

November 2022



# HARPER LIFE

The Harper Adams Club  
Harper Adams Alumni Association  
Established November 1920



# Introduction from Club Presidents Simon Jones & Ros Barsley

Welcome to the 2022 edition of Harper Life, we hope you enjoy reading it. If you feel inspired to contribute your own story, send a picture, or tell us all something interesting for the next edition, just get in touch, we'd love to share it.

It has been another interesting year, thankfully without any Covid restrictions. At last, the University was able to celebrate graduation with 6 events taking place at Harper Adams for the 2020,2021 and 2022 cohorts. The 2020's have certainly got off to a flying start and already left their mark in history. Right now, it is difficult to keep up with what is going on both at home and abroad. Nevertheless, the Harper Adams Club starts its 102nd year with this edition of Harper Life and continues to be the focal point for Harper Alumni. The new Club Committee is full of enthusiasm for the time ahead and is looking forward to building on its century of history.

The Club held its annual lunch and open day on Saturday 18th June and it was a pleasure to be joined by three of our scholars and the University's Vice-Chancellor, Prof Ken Sloan.

The Club continues to support students through the scholarship program and has also made significant donations to three important causes in the last year. You can read all about these and what else has been going on at Harper further on in the magazine.

Thank you to all the contributors to this edition of Harper Life, keep your stories coming.

Keep in touch  
Simon & Ros

## The Harper Adams Club Committee 2022 – 2023

### Joint Club Presidents

Ros Barsley – HND Agriculture 1970 - 1973  
Simon Jones – BSc Rural Environmental Protection 1996 - 2000

### Committee Members

Dale Allen – BSc Countryside & Environment Management 2011-2015  
Ed Cooper – BSc Agriculture 1992 - 1996  
Sarah Furniss – BSc Agriculture with Land & Farm Management 1998 - 2002  
Alex Law – BSc Agriculture with Land and Farm Management 1999 – 2003 / MSc REALM 2007  
Mark Miles – HND Agriculture 1984 – 1988 (SU President 1985/86)  
Charlotte Playfair-Hannay – BSc Rural Enterprise and Land Management 2004 – 2008.  
Sam Roskell - BEng Mechanical Engineering 2018-2022  
Victoria Stead – BSc Countryside Environmental Management 2010–2015 / MSc Integrated Pest Management 2015 -17  
Alice Whitehead – BSc Agriculture 2009 – 2013  
Charlie Wright - BSc Agriculture 1992-1996



## Harper Adams Club lunch and Open Day

### 18th June 2022



Around 50 people attended the Club lunch in June and a great time was had by all with an excellent lunch provided in QMH by the University's catering department. Many thanks go to Catherine Baxter for an extended and comprehensive walk around the University campus



## An update from Vice Chancellor, Professor Ken Sloan

I am delighted to be able to write to you as part of this edition of Harper Life. I cannot believe that it is now a year since I started as Vice-Chancellor. So much has been done and experienced.

I thought it might be interesting to capture some highlights and also look into the future.

Firstly, let me say how much I enjoyed meeting many members of the Harper Adams Club at the annual lunch at the University in the Summer. It was wonderful to talk to graduates who cover almost the entire spectrum of our history, from College to University College and now University. So many memories were shared, and no one was shy in giving me their advice for the future! Building and connecting a vibrant alumni community is one of my key priorities. I have enjoyed the meetings with Simon and Ros, and the wider Harper Club Committee, as we have explored possibilities for the future. It will take us a bit of time to put things in place but be assured it will happen. We are reviewing the web and communication platforms we use and I am hoping that these developments will enable us to connect together more easily, as well as stay connected with what is happening in the University.

The past year has been incredibly busy. Setting up home having relocated from Australia took some time for Dan, the two dogs: Juno and Bennie, and I. When we moved back, Australia was still in lockdown. Just walking around without restrictions took some getting used to. The University was still in a predominantly hybrid mode with many classes online. We moved to a more in person model after Christmas and for the rest of the year.

**So, what have been the highlights? Probably too many to mention but here are a sample:**

The quality and commitment of our students, employees, governors, and alumni is outstanding. They are passionate about what they are doing and they care deeply about the University. It has been wonderful to see how many Harper people have been nominated for and won awards: Timothy Davidson winning Agri Student/Apprentice of the Year at the Farming Life Awards, Ben Chilman winning Farmers Weekly Agricultural Student of the Year, and Georgia Gray as finalist in the NI Student Veterinary Nurse of the Year Awards. Our graduates were

winners too including Cari Thomas receiving the Holstein UK President's Medal, Emily Scot winning the AgriScot Business Skills Award and Femi Adekoya receiving a Royal African Award. There were many more.

We have had a number of significant developments. The School of Sustainable Food and Farming, delivered in partnership with Morrisons, McDonalds and the NFU, has moved into full operations. We will shortly appoint a new Director to accelerate its work. The School's aim is to ensure that the farming sector has access to the talent, skill development opportunities, and policy settings to succeed in delivering net zero operations, and remain economically viable. The School works with a network of partners and is building a network of farms where exemplary and innovative practice is being and will be demonstrated.

We have launched the Future Farm with Richard Hooper as its Director. Scott Kirby is the Future Farm Manager. We have pulled all of our farming operations into one integrated, future-focused team. Not only does this make sense practically and financially, it means we can mobilise all of our expertise to provide leadership and support to others in the sector.

Our research continues to be recognised for its quality and impact with 60% of our submitted work being recognised as internationally excellent. We continued to be successful in securing increasing research awards from industry and government. We have a very strong baseline from which to build.

I have been particularly excited to champion our Harper Forward curriculum. Led by Professor Lydia Arnold, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Digital) with Dr Simone Clarke our Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students), we have collaborated with academics, industry and our students to ensure that our future courses deliver what graduates need to be successful and impactful. Our first ten trailblazer courses

in Food, Business and Engineering are recruiting for 2023 and the rest of our undergraduate courses will be renewed for launch from 2024. We will also be using this framework to develop our apprenticeships and postgraduate portfolio. We have an enviable reputation with industry partners but we need to stay relevant to sustain that. Thank you to everyone who has helped with this process.

I was delighted to see that we were able to secure over £500k in scholarships through the Harper Adams Development Trust. This was down to the outstanding work of Doris Taylor and the Development Trust team and Board, and the contagious enthusiasm and persuasion of Dr Catherine Baxter, our University Secretary. You will not be surprised to hear that I am keen that we go further with our fundraising ambitions. We have so much we can contribute to the future of our industries, and we want to ensure talented students are supported to do so, but we can only do this with the support of partners and our alumni. I am grateful to everyone who has supported the University through the Trust and through the Harper Adams Club. The Club continues to support a number of students and has contributed to our new partnership with Odessa National University of Technology in Ukraine.

We did significant work to develop and implement the University and the Students' Union Respect Plan which had started just before my arrival. At its heart is a very simple message: anyone who has the interest and capability to contribute to and succeed at the University is welcome to do so. It is vital we have an environment where everyone feels that they belong. I have made it clear that I will not tolerate any actions which harm other individuals or do not reflect the values that we look to our graduates to take into society and the workplace. When people are investing so much in their education they have the right to do so safely and with respect. The Board, the senior leadership, and the wider University and Students'

Union community have come together to demonstrate their commitment to this and I know I can rely on your support.

There are so many other highlights I could mention: meetings with our Chancellor, HRH The Princess Royal, visiting a number of agricultural shows where we were exhibiting, bringing students with no experience of rural and farming life to the campus and farm and then seeing it on Countryfile, visiting companies where our alumni are based, celebrating the success and impact of the Nuffield Scholarships, and our students and their constant charitable efforts. Too many to mention.

We have also lost some important and influential people during my first year. Former Principal Dr Tony Harris CBE, The Lord Plumb DL, Dr Caroline Drummond MBE, and Peel Holroyd. They have all left significant legacies on which we can build and we are grateful for the leadership that they each showed. I sense Tony's impact whenever I go around the University campus.

And so to the future. Like every organisation, the University operates in a complex and challenging external environment. Yet we look forward with confidence. I have spoken to many people across the country and internationally to hear their thoughts on what the University should do in the coming years. We need to be more visible, and speak with greater confidence. When the sectors we work with are facing unprecedented challenges, we must step up and share our knowledge, insights and thoughts with clarity. We must challenge ourselves to deliver courses and programmes which anticipate and support the future, and we must offer them to people at all stages of their career, not just at the beginning. We will launch our next University Strategy in early 2023 and I hope you will look at ways to engage and partner with us.

I am sure there will be some who might say "The University has changed", "it wasn't like that when I was there", "I don't feel part of it anymore" or "I don't know where it is going". I will do what I can to make it easier to understand what we are doing and why. We can't stand still; we were not set up to be a museum. To stay independent and sustainable we need to operate in and contribute to the challenges of the age we are facing. For as long as we don't have an answer to how a global population of 10bn will be fed without destroying the planet, we will not stop finding ways to contribute to the answer.

I need you with me on this journey. If you have ideas which can help us to play our role in the future, or ideas of where we might look to for investment, partnership or financial support, I am always keen to hear them ([vc@harper-adams.ac.uk](mailto:vc@harper-adams.ac.uk)). For now, stay well and I look forward to meeting many more of you over the next year.

## In-person Scholarship Presentation sees £500,000 awarded to students

**“Every year, these scholarships offer our students not just financial support, but also opportunity – and it is great to see after each event how these awards help to shape their recipient’s future.”**

An in-person ceremony has celebrated the return of the Harper Adams Scholarship Presentation to campus – with £500,000 awarded to students at the event.

This year’s ceremony – organised by [The Harper Adams University Development Trust](#) - was the first in-person event since February 2020.

A variety of support is offered through the scholarships awarded at each year’s event – including funding which could help with university fees or final year research, for students who want to take part in conferences, and more – and paid work placements with accompanying scholarships, which are often cited by their recipients as helping them secure vital industry experience.

Head of Development Doris Taylor said: “It is wonderful to be able to say that the University’s Development Trust has co-ordinated 164 scholarships this year, totalling £500,000 and supporting 141 individual students.

“The links which are marked at these events between students and sponsors regularly strengthen further – with students securing roles at their sponsoring companies after graduation. I’d like to thank all of our sponsors for their support – which is very much appreciated by our students.”

Professor Ken Sloan, Harper Adams University Vice-Chancellor “We know what a challenging year this has been both for students and for many of our industrial partners. To see the strength of support at this year’s event is a testament to the work of our Development Trust staff, of Clive Gurney as Chairman and his fellow Development Trust trustees, and of Catherine Baxter, University Secretary and Secretary to the Development Trust.

“Whether it is through scholarships, placements, jobs upon graduation, or events like this we know that our current students will continue developing those bonds and building upon our top-ranking reputation among employers.

“Whatever the nature of the sponsorship, it really does make a difference and every sponsor deserves our thanks and recognition.”

## Harper Adams Club Scholars 2022

### Sam Roskell Final Year Scholarship

“Being awarded the Harper Adams Club scholarship in my final year at Harper filled me with a great sense of pride. I have always spoken highly of my ongoing experience at Harper, to family and friends who know the university, but also those who do not. I truly believe that the sense of community at Harper Adams is like no other university and I actively encourage anyone who does not know about what Harper Adams offers to find out! Achieving the scholarship felt like a recognition of both my academic efforts at HAU and also my efforts and enthusiasm for the university’s unique community, ‘Harper Life’.

The scholarship allowed me to fully focus on my academic work during the final year of my studies and particularly the final few months of deadlines which were without doubt the most intense. As I move on into my professional career, I have secured a role with BAE Systems as a Mechanical Design Engineer working on submarine propulsion.”

### Sam Scales, Postgraduate Scholarship

“It was a true honour to revive the prestigious The Harper Club Post Grad scholarship and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the club members that donated to the award. This award provided me and my degree a life line at a time when it was truly needed, allowing me to continue with my studies. It also has also allowed me to help keep that Harper spirit alive, through allowing me the time to get new Harper engineering society off the ground and other wider university projects, such as the Harper Adams Queen’s Jubilee beacon.

I’m now working as a test and development engineer at JCB Heavy Products, and having a fantastic time whilst hopefully showing that Harper still produce the “Industry Ready graduate” the University prides its self on!

One thing is for sure though, you’re never far from Harper, as I found out this week, when in a Meet and Greet with the department managers where at least 25% were Harper alumni!

The support of the Harper Adams Club is something I shall never forget and will be forever grateful for!”

### Tarnia Jordan Presidents Scholarship

I would like to express my utmost gratitude and appreciation to the Harper Adams Club for awarding me the Harper Adams Club President’s Scholarship. This scholarship has opened so many opportunities for me and is something I will always be grateful for. Providing me with the financial support to enrol on post-qualification courses to further my knowledge and specialise in veterinary emergency critical care and anaesthesia at Willows Referrals. It has also provided me with the confidence to believe in myself and to continue to work hard to achieve my goals within and beyond the veterinary sector. I am deeply honoured to become part of the Harper Adams Club community and hope to keep in touch with everyone in true Harper-life spirit.

### Lucy d’Angibau Extended Foundation Degree Scholarship

“The Harper Adams Club Scholarship gave me the freedom to gain new experiences over in Northern Ireland and enabled me to expand my CV further ready for applying for placements this coming year! The experience of applying for the scholarship was invaluable and I feel having had practice writing a covering letter and answering interview questions will also help me as I enter second year and start applying for placements.”

### Kate Hall Presidents Scholarship

“As a recipient of the Harper Adams Presidents’ Scholarship in my final year, it provided me with much-appreciated support. University life can be a tricky balance of study, work and socialising – and this award afforded me financial support to assist with taking pressure off. With added bonuses of meeting HAU club members and alumni at events, I feel more prepared to travel and work. I now know that no matter where I go – be it a shepherding position in the Scottish Highlands, or a genetics role in Canterbury, NZ – that I’ll meet and be welcomed by the Harper community anywhere.”

### Lewis Gregg, Animal & Veterinary Science Scholarship

I was honoured to receive the Harper Adams Club Animal and Veterinary Sciences Scholarship this year, which has and continues to be an amazing opportunity.

I am privileged to be a part of the first cohort of BVetMS Veterinary Medicine and Surgery students studying at Harper and have just started my third year, which is the beginning of the clinical phase of the five year degree. Alongside the course, this phase involves 26 weeks of clinical placements during the holidays over the next three years. The generous support of the Harper Adams Club means that I can plan some of these placements farther afield and in specialised businesses which will help me develop in my particular areas of interest such as farm animal surgery and sustainable reproduction, without having to worry about the costs of transport and accommodation!

Although the course is full on, I still enjoy making the most of life at Harper and have made some great memories here, as well as many friends for life through clubs such as the rugby club!



Club Presidents Ros Barsley and Simon Jones with the Club’s 2022 Scholars



## Save the date - Harper Adams Club Annual Lunch 2023

The Harper Adams Club Lunch will take place at Harper Adams on Saturday 15 July 2023. Further details on how to book will follow in due course. If you have any immediate queries please contact [theparperadamsclub@gmail.com](mailto:theparperadamsclub@gmail.com).

The Club looks forward to welcoming as many alumni as possible and as usual extends a particular welcome to any groups who would like to celebrate a special anniversary in 2023! - such as Diamond 60 years (1963) Golden 50 years (1973) Ruby 40 years (1983) and Silver 25 years (1998).

# Charitable Donations

The Club had long planned to celebrate its Centenary in style. Unfortunately, the Covid restrictions in place in November 2020 meant the Club's 100th Anniversary celebration did not go ahead. The Harper Adams Club Committee decided to make good use of its Centenary budget and make charitable donations of £2500 each to FCN and RSABI



On behalf of The Farming Community Network (FCN), I would like to express our thanks for the donation of £2500 from the Harper Adams Club, to support our ongoing work. Whilst I was sorry to hear that your planned centenary celebrations were thwarted by Covid in 2020, I am delighted that you chose FCN as one of the beneficiaries of your unspent Centenary budget.

As British agriculture undergoes significant change, FCN is uniquely placed to support people across the industry on this journey. We provide a listening ear and help the farm community to develop resilience, manage change and prepare for the future.

Thank you for your recent donation of £2,500. Your support means a great deal to us. This contribution to our on-going work is greatly appreciated.

RSABI currently support people from Scottish agriculture emotionally, practically and financially in times of need. The impact of this combination of support has proven to be affective in helping people to move forward. The demand on RSABI services has increased significantly over the last two years, primarily from working farmers and crofters where the work is becoming more complex and time consuming to achieve satisfactory outcomes.

The team are now able to provide additional services (through qualified third parties) such as a 24hr freephone helpline service, counselling, mediation and business advice to ensure that support is effective. Last year RSABI directly helped around 691 households, 256 of whom received direct

Every day, our dedicated volunteers across England and Wales hear from farmers about the challenges they're dealing with and the pressures they're under – helping them to find a positive way forward, no matter the issue they may be facing.

Our farmers do so much for the country and operate to some of the highest standards in the world. We all rely on our farmers three times a day for the food that we eat; they maintain our beautiful and idyllic British countryside; and they also protect our native wildlife and their natural habitats.

Farmers are also at the heart of solving some of the most significant global challenges, including climate change and food security. The value of their work cannot be overstated.

Your generous donation will help us to continue supporting those in need. Every single donation makes a huge difference, allowing us to reach more people, help more farming families, and ultimately assist us in creating a resilient farming future – one that will thrive and benefit everyone in the years to come.

With renewed thanks and good wishes from us all.

**Dr Jude McCann**

**CEO - FCN**

grants amounting to £257,000. Most of the time spent with clients was to provide emotional (44%) and practical (45%) support to help them move out of difficulty. Thank you for this donation. Rest assured it will be put to good use.

**Carol McLaren, CEO RSABI**



## Ukrainian student sponsorship A huge thank you!

The University would like to express its sincere thanks to the Harper Adams Club, committee and members, as well as the Harper Adams Development Trust and Rabobank UK, for a donation which will support four Ukrainian students to spend a term studying on campus at Harper Adams during the 2022/23 academic year.

The students will be joining us from the Odessa National Academy of Food Technologies (ONUT) with whom Harper Adams is "twinned" through a national programme launched by Universities UK. We hope to be able to welcome more Ukrainian students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, as well as faculty members from ONUT.

# News of old students—



**Michelle Martin (nee Salmon)**

Class of 2011 (BSc Hons Veterinary nursing and practice management), Michelle Martin (nee Salmon) married Tim Martin on 18.06.22 in Gloucester.



**D M Protheroe**

Julie Faust (née Protheroe) sent in this photo of the Harper Adams Agricultural College Hockey Team 1937-38, explaining that her father was a student at the college at that time, studying Poultry Husbandry.

**John Roberts**

*Jacqui Taylor wrote to us about her father, John Roberts, and also shared some images from his time at Harper Adams in the 1950s.*

My father, John, is 94 this year. His hips and back have osteoporosis arthritis, he is profoundly deaf and his sight is now impaired. Walking and conversation have become difficult and he has lost the ability to read - a true tragedy for one who would consume an average of three books a week. His mind, however, is clear as a bell and his memory of past times - the names of fellow students, lecturers, places and events - chime cheerfully every day. He lost my beloved mum in December 2021 and that has been so difficult for him - they were happily married for 61 years. I am John's eldest daughter, and I have lived with and been full time carer to him and my mum for 4 years now. In that time I have learned more about my father than I did in the previous 53 years.

After being an "aviatin' ratin'" at Ford Airfield towards the end of WW2, he moved into the agricultural world of learning. He grew up on farms all over South East England, so this made sense. 1949 - 51 he was at Harper Adams doing his NDA and CDA, and from 1955 - 59 at Guelph in Toronto, Canada - getting his degree in Agricultural Engineering. He then moved to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1959 and worked for the Tobacco Research Board in Salisbury (now Harare) for over 20 years.

A keen fisherman all his life, he graduated by default into marine engineering and ran his own successful boat building and repair business in Harare until he retired 5 years ago at the age of 89. He fell off a ladder climbing out of a boat - otherwise I expect he would still be in his workshop. I am thankful that I have the privilege of being his daughter.

### **Khaldoun Ali, MSc Entomology, 2016**

I earned an MSc Degree in Entomology from Harper Adams in 2016. I then moved to Canada to pursue a PhD program in Plant-Insect Ecology (ecology of carabid weed seed predators) at the University of Saskatchewan in early 2017. I finished my PhD in Plant-Insect Ecology, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Saskatchewan, in February of this year. My doctoral thesis has been nominated for two awards; a Departmental Award (Plant Sciences), and a Dean's award (College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies). On top of that, the Department of Plant Sciences offered me a postdoctoral fellowship in Plant-Insect Ecology. I have recently started my Postdoctoral Fellow position, and I am preparing now for some experimental studies on the ecology of carabid beetles and their potential role in weed and pest biocontrol.

### **Jacky Richardson, (nee Brierley) Agric HND 1990 - 93**

I now own and run a retail garden centre / nurseries with my husband in Buckinghamshire. I have very happy memories of Harper. The staff were amazing.

I was taking my finals the year of the IRA problem when MI5 arrived and took over the common room and helicopters were flying over the rugby pitch and lots of students had to have forensics on their cars etc.

Preston Bissett Nurseries and Country Shop.

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



### **Gary Yeomans (1989-93 BSc AG) and Jess (nee Rumsey) 1989-92 AMBA) Yeomans**

hosted the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on St David's Day. Their Royal Highnesses were given a tour of Pant Farm near Abergavenny, a goat farm that has been providing milk to a local cheese producer for nearly 20 years. The Royal couple heard about challenges and opportunities faced by the sector and how the farm works with local industries and services.



### **Queen's Platinum Jubilee to be celebrated with Harper student Sam's bespoke beacon**

An engineer at Harper Adams University has taken on a unique challenge to design a custom-made beacon which will be lit to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

**Sam Scales**, from Prees in Shropshire, has worked with fellow members of the Harper Adams Engineering society, the Harper Adams Engineering and Estates teams, which was lit at a private ceremony on high ground in the Chetwynd Deer Park in Newport on Thursday, June 2nd.

Having secured both a Douglas Bomford Trust Scholarship and the Harper Adams Club Postgraduate Scholarship during his time at Harper, Sam said he wanted to show his gratitude for the support he has been shown during his time at the University through the project.

He added: "One of the good things about Harper Adams as University is it instills that sense of community spirit and giving back – I have been lucky enough to have been awarded those two scholarships.

### **Tim Whitworth HND 1992 -94; BSc Land & Farm Management 1995 - 96**

In June 2022 I celebrated my 50th Birthday, which gave me an ideal opportunity to reunite with old Harper friends, celebrate and raise some money for charity... Together with family, my friends from Canada and friends from throughout my life, it was just like we picked up from where we left off 1996.

The party was held at the fabulous Sedgewell Barn Wedding & Events Venue near Northallerton run by ex-Harper students Catherine & Stuart Tweddle.



Entertained by the excellent old Harper favourite band 'The Bogus Brothers' and DJ Chris Buj, it really was like old times, with many of the 250 guests staying in the onsite Glamping Cabins and Hot Tubs. The infectious Harper spirit amongst us remains strong and lifetime friendships maintained; with £2500 raised for The Prostate Cancer Charity.

In 2012 I embarked on a new path retraining as an electrician and established my own business in 2018.



### **Alex Law BSc Agric with Land & Farm Management 1999 – 2003 MSC Realm 2007**

Proud to announce the arrival of Cordelia Grace Law, 8lb 1oz, born on the 16th August 2022 a sister for Henry.



### **Viv Marsh HND Agric 1975 – 78**

The Praise Bee charity has been set up for the purpose of conserving and increasing the population of all solitary bees across the UK. Since 2010 when the charity started breeding and releasing 500 Red Mason bees within the loop of the River Severn in Shrewsbury, it eventually expanded to cover the whole of Shropshire, using nearly 70 churchyards creating new colonies. Beyond that, they now work across the county using MoD sites, RHS gardens, Police Stations and NHS hospitals.

Viv Marsh is the founder of the charity Praise Bee, an ex farmer, ex Policeman and ex NHS and is now an Alstroemeria and Iris horticulturalist based at Hunkington Manor, Walford Heath, Shrewsbury

[www.praisebee.org.uk](http://www.praisebee.org.uk)

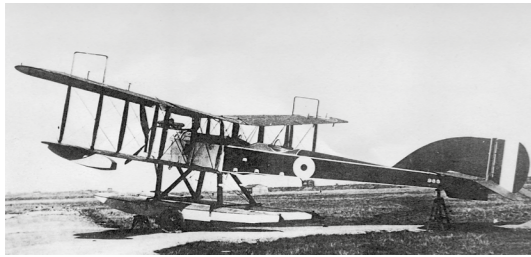


### **April Hughes MSc Agroecology 2016 and Matt Lawn MEng Agricultural Engineering, 2016**

are proud to announce the arrival of Percy Xander Lawn born 25th May 2022

### The Poulter family, Harper Adams and thanks to a pigeon

Leslie Poulter, the son of a London business man, attended Harper Adams in 1917 when he was only 17. However, he interrupted his studies to join the Royal Flying Corps early in 1918 to help the War effort and quickly learnt to fly seaplanes. Soon he was patrolling the North Sea which included dropping bombs by hand on German U-boats which were a great problem for shipping despite several forced landings due to engine failures, the most significant was when he came down on one of these missions with only two pigeons to convey his position back to base on the Isle of Wight. Fortunately, one of the pigeons made it back and a boat was sent to rescue him. Needless to say he was worried about being a 'sitting duck', but his plane stayed afloat for the 10 hours he was in the water and when he arrived they told him not to worry – the war was over – the date 11th November 1918! He later returned to Harper Adams and vowed never to harm a pigeon, even though he wanted to as a farmer, because a pigeon had saved his life.



His time at Harper enabled him to secure a job with Fison's Fertilizers as their first representative with a motor cycle and side car selling fertilizers from Cambridge to Cornwall. Alongside his job, he kept 50 bird houses and by chance found that using peat for litter instead of straw, obviated the need to clean them out regularly. Hence in 'Poultry World' magazine in 1933, on the front page, he was credited with introducing 'deep litter' as a new way of keeping chickens before battery systems became popular.

In 1921 Leslie was a Founder member of the Harper Adams Club and served two spells as President and was made a Life Member. He commissioned the President's badge of office, still in use today, from a silversmith in Chipping Campden.

After settling in Evesham, Leslie and his two sons, John and Gerard were born, both of whom attended Harper Adams in 1948 and 1954 respectively. They too helped to maintain the Club as Presidents and Committee members. Giles, Gerard's son attended Harper Adams in 1991.

On acquiring a small dairy farm in 1947 ran his own fertilizer business and the family maintained our Harper connections having over 40 pre – college students to help us on the farm to mutual benefit. One student Robert Ackroyd NDA 1971 - 73 was Club President in 1991 – 92 and helped to save the declining fortunes of the Club by making all students members of the Club when they left. The modern methods of communication have maximised the ability of the Club to keep the connection to Harper Adams all over the world.

As a family, we have benefitted from the 'Harper Experience' of education, lifelong friendships and attending many weekend reunions and Open Days. So thank you to all concerned, especially that pigeon!



### Peter Lewis HND 1973 - 76

The 1973 t- 1976 HND Alumni group held a re-union at Enniskillen, County Fermanagh from Friday 10th June to Sunday 12th June 2022. About 50 of us attended including spouses and partners and we had a brilliant weekend. Many thanks to our hosts Marshall and Muriel Wright, who with the help of Geoff and Judith Chapman, Frank McCormack and Bobby Beck.

The 73 - 76 group keep in regular contact and many of us participate on our WhatsApp group. We are hoping to have a good contingent at the Harper Adams Club Lunch in 2023 to celebrate 50 years since we started at Harper.

### Alan T. Edwards sends news of Len Taylor -

both were NIPH Students in 1961/62 and both gained CDP and NDP Qualifications



*When being presented at the NIPH to the Queen Mother in 1962*

When in N. Wales last weekend when visiting me in Fairbourne Village, the one that is apparently " sinking " into Cardigan Bay!!

It amazes me how Len's appearance has little changed over the Years



### Bruce Woodall

My news update is that I am still working, why? Because I enjoy it and it occasionally allows me to meet old Harper colleagues like John Tellam when my son's business had a contract to cut up and remove 2No tanks from the bowels of Tater Du lighthouse near Penzance.

I remembered that JT lived in Cornwall so managed to contact him and he was able to put my son in contact with some casual labour and we met up for some drinks one evening which was most enjoyable and probably revealing to my son.

My main business is OTS Group Ltd which manufactures liquid fuel storage tanks and services commercial fuelling installations and fuel security for Super Markets, Haulage businesses and now many farmers that are rightly concerned about fuel theft.

We have just celebrated 50 years in business and my son, Tom, is now Deputy Chairman so very much a family business.

It would be good to hear from any Harper people from 1964 ish!!

# The Queue

By Ben Palmer BSc Ag 1996-2000  
HA Club President 2012-13

**It was something I knew I just needed to do, once the visceral moment of realisation that Her Majesty had actually left us had arrived, on that early Thursday evening. I think the kids were startled by my reaction, especially when I shouted at them to stand up for the National Anthem. But for three generations in our family, she was the only Monarch we had known and even though logic suggested this time was very near, I somehow imagined the day might never come when we would lose our dutiful Queen.**

I arrived in London by train on the following Thursday evening to meet an old friend who I had first met at Haughton playgroup, less than halfway through the Queen's reign in 1981, who was toying with the idea of joining the pilgrimage with me. We walked up the Mall, glorious in Union Jacks, which had witnessed

the previous afternoon the mesmerizingly dramatic musicality of the Queen's final departure from Buckingham Palace to march to her Lying-In-State.



We enjoyed the moving spectacle of the Green Park floral tributes following a well policed one-way system. We met one of the 250 strong contingent from Staffordshire's force. We kept an eye on the Queue app to assess waiting times. Ten hours, so we took a punt on a tactical return to my friend's base in Essex for a couple of hours sleep to chance a reduction in waiting times by joining in the small hours. We awoke at

2am – still ten hours. This was too long for my friend who had work commitments, so he gave me a lift to Billericay station, where instead of striking, the railways were putting on extra hourly trains in the middle of the night into central London. I was the only one waiting for the 2.07am, apart from three nonchalant foxes used to having the platform to themselves at this time.

I made my way by night bus to London Bridge and soon spotted on the river path down below the entity, which was the Queue, snaking briskly but serenely through the night. I walked the opposite way for around half an hour beyond Tower Bridge towards Southwark Park, until a steward handed me a prized golden wristband. I could then begin my brisk walk in the correct direction where it was acceptable to walk as fast as you were able for a short while to establish

yourself in the Queue. Plentiful amiable stewards every few metres had somehow been conjured up throughout the route.

The Queue soon massively slowed and I looked around to see the people who I was about to spend the next twelve intense but spirited hours with. A Hungarian, an Oxfordshire netball coach, who had cut her holiday short who bought me a coffee, an army officer based in Wiltshire who could identify all the many military medals on display from some distance, a retired IT consultant, a train driver on the new Elizabeth Line which the Queen had opened herself in May and me, a Staffordshire dairy farmer. Many had also joined alone, all there for the same reason, but each with our own personal motivations. Conversations were sometimes light hearted, sometimes deep, thorough and wide ranging. After all we had the time.

**“By noon we had made it over the river and had a final wristband check as we entered the grounds of Westminster Hall.”**

Just before dawn the Queue ground to a halt for an hour by St Paul’s Cathedral as the funeral rehearsal stoppage filtered its way down. The National Gallery served warm drinks to keep us going and there were a few chances to buy refreshments or use some portaloos. There was no risk of losing your place in the Queue though, as your new found friends would be eagerly looking out for your return with an

encouraging wave. News arrived at 10am that the Queue had been closed and waiting time was up to 16 hours which made us feel vindicated on the early start. The Faith team from Lambeth Palace was out and about, as Westminster came tantalisingly into view on the other side of the Thames.



By noon we had made it over the river and had a final wristband check as we entered the grounds of Westminster Hall. There was a table of snacks and we enquired with a steward (who normally worked in Whitehall) if we were to hand any unused snacks in? The answer was a firm not yet – there were another three hours to go, and these were offerings recycled from much further down the Queue – so we gratefully picked some up to sustain us. We then had to zigzag over fifty times towards security passing David Beckham each time.

The retired IT guy speculated that he can’t have been queuing since 2am and must have had a ringer who swapped his wristband for his position in the Queue. I concluded that there was no way he could have lived that down, as the person in front and behind him would surely have had something to say about the rather obvious change of company. He had of course been five minutes ahead of us all day. The army officer,

like David, was dressed smartly in black tie and felt gently superior he had not chosen to pair his suit with a flat cap. We resisted asking for a photo, but plenty did, and David was courteous and patient as he leaned on his umbrella for support, and we ultimately overtook him as his progress was impeded by an ITV interview.

Phones and cameras were soon to be strictly turned off as we approached airport style security. The mood shifted and quietened in anticipation of entering the ancient Hall after the twelve hour wait. Magnificent solemnity greeted us as the coffin vividly came into our sight as we journeyed for around five minutes down the steps for our moment with The Queen. The carpeting absorbed most sound and at one point the peace was such I could only hear my own breathing. Some were visibly moved, many more inwardly so; many bowed, some saluted. There were no rules, as by now each Queuer’s experience was unique and personal between them and Her Majesty. Nobody lingered longer than the unspoken allotted two to three seconds, but those seminal moments were all the more potent for their transience.

After several final backward glances I emerged dazed from the Hall into the sunlight, where large crowds were there beyond the barriers, to witness the culmination for the Queuers. The army officer and retired IT guy were there waiting for me to say our farewells. I don’t expect I will ever meet George and Tim again, but I will never forget my time with them in The Queue.

# Royal Visits

To mark the loss of Her Majesty The Queen and the ascension of His Majesty King Charles III this year, we thought we’d share a few pictures of the many royal visits to Harper Adams over the years.



*The visit of H.R.H Princess Elizabeth on the occasion of the College’s Golden Jubilee and the opening of Jubilee hostel on 8th June 1951*



*H.R.H Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother on the occasion of opening of Queen Mother Hall, 1st May 1963*



*Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal visiting Harper Adams University College in April 2004 with Professor Wyn Jones, (Principal of Harper Adams 1996 – 2009)*



*Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal at a reception in October 2015 with Vice Chancellor David Llewellyn and students and staff*



*His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales made a flying visit to the Harper Adams University campus, July 2018*



*HRH The Princess Margaret Meeting staff and students after opening the Princess Margaret laboratories on 15th May 1985. Some of you may remember Felicity Beddowes, who was the receptionist in Main Building in the 1970’s and 1980’s.*



# Harper Adams Alumni feature as Guest Speakers for the 2022 Graduation Ceremonies

The guest speaker for the morning ceremony on Friday 23rd September was Ellen Humphrey, who graduated with a first class honours degree in Countryside and Environmental Management in 2018

Ellen is now Lead Officer for Natural Resources Wales, with specific responsibility for Forests. She previously worked as a project officer for Coed Cymru Woodland Carbon Code Clients and developed their forestry management group after spending a year as a Graduate trainee for ABAgri- global supply chain training programme.

Ellen, who won three scholarships and two prizes while at Harper Adams, volunteers with the Institute of Chartered Forestry for which she is the Welsh Regional Group Secretary, and is also a volunteer Wildlife Trust Warden.

Ellen opened her speech by congratulating the graduates and saying: "Not everyone who starts a degree completes it, and not only have you completed yours but you have done so during a global pandemic. I take my hat off to all of you.

Ellen spoke of her journey to her current position – from trying something that wasn't a good fit, to second guessing whether she could do the roles that held the most appeal.

She was working for a small woodland charity, learning the theory behind woodland management, when she spotted the opening for the position she is in today.

"The job description was intimidating, and I found myself in two minds about whether to apply. My friends and family encouraged me to throw my hat into the ring – after all, I had nothing to lose." And it proved to be the right move!

"For the last two and a half years I have been working for NRW as the forest operations officer covering the Brecon Beacons. I spend roughly half of my time out in

various forests in all weathers and the other half in the office (aka the spare bedroom), doing the dreaded paperwork! At its most basic the purpose of my role is to help manage 5,000ha of forests sustainably, through the planning and delivery of harvesting and replanting programmes.



*Ellen Humphrey with HAU Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Michael Lee*

"But as I have discovered, forest management and forestry operations are far from simple and require an incredibly varied skillset and knowledge base. I have been on a steep learning curve and I am still learning every day and its one of the many reasons I love my job.

"...by listening to my gut, I found a job and a sector that I am passionate about and that I can see a future for myself in. It challenges me, rewards me, suits my personality and aligns with my values. I sincerely hope that you find jobs and careers that suit you too."

Ellen closed by telling the graduates: "Do not underestimate your worth, the value you bring to the workplace, or indeed, what it can do for you. And if you do find yourself going through a bumpy patch, which is part of life, review your options, listen to your gut and have the confidence to do what is right for you."

The guest speaker for the afternoon ceremony was alumnus Guy Coggrave, MRICS FAAV.

Guy is a highly experienced chartered surveyor from North Yorkshire with a background in land agency and rural estate management – having graduated with a Harper Adams degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management 20 years ago.



*Guy Coggrave with HAU Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Michael Lee*

Qualifying a year later as a Rural Practice Chartered Surveyor and Agricultural Valuer, he spent time in practice before returning to his family farm in Yorkshire in 2004.

"Realising that the existing farming business was not big enough to support both my parents and my fledgling family, I set up GSC Chartered Surveyors as a diversification project in a porta cabin on the farm," he told the graduating class. "I was fortunate that this coincided with the commencement of the Single Farm Payment and Entry Level Stewardship Scheme which enabled me to quickly grow a client base, providing advice and support to local farmers."

His business grew, and with the additional of Guy's wife and other friends from his degree at Harper, the company grew from GSC Consulting to GSC Grays – the successful business of today.

"Our business has grown, largely through the recruitment of high calibre Graduates who bring in new ideas, initiatives and energy to our business. We support those individuals to ensure they continue to grow and develop, and in time, manage and lead their own teams.

"Recognising the impact this has had on our business, we wanted to give something back and in conjunction with Harper, set up a placement scholarship scheme to help a number of students progress their career," he added.

"It may surprise you that some of our more senior consultants who are reaching retirement age often say to me how jealous they are of those just starting their careers now, as you will not only have the opportunity to influence the sector, but also see the changes that will come about due to your actions over the next 10 to 20 years, and in that regard we are excited to see what impact you and your cohort will have on our industry.

"My advice to you all is to approach your careers with energy, positivity and enthusiasm. Grasp the opportunities that present themselves and importantly, ensure you maintain a strong network of your fellow Harper Adams University colleagues, as this will be invaluable to you throughout your career and will be something that you rely on, as I have done."

As the Managing Director, Guy is involved with all aspects of the work undertaken by GSC Grays and often provides strategic and succession planning advice to clients. The company works with a number of private clients covering a diverse range of property types and specialises in providing rural consultancy advice to estates, owner occupiers and tenants across the north east of England.

# YOUR HARPER LIFE -

Reminiscences of student experiences over the years – if you would like to submit something or know of someone who we should include in the next edition of Harper Life, please send it to:

**theharperadamsclub@gmail.com**

## Your Harper Life... An interview with Paul Rooke Pre-Ent 1986-87



**HND Agric 1987-90;  
BSc (Hons) 1991-92**

Paul Rooke, born in 1966 in Lincolnshire, a county I have now returned to. I am the Executive Director of the British Coffee Association, culmination of a career spent in trade association work. I am married with 2 grown-up children and my wife and I have just retired from 10 years of sheep breeding and showing.

### When did you attend Harper and what course did you study?

I arrived at Harper in September 1986, having survived the panic of A level failure the previous year to join around 30 other people on Pre-Ent. I then moved onto HND Agric in 1987 and finally finished by 'topping up' to a BSc (Hons), Agric in June 1992 when I had to finally admit defeat and move onto post-Harper life.

### Why did you choose to go to Harper?

I am not from a farming family, but started working on a farm in the late 1970's. When I talked about what I wanted to do after school the farmer

I was working for suggested Harper would be the ideal place for anyone serious about a career in farming.

### Did you live on campus, if so, where?

My first year was spent in Jubilee Adams overlooking the warden's (Ken Mathias) bungalow. Jubilee had just (thankfully) introduced the new-fangled 13 amp sockets for an improved student experience. The brilliant cast iron radiators meant that whilst milk was freezing on the doorsteps that winter, we were never cold.

### Who was your favourite lecturer/member of staff and why?

As someone whose main interest was arable production my favourite lecturer was Roy (Jogger) Jefferson. A truly nice person he was very easy to get on with but also very willing to share his enthusiasm and knowledge for the subject. That said, I am not sure I could point to any Harper lecturer in my time there who was not approachable and committed to delivering for the benefit of students.

### What is the happiest/most memorable/iconic memory of your time at Harper?

Far too many but a couple of memories that come to mind are arguing agricultural policy with Sir Simon Gourlay when he visited Harper to give a presentation as President of the NFU, and then my final year viva with Principal Tony Harris, one of the nicest people I have ever met and the one person who I still most identify with Harper, even 30 years later.

### What adventures did you and your fellow students get up to?

I doubt we were original but cars on beer barrels, cars under the rugby post and moving cars from the main car park to NiPH under cover of darkness all come to mind.

### How did Harper help you in your occupation / work / life?

Harper was responsible for igniting my interest in agricultural policy which has been a mainstay of my career. It also gave me the opportunity to turn my teenage obsession with farming into a career which has given me the opportunity to meet a number of great people – and some politicians as well!

### What is your greatest achievement?

Aside from family activities, the role I was most proud of was taking the Chair of the EU's International Aspects of Agriculture group and being the first non-EU Commission person to do so. A 70 person Committee with 7 sets of interpreters and being able to summon senior Commission officials to present to the group was a very enjoyable period

### Who were your best friends at Harper and did you keep in touch?

I met Ed Pridgeon when we both started on pre-ent. We have remained friends ever since and have both married people we knew from Harper. I use social media to keep up to date with other friends from Harper days.

### What did you do after Harper?

I moved into trade association work

immediately on leaving Harper (my first job was advertised) at the college. Although it had a name change part way through (from UKASTA to AIC), I spent over 25 years with that organisation, representing primarily the grain and seed trade businesses in the UK. This included representation to UK and EU and I spent 6 years as Chair of EU trade body CELCAA, covering trade in a wide range of commodities.

Just as Covid hit, I moved sideways to take up my current role as Executive Director of the British Coffee Association, covering all things coffee from green bean imports to High Street shops.

### What does Harper Adams mean to you?

Fundamentally Harper gave me the opportunity to move beyond a pretty mediocre school performance and to stake a place in an industry which occupied both my work and leisure time. Having spent 6 years and 3 courses at Harper it shaped a large part of my early life and continues to do so today – not least that one of the other people who left Harper the same year is now my wife of nearly 30 years!

### What advice would you give to today's Harper student?

To start with, you have made a great career choice. Take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way as you never know until you try! But do enjoy your Harper time, it will stay with you and will be a great career companion.

## Your Harper Life... An interview with Elin Cunningham



**Bioveterinary Science 2015 – 19;  
MSc Entomology 2019 – 20.**

I currently work as a Research Scientist at Oxitec in Oxford, rearing *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes at scale. I left Harper just before the first lockdown and spent that summer finishing my assignments and thesis for my Master's degree, then moved down to Oxford a few months later to start at Oxitec. Since moving I've joined the Rowing club in Abingdon, sometimes wearing my Harper kit from my days rowing at Pengwern boat club in Shrewsbury. I've also just moved house to lend a hand looking after a fellow Harper grad's horses; small world!

### When did you attend Harper and what course did you study?

I studied Bioveterinary Science at undergrad from 2015-2019, and then the MSc Entomology course from 2019-2020. I was lucky enough to spend my placement year in both South Africa and Jersey Zoo!

### Why did you choose to go to Harper?

I had never heard of Harper before I was invited to interview, and was set on attending a city university for the same course. I wanted a full house of offers so attended my interview and absolutely fell in love with the place.

### Did you live on campus, if so, where?

As a Fresher I was in Princess Royal, then in my Masters I was over in Silcock with a floor of Postgrads who threw the best kitchen parties!

### Who was your favourite lecturer/member of staff and why?

I adored everyone who taught me in Harper, but my standout lecturers are Philip Robinson for his inspiring pre-exam speeches and Steve Baugh for all his support through final year of undergrad and into my Masters year.

### What is the happiest/most memorable/iconic memory of your time at Harper?

I loved my trips away to Polo tournaments and Rowing regattas; travelling the country with my friends to compete for Harper and bring

back silverware (sometimes...) was so much fun.

### What adventures did you and your fellow students get up to?

Monday nights in Newport always ended up in shenanigans, and Wednesday nights in the bar after socials (sometimes in weird fancy dress or painted blue) brought many adventures, but most notably at BUCS in first year, the important fact was discovered that Matthew Thompson's Peugeot 206 didn't have locking wheel nuts... so his wheels ended up hidden around a campsite in Nottingham Watersports centre.

### How did Harper help you in your occupation / work / life?

Everyone knows Harper grads are from good stock, and the world is a surprisingly small place! Harper has stood me in good stead for job interviews, and I currently work with a lot of Harper grads or past students of Simon Leather. The experiences I had both in Harper and on placement have given me countless life stories and also good examples of resilience and adaptability which I take forward into my current role.

### What is your greatest achievement?

I don't think I have one specific achievement, but both my graduations were filled with so much joy and gratitude for the past few years of work. Most notably our course manager Steve Baugh announcing our names as we walked on stage and then turning to each of us with a big beaming smile showed just how much pride lecturers had for each of us.

### What advice would you give to today's Harper student?

Take every opportunity you get, join clubs and societies, and enjoy the time you have at Harper because it really does fly by! I would give my left arm to re-live my first year, but at the time remember being stressed about assignments and exams. Though it's important to work hard and get your degree, the work hard, play hard lifestyle in Harper allows you to take advantage of some down time and enjoy.

# Grow your own business

Since Harper Adams began in 1901, its students have become known to be rather an entrepreneurial bunch. They have a knack of finding new ways of doing things, diversifying existing businesses and growing new ones from scratch.

In this edition of Harper Life we have handpicked three fabulous ex-Harper students who left 'college' just over twenty years ago. We hope you enjoy reading about their journey.

If you have something you'd like to shout about in the next edition, get in touch, we'd love to share it.



**Gwen Davies (REP 1997-2001) & Rhys Davies (REALM 1992-1996)**

I always wanted a future with wine but never dreamt we would be producing our own vintage! When Rhys and I purchased land next to our home in 2018 we were determined to get the most out of it. We had noticed a micro climate around our home in the Vale of Clwyd near Denbigh, North East Wales and after a lot of research we decided to take the plunge and plant 8000 vines across five acres of sandy loam, south-west facing land. We have been on a steep learning journey ever since but have always found support from the network of other vineyards across Wales and Martin Vickers (ND Ag 1962-1964) and the team at Halfpenny Green vineyards, our contract winemakers. In 2021 we cropped all of our 'cool-climate' PIWI varieties and produced a dry white wine from our Solaris grapes, a dry rosé from our Rondo, a red from Pinot Noir Precoce and sparkling from Seyval Blanc grapes. We have two other reds, Cabaret Noir and Divico which are new and exciting varieties. The feedback on our wines has been mind blowing and we are attracting interest from the very supportive local community to restaurants and merchants across Wales and into London.

As our grape yields increase, we hope to find our way into more of these markets. Currently production is boutique and a former dilapidated barn has been restored and is used as our cellar door for sales and as a base for our vineyard tours and wine tasting events. If conditions are right and we can continue to produce these top quality wines, the opportunities for sales avenues, events and promotion are abundant. We are so excited for what the future holds and would love to welcome any Harper alumni to visit us.



Follow our story on Instagram and Facebook @valeveinesandwines or sign up to our newsletter on [www.valevineyard.co.uk](http://www.valevineyard.co.uk)

**Vale Vineyard - Gwinllan y Dyffryn**



**Hugh Pocock 1996 - 2000**

*Twenty-one year's post-graduation, Hugh Pocock now manages an Agribusiness Recruitment company – Cultura Connect – from his farm in Shropshire.*

When I started at Harper Adams in 1996, I had no idea which direction my career would go in. My experiences during my time at Harper laid the foundation for what followed.

Although I had a farming background, it was my Grandparents who farmed, my parents made a living outside of the agricultural sphere. A childhood of varied farming experiences led me to Harper Adams to study Agriculture, I had already done some work experience as shepherd for Robert Gregory, and then my year out from Harper was spent at Richard Ratcliffe's dairy farm in Cheshire, which led to a cattle showing phase! I developed skills as a cattle fitter (clipping cows for the show ring and photography) which then led me to some self-employed work for Cogent Breeding, to prepare cattle for a showcase event. None of this was planned, it was taking the opportunities as and when they presented themselves.



Chris Shepherd (now Shepherd Agri) from Cogent came to me and said I was getting too expensive to clip cattle and that I had better be on the payroll! I started working at Cogent in 2001 as a Progeny Evaluator. The world of cattle breeding was in a stage of serious technological advancement with the launch of sexed semen and Cogent was at the forefront. I travelled extensively throughout the UK visiting dairy farms, selecting progeny to promote the bulls in Cogent's bull stud for two years before being promoted to Sire Analyst and then Head of Genetics two years later. Travelling a little further afield to the US, Canada, Australia, and multiple countries in Europe, I expanded my professional network further by travelling in these countries with selected business partners, choosing genetics to bring into the Cogent portfolio. The challenge was choosing genetics for the future UK dairy herd, considering where the demand would be by the time the bulls had been through the testing stage and to the age where they would have proven daughters on the ground, delivering results to the UK dairy farmer. This is where my keen awareness of the importance of each element of the supply chain began.

After two years I was promoted again to UK Sales Manager where I gained valuable experience of managing a large team of people. This was a fast-paced role where I learnt a lot about the commercial elements of business.

Changing roles within the company every few years meant that Cogent provided me with a broad depth of knowledge that included sales & marketing, people management, business development as well as mergers and acquisitions. As the business continued to grow, I moved into UK and International Business development where I gained experience in business acquisition and board level experience.

Whilst still at Cogent, along with my wife Kate, we invested in a property that incorporated a village butchers' shop. Development of this property included a complete renovation and establishment of a new modern butcher's shop 'Oxtail & Trotter' to meet the needs of a vibrant Cheshire village. Already dabbling with rearing home-grown lamb on a tenanted smallholding, this new route to market gave us even more of an incentive to grow the small farming enterprise.

Taking voluntary redundancy from Cogent in 2017, as a family, we took the decision to move to a bigger tenanted farm to satisfy our farming ambitions. At the same time, after connecting with various people in my network, I took on several consultancy positions. Working with a leading integrated beef supply chain, a livestock identification business and several Ag Tech projects.

I had an interest in Wagyu cattle from the early breed development days whilst at Cogent, I was asked to be on the board of the Wagyu Cattle Breeders Association by the late Mike Tucker who founded Cotswold Wagyu, and was instrumental in getting the breed in the UK to where it is today. We now rear a small number of Wagyu Cattle for Warrendale Wagyu.



Throughout my career, I have always encouraged and promoted the agricultural industry as a great sector to work in. I was often contacted to ask if I knew of anyone for certain roles, it became obvious that there was a gap in the market for someone with commercial and practical experience in the sector to find new talent and to place them in the right business. This is where the idea for Cultura Connect came from. It was a chance meeting with Tom Marsh, watching our sons play tennis that started the partnership that now makes up half of the Cultura Connect management team, with their partners joining the business shortly after its launch.

My advice for current and ex Harper students is to grab every opportunity that comes your way, Harper provided me with an incredible network, and it was undoubtedly my placement year, and the experience I gained whilst there, that launched my career. As a team we are huge advocates of the placement year that puts Harper Adams students at the top of the list when it comes to recruiting graduates. It is no coincidence that Cultura Connect have three Harper Alumni in the team (so far...)

Cultura Connect work across the entire agribusiness sector, looking to place exceptional candidates in agribusiness. We aim to work with integrity and diligence, this is an expansive sector to work in, but it is also very connected which means that quick wins would do us no favours at all, we want longevity and quality placements that will help businesses move forward and succeed.

We are delighted to be working with Harper Adams to help support and guide students, graduates and postgraduates with career advice and job opportunities. If you would like to find out more, get in touch with the team at Cultura Connect.

[www.culturaconnect.co.uk](http://www.culturaconnect.co.uk)  
[apply@culturaconnect.co.uk](mailto:apply@culturaconnect.co.uk)  
 +44 1948 818448  
 +44 7789 171378



**Edward Roach (BSc Agriculture with Land & Farm Management 1996-2000)**

***Thorncliffs Ltd – Sleaford, Lincolnshire***

Whilst in my final year at Harper Adams I had set my heart on trying to gain employment as an assistant farm manager on an arable and sheep enterprise. Having a background in both of these sectors and a passion for machinery this seemed a logical direction. However, one evening when returning from the computer room (yes, before we all had laptops!) I stumbled across an advert on the noticeboard for a role at JCB as a demonstrator and product specialist for the Fastrac range of tractors. This totally changed the direction of my career as I started with JCB in the summer of 2000. As a young man who had only ever worked for contractors or on farms, being trust into a large corporate, global environment was a bit of a culture shock. However, I settled into the place and found some amazing mentors as well as some lifelong friends in the process.



Apart from a brief three year period working in the JCB distribution network and a short spell at John Deere my career with JCB ran from 2000 to 2015. I was lucky enough to travel extensively, working with customers and distributors across the world, exposing me to farming systems, crops and market pressures we don't see in the UK. Working in all areas of sales, product marketing and distribution development this gave me a broad spectrum of experience which really has helped me to start a venture of my own.

I chose to leave JCB in December 2015 as the pressures of a young family coupled with the lifestyle of continuous travel did not work anymore. At this point I took up a Sales Director role with a large distributor of JCB equipment in the UK, however after a couple of years it was apparent there was something lacking and I still had a passion to try to start something of my own. A colleague at the time also shared this passion and we both had identified an opportunity for the remarketing of good quality used equipment.

In March 2018 we both started Thorncliffs Ltd, a used farm machinery business focusing heavily on JCB – The salary stopped, the company car went back and we were on our own - A huge leap of faith, but one that neither of us regret.

We started out at the kitchen table, borrowed a ford fiesta to go to our first farm sale and we were off!

We had a rough plan and our first lorry load of kit arrived in to our rented corner of a yard on a local farm in the May. A huge change from our previous lives, everything was now down to us from all of the office administration and the marketing to repairing and preparing the machines for sale. We called in a lot of favours and the support we have received from all sorts of people has been amazing.

Fast forward 5 years and we now have a business. We employ 5 permanent staff and bought our own site in 2020, which we developed and was ready to move into in June 2021. It has been a bumpy ride, trying to navigate a global pandemic and Brexit as well as many other challenges, but we have learnt so much and are incredibly grateful to all the customers and suppliers who have supported us along the way. We sell machines all over the UK and across the world with many of our customers being ex-Harper students.

We have ambitious plans for the future, as we aim to continue to grow whilst improving the quality and value of the machines we supply to our customers.



For more information or to follow what we are up to please visit [www.thorncliffs.com](http://www.thorncliffs.com)

# Obituaries—



**Dr Tony Harris CBE**

Dr Anthony (Tony) George Harris, an unfaltering champion of British agricultural education and an individual well known throughout British farming circles, died 12th March at the age of 92.

Throughout his life Tony Harris was heavily involved with farming and the farming community of the country, and was responsible for the education of many of Britain's most successful farmers over more than five decades.

Such was his belief in the land as the source of much that is good in Britain, and such was his commitment to those who care for and maintain it through their farming practices, that following retirement in 1994, from the post of Principal of Harper Adams, he continued tirelessly for more than a decade to serve on a variety of agriculture and rural committees at both regional and national levels.

From 1950-52 Dr Harris studied agriculture at Seale-Hayne Agricultural College, near Newton Abbott in Devon, qualifying with a College Diploma in Agriculture and the National Diploma in Agriculture, after which he completed his National Service in the Intelligence Corps.

In 1953 he embarked on his career in agricultural education as a lecturer in agriculture at the Dorset College of Agriculture. Two years later, in 1955, he moved to teach crop production at Harper Adams Agricultural College where he worked for three years before taking the position of Vice-Principal at the Shropshire Farm Institute, subsequently Walford College of Agriculture.

In 1967 he moved to Surrey to take the position of Principal of Merrist Wood Agricultural College where among many notable achievements he was instrumental in the development of the first arboriculture and tree surgery courses outside the USA.

Following a decade at Merrist Wood, Tony Harris returned to Shropshire in 1977 as Principal of Harper Adams Agricultural College, home at the time to 400 students, where he remained until his retirement.



During his time as Principal he oversaw a period of continual growth and expansion in both the institution's fabric and educational offering, transforming it from the more traditional college of his predecessors' days to a forward looking, technologically orientated agricultural institution. In many ways the work of Tony Harris while Principal of Harper Adams laid the foundations upon which the institution of today has been built, and of which his successors were the fortunate beneficiaries.

Under his leadership, students were given a voice on the Board of Governors for the first time, procedures were reviewed and new ideas and direction emerged. Dr Harris created the college's first strategic plan in 1978. Faced with the challenges of changing funding arrangements in the 1980s, new, commercial short courses and the college facilities were opened up for wider use as an event and conference venue.

There was enormous pressure on smaller colleges to amalgamate, but Harper Adams remained independent. By 1991-92 student numbers had passed the thousand mark, reaching 1,525 by the time he retired in 1994.

Degree teaching had arrived with the introduction of BSc Honours routes in agriculture, agri-food marketing and REALM – Rural Enterprise and Land Management – among others. Harper Adams was one of the earliest providers of a BSc sandwich degree course. There was also greater emphasis on postgraduate and postgraduate research education.



*Principal Harris hosted The Princess Margaret when Her Royal Highness opened the laboratories in 1985.*

Principal Harris hosted VIP visitors from Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to Princess Margaret – who opened the teaching laboratories bearing her name in 1985. He oversaw the campus expansion, including the construction of new Halls of Residence, including Harris Hall, which continues to be used today.

In 1991 Tony Harris was appointed OBE for services to Agriculture and in 1996, two years after his retirement; he

was awarded a Fellowship of Harper Adams and conferred with an Honorary Doctorate of the Open University.

On his departure in 1994, the college “stood firmly on the national stage and was moving confidently towards degree-awarding status, possessed of the efficiency and strength to meet its future, accepting change as a challenge but never a threat”. – *Lure of the Land, A century of education at Harper Adams*, by Heather Williams, 2001.

In the 2005 New Year Honours, Dr Tony Harris was appointed CBE.



*Principal Harris hosts Margaret Thatcher for the opening of the Soil Hall indoor field.*

The University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ken Sloan said: “All Principals and Vice-Chancellors benefit from the legacy of their predecessors. This provides the foundations for their contributions and their work. The impact of Dr Harris's outstanding leadership as Principal of Harper Adams can be seen across all our activities. His confident securing of the College's (now University's) independence has led to it achieving its position as the largest and leading UK specialist institution in agri-food and the disciplines that contribute to it. We are immensely grateful for and proud of his service and his continued support during his retirement”

## Peel Holroyd

The impact of Mr Holroyd on agriculture, the poultry and pig industries, and rural life in general, is reflected in his deep and ongoing connections to Harper Adams since graduating. Through the establishment and chairing of the Temperton Fellowship, the awardees of which are celebrated in a dedicated room on campus, and his being awarded an Honorary Fellowship of this institution, his distinguished career is being rightly acknowledged.”



*Mr Holroyd – who worked in both the poultry and pig industries after completing his studies at Harper Adams – died in December after a short illness.*

A resident of Newbury, in Berkshire, Mr Holroyd was a friend and mentor to many in the industries he served,

both in the UK and globally – whether working with major companies such as Marks and Spencer or providing his own independent consultancy across the total food chain.

As a valued member of its alumni community, he was made an Honorary Fellow of Harper Adams in 1989.

He was also instrumental in setting up the Temperton Fellowship, a long-standing Fellowship marked at Harper Adams to commemorate the contribution of Dr Harold Temperton, Director of the National Institute of Poultry Husbandry at the University from 1951 to 1974.

Vice-Chancellor of Harper Adams University, Professor Ken Sloan, paid tribute to Mr Holroyd. He said: “The impact of Mr Holroyd on agriculture, the poultry and pig industries, and rural life in general, is reflected in his deep and ongoing connections to Harper Adams since graduating.

“Through the establishment and chairing of the Temperton Fellowship, the awardees of which are celebrated in a dedicated room on campus, and his being awarded an Honorary Fellowship of this institution, his

distinguished career is being rightly acknowledged.”

## From John McBride 1959 - 1961

I was saddened to learn of the recent death of Peel Holroyd, who attended Harper at the same time as me in 1959-61. I have read the tributes and eulogies to him sent out by Harper Alumni, and have had difficulty knowing how I might add to these. However, if you at some stage have his exploits included in the Club magazine, you may like to add to his attributes the good work he did as HAAC Men's Hockey Team's coach and umpire. I know this pales into insignificance compared with his industry exploits, but it did impress me at the time. I enjoyed meeting with him when he visited NZ in the 1980's.



## Russell John Williams Agriculture, 1952-54

Died 24th June 2022 aged 90 at Rhuddlan, Denbighshire, North Wales.

Farmed at Hartley Farm, Pen-Y-Cefn, Caerwys North Wales.

Mr Williams's youngest son, Jon, HA Post-Graduate Crop Protection student 1984-85, writes: “He set up his own dairy and sheep enterprise at Hartley Farm, Pen-Y-Cefn, Caerwys, on a Flintshire County Council holding in 1958 and never really retired but moved out of the farm in 1999 to a bungalow in Rhuddlan. The farm is now run by my brother, Nick Williams, and still under Flintshire CC ownership. The dairy herd is still going strong, all based on my father's own breeding in the 1960s from original stock intake of just a handful of cows. My father was also an active member of the Farmers Union of Wales and President of the Flintshire Branch for a number of years.

He is Survived by Anne, (wife for 65 years) and children; Penny, Nicholas and Jonathan and also Grandfather of eight.

## Bridget Benthall (Elliott) BSc Agricultural Technology 1984-1988

Died on 30th June 2022 aged 57.

Much loved mum of Tom and dear friend to many. She is sadly missed.

### Lord Plumb

Lord Plumb, who served as the only British President of the European Parliament, died on April 15th, aged 97.



Former PhD student Bill Watts thanks his scholarship sponsor Lord Plumb at Harper Adams University in 2016

He was president of the National Farmers Union (NFU) from 1970 to 1979, and was elected an MEP for the Cotswolds in 1979. He remained a member of the European Parliament until 1999 and served as its president from 1987 until 1989. He was knighted in 1973, and retired from the House of Lords in 2017.

Lord Plumb's family were from Cheshire and had farmed for several generations, with the young Henry taking over the running of his father's largely dairy farm at Coleshill in Warwickshire after his death in 1952.

Speaking as he officially opened the Jerman and Leverhulme Halls of Residence at Harper Adams in 2016, he said: "I think it's fantastic here. I was taken away from school because my father needed somebody to work on the farm during the war, and that left me with a gap in my education. That gap could have been filled here at Harper Adams."

He added: "You make a living by what you do, but you make a life by what you give. That is exactly what has happened here and what has happened through the ages thanks to those who have supported this wonderful establishment."

Doris Taylor, Head of Development at Harper Adams, paid tribute: "Lord Plumb was a long-standing and very supportive Patron of the Development Trust; an influential champion of farming and incredibly supportive of young people entering the industry. We are very grateful for the support provided to the university and its students through Lord Plumb and the Henry Plumb Foundation."

NFU president Minette Batters paid tribute to the organisation's "greatest" leader. "British farming has lost one of its greatest ever advocates and the NFU has lost its greatest ever president," Mrs Batters said. "There was no one more passionate about British farming than Lord Plumb and he remained a great champion for the sector throughout his life."

### Fordyce Maxwell MBE 1965 - 67



With the death of Fordyce Maxwell, the world of journalism has lost a distinguished and highly-respected writer. He was 77 and had been suffering from prostate cancer.

The eldest of a family of nine, the seed for Fordyce's journalism sprang from the family farm at Cramond Hill, near Cornhill-on-Tweed, Northumberland, where his father Thomas Fordyce Maxwell combined farming life with regular columns for the Alnwick Gazette.

Fordyce studied at Harper Adams College in Shropshire where he did his two-year College Diploma in Agriculture (CDA), finishing with a trip to Leeds in June 1967 to sit the National Diploma (NDA). The HND later replaced that system. At college, he was captain of the cricket team and the football team, and was Student President in his second year.

Following Harper Adams, Fordyce cut his journalistic teeth as a young reporter on the original Farming News based in Perth. His next step up the ladder was in the late 1960s as Assistant Agricultural Editor of The Scotsman in Edinburgh eventually succeeding the late Bob Urquhart in the Agricultural Editor's chair in 1975.

After several years of making his mark in a demanding role, Fordyce found the pull of the land too strong to resist and he gave up his job on The Scotsman to return to put his shoulder to the wheel of practical farming with his brothers Angus and Donald at

Cramond Hill. During the next decade or so he worked as an energetic farmer but also wrote freelance articles for newspapers including the Newcastle Journal, The Glasgow Herald and The Scottish Farmer. For 35 years he also wrote a weekly Landlines column under the pseudonym of Halidon for The Berwick Advertiser, the Berwickshire News and the Southern Reporter. He also wrote three books on the lighter side of farming life entitled A Farmer's Lot, A Farmer's Boy and Wild Oats and Wellingtons. In his retirement Fordyce was also a regular columnist in Farm North-East.

It was during the period back on the farm that Fordyce and his wife Liz suffered a family tragedy when their 11-year-old daughter Susan was abducted and murdered by a serial killer as she walked home over Coldstream Bridge after a game of tennis on July 30th, 1982. It was 12 years before Susan's killer was jailed. Despite the sadness and the enduring sense of loss, Fordyce and Liz continued to farm and to pursue their journalistic challenges with Liz in a senior editorial role in the Berwick Advertiser group. Twenty years after Susan's death, Fordyce wrote a moving article with the opening sentence: Life continues, but the pain of loss never fades.

After more than a decade at the family farm, a vacancy occurred for the Agricultural Editor's post on The Scotsman. Fordyce duly applied for his old post and got the job. This time around, however, his journalistic talent was in demand above and beyond his farming desk duties and included lengthy stints as a weekly columnist, the paper's daily diarist and also the sketch writer covering the Scottish Parliament.

Other strings to Fordyce's bow included a talent for broadcasting and for several years he had a regular Maxwell on Monday slot on BBC Radio Scotland's Farm Journal programme. Additionally, he was a gifted public speaker and was in constant demand for after-dinner

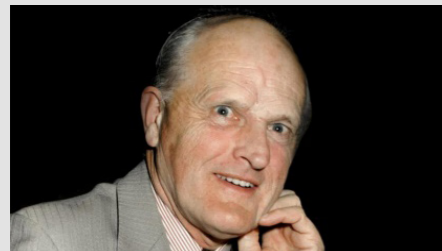
engagements, any proceeds from which he donated to charity.

All his journalistic life, Fordyce was an enthusiastic member and supporter of the British Guild of Agricultural Journalists and was a winner of both the coveted Stuart Seaton and Netherthorpe awards. In 1995 he received the MBE for his services to journalism and in 2007 was given the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Scottish Society of Newspaper Editors.

Fordyce was a generous supporter of rural charities and, as a keen hill walker, was a driving force in the Teesdale Way long-distance charity walk in 2000 in aid of the Guild's Charitable trust and the 200-mile Southern Upland Way walks to raise funds for the RSABI farming charity in 1997 and 2018.

In his many years in journalism, Fordyce was a champion of a farming industry that he loved but that neither infringed upon nor weakened his journalistic objectivity and he was never afraid to tackle often contentious subjects with vigour.

Fordyce leaves behind his journalist wife Liz, daughter Jacqueline, son-in-law Nolan with grand-daughters Ebba and Isla and son Tom, daughter-in-law Jenna, grand-daughter Sabrina and grandson Thomas Fordyce.



### Leonard Chase

Herefordshire farmer and innovator died 30th April 2022 at the age of 93.

His son, William Chase, founder of Tyrrells Crisps and Chase Distillery, has paid warm tribute to his father.

"He was a great person for Herefordshire with everything he did. Things like Tyrrells (Crisps) would not be here without him," he said. "He was phenomenal."

Born in Warwickshire, Leonard Chase was managing a farm in Dormington after finishing his studies at Harper Adams when he met his first wife, Sheila, who died in 1976.

### Peter Chance (HAAC 1953-56)

With regret I must inform old friends that PETER CHANCE (HAAC 1953-56) died peacefully on 24th August, after a short illness. Peter attained both the N.D.A. and the NDA Ag.Eng and enjoyed a successful career in NAAS and ADAS.

In the autumn term of 1958 he joined the soil science department of NAAS in Cardiff, participating in crop variety trials. This continued until July 1960 when he moved to Oxford as a trainee advisory officer. Fully qualified as such he moved to south Cheshire in 1963, based in Crewe, staying there until autumn 1972 when he was seconded as Agricultural Adviser to the States of Guernsey. Six years later he moved back to the mainland joining the Dorchester office of ADAS, where he stayed until retirement in October 1995. It was a partial retirement because he ran a private practice in Dorset for several years afterwards.

To Peter's wife, Susan and their sons, Stuart and Philip, sincere condolences on the loss of a dear husband and father. May I add a personal thanks to Peter for a close friendship of almost 69 years lasting through student days and throughout adult life.

Received from Geoff Warren (HAAC 1953-56)

# University News



Dr David Llewellyn CBE

## New Year Honours: Dr David Llewellyn to be made CBE

"I am extremely fortunate to have worked with some amazing people, and I should like to pay tribute to them for their support, without which this recognition would not have been possible."

Former Harper Adams University Vice-Chancellor, Dr David Llewellyn, is to be made a Commander of

the Order of the British Empire for his services to higher education, agriculture and rural industries.

Dr Llewellyn worked at Harper Adams University for 23 years, leading the institution, first as Principal, then as Vice-Chancellor, for the latter 12 years. During this time the institution experienced an extremely successful period in its history.

## Queen's Baton Relay

"It was a pleasure to welcome the Queen's Baton to the Harper Adams campus as it makes its way to this year's Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. With the Games just days away, there was a real sense of excitement – and I'd like to thank all the Baton bearers, their families, and the wider Queen's Baton Relay team for visiting us. A special thanks, too, to the police, council staff, and of course the Harper Adams University staff who made the event such a memorable occasion on what proved to be the hottest day of the year so far – well done all!"



Baton bearer Jodie Blackadder-Weinstein and Harper Adams University Vice-Chancellor Professor Ken Sloan

## Alumnus receives Royal African Award for eye-catching drone work in Nigeria

"Studying for a Master's degree in Integrated Pest Management at Harper Adams University has armed me with the knowledge, skills, and industry exposure to contribute to efforts geared towards solving real-life challenges for the sustainability of the agri-food sector of my country."

Eye-catching work by a Harper Adams graduate who tackles pests and diseases with drones has secured him a national award in his home country of Nigeria. Femi Adekoya, who studied for a Masters in Integrated Pest Management while at Harper Adams, is now applying his knowledge via his company Integrated Aerial Precision. His success in agricultural technology and innovation has now seen Femi selected by the Royal African Young Leadership Forum for a prestigious Royal African Award. I'm deeply motivated to go with the work I'm doing to keep pushing the boundaries of agricultural technologies, especially talking about drone technology in the African agricultural

landscape to deliver the promise of agricultural productivity, food security, and economic prosperity."



"Personally, the community of supportive staff and the environment that fosters excellent students' work-life balance on the campus made the whole experience great and memorable for me. "I'm always proud of being a Harper

The award is the latest of a series of accolades for Femi, who began his studies at Harper Adams in 2019 – and utilised his time at the university to the full, studying to become a qualified drone pilot alongside his Masters degree. By combining both his full degree and the qualifications he secured via his short course, Femi was able to develop and extend his work in Nigeria – and is now seeking to train a new generation to adopt similar technology.

## Rescue hedgehog Harper helps Genevieve mark graduation success



Harper the Hedgehog with a graduation memento from his namesake University

An animal rescue centre set up by a Harper Adams alumna proved so successful that she found herself heading to her graduation with a very special guest in tow. Genevieve Tomlinson was set to return to Harper Adams from Cheriton Bishop in Devon for her Graduation Celebration Ceremony when a very young – and very dehydrated – baby hedgehog was brought into the hedgehog hospital where she works. "With a qualification as a Veterinary Nurse already secured, Genevieve had been studying at Harper Adams for her Postgraduate Diploma in Veterinary Physiotherapy as a part time student – and was set to mark the achievement at the University. She added: "Three days after he arrived, I was due to attend my graduation at Harper Adams - which had been delayed due to Covid - and because this tiny hog needed feeds, toileting and monitoring every one to two hours, he came too!" With the aid of a specialist incubator, Genevieve and her family were able to take the hedgehog with them to Shropshire

– making sure he was kept safe and healthy while Genevieve attended her special day. Genevieve is now using her studies in her own physiotherapy business for animals in Devon and Cornwall – and intends to develop this into her full-time career. She added: "I was already qualified as a Veterinary Nurse and had always wanted to further train in rehabilitation and physiotherapy, so when I discovered that the PgDip at Harper would enable me to do this, I jumped at the chance and never looked back. "Harper Adams is such a brilliant work environment with excellent facilities and fantastic student opportunities – and now I can combine my existing career as a Veterinary Nurse with a new career in Veterinary Physiotherapy. "Finally graduating was the most amazing feeling ever after such a rocky few years! There were so many times during the course that I felt I would never get through it and so to finally have a beautiful day at Harper celebrating as a fully qualified physio was simply fantastic."



Genevieve on the Harper Adams campus after her graduation



Cari Thomas win means the medal goes to a member of the Cornwall HYB Club for the second consecutive year – after her fiancé, and fellow Harper Adams alumni, Steven Harris took home last year's medal.

## Harper Adams alumna secures Holstein President's Medal 2022 award

She has won an engraved medal and a trip to the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto, kindly funded by HYB's Principal Sponsor, Semex. The Holstein UK President's Medal recognises and rewards young talent and highlights individuals who are the dairy farmers of the future.

Cari – who studied a BSc (Hons) in Rural Enterprise and Land Management at Harper Adams, where she said she made 'friends for life' – is currently employed as a genetic consultant for Cogent Breeding where she is helping to boost both the economy and environment through her work.

## Harper Adams alumnus named winner of the 2022 Canterbury/ North Otago Dairy Industry Awards in New Zealand

Will, who studied BSc (Hons) Agriculture at Harper Adams between 2007 and 2011, has fond memories of his time at the University – and credits his industrial placement year for setting him on his award-winning path.

Looking back at his time at Harper, he said: "I made some great friends for life, had a great social experience and developed not only the farming knowledge from my studies, but also

a great understanding of how to learn and how to process and analysis data.

"Placement was my first time in New Zealand, and from that fantastic experience I knew I just had to come back to develop my farming skills - and to take advantage of the clear progression pathway the New Zealand dairy industry has in place."

Will is a 34% share milker on the 270ha Dairy Holdings Ltd Hinds property, milking 1060 cows, and is working towards his goal of farm ownership.



Will Green was named Share Farmer of the Year for his region in the recent awards – picking up \$10,000 in prizes plus three merit awards. He is now hoping to build on his regional success at the national New Zealand Dairy Industry Awards



### Oxford Farming Conference 2022 successes marked by students and alumni

A successful Oxford Farming Conference has proved to be a hit with Harper Adams students – and a rewarding challenge for one of the University's alumni.

Student Union President Emily Brown and current students Tim Davidson and Jessie Mayall were all chosen to attend this year's conference, with their attendance supported through the 2022 Oxford Farming Conference Scholar's programme.

Meanwhile Harper Adams alumna, Emily Norton – who works as Head of Rural Research, Rural, Energy and Projects for Savills – served on this year's Oxford Farming Council – helping to bring the conference together and facing a series of challenges to ensure a successful event.

"It was encouraging that environmental protection

and sustainability were very much at the heart of most of the discussions. One of the highlights for me was hearing Dame Ellen MacArthur speak on the concept of the 'circular economy', which allowed me to appreciate the role that food and agriculture might have in a truly circular, sustainable economy."

While students like Tim and Jessie were enjoying the conference from the floor, Harper Adams alumnus Emily Norton and her Council colleagues were working to ensure the event ran smoothly – despite the Omicron variant enforcing a change of plans as they reacted to a changing public health picture.

Emily, who studied for a Masters in Sustainable Agriculture at Harper Adams, explained: "The decision to switch to fully digital was as much deeply painful as it was well prepared. We know that Oxford is not at its best when it's in 'broadcast mode' – the real value is in getting people together to have conversations and to learn from each other.

"But equally, with all of the Covid news, we had already planned for a lot of digital content, with overseas presenters attending virtually.

"In the end, we were thrilled with the overwhelmingly positive feedback, and can't wait to be able to deliver content - and experience together - again."

### Harper Adams University's Jubilee trees take root across Shropshire communities

Harper Adams University is delighted to be partnering with the communities of Edgmond and Newport, as well as colleagues at Chetwynd Deer Park, to contribute to the Queen's Green Canopy and to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. As I put down my own roots in Edgmond and Shropshire, it is particularly fitting that the University has donated these trees to create an ongoing legacy to mark Her Majesty's unwavering commitment to planetary sustainability - something at the heart of Harper Adams University's education and research."

Trees gifted from Harper Adams University have been planted in communities near its Shropshire campus as part of a series of Queen's Green Canopy events across the county and beyond.

The trees have been planted in

Newport, Edgmond and at Chetwynd Deer Park, with members of the community joining together with Harper Adams staff at each planting.

In Edgmond, an oak tree was planted in Church Field, with Harper Adams Vice-Chancellor Professor Ken Sloan joining Edgmond Council Chairman Cllr Allan Wilson, High Sheriff of Shropshire Tony Morris-Eyton, and St Peter's primary pupils Selina and Harry to help place the tree.

From Harper Adams, Professor Sloan was joined by Harper Adams University Students' Union President Emily Brown and Interim Head of Student Services, Joana da Silva at the ceremony on Audley Avenue.

And at Chetwynd Deer Park, Professor Sloan was joined by Newport Show, Show Manager Sally Western, Chairman of Trustees, Tony Asson - who is also a senior lecturer at the University - Park Warden Martyn Fallows, Show Vice-President Caroline Belcher, and High Sheriff of

Shropshire Tony Morris-Eyton to plant an oak next to the pool in the park.

Each tree will be registered on the dedicated Queen's Green Canopy website, where they will join those already registered after being planted on the Harper Adams estate at a community event earlier in the month which saw students, staff, local groups and volunteers and more all come together to plant an avenue of fruit and nut trees.



### Online delivery opens up Data Science postgraduate course to students across the world

The PgC in Data Science comprises four bespoke modules – all of which will be open to students across the globe thanks to digital delivery – in Statistical Analysis for Data Science; Techniques in Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence; Data Visualisation and Analytics; and Experimental Design and Analysis.

The Harper Adams postgraduate Data Science suite of courses was a UK first when launched in 2020, when programme leader, Dr Edwin Harris, explained: "The agriculture, food and environment sectors

are experiencing a radical shift in demand for data scientists, thanks to applications in agri-tech, and smart farming and a large surge in demand for general skills using big data and open data across the sector through 2030.

"At the same time, there is a huge demand for data-driven solutions for best-practice solutions for conservation and environment issues that are compatible with the future of farming. This new course, the first and only of its kind in the UK, seeks to address these challenges."



Starting this September, Harper Adams University will be offering a fully online postgraduate certificate course in Data Science for Global Agriculture, Food and Environment – and is offering financial support to overseas students. The PgC course can be taken as a stand-alone or built upon – via further study at the Harper Adams campus - to level up to a Postgraduate Diploma or by also completing a Masters' Research Project to qualify with a full Masters' degree.

The course has attracted global interest, but overseas students have faced challenges in accessing the learning, particularly during the pandemic.

Now, having moved fully online the postgraduate certificate is open to all. And in the courses' inaugural year, Harper Adams University is offering scholarships of £2,500 to overseas applicants to support the global drive to create more data scientists specialising in agri-food and environmental management.

The Data Science curriculum at Harper Adams University is designed to meet the requirements of two types of potential students.

The first are individuals who have an undergraduate or technical background in some aspect of data science and are looking to obtain the necessary agriculture and food experience and the second group are individuals who have a background in agriculture and/or food and wish to undertake training in data science.

To find out more, [view the programme](#) on the university website – through which potential students can register their interest or request a meeting with the course team.



# Got some news you want to share with ex-Harper students?

Got some news you want to share with ex-Harper students?  
Brilliant! Let us know and the Harper Adams Club will gladly share the news.  
Email us at: [theharperadamsclub@gmail.com](mailto:theharperadamsclub@gmail.com)

[www.facebook.com/harperadamsalumni](https://www.facebook.com/harperadamsalumni)

[@HAClub](#)

---

## Save the date - Harper Adams Club Annual Lunch 2023

The Harper Adams Club Lunch will take place at Harper Adams on Saturday 15 July 2023.  
Further details on how to book will follow in due course. If you have any immediate queries  
please contact [theharperadamsclub@gmail.com](mailto:theharperadamsclub@gmail.com).

The Club looks forward to welcoming as many alumni as possible and as usual extends a particular  
welcome to any groups who would like to celebrate a special anniversary in 2023! - such as Diamond  
60 years (1963) Golden 50 years (1973) Ruby 40 years (1983) and Silver 25 years (1998).



Harper Life is produced and  
published by the **Harper Adams Club**.