Textile slide collection preserved for generations to come

The Chancellor’s Fund has awarded the University’s new Centre for Textile Conservation & Technical Art History £27,840 to enable the digitisation of the former Textile Conservation Centre’s slide collection and make it available for teaching and research.

Over 35 years the Textile Conservation Centre offered a conservation service for museums, institutions and private clients in the UK and internationally. During this time more than 10,000 objects were conserved by professional conservators and textile conservation students. The collection of 80,000 colour slides recording the conservation treatments undertaken was part of the legacy of the centre donated when the University of Glasgow’s Centre for Textile Conservation & Technical Art History was formed in partnership with the Textile Conservation Centre Foundation in 2010.

Until the 1990s conservation treatments were recorded on 35mm colour slides. Although housed in archival sleeves, the slides, some of which date from the early 1970s, are now beginning to deteriorate. The project will ensure the entire archive is captured digitally as it would otherwise eventually be lost.

Frances Lennard, Senior Lecturer in Textile Conservation at the University, said: ‘The Textile Conservation Centre made a major contribution to the care of the UK’s textile heritage, ensuring that many thousands of objects have been preserved for current and future generations to enjoy. Our collection of slides recording the conservation treatments undertaken is a rich resource for teaching and research and we are delighted that the Chancellor’s Fund is supporting the digitisation of the archive. ’

‘The resulting collection of images of textile objects and conservation treatments will be used in teaching on the MPhil Textile Conservation and MLitt Dress & Textile Histories programmes as well as other History of Art and PhD students. The final stage of the project will catalogue the archive to make it searchable, an extremely valuable resource for researchers.’

Welcome from the Chancellor

The University of Glasgow has a clear mission – to undertake world-leading research and to provide an intellectually stimulating learning environment, thus delivering benefits to culture, society and the economy. The Chancellor’s Fund aims of supporting our students, developing excellence and preserving our heritage all embrace this mission.

In this issue we look at some new projects where your support is providing important resources to target these objectives and help fulfil our aims. These include preserving the legacy of the Textile Conservation Centre, strengthening the practical training of archaeology students and supporting a student-led healthcare project in Malawi. We also revisit the Glasgow Guardian Digital Archive project, which will open up the great heritage of student journalism at the University for the enjoyment of scholars past and present.

I would like to finish by noting the support of one of our alumni groups, the Oxford Society for Glasgow University Graduates (OSGUG), who have achieved a tremendous target of raising £10,000 for the Chancellor’s Fund. Thank you to the members of OSGUG and indeed all our donors for helping to make these projects possible.

Professor Kenneth Calman
Chancellor
Digging deep for our archaeology students

The Chancellor’s Fund has provided £6,240 to fund six bursaries to allow postgraduate archaeology students to take part in a summer field school at the Strathearn Environ and Royal Forteviot project (SERF).

The SERF project was established in 2006 to investigate the Pictish royal site and unique prehistoric landscape at Forteviot, Perthshire. Research through SERF aims to position Forteviot in a wider political, social and geographical perspective and explore the connections between Scotland’s first farmers and the birth of the nation. The project was also designed to provide high-quality hands-on training for students and the local community.

The field school is a vital part of SERF, offering an exceptional opportunity for students, staff and specialists to work together within this significant and multi-dimensional research project. It provides current undergraduates with an introduction to practical outdoor archaeological skills. The provision of the bursaries will increase postgraduate participation, enabling them to expand their existing skills as well as developing new ones.

Professor Stephen Driscoll, Professor of Archaeology, said: ‘The bursaries have enabled many more of our postgraduates to gain experience in supervising undergraduates and volunteer excavators, skills which are critical for professional success but difficult to obtain. In particular they have been encouraged to develop supervisory and excavation management skills associated with the running of archaeological field projects and the supervision of field teams. It has been a very successful season, which is in no small measure because of the team supported by the bursary.’

The SERF project has been a platform for active collaborations with multiple institutions, including the British Academy and Historic Scotland. As well as successful engagement with local communities through excavation open days, artefact displays and lectures it has received high-profile coverage in the media, including newspaper articles, radio and the BBC television series Landward and Digging for Britain.

Digging deep for our archaeology students

Glasgow students support Malawi orphans

Over the past three years the Chancellor’s Fund has supported Glasgow students travelling to Malawi over the summer vacation to provide healthcare and day-to-day assistance in the Chikondi and Mphatso Orphan Care Centre in Lilongwe. In 2010 our grant of £6,000 provided bursaries towards the costs of the 32 volunteers who spent 13 weeks in Malawi.

As part of the national charity SKIP (Students for Kids International Projects) the aim of SKIP Glasgow is to improve the health, welfare and education of some of the world’s most deprived children as well as giving healthcare students the opportunity to volunteer overseas, aiding in their personal and professional development.

Medical, dental and nursing students train throughout the year to learn about topics including HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria, which have been highlighted by the Malawian Government as priority health concerns. By holding community health promotion sessions and implementing simple health interventions such as establishing a hand washing programme and supervised tooth brushing, the students are helping to improve health on a basic level.

Billy Dunn, one of the volunteers, said: ‘I thoroughly enjoyed my experience of the SKIP Glasgow project. I came back with a new perspective on life – about how lucky I am to live in a country where I am presented with opportunities, which are simply not available to young people growing up in Malawi. I met many interesting and inspiring people, worked with wonderful children and integrated in an entirely new and different culture. Volunteering with SKIP Glasgow has also convinced me to consider a career in paediatrics having enjoyed my time with the children there so much.’
Thank you to OSGUG

Members of the Oxford Society of Glasgow University Graduates (OSGUG) continue to show support for their alma mater with impressive fundraising efforts.

Last year OSGUG launched an ambitious appeal to raise £10,000 for the Chancellor’s Fund (founded by the society’s Patron, Sir William Kerr Fraser) and the target has now been reached. Monies donated as part of this appeal will be put to good use around campus as part of the commitment of the Chancellor’s Fund, and we are extremely grateful for the enthusiastic support of the group.

OSGUG was founded in 1990 to enable Glasgow alumni and former staff to establish and maintain social contact with one another, while taking an interest in and promoting the academic pursuits and aspirations of their alma mater. Members organise a varied annual programme of social events and maintain close contact with the University through meetings from time to time addressed by senior members of staff.

Since its foundation OSGUG’s pride in the University and commitment to current and future students has continued to be demonstrated through a series of fundraising activities, raising a staggering £90,000 for the benefit of various campaigns and initiatives.

OSGUG are always keen to welcome new members. For more information, please contact Tom Hanson at president@osgug.org.uk.

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Read all about it – online

Glasgow’s archive of student newspapers is now searchable thanks to a new website recently launched by the University.

In 2008 the Chancellor’s Fund provided £5,000 towards a collaborative project between the University’s Archive Services, the Library and the Humanities Advanced Technology & Information Institute to create a digital archive of student newspaper journalism from 1956 to 2006. The recently launched archive contains searchable editions of the Gilmorehill Globe, Gilmorehill Guardian and Glasgow University Guardian.

Thanks to additional funding from the Friends of the University Library and Students’ Representative Council work began on preservation of the original newspapers in March 2009. The newspapers were first microfilmed and the digital images generated were used to create the archive, which can now be seen online at www.glasgow.ac.uk/services/archives/guardian. Using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software, a database of the full text of each newspaper was created which can be searched using key words or phrases.

Lesley Richmond, Director of Archive Services, said: ‘We are delighted that the completed archive has exceeded the original specification we applied to the Chancellor’s Fund to support being in a searchable form. Together this represents the entirety of student newspaper journalism at the University and we believe the most complete collection of student journalism in the UK.

‘The papers offer a unique insight into student and campus life for current students, staff, alumni and researchers. Figures of national importance such as Donald Dewar, John Smith, Andrew Neil, William Boyd, Iain Martin and Sir Neil MacCormick have graced the pages. Stories range from the most trivial to issues of national importance with everything in between, written in styles that can be serious, humorous, irreverent or downright offensive!’

Future work will aim to improve the accuracy of the text created using OCR and enhance the search function and display of results.
Latest projects

The latest projects to benefit from the Chancellor’s Fund are listed below.

Chancellor’s Fund for Sport
£30,000 To support students undertaking exceptional sport and recreation activities.

Chancellor’s Fund Community Scholarships
£7,200 To support Psychology students’ summer research projects in local community organisations.

Development of public engagement with research
£3,000 To support a training programme for PhD students in science communication culminating in delivery of an activity at the Glasgow Science Festival.

The Beauty of Romance symposium
£200 To support a one-day workshop exploring the relationship between medieval romantic literature and medieval courtly cultures.

Diodorus Siculus: Shared Myths, World Community and Universal History conference
£3,000 To support an international three-day conference examining the ancient Greek historian Diodorus Siculus.

Leadership development programme for ethnic minority staff and women
£4,000 To improve the leadership skills and representation at senior level of ethnic minority and female academics and managers.

SKIP Glasgow – orphan care project, Malawi
£7,000 To support students providing health promotion and assistance at Chikondi and Mphatso Orphan Care Centre in Lilongwe.

Summer School of Sociolinguistics 2011
£3,000 Towards a summer school for postgraduate students to receive training and feedback on their research from international experts.

Upgrade of Mature Students Association computing facilities
£1,857 To purchase six new computer base units for the association.

iGEM team 2011
£4,000 To support the University’s undergraduate team travelling to the European final of the International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) competition.

Glasgow Science and Engineering Crucible
£10,000 To support a development programme for young academics across the College of Science & Engineering.

Digitisation of the former Textile Conservation Centre’s slide collection
£27,840 Completing the digitisation process of 80,000 colour slides documenting textile samples and conservation treatments carried out over 35 years by the centre.

Vacuum rotary evaporator, Centre for Textile Conservation & Technical Art History
£1,290 To purchase equipment to allow preparation of historical samples of dyed textiles and paint pigments for scientific analysis.

School of Veterinary Medicine
£30,000 Towards four projects: a sensor based motion analysis system for the detection and teaching of equine lameness; the creation of shared open educational resources for veterinary undergraduates; the Ambulatory Veterinary Science for the Scottish Centre for Production Animal Health & Food Safety; and a virtual dog and cat created using MRI and CT scans for the teaching of anatomy.

Undergraduate Overseas Expedition Support Programme
£12,000 To support undergraduate scientific expeditions outwith the degree programme.

SERF Field School – postgraduate bursaries
£6,240 To create six bursaries to enable postgraduate archaeology students to participate in a field school at the Forteviot prehistoric site in Perthshire.

Commemorating Robert Simson and his legacy to the University
£1,500 Towards a one-day symposium and material for the University of Glasgow Story webpages.

Golden Age Iberia in Glasgow
£5,000 To support a collaboration across the disciplines of Hispanic Studies and History of Art using the Stirling Maxwell collections to enhance the learning environment.

Tanzania 2011
£2,500 To establish joint undergraduate research projects with the University of Dar es Salaam on the impact of urban change on local environments.

Thanks to all our donors...

The following lists those who have given new gifts, named existing gifts, or have been upgraded a level between 2 March and 31 August 2011. In addition to those listed below, there are a number of donors whose gifts are awaiting confirmation of naming or who have chosen to remain anonymous.

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* denotes donors that have been upgraded giving club level. We would like to thank all donors for their continued support.
† denotes gifts to American Alumni of Glasgow University (AAGU). We would like to thank AAGU for their support.
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