



Aber^rNEWS

ISSUE 6 - August 2011

Aberystwyth...probably the best place in the world to be a student

UNIVERSITY NEWS

Alumni welcome new Vice-Chancellor

Professor April McMahon received a very warm welcome from the University's alumni at the annual Eisteddfod reunion hosted by the Old Students' Association and the University.

Professor McMahon addressed an audience of over 250 alumni and friends of the University in what was her second public engagement of her first week as Vice-Chancellor.

Speaking in Welsh, Professor McMahon paid tribute to her predecessor Professor Noel Lloyd: "Professor Lloyd has made a significant contribution to Aberystwyth University over the years. It is important that we recognise this formally, and personally I would like to thank him for his warm welcome, his generosity, and his willingness to answer all my questions."

Speaking of the University, she said: "It is a privilege and an honour to be invited to lead and serve the University and I look forward to working with the people who have been working to make Aberystwyth such a great place in which to study, work and research."

"The friendly atmosphere and the willingness of everyone to work for the University has made a great impression on me. Both the University and the town are real communities, and my family and I look forward to becoming part of both."

On her very first day in her new role, Professor McMahon welcomed more than 70 Welsh learners from all corners of the world on the opening day of the Cwrs Haf Awst.

The course, which is aimed at beginners and more experienced learners, is organised by the Mid Wales Welsh for Adults Centre and this year welcomed learners from America, Brittany, Poland, Germany, Australia, Japan and England, as well as Wales.

4 End of an era



6 Aber Research



7 Nuclear powers



10 Developing the iRevolution



11 Business Start-up Week



12 Bristol to Barcelona



COMMUNICATIONS and PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Aber^{NEWS} is published by the **Department of Communications and Public Affairs**, Aberystwyth University. Tel: 01970 621763
E-mail: communications@aber.ac.uk.

The next edition of Aber^{NEWS} will be available in September.

Copy deadline for November 2011 edition is Friday 16th September.



Pictured at the alumni gathering at the Eisteddfod are His Honour Judge Nic Parry, Professor April McMahon, Professor Noel Lloyd, Kay Powell and John Hughes.

Aberystwyth Fee Plan 2012/13

On Monday 11 July, Aberystwyth's Fee Plan was approved by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales. Dr Sarah Taylor, the University's new Director of Planning, sets out what the plan entails and what it will hopefully achieve.

On 11th July we welcomed the news that the Funding Council has accepted our fee plan for 2012/13. As a result, Aberystwyth will be permitted to charge fees of £9,000 per annum from 2012/13.

The plan is important because it sets out a number of key initiatives designed to further enhance the already excellent student experience we offer and to widen access so that all those who can benefit from Higher Education are able to do so. We have incorporated the opinions of our student body representatives at all stages of preparation and completion of the plan and the emphasis on equality of opportunity in our planned expenditure accords with the views of the student body as represented by the Guild.

The full fee plan is available on our website at: www.aber.ac.uk/en/university/student-fees, but the key initiatives to which we are committed as part of the plan are set out below:

- To invest £1m in the delivery of a new means tested bursary scheme which will provide financial assistance to students from households with lower incomes. Around 1,250 students entering AU in September 2012 should benefit from this;
- To offer the Aberystwyth Summer University which will provide an experience of university life for around 80 young people from schools and colleges in areas where, traditionally, the number entering Higher Education is low;
- To enhance our support provided to students with disabilities;
- To invest in our peer-mentoring schemes for students and in technical resources to support more flexible learning;
- To continue to invest, ensuring that our students benefit from an excellent learning environment;
- To develop activities which will enhance the employability of our students, developing an award scheme to recognise extra-curricular activities and providing further training opportunities with business and industry;
- To develop a 'technology enhanced learning student user group' through which student members will provide feedback regarding University services and assist our Information Services department in testing new learning technologies.

The plan will be carefully monitored over the next year to ensure that we are successful in meeting the challenging targets we have set for 2012/13. These targets are designed to ensure that we constantly strive to improve the student experience and work to ensure that all students are supported to enter Higher Education and to achieve their full potential.

Dr Sarah Taylor

Sarah Taylor has recently been appointed Director of Planning. An alumna of the History and Welsh History Department, Sarah also completed her PhD here before going to work as a Research Associate at York University. She joined the Planning Office in 2000 in a temporary post before being appointed as an Administrative Assistant and then Assistant Registrar.



We have committed to a communications strategy to publicise widely the financial support available to new undergraduates, including our generous bursary package, and provide information on what is covered by the fees charged. This is a welcome move towards greater transparency and we are exploring the feasibility of a "dashboard" approach to inform students how the fee income is being spent.

We will also be providing potential students with information regarding the new fee system, to reassure them that no-one should be dissuaded from going to university. Key points we will be making are:

- There are no up-front fees. While full time undergraduates are studying they will not have to pay fees;
- No fee repayments will have to be made until a salary reaches £21,000, and then the payment is based on 9% of the salary over £21,000 (thus for an annual salary of £25k, the monthly payments would be £30).

Our fee plan will help us continue to uphold the Aberystwyth values of excellence in student experience and access for all able students. Our work over the next few years will be to disseminate these values to potential students and to provide them with as much information as possible to help them make informed choices about entering Higher Education.

UNIVERSITY NEWS

Vice-Chancellor's column

It's been a long time since January - a long time for the Higher Education sector, and quite a long time for me!



For Higher Education, we've seen the long-awaited White Paper from the Westminster Government, followed by continuing discussion over its implications for universities throughout the UK. There have been declarations of intended fees for 2012/13, and the excellent news that our own Fee Plan has been approved. The decision on the level of fee we will charge was not taken lightly, but was built on a careful calculation of the costs of continuing to provide a world-class student experience, excellent teaching, and a strong learning environment, while government funding is being reduced. Even more recently, there has been the anticipated statement from the Welsh Government and HEFCW on the likely future reconfiguration of the Welsh sector, launching a consultation to which of course our University will be contributing vigorously.

As for me: I was appointed your Vice-Chancellor designate in January and since then my family and I have been greatly looking forward to joining you in Aberystwyth. I want to thank Noel Lloyd for his generosity in including me in key meetings and discussions over the past few months. I have enjoyed working with him, and send him very warm wishes on his retirement and his return to mathematics!

Through my visits to Aberystwyth, I've started to form a clearer picture of the great strengths of the University - and of what needs to be done. The strengths are many. We have genuine excellence in the senior team; some exceptional commitment and results in both research and teaching; and a firm friendship with the town and local community on which we must build for the future. Nobody could fail to be impressed by the increase in undergraduate applications and acceptances over the past five years; and I was fortunate enough to be at the Open Day in July to see the outstanding engagement from academic and professional support staff and students, working together to provide an excellent, energising day.

However, there is plenty to do. It has never been more important for us to work in partnership with our students, and I have already met the incoming Guild sabbatical officers to agree a new pattern of meetings with my senior team. A university with our record and aspirations in research needs to recruit significantly more postgraduate students; and an increase in international students would provide an even more vibrant and diverse environment for all students and staff. Are we always doing enough to share the good practice I've already seen in action? Do we incentivise success, and are we organised in a way that allows us to do it better?

It is a pleasure and a privilege to have been invited to lead Aberystwyth University through this next and vitally important phase in its history. I'm looking forward to meeting you all, to hearing your ideas and sharing mine. In fact, I've been counting the days.

Professor April McMahon, Vice-Chancellor

PRIFYSGOL
ABERYSTWYTH
UNIVERSITY

www.aber.ac.uk/alumni

Cic Arall i'r Bar

The Bar Kicks Back

Aduniad alumni
Prifysgol Aberystwyth

Aberystwyth University
alumni reunion

**2il - 4ydd
Medi 2011**

**2nd - 4th
September 2011**

Meet the new VC

During August and September 2011 there will be an opportunity for all members of staff at the University to meet with the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor April McMahon.

The meetings will last about an hour and will be an opportunity for Professor McMahon to share with staff her early thoughts about how, together, we can shape our future, and to answer any questions you might have. Refreshments will be provided.

Details of the dates and times of each meeting can be found online. Please note that you will need to book your place at one of the meetings in advance by going to www.aber.ac.uk/en/vc-meetings.

Colleagues who do not have a staff email account or require assistance to book a place, should contact **Communications and Public Affairs** on (62)1568 or **Human Resources** on (62)8555.

End of an era

Professor Noel Lloyd CBE, who retired at the end of July, looks back over his tenure as the University's Vice-Chancellor.

It has been a great privilege to serve Aberystwyth University as its Vice-Chancellor for the last seven years. It has been a period of change, and the rate of change has been increasing consistently. It hardly needs repeating that the turbulence currently being experienced by Higher Education throughout the UK is intense, and there are particular challenges for universities in Wales.

In this, my last contribution to Aber News, it is appropriate to look back, but only in the spirit of the University's continuing development.

One of the first decisions taken after I became Vice-Chancellor was to seek our own degree awarding powers. We became Aberystwyth University and are now awarding AU degrees. This was – and is – a signal of ambition and self-confidence.

At the same time we have established partnerships with other universities which have contributed importantly to our development. Of particular note is the Research and Enterprise Partnership with Bangor University, at the time a pioneering concept. This has been successful and has developed into a strategic alliance across an increasingly wider range of our activity. I have no doubt that partnerships of various kinds are essential for our future well being - to be internationally competitive in research, to provide an effective (and efficient) service to students and staff, and in our community engagement.

It has to be emphasised that universities have a key role to play in their localities (and none more so than Aberystwyth), and we have an important contribution to Wales. But to do so we must be internationally known and competitive in the UK.

The primary focus of our work must be our students, and I am delighted with the success that Aberystwyth has consistently had in all surveys of student satisfaction. This has been one of the main features of the last five years and must have led in part to the outstanding success the University has had in student recruitment. The figures speak for themselves – a huge increase in applications and acceptances over the last four years.

Partnerships are essential, and integration of our activities is vital – integration across the university and between universities. One of the most important developments of the last seven years was the establishment of IBERS through the merger of the former IGER into the University. This has led to other partnerships with leading universities in the UK – identifying the major issues, and responding by assembling interdisciplinary approaches. As important has been the positive attitude to our contribution to the



economy through innovation and training.

There are a myriad other developments which I could mention that have given me particular pleasure. I also note the new buildings that have been completed and are being built. Over a period the University will look very different and the developments of this period in the University's history will be manifested through the buildings.

I said when appointed that it was essential not to be insular in any sense and that Aberystwyth must play a full part in the work of the HE sector in the UK. This I have sought to do, culminating in my chairing HEW and my involvement in UUK, QAA and UCEA, for example. These activities have been very interesting, and I believe that Aberystwyth University has benefited at the same time from being seen to be involved.

It has been a great honour and a pleasure to be Vice-Chancellor, and I wish Professor April McMahon every success and satisfaction.



A standing ovation

Professor Noel Lloyd received a standing ovation after addressing his final degree ceremony as Vice-Chancellor on Friday 15th July.

Speaking to an audience of staff and graduands from the Institute of Mathematics and Physics and the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, President of the University, said: "I would like to pay tribute to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Noel Lloyd who will retire at the end of this month after 36 years of remarkable and loyal service to the University. He leaves with our best wishes and thanks for all he has contributed to the success of this University."

Since his appointment as Vice-Chancellor in 2004 Professor Lloyd has officiated at 56 degree ceremonies.

UNIVERSITY NEWS

On Saturday 16 July a dinner was held at the University to honour the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Noel Lloyd and Mrs Dilys Lloyd, and to mark the Vice-Chancellor's retirement.

The first tribute was paid by University President, Sir Emyr Jones Parry. He attested that the Vice-Chancellor had been a "good and faithful servant" to the University over a period of 36 years - an extremely successful career during which he undertook a broad range of duties, beginning as a lecturer in the Mathematics Department before achieving the status of Professor.

He had a period as Head of Department, Dean of the Science Faculty, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Registrar and Secretary before becoming the leader of the institution in August 2004. This was an exciting time that saw the University being granted powers to award Aberystwyth University degrees in 2007, the creation of IBERS in 2008 following the merger of IGER with the University and also a partnership established with Bangor University.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry read englynion poems composed for the Vice-Chancellor by Dr Huw Meirion Edwards, a lecturer at the Department of Welsh and winner of the National Eisteddfod Chair in 2004 - a tribute that summarised his hard work and contribution.

A further tribute was paid by Professor Aled Jones, Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor who thanked him for his friendship, humour and remarkable attention to detail in undertaking his duties. He also noted his particular commitment to the Welsh ethos of the University.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked all for their kind words and for the support that he had received from Council members, staff and students at the University. He said it had been a privilege to serve as Vice-Chancellor and he also expressed his gratitude on behalf of his wife Dilys and their family for the welcome and friendship received from the University and the community over the years.

The highlight of the evening was the unveiling of a portrait of the Vice-Chancellor by the artist Mark Roscoe. He was given a sketch of the portrait as a gift from the University and a framed copy of the englynion. A bouquet of flowers was presented to Mrs Dilys Lloyd.

The guests had the opportunity to express their good wishes to Professor Noel Lloyd in a book of tribute. Sir Emyr Jones Parry thanked all who had contributed to the success of the evening.

Dr Catrin Hughes - Registrar and Secretary



Professor Noel Lloyd and artist Mark Roscoe



Professor Noel Lloyd and a framed copy of the Englynion

The Englynion

To honour Professor Noel Lloyd on his retirement, July 2011

Chwith, wedi rhoi o'ch eithaf, – clirio drôr,
Cloi'r drws, a dychmygaf
Nad hawdd yn eich seithfed haf
Dynnu'r ffin dan Orffennaf.

Ond Gorffennaf arafach – eleni
Sy'n ddalen lân bellach;
Wedi byw pob eiliad bach
Yn brysur, mae'n haf brasach.

Wedi hafau o dyfiant – fe feda'r
Dyfodol eich llwyddiant;
Rhag gwasgfâu'r galwadau gant
Cewch heddwch, cewch eich haeddiant.

Huw Meirion Edwards

Graduation 2011

Missed out on graduation this year?

The videos of the graduation ceremonies can still be viewed at www.aber.ac.uk/en/graduation/video/2011/ceremony1/



Having just completed the latest round of research monitoring with Aberystwyth University's departments, and with the summer 'research' recess now upon us, it is timely to reiterate the need for a focus on research outputs of high quality rather than quantity (with the caveat that, for the majority of academic staff, four high quality outputs are needed for inclusion in REF2014).



Gary Reed - Head of Research Office

Research Support

Our Research Support Officers are available over the summer to support research grant applications and to help researchers find partners; either other academics in Aberystwyth or other universities, or private or public sector organisations. Other support is available on the Research Toolkit (www.aber.ac.uk/en/research/toolkit/ available off campus via VPN), which is regularly updated with additional information and copies of successful grant applications.

Another resource, the University's Research Funding Opportunities database service, is changing supplier to CoS Pivot, which provides a cleaner interface and functionality and additional facilities that support part of the University's strategy of increasing collaborative research and international research funding. For example, when searching for funding, the system immediately identifies other researchers in Aberystwyth who may also be interested in your search and can also identify people from other institutions both in the UK and abroad. Pivot also has a broader range of funding opportunities, including those from more international and diverse sources. (See the Research Funding Opportunities Database www.aber.ac.uk/en/research/research-funding/pivot for more information).

The Research Office, in conjunction with Communications and Public Affairs and Commercialisation and Consultancy Services has been developing an expertise directory for the University. The function of the directory is to promote the University's research expertise, raise the media profile of our experts, and help develop collaborative working with public and private sector organisations in research, policy engagement and commercialisation. The directory will also make it easier to identify internal expertise to support interdisciplinary potential and, as such, will be linked to the new CoS Pivot research funding database. Before the directory goes live, all research active academics will receive an email in September to check that the expertise that has been attributed is correct. Please help by checking and responding.

OPAN

On the 20th of June the University hosted a research event in collaboration with OPAN, the Older People & Ageing Research & Development Network. 'The Age Agenda in Aberystwyth – building collaborative research with older people on the challenges of ageing in the 21st century' included contributions from **Dr Kate Bullen**, head of the Psychology Department, and **Dr Joanne Thatcher**, acting head of the Department of Sports and Exercise Science.

www.opanwales.org.uk

Collaborations

In terms of collaborations, I'm pleased to announce that Aberystwyth University, through IBERS, has been asked to lead on the Food Security agenda for the St David's Day Group of Universities (Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, Glamorgan and Swansea), and a group of Universities brought together by the BBSRC (Cambridge, Reading, Nottingham, Warwick, Edinburgh, Leeds, University of East Anglia universities, the Scottish Agricultural College and Harper Adams). Aberystwyth has worked with Bangor University to run two very successful meetings that were held w/c June 20th in Cardiff and London. The next step is to map out research strengths and capabilities across both groups. If you have an interest in inter-disciplinary food security research projects, please let us know.

Research Support Contacts

Name	Position	Email	Extension
Research Office			
Gary Reed	Head of Research Office	gar	1789
Hannah Payne	REF and Research Monitoring Officer	hep	8490
Dafydd Roberts	Faculty of Arts and Humanities - Research Support Officer	dir	8787
Joanne Walker <i>(maternity cover for Jenny Deaville)</i>	Faculty of Social Sciences - Research Support Officer	jnw	1616
Sonia Monteiro	Faculty of Science - Research Support Officer	smm14	2947
Huw Merfyn Hughes	European Funding Manager	hmh	8742
IBERS			
Steve Fish	IBERS IP Development Manager	stf	3232
Martine Spittle	IBERS Research Fund Development Officer	rjs	1562
Liz Humphries	IBERS Research and Knowledge Transfer Officer	elh20	3072

Further Research Support can be found in the Research Grants Application Toolkit and the Research Funding Opportunities Database (PIVOT) at www.aber.ac.uk/en/research/

Name	Position	Email	Extension
Editorial Contacts			
Delyth Evans	Research Communications Administrator	dte	8753
Arthur Dafis	Communications and Public Affairs	aid	1763

Nuclear powers



Professor Nicholas J Wheeler

Professor Nicholas J Wheeler who leads the Challenges to Trust-Building in Nuclear Worlds project at the Department of International Politics, has recently returned from India where he presented the work of the project and conducted a conflict transformation workshop organised by Indian NGO Women in Security Conflict management and Peace (WISCOMP). During his visit, he also interviewed a number of Indian politicians, diplomats and other policy-makers on trust building between the two nuclear powers India and Pakistan.

In June 2011 the project held its second annual symposium on Nuclear Rivalries and Prospects for Cooperation and Trust-Building. The two-day event brought together early career researchers, established academics and practitioners working in the fields of trust research and nuclear politics. Participants discussed presentations focusing on current nuclear dynamics in regions such as the Middle East and South Asia as well as future trends in the nuclear relations between the United States, China and Russia.

Milky way

IBERS is heading an international project to support organic and low input dairy farming. SOLID – Sustainable Organic and Low Input Dairying, is a five year £5.28m project and involves 26 partners from 11 different countries.

The main aim of the project, which includes cows and goats, is to improve breeds and feeding methods to maintain productivity and to improve animal health and welfare, while meeting the market's demand for high quality milk.

www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers/news/news_archive_all/news_archive_2011/title-98055-en.html

Women's writing

At the end of May the English and Creative Writing Department celebrated the launch of the new Centre for Women's Writing and Literary Culture (CWWLC).

Operational since 2010, CWWLC draws on the extensive research into women's writing that is currently being carried out within the English and Creative Writing Department. Including the CWWLC's Director, **Dr Sarah Prescott**, there are 10 members of the department and 14 postgraduates who are active researchers in this field.

Staff publish widely on women's writing from the medieval period to the present day and the department also boasts a number of practitioners of creative writing who are published female writers themselves, such as the CWWLC's Deputy Director, **Dr Tiffany Atkinson**.

In the future the centre intends to host an annual lecture presented by a key figure in the field and will organise a major international conference every three years. In addition, it will mount a series of workshops and colloquia organised by, and shaped for, postgraduate members.

www.aber.ac.uk/en/english/departmental-research/departmental-research-centres/womenswriting/

Human Rights Wild energy

The recently published book, *New Developments in the Area of Human Rights*, which has been co-edited by **Marco Odello** and **Sofia Cavandoli** from the Department of Law and Criminology, provides a set of studies and reflections on emerging human rights on the basis of developments in law that have taken place since the adoption of the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

The book is the result of a colloquium organised by the Department of Law & Criminology here at Aberystwyth in December 2008 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The main themes addressed in the different chapters discuss issues and rights that were not originally included as such in the Universal Declaration in 1948.

Further information is available at www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415562096/

Scientists at IBERS are looking at how grass, rushes and bracken could provide energy and help protect nature-rich land in Wales.

Working with research centres in Germany and Estonia they are developing new ways of managing under-used grasslands. PROGRASS is a three and a half year project funded through the European Commission's LIFE+ grants and is aimed at making better use of grassland on protected sites and also increasing biodiversity by providing a sustainable way of managing the land.

Three of the six experimental sites in Wales are on National Nature Reserves, managed by the Countryside Council for Wales. The work at IBERS is being led by **Dr Mariecia Fraser**.

www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers/research/bec/bec_projects/pstcon2ghwadbp/

Fractures and cracks

Professor Gennady Mishuris from the Institute of Mathematics and Physics has successfully secured funding under the FP7 programme. Professor Mishuris has been awarded €1.5m for HYDROFRAC (enhancing hydraulic fracturing on the basis of numerical simulation of coupled geomechanical, hydrodynamic and microseismic processes), €170,000 for the project INTERCRACKS (unsolved problems in fracture mechanics of heterogeneous materials), and €230,000 for the project OA AM (articular contact mechanics with application to early diagnosis of osteoarthritis: asymptotic modelling of biomechanical contact phenomena under dynamic and impact loading). Professor Mishuris will work with Dr A Piccolroaz from Trento, Italy on 'INTERCRACK', and Professor I Argatov from St Petersburg, Russia on the OA AM project.

Graduation 2011

With around 2,500 undergraduates graduating this year, it is sometimes easy to forget that everyone has a story to tell. Aber News spoke to some of those who celebrated.

Christopher Smith graduated with a 2:1 honours in European Languages having read Spanish and French as his major subjects and German as his minor.

As well as graduating, Christopher was also celebrating his success in winning the Veritas Language Solutions translation competition. Not only did he win the prize for the best translation from Spanish to English, he was adjudged to be the overall winner, beating competition from the UK, Spain and Italy.

He said: "I've had a fantastic time as a student in Aberystwyth and as a graduate of the University. I now feel that I have a sound base upon which I can develop my career as a linguist."

Iwan Bryn James graduated with a first class honours in Welsh having completed the External Degree through the Medium of Welsh after studying for eight years.

A Conservation Unit Manager at the National Library of Wales, Iwan also shared the TE Nicholas Award for best essay.

The subject of his dissertation was "Lloerigion Drws y Nant" ('The Drws y Nant Hellfire Society'). "I had been brought up surrounded by wonderful stories about the 'Lloerigion', these 18th century bohemian, literary gentry," he said. "The Drws y Nant public house used to be part of my family home in Rhydymain, Dolgellau, and it was there that the Lloerigion would meet of an evening. I was particularly pleased to have the opportunity to explore my local history in the essay."

When **Jonathan Lowe** from Atlanta (Georgia) USA opted to study for a BSc in Animal Behaviour at Aberystwyth, little did he know that he was following in the footsteps of his great grandparents.

Jonathan's great grandmother, Edith Mary Turner, came to Aber in 1904 and gained a degree in biology before going on to study geography under Professor Fleure. His great grandfather Frank George William King graduated with a degree in physics and was a member of Royal Flying Corps during the First World War.

Now that he has graduated, Jonathan is returning to the USA to work as a research assistant at the Yerkes National Primate Research Centre at Emory University in Georgia.

Mother of eight **Colette Williams** from Newtown was delighted to receive her BA (Hons) in Education and Drama on Wednesday 13 July.

Her father's change of career when he was 40 encouraged Colette to return to education: "My father was a marine engineer who completed a degree in nursing at the age of 40", she said, "and I strongly believe that no matter what age you are, you can still achieve your potential."

Whilst Colette is very proud of her personal achievement, as a mother, it is the positive effect that studying has had on her children that gives her the most satisfaction, in terms of being able to provide motivation and 'normalising' study.

Colette has been accepted on a PGCE course at the University of Wales, Newport in September.

Staff member **Giles Polglase** graduated with a Master's Degree in Business Administration and is the winner of the David Davies Prize for Human Resource Management 2011.

Giles, who works for the Centre for Development of Staff and Academic Practice, completed his MBA whilst working for the University as part of the University's Professional Development Scheme which encourages staff to participate in their professional development by following modules and degree courses whilst employed.

"This is by far the best academic course I have completed," he said. "I was able to instantly apply the theory learnt on the first day of the course into my working practices."

Ursula Byrne, Initial Teacher Education and Training Manager at the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, received her MA (Irish) on Thursday 14 July.

"I began to study for the MA in 2005 when I was administrating the External Degree through the Medium of Welsh," explained Ursula. "Then I moved to a full time job, which meant that it took longer for me to complete the extended essay. An MA of this kind, which is available to study part time, is particularly suitable for people who work," she said.

Ursula's extended essay explored 'The use of Irish Literature in the Ardeistiméireacht exam 1924-2008', looking at the change in the nature of the texts, reading workload and the nature and purpose of the assessment methods.

Ursula originally graduated from University College, Dublin with a BA in Irish and Welsh.

Fellows 2011

Six Fellows were honoured at this year's graduation ceremonies.

The BBC's award-winning Business Editor, **Robert Peston**, was presented by the Director of the School of Management and Business, Mr Nicholas Perdikis.

Widely acclaimed for his work during the Northern Rock banking crisis, Robert Peston is the winner of numerous awards, including Journalist of the Year, Specialist Journalist of the Year and Scoop of the Year (twice) from the Royal Television Society.



Chief Veterinary Officer to the Welsh Government, **Professor Christianne Glossop**, was presented by Professor Will Haresign, Deputy Director of the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences.

Appointed to her current post in 2005, Professor Glossop is responsible for developing and implementing the animal health and welfare policy and strategy for Wales.

Her role in supporting the livestock industry has received particular recognition. She was awarded the Princess Royal Award by the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers in 2009 for her work on bovine TB eradication, and in the same year was joint winner of the Farmers Weekly Farming Champion award with former Rural Affairs Minister Elin Jones. She was appointed Honorary Professor at the Royal Veterinary College, London in 2007.



Human rights campaigner **Dr Mary King**, who once worked alongside Dr Martin Luther King, was presented by Professor Michael Foley, Head of the Department of International Politics.

Dr King, who studied for her PhD here at Aberystwyth, is an academic of high renown and a prolific author. Her books include

Freedom Song: A Personal Story of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, for which she was awarded the Robert F Kennedy Memorial Book Award.



The **Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Pill** was presented by Winston Roddick QC, Vice President of the University.

Sir Malcolm Thomas Pill has had a distinguished career as Counsel and Queen's Counsel, and in the administration of justice as Recorder, Judge of the Queen's Bench Division and as a Lord Justice of Appeal. He is the longest-serving Lord Justice of Appeal, and the most senior member of the Court of Appeal of England and Wales.

A former Third Secretary at the Foreign Office, he has worked at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, has been chair of the Welsh Centre of the UN Association Trust, the Welsh Centre for International Affairs, and of the United Kingdom Committee of the Freedom from Hunger Campaign.



Dr Clive James, agricultural scientist and founder of the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA), was presented by Professor Wayne Powell, Director of the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences.

An Aber graduate (Agricultural Botany, 1961), Dr James founded the ISAAA in 1990 in order to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and the acquisition and transfer of crop biotechnology applications from industrial countries, for the benefit of resource-poor farmers in the developing world. A not-for-profit charitable organisation, ISAAA's mission is to alleviate hunger and poverty in developing countries.

Prior to this he was Deputy Director General at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre in Mexico, where he worked with the Nobel laureate Dr Norman Borlaug, the founding patron of ISAAA. He has also served as Senior Agricultural Adviser to the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UN.



The accomplished military leader, author and academic, Lieutenant-General **Jonathon Riley**, was presented by Professor Martin Alexander from the Department of International Politics.

Lieutenant-General Riley joined the Army in 1973 and dedicated his life to a career in the military, until his retirement from active service in 2009 when he took up the appointment of Director General and Master of the Royal Armouries.

Awarded the Distinguished Service Order for bravery and distinguished conduct in the Balkans in 1995, he was made an Officer of the Legion of Merit of the United States of America in 2004 and Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath in the New Year's Honours, 2008, and in December 2009 he received the NATO Meritorious Service Medal from the Secretary-General.



COMPUTER SCIENCE



Professor Chris Price

Developing the iRevolution

Professor Chris Price cjp@aber.ac.uk

On the 7th-9th of September, Aberystwyth University will host iOS DEV UK, the first UK conference for iPhone developers (www.iosdevuk.com). Professor Chris Price, creator of the acclaimed app for Welsh learners, 'Cwrs Mynediad', looks at the phenomenon that is revolutionising modern mobile communications.

When Apple launched its iPhone App Store in 1998, it started a revolution in mobile phones. Before that date, very few people expected their phone to be able to do anything except make phone calls, send texts or maybe surf the Web. Since then, we have moved to a situation where over half of the phones sold in the USA this year will be smartphones - capable of helping you plan your wedding, navigate in your car, select and book a hotel or a restaurant, track your weight, keep your diary, and a thousand other useful functions.

The iPhone App Store now has over half a million different applications available for sale, and the Android App Store (Apple's main competitor) has reached 250,000 Apps. Not all of these Apps are very useful - there seem to be several hundred Apps that just make strange noises.

There are many Apps out there that provide a genuinely useful function, and Apple sold more than \$2 billion worth of Apps last year. This is forecast to increase to \$15 billion by 2015.

The UK has been making a contribution to this growing industry, with healthy numbers of Apps being created and sold. Some of these are made by micro-companies such as Johnny Two Shoes, brothers Max and Josh Scott-Slade, who have written the hit pirate game "Plunderland". Others are made by more established companies such as Agant Limited, who produced the very successful UK TrainTime App, and have also produced a number of Apps for other companies.

The success of the portable computer that we call a smartphone has started to lead to other small-form computers that are similar but without the phone. Apple has led the way in this market, first with the iPod Touch, which is the same size as the iPhone, but much cheaper, and can do almost everything the iPhone can except make phone calls. They followed this up with a much larger version, the iPad. People thought this was "just a large iPod Touch", but that is to ignore the significant benefits that a much larger screen brings. The tablet form exemplified by the iPad is



HUMAN RESOURCES

Equality 'Champion' Announcements

Human Resources are pleased to inform staff of the following equality activities:

Athena SWAN Charter/Champion – In May 2011 we became Athena SWAN Charter members which recognise and celebrate good employment practice for women working in science, engineering and technology (SET) in Higher Education and research. Dr Kate Bullen, Head of Psychology is our nominated Champion.

Stonewall Cymru Champions – In July 2011 we joined the Stonewall Cymru Diversity Champions Programme Britain's good practice forum for sexual orientation where employers can work with Stonewall, and each other, to promote diversity in the workplace. This follows a visit from Stonewall Cymru's Director and a very well attended LGB&T staff networking event in May.

Aberystwyth Equality Champions – A staff network of Equality Champions was formed in June 2011 to help us further promote equality and diversity across the University. A launch/training event will be held in August 2011.

For more information on any of the above, please contact Olymbia on 8598 or opp@aber.ac.uk.

Health and Wellbeing at Aber

Following a Health and Safety Executive 'Stress Management' survey pilot carried out in 2010, the Human Resources Department, as part of a HECFE 'Improving Performance through Wellbeing and Engagement' project has recently carried out a second 'ASSET' survey. This was piloted with 13 departments to measure the well-being of staff, and to ultimately compare and contrast both pilots.

The ASSET survey is a tool developed by Professor Cary Cooper, a world expert in the area of psychometrics and health

measurement, and the team at Robertson Cooper Ltd. It measures known sources of pressure in organisations, such as working relationships and workload demands. Our initial findings show that staff at Aberystwyth appear positive about aspects of their job but that job security was seen by those surveyed as a source of pressure.

A full report for the University is expected in August 2011 and our thanks go to all staff that took part in these pilots.

Business Start-up Week June 2011

Aberystwyth University's Summer Business Start-up Week was held on campus from Monday 6th – Friday 10th June 2011. This 'Business Boot Camp' provided an excellent opportunity for staff, students and graduates to take part in an integrated series of FREE essential business skills workshops.

Those attending either had a business idea they were looking to turn into reality, or were interested in developing their entrepreneurial skills. Sessions covered themes including: Business Planning, Market Research, Financial Planning and E-Marketing. In addition to these themes, delegates enjoyed interactive sessions on 'How to Network' and heard from inspirational local entrepreneurs Ben Giles (Ultima Cleaning) and Kees Hujisman (Tregroes Waffles).

29 people took part in Start-up Week activities, from 10 different University Departments, as diverse as Education; International Politics; Theatre, Film and Television Studies and Computer Science. In addition, Aberystwyth welcomed graduates back to the University and local people looking at setting up new enterprises.

Delegate Anita Ball said the week was "great throughout. It made me realise what I need to do to make my idea into a reality. It helped me to focus my ideas into recognisable target areas".



Some of the delegates from Business Start-up Week 2011 with inspirational Role Model Kees Hujisman (centre), founder of the Tregroes Waffle Company.

ideal for seeing whole web pages, watching videos, reading and writing documents, and there are signs that many people who would have bought a laptop for these kinds of tasks are now buying a tablet instead.

Business use of applications on smartphones and tablets is a rapidly growing sector that was not greatly foreseen a year or two ago. The new tablets in particular have proven very popular for a variety of tasks. Sales people are using them to give presentations, to record contacts and to log meetings. American Airlines has started to replace paper-based maps with an iPad mapping App. This is estimated to save them over \$1 million per year because of the weight reduction that will be achieved.

In the US, 75% of medical practitioners are estimated to own at least one Apple device, and they are using them for tasks including looking at patient records, showing X-ray photographs and finding medical information. They are becoming so important to the doctor's life that Stanford University and the University of Chicago have both started giving an iPad to every doctor in training.

Smartphones and tablet devices are becoming an integral part of modern life, for leisure, for information, for keeping in contact, and for business. There are 200 million phone and tablet devices out there that run Apple's software, and a further 100 million that run Google's Android software, and those numbers are increasing rapidly.

At Aberystwyth in September, we will be bringing together the people in the UK that are actively creating this revolution, and sharing experiences to make us more competitive in building Apps that are changing the world.

Footnote

The Department of Computer Science has been running a number of courses for commercial app developers and offers three and four year Ubiquitous Computing undergraduate degree courses. www.aber.ac.uk/en/undergrad/courses/compsci/ubiquitous-computing/

ABER PEOPLE

Appointments

Theatre Film and Television Studies

Gideon Koppel joins the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies in September as the new Professor of Film. Previously the Course Director of MA Documentary by Practice at the Royal Holloway, University of London, he recently produced the critically acclaimed feature film *Sleep Furiously* which won the 2009 Guardian First Feature Film Award.

School of Management and Business

Ian Thomas has been appointed Director of Postgraduate Programmes and International Development at the School of Management and Business. An Aber graduate (MBA), Ian returned to Wales following a successful career in the commercial sector based in London and the South East of England. Ian joins Aberystwyth from Swansea University's School of Business and Economics where he worked for 6 years.

European Languages

Dr Andrea Hammel has been appointed as lecturer in German in the Department of European Languages. She joins Aberystwyth from Sussex University where she was a researcher in the Centre for German-Jewish Studies and lecturer in the Centre for Language Studies. Among her research areas are the literature and history of German-speaking refugees and the Kindertransport. She is also co-director of the AHRC-funded Holocaust Writing and Translation Research Network.

Sports and Exercise Science

Dr Joanne Thatcher has been appointed Interim Head of the Department of Sport and Exercise Science. Dr Thatcher succeeds Professor David Lavallee who has been appointed Head of the School of Sport at Sterling University.



Retirement

Brian Foster



After forty years of service, Brian Foster retired in August. Brian started working for the University on 15 August 1971 as a Graduate Assistant. He studied Economics here as a student from 1967 to 1971, during which time he spent two years as a Student Treasurer and Deputy President and served on the Committee's Council/Finance and General Purposes and Development and Priority Committee.

During his time at the University he also held the positions of Assistant Registrar, Senior Assistant Registrar, Academic Registrar including Planning in 1981 and most recently Director of Planning and Academic Registrar. He also served under six Vice-Chancellors namely, Thomas Parry, Sir Goronwy Daniel, Gareth Owen, Kenneth Morgan, Derec Llwyd Morgan and Noel Lloyd.

Bristol to Barcelona

Congratulations to **James Bradbury-Willis** and **Dafydd Davies** who have raised over £12,350 for Apêl Elain after completed a gruelling 1000 mile bike ride from Bristol to Barcelona.

James, a member of the digital marketing team, and Dafydd, a graphic designer in the Design Studio, took on the challenge to raise funds for Apêl Elain, a year-long appeal in support of the charities Wales Air Ambulance, Leon Heart Foundation (previously Children's Heart Unit for Wales), Ronald McDonald House and Wallace and Gromit's Grand Appeal. The four charities have supported a young girl from Aberystwyth, Elain James, whose mother, Bridget, works at the University Sports Centre.

Anyone wishing to contribute can still do so by visiting:

www.bristolto-barcelona.co.uk



Pictured are James (left) and Dafydd being presented with an AU cycling jersey by Professor Martin Jones prior to setting out.

Teaching excellence

The winners of the Aberystwyth University Learning and Teaching Fellowships and the Graduate Teaching Assistant Awards have been announced.

The Learning and Teaching Fellowships are presented to members of academic staff who have made an exceptional contribution to teaching and learning at the University.

This year's winners are **Dr Carl Cater** (IBERS), **Dr I-Chant Chiang** (Psychology), **Dr Hazel Davey** (IBERS), **Karl Drinkwater** (Information Services), **Dr Gareth Hall** (Psychology), **Dr Kobil Ruziev** (School of Management and Business) and **Dr Mark Smith** (IGES).

The Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Awards are made to postgraduate teaching assistants who have made an exceptional contribution to teaching and learning at the University.

This year's winners are **Rhun Emlyn** (History & Welsh History), **Sarah Forrest** (Sport and Exercise Science), **Anja Gebel** (International Politics), **Athina Gkouti** (International Politics), **Andrew Hom** (International Politics), **Erzsebet Strausz** (International Politics) and **Andreja Zevnik** (International Politics).



The awards were presented during this year's graduation ceremonies.

Full details and profiles are available online at www.aber.ac.uk/news

Back to the Fringe

Following the success of local theatre company, Louche Theatre, at the Edinburgh Fringe last year, the girls from CCS are heading back this August with a production of *Be My Baby*. The play is set in a mother and baby home in 1964, and the play is packed with fun and heartache interspersed with songs and dance from the era.

Sarah Mair Gates and **Lizzie Hyde** from Commercialisation and Consultancy Services (pictured) are delighted to have another chance at performing in the

famous arts festival which runs from 5th to 29th August this year.

Of the experience, Lizzie and Sarah say "We're so excited to be going back this year but the pressure is on, however, as last year was such a success with the production nominated for six awards, including best actress."

The show will run for six nights at the Festival from 15th August. Tickets and information are available from www.louchetheatre.com.



The Guild of Students

Ben Meakin, President of the Aberystwyth Guild of Students, presents the Sabbatical and Executive Officers for 2011/12.

On March 17th the students of Aber voted in their masses to elect a team of Sabbatical and Executive Officers that will represent the student body throughout the next 12 months.

The new Sabbatical team comprises **Alun Minifey**, who was re-elected as Activities Officer; **Jess Leigh** who is our new Education Officer; **Tom Burmeister** is Student Support Officer; **Tammy Hawkins** is Welsh Affairs & UMCA President and myself, **Ben Meakin**, the Guild President.

We also have an important team of eight Executive Officers who work voluntarily to support other student issues; **Mike Buchanan** is our new Guild Chairperson, **Ffion Eluned Owen** is Welsh Language Officer, **Grace Balchin** is Non-Portfolio Officer, **Laura Dickens** is Student Support & Campaigns Officer, **Kieran Ford** is Sustainability & Ethics Officer, **Dan Meehan** is Societies Officer, **Ioan Rhys Evans** is Sports Officer and **Dorothee Buettner** is Equal Opportunities Officer.

The team have plenty of campaigns to be working on throughout the next year including: the annual 'I Love Aber' events, engaging students with the new accommodation builds, creating a 'housing week', streamlining online academic resources and much more. This year should also see a student media boom with the re-launch of *The Courier* and the on-going success of *Bay Radio* and *AberTV*, helping us and the University to engage with students on as many platforms as possible.

We are also pleased to welcome Professor April McMahon as the new Vice-Chancellor and look forward to working with her throughout the next year.



ABER PEOPLE

And finally... *I'm a Physiologist, Get Me Out Of Here!*

Physiological Society member **Dr Mark Burnley** from the Department of Sports and Exercise Science, took part in June's 'I'm a Scientist, get me out of here!' event. 'I'm a Scientist' is an award-winning web project funded by the Wellcome Trust where students ask scientists questions about life, the universe and everything.

Scientists are grouped into zones and answer questions. Over a two-week period they are gradually voted off by the students based on the quality of their answers. Mark took part in the Sports Zone and made it down to the final two, pipped at the post by a sports psychologist. Congratulations to Mark on his second place. For more information about I'm a Scientist visit: imascientist.org.uk.



Dr Mark Burnley

WHAT'S ON

Exhibitions

ARTS CENTRE

until 14 September	Wild Thing Contemporary works using animal imagery	Gallery 1
---------------------------	--	-----------

Full details of the Arts Centre programme are available online at aberystwythartscentre.co.uk



Performances and Events

ARTS CENTRE

21 July – 27 August	CHESS The Musical One woman, torn between two World Champion chess players – one Russian, one American. Set at the height of the Cold War, it becomes clear the players are pawns in a much bigger game – far more is at stake than a simple game of chess. The show features a stunning score from the musical geniuses behind ABBA, Bjorn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson, and the lyrics of Tim Rice. A full professional cast, live band, extravagant set and costumes will give you a night to remember.
Fri 19 August 7.30pm	Twelfth Night Illyria Theatre present an evening of romance, music and fun, performed outside on Chapel Court, on a stage inspired by mediaeval touring troupes. Bring a blanket and a picnic and all your friends!
August	Cinema Live Links In August the Arts Centre will be linking to the Glyndebourne Festival and to performances from the Globe Theatre – all screened live in HD onto the screen here in Aberystwyth.

ABERYSTWYTH ARTS CENTRE PRODUCTIONS

CHESS
THE MUSICAL

**21 July/Gorffennaf
– 27 August/Awst**

01970 62 32 32
www.aber.ac.uk/artscentre

Colourscape

A welcome return for this unique walk-through sculpture, where you wander through interconnected chambers to experience the intensity and subtlety of colour.

Thursday 25 – Saturday 27 August 2011

£7 (£6) / under 3s free / Chess ticket holders £5

Please note - the structure will be built outside on Chapel Court (the grassy area by the main box office entrance).

**Canolfan y Celfyddydau
Aberystwyth Arts Centre**