Looking astern, events ought to assume more appropriate proportions than felt at the time, or so historians believe. Institutions are wonderful and terrible places and I rather like the assessment of cathedral rows (equally applicable to any self-governing community) which the journalist Andrew Brown once put in his column in the *Church Times*: ‘What distinguishes cathedral conflicts from all other ecclesiastical scandals is that neither side ever has the faintest idea when to stop escalating. No force and no retaliation ever seems disproportionate to the participants in these struggles. Never mind the terrorist bomb, the first cathedral to get hold of nuclear weapons will blow the whole world to smithereens in a dispute over where to hang the choir robes.’ Oh happy exaggeration; institutions skew, yet they have their admirable side.

There are buildings. Ten or so years ago we took the major decision to tackle three large projects: the transformation of Blue Boar Quad, the renovation of the Library and the repair/renewal of Meadow Tower. Old members rallied round, but it still meant borrowing a fair sum from ourselves, so it was a risk. I seem to remember that the Blue Boar Committee met 33 times and never actually closed itself down, having become expert on bathroom pods and the radical innovation of roofs that slope. Elsewhere there were staircases to be tidied up and a hundred other smaller changes or indeed the avoidance of them: in spite of pressure from the healthandsafetyists, lighting in Tom Quad remains moderate. And now we are declaring open a truly new project: the bridge over the Cherwell, giving access to the sports ground.

There was money. People have been very generous to student support, to the endowment of tutorial posts and to much else. We have been zealous in maintaining the buying power of the endowment. We were fortunate indeed
to be the beneficiaries of the wonderful gift from Michael Moritz and Harriet Heyman at the crucial moment of 2008. So our books have balanced, although we have yet to reach real independence from outside forces.

There were visits by our Visitor. The first was for lunch, when we had a splendid mix of people in Hall, with Her Majesty sitting in the centre on the north side. High Table was reserved for the performance of some Shakespeare, the choice of *Macbeth* having somehow got past the Censors. The Queen returned one Maundy Thursday to distribute Maundy money, and helped us again at the launch of the new Cathedral Music Trust in St James’s Palace.

Far from being a closed community, or indeed an independent suzerainty, the House is a meeting place for visitors of every kind, from the Chinese Minister for Propaganda to conference guests and academics. In fact it seems somewhat of a cross-roads. That purpose is much helped by the cathedral with its worship, prayer and music: an inextricable and natural part of the joint foundation which, along with the Picture Gallery and the Meadow, keeps the doors firmly open, as it were vertically and laterally. Beyond our immediate bounds are projects like Oval House, our links with Christchurch, New Zealand and an international and diverse web of Old Members.

We have experienced enjoyable extras like the Longhorn cattle on the Meadow, reintroduced to the joy of just about all. Christ Church attracts envious insults, but ‘All hat and no cattle’ cannot be one.

There has been the venturing out into the wilds of the Conference of Colleges and the wider federal confusions of ‘the University’ (a term often used as if we were not part of it). Here we have sometimes been at odds with the crowd, objecting to creeping instrumentalism, protecting the Tutorial System (and the Humanities), and wishing to keep our numbers steady in order to look after our junior members properly.

Yet all the above are but nothing were it not for the daily life of the place, which often gets scant mention because it is not a building or an amount of money or an event or even a policy. It consists of undergraduates, staff, graduates and ‘senior members’. It owes something to the ‘built’ context, but of course much more to the interactions of these people. So the principal downside is when this area of life is threatened, usually because of painful matters to do with individuals (a point heinously obscured by the acronym HR). On the whole, however, it has been a joy, for the place is purposeful and diverse. It aims to produce people who can think and who can fill roles in the big wide world. If that is elitist, so be it. It is patient of rowing, other sport, music, drama, parties, indeed of eccentricity, but only so long as the task of teaching, learning and research remains central.

So the most important matter by far is the least tangible: the feel of the place and the degree to which it does its job of enabling people to flourish both academically and in other respects as well. It is little wonder that people are so loyal to the House. It has been a pleasure to be part of it.
When Christ Church was founded, in 1546, its endowment included the lordship of the manor of Oseney. With the manor came the “game of swans”, something that must have been granted to the monks of Oseney Abbey by the Crown. The Dean and Chapter were granted the right to ten swans on the Thames (as it ran through Oxford) and on the Cherwell.

As with most of its property, Christ Church leased out the right to the swans and, in 1562, John Kirton, one of the college butlers, signed an indenture agreeing to pay, on St Andrew’s tide, 33s 4d, and to supply one fat swan every year. From time to time, the Dean and Chapter could ask Kirton to supply a swan for which they would give seven days’ notice and pay 5s. Perhaps the swans were prepared for banquets when Queen Elizabeth came to visit in 1566 and 1592. Very few luxury purchases are recorded in the disbursement books so arrangements like this, as well as gifts of venison or other game from the estates of wealthy, land-owning members of college, might explain their absence.

Kirton’s tenancy obliged him to conserve the number of birds on the river, delivering to the Dean and Chapter, at the end of his 21 year term, two swans more than the number at the commencement of his tenancy. He was also required, every two years, to mark the cygnets with the Christ Church mark at our own upping ceremony. When Kirton’s lease came to end, the Dean and Chapter took the right to the swans back in hand and, at
a swan-upping in 1594, found that they had seventeen adult swans and nine cygnets. A few years later, perhaps finding the management of the swans one task too many, a new lease was granted, this time to Alexander Hill, one of our tenants in St Thomas’s parish, at a reduced rent of 20s a year. In 1606, the upping held on 22 August showed that there were still twenty-six birds spread over a long length of the river at least as far west as Eynsham and south towards Clifton Hampden. Finding two birds here and another three there over a distance of ten miles or so must have been a chore.

Christ Church was not alone in Oxford in having the right to swans: Exeter, St John’s, and Merton Colleges all did, too. Merton College, which is the only one of the three to have any records, shows that the college was managing their birds themselves and, during the 1480s, when there was a nasty cold winter, bought in twelve bushels of oats as feed.

By the early seventeenth century, however, the Dean and Chapter seem to have allowed the game to lapse, and the Keeper of the Queen’s Swans advises that, once lapsed, it can never be regained. Which is a great pity; we know what the Christ Church mark looked like, and the spectacle of the dean, canons, and Students, all in sub-fusc, perched precariously on a punt while ceremoniously marking our cygnets would be one to behold! Should the chance ever arrive, there is a small cookbook in the library which gives detailed instructions on the dismemberment and lifting of herons and swans….

Bottoms up!

One of the joys of having the archive in the Brewhouse, with its much nicer conditions, and a bit more space (although it is fast filling up!), is being able to collect artefacts from Christ Church’s history, as well as papers. A short while ago, a Beagles dinner coat was kindly donated, and made its appearance, expertly modelled by one of our undergraduates, within these pages. Recently, though, the opportunity arose to purchase a tyg. A change from the more usual pewter tankards, this was too good to miss, so the archive budget took a bit of a pounding to acquire this small part of Christ Church sporting history.

The name was originally applied, by the Staffordshire potters, to porrings but it soon became the recognised name for drinking vessels with more than three handles, designed, according to a nineteenth-century catalogue to allow three different persons to drink from it but, as each drinker used a separate handle, they used different parts of the rim. One wouldn’t think that hygiene was necessarily high on the mind of the average drinker in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but perhaps they were more fastidious than we assume!

This particular salt-glazed tyg, offered to Christ Church by a dealer in Somerset, dates from the mid- to late-nineteenth century and shows a hunting scene with a horsemans and dogs around the base. Its three handles are rather skinny dogs, and there is an applied heraldic shield which carries the Cardinal’s hat and tassles, the letters ‘ChCh’ and two crossed hunting horns. Perhaps this, too, like the coat, was made for a member of the Beagles? If anyone does know anything about its origins, the archivist would be delighted to hear.
It is de rigueur these days for choirs such as ours to make recordings. During my years as Director of the Choir we have made well over 50 CDs, many of which have won prizes and awards. You may well ask whether the world really needs yet another recording of choral repertoire since so much is already available. So why do we do it?

One of the main reasons is to share new musical discoveries with our listeners. These recordings are a key vehicle for outreach into the wider world, whether through CDs or downloads. Almost all the music we record is sacred, and this gives us a wonderful opportunity to provide a spiritual experience for vast numbers of people, the majority of whom are not able to hear us in the flesh. Music itself is a powerful medium because of its ability to cross cultural boundaries, but sacred music such as we sing in the Cathedral day by day can carry a particularly special message to its listeners, often giving them unexpected glimpses of the Divine.

Sometimes our recordings are of newly-composed works, such as Howard Goodall’s Eternal Light: A Requiem (EMI 2150472) or John Tavener’s Hymn to the Holy Spirit (Nimbus NI5328) or Francis Grier’s Around the Curve of the World (Somm 225). Sometimes they are revivals of previously neglected works such as Frank Martin’s Mass for Double Choir (Nimbus NI5197), Tippett’s Crown of the Year (Nimbus NI5266), Egon Wellesz’s Mass in F Minor (Nimbus NI5852). Sometimes they are reconstructions of earlier music such as Taverner’s masses (Nimbus NI5218 and Avie AV1213) masses by Esteves (Nimbus NI5516), Palestrina (Nimbus NI5100, NI5394 and NI5650), Pygott (Nimbus NI5578), or music from Christ Church Cathedral Choirbook.
The overall serenity of the music must remain paramount...

In all cases they enable us to share the unique sound of the choir with others. There are many factors which combine to shape the special character of a choir such as this. The building is an important element: Christ Church has a dry acoustic which requires attention to musical line in a way which is different in a more resonant space. My own priority in choral direction (apart from technical features such as ensemble and tuning and clarity of diction) is to encourage the singers to respond as individuals engaged in a common purpose.

Our latest disc continues the series of Eton Choirbook recordings, this one entitled Courts of Heaven. None of the music has been recorded before and all the editions have been prepared by Tim Symons (1990). The featured composers are Browne, Wylkynson, Turges, Davy, Lambe and Hampton, all major contributors to the Eton collection. This is glorious and sublime music of extraordinary virtuosity and subtlety, which evokes a timelessness through its long flowing vocal lines. As usual we made the recording in the more spacious acoustic of Merton Chapel, working with our regular engineer Simon Fox-Gal and producer David Trendell. The technical challenges for the singers are huge as each piece is nearly 15 minutes long. The artistic challenges for the conductor are also complex. The overall serenity of the music must remain paramount as must its improvisatory feel, but there must be utter precision and control in the vocal lines.

The recording is released in September 2014 so make sure you get a copy www.chchchoir.org.uk. My hope is that you will revel in experiencing another of my musical discoveries, and the wonderful sound of this unique choir.
The Choir’s North American tour

Chris Rocker (1967)

The Choir’s return to North America was made possible by the generosity of Robert and Ann Ronus, and a number of other House alumni. Berenika Schmitz (2005) a music graduate of the House, kindly organised much of the first part of the tour and arranged for the boys to be accommodated in Casa Romantica, a 1927 mansion in San Clemente, only 50 yards from the beach, and a true California venue, right down to the sign saying: “Please do not feed the sharks!”

The Choir sang to a full house in Casa Romantica for their first performance, performing works by Vaughn Williams, Tallis, Purcell, Handel, Parry, Walton and Tippett, which would be the staple of concerts to follow. The next day we performed at St. Edwards Church, Dana Point, which was filled to capacity with an audience of 800. We did a slightly different programme of John Blow and Handel, including Zadok the Priest and the Hallelujah Chorus, and were accompanied by Berenika’s Dana Point Symphony.

Our third concert was at the Ronus’ church, St. James, Los Angeles. The tireless Jim Buonemani both arranged the concert logistics and found family accommodation for the boys, including among the stars in Beverley Hills and Hollywood! The concert encore, “Somewhere Over The Rainbow”, brought the house to its feet.

Robert and Ann kindly sent us to Disneyland on our rest day, where a day of parades and roller coasters was enjoyed by all. Then, back in San Clemente, Stephen Darlington did a workshop for local choirs. This was a hugely successful new idea for this trip, and was repeated later. That evening we performed on board the Queen Mary, now a floating hotel in Long beach, where we sang in the Art Deco furnished Grand Salon.

On our last day in San Clemente Berenika organised a fund raiser dinner and auction, with the main prize being a three night stay at Christ Church, including dinner on High Table and behind the scenes tour. The whole evening was a great success and enjoyed by all who participated.

The second leg of the tour took us back to Charlotte, North Carolina, where we had struck up a great relationship with the local classical music station, WDAV, who did a live broadcast of a concert, and negotiated special rates at the local Hampton Inn. We especially owe thanks to Lisa Gray, a former WDAV employee, who made it all happen.

In amongst visiting owls, eagles and snakes at the local Raptor Centre, Stephen Darlington and one of the choir boys, Mikey, were interviewed on WDAV in preparation for the concert that evening at the Covenant Presbyterian Church. But on their return the Choir was stranded as the bus broke down in the rush hour. Lisa saved us by finding three minivans, but there followed the quickest sound test by WDAV and the most rapid rehearsal by the Choir. However, in spite of all the tension, the concert proceeded without a hitch and the resulting wonderful broadcast can be heard on the Choir’s web site www.chchchoir.org.

The hectic pace continued the next day as Clive Driskill-Smith gave an organ master class in Winston-Salem in the morning and Stephen conducted a choral master class for 3 local choirs in Davidson College Presbyterian Church in the afternoon. A concert followed that evening, attended by friends and family of the 3 choirs in which we performed works by Taverner, Byrd, Gibbons, Purcell, Handel, Tippett, Faure, Grieg and Matthias.

Rob Patterson, another alumnus on our organizing team, masterminded our visit to Toronto, where all the boys stayed with families of the Grace Church congregation. We had visited Grace Church on-the-Hill on our last visit to North America and were delighted to be back. Following a visit to the newly opened Toronto Aquarium, the evening was devoted to another workshop conducted by Stephen, this time for individual choir members as opposed to fully rehearsed choirs. Stephen rose to the occasion in a masterful fashion and had the disparate group singing as though they had been performing together for years. On our last day in Canada Rob organised a visit to the Toronto Science Centre, and then the final concert of the tour was another sell out, and ended with a prolonged standing ovation: It was a wonderful way to end the trip.

We had been away for 15 days; we performed 10 concerts, sold over 250 CDs for just under $4000, and earned $55,000 in performance fees. It felt like a great couple of weeks. So many people deserve our thanks, not just those mentioned. Such tours are a vital part of the Choir’s work and could not happen without the various types of support which we are very lucky to receive and for which we are hugely grateful.

Top image: ©2014 Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens
As well as welcoming the usual stream of visitors – several thousand a day in high season – the cathedral has recently enjoyed hosting three arrivals of a different sort: works of art that, each in their own way, are helping us to speak of God and to respond to human need.

The first to join us was the Skidmore Lectern. This splendid Eagle Lectern, familiar to many Old Members, had fallen into disuse in recent decades and, after years in storage, its condition was less than presentable. Originally given to Christ Church by the Reverend T. Vere Bayne and H. L. Thompson, both members of the House, it was made by Francis Skidmore, a leading figure in the Gothic Revival. Thanks to a fundraising campaign and the support of the Friends of Christ Church Cathedral, it is now gloriously restored. It features silvered figures of Saint Frideswide, Cardinal Wolsey and Robert King, the first bishop of Oxford, and has proved to be one of the most popular – and frequently photographed – of the cathedral’s treasures.

Later in the autumn we were delighted to receive a new candle stand for the Latin Chapel, made by the master blacksmith Michael Jacques. Its striking design speaks both of the Tree of Life and of the Burning Bush and it blends beautifully with the foliage on the base of the shrine of St Frideswide, next to which it stands. Worshippers gathering early each morning in the Latin Chapel are finding it an outstanding addition to our company.

The last new arrival is, sadly, only on temporary loan, being with us for the period from Advent Sunday to Pentecost. Charlotte Mayer’s sculpture, The Thornflower, is a memorial to the victims of the Shoah (the Holocaust), but also a powerful witness to hope and reconciliation. Charlotte Mayer has written: ‘The Thornflower is an attempt in sculptural form to reconcile two diametrically opposed elements. The thorns, sharp and cruel, are cut in stainless steel. The flowers, modelled in wax and cast in bronze, are soft and embracing. The sculpture grows from a circular base that speaks of their fundamental unity’.

Standing between the Lady Chapel and the Bell Chapel, The Thornflower embodies the words of Bishop George Bell, inscribed beside his altar:

No nation, no church
No individual is guiltless.
Without repentance and without forgiveness
There can be no regeneration.

Tourists and regulars alike have spent a lot of time with the sculpture, being especially grateful for the artist’s encouragement to touch and handle it.

The life of the cathedral has been immensely enriched by these three very different works of art. They have been warmly received both by visitors and the home team, as they point in new ways to the God we worship and proclaim here.
The Christ Church Choir is such an integral part of the House that many readers may take it for granted. Cardinal Wolsey set out to establish a choral foundation from the early days, asking John Taverner to be its first Director of Music, and since 1546 the Choir has served both the college and a diocese in a unique and celebrated dual foundation. It has a special and distinctive place within the great English choral tradition.

We were therefore thrilled that Her Majesty the Queen, Visitor of Christ Church, and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, agreed to be the guests of honour at the launch of the Christ Church Cathedral Music Trust, on Tuesday 4th March, in the State Apartments of St James’s Palace. The Dean introduced Her Majesty to the Trustees and a number of Members of the House, and following a champagne reception, Dr Stephen Darlington conducted the Choir in a short concert. Sanuda Kariyawasam, the youngest Chorister, presented the Queen with a bouquet of narcissi.

Nigel Hamway, the Chairman of the Trustees, and Stephen Darlington, both spoke, explaining the purpose of the Trust. At a time when many choirs across the country are under threat, the place of music in the Church is by no means secure. Christ Church believes that it has a duty to ensure that both its Members and the public alike realise that high-quality Cathedral Music should be as treasured as other great works of art. The House has made a strategic commitment permanently to guarantee the quality and standing of the Choir, as it is of fundamental importance to the College, the Cathedral, and the wider community.

The Trust aims to endow choral music at Christ Church; to increase scholarship funding for the Choristers, to ensure that affordability is no impediment to Christ Church attracting the best voices; and to support, in partnership with the Friends of Christ Church Cathedral, ancillary facilities, and projects, befitting a choir of its quality. The Trust aims to champion the choral tradition, ensuring its continuation by attracting new Choristers, and promoting the beauty and importance of choral works well beyond the confines of Christ Church. Hence outreach work, such as on the recent North American Tour, is a fundamental part of the Choir’s programmes, both in the UK and abroad, and should be seen as a mission.

Support for the Cathedral Music Trust will not only sustain and enhance the Cathedral Choir in perpetuity, but will also release pressure on existing resources, as Cathedral music costs Christ Church over £0.5 million annually.

www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedral/christ-church-cathedral-music-trust

Photos: Theodore Wood Photography
www.theodorewood.com
“You put together two things that have not been put together before”, so Julian Barnes begins his recent memoir, Levels of Life (2013), “and the world is changed.” Barnes’s soulful assertion unexpectedly captures too the motivation behind a unique exhibition that will occupy the Christ Church Picture Gallery from the end of May to the end of August. The show, entitled Sean Scully Encounters: A New Master Among Old Masters, will feature an arresting selection of works by one of the most celebrated and influential artists working today, set alongside some of the college’s most important paintings and drawings.

Born in Dublin in 1945, a few yards from the oldest modern art museum in the world, The Hugh Lane Gallery (which now boasts a permanent room devoted to his work), Sean Scully has emerged over the past four decades as among the most significant abstract painters in contemporary art. Renowned for its relentless reinventions of the symbolic and expressive possibilities of the stripe and block, Scully’s work features prominently in every important collection of modern and contemporary art, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Guggenheim, the Smithsonian, and the Tate. Twice nominated for the Turner Prize and recipient of numerous international awards, Scully has been associated with several world-class academic institutions, including Harvard University, Princeton University, the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Munich (where he was Professor of Painting from 2002-2007), and the National University of Ireland.

Sean Scully Encounters will mark the artist’s first project with Christ Church and follows a visit the painter and I undertook together to the Picture Gallery in May 2012. A lifelong admirer of Scully’s work, I have had the privilege in recent years of becoming friends with Sean and writing about his extraordinary work, most recently in my new book, 100 Works of Art that Will Define Our Age (Thames & Hudson, 2013). For me, the prospect of putting together two things for which I have enormous affection and that have not been put together before – Scully’s art and Christ Church (where I earned my MPhil and DPhil degrees in English literature) – is especially thrilling.

The unexpected adjacency of Scully’s abstract oil works, aquatints and engravings with indisputable masterpieces from Medieval and Renaissance Europe, for which the Picture Gallery is internationally known, promises to change our appreciation of old and new alike. The hanging side-by-side, for instance, of the hooked flesh in Annibale Carracci’s sixteenth-century Butcher Shop and the bare-bone sky of Scully’s Dark Wall 5.06, or the slanted suffering of Bassano’s Flagellation and the battered flesh of Scully’s Small Barcelona Red Wall (2004), demands the adoption of a new visual syntax, a new logic. Visitors to the exhibition, curated by the gallery’s own Jacqueline Thalmann and me, will witness a ricochet of powerful vision across canvases, discovering in even the most familiar paintings from the institution’s permanent collection fresh strata of feeling, whose depths echo in Scully’s intimate yet irresolvable matrices.

“It is fascinating”, the Dean has generously commented in a Foreword to the catalogue that will accompany the show, “to see Scully’s abstract work in dialogue with the religious paintings of the past...”
One hundred years on, the First World War continues to haunt the imagination of contemporary Britons, shaping our views of war and peace, of authority, and of patriotism. Whenever we enter Christ Church Cathedral, we pass between walls down which the names of the war-dead cascade. The war’s shadow is a long and a fateful one, and the centenary of its outbreak is a fitting occasion to pause for public reflection.

Getting their oar in before the momentum of national commemoration picked up speed, the McDonald Centre for Theology, Ethics, and Public Life, together with Christ Church Cathedral, staged a series of public lectures in Hilary Term under the title, “Oh, What a Lovely War?” Held in the Blue Boar Lecture Theatre, the January and February lectures attracted audiences that regularly spilled over into the adjacent annexe.

The series opened with a characteristically feisty performance by Jeremy Paxman. Speaking under a title that echoed those of his book and accompanying television series—“Great Britain’s Great War”—Mr Paxman focussed on the impact of the war on the home front, while treating with unfashionable sympathy the motives of Britons who went to fight. Although, because of its enormous costs, he couldn’t quite bring himself to say that Britain’s belligerency was justified, he nevertheless admitted that, had he belonged to his grandfather’s generation, he would probably have signed up.

The following week, hotfoot from Paris by Eurostar, Margaret MacMillan, Warden of St Antony’s College, Professor of International History, and author of the recent, The War that Ended Peace: The Road to 1914, spoke to the title, “Accident or Choice? The Outbreak of the First World War”. Extemporising fluently and without notes, she reflected the bias of contemporary historiography in refusing to attribute the outbreak of war to the fate of impersonal forces such as ‘imperialism’ or railway timetables. Nevertheless, she was reluctant to point the finger of accusation in one direction rather than another.

In the first week of February, the British military historian and recent biographer of Field Marshal Douglas Haig, Professor Gary Sheffield, delivered a lecture entitled “Victorious Donkeys? British Generals and Generalship of the First World War Reconsidered”. In this he countered the view, dominant since the 1960s, that the reason for the appalling British casualties of 1914-18 was a toxic combination of military incompetence and callousness. Assuming a more forgiving position, Professor Sheffield argued that a measure of incompetence was inevitable when British officers, trained to command small colonial forces, suddenly found themselves having to learn to manage millions. What’s more, they were compelled to take the offensive against an invader at a stage of technological development that smiled upon defence, coming after the mass production of machine-guns but before the mass production of tanks.

Next up was Christ Church’s own Nigel Biggar, Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology, Canon of the Cathedral, and author of the book, In Defence of War. Drawing on his article in Standpoint, which had inspired Michael Gove’s controversial critique of ‘left-wing historians’ in January’s Daily Mail, Professor Biggar addressed the question, “1914-18: Was Britain Right to Fight?”. His answer: all things considered, Britain was right. She had just cause: the unprovoked, preventative German invasion of Belgium and France. Her intention was right: to uphold international law and to expel an expansionist invader who would not countenance voluntary evacuation until just before the end. Yes, her generals—not least Haig—sometimes pursued a strategy that was more expensive of troops’
lives than necessary. And yes, sometimes they should have known better. But war is like any other human endeavour: even when justified overall, it is only ever waged by imperfect human beings; and the British made strenuous efforts to render attrition ever more efficient, and to overcome the need for it altogether by making a decisive breakthrough—as was eventually achieved in 1918.

In the penultimate lecture, "The War and English Religion", Professor Matthew Grimley, Tutor in History at Merton College, reviewed the fate of English Christianity at the hands of the First World War. Taking an unfashionable line, he argued that the Christian religion flourished among the troops and survived the bloodshed in much better shape than is usually supposed.

Finally, the series reached its climax with a view from Germany. Holger Afflerbach, Professor of Central European History at the University of Leeds and biographer of the Chief of the German General Staff, Erich von Falkenhayn, took as his title, "If you do not want to see God’s hand in everything, even in the most unbearable, you are lost." Experiencing the First World War alongside Kaiser Wilhelm II" Here he told the story of General Moriz von Lyncker, adjutant to the Kaiser, whose progressive disillusionment, not least through the battlefield death of his son, can be traced through his letters to his wife. In discussion after his lecture, Professor Afflerbach observed that, while Fritz Fischer’s thesis—that Germany was primarily to blame for the First World War—had reigned among German historians since the 1960s, Christopher Clark’s recent book, The Sleepwalkers, had begun to shift the consensus toward a wider distribution of responsibility.

All of the lectures in this popular series, except Jeremy Paxman’s, are available for viewing in podcast at: http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/oh-what-lovely-war-first-world-war-anniversary-lectures
Christ Church Library has recently embarked on a new and exciting digitization project. The aim is to open access to our rich repository of manuscripts and early printed books and thus be able to better support original research as well as to preserve unique and fragile heritage items for future generations. We have been very fortunate to benefit from the generous support of the Bodleian Library Imaging Services and the Digital Library Systems department. In fact, the same team of specialists working on the Polonsky Foundation project (engaged in a prestigious collaboration with the Vatican Library) has helped us to produce the first fully digitized manuscripts.

To better understand what this involves, let me focus briefly on what the word “digitization” actually means. The most widely-accepted use of the term is to describe the scanning of analogue sources (such as objects, images, sounds, documents and a variety of signals) and converting them into binary code. The result is the representation of something found in the physical world (in our case, manuscripts) in an altogether different medium. This is by no means a cheap, quick or easy process. Digitization is much more than simply taking pictures of a book. It involves significant investments in equipment, book conservation and digital storage. Crucially, digitization is also dependent on highly qualified specialists capturing images, writing software and making sure that priceless documents are not damaged in the process.

The manuscripts chosen for the digitization pilot project are all extremely valuable items from the library's special collections. One of them is more than a thousand years old. Their often fragile state requires careful handling and complex repairs. The materials being digitized also require high-quality images, as scholars are interested in every aspect of the physical object. In order to record every detail, it is therefore necessary to capture high-resolution images. For this, we use two of the best medium format cameras on the market, one mounted on a wall column, the other secured to the Austrian-made conservation copy stand KT5242, also known as the ‘Grazer’ book cradle. The cradle is a fantastic piece of engineering. It features laser focus and a vacuum bar which applies gentle suction to the back of a page, holding it in place whilst a photograph is taken.

The library is now in the process of finalising the first lot of digitized manuscripts. In this small pilot project we could only include a few selected volumes. We focused on representative items in the Western, Byzantine, Music and Hebrew collections. By the end of July 2014, we expect to be able to provide an interactive web application supporting...
descriptive material and bibliography, plus a viewing environment of digitized images for the following items in the collection: three of the most spectacularly illuminated Western manuscripts (MS 92, MS 101, MS 180), the oldest volume in the library, a 9th century Byzantine history of the world (MS 5), an intriguing Hebrew manuscript, the author of which was identified in 2010 (MS 199), two partbook sets containing some of the most important surviving music manuscripts from Elizabethan England (Mus 979-983 and Mus 984-988), William Byrd’s Masses for 3, 4 and 5 Voices (Mus 489-493) and an exciting 16th century ‘table-book’ containing sections of votive antiphons, magnificats, and other Latin-texted works (Mus 45). As they are finalized, the fully digitized manuscripts will become available on the library pages of the college website (www.chch.ox.ac.uk/library/digitalisation).

A lot more will hopefully follow, as Christ Church has a spectacular collection of manuscripts. There are well over 1,600 of them. Among the codices in the Western collection awaiting digitization are several 14th and 15th century finely illuminated devotional books, one of the earliest manuscripts of Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales and a very early copy of Ralph Higden’s Polychronicon. Donated by William Wake (1657-1737), the Byzantine collection contains 86 volumes and is one of the most important and least known in England. Its holdings include a large number of 11th and 12th century illuminated manuscripts. Christ Church’s Judaica collection is the most impressive amongst all the colleges. There are a high number of Sephardic manuscripts (8 out of 18, plus 2 Provencal and one Italian) ranging from Kabbalah to science by way of Biblical commentary, legal literature, rabbinic responsa and philosophy. The 32 Arabic manuscripts include four Korans, a version of the Gospels and two rare fragmentary manuscripts of the Arabian Nights. The largest collection is that of music manuscripts. There are over 1,250 items of English and Italian scores dating to before 1700. This includes scores by Thomas Tallis, John Taverner and William Byrd as well as autograph manuscripts by Matthew Locke, John Blow and Henry Purcell, and many early Italian madrigals, motets, libretti by composers such as Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Giacomo Carissimi and Domenico Scarlatti. There are also huge collections of rare (often unique) early printed books, a spectacular amount of 18th and 19th century theatrical ephemera and rich personal archives, such as those of Archbishop William Wake and Air Marshal Charles Portal (1893-1971).

Given the importance of these special collections, we would like to continue digitizing the library’s rich repository of manuscripts and unique early printed books, and over the course of the next few years, have thousands of pages made freely available online to researchers and to the general public. There is already a lot of interest from the scholarly community. Several specific volumes are eagerly expected. We have a tried and tested system in place and we have costed both the project as a whole and each individual collection. Also, we have the best equipment available. This, plus the collaboration with the Bodleian Library, promises great things to come. What we now need are the funds to enable us to continue. Please contact simon.offen@chch.ox.ac.uk if you would like to help.
Belinda Jack’s Gresham College lectures

Belinda Jack has completed her series of free public lectures on The Mysteries of Reading and Writing, delivered in London as Gresham Professor of Rhetoric. As well as being Fellow and Tutor in French at Christ Church, Professor Jack also holds the Rhetoric chair at Gresham College, a position created as one of the seven founding Professorships in 1597, when Gresham was the first and only higher education institution in London.

The lectures were delivered between October 2013 and May 2014 at the Museum of London, with a capacity audience of over 200 seats, covering subjects as diverse as: Reading for Pleasure, Modern Reading in Historical Context and How do Novels Beguile? They were received by eager and diverse audiences, but the achievements of in-person attendance were far-outstripped by the performance of the lectures online.

All Gresham College lectures are recorded and released online, both amongst the archive of over 1,500 lectures freely available on the website, and also through sites such as YouTube. The lectures by Professor Jack have now received over 15,000 views and, since they will be there permanently, they will go on being watched and enjoyed by people across the world. The great success of these lectures has delighted Gresham College, whose purpose is to offer free top-level education for all, whether in the London lecture halls or online across the world. In this, Professor Belinda Jack has been a wonderful addition to the College and all are looking forward to her series of lectures next year on The Mysteries of Writing Novels and Poems, which begins with The Novel & Morality: Samuel Johnson’s ‘Rasselas’ on the 14th of October. www.gresham.ac.uk

All Members of Christ Church are very welcome to attend.

New poems by poet Sappho discovered

Sappho is one of the most famed and admired of the ancient Greek poets. She is also one of the most elusive: the majority of her poems survive in portions and fragments, with only one remaining completely intact. That is until the recent discovery of Professor Dirk Obbink, Tutor in Greek Literature at Christ Church and renowned papyrologist.

Earlier this year, Professor Obbink was approached by an anonymous private collector who presented him with papyrus that he quickly identified to be parts of two previously unknown poems by Sappho. Not only do elements of these link up with fragments already known to be by her, but the distinctive dialect and poetic meter in which they are written are clear indications of her work. One poem is a substantially complete work about her brothers, Charaxos and Larichos; the other, a fragmented piece about unrequited love addressed to the goddess Aphrodite.

Sappho’s poems, which were lost from the manuscript tradition, have been predominantly preserved through quotation by other authors or through the discovery of fragments written on ancient papyrus. Professor Obbink’s new find is a significant addition to Sappho’s surviving work and inspires hope for further similar recoveries.
Tower Poetry awards 2014

This year, the 14th Christopher Tower Poetry Prize competition attracted hundreds of entries from budding young poets from across the UK. The competition, launched on National Poetry Day last October, was themed ‘News’ which generated a wide range of creative responses. The 630 entrants represented 345 schools, many of them entering the competition for the first time this year.

At a lunchtime reception at Christ Church on 24th April, 18 year-old Dominic Hand from Magdalen College School, Oxford, was awarded the £3,000 first prize for his poem ‘Annunciation’. The judges were the poets Olivia McCannon, Kei Miller and Peter McDonald.

The winner of the second (£1,000) prize was Sam Buckton, from Rudolf Steiner School, Hertfordshire with ‘Hell-of-an Island’ and the third prizewinner (£500) was Masha Voyles from Charterhouse, Surrey, with ‘Bat Child Found!’. Their schools receive £150 each.

The other short-listed winners, who each received £250 were: Alexander Shaw (King’s Priory School, Tyne and Wear), Charlie Holmes (George Heriot’s School, Edinburgh), Jessica Matthews (Coleg Gwent Crosskeys Campus), and Phoebe Stuckes (West Somerset College). Phoebe Stuckes, as well as Dominic Hand, were two of the Foyle Young Poets winners 2013 and also longlisted in the 2013 Christopher Tower Poetry competition.

Chris Pelling, Doctor of Letters

Professor Christopher Pelling, Regius Professor of Greek at Christ Church, was awarded an honorary degree by Washington and Lee University in May this year. In presenting the degree, Provost Daniel Wubah praised Professor Pelling for opening modern minds to the glories of ancient civilizations, friendship to Washington and Lee University, extraordinary scholarship, and service as a tutor and teacher at Oxford.

PortaCabin

The Porters’ Lodge is currently undergoing an exciting refurbishment in consultation with English Heritage. During this period normal Lodge services are maintained from a temporary building which was craned into position overnight from St Aldates and into Tom Quad, where all pigeon-holes, CCTV and alarm systems have been transferred.

The new Porters’ Lodge will be dramatically different and aims to provide a more welcoming and more usable space for visitors. Works are due to be completed in August of this year.
The University Alumni Office runs a programme of educational, small-group tours designed especially for alumni. Every tour is accompanied by an expert trip scholar, whose role is to share their academic knowledge relating to the theme and the destination. Alumni regularly state that travelling with a trip scholar is one of the highlights of the tours and provides a unique travel and learning experience.

There are currently two trip scholars who are members of Christ Church: Professor Roger Davies, Philip Wetton Professor and Head of Astrophysics, and Dr Rowena E. Archer, Lecturer in Medieval History. Professor Davies has accompanied the Polar Nights and Mystical Northern Lights voyages along the Arctic coastline of Norway since 2010. This has been one of the most popular trips in the Oxford Alumni Travellers’ programme, especially for the last two years when it has been a peak time to view the Northern Lights.

Professor Davies has experienced first-hand how interacting directly with an expert enhances the experience of the Northern Lights trip for alumni. They have the opportunity to ask all of their questions and find out everything they have ever wanted to know about a subject. He says, “it is rewarding to know that there are lots of people out there who are interested in astronomy, the night sky and aurorae and to be able to transfer some of that excitement back to them through sharing your knowledge.”

He enjoys the experience of travelling with an interesting group of people and has found that the groups always gel and there is lots of lively conversation. Alumni on his most recent trip said that, "overall we found it to be a truly memorable experience, thanks to both the night skies and the really outstanding lectures by Professor Roger Davies. I can’t over-emphasise the importance of the latter. Without the lectures we would struggle to rate the experience as highly.” (Rosalind and Mark Atkins, Hertford 1975).

Medieval Historian Dr Rowena E. Archer will be leading an alumni trip to Alsace-Lorraine in June. This will be her first time as a trip scholar, but she has enjoyed a long career running seasonal study programmes for mature students. Their interest in history, great enthusiasm and open-mindedness encouraged Dr Archer to become a trip scholar with an Oxford Alumni Travellers’ group whom she thinks will have a similar viewpoint. She says, “the tours offer a real appreciation of an experience which goes beyond mere tourism, giving a rich understanding of a place and its history.” Dr Archer views the trip as a chance for alumni to revisit the intellectual life that they experienced during their time studying at Oxford. She feels her role as a trip scholar is to feed the intellectual curiosity of travellers, appraising their interests, and plans to aim her talks towards this goal. Dr Archer hopes to reconstruct the fascinating medieval history of the Alsace-Lorraine region through visits to historic sites. She is excited by the prospect of exploring this border territory which has been through a series of identity crises, though its earliest history, unlike later periods, remains surprisingly underexplored. The surviving buildings, art and artefacts illustrate the area’s rich cultural heritage.

The Oxford Alumni Travellers programme offers a wide range of destinations from northern Europe to southern Africa, Central and South Asia to Latin America, with themes including historical journeys, classical music and opera trips, archaeology and natural history tours. Visit www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/travel for more information or contact Natasha Stein in the Alumni Relations Office on +44 (0)1865 611617 or Natasha.Stein@alumni.ox.ac.uk.
Editorial

Fundraising is always a big issue for the House itself of course, but in this edition of Association News we focus on four of our former finest who have taken to rattling the metaphorical tin cup on behalf of organisations far, wide and diverse. In a world where even the Dominican Friars have their own development director, mining the seams of philanthropy has become serious business, and it is no great surprise to find Christ Church alumni well-represented among those taking on the challenge. Richard Brown (1992) does for the friars in Britain while Alessandra Ricciardelli (2003) plunged into raising money for the European Youth Parliament straight after graduating with an MSc in 2005. Mark Stephens (1961) moved into fundraising after spending most of his career as an industrial relations specialist. Peter Wheeler (1975) teamed up with another Houseman, Bernard Mercer (1975), in 2001 and along with a few others, founded New Philanthropy Capital.

I wouldn’t be surprised if the development office here didn’t rush to sign them up: it would be good to get them working in tandem which is, I am afraid, by way of being an awful segue to the books pages, where you can find Alex Morgan (1981) talking about her book – her first novel – of that name. Congratulations to Alex on getting Tandem long-listed as a potential “nation’s favourite hidden gem” for National Reading Group day: it’s an achievement to see your first work rubbing shoulders on the list with books by such well-established authors as Simon Sebag Montefiore and Lucy Ellman. While we are on books, a shout out too for The Secret Supporters of the Boat Race, the first children’s book about the ubiquitous annual event and introduced to us by Robin Bourne-Taylor (2000), ex-Church and university rower, whose girlfriend wrote and illustrated it. If a book can be judged by its cover, it looks gorgeous.

Finally, do check out Pranks’ Corner, where our old friends the Tom Quad tourists are in the spotlight. I am though, I must say, a little disconcerted by the ending to Kieran Browne’s tale: his friend, the stooge-cum-tourist confused I know) can’t still be floating in Mercury can he? More pranks please everyone – especially if they have such intriguing endings.

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

In this issue we hear from four Old Members involved in Fundraising

Mark Stephens (1961)
I read History for a couple of terms and then English Language and Literature. It wasn’t easy to persuade the dons to agree to this change but I was grateful to move from ‘The Reasons for the Dissolution of the Monasteries’ to a detailed analysis of King Lear. It taught me to look closely at text – very, very many thanks to the English Department at the House.

The written word is key to all fundraising efforts: to the articulation of the vision, to the way one expresses gratitude, and often to the development of relationships.

After having spent most of my career as an industrial relations specialist (I was Head of Human Resources at Thames TV) my first effort as a fundraiser came when working for Premier Christian Radio. We had to raise enough capital to build a radio station and enough income to keep the station running. The first required big chunks of money, the second a membership scheme which is the cornerstone of its finances to this day.

Articulating the vision was the key: the vision of a station which embraced every aspect of orthodox Christian faith. Now twenty years on, it is getting closer to its original vision, but it is unlikely to appeal to the private believer of whom there are so many.

Then as Chief Executive of the Actors Centre in Covent Garden I had to raise money from the broadcasters (BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5) on the basis that they had a responsibility to nurture and develop professional acting talent if we were to lead the world creatively in theatre and television. I had to administer six studios, the smallest theatre in the West End – the Tristan Bates Theatre – a membership of some 2,000 professional actors and a requirement to lay on 400 classes and workshops every quarter. And, yes, it is one of the reasons there is such a wealth of available, well trained acting talent in this country today.

Now in retirement I chair a counselling Trust in Harlow in Essex, am part of a support group to the Anglican Centre in Rome and am actively involved in the Chagos Conservation Trust, which in 2010 played a part in persuading the Government to declare the waters of the Chagos Islands, (which are 2.5 times the size of the United Kingdom) a Marine Protection Area. It has the cleanest water in the world, the greatest variety of fish, the greatest biomass of fish and the best preserved coral reefs. Worth fighting to preserve!

I’ve watched my eldest daughter, who founded a company called Higgidy, develop all sorts of philanthropic initiatives in West Sussex. I’ve watch and tried to support my second daughter, who has a special needs child. She ran the Marathon for Grove Cottage this year, a small charity in Bishops Stortford which takes special needs children on Saturdays to give their parents a break. And I’ve watched our son develop a Not For Profit organisation called Streetbank. It’s based on postcodes and enables those who live within a mile of each other to lend equipment, provide services for free and to give things away. Without a penny changing hands it works all over the world and somebody has just offered to pay for the website to be translated into Arabic.
It is a very different world from the one I entered as an undergraduate in 1961. Halfway between these two dates, in 1986, I wrote a Short History of the Trade Union Movement, having written a biography of Ernest Bevin, the founder of the Transport and General Workers Union, in 1981. I passionately believed in the right to independent representation and at the time there must have been 12 million trade union members. Since then the membership has halved. In their place it seems to me there is a new movement based on the same principle of wishing to help and support each other. Its purpose is to serve the wider community, now that we know we cannot cope on our own. A far, far better world, perhaps?

Peter Wheeler (1975)
Peter Wheeler's undergraduate years at the House, 1975-78, followed a ‘gap year’ in India and a dusty return to London on a Magic Bus. Having survived 8 months of travels before the era of the cell phone, Twitter or whatsapp, Wheeler was very thin and shaggy, and had lost his reading list. He was surrounded, fortunately, by the massive and friendly talent of an English set that collectively attended three lectures in three years as far as can be divined, possibly a record (young House-people: do not try this at home). They nevertheless eventually scored two Firsts between them, thanks to inspirational efforts of the young and brilliant Peter Conrad, and the slightly less young but very wise and insightful Christopher Butler. Wheeler’s degree was not among them.

In the chill wind of the Winter of Discontent, the City beckoned, and Wheeler somehow extracted a last-resort job offer from Hill Samuel, a quaint firm in 1979, and one quickly becoming quainter. It did however have a decent cricket team for a bit. With Thatcherism in full swing and yuppydom rife in Clapham, Wheeler moved to the US to take Manhattan by storm as part of Hill Samuel’s ‘Operation Suez II’. He arrived on Wall Street just months ahead of Gordon Gekko. Ronald Reagan was re-elected and Madonna’s Like a Virgin video was airing, in color and stereo, on the quirky new cable channel, MTV. Weeks later, Wheeler was working for Goldman Sachs, a career that eventually led him to establish the firm’s investment banking operations in Asia in the 1990s.

Just before his departure from Goldman in 2001, in the apocryphal Goldman cafeteria, Wheeler and Gavyn Davies, an economist, hatched a plot with some fellow conspirators to relieve their colleagues and former colleagues of large portions of their new wealth by helping them give it away: months later New Philanthropy Capital was born. It was the era of New Labour cool, with income redistribution discussable once more in polite company. NPC survived infancy, thanks largely to the rustic, robust and committed stewardship of Bernard Mercer, another member of the House Class of ’75 English, and founding CEO. Wheeler still sits on the Board today, and the organization has undoubtedly played a small but catalytic role in improving the life outcomes for many people that our Charity Sector serves, through a relentless focus on effectiveness and impact as management and capital allocation tools. It has also done a small bit for thoughtful voluntary wealth redistribution, and aims to do a lot more.

Today, Wheeler is an Executive Vice President of The Nature Conservancy, the first person to represent in London the esteemed 62 year-old US based conservation NGO, among the largest and most respected of its type in the world. He has not been happier in his career since his early days on the China beat in the early 90; maybe not even then. TNC operates in all 50 states in the US and in 33 countries worldwide. It’s a science-driven but boots-on-the-ground organization of 4,500 people. Its mission is to preserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. In Wheeler’s view, there is no more important calling right now, and he is happy to be a full-time executive once more. Talented house-men and -women will receive a special welcome if they share this view, or would like to discuss it. He was very happy to attend last year’s Gaudy in the company of eight of the ten members of the extended English set of ’75.

Richard Brown (1992)
I am one of a small number of Oxford graduates who continue to live in the city where I studied. Now after an eight-year interlude of daily commuting from Oxford into London, I have happily settled into a new post closer to home: in June 2013, I arrived as the first Development Director for the Dominican Friars in Britain (including Blackfriars Hall within the University of Oxford). Now, from my office in Beaumont Street, I can look out of the window and see the Taylor library where, two decades ago, I studied as an undergraduate.

Reflecting on my time at Christ Church, I can think of a number of ways I benefited. Certainly the Oxford system teaches you discipline in meeting deadlines, the ability to work on your own, and to communicate clearly and persuasively – all essential skills in business.
But I think that I derived as much benefit from the extra-curricular aspects: involvement in the JCR was an important opportunity that Christ Church gave me. I served two terms as Entertainments Rep, and one on the Ball committee. This gave me a taste for that unique thrill (I think) of organising an event and seeing it through to successful completion – bringing people together for a shared and memorable experience.

More broadly, I appreciate the stimulating mix of new ideas and interesting people I found in Oxford – I can’t omit to mention my wife, Myfanwy! (née Salih – Christ Church, 1994). My career led me first into publishing, then onto the marketing side of publishing, and from there into charity-sector marketing, which is essentially what is meant by ‘development’ or ‘fundraising’. The common thread between these various organisations has been their link with the Catholic faith – I was received into the Church during my time at Christ Church. So this is how I find myself in the unique position of managing communications and fundraising for a religious order now approaching its 800th anniversary.

I have found it fascinating to work with the friars, whose lifestyle in many ways replicates that of the medieval Oxford colleges – in between teaching, research and lecturing, the friars come together into the chapel and sing the Divine Office, and at other times engage in pastoral work among the people of the city. Oxford is one of those cities where you can see all around you the accumulated layers of history, including so many that are alive even today. Christ Church certainly played its part in first interesting me in that living tradition.

Alessandra Ricciardelli (2003)

Christ Church was an incredible experience for me. It had a major positive impact on my whole life, private and professional. My involvement in fundraising activities started just after my MSc. graduation in 2005, when I became involved in the organization of the 50th international session of the European Youth Parliament, which is part of the Schwazkopf Foundation. I had been a member since 1997. Organizing such a big event in the city of Bari would not have been possible without my Christ Church experience. This helped to set my career by making a real impact on the organizations as well as the communities I have served.

The professional performance and achievement, both in terms of strategy planning and money raising, at EYP first and within the private Italian University LUM Jean Monnet, later, is inextricably related to what Christ Church instilled in me. The time I spent there was about learning to build relationships, sharing enthusiasm with college mates and people for a common cause – we all belonged to the same House. It was also about development, including improving interpersonal skills and strategic orientations while organizing events for clubs or societies, and pursuing and obtaining personal and academic results, throughout nurturing relationships. This is the major gift from the House that I have received, which today has helped me and the organization for which I work.

Another gift is the individual relationships with old members of the house which I still cultivate and which have represented a building block in my career.

While performing fundraising roles, I have constantly based my activities on searching for long-term and connected relationships with donors, institutions and public entities, with government (at all levels) and international contributors. Thanks to the daily lessons learnt at the House, I have used my fundraising position within the University LUM Jean Monnet not simply to perform the role of facilitator or mediator between the University and donors; but I have acted as an agent of empowerment, giving power to the people and donors interested in funding and supporting the cause of the University. This has resulted in a multilevel dialogue amongst the overall community benefiting from the University education and training activities.

I feel that I have a proactive commitment coupled with an enthusiastic attitude to carrying out my fundraising activities. This would not have been possible if it was not backed up by social etiquette and strong interpersonal skills. While I was living in Oxford I was constantly representing myself and the House. Now in my professional life, what I learnt at Oxford about building and fostering relations, as well as approaches to academics and people based on integrity, loyalty, trust and cultural sensitivities, has served me well. It is the key to achieving successful working relationships and is something I treasure from my days at Oxford.
The Varsity rugby match
12 DECEMBER 2013

Schools’ Dinners – Eton College
11 JANUARY 2014
Lloyd’s of London visit
19 MARCH 2014

1964 – 50th Reunion Dinner
21 MARCH 2014

Norfolk Lunch
11 MAY 2014
Book Reviews

Mrs D
The Life of Anne Damer 1748-1828

A Whig aristocrat, niece of Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, and god daughter and protégé of Horace Walpole at Strawberry Hill, Anne Seymour Conway enjoyed an idyllic childhood. Well educated, her mentors included the philosopher and historian David Hume.

She married John Damer, heir to a fortune and a peerage, and joined the social whirl of Le Ton. The marriage, arranged by their fathers, was a disaster, and they separated. In 1776 John Damer became bankrupt and committed suicide.

In a dramatic volte face, Anne forsook the party round, to become a successful sculptor. Professionally trained, she regularly exhibited at the Royal Academy. Her work included lifelike models of animals, neo classical busts of friends and herself, and at a later period busts of contemporary heroes, Nelson, Charles James Fox, Sir Joseph Banks and Sir Humphrey Davy. Her work can be seen in The V&A, the National Portrait Gallery, the British Museum, the Ashmolean, and the Uffizi.

Her European travels were packed with incident, a card game in Spa, ending in a duel at Bath, and a gunboat chase in the Channel, ending in capture by a French privateer. She journeyed alone through Portugal, Spain and revolutionary France. She frequently visited Italy, and was in Naples with Sir William Hamilton, whose marriage proposal she had turned down, when Emma arrived there. She personally presented Napoleon with her bust of Charles James Fox, during the Hundred Days, weeks before the battle of Waterloo. She wrote a novel, Belmour. She acted with and was the organiser of the amateur Richmond House Players who played for two seasons to packed houses including the royal family. Horace Walpole left her Strawberry Hill for her lifetime, and she put on further plays there.

A female polymath, from a leading Whig family and working in a man's world she became a target for Tory pamphleteers, who suggested that she was lesbian. She greatly resented the accusations.

An exhibition "Anne Seymour Damer Sculpture and Society" will open at Strawberry Hill on 11th August and run to 9th November 2014.

Richard Webb (1959)

Theatres of War
Winner of the People's Book Prize

Last September, I published a first novel, Theatres of War, which has now won the Fiction award in The People's Book Prize.

The novel is a story of Love, War and Opera. The theatre of the title is the San Carlo opera house in Naples; the war is the Italian campaign in 1943/44.

The book concerns two British officers. At Salerno they endure the German bombardment together, but they come from different backgrounds and experience contrasting wars. Frank discovers a derelict theatre where he stages a revue and is ordered to stay in Naples to provide entertainments for the troops. And when Edmund's girlfriend, Vermillion, joins Frank at the theatre, her life becomes enmeshed with both men. So whilst Edmund fights in the bitter winter battles near Monte Cassino, Frank dreams of staging an opera.

Is it odd to publish such a novel when the world is focused on WW1? Perhaps. But I didn't really choose to write it; the idea just appeared. The trigger was the purchase of a derelict house in Umbria. Neighbours described the arrival of British troops in 1944. Knowing little about the fighting in Italy, I was astonished that the war had gone down our street. I started researching the campaign and was moved by what I read and the recognition that Italy's hilltop towns and peaceful olive groves had so recently been battlefields.

Later I found an article describing the rebirth of the opera house in war-torn Naples. It seemed incredible that such creativity had occurred less than fifty miles from Cassino.

For several years these stories haunted me. Then the plot of Theatres of War arrived unbidden in my head. I knew I had to write this novel, to evoke the convulsions of the 'forgotten' Italian campaign and the fortitude of those who served there.

'Theatres of War' by RJJ Hall (Troubador: paperback £9.99; ebook £2.99). See also www.rjjhall.com

Richard Hall (1964)
Dirty Bertie
An English King made in France

Bertie, the future King Edward VII, studied briefly at Christ Church. And if it was France, and not the House, that formed his character, it was not really Christ Church’s fault. It just happened that the Prince’s talents lay in fields that weren’t taught at Oxford (at least not in the 19th century). He would have got a First in Can-Can Theory, Actress Appreciation and Brothel Design, all of which figured in Paris’s core curriculum 150 years ago.

But my contention in this new biography of Victoria’s eldest son is that his supposedly frivolous excursions to France while he waited to inherit his immortal mother’s throne were not a waste of time. Learning French sociability, becoming thoroughly un-Victorian, had turned him into Europe’s peacemaker. As soon as he died, the French became resigned to war. In short, without Bertie, WWI would have come years earlier. And thanks to my own First in Modern Languages, I’ve found and read the French sources to back it all up.

Stephen Clarke(1978)

A Very Principled Boy

A Very Principled Boy is the story of Duncan Chaplin Lee, a descendant of one of America’s most distinguished families – the Lees of Virginia – and possibly the best-placed spy the Soviets ever had inside any American intelligence service. Lee attended Christ Church as a Rhodes scholar from 1935 until 1938 after he graduated from Yale University. During his first year at the House, he resided in Room Number 2, Staircase 1, in the Meadow Building, a stone’s throw from the room I had in the same building nearly forty years later. He read jurisprudence and rowed in one of our second boats.

Exposed to leftist politics at Oxford and to communism after a 1937 visit to the Soviet Union, Lee became a secret member of the Communist Party of the United States of America in 1939. During the Second World War, he became a chief aide to William “Wild Bill” Donovan in the newly-formed Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency. While in the OSS, Lee passed classified intelligence to his Soviet handlers. This secret information included the likely timeframe of the D-Day operation and the names of OSS personnel who were under investigation for suspected communist affiliations.

Although he was outed in late 1945 after one of his NKGB handlers defected to the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover’s G-men were never able to bring Lee to justice. Kim Philby, then working for MI6 in London, alerted his Moscow masters about the FBI’s investigation of Lee almost as soon as Hoover opened it. Warned, Lee was able successfully to cover his tracks. In a later move to atone for what he had done, Lee became a Cold Warrior in China, fighting Mao Zedong’s communists. He died a free but conflicted man in 1988, after a long and profitable career as General Counsel to the C.V. Starr Corporation.

As a spy with Christ Church ties, Lee has much more in common with John Le Carre’s Bill Haydon and Graham Greene’s Maurice Castle, who betrayed their countries, than with our nonfictional John Masterman and Dick White, who defended the crown and the constitution. That said, Lee’s story is a fascinating addition to what is known about the House’s centuries’ old links to secret work.

Mark A. Bradley also wrote The Life of Duncan Lee, Red Spy and Cold Warrior. Bradley, a Rhodes scholar who read Modern History, is a former CIA intelligence officer who currently serves as a lawyer in the U.S. Department of Justice’s National Security Division.

Mark A. Bradley (1978)
Tandem

Alex Morgan has fulfilled the ambition of a lifetime with the publication of an award-winning first novel.

The book, Tandem, is a novel set in Scotland, in a place inspired by her own childhood. It tells the story of Paula, who abandons her London life and runs away in the hope of escaping a painful loss – but finds herself involved in the tangled world of Sanders, a complicated 12-year-old who lives in the seaside village. It’s a quirky tale of love and friendship, which shows that life can never be simply black and white – with the attempted kidnapping of a celebrity penguin thrown in for good measure.

Alex’s dream has always been to write a book. After eight years of trying, Tandem has finally been published after she won an international competition run by publisher Hookline.

Alex says: “When I was in the first year of primary school, my teacher, Mrs Brown, told my mother I was going to be a writer. The idea stuck and, apart from a short time thinking I might like to be a fashion designer, it was all I ever wanted to do. I can remember sitting at the dining table in our flat, aged about eight, writing stories with a set of coloured biros. I had a Ladybird Book about Florence Nightingale so she was the heroine of everything I wrote. Sadly, those early efforts haven’t survived.

“I just wanted to write something I would enjoy myself. When I’m reading a book, I have to care about the characters, to really want things to work out for them, and for the writer to have a very light touch – to write clearly and simply without drawing attention to themselves. That’s something I have tried to do with Tandem.

“I imagine all writers put something personal into a book – consciously or not. For me, there was the idea of travelling into the unknown with your life in boxes in the back of a van – something that happened to my husband and me when we first set up home together. And I’ve always been very taken with the bonkers idea that Edinburgh Zoo has a celebrity penguin called Sir Nils Olav – who also features in the book.

“I used the names of several old friends too, including a couple called Kyoko and Felice, who were forced apart by circumstances in real life – in Tandem, they get the happy ending I feel they deserved. I’m beginning to suspect that, for me, part of the appeal of being a novelist is that it gives you the power to fix things for your characters.”

Tandem has gone through countless drafts and been sent out about 30 times to agents, publishers and competitions. Alex adds: “I’ve had some deafening silences, some standard one-line rejections and some lovely, encouraging feedback. You have got to accept that your work can always be improved. I was never tempted to self publish. Having a publisher say that what I’d done was good enough, as Hookline has, was an essential part of the process.

“Tandem didn’t come from any one place. I just wanted to write something I would enjoy myself. When I’m reading a book, I have to care about the characters, to really want things to work out for them, and for the writer to have a very light touch – to write clearly and simply without drawing attention to themselves. That’s something I have tried to do with Tandem.

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“I never expected to win the Hookline competition and I cried when I heard. The competition is unique in that the winner is chosen by readers’ groups and that makes it particularly special. My book was selected for publication by real readers.”

Alex has already started work on her second novel, which combines two of her loves – journalism and historic houses. “I’m not tempted to write a sequel to Tandem,” she says. “Paula and Sanders are fine for now, just getting on with their lives. But it might be nice to return to them in a few years to see what they’re up to.”

We’ve just heard that Tandem has been long-listed in National Reading Group Day’s search for a “hidden gem”.

Introducing the first children’s book about The University Boat Race

As a member of Christ Church as an undergrad, I rowed in the Blue Boat in the 2001/2/3/5 Boat Races. I was fortunate enough to take part in what is officially the closest race in history and was President in 2005.

My girlfriend, spurred on by the OUBC’s enthusiasm and loyalty to the institution, decided to create a book to celebrate the University Boat Race.

Alex Morgan (1981)
The Secret Supporters of the Boat Race tells the tale of the birds and animals who live on the bank of the river Thames and find out about, watch and celebrate the famous Boat Race. Aimed at 4-6 year olds this delightful book depicts the birds and animals that are living in the greener spaces in London. One of the goals of the book is to encourage parents and children alike to venture out to places like the Thames Path and create more awareness of the wildlife on our doorsteps. Fundamentally however, it was to encapsulate the admiration for the rowers, celebrating the long standing institution and inspiring the next generation of champions.

Due to the niche topic, publishing houses feared there wouldn’t be enough interest globally so Hannah has decided to produce it herself. I am very proud of her creativity and determination and hope that Members of Christ Church will enjoy this charming book.

Paperback copies cost £10.00 excluding postage and orders can be made on boatracebook@gmail.com.

Robin Bourne-Taylor (2000)

signal to turn and flee to pre-arranged ‘safe’ rooms. A small prank on a sunny afternoon, but beautifully executed, with no one captured... though we did leave our ‘tourist’ in the water... I wonder if he got away?

Kieran Browne (1980)

1981 or 1982 it must have been, when a few of us decided to hit back at the tourists who seemed to be ever-present and in increasing numbers. The plan was that one of our number would join in with a tour through Tom Quad, dressed as a tourist. The rest of the group walked through in sub fusc.

Inevitably the cameras began to click. We looked annoyed. We looked menacing. We advanced on the group who were now standing by Mercury. We jostled. We selected our man on the tour and... into the water he went.

We turned on the rest of the group. Looks of fear (we believed). Porters running towards us from the lodge, which was the

Pranks’ Corner • REVENGE ON THE TOURISTS

CALLING ALL PRANKSTERS

We are starting to run down our stock of pranks to include in Pranks’ Corner. If you have any pranks you either took part in or recall others doing, and you would like to see them published, please send them to: fiona.holdsworth@btinternet.com or by post to Fiona Holdsworth c/o the Alumni and Development Office at Christ Church, Oxford OX1 1DP
The week after Summer Eights, with the sudden absence of racing excitement, and with most athletes refocussing on imminent exams and deadlines, is always an anti-climax, yet is not a bad time to reflect on the previous season. In a year of rebuilding and regrouping, we had early successes with four Christ Church Regatta crews through to the final day of the event, and the women climbing to 6th on the river, but also disappointment with the men’s First Eight finishing third on the river after a frustrating Summer Eights.

From a coach’s perspective, it was one of the most difficult seasons in Oxford rowing for the past 10 years. The extensive flooding that affected large parts of the country meant that the Isis was under red flag for 8 weeks, while the Wallingford stretch remained unrowable for 7 weeks. Our training in Hilary Term was thus concentrated on Dorney Lake, where we travelled every weekend to battle cross-winds and hailstorms. Pressing through this difficult term would not have been possible without significant financial support towards rowing fees at Eton Dorney, trailering and the minibus.

It is in the area of fundraising that the 2013/2014 season brought the largest successes for Christ Church Boat Club. I have been stunned by the positive responses I have received, firstly, when sending out this year’s BoatHouse magazine with the annual Boat Club appeal, and secondly, as members heard of the incredibly generous matched giving pledge from Alex Beard (Biochemistry, 1985) and Emma Vernetti. They have promised to support the Boat Club Endowment Project, matching other gifts pound for pound, to a maximum of £800,000.

We are very grateful to those who have already responded, but there is still much left to do, and if we are to make the most of this pledge we will need more of our Members than ever to become involved. All new gifts until the end of 2016, irrespective of the amount, count towards the matched pledge, and raising the full amount will give us the certainty that we can support the core costs of the Boat Club, including some coaching, in perpetuity. For further details, please contact simon.offen@chch.ox.ac.uk.

For my part, as my time at Christ Church Boat Club draws to an end, I could neither feel prouder of its achievements over the past three years, nor more confident about its future. It is my hope that, in the same way our Old Members contributed to our standings in the bumps charts today, they will wish to contribute towards the long-term success of rowing at the House.
The Loder’s Club Bicentenary
1814–2014

The Loder’s Club, later usually known as Loder’s Club, first assembled on Saturday, 9th April, 1814, two days before Napoleon’s abdication as Emperor, and his subsequent exile to Elba. It was inspired by the Eton Society, established some three years earlier. The first Loder’s President, Lord Clifton, had been a member of Pop, and the earliest members were mainly Old Etonians.

Both societies were formed to meet the wish for a social club with its own premises in which to read, meet friends, and drink, at least slightly beyond the baleful gaze of Authority. An additional purpose of each was to hold debates, although in the case of The Christ Church Society it was only a short time before enthusiasm for earnest debating began to wane. At the first meeting the motion to punish the French by requesting “Whether the Allies would be justified in destroying the Louvre?” was rejected.

Many members of Loder’s were scions of families steeped in political or social history, such as, to name but a few, Curzon, Eden, Lothian, Percy, Grosvenor, Ponsonby, Baring, Castlereagh, Percival, Chesterfield, Dunglass, Cardigan, Porchester, Rosebery, Derby, Cecil.

Over the years a considerable number of members have entered Parliament.

In the Christ Church of a bygone era the Loder’s enjoyed many pleasures and privileges. It was the time of the ‘gentleman commoner’, when noblemen at Christ Church sat at High Table whilst even Tutors and junior Dons did not. The society had a table set aside for it in Hall, by the window at the right of High Table – a privilege extended until just after World War II. Also, in the days when attendance at chapel was compulsory, Loder’s had its own pew, in which the dull requirement for silence and orderly conduct could at least be endured with friends.

Enjoyment of Loder’s activities depended on the club’s accounts, which were not always healthy but in 1865 were in a state of ‘unparalleled prosperity’. The weekly ‘Wines’, were lively and enjoyable affairs. Proceedings would unfold with a considerable number of toasts, always beginning with ‘The Queen’, drunk in sherry, followed by ‘Foxhunting’, and eventually closing with the Secretary proposing ‘Our next merry meeting’. After ‘Wines’ the society would repair for games, occasionally whist, but more often pool, at Tolley Job’s, in St. Clement’s, where there was a billiard-table, a swimming pool, a Fives Court and a Turkish Bath.

It was a society of generally colourful and lively characters, brimming with sporting instinct. A notable example was Harry Chaplin, elected in 1859. Known as ‘Magnifico’ he soon become prominent among the fast set, wealthy young bloods among whom the talk was of what each would do when he came into his inheritance and could set the night life of Mayfair alight.” Chaplin arrived at the House a year before the Prince of Wales.

In his second term he inherited a valuable estate at Blankney, which enabled him to indulge his inclinations: he kept four hunters in Oxford, and hunted six days a week, sometimes appearing in chapel with a surplice over his hunting clothes. As his biographer notes:

He therefore made little effort to study during his first two years at Oxford. This fact did not escape the notice of the Dean, who summoned Henry to his presence and informed the Squire of Blankney that Christ Church should be looked upon as a place of learning and should not be used simply as a hunting-box. He asked Henry what he proposed to do about this. Henry replied that he was willing to fall in with any plans that the Dean might have, and invited suggestions. “I suggest that you go in for an examination,” replied the Dean curtly, “It is customary in this university.”

The Club’s bicentenary was recently celebrated by members, thanks to the support of Crispin Odey (1977), with a dinner in Hall. A fitting mission for the Club in the 21st century was announced, as members pledged their support for a Loder’s bursaries scheme.
Gathering in the temporary call-centre that had transformed Blue Boar Exhibition Space just a few days after Christmas, it was difficult to know what to expect. Yet, after a brief talk on how the next ten days would run, the growing interest in the room was tangible. A memorable quote from the morning is still etched in my mind, ‘The House is a permanent community of thousands of members; it just so happens that only a few hundred live here at any one time.’ As the campaign went on, the truth of this reminder burned brightly.

Conversations with alumni, particularly those who had read the same degree or who had been part of the same societies, were both illuminating and fascinating, and it really was a pleasure to speak to Old Members as they relived their time at Christ Church. It was striking to hear how, after so many years, room numbers and the chill of December evenings at the House were not forgotten!

Having only ever asked for money from weary members of my family in endless sponsorship events during my schooldays, the thought of asking for money from people I had never met did, at first, concern me. Still, the target of the campaign, namely that of securing money for next year’s bursary fund was, I was sure, a worthy cause. I knew of current members of the House for whom, without a Bursary, their time at Christ Church wouldn’t have been possible and I was keen to secure a similar path for future undergraduates. It was, therefore, a great relief to hear that our alumni felt the same way. Many impressed their belief in the continuation of such a high standard of education at the House, and as a result, fantastic financial support was given by over sixty percent of the alumni we called. Such commitment to the House served to emphasise just how much time at Christ Church should be treasured. Yet, all good things are fleeting, and thus it was both interesting and useful to talk with alumni about the career paths which they had taken after leaving the House. The advice given to me by former members now at the peak of their professions was invaluable, and tales of their experiences will certainly be pondered on over the next year or so.

The ten days spent working on the Campaign were a huge amount of fun. Coming up before the start of Hilary meant that we had the whole of College to ourselves and it was a delight to spend hours drinking tea and talking to Old Members. Some were even generous enough to help me with my Vacation Essay, and for that I am very grateful – my tutor was pleased with my efforts! Divided into two teams, we raced to win Snakes and Ladders, success based on the amount of money we raised and the achievement rewarded with copious amounts of chocolate. For me, though, the highlight of the campaign came when I was running through Tom Quad a few weeks later and bumped into one of the Old Members that I had spoken to on the telephone. I truly realised the vitality of securing the future of the unique education offered at the House.

I was running through Tom Quad a few weeks later and bumped into one of the Old Members that I had spoken to on the telephone. I truly realised the vitality of securing the future of the unique education offered at the House.
As the children, families and visitors who had attended ‘Saakshar Day’ began to thin out, and visitors headed out into the hot and dusty Delhi afternoon, two girls accosted me. Kajal and Kajari, both 14 or 15, had just danced as part of the celebration of Saakshar’s education work with local slum children. They live in Nasirpur slum, a walled off home to 2,000 people in a very ordinary corner of Delhi. Both are committed to supporting Saakshar, a project which has changed their lives and the life of their community, persuading their parents of the value of education, preparing them for school and supporting them over the last ten years as they have juggled childhood and adolescence, insanitary slum life, inadequate schooling and the uniquely challenging expectations faced by girls in India. They get up early and they work hard, cleaning, cooking, caring for siblings and neighbours, fetching water, studying when they can. Their futures will be determined by whether their parents allow them to stay at school for the next few years. If they don’t study hard, they will be pressurised to drop out and work as domestic cleaners. If they seem too keen on local boys, they will be sent to a village to be married to someone uneducated. Their parents are kind, but poor and illiterate and struggle with overwork, poor nutrition, inadequate housing and frequent ill health. Life is tough in Nasirpur slum, but especially tough for girls.

Kajal said to me that her mother was upset. “Why?” I asked. “Because you have visited other families in the slum, but not ours.” We laughed and I promised to visit that afternoon. It was a lovely chance for me to see people I have got to know since I first visited five years ago. Happy children playing, colour and laughter, vivid images of wonderful India. But behind the vibrant and gracious welcome is the daily struggle to survive. Kajal’s parents are both unwell and cannot afford proper treatment. Kajari’s mother was asleep on the family bed with a fever. And everything was covered in flies, swarming everywhere, as the drains had been emptied that morning by scrawny men who scoop out stinking black filth and pile it up on the path to be collected days later.

In this colourful struggle towards a better life, Saakshar is making a huge difference. With twelve teachers and four little school rooms it sends 100 tiny slum children into mainstream school every year, wins over parents who are doubtful of the value of education, and supports slum children as they move towards adulthood. Most of them are keen to make a difference themselves when they can. When I asked Kajal and Kajari’s group of friends – all Saakshar slum children – what they want to do when they finish studying they say, “Teacher”, “Lawyer”. Kajari was silent. “What do you want to do Kajari?” I asked. She gave a big smile which perfectly expressed the impossibility of her dreams, and said, “Dancer!”

To support Saakshar’s life changing work or to learn more, go to http://saakshar.chch.ox.ac.uk
A major development

Ovalhouse was founded by undergraduates of Christ Church in the 1930s; it has been an ever-evolving story of success ever since. As a social and educational hub in the Inner City, it provides a lifeline for young people living with disadvantage, a route into education or training for those formerly excluded by barriers to opportunity and a springboard for some of the greatest talent in theatre. Over the last 50 years the galaxy of alumni includes Howard Brenton, David Hare, Pierce Brosnan, Tim Roth, Mike Figgis, Graeae, Sanjeev Bhaskar, Nitin Sawhney, Mojiosla Adebayo, and Oludipo Agboluaje...a procession of artists you will have heard of and many more who you will hear of in the coming 50 years.

Ovalhouse is about access: for excluded young people to pioneering drama; for talented youth seeking to break into a professional arena; and for early career artists to develop their practice and vision. It also provides its audience access to new and exciting theatre at a low price.

The building on Kennington Oval is steeped in history and resonates with the lives and stories of so many people. And yet we, the Board, are supporting a plan to leave it - but for very good reason: we are poised to make the biggest and boldest development in the organisation’s history.

Built as a Boys Club, the building does not lend itself to the increasingly multi-media and flexible practice of twenty-first century artists. The competition for space, between theatre company rehearsals and the needs of a busy participation department - and an increasing need to generate income through hiring it out - creates frustration and tension instead of encouraging the breadth of activity that is Ovalhouse’s signature. In complete contradiction to our values, wheelchair users cannot access our upstairs theatre. Although we are a minute’s walk from Oval tube station, we are not in a natural centre – there is very little footfall, no shops or businesses and we are too far from both those we seek to help and inspire and those who wish to enjoy the theatre’s output.

\[A\] A schematic sketch of the site of the new theatre, with Ovalhouse represented in the foreground
Over the years, Ovalhouse has undertaken numerous feasibility studies but none before has overcome the problem of location and the lack of truly viable development potential. However the Director, Deborah Bestwick, has refused to say “die”: her relentless determination has finally been rewarded. The long term future of the theatre is going to be secured through a ground-breaking (pardon the pun!) joint development with our local authority, the London Borough of Lambeth (“LBL”).

The Council will contribute the land on a premium site in central Brixton (opposite the increasingly “hip” Brixton Market) on a 999 year lease at a peppercorn rent and Ovalhouse will raise the money for the building, which we will own. A significant contribution to this will come from the value of our current site in Kennington – which LBL will take over once the new theatre is built. But, as you may have guessed, we will need to raise more capital to complete the development.

We need to raise £2.5 million towards the new building. Optimism and motivation is running high, and we have been lucky to secure a fundraising consultant who has masterminded the strategy for similar projects. But as Ovalhouse was born of the efforts of Christ Church men all those years ago, I would now like to invite applications to the volunteer Development Board which will make this new ambition a reality. Men and women of the House, this is an opportunity to make a difference.

We seek people who have time for meetings in London to advocate and network on behalf of the project, and to oversee and support the fundraising strategy. You will have the opportunity to work alongside the Director and Fundraising team and have a front row seat (both figuratively and literally) for the work that Ovalhouse undertakes. The project is already attracting press interest and has a high profile in Brixton and the theatre industry. While this is a job for people who enjoy a challenge, it should also be fun, interesting and enlightening. The opening party will be in 2017 – I would like to see members of Christ Church taking some credit for an ambitious new phase in the history of Ovalhouse.

If you would like to find out more, or visit the site with director Deborah Bestwick, contact me, Robin, Priest (rp@robinpriest.com), or e-mail Deborah directly (deborahbestwick@ovalhouse.com)

Robin Priest is a Managing Director at turnaround specialist advisory firm Alvarez & Marsal LLP, focused on European real estate. He graduated in Law from Christ Church in 1976 and spent 20 years in banking in London, Sydney and Los Angeles before setting up a private-equity backed property business. He also was lead partner for real estate corporate finance for Deloitte in London. He is married with two children. He lives in London but spends leisure time in the Languedoc.
This year saw the centenary of the birth, on 15 January 1914, of Hugh Trevor-Roper, undergraduate at the House, then — after spells as Research student at Merton and wartime code-breaker – Student and Censor in the post-war years. In 1957, as Regius Professor of Modern History, he moved eastwards across Oriel Square, thence to Cambridge as Master of Peterhouse, neither re-orientation, it seems, totally congenial.

To mark the centenary, the History Faculty and the Dacre Trust (see below) organised a one-day conference on 11 January, at which a series of presentations and discussions covered the many facets of Trevor-Roper’s thought and writing. Originally planned on a relatively modest scale, response to the announcement of the event was so great as to necessitate a move to the Schola Magna Australis of the Examination Schools.

Opening the conference, Toby Barnard, recently history tutor at Hertford College, remarked that the gratifying attendance, on a day when floods severely hampered movement by road and rail, amply illustrated the continuing interest in Hugh Trevor-Roper, his life, the subjects he made his own and his published work; he also recalled Trevor-Roper’s assiduity and kindness in supervising his own doctoral thesis.

Later speakers would pay tribute to Trevor-Roper’s attentiveness to colleagues; offering that always-desirable balance, his successor as Regius Professor, Sir Michael Howard made reference to Trevor-Roper’s ‘ruthless self-confidence’ which had, he thought, not always endeared him to fellow-officers and bureaucrats.

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Each of the day’s sessions covered a significant aspect of Trevor-Roper’s life and work, starting with ‘Mid-17th century revolutions’, his seminal article (published in Past & Present, 1959, part of a debate on the rise of capitalism in Europe), his initial warmth and later disdain for the Marxist reading of history. There followed a session on Trevor-Roper’s studies of Erasmianism and ecumenicalism, and the first of several references to ‘unpublished books’ – for example on political thought in the 17th century, the Puritan revolution and the ecumenical movement.

Afternoon sessions focussed on the work which made Trevor-Roper a household name, The Last Days of Hitler, and on his later involvement with the Nazi leader’s ‘diaries’. The wartime code-breaking discipline, Michael Howard suggested, was important to Trevor-Roper’s subsequent view both of 20th and 17th century histories. One anecdote came from Eberhard Jäckel (Professor Emeritus, University of Stuttgart) who had a number of discussions with Trevor-Roper on Hitler’s war aims. When the ‘diaries’ were first rumoured Jäckel had immediate misgivings; there was, however, no chance to communicate these before Trevor-Roper flew to Zürich to inspect the ‘diaries’. Although Trevor-Roper carried Jäckel’s telephone number in his pocket, he was prevented from making the call which might, perhaps, have averted the subsequent farrago.

A final session looked at Trevor-Roper’s mastery of prose style, on which a number of speakers had already touched, the fluency of his writing evidenced not only by his published work but, for example, his elaborate letters of thanks, even to
quite casual acquaintances. There were further references to ‘unpublished books’ – works which Hugh Trevor-Roper planned, but which never reached the reading public, although I don’t recall specific mention of a plan (outlined in the journals) for a history of the English ruling class, emulating, he hoped, the style and scale of his hero, Edward Gibbon. This prospect was, however, one of many topics on which those who had been Trevor-Roper’s pupils were able to exchange reminiscences during breaks in the formal proceedings.

As compensation, perhaps, for those ‘lost’ books, the day ended with the launch of One Hundred Letters from Hugh Trevor-Roper, edited by Adam Sisman, and Richard Davenport-Hines (OUP £20), a collection again illustrating the range of Trevor-Roper’s life and activities as historian, traveller and lover of academic intrigue. And July 2014 should see publication of The Secret World (I B Tauris £17.50), edited by E.D.R. Harrison, a collection of Trevor-Roper’s writing on military intelligence, including letters to political, administrative and military figures, and the former spy Kim Philby.

As his biographer Adam Sisman has written, Hugh Trevor-Roper might stand accused of having become more productive since his death; more seriously, we should record the debt we owe to the continuing efforts of his literary executor, Blair Worden, who led the team responsible for a thoroughly enjoyable day in the Examination Schools (60 years ago that would surely have qualified as an oxymoron).

Chris Sladen’s ‘Oxfordshire Colony’ is now available as an e-book and paperback.
The creator of the ‘monster drawings’ recently exhibited along with Lewis Carroll’s own drawings in the Upper Library was called Rear-Admiral Lord Mark Robert Kerr. He drew hundreds of these satirical scenes lampooning everything and anything that amused him, from domestic dramas to political absurdities. Later in life, in response to demands for copies of them, Mark turned a hundred of them into prints, for his social and artistic friends. Some of these sets of prints have ended up in public collections, including the British Library and the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

Mark Kerr’s monster scenes are significant, as they are one of the foundations from which modern cartoons derive and also give us a remarkable view of the world of his time. He joined the navy at fifteen, as a midshipman on the warship that transported Lord Macartney’s embassy to China in 1792 and kept a log book, which he crammed with watercolours of everything from native ships to Chinese temples, as well as drawings of the coastlines and harbours they visited. By good luck there were four talented artists on board the Lion who became Mark’s teachers.

After Macartney’s embassy returned in 1795 Mark became a naval lieutenant and two years later was given command of a sloop called the Cormorant. During his eighteen months on her he made many jewel-like minute watercolours and drawings both of the ship as well as of other ships and places they saw off the French and Spanish coasts.

In July 1799, Mark came to England on leave, and married the 20-year-old Lady Charlotte McDonnell, younger sister of a formidable figure called Anne Catherine, who was Countess of Antrim in her own right as their father had had no sons to succeed him. Charlotte and Mark’s match was considered a ‘bad marriage’ as they did not have the means to maintain an upper-class lifestyle, although Charlotte had an income from the family estate, and Mark had some prize money from his naval adventures with which they bought a large house at Shiplake, near Henley.

After war broke out again in 1803 Mark again served in the navy and was captain of a frigate until Trafalgar, though after that he never went to sea again. The Kerrs then became embroiled in legal battles over the sisters’ Irish estate, as Anne Catherine, the elder sister, wanted the estate to be inherited by her only child, a daughter, although the property was entailed to the sisters’ eldest male child and the Kerrs had several sons.

As a result, in spite of the prospects of future wealth Mark and Charlotte led a low key existence similar to that of many people in Jane Austen’s novels, and Mark found it a useful means of escape to devote much of his time to drawing his monster scenes. The idea,
he explained, first came to him when he examined the grotesque figures found in the illuminations of a famous medieval manuscript called the Gorleston Psalter, when they were visiting its owner, Lord Cornwallis in Suffolk. He saw that such ‘monsters’ were the perfect tools he needed for his own satirical ideas.

Mark had a predilection for all medieval art and literature, which was very much in the spirit of the times, as this was the age of the gothic novel, and some of his drawings make references to Walter Scott’s novels, as well as Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein and the early works of Victor Hugo. Mark also shared a complex humorous world of verbal puns and teasers with his wife, and his monster drawings all have humorous texts beside them as well. Some were inspired by particular remarks or incidents which they found comical, including one about a lady (possibly Charlotte herself) who says to her family governess:

‘I beg your pardon, M’mam, but this note has puzzled me all day, can you tell me what that French word is?’

To which the response was:

‘Dat voorde Madame? Non, vraiment, dat leetell Dog can tell you as vell for me.’

Mark made his monster prints in the early 1820s and clearly took great pains over them as several were altered and redrawn several times. They clearly made an impact, for soon after they were produced other artists started devising similar ‘monsters’ for their own satirical works. Mark had in fact invented a new form of popular satire, and his ideas spread quickly.

Many of Mark’s prints are inscribed with the dates they were drawn and the names of the country houses he was staying in at the time, so we have a detailed picture of his social life. Contributions to the entertainment were always requested from the guests at these country house parties so it is easy to imagine how he would have created new monsters to amuse his fellow guests, as well as bringing several albums containing his old monster drawings with him. Other drawings were specifically produced for his own family’s amusement, including the one described above and another about a girl who will not go to bed. (She has become a donkey in underwear.)

‘If you don’t go to bed, at once I’ll tell your Mother Miss.’

‘Oh let me warm my feet dear Ma’am on such a night as this.’

‘It’s true it’s cold but you have got your Night Cap on your Head, And sooner warm by far will be your Feet within your Bed.’

With ‘Ten minutes past midnight’ showing on Ma’mamelle’s pocket watch, the figurines on the mantelpiece are leaping into sinister life and it is indeed high time for young ladies to be tucked up tight in bed.

There were dark sides to these monster satires. Mark often expressed his venom for revolutionaries, radicals, and reformers in them, and other monsters had a personal purpose, as he used them to make light of his own terrors. Money worries, he said, gave him ‘hundreds of sleepless nights’ but he kept his fears away from Charlotte, who had a nervous disposition, although he transformed some of these anxieties into monster tales. There were, for example, ‘many Long Bills’ needing settlement at Christmas, so Mark transformed them into monsters’ long beaks piercing other monsters’ ears, and thus briefly into harmless fun.

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‘It’s true it’s cold but you have got your Night Cap on your Head, And sooner warm by far will be your Feet within your Bed.’

With ‘Ten minutes past midnight’ showing on Ma’mamelle’s pocket watch, the figurines on the mantelpiece are leaping into sinister life and it is indeed high time for young ladies to be tucked up tight in bed.

There were dark sides to these monster satires. Mark often expressed his venom for revolutionaries, radicals, and reformers in them, and other monsters had a personal purpose, as he used them to make light of his own terrors. Money worries, he said, gave him ‘hundreds of sleepless nights’ but he kept his fears away from Charlotte, who had a nervous disposition, although he transformed some of these anxieties into monster tales. There were, for example, ‘many Long Bills’ needing settlement at Christmas, so Mark transformed them into monsters’ long beaks piercing other monsters’ ears, and thus briefly into harmless fun.

The exhibition catalogue is available for £5.00 +P&P from leia.clancy@chch.ox.ac.uk

The money rows between the sisters worsened, however. Anne Catherine squabbled with everyone and was so vicious to her own daughter that she was made a ward of court. Anne Catherine indulged ‘in every species of Extravagance, up all night, in bed all day’, and Mark satirized her as a vastly overweight monster with a funnel mouth, into which his family shovelled bucket-loads of food.

‘Feed her, dear sister, and she’ll shortly die. And all her money come to U and I.’

In fact it was Anne Catherine’s husband who died. She then found a second, younger one and although they had no children he had the estate for his lifetime, and outlived them all. The monsters however remain, and give us the somewhat dubious privilege of entering the inner workings of a tortured Regency mind.

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A review by Karl Sternberg (1988)

Members of the House responsible for an investment portfolio in some way will be alarmed by Dr Booth’s desire to expose you to much greater personal risk. Keynes’s observation that ‘...[it is] better for reputation to fail conventionally than to succeed unconventionally’ is also a regulatory shelter. Booth proposes that we remove this convenient safety net: ‘[we should]... institute a regulatory principle such that no fiduciary, if they have lost money, should afterwards be able to claim in their defence that they were only doing what everyone else was doing.’ That would be pretty radical. I can see you now penning your letter of resignation.

The recommendation is typical of Booth. This is the work of an iconoclast. Booth is fundamentally ill-at-ease with accepted conventions, when they have demonstrably failed. Some readers will remember him: he taught microeconomics at Christ Church in the late 1980s. I recall that even then the bulk of a tutorial was spent deconstructing and exposing the inadequacies of the very models we had been forced to learn. He has not done badly from exploiting the failures he observes: he was one of the founders of Ashmore, which has grown to become the world’s largest specialist manager of emerging market assets. This is no pure theoretician: he has put his money where his mouth is.

There are two books here. It is an explanation of the problems of economics and finance theory, and it is a plea for greater investment exposure to emerging markets. As Booth points out, if portfolios were exposed to emerging markets in proportion to their contribution to world income, the average fund would have a 50% weighting in EM assets. In fact, the average is just 5%. He blames this deficit on those theoretical shortcomings.

The book gives a concise history of investing in emerging markets, and the policy lessons learned from the periodic crises. The investor base has changed radically, becoming more heterogeneous, more local and less exposed to leveraged speculators. Emerging countries no longer rely in aggregate on external finance. Their central banks account for over 80% of global reserves. They are the dominant foreign owners of US Treasuries. Once it was emerging market debt burdens we fretted about; now the West has become a series of ‘highly-indebted developed countries’. Investors’ mental map of the world, with developed countries as the core, and emerging markets as the periphery, is being radically undermined by realities.

Booth turns his attention to the shortcomings of economic and finance theories. There is a concise rendition of the history of economic thought since Keynes. It is clear that the attempt by the economics profession to make micro- and macro-economics compatible has led us to ignore some of Keynes’s great insights, particularly those surrounding uncertainty and its effects on investment. (Booth admires Keynes but he is no Keynesian: he notes that when the problem is over-consumption fiscal stimulus can only delay the reckoning). Economics became dominated by an ideological attachment to neoclassical laissez-faire, and theories that explicitly ruled out asset bubbles.
Our misunderstanding of risk is an essential part of Booth’s argument: it is one of the reasons why investors have ignored emerging markets, and it leaves us complacently exposed to major upheavals in future. Risk in the textbooks is dominated by the shorthand of volatility and covariance with indices. We rely on a known probability distribution of outcomes around a mean, drawn from historical observations. This makes neat mathematical models possible. They are widely employed. But there are multiple distortions that come from these assumptions, including the neat segregation of asset classes, and diversification that might still lead us to be over-exposed to more important fundamental drivers of returns. Neglecting uncertainty – not knowing the probability distributions – makes us overconfident. Just take Goldman Sachs’s perplexed bewilderment at the performance of some their investment products relying on statistical relationships back in 2008. We ignore fundamental structural changes in markets, when the covariances between assets shift permanently.

We should spend much more time thinking about the future, and postulating possible outcomes, rather than relying on the past. If we did so, Booth is confident that we would share his concern for developed countries, and his enthusiasm for the emerging markets. He offers a neat summary:

Booth can carry on exploiting the collective madness, and many of you will wish to join him after reading this book, but it will be some time before being right unconventionally wins approval in the UK.

© Karl Sternberg

‘Emerging markets are those where risk is priced in. Developed countries are where a significant portion of investors do not perceive sovereign risk.’ Emerging markets are just perceived to be riskier. There is money to be made when we are over-compensated to own emerging market assets.

Readers will recognise many of the problems he identifies with investor behaviour. He offers practical recommendations about how we might improve our construction of portfolios. I hope some at least can be incorporated into our thinking. But his exhortation to spend more time thinking about radical change than relying on the past will, I fear, go largely unheeded for some time to come. The economics profession remains ostrich-like in its attachments to old orthodoxies, despite pleas from undergraduates in British universities to enhance their courses with alternative theories and applied economics. Regulators and others will continue to rely on the disproved conventional wisdoms, with just a few tweaks for worst case outcomes.

Booth can carry on exploiting the collective madness, and many of you will wish to join him after reading this book. But no need to get the letter of resignation out yet: it will be some time before being right unconventionally wins approval in the UK.
Programme:

1st half
G F Handel (1685-1759)
From Acis and Galatea, HWV 49B:
'Opening Overture'
'O the pleasure of the plains'
'Love in her eyes'
'Happy we'
Organ Concerto in F Op.4 No. 5, HWV 293
Soloist: Clive Driskill-Smith
From Acis and Galatea, HWV 49B:
'Must I my Acis'
'Galatea, dry thy tears'

2nd half
G F Handel (1685-1759)
Foundling Hospital Anthem, HWV 268

A Portrait of the House
Christ Church has long been closely involved with Britain’s public life, having produced thirteen British Prime Ministers, but was also the cradle of Lewis Carroll’s Alice, and more recently stood in for Harry Potter’s Hogwarts – in short, it is a reliable source of the unexpected.

In this full-colour, magnificently illustrated celebration of Christ Church, Professor Chris Butler presents a fascinating Christ Church miscellany designed equally to inform and entertain, and also to reflect the human stories of daily life in a community of learning over nearly five centuries - from porters to professors, from bishops to butlers, from under-gardeners to undergraduates. Very much part of the book are vivid first-hand accounts, anecdotes and descriptions of the House, some from the historical record, many more from living memory.

Special Price for the last few copies – £20.00

The Ingamell etching
A small number of Andrew Ingamells’ etchings of the House remain available for sale. This meticulously detailed original print, which includes an architectural description, is the first copper plate engraving or etching of The House from an aerial perspective since David Loggan’s celebrated work in the 1670s, and the first, therefore, to include Tom Tower. From a signed numbered edition limited to 195 etchings only.

Sheet size: 23 x 30 ins (585 x 760 mm) • Image size: 15 x 22 ins (395 x 570 mm)
Etchings are available either in black India ink on white paper (£195) or individually hand-watercoloured (£295).

Reflections on Christ Church
We are pleased to offer this exquisite set of four screen prints by Brendan Neiland, Keeper of the Royal Academy (1998-2004). Each image is printed in 18 colours and is signed and numbered by the artist.

Special Offer, last few sets – £99.00 per print or £350.00 per set of four.

The Cardinal’s College
Christ Church, Chapter and Verse, by the Archivist Ms Judith Curthoys, is the first complete history of Christ Church since Henry Thompson’s volume back in 1900.

The book builds on the tales that have been told in Christ Church over the years, explains the constitutional oddities that have both beset and aided Christ Church throughout its history, explores how the college and cathedral have worked together (or not, as was sometimes the case), and describes how students were fed and watered, taught, and accommodated.

Copies of the book are now £20.00
To celebrate the Oxford Alumni Weekend, and the launch of the Cathedral Music Trust, the Christ Church Association is pleased to announce a special concert and dinner in Hall on Saturday 20th September 2014.

Harry Bicket (1980), Music Director of the English Concert, has arranged for that acclaimed baroque orchestra to join with the Choir of Christ Church Cathedral, in a performance of Handel, conducted by Stephen Darlington.

PROGRAMME:

1st half

G F Handel (1685-1759)
From Acis and Galatea, HWV 49B:
‘Overture’
‘O the pleasure of the plains’
‘Love in her eyes’
‘Happy we’

Organ Concerto in F Op.4 No. 5, HWV 293
Soloist: Clive Driskill-Smith

From Acis and Galatea HWV 49B:
‘Must I my Acis’
‘Galatea, dry thy tears’

2nd half

G F Handel (1685-1759)
Foundling Hospital Anthem, HWV 268

TIMINGS:

6.15pm: Sparkling Wine reception
6.45pm: Dinner announced
7.00pm: Grace and 1st Course: House Oak Roast Smoked Salmon with Horseradish Crème Fraiche and Beetroot Salad
7.30pm: Concert
8.00pm: Interval and Main Course: Fillet of Beef with Herb and Pepper Crust, Chasseur Sauce and Dauphinoise Potatoes
8.45pm: Concert
9.30pm: Pudding and Coffee: Chocolate Fondant with Spiced Poached Pear and Autumn Berries

Wine is included in the price.
The Buttery bar will be open for drinks after the concert.

Tickets (per person): £90 for the rear tables in Hall, £110 for the front tables.

Please apply via the website: http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/development/events/future/2014/20-september
Or through leia.clancy@chch.ox.ac.uk

The Christ Church Association AGM will be held at 4pm in the Dodgson Room
To find out more about the English Concert, visit their website www.englishconcert.co.uk
This is the pits – literally: being asked to write about what one is reading in Oxford, for one’s college, as a professor, at a time when I’m drowning in print for the REF and the last book I really and truly read was *A Game of Thrones!* This is a pure act of either kenosis or self-immolation at the request of the Alumni Office and as a theologian I ought to know something about each.

Of *A Game of Thrones* I can only say: good, inventive plotting, strong characterisation and evocative detail. It owes a lot to Tolkein’s *Lord of the Rings*, particularly the way it creates the sense that the story being told takes place in the context of a past in which history and mythology are profoundly enmeshed. Written in commercially bite-size, movie screen chunks, it’s not bedtime reading—not unless you find descriptions of eating the raw heart of a freshly killed horse or White Walkers prowling in age-deep woods soporific. But it’s the next best thing for your pulse rate after a running machine. I have it on very good authority indeed (none other than the organiser of the Commemoration Ball and our own Dr. Benjamin Spagnolo) that the quality of the writing goes downhill after volume 3. So how many more volumes I take into the bath with a glass of red wine is still an open question.

Besides, I have Deborah Harkness’s *A Discovery of Witches* (set partly in the Bodleian) sitting fatly and seductively on my desk. I always knew that place was crammed with secrets even Harry Potter would find unconquerably dark.

Alongside Ms Harkness’s New York bestseller is a tome not nearly half so tempting on the political theology of climate change. I have a sense (this is 6th week) that it is only after the climatological apocalypse that I’ll have time to sit down in a remote cave somewhere and do any serious reading at all! As the acid snowflakes fall I shall possibly even enjoy reading about the theology of global warming. Of the REF material I have to be respectfully, and legally, silent.

Meanwhile my own novel, focussing on the disappearance of the ancient library of Pergamum, presses on sentence by sentence. My intrepid and sardonic detective, Dr Catherine Croft (no immediate relation to Lara and temperamentally more like Mary Beard on amphetamines), is in Jerusalem investigating mysteries about the Temple of Venus, built on the site of Golgotha and razed to the ground by Constantine in the 350s.
Unless otherwise stated, please contact the Development Office for bookings and queries:
+44 (0)1865 286325
development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk

JULY 2014
12 July
BEHIND-THE-SCENES AT ALNWICK & BAMBURGH CASTLES
Northumberland
All alumni are invited to a special behind-the-scenes weekend at Alnwick and Bamburgh Castles.

SEPTEMBER 2014
13 September
BOARD OF BENEFACTORS GAUDY
Christ Church

19-21 September
OXFORD ALUMNI WEEKEND
Join fellow alumni for three days of talks, lectures, walks, tours and many more activities.

Contact: Oxford University Society
alumniweekend@alumni.ox.ac.uk
+44 (0)1865 616160 or sign up for email updates at www.alumniweekend.ox.ac.uk

20 September
CHRIST CHURCH ASSOCIATION DINNER & CONCERT
Christ Church
All members are invited to the annual Christ Church Association Dinner and AGM. Harry Bicket (1980), Artistic Director of the English Concert, will be conducting the acclaimed baroque orchestra in a one-off performance held in support of the Christ Church Cathedral Music Trust.

21 September
1546 SOCIETY LUNCH
Christ Church
Members of the 1546 Society are invited to lunch at Christ Church.

OCTOBER 2014
2 October
1987-1990 GAUDY
Christ Church

NOVEMBER 2014
18 November
CITY EVENT
City of London Club
An opportunity for Members to meet the new Dean, the Revd Canon Professor Martyn Percy.

DECEMBER 2014
11 December
VARSITY RUGBY MATCH
Twickenham Stadium
Join the Christ Church Association to watch the Oxford Dark Blues defend their championship against Cambridge at the Varsity Rugby Match.

17 December
ST JOHN’S, SMITH SQUARE CHRISTMAS CONCERT
London
As part of the Annual Christmas Festival, the Christ Church Cathedral Choir will perform a programme of much-loved Christmas music at St John’s, Smith Square.

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KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE HOUSE WHILE ON THE MOVE...
If you would prefer an online edition of Christ Church Matters, on your desktop or mobile device, please state your interest by emailing Leia Clancy at the Development Office leia.clancy@chch.ox.ac.uk

Please direct all queries to:
SPECIAL INTEREST WEEKEND
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Email: specialinterest@chch.ox.ac.uk Web: chch.ox.ac.uk
Constantia Glen wines are amongst the best in South Africa. Enjoyed by members of the House and their guests at the Commemoration Ball, they may be purchased through Berry Brothers (www.bbr.com). You are also welcome to visit the Wine Estate itself in Constantia, Cape Town, South Africa.

The photographs on this page only hint at the joys that await you.

“Constantia Glen is one of the gems of the Constantia Valley, the home of South African wine with a proud history of winemaking dating back to 1685.”