Only a life lived in the service to others is worth living.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

The idea of service permeates much that appears in this edition of Christ Church Matters. Christopher Lewis celebrates his tenth year as Dean this year, and he writes about our Visitor in his Diary. There can surely be nobody in the country who better personifies the ideals of duty and service than Queen Elizabeth II: “I have in sincerity pledged myself to your service, as so many of you are pledged to mine. Throughout all my life and with all my heart I shall strive to be worthy of your trust.”

Many of our thirteen Prime Ministers whom the Archivist writes about also stressed the ideal. W. E. Gladstone, whom another member of the House, Lord (Nigel) Lawson, called “the greatest Chancellor of all time”, stated that “selfishness is the greatest curse of the human race” (and Churchill is alleged to have said “They told me how Mr. Gladstone read Homer for fun, which I thought served him right.”)

Service, to the House, is also epitomised by the authors of the next two articles, Stephen Darlington and the Cathedral School headmaster, Martin Bruce, as it is by the choristers in the both the Cathedral and the College choirs. How lucky we are to have so many who are willing to work so hard to maintain standards, values and traditions.

Other examples of service may be seen in the articles on Jan Morris’ efforts to ensure details of the conquest of Everest were received in London in time for the Coronation, in Joseph Bank’s service to bettering mankind’s knowledge of science, and in the work of Oval House and Saakshar.

W. H. Auden claimed: “We are here on earth to do good to others. What the others are here for, I don’t know.” It is evident from the pieces written by House Chemists, and the number of Members who came to the lunch to wish Paul Kent well on his 90th birthday and to the dinner to wish Martin Grossel well on his retirement, that along with Richard Wayne we have been privileged to have had three tremendous servants to Christ Church, Chemistry and the Tutorial ideal, all believing in and working for the common good.

There are many exciting events in the rest of the year, all listed inside the back cover. Please note them and support them; especially the Association dinner and drama in Hall on September 21st. I trust there will be no collapsing staging and deaths this time but it should still be fun. And of course, if you miss the House you can always lessen the pain by buying one of the last remaining Ingamells’ etchings, details of which are on the back cover.

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The Archivist writes: The gates which lead from the Masters’ Garden to the Meadow were commissioned in 1952 using a gift of £500 from Eric Underwood (1912). Mr Underwood took a first in medieval and modern languages in 1915, and became a barrister after the War. However, he was also a journalist, writing under the pseudonym Peter Simple, for the Morning Post. Underwood was an active advocate of Anglo-American relations and so the gates show the arms of Britain and America. The initials which are cleverly worked into the design at the top of the gate, by the craftsmen of the Rural Industries Bureau, are those of Mr Underwood’s family, intertwined with the Tudor rose motif and a cardinal’s hat. Mr Underwood died in 1952, soon after making his gift, and so did not see the gates erected. A small plaque on the Masters’ Garden side of the gates commemorates his generosity.
The Queen visiting in 2006

A portrait of Charles I and Henrietta Maria by Anthony van Dyck

‘The Queen, Visitor of Christ Church’; that is the principal toast at festive meals and although the title of Visitor does not have practical consequences these days (as an authority to whom to appeal), its symbolic significance is considerable. After all, along with Trinity College Cambridge, we were founded in 1546 by the direct fiat of Henry VIII and given generous, largely monastic, endowments all in the nick of time, for Henry died in January 1547.

The Queen graciously came to lunch in 2006 and met a selection of people from all aspects of the House. As a reminder of an occasion during the reign of Elizabeth I, when a play was put on in Hall (three people died when some staging collapsed, but she then enjoyed the plays very much), a little Shakespeare was performed using High Table as the stage. Someone chose Macbeth. Her Majesty said that she enjoyed it very much.

And then this April, Her Majesty returned to Christ Church to give Maundy Money to 87 men and 87 women, watched over by 174 companions. It was a splendid event which gave immense pleasure to people from all over the counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire – the diocese of Oxford - not to mention everyone involved from the home team, who were amply thanked for all the work which was necessary behind the scenes by meeting and talking to the Queen. The event reached the zenith of social recognition by being featured in Hello!, along with a ball in Monaco and the doings of various famous people whom I was not sure I knew about.

The history of the House is studded with other events involving royalty. Most prominent is the welcome given to Charles I when he had to leave London and lived in the Deanery on and off from 29th October 1642. There is a reminder of this fact on the Monarchy Website, no less, where the Deanery is listed as an ‘unoccupied royal residence’. www.royal.gov.uk/TheRoyalResidences/FormerRoyalResidences/istoricresidences.aspx

That is a somewhat strange description as we rather thought that the Deanery was occupied; maybe the title implies royal re-possession at some future date. Charles’ stay is marked by the door between Christ Church and Corpus Christi, created so that he could visit Henrietta Maria, whose court was at Merton, without going out onto the streets. We now open the door with ceremony each year to welcome, or to be welcomed by, the Corpus Christi Senior Common Room. We choose a date as near as possible to the occasion when the couple met as man and wife: 13th June (1625). The wedding had happened previously in France, attended by Henrietta Maria, but not by Charles. By all accounts, once they got round to meeting, they fell in love. That is an unusual sequence for things, but it seems to have worked rather well.

It is important to be aware of historical detail. When loyal addresses were presented to the Queen in her Jubilee year, the University of Oxford was one of the bodies given the privilege, as was the Greater London Authority. To quote Oxford’s Public Orator: ‘[the Mayor of London] stepped forward and assured the Queen that London had always been foremost in its loyalty to the Crown. I’m not sure about that. I seem to remember that there was some awkwardness in the 1640’s, and Oxford had to step in’ (University Gazette 20.6.12 p 603). House 1 Boris 0.

Not all our dealings with royalty have been uncomplicated and that is understandable, given major upheavals. John Massey was Dean under James II; at the time of the ‘Glorious Revolution’ Massey made his escape out the Deanery drawing room window before dawn on 30th November 1688, disguised himself as a trooper and fled to France. Later, Dean Francis Atterbury was banished for being a Jacobite plotter. Since then, life has been more peaceful. Neither fleeing nor banishments; relations with our Visitor have been as happy as they are today.
On Thursday of Holy Week, Her Majesty the Queen visited Christ Church to distribute the Royal Maundy. In making these symbolic gifts of alms to local pensioners on Maundy Thursday each year, Her Majesty continues an ancient tradition which it has its origins in Christ’s washing of his disciples’ feet at the Last Supper.

Although the practice is probably much older, the first time we know that a Maundy ceremony was performed by an English monarch was in 1210, when King John made gifts of alms to 13 poor persons, one for each full year he had ruled, at Knaresborough Castle. In more recent times the gifts were distributed in the old Chapel Royal (now the Banqueting Hall) in Whitehall, and from 1890 until 1952 at Westminster Abbey. Queen Elizabeth II has sometimes performed the ceremony in Westminster, but has more often made it her practice to travel round the cathedrals of her realm on this day each year. Her visit in March was the first time the Royal Maundy had been distributed in Oxford since 1644, when King Charles I was in residence in Christ Church during the Civil War.

The traditional English name for the Thursday before Easter relates to the liturgical ceremony commemorating Christ’s washing of feet at the Last Supper as recorded in St John’s gospel. After he had washed their feet, Jesus said to the disciples: ‘I give you a new commandment’ *mandatum novum* (John 13: 34). Those words were adopted as the first antiphon (scriptural verse or sentence) sung at the ceremony, which hence acquired the name of *mandatum*, and so (via Anglo-Norman and Old French, *mandé*) Maundy. As early as the fourth century the washing of feet was re-enacted, as well as the commemoration of Jesus’ institution of the Eucharist, in the Church’s liturgy for the day before Good Friday. In Christ Church it is performed each Maundy Thursday evening, when the Dean – putting a towel around his waist – washes the feet of 12 members of the congregation.

In earlier times, monarchs performed that act of service by literally washing the feet of chosen pensioners, one for each year they had reigned, before
making them charitable gifts of money and clothing. Since about 1730, the ceremony has only involved the gifts, a red purse containing a nominal allowance for clothing and provisions, and a white one with specially-minted Maundy coins (pennies, two-, three- and four-penny pieces) adding up to the monarch’s age. The recipients (86 men and 86 women, one for each year of the Queen’s life) were nominated by churches around the diocese for their Christian service to the Church and local community.

Whilst Her Majesty made the Distribution in two parts on the south and then the north side of the cathedral, accompanied by the Lord High Almoner (the Bishop of Worcester) and members of the Almonry Household, the Cathedral Choir joined by the Choir of the Chapel Royal sang anthems, ending with Handel’s ‘Zadok the Priest’, which Her Majesty admitted afterwards is one of her favourite pieces of church music.
One of Christ Church’s most famous claims is that it has educated thirteen of Britain’s prime ministers who held office for 22 separate terms between the 1760s and the 1960s. This year sees the 250th anniversary of the appointment of the first, George Grenville. Grenville’s career as an undergraduate was less than distinguished; as the younger son, he was destined for a career in law, and he was called to the bar – having left Christ Church before taking a degree - in 1735. Grenville was an unlikely prime minister, but he proved better at it than his contemporaries expected. Nevertheless, he was unpopular for his economies – an only too-contemporary problem - and was mocked for his parsimony. George III apparently found him tediously boring stating that ‘When he has wearied me for two hours, he looks at his watch, to see if he may not tire me for an hour more’.

Twenty years later, William Petty (later marquis of Lansdowne), followed Grenville into high office. Petty’s childhood had been brutal and he couldn’t bear the thought of going back home to Ireland after Oxford, so he joined the army and rose spectacularly through the ranks. Within four years of leaving Christ Church, Petty was aide-de-camp to the king, and MP for Wycombe and for Kerry. His premiership lasted just eight months, dominated by peace negotiations with America and demands for legislative independence for Ireland. Snapping at Lansdowne’s heels came his contemporary, William Bentinck, duke of Portland. He was the first of Christ Church’s prime ministers to serve for two terms (1783 and 1807-9). In between came Houseman number four, William Grenville, youngest son of George. He was the first of our PMs to distinguish himself academically. Elected to a Studentship in 1776, he won the Chancellor’s prize for Latin verse in 1779 and was permitted to receive his BA early on account of his having ‘distinguished himself by his diligent attendance upon the public lectures, by his exemplary performance of the college exercises, and his good conduct in every respect.’
Robert Jenkinson, later Lord Liverpool (PM 1812-27) writing home from Christ Church in 1787, 'rejoiced to find this place so free from Debauchery. Gaming is entirely abolished, and there is very little Drinking.' The dean at the time was, of course, Cyril Jackson, known for his determination to make his students work hard. Liverpool’s tutor, Charles Hall, whom he described as ‘an excessive ingenious man’ and ‘very attentive’ succeeded Jackson as dean. As prime minister, Liverpool was considered genial and efficient. His long term in office saw the final overthrow of Napoleon, but also the rise of disaffection at home, particularly in the northern manufacturing districts, and the problem of Catholic emancipation. This latter was to cause problems for Liverpool’s successors, his Christ Church contemporary and friend, George Canning, and Robert Peel. Canning had been to school at Eton, where he had flourished, and his successes continued at Christ Church. Peel, likewise, was a diligent student, taking the first-ever double-first in 1808. His pro-Catholics stance is commemorated in the ‘No Peel’ slogan hammered into the door beneath the Hall stairs.

Lord Derby is less well-remembered at Christ Church for it was he who destroyed the original statue of Mercury leaving the pond empty of adornment until the 1930s. However, although he took no degree (a not uncommon occurrence for more noble students), he was a clever man, lively and self-assured. William Gladstone, perhaps Christ Church’s most famous premier, held the position for no fewer than 14 years. At the House, he was considered to be a bit of a swot and was actually beaten up by more hearty members, but his talents were recognised elsewhere in his own Essay Club and in the new Union Society. He later supported his Christ Church predecessors on Catholic emancipation, and stood firm for Home Rule. He and Lord Salisbury, on the other side of the House, held the premiership continuously from 1880-1902 with only a brief interruption by another Christ Church man, the earl of Rosebery, in 1894/5.

It was another 50 years before Christ Church saw its twelfth prime minister enter Downing Street. Anthony Eden came up in 1919 after serving in France during the 1st World War. He studied Arabic and Persian, and received a 1st class degree. He felt that Middle Eastern languages would be helpful in a future political career. Ironically, it was the crisis over the Suez canal in 1956/7 that caused Eden ill-health and eventually brought about his resignation. The last, so far, House premier was Alec Douglas-Home. He held office only for a year, disclaiming his peerage to do so, and kept things steady after the turbulence of Macmillan’s leadership, particularly the furore around the Profumo affair, until the election of 1964 which brought in Harold Wilson. We wait to see who will be next!
As I write this article, the choir’s latest recording of music from the Eton Choirbook, *Choirs of Angels*, has just been released. It has been greeted with great acclaim by the BBC (already featuring on ‘The Choir’ and ‘CD Review’), and by the national press. This is our second volume of music from the late fifteenth-century collection which was in daily use in Eton College Chapel. *Choirs of Angels* includes a selection of better-known masterpieces, such as Cornysh’s *Ave Maria*, and bold and individual rarities, such as Lambe’s *O Maria plena gracio*.

At first glance, the music of the Eton Choirbook might appear to adopt a generic style but, in fact, there is an astonishing range of individual vocabulary among these composers. It is exactly 570 years since the formal opening of Eton College in 1443. By the turn of the century this elaborate choral foundation was using the vast repertoire of sacred choral music collected together in the Eton Choirbook. Fundamental to the ethos of this music is its inextricable link to the regular worship and tradition of its performers. This is why a choir like Christ Church has such a powerful affinity with it, engaged as it is in an unbroken tradition of daily choral services.

By way of complete contrast, the choir is currently engaged in preparing for performances of two newly-commissioned challenging works. Mark Simpson is a young composer who graduated from Oxford two years ago. He is already developing a glittering career, not least because he wrote a piece for the Last Night of the Proms in 2012. The Newbury Spring Festival has commissioned a setting of the text ‘Salvator mundi’ from Mark for performance at the end of May in the festival’s final concert in Douai Abbey. The work makes fascinating use of unaccompanied choral textures combined with exciting rhythms. Like all his recent compositions, it is making a great impact. The other work has been commissioned from Francis Grier (1981) with funds provided by the JPT Family Trust (Nicholas Pitts-Tucker, 1968) and the Friends of Christ Church Cathedral. The *Missa Aedes Christi* has been conceived with the dancers of the Rambert Ballet School in mind and by the time your read this article I hope a number of you will have come to the series of performances planned in June. Francis’s setting of the Mass combines his extraordinary ear for glorious choral effects with a strong sense of linear writing such as you find in English music of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Ross McKim, who runs the famous Rambert Ballet School, has been involved since the beginning of the project and the dancers have responded positively to the dramatic rhythms of the piece.

The next twelve months are already looking busy for the choir, with concerts in the Sheldonian Theatre (*Acis and Galatea*, 6 July 2013) and St John’s Smith Square (18 December 2013) and another major tour to the USA and Canada in the spring of 2014. For news of this and all the choir’s activities, do look at the choir’s brand new website from which you can also find out how to buy CDs www.chchchoir.org
Times change. On the 26th August 1958 the composer Ralph Vaughan Williams died. His funeral service and commemoration were held at Westminster Abbey on 19th September, the occasion being broadcast live on television by the BBC. Whether or not the ‘man in the street’ really lamented the passing of one of the century’s greatest English musicians the BBC mandarins clearly felt that this was an event of national importance worthy of television coverage. Spool forward to the present: would any of today’s leading composers be honoured in such a way, both in being given an Abbey funeral and air time? It is difficult to imagine that they would. We live in times of cultural plurality and ‘classical’ music, far from being perceived as the dominant genre, must justify its place alongside hip-hop, R and B, garage, pop and a host of other styles.

Of classical music a sub-set is church music of the sort performed week by week by the Cathedral Choristers and by their colleagues at Christ Church Cathedral School, the boys of Worcester College Chapel. In times of uncertainty for the Church of England and of dwindling parish (if not cathedral) congregations, it cannot be asserted that such music occupies the more ‘mainstream’ position it did once; so is there still a place for the chorister life which has been a feature of Christ Church since its Henrician foundation? All of us involved in the education and support of the choristers would reply with a strong affirmation. Our ‘yes’ would not be built on sentiment or romance. Choristership offers a distinct opportunity to musical children that it is difficult to imagine could be replicated in any other way. Choristers learn music, of course, but they also learn discipline, humility, team dynamics, an appreciation of beauty, what ‘professionalism’ means, confidence… it would be easy to extend the list. That this way of life is deeply appreciated may be gathered not merely from the reminiscences of former choristers but by the fact that so many send their children to schools like CCCS so that they may enjoy choristership in their turn.

The training and educating of choristers has a cost, of course, and, like cathedrals up and down the country, Christ Church is generous in its support as it fulfils the obligation established by Henry VIII in 1546. In so doing, the work in recent years of the Development Office in successfully raising funds to endow choristerships has been key and many boys in the stalls wear medals named for the generous benefactors who support them. The situation to which today’s cathedrals aspire is to be able to be ‘needs-blind’ in the provision of chorister places so that any child, from whatever background, may benefit.

Times may have changed and church music may well have to work much harder to make itself heard in the noise of 21st-century Britain; but the value of choristerships to children endures, and Christ Church certainly plays its part in the maintaining of a valuable and precious tradition.
The opportunity to perform in our glorious Cathedral is not limited to those few students able to take up academical clerkships in the Cathedral Choir. Each Monday during term, the Christ Church College Choir – open to all students and staff – assemble to take care of Evensong. This choir, made of those singing solely for pleasure, strive to produce music of sufficient quality for a regular Cathedral service. That this is achieved week on week on one two hour rehearsal (inevitably jostling for position against academic, and of course all other, pursuits) is a quite remarkable achievement.

Not only does the College Choir offer such a wonderful opportunity to members, but it has been a great privilege for me to be able to conduct regularly in such a setting, as well as around the country; we have visited Hereford and Worcester Cathedrals this year, and we visit Gloucester and St George’s, Windsor next. The choir also gives an annual concert with orchestra; recently Buxtehude’s Membra Jesu Nostri and Handel’s Coronation Anthems – Zadok the Priest soared around the Cathedral.
In recent years, the choir has gone from strength to strength. Repertoire is increasing in volume and difficulty, recruitment has expanded to college staff and university-wide (auditioning over 60 people this year) and we are becoming increasingly involved in more Cathedral music.

And so our plans become more ambitious. The most exciting is a trip to Dublin, taking place this July. This is the first time the choir has undertaken a residential tour. A 21-strong contingent will sing the daily services in St Patrick’s Cathedral, as well as a service in Christ Church Cathedral. Such an opportunity to engage with choral music at a more concentrated level than usual is one I found thrilling as a young chorister, and which I hope this group will find invaluable in furthering their singing. The choice of destination very much reflects the ethos of the College Choir. We can enjoy singing in two beautiful Cathedrals while Dublin, as a vibrant and exciting city, offers much to explore for what is a strong social group drawn from a variety of backgrounds, academic and otherwise, that is arguably unmatched by any other society in College. There are plans to visit and perform at venues across Dublin, including the Guinness Storehouse of all places (the performance fee is a pint).

The tour has been funded entirely by our members, although we are seeking to augment this. Two successful fundraising concerts and generous support from CCMS and College have begun this process.

This trip offers an excellent chance to continue the choir’s recent development. To go away for the best part of a week and immerse ourselves solely in music-making will be an extremely useful experience; one that we can bring back to the Cathedral with us in October. On a personal note, it is a fine way to mark the end of both my time at Christ Church, and as Director of this marvellous choir and unique student ensemble.

The College Choir, a strong social group drawn from a variety of backgrounds, academic and otherwise, that is arguably unmatched by any other society in College.
The news from Everest, 1953

Well now, as Shakespeare said, on your imaginary forces work! Here we are at Camp 4 in the western Cwm in the flank of Everest, 22,000 feet up on May 30, 1953. It’s a brilliant day up here. The lonely white valley lies desolate in the lee of the great peaks all around, and the massive wall of the mountain Nuptse, on its southern side, shines mysteriously like silk or rubbed velvet, with the sheen of melting snow. Sometimes there is a sudden high-pitched whistle, when an avalanche boulder screams down from a high ridge. The sky is a deep, deep blue, and from the summit of Everest itself, 6 or 7000 feet above us, a plume of driven snow flaunts itself like a banner. Our little clutch of tents crouches here in the Cwm, and you and I are lounging in the sun outside.

There are perhaps a dozen of us there, as I remember, Sherpas, three or four climbers, John Hunt our leader. All of us are tired after our long weeks on the mountain, and Hunt most of all – he’s just come down here exhausted but indefatigable after a long stint higher up. Now we are all waiting here, waiting – waiting to know whether yesterday Ed Hillary the New Zealander and Tenzing the Sherpa reached the summit of the world, or whether they are now on the way down again, disconsolate. Earlier this morning somebody saw their minute figures away up there, infinitely distant, apparently making their way down, but soon they’d disappeared from view, and whether they’d got to the top or not, none of us knows. There’s no way of knowing – no radio, no signal from them, or from the three other men who are higher up there ready to help them down. We can only wait, and lounge about, and drink tea, and read old newspapers. Mostly we are silent, like the Cwm itself. There is an occasional burst of laughter from the irrepressible Sherpas, or a murmur of gossip or conjecture from a climber. Somewhere a mostly unregarded radio is broadcasting a news bulletin from India, and there is a brief guffaw when it tells us that our whole expedition has already failed and is packing up to go home.

Time and again we stir ourselves to gaze with our binoculars up the cwm, time and again we come back to another mug of tea until suddenly – “There they are!” – and one and all we drop our mugs, throw away our papers, rush and stumble and slither up the snow to greet them. There they are! We can see them now all right, five tired figures in snow-goggles trudging down the snow toward us, Hillary and Tenzing, plus Wilfred Noyce, George Lowe and the Sherpa Pasang Phutar who’ve escorted them down from the ultimate heights. But how do they look? Do they look disconsolate in failure, or just exhausted in success? They give us no sign, just clump tantalizingly down towards us, until at last the man in front, George Lowe the other New Zealander, raises his ice-axe towards the ultimate summit above and gives us the thumbs up. They’ve done it!

At that moment nobody else on earth knew that Everest had been climbed. But I was a reporter, and more important to me was the fact that nobody in the world’s media knew, except only me! As I scribbled down Tenzing’s and Hillary’s story I had two things in mind: one was the prospect of what they used to call a scoop: the other was the possibility that I might just get the news back to my newspaper not only exclusively, but also in time for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, which was going to happen on June 2. The whole world’s press, I knew, was trying to beat me with the story, but if I could do it what a scoop that would be. I thought - an allegorical kind of scoop, linking a great human adventure with a tremendous historical event! By now it was the late afternoon of May 30. I had three days more or less, to get the news to London. It meant a dash down the mountain right there and then, in the gathering dusk, and the climber Mike Westmacott, who knew better than anyone else the treacherous Icefall I’d have to go through, and who
Everest, 1953

IMPROVEMENT ALL WELL. Which meant that Everest had been climbed by Hillary and Tenzing and that we were all OK, thanks very much. First thing next morning, May 30, I sent it off by runner to be transmitted, I hoped, by an Indian Army radio post some 30 miles from Everest. Hoping that it would deceive the radio people and all my dastardly competitors, and also with luck get to London in time for Coronation Day.

And so it did. Far away that morning, as the golden coach trundled through the rain, with a clip-clop of cavalry to Westminster Abbey, the vast crowds lining the route cheered and sang with extra pride, when they learnt from the Times that Everest had been climbed, and by a British expedition. It was a like a national coronation present for the young Elizabeth: and if I may say so your Majesty, what we all got that day in return was a damned good Queen!

This article is based on a speech made by Jan Morris in London, May 2013.
Former Christ Church student Joseph Banks (1743–1820) is nowhere near as famous as he might have been. He is well known to gardeners as the source of the name of the genus Banksia, with its 170 species of Australian plants. Botanists know of him as well, not just for the eponymous genus, but because of his key role in the development of what we now know as economic botany; from the 1770s onwards, Banks was the unofficial director of Kew Gardens where his contribution has been marked since 1985 by the Sir Joseph Banks Building. Historians of Australia and the wider Pacific know of him because of his participation in Captain Cook’s first voyage of discovery on HMS Endeavour (1768–1771), and his role in promoting the choice of Botany Bay as the site of a penal colony. Africanists know of him because of his role in founding the African Association, and his support of explorers such as Mungo Park and Johann Burckhardt. More broadly, scientists know of him because of his longstanding presidency of the Royal Society from 1778 to 1820. For more than forty years, he was at the centre of scientific research and debate, with his house at Soho Square operating as a research institute in all but name.

Despite this, he was not an original thinker and published little. In particular, he failed to publish his important collections of ‘natural’ and ‘artificial’ curiosities from the Endeavour voyage. For example, the more than 700 engravings of the plants that he and his friend Daniel Solander had collected were prepared by 1784 but not published until the 1980s. Instead, he made his collections available to friends, correspondents, and visitors to Soho Square, and gave significant amounts away, including a small collection that was housed at Christ Church for almost a century.

After four years at Eton and four at Harrow, the young Banks matriculated as a gentleman commoner at Christ Church on 16 December 1760. He apparently took up residence on Christmas Eve.

He was not a particularly talented student, but had already developed a lifelong interest in botany.
eventually occupying Rooms 6 and 8 on Stair 8 in Peckwater. He was not a particularly talented student, but had already developed a lifelong interest in botany. This he continued to pursue at Oxford, botanizing and fossil-hunting with friends on Shotover Hill and at Headington Quarry. Famously, he responded to the reluctance of Humphrey Sibthorp, the then Sherardian Professor of Botany, to teach by paying for Israel Lyons to travel from Cambridge to lecture instead.

A key figure in Banks’s time at Christ Church was John Parsons (1742–1785), his senior by a year. Parsons went on to study medicine at London and Edinburgh, before returning to Christ Church as the first Lee’s Reader in 1767. It was almost certainly to Parsons that Banks sent the thirty weapons, tools, and textiles from Tahiti and New Zealand that I ‘rediscovered’ at the Pitt Rivers Museum in 2002. These were among the hundreds of artificial curiosities that Banks and Solander had collected on the Endeavour. Housed first at Christ Church’s Anatomy School, whose completion Parsons had overseen, they were loaned to the University Museum in 1860 along with Christ Church’s anatomical and physiological collections, and then incorporated into the Pitt Rivers Collection on its donation to the University in the mid-1880s. By this time they had lost any documentation and association with Banks, though I have since been able to establish their history.

Since its rediscovery the Banks collection has proved to be of enormous interest to Pacific historians and contemporary Pacific Islanders, the descendants of those who made these taonga (the Maori word for cultural treasures). For example, a cloak with dog-hair tassels has proven to be the only attested historical example of this particular type and as a result has been the focus of research, discussion, and debate by a number of Maori weavers and scholars. Moreover, Maori scholar Paul Tapsell, who received his doctorate from the University (Exeter) in 1998, has suggested that it might have belonged to the Raiatean priest-navigator Tupaia who joined the Endeavour in Tahiti and was regarded by the Maori in New Zealand as the expedition’s leader. Tupaia died in Batavia (now Jakarta), which Cook fatally visited on the voyage home, and it seems likely that Banks ‘appropriated’ his belongings. We are some way from establishing whether this is quite what happened, but if it did it would be very appropriate that some of the property of Polynesia’s most famous priest-navigator should end up in Oxford.
Engraved Gems and the Upper Library

Every term now opens with a new exhibition in the Upper library. In Hilary 2013 we tried something different: a joint venture. On this occasion we collaborated with the Oxford Classical Art Research Centre and various private collectors. Although the exhibition was a scholarly exercise, illustrating aspects of the complex history of collecting gems and cameos from Greek and Roman times to the nineteenth century, it was also designed as an easy introduction for the non-specialist. Setting up an exhibition such as this might seem forbidding. A balancing act too difficult to orchestrate, therefore a non-starter. In our case however it was a joy from the beginning to the end, as we benefited from the help and generosity of many people. Our deepest gratitude goes to Dr Claudia Weber. She directs the Beazley Archive’s gem research program, and it was her curatorial insight and enthusiasm which made an exhibition such as this possible.

Gems may be modest in size but the engraving of them was one of the major luxury arts of classical antiquity. They are also special in that most of them are complete and in exactly the condition in which they left the engraver’s hands. The miniaturisation and beauty of what was once a very rich production of jewellery engraved with intaglio devices for sealing or personal signets, together with cameos cut in relief has continued to amaze the viewer and tempt collectors to spend ever more astronomical sums so that they could be in possession of their favourite items. Some of these, we were told, were bought for an amount of money able to secure a small palazzo in Venice.

One such star exhibit on show was the famous sleeping leopard, also known as the Zanetti cameo. Antonio Maria Zanetti (1680-1757) was a Venetian Count, a highly influential collector and dealer. Looking into the provenance of the object, we discovered a very interesting history. This mottled jasper, it appears, was much coveted by the Duke of Marlborough, but it was sold to the Duke’s cousin, the First Earl Spencer, at Althorp.

Another example of stunning beauty and craftsmanship is the so called Cesati cameo, representing Cupid taming a lion. This cameo was carved in sardonyx and signed in Greek letters ‘Alexander F(ecit)’ for Alexander Cesati (1510-1564). The artist was so admired at the time that in his Vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori (1568), Vasari refers to him as surpassing “far beyond all others in grace, perfection and versatility.”

Invented probably in Alexandria by the second century BC, cameos present in relief, on layered stones a wide variety of secular and religious subjects. Their main function was as jewellery, but also there are fantastic examples of cameos on a grand scale. These were among the favourite formats for Roman imperial portraiture and propaganda.

The most common gems however were seals. In their case, the stone was not carved in relief, but hollowed out.
in intaglio, and designed to yield an impression in wax or clay. Such is, for instance, the Nicolo bull, dating from the first century AD. Images of rural scenes, in particular those showing domesticated animals, as a symbol of prosperity, were a popular choice for personal seals. Equally popular were images of rulers, such as the one in the fragment of a Hellenistic intaglio amethyst. The oldest exhibit on show, dating from the third century BC, is also one of the most mysterious as to whom it might represent.

The idea behind the exhibition was to show as wide a range of engraved gems as was possible and bring them together with relevant books belonging to the library. It was a humbling experience for us to discover how many engraved catalogues of collections dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries we found on the shelves of the Upper Library at Christ Church. These volumes perfectly complemented the gems and impressions, thus better explaining collection histories and their reception of iconography.

Abrahami Gorlaei Antverpiani Dactyliothecae (Antwerp 1695), one of the earliest publications of a gem collection.

Fragment of Hellenistic intaglio.

On a general note, it might be worth mentioning here, that our great library never ceases to astonish. This has been perhaps most evident lately in the process of preparing for publication the new western manuscripts catalogue. Confronted with a surprising range of little discoveries and previously unrecorded facts, we decided not only to have the descriptions updated but also to expand the catalogue. Together with the hard-copy publication (due to come out next year), information is also gradually being made available on-line. Ultimately we should be able to offer a digitised and fully interactive database environment for the whole collection of manuscripts. This will be on a distinct platform, different from that planned for the Brady collection of theatrical ephemera. Creating such a database, we know, is an expensive and labour-intensive exercise. We are fortunate to have been gifted with the equipment and assistance we need, but we still have more work to do to achieve our digitisation and conservation goals. If you would like to learn more about supporting the library, please contact simon.offen@chch.ox.ac.uk.
Among the many treasures of Christ Church Library is a very little known, but extraordinarily valuable collection of theatrical ephemera donated by Francis Bridgford Brady. He was born in China in the late nineteenth century and came up to Christ Church in 1909 as a Holford Exhibitioner. We know very little about him other than that he took a 2nd in Literae Humaniores in 1913. Many years later, on 24 November 1977, the Librarian, Dr J.F.A. Mason, received an unexpected letter from Mr Brady, enquiring whether the college would be willing to accept his collection as a gift prior to his moving house. He wrote: "From the twenties until the sixties, when the material disappeared under the counter or soared above my means, I have occupied my leisure in [...] collecting theatrical material". The Library Committee accepted his gift, but nobody then realised how important the material was.

The only comparable collections worldwide are at the V&A, the British Museum, the University of Pennsylvania and the New York Public Library. The Brady Collection rivals these archives. Roughly 25% of the material in our collection is completely unique, not being catalogued within any traceable archive. A real treasure the Library plans to catalogue, digitise and research in detail, thus making available to scholars material and images of immense value. Within Oxford the discovery of this major resource will have an immediate impact on graduate teaching and doctoral research. More broadly it will considerably strengthen Oxford’s library resources in this field and it will contribute major materials for the local and national publication of ephemera (e.g. the John Johnson collection in the Bodleian Library). Once digitized the Brady collection would offer an unparalleled database of theatrical material, which would also complement recent large research projects dedicated to late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theatre, such as, for example, the Victorian Plays Project (a database of Lacy’s Acting Editions, 1848-73), the Lord Chamberlain’s Plays (a catalogue of titles and key-words of play-scripts in the British Library, 1852-63), and the Cultural History of British Pantomime, 1837-1901 (a 3-year project, including a series of colloquia, held by the University of Birmingham).
Editorial

Chemists abound in this edition of Association News. And no, this is not a case of me – the House’s first ever female chemist – asserting editorial privilege, something which, in all the years of holding this position, I have assiduously endeavoured to avoid. There are good reasons for heading off to the labs this time, chief among them being the 90th birthday of Paul Kent, Dr Lee’s Reader in Chemistry from 1956 to 1972, and still remembered with immense affection by those he taught and worked with, as shown by the 80 chemists, biochemists and “less easily definable members” who joined Paul for a recent celebratory lunch.

There have been the usual many and varied get-togethers for Old Members including a strong turnout by House men and women for the University European Reunion in Madrid. If you are interested in the Masons, the male only (despite the picture), Aedes Christi Lodge is looking for new members.

We always have more books to review than space will allow, but we have squeezed in five this time. The Finding of Freddie Perkins by Liz Baddaley (1998) is being devoured by my nine year-old son who is loathe to put it down, especially when the alternative is revising for his exams. So Who’s Your Mother explores the life of Tarquin Olivier (1956), the son of one of the most highly regarded actors in British theatrical history. The Sultan’s Organ by John Mole (1964) brings us the diary of Thomas Dallam, a sixteenth century organ builder, who made a six month trek to Constantinople transporting the eponymous instrument, a gift from Queen Elizabeth and the merchants of London to Sultan Mehmet III of Turkey. Dallam was rewarded for his craft with, among other things, a pair of virgins, while the Virgin Queen secured trade concessions for her merchants. John Ruskin’s autobiography, Praeterita, gives a vivid account of undergraduate life in the early nineteenth century, while The Stumbling Giant by Timothy Beardson (1966) posits that the rise of China might not be as inevitable as we all think.

I am starting to run low on pranks for Pranks corner, so if any spring to mind, please let me know. And as always, please send me anything you feel might be of interest to include in future issues of Association News.

Fiona Holdsworth (1981), Editor
fiona.holdsworth@btinternet.com

The second Board of Benefactors’ Gaudy

The second Benefactors’ Gaudy, on 15th December 2012, saw 210 people enjoy a series of lectures by Christ Church tutors, an informal wine tasting, behind the scenes tours and viewings, a special choral Evensong, and a champagne reception in the deanery followed by a splendid seasonal dinner in Hall. A piano trio from the House provided entertainment, the Choir sang Grace, and the Dean; the Chairman of the Development Board, Sir David Scholey, and the Rt. Hon. The Lord Neuberger of Abbotsbury spoke. Thank you to all the members of the Board, and to those who made the Gaudy such a success.
2003-2005 Reunion

On Saturday 5 January, a hundred or so old boys and girls gathered for what was being described as a “mid-way lunch”. We were, as I doubt many of us realised, victims of the recent rescheduling of the Christ Church gaudy calendar. The time-tested gaudy rota had sadly buckled under the strain of competing requirements. Those of us who matriculated in ’03, ’04 and ’05 will have to wait a little longer for our first gaudy. So a mid-way lunch was organised and we “victims” were amply compensated with a very enjoyable day back at Christ Church.

For those prepared to get on the slightly earlier train from Paddington (and elsewhere), Judith Curthoys gave an interesting and entertaining talk on the Christ Church undergraduate as he (and she) studied, ate and drank through the college’s history. From unbookish nobles to the boringly bookish Gladstone, and including the unfortunate victim of Peck’s open toilets, the variety of existence in college that we knew and enjoyed seems to have remained unchanged since Wolsey.

The Dean generously hosted a drinks reception, after which followed an excellent lunch in Hall. A lot of catching up was done and a good deal of reminiscing too. Even in the course of a few years, carefree undergraduates had become mothers, husbands, fiancés and more. Interesting careers have been pursued and (like mine) some more traditional ones. A few hairlines had receded and a waistline or two had perhaps expanded, but much had stayed the same. We slipped into old conversations, enjoyed chatting with still familiar faces. From Hall, we moved to the Buttery, then to the immaculately restored and too rarely visited Upper Library and, finally, to the Bear. Late into the afternoon, we were still there.

It was an excellent day and thank you to the Dean, Judith Curthoys, Simon Offen and the Development Office for their generous and warm welcome back.


Association visit to Trinity College, Cambridge

The Association owes a great debt of gratitude to our colleagues at Trinity Cambridge for laying on a splendid tour of the college and excellent lunch in the Old Kitchens for some 40 members and friends. Professor Robin Carrell kindly acted as our guide and host, and we were privileged to see the Master’s Lodgings amongst other gems. Wren’s Library was another highlight, especially as the Sub-Librarian, Sandy Paul, gave us such a warm welcome and interesting talk. Cambridge actually seemed rather appealing!
Paul Kent’s 90th Birthday Lunch

The sun shone on Paul’s birthday celebrations as eighty Chemists, Bio-Chemists, and a few less easily definable members (!) gathered to listen to a brilliant talk by Dr. Allan Chapman on Christ Church chemists in history, enjoy a drinks reception in the SCR garden and a superb lunch (appropriately) in the Freind Room, and be entertained with an after lunch talk by the ever lucid Richard Wayne. During this incredibly happy day the GCR’s present to Paul, a portrait of him by Michael Gabriel, was unveiled; and Paul was presented with two gifts from Housemen and women: an antique silver frame complete with photograph by the Chaplain, Ralph Williamson, of Paul receiving the portrait, and a matching silver bowl. In addition it was announced that thanks to two major donations by people present at the lunch, the endowment fund for the Paul Kent Chemistry Tutorship had reached the halfway mark with gifts exceeding £330k.

The Madrid Reunion

Christ Church had a splendid turnout at the University European Reunion in Madrid in April. Over forty Housemen, women and their guests came to the college dinner on the Friday night and at least another four members of the House were booked in for the weekend. Thank you to Charles Elwell (1970, History) who organised the superb meal for Members which followed a reception at the Ambassador's residence. The Saturday produced an interesting academic programme, a lovely lunch, various cultural tours (including the Royal Palace, the Prado, the Botanical Gardens, and the Bernabeu Stadium) and the University dinner in a brilliant old restaurant where goodness knows how many lambs were sacrificed. Proceedings came to a close on the Sunday with brunch and a guided tour of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes. All in all an excellent weekend in a magnificent city.
In this issue we hear from six Old Members who read chemistry as they reflect on their time at the House and their subsequent careers.

David Neuberger (1966)
In Michaelmas 2010, I wrote in Christ Church Matters about my rather tortuous route from reading chemistry at Christ Church in the late 1960s to becoming Master of the Rolls in 2009. Since then, I have become President of the UK Supreme Court. There are very few former science graduates in the ranks of the UK judiciary and I think I am the only senior Judge in the United Kingdom with a degree in chemistry.

My career in the law owes a great deal to Christ Church and a great deal to reading chemistry for four years.

So far as the chemistry is concerned, virtually all scientific and mathematical problems, unlike many problems in other areas, have a right answer – at least at undergraduate level. So, there is nowhere much to hide for a chemistry undergraduate faced with a question or problem. For this reason, while I had little talent for it, science taught me to develop a degree of intellectual rigour, which I sorely lacked before coming up to Oxford. It is easier to move from a more rigorous subject to a less rigorous one, and, while there is much in law which is very demanding, it is less rigorous than science. There is more room for opinion as to the right answer to a legal question, not least because the whole subject is, to a large degree, man-made.

More specifically, reading chemistry gave me a familiarity with scientific concepts and (relatively elementary) mathematics. My barrister’s practice in land law frequently involved valuation issues, and I found that I was much more at home with figures than most lawyers or judges (and even most expert valuers), and this was a real benefit to my career.

Shortly after I went on the bench, there was a need for another patent judge, and, although I had had no experience in that area of law, my chemistry degree meant I was the obvious choice. I am sure that this extra dimension to my expertise did a lot to help me climb the judicial ladder.

Four years at Christ Church, talking to undergraduates and students – and others - served to give me a broader and deeper perspective than I would otherwise have had on a number of fronts. It enabled me to develop both a social and an intellectual confidence, without, I hope, too much arrogance. Confidence of both types is essential for a barrister and for a judge, but so is self-awareness, which I believe my time at Oxford also helped foster. It is important to be able to understand and communicate with all sorts of people, whether one is a barrister dealing with clients, solicitors, judges or juries, or a judge dealing with advocates, litigants and witnesses, juries or judicial colleagues, and I think my time at Christ Church helped me a lot on that score as well.

David Wheeler (1978)
David started his career at the BBC as a Trainee TV cameraman in 1982. He progressed to directing and after 27 years started lecturing in the subject at Staffordshire University.

Why did you choose to study chemistry? I was always fascinated with chemistry, loved chemistry lessons, and seemed to be reasonably good at it! I had great fun with chemistry sets as a 12-year-old, doing experiments that would no doubt be completely banned today. Certainly the indoor fireworks singed a few eyebrows.

Did you enjoy studying chemistry at Christ Church? I loved my education. The motivating, stimulating and inspiring environment of Oxford and Christ Church gave me lots of energy and drive to throw into my studies. The course, the lecturers, and the experiments were challenging, as they should have been, and certainly, at times they were stressful. I even made a film in my 2nd year about the pressures and stress at University! However the teaching, one’s fantastic and intelligent colleagues, and the overall environment were of enormous support and enjoyment.

What are you doing now as a career? Filmmaking is hugely rewarding because it can combine all of the creative artistic disciplines, e.g. photography, drama, music, dance and art. Additionally, bringing together those various talents means, as the director, you get a wonderful combination of creative ideas from a variety of people. Now that I lecture at University in film production I find it hugely satisfying because I am able to support young people developing confidence, knowledge and skills which prepare them to enter the industry.
George Marston (1980)

I came up to Christ Church in 1980 - a northern chemist, which I recall was a common term of abuse in Oxford at the time. My first recollection of the college, as I arrived with my best mate from school, was a conversation with the College Chaplain, which ended with a double thumbs up and an injunction to ‘stay cool’... I’m not sure we did or, indeed, wanted to.

Life in the House was a bit of a culture shock, but it didn’t take so long for it to just seem like normal life; we played sport, socialised, drank, messed about — but in rather more grand and elegant surroundings than we had been used to — and even studied as well. Of course in Oxford, studying was intimately linked to tutorials, which had a very special quality; gowns were worn, a small glass of sherry — and on memorable occasions something larger and stronger — might be imbibed if the time was right, and hangovers were nursed when tutorials occurred at 9 o’clock on Saturday morning.

My time at the House has had a huge influence on my career, reflected in the fact that I am still a chemist, although having lived in the south for over thirty years, perhaps no longer a genuine northern chemist. Over the years, I have kept in contact with Martin Grossel (organic chemistry tutor) and Richard Wayne (physical chemistry tutor, and DPhil supervisor) both socially and professionally, further evidence of the major influence that Christ Church has had on my life. Many students move on to careers outside of their discipline, but for me, chemistry was just what I wanted to do... or perhaps, I didn’t have the imagination to think of a different career, and, of course, the inspirational teaching of Martin, Richard and others was an important influence on my career path.

Those that remember me would, I suspect, agree that I had a few rough edges when I arrived in Oxford and indeed those that know me now might say the same. Nonetheless, Christ Church — along with my wife Jackie, an LMH biochemist — went some way to smoothing off some of the roughness, another important part of my development. After leaving Oxford, I spent a couple of years in the US before coming back to the UK, ending up eventually at the University Reading, where I am currently Dean of Science. There is a certain symmetry here, given that the university at Reading was founded as a University extension college of Christ Church in 1892. So the Christ Church connection is still there – and long may it continue.

Harry Anderson (1983)

It’s funny how most people remember their university entrance interview years later, whereas when one is interviewing, it is hard to remember what a candidate said earlier the same day. I was interviewed by my three future tutors. Richard Wayne asked me about a “decimal periodic table” (each row had 10 elements). I remember telling Tony...
Cheetham that NaCl and CaCl₂ have basically the same structure — “both just ionic lattices”. The look on his face told me this was wrong. Martin Grossel didn’t say anything in my interview, which was disappointing because Organic Chemistry was my forte. So when he invited the candidates to join him and some undergraduates for a drink, on the evening after the interviews, I decided to investigate. After adjusting to Martin’s sense of humor, I was struck by his exuberant enthusiasm for scientific enquiry and by the warm generosity that he showed to his students. This first impression proved to be accurate.

While I was an undergraduate, my main extra-curricular interest was theology. It was exciting to be living in the same place as Maurice Wiles and John Fenton (both Canons at the Cathedral). I think this fascination originated from the same obstinate curiosity that now motivates my research; unlike many of my friends at that time, I had no interest in becoming a priest. I had known from about the age of 10 that I wanted to be a scientist or inventor. Fortunately, the experience of studying Chemistry did not put me off. All three of my tutors at Christ Church had a huge influence on me; it can’t be a coincidence that I have worked on photochemistry and materials science for the last 20 years. They found plenty of opportunities to direct our studies towards things that excited them, for example, during the run up to Finals, Martin encouraged us to read Jean-Marie Lehn’s work on molecular machines. This was not relevant to our exams, but it was topical — Lehn was awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry the following year, and it inspired me to do a PhD on enzyme models. Soon after completing my PhD, in Cambridge, I returned to Oxford to become a University Lecturer in Organic Chemistry and a Tutorial Fellow at Keble College. If you would like to know what I have done since then, you are welcome to check out my group’s website (http://hla.chem.ox.ac.uk/).

Stuart Smith (1985)
The Art & Science of Life
I was never destined to be a great scientist. In 1979 I wanted to choose the following A-levels: English, Chemistry and German. Needless to say these were less enlightened times and I was gently bullied and eventually agreed to take Chemistry, Physics & Maths. I did however rebel and took an additional O-level – Art. So it’s true that whilst I enjoyed the rigour of the scientific method and the excitement of discovery, I was also attracted to literature and the arts. Looking back I should probably have been born in the mid-19th Century – or now.

Attending The House was one of life’s great privileges. I learned early on that The House gives generously to those who take part fully in all it has to offer. So I embraced everything it had to offer and I am better for that experience. One of the great influences in my life was the fabulous Professor Richard Wayne who gave me a love of science and more importantly a love for living life to the full.

I took my education and went to work for a small consulting science organisation and eventually ended up at a top public relations firm, advising companies on the 1st generation of environmental legislation spewing forth from Brussels in the late 80s. That transitioned me into the general world of communications and PR. Science trained me to love data and to think rigorously and conceptually. My love of the arts taught me creativity. I now use these loves combined to create campaigns for companies and their products.

I attended a Ch.Ch. Chemists Dinner a few years ago which brought together Members from across several generations. One of our most successful Ch.Ch. Professors gave a speech which, in part, eulogised the careers diaspora had chosen to pursue. Paraphrasing him very badly he said something like: “Many of you have become significant in the law, contributed to scientific thinking at great Universities around the world, some have chosen to follow a path into national politics, and we even have one person here tonight in PR.”

I was never destined to be a great scientist or indeed a great artist – but I would never be where I am today if it weren’t for The House and the time I spent in the company of the irrepressible Professor Wayne and his crew.
**Aedes Christi Lodge**

**Did you know there is a Christ Church lodge?**

It’s called Aedes Christi, was founded in 1989, and is open to all matriculated male members of the House. We meet and dine four times a year – thrice in central London (dining in a selection of private members’ Clubs) and once in Oxford (dining at the House). If you have heard alarming stories of secrecy, oaths, or corrupt practices within Masonry, forget them – they are no part of English Masonry, which probably started during the Civil War to bring old friends who had been separated by the War together in a safe environment. Secret passwords were used to prove identity, and discussion of religion or politics was banned. Our meetings involve participation in one of a series of performative allegorical rôle-plays, symbolising the journey of a just and upright man through life. Our aim is to enjoy company and conversation, and to collect alms for charities, especially those connected with the House. We meet after work – normally 6.20 p.m. – and we finish by 10 p.m.. The criterion that members of the Lodge must also be members of Christ Church means that Aedes Christi provides a chance to make new friends, rediscover old ones, and delight in that association which we are all privileged to share. If you are already a Mason, come and join; if you are not yet a Mason, let us make you into one.

Please make all expressions of interest to Rikhil Shonchhatra, 8 Second Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 8QF – e-mail secretary@aedeschristi.org. Further information can be found at the Lodge website: [www.aedeschristi.org](http://www.aedeschristi.org).

**Members of the Lodge and their guests at the annual dinner at Christ Church, June 2012** © Aedes Christi Lodge, 2012
The Finding of Freddie Perkins

Freddie Perkins has lost a lot. His mum, for a start, his friends and his home now he’s been dragged up to Scotland to live with his granny. And even his dad – because even though Dad’s still there, he and Freddie can’t seem to talk any more. But something is watching Freddie. Something very rare and special. Something that finds things that are lost...

The Finding of Freddie Perkins, which was published on 23 May, has been described by publisher A&C Black as “a brilliant debut. A moving, involving story; a sensitive look at grief [and] a timeless, magical fantasy.”

The novel follows Freddie and his family as they struggle to overcome their grief, and leaves them only after they have encountered renewed hope – in their lives, and in their relationships. There is a touch of magic in its surprising but delightful twist, which the writer uses to speak into the reality of both loss and restoration.

The novel is for readers of eight and over, but there seems to be no upper age limit to those who enjoy its blend of poignancy and whimsical charm, with many adults as well as children reporting they can’t put it down.

Liz Baddaley has been writing professionally since she graduated in English from Christ Church (2001), but this is her first novel. Her previous work has been for leading UK charities. She was a staff writer at Christian Aid and has subsequently written freelance for a wide range of clients, including The Children’s Society. She lives in Ilkley, West Yorkshire.

So Who’s your Mother?

In his forward to Tarquin Olivier’s autobiography, the outstanding biographer Philip Ziegler writes: ‘To be the son of a king is always an awkward business, whether the monarch in question is orthodoxy royal, athletic, theatrical of what you will. Tarquin Olivier’s father, Laurence, was every inch a king, agreed by most to be the greatest actor of the twentieth century, so it will be obvious that Tarquin started life labouring under a considerable burden.’

He solved his problems by doing his own thing. While an undergraduate at Christ Church, Oxford, he retraced Dr Livingstone’s Zambezi journey and gained a high level of dedication to Third World development. He lived for nearly two years all over Southeast Asia, often with farmers and fishermen, and wrote his first book Eye of the Day.

After a year’s research at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad he joined the Commonwealth Development Corporation. He married his first wife and together they served in East Africa and Jamaica, having a son and two daughters. Then he joined the renowned banknote printers De La Rue with their interest all over the world.

This is far more than a travelogue: an exploration of his personality and a rounded portrait of a remarkable life. Earliest memories are of Hollywood where he acted in half a dozen MGM films, and aged six fell in love with Judy Garland, then nineteen, whom he last saw only ten days before her death. His stepmother Vivien Leigh had taken his father away from his mother but he was always fascinated by her beauty and her brilliance.

His first wife left him in 1975, taking away their children and he covered the whole of Asia and the Pacific for De La Rue, revisiting dozens of old friends. Then after thirteen years he met and fell in love with Zelfa, and they married in 1989 to the delight of his father and his mother. She encouraged him to write the successful memoir My Father Laurence Olivier.

To commemorate the centenary of his father’s birth he raised a life sized bronze statue of Larry as Hamlet, one of the few roles in which he actually used his own undisguised face. It shows the Prince of Denmark ascending the fortress steps to meet the ghost of his father’s spirit, in trepidation, holding his sword with handle upwards like a crucifix. No organisation, hereditary of financial, would sponsor this so he persuaded more than two hundred, mainly theatre and film people and institutions, to contribute. The statue was unveiled by Lord Attenborough and on the plaque are the words

‘Larry was true. He was exciting, gloriously funny, and is still part of what makes life worth living, as is his creation the National Theatre.’

Tarquin Olivier (1956)
The Sultan’s Organ

In 1598 merchants of the City of London paid for a gift to be sent by Queen Elizabeth to Sultan Mehmet III of Turkey. It was a musical clock with jewel-encrusted moving figures combined with a self-playing organ that could perform continuously for six hours. It was housed in a cabinet about sixteen feet high, six feet wide and five feet deep. In return the merchants hoped to secure trading concessions, and the Queen to turn the Sultan’s military might on her Spanish enemies.

The organ was built by Thomas Dallam, twenty-five years old. He took the instrument to Constantinople on a merchant ship. He encountered storms, exotic animals, pirates, brigands, Moors, Turks, Greeks, Jews, kings and pashas, janissaries, eunuchs, slaves, dwarves and finally the most powerful man in the known world, the Great Turk himself. He kept a diary, now in the British Library. I was enthralled by it, and thought it deserved an audience, so I put it into modern English, while staying as close to the original as possible.

We most often see the Elizabethan world through the eyes of the upper classes. Dallam gives us the point of view of the rude mechanical. He writes in fluent, plain English not deformed by a classical education. He is the first foreigner to peek inside the Sultan’s harem and live to write about it. He is the first to describe an overland journey in Greece. It is a fascinating insight into the meeting of Elizabethan and Ottoman cultures. For these alone his diary is worth reading. But mainly it is because he tells a great story.

John Mole (1964)

Praeterita

The most vivid account of undergraduate life at early nineteenth-century Christ Church is to be found in John Ruskin’s autobiography Praeterita. Indeed, although it is unfinished the book counts as one of the very best of the autobiographies of the period, even though it has significant lacunae – such as the failure of his marriage to Effie. Now there is a new edition in World’s Classics, edited by Francis O’Gorman, with an excellent introduction.

The relevant chapter is titled ‘Christ Church Choir’ and all present and former members of The House will find it absolutely fascinating and a delight to read. Ruskin arrived in Oxford in January 1837, travelling by coach on the Henley Road. His first view of the city would have been from Rose Hill, at the end of the Iffley Road. He came with his mother, and they stayed the first night at The Angel – at the end of the Peckwater, a great disappointment for someone who was a votary of the Gothic, and his bedroom looked out onto Bear Lane – ‘chiefly then of stabling’. ‘Quatermaine’s Stables’ is still carved into the stone of one of the arches. Ruskin was a Gentleman Commoner, which meant he was allowed to wear a gold tassel on his mortar-board. There were many ‘fast’ contemporaries, ‘their drawers filled with pictures of naked bawds,’ but Ruskin, as a staunch middle-class Protestant, eschewed card-playing, and hunting. He looked on dice as ‘people now do on dynamite.’ This ‘inoffensive little cur’ got on reasonably well with the ‘bloods’ but they did disapprove strongly of his over-earnestness, swottiness and lack of *savoir faire* in reading a Saturday afternoon essay which was much too long.

The ‘Choir’ in question was in the Cathedral. It did not look quite the same then as it does now. The present East Window is a fake, and replaced a Gothic one with traceries. The stalls are heavy Victorian oak. The stalls Ruskin and his contemporaries would have sat in, ‘honest and comfortable carpentry’, were yanked out and sent to Cassington Church. Lucky they were not dumped in the Victorian equivalent of a skip.

Oh taste, what sins are committed in thy name! One sentence in this chapter deserves to be committed to memory: ‘In this choir, written so closely and consecutively with indisputable British history, met every morning a congregation representing the best of what Britain had become, – orderly as the crew of a man-of-war, in the goodly ship of their temple. Every man in his place, according to his rank, age, and learning; every man of sense or heart there recognizing that he was either fulfilling, or being prepared to fulfil, the gravest duties required of Englishmen.’

Another classic description is of the Hall, ‘about as big as the nave of Canterbury Cathedral, with its extremity lost in mist, its roof in darkness, and its company an innumerable, immeasurable vision in vanishing perspective.’

As all undergraduates do, Ruskin made friends for life at Christ Church, men such as Henry Acland, Francis Charteris, Charles Newton, Scott Newton, Lord Kildare, the Earl of Desart, Viscount Emlyn and his tutors Walter Brown and Osborne Gordon. He also records the most interesting figure, the geologist William Buckland, whose breakfast of mice on toast he regrets missing.
Francis O’Gorman provides more notes to this work than previous editors have done, but he has nothing to say about Stephen Fox Strangways (p. 130), who does not even make it to the index. I am reminded of the much-loved Curator of Pictures who was a Member of the SCR when I was at Christ Church: James Byam Shaw. He used to regret in the most mournful tones that Stephen’s uncle, William Thomas Horner Fox-Strangways, 4th Earl of Ilchester, the distinguished benefactor of Italian paintings to the Christ Church Gallery and the Ashmolean (Uccello’s *Hunt in the Forest* is the most famous), had not made it to DNB. Still hasn’t. He’s more deserving than many who have!

*Bernard Richards* (1963)

**Stumbling Giant**

A Hong Kong–based executive suggests that the dreaded Chinese juggernaut has a few cracks in its armor.

Some doubting Thomases of late have begun to wonder if China really has the stuff to run the world, and Beardson thinks they may have a point. He constructs a concise, readable, albeit finance-heavy roundup of Chinese successes and failures in order to assess its future potential. One important point he emphasizes is China’s habit of reverting to old models. From the Ming dynasty to Mao Zedong, he notes, rulers have responded to outside pressures by turning inward rather than opening to new currents, and any stress prompts reversion to the top-down method of control, extending to the most local level. Beardson examines the Chinese political, financial and social structures, backing up his determinations of their good and bad aspects with impressive research and analysis. The rapid growth of the Chinese economy over the last 30 years, he finds, has been dogged by such systemic problems as unemployment, currency snags, massive environmental degradation and an inability to sustain the old cheap-export/fixed-investment model. While a new, innovative model is urgently needed, bureaucratic inertia and lack of integrity inhibit Chinese institutions in nearly every field, most notably science, education and research. Plagiarism, corruption, a vulnerable financial system, income inequality, gender disparities, organized crime, military aggression against its neighbors and cyberaggression against the U.S. all undermine Chinese stability. The nation needs to step up responsibly to its world role and defuse the instinct among many wary countries to “check” it, but ultimately, Beardson concludes, “China is weak where it should be strong and strong where it should be weak.”

A thoughtful reconsideration of China’s actual place in the new world order, based on reality rather than fanciful speculation.

*Timothy Beardson* (1966)

**Social media**

Earlier this year, the Christ Church Association joined the realms of social media. Members can now keep up with news about the House and its alumni activities across the major social networks, making it easier than ever to stay in touch.

*twitter.com/ChChAssoc*

*www.facebook.com/ChChAssoc*

*www.linkedin.com/groups/Christ-Church-Association-4813488*

**Pranks Corner**

In 1953 Coronation year the Oxford Town Hall, just up the road from the House, was decorated with a large gold crown held up on either side by two white cherubs. It was all created in “papier mache”. One morning the city woke up to find that the cherubs were covered in green measles spots all over their bodies. That prank was carried out by two House men, both of whom I think are now dead.

One is for certain but I am not sure about the other. It was a well-kept secret at the time and I don’t think it has ever been disclosed who was responsible.

*Henry White-Smith* (1952)
Boat Club Events and Plans

In a season that saw the Oxford rowing community affected by extensive flooding throughout Michaelmas and Hilary Terms, the House crews encountered mixed fortunes.

The Men’s First Torpid, although relatively inexperienced, fought valiantly and ended the campaign third on the river. After showing great promise in training, the Women’s First Torpid yielded to much stronger crews, including the St John’s first boat, which went on to win the Headship in Summer Eights. With another bump on a first boat, the Men’s Seconds continued to rise towards Div II. An entirely novice Men’s Third Torpid, deprived of water time until ten days before racing, unsurprisingly was bumped back into the rowing on division, while the Women’s Second Torpid did not row on.

Our Varsity representation this year, with ChChBC rowers involved in all but one of the Dark Blue victories in the historic clean sweep, gave us great hope for Summer Eights. The Men’s First Eight, undoubtedly the quickest crew on the river, summarily dismissed Oriel on the Green Bank on the second day, but did not quite have enough river to do the same to Pembroke. Saturday’s race ended with overlap between the two crews over the finish line, but without a boat burning in the Meadow. The Women’s First Eight consolidated their position on bungline seven, and our Men’s Second and Third Eights remain the highest of their kind on the river. The Women’s Second Eight stayed in Div III, with many of the crew only having learnt to row four weeks before racing.

While the occasion of a boat burning has been delayed, we are encouraged to look to the coming season, which will be one of rebuilding and growth.

With strong leadership, clear aims and the ever-present support of our Old Members, the Boat Club is confident in its ability to once again occupy the very top of the rankings.

Helen Popescu
Head Coach

Our plans for the future include the renovation and upgrading of the Boat House, part of the Boat Club’s bicentenary endowment project. The initial, draft plans aim to produce the following:

1. The existing front building will be kept as it is
   i. It will enable the boat house to continue to be used whilst building work is progressing (6 months?)
   ii. It will be cheaper than a new build.
   iii. Many like the iconic façade.

2. The new building will be brick with a light steel upper storey.

3. The redesigned ground floor will enable:
   i. The boatman to have a larger, properly fitted workshop which will take a full Eight.
   ii. More room to rack Eights thus avoiding damage.
   iii. A new rack for Fours.
   iv. A new punt store for the winter.
   v. A disabled lavatory.

4. The redesigned and extended first floor will give:
   i. New larger function room, fitted kitchen and bar, spectator’s lavatories.
   ii. New feature balcony.
   iii. Erg room and weights room, both properly fitted out, with sliding doors between for flexible use.
   iv. Separate male/female heated changing facilities, with hot showers and lavatories.

5. There is the possibility of a disabled lift being installed.

If you would like to find out more about the endowment project, or supporting the Boat Club, please contact: simon.offen@chch.ox.ac.uk
At the Foot of Gardens

Compost
Mounds like low grass huts, they grew at the foot
Of tidy gardens, forkable and moist,
Dilapidated, harmless, almost friendly,
Sweet mulching down of much that had been living,
Hair that mounts up grey on a barber’s floor.

The Bonfire Before Lighting
Dropleted twigs with the red bloom still on
Jutted out with thorns, made caves within.
A blackbird’s corpse, a slow-worm’s, all would go.
Dissolution, absolute absence of girders,
Of intellectual property, baroque scales.

First published in Agni

A British Veteran
A hand that held a rifle on the climb
To Passchendaele now bears a bubbling flute.
His hand is strong and rubicund, his frame
Mobile and actual as he toasts his eight

Australian great-great-grandsons; woollen cloth
Is covering his body now as then.
That hand will soon slip under the stream of myth.
No one thinks Agincourt was fought by men.

First published in Plectrum – The Cultural Pick

A Believer
He can’t tell in from out, and still conflates
Good spirits with good spirits, states with states.

© Kieron Winn

Kieron Winn read English at Christ Church, where he was later awarded a doctorate for a thesis on Herbert Read and T. S. Eliot. His poems have appeared in magazines including Agni, The Dark Horse, Literary Imagination, The London Magazine, the New Statesman, the Oxford Magazine, Oxford Poetry, Poetry Review, The Spectator and the Times Literary Supplement. Selections of his poems are also included in the anthologies Oxford Poets 2007 and Joining Music with Reason, and in Where We Fell to Earth: Writing for Peter Conrad. He has won the University of Oxford’s English Poem on a Sacred Subject Prize, and been the subject of a short film on BBC1. He lives in Oxford, where he is a freelance teacher. His website is www.kieronwinn.com

Where We Fell To Earth is an anthology of works from the former pupils of the now-retired English Tutor, Peter Conrad. Copies are available from the Development Office for £25 plus postage.
Contact: leia.clancy@chch.ox.ac.uk
Christopher Tower Poetry Competition 2013

Earlier this year, the 13th Christopher Tower Poetry Prize competition attracted hundreds of entries from budding young poets across the UK.

The winner was Oxford Spires Academy student Azfa Ali, aged 18, who was awarded the £3,000 prize for her poem ‘Origins’. Sarah Fletcher, who won last year’s competition, took second place, followed by Erin Tunney. Also shortlisted were Kathryn Cussons, Luke van den Barselaar and Eva Wallace.

Origins

Killindoni

In my hometown:
I felt the rough sand
scrub against my feet;
chased salty orange crabs
who pinched my pinkie tight; so by firelight,
I would crunch into lemon-seeping shells,
feel the faint texture of sand resting on my tongue.

Refugee on a Motorway

Clutch the parcel of clothes
balancing on your head,
stare at the cluttered road ahead
with your
Kanga
wipe off beads of sweat.
With trembling legs,
brush past the first car’s face:
enter the metal maze,
feel the hot steel
crush you into a flower.
See the world like a
white square tower
turn into a haze.
Let your skin shed its brown
and instead become blue,
violet, pomegranate red.

Scotland

In my country:
I grew up in the Gorbals,
with Kwiksave, the Junkies,
and chucking snowballs;
watching fireworks
on the eighth floor of my council flat,
listening to the bangs and cracks;
watching the orange flames
flower out.
This year Ovalhouse celebrates 50 years of being a theatre. In 1963 Peter Oliver directed a youth production of Shelagh Delaney’s A Taste of Honey for a youth clubs festival. As part of a number of events to mark the birthday, the controversial play was revived earlier this year by the current crop of young people shaping the theatre’s radical history. Ovalhouse was set up by Christ Church graduates as a soup kitchen in the 1930s and became a boys’ club a few years later. To this day its official name remains Ovalhouse, Christ Church Oxford United Clubs. Other such philanthropic missions to make a mark on deprived areas of London include Oxford House, Cambridge House and Toynbee Hall, all in the East End. These were the products of progressive thinking about education’s wider reach and healthy doses of weight-lifting, debating, balsa wood aeroplane-building and trips to the country, to London’s poor.

Christ Church’s involvement in Ovalhouse has been less paternalistic than was perhaps the norm for colleges and their clubs. Since the first youth group performed there, politically engaged artistic directors – of which Deborah Bestwick is the latest – have adapted the principles of the Victorian philanthropic and social movement on which the club was founded, to fit the changing needs of its south London community.

When Bestwick took up the position in 1994, she inherited a theatre steeped in the thinking of the radical left. At that time, Ovalhouse had a strict women’s only artistic policy, but that was only the most recent example of a long tradition of countering the mainstream. By then, Ovalhouse had already been adopted by a string of counter-cultural groups, from early experimental people like the Pip Simmonds Theatre Company in the 60s, to the radical political groups of the 70s (such as Gay Sweatshop), through to black companies and others of the agitprop days, and women’s theatre. David Hare, Steven Berkoff, and Pierce Brosnan have all worked at Ovalhouse, and Howard Brenton’s first play was performed there.

It’s a rich heritage. These days the policy focuses on the artistic and professional development of up-and-coming artists, who are generally outside the mainstream. In the mid-nineties, Bestwick was forward-thinking when she expressed the now de rigueur view that while separatist work has an important liberating function, protecting the position of minority groups and issue-based causes through exclusive theatre policies risks boxing work in. Establishing an open artistic policy has been an important part of the theatre’s identity over the last twenty years, especially given that Ovalhouse is the only theatre in the country with its roots in participatory work. Current projects include working with children with disabilities, those excluded from school and refugee and migrant children. This tradition – entirely down to Christ Church – has helped hugely to situate it in a unique overlap between professional theatre and young people’s theatre, in which both practices inform each other.

Helping Ovalhouse celebrate its anniversary is its Young Associate Actor Seraphina Beh from Croydon, currently in her last year of college. She says: “Ovalhouse produces a lot of strong and intelligent people, who allow you to be part of something professional, something I didn’t believe I could be...”

Those who have worked at Ovalhouse include David Hare, Steven Berkoff, and Pierce Brosnan. Ovalhouse has a rich history of supporting young and minority groups in theatre.
part of." She worked on the revival of A Taste of Honey and also played a dormouse in the recent production of Alice in Wonderland, inspired by a trip to Christ Church where a group of young people went on the Alice tour.

This year, anyone who has ever had any involvement in the theatre is being encouraged to contribute to an online archive of memories. A half-century since its theatrical debut, now seems a good time to hunt down the anecdotes and memories which will bring the history to life. How Ovalhouse emerged as centre for radical theatre and activism is an interesting story, interwoven with the cultural history of this area of London. It is the subject of a book by the company Unfinished Histories, to be published later this year, looking in particular at the symbiotic development of the housing co-ops and alternative theatre in the 1960s, with extensive focus on Lambeth and therefore on Ovalhouse, the south London hotbed of off-beat activity.

Other highlights of this year’s celebrations have included Counterculture 50, a festival of new commissions, and the theatre’s 33% London Festival, which celebrates young artists, directors, producers and apprentices making their way into the professional industry. In line with its principles, Ovalhouse is looking to the past to seek inspiration for an equally socially-engaged future. With the definition of mainstream always changing, it will no doubt continue to question its artistic policy well beyond this year.

Tim Roth appearing in an Ovalhouse youth production of Othello c.1980.

Young people from Ovalhouse performing in The Street produced as part of the Co-operative Foundation’s Truth About Youth initiative.

Becky Brewis grew up in south London and graduated from Christ Church in 2010. She is Commissioning Editor of A Younger Theatre.

Your Birthday Gift to Ovalhouse

We believe that Ovalhouse has grown into an organisation of which the original Christ Church pioneers would be proud. If you would like to support the next 50 years of groundbreaking theatre and youth arts activities then please send us your birthday gift. With your continued support we can ensure another 50 years of success.

Each year we must raise £40,000 to cover the support costs of our work. Only with your help can we maintain our work with 1,100 young people from some of the most economically deprived areas of London.

The young people we work with need your support. Please make a donation to Ovalhouse towards the next 50 years.

To donate please complete the form below and return it to Ovalhouse, 52 – 54 Kennington Oval, London SE11 5SW.

Visit our website at: www.ovalhouse.com/support to find out more about how you can support Ovalhouse.

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TIMOTHY J BROWN

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GIFT AID: Thanks to the government’s Gift Aid scheme, Ovalhouse can reclaim 25p on every £1 donation, increasing the value by a quarter at no extra cost to you.

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Sitting, glass in hand, in Hector’s higgledy-piggledy study it is the log fire which is meant to keep out the cold March night, but in reality the warmth comes from Hector himself, with his translucent, thoughtful eyes, his ever present smile, and his throaty chuckles as he reads a poem from one of his books: “Ireland’s Other Poetry, Anonymous to Zoizmus”. The poem involves the blowing up of an equestrian statue of Field-Marshal Sir Hubert Gough in Dublin’s Phoenix Park, and that moment captures Hector’s essence for me: A man of great culture, talent and creativity, wonderfully humane, but above all fun loving, crying with laughter at the thought of the IRA emasculating the statue of a stallion.

Glenarm on the Antrim Coast is magnificent. No wonder Hector feels homesick when away. The M(a)cDonnell’s history stretches back centuries but perhaps his most distinguished ancestor was the wondefrully named Sorley Boy MacDonnell, (1505-1590) who defeated in battle his major local rivals, the O’Neills and the MacQuillans and when he entertained the governor of Carrickfergus in his castle proclaimed “there is no place in Ireland for an Englishman”. His son, Randal MacDonnell, became the 1st Earl of Antrim in 1620 (for which he paid five thousand pounds) and held sway over some 330,000 acres of the most beautiful countryside and coastline anywhere. If you have never been, please go, you will not be disappointed and there are few better places to stay in order to explore the County at your leisure than the charming cottage in Hector’s garden.

Hector is both artist and author, and they are “a wonderful combination as they use different bits of my brain”, writing in the evenings when exhausted from painting all day. His painting expresses different phases in his life, his experiences; in his writing he explores his thoughts.

When given a retrospective exhibition in Germany aged 30 he froze, feeling his paintings to be meaningless, his ideas of no consequence. “I had nothing important to say.” The crisis lasted a year but he came to see that even though his ideas might be naive his pictures could be worthwhile, if their composition and emotional message was strong. The Darmstadt museum had confronted him with himself and since then he has known he must paint what he loves, including “the intensity” and “vital force” of life in New York, where he lived for a time, and the significance of 9/11. “It’s personal experiences, things that move me, that make me want to paint.”

“I am always touched by the poetry of everyday life”. Art is “life developed”. Hector’s magic is the everyday, the ordinary. What is important is what gives him joy; many of his pictures are of windows and doors, open to the “delight of the world beyond.” One such transforming delight is the prospect of the imminent arrival from New York of his wife and daughter. This will certainly lead to changes in his life, but positive and welcome ones.
There is also strong tendency for Hector to throw himself into the social issues of the day in his painting. He says: “It’s an attitude I very much inherited from my mother (painting and art is in the family) and whenever I can I am drawn to look either at the beauty to be found in humble lives and circumstances – be it a fishmonger in Peckham, a mother with baby by the roadside or a farm kitchen in Co. Antrim, or else to the nature of human catastrophe – so I did a heap of paintings about Belfast in the bad times, culminating in a series I did about the Maze after going there soon after the hunger strikes, then my Rwanda series, then Ground Zero, then Sri Lanka after the tsunami.”

Hector is an emotional painter which perhaps explains why women often buy his paintings. He also suffers for his art: the terrors of Rwanda and destruction at Ground Zero had a deep effect on him, but he still feels “honoured” to have experienced such horrors. Julian Barnes wrote that “the writer must be universal in sympathy and an outcast by nature; only then can he see clearly.” Interestingly Hector felt different, an outsider, as an Irishman and Catholic whilst at Eton and Christ Church.

I am drawn to look either at the beauty to be found in humble lives and circumstances ... or else to the nature of human catastrophe

The creative process is strong and varied in Hector, whether painting, writing, designing and planting his garden, cooking, or music. He’d like to be better at the piano but has not the time to practice. Thomas Tallis’ “Spem in Alium” would be his Desert Island disc, he points out the powerful impact of the silences, and his favourite painting in his home is a version of Wilkie’s “The Rent day”.

Hector sees painting as “an archaeological process”. The idea comes in an instant, the sketch forms quickly, and then the archaeology begins as the painting must be unearthed. A particular momentary experience has been introduced onto the canvas but needs uncovering, “producing the reality he saw”. He uses photos as an “aide memoire” as his sketches were becoming too much like caricatures; this tendency he realised was leading him up a cul-de-sac as they were too linear, not allowing for different dimensions of colour, depth and vision. Whilst the instant is important it takes months to reveal the finished article. The drawings in his books are different; they are intended just to capture a detail and aspect of the moment, and are done within a day.

Hector likes to be alone in his studio but does accept visitors, after all the artist is totally exposed at an Exhibition. He listens to criticism and learns: he wants to know why if people don’t buy a picture.

When writing Hector’s “trash” is always full as he works his thoughts out on paper. He is fascinated by Irish history, archaeology, culture, its Holy places, and their influences on Irish men and women. He is a decent linguist (something he puts down to falling in love with his French governess as a child) speaking 5 languages, but still he would like to be better. He’d take the Bible in Irish with him to his Desert Island, along with Dante and Don Quixote in the original. Hector gains enormous pleasure from writing; the process excites curiosity rather than satisfies it. He also enjoys the discipline and the satisfaction from his research coming to fruition. All this, and of course his humour, is evident in his writing and his choice of pieces in the books he has edited.

FUTURE EXHIBITIONS:
Stuttgart Autumn 2013
Belfast November 2013
London May 2014
Website: www.hectormcdonnell.com

To book the cottage: contact Lynsay McCullough at Cottages in Ireland, Belfast, on 028 9073 6525 or else by email: book@cottagesinireland.com
This year marks the diamond jubilee of Cherwell as a student tabloid; originating in 1920 as an arts-and-social magazine, in Hilary term 1953 it was transformed by two New College undergraduates into a newspaper, with Cambridge’s Varsity as the model.

Christ Church provided several early editors and continues to be represented on the staff. A few weeks before he died at Christmas 2012, Howard Applin (1951), editor in Michaelmas 1953, recalled his first job as ‘Union correspondent’ cum political reporter; few of the staff had much experience: ‘we were flying by the seat of our pants.’ Each Sunday they gathered in a damp Broad Street basement to write up the week’s stories. Copy went by ‘bus to an Aylesbury printer, the editors following next day to paste up the pages and write in the headlines.

A year later, Cherwell moved to a Union garden outhouse; the landlord, a famously entrepreneurial Union President (from Pembroke, now in the Lords) nicknamed it ‘the eloquent potting shed’: it was in fact, as Isis gleefully pointed out, a disused lavatory.

Howard remembered a working relationship between student journalists, university and college authorities, the Proctors content to provide an official line on relevant stories. Relations cooled in Hilary 1955, when another Houseman, Fred Newman (1952, also sadly no longer with us) was co-editor. Under the headline ‘These men should be thrown out of Oxford’, Cherwell reported ‘scenes of mob hooliganism and wanton destruction’ in Peckwater at the end of Torpids, involving that sound of breaking glass so attractive to the upper class (meanwhile at Queen’s ‘shoes were taken from staircases’ – left, in those days, for ‘Scouts’ to clean – and thrown
into the quad). The Censors coldly informed Fred that it was he and his St. Cath’s co-editor who should be thrown out and hit him sharply in the pocket.

A more recent editor, Chris Baraniuk, has written elsewhere about the perpetual interest of national media in ‘spicy Oxbridge news’; student journalists, he claims, are ‘showered’ with Fleet Street contacts. Many from Cherwell have indeed found their way into the national media: Fred Newman graced the now defunct Daily Sketch before founding his own publishing company; others from those early days migrated to Daily and Sunday Express, Times, Sunday Times and Guardian; more recently, several became familiar on TV news and comment programmes.

Today Cherwell’s journalists and managers (nearly 100 names listed in the latest issue) occupy a top floor in St. Aldate’s. The eight black and white pages of 1953 have expanded to 32, most carrying colour, composed, designed and edited on a bank of work-stations, then despatched to a remote printer, care of mouse-click rather than ‘bus conductor. Much of the content is available on-line (www.cherwell.org), with extra audio/video material sought out by a dedicated ‘Broadcasting editor’, a job Cherwell’s founders could hardly have envisaged. Apparently, however, undergraduate readers still appreciate the thrill of riffling through printed pages, notably, it is said, the ‘Lifestyle’ section (another concept unfamiliar in 1953).

Cherwell, Isis (now published termly) and the science journal, Bang! are now owned by a student-run private company, Oxford Student Publications Ltd. (OSPL). Competition comes from Oxford Student (‘OxStu’) the Student Union tabloid, like Cherwell claiming a circulation of around 15,000. Undergraduates’ attention may be further diverted by the student radio, Oxide.

When I met OSPL’s chairman and one of last term’s joint editors, they thought few of today’s student journalists intended to pursue careers in the media. Experience gained of researching, writing, designing, editing and managing, however, was thought potentially helpful in other careers.
The peaceful little island of Alderney, just eight miles off the west coast of the Cotentin, is usually a well kept secret, cherished for its countryside and its singular wildlife, its sandy beaches and steep cliffs, its Victorian and Roman forts and its relics of the German Occupation. In recent months, however, it has received widespread attention for a rather different reason. Together with the other Channel Islands, it is all that remains of the Duchy of Normandy, most of which was finally lost to the Crown by King John in 1204. Not part of the United Kingdom or of the European Union, the islands owe their loyalty directly to the monarch.

It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that the Bayeux Tapestry should be of particular interest to Alderney people. The Tapestry tells of the Battle of Hastings, Duke William of Normandy’s rivalry with King Harold, the mounting of the invasion and Harold’s death. However, the Tapestry is incomplete. Commissioned soon after the battle, it was not discovered until the 15th century, when it was found in a chest in Bayeux Cathedral. The 270ft long piece of linen ended only in tattered threads.

There have been previous versions of the end of the story but it was one Kate Russell, an American long domiciled in Alderney and a keen embroideress, who was inspired to design Alderney’s own Tapestry conclusion. It shows William dining by Norman tradition at the spot where his enemy was killed, the eventual surrender of the English nobles and William’s coronation in Westminster.
Abbey. A final panel shows work beginning on William’s first and best known fortress, the Tower of London. The cartoons for the work were drawn by an island artist, Pauline Black, who skilfully captured the character of the original, and a long-retired member of the House was asked to provide the Latin captions.

Christ Church offered me a place to read Classical Moderations back in 1955 but two years of National Service gave me time to decide that what I really wanted to do was to teach English. This article provides an opportunity to thank the college authorities of the time for letting me change schools. I couldn’t have asked for more able, brilliant and encouraging tutors than J.I.M. Stewart, John Burrow and John Carey and I had a very happy career teaching English and developing the drama at Canford School.

After an interval of more than fifty years my Latin was undoubtedly a little rusty. The particular challenge here was to capture the idiom of the Tapestry, just as Pauline Black had captured the visual style. The surviving portion of the work provided plenty of clues, most notably a sense of a changing word order from that of classical Latin towards what we would recognize as English.

There is also a fascinating instance of a developing preposition: ‘AD’ was used with an accusative to mean ‘to’, and ‘AT’ with an ablative in the modern sense of ‘at’. The 11th Century Latin spelling of Berkhamsted in its ablative form had to be an educated guess, based on analogy. After so much press coverage I fully expected Classical scholars or historians to express their disagreement, but it seems to have passed muster. The final caption, to my particular satisfaction as a former student of Old English, was drawn at the close of the entry for 1066 in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: ‘The end will be good as God wills’.

More than four hundred members of the island community contributed at least one stitch, as did Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall when they visited Alderney in 2012. As a keepsake, they were given an embroidered copy of one of the images from the border, showing the Toad for Jersey, the Donkey for Guernsey and a Puffin for Alderney, all encircled by the tail of England’s Lion. At the work’s unveiling, representatives from Bayeux, including the Tapestry’s curator, expressed not only their delight at its quality but their wish that at some point the Alderney Finale should be shown in Bayeux alongside the original. In the meanwhile, it is on display on the wall of Alderney’s library; come and see it.

Further information is available at www.alderneybayeuxtapestry.com
At the end of Hilary term I flew to Delhi to spend ten days with Saakshar (‘Literate’), the wonderfully effective slum school charity which we have supported at Christ Church over the last ten years. As the recession hit their previous source of funding, we set up Saakshar School Appeal as a registered charity in the UK to increase our support for their life changing work with underprivileged children. Saakshar have smaller local donors but the bulk of their £10,000 p.a. running costs currently comes from us, so I was conscious that this year I was visiting not just as a friend and enthusiastic supporter, but also as a representative of their major donor.

Asha Kumar, founder and Director of Saakshar, decided that the best way for me to do this was to call together the parents of the 150 young children currently being prepared for mainstream school, so that I could explain why we support them, and dispel any myths about our wealth or motivations. At these Parent Teacher Meetings in each of the four little schoolrooms I told mothers and some fathers about my own family’s humble background and my mother having to start work at 14, about our own experience as parents, and about the power of education to change lives. I explained that many of those who give through Saakshar School Appeal to help their children do so out of hard earned income, or from small retirement pensions, and told them that a member of the college’s works staff had given me ten pounds for Saakshar the week I left, which particularly moved them. Above all, and with something of a preacher’s insistence, I talked in each place (translated phrase by phrase) about the intelligence and capability of their children, and about the importance of their support for their children’s learning: "You may not have had the opportunity to study yourselves, but your children’s attitudes are shaped by the way you respond to them. If you are interested in their learning, they will be interested to learn. The two most important things you can give them are your love, and your support for their studies. With education, they will have courage to face life’s many challenges, and confidence to make the most of its opportunities”.

I felt a little like a travelling evangelist for education, but the visits really helped to galvanise support, and the message is utterly true: life for all these children will be difficult, but without studying at school to 16 or 18 it would be very bleak indeed. Parents were delighted to be able to ask questions, to express their hopes, and voice anxieties about their children’s education, health and safety in Delhi’s difficult urban environment.

I came away as impressed as ever by Saakshar’s care for these children and families. It is a simple organisation with low running costs and a deep commitment to transparency and ethical behaviour. Its teachers are from similar backgrounds to the children and are inspiring and kind - laying the foundation for a real love of learning. As children prepared at Saakshar progress through their education, many stay in touch through afternoon homework sessions, holiday activities and younger siblings, and show the huge benefit of Saakshar’s work. If you can help, please visit: http://saakshar.chch.ox.ac.uk

Saakshar is one of three projects run by The Vigyan Vijay Foundation. The other two are community and environmental projects which subsidise the cost of running the VVF office.
Having been an undergraduate at a certain university in the fens, I should have known before I arrived at Oxford that term happens in what feels like a single breath. The head-long schedule, exhilarating as it can be, leaves only snatched moments for reading. My first couple of terms here were thus marked by my signal inability to finish any book I attempted to read. Being a mathematician, when confronted with a seemingly intractable problem, my instinct is to replace it with a simpler one, and thus essays and short stories presented themselves as the solution I needed (though some misguided competitive instinct still makes me strive to finish a particular collection during term.

One of the first collections I came to was actually to revisit the writings of Tony Horwitz on the Middle East in the late 1980s, which are collected in the book “Baghdad without a map” which I first read years ago. Horwitz went on to win a Pulitzer prize while at the New Yorker, but at the time these essays were written he was a freelance journalist following his (also Pulitzer-prize winning journalist) wife when she got an assignment as a correspondent in Cairo. The essays form an odyssey through the arab world: Egypt, Libya, Iraq (Saddam at the time forbade maps to be drawn of the city of Baghdad, hence the title of the book), Yemen, and Iran under Ayatollah Khomeni are all described with remarkable humanity and zest. Given the great changes in the middle east in the intervening years these snapshots of the region a quarter of a century ago, from the hilarious but terrifying account of Gaddafi as a despotic showman, to the wrenching description of a leper-colony in the Sudan, make fascinating and unexpectedly humorous reading.

My ambition for this term is to complete “Pulphead”, a collection of essays by John Jeremiah Sullivan. Written originally for various magazines over a number years, the essays touch on a wide range of American life from pop culture to politics. Sullivan writes beautiful fluent prose which he seasons to his subject-matter, and engages a narrative style which, as others have pointed out, blurs the boundaries between the essay and the short-story. As but one example, an essay on Obama’s healthcare reform begins recounting a tea-party march on Washington with the author walking among the demonstrators. He notices while walking the “mass irony” in conservatives marching (“Conservatives do not march. We shake our heads and hold signs while lefties march”) but finds his empathy continually sapping, partly due to the crowd’s obvious, thinly-veiled, racism. Later he concludes, with shifted pronouns, that “he had been wrong to thing people like this don’t march; they just do it with torches”. The ensuing account of the strange death of a census worker in Kentucky results in an essay which manages to be both one of the most sensitive accounts I have read of the political divisions that made healthcare reform so difficult, and also, in a strange kind of alchemy, a gripping murder-mystery of Holmesian complexity.

Kevin McGerty
Royal Society University Research Fellow and Tutor in Mathematics at Christ Church
On Saturday 21st September 2013, Early Drama at Oxford (EDOX) will be staging a double bill of Elizabethan drama: William Gager’s *Dido* and Christopher Marlowe’s *Dido, Queen of Carthage* alongside a special banquet in Hall.

Members, family and friends are invited to dine in Hall during this double-bill performance, and will enjoy an exciting three course Elizabethan dinner.

Just as it was in his day, Gager’s play will be performed by an all-male cast of current undergraduates. The production will be directed by Professor Elisabeth Dutton. The second half of this double bill sees *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, performed by the critically-acclaimed theatre company from King Edward VI School, directed by Perry Mills.

**TICKETS** are £45 per person, including a pre-performance drinks reception, dinner and wines.

**TO BOOK:** Please contact Leia Clancy in the Development Office. leia.clancy@chch.ox.ac.uk

The performances will be followed by a British Academy conference at Christ Church the next day, entitled *Performing Dido*.

For further details on the conference, please visit the EDOX website: [http://edox.org.uk/projects/performing-dido/](http://edox.org.uk/projects/performing-dido/)
For news and more information about events, please visit our website www.chch.ox.ac.uk

In Erratum
In Issue 29 of Christ Church Matters, we featured an incorrect portrait of the 23rd Baron de Ros. The accompanying image is the correct version.

2014 Commemoration Ball
The Christ Church Commemoration Ball will be taking place on 21st June 2014.

2014 COMMEMORATION BALL

Politics, Patronage and Prostitution
The Experience of Medieval Women

Thursday 3 April - Sunday 6 April 2014
For full details or to book online please visit the conference and events section of the Christ Church website www.chch.ox.ac.uk

Event booking forms are available to download at www.chch.ox.ac.uk/development/events/future

JULY 2013

13 July
CHRIST CHURCH ASSOCIATION VISIT TO FIRLE PLACE
Firle, East Sussex

Members, families and friends are invited to an afternoon at Firle Place. This will include a behind-the-scenes tour of the house and gardens, and a champagne afternoon tea.

SEPTEMBER 2013

14 September
1963 REUNION
Christ Church

Members who came up in 1963 are invited back to the House to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their matriculation.

16 September
1958 REUNION
Christ Church

Members who came up in 1958 are invited back to the House to celebrate the 55th anniversary of their matriculation.

20-22 September
2013 OXFORD ALUMNI WEEKEND
Oxford

Join fellow alumni for three days of talks, lectures, walks, tours and many more activities.
Contact: Oxford University Alumni Office alumniweekend@alumni.ox.ac.uk +44 (0)1865 611610 or sign up for email updates at http://www.alumniweekend.ox.ac.uk/

20 September
CHRIST CHURCH RHODES SCHOLARS SUPPER
Christ Church

Rhodes Scholars and their guests are invited back to the House for an informal reception and supper, to celebrate the 110th anniversary of the Rhodes Trust.

21 September
CHRIST CHURCH ASSOCIATION DINNER & DRAMA
Christ Church

The Association will be holding an Elizabethan dinner in Hall with a performance of William Gager’s Dido (1583), staged by Early Drama at Oxford.

29 September
CHRIST CHURCH ASSOCIATION SOUTH WEST EVENT: DART’S FARM
Topsham, Exeter

Members, families and friends are invited to enjoy a day of vineyard tours, wine tastings, and Sunday lunch at Darts Farm.

OCTOBER 2013

1 October
BOARD OF BENEFACTORS RECEPTION
Spencer House, London

Members of the Board of Benefactors are invited to a special reception at Spencer House.

3 October
GAUDY 1966-71
Christ Church

Contact: Helen Camunas-Lopez, Steward’s Assistant
+44 (0)1865 286580
helen.camunas-lopez@chch.ox.ac.uk

6 October
FAMILY PROGRAMME TEA
Christ Church

Family members of freshers coming up to the House are invited to tea in Hall.

16 October
TALK BY PROFESSOR FRED TURNER
Christ Church

In an event sponsored by the Anonymous Society of Poets and Writers, Prof. Fred Turner (1962) will be hosting a lecture entitled ‘Epic: The Monster That Won’t Stay Dead’.

NOVEMBER 2013

6 November
MEDICS DEBATE & RECEPTION
Royal College of Surgeons, London

Professor Simon Kay (1970), Consultant in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, and Professor James Neuberger (1968) Medical Director of NHS Blood and Transplant, will be hosting a lecture entitled ‘Are new developments in transplantation sinister or inspiring?’ The debate will be followed by informal drinks and canapés.

20 November
Oxford & Cambridge Club, London

Those who matriculated between 2006 and 2008 are invited to a drinks and canapés reception.

DECEMBER 2013

12 December
VARSITY RUGBY MATCH
Twickenham Stadium

Join the Christ Church Association to watch the Dark Blues attempt to prolong their winning run against Cambridge, at the 132nd Varsity Rugby Match.

18 December
ST JOHN’S, SMITH SQUARE
London

The Christ Church Cathedral Choir will perform their annual Christmas concert at St John’s, Smith Square on 18 December.

Unless otherwise stated, please contact The Development Office for bookings and queries +44 (0)1865 286325 development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk
CHRIST CHurch

A GRAVURE ETCHING OF ITS GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

by Andrew Ingamells

Image size: 22 x 15 ins (565 x 380 mm) • On white Hannemühle etching paper • In a numbered edition of 195 etchings only, each signed by the artist

LAST ORDERS PLEASE!

This meticulously detailed original etching by Andrew Ingamells is the first copper plate print of Christ Church to be made from an aerial perspective since David Loggan’s celebrated engraving in the 1670s. It includes all the principal buildings and courtyards, and an architectural description by Judith Curthoys.

Andrew Ingamells is best known for etchings of classical architectural subjects such as the Tate, Paris Opera, Florence’s Duomo and Oxford and Cambridge colleges. He has recently completed etchings of the Temple, Lincoln’s Inn and Gray’s Inn. His work is represented in the collections of English Heritage, the Museum of London, the Guildhall Library and the Paul Mellon Collection of British Art.

Etchings are available either in black India ink on white paper (£195) or individually hand-watercoloured (£295).

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