

LINK

The newsletter for families
of undergraduate students



University of
St Andrews

600
YEARS



Candlemas
2015



“Friendships make St Andrews.
It truly is the ‘friendship’ university.”

The 52nd Rector of the University, Catherine Stihler MEP
(MA 1996, MLitt 1998) Rectorial Address, February 2015.
Catherine is pictured with Rector's Assessor, Annie Newman,
and Students' Association President, Pat Mathewson.

Welcome

Welcome to the Candlemas edition of *Link*, the newsletter for families of undergraduate students. For those families whose students graduate in the summer, we trust you have enjoyed participating in the Family Programme and we hope you will maintain your links with the University and with St Andrews. We look forward to keeping you up to date with University news and developments through our regular e-newsletter.

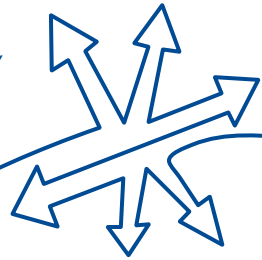
REF Survey

St Andrews has been ranked top in Scotland and fourteenth in the UK for the quality of its research publications across Science, the Arts, Divinity and Medicine, according to the results of the 2014 UK Research Excellence Framework (REF). This result confirms St Andrews' place as Scotland's top university, building on the successes reported in the last edition of *Link*.

The REF 2014, which is a detailed analysis of the research strengths of all UK universities, has demonstrated that 82% of all research carried out at St Andrews is world-leading or internationally excellent with at least 98% rated as internationally recognised.

Since the last REF Survey in 2008, St Andrews' Grade Point Average for the general quality of research has risen to 3.13, significantly above the UK sector average GPA of 3.03.

The survey also rated individual subjects with Classics, Physics, History of Art, Geography & Geosciences, Philosophy and English all ranking among the top 10 in the UK. The School of Geography & Geosciences was placed first for major impact from research in its field while Biological Sciences, Management, Classics, English and History were all ranked in the top six.



Careers Networking

Given the competitive nature of the job market, several networking events have been arranged by the Careers Centre and Development Office to provide students with opportunities to meet and connect with alumni, parents and recruiters around the world. Larger, more formal events have been held in New York, Washington DC, London and Hong Kong while smaller networking events have taken place elsewhere across the US.

The role of networking is becoming increasingly important in obtaining a graduate job. With several more networking events planned for 2015 and the opportunity to sign up to Saint Connect, the University's Career Alumni Network and e-networking platform, there are some great opportunities for students to benefit from their St Andrews networks.

For more information about Saint Connect please visit www.st-andrews.ac.uk/saintconnect



Saints Sport Coaches

The St Andrews sporting scene continues to thrive under further investment in experienced head coaches and directors to guide performance sports to success. With the appointment of Ian Rice as the Director of Rowing and the purchase of new equipment, the Boat Club aims to win major events in Scotland and the UK in the near future.



Ian Rice

Meanwhile, Mike Aitken, Director of Tennis, has received Tennis Scotland's Coach of the Year Award 2014 while Jamie Carnegie, Head of Hockey, has been presented with Scotland Hockey's Coach of the Year Award 2014. Alongside his commitment to hockey at St Andrews, Jamie has recently been appointed as Manager of the Scotland Men's Team.



Mike Aitken

Investment in sport at the University continues as the £14 million redevelopment of the Sports Centre enters the next phase, which will see the creation of six new changing rooms and an eight-court sports hall with removable seating for four hundred.



Jamie Carnegie

New Rector

Catherine Stihler MEP has been appointed the University's new Rector. The Rector is the Chair of the University Court - the highest governing body of the University - and is elected by the students to represent their views for a three-year term.

A graduate of the University, with an MA Joint Honours in International Relations and Geography and an MLitt in International Security Studies, Ms Stihler becomes the fifty-second Rector and only the second female to hold the position. She follows in the footsteps of Rudyard Kipling, John Cleese and Katherine Whitehorn.



Following graduation, Ms Stihler served as President of the Students' Association and has been a Member of the European Parliament for Scotland since 1999. She is delighted to be involved with the University once again, following her installation and the traditional 'Rectorial Drag' (pictured) in February.

Researchers buzzing about new finding

New research from the Universities of St Andrews and Dundee has found strong evidence that even low levels of neonicotinoid insecticides - a new class of insecticides chemically related to nicotine and significantly more toxic to insects than they are to mammals - have adverse effects on bumblebee colonies.

The research group, including Professor Steve Buckland, Professor of Statistics at St Andrews, has demonstrated beyond doubt that the average levels of neonicotinoids currently present in the wild have contributed to the decline in the population of insect pollinators.

Neonicotinoids, when consumed by bumblebees, disrupt brain function and the ability to learn and to forage for food, limiting colony growth.



Young Eliot

Professor Robert Crawford's (School of English) new biography of one of the twentieth century's most important poets, T S Eliot, *Young Eliot: From St Louis to The Waste Land* has recently been published in the UK and the USA.

The biography traces Eliot's life from his childhood in the ragtime city of St Louis right up to the publication of his most famous poem, *The Waste Land*.

The book has already been featured in BBC Radio 4's Book of the Week and ranked in *Publishers Weekly's* top ten list of literary biographies, essays and criticism.



Union Debating Society

The St Andrews Union Debating Society (UDS) competed in the annual World Universities Debating Championships (WUDC) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia this winter break. The WUDC is the pinnacle of every university's debating team's year and St Andrews is no exception being a consistent competitor at the business end of the competition. The team was proud to see alumnus Doug Cochran assume a judging role this year.

Tracing its origins back to 1794, UDS is one of the oldest student debating societies in the UK and has many university debates lined up for this semester, with debates on the EU and Fairtrade, free to attend. They plan to travel to Vienna for the European Debating Championships in August this year.



Mediaeval St Andrews

Postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers across the University, from computer science to classics, have teamed up to design and create a new mobile app for St Andrews. The app brings together hundreds of years of St Andrews' rich history into an interactive platform which features 22 important mediaeval sites, including St Andrews Cathedral, St Rule's Church and the University's St Mary's College. The app also features the distinguished voices of honorary graduates Sir Sean Connery and Joanna Lumley.



The app can be downloaded for iOS and Android devices and provides a highly informative and entertaining way to find out about St Andrews' history.

The Katie Pearson Scholarship

Family and friends gathered in London recently to celebrate the inauguration of the Katie Pearson Scholarship, set up in memory of one of the University's own, and to meet the first recipient of the award.



Katie Mortimer, née Pearson, graduated from the University in 1982 with a passion for creative writing and went on to experience many adventures during her time as a producer and director, an author and a mother. The Katie Pearson Scholarship was established in 2012 to provide financial support to a talented student with a flair for creative writing.

The inaugural recipient, Charlotte Haswell-West (pictured with Marcus, Maddie and Bella Mortimer), is in her first year studying Ancient History and Archaeology. Charlotte is also taking a module in Comparative Literature, and she writes "[it's] a totally new subject to me, but one that I hope will feed my love of literature whilst giving me a worldwide view on words and the impact they can have."

New York Gala Benefit

The centrepiece of the University's 600th Campaign fundraising in North America, the Anniversary Gala Benefit, raised a record-breaking sum for student scholarships, science and medicine, sport and a lectureship in American Literature at St Andrews. Attended by The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge along with over 450 guests at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Gala Benefit was a huge success raising over £2.2 million.



The event commenced with a brief VIP reception before guests were led into dinner at The Temple of Dendur by a piper playing Scotland the Brave. The Duke of Cambridge, alongside Professor Robert Crawford, and US comedian and talk show host Seth Meyers, addressed the guests followed by a performance from renowned opera singer, Renée Fleming.

Student Activities Fund

The Student Activities Fund was created to help support our many student societies and sports clubs, which are becoming increasingly important for students to develop transferable skills sought by employers. This year there were over 30 applications across a variety of projects. Among the recipients are the St Andrews Ice Hockey Team, who are seeking to continue their success by joining a prestigious league and the Foreign Affairs Society who will use their award to run the St Andrews Foreign Affairs Conference 2015: Global Development and Pandemics.

One of last year's recipients, the Aikido Club, used the funding to host Rory Miller, an American self-defence expert and bestselling author. The Club has expressed its gratitude to the donors of the Student Activities Fund for helping make the self-defence event a reality.



"On the 19 April 2014, StAUTri welcomed competitors from all over Scotland to race in the University's very own triathlon, 40 years after the first. Thanks to the generosity of alumni, we were able to invest in chip timing from an Edinburgh-based company. Professional timing definitely helped attract competitors and the day was a great success!"

University of St Andrews
Triathlon Club

"Gifts helped 12 students take part in a full-day technical course to enhance their sound engineering skills. The training enabled students to learn in depth the theory behind a variety of sound equipment, skills they can put to great use throughout the academic year!"

Entertainments (Ents) Crew



Love from Home

Run in cooperation with local baker and confectioner Fisher & Donaldson, our online *Love from Home* service allows you to send loved ones cakes, chocolates and gift baskets on special occasions with a personalised message. Make your order online at:

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/lovefromhome

Please note, deliveries are made to addresses in St Andrews during term-time, Monday to Saturday, 8am–6pm. Please allow at least five working days between placing your order and the delivery date to guarantee delivery on the requested date.

Carnegie Lecture Series

The Carnegie Lecture Series is a ten-year programme of public lectures at Scotland's ancient universities funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York to celebrate its centenary. The prestigious programme brings some of the world's most important thinkers in the fields of the arts, sciences, education and international affairs to Scotland, and St Andrews is privileged to be one of its destinations.



The first two lectures were both well attended and passionately delivered.

Political philosopher Michael Sandel's talk was on *What Money Can't Buy: Markets, Morals and Civic Life* and John Grotzinger, of the Mars Science Laboratory Mission, gave a lecture on *Curiosity's Mission of Exploration at Gale Crater, Mars*. The third lecture in the series sees American author and former Associate Professor of Political Science and Social Studies at Harvard University, Daniel Goldhagen, visit St Andrews on 27 April.



Academic Awards

A number of St Andrews academics have received awards recently. A selection of these are listed below:

Professor Alan Hood of the School of Mathematics & Statistics has been awarded the Chapman Medal for 2015 by The Royal Astronomical Society. Professor Hood has been recognised for his outstanding contribution to the field of theoretical solar physics and will be invited to collect his award at the Society's 2015 National Astronomy Meeting in July.

Dr Antje Kohnle, who is a Principal Teaching Fellow at the School of Physics & Astronomy, has received the 2014 MPTL Excellence Award for a Multimedia Resource for her work developing interactive simulations for the learning and teaching of quantum mechanics. Her simulation was selected from a total of approximately 250 entrants for this year's award.



Dr James Rae has won the European Geosciences Union 2015 Award for the Outstanding Young Scientist in the Biogeosciences division. James's research in the Department of Earth & Environmental Sciences focuses on reconstructing past climate change and its causes.

Professor Colin Ballantyne of the School of Geography & Geosciences has been awarded the Lyell Medal by the Geological Society of London. The prestigious award is given in recognition of significant contribution to 'soft' rock studies.

Dr Michael Cowan has received the prestigious 2015 Katherine Singer Kovacs Award for Best Essay Published in a Journal. Michael's award marks the third consecutive year members of the Department of Film Studies have been honoured by the Society for Cinema and Media Studies.

STAR: St Andrews Student Radio

St Andrews' own student radio has recently benefited from a move into a brand new studio within the Students' Association building. The studio, along with new society spaces, rehearsal and meeting rooms, student offices and a new bar, have all opened as part of the fourth phase of a five-phase major redevelopment project due for completion later this year.

STAR celebrated the launch with a packed schedule of student shows and a sixteen-hour broadcast, raising more than £200 for charity in the process.



Semester Dates 2015

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/semesterdates

Candlemas Semester: Monday 26 January – Friday 29 May 2015
Spring Vacation: Saturday 14 March 2015 – Sunday 29 March 2015
Revision Period: Commences Saturday 25 April 2015
Examinations: Monday 11 May – Friday 22 May 2015
Graduation: Week commencing Monday 22 June 2015
Resits: Week commencing Monday 17 August 2015

Martinmas Semester: Monday 14 September 2015 – Friday 18 December 2015
Orientation: Week commencing Monday 7 September 2015
Graduation: Monday 30 November and Tuesday 1 December 2015 (tbc)
Revision Period: Commences Monday 30 November 2015
Examinations: Monday 7 December 2015 – Friday 18 December 2015
Christmas Vacation: Saturday 19 December 2015 – Sunday 24 January 2016

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Further information for families of current students can be found at:
www.st-andrews.ac.uk/parents

A forum for US parents of current students can be accessed on Facebook at:
www.facebook.com/StAUSParents

Latest news and other information about the University can be viewed at:
www.st-andrews.ac.uk

Produced by Print & Design, University of St Andrews, March 2015

Photographs: Athletic Union, Anne Billson Photography, Robert Gelb, Varan Houghton, from Dr Antje Kohnle, Alan Richardson, Laurence Winram and University of St Andrews Students' Association
Printed by Winter & Simpson Print on Revive Pure Uncoated, 100% recycled paper
The University of St Andrews is a charity registered in Scotland, No: SC013532