



Looking Back: Stepping Forward!

A Seminar to Celebrate 50 Years of Veterinary Nursing

Your speakers – in agenda order



**Liz Branscombe DipAVN(Surgical) RVN
RCVS VN Council Chairman**

Liz Branscombe has been a qualified veterinary nurse since 1986 and has worked in both small and mixed animal practice. She gained the Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (Surgical) in 1994. A large part of her veterinary nursing career has been spent working in specialist referral practice, including a number of years as senior surgical nurse at the Royal Veterinary College. She has worked at Davies Veterinary Specialists since its inception in 1998, where her current role is Training Manager, with primary responsibility for the training and development of a team of 60 full- or part-time veterinary nurses.

Liz is currently an external examiner for the Royal Veterinary College Graduate Diploma in Professional and Clinical Veterinary Nursing and a longstanding member of the BVNA.

Elected to RCVS VN Council in 2006, Liz has served as its Chairman since 2009. During this time she has also represented VN Council on a number of College committees.

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#### **Introduction: the path so far, and where next?**

Liz will introduce the seminar and offer a short overview of the history of the profession so far, before outlining the role of the RCVS Veterinary Nurses Council and some of the areas it is currently considering that will affect the future shape and direction of the veterinary nursing profession.



**Jean Turner RVN**

**Trevor Turner BVetMed MRCVS**

Jean Turner qualified as a RANA in November 1971 as a mature student, having previously had business training.

She has served on BVNA Council for 16 years and is on the editorial board of *VNJ*, now responsible for news items.

Jean was a VN Examiner for several years in the 1980s, becoming senior examiner. She has used her business experience in the practice management of a small animal veterinary hospital. Jean also trained student veterinary nurses (and veterinary students!) until she left general practice in 1998.

Her present role is assisting a forensic veterinary surgeon, case recording, liaison with RSPCA personnel and solicitors.

Meanwhile, Trevor Turner qualified from the Royal Veterinary College in 1958. He started his own small animal practice in October 1958, which became one of the first RCVS-approved veterinary hospitals.

He has been involved in the VN (then RANA) scheme since its inception and has served on various committees involved with VN training. He has also been a veterinary nursing examiner.

Trevor retired from general practice in 1998 and now works as a forensic veterinary surgeon, handling cruelty cases, veterinary jurisprudence, examination of suspected dangerous dogs, etc.



### **The early days of the profession**

Jean and Trevor will share their personal experiences of the early days of veterinary nursing and how the profession has developed over its first half-century.



**Sue Badger VN Cert Ed MBVNA**

**President, British Veterinary Nursing Association**

Sue qualified as a veterinary nurse in 1976, following six months at the Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA). She then spent 15 years in general veterinary practice before deciding upon a career change. She returned to BCA, this time as a tutor, where she spent two years before moving to the University of Bristol's Veterinary School.

She has now been at Langford for 14 years, where she feels privileged to have seen a significant number of student veterinary nurses progress to become qualified VNs.

Currently BVNA President, this is Sue's second stint on BVNA Council, having first been elected in 1993. She is also an observer on the RCVS VN Council.



### **Personal reflections and professional directions**

Sue has seen many developments take place since she joined veterinary nursing, not least the introduction of full-time entry routes into the profession and the development of a small but increasingly important research base in veterinary nursing.

Having been a veterinary nurse for over 30 years, eighteen of them in practice, Sue will share some of her valuable experience from both a personal and a professional point of view. She will also outline some of the future challenges that the BVNA sees facing the profession.



**Hilary Orpet BSc DipAVN (Surgical) CertEd FHEA DipCABT(COAPE)  
RVN**

**Veterinary Nurse Council member**

Hilary joined the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) in 1988, soon after qualifying, and gained vast experience in the Queen Mother Hospital for Animals.

In 1992, Hilary became senior surgical nurse and, in 1993, she was awarded a Diploma in Advanced Surgical Nursing. At this time Hilary decided to put to use all the invaluable experience and theory absorbed over the years, and go into teaching. In 2001, with colleague and close friend, Perdi Welsh, they published their first book 'Handbook of Veterinary Nursing', edition two was published last year!

Hilary is currently course director for the Foundation in Veterinary Nursing degree course run at the RVC in conjunction with the College of Animal Welfare, and course director for the BSc in Veterinary Nursing also at the RVC.

Hilary has been an elected member of RCVS VN Council since 2006.

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What is veterinary nursing?

For veterinary nursing to be legally regulated and recognised, we need to be able to define who we are, what we do and how we work.

This workshop session will ask for your thoughts on a proposed definition, and also for you to consider the purpose, values and commitment to the overall care of animals that the profession demonstrates, and how to define nursing interventions.



Valerie Beatty MBA
Registrar, Veterinary Council of Ireland

The Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) is the Statutory Body established under the Veterinary Practice Act 2005. The principal function of the Council is to regulate and manage the practice of veterinary medicine and veterinary nursing in the State in the public interest.

Valerie has held the position of Registrar of the VCI since the beginning of 2005. Prior to joining the Council, she held a number of management positions in both commercial and public organisations.

Immediately prior to joining the Council, she was Director of Corporate Affairs at the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, a public body charged with designing and implementing a national qualifications framework in Ireland. She holds third level qualifications in management and teaching.



The implications of a statutory register

Veterinary nursing became a regulated profession in Ireland on 1 January 2008, following the passing of the Veterinary Practice Act 2005. In her presentation, Valerie will discuss the following issues:

- The pre-2008 position regarding veterinary nurses and planning for the introduction of mandatory registration
- Setting up the Register and deciding who can enter it
- The veterinary procedures which a registered veterinary nurse (RVN) can perform
- Rights and responsibilities of RVNs – Code of Professional Conduct, Disciplinary Procedures, Mandatory Continuing Veterinary Education and Practice Ownership
- Feedback from RVNs and veterinary practitioners (legal name for veterinary surgeons in Ireland) on regulation
- What the future holds for the profession from a regulation point of view
- The aspirations of the profession



Christian Kummernes

Lecturer, Norwegian School of Veterinary Science (NVH)

- Veterinary technician / nurse NVH, 2005-07
- University and College pedagogics, University of Life Sciences (UMB), 2010
- VETNNET vice-coordinator, 2010 to present day
- Vice-President Norwegian Veterinary Nurse Association, 2008-2011

Christian teaches veterinary nurse students various basic clinical procedures, medical mathematics and basic ethology, he also supervises the students' practice and practice placements, and teaches veterinary nurse and veterinary students hygienic procedures and the use of alternatives.



The veterinary nurse educational landscape in Norway

Christian will explain how veterinary nurse (technician) education works in Norway, where veterinary technicians have gone from being non-educated labour to qualifying via a one-year university-level education to a two-year university-level education. Veterinary technicians became protected both in title and authorisation in 2003, by the Norwegian Food and Safety Authority.

In summary, the current training situation includes:

- Structure of the veterinary nurse education at NVH: four semesters
- 27 weeks are spent full-time at private veterinary clinics in the 2nd and 3rd / 4th semesters
- The students attend six different clinics at NVH for seven weeks in the 3rd and 4th semester
- The theory is taught in 'blocks', ending in an exam in that particular field
- Exam forms: 'traditional' written exams and handed-in papers; final exam eight-station OSCE
- The veterinary nurse students write a 30-page paper in groups of three concerning veterinary nurse-related issues during the 2nd to 4th semesters
- The level of teaching at NVH is adjusted to a relevant level. Much of the theory is taught by the veterinarians, practical demonstrations by veterinary nurses
- Challenges: the link between NVH and placement clinics
- Benefits: national / international authorities teach much of the theory. Placements give the students a good 'reality-check'

What does the future hold?

- Heightening the status of veterinary nurse education and, by this, the occupation.
- Expanding veterinary nurse education at NVH from two years to a Bachelor-degree education. Possibilities of going further to achieving a Master's degree and even a PhD.



Tim Curry

Assistant Head of Nursing Department, Royal College of Nursing

Tim Curry is currently employed by the Royal College of Nursing as Assistant Head of the UK Nursing Department. He has previously spent just under ten years in clinical practice in a variety of settings as a Registered Nurse and as a policy adviser on health reforms and funding.

He has contributed to numerous conferences, debates and articles on health and social care policy in both the national and professional press.



“Definition of Nurse...

Noun: A person trained to care for the sick or infirm, esp. in a hospital.

Verb: Give medical and other attention to...

The presentation will offer some images of nursing and share some of the broad themes that have shaped the work of nurses over the last 100 years. Delegates will be invited to discuss some of those themes which they would find helpful as they define the future of their own profession.