



THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE + BILLET & GENERAL COUNCIL PAPERS

# edit



## HIGHLY ANIMATED

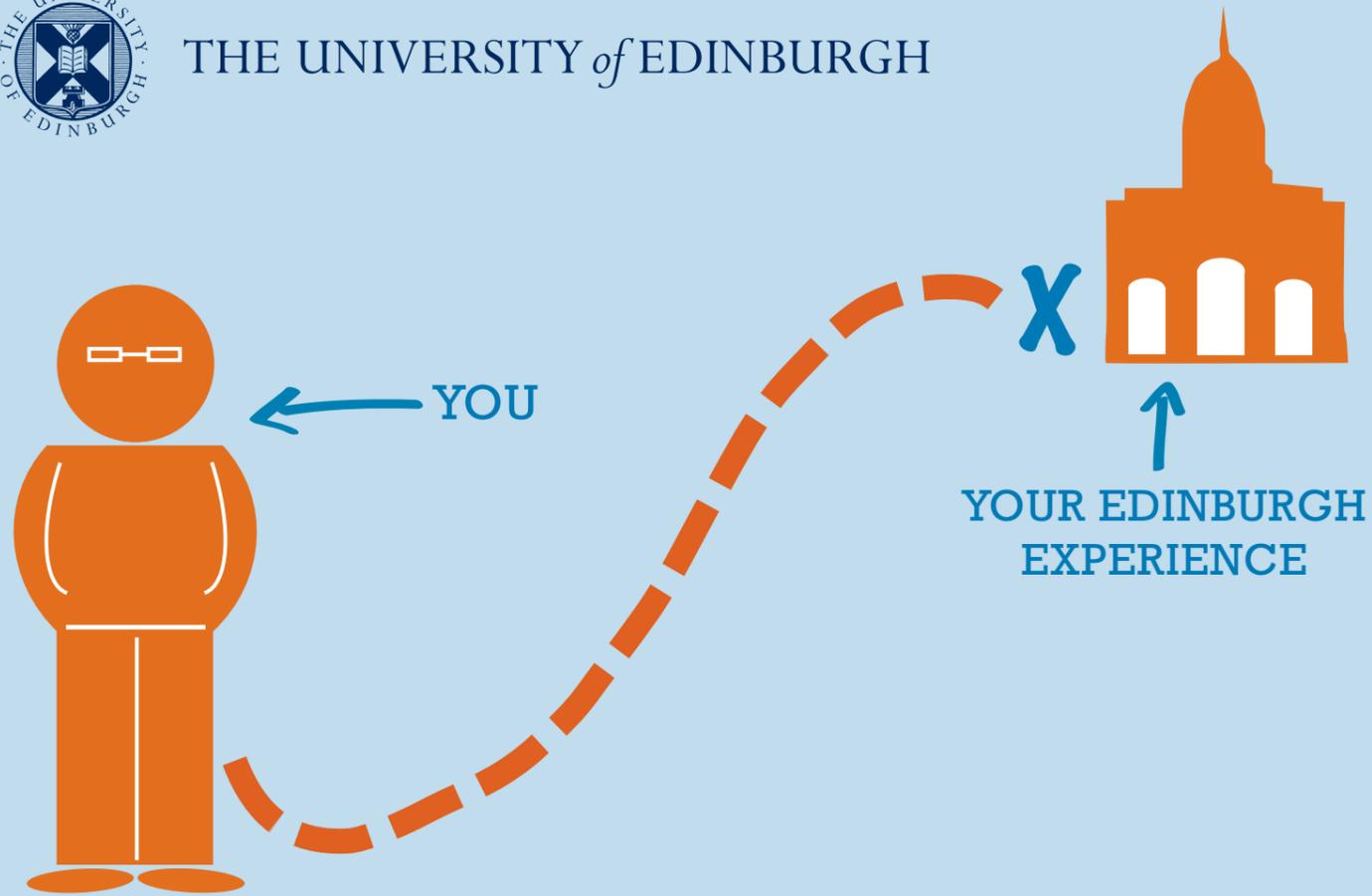
BIG-SCREEN SUCCESS FOR EDINBURGH FILMMAKERS

## OTHER WORLDLY PURSUITS

OUR ASTROBIOLOGISTS PONDER WHAT'S OUT THERE



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH



# How did you make it?

We know that hard work and passion were among the key elements that led to your graduation from the University of Edinburgh, but you may also have needed financial assistance to help you on your way.

Perhaps you received a scholarship or bursary, or something less formal such as help with fees, transport, food, accommodation or childcare.

“ As a single parent and a mature student, a bursary helped me a great deal financially. I was able to spend quality time with my family while ensuring that I was able to obtain a good degree in order to get a decent job.

*Elaine Sneddon, BA (Community Education) 2009*

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SUMMER 2013

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## FOREWORD

Welcome to the Summer 2013 issue of *Edit*. You'll know that Edinburgh is noted for its range and breadth of teaching and research. In this edition we explore this diversity: strengthening international recognition for genetic research (p16); influencing the world with inventions and ideas (p26); working together with the community (p12); and getting creative in the animation studio (p22). Edinburgh's staff and students excel – and so do our alumni. Next time you travel through London's King's Cross station you can marvel at its stunning modernisation knowing that the architect is an Edinburgh alumnus (p18); when you hear about successes in tackling global health problems you can be proud that an Edinburgh graduate has played a major part (p8); and when you pick up *New Scientist* magazine you'll appreciate that one of its news editors (and an *Edit* contributor) Jessica Griggs developed her love of science here (p10). Wherever you are, we hope that we inspire you to reconnect with Edinburgh – you can do this by attending the Alumni Weekend in June, sending us your favourite student memories or connecting with us online.

**Kirsty MacDonald, Executive Director  
of Development and Alumni Engagement**

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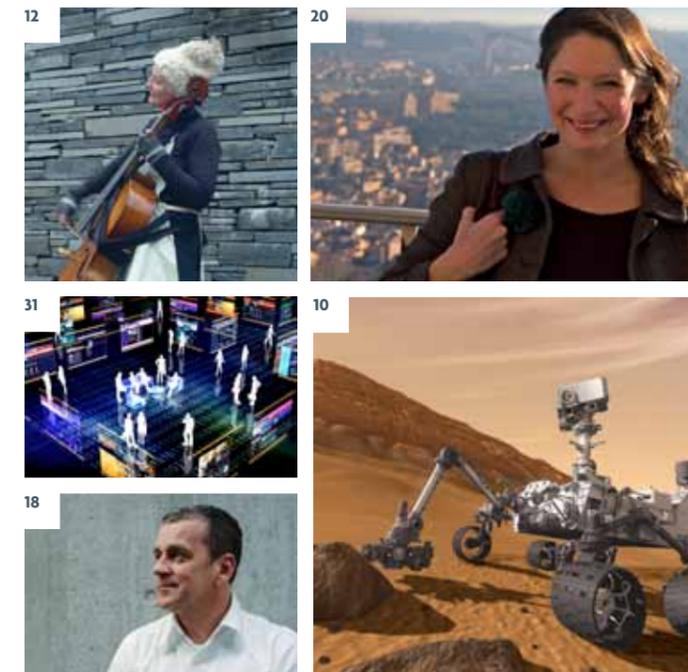
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## CONTACT US

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# UPDATE

FOR ALL THE LATEST UNIVERSITY NEWS, VISIT  
[WWW.ED.AC.UK/NEWS](http://WWW.ED.AC.UK/NEWS)



01 Tony Marsh



02 Maverick Photo Agency



03 Randel Leask

## 02 ACHIEVEMENT CELEBRATED

Five public figures were awarded honorary degrees by the University at a Celebration of Achievement ceremony earlier this year.

Film producer Lord Puttnam, rugby star Scott Hastings, jazz musician Tommy Smith, Homeless World Cup President Mel Young, and Chair of CBI Scotland Nosheena Mobarik were each awarded a Doctor *honoris causa* in McEwan Hall.

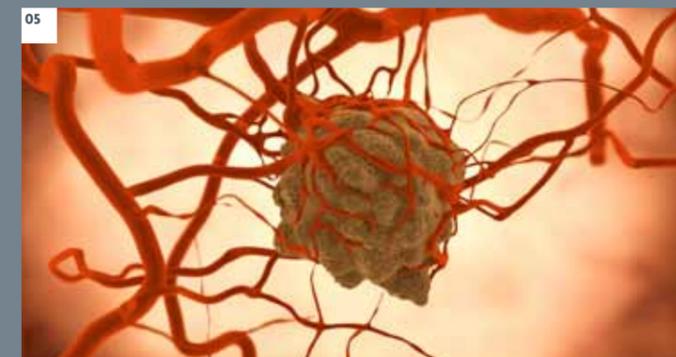
In 2011 Ms Mobarik (pictured) became the first Asian and only the second woman to hold the chair of CBI Scotland, the country's top business lobbying group.

Born in Pakistan but raised in Scotland since she was five, she is the co-founder of Glasgow-based M Computer Technologies.

> TO WATCH VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EVENT, VISIT [WWW.EDIN.AC/13AVTcd](http://WWW.EDIN.AC/13AVTcd)



04 Elizabeth Ravnane/ECCI



05



06 Dmitry Bogdanov

## 01 INNOVATIVE LEARNING INSPIRES AND INFORMS

STUDENTS FROM ALL DISCIPLINES HAD THE CHANCE RECENTLY TO PARTICIPATE IN SOME UNCONVENTIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES DURING THE UNIVERSITY'S SECOND INNOVATIVE LEARNING WEEK.

For one week, traditional modes of teaching such as lectures and tutorials were replaced with a dynamic programme of events designed to give students extra opportunities to develop skills, prepare for employment and meet new people.

More than 200 events took place, and activities ranged from hands-on workshops to careers skills seminars and employment-based projects. Students had the chance to learn sign language, discover Edinburgh's philosophical history on foot, sketch dogs competing for a Best in Show award (pictured) and use maths to perform magic.

Set to become a regular fixture of the University's academic calendar, Innovative Learning Week is part of the University's ongoing commitment to delivering quality teaching. "This is a great opportunity for students to enhance their skill set, while teachers can explore new ways of teaching," says Dr Sue Rigby, Vice-Principal Learning and Teaching.

> Turn to page 28 for more on Innovative Learning Week.

> TO WATCH A VIDEO WITH MORE DETAILS ON THIS STORY, VISIT [WWW.ED.AC.UK/INNOVATIVE-LEARNING](http://WWW.ED.AC.UK/INNOVATIVE-LEARNING)

## 03 LINKS WITH LATIN AMERICA STRENGTHENED

The University has strengthened its long-standing links with Latin America by establishing a new base in São Paulo, Brazil.

The Office of the Americas aims to aid collaboration between the University and partners in education, business and government across the whole of Latin America.

To celebrate the opening, the University has funded 12 new scholarships to support the most talented students from Latin America. The Edinburgh Global Latin America Masters Scholarships are each worth £5,000 and will be available for students to study a one-year postgraduate masters degree in any field.

> TO WATCH THE PRINCIPAL, PROFESSOR SIR TIMOTHY O'SHEA, DISCUSSING THE OFFICE OF THE AMERICAS, VISIT [WWW.ED.AC.UK/NEWS/2013/AMERICAS-260213](http://WWW.ED.AC.UK/NEWS/2013/AMERICAS-260213)

## 04 CENTRE TO BENEFIT EPILEPSY PATIENTS

Children with epilepsy will benefit from a new Edinburgh research centre investigating causes, consequences and improved treatment of the condition.

The Muir Maxwell Epilepsy Centre was officially opened by HRH The Princess Royal, the University's Chancellor, earlier this year.

The £1 million centre – supported by the Muir Maxwell Trust – works to improve the lives of children with epilepsy and their families.

A team of scientists will focus on developing medical and educational treatments for children with epilepsy, and seek to better understand the psychosocial impact of the condition. They will also investigate the influence that a mother's health and lifestyle can have on the likelihood of her children developing epilepsy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [WWW.EDINBURGHNEUROSCIENCE.ED.AC.UK/MUIRMAXWELLCENTRE](http://WWW.EDINBURGHNEUROSCIENCE.ED.AC.UK/MUIRMAXWELLCENTRE)

## 04 MEDIEVAL KNIGHT'S SKELETON UNEARTHED

AN EDINBURGH ARCHAEOLOGY ALUMNUS HAS UNEARTHED THE REMAINS OF A MEDIEVAL KNIGHT AT THE UNIVERSITY'S HISTORIC HIGH SCHOOL YARDS SITE.

The knight's skeleton was among dozens of discoveries uncovered by archaeologist Ross Murray (MA Hons Archaeology 2000) and his team.

Covering the remains was a slab of elaborately decorated sandstone. The stone's markings, which included a sword and a cross, are consistent with those typically found on a nobleman's gravestone. The team also uncovered the foundations of Blackfriars Monastery, revealing for the first time the exact location of the 13th-century building, which was destroyed during the Protestant Reformation in 1558.

"Just purely from the stone and the body, you can tell that he was quite a wealthy person, a high-status person for that time," says Mr Murray. "The fact that he is buried in what would be the grounds of the churchyard tells you that he is rich."

A further eight skeletons were found separately, in the confines of an ancient wall, which may be the remnants of a family crypt.

The discoveries were made at the construction site of the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation. The new centre, billed to be the world's most sustainable historical building, will open in summer.

> TO WATCH A VIDEO WITH MORE DETAILS ON THIS STORY, VISIT [WWW.ED.AC.UK/NEWS/2013/DIG-130313](http://WWW.ED.AC.UK/NEWS/2013/DIG-130313)

## 05 IMPLANTS TO TARGET CANCER TUMOURS

Sensors the size of an eyelash could be used to monitor cancer patients' tumours in real time and in great detail.

The devices would be implanted into tumours, where they could "spy" on a cancerous growth's activity. They would allow doctors to target radiotherapy and chemotherapy treatments more effectively, improving patients' chances of recovery.

A team led by the University, in collaboration with Heriot-Watt University, will develop the miniature chips in a five-year project to prove the technology, which they hope to follow with clinical trials.

Professor Alan Murray, of the School of Engineering, says: "Our aim is, in the long term, to help alleviate suffering and to improve the outlook for many cancer patients."

## 06 PREHISTORIC PREDATOR IDENTIFIED

A team of experts led by Edinburgh scientists has identified prehistoric remains as a new species of marine super-predator, distantly related to modern-day crocodiles.

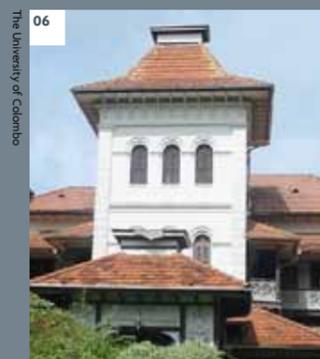
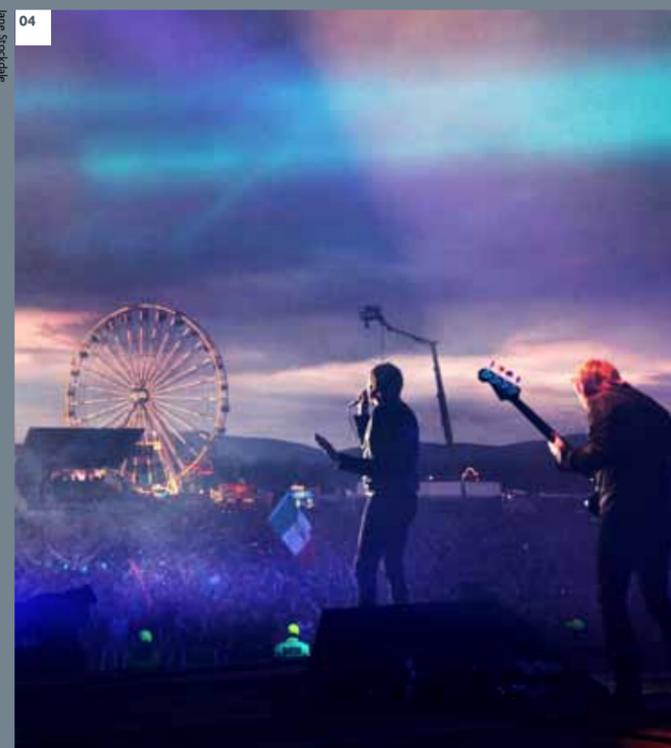
The researchers confirmed that the partial skeleton, discovered more than a century ago, belongs to a type of crocodile that was similar to a dolphin. The animal's serrated teeth and large gaping jaw meant it would have been suited to feeding on large-bodied prey.

The newly confirmed species will help scientists better understand how marine reptiles were evolving about 165 million years ago.

An amateur palaeontologist found the specimen in a clay pit near Peterborough in the early 1900s, and it has since been held by the Hunterian Museum at the University of Glasgow.

# UPDATE

FOR ALL THE LATEST ALUMNI NEWS, VISIT  
[WWW.ED.AC.UK/ALUMNI](http://WWW.ED.AC.UK/ALUMNI)



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## IVF PIONEER REMEMBERED

Professor Sir Robert Edwards, who died in April aged 87, was the pioneer of in vitro fertilisation (IVF).

His work allowed conception using the fertilisation of an egg outside the body for the first time, treatment which led to the birth of the first “test-tube baby”, Louise Brown, in 1978.

His research in the field began as a student in the 1950s, studying at Edinburgh’s Institute of Animal Genetics, now part of the School of Biological Sciences.

He graduated from Edinburgh in 1955 with a PhD in embryonal development in mice. He was appointed CBE in 1988, awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2010 and knighted in 2011.

➤ FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[WWW.ED.AC.UK/NEWS/ALL-NEWS/NOBEL-041010](http://WWW.ED.AC.UK/NEWS/ALL-NEWS/NOBEL-041010)

## 01 GETTING CREATIVE WITH COMPUTING

KATE HO IS MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTION COMPANY INTERFACE 3, WHOSE WORK RANGES FROM BUILDING APPS AND MOBILE GAMES TO DESIGNING IMMERSIVE DIGITAL EXPERIENCES.

Her work has focused on designing experiences for multitouch interface technologies, in particular interactive tables such as the Microsoft Surface and SMART Tables, and the iPad.

Since she became Managing Director of Interface 3, the company has won the Touch Finance Competition, and SMART Technologies’ Multitouch Competition.

Interface 3 also runs coding workshops for primary school children and makes storybooks to be used at Edinburgh’s Royal Hospital for Sick Children.

In 2000 Ms Ho set up the University’s Computer Society and in 2006 she established Hoppers (a society for women in Informatics). She graduated with BSc (Hons) Computer Science & Management Science in 2003.

She is currently finalising her PhD studies at Edinburgh and is also a member of Girl Geek Scotland, a group for women interested in technology, creativity and computing.

## 02 IN SEARCH OF WILD PLACES

Sally Eaton is a research assistant at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) and recently worked as a presenter on *Wild Things*, Channel 4’s programme about British wildlife.

The ecologist and lichenologist has two degrees from Edinburgh, a BSc (Hons) in Biological Sciences (Ecology) 2003, and an MSc in Biodiversity & Taxonomy of Plants 2009.

Ms Eaton grew up in the Forest of Bowland in Lancashire, where she discovered a love of wild places.

She is a trustee of the British Lichen Society and the Species Recovery Trust and is also Chair of the Education and Promotions Committee of the British Lichen Society.

Ms Eaton runs courses, walks and public engagement events alongside her teaching and supervision roles at RBGE.

## 03 RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ON AGENDA

Dr Andrew Bennett (PhD Politics 2002) has been appointed ambassador for Canada’s Office of Religious Freedom.

Announcing the appointment earlier this year, Canada’s Prime Minister Stephen Harper said: “Around the world, violations of religious freedom are widespread and they are increasing. Dr Bennett is a man of principle and deep convictions and he will encourage the protection of religious minorities around the world so all can practise their faith without fear of violence and repression.”

Dr Bennett is Dean of Augustine College, a Christian liberal arts college in Ottawa. Before his appointment at Augustine College, he worked for Canada’s Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, the Export Development Corporation and the Privy Council Office.

## 04 PHOTOGRAPHER CAPTURES THE MOOD

JANE STOCKDALE IS MAKING HER MARK AS A PHOTOGRAPHER, WITH CLIENTS AS VARIED AS NOKIA, ARCADE FIRE, THE BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, T IN THE PARK, O2 AND OXFAM.

Originally from Banchory, Aberdeenshire, Ms Stockdale has concentrated on documentary and music photography since graduating from Edinburgh College of Art (BA Hons Visual Communication: Graphic Design 2003).

Her diverse assignments have seen her document a range of events and causes, including the UN effort to halt the smuggling of weapons in Lebanon, diamond mining in Botswana and the England football team in training.

Earlier this year she shot a comedy sketch featuring model Kate Moss and actor David Walliams for Comic Relief.

Ms Stockdale’s photographs have been published in a variety of UK and international magazines and newspapers. Her first book, *I Predict a Riot* (Koenig Books), a record of the G20 demonstrations that took place in London four years ago, was published in 2011.

## 06 ACADEMIC TAKES UP TOP POST

Professor Premakumara De Silva has been appointed the first Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka.

Professor De Silva (PhD Social Anthropology 2005) took up the post earlier in the year. Prior to the appointment he was Head of the Department of Sociology.

Throughout his academic career Professor De Silva has won prestigious international awards and fellowships, including the Sir Radcliffe-Brown and Sir Raymond Firth Fellowship of the Royal Anthropological Institute in the UK, and the Sir Ernest Cassel Educational Trust Merit Award.

He has served as President of the Sociological Association of Sri Lanka and, since 2008, as the Senior Student Counsellor of the University of Colombo.

## CHURCH ROLE FOR RETIRED TEACHER

Former teacher Marjorie Paton has been appointed the Church of Scotland Guild’s National Convener.

In the year-long role Ms Paton will lead the charitable arm of the church, promoting worship, prayer and action as methods of helping communities.

Ms Paton graduated MA Arts (Ordinary) in 1966 before undertaking teacher training at Moray House. She then taught English, Scottish history and religious studies at secondary level. She has been a member of the Guild for 43 years, and describes the appointment as a “great honour and privilege”.



To share your experiences about where your degree took you, email us at [alumni@ed.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ed.ac.uk) or follow us on Twitter at [@edinburghalumni](https://twitter.com/edinburghalumni)

# THE INTERVIEW



## “THERE’S ALWAYS ANOTHER QUESTION”

A deep connection to her homeland led Zimbabwe’s Dr Precious Lunga into HIV prevention research. Now working at the heart of the international effort to improve health in low-resource settings, she credits Edinburgh with nurturing her lifelong fascination with science. She talks to *Cate MacKenzie*.



DR PRECIOUS LUNGA

**EDUCATION:**

BSc (Hons) Neuroscience 1998, The University of Edinburgh; PhD Neuroscience 2003, The University of Cambridge; MSc Epidemiology 2006, The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine/ The University of London

**CAREER:**

Ionix Pharmaceuticals (scientist); UK Medical Research Council (epidemiologist); Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (strategic adviser); UNAIDS Geneva (Office of the Chief Scientific Advisor); World Yale Fellow; independent consultant

**Q How did you become interested in science?**

**A** When I was about six my father bought me a microscope as a birthday present. I was one of those annoying little kids who was always asking why and how. I grew up in Zimbabwe and I’d pick leaves from different trees and pick flowers and wonder why they looked different and what’s the point. With science there’s always another question: you want to find out why and then you investigate, and that opens up more questions and then you’re making some progress. There’s this never-ending puzzle and something about that really appeals to me.

**Q Did studying neuroscience at Edinburgh nurture that inquisitiveness?**

**A** How the subject was introduced – being taught by people who were so engaged and wanted to pass on their knowledge and who were at the cutting edge – really captured my imagination and my interest. That feeling of being on the frontiers of discovery was just so exciting. Even now I can look back and say my time at Edinburgh

was probably some of the best years of my life, and I’ve had some quite exciting times.

**Q Did any academics in particular stand out?**

**A** Aubrey Manning was an inspiration, just amazing, and Gareth Leng – I have a lifelong fascination with a hormone called oxytocin and that’s entirely due to him. And Richard Morris was a fantastic, inspiring neuroscience professor. That’s just a selection – I was fortunate that there were so many fantastic people who taught us.

**Q Do you have equally fond memories of student life?**

**A** There are some great memories. We’d have our special lunch on a Friday; we’d go to Teviot and feel we were dining in luxury with the white tablecloths! And learning to ceilidh, and all the Burns Night dinners and eating haggis...

**Q Did you belong to any sports clubs?**

**A** Up until then [coming to Edinburgh], I wouldn’t say I’d been particularly sporty. A friend

wanted to try karate so we went together. We had the most difficult training session; it was so hard. My friend decided after a few times she didn’t want to keep going but I stubbornly carried on and before I knew it I’d been at it for several years.

**Q Don’t tell me you got a black belt...**

**A** I did get a black belt!

**Q From Edinburgh you went on to Cambridge to further your neuroscience studies and then switched to epidemiology. Why the change in direction?**

**A** I felt I really needed to do something that maintained my connection with Zimbabwe and Africa. When I was graduating for my PhD I bumped into a professor who was doing work on HIV prevention methods for women. We started having a conversation and I was fascinated. We carried on with this conversation and several months later I left the lab and hopped on a plane and the next thing I was in Uganda on a boda-boda [a bicycle taxi] going to the field.

**Q You played an instrumental role in managing the world’s largest public-private clinical trial aimed at developing an HIV prevention gel for women. Can you tell me about that project?**

**A** We know that condoms are effective in preventing HIV transmission, but in some circumstances it’s difficult for a woman to keep negotiating condom use with her husband or regular partner. The idea behind a microbicide is that a woman can choose to disclose that she’s using the gel but she doesn’t have to keep negotiating use every time, because she’s in control. And not only that, but she could also have the chance to have children. It’s a field that’s still under a lot of research: a definitive microbicide hasn’t been developed yet, but there has been quite a lot of promising advance. It does take time to develop a new therapy from the lab to the bench to trialling to it actually being used. They’re at the stage now where they’re being tested in the field. I am hopeful.

**Q You’ve taken on advisory posts at world-renowned organisations like the United Nations – did your experiences in the field prompt that move into more consultative roles?**

**A** I wanted to have the experience of working in an organisation where you’re really trying to make these advances be adopted into policy – focusing on how can we help, how can we make it happen, getting involved in changing laws. Now I’m working as an independent consultant and work with different organisations, with UN agencies and with governments in Eastern Africa, helping them develop implementation plans for HIV prevention.

**Q Do you enjoy the multidisciplinary challenges you face as a Yale World Fellow?**

**A** I have the chance to engage with other Fellows who are in different disciplines and from around the world – from Pakistan, Israel, as far away as Japan. We develop special projects to work on a problem and then try to come up

with solutions, perhaps by holding a forum to bring together stakeholders from different areas. I can tap into their ideas and apply them to my own field. It’s a really enriching experience.

**Q What progress would you say has been made in Africa with the fight against HIV?**

**A** When I first started this work it was pretty much a death sentence in Africa if you were diagnosed with HIV, and now I’m seeing more and more that people are living with HIV and disclosing that they have it, which is a sign that the stigma is reducing. It hasn’t gone away but I’ve definitely seen that shift – it is reducing and part of that is the availability of antiretroviral drugs. There are fewer new infections each year and that’s massive progress. ■

Now I’m seeing more and more that people are living with HIV and disclosing that they have it, which is a sign that the stigma is reducing.

DR PRECIOUS LUNGA  
BSc (HONS)  
NEUROSCIENCE 1998

# OTHER WORLDLY PURSUITS

From the hard science of hunting exoplanets to the philosophical puzzles raised by the possibility of extraterrestrial life, experts at the new UK Centre for Astrobiology are delving into fundamental questions about the evolution of our universe. *By Jessica Griggs*

With the discovery in March that there was probably once drinkable water on Mars, and giant telescopes finding another distant “Earth” seemingly every other week, now is an exciting time to be an astrobiologist.

And nowhere more so than at Edinburgh, where experts at the newly launched UK Centre for Astrobiology (UKCA) are dedicated to addressing some of our most fundamental and fascinating questions about the origin and evolution of life in our universe.

One of the country’s first dedicated centres of its kind, the UKCA will bring together physicists, astronomers, biologists, chemists, engineers and geologists to ponder questions such as whether there is life beyond Earth, how and where it began, and how to detect it. Research into these questions will also shine a light on the origins of life on this planet, how it has managed to persist for the past 3.5 billion years, and how far it can be pushed.

“Astrobiology is a subject area that captures the interest of a lot of

different people,” says Professor Charles Cockell, Director of the UKCA, “whether it’s those wanting to look at the hard science – the microbiology or the search for exoplanets – or those who are interested in the more philosophical questions, such as what would be the consequences of finding extraterrestrial life.”

Mankind may have dreamt of what lay beyond the confines of this planet for as long as people have looked up at the stars, but it was only in the middle of last century, when the space race escalated, that the opportunity arose to probe what might be out there.

NASA launched the first programme in astrobiology, or exobiology as it was then known, in 1960, just two years after the space agency itself was inaugurated. In the mid 1970s, three experiments were sent on the Viking mission to Mars – the planet deemed most likely to harbour life in this solar system – designed to search for signatures of life. Several other missions have followed, including the Mars Science Laboratory, or Curiosity rover (pictured above), which landed on the red planet last August.

But before scientists can identify extraterrestrial life they need to know what to look for and where, and by examining hardy organisms that thrive in some of the most extreme environments on this planet – including the deepest part of the oceans, driest deserts and in rocks and water saturated with salt – they can make advances in determining whether habitable conditions might exist elsewhere in the solar system.

The UKCA’s flagship facility, the Boulby International Subsurface Astrobiology Laboratory, is located more than a kilometre below ground in a rock-salt mine in Yorkshire and is the world’s first permanent laboratory of its kind. Its network of tunnels carved out of ancient salt deposits – conditions similar to the salty pools of Mars – are home to an isolated microbiology that has uniquely evolved to survive there. By collecting microbes and extracting and analysing their DNA, Edinburgh scientists can determine their species and adaptations to the extremes of living deep underground.

The rocky and remote conditions of the Boulby mine are also ideal for testing robotic technology and

Astrobiology is such a growing field and the set-up of a dedicated UK-based centre was a real landmark event.

MARK FOX-POWELL  
EDINBURGH PHD STUDENT

space instrumentation that could potentially be used to explore the moon and other planets. And, as Professor Cockell explains, it is hoped that testing and ultimately translating this technology will be of benefit to the mining industry and help solve environmental challenges on Earth.

“Space explorers require instruments that are small and robust and that

can survive in physically difficult environments. These are exactly the same conditions required by the mining industry,” he says. “We’re trying to work out how to translate the technology required for planetary exploration to improve mining safety and mineral extraction on Earth.”

Back above ground at the UKCA, these investigations are complemented by the development of the unique Planetary Simulation Facility, which creates a range of climatic and hydrological conditions similar to those on Mars. The facility’s computers can control pressure, temperature and UV illumination, and water can flow in and out of its chamber. “It will allow us to create salty environments to see how that would have affected life on Mars, if it was ever there,” explains Professor Cockell.

The UKCA’s diversity of experimental apparatus and research capabilities as well as its multidisciplinary member body, make it an attractive collaborative partner. The Centre has links to the universities of Oxford and Bath, and Imperial College, to name just a few partner institutions,

and it played host to experts from all over Britain at the recent UK Astrobiology Conference. It is also affiliated to the NASA Astrobiology Institute. This highly collaborative environment enables Edinburgh to attract the brightest stars – students and staff – from around the world.

For Mark Fox-Powell, a PhD student who moved to Edinburgh recently after completing a masters degree in molecular microbiology, the launch of the UKCA was a major draw. Cementing factors for his decision to come to Edinburgh were the fertile interdisciplinary environment and cutting-edge facilities.

“Astrobiology is such a growing field, and it seemed that the set-up of a dedicated UK-based centre was a real landmark event,” Mr Fox-Powell says. “Astrobiology thrives on interdisciplinary collaboration, and being here means we can benefit from the University’s diverse facilities and scientists. It’s a very exciting place to work.”

*Jessica Griggs studied physics at Edinburgh (BSc Hons 2008) and is a news editor at New Scientist magazine.*

## CAPTURING IMAGINATIONS

The University has offered people around the world the chance to explore the subject of astrobiology through an innovative online initiative.



PROFESSOR  
CHARLES COCKELL  
DIRECTOR,  
UK CENTRE FOR  
ASTROBIOLOGY

Edinburgh is the first UK university to offer Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), which give participants a commitment-free glimpse of an undergraduate-level education, mainly through online video-based lectures. The courses have no entry requirements, but no academic credit is awarded.

*Astrobiology and the Search for Extraterrestrial Life* was one of six courses offered earlier this year.

“I thought it was a great way of teaching astrobiology to a lot of people that you couldn’t do within the normal university system,” explains Professor Charles Cockell, whose 15-minute lectures went out to thousands of people. “MOOCs are still relatively experimental and I think they fit into Edinburgh’s enthusiasm for developing innovative ways of learning.”

The course attracted people of all ages from regions around the world, including Albania, Bahrain, Georgia and Hong Kong.



FOR MORE INFORMATION  
VISIT, [WWW.ED.AC.UK/MOOC](http://WWW.ED.AC.UK/MOOC)

# STRIKING THE RIGHT NOTE

Mixing performing arts outreach, community development and conflict resolution, the University's *Music in the Community* course is typical of a deeply creative approach to the art form since music was first taught at Edinburgh in 1839. *By Edd McCracken*



Just the act of singing together can cross all barriers and create a new community within a group of disparate people.

DEE ISAACS  
LEAD ACADEMIC,  
MUSIC IN THE COMMUNITY

Birds are singing in the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh glasshouse. Oyster catchers, gannets and peacocks are assembled beneath the palm trees, and University of Edinburgh music lecturer Dee Isaacs is in their midst, conducting this feathered chorus like a latter-day Mary Poppins.

Their haunting song hovers in the space between the panes like a mist. They sing, "Once upon a time there was a story", harmonising words written by Serbian poet Vasko Popa. Ms Isaacs brings the musical phrase to an end and the birds remove their beaks, bills and plumage – the singing flock is transformed into a chattering group of 10-year-old pupils from Edinburgh's Gilmerton Primary School.

The group is rehearsing for its promenade performance of "Conference of the Birds", a thousand-year-old Persian poem set to music by Ms Isaacs, lead academic on the University's *Music in the Community* course.

What started life in 1991 as a module is now an undergraduate course open to third- and fourth-year students and bringing together myriad disciplines,

including performing arts outreach, community development, creative arts therapies and conflict resolution, all glued together by music.

"Music and community says it all," says Ms Isaacs, who last year won the University's Principal's Medal for services to the community. "Just the act of singing together can cross all barriers and create a new community within a group of disparate people. It's a powerful thing."

Speak to anyone from the University's Reid School of Music and the transcendence of music will usually feature early in the conversation. From engaging with the local community via its numerous outward-facing courses to links with the University's Medicine, Mathematics, Psychology, French, Film and Physics departments, the School restlessly challenges the limits of music's power.

Nowhere more so than in *Music in the Community*. Students on the course bring music to people in places that might otherwise be silent – the young offenders in HM Prison Edinburgh, groups of adults who have suffered head injuries, and

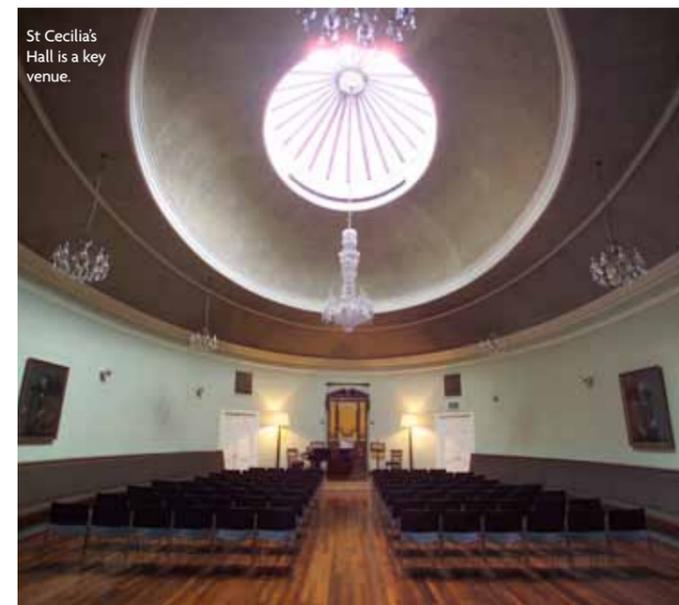
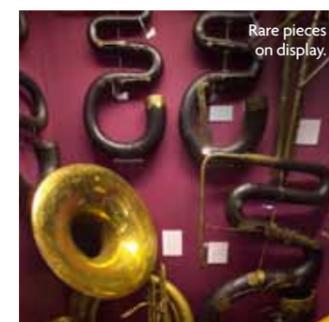
Gambian school pupils, who learn by rote not by music.

Every year the programme culminates in a large-scale production. This year, it was the 30 pupils of Gilmerton Primary School, assisted by 20 students and several professional artists, who were at the centre of this freshly forged musical community. Afterwards, a number of pupils indicated to Ms Isaacs they wanted to study music at university. "I thought that was wonderful," she says.

### EXCITING POSSIBILITIES

The children from Gilmerton would be following in some illustrious footsteps (see panel, overleaf). Music began at Edinburgh in 1839, as a result of a bequest from General John Reid (1721–1807). His will stipulated the establishment of a chair in the theory and practice of music, which eventually led to the creation of the Faculty of Music in 1893. The BMus it offered was the first of its kind in the UK, and the standard for all that followed.

The Reid School of Music continues to innovate. It investigates everything



STRIKING THE RIGHT NOTE  
CONTINUED >

# STRIKING THE RIGHT NOTE

from neuroscience and cognition to acoustics and live music.

preoccupies Professor Simon Frith, the Tovey Chair of Music.

"We have a very broad view of what music is," says Professor Peter Nelson, Head of School. "Music is an utterly fundamental human activity. It's not an aesthetic add-on. We want to introduce undergraduates to the whole breadth of the subject, which isn't to say that people don't go off and become wonderful performers. But they come out with that wholeness. They leave knowing about the possibilities of music."

"Making music together, whether playing, listening or dancing, seems to be one way in which we express relationships with other people that are pleasurable," he says. "We know of no society that doesn't have music. So studying music is very interesting."

Professor Frith's current research involves developing a historical sociology of British music culture since 1950, a fitting pursuit for *The Times*' first ever rock critic and the founding Chair of the Mercury Music Prize. In its newly published first volume, *The History of Live Music in Britain*, Professor Frith credits jazz as

One such possibility is to explain why music flows through the ways in which individuals, societies and nations interact and express themselves. This question

being "by far the most revolutionary moment after the war, not rock 'n' roll" and the real foundation for today's live music scene.

While Professor Frith is fascinated by how music affects the connections we make with each other, Professor Raymond MacDonald is interested in how music changes our internal connections. Put simply, he wants to know what music does to our brains.

"Whether you're listening to music in the car, a bar, in an opera house, or if you're singing in the bath, music is universal and can affect us in profound ways," he says. "Music can touch us deeply, which is something as a psychologist, as well as a musician, that drives my research."

Professor MacDonald has investigated how listening to music can reduce pain perceptions. For example, by listening to music after a minor operation, patients can reduce their anxiety.

Spend long enough with Professor MacDonald and he will come on to another of his favourite subjects: "As well as music being universal in terms of listening, we're all musical in terms of our ability to learn to play music, to communicate through music, and to get enjoyment and satisfaction from playing music. People say they don't have the right musical gene or family, but the growing body of evidence shows playing music to be accessible to all."

And if this is so, then the health, social and psychological benefits of playing music are available to all too. Professor MacDonald provides workshops for adults with learning difficulties. They learn the Javanese gamelan, and over several months he has noted that better rhythm perception has developed in tandem with greater communication skills.

Like everyone else within the School, music's possibilities excite him. "We need to break down some of the barriers that stop people taking up music," he says. "I hope the work I do can contribute to that. I hope the work of the School contributes to that. I can sound evangelical about the importance of music, but I hope it is rooted in evidence." ■



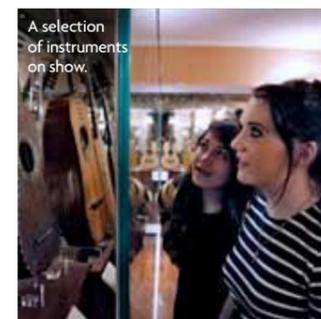
The Reid Concert Hall.



In the recording studio.

## SOUND MINDS

Edinburgh's music academics and alumni include conductors, opera stars, pop artists, writers and music technology experts. We chart just some of their achievements over the past two centuries.



A selection of instruments on show.

**STAY CONNECTED**

The Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments ranks among the world's most important collections of musical heritage. To read about our vision to conserve and make accessible this collection, visit [www.edin.ac.uk/18hhGv1](http://www.edin.ac.uk/18hhGv1)



Organ pipes at St Cecilia's Hall.

**1807**  
General John Reid, a passionate flautist and composer, dies. He leaves money to the University, where he studied law, to establish a chair in the theory and practice of music. He also asks that an annual concert be organised at which the music of his time be played. The University maintains this tradition with the Reid Memorial Concert every February.

**1839**  
The first Reid Professor, John Thomson, takes up his post.

**1845**  
John Donaldson becomes the next chair and expands music at the University significantly. Lectures, including some for women, begin. He experiments with musical acoustics.

**1859**  
Spearheaded by Donaldson, the Reid Concert Hall and music school are completed.

**1867**  
The Musical Society, which acts as an umbrella organisation for the large orchestras and choir, is founded by Sir Herbert Oakeley.

**1893**  
The Faculty of Music is officially established under Frederick Niecks. His programme for BMus is the first of its kind in the UK.

**1917**  
The Reid Orchestra is established under Donald Francis Tovey. It's the only professional orchestra in Edinburgh until the 1970s.

**1940**  
Sidney Newman succeeds Tovey. He oversees the foundation of the Edinburgh Quartet, the acquisition of the Russell Collection of Early Keyboard Instruments and the restoration of St Cecilia's Hall as its base.

**1945**  
The University Singers group is founded.

**1970**  
Kenneth Leighton takes up the Reid Chair and oversees the student careers of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's Chief Conductor Donald Runnicles (BMus Music 1976) and the celebrated composer Dr James MacMillan (BMus 1981).

**1983**  
The Edinburgh University Chamber Orchestra is formed.

**1989**  
Nigel Osborne takes over as Reid Professor. Under his tutelage the School sees the early careers develop of opera singer Benjamin Ellis (BMus Hons Music 2011) and Streetwise Opera founder Matt Peacock (BMus Hons Music 1995).

**1991**  
The Edinburgh University String Orchestra is founded.

**2006**  
Professor Simon Frith, founding Chair of the Mercury Music Prize, joins the staff as the second Tovey Chair of Music.

**2012**  
Dee Isaacs (BMus Hons 1993) wins the Principal's Medal for Service to the Community.

# GENETICALLY DETERMINED

Discovery of a gene that may yield insights into how humans evolved from apes shows how genetics research at Edinburgh is making strides. Now a Scottish hub for the University's molecular scientists is in sight, writes *Chris Small*.

It's about bringing people together – having a central space will stop people thinking in terms of which area they work in. Over time, they'll feel they work in one institute rather than component parts.

**DR SHONA KERR**  
PROJECT MANAGER  
AT THE MRC IGMM

▶ For more information about our genetics research, watch a video at <http://youtu.be/vYY1cl9JTNs>



An international study involving scientists from the University recently uncovered a gene that may shine a light on how humans evolved from apes. The gene, miR-941, appears to be a vital component in human brain development.

The discovery represents the first time a new gene carried only by humans and not by apes has been identified as having a specific function within the human body. Fundamental to the breakthrough was the research contribution of Dr Martin Taylor, who led the study at the Medical Research Council (MRC) Institute of Genetics & Molecular Medicine (IGMM). miR-941 is "a new gene born", Dr Taylor explains, which may be important in changing the development of the human brain.

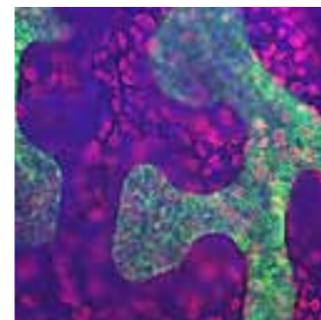
"The really important aspect of this work is it shows that something that was previously not functional at all in the genome has acquired a function," he says. "We know genes must have come from somewhere, and we have 20-odd thousand genes in the genome. But pretty much every instance has come from copying another gene or part of a gene. The human genome has invented something entirely new, and found a use for it. That's something which has never been convincingly demonstrated in the human lineage before."

The miR-941 finding is an indication of the quality and ambition of genetics work currently being undertaken at the University – but it is also typical of the achievements that have been made by Edinburgh



graduates in the field for decades (see panel, right). It comes in the wake of the formation of the MRC IGMM, which brings together the MRC Human Genetics Unit, the Molecular Medicine Centre and Edinburgh Cancer Research Centre. The aim of the merger was to concentrate the expertise of more than 500 scientists with interests spanning birth defects to cancer, alongside chemists, physicists and computer scientists.

Intellectual collaboration was a first step in developing the new IGMM; the next is for the scientists to be united in one dedicated space. This summer construction begins on a new building, which will draw together the existing centres at Crewe Road South, Edinburgh, next to the city's Western General



Hospital. It is hoped that when it opens in autumn 2015, the IGMM will be a Scottish hub for genetics research. Its remit will be to identify molecular and cellular mechanisms underlying normal human development and disease and to translate these findings into clinical benefits.

"The idea for forming the new institute has been cooking for some time, tied into plans for the MRC Human Genetics Unit to become part of the University," says Dr Shona Kerr, a Project Manager at the IGMM. "It's about bringing people together – having a central space will stop people thinking in terms of which area they work in. Over time they'll feel they work in one institute rather than component parts."

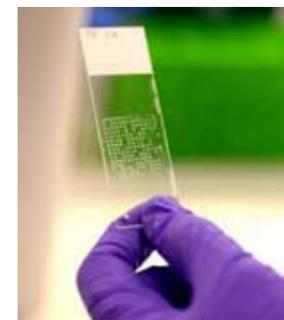


The backing of the MRC – which this year celebrates its centenary with a series of lectures, a festival, an exhibition and live medical research events – is testament to the enabling effect the MRC has had on genetics research in Edinburgh for decades.

Professor Nicholas Hastie, Director of the MRC Human Genetics Unit and the IGMM, believes support from the MRC has been absolutely central to the quality of research that has emanated from Edinburgh.

"The MRC was instrumental in setting up Adrian Bird's world-leading research which led to an understanding of the role of DNA methylation and the whole field of epigenetics," he says. "Adrian started these studies with Professor Sir Ed Southern – the Director of the MRC Mammalian Genome Unit – who played a pioneering role in developing techniques that have underpinned much of the key developments in genetics and biology."

He adds: "The MRC, through providing core support to the Human Genetics Unit and programme grants, has also funded a series of pioneering genetics studies led by alumni. These include David Porteous' work identifying



key genes involved in psychotic disorders and normal brain development and function, Wendy Bickmore's seminal work in understanding the structure of the nucleus and how chromosome folding and position in the nucleus are vital for gene expression, the achievements of David Fitzpatrick in detecting the genetic bases of a number of human paediatric disorders, and Martin Taylor's research identifying miR-941."

Dr Taylor (PhD 2002) believes the IGMM will strengthen the qualities he observed as a student and values now as a member of staff: "The collaborative, collegiate environment at the Institute was really one of the main motivations to come back. Nowhere else that I've been has the cross-talk and interaction. I think that's what marks us out."

As part of the MRC's centenary celebrations Professor Nicholas Hastie will deliver a keynote talk, "Genetics: The new fortune telling?", on 27 June at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. Visit [www.centenary.mrc.ac.uk](http://www.centenary.mrc.ac.uk)

## MAKING OUR MARK

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH HAS A PROUD RECORD OF NURTURING GENETICISTS WHOSE RESEARCH HAS INFLUENCED THE WIDER WORLD. HERE, WE PROFILE A SELECTION OF THEM.

Professor Wendy Bickmore gained her PhD in Molecular Biology at the University's MRC Mammalian Genome Unit. Now Head of Chromosomes and Gene Expression at the MRC Human Genetics Unit, she is leading pioneering research into the three-dimensional folding of the genome.

Author and TV presenter Professor Steve Jones completed a BSc in 1966 and a PhD in 1972 at Edinburgh. He is now Head of the Department of Genetics, Evolution and Environment at University College London. He has focused on the ecological genetics of snails, fruit flies and humans, and his books include *In the Blood* (Flamingo).

Whitley Professor of Biochemistry at the University of Oxford Kim Nasmyth gained his PhD from Edinburgh. He is the co-discoverer of cohesin, a protein complex that regulates the separation of sister chromatids during cell division, and he has received several scientific honours, including the Wittgenstein Prize and the Gairdner Foundation International Award.

Nobel Laureate and President of the Royal Society Professor Sir Paul Nurse spent six years as a postdoctoral researcher in Edinburgh's biology department, a period he later described as being pivotal to his career. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2001, along with Leland Hartwell and Tim Hunt, for their discoveries of "key regulators of the cell cycle".

Professor Sir Ian Wilmut is best known for leading the research group that in 1996 produced Dolly the sheep, the first mammal cloned from an adult somatic cell. He was made an OBE in 1999 for services to embryo development. His many awards include the Paul Ehrlich and Ludwig Darmstaedter Prize in 2005.

Craig Nicoll, Dr Sally Burn/MRC Human Genetics Unit

# WHAT YOU DID NEXT

Edinburgh has been the starting point for the careers of so many alumni. But what was your next move after leaving the University – and how did you achieve success? In this edition we profile a trailblazing science teacher and a celebrated architect.

## “I LOVED WATCHING THE CHILDREN ENJOYING LEARNING.”

DR AUDREY CAMERON, PGCE 2004

Dr Audrey Cameron's career is testament to her tenacity, hard graft and intellectual curiosity.

Profoundly deaf since birth, she has a raft of academic experiences and qualifications. After studying at the University of Strathclyde she became the first deaf person in Scotland to obtain a PhD.

Since 2007 she has been a member of the British Sign Language (BSL) Glossary Team, based at the Scottish Sensory Centre at the University's Moray House School of Education. The team has recently made strides in developing recognised sign language for students hoping to study science subjects.

Originally from Glasgow, Dr Cameron undertook her first degree, in chemistry, at the University of Paisley. Later studying at Strathclyde, she was told that her deafness would prevent her from becoming a lecturer. Ever determined, she opted to switch direction away from chemistry research – and was accepted

for the PGCE teacher training course at Edinburgh.

She explains: “I wanted to teach deaf children and to be able to teach in Scotland in the future. I heard that Moray House has strong links to deaf education so I thought the University would be a great place to study.”

Taking part in the end-of-year celebration day alongside other new teachers was a particular highlight, she says.

Dr Cameron became a teacher of Higher-grade chemistry in mainstream schools, using the services of interpreters in the classroom.

“I loved watching the children enjoying learning chemistry and science,” she says. “I was just like any other teacher standing in front of the class but I'd have a BSL interpreter positioned at the back of the classroom who translated what I was signing to the pupils, and then signed back to me what the pupils were saying. I'd use lots of visual



Dr Audrey Cameron at work with school pupils.

materials for my teaching to help communication.”

Recent work at the Scottish Sensory Centre has focused on developing lists of subject-specific terms in BSL.

Dr Cameron explains: “There are many places on the internet where you can now find subject-specific signs in BSL. The Scottish Sensory Centre BSL Glossary's unique feature is that we also have definitions in BSL and often lab movies or examples to add additional background knowledge to the definition.

“Our target audience is deaf young people at school who use BSL and who want to learn independently using the internet.

“We're also pleased to know that many teachers, communication support workers, interpreters and parents are using the glossary too.”

The team is composed of 16 deaf scientists and linguists who work together to develop new signs. Thus far, 850 have been made, for biology, chemistry and physics. “We're very proud of this but we know we still have a long way to go to have sufficient signs for the school's science curricula,” Dr Cameron says.

In a career marked by talent and determination, she counts her PhD and PGCE, and “watching my students developing in my classroom” among her proudest achievements.

## “ARCHITECTURE CAN IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES.”

JOHN McASLAN, MA (HONS)/DIP ARCHITECTURE 1977, 1978

Architect John McAslan has always had big ideas about how to improve people's lives. And over his varied career these ideas put into practice have seen him accumulate more than 75 international design accolades, including 15 RIBA National and International Awards.

Living and studying in 1970s Edinburgh was formative, he says: “Edinburgh was my first choice to read architecture and I hugely enjoyed my experiences there. I loved exploring the city and developing new relationships, and was fortunate to continue my school pursuits – representing the University First XV and athletics team.”

After graduating, Mr McAslan trained in Boston, US, with Cambridge Seven Associates, before joining Richard Rogers and Partners in 1980. Since establishing his own practice in 1996, major infrastructure and design projects have ranged from the Delhi Metro to Moscow's Stanislavsky Factory, as well as a swathe of iconic buildings in the UK.

In 1998 the practice took on one of the UK's most daunting architectural challenges – the £547 million redevelopment of King's Cross station in London. The aim was to modernise the station for the 47 million passengers who use it every year and in doing so to recapture a sense of its original Victorian scale and grandeur.

The redesigned site was officially opened by Boris Johnson, Mayor

of London, in March 2012, and its most striking feature is the vast white fluted structure spanning the station's western range.

Mr McAslan explains: “The showpiece is clearly the Western Concourse – one of Europe's largest single-span station structures and the heart of the development – but the overall project is far more complex: an extraordinary, collaborative effort that has delivered an internationally significant transport interchange, fit for the 21st century and beyond.”

Appointed CBE in the 2012 New Year Honours for services to architecture, Mr McAslan cites his involvement with earthquake-ravaged Haiti via his firm's Initiatives Unit as a high point of his career. The work involved leading a multidisciplinary team, including local artisans, to resurrect the iconic Iron Market in Port-au-Prince. The market has now returned to daily use and forms the cornerstone of a new city centre cultural quarter redevelopment strategy. Following completion of the project last year, Mr McAslan was appointed Honorary Consul to the Republic of Haiti in London.

The Port-au-Prince experience encapsulates his architectural principles. “My work is informed by a fundamental belief that architecture can drastically improve people's lives and that intelligent, considered design can help the positive development of communities,” he says. ■



The stunning results of the King's Cross station revamp.



Architect John McAslan has received countless awards.

If you'd like to share your experiences, we'd love to hear from you. Visit us at [www.ed.ac.uk/ouralumni](http://www.ed.ac.uk/ouralumni)

FOR MORE ALUMNI PROFILES, PLEASE TURN OVER

# EDINBURGH EXPERIENCE

From artists to academics, many graduates view their student days as the starting point of their professional lives. Here are a few of your favourite Edinburgh experiences, and an update on recent achievements and successes.

## LIZZIE FANE MA (HONS) HISTORY OF ART & ITALIAN 2008

"I spent my third year abroad, studying at the University of Florence. I was thrilled – I hadn't realised that when I studied a language going abroad for a year would be central to the experience. I worked as an au pair near Milan and as an interpreter for an English journalist. I was also the sightseeing chapter editor for *Time Out's* guide to Florence and Tuscany.

and did work experience at mydeco.com, which is run by the founder of lastminute.com. I saw how a well-funded start-up could work. I also did some work for Work Experience Online and got involved in all aspects of the business. It finally gave me confidence to start up myself.

"The site launched in January 2010 and it's gone really well. It gives students up-to-date information and advice about living, studying and working abroad. There's been lots of interest from social media and the universities. We can do things like set up currency cards for students rather than them having to set up bank accounts, which can be a real pain for them. The site is a hub for a certain type of student who likes travelling and languages, and I'm very proud of it."

"In Florence I started developing the business *thirdyearabroad.com*. The success of the site was really down to Launch.ed, the University's service for student entrepreneurs. When I came back they suggested entering the Scottish Institute for Enterprise (SIE) business plan competition and they gave me free office space and business plan software.

"I graduated with a degree and a business plan. I moved to London



## RICHARD M MARSHALL COMPUTER SCIENCE BSc (HONS) 1983, PhD 1987

"I picked Edinburgh Informatics because it was, and still is, world class and has a strong practical element backed up by theory. As both an undergraduate and postgraduate student there was a strong sense of involvement in the department.

"I was lucky to spend my summers working in the department as part of Professor Malcolm Atkinson's Persistent Heap project, which pre-dates many of the things now happening in storage and database management.

"Back in 1980 the concept of entrepreneurship was unknown in the UK, and the term start-up

had yet to be coined. However, two members of staff – John Grey and Irene Buchanan – had recently returned from time at CalTech and brought back with them both the then-new concepts of VLSI [Very Large Scale Integration] design and start-up culture. They were both hugely influential in my career path that has been spent mainly working in different start-ups. I've had more than the statistical proportion of successes, which is great.

"I'm now an industry analyst with Gartner, the biggest and most influential brand in the space. My training in the fundamentals of computing is still tremendously useful in this role."



If you'd like to share your experiences, we'd love to hear from you. Visit us at [www.ed.ac.uk/ouralumni](http://www.ed.ac.uk/ouralumni)

## MARC DWECK BSc 2000, MBChB 2003, PhD 2012

"Most of my memories revolve around times spent with friends. It's also where I met my wife. Probably the highlight, though, was my medical elective. A good friend and I got to spend three months travelling around the world getting into adventures. I spent the first month working with a vet in a game reserve in South Africa; in fact the first thing I gave an injection to was a cheetah. Then we went off to New Zealand, working in A&E and then on attachment with a brilliant surgeon in Tonga who, at the time, was the only one on this particular island. He had to operate on whatever came through the door and it was great to see him at work.

"I met Dr Andy Flapan, with whom I still work, and he made up a project for me where I had to wake up all my friends in the middle of the

night with an alarm clock, make them do a maths test and see what happened to their ECGs. Dr Flapan made cardiology seem like a lot of fun (he still does) and we got some nice data, resulting in my first publication. I think that experience probably set me along my current career path today.

"Now I'm working as a British Heart Foundation Clinical Lecturer in Cardiology, where I get to spend 60 per cent of my time working as a doctor completing my training and the rest doing research.

"We've got access to state-of-the-art imaging techniques which allow us to get beautiful images of the heart and study the processes leading to heart disease in much greater detail than previously possible. There are a lot of exciting projects going on."



## JULIA COLLINS PhD MATHEMATICS & STATISTICS 2011



"My decision to come to Edinburgh was mainly due to the strong reputation of the maths department and my PhD supervisor, but I was also won over by the beautiful and atmospheric city.

"I'm now employed as the University's first Mathematics Engagement Officer. I spend my time giving public lectures and workshops (for example, to school groups or at science festivals), helping researchers to publicise their amazing work, and teaching undergraduates.

"The city of Edinburgh is a fantastic place for mathematics engagement, with so many cultural activities going on all the time and lots of people who are passionate about communicating science."

## IAN SPRINGFORD PGD ARCHITECTURE 1995

"I grew up in Edinburgh and always assumed I'd leave and study elsewhere. When the time came, however, I couldn't find a better city in which to study architecture. The mix of medieval Old and classical New Town along with the dramatic topography of the city make it a fascinating place to study and work in. Edinburgh College of Art also had fantastic facilities and a great reputation within the profession.

"I remember having to pull far too many all-nighters to complete projects on time and some very nerve-wracking presentations, but I enjoyed it tremendously. I've recently had the opportunity to see the programme from 'the other side' as a visiting critic.

"After graduating, I began working with Reich and Hall Architects in Edinburgh before setting up my own practice in 2000. We've been very

fortunate and had the opportunity to work on a wide variety of projects all over the country. We've recently finished a 187-bedroom, four-star hotel in London. We're currently working on the re-cladding and refurbishment of an office building in Irvine and new affordable housing and a church in Edinburgh. We've also got a few interesting projects in development which we hope will come to fruition soon."



# SNAPSHOT

**HIGHLY ANIMATED** A new generation of artistic talent is being recognised thanks to the success of Edinburgh's BA Animation programme. Recent alumni accolades include a BAFTA in Scotland New Talent Award for Animation/Best New Work (Kate Charter for *Hannah and the Moon*) and a BAFTA for Best Short Animation (Will Anderson and Ainslie Henderson for *The Making of Longbird*). These successes come as Edinburgh graduates make a wider mark in the film and TV industries, and on the festival circuit. Edinburgh boasts the largest animation programme in Scotland, and central to its success is an insistence on valuing artistic collaboration. The 10 Films 10 Days 2 Cities project, where third-year animators partnered with Bulgarian film students to produce a new film every day for 10 days, with soundtracks provided by MSc Composition for Film students, is just one example of the ethos.

IMAGES HERE SHOWCASE THE VARIED AND STUNNING RESULTS TO HAVE COME OUT OF OUR ANIMATION STUDIO RECENTLY, AND CAPTURE ALL THE BEHIND-THE-SCENES MAGIC.



01



02



03



04

## STAY CONNECTED

Many now-flourishing animation careers were seeded at Edinburgh and our graduates have proved themselves to be enthusiastic about interacting with current students, returning to deliver guest lectures and discuss their work at the Edinburgh International Film Festival and community events. If you're interested in engaging with our current student body, contact us at [alumni@ed.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ed.ac.uk)



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Photography by Maverick Photo Agency/Callum Bennetts, John K. McGregor, Edinburgh College of Art

01 At work in the studio. 02 Amy Shields (Year 4) adjusts her film set. 03 & 04 Oana Nechifor (Year 4) undertakes delicate work. 05 & 06 Sketching ideas. 07 A stockpile of spares. 08 From alumna Claire Lamond's *Seams and Embers*, which came out of her time as National Mining Museum Scotland's Animator in Residence. 09 Adding a final detail. 10 An early effort from alumnus Will Becher. 11 From BAFTA in Scotland winner *Hannah and the Moon* (Kate Charter). 12 A still from Ainslie Henderson's acclaimed *I am Tom Moody*. 13 From the BAFTA-winning *The Making of Longbird*. 14 One of the results from 10 Films 10 Days 2 Cities 2013. 15 Anna Pearson's 2011 BAFTA in Scotland New Talent winner, *Out on the Tiles*. 16 From Jiamin Liu's graduation film, *If we Meet*. 17 Alumna Anna Ginsburg put together the music video for Bombay Bicycle Club's song "How Can You Swallow So Much Sleep".

> A selection of these films is currently on display at the University of Edinburgh Visitor Centre. For details, email [communications.office@ed.ac.uk](mailto:communications.office@ed.ac.uk)

# ARTS REVIEW

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

## 60 SECONDS IN THE SPOTLIGHT SAM HOARE



**BORN:** London, 1981  
**EDUCATION:** MA (Hons) Philosophy & Psychology 2004  
**CURRENT JOB:** Actor, writer and director  
**FAVOURITE AUTHOR:** Justin Cronin  
**FAVOURITE BAND:** Beirut  
**FAVOURITE FILM OR TV SHOW:** *Breaking Bad*  
**THE PLACE THAT MOST INSPIRES YOU:** The bath  
**GREATEST INFLUENCE:** My girlfriend [actress Romola Garai]

Sam Hoare grew up in the Home Counties and pursued his interest in acting while studying at Edinburgh. After graduating, a part in a London production of Neil La Bute's *The Shape of Things* won him an agent and he went on to appear in TV shows including *Doctors* and *EastEnders*. His first major role came in 2012 when he starred alongside Matt Smith in *Bert and Dickie*, the story of two mismatched rowers trying to reach the final of the double sculls in the 1948 London Olympic Games. Since then he has appeared in *Father Brown*, *Blandings* and *Dancing on the Edge*. *Having You*, a film he has directed and written, starring Andrew Buchan and Anna Friel, premiered recently on Sky Movies. He will also appear in *An Adventure in Space and Time*, a BBC2 drama about the early days of *Dr Who*, in the autumn.

My first impressions of Edinburgh were that it was beautiful, buzzy and friendly. We used to have great picnics on Arthur's Seat and the Craggs. Obviously with an interest in the stage I loved that there was the Festival and the Bedlam Theatre. Going from the Bedlam and directing freshers' plays to eventually working with actors like Chiwetel Ejiofor [in *Dancing on the Edge*] has been fantastic.

**SAM HOARE**  
MA (HONS) PHILOSOPHY  
& PSYCHOLOGY 2004

## THE HIT LIST

### TO WATCH...

*We are Northern Lights* is a documentary drawing together personal videos about Scotland's past, present and future. Some 1,500 people submitted more than 300 hours of footage for the project, which is the brainchild of filmmaker Dr Nick Higgins, of the University's School of Literatures, Languages & Cultures.

 [wearenorthernlights.com](http://wearenorthernlights.com)



### TO READ...

This debut from alumna Beatrice Hitchman (English Literature & French MA 2002) centres on a silent film destroyed in a fire in 1913, the secrets of an ambitious seamstress, and a Parisian cinema icon. *Petite Mort* captures the atmosphere of early 20th-century Paris and its genuinely surprising twist should intrigue readers.

 *Petite Mort, Serpent's Tail*



### TO LISTEN TO...

Recorded in the Reid Concert Hall, this is the debut collection from Sue McKenzie and Edinburgh alumna Ingrid Sawers (MA Mathematics 1989). It features the duo's recitals of six recent British works for soprano saxophone and piano, with the composers' differing responses to popular music a theme throughout.

 *The Coral Sea*, [www.delphianrecords.co.uk](http://www.delphianrecords.co.uk)



## DIVERSE DESIGNS HIT THE CATWALK

McEwan Hall served as a spectacular backdrop recently for Edinburgh College of Art's annual Fashion Show. The event showcased a diverse range of work, inspired by lost Peruvian tribes, luxury yachts, the colour blue and 1990s children's TV shows. Twenty collections from students were featured, including that of Heather Archibald, whose pieces (above) explored the visual and physical interaction of water and fabric.



Sally Jubb Photography

 If you'd like to contribute to Arts Review, email your suggestions to [editor.edit@ed.ac.uk](mailto:editor.edit@ed.ac.uk)

## EDINBURGH ANIMATORS CELEBRATE BAFTA WIN



EDINBURGH COLLEGE OF ART ALUMNI WILL ANDERSON AND AINSLIE HENDERSON HAVE WON A BAFTA FOR THEIR SHORT ANIMATION *THE MAKING OF LONGBIRD*.

The witty and intelligent 15-minute film, directed by Mr Anderson (left) and co-written by Mr Henderson, charts the fractious relationship between Mr Anderson and the eponymous cartoon character, a cut-out paper bird with its own strange backstory and turbulent career.

Made as Mr Anderson's graduation film, *Longbird* has been shown at more than 40 events around the world. Prior to the BAFTA triumph it had won the Short Grand Prix at the Warsaw International Film Festival 2011 and the Golden Dove and Audience Awards at the Leipzig Film Festival, and it was nominated for a New Talent Award 2011 by BAFTA in Scotland.

The film is packed with insights into the nature of a cinema and creativity, and has a winningly cantankerous central character begging to star in a sequel. "It looks like a documentary, but it blurs that line between fantasy and reality and becomes a work of fiction," says Mr Anderson. "I got the idea from studying animation at college and working with friends on it."

Mr Anderson graduated with a BA Animation in 2011, while Mr Henderson received the same degree the following year.

> See our photo story on Edinburgh's animators: page 22

## I DID IT MY WAY: SAMANTHA YOUNG

BA (HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCE) 2009

THE AUTHOR OF INTERNATIONAL HIT *ON DUBLIN STREET* SAYS EDINBURGH AND THE UNIVERSITY PLAYED A STARRING ROLE IN SHAPING HER WRITING CAREER. HERE'S HOW...



Edinburgh had a great reputation and the exact programme I wanted to study. It was a no-brainer, really.

Struggling to find a job, I put all my efforts and free time into writing, self-publishing and promoting my young adult books. After six months I was able to declare myself self-employed as a writer.

In August 2012, I self-published an adult contemporary novel, *On Dublin Street*, which follows the story of a young American woman living and loving in the city of Edinburgh.

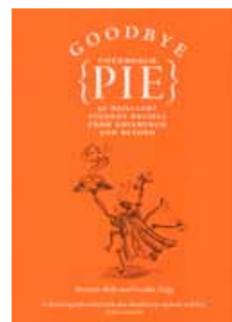
After signing with an agent, I sold *On Dublin Street* in a two-book deal (Penguin) – it will be published in 20 countries.

I find Edinburgh hugely inspiring and have a few concepts for other

series set in the city scrawled down in my notebooks. Moreover, Edinburgh and the University are set to continue to play a huge part in my writing career as the *On Dublin Street* series continues. [The sequel, *Down London Road*, is out now.]

No matter how much it tells you otherwise... procrastination is not your friend! I'd advise current students to get as much out of the city as possible as it's steeped in history and culture and is an education in itself.

## QUIRKY COOKBOOK CATERS FOR STUDENTS



*Goodbye Cockroach Pie: 50 Brilliant Student Recipes from Edinburgh and Beyond* (Inky Paws Press) is a charmingly quirky cookbook compiled by alumnae Rosanna Kelly (MA Russian & History of Art 1987) and Casilda Grigg (MA Spanish & French 1990). Originally conceived in the 1980s to equip students with tasty, budget-conscious recipes, it's been published after a 25-year gap and updated to cover everything from hangover cures to Saag Paneer. The book includes illustrations from Edinburgh College of Art student Stella Phipps.

## JAMES TAIT BLACK PRIZES TO RECOGNISE BEST DRAMA

The 2013 James Tait Black Prizes, Britain's oldest literary awards, have been extended to include a new category for drama. The prizes will be awarded at a special event at the Traverse Theatre in August, as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and the ceremony will include a reading of the winning playwright's piece by the National Theatre of Scotland. For more details, visit [www.ed.ac.uk/james-tait-black](http://www.ed.ac.uk/james-tait-black)

# THE HISTORY MAKERS

# SPARKS OF GENIUS

From chemists to computer scientists, Edinburgh's academics and alumni have had a profound influence on the world since 1583. As part of our new series, we examine the School of Engineering's impact on science and technology through examples of achievement across the ages.



An Edinburgh student in the workshop.



## (HENRY CHARLES) FLEEMING JENKIN (1833–1885)

Fleeming Jenkin was the inventor of the telpherage – better known as the cable car – and the first Regius Chair of Engineering at Edinburgh. He was also a key player in drawing up the proposals for methods of electrical measurement, later recognised as international electrical standards.

Jenkin benefited from an itinerant early life and education, which took him from Kent to Jedburgh, then Edinburgh Academy (where he was a fellow pupil of physicist James Clerk Maxwell) and on to Frankfurt and Paris.

Graduating with an MA from the University of Genoa in 1851, over

the next decade he worked with engineering firms on the design and manufacture of submarine telegraph cables and the equipment for laying them.

In 1866 he was made Professor of Engineering at University College London and two years later took up the post of Regius Chair at Edinburgh.

**In 2011–12 the School of Engineering was awarded £26.88 million of new research grants and contracts.**



By the time of his appointment Jenkin's eclectic talents and skills – as an electrician, economist, lecturer, linguist, critic and artist – were well established. In the post he was able to draw on his mix of scientific expertise, practical insight and business prowess.

Jenkin was a friend of celebrated Scots author Robert Louis Stevenson. In his *Memoir of Fleeming Jenkin*, Stevenson describes Jenkin's childhood, student experiences and accession to the Regius Chair, and praises his range of professional achievements.

## JOHN RENNIE (1761–1821)

One of the great engineers of his era, recognised for his pioneering work on canals, aqueducts and bridges,

**Over the past 30 years the School of Engineering has produced 47 spin-out and start-up companies.**

Rennie studied at Edinburgh from 1780 to 1783. Works he became renowned for include the Crinan Canal and London's Waterloo and Southwark bridges.

## WILLIAM RANKINE (1820–1872)

Studied natural history and philosophy at Edinburgh from 1836 and became a pivotal figure in developing the science of thermodynamics. One of the University's award-winning buildings (pictured above left) is named after him.

## SIR JAMES ALFRED EWING (1855–1935)

An Engineering graduate, he worked on a cable laying expedition to Brazil with Fleeming Jenkin and was

later appointed Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University. During the First World War he managed the department partly responsible for the decryption of intercepted German naval messages. He ensured science and engineering could thrive by establishing the King's Buildings campus.

## SIR FRANCIS McWILLIAMS

Graduating from Edinburgh in 1945 with a degree in Civil Engineering, he was installed in 1992 as the 665th Lord Mayor of London.

## AZAR BESHARAT MOAYERI

Gaining her BSc from Edinburgh, Ms Moayeri (pictured opposite, on her graduation day) became the University's first female graduate of Chemical Engineering.

Returning to her native Iran, she was the first female engineer hired at the National Petrochemical Company. After the Iranian revolution, the family left Iran and settled in Canada where she launched her successful natural hair removal business.

## DR ANDREW ABERCROMBY

Dr Abercromby (pictured below) (MEng 2002) has more than a decade's experience in the Space Life Sciences and Engineering Directorates at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston. Since 2007 he's been Deputy Project Manager for a team responsible for designing and testing a next-generation vehicle for space exploration – the Multi-Mission Space Exploration Vehicle (MMSEV). ■



Science of the University of Edinburgh 1883-1929/Donald M Brier

## DID YOU KNOW...?



**Alexander Graham Bell**, inventor of the telephone, attended the University in 1864. His contribution to engineering is remembered in the form of the Alexander Graham Bell Building at the King's Buildings campus.



During the 18th century, the University was at the heart of the Scottish Enlightenment, inspiring figures such as polymath **James Hutton**, who would go on to use his engineering knowledge to guide the building of the Forth and Clyde Canal.



**Stephen Salter**, Emeritus Professor of Engineering Design, was responsible in 1974 for inventing the eponymous Salter's Duck, a device that converted wave energy into electricity.



**Professor Harald Haas**, Chair of Mobile Communications at the School of Engineering's Institute for Digital Communications, is the pioneer of "Li-Fi", a new way of using LED lighting that can transmit data wirelessly.

# IDEAS EXCHANGE

Creative and experimental learning is a vital part of the Edinburgh student experience. In 2013 we're providing enhanced opportunities for deep learning – for both students and staff – through a variety of intellectual encounters. Here's an example.



Douglas Robertson

Edinburgh Informatics students recently received a taste of “real world” challenges faced by local organisations and community groups during the unique Smart Data Hack.

The week-long event allowed students to use data made available by the University, City of Edinburgh Council, private businesses and non-profit organisations to develop IT products such as apps and websites. Participants formed teams and were mentored

by senior students and working professionals. They then presented their projects to a judging panel.

Event coordinator Professor of Language Technology Ewan Klein (above right) says the hugely successful event allowed students to exchange ideas, network, engage with the community and learn technical skills. The event also provided them with insight into the working world that lay ahead after graduation.

“We had some really positive feedback,” Professor Klein says. “Students get very excited by doing

something they feel is relevant, and one indication is that we now have a few groups who are continuing on with what they developed during the week.”

Taking a break from conventional teaching methods had enormous benefits for students and staff alike, Professor Klein explains.

“Our students are already highly motivated and very bright but this gives them an opportunity to learn things that they can apply more readily. It just releases so much untapped potential.

“The experience of encouraging and facilitating that kind of learning was really fantastic. Events like this mean that we're engaging much more with the local community, both in the third sector and the commercial sector, and those relationships then feed in to all kinds of further possibilities of collaboration.”

The Smart Data Hack was part of the University's wider Innovative Learning Week. ▶

▶ For more information, turn to page 4.

## WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY...



**BEN JEFFREY**  
MINE, YEAR 1  
“The real value of the Smart Data Hack was putting us in touch with

more experienced mentors, and giving us the time, resources and freedom to build some amazing applications and to really push us out of our comfort zones. Many of the projects are still continuing, and participants are now working with the corporate sponsors, so these events can certainly help fill out our CVs.”



**MARGUS LIND**  
MINE, YEAR 1  
“Such events motivate people to come up with an idea and

make it real. It was a great way to learn. Doing things is the best way of learning things in informatics: it strengthens the bonds between people and gives them new connections. In addition it will show you what you need to enhance about yourself to manage better and will give a taste of real-life work.”



**KIM TAYLOR**  
BSc (COGNITIVE SCIENCE), YEAR 2

“By the end of the week our team had a prototype of an Android app that made use of data provided by the Council. Since then we've been fortunate enough to gain the support to continue developing it. Getting to choose what we work on not only makes us more motivated but also gives us experience relevant to our own interests. For example, I chose an AI project that tied in well with my knowledge of linguistics and other cognitive science topics.”



There are numerous ways in which alumni can support and benefit from engaging with the School of Informatics. If you have an idea about how you'd like to get involved, email us at [alumni@ed.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ed.ac.uk)

# THE TWO OF US

Many a friendship is forged during our university days, and we want to hear how you met your partner or best friend. Here's a range of memorable on-campus moments that led to a lifetime together.



The MacLeans “survived” studying and living apart.



The Mackenzies met during Freshers' Week.



Jane Bachner King fell for her partner in a history class.



John King “dared” to contradict a lecturer.

**Alastair MacLean**  
BSc (Hons) Geology & Physical Geography 1997  
**Louise MacLean (nee Nicol)**  
BSc (Hons) Geology & Physical Geography 1996

### GROWING UP TOGETHER

“We met at a Geology Society social event in 1995. Finding myself a girlfriend who was in the year above was a bit of a stroke of genius in terms of help with class work – Louise was a very good, and patient, tutor! We managed to ‘survive’ both studying and living apart in different cities for around four of the first five years we were together. We now live in Aberdeen, where we work in the oil industry, and we have two children. Having met Louise when I was 20 I feel I have grown up with her.”

ALASTAIR MacLEAN

**Bruce Mackenzie**  
MA French & German 1966  
**Iso Mackenzie (nee Moore)**  
MA French & German 1966

### HOLD THE LIFT!

“It was day one of Freshers' Week. I was in the lift on the ground floor of the David Hume Tower and as I was the only one in the lift, I asked the servitor to wait until someone else arrived. That someone turned out to be Bruce! During a short chat, we established that we would look out for each other at the Freshers' disco that evening. We did meet up and found that we were totally relaxed in each other's company. Looking back, I would say it was then I realised Bruce was someone special. The highlight of our time at university would have to be getting engaged on graduation day – 11 July 1966.”

ISO MACKENZIE

**Jane Bachner King**  
BA Arts 1974  
**John King**  
(visiting student)

### A MAGICAL MOMENT

“In the spring of 1974 I was enrolled in American History. I had met a fellow American the previous semester and on the first day of class in January, he introduced me to a friend of his – John – who was spending the year in Edinburgh, initially to take law classes, but by that time had dropped law and was auditing other classes. John went to the lecture with us that day. At one point the professor put a slide up on the screen and announced that it was Jefferson's home. My future husband called out, ‘Sir, I believe that's the Raleigh Tavern.’ I glanced nervously at him in the darkened auditorium. Nobody EVER contradicted the lecturers! There was a brief silence, and then from the podium, ‘I believe you are correct.’ At that moment I knew I was in love. We've been together ever since.”

JANE BACHNER KING

Without any ceremony, the staff nurse administered an injection into my rump... I wonder could it have been love at first sight?

IAN DUNCAN  
BDS 1960

**Ian Duncan**  
BDS 1960  
(spouse's name not supplied)

### LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT?

“In February 1959 I saw a doctor who sent me right away to the students' ward. As I was admitted without time to collect any clothes, I was issued with hospital pyjamas. Without any ceremony, the staff nurse had me take down these pyjamas and administered an injection into my rump. All these years later, I wonder could it have been love at first sight? In the ward was a flatmate who reckoned I had no chance of a date with the staff nurse as she was going with someone who had a car. Always one who liked a challenge I took it up and after a bit of manoeuvring got that date. Later she got her RGN, I got my BDS, we married in 1960 and 52 years and three boys later we're still together.”

IAN DUNCAN

@ If you met your partner or best friend at Edinburgh and would like to share your story, email us at [editor.edit@ed.ac.uk](mailto:editor.edit@ed.ac.uk)

# LANDMARK



@ Send your recollections of your student days to [editor.edit@ed.ac.uk](mailto:editor.edit@ed.ac.uk)

Studying in a unique city like Edinburgh is an unforgettable experience. Each edition we tell the story of an iconic campus or city landmark – and share your memories of its role in your student days.

## TEVIOT STUDENT UNION

Teviot student union opened 124 years ago, the result of a long struggle to create a space for students to meet and study. The world's oldest purpose-built union, it boasts a suitably colourful history. It has witnessed the impact on student life of two world wars, hosted the Union Palais – in the 1950s the most popular dance held anywhere in Edinburgh – and in 1971 belatedly accepted women as members. A city-centre hub for societies, debates, dinners and performances, Teviot can rightly claim to live up to its founders' aim of being the focus for the collective life of students in Edinburgh.

### I REMEMBER WHEN...



**Nicholas Coates**  
MA Arts (Ordinary)  
1971

"The Union for my first two years was all male and I attended the final all-male black-tie dinner. The guest was Jo Grimmond; he was both entertaining and highly blue."



**David Andrews**  
BSc (Hons)  
Agricultural  
Economics 1973

"Superb spag bol and TV pictures from the moon."



**Zining Cui**  
MSc Education  
2012

"My dad came to Edinburgh all the way from Guangzhou in China for my graduation ceremony and we had lunch together at the Library Bar in Teviot to celebrate."



**Nora Lucke**  
MA Arts (Ordinary)  
1965

"Women could only be admitted for specific events – debates for instance, or on Saturday nights, for the Union Palais. The Women's Union was nearby, in George Square."



**Dr Ian Cottrell** BSc (Hons) Chemistry 1965, PhD Organic Chemistry 1969

"Sitting in the library in front of the fire on snowy Edinburgh days; a civilised way to study."



**Professor John Stotesbury**  
MA English 1970

"The place for reading the national newspapers, dozing in the scruffy old maroon-coloured armchairs, picking up one's mail displayed behind glass panels near the porter's box, listening to the lunchtime speakers, and listening to the debates."



**Stuart Swanston**  
MA Arts (Ordinary)  
1974

"It was known as the Men's Union, but that ended when some female members of the SRC ventured for a pint in the downstairs bar. Service was refused and the ladies were requested to go to the first floor bar if they could find members to sign them in. They declined, saying they might play pool. All the lights were switched off and the long-serving manager declared that the building was closed for the rest of the evening."



**Michael Smith**  
MA (Hons) Politics and Economic & Social History 1989

"Pies, pints and politics in the bar with a good selection of MPs."



**Neil Scott**  
BNG Civil Engineering 1992

"I'm fairly sure it was 95p for a pint of 80/ in 1990. Rapid inflation or a fading memory?! A unique place, a great university, a fabulous city – a privilege to be part of it."



**Dr Lydia Michael**  
MSc Reproductive Biology 1998, PhD Biomedical Sciences 2003, MBA 2007

"The Greek nights, organised by the Hellenic Society, lots of salsa dancing nights, some Fringe performances and having lunch with friends many times a week. Fish and chips! Loved it."



**Kirsty Hughes**  
BVMS 2007

"In 2008 as a postgrad I watched the US election there with friends, and in 2010 we had the evening reception of our wedding there."



A black-tie affair, circa 1984.



Teviot is a popular Festival Fringe venue.



Music nights are a regular feature today.



Quiet study in a bygone era.

# THE LAST WORD

## DR DAVE REAY READER IN CARBON MANAGEMENT AND AUTHOR

The shift to online learning at Edinburgh and around the world is sparking a revolution in the way we teach and study. Combined with a growing understanding of climate change, the future of higher education looks virtual, says one of the University's leading academics.



Chris Close

participant, it's a route that opens up attendance to so many more people and has the potential for big carbon savings.

As academics, attending international conferences is a standard part of the job with most of us having cut our presentation teeth as jittery doctoral students at annual meetings like the EGU. The skills and networks that grow from this practice are certainly important yet, with advances in technology and the huge challenge of climate change, it seems high time that virtual meetings and presentations came more to the fore.

In other facets of academia the benefits of virtual meeting and learning technology are being more successfully reaped. Participation in online learning is growing apace across the world and higher education is a lead player in this. At the University of Edinburgh our inaugural set of free-access online courses (Massive Open Online Courses, or MOOCs) attracted 300,000 registrations. Together with a growing portfolio of online honours and masters courses, the virtual student body at Edinburgh is now fast outgrowing its face-to-face counterpart.

This revolution in the way we teach and learn could do wonderful things. It could link us with great students

anywhere in the world whose circumstances would, in the past, never have allowed them to study with us. Students with families to look after, jobs to hold down and insurmountable visa restrictions could now more easily become part of the global community that is the University of Edinburgh. The environmental benefits may also be far reaching, with distance-learning students avoiding some or all of the carbon-intensive travel between Edinburgh and home.

Based on the success of our existing online distance-learning courses, and internationalisation initiatives such as the Global Academies, Edinburgh is well set to ride the online learning wave. This is an opportunity to realise the kind of "sustainable growth" that most businesses and governments can only dream of – growth that is both economically and environmentally sustainable.

The only certainty when predicting the future is that it will be different to what you expect, and in the field of climate change this is something we know only too well. Nevertheless, a future in which online learning becomes a core part of higher education provision seems a good bet. As for academics, and our embracing more actively the technological substitutes for conference globetrotting, the

With advances in technology and the huge challenge of climate change, it seems high time that virtual meetings and presentations came more to the fore.

DR DAVE REAY  
READER IN CARBON  
MANAGEMENT, SCHOOL  
OF GEOSCIENCES

revolution may have a rather more sedate pace. For myself at least, the first question I'll ask next time a conference invite comes in will be: do you do virtual? ▶

*Dr Dave Reay is a Reader in Carbon Management and Director of the MSc in Carbon Management. He also runs the online MSc course Climate Change Impacts & Adaptation. He has written several books on climate change, including Your Planet Needs You! (Macmillan Children's Books) and Climate Change Begins at Home (Palgrave Macmillan).*

# BILLET

The General Council of the University of Edinburgh

BILLET  
CONTINUED >



## REPORT

By Professor Charles Swainson  
Convener of the Business  
Committee of the General Council

The General Council provides graduates with 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 governing body, the University Court, are also members of the General Council. It 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](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk)

THE GENERAL COUNCIL IS REVAMPING ITS WEBSITE. TO SEE OUR NEW LOOK AND JOIN IN THE DISCUSSION, VISIT [WWW.GENERAL-COUNCIL.ED.AC.UK](http://WWW.GENERAL-COUNCIL.ED.AC.UK) IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

I am pleased to present the report of your Business Committee for the period since February 2013.

Your Secretary has completed agreed Guidelines for Consultation between the University and the General Council that have been approved by Court. The document is available on the General Council website.

We bade farewell to Dr Kim Waldron at the Half-Yearly Meeting in February and your Business Committee hosted a leaving reception in March. We wish her all the best for the future. We were delighted to welcome Sarah Smith as the new University Secretary in March and look forward to working closely with her and her team.

June's meeting will be the last Half-Yearly Meeting for retiring Committee members Jane Kille, Ruthven Gemmill, Neil Hynd (Public Affairs Convener), Ian Sutherland (previously Academic Convener) and Shields Henderson. I thank them all for their contribution and am appreciative of the time committee members give freely when they take on this commitment.

Your Business Committee benefits from regular updates from the Director of Communications,

Marketing and External Affairs, Dr Ian Conn, and many members subscribe to the University's daily news feed. The range and number of newsworthy events and research is staggering and gives an excellent insight into the daily life of your University. The work of your Standing Committees has been guided by the Effectiveness Review, and by the priorities agreed at the start of this session.

Gordon Cairns and your Constitutional Standing Committee have produced new information for those wishing to stand for election either to the Business Committee or as a General Council Assessor. This makes the commitment clear and clarifies the way in which we operate to support the University. They are working on revising information for new members of the Committee so that their induction is improved. They have begun to consider whether our election procedures for a future Chancellor should be updated.

Bruce Ritson and your Academic Standing Committee are enquiring into the new support for both home and international students. The University is investing heavily in single point of access services and a universal Personal Tutor scheme and we want to ensure that these are providing their intended benefits.

Kirsty McGregor and your Finance and Services Standing Committee have reviewed the excellent financial year past as described in the *Annual Report* for 2012 with Director of Finance, Phil McNaul. It was good to see the emphasis on the University being less dependent on government teaching grants and seeking as broad an income base as possible, and on the importance of a surplus as a major source of resources for investment.

Neil Hynd and the Public Affairs Standing Committee continue to arrange speakers for the Half-Yearly Lunch and plan our future events, and they are working on a major upgrade of the General Council website. Development & Alumni is a key partner in this and related work. The new Executive Director of Development and Alumni Engagement, Kirsty MacDonald, was welcomed to your Business Committee in January, and gave us an excellent introduction to her new strategies for alumni engagement. Your Committee is supporting one of these, an alumni weekend in Edinburgh at the time of the Half-Yearly Meeting in June; details of events are already on the Development & Alumni and General Council websites, so please book up and come along to meet your friends and colleagues.

Your Committee responded to the publication by the Scottish Government of a new Post-16 Education Bill. In our submission we emphasised our objections to the potential removal of the General Council from the governance of the University and to sweeping powers to direct an institution and its curricula proposed by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, and made a number of comments about poor wording and drafting. The evidence given to the Education Committee of the Parliament and the parliamentary debate has resulted in the expectation of significant revisions to the Bill in its next stage. We will continue to examine this closely until any new Bill becomes law.

Videos of previous Principal's and Convener's Reports, and a selection of after-lunch addresses, can be viewed at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/video\\_gallery.htm](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/video_gallery.htm)



## BILLET NEWS

### FEBRUARY MEETING PROVIDES LIVELY AND POSITIVE DISCUSSION

THE PRINCIPAL GAVE A VERY ENCOURAGING REVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY'S ACTIVITIES IN 2011-2012 AT THE FEBRUARY 2013 HALF-YEARLY MEETING.

His address made mention of the University's many recent positive news stories, in areas ranging from student applications to research funding.

He also noted that there were significant areas in need of improvement, particularly those surrounding the student experience. Even here, he said, there was a basis for optimism as so many initiatives were being undertaken to make improvements.

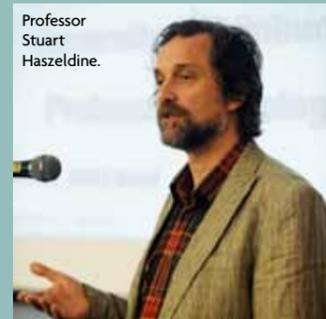
The Principal answered a lively and challenging series of questions on topics ranging from buildings to investments. Questions came from the hall as well as via emails from members in 11 countries, including the US, Burkina Faso and China.

The after-lunch address was given by the University's Professor Stuart Haszeldine, the world's first Professor of Carbon Capture & Storage. His fascinating presentation described the nature and scale of the problem of carbon emissions and their likely consequences for climate change and the possibilities for amelioration using carbon capture.

He explained that while the problem was frightening, the proposed strategies for dealing with it were encouraging. Sustained external support would be required in order for current projects to demonstrate viability of those strategies, he added.



The Principal,  
Professor  
Sir Timothy  
O'Shea.



Professor  
Stuart  
Haszeldine.



See Professor Haszeldine's talk at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/video\\_gallery\\_lunches.htm](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/video_gallery_lunches.htm) and the Principal's address at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/video\\_gallery\\_meetings.htm](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/video_gallery_meetings.htm)

### THE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING & WEEKEND OF EVENTS

21-23 JUNE 2013, EDINBURGH

The next General Council Half-Yearly Meeting and Lunch will take place at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, Easter Bush, Midlothian. For the first time, the General Council's "at-home" summer meeting and lunch will form part of an exciting weekend of events organised by the Development & Alumni team. The weekend provides the opportunity for alumni to return to Edinburgh and see the tremendous changes that have taken place since they graduated, and to reinforce their connections with the University.

#### PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 21 JUNE – EVENING

- Welcome reception, Playfair Library – **Free entry**
- Live comedy and music, Teviot Row House – **£15**

SATURDAY 22 JUNE – MORNING

- General Council Half-Yearly Meeting – **Free entry**

AFTERNOON

- General Council reception and lunch – **£20**
- Independence debate with Professor Tom Devine, McEwan Hall – **Free entry**

EVENING

- Dinner and ceilidh, Pollock Halls – **£25**

SUNDAY 23 JUNE – MORNING

Guided tour (three options) – **£5 per tour**

- University of Edinburgh campus
- Walking tour of Old Town
- National Museum of Scotland

AFTERNOON

- Barbecue, Old College quad – **£10**

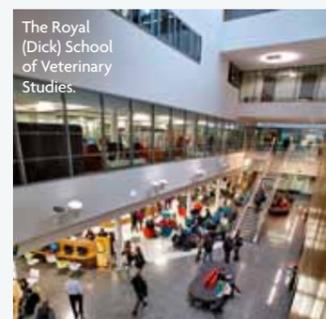
FOR FULL PROGRAMME AND BOOKING DETAILS, VISIT THE DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI WEBSITE AT [www.ed.ac.uk/alumniweekend2013](http://www.ed.ac.uk/alumniweekend2013)

CLOSING DATE FOR ORDERING TICKETS:

Monday, 17 June 2013



Old College  
quadrangle.



The Royal  
(Dick) School  
of Veterinary  
Studies.

# BILLET NEWS

Q

WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS COMMITTEE WORKING ON?

A

THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE – IN PARTICULAR, THE ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THE NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY REMAINS A MAJOR FOCUS.

A recent presentation from Professor Sue Rigby, Vice-Principal Learning & Teaching, was very encouraging and members learned that a number of promising initiatives have been put in place. In addition to the new Personal Tutor system, further enhancements are being made in the following areas:

- academic development and career progression for teaching staff;
- improved communications with students;
- clearer benefits from extra-curricular activities and increasing employability;
- curriculum developments and new e-learning and teaching possibilities;
- the creation of a better sense of community.

A follow-up on these initiatives will be undertaken to determine their impact.

Another area of focus is Edinburgh's financial sustainability – we are looking into the University's financial planning and how it is trying to maximise the returns from all its assets.

We continue to work on improving the totality of the election procedures, including improving the logistics of staging elections and how we provide information to members.

External affairs also deserves attention, and we continue to monitor developments surrounding the Scottish Government's Post-16 Education Bill. Some aspects of this Bill were not perceived as ideal from our perspective and we await the next version with interest.

## KOREAN ARTIST IN THE SPOTLIGHT

FESTIVAL RECEPTION AND EXHIBITION VIEWING: TRANSMITTED LIVE: NAM JUNE PAIK RESOUNDS TALBOT RICE GALLERY

22 AUGUST 2013

The General Council will once again host an exciting festival reception and exhibition viewing this summer at the Talbot Rice Gallery. The event will showcase the exhibition Transmitted Live: Nam June Paik Resounds, which celebrates the 50th anniversary of Korean artist Nam June Paik's first solo exhibition, Exposition of Music – Electronic Television (Wuppertal 1963).

Paik (1932–2006) is widely known as the “father of video art”, and his innovative art and visionary ideas, including video sculptures, installations, performances, videotapes and television productions, continue to inspire artists the world over. A trained musician, he treated technology as a material part of his work.

Transmitted Live will be enhanced by a series of performance art events selected by the curators at the Nam June Paik Art Center in Korea, as well as a series of events, including workshops, public lectures and a conference.

For further information, visit [www.ed.ac.uk/talbot-rice](http://www.ed.ac.uk/talbot-rice)

Tickets are £6, including a glass of wine or soft drink, and may be purchased at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/festivalevent.htm](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/festivalevent.htm) or by post from 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. Please state how many tickets you would like and the names of any guests. Cheques should be made payable to the University of Edinburgh.

**Closing date for applications:  
Friday 16 August 2013**

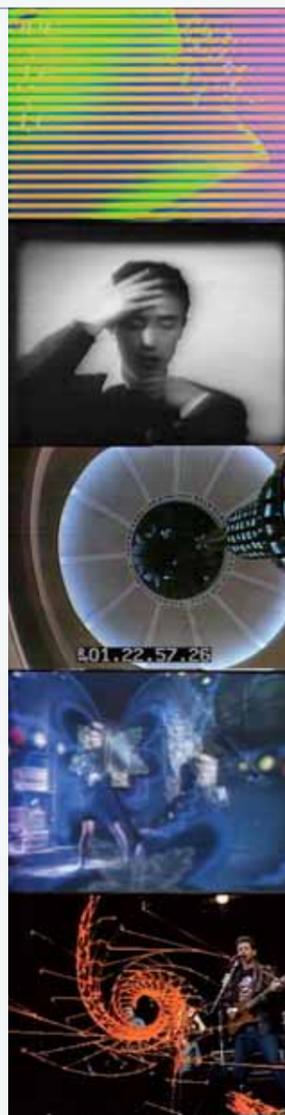
## NEW-LOOK WEBSITE SURE TO BE A HIT

The General Council website is undergoing a revamp.

The new-look site will go live sometime in the summer. It will contain all the usual features, including information on forthcoming meetings and events; reports, photos and videos from previous occasions; information and reports and other documents from the work of the Business Committee; and elections information and guidance. Members will also find details about how to contribute to the General Council Prince Phillip Fund, which provides scholarships and bursaries.

In addition to this information, the site will also feature an exciting new blog, which will provide members with the opportunity to engage in online discussion by posting their views. The blog will be written by a guest author and address current developments affecting the University, its contribution to major world issues, and education in general.

Have a look and join in the discussion at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk)



Courtesy of the Nam June Paik Art Center Video Archives. © Nam June Paik Estate



# BILLET PROFILES

BILLET  
CONTINUED

## MEET THE TEAM

The General Council Business Committee members bring to their roles an array of talent and expertise, with professional backgrounds ranging from medicine to leadership development and human resources. Here, we profile three of its key figures, and they describe the people, places, lessons and events from their time as Edinburgh students that had the biggest impact on their careers.



Gordon Cairns graduated LLB in 1979.

**NAME:** Gordon Cairns

**EDUCATION:**

Royal High School, Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh (LLB, 1979)

**HOME TOWN:**

Buckhaven, Fife

**CURRENT HOME:**

Lasswade, Midlothian

**CURRENT JOB:**

Solicitor (partner in private client department at Gillespie Macandrew)

**FAVOURITE STUDENT MEMORY:**

The fried egg rolls served in the Chambers Street student canteen.

**MOST MEMORABLE STAFF MEMBER:**

Sir Gerald Gordon, for his lectures on the criminal law of Scotland.

**FAVOURITE SOCIAL VENUE:**

The canteen where they served the fried egg rolls!

**MOST VALUABLE LESSON:** Never

to ask anyone to do anything that I wasn't prepared to do myself, and to realise that it was important to work hard to be the best that I could be.

"I was encouraged to take a law degree at Edinburgh as I didn't know

what career path I wanted to take. Having qualified in 1979 and faced with doing my legal apprenticeship I found myself in Dunbar in a small practice, where I was given real clients to deal with from very early on. I found my niche and passion for dealing with individuals of all ages and their varying needs. I joined an Edinburgh practice and opened their first branch office in Penicuik in 1983, and became a partner a year later. My own firm merged with Gillespie Macandrew in 2004.

"I'm married to Fiona, a physiotherapist, and have two children, Matthew, 23, and Victoria, 21. I enjoy theatre, playing golf, travel and wining and dining with friends.

"I have previously been a member of the Business Committee and returned last year as Convener of the Constitutional Standing Committee. It's an honour and privilege to have the opportunity of serving the University and its alumni in this way and to be part of the continuing development of the University in the global marketplace, and in particular considering the effects of independence, should that come to pass next year. I would encourage anyone with an interest in the University to make contact."



Luise Locke's career and attitude to life developed at Edinburgh.

**NAME:** Luise Locke

**EDUCATION:**

St Margaret's School for Girls, Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh (BA Arts 1976, MBA 1999)

**HOME TOWN:**

Edinburgh

**CURRENT HOME:**

Edinburgh

**CURRENT JOB:**

Advocate

**FAVOURITE STUDENT MEMORY:**

Handbrake turns in the Old College quad when parking for 9am lectures. The whole experience of Edinburgh as a student was memorable, from walking across the Meadows in autumn leaf to classes in Buccleuch Place; the views from George Square Library; the architectural joy in sections of George Square; the sheer sense of freedom, fun and independence to take my life where I wanted.

**MOST MEMORABLE STAFF MEMBER:**

The late Lord Rodger, who tutored me in Roman Law, a truly terrifying experience but bearable once I realised he might just have a sense of humour.

**FAVOURITE SOCIAL VENUE:**

Old College Law Library lift – always good for a party!

**MOST VALUABLE LESSON:**

Never, ever give up.

"After graduating I sat law exams, qualified as a solicitor, became a law partner in 1989 at Murray Beith Murray, returned to University in 1998, graduated MBA in 1999, took Bar exams and was called to the Scots Bar in 2000, where I now practise in property litigation. For the fun side of life I resort to music, fly-fishing and skiing, and avoiding lawyers where possible! Holidays find me sherry sampling in Andalusia.

"The University holds a seminal place in my life from which my career and attitude to life developed. Returning for my MBA I realised how much had changed since undergraduate days; the University and teaching methodologies had shifted up several gears. That experience made me curious about the General Council and its role, coinciding with a fishing friend, Bruce Rae, recruiting candidates for the Business Committee. I recommend it to other graduates."

# BILLET PROFILES



Charles Swainson enjoys being involved in the University.

**NAME:** Charles Swainson

**EDUCATION:** St Edward's School, Cheltenham, University of Edinburgh (MBChB, 1971)

**HOME TOWN:** Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

**CURRENT HOME:** Edinburgh

**CURRENT JOB:** Retired renal physician and medical director; now Treasurer for the College of Physicians, eHealth Lead for the Scottish Government, and President of the Scottish Wine Society

**FAVOURITE STUDENT MEMORY:** When the Men's Union granted equality to women, a group of women students entered the bar on a Friday evening. The noise and cat-calling was deafening and the flood of beer that poured from the balcony was too much, and the women fled. But they had made a point and the two separate unions merged soon afterwards.

**MOST MEMORABLE STAFF MEMBER:** The Assistant Dean, Dr Malcolm Low, was a big influence on me because he and his wife, Aileen, introduced me to Edinburgh, and to art galleries, especially the Scottish Gallery and Jimmy Mowat and his Loomshop Gallery in Fife.

**FAVOURITE SOCIAL VENUE:** A long-since gone Italian coffee shop on Forrest Road, where we had intense discussions about rugby, satire, the lighting of DramSoc plays and Tolkien.

**MOST VALUABLE LESSON:**

Henry Matthew, a fearsome physician in the Royal Infirmary, taught me the value of listening to people and that diagnosis comes straight from the patient.

"After a wonderful career as a renal physician and medical director, I retired two years ago and now enjoy part-time work for the College of Physicians and the Scottish Government. As an Edinburgh student I was active in DramSoc, the Music Society, FilmSoc and best of all the Mountaineering Club, which kick-started my quest for Munros and a lifelong love of mountains. My passion now is wine, and as President of the Scottish Wine Society I enjoy regular events, including the Society's annual visit to Burgundy, which raises funds for hospices. Skiing and golf are also firm favourites. I was a late starter with both but I'm making up for lost time.

"Neither my mother nor father had been to university so I was delighted to come to Edinburgh. I've lived and worked in London, the US and Edinburgh and had five terrific years in New Zealand. This university gave me my beautiful wife, Marie, and the city educated my son, Andrew; it is a university and city I love for its northern austerity, intellectual and cultural depth and all it has given me. The opportunity to be elected to the Business Committee, and now to be the Convener, seems a good way to be involved, to give the University what I can, and to help ensure this University gets to be the best in the world."

**OFFICERS:**

**Chairman:** HRH The Princess Royal  
**Secretary:** Michael J Mitchell, BSc, PhD 2015  
**Registrar:** Sarah Smith, University Secretary ex-officio

**GENERAL COUNCIL ASSESSORS ON THE UNIVERSITY COURT:**

A Margaret Tait, BSc 2013  
Alan M Johnston, MBA, CSci, CChem, FRSC, CBiol, FIBiol 2015  
Ann M Smyth, BSc, PhD, MPhil 2015

**CHANCELLOR'S ASSESSOR:**

Sheriff Principal Edward F Bowen, CBE, TD, QC ex officio

**BUSINESS COMMITTEE:**

Convener: Charles Swainson, MBChB, FRCPE, FRCSE, FFPHM 2016  
Vice-Convener: Frances D Dow, CBE, MA, DPhil 2016

Convener of Public Affairs Standing Committee: Neil R Hynd, LVO, FRIAS, FSA Scot, BAArch 2013  
Convener of Academic Standing Committee: Bruce Ritson, OBE, MD, FRCPE, FRCPsych 2014  
Convener of Finance and Services Standing Committee: Kirsty MacGregor, MA, MBA, DipEd 2015  
Convener of Constitutional Standing Committee: Gordon D Cairns, LLB 2016

**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:

A	William Ruthven Gemmell, LLB	2013
A	William Shields Henderson, MA, CA	2013
P	Jane E Kille, MA, MBA	2013
A	Ian Sutherland, BSc, PhD, DSc, TD	2013
P	Simon Fairclough, MBA	2014
F	Luise Locke, BA, MA	2014
P	Elizabeth Morris, MBChB, MRCPG	2014
C	Ann M Sutherland, MA, FBCartS	2014
C	Morven Brown, MA, DipEd, DipEd Psych, AFBPsS	2015
F	Waverley Cameron, BSc, SM	2015
C	Michael Lugton, MA	2015
P	Ritchie Walker, MA, BSc, DipEd	2015
F	Robert (Bobby) Burt, MD, FRCA, FRCPE, FACP	2016
A	Stuart G Macpherson, OBE, MBChB, FRCS, FRCP, FRCGP, FAcadMedEd	2016
F	Hamish McKenzie, MA, CA	2016
C	David M Munro, MBE, BSc, PhD	2016

**ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY:** Mary T Scott, BA

The Constitutional Arrangements for the working of the General Council of the University of Edinburgh and its Business Committee and the Regulations for General Council Elections can be found at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/constitution.htm](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/constitution.htm)

# BILLET GENERAL COUNCIL PAPERS

BILLET CONTINUED >

## GENERAL COUNCIL HALF-YEARLY MEETING AND LUNCH, SATURDAY 22 JUNE 2013

THE ROYAL (DICK) SCHOOL OF VETERINARY STUDIES, EASTER BUSH

**10am:** Refreshments on arrival in the Foyer

**10.30am:** Meeting in Lecture Theatre 2

**12.15pm:** Wine Reception in the Foyer

**12.50pm:** Buffet Lunch in Room G01. Guest after-lunch speaker: Dr George Gunn

Please note that the meeting will be webcast. For details visit [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/livewebcasts.htm](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/livewebcasts.htm). For further information turn to page 33.

## AGENDA FOR THE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

- 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in Old College, Edinburgh, on 9 February 2013 (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 Presentation by Professor David Argyle, Head of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
- 7 Any other competent business
- 8 Adjournment

## PAPER A

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL HELD IN EDINBURGH ON 9 FEBRUARY 2013

### PRESENT

MR PETER McCOLL  
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 MICHAEL MITCHELL  
Secretary of the General Council

PROFESSOR CHARLES SWAINSON  
Convener of the Business Committee

51P AND 13V = 64 MEMBERS  
(P = Physical; V = Virtual)

REV DR HARRIET HARRIS  
Chaplain to the University

### 1 RESULT OF THE ELECTIONS OF ONE ASSESSOR TO THE UNIVERSITY COURT AND FIVE MEMBERS OF THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

The Chairman announced that the one General Council Assessor to the University Court elected to serve for a period of four years from 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2017 was Ms Doreen Davidson, and the five new members of the Business Committee elected to serve for a period of four years from 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2017 were Mr John Clifford, Mr Matthew McPherson, Ms Anne Paterson, Mr Scott Peter and Mr Ian Stevens.

### 2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL HELD IN THE HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY, BERLIN, ON 16 JUNE 2012

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2012 were approved.

### 3 MATTERS ARISING

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

### 4 REPORT OF THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Professor Charles Swainson, Convener

# BILLET GENERAL COUNCIL PAPERS

of the Business Committee, gave the report of the Business Committee. He welcomed all attendees, in particular Dr Alan Brown, the previous Convener, congratulating him on his appointment as a University of Edinburgh Regent. The work of the Business Committee and its Secretariat was commended. The Effectiveness Review, chaired by Dr Frances Dow, had been highly worthwhile involving a wide consultation with the University, Court Assessors and other members. Two main conclusions were: firstly that the current arrangements of the Business Committee and its Standing Committees were fit for purpose, and secondly, that many ways of working could be clarified or improved upon, including various channels of communication. The recommendations were being implemented.

The work of the Standing Committees was highlighted. Public Affairs, under its Convener Mr Neil Hynd, had helped organise the hugely successful meeting in Berlin the previous June. The visit to the Humboldt University had been much appreciated and it had been fascinating to listen again to Dame Stella Rimington as she talked about her professional activities in Berlin. Currently it was involved with the redevelopment of the General Council's website as well as with all future events and meetings. The new website would be more interactive as part of an effort to engage better with all members wherever they might be located.

Constitutional, under Mr Gordon Cairns, was working through many of the recommendations of the Effectiveness Review. This included improving the quality of information provided to candidates for election as well as to new members of the Business Committee when they joined. They had also worked on Guidelines for Consultation between the Business Committee, the General Council and the University. It set out the reasonable expectations of the

Business Committee and of the University on the types of issues on which General Council opinion might be sought, the status of such dialogue and the nature of feedback required.

Academic, under Dr Bruce Ritson, was focusing on two major themes identified by the Business Committee as priorities for this session. The first was to investigate the efforts being made to improve the student experience and to support the University in these endeavours. The University has invested considerable additional resources to improve the quality and capacity of support for students. The second theme was around international students who often had different expectations and needs from home students. The Committee would be exploring ways in which the General Council could support the many University initiatives for those students.

Finally, Finance & Services, under Ms Kirsty McGregor, would be looking into the University's financial situation as well as its efforts into commercialisation. This was in particular the commercialisation of its research, as well as its other physical and intellectual assets.

The Convener thanked the five members who had stood down in July: Dr Alan Brown, as Convener, and Ms Doreen Davidson, Professor Ron Asher, Mr Michael Conway and Mr Bruce Rae. He welcomed the new members who had joined this session: Professor Stuart Macpherson, Professor David Munro, Dr Bobby Burt, Mr Hamish Mackenzie and Mr Gordon Cairns, who was returning, and looked forward to them making a strong contribution. He invited all General Council members to contribute to its work, whether through the Business Committee or various mentoring schemes, or through giving to the Prince Philip Fund. In conclusion, he thanked Dr Kim Waldron, the retiring Registrar of the General Council and University Secretary,

for her support, enthusiasm and contribution to the University.

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 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The next Half-Yearly Meeting would take place on Saturday 22 June 2013 at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, the University of Edinburgh, Easter Bush. Any motions for discussion at this meeting should be received in the General Council Office by 3 April 2013. The following statutory Half-Yearly Meeting would be held on Saturday 15 February 2014 in Old College and any motions for discussion at this meeting should be received in the General Council Office by 28 November 2013.

## 6 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS

There would be elections for five members of the Business Committee in February 2014. Nominations on forms available from the General Council Office and on the website should be received in the General Council Office by 28 November 2013.

## 7 PRESENTATION BY THE PRINCIPAL OF THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY

The Principal presented his Annual Report based on the University's *Annual Review 2011/2012* ([www.ed.ac.uk/about/annual-review/publication](http://www.ed.ac.uk/about/annual-review/publication)). The University aspired to international success in respect to its students, staff, teaching and research, and its success was demonstrated in various ranking. It had had two very successful mergers – with Edinburgh College of Art and the MRC Human Genetics Unit. It was also successful financially with an income of about £700 million. It was noted that formula funding from the Scottish Government was

now only 27 per cent of income resulting in the University being accountable to many different stakeholders. Student numbers were over 31,000, with most of the recent increase in international students. Applications were actually up for Edinburgh, at nearly 50,000, assisted by its very generous bursary schemes. Women were in the majority, accounting for 60 per cent of undergraduates. Humanities & Social Science was by far the largest College, but even the smallest, Medicine & Veterinary Medicine, had more than 4,000 students, which was more than some other entire universities. The proportion from overseas from 1900 to 2000 had remained stable at 19 per cent, but had now grown to about 37 per cent, most growth occurring in the previous 10 years. The most frequent European country of origin was Germany, followed by Greece, although Bulgaria, Poland and Lithuania had all grown greatly. Further afield, nearly 2,000 students came from the US, which was encouraging given the strength of its own universities. Mainland China was next, with Asia as a whole very important. The undergraduate/postgraduate mix overall was two thirds to one third and a greater proportion of postgraduates was desirable.

Research funding stood at £250 million, a spectacular success, with just over half from the UK Research Councils. Charities contributed £3 million and industry £6.5 million, but most notable was the European funding of £32 million. This had been increasing recently and supported social science as well as science and medicine. Recent announcements on the EU budget were very positive and should enable further increases in future.

Major estate developments continued, including the last phase of the Main Library redevelopment and the new Centre for Carbon Innovation, costing £10 million. The wave tank at King's Buildings, an extension to the EPCC and the Anne Rowling Regenerative

Neurology Clinic, were also highlighted. Finally, the major refurbishment in George Square for the School of Literatures, Languages & Cultures was planned at a cost of £33 million.

Other highlights for the University were covered: the new Chancellor had been extremely active in the University, very involved and effective. The Confucius Institute had been given an award for the sixth year in succession, a tribute to the very broad scope of its activities. Innovative Learning Week, a new initiative, had been hugely successful. The Edinburgh College of Art Fashion Show was held in the Playfair Library Hall for the first time and had been a wonderful event. The many activities around Professor Peter Higgs and the Higgs boson were particularly inspiring. The 250th anniversary of the establishment of English Literature as an academic subject had been celebrated. Student volunteering continued to grow in both numbers participating and breadth of activities, and enhanced the University's reputation.

Many members of the University had received honours and awards. This included the very important Student's Association Teaching Awards. The London Olympic Games had been very successful with Edinburgh emerging as the best performing UK university. This position had been developed over many years and enhanced the attractiveness of this university with improvements in both staff and facilities. A number of outstanding people had received honorary degrees.

The internationalisation efforts continued. The office in Beijing was booming and Mumbai was now very active. Additional collaborations were beginning in India. Latin America was receiving increased attention, including the new Office of the Americas in São Paulo. This built on strong existing connections in Brazil, Mexico and Chile. Santander Bank had provided

substantial financial support, including scholarships.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) were recently introduced by this university based on the Coursera platform. They were free and had already become an outstanding success. Almost 100,000 people had signed up for the *Introduction to Philosophy*. The predicted favourite, *Astrobiology and the Search for Extraterrestrial Life*, had 40,000. Unexpectedly, many participants were from schools, thus giving them a wider education and helping them prepare for university study. Although *Equine Nutrition* was the smallest with 23,000, it was hoped that some of these might progress to an online Masters course in Equine Health, which incurred fees. Other courses anticipated a similar progression and given the very large numbers even a small proportion doing so would have a very beneficial impact. Some very positive online feedback had enhanced the University's global reputation. The University was very much at the forefront of the MOOC world and this had been recognised internationally as well as by the Scottish Government. It also addressed the widening participation and social responsibility objectives of the University.

Overall the University was doing very well. It had grown considerably, with income up by 70 per cent in real terms, and student numbers up by 40 per cent over the previous 10 years. The higher rate of income growth reflected the outstanding success in gaining research income. This growth was consistent and continued. The Edinburgh Campaign had reached its £350 million objective. Even with the current relatively generous provision of bursaries and scholarships more were needed and in this respect the General Council Prince Philip Fund was appreciated. New Eric Liddell Scholarships for students going to and coming from China had recently been announced. The quality of both

the international staff and students continued to be enhanced, with exceptional work being undertaken at the University, including on the environment, world health, security and food supply.

In conclusion, thanks were given to the General Council, in particular the Court Assessors who were a very important and active part of the lay membership on Court, as well as the Business Committee and its officers. Its input was also much welcomed, for example the suggestion some time ago to put greater effort into working with Latin America.

The full text of the Principal's remarks, as well as the record of the discussion that followed the presentation, are contained in the *Annex* to the *Billet*. The presentation can also be viewed at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/video\\_gallery\\_meetings.htm](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/video_gallery_meetings.htm).

## 8 ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

There was no other competent business.

## 9 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*, which 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 9 February 2013 is available on the website at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/annex.htm](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/annex.htm). General Council members may also request it by post from: Mrs Mary Scott, General Council Office, Charles Stewart House, 9–16 Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1HT. Tel 0131 650 2152; email [general.council@ed.ac.uk](mailto:general.council@ed.ac.uk); or a copy can be picked up at the location of the Council Meeting from 30 minutes beforehand.



Previous copies of *Billet* can be found at [www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/billet.htm](http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/billet.htm)

# Because all our loved ones matter



*Katy, Cancer Nurse at the Royal  
(Dick) School of Veterinary  
Studies, with Milly*

## The Dick Vet cares for our loved ones today, and educates the vets of tomorrow.

Leaving a gift to the University of Edinburgh in your will means the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies can continue using today's cutting-edge teaching, technologies and treatments to deliver the very highest quality of veterinary education and clinical care to all our loved ones.

To find out more about leaving a gift to the University in your will, please contact Mairi Rosko on +44 (0)131 651 1411 or [mairi.rosko@ed.ac.uk](mailto:mairi.rosko@ed.ac.uk)



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

[www.edinburghcampaign.ed.ac.uk](http://www.edinburghcampaign.ed.ac.uk)