Christ Church is delighted to welcome Sir Tim Berners-Lee as a Research Student and member of the Governing Body. His appointment is an important milestone for the House in helping Oxford develop teaching and research in the subject. Oxford’s Department of Computer Science is top-rated in research terms but undergraduate teaching numbers have traditionally been very restricted, particularly in comparison with Cambridge and several other Russell group universities. Eric Schmidt (Google) recently told a meeting in London there was a “huge shortage of computer science faculty” at British universities, and that the UK was facing “an enormous problem of a lack of skills you’ll need for the knowledge economy”. The House’s aim is to contribute to Oxford’s effort to turn this serious shortfall around.
For now Tim is to come on a part-time basis from his chair at MIT. Our task is to give him the support to come to work in a UK environment, and to grow Computer Science at Christ Church. Tim will be a public face for this initiative, and a huge draw for science and engineering applicants to the House. He will be conducting research with colleagues at the Department of Computer Science and continuing his public policy and outreach work. Christ Church will host his personal office and his PA, and will move quickly to appoint a Tutor in Computer Science who will look after our undergraduates, the first group of which will be admitted in this autumn’s admissions round. We shall also appoint postdoctoral fellows and admit a number of graduate students working on doctoral theses.

Our goal is to help boost Oxford’s undergraduate numbers in Computer Science and to make the House a centre of excellence for integrated computer-science teaching and research. The key role today played by computation skills in teaching and research at undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral level right across the sciences gives us a huge opportunity to leverage Tim’s presence for cross-disciplinary fertilisation. In a related area (Astrophysics) we already have in the House one embryonic centre of excellence, partly-funded by the generosity of an Old Member and by the parent of an Old Member. The arrival of Computer Science will build links with not just Astrophysics (Prof Roger Davies, and in other areas of Physics Profs Axel Kuhn and Guy Wilkinson, and a shortly-to-be-appointed Career Development Fellow) but other subjects including Chemistry (Profs Dirk Aarts and Jason Davis), Engineering (Profs David Nowell and Malcolm McCulloch), Mathematics (Profs Sam Howison and Kevin McGerty), the life sciences, and indeed mathematical finance, where our new MAN professor of Financial Engineering (Prof Mihaela van der Scaar) was previously a computer scientist directing the data-and-decisions lab at UCLA, focusing on machine-learning for medicine and education, quantitative finance, and game theory. There are also potential links with the Oxford Internet Institute, which deals with social and behavioural aspects of information science. We shall shortly be joined (as a Senior Associate Research Fellow) by Dr Gina Neff from the OII.

In short an exciting time for science at the House. In the first instance the House will make this major investment from its own resources. We expect it to expand the programme over the next few years as we work with the Department of Computer Science, add graduate students, post-docs, and research projects, and look for partners outside Oxford. In the following pages Tim sets out his goals for the next five years, and Professor Mike Wooldridge, Head of the Department of Computer Science, explains the importance of the appointment at University level.
My work over the past decades links research projects and campaigns to enhance the potential of the Web and the way the world uses it. For example, I am currently focused on a project to “re-decentralize” the Web to put users in control of their own data, allowing them to choose where it is stored and who and what gets access to it. To do this we are developing a new architecture for Web apps in which we separate, both physically and socially, Web sites and applications from the data they store. The market for secure personal data storage becomes a commodity, and a new market for powerful apps is enabled – apps which compete to provide powerful functionality for the user, but apps whose developers do not need to worry about building out the “back end” – because they all use the arbitrary available storage. This is on the surface a technical development project, but the system is both technical and social, and it has social motivation and impact.

The mission is to build a new ecosystem, showing that it works, and getting it widely adopted. This demands not only research, but also advanced development, standardized platform-building, and the creation of commercial products, so while it is grounded in this lab work, start-ups may be an important part of the deployment plan. The project connects well with the UK-funded SOCIAM (social machines) project at Oxford, Southampton and Edinburgh, headed up by Nigel Shadbolt in OUCS, on which I was a Principal Investigator.

As Christ Church moves into a more computer-science aware world, there are many potential applications where the college can actually be an important test-bed, including personal-data stores for members’ use. This could also happen on a university scale too, with apps for various tasks developed with ChCh leadership, and then rolled out as the university also starts to provide generic storage as a service. The Computer Science team at the college can provide development strength at the core of the project.

Ultimately this is about the personal empowerment of people and groups, which is for me the main motivation. The apps we will be able to build should be very much more powerful for the user than the current apps. Instead of separate silos - a fitness app, a medical web site, a hospital clinic website, or our shopping records - we will be able to access all of it and connect it together, leading to much more insight about our personal lives.

Linked to this are several connected initiatives in which I have been heavily involved in recent years.

One is Open Data, a vision of an emergent structure of Web-based data in which the connections are there from the first moment, but also develop and deepen with time. Most open data on the Web is not currently in this state. It has been prepared from other data which has been prepared from other data in a pipeline which is very one-way. The Open Data Institute (ODI)
Nigel Shadbolt and I founded in east London has been very effective in thought leadership, training, and the nurturing of start-ups using data. Connections with Oxford could include helping ODI with a new campaign, ODI helping the college or the University as a whole (not just in computer science but all sciences) to understand and make progress on their own open data, or collaborating on research projects to enable open data generally. This work has great importance for the future of scientific progress in a world in which fields like genomics, proteomics, immunology, epidemiology, and clinical medicine become very data-intensive and interconnected.

Another is Open Standards. I founded and am still the Director of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), a non-national Web standards body where companies and individuals meet to work together to make the Web more powerful and open as a platform. W3C is about technology development, but mainly consensus building.

Finally, but no less important: Human Rights on Web. The Web is a powerful system: with every step up in functionality, we increase the gap between those with access and those without.

We have a duty to ensure that the Web serves humanity, and all of humanity. The World Wide Web Foundation was created to that end. Rosemary Leith (now my wife) was a prime mover in putting together the Foundation as a real organization. When first formed it was more or less alone in looking at these issues. Now, with the huge global growth of Web users, many organizations have moved into the space. It is valuable for developing responses to political challenges to the open Web from government or industry. The Foundation is not just concerned with the numbers of people using the Web, but also with what sort of Web it is — is it open, non-discriminatory, private and available to all, including minorities and women? Is it a propagating medium for truth and understanding, or more so for untruth and discord? Can these parameters be changed?

One of the roles of the Office for Tim Berners-Lee at the college will be to work closely with the Web Foundation, providing mutual assistance. The issues are many, from censorship and spying, to the connected issues of anonymity and bullying on the web, to understanding the radicalization or youth, and so on.

I am hugely excited to be able to continue some of this work at Oxford and at Christ Church.

The goal is to re-engineer the way the web works in practice, separating applications from data by a common generic interface, so that users can be completely in control of their own data, can chose where it is stored and who and what gets access to it...
Since the industrial revolution, repeated waves of communications technologies have swept over our world, each of them changing it utterly. Just as radio was the communications technology that defined the first half of the twentieth century, and television defined the second half, so the World-Wide Web has been the defining communications technology of the twenty-first century. It is no exaggeration to say that Google, Amazon, eBay, Facebook, Twitter – all these giants of our age, and many, many more – were made possible by the World-Wide Web. And Tim’s role in all of this could not be simpler: he gave the world the web – the whole thing. Starting from an initial proposal at CERN in 1989 (famously described by his boss at the time as “vague but exciting”), Tim designed the entire framework of the web – from the underlying protocols and standards, to the software to make it all work, right through to the principles that should govern it (chief among them being openness and independence – principles that Tim continues to fight for to the present day). The clarity of Tim’s vision for the development of the web were central to the success of the web project. In the early 1990s, there were many systems out there which could do some approximation of what the web does, but it was Tim’s unique combination of insights that made the web succeed where challengers failed. In a rapid series of developments, from 1989 to 1994, Tim gave us the web as we know it today. Everyone who saw it at the time recognised that it was game-changing. Beautifully simple and elegant, and immensely powerful, it was clearly going to be every bit as transformational as the telephone, radio, and television.

Tim has remained at the centre of the development of the web to the present day, and one of his major challenges has been to keep it independent and open, as he originally intended. We have all benefited from his efforts as a consequence. More recently, he has been a champion of open data – the idea that, for example, when Governments generate data, there is huge potential value if this data is made freely available and open for all to use. The web continues to develop, and Tim continues to work towards his vision. At Oxford, we have many researchers working around the web, and having Tim himself at the centre of these activities is a unique opportunity. Most obviously, Tim will continue his long-standing collaboration with Sir Nigel Shadbolt, current Principal of Jesus College, on open and linked data; both Tim and Nigel are heavily involved in the Open Data Institute, as President and Chairman, respectively.

From my perspective as Head of Department, having Tim on-board is of crucial importance to my goal of growing Computer Science at Oxford. Although our department has about 70
Starting from an initial proposal at CERN in 1989 (famously described by his boss at the time as “vague but exciting”), Tim designed the entire framework of the web...

faculty, and we are routinely ranked as the best Computer Science department in Europe (and 3rd best in the world, according to the October 2016 ranking of the Times Higher Education Supplement), for historical reasons, Computer Science at Oxford is an unusually small undergraduate subject – this year we admitted only 26 students to our flagship single honours Computer Science degree. This makes us an extreme outlier in the Russell Group of leading UK universities, and means that Oxford simply doesn’t have the footprint on the UK technology scene that the world’s best university should have. Increasing our undergraduates is key to that, and having the inventor of the modern world here to champion our cause will surely open minds and doors. The signs are good: having Christ Church sign up to take undergraduate computer scientists is a hugely welcome first step, and an indicator, I believe, of where Oxford is going. As Head of Department, I very much look forward to working with Tim and Christ Church to establish Computer Science as a central subject at Oxford.

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Above: Tim Berners-Lee’s original proposal for what would become the Web.

Right: The NeXT Computer used by Berners-Lee at CERN which became the world’s first web server.

Right: The plaque at CERN commemorating the creation of the Web.
By any standards, this is a gratifying achievement, and this glowing assessment will continue to have significant and beneficial reverberations for some years to come. Not least in international recruitment for places to study and posts devoted to teaching and research here at the House. We are, as ever, proud to be the Best-of-the-Best: the finest College in the world’s top university.

Thomas Piketty’s *Capital* (Harvard, 2014) weighs in at 685 pages, and is by any yardstick a contender for the *magnus opus* of a writer only born in 1971. So considering the length and depth of the book, it hardly seems fair to summarise its basic thesis in a single sentence: $R>G$. Or, to express the core thesis slightly less gnomically, the annual rate of return on capital, including profits, dividends and other income from capital (expressed as a percentage of its total value), is greater than the rate of growth of the economy.

No matter where you live in the world, education is an expensive investment. But as the oft-quoted proverb has it, if you think education is expensive, try ignorance. It’s much more expensive.

There can be no doubt that an Oxford education is an expensive business. Every one of our students is effectively ‘double-taught’. The university provides world-class lectures. But week-by-week,
the College provides the closely taught tutorials that ensure each junior member of the House is going into their subject in a depth that is incomparable to other forms of undergraduate teaching. The University is responsible for the lectures. But the cost of the tutoring falls entirely on the College.

Piketty’s thesis may well be true in terms of economics: the returns are greater than the growth. But in education, the basic business is not monetary, but rather social capital. Education is not just about improving the minds and prospects of a deserving few. Education is about taking those few, and giving them an education that leads to a vocation, such that the world becomes a better place for all.

So the ground-breaking research in engineering might improve the water supply for a need community in the developing world. Advances in medicine might help our poorest nations. Discoveries in the humanities and arts can not only push back frontiers of knowledge, but increase our wisdom and self-understanding. Major developments in physics, computing and other subjects can transform our communications and social infrastructures.

If we aspire to be the ‘Best-of-the-Best’ for future generations, and maintain our position as the world’s finest University, we will need to continue to invest. Indeed to invest, so that we can offer a needs-blind admissions system that will be able to offer everyone a place who is able to meet the entry criteria. This is no small challenge, to be sure.

Here at the House, and mindful of our post-referendum climate, we will continue to attract the best students from all over the globe, and to recruit the very best scholars drawn from an international field. It is what makes this University great, and it is the very best way to ensure that the education provided by the House remains ‘the-Best-of-the-Best’.

Make no mistake. Great education requires a significant up-front investment, and considerable outlay. But the returns are inestimable. Not only for students and scholars involved in their quests for knowledge, but also for the wider world, as wisdom is shared out for the wider public good. To do this is, as, our forebears say, simply capital.

The Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy, Dean
What's in a name? Christ Church, unlike many colleges or departments of the University, has not usually named its buildings after people. We have the ‘New Library,’ for example, not the ‘Aldrich’ or ‘Townesend’ Library in contrast with the Codrington at All Souls or the Wren Library in Cambridge, but there are still some parts of Christ Church which carry the names of people or places. Some seem obvious - like Tom Quad, named for the bell which hangs in Tom Tower and remembering Thomas Becket - but others are less so.

Another Thomas is commemorated by the Wolsey Tower. However, like Tom Quad, which was officially known as the Great Quadrangle until the 1970s, it is only relatively recently that the Wolsey Tower was known as such. Through all the discussions about its construction in the 1870s, it was, much more prosaically, known as the Belfry Tower. It was designed to carry the peel of bells moved by George Gilbert Scott as a safety measure from the cathedral to protect the fragile and ancient spire. But there had been a statue of Cardinal Wolsey above the archway since 1719 and the founder’s name eventually stuck. At the top of the Hall stairs is the McKenna Room. Once the New Lecture Room, built in 1829 over the kitchen lobby, the room was refurbished for functions through the bequest of the novelist, Stephen McKenna (ChCh 1906).

From the cathedral cloister, little rooms above the east and south walks are visible. The one on the south is the Allestree Library, a small outpost of the main library holding the books given by Richard Allestree, Regius Professor of Divinity from 1663-1681, for the use of his successors.

On the south side of Hall, is School Quad or Yard. This has nothing to do with ‘Schools’ like the Bodleian main quadrangle, but was actually the playground for the choristers who were, until the nineteenth century, taught in the rooms that are now the Law Library. Across the Yard is the Lee Building. It was built in the 1770s as an anatomy school with a dissecting theatre on the lower floor, using gifts from the royal physicians John Freind (who was most famous for his History of Physick) and Matthew Lee, for whom the building was later named. The Dr Lee’s Readerships also formed part of his benefaction. In the 1970s, when the building was converted from laboratories into accommodation for the Senior Common Room, rooms were named for scientists who had practiced within its walls – John Kidd and Henry Acland – and after its architect, Henry Keene.

Back in Tom Quad, and heading north, one passes Mercury, the pond created as a reservoir and named for the statue in its centre, rather than for the canon who paid for it, Richard Gardiner.
Opposite the Wolsey Tower, is the nineteenth-century Fell Tower, christened after John, dean from 1660-1686. Killcanon, the passage between Tom and Peckwater Quads, is not named after a man or a place, but after the wind which howls along it, said to be cold enough to ‘kill the canons’.

Tucked behind Killcanon is Blue Boar Quad. When Wolsey began to build his college in 1525, two streets leading from St Aldate’s were closed. As compensation, he planned a new street just beyond the college wall. Both the lane and the quad preserve the memory of the Blue Boar Inn which stood nearby. Some of the rooms within Blue Boar (and in other quads) are named after generous alumni.

Three-and-a-half centuries before Blue Boar Quad, the first Peckwater Quadrangle was constructed (c.1605), to be followed one hundred years later by the elegant building we have today. The Peckwater family owned an inn (probably a residential hall as well as a tavern) on the site and gave it to St Frideswide’s priory in 1247. When Wolsey began his construction of Cardinal College, the inn functioned as workshops and accommodation for his builders and carpenters but it was soon used for students. Canterbury Quad is also named after a medieval institution, this time a college for monks from Christ Church, Canterbury. Its buildings survived until the 1780s when Richard Robinson, Archbishop of Armagh, paid for the construction of the grand gateway and its surrounding rooms.

There is one name that remains a mystery, however. Why is the Masters Garden so called? And where does the apostrophe go? Christ Church doesn’t have a Master, and the garden was never intended to be just for MAs. In discussions surrounding its creation in the 1920s, it was the College Garden but just once someone called it the Masters Garden, and so it has remained ever since. ■
Diet affects DNA

New research conducted by current member Emily Seward (2013) and her supervisor Steve Kelly has shown that diet can affect the DNA sequences of genes. In a study on two groups of parasites, they detected differences in DNA sequences that could be attributed to the composition of their food.

Study co-author Dr Steven Kelly, from Oxford’s Department of Plant Sciences, said: ‘Organisms construct their DNA using building blocks they get from food. Our hypothesis was that the composition of this food could alter an organism’s DNA. For example, could a vegetarian panda have predictable genetic differences from a meat-eating polar bear?

‘To test this hypothesis, we picked simple groups of parasites to use as a model system. These parasites share a common ancestor but have evolved to infect different hosts and eat very different foods.

‘We found that different levels of nitrogen in a parasite’s diet contributed to changes in its DNA. Specifically, parasites with low-nitrogen, high-sugar diets had DNA sequences that used less nitrogen than parasites with nitrogen-rich, high-protein diets.’

The study involved groups of eukaryotic parasites (Kinetoplastida) and bacterial parasites (Mollicutes) that infect different plant or animal hosts.

The results, based on novel mathematical models developed by the researchers, reveal a previously hidden relationship between cellular metabolism and evolution. They provide new insights into how DNA sequences can be influenced by adaptation to different diets.

Furthermore, the team found it is possible to predict the diets of related organisms by analysing the DNA sequence of their genes.

‘We are now looking at more complex organisms to see if we will find the same thing.’

For further information, please contact Stuart Gillespie in the University of Oxford press office at stuart.gillespie@admin.ox.ac.uk or on +44 (0)1865 283877.

Dr Steven Kelly: steven.kelly@plants.ox.ac.uk
Emily Seward: emily.seward@chch.ox.ac.uk


The Oxfords in New Zealand

Each year, six men from the choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford (although this year one was from New College, but we won’t talk about that) spend around a month in Christchurch, New Zealand as part of a cultural visit which is now in its nineteenth year. Based at Christ’s College, a boys’ school in the city where we were accommodated, we worked closely with their choirs and musicians, culminating in a joint concert featuring Vierne’s Messe Solennelle.

We also gave a lunchtime recital each Thursday in the school chapel, which very much grew in popularity as the month went on! Another part of our time in Christchurch involved singing with Cathedral Choir (in the Transitional Cathedral, an innovative building constructed largely from cardboard) for several services a week, as well as performing an evening concert there to a hugely appreciative audience. There was, of course, plenty of time to see New Zealand’s seemingly never-ending natural beauty; we visited hot springs, explored volcanic landscapes, climbed up glaciers and tasted an agreeable amount of Kiwi wine. All in all, it was a splendid trip; we would like to thank the benefactors who made this possible and Haydn Rawstron (1968) who masterminds the scheme.

Our blog, which chronicles our time there in rather more depth, can be found at oxfords2016.wordpress.com.
Christ Church, Chemistry and the World Wars

A Symposium to mark the centenary of the death of Andrea Angel in the Silvertown Explosion on 19 January 1917.

This is an afternoon symposium to commemorate the centenary of the death of Andrea Angel (Undergraduate and Chemistry Tutor at Christ Church) in the Silvertown Explosion at the Brunner-Mond factory on January 19th 1917. In recognition of his heroism Angel was awarded (amongst other tributes) the Edward Medal (1st Class) – precursor to the George Cross. Angel is the first name on the World War 1 memorials at Exeter School, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, and the Royal Society of Chemistry in addition being remembered on a memorial stone located near the site of the explosion. He has also recently been recognised by the Royal Society of Chemistry as one of their “175 Faces of Chemistry” and a Blue Plaque has just been approved for display on the site of his Oxford Banbury Road home by the Oxfordshire Blue Plaques Board.

In addition to talks about Angel, the Brunner-Mond Factory, and life in Christ Church during the World Wars, it has been decided to include additional talks about Prof. Lindemann’s role in World War 2 and about more general aspects of Chemical Warfare in the World Wars. It is expected that members of the Rabagliati family (Angel’s descendants) will be present, and it is hoped that they will bring various memorabilia (including the Edward Medal and other honours together with other family heirlooms such as a book of press cuttings from the time of the explosion etc.) for display on the day. A small group from Exeter School (Angel’s secondary school) will also attend and contribute some poster displays.

In addition to members of the college, it is intended that the event should be open to members of the University, the Royal Society of Chemistry and members of the wider public (though numbers are limited to 100 attendees). We are also seeking support to allow us to video the talks so that they can be made available via the University’s podcast site as part of our outreach remit.

Martin Grossel

CHRIST CHURCH, CHEMISTRY AND THE WORLD WARS

FRIDAY 17 MARCH 2017

Blue Boar Lecture Room, Christ Church (University of Oxford)

13.30-14.00 Registration
14.00-14.05 Welcome: Very Reverend Professor Martyn Percy (Dean of Christ Church)

SESSION 1

Chairman: Prof Richard Wayne (Christ Church)
14.05-14.35 Dr Martin Grossel, (Christ Church): “Andrea Angel and the Explosion at the Brunner-Mond Factory, Silvertown”
14.55-15.15 Judith Curthoys (Christ Church Archivist): “Christ Church members and the World Wars”
15.15-16.00 Tea and Exhibition

SESSION 2

Chairman: Dr Martin Grossel (Christ Church)
16.00-16.45 Professor David Dunmur (Christ Church): “The Prof at War: the story of Frederick Lindemann, 1st Viscount Cherwell”
16.45-17.30 Professor Ken Seddon (Department of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Queen’s University Belfast): “Chemical Weapons and the World Wars”
17.30-17.50 Discussion and Closing remarks. Chaired by Reverend Professor Nigel Biggar (Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology, Christ Church)
18.00-19.00 Reception and Exhibition – Christ Church Picture Gallery
The 17th Christopher Tower Poetry Competition

The 17th Christopher Tower Poetry Competition, the UK’s most valuable prize for young poets, has opened for entries, and this year students between 16-18 years of age are challenged to write a poem on the theme of ‘Stone’. In the 16 years of Tower Poetry’s competitions we’ve received almost 11,000 entries from almost 2,250 schools. Students from Bishop Challoner Catholic College (who have been longlisted) have entered most often, followed by the Sixth Form College, Colchester (with a winner in 2008) and thirdly Putney High School (with a winner in 2001). Over 200 different schools have been longlisted - some more than once.

Established in 2000, the Tower Prizes are recognised as among the most prestigious literary awards for this age group. The first prize is £3,000, with £1,000 and £500 going to the second and third prize-winners. In addition to individual prizes, the students’ schools and colleges also receive cash prizes of £150 and the three prizewinners are eligible for a place on the Tower Poetry Summer School. Three or four commended entries will receive £250 each. The names and schools of those longlisted will also be published on the Tower Poetry website. Entry forms are downloadable from the website and entry can be made online (or by post).

The entries will be judged this year by poets Sarah Howe and Vahni Capildeo. The 2017 competition will build on the success of earlier competitions. Many of our growing ‘alumni’ of 100 winners (2001-2016) and almost 800 longlisted, as well as 68 Summer School students, are gaining further acclaim in other competitions or within the publishing/writing world.

The competition is open to all 16-18 year-olds who are in full or part time education in the UK, and students and schools can find out more information about the prizes and associated future events at www.towerpoetry.org.uk/prize, or email info@towerpoetry.org.uk or call 01865 286591. Follow us on Facebook http://www.facebook.com/pages/Tower-Poetry/101808106554586?ref=hl or @TowerPoetry on Twitter or YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/christophertower1

The closing date for entries is Friday 17 February 2017. The winners will be announced on Wednesday 19 April 2017.

Watercolours by William Thomas

History tutor William Thomas has depicted Oxford in watercolour paintings. The paintings were displayed in Christ Church Picture Gallery from 19 October to 7 November 2016.
YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED TO ATTEND

THE ANDREW CHAMLIN MEMORIAL CONCERT

GIVEN BY PROFESSOR JOHN BUTT OBE

“...flawless technical delivery...”
- Gramophone

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
8PM, TUESDAY 6 JUNE 2017

SELECTION OF BACH ORGAN WORKS
ENTRY IS FREE AND ALL ARE WELCOME
In the last issue of CCM (No. 37) Richard Murray expressed the hope that choir school boys would respond to the beauty of the college and cathedral. This aspiration reminded me of my own reactions on coming up in 1950. I thought that nothing could equal the sound of the college prayers congregation singing ‘O quanta qualia’ beneath the rafters of the chancel. Dressed in our surplices and bowed into our places by the Dean’s verger with his silver wand we sang with gusto. The vigour of the singers came from the custom of Anglican public schools which presented boys for confirmation soon after their arrival. The Catholics on our staircase introduced me to the hierarchy among the priests chosen to hear confessions. To be allocated a priest not in the Chaplaincy set but at St Aloysius in the Woodstock Road was a statement about family background.

The contrast between home and college was overwhelming. Having lived in rented suburban houses of the 1920s and 1930s in Sheffield and then in Nottingham we knew our mother was always at home; her groceries were delivered by errand boys. My sister and I went home on foot for lunch from primary school. Our father went to work on the bus. I had never been sent to prep school at the age of eight, been beaten by a member of Pop at Eton, or viewed the expansive grounds and monuments at Stowe. We calculated that there were only nine freshmen from local authority schools out of a total of ninety-nine.

These facts were not available in the annual report written by the senior tutor, Robin Dundas (d. 1960) elected a Student in 1910, only the numbers from major public schools. There was some gossip about the replies we might make about our sexual orientation at the individual interviews he had with each freshman. After my room-mate and I had been to see him Dundas took both of us in his car with a battered canvas top for a walk in Blenheim Park and then to a tea shop in Woodstock.

Having the benefit of a county scholarship, then valued in full at £300 a year, and rarely buying a beer from the buttery before dinner, I managed to keep the total cost of my university education to under £100 a term. According to the sliding scale devised to measure parental income, my father had to give me a subsidy of £23 a year. I was conscious that most of my contemporaries were paying full fees when some of them played with coins on their desks during a lecture by one of our tutors who lacked lustre. The game was to judge how many pennies might be put down as a reward for the tutor’s remarks. Each section of the lecture was valued.

The other asset of the House which merited an accolade for beauty was Christ Church Meadow. I got into the habit of arousing one of my friends at around 7 am so that both of us could complete a walk along the main meadow path before going into the hall for breakfast.

Below: Christ Church Cathedral School Choir, 1950

I thought that nothing could equal the sound of the college prayers congregation singing ‘O quanta qualia’ beneath the rafters of the chancel.
The news that Oxford University was ranked number one in the world reached me while I was enjoying a one-month fellowship at Yale. I was in Farmington, in the middle of Connecticut (about 50 miles from Yale’s main campus in New Haven) in a library that was left to Yale by one of their alumni, Wilmarth Sheldon (Lefty) Lewis (class of 1918). A bibliophile, whose obsession with Horace Walpole - Sir Robert’s youngest son, and the great letter writer and social wit of the eighteenth century - led to the formation of one of the most important depositories of Walpoliana - The Lewis Walpole Library.

Lewis’ bequest meant not ‘just’ the library, but the realisation of his vision of a place for encounters between fellow enthusiasts and scholars. The guest house for the visitors was therefore almost equally important to the success of his legacy. The Lewis Walpole Library was to be a place where scholars could stay, meet and debate while looking at manuscripts, letters, books and other original material. My time there was occupied doing just that – spending the days in the library and the evenings in the beautiful Root House eating (and sometimes preparing) dinner while discussing projects and discoveries and exchanging thoughts and ideas. (Apart from one evening when my fried aubergines set off the fire alarm.)

Lewis and his wife Annie Burr Auchincloss Lewis, succeeded in creating an environment that is truly conducive to thought, idea and research. But it is also due to the librarians past and present and the current wonderful and dedicated staff that this vision could fully be achieved. The Lewises had the foresight to protect and ringfence their creation’s assets in a way that also allows the library’s collections to grow, expand. One very interesting area of expansion is the collection of caricatures. This is not a new strand of the collection and certainly in keeping with the founder’s intentions. After all the library’s reading room is dominated by Thomas Patch’s monumental painted satire *The Golden Asses.*
My own purpose of applying for the fellowship was, as so often, our own collection and my work on the catalogue of Christ Church’s paintings and the life and biography of General John Guise.

I had discovered a sales catalogue in the Bodleian library of books that contained - among others - the library of General John Guise; to me, an object of great interest. While Guise’s paintings and drawings were bequeathed to Christ Church all his other possessions, apart from some monetary legacies, went to his cousin, “John Guise of Highnam near Gloucester in Gloucestershire Esquire”. He was left the authenticity of his Rubens, while asking Richardson if he could give him his opinion of the work. This until now anonymous ‘rough man’ was General Guise.

Spending some time at the Lewis Walpole Library meant that I was surrounded by a contemporary library of a man who knew General Guise and documents that would help me to get closer to understanding the relevance of Guise’s books in relation to his art collection.

Horace Walpole was a generation younger and not a friend of Guise, but he was sufficiently aware of him and they had overlapping interests. Horace’s library, therefore, was a good starting point for trying to find out how and what influenced Guise, or, if in fact, Guise was influential in shaping the taste of his time. He was certainly known as an art collector, connoisseur and antiquarian, as can be seen from a very rare publication printed in 1760 by Horace Walpole’s private Strawberry Hill Press of a catalogue of paintings from three private collections, including General Guise’s. I could study that catalogue and many other objects which I expected to find in Farmington, but true to the Walpolian term of Serendipity there were also numerous accidental discoveries. For example I came across an annotation in Horace Walpole’s hand in his copy of Jonathan Richardson’s Two Discourses (1719) identifying General Guise as the protagonist of an anonymous anecdote. A collector and art lover had vowed to break the head of every person who doubted the

Moneys Stocks Plates Goods Chattels and personal Estates and Effects”. As we now know from the sales catalogue of the library, the books were sold in December 1765, five months after General Guise’s death.

But being in a sweetshop of eighteenth century research I also dipped into other jars: a receipts manuscript by Ann Clifton of 1724 has become my favourite object, with wonderfully readable recipes. (I can only recommend reading recipes as the most mood-enhancing distraction). The almond macaroons were a great success, but I won’t attempt the Spirit [sic] of Oranges, certainly not with the 200 Seville oranges that the recipe asks for.

All this, as well as the lunchtime games of croquet and the amazingly vast American countryside (it was for the first time that I saw the mesmerizing movements of hummingbirds and encountered a black bear roaming behind the house) are things that will influence my research and teaching.

Naturally one returns from these research stints with more knowledge, new ideas and impressions. And one becomes aware that it is through the generosity of other institutions that one advances one’s home institution. It is indeed this generosity, which is the vehicle of good, successful and enjoyable scholarship and which reminds us that scholarship, academic exchange and thought have no borders. We return to teach better, to know more and to have a wider outlook. It is places like the Lewis Walpole Library that share their holdings and make free lateral thinking possible that make universities truly excellent.
STUDENT LIFE

Was the ship of Theseus the same ship after being completely rebuilt over time?

When walking around Christ Church I am reminded of this ancient paradox and wonder whether the same applies to our college. On the one hand time seems to stand still in this wonderful place, with its many special traditions and signs of fading memories of a far-away past. On the other hand, much can and does change in only a few decades. Take, for instance, the introduction of the fob system which ended the nightly curfew and thus the climbing of the Christ Church walls, I hear from our older alumni…

More personally, the Graduate Common Room did not even exist until a few decades ago, whereas today it plays a central role in the daily lives of many of our students. And then again, during its relatively short period of existence, things have changed within the GCR. Recently, I looked into our archives and found a wealth of information about how the GCR was run in the early 90s. I was amazed by the amount of paperwork that was stacked up – at the time, the use of internet was of course not possible.

Next to a carefully created photo album of the 1997 Christ Church Ball, I found lots of evidence of administrative work done by the 1992 GCR Secretary (today called Vice President), Iain Shepherd. In addition to minutes listing, for example, the pros and cons of purchasing a coffee machine, I found membership forms, locker keys, and old GCR constitutions (apparently it used to be the case that the GCR President had to seek written permission from the Censors if (s)he wanted to leave Oxford during term time?). Mostly, however, there were countless slips regarding… dinners! I imagine those will never go out of fashion.

Filled in by hand, on these slips it was politely stated by dozens of graduate students that they should like to attend the GCR Black Tie Dinner at the end of term (still being organised today – only the price has increased from £12 to £30…). Guests could also specify whether they were vegetarian. Indeed, vegetarian or not vegetarian – that was it. Dietary options such as vegan, pescatarian, gluten-free, dairy-free, halal, etcetera were unknown or not widely recognised yet. And, having got a grasp of people’s (sometimes complicated) dietary requirements through my previous position as GCR food and dining officer, I must admit that I am very impressed with the kitchen’s ability today to cater for hundreds of students so efficiently and deliciously.

But most of all, I marvelled at the sheer amount of paperwork in the archive. Mind you, I am not oblivious to the fact that “once upon a time” there was a pre-digital world, but having it visualised right in front of me made me realise how differently things work today thanks to online access. No lengthy, courteous letters are circulated, no slips are pidged – we just send quick emails back and forth. It may have lost its charm, but communication around College has become much more efficient and to-the-point during the past two decades.

Whether the House of King Henry VIII in 1546 in principle is the same as today’s House, I cannot say. Theseus’s paradox, however, does teach us that it is important to adjust to the reality of the present in order to move forward, whilst ensuring continuity of what was achieved in the past. Who knows what the future might bring.
Lily Slater (2013), English Literature graduate, describes her experiences as a volunteer in the Calais ‘Jungle’.

Earlier this year I was proud to co-ordinate an initiative to volunteer in the Calais ‘Jungle’ camp. Fifteen of us from Christ Church took part, a motley group of incumbent second years, recent graduates, two post-grads and our beloved college chaplain, Clare Hayns. We had a lively first meeting in May (organised by Clare) and remained committed to the project from that point on, attracting further eager participants in the months that followed.

In September we spent a fortnight in the largest distribution warehouse in Calais, which continues to serve refugees in northern France today despite the camp’s recent eviction. It is run jointly by the charities Help Refugees (www.helprefugees.org.uk/) and L'Auberge des Migrants (www.laubergedesmigrants.fr/), and their sophisticated grass-roots operation puts each available pair of hands to use. We felt that every minute of our time counted, whether we were chopping firewood, preparing food parcels, making “welcome packs” of bedding and toiletries, erecting tents, or venturing into camp to teach English at “Jungle Books”, a makeshift school.

I was able to return to Calais in early October, and much had changed in three weeks. The eviction had gone from a latent rumour to a daunting reality, and many of the teams we worked with had been disbanded and their members assembled into a single unit who spread information and attended to the needs of the most vulnerable. I myself was able to reconnect with friends our group had made the previous month and offer them reassurance and some warm clothes as the weather grew cooler. They are all safe today in and around France, although unsure what their future holds.

Our endeavour was made possible by the combined efforts of many individuals. First and foremost, those who gave their time: Ali Hussain, Alice Freeman, Becca Conway-Jones, Bruno Ligas-Rucinski, Charlie Fraser, Clare Hayns, Katherine Sayer, Jamie Wilkins, Joseph Corderoy, Joshua Hillis, Juliette Allker, Morag Davies, Rory England and Victor Lacoin. The Dean and college provided a very generous grant which covered our expenses, and donations from friends and family enabled us to donate over £3,000 to the
warehouse and to Calais Kitchens (http://www.calaiskitchens.net/). This provided sleeping bags for nearly one hundred camp residents, as well as a week’s supply of onions and rare treats of coffee and biscuits.

On October 27th, our group reconvened in the Blue Boar Lecture Theatre to give a presentation and screen a short documentary film we made about our experience in Calais. It was a fantastic event and I was happy to speak with a number of first years who are eager to promote similar initiatives, even though the “Jungle” as we knew it is now gone. We hope many members of Christ Church and the University will be inspired to action. The three of us who graduated this year are now actively involved in refugee support both professionally and through further volunteering efforts, and I can say with certainty that the trip changed the lives of everyone who took part.

To watch our documentary go to: vimeo.com/lilyslater/calais or for more information, please contact me through the Alumni & Development Office or via post at Christ Church, c/o Clare Hayns.
It’s been a remarkably busy year for Outreach at Christ Church – our busiest ever, in fact, participating in 122 separate events with over 280 schools. We have continued to build on our existing partnership with IntoUniversity (IU), a national educational charity seeking to raise aspiration and attainment among disadvantaged young people, and are delighted to be continuing to fund their important work out in Blackbird Leys through their Oxford South-East Centre. We’ve run a busy programme of events with IU this year and are thrilled to see so many Christ Church students and staff volunteering weekly at the centre. Other highlights of the past year include our successful Geography Taster Day, Women in PPE Day and Application Preparation Day in June. For these stellar achievements we must thank our team of Student Ambassadors for all their hard work throughout the year - we currently have 135 active Ambassadors, comprising over a quarter of our undergraduate student body!

Ultimately the greatest thanks must go to Hannah Wilbourne, who served as Access and Outreach Officer from 2014 until August this year. We are incredibly grateful for her efforts and wish her all the best in her new career of postgraduate medicine. I had the unenviable position of trying to fill Hannah’s shoes when I took over in the summer. Nevertheless, I – and our Tutor for Admissions, Joseph Schear – have big plans for the year ahead. We are excited for the outcome of our newly-formed Access and Outreach Working Group and have already begun expanding our Ambassador programme, overhauling our digital access initiatives and launching our new Back to School programme, supporting our current undergraduates from schools with little history of application to Oxbridge to deliver presentations and workshops to their former schools. I look forward to including more of our academic staff in our work and focussing our outreach efforts on students at primary-school and early-secondary-school age. The biggest barrier to increased applications to Oxford from disadvantaged young people remains poor attainment, and I am looking forward to initiating more long-term sustained interactions with schools in our target link regions (Norfolk, Suffolk and Barnet) to tackle this worrying state of affairs.

I confess I am not a new addition to the college. I am myself a recent graduate of the House, though certainly would not have been had I not benefited from the hard-work, vision and enthusiasm of access and outreach officers before me when I was a secondary-school student in the North-West. I know first-hand how profoundly bold and innovative outreach interventions can alter the course of a young person’s future. I will never forget receiving that letter containing the offer of a place at Christ Church; it is by no means an exaggeration to describe the experience as life-changing. I am honoured to be tasked with helping other young people access the same life-changing opportunities I have enjoyed, and am excited for the year ahead.
Kimberley Littlemore (1985), discusses plans for the Women’s Network at Christ Church.

Christ Church women are often rather adept at looking after themselves and their careers. However, they have a role to play in driving gender equality for all. A group met in October, hosted very kindly by the Dean and Simon Offen, to discuss the purpose and function of a Women’s Network at Christ Church – a gender imbalance at this meeting was weighted firmly in favour of women – so that’s the first job on my list at least... to aim for a more elegant balance and ensure that men recognise that they have an equally important role to play in the pursuit of gender equality.

Celebrating achievement at all levels was discussed. We love to celebrate success at the highest level, but some of us who had only just managed to get to the meeting (in half term) by extreme juggling of children, begging favours from friends (again) and last minute flinging of self and badly-packed case onto a train were keen to be part of a network that also supports and celebrates a more diverse and eclectic range of achievements and challenges overcome. This was raised at drinks as we unwound a bit after the unseemly dash to Oxford to arrive in time for a 6.30 pre-dinner meeting in the development office. I for one was mostly catching my breath and reveling in the familiarity of the womb-like, wood paneled room in which I found myself – reminiscent of such a wonderful time in my younger life – whilst savouring that moment when you discover that the glass of fizz you’ve been offered is actually champagne.

By the time we were enjoying dessert in the SCR, the atmosphere was most congenial and any urgency around deciding on a specific purpose for the Network had been replaced by a general feeling that it would develop over time and there was no need to be too prescriptive. However, it was generally agreed that it would be great if we could use the collective experience of the Christ Church Network to help with careers, advice and mentoring for potential, present and "old" members. Sharing the stories of role models who are fulfilling their ambitions at home and in the work place could be encouraging and inspiring to others.

The Network is looking for people interested in being involved on the organising committee working towards an event in 2020 to celebrate 40 years of women at Christ Church as well as activities between now and then.

Wannabe organisers of fundraising decade dinners for the 1980s and 2000s are asked to contact Simon Offen: simon.offen@chch.ox.ac.uk.

Catherine Blaiklock (1981) and Kimberley Littlemore are keen to create an online record of biographies and articles from House women for 2020. Please send any thoughts, memories, photographs to: development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk.
Seeking to explain why Christ Church matters to all of us who have been fortunate enough to belong to the college in whatever capacity, I now embark on an inherently tentative and incomplete answer. When I first walked into Tom Quad in early October of 1955 to embark on an advanced degree in modern British political history, I had no clue as to what awaited me socially or academically. Before plunging into the voluminous correspondence of the 3rd Marquess of Salisbury (1830-1903) stored in an upstairs room in the Library, Charles Stuart kindly tutored me in Victorian political history. Those tutorials made me painfully aware of how much historical knowledge, acquired during my undergraduate years at Yale, I had lost while serving for two years in the U. S. Army. If my role as an instructor in mountain climbing and cross-country skiing in Colorado's Rocky Mountains proved more than exhilarating, my daily exposure to the rigors and thrills of alpinism – not to mention the delights of Aspen during weekend passes – made adjustment to the high intellectual standards and parietal regulations (some of the latter I managed to bend if not break) of Oxford life all the more difficult.

Destined (if not doomed) to enter academia, I submitted to the demand of my learned and Anglophilic father (who taught English literature and history at Yale) that I sorely needed re-civilizing after my deep immersion in what he deemed the cultural wasteland of Colorado. Aided and abetted by his old friend at the House, the esteemed Treasurer, Charles Bosanquet, I began my long and arduous journey towards a D. Phil. degree. A lowly Yank on the G. I. Bill, I lacked the glitter and gold as well as the connections of a Rhodes Scholar. Consigned to the top floor of the last entryway in Meadow Buildings – the ultima Thule of undergraduate lodging – I soon discovered that my commitment to research and writing was isolating and dispiriting simply because I missed out on the intellectual discipline, critical discourse, and confraternity of the tutorial system that constitute the essence of an Oxonian education.

On the plus side, my American provenance and plebeian experiences in the army (I never rose above the rank of corporal) helped me to negotiate the often tricky obstacle course of class and status distinctions that were then so ubiquitous. Besides consorting with some of the tweedy upper middle class products of lesser public schools – (the lofty Old Etonians ignored me altogether) – I befriended my next door neighbour, Mike, whose heavy Mancunian accent moved our snobbish scout to inform me that we would have little in common. (This comment came after he had heard us speak and unpacked our trunks.) Mike had arrived on an old motorbike; and I had arrived with a new bowler hat from Lock’s of St. James along with a tightly furled umbrella – gifts from my father who knew the English upper-class drill. A feisty
engineered student from Manchester Grammar School given to
profanities Mike became a boon companion along with Edward
de Bono, the ever resourceful Maltese Rhodes Scholar, on our
three-thirty hour canoe trip down the Thames to Westminster
Pier in June 1956. (See Christ Church Matters, Trinity Term, 2005,
Issue 15.)

Fortunately my American provenance also helped me to bridge the
yawning gulf between upstairs and downstairs on my staircase.
Two floors below me lay the ‘grace and favour’ suite occupied by
the éminence grise, Viscount Cherwell, formerly Professor F. A.
Lindemann, who had been Winston Churchill’s close friend and
chief science advisor since the 1930s. To all good Housemen and
other insiders Lord Cherwell was known as ‘The Prof.’ Strolling
around the college in his three-piece suit and wearing his signature
bowler hat, he cut a formidable figure. His butler, batman, secretary,
chauffeur, and bodyguard was James Harvey. Powerfully built like
the boxer he had once been, the versatile Jim (I always called him
by this name) had served the Prof faithfully for some thirty years. A
vestige of old English yeomanry, the pipe-smoking Harvey filled the
role of devoted minder and factotum to near perfection.¹

One day in 1956 I entered my bedroom only to discover a large
fecal deposit in the middle of my blanket. Dismay would be
an understatement. I knew immediately who the culprit was.
Obviously the Prof’s beloved cat had escaped once again from its
luxurious quarters and mounted the stairs. So I wrote a firm but
polite note to his lordship explaining that all of us on the staircase
lived in mortal fear of this furry creature and hoped that he would
keep it confined in future. Shortly thereafter Harvey appeared at
my door armed with a spray can of deodorant. Little did I know that
our conversation during the belated fumigation of my room would
extend on and off over the next few years. More remarkable I soon
received a written invitation from the Prof for a glass of sherry.

Suitably attired in my best lounge attire, I entered the Prof’s
drawing room suite with considerable trepidation. However my
tall and dignified host could not have been more gracious. At a
loss for words – whether political or scientific – I naïvely asked
him about his wartime activities. His reply was as terse as it
was modest: “I was Winston’s chief bottle washer.” There ended
the lesson. Having broken the ice, we had a pleasant chat and
avoided any mention of the feline episode. Although I rarely saw
the Prof after this encounter, I kept his stern demeanour in mind
whenever I climbed over the high stone wall beneath his bedroom
window late at night because Jim had told me that the noise made
by adventurous undergraduates scrambling over that obstacle
disturbed his slumbers.

Subsequently Jim would regale me with stories about trips
abroad with his master and the Churchillian entourage –
especially their holidays in Marrakech. Alas, early in July 1957
the Prof died suddenly from a heart attack leaving Jim in utter
despair. One month later I had to contend with my own personal
tragedy because my older brother, a keen mountaineer fresh out
of Harvard Law School, had been killed in a fall on the Italian side
of Mont Blanc. So I rushed out by plane and train to Courmayeur
where I climbed up to a tiny alpine hut and met the guides who
had tried and failed to recover his body from the Col de Peuterey
owing to bad weather.

Returning to the Prof’s old rooms, I tried to console Jim over the
loss of his surrogate father and we shared our grief over two
irreparable losses. On that ever so sad occasion he asked me to
choose a memento of the Prof. My love of mountains moved me to
select three large black and white photographs of the alps that the
Prof – a keen photographer – had taken during flights to Morocco.
Expertly framed by Jim, they adorn my small library in Vermont.

In September I left the House for Nuffield College – that new and
industrious workshop for graduate-school students in the social
sciences. Vigilant supervision and intellectual support enabled
me to complete my dissertation in June 1959. (One month later
I married the daughter of the dean and chaplain of Balliol in the
Cathedral.) That autumn I became an apprentice instructor in the
History Department at Princeton. On the occasional sabbatical
visit to Oxford, I renewed my old connection with Jim, who had
moved down St. Aldates to take a desk job with the city police.
How fondly we recalled the good old days in Meadow Buildings.

For many reasons then the House occupies a special place in my
mind despite the passage of so many years – not just because
of the overwhelming majesty of the architecture – from the
grandeur of Tom Tower and the Great Quad to the Georgian
glory of Peckwater and the Library. What also matters are the
people I encountered coming from so many different countries
and backgrounds and possessing so much knowledge. Where
else could I have entered the domain of a legendary magus and
become a friend of his devoted servant cum companion? Small
wonder, then, that Aedes Christi possesses a lustre and an aura
that cannot be clearly defined but continues to grow with time. ■

1. For a sketch of Harvey’s origins and multiple talents, see Adrian Fort, Prof: The

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Antony Percy (1965) has recently been awarded his doctorate in Security and Intelligence Studies at the University of Buckingham. The title of his thesis, “Confronting Stalin’s ‘Elite Force’: MI5’s Handling of Communist Subversion, 1939-1941”, picks up the notion of Stalin’s ‘elite force’ from the memoir of the Communist spy, Kim Philby.

The dominant message from Percy’s dissertation is that, at the time when the Soviet Union was an ally of Nazi Germany (before August 1939 to June 1941), and providing materiel and strategic intelligence to help the Germans wage war against Great Britain, the country’s political organizations – and MI5 in particular – let their guard down, allowing Soviet agents to infiltrate the corridors of power.

The pivotal event in Percy’s story is a mission to Moscow planned by the spy Guy Burgess and his cohort Isaiah Berlin in the summer of 1940. References to the mission – approved at the highest levels of the Foreign Office – were strenuously avoided when the inevitable post mortems occurred after Burgess’s absconding to the Soviet Union with Donald Maclean in 1952. Yet documents released to the National Archives towards the end of 2015 confirmed Percy’s emergent hypothesis – that Burgess had convinced his political bosses that he could personally succeed in turning the Comintern against Hitler, and thus bring the Soviet Union into the war on the side of the Allies.

Percy explains that Burgess had a secret agenda, namely that he wanted to alert his spymasters to the fact that, while the defector Walter Krivitsky, who had been interrogated by officers from MI5 and MI6 at the beginning of 1940, had given broad hints as to the identity of ‘moles’ within the British intelligence services, the situation was under control. For MI5 had been incredibly clumsy in communicating the outcome of the interviews to departments of government: another spy, Jenifer Hart (who would later become Isaiah Berlin’s lover) worked in the Home Office, signed that she had seen the report, and communicated its contents to her friends. Guy Burgess was thus able to orchestrate a response that diminished Krivitsky’s testimony, shifted focus very sharply on to an imaginary Nazi ‘Fifth Column’, initiated a programme of bringing more Communist spies or sympathisers into MI5 (such as Anthony Blunt and Lord Rothschild), and allowed his colleagues in espionage to resume their treachery.

The mission to Moscow itself was called off when Berlin and Burgess reached the United States – probably because by then, Churchill realised that Hitler had abandoned his plans for invading Britain. In that situation, he (Churchill) no longer needed a feint that indicated to Hitler that an active ‘Peace Party’ might still threaten Churchill’s position (and thus give Hitler what he wanted without a fight), and the overtures to convince Stalin of Britain’s resolve were thus no longer necessary. Burgess was recalled to Britain, while Berlin, after some devious workings with Chaim Weizmann and the Zionist movement, found an important job with British propaganda in the United States.

Far left: Guy Burgess  
Centre: Isaiah Berlin  
Left: Walter Krivitsky
Berlin’s motives are also enigmatic. Through his biography of Karl Marx, published in 1938, he helped to make Communism more respectable, but it may be that his dealings with the Soviet Government erred on the shady side. Evidence exists that Moscow may have threatened him with ill-treatment of relatives left behind in the Soviet Union – Berlin was born in Latvia, but always thought of himself as a Russian - if he did not provide them with strategic information. Berlin’s role as a don at All Souls, where he mixed with the politically powerful, represented an attractive connection for the Comintern, and he may well have acted indiscretely.

His ill-judged cultivation of the spy-handler Gorsky later in Washington suggests a highly dubious track-record. In 1940, his role as Burgess’s sidekick was presumably justified internally as an interpreter for Burgess, and explained openly as a way of assisting the Ambassador in Moscow, Stafford Cripps. Yet Berlin had been recruited by MI6 by then, and may also have been anxious to pursue his own Zionist goals in Moscow.

From that summer of 1940 on, however, MI5’s resistance to the Soviet menace gradually ebbed. It moved out its chief expert on Communist subversion, Kathleen Archer (who had, in fact, led the interrogations of Krivitsky). Other ‘agents of influence’ contributed to the appeasement of Communism, with the Soviet desk in the Ministry of Information also coming under the control of a Soviet spy. In February, 1941, Soviet assassins caught up with Krivitsky, and staged his ‘suicide’ in a Washington hotel, thus eliminating any possibility of further leakages. When the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, and Churchill immediately responded by promising support to the new ally, a well-established group of fellow-travellers was in place to complement those who were regularly leaking secrets to the Soviet Union, predominantly Burgess, Maclean, Philby, Blunt, Cairncross, and Long – but also several others.

The risks were immense. If the spies had revealed to their masters the source of much vital intelligence, namely the decrypts known collectively as ‘Ultra’, and the secret had leaked back to the Germans, it would have been disastrous for the war effort. Yet another insidious exposure came to light. By an intensive study of the archives at Kew, and a meticulous examination of contemporary memoirs and biography, Percy has discovered that a massive cover-up occurred over the espionage of atomic secrets undertaken by Klaus Fuchs. When the treachery of Fuchs was discovered in 1949 through the decryption of Soviet diplomatic traffic, the reaction of MI5 was first to conceal the fact that Fuchs could have passed through their net, even though he was known to have been a Communist in Germany in 1933, and second, to modify the official record to suggest that Fuchs had not started his spying until after the invasion of the Soviet Union (when the alliance would have given it, to some, a veneer of moral justification).

The reality was very different. While Fuchs had been interned, as a German, in the panic of 1940, his communism was well-known, and he had in fact been brought specifically out of internment from Canada by his sponsor and collaborator, Rudolf Peierls, abetted by Max Born in Edinburgh, who had employed Fuchs before the war. Peierls himself had very dubious associations with the Soviets, and also conspired to conceal his true role in the affair. Yet MI5 successfully pulled the wool over the eyes of the Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, and even ensured that the official history of atomic research misrepresented the truth.

Percy reveals many more facts about the pusillanimity of MI5 and the cover-ups that occurred – including the remarkable information that the less-heralded spy, Leo Long, was discovered red-handed passing on secrets when working for MI14 in 1943, yet was allowed to work again in Germany as the war wound down. He highlights the efforts of leftist MPs such as Ellen Wilkinson and Dennis Pritt, who were shamelessly allowed to defy the more sensible entreaties of MI5 officers who warned of the perennial danger of Communism. He sheds fresh light on the extraordinary decision to allow the spy Ursula Beurton (née Kuczynski) to operate a radio unhindered in Oxfordshire during the war. She turned out to be Fuchs’s courier.

Percy does not believe that a super-mole at the heart of MI5 was responsible for the calamity, a theory that has been espoused by others. It is, on the other hand, a story of incompetence, of dithering and an unprofessional lack of preparation for the unexpected, of the failure to acknowledge that espionage comes along with subterfuge, of a lack of resolution and insight in following up leads, of a succumbing to the watery but superficially attractive story of the moral advantages of Communism as espoused by intellectuals, and the belief that native British communists must be harmless. When the truth was unavoidable, the impulse of its leaders was to ‘Save the Service’ (and their careers) rather than ‘Defend the Realm’ – a lack of integrity that has sullied MI5’s reputation until this day.

Percy is preparing a book from his thesis, which will be published in time for the centenary of the October Revolution.
The appointment of Sir Tim Berners-Lee by Christ Church and its investment in Computer Science is the sign of an inventive, progressive college. While we reflect on its history, it is this radical instinct that will secure an effective future fuelled by the ambition constantly to transform and improve.

One of the issues that still challenges me is whether the University is a bastion of innovation, or just a bastion of tradition. The reality is that it’s probably engaged in a constant battle between the two. Christ Church takes pride in its abundance of traditions but this can be as much of a narcotic as a vitamin. If, however, we can achieve the alchemy of using tradition as a catalyst for innovation then – truly – Christ Church will be in a winning position.

In this edition, Dr Hazel Wilkinson writes about the pioneering web service Journal.Lists, where notable texts are sent to subscribers in instalments. It’s breathtakingly modern yet simultaneously embryonic in the way that it utilises digital technology to re-capture the fascicular way in which this literature was originally absorbed by its readers.

Personally, I believe that the importance of this is that by encouraging people to read something differently, you may also encourage them to think about it differently. As long as a text is debated and challenged, it lives. When Alan Milburn’s report into social mobility was published and highlighted the need of colleges, including Christ Church, to attract more state educated students, the response from some was worryingly defensive.

Perhaps the better reaction would have been to welcome wholeheartedly its call for greater modernisation and diversification – to invite further debate rather than to constrict it. G.K. Chesterton once challenged the idea that “if you leave a thing alone, you’ll leave a thing as it is.” Instead he argued, “If you leave a thing to itself, you are leaving it to wild and violent changes.”

One of the issues that still challenges me is whether the University is a bastion of innovation, or just a bastion of tradition. The reality is that it’s probably engaged in a constant battle between the two. Christ Church takes pride in its abundance of traditions but this can be as much of a narcotic as a vitamin. If, however, we can achieve the alchemy of using tradition as a catalyst for innovation then – truly – Christ Church will be in a winning position.

Editorial

Matt Hacket (2006), Editor
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Events

Summer Gaudy, 23 June 2016
Matriculands from 1997-1999 returned for their Gaudy in Hall.
Geography Dinner – Professor Judith Pallot Retirement, 25 June 2016
Geographers returned to celebrate the 4-decade long Christ Church career of the first woman Official Student.

Visit to Hatfield House, 5 July 2016
At the invitation of the Most Honourable the Marquess of Salisbury (History, 1965) Members and friends were given a tour of Hatfield house and gardens after enjoying a splendid lunch in the hall.
Young Alumni Drinks in London, 5 September 2016
Younger Members of the House organised a get together at the Tokenhouse in Moorgate.

Christ Church Association Sports Dinner and AGM, 17 September 2016
Members of the House and their families had the opportunity to channel their competitive side at the Christ Church Sports Ground; with everything from rounders to rugby, and tea in the newly refurbished pavilion. Then it was to the Hall for dinner and the Association’s AGM.

Autumn Gaudy, 29 September 2016
At the Autumn Gaudy we welcomed back matriculands from 2000-2002.
Parents’ Dinner, 1 October 2016
Parents of current and old members attended a dinner in Hall. ▼▼

Family Programme Tea, 2 October 2016
 Relatives of new students were welcomed to Christ Church with a tea in Hall. ▼

Moritz-Heyman Project Reception in the House of Lords, 31 October 2016
With the stunning backdrop of the House of Lords, younger alumni enjoyed drinks and canapés on the bank of the Thames.▼
It is wonderful to see so many of you here on this momentous evening when so many of your careers, livelihoods and most importantly house prices depend on the result this evening. My name is Robert Wood and for those of you who don’t know me, I was an undergraduate reading PPE here between 1997 and 2000, and I also returned to the House for an MPhil in International Relations between 2005 and 2007.

It is a great honour to give the Toast this evening on behalf of the Old Members, and the class of the late 1990s. The early Blair years, Cool Britannia, the Spice Girls, the millennium bug. Coming here again today and strolling around the wonderful familiar College buildings I am taken right back to our wonderful undergraduate days here. And naturally our human pattern recognising brains reflects on continuity and change. Some things are certainly the same: We have a Conservative party tearing itself apart over Europe, and calling each other bastards. We have a Clinton heading for the White House. We have an England football team staggering from one embarrassment to another.

And here in Christ Church, I see lots that is the same. Apparently Andy Hegdes is still the number one squash player according to the ladder in the JCR. I was able to pidge at the plodge earlier in defiance of its technical obsolescence. And Queen Elizabeth is still our visitor.

But these are uncertain, stormy times, and I am also unsettled by some things that have changed. Hand sanitiser on every staircase? Student politics has also moved on a bit. Many of you must have followed the Rhodes Must Fall campaign, and the interventions of various radical students trying to turn us into the sort of banana republic that pulls down statues left right and centre. As you can see this evening I have been no platformed by the campaign, possibly for my old fashioned views. In our day, the most radical political movement in Oriel square was probably the campaign to prevent the installation of the rising bollards. Today this would probably be called Oriel Square Bollards must Fall. And rise, and fall again …

Bops have moved on a bit too. Although I’m sure the basic activities are the same, and they probably still play Come on Eileen, I read a couple of years ago that a student arrived with a home-made flame thrower cobbled together with a nail gun. On second thoughts, perhaps that’s not so original, given that we had Andy Yong setting fire to the giant dice after the quad scale game of Ludo. Actually, Andy, the censors have asked to speak to you after this, as that’s the first time they’ve been able to identify the culprit and they want to clear up a few cold cases. Technology has obviously come on a bit too. Some of the students now have mobile phones, and the internet in their rooms. It might catch on. Hopefully the College’s internet monitoring technology has kept pace. Social media didn’t exist in the late 1990s. Personally I’m very grateful. I’d rather have a selective memory of my humiliations, thanks very much. This College now does a very saucy line in naked calendars. I think we’re all glad that they didn’t do so in the late 1990s. While there were a few good looking people, I don’t think we could have found twelve. In fact, I’d pay quite a bit to charity just to NEVER see that calendar. Also if anyone can remember how to reset their Pine email I’d be very grateful; I’ve seem to have forgotten my password.
Returning, one also reflects on what exactly we learned when we were here all those years ago. A few of us have taken a fairly direct path from our degrees into the professions. There is one MP (and a few others who have tried and failed, some more gloriously than others), an advisor to the chancellor, an ambassador, a professor, journalists, military officers, scientific researchers, countless doctors and lawyers and wonderful teachers. That’s probably not unusual, as the House recruits and develops many brilliant people. Reflecting on my own experience, studying PPE I undoubtedly learned some useful things, some of which are relevant this evening. The euro is not an optimum currency area. Democracy is better served by the Burkean tradition of trustee representation rather than by plebiscites which tend to inflame the mob and rob us of proper debate. That we should be suspicious of anyone proposing simple solutions to complex problems; they’re probably a charlatan in a different Burkean tradition.

But I think the real lessons I learned were much broader than the academic content of the programmes, and here I think we start to see what is so special about an Oxford education, and a Christ Church one in particular. My most memorable tutorial with Peter Oppenheimer, who I’m delighted to see is here this evening, took place with me in the passenger seat of his Jaguar XJS rushing to Cowley shopping centre to collect roubles and something I can’t remember from the Pet shop. I learned more about multi-tasking that day than about Thatcher’s monetarism. I also learned a bit about how not to drive, based on the hand signals being sent Peter’s ways from the terrified oncoming cars during some very aggressive overtaking.

I also learned that a gathering of eight people in a room after 11 pm is a party. I learned that some rules are made to be broken, as long as it is raining and you know where the CCTV cameras are pointing. I learned how to drink a bottle of sherry in five minutes with the rugby team, and how to trick next year’s freshers into doing the same. I learned how to lose at many different sports, and also to wear pads if I ever play in goal for an ice hockey team again. I learned from Matt Needham how to make cocktails in a rubbish bin you’ve just washed out, and how to sell them at a 3000pc mark up with the Cardinals. I learned the importance of good handwriting when I woke up very blurry eyed the morning after finals to a message saying my scripts were illegible and I had to dictate my answers to a typist. And I learned about taking responsibility and helping others from Andrew Farlow, our economics fellow who came back the worse for wear from a formal dinner and took a midnight economics revision session in his room for some seriously undercooked finalists in his own time. He didn’t need to do it, he did it because he cared.

We all learned similar lessons – because that’s what this University is about. And Christ Church, with its unique sense of community, with so many living in College itself, with such a diversity of subjects and backgrounds and outlooks, and such high quality caring and engaged teaching staff, I think, teaches those lessons as well as anywhere else in Oxford.

It’s unfashionable to say so, but the real benefits of a Christ Church degree are those of a “general education”; they’ve served us so well and will continue to do so. That’s why in addition to the professional routes I mentioned earlier, our group also includes a reality TV star, a stand up comedian and the composer of a musical starring Lembit Opik (and that’s just Will Goodhand … Rock the Vote for those of you who are interested can be found on the very edges of the Edinburgh fringe this year). We also have several entrepreneurs, a yoga guru, a premier league winner, a forensic archaeologist searching for the true cross, and several media stars. They all learned the Christ Church way. Argue clearly, explore your intellectual interests, be curious, listen to both sides, and take care of other people.

The final lesson I learned here was how to make real friends. The friends I made here are the best friends I have made in my life. They are friendships I have cherished for the past 20 years and will do so for the rest of my life ... although it’s possible that could be quite a short period given that a few of us are heading to Alasdair Mackay’s (1997) stag weekend in Latvia tomorrow morning. Others among you are even closer, there are at least five marriages that I know of and even some Christ Church children.

All of our experiences will be different. But for all of us Christ Church is a very special place, and one that I will always be grateful to call home.
Journal.Lists (www.journallists.org) is a free subscription service which delivers email instalments of periodicals, diaries, letters, and novels, on the anniversary of the day on which they were originally published, written, or set.

Many great works of literature were originally written or published in instalments. Diaries and letters are quotidian by nature, while newspapers and magazines have been the original homes of many novels and essays. The way in which such texts unfold over time can be difficult to appreciate in a modern reading copy, where the text appears as a whole. Journal.Lists was set up to help us understand what can be gained by reading something as it originally unfolded over time.

We began with James Boswell’s *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, an account of the journey he took with Samuel Johnson in 1773. Boswell kept his diary from August to November, and we delivered each instalment on the anniversary of the day it was originally written. Readers experienced Boswell’s journey day-by-day, as the season turned from Autumn to Winter in both 1773 and 2015. We’ve since delivered to inboxes Dickens’s *Hard Times*, as originally serialized in the journal *Household Words*; Byron’s journal of his time in Ravenna, in which some entries were delivered at midnight, when Byron had trouble sleeping; Percy and Mary Shelley’s letters from Geneva, written during ‘the year without a summer’; and John Clare’s *Shepherd’s Calendar*, a series of
twelve poems on the months of the year, delivered on the first of each month throughout 2016.

Ongoing titles include the *Spectator*, written by Addison and Steele from 1711. With six issues a week, readers can immerse themselves in eighteenth-century life and culture. *Journal.Lists* serves as a convenient way of reading such enormous texts as the complete *Spectator* in manageable helpings. Also ongoing is William Cobbett’s *Rural Rides*, each entry of which was written after a day in the saddle, travelling around southern England. Forthcoming titles include Benjamin Franklin’s “Silence Dogood” letters, the witty pieces he submitted to his brother’s newspaper while working as an apprentice printer in Boston aged only 16; and Arthur Hugh Clough’s *Amours de Voyage*, an epistolary novel in verse, recounting Clough’s travels in Rome, which was originally published in instalments in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1858.

*Journal.Lists* provides a convenient way for students to get to grips with the original forms in which major works were published, and for general readers to discover new works, or experience old favourites in new ways. It is also a platform for researchers to study the way serialization affects reading practices and reception. As well as allowing texts to unfold over time as originally intended, *Journal.Lists* functions as a reading community, and encourages readers to interact on social media, discussing the *Spectator* day-by-day, for instance, as it would have originally been discussed in eighteenth-century coffee houses.

Digital technology is often seen as the enemy of print, but *Journal.Lists* is part of a wider effort in my research to show that digital media can actually help us to engage with books and texts in new ways.

*Journal.Lists* was created by Hazel Wilkinson and Will Bowers. You can sign up at www.journallists.org

"Above: Hard Times was originally serialised in Household Words
Below: Mary and Percy Shelley visited Geneva in 1816"
Book reviews

**The Mortal Man**

*Kieron Winn (1987)*

*The Mortal Man* is Kieron Winn’s long-awaited first collection of poems. Ranging from the Lake District to Rome, from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first, these poems revel in the particularity of people and places, and look for the sources of delight in human consciousness. The presence of the past is keenly felt, whether in the faces of visitors to the British Museum, conversations with the Romantic age, or the erotic scene on an ancient oil lamp. There is a version of a medieval Noh play, and Seamus Heaney’s first collaboration with Eminem.


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**At Cross Purposes: A Cathedral Organist’s Memoirs**

*M. Smith (1955)*

“It was during a Monday evensong that the assistant verger murdered his wife.” *At Cross Purposes* is a detailed chronicle of Michael Smith’s life as Organist and Master of the Choristers at Llandaff Cathedral. When he moved to south Wales following a successful term as assistant organist at Salisbury Cathedral, Dr Smith looked forward to new challenges. He was unprepared however for the attitude of the authorities, who would continually test his resolve. With the passage of years he was also dismayed at the conduct and inefficiency of some of his colleagues, which extended to deviousness, dishonesty... and even murder.


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**Blood Dragons**

*Rosemary A Johns (1999)*

There are three people in this affair – and two of them aren’t human...

*Blood Dragons* is the first instalment of a compelling new vampire book series by the critically acclaimed author Rosemary A Johns. *Blood Dragons* explores a hidden paranormal world in London, where vampires are both predator and prey. It’s a story of redemption and love in a divided world beneath our own. Blood Lifers are a camouflaged species, who use venom to paralyse and mimic heart attacks in First Lifers (humans). Yet they fear the First Lifers they prey on. Until one Blood Lifer rebels – against his family, species and century old love - to save both their species.

*Blood Dragons* is Rosemary A Johns’s debut novel and is published by CreateSpace at £8.99 in paperback.
The Rueful Hippopotamus

Robert Hanrott (1959)

Robert Hanrott’s father, Charles, was a keen admirer of Ogden Nash. At dinner time he would sometimes propose the first line of a rhyming verse and invite his two children, one after the other, to develop it. This was how Robert began first to think in rhymed couplets and later to write in the spirit of America’s most famous poet of light verse for adults.

This short volume of a hundred pages is organised in four sections – ‘Whimsy’, ‘Everyday Life’, ‘Personal to Me’ and ‘A Contrarian’s View’ - all of which allow the author to range over many diverse subjects, sometimes with tongue in cheek, sometimes with self-deprecation, and sometimes - more seriously - protesting the state of the world we live in. The book is designed to be light bedtime reading. It may put a smile on your face; alternatively, it may make you think in a new way about our contemporary culture.


Cricket’s Pure Pleasure

Tim Cawkwell (1966)

Cricket’s Pure Pleasure is the account, in words and images, of a remarkable four-day game of cricket played at Lord’s in September 2015 between Yorkshire and Middlesex.

It opened with high drama when Yorkshire’s Ryan Sidebottom bowled a triple-wicket maiden at the start of the game, and closed spectaculantly on the fourth day when Yorkshire suffered a batting collapse. In between was a magnificent 149 from Nick Compton that led the way in wresting the initiative from Yorkshire. To these ingredients were added the absorbing attritional cricket that makes the long form of the game so compelling. At the end Middlesex were the victors but Yorkshire were crowned worthy County Champions.

Cricket’s Pure Pleasure takes the reader through the highs and lows, the quick movements and slow movements, the loud and the soft of cricket in its greatest form. Where words fall short of conveying the splendour of the whole, the photographs take up the challenge, so that the book as a whole aims to give some insight into the pure pleasure, free of blemish of any kind, that cricket can provide.

Tim Cawkwell, *Cricket’s Pure Pleasure*, is published by CreateSpace at £8.90 in paperback.

Measures of Expatriation

Vahni Capildeo (1991)

In *Measures of Expatriation* Vahni Capildeo’s poems and prose-poems speak of the complex alienation of the expatriate and address wider issues around identity in contemporary Western society. Born in Trinidad and resident in the UK, Capildeo rejects the easy depiction of a person as a neat, coherent whole – “pure is a strange word” – embracing instead a pointilliste self, one grounded in complexity. In these texts sense and syntax are disrupted; languages rub and intersect; dream sequences, love poems, polylouges and borrowed words build into a precarious self-assemblage. ‘Cliché’, she writes, “is spitting into the sea”, and in this book poetry is still a place where words and names, with their power to bewitch and subjugate, may be disrupted, reclaimed.

Christ Church Boat Club is celebrating its Bicentenary this year and enters 2017 in good heart. There are some 75 students rowing and Torpids will see at least two Men’s and Women’s boats racing, probably three. Six men are still trialling for the Blue Boat (we started with nine) and two women are trialling for their Blues. A very active committee is determined to ensure the year is a great success, with Jenny Soderman, Amelie Van Alphen, Harrison Green, and Laura Betteridge leading the way under Head Coach, Mike Genchi.

In Michaelmas the Christ Church Regatta saw Merton Women’s A, and Wadham Men’s A winning, with Christ Church WA making it through to the quarter finals and the MA making it through to Saturday. The novice captain Ciara Ward did a fine job to encourage about 50 novices to participate, and it is hoped that at least 20 will continue rowing.

After the successes of 2014 and 2015, a group of men and women ChCh Boat Club Members (two 4+) went to Boston in October 2016 in order to compete in the HOCR. It was a memorable experience for all involved and a great motivation for those who took part. The Club would particularly like to thank their hosts and especially Rob and Susan Spofford for their help in Boston.

Importantly the number of alumni supporting the Club annually has grown to just over 40 (we are aiming for at least 50), and the pledges and gifts which have come in have matched the maximum that Alex Beard and his wife Emma pledged, £800k. The Club is therefore almost fully endowed; which will cover the major annual running costs. (Some gifts were to spend down hence there is still about £50k needed to complete the endowment).

As is the way with these things, that is not the end of the story! The third part of our aim with the Boat Club project is still to be realised, as to date we have not found a donor to help with the boathouse renovation. Therefore the next target is to raise a minimum of £0.5m towards the overhaul of the boathouse, a sum the College would then match.

Of course 2017 should be a year of celebration. The Development and Alumni Office will be in touch about particular events and arrangements, especially the Bicentenary Dinner on June 16th. Other dates for your diary are:

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>TORPIDS 2017</td>
<td>1st to 4th March</td>
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<td>SUMMER EIGHTS 2017</td>
<td>24th to 27th May (drinks on Sat.)</td>
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<td>THE BOAT CLUB SOCIETY</td>
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<td>BICENTENARY DINNER</td>
<td>16th June, 2017</td>
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<td>HENLEY ROYAL REGATTA 2017</td>
<td>28th June to 2nd July (drinks on Sat.)</td>
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The House at Henley

Members who are interested in the history of the Boat Club will enjoy the fascinating book *The House at Henley*, by Prof. Gerald Parkhouse, which covers the first 150 years of Christ Church’s involvement with the most famous regatta in the world. www.chch.ox.ac.uk/alumni/house-henley

Copies are also available from the Development & Alumni Office at £10 + P&P. development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk
DB: How did your career as a professional actor begin?
ST: I got the New Tricks gig at the end of my first year of university. I was frustrated in some of the performance work I was doing, I didn’t have an agent so I just googled and found myself on Louise’s books. Two weeks later I was auditioning for the BBC.

DB: But you already had some acting experience? You had done The Inbetweeners before you went to university?
ST: I got that by being in the right place at the right time, I got selected out of a group of extras. I was always told by school and college that being an actor was not a viable career for me – not because of my lack of talent but I was told there would be no work for someone like me and I was discouraged from applying to drama school. New Tricks was my biggest learning curve; I had to learn how to present myself, how to work on set, dealing with press, how to audition. I felt so honoured to be doing it. I don’t regret doing my degree, it taught me a lot about theory but I’m so glad I managed to start forging my career at the same time.
DB: what prompted you to make your own work, as director / writer of Redefining Juliet?
ST: I was so into the idea of playing Juliet as a little girl. But then as I grew, and even when I was offered other parts I realised that it would never be offered to me in a mainstream way. The only way I’d be able to ask the questions I wanted to, and address the issues as to why I can’t play her is by creating the work myself. I found balancing the demands of acting and producing quite a stressful experience but I wouldn’t have done it for any other show. Juliet for me was a huge self esteem boost – she’s the beginning and end of femininity in Shakespeare and I really wanted to experience that. I wanted other women who didn’t feel they could access those parts to know them – so much of the acting world is focused on looks, but just because we don’t fit that mould doesn’t mean we are incapable. I think particularly of young girls growing up today in the age of Instagram and awful social media validation – they deserve to see people like them performing iconic roles. Juliet is the place to start.

DB: as an actor how far are you involved in the material you perform? How far do you defend or support the material?
ST: For the Malteser’s ad I had no idea how it would turn out until I was on set. I realised some people might think it was a bit rude or crude, and some disabled people haven’t liked it, but it never perturbed me. It was relevant, funny, and I’m quite an open and frank person. If the way to introduce more disabled and diverse talent into our life is by making a joke about sex to sell chocolate then so be it. I admire the forthrightness of the ad and I was very proud to be the front woman. Especially as they have now nominated me for a ‘Best Actress’ award at the Arrow Awards later this month.

DB: Why is Ovalhouse and the new building important to you?
ST: Ovalhouse has the ability to change people. I joined the Youth Theatre as a 13 year old, braces on my teeth, very little confidence, not many friends in school. It was a place where I could have a good time, make friends, make people laugh, wear silly costumes and just be a teenager. No-one commented on my being disabled. If it wasn’t for Ovalhouse I wouldn’t have done drama at school, or at University. I wouldn’t have had the confidence. The new building will be accessible, and as much as a place to see plays or take part, is a place for people to come and have a coffee, find something to make you laugh, make you cry, be a human being!

Storme is a member of the Development Board which, chaired by Robin Priest (1976), is supporting the theatre to raise £2.5m to move into a new theatre in Brixton in 2019. See the Ovalhouse website at www.ovalhouse.com to buy a brick, or a seat and find out more about the development.

HOW TO DONATE
To enable Ovalhouse to support more success stories in a new theatre in Brixton you can donate in the following ways:

ONLINE: MyDonate https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/ovalhousetheatre

BACS: Account Name: Ovalhouse Capital Campaign Account: 80371793 Sort Code: 20 80 57

CHEQUE: Cheques made payable to Ovalhouse Capital Campaign c/o Katie Milton, Development Director – Capital Campaign. Ovalhouse, 52-54 Kennington Oval, London SE1 5SW
As the new College Librarian, when asked “what do you read for pleasure?”, my first response was one of mild panic as I tried to think of something that might sound suitably learned and create the desired positive impression. Quickly abandoning that, instead, you have below a slightly haphazard gallop through some of my literary favourites.

Books and libraries have been in my blood for about as long as I can remember. As children, every Saturday morning we would walk to our local public library where my sister and I would have the terrible problem of which books to choose for the week. Holidays were a nightmare if it meant missing this weekly visit, as then we had to choose books which we could share; Enid Blyton became a staple and we quickly raced through the Secret Seven, Five Find-Outers (the Mystery series) and the Famous Five, and gradually built up our own little library at home of our favourites. I regularly used to make my poor sister “play” libraries with me where we would line up all of our books round my bedroom; I made up little tickets for us, and used my sister’s toy ironing board as an issue desk – perhaps my parents realised then I was never destined to be anything other than a librarian!

Once I reached university (and the incomprehensible rigours of a Cambridge education), I confess that reading for pleasure fell by the wayside somewhat; after long days of studying, yet more reading did not seem the obvious pastime. That said, some of the books I read have stayed with me in the years since. Richard Hamer’s *A Choice of Anglo-Saxon Verse* (London, Faber and Faber, 1970) was never far from my side as an undergraduate and regularly surfaces to the top of the pile for the sumptuous translation of the elegiac poem *Dream of the Rood* “Hwæt, ic secgan cyst secgan wylle... – Hear while I tell about the best of dreams...”. *Beowulf* often eclipses the genre of Anglo-Saxon poetry promoting the stereotypical image of a warrior culture, but Hamer’s volume gives the best glimpse into the breadth of the wonderful literary world of our forebears. It truly is “a book without end” as one can go back again and again, reading different meanings into the poems each time.

We all have some perennial favourites on our shelves. A book that I go back to time and time again is Enrico Brizzi’s *Jack Frusciante Has Left the Band* (London, Flamingo, 1998); a book I first read when I was 15 which painfully encapsulates those first experiences of love and heartache. Written almost as a stream of consciousness narrative, my teenage self was able to identify easily with the sentiments of Alex, the central protagonist. I re-read it just recently and it was quite amazing how a book has the power to transport you back to that particular moment in your life when you first turned the pages. Brizzi’s work is not well known in the UK, and frustratingly this is his only novel to be translated into English which means I must...
improve my Italian! Another favourite with an international flavour is Heðin Brú’s The Old Man and His Sons, (translation: New York, Eriksson, 1970, originally published as Feðgar á ferð (Tórshavn : Felagið Varðin 1940)) a novel set in the Faroe Islands in the mid-twentieth century. Brú tells the story of a whaling family battling between the traditional ways of island life and encroaching modernity which threatens everything they know. It’s a fascinating read and very much recalls the spirit of the Viking sagas; it was voted for by the Faroese as their “Book of the Twentieth Century”, so I’m not the only one to have enjoyed it!

It might be fair to conclude from all of this that my reading tastes now are somewhat eccentric. I spend six hours a day commuting to Christ Church so whatever I am reading needs to be a bit different and captivating enough to keep me awake! I recently finished Wilkie Collins’ The Woman in White which certainly fell into that category; the use of multiple narrators works to great effect in unveiling different layers of the plot and makes it into a real page-turner. It was my first foray into Victorian sensation fiction which I now look forward to exploring more of on the Christ Church shelves!

I’m very much a fan of the physical book still and don’t own any sort of e-reader. I’ve had the privilege of working with some of the most important and ancient books in the country during my career; in my previous role at Corpus I had the honour of caring for the Gospels of St Augustine – the book which has been in this country longer than any other and brought the word of God to the heathen Saxons, and King Alfred’s copy of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. For someone interested books and their history, having an office based in the wonderful upper Library of Christ Church is an almost unimaginable treat and I am enjoying immensely the daily discoveries of new and wonderful treasures. The joy of my role is having oversight of both special and working collections which allows me to indulge academic interests in all things book-history related, alongside professional ones in collection management, conservation and service provision for our current members. I very much look forward to meeting many of you over the coming months and sharing with you some of my favourite finds and learning more about your interests; all members of the House are very welcome to the Library so please do get in touch if you would like to visit.

Steven Archer is the College Librarian at Christ Church. He read Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at Magdalene College, Cambridge and undertook a Masters in Library and Information Studies with a focus in special collections work at University College, London. Steven has worked in the libraries of Trinity and Christ’s Colleges, Cambridge and was Head of Reference at the London Library. He joined Christ Church in September 2016 from his post as Curator and Digital Projects Librarian at the Parker Library, Corpus Christie College, Cambridge. His research interests centre around the impact of the tenth-century monastic reform movement on manuscript production in England, the social function of books in the medieval world, the interplay between script and print, and the survival of medieval libraries during the Reformation. He is keen to hear from any Old Members interested in the College Library and can be contacted at: steven.archer@chch.ox.ac.uk.
The Oxford Madonna and Child, which now stands in the Lady Chapel in the Cathedral, was the centre-piece of an exhibition of Peter Eugene Ball’s sculpture in Christ Church in 2015. This exquisite, richly coloured statue depicts Mary embracing a thoughtful boy Jesus, whose divinity is already manifest, even while he reaches out towards us. It is imbued with the intense devotional aura that characterizes much of Ball’s religious work. A donation from the college’s disbursement committee has contributed half of the purchase cost, but the Cathedral still needs to raise around £12,000 in order to keep this beautiful work in the space for which it was designed. Expressions of interest should be directed to the Cathedral Registrar, Mr John Briggs: john.briggs@chch.ox.ac.uk.
Pevsner famously pronounced that a bicycle shed was a building but a church was architecture. Needless to say, scholars have contradicted him, and a new book – following on from The Cardinal’s College (2012) – will aim to follow in the footsteps of those gainsayers and show that the buildings of Christ Church, built with care for both design and function, whether grand or humble, or even mundane, have much to tell about the history of the site and the institutions that have occupied it. In the main, Christ Church’s buildings are splendid: a visitor in the mid-seventeenth century commented that “...it is more like some fine castle, or great palace than a College”. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the already-grand site was enhanced by ever-more imposing structures, and in the twentieth by buildings of a more functional, but still interesting, nature. Although there were three, often long, principal building phases: the mid-sixteenth century, the late seventeenth and entire eighteenth centuries, and the second half of the nineteenth, there can barely have been a year throughout Christ Church’s five centuries when there was no scaffolding at all. After Wolsey, the main periods of construction were initiated or carried through by the three ‘builder deans’: John Fell, Henry Aldrich, and Henry Liddell. At whatever date, the struggle to provide for the changing needs of academics and residents whilst honouring the history and beauty of Christ Church has been constant.

The final touches are just being made to the text of this new volume which will begin, briefly, with the site before it was taken over by Thomas Wolsey. The following chapters will be chronological but each building will be followed through from beginning to the present day in one place. Hopefully, this will mean that you can discover everything about your favourite places without having to resort constantly to the index!

Although there is much on the architecture of our wonderful site, the book will also cover the debates and decision-making surrounding each building or phase of building, and the people involved with design and construction. Illustrations will be many and varied: new photographs, old maps and plans, engravings and paintings – many of which are from the archive here.

At the moment, the book does not have a definite publication date, but keep your eyes peeled for announcements!