

LINK

*The newsletter for families
of undergraduate students*



University of
St Andrews

600
YEARS



Martinmas
2014



Welcome

Welcome to the Martinmas edition of *Link*, the newsletter for families of undergraduate students. We are delighted, in particular, to welcome new parents to the St Andrews community and hope you enjoy reading *Link*. We also 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*. If you have suggestions of stories for future editions of *Link*, please contact alumni@st-andrews.ac.uk

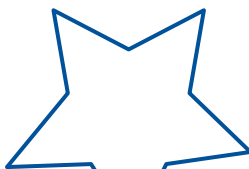
Hitting New Heights

St Andrews has been ranked in the top three universities in the UK in *The Times and Sunday Times University Guide 2015*, our highest ranking ever in what is regarded as the definitive UK university ranking, and was named Scottish University of the Year for the second year in a row.

St Andrews has also been ranked as one of the top 100 universities in the world for the eighth year in succession, in the QS World University Ranking 2015, scoring particularly highly for the reputation of our Arts faculty and our Natural Sciences departments, and our ability to attract the best international staff and students.

These latest league table successes follow on from another outstanding performance in the National Student Survey (NSS), the annual measure of how satisfied students are with the quality of their higher education experience. In the NSS 2014, St Andrews was ranked as the leading multi-faculty university in Scotland and joint top in the United Kingdom.

The Survey also rated individual subjects for student satisfaction with St Andrews number one in the UK for Biology, Computer Science, Anthropology, Human and Social Geography, African and Middle Eastern studies and Divinity. Medicine, Physics, Maths, International Relations, Management, French and History were all placed in the top ten.



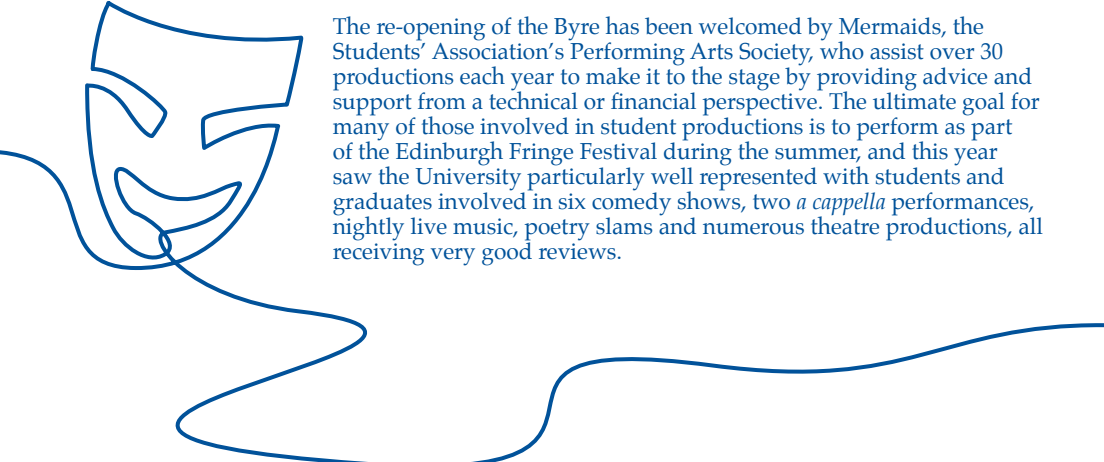
Helping Hands

Professor Sharon Ashbrook of the School of Chemistry (pictured right with Director of Student Services, Dr Chris Lusk) is this year's recipient of the Frotsher Medal for Helping Hands, an award recognising exceptional support to students by a member of staff or another student each year. The prize was established by the family of two former St Andrews students in gratitude and recognition of the support these students received during their time at St Andrews.



The Stage is Set

We are delighted to announce the recent re-opening of the Byre Theatre, thanks to a deal struck between the University, Fife Council and Creative Scotland. The official reopening on 21 October was marked with an event featuring a range of student and community performers. The five star arts venue was closed for business since encountering financial difficulty in January 2013. Now, under the University's management, the theatre will provide a new home for the University's Music Centre, as well as teaching and conference space for the University and an outstanding performance space for the use of the local community, touring professionals and University groups.



The re-opening of the Byre has been welcomed by Mermaids, the Students' Association's Performing Arts Society, who assist over 30 productions each year to make it to the stage by providing advice and support from a technical or financial perspective. The ultimate goal for many of those involved in student productions is to perform as part of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival during the summer, and this year saw the University particularly well represented with students and graduates involved in six comedy shows, two *a cappella* performances, nightly live music, poetry slams and numerous theatre productions, all receiving very good reviews.

Dancing the Night Away

Each year, hundreds of students involve themselves in the world of dance at the University, be it as a fun way to keep fit and make friends, or as a more serious endeavour. Whatever the motivation, all want to make it to the academic year-ending Dance Show as the culmination of all the hard work put in by the teachers, choreographers, committees and dancers throughout the year. The 2014 show, entitled "Hit the Lights!" saw over 180 performers take to the stage showcasing a wide range of genres to two sell-out audiences. You can watch the show online at <https://vimeo.com/96980340>



James Loves Learning

James Montgomery, a third-year Computer Science student, has won £3,000 in a competition by higher education body UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). The competition invited current undergraduate students to submit a 30-second video or a 500-word essay to express why they love learning; and James' onion-dissecting animation came out on top.

Over 2,500 students entered the contest, with an outright winner and three runners-up being selected for both the video and essay competitions. James' video can be viewed online at <http://bit.ly/jamesloveslearning>



Bernard Bentley Prize



One of the University's longest-serving staff members, Bernard Bentley, has recently retired from the Spanish Department in the School of Modern Languages after 38 years' service. Having studied French and Spanish at St Andrews (1968-1972), he

returned in 1976 on a one-year contract and went on to be appointed on a permanent basis a year later, before being promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1999. Among his many achievements, he consolidated the Spanish *ab initio* course into an extremely successful graduating pathway.

The Bernard Bentley Prize has been established by Bernard's former students and colleagues, in recognition of his contribution to the Department. The Prize will be awarded on an annual basis to the best Beginners Spanish student.

St Andrews Prize for the Environment

Blue Ventures Conservation Madagascar has won the 2014 St Andrews Prize for the Environment. The Prize, a collaboration between the University and ConocoPhillips, aims to find practical solutions to environmental challenges around the globe. This year's winning project is empowering local communities in southwest Madagascar to protect their marine environment and manage their resources sustainably by integrating community-based health services within local biodiversity conservation initiatives.

To celebrate the Prize's fifteenth anniversary, eight former winners gathered in St Andrews to talk about the impact of the Prize in allowing them to develop their projects in new and exciting directions.

Further information on the Prize and details of the current and previous winners are available at www.thestandrewsprize.com/



Saints Golf

The University's connections with golf stretch back to the very foundations of the game. The Saints Golf team is working hard to write a new chapter in this shared history.



Through specialised training, fitness work and life coaching, a squad of talented student golfers are beginning to see their hard work paying off. Fourth-year Geography student Gabrielle Macdonald became the one hundredth Scottish Amateur Champion in May, lifting the trophy at Prestwick Golf Club, while first-year student George Burns won the Stephen

Gallagher Foundation Trophy. Both golfers were called up to represent Scotland at international events, Gabrielle at the World Amateur Team Championship (Karuziawa, Japan) and George in the Jacque Leglise Trophy (Barseback, Sweden). You can follow our student golfers' progress at www.saintsgolf.co.uk

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.



A Fresh Start at the Association

The sabbatical team for 2014-15 has now taken up office in the Students' Association. Each year, four students take a year out of their studies to work at the Association, improving the student experience and providing a voice for students. Pat Mathewson (President), Ondrej Hajda (Director of Representation), Fay Morrice (Director of Student Development and Activities) and Leon O'Rourke (Director of Events and Services) will be in post until July 2015 and have an open door for students who need advice or support with representation, events or societies. The Athletic Union also has its own sabbatical, with Sarah Thompson (AU President) responsible for student sport at the University.



The sabbaticals join the Association at a crucial time, with the building in the midst of a £12 million redevelopment programme.

The extended new glass frontage is home to Rector's Café and Your Shop, and the new social spaces of the Main Bar and Sandy's Bar opened in time for Orientation this year. Soon, the society rooms and office space will be revealed and the next stage, the redevelopment of the entertainment venues, will begin. The project is due to finish in 2015 and you can follow progress at

www.yourunion.net/union/redevelopment

Family Book Fund hits £500,000

Having access to the most up to date, comprehensive resources enhances the Library experience enormously for both students and their tutors alike. Through the Family Book Fund, the Library is able to add new textbooks, journals, databases, and other key acquisitions to its collections.

Thanks to the generosity of St Andrews parents and families, the Library has received over £500,000 so far, contributing to the purchase of bibliographic and photographic databases, online manuscripts and journal subscriptions, additional core texts and e-books, and so much more.

The continuous improvement of the Library's holdings is only possible with your support. We would like to extend our sincerest thanks all those who have helped make these fantastic resources available.

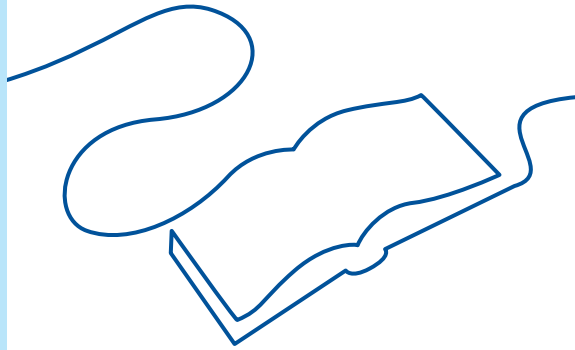
To find out how you can contribute, please visit the following webpage or see the enclosed form. <https://sparc.st-andrews.ac.uk/giving/makeyourgift/parentsupport>

What our students say about the Book Fund:

“(It) has been a real blessing to me this year, ordering several key volumes for my research, which certainly would not have been possible otherwise.”

“Thank you! This goes a long way towards filling gaps in our collection.”

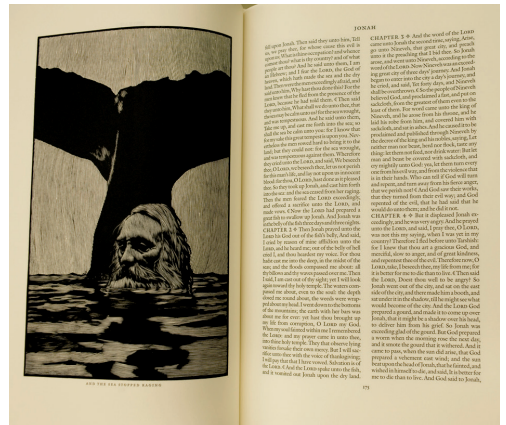
“Thank you so much, I truly appreciate it! I'm looking forward to using the new sources.”



The Gift of Books

The Special Collections Division of the University Library is delighted to have received a very generous gift from Bruce and Suzie Kovner. The Pennyroyal Caxton Bible was designed and illustrated by Barry Moser, who has been described as ‘probably the most important book illustrator working in America today.’

Special Collections have also recently benefited from a donation of rare books from St Andrews graduate Tony Martin (MB ChB 1963), made on behalf of his fellow students, in recognition of their companionship and support. The collection includes an issue of *The Penny London Post* from the second week of May 1746, which provides eye-witness reports of the Battle of Culloden and its aftermath.



Academic Awards

Many St Andrews academics have been awarded honours this year. A selection of these are mentioned below.



Professor N Thomas Wright (pictured left) has been awarded the Burkitt Medal for Biblical Studies by the British Academy. Professor Wright is a Research Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity studies at St Mary's College, and is a former Anglican Bishop.

Professor Nicholas Rengger, who is currently the Head of School of International Relations, has been elected to the *Academia Europaea*, one of Europe's most prestigious and exclusive academies.

Professor Stephen Halliwell of the School of Classics has been elected a Fellow of the British Academy. He is the University's sixth Professor of Greek in succession, going all the way back to John Burnet almost a century ago, to become a Fellow of the British Academy.

Dr Katie Stevenson, Senior Lecturer in Late Mediaeval History, has been awarded the Thomas Reid Early Career Prize for her work on the cultural and political history of late Mediaeval Scotland.

Professor Nick Roe of the School of English has been awarded the Keats-Shelley Association Distinguished Scholar Award for 2014. Nick's focus involves romantic literature and culture.

Professor Jim Naismith has recently been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Professor Naismith is the Director of the Biomedical Sciences Research Complex at the University and works to develop new approaches to destroy drug resistant bacteria.

Dr Michael Morrissey of the School of Biology has been appointed a University Research Fellow by the Royal Society, awarded to those who display an outstanding level of potential in their chosen field.



Online Shop

A 10% discount is available to all alumni and friends at our online retail store, which sells official University branded merchandise. The discount is available in-store and online and is valid across the entire shop, excluding shipping charges. All purchases made on our online store help to directly support teaching and research at the University of St Andrews.

To get your 10% discount add the discount voucher code – ALUMNI10 – when prompted to do so.

www.standrewsuniversitystore.com



Monkey Business

New research carried out by Wardlaw Professor Andrew Whiten of the University of St Andrews, in collaboration with colleagues at the University of Vienna, has revealed that wild monkeys have the ability to learn new tricks – after watching videos of other monkeys in action. The team filmed a group of trained wild marmoset monkeys perform different foraging techniques to open an ‘artificial fruit’ to gain food inside, either by pulling open a drawer or lifting a lid; these recorded sessions were then replayed to groups of wild monkeys living in Pernambuco, Brazil.



The researchers had previously discovered that captive animals can accomplish tasks after watching others perform them, but this is the first time that scientists have been able to show that the same applies to wild animals.



Semester Dates 2014-2015

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/semesterdates

Martinmas Semester: Monday 15 September – Friday 19 December 2014

Graduation: Monday 1 December 2014

Revision Period: Week commencing Monday 1 December 2014

Examinations: Monday 8 December 2014 – Thursday 18 December 2014

Christmas Vacation: Saturday 20 December 2014 – Sunday 25 January 2015

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

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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

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