Hello,

We hope you have been enjoying the second term of this academic year and would like to welcome you to the first edition of the 2015 GradPost.

As the last edition focused primarily on the celebrations for the University of Kent’s 50th anniversary, in this issue we will look into the dynamic nature of student life. As February is LGBT History Month, we will be covering Kent’s involvement with one of the nation’s largest events. We will also remind you of the General Election, coming up in May, and highlight the importance of the student vote. With our sub-editor Rhea Agard, we are going to explore what it is like to spend an exciting spring term in France, as one of Kent’s international centres is based in lovely Paris.

In a particularly unique article, we will introduce you to the Special Collections and Archives in the Templeman Library basement. Though these hold many valuable and interesting published works, they are rarely on display. This will all be topped up with our regular features; Get Involved, The Face Behind the Building (Alan Turing), an update on the Global Skills Award and Researcher Development Programme, and a piece from our Kent Graduate Student Association (KGSA) President, Vid Čalovski.

We hope you enjoy reading this publication as much as we have enjoyed writing and compiling it. As always, do not hesitate to get in touch either by emailing gradpost@kent.ac.uk, sending us a tweet @TheGradPost or visiting our Facebook group, https://www.facebook.com/groups/482353215205222.

We hope that you have an enjoyable and productive term before the spring break!

Editors
Cathryn Andrews
MSc in Marketing
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The Postgraduate Research Café

Last term saw the launch of the Postgraduate Research Café, an informal monthly session created in order for postgraduate students to showcase their own research and network with researchers from other disciplines. There were some fascinating talks given last term, with two speakers each giving a brief presentation on their research topic, followed by questions and a wider group discussion.

The setting is relaxed, and is a great place to try out some new research ideas. The Research Café runs on the second Wednesday of each month, and is held in the Peter Brown Room between 1-3pm. Tea and biscuits are also provided. All researchers welcome.

Hannah Huxley
PhD in American Studies
The Kent expat in Paris

For me, and I am sure many others, December was a hectic month with one too many sleepless nights. Between trying to finish two 6,000-word essays, juggling the Christmas festivities and preparing for a big move to Paris, I’m not quite sure where my head was!

Trying to find suitable accommodation in Paris was near impossible. It really isn’t as simple as just looking on Zoopla, browsing through pictures and arranging a viewing. I was lucky enough to find my housemate and apartment on Erasmusu (a really helpful study abroad site) and in light of all the craziness surrounding Paris this year – the Charlie Hebdo attack and Eurostar fire – I managed to arrive safely in Paris, even if it was just a day before classes were due to begin.

For those of us taking our spring term in Paris, Reid Hall in Montparnasse replaced Canterbury in becoming our new home. There is just something surreal about studying in Paris; with its magnificent boulevards, cobbled streets and breathtaking landmarks, Paris is certainly an exceptional city. Our Paris Graduate Student Union help to make sure that we discover all that the city has to offer by organising trips and providing helpful information. We also have the luxury of individual module trips organised by our lecturers, which so far have included the covered arcades, the Tour de Eiffel, Cité de l’architecture, the Musée Rodin, the list goes on.

Choosing to study in Europe is one of the most thrilling things I have ever done. As well as having a great new addition to my CV, I am learning to live and study in a new country. Further still, with so many different cultures to experience right on my doorstep, I am often guilty of abandoning the French cuisine for a few authentic Chinois or Lebanese meals. Likewise, one has the benefit of being able to travel to other nearby European cities and I am currently planning a trip to Berlin and Normandy, which are very close.

It feels as though it was only yesterday that I chose to study at Kent, the UK’s European university, and it was mainly because of its opportunities to study abroad. Arriving in France, I was nowhere near as prepared as I should have been and I may struggle with my French every now and again but I am in love with the magical, mythical, cosmopolitan city that we know as Paris!

Rhea Agard
MA in English and American Literature (Paris Option)

Skills Training

The Global Skills Award – spring term

The Global Skills Award programme last term was excellent, with a series of interesting lectures and high attendance by students.

The Chancellor, Dr Gavin Esler, gave a thought-provoking open lecture on how trust has been diminished in the suspicious century; he expressed his views about how trust can be restored in society and the role that tertiary institutions can continue to play in upholding this trust. Those taking part in the programme have also enjoyed lectures on the ‘disappearing computer’, ‘pride and prejudice of groups and their leaders’ and ‘the wisdom of psychopaths’. There have also been insightful workshops on networking, career management, presentation skills and leadership.

Participants can look forward to further interesting lectures and workshops in the spring schedule. For instance, the last lecture scheduled for the programme will feature participants discussing their experiences on contrasting cultures, with the aim of improving working experience in international companies. The tentative date for this lecture is 23 March 2015.

Salaudeen Amao
MSc Networks and Security

Researcher Development Programme

The Researcher Development Programme provides a series of workshops designed to equip research students and doctoral researchers with a range of skills, designed to improve their employability and research effectiveness.

This term’s workshop series includes ‘Rapid Reading’, a one-day session to improve reading and retention skills, speed of reading and eye-moving techniques. Also available are training on presentation skills, tips on the submission process for peer-reviewed journals, and a workshop to help identify what makes you ‘tick’ through the Myers Briggs Type Indicator – which focuses on individual preferences for energy, information and decision-making.

A full list of workshops can be found on the Graduate School website, and sessions can be booked via the online booking system.

Hannah Huxley
PhD in American Studies
LGBT History Month (LGBTHM) at Kent looks to have been one of the largest in the country and is certainly the largest one that the University has held so far. For those who do not know, LGBT stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans*, but within that is a rainbow umbrella that spans every type of person who does not fit into the ‘straight’ box. LGBT is also open to any ‘straights’ out there; we are the ultimate “open to everyone” group.

LGBTHM is a national event in February though its title can be a bit misleading for some. It is not to do with history per se, but rather a time for all things LGBT, history-related or not, to be celebrated.

When I started at Kent in 2010, LGBTHM was not a month but just a week. From those humble beginnings sprang bigger things and in 2013/14 the LGBT Society extended the celebration to the whole of February, during which a small selection of events took place across campus and made enough of a splash to win Achievement of the Year 2014 at the Society Awards. I believe bigger is better, so decided that 2015 would be massive, including a shift in focus.

In the past, LGBTHM tended to be a rather small and subdued affair; LGBT events for LGBT people with flags at proverbial half-mast. Though 2014 made a start, the 2015 plans aimed to show LGBTHM’s true potential through 24-plus events, numerous collaborations, rebranding and the adoption of two official charities: The Albert Kennedy Trust and Schools Out.

One major event was the Art Trail, which saw a variety of artists from all over the country bringing their work to be displayed on campus in a celebration of LGBTHM (achieved with the indispensable help of Hollie Mackenzie). We had 12 pieces displayed in the Keynes College Atrium and its first floor, as well as a ‘50 Years of LGBT at Kent’ exhibition in the Jarman building Mezzanine. The Gulbenkian also showed a series of films from our artists projected on to the café wall and the Archives got in touch to be a part of LGBTHM, which would be another interesting addition to the Trail.

A charity comedy night in the Gulbenkian called ‘Tickle Me Pink’ was held to open up LGBTHM to the public and raise money for our official charities. Along with Tickle Me Pink, our drag make-up workshop, ‘Dragtastic’, sought to bring a fascinating and fabulous world to campus, while raising plenty of pounds in the process. For those who find debate and academia is more up their street, we had interactive seminars on: being Trans*, feminism in art, ‘Dragism’ and a special open forum with the School of Politics. The seminars looked to challenge people’s perceptions of what LGBT means today.

Three of our most high-profile events were our panel discussions, which were designed to appeal and engage with a large audience while adding weight and legitimacy to LGBTHM. Our first one was ‘Pride of Britain’ involving Claire Harvey (Paralympian) Lou Engelfield (Pride Sports founder) James Wharton (soldier and author) and Nina Mehri (Kent’s VP Sports) This panel was set to challenge perceptions of sport and the military, which are typically seen as ‘straight male’ domains.

‘Pink Pounds: Managing Diversity in the Workplace’ saw representatives from RBS, Lloyds, PWC and The Albert Kennedy Trust, with the support of Kent Business School, bring a panel discussion on how to manage a diverse workplace.

Our third panel, ‘Meet the Press’, was one that I am personally most proud of. In collaboration with the School of English’s LGBT Writers’ Week, we managed to secure the Editor of Attitude magazine, the Deputy Editors for Gay Times and DIVA, as well as a chief reporter for PinkNews, who is a Kent alumnus. This meant four of the largest LGBT publications coming to campus to talk about LGBT journalism’s place in the past, present and future.

Finally, I teamed up with the LGBT Society and the University’s outreach department to bring LGBT awareness and engagement beyond our campus. ‘Mythbusters’ will be an official part of the Outreach programme for years to come, offered to schools, colleges and youth groups in Canterbury and across Kent and will see LGBT+ students from the Society take part in Q&A sessions.

We hope that this year’s events will leave a legacy at Kent and helped to open people’s eyes, hearts and minds to the possibilities of LGBTHM, as well as paving the way for future growth.

www.facebook.com/LGBTHistorymonthUKC

Sebastian Bromelow
LGBT History Month at Kent Co-ordinator: 2013-2015
With the General Election now less than 100 days away, and all parties stepping up their electoral campaigns, more and more media outlets are asking the question: could students really decide who wins this election?

Admittedly the student population is relatively low, just over a million, but their concentration in prominent seats could really alter the balance of power come Election Day. However, there is another issue that looms over the student electorate and that is a low turnout of voters.

This is not just a student problem; the younger generation in general seems relatively apathetic when it comes to participation in democracy. This is understandable in the era of austerity, funding cuts and expenses scandals. There is a growing disillusionment with our political establishment and it is more pronounced in the young. The last five years have been particularly difficult for students, with tuition fee hikes and reduced employment opportunities upon graduation still fresh in the minds of many.

So we unfortunately arrive at the biggest cliché our democracy faces today: how does the Government engage with young people? It is perhaps a consequence of a Parliament predominantly composed of those who grew up in a different era. Another more disheartening possibility is the idea that a perceived indifference from the young towards the political process, is leaving politicians disinterested in providing policies for a section of society that is not going to vote.

This has caused a continuous cycle, where the less that politicians show they care, the less likely the young will vote and so on.

Despite being a rather pessimistic analysis of the situation, this view does offer hope by implying things can change, it would just require students to actually vote.

What are the issues that we can really focus on and lobby politicians for? Education would be the obvious one for students. The cost of university has risen dramatically; increased tuition fees means those considering university education now have to contemplate a heavy burden of debt. Policies designed to reduce the debt or at least ease the living constraints on those that do attend university will be greatly appreciated. The rise in unemployment for recent graduates is another thing that the parties can start focusing on; policies to encourage investment in those with higher qualifications or the introduction of more paid internships and apprenticeships would give a lot of hope to an entire generation.

Obviously these things are easier said than done. The economic situation of the country is a little bleak and I realise that there are various arguments against such plans. However, as a specific section of society, it is not for the students to decide what is to be done but rather what their collective voices can demand. In the run up to this election there should be some emphasis on voting, as it is the most direct way to influence politicians, but there are also other ways students can get involved in the political process.

Democracy is not, and never will be, simply about standing in a voting booth for 30 seconds and ticking a piece of paper every five years. Democracy is about engagement. Let us as students, who have so much time and potential, really start getting involved in the political process.

Learn about the political parties and find one that suits your interests and beliefs, so that on 7 May you can enter that voting booth as an informed individual ready to choose a candidate who will do all they can to fight for you.

You can register to vote online and there will be many registration drives around campus in the run up to the election. Use this election as an opportunity to get involved in politics, even in a small way, and continue to use your voice to help improve the current system and make it a fairer and more accurate representation of the people.

http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Dean Hochlaf
MSc in International Finance and Economic Development
Named after the pioneering British computer scientist, mathematician, cryptanalyst, mathematical biologist, logician and philosopher Alan Mathison Turing, ‘Turing College’ is the brand new student accommodation at the University of Kent. The college opened in September 2014, two years after the centenary of Turing’s birth and one month before his induction into the NSA Hall of Honour (October 2014).

Turing College will have a total of 801 student rooms across shared houses and flats. It also has its own catering outlet ‘Hut 8’, which was named after the section of the British WWII code-breaking station, Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS), tasked with solving German naval Enigma messages. It is a tribute to Turing who, best known as one of the founders of computer science and artificial intelligence, contributed to the British war effort by decrypting messages encoded by the Germans during World War Two.

Turing was born in Paddington, London, in June 1912 and grew up in Guildford, Surrey. He displayed signs of high intelligence from an early age. He solved advanced mathematical problems at the age of 15 and when he was 16, extrapolated Einstein’s questioning of Newton’s laws of motion from a text in which this was never made explicit. In 1935, one year after he gained a first-class degree in mathematics from the University of Cambridge, Turing was elected a fellow at the age of 22, having completed a dissertation in which he proved the central limit theorem. In 1938, Turing was awarded a PhD in mathematics and cryptography from the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University. By that time he had already put forward his notion of a universal machine, which later became a concept in modern computing theory now known as a ‘Turing machine’.

By the year 1942, Turing had mastered most of the theoretical problems posed by the Enigma coding machine used by the Germans in the Second World War and thus paved the way for a major intelligence breakthrough, which provided vital intelligence for the Allies. After the war, he worked at Britain’s National Physical Laboratory (1945-1948) where he turned his endeavours to the development of a machine that would logically process information, and in 1945 wrote a detailed plan for building a computer.

He lived the rest of his life in Manchester where he bought a house in the suburbs and went each day on his bike to work at the University of Manchester. Although a private man, his personal life became public. In 1952, he was accused of homosexuality and was convicted of ‘gross indecency’. He was ordered to undergo treatment with injections of oestrogen for a year, to avoid a prison sentence. Homosexuals were open to blackmail at that time and considered a security risk. Therefore, his security clearance was withdrawn and that barred him from working for the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ). He was prevented by the Official Secrets Act from discussing his war work and was also denied entry into the United States.

In June 1954, Turing was found dead by his housekeeper, at the age of 41; the night before, he had taken a few bites of an apple that was later found to contain cyanide. The inquest ruled that his death was a suicide, but his mother had serious doubts about this and suggested that her son must have accidentally ingested something from one of the chemical experiments he conducted at home and in 2012 Jack Copeland, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Christchurch, New Zealand, and a Turing expert, made the same argument. Despite his great service to humanity, Turing spent his life hounded for his sexuality. On 10 September 2009, the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, on behalf of the British Government, made an official apology to Turing posthumously for his prosecution as a homosexual. Further still, the Queen granted a posthumous pardon to Turing in August 2014. Nonetheless, prejudice still prematurely deprived the world of a creative genius.

The project to build Turing College began in July 2013. Its construction plan included environmental management to enhance the existing habitat for the wildlife of the area and protect the trees that were retained. In addition to this, the land surrounding it featured on the BBC on 25 July 2013, as some experts believe the area to be an Iron Age settlement.

For more information on Turing College, please visit: www.kent.ac.uk/accommodation/canterbury/apply/guide/?tab=turing

Dimitrios Sakellariou
MSc in Science, Communication & Society

“\The fact remains that everyone who taps at a keyboard, opening a spreadsheet or a word-processing program, is working on an incarnation of a Turing machine.\”

Paul Gray
Time Magazine
Books in the basement

The Templeman’s Special Collections and Archives section

Down beneath your feet in the basement of Templeman Library, lie the ‘Special Collections and Archives’. These hold many valuable and interesting published works, but unfortunately it seems that many people do not even know they exist! The Special Collections team are responsible for the preservation of these written and visual artefacts and are eager for more people to see and use them.

They have a surprisingly wide variety of collections, with over 50 detailed on its website alone. These include collections on theatre, with 19th century playbills, programmes and photographs found in the Wind and Watermills collection. Additionally, a recently founded Stand-Up Comedy collection includes scripts, cassettes and works from the likes of Linda Smith and Mark Thomas. You can also gain access to the Canterbury Cathedral Archive through the library catalogue for material which is not available elsewhere.

A particular highlight of the department is the British Cartoon Archive, which contains over 100,000 original pieces of artwork, predominantly with political perspectives from the 19th and 20th centuries. This well-established collection includes a complete set of *Punch* and the archive of Carl Giles, the renowned cartoonist (even including his cardigan and art materials), along with many others. It is internationally acknowledged and contains works by more than 300 cartoonists. More highlights of the Archive includes a collection (one of only two in the world) on the playwright Boucicault, as well as the personal library of Lloyd George – the Prime Minister during the First World War – which contains signed books by Winston Churchill, and even books on cows.

There are many other collections catering to various different tastes and areas of research. For the scientists out there, there is the History of Science collection with a first edition of *On the Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin, chemistry and physics texts, and the Maddison Collection of science and technology books from the 17th-19th century.

For lovers of English literature, there are literary collections with first editions by Virginia Woolf, works by T S Eliot and early newspaper editions. As for the History buffs, there is the ‘University of Kent Archive’ which contains information from the University’s founding years, to details of various productions hosted by the Gulbenkian. Furthermore, you can browse pre-17th century local history collections and read up on Hewlett Johnson – a former communist and Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, who received the Stalin International Peace Prize.

As well as the text collections, there are several interesting artefacts that are worth looking out. These include an Indonesian shaman staff, a Roman tablet and what the team believe to be an Ancient Greek vase.

The facilities are open to anyone and a member of staff is available to answer any questions and can inform you about the content of the collections, which may help with your research topic. You can view material in the Reading Room on the fourth floor from Monday to Friday 9.30 to 16.30, by booking a time slot 24 hours before. If you find something in the library catalogue of interest to you fill in an online request form or send an email to let the team know, and they can retrieve it from the archives. They are more than happy to help and also keen to hear of anyone who wishes to volunteer to help generally or in the ‘Big Underground Move’ while the library is being renovated.

So whilst you are searching round the library for those all important books in the Core Text Collection, take a moment to think what might be in the Special Collections and Archives that could be exactly what you need to spice up your essay or dissertation.

Blog: blogs.kent.ac.uk/specialcollections/
Lectures: www.kent.ac.uk/library/collections/lectures/index.html
Festival: www.kent.ac.uk/english/festivalofenglish/lectureseries.html
Email: specialcollections@kent.ac.uk
Charlotte Godfrey
PhD in Biochemistry
Get Involved

Let’s Play!

Let’s Play is a project that aims to give people who are new to sport the opportunity to try it out in a non-competitive and relaxed environment. You may never have done sport before, but not be very confident in an activity, or simply want to try something new. If so, then Let’s Play is for you!

‘I like Let’s Play sessions because they are a good way to have a break when I need to spend my whole day studying. It helped me a lot because it also gave me the chance to talk with English speakers (for example during the climbing sessions), so it has been a good opportunity as an international student as well.’ Beatrice Valentini.

Like Beatrice, you may want to get away from all your work for a bit. Get active with Let’s Play for fun, flexible and affordable activities you can fit into your busy timetable. Come along and try something new; we have beginner sessions activities including softball, canoeing, badminton, swimming and many more. No experience or equipment is necessary and sessions are available on and off campus every day. Visit our website (below) to check out the timetable for this term.

The sessions are only 30 minutes and you can just turn up to take part. However, some activities such as swimming and climbing are quite popular; so it’s worth reserving a spot by emailing us or filling in the online booking form. Everyone is welcome and you do not need to have Kent Sport membership. Activity sessions cost as little £1 or £2 and some are completely free. You can buy a £1 ticket or go for the ‘£10 for ten sessions’ or ‘£20 for unlimited sessions’ options; all of which are available online or at the Sports Centre and Pavilion reception.

Let’s Play also gives you the chance to win prizes! Come along to six sessions to get a free T-shirt, and 10 sessions to win a goodie bag. Further still, at the end of the year a grand draw will reward students who have attended the most sessions with fantastic prizes – we are hoping for an iPad.

Let’s Play is more than just sports; we also hold games nights on campus, where you can drop in to play table tennis, pool or maybe a bit of Wii Fit. Updates on these nights are available via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We will soon be posting information about our upcoming UV night; an exciting evening of playing volleyball, badminton and squash in the dark, lit up only by UV paint. There will also be music, goodies and food – you don’t want to miss it!

Last, but certainly not least, Let’s Play has something in mind just for you Masters’ students. We are looking into a postgraduate timetable during the Easter and summer vacations to provide you with various fun and flexible activities to perk up your stay on campus! Want to try out a sport? Send us an email with your suggestions and we can try and include it!

Website: www.kent.ac.uk/sports/letsplay
Email: letsplay@kent.ac.uk
Twitter and Instagram: @LetsPlayKent!
Marion Hincker
BA in Politics and International Relations

Kent Raise and Give society

Did you know at the University of Kent you have the opportunity to choose from a number of clubs and societies including sports clubs, debating, creative writing, and even tea! There is a society for everyone so there is really no excuse not to join one.

As part of the Kent Raise and Give (RaG) fundraising society, I get to be involved in helping to organise, promote and be involved in some amazing events. Last year I took part in the London Christmas Raid to help raise money for children with cancer. Together with the RaG Raid Team we raised £1,514.22. The temperature was freezing but everyone who took part felt great to have been involved something in aid of such a worthy cause.

Being involved in a society, you are surrounded by fellow students who know you are likely to have other commitments in addition to your studies. That is why any time you volunteer give can be flexible and fit around your other responsibilities.

The Kent RaG organise many exciting challenges including the London to Paris bike ride, trekking the Great Wall of China or climbing Mount. You can also get involved on a smaller scale with events including Wear it Pink, which raises money for breast cancer, or partake in various raids throughout the year to ask the public for donations for amazing causes.

Furthermore, it helps you stand out when you are able to add all these additional activities on to your CV. In the difficult job market we are about to enter, having a good academic record is no longer enough, but getting involved in additional activities will give your CV an edge.

So what are you waiting for? Whether it is the Kent RaG society, or any other society on offer at Kent, make the most your time here by volunteering to join one.

Priya Patel
MSc in Marketing