



University of St Andrews  
*Scotland's first university*

600 YEARS  
1413 – 2013

# St Leonard's College

News from the postgraduate community

2013 / 2014



# Principal's foreword



This short introduction offers me a wonderful opportunity to thank current postgraduate students from across the faculties, and around the globe, for their outstanding contribution to the life of our university. Your commitment to the pursuit of knowledge, your passion for your research, and your core belief in its essential value, all give me – and my colleagues in the Principal's Office – confidence for the future of research both here at St Andrews and more widely in academe.

As the University enters its seventh century of exploration and experimentation, our postgraduate students are at the forefront of our academic mission of excellence in research and teaching. The following pages offer both insight and overview, and they speak directly to the vibrancy, creativity and intellectual curiosity of our postgraduate community here at St Andrews. I hope that you enjoy the magazine.

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**Professor Louise Richardson FRSE**

*Principal and Vice-Chancellor*

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## Welcome from Verity

While the University of St Andrews was founded in 1413 making it the third oldest in the English-speaking world, St Leonard's College was only re-launched in Summer 2013. Since the College has been re-launched we are aspiring to meet the needs of all postgraduates.

St Leonard's College has the mission "to promote a culture and environment in which scholarship, creativity and discovery will flourish".

**"To promote a culture and environment in which scholarship, creativity and discovery will flourish"**

with the Schools, CAPOD, the Careers Centre and the Knowledge Transfer Centre. While all research postgraduate (PGR) students were automatically members of the College, we now proudly welcome the postgraduate taught students into our fold.

We realise you regard yourselves as a single community. We believe the mission of St Leonard's College applies equally to postgraduate taught (PGT) and PGR. In removing this artificial division, we look forward to St Leonard's College becoming stronger, richer and more relevant.

We aim to host social and networking events throughout the year to encourage the community to come together, because we believe that intellectual growth is rarely accomplished by solitary endeavour.

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**Professor Verity J Brown FRSE**  
*Provost of St Leonard's College*

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This is done by supporting the professional and career development of its members, in collaboration

## Welcome from Scott

Welcome to St Andrews. The town. The University. The postgraduate community. In addition to its historic charm, architectural splendour, academic pedigree, and a golf course that I keep hearing about, St Andrews has become a home away from home for many postgrads, myself included. The University provides a support network for like-minded yet diverse postgrads to achieve their academic and professional goals, while allotting the freedom to explore unknown terrain, whether in research, personal development, or the Scottish Highlands.

The Postgraduate Society aims to help contribute to an already strong community by providing a diverse catalogue of

**"St Andrews has become a home away from home for many postgrads, myself included"**

events including formal balls, pub nights, movie nights, and excursions throughout Scotland.

Additionally, we provide formal representation for fellow postgrads within both the University and the Students' Association. We hope to see you at our next event, and as always you are welcome to join our Committee!

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**Scott Schorr**

*Postgraduate President 2013-2014*

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*<http://stapgsoc.co.uk>*

*🐦 [Postgraduate Society@StAPGSociety](mailto:PostgraduateSociety@StAPGSociety)*

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## The Postgraduate Gown

Lorianna Clarke-Alexander (MLitt in Art History) – Photo credit: Matt Prokosch

We have all seen the photographs of pensive St Andrews students walking along the pier in their illustrious scarlet gowns, praying that the wind doesn't whisk them into the frigid North Sea. As a prospective student, I pictured myself strolling across St Salvator's Quad smartly dressed in a gown that would convince my friends back in the States that I actually attend Hogwarts. Unfortunately, I quickly realised that the red gown was only worn by undergraduates, and thus my dreams were crushed.

However, the story gets better. A year or two ago the Postgraduate (PG) Society received many requests from PG students to create a gown that would make their presence known. Personally, I interpreted this as PG students wanting to look just

as snazzy as the undergrads. I really can't blame them.

Upon arriving in St Andrews last September, whispers that a postgraduate gown existed spread like wildfire. The rumours were confirmed by the PG Society and BESS (not the cow, the University shop) was taking orders for gowns. I quickly placed my order and received my gown a month later.

Normally, seeing students wear red gowns in town is about common as seeing someone wear a pair of blue jeans. However, the PG gown is an anomaly (so far). When I sport my gown, I receive quite a few stares and occasionally get photographed by tourists. The latter of which I find rather amusing and wonder if they think I'm the future Duke of

Sutherland (I recently wrote an essay about the Highland Clearances and that was first title to come to mind).

Nevertheless, I believe the new postgraduate gown is a fantastic addition to the gown tradition of St Andrews and hope more PG students purchase them.

I originally posted this article on Inside St Andrews, a postgraduate blog, in December 2013. In my not so spare time, you can find me aimlessly walking around St Andrews with my camera. You can view my website here:

[www.prokoschphotography.com](http://www.prokoschphotography.com)

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**Matt Prokosch**

*MLitt student in Modern History*

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# Bright Club: What's it all about then?

Bright Club is the place where public engagement and stand-up comedy collide. Academics and researchers, most of whom have never done comedy before, take to the stage to perform an eight minute routine about their area of expertise. Following successes in Edinburgh, Dundee and other cities around the country, Bright Club has arrived in St Andrews and the first event took place in February.

Kate Cross is a researcher at the University of St Andrews and performs stand-up comedy for the Bright Club. She explains why scientists shouldn't be scared to stand up and tell a few jokes.

Bright Club started, as many things do, in London. Steve Cross and Miriam Miller of UCL decided to try out an experiment: What would happen if we got academics to try their hand at stand-up?

The result was Bright Club, a 'thinking person's variety night' where any academic – from astrophysicists to avant-garde poets, Deans to doctoral candidates – can take to the stage with eight minutes of jokes and funny stories about what they know and love best – their own research. The idea quickly spread to other cities in the UK.

With Bright Club Newcastle and then Bright Club Edinburgh, I went quite rapidly from being the painfully shy final-year PhD student at a 'public engagement skills' workshop, to performing at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. I almost never shut up about Bright Club and spent quite a bit of time telling people how great it is and why they should do it.

So I hope to convince you that, if you're an academic, getting on stage and doing eight minutes of stand-up comedy about your specialism is one of the best damned things you could do.

## Why?

### 1 You will become a better, more confident, speaker

Doing stand-up is initially nerve-wracking. But after you've done it, a conference talk will never hold anything like the same fear. I've seen people grow in confidence immeasurably because of Bright Club (including myself).

It's hard, if you plan to do it well. Think of how many 20-minute conference presentations over-run and bore the audience rigid. When you have eight minutes you're forced to strip out everything that isn't absolutely critical. You'll write and re-write and throw out stuff you thought was essential. You'll have no time to fumble. You'll be too excited to look bored. You'll give the most engaging presentation of your career. You might also see your research in a whole new light – it never hurts to step back and start from the beginning with "What is my research actually all about?" and "Why does it matter to me?"

### 2 It's a great night out Bright Club fills the Stand Comedy Club in Edinburgh on a weekday night, with some audience

members coming back month after month after month. The only thing the audience members all have in common is that they've come along to have a laugh and hear something they've never heard before – whether it's about quantum physics, sustainable forestry, or what geologists are doing about climate change. Bright Club has been described as an atmosphere "brimming with goodwill", and it is.

All of this makes it very easy to have fun. You will have fun. You'll get laughs, you'll come off the stage buzzing, and you'll feel like a hero for days. As a bonus, your friends and colleagues will look at you with a new respect bordering on awe. Promise.

### 3 Universities and funding bodies really like to know that you can talk about your work with a wide range of audiences.

#### So why not have a go?

#### But I'm not funny and my research isn't funny

The most common reason people give for not signing themselves up is that they're not naturally funny. Well, neither am I. All Bright Clubbers get training, guidance, and support in getting the funny out of their research. I've seen people do very successful sets on everything from the genetics of cancer

treatment to long-term unemployment. Academics have a big advantage when it comes to comedy – they all have something different and new to talk about.

#### I don't want to joke about my research – I care about it

I can understand this one. But the comedy doesn't come from belittling our work. In many cases it comes from conveying just how passionate we are about it. Does your research make you feel overjoyed? Overwhelmed? Frustrated? Triumphant? Has it changed your social life or the way you think about everyday tasks? Has it changed your life? Good. That's what we want to hear. We can identify with those feelings, they make what you say memorable, and they make us laugh with you.

#### OK. Tell me more

Brilliant! If you're interested in finding out more, the best thing to do is to type 'Bright Club' plus the name of a nearby city into the search engine of your choice, there's bound to be one near you. Bright Clubs have also been held in Sydney and Melbourne. If there isn't one in your local area/country/sector of the galaxy, all you need to get one started is a friendly professional comedian willing to share some know-how, a few academics, and a venue. But maybe that's a story for another day...

#### Kate Cross

Lecturer in the School of Psychology & Neuroscience

The article written by Kate Cross was originally published as part of Felicity Muth's "Not bad science" blog for Scientific American. <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/not-bad-science>

Bright Club Scotland:  
[www.funnyresearch.info](http://www.funnyresearch.info)

[www.facebook.com/brightclubstandrews](https://www.facebook.com/brightclubstandrews)  
[@BrightClubStA](https://twitter.com/BrightClubStA)

# What is the Postgraduate Society?



As I like to say, we are the 'home' student society for postgrads in St Andrews. All matriculated postgraduate students are automatically members of the Postgraduate Society, including taught postgraduates (PGTs) and research postgraduates (PGRs). The Society exists for the dual purpose of providing formal postgraduate representation within the University and Students' Association and hosting both academic and non-academic social events. Our event calendar includes formal balls, pub nights, movie nights, guest speakers, and excursions to other locations in Scotland.

## Where are you from?

I am from Pittsburgh in the United States; second home of Andrew Carnegie and home of the Pittsburgh Penguins hockey team.

## What do you study?

This is definitely the most popular question to ask any postgrad. Currently, I am pursuing an MSc in Computing and Information Technology. Last year, I completed an MLitt in Modern History. My research interests combine elements from both disciplines, and I hope to continue my studies at St Andrews for a PhD.

## What does the Postgraduate President do?

It is very busy role, but also rewarding. When I am not coding and attending class for my MSc, I am in meetings, creating the programme for the Postgraduate Society, and writing late-night mass emails. The term 'I' is also misleading, as I am supported by members of the Postgraduate Committee. As a team, we run the Postgraduate Society, and have Committee meetings every Monday.

In my role as President, I sit on the Students' Representative Council (SRC), Student Services Committee (SSC), and am a non-voting member of the Students' Association's Board. Regarding the University, I sit on Academic Council (University Senate), work closely with St Leonard's College, and sit on various other committees. The entire purpose of this is to provide a postgraduate voice in the governance of both the Students' Association and University.

## How long have you been involved with the PG Society?

This is my second year involved with the PG Society. In my first year, I was the 'Development Officer/Ideas Wizard', and I decided that I would like to stay involved. My predecessor, Dani (2012-2013), helped teach me the responsibilities of the position, and gave me many practical pointers on how to plan events and balance meetings. I also corresponded with two previous Postgraduate Presidents via Facebook when reaching out for additional support, Holly (2011-2012) and David (2010-2011). I am looking forward to offering support next year to my own successor.

## Why did you choose St Andrews?

I chose St Andrews because I was intrigued by the research profile of the Centre for Transnational History. Prior to my application, I had submitted a list of questions to my future supervisor, and received a very kind email in response. Prior to attending St Andrews, I studied abroad in Vienna and Berlin during my undergraduate course, which sparked my interest in learning about the history of the European Union. I attempted to merge my historical interests in European integration and technology by choosing

to write my MLitt dissertation on the founding period of the European Space Agency (ESA). This led me on a summer research trip to Florence, and provided me with a convenient excuse to send interview questions to prominent ESA historians and current ESA scientists and directors.

## What was your favourite moment as Postgraduate President so far?

So far, I would say when we hosted the first annual Postgraduate Gala in the first semester at the Scores Hotel. I was apprehensive about hosting our first hotel-scale event of the year, but our Committee came together and pulled off the event and I was thrilled with the result. We had sticky toffee pudding to calm my nerves for dessert, which also may have helped.

## What is The Sunday Postgraduate?

When I was first given access to the Postgraduate President email account, I was very intimidated about sending out an email to every student in the postgraduate community. I alternatively viewed the send button as either 'launch' or 'self-destruct'. After sending my first email successfully with my laptop remaining intact, I thought why not spice up my subsequent messages and try to entertain people while simultaneously informing them? This resulted in the birth of The Sunday Postgraduate weekly email. Its name was derived from the date of publication and target audience, and also because I wanted it to sound like a newspaper (e.g. The Sunday Post in Dundee).

## What would your dream job be?

This may sound overly complicated, but at the moment I have a rather specific response: (i) become a professor, (ii) run my own technology start-up, (iii) at some point return home to Pittsburgh, and (iv) retire as the United States Ambassador to the European Union. If one of these happens, I would be ecstatic, more than one, I couldn't complain.

## Scott Schorr

Postgraduate President 2013-2014

E: [pgpres@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:pgpres@st-andrews.ac.uk)

## Fieldwork in Wamba



Everyone showed up to watch our plane leave Djolu, February 2013

In February 2014, I will travel to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to study gestural communication of wild bonobos (dwarf chimpanzees). The gestural repertoire of bonobos has never been studied in the wild. More specifically, I'll be looking for intended meaning of each gesture and assessing how variable the meaning is for different individuals. At the moment the theoretical background is very exciting, but I'm more focused on preparations for fieldwork. There is a lot to consider. Thankfully, I have a good idea of how things will go because I have already been to Wamba.

Wamba is a Japanese-run field site in DRC, affiliated with Kyoto University's Primate Research Institute. The site was established in 1974, so the bonobos are extremely well habituated and the Japanese team know how to make everything run smoothly. Wamba is located in a group of five villages, and employs at least one member from each family. I have heard of other field sites that don't use local field assistants, but I can't imagine work without them. The trackers are invaluable guides through the forest,

ensuring safety and continuous data collection.

Possibly the biggest challenge is actually getting to Wamba. From Edinburgh, I'll fly through either Paris or Brussels to Kinshasa; spend a couple of nights in Kinshasa to collect research permits. Then I will fly from Kinshasa to Djolu which takes four hours in an American four seat, single engine Cessna 182 (see picture); then ride by motorbike for another four hours to get to Wamba. The Democratic Republic of Congo is a beautiful country, but **conflict** in the eastern provinces means that there are many **travel safety precautions** to take into account. At every step I'll be with a Japanese researcher or Congolese employee. DRC is also an enormous country spanned by dense jungle, so Wamba feels like a lifetime away from the conflict.

Once at Wamba, it will hopefully be five months of smooth data collection (isn't that how all field work goes?) Last

**“Possibly the biggest challenge is actually getting to Wamba”**

time, I was sent from September to February, coinciding with the long **rainy season** from October to January. Not ideal for video data collection. Now that I'm doing my own research, I make sure that I avoid this period. I will follow the bonobos

for half days, five days a week, recording an equal amount of video footage of gestures for each individual. Wamba is a very basic field station with solar panels to

charge my camera and computer, but **no internet access** except for a shared email account to use once a week – data entry without distractions.

Now that February's getting closer, and I'm arranging flights, visa, permits, and vaccinations, the fieldwork seems much more real. I'm looking forward to returning to Wamba, and coming back with a tonne of data to code and analyse just in time for the summer.

**Kirsty Graham**

*PhD Student of Professor Richard Byrne,  
School of Psychology & Neuroscience*



# Martyrs Kirk: Your Space!



Photo credit: Andrew Lee

The newly redeveloped Martyrs Kirk on North Street is now open for business and is available to postgraduate research students, academic staff and academic-related staff.

Now known as the Martyrs Kirk Research Library, the first official visitors to grace the space included 600th Anniversary Celebrations guests Hillary Clinton, Tim Berners-Lee and the Right Revd Dr Rowan Williams as well as many other well-known honorary graduates.

The building consists of two reading rooms: a Research Reading Room (occupying the former church) which consists of 40 study spaces and a Special Collections Reading Room (in the church hall). The rear of the building is occupied by a Seminar Room for Library staff to use as a teaching space.

The Research Reading Room opened for business on Monday 30 September,

and is available to Postgraduate Research students. It contains ~5,000 volumes of research materials requested by academic users in the Faculties of Arts and Divinity. The Special Collections Reading Room represents a stage in the development of a long-term solution to the need for dedicated accommodation for the Library's Special Collections. Users will hopefully have a more attractive, more comfortable and much better situated reading room in the Research Library. Remember to order the materials you wish to consult in advance. Any ordered materials will be delivered by van to the new Reading Room.

In developing the Martyrs Kirk Research Library, the University has

**“Remember to order  
the materials you  
wish to consult”**

created a beautiful space, with a high-quality finish, which successfully translates its original function to support worship and prayer into a sanctuary for learning and research. There is a fantastic use of light to illuminate the highlights of the new

interior as well as the original architecture, and the awe-inspiring stained glass in windows such as the 'Hymn of the Universe', designed by Sadie McLellan in 1989, the building is a beautiful addition to the postgraduate space.

The Special Collections Reading Room will allow Special Collections to operate in a new way, with regular delivery runs for requested offsite material. It is anticipated that this service will begin early December 2013.





## How can the Library help you?



Academic Liaison Team: Subject Support  
(left to right: Beth, Vicki, Colin, Hilda)

We can help you throughout the different stages of your research, from finding literature to develop your arguments, to submitting your finished thesis!

If you are struggling to find the right article, we can show you search techniques for the different databases and resources you might use. We can also discuss what resources are available to you and look at what might be the best sources for you. While you are gathering articles and references, we can help you organise and save these using reference management software such as EndNote or Mendeley. Once you are writing and are ready to publish, we can discuss the different publication routes open to you, the best journals for your subject, the Open Access options available and through our Journal Hosting Service, even help you set up your own journal!

When you are ready to submit your thesis, we are here to advise on how to deposit it in the Research@StAndrews:FullText repository.

Visit us in the Library, you can talk to our friendly staff at the Helpdesk, email us on [library@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:library@st-andrews.ac.uk) or arrange an individual appointment with your Academic Liaison Librarian. Who is your Librarian? Find out here: [www.st-andrews.ac.uk/library/contact/academicliaison](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/library/contact/academicliaison)

The Library also has information on requesting an embargo and how to submit electronic theses.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

## Publishing your PhD

As your Supervisor will tell you, one of the most important outcomes of your PhD research is a peer-reviewed publication and you should be encouraged in advance of your viva to start looking for potential publishers.

There are many university press publishers to consult along with the larger commercial publishers who run series in various disciplines. It is worth taking the time to look carefully at the publishers' websites and perhaps consider the following before making contact:

- Which publisher has titles in a similar field to yours? Where will your work be best placed?
- Many publishers have discipline representatives who visit the University annually – ask around your School to see if such a visit is planned and when it might happen. It enables you to meet with section editors to gain more information about their submission and review process.
- What additional research or chapters will be added to the PhD research in order to turn it into a book? Has the PhD already had an impact on outside organisations, government or events? This should be included as a new item in the chapter list.
- What will be the suggested title of your book? It should be eye-catching and easily remembered.

- If you were asked to give an abstract to someone in 30 seconds about your book, would you be able to give a precise description? A way round this is to imagine someone lifting your book from a bookshelf and reading the blurb on the back and that being their only means of gauging how relevant or vital your written work is. It is important to be as concise and informative as possible.

Publication can be long and drawn out. All publishers have submission processes and regulations that are followed in advance of signing any contract and these 'Notes for Authors' are included on all the websites.

When you do finally agree on a publisher and you have signed the contract, pay close attention to timescales and submission dates. At the point of signing, your publisher will include your book in their forthcoming listings with an expected print date. If you stray too far from this, you are not only letting yourself and the publisher down but also your readers.

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**Gillian Duncan**  
*Administrative Manager, CSTPV and Editor,  
Journal of Terrorism Research*

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# Postgraduate Research Experience Survey: Key Themes

In the Spring of 2013, research postgraduates were given an opportunity to make their views known through the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey.

Some of the issues that were noted from the results of this survey are already being addressed by the University, in particular, the provision of study space (Martyrs Kirk Reading Room and office space in the Bute building).

St Leonard's is actively working to improve the sense of community and increase the opportunities for students to network outside their Schools and attend academic and social events with students from across the University.

**Key themes that have been identified are:**

- 1** Training for new supervisors and support for 'overloaded' supervisors.
- 2** Support for development of researcher skills beyond the project / thesis.
- 3** Library resources are perceived to be inadequate for researcher needs.
- 4** Strengthening a sense of researcher community to improve 'research ambience'.
- 5** Clarity of information around induction, monitoring, progression and assessment of PhD students.
- 6** Improving the formal training and support for postgraduates who teach.
- 7** Greater engagement by the University to ensure that feedback is acted up and that action points are communicated widely.

Many of these points are already being addressed and St Leonard's College is keen to hear the opinions of all postgraduates. It is therefore the final point that we take particularly seriously. Having sought your views, we fully intend to take action: we will keep you informed of what we are doing and we will continue to listen to you. We hope that by working together, we will make improvements that will bring tangible benefits.



## CAPOD Funding Opportunities

Research Skills Innovation Grant: fund for students and staff who are encouraged to think more creatively about ways in which the generic skills development of postgrads, postdocs or supervisors can be facilitated through the GRADskills programme.

- up to £1,000 for smaller projects;
- up to £2,000 for larger projects.

An example of Innovation Grant funding is the project "Immersive Training Environment to Explore 3D Virtual Worlds for Student Transferable Skill" by Indika Perera in Computer Science.



# Dundee Science Festival



Photo credit: Dundee Science Festival

We all know that life as a postgraduate research student can be pretty busy. From teaching undergraduates, to meetings with your department, to attending courses, conferences and workshops, it is often a wonder we get any time at all to do this 'research' business we are

allegedly here to do. But amidst all the demands on our time, there is one sadly overlooked yet vital activity that we do not do enough of – **public engagement and outreach.**

**Why bother with it?** Why waste your time when you could be doing 'proper' research?

**Let me make a confession – I don't do outreach for entirely altruistic reasons.** It is a brilliant way for us to learn and practice new skills. Recently, I was involved in the Dundee Science Festival 2013 where I took part in five events. I organised two of them from scratch, I recruited helpers, booked venues, communicated with a huge range of people in various organisations, did some

## **"As researchers, it's important for us to inform the tax-paying public what we're actually doing with their money"**

publicity work. I learned how to persuade people to let me borrow expensive and sometimes dangerous equipment, as

well as designing experiments and demonstrations, and finally I was involved in delivering each of the events. It was exhausting, but just look at

the range of skills something like this can teach you, and how many of those skills you can apply to your 'real' career.

Public engagement is valuable to everyone. The public get an opportunity to learn about research from researchers themselves, and kids get the chance to be inspired by people who love their work.

As researchers, it is important for us to inform the tax-paying public what we're actually doing with their money.

Professionally, thinking of ways to demonstrate and explain our work to people is enormously beneficial to us. It often gives rise to new ways of looking at 'the simple stuff' that you would never have thought of otherwise (e.g. my recent use of a sword to explain disordered

quantum systems and a Nerf gun to demonstrate laser cooling). It is personally valuable to us in that it gives us an opportunity to practice skills like public speaking in a friendlier environment than a typical conference, and it lets us make connections and often opens doors for us. As a case in point, my outreach activities were the reason I was asked to write this article.

Public engagement activities are not an optional extra or just another drain on your time. They are an essential component of being a researcher, and a fun and useful way of quickly picking up new skills that a lifetime in a lab or office will never teach you. Getting involved in this stuff is not a waste of time; it is an investment, not only in your own future but also in the futures of those you just might end up inspiring.

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### **Steven Thomson**

*PhD student in the Condensed Matter Doctoral Training Centre in the School of Physics & Astronomy, working with Dr Frank Kruger on quantum criticality. He also writes for Sci@StAnd ([scistand.com](http://scistand.com))*

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# St Leonard's College



St Leonard's College was originally established in 1512 for the college for poor clerks of the Church of St Andrews. It now provides a sense of community, support and structure to the needs of research postgraduates.

I for one enjoy living in the internet era where my friends are just a Skype away, I can WhatsApp a picture to friends or family and, while I am not comfortable with Twitter, information can be a click away.

## Social Media

St Leonard's College has moved into the modern era with a Facebook page and a Twitter account (@StLeonards\_PGs). While these are mostly to keep you informed about ongoing events this is also a good way to make light of useful information. Some of the more popular posts have been:

- PHD Comic, Piled High and Deeper
- Stay safe cycling
- The Krebs Cycle, rapped to the tune of Macklemore's "Thrift Shop"
- Home-made cider from St Leonard's Orchard
- How to give a memorable talk
- Want to be a politician or get into science policy. Check out the 20 top science tips for politicians.

The College is here to listen to you! What do you want? What do you need? Please help mould YOUR College.

## Structure

St Leonard's College has academic leadership provided by the Provost, Professor Verity Brown. This role is supported by two Pro Provosts one from Arts and Humanities and one from Science and Medicine. Dr Grant Macaskill is the Pro Provost for Arts and Humanities and has been instrumental in the establishment of the Scottish Graduate School for the Arts and Humanities. Dr Colin Allison is the Pro Provost for Science and Medicine in Computer Science and is very knowledgeable about postgraduate affairs. The Provost team is very approachable and friendly; if you have a postgraduate problem do not hesitate to get in touch.

Other Postgraduate support includes, Toria Johnson in Student Services who is available to offer postgraduate support and for those in halls, there are the St Leonard's Wardens and a postgraduate team in Registry.

## Community

In order to help provide a sense of community a number of events have run through the Autumn Semester 2013. These talks have been followed by a loosely termed "networking event" or free food and chat at the "break out" area in the newly refurbished Bute Building which provides some lovely Postgraduate space.

The first event was the fabulous Kate Cross talking about the Bright Club (see page 5). Bright Club has now trained its first batch of researchers and hosted a Bright Club comedy night in Venue 2. I don't know about you but I would be up for watching some of our researchers talk

about their research, their frustrations, joys and relationships. If comedy appeals to you then you should keep an eye out for Bright Club. Also, Jorge Cham of PhD Comics visited and gave a fabulously funny talk on the Power of Procrastination in March 2014.

In addition, we have also had Vincent Janik talk about acoustic studies in Marine Mammals and the Scottish Institute of Enterprise. One of my favourite talks was by the Ruth Robinson and David MacFarlane who talked about Science Outreach, how to get involved and what it can mean. This was probably the first and only time I have had marbles and party poppers involved in talks. It was good fun and I think I personally helped save 95% of a town from a volcanic eruption!

The College has not only provided talks wine and nibbles but also a couple of coffee mornings organised at the Chaplaincy. This is where people can pop in and have a cuppa. The Provost team have also been present so that if anyone has something they want to talk about then they can take the opportunity. A variety of people turned up to the coffee mornings along with their golf clubs. It can be a place where you can talk about your future prospects where do you see yourself and how you can achieve that goal.

## Dr Tamara Lawson

St Leonard's College Administrative Officer  
[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/pgstudents/stleonards](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/pgstudents/stleonards)

Facebook: <http://on.fb.me/18nCq1S>  
Twitter: @StLeonards\_PGs



# St Andrews is Scottish University of the year

The University of St Andrews has been named Scottish University of the Year in *The Times* and *Sunday Times* University Guide 2014.

St Andrews is also ranked fourth in the United Kingdom, equalling its highest ever ranking by either *The Times* or *The Sunday Times* and as a result it was shortlisted for the title of UK University of the Year.

Professor Louise Richardson, the Principal of the University said, "The timing of this announcement, as we reach the conclusion of our 600th Anniversary celebrations, is auspicious."

**"Luck however has absolutely nothing to do with the achievement itself"**

"Luck however has absolutely nothing to do with the achievement itself."

"It is due entirely to the talent and dedication of all who work and study here; our academic Schools, our service units and our students, who are the ultimate ambassadors for the unique blend of research-led teaching which is at the heart of the St Andrews mission."

The new *The Times* or *The Sunday Times* Guide shows that St Andrews has moved from sixth to fourth in the UK, that its student satisfaction rating of 85.9% is the highest in Scotland and one of the highest in the UK, its facilities spend per student is the highest in Scotland at £2,298.

In 2013, an independent economic impact assessment found that St Andrews generates over £484 million per year for the Scottish economy and supports over 9,000 Scottish jobs. For every £1 of public



money invested in research and teaching at St Andrews, it returns £12.50 to the Scottish economy.

In a message to St Andrews staff and students, Professor Richardson said she hoped they would all "take considerable pride" in the part they had played in helping St Andrews secure the University of the Year title.

## Call My Name? Dolphins have names...?



Dr Vincent Janik who gave a talk for the St Leonard's College Postgraduate Talk series finds his research in the limelight again.

The research was carried out by marine biologists Dr Stephanie King and Dr Vincent Janik.

The work showed that bottlenose dolphins can use copying of signature whistles as a way of "calling" animals on an individual basis. It was conducted using playback experiments with wild bottlenose dolphins off the Scottish coast.

Their work published this year in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society* showed that dolphins often copy the signature whistles of their close relatives and friends. Signature whistles make up about

50% of an animal's whistles and broadcast its identity to others. This new study tests whether animals that are addressed with copies of their signature whistles really react to them.

The team followed groups of wild dolphins and recorded the dolphin unique 'signature' whistles using a novel signature identification method. They then played back either a computer version of an animal's signature whistle, or control whistles of either an unfamiliar animal from a different population or a familiar animal from the same population.

Each dolphin only reacted when hearing the computer version

of its own signature whistle, but not to the other whistles played back to it. Showing that dolphins can be addressed in this way was the missing link to demonstrate that signature whistles function as names.

Dr King explained: "Animals have been found to use calls to label predators or food but these calls are inherited and not influenced by learning.

"The use of new or learned sounds to label things is rare in the animal kingdom."

**"The use of new or learned sounds to label things is rare in the animal kingdom"**

However, it is ubiquitous in human society and at the heart of human language. There are good data showing the ability to invent new sounds and copy them in dolphins and this led us to design our experiments".

This new study and previous work really demonstrates that signature whistles are used like names.

Dr Janik added: "Our results present the first case of naming in mammals, providing a clear parallel between dolphin and human communication. In

experimental work, parrots are also good at learning novel sounds and using them to label objects. Some

parrots may also use these skills in their own communication. Thus, both dolphins and parrots present interesting avenues of research for understanding labelling or naming in the animal kingdom."

The results are published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS).

# Mental Health



Photo credit: Christopher Davy

When you hear the words “mental health” what do you think of?

Does it make you consider ideas of abnormal behaviour? Possibly someone who is socially isolated? These can be unhelpful stereotypes, and sometimes can even make talking publicly about mental health a daunting prospect. All of this can put us off from paying the proper attention to our own mental health. Here at St Andrews, we believe mental health should be a priority for all students.

In reality, mental health is something that affects us all, whether it is a question of dealing with existing issues or maintaining a healthy balance in our lives to prevent future problems. It is normal to have problems, or to feel sad, lonely, or stressed. The pressures of postgraduate study can magnify these things, and can make everyday life feel like more of a challenge. It is important to be aware of your own mental wellbeing, to know when to seek help, and to remember that you are not alone.

This is often easier said than done. Recent headlines suggest that up to a third of British adults “feel that they have no one to turn to in a crisis” (BBC). Loneliness is common, and it is not restricted to the elderly or housebound. Many of you will be far away from home while undertaking your studies, and, while it is natural to feel some degree of homesickness, it is important not to let it get out of hand. While modern technology can be a godsend for those living away from home, it is also vital to know that there is a community at hand to support you both within the University and in the local area.

If you are worried about any mental health issues, **Student Services** is there to help you. Aside from offering normal counselling services – both on an individual and group basis – there is a Postgraduate Support Adviser, to support and develop the PG community, and to see any PG student about academic and personal issues. You can contact the PG Support Adviser through the **Advice and Support Centre (ASC)**, at 79 North Street, or by email at [support.advice@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:support.advice@st-andrews.ac.uk). Student Services also offers comprehensive webpages with plenty of advice and information about how to manage your mental wellbeing, and what to do if things are getting out of hand. It can be found at [www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/advice/personal/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/advice/personal/).



**student  
minds**

Student Services also supports a number of student organisations devoted to student mental welfare. The **Mental Wealth Project** is a student-led campaign that aims to raise awareness of mental health issues, to reduce stigma surrounding mental health, and to hold events to improve/promote the mental well-being of all St Andrews students. **Nightline** offers a confidential and anonymous listening and information service run by students, for students every night of term time. If you want to speak in confidence, about anything, give them a call. You can call them between 8pm and 7am any night of the week on: 01334 (46) 2266. More information can be found at:

[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/nightline](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/nightline). The Students’ Association has also recently elected a Wellbeing Officer to the Students’ Representative Council, whose aim is to further support the mental welfare of all students.

The **University Chaplaincy**, led by the Rev. Dr Donald MacEwan, is available to any student, regardless of personal belief, either on an individual basis or in a group setting. They can be contacted at [chaplaincy@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:chaplaincy@st-andrews.ac.uk). Self Help groups aimed at supporting anyone affected by depression (directly or indirectly) run in both St Andrews and Dundee. The **St Andrews Depression and Anxiety Support Group** meet on the first Monday of every month in Mansefield, Chaplaincy Centre, opposite the Students’ Union. They can be contacted on: [stadasgroup@gmail.com](mailto:stadasgroup@gmail.com).

One of the recommended methods for dealing with symptoms of depression is keeping active. In fact, maintaining a healthy and active social life is an important part of looking after your mental wellbeing. Fortunately the University is rich in societies and clubs that you can join to meet likeminded people and find activities to suit your interests. While most societies are open to both undergraduates and postgraduates, there are some which aim to cater specifically to the postgraduate community. Specifically open to postgraduates are badminton, cricket and hiking clubs. We understand that there is the potential for much more activities for postgraduates and therefore we welcome people to discuss ideas with St Leonard’s College and/or your Postgraduate representatives.



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# A new Scottish Graduate School for Arts and the Humanities

A Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities (SGSAH) is being established as a result of £14.2 million worth of funding being secured from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and £1.8 million from the Scottish Funding Council.

This Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) will provide postgraduate studentships and training in the arts and humanities. It will be open for applications from early 2014 for PhD entry to the consortium's institutions in October 2014.

The Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities will be formed from a consortium of Scottish universities, led by Glasgow and comprising St Andrews, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow School of Art, Stirling and Strathclyde universities.

The newly-created SGSAH will be administered from the University of

Glasgow, but with shared governance across all partner institutions.

Professor Murray Pittock, Head of the College of Arts at the University of Glasgow, speaking for the consortium, said: "The establishment of the SGSAH represents a departure from existing

**"It will be open for applications from early 2014 for PhD entry to the consortium's institutions in October 2014"**

models of postgraduate research education. It is a potentially transformative step in changing the landscape of arts & humanities doctoral provision in Scotland."

The status of the SGSAH as a national organisation, involving a range of Scottish Higher Education Institutions, will provide the framework for the development of more coherent, strategic and sustainable partnerships with organisations from across the creative, cultural and heritage sectors.

There are more than 30 organisations supporting this work, ranging from

the National Galleries Scotland, to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, to Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, to Dundee Repertory Theatre.

Professor Pittock added: "The SGSAH will develop doctoral researchers across Scotland who not only recognise the value of arts & humanities research but who have the skills, experience, aspiration and confidence to apply that research in addressing issues of economic, social and cultural importance."

Professor Rick Rylance, Chief Executive of the AHRC, said: "This is an important step forward in delivering the best possible training and support for postgraduate students in the arts and humanities, and in developing a collaborative approach which pools expertise and expands horizons for postgraduate researchers.

"We are delighted at how the sector and partners beyond the sector have responded, and we look forward to working closely with them to support the next generation."

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## Scottish Institute of Enterprise

**Campbell Hasting the Scottish Institute of Enterprise (SIE) intern discusses SIE and what they can offer postgraduates.**

The SIE encourages students to engage in enterprise and to develop skills that are valuable for developing business ideas or for employment.

Ann Davidson and Dawn Shand from the SIE recently visited St Andrews as part of the St Leonard's College talk series. Ann Davidson, SIE Enterprise Programme Director introduced the SIE to the postgraduate community. It was a chance for those interested in enterprise to hear more about the specific programmes that SIE has to help students. Dawn Shand, the SIE Business Adviser, was also available.

The SIE achieves their goals through various competitions and events, such as the current 'Fresh Ideas' competition that invites and supports students to develop innovative business ideas, with

business support and cash prizes up for grabs. My role as Intern for the University of St Andrews involves supporting current efforts by the University and Careers Centre to encourage entrepreneurship, and to make students aware of the great opportunities that SIE presents to all students in Scotland, for free. SIE's regional business adviser, Dawn Shand, has a clinic in St Andrews monthly to offer help to those thinking about starting up their own business, or to those simply wanting to develop an idea and see if it is viable to do more work on.

My role has inspired me to set up a business of my own one day. One of SIE's recent introductory competitions, 'Get Enterprising' asked participants to write down a problem that they see in the world and to come up with an innovative solution, the catch being that this was to be conveyed in just a couple of sentences. It became apparent to me

that problem solving is what enterprise and innovation is all about. As society becomes more technologically advanced, consumer products have to be aimed to make life more 'convenient'. The latest smartphones are the fusion of many gadgets of days gone by into one small, 'smart' device, where the user no longer has the problem of carrying a laptop, a PDA and a camera, as their phone does it all. 'Get Enterprising' illustrated how anyone can be enterprising and come up with innovative ideas. SIE are here to help any student develop the business and life skills that allow them to turn an idea into a successful reality.

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**Campbell Hastings**  
Scottish Institute of Enterprise (SIE) intern  
[www.sie.ac.uk](http://www.sie.ac.uk)

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# Sense about Science

We have all seen outrageous misrepresentations of science in the media. From the invention of the lightsaber last year to the continuous stream of 'substance X causes cancer', it is hard to avoid the deluge of sensationalised science. But how do we, as young scientists, go about fixing things? Well, that is exactly what the annual 'Standing Up For Science' workshop in November aimed to teach us. Sense About Science and Voice of Young Science (VOYS), run a media engagement workshop designed to give participants the confidence and know-how to speak out publicly about the science we love and stop the media from misunderstanding it. The workshop consisted of three panel sessions interspersed with group work activities.

The workshop began with a panel session where three eminent scientists – Professor Miles Padgett, Dr Eleanor Gilroy and Professor Sergio della Sala

– spoke about their experiences about communicating science. The combination of the three was inspiring, with a captivating blend of advice and hilarious anecdotes, particularly from Sergio who was ever-ready with a funny story to illustrate his point. They advised us to think carefully before we say something that could be misused, to make sure we communicate well rather than just ticking the box marked 'did some public engagement' and above all, practise, practise, practise!

Next up was a journalist session where journalists Jeremy Armstrong, Peter Ranscombe and Anne McNaught gamely put themselves in the firing line as participants gave them a grilling on what they look for in a story and how they balance scientific accuracy with mass appeal. A particularly hot topic was on where the responsibility for scientific accuracy in journalism lies – with the researchers to communicate effectively, or

with the journalists to report it accurately?

Rounding off the day was a third panel session with Chris Peters from Sense About Science. VOYS member Lewis Dean and University of Glasgow media relations officer Ross Barker, giving us a last round of general tips on how to deal with the media, how not to get into difficulties and to use the university press office's experience and know-how to help prepare us before we jump head first into the murky world of the media.

All-in-all, it was a fantastic day, and not only was it immensely interesting and useful, it was a wonderful opportunity to meet other likeminded early career researchers. This workshop comes highly recommended!

## Steven Thomson

*PhD student in the Condensed Matter Doctoral Training Centre in the School of Physics & Astronomy. He also writes for Sci@StAnd (scistand.com).*

## Higher Education Academy Travel Fund



Bursaries of up to £300 to encourage staff and students in Scottish HEIs to engage with colleagues from other parts of

the UK through the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in Scotland.

The HEA fund is unrelated to CAPOD funding. Application can be made to the Academy Scotland fund separately or in addition to an application to CAPOD. Applications are accepted throughout the academic year until the fund is completely disbursed.

[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/funding](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/funding)

## Funding for External Research Student Development Events

CAPOD has a Research Student Development fund to help all research postgraduate students to attend external courses and events that provide transferable research skills development opportunities that are not available via the GRADskills programme. Research postgraduates may request up to a maximum of £150. This funding does not cover attendance at a discipline-specific event, unless there is a specific skills development opportunity on offer (e.g. a workshop on a statistical package used within your subject area).

Events that might be funded include:

- Vitae conferences / workshops
- Society for Research into Higher Education conferences / workshops
- British Library Postgraduate Open Days and workshops
- Career development events specific to your discipline
- Courses/workshops on public engagement or dealing with the media

Examples of events that have been funded in the past include: Broadening Horizons: Career management for researchers; Standing Up for Science media workshop.



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