Is the Doctor a graduate?

TV’s Doctor Who suggests that the time-travelling hero is a graduate

Also inside, interviews with:
The creator of Who Do You Think You Are?
and the China-based correspondent who is our Young Alumnus of the Year
Welcome to the latest edition of Avenue, our twice-yearly magazine for alumni and friends of the University.

Recently creating a bit of a stir at Gilmorehill was the realisation that we may have been overlooking one of our most legendary alumni. The Doctor, best known for his Saturday evening adventures protecting our planet, claims to have a degree from Glasgow. This issue of Avenue investigates whether television’s much-loved Doctor really is a Glasgow alumnus (page 16).

Continuing on our television theme, we talk to alumni who work in different realms of broadcasting. Our inspirational Young Alumnus of the Year 2014, Martin Patience, shares what life is like as a foreign correspondent (page 8). The mind behind Who Do You Think You Are?, Alex Graham, talks about the craft of storytelling for television (page 10).

We also celebrate eight of our academics who have been ranked as some of the most highly cited researchers in the world by Thomson Reuters (page 3). And find out why a team of researchers are looking into how birds cope with the stresses of city and country living (page 14).

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and the snap shot it provides of the dynamic life of the University.

Professor Anton Muscatelli
Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Welcome

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Half-yearly meeting of the General Council

Saturday, 31 January 2015

Alumni are invited to join the Chancellor and the Principal at the General Council half-yearly meeting on Saturday, 31 January 2015 at 11am in the Kelvin Gallery.

Read the report of the last meeting on pages 26 and 27.

Contents
Youngsters encouraged to rise and dine to reduce diabetes risk

Children are being urged to have a high-fibre breakfast every day to reduce their risk of developing Type 2 diabetes in later life.

Researchers at St George’s, University of London, and the Universities of Oxford and Glasgow have found that children who eat a daily breakfast have a lower risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, compared with those who either never or occasionally do so.

Type 2 diabetes develops when the body either cannot produce enough insulin or insulin produced does not function properly. It has become a major public health issue in recent years, with more people in younger age groups developing the disease.

The study followed the habits of more than 4,000 primary school children aged 9–10 years in London, Birmingham and Leicester and involved monitoring blood samples, physical measurements and dietary data.

The diabetes risk profiles of those children who always had breakfast were consistently better than those who did not, regardless of differences in body fat, socioeconomic status or levels of physical activity.

Fibre-rich breakfasts were found to be particularly beneficial among children who always ate breakfast, with blood samples from those who ate high-fibre cereals showing low insulin resistance – an important indicator of future Type 2 diabetes risk.

Professor Naveed Sattar, Professor of Metabolic Medicine at the Institute of Cardiovascular & Medical Sciences at Glasgow, says: ‘Whilst these data are not from a trial, they suggest parents should be encouraging children to eat breakfast, and in particular cereal rich in fibre, of which there is now a wide selection.’

‘By doing so, we may help in the battle against diabetes, which is still rising at alarming rates in younger adults, and is now also seen in children. Future trials are now also needed in this area and are being developed.’

Honouring inspiring people

At ceremonies throughout 2014, the University awarded 23 Honorary degrees to people who have made considerable contributions in their respective fields.

Fourteen Honorary degrees were presented at a Commonwealth Games themed Commemoration Day celebration on 18 June 2014.

Eight of these went to Scottish Commonwealth Games gold medal winners, including Rosemary Oliva Wright, gold medalist in the 1970 800m race, and George Aitken and Grant Knox, gold medalists in the 1986 lawn bowls pairs, who received Doctor of the University (DUniv).

Also presented with an Honorary degree at the annual ceremony was Glasgow graduate Colin Blane (MA 1976), pictured above, who collected a Doctor of Letters (DLitt) for services to broadcasting. Colin joined the BBC shortly after graduating and has been East Africa Correspondent and Europe Correspondent and is now Scotland Correspondent at BBC Scotland.

A further nine Honorary Degrees were awarded at graduation ceremonies over the year, with alumnus and chief pilot for Virgin Galactic David Mackay (BSc 1979) receiving a Doctor of Engineering (DEng) at a ceremony in July. Mackay chalked up his first flying hours as an undergraduate with the University Air Squadron.

Alumnus Andrew Bow (BArch 1986) was awarded Doctor of the University (DUniv). He is one of the UK’s most highly respected architects and a senior partner of Foster + Partners, and has worked on projects in the Middle East, Far East and Europe, including London’s Millennium Bridge and the master plan for Trafalgar Square.

Eight of the University’s leading scientific minds feature in the Thomson Reuters Highly Cited Researchers 2014 list – ranking them in the top 1% globally for the number of citations of their work.

The Thomson Reuters Highly Cited Researchers list identifies experts who have achieved exceptional impact in their field, based upon the number of individual papers published by each researcher, and the number of citations received by each paper.

Just 3,215 researchers worldwide have earned the distinction and Glasgow academics appear on the list more than any other Scottish institution.

The eight researchers are:

- Professor Alan Crozier, formerly Professor of Plant Biochemistry, and currently an Honorary Senior Research Fellow in the School of Medicine
- Professor Ian Ford, Professor of Biostatistics in the Institute of Health & Wellbeing
- Professor Michael Lean, Chair of Human Nutrition
- Professor John McMurray, Professor of Cardiology in the Institute of Cardiovascular & Medical Sciences
- Professor Graeme Milligan, Gardiner Chair of Biochemistry in the Institute of Molecular Cell & Systems Biology
- Dr Bill Mullen, a Research Fellow for the Institute of Cardiovascular & Medical Sciences
- Professor Naveed Sattar, Professor of Metabolic Medicine in the Institute of Cardiovascular & Medical Sciences
- Professor Jeff Webb, Honorary Senior Research Fellow in the School of Mathematics & Statistics

To read more about the influential eight, see www.glasgow.ac.uk/avenue.
Human threat to animal migration

Researchers tracking the epic Serengeti migration of 1.3 million wildebeest and 250,000 zebra have revealed that humans have a greater impact on the migration than food or predators.

A team of experts, led by Dr Grant Hopcraft of Glasgow’s Boyd Orr Centre for Population & Ecosystem Health, have been tracking the animals for ten years. The team wants to analyse how the animals make decisions during migration and devise strategies to ensure their survival.

The findings suggest that wildebeest and zebra move for different reasons: wildebeest primarily seek fresh grazing, whereas zebra balance their need for food against the risk of predators. However, both species are driven, above all else, by the need to avoid humans and human development.

Two human threats faced by the animals in the Serengeti are poaching and the development of infrastructure. About 80,000 wildebeest are hunted illegally every year for the bushmeat trade. When the animals encounter areas of high poaching, they exit as soon as possible, regardless of the food available. In addition, the Tanzanian government has been considering a national highway through the Serengeti to create a trade route. This could be catastrophic for the migrating animals as it would interfere with their access to the Mara river, the only source of water during the dry season.

‘If we want to protect migration we need to focus on managing humans and not the animals,’ says Dr Hopcraft.

• Glasgow’s Boyd Orr Centre for Population & Ecosystem Health was awarded the Queen’s Anniversary Prize for Further & Higher Education in 2013.

Glasgow Clyde-siders boost the Games

The Commonwealth Games transformed the city of Glasgow in the summer of 2014, and playing a key part were over 300 volunteers from the University.

Neil Nairn is usually a dental instructor in orthodontics for undergraduates and postgraduates at the Dental Hospital. However, the Games saw him become a fluffy, smiling thistle named Clyde (pictured below).

He appeared as the Games mascot at events along a section of the route of the Queen’s Baton Relay, including St Andrews, Dundee and Montrose.

‘The kids absolutely adored Clyde,’ he says. ‘I was besieged by people.’

When the Clyde costume came off for the first time, he helped out with logistics during the Glasgow section of the Baton Relay, then appeared as a cast member in the closing ceremony.

‘Kylie Minogue and I are best of friends,’ he jokes. ‘But really, the list of highlights is endless – it was just Team Glasgow at its best.’

Three University volunteers carried the Queen’s baton during the final leg of its 190,000km journey, and other University “Clyde-siders” helped across a variety of essential tasks from directing spectators to venues to keeping people safe.

Court approves campus vision blueprint

The University Court has endorsed the estate strategy proposed by Director of Estates & Buildings, Ann Allen. It is a key stage in the development of the Historic Gilmorehill Campus and follows the acquisition of the 14-acre Western Infirmary site, which was originally part of the University’s estate back in the 1870s. The site will be handed back to the University next year, once the transfer of NHS services is complete.

The estate strategy will become one of the University’s key strategic documents. It is a long-term blueprint for how the campus and the buildings can be shaped and used to support the University’s strategic ambitions.

Ann Allen says: ‘The overall aim of the strategy – its “vision” – is to create a campus that is fit for today and the future. The campus will be innovative, of courageous design and reflective of the University’s heritage and ambition in research and teaching and learning, inspiring current and future generations.’

Court endorsed the key objectives for the redevelopment, which were to:

• Provide additional capacity which is efficient and effective
• Provide larger purpose-built interconnecting buildings which support collaborative working and enable co-location of colleges
• Develop flexible purpose research space to encourage partnership and industry engagement
• Develop quality, purpose-designed teaching and learning facilities
• Develop an infrastructure that supports this level of development
• Improve condition of buildings.

So far the University has launched three engagement and consultation exercises for staff, students and the general public. It is expected that wide-reaching consultations will continue.

Glasgow tightens Vancouver links

The University of Glasgow and Simon Fraser University (SFU), Vancouver, have signed a new student exchange agreement. The move consolidates many years of collaborative work between the institutions, particularly between the SFU’s Centre for Scottish Studies and Glasgow’s Centre for Robert Burns Studies. The agreement will enable students from both to benefit from their respective expertise.

City partnership to boost higher education

A new group of Glasgow universities and colleges, including the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde and Glasgow School of Art, have joined forces with the Glasgow City Marketing Bureau to promote the city as a global education destination. The partnership will help to increase the number of international students and academics choosing Glasgow to study and work.

Global perspectives on end-of-life interventions

The Wellcome Trust is funding a four-year project that will map and compare end-of-life care around the world. The investigation, headed by David Clark, Professor of Medical Sociology and director of the University’s Dumfries Campus, will focus on how to improve end-of-life interventions in the face of global population growth and ageing.

Skin cancer breakthrough

Cancer Research UK scientists have shown that a fat molecule found in the body directs the most serious type of skin cancer to spread, according to research published in PLOS Biology. Lead author, Professor Robert Innsal, Cancer Research UK scientist at the Beatson Institute for Cancer Research at the University, says: ‘At the moment our research is still in its early stages but we hope this could help doctors to make sure this cancer doesn’t spread.’

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Eat your seaweed

A new study led by Glasgow researcher Dr Emilie Combet has found that eating seaweed could help to reverse iodine insufficiency.

Iodine is important for thyroid function, as it is a key component of thyroid hormones. In addition, having sufficient iodine is particularly important for pregnant women. Low iodine levels are prevalent in the UK and across the world due to lack of dairy and/or seafood in the diet. This is having an impact on health, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Since 1993, the WHO has encouraged the fortification of salt with iodine to combat insufficiency, but some scientists are concerned that this confounds efforts to improve cardiovascular health by reducing salt intake.

Now, nutritionist Dr Combet from the School of Medicine has led an investigation into Scottish seaweed – a naturally rich source of iodine – as an alternative to fortified salt. Her findings suggest that seaweed has a more sustained release of iodine, releasing a lower level over a longer period, compared to salt.

Study participants found the seaweed palatable, and the majority (67%) were positive about its use in food. However, most also felt they lacked opportunity to buy and eat it.

Seaweed is available on the UK market, mainly in capsule form, but choosing the right seaweed is not straightforward as there are over 630 unique species of seaweed in the UK alone. Ascophyllum nodosum, which was used in this study, contains around 700 micrograms of iodine per gram, and participants took 0.5g daily.

Dr Combet says: ‘Caution must be exercised – not all seaweeds are the same, with some containing too much iodine, or heavy metals.’ The study is published in the British Journal of Nutrition.

In the line of duty

A four-year project to investigate the service of University staff and students in the First World War began with a Service of Remembrance for the first Glaswegian to be awarded the Victoria Cross in the conflict.

Captain Harry Sherwood Ranken was honoured on 25 September, the centenary of his death, with a service in the University’s Memorial Chapel and the laying of a commemorative paving stone.

The doctor and alumnus sustained a serious leg wound at Haute-Avesnes, France, but continued attending to the needs of other soldiers. By the time he agreed to be carried off the battlefield, the wound had become severe and he died of an embolism.

Around 4,500 staff and students of the University served in WWI. Of these, 761 died – one quarter of them doctors – and a Garden of Remembrance will eventually hold a small white cross for each.

The Great War Project in 2014 focused on the role of doctors, women and medal winners from the University. Follow their work on Twitter at @GlasgowUniWW1.

Breakthrough could herald cheap green energy

Chemists from the University have taken a major step forward in the production of hydrogen from water which could lead to a new era of cheap, clean and renewable energy.

The research team, led by Professor Lee Cronin, report in a paper in Science on a new form of hydrogen production which is 30 times faster than the current state-of-the-art method. The process also solves common problems associated with generating electricity from renewable sources such as solar, wind or wave energy.

Hydrogen is easily produced from water by electrolysis, a process which uses electricity to break the bonds between water’s constituent elements, hydrogen and oxygen, and releases them as gas. Currently, industrial production of hydrogen relies overwhelmingly on fossil fuels to power the electrolysis process. The new method allows larger than ever quantities of hydrogen to be produced at atmospheric pressure using lower power loads, typical of those generated by renewable power sources.

Professor Cronin explains: ‘The potential for reliable hydrogen production from renewable sources is huge. The sun, for example, provides more energy in a single hour of sunlight than the entire world’s population uses in a year. If we can tap and store even a fraction of that in the coming years and decrease our reliance on fossil fuels it will be a tremendously important step to slowing climate change.’
Calmness in conflict

Life as a foreign correspondent can be exciting, arduous and often risky. Young Alumnus of the Year 2014, Martin Patience, talks about the highs and lows of this demanding career which has taken him from the Middle East to Afghanistan to China.

By Douglas Blane

Talking confidently to camera while being shoved around by hooded men in masks – as Martin Patience (MA 2002) recently did in China – looks both difficult and dangerous. But I kinda know they’re not going to hit me in the face,’ he says. ‘I have never been punched in Beijing.’

Now in his mid-thirties with a wife and baby son, the BBC foreign correspondent has covered some of the hottest spots in the world, since graduating from Glasgow with a degree in history. For a man who says he hates conflict, it seems a strange choice of career. ‘It’s a bit like firemen with fires,’ he says. ‘You are trained to do a job. I think it’s incredibly important to get in there, find out what’s happening and present it to the world in an impartial way. That’s why I volunteer for these types of assignment.’

Staying alert is crucial, he says. ‘Sometimes you get caught up in things. One of the tensest places was Afghanistan, where I spent a week with British troops and went on patrol with them. Because of IEDs (improvised explosive devices), you never know when your next step is going to be your last. That underlying stress makes it difficult – especially for the soldiers.’

When asked about the qualities needed for success as a foreign correspondent, Martin hesitates. ‘It’s strange being interviewed yourself,’ he laughs. ‘When people ask me what they should do when a journalist tries to interview them, I usually say “Run away!”.

But let me think. You have to get on with people. You need to stay calm and be able to soak up pressure, not just from what’s happening in front of you – be it protests, bombs or bullets – but also from London. You need to be hard-working and physically fit. And good-humoured. You see lots of awful things, so you need to be able to unwind.’

There is another vital quality, he says, trying to put his finger on it precisely. ‘Humility? Not quite. You speak to people who have experienced the worst things life can throw at them. Sensitivity, maybe. You have to listen and be sensitive to people.’

As an already experienced reporter and news editor for Glasgow University Guardian, Martin won Scottish Student Journalist of the Year in 2002 – which led to a summer reporting for The Herald, followed by several months in Cairo. He then moved to New York to study for a Masters degree.

Professor Bernard Wasserstein and Professor Evan Mawdsley, who I’m still in touch with, suggested Columbia University and supported my application. New York is an amazing place. The greatest city in the world. But it is also exhausting so I was quite glad to move on.’

There followed a year’s scholarship to study Arabic in Syria, where Martin met his wife, then a move to Jerusalem in 2005, where he worked for USA Today and the Sunday Herald. Recruited to the BBC in 2006, Martin remained in Jerusalem for two years before covering the war in Afghanistan for two years, and then moving to Beijing in 2010.

‘I believe the most important time in your life is just after university,’ he says. ‘I’ve always taken risks. If you want to do something and have enough drive you will get there. But you have to make sacrifices. I have had wonderful experiences, met wonderful people. But I’ve been away from home for 12 years. You miss your family and friends. It can be lonely on the road. Things change. People are always moving on. A colleague was killed in Afghanistan.’

He pauses. ‘Broadcasting is a craft you have to work at to improve. I want to get better. Sometimes you think about a more normal existence. It does appeal. But you have to be honest and say you probably get bored. Maybe when I’m 50 I’ll say I’ve had a good run and amazing experiences and count my blessings. I would like to write at least one book. And perhaps get a bit closer to home.’

Which is still Glasgow? ‘Very much so.’

Young Alumnus of the Year is an annual award that celebrates the achievements of alumni who have made a major contribution to the community, arts, sciences or business.

Martin Patience

Broadcasting is a craft you have to work at to improve. I want to get better. Sometimes you think about a more normal existence. It does appeal.’

Martin is pictured above reporting from the Khyber Pass in 2008. The pass is an important and often dangerous route connecting Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Currently based in China, Martin has reported on issues from around the country, including the recent Hong Kong protests.
Who do you think you are, Alex Graham?  
An interview with the mind behind the successful genealogy series.

Alex Graham dislikes authority. He strives for innovation and likes taking chances. But he always sticks to what he loves. The creator of television’s popular series Who Do You Think You Are? lets us in on his secrets to success.

By Douglas Blane

Anyone who buys one third of a television production company for £1, as Alex Graham (MA 1977) did in 1987, then sells the whole company two decades later for £25 million, must have had their fair share of luck – the one personal quality to which the graduate readily admits.

“I think about this often,” he says. “Life is about luck as much as good judgement. You have to take your chances. Once I realised television was what I wanted to do I became more focussed. I was passionate. I worked hard. But I never really had a plan.”

Early signs of high achievement, from the man who would produce one of the most successful TV programmes of all time – Who Do You Think You Are? – were not obvious. “My dad died when I was a boy and my mum went out to work,” he says. “So my brother and I were latchkey kids. I remember my mum, when she got home, trying to encourage me to do my homework, saying ‘You’ll never get a proper job sitting around watching telly all day.’”

He did, of course. But there were twists and turns along the way, the first during his time at the University, when Alex realised that in engineering he had chosen the wrong subject to study. Already well into his second year, he was struggling with the practical side, he says. “But it wasn’t easy to transfer to a totally different course. My best chance was to do really well in the end-of-year exams. I was told. That galvanised me. I worked like mad and in the autumn of 73 started back in first year doing a Joint Honours degree in English literature and sociology.”

The power of paper
That ability to adapt was crucial, many years later, when his concept of Who Do You Think You Are? came in contact for the first time with reality. “I had thought of it as a different way of telling history,” he says. “Each week would be about a big story, such as the First World War, told through the family history of a celebrity.”

The first of these was Bill Oddie, whose family came from Rochdale and had worked in the cotton mills. “I thought we could use them to tell the story of the Industrial Revolution,” Alex says. “But what interested Bill more was finding out why his mum had been away such a lot when he was growing up. He suspected mental illness.”

This sounded like a more interesting programme to Alex than his original concept, so he altered his thinking – rightly, as it turned out. “Our researchers discovered that Bill’s mum had given birth to a daughter who had died,” he says. “There is a scene in that first episode when Bill gets the death certificate. It has a box pre-printed with the word ‘years’. Someone had scored that out and written ‘five days’.”

“Bill saw that it broke him up. It was very poignant. That’s when I realised this was a different kind of programme from what I had in mind. It was much more personal, more emotional.”

Alex himself gives the impression of being a calm, thoughtful man, whose emotions seem not so much kept in check as seldom stirred. “I do get quite emotional about all sorts of things – music, football, politics,” he admits. “But in my day-to-day life I am logical and rational. Some would say relentlessly so.”

That clear-thinking quality is a necessary element in making good television, he says. “But too is something else – which comes with experience and maybe with all those hours watching TV as a boy. ‘You have to understand the language. If you want to work in France, you learn French.’ Television has a language too. It is not a good medium for complicated ideas. What it’s really good at is narrative and emotion. At those it is incredibly powerful.”

Entirely novel ideas are not as important as creativity of execution, he says. “Ideas are over-rated. Who Do You Think You Are? and The 1900 House are about as different as you could imagine. But what they both do is harness the strengths of television. I’ve always been interested in innovative ways of telling stories. My skill is in storytelling.”

Branching out
Alex’s own story, leading up to the foundation of the production company Wall to Wall, took him from the University of Glasgow into print journalism in London and Bradford, then, after a few years, to a researcher post at London Weekend Television. “I walked into the studios,” he says. “And there was a moment when I looked around and remembered – this is what I wanted to do.”

But only four years later, following a rapid rise from researcher to series producer, Alex left

“I realised this was a different kind of programme from what I had in mind. It was much more personal, more emotional.”

Alex Graham
I am almost more proud of the people we have had through Wall to Wall. The secret of success in any business, someone said, is to hire people more talented than you, then delegate more than you're comfortable with.’

Alex Graham

London Weekend. The reasons are revealing. ‘It was a secure place with nice salaries and pensions,’ he says. ‘So most of my contemporaries stayed. But when Channel 4 came along in 1982, suddenly there were all these independent production companies. I was drawn to the small company culture.

‘I have always had a dislike of authority. I don’t like being told what to do. So I left to work for an independent production company called Diverse. I loved it and after four months I was running a prestigious current affairs programme.’

At this point chance took a hand again when Alex, now in his early thirties, met three young producers and went to work for the company they set up. ‘After a year I was offered a share in it,’ he says. ‘Nowadays production companies are seen as having real value. But in those days nobody knew. I bought a share in Wall to Wall for £1.’

Ten years later, in his mid-forties now, with three children under the age of 11, Alex had ‘a bit of a mid-life crisis’, he says, when the other directors moved on to big jobs in broadcasting. ‘I wondered what I was doing there,’ he says. ‘I was a producer; I loved making television programmes and I was good at it. I realised I had all kinds of ideas about how they should be made and how companies should be run.’

An eye for talent

Choosing the right people and nurturing them is the key, he says. ‘I am proud of the programmes we made. I am almost more proud of the people we have had through Wall to Wall. The secret of success in any business, someone said, is to hire people more talented than you, then delegate more than you’re comfortable with. I have an eye for talented people and I delegate well.

‘My mum taught me not to settle for second best. I’m committed to making things as good as they can be. It’s not exactly perfectionist. When I watch one of our films, I can always find something I wish we’d changed. Nothing is ever perfect. But if a thing is worth doing, it’s worth doing to the very best of your ability – that’s my mum again. I set high standards.’

Now in his early sixties, Alex does not give the impression of a man content to coast along, play golf and watch television. A sense of drive that took him from Hamilton to the heart of London broadcasting remains. ‘We are in danger of getting into deep psychology here,’ he says. ‘But my dad died of meningitis when I was eight. That had an impact on me. Something has always driven me on. I worked long hours. I never wanted a nine to five job.’

The critical thinking he learned at Glasgow was vital, he says. ‘My years there were very formative. I worked hard and got a good degree. What I tell young people now is to choose a subject they’re passionate about, and don’t let the academic side completely define you. The stuff that really stuck with me was the theatre I did, and the music and the politics. And of course the people. University is about friendship.’

The final question, inevitably, is whether the man behind Who Do You Think You Are? is ever perfect. ‘I haven’t,’ he admits. ‘I spent all my time doing other people’s. Genealogists tell me the process is as much fun as the result. So maybe now that I’m semi-retired I will have a go myself. It is on my bucket list.

‘I would like to find out who I am.’

View your ancestors’ University records

Through the University’s archive services you can view your ancestors’ University records. Students who graduated from the University, right back to 1451, left records of their study, which are now held in the University archives. Brief until the mid-19th century, these become more detailed from then on, and include matriculation records, prize lists, class roll books and records of student societies.

Archive services also hold records for Glasgow Veterinary College, Anderson’s College of Medicine, St Mungo’s College, Trinity College and Queen Margaret College.

Visitors can arrange to view records and do their own research. We recommend you make an appointment, so that a member of staff can explain the records to you. Remember to bring your camera.

Before your appointment, archives staff can find out, at no cost, if an ancestor studied at the University. They can be commissioned to carry out more detailed research.

www.glasgow.ac.uk/ancestraltourists

Researching your family history

1. Make a note of what you and your relatives know. Don’t just talk to your older relatives; siblings and cousins may know something too.

2. Start your family tree from the outset and keep it up to date. Try using a tree-building software package.

3. Begin your search with the census in 1851, as you or your family will probably know of at least one relative living at that time.

4. Use this information you can order birth, marriage or death certificates (£9.25 each) or follow the family back to earlier censuses.

5. Get help and advice from experts, such as from magazines, a local family history society or genealogy fair.

These tips are adapted from the Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine, which is filled with helpful tips and expert guidance on family research.

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk is a good place to start for Scottish genealogical records.

Jeremy Paxman discovered his great-great-grandfather and grandmother married and lived in Glasgow. He visited the Glasgow tenement where his great-great-grandmother had raised nine children.

Lisa Kudrow, best known for her role in Friends, is the co-executive producer of the American version of Who Do You Think You Are? which is being filmed with Glasgow University. After seeing the show in the UK, Lisa and her company got involved. Now in its fifth season, the American series will be coming to British TV screens in summer 2015.

www.glasgow.ac.uk/ancestraltourists

Friends

Before your appointment, archives staff can

www.glasgow.ac.uk/ancestraltourists
A bird’s-eye view

Natural habitats are changing at ever-faster rates. Can wildlife cope? And what can humans learn from their responses? A range of research projects at Glasgow exploring the effects of stress on birds in country and city environments is helping to uncover answers.

By Elizabeth Buie

Blood sampling is not only a potentially confounding stressful event in itself, but is also extremely difficult to achieve in many scenarios,” he says. The development of novel measurement techniques that are both non-invasive and have greater temporal resolution could potentially be of significant value.

Hot and bothered

The theory behind the use of thermal imaging to detect stress is that increases in core body temperature resulting from activation of the autonomic nervous system in response to stressors are accompanied by corresponding drops in surface temperature. These surface temperature fluctuations can be measured without physical contact, and at high frequencies, via infrared thermography.

The underlying purpose of Paul’s research – under the supervision of Dr Ruedi Nager – is to investigate whether human actions are affecting the ecology of the area and to find mitigation strategies.

It’s an aim shared by ecologist Dr Ross MacLeod, who is also studying the birds in the woodlands around SCENE. A specific focus is whether climate change is affecting wild blue-tits. Recent winters have been less cold but much stormier than expected, so he is investigating what effect – if any – the big storms of last winter have had on the birds. ‘If the wind starts blowing hard enough, birds can’t get out and feed; they huddle somewhere and use up their fat reserves. It’s good to be fat in these circumstances,’ he says.

Fat or fast?

The converse, however, is that if birds have too many fat reserves, they can’t take off as fast – and that leaves them vulnerable to predators. Starvation–predation risk tradeoff strategies and their links to population dynamics form part of Dr MacLeod’s research focus. To this end, he uses a model sparrowhawk to simulate risk without harm and manipulates feeding supplies in winter. As he measures how birds respond to changes in their food cycle or predator attacks, he hopes to gain greater insights into the implications for human responses to risks and environmental change.

Much of his research is focused on the 500 nesting-boxes around SCENE. These are shared by other researchers, who compare the behaviour of birds at SCENE with those in less natural habitats.

Hard life in the city

In the city of Glasgow, research assistant Dr Davide Dominoni is also focused on the inhabitants of nesting-boxes, which he studies along a connecting system of boxes reaching from SCENE into Kelvingrove Park, near the University’s main campus. His research follows studies into the biological rhythms of urban blackbirds compared to those living in a rural forest – research carried out in southern Germany in a collaborative project between the University of Glasgow and the Max Planck Institute for Ornithology in Germany.

Dr Barbara Helm, who is a specialist in biological time-keeping and supervises the latest programme in Glasgow, reports that although city life appears on the face of it to be attractive to the tits – they are coming in large numbers to the urban environment – they do not appear to be thriving.

‘The birds are having to work harder to raise their offspring and they have fewer chicks in their nests,’ she says. ‘This makes us wonder what factors make city life so tough. We are thinking about broadening our studies, for example to look at immune challenges and disease ecology.’

The poor life expectancy of Glaswegians living in socioeconomic deprivation is well documented: SCENE researchers now want to establish whether birds also have lower life expectancy in this large city.

If the wind starts blowing hard enough, birds can’t get out and feed; they huddle somewhere and use up their fat reserves.

It’s good to be fat in these circumstances.’

Dr Ross MacLeod, ecologist

www.glasgow.ac.uk/scene

Dr Davide Dominoni checks one of the research project’s nesting boxes on Kelvin Way.
Known for his adventures travelling through time and space keeping us safe from evil monsters, the Doctor is one of the world’s most loved aliens. Amid claims he studied at Glasgow, Avenue investigates whether the TV Time Lord is our most famous fictional alumnus.

By Lynne Maclagan

Avenue’s research into the time-travelling alien started with the biggest question elucidating Doctor Who enthusiasts, known as Whovians, since the series began over 50 years ago: Who is the Doctor?

His life appears to be a fast-paced riddle, filled with half-told stories and wildly exciting tales – such as that he was once married to Marilyn Monroe and he has studied at Glasgow. Over the years he has told conflicting stories about his doctorate, leaving Whovians questioning his qualifications. Then in the 2014 season finale, the Doctor’s companion, Clara Oswald, referred to his Glasgow degree.

While pretending to be the Doctor in an effort to save herself from an army of Cybermen, one of the planet’s deadliest enemies, in Death in Heaven, Clara said: ‘I don’t even really have a doctorate. Well Glasgow University, but then I accidentally graduated in the wrong century.’ Although this doesn’t fully solve the mystery of what he studied and when, it seems to confirm that he is a Glasgow graduate.

The current writer and producer of the series, Steven Moffat (MA 1993, DLitt 2013), is a Glasgow graduate. An enthusiastic fan of the show since childhood, Steven became head writer and executive producer in 2010 after several years writing for the show. It’s Steven who has been credited with the rise in success of Doctor Who.

When you delve a bit deeper you find he renounced claims to a degree, except a ‘purely honorary’ one, in the 1974–75 episode The Face of Boe. He also included Lister in his CV but dated the degree 1888, I think...Lister.

The Doctor has called himself a scientist as well as displaying great knowledge of the law. It seems he could simply be a Doctor of many things as he stated in Revenge of the Cybermen in 1975.

Several characters have called themselves scientists or Nobel laureates. The Doctor could have taken his classes in advanced mathematical physics as well as medical knowledge in The Trial of a Time Lord in 1986.

On several occasions, the Doctor has called himself a scientist as well as displaying great knowledge of the law. It seems he could simply be a Doctor of many things as he stated in Revenge of the Cybermen in 1975.

University archivist and Whovian, Lesley Richmond, has a theory.

‘There are a few problems with the Doctor’s Glasgow claims,’ says Lesley. ‘Lister wasn’t here in the 1880s. And, when you look at the different dates he says he was here – it doesn’t add up.

‘One of my theories is that he came to consult with some of the greatest scientific minds of the time, because he was developing the sonic screwdriver. Now, who better to assist than Lord Kelvin?’

The sonic screwdriver is one of the Doctor’s most sophisticated gadgets. It allows him to unlock anything and remotely control other devices. Lord Kelvin was Professor of Natural Philosophy from 1846 to 1899, which means the Doctor could have taken his classes in advanced mathematical physics as well as medical knowledge at the University.

Lord Kelvin could be one of many professors that the Doctor studied under. Clara’s recent revelations imply that the Doctor took a flexible approach to his studies. Being over 2,000 years old, spending his life jumping between civilizations to save the world, this is not surprising. He says he got a degree from the University of Glasgow, perhaps we have to take him at his word.

Doctor, who are you? This, it seems, is a question that no one, not even a Whovian, is destined to find the answer to.

Uncovered evidence: University archivists found an intriguing matriculation record which supports claims that the Doctor studied at the University.

The Doctor’s sonic time-machine, the TARDIS (Time And Relative Dimension In Space), can be seen around the city of Glasgow cleverly disguised as a Police Box – one as close as the Botanic Gardens. And a brief sighting has been mysteriously photographed on campus.

As well as the Doctor, the University has several other well-known fictional alumni, many of whom are the creation of our very own graduates.

Simon Darcourt, A Big Boy Did It and Ran Away, by Christopher Brookmyre (2003)

Several characters in A Big Boy Did It and Ran Away are alumni, including the dastardly Simon Darcourt. Christopher (MA 1989, DLitt 2013) brings back his villain in A Snowball in Hell. In Christopher’s world of crime, the University features as a thinly disguised version of itself, as Kelvin University, which appears in Attack of the Unstoppable Rubber Ducks. Read more about Christopher’s career on page 19.

Charlie Grant, Remedy is None, by William McNiven (1986)

Charlie Grant is an English literature undergraduate who drops out of university after his father’s death. The novel opens with Grant listening to an unsatisfying lecture on Romes and Juliet. William (MA 1989) studied English Language and Literature at the University.

Dr Murray Watson, Naming the Bones, by Louise Welsh (2010)

Dr Watson is an English literature lecturer on sabbatical to research the life of dead poet Archie Lusan who he becomes embroiled in as a whodunnit. History alumnus Louise Welsh (MA 1990) was Writer in Residence for the University and Glasgow School of Art from November 2010 until April 2012.

Help us grow this list. We’d love to hear from you if you know of any other fictional alumni, students or staff.

For our list so far, see www.glasgow.ac.uk/avenue.
Aged 15 Amal Azzudin and friends took a stand against the immigration authorities’ treatment of an asylum seeker friend. Their brave story has since been adapted for stage and TV. Lisa Drysdale talks with the ‘Glasgow girl’ to find out what’s next for her.

When friend and fellow Drumchapel High School pupil Agnesa Murselaj was removed from her home in a dawn raid along with her family, Amal and six of her classmates set their sights on her release.

As Roma from Kosovo, Agnesa and her family had come to Scotland five years previously to seek asylum; now they found themselves locked in a detention centre, threatened with deportation.

What began as a simple petition intensified into a fortnight campaign to lobby the Home Office for the family’s release, and for more humane treatment of asylum seekers. Press and TV coverage won the Glasgow girls support from the community, and the group eventually found themselves confronting the then First Minister Jack McConnell face to face. All their efforts paid off: the girls got their friend (and her family) back three weeks later.

The story has since inspired a National Theatre of Scotland production and a BBC Three musical drama.

Amal is originally from Somalia and had herself received leave to remain in the UK just the year before the incident involving her friend. There is no doubt that her campaigning experience as a 15-year-old set Amal on her current career path. After first going to college, where she worked in communities, Amal entered the second year of the BA in Community Development at Glasgow.

‘I love working with people, and I love making a difference – that’s what I’m most passionate about – so it was the perfect course for me,’ says Amal.

Amal graduated in 2011 and a few months later was offered a community development role at the Mental Health Foundation, raising awareness of mental health and wellbeing among refugee women.

She has continued to work in the role that she loves even after returning to the University in 2013 to study for a Masters in Human Rights & International Politics.

Somehow Amal has also managed to find time to juggle a hectic schedule of speaking engagements, advocating for peace in Gaza among other causes.

‘I’m very interested in the whole asylum system and how that works, and I think that’s what I want to do now,’ Amal says. ‘But eventually I hope to have my own charity and help everyone, not just asylum seekers.’

Christopher Brookmyre was awarded Young Alumnus of the Year 2005 in recognition of his tremendous success. As well as being a huge honour, Christopher says that his experience of winning the title fed directly into his writing; he set his next book, Attack of the Unsinkable Rubber Ducks, around a fictionalised University of Glasgow.

Christopher remembers when novelists appeared to him to occupy the same realm as rock stars – becoming a novelist felt like an unrealistic aspiration. So he got himself a job.

Dedicating months at a time to novel writing, Christopher encountered as a student – all of the experiences, incidents and characters have represented a looming presence in his work, and the act of writing has resurfaced many of the experiences, incidents and characters Christopher encountered as a student – all of which he describes as ‘fuel’.

‘Writing is sometimes like trying to solve the world’s most complex equation,’ he says. ‘It is very daunting. Yet, when you do solve a bit of it, you feel really elated for a moment – until you realise that the bit you solved has just revealed another completely unknown bit that is even bigger than you had anticipated. ’

Christopher devised the concept and storyline, wrote the script and was hands-on in almost every technical aspect.

Christopher Brookmyre: MA 1989, DLitt 2013
Current position: Author of 18 novels, the latest of which is Flesh Wounds

In the ten years since Christopher Brookmyre was awarded Young Alumnus of the Year, he has published a new novel nearly every year, and has a video game in production and a TV adaptation in the pipeline.

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Christopher Brookmyre was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters in 2013.
Notes from No 2

Glasgow was buzzing with energy in the summer of 2014 with all the excitement of the Commonwealth Games. There was a surge in visitors to the city, and we offered visitors and alumni the chance to visit our beautiful campus by putting on many cultural events from music to 4km to sport.

Back in June, 150 people turned out for one of our Commonwealth Games warm-up events, a pop-up cinema screening of Chances of Fire in the West Quadrangle (pictured below). We were extremely lucky with the weather: not a drop of rain appeared during the outdoor screening. These kinds of events open up the University not only to our alumni, but also to the local community. Our West End campus is set to become an even deeper part of the community with the expansion of our grounds into the Western Infrmary site. You can read a little more about this in the Principal’s report on page 28.

If you’re interested in connecting one step further, you can get involved with projects like Glasgow Careers Alumni Network which help boost the employability of the next generation of graduates. By sharing your career experiences with current and prospective students, you’re giving insight to help prepare them for their careers ahead.

There are many simple ways to be involved, from filling out a career profile to talking at an event. Or you can sign up for our new alumni-student e-mentoring programme Ask Our Alumni. See www.glasgow.ac.uk/glasgowcareeralumninetwork.

Queen’s Birthday Honours 2014

CBE

Mr Alastair Buchan (MA 1985) received a CBE for services to Local Government

Mr Richard J Coakley (BSc 1975) received a CBE for services to Civil Engineering

Dr Francis G Dunn (MBChB 1976) received a CBE for services to Cardiology and the community in Glasgow

Ms Kathleen Mainland (MA 1990) received a CBE for services to Culture in Scotland

Professor Chris Packard FRSE (BSc 1974, PhD, DSc) received a CBE for services to Clinical Science

OBE

Dr Hilary Dobson (MBChB 1979) received an OBE for services to the Detection of Breast Cancer

Professor Julie Fitzpatrick (BVMS 1982, PhD) received an OBE for services to Animal Health and Science

Mr Robert Mairs Houston (BVMS 1982, PhD) received an OBE for services to Veterinary Science in Northern Ireland

MBE

Professor Colin McNees (BSc 1988, PhD, DSc) received an MBE for services to Space Research, Science and Technology

Microbiologist receives prestigious honour

Stephen Hajduk (PhD 1981) has been elected as a 2014 Academy Fellow to the American Academy for Microbiology (AAM). This prestigious honour recognises those who have made significant contributions to the field of microbiology. Dr Hajduk’s laboratory is mainly interested in the molecular biology and biochemistry of trypanosomes, the causative agent in sleeping sickness in humans. Their studies work to gain better insight into the basic biology of these organisms and to explore new approaches for combating the disease.

Japanese TV show based on life of alumnus

Steven Moffat wins Emmy for best writer

Glasgow graduate and television producer and writer Steven Moffat (MA 1983, DLitt 2013) picked up an Emmy in August 2014 for ‘outstanding writing in a mini-series, movie or dramatic special’.

The prestigious American television award was given for the Sherlock episode His Final Vow, which drew nine million viewers when it was screened in the UK in January 2014.

Moffat, who is also the executive producer of Doctor Who, adds his Emmy to the Special Award he received at the BAFTAs in 2012.

He was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters (DLitt) in 2013 by the University, and has noted the influence Glasgow University Student Television (GUST) had on his early career.

Steven Moffat

Mclvanney is New Zealand’s king of crime

Alumnus Liam McIlvanney (MA 1990) won New Zealand’s prestigious Ngaiaroa Marsh Award for Best Crime Novel 2014.

Liam, who is Professor of Scottish Studies at the University of Otago, is also the son of Scottish novelist and poet William McIlvanney (MA 1959). Where the Dead Men Go, his second novel, is set in Glasgow and impressed judges with its page-turning storytelling powered by superb prose.

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New London alumni association
Summer 2014
The Glasgow University London Alumni (GUILA) Association has been formed this year by alumnus Gavin Macfarlane (MA 1998, MSc 2000) working alongside former classmates, colleagues and the Development & Alumni Office to bring alumni and University friends based in London together in a social context. Three informal networking receptions took place over the summer, with attendance doubling at each event, and quarterly events are scheduled to continue. Please contact the Development & Alumni Office if you would like to be informed of future GUILA gatherings in London, email alumni@glasgow.ac.uk.

1965 Chemistry
August 2015
A reunion is being organised to celebrate 50 years since graduation. Get in touch if you would like to attend or for more information.
Contact: Pat Gallagher (von Brederode), email pavanBrederode@hotmail.com, and Maureen Miller (Lang), email maureen.lang1@gmail.com, or call +44 (0)334 669065.

1965 Engineering
2015
2015 will mark our 50th anniversary. We celebrated well-attended, happy reunions to mark our 25th and 30th anniversaries and a small meeting on our 35th. Let's meet again for our Golden Jubilee. Please send expressions of interest and offers of assistance to the organising committee.
Contact: John Loughran, johnmloughran@gmail.com, or call +44 (0)1785 254189.

1967 Modern Languages
Christine Braderbo (MacKinnon) would like to reunite with classmates from the 1967 graduating classes of Modern Languages.
Contact: email cgbraerboer@gmail.com, or call +44 (0)1785 254189.

1984 Geography
March or April 2015
Stuart Cameron is hoping to organise a class reunion for the Honours Geography class of 1984 in Glasgow.
Contact: Stuart Cameron, email scameron@bintnet.com.

1984 Geography
2015
A few from the 1984 Geography class are hoping to organise a reunion in 2015. If you would like to be kept informed of plans, please contact the Development & Alumni Office.
Contact: email alumni@glasgow.ac.uk.

1984 BDS
Mike Barrat is hoping to organise a reunion of the BDS class who graduated in July 1984, along with those who were in the class at any point of their studies.
Contact: Mike Barret, email 1mkeb@hotmail.net, or call +44 (0)1779 338905.

1984 Chemistry
August 2015
A 40th anniversary reunion for students who matriculated into the 1975 law class. Please get in touch if you would like to attend.
Contact: email j.m1975lawclassreunion@bintnet.com, or write to Dr Duncan B. Ross, 18B Abbey, AB34 8BY.

1975 Geology
June/July 2015
It is proposed to hold a reunion 40 years on from the last Honours Geology class to graduate back in 1975. We have tracked down all but one of the classmates. If you know the whereabouts of Dave Walker, please contact Allan Jack, email allanjack@gmail.com.

1980 Law
Autumn 2015
A 30th anniversary reunion for graduates of 1980.
Contact: email law1980reunion@bintnet.com, or write to Dr Duncan B. Ross, 18B Abbey, AB34 8BY.

1981 Business
March 2015
Two further informal networking sessions are planned for 2015; one to be held in London and the other in Glasgow. If you would like to be informed of the dates please contact the Development & Alumni Office.
Contact: email alumni@glasgow.ac.uk.

1982 Medicine
A reunion is proposed for Summer 2015.
Contact: Dr Brian Pringle, brian.pringle@btinternet.com.

1983 Modern Languages
June 2015
A reunion is planned for Summer 2015.
Contact: email e.cullen@katherine-cullen1@gmail.com.

1984 Medicine
June 2015
A 30th anniversary reunion for graduates of 1984.
Contact: email katherine-cullen1@gmail.com.

1985 Chemistry
August 2015
A 30th anniversary reunion for students who matriculated into the 1985 Chemistry class.
Contact: email katherine-cullen1@gmail.com.

1985 Engineering
September 2015
A 30th anniversary reunion for students who matriculated into the 1985 Engineering class.
Contact: email katherine-cullen1@gmail.com.

1986 Business
A 30th anniversary reunion for graduates of 1986.
Contact: email katherine-cullen1@gmail.com.

1987 Dental Surgery
July 2015
A reunion is planned for Summer 2015.
Contact: email katherine-cullen1@gmail.com.

1988 Engineering
A 30th anniversary reunion for graduates of 1988.
Contact: email katherine-cullen1@gmail.com.

1989 Dentistry
July 2015
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Contact: email katherine-cullen1@gmail.com.

1989 Medicine
August 2015
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1995 Biomedical Science
August 2015
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1949 Chemistry class
The 1949 Chemistry class must be one of the oldest groups still meeting. Despite advancing years, we celebrated the 60th anniversary of our graduation in the Royal Scots Club in Edinburgh in June. We managed to meet again in Southampton in October to celebrate the Diamond Wedding of one of our members. All being well, our 65th anniversary lunch will be in Glasgow in July 2015 and we would love to hear from any others from our year, whether they are able to attend or not. Contact the Development & Alumni Office, email alumni@glasgow.ac.uk, or email dcm703@isy.com.

1953–59 Gamma Medical Club
Our 55th reunion was held in the Marriott Hotel, Glasgow, from 4 to 7 September 2014. Outings to the Trossachs, a sail on Loch Lomond and a conducted tour of the city of Glasgow were popular items in the programme. Forty attended the banquet and requested a further reunion in two to three years’ time. Please keep us up to date with your email and home addresses. Any queries should be directed to Lady Marjory Macsween, email marjorymacsween@googlemail.com or Dr John Kennedy, email jphkennedy01@ascot.com.

1958–1964 Gamma Club
Forty-nine club members, some of whom had travelled from Australia, Canada, Norway and the USA, and 33 partners attended the class 50th anniversary reunion at Cameron House on Loch Lomond from 10 to 13 June 2014. Our first day was spent in Glasgow, where we were welcomed to the BHF Glasgow Cardiovascular Research Centre in the University by Professor Andrew Baker. He told us of the changes to the undergraduate curriculum and this was followed by a guided tour of various research projects there. After a buffet lunch in the Senate Room, we visited the Riverside Museum. Day two consisted of a seminar in the Senate Room for lunch on Wednesday afternoon and formal dinner in the evening. The Mathematics & Natural Philosophy class of 1964 held its golden anniversary reunion on Saturday 12 April 2014 at Arta, Glasgow. We had students from various parts of the globe, the largest contingent coming from Canada. The afternoon was spent catching up with old friends and a slide show of old photographs depicting student days in the ‘swinging sixties’.

1964 Honours History
A 50th anniversary reunion lunch was held at the Hilton Hotel in Glasgow the day after the Scottish Referendum. Eleven members of the 1964 class (plus four of their partners) exchanged anecdotes and the stories of their lives since their first year at the University. The celebration began with toasts of champagne supplied by one of the group, who had travelled from Australia. And members from England joined those colleagues who had continued their careers in Scotland.

1964 Mathematics & Natural Philosophy
The Mathematics & Natural Philosophy class of 1964 held its golden anniversary reunion on 17 and 18 June 2014 in conjunction with the University’s Commemoration Day. There were 24 attendances from an initial class group of 72, with ten spouses or partners accompanying. A lunch in Gough A. S. Russell was followed by an interesting visit to the School of Physics & Astronomy in the afternoon, then a reunion dinner in the evening in the Braidie Suite in the University Union. The next day many of us attended the Commemoration Day events at the University and a lunch in the Hunter Halls.

1965 Delta Club
A lunch to celebrate the 60th anniversary of our club was held on 29 August at House for an Art Lover in Bellahouston Park. Thirty-one of our club was held on 29 August at House for an Art Lover in Bellahouston Park. Thirty-one club members, some of whom had travelled from Australia. And members from England joined those colleagues who had continued their careers in Scotland.

1964 Honours History
In April, to celebrate our 40-year reunion, 125 Gamma Club members and partners gathered at the Old Course Hotel, St Andrews. Friday was a day for meeting up and an evening buffet and fun quiz. On Saturday, the traditional golf competition was held, the non-golfers enjoying further opportunities to explore the attractions of St Andrews. The highlight of the weekend – a celebratory dinner and champagne reception – took place on Saturday evening. Thereafter we dined to the music of Chittery Bites Ceilidh Band. A further reunion will be held in five years’ time.

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A 50th anniversary reunion lunch was held at the Hilton Hotel in Glasgow the day after the Scottish Referendum. Eleven members of the 1964 class (plus four of their partners) exchanged anecdotes and the stories of their lives since their first year at the University. The celebration began with toasts of champagne supplied by one of the group, who had travelled from Australia. And members from England joined those colleagues who had continued their careers in Scotland.

1964 Mathematics & Natural Philosophy
The Mathematics & Natural Philosophy class of 1964 held its golden anniversary reunion on 17 and 18 June 2014 in conjunction with the University’s Commemoration Day. There were 24 attendances from an initial class group of 72, with ten spouses or partners accompanying. A lunch in Gough A. S. Russell was followed by an interesting visit to the School of Physics & Astronomy in the afternoon, then a reunion dinner in the evening in the Braidie Suite in the University Union. The next day many of us attended the Commemoration Day events at the University and a lunch in the Hunter Halls.

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1974 Electrical Engineering & Electronics
A reunion was held on the weekend of 19 to 20 September 2014. On Friday, ten of the class visited the Ranelike Building for a tour of the company of Bill Monaghan and Scott Roy. On Saturday, 16 attended a lunch in the Turnbull Room. We set up a Skype call with Raj Shukla in Australia. Raj and Frank McVerry (in USA) had been in Scotland earlier in the summer and the informal mini-reunions had taken place. We had an excellent buffet and a three-minute speech on what we had been doing for the last 40 years. Afterwards a group of us adjourned to the Bar for a refreshment.

1964 Notre Dame
Seventy-two graduates of Notre Dame College of Education, Downton Hill, were reunited on Thursday 28 August 2014 to commemorate the golden jubilee of their graduation. The festivities began with a Mass of Thanksgiving in the Memorial Chapel celebrated by the Most Rev Mario J Conti, Archbishop Emeritus of Glasgow. This was followed by a reception and buffet lunch in the Randolph Hall. Many had travelled from various parts of the globe, the largest contingent coming from Canada. The afternoon was spent catching up with old friends and a slide show of old photographs depicting student days in the ‘swinging sixties’.

1986 Geography
The class of 86 had a fantastic reunion on Saturday 12 July. Starting with drinks in the Gregory Building was a real treat as we hadn’t been in the building and lecture theatre in 20 years. Dinner in the Melville Room was excellent. The meal was superb and the staff and service were fantastic. Nothing was too much trouble. Thanks to everyone who helped make the reunion happen...a great success.

1994 Geology
The class of 94 had a fantastic reunion on Saturday 12 July. Starting with drinks in the Gregory Building was a real treat as we hadn’t been in the building and lecture theatre in 20 years. Dinner in the Melville Room was excellent. The meal was superb and the staff and service were fantastic. Nothing was too much trouble. Thanks to everyone who helped make the reunion happen...a great success.

2004 BDS class
The ten-year reunion was celebrated on Saturday 12 April 2014 at Arta, Glasgow. Students graduating from the Rousso University of Limassol in Cyprus attended the reunion. The Rousso University of Limassol is a well respected medical school in Cyprus. The reunion was a huge success and we hope to repeat it in the future.
The General Council

The General Council of the University was set up by Act of Parliament to give voice to the views of the graduates and academic staff on the regulation and wellbeing of the University.

A report prepared for the General Council by Amber Higgins, clerk to the General Council: clerkgc@glasgow.ac.uk

The last General Council meeting was held on Saturday, 19 July 2014 in the Sir Charles Wilson Lecture Theatre on the University’s Gilmorehill Campus. The Chancellor, Professor Sir Kenneth Calman, was in the chair. This article contains an abbreviated description of the business of the meeting. A full minute can be found at www.glasgow.ac.uk/gc/remarpt

Election of General Council Assessors to the University Court

The Chancellor thanked the outgoing Assessors Alan MacFarlane and Kevin Sweeney for all their hard work over the last four years on the University Court.

Report of the Business Committee Convenor, Mr George Tait

General Council Ancient Universities meetings: It was reported that a positive meeting had taken place with the four ancient universities in Scotland in March 2014. These meetings were an invaluable opportunity to share information and experiences.

Business Committee matters: Since the last report in January, the Business Committee has focused a significant amount of time on the Court’s proposal to reduce the number of General Council Assessors from five to two due to changes to the composition of Court as part of the process of complying with the new Code of Higher Education Governance. The Business Committee voted not to support the ordinance. The ordinance had been submitted to the Prvyc Council but had been withdrawn at the last minute, which had led to the election of the two General Council Assessors to the University Court.

College of Arts: Professor Murray Pittock, Vice-Principal and Head of College of Arts, briefed the committee on the college’s progress and how they planned to move forward.

Principal’s Report, by Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Anton Muscatelli

Strategy: The Principal outlined that the Glasgow 2020 strategy had been implemented for four years and would be reviewed over the coming year to ensure that all Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) would be met. The Principal noted that this had been an ambitious strategy but that a number of the targets had been met and that there was good progress towards achieving all of the KPIs set out in Glasgow 2020.

Student experience: The Principal reported that the University had received a positive result in the Enhancement-led Institutional Review. It was also reported that student surveys had shown a significant improvement over the last ten years and this year the University had continued to move up a number of the tables.

Quality of research & knowledge exchange: The Principal reported that tremendous progress had been made over the last five years and the University was now receiving record levels of research income – £210m last year.

Campus redevelopment: The Principal explained that the University was moving forward with the estates strategy in light of the expansion to the Western Infirmary site and that this was an exciting opportunity for the University to shape the campus for future generations. The University was working closely with Glasgow City Council, which had recently approved the campus development framework.

Support of friends and alumni: The University could not have achieved its current position without the support and help of donors and supporters. It is very grateful and hopes that this support will continue, as the University develops its ambitious plans for the future.

Q&A: In answer to questions. The Principal noted that at present no architects had been appointed for the campus redevelopment and that each building design would be subject to an open tender process. It was also noted that an open letter from the SRC had been received by the University senior management regarding the under-provision of facilities for the number of students on campus. The Principal reported that measures would be put in place to ensure that students did have access to all the facilities on campus and that the University was looking to invest in a priority in learning and teaching space.

The Chancellor responded to a number of questions about the ordinance to change the University Court membership and thereby reduce the number of General Council Assessors from five to two. Considerable opposition to the proposed reduction in the number of General Council Assessors was expressed. It was noted that the University had undertaken the full consultation process as outlined by the Prvyc Council and that the General Council Business Committee would continue to be kept informed and consulted about any changes to the University Court membership.

Closure of the Meeting

The Chancellor thanked all those present and informed the meeting that the next meeting would take place on Saturday 31 January 2015 in the Kelvin Gallery at 11am.

Convenor’s Comments

From George Tait, Convenor of the General Council Business Committee.

As my four-year term as Convenor of the General Council Business Committee comes to an end in January, I look back on my time as Convenor and see the results of our efforts to make our meetings more productive, purposeful and interesting.

To give you a bit of insight into what we get up to, during my time at the helm the Business Committee has:

• become more engaged with the activities of the University, raising issues with management, such as zero-hours contracts, MyCampus problems, e-learning developments and ongoing student concerns relating to over-recruitment. The Business Committee hopes to have news of progress in the area of equality and diversity in the near future;

• broadened our membership base and encouraged wider committee participation via Avenue magazine;

• become better and more speedily informed about Court matters affecting the wellbeing and prosperity of the University;

• taken a keen interest in the campus development plans and the acquisition of the Western Infirmary site;

• revamped the half-yearly General Council meetings so that a variety of campus venues are now used, introduced live-streaming of the event and posting of the recording on www.glasgow.ac.uk and added a post-meeting University presentation – attendance is up and many more questions are being asked;

• started email communication with General Council members;

• voiced opposition to the proposed restructuring of Court, involving a substantial reduction in the number of General Council Assessors on Court from five to two. At the same time the Committee ensured that the election of two new General Council Assessors proceeded as normal;

• opened up the election of General Council Assessors to the wider body of General Council members. In July 2014 there were 15 well-qualified candidates for two vacancies among the five Assessors, resulting in over 1,900 votes being cast in the election of Morag Macdonald Simpson and Lesley Sutherland;

• extended the length of our regular meetings by half an hour to accommodate the presentations given by staff from the four University Colleges; and

• invited University management to share with us selected topical issues, enabling the Business Committee to better understand the competitive challenges facing the University.

As you can see, we have an opportunity to express our views on how the University is progressing, and we also enjoy the chance to meet in different parts of the campus.

Are you interested in joining us? We have vacancies coming up in January and July 2015, and would be delighted to hear from you. Please email clerkgc@glasgow.ac.uk

The last General Council meeting was held on Saturday, 19 July 2014 in the Sir Charles Wilson Lecture Theatre on the University’s Gilmorehill Campus. The Chancellor, Professor Sir Kenneth Calman, was in the chair. This article contains an abbreviated description of the business of the meeting. A full minute can be found at www.glasgow.ac.uk/gc/remarpt

Election of General Council Assessors to the University Court

Following the nominations and election process, the Chancellor announced that two members of the General Council had been elected to serve on the University Court: Dr Morag Macdonald Simpson (LLB 1968) and Lesley Sutherland (MA 1973).
In this year's QS World University Rankings, we were ranked equal 55th, and in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings we rose from 117th last year to 94th this year, making it the first year we have appeared in the top 100 universities in both the QS and the THE tables.

Principal Anton Muscatelli

What's on at The Hunterian

Current exhibitions
Ingenious Impressions: The Coming of the Book
27 February to 21 June 2015 Hunterian Art Gallery (Admission Free)
This exhibition charts the development of the early printed book in Europe and explores the transition from manuscript to print and its impact on late medieval society. As an ‘ancient’ university established in the late Middle Ages, the University of Glasgow holds one of the UK’s most important collections of early printed books. The University’s collection is the largest in Scotland and over half comes from the collection of Hunterian founder Dr William Hunter.

Duncan Shanks Sketchbooks
14 March to 16 August 2015
Hunterian Art Gallery (Admission Free)
Leading Scottish landscape painter Duncan Shanks recently made a major gift to The Hunterian of his entire output of sketchbooks from the past 45 years. This important addition to our collection of Scottish landscape art has been catalogued, photographed and conserved and a selection forms this special focus display.

Coming soon
Cradle of Scotland
3 September 2015 to 3 January 2016
Hunterian Art Gallery (Admission Free)
An exhibition that reveals the dramatic discoveries made by the University’s Centre for Expertise in Geosciences & Environment (CEG) project and combines these original artefacts with replicas and visualisations, creating an exhibition that explores the archaeological history of Scotland.

National and international loans
You can enjoy our collections throughout the world, through The Hunterian’s national and international loans programme.

Japan: Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama
December 2014 to 1 March 2015
James McNeill Whistler: Retrospective
On loan: 70 works including Battersea Reach from Lindsey Houses and Red and Black: The Fan

17 October 2014 to 12 April 2015
Sherlock Holmes: the man who never lived and will never die
On loan: ten Whistler prints of London scenes

UK: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
4 December 2014 to 1 March 2015
William Blake: Apprentice and Master
On loan: 24 prints by William Blake, including 17 from the set of Thornton’s Pastoral of Virgil

UK: Wallace Collection, London
12 March to 7 June 2015
Sir Joshua Reynolds: Experiment in Paint
On loan: Nelly O’Brien by Sir Joshua Reynolds

USA: Anchorage Museum, Alaska
27 March to 7 September 2015
Arctic Ambitions: Captain Cook and the Royal Arctic Library
On loan: ten Native American/First Nations artefacts collected on Cook’s voyages

About The Hunterian
The Hunterian is one of the leading university museums in the UK and one of Scotland’s most important cultural assets. Founded in 1807, it is the country’s oldest public museum and home to one of the largest collections outside the National Museums.

Opening times
Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 5pm
Sunday 11am to 4pm

Free admission to the Museum and Art Gallery. Admission charges for The Mackintosh House. Admission charge to University of Glasgow staff and students with valid staff/student cards.

The Hunterian, University of Glasgow
Glasgow, G12 8QQ
Tel: +44 (0) 141 333 4221

For updates on programmes and events, see www.glasgow.ac.uk/hunterian

What’s on at The Hunterian

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Principal Anton Muscatelli

The General Council Paper A: Report by the Principal

All organisations seek to identify their unique selling point, their USP. Teaching & learning, research & knowledge exchange, internationalisation, and widening access have been core to the University’s strategy in the last five years, Glasgow 2020: Global Vision. They are important areas that the elite Russell Group of universities can and do sign up to; they are common to their strategies too. But I would want to suggest that while some might be strong in two or three of these areas, few if any perform as well as Glasgow does across all four. This is Glasgow’s USP.

In this report, I want to focus on two elements of our USP in particular.

First, learning & teaching and the student experience. In my last report we were waiting for the outcome of the Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR). ELIR is an external review and looks at the quality of academic standards and the student learning experience. We were delighted to receive the highest possible rating. The quality of the learning environment coupled with the quality of our campus life is also reflected in the most recent National Student Survey. We achieved our highest ever result. Over 91% of students were satisfied with the quality of their course, an increase of 2% on last year’s survey.

This puts the University in the Russell Group, second outright in Scotland, and well above the sector average rates for UK universities of 86% and Scottish sector average of 87%; a great outcome.

Second, research. There’s no question that the creation of the college structure and development of seven research institutes, as well and a range of centres has strengthened our research portfolio. We have the highest ever research order book and the highest level of income per academic, moving us, in just under ten years, from 17th to 7th in the Russell Group, a growth of 71%. Over the same period, we have increased our PhD student population by 70%, moving us from 24th to 7th again in the Russell Group.

Our success in delivering across our strategy is reflected in two key league tables. In this year’s QS World University Rankings, the University was ranked equal 55th, and in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings we rose from 117th last year to 94th this year, making it the first year we have appeared in the top 100 universities in both the QS and the THE tables.

In addition, along with five other institutions, the University has been shortlisted for the THE University of the Year award for 2014 and shortlisted in three other categories: Outstanding Support for Early Career Researchers; International Collaboration of the Year; and Outstanding Contribution to Innovation and Technology.

We are now in the process of developing our new strategy for 2015–20, and several key themes, which will underpin it, are aimed at building on all these successes. The University will continue to be a place which attracts people who will go on to change the world. We will aim to continue to attract, develop and retain excellent staff. We will seek to maintain a balanced growth in student numbers, ensuring that we manage ‘staff to student’ ratios. We will seek to grow our research reputation still further through interdisciplinarity, activity and we will commit to improving our service culture. We will continue to be an elite university that is not elitist and which currently attracts 28% of our students from less advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds.

Beyond buildings
In addition, a key part of our strategy will be our campus development plan as featured in this edition of Avenue. As we prepare to take possession of the 14-acre West End site in 2015–16, the process towards establishing our plans has been progressing at pace. Following a period of wide consultation, Glasgow City Council’s approval for the Campus Development Framework, and Court’s approval in October, a broad strategic framework for the redevelopment is in place. Alongside this is a set of business cases produced by, and relating to, each of the colleges and University services, and as proposals for a research hub which will focus on our major interdisciplinarity across all four colleges. We also want to find ways to bring the schools within our Colleges of Arts and Social Sciences, currently spread across multiple sites, closer together to maximise the creative enterprise and connectivity we can produce. We want to enhance the infrastructure available to the physical and biomedical sciences and engineering to ensure that we are competitive with the very best universities around priority areas for global science.

While big and detailed decisions have still to be taken, one important one is already in place. We have agreed to develop the plans for a Teaching & Learning hub, providing a state-of-the-art learning and social space. This decision not only confirms our commitment to providing a quality student experience but lays down a marker for things to come as we embark on the full campus plan.

These are exciting times and I know that as our plans crystallise over the coming months, we are determined to ensure that the decisions we take now will all work to one goal: the creation of a University which has a growing global reputation but which is embedded in its local community and the North West of Scotland.

This next decade of transformation for our University will rely on a similar community of support that made our game-changing move to Gilmorehill in 1870 possible! I hope you will join me as we set about transforming the University to make it one of the best universities around priority areas for global science.

1. Duncan Shanks, Sketchbook 78, 2864–1871
2. James McNeill Whistler
Battersea Reach from Lindsey Houses, c. 1864–1871.

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