



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

SUMMER 2011

edit

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE INCLUDING BILLET & GENERAL COUNCIL PAPERS

"It all started in Edinburgh"

How Miles Jupp carved
out a career in comedy

ALSO INSIDE

Our office in India
opens its doors

To Timbuktu and back
in search of a cure





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Foreword

Edinburgh's staff, students and alumni are all part of our global community and in this edition we feature stories from all over the world. We profile the opening of our new liaison office in India (page 8) and follow readers on their adventures to far-flung places such as Antarctica (page 21) and even Timbuktu (page 14).

Also in this issue, we share a laugh with comedian Miles Jupp, who cut his teeth on the Edinburgh stand-up circuit while he was an undergraduate (page 12), and we put the life and legacy of physician Sir James Young Simpson under the microscope (page 18).

Plus, we showcase a selection of your arts-related events and achievements (page 28) and share some of your recollections about life, love and learning at Edinburgh (pages 24–25, 30–31).

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University News

Bird flu breakthrough

Chickens genetically modified to prevent them spreading bird flu have been produced at the universities of Edinburgh and Cambridge.

Scientists have successfully developed genetically modified (transgenic) chickens that do not transmit the avian influenza virus to other chickens.

This genetic modification has the potential to stop bird flu outbreaks spreading within poultry flocks. It would not only protect the health of domestic poultry but could also reduce the risk of bird flu epidemics leading to new flu virus epidemics in the human population, say the experts.

The team's study, published in the journal *Science*, yielded encouraging results, according to Professor Helen Sang from the Roslin Institute at the University of Edinburgh.

"Using genetic modification [GM] to introduce genetic changes that cannot be achieved by animal breeding demonstrates the potential of GM to improve animal welfare in the poultry



Scientists believe the research could improve economic and food security.

industry," Professor Sang explains. "This work could also form the basis for improving economic and food security in many regions of the world where bird flu is a significant problem."

Memory storage devices improved

Fast, low-energy memory for MP3 players, smartphones and cameras could become a reality thanks to University of Edinburgh research.

Scientists have created a device that improves on existing forms of memory storage by using a tiny mechanical arm to translate the data into electrical signals. Conventional methods use electronic devices and Edinburgh experts say the latest breakthrough could offer designers a way to create faster devices with reduced power consumption.

"Using a mechanical method combined with the benefits of nanotechnology enables a system with superior speed and energy efficiency compared with existing devices," says Professor Eleanor Campbell of the School of Chemistry.

Principal's Medal winner honoured

Paul Nisbet, a senior research fellow with the University's School of Education, has been awarded the Principal's Medal 2010.

The award recognises staff or students who, as individuals or groups, have made a significant contribution to support or benefit the wider community.

Mr Nisbet is Joint Coordinator of Communication Access Literacy and Learning (CALL) Scotland, which provides specialist technology expertise for children in Scotland with writing, speech and communication difficulties.

Because ye are worth it: bygone beauty tips

Teeth whitening and anti-wrinkle treatments were as sought after in Renaissance times as they are today, an Edinburgh historian claims.



Dr Jill Burke, an expert in art history at the University, says Renaissance women used make-up and a range of beauty secrets to improve their appearance.

A smooth face and hands, a hair-free body, white teeth, fresh breath and bright lips and cheeks have never gone out of

fashion, according to Dr Burke, who has found that women in the 15th to 17th centuries used a number of recipes collected by a Renaissance beauty expert named Caterina Sforza in her *Book of Experiments*.

Many of these were later published in *Books of Secrets*, a series of manuals with advice, passed across the generations, on general health, beauty and homemaking. Tips included how to disguise a bad complexion caused by diseases such as smallpox, how to use quicklime and arsenic to remove hair, and how to make hair dye from fresh walnut peelings.



It is hoped that the merger will build on the two institutions' strong international reputations.

ECA merger approved

Following Parliamentary approval, the University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh College of Art are to merge later this year.

As of 1 August 2011, Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) will combine with the University's School of Arts, Culture & Environment to form a new Edinburgh College of Art within the University, containing Art, Design, Music, History of Art, Architecture and Landscape Architecture.

Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, welcomes the news: "The vision is to create a vibrant, enlarged and sustainable art college

that combines the knowledge, skills and expertise of the two institutions, and builds on the strong international reputations that they both enjoy."

Retiring ECA Principal, Professor Ian Howard, echoes this sentiment: "I would like to thank all those who have worked so hard to bring this proposal to fruition. We are confident that, through merger, the College and the University will be at the heart of creativity, innovation, and cultural and intellectual life in Scotland and beyond."

For all the latest University news, visit
www.ed.ac.uk/news

NEWS IN BRIEF

Low-cost fuel on horizon

Low-cost, clean hydrogen fuel could soon be a reality, thanks to a discovery by University scientists. In collaboration with the Institut de Ciència de Materials de Barcelona, experts have uncovered key details about chemical catalysts that use light to break apart water molecules, splitting them into hydrogen – for use as fuel – and oxygen.

Top teachers in spotlight

The winners of the third EUSA Teaching Awards have been announced. Eleven awards were presented to outstanding members of University staff and postgraduate tutors. This year, a record 5,168 student nominations were received for 777 members of staff.

Award for genetics expert

Adrian Bird, the University's Buchanan Professor of Genetics, has received one of the world's most esteemed medical prizes. The scientist was selected for a Canada Gairdner International Award in recognition of his pioneering discoveries of DNA methylation and its role in gene expression.

Portfolio extension

Vice-Principal Professor Mary Bownes' portfolio of strategic responsibilities has been extended to include Development. This is in addition to her existing strategic responsibility for postgraduate affairs, widening participation, recruitment, admissions, scholarships, community relations and sustainability. She is Professor of Developmental Biology and Director of the Scottish Institute for Biotechnology Education.

CLIMATE CHANGE THREATENS ANCIENT SITES

Ancient remains that have been frozen for millennia are at risk due to climate change, University research suggests.

Scientists at the University's Business School have found that remains in some of the coldest places on Earth are being exposed as warmer temperatures cause ice and hardened ground to thaw. Structures at risk include ancient tombs, artefacts and

human remains in Alaska, North America's Rocky Mountains and central Asia's Altai Mountains, which contain the world's only frozen tombs.

"Warming climates are expected to lead to more melting ice, and we need to take action to safeguard ancient treasures," warns Dr David Reay, Director of the University's MSc in Carbon Management.

University News

Gene expert solves airport baby riddle

A University researcher has helped a man abandoned at birth to trace his genetic roots.

Dr Jim Wilson, a population geneticist at the Centre for Population Health Sciences, analysed Steve Hydes' DNA to identify where his parents may have come from.

Mr Hydes, now 25, was found as a 10-day-old baby wrapped in a blanket on the floor of a ladies toilet at Gatwick Airport. He was adopted and raised in England, and Dr Wilson provided the DNA analysis that helped him identify his family origins.

The tests showed that Mr Hydes shares big blocks of DNA with people whose four grandparents came from England and also one from Ireland, meaning they are his distant cousins. Dr Wilson also analysed Mr Hydes' Y-chromosome to track the male bloodline, and the results show that his father's family was likely to come from the east of Britain.

HOW CHICKENS KEEP COOL: STUDY

Edinburgh scientists have discovered how one of the poultry world's most curious specimens developed its distinctive look.

The Transylvanian Naked Neck Chicken – once dubbed a 'churkey' or a 'turken' – has developed its defining feature due to a genetic mutation.

Researchers at the Roslin Institute at the University of Edinburgh found that a vitamin A-derived substance, produced around the bird's neck, enhanced the effects of the genetic mutation which, in turn, produced a protein that suppresses feather growth.

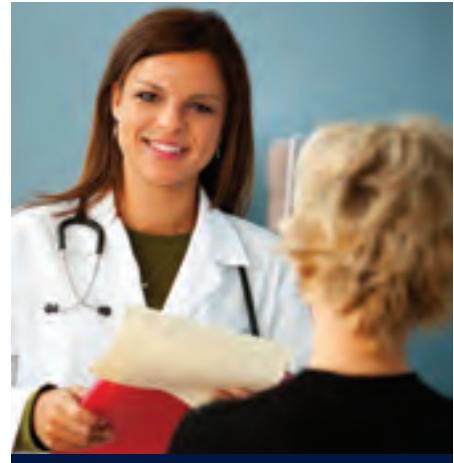
Blood test identifies more heart attacks

A highly sensitive blood test could help identify heart attacks in thousands of patients who would otherwise have gone undiagnosed.

A University study evaluating the test, which identifies heart muscle damage, found that it detected heart attacks in a third more patients who were admitted to hospital with chest pain than previous tests.

"The research also shows us that it is not just patients with major heart attacks where treatment can make a difference. Even patients with comparatively minor heart damage benefit from these treatments," explains Dr Nicholas Mills from the University's British Heart Foundation Centre for Cardiovascular Science.

After this test was introduced into clinical practice, the risk of readmission to hospital with – or dying from – another heart attack within the following year was halved. Patients were more likely to see a specialist and to receive better treatment following the introduction of the more sensitive test.



Even patients with comparatively minor heart damage will benefit from the test.

The study, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, saw researchers analyse data from more than 2,000 patients who had been admitted to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh with chest pain and suspected heart attack.

Scientists search for Earth-like planets

Astronomers from Edinburgh have joined the hunt to discover Earth-like planets.

They are part of an international team that will build an instrument designed to analyse potential planets identified by NASA's Kepler space probe.

The instrument, called HARPS-N, will be created through a project also involving Queen's University Belfast and the universities of St Andrews, Geneva and Harvard, and the Italian Institute of Astrophysics. It will be installed on the Telescopio Nazionale Galileo at the Roque de los Muchachos observatory in the Canary Islands.



"Kepler and HARPS-N offer the first hope to find planets like the Earth that are at distances from their sun that would allow water to exist as a liquid and, potentially, life, as we know it, to evolve," says Dr Ken Rice, of the University's Institute for Astronomy.

For all the latest University news, visit
www.ed.ac.uk/news



HRH The Princess Royal will be the University of Edinburgh's eighth Chancellor.

New Chancellor elected

HRH The Princess Royal has been elected as Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh.

She succeeds HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, who stepped down from the role in 2010, having held it since 1953.

The Princess Royal was elected as Chancellor with effect from 31 March, 2011.

The Princess Royal is also Patron of the University's Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. She will be the University's eighth Chancellor in the 150-year history of the position.

"I am delighted that the Princess Royal is to become our new Chancellor and I welcome her to this important role at the heart of University life," says the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea.

The election of the Chancellor is the responsibility of the General Council of the University. Dr Alan Brown, Convener of the General Council's Business Committee, says: "I am certain that the appointment of HRH The Princess Royal as Chancellor

of the University of Edinburgh will be welcomed enthusiastically by all General Council members, and it will be of immense benefit to the whole University community."



The University's Chancellors

1953–2010	HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh (pictured)
1946–1952	The Marquis of Linlithgow
1937–1946	Baron Tweedsmuir of Elsfield
1930–1937	Sir James Matthew Barrie, Bt
1891–1930	The Earl of Balfour
1868–1891	The Right Hon. John Inglis
1859–1868	Baron Brougham and Vaux

Ancient weather records help experts

Centuries-old weather records – including details gleaned from monks' diaries – have helped scientists verify how European climates have changed over the past 500 years.

Researchers compared data from historic sources, such as weather station archives and harvest records, and found that the records match closely to computer simulations of climate patterns over the past 500 years, which were created using contemporary data.

The simulated data took account of minor influences on the weather, such as volcanic activity, variations in the sun's temperature and, more recently, an increase in greenhouse gases.

Orcadians shed light on sun benefits

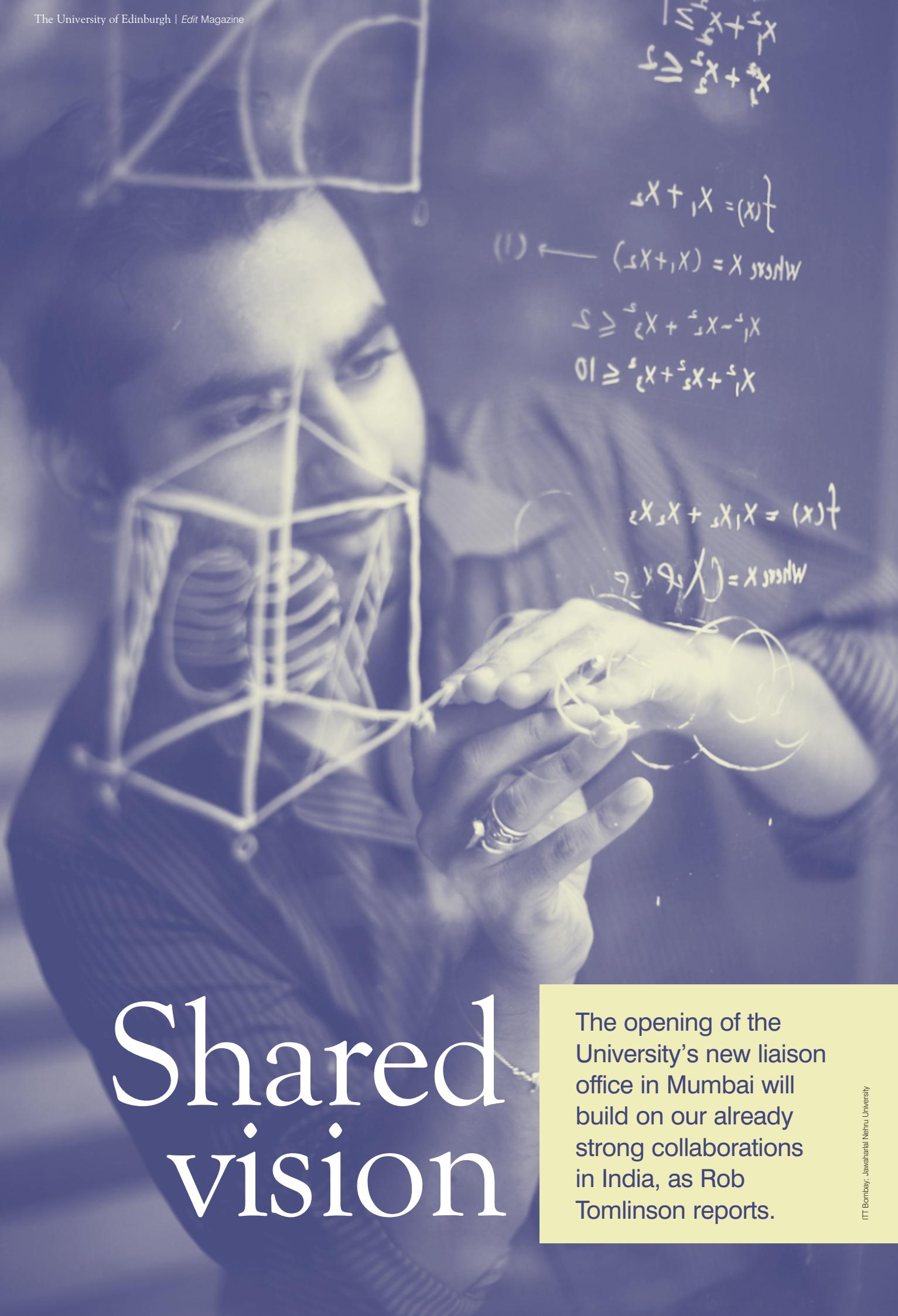
The people of Orkney are taking part in a study to help determine how a lack of sunlight might impact on a range of serious health conditions.

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh will test whether levels of vitamin D – which is made by the body when it is exposed to sunlight – have an effect on the development of conditions such as diabetes, multiple sclerosis and heart disease.

The study could also determine whether people with these conditions have lower levels of the vitamin.

Orkney has the highest rate of multiple sclerosis in the world and researchers believe that lack of vitamin D may be an important factor.

More than 2,000 people will be involved in the study, which will also take account of participants' diet, intake of vitamin supplements and time spent outdoors.



Shared vision

The opening of the University's new liaison office in Mumbai will build on our already strong collaborations in India, as Rob Tomlinson reports.



Opposite page: an academic at work at the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. A University of Edinburgh delegation visited the campus during a week of events to mark the opening of the new Mumbai-based liaison office.

Clockwise from above left: the University has had ties with India for more than 200 years; a student walks to class at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU); Edinburgh has signed a memorandum of understanding with JNU; a student enjoys a quiet spot in which to study.

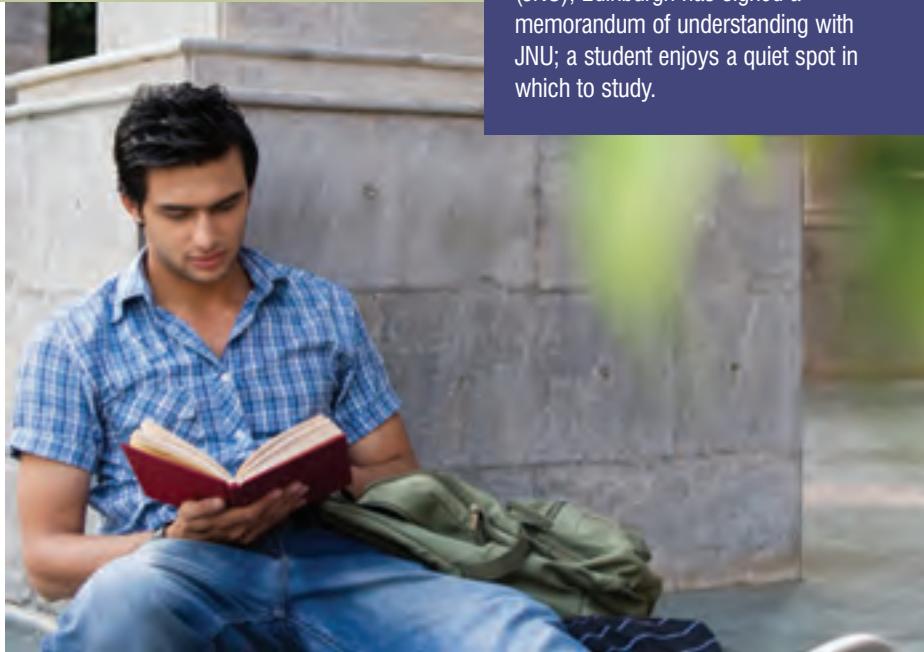
Edinburgh in the 1790s – a century was drawing to a close and the people of the Scottish capital could reflect on nearly 100 years of astonishing intellectual achievement during which their small city had placed itself at the very centre of the civilised world.

The Scottish Enlightenment had helped to transform the way we view the world, and key scholars such as David Hume and Adam Ferguson, whose close links with the University of Edinburgh helped to place it at the forefront of this revolutionary period. Also among their number was William Robertson, a highly respected minister and historian, and the University's Principal from 1762 to 1793, of whom it was said: "The 30 years during which he presided over the University perhaps represent the highest point in its history."

But as a new century beckoned, and indeed as Robertson neared the end of his life, it wasn't to Edinburgh or the other great cities of Europe that he looked to in his efforts to make sense of how the modern world was shaped; it was to the East and, more specifically, to India.

The year 1791 marked the publication of Robertson's seminal text on India, *An Historical Disquisition Concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients Had of India*. This work was among the earliest European publications to take note of Indian commerce and culture and to acknowledge the strides that the region had made in moulding the world's future.

Fast forward exactly 220 years and those early University connections with India and that acknowledgment of its role as a global influencer have been made flesh – in the form of a new University of Edinburgh office in Mumbai. The liaison office was officially opened in February



“We have partnerships with the University of Delhi, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and the National Centre for Biological Sciences. We now want to build upon those strong foundations. **”**

when a delegation of staff from the University, led by the Principal, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, visited India for a series of public lectures and meetings with a variety of partnership institutions.

The launch of the office was the latest milestone in the University's links with the sub-continent, started by Robertson in 1791, and continuing through to 1875 when Indian students at Edinburgh set up the Indian Association – the UK's first

South Asian association. A year later the University honoured its first Indian graduate and by the 1920s the Indian student population was greater than at any other UK university.

Today, as universities operate in an increasingly competitive global market, Edinburgh's collaborations with India are more important than ever, as Professor O'Shea acknowledges: "As one of the world's leading universities, we have a ▶

responsibility to lead progress in finding solutions for serious world problems – such as climate change, improving global health and economic development. Our partnerships with India will help us to jointly pursue solutions to these problems and further education across the world."

He continues: "We have partnerships with the University of Delhi, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and the National Centre for Biological Sciences. We now want to build upon those strong foundations and create even more beneficial relationships with Indian colleagues."

“Three public lectures by our eminent academics did much to raise our academic profile.”

To celebrate the launch of the new office, a series of public lectures by University academics was held in Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore, and the University signed a memorandum of understanding with Jawaharlal Nehru University on future cooperation in areas including social sciences, life sciences and arts and aesthetics. Fifteen new scholarships have also been announced for students from India and a new Masters programme on South Asia and International Development has been created.

Head of the India Liaison Office, Amrita Sadarangani, is the 'face' of the University in India, and will provide support for the development of the University's India strategy, facilitate and further Edinburgh's links in India and extend both recruitment and alumni activity in the region.

"The recent visit of the University delegation was extremely successful,"



Students at work in the library at the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. **Below:** Nearly 300 students from India are currently undertaking study at the University of Edinburgh.

Ms Sadarangani says. "Three well attended public lectures by our eminent academics did much to raise our academic profile in India and we co-hosted receptions in Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore, where we were very pleased to welcome our Indian alumni."

One of the big success stories of the trip was the extent to which it helped to bring attention to the University's presence in

the region, with the Indian media covering the office launch in leading publications such as *The Times of India* and *India Today*.

The University intends to prove that commitment by gradually building on the work of the new office and through a series of follow-up visits by world-class academics to demonstrate that, in India, Edinburgh means business.



INDIA'S INNOVATORS, PAST AND PRESENT

The University of Edinburgh boasts a wide range of diverse and distinguished Indian alumni who have become influential leaders in their fields. Here is a selection:

Dr Aghornath Chattopadhyaya was widely respected in the field of education and graduated as a Doctor of Science in 1877. A linguist, crusader and original thinker, he established Nizam College in Hyderabad in 1878, pioneering English and women's education.

Dr Taravath Madhavan Nair, politician and co-founder of the Justice Party in India, studied medicine, graduating in 1896. A President of the Edinburgh Indian Association, he had links with the Indian National Congress right from the time of his return to India in 1897. He went on to launch the South Indian Liberal Federation, also known as the Justice Party, in 1917. In 2008, the Government of India released a postage stamp in his honour.



Dr Achyut Thatte (Electrical Engineering PhD, 1954) worked for the Indian Government's Department of Atomic Energy for 30 years. He was Head of Electronics at Mumbai's SNDT University and contributed widely to the popular science media through lectures, radio/TV broadcasts, books and articles.

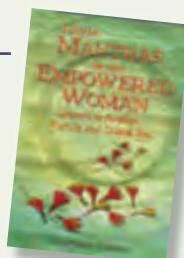
Dr Armeane Choksi graduated in 1967 with a BSc and became the founder and president of the US-India Institute, a Washington DC-based think tank. He is Managing Partner and Chairman of Hudson Fairfax Group, a Washington DC investment firm exclusively focused on India – and a former president and founding partner of Rubicon Capital Investments LLC.



Professor Raj Bhopal CBE graduated with a BSc in 1975 and MBChB in 1978. He is currently Professor of Public Health and an Honorary Consultant in Public Health Medicine at the University. A former Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health at Newcastle University, he is also Chair of the World Congress of Epidemiology 2011.

Vinod Bahuguna graduated with an MSc in 1989 and is now Inspector General of Forests in the Indian Government's Ministry of Environment and Forests. He was awarded the 2000 Queen's Award for Outstanding Forester of the Commonwealth.

Dr Abha Sharma Rodrigues received her PhD in 1995. A restaurateur, writer and business adviser, she is a former lecturer at the University of Rajasthan. With her husband she has created two award-winning restaurants in Edinburgh and she is the author of *Fifteen Mantras for the Empowered Woman*.



THE NEXT GENERATION



Currently, nearly 300 Indian scholars are undertaking study at Edinburgh. Among this new generation of achievers is Architectural Design undergraduate **Nirupa Puliyel**, 22, who is set to graduate in summer.

"Edinburgh is a beautiful city; it absorbs you into its arms, regardless of your race, age, nationality, or even duration of stay. It's inspiring to study architecture in these surroundings."

"I went to an international school in Delhi and we had a lot of university visits and a college counsellor, so I'd heard that Edinburgh had a really good reputation in the subject. I always had an interest in architecture and I liked the structure of the course. Academically, I've enjoyed learning from prominent architects and theorists, and the work has been challenging but interesting."

"I really liked the city when I arrived; I still feel the same now. There are lots of international students and I like the exposure to people from other countries. I'm planning to continue at the University to do my Masters in architecture."

THE INTERVIEW

Stand and deliver

Best known for his TV roles in *Rev* and *Balamory*, actor and comedian Miles Jupp carved out a career in comedy while he was an Edinburgh undergraduate. Here, he shares a laugh with Cate MacKenzie.



Cate MacKenzie: Having come to Edinburgh from England, what was your first impression of the city?

Miles Jupp: I remember coming to an open day at the University, coming out of Waverley Station on a wet day, and it was fantastic. When you come out of Waverley it's sort of like being blown out of the other end of a volcano, you just pop out right in the middle of the city, and it feels amazing.

CM: Where did you live as an undergraduate?

MJ: In a flat in South Clerk Street, near Blockbuster. The fire alarm would go off three or four times a week – we'd come back from the Southern Bar, someone would put the toast on, the toast would stick and then catch fire and then we'd all be standing outside the front of the building in our dressing gowns with a whole lot of people and dour police hurling abuse.

CM: What did you get out of your student experience?

MJ: I loved being at New College; I was a great fan of everything in my first year and the people I met made a tremendous difference. Divinity was a small, quite close-knit group, so you mixed with people of a wide variety of ages and backgrounds – people turning up after school not knowing what else to do, people who work in the corporate banking sector and then some who just think, 'Argh, what am I doing here?'. A lot of my closest friends are people I met in Divinity – three of the four ushers at my wedding were from my course.

CM: Did any academics inspire you?

MJ: It was a very encouraging environment. When I was in my third year I was offered a part in a children's programme and I went to my Director of Studies, Dr Nick Adams, saying, 'Listen, I might get this thing – what do you think?' And he went, 'Yeah, that sounds great!' He was a great influence on me, as was Professor David Fergusson. I always enjoyed his lectures and I found

I loved being at New College; I was a great fan of everything in my first year and the people I met made a tremendous difference.

him very funny; he said a lot of things that would really, really make me laugh.

CM: How did you get into comedy?

MJ: I did an Improverts workshop at the Bedlam [Theatre] and I did some freshers' plays, which were great fun. I started doing stand-up and by second year I was gigging pretty regularly at the Stand and also through in Glasgow. It all started for me at the Stand.

CM: You don't resort to dirty or cruel humour like some comedians... Is there a formula to telling jokes?

MJ: To be honest I have a slightly undeserved reputation for being completely clean and polite! Sometimes the best jokes just happen; when you're on a roll and you're being chatty, say, on *News Quiz*, or when you're knocking ideas around between a few of you – I think I laugh more at dinner parties than I do when I'm actually watching comedy! It's not a science but you just have to think about what's funny and just go with it and write a joke about it.

CM: You're on tour now... what's the premise of your current show, *Fibber in the Heat (A Cricket Tale)*?

MJ: In 2006 I decided that I was following the wrong career path and that I wanted to become a cricket journalist. I basically thought that if I could get on an England tour and wrangle my way into the press box, then people would start giving me things to do. So I went off to India with some headed notepaper saying I was the BBC Scotland cricket correspondent. And almost nothing went to plan! My show tells this story. I'm writing a book about it as well, which comes out in 2012.

CM: Sounds like you're very busy...

MJ: I'm touring til late May and then until the start of August I'm shooting and rehearsing *Rev* [Miles plays lay reader Nigel in this BBC TV sitcom]. I've written a sitcom that I'm recording for BBC Radio 4; I play a cookery writer.

CM: Radio, TV, stand-up comedy, writing... Do you prefer one of these pursuits over the other?

MJ: I suppose in your twenties you're trying to keep as many balls in the air as you can and then you start to see what is starting to land. The thing I most like doing is acting. There is a sort of pressure on set that I quite enjoy... That moment when it all goes quiet and suddenly everything really matters; knowing there's a minute coming up when the camera is just on your face or the person opposite's face. There's a real excitement to it and I suppose it's in tune with the way my solo shows are starting to go; they're about telling stories and I like being part of the story.

CM: What do you do with your time when you're not telling stories?

MJ: My University of Edinburgh graduate wife (did you like how I slipped that in there?!) and I take great pleasure in existing as a family [Miles and his wife Rachel, an English Literature/Creative Writing graduate, have a two-year-old son]. It's great to think that time you spend playing is no longer time that you're wasting. So, if after breakfast before I sit down to write I spend 45 minutes building towers out of wood, then so be it. I'm not doing it on my own; I'm doing it for someone else's benefit, and there's a lot of joy to be had in that.

Daring to Dream



From Mount Kilimanjaro to the Sahara desert, one family has gone to great lengths to raise funds for a world-leading research centre.
By Anna Borthwick

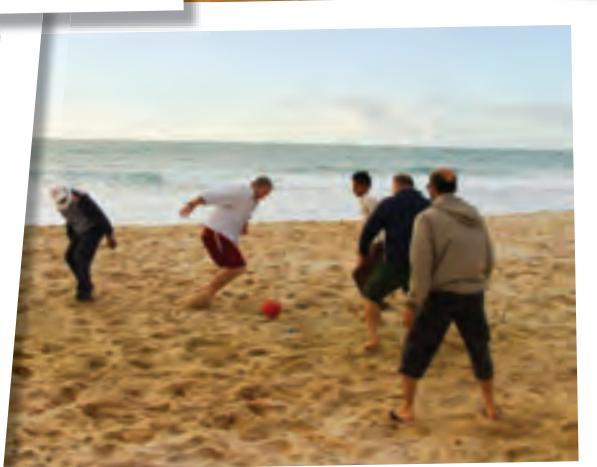
Some people just don't know when to quit. Insatiable in their quest for achievement, they strive beyond the limits at which most of us would call it a day.

Take Gus Alusi, for example. With two children under the age of five and a pressured working life as a consultant surgeon he, together with his wife Reem, persuaded a group of friends to climb Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro. The objective? To raise money for research into Fragile X syndrome, a genetic condition that affects their son, Kenzo.

The condition is the most common genetic cause of autism, and it results in anxiety, learning difficulties and language impairment. Despite affecting as many people as cystic fibrosis, Fragile X syndrome is not as well known or as widely researched.

When Kenzo was diagnosed with Fragile X syndrome at the age of two, the medical support he required was so limited in the UK that the London-based family had to travel to the US for specialist care. Believing that the care provision in this country could be improved, the Alusis decided they wanted to help.

So in 2008, they found themselves together with friends on the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro – no mean feat by anyone's standards – and returned with thousands of pounds in raised funds. They donated the money to the University of Edinburgh to help establish a new research centre, the Patrick Wild Centre for Research into Autism, Fragile X Syndrome and Intellectual Disabilities. Led by Professor Peter Kind and Dr Andrew Stanfield, the Centre will investigate the



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: "We've made it!" The fundraising group celebrates reaching the summit of Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro; the locals whom Mr Alusi and his crew encountered along the Sahara route were the "the most welcoming and friendly" he had ever met; the team deals with another desert breakdown; the final destination is in sight; all the vehicles for the trek were sourced for less than £1,000 each and the remaining intact vehicles were donated to a desert hospital; time out with a spot of beach football; Mr Alusi gets to know the villagers.

neurological causes for these conditions and run clinical trials of medicines to treat their symptoms.

Many people would have stopped at the realisation of that dream. But despite the recent arrival of their third baby, the Alusis decided to take their fundraising efforts a step further. "We wanted to do something even harder than Kilimanjaro," says Mr Alusi, "and landed on the idea of getting ourselves from London to the remotest town on Earth, Timbuktu, in cars that cost less than £1,000 each."

This time, the challenges went beyond the purely physical. Having

sought Foreign Office advice on the most practical way to drive across the Sahara desert, which is unsafe in parts due to unexploded landmines and terrorist threats, Mr Alusi meticulously planned their route and organised for armed escorts to accompany them through the most dangerous regions. On a cold, dark January night this year, the jeep convoy set off from London.

Over three weeks, the 20-strong team drove through Europe and across the north west of Africa, facing daily temperatures as high as 42°C (108°F)

and numerous patience-testing mechanical breakdowns.

"There was one four-hour stretch through a live minefield and that was obviously a bit tense," recalls Mr Alusi. "But aside from that I can genuinely say that we didn't fear for our safety. The people we met were the most welcoming and friendly I've ever known. Every time one of our vehicles broke down, we would be surrounded by a crowd of 100 people trying to help, shining their torches under the car to see what might have gone wrong. They always went out of their way for us." ▶



The people we met were the most welcoming and friendly I've ever known... They always went out of their way for us.



“

It’s wonderful to be able to involve the patient community in that way, to ask them for their views on what they feel our research priorities should be.

With good humour, and regular stops for desert golf and Frisbee games with local children, the convoy arrived safely at their destination, with two vehicles in decent enough condition to donate to the local community.

“We had carried with us as many clothes, books, mosquito nets and medical supplies as we could fit in the cars and distributed them along the way,” recalls Mr Alusi. “The most moving element of the whole trip came when we arrived in Timbuktu and found a makeshift hospital that receives pregnant women who live in the Sahara. The women travel on camelback and many of them die in labour on the journey. We gave the hospital our two remaining cars so that they could provide an ambulance service for the first time, and we also gave the midwives who work there our medical supplies. Afterwards the head

of the tribe came to thank us and gave us gifts of salt and clothes in return. I just wish we could have done more.”

BETTER UNDERSTANDING

Back in the UK, the funds raised by the Alusis and other benefactors are already helping to transform our understanding and treatment of Fragile X syndrome and related disorders. The Alusis pledged a six-figure sum towards the Centre and their Timbuktu and Mount Kilimanjaro adventures raised an additional £70,000.

Centre Co-Director (Research), Professor Peter Kind, says significant research advances over the past decade have made the Centre’s creation possible. “Because of recent advances in human genetics and our knowledge of how the brain develops, there’s growing optimism that it will be possible to make a real difference treating these

neurodevelopmental disorders in the relatively near future,” he explains.

His Co-Director, consultant psychiatrist Dr Andrew Stanfield, says the research team not only studies the genes and brain processes that lead to conditions such as Fragile X syndrome and autism, but they also engage with the people affected by these conditions, and their families, to better understand their difficulties.

“We hope that by plugging into the international research community and by drawing on the leading neurology expertise we have in Edinburgh, we’ll be able to deliver something of real value to the people who need it most,” he explains. “We’ve had people visiting from across the UK to find out more about our research programme. It’s wonderful to be able to involve the patient community in that way, to ask



ABOVE: Gus Alusi and Reem Waines, pictured with their son Kenzo, were motivated to fundraise for the University after Kenzo was diagnosed with Fragile X syndrome at the age of two.

them for their views on what they feel our research priorities should be."

One member of that patient community is Lesley Jones, Edinburgh mother of six-year-old Evan, who has Fragile X syndrome. When Evan was diagnosed with the condition, Mrs Jones spent "days researching on the internet" before concluding that there was little scientific research in the UK that could help her son.

The Centre's opening had a profoundly positive effect on her family, as she explains: "We can see for ourselves the research being carried out, then meet the scientists. This has exceeded our hopes and we're proud that it's happening in Scotland and that families can feel a part of it."

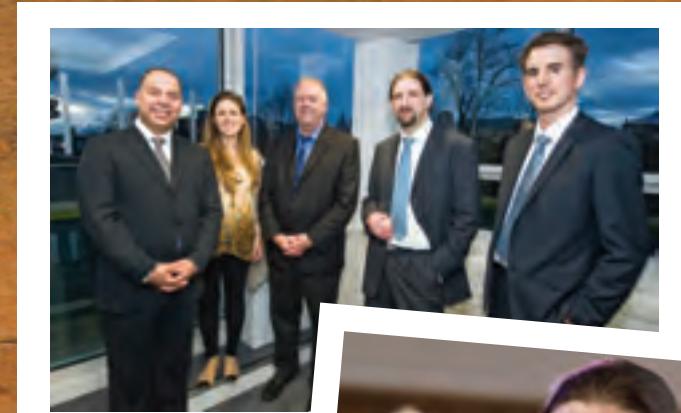
Watch a video about the Patrick Wild Centre at <http://goo.gl/hSA5f>.

Making a difference

The Patrick Wild Centre for Research into Autism, Fragile X Syndrome and Intellectual Disabilities was established with the support of Edinburgh alumnus Dr Alfred Wild, whose brother Patrick was affected by autism. Patrick lived with severe autism during the early part of the 20th century, when there was no treatment and little understanding of a disorder that profoundly affected him and his family.

In explaining his support to the University, Dr Wild says: "My legacy is dedicated to my parents for the sacrifices they made in looking after my severely autistic brother, Patrick. They would have been pleased and proud to have his name linked with an enterprise which showed such optimism and hope for the future understanding and possible prevention of autism."

"There's growing optimism that it will be possible to make a real difference treating these disorders in the relatively near future."



Celebrating the opening, from left: Gus Alusi, Reem Waines, Professor Sir John Savill, Head of the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine, Professor Peter Kind (also below) and Dr Andrew Stanfield.



Fragile X syndrome explained

Fragile X syndrome is the most common inherited form of intellectual disability, and the most common known genetic cause of autism spectrum disorders. Affecting an estimated 12,000 to 15,000 people in the UK, it is the result of a genetic mutation and takes its name from the 'fragile' appearance of the X chromosome on which this gene appears. The disorder can cause severe learning difficulties and language impairment and behavioural symptoms such as anxiety, attentional difficulties and hyperactivity.



HIDDEN HISTORIES

SIR JAMES YOUNG SIMPSON (1811–1870)

A sympathetic physician with a daring approach to experimentation, this pioneering medic was years ahead of his time.

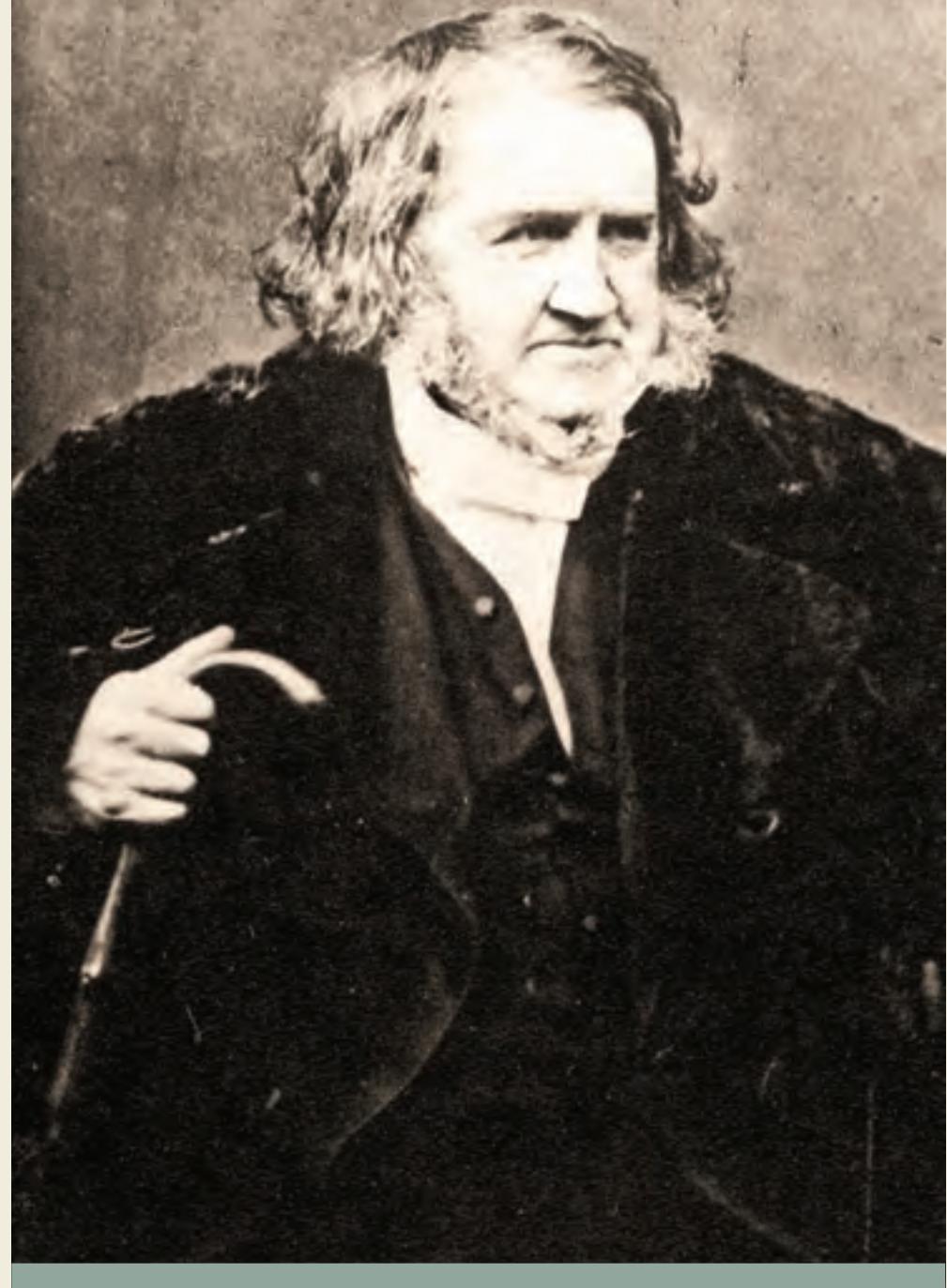
By Tara Womersley

When James Young Simpson first administered chloroform to provide pain relief to women in

labour, the Church was outraged. Surely, opponents of this treatment argued, as stated in the Bible, “in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.”

Undeterred, the physician argued that, according to Hebrew texts, sorrow meant ‘toil’ or ‘labour’ not pain, and his perseverance was awarded with the Royal seal of approval in 1853 when chloroform was administered to Queen Victoria while she was in labour with her ninth child, Prince Leopold.

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Simpson, who was known for his pioneering approach to medicine and in particular his discovery of chloroform’s anaesthetic properties. His medical milestones include being the first



medic to experiment with vacuum extractors to aid deliveries and his development of the uterine sound, which measures the uterus and is still used in hospitals worldwide. Modern hospital forceps are also based on his original design.

Andrew Calder, Emeritus Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Edinburgh, believes Simpson was “years ahead of his time”. “There is no doubt that he put obstetrics and gynaecology on the map, whereas before it was seen very much as a tradesman-type craft,” Professor Calder explains. “Although chloroform didn’t remain in use as pain relief for labour, it was certainly used well up until the

mid-1960s in surgery. Simpson also recognised that it was changes within the uterus that drive the onset of labour, which was also only really acknowledged in the last 30 years.”

Born to a family of bakers in Bathgate on 7 June, 1811, Simpson entered the University of Edinburgh, aged 14, starting off with studies in Greek, Latin and mathematics before enrolling as a medical student in his second year. He was to become the University’s Deputy Professor of Pathology before being appointed its sixth Chair of Midwifery in 1840, aged 29. Established in 1726, the Chair is the oldest of its kind in the world.

The appointment came after an arduous campaign, in which Simpson

The effects of this substance were startling: Simpson awoke on the floor to find one assistant unconscious beneath a chair and another on his back, kicking the legs of the supper table.



was disadvantaged by his youth and unmarried status. Ever determined, in the middle of canvassing for votes, Simpson slipped away on Boxing Day 1839 and married Miss Jessie Grindlay. His campaign was strengthened further when his main opponent, Dubliner Evory Kennedy, was discredited in a pamphlet for having what was perceived as the indecency to place a stethoscope on a woman's naked belly.

Simpson stated later in life how the seeds of his lifelong commitment to finding pain relief for patients were sown while he was an Edinburgh student. Recalling his horror at the expression on a female patient's face as a knife was about to be inserted into her breast during a surgical lecture, he had asked himself, "Can nothing be done to make operations less painful?"

His famous experiment with chloroform took place on an 1847 November evening in his dining room. The effects of this substance were startling: Simpson awoke on the floor to find one assistant unconscious beneath a chair and another on his back, kicking the legs of the supper table.

This incident was to have a world-changing effect on medicine, however his other experiments could easily have ended in disaster. On one occasion, Edinburgh's Professor of Chemistry, Lord Playfair, urged Simpson to test a liquid intended for self administration first on two rabbits. Simpson heeded this advice; both rabbits died.

In addition to his interest in pain relief, Simpson was also a staunch supporter of women's rights to study medicine, and

he backed Sophia Jex-Blake's campaign fighting for women to gain a medical education. "Simpson didn't live to see the University allow female medical students to graduate [Edinburgh's first female doctors graduated in 1896] but he was a great champion of women's rights in a time of great male chauvinism," explains Professor Calder. "He certainly wasn't shy about taking on the establishment."

Simpson could have easily faded into obscurity. When he finished his studies at Edinburgh he was still a teenager and too young to complete his MD, so he applied for a post as a GP in the Inverclyde village of Inverkip. He recounted in later life that had he been selected, he would "have been working as a village GP still." A post was also found for him as a ship's doctor, but by

the time the position became available Simpson's career in Edinburgh was already well established.

Simpson was knighted in 1866 for services to medicine. He was buried in Edinburgh's Warriston Cemetery and nearly 2,000 colleagues and public figures joined his funeral procession, with 30,000 well-wishers lining the route.

The University is involved in a number of 2011 events to celebrate the bicentenary of Sir James Young Simpson's birth. Events include an oration by Professor Sir Ian Wilmut, Director of the University's MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine, on 2 June, and a service at St Giles Cathedral on 5 June. To book and for more information, visit www.simpson2011.com.

* Tara Womersley is the co-author of *Body snatchers to Lifesavers: Three Centuries of Medicine in Edinburgh*.

A FIRM FOUNDATION

Obstetrics and gynaecology have come a long way since the 1800s – not least due to the foundations laid by Sir James Young Simpson. At the University of Edinburgh, current research ranges from studying obesity and reducing its impact during pregnancy to the prevention of potentially fatal pre-eclampsia, which causes high blood pressure in pregnant women. A statue commemorating Simpson's contribution to clinical medicine stands in Edinburgh's Princes Street Gardens, but perhaps an even more fitting testament to his legacy is the fact that each year, some 6,000 babies are born at the city's maternity unit, which is named after the famous obstetrician and affectionately referred to as simply the "Simpson".



Alumni Profiles

Kelly Fry Environmental Sustainability MSc, 2009



Kelly Fry is a Perth-based Cycling Officer for UK charity Sustrans, which encourages environmentally friendly travel choices. Already passionate about the environment, she furthered her studies with an MSc at Edinburgh and landed her dream job.

"I chose my degree because of its focus on the environment and the fact that it's about making real changes. I did my undergraduate degree (a double major in Biology) in Barbados in the Caribbean, and I'd done some conservation work, but I felt that I wasn't having the kind of impact that I wanted to on the environment. Yes, I was helping to save one species of turtle but I felt the course at Edinburgh had more of a focus on dealing with the problems that are facing the world. The fact that there was a dissertation period also gave me the chance to put what I'd learnt into practice.

"When I started at Edinburgh I'd been living in Scotland for about a year. I

thought the University was excellent – very developed yet with lots of history; it was a great experience to study there. I wasn't in any clubs but I attended social events – I spent most of my time in the library! I was very focussed on getting the best grades possible as having already done an undergraduate degree you come to a postgrad with fresh eyes, and as I funded myself I was determined to do well.

"Some of the field trips I went on were fantastic. We had lots of visits to various places in Scotland, restoring the environment. We also did a lot of presentations, which helps me a lot in my job now. The degree really boosted my employment opportunities – I got quite a lot of interviews. I graduated in August and I was employed by the end of October.

"My job is exactly what I want to be doing. Sustrans is all about getting people to use sustainable transport – walking, cycling, using the bus and train. It has lots of

projects; the most recognised nationally would be the National Cycle Network.

"My title is Cycling Officer in Perth, and I work with transition-aged pupils (9 to 15 year olds), with a focus on girls, to raise awareness, develop skills and encourage more cycling to school. I don't deliver their cycle training, but the work I do develops the training they have received and builds on it. My role includes things like taking

"MY JOB IS EXACTLY WHAT I WANT TO BE DOING. SUSTRANS IS ALL ABOUT GETTING PEOPLE TO USE MORE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT – WALKING, CYCLING, USING THE BUS AND TRAIN."

pupils on local bike rides to teach them safe routes; running bike maintenance lessons and bike skills courses; delivering a range of classroom lessons on safety, mapping routes and the history of the bike; and delivering events such as Bike Breakfasts and Hi-Viz Days, where pupils dress in bright clothes and cycle or walk to school.

"I work with a brilliant group of children – so many different characters – and the teachers are fantastic. Feeling like you're making a real difference in people's lives is great – we now have entire families who have started cycling to school just because, say, we've installed a cycling shelter. Seeing those changes happen right in front of you and seeing the cycling culture within the school grow is exciting.

"I do a lot of cycling in my personal time, some mountain biking and a lot of road cycling. I tried to take up running as well as my whole world has become about bicycles!"

We are happy to forward correspondence to graduates for whom we hold current address details. Email us at alumni@ed.ac.uk.

Gavin Booth

Geography & Economics MA (Hons), 1997

Chartered surveyor Gavin Booth met fellow alumnus and outdoor enthusiast Adam Wilton at the University's Boxing Club. They have embarked on many an extreme adventure together, the most recent of which saw them trek 700 miles across Antarctica to the South Pole. They broke the record for the fastest unsupported British team to finish the distance and their fundraising efforts for the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust earned them both MBEs.

"I chose Edinburgh because of its reputation and because it was somewhere away from my hometown, Aberdeen – it was all part of growing up. I hadn't spent much time in Edinburgh before but I liked the feel of the University and the city."

"I stayed at Pollock Halls in first year. What an amazing place to stay – Arthur's Seat is right there and you're so near to George Square and Drummond Street, surrounded by all those historic buildings. There was a lively student community and I liked the extracurricular side of university life. I was in the Hare & Hounds Running Club and the Athletics Club, and at various points was Secretary of each. I also joined the Boxing Club, where I met Adam."

"I chose quite a general degree in geography but had the opportunity to make that joint honours with economics. The good thing about the Scottish degree being four years is that it's quite broad. I work in real estate and the two subjects fit naturally together."

"Many people who study geography have a passion for the outdoors and when I moved to London in 2001, I renewed old friendships and met up with Adam. In 2004 we did a race in the Sahara, the



"THE FIRST 10 DAYS WERE VERY DIFFICULT – THE SUN DIDN'T COME OUT, IT WAS VERY, VERY COLD WITH LOW VISIBILITY AND THE SLED WAS AT ITS HEAVIEST, WEIGHING 130 KILOGRAMS."

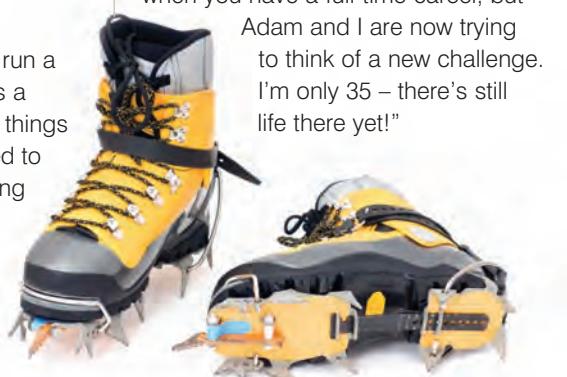
Marathon des Sables, where you run a marathon a day for a week. It was a massive challenge, and after that things sort of snowballed and we decided to set a goal to do something amazing and impossible. The expedition

to the South Pole took about four or five years of preparation. We competed in a lot of adventurous ultra races, whether it was 100 miles non-stop through the Alps, the jungle or in Arctic Canada, testing ourselves physically and mentally. We also began mountaineering and completed expeditions in the Alps, North Norway and North Greenland, building skills and the confidence necessary for polar expedition.

"The South Pole expedition was tough and the first 10 days were very difficult – the sun didn't come out, it was very, very cold with low visibility and the sled was at its heaviest, weighing about 130 kilograms. You'd wake up every morning with the wind battering the tent, it's -50°C outside [-122°F] and you know you have to take down the tent and haul the sled for 10 hours. It was very much a mental thing but the determination was there. In such extreme conditions you have to look out for each other as you're drained physically and emotionally, and you have to be able to rely on each other. Our friendship was strengthened because of it."

"In January it was 100 years since Captain Scott arrived in Antarctica, and the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust campaign to save his Terra Nova Hut reached its target in the same month by raising £3.5 million. It's not just a shack; there are more than 10,000 artefacts there and it's like a time capsule."

"These sorts of expeditions take a lot of time and effort to organise, especially when you have a full-time career, but Adam and I are now trying to think of a new challenge. I'm only 35 – there's still life there yet!"



Alumni Network

Have you ever wondered what your former classmates are up to? Here's a snapshot of who's doing what, where and why... Visit www.ed.ac.uk/alumni to keep up with the latest alumni news and stay informed about events happening in your area.



The Polish School of Medicine was founded in 1941 and stopped teaching in 1949.

Celebrating 70 years

The 70th anniversary of the founding of the University's Polish School of Medicine is being marked with a unique exhibition at the Main Library. The exhibition's official opening was attended by University Principal Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, the Polish Consul and several Polish Medical School attendees, many of whom are in their eighties and nineties. The School was established in 1941 to allow Polish soldiers and refugees to continue their studies during World War II. It stopped teaching in 1949.

UK graduates link up

Recent graduates were invited to join alumni from other UK universities at a British Council event at the British Embassy Residence in Paris. The evening began with an introduction from the Director of the British Council in France, Chris Hickey, who spoke about ways of staying connected to the UK.

Events round-up

RESEARCH

Spotlight on stem cells

The London Alumni Network hosted a recent panel discussion on stem cell research. Speakers at the event included Professor Siddharthan Chandran from the Euan MacDonald Centre for Motor Neurone Disease Research and Professor Peter Kind from the Patrick Wild Centre for Research into Autism, Fragile X Syndrome and Intellectual Disabilities. The panel discussed the University's research into the repair of the human brain and treatment of disorders such as autism, stroke, dementia, multiple sclerosis and motor neurone disease.



The University's pioneering approach to stem cell research was on the agenda in London.

RECRUITMENT

Greek events a success

Alumni in Athens and Thessaloniki in Greece recently assisted University representatives at the British Council's Higher Education Recruitment Fairs. The fairs gave prospective students the chance to hear from alumni about student life in Edinburgh. An alumni reception was held in the St George Lycabettus Hotel in Athens. For more information about joining the Edinburgh University Alumni Club of Greece, contact diatrides@yahoo.com.

CAREERS

Making connections

The School of Informatics hosted a recent careers day, bringing students and alumni together to exchange ideas and discuss job-seeking techniques. The event marked the launch of the School's Career Mentoring Scheme which, it is hoped, will be rolled out across the University in the near future. The day was based around a series of presentations and speakers included Doug Morrison, founder of MardiNet.org, and University Careers Service staff.

Let's get together

Whether you're thinking of an informal gathering or a full weekend of activities, we can advise you on how to organise a reunion. For more information or to find out about reunions in your area, visit www.ed.ac.uk/alumni or contact Development & Alumni's Anna Moslow on +44 (0)131 650 2240 or at anna.moslow@ed.ac.uk.

We are happy to forward correspondence to graduates for whom we hold current address details. Email us at alumni@ed.ac.uk.

Rising star

Mairead Kelly

MEng Engineering, 2008

Crowned Young Engineer of the Year at the 2010 British Engineering Excellence Awards, recent graduate Mairead Kelly is contributing to innovative audio technology design with Dialog Semiconductor's Edinburgh team.

"At school, I really enjoyed maths and physics, as well as art and design, so I was looking for a career that could be technical but also creative – engineering seemed to offer a good mix."

"I knew that Edinburgh's School of Engineering had strong links with business, so I chose the five-year MEng programme, which included a nine-month industrial placement. My placement gave me some experience working alongside analogue design engineers, which helped me to realise it was an area I wanted to work in."



"When I discovered Dialog Semiconductor was opening an Edinburgh office, I applied for a position and started shortly after graduating. We are designing audio ICs [integrated circuits] for mobile applications and there are many exciting projects on the horizon; the work is quite varied. It's the perfect environment in which I can develop my skills, strengthen my knowledge and increase my contribution to the design team."

Club focus

France

The Association of University of Edinburgh Alumni in France was officially established in 2001 and is open to all alumni living in France.

Following a busy 2010 events schedule, which included an enjoyable pub evening in Carr's Bar in Paris, the programme for 2011 is shaping up to be equally varied. In April the Association held its annual golf day at Le Coudray-Montceaux, just south of Paris, and members are planning a weekend away in Montsoreau, in the Loire Valley, in late May.

For more information or to join, visit www.dev.ed.ac.uk/clubs/france.



DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

13 August 2011

Bach Dialogue Meeting, Playfair Library

Edinburgh alumni are invited to attend Bach Network UK's fifth J.S. Bach Dialogue Meeting, to be held at the Playfair Library.

Guest speaker Sir John Eliot Gardiner, a leading scholar and conductor, will be joined by international musicologists, performers and Baroque period enthusiasts. A dinner will be preceded by a reception and a short concert by Edinburgh's Dunedin Consort, with John Butt conducting.

Bach Network UK was formed in 2004 to increase worldwide appreciation of the composer's works. For more details and tickets, visit www.bachnetwork.co.uk.



Manning the phones

University of Edinburgh students have been working the night shift over the past few months to help with Development & Alumni's latest fundraising endeavour.

A team of 60 students has been telephoning Edinburgh graduates to help raise money for a range of projects across the University – and more than 1,500 alumni have supported the appeal. Donations will go towards a number of projects, including research grants and student bursaries.

The University would like to thank all alumni who gave their time to speak with a student fundraiser.

Master & Apprentice

Every graduate can name a mentor who gave them advice and encouragement. But have you ever wondered if you inspired your teachers in return? Here, we talk to one of your role models about their experiences.



THE MASTER

Lesley Yellowlees

School: Chemistry

Title: Professor of Inorganic Electrochemistry

Are you an Edinburgh alumnus?

Yes. I have a BSc (Chemical Physics, 1975) and a PhD (Science & Engineering, 1983).

When did you start work at Edinburgh?

I got my first demonstratorship in 1986 and then I became a lecturer in 1989.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

Seeing people succeed, and seeing the outside world sit up and take notice of the department. That you can help put in place conditions to make the department a good environment for people to work in and be successful in is a great feeling.

... and the most challenging?

Setting up those conditions! Although I've stopped being Head of School [Lesley was Head of Chemistry from 2005 to 2010], the challenges are always there in this tight financial climate to create a good learning environment for students and a good research environment for the staff so they can succeed. I always want to work in a collegiate atmosphere – of course people want to do well for themselves but to try and help others to do well is also important; you get far more done that way.

What has changed over the years?

There are far more women in prime positions now. And, looking back, I'd say

I probably had less pressure on me when I started – there's an immediate pressure now to be successful and I felt I had the time and freedom to develop my own niche research.

Is it satisfying to see graduates excel in their careers?

One of the happiest days in the academic calendar for me is always graduation. It's a great privilege to sit on that platform every year and then talk to the students and meet their parents. Afterwards, it's great to hear from them and see the varied and exciting things they all do.

Can you name a student who made your role as mentor particularly satisfying?

Paul Murray did a PhD with me, and his sheer enthusiasm for the subject and can-do attitude were impressive. He



worked independently and constantly stretched me when it came to interpret, with him, his impressive results. He constantly tried new ways of doing things – much of which yielded spectacular results.

Professor Yellowlees MBE was recently appointed President of the Royal Society of Chemistry. She is the first female to be appointed to the role in the organisation's 170-year history.

THE APPRENTICE

Paul Murray



Paul Murray received a BSc (Hons) (2002) and a PhD (2005) in Chemistry under Lesley Yellowlees' tutelage. After working at the School of Chemistry for five years, he starts training at the Moray School of Education in September.

“

Lesley expects you to work hard and get good results but she is a strong believer in having a life outside of Chemistry. Her door is always open and whenever I ran into a problem she would always come up with loads of possible solutions to try. Lesley was also a big wheel in teaching me how to inspire young chemists – she really takes a bit of chemistry and makes it into a show – and she taught me how to work with and manage people.”

My Edinburgh

Send your photographs of your student days to editor.edit@ed.ac.uk

Coming to Edinburgh means a lot of memories are enhanced by the stunning location, breathtaking weather and all-round cosmopolitan experience. We invite you to share what made your student days so memorable.



Rosalía Rodríguez-Vázquez
Phonology & Music PhD, 2007

Where do you live now and why?

I'm a lecturer in English Linguistics at the University of Vigo in Galicia, Spain. I'm currently living in Paris as I was invited to take a 12-month research position working for the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

When did you live in Edinburgh?

From September 2002 until the end of August 2007.

What do you miss about the city?

I miss the type of life Edinburgh offered, combining the thriving cultural life of a capital city with the calm and quiet of a small town. I also miss those blue winter days, when you could go for a long walk starting in George Square and end up wherever your feet took you.



What was your first impression of Edinburgh when you arrived?

I had the impression that the city had been frozen in time... the Old Town with its medieval buildings, cobblestoned streets and alleys.

I thought the town had a special *je ne sais quoi*. I soon realised that the city and its people were the best hosts I could have ever wished for.

What is your fondest memory of your time at the University?

I will say the day I threw a party to celebrate my viva's success. All my friends, academic and non-academic, were there, and I gave a recital with the Noteworthy Trio (a group that I formed together with two friends) at St Cecilia's Hall.

What did the University do for you?

It gave me the human and material resources to broaden my knowledge and academic perspectives, allowing me to work with really brilliant, passionate people. Also, it facilitated the interdisciplinary enterprise upon which I embarked – the opportunity to enjoy academic life within both the linguistics community and the music community. I always participated in one or two of the considerably large number of orchestras that the University hosts and this, in turn, made me part of the cultural life of the city.

Which book or staff member influenced your life most when you were there?

I remember with particular emotion the discussions held with my PhD supervisors, Professor Heinz Giegerich and, especially, Professor Raymond Monelle, who died last year. He was a truly wonderful scholar and human



being. I'm a poetry lover, so if I had to choose one book, it would be *The Colour of Black & White* by Liz Lochhead.

What is your favourite view of the city?

I travelled a lot while I was there and I came to realise that my favourite view was from the plane. You could see the Forth Rail Bridge, the castle, Leith, the University... Wonderful!

What would you recommend as 'unmissable' to a tourist?

Any tourist who enjoys literature should attend the Edinburgh International Book Festival in August. It's a great chance to see and listen to some of the most amazing living writers. Charlotte Square becomes an island of peace and poetry during those three weeks.



Then & Now

Graduation

Graduation Day marks the culmination of years of hard work for every student and is cause to celebrate with family and friends. Every year the University confers around 5,000 degrees and 250 diplomas and certificates, and since 1695 it has awarded honorary degrees to more than 2,700 individuals. For generations, the grand interior of McEwan Hall has provided a fitting setting for this solemn but exciting occasion.



01 Polish Medical School graduates in 1944. **02** McEwan Hall's doorway sculpture depicts a graduation ceremony. **03** A double celebration, 1980s style. **04** Graduate Eric Liddell celebrates on 17 July 1924. **05** Chancellor, HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh (right) leaves the graduation ceremony on the Medical Faculty's 250th anniversary. **06** Our first female graduates received their MA degrees in 1893. **07** Alumnus and *Peter Pan* author, JM Barrie (right), presided as Chancellor over the 350th Anniversary Graduation Ceremonial. **08** Work started on the semi-circular hall in 1888. **09** The hall's organ was built in 1897.

Send your photographs of your student days to editor.edit@ed.ac.uk



10 The University choir provides a musical interlude. **11** McEwan Hall's interior lends a sense of occasion. **12** Writer and broadcaster Michael Palin and former Edinburgh International Book Festival Director Catherine Lockerbie applaud their fellow honorary graduands. **13** The hall's bold façade provides a fitting backdrop. **14** Graduands take in the solemnity of the occasion. **15** Professor Anneila Sargent, Professor of Astronomy at Caltech, received an honorary Doctor of Science. **16** The Most Reverend Archbishop Desmond Tutu received an honorary Doctor of Divinity. **17** Classmates savour the moment.

Arts Review

Whether for work or play, the arts have always featured prominently in our alumni activities. Here, we showcase just some of your artistic endeavours and feature a few favourite cultural escapes.

60 SECONDS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

ALASTAIR COLE



Born: New Zealand, 1983

Educated: BA/BCom, The University of Otago, MSc(Dist), The University of Edinburgh

Current home: Edinburgh

Current job: Documentary filmmaker, PhD candidate

Favourite film: *On the Way to School*, a Turkish documentary by Ozgur Dogan and Orhan Eskikoy

Favourite song or piece of music:

“Wine with Dinner” by Loudon Wainwright III

Greatest influence: My family and friends

Skill you'd most like to learn:

To successfully grow a chilli farm in my laundry



Alastair Cole's *Do You Really Love Me?* will premiere at Cannes Critic Week in May. For details, visit www.tonguetiedfilms.co.uk.

After years working at film festivals, documentary filmmaker Alastair Cole decided to get behind the camera. Rejecting the notion of film school, the globetrotting New Zealander was instead drawn to Edinburgh's MSc in Social Anthropology, which could offer him the chance to engage with research and theory. He stayed in Edinburgh to pursue the University's PhD programme in Transdisciplinary Documentary Film.

“I was fortunate to have worked alongside some great documentary filmmakers in South Africa, Italy and the UK and, through them, I began an endless learning process in creative documentary filmmaking.”

THE HIT LIST



To watch...

Anne Hathaway and Jim Sturgess play University of Edinburgh students Emma and Dexter, who have a graduation-day fling on St Swithin's Day. Based on David Nicholls' bestselling novel and filmed partly in Edinburgh, this movie tracks the friends' relationship, once a year on the same day, for 20 years. – **One Day** (PG-13, Lone Scherfig, Film Four)



To read...

Frances Fowle (PhD, 1994) examines the career of Alexander Reid, a prominent art dealer and key Scottish figure in the history of Western art. Described as being stubborn and difficult as well as a “prince among dealers”, Reid was a friend of Vincent van Gogh and bore an uncanny resemblance to the painter. – **Van Gogh's Twin** by Frances Fowle (National Galleries of Scotland, £19.95)



To listen to...

As part of an ongoing cultural project encompassing film, exhibitions, stories and photographs, this compilation album from MBA graduate Shona McMillan features songs by well known Celtic artists and locals from Fife's local fishing community. – **People and Songs of the Sea** by Shona McMillan (www.shonamcmillan.co.uk or Greentrax, £12.50)

James Tait Black judging underway

Judging of this year's James Tait Black Memorial Prizes is well underway, with the panel having assessed more than 300 books. The Prizes are Britain's oldest literary awards and are judged by senior staff within English Literature and postgraduate students. A shortlist was due to be released at the time of *Edit* going to press and winners will be announced at the Edinburgh International Book Festival in August.



If you would like to contribute to Arts Review, email your suggestions to editor.ed@ed.ac.uk.

New fund hits high note

Virtuoso violinist Nicola Benedetti is to be patron of a new scheme to support Italian Studies at the University.

The Nicola Benedetti Scholarship Fund will seek to provide scholarships for Masters and PhD programmes and postdoctoral fellowships in Italian Studies, including research in Italian visual arts, music, literature, history and philosophy.

Scots-born Ms Benedetti, who has just released her fifth classical album, says the scheme will help enhance the rich historical ties between Scotland and Italy: "I'm very proud to support Italian postgraduate studies at the University of Edinburgh and hope this new fund can help ensure that no gifted student



misses out on a place at Edinburgh because of a financial obstacle."

More students graduate in Italian Studies from Edinburgh than from any other Scottish university.

WHAT'S ON AT THE TALBOT RICE

Throughout 2011 Talbot Rice Gallery presents an exciting range of exhibitions and events. For further details, visit www.trg.ac.uk.



Postgraduate curators

27 May–25 June

Our annual collaboration with postgraduate curating students from the University and Edinburgh College of Art.

Edinburgh Festival Exhibitions

4 August–22 October

Anton Henning: A total work of art featuring wall painting, sculpture and furniture.

Ragamala: A rare opportunity to see the University's collection of Indian miniature paintings (pictured).

Beholder

19 November–18 February 2012

Part of the University's Hume Tercentenary, an innovative exhibition exploring taste and beauty.

THE FAB FIVE

Music can make us laugh, cry, swoon or daydream. Here, five alumni share their most treasured tunes.

01



"Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band"

– from the Beatles' album of the same name. "An all-time great, released at the end of my first student year and dominating every Edinburgh party for many weeks." **Cherry Ann Knott, BAr Architecture, 1968**

03

"P.S.S.O.S."

– from Nagasawa Tomoyuki's album of the same name. "It reminds me of love perhaps unrequited, which we hesitate to impart." **Catherine Urquhart, Linguistics MA, 1984**

04

"Symphony No 9 in D Minor"

– by Ludwig van Beethoven. "As a young Black Watch lieutenant in Germany in 1947, I remember being metaphorically 'blown out of my seat' by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra." **Robert Rodger, Psychology MA, 1956**

05

"Directly from My Heart to You"

– from Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention's *Weasels Ripped My Flesh*. "If you ever thought that 'love hurts' then this track is it!" **Charles Barber, MBA, 1996**



02

"Across the Sky"

– from the Pat Metheny Group's *Imaginary Day*. "It's a really chilled jazz tune. I love the mellow start and the gradual crescendo." **Imran Shahryar, Economics MA Hons, 2010**

Louis Stevenson's missing masterpiece

Author Robert Louis Stevenson's abandoned first novel has been found and is to be published in French. *The Hair Trunk*, begun in 1877 when the Kidnapped author and Edinburgh alumnus was 27, was never completed. French author and Stevenson scholar Michael Le Bris located the manuscript in an American library and added seven chapters to the existing nine.

Food for Thought

Most of us have honed our cooking skills somewhat since we were students but in case you're in need of a little inspiration, here are some culinary insights from a fellow graduate who hails from Athens, Greece.



Ria Psouchla (MSc Philosophy, 1997) is passionate about her heritage and its culinary traditions. Here, she shares her grandmother's recipe that is a staple at family gatherings.

"I was born in Constantinople (Istanbul) and we moved to Athens when I was a baby. As Richard Clogg (an Edinburgh alumnus!) says in his *Concise History of Greece*, the Greek refugees from Asia Minor brought to Greece a very rich culinary tradition, which blends Eastern and Western cuisine.

"Although Greece is a small country it has numerous regional cuisines that are determined by geography, history and local produce. On Greek islands and in villages they have signature dishes or sweets.

"We cherish the Sunday lunch with family and I love the Christmas Day lunch. When I was a child my grandmother and mother would prepare the table filled with *mezedes* (smaller dishes with many delicacies before the main course). We all gathered and enjoyed the different tastes and flavours while my parents and relatives told stories of their life in Constantinople.

"Cheese, honey, extra-virgin olive oil, fresh vegetables, olives and local spices (like saffron and mastic) are used by Greek chefs in an innovative way while preserving tradition.

"I love to try local cuisines as this provides you with real insight. In Edinburgh I used to eat a lot of salmon and pheasant and I loved the restaurants with game and places that served cuisines of the world like Chinese, Lebanese and Indian."



Reader Recipe Dolmadakia (Stuffed Vine Leaves)

Serves 10 as a starter

1kg medium-sized onions, peeled • 250ml extra-virgin olive oil • 250g uncooked Arborio rice • Juice of 2 lemons • 1tbs each finely chopped dill, dried mint and sugar • 250g–300g fresh vine leaves • Dill stalks • 250ml water • Cos lettuce leaves and lemon slices, to serve

Step 1: Bring a very large saucepan of water to the boil, then reduce heat, add onions and continue to heat on a low boil for about 15 minutes.

Step 2: Remove onions and chop finely. Heat oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat, then add chopped onion and cook, stirring, for 1–2 minutes. Remove pan from heat and add rice, lemon juice, chopped dill, mint and sugar. Season with salt and black pepper. Stir thoroughly to make a paste and set aside.

Step 3: Plunge vine leaves into a large saucepan of boiling water for 2–3 minutes, then remove leaves and set aside. Discard water and clean pan, then arrange dill stalks in the pan's base and set aside. Spoon 1 tablespoon of paste into the centre of a vine leaf and roll up into a cylindrical parcel. Repeat with paste and leaves until all paste is used.

Step 4: Arrange parcels on top of dill stalks and place 2 or 3 vine leaves on top. Pour the water into pan and bring to the boil, then reduce heat and simmer for about 1 hour or until leaves are soft and a deep green colour. Set aside for 2–3 hours. Arrange parcels on lettuce leaves and garnish with lemon.



The Two of Us

Many a lifelong friendship is forged during our university days, and we want to hear how you met your partner or best pal. For John and Rhona Marshall, a chance meeting in Chambers Street was 'meant to be'.

Rhona Marshall (Gillies)
Geography BSc, 1971

"University was the great unknown, an adventure. I took digs sharing with a classmate and a girl from Brechin, who was going out with a farmer she met during Freshers' Week. One day she pointed him out with a bunch of his friends. I enquired who 'the one on his left' was. We all arranged to meet. I can't remember what we talked about but following a later encounter at a dance we started dating.

"I was perplexed that I wasn't invited to John's 21st birthday but understood when I saw a picture of him and all the 'girls' (aged aunts), having coffee. The kitchen clock read 9.30pm and they were heading for home. When I eventually visited the farm I descended the stairs for breakfast in my miniskirt. I caught a glimpse of them, all in jeans! I crept quietly back to my room and changed.

"After my finals I set off for summer work to Camp Marimeta in Wisconsin. John was potato inspecting for the Government in the North East. We wrote to each other every day for the duration. After London, our romantic honeymoon was a week's camping, touring Scotland in very cold May.

"My former flatmate's globetrotting son was to get married this year in Australia (not a good time for a potato man), so I packed my bag. As I write this, I miss John, and our children and grandchildren; somehow texting is not the same."

John Marshall
General Agriculture BSc, 1972

"The lovely, lively lass from Largs met an un-streetwise, shy, almost-mute Perthshire farm boy in Chambers Street in 1968. Nervous of one another we had a close encounter at the Men's Union dance and from there our relationship steadily grew. We were disillusioned by the bomb, confused by Vietnam, didn't eat South African apples, avoided Usher's beer, laughed at *Monty Python*, jumped on buses to raise money on the border raids and marched against Margaret Thatcher.

"Great coats, long hair, flares and leaking shoes were not compatible with essential income-earning work during the holidays as a farm boy feeding cattle and, for Rhona, miniskirts, flying hair and kinky boots hobbling round the breezy streets of Largs delivering the Christmas post was, to say the least, character building. We loved swapping our stories.

"The one-sex unions became mixed overnight; full board for digs at £5 per week encouraged us to find cheaper separate flat accommodation. It was too early for that kind of commitment.

"After graduation we took to the East Coast Line and settled in a Scottish colony in London's Bromley North. We returned to Scotland to get married, got jobs and bought a house. We have a family, two girls and a boy who, in turn, had their own university experiences and are starting families of their own. That chance meeting in Chambers Street in 1968... it was meant to be."



Great coats, long hair,
flares and leaking shoes
were not compatible with
essential income-earning
work as a farm boy.



John Marshall is a potato seed buyer and his wife Rhona is a retired geography teacher. They have been married for 38 years and live in Auchtermuchty, Scotland. If you met your partner or a lifelong friend at the University of Edinburgh and would like to share your recollections, email us at editor.edit@ed.ac.uk.

Billet

The General Council of the University of Edinburgh

Report By Dr Alan Brown, Convener of the Business Committee of the General Council

The General Council is the means by which graduates have a continuing voice in the management of the University's affairs, and every graduate automatically becomes a member. Academic staff and members of the University's supreme governing body, the University Court, are also members of the General Council, which meets twice a year and has the right to comment on matters affecting the University's prosperity and wellbeing. For more information on the work of the General Council, visit www.general-council.ed.ac.uk.



Members will have learned with great regret that our Chancellor for the last 57 years, HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, has retired. I am certain that the General Council wishes to record its deep appreciation and gratitude for the immense contribution he has made to the University during his distinguished term of office. The Business Committee is considering how best to mark his outstanding contribution and I will keep you informed. The procedure for electing a new Chancellor, which is the General Council's responsibility, was completed and as HRH The Princess Royal was the only nomination received, she was elected Chancellor with effect from 31 March 2011. I know this appointment will be welcomed enthusiastically by all General Council members and it will be of immense benefit to the whole University community.

It is also sad to report that Lord Cameron of Lochbroom, the Chancellor's Assessor since 1997, has demitted office. At the February Meeting of the General Council I paid tribute to his invaluable service to the University, the General Council and its Business Committee. In appreciation of his commitment, on behalf

of the Council, I presented him with claret glasses engraved with the University logo, which he much appreciated. Later in the year we will hold a reception in his honour.

The Business Committee has been considering the crucial question of higher education funding particularly in the light of the Green Paper published by the Scottish Government in late 2010. A working group under the chairmanship of the Vice-Convener, Dr Frances Dow, prepared a paper which was approved and submitted. This may be read on the General Council website along with the Green Paper and the response by the University.

Plans are now well in hand for the introduction of online voting in General Council elections from early 2012. I strongly encourage members to register their email addresses through the MyEd Alumni Portal, details of which are on page 39 of this *Billet*. Those wishing to continue with a postal vote are able to do so.

I am grateful to all members of the Business Committee who also serve on one of the four Standing Committees for their hard work. The Business Committee minutes are on our website and the reports of the Standing Committee Conveners are contained in the Annex to the *Billet* which is available from the General Council office. The three Court Assessors also deserve our thanks for keeping the Business Committee informed of the important issues in these difficult times for higher education.

The General Council Scholarship fund continues to attract interest and donations, for

which we are most grateful. The first recipient, Gordon Clark, has given an interview which may be seen on our website. As Convener of the Business Committee, a major objective during my tenure is to raise awareness of Council members of their importance to the University by contributing in some way to its continuing success: for example, by submitting ideas, standing for election to the Business Committee or as an Assessor to the Court, or contributing to our Scholarship fund. Every donation, however small or large, is vital and confirms your commitment to this great institution; it also benefits needy students who wish to study at this University which gave us the invaluable start to successful careers.

Last February's Half-Yearly Meeting was notable for the upbeat report by the Principal, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, and the light-hearted after-Lunch address by the Very Reverend Dr Gilleasbuig Macmillan, the much respected Minister of St Giles' Cathedral. Both presentations may be seen on our website. King's Buildings will be the venue for the Meeting on 18 June 2011 and details are given on page 37 of this *Billet*. The next out-of-Edinburgh Meeting will be held in Brussels on 16 June 2012.

For the last 12 months Dr Ann Matheson returned to be Acting Secretary of the General Council. I thank her most warmly for her unstinting and dedicated commitment to the Council and its Business Committee. Her worthy successor is Dr Michael Mitchell who until recently was Convener of the Public Affairs Standing Committee and Chairman of the Media Subgroup. I wish him every success.

Billet

General Council Half-Yearly Meeting on Saturday, 18 June 2011

10.30am: Darwin Lecture Theatre G10, the Darwin Building, the King's Buildings

12.30pm: Wine reception in the Swann Building Reception

1pm: Buffet lunch in the Swann Café

3pm: Tours of King's Buildings facilities (For further details, please see page 37)

Please note that the Meeting will be webcast.

For details, visit www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/livewebcasts.htm.

AGENDA FOR THE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

1

Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in Old College, Edinburgh, on 12 February 2011 (**PAPER A**)

2

Matters arising

3

Report of the Business Committee

4

Dates of future Meetings of the General Council

5

Notice of forthcoming Elections

6

Presentations: "Research at King's Buildings: Addressing the Future Needs of Society" by Professor Steve McLaughlin, Dean of Research, College of Science & Engineering, and "A Virtual Tour of the Learning and Teaching Cluster at King's Buildings" by Professor Simon Bates, Dean of Learning & Teaching, College of Science & Engineering

7

Any other competent business

8

Adjournment

PAPER A

Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in Edinburgh on 12 February 2011

Present:

Mr Iain Macwhirter

University Rector, in the Chair

Dr Kim Waldron

University Secretary and Registrar of the General Council

Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea

Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Dr Ann Matheson

Acting Secretary of the General Council

Dr Alan Brown

Convener of the Business Committee

64 P and 167 V = 231 members
(P=Physical; V=Virtual)

Rev Dr Harriet Harris

Chaplain to the University

- 1.** Result of the Election of Assessors and Members of the Business Committee

The Rector announced that the two General Council Assessors elected to serve for a period of four years from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2015 were Mr Alan McDougall Johnston and Professor Ann McIntyre Smyth. The five new members of the Business Committee elected to serve for a period of four years from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2015 were Mrs Morven Islay Helen Gibson Brown, Mr Waverley Duncan Cameron, Mr Charles Michael Arber Lugton, Ms Kirsty Joan MacGregor and Mr Stuart James Ritchie Walker.

- 2.** Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in Loke Yew Hall Auditorium, University of Hong Kong, on 12 June 2010

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 June 2010 were approved.

- 3.** Matters arising

The Chairman reported that there were no matters arising from the Minutes.

- 4.** Report of the Business Committee

Dr Alan Brown, Convener of the Business Committee, gave the Report of the Business

Billet

Committee. He welcomed Dr Kim Waldron, Secretary of the University and Registrar of the General Council, and the Rev Dr Harriet Harris, the University Chaplain, and wished them long and successful associations with the University. He informed the meeting that the Chancellor, His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, had stepped down from the post after almost 60 years of distinguished service. The General Council deeply appreciated the immense contribution he had made to the University during his long term of office. A suitable way to mark this great service was under consideration by the Business Committee. The procedures to elect a new Chancellor according to the Ordinance were underway and nominations closed on 17 March. Lord Cameron of Lochbroom, the Chancellor's Assessor for 13 years, had demitted office. A warm tribute was paid to him in view of his invaluable service to the General Council and to the University. A gift was presented to Lord Cameron on behalf of the General Council.

The plans for the introduction of online voting and revised governance arrangements following recent recommendations on good practice were described. A Motion on a simplified Ordinance which accommodated these changes had been submitted to this Meeting. Reassurance was given that any changes would not diminish the influence of the General Council as any subsequent procedural alterations would still be referred to the Half-Yearly Meetings. The plan was to introduce online voting for the February 2012 elections and members were strongly encouraged to register on the MyEd Alumni Portal, a requirement of online voting.

A second Motion on the appointment of a new Secretary, Dr Michael Mitchell, was being proposed. He had recently been a member of the Business Committee, serving as Convener of the Public Affairs Standing Committee and Chair of the Media Group which introduced live webcasting to Half-Yearly Meetings.

The great success of the away Meeting of the General Council in Hong Kong in June 2010

was touched on. It was emphasised that this brought together members from all four continents, for the first time, and thus fitted very closely with the University's current strategy on internationalisation. The Business Committee had agreed that the next away Meeting would be held in Brussels on 16 June 2012, with active support from the Edinburgh University Brussels Society.

The General Council Scholarship had made some significant advances. With a generous contribution from the Principal's Appeal, the Fund had been endowed for an initial scholarship, which would be awarded in perpetuity. Archaeology student Gordon Clark had been awarded the first scholarship and a video interview had been placed on the General Council website.

The Convener emphasised the importance of General Council members to the University. They contributed to its success by the submission of constructive suggestions, by standing for election to the Business Committee or as Court Assessors and by contributing to the Scholarship Fund. It was emphasised that every donation was important, whether large or small, and enabled deserving and needy students to benefit.

The Business Committee and its Standing Committees were commended for their endeavours. The Court Assessors were part of the General Council's responsibility to advise the University on matters affecting its wellbeing. As higher education faced major challenges at this time of financial uncertainty, it was even more important for the General Council to contribute in all possible ways. A response to the Scottish Government Green Paper was being prepared by a Business Committee working party and would be available on the General Council website. However it was certain that the University was in good condition and well prepared to face the upcoming challenges.

In closing, the Convener thanked Dr Matheson for her additional efforts as Acting Secretary, which had extended her excellent stewardship to almost 10 years. Mr Smith, who had been the mace-bearer for five years, was also warmly thanked and given a token of appreciation. The Report of the

Business Committee was approved.

The full text of the Convener's remarks is contained in the Annex to the Billet.

5. Motions

The Chairman invited the Convener to present the Motions. The first Motion was to introduce a simplified Ordinance, number 210, the detailed procedures in the existing ordinance being transferred to the General Council's Constitutional Arrangements and Regulations. It also covered the introduction of online voting and changes to terms of office. This had been approved in principle by the Privy Council and members were reassured that it would not reduce the influence of the General Council as any procedural alterations will continue to be referred to Council members at Half-Yearly Meetings. After lengthy discussion, the Chairman invited members to vote and the Motion was approved by an overwhelming majority.

The second Motion concerned the appointment of Dr Michael J Mitchell as Secretary of the General Council; this was unanimously approved.

This item is an addendum to the Minutes of the General Council Meeting held on 12 February 2011.

6. Dates of future Meetings of the General Council

The next Half-Yearly Meeting would take place on Saturday 18 June 2011 in the Darwin Building, the King's Buildings. Any motions for discussion at that Meeting should be received in the General Council Office by 31 March 2011. The following statutory Half-Yearly Meeting would be held on Saturday 11 February 2012 in Old College, the University of Edinburgh. Any motions for discussion at the Meeting on 11 February 2012 should be received in the General Council Office by 23 November 2011.

7. Notice of forthcoming Elections

There would be Elections for five members of the Business Committee in February 2012. Nominations on forms available from the General Council Office should be received in the General Council Office by 23 November 2011.

Billet

8. Presentation by the Principal of the Annual Report of the University

The Principal said that it was a great pleasure to present the Annual Report to the General Council. The University had had a very successful year. It had secured research grants of £208 million, about a third of its annual income, a major achievement. Sponsorship had also grown significantly and the Principal thanked all donors warmly, of whom many were General Council members. Student numbers were also very healthy, at around 28,000. There had been a tremendous growth, particularly in Masters students to 5,000, as well as 4,000 Research Postgraduates. The largest cohort came from Scotland, about a third, then almost a fifth from England. From overseas the largest group was from the United States, unusual at a British university. Next largest was from China with considerable numbers from other Chinese-speaking countries. India was becoming increasingly important. Undergraduate places were hugely oversubscribed, which was gratifying but brought its own challenges. The excellent quality of the staff was shown by their high number of awards and achievements in the year.

On the financial side, income had grown by seven per cent to £634 million, as it had done consistently for the past eight years. This had supported considerable redevelopment, including the new Business School in the Adam Ferguson Building, the Clinical Imaging Centre at Little France and the Sports and Exercise extension. In the coming year major new facilities would be completed including the new Dick Vet at Easter Bush and the Scottish Centre for Regenerative Medicine at Little France.

In a review of the year's activities, the Principal gave a month-by-month account, which showed the diversity and range of the achievements of the University in research, culture and international relations. Some major topics were highlighted. The work on carbon capture and storage was world leading and showed how an original Edinburgh research idea could lead to industrial innovation as well as becoming a centre of excellence in teaching and further research. It attracted partnerships with Scottish Power. There was massive international interest in the

technology, especially from China and India. There were many leading projects in oncology, including one on the gene that spreads breast cancer, C35. This illustrated the process from fundamental research in genetics to identification of critical genes in human genetics leading to development of pharmaceuticals or other interventions. Commercialisation had also been tremendously successful this year with 14 companies formed. It was a complicated process led by Edinburgh Research and Innovation, with incubator schemes and infrastructure such as the Edinburgh BioQuarter being developed together with Scottish Enterprise. A new spin-out, NGenTec, had taken the engineering technology from wave power devices and applied it to wind turbines, resulting in simpler and more reliable turbines and attracting major inward investment to Scotland from Japan.

Excellent relations were maintained with the city, in particular through the participation in its many festivals. The Science Festival was one major focus, as was the Festival Fringe. The Appleton Tower became 'Fringe Central', leading to the surrounding University area becoming a hive of activity. Assembly Theatre would move to around George Square this year. The new InSpace gallery had been a great attraction, especially its award-winning Cybraphon, which, with support from Creative Scotland, was going on an international tour. Also inspiring was the Skoog, which was a device, created by the Schools of Music and Engineering, that people of all abilities could use to make music.

The Princess Dashkova Russian Centre was opened with support from Russkiy Mir, a body similar to the British Council, the first such centre in a British university. It joined the Confucius Institute and the Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World as a significant part of the University's internationalisation strategy.

There were major opportunities and challenges for the coming year. The merger with Edinburgh College of Art was expected to go through by 1 August. Much planning and preparation was being done. Planning for this and subsequent years was made more difficult by uncertainty about Government policies and funding. The UK Borders Agency restrictions would significantly

affect both staff and students, with restrictions on staff potentially limiting access to the best research and teaching talent and changes to student visas possibly making it more difficult to attract international students. There were also major questions on the funding of higher education in Scotland and challenges from the changes to funding and fees in England. The University as well as the General Council had engaged with the government consultation in Scotland. Currently research funding was relatively unaffected as it was ring-fenced but this was also a continuing challenge. The University wished to maintain the quality of its teaching, research and students while maintaining its balance and range of activities.

A number of defensive initiatives had been implemented, a major one being the e-Learning Initiative. Every School would run major courses using electronic media to reach distance students. An example in medicine was the partnership with the Royal College of Surgeons to deliver the Edinburgh Surgical Sciences Qualification. Such courses would also reduce the impact of the UK Borders Agency restrictions. The efforts of Development & Alumni to raise funds were ever increasing, especially to support scholarships and bursaries.

There were still a number of grounds for optimism. The quality of the student body was unprecedented as shown by a wide range of achievements including intellectual, sporting, cultural and entrepreneurial. The second was the quality of the staff body, illustrated by its success in acquiring external research funds, increasingly from European and international sources. It was also supported by the increasing success in improving the quality of the student experience, in particular the learning experience. Thirdly the international reputation of the University continued to rise. This was shown by a key role played in the £40 million global project on Environmental Sustainability and Poverty Reduction. The University had engaged with the Latin world more recently, with considerable interest and support from major Spanish companies including Santander and Iberdrola. A new Chair in Japanese-Chinese relations had been secured, which fitted well with the Confucius Institute and the Centre for Japanese Studies.

Billet

External support continued to grow including the magnificent £10 million from JK Rowling for MS work and a £4 million anonymous gift to support research on climate change. The support from the General Council was very much appreciated; mentioned in particular were Dr Alan Brown and the Business Committee, the outgoing Secretary Dr Ann Matheson and the three Court Assessors, Professor Smyth, Mr Connell and Mrs Tait. Finally and certainly not least, thanks were given to Lord Cameron as the previous Chancellor's Assessor who had given great advice and assistance to the University.

A full text of the Principal's remarks, and the record of the discussion that followed the presentation, is contained in the Annex to the Billet.

9. Any other competent business

There was no other competent business.

10. Adjournment

The Motion by the Convener of the Business Committee that, for the purpose of considering matters which may be transmitted to the General Council by the University Court or any other business of a competent nature, the Business Committee be empowered to act on behalf of the Council, and that this meeting be adjourned to a date to be fixed by the Business Committee, was approved.

Rev Dr Harriet Harris closed the meeting with a benediction.

The Annex to the Billet contains supporting papers for the Agenda, including communications from the University Court, full Standing Committee reports, a transcript of the Principal's presentation, and the Business Committee's Report to the meeting on 12 February 2011. General Council members may request it by post from: Mrs Mary Scott, General Council Office, Charles Stewart House, 9–16 Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1HT. Tel +44 (0)131 650 2152; email

general.council@ed.ac.uk. Alternatively, copies may be collected at the location of the Council Meeting from 30 minutes before.

Officers

Chairman:	HRH The Princess Royal	
Secretary:	Michael J Mitchell, BSc, PhD	
Registrar:	Kim Waldron, PhD, University Secretary	ex-officio

General Council Assessors on the University Court:

Douglas A Connell, LLB	2011
Ann M Smyth, BSc, PhD, MPhil	2011
A Margaret Tait, BSc	2013

Business Committee:

Convener: Alan D G Brown, MB ChB, FRCOG, FRCS Ed	2012
Vice-Convener: Frances D Dow, MA, DPhil	2012

C	Convener of Constitutional Standing Committee: Ralph V Parkinson, MA	2011
F	Convener of Finance and Services Standing Committee: Doreen Davidson, BA, AIPD	2012
P	Convener of Public Affairs Standing Committee: Neil R Hynd, LVO, BArch, FRIAS, FSA Scot	2013
A	Convener of Academic Standing Committee: Ian W Sutherland, BSc, PhD, DSc	2013

Members:

A' denotes a member of the Academic Standing Committee,
C' a member of the Constitutional Standing Committee,
F' a member of the Finance and Services Standing Committee, and
P' a member of the Public Affairs Standing Committee:

C	Chancellor's Assessor: Vacant	ex officio
C	Gordon D Cairns, LLB	2011
A	Alan D Simpson, BSc, PhD	2011
P	Frank I Stewart, MB ChB, MA	2011
F	Hilary A Vandore, MA, MBA	2011
A	R E Asher, BA, PhD, DLitt, FRSE	2012
P	Michael C Conway, MA	2012
C	Bruce L K Rae, LLB	2012
C	Mary M Swarbrick, MA, PGC	2012
A	William Ruthven Gemmell, LLB	2013
F	William Shields Henderson, MA, CA	2013
P	Jane E Kille, MA, MBA	2013
F	Luise Locke, BA, MBA	2014
P	Elizabeth Morris, MB ChB MRCGP	2014
A	Bruce Ritson, MD, FRCPE, FRCPsych	2014
C	Ann M Sutherland, MA, FBCartS	2014
F	Charles P Swainson, MB ChB, FRCPEdin, FRCSEdin, FFPHM	2014

Assistant to the Secretary: Mary T Scott, BA



On 18 June 2011 the General Council's Half-Yearly Meeting will take place in the **Darwin Lecture Theatre G10, Darwin Building, King's Buildings**. We look forward to welcoming speakers Professor Simon Bates, College Dean of Learning and Teaching, and Professor Steve McLaughlin, the Dean of Research. The after-Lunch address will be delivered by Dr Ian McKee, retired GP and ex-Member of the Scottish Parliament. Afterwards, members may join a campus tour. Tickets at £19 include a pre-lunch wine reception and buffet lunch. Table wines by the glass or bottle will be available for purchase. Please book early to avoid disappointment. Online booking is open from Monday, 9 May 2011 via www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/forthcoming_events.htm. Alternatively, complete the booking form opposite.

June 2011 General Council Meeting and Lunch

Swann Café, Swann Building, King's Buildings, Edinburgh, on Saturday, 18 June 2011, 12.30pm for 1pm

Please send me tickets (£19 per person) for the General Council Lunch.

A cheque for £ is enclosed, payable to the University of Edinburgh.

Name

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of guest(s)

Please indicate any dietary requirements for yourself or guests, and/or a preference for fresh fruit instead of dessert.

Tour of new developments at the King's Buildings

If you wish to join the short tour of the King's Buildings facilities from 3pm–4pm, please specify the number/s attending in the box provided to assist with organisation.

Please complete and return this form to Mrs Mary Scott, Assistant to the Secretary of the General Council, General Council Office, University of Edinburgh, Charles Stewart House, 9–16 Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1HT, Scotland, UK. Alternatively you may order online at www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/forthcoming_events.htm. **Closing date for applications: 10 June 2011**



The February 2011 General Council Lunch

The February Half-Yearly Meeting was well attended and the after-Lunch speaker, The Very Reverend Dr Gillean Macmillan, Minister of St Giles' Cathedral, gave a most enjoyable address. Before the General Council Lunch on 12 February 2011, left to right: Mr Iain Macwhirter, Rector of the University, Dr Michael Mitchell, newly elected Secretary of the General Council, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Reverend Dr Harriet Harris, Chaplain to the University, The Very Reverend Dr Gillean Macmillan, Minister of St Giles' Cathedral, Dr Alan Brown, Convener of the Business Committee, Dr Ann Matheson, recently retired Secretary of the General Council, and Dr Kim Waldron, University Secretary and Registrar of the General Council.

Billet



Anton Henning Installation at Haunch of Venison, London
2010. Courtesy of the artist; Paul Zanne Photography

Festival Reception and Exhibition Viewing

Thursday, 25 August 2011, 5.15pm–7pm

The General Council will hold a reception and exhibition viewing at the Talbot Rice Gallery for General Council members and guests, Graduates' Association members and Friends of the Talbot Rice Gallery on Thursday, 25 August 2011. Everyone is very welcome.

The exhibition in the Main Gallery will feature the work of internationally acclaimed visual artist Anton Henning. He will create a visual spectacle (pictured, above left), including wall, window and



floor painting overhung with more traditional canvases, sculpture, furniture and film.

The Georgian Gallery (pictured, above right) will showcase "Ragamala", a selection of the University's Collection of Indian miniature paintings. This exhibition will coincide with the 2011 Edinburgh International Festival theme of Orientalism.

Tickets to this event can be ordered online at www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/festivalevent.htm or by post on the form below.

Festival Reception and Exhibition Viewing: 25 August 2011

Talbot Rice Gallery, Old College, on Thursday, 25 August 2011, 5.15pm–7pm

Please send me _____ tickets (£12 per person) for the Festival Reception and Exhibition Viewing.

A cheque for £ _____ is enclosed, payable to the University of Edinburgh.

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Name(s) of guest(s) _____

Please return to: Mrs Mary Scott, Assistant to the Secretary of the General Council, General Council Office, the University of Edinburgh, Charles Stewart House, 9–16 Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1HT, Scotland, UK. Alternatively, you may order online at www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/festivalevent.htm. Closing date for applications: 17 August 2011.

General Council Online Elections

The General Council is preparing to introduce online elections with effect from February 2012.

The aim is to make it easier for members of Council to vote and to increase participation in elections for General Council Assessors and members of the Business Committee.

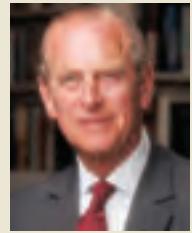
In order to vote online it is necessary to register on the University's MyEd Portal (www.myed.ed.ac.uk). This should be straightforward and full

instructions are given. A helpline is also available.

Those without internet access may request a postal vote. If you did not complete the notice previously enclosed in *Edit* concerning a request for a postal vote and would like one, please contact: Mrs Mary Scott, Assistant to the Secretary of the General Council, Charles Stewart House, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1HT, UK, tel +44 (0)131 650 2152, stating your full name, degree and year of graduation.

Thankyou from Sandringham

Following his retirement as Chancellor, a thankyou letter was sent from the General Council to HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. He replied: "I am grateful for the kind message from the Business Committee of the General Council. Please convey my appreciation to all members. It has been a privilege, an honour and a pleasure to serve such a distinguished seat of learning and teaching."



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For an informal chat or to request an information pack – or to let us know about a pledge you have made – contact the Legacy Team's Morag Murison or Gillian Blake.

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w: www.edinburghcampaign.com/legacy