

Reaseheath's Principal honoured by OBE

Reaseheath College Principal Meredydd David has received his OBE from HRH The Prince of Wales.

Meredydd, who became head of our college in 2004, was selected for the 2009 Queen's Birthday Honours in recognition of his outstanding services to local and national Further Education.

He spent several moments at his investiture chatting to Prince Charles, who recalled visiting our food manufacturing halls in 2005.

Meredydd said: "It was a wonderful occasion and a very proud moment. The ceremony was beautiful and I was honoured to accept the OBE on behalf of colleagues at Reaseheath. It was recognition of the wonderful achievements that Reaseheath has made both locally and nationally - success which can be attributed to our team's dedication and professionalism."

The ceremony, in the ballroom at Buckingham Palace, was watched by

Meredydd's wife Lisa, son Thomas, 26, and daughter Cerys, 22. The couple's second son, Owain, joined the family later.

Since Meredydd's appointment, Reaseheath's student numbers and income have doubled and our college has gained recognition as being one of the premier land based colleges in Britain.

Reaseheath's raft of awards include an 'Outstanding' Ofsted and Beacon college status. We have also gained Training Quality Standard (TQS) for the way we respond to the needs of employers.

As well as taking the lead at Reaseheath, Meredydd is on the Board of Directors for LSIS, the learning skills improvement service, and he is chairman of Landex, the land-based colleges' federation. He is also a council member for Lantra, the sector skills council, chairman of the LSC Technical Funding Advisory Group, and on the North West Rural Affairs Forum Executive.



▲ Principal Meredydd David is invested with his OBE by HRH The Prince of Wales.

Young designer strikes first time gold

Budding garden designer Lee Belgrau took a coveted gold medal at one of the country's most prestigious horticultural shows - at his first attempt.

Lee, 21, who is studying for his Foundation Degree in Garden and Landscape Design, was also awarded the title of Tatton Park Young Designer of the Year at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Show Tatton Park.

Lee scored top marks with a garden called Red Rhythm, which he designed and built with a team of fellow students. The garden was placed in a new category to showcase future talent but judged by the RHS against the same criteria as all other show gardens.

Lee's contemporary style garden was aimed at a young, professional couple who would use it for relaxing and entertaining.

He explained: "I wanted to show cutting edge design which is also practical and suitable for installation in a new garden. I've gained a lot of knowledge and skills while I've been at Reaseheath. I was really excited to get the opportunity to show what I can do."

Lee is in his fourth year of study at Reaseheath, and has already gained his National Certificate and National Diploma in Horticulture. He has found that the gardening industry allows him to work out of doors while continuing his interest in art and design.

Kris Hulewicz, show manager for the RHS Show Tatton Park said: "We want to ensure the future of horticulture is bright, which is why



▲ Lee Belgrau, Tatton Park Young Designer of the Year, on his Red Rhythm garden.

we created a specific platform to help young talent break into the competitive world of garden design. This unique opportunity placed raw talent alongside seasoned professionals, all working to the world-class standards expected at RHS shows."

Lee was joined in his garden build by fellow students including James Bellis, Martin Purvin, Ben Hattersley, Collette Ellison, Kirk Dadvidge, Chris Greenwood and David Billington.

* See page 3 for our other successes at RHS Show Tatton Park.

Staying ahead of the curve

This autumn we recruited record numbers of further and higher education students. This substantial growth is in all areas and includes our Train to Gain and Apprenticeship programmes.

Reaseheath's excellent reputation continues to spread. Our focus on delivering the best experience possible to all our students, including those in employment, has contributed significantly to our success.

Once again our student achievements and successes are second to none and their qualification success rate and progression into higher education or employment places us in the top ten per cent of all colleges in England. Our excellent team of dedicated, professional staff makes all of this possible and I thank them all.

We continue to invest in specialist resources and facilities to ensure we give the best education and training possible. This year we are investing a further £12 million, bringing our total spend to over £30 million. The LSC and the North West Regional Development Agency (NWDA) have recognised the value of investing in Reaseheath and we are grateful to them for their support.

Our work in support of rural businesses and communities continues to grow and we are a major delivery partner for the NWDA in a number of Rural Development Programmes for England (RDPE) schemes. Expansion in this area has enhanced our education, training, knowledge exchange and research work which, in turn, supports and increases the competitiveness of industries and employers.

This important service is delivered through our Enterprise Hub and includes work on sustainability and food and energy security. These will be increasingly important elements of our work and mission in future years.

The major successes that you will read about in this 18th edition of Grass Roots will, I am sure, amaze you. These are only possible because of our team of wonderful staff and the hard work of our students.

Meredydd David OBE
Principal

New build continues

Continuing expansion of our technical resources and facilities has resulted in several major building projects across campus.

This year we are investing a further £12 million, including £4 million on a new animal management centre and about £7 million to complete our Food Academy and Centre of Excellence. This will bring our investment over recent years to over £30 million.

We already have eight new buildings on site, including a learning skills centre, a dedicated Engineering Skills Academy, an IT Centre, an upgrade for our equine centre, a purpose built construction workshop and two halls of residence.

Reaseheath has nearly 7,000 students from 110 local authorities and from over a dozen countries. We have met the increased demand for residential accommodation



▲ New accommodation at Regents campus.

by acquiring nearly 100 extra bedrooms at our new Regents Campus in Nantwich.

Our on site farm has benefited from a cutting edge milking parlour and improved accommodation for the Genus MOET herd. A high welfare commercial pig unit has been built to RSPCA freedom food standards.



▲ The new farrowing village.

Construction students get behind the scenes

Our construction students had a unique opportunity to get behind the scenes of a multi million pound building project.

Thirty trainee bricklayers and joiners joined main contractor ISG for a guided site tour of our unique food and dairy processing plant. The plant is currently undergoing a £6 million extension and refurbishment which, when completed next Spring, will offer world class technical facilities to Reaseheath's food manufacture students and to north west businesses.

ISG has taken the lead on a 16 week, fast track programme to prepare the building for the installation of specialist equipment.

The students, who are taking a full time Level 2 Construction Diploma, heard ISG site manager Steve Lowton describe the daily challenges of working on a high profile and time sensitive project. He also introduced them to new building techniques, particularly those concerning sustainability and energy efficiency.

Steve himself joined the industry as an apprentice joiner and worked his way up to his current position. He said: "We have been delighted to give the students some site experience. Hopefully it will open their eyes to the opportunities available within the construction industry."

Tutor Jim Spooner said: "This



▲ Construction students enjoy their site visit.

has been a great opportunity for the students to see theory put into practice by a national company. Seeing how Steve has progressed will also encourage them to take their own careers forward."

Reaseheath is recognised as an international centre of excellence for dairy training and is dairy champion within the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink Manufacture.

As well as providing industry level resources to Reaseheath's full time food manufacture students and to food manufacturers, the food halls will be used by students on Project Eden, a new training programme delivering a globally recognised degree level qualification in dairy technology to those already working in the industry.

RHS Show Tatton Park

'Edible Trends' garden creates a buzz



▲ The completed show garden.

The BBC North West Tonight 'Edible Trends' bee friendly garden created a real buzz at the RHS Show Tatton Park.

Designed and created for the BBC by our garden design students, the show garden was awarded a silver gilt medal and drew crowds as it was used as a base for live coverage of the event.

Current trends such as urban greening, organic and wildlife gardening, community engagement and the health benefits of horticulture were incorporated into the design. The plot's edible oasis of vegetables, mixed with colourful perennials and flowering shrubs, showed how to provide vital nectar and pollen for honey bees and other beneficial insects.

Contemporary planting in abstract shapes and bold blocks of colour - the trademark of Reaseheath show gardens - impressed the judges, as did the creation of a wildlife habitat from natural materials.

This was the second time that our students have had the opportunity to create a garden for the BBC.

Said Caroline LeBeau, Editor of North West Tonight: "We are very pleased to team up with Reaseheath College again after a successful partnership last year. The students have designed an innovative and beautiful show garden which Gordon Burns and the rest of the North West Tonight team have enjoyed showing to viewers on BBC 1."

Kris Hulewicz, show manager for the RHS Show Tatton Park said: "Reaseheath College has once again provided an important contribution to the show. The BBC North West Tonight 'Edible Trends' garden has been a real hit and Tatton Park Young Designer of the Year Lee Belgrau and his team have impressed judges and crowds alike with the bold design of the Red Rhythm garden." Former students who were also among the medals included:

Show gardens

- Kate Rayner (former Diploma in Garden Design and Amenity student, helped by other past and present students) who now runs RaynerShine, a successful design and build company, with husband Tim. GOLD for 'Strictly Come Gardening'.
- Mary Hoult (completed RHS General Certificate



▲ Gordon Burns and Diane Oxberry present the news from the BBC North West Tonight garden.



▲ Eye catching planting from the North West Tonight 'Edible Trends' garden.

and Advanced Certificate in Horticulture, now doing Advanced Certificate in Garden Design) helped by RHS Diploma students. SILVER for 'Thyme and Money' for Cancer Research UK

Back to back gardens

- Tim Fowler (evening class garden design) now running his own garden design company. GOLD and BEST IN SHOW with 'Forgotten But Not Overlooked'. Tim was partnered by landscaper Tim Shovelton and interior designer Alice Buckley
- Hugh Thomas (ex Professional Diploma in Garden Design plus CAD and digital design technology courses), now self

employed designer. GOLD with 'Dark Horses Have a Bright Future'

- Bernie Quinn (former Higher Diploma in Garden Design), now self employed designer. SILVER with 'Lose the shoes'
- Sue Beesley and Isabelle Brooke (both RHS Diploma in Horticulture. Isabelle currently studying garden design) SILVER with The Business Lunch

Tatton Park Young Designer of the Year

Andy Gibson, former Foundation Degree in Garden Design who went on to study landscape architecture at university SILVER with the Revolution garden.

Computer Aided Design

Computer Aided Design (CAD) courses using the latest computer software are enabling garden and landscape designers to realise the full potential of their designs.

Training workshops on programmes at the forefront of the industry, such as VectorWorks 2010, Adobe, SketchUp and Artlantis, are being offered through our new, bespoke, garden design studio.

The workshops are ideal as Continuing Professional Development for those already working in the industry and are also being snapped up by enthusiasts who want an introduction to this exciting area of design.

For details of day workshops and longer courses Contact 01270 613211 email suepa@reaseheath.ac.uk



▲ Gardeners World presenters Toby Buckland and Joe Swift join Reaseheath garden designers on the BBC North West Tonight show garden.

Reaseheath florists are the people's champion

Reaseheath florists were blooming after taking one of the top prizes at the RHS Show Tatton Park.

Our students' eye-catching display received the British Floristry Association's Public Award after an overwhelming vote from visitors to the prestigious show.

Our team were also narrowly beaten into runners-up position in the national final of the Society of Floristry 'College of the Year' competition. A nailbiting final score saw just two marks separating the top two positions out of a total of 600.

For the final, students from the Advanced National Certificate in Floristry course promoted the summer collection of global fashion designer Jean Paul Gaultier. Our team of Eleanor Bellwood, Mandy Smith, Jenny Barrow and Sam Burdon won four of the six sections with their mood board, floor standing design, body adornment and decorated alcove.

Presenting the prizes, David Martin, Vice President of the Society of Floristry, said: "The students have done an incredible job of representing both their



▲ Mandy Smith, Jenny Barrow, Sam Burdon and Eleanor Bellwood with their Jean Paul Gaultier display.

colleges and their industry to world class level."

Reaseheath florists also took on the best of British in the 2009 national finals of the WorldSkillsUK competition. Jenny Barrow and former student Amy Drysdale qualified but just missed out on a top placing.

▲ Jenny Barrow with her entries for the WorldSkills UK competition.



Flowers for special occasions



Reaseheath's award winning floristry department offers a free, no obligation consultation service for anyone looking for flowers for a special occasion.

Our experts are available to advise on colour and bespoke designs for weddings, birthdays or funerals. We can offer any theme, from traditional to contemporary, and can advise on flowers of the season.

Our floristry department also hold themed workshops which cover topics such as hand tied creations, Easter and Christmas designs, flowers for churches and wedding designs. You can buy vouchers for these workshops - they make excellent presents.

Contact our floristry studio on 01270 613185

National Trust trainees harvest results

Trainee countryside wardens and gardeners graduated from the National Trust's flagship careership training programme which is run in partnership with Reaseheath.

The trainees, who work at the charity's historic properties nationwide, celebrated completing a tailor-made, three year, training programme. They attend college on a block release basis and continue their training in the workplace with help from their managers and from Reaseheath tutors. The careership scheme for gardeners is supported by the National Garden Scheme.

Special awards went to two outstanding gardeners, Tracey Harnish (*National Trust Award for the Best Trainee Gardener*) and Georgina Couch (*James Row*

Memorial Award for Endeavour) while the prizes for outstanding wardens went to Richard Byrne (*National Trust Award for the Best Trainee Warden*) and David Wraith (*Gareth Seel Award for Endeavour*).

Tracey works in the gardens at Barrington Court and Lytes Cary Manor, Somerset, while Georgina is a gardener at Dunham Massey, Altrincham. As well as earning a rare 100% mark in her garden history presentation while at college, Georgina has continued to play a key role in a major project to prepare the biggest winter garden in Britain.

Richard Byrne works at the countryside estate of Dyrham Park near Bath while David Wraith is a warden at Woolbeding, a West Sussex property.

Paying tribute to the dedication

shown by the trainees, Vice Principal Dave Kynaston emphasised that Reaseheath was determined to provide training for the specific needs of industry within the land based sector.

The awards were presented by Reaseheath's careership countryside course manager Leigh Cawley and horticulture course manager Ken Higginbotham. The National Trust Head of Gardens and Parks Mike Calnan and Jo Burgon, Head of Access and Recreation, were also present.

Graduating wardens: Nathaniel Wilkins, Kait Jones, Richard Byrne, Rowan Thompson, Heather Fisher, Patrick Lynch, David Wraith, Richard Hardwick.

Graduating gardeners: Tracey Harnish, Georgina



▲ Top National Trust trainees Richard Byrne, Georgina Couch and David Wraith with Reaseheath tutors Ken Higginbotham and Leigh Cawley.

Couch, Nanette Hudson, Adam Roberts, Jason Arnold, Roger Standley, Catherine Mobbs, Emily Smith, Sarah Davis, Claire Fisher and Eleanor Machin.

Reaseheath recognised as Adventure Sports leader

Reaseheath's adventure sports department has proved it is a leader in its field by gaining new national accreditation.

Our college is one of the first in the country to have won approval as an outdoors training provider from the National Skills Academy for Sport and Active Leisure. The accolade will enable our adventure sports department to work even more closely with employers and to expand its courses to meet their training needs.

Explained Head of Adventure Sports, Tim Reeves: "We are delighted to have received this accreditation, as it will encourage businesses and individuals to use Reaseheath as their first port of call when looking for first class outdoor training.

"This is not just about providing relevant training for outdoor activities, such as coaching qualifications, but about all other aspects of running a successful enterprise. This could include growing the business, management training, risk assessment or even catering.

"We want to help employers to train staff and individuals to gain skills to match what employers want. We will put on new courses where there is a demand and also aim to link in to the national apprenticeships scheme."

Reaseheath's Adventure



▲ Outdoor instructor Chris Tym gives student Adrian Lees some tips on our high ropes course.

Sports department already offers training for nationally recognised leadership and first aid qualifications and delivers a range of coaching awards. The department is a training provider for the British Canoe Union and the Royal Yachting Association

and is licensed by the Adventure Activities Licensing Service.

Former students include James Bebbington and brothers Ben and Dom Brayfield, who represent Britain in freestyle kayaking, and Ryan Morris, a member of the GB Junior Triathlon team.

Adventure Sports takes to the woods



▲ Adventure sports students get a safety briefing.

Our adventure sports students took to the woods to learn about the natural resources used in outdoor recreation.

Working with BTCV Cheshire co-ordinator Pete Attwood, the first year National Diploma Adventure Sports students spent a day helping to manage an area of woodland in Furey Wood, Northwich.

They helped to improve the biodiversity of the woodland by thinning out some of the thick canopy which was shading out low level growth. The successful project was carried out using traditional hand tools.

Explained course manager Dan Bean: "Working as volunteers for a day gave the students an insight into the work that goes into maintaining natural resources. It also helped them develop a better understanding of habitats and ecosystems, which link into environmental education and impacts and sustainability units which are part of their course."

High flying career for castle falconer

Former countryside student Jimmi Hill is enjoying a high flying career - both as head falconer at one of Cheshire's most picturesque hotels and as a reality tv star.

Jimmi, 23, runs an impressive bird of prey collection at Peckforton Castle and has also been in the public eye as a finalist in the BBC's 'Wildest Dreams', a wildlife reality show based in southern Africa.

Jimmi was one of nine natural history lovers selected from 12,000 initial applications and was given the challenge of capturing different elements of wildlife on film. The series was based in the Okavango Delta and Kalahari Desert of Botswana and the Drakenberg Mountains in South Africa.

Jimmi, who rates the experience as the chance of a lifetime, encountered predators,

learned how to track large game and spent time with exotic wild birds.

Now back at Peckforton Castle, where he gives flying displays and personal tuition with birds of prey including golden eagles, Jimmi said: "I've always been interest in the countryside, particularly in birds of prey.

"I came to Reaseheath straight from school at 16 and did my National Certificate in Environmental Conservation and my Advanced National Certificate in Countryside Management.

"I've always said that the two years at Reaseheath were the best I've ever had. They gave me the confidence to set up my own business at the age of 19 and I've never looked back."

▲ Falconer Jimmi Hill shows off his long eared owl.



Reaseheath a winner at Cheshire Show

Reaseheath College's visitor friendly exhibition took the top prize in the rural section at Cheshire Show.

Our stand encouraged show visitors to take part in a diverse range of activities including scaling a climbing wall, riding a mechanical horse and sampling ice cream.

Our engineers rebuilt an engine, horticulturists displayed plants as natural remedies, countryside students built bird boxes and bricklayers and joiners showed off their skills.

Pets and reptiles from the animal care unit, a hands-on milking display, a practical floristry demonstration and a competition to identify flowers and plants were also part of the action.

The college stand, under the banner 'Do Something Different', has scooped a medal at the Cheshire Show for six consecutive years.

Handing over the award, Cheshire Show Judge John Gittins said: "Reaseheath sets the



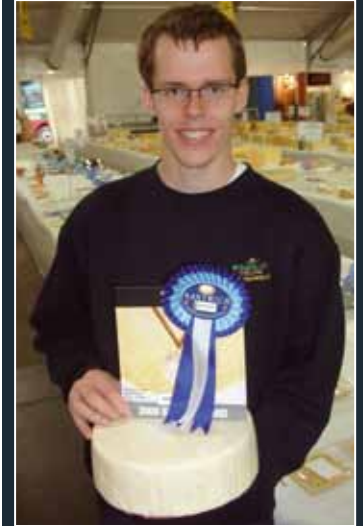
▲ Glyn Ferriday receives Reaseheath's award from John Gittins and steward Marie Birkenhead.

standards to which others aspire."

The second day of the show coincided with VQ Day, a national celebration of students who gain vocational qualifications. Reaseheath took advantage of the occasion to showcase the achievements of its students in front of thousands of show visitors.

Marketing Manager Glyn Ferriday said: "Attending good rural shows like these gives us a great opportunity to meet the public and demonstrates the huge range of vocational activities we offer. We are very proud of the success of our students and this is a chance to show what they can do."

Reaseheath takes medals at international cheese show



▲ Student Tim Baddeley shows off one of our award winning cheeses.

Our food manufacture students took two top medals at the Nantwich International Cheese Show - one of the largest and most prestigious shows in Europe.

A Cheshire cheese made by Joanne Haywood took the silver award in the Novice Cheesemaker Class and a further silver went to a cheese made by teams of students and exhibited in the Small Producer Class.

A total of five students entered individual cheeses in the novice cheesemaker section, which was judged by international experts. Alex Maudsley, Amanda Dodd, Stephen Bennet and Rob Boffey joined Joanne in our manufacturing halls to produce the 20 kilo blocks of cheese. The students had graduated from the Level 3 Diploma in Food Manufacture.

Our Business and Development Manager Chris Edwards, Trials and Development Manager Damien Murphy, technicians James Blakemore and Nick Blakemore and former student Laura Gladwyn acted as stewards at the cheese show.

We also used the event to highlight our food and drink training hub Enrich, which is aimed at helping small and large manufacturers with business and product development.

THE JOHN PLATT TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP

John Platt Scholarship handed over at Cheshire Show

Two young Cheshire farmers will be travelling the globe, thanks to a scholarship launched by the Cheshire Agricultural Society and presented at the Cheshire Show.

Ian McGrath of Parkgate Farm, Tabley, Knutsford, and Jonny Hewitt of Red House Farm, Dunham Massey, each received £2,000 from the John Platt Travel Scholarship.

John Platt OBE retired last year after 30 years as chair of the Cheshire Agricultural Society. The scholarship was launched to mark his retirement and is organised through Reaseheath. John is chair of our governors.

Ian is planning to visit Holland and Sweden to look at technological advancements in dairy farming. He is particularly interested in the use of automotive systems in farming, such



▲ Jonny Hewitt (left) and Ian McGrath (right) are congratulated by Meredydd David and John Platt

as robotic milking.

Jonny is Director of Fun and Chaos at Red House Farm, which offers public attractions including a maze, cookery demonstrations, tea rooms and an ice cream parlour. He intends to study farm based diversification in Philadelphia, USA. Jonny is also current Cheshire county chairman of the National Farmers Union.

Presenting the scholarships, Reaseheath Principal Meredydd David said that the awards provided the opportunity to young people to visit best businesses abroad and share that knowledge back in the UK.

- The John Platt Scholarship is open to anyone aged between 18 and 35 who lives or works in Cheshire and is employed in agriculture or related industries.
 - Applicants must show that they want to improve their education and experience through travel by putting forward a project focused on new technology, new or alternative farming methods, diversification, use of natural resources or improved profitability.
- Details: Dave Kynaston **01270 613243**, email davek@reaseheath.ac.uk; website www.reaseheath.ac.uk or www.cheshirecountyshow.org.uk

Happy ending for mistreated mule

A traumatised young mule has had his future transformed by our equine students.

Three year-old Jacob was rescued by kind hearted farmers Rupert and Corinne Sutton, who spotted him at a livestock market while looking for a pony for their five year-old daughter Catherine. But three months later, despite their best efforts, Jacob would still not allow humans to handle him.

The couple strongly believe the mule was sedated for the market as he was docile in the sale ring. Further inspection at home revealed injuries consistent with him having been cruelly beaten and burnt with a cigarette lighter.

Rupert turned to our equine therapists for help and Jacob was accepted as a case study for students on the Foundation Degree in Equine Science, Complementary Therapy and

Natural Horsemanship. Just five weeks later, Jacob was leading happily on a headcollar, negotiating obstacles such as ramps and poles and even loading into a trailer.

Recalled Rupert: "The mule's character changed completely. He was easy to manage when we bought him but by the time we got him home we couldn't get near him, even in a stable. He was absolutely terrified of humans."

"I don't know what we would have done if Reaseheath hadn't taken him over. I couldn't believe the transformation in such a short time. The students have worked wonders."

Students Dawn Gale, Kim McMuldrow and Michaela Atterbury trained Jacob daily.

Dawn explained: "We took it slowly and gave him time to adjust and gain confidence. We learn a lot of different holistic techniques on our course such as energy



healing and animal communication and this has been a wonderful opportunity to put the theory into practice. I feel very privileged to have worked with Jacob. He is a very intelligent animal who did not deserve to be treated so badly."

Rupert and Corinne are now looking forward to taking Jacob home, where he will join the family's pony.

▲ Jacob is introduced to a giant ball by student Dawn Gale.

Reaseheath is one of few colleges to have dedicated facilities for equine therapy and natural horsemanship. The courses are led by Caroline Booth BHSI, Reiki Master and animal communicator. For further details contact 01270 613242.

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- over 15 hh
- a weight carrier
- sound and safe
- capable of jumping a small course

We would like to hear from you

We offer five star care including:

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- regular turnout
- a holistic approach to equine management
- reasonable rates
- owners are welcome to ride their horses and use our facilities outside college hours

Contact Kim Bailey on 01270 616448 or email kimb@reaseheath.ac.uk

Amy takes the trophy

Amy Salmon was awarded the Key Stage 4 horse care student of the year trophy after impressing tutors with her keenness to learn.

Amy, a pupil at Tarporley High School, has been enjoying a day each week at our equine unit gaining practical experience and a nationally recognised qualification alongside her conventional GCSEs. She completed her C&G Level 1 Certificate in Land Based Studies with distinction this summer and has since started work as an apprentice.

She now works at Willington Hall Stables and attends Reaseheath weekly to increase her qualifications.

Amy was one of over 100 Key Stage 4 pupils from secondary schools throughout Cheshire and Staffordshire to study for vocational qualifications with us this year.



▲ Amy Salmon receives her trophy from sponsor Carol Chandler of Nantwich Saddlery, watched by instructor Lisa Brewitt and horse "Ice".

The pupils can choose from horse care, horticulture, agriculture, construction, engineering or animal care as part of the Vocational Opportunities Programme.

Reaseheath's Pre 16 Learning Manager Graham Morgan said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for young people in their final two years at school to receive a practical, work-related experience which is outside the usual curriculum."

Trophies for dressage duo

Our series of unaffiliated dressage competitions have been attracting horses and riders from Cheshire and surrounding counties.

The trophies for the most successful combinations of the season went to 13 year-old Lucy McKeown and her pony Lady Lulu (The Ashworth Memorial Trophy for most points of any rider / horse) and Ruth Murphy and her horse Teddy (Sweet Meadow Horse Feeds Trophy - restricted section).

One of our keenest competitors, Lucy has been traveling in regularly from Eccleshall, Staffordshire, and is hoping to pursue an equine career with us after she leaves school.

Ruth and Teddy have enjoyed their first season together and have progressed from preliminary to novice level competitions. Ruth



▲ Dressage winner Lucy McKeown and Lady Lulu.

said: "This is the first time I've had a horse that can compete at dressage and I've really enjoyed it. The atmosphere at Reaseheath is brilliant - you feel really welcome."

Further details click on www.reaseheath.ac.uk/equine or phone 01270 616448

TV vet makes a college appearance

TV wildlife presenter and working vet Steve Leonard had a close encounter with some rare animals when he visited our animal centre for the second time.

Steve, who is a partner at Leonard Brothers Veterinary Clinic, Whitchurch, met up with some of our exotic residents before giving students a rare insight into preparations for filming 'Orangutan Diaries' for the BBC.

Steve, who reacquainted himself with our tapirs, ring tailed lemurs, meerkats, capybara and hawks, said: "Reaseheath students are very lucky to have facilities like these. When applying for jobs, they will be able to say they have hands-on experience of handling exotic animals and have been involved in their management and in the design of enclosures.

"Due to the pressures of climate change, more people are becoming interested in conservation and sustainability. Because it has moved with the times, Reaseheath is able to offer young people a fantastic opportunity to pursue those dreams. Qualifications open more doors than anything else."



▲ Steve Leonard meets Breeze the buzzard with students Stephen Teale, Thomas Jones and Jane Anderson.

Steve's talk outlined the campaign by Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) to save the orangutan, Asia's only great ape. The orange coloured ape is endangered because its forest home is being destroyed at an alarming rate to make way for palm oil plantations. Many adult orangutans die of starvation or are killed by contractors, while young animals are taken for the illegal pet trade.

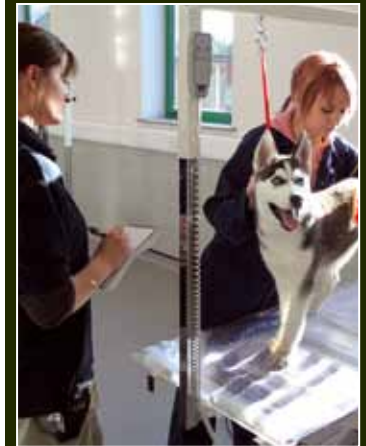
BOS hand rears hundreds

of orangutan orphans and is trying to find ways of preserving their habitat. The charity's work has featured in two prime time television series, presented by Steve and Michaela Strachan.

Student Jane Anderson said: "It's been fantastic meeting Steve and hearing about his work with the orangutans. I'm really keen to help save rare animals like these when I'm qualified."

For more information on BOS go to www.savetheorangutan.co.uk

Pooches wanted for pampering



▲ Kerri Robson watches as student Wendy Lomas grooms Stig.

Pooches are wanted for pampering by Reaseheath students. We need pets of all shapes and sizes to act as models for our popular dog grooming courses.

Our canine package, which is considerably cheaper than in a commercial salon, includes a wash, dry and brush up plus some coat trimming, nail clipping and a health check.

Our students are taught and closely observed by grooming specialists at our purpose built, industry standard, dog grooming parlour which has adjustable tables and dog showers.

Dog grooming tutor Kerri Robson explained: "We need as many different dogs as possible to act as models for our students. We take all types, from hairy and muddy mongrels to pedigree breeds needing a classic trim, and sometimes we have set days for certain breeds. Our facilities are fabulous and we already have a list of very satisfied regular clients."

For further details, phone **01270 613222** or email angelak@reaseheath.ac.uk

Meerkats make a move

Reaseheath's successful meerkat breeding programme is benefiting zoos nationwide.

Our own two groups of 18 animals are so productive that we have been able to provide stock to over 15 UK zoos. Most recently we have sent young males to Chester Zoo, the Welsh Mountain Zoo and Yorkshire Wildlife Park, where they have introduced a new genetic mix as well as providing a popular attraction for visitors.

In return we have welcomed a number of new animals from zoos to our own collection, including a second tapir, four spider monkeys, two bat eared foxes, Californian quail, two Harris hawks and some angora and cashmere goats. Our horticulture department is busy building a new otter enclosure and we have new enclosures for our cotton top tamarins.

Our animal management

students are also benefiting through work placements at zoos and wildlife parks and many are going on to win dream jobs in a very competitive market. No less than five former students are now working at the Welsh Mountain Zoo in Colwyn Bay.

Some zoo management students are currently building an outside tortoise enclosure at Stapeley Water Gardens as part of their course.

Explained Animal Centre Head Richard Champion: "Our animal collection is becoming recognised throughout the country and our exchange of animals has led to strong industry links. Proof that we have a successful breeding programme is particularly rewarding as this happens only under the highest standards of animal husbandry."

Reaseheath's animal centre

was the first college-based centre in the country to be awarded a zoo licence and houses over 167 species of animals. We also have a farm park stocked with wallabies, pygmy goats, Cameroon sheep, rhea, alpaca and ponies.

Our animal centre is currently undergoing a major new build and will reopen to the public next summer

Apprentices take Accolades

Two young people who combine their jobs with college training and excel at both were crowned Reaseheath apprentices of the year for their outstanding achievements.

Site carpenter Tom Stubbs and technical administrator Maria Stubbs (no relation) took top honours when we celebrated the graduation of 95 apprentices.

Tom, 18, who is on the workforce of builders A Estcourt and Sons of Warmingham, took the Apprentice of the Year award while Maria, 21, who works for David Williams Cheese of Crewe Hall Enterprise Park, was crowned Advanced Apprentice of the Year.

Tom achieved his award for his natural flair and good knowledge of joinery. His aptitude was noted by his tutors, who put him forward to represent Reaseheath in the national Skillbuild competition. A former pupil at Sandbach Boys School, Tom joined A Estcourt and Sons over two years ago. He is part of a team working on new builds and extensions, and spends one day a week with us increasing his qualifications.

Maria joined David Williams Cheese five and a half years ago as a packer but was quickly promoted to work in the food safety laboratories. Her college work on food safety has been used to form a handbook for fellow employees and her research on safe working practices has helped her employers gain their Investors in People award.

Maria's achievements at work and college have been even more notable as she is a mother of one.

Announcing the awards, Apprenticeship Team Leader Christine Middleton said that many of the apprenticeships had been achieved in record time, and that this proved a high level of determination and focus – the sort of skills welcomed by employers.

Other principle awards were:

Best Agriculture Project: Sam Harding, 21, who works for TC and N Taylor of Astley, Shropshire.

Best Animal Care Apprentice: Christine Griffiths, 20, a former

apprentice with the Broadway Veterinary Practice, Wirral.

Best Construction Apprentice: Andrew Goff, 19, a bricklayer with builder J. T. Johnson of Utinton near Tarporley.

Best Food Apprentice: Maria Stubbs

Best Horticulture Apprentice: Jon Ellis, 19, who works for Clifton Landscapes, Preston

Certificates of Endeavour: Suzi Wilson, 18, a business administration apprentice at Reaseheath College and bricklayers Greg Eaton, who works for Caldly Tarmac, and Ben Rogers of Smilers Building and Groundwork.

Certificates of Excellence: James Armstrong, an agriculture apprentice with family firm J&L Armstrong and Andrew Mansfield, who is on the greenkeeping team of Crewe Golf Club.

National honours celebrated on the night included Josh Johnson, a bench joiner with Conran Homes, Faddiley (North West Learner Award).

FACT FILE

- Reaseheath currently trains 250 apprentices, the largest number in the 87 year history of the college
- The Apprenticeship and Advanced Apprenticeship schemes allow wage-earning trainees aged 16 - 24 to gain nationally recognised qualifications by attending college on one day a week. Reaseheath also offers Adult Apprenticeships for those aged 25 and over.
- Employers include golf clubs, exterior landscapers, kennels, pet shops, livery stables, florists, farms and the food and construction industries.

Contact Reaseheath's Work Based Learning team:
01270 613258.
Email: wbl@reaseheath.ac.uk



▲ Apprentices of the Year Maria Stubbs and Tom Stubbs.



▲ Top construction apprentices Josh Johnson, Tom Stubbs and Andrew Goff.



▲ Customer Service Team Leader Jo Studzinska and Assessor Lynn Robinson with business administration apprentices Sarah Leeson and Suzi Wilson.



▲ Top animal care apprentice Christine Griffiths.



▲ Best agriculture project - Sam Harding.

Another record year

A memorable awards ceremony for 830 graduating students was one of the key highlights of a year packed with accolades.

Principal Meredydd David told an audience of family and friends that Reaseheath had enjoyed yet another year of exceptional success, with record numbers of higher and further education students enrolling and achieving qualifications. The college's reputation had increased nationally and internationally and nearly 7,000 students from over 110 local authorities and from over a dozen countries were studying on campus.

Reaseheath continued to be assessed as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and retained its Beacon college status. The college had also gained an outstanding grade in the Framework for Excellence, a system newly introduced by the Learning and Skills Council which grades colleges in a similar way to other public services such as health trusts and local authorities.

The awards were handed out by MP for Crewe and Nantwich Edward Timpson and MP for Eddisbury Stephen O'Brien.

Mr Timpson commented upon the family feeling which Reaseheath generated and said that he was looking forward to seeing the students using what they had learned to better themselves and their local community.

Describing Reaseheath as the signal college for the nation, Mr O'Brien, who is Shadow Minister for Health, said that the college continued to make a significant contribution to the rural economy and that this achievement was of particular importance during the current deep recession.

They were thanked by Student Association President Hayley Juniper and Vice President Bridget Miller Mills.

Principal award winners:

Cross College awards

Clare McAleavy (Best contribution to college life); **Holly Jones** (Best all round contribution to college); **Patrick Walsh** (For personal qualities); **Joseph Hickey** (Best contribution to sporting activities)

Entry Level

Rory Walker (Best Overall Student); **Stuart Reid** (Most improved student)

Foundation Level

Thomas McCallister (Best overall student); **Amber Kenny** (Best overall student, animal care); **Samantha Winstanley** (Staff prize A, animal care); **Thomas Flude** (Staff prize B, animal care); **James Payne** (Best student, agriculture and countryside); **Kelly Mutch** (Best student, equine studies); **Sebastian Tame** (Best overall student, horticulture); **Daniel Costello** (Most improved student, engineering); **Natalie Whitehand** (best overall student, sports)

Animal Care

Jessica Britland (Best group 'A' student, First Diploma); **Melanie Hughes** (Best group 'B' student, First Diploma),



▲ Top National Diploma Animal Management students Joe Beetenson, Richard Bowler and Sally Roberts.



▲ MP Edward Timpson with Reaseheath's cross college award students I-r Patrick Walsh, Clare McAleavy, Holly Jones, Joseph Hickey.

Katie Ashworth (Best group 'C' student, First Diploma); **Rebecca Cowly** (Best group D student, First Diploma)

Animal Management

Sharna Hammans (Best academic student, National Certificate); **Graham Unwin** (Best practical student, National Certificate); **Daniella Wood** (Highly commended, National Certificate); **Sally Roberts** (Best academic student, National Diploma); **Richard Bowler** (Best practical student, National Diploma); **Joe Beetenson** (Merit Award for Outstanding Effort, National Diploma); **Aimee Platt** (Best student, National Award)

Construction

Jonathan Dooley (Best overall bricklayer, Level 1); **Steven Powell** (Most improved bricklayer, Level 1); **Christopher Hewitt** (Best overall bricklayer, level 2); **James Minshall** (Best overall

joiner, Level 1); **Ryan Prince** (Most improved joiner, Level 1); **Matthew Slater** (Best overall joiner, level 2)

Business

Tom Gilman (Best student, National Diploma)

Events Management

Elizabeth Hough (Best student, National Diploma)

Access to HE

Michael Best (Best student)

Adventure Sport

Jack Hockenhull (Best student, First Diploma); **Daniel Whitlum** (Best student, National Certificate); **Philip Taylor** (Best student, National Diploma)



▲ Business student Tom Gilman and Event Management student Lizzi Hough.

Sport (Performance)

Thomas Whitehand (Best student, National Diploma)

Horse Studies

Abigail Mellor (Best student, First Diploma); **Nathan Slack** (Most improved student, First Diploma); **Tomasz Olejnik** (Croft End Equestrian Centre Award); **Hayley Thompson** (Best student, National Diploma); **Abigail Lindley** (Most improved student, National Diploma); **Hayley Thompson** (For Care and Consideration of Horses)

Floristry

Jane Seymour (Best student, National Certificate); **Mandy Smith** (Best student, Advanced National Certificate)

Horticulture

James Higginson (Best student, First Diploma); **Tom Francom** and **Gareth Davies** (For endeavour, First Diploma); **Cat Gilham** (Best student, National Certificate); **Matthew McAuley** (For endeavour, National Certificate); **David Adamson** (Best practical student, National Certificate); **Christopher Greenwood** (Most improved student, National Diploma)

Environmental Conservation

David Bozier (Best student); **Edward Haslam** (Best practical student)



▲ Top entry level students Stuart Reid and Rory Walker.

Countryside Management

Stephen Merrill (Best student); **Nathan Brotherton** (Student of the Year); **Timothy O'Donnell** (Best practical student); **Christopher Sears-Black** (For endeavour)



▲ Mandy Smith Advanced National Certificate Floristry.



▲ Stephen Merrill best student Advanced National Certificate Countryside Management.



▲ Stephen O'Brien congratulates Gary McNaugher watched by Meredydd David and John Platt (right) and graduating students from the agriculture and food departments.

Land Based Technology

Charles James (Best student, First Diploma); **Martin Hayward** (For endeavour, First Diploma); **Ben Salisbury** (Best practical student, First Diploma); **David Gates** (Best student, National Diploma); **John Battye** (Best practical student, National Diploma); **Jonathan Henderson** (For endeavour, National Diploma)

Vehicle Technology

Timothy Evans (Best student, First Diploma); **Robert Rowlands** (Best practical student); **Thomas Boughey** (Best student, National Diploma)

Agriculture

Jonathon Foord (Best student, First Diploma); **Gary McNaugher** (Best student, National Diploma); **Robert Jolliffe** (Best student, livestock

production); **Adam Martin** (Best student, crop production); **Joe Hilling-Leigh** (Best student, National Certificate); **Alistair Fletcher** (For endeavour, National Certificate); **Edward Thompson** (Best practical student, National Certificate)

Dairy Herd Management

John Coar (Best dairy student); **Bethan James** (Best academic student); **Robert Cooke** (Best bank exercise)

Mixed Farming

Alice Helliwell (Best student); **Simon Baskerville** (Best practical student); **William Johnson** (Most progress)

Food Health and Nutrition

Robert Boffey (Best student); **Gemma Rees** (Best student contribution to the food department)



▲ National Certificate in Agriculture Alistair Fletcher, Joe Hilling-Leigh and Edward Thompson.

Record year for Reaseheath Engineering!

We have 712 future engineers and motor mechanics – the highest intake of students ever! Reaseheath's engineering department is recognised by industry as one of the country's leading providers of quality land based engineering training.

Top of the range car for young apprentices

Future motor mechanics are training on one of the most technically advanced road cars available – and that's before they're old enough to drive!

Jaguar Land Rover has loaned us a top-of-the-range, high specification model for use by trainees on its Jaguar Land Rover Young Apprentice Programme. A total of 46 pupils from local secondary schools attend the programme on one day a week for two years, completing with a qualification which will launch them on a career in motor mechanics.

Our current car is a £60,000 Jaguar XF V8 with a 4.2 litre supercharged engine which can reach 60 mph in less than six seconds. Jaguar Land Rover is also supplying parts and technical support.



The trainees are using the vehicle for practical sessions on satellite navigation, on-board diagnostics, transmission, drive line layouts, advanced braking systems and in-car entertainment.

Course manager Stuart Neve said: "The programme is proving to be a very successful partnership between Reaseheath and Jaguar Land Rover. It

▲ Trainees on the Jaguar Land Rover Young Apprentice Programme and tutor Jeff Jones with their new car.

gives young people a superb opportunity to be able to work on a high spec, luxury vehicle and is an ideal way to encourage new recruits into this exciting industry."

Reaseheath Engineering has a dedicated Engineering Academy for its young trainees.

A-PLANT Awards



▲ A-Plant Maintenance Apprentice of Year 2 Leon Jones with Course Manager Roger O'Brian.

A-PLANT, the UK's leading equipment rental company, chose to hold its nationwide awards ceremony for all its apprentices at Reaseheath.

Our engineering department has formed a strong partnership with A-Plant and trains 66 plant maintenance apprentices from depots throughout the UK. The apprentices graduate from a block release programme after two years and can then continue onto an advanced apprenticeship.

Addressing a packed audience which also included families and depot managers, Reaseheath's Principal Meredydd David said that recognised qualifications proved to customers that they were working with the best possible professionals.

Ken Palframan, A-Plant's HR Director, emphasised that the apprenticeship programme created future managers and leaders and that a number of former apprentices were now in senior positions managing million pound projects.

Plant mechanics celebrate career milestone

Thirty-two trainee construction plant maintenance mechanics have graduated from their apprenticeships.

The trainees work for leading construction plant companies nationwide and also attend a tailor-made, block release training programme run to strict industry standards. A total of 150 apprentices are currently in training, travelling from as far as Fife, Newcastle on Tyne and Norwich.

At their workplace the apprentices maintain machinery ranging from heavy earthmovers to small hire tools. The majority plan to progress to an advanced apprenticeship with us and from there into management.

Five apprentices received special awards:

Apprentice of the Year: Tom March, Scot JCB (Carlisle). Tom divides his time between the construction plant workshops and going out on site.

Best Practical Apprentice: Scott Grundy, Clee Hill Plant (Stoke) and **Chris Tweddle**, Scot JCB (Carlisle). Scott spends much of his time in the workshop fitting out compaction and surface dressing machinery. Chris is on call covering a wide area of Cumbria and southern Scotland.

For endeavour: Stephen Howard, CA Blackwell (Earls Colne, Essex). Stephen is an in-house fitter working on an extensive fleet of construction machinery.

Most Improved Work Based Evidence: Jack Smith, D. Morgan Plant Hire, Ellesmere Port. Jack is an in-house fitter working on an extensive fleet of construction machinery.



▲ Top trainees Stephen Howard, Scott Grundy, Chris Tweddle and Tom March with engineering tutors Richard Hough, Garry Walker, Alan Harnett, Roger O'Brien and Will Hughes.

Reaseheath Engineering welcomes a new age of rail

Reaseheath Engineering is to train 20 young apprentices in the traditional skills required for railway restoration.

The trainee railway heritage engineers, who have all been unemployed for at least six months, are part of a new project

to find employment for young people and to encourage them into future careers in railway engineering.

Founded by pop mogul and rail enthusiast Pete Waterman, who runs the Waterman Railway Heritage Trust, the project is

based at the Crewe Heritage Centre and will involve restoring steam locomotives.

The progress and achievements of the trainees will form a central part of a television documentary being filmed by the BBC in 2011.

Welcoming the partnership,

Head of Engineering Melvin Johnson said: "This is an exciting new venture for Reaseheath. We are delighted to have been chosen as the preferred trainer by the Heritage Trust to train these young people in traditional skills which may otherwise die out."

National honour for Iestyn

Sports Turf Management student Iestyn John has carried off the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) award for the most promising sports turf student of the year.

This is a second major honour for Iestyn - he recently received a trophy in recognition of his commitment to the industry from the south Wales branch of the IOG, of which he is a committee member.

Iestyn, 21, learned of his success at the IOG national conference and gala dinner at the Emirates Stadium, London, home of Arsenal Football Club.

A committed student, Iestyn

has been travelling weekly to Reaseheath from Cwmbran, south Wales, and has almost completed his studies for his Foundation Degree in Golf and Sports Turf Management. He combines his studies with working for his family's sports turf maintenance business.

Said senior sports turf lecturer Gareth Phillips, who put Iestyn forward for the national award: "Reaseheath is keen to support successful students. Iestyn has benefited from our advice and help and this has helped him take his career forward."

Iestyn said: "I was very pleased to be nominated by my course



▲ Award winning Iestyn John.

tutor for this national award and even more surprised to win it, given the high calibre of the nominees. To receive the award at such a prestigious venue was a fantastic experience."

Cancer charity benefits from tournament

Sports turf students donated the proceeds from a veteran golf tournament to a Shropshire cancer charity.

Tim Johnson, Sam Hamer and Simon Wilgose, who organised the 2009 Reaseheath Vintage Open as part of their degree level course, chose the Lingen Davies Cancer Relief Fund as their charity of the year.

Over £300 was raised from the tournament, which is open to players aged over 70 and run on our commercial nine hole golf course. Sponsors included Bathgate Leisure, sand and gravel supplier, and Banner building and plumbing.

Area Co-ordinator Fred



▲ Fred Boneham and Fund-Raising Officer Louise Cliffe receive the cheque from Gareth Phillips and Sam Hamer.

Boneham said: "We are very grateful to the students for all their hard work in organising

such an excellent event. The money will be of great benefit to cancer patients in Shropshire."

Pesticide reduction top of the agenda

Senior sports turf lecturer Gareth Phillips delivered lectures at two universities 'over the pond' during a research trip to the USA and Canada.

Gareth investigated pesticide reduction on a ten day visit financed through a bursary from The Farmers Club Charitable Trust.

He visited North Carolina State University to see management of grass sports facilities in the USA's transitional zones, where temperatures can vary widely between seasons. He attended several lectures and visited a number of sports turf venues as well as delivering two lectures himself.

Gareth then went on to the Guelph Turfgrass Institute and

Environmental Research Centre at Guelph University, Toronto, where specialists are developing a pesticide free management system. Again, he delivered and sat in on lectures and also went on several consultancy visits to a range of private and local authority pitches.

Gareth said: "This was a fantastic opportunity to learn from experts at the cutting edge of the sports turf industry. My own research is of great relevance, as the UK's amenity horticulture industry is likely to have to reduce its use of pesticides under EU legislation."

Another highlight was the chance to meet with Ben Ingram, a former Reaseheath sports turf student who is now golf course superintendent



▲ Gareth Phillips meets former student Ben Ingram in Canada.

at the Caledon Woods golf course in Ontario. Ben heard of Gareth's visit via the Turf Institute and invited him to have a look round the popular course.

Charity donation from bridal event



▲ Lizzi Hough presents the proceeds from the wedding fayre to Student Services Co-ordinator Mark Hardy.

Events management students handed over £678 to our RAG appeal - cash they raised from a high profile Wedding Fayre which they ran in Reaseheath's main hall.

The successful event, which attracted 20 exhibitors and over 300 brides to be and their relatives, was run by students in the second year of their national diploma.

Activities included a live catwalk fashion show, backed up by a professional DJ and compere. Florists, wedding outfitters, limousines, wine merchants, cakes, jewellery and a wedding planner were just some of the wedding services and products on offer.

Our floristry students were also involved, creating a wedding breakfast table with a cake, favours, drinks and napkins made from flowers and beads.

The same team of events management students had previously organised a charity auction dinner dance which included a three course meal, licensed bar and jazz band. The event raised a massive £3,000 for charity through an auction of prizes including a hot air balloon ride and a day at the races.

Said lecturer Vicki Disley: "Our students finish their course with many practical skills and useful experiences which will hopefully help them in their future careers."

Enthusiastic Gardeners Gain RHS Awards

Six enthusiastic horticultural students have been awarded the ultimate qualification for amateur and professional gardeners.

Barbara Platt, Emma Harrison, Judith Lee, Jane Miles, Hilary Kenworthy and Sue Beesley are the latest students to be awarded the prestigious Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Diploma in Horticulture.

Many RHS students are already working in the horticultural industry and are adding to their professional qualifications, while others are considering a career change or studying for interest. They have been attending college one day a week and studying at home.

As well as spending time in the classroom, the students have been trained in seed sowing, plant propagation, potting, planting, pruning and soil preparation and testing. They have also learned to identify a wide range of plant material, pests, diseases and disorders.

Barbara Platt has gained so much confidence from her new qualification that she is planning to open her own garden to the public. Mother of three Emma



▲ RHS and City & Guilds students enjoy a visit to Hidcote Manor Garden, Gloucestershire with lecturers Harry Delaney and Anne Harrison.

Harrison, who has her own garden maintenance and design business, is hoping to use her knowledge to expand her business.

Part time teacher Jane Miles hopes to teach at a higher level while Judith Lee is mentoring a student teacher in aspects of gardening. Hilary Kenworthy has already put her knowledge to good use on her small holding while Sue Beesley owns and runs a successful garden nursery specialising in perennials near Warrington.

Barbara said: "Gaining the RHS Diploma has been the pinnacle of a life long interest in gardening. I've thoroughly enjoyed coming to Reaseheath because it has superb horticultural facilities and staff. I've also met like minded

people who get the same buzz out of growing things as I do."

Other students to achieve higher level awards were:

RHS Diploma (individual modules)

John Spencer, Chrissie Penn, Vanessa Nuttall, Isabelle Brooke, Liz Pearce, Rosemary Prialux

RHS Advanced Certificate

Janet McKeating (commendation), Ralph Millward (commendation), David Gibson, Clive Hambleton, Mary Hoult, Mary Moxon, Lucas Athienites, Emma Crutchley, Philip Tatler, Zdenek Valkoun.

Reaseheath offers RHS courses from introductory to advanced.

Contact: 01270 613211 or email Course Manager Sue Sherwood on suesh@reaseheath.ac.uk

Crunch time at vegetable plot



▲ Gone gardening: Hannah Astley and Nayim Young.

A vegetable garden tended by students Hannah Astbury and Nayim Young was judged best of 14 plots grown by our Entry Level 1 and 2 students.

Twenty eight students grew vegetables from seed, planted them out and then shared out the harvest as part of their horticulture studies. Their hard work resulted in an abundant crop of lettuce, onions, beetroot, radish, carrots, runner beans and flowers and a true appreciation of where the food on our plates comes from.

The winning pair, who received a special prize at their end of year awards ceremony, earned top marks for the tidiness of their plot.

Said Hannah: "I love growing and picking the vegetables. It's been a lot of fun being out of doors with the rest of my group and learning where vegetables come from. But I hate weeding!"

Our entry level students study animal care and agriculture as well as horticulture.

Gone fishing

Ten pre-entry learners enjoyed a day learning to fish at an innovative event run for people with special needs.

Our group went to the Hampton Springs Fishery near Malpas and were introduced to the sport by an experienced fishing guide and helpers. Everyone was awarded a certificate of achievement and two particularly successful students received medals - Derek Powell for landing the biggest fish and Matthew Griffiths for catching the most fish.

The event, which also included a free lunch, was organised by the Masonic Trout and Salmon Fishing Charity. The charity runs a small number of these events annually with the aim of bringing an interactive fishing and countryside experience to people with special needs.

The fishing group are on a sport



▲ Rio Higginson and Derek Powell learn to fish.

and leisure programme and join us one day a week. They have also enjoyed learning soccer skills with Crewe Alexandra football coaches,

team activities on our ropes course and an African drumming session.

Our pre-entry learners can stay with us for up to three years and

can try out a range of activities. Thirty five learners are currently travelling in from Cheshire and Warrington. Other specially tailored programmes cover horse care, small animal care and agriculture.

Course manager Louise Badjie said: "Our learners enjoy a wide range of activities but this was the first time we had tried fishing. It was a brilliant event and they all thoroughly enjoyed themselves."

International food department advances globally

Our food processing halls are currently undergoing a multi million pound refurbishment which, once completed, will make Reaseheath the best college in Europe for dairy training.

The building work has not stopped our food hall staff continuing to work with international companies on training and new product development.

Global delegates from Tetra Pak Worldwide benefited from a 10 day course with us, travelling from as far as Russia, Chile, Egypt, Italy and France to learn about dairy processing. Reaseheath has been providing training for Tetra Pak for over 20 years.

Chris Edwards, Food Training and Development Manager, has recently visited Tetra Pak (Sweden) to confirm course structures, meet their

training team and to gain fuller understanding of their worldwide business. This strengthened partnership will help us to meet their training needs better.

Damien Murphy, Processing Halls Co-ordinator, also had a successful visit to Denmark to the Arla Foods factory where he inspected and accepted equipment the company is donating to our refurbished food halls.

Damien also visited the Scanima factory and went on to visit Dalum College, Denmark's premier food processing college.

Dr. Karl Feakes, Food and Dairy Industry Specialist, spent a week in Holland investigating continental cheese-making with several Dutch companies and then moved on to Frankfurt in Germany to attend Food Ingredients Europe, a major



▲ Vice Principal Bjarne Larsen and Food Lecturer Bernt Mikkelsen with Damien Murphy during his visit to Dalum College.

conference and exhibition.

The conference visit was part of his New Engineers Fellowship which is backed by generous financial support from the Gatsby Charitable Foundation. This fellowship enables lecturers to take secondments with businesses or university research centres to

increase skills and knowledge which are relevant to industry.

Chris Edwards and colleagues spent four days training staff in dairy science at Arla Foods' milk processing factory in Leeds and also taught food safety and health and safety to staff at Nom Dairies near Telford, Shropshire.

Reaseheath works with big brands on training needs

Reaseheath's food specialists will be working alongside the biggest names in the food and drink sector in an effort to shape training for specialist engineers in the food industry.

Industry leaders have been asked to form a steering group to look at skills gaps which lead to increased downtime and a drop in productivity and profits. The initiative was forged following a seminar held at Reaseheath and attended by engineers and managers from the UK's most prestigious food and drink companies, including Thorntons, Britvic, Premier Foods, Kelloggs, Carlsberg and Cadbury.

Discussions at the seminar identified a lack of the engineering skills needed to maintain and operate plant and equipment.

Reaseheath's Food Training and Development Manager Chris Edwards confirmed: "There is a skills shortage across the food industry in both technology and engineering. Reaseheath recognises that engineering plays a huge part in the running of a modern, fully automated food process plant.

"To take the industry further, skilled food engineers do not just need an understanding



▲ Needed: well trained food engineers.

about mechanical, electrical and automated systems. They also require an in-depth knowledge about food hygiene and food preservation and about equipment that is specialist to the food industry such as filling machines.

"Working alongside other industry leaders, we are hoping to identify best practice and formulate a common framework which will go some way to filling those gaps."

The conference was organised by MCP Consulting and Training and supported by Reaseheath, The National Skills Academy for Food and Drink Manufacturing and the Centre of Food Robotics and Automation.

Apprentice Jack is Food and Drink Star

Entrepreneurial apprentice Jack Sidebottom has earned a place among the stars of the UK's food and drink manufacturing industry.

Jack, 18, was runner up in the best apprentice category of the 2009 Food Manufacture Excellence Awards, which celebrates the best companies and people in the industry nationwide. He learned of his success at a gala event, held at a top London hotel.

Jack was put forward for the award by Reaseheath assessor Neil Haywood and Apprenticeship Team Leader Christine Middleton, who recognised how much his determination and input had enabled his family business to grow.

Jack completed his apprenticeship in Meat and Poultry Processing with us in record time and won our annual Muller Award for the best food and drink apprentice of the year. He gained experience during a placement at a farm shop and butchery and intends to use his skills to set up a similar business at his family's farm at Alderley Edge.



▲ Star food apprentice Jack Sidebottom.

Said Neil Haywood: "We have been very impressed with the way Jack has applied himself to making his family's business expand and become more successful. We were delighted that the judges obviously felt the same way. This national recognition is testament to Jack's ability and determination."

Jack said: "It was good experience to be put up for the award and I was very pleased and proud to be selected as runner-up."

Enterprise Delivery Hub

Delivery hub increases profitability in the north west

The Reaseheath Enterprise Delivery Hub has already made a difference to almost 200 businesses in the North West by enabling them to grow turnover, increase profitability, create new jobs and up-skill existing employees. Another key aim is to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint through sustainable practices and by introducing low carbon technologies.

The Enterprise Delivery Hub, which is supported by North West Regional Development Agency funding, provides access to knowledge, expertise, skills programmes and specialist facilities across college as well as linking in with partners and stakeholders across the region.

Since its official launch in September, our Hub has earned a fast growing reputation for meeting the needs of businesses and boosting the output of the region, whether start up businesses or well

established companies looking to innovate and grow. The Hub has also been awarded £2 million of Rural Development Plan for England (RDPE) funds to support farming and forestry businesses and a further £2 million to support skills



▲ Annette McDonald and Jane Casson, Enrich Advisor, at the Cheshire Rural Women's Awards

provision across Cheshire and Warrington.

Our Hub continues to:

- deliver tailored business planning and to generate growth and improved profitability
- help drive innovation through developing new products and processes
- find grant funding so companies can invest in training, new ideas and diversification
- organise information events to encourage business collaboration
- champion ways to use renewable energies on farms and in rural businesses
- translate knowledge and technology into practical business applications particularly for the agri-food sector

Annette McDonald, Reaseheath's Head of Skills, Innovation and Enterprise Solutions, said: "We believe in working



▲ Reaseheath Enterprise Delivery Hub is launched in our main hall.

closely with partners to provide clients with the best possible advice and support to drive innovation, enterprise and skills which are the keys to sustainable business growth. This collaborative approach is succeeding in maximising the potential of our rural communities and contributing towards a sustainable rural economy."

Reaseheath Enterprise Delivery Hub: 01270 613195
email: hub@reaseheath.ac.uk

EID for Improved Flock Management

Ways in which new technology such as sheep electronic identification (EID) can help farmers manage their flocks more efficiently were explored at two open days held at Reaseheath.

The events were held in conjunction with sheep handling and identification specialists Shearwell Data Ltd. and attracted over 160 farmers from Anglesey to Cumbria. One day was part of the Rural Development Plan for England (RDPE) Northwest Livestock Programme.

An EID system is already in use by Reaseheath for collating detailed individual veterinary and other records on the college's 500 strong North Country Mule flock. The results are used to quickly identify areas requiring improvement within the flock and to highlight animals that are performing well.

The information is already proving an invaluable teaching aid for agricultural students on our mixed farming courses.

Reaseheath's flock manager, Matt Bagley said: "Sheep EID is very much a topical issue which affects every sheep farmer in the UK. As one of the country's leading agricultural colleges, Reaseheath has made every effort

to embrace this new technology. We are now reaping the benefits, both in raised animal welfare standards and on the bottom line when sheep go to market.

"We hope we have shown farmers how EID can be of real benefit in the management of flocks. It makes sense that we, as farmers, should make the best use of the systems on offer."

- Another event in the RDPE Northwest Livestock programme was a farm walk looking at the management of manure as a resource with Cheshire farmer Andy Green.

A former National Diploma in Agriculture student with us, Andy says his time at college gave him an invaluable start to his farming career and he now welcomes groups of Reaseheath students to his own farm to gain practical experience. He was happy to host the well attended farm walk at Bostock Hall Farm near Middlewich, a beef farm run by Andy, his father, John, and a stockman. The event was supported by the Environment Agency, Promar International and Cheshire FWAG.



▲ Matt Bagley, Agriculture Lecturer, demonstrates the benefits of electronic identification of sheep.

The Rural Development Plan for England (RDPE) Northwest Livestock Programme is an initiative to improve the performance and efficiency of farm businesses. Reaseheath is delivering the programme's events in Cheshire and Merseyside. Two monitor farms are being set up in our region with a discussion group attached to each.

For more event details contact Tim Goldsbrough, RDPE project officer on **07788 721943**; email **timg@reaseheath.ac.uk**

Supporting the local community

Reaseheath supports the local community and its businesses by offering a wide range of training opportunities, often at little or no cost where students meet criteria.

For further details of qualifications you can gain in the workplace, contact Reaseheath's Clare Holland on 01270 613189 or email clareh@reaseheath.ac.uk

New training centre brings hope to the jobless

Our new accredited forklift truck training centre is offering a lifeline to the jobless of Cheshire.

Funded through the European Social Fund and Learning and Skills Council, the centre has been set up to encourage people to gain a useful qualification which will make them more employable.

Fifty people have been awarded nationally recognised forklift licences since the centre opened in August and ten of these have gained jobs. The service is so popular that there is a waiting list for our three and five day courses.

Training is free for people who have been made redundant recently through the government's 'Response to Redundancy' package, while those who have been unemployed for six months or more are eligible through the 'Six Month Plus' scheme.

As well as learning forklift driving skills, students spend two days updating skills which will give them the edge in the jobs market such as CV writing, interview techniques and health and safety in the workplace.

Companies or individuals can also use the centre for refresher training, but there is a cost.

Project Manager Chris Mann

explained: "The training is helping both the unemployed and employers. Gaining an accredited licence makes people more employable in the current recession. It is recognition that they have wider skills and can be more versatile. Quality training also improves safety and efficiency in the workplace, which in turn benefits the employer."

Grandfather of one Trevor Bennett has already found that taking the qualification has stood him in good stead in the jobs market.

Out of work for a year, the former warehouse manager achieved his licence and then went to Rookery Hall and Spa, Nantwich, on a trial placement organised through Reaseheath Train to Gain assessor Sam Smith. After two days he so impressed his employers that he was given a permanent job on the maintenance team.

Said Trevor: "This is the best job I've ever had. I wouldn't have got it if I hadn't been to Reaseheath. The trainers were excellent and gaining the forklift licence and updating my CV have been really useful."

• **Reaseheath's forklift truck training is accredited by the RTITB, the largest lift truck training accrediting body in UK and Ireland.**



▲ Trevor Bennett is instructed by Project Manager Chris Mann.

Green fingered volunteers get growing

Reaseheath has been helping green fingered volunteers with a Vale Royal community enterprise to gain qualifications.

We joined up with Furniture Finders of Winsford to help create a vegetable plot on unused ground at the rear of its warehouse.

Furniture Finders engages volunteers, some of whom have special needs or are unemployed, and gives them the chance to gain qualifications or work placements which could lead to better job prospects and improved health. Main income for the non profit making organisation comes from selling good quality second hand furniture at affordable prices, but it is hoped that the vegetables and flowers grown on the plot could also bring in sales.

Interested volunteers have been working with Reaseheath assessor Annemarie Belcher to dig out, fence and plant up the plot. The result has been a thriving vegetable garden with potatoes, runner beans, beetroot, lettuce and soft fruit.

Four volunteers have achieved a Level 1 qualification and are considering going on to a higher level, and there are plans to expand the plot and introduce a polytunnel.

Jason Newman, one of the first to gain his qualification, said:



▲ Successful volunteers Jason Newman, Robert Shaw and Kevin Wright with Liz Stockall of Furniture Finders and Annemarie Belcher. Nicholas Haigherty also achieved his qualification.

"Working on the plot has been really interesting. Looking after the plants keeps you busy and being outside makes you feel better. I'd like to learn more and maybe work as a landscape gardener."

Louise Bratt, People and Administration Manager said: "Furniture Finders is committed to developing its staff and volunteers through work based learning. By working in partnership with Reaseheath, we have been able to add to our volunteers' skills and experience which will hopefully improve their prospects."

Furniture Finders 0845 026 4727
www.ffow.co.uk

Reaseheath helps families improve green spaces

Horticulture students and staff have been helping local communities improve their shared green spaces by planting bulbs in play areas.

Residents were asked to suggest schemes to encourage better use of communal areas in Crewe's West End at a family fun day. The event, at local play areas, combined the efforts of Greenscape - an environmental action project in the Coppenhall and St Barnabus regeneration wards - and the Crewe Local Area

Partnership, which brings together people who have an interest and responsibility for delivering improvements in the town.

Reaseheath was one of several key service providers invited to take part and students engaged the public in bulb planting and discussion at both sites.

Horticulture Lecturer Julie Gorton said: "This was a great opportunity for First Diploma in Horticulture students to get involved with local projects."

Unsung heroes have 'Star' appeal

The 'stars' of Reaseheath have been honoured for their outstanding contribution to our college's success.

Teams and individual members of staff judged to have 'gone the extra mile' have received Awards of Excellence. The awards are handed over annually in recognition of the highest levels of professionalism, commitment and dedication. All nominations come from colleagues.

The Reaseheath STAR Award, for the staff member who has made the most outstanding contribution of the year, went to senior gardener Dave Mason, a member of the grounds team which ensures our 12 hectares of formal gardens and 50 hectares of grounds are kept in pristine condition.

Dave has been with us for 39 years and is one of Reaseheath's longest serving staff members. He was singled out for setting standards to which others aspire.

He said: "I was very pleased and proud to get the STAR award. Reaseheath is a wonderful place to work and I've enjoyed every minute of being here."

The grounds team, manager James Dentith, Dave Mason, Anthony Bibby, Lamin (Gaa) Badjie, Scott Sherratt and James



▲ Reaseheath stars: the grounds team.

Taylor, also took the Customer Service Award for ensuring that our grounds give that special welcome to visitors.

Also in the honours were:

The People's Award

Angela Boon, administrator for agriculture and countryside, whose 'can do' attitude has prompted her to learn stock skills such as lambing our sheep flock.

Diversity Champion

Annie Jones, a learning skills instructor who has helped us become an even more inclusive organisation through her support of students with learning difficulties.

Growth and Development

Sarah Parker, a floristry tutor who has guided students to frequent top accolades at shows and at UKSkills competitions.

Education Excellence

The Foundation Team (Level 1), for their tireless efforts to ensure that all students have equal opportunities and are happy, safe and successful.

Leadership Award

Tim Reeves, Head of Adventure Sports and Sports Performance, whose vision and drive has built up a department with an enviable reputation throughout the outdoor education industry.

Students benefit from learning fund



▲ Councillor Brian Silvester, former Mayoress Sheila Davies and Principal Meredith David with students Lee Chapman, Malcolm Bourne and Bradley Carroll.

Local students are making the most of their studies thanks to a fund set up to encourage learning.

Engineer Malcolm Bourne, 50, and adventure sports students Lee Chapman, 23, and Bradley Carroll, 16, are among those benefiting from the Lifelong Learning Fund, a £10,000 pot of money set up to help Reaseheath students from Crewe and Nantwich.

The fund was the brainchild of Councillor Brian Silvester, Deputy Leader of Cheshire East Council and Mayor of the former Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council. One of his last gestures in office was to hand over a £5,000 grant which we have doubled. Students who meet criteria can claim up to £200 for essential expenses.

Malcolm is a former meat inspector now aiming to run his own business restoring classic tractors and vehicles. He has used his grant to buy necessary clothing.

He said: "Coming to Reaseheath has been the chance of a lifetime. I've always wanted to learn more about engineering. But I'm on a fairly tight budget and I've found the funding very useful."

Lee and Bradley have used their grants to meet expenses for a residential course in Anglesey.

Lee, who wants a new career as a climbing and kayaking instructor after being made redundant, said: "We're doing an assignment based on what we learned on the residential course. It would have been difficult for me to go if I hadn't received the grant."

Councillor Silvester said: "I am delighted that the Lifelong Learning Fund has assisted local people of all ages to realise their ambitions. Reaseheath is a very successful college and we are privileged to have learning establishments like this in our area."

Reaseheath instructors gain teaching certificates

Practical instructors returned to learning to gain a professional certificate in education.

Our motivated staff followed an intensive five day programme to achieve their City & Guilds PTTLs (Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector) qualification. As well as updating their own personal qualifications, the achievement ensures that Reaseheath remains at the cutting edge of technical delivery.

We teamed up with AtLast! Training Ltd. to create a bespoke course allowing the instructors to study in their workplace during college holidays, avoiding disruption to students. EMC Training carried out the assessment and certification.

Successful staff were:

Animal Management: Amy Dunbar, Emma Hunt,



▲ Successful Reaseheath instructors celebrate their new qualifications with Dave Kynaston, Vince Holley from AtLast Training and Margaret Doyle-Bennett of EMC Training.

Kerri Robson.

Construction: Dave Allman, Ian Jones, James Spooner.

Engineering: Justin Connor, Alan Harnett, Pete Honeyman.

Foundation:

Brian Bennion, Dave Castle, Anna Hughes, Dean Rhodes.

Horticulture:

James Dentith.

Train to Gain:

Annemarie Belcher, Sam Smith.

Communities benefit from Colleges Week

Reaseheath was a major player in Colleges Week, a national event highlighting the opportunities which colleges create for their local communities, individuals and businesses.

Tree planting, bug box making and creating wildlife habitats were three of the activities put on by our staff and students.

Our horticulture department helped pupils from Hungerford Primary School, Crewe, to plant fruit trees in the school's allotment. We donated six apple trees to the school and these have taken pride of place in a plot used by pupils to learn about the outdoors.

We have been advising the school on its gardening activities since last Spring. The pupils have successfully grown vegetables and hope to cook their produce in the school kitchen.

Assistant Head Damien Sweeney said: "We are trying to show the pupils where their food comes from and encourage them to enjoy being out of doors. Planting the trees here has been brilliant. We wouldn't have been able to do this and other work on the allotment without the help of Reaseheath."

We also welcomed visitors from Macon House, Crewe, a day centre for adults with learning difficulties, onto campus. Members of the environmental group enjoyed making winter shelters for insects such as ladybirds from bamboo canes. They also learned about the problems faced by other insects during the cold months from tutor Annemarie Belcher.

The group then went into our glasshouses to plant up bowls of narcissus bulbs and to take cuttings of spider plants with trainer Anne Chandler.

Said Tom Brereton, Day Service Officer for Macon House: "This has been a wonderful opportunity to benefit from structured learning. The group work on our own allotment and have a gardening project in the Crewe Heritage Centre, so any tips we have picked up will be very useful."

Reaseheath also welcomed the public onto campus during the week for an information evening, illustrating the courses which we offer from diplomas to degrees.

Principal Meredydd David said: "Colleges Week has given us a

great opportunity to demonstrate how colleges are at the heart of the community. We have been delighted to offer these exciting activities and hope they have been of benefit.

"We have also been pleased to show the public our £20 million new facilities and to flag up the many career opportunities which follow from our courses. The land-based industries is one area that still has more job opportunities than trained people to fill them."



▲ Reaseheath's Dave Black, Lee Belgrau and Ben Hattersley help six year old Ben Keegan and Leah Bebbington, nine, to plant an apple tree.



▲ Sarah Speed, Yvonne Roberts, Ian Waldron, Janice Walton from Macon House with Reaseheath lecturer Annemarie Belcher.



▲ Student Ben Hattersley with pupils from Hungerford School.

Winning video

Two horticulture students have won a national prize in a video competition for Colleges Week.

Susanna Hinton and Beverley Moon, who are studying for our National Certificate in Horticulture, came up with innovative ideas of how they would encourage London's diverse nationalities to visit the capital's green spaces.

They have won the unique chance to shadow Mark Camley, Chief Executive of the

Royal Parks, for a day.

We submitted two other videos which narrowly missed the top prizes. Three players for our ace Men's Football Team talked tactics and suggested team bonding ideas in an imagined conversation with Sven Goren Eriksson, while three events management students came up with innovative ideas to improve the profitability of M&S if they were in Sir Stuart Rose's shoes for the day.

REASEHEATH AT A GLANCE

- Outstanding College (Ofsted)
- Beacon College (QIA)
- Dairy Champion National Skills Academy for Food and Drink Manufacture
- Engineering Academy
14 years - 19 years
- Training Quality Standard

Subject areas:

- Further and Higher Education
- Adventure Sports
- Agriculture
- Animal Management
- Business and IT
- Construction
- Countryside and Conservation
- Engineering
- Entry and Foundation Programme
- Equine
- Floristry
- Horticulture
- Food Technology
- Greenkeeping and Sports Turf
- Motor Vehicle
- Sports Performance and Excellence
- Leisure and Community Studies

Associate College of:



Total students:

- Full time Further Education: 1,800
- Higher Education: 600
- Part-time inc. adult leisure: 4,000
- Schools partnerships, work based learning and Train to Gain 1,400

Estate

- College grounds: 21 hectares
- Owned and rented farm land: 330 hectares
- Land leased to Crewe Alexandra Football Club: 6 hectares

Turnover

- Academic year 2008-09: £18.2 million

Facilities

- On-site accommodation for 400; five catering outlets; student lounge/bar; learning resource centre; HE study area; sports hall; climbing wall; multi gym; sports pitches (rugby, football, crown green bowling, cricket); commercial nine-hole golf course; indoor riding arena

Staff

- 500 (including agency)

Further details - please ask for a prospectus

Record raising and giving

Members of our Students Association handed over a massive £12,076 to charity - the result of a record breaking, fundraising year.

The money was raised by staff and students through RAG (Raising and Giving), and was donated to BIRD - Brain Injury Rehabilitation and Development - based near Chester. The cheque was handed over at our student ball.

RAG chair Verity Taylor said: "We were delighted when we realised we had exceeded our target by over £1,000. We thought that people might be less able to donate under the current economic climate, but in fact they have been more generous than ever."

Fund raising activities included a

staff member running the London marathon, a raft race on the college lake, a tractor pull by teams of students, a can shake in Chester and Nantwich and a challenge to stay awake all night.

Helen Schielke, practice manager at BIRD, said: "We are thrilled with the wonderful sum of money raised by Reaseheath's students and staff over the past year. I cannot thank them enough for all their hard work."

The total funds raised by Reaseheath staff and students over the past 19 years is an impressive £141,000 - all benefitting local charities.

The Childrens Adventure Farm Trust www.caft.co.uk is to be our charity for 2010.



▲ Patrick Walsh with our record cheque for RAG, watched by members of the students union and BIRD representatives at the student ball.

RAG activities already in the pipeline include Chester's Dragon Boat Race, a live band, a sponsored swim and fancy dress pub crawls.

Families are spellbound by Reaseheath's maze

Thousands of families were spellbound when they visited our popular 'Witches and Wizards' maze.

A giant 'Witches' maze and a smaller 'Spider's web' were crafted out of our giant maize crop and provided a home to wizardly characters including Grumbledore and Parry Hotter (relatives of the famous Harry).

Although wands were in short supply, each group of visitors received a flag with a witch on it to magic up help if the quest for the maze centre became too difficult!

Maze games and light refreshments, including Reaseheath's own ice cream, were also available.

Maze manager Tanya Griffiths said: "We tried to provide a really good day out of affordable fun for all the family. All our visitors seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves."

There will be a zoo theme for our maze in 2010. Visitors will be able to buy a combination ticket which also allows entrance to our animal centre.



▲ Spellbound - Witches maze.

Rare apples at core of event

Several rare types of apple have been identified growing in local gardens by Reaseheath fruit experts.

Green balsam, Millar's seedling and the peculiarly named Catshead Codlin were just three of a number of obscure varieties brought in by the public to our Apple Festival.

Visitors from several counties queued to find out the names of ancient fruit trees in their garden and what they could do to preserve them. As well as identifying species, horticulturists Derek Jones and Harry Delaney were kept busy advising on pruning, pest control

and suitable new trees for planting.

Said Derek: "The apple festival is always popular but this year we have been inundated with people wanting to know more about the apples in their garden. There is no doubt that interest in local produce has grown hugely over the past few years."

"Reaseheath's apple festival has become an important date on the calendar and people wait for the event to bring their fruit in. This year we had some very exciting finds of rare varieties which were over 300 years old."

Hundreds of visitors attended



▲ Derek Jones identifies a green balsam apple for Austin and Margaret Forbes and Roy Davies

our event, which included a display of over 70 rare apple varieties and tours of our fruit garden.

Diary Dates... Come and see us!

January 2010

16
Courses information event
10am start. Book beforehand

19 - 21
British and International Golf
Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA)
Turfest Harrogate Week

20 - 21
Lincolnshire Agricultural Machinery
Manufacturers Association (LAMMA)
show, Newark

23
Year 9 taster day

February 2010

6
Courses information event
10am start. Book beforehand

27 - 28
Reaseheath lambing weekend

March 2010

6 - 7
Reaseheath lambing weekend

10
Church Farm, Wirral
Courses Information Event

16
Courses information event
6pm - 8pm. Drop in.

21
Car boot sale at
Reaseheath Golf Club
7am for 8am start.

26 - 28
The Outdoors Show at the National
Exhibition Centre (NEC) Birmingham

April 2010

21
Church Farm, Wirral
Courses Information Event

24
Courses information event
10am start. Book beforehand

May 2010

8
Harper Adams Open Day

15 - 21
Adult Learners Week

16
Reaseheath Family Festival
11am - 5pm

23
Cheshire Young Farmers Club
annual rally

26
Church Farm, Wirral
Courses Information Event