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St Andrews

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# LINK

Issue 1  
2017-2018

*The newsletter for families  
of undergraduate students*

## Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of *Link* for 2017-2018, our bi-annual newsletter for the families of undergraduate students. Back in September we had the opportunity to meet many of our new Family Programme members at our Parents' Receptions and I wanted to extend a special welcome to everyone who has joined the programme this year.

We are very proud of the fact St Andrews is number one in the UK for parent and family donations and grateful to all who are able to support the University in this way. Thank you and I hope you continue to enjoy your association with St Andrews as much as our students do! Keep an eye on our regular e-newsletter, *St Andrews in the News*, for regular news and event updates throughout the year ahead, and if you want to send us any comments on this, or any future edition of *Link*, please contact [alumni@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@st-andrews.ac.uk).



Robert Fleming, Director of Development

## University news

There has been plenty going on around the University this term, here is a selection of stories:

- Dean of Medicine, Professor David Crossman has been appointed new Chief Scientist for Health by the Scottish Government. Professor Crossman will be seconded two days per week to his new role and will continue as Dean of Medicine.
- The University has been awarded a Gold award in the 2017 CASE Circle of Excellence Awards for our direct mail campaign with agency Bluefrog.
- Researchers in the School of Computer Science have issued a \$1 million challenge to find a solution to a 'simple' chess puzzle that could have a profound impact on daily life.
- Quick-thinking student, Lucy Reis, who was on her way to her graduation ball in June, has been praised by HM Coastguard for helping a young girl who got into difficulty on the rocks by Castle Sands.
- The University's green energy data centre has won gold for the third time in the Certified Energy Efficient Datacenter Award Scheme.
- St Andrews has received support of up to £252,000 from The Wolfson Postgraduate Scholarships in the Humanities with fully funded PhD opportunities announced.
- The Marseille Middleton Holloway Collection – a collection of historical documents associated with British and French historical political and literary figures from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries – has recently been donated to the University of St Andrews Library. The Principal is pictured below inspecting the collection.



## Awards success

The University has been highly placed in a number of league tables this year, both for the quality of its teaching and research, and in terms of student satisfaction.

In **April**, the *Complete University Guide 2018* ranked St Andrews top in Scotland and third in the UK, with the top two places taken by Oxford and Cambridge. The University's rise from fifth to third place in the guide is due to its high scores for teaching quality and to student satisfaction with the quality of its academic programmes.

A month later in **May**, the *Guardian University Guide 2018* also placed St Andrews third in the UK.



**June** brought two further plaudits with the publication of the *QS World University Rankings* and a Gold Award in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

The *QS World University Rankings* is the most extensive listing of its kind, and takes into account factors including academic reputation, research strengths, citations, reputation with graduate employers and international influence.

In **August**, *The National Student Survey 2017* named St Andrews as offering students the best academic experience in the United Kingdom – the ninth time in 11 years.

Finally, in **September**, St Andrews was named the UK University of the Year for Student Experience in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018* and retained its place for the second year running as the top university in Scotland and third in the UK.

We may be a small square on the north east coast of Fife, but our University competes and engages on a world stage.



## In brief

### Latest research

- Dr Jonathan Kemp (Head of Music Technology at the Music Centre and a lecturer in the School of Physics & Astronomy) has invented an electric guitar string that can be balanced in sensitivity and feel in a way that has never been achieved in a standard instrument.
- SpeCam – an innovative technology created by researchers at the University – can enable your smartphone to carry out a range of tasks just by recognising the surface it's sitting on.
- Researchers from the University of St Andrews and the University of York have been awarded over £5 million from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) to research resonant and shaped photonics, which will explore new and innovative ways in which we can use light to measure the natural world.



Find out more about our latest research breakthroughs at: [www.st-andrews.ac.uk/news](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/news)





## New sabbatical positions created

It has been all change over the summer at the Students' Association as the new sabbatical team took office. Elected in an all-student ballot, the sabbaticals – led by President Lewis Wood – each work for a year helping students with societies, events, and welfare issues.

This year has seen the addition of a fifth sabbatical with the previous Director of Representation remit being split into the new Director of Wellbeing (DoWell) and Director of Education (DoEd). Claire Shirey takes on the role of DoWell working with students and the University on wellbeing, equality and mental health projects. Zachary Davis works with a remit to support education and employability projects, and works closely with the School Presidents in each academic School. We wish Claire, Zachary and the other sabbaticals all the best for their year of service!

## A quick word

Georgia Spencer-Rowland (MA 2017) spent part of the penultimate year of her degree in Paris thanks to the Margaret F K Fleming Bursary. Here is more on her experience.

### What was your scholarship?

Margaret F K Fleming (MA 1933) studied Modern Languages at St Andrews and spent a year abroad as part of her course. This travel scholarship was funded thanks to a legacy from her estate.

### What has your scholarship enabled you to do?

I spent six months in Paris from August 2015 studying International Relations and Humanities at Sciences Po University and living in the heart of the 2<sup>ème</sup> *arrondissement*. It was a wonderful experience both socially and academically.

### What advice would you give anybody who is thinking of applying for a scholarship?

Don't hesitate – just go for it! It has given me some astounding opportunities, and I cannot thank the donors of the Margaret F K Fleming Bursary enough.

You can find out more about supporting scholarships at St Andrews here: <http://bit.ly/StAScholarships>



## Sporting times



Athletic Union President, Tom Abbott (pictured left), describes some key updates from Saints Sport:

- St Andrews came 24th in the UK last year in the British Universities and Colleges Sport competition (BUCS), with Golf and Ultimate winning their respective national championships. We have an unprecedented six BUCS Premier League teams, compared to zero five years ago!
- We have added Weightlifting and Parkour to our list of new clubs this year, and have seen the Mountaineering Club's membership treble this year due to the Schlenker Family Climbing Wall.



## Sports Centre redevelopment update

There has been a lot going on at the Sports Centre since the last issue of *Link*. Work has now begun on the construction of the four-court indoor tennis centre, which is due to be completed by February 2018. We are grateful to a number of donors to the Tennis Centre, including parents Charles and Toni Horn, the Lawn Tennis Association, Tennis Scotland and sportscotland.

In addition, a new technical climbing wall (designed by leading Scottish climber Scott Muir and constructed by Dream Climbing Walls) is now located in the original four-court sports hall. It was named following a generous donation from the Schlenker family.

Finally, renovations to the Krentz Dance Studio (kindly supported by the Krentz family) have been completed. The studio is now used regularly for the Saints Fitness exercise class programme, which offers a mix of over 40 classes a week, as well as a choice of additional personal training services. *For more information on the Sports Centre redevelopment visit:* <http://bit.ly/StASportRedev>

## Principal's Medal winners

Three exceptional students were recognised with the award of The Principal's Medal at their graduation ceremonies in June. This is the eighth year of the Medal, supported by Ede and Ravenscroft, which recognises students for the impact they make on student life alongside their academic excellence.

Johanna Ojamae (BSc 2017, Economics and Statistics) (pictured with the Principal) picked up her award for her contribution to music and as the recipient of the Frotscher Medal for Helping Hands in 2015. Lindsey Karmen (BSc 2017, Medicine) has enthusiastically participated in outreach work for Medicine but also received a Full Blue for her work with the 'Blue Angels' dance squad. Maya Beit-Arie (MA 2017, Geography and Social Anthropology) has been recognised for her international research on African affairs and her volunteering work.



## An extension for MUSA

The Museum of the University of St Andrews (MUSA) is the centrepiece of the University's museum service. It opened to the public in 2008 thanks to the support of many generous donations, and since then it has consistently been awarded five stars under the Visit Scotland Quality Assurance Scheme – the only university museum in Scotland to achieve this.



Temporary exhibitions have successfully been trialled in MUSA since 2013, but there is currently no space to hold them on a regular basis. As a result, there are plans to create an extension to MUSA to provide two new galleries for temporary exhibitions, an environmental control system to provide optimal display conditions and a studio workroom to support teaching and public engagement. *To find out more about how you can support the redevelopment of MUSA, please visit: <http://bit.ly/StAMUSA>*

## Three questions

We asked Dr Helen Rawson (Co-Director of the Museums Collection Unit) three questions about MUSA:

1. **What is your favourite artefact in the Museum?**

The three medieval maces! The Mace of the Faculty of Arts, the Mace of the Faculty of Canon Law and the Mace of St Salvator's College all date from the fifteenth century. They are spectacularly beautiful and intricate examples of medieval craftsmanship.

2. **What benefits will the extension provide?**

It will allow us to offer a high quality programme of temporary exhibitions which will support teaching and research in the University and also engage a wide range of audiences from University members to the local community, schools, families and visitors to the area.

3. **Sum up MUSA in three words (or less!)**

MUSA: inspiring, fascinating, for everyone!



*Mace of St Salvator's College*



*Mace of the Faculty of Arts*



*Mace of the Faculty of Canon Law*



## Academic awards

Our academics regularly win awards for their outstanding work. Here is a selection of those recognised over the semester:

- Professor Sir Hew Strachan (School of International Relations) and Professor Nicholas Roe (School of English) have been elected Fellows of the British Academy in recognition of their world-leading research in the humanities and social sciences.
- Professor Kishan Dholakia of the School of Physics & Astronomy has been awarded the Institute of Physics Thomas Young Medal and Prize for 2017 for his distinguished contributions to the field of optical micromanipulation.
- Professor Richard Byrne of the School of Psychology & Neuroscience, has been awarded the British Psychological Society Lifetime Achievement Award for 2017 for his work on animal cognition, while Professor Stephen Reicher has been named the Nevitt Sanford award winner by the International Society of Political Psychology - becoming only the third ever UK academic to receive this award.
- Zinnie Harris, Professor in Playwriting, and Oliver Emanuel, Lecturer in Creative Writing, both from the School of English, were each awarded a Herald Angel award at this year's Edinburgh International Festival.
- Dean of Arts and Dean of Divinity, Professor Paul Hibbert, was honoured by the British Academy of Management with the Academy's Medal for Knowledge Development.
- The European Association of Geochemistry has elected Dr Sami Mikhail of the University's School of Earth & Environmental Sciences as their new Early Career Councillor.
- Professor Lesley Torrance has received a grant of £485,000 from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council for her work in the School of Biology.
- The School of Mathematics & Statistics' Professor Peter Cameron has been awarded the 2017 Senior Whitehead Prize of the London Mathematical Society. He received the Prize for his research, but also for his "enthusiasm and lucidity as a lecturer that... draws people to his subject, encouraging problem solving for starting undergraduates."
- Professor Mark Chaplain from the School of Mathematics & Statistics has been made an inaugural Fellow of the Society for Mathematical Biology.



## Love from Home

Our *Love from Home* service offers you the chance to send cakes, chocolates and gift baskets to your students as a little bit of encouragement or on special occasions. Order online at <http://bit.ly/sta-love-from-home>



Please see online for terms and conditions.

## Ultimate Frisbee

Seven members of the University's Ultimate Frisbee team have been selected to represent Great Britain and Ireland at the World Flying Disc Federation (WFDF) World Under 24 Ultimate Championships in Perth, Australia, in January 2018. Six of the seven only began playing the sport after starting at university and all were put through a rigorous ten-month selection process.



Left to right: Gabriella Starek, fourth year; Gabe Schechter, fifth year; Arek Aspinwall, fourth year; Jack Lynch, fourth year; Lochlan Fisher, MSc 2017; Ryan Moar, MSc 2017; Helena Slater, BSc 2016

### Forthcoming semester dates 2018

[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/semesterdates](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/semesterdates)

**Candlemas semester:** Monday 29 January 2018 – Friday 1 June 2018

**Spring vacation:** Monday 19 March 2018 – Friday 30 March 2018

**Revision period:** commences Monday 30 April 2018

**Examinations:** Monday 14 May 2018 – Friday 25 May 2018

**Graduation:** week commencing Monday 25 June 2018

**Summer vacation:** Monday 4 June 2018 – Friday 7 September 2018

**Orientation:** week commencing Monday 10 September 2018

**Martinmas semester begins:** Monday 17 September 2018

**LINK** is published by:

Development

University of St Andrews

Crawford Building

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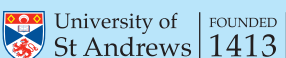
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Produced by Print & Design, University of St Andrews, December 2017

Photographs: Oli Walker, Tilted Frame Photography and Students' Association.

Printed on 140gsm Oxygen Offset 100% recycled paper

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