



GLASGOW SCIENCE CENTRE!

Celebrating **21 years**

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY PUBLICATION

JULY 2022

WHEN I first arrived at Glasgow Science Centre in 2012, I was excited about the challenge, but I knew there was a lot of work to be done.

The centre, which opened in 2001, had fallen behind. Its exhibits were showing signs of age and there were structural problems to address, so the focus in those early days was on getting the three buildings back up to standard.

Once we had progressed with that, however, we could look beyond the centre itself and think about our reach both within the Glasgow community, and across Scotland and beyond.

I am passionate about engaging people in STEM – science, technology, engineering and mathematics – and it has been incredibly exciting to reflect upon the developments in those areas on our own doorstep. The space industry, precision medicine, photonic and quantum technology – these sectors have made huge strides in Glasgow and the west of Scotland, which makes the role of Glasgow Science Centre even more important.

When I look around, I see lots of high quality, exciting opportunities being created. Part of our role is to make sure as many of our young people as possible are able to access



those opportunities. That is what drives me.

There have been many highlights in my 10 years at the helm of the charity, but working with the BBC on creating an event venue for the Commonwealth Games in 2014 and supporting the RAF in its centenary celebrations in 2018, are up there at the top of the list. The peak, however, was our role in COP26, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, which came to Glasgow in 2021.

Coming out of a two-year period in which we were closed more than we were open due to the pandemic, it was exciting to see the centre at full capacity, working with the

UK Government to deliver a comprehensive programme of events and attracting interest not just here in Glasgow but from across Scotland and around the world.

I am incredibly proud of the role Glasgow Science Centre has in the fabric of city life. I always felt we had a more



I am incredibly proud of the role the Glasgow Science Centre has in the fabric of city life

fundamental role to play than simply being a visitor attraction.

Our vision is that all people from all backgrounds across Scotland should be empowered through science and technology, and that needs more than a single visit or a fun day out. Those visits are the spark upon which we need to build and we hope that it is just the start of a long-term relationship working with young people and the community.

It is these long-term relationships that create the opportunity to bring positive influence into people's lives, building their confidence, making them aware of the opportunities that exist, and truly empowering them.

As we celebrate our 21st birthday, my wish is that people will come and celebrate with us, to share in our previous successes and our ambitions for the future as we continue to develop collaborations on a national and international scale, and raise the quality of public engagement in science.

Above all, I hope the people of Glasgow and the west of Scotland will continue to feel at home here, to come and enjoy this great asset which benefits everyone.

This is your science centre. It belongs to you. ■

Dr. Stephen Breslin,
Chief Executive



Published on behalf of the Glasgow Science Centre by the Herald & Times Group.
Words: Ann Fotheringham
Design: Ian Corcoran, David Ross

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THIS IS A **SCIENCE** CENTRE.



**LABORATORY OF LEARNING
QUENCHER OF CURIOSITY
GYMNASIUM FOR THE MIND**

DEDICATED TO HUMAN ENDEAVOUR
ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN
A CELEBRATION OF OUR SENSES
THE BEGINNING OF A BRIGHTER FUTURE

FROM THIS PLACE
IMAGINATION MAY BLOSSOM
CREATIVITY, NURTURED
TREPIDATION, REMOVED
SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS ARE BORN HERE

IT'S NOT ONLY A FUN DAY OUT
IT'S A STEP FORWARD IN YOUR JOURNEY
OF LIFELONG LEARNING
FRIEND, YOU STAND ON THE EDGE OF DISCOVERY:

THIS IS GLASGOW **SCIENCE** CENTRE.



THE VITAL SPARK: A visit to the Bodyworks exhibition inspired student Archie Wallace to pursue a science degree

I WAS nine years old when I first visited Glasgow Science Centre's Bodyworks exhibition – now I am 18 and have just completed my first year of a Pharmacology honours degree at Glasgow University.

A visit to Glasgow Science Centre was always exciting, it was like nowhere else I had been, and we didn't get much science at primary school so it was something new and different.

It is a place that makes you want to ask lots of questions. Every time I left I always wanted to come back. There was so much to see and learn. I remember Bodyworks because it went into so much fascinating detail about the human body.

I liked the hamster wheel, and the skeleton bike – I was fascinated by that, looking at how all the bones and joints moved as I pedalled. I think my mum might have steered me away from the live autopsy table on that first visit, though I saw it when I was older.

My first interest in science was on the forensics side, in fact, and I thought I might like to go into detective work. However, while I knew I wanted to work in analytical science, I began to realise I wanted to do something less niche, something that would help people on a much bigger scale. That is why I chose to study pharmacology and I hope one day to work in precision medicine.

I was lucky to have excellent and inspiring science teachers at Duncanrig Secondary School, who encouraged me to consider science as a career

– but the spark was lit at Glasgow Science Centre.



■ Archie Wallace today at University of Glasgow, and, top, aged nine on the hamster wheel at the Bodyworks exhibition



■ Sandy Ferguson, Forbes MacPherson and Stuart Gulliver cut the first turf on site as city-based Building Design Partnership were announced as the successful architects who would design the centre



■ Construction begins on Glasgow Science Centre at Pacific Quay on the banks of the River Clyde, in November 1999



■ The elegant curve of the Science Centre spine dovetails beautifully with the Armadillo auditorium on the opposite side of the River Clyde

Captured on camera are some of the highlights of the Glasgow Science Centre's first 21 years on the banks of the River Clyde

21 YEARS



■ Her Majesty The Queen and Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh meet Lord Provost Alex Mosson at the official opening of Glasgow Science Centre on July 5, 2001



■ Steven Douglas, a pupil from Largs Academy who were visiting the spring lambs and viewing the other high-tech exhibits gets a kiss from Horace the new born cross bred lamb in May 2002



■ Lisa Watt helps illustrate the various stages of the growth of the human jaw at the Life of Mammals Exhibition hosted by the Science Centre in January 2003



■ Where it started: An artist's impression of the proposed "National Science Centre" in Glasgow



■ During National Science Week in 2004, Glasgow Science Centre's Live Performance Co-ordinator Steve Owens helped bring science to life. The Science Centre also hosted the forward-thinking Nature's Reality Game Show, which helped pupils learn about food chains, recycling, energy use and threats to native species

PICTURE: KEIRAN DODDS



■ Jay Gunn, exotic animal handler, left, with children from Linwood child care and Sydney the snake at the Science Centre in 2005

SCOTT WILKINSON



■ American astronaut Leroy Chiao presented Andrew Milne from Braidbar Primary in Giffnock with the Young Inventor trophy at Glasgow Science Centre in 2005. The contest attracted young people from across Scotland, and judges included Chiao, who flew on the Space Shuttle, and Archie the Inventor (Miles Jupp) from CBeebies series Balamory

JANE SHARPE/STUART SIMMONS



■ Famous paddle steamer Waverley leaves its moorings at Glasgow Science Centre for a trip during the Glasgow River Festival in 2007

MARK DISSON



■ Love was in the air – and at the top of the Science Centre's impressive Glasgow Tower, on January 27, 2005, when Gerrie Victor asked his girlfriend Audrey Corr to marry him. She said yes...

JILL HENDERSON



■ Scientist Ayshah Ismail enjoys a cup of coffee as part of the Science Centre's 1001 Inventions exhibition in 2008. It celebrated 1000 years of scientific and technological innovation by Muslim scholars and inventors across the globe from southern Europe to Asia

MARTIN SHELDON



■ BodyWorks on Tour launched in 2009 and has been visiting schools and community groups across Scotland ever since.

MARTIN SHELDON



■ David Grimmer of the Science Centre gets a breathtaking view at The Planetarium in 2009

ANDY BUCHANAN



■ Princess Anne visited the Science Centre in 2011 to open a new exhibition titled MindWorks

MARTIN SHELDON



■ Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Moon landing at the Moon50 event in Glasgow Science Centre in 2019

PICTURE: MARTIN SHELDON



■ Science Communicator Chris Banks demonstrates the Elephant's Toothpaste experiment at the Science Show Theatre in 2017



■ Glasgow Science Centre's On Tour van heads out to the Caithness Science Festival in 2014. The Science Centre supports engagement with science across Scotland

Pride of the Clyde



A long time advocate of a more ‘hands-on approach’ to science, the idea of a new science centre in Glasgow was a real light bulb moment for Professor Graham Durant, one of the Science Centre’s founding fathers

PROFESSOR Graham Durant can still recall the excitement he felt watching Glasgow Science Centre take shape on the banks of the River Clyde.

“It was a cold, wet, muddy site, and it was daunting – once it was all green-lit, big decisions had to be made very quickly – but it really was brilliant,” he smiles.

“I’d been working at The Hunterian at Glasgow University, and had become increasingly interested in the idea of science communication.

“Now, here I was, on site making decisions about theatre spaces and labs and exhibition areas, with £21m to spend on the science displays and exhibits.” He adds, laughing: “That was quite unusual, for a university museum curator...”

As far back as 1986, Professor Durant was suggesting a more ‘hands-on’ approach to science in Glasgow, and in 1988 he helped bring the Dome of Discovery to the city, an interactive exhibition which ran for 11 days and attracted more than 20,000 visitors.

Fast forward to 1994, when the UK Government announced plans for a National Lottery and sought ideas through the Millennium Commission, for suitable projects that could benefit from funding.

“The Commission was thinking bridges, sculptures, that kind of thing – but when it received more than 30 bids for science centres, it realised there was an opportunity there,” says Professor Durant.

“Many of those were built, some are still going, of which Glasgow, of course, is one.”

He adds: “It was very clear in the early 90s that we needed to build a level of science literacy among young people, to support teachers and encourage students into STEM careers. That was one of the aims at the heart of the centre – the other was urban regeneration.

“For a city that had turned its back on its river for so long, it was great to see it valuing it again. There is a huge buzz about Pacific Quay now, with

the BBC and STV, hotels, businesses and more having taken root there. Glasgow Science Centre has been a catalyst for the regeneration of that part of the city.”

Professor Durant is full of stories about the centre, and the VIP guests who came to visit. “I remember taking

■ Professor Durant shares his excitement at the opening of the Science Centre with the public in 2001, right, and pictured in front of the centre in 2011, above

former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on a tour – she was very interested and engaged in the work of the centre.

He also recalls a near-miss with Prince Philip’s security detail at the official Royal opening of the centre in 2001. “The Duke of Edinburgh was coming to the second floor, and we had been told where to stand to greet him,” says Professor Durant. “The Royal Party was late, however, so we were told to stand down and they would contact us when we had to get back into position.

“So I was about 30 metres away from where I should have been when the lift doors opened, and out walked the Duke. I started running over to him, only to see the bodyguards reaching inside their jackets.” He laughs: “I had to shout, it’s okay, I work here...”

Professor Durant adds: “VIPs are all very well, but it was more important to us to see the impact the centre had on young people. Now there is another generation of visitors, all with their own tale to tell.”

Shortly after returning to The Hunterian, Professor Durant received a call from Questacon, Australia’s National Science and Technology Centre, offering him a position.

“So my wife and I went on an adventure and we have been in Canberra ever since,” he says, smiling.

“I retire this year, and we will be coming back to Glasgow to catch up with the people and places we miss the most – and Glasgow Science Centre is definitely on that list.” ■



A Pictorial History

Glasgow Science Centre has played host to some of Scotland's greatest occasions ...

PICTURE: JAMES GALLOWAY/HERALD & TIMES



■ Scottish actor Robert Carlyle won a BAFTA Scotland when the celebrated film and TV awards ceremony came to Glasgow Science Centre in 2009

PICTURE: ANDY BUCHANAN



■ Glasgow Science Centre helped welcome visitors to the city for the Commonwealth Games in 2014 with interactive displays on the human body at the spectator villages in Glasgow Green and Pacific Quay

event horizon

PICTURE: NICK PONT/HERALD & TIMES



■ In September 2004, schoolchildren from around Scotland were invited to ask then First Minister Jack McConnell questions on a range of topics, part of GSC's ongoing commitment to bringing the community in to the centre



■ A delegate experiences "Hands on fire" at the Visit Scotland Expo which took place at Glasgow Science Centre in 2009.

Glasgow Science Centre was founded on the principle of inclusivity – and innovative new learning projects led by Gillian Lang are ensuring no visitor feels intimidated by the subject, writes **Ann Fotheringham**

EVERYONE is a scientist, explains Gillian Lang, Director of Experience Development at Glasgow Science Centre.

“Education is the key, and we are an educational charity which happens to have a visitor attraction,” she explains.

“It’s not the other way round.”

Gillian’s remit includes developing new exhibits and programmes, working with external partners and bringing a more “holistic educational experience” to the community inside and outside the building.

Since 2001, Glasgow Science Centre has been supporting teachers and delivering educational experiences to learners of all ages, from stargazing in the Planetarium to DNA extraction in the Lab.

When the pandemic forced the centre to close in March 2020, Gillian and her team quickly switched the programme online, coming up with GSCAtHome – a series of science engagement videos put out at 10am every day during lockdown to support families with home learning. This evolved into Learning Lab.

“Learning Lab was born out of necessity but has developed into a key part of what we offer to schools,” says Gillian.

“Traditionally, schoolchildren would come into the centre to do a 45-minute workshop, see a science show and leave. Research has shown, however, that is not impactful enough and a deeper learning experience is needed to help children engage with science.

“Learning Lab allows schools to sign up for a fully curated experience, over a period of eight to 10 weeks, with interactive resources and videos online before visiting the centre itself.”

The programme has been hugely



successful, building up from eight schools in the first year to around 25,000 students taking part in the last 12 months.

“We have had excellent feedback and teachers are signing up to do it again, which is a really positive sign,” adds Gillian.

“It demonstrates this model was needed, especially for primary schools.”

Examples of the topics included range from climate change to body systems and the space industry. Gillian explains: “We look at the myths surrounding climate change and explain the science – how do

we understand the problem to make a positive change?”

“There is a lot of innovation happening in Glasgow in the space industry, so we look at how that innovative spirit is applied in the sector right here in the city.

“Everyone has that innovative spirit, it’s about honing and practising those skills as scientists. Of course, we want to get people into STEM subjects, but research has shown that a level of science literacy is very important no matter what industry you go in to.”

Another recent innovation at Glasgow



■ Gillian Lang participates in the redevelopment of the centre's outside space



■ Sally White (Glasgow Science Centre Senior Community Learning Coordinator) pictured in the Bothy, the Glasgow Science Centre community hub

Gillian was a physics research scientist working in Ireland when she heard of a “new science centre concept” happening in Glasgow.

“That was 1999, and I thought – that sounds interesting,” she smiles. “I started with a little programme called Be an Inventor, with a handful of primary schools. I have been here ever since, working on the exhibition floors, in the education team and, for the last 12 years, on the exhibition side.

“It’s great to see the impact the centre has on young people – we have many examples of children who came here on school trips who have been inspired to go into science as a career.

“Importantly, our community work is always needs-led – we’re not saying, here’s a programme, do you want to be part of it. Instead, we spend a lot of time working with each group and listening to their needs, before we create the pathway for them.”

She adds: “We want to make science as inclusive and as accessible for everyone.” ■

Science Centre is The Bothy, a dedicated space for community groups right in the heart of the building.

“Coming to the centre can be daunting, especially when it is very busy, or for groups with particular challenges, so this space provides a safe place for groups to take part in workshops, watch films, have discussions – it is really lovely, and part of our commitment to making our community feel part of the centre.”

It is unique in the UK, explains Gillian. “We’re not aware of any other science centre which has this facility,” she adds.



We want to get people into STEM subjects, but research has shown science literacy is very important no matter what industry you go in to

PICTURE: MARK MAINZ/HERALD & TIMES



■ All eyes on Glasgow – singer Paolo Nutini was one of many celebrities attending the Scottish Fashion Awards, at Glasgow Science Centre in June 2010. Paolo won Fashion Icon of the Year

PICTURE: ANDY BUCHANAN



■ Professor Brian Cox was the inaugural guest speaker for Glasgow Science Centre's A Question of Science event in October 2011

■ The RAF100 Aircraft Tour at Glasgow Science Centre in August 2018, featuring the Sopwith Snipe, Spitfire, Harrier, Typhoon, and the new state-of-the-art Lightning stealth combat jet



PICTURE: JAMIE SIMPSON/HERALD & TIMES

■ Prince William, The Duke of Cambridge, spoke at a meeting of The Earthshot Prize winners and finalists and several members of the Earthshot Global Alliance at The Science Centre during the COP26 summit in Glasgow in November 2021



PICTURE: PA

PICTURE: ANDY BUCHANAN



■ Visitors exploring a giant inflatable heart at Glasgow Science Centre's tent in Glasgow Green during the European Championships in 2018

A journey of understanding

One of eight mums-to-be followed by the Glasgow Science Centre's ground-breaking Bodyworks project, Deborah Bryson helped highlight issues above and beyond those normally associated with pregnancy

WHEN she was expecting her daughter, Deborah Bryson noticed an advert calling for mums-to-be to sign for a Glasgow Science Centre project.

"It was in 2012, and I was about six months pregnant," she explains. "The centre wanted women who were expecting to share their experiences for a forthcoming exhibition called Bodyworks.

"They wanted to hear about how their bodies were changing, the physical things that affect you as you go through pregnancy. And I thought – I wonder if they have considered how mental health might be affected too?"

It was a subject close to Deborah's heart. She had suffered from serious pre-natal depression since discovering she was pregnant.

"It was mostly caused by work-related stress – my employers at the time were deeply unsympathetic and unhelpful, and that lack of support affected me extremely badly," she says. "I was also an older mum, at 40, so there was a lot of worry about how that might affect me, and I had my own health to consider, having been through heart operations some years before."

Deborah, who is now a post-diagnostic dementia link worker, adds: "Everything was stacked against me, and it was a lot of pressure, at a time when you're supposed to be full of joy. When you are not, you feel guilty."

Glasgow Science Centre brought Deborah on board for the Bodyworks project, which looks at how a baby develops during its nine-month incubation period, and follows eight mums-to-be on their pregnancy journey.

"I had to speak to the team about how I felt, how things were affecting me, and the end result was a video journal which followed my experiences," says Deborah.



■ Heather, now 10, with mum Deborah and dad Gary



It's a fantastic place, and Bodyworks is groundbreaking. We're really proud to be part of it



■ Heather as a baby with mum Deborah

"I was always hoping that if at least one woman coming in to the centre could see that, and it could help her, then I'd be over the moon.

"There is a lot spoken about post-natal depression but very little is said about pre-natal depression – and not much has changed in the last 10 years."

Heather, who is now 10, was the first Bodyworks baby born, arriving to a delighted Deborah and her husband Gary in May 2012. "I remember going to the Bodyworks launch party with her and she was teeny," smiles Deborah.

"And of course, we have been back many times over the years since. When she was old enough to understand she featured in the exhibition, she just took it all in her stride.

"It's a fantastic place, and Bodyworks is groundbreaking. We're really proud to be part of it." ■

The Science Centre takes a peculiarly Glaswegian approach to encouraging new ideas and invention

GLASGOW Science Centre is passionate about inspiring the next generation of innovators.

The charity will use anything at its disposal to do that – from unique digital resources, stunning science exhibits and, occasionally, a Tunnock’s teacake.

Digital content co-ordinator Derek Shirlaw explains, with a laugh: “In 2017, we launched a teacake into space, as part of a project aiming to understand what Glasgow Science Centre meant to the people of the city.

“We focussed on particularly Scottish, or Glaswegian, things such as launching

Teacakes in Space!

an Irn-Bru bottle off the science centre tower, covered in a special kind of gel, to see if it would survive the fall (It did not), and cooking a tattie scone using scientific methods, such as a bunsen burner – and obviously not eating it afterwards,” he says, smiling.

“By far the most successful part of that project was the teacake, which we put through astronaut-style training to see if it could cope with the low pressure of space, the heat of re-entry and so on. Then, we launched it 37,000m above the Earth on a weather balloon.”

The project received international attention, with Professor Brian Cox retweeting the pictures of the teacake against the curvature of the earth to debunk myths perpetuated by flat-earthers.

“It was an amazing project, lots of fun, and it brought the elements of science to a wider audience,” says Derek. “The aim was to reconnect with the people of Glasgow and to make it clear science is for them – science is for everyone. It was a forerunner to our GSCAtHome digital learning programme – it showed us we could have an impact outside the centre.”



■ Derek Shirlaw with one of his spectaculars



■ Recent innovations such as this robotic arm is celebrated at the Idea No.59 exhibition

Glasgow Science Centre’s most recent permanent exhibition, Idea No.59, builds on the idea of engaging the wider community about how technologies are shaping the future of society.



Scotland is rightly proud of its heritage of invention – look at John Logie Baird and television or James Watt

“Scotland is rightly proud of its heritage of invention – look at John Logie Baird and the television, for example, or James Watt and the steam engine,” says Derek, who joined Glasgow Science Centre as a science communicator 16 years ago.

“Idea No.59 pays tribute to the past but also celebrates the recent advances which have put Scotland back on the map as a place where innovation happens.

“It aims to allow people to explore for themselves the skills required to become innovators, to encourage young people into STEM careers and to show them the opportunities are there to pursue and try and dream big.”

Science is not easy, points out Derek, which is summed up in the Idea No 59 logo.

“It’s a squiggly line which loops back on itself and twists and turns, but eventually ends up straight,” he says.

“You might fail 100 times but with every try you learn, and with perseverance, you get there in the end. Glasgow Science Centre is a safe place, with a warm and welcoming team who are there to help you on that journey, whatever level or age you are.” ■

Glasgow Science Centre has been a focus for communities and young people to experience and explore all aspects of science and technology during its 21 years

a world of wonder

■ Scientists of the future, Liam Reid, 10, and Rebecca Murphy, 11, from Condorrat Primary in Cumbernauld, had the chance to experiment with food dyes at Glasgow Science Centre in 2008.



PICTURE: MARTIN SHELDSHERNAID & TIMES

■ Famous animated characters Wallace and Gromit presented A World of Cracking Ideas at Glasgow Science Centre in February 2010. Alison Cassels, 11, of Lorne St Primary in Kinning Park was delighted to meet Wallace at the event



■ Taylor McSkimming and Ryan Docherty, both 11, get a glimpse into bone structure at Bodyworks in 2013, as it was announced Glasgow's primary schoolchildren would receive another year of free access to Glasgow Science Centre's education programme



PICTURE: ANDY BUCHANAN

■ A youngster enjoying Little Explorer Day at Glasgow Science Centre in 2018, which is specially tailored for under 7s to explore science



■ Visitors test their grip strength at the hugely popular Bodyworks in 2013. The exhibition explores the science that underpins human health and wellbeing

PICTURE: GSC



■ In an out-of-this-world first, the Science Centre launched Terry the Teacake 37,000m into space on a weather balloon in 2017



PICTURE: MARTIN SHELDON/HERALD & TIMES

■ More than 400 school children watched the solar eclipse at Glasgow Science Centre in March 2015



PICTURE: SANDY YOUNG

■ Climate Sisters Heather Dundas and Menesia Keister pose with their recycled garden at the official launch of Glasgow Science Centre's Community Learning Hub, The Bothy in April 2022

■ British astronaut Tim Peake, right, visited the centre in 2016, to talk about his mission aboard the International Space Station. How he coped with drinking recycled urine was a highlight



PICTURE: PA



PICTURE: GORDON TERRIS/HERALD & TIMES

■ Glasgow Science Centre Climate Change coordinators Caitlin McInnes and Jess Sterck, and programme manager Emma Woodham, plant heathers and trees in Govan as part of the Science Centre's COP26 legacy projects

AS a young physicist and meteorologist, keen to spread the word about the benefits of STEM and engage more young people in science, Heather Reid recalls the arrival of Glasgow Science Centre in 2001 as a “dream come true”.

She explains: “Engaging people in science has been at the core of everything I’ve done since I was a student at university, getting involved in outreach work – it’s been my passion from the word go.

“So when I heard this amazing centre was opening in my home town, just down the road, in fact, in this beautiful iconic building on the Clyde, I was absolutely delighted – it brought all my passions and interests together in one place.”

Heather, who was already well-known as the presenter of BBC Scotland’s weather bulletins, was taken on as a part-time Staff Scientist when the centre opened in 2001, juggling her TV role with a demanding job running science demonstrations and shows in the newly-opened riverside buildings.

In 2006, she joined the charity’s board of trustees and remained in position for 10 years.

“At the time, I was the only woman, but over time we were successful in making the board more inclusive, bringing on several more female board members from industry and the creative sector, which of course has a huge overlap with science,” she says.

“I gained so much knowledge and experience from having a role on both sides of the organisation, operational and strategic. It was incredibly valuable.”

Glasgow Science Centre has always been aware of its reach, not just geographically, says Heather, but into communities which may not otherwise have access to science opportunities.

“The Bodyworks exhibition, for example, really started to involve everyone, from visitors and the community to citizen scientists and academics, on health and wellbeing, a topic which is particularly important not just in Glasgow but across Scotland,” she adds.

“It was groundbreaking. It led to an extensive outreach programme, and to be part of the planning for that was really exciting. It’s a model I know has inspired

Spark of inspiration



The former face of BBC’s Scotland’s weather bulletins, Heather Reid, has enjoyed a long relationship with the Glasgow Science Centre. She believes it is a vital asset in promoting the STEM agenda among the wider community

others around the world.”

Heather studied physics and meteorology at the University of Edinburgh before working at the UK Met Office and BBC Scotland. She now works in science education, delivering CPD for primary school teachers, and sits on the boards of Scotland’s natural heritage body NatureScot and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

Heather stepped down from Glasgow Science Centre board in 2016, although she continues to be an advocate for the charity and the importance of STEM education. She is still involved with Glasgow Science Centre having recently

given a talk on the climate emergency at the charity’s digital science festival, Curious About Our Planet.

“STEM underpins everything about our future,” she says. “Glasgow Science Centre has provided a focus and a platform for scientists and science communicators to reach a whole range of people, including in particular those in deprived communities, where, actually, you can change people’s lives by introducing them to the STEM agenda.

“Seeing that spark in young people, watching them get excited about the opportunities that exist, is what makes it all worthwhile.” ■



Glasgow Science Centre has provided a platform and focus for science communicators to reach a whole range of people

A childhood visit to Glasgow Science Centre opened up a whole new world of opportunity for a young Emma Woodham

EMMA Woodham still has the entry ticket from her very first visit to Glasgow Science Centre.

“It was just after it opened, I must have been 11 years old,” she says, smiling. “I grew up in Muir of Ord, a really small place near Inverness. It’s fair to say STEM lessons and opportunities to get involved in science were few and far between up there at that time.

“During the October school holidays, my parents brought me down to Glasgow, and we visited the science centre. It was incredibly exciting and just a lot of fun.”

The ticket has pride of place in a scrapbook of memories and mementoes, she laughs. “I have written beside it that the centre got a 10 out of 10 and was absolutely fantastic,” she adds. “I can remember being fascinated



passion and love for public engagement, and I’d actually worked at Aberdeen Science Centre for a while,” she explains.

“I did the public engagement training

■ Emma, above, and her prized ticket, right

programme responding to the climate emergency.

“We worked closely with the Scottish and UK Governments to ensure COP26 was for everyone, fundraising for half a million pounds to develop a far-reaching programme for schools,” she says.

“It included climate cafes, digital resources and campaigns, and has reached 1.2m people since launching in September 2020 – I’m really proud of that.”

Emma is also working on the main 21st anniversary celebration at Glasgow Science Centre – a family party on July 22. “Our family parties are legendary – people love the Halloween events, in particular, and we held a brilliant moon landing anniversary party in 2019,” she smiles. “This will be our first one since the centre had to close because of Covid.”

She adds: “We are asking people to reflect on the role Glasgow Science Centre has played in their lives, to send us photos and memories from over the years, and to celebrate the incredible research and innovation going on in Glasgow and around Scotland.

“We are on an endless quest, really, to understand what people want from Glasgow Science Centre, and to match that as closely as we can in what we deliver.” ■

Just the ticket

by the optical illusions, and the ‘smoker’s lungs’ – feeling how hard it was to pump air through them.”

The visit meant more to Emma than a happy family day out, however, as it inspired her to study science – she has a First in biochemistry from Aberdeen University – and she now works at the centre, as Science Experience Manager.

“My team’s remit is to create events and projects that engage with all kinds of audiences, from family parties to marginalised communities,” she explains.

“Glasgow Science Centre understands it has to serve the people of the city, and I love its passion for wanting to bring everyone in, including those who might not usually have access.”

After completing her studies in Aberdeen, Emma came to Glasgow to do a PhD at the Cancer Research UK Institute at the Beatson in Bearsden.

“During my studies, I’d developed a

at Glasgow Science Centre, around 2013, because I wanted to develop my skills in that area.” She laughs: “I felt that a career in academia wasn’t for me, because I always enjoyed talking to people about my research, rather than actually doing it. At Glasgow Science Centre science is for everyone, not just researchers – that really resonated with me.”

For the last two years, in the run up to the arrival in Glasgow of COP26, the UN’s Climate Change Conference, Emma has been working on the centre’s



At Glasgow Science Centre science is for everyone, not just researchers ... that really resonated with me

6.5 Million VISITORS



Since opening in 2001



1.3 Million



pupils from nursery to secondary visited since 2001.

8K+

Experts have demonstrated science engagement sessions in our science mall.



1.5 Million people have engaged with our On Tour exhibitions across the UK from Shetland to London.

We've worked with over **700** community groups, enabling

49,000 members to discover science since 2012.



315,000 visitors to our digital Planetarium since 2015.

30,000 pupils and **1,000** teachers



have taken part in Learning Lab, our remote STEM learning programme since September 2020.

1M+

No. of times people have viewed **GSCAtHome** videos during the COVID 19 lockdown in 2020,

4K

visitors to our Autism Friendly sessions since 2018.



people have visited our website since launch.

95%

visitors agree they learn something new when they visit us.

54,000  people have attended our Curious About digital science festivals since 2021.

30

No. of exhibits we've developed and made for organisations like **Glasgow Children's Hospital** and **Scottish Seabird Centre**.



Thank you for 21 years of inspiring science with us

Thank you for your support

Glasgow Science Centre is extremely grateful to our funders, key partners and stakeholders in helping us continue to inspire everyone to discover and enjoy science.



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EIT Food • Emerson • Endrick Trust • Glasgow Children's Hospital • Glasgow City of Science & Innovation
Glasgow Life • Glasgow's Leading Attractions • Greenpower Education Trust • Highland and Islands Enterprise
IBM • iCAIRD • Imperial College London • James Weir Foundation • James Wood Bequest Fund
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RS Components • Schlumberger • Science Skills Academy • ScotPen • Scottish Renewables • Scottish Seabird Centre
Skills Development Scotland • Skyrora • Skyscanner • Sonnedix • SSERC • STUC • Thales • The Physiological Society
UK Energy Research Centre • Vattenfall • W M Mann Foundation • World Energy Council • East Dunbartonshire Council
East Renfrewshire Council • Education Scotland • First Scandinavia • Morrison Construction • NHS Golden Jubilee
North Lanarkshire Council • Primary Engineer • Renfrewshire Council • South Lanarkshire Council
Sustainable Glasgow • Techniquet • West Dunbartonshire Council • Cambridge University
Glasgow Caledonian University • Glasgow School of Art • Heriot-Watt University • Living Laboratory
Medical Research Council • Scottish Association of Marine Science • University of Edinburgh
University of Glasgow • University of Strathclyde • University of the West of Scotland • Afro Celtic Sport Journo
BBC • Bumblebee Conservation Trust • Energy Skills Partnership • Epilepsy Connections • Fidra
ICE • Friends of Queen Mary • GeoBus • Glasgow Disability Alliance • Learning Link
Marine Conservation Society Maths Week Scotland • Orbital Marine Power • RAISE • Renewable UK • Rolls Royce
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow • Royal Zoological Society of Scotland • Shell UK
SP Automation & Robotics • STV • Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum • The Conservation Volunteers • The Lost Woods
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