St Andrews American Foundation Update for 2006

This past year has been an exciting one for the University of St Andrews. As the members of the St Andrews American Foundation learned from Principal Brian Lang at the October 27 Board meeting, St Andrews — ranked highest of all Scottish Universities in research is currently seventh in the UK in the national Research Assessment Exercise; in the top ten in the British University League Tables; was named Scottish University of the Year by The Sunday Times and was also voted third overall in the National Student Survey for the UK. The University remains highly competitive with approximately eleven applications for every place and boasts the most popular medical school in the UK, not just in Scotland.

These achievements and accolades put increasing pressure on St Andrews to develop a world-class infrastructure to continue to excel, while maintaining the historic character and distinctive ‘Scottishness’ that make it such a popular place to study. With the completion of the new Faculty of Arts building on The Scores in 2006, expanding and upgrading the medical school is now the University’s top priority.

This intense building activity anticipates the 600th Anniversary of the founding of the University between 1411, when the Wardlaw Charter was issued, and 1413, when the University was formally recognised. The Anniversary celebrations will thus take place between 2011 and 2013. A working group with broad representation across the University has already been established to plan a series of appropriate events. Further details of the plans for the Anniversary celebrations and an associated fundraising campaign will be available by the time of the next Board meeting in October 2007.

At this juncture, the American Foundation and the Development Office are soliciting proposals for celebrating this auspicious occasion in the US. Suggestions tentatively put forward at the Board meeting included taking advantage of the obvious golfing links; a series of events highlighting the Scottish heritage and St Andrews ties of outstanding Americans since the Declaration of Independence; developing the themes of the Scottish Enlightenment; and reaching out to top Scots in the Arts, entertainment, business, academia, science and sport in the United States. The University also hopes to enlist a prominent Patron with transatlantic stature for the overall Anniversary Appeal, who would be able to host events in the US as well as in the UK and Europe. We would very much like to hear your thoughts on what St Andrews might do in the US and encourage you to contact the Foundation and the Development Office with specific ideas.

Against this backdrop, the St Andrews American Foundation also seeks to put its own fundraising and alumni activities on a firmer footing. Although the level of donations to the Foundation for the University increased fourfold in the 2005-2006 Appeal year, with some large scholarship donations, the actual number of individual donations declined (170 individual donations this last year in contrast with 200 for the preceding period). This was a topic of considerable discussion at the October 2006 Board meeting, and we would appreciate any ideas that you might have on ways to improve the University’s annual giving outreach to US alumni.

At the October meeting, the Trustees also earmarked the general gift from the 2005-2006 Annual Appeal to cover additional financial assistance for the completion of the Faculty of Arts building. It was agreed that future disbursements for 2006-2007 would go towards American Foundation student scholarships in the Sciences, tied to planned fundraising for the new Medical School facilities. (Approximately 15 per cent of the University’s students are currently from the US, and the emphasis of the American Foundation is primarily on funding for scholarships for American students to study at St Andrews as undergraduates and graduates unless other special projects arise.)

As a closing note, the Board tenures of Alex Fleming (MA ’71, LLD ’99), President Emeritus of the St Andrews American Foundation, and Treasurer Caroline Thacher (BSc ’61) expired on December 31, 2006. Andrew Gillen (JYA 1987-88) was nominated and approved at the Board meeting to take over the duties of Treasurer from Caroline, who has been the Foundation’s Treasurer since 1985. On behalf of the University, Principal Brian Lang has proposed to the University Court that both be granted Emeritus status on the Board. The St Andrews American Foundation and the University are extremely grateful to Alex and Caroline for their years of service and dedication and look forward to continuing to work with them in their new capacities.

We also look forward to your ideas on the 600th Anniversary and fundraising outreach and hope to hear from you in the months ahead. Please contact Fiona Hill at Email: fhill@brookings.edu or the Development Office at Email: develop@st-andrews.ac.uk

Development Update

The past year has seen an expansion of the role of Development at St Andrews, growth that is set to continue next year as we build towards the launch of the University’s 600th anniversary celebrations and continue to fundraise for the vital projects that help to maintain St Andrews as a world-class university. We have been joined by two new full-time members of staff – Ellie Porter as our new Major Gifts Officer, and Stuart Armstrong as a dedicated fundraiser for the University’s new Medical Sciences Project.

Medicine

Medicine has never been more popular at St Andrews, and the Bute Medical School was voted the best in the country in the 2006 National Student Survey. Students praised the commitment and enthusiasm of the staff, the intellectual stimulus of the courses and the good organisation of the curriculum. However the building is no longer fit for purpose, therefore it is intended to relocate the School of Medicine to a purpose-built Medical Sciences building, incorporating teaching and multi-disciplinary research, situated on the North Haugh, in close proximity to the other science schools.
The Arts building is now occupied by the School of International Relations, and the Department of Middle Eastern Studies. So far 206 donors have contributed to this landmark building. Although it is now occupied, we continue to fundraise for the important new research centers it houses, primarily the new Institute for Iranian Studies and the Center for Syrian Studies (part of the Institute for Middle East, Central Asia, and Caucasus Studies).

Wardlaw Scholarships
Our ongoing Wardlaw Scholarship program has remained popular with donors, with 677 individual donations received to date, of which 17 are for endowed scholarships. The program is currently supporting 78 students across their first three years of study, with ten new scholarships to be awarded for 2007. We have added a new program – the New Links Scholarship - which has been set up to support students from lower income families in the United States, who have an active interest in golf, and who would not otherwise have been able to consider an overseas education, for financial reasons.

Museum of the University of St Andrews (MUSA)
Building for the forthcoming Museum of the University of St Andrews will begin in the summer, with the project on schedule to open to the public in 2008. Fundraising has begun in earnest for this project, and we are now seeking the support of our friends and alumni to generate enthusiasm and further funds, with a range of sponsorship packages, each with a level of benefit for the donor. For further information on how you can support the MUSA project, please visit www.st-andrews.ac.uk/develop/giving/yoursupport/campaign_projects or contact the Development Office.

American Foundation
The increase in our fundraising activities in the US has paid dividends, with nearly $1m disbursed by the American Foundation Trustees this year, compared to $247,000 last year. In February our Chancellor, Sir Menzies Campbell, made time in his busy schedule for a three-day trip to the US, meeting parents, alumni and friends of the University in New York and Washington. Over lunch with Jack DeGioia, President of Georgetown University (with which St Andrews recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding) it transpired that Dr DeGioia, a keen athletics fan, had been in the audience at the 1966 Commonwealth Games in Jamaica when Sir Menzies competed in the 200m for Great Britain!

Reunion Weekend
Reunion Weekend remains popular with our annual reunion program continuing to attract alumni of all ages back to St Andrews to renew friendships, make new ones and to see how their alma mater continues to thrive. Further details can be found at www.st-andrews.ac.uk/develop/

The Future
All in all, Development at St Andrews is in good shape, thanks to the continued loyalty and support of our alumni and friends for which we are very grateful. We will, however, be relying on your help and participation more with each passing year, as the financial status of universities south of the border is enhanced with funds from top-up fees and now matched funding from the Government. With English institutions being actively encouraged by the Government to follow the US model of fundraising, there will be an inevitable knock-on effect in Scotland. There are currently no plans for any funding investment of this type for higher education in Scotland, and so we increasingly need financial commitment from our friends and alumni to ensure that St Andrews, although small, continues to be the best.

For further information please see: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/develop/

An update on US Alumni Activities
In honor of St Andrew’s Day, the New York City alumni effort led by Alice Burley delivered a well-attended event in November 2006 when many generations of alumni were present to toast Saint Andrew, the Patron Saint of Scotland. More recently, Peter & Mary Komman (parents of Alexander Komman, Class of 2006) generously hosted a reception in honor of Sir Menzies Campbell’s first visit to the US as Chancellor of the University. Sir Menzies and Brian Lang spoke in early February to alumni and parents in the New York Metropolitan area about the University’s ambitious and progressive plans for the future.

In Georgetown, over 30 St Andrews alumni and friends gathered at the Town Hall Bar and Tavern in honor of St Andrew’s Day on November 30, for an evening of scotch, cigars, and the lyricisms of Robert Burns. The event not only provided an opportunity for new alumni moving to DC to meet fellow St Andrews graduates, but also represented one last chance to enjoy excellent cigars in a DC establishment before the institution of a ‘Smoke Free DC.’

The LA club also celebrated St Andrew’s Day, with an informal dinner in 2006 and plan to celebrate St Andrew’s Day again in 2007, on November 30th (of course).

In June 2007, from 19th - 23rd, Emory University in Atlanta, GA is to host a reunion of past scholars involved in the prestigious Bobby Jones Scholarship. The Scholarship was established by friends of golfer Bobby Jones as an exchange between students of Emory University and the University of St Andrews. Bobby Jones had a particular love for St Andrews and the Scholarship was set up to honor his memory. Each year since 1977, four students from each University have traded places for a year. This year marks the 30th Anniversary of the Scholarship, and all of the former students are being invited to the reunion. Cliff Jones and Eliza Watt are leading the Atlanta Alumni Association and will be joining in the celebrations – Congratulations Bobby Jones Scholars!

A list of the US alumni club representatives is available on the alumni pages of the University’s website. We are keen to recruit active volunteers who are willing to promote the clubs and events in their home areas (graduating and non-graduating alumni and parents) so please feel free to get involved, as we need your support!

St Andrews in the News
Sarah Frankland, Director of Fundraising & Alumni Relations

In February, all of our alumni and friends for whom we have an email address will have received the first edition of ‘St Andrews in the News’ our new e-newsletter. Bringing you links to stories about the University of St Andrews that have appeared in the press in the recent past, as well as forthcoming events, this newsletter will be sent out every two months. For those of you who did not receive the first edition and who would like to subscribe, please go to www.st-andrews.ac.uk/develop/ and select the ‘Newsletter’ link.
A career in the arts is rarely conventional, and Peter Trippi’s has run a truly unusual course. When he arrived at St Andrews from his native Washington DC in 1986, Peter already admired the University’s School of Art History for its international reputation. But his worldview changed during a post-lunch lecture on the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood: “I sat bolt upright as their paintings rolled across the screen. I had never even heard of these nineteenth-century rebels and their hallucinatory pictures,” he recalls, “and I couldn’t believe how compelling they still are.”

Since then, Peter has tried to shine some much-deserved light on these and other Victorian artists. After St Andrews, he headed to New York University to earn an MA in arts administration, writing his thesis on the Association of Art Museum Directors, a powerful force on the American scene. The Victorian itch remained, so Peter moved to London’s Courtauld Institute of Art, where he wrote on the forgotten Pre-Raphaelite J R Spencer Stanhope (1829-1908). “The two-year stay in London helped me reconnect with St Andrews friends, and now I visit the UK often because those friendships are still so meaningful.”

Back in America, Peter launched a parallel career in fundraising, first at the Baltimore Museum of Art, where he helped write the exhibition catalogue, A Grand Design: The Art of the Victoria and Albert Museum (1997), and then at the Brooklyn Museum. “I was there for Brooklyn’s 1999 presentation of Sensation, which raised every possible flag in our society: relationships with collectors (in this case, Charles Saatchi), government funding, pornography/blasphemy, and media-storm management. The toughest moment was definitely the day a Catholic fanatic spray-painted Chris Ollis’s ‘Virgin Mary’ in the gallery.”

In 2002, Phaidon Press (London) published his 250-page biography of the late Pre-Raphaelite painter, J W Waterhouse (1849-1917). In 2003 the book was distilled into a catalogue chapter for the well-attended exhibition of Andrew Lloyd Webber’s Victorian collection at the Royal Academy. Peter’s research is now at the heart of a Waterhouse exhibition that will travel from the Netherlands to England and then Canada in 2009-2010.

The exhibition’s organizing has been informed by Peter’s tenure (2003-2006) as director of Manhattan’s Dahesh Museum of Art, the only US institution devoted to nineteenth-century academic art. Last year, Peter became editor of Fine Art Connoisseur (fineartconnoisseur.com), a New York-based bi-monthly magazine that serves collectors. “This is an ideal time to cover the art market, which has never been stronger, ever; prices are rising so sharply for the usual suspects that it’s only a matter of time before great Victorian artworks get taken more seriously.”

We’ll have to watch what happens next, both with Victorian art sales and Peter. He admits: “I probably wouldn’t be in this field if it weren’t for that revelatory afternoon in Second Arts; that’s one reason why it was such a thrill to return to St Andrews last spring to give a paper in the School of Art History’s marvellous ‘new’ home on The Scores: it’s nice to see art history is thriving everywhere!"
Once again, St Andreans made a good showing at the Annual British and Irish Graduates Ball, which was held on Friday 3 November 2006 in the Plaza Ballroom at the Seaport Hotel, Boston. The Ball started at 7pm with cocktails and hors d’oeuvres, compliments of Enterprise Ireland.

The action then moved to the splendiderously arranged Plaza Ballroom, where we enjoyed a fine gourmet dinner, followed by the prize raffle, which was preceded by warm welcomes from Mr David Barry, Consul General of Ireland and Mr John Rankin, Consul General for the UK, who extollled the British and Irish graduates community as an example of what can be achieved through collaboration. The $2500 worth of raffle prizes donated by local businesses and organizations made a few lucky winners very happy, and entertained the rest of us thanks to the wit and charm of the raffle organizers and comeders, Kirsten Cairns and Orla Smith.

The evening just kept getting better when the Soul Band took to the stage and within seconds filled the dance floor. Dancing, drinking and socializing continued in equal measure through the rest of the night, until way after midnight.

All in all this was a fabulous night. If you were there, we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did. If you couldn’t come this year, we missed you and you missed out! The Third Annual BIG Ball is scheduled for November 9, 2007 in Boston, MA. Please see the British and Irish Graduates in America website at www.biginamerica.net for more details.

The family and friends of Dr Henderson established a fund in his memory and to date donations of £6,460 have been received, to be used by the School of Economics & Finance to commemorate Dr Henderson’s contribution to the development of Economics at St Andrews.

We are very grateful to the many friends and members of the Henderson family who have contributed to this fund in such a generous way. The funds will be used by the School of Economics & Finance to provide student support in the form of a Postgraduate Masters Prize in International Strategy and Economics. In addition to this memorial prize we have placed a plaque, in honor of Dr Henderson, on the door of the main Economics teaching room in Castlecliffe. We are delighted that John’s widow Joanna, his daughter Mary Henderson Pressman and his son-in-law Ron Pressman will be in St Andrews in June to attend the awarding of the first prize and the unveiling of the plaque.

Ron Pressman succeeded John Myers as President and CEO of GE Asset Management. Below, Jackie de Sanctis reports on her interview with John Myers.

Financial markets are global. Investors are global. Corporations are multinational. Does this suggest an international undergraduate or graduate education for Americans may offer a competitive career advantage? I spoke with a 37 year veteran of General Electric (GE), John Myers, who, as a guest speaker in St Andrews at the Kate Kennedy Club, shared some of the events in his career that helped shape his successes as a business leader for a company that many consider the world’s best managed.

When John Myers graduated from college in the late 1960s, he was undecided what direction to take with his life. At the time, the US was embroiled in the Vietnam conflict and, with the military draft imminent John enlisted in the Navy and served two tours of duty in Vietnam as a Naval Officer. Subsequently, John was hired by GE to participate in a special three-year business program considered the equivalent of an MBA. In 1973 John completed the Financial Management Training Program but, unlike his peers who opted to pursue opportunities with GE in the United States, John requested a position in the company offices abroad. At the time, people usually left corporate offices in the US when their careers had no upside potential at GE. John, however, was eager to live in Europe to travel and take advantage of the cultural and professional business experience unique to living abroad. John soon became, at age 29, one of GE’s youngest corporate managers outside the US and was quickly developing a unique global corporate perspective. Assigned to their corporate offices in Italy and Germany, John was involved from the outset in helping develop GE’s global business strategy solutions.

Following his European assignment, John was transferred to GE’s International headquarters in Fairfield, Connecticut. In 1986 he accepted a position in GE’s Pension Fund where he was instrumental in transforming a corporate pension fund office into one of the world’s largest and most successful institutional money managers - GE Asset Management. During his career at GE, John had the opportunity to work for the legendary Jack Welch and current Chairman Jeff Immelt who assumed his position as CEO on September 10, 2001, the day before the world as we know it changed forever. In July 2006 John retired as President and CEO of GE Asset Management. Looking back over his many years at GE, John attributes much of his professional success to his overseas corporate experience and exposure to unique customs, distinct business practices, and varying work cultures. As John is fond of saying, “The more aware of the world one is, the better leader one can become.”