

LINK

*The newsletter for families
of undergraduate students*



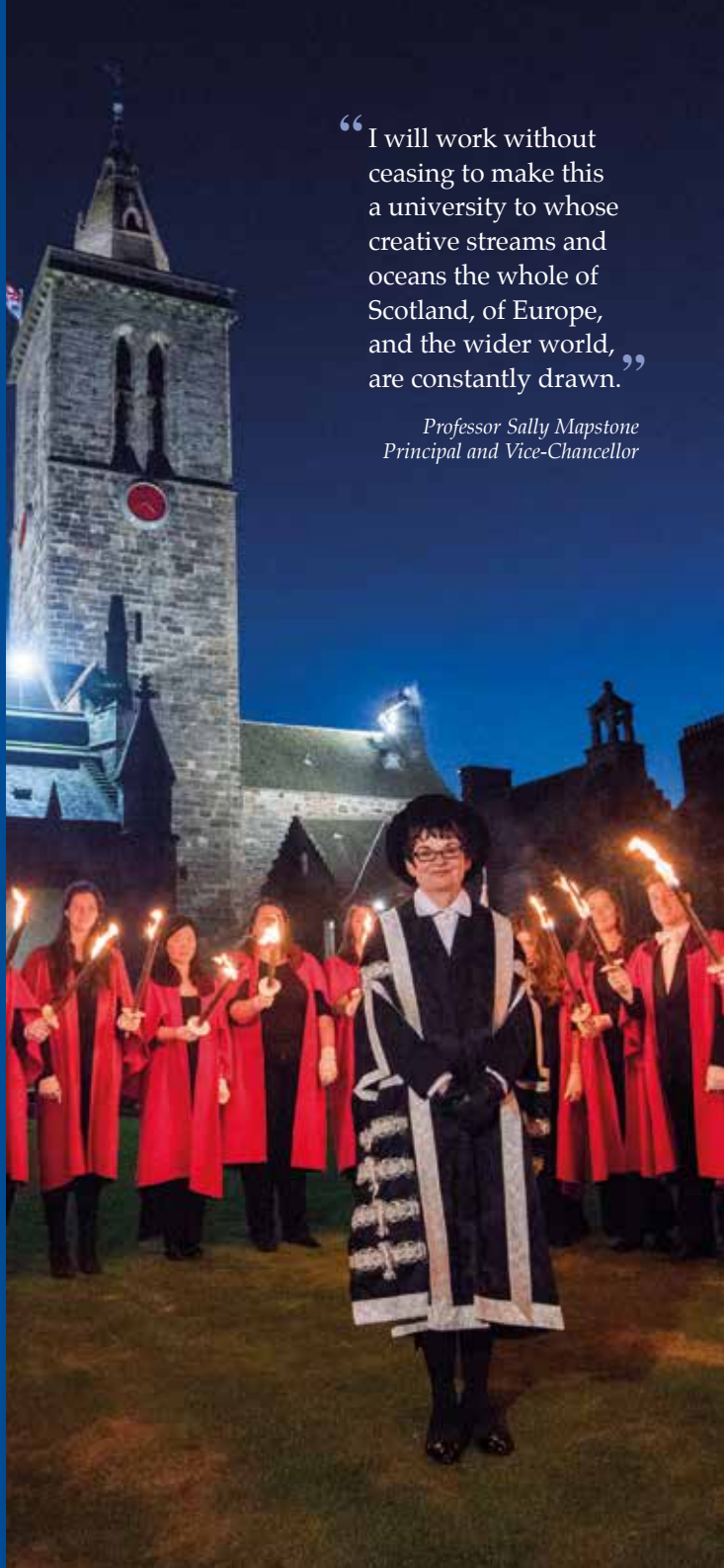
University of
St Andrews

600
YEARS

2016-2017
Issue 1

“ I will work without ceasing to make this a university to whose creative streams and oceans the whole of Scotland, of Europe, and the wider world, are constantly drawn.”

*Professor Sally Mapstone
Principal and Vice-Chancellor*



Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of *Link*, the newsletter for families of undergraduate students, and in particular we are delighted to welcome new parents to the St Andrews community. As you will see below, and from our cover story, our new students were not the only arrivals at the University this academic year as our Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sally Mapstone, took up office in September.

We hope that you enjoy reading *Link* and look forward to keeping you up to date with University news and developments throughout the year in our regular e-newsletter, *St Andrews in the News*.

We are always pleased to receive feedback and suggestions for stories for future editions of *Link*, via alumni@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Robert Fleming, Director of Development

Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Professor Sally Mapstone was officially installed as the University's eleventh Principal and Vice-Chancellor in a special ceremony on Tuesday 29 November 2016. The ceremony, in the iconic Younger Hall, was led by the Chancellor, the Rt Hon Lord Campbell of Pittenweem and took place in front of an audience of students and staff.



Professor Mapstone, a distinguished academic of Older Scots Literature, joined St Andrews from the University of Oxford where she had held the position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education. One of her former students Ruth Hunt, Chief Executive of UK-based charity Stonewall gave the Congratulatory Address at the ceremony.

In her Installation Address, Professor Mapstone spoke on Brexit, funding and diversity, stating that the University will play a leading role in public debate as the UK negotiates an exit from the European Union, and promised to defend the freedom of international students to study here. Professor Mapstone also said that inclusivity and diversity would be at the heart of her decision-making, signalling that St Andrews will do more to attract and support students from disadvantaged and non-traditional backgrounds.

The full address can be seen online at: <http://bit.ly/sta-instal>

Following her installation, Professor Mapstone presided over winter graduation as almost 600 students had their degrees conferred upon them across three ceremonies. Special congratulations go to Matthew Akintunde who was the first student to receive a degree from the Principal.

The installation of Professor Mapstone makes St Andrews one of the first universities in the UK where four of the top senior staff and student leadership posts are held by women. Pictured alongside Professor Sally Mapstone are (left to right) Charlotte Andrew (President of the Students' Association), Catherine Stihler (Rector) and Dame Anne Pringle (Senior Governor).



Top of the tree

St Andrews was recently named UK University of the Year for Teaching Quality and was runner up for the title of UK University of the Year in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times University Guide 2017*. The guide also ranked St Andrews third in the United Kingdom.



Alastair McCall, editor of *The Times* and *Sunday Times Good University Guide*, said: "There are

few things as certain in life as the perennial excellence of the University of St Andrews. It stands in our league table this year behind only Oxbridge and out of sight of all of its rivals in Scotland, helping it to runner-up spot in our UK University of the Year award."

The *Sunday Times* ranking completed a highly successful year for St Andrews with top five placings among UK institutions in the 2017 *Guardian* and *Complete University* guides. In September the University was named as one of the top 200 universities in the world in the *THE World University Rankings*, coming top in Scotland, and twenty-second in the world, for its international outlook.

Professor Sally Mapstone, Principal and Vice-Chancellor commented, "I'm delighted to see our international character recognised in this way. Our diverse community, global collaborations, and multicultural spirit have always made sure St Andrews has advanced beyond its shores. The benefits of our international community reach far beyond the enrichment of our university environment – our graduates progress into an incredibly diverse range of destinations and have great contributions to make as some of our brightest global citizens."

Green at Guardbridge

The University – in partnership with Vital Energi – won national recognition at the Scottish Green Energy Awards for the biomass energy centre at the Eden Campus at Guardbridge. The partnership beat off stiff competition from across Scotland to take the prestigious Sustainable Development award for this project.



The £25 million energy centre on the east side of the former paper mill site at Guardbridge produces hot water from a biomass boiler using clean, natural fuels. The water is pumped four miles through an underground pipeline to St Andrews where it heats University buildings. The plant was officially commissioned on Tuesday 6 December by the Principal and representatives from the Guardbridge Primary School.

Social Mediaeval

Senior Lecturer in Art History, Dr Kathryn Rudy, has revealed that medieval book owners personalised their second-hand books in the same way that people today use social media to document thoughts and memorable events.



In her latest book, *Piety in Pieces: How Medieval Readers Customized their Manuscripts*, Dr Rudy details how book owners found ways to update, amend and upcycle their books or sections of their books. To keep a book fashionable or emotionally relevant (for example, to commemorate a deceased relative) they would sometimes make extreme adjustments to it.

The research for this book was possible thanks to funding from the Leverhulme Trust and has been published in a new electronic format (Open Book) which will make the results more accessible and affordable.

Olympics are good for your health

The long-term health and social benefits of participating in sport and exercise have long been accepted, but recent research by an international team of academics, coordinated by Professor of Psychology Stephen Reicher, suggests that our well being could also be improved by the Olympics because of the stronger sense of community they generate among the general population.

Professor Reicher explained: "After a tremendous success... there is a sense that you can go up to anybody in your community, even a complete stranger, say 'wasn't that wonderful' and they will not only understand you but agree with you."

Sport in St Andrews has recently received its own boost with the opening of the new gym and strength and conditioning facilities as part of a major £14 million refurbishment and extension of the University Sports Centre. Already boasting one of the highest participation rates among Scottish universities, it is anticipated that the enhanced facilities will further support the sporting ambitions of our students locally, nationally and internationally. For more information about giving to the Sports Centre redevelopment, please email: develop@st-andrews.ac.uk

Behavioural breakthrough



An international team of researchers, including St Andrews Professor Josep Call of the School of Psychology & Neuroscience, has discovered that the ability to understand how others see the world may not be unique to humans, as previously thought.

Research on ape behaviour has indicated that chimpanzees, bonobos and orangutans are able to see the world through another's eyes, therefore allowing them to understand and interpret their behaviour.

The results mirror those from similar experiments with human infants under the age of two and represent a key first step in developing a full-blown 'theory of mind'.

Representing students

Each year the Students' Association and Athletic Union hold elections to choose the new student leaders for the year ahead. St Andrews has a strong and vibrant record of student democracy, being the only UK students' union to have exceeded over 50% turnout in student elections. The Association has also held the title of highest turnout in student elections across the UK for four years running (2012-2015).



The five elected Sabbatical Officers devote a year of their time to make the student experience the best it can possibly be. The Sabbaticals for 2016-2017 are (left to right) Jack Carr (Director of Representation), Charlotte Andrew (Association President), Taryn O'Connor (Director of Events and Services), Caroline Christie (Director of Student Development and Activities) and Ben Peddie (Athletic Union President). They will remain in post until July 2017.

Student satisfaction

The University came out top in the National Student Survey (NSS) 2016 with 94% of final year students surveyed awarding St Andrews top marks for the quality of the learning and teaching experience. The results mark the eighth time in the past ten years that the University has been ranked in the top two in the UK.



The NSS asks nearly half a million students across the UK about their satisfaction with their university experience, with core questions relating to academic support, learning resources, teaching, management, assessment and personal development.

Professor Lorna Milne, Vice-Principal and Proctor welcomed the news: "This [ranking]... assures incoming students that they've made the right choice... confirms we have superb staff and a community where the greatest satisfaction goes together with the most ambitious challenges."

Chapel Choir

Choral singing has been a key feature of student life at the University since its foundation in 1413, with early sources referring to the *Choristi Sanctiandree*, when all students were obliged to sing in the chapel. Today the University's flagship choir is the St Salvator's Chapel Choir, conducted by Tom Wilkinson, who hold weekly services in the Chapel and travel the world to perform – with a trip to Belgium coming up in March.



In April 2015 the choir released their first CD on the University's internationally-distributed CD label, *Sanctiandree*. The choir's latest release, *A Nativity Sequence*, includes classic carols and other favourites and is available to purchase via the University's Online Shop: <http://bit.ly/sta-choir>

Family support at St Andrews

The incredible support of parents and families has proved time and again that our extended St Andrews community can have a hugely positive impact on student life. Whether by volunteering for the work shadowing programme, offering places on internships, attending events, or donating to one of the priority fundraising projects and scholarships, the support of families is a source of pride for the University. In 2014-2015 £1.7m was received from our community of parents alone.

The Family Book Fund is one project which receives support from the families of students. Since its establishment over 2,600 families, friends and alumni worldwide have donated to the Fund, helping the University Library provide the highest calibre of online and print material for students.

This Fund makes a real difference to all our students:

- a £50 donation helps to purchase a textbook that an undergraduate student can use in a research project.
- £70 provides electronic source material that hundreds of our students can access and review simultaneously.
- £250 secures a highly coveted, or perhaps rare, multi-volume journal or text that can add depth to a postgraduate student's arguments in their dissertation.

Since launching in 2008, our 600th Anniversary Campaign has realised a total exceeding £75.5 million in gifts and pledges with more than £55.4 million already invested in key developments. We hope you will consider making a gift today to help our students continue to excel in their studies: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/600/donate

If you have any questions about the Fund or how to contribute, please contact Lynsey Kerr at: annualgiving@st-andrews.ac.uk or go online to: <https://sparc.st-andrews.ac.uk/giving/makeyourgift>

Naming opportunities

Naming opportunities are available for you to make your mark in St Andrews! Why not inscribe a flagstone in St Salvador's Quadrangle or personalise a bleacher seat in the new Sports Centre. For more information, visit: <https://sparc.st-andrews.ac.uk/giving/naming>

Love from Home

Want to send a little 'good luck in your exams' treat? Maybe you want to make sure your student receives a cake on their birthday? Or perhaps you just want to remind them to give you a call every now and then!

We have joined up with local baker and confectioner Fisher & Donaldson to enable Family Programme members to send their loved ones cakes, chocolates, and gift baskets with a personalised message for that special occasion. Order online with our Love from Home service at: <http://bit.ly/sta-cake>



Please see online for terms and conditions.

Academic awards

We continue our ongoing series of reports on the national and international recognition received by our fantastic academics:

Professor Jim Scott (pictured) of the School of Chemistry has been awarded the UNESCO medal for 'Contributions to Nanoscience and Nanotechnology'. His pioneering work on ferroelectric materials and devices is used in millions of e-money smartcards worldwide.



Professor John Hudson (School of History) and Professor Lorna Hutson (School of English) have been elected Fellows of the British Academy.

Drs Emma Carroll, Maria Dornelas, Andy Gardner and Tracey Gloster (all School of Biology) and Alice König (School of Classics) have all been elected as members of the Royal Society of Edinburgh Young Academy of Scotland (RSE YAS).

The RSE YAS provides a platform for innovative young entrepreneurs, professionals and academics to develop a coherent and influential voice for society in Scotland and beyond.

Professor James Naismith FRS, Director of the Biomedical Sciences Research Complex at the University (pictured) has been elected as a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in recognition of his 'sustained and distinguished contributions to the structural and functional analysis of enzymes'.



Dr Anindya Raychaudhuri (School of English) and Dr Victoria Donovan (School of Modern Languages) have been selected by the BBC as 'broadcasters of the future' as part of the New Generation Thinkers scheme.

Professor Ifor Samuel (School of Physics & Astronomy) has been named the 2016 winner of the Royal Society of Chemistry Chemical Dynamics Award for his research concerning remarkable plastic-like materials that can conduct electricity and emit light.

Congratulations to all our award winning academics.



Foamy fun

The annual Raisin Monday foam fight proved once again to be a messy, yet thoroughly enjoyable affair for the first-year students who took part in the Raisin Weekend celebrations in October. The event, part of the tradition of academic families, took place on Lower College Lawn and saw a plethora of impressive and inventive costumes including 'minions', 'bunches of grapes' and 'sheep'.

A video of highlights can be viewed at: <http://bit.ly/sta-foam>

Semester dates 2017-2018

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/semesterdates

Candlemas Semester: Monday 23 January 2017 – Friday 26 May 2017

Spring Vacation: Saturday 11 March 2017 – Sunday 26 March 2017

Revision Period: Commences Monday 24 April 2017

Examinations: Monday 8 May 2017 – Friday 19 May 2017

Graduation: Week commencing Monday 19 June 2017

Resits: Week commencing Monday 14 August 2017

Martinmas Semester: Monday 18 September 2017 – Friday 22 December 2017

Graduation: Thursday 7 December 2017 and Friday 8 December 2017

Revision Period: Commences Monday 4 December 2017

Examinations: Monday 11 December 2017 – Friday 22 December 2017

Christmas Vacation: Saturday 23 December 2017 – Sunday 28 January 2018

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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

Facebook: @ustaalumni

Twitter: @ustaalumni

Wordpress: Incomparabubble

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