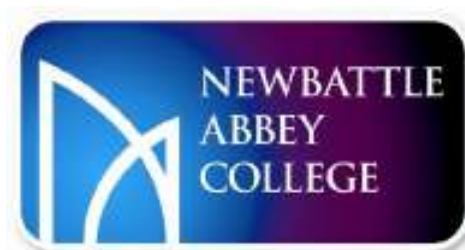


Newbattle News

The latest news from Scotland's Life-Changing College

April 2008



In This Issue

- [Storytelling Award](#)
- [Completion of 70th Anniversary Celebrations](#)
- [ESOL project celebration](#)
- [Staff Profile: Stephanie Walker](#)
- [Award Recruitment Update](#)
- [Friends of Newbattle](#)
- [The New Curiosity Shop: Profile](#)
- [Knowledge Transfer Heritage Project](#)
- [HMIE Review](#)
- [Campus Sustainability Group](#)
- [Events Administrator Post](#)
- [New Cook](#)



Dear Staff & Students,

Welcome to the April Newbattle News. I hope you all enjoyed the Easter break, and are looking forward to the Summer term.

As the days get longer and it finally looks as though winter's behind us, there is much to look forward to at Newbattle over the Spring and Summer months.

In April, we will be holding an evening celebrating Scottish and Polish culture, as we launch our DVD and online ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) course.

In May, June and July Rae McGhee will be looking into how we can make the most of our fabulous building and grounds, by realising our potential as a tourism and events venue.

And in September, we will be launching the first ever formal qualification in Storytelling, in partnership with the Scottish Storytelling Centre.

The months leading up to the end of the summer term are always busy, as we head towards final assessments and exams. Please remember that staff are here to help, and if you need extra support during this busy time, all you need to do is ask.

All the best,

Ann Southwood
Principal

Storytelling Award

Newbattle has forged a new partnership with the Scottish Storytelling Centre (SSC) to deliver the first formal qualification in storytelling. It is designed for a wide range of professionals who use storytelling as part of the every day working, such as people working in education, social care, museum education, built and natural heritage, tourism and even business communications.

The SQA certified course will be available from September, and structured into a formal HN unit. It will be taught by Storytellers from the Scottish Storytelling Centre using the facilities at Newbattle. The course will be delivered using a blended learning approach of 20 hours classroom teaching combined with 20 hours distance learning. The course, which will be delivered over 20 weeks, will include 2 residential weekends.

Newbattle and the SSC share a close connection with George MacKay Brown, one of the greatest Scottish poets of the 20th century, who studied at here and went on to become a founding patron of the Scottish Storytelling Centre shortly before his death in 1995.

70 Years Learning in the Community: Next Steps

Last year was our 70th Anniversary, and as part of the commemorations we embarked on the "Seventy Years of Learning in the Community" project. This

was a fascinating journey through the history of Newbattle, investigating the College archives, and collecting oral histories from a wide range of people with memories of the College. This research was used to build an exhibition, which is now permanently on display in the College.

The 70th Anniversary activities culminated in an Open Week at the beginning of March. Over 500 people passed through our doors on the 1st and 2nd March, with members of the local community and former students turning out in droves. Some visitors even travelled from as far as Aberdeenshire. Our local volunteers from the Midlothian Volunteers Forum did a great job of showing the visitors round, enjoying themselves so much that they will continue to work with us to run guided tours of the College and its grounds.

We also welcomed pupils from St David's Primary School, Mayfield Primary School, Tynewater Primary School and Stophill Primary School, who took part in Woodland Workshops during the open week, and we were delighted to see around 100 people turn up for ranger-led walks into Lord Ancrum's Woods.

The 70th Anniversary celebrations were a great success, and have played an important role in re-igniting relations with our local community. We now have a core group of local volunteers, who will work with Rae McGhee to develop further heritage projects for the future. We have also built great relationships with the local schools, and are currently developing teaching and learning materials so that we can welcome schools here on educational visits.

ESOL Project Event - 14 April

On the 16th April, we will be hosting an evening celebrating Scottish and Polish culture. The event will mark the culmination of the first stage of our very successful Scottish Funding Council supported ESOL project with St David's High School, and will be attended by the students and parents from minority groups at St David's, along with Cabinet Secretary for Lifelong Learning, Fiona Hyslop, and philanthropist Sir Tom Farmer. Cardinal Keith O'Brien will deliver a mass in the chapel, which will be followed by music and dance performances from pupils and students at St David's and Newbattle, with Scottish and Polish food available.

This event will also be the formal launch of the DVD and online course prepared by the New Curiosity Shop (see below for more information on NCS) as part of this project. This online learning package is targeted in particular at Polish adults now living in Scotland. Polish pupils at St David's received training so that they can coach their parents in IT skills, to enable them to use the online learning package. In this way, the project has helped develop a range of skills for both the pupils and their parents.

We recently heard that the South East Forum has granted funding to extend this project, which is very exciting news - watch this space for more detail.

Staff Profile - Stephanie Walker

Newbattle's Ecology tutor Stephanie Walker has been working with us on a part-time basis for the past four years. Spending two and half days a week here, she uses the College's woodland outdoors environment as a classroom to deliver various ecology courses as part of the Newbattle Arts & Humanities Award. In addition to this, she also works closely with the two Forestry Commission wardens based on-site to develop woodland based learning activities and events, such as the recent series of SQA approved parent-child Woodland Workshops.

Stephanie also works with the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh, and the National Museums of Scotland and the National Galleries of Scotland to deliver community arts and education projects. With a degree in Zoology and a masters in Marine Biology, she has a strong background in natural sciences.

Stephanie commented: "I am very lucky to have the opportunity to work in a natural, outdoor environment, and the woodlands at Newbattle Abbey College are particularly special given that they are so close to an urban environment and yet have remained untouched for years. I believe that the study of art and nature goes hand in hand, and I am very fortunate to work in such an inspiring

and enjoyable area."

Award Recruitment Update

So far, this year we have seen a fantastic number of enquiries into the Newbattle Abbey College Arts & Humanities Award. March saw ninety five prospectus requests, which is the highest figure in three years, and in the first three days of April alone we had fourteen requests. We have already accepted eleven places, with over fifteen more awaiting reference checking and interview. The figures are looking very promising!

Changes to online 'Friends of Newbattle'

Plans are in place to upgrade the 'Friends of Newbattle' section of the website to allow former students, staff and those with an association with Newbattle to become more involved with the College. We will be encouraging friends of the College to sponsor various areas activities including the planting of the Italian Garden and the provision of garden benches. Further details to follow.

The New Curiosity Shop

The New Curiosity Shop (NCS) is an online college which provides distance learning courses in a range of subjects from astronomy to archaeology, aimed at adult learners from all over the world. The NCS, which is based at Newbattle Abbey College, is the brain child of Noel Chidwick and Dr W Arthur Chapman, who between them have many decades of experience in the further education sector.

NCS offers short courses in a range of topics, with each course written by an expert tutor, and taking between two and four hours of study over a six week period to complete.

NCS has been working with Newbattle Abbey College since 2006. The partnership is a natural one, given the similar approach to learning shared by the two organisations. In return for premises and access to Newbattle's teaching resources, NCS grants Newbattle staff access to their Moodle server (a powerful virtual learning environment) and provides training in its use.

Newbattle and NCS have worked together on a number of projects, the most recent being the online ESOL package available to students at St David's High School. We have also recently worked with them to develop the Newbattle 70 Heritage website www.newbattle70.org.uk. We will continue to work with them wherever we can, and encourage staff and students to consider NCS for any online learning packages they are considering producing.

For more information on the New Curiosity Shop, go to www.newcurioshop.com.

Knowledge Transfer Heritage Project

We have a fantastic resource in our very building and grounds here at Newbattle Abbey College, and over the course of May, June and July, Rae McGhee will be investigating how we can develop its potential as a heritage venue and tourist attraction. She will be looking into how we can increase our partnership working with VisitScotland, increase the buildings' use as a B&B and also what potential there is to develop a range of heritage short courses.

This initiative is part of a wider drive to develop independent income streams, so that we can serve our students, staff and community even better.

HMIe Review - Update

As most of you will know, the staff from HMIe will be in College from 14 - 18 April, to conduct our formal review. We look forward to welcoming Dr Anne Pia, Dr Iain MacRobert, Karen Corbett, Andrew Brawley, Penny Skett, Peter Connelly and Peter Midgley to Newbattle.

Campus Sustainability Group

Gill Turner will be leading a new campus sustainability group, looking at how the College can upgrade its practices to become more environmentally friendly.

We will look at how we can use funding from the Scottish Executive Sustainable Action Grant Fund and the Scottish Funding Council to become more sustainable in our practices by reviewing how we can reduce, reuse and recycle.

We are also now members of the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges, giving us access to a network with whom we can share best practice and learn about the latest technologies available.

Gill is currently looking for volunteers to join the group, which, as a first step, will be looking into what a 'sustainable campus' should be. Anyone interested should email Gill on gillt@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk.

Events Administrator

Sarah Thomson has decided to head for pastures new, and we have taken the opportunity to review the post and create an Events Administrator position. This position has now been advertised.

New Cook

We have employed a new Cook to replace Marion. His name is Tom Notman, and he starts on Monday 14 April.

[Forward email](#)

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to ian@halogencom.com, by catriona@halogencom.com
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Halogen Communications | 4 Queen Street | Edinburgh | EH2 1JE | United Kingdom