

**UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE  
THE FIFTIETH ORDINARY MEETING OF CONVOCATION**

**HELD ON SATURDAY 30 JUNE 2007, 11AM, RESEARCH BEEHIVE, OLD  
LIBRARY BUILDING**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Miss Joan Andrews, Mr Peter Bowen, Dr Judith Brand, Mr Tony Brookes, Dr Keith Broomfield, Dr Ann Brown, Dr Hugh Brown, Mrs Anne Brown, Mr Walter Bruce, Mr Peter Byrne, Mr Andrew Capes, Ms Elisabeth Carpenter, Mr Hedley Chambers, Mr Graham Cooper, Mrs Julia Bell, Mr Irvin Bell, Mrs Fiona Douglas, Dr Michael Fisher, Mr James Gartside, Dr Donald Gascoigne, Miss Elspeth Gould, Mr John Hall, Dr Frederick Hardy, Mr Philip Hood, Mrs Rachel Horne, Dr Helen Horne, Mr David James, Mr Jack Jeffery, Dr Jared Johnson, Mr Antony Jones, Mr Christopher Kay, Mrs May Lewis-Meikle, Mr Peter Llewellyn, Mrs Ann Makepeace, Ms Rosalyn Mawson, Dr Robert McCrae, Mr John McGregor, Mr Colin McKenna, Dr Eileen Miller, Mrs Joan Mills, Dr Marcus Milton, Mrs Sarah Moseley, Mrs Anne Nunnerley, Mr William Oliver, Mr William Owen, Mrs Alison Owen, Mrs Kathleen Paley, Ms Irene Pangalou, Mr Andrew Pape, Professor David Parker, Mrs Carole Parker, Mr Norman Paul, Mr Christopher Payne, Mr John Percy, Mrs Pat Percy, Mrs Meriol Penn, Mrs Judith Penney, Dr John Phillips, Mrs Carolyn Phillips, Mr Nigel Pike, Mr Dominic Pinto, Mr Rishiyur Rajan, Mrs Vathsala Rajan, Mrs Jennifer Redgrave, Mr Horace Regnart, Mr John Roxborough, Dr Lorna Rozner, Mr Mark Scrimshaw, Ms Elizabeth Shaw, Dr Robert Sheil, Mr Michael Stoddart, Mr William Stone, Mrs Grace Stretton-Downes, Mr Adrian Swift, Mr Robert Theaker, Mrs Adele Timlin, Mr Gareth Trainer, Professor Anthony Walton, The Rt Hon Lord Walton, Mr Harry Watkins

**In attendance:**

Vice-Chancellor Professor Christopher Edwards, Professor Ella Ritchie (Pro-Vice-Chancellor), Mrs Jane Clubley (Director of Development), Ms Lauren Huntington (DARO), Ms Jaine Fleetwood (DARO), Mr James Johnston (DARO), Dr John Hogan (Registrar), Ms Tracey Readshaw (DARO), Mr Ben Wilson (DARO)

**Apologies:**

Mr John Allinson, Mr Kenneth Allison, Mr Ellis Amos, Mr Ross Anderson, Ms Alison Armour, Mrs Jennifer Baker, Miss Kaija Barnes, Mr Francis Beaumont, Mrs Margaret Beck, Dr David Black, Mrs Alizon Burgess, Mr James Burgess, Mr Lorne Campbell, Professor Derek Carr, Miss Lisa Carroll, Mr Derek Chandler, Mr David Colwell, Dr Elizabeth Copland, Mr Andrew Coulson, Emeritus Professor Alex Crombie, Mr Michael Cunliffe, Dr William Dobie, Mr Dennis Doe, Mr Ian Forster, Mr Lars Fossum, Mr Richard Fothergill, Dr Jeremy Gawen, Mrs Caroline Gill, Dr David Gill, Professor John Goddard, Mr Mark Goldberg, Mr David Gomez, Dr Peter Gore, Mr George Greener, Mrs Elizabeth Greenway, Mr Anthony Grezo, Mr Philip Harding, Mr James

Hathaway, Dr Valerie Henderson, Ms Mary Hood, Dr Ruth Hurwitz, Dr Sheila Irving, Professor Oliver James, Mrs Joy Johnson, Mr Brian Jones, Mr Gary Jones, Mr Stephen Jones, Mr Nick Keeley, Professor Paul Kennedy, Mrs Lesley Kirkup, Mrs Christine Knight, Mr Matthew Knight, Mrs Bertha Kronenberger, Dr Christopher Lanigan, Mr Daniel Large, Mrs Wendy Leeming, Mr Kenneth Lockerbie, Dr Herbert Loebel, Mr Paul Mahoney, Mr David Massarella, Mr Jonathan McEvoy, Mrs Claire McWilliam, Mr Geoffrey Meikle, Mr Stephen Melton, Mr James Millmore, Dr Peter Milne, Dr Julian Minghi, Mr William Moore, Dr William Morgan, Ms Dianne Nelmes, Mr Anthony Norfolk, Dr Robert Oakey, Professor Trevor Page, Dr Arthur Penman, Dr Keith Powell, Mrs Ethel Randall, Mr Nicholas Richardson, Mr Miles Ruoff, Mr Peter Samsom, Mr Alan Scott, Mr Richard Snow, Miss Francesca Spencer, Mr James Stevens, Dr Ralph Swinburn, Mr Ian Symes, Dr Douglas Thomson, Mrs Jane Van Es, Mr Henry Vivian-Neal, Dr Elizabeth Wagstaff, Mr John Walker, Mrs Sarah Walter, Mr Robert Walton, Mr Piers Ward, Dr Talbert Ward, Dr Paul Weightman, Mrs Betty Welford, Professor Zhibang Zhou

**The Chairman, Mr Jack Jeffery** welcomed the members of convocation to the meeting, and explained the reasons for the change of venue.

Jack welcomed Jane Clubley, in her first month as Director of Development.

Jack stated that Mr Richard Fothergill (BSc Applied Science/Electrical Engineering 1950), a supporter of the University, was unable to attend but had sent his apologies and good wishes. Jack mentioned that the Obituaries list was available from the reception area downstairs.

- **MINUTES** Received:

The minutes of the Forty-Ninth Ordinary Meeting of Convocation held on 3 June 2006 were approved.

- **MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman apologised for the misspelling of Dr Lorna Rozner's name in the minutes of the Forty-Ninth Ordinary Meeting of Convocation, and asked that it be spelt correctly in the minutes from this meeting.

- **TRANSFORMING EDUCATION: THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S ACADEMIC REVIEW AND FORECAST 2007**

Received:

A report by the Vice-Chancellor; 'Newcastle University in retrospect and prospect'.

The Vice-Chancellor gave apologies for any disruptions due to the building work that was being carried out on campus, before speaking of a number of developments which have arisen since the previous meeting of Convocation, all of which are contained in the attached presentation. These included:

- University Mission
- Income Growth Projections
- Financial Forecasts 2006-2007
- The INTO Project
- Learning and Teaching - University's Capital Plan - Science City
- Singapore and Malaysia
- The Freshwater Challenge - Sporting Success
- Individual Achievements - The Future

A number of questions followed:

**Donald Gascoigne** (MB BS 1951) observed that not everybody present at Convocation may have been able to see the maps on screen, and that maybe personal copies should have been provided.

**Lorna Rozner** (MB BS 1947) asked if it would be possible to take a copy of the VC's speech home to read

**Vice-Chancellor** responded that a compressed version of his presentation would be sent out with the minutes from this meeting.

**Vice-Chancellor** stated that a partnership would be formed between Newcastle University, Durham University and the Centre for Life to facilitate public education. The VC added that there was a possibility of Newcastle University being involved in a hub school for stem subjects, to stimulate science and technology in the North East. Professor Ella Ritchie will lead the Education Group, both internally through the Science City Education Group, and externally through the Newcastle Science City Education Task Group.

**Donald Gascoigne** (MB BS 1951) respectfully asked if everyone could state their name and faculty before asking their question.

**Judith Penny** (BA Hons Geography 1967) asked in view of the political happenings of the past week, if the VC has a final message before he leaves.

**Vice-Chancellor** responded that the suggestions made by the Government were to the University's advantage, adding that it was important to put universities, skills and innovation together. The VC continued by highlighting the importance of higher level skills, and recognised that Gordon Brown's interest in innovation and science was good news for Newcastle University.

**Horace Regnart** (LLB 1968) thanked the VC, and congratulated him on his analysis and presentation, adding his commendation of interdisciplinary research. He ended by suggesting we convey good wishes to Mr Fothergill who was unable to attend Convocation.

**Elsbeth Gould** (MSc Public Health 1998; BA Hons Humanities 2005) asked about the current thinking for lifelong learning and skilling up for non-traditional students, now that the Joseph Cowan building has been removed and the University has withdrawn from the Centre for Lifelong Learning.

**Vice-Chancellor** responded that it was a difficult situation, but a decision had been made to encourage more young people into University and more people from the North East. During the year 2000 it was found that out of the 500 fully funded places, most students already had either one or two degrees. A decision was made to free up these places to be used for widening participation into the University. The VC added that Sunderland University was now providing lifelong learning, and asked the Registrar, Dr John Hogan, if he could comment further on the removal of Joseph Cowan House.

**John Hogan** responded that students currently in Joseph Cowan House and the Centre for Lifelong Learning will move to the Bedson Building.

**Dominic Pinto** (BA Hons Politics 1978) thanked Newcastle University for its openness, and expressed concerns over expansion and such a significant era of change. He asked about the current quality of schools and A-levels, and whether or not Newcastle University would consider having a grade assessment test like the American universities.

**Vice-Chancellor** acknowledged that this was a difficult area, but that no decision had been made with regards to a Newcastle University entrance exam. The VC expressed concern over the view that A-levels are getting easier, stating instead that schools are getting better at teaching pupils to take exams, which he believed to be a good thing. He highlighted the need to recognise new exams which would identify potential, rather than those that obsess over numbers.

**Adele Timlin** (BA Hons Combined Studies 1985) asked whether Newcastle University would consider a merge with Northumbria University.

**Vice-Chancellor** answered that this was unlikely, due to the fact that they are two very different institutions. Although both universities have different roles to play which are important none-the-less, Northumbria University is not research intensive and a merger would result in a heterogeneous mission, which neither institution would find advantageous.

#### **4. HONORARY DEGREES 2006/2007**

Due to time restrictions, the Chairman asked attendees to consult their agendas for the full list of Honorary Degrees and Honorary Fellowships, which were conferred on the following individuals at ceremonies held on 30 October 2006, 8 January 2007 and 20 April 2007.

#### October

DCL Alan Maude

DSc Robert Alistair Livingston Brewis DSc Mary Dunning

#### January

DCL The Right Honourable Gordon Brown MP DCL Bob Geldof (KBE)

DCL Susan George

DCL David Golding

DCL His Excellency Benjamin William Mkapa

#### April

DCL Anthony John Grenville Hey DCL Ernest Ronald Oxburgh DCL Prem Singh Rana

DCL Matthew White Ridley

- **HONORARY FELLOWSHIPS 2006** To report:

Honorary fellowships were conferred on the following individuals at a ceremony held on 9 October 2006.

Elizabeth Barraclough Nick Richardson

Sir John Willis

- **ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Received:

A verbal report from Chair of the Alumni Association, Mark Scrimshaw.

Mark gave personal thanks to the VC for his support and for playing such an effective role in the Alumni Consultative Group. Mark felt that Newcastle University has found its place in the city and is an integral part of the development of the region, and that this was down to the leadership of the VC. Mark added that education is not just about figures, but is also about human learning and interaction.

Mark welcomed Jane Clubley to the role of Director of Development in DARO, and acknowledged the good work of the office. In particular, Mark made reference to the Communication Strategy which is bearing fruit, and the work of Dan Howarth,

the Publications Officer. Mark highlighted the success of Arches Online, AlumNews and the Great North Museum Project. The GOLD Network for graduates of the last decade was hailed as a success, and praised for keeping the University in touch with younger alumni based around the country. It was announced that the Development Council has reformed, and Mark extended his thanks to Paul Walker for agreeing to chair. Mark revealed that throughout the past year, events were attended by around 1300 alumni, and this number will only increase due to the establishment of new alumni branches and networks in Greece, Norway, USA, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia and China.

Mark gave thanks to those people who have left DARO since last year; Stephen Teal, John Connolly and Jennifer Young, and gave his best wishes to Jaine Fleetwood who will be leaving DARO shortly to work in Sydney. Mark extended his thanks to the VC and everybody for attending the Convocation.

**Antony Jones** (BA (Hons) Politics 1980) stated that Reunion Weekend was an opportunity for alumni to relive their student experience, and asked what alumni can do to contribute to helping build this experience for future students of Newcastle University.

**Mark Scrimshaw** stated that alumni involvement goes beyond money. He added that alumni are a source of expertise and experience, and it is the essence of the University that encourages people to offer this. Mark also stated that the way alumni become involved is not set in stone, and the University is open to new ideas.

**Vice-Chancellor** recognised the efforts of Antony Jones who gave not only his money, but his time as well, particularly in helping the Business School and the Union Society. The VC added that there are multiple ways that alumni can help, and that any personal things they can contribute would be gratefully received and appreciated by the University.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Jack Jeffery introduced Jane Clubley, the Director of Development.

**Jane Clubley** expressed her delight at being at the 50th meeting of Convocation, and gave thanks for the huge support she has received from the DARO team, senior management and volunteers.

Jane identified the need to further develop relations with alumni, and promised a more open and welcoming office in the future. Jane extended an invitation to all alumni to visit the DARO office, where all views and comments would be welcomed.

Jane highlighted the Government's plans for matched funding on individual gifts and trusts & foundations donations. She stated that under this new scheme, for every £2 raised the Government would award £1 up to a cap of £2m.

Jane then launched the Christopher Edwards Sports Endowment Fund in recognition of the support the VC had given to this area, both on a professional and personal level.

**Jack Jeffery** thanked Jane and asked that people do visit the DARO office to offer their experience and suggestions.

He then paid tribute to Newcastle University and the VC, who he referred to as outstanding, with the vision and courage to bring about change. He added that the VC has had an enormously positive impact on the University and the region, bringing gifts to bear and leaving an impression on the students.

Jack finished by wishing the VC and his wife a long and happy retirement before presenting the VC with a gift on behalf of Convocation.

**The Rt Hon Lord Walton** (MB BS 1945; MD 1952; DSc 1972; Hon DCL 1988) thanked Jack Jeffery for an excellent meeting and for being an outstanding Chairman. He continued by paying tribute to the VC and expressing his best wishes for his retirement.

## **8 . DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date for the next meeting of Convocation will be circulated according to the availability of the next Convocation lecturer. The meeting closed at 1.00pm.