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# OXFORD TODAY



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OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/GREG SMOLONSKI

Summer by the River Cherwell, Christ Church Meadow

*Trinity Term 2014*

# Welcome

## Technology and rewilding at Oxford

This issue's cover story (p28) explains how one college turned over a tract of land to a rewilding initiative. The resulting eco-park today resounds to the rustle of tree leaves, the tinkle of a wind turbine and the clinking of coffee cups in a café founded by award-winning social entrepreneur and Magdalen undergraduate Madeleine Ellis-Petersen. Unless perhaps you were at Pembroke or Corpus and played rugby or cricket, the site of Hogacre Common Eco-Park is likely to be unfamiliar, yet it is barely a ten-minute walk from Folly Bridge and well worth a visit if you are coming to Oxford.

Moving in a very different direction, we decided in this issue to try to summarise how technology has (and has not) changed the experience of studying and teaching at Oxford (p24). 'Change' is a loaded word here, with technology often bringing efficiency to the process of thinking and learning rather than changing it as such. In some instances technology gives the appearance of creating and then solving problems that were formerly less often encountered but not unknown, such as plagiarism. There's no going back and the scope and content of actual knowledge has ballooned as the result of technology, and will continue to do so.

Elsewhere in this issue English fellow Dr Julie Maxwell contemplates science in literature, while Chris Danziger narrates in gloriously anecdotal and humorous detail the almost totally forgotten episode in which European sovereigns came to Oxford in 1814 to celebrate the initial fall of Napoleon, a year before Waterloo. Finally, a former Director of the American Stock Exchange, Dr Michael Black, now the librarian at Blackfriars, seeks to explain why late twentieth-century capitalism was so scandal-ridden.

EDITOR: Richard Lofthouse

**Front cover:** A picnic at Hogacre Common Eco-Park
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# Oxford Today

*Trinity Term 2014*

## In this issue…

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Ruby Wax on how studying at Oxford as a mature student has changed her life

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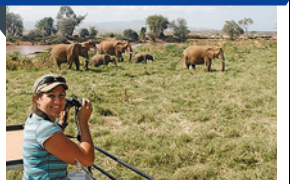
TRINITY HIGHLIGHTS



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Tracking the varied careers of alumni, including elephant expert Lucy King

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### Finance
A former Director of the American Stock Exchange on the recent scandals of capitalism

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### Napoleon
A look back to the extraordinary party thrown at Oxford after Napoleon's first downfall

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# OXFORD TODAY DIGITAL


**Oxford Today** *will soon be available for Android devices. For now, it is on Apple iPad. Visit Apple Newsstand to download: http://bit.ly/otapple*

## The Top Five

Most popular web features

**1. Letters**
Consistently a winner on our website – evidently you like to read what others wrote!
**bit.ly/otletters**

**2. *Architecture That Shook Oxford* (film series)**
The series is now complete with seven episodes ready to be watched. Highly recommended by you.
**bit.ly/otarchitecture**

**3. If My College Were a Wine...**
See below for one of the entries in this challenge. We had some fun and so did you.
**bit.ly/otwinecollege**

*If my college – Univ – were a wine.*
*It would have to be both rare and fine;*
*Choice of many ministers of state –*
*It would have to be uniquely great,*
*High on intellectual appeal,*
*Capable of ageing a great deal;*
*Favourite of peerless Harry Waugh –*
*It must be the '45 Latour.*
**Colin Akers (University College, 1952)**

**4. The Lure of the Water**
An alumna celebrates the revival of "sensual and immersive" wild swimming.
**bit.ly/otswimming**

**5. Will a Master's in Creative Writing Get You a Book Deal?**
An entertaining and informative look at the state of writing and publishing.
**bit.ly/otpublishing**

# How I discovered a priceless set of William Blake engavings

Jonathan Downing, a theology DPhil student at Trinity, agreed to feature in our latest video feature to share his big discovery

During an afternoon last year in the Danson Library at Trinity, I stumbled across a complete copy of William Blake's *Illustrations for the Book of Job*. Through consultation with experts at the Bodleian Library, librarian Sharon Cure and I were able to identify that the plates were part of a first edition of 100 which Blake had printed in 1826, the year before his death. In the film clip on *Oxford Today*, I show where the discovery was made, and explain how the engravings were donated to Trinity in 1899 by Alfred Vaughan Payton, a scholar in Greats.

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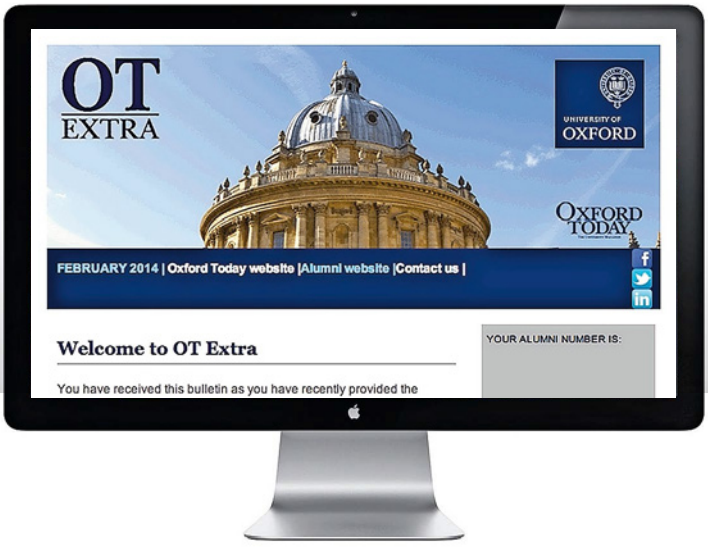


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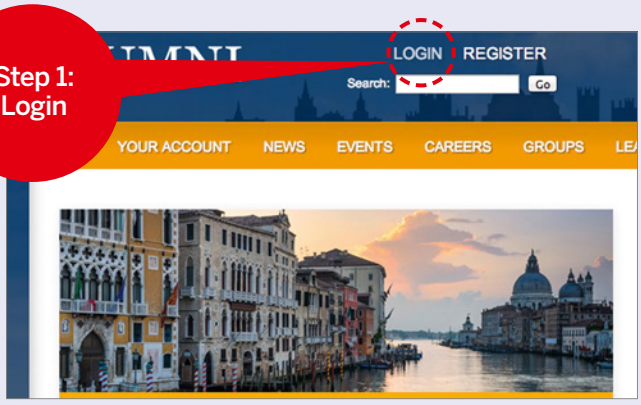


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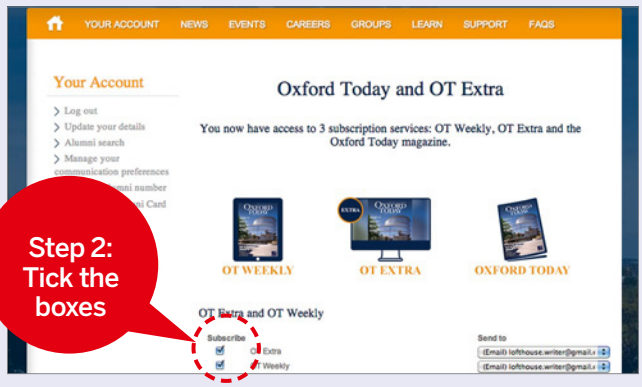


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We've tried to make it as simple as possible. As long as you have registered with us and logged in, you'll go straight to this page. Simply tick the relevant boxes, check the email address, and look forward to automatically receiving the news letters.

# Letters

## Your correspondence

We welcome letters for publication, but may edit them to fit. Unless you request otherwise, letters may also appear on our website. Write to us at: Oxford Today, University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JD

# In response to…

## *OT* 26.1: Margaret Thatcher

### Oxonians remember our former Prime Minister in different ways

Your articles on Margaret Thatcher and the importance of science in politics did not mention the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, a treaty that she was able to push for in a knowledgeable way. It was successful in its immediate aim; unfortunately, the HFCs that replaced the CFCs and HCFCs are super-greenhouse gases. Hands up all the MPs capable of making evidence-based policy on that one.
JONATHAN A COLES
*Worcester, 1961*

In her book *Statecraft* Thatcher recanted her subscription to the hypothesis of human-induced climate change. Absent explanation for the Roman and medieval warm periods, she may have been right to change her mind.
COLIN ALEXANDER
*Magdalen, 1959*

None of your contributors mentioned that the reason for Oxford withholding the customary DCL was the damage which Mrs Thatcher had done to education. The only abstention was that of the then Principal of Somerville, who allegedly said that she knew what would happen to her college if she voted with the rest. Indeed, the Prime Minister was held to have responded swiftly with £10m cut to Oxford research funding.

I read PPP at Jesus in 1954-56 on a mature student's state scholarship, moving on to teaching, then to being an educational psychologist for state schools and finally a lectureship at Nottingham University. Had present circumstances prevailed in 1954, I would probably have remained a navvy ganger, arguably less socially useful but rather better paid.
PETER COX
*Jesus, 1954*

DAVID MONTGOMERY/GETTY IMAGES

**A portrait of Baroness Thatcher: a divisive figure both at Oxford and beyond**

The trouble with Margaret Thatcher was she was taken far too seriously for far too long by far too many people, Jill Rutter and Charles Moore evidently being no exception. She was allowed to destroy much of the public and social realms of Britain, and her Oxford-educated successors Blair and Cameron have seemed only too ready to complete the task. Certainly the University was right to refuse her an honorary degree.
ROBIN WENDT
*Wadham, 1959*

As a supporter of the Saïd Business School I applaud the decision that the new building for Executive Education should be named after Margaret Thatcher. I believe that this opinion will be shared by business leaders the world over and by those who will be attending the business school from many countries.

Like others, including those with different political persuasions, I thought it extraordinarily small-minded of Oxford not to give an honorary degree to Margaret Thatcher, a national leader and our first woman Prime Minister, even though as a political leader many opposed her policies. This makes the decision for the building to be named after her all the more welcome.

Wafic Saïd has been incredibly generous to the University and his wishes therefore most certainly deserve to be respected. Perhaps the authors of the letter in your Michaelmas Edition do not wish Oxford to have a business school? Certainly their attitude to the wishes of a major benefactor of the University suggests they wish to discourage private donors.
LORD SAINSBURY OF PRESTON CANDOVER, KG
*Hon Fellow, Worcester College*

## Oxford architecture

Why does David Favager wish to consign the buildings he doesn't like to Liverpool JMU's Birkenhead Docks Campus? Birkenhead is just as deserving of quality modern architecture as Oxford.

Isn't this just another example of Oxford elitism?
JULIAN TREUHERZ
*Christ Church, 1965*

Thanks for the article on Oxford's controversial architecture. I never knew Hertford's Bridge of Sighs had ever been called "an aesthetic crime", even if only by a librarian.

But why did it become known as the Bridge of Sighs? It is obviously much more like the Rialto.
DAVID BROOK
*Oriel, 1957*

Was it editorial discretion or some other motive that allotted the Castle Mill development of graduate accommodation just 33 words in a corner of the university news pages (*OT* 26:1, p11)? And that gave the impression the controversy involved was about 'landscaping'? I think a more balanced piece of reporting might have made clear that these monstrous new buildings overlooking Port Meadow have been the cause of much vociferous protest, both locally and nationally, over the perceived deficiencies in the planning process that approved them, over their inherent ugliness, and over the way they have ruined views of the Oxford spires and of St Barnabas church from the meadow. Heritage organisations have expressed dismay, petitions

have been got up, *Private Eye* has lambasted them, they were nominated for the 2013 Carbuncle Cup, and a damning review was held into how this development got through. A slight problem with 'landscaping' is one way of describing it. *Building Design* (June 2013) called Castle Mill "a deeply unimaginative and impoverished design which would lower the spirits whatever its setting, but on the edge of one of central England's most important and ancient landscapes, it is an outrage."
GRAHAM CHAINEY
*Exeter, 1965*

## Peddling words

While reading of the developments at Harris Manchester I was saddened by the implication of falling moral standards among the College's employees – a problem apparently so prevalent that it has been deemed appropriate for the new weather vane to depict a beneficiary of the College's generosity 'peddling a bicycle' which he or she should, presumably, have been 'pedalling' through the city's streets.
MARTIN LECKEBUSCH
*Oriel, 1980*

I may be a stickler, but it does annoy me when our language is misused, as it so often is these days. I fear I occasionally despair when reading *Oxford Today*. Our hallowed institution should be able to do better. The latest example is at the bottom right of *OT* 26:1, p29. Do you know what the word 'anticipated' means?
PS: a (rather old-fashioned) clue – Jack and Jill were expecting to get married. Had they anticipated it, only Jill might find herself expectant.
TIMOTHY KNIGHT
*Worcester, 1966*
*ED NOTE: The OED allows for both usages.*

## Class of 2012

I don't usually read whole pieces in *Oxford Today* but was fascinated by "The Class of 2012". Mr Eliot Ball in particular describes lectures as "almost universally very poor". This was also my experience (1971-74, modern languages).
TOM DOAK
*Jesus, 1971*

## Collaborative study

Advocacy of cross-boundary collaboration at Oxford (*OT* 26.1, p8) is nothing new. In one of his undergraduate theology lectures in the late 1950s, the Chaplain of Jesus College, the Rev DEH Whiteley, suggested that people reading theology and people reading English should "get together and cross-fertilise one another".
MJ LEPPARD
*University College, 1956*

## Speed recording

I was most interested to read of the electric car speed record (*OT* 26:1, p18), but is 204mph correct? This Lola car looks very light and aerodynamic; in short, a racing car. With 805bhp in that vehicle I would have expected more like 304mph.

After all, a 'normal' supercar can do about 200. For instance, the Bentley Continental GTS does 205 and that is a big, heavy four-seater with 'only' 625bhp. So is p18 simply a typo, or is there something that I am missing?

If YASA could be persuaded to write an article for this magazine it could be of general interest. It sounds a very worthwhile outfit. Failing that, perhaps a general article on the spin-out companies.
MSR NAPIER
*Balliol, 1952*

## John F Kennedy

I very much enjoyed John Garth's article "Rendezvous with Death" in the last edition of *Oxford Today*.

In November 1963, my father, Monty Woodhouse (New College, 1935) was MP for Oxford, and he and my mother had been invited by Tom Boase, President of Magdalen, to stay for the weekend. For some reason, I, aged 9, was included in the treat. I vividly remember being put to bed in the President's lodgings in a dark room at the end of a dark corridor and feeling just like Mary Lennox in *The Secret Garden*. As my mother told the story, a dinner party was well underway downstairs when the butler whispered into Tom's ear that there was alarming news from the US. A great deal of fluster ensued because the President's lodgings had neither radio nor a television. College servants were dispatched in all directions to see if an undergraduate might have such a thing as a wireless. In due course one was found and the terrible news was then confirmed.

At that point, my father came upstairs and woke me up. "I think you should know," he said, "That President Kennedy has been shot." In retrospect, perhaps this seems an odd thing to have done to a child – disturbing in every sense of the word. However, I have always felt immensely pleased and proud that he wanted to share this moment with me. Had I known, however, that the author of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* was also dead, I might not have gone back to sleep quite so quickly.
EMMA WOODHOUSE
*Lady Margaret Hall, 1973*

I have a particularly clear memory of the evening of 22 November 1963, when the news of the assassination of President Kennedy reached Oxford. We were about to attend a club dinner (Keble's now sadly defunct Mitre Club). We did not allow the news to dissuade us from holding the dinner, but towards its end the President of the JCR came into the room and whispered a message to the Warden, the saintly Austen Farrer, who then told us that, sadly, he would have to leave, having received the news of the death of a very dear friend. I found myself wondering how he might have been a friend of JFK and why the news had reached him much later than the rest of us. It was not until the next day that we learned that his very dear friend was CS Lewis.
ANDREW BUNBURY
*Keble, 1962*

New letters are regularly uploaded to the 'opinion' section of the *OT* website
www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

Oxonian News
University news

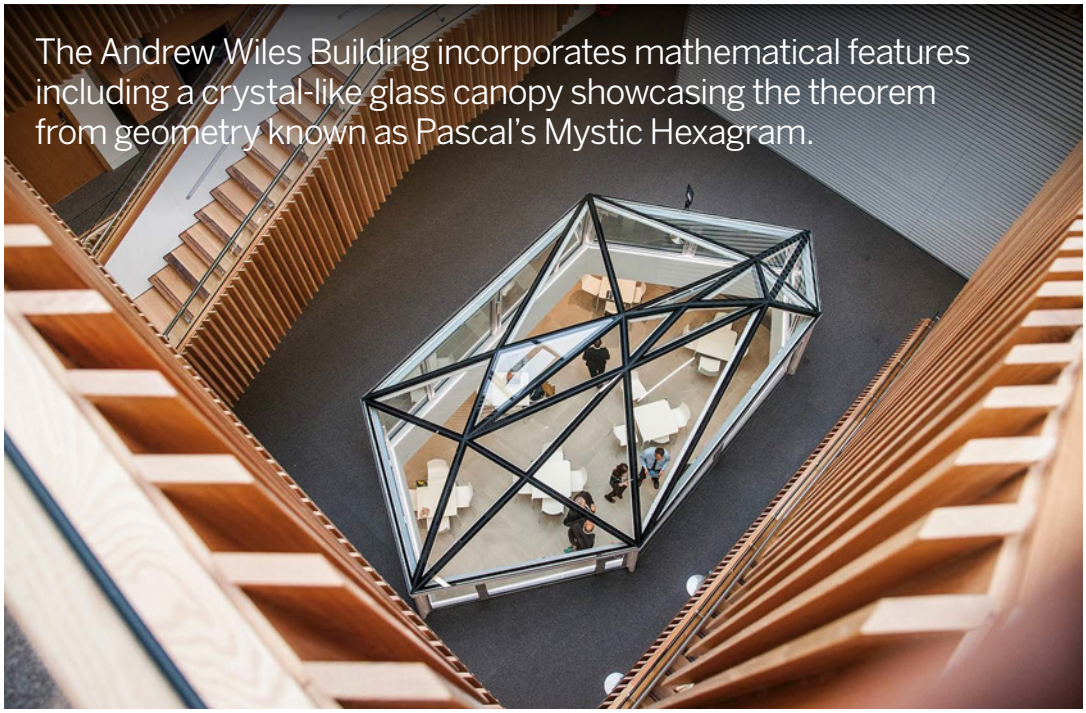
# Mathematical building opened

## Department's new home is named after Wiles

Oxford University's new Mathematical Institute building was officially opened on 3 October 2013, beginning a new chapter in the history of mathematics at Oxford.

The building brings together a department previously distributed across three locations, providing workspace for a diverse community of more than 500 researchers and 900 undergraduates. It also incorporates ground source heat pumps that will supply warmth in winter and cooling in the summer. The new building has been named after Professor Sir Andrew Wiles, one of Oxford's most distinguished mathematicians and famous for his proof of Fermat's Last Theorem. Designed by Rafael Viñoly Architects and constructed by Laing O'Rourke, the Institute will on April 22 celebrate the 85th birthday of Sir Michael Atiyah with a meeting. Speakers include Robbert Dijkgraaf, Sergei Gukov, Nigel Hitchin and Graeme Segal. See time-lapse footage at **bit.ly/otmaths**.

**(Left) Andrew Wiles (Below) The front view of the Andrew Wiles Building, with the Radcliffe Observatory, Green Templeton College, in the background**



The Andrew Wiles Building incorporates mathematical features including a crystal-like glass canopy showcasing the theorem from geometry known as Pascal's Mystic Hexagram.

JOHN CAIRNS

## Latin dictionary completed

Led by its editor Dr Richard Ashdowne, a monumental dictionary of Latin has been completed after 100 years of research. Ashdowne, also a linguistics Senior Research Fellow at Somerville, said, "This is the first ever comprehensive description of the vocabulary of the Latin language used in Britain and by Britons between AD 540 and 1600."

BRITISH ACADEMY

**From left: Dr Giuseppe Pezzini, Dr Carolinne White and Dr Richard Ashdowne**

## Sappho poems discovered

Two poems by sixth-century Greek poet Sappho were brought to light recently when a private collector showed a piece of papyrus to Oxford papyrologist Dr Dirk Obbink.

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/PRIORYMAN

**Marble bust of the ancient Greek poet Sappho**


**It's become normal to produce large format hardback books to celebrate significant college anniversaries**

# Time to celebrate

## This is a big year for Merton, Exeter and Worcester

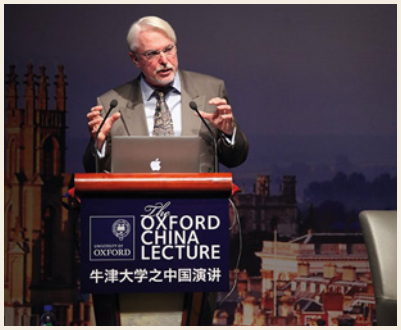
Three of Oxford's colleges will be celebrating important anniversaries in 2014. Merton commemorates 750 years since its foundation, Exeter 700 years and Worcester 300 years.

Alongside campaigns for funding, their diverse celebrations will look back over lengthy histories and forward to successful futures. Worcester's Tercentenary Campaign to re-endow the college launches at an event at The National Gallery in February, while Exeter Excelling is underway to raise £45 million. Sustaining Excellence, Merton's campaign, is aiming for £30 million.

Anniversary events for alumni and friends of the colleges – not just in Oxford but in London, Hong Kong and North America – commenced in 2013 and continue throughout 2014. All are hosting academic lectures and symposia, peer group meetings (Exeter schedules different Decade Days, while many of Worcester's gatherings are by subject) and numerous cultural, social and sporting opportunities. Exeter's Founder's Day weekend, in April, and Merton's Birthday Weekend, in September, are highlights. At both, newly commissioned choral works will be premièred. Souvenirs range from Merton's mugs to Exeter's English wine. Each college has already produced a commemorative book (pictured above).

Worcester's white-tie Tercentenary Ball on 27 June, for which all 1750 tickets sold within 40 minutes, precedes Anniversary Balls at both Exeter and Merton the next night. With rare permission for festivities to spill over into Brasenose Lane and Radcliffe Square, Exeter promises 2,500 tickets.

St Cross turns 50 in 2015, Wolfson 50 in 2016 and Corpus Christi 500 in 2017. Their anniversary plans, similar yet individual, are already underway to fulfil, or even exceed, expectations raised by this year's extensive celebrations.




## Inaugural Oxford-China lecture takes place

The Vice-Chancellor paid a visit to Shanghai in early December for the inaugural Oxford-China lecture. Professor Steve Rayner (pictured) spoke about 'The Future City'. Rayner is James Martin Professor of Science and Civilisation, and Director of the Institute for Science, Innovation and Society. The Oxford China Centre is also scheduled to open later this year in Oxford, and will become Europe's largest concentration of China specialists.

OUIMAGES/GREG SMOLONSKI

## Boost for Oxfordshire

Recognised as a hub of economic growth in which the University is a central element, Oxfordshire was the beneficiary of an investment deal struck in January between central and local government, the University and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The City Deal is a national scheme creating four business incubators around the county, to help small science companies take their products to market. It may generate as many as 50,000 new jobs.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/ROB JUDGES

# 40 years of co-ed

## The University is marking a great moment

The year 1974 saw five all-male Oxford colleges welcome women for the first time: Brasenose, Hertford, Jesus, St Catherine's and Wadham. Four decades later, the University is celebrating this landmark shift towards gender equality in higher education with a year-long series of events organised under the banner "Into the Mix: Celebrating 40 Years of Co-Education at Oxford". March saw the inaugural event, held in London, where six alumnae spoke to the brief 'Lessons in Life and Work: What I Wish I'd Known at 18'. Other sessions are planned that will focus on women excelling in science, the arts, media and law, plus a Brasenose-led seminar entitled 'Women Succeeding: Do We Still Need Woman's Hour?' The full schedule can be found at the alumni relations website **www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/coeducation2014**

# New diversity fund

## The University tackles under-representation

The Vice-Chancellor has announced a new £1 million fund for the advancement of diversity among academic and research staff at the University. One of the fund's main purposes is to address the under-representation of women in senior reseach and academic posts. The University also has a recently appointed Race, Religion and Belief advisor, Shakina Chinedu (race.equality@admin.ox.ac.uk), who is facilitating the creation of a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) support network. The University celebrated Black History in October,

BLACK HISTORY

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

and will do so again later this year with lectures and seminars. **(See also the review of the book *Black Oxford* on page 49.)**

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60 seconds with...

# Dr Tom Moorhouse

Wildlife conservation researcher in the Zoology Department

**How did you first become interested in water voles?**
I worked on water voles for eight years, starting in 1999, initially as a PhD research project where I was looking at their populations and trying to understand how the social structure of the water vole population works.

**You were also involved in a successful reintroduction programme, weren't you?**
We reintroduced 12 new populations to the Thames in Oxfordshire, of which seven are still alive and well. For a reintroduction programme this is phenomenally successful, as these projects often fail miserably because it's hard to understand fully the incredibly complicated ecology of a species.

**What is the biggest threat to water voles?**
We lost about 80 per cent of them in the 1990s, and this is continuing because of the spread of an invasive animal, the American mink. It was brought over from America in the 1920s for the fur farming industry, but it escaped.

**Is it possible to save them?**
At some point we have to make the hard decision that if we want to go back to the situation we had 50 years ago, when you could go to any river in the country and see water voles, then we have to get rid of American mink nationally.

**What is it about these creatures that inspires such affection?**
The water vole has arguably had as much research as any other species ever, so we know how to conserve them, and this vast amount of money has been spent because people care about water voles – partly because of their nostalgia for Ratty in *The Wind in the Willows*, and partly because they are seen as such a wonderful and important feature of the English countryside.

**How have voles inspired your own literary efforts?**
When I set out to write my first children's book, *The River Singers*, I wanted nothing to happen to my characters that wouldn't normally happen to real water voles. The book has been received extremely well. It's an adventure book about water voles trying to find a new home. The sequel, *The Rising*, comes out in October.

**What are you researching at the moment?**
I'm now researching the global exotic pet trade. It's worth anything up to $6bn a year, so that tells you just how many animals are being taken and shipped halfway across the world in terrible conditions to be sold to people who have no idea of the costs, both in terms of animal welfare, and the danger of potentially fatal infection from dangerous zoonotic diseases. We are conducting a desk study into people's motivations for buying these animals. If we can identify the reasons they do it, and find out what might make them stop, we can provide information to organisations to use for lobbying or education programmes.

To read more interviews like this (and web exclusives) visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk


750 YEARS
SUSTAINING EXCELLENCE

MERTON COLLEGE OXFORD

# MERTON CONVERSATIONS
LONDON 2014

## THE TWO CULTURES OF CP SNOW
### WITH STEPHEN FRY & PROFESSOR BRIAN COX



The Royal Society, Carlton House Terrace, London
Thursday 15th May, 6 – 9.30pm | Tickets from £65

Two of Britain's best-loved television personalities and Merton's Emeritus Fellow, Lord May of Oxford, join to discuss the chemist CP Snow's most famous book, *The Two Cultures* – a lament on the gulf between scientific and literary circles. A reception with canapés will follow the event.

## LIBERTY
### WITH THE RT HON SIR BRIAN LEVESON & SHAMI CHAKRABARTI



BAFTA, Piccadilly, London
Tuesday 7th October, 6 - 9.30pm | Tickets £65

At BAFTA headquarters, two of Britain's top legal minds, the Rt Hon Sir Brian Leveson and Shami Chakrabarti (Director of Liberty) will come together for an evening of scintillating debate moderated by Philippa Whipple QC. A reception with canapés will follow the event.

## THE REAL SCIENCE BEHIND CSI
### WITH PROFESSOR SIR ALEC JEFFREYS & SIR BERNARD HOGAN-HOWE


The Royal Institution of Great Britain, Albemarle Street, London
Tuesday 11th November, 6 - 9.30pm | Tickets £65

In our final Merton Conversation of 2014, science and its real-life applications and implications for crime-fighting will be discussed by the scientist who developed DNA fingerprinting and the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. A reception with canapés will follow the event.

**BOOK ONLINE: WWW.MERTON.OX.AC.UK/CONVERSATIONS**

# Honours & appointments

Honours, awards and appointments from across the collegiate University

## Honours

### New Year Honours

The following members of the University were recognised:

**MARTIN WEST, FBA,** Emeritus Fellow of All Souls College, was appointed to the Order of Merit. Regarded as one of the world's leading classical philologists, Professor West was Senior Research Fellow at All Souls from 1991 to 2004.

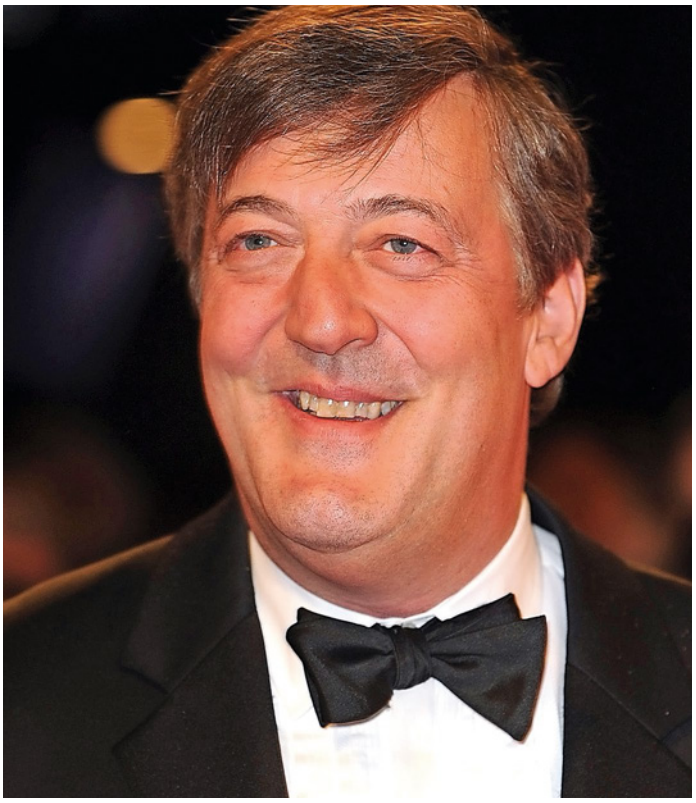
**FRANCES KIRWAN, FRS,** Professor of Mathematics and Fellow of Balliol College, was appointed DBE for services to mathematics.

**PAUL COLLIER, CBE,** Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government, Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of African Economies and Fellow of St Antony's College, was knighted for services to promoting research and policy change in Africa.

**DR NOEL MALCOLM, FBA,** Senior Research Fellow at All Souls College, was knighted for services to scholarship, journalism and European history.

**PETER RATCLIFFE, FRS,** Nuffield Professor of Clinical Medicine, Head of the Nuffield Department of Clinical Medicine and Fellow of Magdalen College, was knighted for services to clinical medicine.

**MARIAN DAWKINS,** Emeritus Professor of Animal Behaviour and Emeritus Fellow of Somerville College, was appointed CBE for services to animal welfare.



ZAK HUSSEIN/PA WIRE

Stephen Fry was appointed Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre at St Catherine's College, 2013/14

**JOHN KAY, FBA, FRSE,** Supernumerary Fellow and Investment Officer of St John's College, was appointed CBE for services to economics.

**CERIDWEN ROBERTS,** Senior Research Fellow at the Department of Social Policy and Intervention and member of Oxford Centre for Family Law and Policy, was appointed OBE for services to social science.

**KAREN HEWITT,** Tutor in the Department for Continuing Education, was appointed MBE for services to building academic and cultural understanding between the UK and Russia.

BRENDON FRASER

Marios Papadopoulos, founder and director of Oxford Philomusica, was made MBE

Also honoured was **DR MARIOS PAPADOPOULOS,** founder and music director of Oxford Philomusica, who was made an MBE for services to music in Oxford. In 2002 Oxford Philomusica was appointed the University's first Orchestra in Residence.

## Awards

### Chancellor's Court of Benefactors

In Michaelmas Term, the following new members were admitted to the Court in recognition of their generosity to the collegiate University and Americans for Oxford, Inc:

**DR EBADOLLAH BAHARI,** Former Senior Consultant to the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation; **ALEX BEARD,** Director, GlencoreXstrata plc; **DR HON DAK CHUNG,** Chairman of the Maxdo Group and Chung Hon Dak Foundation; **PROF JEREMY FARRAR,** OBE, Director, Wellcome Trust, as the Trust's representative; **CHRIS HALE,** partner, Travers Smith LLP, as the firm's representative; **MAEVADI NAVAPAN,** Chairman of Panasonic Thailand; **ROBERT RANKIN,** Co-Head of Corporate Banking & Securities and Head of Corporate Finance, Deutsche Bank, as the Bank's representative; **DR LISBET RAUSING,** co-founder of the grant-making Trust Arcadia; **JULIAN ROBERTSON,** KNZM, investor and philanthropist; **TIMOTHY SANDERSON,** founder and CIO of Sanderson Asset Management; **LORD SASSOON,** Jardine Matheson Director and former Treasury Minister, as the Jardine Foundation's representative; **HRH RAJA DR NAZRIN SHAH,** Crown

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/JOHN CAIRNS

Left: Nemir Kirdar, CEO of Investcorp, shaking hands with the Chancellor of the University

Prince of the State of Perak in Malaysia; **SIR HOWARD STRINGER**, former Chairman of the Board of Sony; **JOAN WINANT**, President of the Eppley Foundation for Research, Inc.

In addition, **NEMIR KIRDAR**, founder, Executive Chairman and CEO of Investcorp, was recognised as a new Fellow of the Court as Investcorp's representative.

Membership of the Chancellor's Court of Benefactors stands at more than 200 and the impact of the Court's generosity is felt both in Oxford and around the world.

# Appointments

## Professorships And Senior Administrative Posts

### History of science

**SILKE ACKERMANN,** FSA, Professor of Cultural Studies and President, Baltic College, University of Applied Sciences, Schwerin, Germany, was appointed Director of the Museum of the History of Science and became a fellow of Linacre College.

### Materials

**PETER BRUCE,** Wardlaw Professor of Chemistry at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, was appointed Wolfson Professor of Materials and became a fellow of St Edmund Hall.

### Economics

**BEATA JAVORCIK,** Professor of International Economics at Oxford, has been appointed Professor of Economics and a Fellow of All Souls College with effect from 1 September.

### Microbiology

**SUSAN LEA,** Professor of Chemical Pathology and Co-Director, James Martin Vaccine Design Institute, Oxford, was appointed Professor of Microbiology and became a Fellow of Wadham College.

### Science and religion

**ALISTER MCGRATH,** Professor of Theology, Ministry and Education and Head of the Centre for Theology, Religion and Culture, King's College London, and Senior Research Fellow, Harris Manchester College, Oxford, was appointed Andreas Idreos Professor of Science And Religion and became a fellow of Harris Manchester College.

### Sociology

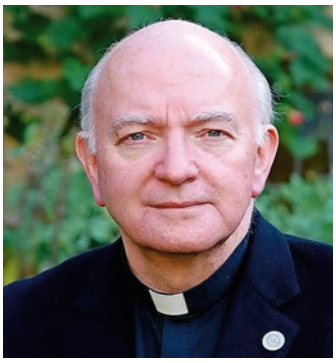
**MELINDA MILLS,** Full Professor and Rosalind Franklin Research Fellow at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands was appointed Nuffield Professorship of Sociology and a fellow of Nuffield College with effect from 1 June.

### Respiratory medicine

**IAN PAVORD,** Consultant Physician, Glenfield Hospital, Leicester, Honorary Professor of Medicine, University Of Leicester, and NIHR Senior Investigator, was appointed Professor of Respiratory Medicine and became a fellow of St Edmund Hall.

### Bodleian Library

**RICHARD OVENDEN,** Interim Bodley's Librarian, was appointed Bodley's Librarian and became a fellow of Balliol College.



KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

Clockwise from top left: Silke Ackerman, Alister McGrath, Rick Trainor, Susan Lea and James Hanvey

### Ashmolean Museum

**ALEXANDER STURGIS,** Director of the Holburne Museum of Art, Bath has been appointed Director-elect of the Ashmolean. Mr Sturgis will be a fellow of Worcester College.

## Visiting Professorships

### Contemporary theatre

**STEPHEN FRY,** actor, writer and television presenter was appointed Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre 2013-14. The post is based at St Catherine's College.

## Heads of House

### Campion Hall

**THE REVD DR JAMES HANVEY,** SJ, Head of the Theology Department, Heythrop College, University of London, and Founding Director of the Heythrop Institute for Religion, Ethics and Public Life, was appointed Master with effect from 1 December.

### Exeter College

**PROFESSOR SIR RICHARD ('RICK') TRAINOR**, Principal of King's College London, has been elected Rector with effect from 1 October.

# Discovery

Research breakthroughs across the University

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/ROB JUDGES

## Your friendships are numbered

### Different layers of friendship charted by research team using student phone data

Our friendships sit in a complex hierarchy of ever-decreasing familiarity, according to Dr Felix Reed-Tsochas, James Martin Lecturer in Complex Systems. Felix and his team tracked the mobile phone data of students over an 18-month period as they made the transition from school to university or from university to work; periods chosen to see what happened when people were given the opportunity to meet new people. Analysing their communications and cross-checking these with survey responses allowed the team to gauge the quality of each relationship.

The findings reveal that most of us have between five and eight intimate friendships: a number which stays relatively constant. "We found that even though this was a time when social relationships were in flux, for any given individual there was a particular social signature which remained constant over time," he says. So, if one becomes less friendly with a close ally, another, more distant, acquaintance is ushered into the inner circle; by contrast, if a good new friend is made, one is pushed out.

"We all have a fixed time constraint on close friends, and our mental and emotional capacity to deal with them is limited," posits Reed-Tsochas. "We don't have an infinite ability to invest in social relationships."

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

## Finding paradise

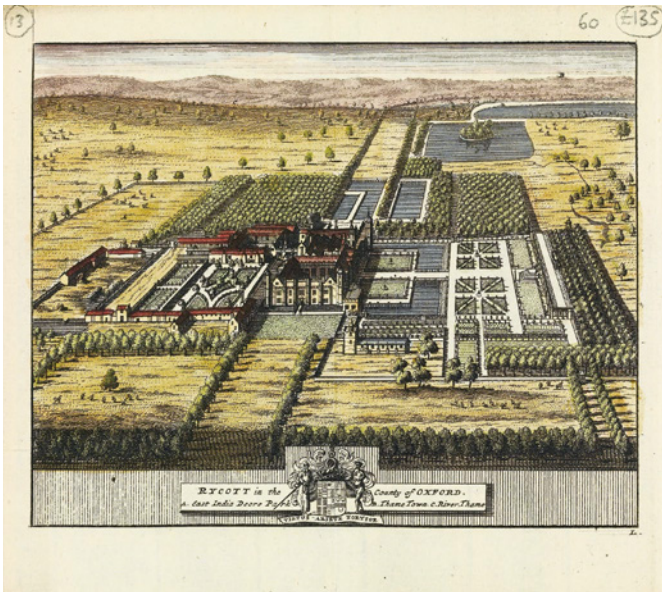
The location of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon has puzzled scholars for centuries, but now Dr Stephanie Dalley of the Oriental Institute has identified it. By piecing together information from ancient texts and sculptures, Stephanie has placed the garden 200 miles north of of the ancient city of Babylon, in Iraq on the citadel of Nineveh.

Currently the site is too dangerous for westerners to visit, but "it's the most convincing place for it to be," she explains. "More research is required at the site, but sadly I don't think that will be possible in my lifetime."


FAZONI/ISTOCK

## Political house pricing

London house prices don't just rise and fall with the national economy: they follow turmoil in other parts of the world, according to research by Professor Tarun Ramadorai and Dr Cristian Badarinza from the Saïd Business School. They've analysed the correlation between unrest in other countries and London's housing market. "The results provide firm evidence which supports the anecdotal belief that investors view London properties as a safe haven for their cash," says Tarun.




BODLEIAN LIBRARIES

# Rediscovering Rycote

## Mansion's secret history finally revealed by findings in Bodleian Libraries

Rycote was one of England's most important Tudor mansions but was demolished in 1807, leaving just its south-west tower standing. Now researchers have discovered the secret history of the building hidden among the Bodleian Library's archives.

The mansion, situated in Rycote Park, near Thame in Oxfordshire, was built for one of Sir Richard Fowler, Giles Heron or John, Baron Williams of Thame – though it remains unclear which, to this day. What is known is that, in the early 19th century, a cash-strapped owner was forced to sell off the building, bricks and all. Rycote's archive, deemed to be worthless at the time, was tossed on to a bonfire.

The Bodleian Library, along with the current owners of the remaining property, decided to solve finally the riddle of Rycote. Together, they drew on 50 different antiquaries, families and historical figures, poring over manuscripts, letters, accounts, maps and drawings to piece together the history of the house. To their surprise, they found that many important items had lain undiscovered in the Bodleian's archives all along; in truth, the house played a key role in local and national history. It was host to six English kings and queens at different points, including Henry VIII, who visited in August 1540 with his new bride Catherine Howard, and Elizabeth I, who was a close friend of the then-owner Henry, 1st Baron Norris of Rycote. In 1625, Charles I's court was even relocated to Rycote following an outbreak of the plague in London.

More detail than ever before has surfaced about the house: of its unique art collections, nationally important chapel, and a fire that threatened to destroy the building long before it was finally demolished. All these artefacts have been turned into a web-based resource, which features maps, an interactive timeline and even mini documentaries which you can explore at **bit.ly/otrycote.**

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/ROB JUDGES

60 seconds with...

# Dr Alexandra Buckle

Alexandra is lecturer in music at St Hilda's and St Anne's

**What's your field of research?**
I specialise in 'early music' from the late medieval and renaissance period in England, in particular music used by English institutions and royal and noble households. My doctorate focused on Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. He was Henry V's closest friend, and then became guardian of Henry VI, so I was looking at the music he used within his household and in the church he was a patron of in Warwick.

**How much time do you spend poring over historic musical scores?**
Surprisingly little. For my Masters I spent a lot of time in the history faculty learning Latin and deciphering household accounts from that period, as it's these that will often take me to the music. Very few of the actual scores have survived from that time.

**How did you discover the details of the reburial ceremony for Richard III?**
I first came across a reference to it in the Bodleian in a dusty 17th century volume, then I found the original document in the British Library. It was a general rite that was used for medieval reburials and we know this ritual was intended for use at a reburial because it refers to bones and not a body. It also calls for a bishop, so that's how we know it was a ceremony for an important man.

**How did it feel when you discovered that your medieval research had such a timely relevance?**
As Richard III hadn't been found at that time, I had no idea it would eventually be used again as part of a national service. It took over a year between finding the ritual and then going to meet the team that discovered the burial site in Leicester. But I've always been passionate about bringing my research into the public domain. I was the first music consultant ever employed by English Heritage and I worked with them on the music as part of a reinterpretation project for Henry II's Tower at Dover Castle. Finding this reburial music was a dream come true.

**What are the plans for Richard III's reburial?**
Nothing is confirmed yet as there will be a judicial review in March into where the reburial will take place, to make a decision on whether it will be in York or Leicester. I've got the framework for how a reburial would have looked about ten years before Richard III died and that involves all the music, prayers, rubrics about how the bones were to be treated and where the bishop should stand.

**When was the music last performed?**
Certainly before the Reformation as it's closely linked with Catholic doctrine. The last case I have found was the early 1500s. It was breathtaking to hear New College choir recording the music for the BBC.

To hear the reburial music for Richard III for yourself, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk/RichardIII

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES

# Restoring sight

## A genetic condition affecting the eye could be cured by new gene therapy

A team of surgeons from the Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology have used a pioneering new form of gene therapy to help restore sight in six patients with genetic vision defects – and they believe it could be used to treat blindness more widely, too.

Professor Robert MacLaren has developed a treatment for choroideremia, a genetic condition which affects the eyesight of 1 in 50,000 people. Usually diagnosed in late childhood, patients initially struggle to see in low-light conditions, but their sight declines until most sufferers lose their eyesight completely by the time they reach middle age. The condition is caused by an inherited faulty gene, known as CHM, which causes the light-detecting cells on the retina to die slowly .

MacLaren's proposed solution was simple: to stop the cells from dying, he planned to inject working copies of the gene into them. That may sound simple, but such a technique had never been attempted before. A small-scale trial, carried out at the John Radcliffe Hospital and now completed, shows that the treatment is very effective. Indeed, all six patients saw their eyesight stabilise, and two even reported improvements in their ability to read several extra lines down an optician's sight chart. Just as importantly, there were no adverse side effects, either.

In the future, the technique could be used to treat blindness more generally. "The mechanisms of choroideremia and what we are trying to do with the treatment would broadly be applicable to more common causes of blindness," explains MacLaren. By identifying the right genetic targets, then, other conditions could soon be treated in the same way.

**(Above) Robert MacLaren and his team performing eye surgery**

To read more discoveries and web exclusives visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

© PHILIPP HENSCHEL/PANTHERA

## Endangered lions

New research reveals that lions are critically endangered in West Africa. A six-year survey, which covered 11 countries, shows that there are now an estimated 250 adult lions in West Africa, roaming an area one per cent of the size of their original historic range: about the size of New York State. "Many of the West African protected areas still supporting lion populations are chronically underfunded," explains Dr Lauren Coad from the Environmental Change Institute. "Lions are threatened by poachers who target both lions and their prey, but many protected areas do not have the capacity to undertake anti-poaching patrols."

OU IMAGES/JOBY SESSIONS

## Serendipitous library visit

When Jonathan Downing attended a Trinity College library open day in 2012 he found more than the contents of his reading list: he stumbled across a full set of the 21 *Illustrations for the Book of Job*, produced by William Blake. "I found them by complete chance," he says. "That section of the library isn't usually open to students." Fortuitously, Downing's DPhil research is on Blake, and since finding the illustrations he's been researching their provenance. New analysis of their watermarks confirms they are in fact one of the 100 original sets from 1826. Downing notes that that discovery has "kickstarted a drive to catalogue the rest of the material in the same section". **See page 6**.

# START THE ADVENTURE TODAY

## Stonehenge, Avebury and Ancient Wessex

DATE: 14 – 19 September 2014
PRICE: £1,600

Discover the mysteries and marvels of some of Britain's best known prehistoric monuments, introduced by Oxford Professor of Archaeology, Gary Lock and guest lecturers from Oxford's Department for Continuing Education. Based in the charming Cathedral city of Winchester, highlights include the Roman mosaics at Fishbourne Palace, - introduced by Dr Alison MacDonald (Merton, 1990); Iron Age hillforts; Norman cathedrals; and private access inside Stonehenge at sunrise.

*Price is per person based on sharing a room. Single supplement: £150*

## Ice Age Art in the Dordogne

DATE: 23 – 30 June 2014
PRICE: £2,200

Journey through the lush landscapes and limestone plateaux of the Dordogne Valley with world-renowned Rock Art expert, Dr Paul Bahn, who has secured unrivalled access to the paintings of the Dordogne Caves. This early art represents the first sustained outpouring of artistic expression in the western world – a profound and fascinating stage of human development. Vivid, beautiful and ancient – this is a privileged glimpse into life as it was lived more than 20,000 years ago.

*Price is per person based on sharing a room, inc trains from London. Single supplement: £290.*

For more information on these trips please contact Andante Travels on +44(0)1722 713800 / tours@andantetravels.co.uk

OXFORD ALUMNI
TRAVELLERS

The University's official range of educational small group tours for alumni.
Visit **www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/traveladt** to find out more.

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

# *Meeting Minds*
# *Oxford Alumni Weekends*

Reconnect with Oxford at one of our Meeting Minds events and you'll benefit from:

- carefully selected academic session topics, helping you to engage with the collegiate University, as it is today
- plenty of opportunities to discover new interests and explore parts of Oxford not usually open to the public
- time to debate what you've learned with your peers and enjoy social activities

**(right)**
Attendees discuss DNA profiles
*Image: Rob Judges*

**(left):**
A curator from the Museum of the History of Science showcases one of the University's astrolabes
*Image: Dick Makin*

**Download talks from previous Meeting Minds events to enjoy at your leisure, via the Alumni Weekend library at podcasts.ox.ac.uk**

You can now find Meeting Minds events in Oxford (annually) and in Asia, Europe and North America (biennually), to help you reconnect with the institution, wherever you are in the world.

Come back to Oxford from 19 – 21 September and enjoy being part of our seventh annual Alumni Weekend in the city. Whether you can join us for three days, or can only drop in for a couple of hours, we hope that you'll find something in our programme to tempt and inspire you.

## www.alumniweekend.ox.ac.uk

*Meeting Minds*
Alumni Weekend in ASIA

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Alumni Weekend in OXFORD

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# Alumni notices

## Why you should attend an event – and resources for alumni

Terry Slesinski-Wykowski (Pembroke, 1985) has travelled to almost every alumni reunion

# Keeping up with Oxford

## Alumni events are an important part of post-University life

Flights totalling 150,000 miles, a 4000-mile road trip to New York, plus a 2000-mile international train journey spanning three countries. This is the globetrotting tally that Oxford graduate Terry Slesinski-Wykowski has notched up over the years, travelling from her home in Houston, Texas, to the University's alumni weekends.

But it doesn't stop there. Terry always makes the trip a family affair – bringing along her husband Jim Wykowski and also – since 2000 – her business partner Neil Douglas (neither of whom ever studied at Oxford).

"We all look forward to these events and wouldn't miss them for anything", says Terry, "We meet old friends and we make new friendships."

Terry's three years at Oxford had a huge impact on her. "For me, it was absolutely life-changing; I learned to learn – not to be taught," she says.

"I loved the diversity that I found in Oxford. And I loved the fact that I was taught to question everything and seek the truth. My experience since, as an Oxonian, has been pretty contagious, too – I have managed to pass it on to others close to me."

While Terry is one of the more faithful attendees, she's far from alone in enjoying the unique blend of intellectual stimulation and social networking that the Alumni Weekends offer. On its own, the annual Oxford Alumni Weekend draws over 1000 alumni and guests annually. Returning either to Oxford or to one of the international events carries intrinsic value.

"The Weekends give former students the opportunity to connect with the institution as it is today", says Alison Edwards, head of communications for Oxford University's alumni office. Terry adds, "We love the lectures – we all split up and go to listen to different speakers, then compare notes."

Meanwhile, back home in Texas, Oxford still dominates a significant part of Terry's life. Chair of the Houston Oxford Society, one of more than 200 volunteer-run alumni groups internationally, she dedicates many hours a month to helping former Oxford students connect with each other. "I want to help grow the Oxford family," she says.

## Alumni resources

**Academic content**
Alumni benefit from continued access to books, journals and current research via JSTOR, the Bodleian and the University's open access database.
**www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/learn**

**Networking**
The University's new LinkedIn page enables you to search alumni by work sector and employer. Don't forget to connect with alumni by joining the Oxford Alumni group on LinkedIn.
**www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/linkedin**

**Mailing lists**
Don't miss out! Sign up for our mailing lists to receive regular updates and information of interest to you. You can get weekly or monthly news bulletins, or join specific lists for books and learning, careers, events, sport and travel.
**www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/subscribe**

**Alumni groups**
Engage with Oxonians wherever you are, and whatever your interests, by joining one of the regional, subject or interest-based alumni networks.
**www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/networks**

**Alumni Number**
Found on your Alumni Card, you need this number to register for events, the email service and an alumni account. With the Alumni Card you can access colleges and a range of discounts.
**www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/card**

**Graduation and MAs**
A list of forthcoming degree days can be found on the University website, but whether you still need to graduate for your first degree or want to get your MA, booking is via your college.
**www.ox.ac.uk/students/graduation/ceremonies/dates**

# Oxonians at large

Words by **Lindsey Harrad**

ELEPHANTS AND BEES

## Elephant-persuading

Scheme uses bees to keep wildlife away from farms

**Lucy King**
Balliol, 2005

Lucy King became fascinated by elephants at an early age. In her teenage years she discovered Dr Iain Douglas-Hamilton's work on the ivory trade, a subject that eventually led to a degree in zoology and an interest in the conflict between animals and humans.

Following her DPhil research in Kenya, King established the award-winning Elephants and Bees Project. Using an in-depth understanding of elephants' instinctive avoidance of African honey bees, King's innovative project studies the effect of using these bees to protect crops.

King used this information to develop beehive fences, a simple, low-tech and inexpensive solution for Kenyan farmers which also has an additional benefit of providing an extra income from 'Elephant-Friendly honey'. "Beehives are strung between posts connected by a single line of wire," explains King. "If the elephants try to push past the wire to get to the crops, the knocking of the hives disturbs the honey bees. It's not only the angry buzzing noise, but also the stinging of the bees around the trunk, eyes and ears that scares the elephants away from the farm."

The initiative has started spreading to other countries in Africa and has also attracted a series of accolades, including the Future for Nature Award and the St Andrew's Prize for the Environment in 2013. "It has been incredible to get some recognition after seven very hot, dusty and hardworking years," King observes.

**www.elephantsandbees.com**

PETER SANDERS

## Helping hand

**Imam Monawar Hussain**
Westminster, 1998

Imam Monawar Hussain's latest venture is the Diamond Jubilee Legacy Fund for East Oxford to "support groups such as the homeless, the elderly, people with mental illness, young people and ex-offenders".

He's also developed an education programme to tackle the influence of religious extremism, the Oxford Muslim Pupils' Empowerment Programme. "Young people can be easily manipulated, so we try to expose them to these ideas in a safe environment in order to provide a balanced view and offer counter-arguments," he says.

**www.facebook.com/HMDiamondJubileeLegacyFund**

## Heritage worker

**Oliver Cox**
University College, 2006

As a Knowledge Exchange Fellow of The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH), Oliver Cox describes himself as a 'pilot project' for a different type of academic role. "My remit is to find ways for Oxford researchers to engage with partner organisations in the heritage sector," says Cox of his Thames Valley Country House Partnership Project (TVCHP). "Collaborative projects offer the academic or student a fantastic opportunity to do archival research with a built-in public engagement aspect, while the heritage venue benefits from a more nuanced and interesting story to tell about its history."

**www.tvchp.org**

We welcome suggestions from alumni for these pages. Please send details to the Editor at oxford.today@admin.ox.ac.uk

QUINLAN O'REAR

# Forwarding film

## Writer/director/producer forging a way into the film industry

**Toby Fell-Holden**
Harris Manchester, 2005

After reading PPE as a mature student at Harris Manchester, where he set up a college film society and took courses with Oxford Film and Video Makers, Toby Fell-Holden's filmmaking lightbulb was switched on and he spent five years taking Columbia University's Film MFA course.

"The most recent career highlights have been with my thesis film, *Little Shadow*, which was nominated by the Casting Society of America for an award, and was long-listed by BAFTA for their short film category," he says. His next project is a script that focuses on an arranged marriage between British-born Indians. As a London-born Anglo-Indian writer, he says that "race and cultural tensions frequently find a way into the stories I write. It seems to be a given aspect of the creative process."

**www.littleshadowmovie.com**

# Nose for success

## The chemistry behind a beautiful fragrance

**Ruth Mastenbroek**
Lady Margaret Hall, 1970

For a chemistry graduate with a creative streak, Ruth Mastenbroek says a career in perfumery proved to be the perfect meeting point of art and science. "An understanding of chemical groupings did give me certain insights, especially for challenging tasks such as creating fragrances for household products such as bleach and detergent, but artistic flair can't be taught so easily."

Mastenbroek says her 'nose' has developed over 30 years of experimentation in the labs of international and British perfume manufacturers, and for the last 10 years at her own company. A few years ago she launched Ruth Mastenbroek Eau de Parfum under her own brand, and in 2012 her second fragrance, Amorosa.

Even for a chemist, there's still an element of alchemy in perfumery: there's always an indefinable element that makes a fragrance a classic. "An accord, or mixture, of perfumery ingredients can create an impression that is quite different from that of the single components," she says. "But even if the perfumer creates a formula that smells wonderful, it still has to captivate a woman (or man) so she can't live without it!"

**www.ruthmastenbroek.com**


OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/JOBY SESSIONS

# TUTES & TECH

**Kate Lindsay** brings us up to date on how technology has evolved at Oxford, and how some things have changed a lot and others – like tutorials – are recognisably the same

English literature undergrad Rebecca sits in Queen's Lane Coffee House, pleased that she found a copy of that out-of-print book. As a result her essay certainly benefited; her assignment was returned with one of her highest marks yet.

Finding out how to get the book was not difficult. Rather than scouring the card catalogues at the Bodleian, she simply entered the book details into the Mobile Oxford app (**m.ox.ac.uk**) on her phone, which then supplied her with a map showing the way to the nearest library with an available copy. She downloaded many of the books and papers referenced in the book to her ebook reader, to which she added her own electronic annotations, all held within a device no bigger than her hand. She had also shared quite a few with her course-mates on the Facebook revision group set up by her tutor.

She had just picked up her assignment from her virtual pigeonhole, and reading the feedback she was pleased to see that the automatic plagiarism report gave her full marks for her use of source citation. Checking her Twitter stream, she sees that

Adam Leonard in an English tutorial with Dr Abigail Williams at St Peter's College

## My Tech Diary

*By Adam Leonard*

**8am** Wake up, shower, breakfast.
**9am** Check emails; scroll through *The Guardian* iPhone app; listen to 6 Music on iPlayer.
**9:30am** Start my essay online in Google Drive.
**12:30pm** Lunch in hall.
**1:15pm** Check where the secondary reading texts are by using our English Student Facebook group. Search for the remaining books using SOLO. Order closed stack books to be delivered to the Radcliffe Camera online.
**2:00pm** Continue writing my essay.
**4:00pm** Old English grammar exercises using Old English Aerobics website.
**5:30pm** Dinner in hall.
**6:30pm** The King's Arms with friends. Continue arranging accommodation for next year using our Housing Facebook group on my phone.
**7:45pm** Return to college and relax in the JCR; YouTube party!
**9:15pm** Read in my room and listen to a couple of new albums on Spotify
**10:30pm** Check my emails and Twitter quickly on my phone and then go to bed.

*Adam Leonard (St Peter's, 2013) is a first-year undergraduate reading English*

@OxfordExams has tweeted that her exam results are now ready to collect. She logs into the Student Self-Service System and, pleased with her marks, accepts a Facebook invitation for post-examination celebratory drinks. Again using the Mobile Oxford app on her phone, she finds out when the next bus is due and, while she waits, plugs in her headphones to catch the public lecture she had missed the evening before, available to the world on Oxford on iTunesU.

Rebecca's experience may not be representative of how every student blends technology into their university life, but it is certainly an experience that has been made possible for all at Oxford. Last academic year, 92 per cent of incoming students surveyed brought with them a laptop and 82 per cent a smartphone. With more than 90 per cent of new students expecting online access anytime, anywhere, the University is committed to providing the infrastructure that enables them to have an optimum digital experience as part of their time at Oxford. In higher education, as with life more generally, it is practically impossible to get by without technology in the twenty-first century. Whether it is accessing your reading lists online, video conferencing with peers, downloading online journals or just viewing a PowerPoint presentation, they are a staple part of student academic life.

Technology affects different subjects in different ways, and where the laboratory is concerned, it breaks down into myriad applications spanning hardware and software, quite apart from the more generic examples already given here. But for the purposes of this article, we wanted to put a spotlight on the humanities – where traditionally technology has been assumed, rightly or wrongly, to have had less relevance.

While the digital experience is increasingly part of the fabric of student life, the University is rightly cautious in assuming that technology can always improve the quality of the teaching and learning experience, especially if it implies a replacement for face-to face-contact. For the humanities in particular, the tutorial is still one of the cornerstones of the 'Oxford experience'. In an environment where both staff and students are increasingly busy, and strain on resources could threaten this beacon of Oxford life, technology is now working with tradition to preserve the tutorial system. The University's Virtual Learning Environment (WebLearn) provides support to ensure that the humanities student still goes face-to-face with their tutor in the traditional manner, while reducing unnecessary administration. Students can now book and change their tutorial slots online and submit their assignments to their tutor's virtual pigeonhole, which can then be marked and returned to them virtually. Tutors can put student ↪

assignments through the embedded plagiarism detection tool, running checks against the world's largest comparison database containing 40 billion-plus web pages, 300 million-plus student papers and 130 million-plus academic books and publications. The tool doesn't exist just to catch students out; it is also a means of improving the quality of original writing and source citation. In an age of increasing demands on academic staff, it releases time for tutors to give better feedback on articulating arguments or knowledge, rather than the technicalities of writing and reference.

Face-to-face contact no longer has to be confined to a particular college or departmental office. Technology offers an opportunity to work far more flexibly, around hours – or, even better, minutes. Students can discuss their work through video conferencing technologies such as Skype, Google hangouts and FaceTime. Departments too are able to start linking up UK students with their counterparts from the four corners of the globe.

Text analysis, archival methods and critical reading are activities that remain at the heart of the study of the vast majority of humanities subjects. However, the days of rifling through physical library catalogues are dying out in an environment where books can be ordered for collection in advance via the University's online library system and searched on the move via mobile technology. And while the reading rooms of the Bodleian are still a pleasure in which to study, a vast corpus of literature can now be read online or downloaded to a device such as a tablet or Kindle. In 2004, Oxford University entered into partnership with Google to scan the Bodleian Libraries' out-of-copyright holdings, in particular those from the nineteenth century. To date, 335,000 books covering a wide range of languages, disciplines and genres are available to download for free. The activity of text annotation is also available in digital format. Such annotations have generally remained private, but web annotation tools and ebook readings now enable students to share their notes with friends.

Digital access has also enabled students to view rare and dispersed materials that before would have been off limits. Through the power of digitisation, collections can now be reassembled in virtual archives and made available for use in teaching, learning and research. Among these collections are the Bodleian's digital facsimile of the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays (bit.ly/otfirstfolio), a collection of poetry manuscripts and supporting source material from the British First World War poets (bit.ly/otwarlit), and the recently launched landmark digitisation initiative with the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (Vatican Library) to open up repositories of 1.5 million pages of ancient texts (**bit.ly/otvatican**). No longer are manuscripts the hallmark of PhD studies or require grant-funded travel to obscure archives; they can be accessed from a college room.

## 'The world of technology for learning, teaching and research is changing rapidly'

Along with the numerous digital corpora being produced at Oxford and elsewhere have come new digital tools and methods to analyse them. Their aim is to both uncover new knowledge and to visualise data in new and revealing ways. Such methods include the use of computational text-analytic techniques; geographic information systems; interactive games and multimedia. Today the humanities represent a collective discipline increasingly interwoven with the methodologies of the social sciences and computing. Unlike some other universities, at Oxford this field of 'digital humanities' is not a discipline in itself, but embedded within the schools and faculties of the division, and represented through the Digital.Humanities@Oxford initiative (**digital.humanities.ox.ac.uk**) and The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (**torch.ox.ac.uk/dighum**). The University's Digital Humanities Summer School provides training in the creation, analysis, modelling,

## My Tech Diary

*By Abigail Williams*

**7.15am** Get up. Fight off children's pleas to play *Minecraft* before breakfast.
**9.00am** Check email, make 'To Do' list for my day. Email programmer in Canada about modifications to Digital Miscellanies database. Discover a new update to Windows has made a part of the site unusable.
**9am-12pm** Work on my upcoming conference paper on the history of modesty. Use ESTC (English Short Title Catalogue) to find out how many 18th-century book titles have the word 'modest' in them. Turns out to be more than 650!
**12pm** Remember I haven't confirmed the time of my second-year class, and email them all. Wonder about asking one of them to put it on Facebook to make sure they all got the message, but decide against it on grounds of too much spoon-feeding...
**2pm-4pm** Carry on working on modesty piece, using online French medieval dictionaries. Realise my Middle French isn't up to reading them out and decide to paste them all into my PowerPoint slides.
**4.30pm** Revised vacation reading lists for next term; recommend some iTunesU podcasts and iPlayer episodes of *In Our Time* as useful context.
**6pm** Leave College for home but check on Marston Psychopath (flooding tracking site covering the cycle path I use) to see if I will need wellies.
**6.20pm** Get home to more talk of *Minecraft* and fierce debate over Creative vs Survival (whatever that means).
**8pm** Put children to bed, re-check email.
**9pm** Watch *Borgen* on iPlayer.

*Dr Abigail Williams is Lord White Fellow and Tutor in English, St Peter's College, Oxford, and Director, Digital Miscellanies Index: digitalmiscellaniesindex.org*

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/JOBY SESSIONS

(Above) Dr Mark Wormald works in his laboratory at the Oxford Glycobiology Institute

visualisation and publication of digital data for the humanities.

The world of technology for learning and teaching is a rapidly changing entity. As a result the face of the humanities is changing. Technologies such as 3D printing will bring the industrial and scientific arenas into the mix through reconstructing objects for research in archaeology, museum studies and fine art. And perhaps in 2020, students will be surrounded by a world of data and augmented reality accessible through wearable computers such as Google Glass (**google.com/glass**).

The future of the humanities is difficult to predict, but it will continue to respond to the challenges and opportunities of technology. Some things will undoubtedly remain the same, but others will change even more, particularly the sheer amount of resources available online. How all these will pan out is a challenge and an opportunity not just for the humanities, but for the institution as a whole. In the words of the Vice-Chancellor, "When I look at digital Oxford in the mirror, I see a figure beginning to take shape that must and will be recognisably our own." (**bit.ly/otpressrelease**) The University is also planning to invest heavily in the student digital experience in future years, including a replacement of its administrative system.

For more information on Oxford's Humanities Division today, visit their site on Oxford Podcasts (**bit.ly/otpodcasts**) and iTunesU (**bit.ly/otitunesu**).

*Kate Lindsay (Kellogg, 2004) is Manager of Education Enhancement, Academic IT Services.*

## My Tech Diary

*By Mark Wormald*

**7.25am** Wake up.
**8.15am** Get son off to school, leave for work.
**8.45am-9am** Get to the department, check electronic calendar for the day, check emails and deal with urgent enquiries, send a text reply to a request to referee a rugby match on Wednesday evening.
**9am-9.20am** Finish writing a reference for an ex-student applying to be a teacher, submit it online.
**9.20am-9.55am** Finish editing the experimental protocol for a new computer-based enzyme simulation programme to be used by first-year students.
**10am-10.30am** Chair biomedical sciences first-year committee (papers downloaded the previous evening for reading).
**10.30am-11.15am** Coffee, discussion of high-throughput methods of drug screening.
**11.15am** Check and deal with emails.
**11.30am-12.15pm** Meeting with Part II student to discuss role of sialic acids in bacteria.
**12.30pm** Check and deal with emails, then go to College.
**1pm-1.45pm** Lunch.
**1.45pm-2pm** Contact College IT support; the College firewall may be preventing me accessing files on the department server via VPN.
**2pm-3pm** Write a couple of new problems for chemistry tutorial work, upload them to WebLearn (VLE) between dealing with emails.
**3pm-5.30pm** Give tutorials to first-year biochemists.
**5.30pm-5.45pm** Check and deal with emails.
**5.45pm-6.45pm** Start to put together agenda and papers for Biochemistry Teaching Committee next Monday (all papers are made available electronically through WebLearn).
**6.45pm-7.15pm** Check and deal with emails that arrived during the afternoon; write my Tech Diary for *Oxford Today*!
**7.15pm** Go home.
**9pm-11.30pm** Go through papers for a meeting tomorrow morning and student work for classes tomorrow afternoon, try (desperately) to avoid more emails, feel guilty about the emails that haven't been dealt with during the day.

*Dr Mark Wormald is a Tutorial Fellow in Biochemistry and Chemistry, Corpus Christi College; Associate Director of Undergraduate Teaching, Department of Biochemistry and University Research Lecturer, Oxford Glycobiology Institute*

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/JOBY SESSIONS

# HOW TO REWILD OXFORD

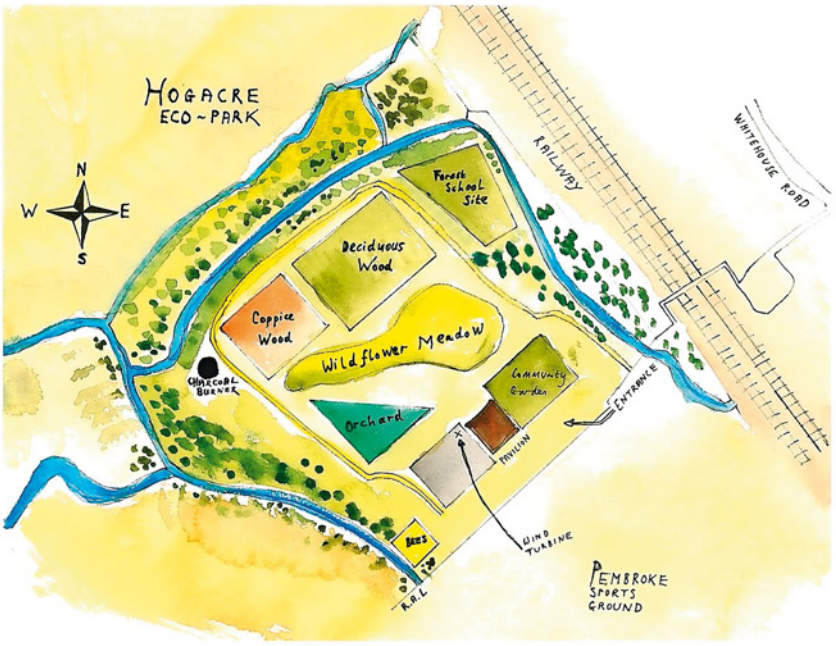
**Richard Lofthouse** considers an imaginative transformation of land use made possible by a generous college, visionary alumni and enterprising students

So-called rewilding is an approach to conservation that entertains the re-introduction of dinosaurs to the Great Plains of North America, or at least elephants; and at a less controversial remove, sticking a bridge over an interstate highway as a migration corridor. The debate doesn't easily reduce to an English context, let alone Gerard Manley Hopkins' vision of Oxford, "Cuckoo-echoing, bell-swarmed, lark-charmed, rook-racked, river-rounded."

And while until recently the wallabies ran freely at Worcester (see page 54), and while we might entertain with some delight the notion of elephants grazing the margins of the Cherwell River, the more obvious point of the rewilding debate in the UK is that biodiversity has been lost but can, it is hoped, be regained. When did you last see or hear a cuckoo, a lark or a rook?

Enhancing biodiversity is one central purpose of Hogacre Common, a freely accessible, community-facing eco-park that until 2010 served as the cricket and rugby pitch of Corpus Christi College. Four years

**At the head of a brightly bedecked picnic table sits Professor Richard Carwardine (Corpus, 1965), current President of Corpus Christi College. On his right sits Alan Poulter (New College, 1964), one of two directors of Hogacre Eco-Park; on his left graduate student volunteer Andonis Marden (St Antony's, 2013). At the front left sits undergraduate volunteer Henry Owen (University College, 2012); and at the front right undergraduate founder of the café, Madeleine Ellis-Petersen (Magdalen, 2011)**




OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/RICHARD LOFTHOUSE

later, Hogacre Common Eco-Park, which is situated five minutes' walk south-west from Folly Bridge, is where an orchard is maturing, woodlands are being nurtured, an eco-café is serving coffee and vegetables are being cultivated. There's even a wind turbine agitating in the breeze, generating electricity to power the café, and bees producing honey.

One of the pivotal first-movers in the project was Corpuscle Barbara Hammond (Corpus, 1979), currently Chief Executive of the Low Carbon Hub and a senior member of several other Oxford-based low carbon initiatives. "I was a rower at Corpus, →

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**Day 4: A day at leisure exploring St Moritz.** Today you are at leisure to explore St Moritz by cable car, free of charge using your St Moritz Travel Card. Alternatively explore the mountains further afield with 50% fares using your GRJ First Class Swiss Travel Card.

**Day 5: First Class on the iconic *Glacier Express* to Zermatt.** Today we take the *Glacier Express* narrow-gauge train along the iconic route from St Moritz to Zermatt. The train climbs steadily and steeply up and over the Oberalp Pass, before crossing the spectacular gorge at Brig. We then arrive in Zermatt, overlooked by the Matterhorn. Our base here for the next four nights is the fabulous Hotel Beau Site.

**Day 6: Zermatt and the *Gornergrat Mountain Railway*.** Today we ascend the *Gornergrat Mountain Railway*, the highest open-air cogwheel railway in Europe. The train climbs to the summit of the Gornergrat at 10,134 feet (3,089m) and offers spectacular views of the Matterhorn. After some time at the top to enjoy the scenery, we descend and enjoy a guided tour of Zermatt.

**Day 7: Stresa, Lake Maggiore and Isola Pescatore.** Today we travel to Stresa, on the shore of Lake Maggiore. On arrival, we take a cruise across Lake Maggiore to the charming island of Isola Pescatore, a wonderfully atmospheric rustic fishing village. We return to Zermatt for dinner this evening.

**Day 8: A day at leisure using your First Class GRJ Card.** Today is free for you to explore Zermatt. Perhaps relax and take advantage of the hotel's excellent pool and spa facilities, enjoy a walk along one of the many marked trails or climb the Kleine Matterhorn. Alternatively, use your First Class Swiss Card, which allows 50% fares on most trains, buses and lake steamers, to explore further afield.

**Day 9: By train to Luxembourg.** We descend from Zermatt to Visp, where we change trains and travel to Basel. Here we join the train to Luxembourg, where we spend the night at the Mercure Grand Hotel Alfa.

**Day 10: To Brussels and London.** Today we travel from Luxembourg to Brussels. Here we connect with *Eurostar* to St Pancras International.

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OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/JOBY SESSIONS

COLIN HOLMES, CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE

(Clockwise from far left) An ecological toilet designed to recycle human waste (you sit in it and perform your necessaries. Not currently in use!); the ex-Corpus cricket pavilion in 2007, when it was marooned by spectacular floods; Madeleine Ellis-Petersen inside the café she opened in 2013

not rugby or cricket," she recalls. "I had never seen this site before! The minute I saw it, I thought, 'Yes, that is beautiful.' With the pavilion, itself beautiful, we could see how it could all function, with a comprehensively appointed facility that could function as a venue, as shelter, as a focal point for all sorts of activities, of which some could be revenue generating such as the café, or a venue to hire out, or for educational purposes." It was Hammond, in 2010, who effectively got the several balls rolling that led to Hogacre in its present form.

Contacting her was Corpus' Development Director Nick Thorn (Corpus, 1988). The college, one of Oxford's smallest when measured in undergraduate numbers, was barely using its sports ground and had the opportunity to share facilities with University College. Owing to the site being difficult to access across the railway that runs down its eastern border, and to the fact that it occasionally floods, the building of student housing was ruled out. It was from this vantage point that Corpus' governing body began to entertain an imaginative vision for alternative land use.

Once upon a time, Hogacre was where pigs used to graze the Thames basin, and during most of the twentieth century it's where Corpuscles played rugby and cricket. Henceforth, and under the terms of a 25-year lease issued by the college to West Oxford Community Renewables, it was to become an eco-park, the term that best summarises its combination of community garden, café, orchard, woodland and wind turbine. The formal entity for the eco-park, meanwhile, is a Community Interest Company (CIC), one of those hybrid, revenue-generating but not-for-profit structures permitted since the Companies Act of 2004.

Alluringly, the 11-acre plot is a near-island, with three of the four sides of its squarish boundary marked by the watery flow of Hinksey Stream and Hogacre Ditch, both later joining the Thames south of the city. Yet Hogacre is not cuckoo-echoing even if it is river-rounded. You arrive by crossing a railway footbridge, and on the day I first visited the sky remained glum and grey, the wind turbine jittered like yacht rigging in a marina, the proximity of giant electricity pylons encumbered the view westwards and the busy ring road remained all too audible.

Yet these inauspicious elements endow the place with its own, uniquely twenty-first-century character. Undergraduate volunteer Henry Owen (University College, 2012) notes, "The magic of Hogacre I think lies in the fact that anyone is welcome, and that it's so unexpected. You cross the rusty railway bridge and it's like you're in a different world."

To be honest, the place needs a good tidy up. A second wind turbine lies on a perishing tennis court, wounded beyond repair I am told, having been mistakenly dropped. And there are lots of car tyres and oddments of garden furniture. But beyond is a picture to gladden the heart of anyone who appreciates trees, flowers and the countryside. Three thousand trees have been planted here in the past two years, the first stages of a terrific forward vision.

To the left is an orchard that barely hints at its potential, stocked as it is with the saplings of local heritage species in danger of disappearing forever, such as Oxford Greening, Oxford Sunrise, Oxford Hoard, Blenheim Orange, Rosemary Russet and Allington Pippin. When did you last see those for sale at Tesco?

→


The community garden, managed by Oxgrow, is irrigated using rainwater captured from the roof of the pavilion

Beyond the orchard, a charcoal burner will one day stand adjacent to a grove of hazel that will be coppiced to produce all manner of poles and traditional fencing – one of the two Hogacre Directors, Hugo Crombie, talks enthusiastically about plans for a pole lathe, wood-turning workshops and basket weaving using some of the willow growing at the river's edge.

Dead ahead of the pavilion lies a nascent wild-flower meadow, and off to the right several thousand saplings planted by volunteers, paid for by a rewilding grant and orchestrated by tree guru Ben Hayden. The wood comprises native English species such as small-leaved limes, ash, oak, field maple, rowan, crab apple and wild cherry, with an eye to aesthetics, biodiversity, coppice timber and habitats.

At this point it would be a hard-hearted sceptic who denied the vision of Hogacre, particularly considering the plans for a beekeeping revival in keeping with the bee-loving friend and co-founding patron of Corpus, Hugh Oldham (*c.*1452–1519). Symbolically, the peppercorn rent is not paid in pepper, but in honey: the Hogacre directors Alan Poulter (New College, 1964) and Crombie present a pot annually to the governing body of Corpus.

The eco-vision for Hogacre barely scratches the surface of what's already going on there. Oxgrow is a community garden, and then there is the prize-winning Hog-Roast Eco-Café, the invention of Madeleine Ellis-Petersen (Magdalen, 2011). Quick to dispel the idea that pigs are spit-roasted at Hogacre, Ellis-Petersen explains that the café is an Eco Vegetarian Café, partly preparing its own food, harvesting some of it from the garden and buying the rest from West Oxford Community Café. Coffee is from local, Witney-based UE Roasters while milk is sourced from a dairy in North Aston, to keep the supply-chain resolutely local. Although closed over the winter and typically open only on Sundays, the concept of a revenue-generating enterprise is a powerful part of the overall vision for Hogacre, and the café will grow.

Finally to the turbine. This is where West Oxford Carbon Renewables steps back into the frame. We have already written about its initiative to generate large scale electricity from the river at Osney Lock, and its installation of an Archimedes screw scheduled for later this year (**bit.ly/otosney**). The wind turbine at Hogacre is merely one of several initiatives that the group has masterminded elsewhere in the city. It cost £30,000, has a 6kW capacity, and generates *c.*2000kW hours per year – more than enough to supply the café, but by Hammond's own estimation, not much in the scheme of things: "Half the consumption of an average family household."

The obvious question, whether this element of the site could develop, is moot for the time being. "We can't do a lot more energy generation without upgrading the grid connection, which is expensive."

There is no mad rush to 'develop' the site, says Hammond. "One of the great things about Oxford colleges is that they are in business forever. Corpus celebrates its quincentenary in 2017; the forward view is the next 500 years. They are leasing the land to an innovative use for some portion of that 'forever'. It is simply fantastic to have that structure, that solidity."

It may be that Hogacre's function is simply as a counterbalance to all the libraries, and all the hours spent in them. Says Andonis Marden (St Antony's, 2013), a graduate student volunteer: "It provides respite from the intensive academic life at University, inspiring an engaged and creative mindset."

Ellis-Petersen continues, "Andonis and I are working together to expand the activities that Hogacre has to offer. We hope to make the space an invaluable community asset that encourages people from all walks of life to interact in the garden, café and field. We hope Hogacre can offer an array of musical, theatrical and spoken word performances; alternative community-driven seminars; and a regularly-open space to study, exchange ideas, and make friends over a cup of tea."

**(Above) Our picnic-themed cover shoot in progress. The day began and ended with heavy rain and dark skies, but for the duration of the shoot we were blessed with radiant sunshine and above average October temperatures (Below) The wind turbine, generating electricity for the café**


THE STATE

# THE RISE OF LAB-LIT

Coinciding with the Bodleian's exhibition on medical discoveries, English fellow and novelist **Julie Maxwell** charts the story of lab-lit

We're all familiar with the concept of science fiction, but what about science *in* fiction? Instead of futuristic speculation, current scientific knowledge and research developments have been featuring in novels that depict the world as we know it now.

Dr Jennifer Rohn, a cell biologist at UCL who has also published two novels about scientists, coined the term 'lab-lit' in 2001. It defines "a small but growing genre of fiction in which central scientific characters, activities and themes are portrayed in a realistic manner." Although it may include imagined scientific advances, the emphasis is on plausibility rather than sensationalism.

Ian McEwan's 2010 novel *Solar* is an outstanding example of the genre. The main character, Michael Beard, is a Nobel Prize-winning physicist. Everyday life is also seen through a scientifically trained eye. Has the guilty pleasure of eating a packet of salt and vinegar crisps ("the actinic sting of these thirty grams") ever been so precisely evoked?

'Lab-lit' consciously echoes 'chick-lit', that light-hearted genre of female fiction which developed in the 1990s around works such as *Bridget Jones's Diary* by Helen Fielding (St Anne's, 1976). It's a convenient rather than straightforward comparison. The presence of science in fiction might be more accurately compared to the best historical fiction. It contains an element of instruction as well as entertainment. Lab-lit is also, unlike chick-lit, a tiny sub-category of fiction. Fewer than a hundred lab-lit novels have ever been written, and only since the 1990s have they appeared in sustained (if very modest) numbers annually.

The small beginnings of lab-lit coincide with the complaint made 20 years ago by Oxford Emeritus Professor of English Literature John Carey: poets had been practically "science-blind" since John Donne, while his own students "seemed unaware... that the blood circulated round their bodies."

It was not, of course, that novels written before 1990 demonstrated no scientific expertise. Some of the best science fiction writers, for example, were trained scientists. HG Wells, the author of *The Time Machine* (1895) and *The War of the Worlds* (1897–8), studied biology and wrote a textbook. But science fiction was excluded from Carey's anthology *The Faber Book of Science*. He wanted real science. Rohn draws an equally firm line between science fiction and lab-lit. Nonetheless, the new genre is clearly indebted to the older one.

As McEwan pointed out in a talk to mark the thirtieth anniversary of Richard Dawkins' *The Selfish Gene* (1976), literature is not, like science, self-correcting. It "does not improve; it simply changes." Throughout the centuries of English literature, the genres have continuously overlapped. So it is no surprise to find that lab-lit novels often borrow the stock-in-trade of science fiction and translate them, as it were, into the terms of the contemporary realist novel.

In Jim Crace's 1999 novel *Being Dead*, for example, the story of two entomologists who are unexpectedly murdered, there is no time travel but there is a narrative that goes backwards in time instead of forward. The appropriation of science fiction motifs in the realist novels of Crace, McEwan and others parallels the way that scientists themselves have sometimes been inspired by the genre to make discoveries in real life. Sir Tim Berners-Lee (Queen's, 1973), the scientist credited with creating the world wide web, has acknowledged a science fiction tale by Arthur C Clarke, "Dial F for Frankenstein", as an influence.

Sometimes, however, the long-distance relationship between science fiction and cutting-edge scientific research is deliciously coincidental. In 1925 Mikhail Bulgakov published *The Fatal Eggs*, the story of a hapless Professor of Zoology who blunders on an important discovery. Who could have predicted that the discovery of penicillin three years later by Alexander Fleming would be every bit as marvellously accidental?

Given that the history of literary genres is integral to the story of English literature, one wonders whether it might be worth re-classifying earlier works of literature in the light of our new awareness of lab-lit. In 1951, novelist Muriel Spark championed the nineteenth-century novelist Mary Shelley at a time when even *Frankenstein* (1818, revised 1831) was dismissed as children's literature. Spark argued that the novel was actually science fiction; Shelley was not only writing in a genre that the mid-twentieth century considered a male preserve, but she had got there before Wells, Huxley and Orwell. Equally, one might argue that *Frankenstein* was the ancestress of lab-lit. For unlike Shelley's final novel, *The Last Man* (1826), which is set toward the end of the twenty-first century, *Frankenstein* does not have a futuristic setting. Instead, Shelley pondered the contemporary scientific theory of galvanism (that is, the animation of dead flesh by electrical currents), which then seemed plausible. She took fiction into the 'lab' of her own day, a world of gentlemen amateurs who transported their chemical instruments on holiday to Orkney.

Furthermore, although it is the disastrous galvanistic experiment for which *Frankenstein* is famous, Shelley's larger interest is one she holds in common with her Romantic contemporaries – the emergent science of the mind. As a pioneer of lab-lit, her avant-garde achievement is overdue a fresh appreciation.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/JOBY SESSIONS

Dr Julie Maxwell in the library of Exeter College

*Dr Julie Maxwell (Christ Church, 1995) has recently published a science-in-fiction novel,* These Are Our Children, *a review of which can be found in the Books section of www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk.*

Great Medical Discoveries: 800 Years Of Oxford Innovation runs until 18 May. www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk

# THE BIG JUNKET

Oxford University has had its fair share of famous visitors over the years, but nothing beats the array of dignitaries who turned up two centuries ago to crow about Napoleon's imprisonment. **Christopher Danziger** looks back on a day to remember


***A Reception of Doctors at Oxford's University*: a French caricature showing the presentation of honorary degrees to the allied sovereigns in the Sheldonian Theatre on 15 June 1814. In the centre is the Prince Regent; on his right is the Tsar and on his left the King of Prussia**

Just 200 years ago excited crowds, three and four deep, were lining the High Street in Oxford. There was someone perched in every tree and up every lamp post. A substantial military presence ensured law and order. It was still mid-morning, but night would reveal that almost every Oxford college had made arrangements to be lavishly illuminated, some picking out the outlines of their façades.

What was the cause of this excitement? The well-born and the famous have always beaten a path to Oxford's door, but 13 June 1814 must have been the only time in its history when it hosted an Emperor, a King, four future kings, a Chancellor of the Austrian Empire, two future and two past British prime ministers, many world-famous generals and enough peers to burst the House of Lords. One would imagine that there would be all sorts of memorials to the event and blue plaques announcing that "Tsar Alexander I" or "Marshal Blücher slept here", but it has been curiously overlooked even in Oxford.

The occasion was the celebrations for the defeat and abdication of Napoleon, the "enemy of order, liberty and religion". After rendering him harmless (or so they thought) on the island of Elba, the victorious sovereigns gathered in Paris for mutual congratulations. The Prince Regent, as head of the state which had most consistently opposed Napoleon and largely financed the resistance to him, invited them to continue their celebrations in England. The offer was enthusiastically taken up.

One of the things the allied sovereigns wanted to do in England was to visit the famous university town of Oxford, one of the very few places in the country, incidentally, where the Prince Regent could rely on a warm welcome. At the prospect, "every heart fluttered with expectation and delight". The Chancellor of the University, Lord Greville, himself a previous prime minister and the son of another, had issued meticulous instructions to everyone involved "according to the plan agreed on in 1703". Apparently this 111-year-old blueprint still served its purpose well.

However, a hitch cropped up with the very first step, when the Prince Regent (the future George IV) arrived from Dorchester so punctually on Tuesday 14th at Magdalen Bridge that the Chancellor's welcome party, which had assembled in Exeter College, had only reached the gates of Magdalen College. With the Prince was the Prince of Orange and his own brother Frederick, Duke of York, better known as the butt of the rhyme about marching up to the top of the hill.

First stop for the royal party was the Divinity School, where the Chancellor gave a grovelling speech of loyalty to the King (whose insanity sadly prevented his presence in person) and to his Royal Highness. The Prince Regent was then escorted to his quarters in Christ Church to wait for his royal guests. First to arrive at their lodgings in Merton College were "the noble, the modest, the warrior-like Tsar Alexander" and (in the opinion of the Oxford scribe) "his lovely, amiable and interesting sister", but dubbed "intolerable" by the Prince Regent, and "ignorant of how to behave" by Lord Liverpool, the prime minister.

Then came King Frederick William III of Prussia, and his two eldest sons, both of whom would rule Prussia in turn until as late as 1888. Another slight embarrassment arose because they "preserved the same simplicity of appearance" so successfully that they were not recognised. They were lodged in Corpus Christi, where a guard of honour raised the Prussian eagle.

> 'The occasion was the celebrations for the defeat of Napoleon, the "enemy of order, liberty and religion"'

When the royals were assembled, all credit to them that they did not let the grass grow under their feet. They immediately visited the hall in Christ Church, pronounced by the Tsar to be "one of the finest rooms he had ever seen", the Cathedral and the Library, before moving on to Merton and All Souls and – apparently the spot which most took their fancy – New College Chapel. Then tirelessly on to the Clarendon Press and the Bodleian Library before returning to their lodgings.

There they had hardly more than an hour's turnaround time before they re-assembled in the hall of All Souls College. From there they made their way over a specially laid red carpet to the Radcliffe Camera for the celebratory dinner, which was the highlight of the visit. The Upper →

## ‘Soon there was such a crush that “hats, caps and shoes were flying in all directions and gowns and coats were torn in pieces”’

Gallery of the Camera was thrown open to the public. They ascended by one of the small stone staircases and a smooth flow was supposed to be ensured by a specially constructed wooden staircase at upper window level. That would have been fine if people had been content to keep moving. Naturally they preferred to dally, taking in the unique spectacle beneath them. Soon there was such a crush that “hats, caps and shoes were flying in all directions... and gowns and coats were torn in pieces”. This aggressive voyeurism was only brought to a halt by the arrival of the military.

Meanwhile, at ground level, a table sumptuously decorated with silver had been placed directly under the dome. From this radiated five spokes, each seating about 40 diners. The whole space was ablaze with “brilliant patent lamps and a profusion of candlesticks”. A lavish spread was cooked in the kitchens of Brasenose, the college best-placed for the job, but a chef, suitably named Mangeans, had been brought in for the evening from the Clifton Hotel.

From their vantage point the crowds had a bird’s eye view of the appetite and table manners of the assembled kings and generals. Frequent toasts were drunk and whenever one met with public approval, the Prince Regent, who was said to be “in high spirits” (not a euphemism, I think), waved enthusiastically to the gallery. There below them among many others sat Metternich, the Austrian Chancellor; Chernikov, the Russian Chancellor; Count Lieven, the Russian ambassador; Lord Aberdeen, the future British prime minister – and the crowd’s two great favourites, Sir Charles Stewart, whose much be-medalled uniform and weak head for alcohol always made him worth watching, and the Prussian Marshal Blücher, who took too much “strong beer and cognac” and became extremely drunk.

Blücher’s transcendental moment at Waterloo was still over a year away, and his delusion that he was about to give birth to an elephant was not universally known, but his martial ardour and total inability to accept defeat had made him a household name throughout Europe. When he arrived in Oxford, the crowds had tried to unhitch his horses and pull his carriage themselves but had been restrained by the proctors. One enterprising shoemaker threw a pair of new boots into his carriage and ever after advertised himself as “bootmaker to General Prince Blücher”. Throughout his stay, crowds gathered under his windows in Christ Church, where he could be seen through an open window, sitting on the end of his bed smoking a long pipe. From time to time he would move towards the window and bow. →


Marshal Blücher gives Napoleon a good hiding in this etching by George Cruikshank (1792–1878)

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**A vase of Siberian jasper sent to Merton College by Tsar Alexander I and his sister, Ekaterina Pavlovna, in thanks after lodging there on the night of 14 June 1814**

At 11pm the party broke up to allow the diners to see the superb illuminations in the streets. Between the lights hung posters and paintings, "some [*of which*] displayed a tolerable share of John Bull's humour". Royalty mingled freely with the crowds until 1am, when a torrential thunderstorm sent everyone scurrying indoors and extinguished the illuminations. By any standards it had been an exceptional day. However, there was more to come.

On Wednesday 15 May, Oxford was again up early to stake places in the Sheldonian Theatre to confer honorary degrees on their distinguished visitors. Until 8am only ladies in evening dress were allowed entry. Then the doors were opened to the public and all seats were taken in ten minutes.

## 'Royalty mingled freely with the crowds until 1am, when a torrential thunderstorm sent everyone scurrying indoors'

There was such a crush that the undergraduates relieved the heat by "breaking every window within reach". At 10am the main doors were thrown open and the organist, Dr Crotch, struck up a march. The three sovereigns and their entourages entered to the rousing notes of Dr Crotch's organ.

They were then honoured with the award of DCL (Doctor of Civil Law). The public orator orated and was followed by no less than eight congratulatory addresses in verse, probably to the mystification of the foreign sovereigns. The Prince Regent then led his party out. The official Oxford account quoted him as saying he "was never present at any assembly where everything was so well conducted", but other reports claimed that when Blücher fought his way out of the ceremony, he said that "it was the hottest struggle he had ever been in".

Their next commitment was another ceremony in the City Council Chambers. Quite rightly, town had to be given the same respect as gown. The town clerk gave them another address of welcome, for which the Prince Regent immediately knighted him. Mr Taunton was so overcome that he had to be led away by friends. The Father of the City was similarly honoured but declined on account of his great age. The mayor had no such scruples. The City Council responded by conferring the freedom of the city on all the dignitaries. Honour had been satisfied on all sides.

The party then moved on for a tour of the Observatory before breaking "to partake of an elegant breakfast" at All Souls. Was their royal highnesses' curiosity sated? Not a bit of it. After lunch, the Tsar and the King of Prussia were off again, to visit Blenheim Palace and Stowe. Meanwhile the Prince Regent held a levee in the Upper Library at Christ Church which, reading between the lines, may have been rather sparsely attended.

However, by 6.30pm all those remaining were back on parade to dine in Christ Church Hall. The High Table was vastly enlarged, and 400 members of the college crowded into the dining hall. Toasts were proposed, including one by Blücher "in a powerful voice and most expressive energy" (the result again of immoderate consumption) to the Prince Regent, which the Prince Regent graciously paraphrased himself for the benefit of fellow diners.

And, finally, just to emphasise that kingship is not all a bed of roses, there was another ball in the Town Hall that evening, again attended by every visitor of note. When the royal party left the following morning at 11am, the cheering crowds prompted an Oxford commentator to observe that "a warm and enthusiastic regard to the sovereign is the native growth of a British bosom... It needs but the smile of approbation to bring forth the sacred fruits of loyalty and obedience."

There was one nice final touch when, three weeks later, to commemorate the peace, a great dinner for 4000 of the poor but respectable inhabitants of Oxford was held in Radcliffe Square. Huge applause greeted the closing toast to "the General Peace, the best of all generals".

Of course all these celebrations were a year premature. Nine months later Napoleon escaped from Elba and the allies' long-winded and quarrelsome negotiations at Vienna came to an abrupt end. When Napoleon was eventually defeated again at Waterloo, there was much less junketing. But places like Oxford had had their day in the sun. Very few cities in the world have ever enjoyed anything similar. Oxford does not normally underplay its successes; perhaps the bicentenary is a good opportunity to revive memories of this one.

*Christopher Danziger specialises in Russian and Napoleonic history, which he teaches at Oxford's Department for Continuing Education.*

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# THE SINS OF FINANCIERS

**Michael Black**, the librarian of Blackfriars Hall and former Director of the American Stock Exchange, revisits the sins of corporate finance

Did my uncle create the financial bomb that finally blew up the world economy in 2007–8?

Put it this way. Along with Myron S Scholes and Robert C Merton, Uncle Black (Fischer Black to everyone else) was credited in the early 1970s with formulating the mathematical model that led to derivatives.

To cite just one post-Lehman historian: "Without derivatives, leveraged bets on subprime mortgage loans could not have spread so far or so fast. Without derivatives, the complex risks that destroyed Bear Stearns, Lehman Brothers, and Merrill Lynch... could not have been hidden from view... Derivatives were the key; they enabled Wall Street to maintain its destructive run until it was too late."

What is a derivative? In essence, it is a financial contract that derives its value from the performance of another entity such as an asset, index or interest rate. It is one of three categories of financial instrument, the other two being equities (stocks) and debt (mortgages and bonds).

Derivatives were made possible by a mathematical model of financial markets devised by Black and Scholes, from which a formula of financial valuation followed. The Black-Scholes model was first aired in their 1973 paper 'The Pricing of Options and Corporate Liabilities', published in the *Journal of Political Economy*.

Black-Scholes also allowed the financial valuation of a company – any company, of any sort, anywhere in the world – which is shown to be a function of the price of its options that are traded in the market (and vice versa). It became the $E=MC^2$ of the world of finance, its Gold Standard.

The most important thing to bear in mind is that at the time, and for three decades, the theory was seen to be progressive as well as brilliant. Merton and Scholes received the Nobel Prize for it in 1998 (Fischer had died in 1996 and the Nobel Prize is not awarded posthumously).

Black-Scholes was accepted by academics, by analysts, by traders, by rating agencies and by virtually all investment institutions as a representation of financial reality. Black-Scholes is probably the closest the world has ever come to a universal standard of financial value.

The Black-Scholes idea of value reigned supreme... right up to the moment in 2007 when it didn't. Almost overnight, the model became suspect and the world financial system ground to a halt. Investment portfolios from Darien to Düsseldorf became 'toxic' because the Black-Scholes presumptions were suddenly recognised as bogus and the 'real' value of assets purchased was consequently indeterminate.

> 'Almost overnight, the Black-Scholes model became suspect and the world financial system ground to a halt'

One could choose to view the entire Black-Scholes 'boom to bust' life cycle as one instance of a much broader pattern of post-1945 capitalism in which government financial controls were gradually relaxed, but at the expense of stability. That's a very synoptic view suggested by the newly-published *Cambridge History of Capitalism* (see review, page 51).

However, that's not what it seemed like half a century ago. Corporate finance was in its infancy and beamed with the sort of promise we associate with the eighteenth-century Enlightenment – applying reason and science to human problems previously left to luck and quackery.

Born in 1938, Uncle Black was a maths and science geek who went to Harvard. By the mid-1960s he stood at the very dawn of a world we have since taken (and still take despite 2007–8) for normal, with investment management by 'scientific method', as opposed to the sort of craft practice that had prevailed before.

But the supposedly universal quality of Black-Scholes was to prove its undoing. The failure of this measure of value was systematic: that is, it affected everyone, everywhere simultaneously precisely because it was employed universally, its collective wheel greased by technology. Modern financial theory was supposed to eliminate risk, yet it had done the reverse.

This self-defeating character of a universal measure of value then raises a second issue. Is an objective measure of corporate value possible to formulate even if it's not universal; let's say, for an industry or a sector?

A hint to the answer to this question comes through the experience of a classmate of mine at the Wharton Graduate School of Finance where we both did our MBAs. Michael Milken understood what many of us more prosaic types didn't: that the real money in corporate finance didn't lie in creating value but in defining it. After graduation, this is what he set about doing with great skill for almost two decades.

Milken developed a supposedly objective measure of value which purported to show that many smaller and less prestigious companies were being substantially undervalued. His new measure made CEOs happy because it confirmed their professional intuition that their companies were undervalued. It made second-tier investment banks happy because they had something to sell. It made the managers of emerging equity funds happy because they had something to buy. Thus the junk bond (or, if one prefers, the high yield investment) market was born. →



(Right) Dr Michael Black in the library of Blackfriars Hall, St Giles, Oxford


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It takes considerable political-sociological skill to maintain the credibility of a measure of value without serious academic backing. And Milken sailed not just close to the wind but through it in order to maintain the credibility of the measure in his dealings with investors and regulators. But just as Goldman Sachs' valuation of mortgage derivatives were shown to be self-serving after the 2007 crash, Milken's corporate valuations were finally unmasked. Faced with a long list of fraud charges in 1990, he pleaded guilty to a selected few and was sentenced to two years in jail with a personal fine of over $4 billion (which he paid with plenty left over to continue his considerable benefactions to medical charity).

So much for objectivity. But isn't there some way to overcome the natural self-interest of management, a way to correct measurement bias through the analytical verification of corporate value?

Actually there isn't. This has to do with the nature of value itself. In philosophical terms: value is its own representation.

This rule of financial reality became clear to me through the rise (and once again fall) of an ex-McKinsey & Company colleague, Jeff Skilling. Based on his radical ideas for finance in the complex and notoriously risky business of natural gas, Skilling was hired in 1990 by his main client, Enron, in Houston, Texas. Eventually he became its CEO.

Skilling, like Black and Milken before him, created a new measure of corporate value for Enron. The measure itself was old hat to corporate finance pros, since it was based on one of its fundamental postulates: the real value of a commercial entity is its discounted expected future cash flows. To compute the corporate value, he merely estimated the future flows of actual (not accounting) flows in and out of the company/project/contract and applied the appropriate discount rate year by year. The result is what is called Net Present Value (NPV), perhaps the most fundamental concept in corporate finance.

So Skilling had some solid theoretical basis for his method of valuation. And he created a 'following' in the financial industry, that tracked and promoted this value assiduously. He even convinced the now defunct auditing firm of Arthur Andersen to subordinate its entire accounting system to this NPV regime.

Through an otherwise insignificant technical error in one of the myriad subsidiaries, the NPV house of cards was revealed for what it was: a simulacrum of value based on overheated managerial dreams. Within a few months of the slip Enron was bankrupt. Skilling and most of his senior management were indicted for securities fraud and false accounting. Currently Skilling is serving his sentence in federal prison and may be eligible for parole in 2017.

MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

**Financier Bernie Madoff enters Manhattan Federal Court on 12 March 2009. Madoff was given the maximum prison sentence of 150 years for masterminding a massive fraud**

The whole valuation of Enron had come to rest on a theory of value applied by Skilling. At one level a black comedy, Skilling still protests his innocence. In at least one sense he is right. Not excusing criminal behaviour, nonetheless he was also a victim of the culture of corporate finance.

And then there is Bernie Madoff and the well-known scandal that broke late in 2008 around his so-called Ponzi scheme.

I had come competitively head to head with this éminence grise of finance when I was appointed arriviste Managing Director International for the American Stock Exchange. Madoff was then the Chairman of the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD) as well as head of his own highly successful firm for more than four decades.

So the shock of Madoff's admission that he had been engaging in fraud for years was profound. Most commentators asked the question "How?" How could Madoff dupe the regulators and analysts? How could he maintain the pretence without cracking over all those years? But for me the central question – for Madoff but also the others – remains not "How?" but "Why?" Why would one of the most respected men in global finance commit such a dire sin?

The facile and common explanation is: egotistical arrogance. The market went wrong and Madoff couldn't admit poor judgement. But this doesn't mesh with my experience of the man. There is, for me, a less ignoble if no less harsh interpretation of events.

Liquidity – the ability to find funding for a business even in times of temporary setbacks – is a core presumption of financial theory. The freezing of markets – illiquidity – is the financial equivalent of the existence of black holes in astrophysics: all the normal rules are suspended; theory fails.

For someone as consistently successful as Madoff (or Milken, Skilling, and for that matter Uncle Fischer, Scholes and Merton), however, liquidity is more than a theoretical presumption. It is a substantial right, an effective norm, which has been earned by previous success and implied by financial theory. Madoff's liquidity would have been jeopardised by proper accounting of his initial book losses (just as it would have been for Skilling and Milken).

Given their track records, each of these men in their own way could well have felt compelled, duty-bound by the logic of corporate finance, to protect their liquidity for the sake of, and even as an obligation to, their clients until 'reason' – the logic of corporate finance – returned to the markets: Madoff by essentially using funds from new clients to support the existing clients; Skilling by creating complex, impenetrable intra-company transactions; Milken by insider dealing with 'arbitrageurs' like Ivan Boesky; Black and Scholes by simply ignoring the consequences of the very real if theoretically inconvenient liquidity crises that regularly hit companies such as Bear Stearns, Lehmans or Northern Rock, not forgetting the $4.8 billion federal bailout of hedge fund Long-Term Capital Management in 1998, on whose board both Scholes and Merton sat.

To paraphrase John Maynard Keynes: "The market can stay irrational for a lot longer than you can stay liquid." To a man, and they were all men, they were caught out by this irrationality. Their theories didn't allow for it.

Excusing no criminal act, nonetheless their behaviour was consistent with the culture of corporate finance. This culture seems to be least visible, and therefore most obsessively compelling, to those engaged in it most intimately. In the *Wealth of Nations* in 1776, Adam Smith insisted, "It is fear of losing employment which restrains fraud and corrects negligence." But this was before the rise of the corporation. Today the inverse is more probably true: fear of failure promotes fraud and deceit.

*Dr Michael Black is the librarian at Blackfriars Hall, a Permanent Private Hall of the University, a Community of more than 20 Dominican Friars and a centre for the study of theology and philosophy.*

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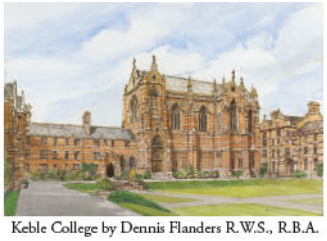
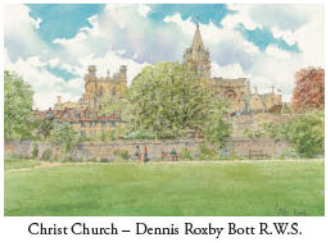
Corpus Christi – James Porteous Wood R.S.W.


Keble College by Dennis Flanders R.W.S., R.B.A.


Christ Church – Dennis Roxby Bott R.W.S.

## *COLLEGE ORIGINALS FOR SALE*

*Over the past 25 years Contemporary Watercolours have commissioned members of The Royal Watercolour Society and Royal Academy to paint definitive views, as agreed with colleges concerned, of principle Oxford colleges. Limited edition prints were made from the paintings and offered for sale to Old Members of each college. The college receiving a royalty on sale of prints.*

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*It has been decided that the time has now come to offer the original paintings for sale through Oxford Today. Offers in excess of £500 for each painting are invited by email, post or telephone. Closing date for offers is 30th April 2014.*

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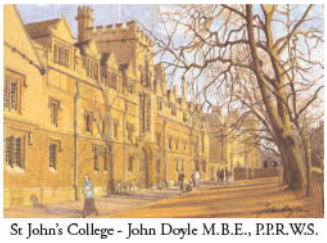
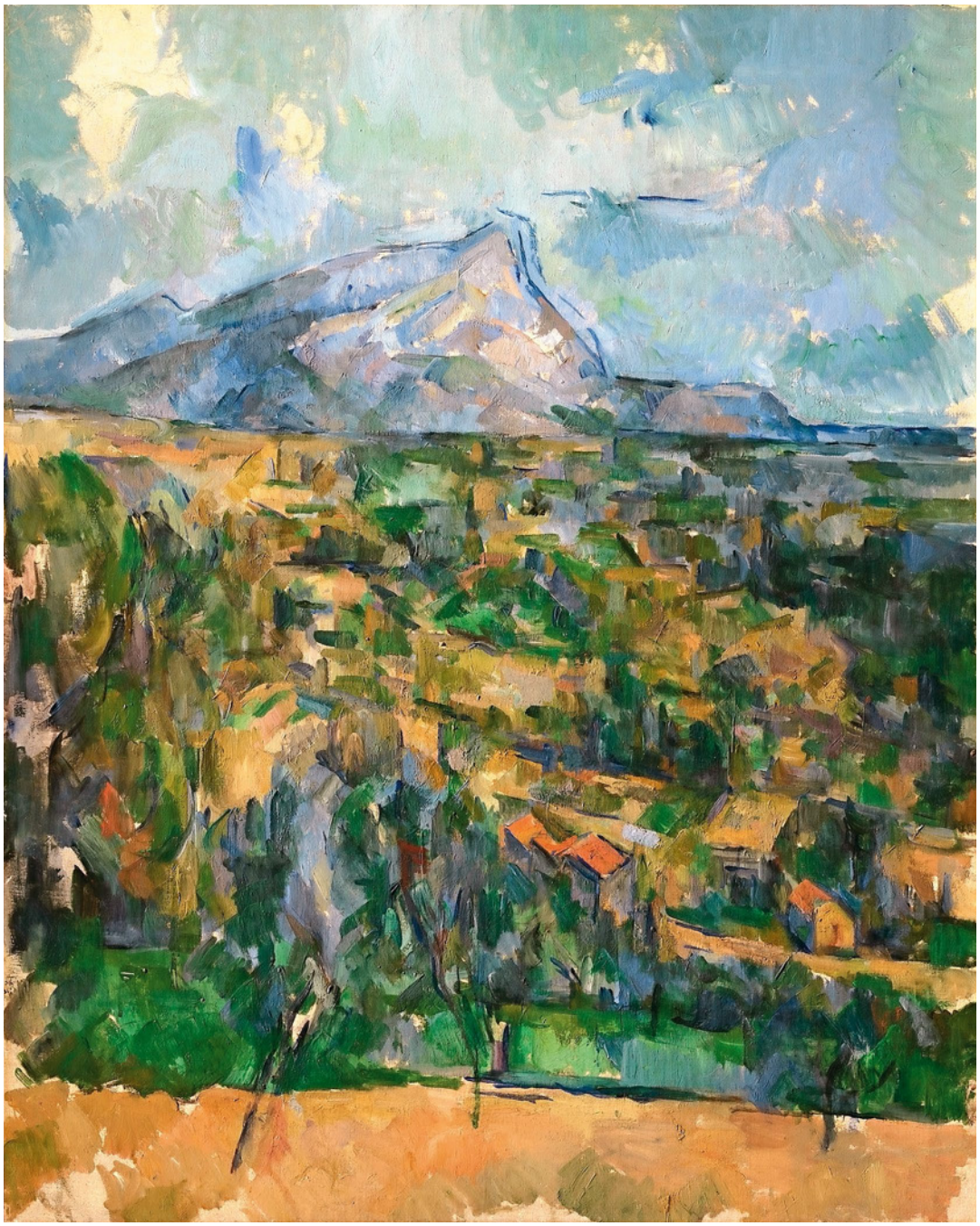
Somerville College - Jane Carpanini R.W.S., R.W.A.


St John's College - John Doyle M.B.E., P.P.R.W.S.


St Hugh's – Cliff Bayly R.W.S.

# Arts & Ideas





Mont Sainte-Victoire *(1902) by Paul Cézanne (1839–1906), from* Cézanne and the Modern: Masterpieces of European Art from the Pearlman Collection, *at the Ashmolean Museum until 22 June 2014*

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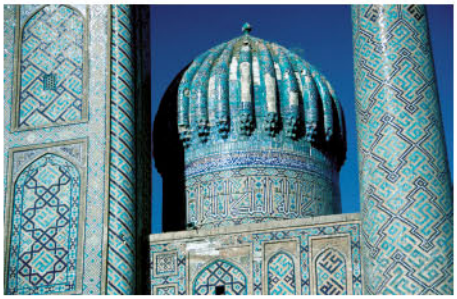

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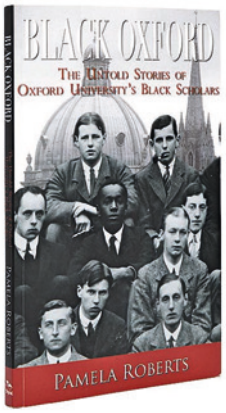
# Book reviews

*All books are Oxford-connected; their subject matter is the University or city, and/or the author is a current or former student or academic*



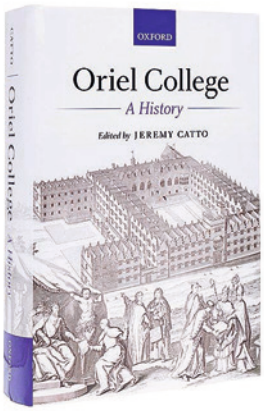

## Black Oxford

**By Pamela Roberts** Signal Books, £7.99

*The Untold Stories of Oxford University's Black Scholars* – the sub-title of this work of original research – is divided into seven sections of capsule biographies organised both thematically and chronologically. It begins with pioneers, including Christian Frederick Cole, a lawyer at University College from 1873, originally from Sierra Leone. It continues with female Rhodes Scholars, black Oxonians who became Prime Ministers, legal professionals, educators and others. As much as I celebrate with author Pamela Roberts for bringing so many achievements and stories to life, I also question why their stories have remained untold for so long. Roberts notes early on that she has no quarrel with the University as such, or indeed Oxford the city. Yet one stimulus for the book was her innocent curiosity as to why in tourist literature and walking tours in Oxford, the veneration of overseas alumni always seemed to stop at Prince Naruhito of Japan, Indira Gandhi of India, Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma and of course Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan. Why do we never hear of Sir Seretse Khama, first Prime Minister of Botswana, or Kofi A Busia, Prime Minister of Ghana? Why indeed? Dr Susan A Rice, who completed her DPhil at New College and later advised Clinton and Obama in international affairs, is cited: "The greatest evil in omitting or misrepresenting Black history, literature and culture in elementary or secondary education is the unmistakable message it sends to the black child. The message is 'Your history, your culture, your language and your literature are insignificant. And so are you.'"

The absence of even such a slender book as Roberts' until 2013 is undoubtedly troubling; the fact that it is written by a non-Oxonian is possibly instructive. Of course, one larger subject that isn't explored here is that the University of Empire recruited its own. The cast of characters described here not only came from tiny Caribbean islands and British African colonies and outposts such as New Zealand, but they were typically (but not always) elites. The first African woman to receive a degree at Oxford was Lady Kofoworola Abeni Ademola (St Hugh's, 1932). From Nigeria, she was very well connected to get in, but faced the double-whammy of being a double curio, both female *and* black. By her own estimation it was jolly unpleasant, but not unremittingly so.

*Shakina Chinedu is Race, Religion and Belief Equality Advisor at the University*




## Oriel College

**Edited by Jeremy Catto** Oxford University Press, £85

"Writing the history of an institution which is almost 700 years old is a daunting prospect," writes former Provost Sir Derek Morris in his preface to this majestic volume. Readers, too, may feel the odd twinge when faced with 847 pages, yet it's hard to see how Oriel's story could have been better dealt with, seeing as it concerns not just Oriel but its changing role in the University. To deal with what must have sometimes seemed an overwhelming mass of material – "Accumulated muniments and other records... stored in the basement in ever decreasing order," writes the editor ruefully – his team opted for a mix of chronological and thematic chapters, the latter covering the college buildings, Oriel's place in Sport, Science and 'The Wider World'.

Catto himself tackles Oriel's first couple of centuries, starting with commendable caution, "In 1326 we have the first evidence of scholars at St Mary's [the scholars' hall preceding Oriel]." Other hands then lead the reader through to the eighteenth century, when Oriel, then one of Oxford's smaller colleges, was best described as 'A Society of Gentlemen' typified by one Mr Sawyer, an undergraduate and "a good-natured man... tho' he is much addicted to his sports, yet reads pretty much at intervals."

The following chapters depict the changes and upheavals of the nineteenth century, when Balliol and Oriel were in the ascendant. Oriel's common room is said to have "stunk of logic" and verbal warfare raged between Noetics and Tractarians, Antinomians and Oxford Movementists, Peelites and anti-Peelites. And so to the twentieth century, when differences between colleges may perhaps have been eroded by common issues such as the carnage of World War I, political meddling and financial pressures, not forgetting co-residence and conferences.

Orielenses will surely gloat over this book, but there's interest for the general reader too, not least, oddly enough, in the chapter on Oriel's buildings. What first appears to be an unwieldy ragbag of sites and premises turns out to feature buildings of wider interest including a real tennis court patronised by the then Prince of Wales, and others which for centuries offered refreshment to town and gown, notably the Tackley Inn on the High, whose name, at least, survived until recently as that of a coffee house.

*Chris Sladen (Christ Church, 1953) writes for* Oxford Today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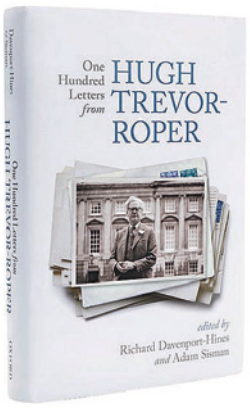



## One Hundred Letters From Hugh Trevor-Roper

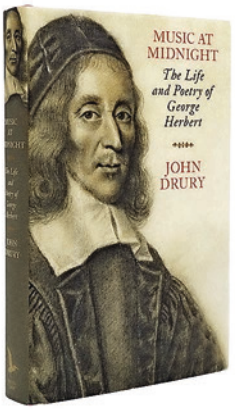
**Edited by Richard Davenport-Hines and Adam Sisman**
Oxford University Press, £25

On Saturday 11 January, with the sun gleaming on the High Street stone, an audience of 260 alumni and academics entered the Examination Schools for a day-long conference to mark the centenary of the birth of Hugh Trevor-Roper, the Oxford historian. Trevor-Roper, who passionately wanted history to be read and enjoyed beyond the academic community, would have been delighted by the variety of the audience, which mingled at lunch and in the refreshment breaks. Many of those present remembered him as a tutor at Christ Church (1946–57) or as Regius Professor of Modern History (1957–80). There were many younger people present too. Had it not been for the disruption of rail travel by floods, the audience would have been larger still.

Trevor-Roper had a boundless range of historical interests. In order to give focus to the day, two of them were selected for discussion: the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the subject of the morning's papers; and the Second World War, which was discussed after lunch. A third area, the Enlightenment, will be covered by a series of weekly lectures, again in the Schools, in the autumn. The ten speakers at the January conference included two of Trevor-Roper's successors as Regius Professor, Sir Michael Howard and Sir John Elliott, as well as Sir Noel Malcolm, Richard Overy (who spoke on *The Last Days of Hitler*) and the novelist John Banville, who in the final talk of the day illustrated his conviction that Trevor-Roper is "one of the greatest prose stylists in the English language". During the question sessions the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Lawson of Blaby, was able to cast light on the mischievous letters, written by Trevor-Roper under the name Mercurius Oxoniensis, which Lawson had published during his time as editor of *The Spectator*.

Trevor-Roper's literary prowess extended beyond historical writing. His stature as a letter-writer, marked by a previous selection published in 2006 as *Letters From Oxford*, is now joined by a new volume that we launched at the conference, *One Hundred Letters From Hugh Trevor-Roper*. Two more posthumous volumes will appear in this centenary year, both published by IB Tauris: *The Secret World*, a collection of his writings on wartime intelligence edited by Edward Harrison; and *The Third Reich*, a collection edited by Gina Thomas.

*Dr Blair Worden (Pembroke, 1963) is Emeritus Fellow of St Edmund Hall*

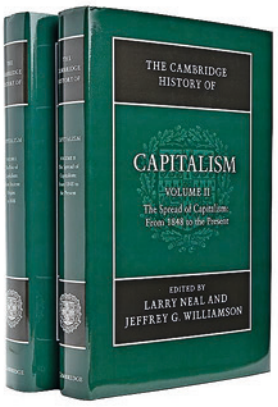



## Music At Midnight: The Life and Poetry of George Herbert

**By John Drury** Allen Lane, £25

Lines from George Herbert's poems haunt the memory of all who have heard them. Now, thanks to John Drury's pellucidly written and subtly imaginative book, their musicality and deeper meaning can be fully understood; so too can the motivation of the passionately devout yet delightfully down-to-earth man who wrote them. George Herbert was born in 1593, late in the reign of Elizabeth I, and flourished in the reign of James I. A friend of John Donne and Francis Bacon, he toyed with social prominence, winning the post of Cambridge's University Orator. But in 1629 he opted for devoting himself to a quiet country parish near Salisbury, where he worked over his great legacy to literature: poems that still sing off the page. He could have no better biographer than John Drury, formerly Dean of Kings College, Cambridge and Christ Church Oxford, and presently Chaplain of All Souls, who sets the poet four square in place and time as a man, and quadruples our appreciation of his work, both as poet and parson.

*Christina Hardyment is an author and founding editor of* Oxford Today




## The Cambridge History of Capitalism

**Edited by Larry Neal and Jeffrey G Williamson**
Cambridge University Press, £150

For all the ink spilt over the recent implosion of the financial system, the really synoptic view has been largely missing. Now we have it. "The trilemma for [post-1945] governments was how to, simultaneously, achieve control, stability and competition within the financial system... After 1945, control was the priority and that was achieved at the expense of competition before the 1970s and stability afterwards." What beautiful concision. With it, Ranald Michie (Vol 2, p257) accommodates the 2007–8 crisis with ease.

The first volume asks the much bigger question, namely why it was so hard for capitalism to get going at all, allowing many of us, in the space of two generations, to acquire fridges and cars as a result. The result of intensive seminars between the contributors, some of them at Oxford, this title is an inestimable contribution by CUP and firmly re-anchors the dismal science in historical analysis, where it always belonged anyway.

*Richard Lofthouse (LMH, 1990) is the current editor of* Oxford Today

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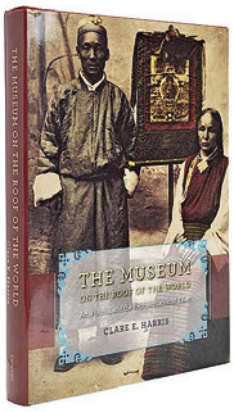
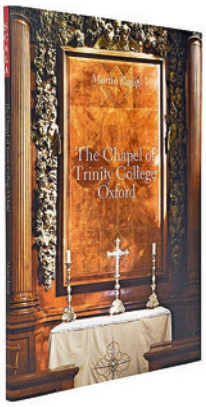



## The Museum on the Roof of the World

**By Clare E Harris**
University of Chicago Press, £31.50

Subtitled *Art, Politics and the Representation of Tibet*, this careful study by visual anthropologist Harris explores how Tibet's cultural history is represented outside the country in museums from China to Britain.




## The Chapel of Trinity College Oxford

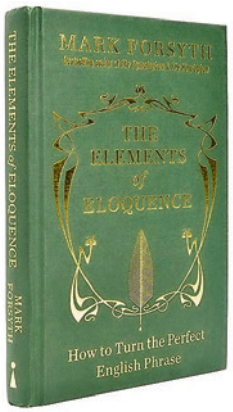
**By Martin Kemp**
Scala, £12.95

The author, an emeritus professor in the history of art and honorary fellow, has produced a detailed guide to Trinity's Chapel. The emergent hero is 16th-century Trinity President Ralph Bathurst, who transformed it.


## July 1914: Countdown to War

**By Sean McMeekin**
Icon Books, £9.99

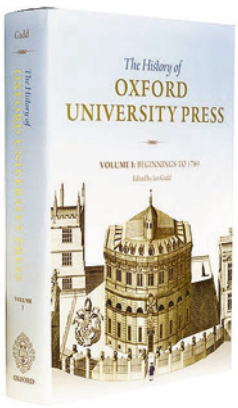
"For the fallen," reads the simple, poignant dedication of this book, before it goes on to examine in minute, gratifying detail the origins of the Great War. The conflict, it seems, was hungrily desired by many who should have known better.




## The Elements of Eloquence

**By Mark Forsyth**
Icon Books, £12.99

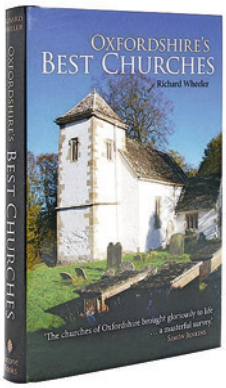
This is a meticulous and also hugely entertaining reeducation in the art of rhetoric. Forsyth explains why some constructions are more effective than others, using brilliantly luminous examples that range from Shakespeare to Winston Churchill and Dorothy Parker.




## The History of Oxford University Press

**Edited by Ian Gadd; Simon Eliot; Wm Roger Louis**
OUP, £250 (3 Vols)

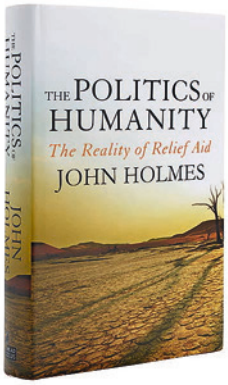
Three volumes, 2,384 pages and an army of contributors makes this a landmark achievement in scholarship, publishing, and of course the history of the University.




## Oxfordshire's Best Churches

**By Richard Wheeler**
Fircone Books, £25

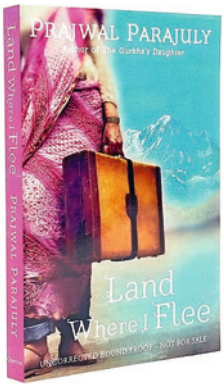
Lavishly illustrated with excellent photographs, this guide to 116 noteworthy churches in the county details each building's history, design and setting, mixing history with architectural illumination. Clearly a labour of love by Wheeler, this is a delightful record.




## The Politics of Humanity

**By John Holmes**
Head of Zeus, £20

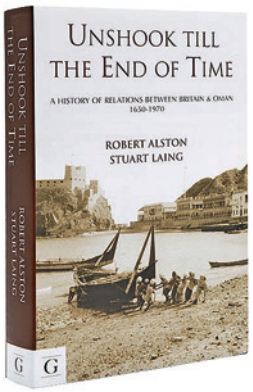
As the former UN Under-Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs, Holmes was in the unique situation of responding to crises across the globe. Here he highlights the many sobering factors hindering relief aid, from local politics to donor interference.




## Land Where I Flee

**By Prajwal Parajuly**
Quercus, £16.99

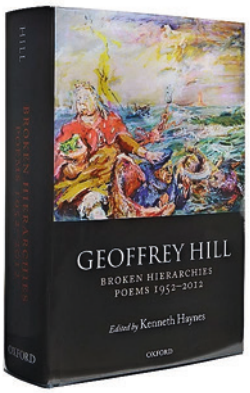
The author of the acclaimed short story collection *The Gurkha's Daughter* debuts his first fiction novel, following three siblings (from New York, Oxford and Colorado) who travel to the Himalayas for their grandmother's birthday celebration. A cultural mélange with plenty of wit and bite ensues.




## Unshook Till The End of Time

**By Robert Alston, Stuart Laing**
Gilgamesh Publishing, £25

Penned by two former British Ambassadors to Oman, Alston an Oxonian (New College, 1958), this book elaborates Britain and Oman's special bond between 1650 and 1970. An account of one of the happier legacies of Empire.




## Geoffrey Hill: Broken Hierarchies Poems 1952–2012

**Edited by Kenneth Haynes**
OUP, £35

Apart from a fourfold epigraph that includes Psalm 90: 14-17 and Ezra Pound distinguishing private gain from prosperity, the volume contains no elucidation or critical diversion. Just a thousand pages of verse from perhaps our greatest living poet.

## Oxford Characters

# SIMON BAGNALL

**Judith Keeling** meets the head gardener in one of the leading – and most beautiful – gardens in the collegiate University

The porters' lodge at Worcester College was bustling with students when the call came through from the stationmaster at Oxford's railway station. "We've got one of your wallabies here on the platform," boomed the stationmaster to whichever porter happened to pick up the phone.

"What's he doing there?" sighed the exasperated porter (for escaping was one of the specialities of the college's two resident marsupials).

"Looks like he might be about to board the ten-to-five to London," came the crackled response.

The errant wallaby was one of a pair donated to the college in 1953 and living in the Provost's gardens. But alas for the pair (who'd also made themselves deeply unpopular by gobbling the Provost's roses), the harsh winter of 1955 spelled the end of their lives at Worcester. The buck bounded onto the frozen college lake, slipped through the ice and perished. Thereupon the college decided that enough really *was* enough, and the female and two babies were promptly rehomed at Ilfracombe Zoo.

The Worcester wallabies are just one chapter in the colourful history of a unique and stunning 26-acre Oxford college garden – which also includes playing fields and an orchard – all hidden behind the college walls on the edge of Jericho. In the eighteenth century, cattle grazed on the area beyond the lake, but that's long since been replaced with sports pitches and a pavilion. Now, as the college celebrates its 300th anniversary, animals are still in evidence, but they're indigenous and more conventional. The glorious lake, fed from the canal, is home to numerous species of wildfowl, mostly donated over the years. "We've had some recent donations from a local primary school who were doing a project hatching eggs," explains Simon Bagnall, Worcester's head of gardens and grounds. "They had a number of ducklings they didn't know what to do with, so they gave them to us. It seems we're locally known to have some water, so every now and then people bring us ducks!"

The centrepiece of Worcester's gardens, the lake also serves as the glorious setting for unique floating theatrical productions put on by the students during the summer term. The tradition began in 1949 when the college's drama society, the Buskins, put on a memorable performance of *The Tempest*, in which Ariel ran across the lake on duck boards. The production set the creative benchmark for drama at Worcester, with many of the cast going on to become professional actors. Last year students revived the tradition with a floating performance of *The Merchant of Venice*. Another summer production is expected this year.

> 'Worcester's gardens have played an important part in the life of the college'

Now the college has plans to extend the lake as part of the landscaping for a new lecture theatre to be built within the next two years, subject to planning permission being granted. "The design for the Nazrin Shah Building is for a 160-seat lecture hall, with the gable end floating on stilts over the lake which will be extended to meet it," says Bagnall. The new building will be situated in a slightly neglected corner of the college garden to the right of the playing fields. "The landscaping is very much an important feature," Bagnall points out.

Indeed, Worcester's gardens have played an important part in the life of the college from the beginning, as correspondence from some of the early Provosts shows. The striking rectangular sunken lawn in First Quad was an early object of love and care. In October 1785, Provost Sheffield was moved to circulate a letter to dons in which he ordered that: "Any member of the college who keeps a dog in his room be sconced half a crown, as shall everyone who walks upon the grass plat in the quadrangle." And one of his successors, Provost Lys (Worcester College Provost from 1919 to 1946), spoke in his memoirs about employing local boys to pick the daisies out of the lawn in First Quad.

These days, there is a dedicated team of seven gardeners to care for the grounds, headed by Bagnall, who has been head gardener at Worcester for ten years. His love of plants is evident, and even on a grey winter day, the Nuffield lawn is alive with bulbs including around 70 different types of snowdrop, a particular passion.

The Worcester gardeners are busy during the winter months growing exotic flowers and bedding plants in the college's greenhouse to adorn the borders in the summer. The gardens also produce fruit and some salad. "So there's always plenty to do here," says Bagnall. "I am exceptionally lucky with the gardening team and the college garden committee; everyone has ideas and we work together well. We do plan the gardens with the students in mind: after all, it is their garden."

One popular spot is the orchard, with its twisting apple and pear trees that each year produce 500 bottles of organic juice, available for students to buy. The garden team leaves the area under the trees unmown to grow into islands of grass and wild flowers; places for undergraduates to relax, chat or even revise.

Professor Jonathan Bate, the current Provost, also has his own corner for contemplation: a wooden shepherd's hut on wheels, at the end of the Provost's garden beside the lake – a slice of paradise.

I can't think for the life of me why those wallabies were always trying to escape.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/JOBY SESSIONS

Simon Bagnall, Worcester College head of gardens and grounds, stands on the Mildred Allen Bridge by the Provost's hut

*Judith Keeling contributes to a wide range of national newspapers and magazines and contributes to both print and digital* Oxford Today

ANGELA DAVISON

Sam Agarwal batting for Oxford MCCU against Warwickshire CCC in April 2013

# OXFORD CRICKET

Sam Agarwal broke records as cricket captain for the Blues. And Oxford has yet more cricketers poised to make us proud, writes **Judith Keeling**

Blues cricket captain Samridh Agarwal's last shot for Oxford University – a single run off a drive to long on – was, in itself, relatively unspectacular. Yet it brought to an end an outstanding performance that saw him score an epic 313 not out off 312 balls against Cambridge: thus turning the talented Indian batsman into a Varsity match legend overnight.

Agarwal's tour de force in last year's four-day Varsity cricket match at Fenner's was hailed as the most extraordinary innings in the 186-year history of the competition. It smashed the previous highest individual Varsity match score of 247, set by Oxford's Salil Oberoi, in 2005. It showed that Oxford University Cricket Club – which in the past has produced famous cricketers such as AC Smith, Colin Cowdrey and Imran Khan – is still nurturing new generations of elite sportsmen.

For a phenomenal seven hours, Agarwal, a materials science engineer (The Queen's College, 2009), dominated the crease, scoring 41 fours and three sixes along the way. "My emotions were high going into the match as it was my last for Oxford University Cricket Club," recalls Agarwal, who graduated with a 2.1 MEng degree and is currently playing cricket back in his native India. "But I was trying hard not to show them because I was captain and needed to set an example on and off the pitch."

According to the Blues' head coach Graham Charlesworth, Agarwal's destruction of an experienced Light Blue bowling attack, and the way he led his side to a comprehensive 186-run victory over Cambridge inside three days, has highlighted just how far he progressed as a player during his time at Oxford. "When he first arrived he would get out because he got frustrated, but in the four years he has been at Oxford, his temperament has improved," says Charlesworth, who is responsible for steering the development of all the talented cricketers coming through Oxford University and Oxford Brookes. "He played each ball on its merits and just kept scoring runs at the same tempo all the way through. It was impressive to watch."

Agarwal's ability to juggle sporting commitments and achieve top grades is by no means unique. Many of the Blues players also train with the Oxford MCCU, one of six MCC-funded university centres of cricket excellence in England, set up to provide elite student cricketers with the opportunity to play first-class cricket while studying for a degree.

The Oxford MCCU also has players from Oxford Brookes. "There's an adage that if all the Blues sportsmen and women were to be grouped into a college, they would be among the leaders in the academic league tables," says Charlesworth, who is also Oxford MCCU's head coach. "Most of the students selected for the Oxford MCCU go on to get a minimum of a 2.1 and there are quite a few Firsts, too. This is partly because they are extremely well organised."

"There's no room for inefficiency and dawdling," agrees Gus Kennedy, this year's Blues captain, who is also a Hockey Blue and studying for a Master's in economics and social history at Kellogg College.

Oxford may have lost Agarwal, but there are other promising players in this year's Blues and MCCU sides, says Kennedy. Names to watch for the future are seam bowlers Abi Sakande, an England Under-19 player and natural sciences fresher at St John's, and Johnny Marsden, a St Hilda's engineer who is under contract to Derbyshire and therefore already playing first-class cricket.

Oxford MCCU plays top counties in first-class fixtures every spring and summer which are open to all in the University Parks. So anyone who strolls through the parks at the time gets the chance to watch Oxford students playing against international cricketers – a unique situation. Agarwal, for instance, scored a century against county champions Warwickshire in last year's match, which Oxford MCCU went on to lose by only 20 runs.

The parks will also play host to the four-day 2014 Varsity cricket match against Cambridge, which, as Kennedy says firmly, "We are very focused on winning again!"

*For more information on upcoming matches in the University Parks, visit* **cricketintheparks.org.uk.**

*Competition*

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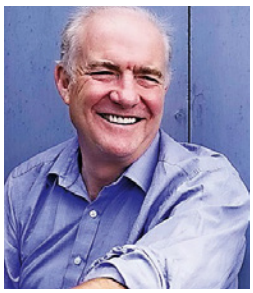

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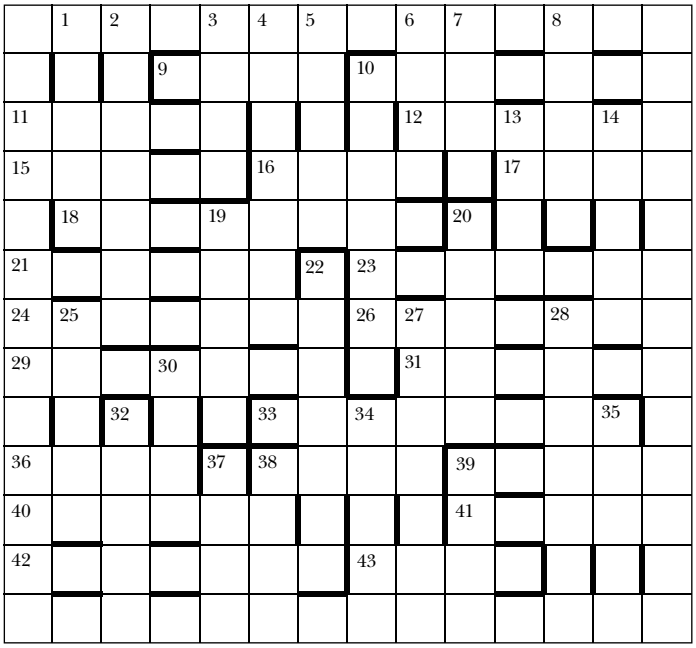
# Crossword

## Across

**9** Weep over onion recipe, maybe (4)
**10** Envy Cousteau swimming without special device anchor relies on? (7)
**11** Exterior presented by metropolitan bijouterie (5)
**12** See preamble (6)
**15** Large figure – it's seen on top in mathematical function (5)
**16** Exporter backed swindle delivering rainwear (4)
**17** Card player always sat out after end of game (4)
**18** Sound units from northern environs of Perth one's deployed around Middle East (8)
**21** Team from East Fife town demoted (6)
**23** Drink knocked back, consumed by inebriated father – fiery stuff (7)
**24** Opposes most of article, noting blemishes (7)
**26** Extra fast current starts to tug at lines around Channel Island (7)
**29** Old coin offered by rank-smelling farmer in South America (7)
**31** Eastern country shifting capital away from the coast (6)
**33** Jumping gun – vital when running cross-country (8)
**36** Olympian given terribly hard time (4)
**38** Flighty type using ham in avocado sandwiches (4)
**39** German community seen freely embracing Austrian saint (5)
**40** Last ditch group of supporters start to claim equal cut (6)
**41** Overseers indicated average time (5)
**42** Federal soldiers try, in point of fact, returning north (7)
**43** Colourful deity from Indonesia encountered in tropical isle (4)



**Six of the clues contain two superfluous words each. Each of the remaining clues contains one superfluous word. The initial letters of these 50 words spell out a quotation to be entered clockwise in the perimeter squares of the diagram. Two unclued entries are to be deduced.**

*Michael Macdonald-Cooper (St Catherine's, 1962)*

## How it works:

Every month during the academic year 2013-14, correct entries to the *Oxford Today* Crossword Competition will be thrown in a hat and a winner drawn. The winner will receive a bottle of wine (see below). There is one crossword puzzle in each of the *Oxford Today* print issues, published on 17 October 2013, and 17 April 2014 respectively, and then online bimonthly, with alumni alerted to their going 'live' by the '*Oxford Today* Extra' email service (see page 7). The deadline for the competition on this page is Friday 30 May 2014. Please post entries to Janet Avison, University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD.

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## Down

**1** Supply hard question, one to feature in first of exam papers (5)
**2** Evangelist's friend endlessly admired by the women (7)
**3** Become tense travelling on vessel (4)
**4** As, for instance, Spanish article on people in Egypt describes Alexandrians (7)
**5** A rich decoration covering area to port or starboard? (5)
**6** Played impromptu club chess, finally exchanging knights (4)
**7** Danish couple, quite mad, scrubbing area within college (4)
**8** Almost half of class in Tanzania achieved fame (5)
**10** Takes to task Church of England priest featured in book (7)
**13** Sidelong look apt to wind up (4)
**14** Commercial city, very large, also known as Canton (5)
**19** Foolish persons mistakenly send king to capture rook (5)
**20** Exhausted mariner ecstatic about end of trip (5)
**22** When young, Silas organised attacks (7)
**25** Place to put up the old Christmas holly, almost withered (5)
**27** See preamble (7)
**28** Roof showing escutcheon and arms artistically represented (7)
**30** Country air around Quantocks initially stimulates (4)
**32** Tender from Geneva travelled in three foreign countries primarily (5)
**34** Ruined section of ground easily identified (5)
**35** Dramatist shows annoyance before opening in Theatre Royal (5)
**37** Expected tenor to give thrilling musical performance (4)
**38** Fitting in introductions to more Oxford entrepreneurs early tomorrow (4)
**39** Uprising first eliminating nice quiet ruler (4)

Monthly crosswords, including this one, will appear on www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk/puzzles

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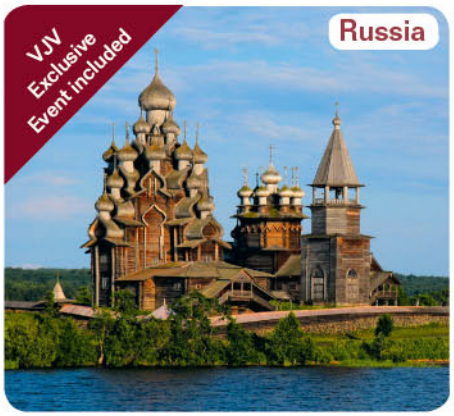


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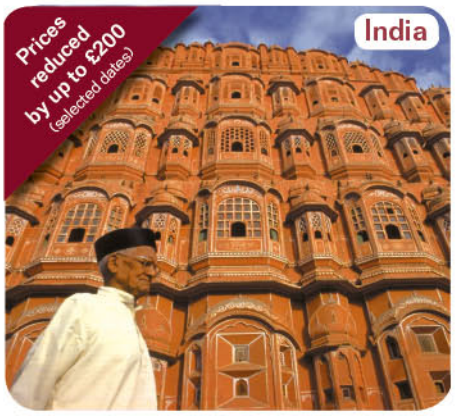


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# Obituaries

## John Albery

*5 April 1936–3 December 2013*

(Wyndham) John Albery FRS, FRSC, chemist and Master of University College, Oxford, from 1989 to 1997, died on 3 December 2013 aged 77. He was educated at Winchester College and Balliol College, Oxford, where he read chemistry, graduating in 1960 and taking his DPhil in 1964. He was a lecturer in physical chemistry and fellow of University College until 1978 (and a tutor for admissions from 1968 to 1975). He was Professor of Physical Chemistry at Imperial College, London until 1989. A leader in the field of electrochemistry and enzyme kinetics, he was elected an FRS in 1985. As Master of Univ, he was a colourful figure, as befitted his background in the theatrical Albery family. He was unmarried.

## Anne Barton

*9 May 1933–11 November 2013*

(Barbara) Anne Barton (née Roesen) FBA, literary scholar, died on 11 November 2013 aged 80. Born in New York, she was educated at Bryn Mawr College, graduating in 1954, and took a PhD at Cambridge in 1960. She was a research fellow at Girton College from 1960 to 1962, then an official fellow until 1972. After two years as Professor of English at Bedford College, London, in 1974 she became tutor in English and the first female fellow of New College, Oxford. In 1984 she returned to Cambridge as Professor of English. She was known for her work on Shakespeare – notably *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play* (1962) – but also for that on Ben Jonson, Byron and the Earl of Rochester. She is survived by her second husband, John Barton.

## Lawrence Klein

*14 September 1920–20 October 2013*

The Nobel Prize-winning economist Lawrence Robert Klein died on 20 October 2013 aged 93. Born in Omaha, Nebraska, he attended Los Angeles City College, the University of California, Berkeley, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He then taught at Chicago and Michigan and moved to Oxford University's Institute of Statistics, where between 1954 and 1958 he worked closely with Sir James Ball developing the 'Oxford model' of the British economy. In 1958 he returned to the US to become a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, where he remained until his retirement in 1991. He was best known for his work on economic modelling. He won the Nobel Prize for economics in 1980, was made a corresponding FBA in 1991 and became an honorary fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, in 2005. He is survived by his wife Sonia and four children.

## Joan Thirsk

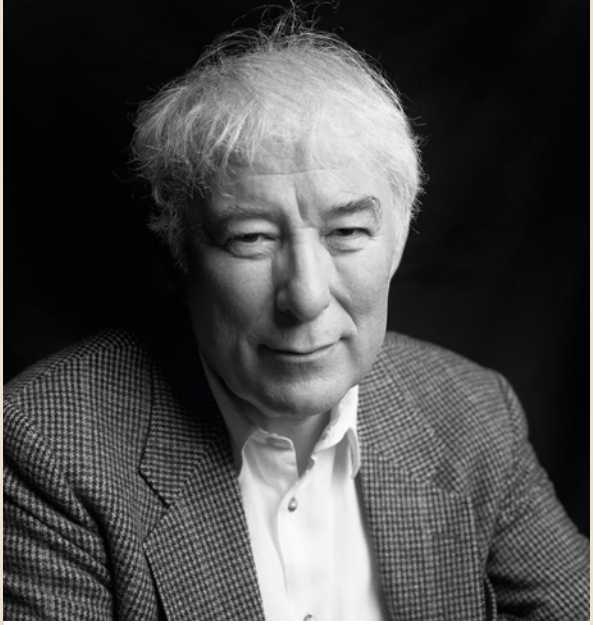
*19 June 1922–3 October 2013*

(Irene) Joan Thirsk (née Watkins) CBE, FBA, Reader in Economic History and Professorial Fellow of St Hilda's College, Oxford, from 1965 to 1983, died on 3 October 2013 aged 91. Born in London, she was educated at Camden School for Girls and Westfield College, London, but her undergraduate education was interrupted by war service at Bletchley Park. Returning to Westfield College, she graduated in History then completed a PhD on English agrarian history. For 14 years she was a research fellow at the University of Leicester before moving to Oxford. She wrote on all aspects of English agricultural and rural history and was general editor of the *Agrarian History of England and Wales*. She was elected an FBA in 1974 and made a CBE in 1994. She is survived by her husband, Jimmy, and two children.

## D Ellis Evans

*23 September 1930–26 September 2013*

David Ellis Evans FBA, Jesus Professor of Celtic at the University of Oxford from 1978 to 1996, died on 26 September 2013 aged 83. Born in Carmarthenshire, he was educated at Llandeilo Grammar School, the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and University College, Swansea – and, as a Meyricke graduate scholar, Jesus College, Oxford. He completed his DPhil in 1962 on early Celtic personal names. He taught at University College, Swansea, from 1957, becoming Professor of Welsh Language and Literature in 1974. He published on the culture of the early continental Celts and the history, literature and culture of the Celts in Wales and Ireland. He was elected an FBA in 1983. He is survived by two daughters, his wife Sheila having predeceased him.



NORMAN MCBEATH

## Seamus Heaney

*13 April 1939–30 August 2013*

Seamus Heaney FBA, Professor of Poetry at Oxford from 1989 to 1994 and winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1995, died on 30 August 2013 aged 74. The son of a farmer in County Derry, Northern Ireland, he was educated at St Columb's College, Derry, and Queen's University, Belfast. After graduating in 1961 he taught at a secondary school, then at a college of education, then at Queen's University, Belfast; he later taught at Carysfort College, and from 1985 to 1997 at Harvard (where he spent nine further years as Poet in Residence). His first substantial collection of poems, *Death of a Naturalist* (1966), won both the Somerset Maugham and the Cholmondeley Awards. He published 13 collections of poetry, several volumes of essays and a translation of *Beowulf* (1999). He was awarded an honorary DLitt by Oxford University in 1997 and elected an FBA in 1999. He is survived by his wife, Marie, and their three children.

*Obituaries are edited by Dr Alex May, research editor at* Oxford DNB

A more comprehensive list of obituaries of Oxonians is at www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk/obits

OXFORD UNIVERSITY IMAGES/ROB JUDGES

# My Oxford

## Ruby Wax – Kellogg 2010

After a life in entertainment Oxford was the real deal, the actress and comedian tells **John Garth**

**Where had you studied as an undergraduate, and what did you study?**
I majored in psychology at Berkeley but I had a very short academic experience. I came to England to study drama hoping to combine it with psychology. Well, this was ridiculous! I got snared by narcissism, and the money was much more interesting than if you were a therapist. But I said someday I'd come back to psychology. Thirty years later I was losing my interest in television. I studied therapy at Regent's College in London, but I wasn't a very good therapist. So I thought, let's study the brain: that's the real McCoy. I don't like ethereal flaky things; I like to look at the meat.

**Why did you apply to Oxford?**
I suffered from depression, though I haven't for seven years now. It's about regulating whatever toxic chemical rushes through. For that, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) had the best results and Professor Mark Williams, the founder, was teaching here. That gave me a mission. He was very surprised when I got in, but I give great interviews.

**What were your impressions of Oxford?**
It was a kick. When you get into that inner sanctum and you don't have to do the tap-dancing and you're kind of accepted – there's nothing higher than that.

**Were you a hard-working student?**
Yes. I was obsessed. For a Master's you only come three days every few weeks, but those are so heavy that when you go away your brain hurts. I had to have a career too, but it wasn't as hard for me as it was for people who were doctors, because they're working all the time.

**Was there a social life with your fellow students?**
Not in the beginning. I was very foreign to them. There were people from Canada and Norway and Croatia, so they hadn't really heard of me – they just thought I was a flake. But by the end we'd developed a sense of humour and then it was hilarious.

**Did you take part in any extra-curricular activities?**
I wasn't tempted. Here in Summertown, Starbucks is the cultural centre. I have my Union card but I haven't gone into the Union once. I could have joined the boating team. It was all there. Too bad I wasn't an undergraduate, but I wasn't smart enough then; I only got smart later in life.

**What were your tutors like?**
Listening to Mark Williams was my favourite part. It's from the horse's mouth. There's no fat in any of his sentences. Everything he said, I wrote down, and I'd squeeze him and he'd say, "I've done enough now." I had to research what I needed to research.

**Did you submit a practical to go with your thesis?**
Everyone else had to do clinical hours leading the practice of mindfulness, but I was never going to be a clinician. My practical was a show at the Menier Chocolate Factory in London. The show became a book, and the book is now becoming a show which I'm going to tour. It's all because of Oxford. My only gift is that I can make it funny.

**You had to write a thesis too. What was that like?**
Terrible, really awful. I can't write academic. I'm dyslexic. But I got the idea, and that's all that counts.

**Is it going to change your life?**
It already did. I'm doing a show, and I wrote a book, and I have street cred because I did a Master's at Oxford so nobody can say this is a whim of a celebrity.

**Does Oxford have a role to play in your field?**
MBCT is the zeitgeist now. There's not a lot of money for therapy or medication, but mindfulness is an eight-week course and then you're on your own.

**How do you think of Oxford now?**
Oxford is a fantasy to any American. I can't ever top this, even if I won an Oscar. It's the ultimate.

See a video of Ruby Wax speaking about her 'Secret Oxford': www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk/rubywax

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