The weird and the wonderful

Richard Wiseman on the secrets of psychology

ALSO INSIDE

The Roslin Institute unveils its innovative research hub

Edinburgh College of Art celebrates a new era
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For those members of the General Council who have requested them, voting papers for the election of the University’s alumni members of the General Council’s Business Committee are enclosed. To vote online, visit www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/elections.htm.

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The past year has seen many new faces and new beginnings at the University of Edinburgh. In this edition we welcome readers from Edinburgh College of Art and new Principal Professor Christopher Brewell outlines his plans for the College on page 14. We also profile the relocated Roslin Institute (page 8), now home to one of the world’s largest groupings of animal scientists, and celebrate the revamped Old College quadrangle (page 26).

Also in this issue, psychologist Professor Richard Wiseman explains how Edinburgh has informed his experiments and ideas (page 12), we highlight the accomplishments of pioneering pacifist and feminist Chrystal Macmillan (page 18), and we present a selection of recollections of your time at Edinburgh, alongside a sample of your most recent achievements (pages 20–25 and 28–31).

With best wishes for the holiday season.

For those General Council members who have requested them, voting papers for the election of the members of the General Council’s Business Committee are enclosed. To vote online, visit www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/elections.htm.
University News

Cinema superstar among Edinburgh honorary graduates

A leading Chinese actress and an Olympic silver medallist were honoured at the University’s summer graduation ceremonies.

One of modern cinema’s greatest actresses, Maggie Cheung, received a Doctor honoris causa. Ms Cheung has appeared in more than 70 films and is renowned for her stunning performances in Hero and In the Mood for Love. Raised in England and Hong Kong, she is the first Asian actress to win a prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

Alumna and three-time Olympic rowing silver medallist Katherine Grainger also received an honorary degree (Doctor honoris causa). Ms Grainger started rowing as an Edinburgh undergraduate and was captain of the Edinburgh University Boat Club. She graduated LLB from Edinburgh in 1997.

Other notable public figures who were honoured over the summer include Olivia Giles (Doctor of Laws), founder and Chief Executive of the Cary Trust, and Monika Biček, President of the International Society for the Protection of Children.

Ancient rocks help experts predict sea levels

Ancient rocks embedded in the West Antarctic ice sheet behaved between ice ages will help experts improve sea level predictions.

The research team is analysing the rocks and their findings will indicate whether the ice sheet melted at the warmest point between the two most recent global ice ages, some 120,000 years ago, when sea levels rose by up to six metres.

“With help us predict whether we are heading for major sea level rises in the next century or so, as we head toward warmer climates,” says Professor David Sugden of the School of GeoSciences. Understanding how the West Antarctic ice sheet behaved between ice ages will help scientists to improve their models of past climates, Professor Sugden says.

Study could help superbug battle

Targeting a toxin released by virtually all strains of MRSA could help scientists develop new drugs that can fight the superbug.

A study from the Roslin Institute at the University of Edinburgh discovered a toxin – SEIK – that leads the body’s immune system to go into overdrive and damage healthy cells.

The investigation will enable research to find drugs that could target SEIK and prevent damage to healthy cells, says Dr Ross Fitzgerald of the Roslin Institute: “If we can find ways to target this toxin, we can stop it from triggering an over-reaction of the body’s immune system and prevent severe infections.”

Merger complete

Edinburgh College of Art merged with the University of Edinburgh on 1 August 2011. As a result of the merger, the College has combined with the University’s School of Arts, Culture and Environment to form a new, enlarged Edinburgh College of Art within the University. The new Principal of the College is Professor Christopher Breward, above, who took up his position in September. Professor Breward was formerly Head of Research at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.

Read an interview with Professor Breward on page 14.

New Chancellor installed

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

The installation took place in the Old College quadrangle in autumn.

The Princess Royal is the University’s eighth Chancellor in the 150-year history of the position and succeeds HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, who stepped down from the role in 2010, having held it since 1953. She is also Patron of the University’s Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

The official ceremony was followed by refreshments on Old College lawn, and in a later ceremony, Ms Rowling buried a time capsule to acknowledge the start of building work on the centre.

Chancellor’s award winners

Following the installation event, the Chancellor presented awards to three members of staff for their contribution to teaching and research.

Sue Welburn, Professor of Medical and Veterinary Molecular Epidemiology and Director of the University’s Global Health Academy, was given the teaching award.

Mark Bradley, Professor of High-Throughput Chemistry, received the award for research.

Dr Dominic Johnson, Reader in Politics and International Relations, was given the Rising Star Award, in recognition of his academic potential.

Fighting climate change

Innovative methods that turn agricultural waste into carbon-rich soil in a bid to tackle climate change are to be developed at a new facility based at the University’s Biochar Research Centre. The unit will help researchers to produce biochar, a charcoal-like substance made through the oxygen-free, slow heating of agricultural waste.

Excellence acknowledged

Colin Pulham, Professor of High-Pressure Chemistry, was the 2011 winner of the Tom Dalby Prize for Excellence in Engaging the Public with Science. Following the award presentation in early December Professor Pulham delivered the University of Edinburgh Christmas Lecture, titled ‘Chemistry – Our Life, Our Future’.

Diesel fumes ‘heart risk’

Tiny chemical particles emitted by diesel exhaust fumes could raise the risk of heart attacks, Edinburgh researchers say. Scientists have found that ultrafine particles produced when diesel burns are harmful to blood vessels and can increase the chances of blood clots forming in arteries, leading to a heart attack or stroke.
Specialised scans capture tarantula’s beating heart

Scanning technology pioneered at the University of Edinburgh has revealed for the first time in detail how a spider’s heart beats.

MRI scans, which show blood flowing in and out of a tarantula’s heart, suggest the way in which a spider’s heart functions is much more complex than previously thought. Edinburgh scientists have used the scans to look at heart rate and blood volume, enabling a better insight into the workings of a spider’s heart.

The research, carried out in collaboration with the University of Glasgow, may help provide a greater understanding of the unique evolution of spiders and of how the species evolved differently in comparison to other animals. Unlike most other invertebrates, spiders — like humans — have more centralised organs such as the heart and the brain.

Gavin Merrifield, from the University’s department of Medical Physics, says: “These specialised MRI scans have given us in-depth images to provide a much better insight into how a spider’s heart works. Further scans will help us gain new evolutionary information and identify not only the similarities that we share with spiders, but also how and when they acquired them independent of ourselves.”

State-of-the-art veterinary teaching facility opened

The University’s innovative new teaching building for veterinary students has been officially opened at the Easter Bush campus.

The £42 million facility was opened by The Princess Royal, the University’s Chancellor and Patron of the Vet School.

The building houses modern and flexible learning and teaching suites designed to support world-class veterinary education.

The unveiling of the new centre was followed by the appointment of Professor David Argyle as the new Head of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

MILESTONE FOR ENGLISH LITERATURE

The University’s department of English Literature will be celebrating its 250th anniversary in 2012 with a range of special events.

There are plans for a major lecture to be held in May; the exhibition ‘250 Years of Literature in Edinburgh’ in the University’s Main Library, showcasing books, letters and other artefacts; and an event at the 2012 Edinburgh International Book Festival debating the role of literary study in contemporary culture. There will also be a series of walking tours in association with the ‘Edinburgh: UNESCO World City of Literature’ project. Email hod.english@ed.ac.uk.

Strong crop of new companies created

The University has recorded another solid year of creating new companies, strengthening its position as Scotland’s leading research institution.

The University formed 35 new firms in the 2010–2011 academic year, following on from the record 40 companies created in 2009–2010.

New companies created by Edinburgh Research and Innovation (ERI) – the University’s commercialisation arm – in the past year include Speech Graphics, which develops software that realistically creates speech-synchronisation for video games, and DestiNA Genomics, which has developed a chemical test that quickly detects genetic mutations.

In the past five years, the University has formed 143 companies. Around 75 per cent are still in operation and currently employ more than 300 staff.

Fool’s gold provides priceless insight

Fool’s gold is providing Edinburgh scientists with valuable insight into the Earth’s past geological events.

Experts within the School of GeoSciences are recreating ancient forms of the mineral pyrite – dubbed fool’s gold for its metallic lustre – that reveal details of the Earth before the Great Oxygenation Event, which took place 2.4 billion years ago. This was a time when oxygen released by early forms of bacteria gave rise to new forms of plant and animal life, transforming the Earth’s oceans and atmosphere.

Studying the composition of different forms of iron in fool’s gold enables better understanding of geological conditions at the time.
At first glance, the rolling pasture land of Midlothian’s Pentland Hills may not seem the obvious backdrop for an international hub of cutting-edge scientific activity. But it is here, at the University of Edinburgh’s Easter Bush veterinary campus on the outskirts of the city, that the epicentre of one of the world’s largest concentrations of animal scientists is now located.

Having recently taken up residence in a £60 million state-of-the-art complex – the new home for the Roslin Institute – some 500 experts are getting on with the challenge of addressing some of the world’s most pressing animal health and welfare concerns. And that task, says Institute Director Professor David Hume, is made all the easier thanks to the award-winning design of the innovative new building.

“Our building, with a design based on a pair of chromosomes, is instantly recognisable,” he says. “But more importantly, it’s changing the way we approach science. This is because the building is predominantly open plan, so it encourages interaction and removes the traditional boundaries associated with scientists working in isolated areas.”

University researchers share their new space with animal sciences partners from the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC), and the close proximity offers great scope for cross-collaborative research and information sharing, says Professor Hume. “In terms of improving health for livestock animals, the partnership with SAC is a logical one,” he explains.

The SAC has plenty of expertise in livestock and good relationships with farmers, so by working together we can enhance research to improve animal health as well as translate any discoveries that we make for use in livestock farming.”

The Roslin Institute joined the University of Edinburgh in 2008 and over the past three years has almost doubled the number of researchers it houses. It has received key Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council funding for both the new building and the scientific investigations undertaken within its walls.

The Institute’s researchers carry out world-leading basic and translational science to tackle global animal health and welfare issues and any implications those issues have on human health and the role of animals in the food chain.

The research stars of tomorrow are also being nurtured at Roslin: 100 PhD students are currently under supervision and 2011 saw the first cohorts from the Institute’s new MSc in Animal Biosciences begin their studies.

The Roslin Institute is perhaps best known internationally for creating Dolly the sheep, the world’s first animal to be cloned from an adult somatic cell.

By working together we can enhance research to improve animal health as well as translate any discoveries we make for use in livestock farming.”
An inspired design

The Roslin Institute’s design was inspired by the shape of a pair of human chromosomes, with a rainbow progression of coloured panels linking offices with research laboratories. The three-storey building covers 14,000 square metres and includes a lecture theatre and conference facilities. Its environmentally friendly design features natural ventilation in offices and social spaces and coloured glass panels on the building’s exterior, which help to prevent the build-up of solar heat.

Although cloning is no longer part of the Institute’s remit, Dolly’s legacy continues to impact heavily on Edinburgh’s research into disease treatments – especially in the field of developmental biology and, in particular, the role played by embryonic stem cells in an animal’s early development.

“Dolly’s legacy is enabling us to understand the process of how cells can lead to the full development of both animals and humans,” Professor Hume explains. “Although we have moved on from cloning we certainly have not forgotten the impact that Dolly has made. We have even named the canteen in the new building – Dolly’s Diner – after her.”

Improving treatments

The Roslin Institute continues, also, to break new ground in quantitative genetics. Research in this field seeks to identify genes that could improve the economic viability of livestock.

Edinburgh researchers made worldwide headlines in 2011 when it was announced that they had developed a strain of genetically modified chickens that cannot spread avian flu to other birds. Poultry production now ranks as the world’s biggest livestock sector, with some 50 billion chickens being produced globally, and the Roslin Institute’s focus on improving poultry health remains paramount.

With the world’s annual consumption of meat set to double to 470 million tonnes within the next 40 years, the beef industry is also under the microscope at Roslin, where experts are searching for genes that would enable farmers to breed bovine tuberculosis-resistant cattle.

In addition to their investigations into livestock health, Institute scientists are also focusing on developing and improving treatments for animals such as dogs, cats and horses.

“Again, collaboration and close proximity are key components to success in this area – Roslin experts are now working directly alongside their colleagues from the University’s Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

“The Vet School’s recently unveiled £42 million teaching building lies adjacent to the Roslin Institute at the University’s Easter Bush campus. Bringing on to the one site the research of the Institute and the combined teaching and clinical activities of the Vet School produces enormous benefits, says Professor Hume: “Our affiliation with the Vet School can help us learn things about human biology, just as is the case the other way round – in that we can translate our knowledge of human biology to improve treatments for animals.”

Professor David Argyle, new Head of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies in October 2011, agrees that the union opens up enormous possibilities for graduates in the dynamic and growing field of veterinary medicine. He says: “Having vets collaborate on research at the Roslin Institute will impact on wide-ranging areas of veterinary medicine. Such a partnership means we can share expertise with a number of projects.

“This could range from looking at ways of improving the health of livestock animals to preventing infections from spreading between species. Other areas include looking at the important roles genes play, which will enable us to better understand why certain animals are more susceptible to particular illnesses.”

He continues: “The relationship between the Vet School and the Roslin Institute is also invaluable in that it provides opportunities for veterinary graduates wanting to pursue a career in research.”

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Richard Wiseman: I remember my grandfather performing a really good trick with a coin. It was the only trick he did but he never told me how it was performed. I was about eight, and I went to the local library to try and find out. When I wasn’t much older than a kid myself, I did a lot of kids’ shows as an entertainer and then I did street entertaining in Cowen Garden in London.

CM: Why did you choose Edinburgh for your postgraduate studies?

RW: I studied psychology at the University College London and I became interested in the paranormal. A friend saw an advert from Edinburgh that he thought might appeal to me, as he knew I was interested in doing a PhD in ‘weird things’. So I came up here to look into it, rather liked it and then managed to get a grant to study here.

CM: Did any academic staff members inspire you?

RW: [The late] Bob Morris, my main supervisor, was my main influence. He was very mild mannered, very approachable, very funny and also very even handed within parapsychology, and that’s unusual – most people are either extremely sceptical or extreme believers that’s unusual – most people are either extremely sceptical or extreme believers and few people can see both sides of the argument.

CM: What did you do for fun when you were a student?

RW: I was a bit of a workaholic and spent most of my time in the Psychology department in George Square. I lived in Marchmont for a while and then above Negociants pub on Lothian Street, so most nights my entertainment was looking out the window! By far my favourite memories are of rushing from one magic show at the Festival Fringe to another. August always feels special because for that month, your city becomes the centre of the arts world.

CM: So you’re a Londoner who also sees Edinburgh as ‘your city’?

RW: I think Edinburgh is one of the most gorgeous places on Earth. I still get smacked in the mouth on those days when you look up and see the Crags or the Castle and you realise just how beautiful the city is.

CM: And you have quite strong professional ties here too…

RW: I’ve often spoken at the International Book Festival and my involvement with the Science Festival at the University goes back to my time as a postgraduate. A lot of the experiments in my books Quirkology and 59 Seconds were run in Edinburgh too. And then there’s the Edinburgh Secret Society [a mysterious organisation run by Richard and Edinburgh psychology lecturer Dr Peter Lamont] – we have a very enthusiastic following of people of a curious disposition who like unusual evenings.

CM: Your job is to help people comprehend unusual things... Tell me about your role as Professor of the Public Understanding of Psychology at the University of Hertfordshire.

RW: There’s a lot of bad psychology out there, stuff with very little evidence to support it, and yet there’s a lot of academic psychology that doesn’t get beyond the journals – my role is to be a bridge between that work and the general public, whether it’s through books, TV, talks, science festivals or consulting. I’m a social psychologist rather than a cognitive or physiological one, and ‘social’ stretches into a lot of areas.

CM: Has social media changed how you can inform people about psychology?

RW: It has made a huge difference; a lot of my work is online and you can reach huge numbers of people. One of my videos, The Colour-changing Card Trick, has had more than 4.5 million views, and that was made for £50 in the lab. Twitter and Facebook offer a way of reaching out to people that was impossible maybe even just three years ago.

CM: But surely conventional face-to-face teaching has its merits?

RW: I still like the idea of people getting together and talking to one another. My background is in performance, so I enjoy getting up in front of audiences. The fun and challenge is to take the academic psychology, which is quite rightly rather dull to most people, and bring it into a domain where it becomes exciting.

CM: Some of your experiments, such as your investigation into Edinburgh’s ‘haunted’ underground vaults, involve huge numbers of participants… Do things always run smoothly?

RW: When you’re dealing with large numbers of people you have to be almost like an events manager as much as you are a psychologist. With the underground vaults experiment we had to work out how to get several hundred people safely down to the vaults, get them to report their ‘weird’ experiences, each in their own vault, and then get them back out again.

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CM: You were recently named in a poll as one of the top 100 people who make Britain a better place. That’s rather a nice accolade…

RW: I’d say I’m probably one of the top 100 who don’t make it worse! Sometimes having fingers in lots of pies helps – for example, 59 Seconds is about how to be more creative, or how to fall in love, or how to achieve your goals more effectively, and all those things, I think, make people’s lives better.
For a man famed for his sartorial knowledge, Professor Christopher Breward is reassuringly dapper in person. The author of several seminal texts on men’s fashion, the new Principal of Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) cuts a slender, sharply dressed figure. And, as with any dedicated follower of fashion, the power of aesthetics is never far from his mind.

“The main building is the best located art school in the world,” he says, smiling. “Look at the views it has on to the castle. It’s an inspirational place, a great place to learn.”

Professor Breward took up his position at the College in September, swapping his post as Head of Research within London’s cathedral to art and design, the Victoria and Albert Museum (the V&A), for one of the creative industries’ most prolific seminaries. He has been flirting with ECA all his life. As a young man studying at London’s Courtauld Institute, he was aware of the College’s MA in Fine Art, unique for its art history element. ECA’s influence has loomed ever larger as his career progressed: he moved from studying to teaching at the Royal College of Art, then on to the V&A in 2004 via the London College of Fashion. He has published incessantly throughout, penning a tome on the history of fashionable dress and books on men’s style between 1963 and 1973, British Asian style and men’s fashion in the late Victorian and Edwardian age.

His final project with the V&A confirmed his fascination with ECA. He has co-curated the museum’s 2012 London Olympic Games offering. Merger with the University will unleash ideas, ingenuity and risk-taking at Edinburgh College of Art, says its new Head, Professor Christopher Breward. By Edd McCracken

The creative collaborator

Chris Close
a retrospective of British design from 1948 – the last time the Games rolled into the UK. In the process, he discovered just how much of a hold the College has had on the past six decades. “The artists and architects I was particularly drawn to have been alumni of ECA,” he reveals. “My favourite architect is Sir Basil Spence [who designed the University’s Main Library], one of the greatest ECA alumni. Coventry Cathedral is one of the UK’s best buildings.”

Admitting his move to Edinburgh was in some ways a “leap”, Professor Breward is enthusiastic about the possibilities art colleges can provide. “They add a bit of grit to life,” he says. “They are risk-taking institutions. The role of the artist or the creative practitioner is to push boundaries. Because of their flexibility and suspicion of hierarchy, art colleges bring people together with different perspectives. They are creative laboratories, and ECA is well placed to play that sort of role.”

Just as important, he stresses, is how ECA relates to its new ‘home’. The College merged with the University in August, a marriage that will open up potential collaborations with every corner of the institution, Professor Breward believes: “We live in a more spatially and visually engaged society. All disciplines within the University have potential for connection – the sciences, medicine, as well as humanities. These collaborations help bring a broader understanding of society.”

Music is a subject area that particularly excites him. Formerly part of the University’s School of Arts, Culture and the Environment, it now sits with the newly enlarged ECA. “I can’t think of any other art college that will have such a strong relationship with music,” he enthuses. “This is the kind of school that is a centre for research in Scotland. In the history of the art college there is an interesting mix of rock and pop music, counter-cultural music coming out from art students. But here we have the discipline itself, sitting within the College. It’s full of possibilities.”

Professor Breward brings his focus back to ECA’s magnificent main building, complete with its sculpture court and airy studios. Reading its masonry, space and light like he would a gentleman’s suit, he reflects on what it says about its owner. “ECA has a strong reputation for providing traditional training in arts and crafts skills,” he explains. “You get a sense of that with the studio space, the cast collection, and that echoes through to contemporary art practice. ECA has this proud heritage of a particular kind of art education, and I want to preserve that.”

Yet amidst his list of priorities, maintaining this classic facet of ECA while encouraging its crucial role as an incubator for new ideas and technologies is key. “After years of conceptual art we’ve seen the resurgence of drawing, a growing interest in the object, the rediscovery of things, running alongside an embracing of the virtual and the digital,” Professor Breward says. “There’s been a real thinking through of processes, of what skill means, what beauty means. You can find that dualism in various moments of ECA’s history but it’s enjoying a resurgence at the moment. And the new ECA is very well placed to take advantage of that.”

Founded in 1760, Edinburgh College of Art has produced some of Britain’s most respected artists, from sculptor Eduardo Paolozzi to Turner Prize nominee Callum Innes. The recent merger with the University has created five distinct subject areas and has built on the already strong ties between the two institutions: the MA in Fine Art has been run jointly since 1946. Edinburgh has accredited ECA degrees since 2004, and the two institutions’ architecture departments merged in 2009. Here is a taste of some of the most versatile talents to have emerged in recent years.

**ECA: a tradition of excellence**

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**Architecture & Landscape Architecture:**

The University and College’s architecture departments have developed programmes in architectural conservation, urban design, landscape architecture, and art, space and nature. It is the top ranked centre for research in Scotland.

Sir Nicholas Grimshaw, who has designed several of the UK’s most striking modernist buildings, including the Eden Project (above) in Cornwall and London’s Waterloo train station, graduated in 1962.

**History of Art:**

Encompassing everything from late Medieval art and the Renaissance to Neoclassicism and the present day, this department has a focus on the late 19th-century and contemporary art and theory.

Recipient of a recent major retrospective at the Royal Scottish Academy, Dame Elizabeth Blackadder graduated with a Masters in Fine Art (MA) from Edinburgh College of Art and the University, in 1954. Her work (above) can be found in the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

**Design:**

Home to animation, fashion, film direction, glass, graphic design, illustration, interior design, jewellery and silversmithing, performance costume, product design and textiles. By forging partnerships within science and engineering, the department aims to be at the forefront of research.

Rachael Barrett graduated in Design & Applied Arts in 2007 and has since created costumes for pop star Lady Gaga (above), who describes her as a ‘favourite designer’.

**Music:**

Combining theory with practice, music has had a long and distinguished presence within the University. It remains at the cutting edge of music production and consumption.

James MacMillan studied composition and since graduating in 1981 has been commissioned by the likes of the Welsh National Opera and London Symphony Orchestra. He was the composer and conductor for the BBC Philharmonic until 2009.

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“Art colleges add a bit of grit to life. They are creative laboratories, and ECA is well placed to play that sort of role.”
HIDDEN HISTORIES

CHRYSTAL MACMILLAN
(1872–1937)

A globetrotting feminist in the first decades of the 20th century, Edinburgh alumna Chrystal Macmillan struck blows for equality and peace, before being largely forgotten. Now her story is being retold for a new generation. By Chris Small

She is one of Edinburgh’s most radical and remarkable alumni: the University’s first female science graduate, a brilliant mathematician, suffragist, lawyer, internationalist and peace campaigner. But the injustice of Chrystal Macmillan’s story is that she is not better known.

Dr Fiona Mackay, Senior Lecturer in Politics at the School of Social and Political Science, describes Macmillan as “a genuine pioneer”. “She was the first woman to lobby the House of Lords,” she says. “She was an early female science graduate, a brilliant mathematician, suffragist, lawyer, a prototype for the development of an internationalist and peace campaigner.

Macmillan was the only daughter in a family of nine children. They grew up in Comiston Hill House, now owned by the Royal Zoological Society. She attended St Leonards School in St Andrews and matriculated at the University of Edinburgh on 5 October 1892 – the first day women were admitted to Scottish universities – graduating four years later with first-class honours in mathematics and natural philosophy.

A 1940s memorial document mentions that she was the “foremost student” of George Chrystal, Professor of Mathematics at Edinburgh in the 1890s. It reads: “The mathematical cast of her mind explains much of the characteristic qualities of her method of reasoning and action, her logical presentation of facts and the conclusions she drew from them, her inability to understand compromise, her personal detachment in argument whether it went for her or against her.”

Alongside this rationalism flowered radicalism. Helen Kay, currently researching a book on Macmillan, has discovered that she attended the first meeting of the Women’s Representative Committee at the University on 8 February 1896, and was “engaged politically from the start”.

Between 1868 and 1918 the universities of Edinburgh and St Andrews were represented in the House of Commons. As Secretary of the Women Graduates of the Scottish Universities, Macmillan argued that female graduates had a right to vote in the 1906 election.

Ms Kay explains: “They took it to the University Court on the grounds that the Secretary had no right to refuse them and that they should be getting the votes as they were registered graduates of the University. They went to the Court of Session, but they got turned down. They then took it to the House of Lords but they couldn’t afford another barrister, so Chrystal led the case herself.”

The voting statutes of the University’s General Council referred to “persons” throughout, and the crux of Macmillan’s argument – which seems reasonable enough – was that women were also “persons”. The case failed, but Macmillan received glowing press. Newspapers described her as the “modern Portia” and alluded to her melodious style.

Despite her public emergence as a suffragist, Macmillan had to live with the personal compromises of her era. In 1901 her father – a tea merchant – died suddenly and her brothers insisted that she return to manage the family home. She did not leave Edinburgh until 1913, aged 41.

“We assume that it was a progressive liberal family for her to have the access to the education that she had,” says Dr Mackay. “So I guess she was living the contradictions that what they called the ‘new women’ were experiencing at the turn of the century, the contradictions that actually a lot of women still experience – that mix of emancipation and constraint.”

Macmillan was a tenacious peace activist. In 1914, at the start of the First World War, she traversed the U-boat-patrolled North Sea to deliver food to homeless Belgian refugees. She spoke for the UK at the International Congress of Women at the Hague in 1915 and was chosen as a member of the international committee who were to travel to neutral nations to champion peace.

Ms Kay believes Macmillan’s pacifism may have damaged her stature. “There was a war fever. People who were advocating peace and mediation – as Chrystal and her colleagues were – would not have been popular. The suffrage movement itself split on the issue.”

But Macmillan continued to burnish her credentials as a feminist. In 1924 she became one of the first women called to the English bar. She led diverse and typically enlightened campaigns, including the fight for women to retain their nationality after marriage – a right that would not be recognised by the United Nations until 1957, two decades after her death.

Macmillan was known for being scrupulous and single-minded, but Ms Kay also points to her sense of humour. Fellow suffragist Cicely Hamilton said she was “a very just human being... She could not budge an inch on matters of principle but she never bore her temper and never bore a grudge in defeat.”

Dr Mackay believes the decline in our knowledge of Macmillan is part of a longer trend of women being written out of history. “What’s so surprising is that we tend to think of transnational feminism and international organisations as quite a new phenomenon,” she explains. “What we’re seeing is this really very strong international network of women who were not afraid to challenge convention, who were involved in some of the most gripping issues of the time.”

Dr Mackay feels that Macmillan’s achievements resonate with women’s continuing fight for equality worldwide – and with the University’s internationalist ethic today. “In Induction Week [tell students about Chrystal],” she says. “I say the kind of values she emoted to around challenging convention, internationalism, women’s rights, social justice, and the idea of a global citizenship, are ones we see as ideal for social scientists at the University.”

With the School of Social and Political Science now housed in the Chrystal Macmillan Building, the announcement of a new Chrystal Macmillan PhD scholarship, starting in 2012–13, an annual lecture launched in November 2011, and plans for a permanent exhibition (from February 2012) of her work, the process of retelling the story of Edinburgh’s forgotten feminist has begun.

“The School is determined that her rightful place will be restored,” says Dr Mackay. “Like a lot of remarkable Scottish women, she has been obscured. We intend for her to be rediscovered.”

“Her story is being retold for a new generation.”
Alumni Profiles

Emilie Venables

“I liked living in Marchmont because I was close to my friends and colleagues, and I was able to walk to the local pub for a ‘quick’ drink. My favourite pub was the Pear Tree – going for gin and tonics after the Wednesday CAS seminar was a weekly ritual, which often ended in the early hours of the morning. Curry at the Mosque Kitchen was also a staple for CAS students. I loved living at the top of an old tenement, the wind. Nights out were spontaneous and unpredictable: I may find myself presenting on a local community radio station, translating a medical consultation into French or engaging in a participatory photography project.”

“My studies at Edinburgh were inspired by my travels and gap year in West Africa, as well as my previous studies in social anthropology. I’d heard a lot of positive things about studying in Edinburgh and was attracted to the Centre of African Studies (CAS) because of the expertise and experience of its staff and students. “I saw Edinburgh out of the train window and thought it was a beautiful city – the journey up the coast from my home town of Leeds is still one of my favourites. I remember thinking that there were a lot of hills, and walking over the bridge in winter to get to a 9am stats class isn’t something I look back upon with fond memories… My bike made a couple of outings before being relegated to the bottom of the stairwell!”

Richard Smith
BSc Pathology, 1973 and MBChB, 1976

“MY DAYS ARE UNPREDICTABLE: I MAY FIND MYSELF PRESENTING ON A LOCAL COMMUNITY RADIO STATION, TRANSLATING A MEDICAL CONSULTATION INTO FRENCH OR ENGAGING IN A PARTICIPATORY PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT.”

Dr Richard Smith is Director of the UnitedHealth Chronic Disease Initiative, which funds centres researching how to counter non-communicable diseases in the developing world. He is a former editor of the British Medical Journal.

“Dr Richard Smith is Director of the UnitedHealth Chronic Disease Initiative, which funds centres researching how to counter non-communicable diseases in the developing world. He is a former editor of the British Medical Journal.”

President of the University Poetry Society and in that role met many great Scottish poets, including Hugh MacDiarmid, Norman MacCaig and Sorley MacLean. Many friends that I made at university are now prominent Scottish poets, including Liz Lochhead and Brian McCabe. “I was also one of the founders of an experimental arts society. We wrapped up a string quartet, performed a play in Russian when none of us spoke Russian, made a pink porridge lady and created a human aquarium.

Edinburgh was always encouraging of this experimentation, although not everybody saw all the jokes!

“I was very political when I arrived in Edinburgh and was elected to the Student Representative Council and the Medical Students’ Committee. I became the medical school student representative on the Senate SRC Liaison Committee.”

“I edited the University poetry magazine, BUMp, and Synapse, the medical school magazine. I was editor of Synapse when Gordon Brown was the editor of the Student, and I got to know him a little and have bumped into him since. These experiences of editing were very important for my subsequent career as an editor. Also important to me were the many prominent people I heard lecture in Edinburgh, including Cicely Saunders, the founder of the hospice movement.

“My main interest is to contribute to countering non-communicable diseases (cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and common cancers) globally. As Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization, has said, this requires a ‘whole of society and whole of government approach’.

“An institution like the University of Edinburgh has great strengths not only in health but in many other disciplines, and it’s very useful to me to be part of the network.”
Alumni Network

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

History repeats for Ronnie, six decades on

Ronnie Cramond recently celebrated graduating from Edinburgh for a second time – 62 years after he was awarded his first degree from the University. Now aged 84, Mr Cramond studied at Edinburgh as a young man, gaining an MA in History in 1949. Six decades later he resumed his studies and graduated with an MPhil in Scottish History in 2011. Mr Cramond, whose MPhil dissertation was about the motivation behind the creation of the Museum of Scotland, remembers university in the 1940s as being about “playing rugby, the weekly hop in the Union Palais [now the Teviot Union] and working very hard”. He is currently undertaking personal research into the Battle of Culloden.

OUT AND ABOUT

UK alumni tour

The Development and Alumni Office recently began its inaugural tour of the UK. With more than 100,000 alumni living and working in Britain, the team hopes to meet with as many alumni as possible over the coming months. Successful networking events have been held in Aberdeen, London, Cambridge, Newcastle and Manchester, with upcoming events planned for Bristol, Belfast, Glasgow and Edinburgh. For details, email alumni@ed.ac.uk.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

29 May 2012

Film show

Playfair Library

Alumni and friends are invited to the University’s Graduates’ Association/Paramount Cinemas’ film show in the Playfair Library on 29 May, 2012.

Films to be screened include Northern Capital (1937), which showcases Edinburgh sights, lothian Landscape, focusing on East Lothian, and the 1948 classic Waverley Steps.

For more information, send an email to gradassoc.admin@ed.ac.uk.

Careers in the spotlight

Careers networking events for alumni were recently held across the world in Toronto, London and India. Heather White, business coach and networking facilitator, simplified the art of networking at an event hosted by the University of Edinburgh London Alumni Network, Edinburgh University Club of Toronto past president and Career Connections coordinator, Josh Gillespie, given an address at Toronto’s inaugural Edinburgh Career Connections Networking Event, and an employability workshop and reception was staged at a joint Scottish universities event in India.

NETWORKING

Striving for the future

With such a vast number of alumni living outside the UK, the Development and Alumni Office is keen to hear from University of Edinburgh graduates who have an interest in becoming a volunteer alumni contact for their region. Alumni contacts help build a strong alumni community, enhance the university experience for current students and assist in the recruitment of potential scholars. For further information and an application form, email alumni@ed.ac.uk.

Keep in touch

Do you have your current contact details? If not, you might be missing out on event invitations and our bi-monthly e-newsletter, which keeps you updated on the latest alumni benefits, club activities and news. If your details need to be updated, please visit the Alumni Portal (www.myped.ed.ac.uk) or email us at alumni@ed.ac.uk.

RISING STAR

Anna Davidson

MA (Hons) Sociology & Politics, 2007

With a Fulbright Scholarship to undertake a Masters in Environmental Studies at the State University of New York, Anna Davidson is making her mark as an advocate for sustainable solutions.

“I knew I wanted to figure out why and how societies change and combining sociology, politics and economics seemed to be the best way to start looking for answers. Edinburgh offered the flexibility of taking multiple subjects at a world-class university, in an exciting city. I was incredibly fortunate to have lecturers at Edinburgh who were supportive – even guiding me through publishing one of my papers in a peer-reviewed journal. My involvement with the Edinburgh University Students’ Association was an incredible experience that taught me most of what I know about politics. “My experience of advocating for sustainable solutions at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development in New York earlier this year was both deeply inspiring and disheartening. The energy and talent within the youth major group was inspiring. However, the will and vision held by so many was thwarted by a system dominated by short-sighted national interest. “My masters is giving me the chance to publish some of my work and get involved in things like the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. I hope it will lay the groundwork for a PhD, and work in an environmental NGO in the near future.”

STEP BACK IN TIME

Spotlight on the '60s

Edinburgh students at the Bedlam Theatre on Bristo Place unearthed a trove of University memorabilia during their recent renovation of the building’s kitchen.

The brochures, letters, postcards and photographs date from 1961 to 1964, when the Bedlam was the University’s chapel’s likeness. Among the finds is a photograph of the old chapel (left), which is now used as a dressing room. “We’ve had several alumni turn up and say they were married in the building but we have never been able to figure out where exactly that was until now,” says Cameron Acosta, Bedlam’s 2011 Festival Fringe public manager. “It’s great to be able to share our discovery with those who used Bedlam before us.”

An engaging read

In the last edition of Edil we ran a photograph of Peter Pan author JM Barrie with former British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, both Edinburgh alumni. Mr MacDonald’s granddaughter Victoria Bagshaw (BSc 1965 & PhD 1969), writes in with this interesting insight into the long-time friendship between the two men: “My parents, Joan M MacDonald [pictured in a news clipping, right] and Alastair Ulleam MacKinnon, met at the University as medical students. When they became engaged in 1930, JM Barrie, a family friend, wrote to Isbel, my mother’s older sister, and I still have the letter. He wrote, I feel that your sister Joan has taken a good deal on herself in going and getting engaged while still a mere undergraduate.”
Every graduate can name a mentor who gave them advice and encouragement. But have you ever wondered if you inspired your teachers in return? Here, we talk to one of your role models about their experiences.

**Dr Elena Garde**

Dr Elena Garde is Programme Leader for Veterinarians Without Borders/International Animal Health. She undertook an online MSc in International Animal Health (2011) under the tutelage of Ewan MacLeod. She is Programme Leader for Veterinarians Without Borders/Vétérinaires Sans Frontières-Canada in Latin America.

**“Ewan was incredible. His support has been above and beyond the call of duty, and nothing ever seemed too daunting. I sometimes imagined him receiving the same questions about problems with the website or a PDF that wouldn't open or a programme that wouldn't download... but he never relayed impatience in his emails, and this made it easy for us to communicate openly. His professionalism, but at the same time informal friendliness, made it really easy to work with him.”**

**The Apprentice**

Elena undertook an online MSc in International Animal Health (2011) under the tutelage of Ewan MacLeod. She is Programme Leader for Veterinarians Without Borders/ Vétérinaires Sans Frontières-Canada in Latin America.

**Dr Ewan MacLeod**

**School:** Biomedical Sciences  
**Title:** Programme Director, MSc International Animal Health

Are you an Edinburgh alumni?  
Yes. I have a PhD (2005) relating to tsetse fly/tsetsesome interactions. I studied at the Centre for Tropical Veterinary Medicine (CTVM), Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. In what capacity have you worked at the University?  
I started in 2006 as a tutor on the International Animal Health MSc programme, becoming the educational coordinator in 2008, and in 2010 I took over as Director.  
What is the most satisfying part of your job?  
We have a diverse range of students from across the world. It’s nice to see how they all cooperate even though some have very different backgrounds.  
... and the most challenging?  
My role is to ease students’ transition into postgraduate education, as many are returning to study years after completing their undergraduate degree. The programme team works hard to respond quickly to any concerns.  
What has changed since your student days?  
The web has made a huge impact. With university e-journals students can now access material at any time as long as they have an internet connection. This makes studying an online programme an extremely effective method of learning.  
Is it satisfying to see graduates start or return to their careers with fresh approaches learnt at Edinburgh?  
Many students have used the programme as a stepping stone to a PhD. Several of those who did residential masters at the CTVM are heads of their countries’ veterinary services. We hope some of our graduates can follow in their footsteps in the years to come.  
Can you outline some unique teaching tools that make distance learning at Edinburgh first-class?  
Lectures are released on a weekly basis and the student can download the content at any time, meaning they can study when it suits them. They can also interact on the online discussion boards, discussing the lecture notes or anything else that catches their interest.  
Can you describe your experience of collaborating with Elena Garde?  
Elena was a very diligent student. Her dissertation work looked at a canine distemper outbreak in the tsunami-affected town of Dichato in Chile. She hopes to continue her collaboration with the University of Edinburgh and we look forward to working with her.

**THE MASTER**

**Dr Judith Diehl**

**PhD (Divinity), 2007**

Where do you live now and why?  
I live in Denver, Colorado. I’m an instructor in a seminary in the city. We prepare students for pastoral positions in local churches, and for mission work, chaplaincy and Christian counselling.  
When did you live in Edinburgh?  
My husband and I lived in Craildram from 2004 to 2007.  
What do you miss about the city?  
I miss Ryan’s Bar on rainy evenings. I miss the fact that nearly every month of the year some flower was blooming. From the snowdrops in January to the late-blooming roses, the city was alve with colour. I miss our Kirk and I really miss the aroma and the taste of the bacon rolls after the morning prayer service. The only thing sweeter than the orange marmalade was the friends we made.  
What was in your ‘little black book’ when you lived in Edinburgh?  
I loved breakfast in Stockbridge on Saturday mornings and then a tour of all the charity shops, usually finding a little piece of Scotland to cherish.  
What was your first impression of Edinburgh when you arrived?  
The cherry trees were in full bloom the first time I visited New College. As I stood at a street corner waiting for a bus, it began to pour. I thought I would drown as the bus came to a splashing halt. There were rivers of pink blossoms rushing down the street.  
What is your fondest memory of your time at the University?  
On Friday mornings, the biblical studies students gathered in the old Senate Room at New College for lectures and discussion. I remember the archaic door with an iron knocker, the ancient threadbare rug and the stiff chairs, crowded around the tables. It smelled like history and books and knowledge. I could feel the years of theology that had ‘happened’ within the darkened walls of that room. It proved to be a rich time of thinking and learning and discussing with peers, and with those much more seasoned in the field than we students.

**My Edinburgh**

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

**Which book influenced your life most when you were there?**

We read books by Anthony Thiselton and Kevin Vanhoozer, which proved to be essential background for my present teaching assignment.

**What is your favourite view of the city?**

From the terrace of the dining room of the New Club in Princes Street. We could look straight across the street to the castle, yet we were high enough to see a great distance east and west as well.

**What would you recommend as ‘unmissable’ to a tourist?**

The museums, gardens and restaurants are musts, but I loved travelling outside Edinburgh as well. One of my favourite memories is of looking out of a bus window as we drove alongside a golf course. The day was cold, wet and grim, but a number of golfers were on the greens, wearing coats and hats and gloves to keep warm. Now that is dedication, and that is truly Scotland!
The University’s iconic Old College quadrangle reopened in 2011 after being resurfaced, completing the original architectural vision for the site more than 220 years after building there began. During the work, equipment used by Joseph Black, Edinburgh’s Professor of Chemistry from 1766, was unearthed. Over the years the quad has served various purposes and it will continue to be a versatile events venue and public meeting space.

Send your photographs of your student days to editor.ed@ed.ac.uk
Whether for work or play, the arts have always featured prominently in our alumni activities. Here, we showcase just some of your artistic endeavours and feature a few favourite cultural escapes.

**60 SECONDS IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

**ALISTAIR MOFFAT**

**Born:** Kelso, the Scottish Borders, 1950  
**Educated:** Kelso High School, the University of Edinburgh, the University of St Andrews and the Warburg Institute at the University of London  
**Current home:** Near Selkirk, the Scottish Borders  
**Current job:** Writer and director of the Lemn Sissay and Borders book festivals

Favourite book: *A Time of Gifts* by Patrick Leigh Fermor  
Favourite song or piece of music: “At Llibal as Arde” by Runrig  
Greatest influence: Lindsay Moffat, my wife

“Edinburgh is the most beautiful city in the world, and I realised [while studying at the University] that the best arts festival in the world takes place there. The student newspaper was very vibrant and I liked the sense of a campus around George Square.”

**THE HIT LIST**

**To watch...**

This black comedy earned director and Edinburgh College of Art alumnus and drama tutor Morag McKinnon a Scottish BAFTA for Best Feature. The follow-up to the highly acclaimed *Red Road*, it centres around Alie (James Cosmo), a Glaswegian street-market seller, around Alfie (James Cosmo), a acclaimed follow-up to the highly BAFTA for Best Feature. The

**To read...**

Dr Stephen Cullen (MA Hons Politics/Economic History, 1984) reassesses the contribution made by the Home Guard to the British war effort. Drawing on eyewitness testimony, he aims to dispel some myths about the men and women who made up this national defence force. — *In Search of the Real Dad’s Army* by Dr Stephen Cullen (Pen & Sword Books Ltd, £19.99)

**To listen to...**

A selection of unusual musical instruments held at the University is featured in MIMO, a new digital exhibition down from the collections of nine of Europe’s major instrument museums. Visitors can sample sounds made by instruments including exotic tubas and euphoniums. — Visit [http://exhibitions.europeana.eu/exhibits/show/musical-instruments-en](http://exhibitions.europeana.eu/exhibits/show/musical-instruments-en)

A stitch in time

Alexander McColl Smith, Edinburgh alumnus and author, has helped to conceive the Great Tapestry of Scotland, which is made up of 107 “moments” from the nation’s history. Due for completion in 2013, its panels will feature an eclectic range of Scottish people and events, including singer Lulu, the Battle of Mons Groupius in 83AD, and the reoverning of the Scottish Parliament in 1999.

**THE FAB FIVE**

We all interpret and appreciate art in our own way. Here, five alumni pick out the pieces that most inspire them.

**01**

‘An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump’ by Joseph Wright (1768), at the National Gallery, London  
"I have a great use of light and was very logical for its time.” Paul Billington, BSc Artificial Intelligence & Computer Science, 1992

**02**

‘Silence’ by John Henry Fuseli (1799–1801), at the Kunsthau, Zurich  
“...the stiffness of this painting always stayed with me. When you look at it in more detail you realise that the proportions of the limbs are all wrong.” Elizabeth Gardner (nee Hargreaves), MA Archaeology, 2001

**03**

‘Inside Australia’ (sculpture installation) by Antony Gormley, at Lake Ballad, Western Australia  
“You’re humbled by the scale of the place and the harshness of the climate.” Neil Culpan, BSc Geology, 1991

**04**

‘Montagne Sainte-Victoire’ by Paul Cezanne (1890–1895), at the Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh  
“The colours are just spectacular! Reminds me of being in Provence.” Dr Nathalie Muller-Chauviere, PhD Medical & Radiological Sciences, 2007

**05**

‘Landform’ (landscape work) by Charles Jencks (2001), at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh  
“It’s both visual and tactile and pulls you into it to explore and experience it from multiple angles. Stone circles have the same effect on me.” Patricia Barclay, LLB, 1983, PG Dip (Legal Practice), 1984

**Acclaimed critic shares book prize**

Theatre critic Hilary Spurling and debut novelist Tajani Soli have joined the list of acclaimed authors who have won the James Tait Black Prizes, Britain’s oldest literary awards.

Hilary Spurling (pictured), former literary editor of *The Spectator*, claimed the biography prize for her book *Bunying the Boses: Pearl Buck in China* (Profile Books, £8.99) while American author Tajani Soli is the recipient of the fiction prize for her first novel, *The Lotus Eaters* (St. Martin’s Press, £7.99).

They join the ranks of respected former winners such as Ian McEwan and AS Byatt.

**WHAT’S ON AT TALBOT RICE**

Throughout 2012 Talbot Rice Gallery presents an exciting range of exhibitions and events. For further details, visit [www.trg.ed.ac.uk](http://www.trg.ed.ac.uk).

**Beholder**

Until 18 February, 2012  
Is beauty in the eye of the beholder? Talbot Rice Gallery puts David Hume’s statement to the test. To coincide with the University’s Hume Tercentenary, Talbot Rice Gallery has invited institutions and artists across Scotland to nominate artworks and objects they consider to be beautiful. Including conceptual works, film, sculpture and paintings, ‘Beholder’ is an eclectic and wide-ranging exhibition. The statements of selectors reveal the very different kinds of relationships people have to the concept, from critical interpretations to clear-cut celebrations.

**Coming up at Talbot Rice**

Alison Turnbull and James Cumming both 10 March – 5 May 2012  
Visit [www.trg.ed.ac.uk](http://www.trg.ed.ac.uk) for details.
**Food for Thought**

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

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**Reader Recipe: Icelandic Christmas feast**

Serves 4–5

**Starter:** Asparagus soup  
**Main course:** Plurinad breasts  
**Dessert:** Home-made chocolate ice-cream and/or pineapple trifle

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1-2 tsp redcurrant jelly

**Chefs note:** “In my family we stick to rock puddings, mashed turnips, and warmed sweetcorn and peas. But at Christmas, it’s all about the main course!”

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**Icelandic Christmas feast**

**Step 1:** Soak birds in milk overnight. Melt butter in a very large pot and brown meat on all sides. Pour in milk, adding a little water. Strain and reserve stock. Add berries, then season and boil for 70–90 minutes. Carefully remove birds (strain and reserve stock) and divide down keel bone into two pieces, then cover and keep warm.

**Step 2:** Meanwhile, sprinkle sugar evenly over the base of a heavy pan and heat, stirring, over a low heat until dissolved. Add 2 tablespoons butter, stir, then increase heat to medium, add potatoes and heat, stirring, until a sticky glaze forms. Add a little water, if necessary. Keep warm.

**Step 3:** Make gravy with reserved cooking liquid, some butter, flour and seasoning, then mix with redcurrant jelly and top with cream.

**Step 4:** Arrange meat on a platter, then top with peaches and prunes, and serve with potatoes, a Waldorf salad, pickled red cabbage and warmed sweetcorn and peas.

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**Brenda and I met in 1954 when she joined the third-year medical course. Though English, she came from the University of the Witwatersrand, in Johannesburg, to finish her clinical studies in Edinburgh. I saw her returning from lunch near the Meadows and by running hard bumped into her ‘by accident’ as she came by the tennis courts and asked her to the year ball.

“Her surprise was compounded when, the next day, she accompanied a friend into the Royal Infirmary where I had been admitted with a broken jaw after boxing against Glasgow University. I was in bandages for some time so she didn’t really know what I looked like until too late! I discovered she loved me when she used her overtime money as a Butlin’s waitress to buy her first climbing boots to join me in the Edinburgh University Mountaineering Club.

“Then came training for me in pathology. I was seconded (for my National Service) to Dar es Salaam, in Tanzania, to start the pathology teaching in the new medical school. Then came training for me in pathology. I was seconded (for my National Service) to Dar es Salaam, in Tanzania, to start the pathology teaching in the new medical school.

“...and by running hard bumped into her ‘by accident’ as she came by the tennis courts and asked her to the year ball.

I was in bandages for some time so Brenda didn’t really know what I looked like until too late! I discovered she loved me when she used her overtime money as a Butlin’s waitress to buy her first climbing boots to join me in the Edinburgh University Mountaineering Club.

“The first married couple to do so.

**Gerard (Gerry) Slavin**

MB ChB, 1957

**Brenda Slavin (nee Stewart)**

MB ChB, 1957

Gerard and Brenda are both retired and live in Matlock, Derbyshire. They have three children – a surgeon, an anaesthetist and a psychologist – and 11 grandchildren. If you met your partner or a lifelong friend at the University of Edinburgh and would like to share your recollections, email us at editor.ed@ed.ac.uk.

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Many a friendship is forged during our university days, and we want to hear how you met your partner or best pal. For Gerard and Brenda Slavin, a meeting in the Meadows led to a lifetime together.
In July there was a memorable celebration of the Business Committee.

Meanwhile the work of the Business Committee and its Standing Committees has continued.

Last June’s highly successful Half-Yearly General Council Meeting was held at King’s Buildings, which has undergone an enormous transformation since many of us older graduates studied there. We were inspired by presentations from Professor Simon Bates, College Dean of Learning and Teaching, and Professor Steve McLaughlin, Dean of Research. Their talks may be seen on our website, and if you watch them you will understand why the quality of their work and that of many others around the University has resulted in this transformation since many of us older graduates studied there.

After the meeting:

10 am to 10.30 am: Coffee, tea and biscuits in the Lorimer Room, School of Law, Old College

10.30 am: General Council Meeting in Room G175, School of Law, Old College

After the meeting: Lunch in the Playfair Library Hall (see page 38 for details)

*Please note that the Meeting will be filmed.

AGENDA FOR THE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

1. Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held on 18 June 2011 (PAPER A)

2. Matters arising

3. Report of the Business Committee

4. Motion (PAPER B)

“Constitutional Arrangements for the working of the General Council of the University of Edinburgh and its Business Committee” and “The General Council of the University of Edinburgh Regulations for General Council Elections”

5. Dates of future meetings of the General Council

6. Notice of forthcoming elections

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

8. Any other competent business

9. Adjournment

Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in Edinburgh on 18 June 2011

Present:

Dr Charles Swainson
Chairman

Dr Kim Wadron
University Secretary and Registrar of the General Council

Professor Simon Bates
Dean of Learning and Teaching, College of Science & Engineering

Professor Steve McLaughlin
Dean of Research, College of Science & Engineering

Dr Michael Mitchell
Secretary of the General Council

Dr Alan Brown
Convener of the Business Committee

Dr MaryCatherine Burgess
The Associate Chaplain to the University opened the meeting with prayer.

1. Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in Old College, Edinburgh, on 12 February 2011

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 February 2011 were approved.

2. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Report of the Business Committee

Dr Alan Brown, Convener of the Business Committee, gave the report of the Business Committee. Welcoming the attendees, both present and online, and the speakers he noted that it was the first time this meeting had been held at the King’s Buildings. He thanked Dr MaryCatherine Burgess in particular for all her support, as regretfully this would be her last meeting before she retired from her post.

The unopposed election of the new Chancellor, HRH The Princess Royal, was warmly welcomed. In a letter to the General Council she looked forward to a long and fruitful relationship with the University. It had been decided to mark the outstanding service of the previous Chancellor, The Duke of Edinburgh, by creating the Prince Philip General Council Scholarship Fund, which would distribute bursaries to deserving students. Any General Council members wishing to donate to the University for such purposes were encouraged to contribute to this fund.
The next Half-Yearly Meeting would take place on Saturday 11 February 2012 in Old College, the University of Edinburgh. Any motions for discussion at that meeting should be received in the General Council Office by 23 November 2011. The following Half-Yearly Meeting would take place on Saturday 16 June 2012.

4. Dates of future meetings of the General Council

The University of Edinburgh

The simplified Ordinance 210 continued to make progress. The Constitutional Standing Committee had worked to update the Constitutional Arrangements and Regulations in line with the Ordinance and other previously approved changes. The work to introduce online elections continued.

Although the Business Committee in general worked well there was always room for improvement. Accordingly a small working group had been set up, chaired by Dr Frances Dow, to conduct an Effectiveness Review of the Committee. Dr Brown thanked the outgoing members of the Committee for their dedication and support. He invited members to consider standing in future elections.

The report of the Business Committee was approved.

The full text of the Convenor’s remarks, and the record of the discussion that followed the presentation, are contained in the Annex to the Billet.

5. Notice of forthcoming elections

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

6. Presentation by Professor Simon Bates, Dean of Learning and Teaching, College of Science & Engineering, and Professor Steve McLaughlin, Dean of Research, College of Science & Engineering

Report on presentation by Professor Steve McLaughlin

The presentation focused on the research at King’s Buildings within the College of Science & Engineering, emphasising its cross-disciplinary, multidisciplinary and cross-College nature. Two areas highlighted were renewable energy and translational medicine technology. The College now had seven Schools; Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Engineering, GeoSciences, Informatics and Mathematics. Currently there were 2,000 staff, 5,000 undergraduates and 1,000 postgraduates, and in the previous year the College had won £114.5 million of competitive research awards. The College was ranked first in Scotland for research excellence and in the top five in the UK with about half of the top-rated (four-star) research in Scotland coming from Edinburgh.

Although it was within the Schools that specific disciplines were taught and much research was done, there were also centres, which brought together researchers from many areas. An example was the Centre for Systems Biology, which had involvement from Biology, Informatics and Physics. The various disciplines benefited from learning from each other and challenging preconceived ideas. These centres were much engaged with external companies.

Research in energy concentrated on marine renewables. The involvement went back to 1974 when Professor Steven Salter in Engineering was researching wave energy based on tuning hydraulic power into electricity. This led to work in designing wave tanks, which created knowledge transfer opportunities worldwide. A major new wave tank facility at King’s Buildings was being built to allow modelling of currents up to six metres per second and waves up to 98 metres. Devices, such as Pelamis, manufactured in Leith, were based on original research from Edinburgh’s development of its wave tanks. There was also major research and development work going on in Carbon Capture Storage by GeoSciences, Engineering and Chemistry.

The other highlighted area was Translational Medicine Technology. In Engineering they were looking at integrated diagnostics using an ingestible microchip, incorporating sensor, control and transmitter chips. Originally intended for gastrointestinal investigations, it was also being used in oncology. Hypoxia within tumours may affect drug treatments and being able to measure this at a micro-environment level may improve effectiveness.

New drug delivery devices were also possible using microchips, such as intracellular treatments for glaucoma with fluid being ejected by inductive electrical currents. In Chemistry there was work on investigating a wide range of new polymers using ink-jet technology to print on to substrates, with wide-ranging applications.

Finally there was major research in synthetic biology. Essentially, this means constructing biological systems from component parts using computer science. This required an understanding of well defined components, structures and properties. The analogy was bio bricks, an open source registry of standard biological parts and a heavy emphasis on control and signalling components. They had developed a bio sensor to detect arsenic in ground water, which had won first prize in an MIT competition. There was a long and lively discussion on the research presentation.

Presentation on teaching and learning by Professor Simon Bates

This focused on the considerable developments in teaching and learning within Science & Engineering, but also emphasised how these were relevant to similar developments in other Colleges. Professor Bates described his career and how he had been a “regular” academic but developed a special interest in teaching and became Dean of Learning and Teaching. This career progression also illustrated how there was now genuine recognition and a career path based on teaching within the University. The College had a Strategy with an objective to be renowned for the quality and innovation of its teaching. The challenge was to educate undergraduates to be able to cope with future changes in technologies and society’s needs. There were some guiding principles about students learning in a variety of ways, independently, collaboratively and with an authentic spirit of enquiry. Lectures were a very old method of conveying information and given today’s information technologies there was no longer an effective method when only used to transmit information; the lecture was now an opportunity to engage students actively, to challenge their understanding and to make sense of the information available. Peer discussion and active dialogue produced rapid improvements in conceptual understanding. This technique was both popular and effective. Workshops were related to small-group tutorials, which sometimes but not always worked effectively. Workshops complemented lectures with the advantages of small-group collaborative learning and problem solving. The University had the opportunity to adapt some spaces specifically for this purpose with small-group tables as well as group and room-level IT support equipment. Groups could work collaboratively with the support of tutors or they could have whole-class discussions and presentations thus facilitating teaching of presentation skills.

Self-study was also changing. Although huge amounts of information, including lectures, were available online it could be difficult to make sense of it and integrate it into existing knowledge. By using online software called “Peerwise”, developed at the University of Auckland, students could create their own assessment questions. However this was done with a lot of social functionality. They not only created questions and answered those posted by others, but also rated them, followed individual authors and engaged in online discussions. In a first-year physics class of 200 more than 700 questions were generated, nearly all of high quality, many of them exceptional and requiring real understanding of concepts. Final-year students lacking this opportunity had not created a single question. The College was now self-study and small-group study rooms, also equipped with IT support material. The provision of suitable physical and virtual space and facilities was a major challenge for the University but it was being addressed.

It was not an easy or simple task. It required high-quality students, which Edinburgh had, and also highly motivated and engaged staff able to balance their academic lives.

7. Adjournment

The Motion by the Convenor 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.

Dr MaryCatherine Burgess, Associate Chaplain, closed the meeting with a Benediction.

In the Annex to the Billet contains supporting papers for the Agenda, including communications from the University Court, full Standing Committee reports, a transcript of the presentations, and the Business Committee’s report to the meeting on 18 June 2011. General Council members may either obtain the Annex from 30 minutes before the Council meeting or request it by post from Mrs Mary Scott, General Council Office, Charles Stewart House, 9–16 Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1HF. Tel. 0131 650 2152, email General.Council@ed.ac.uk.

PAPER B (MOTION)

Motion:

Preamble

The Business Committee on the advice of the Constitutional Standing Committee, having approved the two documents entitled “Constitutional Arrangements for the working of the General Council of the University of Edinburgh and its Business Committee” and “The General Council of the University of Edinburgh Regulations for General Council Elections”, which have been prepared by the Constitutional Standing Committee, proposes that the said two documents should be approved and adopted by the General Council of the University of Edinburgh. The objective is to encapsulate in these two documents (a) the legislation laying down the provisions of the Statutes, Regulations and Minited Decisions of the General Council and Business Committee, and guidance relating to the procedures and functions of the Business Committee for the benefit of present and future Members of that Committee and (b) regulations relating to the election of the Chancellor, General Council Assessors and Members of the Business Committee. The changes have been made in accordance with Ordinance No. 210 and the Motion approved by the General Council at its meeting in Old College on 12 February 2011 relating to the introduction of online voting for General Council Elections and unifying periods of office for General Council Assessors, Conveners and Vice-Conveners and members of the Business Committee.

The Business Committee proposes:

That the said two documents entitled “Constitutional Arrangements for the working of the General Council at the University of Edinburgh and its Business Committee” and “The General Council of the University of Edinburgh Regulations for General Council Elections” be adopted and approved by the General Council of the University of Edinburgh, Proposed by the Convenor of the Business Committee

Seconded by the Vice-Convenor of the Business Committee

The revised documents are available on the General Council website at www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/businesspapers.htm and may be obtained from the General Council Office (general.council@ed.ac.uk). Copies will be available at the Half-Yearly Meeting on 11 February 2012.
General Council Election

February 2012

Candidates for Members of the Business Committee

The following nominations have been received for the election of five members of the Business Committee to serve until 31 July 2016. The names of the candidates appear in random order, as drawn by ballot. This is also the order in which they will appear on the voting screen and paper.

Mr Hamish Andrew
Niven McKenzie
MA 1967

Proposed by Mr Charles Michael Arber Lutton, MA (Hons) 1973
Secended by Ms Jane Kille, MA (Hons) 1973

Formerly a professional chartered accountant in Edinburgh for many years, and with a degree in English Literature, I feel I could make a balanced and positive contribution to the work of the Business Committee. I have much charitable and local amenity experience including National Trust for Scotland and appeal panel.

Mr Simon Maurice
Lytton Fairclough
MBA 2004

Proposed by Mr George Barrie Clark, LLB (Hons) 1974
Seconded by Mr Scot Allan Carbon, MBA 2010

With 25 years under my belt in organisational communication, I would hope to bring my experience of public affairs to the Business Committee. A Chartered Director, I am an enthusiastic advocate for cultivating good governance, and am passionate about education and the opportunities afforded to individuals and wider society.

Professor David Mackenzie Munro
BSc 1973

Proposed by Dr Alan David Gillespie Brown, MB ChB 1963
Seconded by Mr Neil Robertson Hynd, BArch 1969

Twice a graduate and subsequently a Research Fellow of the University, I have served as Director of an educational charity and on UK Government and UN advisory bodies. I wish to contribute to the future strength of the University, drawing on experience in the fields of education, funding and governance.

Professor Stuart Gowans Macpherson
Gowans Macpherson
MB ChB Glasgow 1966, Emeritus Professor, University of Edinburgh

Proposed by Mr Kirsty Joan MacGregor, LLB (Hons) 1919
Seconded by Dr Frances Diana Dow, MA (Hons) 1969

Having served previously I hope to provide added value to the committee, given my experience as a solicitor, tribunal judge, university tutor and examiner. Working to enhance the reputation of the University and the student experience through membership of the Business Committee would be an honour and a privilege.

Mr Gordon Douglas Cairns
MB ChB 1963

Proposed by Mr Alan McDougall Johnston, MBA 1969
Seconded by Dr Frances Diana Dow, MA (Hons) 1969

Having served previously I hope to provide added value to the committee, given my experience as a solicitor, tribunal judge, university tutor and examiner. Working to enhance the reputation of the University and the student experience through membership of the Business Committee would be an honour and a privilege.

Dr Robert Andrew
Philip Burt
MB ChB 1961

Proposed by Dr Edward Bruce Nilson, MB ChB 1961
Seconded by Dr Herbert John Gold, MB ChB 1961

Proposing candidate to bring a wealth of knowledge and experience in the fields of education, funding and governance, I believe he would contribute positively to the work of the Business Committee.

Voting in the General Council Election

General Council members are reminded that the next election, in February 2012, will be conducted principally online. Voting will take place online through the Elections channel of the MyEd Alumni Portal, which will be open from Monday 9 January 2012 until 17.00 GMT Wednesday 8 February 2012. In order to vote you must register via the EASE registration process as explained below by 17.00 GMT on Thursday 2 February 2012 at the latest.

Voting Papers are only enclosed where members have specifically requested them by 30 November 2011 and should be completed and returned in the enclosed addressed envelope to the Secretary of the General Council. Details of all candidates appear opposite. Anyone still wishing to vote by post may do so for subsequent elections by requesting a postal vote from the General Council Office before 30 November in any year prior to any election.

To register for online voting please go to www.myed.ed.ac.uk and complete the EASE registration process if you are a new MyEd Alumni Portal user. If you have already used the Portal as a student, you can use your student username and password to access the Alumni Portal. If you have a University User Name (UUN) or know your original matriculation number you should be able to register through EASE directly. If you have your matriculation number you can use this as your UUN by adding an “s” before the number and register online using this. If you do not know either of these you will need to contact the service. To do this you will need to send an email to the Information Services Helpdesk at IS.Heplin@ed.ac.uk requesting access to MyEd and giving your full name, date and degree awarded at graduation from Edinburgh. A username and initial password will then be sent to you. If you experience problems at any point when registering for, or accessing the Alumni Portal, please also contact Information Services at the above email address, identifying yourself by matriculation number (if known), full name, year and degree awarded at first graduation from Edinburgh.

To register for online voting please go to www.myed.ed.ac.uk and complete the EASE registration process if you are a new MyEd Alumni Portal user. If you have already used the Portal as a student, you can use your student username and password to access the Alumni Portal. If you have a University User Name (UUN) or know your original matriculation number you should be able to register through EASE directly. If you have your matriculation number you can use this as your UUN by adding an “s” before the number and register online using this. If you do not know either of these you will need to contact the service. To do this you will need to send an email to the Information Services Helpdesk at IS.Heplin@ed.ac.uk requesting access to MyEd and giving your full name, date and degree awarded at graduation from Edinburgh.
The February 2012 General Council Lunch

Following the Half-Yearly Meeting, members of the General Council, other alumni, partners, family and friends are cordially invited to the General Council Lunch on Saturday 11 February 2012 in the Playfair Library Hall, Old College. Dame Stella Rimington will give the after-lunch address. Dame Stella retired from MI5 in 2000 and has since pursued a very successful career as an author. Her talk promises to be extremely interesting.

If you would like to attend the next General Council Lunch, please complete and return the form below no later than Monday 30 January 2012.

Tickets at £20 include pre-lunch wine reception and a buffet lunch in the Playfair Library Hall. Table wines will be available for purchase at the meal.

The February 2012 General Council Lunch
Playfair Library Hall, Old College, on Saturday 11 February 2012, 12.30pm for 1pm.

Please send me: 

[ ] Tickets (£20 each) for the General Council Lunch.

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

Name

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of guest(s)

Please return to: Mrs Mary Scott, Assistant to the Secretary of the General Council, University of Edinburgh, Charles Stewart House, 9–16 Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1HT, Scotland, UK or, alternatively, you may order online at www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/events.htm

Closing date for applications: Monday 30 January 2012.

Half-Yearly Meeting in Berlin

Saturday 16 June 2012

Due to unforeseen circumstances the General Council has been obliged to change the venue of its June 2012 Half-Yearly Meeting. We are sure that members will look forward to attending the meeting, which will be held in Berlin, Germany. It will form part of an exciting weekend of events organised together with Development & Alumni. On the Friday there will be a half-day conference and a reception in the evening at a prestigious location. On Saturday morning the Half-Yearly Meeting will take place with a lunch and after-lunch speaker to follow. On Saturday evening there will be a gala dinner at a highly attractive venue. As usual these events will be popular, so to avoid disappointment please monitor the General Council website (www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/forthcoming_events.htm) regularly for information and the opportunity to purchase tickets. If you would like to be notified of the final programme please send an email or write to the General Council Office giving your name and contact details.

New Chancellor

HRH The Princess Royal was elected Chancellor of the University by the General Council with effect from 31 March 2011. She is the University’s eighth Chancellor in the 150-year history of the position and succeeds HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, who stepped down from the role in 2010, having held it since 1953. The Princess Royal is also Patron of the University’s Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. The installation took place in the Old College Quadrangle on Monday 26 September. The event was witnessed by University staff and students and followed by Her Royal Highness officially opening the newly refurbished quadrangle.

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

June 2011 General Council Meeting and Lunch

Darwin Building and Michael Swann Building, King’s Buildings, Edinburgh

The June 2011 Half-Yearly Meeting of the General Council was held on Saturday 18 June 2011 in the Darwin Building, King’s Buildings. Members received presentations from Professor Steve McLaughlin, College Dean for Research on the extensive research undertaken, and Professor Simon Bates, College Dean for Learning and Teaching on the innovative learning and teaching methods employed.

The lunch took place in the Upstairs Café in the Michael Swann Building, affording magnificent views over the campus and the city. Members and their guests were treated to an extremely interesting after-lunch address by Dr Ian McIheb about his life as an Edinburgh GP and more recently as an SNP MSP.

After lunch Professors McLaughlin and Bates hosted a tour of the impressive new learning and teaching facilities in the James Clerk Maxwell Building.

Prince Philip General Council Scholarship Fund

The General Council is proud to announce that its scholarship fund has been re-launched as the Prince Philip General Council Scholarship Fund. His Royal Highness graciously accepted the proposal to create this scholarship as an appropriate way of expressing the General Council’s appreciation of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip’s long and distinguished service as Chancellor of the University. The fund will provide bursaries for students who would otherwise be unable to afford to go to university and the goal is to build an endowment substantial enough to support these scholarships in perpetuity.

A typical bursary provides £1,000 of support each year for qualifying and deserving students. The new Prince Philip General Council Scholarship Fund is in addition to the existing Edinburgh Fund Access Bursaries, and it is hoped that together they will give hundreds of students the chance to take up their deserved places at the University. If you would like to contribute you may do so online by using the following links at www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/GeneralCouncilScholarships.htm.

July 2011 Celebration of the Chancellorship of HRH The Prince Philip

A Reception and Dinner was organised by the University in honour of HRH The Prince Philip’s long and exceptional service as Chancellor. It was held in the Talbot Rice Gallery and the Playfair Library and was a most fitting celebration. Dr Alan Brown gave the vote of thanks.

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Much has changed since Dr Caldwell graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1952, but the need to support our students is one thing which has remained a constant. Through her donations to the University’s bursary scheme, Dr Caldwell is helping Sam to train to be a doctor. By pledging a legacy, she is ensuring that future generations of medical students will continue to benefit.

“Supporting Sam is my investment in our future. I want my legacy to continue this support.”

Dr Helen Caldwell pictured with her beneficiary, Sam MacKenzie, in the Anatomy Museum, the Old Medical School, Teviot Place.

Dr Caldwell pictured with her beneficiary, Sam MacKenzie, in the Anatomy Museum, the Old Medical School, Teviot Place.