

THE

# Almanac

JANUARY 2024



[www.uega.co.uk](http://www.uega.co.uk)

University of Edinburgh Journal Supplementary Newsletter



## From the President

Welcome to this 5<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Almanac*. Inside you should find details of the AGM 2024, please put the date in your diary. As this edition is later than planned, it gives me the opportunity to wish you all a very Happy New Year and all the best for 2024.

In the last issue of the *Journal*, reference was made to the ongoing situation with regard to marking exam papers. According to the press, this has now been resolved, although I believe that there is a possibility of further action. It is not good to have so many graduates in a state of limbo with regard to further studies, employment, or visas being extended. It is to be hoped that there will be no further disruption this year.

It has been interesting to see where alumni have ended up. The new Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is Professor Jim Skea, who studied Mathematical Physics at the University of Edinburgh. On holiday in July, I was on a cruise to Norway and Iceland, and one of the guest speakers was Liz Drake, also an alumna of the University. She was talking about an organisation called ORCA, who are researching the current situation with regard to whales and dolphins. The University has also been at the forefront of some scientific discoveries, foremost among which is perhaps the work

## Contents

From the President		1
From the Vice President		2
Contributions		2
AGM 2024		3
AGM 2023 Minutes		4
Notices		7

Interim Editor

**Prof Stephen G. Hillier** OBE

Production Editor

**Mr John R. Sutherland** MA (Hons) MSc

ISSN: Forthcoming



being done by Dr Ken Lee. His work on troponin testing looks to be able to diagnose more accurately heart attacks in women.

The next two years are important ones for the University of Edinburgh Graduates' Association. 2024 is the centenary of the Association, and 2025 the centenary of the first edition of the *Journal*. More information about any events to celebrate these milestones will be issued in the future.

David Gilmour  
UEGA President

events. Additionally, if you would like to learn more about serving on UEGA's Executive Committee for a term, please contact us at:

**Ann Henderson**  
**UEGA Vice President**  
**1fR, 18 Buccleuch Place, EH8 9LN, UK**  
**gradassoc@ed.ac.uk**

Thank you for your continued support.

Ann Henderson  
UEGA Vice President

## From the Vice President

As members may be aware, the UEGA office is still understaffed at present, following Joan Meikle's death in 2022, and we have therefore not been able to arrange events or promptly carry out some of the administrative tasks related to the Association. Additional disruption arose in October, when a neighbouring property flooded, causing significant damage in the UEGA office and the requirement for repairs and redecoration.

Members will have noted a delay in communications, including subscription renewal letters coming from UEGA. Those paying by Direct Debit may have noticed a delay in collecting subscriptions in late 2023. Our apologies for this; it was due to a change in the recording arrangements, which was explained in a separate message to individuals, this has now been resolved. Letters for others members regarding their subscription have been dispatched earlier this year.

Looking ahead to our centenaries, we do have ideas for some events in Edinburgh in 2024 and 2025 to bring alumni, and other University societies we think will be of interest, together. The UEGA Vice President, Ann Henderson, would welcome any members who would like to volunteer to develop these

## Contributions

The Interim Editor warmly invites subscribers, alumni, and current students, staff, and friends of the University of Edinburgh to contribute writing to the *University of Edinburgh Journal* and *The Almanac*.

Articles and notes on any aspect of the University of Edinburgh, creative writing, reviews of books or other media, obituary notes, and letters to the Interim Editor on any issue of interest are all welcome and will be given serious consideration for inclusion in a future issue.

For more information on making a submission to either the *Journal* or *The Almanac*, our House Style, and copy deadlines, please contact our Editorial Team at:

**The Interim Editor**  
**1fR, 18 Buccleuch Place,**  
**Edinburgh EH8 9LN**  
**gradassoc@ed.ac.uk**



## Events - Spring 2024

### UEGA AGM 2024

Subscribers are invited to the University of Edinburgh Graduates' Association's Annual General Meeting 2024, due to be held in the

**Raeburn Room, Old College, South Bridge,  
Edinburgh EH8 9YL**

on **Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 11.00 am.**

There is no cost for attending the meeting, but we do ask that subscribers order a free ticket on our website or inform us of their intention to attend.

Fairtrade Tea & Coffee will be available during the meeting, along with a selection of Fruit Scones with Jam & Cream and Salted Caramel Chocolate Brownies. There is no charge for these refreshments, but there will be a collection for donations at the meeting to help cover the cost of the event. We appreciate your support.

Members can also download papers for the AGM, including copies of the Agenda, an Annual Report, UEGA Accounts, and the Minutes for the Last AGM held in April 2023. These papers can be found at:

[www.uega.co.uk/agm-2024](http://www.uega.co.uk/agm-2024)

### AGM 2024 Agenda

The minutes from the last UEGA AGM, held in April 2023, can be consulted on **pages 4-7** of this issue of *The Almanac*.

1. Welcome & Sederunt
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising
4. President's Report
5. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Accounts
6. Interim Editor's Report
7. Relations with Development & Alumni
8. Election of Honorary Office Bearers
  - **President:** David Gilmour
  - **Vice President:** Ann Henderson
  - **Hon. Secretary:** David Lamb
  - **Hon. Treasurer:** Finlay Marshall
  - **Hon. Accounts Examiner:** Eric Brown
  - **Interim Editor:** Steve Hillier
9. Election of Executive Committee Members
  - **Please note:** Ten posts are currently available on the Executive Committee. Subscribers should also note that all nominations, duly proposed and seconded and with the consent of the nominee, should be in the hands of the Hon. Secretary, in writing, by 7 February 2024.
10. AOCB
11. Date of AGM 2025.

We encourage subscribers to order tickets for all Events on our website at:

[www.uega.co.uk/events](http://www.uega.co.uk/events)

Doing so helps a great deal with both organisation of events and costs. You can also order tickets by writing to:

**Hon. Secretary, UEGA**  
1fR 18 Buccleuch Place, EH8 9LN  
[gradassoc.admin@ed.ac.uk](mailto:gradassoc.admin@ed.ac.uk)



## AGM 2023 Minutes

---

Minutes of the UEGA Annual General Meeting held at 12 noon on Thursday, 10 April 2023 in the Raeburn Room, Old College, EH8 9YL.

**Present:** Mr David Gilmour, President in the Chair; Ann Henderson, Vice President; Mr David Lamb, Hon. Secretary; Mr T. Finlay Marshall, Hon. Treasurer; Prof. Stephen Hillier, Interim Editor; Mr John R. Sutherland, Production Editor; Mrs Oonagh Gray, Immediate Past President; Mr Tom Gray; Mr Hamish McKenzie; Ms Elizabeth Owens; Mr Ritchie Walker; and Mr Malcolm Wylie.

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the delay in holding this meeting was due to unforeseen industrial action at the University in February 2023.

**Apologies:** These had been received from Mr Peter B. Freshwater, Editor Emeritus; Dr Margaret Alexander; Dr S. Michael Langdon; and Lady Lucinda L. Mackay.

### 1. Minutes of AGM 2022 and Matters Arising:

The AGM 2022 was held on 10 February 2022. The minutes of that meeting were approved with the adjustment that Mrs Oonagh Gray had attended via Zoom. DG would sign a copy at a later date.

**2. Finance, Presentation of Accounts:** The accounts were presented by FM with the following comments. In general, UEGA is in a slightly poorer position than at the last AGM; annual subscription income had dropped by ~£2,000 but a slight boost had been provided by an increased attendance at events. UEGA remains heavily dependent on donations and on our Annual University Grant of £4,500. Without the grant, UEGA is almost out of money.

Wages and salaries are slightly up due to the effect of furlough payments being received. Due to three years of COVID-19, there has been a noticeable change in membership habits; events are not supported as well as they used to be.

Regarding the future, the principal change was that there is currently no Assistant Secretary in the office, which means that wages are significantly less. Without

a significant increase in subscriptions, UEGA may not be able to afford to employ an Assistant Secretary and/or an Assistant Treasurer. The current Office Bearers were volunteering their time to assist JS in taking up the slack left by the death of Mrs Joan Meikle. This is workable short-term arrangement, but will not be sufficient in the long term.

Annual income is holding up for the next year, but events are not producing income. Events remain essential to UEGA's ongoing work. There has also been a significant drop in donations received. In short, UEGA needs new members urgently. We need the co-operation of D&A, within the bounds of GDPR, and in keeping with their objectives, to recruit new members to UEGA.

FM was concerned with the future direction of UEGA, and suggested that the current reduced expenditure may be a short respite while we regroup. He indicated that the Honorary Accounts Examiner, Mr Eric Brown, had raised questions about UEGA's future. FM had informed EB that these questions would be addressed. DG thanked FM for his report.

**3. Editorial Committee Report:** The following report was delivered by SH and JS. The year leading up to this AGM has been one of change for the *University of Edinburgh Journal* and its Editorial Team. Mr Peter B. Freshwater, who has served as Honorary Editor of the *Journal* for more than 11 years, stepped down after the publication of the Winter 2022 issue. SH, with the approval of the Editorial Committee, and the blessing of PF, stepped away from his role as Vice President of UEGA to take up the post of Interim Editor. SH will remain in post until a process by which a new Editor can be formally appointed in the lead up to the relaunch of the *Journal* ahead of its 2025 centenary. PF has agreed to remain in contact with the Editorial Team as Editor Emeritus in order to smooth the transition and provide important advice and contacts for the *Journal*.

Perhaps the most significant development in the past year has been our progress in developing a stronger relationship with the University of Edinburgh through D&A. At the outset of this process, the Editorial Team sought to address three basic questions: 1) What is the



purpose of the *Journal*? 2) Who reads the *Journal*? 3) What is the impact of the *Journal*? We also identified some fundamental needs for the continuance of the *Journal*, including ongoing engagement with D&A; logistical support in the form of IT help, social media engagement, and website support; and financial support until such time as the *Journal* is again self-sufficient. Three meetings of the *Journal* Working Group, comprised of representatives from the *Journal*'s Editorial Team and D&A, have taken place at which these questions and needs have been discussed. Our progress has included agreement on a mission statement for the *Journal*:

Established in 1925, the *University of Edinburgh Journal* is an editorially independent, scholarly, and multi-disciplinary journal with two main aims. First, to publish academic and creative writing by students, staff, alumni, and friends of the University of Edinburgh. Second, to continue to build a detailed archive on the history and heritage of the University and of its people. Topics covered relate to any relevant aspect of University life – past, present, and future – and are of interest to diverse specialist branches of the academic community, at home and abroad.

Further, areas of co-operation and support have been agreed, including support in distributing the *Journal*, website and social media consultation, and agreement for ongoing engagement with the *Journal* in its future development. Further meetings are planned, and the Editorial Team will continue to report progress to the Executive Committee in its regular meetings and at the AGM in 2024.

The Editorial Team has also held several meetings with sabbatical officers from EUSA in order to strengthen the *Journal*'s relationship with students. These have resulted in *Journals* being distributed to current students in union buildings to increase its profile and cultivate engagement. Internships for students, including an Assistant Student Editor, were being investigated, and calls for submission of material were also being considered in the form of posters and items in EUSA's regular newsletter. Lastly, the Editorial Team has begun developing a permanent contact at EUSA to avoid losing momentum when sabbaticals end their term of office.

SH and JS, now Production Editor of the *Journal*, have been working steadily to increase membership of the Editorial Committee and to form a new Editorial Advisory Board, which would oversee the operations of the *Journal*. Dr Shenxiao Tong, recently retired Academic Support Library for the Main University Library, had been approached to join the Editorial Committee and it is hoped that he will attend at their next meeting in August 2023. AH has also agreed to join the Editorial Committee. Meetings have also been held in November 2022, and January and March of 2023 to discuss the future of the *Journal*. The Editorial Team has also drawn up a list of potential Committee and Board members from across the University community and has begun reaching out to these individuals.

The Summer and Winter 2022 issues of the *Journal* were published successfully and distributed to all subscribers by print and PDF according to their listed preference in our records. This was done at a cost of **£2,654.77** for 400 copies of the Summer issue, and **£3,337.72** for 750 copies of the Winter issue. The additional number of Winter issues were printed in order to provide a surplus for use in promotional endeavours, such as our meetings with D&A and EUSA.

The Editorial Team is moving forward with a selection of articles and reviews for the Summer and Winter 2023 issues, including the beginnings of our Legacy Articles Project. This project aims to use old articles from the *Journal*'s archive to solicit modern commentaries on issues that remain relevant to today's readers. Old and new articles will be published side by side in the *Journal* to provide proper context for the legacy article, and the best possible comparison point for the modern-day commentary. Several of these new articles have been solicited and are in the process of being written. Along with these, we have continued to solicit fresh articles on a range of topics, and are grateful to receive reviews of books and other media, and obituary clippings for inclusion at the end of each issue.

The *Journal*'s archive and website operations have been scaled back while JS helps to cover the duties normally covered by the late Mrs Joan Meikle. Until a new Administrative Assistant can be appointed,



THE

# Almanac

scanning of back issues and significant updates of the website and Facebook page have been placed on hold.

The fourth issue of *The Almanac* was published in January 2023, containing the papers for this event amongst other items. It also included events information for our wider Spring programme. We encourage our subscribers to engage with *The Almanac* and the website as much as possible in terms of booking tickets for events and sending in news of themselves or other items of interest. It is important to restate that ordering tickets through our website is the most efficient, cost-effective, and practical method of tracking attendance at events, informing subscribers *en masse* of changes or cancellations, and tracking data associated with our events for future planning. Furthermore, any subscribers who haven't already provided our team with an email address for future communications, we encourage you to do so.

SH recorded his thanks to JS and PF for their assistance in producing the *Journal*. He also reiterated that ongoing talks with D&A are constructive. AH asked if the *Journal* could be brought to the wider attention of University Court, possibly supported by EUSA – JS confirmed this would be investigated. DG thanked SH for delivering the report.

**4. President's Report:** The report was delivered by DG, focussing on events. Firstly, the membership number was reported as **788** at the time of this meeting.

On 22 March, the Annual Reception and Dinner was held with guest speaker, Deborah Kayembe. On 22 June, the visit to Abbotsford House was planned. However, due to COVID-19, and several members pulling out of attending, the event was cancelled.

DG comments on the loss of Joan Meikle, saying that he didn't realise how much was done by JM until she was no longer with us. He confirmed that an appreciation would appear in the *Journal*, and that the funeral was well-attended. DG thanked JS for taking on some additional duties in the short-term, and commented that the future staffing situation of UEGA was still uncertain.

On the death of HRH Queen Elizabeth II, DG wrote to the Patron to express condolences on behalf of

UEGA. He had received a very warm response.

On 22 October, the members lunch with guest speaker Dr Elizabeth Cumming was held. This was widely reported to be a huge success. On 11 November, DG laid a wreath at the Old College remembrance service on behalf of UEGA. He reported that the service was now back to normal after COVID-19.

On 12 December, the UEGA Christmas Lunch was held. This was well attended, and resulted in very positive relations between members. One comment was made to ensure that soft drinks were made available as an alternative to wine at future events. Coffee morning had been restarted in the Balcony Café at the National Museum of Scotland – DG encouraged members to attend.

The next event is due to be the Annual Reception and Dinner. The Lord Lyon King of Arms, Joe Morrow, was due to speak at the event. However, due to unexpected surgery, this had to be cancelled. Iain Gordon Brown was approached to speak on 'Auld Greekie', but cannot make it. FM has enlisted Mhari MacPherson, winner of Martha Hamilton prize for creative writing, to give a short informal talk instead.

On 23 May, a Tour of St Mary's Song School is due to be held, led by DG who volunteers for the school. The cost per ticket is £10, which includes a donation for St Mary's. DG encouraged members to attend.

RW thanked DG for delivering his report and for writing to the Patron. He asked if news of this could be relayed in the *Journal*. He also asked if events information could be included with the *Journal* in the future. SH responded that this question raises the issue of the separation of interests of UEGA and the *Journal*. This would be discussed at length with D&A. JS commented that events information would be contained to *The Almanac* for the time being, but that the issue, with DG's approval, would be brought back to the Editorial Committee for discussion.

**5. Relations with the D&A Department:** See Editorial Committee Report for details on this.

**6. Election of Honorary Office Bearers** (President, Vice President, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, Interim Editor): The following individuals



were nominated for, and accepted the posts of  
**President:** David Gilmour; **Vice President:** Ann Henderson; **Honorary Secretary:** David Lamb; **Honorary Treasurer:** T. Finlay Marshall; and **Interim Editor:** Steve Hillier.

**7. Appointment of Accounts Examiner:** FM confirmed that Eric Brown would continue as the Hon. Accounts Examiner.

**8. Executive Committee Elections:** DL proposed Hamish McKenzie for the Executive Committee. This was accepted by HM, seconded by FM, and approved by the meeting.

**9. AOCB:** JS commented on the need to hold an event to celebrate the tenure of PF. DL and SH supported this, suggesting it could be an opportunity to invite significant members of the University community to participate. JS would investigate further with PF to determine his wishes. RW asked that a membership event be considered for this if appropriate.

**10. Date of Next Meeting:** It was agreed that the next AGM should begin an hour earlier at **11.00 am** on **Thursday, 8 February 2024**. A vote of thanks was proposed to DG.



## Coffee Mornings

Given a recent reduction in numbers, UEGA has taken the difficult decision to suspend coffee mornings until further notice. We hope that, with plans for a new events programme in development, we can bring these back in the future. Please look out for any information in future issues of *The Almanac*, or on our website.

## Notices

### *My Life as an Artist*, A Memoir by Lady Lucinda L. Mackay

Lady Lucinda L Mackay has recently published her autobiography entitled *My Life as an Artist*. The book explores Lady Lucinda's early life and education, delves into her development of a successful artistic career, and offers a collection of thoughts and anecdotes on her work. It also includes almost 200 pages of scanned reproductions of Lady Lucinda's work, ranging from portraits of familiar faces, such as Prof Sir Tim O'Shea, to landscapes, still life, and quick, on-the-spot sketches of Edinburgh scenes.

The Editor Emeritus of the *Journal*, Mr Peter B. Freshwater, has written a short review of the book in Vol. 51, No 2, which is due to appear in February 2024. Designed and edited by the *Journal's* production Editor, Mr John R Sutherland, the book features a foreword from acclaimed Scottish author, Sir Alexander McCall Smith.

A limited number has been published privately by Lady Lucinda; hardback copies are available for **£30.00** by writing to her at:

**Lady Lucinda L Mackay**  
**lucinda.l.mackay@gmail.com**