get real-world business experience and grow their social enterprise Muddy Wellies
- Give the library foyer a new lease of life as a light, bright, interactive social learning space equipped for new ways of learning
- Launch a student-focused initiative, so they can play a part in how some of the Cirencester Fund is used.

The Cirencester Fund encourages and enables as many former students as possible to support current and future ones. The sums really do add up; giving us real 'strength in numbers'. With 14,000 alumni, even a small regular amount or a one-off gift can, collectively, make an immediate, substantial, and enduring impact:

- If everyone gave just £5 per month, with Gift Aid, the RAU would have an extra £900,000 next year to support our students

- If everyone gave £100 a year for three years, with Gift Aid, we would raise £4,500,000, which would deliver an unprecedented step-change in what we could provide for students. We have lots of projects and plans we'd like to make happen, so do join in by giving what you can. You can make a donation at [alumni.rau.ac.uk](http://alumni.rau.ac.uk) and help us make the RAU even more special!

## The Director of Development writes...

*Kate Love, Director of Development*



By the time this year's *Landmark* reaches our alumni and well-wishers across the globe, I will have been in post for almost a full year. It's been an action-packed start. I arrived from Cambridge charged with reviewing the RAU's alumni programme and looking, with others across the University, at how we might continue to provide best value to all of you who studied here, with more opportunities to develop stronger links in all kinds of ways. The Cirencester network is, of course, legendary. The role of the 'new look' Alumni Relations and Development Office is to keep our worldwide community active and engaged by offering a range of opportunities, not only to meet us and each other socially, but also take advantage of professional connections, shared knowledge, and to gain insight into your University's current trajectory. We want to build even sturdier foundations of advocacy and support in order to ensure that the next generation of leaders in the land-based sector can benefit from exceptional teaching within a vibrant and well-resourced academic environment. Over my first months here, I've had the chance to meet many alumni, and I look forward to getting to know many more over the course of the summer.

I've been struck by the warmth of my welcome and by the very special place that Cirencester has in the hearts of so many. In describing the institution, their time here, and the impact it has had on their lives and careers, the same adjectives are repeated time and time again: among them, individual, influential, inspiring. It is that deep-seated sense of pride and loyalty that underpinned the success of our first ever telephone fundraising campaign. Last autumn, a small team of students hit the phones and contacted several hundred alumni asking them to support our Cirencester Fund. Each year, the fund will provide additional income that will be of direct and immediate benefit to the current student body. It will enable us to do some of those extra things that would otherwise be beyond our reach; the projects that will enhance what the RAU can offer and ensure that the 'Cirencester experience' remains truly unique. This year we raised almost £50,000 in gifts and pledges, with over a third of those asked choosing to give. This is incredibly heartening for staff and students alike, as we try to make the very best of an exacting regime of reduced University funding and higher student fees. We'll be doing more of this. It's already

making a difference. So far, our alumni have helped us create a new group learning space in the library foyer, where students can meet and collaborate in an area with informal seating, enhanced Wi-Fi, and big screens for laptop projection: embracing the new ways of working made possible by digital technology. You've also provided funding that we've been able to match elsewhere, unlocking resources for growing our flagship social enterprise Muddy Wellies (I hope some of you have sampled their range of tempting ales and cider!); run by students, for students – providing real-world business experience with profits coming back to the institution. On behalf of everyone who studies and works at the RAU, I'd like to heartily thank those of you who have already made a contribution to the current and future success of your RAU by supporting the Cirencester Fund. There are exciting times ahead for the Alumni Relations and Development Office, with many more important projects and activities for us to promote and help fund. Watch this space as momentum takes hold. I, for one, believe this place has an incredibly important role to play and that it deserves philanthropic investment. I'm sure I'm not alone.

**“This year we raised almost £50,000 in gifts and pledges, with over a third of those asked choosing to give.”**

*Kate Love, Director of Development*

## Starring on the BBC



The Royal Agricultural University has been providing quality entertainment on the BBC recently, starring in three episodes of *Antiques Roadshow*, the *Countryfile* Christmas Special, and *Harvest*. BBC One's ever-popular *Antiques Roadshow* was filmed in the University's beautiful grounds last June, and has since been featured in two programmes broadcast in September 2013 and April 2014. The RAU also featured in the end of year highlights show *Retrospective*, which remembered the remarkable moment it stumbled upon a rare Van Dyck painting, worth around £400,000, bought by a vicar at the local antiques shop for just £400. The *Countryfile* Christmas Special saw agriculture students and choir members Lydia Jeffs-Joory and Phillip Steadman



don their wellies and get muddy with Adam Henson on the University farms, before singing with the rest of the choir at the big festive finale at Westonbirt Arboretum. BBC Two show *Harvest*, a three-part series which shone the spotlight on British farmers in September 2013, featured Tom Bradshaw who completed the Worshipful Company of Farmers Advanced Agricultural Business Management course at the RAU. Tom's travelled the world to see what lessons he can bring home to enhance the value of his own soils on his arable farm in Essex.

## Cirencester Scholarship celebrates local students

Launched last year to celebrate university status, the new Cirencester Scholarship has already helped three local students with the cost of higher education at the RAU.

There are three more scholarships available for 2014, two undergraduate and one postgraduate, for students who live and/or have studied within a 10 mile radius of the RAU and can demonstrate academic excellence.

One of the first recipients of the scholarship is agriculture student Hannah Miles, who realised her love for livestock whilst working on a small sheep farm during lambing season. "Being awarded the scholarship made my dream of studying agriculture a reality. It enabled me to push myself, typically because I don't come from a traditional farming background, to find ways of working towards my goal. The scholarship has instilled in me a sense of worthiness and I wake up every morning thinking – I can do this!"

For more information, visit [www.rau.ac.uk/scholarships](http://www.rau.ac.uk/scholarships)



Victoria Cowan and Hannah Miles

“

“Being awarded the scholarship made my dream of studying agriculture a reality.”

Hannah Miles

## Out in the Stix

Following their graduation in 2013, former students Ruari Clark, BSc (Hons) Countryside Management, and Joe Bibbey, BSc (Hons) Business Management, spotted a niche in the market for advertising rural holiday rentals online. They launched their business, Out in the Stix, earlier this year and are currently looking for landlords with holiday properties in rural areas to sign up with their online advertisement service. The website gives landlords complete control of bookings and allows them to deal directly with the customer. It's free to list a property, and after three booking enquiries have been received they have the option to buy full membership (£55 for the first year) or have the property removed. To find out more or to list your property, visit [www.outinthestix.co.uk](http://www.outinthestix.co.uk)





## Thousands raised for bike charity

Dedicated second year students Angus Gubbins, Edward Howard and Hugo Owen spent last summer pedalling hard to raise £3,000 for bicycle charity, Re-Cycle. The trio took to the saddle for a gruelling six day challenge, pedalling over 500km from Madrid to Bilbao in Spain. While Hugo took the solo approach, Angus and Edward decided to join forces and take on the tandem.

*Angus Gubbins, Hugo Owen and Edward Howard*



## Channelling energy into Climate Week 2014

Staff and students pulled out all the stops for Climate Week 2014, taking part in activities and pledging energy saving changes for the week and beyond. Students took part in bike polo, planting and gardening projects, and the Climate Week Challenge, whilst staff donated books and pledged small changes that add up to a big difference.



In just five days, staff saved approx. 125 disposable cups from recycling/landfill by bringing in their own from home (that's 6,500 a year), and 45kWh energy and 20kg of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases by turning off monitors, lights, and printers during lunch and overnight. This equates to:

- **71 washing cycles/seven months of washing machine usage for the average person OR**
- **18 cycles of tumble drying OR**
- **409 cups of tea OR**
- **Powering a standard fridge freezer for six weeks**

Staff and students also enjoyed a stimulating seminar about food waste, organised by MSc International Rural Development students, followed by a delicious chilli cooked by award-winning 'Cotswold chef' Rob Rees using food that would otherwise have gone to waste. The RAU canteen served up bubble and squeak during the week to minimise food waste.





# Bledisloe focus on science, technology and agriculture by Minister

*MP David Willetts and Principal Professor Chris Gaskell*



The University welcomed the Rt. Hon David Willetts MP, Minister of State for Universities and Science, and Member of Parliament for Havant in Hampshire, for the annual Bledisloe Memorial Lecture on 31 October 2013. Students, academics, and invited guests packed to the rafters of the Boutflour Hall, keen to hear more about science, technology and agriculture. MP David Willetts began by congratulating the RAU on its university status and declaring his continued support, before

going on to discuss the importance of science and technology in agriculture, in a world facing an increased demand for food and a rapidly growing population. He spoke of the need for sustainability within the Agri-Tech Strategy, and touched upon the controversial topic of genetic modification in crop production. Professor Chris Gaskell CBE, Principal of the RAU, said: "The timing of this Bledisloe Lecture presentation is just right for considering the new Agri-Tech

Strategy of the UK Government for the future of our food and farming industry. The need is greater than ever, and there is a distinct feeling that Europe could fall behind, otherwise, in the competitiveness of our industry and our sustainability unless we adopt more innovation and high-tech solutions. Not to mention, of course, our ability to manage climate change and better protect our precious countryside."



**"The timing of this Bledisloe Lecture presentation is just right for considering the new Agri-Tech Strategy of the UK Government for the future of our food and farming industry."**

*Professor Chris Gaskell CBE, RAU Principal*

# Vic Hughes celebrates 88th birthday

*Ron Coaten, Mr and Mrs John Fielding, Professor Rosalind Gaskell, Mrs Eric Kershaw, Mr Vic Hughes, Mr Eric Kershaw, and the Principal, Prof Chris Gaskell*

Previous Principal Vic Hughes celebrated his 88th birthday on Sunday 2 February. He marked the occasion with a special lunch at The Crown in Ampney Crucis with his colleagues and friends Ron Coaten, Mr and Mrs John Fielding, and Mr and



Mrs Eric Kershaw. The current Principal, Professor Chris Gaskell, and his wife Rosalind also joined the celebrations. Vic Hughes was at the University from 1950 to 1990, initially as a lecturer in Animal Husbandry. He spent many years

as Farms Director before becoming the Principal in October 1978. Vic spent the last 12 years leading the then College, and a splendid portrait hangs in the Bathurst Lounge to mark his time at the RAU.

## Agriculture ahead of the field for job satisfaction

Agricultural managers and farmers are among the happiest in their jobs, according to a recent report by the Cabinet Office.

Agricultural managers ranked third from top in terms of happiness and job satisfaction, closely followed by farmers who were found to have the eighth highest life satisfaction in a pole of more than 270 professions.

In fact, the outdoor life does seem to be associated with greater personal wellbeing, as farm workers ranked in the top 25 too.

The Government created the report to give people access to information about the salary and satisfaction related to a career, as part of a drive to understand and boost wellbeing.



## Sell out localism conference

**SOLD OUT**

The School of Real Estate and Land Management (RELM) hosted a hugely successful Localism and Neighbourhood Planning conference, attended by over 120 delegates and industry professionals. The conference was opened by RAU lecturers, Dr Rhiannon Naylor (née Fisher) and Katharine Foot, and the President of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), Michael Newey. It explored the Localism Act 2011 and focused on the introduction of neighbourhood planning and community rights. Key industry speakers discussed the changes stemming from the ground-

breaking Act, drawing on early examples from local communities and practitioners to give an insight into how it's working on the ground in rural areas.



## Towards the 20,000 litre cow

Professor Toby Mottram gave his Inaugural Lecture at the Royal Academy of Engineering in London and Royal Agricultural University in Cirencester in October 2013.

It went down a storm with academics, journalists, and industry professionals interested in hearing more about the 20,000 litre cow of the future.

The stimulating lecture, introduced by MP George Freeman, discussed

'Beyond Boutflour: Towards the 20,000 litre average cow'. Professor Mottram presented a programme of research as to how to routinely produce 20,000 litres of milk from healthy long-lived cows, citing management, housing, and silage as key factors in achieving higher yields. This was followed by a series of thought-provoking questions from the audience.



## New Chairman of Governors appointed



Jeremy Lewis, a former Chartered Accountant specialising in rural client work, has been appointed as the RAU's new Chairman of Governors.

Jeremy's wealth of experience and keen interest in farming and the countryside will help the University to build on its already enviable reputation for higher education in the agricultural, food, real estate, land management, equine and business management disciplines.

Commenting on the appointment, he said: "I look forward to playing my part in helping the University to develop the necessary leaders of tomorrow in the context of the challenges of

**"I look forward to playing my part in helping the University to develop the necessary leaders of tomorrow in the context of the challenges of world food supply and domestic and international sustainability."**

*Jeremy Lewis, RAU Chairman of Governors*

world food supply and domestic and international sustainability." Jeremy has been a Governor at the University since 2008, having most recently chaired the Planning and Resources Committee. This follows the retirement of the previous Chairman, Brian Hilton.

*Jeremy Lewis, Chairman of Governors*



## Catering team named food business of the year



*The RAU catering team*

RAU catering staff tasted sweet success at the Taste of Gloucestershire Food and Farming Awards 2013 as they were announced Food or Drink Business of The Year. The team is led by Head Chef Mike Simmonds, who works with local suppliers to make sure staff and students enjoy the best quality food whilst supporting local farmers and producers.

## Eat Wild wins Countryside Alliance award

Eat Wild food business, which was set up in 2010 by William Thompson and his brother Calum, currently a third year student at the Royal Agricultural University, has been announced Local Food Champion for the Midland Region in the 2013 Countryside Alliance Awards – or the

Rural Oscars as they are also known! The brothers, who want to educate people on where their meat comes from and to build awareness of sustainably sourced meat and game products, attended the awards ceremony at the House of Lords in April. Calum and William pride themselves on harvesting, cooking, and retailing wild meat and game products fresh from the English countryside. They have also recently opened a restaurant in Cirencester town centre, offering a gourmet-style burger, focusing on wild meat and game with the addition of locally sourced heritage meats.



*William Thompson and Calum Thompson*

To find out more about Eat Wild, visit [www.eat-wild.co.uk](http://www.eat-wild.co.uk)



# Celebrating Convocation in Cirencester

More than 400 students graduated from the University at Convocation on 12 October 2013 in a joyful ceremony at Cirencester Church, followed by a drinks reception at the University campus. As the first Convocation since the RAU was awarded full university status, and Cirencester became a 'university town', it was fitting that the event was held in the town itself. Principal Guest, the Rt Hon the Earl of Selborne, addressed students as they prepare to go forth into the world, equipped with the knowledge, skills and experience

they have gained at the RAU. He touched upon the value of higher education, and the opportunities it opens up. In his speech, Principal Professor Chris Gaskell CBE congratulated the students on their fantastic results and thanked their parents, friends and family for their continued support. He spoke about the University's record-high student numbers, and how this reflects society's growing appreciation of agriculture, land management, and rural development. Graduates were joined by their friends

and family, and special guests from the town including the Mayor of Cirencester, the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire, and the Chairman and Leader of Cotswold District Council. Fellowships of the Royal Agricultural University were awarded to the Rt Hon the Lord Cameron of Dillington, Simon F Pott, David Campbell, and Joe Henson. Convocation finished on a high with the Graduation and Freshers Ball. We welcome the Class of 2013 students to the 14,000 strong RAU alumni network!



From left: Principal Professor Chris Gaskell, the Rt Hon the Earl of Selborne, Brian Hilton (former Chairman of Governors), and Simon Pott



Joe Henson is presented his Fellowship by Brian Hilton, former Chairman of Governors



## Annual equine conference

Dr Andrew Hemmings, senior lecturer in Equine Science at the RAU, spoke at the prestigious Horses Inside Out Annual Conference 2014 in February. The Back and Beyond conference was organised and delivered by Horses Inside Out founder and former RAU student, Gillian Higgins

(2005). It included a series of special guest speakers, such as world renowned dressage trainer, Dr Wilfred Bechtolsheimer, and internal medicine specialist, Dr Richard Hepburn, and provided a deeper understanding into the complexity of back-related issues.



# From the archives



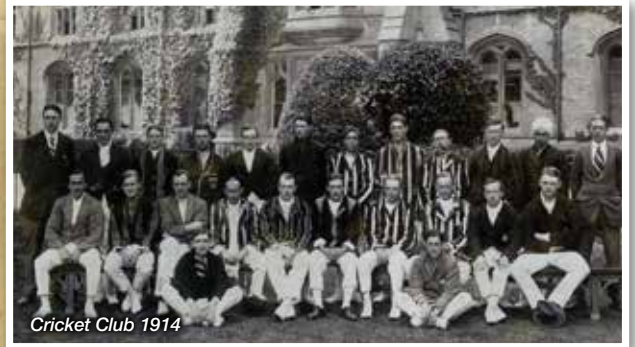
Governors and Principal of the RAC outside Bledisloe Lodge 1954



Preparing for practical surveying 1967



Tennis Club 1911



Cricket Club 1914



Students off beagling 1935



Students haymaking 1935



Milton Mount College girls school, from Gravesend in Kent, was billeted at the RAC in September 1915. They moved here during the First World War as the RAC closed from 1915-1922.



P Brown with students c.1930



Class in land surveying 1930s



# What a Grand Idea!

The Royal Agricultural University held its seventh annual Grand Idea business competition awards evening on Tuesday 6 May 2014. Eight talented individuals and groups pitched their ideas to a Dragons Den style panel made up of national business leaders and chaired by Philip Tellwright, Managing Director of South West Angels and Investors Network. Philip Tellwright announced the winner as Elie Sear, with her business 'Cuprum'. Elie developed an innovative new equine product which aims to reduce box rest for minor issues and eliminate vets bills through its antimicrobial properties. During the competition, Elie received three months of business mentoring from businessman Nigel Chute of Chute Design, who has mentored the past three winners. She was presented with a cheque for £1,000 towards her business idea, and will also receive a number of invaluable prizes from the sponsors, Burges Salmon, HSBC, MarkeTest, Reed Learning, and Pillow May in the form of free

business support, help and advice. Elie Sear said: "I'm just really humbled to have won, and want to extend my thanks to my mentor, Nigel Chute of Chute Design, as well as to the judges and organisers. The Grand Idea is a fantastic opportunity, and it really is a case of nothing to lose, everything to gain. I'm excited to see where I can take my business in the future." Runners up were Liam Derry, for his plan to establish a UK jerky company Regal Jerky with locally sourced suppliers, and Clare Freeman, for her My Plus One website giving travellers the opportunity to meet like-minded locals and find the most stylish, affordable accommodation. RAU Principal, Professor Chris Gaskell CBE, said: "The Grand Idea business competition is a great way to celebrate the outstanding achievements of some of our most enterprising students. There were some fantastic business ideas being pitched to the panel – which in itself is no small feat! On behalf of myself and the University I'd like to say a huge congratulations to Elie Sear, winner of the

2014 Grand Idea awards, but also to all of the entrants who pitched so well and impressed the judges. We wish you every success in all of your future endeavours." The guest speaker at the award ceremony was businessman and entrepreneur Levi Roots, who gave an inspirational talk on his journey to become the man behind the Reggae Reggae Sauce sensation. He imparted words of wisdom to the Grand Idea entrants, praising them for their boundless enthusiasm and encouraging them never to give up on their dream. The 2014 awards dinner was attended by nearly 70 delegates, including the mentors, judges, past winners, this year's entrants, and representatives from the businesses that support the competition.

Grand Idea finalists 2014



**"The Grand Idea business competition is a great way to celebrate the outstanding achievements of some of our most enterprising students."**

*RAU Principal, Professor Chris Gaskell CBE*



*Levi Roots with Grand Idea winner Elie Sear*

## Magician named Cotswold Rocker

Magician, performer, and third year BSc (Hons) Business Management student Alexander Robertson has been officially named a Cotswold 'Rocker'. Established by local businessman Oli Christie, founder of Neon Play, Rock the Cotswolds was created to showcase the diverse range of different businesses, events and people in the Cotswolds. After receiving hundreds of nominations and being inundated with an incredible selection of companies, people, and places to eat, drink, and shop, nominations were whittled down to a shortlist of 75 who would make up the first ever Rock the Cotswolds hotlist.

Alex was thrilled to be named on this bespoke Cotswold hotlist: "It's basically about showcasing some of the cool, 'uncotswoldsy' businesses that we have here. Once I was nominated, I met the man behind it all, Oli Christie, did a bit of magic for him and his employees and now I'm a 'Rocker!'" The Rock the Cotswolds hotlist also features RAU alumnus and entrepreneur Jeremy Benson (1991), founder of Bensons Totally Fruity juice company, alongside the likes of Kate Moss, Lily Allen and Damien Hirst, as well as a number of influential businesses and individuals, including Superdry, GCHQ, and the Lotus F1 team.



*Cotswold 'Rocker' Alex Robertson*

[www.rockthecotswolds.com](http://www.rockthecotswolds.com)



## Ensuring access for all

The RAU will allocate more than £816,000 during 2014 and 2015, on means-tested scholarships, bursaries, fee waivers, and outreach aimed at increasing student success, according to a report by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA). The University has always been strongly committed to ensuring that those with the potential and aspiration to enter higher education are able to do so. Without this financial assistance, some students would not have been able to accept a place at a higher education establishment. The OFFA report demonstrated that the RAU is taking an increasingly strategic approach to improving access, as it continued to develop generous funding opportunities for 2014 and 2015 entry.

The University offers an unlimited amount of Means Tested Fee Waivers of between £1,000 and £3,000 per year, available depending on eligibility, and anyone with a household income of less than £42,600 can visit [www.rau.ac.uk/scholarships](http://www.rau.ac.uk/scholarships) to see what financial support may be available. In addition to the means-tested financial support featured in the report, the RAU commits further funds each year on its own generous scholarships and bursaries. One such award is the Academic Excellence Scholarship; each new RAU undergraduate student who achieves at least AAB grades at A Level (or equivalent) will be eligible to receive the scholarship, worth £2,000 over two years.



The University offers an unlimited amount of Means Tested Fee Waivers of between £1,000 and £3,000 per year.



Professor Chris Gaskell with Baroness Floella Benjamin

## Inspirational words

Baroness Floella Benjamin gave the keynote speech at the RAU's inaugural IED (Inclusivity, Equality and Diversity) Conference in October 2013. Speaking with passion and sincerity as she

addressed the packed lecture hall, Baroness Benjamin expressed her wholehearted belief that diversity, equality, and inclusion should be embedded into the very DNA of an institution.

## Students deliver at charity race day

Students had a fantastic time running equine events and activities at the Greatwood charity race day, at The Racecourse in Newbury, back in March. The RAU students' event management team, 16 students studying the Events Management module, ran a series of fun, educational workshops and displays for families and all ages in the equine village they helped organise.



RAU students at Greatwood charity race day 2014

# Environmental students enhance local wildlife

Students studying a foundation degree in Environmental Conservation and Heritage Management have been involved in community projects to improve access and amenity around Querns Wood and the Roman Amphitheatre, both next to Cirencester Hospital. Work experience opportunities and practical project days, completed as part of Cirencester Town Council's Green Spaces Strategy, give students the chance to apply practical skills gained during the taught part of their course.

They also developed a range of contacts that will enhance their chances of future employment. Partnerships have played a key role in these projects. Improvements to the biodiversity of the woodland have been completed most recently as part of a joint initiative between the Waitrose Community Matters Programme and Friends of the Amphitheatre. In the past, students have worked with OVO Energy as well as community groups.



## Come and see the 'Bare Hare'

As part of the Cirencester Hare Festival, the Royal Agricultural University has sponsored its very own 'Bare Hare', currently making itself at home in the beautiful University grounds. The 'Bare Hare' was painted by former student and anatomical artist Gillian Higgins (2005) in her unique style. Founder of 'Horses Inside Out', Gillian is a trained sports remedial therapist who travels the world delivering live painted horse anatomy demonstrations. Members of the public are invited to visit the RAU's historic campus in Cirencester and take a look at the one-of-a-kind 'Bare Hare'. It has taken up its new residence

on the Bathurst Lawn, by the Bathurst Wing, where it will remain until the end of the Hare Festival in September. The RAU celebrated the launch of the 'Bare Hare' on Saturday 29 March with an intimate afternoon tea on the Bathurst Lawn. Special guests included the Mayor of Cirencester, Joe Harris, and Councillors and former Mayors, Shirley Alexander and Andy Lichnowski.



Students play croquet at 'Bare Hare' launch



Principal Professor Chris Gaskell with Gillian Higgins and the 'Bare Hare'



Gillian Higgins with her father David Higgins





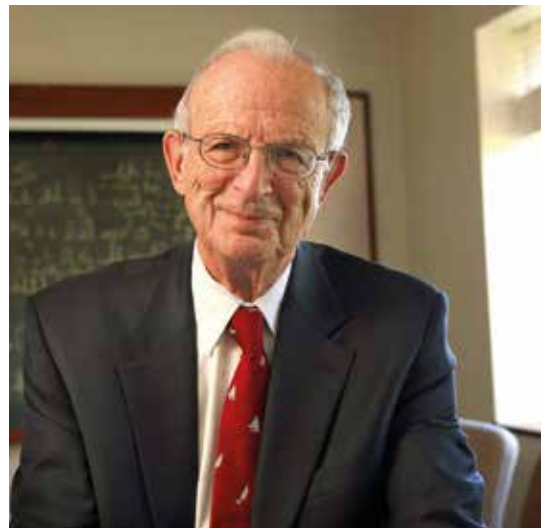
## Harvard agri-business seminar

Postgraduate students, RAU lecturers, and invited guests enjoyed an interesting seminar by Professor Ray Goldberg, George Moffett Professor of Agriculture and Business Emeritus of Harvard Business School, on 'The Future of Global Agribusiness'.

RAU Vice-Principal, Professor Paul Davies, said: "We are delighted that Professor Ray Goldberg could make time for this UK visit, and that our students, in particular, are

able to benefit from this excellent teaching experience. A great opportunity to discuss critical global issues for agribusiness, with someone of such a wealth of experience and understanding."

This memorable occasion was a return visit to Cirencester for Professor Goldberg, who was made an Honorary Professor of the Royal Agricultural College in 1996.



*Professor Ray Goldberg*



**"We are delighted that Professor Ray Goldberg could make time for this UK visit, and that our students, in particular, are able to benefit from this excellent teaching experience."**

*RAU Vice-Principal, Professor Paul Davies*

## New arena for equine research



**"The RAU is very pleased to be working with Martin Collins; the high quality arena we now have is a mark of the leadership we both provide in the equine world, and we look forward to working together in the future."**

*RAU Principal, Professor Chris Gaskell*

The RAU's brand new research-led equine arena has opened at Fossehill in Coates, Cirencester, with Martin Collins Enterprises, market leader in equestrian surfaces innovation and supply. Students and local liverys will be able to use the 60m x 30m arena, but the emphasis will be on utilising it for research purposes. The surface will be kept in optimum condition for curriculum topics such as gait analysis, research into causes of lameness, and to provide a safe environment for equine behavioural studies.

Principal of the RAU, Professor Chris Gaskell CBE, said: "The RAU is very pleased to be working with Martin Collins; the high quality arena we now have is a mark of the leadership we both provide in the equine world, and we look forward to working together in the future." The varied uses of the arena were demonstrated at the opening; eventer Michael Jackson gave a dressage performance and Dr Andrew Hemmings, senior lecturer in Equine Science at the RAU, showed how the arena will be used in future for research, with an equine behaviour demonstration. The new Ecotrack arena is first of several planned developments that herald further expansion of the RAU's facilities, including the development of the Rural Innovation Centre at Harnhill.





## Muddy Wellies go down a storm

RAU social enterprise Muddy Wellies drinks proved popular during the festive season as students set up stalls at the famous Bath Christmas market to sell locally produced ales and ciders.

Muddy Wellies is a brand of artisan ales and cider produced through a student social enterprise at the Royal Agricultural University. First established by a group of students in 2007, the brand now offers three quality ales and one premium cider on sale in more than 60 different outlets.

As well as producing a great range of products, the enterprise offers a fantastic opportunity for students to develop a wide range of business skills, including marketing, finance, event organisation, sales, and customer service.

Sam Holliday, Muddy Wellies student coordinator, said: "Working on a project like Muddy Wellies is a fantastic opportunity. The ability to gain first-hand business experience whilst at University is a huge advantage and has taught me the importance of planning, logistics and sales. It's boosted my CV and my confidence, and the beer's not bad either!"





## School names

The RAU has updated its school names for 2014, to reflect the nature of the courses they offer.

The new names are:

**School of Agriculture, Food and Environment (SAFE),**

**School of Business and Entrepreneurship (SBE),**

**School of Equine Management and Science (SEMS).**

The School of Real Estate and Land Management (RELM) will remain the same.

## RELM builds lasting partnerships

The School of Real Estate and Land Management's partnership with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) has continued very positively, with two new courses having been presented for validation in April. Other successful partnerships include the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation, which accredits the new HE Diploma/BSc Real Estate Valuation, and the Cambridge International Land Institute and Hong Kong Academy of Management in the delivery of the MSc in International Real Estate. A number of highly qualified Visiting Professors and lecturers have been appointed, including Michael Newey, the current President of

the RICS, as a Visiting Fellow.

Undergraduate and postgraduate student numbers on the land-based courses remain strong, and with the improvement of the property market and increased development and investment activities, the school is optimistic for increasing student numbers.



## Entrepreneurial business school celebrates 25 years

The University celebrated 25 years of its dedicated School of Business and Entrepreneurship in September 2013, with an official renaming ceremony at the Cirencester campus.

Entrepreneur and businessman Levi Roots joined honoured guests for the special celebration event. Speaking with great enthusiasm he said: "The new entrepreneurial business school has my unreserved support; after all, the graduates of today are the business leaders of tomorrow. I strongly believe that young people can achieve anything they put their mind to, as long as they have the creativity, commitment and drive to make it happen." The School has a strong entrepreneurial focus, evident in the content of the degree courses as well as numerous entrepreneurial programmes and projects. The RAU is in the top 10 universities in the UK for enterprise.

**25** years  
of business



*Professor Kanes Rajah, Dean of the School of Business and Entrepreneurship with Levi Roots*



*Staff and students of the School of Business and Entrepreneurship*

# New equine school launched

The Royal Agricultural University is very pleased to announce the creation of its new School of Equine Management and Science, dedicated to equipping students with the skills required to meet the growing demands of equine-related businesses. The University's equine courses were first established in 1992, after extensive consultations with various areas of the equine industry. It maintains those strong links with the industry and continues to redefine course content to meet employer requirements. Graduates benefit from a blend of teaching methods, including both practice and theory, from international trips, and from exposure to senior figures from across the equine world, going on to pursue a diverse range of careers. Dr Meriel Moore-Colyer is the first Dean of the new School. Meriel graduated with a BSc Honours degree in Agriculture in 1984 from the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and went on to become a lecturer in Animal Science at that University between 1989 and 2004. She completed a PhD in Equine Digestive Physiology at the University of Edinburgh in 2000. Meriel is a registered Animal Scientist with the Society of Biology and an

active researcher, with a wide range of publications on equine nutrition and the health and welfare of the stabled horse. In this respect she has developed and fostered many valuable links with a number of academic institutions involved with equine research and management. She has worked with numerous UK-based feed companies in product development and is committed to the application of both pure and applied equine research to the horse industry. Meriel regularly lectures at international conferences and industry CPD days across the UK and Europe. With her background in agricultural science she is well-placed to appreciate the relationship between the horse and agricultural industries and to identify areas of mutual interest between them. Dr Meriel Moore-Colyer said: "The formation of the new School of Equine Management and Science is an exciting new development at the RAU, giving us a clear identity and a platform from which to provide our courses. "Our BSc (Hons) International Equine and Agricultural Business Management degree is unique and ever-popular and we will be building on our portfolio of



*Dr Meriel Moore-Colyer, Dean of the School of Equine Management and Science*

industry-related equine management courses in the near future.

"The new School will provide a clear identity for our research specialisms in nutrition, genetics, health and welfare and further enhance our USP in applied equine research. We have excellent links with all aspects of the equine industry and we hope to build on these to further enhance our courses giving students at the RAU an exceptional learning experience."



**"The new School will provide a clear identity for our research specialisms in nutrition, genetics, health and welfare and further enhance our USP in applied equine research."**

*Dr Meriel Moore-Colyer*



## SAFE launches new degrees

The School of Agriculture, Food and Environment (SAFE) has launched two new foundation degrees in conservation and heritage, and a Masters degree in Food Safety and Quality Management for 2014 entry. FdSc British Wildlife Management will give students an in-depth knowledge of different ecosystems in Britain, and FdSc Archaeology and Historic Landscape Conservation will equip students with a thorough understanding of archaeology and landscape heritage.

Graduates will have the opportunity to progress on to an appropriate BSc Honours course, such as the BSc (Hons) in Countryside Management. Leading the way in food safety in an increasingly globalised industry, the new MSc in Food Safety and Quality Management responds to an increasing demand by international experts and influential food buyers for higher levels of management skills and professionalism.



# Geoffrey Craghill Scholarship

Two MSc Rural Estate Management students have been awarded the Geoffrey Craghill Scholarship for their dissertation research, one for country sports and the other for agriculture and land management. Eric Parker explored the opportunities for both stalkers and landowners to generate additional income from the sale of wild venison. The study focused on South East England and considered potential markets and key barriers, such as hygiene legislation

and regulations. It found that the potential profits were often modest despite the added value. Furthermore, the investment required for game larders and other facilities means that a high throughput is needed. Duncan Branch explored the economic consequences of, and the attitude of farmers, working within Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs). The research focused on the financial costs and the environmental benefits achieved from compliance with

NVZ legislation, and identified the positive and negative attributes of nitrogen and the resulting nitrates to the farming sector, as well as farmer opinions. Geoffrey Craghill was an animal husbandry lecturer with a passion for country sports. Following his death, a Scholarship Trust was set up in his memory to encourage and support student involvement and research into these two sectors.

## Celebrating student success

Talented RAU students have been winning national awards left right and centre, in recognition of their hard work and dedication.

Anna Bowen, third year BSc (Hons) International Equine and Agricultural Business Management student, won the 2013 British Guild of Agricultural Journalists and John Deere Training Award. Anna completed the two day journalism course and three days of practical experience with a specialist publication, and impressed judges by skilfully putting the lessons she learnt into practice.

Former student Matthew Bennison, who graduated with a first class BSc (Hons) degree in Rural Land Management, was awarded the prestigious Morley Penistan prize by the Royal Forestry Society's (RFS) Gloucestershire Division after coming top

of the class in his Woodland Management elective module – a passion for which he discovered whilst working as a tree surgeon before university.

James Wotton, final year BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management student, was awarded the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV) prize for top student in the module Rural Professional Practice after achieving an outstanding mark of 80% for his professional practice case studies. Finally, postgraduate students Joseph Phoenix, studying an MBA in International Food and Agribusiness, and Bradley Towell, completing an MSc in Rural Estate Management, were selected to receive the 'Centenary Award' bursary from the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust. Congratulations to all.



Anna Bowen won the British Guild of Agricultural Journalists and John Deere Training Award



Matthew Bennison was awarded the Morley Penistan prize



James Wotton was awarded the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV) prize



Bradley Towell (left) and Joseph Phoenix were selected to receive the 'Centenary Award' bursary from the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust



Professor Toby Mottram at OFC 2014

## Success all round at Oxford Farming Conference

Congratulations to Professor Toby Mottram, the Douglas Bomford Chair in Applied Farm Mechanisation and Management, on being highly commended in the Practice with Science Award for the eBolus at the Oxford Farming Conference 2014 in January. The eBolus was developed by design engineer Seonaid Nimmo of eCow, founded by Professor Toby Mottram in 2007, to accurately and wirelessly measure the rumen pH in cows. Designed to help dairy farmers improve cow rations it can also be used in experiments to develop new feeds. The University has been working with eCow and Mole Valley Farmers to determine the commercial benefits of the eBolus. The results have been overwhelmingly positive; one farmer saved £10,000 in food over two months and another increased milk yields by five litres per day. Two students are



Duncan Howie speaking at OFC 2014

currently conducting dissertation studies to increase knowledge of how to use this tool to monitor and control diets. The RAU is unique in the sector by being able to use the latest technology as developed by a member of staff, Professor Toby Mottram, for improved research and husbandry.

The 2014 Oxford Farming Conference also saw former student Duncan Howie (2009), land agent at Strutt and Parker in Chelmsford, successfully second the Leader of the Green Party Natalie Bennett in a sensational debate over renewable energy. Turn to page 47 for the full report.

## Sport Relief 2014



Cirencester Sport Relief, Professor Chris Gaskell with local family

Families and runners turned out in force for the Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile in Cirencester, in March. More than 80 people took part in the one, three, or six mile run around the Royal Agricultural University's picturesque grounds, and the day was a huge success. Competitors enjoyed delicious homemade flapjacks when they crossed the finish line, kindly baked by the RAU catering team, and even the sudden downpour of hail couldn't dampen their spirits!



Cirencester Sport Relief finish line





## Raising and Giving 2014

RAG Week 2014 (Raise and Give) saw students take part in a charity auction, clay pigeon shoot, rugby match, gala dinner and a tractor pull from Cirencester town centre to the University campus, to raise money for three fantastic causes. The RAG rugby match was attended by former England and Gloucester rugby player Phil Vickery, who rustled up some tasty barbecue snacks for hungry spectators and contestants. This year's fundraising events, which took place early February, were organised by the RAG Team and RAU Student's Union to raise money for



the Prince's Countryside Fund, Ellen MacArthur Trust, and Help Madina. Millie Mantle, RAUSU Chairman, said: "RAG Week is an essential part of the RAU tradition and one that we are proud to put on and promote. As a RAG Team, we would like to thank all those who made it a great success. Let's hope we can smash last year's total." RAG Week 2013 raised a staggering £22,357 for the Teenage Cancer Trust, Elizabeth's Legacy of Hope, and Care South Sussexdown. A RAG lunch was held in October to present charity representatives with the funds raised.



**"RAG Week is an essential part of the RAU tradition and one that we are proud to put on and promote."**

*Millie Mantle, RAUSU Chairman*



*RAG Chairman Ben De Havilland and Phil Vickery at RAG rugby*

## Record number of Africa Fellowship award applications

The RAU and the Africa Fellowship Trust (AFT) received more than 250 applications from 20 different countries for the Africa Fellowship awards in 2013, that's almost three times the number of applications seen in previous years.

So far, the Fellowships have provided professional training and leadership development for 59 Fellows over the last seven years of the AFT-RAU programme, the majority of whom are now contributing significantly to rural development projects in their various home countries.

Vice-Chairman of the Trust and Vice-Principal at the RAU, Professor Paul Davies, said: "We are very pleased with this increasing recognition of our fellowship scheme for young leaders in Africa."

In addition to this, the RAU is also providing (to shortlisted candidates

who have previously applied for the Africa Fellowships) an opportunity to apply for new RAU Africa Scholarships. These are being provided on a fee waiver basis only, as a contribution to the costs of the associated Masters degree programme in the UK.

The programme at the RAU is also strengthened by Post-Fellowship training currently at the Standard Bank Centre for Agribusiness Leadership and Mentorship Development at Stellenbosch University in the Western Cape of South Africa.



"We are very pleased with this increasing recognition of our fellowship scheme for young leaders in Africa."

*Vice-Chairman of the Africa Fellowship Trust and Vice-Principal at the RAU, Professor Paul Davies*

## Safest in the South West

In 2013, the RAU was ranked as the safest university in the South West, in a report published by the independent Complete University Guide. The University emerged with the lowest incidence of student-relevant crime within three miles of its campus in Cirencester, ahead of the nearby University of Gloucestershire and Bath Spa in second and third places. It was also ranked as the fifth safest university in England and Wales.

## #forageaid supports flood stricken farmers



Students pulled together to help farmers worst affected by severe flooding in the Somerset Levels in January, by supporting the #forageaid campaign on Twitter. Using #forageaid they were able to show their support and pledge donations of straw, silage, fodder and animal feed, as well as financial support to affected farmers. The much needed supplies were delivered to Sedgemoor Market by supermarket lorries supporting the

logistics of the high-profile aid operation. #forageaid was initially set up by Andrew Ward in March 2013 to help farmers badly affected by heavy snowfalls. As the campaign coordinator, he felt that "it was only natural to resurrect the #forageaid initiative to help the farmers in Somerset. The scheme is so well known now that there have been tremendous offerings of forage from all areas of the UK."





## New Rural Innovation Centre opens for business

The Royal Agricultural University launched its brand new Rural Innovation Centre (RIC) at Harnhill Manor Farm on Thursday 27 March 2014. Former Government Chief Scientific Advisor, Professor Sir John Beddington, joined leading industry professionals and representatives from BASF, Agrii, CCRI, FWAG and the Prince's Countryside Fund for an afternoon of stimulating discussion around the 'hot topics' in agriculture. Professor Chris Gaskell CBE, RAU Principal, took to the stage to warmly welcome guests before speaking of the centre's laudable purpose as a hub for applied research. Professor Toby Mottram then gave a presentation about

'Agri-Tech, the value of technology to farmers' before Dr Louise Manning discussed 'the knowledge agenda' and made the exciting announcement that Agrii had agreed to fund a new PhD in celebration of the launch. Professor Sir John Beddington, former Government Chief Scientific Advisor and a Governor of the RAU, then addressed the captivated audience with an inspirational presentation on 'Technology and innovation: Meeting the needs of the future', touching upon the University's translational research, before pulling the curtain cord to reveal the plaque and declare the centre officially open. There were a number of interesting

displays and exhibitions by the Prince's Countryside Fund, BASF, Agrii, CCRI, and FWAG, and the KisanHub was on show; a cloud-based integrated software platform which helps farmers arrive at better agronomic and/or business decisions. There were also live demonstrations of rural skills courses such as blacksmithing, dry stone walling and hurdle making. The University has invested £1.2million in the centre, which was visited by HRH the Prince of Wales prior to its official launch, towards the end of last year. It will enable the sharing of cutting-edge knowledge between those involved in agricultural production and those undertaking applied research; promoting education, innovation

## HRH the Prince of Wales visits new Rural Innovation Centre

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who is President of the University, met with staff, students and industry specialists as he visited the Rural Innovation Centre and viewed some of the more practical activities and workshops.

During his visit, His Royal Highness engaged with RAU students in an arboriculture lesson and those in an animal husbandry laboratory session, where he joined the students in testing silage samples.

Alongside the sharing of scientific research, the centre will also enable the University to build on the vocational rural skills training it already provides to organisations and individuals.

The University received a grant of £50,000 from the Prince's Countryside Fund to support the centre in delivering vocational short courses, aimed at introducing local young people, especially those who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) to agricultural skills. The Prince of Wales met some of the beneficiaries of the scheme who were taking part in a taster day learning blacksmithing and iron work, dry stone walling and hurdle making.

Before departing, His Royal Highness laid a commemorative stone within a Cotswold stone wall being constructed as part of the day's activities.



*Principal Professor Chris Gaskell and Professor Sir John Beddington*

and knowledge exchange in the 'field'. As a 'knowledge hub', the centre will provide a major new on-farm resource for the wider rural sector and the local community and include classrooms, offices, a demonstration area, communal space, and meeting rooms. Alongside the sharing of scientific research, it will enable the University to build on the vocational rural skills training it already provides to organisations and individuals. The centre has been supported with a kind contribution by the Frank Parkinson Agricultural Trust.



*HRH Prince of Wales drops in on an arboriculture lesson*



*HRH Prince of Wales gets involved in silage research*



*HRH Prince of Wales observes blacksmithing at Harnhill*



# Supporting the RICS/RAU Rural Land Market Survey

The RAU sponsored the RICS/RAU Rural Land Market Survey H2 2013 which reported that rural farmland prices hit yet another record high, jumping around 15% in the space of a year. During the second half of last year, the average cost of farmland rose to £7,754 per acre across England and Wales, hitting a record high for the ninth consecutive period. The cost of land is now 14.3% higher than during

the same period in 2012 when an acre cost, on average, just under £6,800. Growth in prices has been driven by the ongoing surge in demand from farmers looking to expand their operations, while the amount of land coming up for sale is continuing to lag well behind. However, with many areas having been subject to severe flooding, it remains to be seen what impact this will have on the price and saleability of farmland in some areas.

## The College and the War



In commemoration of the 100 year anniversary of the start of World War One, extracts from the December 1914 and July 1915 Agricultural Students' Gazette have been included in this 2014 edition of *Landmark*. This includes an editorial piece about the College and the War, sadly just the first in a series of articles to list those killed in action, and the painful announcement that the College was to close. **To mark the centenary year, a poignant World War One exhibition is currently on display in the RAU chapel foyer**, at the historic Cirencester campus. Using artefacts and material from the University archives, it masterfully recreates the story of the RAC and the War. The College was shut from 1915 until 1922, and during this time housed the Milton Mount Girls School. **The display will be on show until 14 November and is open to the public.**

## Lecturer appointed Nuffield Trustee

Dr Louise Manning, lecturer in Food Production Management, has been appointed as a Trustee of the Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust.

Louise said: "It is an honour to serve on the Board of Trustees of an organisation that promotes lifelong learning opportunities in the agri-food sector. Being awarded a Nuffield Scholarship allowed me to travel around the world seeing agriculture and food production from a range of perspectives and truly widening my horizons."

Louise Manning is a 2007 Nuffield Scholar and her study focused on water availability, water trading, and opportunities for UK agriculture and the land-based sector.



Dr Louise Manning



"Being awarded a Nuffield Scholarship allowed me to travel around the world seeing agriculture and food production from a range of perspectives and truly widening my horizons."

Dr Louise Manning

## New Shoots business challenge

Talented RAU students were runners up in the annual 2013 New Shoots business challenge by making an impressive virtual £708,103 after creating a simulated company using SimVenture Business Simulation software. Business students Sam Holliday and George West teamed up with agriculture student Naomi Southgate to set up and run a virtual company. They had to make key decisions about the company's production, employment and outsourcing, as well as tackling financial crisis – all the



challenges a 'live' organisation might face. They were competing alongside students from Scotland's Rural University College, Duchy College, Hartpury College, and Harper Adams University, who had travelled to Cirencester to enter the competition. Each team was supported by an industry professional, whose role was to mentor their progress, offering guidance and support to assist their decision-making processes.



Sam Holliday, George West and Naomi Southgate with Principal Professor Chris Gaskell CBE

## 63rd Worshipful Company of Farmers course

The RAU has hosted the Worshipful Company of Farmers Advanced Agricultural Business Management courses since January 2010, and successfully delivered its 63rd training course earlier in 2014. This year's participants, who are all at the forefront in agriculture, travelled from as far afield as New Zealand, Australia, Portugal, and Germany to partake in

seminars, group discussions, and case studies and further their knowledge in all elements of farm business management. More than 1,200 delegates have completed this renowned course during the 50 years it has been running, and many of the course alumni now hold very influential positions within the industry.



## With deepest sympathy

We're sad to announce that Robin Malim, former RAU governor and co-founder of Velcourt, has passed away aged 80. Robin was a visionary with boundless enthusiasm and an inspiration to young people entering the industry that he loved, influencing many working in agriculture today. A founding member of the 75 Club, a network of forward-thinking commercial

farmers, Robin was also chairman of Farm Africa in the 1990s and in recognition of his many achievements, was appointed a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Societies in 1993. Robin is survived by his wife, Carol, their three children, Karen, Peter and Sophie and seven grandchildren, to whom we offer our sincerest condolences.





# Sports reports

## Darts

The Darts Society has had a very promising late 2013 and early 2014, with training going well and some genuine talents coming through the academy system. Of particular note have been the developments of Joe Weld and the finishing skills of Freddie Anderson. On the note of matches, we found ourselves 7-4 up after Eddie Howard beat a couple of our competitors, but a collapse in the latter stages sadly saw us fall to a 14-7 defeat.

*Angus Gubbins*



## Men's Hockey

It's been a good season, compared to last year, after finishing middle in the table. Following the influx of freshers, we put out a strong team and hope to be even more successful next year and compete at the top of the league. Thank you all who played for us this season, and we look forward to seeing you next year.

*George Everett*

## Ladies' Hockey

The Ladies' 1st XI has had an extremely successful season so far. With two matches remaining we are currently top of the league with a goal difference of 21. Through a large intake of talented freshers and postgraduates, combined with a bunch of experienced second years, the team has excelled in all of their matches, with notable victories against Bristol and Cardiff and a huge win against the University of Gloucestershire, where we won 9-1. The commitment and attitude of all the players has been exceptional and hopefully this will continue throughout the rest of the season in order for us to gain promotion.

*Helen Gregory*



## Football

Although a disappointing season overall in terms of development, some very good hard fought matches have been played against some decent opposition. We have a young team and I believe that with an influx of keen freshers we could have a strong squad on our hands next season. We lost a lot of senior players at the end of the 2013 season and they were missed. I think we will be a stronger side next year when we are reinforced by new players, and I would like to see us compete further up the table. We have had good numbers for training through the season and we have worked hard. The SU and grounds staff have been very helpful in arranging games and keeping things organised and I hope the team can finish the season off strongly.

*Jamie Bradshaw*

# 柔術

## Jiu Jitsu

Sensei James Slaughter began training students in the art of Auchi Jiu Jitsu in 2013. As a self-defence based martial art, we train to defend against a range of unarmed attacks as well as an array of weapon attacks. Training, using the new mats and wooden swords and rubber knives kindly funded by the SU, has been varied and interesting. This was helped by attendance at the national training weekend at High Wycombe and various trips to other clubs in Swindon and Basingstoke. A highlight was a beginners' course held in the Boutflour Hall attracting over 30 members from other clubs to the RAU. Thanks to everyone who has taken part and we look to move the club towards bigger and better things for next year.

*Alistair Harvey*



## Lacrosse

After moving up a league this season it has been by no means easy. Playing top teams like Exeter 2nds and Bath 2nds was tough. Our scores do not demonstrate the standard we have improved to, but we have definitely come on as a team. We have worked hard to have a permanent goalie this season, Catherine Corbett, and brought on players in the midfield. With the help of a part-time coach at the beginning of the season, our skills certainly improved across the board. We have moved down the league but hope that playing in a higher league has benefited us and improved our play. We will be sorry to lose the third years, who make up a large proportion of the team, but look forward to welcoming an influx of new freshers.

*Amy Adams*



## Ladies' Shooting

The shooting teams this year have had many great successes and have gone from strength to strength in their performance at each competition. The ladies teams have had the greatest success this year especially being able to field two strong teams for the first time in the club's history. The ladies winning streak started with winning the St. Andrews Challenge, our first competition of the year. Nearing Christmas the Ladies' 1st team were also awarded National Champions at the BUCS National Competition. At the Aberystwyth Spring Cup both the Men's and Ladies' 1st teams won, and William Horner took High Gun. We are looking forward to continuing our success this year, especially at our home competitions, the Countryside Alliance Cirencester Cup and the newest of our competitions, the Sandhurst v RAU competition held at Ladyswood Shooting School.

*Lizzie Hardie*

## Men's Shooting

The shooting club has experienced a great start to the season once again, in keeping with its performance over the past few years, and has fared very well. A performance of particular note was a score of 96/100 on the flush in St. Andrews which was shot by our 1st team; William Horner (captain), Charlie Andrews, Ollie Fielding and Barney Hitchings. Our Men's team also recorded second place finishes in Monmouth and St. Andrews with a win at the Reading shooting competition held at E.J.Churchills. The RAU shooting teams continue to be a force to be reckoned with, and with lots of hard work the teams will only become stronger. We have built up a solid base of new talent from the first years this season and I hope that they will continue to build on the club's successes into the future.

*William Horner*





## Sailing

This year the Sailing club has a strong team of enthusiastic and experienced sailors – with excellent backgrounds in everything from national squad dinghy sailing to high profile offshore and ocean racing. In November, the club ran a successful training cruise when we took two boats from Plymouth and sailed off the South Devon Coast to Dartmouth. As a result of that weekend, the club is confident of a strong challenge at this year's BUSA Yacht Nationals.

**Simon Griffiths**

## Rugby

Pre-season started as soon as the first term of the year had begun. The turnout of players of all calibre was a very exciting prospect for the season to come. We had enough for two teams to play on a regular basis. As captain for the 1st team I was feeling very hopeful and confident that we would have a very successful season. We as a team have been climbing from strength to strength putting on a great game for spectators to watch and for opposition to be concerned about. Coming to the conclusion of the season, we are now at the business end and will be looking to be promoted if the rest of our games go to plan. The rugby teams as a whole improve each year, in performance, numbers of players, and socially.

**Jack Hawking**



## Rowing

This year is the first year that the club has trained and competed as a 'University'. We recognised this and pushed hard to reach, and surpass, University standards, running plenty of training sessions, matched with some great socials. Over RAG week we were heavily involved, raising hundreds for the chosen charities, mainly by organising and taking part in our first 'overnight row'. This involved 16 members of the club spending the night in one of the main lecture rooms rowing the distance from Cirencester to Leeds from 8pm-8am on two rowing machines on an interval relay. Just a week later we sent two competitive

teams to the South of England Indoor Rowing Championships, where we placed 1st and 4th in the women's novice relay row, and 3rd and 4th in the men's novice relay row. The women's team also won the course record at the event. We have moved the club from Gloucester back to Cirencester, and have been training on the local lakes on a regular basis, as well as running land training sessions every week. It's been a privilege to run the club this year, and I look forward to seeing how we do at this summer's regattas, including at the national championships.

**Henry Myatt**



## Equestrian

The 1st IV has had a good season so far with one victory and one runner-up. The team still have two competitions to go and are hoping to qualify for the BUCS Regional Final. The team of four is a mix of Katy Cooper, Josh Thompson, Daisy Cornwall, Lucinda Quesnel, and Chloe Gunn. Katy Cooper has also done exceptionally well so far with a top five placing at each competition. The 2nd IV have had a very successful season so far with two victories, one

being the home competition at Talland where they won by a clear margin and took four of the top eight placings. With only one competition to go fingers crossed they will qualify for the BUCS Regionals, with Rachel Gallop hopefully having a chance of qualifying individually as well after having two individual wins out of three competitions so far.

**Lucinda Quesnel**



### Polo

The Polo club has had a good year so far. A successful recruitment campaign resulted in 48 beginners taking up polo. Coaching for these beginners has continued at Longdole Polo Club and the speed at which they have reached a level of proficiency is impressive. The RAU recently played Oxford University at beginner and novice divisions and won the beginner match 4-3 and the novice match 5-2. The team entered beginner, novice and intermediate level teams at Inglesham for a university tournament, winning the beginner and intermediate divisions but narrowly missing victory in the novice division. I would like to thank Lucy Robinson and Henry Wethered who have supported the club throughout the year from their roles on the committee. With the SUPA nationals around the corner, the May Ball exhibition, and a charity bike polo match, we are enjoying a successful year of polo at the RAU – long may it continue!

**Theodore Wasserberg**

### Netball

We struck gold this year with so many talented freshers coming to join the squad; they integrated into the team quickly and have been brilliant on our socials. We got off to a slow start at the beginning of the season due to lack of fitness but as this began to improve, so did the scores on each game. Having moved up a league the previous year, the teams we played were still a challenge to us but we have come on leaps and bounds and have had some very good wins against teams high in the league. I am proud to have captained such a great squad of girls this year, who have embodied the RAUSU's motto; work hard, play hard. Special thanks to Tori Udale for vice-captaining the squad with me.

**Olivia Watts**

### Racing

The Racing club is now in its fourth year and has continued to grow in popularity. A number of very successful trips to Cheltenham have been organised this National Hunt season along with students attending the first National Student Race Day in Newbury. All of the meetings have been well supported by students, with the showpiece of the season being the Countryside Day at Cheltenham during the open fixture, which over 100 students

attended. In total, we have managed to get over 250 students through the gates at Cheltenham this season. A special thank you must be said to Racing for Change and to Cheltenham Racecourse for all their support and generous offers for Cirencester students. It has been a great season getting more students involved in racing and it will hopefully carry on in the years to come.

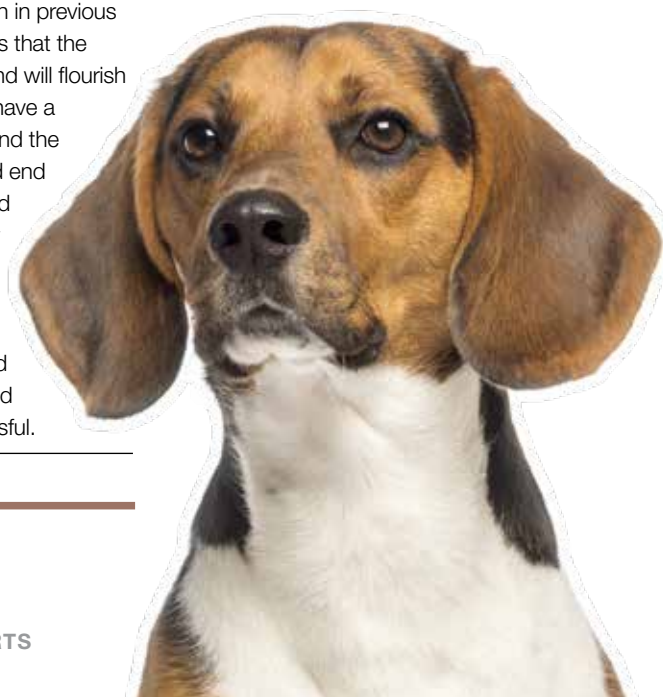
**Andrew Sage**



### RAC Beagles

The RAC Beagles are having a very successful season this year, showing plenty of sport and lots of successful days hunting. My Joint Masters, Izzy Bainbridge and Toby Dunn, and I have organised more hunting days than ever before and opened up new meets to go hunting in the local area. We have also enjoyed a brilliant tour up north, hunting two days in the Peak District. This year we have more student subscribers than in previous years and this hopefully shows that the Beagles are well supported and will flourish for many years to come. We have a very busy social calendar to end the season, with our hunt ball and end of season dinner. We have had a great team this year and my thanks must go to all those who have helped, my Joint Masters, whippers-in, and secretary. There is a very good team lined up for next year and I hope that it is just as successful.

**Harry Gosling**





# Research and Consultancy

The RAU has a long tradition of research of various types, principally applied research which benefits our immediate constituency, farmers and land managers. This year sees two PhD students graduate having completed projects in that vein. We have also made our third submission to the Research Excellence Framework

detailing the higher level academic research undertaken by staff. The Contract Research/Consultancy Unit has also managed a wide range of projects for specific clients. We are proud of our research activities and are continuing our developments toward Research Degree Awarding Status; we are offering three fully

funded PhD opportunities this year. A selection of the contract research and consultancy projects that the University is involved with is included in this section.

---

**Dr John Conway,**  
Director of Research

## New PhD projects

The Royal Agricultural University is funding three new PhD projects specifically to encourage engagement by less experienced researchers. These have been awarded to Dr Rhiannon Naylor (née Fisher) (Examining models of risk communication and disease management: The case of biosecurity measures on English dairy farms) which develops her work on bovine TB; Dr Andrew Hemmings (Behavioural probes for equine brain function) and Dr Karim Farag (The role of current and future food systems in alleviating food poverty in urban areas: Developing an inclusive model) which builds on his work with Bristol local food initiatives.

## Iwona Janik

Iwona successfully defended her PhD thesis which provided new evidence with regard to physiological changes within the udder before and during mastitis outbreak and supported the theory of interdependence between quarters within the udder. The particle count in milk can be used as an indicator of the health status of the single animal. The understanding of the particulate behaviour will help to minimise the chance of mastitis outbreak by early detection and also to reduce the chance of the cross-contamination between animals during the milking process. Milk fat globule size and number can be used as an efficient indicator of the onset of mastitis.

## Research development and the Corporate Plan

**The 2014-2019 RAU Corporate Plan includes the development of research activity as one of the strategic aims of the University over the next five years. To that end, we are bidding to various schemes, most notably the government's Agri-Tech Strategy to develop collaborative research facilities for innovation in agricultural technology and would welcome offers for joint ventures or support for this scheme. We have invested £1.2m in the new Rural Innovation Centre at Harnhill Manor Farm, which was visited by HRH Prince Charles in November 2013 and formally opened in March 2014. Facilities are provided for training courses, a field laboratory, engineering development and will complement the more research focussed laboratory building planned for the campus.**

Find out more about the new Rural Innovation Centre on page 27.

*Iwona Janik*





Farmer Alan Hughes inventor of the TB Buster

## bTB biosecurity trials

The RAU recently completed a three month trial assessing the effectiveness of the TB Buster in preventing badger access to mineral lick buckets. Farmer Alan Hughes, inventor of the TB Buster, designed the tailored mineral lick holder to prevent contact between badgers and cattle and to improve biosecurity against bovine tuberculosis. The three month trial aimed to provide robust scientific evidence to assess the effectiveness and practicality of the TB Buster. It was found that badgers were unable to access the mineral lick held by the TB Buster, whereas badgers regularly accessed a conventional mineral lick bucket. The RAU is also undertaking a wider study which involves trialling a range of biosecurity measures, with the aim of providing practical and cost effective advice to farmers.

## Milk supply chain in Ukraine

The RAU is working with PepsiCo Ukraine on a long term project to increase milk quantity and quality in their supply chain. The RAU team visited the dairy processing factory and two supplier farms near Kiev in January, in order to assess how the dairy industry is currently functioning. The team will be designing

## Lead evaluators of local broadband impact

The School of Real Estate and Land Management at the RAU is currently leading a two year investigation into the impact of broadband access across rural Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. The deployment of Next Generation Access broadband is currently being rolled out across the two counties by the 'Fastershire' project, aiming to increase access to a target of 90% of premises by 2016. The capital investment is anticipated to have a significant impact on the sustainability of rural communities, leading to a range of social and economic benefits. The recognition of these and the associated barriers to digital inclusion is pertinent, and of great interest to the RAU.

and implementing training for these two farms in order to increase milk yields and operating procedures, with the aim of rolling out this training to improve standards across the whole of the supply chain. They will also be working closely with PepsiCo staff to increase capacity in their supply chain development.



## REF submission

November 2013 saw the submission of our research activities over the last six years to the Research Excellent Framework (REF), the periodic assessment of university level research, previously called the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). We have increased numbers of dedicated research staff from nine to 12, and would have included four more but for the structure of the submission required. The REF also demanded a new section 'impact case study' which required us to provide evidence of the impact our research had on the industry, academia, or government policy. Dr Richard Baines provided evidence that his research into food safety and assurance schemes had impacted on various government schemes and underpinned an international training scheme. Dr Andrew Hemmings and Dr Meriel Moore-Colyer jointly provided evidence of the impact of their work on horse nutrition and behaviour, including product development and an iPhone app on horse rations.

## Greencycleit towards sustainability

The RAU are currently working with Greencycleit, a Cirencester based company, to undertake a review and subsequent growth trials to investigate the incorporation of a raw material as a growth medium; working towards developing an environmentally friendly, sustainable product base. Greencycleit were successful in their application for a South West Innovation Voucher; an ERDF funded scheme with the aim of supporting SMEs in the South West towards growth, by offering 40% financial contribution towards any project costs with a knowledge base partner. This voucher was used to gain expertise from the RAU, and the review highlighted the opportunity for further research and development with the RAU to determine the precise composition of future products.



Photos from our action-packed programme of events

# 2013 Alumni events

- 1** 1966 reunion – '66 Club Lunch – 6 October
- 2-3** Cheltenham Countryside Day – 15 November
- 4** Suffolk Show – 29 May
- 5** 1983 B Course reunion – 26 September (Rural Estate Management)



1



2



4



3



5

- 6** Principal Professor Chris Gaskell, CBE and Ron Coaten's visit to Africa – November
- 7** Royal Welsh Show – 23 July
- 8** Cereals Event, Boothby Graffoe, Lincolnshire – 12 June
- 9** 1972, 1973 and 1974 reunion – 14 September
- 10** CLA Game Fair, Ragley Hall – 20 July
- 11** Farm Walk at Lulworth Estate, Dorset – 26 June





**Name:**

Céleste Wilkins

**Course:**

MSc Applied Equine Science

**Class of:** 2014

# Press(ing) matters

Swapping her jodhpurs for her race day finest, equine enthusiast Céleste Wilkins explains how she landed her dream job covering events like Badminton Horse Trials and the very posh Gucci Paris Masters as an equestrian journalist.

I decided to do my Masters at the RAU because I really wanted to study with Dr Andrew Hemmings and Dr Meriel Moore-Colyer, two of the top equine researchers in the UK and internationally, but little did I know this would be the beginning of a whole new future. I have always blogged and written, but my big opportunity came when Horse Junkies United, a North American equestrian website with a huge international following, asked me to cover the Badminton Horse Trials, whilst studying for my MSc. Although it was a daunting experience, it made me realise how passionate I was about pursuing equine journalism. Soon after that I applied to do an internship at *Horse&Rider*, who made sure I could join their marketing team in Surrey when I finished the taught part of my course. I enjoyed every minute

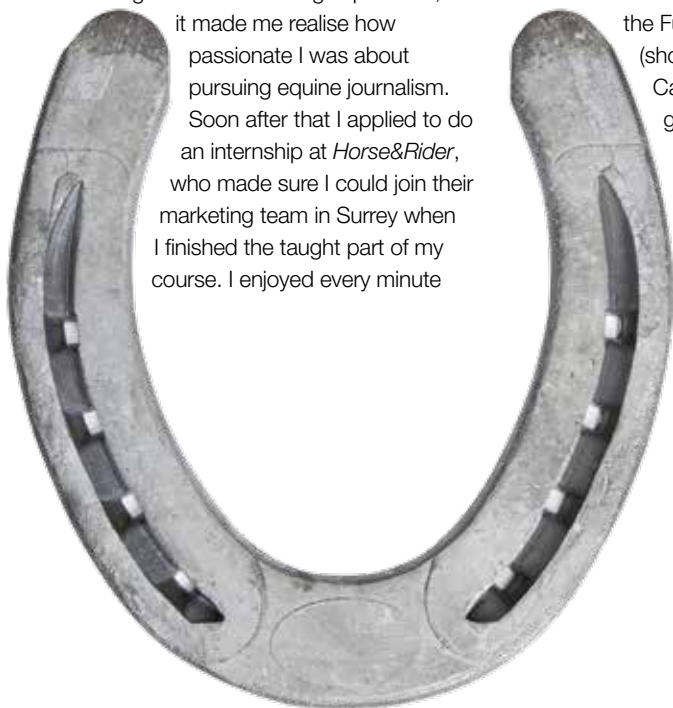
of it, and when my internship ended a role in the editorial department became available. I was thrilled when they asked me to stay on as Staff Writer. My aim has always been to have a 'horsey desk job', and I feel that I have achieved that. My week usually comprises a lot of writing, from equine science to related topics, editing and proofreading, but I often do this on-the-go as I attend a lot of different photo shoots, interviews and equestrian events. In the summer months, you can usually find me at an event or competition, tweeting from the side-lines and taking lots of photos! While I am Staff Writer at *Horse&Rider* magazine, I sometimes also do a bit of freelance work – my favourite assignment so far was acting as press agent at the Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup (show jumping) Final for Equine Canada, the Canadian national governing body of equestrian sport. At *Horse&Rider* I get to interview a lot of equestrian celebrities, including Carl Hester and Charlotte Dujardin (GB Olympic

medallist dressage riders) – and being Products Editor means I get to go to a lot of fun trade fairs and industry events too. When I started my degrees, people always asked if I would become a rider or groom, assuming that these are the only 'real jobs' within the equine industry. I can assure you the industry has an amazing depth of talent in so many diverse areas. I love my current role and use the knowledge from my MSc daily, to ensure that *Horse&Rider* can be a market leader in presenting the most up-to-date and interesting information to the equine community monthly. The research skills I learned have really been an asset to my career, and the RAU experience will stay with me forever. One day I'd like to become a lecturer like Dr Hemmings or Dr Moore-Colyer, and there's no doubt that with my RAU education and the practical experience gained from my current role, that anything is possible.

[celeste.wilkins@hotmail.com](mailto:celeste.wilkins@hotmail.com)  
@HR\_insider

“

“The research skills I learned at the RAU have really been an asset to my career and the experience will stay with me forever.”







**Name:**

Adam Hinchcliffe

**Course:**

BSc (Hons) Agricultural Management

**Class of:** 2011

# From the agricultural to the sports field

Lecturer turned Team GB triathlete, Adam Hinchcliffe, reveals how his passion for sport stems from an intrinsic love of agriculture.

**W**hether it's farming, cycling or running that's keeping Adam busy, you won't catch him still for long. Having grown up in rural North Yorkshire, Adam's love of the great outdoors started at a young age. "I always enjoyed being outside, and found I could combine that with my other interest of sport. I spent a lot of time working and gaining experience on my friend's farm, where my passion for agriculture grew and grew. This kept me fit and I was able to combine it with cycling and running." When it came to thinking about the future, there was no doubt in his mind as to which route he would take. "I started looking for a university that would combine my interest in rural studies, and the experience I had gained from farming for so long, with my love of sport. I looked at a number

of agricultural universities and colleges, but when I visited the RAU everything just fell into place. I had one of the best experiences of my life in a beautiful part of the country, and if I wasn't in lectures

I was either out running or on my bike!" On graduating from the Royal Agricultural University, Adam went on to land his dream job as a lecturer in mechanisation at Askham Bryan College, North Yorkshire. "I was a little apprehensive about applying for jobs at first, but then of all the positions I applied for around 90% of them invited me to interview. I put this down to the fantastic support of my lecturers, and having the RAU on my CV – it's very much seen as the 'Oxbridge' of rural studies and I am very proud to have been part of it." He then felt it was time to start focusing on his cross triathlon training, an endurance sport of swim, bike, and run made for the rural environment, but not the faint-hearted. "I have recently been selected as part of Team GB, which will take me to a number of countries and climates throughout Europe and the rest of the world.

Training takes time and commitment, a discipline learnt and embedded at the RAU. I make my training as challenging as I can; running up and down the Dales, swimming at 5am before work, and cycling across rough terrain in all weathers, to make sure I can compete with the best. "I take everything I face as an individual challenge. I see triathlon as an independent sport, where I only have myself to rely on, whereas I see my working life as a lecturer as more of a team sport. The great thing is I get the best of both worlds. I am focused on achieving a podium place with Team GB, and will continue to improve as a lecturer so that hopefully one day I'll be part of the RAU again!"

“

**“I have recently been selected as part of Team GB, which will take me to a number of countries and climates throughout Europe and the rest of the world.”**







**Name:**

Abigail Reader

**Course:**

BSc (Hons) Agriculture,

MBA Advanced Farm Management

**Class of:** 2004

# The fresh face of agriculture

**Milking cows, building a business, inspiring young farmers, and campaigning for industry change, it's all in a day's work for NFU Cymru's youngest ever County Chairman – and that's just before breakfast!**

**A**bi Reader received a warm welcome into the NFU Cymru group in January this year, as she undertook responsibility for representing union members in Glamorgan. "It is very humbling and a great honour to become Glamorgan County Chairman. As I am sure anyone who has been in this role will tell you, you aspire to do your very best to represent your county's views. It spurs you on to think that others believe in you and support you, I know I will learn a lot from this experience." It's no small feat, but Abi already has some big plans for her two-year chairmanship. "My main aim is to encourage more people to join the Glamorgan NFU group so that we can more accurately represent peoples views. In order to achieve this



I am keen to work with local Young Farmers' Clubs, to improve their membership and make sure there's adequate training available.

"As Vice Chairman of Maendy YFC I have strong links with Glamorgan

YFC, and was aware that they needed more funding to keep putting on events and run training for their members. As an NFU member, I also knew that Glamorgan NFU would be able to help. I went along to a Glamorgan YFC meeting, introduced myself properly, and explained a bit about what I hoped to achieve in terms of better membership. I then suggested that YFC members come along to an NFU meeting and give a presentation about the funding they need." Since Abi was elected Chairman she's already had a clear impact, mobilising young farmers to take positive action during the Somerset floods. "I've seen first-hand what we, as an industry, can achieve when we pull together. I first got involved in the NFU during the SOS Dairy Campaign back in 2012, which highlighted to me everything the NFU stands for; unity and responsibility. So when I was approached by Glamorgan NFU to see if we should hold a fundraiser for Somerset farm flood victims, I felt that we would get a bigger response if we joined forces with Glamorgan YFC. "We held a fundraising event on 28 February and raised an incredible £20,000, with support coming from contractors, feed companies, AI companies, fuel companies, and veterinary surgeries. This just goes to show, if we stand together we have a bigger voice."



**"It is very humbling and a great honour to become Glamorgan County Chairman. You aspire to do your very best to represent your county's views."**

When Abi's not changing the face of Welsh agriculture, she's running her own successful dairy farm business and helping young people gain valuable veterinary work experience. "My policy is never to turn anyone away, lots of people helped me when I was at school and university, so now it's my turn to give something back. It is extremely rewarding to see students, who often have never been on a farm before, learn how to be confident around stock and to understand the commercial side of keeping animals combined with a sense of compassion and social responsibility." Abi's influential career in agriculture started, somewhat surprisingly, with a phone call to a supplier she'd never met. At a loss as to what to do when her A Levels finished, they told her to go to Cirencester and study at the RAU. "Within a week I had filled in a UCAS application and I haven't looked back since. I loved every second of university, it was fantastic to be with so many other people who enjoyed agriculture, farming and the countryside. Everything I learnt at university I still rely on now; knowledge is everything in this game because it helps you think about the bigger picture when you're farming. These are all skills I would have struggled to learn had I not gone to the RAU."

[abireader99@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:abireader99@yahoo.co.uk)  
[@AbiReader](https://twitter.com/AbiReader)

## PROFILE

**Name:**

Percy Mabvuto Ngwira

**Course:**MSc International Rural  
Development**Class of:** 2011

# A world first

From Zambia to Paris, France and Madrid, Spain and back again, the MSc International Rural Development course opens up a world of possibilities for First Secretary for tourism in Zambia, Percy Mabvuto Ngwira.

**A**fter completing my undergraduate studies at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, I wanted to further my studies in tourism or development studies. My desire as a citizen of a former British colony was to one day gain a degree from a UK university, to develop my knowledge and skills and gain a qualification that would be respected by employers and academics worldwide. With this in mind, I began to search for a university that would give me a sense of community amongst my fellow students and staff, and offer a stimulating and unique learning environment. The International Rural Development course at the RAU combined academic excellence with practical application, and I have never regretted my decision to apply. The strong industry links maintained by the University, both nationally and internationally, enabled me to undergo a three month research practical training course at the Okavango Research Institute of the University of Botswana. Upon graduation from the RAU and return to my job at the Ministry of Tourism in Zambia I was immediately promoted, transferred to Ministry of Foreign Affairs and posted into the Foreign Service as First Secretary responsible for tourism activities at the Zambian Embassy in Paris.

My first assignment in the Foreign Service was to work at the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Headquarters in Madrid, for a year, helping to prepare for the 20th Session UNWTO General Assembly that was successfully co-hosted by Zambia and Zimbabwe in August 2013. After this assignment I was awarded a certificate of Honour from the UNWTO and a personal letter of congratulation from the UNWTO Secretary General, Dr Taleb Rifai for the work I did. I then moved back to my station at the Zambian Embassy to continue with my work as First Secretary (tourism) but also as the main link between Zambia and the UNWTO. I feel that without the qualification from the RAU I would not have had this opportunity – the degree has opened up the world for me. I consider my work at the UNWTO as one of the most interesting and challenging of my career so far, as it gave me the opportunity to work with people from different nationalities around the globe. This has continued with my work at the Embassy where I still work with the UNWTO, United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and seven other countries to which the Zambian Embassy in Paris is accredited to. Zambia as a Permanent Delegation to UNESCO has also provided me the opportunity to work with UNESCO on issues of tourism, heritage and culture. While working full-time, I have decided to do my PhD in Tourism Development part-time at the University of Nebrija in

Spain. Once completed, I hope to change my career to a university lecturer, as I feel this is the best way to share and pass on the experience and knowledge that I have gained. In the long term I would like to make a meaningful contribution to tourism development in my country, Zambia, and be a useful international citizen.

[tngwira@gmail.com](mailto:tngwira@gmail.com)



*Percy Mabvuto Ngwira (centre)  
First Secretary for tourism in Zambia*

“

“I consider my work at the UNWTO as one of the most interesting and challenging of my career so far, as it gave me the opportunity to work with people from different nationalities around the globe.”



**Name:**

Charles Malet

**Course:**MBA Business Management  
in the Food Industries**Class of:** 2012**Name:**

Ed Coyte

**Course:**BSc (Hons) Countryside  
Management**Class of:** 2013

# Brewing big business

Plenty of us enjoy sipping a nice cold beer while unwinding after a hard day's graft, but for these two hard-working souls it's not just a drink it's a way of life, as they turn their beloved beverage into booming business ventures.

**C**harles Malet, founder of Force Brewery, had been thinking about beer as a business opportunity for a while before he took the plunge and enrolled on an MBA at the Royal Agricultural University. "I first felt I would benefit from an MBA when I decided to leave the British Army and start my own business. The seeds of the idea were sown during my last posting in Nairobi; Kenya needs a better beer and I had a vague notion to stay on and brew there. The plan morphed as I began to think about the context in which beer can be consumed in the UK and, with a bit of imagination, I felt there was room for another brewer. "I came to the RAU in order to learn about business within the context of the rural environment, and felt an MBA at a good business school would teach me

the fundamental principles of what drives a business forward – after a number of years in the Army I felt somewhat out of touch. Joining the MBA in the food

and agricultural industries gave me an excellent opportunity to develop ideas for the future whilst learning from the past and, most importantly, the present." Ed Coyte on the other hand came across the idea for his company, Whale Ale, while writing his final year thesis about the diversification of a farm. "As I built the business plan up and talked to brewers and farmers it became apparent there was actually a real business to be built there. I had done the research, the numbers made sense, so my brother and I decided to do it. Beer is a high value food product and we wanted to create quality beers targeted at the younger market – it's never going to go out of fashion and the margin is good for the entire value chain." Ed, who was recently awarded 'Young Entrepreneur of the Year' at the Midlands

Business Awards, explains how he got his booming business up and running. "After tweaking the recipes on a pilot brew plant, we knew we needed some practical and theoretical industry knowledge about brewing beer in the commercial environment. I enrolled on a postgraduate brewing course and between us, my brother Tom and I have worked in seven breweries of all sizes. We enlisted the help of a previous head brewer from St Peter's Brewery to help scale up the brews without altering the quality or taste profiles. Setting up the business has been an incredible journey, and the RAU played a big part in equipping me with the skills and confidence I needed to get going." "We currently supply our local free houses and various pub and restaurant chains across the Midlands, and have recently started supplying some of the larger pub companies such as Punch Taverns, Mitchell and Butler, and JD Wetherspoons. We have expanded the business three times in the past 12 months and have just won a couple of major tenders, so we are very happy!"



Edward Coyte of Whale Ale

Charles set up his business, Force Brewery, with a strong sense of the relationship between good beer and shared experiences, and has maintained this belief ever since. "The focus for the brewery is events, whether in the home, out and about, or at the brewery. Force Brewery supplies the local market with the very freshest beer and it is able to do this by opening its doors to the public, who can see where their beer is made before taking their fill. Beer festivals and other events are exciting routes to market as well. The brewery is a licensed venue, so the scope broadens all the time." Whilst talking about the future of his

brewery, Charles comments that "the biggest challenge so far has been to control the rate at which the business operates. My aim is for Force Brewery to become a significant part of the fabric of Gloucestershire, and I hope to achieve this by growing the business organically, fostering the development of a very local market, and having an increasing engagement with the community." It's this delicate balance between growth and expansion that Ed Coyte can well relate to. "We are still in the early stages of the business and our focus is profitable growth. We have some exciting ideas about expansion, but right now the focus

is consolidating the brand and showing growth. In a few years we expect to have branched out into some new ventures." It sounds like the business plans are brewing, so just watch this space. Cheers boys!

---

**Force Brewery**  
[charles@forcebrewery.com](mailto:charles@forcebrewery.com)  
[www.forcebrewery.com](http://www.forcebrewery.com)

---

**Whale Ale**  
[www.whaleale.co.uk](http://www.whaleale.co.uk)  
 @WhaleAleCo



Charles Malet of Force Brewery



**Name:**

Duncan Howie

**Course:**BSc (Hons) Rural Land  
Management**Class of:** 2009

# Electric renewables

## debating

Hot under the collar and clinging to the edge of their seat, that's how the majority of spectators experienced the electric renewable energy debate at the 2014 Oxford Farming Conference.

**R**eal estate professional turned public speaker extraordinaire Duncan Howie stole the show at this year's Farming Conference debate at the Oxford Union, as he successfully seconded the Leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, Natalie Bennett, in opposing the motion 'Renewable energy is not worth the carbon it saves'. "The underlying principle was that both food and energy are key to national security and therefore we need to subsidise to guarantee supply," explains Duncan. "I concentrated on arguing that renewables were a diversified income for the rural economy, that renewables have nothing to do with saving carbon, and that it has everything to do with national security and removing our reliance on fossil fuels imported from foreign countries. We may not be able to power the entire country with renewables, but it does guarantee a certain level of security! Lastly, I argued that if we are to rubbish renewables because of subsidies, then the same principle should be applied to agriculture," and that seemed to do the trick. "At Howies & Sons LLP, the family business, we have had a positive experience with renewable energy, so I do feel they are important. Two years ago we installed 50kW of ground mounted solar panels and the returns have been

consistently good. The key reason for which is that 100% of the energy is used on site, consumed by two butchery buildings on the farm. We see renewables as a diversified income stream which is government backed and therefore very low risk."

When he's not sparking interest in the principles of renewable energy, the former RAU Student Union Chairman works in land management, specialising in compulsory purchase, renewables and farm agency. On completing his BSc (Hons) degree in Rural Land Management, he did a brief stint milking cows in New Zealand and working on the family farm, before joining Strutt and Parker in 2010 to pursue his career. "As soon as I looked around the campus I knew it was where I wanted to go to university, but the real draw was the fact that I knew the Rural Land Management course was for me. Cirencester is the leading university for Rural Land Management; it gave me the knowledge to carry out my current job, but crucially gave me the widest list of contacts you could ever hope for."

Duncan is also heavily involved in his local farming community and has headed up various organisations. After graduating from the RAU, he returned home and became the County Chairman of Essex Young Farmers Club, before moving on to Area Chairman of the Eastern Area Committee. At a national level he now sits on the Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee (newly named YFCAGRI) and is the CLA and CEJA representative on the committee; representing young farmers across Europe. He is also a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and a Fellow

of the Agricultural Valuers Associations. Talking about the future of agriculture and land management, an industry clearly close to his heart, Duncan said, "I'm passionate about farming and feel that whatever part of the industry we are in, it's going to be a good place to be in the next 20 years. Everything that land can supply, whether it be food, water, energy, development or minerals, there will be opportunities, and as farmers and land managers we need to be best placed to identify these."

To read more about the 2014 Oxford Farming Conference turn to page 24.

[duncan.howie@struttandparker.com](mailto:duncan.howie@struttandparker.com)





---

“Cirencester is the leading university for Rural Land Management. It also gave me the widest list of contacts you could ever hope for.”





**Name:**

James Cutting

**Course:**

BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management

**Class of:** 1997

# A cut above...



James Cutting swaps rural surveying for the red carpet as a spontaneous holiday to Morocco sparks a sensational new life in the film industry – rubbing shoulders with the rich and famous and landing awards left right and centre.

**B**ut it's not all film premieres and champagne receptions. James Cutting spent the hottest month in Morocco, August, filming in a desert with temperatures reaching 55°C. Approached by Writer and Director Tom Petch, James started out as Location Scout for anti-war film *The Patrol*, a gritty depiction of British involvement in the war in Afghanistan, and ended up as Associate Producer. Initially tasked with finding a location that resembled Helmand, Afghanistan, he came up trumps with a stony desert just 45 minutes from his home in Marrakech,

which would provide the perfect backdrop. "Whilst on the scout we came across a village that had been abandoned a few years earlier, due to the wells drying up. We negotiated with the Mayor and got permission to use it as a set." James soon realised the film's significance as an anti-war commentary, and decided to step up his involvement. "As soon as we started filming I realised just how powerful *The Patrol* would be, so I decided to invest and became Associate Producer. The film follows the lives of a British patrol in Afghanistan, and takes a good, hard look at the British Government's decision to deploy them – at a time when they should have been withdrawing troops from Afghanistan. The vibrant imagery, brilliant script, and incredibly realistic location make

it the powerful piece of cinema it is." *The Patrol* was crowned best film at Raindance Film Festival last summer, 2013. "I always felt confident that *The Patrol* was something special, so when it won I felt elated! The reviews in *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, and various film magazines have been incredible, one even dubbed it the 'British answer to *The Hurt Locker*'. It was voted number one in the top 10 anti-war films, above '*Apocalypse Now*' and '*Platoon*', and has been nominated for the British Independent Film Awards. Sadly the film was released too late for this year's BAFTAs, but we've got our fingers crossed for a nomination next year!" This is just one of the latest projects in James' exciting film career, which has seen him work on *Alexander*, *Kingdom Of Heaven*, *Babel* – during which he actually



lived with Brad Pitt and formed part of his close protection team – Rendition, Body of Lies, Green Zone, Blackline, and Salmon Fishing in the Yemen. He has also been involved in more than 50 television productions, including the Emmy Award winning American production, Born to Explore, and a BAFTA nominated British cookery show. With the taste of his latest film success still fresh, James launched straight into a series of 10 television productions and filming on home turf. “I can’t say much at this stage, but Clint Eastwood, Tom Hanks, Nicole Kidman, and Ridley Scott are all coming to Morocco to film major productions.” So, how did a land agent, who studied Rural Land Management at the Royal Agricultural University before going on to complete a postgraduate law degree at

the University of Bristol, wind up rubbing shoulders with the likes of Emily Blunt and Ewan McGregor? “After visiting a friend in Morocco it became clear that this was the place to live. I moved into a small villa in Marrakech with my girlfriend, now wife, and we let out rooms during holidays. Then one fateful evening I got chatting to a guy in a bar, who offered me a job on the film Alexander – and I’ve never looked back. Three months later I was asked to work on Ridley Scott’s Kingdom Of Heaven as a Location Manager, and after seven Hollywood films and countless television productions, I’m now a Freelance Producer with a company in the UK called 221B Productions.”

---

[cuttingadash@gmail.com](mailto:cuttingadash@gmail.com)  
00212 (0) 699 39 48 60



**Name:**

James Nightingall

**Course:**

BSc (Hons) Property Agency and Marketing

**Class of:** 2012

# Unlocking the property market

James Nightingall proves that it really does pay to try, try and try again, as his third and final business proposal for the Grand Idea awards hit the jackpot and saw him set up a successful network of property search agents.

**M**otivated, passionate, driven. Just three words that sum up former Property Agency and Marketing student and business entrepreneur James Nightingall, who entered the University's Grand Idea awards three times with three completely different business ideas. Despite coming runner up on two occasions, he was undeterred by his so-called 'lack of success' and kept going back to the drawing board – and good job he did because idea number three struck gold! Talking about his experience, James said: "I saw the Grand Idea awards as an opportunity to create my own job before

leaving university. I'd always known that I wanted to start my own company so it was the perfect opportunity. I entered three times with three separate ideas; RAU Wellies, a car sharing

app for university students, and finally the property search network which went on to form the foundations of the business I would go on to set up, James & James. "I came across the idea while I was completing my dissertation on the buying agency industry. I discovered over 1,000 property agents with off-market access to the UK's property market and saw this growing number of unique buying agents as a network opportunity. Each year was invaluable towards my experience, personal development and connections, and I really do feel that it changed my life. The feedback from the competition

allowed me to develop what I was really passionate about, entrepreneurship in property, and helped me get to where I am today." If that's not enough evidence of James' entrepreneurial spirit, then how about this. He was also President of the Entrepreneurs Society from 2010-2011.

"Being the President was an invaluable experience. It was a great way to meet like-minded people and raise money for charity through events. A lot of the management skills I learnt from the Society I now use in my everyday business." After graduating from the Royal Agricultural University, James was awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Entrepreneurship at Cambridge University before setting up James & James. "We help clients find and select the right buying agent for their property search. Buying agents act on behalf of the buyer to secure the right property for the lowest price, whereas an estate agent acts for the seller to achieve the highest selling price," he explains. "In the past six months alone we've helped clients from all over the world with a combined budget of £21.5 million, and have over 45 buying agents across the UK as network members. My mission is that more people hire buying agents for their property search. Everyone should have their own Phil Spencer and Kirstie Allsopp from Channel 4's Location, Location, Location!" So, any advice for someone thinking of setting up their own business? "Starting a business at university is the best time to do it, you have the resources and the networks. Don't worry about failure, it's only feedback. Keep it simple, be curious, and dream big. But most of all, enter the Grand Idea awards. The support from the enterprise team at the RAU is outstanding."



**"Starting a business at university is the best time to do it, you have the resources and the networks. Don't worry about failure, it's only feedback. Keep it simple, be curious, and dream big."**

**James Nightingall**  
020 8720 6909  
james@jandjlondon.com  
www.jandjlondon.com



# One Year Farming

The One Year Farming course is an intensive programme of study, designed to equip the prospective landowner, farmer or manager with the basic knowledge required for running contemporary farm enterprises.

Crop Production and Science  
Livestock Production and Science  
Machinery and Buildings  
Estate Management  
General Agricultural Issues  
Farming and the Environment  
Farm Administration  
Skills training

For further information about the course content please contact [nicholai.thomasin-foster@rau.ac.uk](mailto:nicholai.thomasin-foster@rau.ac.uk) or visit [www.rau.ac.uk/one-year-farming](http://www.rau.ac.uk/one-year-farming)

Royal  
Agricultural  
University  
Cirencester

The logo for the Royal Agricultural University, featuring a crest with a crown and two figures, and the letters 'RAU' in a stylized font.



**Name:**

Charlie Cole

**Course:**BSc (Hons) Rural Land  
Management**Class of:** 2010**Name:**

Elizabeth Dyer

**Course:**BSc (Hons) International Equine and  
Agricultural Business Management**Class of:** 2013

# No kidding around

Kid meat may sound like an exotic dish, but as British tastes widen and people become more experimental with what they put on their plate, the market for products like kid meat is growing at an astonishing rate.

**T**wo former students who know this better than anyone are Elizabeth or 'Lizzie' Dyer and Charlie Cole.

These entrepreneurial individuals both spotted a glaring gap in the market when they realised how much potentially valuable kid meat was going to waste. Business-minded Charlie established his company Broughgammon, in 2010, and has since grown a successful and sustainable kid meat business, and Lizzie, who founded hers just last year in 2013, has already developed an impressive portfolio of high-profile customers that's growing by the day. "I've always liked goats," said former equine student Lizzie, "and was surprised to find that the practice of killing billy kids; a tasty, healthy red meat, at birth was still permitted. With this in mind, plus my love for food, the rest just fell into place. In an era of food shortages, to have such a vast number of billy kids wasted was simply mad." Lizzie set up her business Just Kidding after a final year business

module gave her the opportunity to create the business plan and explore the viability of the idea. She has since developed a successful business that has grown in line with demand.

But just how easy has it been to convince the British public of the merits of kid meat? "I've been overwhelmed by the interest and support I've had, and I now supply both members of the public and Michelin-starred chefs," smiles Lizzie. "There have been plenty of puns along the way but no problems to speak of. The biggest challenge so far has been to create a market for my product as it's very niche. In addition, there's no blueprint for rearing billy kids, so we have had to work on trial and error with different systems to find one that works." Charlie, who trained as a land agent before seeing the emerging opportunities in agriculture, and more specifically kid farming, also found that people were surprisingly susceptible to this once 'exotic' dish. "It has sometimes been an uphill struggle here in Northern Ireland, as people have very conservative tastes, but I think we're seeing a food revolution. People are becoming more experimental and it's great to be a part of that."

He recalls the moment he first struck onto the idea of selling kid meat, and the initial reactions from the butchers and restaurants he approached. "I looked at our small plot at home and after coming up with lots of different ideas I started thinking about goats. Before I knew it I was calling up the Irish Goat Society and various ethnic community groups to try and establish markets! I borrowed some money and gradually grew the enterprise from a mobile home on a 48 acre plot to a purpose built barn with plans to expand. "When we first started selling it we hit a bit of a snag, we thought restaurants would follow mainland trends and snap them right up, but when they didn't we had to fill the freezer with kid meat and have a rethink. We came up with the idea of selling kid meat burgers at fairs and festivals, and the burger van was born. We arrived at 'The Ould Lammas Fair', a traditional horse fair drawing people from all over Ireland, and during the event were inundated with hungry revellers and completely sold out. We decided to invest in a fridge van and have been attending farmers markets and small events ever since. Our main income is through retail trade, but we've also started to supply wholesale to restaurants as we get more involved in foodie events."

**Broughgammon**  
charlie@broughgammon.co.uk  
www.broughgammon.com  
@BroughgammonFrm



“

“We’re seeing a taste revolution. People are becoming more experimental and it’s great to be a part of that.”

It’s not just the meat that’s flying off the shelf, Lizzie also makes an income selling skins. “As a by-product of the main business, we sell the skins independently and to a woman who uses them to make handbags. They are salted on the farm and sent to the only registered organic tannery in the UK.” Who knew the humble billy kid could become such a lucrative business? Looking towards the future, both Lizzie and Charlie have grand plans to continue to grow and expand their respective

businesses. Lizzie hopes to set a precedent for rearing billy kids for meat and carry out farm based research accordingly, while Charlie plans to grow the business sustainably and concentrate on his latest business venture, veal and game.

**Just Kidding**  
**07875331434**  
**[lizzie.dyer@gmail.com](mailto:lizzie.dyer@gmail.com)**  
**[www.cotswoldkidmeat.com](http://www.cotswoldkidmeat.com)**



Credit: Sean Allard



# Ciren weddings



## James Holbrook-Bull and Kerry Read

James Holbrook-Bull and Kerry Read, both BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management 2007, exchanged their vows in Kerry's home parish, St Andrew's Church in Leigh, near Sherborne on 14 September 2013. After a quick stop off at Drummers Farm, Kerry's childhood home, to take some stunning wedding snaps, the party travelled to Stockbridge Farm Barn to start the celebrations. They enjoyed a feast of roast beef with all the trimmings, sourced from the family farm, before jetting off on a once in a life time trip to the Rockies and Yellowstone National Park, USA. James and Kerry returned to their newly renovated house in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire and land agent jobs at Fisher German and Strutt and Parker. They are already on the lookout for their next big house project.

## George Harrison and Penelope Swift ►

Penelope Swift (BSc (Hons) Business Management 2009) married George Harrison (BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management 2009) on Friday 15 November 2013 at St Margaret's Church in Ipswich, followed by a reception at The Royal Harwich Yacht Club. They were joined by 115 guests, 45 of whom were at Cirencester with them. Ben Skilbeck, who was Master of the RAC Beagles, blew them into their wedding breakfast and the boys formed a guard of honour with hunting whips outside the church. Afterwards, they flew to Kenya for their honeymoon.





### James Hill and Alexandra Gilmore ►

James Hill (BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management 2000) of Lockington, East Yorkshire, married Alexandra Gilmore of Stretton on Fosse, Warwickshire, on 21 December 2013 at Whichford House in Warwickshire. 10 of the ushers and best men (pictured) were ex-Cirencester students, as was their bridesmaid, Ally's sister Ginny Gilmore (2008), and more than a third of the wedding guests.



### ◀ Nicholas Edward Nixey and Tanya Anne Pearce

Nicholas Edward Nixey (BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management 2003) married Tanya Anne Pearce on a beautiful sunny day at her family farm in Broughton Poggs, near Lechlade on 6 July 2013. The ceremony was held in the village church before the 120 guests walked back to the farm to celebrate the occasion in a giant marquee. They were joined by 17 former Cirencester students, and the bulk of the VWH Hunt turned out in force for the evening. The couple then jetted off to Kenya for their honeymoon, where they went on a safari and stayed on a stunning private island off the coast of Mombassa.

### ▼ Charlie Booker and Rebecca Matthew

Charlie Booker (BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management 2007) married Rebecca Matthew (BSc (Hons) Property Agency and Marketing 2007) on 16 September 2012 in the University Chapel, surrounded by their family and friends – a high proportion of whom were alumni! They enjoyed drinks on the lawn in front of the Bathurst Wing and had the reception in the main dining room.



### ▲ Sarah McKay and William Hosegood

Sarah McKay (BSc (Hons) International Equine and Agricultural Business Management 2007) and William Hosegood (BSc (Hons) Rural Land Management 2007) married in Combs Church, Stowmarket on 14 December 2013. The reception was held at The Granary Barns, an amazing converted flint barn just outside Newmarket, developed by ex-student Guy Taylor (2005) in 2013. The best men were John Farrington (2005) and Robin Stevenson (2007), both ex-students. Most of the ushers were also ex-RAU, as well as one bridesmaid, Amy Stevenson (née Lowry, 2007). The group photograph includes most of their ex-RAU guests, although it was pretty cold so a few had already left by then!



### ◀ Lara Atkinson and Harrison Veck

On 13 July 2013, Lara Atkinson (BSc (Hons) Animal Science and Management 2012) and Harrison Veck (FdSc Animal Science and Management 2010) tied the knot at Lackham House, in the grounds of Lackham College near Chippenham, the place they first met whilst studying. Friends and family from near and far, and their beautiful baby Avaline Bao, helped them celebrate the joyous occasion and partied into the small hours. The couple spent their honeymoon basking in the warm rays of sunny Weymouth. Baby Ava was so fascinated by the creatures at Sea Life Centre, it looks like she's already becoming an animal enthusiast like her parents!



# 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](mailto:alumni@rau.ac.uk) and remember to include the year you graduated and the course you studied.

## 1950s

### **Peter Vessey** **1956 Rural Estate Management**

Having booked to study the A course, I arrived for my first day at College only to find that the course was full! My options were to transfer to the B course (Rural Estate Management) or return for the A course (Agriculture) the following year; obviously I stayed on and completed the B course. The College in the 1950s was a social eye-opener; Lord this, Viscount that, Prince so and so and then me on my bike. Along with my father I farmed beef, dairy, pigs and sheep in Devon at a time when it was usual to have only local breeds. We imported Border Leicester Cheviots from Dingwall and one black sheep which came free with a hundred white ones. Subsequently I spent three years on the Lee Abbey Estate (a Christian community and retreat) which was followed by ordination. Since my plans for agricultural missionary work in East Africa did not work out, I became a parish priest, based mainly in cities, as well as being a police chaplain. Later in life my wife Uta and I retrained as counsellors and ran a private practice. Now in retirement I have become an expert dry stone wall builder which is a necessity for my garden, reclaimed from woodland on a steep Derbyshire hillside.

## 1960s

### **Peter Sanguinetti** **1961 National Diploma in Agriculture**

My early days in Africa were spent with my mother and Grandfather, Sir Ernest Guest, a pioneer, lawyer and Statesman. My mother's twin brothers both lost their lives in WW2, and my father did not return. Grandpa was my hero. In 1950, my mother remarried a successful farmer with 6,000 acres. We employed about 100 workers and their families. We had cattle, maize



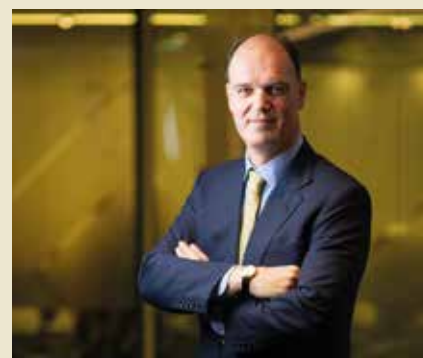
*Peter Sanguinetti*

and some tobacco – it was successful and after school at Bishops in Cape Town I was sent to Cirencester. Alas, my year farming did not qualify for NDA, but I made some wonderful friends. In January 1965 I landed in London, with a few clothes and £100. I did odd jobs, and slept on a camp bed on the floor of a friend's flat until I was offered a job as a management trainee at WD & HO Wills in Bristol. It took me 19 years to reach top management at Imperial Group. I led an industry campaign to obstruct EU plans to change taxes and saved jobs. In 1987 Sir Norman Payne, Chairman of BAA, recruited me as Director of Public Affairs, responsible for parliamentary approval to build Stansted and privatise BAA. Then, in 1993, the Chairman of British Gas recruited me to facilitate the demerger. In 1996 I was invited to be Director of Fundraising for the Prince's Trust and raised £3 million in two years! I also spent some time as Director of Communications at CLA and founded a chair of Strategic Communications at UMIST and was awarded an MSc (Hons). Finally came six years as Chief Executive of the Crop Protection Association, where I achieved approval for the safe use of pesticides. Retired, I enjoy my lovely Georgian House overlooking my farm and Glastonbury. Married to Rose, I have two children, Edward and Charlotte.

## 1970s

### **Edgar Cooksley** **1973 National Diploma in Agriculture**

Attending the RAC aged 41, I was twice the age of most of my fellow students and older than the then Principal Dr Gordon Dickson. I was one of the many small dairy farmers who 'went to the wall' during the 1960s and 70s and was intent on building a new career. After leaving the College I took a teaching qualification that enabled me to teach at Kingston Maurward, Hampden Hall, Stoke Mandeville and at a junior detention centre. In the 1980s I was involved in helping to create a new agricultural institute in Oman. Subsequent to this, I became the manager of a 2,500 acre farm development in Nigeria. To a large extent I owe some outstanding experiences to my time at the RAC and have many happy memories of my two years of study.



*Philip Gready*

## 1980s

### **Philip Gready** **1982 Rural Estate Management**

I'll admit, despite being a farmer's son from Gloucestershire, that the RAC, as it was then, was not the most obvious next step on my career path after leaving school. To my parents' immense

frustration I was more interested in an extended gap year (three years!) and it took some practical experience with my uncle's property business, and a few incentives, to persuade me that a course in Rural Estate Management would be a wise move. Away from the lecture theatre, my spare time during the winter and spring terms was largely taken up by rugby, and while Captain I had regular Monday morning meetings with Vic Hughes – more to discuss the post-match 'events' than the score. On leaving Cirencester, I rejected a job offer from MAFF in favour of a place with Savills, despite the lower starting salary. My first major role involved the day-to-day management of the Rushmore Estate, Dorset in which I retain a keen interest. I'm certain that my estate management training helped me develop many of the skills I require for my present role as Head of Savills Rural, Energy and Projects Division. My time with Savills (32 years) has flown past – it has been hugely diverse, challenging and great fun. Over this period our business has grown from a UK partnership employing a total of 190 people to a FTSE 250 Property Advisory company employing 28,000 people around the globe. The Royal was a great preparation for what lay ahead. I have remained in close contact with many of my contemporaries and my closest friends are from those Cirencester days. There is probably no better testament to the value I place on my three years at the RAU than the fact that my son Bertie has followed me there.



Hugh Baker

## 1990s

### Hugh Baker 1993 Rural Estate Management

It's 20 years since I studied at Cirencester; I'm not sure where the time has gone, other than into qualifying as a Rural Practice Surveyor in Wiltshire, moving to South Lincolnshire to work with Brown & Co, a stint in the fresh produce industry in Nottinghamshire and starting Hub Rural, my Spalding based consultancy practice in 2007. Getting married, building a house, having and grappling with three children, and the obligatory black Labrador has also passed the time!

Hub Rural clients are typically in the agri-food sector, with activity in other areas as opportunities occur. Our input ranges from land agency and farm business management tasks through to Non-

Executive Chair and Director roles, and everything in between. We also act for estates, trustees, landlords, families, joint ventures, collaborations and producer organisations. In short, we will try and help anyone who has a rural property or business issue. We specialise in building close relationships with clients and typically become part of their infrastructure. As a result, we tend to do more for each client but have fewer clients, so that the level of service can be maintained. Renewable energy is becoming an increasing part of our consultancy activity, as the involvement of rural assets within site provision or feedstock supply chains accelerates and matures, combined with customers wanting food production to be 'greener'. Another 20 years takes me to retirement and if there is as much going on in the second 20 as the first, it is going to be an interesting ride. I will have even less hair by the end of it that's for sure!

## 2000s

### Vics Thirlwell 2002 International Agriculture and Equine Business Management

For many alumni who spent a great life-forming three years here, the Royal Ag has an almost magnetic draw that means many of us return and settle in the area – it just feels like home. I am one of them and I returned 'home' two years ago to work at the RAU and I am now the Development and Alumni Officer. Just as during my student days, being back on campus continues to give me a strong grounding and a robust outlook on life – which I can only blame for giving me the confidence and gumption to sign up for a charity trek to Everest Base Camp in September. Whilst I have always considered myself an adventurous individual, a bit of off-piste skiing and straying away from the usual dog walking route are not really adventurous at all in the grand scheme of things. So it's no wonder that I'm now questioning my own sanity for deciding that a trek up to the Base Camp would be both achievable and a good idea! Fortunately I am being trained by the RAU gym and I am incredibly grateful for their support, along with my corporate sponsors; Bell Silencer, Swindon, and Chesterton Farm Shop – without whom, the challenge would not be possible. I am also extremely thankful to the Tunnel House Inn for providing the venue, food, and drink for my charity auction which raised over £5,000 on 4 July.

Vics Thirlwell



I am fundraising for Challenge for Life, a charity that is affiliated with all of the cancer charities meaning that I didn't have to make the difficult decision about whether to support cancer research or support/care – I can split my fundraising between them. Nowadays it seems that cancer touches most people's lives in some way and 2013 saw the loss of both my brother Roger and my partner's mother Ruth Jenner – spurring me on to do my bit to help with the fight against cancer. Who knows, perhaps this could be the first of many challenges for me – South Pole next? If you would like to support Challenge for Life and Vics' fundraising effort, please visit her page on: [www.everydayhero.co.uk](http://www.everydayhero.co.uk) and search for Victoria Thirlwell or contact her via the Development Office: [Victoria.thirlwell@rau.ac.uk](mailto:Victoria.thirlwell@rau.ac.uk)

## 2010s

### Lisabeth Grindrod 2013 Rural Land Management

It has now been five months since I said my emotional goodbyes to friends and family at graduation and celebrated three fantastic years at the RAU. The result was a very pleasing first class degree in Rural Land Management, great contacts, friends, and fond memories. The day was the perfect ending to one chapter, and the exciting start to another. Less than 24 hours after the celebrations had come to an end at the Freshers and Graduation Ball, I was boarding a New Zealand bound plane. Since arriving, I have been working at a 340 cow dairy in Canterbury, South Island. Although small by Kiwi standards, it has meant I have enjoyed great responsibility and been trusted with management decisions. I believe practical agricultural experience is essential to succeed in my chosen profession as a rural Chartered Surveyor. I will be returning to the UK in October to begin my employment with Fisher German and start working towards the RICS and CAAV qualifications. Exciting times lie ahead, but before I get ahead of myself, I still have the busy time of calving and some rewarding sightseeing to look forward to.

Lisabeth Grindrod





Considering  
postgraduate  
study?

20%  
REDUCTION  
ON TUITION  
FEES FOR ALL  
RAU ALUMNI\*

## PLUS

You could be eligible for one  
of our scholarships, bursaries  
or awards

The 20% alumni tuition fee reduction will be  
applied after any other scholarship or funding  
has been applied

## NEW for 2014

MSc bursary of up to £2,500 is now available to  
new MSc students, from the UK and EU, who enrol  
onto one of the following taught MSc courses:

MSc International Rural Development  
MSc Food Safety and Quality Management  
MSc Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security  
MSc Applied Equine Science

For a full list of the scholarships, awards  
and bursaries available, please visit  
[www.rau.ac.uk/scholarships](http://www.rau.ac.uk/scholarships)

Royal  
Agricultural  
University  
Cirencester



[www.rau.ac.uk](http://www.rau.ac.uk)



Materials : Cover : 150gsm UPM Fine Offset  
Text : 100gsm UPM Fine Offset  
Insert : 130gsm Essential Silk  
FSC Mix Credit  
TT COC 002168

\*discount applies for 2014 entrants on all taught postgraduate courses



Printed on recycled paper.

When you have finished with this magazine, please recycle it.