



# Newbattle News

## Welcome

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Newbattle Abbey College Newsletter. It is with great pleasure that I introduce this from my new position as Chair of the College Board of Directors. After a period of post-graduate research in history at the University of Edinburgh, I have spent thirty years or so in higher education administration and management in a number of universities - latterly at the University of Aberdeen, where I was Academic Registrar for ten years and then Director of Policy, Planning and Governance and Deputy Secretary. Throughout this period I managed to keep up my academic interests, spending eight years tutoring undergraduate students in history and was also for a period a warden in a University hall of residence, so I have some experience of the



AN EXTERNAL VIEW OF NEWBATTLE ABBEY COLLEGE'S 16TH CENTURY BUILDING

trials, tribulations and enjoyment of communal living!

Having originally joined the Board of Directors in September 2006, I took up the position as Chair in February 2011, at what can only be considered to be both a challenging and exciting time for the College. The time is challenging as the public sector generally moves to deal with substantial funding cuts - but exciting also as opportunities

emerge to do different things and to do things differently. This is amply demonstrated by the range of stories and successes described within this Newsletter. Particularly welcome is the funding for urgent repairs which has become available, thanks to generous contributions from Historic Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council and the College Trust. The Board is very grateful for the efforts which the staff and members of these bodies have made on the College's behalf.

Finally may I say how honoured I feel to be able to contribute to the outstanding and unique work of the College? Newbattle truly is *Scotland's Life Changing College* and it is a privilege to be part of that.

**DR PETER MURRAY**

Chair  
Newbattle Abbey College Board of Directors

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### Student Recruitment 2011-12 Arts & Humanities Award

Recruitment for Newbattle Abbey College's September 2011 intake is now progressing.

A highly successful Taster Weekend took place in March this year for our full-time and part-time Arts and Humanities Award.

Fifteen prospective students took part in the event, which was such a success that we have scheduled another Taster

Weekend for prospective students on the weekend of 7 May.

Should you require further details about the Taster Weekend or the impressive range of courses that the College has to offer, please do not hesitate to contact the College direct on 0131 663 1921 or log-on to our website at

[www.newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk](http://www.newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk)

**Now recruiting for 2011-12 Arts & Humanities Award Full & Part-Time Courses**

## College Celebrates Cultural Diversity

Newbattle Abbey College celebrated its unique partnership with the University of Wisconsin in March by hosting a joint ceilidh.

More than 60 staff and students from the College joined their Wisconsin counterparts to enjoy a night of Scottish culture, including ceilidh dancing, poetry reading, music and singing in the crypt - but with some surprise cultural additions featuring along the way.

The Wisconsin contingent also marked the impending St Patrick's Day with energetic ceilidh dancing before adding their own American slide dances - celebrating three different cultures all in one night. Mandee Akason, 21, originally from Pine Island Minnesota, said: "This type of event is great to celebrate on-going successful relationships and bring together students and staff to celebrate the mix of different backgrounds and cultures."

Gill Turner, Curriculum Manager at Newbattle Abbey College, added: "We have provided placements for the University of Wisconsin for a couple of years now and it is great to celebrate this social and cultural event for the first time."

## Lord Ancrum's Wood Pathways Open To The Public

Midlothian Lord Provost Adam Montgomery joined Newbattle Abbey College Principal Ann Southwood and Jeremy Thompson of Forestry Commission Scotland to officially open the College's upgraded pathways to Lord Ancrum's Wood.

Members of the public can now see and use for themselves the historic wood's enchanting and enhanced walkways funded by Forestry Commission Scotland.

The pathways now form part of the Midlothian Walkways Network and enable Newbattle Abbey College to make improved use of the surrounding ancient woodland.

The native woodland, which sits on the banks of the River South Esk, has been managed by Forestry Commission Scotland in partnership with the College for five years.

Jeremy Thompson, Director Forester Community Reaction and Tourism, Forestry Commission, said: "In partnership with Newbattle Abbey College, Forestry Commission Scotland has worked hard to make use of the woodland with the introduction of an access bridge and pathways which

were fit for purpose.

We have invested much time and money in making the woodlands accessible and we hope to see as many members of the public use them as possible."

Provost Adam Montgomery of Midlothian Council added: "There is a tremendous history in Midlothian and Newbattle Abbey College is a huge part of that.

We have excellent walkways in Midlothian and I hope the public make use of these new pathways.

I'd like to thank Newbattle Abbey College for opening up that possibility for the public."



PRINCIPAL ANN SOUTHWOOD, PROVOST ADAM MONTGOMERY AND JEREMY THOMPSON, FORESTRY COMMISSION SCOTLAND AT THE OPENING

## Urgent Repairs Made Possible Courtesy of Grants

Urgent roof and structural repairs to Newbattle Abbey College's stunning 16th century building have now been made possible courtesy of £450,000 of grants and contributions made by Historic Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council and Newbattle Abbey College Trustees. Historic Scotland's Building Repair Grant contributed £152,484, to the fund, with the Scottish Funding Council adding £183,000 and College Trustees a further £72,984. Historic Scotland added another £40,000 Ancient Monument Grant to allow the College to carry out works to the riverside wall.

The restoration works will preserve the original fabric of the medieval building, in turn safeguarding its future, and allowing College Trustees the opportunity to expand upon the already established list of community activities.

Fiona Hyslop, MSP, Culture and External Affairs Minister, commented: "These projects have the potential to benefit their communities; either ensuring the buildings continue in their function, like Alexander Scott's Hospital, or giving historic buildings a new lease of life."

## College Launches Second Annual Celtic Festival

### Saturday 21st May 11am - 5pm

Newbattle Abbey College has announced plans to host the Celtic Festival for a second year, but with more for visitors to enjoy.

Taking place on Saturday, 21 May this year, festival events are part-financed by the Scottish Government and the European Community Tyne Esk Leader 2007-2013 Programme as well as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Building on the 2010 event, which attracted more than 3,000 guests, the College's 16th century building, grounds and woodlands will provide the backdrop to what is already promising to be an exciting day.

The programme will again feature a ceilidh tent with live performances of singing, traditional dance and music and an expanded craft tent.

New for 2011 is the Children's Tent, featuring children's entertainer Mr

Boom, whilst local restaurateurs will provide cooking and tasting sessions in the Food and Drink Tent. The programme also includes a wide range of biodiversity activities and activities in our Community Garden.

Workshops in archaeology, local history, Gaelic, creative writing, song and Scots language will also be on offer in the main building.

College Principal Ann Southwood said: "The College is proud to launch the second successive Celtic Festival, building on a successful event last year. "The event forms part of a major project, involving local and national partners, which will build upon Newbattle's already established cultural heritage."



## Canadian Benefactor Boosts Funding

A series of urgent repairs to the main Newbattle Abbey College building have been boosted further courtesy of a generous \$25,000 bequest from a Canadian benefactor with strong historic links to the Dalkeith-based College.

Margery Frances Dissette, of Ontario, who sadly passed away on March 21, 2010 aged 96, was born in New York to Anne Isobel Kerr, one of three daughters to Charles Rollo Kerr who emigrated to Canada previously.

Charles was himself a descendant of Philip Kerr, who in 1935 gifted his home to the people of Scotland for educational purposes - hence Ms Dissette's intrinsic link with the 16th century College building.

Passionate about education, Ms Dissette decided to bequeath \$25,000 to the College to use for improvements.

College Principal Ann Southwood said of the legacy: "Our well wishes go to Ms Dissette's family and we are delighted to use the money she donated directly toward the upkeep and maintenance of the house donated by Philip Kerr himself in 1935."

## IN FOCUS: Staff & Students of Newbattle Abbey College



**NAME: PAUL HAY**  
**STAFF: CHEF MANAGER**

Married with two children, Paul joined the Newbattle Abbey College team in 2010 having spent a considerable number of years as Catering Manager for Standard Life.

Paul, who cycles to and from College from his home in Musselburgh, has spent time travelling and working abroad in places including Australia and New Zealand before plying his trade under acclaimed chef Paul Gaylor.



**NAME: IAN ANDERSON**  
**STUDENT: ARTS AND HUMANITIES**

Lone parent of his three-year-old daughter, Ian returned to his native Edinburgh from London last year having spent 20 years in the restaurant and wine trade.

A self-professed 'book geek' Ian intends to attend Edinburgh University to read Scottish Literature with a view to becoming a teacher. An admirer of the works of Peter Ustinov, Ian hopes to follow a similar path in his autumn years.