



ABER *News*

Staff and students from the Department of Mathematics, which was crowned Department of the Year 2018

Maths wins Department of the Year 2018

The Department of Mathematics was awarded the coveted title of Department of the Year at the Aberystwyth Students' Union Staff and Student Awards 2018 on Thursday 26 April.

Now in their 7th year, the annual awards celebrate the exceptional contributions of staff, students, academic representatives and departments.

The winners of the AberSU Staff and Students Awards 2018 are:

Lecturer of the Year

Professor Matthew Jarvis
 (English & Creative Writing)

Support / Service Staff Member of the Year

Stephen Fearn (IMPACS)

Academic Representative of the Year

Sabrina Mangham (International Politics)

Student Volunteer of the Year

Geena Whiteman (Business School)

Volunteer Officer of the Year

Megan Hatfield (Business School)
 Ammaara Nalban (International Politics)

Student Mentor of the Year

Dana Barringham (IBERS)

Supervisor of the Year – Postgraduate

Dr Berit Bliesemann de Guevara
 (International Politics)
 Professor Milja Kurki (International Politics)

Supervisor of the Year – Undergraduate

Dr Simon Payne (IBERS)

Hyrwyddwr yr Iaith Gymraeg /

Welsh Language Champion

Dr James January-McCann
 (Welsh & Celtic Studies)

Postgraduate Teacher of the Year

Deborah Kobani (Law School)

Innovative Teaching Award

Dr Val Nolan (English & Creative Writing)

Personal Tutor of the Year

Dr Rachel Rahman (Psychology)

Outstanding Feedback Award

Alexandros Koutsoukis (International Politics)

Next Step Award

Arwyn Edwards (IBERS)

Election Heroes Award

Welsh and Celtic Studies

Department of the Year

Mathematics

See p.2 for photos from the awards ceremony

4 Nominations for
 VC's Charity of the
 Year



7 Meet the Arts
 Centre Director



8 In addition to
 the day job



10 Focus on... Aber+



12 Spotlight on... the
 University Music
 Centre



ABER^{News} is published by the
Communications & Public Affairs Team,
 Aberystwyth University.
 Tel: 01970 622578
 E-mail: communications@aber.ac.uk
 The next edition will be available in **July**.
 Copy deadline is **Monday 21 May**.



Postgraduate
Teacher of the Year -
Deborah Kobani



Support/Service
Staff Member
of the Year -
Stephen Fearn



Lecturer
of the Year -
Professor Matthew Jarvis



Volunteer
Officer of the Year -
Megan Hatfield and
Ammaara Nalban



Undergraduate
Supervisor of the Year -
Dr Simon Payne



The winners of the AberSU Celebrates Staff and Students Awards 2018

Celebrations, Breaking Records and Awards

It's nearly time to welcome the new freshers to Aber and the next academic year's officers into post but not before we celebrate all AberSU has achieved this year:

AberSU Celebrates week (23-27th April)

During the recent Celebration week we held three awards evenings to celebrate the successes and achievements of our sports clubs, societies, and students and staff here at Aber.

All the awards are nominated and decided by students and an amazing 1,004 nominations were submitted for this year's awards.

For a roundup of the week's results from all three awards evenings, please have a look at the news section of the AberSU website.

NUS Wales Awards

We were shortlisted for 6 awards during the annual NUS Wales awards held in the Principality Stadium in Cardiff on 13 March.

This year, AberSU came home with the Student Opportunities of the Year award for the successful 'sports funding' campaign which included removing the sporty card and replacing with a much cheaper TeamAber insurance cost for clubs and societies alike, accessible training facilities for teams and British Universities & Colleges Sports (BUCS) funding.

AberSU Officer Elections 2018

2017 was a record breaking year for the Aber Elections, but 2018 broke yet another record...

A total number of 2,832 votes were cast in this week's Election giving the AberSU Elections a turnout of 35%.



Left to right: Megan, Molly-Jean, Louisa, Bruce and Anna

The team that will be taking up the full time positions over the summer are:

- AberSU President: Bruce Wight
- Welsh Culture officer and UMCA President: Anna Jones
- Academic Affairs Officer: Megan Hatfield
- Student Opportunities Officer: Louisa Fletcher
- Wellbeing Officer: Molly-Jean Longden

Congratulations to all candidates that stood in this year's Aber Elections and a full list of elected candidates can also be found in the news section of the AberSU website.

National Societies Awards

The National Societies Awards shortlist has been announced and Aber St John LINKS has been shortlisted for the Best Volunteering & Charity Society of the year.

Winners will be announced at an awards evening at the start of May.

Pop over to www.abersu.co.uk for more news.

Eleri Wyn

AberSU Communications & Engagement Manager

Vice-Chancellor's Column



A few weeks ago, on 3 April 2018, I quietly marked a full year since taking up my post as Vice-Chancellor. It has probably been one of the busiest years of my life so far; sometimes challenging, always inspiring. One of the delights of the past 12 months has been finding out more about the wonderful work

across the University – from pioneering research tackling global issues and innovative teaching methods to our civic, cultural and community impacts.

I felt particularly proud - and humbled - at the AberSU Celebrates: Staff and Students event held at the Great Hall on Thursday 26 April. The heartfelt tributes paid by students to individual lecturers and departments were a joy to hear, and reinforce the reasons why Aberystwyth was named UK University of the Year for Teaching Quality in *The Times & Sunday Times 2018 Good University Guide*. Warmest congratulations to all winners and nominees, and to the Students' Union for organising with such elegance and efficiency.

I would like to pay my own tribute here to one member of the Students' Union sabbatical team who left Aberystwyth at the end of April to take up a permanent post at Birmingham University. Many of you will know Emma Beenham either from her time as a student here or as the AberSU Academic Affairs Officer since last summer. She has carried out her remit as advocate for her fellow students with wisdom, maturity and empathy. It has been a pleasure to work with her and I wish her well in her new job. Our loss is Birmingham's gain.

Congratulations are also due to staff delivering our Postgraduate programmes. At the 2018 WhatUni Student Choice Awards on Thursday 19 April, Aberystwyth picked up a winning Gold in the Postgraduate category with International awarded Silver for the second year running in their category. Across the board, the University was in the top ten HEIs in a further five categories (see page 6 for details). Decisions on who gets an award are made by an independent panel and are

based on reviews submitted by our students. It's worth reading what they have to say, if only to remind us of why we're here and how we're appreciated.

Listening to our students' voice is one of our many strengths as a University. Not only do we work closely with the AberSU, we also offer direct feedback channels through Tell Us Now and an effective personal tutor system. The views of students were a key factor in our decision to move our departments of Business, Law and Information Management, Libraries and Archives from Llanbadarn to Penglais over the summer. I know such a move can be an upheaval but by bringing our full-time, undergraduate teaching together on our main campus, the aim is to consolidate our estate, further strengthen our collegiality foster increased interdisciplinarity and maximise the student experience.

The move from Llanbadarn is not the only change currently facing us of course. I am grateful to everyone who has responded to the consultation on the future shape and structure of the University. As we listen to the students' voice, so too do we listen to what our staff have to say. Complex, difficult decisions will have to be made and not only here in Aberystwyth. It is a time of fundamental transformation across the sector too. We are making progress here towards achieving reaching the objectives laid out in the SIP a year ago. My hope is that by the end of this calendar year, we will have achieved what is required and be in a stronger position to build our vision for a sustainable, successful future for the benefit of staff, students and the wider community.

One year on from my arrival in Aberystwyth, it seems an appropriate time to invite nominations for the Vice-Chancellor's Charity of the Year 2018-19. See page 4 for further details on how staff and students can nominate the charity of their choice, before the whole University community will be invited to vote on a shortlist in order to select the winning charity. I look forward to hearing about the good causes that are close to your heart, and announcing the Vice-Chancellor's Charity of the Year 2018-19 at this year's Graduation ceremonies.

Professor Elizabeth Treasure
Vice-Chancellor



Image / Llun: Glen Thomas

MUSICFEST
Aberystwyth

International Music Festival
and Summer School
Gŵyl Gerddoriaeth
ac Ysgol Haf Ryngwladol
28 July – 4 August
28 Gorffennaf – 4 Awst

Festival pass / Pas yr Ŵyl: £180
Early Bird Festival pass until 1 July |
Pas Cynnar a brynir cyn 1 Gorffennaf: £160

Tickets / Tocynnau

01970 62 32 32 | aberystwythartscentre.co.uk
musicfestaberystwyth.org

CANOLFAN Y CELFYDDYDAU
ABERYSTWYTH ARTS CENTRE

Nominations sought for VC's Charity of the Year

Professor Elizabeth Treasure is inviting nominations from students and staff for the Vice-Chancellor's Charity of the Year 2018-19.

The Vice-Chancellor's Charity of the Year appeal seeks to raise as much funding as possible for a worthy cause, and provide a fundraising focus for staff, students and the community.

Since its launch in 2012, four charities have benefited: Beacon of Hope, Wales Air Ambulance, Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Mind Aberystwyth.

To nominate your favourite charity to be the Vice-Chancellor's Charity of the Year 2018-19, please visit: www.aber.ac.uk/en/about-us/charity/nominate. The closing date for nominations is Friday 25 May.

Once all the nominations are in, a shortlist will be produced by the University Executive and Students' Union Officers, and students and staff will be invited to vote for the charity of your choice.

The Vice-Chancellor's Charity of the Year 2018-19 will be announced at the graduation ceremonies in July.



Aberystwyth Research Portal

Research, Business and Innovation are pleased to announce the forthcoming launch of the Aberystwyth Research Portal - research.aber.ac.uk - a searchable public interface displaying all of the University's research activity.

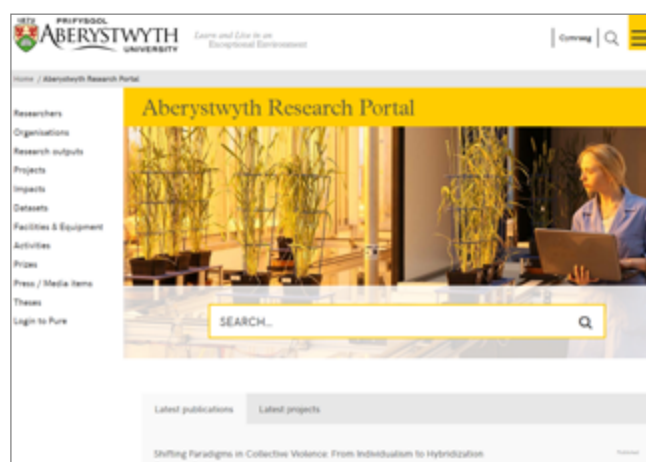
Aberystwyth Research Portal will display all research outputs, projects, datasets, impact and activities, along with Personal Profiles of all current staff and research students.

The underlying data for the portal comes from the current research information system, PURE, pure.aber.ac.uk. Personal profiles can be managed through the 'My HR Applications' Online Staff Profiles Section - myhr.aber.ac.uk.

For any queries or support with PURE please contact research@aber.ac.uk.

For more information regarding the Online Staff Profiles Systems (OSPS) please see:

www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/it-services/web/staff-profiles/



Professional teaching accreditation for postgraduates

Teaching for Postgraduates at Aberystwyth University (TPAU), is the newest strand of professional teaching provision at the University.

Run by the Centre for the Development of Staff and Academic Practice (CDSAP) and supported by the Graduate School, TPAU is designed to be a professional teaching accreditation aimed at PhD students who are already teaching over 20 hours a week in their departments.

The programme provides a grounding in the good practice of teaching, and expands knowledge and expertise in a range of core teaching areas. Staff engaged in supporting academic provision (such as subject librarians) are also eligible.

Participants who successfully complete the programme are awarded an Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA).

The first cohort of 13 participants completed the programme in August 2017. Feedback from the programme was excellent, with 100% of respondents reporting that they would recommend TPAU to fellow students.

One student commented: "The programme was easily carried

out alongside a full-time PhD." Another described the course as "an excellent way to consolidate my teaching practice and develop new skills." Another said: "I'm glad to see that Aberystwyth has put this together because I don't think many universities have this kind of programme, or really try to engage a lot with PhD students in terms of career development."

Following on from the success of the first course, a second began in September 2017. Demand for places was so high that the course had to be put on a third time in January this year.

The applications process for the September 2018 induction opened in April and closes at the end of July.

Building on the success of the TPAU programme, CDSAP hopes to continue running two cohorts each year and are looking to develop a strand aimed at research staff.

Further information about the programme can be found on the CDSAP webpage: www.aber.ac.uk/en/cdsap/tpau or if you have any questions please e-mail: pgr-tpau@aber.ac.uk.

Everything's easier with Aspire

From its launch in September 2014, the Aspire Reading List system has proved to be very popular amongst the students here at Aberystwyth University.

Embedded within Blackboard, Aspire offers a modern, intuitive access point to the library resources that the students will need for their studies.

With Aspire, it's never been easier to find study materials. As the system links directly to the library catalogue, a traffic light system (designed by the Library Systems team and embedded within the interface) gives real-time notification of whether the books are currently available in the library. Not only that, but the same interface allows one-click access to electronic books, articles, and other digital content.

We are pleased to announce that there is now an Aspire Reading List for every current undergraduate module that requires one. This has involved



a significant amount of hard work by members of academic departments and the teams in Information Services. But this hard work is really paying off. Feedback from the students has been very positive, which is reflected in the National Student Survey where scores for library resources since the Aspire system was implemented have been consistently high.

We are not resting on our laurels though; our work continues. The deadline for getting resources ready for the new academic year will soon be upon us. Therefore if you need any advice or

assistance creating new, or updating existing, reading lists then please do contact your subject librarian or the Academic Engagement Team who will be happy to help. Email: acastaff@aber.ac.uk or Telephone 01970 621896.

A wide array of information relating to Aspire can also be found on the University website here: faqs.aber.ac.uk/802

**Academic Engagement Team,
Information Services**

Rhiannon Powell Science Bursary

Thanks to the generosity of two Aber alumnae sisters, three IBERS undergraduates were given the opportunity to attend the internationally recognised British Society for Parasitology Conference in April, which was being held in Aberystwyth for the first time since 1986.

The students were awarded a bursary established by sisters Kay Powell and Suzanne Hudson, in memory of their mother, Rhiannon Powell. Rhiannon, also an Aber alumna, was a passionate biologist who strongly believed in helping budding scientists to maximise their education and opportunities.

The three students, Rachel Averis (third-year student in BSc Biochemistry), Sash Riech (in his third year of an integrated masters in MBIol Zoology), and Jordan Obosi (third-year student studying BSc Agriculture with Animal Science) were awarded the Rhiannon Powell Science Bursary, which has been established to give students studying a biological science further opportunities to advance their knowledge and expertise.

Professor Jo Hamilton, who presented the bursaries along with Pro-Vice Chancellor, Professor Chris Thomas, at the Welcome event in the Old College, said: "The students really made the most of this exceptional opportunity. The bursary has given these budding parasitologists a huge leg up in the world with the opportunity to meet internationally renowned scientists."



Left to right: Sash Riech, Jordan Obosi and Rachel Averis

Sash Riech, one of the recipients of the bursary, said: "I was delighted and felt honoured to receive the bursary. The conference offered the opportunity to network and engage with researchers and academics at the forefront of parasitology discoveries. I am even now looking at the possibility of embarking upon a PhD in Australia, after speaking to a Senior Research Fellow from James Cook University at the conference."

Hayley Goddard, Individual Giving Officer from the Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO) said: "We are truly thankful to Kay and Suzanne for their generosity in establishing the Rhiannon Powell Science Bursary in memory of their mother. The opportunities offered by bursaries such as this allow students to broaden their horizons and aspirations, enhancing the lives of our students and helping to make their Aber experience a truly memorable one."

Aber wins gold and silver at WhatUni awards

Aberystwyth University has won the Postgraduate category in the WhatUni Student Choice Awards 2018.

For the second year running, Aberystwyth also picked up a silver award in the International category at the WhatUni awards ceremony held in London on 19 April 2018.

As well as the Postgraduate and International categories, the University had been shortlisted for a further five awards including University of the Year, Accommodation, Clubs and Societies, Course and Lecturers, and Giving Back.

The University also featured in the top 10 in the UK in all the categories for which it was shortlisted, including 5th overall for University of the Year.

More than 36,000 student reviews were collected and more than a hundred universities were visited in order to compile the shortlist.

For the 2018 awards, 43 higher education institutions were nominated across fifteen categories, recognised by their students for offering an incredible university experience.

The WhatUni awards are based on averages taken from tens of thousands of reviews submitted by students and published on Whatuni.com.

The annual survey also showed that Wales hosts the happiest students across the United Kingdom.

Now in their fifth year, the awards provide prospective students with an unbiased, student-led alternative to traditional university ranking systems.

Speaking ahead of the awards, Eleni Cashell, Editor of WhatUni, said: "Being nominated for an award is a huge achievement, because the only judges at the WUSCAs are the students themselves. It showcases to both prospective students and the higher education sector that your institution offers value for money, provides a good student experience and has a highly satisfied and supported student community."



InvEnterPrize 2018 winners announced



Left to right - Dr Rhodri Llwyd Morgan, Pro Vice-Chancellor; Professor Donald Davies, Chair of InvenEnterprize judging panel; Clipr developers Howun Lam, James Stone and James Bryan; Tony Orme, University Careers Service and Louise Jagger, Director of Development and Alumni Relations

A mobile app designed to revolutionise bookings in the hair and beauty sector is the winner of Aberystwyth University's InvEnterPrize for 2018.

Developed by student team James Bryan, James Stone and Howun Lam, Clipr is designed to bring salons closer to customers and enable them to run their businesses from their smartphones.

Along with the title of InvEnterPrize winners, the team receives a £10,000 prize to invest in developing the concept.

"The app is Airbnb meets Uber for hair and beauty", said James Bryan, who came up with the idea whilst looking for a hair salon open on a Sunday in Aberystwyth.

"Using the app is a very simple, intuitive process which will be familiar to anyone using social media", he added.

Since September 2017, the team has been working with businesses in Aberystwyth and now looks forward to finalising the concept before launching the app to students in the town.

"Winning InvEnterPrize is a huge boost and will enable us to develop an iOS version for Apple smartphones as it currently only exists in Android. We are also looking at making it possible for the businesses who are part of the project to take digital payments safely."

A further two entries were highly commended by the judges; Tom Lancaster with his Exmoor Bike Park proposal, and Enhancing Coastal Habitats by Harry Dennis, Ally Hall and Sunny Bradbury.

The finalists presented their business proposals to a panel of judges in a *Dragon's Den* style event, on Monday 19 March 2018.

Now in its 5th year, InvEnterPrize was established to encourage a culture of entrepreneurship.

The £10,000 prize provided by alumni via the Aber Fund enables the winner to invest in equipment, facilities or professional services to turn the invention or business start-up idea into reality.

Meet the Arts Centre Director

Dafydd Rhys took up the post of Director of Aberystwyth Arts Centre in February.

ABERNews spoke to Dafydd to find out more about him, and his vision for the Arts Centre:

What do you think makes Aberystwyth Arts Centre special?

The Arts Centre is an iconic arts centre not only in Aberystwyth and mid Wales, it is one of the most important national arts facilities we have in Wales. Community involvement is paramount, and I've been flabbergasted at the amount of participation that goes on here across a very broad range of disciplines. We have significant public engagement responsibilities and I'm looking forward to exploring possibilities with other University departments.

What is your vision for the Arts and the Arts Centre?

The Arts are for everybody, and I'm a keen believer in making sure a visit to the Aberystwyth Arts Centre is affordable to as many people as possible. At the same time I believe in ambition, to be a hub of creativity not only within a Welsh national context but also internationally. The centre needs to have a clear identity as the main regional, public, cultural centre while still an integral part of the University. This in itself enhances the profile of the University to a wider audience. I'm also a big believer in partnerships, and look forward to building on the excellent links we have with the arts community, within the University community but also with other bodies not only in Wales, but internationally.

Tell us a little about your links with Ceredigion

I spent my childhood years growing up in Llanelli, but my mother was from the Synod Inn / New Quay area and I spent my summers, from the age of 3 to around 15 on the sand in New Quay. They were good times.

And it was Ceredigion that provided one of the highlights of my career as a television producer. *Dic Jones - yn ei eiriau ei hun* was a programme about one of Wales' greatest poets. A former Archdruid and winner of the National Eisteddfod Chair, the recordings we did with Dic sadly turned out to be his last. He died in 2009. I was quite spellbound by the way he trusted us as programme makers because he realised, I think, that we shared the same ambition that he had, that we were to do something of the highest standard possible.

You sang in a punk rock band in your youth. What was that all about?

In terms of my experience of the Arts, I have a split personality. I participated in eisteddfodau as a child, reciting and singing. But I was also a singer in a punk band, Llygod Ffyrnig - 'Rats'. Our song, *NCB (National Coal Board)* was played extensively on the radio in the late 70s and told of the tough choice facing young men at the time of life on the dole or the dangers of working underground. Looking back, I have always respected the traditions of Wales, but I have always also tried to challenge and be involved in contemporary work, something, I would like to think, continues to this day.

What do you do when you're not working?

Over the last year or so I have developed a liking for yoga. I also play guitar...badly, and enjoy film and theatre. I'm also a big fan of international cinema, particularly the work of Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar, and films from South America - I prefer films that are less Hollywood, if the truth be told.

And, given that I'm from Llanelli, it won't surprise the readers that I'm a season ticket holder with the Scarlets!





Dr Sarah Taylor is Head of Strategic Development in the Planning Office, where she has worked for 18 years.

In addition to the day job, Sarah is a successful children's author. Her debut book, *Arthur and Me* won the Firefly Children's Book prize in 2014. Her second book, *Max the Detective Cat: the Disappearing Diva*, published in March this year is the first in a series featuring a feline super-sleuth.



ABERNews spoke to Sarah about what she particularly loves about writing for children:

In addition to the day job

What do you love about writing for children?

Children's imaginations are massive. You can be so bold as you write for them and it makes it great fun. I've had a few short stories for grown-ups published, but even in those I would often indulge in a little magic or make the world obey slightly different rules. I think that's what draws me to writing for children. However far your imagination takes you you're still only playing catch-up with theirs. It's also a huge challenge, because the one thing that children will not put up with is being bored. Every scene has to count and it really keeps you on your toes as a writer.

Where do you get your ideas from?

Usually it starts with a 'what if' and then I just try out possibilities until the idea starts to grow. With Max I had been wanting to write a mystery series for ages because I love all the Agatha Christie books so much.

I grew up helping out backstage or appearing onstage at Theatre Werin and wanted my series to revolve around a theatre. At first I thought that maybe the detective would be a young person in a theatre company, but then I had a 'what if' moment of a theatre cat, and once I had played with that idea for a while, Max was born.

Have you always loved stories and reading?

Always. When I was a child I used to make up stories, and I always loved reading to my little sister and making up new stories for her. I wrote a set of books when I was a teenager about a hopeless king who was always making mistakes. My Dad once caught me nudging the books in the 'T' section of a bookshop apart and when he asked me what I was doing I said 'I have to leave a bit of room for mine.'



Sarah at the launch of Max the Detective Cat: The Disappearing Diva at Waterstones, Aberystwyth, an event held to coincide with World Book Day in March 2018

Selfie film scoops award

A film about the future of selfie culture by two lecturers from the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies has been praised for its "very high production value" by the judges of the British Universities Film & Video Council's Learning on Screen Awards 2018.

Into the Looking Glass- how selfie culture is preparing us to meet our future selves by Dr Greg Bevan and Dr Glen Creeber was announced as winner of the Audiovisual Essay Award category at the awards held at the BFI in London on Thursday 26 April 2018.

The 24 minute film takes a close look at the future development of selfie culture and its proliferation via smart technology.

The British Universities Film & Video Council's Learning on Screen is a charity whose members are experts in the use of moving image in education, delivering online academic databases, on demand video resources, training, information and advice.

Speaking after learning of their success, Dr Glen Creeber said: "We would like to sincerely thank the 'Learning on Screen Awards' for this wonderful recognition. This is the first video essay we have ever produced, so it's particularly satisfying to have received this tribute and it will encourage us to make many more in the future. We are currently working on a new one about the use of Virtual Reality in the classroom - we can only hope it is received as well as our first."

Speaking ahead of the awards ceremony Dr Bevan said: "Video essays as academic outputs are still a fairly new idea. It's a way of engaging with your audience more imaginatively, and also of introducing theories and concepts to new and non-academic

audiences who might never ordinarily read a journal article.

"We also hope the video essay will be a useful teaching aid in the fields of digital media, digital culture, media and communications, and beyond".

The film explores the idea that the screen is coming increasingly nearer to the viewer - from the village cinema to the living room. Now it is carried in the form of a tablet or phone; but what lies beyond the likes of VR sets and smart watches? Could eye and brain implants lead to the screen disappearing altogether? Will the viewer eventually become one with the screen?

The original score for the film was composed by Dr Alan Chamberlain, a Senior Research Fellow at the Mixed Reality Lab, Department of Computer Science at the University of Nottingham.

Dr Alan Chamberlain said: "It's exciting to see the importance of this collaboration being recognised at a national level and nominated for an award. Working with Aberystwyth University has allowed us to show the impact that cross-disciplinary research across universities can have.

"This project brings together the Arts and Sciences in a way that it is both interesting and innovative. Aberystwyth University is one of the creative powerhouses in the academic landscape of Wales and it's been a great experience to work with people there, we're already working on our next project."

I was lucky to have a great teacher in primary school who encouraged me to write and I'm also grateful that I grew up in a town that has a good library that was accessible. I would go on a Saturday, take out four books and then pop in after school on a Wednesday for a refill. Children go through so many books, so libraries are utterly vital and I'm glad Aberystwyth still has such a good one.

What is the best thing about being a writer?

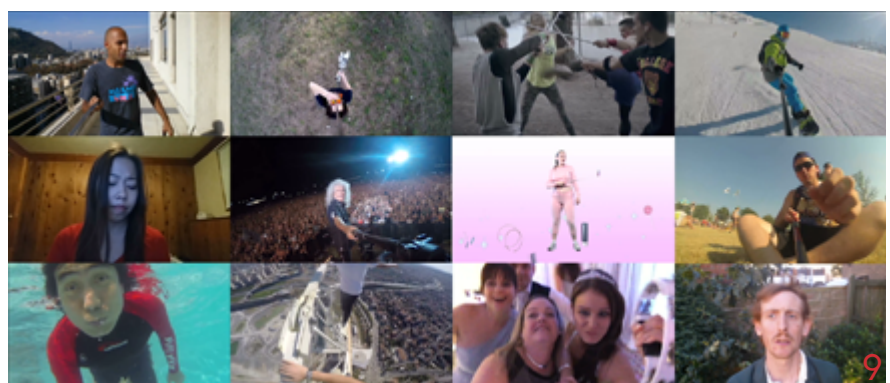
Definitely when you hear that a child has read something you've written and has enjoyed it. That's just the best feeling. A friend told me that she found her children acting out scenes from my first book when they went to play at a castle, and that was just wonderful to hear. I've done a few workshops too, and they are tremendous fun. It's great working with children and hearing their stories. Building a story together as a group and seeing the enthusiasm for storytelling is wonderful.

What is it like when you first see your characters brought to life by an illustrator?

The first time I saw the initial pictures of Max it was like Nicola (Nicola Kinnear) had reached into my imagination and drawn what I could see there. He was perfect. It was the same with Peter Stevenson's pictures for *Arthur and Me*. I've been so lucky that my publishers have paired me with such great illustrators and the first time that I get the illustration copy through is one of the best moments of the whole process. It involves a lot of me sitting in front of my computer screening squealing at how gorgeous everything looks.

What are you working on at the moment?

The next Max book is due out in September and is a spooky tale where Max has to solve the mystery of a haunted castle and some missing diamonds. Then I'll be working on the third book, but that's a bit of a secret at the moment.





Focus on...Aber+

Jo Hiatt works for the University's Careers Service as the link Careers Consultant for the Institute of Arts and Humanities, and also leads on the Aber+ scheme which supports students with disabilities with making the transition from University into work.

Ruth Fowler, Communications and Equalities Officer in the Human Resources Department, spoke to Jo:

What does your role entail?

I support students and graduates with their career development through one-to-one guidance appointments and drop-in advice sessions. I deliver career education workshops and lectures in departments that cover a range of topics from gaining work experience, to using social media to develop a professional brand and interview skills. I am also the Equality and Diversity Officer for the Careers Service and support students referred from Student Support Services.

I hear you've done a masters too whilst working, can you tell me a little more about that?

I completed an MA in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education through the Centre for Lifelong Learning at the University of Warwick. I initially started only on

a diploma course as part of my training to become a qualified careers consultant, but I enjoyed the research module so much I decided to complete the Masters level qualification.

It was hard work fitting in studying around full-time employment and family life, but the extra experience and knowledge has really helped me to develop my role in the Careers Service and the support I can offer to students and graduates.

Tell me how the Aber+ scheme came about?

While studying for the MA I decided to write my dissertation on 'Assessing the career development of disabled students and the services provided by the Careers Service at Aberystwyth University'.

It became clear from my research that many students with disabilities struggled to make the transition from higher education to the workplace, and lacked confidence to engage with employers and the Careers Service.

A key recommendation from my research was to develop a coaching programme to support students.

I worked closely with a colleague, Sarah Thomas from Student Support Services, and together we developed the concept of a programme to specifically support students who have disabilities ranging from specific learning differences, to hidden disabilities and long-term medical conditions. The programme became known as Aber+.

Tell me what you enjoy most about the Aber+ scheme?

I really enjoy watching the students develop as they progress through the scheme and grow in confidence in their abilities, and can recognise and articulate the amazing skills they are developing at Aberystwyth.

I enjoy the opportunity to work with students who may not normally access the Careers Service and have the chance to show them all the employer events, workshops and work experience opportunities they can participate in.

Can you tell me about some positive outcomes that have come about since the Aber+ launch?

One of the most positive outcomes of the scheme has been to develop a close working relationship with colleagues from the GO Wales scheme. Students participating in Aber+ can develop their confidence with job applications and presenting themselves to employers, and then access the GO Wales scheme to arrange work experience opportunities to test out their career ideas, and gain experience of the workplace in a supported placement.



The Aber+ scheme has allowed students who may not have previously accessed the Careers Service to come and use the services available and develop a rapport with staff which enables them to have the confidence to seek support when they need to.

The Careers Service has also thought about how we can reduce some of the barriers students feel when trying to access the services. One positive outcome has been that students can now book guidance appointments online, and can access our events and vacancy database (AberConnections) to book places on our workshops and employer events.

Students can also view a range of information, useful links and videos on our equality and diversity webpages, www.aber.ac.uk/en/careers/equality-and-diversity.

What more would you like to do to enhance Aber+?

It would be fantastic to expand Aber+ further so more students benefitted from the scheme. Our aim for the next academic year is to really market the scheme, and move from a pilot project to a more embedded scheme which is part of the student experience at Aberystwyth.

We also want to encourage students to feedback to us what support they would like and need, so that they feel part of developing the programme.

How can Aberystwyth University colleagues help or get involved with Aber+?

If colleagues know of any students who may benefit from the scheme or would like more information then please get in touch through jeb@aber.ac.uk



A tribute to Non Lavarro

A few weeks ago we were all shocked and deeply saddened to hear of the untimely death of staff member Non Lavarro, who passed away on 12 April.



Non Lavarro

Non's links with the University go back to her days as a Business Studies student, in which she graduated in 1999. She returned to the University as a member of staff in 2012 and worked for several years in the Research, Business & Innovation department.

More recently, Non had been working as the Business Development Manager for the Institute of Business and Law (IBL). Her work involved forging and strengthening links between the University and the local business community, in order to ensure that Aber graduates had access to appropriate work experience and exposure to employers. She also worked at integrating alumni and employers throughout degree programmes in the Business School and Law School.

Non will be sorely missed by colleagues across the University who knew her in both a professional and personal capacity. Institute Manager of IBL, Adrian Harvey wrote the following tribute to Non:

"Non was a tremendous colleague, friend and mentor to all that she worked with.

Her passion, enthusiasm and professionalism were just some of her many exceptional qualities which will be sorely missed within the Institute, University and wider community.

She cared deeply about people, and was always interested in their stories, interests and how she could help - a characteristic that led to her success across her roles within the University, quickly building strong relationships and working collaboratively both within AU and with external partners.

A love of racket sports saw Non participate in staff badminton sessions and also involved with playing and coaching in Aberaeron. She was a regular visitor to Wimbledon and could talk at length about tournament play, catering and sometimes questionable decision-making.

Always willing to tackle problems head on, her proactive approach to finding solutions and addressing issues was exemplary.

Family and friends were core to Non, and at this difficult and terribly sad time, our thoughts and wishes are with them all.

The University has opened a Memorial Book where fellow students and staff can share their memories of Non. It can be found in the RB&I reception if you would like to add a message or memory, a poem or picture."

Adrian Harvey

Spotlight on... the University Music Centre

The University's Music Centre has been behind two spectacular performances at the Arts Centre in recent months.

On Saturday 17 March the University and community symphony orchestra, Philomusica, offered the chance to enjoy the very best of live orchestral music, and on Saturday 21 April (rearranged from Saturday 3 March due to the snow), the University Singers performed a large-scale showcase production of Sir Karl Jenkins' *Cantata Memoria*, commissioned to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Aberfan Disaster in 1966.

We spoke to the University's Director of Music, Dr David Russell Hulme, to find out more about the work of the Music Centre:



David Russell Hulme

What is the background to the University Music Centre?

Music was one of the College's first departments. From the very beginnings it was closely linked with the community (a unique interaction which continues to this day). Initially under Professor Joseph Parry, the musical life of the College developed and by the 1920s, Aberystwyth had become a significant musical focal point.

The University stopped offering Music degrees in the late 1980s, but through the Music Centre, performance and a vibrant musical life continue to flourish in Aber.

The Music Centre offers all students the opportunity to play, sing and learn, and to enjoy music alongside their other studies. For many this is hugely important.

Where is the Music Centre?

The University's Music Centre is based in the Old College, where upgraded practice, rehearsal and library facilities have given a real boost to our work.

The Centre has practice rooms available, and teaching spaces for students wishing to receive instrumental or vocal lessons. It has numerous pianos, a two-manual electronic organ, harp, harpsichord and chamber organ, as well as percussion and other instruments.

The Old College is also home to the Music Library, which houses a large sheet-music collection.



Who works at the University Music Centre?

Nowadays staff at the Music Centre are part-time. In my case, this has allowed me to get down to academic research, which includes several volumes for OUP, undertake conducting engagements across the world, and complete a fair number of recorded and broadcast orchestrations and reconstructions.

The Centre’s administrator, Nia Jones, graduated in Music from Cardiff. A talented singer and flautist, she keeps everything running smoothly, and is a regular member of several of our large ensembles.

Other tutors include Elinor Powell (of Sgarmes fame) and Concert Band and Saxophony director, Harry Jepson, former principal clarinet of the Elysian Orchestra of New Jersey.

What activities can students get involved in through the Music Centre?

For those who enjoy singing, there are a number of groups to get involved in. There is the University Singers (a large mixed choir) and The Elizabethan Madrigal Singers (a student acapella chamber choir). For singers with a theatrical flair Showtime Singers and Curtain Call stage productions of modern musicals, and Aber Opera performs operatic excerpts in concert.

Aber also offers great opportunities for instrumentalists. The University and community symphony orchestra, Philomusica of Aberystwyth, concentrates on music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It has an excellent reputation, has worked with soloists of international standing, and often attract bigger audiences than the BBC’s National Orchestra of Wales!

The University Sinfonia is a chamber orchestra that comes together on a semi-casual basis to enjoy smaller repertoire. Also, on a more informal level, the University runs weekly string and saxophone groups, Simply Strings and Saxophony, as well as a guitar group. The University Concert Band offers wind,

brass and percussion players the chance to experience the full range of the wind band repertoire, and performs two concerts a year. We also have strong links with Aberystwyth Silver Band, a long-established band with a busy concert calendar that offers a warm welcome to students.

What do you think the Music Centre adds to the Aber student experience?

A high-quality music provision is important for many students, often adding hugely to their positive student experience. A recent Music Centre survey showed its programme and reputation had been a significant decider for dozens who chose Aberystwyth, and actually the crucial factor for quite a few. The University offers Music Scholarships too, attracting talented performers to Aber.

The great musical life is one of the strengths of the University, and generations of students have discovered the special quality of music here in Aberystwyth.



Appointments

A warm welcome to colleagues who have joined the University in recent months, including:

Marketing and Recruitment



Robin Halley took up the position as Director of Marketing & Recruitment on 23 April. Robin has more than 20 years' experience in a range of Higher Education marketing roles at director level both in the UK and internationally. Most recently, he has worked as a

Consultant for International Transformation at the University of South Wales and before that, he was Interim Deputy Director of Student Recruitment Access and Admissions at the University of Bristol (2015-2017). As Director of his own consultancy, Robin has worked on marketing and student recruitment strategies for Coventry University London Campus, the International University of Bad Honnef in Germany and Abu Dhabi University.

Aberystwyth Arts Centre



Dafydd Rhys began his role as Director of Aberystwyth Arts Centre in February. A Council member of the Arts Council of Wales, Dafydd Rhys was Director of Content at S4C from 2012-2016. During this time, he was responsible for leading a team that commissioned

a diverse range of programming including the *Hinterland* detective drama series. Find out more about Dafydd on p.7.

Aberystwyth Business School



Professor John Goddard joined the University as Head of the Business School in March. John served as Deputy Head of Bangor Business School at Bangor University between 2007 and 2017, and his previous academic appointments were at Swansea, Leeds and Abertay.

His research interests are in the economics of banking, and the economics of professional sports.

Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences



Dr Islam A. Abd El-Daim has joined IBERS as a postdoctoral researcher in Plant-Microbe Interactions. Islam received his PhD in biology from the Swedish University of Agriculture Sciences (SLU), Uppsala, Sweden and worked as Researcher at the Soils, Water and Environment Research

Institute (SWERI) in Egypt. His research interests include the microbial ecology of plant growth promoting bacteria and diazotrophs.



Dr Melanie Prentice has joined IBERS as a postdoctoral research associate on the Wales-Ireland Ecostructure project. Melanie received her doctorate from the Environmental & Life Sciences department of Trent University, Canada in 2017. Her research at

Aberystwyth uses genetic and genomic techniques to assess range expansions and invasions of native and invasive marine organisms in the Irish Sea.



Dr Sian MacKintosh has returned to IBERS as the Stapledon IRC Project Officer. Formerly an AU Equine Science Masters graduate, Sian gained her PhD at the Royal Veterinary College, London, studying in vitro models of bovine endometrium to further understanding of the

pathophysiology of bovine endometritis. She later completed a 4-year project as a post-doctoral research fellow assessing red meat waste within the beef supply chain at IBERS.

Department of Modern Languages



Christie Margrave has joined the department as a lecturer in French. Christie attended University of St Andrews where she completed an MA in French and Latin, MLitt in French Studies, and a PhD focusing on 18th and 19th century French women's writing. During the course of her doctoral thesis, she

spent two years working as a lectrice d'anglais at La Sorbonne in Paris. She has also worked as a part-time French tutor at the Universities of St Andrews, Edinburgh and Sheffield, a lecturer in French and Latin at Bangor, and most recently a lecturer in French and Translation Studies in Cardiff.

Department of Computer Science



Dr Jacqueline Daykin has joined the department as a Sêr Cymru II Fellow. Jackie obtained her PhD from Warwick University followed by teaching & research positions at King's & Royal Holloway London and also career breaks. She holds visiting research positions at King's College and Stellenbosch & Rouen Universities. Her research in big data focuses on pattern inference in stringology and applications in bioinformatics sequence alignment and compression. She is also a Lecturer at the Mauritius branch campus.

Department of Physics



James Parker has joined the department as a Research Associate. From 2010-14, he was a Mphys student at Aberystwyth, studying Physics with Planetary and Space Physics. He is currently working towards the completion of his PhD at Aberystwyth, his research focusing on the

modelling of the ionosphere under the joint supervision of the university and QinetiQ.

Student Support Services

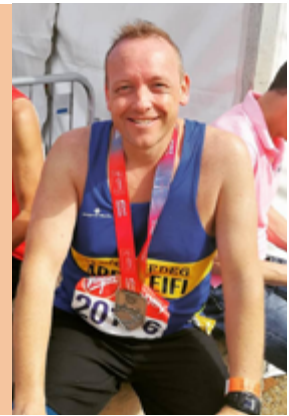


Samantha Glennie has joined as a Wellbeing Practitioner-Mental Health Specialism. Samantha worked within Statutory Mental Health services for nine years. A registered Mental Health Nurse, she has undertaken psychological therapy training and delivering; Cognitive

Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Brief Solution Focused Therapy and Emotional Coping Skills (ECS).

London Marathon congratulations!

Congratulations to **Andrew Thomas**, Historical Buildings Improvement Manager from the Estates Department, who ran the London Marathon on Sunday 22 April, completing in a time of 4 hours 32 minutes.



Dysgu Cymraeg | Learn Welsh 2018
Aberystwyth
 Cwrs Haf Dwys | Intensive Summer Course

I ddysgwyr ar bob lefel for learners at all levels
 Preswyl neu ddibreswyl Residential or non-residential
 30 Gorffennaf - 24 Awst 30 July - 24 August 2018

dysgucymraeg.cymru
 learnwelsh.cymru
 Ceredigion, Powys a Sir Gâr
 Ceredigion, Powys & Carmarthenshire

Obituary

Geraint John (1931-2018)

With sadness we note the passing of Geraint John, a former member of staff of the Department of Music, who has died at the age of 86.

Geraint John was born at Gowerton, near Swansea, in 1931. He was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales from its earliest days and during National Service, he played as a clarinettist with the Central Band of the RAF with whom he marched at the Queen's coronation.

His appointment in 1963 as cellist in the resident chamber ensemble of the University College, Aberystwyth brought him back to Wales. He taught cello and played regularly in the weekly University Recitals, mostly performing the string quartet repertoire.

It was choral conducting, though, that was probably his greatest love - one which took him all over Wales and beyond.

In 1970 Geraint John revived the town's mixed choir - the Aberystwyth and District Choral Society attracted 120 singers for its first performance: Handel's Messiah at the King's Hall in December 1970.

Geraint John continued to work at the Music Department until its closure in the late 1980s. He enriched the lives of generations of students, as well as staff and the local community, and will be remembered with great affection and respect.





THE SUMMER HOUSE HAF
AUGUST | AWST

**CANOLFAN Y CELFYDDYDAU
ABERYSTWYTH ARTS CENTRE**

CASUS CIRCUS - DRIFTWOOD
LOST IN TRANSLATION CIRCUS - THE HOGWALLOPS

THE DEMON BARBERS - XL
OKHAMS RAZOR - THE BELLY OF THE WHALE

CITRUS ARTS - SHIPWRECKED

2FACED DANCE - WHAT THE MOON SAW
COMEDY4KIDZ
ILLYRIA - THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
CABERATION CABARET

PIRATES AND MERMAIDS PICNIC
OPERA UPCLOSE - OPERA COCKTAIL
AN EVENING OF MUSICAL THEATRE
...AND MUCH MORE!

A month-long programme of spectacular performances under canvas, including astounding acrobatic acts, circus, mystery guests, music gigs, musical theatre, family shows, a big picnic! **Rhaglen am fis o berfformiadau ysbennydd o dan gyfnas, yn cynnwys actau acrobatig anhygoel, syrcau, gwahoddedigion dirgel, cerddoriaeth, theatr gerddorol, sioeau teuluol a phicnic mawr!**

 aberystwytharts
 @aberystwytharts
 @aberystwytharts

01970 62 32 32
www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk

Programme subject to change
Gall y rhaglen gael ei newid.



School of Art Exhibitions

The School of Art Gallery is open Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm. Admission is free.

School of Art Degree Show and Postgraduate Exhibition

21-31 May

An exhibition of paintings, drawings, prints, illustrations, photographs, installations, performances and films attesting to the continued high standard of achievement of our students: the richness and diversity of their work demonstrating energy and enthusiasm.



Strandgutsammler, circa 1930-1945, photograph by Hans Saeber (1895-1969)

Sea Change

21 May - 31 August

A student-curated exhibition of prints, paintings, photographs and ceramics from the School of Art collection.

The exhibition borrows a phrase from Shakespeare's *Tempest* for its title, to explore its metaphorical potential.

Discourse: Reynolds to Rego - 250 Years of Prints by Royal Academicians

11 June - 31 August

Marking the centenary of teaching Art at Aberystwyth University and 250 years of the Royal Academy



Adam's Detection, c.late1790s by James Barry (1741-1806); Sir John Williams Bequest.