

Nov 21, 2013 00:00 GMT

Graduates reunite after half a century

A celebrated Northumbria University alumnus was among a group that reunited on campus during Open Day to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their enrolment.

As new and current students arrived this term to settle into university life, they were joined by a select group of alumni who returned to the site of Rutherford College, one of the institutions that later became Northumbria, to remember their own first term.

Over the reunion weekend, 15 former Rutherford College students gathered at Northumbria's city campus in Newcastle to celebrate, including one of the

best known figures in the Labour Party movement and former president of trade union, UNISON, Rodney Bickerstaffe, who is also an Honorary Fellow of Northumbria University.

Alumni Hilary Rosankiewicz, worked with Northumbria's Alumni and Development Team to organise the reunion weekend for herself and fellow graduates David Athron, Ann Sallin, Duncan Halliday, Roger Sallin and Gillian Brain, who were the first sociologists to study at the institution when they began their studies in 1963. Sir Andrew Foster, an Honorary Graduate, who became Head of the Audit Commission, was also part of the reunion although wasn't able to attend the campus visit.

As part of their reunion, the group spent time visiting their former common room – now the staff recreation room – and their old lecture theatre and exam hall in Ellison Building, now home to the University's Engineering and Environment programmes.

Reunion organiser Hilary Rosankiewicz commented on the huge development of the campus. She said: "I have had feedback from the group asking for another reunion in three years to mark 50 years since we graduated. The lecture hall in particular awakened some good memories."

Other reunion events also included a visit to Beamish Museum, an evening meal with guest speaker Professor Bill Williams, a Durham University sociologist, and a river cruise from the Quayside to Tynemouth.

Peter Storey, Acting Head of Alumni and Development at Northumbria University, said: "The group were surprised by the number of changes that have taken place since their graduation five decades ago. When they studied here the central motorway was only a single lane carriageway so they astounded by both the bridge across it and the City Campus East development.

"There were no Halls of Residence, so they had to find their own accommodation, and no Metro to get them in and out of the city."

Northumbria University will showcase its campus and courses to prospective students during its Open Day this Saturday, October 26th from 10am-3pm. Prospective students and their families can either register online or turn up

on the day. For more information, visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/opendays.

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focussed, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

Contacts



Rik Kendall

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences

rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk

07923 382339



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences

andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk

07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk

07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact

Student Communications Manager

james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk

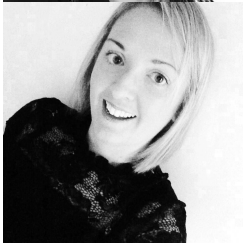


Kelly Elliott

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk