SUSTAINABILITY SPECIAL
MEET ALUMNI, STAFF AND STUDENTS DEVOTED TO THE SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CAUSE
Inspiration can be your legacy

“A university and a gallery have much in common. Challenging, Beautiful, Visionary. Designed to inspire the hearts and minds of the leaders and creators of tomorrow.”

Pat Fisher, Principal Curator, Talbot Rice Gallery www.ed.ac.uk/talbot-rice

FOREWORD

Welcome to the Summer 2014 issue of Edit. As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of Edinburgh becoming Scotland’s first Fairtrade University, this edition of Edit has a sustainability theme. Our news, reviews, features and interviews focus on alumni, staff and students involved in all manner of activities related to sustainability and social responsibility. In our main features we reflect on the student-led Fairtrade campaign a decade ago and meet entrepreneurs, artists and scientists looking to the environmental and socio-economic challenges of our future. You can also catch up with many of your peers who are blazing trails in the sustainability and social responsibility fields, in our update pages and alumni profiles. Edit itself is always seeking to enrich its offering to our growing readership, while limiting our environmental impact, and this month we launch a digital edition of the magazine at www.edit.ed.ac.uk which you can enjoy on your laptop, PC, tablet or phone. Wherever and however you read this sustainability special, as always we would love to receive your views of the magazine and your own stories to share with Edinburgh alumni throughout the world.

Kirsty MacDonald, Executive Director of Development and Alumni Engagement

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ON THE MOVE?
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This publication is available in alternative formats on request.

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WWW.ED.AC.UK 3
The University has officially launched its Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability.

Professor Mary Bownes, Senior Vice-Principal External Engagement, opened the department at the University’s annual Sustainability Awards ceremony at Teviot House, where 35 awards were announced.

The department formalises activities that have been taking place across the University for many years. Announcing the launch, Professor Bownes said: “While the University can be proud of its achievements, we need structures for the management and governance of social responsibility and sustainability.”

Edinburgh is the first university in the UK to have a social responsibility and sustainability department. It is responsible for promoting and embedding sustainable practices within the University, including energy efficiency, ethical investment and procurement. It also provides advice and support for students and academic and support staff.

Social responsibility is one of the six strategic themes of the University’s Strategic Plan 2012–16.

In the Sustainability Awards, the Roslin Institute took the Best Energy Saving and Ethical Investment and Procurement Award for students and academic and support staff.

Professor Bownes added: “This is an exciting step for the University and for Edinburgh, and we look forward to working with the new department to embed sustainability across all activities across the University.”

The department also supports Jane Goodall’s Roots and Shoots, a programme that helps young people take responsibility for meeting local challenges.

**SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY LAUNCH**

**JANE GOODALL GIVES GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM**

The celebrated conservationist Dame Jane Goodall gave a public lecture entitled “Reasons for Hope” at New College in May.

Dame Jane, who is best known for her hands-on research into Gombe chimpanzees, recounted her unique experiences in the field. She discussed the future of chimps in the wild and the illegal trade in ivory and rhino horn.

Proceeds from the event went to the Jane Goodall Institute, which aims to continue Dame Jane’s research and conservation projects. The institute also supports Jane Goodall’s Roots and Shoots, a programme that helps young people take responsibility for meeting local challenges.

**JANUARY: FOR OPTIMISM AND ETHICAL INVESTMENT AND PROCUREMENT**

The annual Our Changing World series of public lectures beginning in September will feature Mark Rounsevell, Professor of Rural Economy and Environmental Sustainability at the School of Geosciences.

Professor Rounsevell is a lead author on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s Working Group on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, which in April reported that climate change is already occurring on all continents, as part of the IPCC’s Fifth Assessment Report.

He is the University’s Assistant Principal Global Environment and Society, and Director of the University’s Global Environment & Society Academy.

**UN CENTRE OF EXPERTISE**

A new centre of expertise in sustainable development education is to be opened at the University.

Learning for Sustainability Scotland will be headquartered in Edinburgh as Scotland’s only United Nations Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development. It will be opened at a reception on 17 November in the Playfair Library.

Sustainability education courses are already offered at the University and the centre will accelerate existing activities.

Separately, Edinburgh has joined a global network of leading universities committed to embedding sustainability in the curriculum and working practices.

Edinburgh is the first Scottish university to join the International Sustainable Campus Network, which includes Oxford, Yale, Harvard, Peking and Melbourne universities.

For more information, visit www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability

**TALKS FEATURE IPCC AUTHOR**

The annual Our Changing World series of public lectures beginning in September will feature Mark Rounsevell, Professor of Rural Economy and Environmental Sustainability at the School of Geosciences.

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He is the University’s Assistant Principal Global Environment and Society, and Director of the University’s Global Environment & Society Academy.

For more information, visit www.ed.ac.uk/edinburgh-global

**AMAZON STUDY COULD AID CARBON OFFSETTING**

Edinburgh researchers studying the Amazon Basin have revealed unprecedented detail of the size, age and species of trees across the region by comparing satellite maps with hundreds of field plots.

The findings could help improve carbon offsetting initiatives, which place a cash value on the preservation of trees according to their carbon content.

Existing satellite maps of the area have estimated trees’ carbon content based largely on their height, but have not accounted for large regional variations in their shape and density.

Researchers from the Universities of Edinburgh and Leeds, who led the research, say their findings could help quantify the amount of carbon available to trade, and improve understanding of how much carbon is stored in the world’s forests, which informs climate change forecasts.

Scientists studied a database of thousands of tree species, taken from more than 400 hectare-sized plots across the nine countries of the Amazon Basin — Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela.

Dr Ed Mitchard of the School of Geosciences said: “Developing our understanding of this aspect of forests, in the Amazon and elsewhere, could be hugely important for our climate.”

For more information, visit www.ed.ac.uk/edinburgh-global

**POWERHOUSE WITH GREEN CREDENTIALS**

The University has switched on a new £43 million supercomputer, ARCHER (Academic Research Computing High End Resource), which, among other applications, will contribute to global understanding of climate change.

ARCHER is the most powerful computer in the UK, capable of more than a million billion calculations a second. It will enable scientists to tackle a new level of “Big Data” problems, such as climate modelling.

ARCHER is housed in one of the greenest computer centres in the world, with cooling costs of 8p for every £1 spent on electricity. It is funded and owned by the Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council, and operated by the University’s Edinburgh Parallel Computing Centre.

For more information, visit www.ed.ac.uk/edinburgh-global

**AWARDS FOR CARBON CENTRE**

The home of Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECI) at Edinburgh’s High School Yards has won the Building Conservation Award at the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Scotland Awards 2014.

It was also named Building of the Year in the Edinburgh Architectural Awards.

The building, formerly Edinburgh’s Historic Old High School, was the first refurbished building in the UK to achieve the industry sustainability ‘BRE/IMA Outstanding’ award at the design stage.

In April ECI, a hub of cross-sectoral expertise, launched the first electric vehicle to join Edinburgh’s successful City Car Club. The car will be based at the Centre, which has installed four electric vehicle charge points, and will monitor the use of electric vehicles and attitudes towards them.

For more information, visit www.ed.ac.uk/archercentre
**CONCRETE RESULTS FROM SAND AND UREA**

**PETER TRIMBLE (BA PRODUCT DESIGN 2013) HAS MADE FURNITURE FROM AN ECOLOGICAL ALTERNATIVE TO CONCRETE THAT USES SAND AND AN INGREDIENT FOUND IN URINE.**

“Dupa” is a microbial manufacturing process that Mr Trimble used in his thesis project at Edinburgh College of Art. When sand is mixed with urea and the bacterium Bacillus pasteurii a chemical reaction produces calcite, which glues the sand grains together, producing a sandstone-like material.

Mr Trimble has made seats using these ingredients in a low-energy manufacturing process. He says conventional production methods involve vast amounts of energy and waste that could be cut drastically by using low-temperature biological processes.

It’s not very well known, but the manufacture of concrete is a major contributor to CO2 emissions, producing 5 per cent of global emissions,” says Mr Trimble.

Mr Trimble has made seats using these ingredients in a low-energy manufacturing process. He says conventional production methods involve vast amounts of energy and waste that could be cut drastically by using low-temperature biological processes.

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**VET DIRECTOR JOINS FISH FIRM**

Ronnie Soutar (BVMS 1980), former Director of Veterinary Services at the University, has been appointed Managing Director of Aqualife, the world’s largest fish vaccine delivery company.

Aqualife, based in Stirling, offers vaccination and training services to the aquaculture industry. On taking up his appointment, Mr Soutar said: “Aqualife is making significant practical improvements in fish health and welfare, things I truly believe in.”

Mr Soutar is President of the British Veterinary Association’s Scottish Branch and a board member of the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

After his first degree at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, and postgraduate study at Stirling University, he worked as a vet and in management in fish farming. He was Director of Veterinary Services at Edinburgh from 2005 to 2013.

Alumni working in the fields of sustainability and social responsibility are among those recognised in the 2014 New Year Honours.

Professor Sir Geoff Palmer (PhD 1967), a prominent anti-racism campaigner, was knighted for services to human rights, science and charity.

Dr Heather Sylvia McHaffie (MPhil 1992, PhD 1998), who is Scottish Plants Officer at The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, was appointed MBE for services to the conservation of plants in Scotland.

Meanwhile, volunteering for the University’s General Council has been recognised. Margaret Tat (BSc 1965) is a former Convener of the Business Committee, and a former member of the University Court. She was made MBE for services to education.

Alumni honours:

edin.ac/He150c

**EUAN’S GUIDE TO ACCESSIBILITY**

**EUAN MACDONALD (LB 1999) HAS CREATED A WEBSITE OFFERING REVIEWS OF PUBS, RESTAURANTS AND VISITOR ATTRACTIONS FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS.**

Euan’s Guide encourages users to post reviews of any venue, anywhere in the world, and venues are able to promote their own accessibility features.

Mr MacDonald has been using a wheelchair for the past four years, having been diagnosed with motor neurone disease 10 years ago. He says that since using a wheelchair, he has found visiting hotels, social venues and visitor attractions difficult, because it is often impossible to discover what their disabled access is really like ahead of a visit.

The new website is “a great way for people to share practical first-hand knowledge of venues which is otherwise difficult to find”, Mr MacDonald says. “Euan’s Guide aims to be a friendly, honest and empowering alternative to hours of web searching and phone calls, and most importantly remove the ‘fear of the unknown’ when visiting a venue for the first time.”

The University is home to the Euan MacDonald Centre for Motor Neurone Disease Research, opened in 2007.

www.euanguide.com

**HONOURS FOR ALUMNI**

Alumni with innovations that can benefit the environment and society were recognised in the 2014 New Year Honours.

Fenn Sinclair (MChem 2003) has come up with an ecological way to cut the waste destined for landfill after music festivals. Sinclair has set up an ecological company that produces biodegradable tents.

She wishes to create a biodegradable fabric that will keep the weather out but then decompose under the right conditions. She says one in six festival goers leaves behind a discarded tent.

Maria Mullane (MA Product Design 2013) has worked with stroke patients to design a hand therapy tool to help them regain movement and muscles.

Ms Sinclair and Ms Mullane won £500 each to help develop their ideas into business ventures.

**PRIZES FOR INNOVATION**

Alumni with innovations that can benefit the environment and society were recognised. Margaret Tait (BSc 1965) was knighted for services to human rights, science and charity.

Meanwhile the Alumni Services section of the University’s website has been enhanced, making it easier to access information of greatest interest to alumni, especially benefits and reunions.

www.ed.ac.uk/alumni/services

**TEN MARATHON CHARITY EFFORT**

Ellan Iaquaniello (MA Social Science 1993) is undertaking one of the world’s toughest endurance challenges: running 10 marathons in 10 days.

Ms Iaquaniello has been selected as one of 15 athletes to take on the Brathay 10 in 10 challenge. She is raising funds for the Brathay Trust, which supports disadvantaged young people to help them make positive choices in their lives.

Due to complete the challenge as Edit goes to press, Ms Iaquaniello was aiming to run the course of the Brathay Windermere Marathon in Cumbria every day for 10 days.

She is raising funds for the Brathay Trust, which supports disadvantaged young people to help them make positive choices in their lives.

Meanwhile, volunteering for the University’s General Council has been recognised. Margaret Tat (BSc 1965) is a former Convener of the Business Committee, and a former member of the University Court. She was made MBE for services to education.

Alumni honours:

edin.ac/He150c

To share your experiences about where your degree took you, email us at: alumni@ed.ac.uk or follow us on Twitter at @edinburghalumni

Visit the new digital edition of Edit for rich content linked to our main features and interviews.

You can access the Edit website on your phone, tablet or computer at www.ed.ac.uk/alumni/services

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www.ed.ac.uk/alumni/services

www.ed.ac.uk/
Ten years ago the University of Edinburgh became the country’s first Fairtrade university. To celebrate this anniversary, *Edit* looks back, with some of those behind the original campaign, to how it all began. By Edd McCracken.

**W**ednesday evening, November 2003. George Square, Edinburgh. Under a street light Steve Cockburn rummages through his wallet. It’s not there. Then through his pockets. It’s not there either. His heart sinks. sweat rises. He is on the cusp of making the biggest mistake of his young campaigning career.

In mere minutes Mr Cockburn, fourth-year politics student and president of the student society People & Planet, is due inside the George Square Lecture Theatre to present the motion to the Edinburgh University Students’ Association (EUSA) that would set the University on course to become Scotland’s first Fairtrade university. And he has forgotten his student card. The stewards will not let him in.

Months of campaigning are threatened by forgetfulness. Frantic, he borrows a bike and sets out across the Meadows towards his Marchmont flat, hoping that the card is somewhere obvious. It is. “Turns out my card was actually in my pocket the whole time,” he says.

Mr Cockburn made it back in time. Just. Finally getting the better of the stewards, his name was being called as he entered the lecture theatre. He had to step over students, sitting on the floor and the stairs, to get to the stage. The motion was presented and overwhelmingly passed.

At a ceremony a few months later, in March 2004, the University received official designation from the Fairtrade Foundation. It signed up to five goals: to have a Fairtrade steering group; to stock Fairtrade products at University outlets; to serve Fairtrade products at meetings; to run campaigns on Fairtrade; and to set up a staff-student Fairtrade steering group.

All through 2014 the University celebrates its 10th anniversary as a Fairtrade university. And it all began on that November night.

**It was all down to the dedication of a really great bunch of people being in the right place at the right time,** says Eilidh Macpherson (MA Social Policy & Law 2006), who sat nervously in the stalls that night.

It was the biggest turnout for a EUSA AGM in living memory. More than 1,000 students were crammed in. The netball team cancelled its practice that night, and Steve Cockburn was peddling in the Meadows muck, hundreds were being turned away.

**It gave us a channel for the activity that was going on,** says Ms Macpherson, Fairtrade Coordinator in 2003-4.

To gain the designation People & Planet had to pass a motion at EUSA’s AGM calling on the University to meet the requirements. This would then have to be agreed and ratified by the University Court.

What Mr Cockburn and Ms Macpherson proposed, however, went beyond the bare minimum. Rather than insist the University should only offer a Fairtrade option in chocolate, tea and coffee in its outlets, the text of the motion asked for Fairtrade products to be the default.

*Forgetting the Fairtrade Way* was first published in *Summer 2014.*
FORGING THE FAIRTRADE WAY

LOOKING FORWARD AFTER FIRST FAIRTRADE DECADE

THE UNIVERSITY’S ANNUAL FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT IN FEBRUARY 2012 EXTENDED THE MESSAGES OF EVENTS HELD TO STUDENTS AND STAFF TO REFLECT ON ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE AND FUTURE ASPIRATIONS AS A FAIRTRADE INSTITUTION. HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

2004
Fairtrade University status achieved. Edinburgh is the first Fairtrade university in Scotland and the third in the United Kingdom.

2005
Student-organised bicycle-powered screening of the documentary Black Gold about the global coffee industry.

2006
First Fairtrade cotton clothing stocked in EUSA shops and the University shops.

2009–10
First Scottish Universities & Colleges Fairtrade Conference, co-hosted by the University and EUSA.

2010–11

2012
University of Edinburgh Steering Group wins Best Steps for Fairtrade Award at the National Fairtrade Campaign Awards 2012.

2012–13
UK-wide Fair Trade Community of Practice launched by Fair Trade Research and Policy Manager Liz Cooper.

2013
The University awarded Fairtrade Foundation grant for collaboration with Edinburgh College. The University’s first Fair Trade Co-ordinator appointed Fair Trade Academic Network established.

“We were really excited about activism and social change, Counterspace and Occupy. You can’t Evict An Idea. Mr Miller was awarded the Principals’ Medal for services to Fairtrade in 2010 and currently works at the Scottish Parliament, encouraging ethical buying and public bodies.

Ms Macpherson, too, worked at the Scottish Parliament on green issues before working in China on human rights. She is now Campaign Manager for the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development. Like the others, she says she can draw a lesson from this experience and the University staff.

“I still use it as an example of one of the best, most successful, most inspiring campaigns I’ve ever been part of,” she says. “I worked with some really great people, different societies, and the University staff. It was a really special time.”

“I was unable to do very much but the repercussions were huge,” says Ms Macpherson. “It had a significant impact on UK Fairtrade sales overall. It meant our motion was really ambitious and it raised the bar for the universities that went after us.”

With high aspirations, the campaign to win the vote began in the autumn of 2003. Flyers were handed out. Mr Cockburn and others toured hundreds of societies giving talks. Announcements were made at the start of lectures to remind people to attend the AGM. Lecturers wrote letters of support. “And samples of Fairtrade chocolate definitely helped,” says Mr Cockburn.

As well as being tasty, Fairtrade was concrete. “It offered a really tangible way of expressing solidarity with people,” says Mr Gee. “At their end we knew they were getting better wages and conditions. And at our end, we could hold their coffee in our hands. By doing the things we love, like drinking tea and coffee and eating chocolate, it actively helps. It’s a wonderful feeling.”

Despite this groundswell of support, the campaign still faced opposition. “It’s difficult to think this now, but at the time some people thought Fairtrade was new, untested and risky,” says Ms Macpherson.

During the debate someone complained that Fairtrade wasn’t a sustainable system and everyone couldn’t live on People & Planet’s “happy fluffy cloud land”. Such opinions went the way of over zealous stewards that night. More than 1,200 voted in favour of the motion, with a mere 20 against.

From that moment, things moved fast. The University had been preparing itself. David Somervell, current head of Social Responsibility and Sustainability Futures, had worked with People & Planet previously, notably on making the University one of the first large public bodies to buy green electricity in 2000.

“We had a friendly partnering relationship with EUSA,” says Mr Somervell. Even before the EUSA AGM, Mr Somervell and Karen Bowman, the University’s Director of Procurement, had brought the idea of becoming a Fairtrade university to several internal committee members.

“As a University we were ready and keen,” says Mr Somervell. “But it was first and foremost an initiative from the student body. We went hand in hand with them. They enabled us to take that step. If it was just the administration saying we should do this, it wouldn’t have had the legs which it continues to have today.”

After their initial success, the student campaigners looked to other areas where the University could apply Fairtrade principles. “It was the beginning of us as students becoming aware of the buying power of the institutions we were involved in,” says Ms Macpherson.

In 2004 EUSA passed a motion that all clothes in University shops should be Fairtrade. They were determined that no supplier could meet such a demand. “The very fact that we created that demand meant that two years later, when I was Vice-President of Services in EUSA, it meant I could go out, find that supplier and get it into the shops,” says Mr Gee. Once again, the abstract became concrete.

There was a growing sense that Edinburgh was pushing the boundaries of Fairtrade for universities. In 2004, after an absence of several years, EUSA rejoined the National Union of Students (NUS). In 2005 Mr Gee was elected to the board of NUSUL, the NUS’s buying consortium for its 220 institutions. He passed a motion to extend Edinburgh’s Fairtrade policies to student unions across the country. As of 2007, NUSUL made Fairtrade tea and coffee its default.

“There is no doubt that Edinburgh is the pioneer,” says Ben Miller (MA Politics 2009). “People look to us.” When Mr Miller joined the University in 2005 it was two years after the initial campaign. Mr Cockburn and Ms Macpherson were coming towards the end of their studies at Edinburgh but the baton was seamlessly passed through the students. “There was still a lot more work to do,” Mr Miller says. “I saw a lot of opportunities to go forward.”

Fairtrade activities of all kinds were arranged: fashion shows, fairs, photography exhibitions, wine tasting, and even a football tournament, using a Fairtrade football. Public meetings were held. The University’s Accommodation Services, under the stewardship of Ian Mackley, began to use Fairtrade products at all three meals served every day in Pollock Halls of Residence.

Today more than a million cups of Fairtrade coffee and 400,000 cups of Fairtrade tea are sold each year at the University. People & Planet, EUSA, and the University are constantly looking for new challenges.

Last year Ms Macpherson, Mr Cockburn, Mr Gee and several others involved in the campaign 10 years ago gathered together for a friends’ wedding. “Joining a major institution’s culture, coupled with regular sessions in the Doctor’s pub, will weld people together. Despite being scattered across the globe, their trajectories since that vote in the George Square Lecture Theatre are surprisingly similar.”

Mr Cockburn is based in Senegal managing Oxfam’s campaigns across West Africa. He is soon to start a new post as Deputy Regional Director for Amnesty International in West and Central Africa. He now always keeps his ID close to hand. Mr Gee is an educator and author of two books about activism and social change, Counterspace and Occupy. You can’t Evict An Idea. Mr Miller was awarded the Principals’ Medal for services to Fairtrade in 2010 and currently works at the Scottish Parliament, encouraging ethical buying and public bodies.

Ms Macpherson, too, worked at the Scottish Parliament on green issues before working in China on human rights. She is now Campaign Manager for the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development.

Like the others, she says she can draw a lesson from this experience and the University staff.

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A roundtable discussion ‘From conflict minerals to fair foods’ organised by the Politics and International Relations department.

02
A student-curated exhibition around the theme ‘what does fair trade mean to you?’

03
A public lecture. Does fair trade make a difference? With former Tradecraft Chief Executive Paul Chandler and Hurnza Youssaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development.

A just World Institute Ethics Forum seminar hosted by the University’s Fair Trade academic network.

04
Suggestions from participants in a range of fairtrade fortnight events were collated into a booklet and are being used to inform the university’s fair trade strategy.

01
A student-organised bicycle-powered screening of the documentary Black Gold about the global coffee industry.

A wine-tasting event with international producers.

02
2003
The EUSA AGM attracts 1,200 students to vote through the motion supporting Fairtrade.

03
2006
First Fairtrade cotton clothing stocked in EUSA shops and the University shops.

04
2004
Harriet Lamb, Executive Director of the Fairtrade Foundation, gives the University’s inaugural International Women’s Day lecture.

05
Ben Miller receives Principal’s Medal for services to Fairtrade.

06

07
The University increases its commitment to its revised Fair Trade Policy.

08
The University presents to the Scottish Parliament Cross-Party Group on fair trade and procurement.

09
The University of Edinburgh Steering Group wins Best Steps for Fairtrade Award at the National Fairtrade Campaign Awards 2012.

10
The University awarded Fairtrade Foundation grant for collaboration with Edinburgh College. The University’s first Fair Trade Co-ordinator appointed Fair Trade Academic Network established.

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The idea came from a discussion with friends in Edinburgh over lunch, so it’s been a long-held ambition.

**Q** What made you decide to study at Edinburgh?

**A** I’m originally from Northern Ireland so I couldn’t go to Queen’s, in Belfast but a few of my friends were looking at universities in Scotland, so I did a bit of research. Edinburgh had the best reputation and looked like the most fun. I came for the open day and it looked great, so I chose it. Also a good friend who later became my wife was planning on studying at Edinburgh although she ended up going to Aberdeen – but she still became my wife!

**Q** What are your stand-out memories of your time as a student at Edinburgh?

**A** I studied business, but I was also able to do courses in philosophy, politics and ancient history. You were studying for the love of learning.

**Q** How do you feel your time at Edinburgh shaped you?

**A** I got into energy because I did a course at university in financial services, marketing and I took a lot from it that could be applied to the energy sector. Also, I met a lot of people at Edinburgh who had grown up in a very different environment from mine and it opened up my eyes to other people’s ambitions. It helped me get a sense of what success looks like and taught me to set my sights high.

**Q** What do you think has made you successful?

**A** One thing is the focus on keeping costs down. Energy is a commodity so cost is important to the consumer. A lot of energy companies offer lower prices to begin with and then charge more over time. That didn’t feel right. The other things are good customer service and transparency. There’s a lack of trust in the sector so it’s important to tell the customer everything, and be open about how we arrive at our prices.

**Q** What are your ambitions for the company now?

**A** We’ve just passed 1 per cent of market share in the UK, so the next milestone is 2 per cent. That’s maybe achievable in a couple of years. We also want to offer other services as well and expand into other countries.

**Q** What advice would you have for Edinburgh graduates looking to get on the first rung of the career ladder?

**A** Applied for around 40 jobs in banking/finance and as for the one I ended up getting I made a real effort to stand out. I put together a huge poster and scanned on to it all my achievements with artwork etc. It was about 4ft high and I posted it off. I got the interview and then got the job by standing out. Now that I run my own business, we get hundreds of CVs and we are passionate about affordable renewable energy but not at any price. They all look the same, so figure out a way to stand out and get noticed. Remember that when you get a job, the company or business has been successful in the past without you and that you are not essential. You have to prove your value, so do the very best that you can and stand out. We have people who joined the company at entry level in the call centre who are now working in marketing and HR because they’ve made the best of the opportunity. So, be willing to do more than you’re supposed to do, always be willing to look for new things to do and every time you’re tasked with something different, treat it as an opportunity to learn something new.

**Q** How important is the sustainability agenda to you and to the future of the market?

**A** It’s very important. We are passionate about affordable renewable energy but not at any price. It’s the market of the future and it has to be done at a pace and a price that is affordable to the highest number of people. There can’t be a blanket cheque for renewable projects – it has to be balanced.

**Q** What made you decide to set up a successful company in a sector that is notoriously difficult to break into? How did the idea for Ovo come about?

**A** The idea came from a discussion with friends in Edinburgh over lunch, so it’s been a long-held ambition. I also enjoyed the breadth of study that was available and the flexibility. I studied business, but I was also able to do courses in philosophy, politics and ancient history. You were studying for the love of learning.

**Q** How do you feel your time at Edinburgh shaped you?

**A** I got into energy because I did a course at university in financial services, marketing and I took a lot from it that could be applied to the energy sector. Also, I met a lot of people at Edinburgh who had grown up in a very different environment from mine and it opened up my eyes to other people’s ambitions. It helped me get a sense of what success looks like and taught me to set my sights high.

**Q** What are your ambitions for the company now?

**A** We’ve just passed 1 per cent of market share in the UK, so the next milestone is 2 per cent. That’s maybe achievable in a couple of years. We also want to offer other services as well and expand into other countries.

**Q** What advice would you have for Edinburgh graduates looking to get on the first rung of the career ladder?

**A** I applied for around 40 jobs in banking/finance and as for the one I ended up getting I made a real effort to stand out. I put together a huge poster and scanned on to it all my achievements with artwork etc. It was about 4ft high and I posted it off. I got the interview and then got the job by standing out. Now that I run my own business, we get hundreds of CVs and we are passionate about affordable renewable energy but not at any price. They all look the same, so figure out a way to stand out and get noticed. Remember that when you get a job, the company or business has been successful in the past without you and that you are not essential. You have to prove your value, so do the very best that you can and stand out. We have people who joined the company at entry level in the call centre who are now working in marketing and HR because they’ve made the best of the opportunity. So, be willing to do more than you’re supposed to do, always be willing to look for new things to do and every time you’re tasked with something different, treat it as an opportunity to learn something new.
Edinburgh’s geoscientists are at the forefront of efforts to understand the complex processes affecting climate. Helen Quinn speaks to one team that has taken a high-flying approach to studying the atmosphere.

How do you study a constantly moving zone of air above the Earth’s surface? This was the challenge facing a group of geoscientists at the University who were researching the lower atmosphere of our planet.

To examine this part of the atmosphere you need to get yourself off the ground.

Eight years ago, John Moncrieff, Professor of Micrometeorology in the School of GeoSciences, was making regular visits to a private airfield in Glenrothes, Fife, in order to conduct his research. Each time he would hire a plane and a pilot, but after a few expensive trips he dared to think big. “An idea stuck in my mind: we could possibly buy our own plane and conduct our research. Each time to measure the atmospheric gases, Professor Moncrieff’s team has taken the plane as far north as the Arctic Circle.

In measuring these gases the team is able to assess sources and sinks of CO2 that are vital to our understanding of the effect of human emissions on our environment, as well as how different types of landscapes, such as forest or moorland, affect these emissions.

To measure the atmospheric gases, the aircraft carries instrument pods beneath its wings. Tom Wade, a pilot and University researcher, is responsible not only for safely flying the plane but also for ensuring this equipment is ready for use.

The flights have filled important gaps in scientific knowledge. Ground-based surveys have limited geographical coverage, while satellites provide good coverage but are limited in their resolution.

Professor Moncrieff’s big idea has paid dividends. Established in 2007, Airborne GeoSciences gained “NERC Facility” status from the UK’s Natural Environment Research Council in 2011.

Reflecting on the unique rewards of her work, Dr Nichol says: “It is a privilege to be flying and be part of this recognised national facility. The plane is my office, but a very different one, and there’s nowhere I’d rather be.”
Spyros Kizis was inspired by the natural and economic environments of his native Greece to design new materials and products that can alleviate the pressures on both. He speaks to Adam Ramsay about Artichair.

I think that things could work better by going local again.

Spyros Kizis
MFA Product Design 2013

I am not what you might think. Spyros Kizis has created seats from a Mediterranean species of thistle, which is a really expensive process.

He applied for an Innovative Initiative Grant (IIG), a funding source available to all students and staff at Edinburgh that comes entirely from alumni donations.

When explaining his plans to the IIG assessment panel, he said: “The thistle’s a wild weed; no-one wants it, it’s a parasite.” The reply came: “You’re presenting our national emblem as a wild weed that no-one wants?” But he succeeded in gaining £3,600 in IIG funding.

“If I didn’t have the grant, I don’t know if it would have happened,” Mr Kizis says. “In order to make the furniture, I needed to make moulds, which is a really expensive process.”

The thistle-and-resin material contains no synthetic chemicals and is biodegradable. Mr Kizis says that, as crude oil becomes more scarce and expensive, materials such as his “could replace conventional plastics.” And he says the thistle fibre has advantages over other bio-plastics, being based on a material that has no food use, needs very little water and is almost free to produce.

For Mr Kizis, the combination of eco-technology and hands-on craft could be the key to rebuilding his native economy. “I think that things could work better by going local again,” he says. “Develop the product in the small scale, until you know how to do it, and then grow bigger.”

And Mr Kizis sees the economic crash as providing impetus for a new kind of growth. “Now is the time that, all of Europe, we’re starting to see movements from young people who want to change things—the makers’ movements, or even Kickstarter [the online crowdfunding platform],” he says. “In my opinion, it’s a revolution—it’s a thing which questions the way the economy is working. From each bad thing, one good thing happens.”

Mr Kizis himself is determined to pursue his own entrepreneurial path through the recovery. He is currently in negotiations with an office furniture manufacturer in the Netherlands with the hope of mass-producing Artichair.

His pitch is compelling: “Each chair is unique—you will never get the same chair a second time—and if you want anything different, you can have it. This chair is for those who care about the environment. It comes from plants, and if you are ever going to throw it away, you aren’t going to send it to Africa to pollute the environment; you can just chop it up, chuck it in your back yard and wait for another plant to grow, because in the chair are the seeds of another plant.”

It’s a fitting metaphor for his hopes for the Greek economy.

Shrub is a cooperative aiming to reduce waste and promote a more sustainable way of meeting peoples material needs. It has a shop on Guthrie Street, Edinburgh, where the public can swap or buy second-hand items, and attend repair workshops, talks and other events.

The organisation received an IIG of nearly £2,000 to help with its running costs when it was setting up as a cooperative in 2013. It has since built up a regular revenue stream from sales, enabling it to pay its overheads.
Edinburgh graduates are prominent among those tackling the impacts of commerce and consumerism. "Edit" speaks to three alumni whose innovations benefit the planet and its people.

"I IMMEDIATELY STARTED THINKING, 'WOW, WHAT A GREAT THING.'"

JOE FRANKEL, BSc MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS 1998, PhD AUTOMATIC SPEECH RECOGNITION 2004

I started with a spoon; Joe Frankel was working in San Francisco as a speech recognition researcher, when one day his wife came home from a farmers’ market with a yoghurt spoon that was to change their lives.

It was the spoon’s aesthetics that first caught his eye. “It was slightly tactile, and it reminded me of a bone spoon of my grandmother,” he recalls.

When his wife told him it was made from potato and corn starch and was entirely compostable, it was a light bulb moment. “I thought that was fantastic. I immediately started thinking, ‘Wow, what a great thing,’” says Mr Frankel. “It all snowballed from there.”

It did indeed snowball. This year Mr Frankel’s company, Vegware, will have shipped to his sister-in-law’s flat in Edinburgh, ready for Mr Frankel’s return to the School of Informatics at the end of his year in California. His first customers were Edinburgh’s Sitra Porrige and the London-based food company Rude Health.

Mr Frankel has a haul of international awards, for both its business success and its green credentials.

Back in 2006, Mr Frankel traced the spoon via the yoghurt vendor to its manufacturer. Very soon Mr Frankel was the owner of several tonnes of “resin”, small pellets derived from corn starch that could be moulded into shapes such as cutlery.

He sourced a “converter” – someone able to do the injection moulding – and before long around 300,000 pieces of compostable cutlery had been shipped to his sister-in-law’s flat in Edinburgh, ready for Mr Frankel’s return to the School of Informatics at the end of his year in California. His first customers were Edinburgh’s Sitra Porrige and the London-based food company Rude Health.

Mr Frankel’s return to the School of Informatics at the end of his year in California. His first customers were Edinburgh’s Sitra Porrige and the London-based food company Rude Health.

Mr Frankel says his years as an Edinburgh PhD student and post-doctoral researcher meant he had the right skills and attitude to set out into the unknown. “In research you don’t know the answer before you start – otherwise you wouldn’t be doing research,” he laughs. “Research is the school of hard knocks, because on a daily basis you’re greeted with things you didn’t expect or wish for.”

The ultimate goal is to be “the best known brand for eco foodservice packaging globally”, Mr Frankel says.

Amid rapid growth in the UK and internationally, Mr Frankel sees his company’s future firmly based in Edinburgh, where Vegware recently expanded its premises to accommodate a staff of around 40. Edinburgh’s just a fantastic city,” he says. “We’ve had tremendous success in finding good employees here; compared with, say, London Edinburgh has incredibly smart, well educated and articulate people – it’s a tremendous place to be running a business.”

And Mr Frankel’s feelings about his achievements show what this enterprise is all about: people and putting something back.

“It might seem a bit weird,” he says, “but one of the things I am proud of is our National Insurance contribution.” He explains: “Every so often our National Insurance contribution turns out to be bigger than our entire wage bill was a few months previously, and suddenly I see us contributing to UK plc. I quite enjoy that.”

"I WAS CLAMBERING OVER WASTE ON THE BEACHES, AND MOST OF THAT WAS NETS.”

MIRIAM TURNER, BSc BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES (ECOLOGY) 2002

It’s a familiar conversation among ecology students who have become kindred spirits: after graduation well work together on a “save the world” project that will really make a difference.

Like many before and after them, Miriam Turner, Nick Hill and their friends often discussed such plans, both during their studies and afterwards as their friendship continued. But they soon found that their burgeoning careers were taking them in divergent directions.

Dr Hill recalls: “I went to the Philippines for a year during my PhD. Most of that time I was clambering over waste on the beaches, and most of that was nets.”

It happened to have a bit of data about how many nets people have, and how often they discard them. My computer blew up the day before Miriam’s workshop, but somehow I managed to get the information off it, and we talked at it during the workshop.”

Net-Works was born. A partnership between Interface and ZSL, Net-Works recycles discarded fishing nets into carpet tiles. Fishing communities collect the waste nets, which are transported to a “depolymerisation” plant in Slovenia where the nylon is turned into yarn for Interface carpets. Harvesting discarded nets cuts environmental damage including “ghost fishing”, where old nets trap and kill fish as they drift through the water.

Following scoping and trials, Interface and ZSL have recently committed to a three-year partnership amid plans to expand Net-Works – currently operating in 26 villages in the Philippines – to Africa and south-east Asia.

Ms Turner says: “There’s no reason this couldn’t meet the whole of Interface’s needs for nylon.”

The company estimates it could harvest 40 tonnes a year of discarded nets from the existing scheme, and Interface uses about 6,000 tonnes of nylon a year. “So it will take a long time,” says Ms Turner, “but our current 26-village hub is tiny.”

"WHAT YOU DID NEXT"

Joan McEwen, BSc Biological Sciences 2005, MSc Environment and Business 2007

"WHAT YOU DID NEXT"

Dr Miriam Turner studies the diversity of the planktonic crustacean Copepoda in the coastal waters of the UK, with a particular focus on the effects of ocean acidification. She has recently published a paper on the effect of ocean warming on the larval survival of a crustacean species.

Ms Miriam Turner was involved in a project for Interface, the world’s biggest maker of carpet tiles, working directly with artisan weavers in India. Ms Turner impressed with Interface’s ambitions to be a “restorative business”, took a job with the company and began rapidly to rise through its ranks.

During a masters degree in sustainable development, Ms Turner was involved in a project for Interface, the world’s biggest maker of carpet tiles, working directly with artisan weavers in India. Ms Turner impressed with Interface’s ambitions to be a “restorative business”, took a job with the company and began rapidly to rise through its ranks.

Ms Turner recalls that during one of their sporadic reunions, their group of Edinburgh ecology graduates joked that “the save-the-world project will have to wait for another lifetime.”

But in late 2011, a brief chat between Ms Turner and a senior Interface colleague suddenly brought divergent paths back together.

“IT'S A FAMILIAR CONVERSATION AMONG ECOLOGY STUDENTS WHO HAVE BECOME KINDRED SPIRITS: AFTER GRADUATION WELL WORK TOGETHER ON A ‘SAVE THE WORLD’ PROJECT THAT WILL REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE.”

"WE'D LOVE TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES AT www.ed.ac.uk/alumni/yournews"

"WHAT YOU DID NEXT"

The University of Edinburgh www.ed.ac.uk
Many graduates view their time at Edinburgh as the formative years of their professional lives. In this edition, we hear from alumni whose journeys have taken them in a sustainability direction.

**SOPHIE GERRARD**
**BA PHOTOGRAPHY 2005**

“I always enjoyed art at school and had planned to go to art college, but developed a social conscience at 14 and so decided to study environmental sciences at university.

I worked as a graduate scientist for a short time, and I remember standing in the middle of this iron polluted river, which was bright orange, thinking ‘this is most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen but it’s toxic.’

I thought, ‘I can really imagine being the person who makes images of this, to communicate to people what is happening here, rather than being the person in the wellies, the hard hat and the clipboard.’

I really started doing photography during a gap year aged 21. I then moved back to Edinburgh and after doing some art classes was delighted to be accepted at Edinburgh College of Art. The general first year was amazing. I loved it, and three years at ECA gave me a very good grounding in all sorts of disciplines, including photography.

I used the library a lot. I came across the photographs of people like Richard Misrach who made beautiful photographs of important environmental issues; like Joel Sternfield and Edward Burtynsky who were employing a strong aesthetic, and a beautiful visual style.

It came together: wanting to create something aesthetic but wanting it to communicate something important.

Today I split my time between Edinburgh and London. I’ve just finished a piece on Scottishness for the FT magazine with Matthew Engel, which is a good example of what I do.”

Sophie Gerrand’s work can be seen at the Beyond the Border exhibition at the Bradfield Impressions Gallery, opening 3 July, and at the Street Level Photoworks, Glasgow, from the end of August.

www.sophiegerrard.com
www.documentscotland.com

**JULIET WILSON**
**BSC BOTANY 1989**

“It’s important to get people out into nature, because if people aren’t enjoying nature they have no real emotional connections with it, no real impetus to protect it. If you don’t know what’s out there, you don’t care about it.

My Crafty Green Post blog is about recycled craft, literature, arts that relate to the environment, and environmental issues.

Many environmental blogs are issue based and people aren’t already interested in the topics may find this boring. Creative approaches make it more engaging, and hopefully help to show people what they can do.

My crafts are all made out of recycled materials, and by sharing those on my blog I can encourage people to think about their waste and whether they could do something creative with it. For some reason, people just love my chip stick bags.

Studying botany appealed to me because I was drawn to the fact that in a Scottish university you could do more than focus on just one subject. Although I did a botany degree, I also did ecology, biochemistry and philosophy of science.

The whole experience at the University of Edinburgh — including the range of student activities — was just brilliant. The people I met were so good for sparking ideas.

I spent two years teaching in Malawi after my degree, and then Edinburgh seemed the natural place to settle, with lots of green spaces, and its rich culture.”

[craftygreenpost.blogspot.co.uk](http://craftygreenpost.blogspot.co.uk)

**ANDY OLDROYD**
**MSC ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY 2004**

“After completing my MSc I had planned to join an instrumentation company in the Highlands. But that changed when my son became suddenly ill. My wife Monica and I then decided to start a business – this allowed us to be flexible, to manage what was going on in our family life and use our skills.

Oldbaum Services, our wind energy consultancy, was set up in 2005. The company quickly grew legs and gained recognition. Oldbaum’s expertise lies in wind data and among other things we use instrumentation techniques to provide wind data to our clients. Accurate data is crucial to the success of wind farm projects.

Leading up to Oldbaum’s formation I worked on the introduction of a novel wind energy data measurement system for which I was awarded a Scottish Renewables Green Energy Award in 2004.

For more alumni profiles, visit: www.ed.ac.uk/alumni/profiles

www.oldbaumservices.co.uk

**DANIEL MITTLER**
**MA POLITICS 1996**

“My choice of Edinburgh University was based on false assumptions. I knew that Edinburgh was by the sea and assumed it would be easy to go sea kayaking, one of my passions. In the end I never went sea kayaking. It was too complicated.

Climbing Arthur’s Seat became my daily outdoor pursuit instead. I still miss those wind swept walks with spectacular urban views.

I have been an environmental activist since my youth and at Edinburgh joined the Green Society and heard some of the most inspiring talks of my life at the Centre for Human Ecology.

I took great courses on environmental politics and ethics and my conviction that poverty and environmental politics and ethics are two sides of the same coin partly comes from writing my honours thesis on the environmental challenges of South African cities. I volunteered for Friends of the Earth Scotland.

I am now the Political Director of Greenpeace International and live in Berlin. Doing international work, ranging from global climate change negotiations to pushing for high seas protection at the Rio+20 Summit, I still draw from the cosmopolitan education I received at Edinburgh.”

www.greenandiel.blogspot.com

**LOUISE WILSON**
**LLB 1990**

“I have very fond memories of Edinburgh – I had a lot of fun, and I was a mad clibber. I also learnt to consume large volumes of information, to drill down, and to craft an argument.

Eventually I fell into merchant banking, at UBS. Things went well, it was a rewarding role and I rose up through the ranks, covering emerging markets. But latterly I found myself less and less satisfied by the work we were doing.

We live in a world of finite resources but we don’t seem effective at adapting ourselves to that. I was becoming concerned about the environment, and I wanted to do something.

I left my job in 2008 and went to Alaska with a backpack. When I reappraised, the wheels had come off the whole system.

I had the great fortune to be introduced to my two co-founders, and we established Abundance.

It’s about connecting generators of renewable electricity with investors. It’s an offering to the widest possible audience – you only need £5 to get started. It’s allowing people to invest in renewable energy projects that they choose, and get a return, funded by the money that project makes. It’s democratic finance.”

www.abundancegeneration.com
INSPIRING WOMEN

International Women’s Day, on 8 March each year, celebrates the economic, political and social achievements of women around the world. The University marked the day this year by showcasing some of its 6,000 female staff, nominated by their peers for their contribution to the University and beyond. We asked leading photographers to help us celebrate the diversity and influence of the roles these women hold in the University, while capturing their individuality and character, which are clearly a great part of their success. These women are not only “inspiring change” – the theme of International Women’s Day 2014 – but are also making real change to people’s lives. Their efforts are helping the University meet the urgent challenges affecting the world and provide an outstanding student experience to 33,000 students, 16,000 lifelong learners and more than 100,000 MOOC learners. The University staged an outdoor exhibition of photographs in Old College Quad 8–31 March, plus a smaller exhibition in the University Visitor Centre. Among other International Women’s Day events held at the University was a lecture at the McEwan Hall on Women in Sport, by Olympic champion Katherine Grainger (LLB 1997).

PHOTOGRAPHS HERE ARE A SELECTION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY EXHIBITION IN OLD COLLEGE QUAD, 8–31 MARCH 2014

Photography by:
01 Jane Barlow, 02 Dominic Ibbotson, 03 John Need, 04 Euan Myles, 05 John Need, 06 Euan Myles, 07 Euan Myles, 08 Susie Lowe, 09 Heshani Sothiraj Eddleston, 10 Euan Myles, 11 Maverick Photo Agency, 12 Susie Lowe, 13 Maverick Photo Agency, 14 Katherine Grainger (LLB 1997), 15 Dominic Ibbotson, 16 Chris Close
I'm currently engaged to create several large sculptures for Cuningar Loop, a new woodland park in the east end of Glasgow. I've spent four months working with local communities to develop the idea. The park will be the largest Commonwealth Games Legacy project and I am delighted to be involved in such an inspiring vision. It has always been my aim to share my art with as many people as possible.

ROB MULHOLLAND
BA SCULPTURE 1986

TIDAL POWER POTENTIAL
Tidal generators in a stretch of water off the north coast of Scotland could meet almost half of the country’s electricity needs, researchers have found. Engineers at the Universities of Edinburgh and Oxford have completed the most precise study yet of the energy potential of the Firth of Forth, which lies between the mainland and Orkney. The thesis is said to have the greatest tidal power potential of any single site in the world.

Researchers say 19 gigawatts of power could be available, equivalent to 20 per cent of Scotland’s electricity needs, if tidal turbines were placed across the entire channel. In the Tenth Day Prize Lecture in April, which formed part of Edinburgh International Science Festival, Professor Haas demonstrated two-way data transfer that outpaces wi-fi, using low-power LEDs to transmit the information.

Professor Harald Haas has continued to unveil breakthroughs in ‘Li-fi’ – wireless broadband communication that uses visible light instead of the radio wavelengths of conventional wi-fi.

SOLAR PANEL AS LI-FI RECEIVER
In his Tenth Day Prize Lecture in April, which formed part of Edinburgh International Science Festival, Professor Haas demonstrated two-way data transfer that outpaces wi-fi, using low-power LEDs to transmit the information.

He also used an off-the-shelf solar panel to capture the data transmitted, a development that could greatly enhance the ways his invention can be deployed, including off the electricity grid.

The Gaia hypothesis, developed in the 1960s by James Lovelock, says Earth and its organisms operate as a single self-regulating system. A new book by Toby Tyrrell (McG Informatics 1985; PhD 1995), Professor of Earth System Science at the University of Southampton, investigates the hypothesis, testing its claims against the latest scientific evidence. Drawing on climate science, oceanography, geology and evolutionary biology, and visiting fascinating corners of the natural world, Professor Tyrrell concludes that Earth’s feedback systems do not protect against our environment becoming uninhabitable. The book has received positive reviews in journals including Nature Climate Change and New Scientist, which published a leader article in response to its conclusions.

Toby Tyrrell, On Gaia: A Critical Investigation of the Relationship between Life and Earth
Princeton University Press

The Okavango Delta is one of the least-visited and extensive wetlands left on the planet. It is home to indigenous communities, including the threatened San Bushmen, who not only depend on the ecosystem but also are its guardians. It is also home to Great biodiversity: a wild river and delta and the world’s largest elephant population. Sometimes fate or luck puts you in a unique place, and if you get to know it you realise how precious it is.

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IN FOR THE LONG GAME

Many sporting greats have honed their skills while studying at Edinburgh. In the year that Scotland hosts the Commonwealth Games, we highlight a selection of famous and fascinating names in the University’s sporting history.

ERIC LIDDELL (1902–1945)

Subject of the Oscar-winning film Chariots of Fire, Eric Liddell is most famous for winning gold in the 400m in a world-record time at the 1924 Paris Olympics – and for not competing in his best event, the 100m, because he was held on the Sabbath. His gold medal and his bronze for the 200m at the same games are held by the University, where he studied pure science. At his graduation, the University Principal, Sir Alfred Ewing, quipped: “Mr Liddell, you have shown that none can pass you but the examiner.”

Liddell followed his parents into missionary work, and while travelling in Japan in 1943 was captured by the Japanese. He died two years later in an internment camp.

SIR PETER HEALTY

BSc CIVIL ENGINEERING

1945

Sir Peter Healy is a self-taught diver who dominated his sport in Scotland for more than 20 years, winning five Commonwealth Games medals, including gold in three consecutive games. He also competed in the 1948 and 1952 Olympic Games.

A distinguished career in sports management saw him become chairman of the Scottish Sports Council (now sportscotland) from 1975 to 1987, and chairman of the Commonwealth Games Federation from 1982 to 1990. He was appointed Patron of Commonwealth Games Scotland in 2009.

ROSEMARY CHIMES

MA ARTS 1956

Rosemary Chimes (above), who won a Commonwealth Games gold in 1970, today continues to set age-related world records in track and field at the age of 85. In March this year she set world records in the shot put and high jump, and British records in the 60m and long jump, in the W80 category of the Masters indoor championships in London.

In 1970, when known as Rosemary Payne, she won gold in the discus at the Commonwealth Games in front of a home crowd at Edinburgh’s Meadowbank Stadium. She went on to represent Great Britain in the 1972 Olympics in Munich, and in the 1974 Commonwealth Games she took silver in the discus. Later she served as British Junior Team Manager, supervising future stars including Steve Cram, Fatima Whitbread, Colin Jackson and Steve Backley. Since then she has been competing in Masters events in the 1980s, has set world records at least 25 times in her age groups.

After her Edinburgh degree and a PGCE at Moray House, Ms Chimes worked as a primary teacher. She says her athletic’s career began when she was first encouraged to throw the discus as a student.

CATHY PANTON-LEWIS

MA GEOGRAPHY 1977

Cathy Panton-Lewis is one of the UK’s greatest golfers. In 1976, while a student at the University, she became the British Amateur Champion, and was named Scottish Sportswoman of the Year. In 1979 she played in the inaugural Professional Ladies European Tour and over the next nine years she won 14 European Tour championships.

Contributing to the development of her sport, she was the executive director of the McDonald’s WPGA Championship of Europe from 1996 to 1999, and is an Advanced Fellow Professional of the PGA. She continues to play on the seniors tour. She won the University’s Eva Bailey Cup (best female sports performer) in 1975–76.

GRAEME RANDALL

BED PHYSICAL EDUCATION

2001

Judoka Graeme Randall has won a host of European, Commonwealth and World titles and has competed in two Olympic Games.

A black belt by the age of 15, he was the European Junior Champion in 1994 and won bronze medal at the Junior World Championships in the same year. He represented Scotland more than 100 times and represented Great Britain at the 1996 and 2000 Olympics and the 1997, 1999 and 2001 World Championships.

In 1999 he became Scotland’s first judo world champion, and in 2001 he won a memorable Commonwealth gold in Manchester. He is now one of the country’s top judo coaches.

GEMMA FAY

BSc APPLIED SPORT SCIENCE 2003

Gemma Fay is Scotland’s most capped footballer and was first selected for her country when she was just 15. She has now represented Scotland internationally 160 times.

She is captain of the women’s national team and the first-choice goalkeeper. Gemma has been a key figure in the success of the team, while in her capacity as ambassador for her sport, she is a driving force in helping to make women’s football one of the fastest growing team sports in the country.

She has enjoyed a distinguished club career at Premier League level in Scotland and England, currently playing for Celtic.

2012 OLYMPIANS

Edinburgh alumni were central to Team GB’s successes in the London Olympics. Sir Chris Hoy, who studied Sports Science at Edinburgh, became the most successful British Olympian in history, and Katherine Grainger, who started her rowing career while studying law at Edinburgh, took gold in the double sculls.

2014 HOPEFULS

Several Edinburgh alumni have been selected for Team Scotland in the Commonwealth Games in July, as the selection process continues. Edith Child (MG 2003) is a medal contender in the 400m hurdles, as is Alastair Cline in squash (also MG 2008).

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They say you don’t really know something until you teach it to someone else. So an outreach course through which GeoSciences students share their work with the public is enhancing their learning as well as strengthening the University’s relationship with its host community.

“Many a lasting relationship is forged during university days, and we want to hear how you met your partner or best friend. Here is a range of memorable on-campus moments that led to lifetimes together.”

**EMMELINE HOOGLAND MA GEOGRAPHY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

Emmeline worked with the Harmony School for children with complex emotional and behavioural needs.

“She says: ‘Children often pretend to be animals, and I thought ‘why can’t we use this as an educational way?’”

She helped children look at the loss of a forest through the eyes of its animal inhabitants. “The children reflected on how they felt sad, how it wasn’t fair. They said, ‘Humans should think of us, we were here first’.”

Taking this empathetic approach further, she enlisted a horse from a nearby stables, and a teacher of natural horsemanship. Emmeline explains: “Horses communicate with body language, and the children were communicating with the horse by adopting its perspective. “It was such an amazing experience,” says Emmeline. “Children often pretend to be animals, and I thought ‘why can’t we use this as an educational way?’”

**EVE SMITH BSc ENVIRONMENTAL GEOSCIENCE**

Eve worked as an Open Door charity in Morningside, which helps older people with support needs. She ran a session on environments and the weather for a group of people in their nineties who were either deaf, registered blind or showing signs of dementia.

She used cups with tactile items inside them, such as sand, shells, water, grass and pine needles. “The idea was to get the group thinking about habitats and environments outside of the one they are exposed to every day. Eve explains. She also used sounds representing weather extremes.

“It has given me a lead on what I want to focus on for my career,” says Eve. “I have now applied for a masters in environmental science.”

**THANKS TO UNCLE BOB**

“Tina and I became medical students in 1952.

Never in the first five years of our course did Tina and I speak. However, come our final year, Tina had asked a mutual friend, Donald Scruby, to escort her to the Six Nations rugby match between England and Scotland. Donald was in love elsewhere and declined the offer. So Tina asked him to ask me if I would escort her, and I agreed. We had enjoyed the match and each other’s company. I took her back to my digs, where my landlord, Uncle Bob, made us both strip off and put on dressing gowns while he fed us a hot meal, plied us with hot toddies, and hung our wet clothes to dry in front of a roaring fire in the massive kitchen range. He lent me his car to drive a now warm and dry Tina back to the Suffolk Hall ladies’ hostel.

On leaving her at the door, I tentatively asked if we could meet again. ‘Of course,’ was the typically brief reply.

Back at my digs, Uncle Bob asked what my intentions were towards Tina. When I hesitated, he said: ‘Bill, hang on to that girl, she is pure gold’ So I did. We were married in Greyfriars Kirk in 1959, with Donald as our best man.

Tina died of leukaemia on 9 May 2012, three months short of 53 years of blissful marriage and best friendship. Pure gold indeed!”

**BILL RYDER**

MBChB 1958

**Angela Carmichael (nee Pye)**

BMus 1976

**Robin Carmichael**

BSc Mathematics 1977

**PERFECT HARMONY**

“Robin and I met in the spring of 1976. We both played in the Edinburgh University Musical Society’s Philharmonic Orchestra, which was renowned as much for its socialising as its musical achievements. Robin played the French horn and I played the violins.

Following graduation and a PGCSE in Cambridge I taught music mainly in Yorkshire and Herefordshire while Robin followed a career in IT. First in Sheffield and then in London.

We Married in 1979 and continue to share many music-making activities and now, as we approach retirement, we run our local village community choir.

Our daughter, Victoria, was born in 1982 and to our delight chose to read music at Edinburgh. Imagine our joy when last March she was elected President of Edinburgh University Music Society. A true Musto baby!”

**BILL RYDER**

**Katharine Ellis**

(nee Alston)

Edinburgh College of Domestic Science 1950

**Derek ‘Derry’ Ellis**

BSc Zoology 1952

**TO CANADA, WITH LOVE**

“The first time I saw Derry was at a New Scotland Society dance. He phoned me that weekend to invite me to an Art College dance, and we ‘went out’ together from then on, while I was at Atholl Crescent (College of Domestic Science).

In 1956 I followed Derry to Montreal and worked as a stenographer. That summer I had a great time working at Jasper Park Lodge, Alberta, and hiking in the Rockies.

We lived for six years in Nanaimo, British Columbia, starting a family of three boys. In 1962 we all [with dog] drove to Winnipeg, where we experienced the weather extremes of central Canada. You flooded your backyard and it became an ice rink for skating and hockey practice.

We came to Victoria, BC, in 1964, and we are still here.”

**KATHERINE ELLIS**
The word “Pleasance” evokes a panoply of meanings for those familiar with Edinburgh. For many alumni it is an address that was once home; for others the place of sweat and toil in the gym. If the theatre was your thing, its venues may be the setting of some of the most fun nights I had club nights, those evenings were calm night compared to other sports nights when I would finish studying from 11pm to 9am. I recall feeling refreshed and ready to go to the Pleasance bar and drink before heading back upstairs to bed. During the Jazz Festival it was very noisy and I was glad when they periodically forgetting. Occasionally I hit the bull – and then we justifiably celebrate in a local bar.

When we established the ONSpace research centre in 2005, we considered the barriers and facilitators to getting outdoors for a range of groups in society: disabled people, older people, children and teenagers, black and minority ethnic groups and deprived urban communities, with a particular emphasis on access to green and natural environments.

Our research took as its premise the idea that recreational landscapes, whether in rural areas or in urban centres, should be designed to offer ‘least restrictive access’, in other words, should not exclude certain groups through the way they were constructed and managed. The assumptions made about why people might visit such spaces, how they might get there, and what they might do once there.

We were also interested in more fundamental questions about the importance of access to the outdoor and natural environment: the links between landscape and health.

In 2001 we found it extremely difficult to get external support for research into this topic partly because it was seen as of marginal interest. Yet within 10 years things had changed markedly. We were given the opportunity to develop innovative approaches to exploring how green and open space might enhance health – why such landscapes might be “salutogenic” – and what kinds of interventions might be used to increase access to such spaces.

By 2010, public documents such as the Marmot review on health inequalities in England were promoting improvements to green infrastructure as an important strategy for enhancing health. The Scottish Government’s “Good Places, Better Health!” strategy recognised that access to parks, green places, and open spaces was vital in nurturing good health for children, and we were pleased to play a part in evaluating the evidence for this.

What has made the difference, and why should we still be concerned? A key component has been the World Health Organisation’s articulation of the need to include human health as a key pillar of sustainability.

For development to be sustainable, says the WHO, it must benefit the health and wellbeing of present and future generations. If access to natural spaces such as public parks or woodlands is associated with better health, then those communities with poor or no access to good quality green space will be disadvantaged. And it is often the most deprived communities, inner urban ones in many cases, that have least access to green space.

The concept of environmental justice suggests that variations in environmental quality are unjust if they have a health and wellbeing inequities.

Some of our most exciting recent research suggests that green space offers a particularly good environment for helping people to recover from stress – it is a restorative environment. This might seem common sense to many people but it is important to develop rigorous evidence if it is to influence public policy.

So we need to pay attention to provision of good quality green spaces near to where people live. Everyone is to have the opportunity to maintain good health, mentally and physically. This means not just providing green and natural environments but also investing in them over time – maintaining them and ensuring they remain attractive for different people’s needs. In an era of tightening budgets and reduced public spend, this is actually a very cost-effective way of enhancing public health.

We need joined-up policies that recognise green infrastructure and ecosystems services as providing vital important habitats for human health, and designs and redevelopments of our urban environments that reflect this. Only then will we be able to develop truly sustainable places for all species, including ourselves.

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We need joined-up policies that recognise green infrastructure and ecosystems services as providing vital important habitats for human health, and designs and redevelopments of our urban environments that reflect this. Only then will we be able to develop truly sustainable places for all species, including ourselves.
I am pleased to present a report of your Business Committee for the six months since the last edition of Billet.

Your Business Committee agreed priorities for the 2013–14 session – see more on page 34. Your Standing Committee is developing these themes during the year. Your Committee contributed to a review of the University’s responsible investment policy, a topic raised by EUSA and our members.

Your Academic Standing Committee has met with Vice-Principal Sue Rigby and the Vice-Provost Academic Affairs of EUSA. The University has embarked on a major programme to deliver higher quality teaching and improve other aspects of the student experience. Others in the Russell Group have moved faster, so the emphasis is on building the extensive capital building programme and reserves, which are used to invest in improved facilities for teaching and research, and for accommodation. Nearly £1 billion has been allocated to capital projects.

The international nature of your University (40 per cent of students are international) means that investment must be made in first-class accommodation and other facilities to attract the best students; help them make the best of their time in Edinburgh, and to develop long-term relationships as research collaborators and alumni. International students also require good support and advice facilities and your University works closely with EUSA to achieve that. Do read the Annual Review: it contains wonderful examples of the breadth and depth of staff and students’ endeavours and success.

The Edinburgh Development Trust has published its Annual Accounts to 2013. Donations have grown again, and with a wider donor pool, to more than £14 million; more than £12 million has been disbursed to schools and services in your University, especially to support the Bursary Scheme. Alumni can support the Principal’s Bursary Scheme or the General Council Prince Philip Fund for bursaries through single gift donations and know that their contribution supports very able and grateful students who would otherwise not come to Edinburgh. Once again a substantial donation came from our alumni in the US.

The Half-Yearly meeting in February was well attended. At lunch, Sheriff Principal Edward Bowen, the Chancellor’s Assessor, gave an amusing account of life as an advocate and sheriff. Your Business Committee joined the Chaplaincy and EUSA for a workshop on the topic “Can the University afford to have values?” One of the speakers was Professor Anne Smyth, a General Council Assessor.

Your General Council Assessors provide great support as members of the Court, being active in Court Committees and bringing a range of views from alumni and from outside the University. They attend Standing Committee meetings, and at all Business Committee meetings provide a confidential summary of issues facing the Court.

Your Business Committee elections have been held, with eight candidates for five places and with increased online voting. I am grateful to all who have registered to vote and encourage more to do so. I appreciate that registering on MyEd is not simple, but telephone the help number on the website or email the helpline at IS (Information Services) and a staff member will enrol you very quickly. Once registered it is easy to vote. We had more younger candidates and this trend is very welcome. The new members who take up office in July 2014 are David Houston, Dorothy MacLeod, Philip Mawer, Sarah Morgan and Sam Trett. We look forward to welcoming them.

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The next “away” meeting will be held in Toronto following a highly successful meeting in Berlin in 2012. Toronto has a large number of University alumni who have retained close links with Edinburgh and who will be enthusiastic supporters of our programme of events. There are also many alumni across Canada who it is hoped will also come along.

The University has a long history of very close links with the University of Toronto and it is anticipated that these will be strengthened during these events. As is customary, the University has organised a series of seminars, honorary graduation ceremonies and social functions to make this a highly attractive programme. This will include the General Council Half Yearly Meeting on the Saturday.

It is very much hoped that many General Council members, alumni and University Friends will come along to some or all of the events, thus reinforcing the already strong and lasting relationships between the University and Toronto.

The programme on Saturday 21 June will include a trip to Toronto Roy Thomson Hall, where Margaret Atwood will receive an honorary degree and give the after-dinner talk. The tour lasts approximately eight hours and is organised by JPdL Toronto & Niagara on behalf of the University of Edinburgh. The tour lasts approximately eight hours and is organised by JPdL Toronto & Niagara on behalf of the University of Edinburgh. The tour lasts approximately eight hours and is organised by JPdL Toronto & Niagara on behalf of the University of Edinburgh. The tour lasts approximately eight hours and is organised by JPdL Toronto & Niagara on behalf of the University of Edinburgh. The tour lasts approximately eight hours and is organised by JPdL Toronto & Niagara on behalf of the University of Edinburgh.
Finally, we wished to work closely together with students, who are of course the alumni Association, for a long time. It was felt that we could work more in an important issue. This included creating well-functioning much worth exploring.

Finally, the introduction of innovative learning methods was very changes on both staff and students needed to be investigated. The many initiatives and enhancements we had been told about in important as world-class research. We wanted to make sure that Engaging with communities

The student experience including teaching and learning

WHAT'S THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE BEEN WORKING ON THIS SESSION?

The setting of key themes for the Committee to work on each session has proven very worthwhile. It sets out clear priorities, helps align work on the main issues across the various Standing Committees and keeps us focused. We try to distil the priorities we learn about from our Court Assessors and from the ELSA Officers as well as from the Committee members.

MEET THE TEAM

NAME: Morven Brown
EDUCATION: The Mary Erskine School, Edinburgh
HOME TOWN: Edinburgh
CURRENT HOME: Edinburgh
CURRENT JOB: Educational Psychologist
FAVOURITE STUDENT MEMORY: When the days begin to shorten and that delicious autumnal smell is in the air and you get one of those glorious blue and gold days in which Edinburgh glows. I still remember the sense of anticipation and excitement which always accompanied the start of a new academic year in October.
FAVOURITE SOCIAL VENUE: It has to be the Traverse Theatre, full of the strangest and most fascinating people and where you could watch the most daring and innovative theatre productions while balancing on a pile of uneasy seating modules.
MOST MEMORABLE STAFF MEMBER: My undergraduate thesis was supervised by Colwyn Trowarth who had recently been involved in the split-brain research. His lectures were full of the amazing findings about differentiation and localisation of function in the brain hemispheres. These were exciting topics for neuropsychology and have remained fascinated by the ever more detailed discoveries which have been made about the brain and how it impacts on the way we think, learn and behave.

NAME: John Gilmore Clifford
EDUCATION: Henley-on-Thames Grammar School, University of Oxford, (MA Modern Languages, Dip Ed) Goethe Institut (German Language), Europa Institute, University of Edinburgh (MSc European Legal Studies)
HOME TOWN: Henley-on-Thames
CURRENT HOME: Edinburgh
CURRENT JOB: Honorary Consul of Austria for Scotland Director at Focus Scotland and Quadro Europa
FAVOURITE STUDENT MEMORY: Oxford then Edinburgh were stepping stones to a defining cultural and intellectual engagement with Austria, Germany, wider Europe and beyond.
FAVOURITE SOCIAL VENUE: The former Centre for Human Ecology in Balfour Street, where the remarkable Dr Ulrich Loeving held a multidisciplinary cat’s cradle of human and ecological inter-connections across the University and inter-nations, and meetings evolved into late night suppers.

NAME: Matthew McPhearson
EDUCATION: George Watson’s College, Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh (MA Sociology 2015)
HOME TOWN: Edinburgh
CURRENT JOB: Recently takes a new role with Police Scotland. Previously a Caseworker for an Edinburgh MP
FAVOURITE STUDENT MEMORY: My first student election night in Teviot. As results came in one by one, the atmosphere was electric. I remember my pride at being part of it.
FAVOURITE SOCIAL VENUE: Definitely Teviot – runs by students, for students. I took guests there to make them jealous, and it always worked. I only wish I could remember every night I had in there!

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 committee members, and they describe the people, places, lessons and events from their time as Edinburgh students that had the biggest impact on their careers.

The University’s international horizons, make my own contribution to the rest of our European homeland and the common people I am proud to serve together my experiences at the University.

As results came in one by one, the atmosphere was electric. I remember my pride at being part of it.

MOST VALUABLE LESSON: Motivating students into political action was hard. I realised quickly that in politics the first battle can be not with authority, but with the people you represent – in getting people to believe “we can do better than this”.

Having served as EUSA President 2011-12, I was elected a member of the General Council’s Business Committee, and sit on the Academic Standing Committee. I have worked in the political and third sectors, with roles in the Scottish Parliament; Church of Scotland; and the ‘Olamba for America’ re-election campaign. My spare time is filled with meetings and camps as a scout group leader. I do my own travelling, too, and have spent time in the US last year I am in Australia on a month-long trip in May 2014.

A very keen musician [with six guitars!], I nurtured my passion for volunteering, politics and music while at Edinburgh.

The common thread that bound together my experiences at the University was people. It is those same people I am proud to serve as a Business Committee member. Representing graduates isn’t about looking back – it’s about looking forward. The experiences we all had as students are critical in shaping the University we want Edinburgh to become.

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AGENDA FOR THE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

1 Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in Old College, Edinburgh, on 15 February 2014 (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 Sir Timothy O’Shea, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

7 Any other competent business

8 Adjournment

The previous June’s Half-Yearly Meeting had been part of the first Edinburgh alumni weekend organised by Development & Alumni. The Half-Yearly Meeting was hosted by Professor David Argyle at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, and, was well attended. Other weekend events included a reception, ceilidh and barbeque, hosted by the University, and much appreciated by local alumni and visitors alike.

The recently published Annual Report of the University of Edinburgh Development Trust to July 2012 was very encouraging, showing that income was stable at around £70m with very good support from legacies, and a particularly generous contribution from fellow alumni in the United States of £11m. The report also included major gifts supporting research into autism, and fragile X syndrome and intellectual disabilities, and major support for the Centre of the Study of Islam and of Sino-Japanese Relations. Corporate donations had fallen slightly, but were outweighed by substantial private donations, and the Convener encouraged Members to assist fundraising by providing introductions to potential donors, through their personal networks, as well as donating personally.

New information and induction packs for Business Committee Members and General Council Assessors had been assembled and published by the Constitutional Standing Committee, led by Mr Gordon Cairns. Gordon and his committee were also examining the implications of constitutional change for the University.

The Academic Standing Committee, led by Dr Bruce Aitken, had continued to follow the efforts being made by the University to improve the student experience. The University had made very considerable investments but the Business Committee recognised that improvement would take time. It had also looked at integration and support of international students, which was a growing and important component of university life. Both of these themes were of fundamental importance to the well-being of the University.

The after-lunch speaker will be Professor Zulfiqar Bhutta. Professor Bhutta is the Founding Director of the Center of Excellence in Women and Child Health at the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan, and holds the Robert Harding Inaugural Chair in Global Child Health at the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, as well as professorships at several other leading universities. His research interests include newborn and child survival, maternal and child under-nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. He leads a large research group based in Pakistan with a special interest in research synthesis, scaling up evidence-based interventions in community settings and implementation research in health systems research. In particular, his work with community health workers and outreach services has influenced integrated maternal and newborn outreach programmes globally. He has won many awards for his work in the arena of world child health.

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

Committee members also received an update on the Estates Strategy, the recent building programme being highly impressive, with a number of current and imminent projects which would benefit both the University and the city.

The Convener reported that there were no matters arising from the minutes.
Toronto. Any Motions for discussion at this meeting should be received in the General Council Office by 31 March 2014. The following Statutory Half-Yearly Meeting would be held on Saturday 14 February 2015 in Old College and any Motions for discussion at this meeting should be received in the General Council Office by 26 November 2014.

NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS

There would be elections for two General Council Assessors to Court and five Members of the Business Committee in February 2015. Nominations on forms available from the General Council Office and on the website should be received in the General Council Office by 26 November 2014.

PRESENTATION BY THE PRINCIPAL OF THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY

The Principal began by praising the enormous contribution by the Chancellor to the work of the University this past year. He also pointed out the significant contributions from the University to the various Edinburgh festivals: International, Fringe and Book.

The Principal presented his Annual Report based on the University’s Annual Review 2012-13 (www.ed.ac.uk/about/annual-review/publication). The financial position of the University was very favourable again this year, in particular, the record income from competitive research grants of £100 million. Just over half came from the UK research councils with about £30 million coming from EU sources, which will become increasingly important in the future with the Horizon 2020 programme. UK charities awarded £35 million and the remainder came from a very broad international base. The success rate for applications was unusually high in this University and large grants had become more common.

BILLET GENERAL COUNCIL PAPERS

Beneficiations and legacies had also increased which the University was very grateful. For student numbers had increased to a very healthy 33,000 with two-thirds of international students. The proportion of international students was now about 40% and had been increasing progressively. It was considered desirable to increase the proportion of postgraduate students, especially research postgraduates.

The University had done well in many international league tables, being 17th in the world in the QS World University Rankings. This was an outstanding performance given that there were more than 20,000 universities in the world. A turnover of £175 million was not all large compared with other universities with similar rankings but the unusually high international component at Edinburgh almost certainly contributed significantly to its success. The proportions of Scottish, rest of UK and international students had remained fairly stable, which was an important achievement given the changes in fee structures. It was felt that the four-year degree structure contributed significantly to the success and attractiveness of the University. This was illustrated by having more than 50,000 undergraduate applications for the first time.

There were many outstanding appointments at professorial level, including for student teaching which was an important step. Attracting 250 Early Career Fellows of great promise had also strengthened the staff. This had been made possible by a Global Excellence initiative, partly funded by additional funding from the Scottish government. There had been a wide range of honours and achievements though special mention had to be made of the Nobel Prize for Professor Peter Higgs, which was particularly exciting. There were, in addition, numerous other individuals who received awards for research, teaching and community initiatives. Many outstanding honorary degrees were awarded. The following year Clinton was mentioned in light of the links into the Saturday 14th initiative, especially in Africa, which tied in very well with the University’s Global Academies.

There were three Athena Swan awards which emphasised the work on increasing female participation rates. Launch supported student entrepreneurs with 35-40 new companies a year set up, an internationally competitive rate. Efforts on community orientation reflected the historical and ongoing deep engagement with the community.

Innovative Learning Week had been highly successful with an unusual and productive range of different ways to approach learning. Another slightly unusual project was the one to develop new approaches to delivering broadband to remote communities, in this case the Highlands University by Professor Peter Buneman of the School of Informatics. This had become a truly wonderful year for the University.

The Principal concluded by pointing out that this had been a truly wonderful year for the University. This had been based on the truly outstanding quality of the staff and students. He also graciously acknowledged his appreciation for the work and support of the General Council, manifest in many different ways.

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 on the website at www.general council.ed.ac.uk/media.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

There was no other competent business.

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.
PRIVATE GIVING, PUBLIC GOOD
The Impact of Philanthropy at the University of Edinburgh
Jean Grier and Mary Bownes

Private Giving, Public Good: The Impact of Philanthropy at the University of Edinburgh
By Jean Grier and Mary Bownes

A great university develops over time and is dependent on many factors for its success. This lavishly illustrated book – the first major publication on the University of Edinburgh in more than a decade – looks at how philanthropic giving over the years has shaped the University as a community within the city and has enabled the University, its staff, students and alumni to contribute to global development.

Covering the historical background to the establishment of the University, the book charts the impact of philanthropy on the University’s buildings, student life, sporting successes, museums and collections, bursaries and other awards, and examines how research and scholarship – past and present – continue to influence the world.

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