Christ Church Matters

MICHAELMAS TERM 2014

ISSUE 34
In this Michaelmas edition we welcome our 45th Dean, the Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy, who joined us in October after ten years as Principal of Ripon College Cuddesdon. We also say goodbye to our former Dean, Christopher Lewis, and his wife Rhona as they retire to the idyllic Suffolk coast. Much has been achieved in this year of change, and we celebrate the successes of members past and present in this issue.

If you have news of your own which you would like to share with the Christ Church community, we invite you to make a submission to the next Annual Report – details of this can be found in College News.

A new Christ Church website will be launched in the spring, and with this a new digital platform for Christ Church Matters. If you would like to receive the magazine digitally, please let us know.

We wish you a wonderful Christmas and New Year, and hope to see you in 2015.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS
Event booking forms are available to download at www.chch.ox.ac.uk/development/events/future
The first proper meal at Christ Church was a modest, circumspect affair – just fresh fish and some cheese, costing 19 shillings and sixpence in January 1547. The foundation feast and celebrations that followed a few weeks later was a rather more lavish affair, costing over £21. This marked a re-birth of Wolsey’s great vision – a place for the ‘brining upp of youthe in virtue’, rooted in Christian principles, and open to the humanist teachings already adopted by Magdalen and Corpus Christi.

The early years of any institution can be fragile, and Christ Church was no exception. It had of course started with some advantage, being well-endowed from the outset. Indeed, the imagination and entrepreneurship of our Tudor forebears provided much of the solid foundation that Christ Church still rests on today. The key then, as now, was development. The food and feasts that the first scholars enjoyed were the fruit of careful stewardship, coupled to generous giving that sought the nourishing and flourishing of those scholars who were admitted to the House. Well-educated scholars meant a more healthful society – a commonwealth that was nourished. Good education then, as now, benefits not just the few who come to college, but the whole of humanity. Societies that nourish good education will inevitably nourish the world. Goodness is fecund; it breeds.

Some of our greatest thinkers from Christ Church were to benefit from this goodness. I think of Robert Hooke (1635–1703), an English natural philosopher, architect and polymath, whose work Allan Chapman discusses in more detail on pages 32-33. In his early life, he had lacked the money for a decent education, but had somehow managed to take a course of twenty organ lessons. From this platform, he became an assistant to Dr Thomas Willis, a chemist. Through work with Willis, Hooke met Robert Boyle (helping to develop early air pumps), and later the architect, Christopher Wren. Hooke became curator of experiments of the Royal Society, Gresham Professor of Geometry and Surveyor to the City of London after the Great Fire of 1666, in which capacity he probably performed more than half of all the surveys after the fire. He was, by all accounts, scrupulously fair and honest in this.

We don’t know precisely which benefaction enabled Hooke to be at Christ Church. But we have every
reason to suppose that the gifts of
earlier generations had already laid
the foundation for encouraging and
developing scholars like Hooke, who
might otherwise not have received
a decent education. These days, talk
of ‘development’ at universities and
colleges is often seen as a less than
subtle code for some basic fundraising.
This is not so at Christ Church. Here at
The House, ‘development’ means exactly
what it says on the tin: ‘an unfolding’
of the person and the ‘bringing
out of latent possibilities’ through
improvement and advancement.

But there is no development without
donation. And a donor is, by definition,
a giver; and a giver is someone who
enables another. Christ Church is rooted
and founded in gift, and those who have
received have themselves gone on to
be givers. It is this virtuous cycle that
enables us to advance and improve, and
so enable others.

Wherever you are within this orbit, I
hope and trust you will be thankful for
the gift of the House, and reflect on how
you can help it continue to give to others.

I could not end this first ‘Dean’s Diary’
without a personal tribute to all the
Students, staff, undergraduates and
graduates who have welcomed the Percy
Family here to the House. The Installation
Service in October was a deeply moving
occasion. It was a truly humbling service,
and quite extraordinary to see so many
there. The next week began in earnest
with various events for new students.
Talking to hundreds of parents at a
Sunday Tea – welcoming them to Christ
Church as they dropped off their sons
and daughters – was a real pleasure
and privilege. And then meeting the
new undergraduates on Monday, and
beginning to get to know them. This is all
enfolded by the beauty of the worship in
the cathedral, our fine Canons, and world-
class choir. It all underlines the bountiful
blend that this role entails: serving a
cathedral, college and community.

I am pleased to say that Pippa (our
over-friendly bearded collie), has been
designated and installed as ‘Assistant
Dean’, in line with other staff who bring
their canine assistants to work. Pippa
is taking on her new role with some
seriousness. Her first act was to enact a
new by-law, requiring all squirrels living
on Christ Church Meadow to remain in
their designated-domicile deciduous
trees. Any squirrel seen straying on the
lawns or paths is therefore pursued
vigorously. None have so far been caught
(a relief!), but Pippa’s new role seems
to fascinate and amuse the tourists in
equal measure.

Thank you for your welcome here. I look
forward – very much – to reciprocating.
This House is a home of warmth and
wisdom, in which we all partake. I very
much look forward to meeting you here
– and, I hope, soon.

Yours, as ever.
Thanks to Judy for all those nice inaccurate words. Judy was the Senior Censor when I arrived and did her best to be ...terrifying, but actually, when she was not either on a horse or in Russia, was terrific... and fun. Early on she was labelled by someone as a 'we-slow-down-for-horses – socialist', so that's all right then.

Gratitude also to the choir for their wonderful evensong, among many ... and the musicians who gave that marvellous concert; there is talent of all kinds here. Cherish the music! Then it is good of all of you to come to this event: family; members of the House of all kinds; friends. I will mention one couple by name, that is Hugh Williamson and Julia: Hugh is retiring to the Suffolk coast – who isn't ?- and has had a superlative career here as Regius Professor of Hebrew. Then enormous thanks to Christ Church for 11 happy years of friendship and goodwill and for this splendid send-off to me and to Rhona. The hall staff and the kitchen staff are doing a spectacular job: Longhorn beef, Morris Minor decorations, guinea fowl feathers.

My successor was being appointed the other day, and to my surprise, I was given ...a job description, which I studied with interest. It is quite a quirky job, not easy to describe. When I arrived I was handed a magic card which lowers the bollards in Oriel Square, but I cannot think of any other direct powers. I rather like the description which came from our sister college in Cambridge, namely that the head of House has the power on a hot day to suggest that men may take off their jackets, but only when they have started to do so already.....

I did get a splendid letter from an undergraduate who reckoned that I ought to sort out the nightly rowdiness in the city. I was able to respond that I...
thought this kind of order was outside my sphere, but anyway that the rowdiness had a very long history and had produced enormous benefits, directly causing the foundation of the University of Cambridge in the 13th century.

So, individual achievements have been about nil, especially as the most important features of a community like this are intangible ones, like the culture and feel of the place. What I believe is called ‘level flight’ is not very exciting, but of supreme importance, in an aeroplane or on the ground. I may have helped to prevent the lighting in Tom Quad becoming like that of a football stadium, or helped the cathedral to spread its wings, but basically everything has been joint. So it is good that in the last few years we dared to take on three enormous building projects. It has been fun entertaining interesting people, among the better known being: The Queen times three, the Premier of China, Romano Prodi, Michelle Obama, José Barroso. It is great to have a Ball every three years and to have built a bridge over the Cherwell. We have even been nearly top of the Norrington table at one stage, and head of the river too. Perhaps most important for the future, we have paid off our debt and balanced the books, much helped by old members, and this while still doing crucial things like having subsidised dinners for junior members, having lots of Junior Research Fellows and having the best Tutors and Lecturers. Some things of course go on a bit. I think the Blue Boar renovation committee met around 30 times and spent one meeting deciding whether to have handrails on one side of the stairs or on both. Some things are painful, especially difficult personnel cases. Some are frustrating, like being on the Council of the University.

A couple of things which I hope will go on being features of the place. One is for it to continue to be distinguished by outside contacts and interests: an openness to the world around, which relates to ‘access’ activity too. Contact is helped by the way we behave, but also by the Cathedral, the Picture Gallery, the Meadow, our relationship with Oval House and its wonderful work in London,
Christ Church is very beautiful and we will miss all the people, and the joy of waking up to the light on Tom Quad, changing with the time of day and the seasons.

I am frequently asked what our plans are and I have been trying out various answers. ‘To have fewer plans’; ‘to sort the sock drawer’; ‘go sailing with grandchildren’. I like that Flanders and Swan song (by the way, they were at the House) where The Sloth sings about all the things it could do...like...‘Win a War and Write a Book about it’, but actually the sloth just hangs upside down by its six toes, watching the sky go by, beneath its feet. We have loved the pattern of life here and are looking forward to a new pattern.

We do lots of things together and this is a goodbye to both of us. Rhona has been working away quietly with a hand in numerous things in her own unspectacular and charming manner. I might be tempted to say that she has been a support, but that is patronising, and it also might suggest that she has not got a life of her own - and views of her own, both of which she has. Suffice it to say that she has enjoyed the Deanery and the life of Christ Church too, and been an invaluable member of the community. For me, it has always been just wonderful to be married to her and I cannot imagine any other state of being.

I once heard the House described as ‘part liner, part iceberg’. That could be taken in a number of different ways, especially if you are the Titanic. But certainly Christ Church is very beautiful and we will miss all the people, and the joy of waking up to the light on Tom Quad, changing with the time of day and the seasons. The very size sets Christ Church apart and means that it does indeed have many hidden aspects: places to explore and lots of wonderful people to get to know. Yet it is a whole lot more than that. Many who come here express gratitude to Christ Church – to the institution and to its people - for what it is and for what it does...and both Rhona and I are also full of gratitude.
In 1910, Thomas Banks Strong was appointed Dean of a college basking in Edwardian cosmopolitan grandeur, populated by royalty, the sons of diplomats, and the offspring of great entrepreneurial families. All was to change forever. Before the new academic year began in October 1914, large numbers of students – both those already members and those about to matriculate – and younger tutors volunteered for military service, many processed through the special committee set up and administered by Strong. The college emptied of its undergraduates and E.R. Dodds, later Regius Professor of Greek, described the university as a place ‘chiefly of young boys putting in time while they awaited their call-up, plus a few crocks, a few overseas students, and a number of women’. The total undergraduate body in October 1914 was thirty, including five American Rhodes Scholars. In 1915, and the years following, only a handful of young men came up, and most of those were just biding their time before call-up.

In spite of his active participation in officer recruitment, Strong believed in ‘business as usual’. During those early weeks, there was little change in the ordered life of the college and cathedral. Hopes that the conflict would be over by Christmas encouraged the Governing Body to reject a proposal to insure the fabric, books, and pictures against damage. Soon, however, the War came to dominate decisions: as undergraduates and the younger fellows disappeared from the darkened quadrangles so the military and refugees from Belgium and Serbia came to fill their rooms.

The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry were billeted in Christ Church - the officers making use of the Common Room Smoking Room as their mess - until their more permanent barracks in Cowley were ready, and Christ Church, with Brasenose College, became home to the Royal Flying Corps from 1915. One of the canons, Henry Scott Holland, described the scene at the beginning of October 1916: ‘Oxford begins next week, and we shall be more entirely a Camp than ever. Our 200 flying-men keep Ch.Ch. alive: and now and again Peck[water Quad] wakes to quite its historic noises’. At Holland’s funeral in March 1918 the cross placed in his hands was a gift from the Serbian students, a squadron of air-men stood to attention as the coffin was processed into the cathedral, and an aeroplane passed low over the cathedral in salute.

The resident officers ensured that the stocks of wine were steadily depleted - to the Common Room’s profit. When rationing was introduced in 1918, High table meals were similarly reduced; meat was only served on Tuesdays and Thursdays during 1918, and guests were only permitted on ‘meatless’ days.
chef had to cope not only with limited ingredients but also with a disgruntled senior membership whose opinion on wartime catering was less than complimentary.

But the real toll of the war was brought home in the weekly lists of dead in the Oxford Magazine and in the obituary columns of the college’s Annual Report. 16% of the Christ Church men who served were killed. Across the University, nearly 29% of those who had matriculated in 1913 died.

Throughout the War, the cathedral was perhaps more than ever the centre of collegiate life; the Yeomanry’s colours were hung above the sub-dean’s chair in August 1914 for the duration of hostilities. Organ recitals were given on Saturday afternoons and Sunday evenings in the summer months to raise funds for the Red Cross. On the third Sunday of every month, commemorative communion services for the fallen were held; there were special services at Easter and Christmas for the troops in residence, and regular Parades. The military men occupied at first only the north side of the cathedral but soon khaki began to appear among the choir as the lay clerks joined up. The Precentor had already left as chaplain to the 2nd South Midland Mounted Brigade.

Armistice Day celebrations at Christ Church were cancelled as the organist and choristers were all laid low by the European-wide influenza epidemic. Instead, a commemoration service was held in the cathedral on 17 November 1918. It was on All Saints Day 1919, close to the first anniversary of the Armistice, and once all the numbers were finally gathered in, that the main service of remembrance was held. The cathedral was full of undergraduates; many were students returning to finish their interrupted degrees, others were servicemen given for the first time the opportunity to study at university, still more were new fresh-faced 18 year olds with only second-hand experience of the War. J.C. Masterman remembered the ‘speed and determination with which Oxford resumed its peacetime life’ as well as the ‘wide and healthy tolerance of the returning warriors which enabled them to continue and coalesce easily and amicably with the younger men’.

Yet never before had the college been so mixed, so democratic, or so full. From January 1919, the flood-gates opened and through that year 245 new faces appeared at Tom Gate to add to those who had matriculated in October 1918 and all those who returned to complete their interrupted studies.

WE WOULD LIKE TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE DESCENDANTS OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE WHO DIED IN THE GREAT WAR. If this is something you can help with, please contact the archivist: judith.curthoys@chch.ox.ac.uk

Details of those who are named on our war memorials can be found on the website: www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedral/memorials
The superb Christ Church Cathedral choir here offer five more works from an unparalleled source of English sacred polyphony from the late 15th and early 16th centuries...these rich, graceful, intricate antiphons...are sung with unflinching elegance.’

Sunday Times

‘These CDs are a ground-breaking achievement....stunningly effective singing from soloists....and full choir, all of whom capture the tricky rhythms and intervals of the Eton idiom with complete confidence and musicality.’

Early Music Review

‘Darlington and his ensemble are extraordinary.’

Classical Music Network

‘The stamina shown by the trebles is at all times remarkable.’

Gramophone

These are some of the reviews which have greeted the choir’s latest release of music from the Eton Choirbook. Of course, it is immensely flattering for our musicians to receive the accolades of critics from the wider musical world, but it has caused me to reflect on the reasons for the appeal of this early repertoire to such a varied audience. After all, this is music which was written specifically for the daily Christian worship of the community at Eton College, and as an affirmation of the faith which sustained it through the turmoil of late-fifteenth-century England. How is it possible for such deeply religious music to ‘speak’ to a secular audience in the twenty-first century?

I think the answer lies in the general appeal of vocal music to all humanity. The primate instinct to sing has sustained people throughout history: one thinks of the enduring traditions of folk music or the protest songs of slavery as just two examples. This physical connection with music was the subject of much discussion in Victorian England. The historian Herbert Spencer included a chapter entitled ‘On the Origin and Function of Music’ in his book Essays on Education and Kindred Subjects (London, 1902). His consideration of music contains much discussion of the relationship between instinctive physical reactions and emotional feelings at the end of which he concludes that all the leading vocal phenomena have a physiological basis. He believes that the general law of the animal kingdom, that feeling stimulates muscular action, is so profound that it leads to a common understanding of how human beings interpret the emotions of others. Struggling with the same topic a generation earlier, the Rev. Hugh Haweis asked “What is the rationale of music’s existence and the secret of its power over the soul?” in his huge book Music and Morals (London, 1871). Unlike Spencer, Haweis is adamant that the answer to his question is a simple one: God. Edmund Gurney’s study, The Power of Sound (London, 1880) adopts a Darwinian approach and seeks to provide a scientific basis for defining musical response, by investigating acoustics, physiology and psychology within the context of theories of evolution.

Irrespective of their varying attempts at finding explanations, all these authors recognised the fundamental appeal to the senses of vocal music, religious or not. There is no doubt that the Eton Choirbook repertoire has a timelessness which can act as a vehicle for reflection in many different ways. For some this is helped by the precise meaning of the text and for others it is solely the music itself, the lengthy melismas and the powerful sense of improvisation.

The season of Christmas is now upon us, a time when there is an annual juxtaposition of the secular and sacred. No shopping trip is complete without the musical background of Christmas carols. Just as in the case of the polyphonic compositions of the fifteenth century, all of us can find a connection with these vocal idioms. It is for this reason that we have released a new compilation of Christmas music recorded over many years on the Nimbus label (NJ7096). The selection brings together works that reflect differing aspects of the season. This is music to lift the spirits and transport the listener into a world of mystery, music which I hope will continue to speak to twenty-first-century audiences in search of moments of peace in the midst of the rapid pace of modern life.
The last few months at the Cathedral have been marked by a series of celebratory services and events. We bade farewell to our Dean of the last eleven years, Christopher Lewis; we welcomed our new Dean, Martyn Percy; we celebrated the life and work of Sir Harrison Birtwistle; we hosted thousands of people at the Diocese of Oxford’s Grand Day Out; and we said a fond farewell to John Pritchard, retiring after seven years as the Bishop of Oxford.

In October an exhibition of Paper Pilgrims was installed in the Cathedral’s Watching Loft, beside the shrine base of St Frideswide. The two hundred colourful figures were the work of pupils at Summer Fields School and Wolvercote Primary School, in association with an artist in residence, Edwina Bridgemen. The exhibition coincided nicely with the annual events marking the feast of Oxford’s patron Saint Frideswide on the 19th October.

Finally on the 30th October Bishop John Pritchard said farewell to the Diocese of Oxford at a Sung Eucharist on Thursday 30th October – once again the Cathedral was full to capacity. The Bishop chose all the music for the service, which involved a worship band and two trumpeters as well as the Cathedral Choir. At the very end of the service Bishop John laid down his episcopal staff, a symbol of his office, on the altar. The staff will be picked up by the next Bishop of Oxford when he or she takes office – another large-scale event to which we look forward with enthusiasm.
Bob Henwood was grounds-keeper at Christ Church in 1877 and part of the Varsity cricket coaching staff in the 1880s and 90s. He ‘body-lined’ Dr. W. G. Grace when the M.C.C. played the Gentlemen of England. This is an odd fact for a Curator of the Picture Gallery to even be aware of, but interestingly, Bob’s memory lives on in Christ Church Picture Gallery.1

Bob Henwood’s granddaughter, Phyllis May Bursill (known as Phyll, she never liked the name Phyllis) works as an invigilator at the Picture Gallery - she turned 91 in August. Her sister, Mary Griffin, was the nanny in the household of Dr. Robert Cecil Mortimer, Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology (1945-48), while he and his family lived in one of the Christ Church canonries. Christ Church educated Nobel Prize winners, great thinkers, scholars and theologians, writers, musicians and thirteen prime ministers, but its history is much broader and it incorporates everybody who works, teaches and learns here. Many people who passed through Christ Church are unknown or have been forgotten, but in order to celebrate the whole that is the House, I would like to highlight, at least, some stages of Phyll Bursill’s life, doubtless our most senior employee.

It started with a photograph of Mrs Bursill, then Miss Griffin, that I saw by accident – it showed her as a landgirl in 1942. The image sparked long conversations about the war, history and experience and since then I have felt that the lives of more people at Christ Church should be recorded, documented and shared. I didn’t know, for example, that landgirls stayed on to ensure the agricultural survival of the nation until many years after the war, in Mrs Bursill’s case until 1949.

1. I am grateful to Professor Christopher Pelling for sharing his bottomless cricket knowledge and for not tiring to discuss the etymology of cricket terminology with me.
She came to Christ Church after the death of her husband and after she had retired from the police force; she was the first female police detective at Oxford City Police, a member of the Criminal Investigation Department (plain clothes, as I was told). This in itself is a fascinating fact that would deserve further exploration. (Just tying in with her cricket-playing grandfather, there seems to have been a memorable cricket game between the Bullingdon Club and the Oxford Police Department in which Phyll, the only female player, participated.) Initially, Mrs Bursill was employed at Christ Church as a custodian and again she was the first woman in that role, albeit for a short time, as she soon moved to the Picture Gallery, where she still works.

It is easier to tell someone’s story with pictures and we convinced Mrs Bursill to share some of her photographs with us. These are personal memories, but their meaning as historic documents mustn’t be undervalued and is increased by knowing whom they show and in what circumstances. For example the photo of Phyll with the joyous laugh could almost be an advertisement for the recruitment of landgirls onto farms, but conceals the hard work. In fact it was taken the day before she collapsed with angina pectoris brought on by exhaustion.

One is aware, of course, that it is not just Cardinal Wolsey, Henry VIII, Alice in Wonderland, John Locke, Gladstone, W. H. Auden and all the other illustrious Christ Church personages who make the House what it is, but many of the people who work here behind the scenes. Tom Tower would be just a tower and would not have the ability to conjure up memories and emotions without the people who walk daily beneath it. The continuity and tradition, the charm and idiosyncrasy of places like Christ Church lies in its buildings, but it is passed on and kept alive by the people who stay on and constitute the collective memory and who contribute to it with their own stories and personalities. Phyll has been at the Picture Gallery for over twenty-two years and has become an important part of it.
The Library has recently finalized an important project funded by the National Manuscript Conservation Trust (NMCT). The Trust established by the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, the British Library Board and various benefactors aims to provide financial assistance towards the cost of conserving manuscripts of historic value. At the advice of the Oxford Conservation Consortium, we prepared to approach the Trust for support on the preservation of the music collection. Even by Christ Church standards, this particular collection is nothing short of spectacular. Its principal riches lie in English and Italian music before 1700. There are also extensive holdings of manuscripts reflecting music-making in Oxford in general, and Christ Church in particular, during the period c.1660-1740. Christ Church acquired these materials (over 5000 scores) principally through two acts of bequest in the eighteenth century, from donors Henry Aldrich (1648-1710) and Richard Goodson Jr (1688-1741).

A huge collection! Impossible to deal with all of it at once, so, to start with, we applied for the conservation of manuscript scores, specifically of c.1250 items of English and Italian manuscript music dating to before 1700. This included autograph manuscripts by Matthew Locke, John Blow and Henry Purcell; Robert Dow’s partbooks (c.1580), William Byrd’s Mass for four voices (c. 1592); a rare autograph manuscript of an ode by Henry Aldrich (1679). Also included were many early Italian madrigals, motets, libretti by composers such as Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Giacomo Carissimi and Domenico Scarlatti. All these were chosen in consultation with Dr John Milson from among the most vulnerable and most important manuscripts within the collection.

We knew recent years benefited from a significant increase in the scale of NMCT grants awarded, so we all hoped that the application from Christ Church Library would be successful. To our delight, it was! In July 2013 the Library was awarded £9,975. The need for conservation work on the music collection had become apparent in 2005 when it was examined by Kate Colleran. This is one of the most important early printed and manuscript music collections in the world, and, as such, it is always in high demand by scholars. Although always done with great care, repeated handling has rendered some of the scores a little too fragile and consultation had to be restricted in order to prevent further damage. Keeping the collection out of action was not an option. The Library is fully committed to widening access and making its unique holdings available.

Also it has put considerable resources towards the creation of the online music catalogue. This was finalized in 2013 by Dr Milsom. The moment was therefore right for a new survey aiming to identify problems in terms of general preservation and to select volumes in urgent need of treatment. The survey was conducted by Katerina Powell and Celia Withycombe, accredited conservators at the Oxford Conservation Consortium.

The project started in January 2014 with the general refurbishment for all volumes. This was carried out in the room originally designed and built to house the collection, in which it is kept.

Dr Cristina Neagu
In Charge of Special Collections, Christ Church Library
Repairing a detached board using a Japanese paper hinge.

Spine lined with Japanese paper, aerocotton and braids, ready for board attachment.

Repairing a detached board using a Japanese paper hinge.

Spine lined with Japanese paper, aerocotton and braids, ready for board attachment.

Details of bookshelves with books supported and protected in their new enclosures.

Details of bookshelves with books supported and protected in their new enclosures.

Minor repairs were carried out in situ using wheat starch paste and Japanese repair papers. Many volumes however required one or both boards reattaching and several volumes presented more severe damage, such as breaks in the textblock and sewing cords. These were treated more fully and rebacked using conservation grade leather dyed with selset leather dyes. Four alum-tawed bindings required repair to endcaps at both head and tail. Two volumes had larger losses. These were repaired with new, toned pieces of alum-tawed leather. Three volumes displaying severe iron gall ink corrosion of the manuscript score were conserved. Each folio was examined with a light sheet to ensure that all areas of damage were identified and repaired using a gelatine coated remoistenable tissue. Only areas showing cracking of the ink and/or losses were repaired to ensure treatment remained minimal and to avoid obscuring areas of the manuscript score. Care was taken to minimise the amount of moisture transferred to the ink through the repair process. The tissue was reactivated on a reservoir holding a volume of water calculated to be sufficient to rehydrate the tissue and achieve adequate adhesion of the repair, whilst not allowing for migration of Fe (II) ions into the surrounding paper.

Most of the complex conservation treatments were provided by Lucy Crombie. The collection of single sheet material that was conserved at this stage included sections that had been removed from larger bindings and sheets that had been stitched as pamphlets. These were cleaned and areas that had become overly softened or damaged by mould were re-sized using methyl cellulose in a water/alcohol carrier. Repair and flattening was carried out to stabilise the material only, to help make it legible and safe for careful handling. Four-flap folders of acid-free paper were made to house each item individually. Finally sixty five kasemake boxes/folders and forty nine shoes were made from conservation board and the books supported and protected in their new enclosures.

Following the conservation project, the music manuscript collection is now in a stable condition and digitization can now move forward at full speed. By January 2015, we expect to be able to provide a viewing environment of a number of important manuscripts from the music collection, among which are: Mus 45 (containing sections of 16th century votive antiphons, magnificats and other Latin-texted works copied in table-book format), Mus 489-493 (the volumes include the oldest copies of William Byrd’s Masses for 3, 4 and 5 voices), Mus 1001 (an English organ-book from c.1640, containing accompaniments for anthems and services), Mus 984-988 (a complete set of five partbooks of motets, anthems, consort music copied principally be Robert Dow (1553-88) and Mus 979-983 (five partbooks from a set originally of six from c.1575-81, copied and formally owned by John Baldwin). The two partbook sets are among the most important surviving sources of Tudor music. Incidentally, the digitization of the restored Mus 979-983 also made it possible for these unique scores to be further studied as part of the Tudor Partbooks Project. This is a three-year project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council that aims to digitize all the extant manuscripts of Tudor polyphonic music from c.1510-1580 preserved in partbook format. The Christ Church Library set is a key exemplar of this repertory as, while some of the music can be found in other sources, about sixty pieces are found nowhere else. A process of collaborative reconstruction drawing on the expertise of both scholars and performers will create a plausible version of the missing parts, allowing these works to be performed and developing a greater stylistic understanding of the repertory in the process.

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). The work on this project is done in the Library’s high-tech imaging studio and in collaboration with the Bodleian Digital Library Systems. We look forward to being able to provide more and more fully digitized manuscripts in 2015.
Christ Church is often contrasted with King’s Cambridge and New College Oxford as not having a school of its own but this is, of course an error as it has the neighbouring Cathedral School.

Although it is true that we don’t enjoy the same fame as Eton or Winchester, we are a place of which Christ Church as a whole, can feel proud. It is very satisfying to me that we are now educating a number of the children of members of the College who, having enjoyed their time at Christ Church, are returning to start their children’s education here. Indeed one such person the other day described occupying some rooms in St Aldate’s Quad from which they had heard the shrieks of happy boys, little guessing that one day their own son would be entertaining the current occupants in a similar way. I would, of course, be delighted to show any Member round the school, particularly if they had a child of the appropriate age!

The boys of the school are exceptionally fortunate in so many ways. For one thing, they have for their use what must be the most attractive playing fields in the country, namely Merton Fields. We are, at the moment, developing an “outdoor classroom” in the wooded area of the fields in order to make the most of this wonderful place.

The School goes to the Cathedral every Friday for a school service — the building, of course, is not only the Cathedral of the Diocese, the Chapel of the College but also the Chapel of the School. These experiences undoubtedly have a profound effect on the boys, even if they are not fully aware of it at the time, as many Old Boys who return almost always acknowledge.

One thing which I have been asked frequently when I am in College is the question “And so where is the school?” The answer is within the very shadow of Tom Quad just on the other side of St Aldates. No 1 Brewer St which used to be the Headmaster’s House, contains the Art Department, Nursery and a couple of other classrooms. It is a very ancient place and it was in a panelled room in this building (now used to teach maths) that Wolsey allegedly drew up the...
plans for his new College. It was in this building too that the Scholar and writer Dorothy L. Sayers was born, her father having been one of my predecessors as Headmaster of the School. No 3 Brewer St was built for us by Dean Liddell, the first purpose built choir school in the country, in 1892, the final year of his lengthy Deanship and in it is housed the choristers’ boarding accommodation, the school offices, some classrooms and the Dining Hall. From Brewer St it has a most picturesque aspect and as I sit in my study, I see many tourists taking photographs of it. Our final building is the late 20th Century William Walton building, named after one of our most famous alumni. It is a building which has a number of attractive and light classrooms. We also have a main playground, one side of which is formed by Lutyens’ building for Campion Hall, a building whose windows on our side are covered with grills to prevent the aspiring Jesuits from having their windows smashed by our football and cricket balls. We also have two lovely gardens where the pupils grow plants, flowers, herbs and vegetables. In our second recreational area there is a huge horse chestnut tree which provides the pupils with endless supplies for their hotly contested games of conkers. The two reactions which we often get when people visit is that they had no idea that the school existed so close to places they know so well and secondly that it has an almost Tardis-like nature, being much bigger than they imagined. I arrived at the school in January 2014 from just up the road in Summertown where I was a Housemaster at St Edward’s School. I was particularly struck by the charming nature of the pupils from Christ Church which is one of the major reasons I applied for the position of Headmaster. I am married to Hannah who has introduced Greek at the school and two of my children are pupils. The past eleven months have provided some of the most stimulating experiences of my career so far. I have loved being Headmaster of this remarkable school. There can be few schools in a more idyllic setting and whose pupils come from a more interesting cross section of families. Central Oxford attracts a diverse and fascinating group of parents. There is nothing that could possible prepare one for the nature of the conversations which it is possible to have with our parent body. One morning I found myself discussing communications systems in Vietnam whereas on another it was the nature of astronomical telescope lenses. A school like ours can also attract excellent and motivated staff with whom it is a pleasure to work. From the moment I arrived the College has been utterly supportive of the school - I wonder how many other schools of less than 200 pupils can claim to be part of so famous and influential an institution as Christ Church.

Christ Church is of course a very large and complex foundation but I suspect it is even more multi-faceted than many of its members realised.

Numerically, the Cathedral Choristers form only a small part of the school: 22 out of 155, but they are a significant part, being the reason for its foundation, the only boarders and undertaking a regime different from all the other pupils. They have to stay in school from the end of Michaelmas term until Christmas Day and during Holy Week, when all the services are sung, unlike the Choristers of the other two major choirs of Oxford, who sing University terms only. The school also provides the Choristers for the choir of Worcester College where they sing twice a week during term times. So the school does maintain its strong musical tradition and, as an acknowledgement of this, came runners up to King’s College Cambridge for Best Prep School for music in The Week’s Guide for Education. Obviously the school has much more to offer besides, and indeed there are pupils in the school who are completely unmusical, but it is very hard to be in the school for more than a few minutes before one hears music coming from somewhere.
Election to American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Earlier this year, The American Academy of Arts and Sciences announced its 2014 class of new members. As an honorary society and a leading centre for independent policy research, those elected included leaders in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, arts, business, public affairs, and the non-profit sector. Those previously elected include Stephen Hawking, T.S. Eliot, Joan Didion and Al Pacino.

We are delighted that two former members of our Governing Body were elected to the Academy this year: Professor Tony Cheetham (Emeritus Student and Tutor in Inorganic Chemistry 1974-91) and Dr Claudio Stern (University Lecturer and Student 1985-94). Congratulations to them both.

Twelve Voices by Chris Pelling & Maria Wyke

'Stand in the trench, Achilles...': how could it be that Achilles, the most special of special cases, could mean so much to some of those amid the horrors of the First World War? How much difference does it make that Sappho’s love was same-sex? Is Herodotus’ history a foundation text, or a critique, of racism and ‘Orientalism’? Should international relations theorists stop reading Thucydides? Is Caesar a safe text to put in the hands of the young? If Barack Obama’s rhetoric might make him the new Cicero, why do his enemies see him as a new Caesar instead?

This book, based on our contributions to a Radio 3 series, deals with our own and others’ ‘conversations’ with twelve classical authors. That notion of a conversation is important to us: we have chosen texts to which readers can keep going back, and bring new questions, find new things, and go away with new reactions. We have certainly chosen writers that have meant a lot to us personally as readers, as teachers, and in several cases as the teenagers we once were. What matters more, though, is their capacity to stimulate thoughts and reflections about the modern world: ‘ancient ideas for modern times’, indeed. Our fondest hope is that we may provoke our readers to some fresh conversations of their own.

Inaugural Varsity Horse Race

Cambridge were victorious against Oxford in the first Varsity horse race at Newmarket on October 17th.

After a summer of training, five students from each university took part in the race over eight furlongs at the Rowley Mile Course. The race is part of a wider drive to involve more students in horse racing and was watched by over 12,000 spectators as part of Dubai Future Champions Day.

Christ Church student Lizzie Hamilton (2012, Chemistry) captained the Oxford team and came fourth in the race, riding Fremont.

Tree felling in the Meadow

Christ Church Meadow is one of the oldest continuously managed parks in the country with over a million visitors every year. The college takes its responsibility for preserving and improving the Meadow seriously and has therefore commissioned a management strategy for the trees in the Meadow. The New Walk, originally planted in the 1860s, has been causing concern due to the condition of some of the large hybrid black poplars which have been shedding limbs and represent a potential hazard to visitors.
Over the last century and a half, the avenue has been patched up and now consists of two species of poplar and four of lime, of mixed spacing, age and canopy shape, forfeiting much of its character as a regular avenue. This coupled with the loss of several large branches and the detection of significant decay within some of the mature hybrid black poplars, has led to the conclusion that early intervention is needed for safety reasons and to restore the avenue to its former character.

To do this sensitively, it is proposed to carry out phased replacement of the trees in the avenue, starting with the hybrid black poplars, which are approaching the end of their safe useful lives, and replanting in several small distinct phases over the next 20 years. This will reduce the impact on the landscape at any one time, but will restore the feature within a reasonable time scale.

Following detailed consultations, Christ Church has recently submitted an application to the Forestry Commission for a felling licence to remove 10 poplars from the New Walk. The poplars will be replaced with 18 limes, of a type used in historic avenue planting, as part of the college’s long-term plans for maintaining the avenue.

The relevant part of the draft Landscape Conservation Management Plan can be consulted on application to the Treasurer.

### A refurbished Porter’s Lodge

The refurbishment of the Porter’s Lodge, which began in February this year, was completed in early October. The internal remodelling took place under a watchful archaeological eye, owing to the Tudor history of the building. The result is a welcoming entrance to the college with modern facilities, which still safeguards its historic character.

### Annual Report – a call for submissions

A particularly popular feature of the Annual Report is the News from Old Members section, which enables alumni to keep their contemporaries up to date with their latest news. If you would like to submit news to be published in the Report, please contact Jackie Webber in the Tutor’s Office: jackie.webber@chch.ox.ac.uk.

### A Piano for the Deanery

The Deanery is on the look-out for a baby grand piano – either a long-term loan, or gift – so that the Drawing Room can be used as avenue for small recitals, and also as an alternative venue for musicians to rehearse and practice in. Please contact the Development office if you think you can help with this.
In the summer vacation the Club said goodbye and thank you to Helen Popescu, who had been an inspirational Head coach for the past two years. We also welcomed her replacement, Mike Genchi. Mike comes with a raft of experience and has coached parts of the GB squad, OUWBC and recently Magdalen College Boat Club. One of his first tasks was to attend the Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston with an alumni crew (see right) and he has integrated with the club extremely well. Some good results are already coming in.

Term started with the most successful novice recruitment in many years, with over 70 people signed up. This lead to Christ Church entering four crews into this year’s Christ Church Regatta, two men’s and two women’s. Men’s B lost narrowly in their first round, rowed over in the repechage and was unfortunately knocked out by an A crew in the second round. Women’s B had a strong first row to progress straight to the second round; where similarly they were beaten by an A boat. Women’s A had a good row in the first round to beat St Antony’s WA but came up against tough competition in the second round where they were beaten by the eventual winners of the women’s competition, Regents Park WA. Men’s A moved comfortably into the second round where they won 3 races on Friday to make it into the final 8 crews. On Saturday they beat Jesus MA, followed by Trinity MA, before beating Balliol MA by a length in the final to make Christ Church Regatta history by being the first ever Christ Church crew to win.

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The Head of the Charles

The Christ Church Boat Club Society seeks to help rowing at the House by supporting the Boat Club financially with coaching, with transport to places where the crews can train effectively, and by providing equipment. Furthermore Society members give great support from the river bank, and can help with the recruitment of rowers, both undergraduates and graduates.

Thus when an alumni Eight, headed by David Livingston (2001), offered to represent the House at the 2014 Head of the Charles, the Society backed the project wholeheartedly. Generous support from old member David Pierce Jones, and hard work by Helen Popescu, Mike Genchi and the Development Office ensured it happened.

In Boston the Harvard Boat Club could not have been more helpful and generous, friends Rob and Susan Spofford looked after the crew magnificently, and Drs Michael England and Julie Stiles enabled us to hold a splendid dinner at the University Club for members in the area. The crew rowed well considering they had not rowed together before!

It is good in many ways for the Society, the Club and the House to have crews at Henley, the Charles, and other events, so the Society would like to encourage old members who wish to continue rowing in the Club’s colours to be in touch. Regular outings in Oxford, London, and even New York or Boston might be possible. In the first instance please email: headcoach@chch.ox.ac.uk
Editorial

After 12 years occupying this corner, I am going to exercise some editor’s privilege and give a particular shout out this edition for the Christ Church Chemists, whom we feature on page 22. As a House chemist myself – the first of my gender ever to be able to say that – I am particularly excited to bring you news of the formation of our new “affinity group” which sprang into life during 2014. Our summer inaugural event may have suffered from an outbreak of summer weather, but even the relentless sound of rain drumming on umbrella canvas could not drown out our enthusiasm or our fun. I am delighted that two of my old tutors – Martin Grossel who chairs the (Ch)3 affinity group and Richard Wayne, our all-round eminence grise – are both so prominent in the new group.

Professor Wayne may be right when he says that there is an “unusually strong cohesion” among past and present House Chemists, but I would also like to use this spot to lay down a challenge. I am proud to be part of a group that is so strongly bonded (covalent or ionic?) but I cannot believe that we are unique. So come on you Historians, Physicists, Lawyers or Linguists - I cannot believe that we are unique. So come on you! I look forward to seeing your exploits featured in future editions of Association News.

My thanks are due to Matthew Hackett (2006) who has helped out with this edition, and particularly with our feature on old members who have found their way into sales. Once again, it is intriguing to read about the twists and turns of different people’s career paths – some planned, some not so planned – and how it is so often the case that success in a chosen profession can be traced back to the confidence and experiences that Christ Church provides.

Look out in this edition too for some serious wine tasting, plenty of photos of recent events and, as ever, a diverse and fascinating assortment of new books written by old members. So helpful has Matt’s input been to this edition, that I am rushing straight away to a copy of Felix Barber’s Collaboration Strategy (co-authored with Michael Goold) to brush up on how to ensure it is not just a one-off. In fact I am hoping that Matt might take over as editor from me at some point next year. Meanwhile, I hope you enjoy the results of this particular collaboration.

Charles Metcalfe’s Wine Tasting

A small and discerning group of Benefactors met to enjoy six ‘bin-ends’ from the SCR cellar before the serious business of Evensong, a glass of champagne in the Pococke Garden, and Dinner in Hall. Would that the cut-price offers of most wine merchants were as appealing as these wines turned out!

As I expected, there was a fair amount of wine experience among the tasters in the Freind Room, and some firm opinions about where the best wines came from (formed, perhaps, many years earlier, in Hall).

The first wine was a pleasingly mature Champagne, 2000 Champagne Tarlant, almost entirely made from Chardonnay (with 10% Pinot Noir), toasty, savoury and elegant. A good beginning. Two white Burgundies followed, the crisp, youthful 2008 Chablis 1er Fourchaume from Domaine Séguinot-Bordet and the much more mature 2002 Puligny Montrachet Les Folatières, from Domaine Gérard Chavy. The contrast was striking, the Chablis just beginning to show some honeyed softness through the bright acidity of the 2008 vintage, the Puligny golden-yellow in colour, with much more evident evolution in aromas and flavour. We decided it will not improve, but were happy to meet it towards the end of its journey. Next was a red Burgundy, 2007 Vosne Romanée from Domaine Jean Grivot. This was a delight (for Pinot-philes), with a lovely balance between fresh red fruit flavours and the beginnings of savoury maturity.

1993 Ridge Geyserville was the wine that caused most discussion. To start with, it’s not from Europe. Secondly, it’s mostly made from Zinfandel, that quintessentially Californian grape. But, some of the patches of vineyard that contribute to the blend are 130 years old, older than almost any vines in Europe. So, a fascinating wine, rich and powerful, with high acidity as well. Perhaps too powerful for some tasters, accustomed to more restrained European styles. But an extremely characterful wine, from one of California’s supreme winemakers, Paul Draper, a self-taught Stanford philosophy graduate.

There was no doubt about the last wine, 1963 Quinta do Noval vintage port. Maybe not the greatest example of this very successful vintage, but a lovely wine all the same. Cedary, with aromas of dried fruits and old furniture, rough tannins now smoothed by five decades in the bottle, gracefully celebrating its half-century. It was a pleasure to share it.

Commemoration Ball
21 JUNE 2013

1982-86 Gaudy
26 JUNE 2014

Visit to Alnwick and Bamburgh Castles
12-13 JULY 2014
Dinner and Concert
20 SEPTEMBER 2014

1546 Lunch
21 SEPTEMBER 2014

1987-90 Gaudy
2 OCTOBER 2014
The Chemists have recently established an “affinity group” to promote the interests of alumni of Christ Church who have read Chemistry there, or have carried out research in Chemistry under the umbrella of Christ Church as their graduate college. We have shortened the name “Christ Church Chemists” to (Ch)³.

This idea came about after a series of milestone celebrations at which there appeared to be a general feeling that it would be good to get together on a more regular basis. An online survey run in the Autumn of 2013 to test the proposal led to a very strong response in support of the establishment of an Affinity group, with a particular focus on more frequent reunions and social events for its members.

Richard Wayne explained, “There is an unusually strong cohesion amongst our current and former undergraduates and graduates, where social activities do offer a common theme. The (Ch)³ members behave in some ways like a close-knit family, where there is a team spirit of playfulness, of helpfulness in times of adversity; and of admiration and true mutual celebration in times of success.”

As a result of the survey the Affinity group was created under the chairmanship of Martin Grossel. Our steering committee was initially selected on the basis of the names of those who, in response to the initial Survey, had volunteered to help. We have now held several committee meetings in college and using our privilege of High Table dining, have enjoyed wonderful meals afterwards. We have our own website www.chchchem.org.uk and forum and will be creating a Facebook Group shortly.

Our inaugural (Ch)³ event was a Family Picnic Lunch and Tea held earlier this year in the Masters’ Garden on Saturday 5th July. 71 people took part which made for a very entertaining afternoon. We assembled in the Masters’ Garden around lunchtime but had to flee to the dry safety of the Lee Building when the heavens opened. Martin Grossel entertained us while we ate our lunch with a lively presentation on “Charles Dodgson’s Wonderland: Christ Church and Alice Liddell” before we returned to blissful sunshine in the Masters’ Garden for games of croquet, a treasure hunt and a photography competition for the youngsters. Many of us went on an Alice tour of the college and visited an Alice exhibition in the Library before indulging in a yummy tea with plenty of cake. All seemed to go well until I discovered that my daughter had headed back to Warwick with my keys in her pocket!

Our post event survey confirmed that the visitors had enjoyed the day and that there was a demand for another similar event in the not too distant future. But before that we have a number of other get-togethers planned for the next 12-18 months and two dinners (in January 2016 and during the Easter break in 2018).

Fiona Holdsworth (1981)
Michael Martin (1960) Chemistry

“I’m moving from R & D into sales” I said to the personnel manager at an event in the Managers’ Club at the Agricultural division of Imperial Chemical Industries. He had interviewed me some three years previously when I applied for a job there.

“That’s interesting”, he said. “I noted that you could be suitable for sales when I interviewed you.”

“I wouldn’t have agreed with you if you had told me that!” I replied.

So I had taken another step in a chain of events that led me from being a diffident schoolboy to a (hopefully) self-possessed sales person.

It all started when I got a place at Oxford to read Chemistry and joined Christ Church in 1960. This did a lot for my self-confidence. The development continued as I met people of widely different backgrounds and achievements.

From Oxford I went to Tanganyika (as it then was) for a year’s voluntary service on Kilimanjaro, then back to the dark satanic mills of Teesside to work in the research department, monitoring a new fertiliser plant. After two years, one of the cyclical economic crises came and ICI found they had too many chemists but were looking for salesmen.

As my view of salesmen was in the process of changing from fast-talking, foot in the door people to one whom potential customers are pleased to see, I went on a company sales course on agriculture and spent three months on a company farm in Kirkcudbrightshire, winding up in the Marketing Department.

From there I moved to management consultancy followed by exporting glass fibres for Pilkingtons to Germany, based in St Helens. This showed me that the German I had learnt from my Swiss mother plus some school grammar was generally understood in Germany, so I achieved my next goal to move to Munich near the Alps for skiing. I sold medical products, and continued to do so until 2013. I progressed from regional sales manager for disposable products covering Germany, Austria and Switzerland, to being Germany’s national sales manager for a renal dialysis company. Over the last thirty years I have had various sales, marketing, and export positions with manufacturers of surgical and aesthetic lasers.

Confidence and empathy are big features of successful selling. The people I met at Christ Church gave me a big dose of both, for which I am very grateful.

Lindsay Wilcox (1966) Law

I read law at Christ Church in the 1960s and was taken on as an articled clerk by Slaughter and May. I think almost all of my university friends at that time found work without difficulty – I know things are rather different now.

I liked Slaughter and May very much. However, I decided to start a company of my own. At the time this seemed like an obvious decision easily made but looking back, it was at best a huge gamble and at worst rather crazy.

I have always been very interested in the visual arts and design – a new career opened the possibility of working in this area rather than dealing with legal documents. In the same year, 1974, I married Claudia and we bought a house – we are still very happily married and still live in the same house in the Chilterns.

With virtually no forward planning I borrowed a small amount of money and started an importing and exporting company. The first product was a range of injection moulded acrylic sign making letters manufactured in Florida – this was at a time in the UK when similar letters were individually cut out of a sheet of solid material. I sold to sign making companies, hotels, department stores – a wide range of customers. Very soon they were asking for the letters to be mounted onto a backing plate or if they could have an engraved brass sign instead – my importing and exporting company had become a sign making business.

The early years were a struggle but we tried hard and focused on providing high quality products aimed at the top end of the market. Forty years and a company amalgamation later, we have factories in London and Newcastle upon Tyne and employ about sixty people.

I am the sales and marketing director and am now mostly involved in working with architects and designers to determine where signs should be located.
to move people efficiently around a building or public area, what they should look like, what materials should be used.

I loved my time at Christ Church. Teddy Burn taught me the importance of meeting deadlines and the lifetime challenge of trying to use words carefully and succinctly. My friends opened my eyes to life’s variety and possibilities. My career path may be unusual but it has been hugely varied and enjoyable.

Philosophy and Modern Languages
I read Philosophy and Modern Languages at Christ Church and ended up with an offer to stay on and do a PhD, as well as an offer to join a global Information Technology firm in their graduate scheme. Dr Krailsheimer, my tutor, advised me to get out and see the world and earn some money meanwhile – so I went into business, learning a whole new set of skills.

Selling is at the heart of every business. When it’s going well, the results are immediately tangible. I remember the first large project I sold, meeting the project team and realising that before me was a group of people, in new employment, learning new skills and working towards a common outcome. It was very satisfying to know I had personally contributed to that.

It’s a profession that has taken me into many interesting, aligned areas of our business: launching new product portfolios, running a consulting practice, leading a telesales centre, and working in collaborative selling with many of our business partners. I have also worked with clients – large and small – across many industries, often fascinated by the specific challenges and opportunities they face.

Many aspects of my degree subject have proved relevant to my career in sales, so much of which is about communication, clear analysis and creative problem solving. Attention to detail is crucial. However, so is the ability to rise above that with an engaging but logically grounded message, having carefully evaluated the options – all things which my academic training focused on.

Being interested in all sorts of different people helps. As a linguist, I was genuinely motivated to build those bridges of greater understanding, something that I still try to do every day in my working life. People ask me if I have used my languages; I have been fortunate enough to work with colleagues all over the world, and lead teams across Europe. While our common language has been English, using my language skills has sometimes proved very powerful. Looking back, I have no regrets that I studied an academic, arts subject, which I loved. It proved, almost incidentally, to develop competencies which I use every day at work.

Hannah Pennington (2006)
Modern Languages
I chose to read languages at Christ Church because I liked reading. “Do what you enjoy,” mam said. And at Christ Church I could read and read. I was tickled by Heine’s wit, I fell for Rabelais’s nonchalant elastic style, and I toured through Austrian Modernist poetry and prose.

I did a German literature MA at UCL so that I could read more Heine, but it was a summer job at an online retailer that took me to Google, at first in Dublin, and now in London. Google was my wild card graduate application and the round of six interviews went smoothly because at least I didn’t have to do those online verbal reasoning and maths tests.

Google takes on graduates, in much the same way as Oxford, for their potential. They prefer the all rounder, who can turn their hand to something. They offered me a position in sales, which suited me well. I realised I like short term sales goals, and it took me a while to start calling them ‘quarters’ instead of ‘terms’, and I still can’t bear the third quarter for it lacks an Oxford equivalent.

I now work in the ad tech world, looking after real time advertising buyers. I might be a humanities graduate, but it’s me who analyses and forecasts the programmatic trends on our ad exchange and presents them to buyers.

Besides singing in the Google choir, interning in the Google kitchens, the massages, the free five-star-hotel-rivaling breakfasts and sushi lunches, the Google Glass trials, the laughter yoga sessions and the weekly TGIF, I like working at Google because I work with clever, tolerant and interesting colleagues. And most of all, I feel right at home because there’s a library.
My father always intended me to be a doctor. I don’t recall questioning it any time before I became a medical student. Indeed I had little idea of what a medical course would lead to. Oxford, however, has always recognised there is a choice between a life of self-indulgence in pure science and the noble vocation of treating patients. Hence, after the customary two pre-clinical years inculcating the anatomy and physiology that doctors need to know, the student is indulged by a seductive third year of pure science.

In my case I was seduced even further by a scholarship and an invitation to spend three years studying for a DPhil in the enchantingly beautiful surroundings pertaining to a Senior Scholar at the House. A life of research beckoned, and however rocky has been the road since then I managed to hang on to it.

My DPhil work was involved in unravelling one of the many intricate pathways in the brain. But a new tool had arrived. The electron microscope enabled us to see brain structure at the hitherto unimaginable magnifications of millions. It was a vision of an unseen world, and wrapt in that new vision it occurred to me that the rules here were different. Instead of thinking of the brain as a telephone network, it now became alive. In 1969 I called this ‘plasticity’. I simply meant the ability to change. We now think this is the basis of learning, and of memory and forgetting, and of all that make us mentally alive and creates our civilisation.

From this observation I was led on by the idea that if we could control this process we might be able to repair injuries of the brain and spinal cord. Getting a patient out of wheel chair was half a century ahead, and there were many twists in the road there. I proposed the idea that when nerve fibres are severed they retain throughout life the ability to grow back to their original destinations and restore lost functions. I called it the ‘pathway hypothesis.’ Like cars on a blocked roadway, the repair does not involve treating the cars, but repairing the road.

But where to get such magic material that could repair a roadway in the damaged brain or spinal cord? The answer came from the olfactory system. This is the only part of the nervous system where nerve fibres grow throughout adult life. Their pathway is provided by a special type of cells which I described in 1985. They are now called olfactory ensheathing cells (OECs). In laboratory models we showed that transplanting OECs into a spinal cord injury provided a bridge for severed nerve fibres to grow over the site of injury and restore lost functions.

Now for the first time the exact procedure has been carried out in a spinal injured patient by the team of Pawel Tabakow in the city of Wroclaw in Poland. Before operation the patient was confined to a wheel chair, completely paralysed and without sensation from the waist downwards. Over the two years since operation he has regained the ability to walk with a walker and has recovered sensation in his legs. If this can be repeated we are seeing the first step in a historic advance which will mean that spinal injured patients can one day look forward to walking again.

Looking back I can see the importance of my formative years at Christ Church. They gave a young man the chance to step back and take a wider look at life, and at himself, and to see in it wonder and beauty. And looking back I can see that I have never done anything that I did not choose to do, however hard circumstances made that choice. I do not think anyone could have had a more privileged life than that.

‘To Walk Again’, a documentary about this pioneering transplant, is available to watch on BBC iPlayer.
Book Reviews

Collaboration Strategy: How to Get What You Want from Employees, Suppliers and Business Partners

More and more companies are stumbling in implementing their strategy. Good leadership and management are no longer enough; solving problems often requires setting up to do business in quite new ways.

As business activities shift from routine production and delivery to non-routine activities such as design, development, marketing, sales, and projects, implementing strategy is becoming much harder. For non-routine activities, you can’t so easily define just what you want employees and suppliers to do. To motivate people and companies to do the work often requires creative new approaches, for example strategic partnerships in which you outsource design or development work to small companies and share revenues with them to reward their efforts, or a pain and gain sharing Alliance in which you “joint-venture” with a supplier to deliver a large project on time and on budget. In industries from pharmaceuticals to fashion, infrastructure to information systems, these and other new ways of setting up to get the work done are enabling businesses to grow more rapidly and achieve superior profits.

Felix is a former Partner at The Boston Consulting Group and currently, with co-author Michael Goold, a Director of the Strategic Management Centre at Ashridge Business School. In their book they offer a framework for setting up profitable collaboration tailor made to fit your business needs. The book presents the 10 requirements for success and offers a menu of tactics to address the most common problems in meeting them based on seven years of research and interviews with over 200 businesses.

Felix Barber

Mount Athos Renewal in Paradise Winner of the Criticos Prize

For more than a thousand years Mount Athos has been the spiritual centre of all the Eastern Orthodox Churches. It is a peninsula in northern Greece, devoted entirely to male monasticism, though not all the monasteries are Greek. Russians, Romanians, Bulgarians, and Serbs all have a presence there, as once did Georgians and even Latin-rite Amalfitans. A renewal has recently taken place which saw the population double in the last quarter of the twentieth century. The 2,500 monks who live there today are drawn from an ever-widening catchment area that now extends to North America, Australia, and even Britain.

I first went there in 1988, when the renewal was already under way, though it was not yet very obvious to the casual visitor. On subsequent visits during the 1990s I watched the changes with amazement as derelict buildings were restored, abandoned cells were restocked with young, well-educated monks, libraries were opened up to visiting scholars, icons and other treasures were conserved and even exhibited to the outside world for the first time, and Athos became an extremely dynamic place.

It occurred to me that a book needed to be written about what was happening there and that perhaps I should be the one to write it. Mount Athos: Renewal in Paradise first appeared in 2002, published by Yale University Press, and won the Criticos Prize. It has since been translated into Greek and Romanian.

Now a second edition in English has just appeared, published in paperback by Denise Harvey (www.deniseharveypublisher.gr). Apart from revising and updating the text, I have added a completely new chapter documenting the changes that have occurred in the last twelve years. The renewal can now be seen in its historical...
context and has been succeeded by a period of spiritual and cultural maturity. Not for the first time, in a world beset by political upheaval and economic turmoil, Athos stands as a symbol of continuity and stability, a spiritual powerhouse offering refreshment to all who turn to it.

Graham Speake (1967)

From the Cam to the Zambezi

From the Cam to the Zambezi records the experiences of a group of young people who first met in Cambridge, and then went on to live and work in Africa during a time of constitutional change.

The book is set in Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia) and covers the last few years of colonial rule and, in some of the chapters, the early years of the new nation after it gained independence in 1964. The authors are individuals, who attended the 1961-62 Overseas Services Course held in Cambridge, and three of their wives.

The stories reveal the kind of life the participants lived, often in remote areas without electricity or telephones, with little company and where supplies had to be ordered from shops which were often hundreds of miles away. They also describe the responsibilities they were given as District Officers at a relatively young age, and include first-hand accounts of some historically important events.

One of the chapters consists of extracts from the writings of the late Valentine Musakanya, who attended the Cambridge course and was later Secretary to the Cabinet and Governor of the Bank of Zambia. Arrested in 1980 he was sentenced to death, before being acquitted on the grounds that the only evidence against him was a confession which had been obtained by torture.

Each of the stories is written in the author’s own words. Some are in the form of light-hearted anecdotes; others are more straightforward descriptions of life in rural Africa and the various events which took place.

Edited by Tony Schur, who also wrote one of the chapters, and with a foreword by Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, the book was published under The Radcliffe Press imprint of I B Tauris in October 2014, to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Zambian independence.

Tony Schur (1958)

Lewis Carroll, The Man and His Circle

There have been quite enough biographies of Lewis Carroll (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) produced over the last century making another seem superfluous. Nevertheless, there is much to be learnt about this internationally famous author by considering, perhaps in more detail, the people he mixed with, and their relationship with him.

In addition, we have a wealth of new primary sources to draw upon. Many previously unpublished letters sent and received have come to light, his catalogue of photographs taken over a period of 25 years has been reconstructed, his surviving diary is now published and annotated, his life-time bank account details have been published, a listing of the presentation copies of his works has been assembled, and rare manuscripts from archives dotted around the globe have emerged. Much new research has taken place and there is a new, fuller, and more accurate, story to tell. This book achieves this task.

Edward Wakeling, a mathematician by profession, has studied Lewis Carroll for almost 40 years, and has written many books and articles about the author of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland (1865). He studied for the M.Sc. degree in mathematical education at Christ Church in 1981-82. He is a former Chairman of the Lewis Carroll Society, and is frequently asked to speak on Carroll at conferences, meetings and book festivals, and has been involved with many television programmes over the last few decades, some filmed at Christ Church.

Edward Wakeling (1981)
Paul’s Cross and the Culture of Persuasion in England, 1520-1640, ed. Kirby (Brill 2014)

The open-air pulpit within the precincts of St. Paul’s Cathedral known as ‘Paul’s Cross’ can be reckoned among the most influential of all public venues in early-modern England. Between 1520 and the early 1640s, this pulpit and its auditory constituted a microcosm of the realm and functioned at the epicentre of events which radically transformed England’s political and religious identities.

Through cultivation of a sophisticated culture of persuasion, sermons at Paul’s Cross contributed substantially to the emergence of an early-modern public sphere. This collection of 24 essays seeks to situate the institution of this most public of pulpits and to reconstruct a detailed history of some of the more influential sermons preached at Paul’s Cross during this formative period.

Persuasion and Conversion: Religion, Politics, and the Public Sphere (Brill 2014)

The early modern ‘public sphere’ emerges out of a popular ‘culture of persuasion’ fostered by the Protestant Reformation. By 1600, religious identity could no longer be assumed as given within the hierarchical institutions and elaborate apparatus of late-medieval sacramental culture. Reformers insisted on a sharp demarcation between the inner, subjective space of the individual and the external, public space of institutional life. Gradual displacement of sacramental culture was achieved by means of argument, textual interpretation, exhortation, reasoned opinion, and moral advice exercised through both pulpit and press. This alternative culture of persuasion presupposes a radically distinct notion of mediation.

The common focus of the essays collected here in these books is the dynamic interaction of religion and politics which provided a crucible for the emerging modern ‘public sphere’ in late-Tudor England.

Torrance Kirby (1979)

Pranks’ Corner

Anyone who has roomed at 89 St Aldates at below ground level, where the basement window opened out on shoes passing on the sidewalk will fondly remember the great midnight lorries northbound to Brum shaking the fragile architecture of Christ Church and Pembroke, and nearly asphyxiating us with their fumes.

So one Guy Fawks we discovered that Alfred Street that exits west off St Giles, just north of the Randolph, was signed as a dead-end street. So, with a few acquired barricades placed on the northbound lane of St Giles, with redirection signs, and a sack over the “T” sign signifying Alfred’s dead end, we were able to direct the 3am 18-wheel pantechnicons down Alfred....Do you know how difficult it is to back up a lorry of that size?

Anthony Careless (1966)
A review
by HRH Princess Badiya el-Hassan bin Talal (1992, Modern History)

A fascinating collection of essays which don’t seek any formal comparison between the various practices of the major religions, so much as relate them through juxtaposition. What emerges is a multi-faceted panorama of world faiths as they are lived, in critical, sensible dialogue with their intellectual and political contexts. If you thought religion was superstitious clap-trap or on the way out – think again. Religion flourishes in myriad adaptive and culturally resonant forms. And this collection of essays showcases a variety of them.

Professor Graham Ward, Regius Professor of Divinity

Before heading off to fight for the so-called “Islamic State”, some of the would-be “jihadists” apparently ordered books of “Islam for Dummies”. “Sensible Religion” is certainly not religion for dummies; it is grown up religion for those who are educated, and educated enough to read with open hearts and minds. Coming from a variety of faith and personal backgrounds, the writers each contribute to the discussion of how religion can be both sensible in providing reasonable, realistic responses to the questions of life, as well as encouraging a sensibility to, a mindfulness of others and of the world at large. Some writers have chosen to focus on particular aspects of their faiths, such as the timely analysis of the true meaning of Jihad in Islam or the fascinating critique of the prohibition of idolatry in Judaism. Others, such as those on Hinduism or Buddhism, give welcome overview explanations. All of the writers have in common a preparedness to admit to the other side of the coin, to “bad religion”, and to tackle its causes, including patriarchal cultural prejudices, doctrinal contradictions and human fallibility. Along with the co-editors’ truly excellent first and last chapters, this all helps to clarify the criteria for good and bad religion, while offering antidotes to the latter. Whichever your religion or, even if you are not religious, there is much to be learnt, not just about what in God’s name is going on here, but also how you might better live your own life. To borrow a quote: “Travelling a thousand paths, may we all find the way to freedom and sensibility, living safely in our bodies and among our communities”.

(Sensible Religion pg 165)

An alumni discount is available to those interested in purchasing the book. Please contact leia.clancy@chch.ox.ac.uk for further information.
The Paper Project at Ovalhouse

Victoria Hardie, an Ovalhouse supporter, Brixton Resident and writer, introduces The Paper Project at Ovalhouse.

In 2013 The Paper Project was devised by the Ovalhouse young migrant group in collaboration with the renowned theatre artist Mark Storor. The title refers to frustrations with official paperwork and fear of deportation. It evolved from the ‘We are London’ workshop group for young migrants and refugees run by Stella Barnes, Ovalhouse Director of Participation.

Stella introduced me to three of the seven young Ovalhouse performers who created The Paper Project in the theatre cafe:

Victor Rios - A member of the Ovalhouse Young Associate Scheme, Playwright, Film director, Performer.
Qendesa - Youth Ambassador for Ovalhouse, Theatre, Film Director and Actor.
Salih - Actor, Poet and youth projects volunteer.

Victor Rios, in his 20s, wearing a Porkpie hat, tells me "I shadowed Ovalhouse when I first came to London from Bolivia in my teens. I auditioned for a Shakespeare play but I didn’t get a part because I didn’t know Shakespeare". He laughs. “Stella rescued me!”

"Working with Mark Storor on The Paper Project we explored our past, drew stories. We had to have the confidence to learn from each other. We made theatre visual, sensory, metaphorical, verbal. Installations were created: scented wood shavings to walk on. Eggshells on the floor expressed fragile lives, rose petals on a mirror for gentleness. Physical theatre helps people relate to feeling. To the problems we are given as refugees. The audience cried. Theatre can be exquisite. "I shadowed a film maker, Srik Narayanan, at Ovalhouse. I love making films. Once I found the Ovalhouse. I never wanted to leave.”

Qendesa from Kosovo discovered Ovalhouse in 2009 while at school. "I was taught film there by Bruce Goodison, award winning TV and film director. He taught us how to make two minute films. The confidence I found! Through acting I picked up English quickly. Acting helped me speak out. In 2012 with Young Leaders I worked in colleges and universities. I worked with The Paper Project since its beginnings. In the performance I sat in a cupboard and broke china and told a Kosovan fairy story, my life story, and I danced. Everyone shared ideas.”

Stella agrees: “The creative process makes for closer connections”.

For ten years Ovalhouse Theatre has introduced and involved young migrant refugees in theatre production and performance from welcoming workshops up to a professional level. Many had fallen through the educational net, some had lost their families, their culture and sense of identity. The Paper Project was an ambitious, site specific, multi-media production which explored the effect of these losses on displaced young migrants. The show transformed lives and received critical acclaim. The young people involved in the project have now formed their own company to make further theatre and take their work to conferences and theatre venues.
Qendesa. “Becoming a Young Ambassador for Ovalhouse Theatre, I feel belonging. Before Ovalhouse I was without family”

Salih is from Sudan. “In the performance I lay on a sofa, in a T-shirt, my poem printed on it. I recorded my voice so the poem was played over speakers.”

Stella helps Salih underline a few lines from his beautiful poem.

My body is a map.
Me and my horse. I ride to my place, my place in the mountains;
I hold my small village in my heart, and climb my mountain.
There are dark places and dark spaces, but I am not afraid there as I am here.
We walk my horse and I in no light, but I am safe.

He smiles and says “The smell of an orange connects me to Sudan”.

Some believe that we need to belong in order to become. Many young migrants feel they belong at Ovalhouse Theatre. Some have become The Paper Project, with plans for the next new show.

OVALHOUSE was founded by graduates of Christ Church in the 1930s and has continued the founding mission of education and empowerment for all through theatre and arts participation, becoming a leading small scale venue. We continue to rely on the support from our generous donors.

To support initiatives such as The Paper Project, or contribute to a new building planned to open in Brixton in 2017 please contact Ovalhouse Director Deborah Bestwick:
deborah.bestwick@ovalhouse.com
Ovalhouse, 52-54 Kennington Oval, London SE11 5SW
On 21 January 1665 Samuel Pepys ‘bespoke’, for 30 shillings, his copy of Robert Hooke’s newly-published *Micrographia*. ‘The most ingenious book that ever I read in my life’ so transfixed him that he sat up until 2 a.m. reading it. For not only was *Micrographia* beautifully and lucidly written – a model of how the scientific prose of the early Royal Society was developing – but the volume was illustrated with 38 fine-art-quality plates showing things invisible to the naked eye. Plates extending from the anatomy of the common flea to the first high-definition telescopic drawing of a single lunar crater. And all observed and drawn by Hooke himself.

Indeed, *Micrographia* was much more than the first illustrated book of microscopic bodies. It proclaimed a whole new agenda for experimental science: science conducted with new precision instruments such as the microscope, telescope, and barometer – ‘artificial organs’ that gave previously unimagined powers to our five senses – to reveal worlds undreamt of by Aristotle or Ptolemy.

And Hooke was very much a Christ Church man. A brilliant Westminster boy whose path from an Isle of Wight parsonage to school and to Oxford had been facilitated by his deceased father’s Island Royalist friends after 1648, the Revd Cardell Goodman senior and probably the Revd Dr Samuel Fell, former Rector of Freshwater and Dean of Christ Church, Hooke entered the House in 1653 and stayed until 1661-2.

In addition to his gift for the classical tongues, Hooke’s Westminster Headmaster, Dr Busby, had noted his technological genius, and in Oxford he was recruited into that circle of scientific friends who, in 1660, would become the Royal Society. These included Christ Church’s anatomists and chemists, Dr Thomas Willis, Dr Richard Lower, and John Locke; along with Warden John Wilkins, [Sir] Christopher Wren, and, slightly later, John Mayow, all of Wadham; plus the eminent Irish gentleman-chemist residing in Oxford, the Hon. Robert Boyle.

Then Hooke, who by January 1665 was already Curator of Experiments to the Royal Society, and residing in Gresham College, London, was, in June, appointed Gresham Professor of Geometry.

*Micrographia*, like Newton’s *Principia* (1687), would become a foundation text for the New Science. But Hooke’s approach was fundamentally different from Newton’s, though in 1672 the young Newton admitted to the Royal Society that his own study of light and colour had been stimulated by an optical experiment in Hooke’s ‘Micrography’.

Yet fine mathematician as Hooke was, his approach to science was experimental, and his emphasis on testing and quantifying nature suffuses *Micrographia*.

Hooke’s masterpiece consists of 60 ‘Observations’ of a variety of natural phenomena. Not all were made with microscopes – Observations 59 and 60 were telescopic – but all were rooted in a precise, disciplined, and quantifying approach to nature, and made with precision instruments. In harvesting, analysing and interpreting data, no less.
Micrographia begins, however, with illustrated microscopic studies of delicate man-made objects at around 60 magnification: a needle-point, a razor-edge, and gossamer silk. Yet all appear coarse when highly magnified. Conversely, natural objects, the Handiwork of God, become ever more stunning when magnified.

Micrographia then proceeds to examine and illustrate delicate structures in the mineral, botanical, avian, and astronomical realms. In Observation 18, ‘Of...Cork’, for example, Hooke first coins the term ‘Cell’ to describe the individual chambers making up the structure of cork. Committed, like his Christ Church mentor Thomas Willis, to William Harvey’s 1628 discovery of the blood circulation, Hooke speculated that these ‘cells’ might convey a succus nutritius, or some botanical equivalent to blood, around plant bodies. But one should understand that Hooke had no idea of the true biological function of living cells. That would have to await Rudolph Virchow’s 1858 Berlin discoveries, made with much more powerful microscopes.

It is in his brilliant insect studies, however, and especially those of the ‘Blue Fly’, that one encounters Hooke the father of aeronautical engineering. For how does the fly, with its hard, glassy wings, move so rapidly that it buzzes, whereas the moth, with its down-covered wings, moves slowly and silently? Hooke analysed the body ‘fusilage’, wings, and muscles of carefully-captured living flies. Later, he even tried, from the changing musical pitch of the fly’s buzz, to establish the wing-beat velocities for different flight directions; while the insect’s multi-faceted eyes fascinated him as natural optical instruments. Pioneering studies in microscopy, engineering science, biology, and optics, all from one pestiferous little beast!

Hooke’s work with the newly-invented optical instruments further led him, in Micrographia, to inquire into the very nature of light and colour, and propose his theory of ‘Inflection’, or light-bending, based upon a series of meticulous lab experiments. And it was in Observation 9 that he announced his wave model for light and colour. Unlike modern wave-theory, however, Hooke argued that there was one single pulse, or wave, emitted from the light source. As the pulse entered the eye, one peak generated the sensation of ‘blue’, and the other of ‘red’; then, as the curves of the pulse snaked through the retina, all the intermediary colours were produced.

This fitted perfectly into Hooke’s wider model of what we now call ‘energy’, as light, gravity, magnetism, and heat all had their unique geometrical pulse patterns.

Micrographia concludes with astronomy: how increasing telescopic power since Galileo in 1610 had revealed countless myriads of stars scattered through a seeming infinity of space. And finally, Observation 60 considers the formation of lunar craters. Hooke was the first scientist to propose the two crater-formation models still discussed today. Did craters result from bodies crashing into the moon under lunar gravitational attraction? Or were they the products of lunar volcanism?

Hooke performed experiments to test both: dropping pistol balls into a tub of glutinous pipe-clay, and blowing air bubbles under the pipe-clay with bellows, obtaining each time beautiful crater-like formations – thereby becoming the first ‘lab astronomer’.

Micrographia still stands as a brilliant cornucopia of inspired experimental science, containing, besides all the above, pioneering researches into combustion chemistry, capillary action, and barometric meteorology.

Dr Robert Hooke is the House’s first truly great scientist, and in 2015, we should commemorate his world-changing Micrographia.

The Micrographia 350th Anniversary Exhibition will open in the Upper Library on Monday 11th October 2015.
The brutal murder of Brits David Haines and Alan Henning, on top of so many others in recent weeks more than justifies the House of Commons’ decision to launch air strikes against ISIS. But given that they were murdered in Syria, why is it that we have authorised air strikes only in Iraq? And will we really defeat ISIS solely from the air? Why were those the only options offered to the House of Commons in the vote on Friday 26 September?

The answer lies not in Strategy; not in compassion, not in international diplomacy. The answer lies in brute politics. It’s not because David Cameron thinks that air strikes against Iraq are necessarily the right things to do, nor the only things to do. But apparently bearing the scars of last year’s abortive vote on anti-Assad strikes, he concluded that they are the only thing he could do if he had to secure a majority in the House of Commons for it. He knew that the word ‘Syria’ is so toxic, and that ‘boots on the ground’ is such a no-no that he had to specifically preclude them in the motion.

Yet it is pretty obvious that if ISIS are the enemy, then we must strike against them wherever they may be. And while no-one wants another ground war like Iraq in 2003 or Afghanistan, there may well be a legitimate argument that we will not defeat ISIS without ground forces, at very least certain specialist troops under the right circumstances. There may well be a need for certain target acquisition or intelligence people, for example, special forces, people to help with specific humanitarian problems; perhaps people to train the Peshmerga troops how to use the sophisticated military equipment with which we are supplying them. Nor did my colleagues and I who voted for the Government’s motion really have much of a clue about what end-game we are seeking, nor how we plan to achieve it. Some intelligent observers think that we are being suckered into a new Crusade on the back of public outrage at the atrocities, and that that will simply act as a recruiting sergeant for ISIS. They may be right. Few of us understand the complex relationship between the Sunni neighbouring states or the nature of the generational Sunni/Shia war for which ISIS stands proxy.

Those are complex (and properly secret) matters on which the generals and the Prime Minister himself may well take a view. But they are not matters on which I as a humble backbencher (if there is such a thing), am truly qualified to decide. The Commons motion answered the general feeling that ‘my constituents hate these brutal executions and therefore we must do something about it.’ But it did not (and it could not) consider strategic or tactical level matters, consider the secret intelligence on it, or be guided by the technical legal advice which is necessary before
any military engagement. These are matters quite beyond the ken of Commons backbenchers. They are quite properly the sole preserve of the Prime Minister, the military and intelligence chiefs and those advising them.

Not only are MPs ill-equipped to vote on these matters. By doing so we are also fundamentally misunderstanding our real – and extremely important – role in war-making. It is our job not to agree to wars; but to scrutinise what the government and Prime Minister have done with regard to wars. If we are suckered into supporting them in their military ambitions (as Blair did famously over Iraq), we give up our right to point out when they get it wrong. By doing the Prime Minister’s job for him by voting for military action, we give him ‘top-cover’ for decisions which may or may not be the right ones. Surely when the PM accepts the seals of office, he is accepting the terrible responsibility of deciding on whether or not and how and when to go to war?

Since 1700 we have fought one hundred and twenty four wars; we have fought in 171 of the 193 countries recognised by the UN, and in only one year since the Second World War (1968) has no British soldier died in active combat. Yet only two of those conflicts have been approved in a vote in the House of Commons before their start – the two strikes against Iraq, in 2003 and now

...in only one year since the Second World War (1968) has no British soldier died in active combat. Yet only two of those conflicts have been approved in a vote in the House of Commons before their start...

in 2014. Only twice has a Prime Minister thought it necessary to seek Parliamentary approval for what he is doing with our armed forces. And the price he has to pay to do so is to circumscribe his actions to achieve popular support.

That is why I am strongly of the view that a Commons vote on going to war (which is a very recent and ill-thought-through convention) is exactly the WRONG thing to do. It is wrong from a strategic and tactical standpoint. And it is hideously wrong from a Constitutional hold-to-account standpoint. There is something chillingly wrong about a government, failing to have the power of its own convictions over warfare, lacking the statesmanship and leadership which we can reasonably expect of them, feeling the need for the comfort of a supportive vote in the House of Commons. They put together a simplistic motion which they hope will get support from all parties. The whips then force that motion through – the sheep baa-ing uneasily as they are herded through the voting lobby. And by that means the PM delegates the awful responsibility of war-making to those least qualified to make that decision, and perhaps fatally constrains what he can then decide to do with our armed forces.

We need leadership and statesmanship in war-making, not populism.

James Gray MP and Mark Lomas QC are joint authors of a recently published book “Who takes Britain to War?”
When I came to Christ Church as Head Gardener in January 2012, I was immediately struck by the beauty of the gardens and the setting of the buildings in the landscape, but what also struck me was that not enough was being made of the very special landscape of Christ Church. Maintenance was not up to the standard I would expect for such an institution and what should be a natural Meadow was being maintained in a rather park like fashion.

We are now working to improve all areas, and have started a slow but steady improvement of such things as lawn maintenance and weed control both in borders and paved areas and paths. Planting areas such as those in the Pocock Garden and just inside the main visitor entrance have been revamped and other areas such as the Cathedral Garden and the border at the Corpus end of the Masters Garden are now under consideration.

In 1984 English Heritage designated Christ Church as a Grade I historic landscape, (the only other college in the UK with this designation is Magdalen), the reason being that the Christ Church landscape is of the highest significance, relating to its history, associations, as an early example of ornamental walks, quadrangles and garden spaces, and as the designed setting for an extensive group of Grade I buildings. In light of the importance of the landscape and to ensure that everything we do is in keeping with the history, use, and demands of the site we have recently commissioned a Conservation Management Plan from Sarah Couch Historic Landscapes which covers all of the Christ Church landscape from the intensely maintained areas such as the Memorial and Master’s Gardens, to the wilds of Boat House Island and Astons Eyt. This will look at, and clarify the history, use and upkeep of the areas as well as informing and guiding decisions, plans and maintenance, and provide a blueprint to ensure the future of our surroundings.

In the Meadows we are now encouraging wild flowers to make a comeback with a less rigorous mowing regime, and having sown one area last autumn with wild flower seed. We will shortly be planting 3,200 wildflower plug plants and putting in 12,000 wild bulbs, so we should see the return of Fritillaries, Wild Tulips, Wild Columbine, Ragged Robin and many others.

The New Walk avenue has become a fragmented feature with 2 species of poplar and 4 of lime, all different ages and spacing rather than being a single species, same age, regularly spaced feature. We have worked with several tree specialists and...
historic landscape consultants to come up with a scheme that will start the process to restore the avenue’s form and now have a Phase One plan to fell 9 of the worst Hybrid Black Poplars which have reached old age and are starting to drop limbs and succumb to fungal infections, and replace them with 18 Common Lime (Tilia x europaea ‘Pallida’), this plan will go ahead once we have final agreement from English Heritage and Oxford City Planners.

The Broad Walk, which was once a world famous elm avenue, has been lost as an avenue feature. We plan to reinstate this feature by planting 36 trees as a new avenue inside the existing trees and for a greater distance, and we now have a trial planting of 4 new Dutch Elm Disease resistant varieties (Ulmus ‘Lutece’, U. ‘Vada’, U. ‘San Zanobi’ and U. ‘FL493’ – the latter so new it has no name and we have 3 of only 12 specimens in the UK) with a view to replanting with one of these in the future. These varieties have been extensively trialled for their resistance to Dutch Elm Disease, but are as yet, unknown in terms of vigour, habit and speed of growth so we are still in an exciting experimental phase for this project, but we look forward to the return of this significant feature.

Carrying out this work requires a lot of background support and we have invested in new, more efficient machinery and equipment, as well as staff training. The next major behind the scenes project that we hope to start, will be to build a twin span glasshouse to replace the inefficient and inadequate collection of small, domestic style, aluminium greenhouses in our nursery area. This will enable us to grow the plants we need much more efficiently and give us the facilities to propagate and grow on a much wider range of plants.

In summary I am looking forward to an exciting period during which many improvements to the Christ Church landscape will be made and the return of several important features that have become lost or degraded.
Alice Liddell implored Dodgson to write out the fantastical story he had invented. He said he “would try.” This was quite an undertaking as Dodgson had used nothing more than his creative imagination – no plan and no notes to help him reconstruct the story, just a good memory. He spent the following day, on a railway journey to London, jotting down as many of the ideas in the story that he could remember, but nothing happened for some months afterwards. It is likely that an impatient Alice reminded Dodgson of his promise during the Michaelmas term because he notes in his diary that he began writing out the text on 13 November 1862. Dodgson sat in his room in Tom 7:3 (now the JCR) and completed the manuscript, written out in a careful non-cursive hand to look like the printed page, on 10 February 1863. But he left spaces for the illustrations, a more daunting task since Dodgson was not a trained artist.
The Library at Christ Church contains some unique manuscripts that show how Dodgson practised his drawings before inserting them into the manuscript, a task that took him many months. We know that Dodgson consulted books on natural history from the Library to help with accuracy. There are drawings of guinea pigs, a lizard, a flamingo, rabbits, a mole, a puppy, various fish, a sea-horse, a mouse, and a caterpillar. Two imaginary creatures, a gryphon and a mock-turtle are beautifully drawn, but the initials “W.L.D.” indicate that these were done by his brother, Wilfred Longley Dodgson, who had been an undergraduate at Christ Church (1856-60). There are various drawings of the fictional Alice in various positions; standing, seated, drawing back a curtain, head squashed down to her toes (part of the story), head resting on her arm, profiles of her head, swimming, holding a flamingo under her arm, and so on. Strangely, among the preliminary drawings are the heads of elves, goblins and other mythical creatures that do not appear in the final version of the story. These were clearly a feature of some tales told to the Liddell children during the boat-trip, but Dodgson chose not to include them in the final version of the story.

Once completed, the manuscript pages, now with their illustrations, were stitched together and bound in green leather. Almost two and a half years after the river-trip, Dodgson presented Alice with the manuscript of *Alice’s Adventures Under Ground* (the title of the original story) as an early Christmas gift for 1864 (she received it on 26 November). Dodgson inscribed it “A Christmas Gift to a Dear Child in Memory of a Summer Day.”
But this is not the end of the story. During the preparation of the manuscript a number of Dodgson’s friends saw the pages and had a chance to read them. He was strongly encouraged to publish the book. So before the manuscript was presented to Alice Liddell, he set in motion the process of getting the story prepared for publication. He originally intended to publish the book with his own illustrations, and he arranged for the book to be printed at the Clarendon Press at his own expense. They provided him with woodblocks and pencils so that he could copy his drawings from the manuscript onto blocks for the engraver. The result was not a success. Following advice from artistic friends, he decided to obtain the services of a professional illustrator. Typically for Dodgson, he aimed for the best.

Dodgson was already acquainted with the dramatist and civil servant, Tom Taylor, who was a regular contributor to Punch. Dodgson wrote to him on 20 December 1863 asking for an introduction to the “number one” illustrator in Punch, John Tenniel. The request was successful. Dodgson called on Tenniel for the first time on 25 January 1864 and noted in his diary that Tenniel seemed willing to undertake the pictures but wanted to see the book before deciding. Tenniel took his time to consider the commission and finally wrote to Dodgson at the beginning of April 1864 consenting to draw the pictures for Alice’s Adventures.

Dodgson was still not clear about a title for the published book, so he wrote to Tom Taylor to seek his advice. Dodgson had various titles in mind including “Alice’s hour in Elf-Land,” “Alice among the Goblins,” and “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland.” The latter was chosen, but from this we can see that elves and goblins formed a part of the intended book as Dodgson rewrote the story of Under Ground (12,790 words) into the much expanded published version of Wonderland (27,240 words). New episodes were included such as “Pig and Pepper” (chapter 6) and “A Mad Tea-Party” (chapter 7), neither of which contained elves or goblins.

Dodgson eventually settled for 42 illustrations, realising that Tenniel’s work would give his book a much better chance of success. The plan for the illustrations survives in the Library and this outlines the number of illustrations for each chapter, the subject, and the height and width of the picture required. Dodgson was keen to have the book ready for the third anniversary of that fateful boat-trip so that he could present Alice Liddell with a specially bound copy on 4 July 1865. The book was set in type and 2,000 copies printed by the Clarendon Press. However, in their haste to get the book ready by Dodgson’s deadline, the process was unduly hurried resulting in some minor variation in print intensity and some “bleeding through” of the text onto the verso pages. In a few cases, the print from the underside of a page affected Tenniel’s illustrations. The overall effect is hardly of major concern, yet Tenniel, a man with a reputation at stake, was unhappy with the result. Dodgson had already given away some copies of the first edition, bound up for presentation purposes, which he hastily tried to retrieve.

Dodgson ordered a reprint on 2 August, but this time it was typeset by Richard Clay in London. Dodgson received a copy of the new impression of Alice on 28 November 1865, which, to Dodgson’s relief, was fully approved of by Tenniel. The first published edition of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland was available for the Christmas market in December 1865, but all copies bear the date 1866 on the title page. Christ Church has a copy inscribed “The Common Room, Ch. Ch., presented by the Author, Nov. 1865.”

2015 sees the 150th anniversary of the first publication of Alice, and the occasion will be marked by events, television programmes, books, and exhibitions around the globe.
Books without ending…

Reading for pleasure

My bedside table bears guilty record of the unfinished. Stacked none too neatly are Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina (the first two hundred pages or so were gobbled in greedy haste), Jeremy Pynchon’s beautifully presented but intellectually hostile Collected Poems, James Wood’s essay collection, The Fun Stuff (the title essay of which—on Keith Moon’s drumming—is so terrific I have reread that rather than progressing to the next), Italo Calvino’s first short-story volume, Difficult Loves (somewhat difficult to love), and Jeffrey Eugenides’s edited compilation of love stories, My Mistresses Sparrow is Dead—it was Chekhov’s ‘The Lady with the Little Dog’ that did it. Each qualifies all too literally for discussion in ‘Books with no ending…’.

But I felt a more compelling subject to write upon is the way my recent reading has confronted the purpose and process of reading—and with it the purpose and process of writing. For a Romanticist, this second impulsion might be explained as making feeling object. Romantic poetry is demonstrative of the out-in-out practice of composition—the nexus of observation and reflection that precedes the shaping of that most malleable of materials—language—into crafted object. The most profound resolution of absence into presence is found in writings on mourning. Poetic elegy is the ultimate objectification of absence—of filling the gap, vacuous nothingness that the death of someone, or something, leaves.

I am writing this whilst reading Anne Carson’s Nox, a translation-cum-commentary-cum-extended elegy in response to Catullus’ 101—itself an elegy on the death of the Roman poet’s brother—to work through (contemplatively and actively) the death of her own brother. Explication of the third word of the Catullus (gentes) considers the bi-millennial pilgrimage of the sacred Phoenix that Hekataios writes of, to the Temple of the Sun in Heliopolis, Egypt, with the sole purpose of paternal interment:

And in the shadows that flash over him as he makes his way from Arabia to Egypt maybe he comes to see the immensity of the mechanism in which he is caught, the immense fragility of his own flying—composed as it is of these ceaselessly passing shadows carried backward by the very motion that devours them, his motion, his asking.

The above lines are suggestive of the process of elegy as at once the process of commemoration and the questioning of the methods of memorialization, something we are all confronted with each 11th November, but especially this hundredth year since the unfoldings of 1914.

My other current page-turner is William Faulkner’s Absalom, Absalom! A novel that remembers and re-remembers events through multitudinous voices, Absalom, Absalom! is eloquent on the subject of memory:

Once there was—Do you mark how the wistaria, sun-impacted on this wall here, distills and penetrates this room as though (light-unimpeded) by secret and attritive progress from mote to mote of obscurity’s myriad components? That is the substance of remembering—sense, sight, smell: the muscles with which we see and hear and feel—not mind, not thought: there is no such thing as memory: the brain recalls just what the muscles grope for: no more, no less: and its resultant sum is usually incorrect and false and worthy only of the name of dream.—

The examination of memory here occurs as a digression—a textual maneuver that requires absenting oneself from a purported path, before succumbing to the pressure to return once more. As such, Faulkner’s description becomes itself the formal manifestation of recollection, mimetically articulating the pattern of remembrance as a return. That Faulkner’s narration of remembering itself demands revisitation by the reader evidences the extraordinary genius of his prose.
Christ Church students Lily Slater and Iona Blakeney are planning to put on ‘The Crucible’ at the Sheldonian Theatre in 5th week of Hilary term.

This production draws subtle parallels between the 17th-century witch trials in Salem and stories of the modern-day sexist persecution of women in the Middle East. This will be the first time that the Sheldonian Theatre has been used as a performance space for student drama, and in order to do so the Christ Church Dramatic Society needs to raise £3000 to hire the venue for the week of performance.

The support of Old Members would be greatly appreciated. If you would like to make a donation, of any size, or find out more information please email: crucible.sheldonian@gmail.com