

Exeter in UK Top 20

Paul Jackson: a life in television

Alumni Network News



The Times Higher
**University
of the Year
2007/08**

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The University of the Year Award will mean a great deal to the students, staff and alumni of this institution. The University of Exeter has changed enormously over the past five years and, as a result, has become a lot more focused on its strengths. To win University of the Year really is the icing on the cake and caps a tremendous period of growth. This couldn't have been achieved without the willingness of people here to embrace change and the support of all our alumni and other friends. I could talk a lot about the changes that have been made, but perhaps one fact stands out. If you take total income as a measure of activity then it's interesting to note that since 2000 it has more than doubled. We expect turnover to be £171.5m this year and to rise to £220m by 2011.

The last few weeks have been a very intensive period for the University as we finalised our entry for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). It doesn't sound very exciting, I know, but the RAE is probably the single most important thing for us to get right if we are to remain a top 20 university in the years ahead. The RAE is a massive national assessment of the research quality of every single university in the UK. The quality of the papers written by lecturers for academic journals is given a score – and the higher the score the more money we get from government to fund research. It is also a major indicator of quality because the best universities in the UK are the research intensive ones. Since the last RAE in 2001 we have invested a great deal of time, effort and money in improving research quality and quantity. We have reorganised the University, invested in new research teams and staff (182 in the last year alone, including 36 professors). As a result we expect to do much better than in 2001 and we hope this will further enhance the University's reputation.

The question of 'What Next?' will be occupying our minds in the New Year as we attempt to set the University some challenging new targets. Our growth and progress has exceeded expectations and we are ahead of where we expected to be at this point in time. We will be looking very closely at what this University could expect to achieve in the next five years. One thing is for sure; this institution has the potential to go higher still.

Professor Steve Smith Vice-Chancellor



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University of the Year

Exeter has been named 2007/08 University of the Year by the *Times Higher Education Supplement*.

The Award was made in recognition of the University's efforts to create new educational opportunities in the South West in partnership with a range of other organisations. It was presented to the Vice-Chancellor Professor Steve Smith and the President of the Guild of Students Jess Dow at a glittering ceremony at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London, in December. The ceremony was attended by 1,200 leading figures from the world of higher education. More than 90% of UK higher education institutions entered in one or more categories.

The award caps an excellent year for the University which has firmly established itself as a top 20 UK higher education institution.

Professor Steve Smith, the University's Vice-Chancellor, said: "This is an important statement by our peers who have recognised the excellent work carried out by the University's staff and students. It caps a fantastic year for the University. Applications and research earnings have increased dramatically and we have recruited 182 excellent new staff. This Award underlines the fact that Exeter is firmly on an upward trajectory. This is a University which combines world class research with a high quality student experience."

History lecturer Dr Richard Toye also won the award for Young Academic Author of the Year. His colleague Dr Kate Fisher

was shortlisted for the same award. Exeter was also shortlisted in the category for Outstanding Student Financial Support Package.

The University of the Year Award highlights three major educational initiatives which came to fruition in 2007. The success of these ventures has substantially raised the University's profile, demonstrated its ability to work with different partners, added significant new academic assets and fuelled growth. The three ventures are:

- The completion of their studies by the first year of students at the University's Cornwall Campus near Falmouth. Opening a campus 100 miles away in Cornwall was a significant challenge for the University and meant working closely with a very different institution, University College Falmouth. The two institutions share the Campus, including academic and social facilities and student accommodation, and have developed a shared vision for future development. The creation of the Campus has been made possible through European Objective One funding as part of the wider Combined Universities in Cornwall. Not only has the campus proved extremely popular with students but it has also been possible to attract exceptional staff to Cornwall. The Biology group, for example, has attracted a world class group of academics specialising in conservation and evolutionary biology.

- The completion of their studies by the first cohort of students from the Peninsula Medical School. This is another joint venture, this time with Plymouth University. Since the Medical School was established in 2002 it has grown in size from an initial intake of 127 students to 214 now and has established bases in Exeter, Plymouth and Truro. It recently won funding for a new dental school – the first in the UK for 40 years – which opened its doors to students in the autumn. Research has quickly developed with Medical School researchers recently making national and international news with their discovery of genes for obesity. Diabetes research is a particular specialism within the Medical School and researchers have identified and developed treatments for forms of 'monogenic' diabetes.

- The £14 million Great Western Research project. This initiative, led by Exeter, involves all of the South West Higher Education Institutions. The project has provided a significant boost to postgraduate development in the South West with students working on projects in collaboration with local businesses.

The University is now looking to the future with a planned £450m investment in campus facilities by the end of the next decade.



Cornwall Phase 2 opens

The University welcomed 450 new students to its Cornwall campus, with the opening of its second phase at the start of this academic year.

Thanks to this latest development, four new degrees in law, history, politics, and cornish studies are available at Cornwall. Jointly managed by the University of Exeter and University College Falmouth, and part of the Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC) initiative, the student population at Cornwall has now expanded to 2,600.

"The launch of the second phase of the campus offers a really broad range of options for students from within and outside the county to study for a high-quality degree in the unique environment of

Cornwall," said Professor Matthew Evans, Provost of the University of Exeter's Cornwall Campus.

The new Phase 2 building, designed to have a minimal environmental impact, features a wild flower roof to help it blend into the landscape. Cornwall has recruited thirty new academics, many of whom are leaders in their field.

News of further developments in Cornwall is expected soon as the University is awaiting a decision on a funding bid to the European Union for Phase 3 of the campus. The funding would be invested in an institute of international excellence for research into the environment and sustainability.

Harnessing wave energy

Exeter is playing a leading role in the creation of a new £25m Peninsula Research Institute for Marine Renewable Energy. Located in Plymouth and at Exeter's Cornwall Campus, it will put the region at the forefront of wave energy development.

St Luke's retained

Consultants' advice about the future of the St Luke's campus is to be implemented. The University Council agreed that the most viable option is to keep two schools at St Luke's, but move the School of Sport and Health Sciences to the Streatham Campus in 2010. It will occupy the Hatherly Laboratories, once Biosciences moves fully into Geoffrey Pope.

The University will invest in providing higher quality facilities for the remaining St Luke's students from Education and Lifelong Learning, Medicine and Dentistry. There were fears the future growth of the schools was at risk if they all stayed at St Luke's.

First dental school for 40 years opens

Exeter is helping to train the dentists of tomorrow at the first new dental school in the UK for 40 years. The inaugural cohort of student dentists are now well into their first year of training. More than 180 people applied for the 64 places available on the four year course.

The Peninsula Dental School provides a community-based curriculum. Student Jeremy Lenaerts, 28, lives in Exeter and, for him, studying at the Dental School is fulfilling a childhood dream. Jeremy, who already has a PhD in Biological Sciences from Exeter, said: "Ever since I was at school I've had an interest in dentistry but have followed a different career path, so when I heard about the Peninsula Dental School I realised it was too good an opportunity to miss."



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Exeter in UK Top 20

The University of Exeter is rated in the top 20 of more than 100 UK universities. Exeter is ranked 17th in the latest league tables published in *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, and the Good University Guide in *The Daily Telegraph*.

The Sunday Times singles Exeter out as a place of "vitality and optimism" and says it "is able to choose from the brightest students." *The Times* says: "Exeter is one of Britain's most popular universities in terms of first-choice applications, not only in its traditional strong suit, the arts, but increasingly in the sciences and social sciences."

A strong research performance and high entry standards support Exeter's high ranking. The University also scores highly for completion rates, student satisfaction, and for students who achieve good honours degrees of 2:1s or Firsts.

A large number of Exeter's courses are in the top 20 in their respective subject league tables in *The Times*. These are: sports science, history, business, drama, economics, education, engineering, physics, geology, German, Spanish, mathematics, politics, and psychology. A full version of *The Times* league table is published at: www.timesonline.co.uk/gug

And some of the most satisfied students

A new survey has found that Exeter has some of the most satisfied students in Britain. According to the National Student Survey 2007, some 91 per cent of University of Exeter students were satisfied with their experience compared with a national average of 81 per cent.

Exeter came fourth among universities of its type, placing the university in the top ten for the third year in a row. More than 140 universities and higher education colleges took part in the survey, which asked 177,000 final year students what they thought of their course.

Call to save coral reefs

Think of coral reefs and images of vibrant, colourful marine ecosystems come to mind. Yet Professor Peter Mumby – University of Exeter academic and marine ecologist – warns that the Caribbean’s coral reefs are at risk of terminal decline. He is the lead author of a new study that shows seaweed invaders are threatening to turn beautiful coral reefs into algae-flooded domains. The research, by the Universities of Exeter and California Davis, was recently published in the leading journal *Nature*.

As Professor Mumby explained, many of the problems of coral reefs today are due to the near-extinction of the herbivorous urchin, *Diadema antillarum*, in the 1980s. This grazing urchin, along with parrotfish, kept seaweed levels down, creating enough room for coral to grow and thrive. Due to the loss of this urchin, parrotfish are now the sole grazers of seaweed on many Caribbean reefs. Yet over-fishing means that parrotfish numbers have dwindled to dangerously low levels. Human activity, from fertilizers washing off farmland into the sea to warmer waters caused by climate change, is also helping to boost seaweed growth.



Without sufficient numbers of parrotfish available to feed off the seaweed, more and more coral reefs in the Caribbean are being smothered. “We are seeing more and more coral reefs becoming just overgrown with seaweed,” said Professor Mumby. He and a team of twelve other researchers at the Marine Spatial Ecology Lab, part of the School of Biosciences at Exeter, are working hard to monitor reefs and help conserve them.

This latest piece of research was funded by the US Environmental Protection Agency, the Royal Society, the Natural Environment Research Council and the National





Coral reefs in video

Science Foundation. A computer model was used that revealed some coral, once it has reached a certain tipping point, may never recover.

Professor Mumby believes that we need to act quickly. "We recommend a change in policy to establish controls over the use of fish traps, which parrotfish are particularly vulnerable to," he said, "and we also call on anyone who visits the Caribbean and sees parrotfish on a restaurant menu to voice their concern to the management."

He warns that we cannot afford to do nothing. "Millions of people depend on coral reefs and, unfortunately, many of the problems are experienced because of climate change, which is largely a function of developed countries, yet it is mainly developing countries that will be most severely affected." He added: "We also have a moral obligation to protect the most diverse ecosystems on the planet."

"We also have a moral obligation to protect the most diverse ecosystems on the planet"

Coral reefs rival the rainforests in terms of their diversity. Some of the oldest have been growing for nearly 25 million years. Small calcium-producing organisms are responsible for the growth of coral. Professor Peter Mumby, a Royal Society Research Fellow, is behind a new educational website called ReefVid. The website, www.reefvid.org, has more than 500 video clips of coral reefs free for educational use by teachers and scientists. The video shows the array of reef fish and other marine wildlife that make coral reefs such special places.

Gifts fund coral reef fieldwork

Thanks to donors, Biosciences students were able to study coral reefs at an international research centre. The course, held at the Gerace Research Centre, San Salvador, in the Bahamas, during the summer of 2007, gave 32 students the chance to carry out their own research into coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves.



LEFT: Adult male of the queen parrotfish, *Scarus vetula*, one of the most important grazers on Caribbean coral reefs.
ABOVE: School of snappers (*Lutjanidae*) taking refuge under a canopy of the coral *Acropora palmata*.
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF EVAN D'ALESSANDRO



Cricket centre becomes a reality

Plans for a £2 million indoor cricket centre at the University are to become reality, thanks to a successful fundraising initiative. The centre will provide training facilities for talented cricketers. Honorary Graduate Sir Christopher Ondaatje donated £250,000 towards the centre, with an additional £1.5 million coming from donors and other sources, including the England and Wales Cricket Board.

Sir Christopher Ondaatje said: "I am delighted to support such an important development in Devon and at the University as cricket is of great interest to me."

The Sir Christopher Ondaatje Cricket Centre, which will have four nets, is set to open this autumn. Exeter is one of the country's leading cricketing universities. A number of test players are alumni, including Paul Downton and Richard Ellison. Exeter finished tenth for sport overall in the 2007 British Universities Sports Association (BUSA) rankings.

Donors make a big difference

The Annual Fund, the University's annual fundraising programme, has enjoyed its most successful year to date. In excess of 2,000 alumni and friends gave nearly £250,000 in 2006/07. The gifts, received and disbursed by the Exeter University Foundation, have funded a wide range of projects.

Funds raised from the Annual Fund contributed to Library improvements including ten new laptops for loan to students, secure laptop storage facilities and a multimedia room. "By putting something back into the University, alumni and other donors are helping to provide today's students with the facilities and resources to help nurture their career skills," said Martin Myhill, Assistant Director for Collections and Research Support.

More than 140 children and 150 older people are now regularly using two new Community Action minibuses acquired with a £31,000 grant. Sandra Loveday, Community Action Coordinator, added: "We could not have continued student-led projects without the support given by donors. This really shows that the gifts people have given are making a difference."

Meanwhile, this year's appeal is already underway. Student telephone fundraisers will contact around 15,000 alumni and parents of current students spread around the world. The 2007/08 Annual Fund is raising funds for three priority areas: Scholarships and Bursaries, Student Life, and, for those who do not have a preference, Wherever the Need is Greatest. For more information about the Annual Fund see: www.exeter.ac.uk/foundation or contact Lisa Williams on +44 (0)1392 263360 or annualfund@exeter.ac.uk

Celebrating excellence

Eight outstanding individuals have won a prestigious scholarship to study at Exeter. The £5,000 per annum Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Scholarship rewards academic achievement and extra-curricular activity such as voluntary work. More than 350 applications were made for the awards. In addition, 14 Jubilee and Millhayes Awards, worth between £2,000 and £3,000 each year,

were granted to Science students who demonstrated exceptional academic merit. As well as scholarships and bursaries funded by the University, alumni and friends have enabled many students to benefit from an Exeter education. If you would like to support a scholarship please contact Shirley Lovegrove on s.m.lovegrove@exeter.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0)1392 269015.



People Profile



Born in Manchester, **Professor Christine Allison** grew up in the North West of England, but her passion for the Kurdish language took her to the heart of Saddam Hussein's Iraq. The University of Exeter's new Chair in Kurdish Studies spoke to *University News*.

“It was a very exciting but humbling experience,” said Professor Christine Allison, when asked to describe what it was like carrying out fieldwork in Saddam Hussein's Iraq in 1992.

“Everyone was terrified Saddam's army would come over the hill at any moment. Of course if that happened I could always get out, but my friends there couldn't.”

As she recounts: “It was relatively isolated from other countries. There weren't Internet connections and telephones. At that time, it was hard to buy things not produced locally, food supplies were limited, and many, probably most, people were very poor.

Yet Professor Allison's experience was that ordinary people living under the

shadow of Saddam's regime were friendly and kindhearted. “Despite their problems, they were always welcoming and generous, and tried to help me in my research wherever possible,” she said.

The academic journey that led Professor Allison from the North West to Iraq started at Oxford. After a BA degree in Classics and French at Magdalen College, Oxford, Professor Allison decided to study Kurdish at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). Her PhD thesis focused on oral traditions amongst the Yezidis of Iraq. This was followed by a British Academy postdoctoral fellowship at SOAS (1997-2001).

She then lectured in Kurmanji Kurdish at the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) in

Paris, before taking up the post of Ibrahim Ahmed Chair of Kurdish Studies at Exeter, funded by a gift from the Ibrahim Ahmed Foundation. Exeter's new Centre of Kurdish Studies (CKS) is the first of its kind to be established outside of Kurdistan.

Exeter is the only British university to teach Sorani, and soon, Kurmanji Kurdish as part of its undergraduate programmes. The University also offers a new MA in Kurdish Studies, and there are plans to commission a new peer-reviewed academic journal.

Professor Allison says Exeter's international reputation in Kurdish Studies was one of the main factors that brought her to the University. Asked why Kurdish Studies is so important, she highlights that the Kurds are one of the largest groups in the Middle East. “There are well over 20 million Kurds,” she explained, “and they have their own language and culture, which differ in many ways from those of their neighbours.

“Moreover, they inhabit a strategic area once referred to as ‘the most valuable piece of real estate in the Middle East, bar Israel’. This area comprises not only important oil resources, but also the headwaters of the Tigris and the Euphrates.”

As well as carrying out research in Iraq, the academic has worked with Kurds in Germany and most recently in Armenia. Although she is an active researcher, Professor Allison also has a passion for teaching Kurmanji Kurdish to her students. She added: “I love teaching and I always find that I learn a lot from my students as well.”



First Lady of Iraq in Exeter

Mrs Hero Ibrahim Ahmed, the First Lady of Iraq,

visited the University in October to talk to academics about the development of Kurdish Studies.

The University has been given

hundreds of thousands of pounds by the Ibrahim Ahmed Foundation to support Kurdish Studies, in particular, a new Chair in Kurdish Studies.

The gift has confirmed Exeter's position as a world leader in Kurdish Studies. Mrs Hero Ibrahim Ahmed is a director of the Foundation. One of the highlights of the visit was the official naming of the Ibrahim Ahmed Room, at the University's historic Reed Hall, in recognition of their support.

Research findings

Vitamin C is essential for plant growth

Scientists from the University of Exeter and Shimane University in Japan have proved for the first time that vitamin C is essential for plant growth. This discovery could have major implications for agriculture and for the production of vitamin C dietary supplements. Vitamin C is currently produced by mixed fermentation and

chemical synthesis. The new enzyme provides the potential to engineer microbes to produce vitamin C by a simpler, one-step process.



Re-thinking GM field trials

Field trials could be underestimating the potential for cross-pollination between GM and conventional crops, say Exeter scientists. The research team recommends a new method for predicting the potential for cross-pollination, which takes account of wind speed and direction. The findings show huge variation for cross-pollination between GM and non-GM crops of maize, oilseed rape, rice and sugar beet. Levels vary according to whether the GM field is upwind or downwind of the non-GM field given the direction of the prevailing wind over the flowering period of the crop.



Stroke study sheds light on left-right brain divide

Research into the effects of strokes has furthered our understanding of the different roles of the left and right sides of our brains. A study, led by the University of Exeter, highlighted differences in the ability of people to perform basic tasks, depending on whether the left or right sides of their brains had been damaged by a stroke. The team found that people who had damage to their left side were more likely to realise they had made a mistake, and then correct it, compared to those who had damage to their right frontal lobes.

Dressing for success

New research has found that leaders are most effective when they transform themselves into 'one of us'. The study, by the University of Exeter, University of St Andrews and Australian National University, shatters the stereotype that 'good' leaders must have a specific set of qualities. Instead, it shows that leaders must embody the qualities and opinions of the group they seek to influence, even down to personal appearance. The research found that the best leaders work by shaping themselves to fit the group, before shaping the group itself to fit with their policies and proposals.

Improving quarry safety

Research by the University of Exeter's Camborne School of Mines (CSM) could reduce accidents among those who work in what is one of the UK's most dangerous industries. Psychologist Anam Parand has been working with CSM mining engineers to identify the root causes of accidents and establish new, bespoke ways of preventing them. Quarrying employs 35,000 people in the UK and has one of the highest rates of injury of any industry.



Thirst-quenching sex

Female beetles mate to quench their thirst, according to a new study by a University of Exeter biologist. Dr Martin Edvardsson, whose work was published in the journal *Animal Behaviour*, researched the bruchid beetle *Callosobruchus maculatus*. The study found that thirsty females mated 40 per cent more often than those with free access to water.



Study reveals 'wrong' attitudes to exercise

New research, by the University of Exeter and Brunel University, shows that British adults now believe that moderate activity is more beneficial than vigorous exercise, in contrast to most large studies that suggest the greatest health benefits are derived from regular participation in vigorous activities, such as jogging and competitive sports.

Traditionally, adults were encouraged to take part in 20 to 60 minutes of vigorous exercise three or more times a week. In 1990, research showed around 90 per cent of British adults believed vigorous exercise was important in maintaining and

improving health and fitness. Since 1995, the Department of Health has instead promoted 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week, which can be achieved through everyday activities such as walking, housework, or gardening. The research team believes this shift in attitudes is threatening the nation's health and is calling for evidence-based guidelines. Dr Gary O'Donovan, exercise physiologist from the University of Exeter and lead author on the paper, said: "Time and time again, the largest and most robust studies have shown that vigorously active individuals live longer and enjoy a better quality of life than moderately active individuals and couch potatoes. It's extremely worrying that British adults now believe that a brief stroll and a bit of gardening is enough to make them fit and healthy. The challenge now is to amend Britain's physical activity guidelines so that they emphasise the role vigorous activity plays in fighting obesity, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease."

In addition to halving the risk of diabetes and heart disease, recent studies have

shown that regular exercise offers protection from certain cancers. The research team believes that 30 minutes of brisk walking per day might be sufficient to reduce the risk of breast cancer, but regular participation in vigorous exercise is probably necessary to reduce the risk of prostate and colorectal cancers.

The researchers argue that in order to enable the public to make fully informed decisions about exercise, policymakers should describe the dose-response relationship between physical activity and health. Dr O'Donovan explains that: "Brisk walking offers some health benefits, but jogging, running, and other vigorous activities offer maximal protection from disease."

The survey, funded by the Sports Marketing Research Trust, shows for the first time the extent of awareness of the current Government exercise recommendations: 78 per cent of men and 84 per cent of women interviewed were aware that moderate activity is currently recommended for adults.

Activity

Approximate time to burn 400 Calories

Light to moderate activities

Dusting and cleaning	114 minutes
Vacuuming or mopping	82 minutes
Walking briskly	75 minutes
Cycling at < 10 mph	71 minutes
Golf, walking and pulling clubs	66 minutes
Mowing lawn with power mower	63 minutes

Vigorous activities

Tennis, doubles	48 minutes
Badminton, competitive singles	41 minutes
Circuit training or jogging at 5 mph	36 minutes
Swimming laps or running at 6 mph	29 minutes
Cycling at 16–19 mph	24 minutes
Running at 8 mph	21 minutes

Table courtesy of Dr Gary O'Donovan, School of Sport and Health Sciences, University of Exeter.





Paul Jackson: a life in television

One of the most influential figures in television, Exeter alumnus Paul Jackson (English 1970) is the Director of Entertainment and Comedy at ITV. The 59-year-old has worked on a host of hits during a career that has spanned three decades. As well as building a successful career, Paul chaired Comic Relief for many years. Other interests include helping to mentor young people in the media. He is a Visiting Professor at the University of Exeter's School of Arts, Languages and Literatures. He spoke to *Ben Norman*.

What is your best memory of your time at the University of Exeter?

The night *The Who* played at the Great Hall. The first time it had ever been used for a Students' Guild event.

Can you describe what it was like being a student when you were at Exeter?

In truth, it was fantastic. It was the late 60s and we thought we had discovered a whole new world and the key to life and happiness. Fabulous campus; great social life; and, as I was doing English, reading anything and everything I could.

What inspired you to embark on a career in the media?

It is what I always wanted to do. Both my parents had been in theatre and my dad worked at the BBC.

Can you describe your current job?

I am responsible for buying and overseeing all the Entertainment and Comedy on ITV's four channels.

What is the best thing about your job?

Getting to work with some of the top Comedy and Music acts in the country. I just love being around those people.

What has been the proudest moment for you in your working life?

Making it in Los Angeles. We had shows on all four major networks as well as several cables and one breakout hit with Gordon Ramsay's *Hells Kitchen*. It is a good town in which to enjoy success.

And your worst?

The failure of Carlton TV to deliver on its initial promise.

Most embarrassing?

I really don't do embarrassment. That is not to say I haven't screwed up, I have often but I don't embarrass easily. Actually, the worst moment in showbiz I have had was while I was a student at Exeter. I was in a play called *Little Malcolm and his Struggle Against The Eunuchs*. I completely missed an



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF ITV

entrance cue. I left the guy playing Malcolm, his name was Dougy Benson, completely on his own on the stage for a couple of minutes.

What single piece of advice would you give to Exeter alumni starting out in their careers?

If they want to come into any branch of this business, my advice is: be very, very sure that you absolutely live it, eat it and breathe it. It is a great business and it has given me a wonderful life; but it consumes your life and you have to be prepared to accept that. It is not a job you can do half-heartedly.

Why do you think so many Exeter alumni are leading successful careers in the media?

The media has always been a popular career choice for graduates and Exeter is strong in the arts – which are probably more appropriate than straight media courses.

Who do you admire the most in the media?

My two mentors were Bill Cotton and Michael Grade, both of whom I still hugely admire. The latter of course is currently my boss. In the past few years, you have to admire the entrepreneurship of the two Simons: Cowell and Fuller. Then again, I have to say Ant and Dec are as good a presenting team as any I have worked with over the last thirty years.

What do you watch on the television when you are at home?

I have to watch pretty well all the Entertainment and Comedy across the major channels. This is normally part business and part pleasure. I also love to watch the big sporting events. I am a big Corrie fan and I do like TV drama at its best: *Prime Suspect*; *Doc Martin*; that kind of thing.

Can you name an individual in public life who you admire the most?

I am a huge fan of Richard Curtis, both professionally and personally. I also admire Alex Ferguson.

Do you have any future ambitions for your career?

I would love to find the next big thing in Entertainment and one or two more comedies to rebuild the genre on ITV. However, I am not secretly hoping to be promoted to my boss's job or run the BBC; I am just enjoying what I am doing.

What is it like being a Visiting Professor at the University of Exeter?

I really enjoy my professorship. It is constantly stimulating and makes me think about and examine what I do at work and how we go about it.

Which bit of being a Visiting Professor do you enjoy the most?

The best part of teaching at Exeter is hearing what the students care about, what they like and dislike, and what they want to achieve.

Why is charity work so important to you?

As I have said, luck has a lot to do with success in this business and I was very lucky as a young graduate that people made time to advise and mentor me. It just seems natural to return the favour. Moreover, the truth is you benefit by it. You meet people and find out things you wouldn't otherwise. Comic Relief was just a no brainer. Why wouldn't you want to work with that group of people? I then discovered on various trips, particularly to the African projects, just how rewarding it was to be around the field workers and the beneficiaries of the fundraising.



The Cv

Paul Jackson took up his current post at ITV in February 2006 after supervising Granada production businesses, first in Australia and then in America. He went to Australia from the BBC where he held the role of Controller of Entertainment.

Paul has a distinguished record as a producer of programmes. His hits include the cult sci-fi sit-com *Red Dwarf*, *Three Of A Kind* (which was a BAFTA and Montreux Rose winner), *The Young Ones* (another BAFTA winner), and *Saturday Live* for Channel 4.

He also co-produced an Oscar-winning success in 1988 with the comedy live action short *The Appointments of Dennis Jennings*, which starred Rowan Atkinson.

News from the Alumni Network



PICTURED: From left to right: Richard Hooper (Hon LLD 2007), The Chancellor Floella Benjamin OBE (Hon DLitt 2005), Paul Jackson (English 1970), and Keith Taylor, Director, FB Productions.



PICTURED: Paul Jackson (English 1970) gives his speech at the event.



PICTURED: From left to right: Lindy Newton (Russian 1972), The Vice-Chancellor Professor Steve Smith and Judith More (English & American Arts 1977).

Exeter Media Network Event

ITV headquarters in London was the venue for a recent professional media networking event. More than 70 Exeter alumni attended the Exeter Media Network Event on 19 November 2007. The host, Paul Jackson (English 1970), spoke with passion about being a Visiting Professor at Exeter. He encouraged alumni to get involved in the University by giving careers advice to Exeter students. The Chancellor, Floella Benjamin OBE (Hon DLitt 2005), and the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Steve Smith, also attended.

BBC Security Correspondent Frank Gardner OBE (Arab and Islamic Studies 1984), who came along to the evening as well, said: "I was surprised and impressed to see so many Exeter alumni there from the media. This was a great opportunity for people to catch up."

The media network is just one of a series of professional networking events being held this year. Other networking opportunities include the Finance (12 February) and Law (TBC) events, as well as the Gala Dinner in London, at Middle Temple (15 May). A series of international events are also taking place. The purpose of these events is to help to bring Exeter's community of 58,000 alumni across 150 countries closer together.

More and more alumni are also organising their own networks and get-togethers. A number of prominent alumni have recently set up a new Alumni Relations Network Group. Working with Convocation and the University, the group aims to foster closer links between alumni and with Exeter. In addition, it is hoped more alumni will want to share their skills and expertise with the University's current generation of students by giving careers presentations and advice.

Search for lost alumni

A new search is underway to find alumni with whom the University has lost contact. Many of these so-called 'lost alumni' have not been in touch with Exeter for many years and may not know about the latest networking events, reunions with old friends and other news. If you know of any 'lost alumni' please contact us and encourage them to get back in touch.

For help from the Alumni Relations team in organising your own event, to share your professional expertise with students, or to assist in the search for 'lost alumni' please call +44 (0)1392 263141 or email alumni@exeter.ac.uk



Engineering a reunion with lecturers

Exeter alumni took a trip down memory lane with their former lecturers at a recent reunion. Former students, who graduated in 1972, 1977 and 1982, returned to the University for a weekend in September. The reunion was particularly special for one group of engineering students as many of their former lecturers were able to attend.



Paddon Award Competition 2008

Write a poem using a maximum of 40 lines with the title "The Day the World Changed"

Win a **cash prize**, read your work to an invited audience and be published in a University of Exeter publication

Open to all alumni, current students and staff of the University of Exeter.

Closing date for entries: **1 February 2008**

Final Judging and Awards Ceremony: **8 March 2008**

For entry forms and rules email: alumni@exeter.ac.uk

The competition is organised by Convocation, the Students' Guild and the University's Alumni Relations team.

For enquiries phone: +44 (0)1392 263141



Alumni brave flooding

Despite the fact that most of England had come to a standstill caused by severe flooding, only four alumni who had booked to attend a weekend reunion failed to make it to campus. Those who made it to the reunion in July told their fellow alumni stories of journeys taking nine hours and long detours. One couple, stranded half-way through their journey, were so determined to attend they chose to spend the night in their car in the hope the water would recede, rather than turn back for home. Some attendees had crossed even more water coming from Switzerland, France and Germany. In the end, more than 60 alumni attended the reunion for the Classes of 1957, 1962 and 1967, including one group from the Class of 1959 who come along every year.



Fond farewell

Alumni are being asked to mark the retirement of two leading figures of Exeter's Archaeology Department. Archaeologists Val Maxfield and Bryony Coles will retire from the department this year after completing 36 years at Exeter. Archaeology staff, other colleagues and friends are marking their retirement by organising a special conference weekend entitled 'From Desert to Wetland' on 27 and 28 September 2008. Professor Coles was elected a Fellow of the British Academy, the national academy for the humanities and social sciences, in recognition of her academic achievements in September 2007. For more information about the event, please contact Derek Gore on d.a.gore@exeter.ac.uk

Signs for the Times

It is amazing what you can buy on eBay nowadays: houses, luxury cars, and even private jets. But, for ten days during November, people could buy a piece of University of Exeter history on the auction website: an old University sign.

More than 160 of the green and white signs that had previously graced the campus, and which were replaced last summer, went under the hammer. The auction raised £8,000 for the Exeter University Foundation.

The starting price for bids was 99p. Within the space of just a few days, bids for individual signs had reached £100. By the end of the auction, some of the signs had fetched in excess of £300.

Many of those who bought a sign were alumni and friends of the University from all over the world. Some of the successful bidders live in the USA, Norway and France. Signs for student halls of residence fetched the highest prices; Birks Halls of Residence was sold for £337; and Hope Hall went for £312. The University of Exeter signs up for grabs also proved to be popular and one fetched £294.

University staff member Carole Fitzgerald bought one of the signs, Rowe House, as a 40th birthday present for a friend.

She said: "I was struggling to think of a special gift for my friend's 40th birthday. What do you buy for someone who has everything? I couldn't believe my luck when I saw the sign auction. What a great idea, and there was just the sign for her – Rowe House – her surname is Rowe. An ideal personalised present, unique and about the same age!"



New website for online surfers

Convocation – the name of the formal body of alumni – has launched a brand new website

As well as keeping alumni abreast of what is happening in Convocation by way of representing their interests and opinions to the University, the website provides immediate access to Convocation regional branches and the year-round social activities each offers. By accessing www.exeterconvocation.org, alumni can find information about the various inter-branch reunions such as the four-day spring gathering in Hope Hall and the summer outing (this year to Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire).

The website also has pages of news which keeps users up to date with activities and events, such as the annual Paddon Award competition, the annual Andrew Stratton Lecture, the Convocation Sports scholarship and the Graduation Ball.

Alumni can also access a link on the website to subscribe to the Convocation quarterly printed newsletter, *Branch Lines*, which is £5 a year per household.

The star lawyer: Anthony Salz

Exeter alumnus Anthony Salz (LLB 1971) has a formidable reputation and CV: one of the country's top corporate lawyers with thirty years' experience, a legendary contacts' book, a former vice-chairman of the BBC, and someone who has spent a large amount of his time on charity work. In 2006, he switched from the legal to the corporate banking world by joining NM Rothschild, one of the world's most influential banking institutions. *Ben Norman* spoke to Anthony, a long-standing friend of the University, about his time at Exeter and his career.

The secret to a successful career, according to Anthony Salz, are three qualities: stamina, curiosity, and a sense of humour. Anthony has had to draw on his reserves of all three of these throughout his career since he left Exeter with a degree in law during the early 1970s.

The 57-year-old star lawyer hopes that more alumni, like him, will keep in touch with the University of Exeter, where he picked up his first law book. "I hope that alumni will feel that keeping in touch with the University and your old friends is tremendously rewarding," he said. "We were at Exeter at a special time of our lives and the experience gives us something important in common."

The avid Southampton Football Club supporter has very fond memories of his time at Exeter. "I remember the cream teas, the pubs, Dartmoor and the Devon countryside, the music, and debating various issues, even legal ones; oh, and getting a decent degree," said Anthony, who recalls going to lectures in Exeter's Gandy Street, where the University's Law department was located at that time.

After leaving Exeter, he remembers that his experience of applying for his first job was a difficult one. "My hair was too long (or so they thought), I didn't apply early enough and I was not quite ready for a life with only four weeks' holiday," he said. "Then, like buses, three offers came in a row and I selected the law firm that seemed to have the most attractive offices." So, the young Salz started his legal career at Kenneth Brown, Baker and Baker. He left the firm nearly two years after qualifying and went to Freshfields in 1975.

Anthony's career flourished at Freshfields. He spent a year in New York and within five years he was made a partner. By 1996, he became senior partner. One of the highest profile deals he worked on was the 1987 BP rights issue, in which

the government under Margaret Thatcher sold off its remaining shares in the firm. He also masterminded a number of mergers including Reed International with Elsevier and SmithKline with Beecham.

As well as dealing with legal intricacies, Anthony, who was born in Tavistock, Devon, enjoys the range of people he has had the chance to work with. While he was at Freshfields, he spent a large amount of time working with a charity that gives homeless people the opportunity to benefit from placements in business. He also helped other charities and public sector organisations by supporting teachers working in inner city communities and by his ability to approach problems with a fresh set of eyes. Meanwhile, in 2004, the partners at Freshfields agreed to him taking on the role of vice-chairman of the BBC after one of its most turbulent periods following the Iraq war. He said: "The BBC is such a special organisation and I have great respect for the people who work there and their journalism. The public's expectations are enormously high, in part because of their pride in the BBC."

As an executive vice-chairman at Rothschild, Anthony is continuing with his philanthropic work. He was a founder in 2006 of the Tick Tock Club, whose members raise money to support the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. He added: "It is a humbling experience. It gives you an important perspective outside your working environment, helps you to understand how lucky you have been and allows you to make a contribution in an entirely different way."



© DANIEL JONES/THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Profile: in brief

Degree in Law, University of Exeter

Joined Freshfields in 1975

Became a Partner in 1980

Made Senior Partner 1996

Vice-Chairman of the BBC 2004

Joined NM Rothschild as Executive Vice-Chairman 2006

Alumni behind high-tech success story



A long list of alumni have contributed to catapulting Transition Consulting Limited (TCL), a software testing business based in the University's Innovation Centre, into one of the top-50 fastest growing private technology companies in the UK, starting with the company's founder, Stewart Noakes (Physics 1994).

Other alumni include Mark Garnett, a university pal Stewart met on his first day as an undergraduate. He offered his services as a website designer for the new company, which was started in 2000. The list now includes: David Weston (Computer Science 2006) a Test Analyst; Martin Westacott (Computer Science 2007) a Test Analyst; Kyle Alves (MBA 2007) a Business Consultant;

Jonathan Wright (MBA 2005) a Business Consultant; and Jessica Harrington (Business and Management 2008) who handles University Liaison.

A fortuitous set of coincidences led Stewart to choose the Innovation Centre as the location for his brand new company. Sitting at his breakfast table in Surrey in early 2000, leafing through the latest edition of *University News*, Stewart noticed an article about the opening of the new Innovation Centre at Exeter. Already in touch with Mark Garnett, Stewart was persuaded to find out more about what the Innovation Centre had to offer a start-up situation like his.

After several meetings with the team at the Innovation Centre, Stewart was so impressed by the levels of enthusiasm and unique support and services available, that his mind was made up and Transition Consulting Ltd became one of the Centre's first residents.

Seven years on, TCL has a turnover in excess of £6 million and has entered the prestigious Sunday Times Tech Track rankings at number 47, an extraordinary achievement for such a young company.

"To appear in the Sunday Times Tech Track ranking was a real aspiration when we started the business," Stewart explained. "It is a testament to the hard work of the whole TCL team and the wonderful support we've received from key stakeholders, including the staff at the Innovation Centre, that we've achieved it so quickly," he said.

Despite its meteoric growth, the company has still found the time and resources to ensure it adds value to both the University and the wider regional community. Its sponsorship of the University of Exeter's MBA sailing team has included helping the team with the cost of hiring their boat and the insurance. TCL also offers three annual scholarships to Computer Science students at Exeter, along with a sports scholarship. And some of the past scholarship winners are in the list of alumni that now work for the company. The firm also undertakes pro bono business consultancy for selected local charities.

Not content with being a high achiever in the corporate world, Stewart has decided to augment his academic credentials by undertaking an MBA at the School of Business and Economics.

Innovation

The University's Innovation Centre has been expanded to nurture more knowledge-based enterprises. Phase 2 of the Innovation Centre can accommodate a further 30 high growth firms. The enlarged centre provides 35,000 square feet of offices and laboratories. The University is also working in partnership with a number of organisations, including the Met Office, on plans for a new Science Park for Exeter. For more about the Innovation Centre see www.spaceforsuccess.co.uk





Exeposé celebrates 20th anniversary



This academic year marks a particularly important date – the 20th anniversary of *Exeposé*, the student newspaper that has provided the springboard for many media careers. Generations of alumni have experienced the pressure of the print deadline, the rush of adrenaline of a breaking news story and the pride of seeing their by-line in print. John Stevens, current

editor of *Exeposé*, said: “We’ve been in contact with former editors from the last twenty years and it’s been great to share experiences with our predecessors.” Here are just a few of the memories of alumni who first cut their teeth in journalism during their time at Exeter on *Exeposé*, and its predecessor, *The South Westerner*:



Stuart Pollitt (History 2002)

Exeposé Sports Editor
2000-2002

Among the highlights was Exeter winning the University rugby championships at Twickenham in 2001. It was a terrific thing to do for a budding journalist – there really is no better experience than doing a hands-on job on a paper like *Exeposé*. It helped prepare me for my current job, presenting and reporting on the likes of Aston Villa and Wolves for the West Midlands *Express & Star* – Britain’s biggest regional newspaper and website.



Jennifer Hughes (History 1997)

Exeposé
Editor 1996-1997

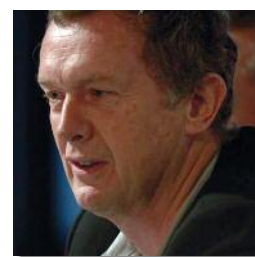
Did I leave a fully-fledged reporter? Not exactly, but *Exeposé* put me on the path and confirmed my love of print journalism. I’ll never forget the adrenaline rush as deadline neared, nor the subsequent buzz of seeing people reading ‘my baby’ in Devonshire House each week. I loved the drama, the camaraderie of the newsroom and the excitement of a real story. The newspaper I work on may have got bigger, but those feelings haven’t changed. *Jennifer is currently Financial Correspondent on the Financial Times and has just returned from a three year posting in New York.*



Ian Anderson (Politics 1981)

The South Westerner
Editor 1980

I have to own up to editing *The South Westerner*, I think, in 1980 – my second year as a Politics student. We had a wonderful time despite having to write the entire paper on an old electric typewriter and pasting the articles onto cardboard with glue! The whole thing was probably responsible for me getting a start in real newspapers – which in turn have led to 20 years in the BBC TV newsroom – where I’m a senior producer.



Stewart Purvis (Politics 1969)

The South Westerner
Editor 1967-1968

With students elsewhere making so much news the new TV station for the West of England and Wales, then known as Harlech TV, decided to devote half an hour a week to student matters. They auditioned every editor of a student paper in their region as a presenter and I got the job. That led to me getting a news traineeship at the BBC. From there I went on to 31 years at ITN, to a Professorship in journalism and now to the media regulator Ofcom where I help to oversee the quality of British television and radio. So thanks, sleepy old *South Westerner*.

Galaxy of Graduands receive Honorary Degrees



Brian May, rock star and astrophysicist, was among 20 public figures who received Honorary Degrees last year. Honorary Graduands from the fields of arts, business, law, and sport joined more than three thousand students in ceremonies during summer 2007.

Musician Brian May was awarded a Doctorate of Sciences for his interest in astronomy and physics. Yusuf Islam, formerly known as Cat Stevens, received his Honorary Degree in recognition of his humanitarian work and improving understanding between Islamic and western cultures. Jennifer Saunders and Adrian Edmondson received Honorary Doctorate of Literatures; the married actor-comedians live on Dartmoor in rural Devon. Former England Rugby Union coach Sir Clive Woodward received a Doctorate of Laws for his achievements in sports and management.

Other public figures who received Honorary Degrees included: Sir Richard Dearlove, Professor Dame Carol Black and Sir Nicholas Stern, economist and author of the key report on climate change.

Streatham campus, Exeter

Yusuf Islam (LLD)
Professor Dr Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (LLD)
Brian May, musician (DSc)
Jennifer Saunders and Adrian Edmondson (both received DLitt)
Sir Robert Owen, judge (LLD)
Anthony Gibson, National Farmers' Union (LLD)
David Eldridge, playwright (DLitt)
Dr Beverley Naidoo, author (DLitt)
Michael Rosen, poet and children's author (DLitt)
Posy Simmonds, cartoonist (DLitt)
Sir Peter Job, former chief executive of Reuters (LLD)
Sir Richard Dearlove, former head of MI6 (LLD)
Sir Clive Woodward, former England Rugby Union coach (LLD)
Ray Dillon, Exeter businessman (LLD)
The Right Revd Michael Langrish, Bishop of Exeter (DD)
Richard Hooper CBE, businessman (LLD)

Peninsula Medical School graduation

Prof Dame Carol Black, Chairman, Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (DSc)

Tremough campus, Penryn, Cornwall

Kurt Jackson, artist (LLD)
Sir Nicholas Stern (DSc)

New books Exeter alumni and staff have been hitting the publishing trail again.

Dr Todd Gray, Honorary Research Fellow, has scooped the Devon Book of the Year award with his chronicle of the rise of fascism in Devon, entitled *Blackshirts in Devon*. Contact info@stevensbooks.co.uk

One Step to Danger, the first of a trilogy, is a fast moving thriller, bringing together the worlds of crime and high finance. Written by John Gubert (French & German 1968) ISBN 978-1-906221-35-5 See: www.troubador.co.uk

Alison Dixon (English Literature 1979) has co-authored *Career Change: A helpful web-based companion for planning and preparing for your next career move*. Available from www.amazon.co.uk

Saffia Farr (Law 1995) has published her first book, a description of life and raising her child in Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia – a place where people eat sheep's eyes, spit on your feet, and live in felt tents. See: www.saffiafarr.com

John Kinross (Naval History 1995) has two books on very different topics available; the latest is *Discovering the Smallest Churches in Wales* (www.tempus-publishing.com) and *Fishguard Fiasco*, about the French invasion of Wales ISBN 978-1-904396-68-0

Dr Edward Leggatt (Certificate in Education 1942) provides insights into the many avenues opened up by the discovery of holistic natural energy healing, in his book entitled *In the Vortex: Aspects of a Healer's Life*. See: www.upfrontpublishing.com



Seeds of Change

Stephen Scarr, who joined the University in September 1979, having been a gardener and horticulturalist since the mid-fifties, has retired after nearly three decades as Director of Grounds.

Stephen's career involved two spells at Kew Gardens, one in 1960 as an apprentice and later, in 1965, as a student. After further studies in specialist parks management and design, he started his first job as a technical assistant at Norwich parks. For the next ten years, he continued working in the field of public sector parks management until the graduate trainee in his team pointed out an advertisement for the job at Exeter. She had played hockey at the campus and thought it would be ideal for him. How right she turned out to be.

We took the opportunity to ask Stephen some questions about his tenure:

What was the best part of your job at the University?

Watching the landscape projects that I had designed grow and mature. Also seeing the rare or difficult plants that we were growing coming into flower. A most recent example of which was the King Protea.

What is your fondest memory of the years you spent at the University?

I met a student sitting on a rock looking very wistful. She was studying on a short course at the University. She said she came from Liverpool and did not realise that there could be such a beautiful University.

Apart from the University, what are your favourite grounds/gardens and why?

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, because of its fantastic plant collection and magnificent ancient trees.

Was there anything that for whatever reason you wanted to do but couldn't to the grounds during your time here?

I would always have liked to be able to replace fallen mature trees with healthy mature trees, thereby preserving the visual landscape.

Do you have any top tips for enthusiastic but novice gardeners?

Study and persevere, remembering that gardening is both skilled and complicated.

What have you been up to since your retirement?

Researching and constructing two small but different beds for some specialist Alpines, attending a conference on Cacti, and starting to tidy up the rest of my garden.

Our new Director of Grounds, the aptly named Iain Park, comes to us from Edinburgh. Iain narrowly escaped specialising purely in forestry when he realised that he could combine his love of trees with his developing interest in plants and horticulture during his degree in the 1980s.

After leaving university, Iain spent his entire career, bar a brief spell in the mid-1990s, with the City of Edinburgh Council. Iain held a variety of posts, most recently as Parks Manager with responsibility for 1,600 hectares, equivalent to 2,200 acres of green space.

Commenting on the legacy left by Stephen, Iain said: "I am so impressed by the unbelievable commitment of my team of grounds staff, whose knowledge of the campus is second to none, and who are passionate about their work."

To mark Stephen's retirement, why not make a donation to enhance the University grounds? For more information about making a gift, which could be used to dedicate a tree, contact Shirely Lovegrove on s.m.lovegrove@exeter.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0)1392 269015.



Golden Jubilee for University Chapel

The University Chapel celebrates its Golden Jubilee this summer. The Chapel, which is a listed building, was dedicated in June 1958. The place of worship has a Lutyens-like exterior and a spacious interior featuring a ceiling painted in pastel shades by Sir Thomas Monnington, a Royal Academician.

From private prayer, to rehearsals and concerts, the Chapel is much used. Grants from trusts underpin choral and organ scholarships. A £250,000 fundraising appeal is also being launched to commission a new organ.

In recognition of the importance of the Chapel to the University's life and history, a celebratory weekend is taking place on 21 and 22 June. The weekend will feature a Saturday night concert, gala dinner and rededication service on Sunday morning to which all alumni and friends of the University Chapel are invited.

University Lazenby Chaplain Charles Hadley said the chapel was a place that many who had studied or taught at Exeter knew well and held dear. "Truth and beauty in all their rich variety are honoured at Exeter and in this Chapel. I pray that the Golden Jubilee will be a joyful celebration of this fact," he said. For more information, contact Charles on c.a.hadley@exeter.ac.uk

53rd Annual General Meeting of **Convocation 2008**

The 53rd AGM of Convocation will be held on Saturday 12 April 2008 at 10am in Hope Hall during the Annual Reunion of Convocation.

The three-year term of office of the Chairman and three other members of Standing Committee will have expired at that time. There are also two, one-year vacancies. Nomination papers are obtainable from:

The Secretary to Standing Committee
c/o Alumni Relations Office
University of Exeter
Northcote House
Exeter EX4 4QJ

Nominations should be returned by 14 March 2008. All present members are eligible for renomination.

Any Convocation members wishing to bring forward a motion for consideration by the AGM should send the Registrar and Secretary of the University notice of such a motion (also via the Alumni Relations Office), signed by the proposer and at least two other members of Convocation as seconders, to reach him by 14 March at the latest.

A hole in one – alumni raise funds at golf day

Exeter alumni raised more than £6,000 at a charity golf day. The event, attended by 43 alumni of all ages, took place at the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club, East Sussex, in September. The money collected will support University golf scholarships. This year's golf day was organised by John Gilbert, Rod Alexander and Chris Edge.

Four University of Exeter golf scholars took part, three of whom have been supported due to the £3,000 raised as a result of the 2006 golf day. This year, the money was raised through a mixture of entry fees, a raffle, and an auction. Exeter alumni who attended on the day, and the University, donated many of the prizes.

Rod Alexander said: "The fundraising for golf scholarships enables us to put something back into the University from which we gained so much. Hopefully one of the scholarship golfers could go on to represent the country or make the pro circuit."

This year's event is at the Denham Golf Club on Thursday 18 September. For more details contact: John Gilbert John_Gilbert@blueyonder.co.uk, Rod Alexander rodericscottuk@yahoo.co.uk or Chris Edge chris.edge@allenbridgepic.com





Rob Walker (English and Drama 1997), a journalist and former President of the Students' Guild, is the driving force behind the LondonLemmy – a charity club night that attracts more than 1,000 alumni each year. Working with the Prince's Trust, money raised from the event is used to take six 18 to 22-year-olds on a life-changing educational trip to Kenya and Uganda. He is now organising an Exeter Alumni Ball in London to bring graduates together and raise even more money for charity.

"Like most undergraduates, I absolutely loved my time at Exeter," said Rob. "The campus, the strong sense of identity and the friends I made all contributed to some of the most memorable days of my life."

When he moved to London, Rob was amazed at just how many Exeter alumni he kept meeting: "One night in Clapham, I bumped into six familiar faces, all from different years and social groups," he remembers. "I went home thinking: 'If there are that many Exeter grads in one bar, surely there are enough for an annual reunion?' And so LondonLemmy was born."

The first LondonLemmy took place in 2002, with 1,000 people turning up – far more than the predicted 250. The Shepherd's Bush Empire in Hammersmith is now the regular venue for the event and, so far, more than 6,500 people have experienced it.

Although the LondonLemmy was never intended to be profit-making, it soon became clear that there would be money left over. Rob worked as a BBC Sport reporter at that time and, after making a documentary about distance running in Kenya and Ethiopia in April 2003, he decided to put the profit to good use.

Rob explained: "Studying at Exeter was a wonderful opportunity for all of us, but not everyone in life gets the breaks they deserve. I wanted to use our reunion money to give as many young people as possible a chance to look at themselves and their possibilities differently. These are also the aims of the Prince's Trust, so I worked with them to find six deserving youngsters for the trip of a lifetime.

"We chose teenagers with a variety of issues, from unemployment to depression and family problems. The first group assembled for a tour of Kenya and Uganda in November 2005," Rob said.

Out of Africa

Each trip starts and finishes in Nairobi. Along the way, the group teaches English in schools,

take part in building projects, visit orphanages, organise sports days and fun runs in primary schools. Of the 18 who have been taken on the three trips so far, he says at least 12 are doing things they never would have thought possible a few years ago.

Rob wants to help more young people and so, as well as continuing with the LondonLemmy, he is organising the first Exeter Alumni Ball on 25 October 2008 at the New Connaught Rooms in Covent Garden, London. Tickets will include a sit down three-course meal, wine and entertainment.

Rob added: "It's a stunning setting for what we hope will be a very special night. It will be an event by Exeter graduates for Exeter graduates and, just like LondonLemmy, the profit will help continue our work in Africa". For more information, email rob@robwalkertv.com or telephone Rob on (+44) 07909 658488. See www.exeteralumniball.com

Diary

2008

Exeter Finance Network Event

Date: Tuesday 12 February

Venue: Butterfield Private Bank, London

Exeter Law Network Event

Date: TBC

Venue: TBC

Always a popular event, tickets are expected to sell out quickly. If you would like to attend this event, please contact alumni@exeter.ac.uk

Finals of the Paddon Award Competition

Date: Saturday 8 March

Venue: Parker Moot Room, Amory Building, University of Exeter

See separate news item for details of the competition.

Convocation Spring Reunion

Date: 11 - 15 April

Venue: Hope Hall, University of Exeter

A chance to meet old friends and join them in a number of outings, including a whole day visit to Tyntesfield House and gardens. More details from Jennifer and Bob Evans, 52 Cambridge Road, Lee-on-the-Solent, Hants PO13 9DH or email r.evans25@ntlworld.com

Convocation AGM

Date: Saturday 12 April

Venue: 10am in Hope Hall, University of Exeter (see separate notice)

Convocation Summer Outing

Date: Saturday 14 June

Venue: Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire

An Exeter University Convocation Club event attended by alumni from all over the country. Details from Rolf Hosstein, 13 Kennet Way, Oakley, Basingstoke, Hants RG23 7AA or email rosemary@holstein.fslife.co.uk

Alumni Reunion – 40th, 45th, 50th and 55th Anniversary

Classes of 1953, 1958, 1963 and 1968

Date: 20 - 21 September (NB: this replaces the July date)

Venue: University of Exeter

Alumni Reunion – 25th, 30th and 35th Anniversary

Classes of 1973, 1978 and 1983

Date: 20 - 21 September

Venue: University of Exeter

If you graduated in these years then September is the month of your reunion. Note the date in your diary, spread the word amongst your friends and come back to the University to meet up with old friends.

To book a place and for further information, contact the Alumni Relations team on +44 (0)1392 263141 or alumni@exeter.ac.uk, or visit www.exeter.ac.uk/alumni



International Events

The University of Exeter is visiting a number of countries this year to meet with our alumni. The Development and Alumni Relations Office is planning international alumni events in China, the Middle East and the USA. Details will be available soon at www.exeter.ac.uk/alumni

For more details please email Stephanie Ganeson at stephanie.ganeson@exeter.ac.uk

Shaping the Future

The UK's former top spy is among the speakers in the latest Shaping the Future lecture series at Exeter. The lectures provide a forum for distinguished speakers to talk about the major issues that shape our lives.

Sir Nicholas Stern (economist and author of the climate change report, Hon DSc) will give a talk on Wednesday 12 March. Sir Richard Dearlove (former head of MI6, Hon LLD) is presenting a lecture on Monday 19 May. Meanwhile, Professor Dame Carol Black (Chairman of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, Hon DSc 2007) is giving a lecture on Thursday 5 June.

Previous distinguished speakers have included: David Blunkett, former Home Secretary, and Lord Winston, Emeritus Professor of Fertility Studies at Imperial College, London. For more details and to book a place, contact Catherine Pierce, Events Officer, on c.a.pierce@exeter.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0)1392 263062.



BOOKINGS NOW BEING TAKEN

Annual Gala Dinner in London

Date: 15 May 2008

Venue: Middle Temple, London

Book your place now for the forthcoming Annual Gala Dinner in London.

For more information about our special guest speaker, please visit www.exeter.ac.uk/alumni closer to the time.

For details about public events on campus see: www.exeter.ac.uk/news/whatson.shtml

For information about events for alumni see: www.exeter.ac.uk/alumni