

c n t a c t



The magazine of the University of Dundee • February 11



A journey of rediscovery

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Front cover image of Lobster Fishers: Machrihanish Bay by William McTaggart (University of Dundee collections)

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from the principal...

One of my first duties in 2011, and a very pleasant one at that, was to address the latest cohort of new students. As this column went to press, it looked as if we would be welcoming well over 200 new postgraduate students into the University fold. This is a great result, particularly in the current challenging climate.

Because of the difficulties many overseas students face in acquiring visas, on many courses the University accepts new students up to the end of January. On one level, flexibility like this might seem a good thing, but actually it highlights the problems the higher education sector faces in attracting international students; and with immigration warnings coming out of Government on a regular basis, the outlook for the future is worryingly uncertain. At a time of economic difficulty such as now, universities have to look to other income streams to help plug the public funding gap, but if UK immigration rules put off or even prevent overseas students coming, this economic safety valve is hobbled. This is all the more difficult to swallow given our excellent performance in the national student survey and the international student barometer. We are all working hard to provide the first-rate experience that will attract gifted overseas students, but these efforts are being dashed by crude national policies. And we mustn't forget that changes to immigration affect our ability to recruit the best overseas academics and researchers, too; and that can damage our reputation. Be assured that this issue is one which the Scottish Principals are doing their best to influence.

Just before Christmas, the Scottish Government launched its higher education green paper 'Building a Smarter Future'. Whilst we should welcome the opportunity to contribute to a consultation on the future direction and structure of the Scottish university sector, I have to say that the paper, billed as heralding the development of a Scottish Solution, is somewhat disappointing. It does not, as many had hoped, provide specific proposals for a solution to the current funding crisis and the possible funding gap (estimated by Universities Scotland to be in excess of £600m) with England, but instead invites comment on a range of funding options, namely:

- State retains the prime responsibility
- State retains the prime responsibility but requires some form of graduate contribution
- Increasing income from cross border flows of students
- Increasing donations and philanthropic giving
- Increasing support from business
- Increasing efficiency

If we are honest, these aren't really options for funding, and aside from the first two, they do not offer a means to secure stability in the long term. In my last column I voiced my support for a graduate contribution that ensures education is free at the point of entry, but there is nothing in the green paper which unpacks how such a system might work. The final four 'options' are in fact just the kind of activity that any well-run, entrepreneurial and conscientious University is already fully committed to, and none of them can provide a secure alternative means of funding. It seems we have some way to go before universities in Scotland will have the kind of longer term planning security that the outcomes of the Browne review, whether you like them or not, have had in England. And in Scotland of course we have the added complication of Holyrood elections. Just as with immigration above, this is an issue that I, and my colleagues at the other Scottish universities, are fully engaged in and over the coming months we will be exerting as much influence as possible with our political masters.

Professor Peter Downes • Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Two better than one finds blood pressure study



A new study by a team of UK researchers, including staff at the University's School of Medicine, has shown that starting treatment of blood pressure with two medicines rather than one produces better and faster results and fewer side effects.

The study, published in the Lancet, challenges popular medical practice for the treatment of high blood pressure. The research was led by Cambridge in collaboration with staff at Dundee and the University of Glasgow and the British Hypertension Society.

Doctors usually start treatment with one medicine and then add others over a period of months, if needed, to control blood pressure. This study shows that it is best to start treatment with two medicines together at the same time.

The two medicines can be incorporated into a single pill, simplifying things for patients who will still only have to take one pill. But by including two medicines in the same pill, they are taking a much more effective medicine with fewer side effects.

There are currently almost 10 million people in the UK with high blood pressure and effective treatment is known to substantially reduce the risk of stroke and heart disease.

The investigators believe these important findings could change clinical practice and affect the future treatment of blood pressure for millions of people in the UK.

Professor Tom MacDonald, from the University's School of Medicine said, "The research is a great result for patients with high blood pressure. Starting with two medicines is clearly better than starting with one and amazingly there were fewer side effects and not more."

The ACCELERATE study showed that patients who start treatment with a single tablet containing a combination of drugs will have a 25% better response during the first six months of treatment than patients receiving conventional treatment, and - remarkably - are less likely to stop treatment because of side effects.

The authors suspected that conventional treatment allows the body to partially neutralise each drug, and ACCELERATE was designed to show that the new treatment programme prevents this neutralisation from happening.

The study was designed by The British Hypertension Society, who entered a unique partnership with Novartis in order for the treatment programme to be simultaneously tested in ten countries on four continents.

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Professor Cameron gives Royal advice



The expertise in global energy issues at the University's Centre for Energy, Petroleum and Mineral Law and Policy has been tapped into by the Duke of York, the UK's Special Representative for International Trade and Investment.

Professor Peter Cameron, Director of CEPMLP, was invited to give the Duke a personal briefing last month on production sharing agreements, which are a commonplace arrangement between sovereign states and mineral extraction companies.

However, they have also been a source of serious dispute in North Africa, Russia and Kazakhstan.

"There are many misconceptions about these contracts," explained Professor Cameron. "Often the only difference between them is the label which a Government chooses to put on them for domestic political reasons. But passions about the labels in many parts of the world can be explosive.

"We are delighted to be invited to respond to the Duke of York's questions about these matters."

Professor Cameron met the Duke at the UK Trade and Investment offices in Glasgow.

Triple success for Professor McLean



Professor Irwin McLean from the University's School of Medicine, has registered an impressive hat-trick of awards after being awarded the top dermatology society prizes for Europe, America and Asia.

Professor McLean, whose research group discovered that mutations on the filaggrin gene are the major cause of eczema and allergies, has recently returned from Japan, where he gave the Tanioku Kihei Memorial Lecture at the annual conference of the Japanese Society for Investigative Dermatology. This is the highest award of the JSID.

It follows Professor McLean having given the Rene Touraine Lecture of the European Society for Dermatological Research (ESDR) in May 2008, and the William Montagna Lecture of the Society for Investigative Dermatology (SID) in Atlanta, USA in May 2010.

Professor McLean is based in the Division of Molecular Medicine, where his research is concentrated in the area of inherited and inflammatory skin disorders.

"To collect the major awards from each of the societies in Europe, America and Asia is an achievement I am immensely proud of," he said.

"I am enormously grateful to past and present members of my research group, our many collaborators and many patients and families both locally and worldwide, without whom none of this would have been possible."

Research grant success for English



Professor Peter Kitson of the English programme has been awarded a prestigious 'Invitation Fellowship for Research in Japan' by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

The fellowship is sponsored and hosted by the University of Tokyo. For the period of the fellowship Professor Kitson will work with his co-researcher, Professor Stephen Clark at the University of Tokyo on their current research project relating to cultural exchanges between Britain and the Far East in the nineteenth century.

The Invitation Fellowships of the JSPS are extremely sought after and are characteristically awarded to distinguished researchers in the field of science.

Professor Kitson is delighted and honoured to be awarded the Fellowship by Japan's national research council.

Professor Kitson is the Academic and Research Leader of the English programme of the School of Humanities. He holds one of the two established Chairs in English. He is currently a holder of a Philp J. Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship (2010-2012) for his project on China and the Far East in the Romantic Imagination 1780-1840.



Report highlights autopsy rate

The system of post-mortem examinations used in Tayside over the past 20 years has spared more than 4000 families the prospect of a relative being subject to an autopsy, according to a report by researchers at the University's Centre for Forensic and Legal Medicine.

Since 1988 a programme in Tayside has maximised the use of external examinations, which the report's authors, led by Professor Derrick Pounder, argue are a more cost-effective and less intrusive system for identifying cause of death than autopsies. As a result the autopsy rate is 6%.

The report "How can we reduce coroner autopsies? Lessons from Scotland and the Dundee initiative," which was published in January's Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine, suggested that if the same system was adopted in England and Wales, the number of coroner autopsies carried out each year could be reduced by over 60%.

"Currently the autopsy rate for England and Wales is 22% (110,000 coronial autopsies for 500,000 deaths per annum)," said the reports authors, "yet there is a general lack of evidence about the utility of and justification for such a high level of activity, which is between double and triple the rate in other jurisdictions.

"While the autopsy is an important tool in modern death investigation, an almost automatic recourse to it is inappropriate. External examinations are not only cost-effective but also a necessary element in any death investigative system which wishes to strike an appropriate balance between intrusion by the state and the rights of the bereaved.

"The need for the state to seize the corpse and to dissect it for investigative purposes must be balanced against the rights of the family to privacy and freedom of religious practice. Quite apart from the issue of ethics and human rights, the overall cost of autopsies and other medical and scientific tests is rather more than half the total direct cost of the coroner service in England and Wales."

An external examination, the authors argue, is thorough and includes the examination of clothing and a head-to-toe examination of the body to record all identifying features, old and recent injuries, post-mortem changes, and recent medical intervention including resuscitation attempts. Minor incisions can be made to obtain samples for toxicology - for example a short 2 or 3 inch incision in the groin to obtain blood from a vein for drugs analysis.

"We need fewer autopsies in which we invest more time to perform them better," said Professor Pounder. "We need to change our approach and be much more thoughtful in selecting which deaths we autopsy, rather than carrying out autopsies automatically in large numbers of deaths, and running a production line system.

"Autopsies must be performed by skilled pathologists, and we simply do not have the people to perform well such large numbers of autopsies. The inevitable result is a lowering of autopsy standards, and a false sense of security that we have properly investigated the death. Unnecessary autopsies in large numbers of deaths rob us of our most precious resource - the time of skilled professionals."

Professor Pounder added that the report had already sparked a response including an invitation to give the keynote address to the Asia Pacific Coroners Society annual conference in Australia later in the year.

"Tom Luce, who chaired the Home office independent review group of the Coroners Service has also congratulated us on the paper," he added, "And I have had an email from a young woman who believes the autopsy carried out on her mother was unnecessary. She now wants to campaign for the numbers to be reduced."

The Tayside programme, which Professor Pounder leads, was extended to Fife and Central regions in Scotland in 2006, with the support of NHS pathologists, and now serves a population of 1.1 million people and includes three police forces and nine procurator fiscal offices.

New green map for campus



Students and staff keen to help the environment are being given a helping hand with a new "Green Map" of the campus.

The map, available in electronic form on the University's website, shows the campus locations of recycling points, wildflower sites, bike lockers, parking facilities and areas of greenery.

With a simple click on the relevant icon, the map reveals which items can be recycled at each recycling point.

The map will be expanded as more and more recycling sites and other eco-friendly facilities are installed. Plans are already underway to roll out internal recycling points across all buildings on the main city campus this year.

Students matriculating in January were shown highlights of the map on "green tours" organised by Environment and Sustainability Officer Trudy Cunningham.

"We try to get the sustainability message across to students from the moment they begin their studies," she said.

"The Green Map is important because it lets them, at a glance, find out where they can recycle or enjoy the greenery on campus, or whether there is a suitable place for them to secure their bike near the building they are going to.

"The students have been hugely supportive and have also driven some of the changes themselves. A new recycling point will be installed outside the Students Union at the request of student representatives who sit on our Environmental Taskforce. We also want them to embrace a healthy lifestyle and this is why we promote cycling as a way of cutting carbon emissions, saving money and getting fit.

"We've found that both students and staff are supportive of these measures once they know about them, but things like recycling points are not always immediately apparent. For that reason, we hope they take the time to go online and check out the Green Map."

The University of Dundee Green Map can be viewed at www.dundee.ac.uk/general/campusmap/

Nursery children launch clean campus campaign

Children at the University Nursery have been doing their bit for the environment by launching a "Keep Our Campus Clean" campaign.

The pro-active pre-schoolers designed colourful posters urging staff, students and visitors to the campus to dispose of rubbish responsibly.

To help make that happen they also sent letters to the Principal and to Estates and Buildings asking for an extra bin for the area outside the nursery near the DUSA building.

Mrs Kim Reid, Senior Early Years Practitioner at the Nursery, said the idea came from the children during a circle time session.

"Part of the new Curriculum for Excellence is about being a responsible citizen so we talked about how they could do that and what they could do to make things better," she said. "One of the children mentioned the litter lying about on the way to the nursery and said it would be good if it could be cleaned up.

"Another child said it would be good to have an extra bin at the top of the nursery path so we talked about who we could ask for help and as a result of that we wrote a few letters including to the Principal and to Estates and Buildings.

"The children were delighted when they received their replies. It made them feel very important. They are part of the University community and it is good for them to get involved in looking after their environment."

With the new bin now installed and an array of artistic posters on display, the children are hoping others will follow their lead and help keep the campus clean and tidy.



3D image illuminates antibiotic battle

Researchers from the College of Life Sciences have made a significant breakthrough in understanding how resistance to antibiotics might be overcome, by producing the first ever 3D molecular image of a key drug target and showing how drugs bind to it.

Professor Bill Hunter coordinates the EU-funded Aeropath project, which is designed to advance early stage drug discovery against *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (*P. aeruginosa*), a common bacterium that can cause serious diseases in animals and humans.

In collaboration with colleagues from Oxford's Division of Structural Biology, and the Oxford Protein Production Facility (OPPF) the team were able to determine the accurate chemical structure of the penicillin binding protein PBP3 from *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*.

This bacterium is particularly troublesome since it has developed resistance to many common antibiotics and is an important pathogen of burns victims, immuno-compromised patients for example due to chemotherapy or other conditions, and also to cystic fibrosis patients.

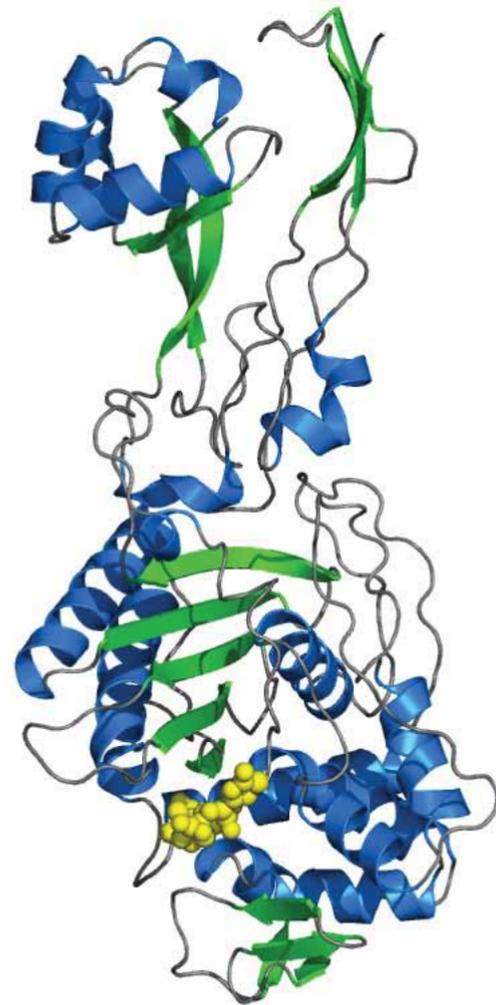
The research was made possible by using a machine called a synchrotron. It houses a large ring-shaped vacuum tube similar in size to Hampden Park, in which electrons are accelerated at close to the speed of light and manipulated by special magnets to give off very intense X-rays. These X-rays were then used to probe tiny PBP3 crystals through diffraction methods, enabling the researchers to determine the 3D structure of the protein.

Knowing the 3D structure of an antibiotic bound to its target protein elucidates the molecular mechanism - revealing how the drug works and how it could be modified, for example, to overcome resistance. The structures identified suggest that there could be scope to develop new drugs that work in combination with existing PBP inhibitors to make them more effective and able to overcome resistance.

The research has been published in the most recent edition of the *Journal of Molecular Biology*. Now that the Dundee/Oxford team have established the exact chemical structure of the protein, researchers at these and other institutions will be able to try and develop new inhibitors and therapies.

"Having this accurate 3D picture of the enzyme and knowing where these molecules called inhibitors bind is critical," said Professor Hunter. "It gives us a clear understanding of the molecular interactions that are involved in inhibiting this drug target. If we didn't have that information we would be looking to characterise interactions by other less accurate methods.

"In those circumstances, you're essentially working blind. You have to do many more experiments to get the understanding we have been able to get by doing this crystal structure.



"The objective of our work is to help advance understanding of potentially new targets for the development of therapies against Gram negative infections, which are a real problem because of the increase in drug resistance and in some cases, these are just tough beasts to kill."

"For many years, this has been a key therapeutic target but the organisms can change, mutate, and develop drug resistance.

"Now that we've got this 3D picture, we know where all the atoms are, we know how this molecule works, and the challenge is to use this information to come up with new small molecules that will stop PBP3 from working. This is a medical problem that deserves a solution and we are looking at several possible pathways of modifying existing drugs to supplement the arsenal of antibiotics."

The Dundee team is funded by the European Commission, while the Medical Research Council (MRC) provide funding for the Oxford researchers' work.

V&A AT DUNDEE MAKING IT HAPPEN



£4.8m funding boost for V&A at Dundee

Almost £5 million of funding for the V&A at Dundee project was announced last month by Scottish Culture Minister Fiona Hyslop during a visit to Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design.

The funding over two years is a major step forward for the project which late last year named Japanese architect Kengo Kuma as the winner of an international competition to design a landmark building to house the project on Dundee's waterfront.

"The V&A at Dundee will be great for the city as well as benefitting the whole of Scotland, acting as a magnet for visitors from all over the world," said the Culture Minister.

"The Scottish Government is making a significant capital contribution to the project, providing a sound funding basis to which the partnership can add from other sources to enable the project to proceed."

Project leader for the V&A at Dundee and the University's Director of Strategic Planning, Graham McKee said he was delighted with the funding package and added it was fitting the announcement had been made at Duncan of Jordanstone.

"The College's reputation for excellence is a significant part of what attracted the V&A to Dundee in the first place and contributing to the growth of creative industries is a major part of the University's future strategy," he said.

"The funding will allow the project to progress at full speed in the year ahead. It will allow the project to appoint its own staff and progress rapidly in all areas including wider fundraising and development as well as working with architect Kengo Kuma and partners.

"This will complement the staffing and resource already given to the project by the partners the Universities of Dundee and Abertay Dundee, Dundee City Council, Scottish Enterprise and the V&A."

Visitors to the Scottish Parliament had the chance to see the six outstanding designs shortlisted for the V&A at Dundee building, including the winning submission, last month when the "V&A at Dundee: Making It Happen" exhibition opened as part of a three venue tour.

The exhibition is currently showing at The Lighthouse in Glasgow until 18 February. It will then move on to the V&A in London from 4 April until 13 May.

For more information visit www.VandAatDundee.com

Discovery Days kick off 2011

The secret life of numbers, how technology can improve cancer care and why Doctor Who is a great teacher were just some of the topics under discussion at the 8th annual Discovery Days lectures last month.

A total of 14 newly appointed professors from a wide variety of disciplines were joined by award-winning teaching staff in the annual showcase of research and teaching.

Over the course of two days speakers had the opportunity to share their expertise in a series of 15 minute presentations designed to inform, captivate and entertain.

This year's talks covered a wide range of subjects including Antarctica, digital diabetes, plant genomics, education research, molecular physiology, psychology, medicine, photonics and nanoscience, biophysical science & engineering and modern literature.

The short Discovery Day lectures have a reputation for providing an entertaining and accessible glimpse into a range of challenging and often complex subjects. Their format has become a model for the sector, imitated by a number of other universities in the UK.

Genetic discovery in diabetes drug research

Researchers in the University's Biomedical Research Institute have uncovered new genetic evidence of how the world's most commonly used diabetes drugs might save lives.

Metformin, a drug used by hundreds of millions of people with diabetes world wide, has been in use for over 50 years and has been shown to protect against heart disease, and eye and kidney disease in people with Type 2 diabetes. It has also been shown to have benefits against cancer.

In spite of its huge success, however, scientists have not known exactly how metformin works. Now research carried out at the University has revealed new mechanisms for this old drug.

Dr Ewan Pearson, Professor Colin Palmer and colleagues at the Biomedical Research Institute used anonymous data from a clinical information system of patients with diabetes, linked to donated blood samples from 20,000 people in Tayside.

They were able to determine how well metformin worked in 2800 people, and identified an area of chromosome 11, which includes a gene called ATM, that altered how well people respond to metformin.

This finding was replicated by researchers in Oxford using a large prospective clinical trial, the UK Prospective Diabetes Study, in over 1100 people taking metformin for the treatment of diabetes. Additional studies have since confirmed that ATM is important in regulating how metformin works.

The ATM gene, short for Ataxia Telangiectasia Mutated, is a gene that is known to be involved in the DNA damage response system of cells, a mechanism that if faulty can lead to the development of cancer, said Dr Pearson.

"In one of the largest studies of its kind, we have used the genetics of drug response, otherwise known as pharmacogenetics, to investigate how metformin works," he said.

"We were expecting to find genes involved in blood sugar regulation so the finding that ATM is involved in metformin response was totally unexpected. Although ATM has been widely studied by cancer scientists, no one previously thought it had a role in how this commonly used diabetes drug worked.

"Our finding therefore draws together mechanisms that protect against cancer and lower blood sugar, suggesting a new area for diabetes drug development."

Professor Colin Palmer added, "This is an important development in defining how individuals may respond differently to diabetes drugs, but further work is required before we have enough information to be able to reliably use genetic testing in the clinic to guide treatment of common forms of type 2 diabetes."

The research, carried out with the University of Oxford and the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute as part of the Wellcome Trust Case Control Consortium, has been funded by The Wellcome Trust and Diabetes UK and was published in the journal Nature Genetics.

Diabetes UK has now awarded Dr Pearson further funding to continue his research using new genetic techniques on a population of 8,000 people with Type 2 diabetes.

Dr Iain Frame, Director of Research at leading health charity Diabetes UK, said "This study is a great example of how research can produce unexpectedly exciting results. The benefits for people with Type 2 diabetes may not be immediate but any research that increases our knowledge of how effectively drugs work in different individuals is hugely important.

"This is why Diabetes UK is funding Dr Pearson to continue this important line of research and this is likely to have significant impact in the future for people with Type 2 diabetes and the costs involved to the NHS in treating Type 2 diabetes."

CAHID stars set to shine with new TV series



TV crews were back at the University's Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification last month to film a new series of the fascinating History Cold Case programmes.

The first series screened on BBC Two last Spring attracted top viewing figures of 2.3 million and won widespread critical acclaim.

It followed the work of Professor Sue Black and her CAHID colleagues as they investigated the remains of everyday people from distant ages and painstakingly reconstructed their often remarkable stories using 21st century forensic techniques.

The new series, once again produced by Shine TV, will see Professor Black, Dr Caroline Wilkinson and Dr Xanthe Mallett back on the nation's screens in early summer with a new set of mysteries to solve.

"We were completely bowled over by the public's response to the last series of History Cold Case," said Professor Black.

"The profile that this programme gives to CAHID, to the College of Life Sciences, to the University and to the City is very important to us and so we are working hard to ensure that the high standards set in series one are raised further for the second set of programmes.

"The cases we have worked on so far are equally challenging and exciting and we hope that everyone will agree that the stories are worth telling and investigating".

“No other Scottish writer has so many statues erected in their memory.”



Exploring the popularity of the Ploughman Poet

On January 25, millions of people the world over will have raised a glass to toast Robert Burns, Scotland's national bard and the country's most celebrated son.

But why should an 18th century poet inspire such global devotion more than 200 years after his death?

Christopher Whatley, Professor of Scottish History at the University, has been exploring the enduring popularity of the "Ploughman Poet" as part of a research collaboration with Murdo Macdonald, Professor of History of Scottish Art at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design and Professor Murray Pittcock from the University of Glasgow.

Funded by the AHRC, the one year project "Robert Burns: Inventing Tradition and Securing Memory 1796 – 1909," aims to build a web-based catalogue of all the public monuments to Burns worldwide as well as classifying different kinds of Burns related memorabilia.

It is also looking at the relationship between literary and material culture and how the memorialisation of Burns fed back into how his poetry was perceived.

"What we are trying to explain is why Burns has been so popular around the world," explained Professor Whatley.

"No other Scottish writer has so many statues erected in their memory. In the years covered by the project more than 50 statues of Burns were erected world-wide, with many more being raised outside the period.

"When Burns died in 1796 the emotional reaction was the kind we associate nowadays with the deaths of major celebrities but the difference is that although there was a huge outpouring of grief when, for example, Elvis Presley or Princess Diana died, it dissipated over time. With Burns it kept on growing.

"I wanted to find out what was behind this."

Professor Whatley added that what makes Burns particularly intriguing is that he inspired devotion in such a diverse range of admirers from working class Scots to the landed aristocracy and across national boundaries from Scotland to China through to the USA.

"Burns certainly has an international appeal and countless people have looked to him for inspiration including American President Abraham Lincoln and industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie," he said.

"His work was also read avidly - and heard, through his songs - by émigré Scots. The first money subscribed to commemorate him came from places like India, where there was great nostalgic appeal. What struck me, however, is how much he meant to ordinary people in Scotland.

"I think the main reason for this is that he was a democrat. He espoused values of democracy and human dignity which appealed to ordinary people. The electorate was very small at that time and he offered people a sense of their own worth.

"It has to be remembered too that he was writing at a time when Scotland didn't have its own parliament. He was writing in Scots at a time when Scottish identity - as represented by language - was under threat. His work can in part be interpreted as a declaration of cultural independence, and pride in Scotland."

Burns radicalism, however, presented the ruling classes of the time with a dilemma.

"His memory was also toxic," said Professor Whatley. "Burns was a republican sympathiser and a democrat. This was a challenge to the authorities at a time when there were revolutions taking place through much of Europe."

Burns enthusiasts who sought to maintain the political status quo had to celebrate Burns, but by celebrating only certain aspects of his work while ignoring others.

"For example, one of Burns' best-known poems was 'The Cotter's Saturday Night,'" explained Professor Whatley. "This portrays a god-fearing, stoical peasant who apparently knew his place in the social order. But there are radical lines in the poem too, which were missed or deliberately ignored.

"There was an incident in 1859 - the centenary of Burns' birth - which is quite telling. Sir Archibald Alison, the sheriff of Lanarkshire and a scourge of Glasgow's working class, was also a huge Burns fan. He had spent much of his life writing about France and the French revolution, and warned his readers about the dangers of such upheavals happening in Britain. As part of his defence of the status quo he drew on Burns' poetry. But in his centenary speech in January 1859 Alison felt it necessary to concede that Burns had been a radical - an admission he tried to explain away by arguing that Burns was simply a product of the unstable age in which he had lived."

Professor Whatley and his colleagues at DJCAD and the University of Glasgow will be presenting their research findings at a conference in Dundee in the Spring.

"The Object of Poetry" conference on 26 March at the Dalhousie Building will bring to Dundee speakers from across the UK, Europe and North America.

An exhibition based on the project's findings is also planned for the newly opened National Trust for Scotland Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway in Ayrshire. The Beyond Text exhibition will run from 7 March to 29 April 2011.

Brushing up on Burns

The end of January traditionally marks Scotland's annual celebration of its national bard, Robert Burns, but this year it also coincided with the official opening of the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Ayr.

Playing a vital role in the preparations for the opening was the University's Book & Paper Conservation Studio through its work conserving books from the most important Burns collection in the world - 5,000 artefacts associated with the life, work and legacy of the poet and which are now in the care of National Trust for Scotland.

Items treated by the studio's team of five conservators included an exceptionally rare Kilmarnock Edition of Burns' poems and manuscripts in the poet's own hand.

The fragile volumes from the Robert Burns museum had been on display for many years - often opened at specific pages for long periods.

As a result, their bindings were set into the shapes they had been left open at and many of the most important annotated pages were badly damaged after long exposure to high light levels. This legacy of years in the public spotlight determined the team's treatments.

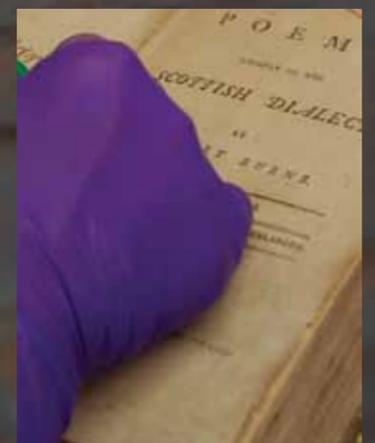
"A striking problem with this collection was the extreme discolouration of some of the paper," Emma Fraser, Book Conservator at the studio explained.

"In the past I've maybe treated a water stain on a small section of a page, but for this project we had to wash whole pages."

In order to achieve this without disbinding the books, the conservators used a vacuum suction platen, an ingenious device known in the studio as a 'stealth sucker'. This was placed under the stained pages and a washing solution applied. As the vacuum extracted age-old stains, Burns' inscriptions were protected by a coating of cyclododecane, a wax-like substance which removes the possibility of the ink running and allows the delicate 'washing' process to be completed safely.

The project has added to the list of treasures that have come under the care of the studio in the 25 years since it was established at the University's library. Amongst many important artefacts there has been a drawing by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, a note written by Sir Isaac Newton and an early fifteenth century charter founding St. Andrews University.

For more information about the work of the Book & Paper Conservation Studio visit www.dundee.ac.uk/library/conservation/



Changing a culture in baby steps



There can be few subjects more likely to stir up a myriad of emotions amongst new mothers than how they decide to feed their babies. A quick look through any parenting website will reveal countless breastfeeding versus formula feeding debates.

Although the research evidence suggests “breast is best” the UK still has one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in the world.

The reasons behind the decisions mothers make and the evidence that already exists globally on infant feeding form the basis of a new book by researchers at the University’s School of Nursing and Midwifery and NHS Tayside.

Breastfeeding: Contemporary Issues in Practice and Policy looks at the social, cultural, political and economic factors that influence both women and health professionals.

“It is a very complex area,” said Dr Liz Rogerson, co-author of the book and a senior lecturer at the School of Nursing and Midwifery. “There have been a lot of policy changes in the past 20 years with, for example, Unicef’s Baby Friendly Initiative which encourages hospitals to implement ten steps to successful breastfeeding and offers a seven point plan for encouraging breastfeeding in the community.

“We wanted to pull together all the knowledge into a central place and see how services for women could be improved. It is also about giving women a voice.”

The book contains case studies of individual women who share their babyfeeding experiences – good and bad – and provide an insight into the attitudes and practical issues which can help or hinder breastfeeding.

“Whether someone breastfeeds or continues breastfeeding is influenced by lots of different factors including the type of labour a woman has, the way she feels about her body, the support she has and the society she lives in,” explained co-author Janet Dalzell, Health Improvement Principal for Breastfeeding for NHS Tayside.

“Some countries have much longer paid maternity leave for example and greater involvement by the child’s father. In the UK some women have to return to work very early, sometimes before breastfeeding has been properly established.”

For Liz and Janet and fellow author Linda Martindale, a lecturer at the School of Nursing and Midwifery, one of the biggest hurdles for women in Scotland and the UK in general is that they live in a culture where bottle feeding is still seen as the “norm.”

It explains, they believe, why despite numerous policies and initiatives encouraging breastfeeding, the rates lag way behind some other European countries. In Scotland, for example, a health improvement target has been set to raise the number of babies exclusively breastfed at between six to eight weeks from 26.2 percent in 2006/7 to 32.7 percent by 2011.

“The infant feeding industry plays a very influential role here,” said Janet. “What we are facing is something natural versus an industry.”

“In the late 1960s and 1970s hardly anyone breastfed their babies in the UK,” explained Liz, a former Health Visitor. “We used to give women a pill to dry their milk up and everyone bottlefed. A culture of bottlefeeding was encouraged. That is the challenge we’re facing now. We have had half a century of an anti-breastfeeding culture and it will not change overnight.

“Kenya had a similar experience after infant feeding manufacturers persuaded women to bottlefeed. There is now an effort to re-establish breast feeding but what is happening is that it is the grandmothers of the women who are offering support and advice rather than the mothers because the mothers didn’t breastfeed.”

“There has been a loss of family knowledge that used to be passed down through the generations,” agreed Janet. “Many women becoming mothers now were not breastfed themselves and may not have seen anyone breastfeeding a baby.”

Despite the challenges the authors are confident that more can be done to help women breastfeed should they wish to do so and that the policies and practices already in place will bring benefits in time.

“In Dundee we are seeing increasing levels of breastfeeding at 6 to 8 weeks in areas that have been targeted so change does happen but it takes time,” said Janet.

She added that other small changes may also have an impact in years to come. As part of the new Curriculum for Excellence for example, breastfeeding is also now included for the first time in food and nutrition education and in living and growing lessons in primary schools in terms of how mums feed their babies.

The authors agree that education is key but stress that the way information is communicated is also crucial.

“We need to look at how health organisations who are working to support breastfeeding can be more responsive to the needs of women,” said Liz. “That means providing the right information at the right time and in a way that is not judgemental.

“The whole emphasis of the book is to look at what is happening at the moment and the processes that are in place, assess and evaluate them and then use that as a basis for moving forward to offer better support for women.”

The book is published by Radcliffe Publishing and is available from a number of booksellers including Amazon.

“What we are facing is something natural versus an industry.”



The ABC of staying active after cancer

The benefits of exercise for people recovering from heart disease are well known and the University's Institute of Sport and Exercise has been in the forefront of providing facilities and expertise for heart patients with its cardio rehabilitation programme.

Now Dr Anna Campbell, recently appointed lecturer in sports biomedicine within the College of Life Sciences and based at ISE, is hoping to offer the same opportunities to local people with cancer.

"Up to about ten years ago people with cancer were told to rest," she said. "The evidence now is that exercise can help with recovery and in combating fatigue, depression, deconditioning and other persistent side-effects of cancer treatment."

Dr Campbell began researching the benefits of exercise for cancer patients following completion of her Masters in Sports and Exercise Biomedicine at the University of Glasgow.

"I was asked to carry out a small pilot study to see if exercise combated tiredness in breast cancer patients," she explained. "It did so we carried out a large randomised trial that also showed exercise had a number of positive physical and psychological effects. From a cost benefit point of view, the women randomised to the exercise part spent fewer nights in hospital and had fewer visits to their GP."

Since then Dr Campbell has focussed on using the scientific research to develop practical ways of helping people with cancer benefit from exercise.

"I was a bit frustrated to begin with that the evidence was there but it wasn't being translated into anything practical so I asked myself what could I do to change that.

"Three years ago I set up CanRehab, which provides training programmes for fitness and health professionals. I wanted to highlight the benefits of exercise to health professionals and give fitness instructors the confidence and expertise to provide fitness advice to cancer patients. I also wanted to see programmes being set up away from the hospital setting and out into the community.

"I set up Active ABC - which stands for After Breast Cancer - in Glasgow where I was based at the time. It offers a programme of community based exercise classes for women with breast cancer and it is now part of the breast cancer care package in Glasgow.

"The feedback we have is that it is very beneficial. It helps with confidence, self-esteem and body image. Exercising as a group also seems to help. The classes help women share fears and experiences in an informal way and also allows them to have a laugh with people going through the same thing.

"It's a way of keeping a sense of normality. I've been told by people at the classes that it is a way of getting their life back."

A programme based on the Glasgow classes has just been launched at ISE where Dr Campbell has been working with ISE's Active Living Programme Manager Hazel Ednie.

Aimed at women with breast cancer the programme offers exercise classes tailored to individual needs backed up by educational material and ongoing support.

"Instructors will be able to modify exercises depending on how individual women are feeling," said Dr Campbell. "It is aimed at women at different stages of treatment. A good time to start is when they have settled into their treatment but if someone is two years down the line and think they want to give it a go then that is okay too. It is very flexible."

As well as establishing a programme with practical benefits for people in the Dundee area Dr Campbell, who teaches clinical exercise science, is also continuing with her research and sees her move to ISE as providing an ideal opportunity to link up with other researchers.

"Dundee is a great place to be," she said. "I'm establishing links with researchers in the schools of nursing and midwifery and medicine to carry out future research projects including how exercise seems to protect against cancer returning. I'd like to link up with researchers to look at what is happening at the molecular and cellular level.

"There is such a high reputation here for genetics and cancer research and all these links make it an ideal place for me to be based.

"It is a relatively new area of research and for that reason it is very exciting to be breaking new ground. It is also very humbling working with people with cancer and it is amazing to see the difference the exercise classes can make."

For more information about the Active ABC classes contact Hazel Ednie on 01382 385177 or 01382 384122 or via email at h.c.ednie@dundee.ac.uk

Charity DVD aids recovery at home

Dr Campbell has been helping women with breast cancer stay active at home with a specially devised DVD which was released in the summer.

Breast Cancer Care's *Getting Fitter, Feeling Stronger* DVD shows Dr Campbell demonstrating an exercise routine aimed at women of all different ages and fitness levels.

It also features oncology physiotherapist Lisa Wright demonstrating exercises for different stages of recovery from breast surgery.

The programmes are aimed at helping patients regain arm and shoulder movement after surgery and radiotherapy as well as improving overall fitness.

"Having worked with over 400 cancer patients I knew there was a need for something they could use at home and that is where the DVD came from," explained Dr Campbell. "Breast Cancer Care said lets do a DVD so we did. It came out in July and there have been 35,000 copies made so far."

The DVD is available from Breast Cancer Care at www.breastcancercare.org.uk/

what's going on

gym @ ise

here at **ise** we want to go the extra mile to make you feel special. we have added little extras we hope you will enjoy, take your pick from serious stuff, fun stuff, or charity stuff. come along and take part in anything that tickles your fancy! we hope to see you there...

superstar challenge

march • monday 7 @ 5pm-7pm

have you ever wanted to prove you're the best both physically and mentally? our superstars competition will determine who is the toughest! challenge yourself in the fitness test and other events. the overall champion will be crowned ise superstar. not for the faint hearted!!

£5 registration is needed when you book which will be donated to comic relief

zumba cardio party

march • wednesday 9 @ 6.30pm-8.30pm

dance like you've never danced before. come and join us for a fun filled zumba session with a difference. this cardio dance party is inspired by the traditional cumbia, salsa, samba and merengue music and moves we have in class. it's gonna be awesome!

£5 registration is needed when you book which will be donated to comic relief

international fitness showcase in blackpool!

march 25 - 28

each year 1000s of people from all over the world take part in this fitness extravaganza. there are classes in everything to do with fitness; aerobics, step, dance, spinning, yoga, pilates, personal training, in FACT EVERYTHING!

If you fancy a weekend of fab fitness contact nik on (01382) 386763

triathlon

men's triathlon • 4 april @ 5.15pm

ladies triathlon • 7 april @ 5.15pm

time to put all the training into practice! work hard and good luck, we know you can do it!

monikie 10k run

better • stronger • faster. dust off your running shoes and challenge yourself to run 10k. more info at ise reception soon.

for more info check www.dundee.ac.uk/ise or contact nik long • gym manager
01382 386763 • email n.long@dundee.ac.uk • reception (bookings and enquiries) 01382 384122

Insight into Dundee research

Researchers from across the University have received funding from the Scottish Universities Insight Institute to carry out work on a number of topics ranging from water resource management to independent publishing.

Professor Chris Spray and Dr Brian Cook of the UNESCO Centre for Water Law, Policy and Science won backing for their plans to run a series of workshops in collaboration with the University of St Andrews aimed at sharing knowledge of water resources management.

The Institute will fund the participation of those actively involved with river basin management in New Zealand and Canada so that their knowledge can be exchanged with a broad range of researchers, government officials and NGOs in Scotland.

Other Dundee involvement includes work by Professor Sue Black (College of Life Sciences) and Professor Fiona Raitt (Law) on Scots Law of Evidence, Dr Gail Low (English) on Independent Publishing and Hamid van Koten (Design) on Community Resourcing.

The Institute is a partnership of five Scottish Universities namely, Dundee, St Andrews, Edinburgh, Stirling and Strathclyde. It hosts programmes of enquiry which address and inform substantial issues that face Scotland and the wider world.

For further information see www.scottishinsight.ac.uk

Dundee leads the way in EU-Australia collaboration

The University is at the forefront of a cultural and academic exchange programme to promote environmental sustainability which is set to lead to the first degrees jointly awarded by universities in Europe and Australia.

The Global Environmental Sustainability Project (GESP) is a unique, three-year mobility collaboration between universities in the UK, Austria, Poland, Denmark and Australia.

The sustainable management of the environment is a crucial issue for future generations. Whilst there are national and international consortia focusing on collaborative research in this area, this is the first programme to facilitate the movement of students between Australia and countries in the European Union.

Dundee has received more than £500,000 of funding from the EU to lead the project jointly with James Cook University in North Queensland. Between now and October 2013, 45 European students (including 15 from Dundee) will have the opportunity to study sustainability in Australia for a semester.

Forty-five of their Australian counterparts will come the other way and study environmental management at European universities, including Dundee. Researchers will also take part in the exchange by spending three weeks Down Under.

The project will enable future specialists and current academics in this discipline to share best practice in education and research, gain experience of environmental management in a different geographical spectrum, and confront the future challenges of sustainability in an increasingly complex international environment.

Dr Alison Reeves, GESP's academic lead at Dundee, explained how the students will benefit from the project.

"By taking part in this project, students will gain an invaluable insight in to the additional aspects of environmental sustainability that they would not have learnt by staying on one continent.

"All of our students learn from each other. They are already benefiting from the experiences of a new class member, who has joined us from The University of Tasmania. Informal peer learning is an excellent way of engaging with any course material."

In addition to Dundee, Johannes Kepler University (Austria), the University of Wroclaw (Poland), and the University of Copenhagen (Denmark) are the other EU institutions taking part in the project. James Cook, Flinders University, and the University of Tasmania are the participating Australian universities.

The project partners will work towards a common system of credit and grade recognition which can be of future use to other institutions exchanging students between the EU and Australia.

There is also a commitment for partners to investigate the possibility of launching permanent undergraduate or postgraduate programmes to be taught jointly between Australian and EU institutions.

"The degrees would be awarded by Dundee and James Cook University, and we would envisage students spending two years there, and two years here," explained Christopher Bustin, International operations manager at the University. "This is a very exciting project and the scholarships will encourage young students to gain a fresh perspective on issues of environmental sustainability."



Norma's on target with archery success

A part-time member of staff at the University Health Service has shot to success in archery only 18 months after taking up the sport during a Campus Sport taster session.

Within a year Norma Smith had finished runner-up in the Scottish Outdoor Championships for a recurve bow. She then went on to be picked for the Scottish team for the British Championships and achieved her "Bowman" classification, a level reached by only around 15% of archers.

Her success is all the more impressive as she has battled chronic back pain for almost 20 years.

Norma (46) now practises four times a week, both with the University's Archery Club at the Institute of Sport & Exercise (ISE), and with her club side, Links Archers in Montrose.

"The past 18 months, since I first took up archery, have been fantastic," she said. "I'm getting more exercise, and a real sense of achievement. Because of my injury, I hadn't done anything competitive for a long time, and I'm really enjoying myself.

"I suffer from pain and stiffness in my lower back and leg, and so if you'd said to me a couple of years ago I'd be outside taking part in competitions in wet weather I wouldn't have believed it. Now I'm out shooting four times a week and, having lost some weight, it seems to be helping with my back pain. I am absolutely loving it.

"I've always been interested in sports where aiming plays a big part. I used to go clay-pigeon shooting and I enjoyed things like ten-pin bowling in the past, but now I am restricted in what I can do.

"That's why I thought archery may be something I could manage and so I went along to one of the "Come and Try" sessions for staff at ISE."

Norma is now rated 4th in Scotland (outdoors) and 53rd in the UK. She hopes to break into the top 50 in the near future.

Paul McPate, Assistant Director of ISE, said everyone involved with Campus Sport was proud of what Norma had achieved in a short space of time, especially given the adversity she had battled against.

"Norma's success is nothing short of remarkable," he said. "We are all justly proud of her and we hope she keeps developing as an athlete. Her enthusiasm for archery is clear for all to see, and it is a real inspiration for others to take up a sport. Norma's experiences show what you can get out of sport, and we hope other members of staff come along to our sessions and have a go for themselves.

"We hope that, with additional sports science support and guidance from ISE, we can help Norma to continue her meteoric rise in archery and enable her to continue to succeed on the national - and hopefully international - arena."

Unboarding the window to the west



A major exhibition of contemporary and historical Highland art, put together by two academics at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, has been wowing critics since it opened at the City Art Centre in Edinburgh at the end of last year.

Window to the West: The Rediscovery of Highland Art, which runs until 6 March, has been described by The Times as “ground-breaking” and in

The Scotsman as a celebration “of the enduring richness of the Highland tradition.”

Curated by Murdo Macdonald, Professor of History of Scottish Art and Arthur Watson, senior lecturer in Fine Art at DJCAD and Secretary of the Royal Scottish Academy, the exhibition marks the culmination of an ambitious five-year project to redefine the status of visual art in Highland Scotland.

The project is part of a continuing collaboration between the University and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic College of the University of the Highlands and Islands. Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council the aim was to rethink the history of visual art in the Highlands, create contemporary art in a Highland context and explore the visual in the Gaelic language.

In June last year the project held a conference at the National Gallery of Scotland addressed by, among others, the Education Secretary Michael Russell, who discussed his research on photography in the Outer Hebrides.

The exhibition, spread over two floors of the Edinburgh gallery, brings together new art works and some rarely seen historical treasures.

“The exhibition has brought together work from the Royal Scottish Academy, the City Arts Centre, the Fleming Collection in London and the collections of the Universities of Dundee and Edinburgh and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig,” explained Professor Macdonald.

“It includes works by William McTaggart, the Kintyre-born, Gaelic-speaking painter who created the conditions for modern Scottish art. One of the pieces is *Lobster Fishers: Machrihanish Bay* which has been loaned from University House. Being able to show such a fine work from our Dundee collection to a wider public is very satisfying.

“The University of Edinburgh have lent us a piece by Keith Henderson dating from the 1930s, ‘Wool Waulking, Barra’, which is rarely seen in an art context. Another work from that period is David Forrester Wilson’s ‘The Young Shepherd’, loaned by the Royal Scottish Academy, which has gone from obscurity to become the iconic banner image of the exhibition. The other banner is based on work by Professor Calum Colvin of DJCAD, and it is thanks to sponsorship from Bòrd na Gàidhlig that these large banners could be created.

“Private loans have also been important, for example those of paintings by Angus Morrison, a self taught painter from the 1920s. This is first time these paintings have been seen outside the Isle of Lewis.

“It really is wonderful to see these works under the same roof and the way they spark off each other is amazing.

“All of this was only possible thanks to members of staff at DJCAD’s Visual Research Centre, in particular Lesley Lindsay and Jane Cumberlidge, and the efforts of the City Art Centre team in Edinburgh led by David Patterson.”

The exhibition also features work by a number of artists at DJCAD including Norman Shaw (also a member of the research team), Edward Summerton, Graham Fagen and Emeritus Professor Will Maclean, a key adviser to the project, who came up with the title ‘Window to the West’.

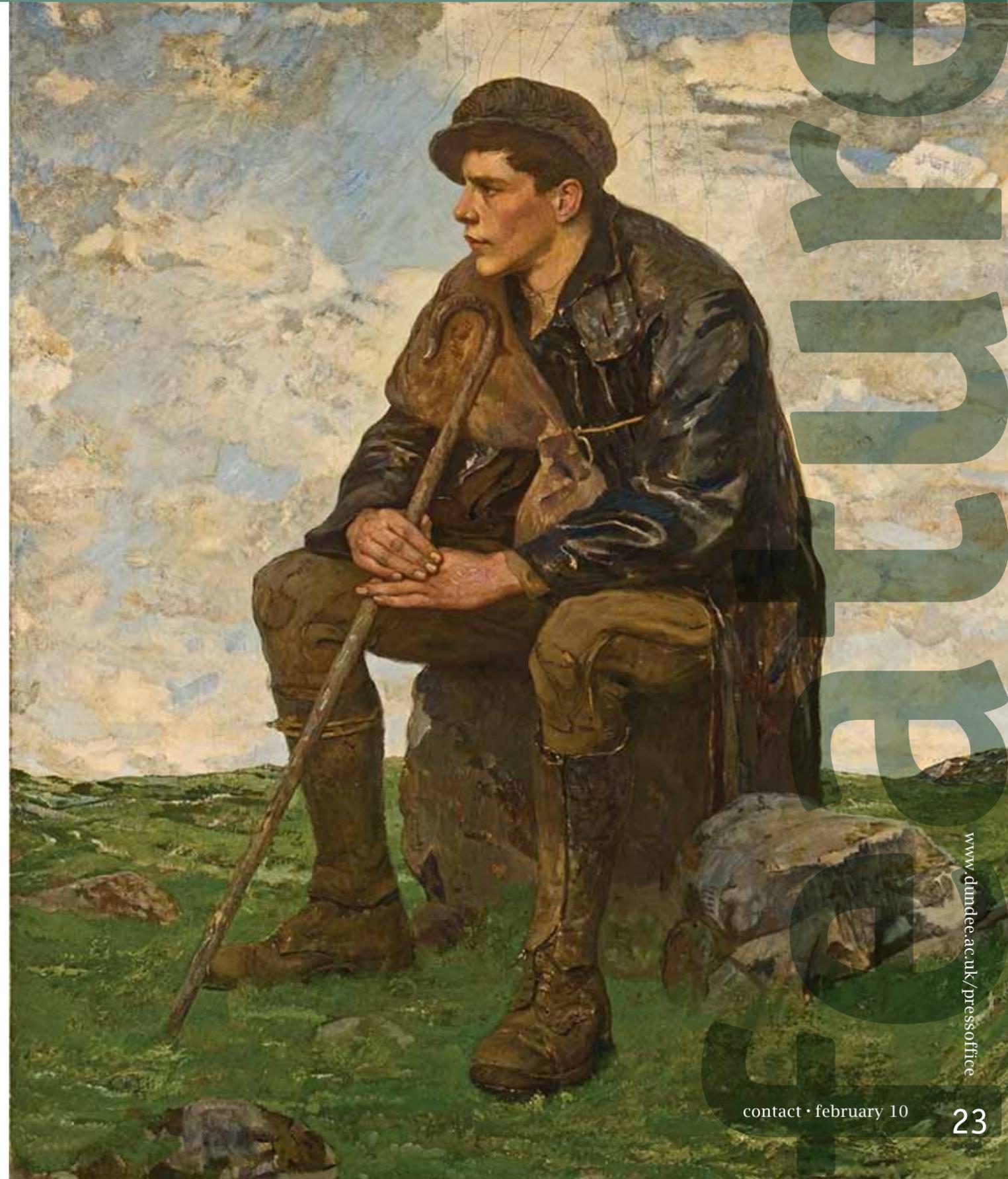
“It derives from Sorley Maclean’s poem *Hallaig* in which the poet writes in his own translation from Gaelic, ‘The window is nailed and boarded, through which I saw the West,’ explained Professor Macdonald.

“It has been our aim all along to unboard that window and to make evident both the art history and the contemporary art practice of the Gàidhealtachd.

“We are still at the beginning of that process. The window is not unboarded yet but we have laid the groundwork and really reminded people of the importance of this Gàidhealtachd visual tradition, and that has not been done before in any systematic way.

“We have created an area on the research map that was not there at all for all sorts of reasons. The subtitle of the project is ‘towards a redefinition of the visual in Gaelic Scotland’ and we have definitely achieved that redefinition.”

Window to the West: The Rediscovery of Highland Art runs at the City Art Centre until 6 March. For more information visit: www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk or contact Murdo Macdonald mjsmacdonald@dundee.ac.uk.



Dundee graduate wins UK's top art prize

Susan Philipsz, a graduate of Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, is the winner of this year's Turner Prize.

Susan studied Fine Art at Dundee from 1989 to 1993, specialising in sculpture. Her association with the city continued when Dundee Contemporary Arts exhibited one of her pieces 'Atlantis' in 2005 as part of the Our Surroundings exhibition.

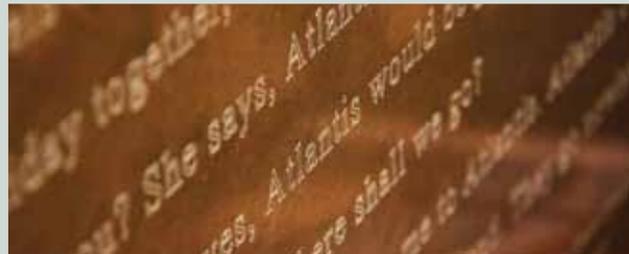
The work (pictured) was originally sited on Dundee's Riverside and included a horn emitting sound. It is now part of the University's museum collections.

Her success in winning the UK's most prestigious art prize was praised by Gareth Fisher, Professor of Fine Art at DJCAD.

"I am absolutely delighted, and I am sure everyone in the College will be, to see Susan winning the Turner Prize," he said. "I tutored Susan in her Honours year and she is still a good friend to Dundee."

Susan, who comes from Glasgow and now lives in Berlin, is best known for creating 'sculptures using sound' and often uses popular music and film themes as the basis of her art.

She was nominated for the Turner Prize for her presentations of her work Lowlands at the Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art and Long Gone in the group exhibition Mirrors at the Museo de Arte Contemporanea de Vigo, Spain.



Precious win for jewellery students



Jewellery students from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design have scooped five prizes at the Goldsmith's Precious Metal Bursary Awards 2011.

The five students will each receive £200 to enable them to buy precious metals for their work. They were recognised in the national competition, which is open to students from universities and colleges across the UK who are studying jewellery or a related design subject.

Their success meant that DJCAD had more winners than any other institution in Scotland, and was joint second in the UK. The competition attracted 144 entries from 19 colleges and universities. A total of 40 Precious Metal Bursaries were awarded.

Dr Sandra Wilson, Jewellery & Metal Design Programme Director at DJCAD, praised each of the winners, and said their collective achievements represented a great success for the whole institution.

She said, "To receive one of these awards is a fantastic boost to students confidence at a crucial stage in their studies and enables their CV to stand out from the crowd which is increasingly important in these difficult economic times."

The winners from DJCAD are Filipa Oliveira (24), Jennifer Tsang (22), Laura Cowan (22), Dougie Kinnear (49), and Merlin Planterose (26). All are Level 4 students on the Jewellery & Metal Design programme.

The competition prizes allow winners of the bursary to buy silver, gold, palladium or platinum to make their final piece in precious metal. Entrants to the competition were required to submit a design proposal and supporting material for their final project.

Their work demonstrates design development, quality and consideration of design, professionalism of presentation and individual creativity.

In addition to the bursaries to buy precious metal, winners receive a personalised Award Certificate and an Award Winners display card for their Degree Show later this year. The degree show runs from Saturday 21st May - Saturday 28th May 2011.

Jane sole winner of top art prize

Painting the same pair of shoes every day for 66 days won Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design Graduate Jane Forbes a first prize of £10,000 in a competition organised by shoe designer and retailer Dune.

Jane (47), who graduated from the Master of Fine Art programme in the autumn, wowed the judges of the "Shoe is Art" competition with her installation "Ad Infinitum" which was displayed at Dune's flagship Covent Garden Store in London.

"Ad Infinitum..." saw Jane paint the same pair of shoes each day for 66 days. Each day she started afresh, without reference to any of the previous paintings, meaning each is subtly, or in some cases, not so subtly, different depending on a number of other variables.

Jane, who is based in Crail, says that she is "genuinely thrilled" to have won the prize, and that the money will be used to support her artistic practice.

"This is an absolutely fantastic prize for me to win," she said. "Having just completed your Masters, you think about what's next but this is a massive boost that will support me as I try to establish myself as an artist."

"Ad Infinitum was a work that began to evolve as I started the process of painting the shoes each day. Every time I turned the page and began again. In the digital age, it would have been easy to do one painting and make exact copies, but that wasn't what this work was about.

"It was more of an exercise in painting, and the fact art is a process rather than exact science. The result is that every picture is that little bit different. Some days, the boots would be much darker or lighter than others, and the finished product would reflect my mood on each of the 66 days.'

Jane worked as a primary school teacher for many years, before fulfilling a life's ambition to study art. She graduated with a BA (Hons) Fine Art from DJCAD in 2005, and worked as an art teacher before being awarded the William Sangster Philips of Scholarship for merit 2009-2010, which enabled her to fund her Masters course.

Her paintings have been chosen to appear in several prestigious exhibitions, and she has also hosted several solo exhibitions at galleries across the UK.

court news

The December Court meeting focussed on financial matters: the effects of the Scottish Budget and proposed capital expenditure within the University.

Scottish Budget

The Court learnt of the higher education priorities which the Cabinet Secretary for Education & Lifelong Learning had set out in his letter to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). These included: maintaining current levels of student numbers; protecting excellence in research; protecting access to higher education; and supporting articulation into universities for students from further education and other advanced entry routes. In financial terms, the sector was facing a 7.6% reduction in funding for the academic year 2011/12, which would be addressed by cutting the unit of teaching resource and the number of funded student places, although the latter was expected to be balanced through the recruitment of fees-only students. In terms of capital funding, the sector faced a reduction of over 56%. Court noted the context of the upcoming Scottish Parliament elections: there was a real possibility that the budget might not be passed before then. As a result of this, and in contrast to England and Wales, Scottish institutions would be unable to plan for the longer term.

Finance

The Court approved the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2010, noting positive comments from the auditors as well as from the Finance & Policy and Audit Committees. The operating result for the year was a surplus of £4.1m, compared with £1.6m for 2008/9. The overall surplus had increased from £0.6m in 2008/9 to £3.3m in 2009/10. Income had increased by 5% during the year to £219m, including an increase in tuition fees and education contracts of 11% (with the largest growth in non-EU tuition fees which had risen by 22%) and in research income of 9%. Expenditure had also increased by 4%, with staff costs rising by 6% overall. The statements are available online at: www.dundee.ac.uk/finance/.

Capital Expenditure

The Court considered a proposal from the College of Life Sciences for the construction of a Centre for Translational & Interdisciplinary Research to enable the expansion of the Drug Discovery Unit along with mathematical and computational biology. A bid to the Wellcome Trust/Wolfson Foundation had already secured £4.8m of the estimated £12.5m costs of the build. The Court supported the academic rationale for the project and agreed to add it to the capital plan. The Court also considered the prioritisation of projects on the capital plan. It was clear that given reductions in capital funding, the University would be unable to fund all approved capital projects as initially conceived.

The Court agreed to defer a final decision on capital expenditure for the period to 2012/13 until it had received further detailed information at its February meeting on the respective merits and risks associated with the projects currently on the plan.

Academic Strategy

The Court discussed a paper from the Principal which set out what progress had been made by the Senior Management Team (SMT) on reviewing the current overarching academic strategy of the University, following the agreement to do so by Court at its annual retreat in September 2010. The paper arose from an understanding that the Strategic Review would not deliver the level of change necessary to withstand the difficult financial situation and that therefore a more fundamental assessment of the University's activity should be undertaken. Further updates would be considered at future meetings of the Court.

Governance

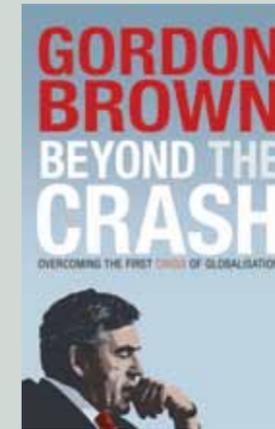
The Court welcomed a new student member. Kirsty Brown, Vice-President Student Activities at DUSA, has joined Court as Acting Deputy President and will sit with Chris Browne, Acting President, to represent the interests of students.

Other Issues

The Court considered a progress report from Professor Christopher Whatley on the work being done to embed the principles of employability into the undergraduate curriculum, and on the initiatives being taken forward to engage with students on these issues.

The Court also received an annual report on its key performance indicators. This particular report focussed on the University's performance over time. Both entry standards and progression rates had shown marked improvements, but graduate employment and energy efficiency remained areas of concern.

Gordon Brown visits DUSA to discuss new book



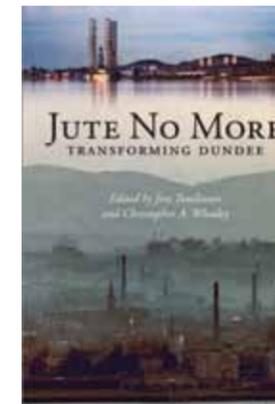
Former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown MP visited the University last month to discuss his new book "Beyond the Crash."

More than 300 students and staff attended the event which was organized by Dundee University Students' Association.

Following the talk the former Premier signed copies of his book which examines the global financial crisis.



Image credit: Dylan Drummond www.sonothesea.co.uk



Jute No More: Transforming Dundee

Edited by Jim Tomlinson and Chris Whatley
DUP

The second in the successful series of books about Dundee, this volume follows the history of the city from the close of the Victorian era to the present day.

It tells the story of the city's industrial and cultural progress

through the 20th Century from the point of view of workers, women and city officials alike.

From industrial decline to cultural progress Jute No More proves Dundee to be a city with far more to it than jute, jam and journalism and places it in its rightful place as a crucial component of Scotland's urban history.

Contributors include Professor Jim Tomlinson, Professor Chris Whatley and Professor Charles McKean, all History academics in the School of Humanities.



New DUP book on Dundee doctor's Crimea role

A collection of letters which casts new light on the Crimean War, Florence Nightingale and Dundee has been published in book form by Dundee University Press.

Letters from the Crimea: Writing Home, A Dundee Doctor tells the story of Dr David Greig, a young, newly qualified doctor from Dundee who served as an army surgeon in the Crimean War in the 1850s.

His collection of letters, which were found by chance during a house clearance in Dundee, tells of his medical and personal experiences in a savage war zone including his encounters with Florence Nightingale.

On his return from the war Dr Greig became a leading doctor at Dundee Royal Infirmary.

The book is available through Dundee University Press priced £9.99 online at www.dundee.ac.uk/dup or from Amazon.

International appeal of book prize

The Dundee International Book Prize 2011 has attracted a worldwide field of aspiring novelists again this year.

Now in its 7th year the Prize is one of the UK's premier awards for new writers. The winner will see their novel published and receive £10,000 in cash.

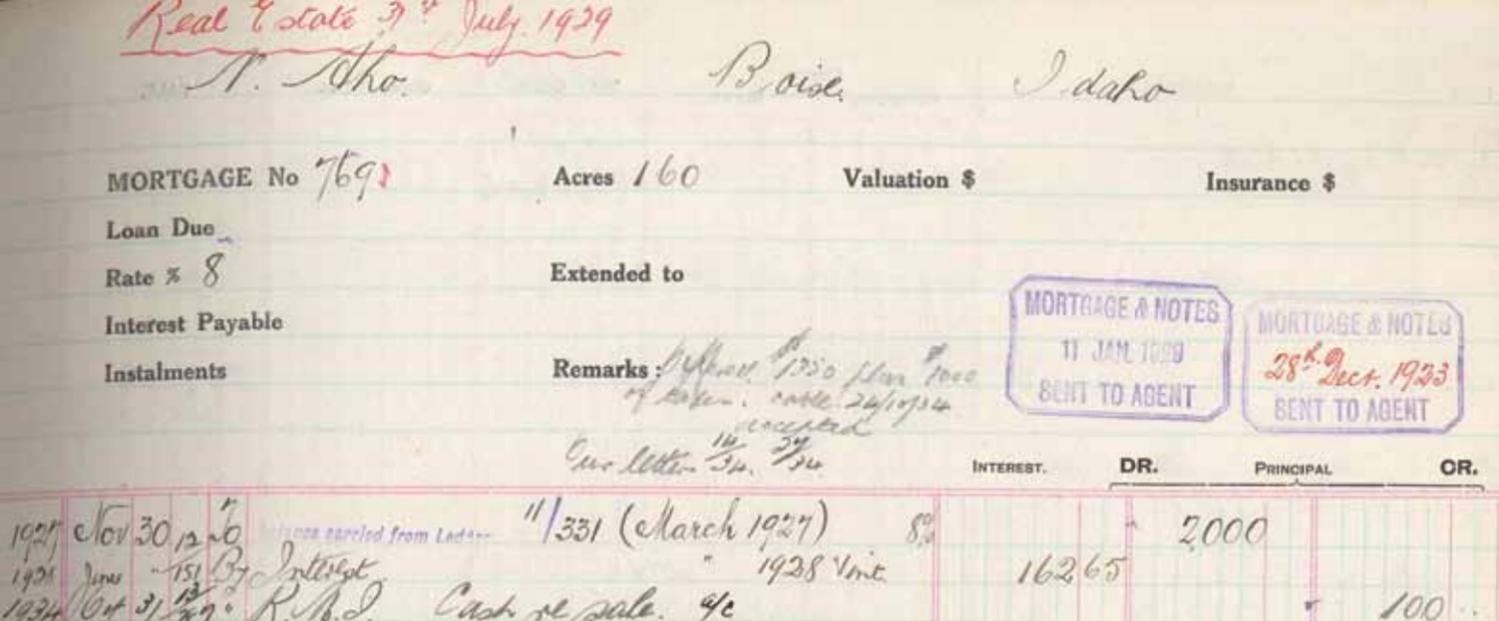
The competition is a joint venture between the 'Dundee - One City, Many Discoveries' campaign and Literary Dundee. It is open to both local writers and authors from around the world.

Entries this year have been received from Canada, the USA and Germany as well as from more local writers.

"Every year we receive a huge volume of high-quality manuscripts from across the globe," said Anna Day, Director of Literary Dundee, the University-led initiative to promote interest in literature.

"The job of judging gets more difficult as the reputation of the Dundee International Book Prize grows year-on-year."

The closing date for entries was 1st February. Shortlisted authors only will be contacted by the organisers of the prize. The winner will be informed of their success in May and the book will be launched in published form in November as part of the Dundee Literary Festival.



From the Archives...

The University of Dundee Archive Services has recently become custodian of the Alliance Trust archive. Archive Services is privileged to provide a home for this very important collection which charts the growth of this major investment company and its (and Dundee's) impact on the rest of the world.

Based in Dundee and founded in 1888, the Alliance Trust is currently the largest generalist UK investment trust by market value on the London Stock Exchange. The company's headquarters are based on the corner of Nethergate and West Marketgait.

The Alliance Trust is a descendent of various Dundee investment companies that emerged in the 1870s including the Dundee Mortgage & Trust Company and the Oregon and Washington Trust Investment Company, Limited. Many major figures in Dundee invested money in the Alliance Trust and its predecessors, including merchants, ship owners, textile manufacturers, academics (including some of the early staff of University College, Dundee) and prominent businessman such as Sir John Leng. As the company grew in strength it quickly attracted investors from across the UK.

One major aspect of the trust's business that is particularly well documented in the records is the mortgage business, which was centred on agricultural areas of the western United States (especially Oregon, Idaho and Texas). The company also established a successful business leasing mineral rights of properties in Texas and Oklahoma to prospectors, as well as investing in a number of other ventures in the UK and further afield.

The company's surviving records are very extensive and date back to the 1870s, with many records of the predecessor companies of the current firm being included in the collection. The records give a clear indication of who was investing in the company and so tell us a lot about Dundee's economic history. As one of Dundee's oldest and most significant businesses we are very pleased that the records will be properly preserved and made accessible to researchers. This is a very important collection with significant research potential. Given the impact of the Alliance Trust on Dundee, the western United States and in other countries it is likely that this collection will attract major interest from researchers from across the globe.

International archival conference beats the weather

Speakers and delegates from 14 countries fought their way through the heavy snow to Dundee in December to take part in a conference organised by the University's Centre for Archive and Information Studies (CAIS).

The conference entitled *Memory, Identity & the Archival Paradigm: an Interdisciplinary Approach* was the final event in a two year Royal Society of Edinburgh Network Award project.

The theme of the conference examined, over three days, subjects including theories of identity and memory, the act of display and interpretation in the creation of identity and the creation of community and national identities.

Three keynote speakers, Professor Terry Cook, Archivist and Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada; Dr Graham Dominy, National Archivist of South Africa and Professor David Lowenthal, author of the best selling book 'The Past is a Foreign Country' spoke on aspects of the conference theme including 'Overcoming the Apartheid Legacy'.

Papers from the conference will be published in *Archival Science* before the end of the year.

More information on the project, which is ongoing, is available on the CAIS web site at www.dundee.ac.uk/cais/memoryandidentity/

How the Scots gave voting to the English

Voting was a Scottish import that the English adopted following the 1603 Union of the Crowns – that's the conclusion of new research carried out by a University historian.

However, it is not the case that late-medieval Scotland, rather than ancient Athens, was the cradle of democracy, but that its terminology was closer to that of today than its neighbour.

Dr Alan McDonald has found that, whilst the concept of voting was widely used in the English parliament prior to the beginning of the 17th century, the word itself did not enter the English political lexicon until James VI of Scotland took it south with him when he became James I of England.

The resulting paper, entitled 'Voting in the Scottish Parliament before 1639', has been published in the most recent edition of 'Parliaments, Estates and Representation', a multilingual journal that examines the nature and development of representative government across the world.

"In England, prior to c.1600 there are no references to votes, only 'voices' when it came to the decision making in the English parliament," explained Dr McDonald.

"Thereafter references to votes and voting began to appear, which is too neat a coincidence when you consider James VI became James I in 1603 and came from an environment where voting was well established as part of the political lexicon.

"The Oxford English Dictionary shows virtually no citations of 'vote' in England until after 1603, whereas it shows citations appearing in Scotland from the mid-15th century. After 1603 we see an increasing number of references to voting in England until it replaced 'voice' completely to refer to the counting of opinions in a decision making process."



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what's on...

Until Feb 26

Travelling the World Exhibition

Tower Foyer Gallery

This exhibition features art and artefacts depicting different countries and cultures from around the world. Most of the paintings and drawings are by Scottish or English artists who travelled to new places for inspiration - experiencing a change of landscape, people and climate. It also includes objects and works of decorative art which have come to the University from countries across the world, many presented by other higher education institutions.

28 February

Café Science Dundee: Eye Saw It

7pm Chambers Coffee House

Dr Kat Jamieson will be exploring the psychology of eye witness memory in this free Café Science Dundee event.

For more information visit www.cafesciencedundee.co.uk

1 March

Dundee Arts Café with Professor Yolande Muschamp

McManus Café, McManus Galleries

Professor Muschamp will be discussing the effects of curriculum change across the globe in a free talk entitled Curriculum for Excellence: Freedom to teach or a "Scotch Mist."

For more information visit www.dundeeartscafe.co.uk/

1 March

Dundee Conservation Lectures

6pm, Tower Building

The latest talk in the current series is entitled "Traditional Materials 2 Interior Finishes." The Dundee Conservation Lectures cover a number of conservation issues, offering an opportunity to learn more about, and debate, philosophical, practical, legislative and technical matters.

For more information contact Town & Regional Planning on 01382 385236.

6 - 20 March

Women in Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths Festival

The Women in STEM festival is a chance to celebrate the achievements of women in science, technology and engineering as well as encouraging more young women to consider the sciences as a career.

For more information contact Revealing Research at revealingresearch@dundeesciencecentre.org.uk

8 March

Dundee Conservation Lectures

6pm, Tower Building

Arts and Heritage Consultant Professor Peter Burman will present a lecture entitled "Pioneers of Building Conservation."

More information from www.dundee.ac.uk/planning/events/conserv/

9 March

Café Science Extra: The Trouble with Facebook

6pm, Dundee Science Centre, Greenmarket

Wendy Moncur will be discussing the social networking site in the latest Cafe Science Extra session.

For more information visit www.cafesciencedundee.co.uk

10 March

Jute No More launch event

6pm, Dalhousie Building

The second in the successful series of books about Dundee will be launched at this free event. The authors, including Professor Chris Whatley and Professor Jim Tomlinson, will be there to sign copies of the book.

Tickets are available from www.dundee.ac.uk/dup

15 March

Dundee Conservation Lectures

6pm, Tower Building

Timothy Brittain-Catlin, from the University of Kent, will discuss how to read churches and other buildings. More information from www.dundee.ac.uk/planning/events/conserv/

22 March

Dundee Conservation Lectures

6pm, Tower Building

The last lecture in the current series will look at the houses and gardens of John A Holms. More information from www.dundee.ac.uk/planning/events/conserv/

23 March

Heritage or History? Conflicting Views of the Past lecture

6pm, D'Arcy Thompson Lecture Theatre, Tower Building

Professor Keith Thomas presents the latest Arts and Humanities Research Institute lecture. This is a free event. More information from www.dundee.ac.uk/humanities/artsandhumanitiesresearchinstitute/ahrilectureseries/

28 March

Café Science: Are you smarter than your computer?

7pm, Chambers Coffee House, South Tay Street.

Dr Karen Petrie will be presenting a guide to artificial intelligence in this free event. For more information visit www.cafesciencedundee.co.uk

2 April

Graduates Council Discovery Lecture: Family History and the Media

6pm, Dalhousie Building

Nick Barratt, genealogical consultant for the BBC Series "Who Do You Think You Are?" will explore challenges facing historians and archivists in the 21st century posed by media interests in personal history, covering genealogy, house & local history. The lecture is free but tickets are required and will be available online at www.dundee.ac.uk/tickets or 01382 384822.

5 April

Dundee Arts Café with Professor Calum Colvin

6pm, McManus Galleries

Calum Colvin, Professor of Fine Art Photography at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design presents "Natural Magic," an interdisciplinary investigation into two-dimensional and three dimensional awareness.

For more information visit www.dundeeartscafe.co.uk/

4 April - 13 May 2011

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SATURDAY EVENING LECTURE SERIES 11

This year's Saturday Evening Lecture series gets underway this month with two talks scheduled for February.

Bang Wong, creative director of the Broad Institute at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and adjunct assistant professor at John Hopkins University School of Medicine, is first in line with a talk entitled "Showing the Unseen."

The talk will explore the ways in which art and design have been used to enable scientific discovery.

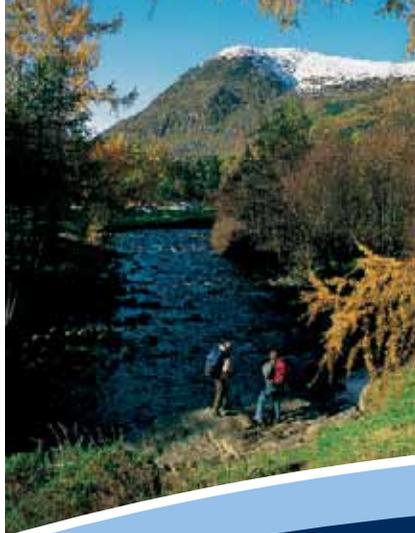
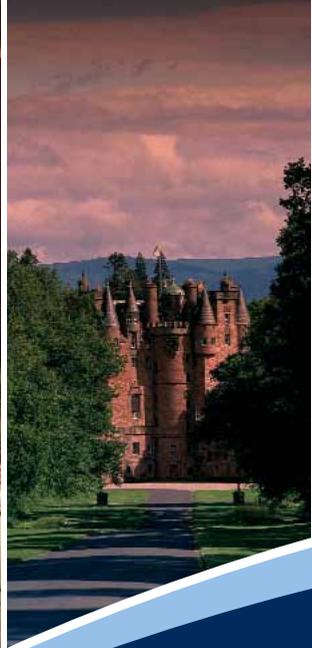
The series will continue on 19th February when New York Times writer Graham Bowley will read from and discuss his book 'No Way Down', which deals with the true story of a group of 30 climbers who conquered the summit of K2 only for 11 to perish during the descent, and contains heart wrenching stories of human tragedy.

The series, which celebrates its 87th anniversary this year, will conclude on 7th May, when Professor Rob Duck, Dean of the University's School of the Environment, will examine "This Shrinking Land: Climate Change and Britain's Coast."

The Saturday Evening Lecture Series is Scotland's oldest continuous free public lecture series. It attracts thousands of people each year to hear varied and thought-provoking lectures from prestigious, world-class speakers.

All lectures begin at 6pm and will be held in the Dalhousie Building. Drinks receptions will follow each lecture, and where appropriate, book signings will be held.

Tickets are available from the University's Online Store, or by calling the Events Office on 01382 388564. More information about all events, and the speakers, is available at SELS 2011 webpage.



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A culturally spirited region, the Dundee and Angus area is renowned for its unique blend of cutting edge art, award winning theatre and exciting and inspiring heritage. It has inspired scientists, writers and historians and has pushed the boundaries in terms of academic research.

Major conferences and events held in the area have attracted delegates from around the world, helping to forge new partnerships and international links, whilst raising the profile of the area. Business tourism plays a key role in the growth and prosperity of Dundee and Angus. Conferences provide a platform not only to highlight cutting edge research and developments, but also showcase the host city and its attractions, to the world.

From award winning visitor attractions such as Discovery Point to an array of excellent galleries, museums and retail parks, Dundee is truly the City of Discovery for the delegate. Beyond the city lights, Angus offers a haven of relaxation with the opportunity to explore the great Scottish outdoors or play on some of the world's most famous golf courses. St Andrews and Carnoustie are both ideally placed for experienced or aspiring golfers. All of these ingredients combine to create an enriching and memorable visit, that delegates will want to experience again.

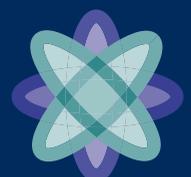
If you would like to play a part in helping us secure and host more conferences and generate benefits for your organisation and the destination - find out how you can become an ambassador by contacting Karen Tocher, Manager of Dundee & Angus Convention Bureau on 01382 434 318 or email Karen.tocher@conventiondundeeandangus.co.uk.

You can also follow us on facebook and twitter.

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