STUNNING LIBRARY TRANSFORMATION
£11M REVAMP UNVEILED

CALLING ALL BOOK LOVERS...
YOUR CHANCE TO ADOPT A BOOK

BBC RADIO 1 DEBUT
GRADUATE LANDS DREAM DJ JOB
At the School of Arts and Humanities, our students have the desire to explore, to innovate and to create. Our subject areas are renowned for international and world-leading research. One of the largest academic Schools in the University, we offer students a wide range of subjects to study in an exciting research-led and highly interdisciplinary environment. Our teaching is regarded as innovative and the levels of student satisfaction are consistently high. A vibrant intellectual community is constantly enriched and renewed by the contribution of visiting scholars and practitioners.

Taught postgraduate provision includes:

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» MLitt Publishing Studies
» MSc International Publishing Management
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» LLM/MSc Financial Services Regulation *NEW*

For further information contact:
Sheilah Greig, School of Arts and Humanities
Email: sheilah.greig@stir.ac.uk  Web: www.stir.ac.uk/arts-and-humanities
Kerry Bryson is the new Director of Development and External Affairs at the University of Stirling. An Alumna of Trinity College Dublin, she has a successful track record in fundraising, alumni relations, marketing and communications.

I am delighted to welcome you to the new eco-friendlier sized edition of Stirling Minds. The smaller format allows us to engage with over 40,000 alumni in 145 countries whilst significantly reducing our postage and print costs.

If you have just graduated, I congratulate you and urge you to remain actively involved in the life of the University. A strong alumni network benefits Stirling, its current students and fellow graduates in many ways.

Whether you are a new graduate, an established friend or a member of staff, I hope you enjoy reading this magazine. If you have not visited the University recently, I hope you will be impressed by the pictures of the dramatic library transformation (p22).

We continue to be grateful to the many generous benefactors who contributed to this project. When alumni, staff and friends demonstrate tangibly that they care about the future of their University, it sends out a positive message to the rest of the world that Stirling is an institution worthy of the widest support. You can still play a part in our future success by participating in our Adopt a Book campaign (p26).

You can also catch up with news of fellow alumni in Class Notes (p36). I am delighted that so many graduates want to share their latest news and achievements with us. This issue spotlights alumni doing extraordinary things: you can read about BBC Radio 1 DJ Ally McCrae (p12), dragonologist Rose Jardine (p41) and tennis ace Colin Fleming (p46). But we want to hear more. Please email the Alumni Relations Manager, Jennifer Nicol with your news at: jennifer.nicol@stir.ac.uk

I’m looking forward to meeting many of you over the coming months and learning about your life after Stirling.

Kerry Bryson
Director of Development and External Affairs
The student experience at Stirling is just getting better and better, according to the Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey. Stirling is rated as best in the UK for its campus environment and second in the UK for its sports facilities, while staff and lecturers also receive high ratings. Stirling is also ranked in the UK top ten in the National Student Survey.

Our first Singapore graduation ceremony took place last July. We are continuing to enhance our reputation as an international education provider: a new Master's course in Media Communications Management was launched at Vietnam National University and we also deliver our prestigious MBA in Finance at Foreign Trade University, Hanoi.

Professor Kathleen Jamie, one of Scotland’s finest writers, was appointed to the inaugural Chair in Creative Writing, adding weight to a dynamic team with an international reputation for expertise in literature and publishing. Her poetry was showcased recently in a Pathfoot exhibition alongside the artwork of Brigid Collins. The appointment is one of 30 new professorships and lectureships demonstrating significant investment in world-class academic expertise.
Sir Alex Ferguson, regarded as one of the world’s greatest football managers, has been made a Doctor of the University. Still going strong after 25 years at the helm of Manchester United, where he has just won the league yet again, he spent part of his playing career at Falkirk FC, who now have their football academy on campus.

In Bangladesh, the Institute of Aquaculture set up a community education centre to teach local people how to get the most from fish. Growing demand for fish is putting pressure on the country’s aquatic systems and Dr Andrew Shinn identified an opportunity to teach the local community the importance of conservation, and also became involved in running a night school for some of the area’s poorest children.

In 2011, the University will launch its new Strategic Plan. Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Gerry McCormac said: “The Strategic Plan sets out the objectives of the University and will inform our work through to 2016. It articulates our vision, our institutional priorities and the actions that are required to ensure success. It sets targets that will enable us to improve our self-reliance and create an intellectual space in which students and staff are inspired to discover their unique capacities to contribute to the changing needs of society.”
long live the book
Are ebooks the next chapter in publishing? Professor Claire Squires, Director of the Stirling Centre for International Publishing and Communication, says our love of the printed word isn't over yet.

As anyone who travels regularly on public transport will know, there has been an explosion of digital reading. 2010 saw the long-awaited launch of Apple’s iPad; Amazon UK’s launch of the Kindle made it a Christmas bestseller; and the ubiquity of smartphones has pushed up our consumption of content on the move. Publishing industry trade fairs and conventions are abuzz with discussion of the latest technological developments. Books are being redeveloped for the 21st century, both as straight digital copies of print books, but also as ‘enhanced’ editions, featuring audio, video, and interactivity. The publishing industry has reached a digital tipping point.

Rumours of the death of the printed book have been circulating for well over a decade. Did the digital gurus speak a little too soon? Books sold in unprecedented quantities in the 1990s and 2000s, with the works of blockbusting authors Dan Brown, J K Rowling, Stephanie Meyer and Stieg Larsson piled high in booksellers and supermarkets. It’s easier than ever to make books via desktop publishing and print-on-demand (POD) technologies, and we’re producing more new titles than ever before.

Anyone involved in the publishing industry will tell you that it has been digital for decades, with publishing workflow, digital technologies, ecommerce and now social media being used to produce, manage, print, distribute and market books. Some market sectors – reference, journals and STM (science, technical and medical) – passed their digital tipping point long ago.

But big change has come at the end of the first decade of the 21st century in the area of general consumer, or ‘trade’, books. This change will radically reshape the industry. For publishers, there is a risk of falling out of the supply chain altogether unless they can continue to demonstrate their value. In recent months, the literary agents representing the estates of Ian Fleming and Catherine Cookson decided to take their ebooks straight to retailers.

Consumers want to pay even less for ebooks than the heavily discounted prices of the supermarkets, even if ebooks are liable for VAT (print books are exempt in many countries). Every sector of the book trade is anxious about digital piracy, despite technological advances in digital rights management.

While high street bookshops are having to diversify to survive, Amazon’s market share for selling print books has grown exponentially, positioning itself perfectly to control digital book sales. Its chief competitors for the future of the book market are likely to be technology and internet companies: Apple and Google.

That such big and powerful players are squaring up in the marketplace for digital book content tells us firmly that the book is far from dead, although it might well be produced, distributed and consumed in very different ways in the future. For the landscape of publishing and bookselling is undergoing seismic change, and while the death of the print book might have been greatly exaggerated, the rise of the ebook has only just begun.

To comment on this or any of our other articles see our feedback form at www.stirlingminds.ac.uk
"Dementia care costs more than cancer, stroke and heart disease put together and it's still not done well enough," says Professor June Andrews of the Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC) at the University. "It needs to be transformed, and we are in the process of doing that."

As the DSDC marks its 21st anniversary, there are now 750,000 people in the UK living with dementia. It's likely that everyone who reads this magazine will know someone who has dementia and one in three of us over the age of 65 will eventually be affected.

It was a far sighted move for Professor Mary Marshall to come to the University in 1989, to set up the first centre for the improvement of dementia services. Now there are accredited training courses for professionals, specialist training courses for carers at all levels and far greater awareness of the importance of the therapeutic environment.
"Frank used to get up too early and disturb everyone else. We’d try to make him go back to bed and cause even more commotion. After our manager went on a Dementia Services Development Centre course, she introduced life story work. It turns out that Frank had been a postman and getting up early was part of his past life. Today, Frank gets up when he wants and we fit in around him. No more rows in the morning."

Care worker in a care home

"It's vital for high quality dementia care that the people delivering the care have at least a basic understanding of how the condition affects both brain and body," says Professor Andrews. "We know what a difference that makes and awareness is growing among care providers, as well as the wider public, who will expect standards of care to continually improve."
"Our day centre was due for a refurbishment and we called the DSDC for advice. Basically we did everything that is in their books across a range of design and technology ideas. It cost less than a traditional refurbishment and since then we’ve saved a fortune in reduction in falls and other adverse incidents."

Director of Social Work, local authority

"DSDC has demonstrated how doing dementia care properly costs less than doing it badly and how to turn services around," says Professor Andrews.

The DSDC is internationally recognised as a centre for excellence in co-ordinating dementia projects which produce tangible results. Much of its work is funded by the Dementia Services Development Trust, established to extend and improve services for people with dementia and their carers.

The DSDC library houses one of the UK’s largest collections of publications on dementia. DSDC also writes its own publications in house and sold £200,000 worth last year alone. 10 Helpful Hints for Carers sold 13,000 copies in its first year – many of them to healthcare professionals who had no knowledge of how to deal with dementia.

"We focus on what nurses, care homes and carers at home have to do just to make life easier for people if they have been diagnosed with dementia," says Professor Andrews. "People shouldn’t fear having dementia or dread having to care for someone in that position."

"Thanks to the Centre’s vision, hospital care is improving, health and social care staff are better educated, information for carers is of extremely high quality and levels of diagnosis are increasing."

To find out more about the work of DSDC, including training, publications and how to donate see: www.dementia.stir.ac.uk
You describe yourself as a self-confessed gig addict, so when did your love of new music begin?

I was fortunate enough to grow up in a house filled with music. I was the one with the loud mouth, acting out my pre-teen rebellion by staying up late, listening to Colin Murray, Lamacq and Mike Davis. This led to me sneaking out the house to see my first gig when I was 12 (my mum will know that now!). This set me on the path that I’m still on, going to as many gigs as I can and listening to dozens of demos every week. My best pal and I also have an online blog (www.detour-scotland.com) where we give exposure to Scottish acts by filming them playing live in bizarre and wonderful places. On top of that we host gigs and musical mystery tours. I’m also taking part in Starter for 6, a creative industries training programme for up and coming Scottish entrepreneurs, as I want to set up my own music production company.
How did you get work experience in radio?

I joined Stirling’s student radio station Air3 in my first year with my six flatmates for a laugh – but once I caught the broadcast bug, I realised that studying Philosophy wasn’t for me and switched to Film and Media Studies. I ended up running the station for two years and I learnt a lot there while presenting and producing a weekly show. We started with just three shows a week, but by the time I left there were 50.

So how did the Radio 1 gig come about?

While I was at Air3 I took part in a BBC Radio feature on the Vic Galloway show – giving students like me ten minutes on air every month for six months. Last August, when Vic was on holiday, I filled in for him for two weeks and in September they offered me the job – I had no idea it had been an interview. My first show was terrifying. The other shows had been live but scripted, this was me just speaking. I was also running the desk for the first time, trying to make sure I pressed all the right buttons – I managed to stop one track mid flow! I’m beyond excited to be joining Radio 1 and taking the reins of a show that is so vital in promoting the vast amount of cracking Scottish music being produced from this wee country. It’s an honour and I’ve made my mum very proud.

Listen to Ally on BBC Radio 1 from midnight on Sundays.
Cars will drive themselves

Cars that think for themselves could soon be science fact rather than fiction. Dr Amir Hussain has been awarded a research grant of over £350,000 to develop cognitive control mechanisms which would allow ‘thinking’ vehicles to drive themselves.

Using principles derived from the way that the animal brain functions, he aims to exploit a range of similarities between systems in control engineering and the animal brain to develop a new generation of planetary rover vehicles and ‘smart’ cars.

Dr Hussain is head of the Cognitive Signal Image Processing Research (COSIPRA) laboratory in the School of Natural Sciences. For this ambitious three-year project, he will collaborate with a world leading computational neuroscientist, Professor Kevin Gurney of Sheffield University.

Funded by the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, Dr Hussain says: "We now understand more about how humans make decisions in complex situations. What we are talking about are more intelligent ‘cognitive’ vehicles, equipped with sufficient cognitive skills – sensing, learning, decision making and control capabilities.

"This has never been done before. Smart cars might safely self-drive as well as humans do, be it an urban road setting or a challenging planetary terrain."

The COSIPRA Laboratory was established to lead and advance internationally-leading interdisciplinary research in brain-inspired cognitive systems. For further information see: www.cs.stir.ac.uk

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Research at Stirling is directly relevant to real world needs. We focus on five core areas: enterprise and the economy, health and well-being, culture and society, environment and sport.

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14 / STIRLING MINDS / Alumni, Staff and Friends
Preventing childhood obesity

The prevention of childhood obesity has taken a major step forward after research identified that children are most susceptible between the ages of seven and eleven.

Dr Adrienne Hughes, of the School of Sport, led researchers from the Universities of Stirling, Strathclyde, Glasgow and Bristol who tracked the body weight and height of nearly 5,000 children from birth to 15 years.

She said: “There has been a large amount of research on the prevalence of paediatric obesity but, until now, no studies have examined when it is most likely to develop. This research has enabled us to identify what stage of childhood and adolescence should be a priority for obesity prevention programmes and, hopefully, help to improve the success of these programmes.

“Interventions to increase physical activity, reduce screen time and improve diet should take place at all ages, but our results indicate that mid-childhood should be a priority.”

The researchers also examined if children and adolescents were likely to ‘grow out’ of overweight or obesity, finding the majority of overweight and obese children did not achieve this by the age of 15, further proof of the need for prevention.

The group is now looking to develop an obesity prevention programme tailored towards primary school-aged children.

“The main causes of obesity are a lack of physical activity, excessive intake of sugary drinks and a high level of sedentary behaviour such as watching television and playing computer games.”
Winning hearts and minds of young offenders

The first prison-based dog training rehabilitation programme in the UK is being launched at HMYOI Polmont, near Falkirk – the country’s largest young offenders’ institution, with over 700 residents. In this pioneering project, developed by the University in association with the Scottish Prison Service and Dogs Trust, male young offenders will learn how to train and rehabilitate rescue dogs for rehoming.

The research project is led by Rebecca Leonardi, studying for her PhD at Stirling. She said: “This project offers an exciting and innovative opportunity to make a considerable difference to the lives of the young offenders involved. It really is a win-win situation: by helping the dogs, the young offenders are helping themselves at the same time. The evaluation of the project will provide the research evidence we need to expand these types of programmes further, providing effective long-term strategies for rehabilitating offenders in Scotland.”

Studies in the USA, where there are already 65 prison-based dog training programmes, have shown a remarkable zero reconviction rate is possible when the trainers re-enter the community with new job and personal skills, as well as increased compassion. As for the dogs, they leave the programme ready to be great pets.
Diagnosing prostate cancer early

Men have a worrying tendency to delay seeing their GP to discuss symptoms which may be an indication of prostate cancer, despite this being the most common cancer in men in Scotland. Research undertaken by the University’s Cancer Care Research Centre, and funded by The Prostate Cancer Charity Scotland, found that 85 per cent of men diagnosed with prostate cancer in the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde area had experienced symptoms for more than a month before contacting a health professional. Almost half waited for more than a year before seeking medical advice.

This delay was despite more than half describing their symptoms as ‘troublesome’ and a quarter describing them as ‘painful’. While many thought their symptoms were just part of the normal ageing process, one in five delayed due to being ‘embarrassed’, and nine per cent said they would rather not find out if they were ill.

Dr Liz Forbat of the Cancer Care Research Centre said: “Knowledge of prostate cancer appears to be low. A viable intervention that draws on informal networks would encourage men who are most at risk of the disease to discuss with a health practitioner whether having a PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) blood test is right for them.”

For more information, visit: www.research.stir.ac.uk

» 2,700 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year in Scotland and 19,000 Scottish men are currently living with the disease.

» Although prostate cancer can be slow-growing, it can be aggressive in some cases – where time is very much of the essence. The earlier prostate cancer can be detected the higher the chance there is of it being treated successfully.
You might expect that if you gave your best friend a black eye and a broken lip in front of an audience then the result would be a court appearance. In Svein Clouston’s case, it earned him the very first Scottish Chess Boxing Championship.

Chess boxing started out as a comic book cartoon, which inspired Dutchman Lepe Rubingh to create an art installation, *Is it possible to play chess after a boxing round?* This led him to create the new sport of chess boxing in 2003, and the first Scottish Championship match, between Stirling graduates Svein and Alan Riley, took place in the Boston Dome in London in March 2011.

“I was attracted to chess boxing because it was so unusual,” says Svein. “I played chess as a kid but I’d never boxed, although I’ve done marathons and ironman events. I was looking for something different to do on a Saturday and saw a chess boxing class just over a year ago. I thought I’d give it a shot.”

Svein and Alan came to Stirling in 1998. They had been best friends in school but separation was on the cards when they applied to different universities: “I was listening to Aberdeen v Rangers on the radio and unpacking my stuff in my new room in Andrew Stewart,” says Svein, “when there was a knock on the door and I discovered that Alan was next door.

“I studied French and Politics at Stirling and was a sports journalist for a few years after graduating. But I was living and breathing football so I changed direction completely and went into publishing. I sell books and translate French contemporary fiction into English. It’s fantastic.”
“It was a bit of fun, but it was also brutal. It was such a close match we were both exhausted.”

Svein Clouston
“The hardest bit is to come out of the chess and into the boxing,” says Svein. “It’s a case of controlling the breathing – once you crack that it becomes easier.

“The Scottish Championship fight was very difficult as it was my first real fight and it was so different from the sparring that I’d been doing in training. All our friends from Stirling came down for the match and there was a crowd of 650 people there.

“I was nervous in the first round – those boxing gloves are big and can do damage. I found it difficult to control my concentration at the start as I expected to be able to beat Alan at chess. But his chess was good, so I had to try to knock him out – it was him or me.

“Alan was winning the chess but I managed to get it back to stalemate and just scraped the boxing on points. It was the first chess boxing match that’s ever gone the full 11 rounds and the atmosphere was fantastic – the crowd was roaring.

“It was a bit of fun, but it was also brutal. It was such a close match we were both exhausted.”

Svein says that all the exhibition matches to date have featured male boxers, but female players come to classes and take part in sparring. Chess boxing is not as violent as straight boxing matches.

“There’s a fine balance between using your muscle power and using your intellect – you need strength for the boxing and a calm, concentrated and tactical approach for the chess. Boxers do get beaten by chess players: if the chess player can hold off the challenge in the boxing, they can often stay in the match long enough to beat the boxer on the chessboard.”

Svein says it wasn’t difficult to box his best friend with the Scottish title at stake. In fact, he’s not sure that he could have done it against a complete stranger, which is why he’s hoping that no challengers will come forward.

“It’s all a bit tongue in cheek”, he says, “but I’m proud to be the first Scottish chess boxing champion.”
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Triumph of Space and
DONORS MAKING A DIFFERENCE
When the Earl of Wessex formally opened the new University library in March it was a chance to say thank you to some of our most committed donors, the people who really made a difference to the creation of the stunning contemporary environment.

Over ten per cent of the £11 million investment came from gifts, ensuring that distinctive features such as the Enterprise Zone could be created for the benefit of future generations of students.

The Earl was introduced to staff, students and donors as he toured the library, and was clearly impressed as he spoke at the unveiling ceremony, comparing the learning environment favourably to his own experiences as a History student at Cambridge.

Professor Gerry McCormac, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, paid tribute to the many benefactors, and said he hoped they would help the University to continue to grow: “This is not just about today; we have ambitious plans to enhance the quality of life at Stirling by creating a leading centre for educational engagement.”

On behalf of the students, Ross Main of the Students’ Union said: “This library, in these surroundings, makes the University a more amazing place for students to come and learn, meet friends for life and become the adults their parents want them to be.”

To everyone who contributed, thank you!

View an image gallery of the official opening here: www.stir.ac.uk/news/gallery/library-royal-opening

The University library is now a vibrant place fit for 21st century scholars following an £11 million redevelopment project.
Key features

The library structure is a listed building, so the shell was retained while its interior was completely reconfigured and redesigned, creating a light, spacious and hi-tech environment over three floors.

Working with the site’s existing qualities – in particular the spectacular views of the Airthrey Loch, the Ochil Hills and the campus parkland which surround it – the architects have created a light, spacious and welcoming environment, which meets the hi-tech needs of students and members of the public alike.

To make it a place where students will want to gather and study, the planners incorporated a lot of input from the students to provide a seamless service and make it a place that they feel is ‘theirs’, with zoned study space, wireless computer network and 24/7 opening for key services.

The state-of-the-art library saw an 80% increase in footfall when it reopened in August 2010 in time for the autumn semester, compared with figures for the same period in 2008 before the refurbishment programme began.

The interior spans out from a dramatic central lightwell with zoned study spaces for groups or individuals, circular study pods with swivelling touch-screen computers, informal reading sections and ten group study rooms equipped with the latest technology from iPod docking facilities for audio and video playback of field recorded material to high definition display facilities and infra-red broadcast technology for students with a hearing impairment. These rooms can be reserved via an electronic booking system located at the entrance to each room.

The Enterprise Zone, complete with armchairs and sofas, is the perfect meeting place for young entrepreneurs, while an adjacent lecture room seats up to 60 people.

The University’s valuable heritage collections, from James Hogg manuscripts to first edition Penguin books, are now in environmentally controlled storage, with choice items on permanent display in a floor to ceiling glass partition.

The entrance area is a generous space with several staffed reception desks. In addition, there are automated stations which assist visitors with self return and self issue of books, together with terminals which can help in the search for journals online and find the precise location of any particular book out of the half a million in stock. Users can also access 44,000 e-journal titles and 3,100 e-books.

If you can’t make it to the library in person, take an online tour: www.is.stir.ac.uk/tour

You can also view material from our special collections and exhibitions via Flickr pages, which have had over 20,000 views: www.flickr.com/photos/40937572@N08
To celebrate the reopening and transformation of the library, we have launched an ‘Adopt a Book’ campaign.

How can you help? We are inviting all our graduates and friends to adopt a book in the library. All donations will go to the Library Special Collections Fund to enable us to purchase valuable papers and materials when they come onto the market.

For every £30 you donate, we will recognise your support by placing a bookplate inside the front cover of a library book. You can even specify your chosen subject area. You will receive details of the book together with the classmark should you wish to view it on the shelf.

You may wish to consider adopting a book as a personal and unusual gift for a special occasion such as a birthday or as a thank you to your parents who have supported your time at University. Alternatively you may wish to commemorate a favourite professor, mark your graduation or dedicate a book to a friend. You may inscribe your bookplate personally or have one electronically generated for you by the University.

We hope that you will support this initiative and thank you, in advance, for your support.
Adopt a Library Book

Thank you for your kind offer to Adopt a Book at the University of Stirling. Your gift will be used to support the Special Collections Fund to help us purchase valuable papers and material when they become available.

Name: 
Home address: 
Town: 
Postcode: 
Email address: 
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I enclose my cheque/Charities Aid Voucher for £30.00 payable to ‘University of Stirling’
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Bookplates
To recognise your gift, the University will place a bookplate into a book within the library. You can (a) choose to have a name printed on the dedication; or (b) you can have a bookplate sent to you to inscribe a personal message and sign your name, before returning the bookplate to us.

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What book? Please specify a subject area, e.g. management, nursing, etc:

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For further information please contact:
Khlayre Mullin, Head of Development Services,
Development and External Affairs, University of Stirling, Stirling FK9 4LA
Tel: +44 (0) 1786 466675  Email: k.l.mullin@stir.ac.uk
macrobert

at 40
acrobert goes back almost as far as the University itself, opening in 1971 as Scotland’s first purpose built arts centre. It was the brainchild of the first Principal, Dr Tom Cottrell, who anticipated the importance of the arts to the University community and the wider population.

Students from those days would still recognise the essence of the macrobert, although the centre has gone through major refurbishment and extended towards the loch where the swans still come close – or too close – if you have your lunch at the shore.

"macrobert has been innovative from the very start," says Liam Sinclair, artistic director since September 2010. "We’re constantly evolving because if you’re not moving forward you’re moving back – there’s no such thing as standing still.

"The arts have a high impact on people’s lives and need to be accessible to everyone. On any one day we can have an eight-year-old in the crèche or a 90-year-old here to see the opera. We have everything from Scottish Ballet to theatre for babies, from Scottish touring theatre to international dance."

Retired Professor, Peter Meech, remembers stunning performances by world renowned artists in the 1970s. Vladimir Ashkenazy performed in the studio theatre, while Scottish Opera used macrobert as its base until the Theatre Royal was built in Glasgow.

In 1995, Hollywood came to Stirling when Catherine Zeta-Jones (below left) stepped out of her limousine and into the macrobert for the European Gala Premiere of Braveheart. In a stunning red dress, Zeta-Jones was accompanied by a kilted Mel Gibson (below left).

"It wasn’t an easy process to bring the premiere to macrobert," says Liz Moran, artistic director from 1992 to 2010. "We were competing with all the commercial distributors to get the premiere, but we had a good relationship with 20th Century Fox and were able to argue that Stirling was at the heart of the Braveheart story."

"I was there as an usher on opening night in 1971. It was a performance of The Rake’s Progress by Scottish Opera and the scenery had lots of scaffolding. Everyone thought the building wasn’t finished."

Jenny Harper (née Brown), BA English 1972
In 2002, the old macrobert underwent a radical refurbishment costing £6.3 million and emerged as a newly expanded arts centre, with a state-of-the-art cinema, children’s gallery, café/bar, crèche, dance workshop and Scotland’s first dedicated children’s theatre.

"The physical space is really relaxing," says Liam. "It doesn’t have that sense of stuffiness of theatres, but has a very easy environment where people can come and have a good time, no matter what age they are."

In 2008, macrobert became a separate entity from the University and is now a registered charity, raising funds from grants, donations and its own activities.

In September this year, all of macrobert will be turned into a birthday party venue and guests – including students, performers and young people – will be invited to do their party piece. At the end of the year, there will be a gala performance on the 40th anniversary of the panto.

An enduring element of the celebrations will be the creation of an archive of macrobert. "Everyone who reads this has a connection to the University and to macrobert," says Liam. "We would like you to share your memories, going right back to the very beginnings, so that they can be preserved in the archive for future generations of students and audiences."

Get involved in the macrobert’s big party on Saturday 17 September: www.macrobert.org/40

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"I was hypnotised by Robert Halpern on McBob stage. I ate an onion thinking it was an apple and danced round the stage like a ballerina."

Richard (Dickie) Arnott, BA Economics 1980

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BELOW
The centre has attracted high profile visitors including Dame Judi Dench
MAKING THEIR MARK
FROM NATURE TO NURTURE, THESE FOUR GRADUATES ARE SHAPING THE WORLD IN THEIR OWN UNIQUE WAY:

Anton Immink, MSc Aquaculture 1996
Senior Consultant, University of Stirling’s Institute of Aquaculture

I wanted to work in international development and my MSc in Aquaculture has definitely benefited my career. I’ve been lucky enough to work in many countries including Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Kenya, Malawi and Uganda. I can’t claim to know what it’s like to live in extreme poverty, but my training and field experience have helped me to understand how we can help alleviate poverty.

In Uganda, I am leading the Institute of Aquaculture’s work with several partners to develop a commercial catfish and tilapia farm that will bring jobs to hundreds of people. The farm development is bringing together commercial and technical expertise to attract international finance from investors and donors. Sharing this experience with students on the MSc in Sustainable Aquaculture is one of the highlights of my job as a Senior Consultant in Stirling Aquaculture.

I am also a Trustee of the Rwanda Scotland Alliance (RwSA). The RwSA was founded by a small group of people with an interest in strengthening links between the two countries. Last year we raised money to send technicians from Rwanda to Kenya and Uganda for practical, hands-on training in fully operational fish farms.

My job is exciting, invigorating and very rewarding. When I am not sharing my experiences around the world, I also get to work with some great people in the Institute of Aquaculture and enjoy the wonderful campus at Stirling.
I help save species from extinction. You know those red kites which were almost wiped out, and are all over the UK again? I helped to bring them back. And the Sumatran rainforest which is all but lost? I’m helping local people to replant it and protect it against illegal loggers, so that the rare Sumatran tiger, pygmy hippo and the biggest flower in the world all have a chance of survival. Mind you, I’ve never been to Sumatra. I do all this with over a million other people through the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB): www.rspb.org.uk

My journey from Stirling to the RSPB was a meandering one. My degree led to a job with the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), testing water and shellfish for toxins and several roles later I found myself working at a zoo with a reawakened passion for wildlife. It turns out I’m better at talking about nature than at researching it, which led me to a job with the RSPB.

I train staff and volunteers across the UK in raising funds to support our conservation work. I try to inspire people about nature and to give them confidence in asking people to support us. Over three quarters of our income is from individuals – ordinary people who care enough to put a little bit of money towards helping wildlife.

Future plans? I can’t imagine a more worthwhile job. I’m staying put!
If someone had told me as an 18-year-old fresher that my ideal job would one day involve play dough, bubbles and puppets then I may have reconsidered my History degree there and then.

After graduating, I completed a PGCE in Primary Teaching and later an MA in Autism and Education. In 2008 I set up my own UK-wide consultancy service, and most recently a charity supporting pre-school children with autism-related difficulties and their families. Our website is:

www.earlyinterventionscotland.org

I grew up at Stirling. My experiences and the people that I met at the University, truly inspired me to become the person I am today. I am also in the final stages of my professional doctorate, and without the excellent teaching at Stirling as a young student, I don’t believe I would have got this far academically.

Choosing to go down the path of self employment, and most recently setting up a charity from scratch, takes a great deal of confidence and a good bit of bravery. The charity, Speur-Ghlan Early Intervention Service, is the first of its kind in the UK and has just been successful in accessing a start-up lottery grant. I have chosen to base our premises at the Innovation Park at the University of Stirling because for me it feels like coming home.
I took some time out to travel after I qualified from Stirling and was spoilt for choice for jobs when I returned home eight months later. I feel this reflects the high regard in which Stirling nursing graduates are held.

I continued my studies to BSc (Hons) level while working full-time and was so inspired by my dissertation topic of bereavement support, that I became involved in the set up and evaluation of a similar service within my current role in intensive care. This has been both challenging and rewarding. This was the first of its kind within a critical care environment, and was nominated for an innovation award with the British Journal of Nursing. My colleagues and I were also awarded second place in the intravenous therapy category 2011 for clinical excellence and setting best practice standards.

The University equipped me with the ability and confidence to critique current knowledge to inform my practice, and to appreciate the importance of recognition of good work.

I am very fortunate to work with an excellent and motivated team, and to enjoy my job for the satisfaction and challenge it brings. I am excited to see where my career may lead me, and later this year I look forward to providing nursing support to a group of scuba divers in a remote location of Fiji for ten weeks.
Where are you working? What have you been doing since you left? Who would you like to get in touch with? Let us know and we’ll spread the word in the magazine and online.

2000s

MATTHEW SOWERBY, MED TQFE 2010
I’m Senior Lecturer in Photography and Art at Stevenson College in Edinburgh. My studies have illuminated my practice, renewing my enthusiasm for new pedagogical approaches embracing new technology and the traditional classroom environment. My studies were supervised by Greg Mannion, who I hold in great regard.

WESLEY PEREIRA,
MSC INVESTMENT ANALYSIS 2009
Since I left Stirling and returned to Brazil, a lot has happened to me. First of all I have been reintegrated to my previous job, but this time as project manager rather than project analyst. Stirling gave me more personal and professional maturity so I could improve my career.

AJITH KABBHALLI PRABHUSHWAMY,
MBA 2009
I’m currently working as a consultant at a leading executive search organisation, Stanton Chase International. We manage ‘C’ level recruitments for some of the leading Indian and Multi national organisations. I would like to be in touch with my fellow classmates and also would like to network with senior professionals from Stirling. I can be reached on kp.ajith@stantonchase.com (business email) ajith85@gmail.com (personal email) and +919004657772 (mobile number).

JULIEN REUTIN, BA (HONS) MARKETING 2008
Since graduating, I’ve created my export company in France specialising in French wine and spirits. My website is www.reutin-international.com - please get in touch.

SHANSHAN (APRIL) LI,
MSC INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS 2005
After graduation I worked in London for a few years and moved back to Beijing in the summer of 2007. Right now I am working for ABB China as a marketing communications officer. I’d like to get in touch with my classmate Shaffic who is from Pakistan. Many thanks.

NEIL CORBETT,
BSC (HONS) COMPUTING SCIENCE 2005
I am the youngest ever member of an executive team for a large Credit Union on Vancouver Island, BC - Island Savings. I’m responsible for full re-engineering of all processes for the entire organisation and a team of 24 staff. I’m married with two kids and soon to be a Canadian Citizen.
MAHARI CONNOR, BA SPORTS STUDIES 2002
My son was born in 2007, I married David in 2008 and my daughter was born in 2010. We’re living in Stamford, Lincs. Following graduate career in the city in investment management and as a swimming coach, I’m now a full time mum. I’d like to get in touch with Nicky Baxter (Nicola).

TRAVIS HICKEY,
BA (HONS) FRENCH AND SPANISH 2001
I’ve been a dancer and gymnast since a very young age. I’m in a dance troupe, Enchantment, and we’ve made it through to the semi finals of ‘Britain’s Got Talent’! Check out our website at www.enchantmentcirque.com

SCOTT FYFE, BA (HONS) MARKETING 1996
I’ve been appointed to the Marks and Spencer trading board as the Trading Director responsible for Womenswear and Per Una. I was previously the Executive Assistant to Sir Stuart Rose, former M&S CEO, and the Director in charge of Marks and Spencer’s environmental and ethical worldwide sourcing.

MARGARET BEATON,
BA (HONS) BUSINESS AND SOCIOLOGY 1997
I’m trying to get in touch with Theresa McDonald who was a classmate from 1993 - 1997. Theresa was doing Sociology and Social Policy, if I remember rightly. I’d like to get in touch with her again, or indeed with anyone who remembers me. I was in her Sociology class but I also did Business Studies. Since graduating I worked at the University in Student Support and retired in January 2009. I work two days at the Citizens Advice Bureau in Stirling and am a volunteer committee member of a housing association. Between that and walking the dog the days fly by.

JAMES LORDERINGTON,
BA (HONS) MARKETING 1997
I moved to London in 1998 as Marketing Manager for UBM. I travelled around SE Asia, settling in Australia. I’m married to Michelle Kvello and working for the Australian Government on major events including the Beijing Olympics, Forbes Conference and now the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Perth.

FIONA DE SOUZA (Née MCDONALD), BA (HONS) MARKETING 1996 and HUSBAND
WARREN DE SOUZA, BA (HONS) SOCIAL POLICY 1993
Fiona has qualified as a Primary School Teacher and is working in a Primary School in Rotherhithe South London. We’ve celebrated 10 happy years of marriage. We live in East Dulwich and are surrounded by a number of friends also from Stirling. It looks like South East London is the place to live for Stirling graduates in London.

1990s

KHENG-HOR KHOO, MBA 1991
My fourth novel, Sifu, has been nominated for the 2011 International IMPAC-Dublin Literary Award. This is my second novel thus nominated. My website is www.khookhenghor.com

1980s

RORY HOWIE, BA (HONS) HISTORY 1988
I’m an HR Director in the University sector and still dabble in the semi-pro music scene at weekends. I live near Bridlington, Yorkshire, with my wife Corrine and a worthy collection of classic guitars.

ANTHONY LUPTON, BA (HONS) FRENCH 1986
I eventually found my way to teaching; I now teach Film and Media Studies in Hertfordshire. I have a 19 year old daughter from my first marriage. I’m keen to hear from anyone I knew and my email is anthony.lupton@tbshs.herts.sch.uk

REV DAVID MONTGOMERY,
BA (HONS) ENGLISH AND MUSIC 1986
I’m a minister of Greystones Presbyterian Church, Co.Wicklow; lecturing part-time for the Irish Studies Programme of Taylor University, Indiana; and completing a doctoral dissertation on church planting.
DAVID LADD, BA (HONS) BIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY 1981
Aye, the Grange – very happy evenings; Maisies Bar the best ever nights. What ever happened to the lamp shade we all autographed? I’m still very good friends with people from Stirling. Kenny Morrison and I were members and leading lights of the University bike club (motorcycles). We’d like to track down ‘Neil Boy Racer’, ‘Viking Neil’ and George my successor as El Presidente for the club. They will know who they are. Can you send out an APB to see if they own up?

RICHARD ARNOTT, BA ECONOMICS 1980
I’m very happily married with one boy (now 22 and studying at Dundee). I’ve worked and travelled the world from Hong Kong to the Caribbean but returned to Perth in 2007. Now semi-retired but doing international project management training primarily in the Middle East, Sub Saharan Africa and Far East. I like skiing and Rugby 7s (watching).

1970s
FIONA BURNS, BA ENGLISH AND HISTORY 1975
After I graduated I spent a year at Jordanhill. Thereafter I taught English at Alva Academy until I took early retirement in 1997. I now enjoy my beautiful garden which backs on to the Hillfoots where I work, relax and entertain.

ANNE SMITH (NÉE PHILLIBEN), BA DIPED ENGLISH 1975
I’m still at St. Mungo’s High School in Falkirk, where I’ve been since January 1975. I’m now teaching Media Studies and running the school radio station – SMFM – and developing school TV which is all very exciting. Still love my job.

PETER LYELL, BA SOCIOLOGY 1974 AND WIFE JAN (NÉE HOWITT), BA ENGLISH 1975
I’m a Director of Savills property company based in Edinburgh and a Fellow of The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. I’m married to Jan whom I met at Stirling and she is Head of Corporate Affairs at NHS National Services Scotland. She is also a member of the Institute of Personnel Development.

DAVID SCOTT, BA HONS ECONOMICS 1972 AND WIFE JILL SCOTT (NÉE CHANDLER), BSC BIOLOGY 1973
We’re still married and enjoying semi-retirement in Tunbridge Wells after running our own Financial Risk Consultancy for ten years. David is still looking for challenges for the occasional consultancy. Sadly our youngest daughter Moira, who lived a very fulfilling life, although very severely disabled, died two years ago. We now run her house for eight disabled people in the centre of town. Our other two children are both married and we have two delightful grandchildren who all live nearby.

JOHN SCOTT, BA HISTORY 1971
I’ve just added to my artistic portfolio by being appointed to the Board of the Barbican Centre in London, in addition to being a Governor of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. As an elected Member of the City of London Corporation I would be delighted to hear from any alumni working in the City at john.scott@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Condolences
The University regrets to announce the following deaths:
DR MARK BROWNRIGG, BA (HONS) FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES 1998
GEORGE BRYDON, BA (HONS) PHILOSOPHY 1980
JOHN HAYWARD, BA (HONS) BUSINESS STUDIES 1986
CAROLYN PYRAH, MBA MARKETING 2008
 DANIEL RAFFERTY, CERTHE 2010
NONTAS TSAKALIS, MSC BANKING AND FINANCE 1999
DR ALISTAIR WATSON, MSC MATHEMATICAL PSYCHOLOGY 1969
See more class notes at: www.stir.ac.uk/alumni/class-notes

Keeping in touch
You can also catch up with old friends on our social networking groups. Simply follow the links from: www.stir.ac.uk/alumni
In 2010, almost 3,000 alumni took part in an alumni engagement survey. The results indicated a high level of enthusiasm amongst Stirling alumni for continued contact and willingness by many to volunteer as Alumni Ambassadors within their home territory, acting as a link between the University and local alumni.

There was, however, little enthusiasm for maintaining an elected representative structure.

Having taken into account the views expressed in the survey and the importance of strong alumni networks University Court, at its March meeting, agreed a new Ordinance to reflect feedback to current circumstances.

Membership of the alumni association will automatically include all former students.

Engagement with the alumni body will be strengthened through a communications programme, an events programme and a network of Alumni Ambassadors co-ordinated by the Alumni Relations Manager in Development and External Affairs.

The growth in numbers and geographic dispersal of the alumni body make it impractical for alumni to attend physical meetings. Whilst there will no longer be an Executive Committee or Annual General Meeting, an alumni representative will continue to serve on University Court, retaining an important and valued link between the University and its graduates.

When a vacancy occurs, expressions of interest will be sought from the alumni network and the final appointment will be made by the Court Appointments Committee, which also includes alumni representation. The alumni representative on Court shall be designated as the President of the association for the period of his/her appointment to the Court.

The current President, Harry Adam said: “These new arrangements confirm the University’s commitment to developing and maintaining a strong and sustainable link with its alumni body which fits better with the global spread of this important constituency. This latest development will build on the efforts of the previous Executive Committees of past graduate and alumni associations whose unflagging commitment laid the foundations on which future activity will build. I thank them for their contribution.”

To find out more, please contact Harry on alumnipresident@stir.ac.uk or if you wish to volunteer to be an Alumni Ambassador please contact Alumni Relations Manager, Jennifer Nicol on jennifer.nicol@stir.ac.uk

Harry Adam, Alumni President
Key dates for your diary

AUTUMN
» John Damien Lecture, Thursday 6 October: The Luck Factor. Why do some people lead happy successful lives whilst others face repeated failure and sadness? For many years psychologist Professor Richard Wiseman has worked with some of the world’s luckiest and unluckiest people to answer this question.
» Williamson Memorial Lecture, Thursday 13 October: our hotly-awaited annual political lecture will be delivered by Douglas Alexander MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.
» Stirling Lectures: if you’re based in the Highlands or Western Isles, look out for the lectures held at our campuses in Inverness and Stornoway.

WINTER
» Winter graduation ceremonies, Friday 4 November (Highland campus) and Friday 25 November (Stirling).

For more information on these or other events, including our lunchtime music recitals, visit: www.externalrelations.stir.ac.uk/events

ALUMNI
Thank you to those who came to our reunions in New York, Chicago, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore last year. Events coming up include:
» Edinburgh: The next dates are Thursday 25 August and Thursday 10 November.
» Bangkok: Saturday 17 September is the date for the first reunion.
» Zurich: First Swiss reunion planned for Friday 7 October in a central location. Put the date in your diaries for now!
To find out about events in your area, call Jennifer Nicol, Alumni Relations Manager on +44 (0) 1786 467034 or visit: www.stir.ac.uk/alumni/events-and-reunions

RECRUITMENT
If you are interested in returning to study there is a range of opportunities to come and visit the campus, including open days, talks and tours, applicant days and self-guided visits. The next open days are Saturday 24 September and Saturday 15 October. For a full list of opportunities visit: www.stir.ac.uk/undergraduate-study/visit-the-campus
Performing a dragon summoning incantation at interview might not be the best way to land your dream job, but it worked for Stirling graduate Rose Jardine (née Fagan).

Over 3000 people viewed Warwick Castle’s advertisement for a Consultant Dragonologist and twenty applied for the job. Potential candidates were required to demonstrate extensive knowledge of dragon myth and legend, with particular reference to dragon summoning as well as dragon powers and riddles. Psychology graduate Rose (1986 – 1990) won the day with her very special dragon summoning incantation.

“Only performed half of the incantation,” says Rose, “as I didn’t want to unleash the beast without having taken all the marginal precautions. The fire brigade was present at the interview in case there were any mishaps.”

Asked if her time at Stirling inspired her to follow this particular career path, Rose said: “I was research assistant for Dr David Fryer for a couple of years and we worked on different ways of getting to know people better using, for example, music, drama and pantomime.

“David’s mentorship and inspiration gave me confidence that no matter what my background, I could do anything I wanted.

“I was always interested in ghosts, legends and mythology and enjoy conveying that emotional thrill to children, to harness their interest to encourage them to learn. So when I talk to them about how dragons fly, they could be learning about science.”

If you are in an unusual job, be sure to let us know and you could feature in our next edition. Email: mediarelations@stir.ac.uk
Anyone who has ever walked through the Pathfoot Building has admired the stunning paintings and prints that line the walls, while outside in the grounds the collection of iconic sculptures makes the Stirling campus unique and distinctive.

Jane Cameron, curator of the acclaimed Art Collection at the University since 2005, aspires to raise the status of the Art Collection to that of an internationally-recognised gallery, as befits the strength and importance of its holdings, and the significance of the University’s founding vision to make art an integral part of the daily experience of all who use the campus.

“The bulk of the collection dates from the 1960s onwards and is no older than the University itself but we also have outstanding works by Scottish artists from the past hundred years,” she explained.
“In the corridors of Pathfoot, for example, you can already see juxtapositions of works of art with poetry by Kathleen Jamie, our new Professor of Creative Writing, and we also have great Scottish artists such as Scottish colourist JD Fergusson and William McTaggart.”

Jane is keen to ensure that the collection keeps growing but, like everyone in higher education, has to work within a budget: “We are only able to achieve our aspirations through the generosity of our friends, supporters and partners and, indeed, the vast majority of the art collection has been the result of generous bequests and donations during the last four decades. We are very interested in acquiring paintings, photography and sculpture that fit with the overall theme of modern Scottish art.”

Recent acquisitions include a sculpture by Joe Ingleby (already sited on campus) and prints by Alan Davie, Adrian Wiszniewski, Philip Braham and June Carey. Generous support from trusts and individuals has also allowed the collection to be showcased in a number of catalogues and greetings cards.

There are some major developments planned for the recently-listed Pathfoot Building. This summer, the flagship collection of fourteen Fergusson paintings, presented in 1968 by his widow, the dancer Margaret Morris, are to be rehoused within museum quality glass display cases, an opportunity to showcase the paintings within their remarkable 1960s setting. The work will be complete in September and a new printed catalogue will help introduce these works to a new audience. With contributions from academics including Helen Beale, Angela Smith, Rory Watson and Jenny Kinnear, this catalogue will also mark the 60th anniversary of Fergusson’s death.

Following the redisplay of works in the Pathfoot Galleries and Courtyards, the Art Collection will embark on a rolling programme of exhibitions starting with Pip Grisham prints, then a major retrospective of work by Elizabeth Blackadder, an honorary graduate of Stirling, to mark her 80th birthday and will also show the work of her husband John Houston. In 2012, to tie in with the Olympic Games, an exhibition called Human Race: Inside the Science of Sports Medicine, will open at Stirling before touring five other Scottish cities.

The University Art Collection is on view in Pathfoot Building, seven days a week from 9am to 7pm. For further information on exhibitions, see the website at: [www.artcol.stir.ac.uk](http://www.artcol.stir.ac.uk)

If you would like to discuss making a donation to the collection, please email: [jane.cameron@stir.ac.uk](mailto:jane.cameron@stir.ac.uk) Jane would welcome support from alumni for publishing catalogues and purchasing artworks.

THE UNIVERSITY’S FOUNDING VISION WAS TO MAKE ART AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE DAILY EXPERIENCE OF ALL WHO USE THE CAMPUS.
SPORTING HIGHLIGHTS

It has been another fantastic year for Scotland's University for Sporting Excellence, in the lab and on the field.

SPORTS RESEARCH
Health and Exercise researchers in the School of Sport have been making the most of stunning new laboratory facilities, which include a full body scanner and muscle biopsy room. Dr Paul Dimeo, an expert on drugs in sport, is leading a project on behalf of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), educating elite Kenyan runners.

Scottish Premier League (SPL) football fans have been busy shedding the pounds thanks to an innovative men’s health programme devised and developed in part by Dr Cindy Gray and Professor Sally Wyke, from the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health. Football Fans in Training helped 355 supporters lose a total of 1,202 kg in weight and 1,142 cm from their waists in its first 12-week block and is now being rolled out for a second season.

GANNOCHY INVESTMENT
The University continues to invest in Scotland’s sporting future and in October will complete a £750,000 development of the Gannochy Sports Centre. This investment will create new sports performance assessment laboratories and provide sports medicine facilities, to be used jointly by the University and the sportscotland institute of sport.

DELHI 2010
2010 finished in style, with 14 athletes and five members of staff travelling to India for the XIX Commonwealth Games in Delhi. Tennis star Colin Fleming (see profile on page 46) won gold, while three Scottish swimmers were part of the freestyle team which secured a relay silver medal.

Commonwealth attention now turns to Glasgow 2014 but, before that, Sports Participation Coordinator Gail Niven will support the nation’s brightest new talent as Deputy General Scotland Team Manager at the Youth Games in September.

FOOTBALL CHAMPS
There are few football clubs on the up in Scotland, but the University men’s team is proving the exception to the rule. Promoted to the East of Scotland Premier Division last season, the first team went on to finish second overall, be crowned British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Premier North Champions and reach two Cup finals, winning the Alex Jack Cup by a resounding 8-0 scoreline.
SFA ACADEMY
Women’s football is also proving popular at Stirling, with 14 students part of the campus-based Scottish Football Association Women’s National Football Academy.

DUMYAT HILL RACE
The scenic campus hosts a number of sporting events throughout the year, including the Dumyat Hill race, which saw more than 300 runners complete the 390m climb across 8km of tough terrain.

GOLFMING GLORY
In golf, the men’s teams secured the BUCS Matchplay and Strokeplay titles while Sports Studies student Kelsey MacDonald built on five amateur titles in 2010 with victory in the BUCS Individual Strokeplay Championship – 17 shots ahead of her nearest challenger.

YOUTH OLYMPICS
Fresher Andrew Hood, a performance triathlete, was the only Scot in the Great Britain team to compete at the inaugural Youth Olympic Games in Singapore. He is part of a cell of 10 scholarship triathletes, including current GB U23 competitor David McNamee.

PERFORMANCE COACHING
Behind every talented athlete is an expert coach and a new performance coaching degree has attracted some of the best around – including triple Olympian snowboarder Lesley McKenna.

For up-to-date sports news, visit: www.sportingexcellence.stir.ac.uk
Tennis ace Colin Fleming secured a mixed doubles gold medal for Scotland at the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games. Now, with the season in full swing, he is hoping to fire Great Britain to Davis Cup success against Luxembourg in July.

How has your season been so far?
Frustrating – I had a back injury then my doubles partner Ross Hutchins had a wrist injury. Since I recovered, I’ve been trying to mix and match with different partners but, thankfully, Ross is now back and we can get going properly.

Singles tennis is more popular – fight the case for doubles...
I think there is more skill on show than in singles, with shorter points and more excitement. Singles is often playing from the base line, slugging it out, whereas doubles is more about using the full range of skills, with lots of different shots.
Are you looking forward to the Davis Cup at Braehead in July?
It’s always an honour to play for Great Britain. I was fortunate enough to make my debut at Braehead and I received amazing support as I was the only Scot in the team. This year, it’s likely to have a few more Scots so I’m sure it will be a great atmosphere if I’m selected.

You were part of the University’s International Sports Scholarship Programme (ISSP). Did this help you onto the world tour?
It was a massive help. When I came to study, I didn’t have any ambitions to have a career playing tennis, but the programme got me to a level where I could play professionally. I was also allowed to take a two-year gap and come back to complete my degree.

You graduated with first class honours. Have you found your degree useful in the tennis world?
At the moment, I probably only use it when I’m playing travel scrabble! I’m sure it will become more important in the future. I certainly picked up plenty of vital life skills living and studying at Stirling.

What do you do when not playing tennis?
Well, I play in about thirty-five weeks of tournaments a year and train on court every day plus weights and running sessions. So when I’m back home I tend to switch off from tennis and just chill out at home with the family. I’m also becoming pretty addicted to golf too.

University coach Euan McGinn has worked with Colin since his early teens and was head coach of the successful Delhi 2010 team. So what does he make of his protégé’s progress?
"Colin is a great inspiration to the current players on the programme and proof that University tennis can produce ATP tour-standard players. You get the balance of training as much as any full-time player and completing a degree. Through people like Colin, the profile of Scottish tennis is changing and it’s vital we build on the progress up to now."
CALLING ALL BOOK LOVERS...
Inside: your chance to adopt a book and support our special collections.