

Inaugural John Pearce Memorial Lecture 2015

Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) commemorated the life of one of the UK's founding figures in social enterprise, John Pearce, at the launch of its Social Enterprise Collection (Scotland) in October 2015.

The University's Yunus Centre for Social Business and Health held the inaugural John Pearce Memorial lecture, which was delivered by Chair of the British Council in Scotland Willy Roe CBE.

He said: "John Pearce was a Social Change Design Engineer – one of the best I have known. He brought great insights about how to transform local economies to benefit local people. But more than that, he was a leader who made things happen, a design engineer who showed us how to replicate good ideas, and an educator and influencer who worked across the world to help communities secure their sustainable futures."

John played a pivotal role in Scotland's community business movement, the precursor to social enterprise, and before his death in 2011, he donated his collection of papers and documents to the GCU Archives.

He has been recognised as an influential thinker in the principles and practice of collective and community enterprise, writing extensively throughout his life including the seminal 'Social Enterprise in Anytown', published in 2003, and still read worldwide by social enterprise students. He was credited for turning theories into practice and directly helping the development of communities in Scotland, the UK, and further afield.

GCU Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor James Miller welcomed attendees, followed by an address by Professor Cam Donaldson, Yunus Chair in Social Business and Health, and GCU Archivist Carole McCallum. Alan Kay also addressed the audience on behalf of the Community Business Scotland Network (CBS), which previously supported social and community enterprise.

Professor Cam Donaldson said: "It was a great honour for GCU and the Yunus Centre to host this event. We are proud to work with the Community Business Scotland (CBS) Network and CEiS to present such an important Collection in the name of one of the international guiding lights of social enterprise. To have such a resource available for research by staff, students and the public is an important part of the great legacy of John Pearce."

The Social Enterprise Collection, accumulated over the course of John's 35-year career, includes papers and documents on community development, community enterprise, social enterprise and social accounting and auditing.

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