



Going further

The Guernsey College of Further Education has celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. **Shaun Shackleton** spoke to two men who were there at the beginning and one of the Coutanchez's first apprentices – who is now a lecturer there herself

college of further education

ENGINEER John Frankland came to Guernsey in September 1969. 'I'd been teaching in Barnsley and I didn't know what to expect. But it was exciting, a big challenge. There were five of us altogether, to start off with. We were at the Technical Training Centre, based in the old Ladies' College at La Couperderie. I took motor vehicle engineering. 'One of my jobs was to go around and persuade all garage owners to send their apprentice mechanics to college. 'We did plumbing as well, with another engineer, Harry Parry. Arthur Hollingsworth did carpentry and local man Andrew Gilliam did general studies. Gordon Anderson came here before me, early 1969, to get it all set up. He did horticulture. He was considered the senior man. The Famous Five. Mike Hutchings, the further education officer, recruited everyone. And Claire Kennedy was the secretary.' John remembers getting everything ready at the La Couperderie site.



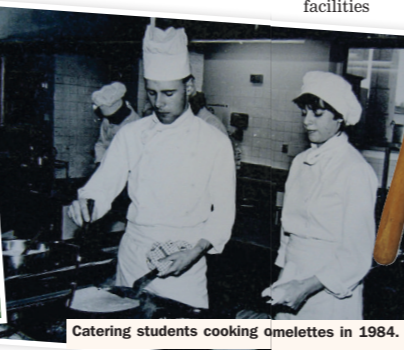
Peter Bretel, plumbing student, who, in 1995, was awarded the College of FE's 'Best Overall Student'.

'When I came they were still setting it up. Me and Harry Parry were put in the girls' cloakroom, which we turned into a workshop. The States sorted it out. I went to Wholesale Supplies and bought vices and I even brought in my own tool kit. We did everything. Harry got a second-hand lathe. I remember him building with concrete blocks. Motor vehicle and engineering, side by side. Classes had welders and plumbers and part-timers came in to teach but they would become established courses.' During 1970/71 you could do three terms of evening classes for £1.20. In the 1970-71 Further Education and Youth Handbook, under the Part-time and Day Courses section, John was in charge of: 'A course for apprentices who will be prepared for the City and Guilds Motor Vehicle Mechanics' Work Examinations.' 'I took the older guys on three-year apprenticeships. They were all great. All the students in my experience were great – absolutely spot on. And it was in 1971 that it changed into the Guernsey College of Further Education. 'Hairdressing came into the classroom, run by Andrew Gilliam. The students had to bring their own hairdryers. Then the welding was set up.' John originally came over to Guernsey by boat. 'I built my own boat in England and sailed it over. I did a lot of sailing, stuff with Dave Nicole, one of the lecturers in navigation and seamanship. Then I started

teaching it. 'In 1969 I only came for two years, to help set it up. I officially retired in 1998, but I never stopped. I still go down there. I run the maritime section. 'Some of the same firms are still supplying us with students and I still see loads of ex-students.' 'Everyone was expecting us to fall on our faces,' admitted the late Michael Hutchings in an interview in February this year. After seeing an advert in the Times Education Supplement, Michael had left his administrator's job at North East Essex Technical College to take up the position of the college's first further education officer (and then deputy director of education). 'But we didn't fail, due to the enthusiasm of the staff and the students.' And he understood this enthusiasm. 'I gave students an incentive. There was always an undercurrent that "if you didn't go to college you weren't worth much". But the College of FE provided a "go and train and get qualifications" feeling.' Michael also recalled getting La Couperderie ready for opening. 'We had the motor vehicle workshop, which were the toilets and cloakroom, the room above, the



One-time apprentice Julie Hyde has been a teacher at the College of Further Education for nearly 30 years.



Catering students cooking amelettes in 1984.

From 1979: 'In the motor vehicle workshop at the College of FE, six students taking a vocational experience course for unemployed youngsters work under realistic conditions.'

gymnasium, that was the carpentry workshop. We were given a hoist, an RSJ to lift engines, by a local company. It was interesting. 'There were lecture rooms at the front, motor vehicle and general engineering, carpentry, joinery and plumbing. There was also hairdressing, with the lecturer being James Stevens Cox. 'The one thing the States didn't realise is that education is expensive. They were a bit aghast at the amount of money they had to make available.' The States Apprentice Scheme was a great success. By 1970-71, there were 254 students, both boys and girls – training with 127 States-registered employers. A total of 531 apprentices had already satisfactorily completed training under the scheme. 'Not under the auspices of the Education Council, it was the States Labour and Welfare Committee. We had to deal with employers. We didn't have meetings with employers before I came.

[It would later become the responsibility of the Education Council.] 'I went to see one of the motor traders, the managing director of Ruette Braye Motors, Mervyn Kitts. "You tell me all about this," he said. "But I've heard it all before". 'But he eventually agreed to send his apprentices for two half-days and one evening a week. The courses went very well.' As well as the apprentice scheme, Michael believed that the adult classes were not only a major part of the college but also the local community. 'People were signing up as soon as the lecturer already knew who her students were going to be. 'Every class programme was very important – not just the content, but the social aspect too.'

In 1971, plans were prepared for the construction of a purpose-built college to meet the increasing demand for facilities



From 1990: Written in stone – a painting and decorating apprentice is put through his paces.



Wednesday 17 March 1976. The College of FE at the Coutanchez is opened by the Bailiff, Sir John Loveridge.



Exterior shot of College of FE from 1980, just four years after it opened.



From 1976: 'Hairdressing students work in ideal salon conditions, with friends who volunteers as models.'



JW Rihoy & Son working on an integrated workshop at the College of FE in 1987. These bays were being made to enable plumbing apprentices to practise installing bathrooms and kitchens.



John Frankland's prospectuses from 1970-71 and 1971-72.

in further education from all sections of the community. The site at the Coutanchez was bought that same year, with States authorisation to build being passed in 1974. By the time it was officially opened by the then Bailiff, Sir John Loveridge, on Wednesday 17 March 1976, it had almost 600 students and 23 full-time members of staff. And, for the first time, as it was approved and recognised as an examination centre by a large number of authorities, it meant that students taking external exams could sit them at college rather than having to travel off-island. One of those first students was catering and hospitality apprentice Julie Hyde. If ever there was needed someone to illustrate the success of the College of FE, then Julie is the perfect example. After staying on at St Sampson's Secondary school to take her CSEs and GCSEs, Julie failed her GCSE in food and nutrition. 'I'd already started work, my sister and I, at L'Anresse Holiday Centre – washing dishes. The chef there was Jean de Kooker and I wanted to be like her. 'Then my dad suggested I go work at the Marina Restaurant at Beaucette. I went for an interview

and they said, "Start tomorrow at 10am". I had to go to Gabriel's on the Bridge for a cap and overalls. Yves Davy was the chef at the Marina. He taught me so much. He was a constant source of information. He died about seven years ago, but I could go to him any time.' It was here that Julie worked with second- and third-year apprentice chefs from the College of FE and in September 1976 she signed up for the four-year apprenticeship herself. When she started there wasn't even a kitchen at the college. 'We'd do our theory lesson at college, which were like science and social studies, then on Friday lunchtime we'd catch the bus into Town, then to L'Eree and use the kitchens at L'Eree Hotel, which had closed down. The following year the college had a kitchen. They have two now. 'Our lecturer was Steve Parks, who is still around. We put him through some tough times. There were ground rules. Charles Hunt was the principal and it was always Mr Hunt, never Charles. The same in the kitchen. It was always Chef. Front of house, it was always Mister. 'The college was an amazing place in the

'Everyone was expecting us to fall on our faces. But we didn't fail, due to the enthusiasm of the staff and the students'

Michael Hutchings, the college's first further education officer

'70s. I loved the discipline. All the trades were here. It was a true community college. That's what it was built for and what it should still be for, assisting the community.' Julie's course was well structured. 'You'd get a City & Guilds 706/1 qualification, then the 706/2 and then the 707/1. So in four years you got three qualifications.' Julie passed and went to work at the Marina Restaurant, where there could be

120 people a sitting. 'Famous people used to visit – Oliver Reed, John Noakes, Faith Brown, Jimmy Tarbuck. It was a lovely life.' During the summer season she worked at the Friquet Flower Centre. She then became housekeeper and cook for a couple who travelled between Guernsey, Spain and Gibraltar. She then had a son and worked at Le Plating Nursing Home as a cook, on the fruit and veg counter at Besant's supermarket and then in finance. 'Then, at the age of 30, because I needed a job that coincided with term time, I applied for a job at the College of FE.' At first Julie was a catering technician. Graham Edwards was in charge and because she loved teaching so much she had the opportunity to teach adult and Links students. She then studied to become a teacher. 'Then Trevor Wakefield offered me part-time teaching Access students. Then a job came up for full-time teaching. Paul Wilson got that. I applied the next time and I got it. 'I'll have been here 30 years next year. It's a pure joy to be able to teach apprentices the same skills that I learnt. Now I'm teaching students whose parents I also taught. It's gone full circle.'