

# SRUC Community

The SRUC Alumni & Friends Magazine

Issue 1 2016

## Welcome New Alumni

2016 Summer Graduation  
Ceremony

## Team Spirit

Meet the Crichton team  
who studied with SRUC

## Global Impact

SRUC working internationally  
to help solve global problems





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## Stay Connected

If you studied or worked at SRUC, SAC (North, West and East of Scotland Agricultural Colleges), Barony College, Elmwood College, or Oatridge College - we welcome you to the SRUC Alumni & Friends Community.

It's free to join, so stay in touch to:

- Keep up to date with SRUC news
- Make the most of alumni benefits & discounts
- Promote your business
- Keep in touch with friends
- Find out about job opportunities
- Get invites to SRUC events
- Organise a reunion

Update your details at [www.sruc.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/alumni) or fill in your details on the tear off strip at the back of this magazine.

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SRUC Alumni



@SRUCAlumni

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# Welcome to the first SRUC Alumni Magazine



I'm delighted to be the new Principal and Chief Executive of Scotland's Rural College. It is a unique and innovative institution, hugely respected not just in Scotland and the UK but globally.

Land-based research is becoming increasingly important in a world where food and nutrition security and climate change are the top challenges facing governments across the globe. I believe SRUC has a key role to play in solving these important issues. SRUC's research portfolio combines areas such as animal breeding, precision agriculture, animal and crop health, farming systems and rural communities, and it is this holistic approach that differentiates SRUC.

The college also excels in its education and consulting activities and it is this integration of cutting edge expertise and knowledge exchange activities that ensures that SRUC has such a comprehensive understanding of the bigger picture, providing an outstanding environment for students.

As well as looking forward, it is important to reflect on where we have come from. Hence, I am delighted that you are receiving this first SRUC Alumni & Friends Magazine. SRUC now has a dedicated alumni office, and I believe that reconnecting with our former students, former staff and friends will help the institution grow. It also allows us to celebrate the successes of the people who have made SRUC the institution it is today.

I hope you enjoy this magazine, and welcome your feedback. After all, SRUC Alumni & Friends is your alumni community, and the team is keen to hear your stories and ideas.

**Professor Wayne Powell**

*Principal and  
Chief Executive  
Scotland's Rural College*



#SRUCcess



*Welcome*

**new Alumni!**



*You will need to take the skills and experience gathered throughout your years at SRUC and use them to transform our industry.*



**SRUC's** summer graduation ceremony, held on Friday 8 July 2016, saw more than 150 graduands receive their degrees. The ceremony took place at Bute Hall, University of Glasgow.

SRUC's new Principal and Chief Executive Wayne Powell shared some valuable words of wisdom.

*"You will need to take the skills and experience gathered throughout your years at SRUC and use them to transform our industry. The world today faces a complex challenge – improving nutrition for all, and agriculture has a key role to play in ensuring people across the globe benefit from a healthy diet."*

*"We need to make our land, our resources, and our products go further, we need to feed a growing population, and yet reduce our impact on the environment. These are huge global problems, but they are ones where we can make a big difference, and I am certain many of you will take that challenge on in your careers."*

*"Don't just work hard, love your work, approach each day with curiosity and enthusiasm and you will find they quickly fly by."*

Prize and award giving ceremonies also took place across SRUC's Barony, Elmwood and Oatridge campuses this summer for students studying our Further Education courses.

Winter graduation will take place on the 4th of November for SRUC's HNC and HND graduands.

**John Campbell of Glenrath Farms** was awarded Honorary Fellow of SRUC.



# The Royal Hi



The SRUC Alumni & Friends team were kept on their toes at the 2016 Royal Highland Show, connecting with alumni and friends from all over the UK during Scotland's biggest celebration of farming, food and rural life.



educators, to hear about our research, get advice on educational courses and careers, discuss farm management and CAP reform, and find out about advances in animal health and welfare.

The SRUC pavilion was buzzing with events over the four days of the show.

A 'Women in Agriculture' event on the second day addressed the need for the farming sector to encourage more female participation in the industry and promote the significant role of women already working in agriculture. SRUC alumnae Sally Williams (Animal Science, Edinburgh 2009), a farmer from the Borders, and Emma Patterson Taylor (Sustainable Environmental Management, Edinburgh, 2009), Project Manager with SAOS, made up part of the fantastic panel of speakers.

Visitors to the SRUC pavilion had the opportunity to meet our vets, consultants, researchers and

Alumni shared their memories and words of wisdom on postcards. One of the most popular postcards was written by retired farmer Reg Drysdale (Agriculture, 1967, Edinburgh) who tongue in cheek said - "Don't be like me, work hard".



"Don't be like me, work hard"



# Highland Show



Jill Brown



Fiona Dickinson



Steve Mitchell

The Alumni & Friends team connected with a host of new and familiar faces, handing out over 200 SRUC Alumni badges during the show. Also receiving his badge was our very own Sir Alex Fergusson, former MSP for Galloway & West Dumfries.

Sir Alex, who studied Agriculture in 1970 at the West of Scotland Agricultural College, recently received his knighthood for services to politics, the Scottish Parliament process and public life in Scotland.



Robert Mackenzie



James Wallace

**WE** caught up with some of the entrepreneurial SRUC alumni around the show, including Jill Brown from Berry Good, who is taking Scotland by storm with her award winning Scottish liqueurs; Fiona Dickinson from Dyslexia Scotland; Robert Mackenzie from Cullisse Highland Rapeseed Oil; Steve Mitchell from The Buffalo Farm, winner of the Retail Meat category for the 2016 Scotland Food & Drink Excellence Awards; and James Wallace, Suffolk Sheep Farmer, who won the Suffolk Sheep Championship.

# Dyslexia and Me

When young Lanark farmer Kirstie Baird was finding her Agriculture classes at SRUC Ayr difficult, because she was struggling with her reading and writing, it was her mother who suggested she get tested for dyslexia. Kirstie's dyslexia diagnosis has since turned her student experience around.

*"I think the biggest issue was confidence. I thought I was doing better than I was. I was then diagnosed with dyslexia. My lecturers recognised the signs of dyslexia too. This gave me the opportunity to change my learning approach along with all the help and support from SRUC. Now I am regularly getting A's and B's."*

About one in ten people in the UK have dyslexia to some degree. In rural communities and the farming sector, the condition is even more prevalent. SRUC's Learning Support team estimate that up to one in four of SRUC's agricultural students have dyslexic tendencies.

SRUC is helping students like Kirstie by providing study support tutors, who recognise there is no 'one size fits all' approach to dyslexia, along with other learning difficulties.

*"The Ayr campus has an excellent set up for dyslexia and they offer support from beginning to end. They have an administrator that manages all of it and who is really aware of the needs of dyslexic students."*



SRUC is also involved with the Farming with Dyslexia campaign, a working group led by NFU Scotland. The campaign began in June 2014 and has been working with various organisations to seek practical solutions to make life easier for dyslexic members of the farming community.

Kirstie is so passionate in speaking out against the stigma surrounding dyslexia, she is now Farming with Dyslexia's first 'Young Ambassador'.





“

*If you think you might have dyslexia, get tested! Talk to Dyslexia Scotland or if you are studying at SRUC, speak to a member of the Education team. You can gain so much confidence by getting support, so you really should feel confident to do something about it.* ”

*Kirstie Baird, SRUC student & Farming with Dyslexia Young Ambassador*

Kirstie wants to promote the strengths of people with dyslexia, which are a huge asset to the agricultural and land-based sector. For example, people with dyslexia are often highly articulate in conversation and generally possess excellent long-term recall and ability to solve problems. Dyslexic people also tend to think creatively.

*“Dyslexia isn’t a ‘bad’ thing,” said Kirstie. “We’re smart, we’re driven and we have excellent hands-on skills. We just have a different way of learning. I’m very interested to see how people react to the campaign, perhaps it would raise the question - I recognise those traits, do I have dyslexia? - and encourage people to get tested.”*

Fiona Dickinson, from Dyslexia Scotland, explains that many farmers and crofters will have lived with dyslexia for their entire lives without being assessed.

*“Dyslexia Scotland are here to help. We run a confidential Helpline which offers advice and guidance on dyslexia-related issues in Scotland. You can phone, webchat, or email to talk to our trained, experienced staff and volunteers.”*

For further information contact the helpline at [helpline@dyslexiascotland.org.uk](mailto:helpline@dyslexiascotland.org.uk)  
T: 01344 800 8484  
[www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk)

# Catching the Lifelong Learning Bug

Most graduates are happy to throw away their study books – at least for a few years – but not so for Craig Simpson. Craig celebrated his graduation from college by signing up to return as a distance learner after the summer for a postgraduate course.



Craig, from North Berwick, studied at SRUC’s Aberdeen Campus, and recently graduated with an Honours degree in Agriculture.

After a short summer break, he will start an MSc in Agricultural Professional Practice, combining his studies with working on the family arable farm, and an overseas study trip to New Zealand.

*“The accessibility of staff made the campus very special and provided me with a well-rounded degree in agriculture.”*

*“The flexibility of the degree allowed me to focus on my home farm for site specific situations and also provided more general agricultural modules.”*

*“I am delighted to be continuing my studies with SRUC and am already looking forward to going back after the summer to study a part time postgraduate course, with a specific emphasis on agronomy.”*

“ I have loved my four years at SRUC Aberdeen’s Craibstone Campus ”

## Keep growing with Scotland’s Rural College



### Postgraduate Study Programmes

SRUC offers unique opportunities for postgraduate study. Our unbeatable links with industry, along with our own highly-respected consultancy and research divisions, gives us knowledge, expertise and facilities befitting a national institution. Depending on your chosen course there are part-time, full-time and distance learning options with our degrees awarded by the University of Glasgow and the University of Edinburgh.

- MSc/PgDip Agricultural Professional Practice
- MSc Applied Animal Behaviour
- MSc/PgDip Applied Poultry Science
- MSc/PgDip Countryside Management
- MSc Ecological Economics
- MSc Environmental Protection
- MSc Food Security
- MSc International Animal Welfare
- MSc/PgDip Organic Farming
- MSc/PgDip Rural Business Management
- MSc Soil and Sustainability
- MSc Sustainable Plant Health



[www.sruc.ac.uk/postgraduate](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/postgraduate)

SRUC's Crichton Royal Farm, based in Dumfries, is home to the Dairy Research Centre. SRUC's dairy research aims to provide knowledge for farmers about sustainable breeding and management systems for dairy cattle. Central to this is finding ways to improve the health and welfare of UK dairy herds and measuring different systems' effects on the environment.

**Eleven of the research staff that work at the Centre are graduates of SRUC.**

We met with Hugh McClymont, Research Farm Manager at Crichton, and Ainsley 'Baggy' Bagnall, Principal Technician of Future Farming Systems, to talk about their backgrounds, their team of SRUC alumni, and the important work they do.

"I was very much a towny," said Baggy. "I was studying to be a civil engineer in my first year after school. I had a summer job, 32 years later I still have that summer job! I started off in the Agronomy department at Auchincruive and then I did animal behaviour work and feed studies. In 2002 I jumped at the opportunity to come down here. I had no agriculture qualifications, so I got my HND, which I really enjoyed. You get almost everything you need to know in the HND."



**Ainsley (Baggy) Bagnall**  
Principal Technician  
HND Agriculture /  
Auchincruive / 1994  
"Team ethos. No two days  
are the same."

**James Coupland**  
Tractor Driver /  
Stockperson  
SVQ Agriculture / Barony /  
1988  
"Great team involvement  
with a variety of work."

**David Bell**  
Senior Technician  
BSc Applied Animal Science /  
Auchincruive / 2000  
"One minute dealing with  
data - getting hands dirty  
the next!"

**Mark Hudson**  
Herdsperson  
H&S Training / Foot Trimming /  
Barony / 2013-16  
"Great team and working  
environment. Good  
communication."

# Team

## Meet the Crichton

"I remember Baggy starting in his shorts," added Hugh. "He's still wearing them! Baggy was a great student, he actually won a gold award for his studies."

Hugh's background is very much a rural one.

"I was born and brought up on a dairy farm, farming is in my blood," said Hugh. "I left school, wanted to go into farming but my parents discouraged me. They felt agriculture was not the

best career move. However I got into Auchincruive and spent two years enjoying my Diploma. I arrived at Crichton in 1979 and am now in my 37th year here. I came to milk cows as a dairy man, and I have ended up as research farm manager. "

In 2013 Hugh was named Farmers Weekly Dairy Farmer of the Year. It raised the profile of Crichton Royal Farm and attracted many people to find out about SRUC's research done on the farm.



**Darren Young**  
 Dairy Stockperson  
 Herd Management IT Training/  
 Telehandler Training/ H&S  
 Manual Handling Training  
 2003 - 2010  
 "Good people  
 to work with".

**Pete Little**  
 Senior Herdsperson  
 SVQ Agriculture /  
 Barony / 1983  
 "Team environment  
 and the variety of  
 research projects."

**Jim Gordon**  
 Tractor Driver  
 SVQ Agriculture /  
 Barony / 1987  
 "Excellent working  
 conditions and team  
 operations."

**John Dickinson**  
 Research Technician  
 HND Agriculture /  
 Auchincruive / 1990  
 "Enjoy working  
 with the team  
 and the cows"

**Isla McCubbin**  
 Research Technician  
 BSc Applied Animal Science /  
 Auchincruive / 2013  
 "Variety of work with trials  
 and making use of my  
 degree knowledge."

**Samantha Haining**  
 Dairy Stockperson  
 HND Agriculture / Barony &  
 Ayr / 2015  
 "Continuous on the job  
 training and positive  
 direction of the team."

**Hugh McClymont**  
 Research Farm Manager  
 Diploma in Agriculture /  
 Auchincruive / 1977  
 "The people, the challenge  
 and variety of a Research  
 Facility".

# INSPIRIT

team who studied with SRUC



"I am always out spreading the good work of Crichton," Hugh explained. "Farmers are inquisitive people, so for them it's great to talk to someone from Crichton. Being a research centre has a huge impact on what we can achieve, and also gives us a competitive edge as a commercial farm. It's a complex farm, as it needs to conduct research whilst also operating commercially.

"SRUC looks after staff really well here, and that is reflected in the amount of people with long years'

service - look at me and Baggy! We enjoy our jobs. There's a fantastic balance in what we do.

"We had a barbecue recently that the team asked for. I did the cooking and everyone survived! However the milking was still going on and two staff members couldn't attend because they were on duty. At 3am the next morning the milking still went on. We all have to work hard, but it's worth it."

"The farm staff are more than farm staff, they are pretty much researchers and appreciate how important it is to do things properly," added Baggy. "We can be quite demanding at times, but they just say, 'ok, here you go'. They keep remarkably good records, and are a real credit to SRUC."



**Melissa Irvine**

# This Farming Life

“This Farming Life” series followed five farming families over the course of a year, with spectacular footage providing an insightful look at modern farming in Scotland.

Melissa (Agriculture, 2011, Aberdeen) and husband Martin who live on a family-run 240 acre farm in Drummuir, Keith, starred in the show.

Alumni in the

SRUC alumni are shining in the rural sector. Agriculture graduates from the Aberdeen campus, Melissa and Martin McIntyre, talk to us about their experience during the filming of This Farming Life.

## Melissa, how did you find the experience?

We were a bit nervous at the start but after the first few recordings we really relaxed into it and pretended that the camera wasn't there. The BBC crew were fantastic, they didn't get in the way at all, we were able to get jobs done on the farm, and on the wedding day they were very much in the background. We became really good friends with the sound and camera people.

## How many viewers did the programme get?

It peaked at 2.8 million on one episode.

## Do you think This Farming Life is a fair representation of what it's like to be a farmer?

It's definitely good for people to see a more honest reflection of farming. We were quite happy for everyone to see the good, the bad and the ugly of farming, and other families being filmed did the same. We showed the camera everything – you see calves die and others live. Some things go right and some things don't – like when we didn't sell the bull. It wasn't all a bed of roses.

I feel that it did give us a true representation of what we're all about, and I think that's what the public needs to see. It wasn't just 'everything's fantastic and farmers make so much money', because that's not what happens.

## Was farming always going to be your future as you were growing up?

My dad switched to a mixed livestock farm after having a dairy farm, so I was born and bred on a farm! Either side of my family are both farming and I knew that farming was what I wanted to do. Every job I've had has been related to farming, and I studied Agriculture at SAC. My mum and dad were both really supportive – “it doesn't make you a lot of money, but if you're happy doing it, go for it”.

## Tell us about your current role with ScotEID

ScotEID works closely with the Scottish livestock sector and Scottish Government to develop and provide farmers with traceability products and services, helping them with legislative requirements

and difficulties. I have worked for them as an information assistant since November 2015. I'm part time – which is great as I can get out on the farm a lot more – apart from the fact I'm due to have a baby in the next 5 days! So I'm quite a busy person!

I haven't had a chance to get stuck into lambing this year which has been something I've struggled with, because I absolutely love doing it, and not being able to help Martin has been tough. Martin's mum and dad, and his brother Darren, have been great and really mucked in at lambing time, and we managed to get a night-time lammer to come and help.

I absolutely love sheep farming, so when I fell pregnant I was “Oh yay!!” and then I calculated it out and I said, “Oh no! This is going to land during lambing!”

## Has what you learned at SRUC prepared you for life on the farm?

I would have to say yes – I had a really good three years at college and I met so many lifelong friends and learned a lot from their experiences in agriculture too. When you're looking for employment, a lot of people look for that piece of paper.

There were some really good lecturers when I was at Craibstone – Jim Marr was one of them, I think he's retired now, who were just fantastic. I really did enjoy my time at Craibstone, and the social life was fantastic as well.

## What advice can you give to women in a predominantly male environment?

I would be encouraging anyone – young or old, male or female, if that's what you want to do, to go for it, and don't let anybody tell you that you can't do it. Yes, maybe some males are physically stronger, but there's nothing a woman can't do, or have a good go of doing.

Agriculture is still male dominated. For this to change it's about telling the women out there who want to do it, that they shouldn't just sit back and let men take over. My advice to them would be just 'go for it' and to take any training that they can get.

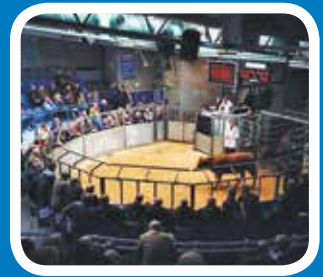


# Spotlight

Shining a spotlight on the graduates from SRUC's Melissa Irvine and Finlay about their experiences filming of BBC's *The Mart* and *The Mart*.

## Finlay McIntyre

# The Mart



"The Mart", a six-part BBC Scotland series aired early 2016, is a behind-the-scenes documentary about life in Thainstone Mart, one of Scotland's biggest livestock marts.

We caught up with Finlay McIntyre, one of The Mart's auctioneers, who graduated from SRUC in 2006 with an Honours Degree in Agriculture.

### Finlay, how was the experience?

It was an interesting thing to be part of the filming, and to see the work those guys put into making it. It was thoroughly enjoyable to be part of it, and it's been a good advert for the industry.

### Do your friends consider you a celebrity now?

No, I don't think they think I'm a celebrity – they still think I'm a bletherer. I couldn't even spell "celebrity"!

### Are you from a farming family?

I was born and raised in Kinloch Rannoch. I was lucky enough my father was shepherding when I was young. He came away from farming, but always gave people a hand. My grandfather had sheep, and my aunty and uncle were also in sheep farming.

I was always going to be involved in farming one way or another – I didn't know how – but knew that's what I wanted. I've never really been interested in arable farming. To me, a tractor is a great work of engineering, but a good Blackie or a good Hills – is a great feat of genetics. That's why I prefer the livestock side of farming.

### What are you up to now?

I've left auctioneering because I got the chance to become a farm manager for an estate in Perthshire, right along from Kinloch Rannoch, where I was born. I feel very fortunate. I'm very much back into the community now and managing a place called Dunalastair Estate. I still keep my own sheep as well, so back to your more practical farming. I can't see myself moving again from here.



### What did you particularly enjoy about your studies in Aberdeen?

There was a very dedicated team of lecturers, and you got the impression they really cared what they were speaking about. The practical side of things that we did on Craibstone farms was enjoyable too.

It's amazing what you learn from your peers, I think that was one of the most important things from college. I was going to SAC with guys from Ullapool, Caithness, Shetland, Orkney right down to the Borders – the whole of Scotland went there and it was so interesting to see how different folk had different ideas about how they did different things.

Some of the best years of my life were at college, I met some very dear and long term friends. I met my wife Gillian there too - she was at SAC in Edinburgh – so I owe a great deal to it. I'm glad I kept going back.

Then of course there was the social life. Well, I made full use of the social life while I was there. I think that's what it's all about!



# Global Impact



## SRUC helping solve global problems

PhD students Bridgit Muasa (Kenya) and Aluna Chawala (Tanzania) have enjoyed their first Scottish summer in Dumfries conducting research with the hope of raising breeding prospects and health in African cattle. SRUC has recently secured funding through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This includes the Nelson Mandela PhD Studentship programme, which supports research in cattle fertility and growth in Africa, and covers Bridgit and Aluna's projects.

Bridgit is assessing the easiest way for east African dairy farmers to tell whether their animals are 'on heat' and so improve rates of conception in the African dairy industry.

While in the UK dairy cows often conceive on the first attempt, in Kenya where Bridgit's PhD is partly based, conception can take three or four attempts, and this can be a significant cost with semen bought in for the job.

"Basically without access to modern equipment the only way to tell whether a cow is ready to conceive is to watch her, noticing subtle changes

in behaviour that indicate she is fertile," explains Bridgit. "However, that just isn't practical. African smallholders often have crops and other animals to tend to. They just don't have the time to constantly watch their cows.

"I hope that this research will identify practical tools the dairy farmers in Kenya can use, and that those tools will save them money and result in a rise in conception rates."

Aluna's research combines social science with animal genetics in an attempt to help African dairy farmers breed the ideal cow for their environment. Aluna plans to use the data to create practical breeding goals for African dairy farmers, so that their livestock is adapted for an African system, rather than a Western one.

"There has historically been a lack of understanding around what breed companies consider to be a good dairy cow, and what is actually a good dairy cow in Africa," Aluna explains.

"The environment is so different over there, in terms of weather, feed and diseases, that we really need to breed a completely different type of dairy cow. But first we need to know exactly what that dairy cow should be."

Aluna Chawala



Bridgit Muasa



Our work with the Gates Foundation has been critical in developing SRUC's international strategy and has given us a credible place at the table in supporting agricultural progress in developing countries.

*Professor Andy Peters, Assistant Principal International*

# Summer Work

## SRUC Trust supporting student work placements

Three SRUC third year students received valuable work experience over a ten week summer placement with SAC Consulting. Each student received a ten week living wage, plus £1,000 bursary, from the SRUC Trust. The experience gave the students a practical insight of what is involved in being an agricultural consultant.



**Heather Kerr** an Agriculture Student from Maybole in Ayrshire, who is entering her final Honours year did her placement in Ayr.

“The work experience is really varied and I’ve been to other offices in Dumfries, Lanark and Stranraer. It’s enjoyable because when I think, ‘oh I could do with a day out of the office’, we head out to the farms.

“I have been out on farms taking soil and silage samples for analysis as well as talking to farmers and checking forms for different schemes like capital grants and organic conversion. I have also been working in the office helping to write reports and also had the opportunity to attend key farming events such as Scotsheep and the Stranraer Show.”

Heather thinks there are even benefits for students who applied but didn’t get a placement:

“Going to a job interview, is a skill in itself, and then SAC Consulting gives you feedback on how you did- which is really helpful for job hunting.

“Having the work placement will also give me something to talk about in interviews and I now have real-life consulting experience to draw on, which will be a big advantage for my first role outside of SRUC.”

**Mhairi Dagleish** from Thornhill in Dumfries and Galloway, studies Agriculture Bioscience and is entering her final Honours year. Mhairi also undertook her placement at the Ayr office.

“It’s great fun and I am learning new things at the same time. I have been involved in a range of tasks including completing nutrient plans and grant applications as well as visiting farms to take soil and silage samples for analysis. I have also completed a Labour Requirement Report to support a planning application for a new house.

“The placement is really broadening my knowledge, which I will be able to apply to my final year study.

“I am keeping my future options open at the moment, but consulting is something I am thinking about, as I am looking for a job that has quite a lot of variety, which is why this internship is so good.”

**Sara Haughey** from County Armagh in Northern Ireland, undertook her placement with the Edinburgh office. Sara is starting her final Honours year in her Agriculture course.

“It’s been great fun and I am learning new things at the same time. I have been involved with a range of tasks including inputting data into a climate change programme as well as visiting farms to take silage and soil samples for analysis. I have also been involved in crop monitoring studies.

“Because I am originally from a beef farm, I was used to working with livestock and I wasn’t really interested in crops. During my work placement I’ve been out on crop walks, and it’s so different from learning about crops in a classroom.

“We are getting an hourly wage and then we get a £1,000 bursary next year. That will probably relieve some of the pressure of having to go and work and earn money when you want to be studying.

“Before I was undecided, now my work placement has definitely made me want to consider doing a job in consultancy.”

# SRUC students on winning streak!

## SRUC students buzzing over Gold Medal

SRUC Edinburgh's Garden Design students have excelled themselves winning the coveted Premier Gold Medal for their show garden at Gardening Scotland 2016. The "Hive Jive" garden, designed and created by 2nd year students based on the waggle dance performed by forager bees, was the only gold award among the eight show gardens which showcase the crème de la crème of Scottish garden design.



## Silver for Ayr Agriculture student in UK award

SRUC Ayr Agriculture student Kirstie Baird from Lanark, was runner-up in the UK wide competition for the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers 'Animal Health Dairy Student Award'. Kirstie competed in London at the Farmers Club with her presentation on 'The UK dairy industry in 10 years' time'. As the Young Ambassador for the Farming With Dyslexia campaign, Kirstie hopes her success inspires other students with dyslexia.



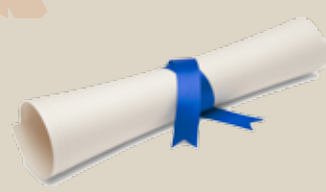
## Silver win for innovative idea

Heather Kerr from Ayrshire, studying Agriculture at SRUC's Ayr campus, won the silver award and £1,000 at the 2016 Farmers Club Pinnacle Awards for Excellence in Business Management. Heather's innovative business idea was for a green burial site in the Carrick Hills.



## Cooking up a Storm

Four SRUC Elmwood Professional Cookery Students were identified as some of Scotland's finest young talent, winning coveted scholarships by Hospitality Industry Trust Scotland.



## SRUCSA celebrates national award

SRUCSA (the SRUC Student Association) was awarded the "Best Small and Specialist Students' Association" at the National Union of Students Awards. A fantastic achievement for a three year old association.



The Hive Jive

# It's fantastic to catch up with classmates for a special reunion, and even better when you get a bit of help from your Alumni Community!



The Class of '76 (Agriculture, Edinburgh) came together in July this year, to celebrate their 40th year reunion by returning to the King's Buildings from all over the world - including alumni as far afield as Papa New Guinea and Iceland.

The day began with a trip down memory lane starting at their old social hangout Pi in the Sky. The group of 24 classmates, along with 18 partners, then had a brief tour of the Peter Wilson Building (known as 'the Agric building' back in the day), followed by a mock 'International Conference' where various 'delegates'



**The Class of '66 (Agriculture, Edinburgh)** caught up in June this year. Six former classmates enjoyed a tour of the Peter Wilson Building before visiting Bush House (where they boarded in their final year) alongside a tour of SRUC's Easter Howgate research farm on the Bush Estate.

Stories were shared by the group who enjoyed pranks that today's students wouldn't dare (beware rose bushes and tendered lawns!). The group continued reminiscing over dinner at the Sheraton in the evening where they joined by a 7th classmate.

Sandy Bremner, reunion organiser, said: "Thank you so much for the visits you laid on at the College and Easter Bush, not only did they bring back old memories, but were interesting in their own right."



**The Class of '71 (Agriculture and Agricultural Economics, Edinburgh)** reunited after not having seen each other for 45 years! Alumnus Chris Firby organised this reunion during the Royal Highland Show at SRUC's Pavilion. The group were delighted to have the chance to meet during their visit to the Show.

Like it was only yesterday!



shared their stories. The group was joined by three former lecturers Fred Harper, Colin Whittemore and John Manson, with Fred chairing the conference. Much fun was had by all alumni and former-staff.

Memories were shared of stunts performed by the mischievous group back in the 70s - including parking a student's Mini in the foyer of the Peter Wilson Building (with reunion organiser Derek Wood caught behind the wheel by the Principal!).

After early evening refreshments at various old haunts in the city the group dined at

Contini Cannonball where the fun and nostalgia continued.

Derek Wood, reunion organiser, said: "The reunion was a resounding success with old friendships renewed, invitations to visit extended and many happy memories. For me the day was summed up with the comment 'It was as though we had just been away for the summer'. What a splendid day it was."

[www.sruc.ac.uk/reunions](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/reunions)

A 50th year reunion is being held in the summer of 2017 (3/4th June, Aberdeen) for the women who studied Domestic Rural Management and the Farm Secretarial courses at Craibstone in 1966 & '67.

Do you know anyone who might have studied at this time, or was a staff member? We are keen to get in touch with Miss McKinley (Dairying) & Miss MacLeod (Cookery).

# Where Are You Now?

Updates from SRUC alumni in Scotland and further afield



## The great outdoors

Lorna McCartney (HNC Countryside Management, 2014) After years of volunteering with The National Trust for Scotland, Lorna was inspired to do her HNC with SRUC via distance learning, allowing her to work whilst studying. Lorna is now the Seasonal Project Leader of Thistle Camps with NTS. "I've gone from working in an IT office with no windows, to an office with no walls". A range of volunteering opportunities can be found on [www.nts.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.nts.org.uk/volunteering).



## It's a family affair

Steven & Tracey Roan, and Stuart & Aylett Roan have more than a surname in common. All four are SRUC alumni: Agriculture for Steven (Auchincruive 2001), Stuart (Auchincruive 1999) and Aylett (Oatridge 1999); Rural Recreation and Tourism Management for Tracey (Auchincruive 2004). The family launched Roan's Dairy in September 2015. Based outside Dalbeattie, they supply fresh free range milk within Dumfries and Galloway direct to the customer.

*"Our milk is not just any ordinary milk you can get in the supermarket. Ours is from grass fed, free range cows and this is something that that we are very passionate about. We don't just sell our milk but we sell our story and that's what customers like about us."*

## Edinburgh Agrics

The Edinburgh Agricultural Society has been going since the 1960s. Members consist of former students who studied Agriculture or Farm Business Management. The majority of current members attended the East, West or the North of Scotland Colleges - and they are on the look out for new members.

The Society run tours to farms every summer, mostly to one county within the UK. From time to time the Edinburgh Agrics go overseas, including places like California and Zimbabwe. This year they went to Czech Republic, where they toured cities and countryside whilst visiting vineyards, farms and breweries.

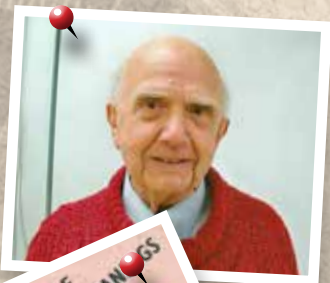
If you're interested in joining the Edinburgh Agriculture Society, please get in touch with the SRUC Alumni & Friends team.



## Aberdeen Grazers

The Grazers are a group of retired members of staff, and their partners, from North of Scotland College of Agriculture, SAC, SRUC and some ex-University of Aberdeen staff who had rural or agriculture backgrounds. "It is all very informal and the social side is just as enjoyable as the content of our talks that take place every month," says Douglas Scott, convener of the Grazers.

If you would like to get involved please contact the Alumni & Friends office and we will put you in touch.



## Stubble Gleanings

Ralph Scott studied Agriculture and also Dairying at the West of Scotland Agricultural College in the early 1960s. Ralph was the chief editor of the popular "Stubble Gleanings" keeping students up to date with all the latest happenings at the time. He now lives in New Zealand, having worked as a Bacteriologist, Freelance writer and Manager up until his retirement in 2002. His words of wisdom to today's students are, 'Use it, or lose it!' Ralph is interested to hear from classmates at the time- please contact the Alumni & Friends office if this is you!



Visit  
[www.sruc.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/alumni)  
to read more alumni profiles, and  
fill in a form to let us know what  
you have been up to.  
We'd love to hear from you.

# SRUC Alumni & Friends

Supporting today's students through the SRUC Trust

Generosity from our alumni and friends supports students facing financial difficulty; encourages students to further study; promotes research excellence; and enhances the student experience.



5%

## Paid Student Work Placement

*I was lucky to get the place, it's a great opportunity. The experience has helped with my plans for the final year of my degree and the modules I want to take.*

**Louise Paterson, who undertook a paid work placement with SAC Consulting**

55%

## Research Projects

*My research aims to evaluate promising techniques for restoring abandoned lead mining sites, establishing productive land for agriculture, recreation and wildlife.*

**PhD student Andrew Innes, Research Scholarship recipient**

In 2015/16

**£130,000**

was awarded to the following areas

10%

## Going Further Bursaries

*It opened up opportunities. I am grateful for the support but what is probably far more valuable is the recognition and the tremendous confidence boost from being identified as being someone with potential to progress. It really lifted me.*

**Student Kathryn Craig, Going Further Bursary recipient**

15%

## Educational Trips & Student Exchanges

*I received funding for flights. It took a weight off my shoulders when figuring out how to fund my trip. This was great support and I am very thankful for it.*

**Student Callum Peace, who received support for his Arkansas exchange trip**

15%

## Centenary Bursaries

*It was looking like I couldn't leave the family farm to go to SRUC. This support means my education is now back on track.*

**Student Alex, Centenary Bursary recipient**

[www.sruc.ac.uk/support](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/support)

[www.sruc.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/alumni)



**SRUC**

*Scotland's Rural College*

*Leading the way in Agriculture and Rural Research, Education and Consulting*

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Title:

Given name:

Surname:

Maiden name:

Date of birth:

Home address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

Current position  
/ job title:

Retired:

Course studied:

Campus:

Year graduated:

Former staff: role:

Employment dates:

Your interests:  
where you involved  
in any clubs, societies  
or teams as  
a student/ staff?

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If you do not wish to receive such messages please tick (✓) the relevant boxes to opt out of that communication channel.

Please do not contact me by:

Postal mail

Email

Phone

# SRUC ALUMNI

## SRUC Alumni & Friends – help us keep in touch!

As a former student or staff at SRUC or its predecessor institutions you are important to us.

Help us to keep your records at SRUC up-to-date so that we can ensure proper delivery of our quarterly e-newsletters, magazine, event invitations and other updates.

Please fill out the form overleaf and return to:

**SRUC Alumni & Friends  
Peter Wilson Building  
West Mains Road  
Edinburgh  
EH9 3JG**

**You can also update your details online by signing up at**

**[www.sruc.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/alumni)**

