



Lisa Jack

Brian Webster

Kerstin Mey

Paul Williams

Carolyn Roberts

Stanley Ellis

money and Nationwide Building Society. In his new role at Salford, he will manage internal communications, media relations, corporate marketing and online branding.

A professor's work in promoting Greek cultural heritage has been recognised with an international prize. **Sir John Boardman**, emeritus Lincoln professor of classical art and archaeology at the University of Oxford, was awarded the inaugural Onassis International Prize in Humanities for his work. He will travel to Paris to receive his award on 14 December. Sir John is one of two laureates to receive the prize, the other was the French archaeologist Jacques-Yves Empereur.

Steven Miles has been appointed professor of urban culture and director of postgraduate studies at the University of Brighton. A specialist in the fields of the sociology of consumption and cultural policy, Professor Miles joins Brighton from the University of Liverpool. In his new post, he will be involved in further developing postgraduate provision and will contribute to debates about the evolution of the post-industrial city.

The University of Portsmouth's Business School has appointed **Lisa Jack** professor of accounting. Professor Jack's focus is on research into the accounting aspects of the agricultural production of food. Her work is aimed at producing research that will advise policymakers and help to promote fair returns for those working in the industry.

Brian Webster has taken on the position of head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery at The Robert Gordon University. He joins from the University of Southampton, where he was deputy head and director of education in the School of Health Sciences. At Southampton,

he was responsible for 250 members of staff and looked after the school's educational contracts, worth about £27 million. He takes over from Jennie Parry, who recently retired.

The University for the Creative Arts has a new director of research and enterprise. **Kerstin Mey** will work to strengthen PhD research, develop successful funding bids and build links with relevant organisations outside the university. She previously held a chair in fine art and worked as director of the Art and Design Research Institute at the University of Ulster.

The University of Reading's **Paul Williams** has been selected as a Royal Society University Research Fellow for his work in the field of climate change. Dr Williams was awarded the fellowship from the UK's national academy of science to investigate ways to improve climate modelling by applying new techniques that have proved to be successful in the field of weather forecasting.

Carolyn Roberts has taken up the role of director at the University of Oxford's Environmental Sustainability Knowledge Transfer Network, an association that brings universities and businesses together to develop new environmental technologies. Professor Roberts is a water resources specialist and was an adviser to Gloucestershire County Council following the serious flooding of the county in 2007. She was formerly professor of environmental sciences at the University of Gloucestershire and is also a vice-president of the Institution of Environmental Sciences.

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Obituary

Stanley Ellis, 1926-2009

A dialectologist and pioneering forensic linguist – who made a notable intervention in the Yorkshire Ripper inquiry – has died.

Stanley Ellis was born in Bradford on 18 February 1926, studied at Grange Grammar School and then secured a scholarship to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

After National Service, largely in the Indian subcontinent, he read English at the University of Leeds and began to specialise in dialectology. This led to a period of six years on the road in a caravan as the leading fieldworker for the definitive *Survey of English Dialects* (published in four volumes between 1962 and 1971), overseen by Harold Orton.

The project was based largely on interviews with ageing farm workers who had grown up in the late 19th century, and so represented the last generation whose language had not been decisively influenced by the mass media. It also provided a solid grounding for Mr Ellis' subsequent career as lecturer and then senior lecturer in the School of English at Leeds, where he remained until 1983.

Drawing on his natural bonhomie and an almost uncanny ability to distinguish the nuances of local accents, he was highly effective in popularising dialectology on radio and television. In 1967, Mr Ellis became the first person to apply expert linguistic skills to speaker identification in an English court. He was later employed by the security services in a similar capacity.

When the police received tapes in 1979 purporting to come from the Yorkshire Ripper, Mr Ellis and his colleague Jack Windsor Lewis soon concluded that it was actually the work of a hoaxer who had grown up in a village near Sunderland many miles from the murders.

Although their views were unfortunately disregarded, they were vindicated in 2005 when someone from precisely the area they had pinpointed was arrested, and later admitted perverting the course of justice.

Clive Upton, professor of modern English language at Leeds, describes Mr Ellis as "totally unaffected, very genuine, very straight-talking and able to mix in all sorts of company.

"That was why he was such a good fieldworker, where he was in a sense the student of his informants, and never came across as someone who had come from a university to impose upon them.

"*Survey* counts as the only serious study of English dialects and brought together a meticulously collected bank of data about language variation which researchers have cause to be very grateful for, even now."

Mr Ellis died suddenly on 31 October and is survived by his wife Margaret and three children from a previous marriage.

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