Editorial

“Like yeast in the mind…..”

Christ Church Matters seeks to record and review news and events past, give notice of events to come, and present an eclectic selection of articles for the reader’s enjoyment.

This edition introduces two new features. As Senior Members and longstanding staff leave or retire so we will ask them to contribute a piece for publication. Thus we have contributions from Peter Oppenheimer on the state of the economy, Hugh Rice on Antony Flew, and Jonathan Wright and Hugh again on the history of PPE at the House.

The second feature which we hope will be found stimulating is “books with no ending. “, a reference to R. D. Cumming’s quote “a good book has no ending.” We start with an article by Dr Mishtooni Bose, and future issues will feature an article by a Senior Member on what they read for pleasure.

One can hardly mention Christ Church without realising an aspect of its history. The archivist’s piece on the Eynsham Cartulary is a fascinating insight into medieval England. We are also lucky to be able to include an article by Sir William Gladstone on his great grandfather’s links with Oxford. Few have seen the young Gladstone’s revision notes, written for his finals.

But the House is not trapped in the past. The review of Dr Malcolm McCulloch’s work, so relevant with the Copenhagen conference in the news, is evidence of the forward looking nature of so much that occurs here. So too the piece on the Schools Project illustrates our progressive approach to admissions, a constant search to find the best, with entry to Christ Church being on merit and potential alone, regardless of background and free from any sort of quota.

The number of events organised by the Steward, the Development Office and the Association grows year on year. There are reports and photos on many of these occasions in one or other section of the magazine, with the highlights having been Henry’s House Party and the Association dinner. On 24/25/26 September 2010 we will be celebrating the GCR 50th anniversary, along with the annual Association Dinner and the University Alumni Weekend. If Old Members have not recently experienced the quality of House events We can certainly recommend that they attend on that occasion.

Whether this edition of Christ Church Matters ends up on your desk, coffee table or in the smallest room of your home, we hope that some of what you read will bud and bubble in your mind and that you will return to its pages again and again, just as we hope you will return to the House during this coming year.

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For a dinner to transform itself into a seminar is not uncommon when Old Members are concerned. What is happening about governance in Oxford? (answer: gradualism, but no majority of ‘externals’ on the Council); do you have quotas for admissions? (easier, that one, no), how do you prevent Oxford filling up with a lot of foreigners (hadn’t had that before… answer: we can’t because we admit on merit and anyway we shouldn’t object, although I know a newspaper that would), when are you going independent? (we already are in a way, although we get a lot of – especially research – government money, can’t set our own fees yet…). Those, of course, were just the jumping-off points.

This particular happy occasion was at the Denver Country Club, which is surprisingly near the attractive centre of the state capital of Colorado, although there is what seems like an endless sprawl towards the edge. It is good to be in a part of the world, as it were by mistake, as the alumni are surprised to see us and we are surprised to find them there as well.

For the aim was a holiday in the Rocky Mountain National Park, where Rhona and I spent a week in a wooden cabin and hiked a trail a day in wonderful scenery. We varied the programme by having a geology tour on one afternoon and by discovering some stand-up comedy of an evening. So we climbed to great heights during our week, meeting a wonderful selection of wild-life. Before and after, we encountered alumni, including trips to Vail, Boulder and the town of Bailey.

The animals: numerous elk, a couple of sinister coyote, marmot, pikas among the rocks, chipmunks and the like, and a herd of shy bighorn sheep encountered breathless (us not them) at 11,000 ft on the Twin Sisters Peaks. Fields of flowers and numerous birds: hummingbirds, hawks and Steller’s jays. This part of Colorado is marvellously dominated by the Rockies, providing skiing and myriad outdoor activities. Politically it is diverse: all the trendiness of Boulder and also areas which are way to the right of that.

The Old Members: one who is in catering and the brewing of beer; three in finance of various kinds, one of whom is hoping to teach Sanskrit on the side; one planning future electricity provision for the state; one retired from the UN who does ski patrols; one read chemistry at the House and works for a mining company thinking of new applications; a Professor of International Relations; a postgraduate student in business studies; a chief executive of an anti-counterfeiting company.

Mark Turnage and Lee Driscoll sponsored the excellent dinner. As for us, we had a fascinating and energetic time. And Christ Church, well, it straddles the globe. ❝
To the monks it was a working document; it has been scribbled on, annotated, and added to throughout its life. There are funny little drawings of cauldrons in the margins, and occasionally the medieval equivalent of a post-it note, a hand with a pointing finger presumably to mark a charter which was of importance at the time. Most of the entries are dull, like many legal documents, but some highlight interesting aspects of life in the High Middle Ages such as the use of language. In several of the deeds, although the legalese is in Latin, the crucial bits which actually describe the land being given to the abbey are in English so that everyone could understand.

There are items about servants or lay clerks at the abbey: in 1323, Simon le Corbet is granted a pension of 6/8 and a robe every year; in 1317, the servant in charge of the parlour was granted a pension as well as food supplies. In 1281, a new porter was appointed; his job description and his pay are recorded. One deed seems rather controversial to modern eyes; probably entered in the cartulary as the abbot or one of the monks was a witness, the document records the sale, in the mid 13th century, of a ‘nativus’, Henry Morel, for 20s. Some would say that this proves that there were slaves in medieval England but it could just be seen as a contractual arrangement.

Interpretations of the feudal system are many and varied!

Most of the items are just leases or grants of property, but even those relating to land can sometimes be of interest beyond the succession of ownership. In 1352 it is decided that the abbey’s wood at Charlbury should be enclosed, and in 1285 the abbey is given permission to assart the land between the stony way and the Evenlode. In 1284, the right to fish in abbey waters was granted to Robert Belgrave for 40s a year. There are also documents by people you wouldn’t expect to have any interest in a small Oxfordshire abbey, including one by King Malcolm IV of Scotland written to the Knights Templar about the church at Merton which was to be given to the monks of Eynsham. Another was witnessed by the first known mayor of London, Henry FitzAlwyn.

It may be small and a bit tatty, but the Eynsham cartulary is a crucial document in the history not just of Christ Church, but of the church, the county, and even the country.

Judith Curthoys
Archivist
What have a Booker Prize short-listed novelist, a singer with five top 50 hits, and the Director of Science at the Eden Project got in common? The answer is that they are all guest speakers in a new Sunday evening service in Christ Church Cathedral.

After Eight was launched this Michaelmas Term, and offers something very different to complement traditional Cathedral worship. Services follow a theme over four weeks, and feature a conversation with someone who has something distinctive to say about Christianity in contemporary society. The Sub-Dean of Christ Church, Canon Edmund Newell, says, ‘After Eight is a sort of cross between BBC Radio 4’s Something Understood and Friday Night with Jonathan Ross. It’s relaxed, and the idea is to explore the Christian faith using a wide range of music and readings and by interviewing interesting people. We try not to be preachy, and a chat-show style conversation is a good way to get the insights of those who perhaps wouldn’t normally speak in a church service.’

The opening series, ‘Faithful Scientists’, explored the relationship between science and religion, and speakers included Professor Sir Ghillean Prance FRS, Director of Science at the Eden Project and a former Director of Kew Gardens. Speakers in the ‘Art of Faith’ series include Ross McKim, Principal of the Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance, who has a doctorate in theology. ‘I find it intriguing how people in very different walks of life are engaging in creative ways with religion,’ says Canon Newell. ‘Sometimes it’s out of curiosity, sometimes it’s out of a deep personal faith. After Eight is about tapping that creativity.’ Forthcoming speakers include the acclaimed writer Geoffrey Moorhouse, popular singer-songwriter Martyn Joseph, and award-winning children’s writer Julia Golding.

After Eight takes place in the round in the north transept. Music is provided by members of Christ Church Music Society and Andrew Theyer, a priest and DPhil student at Worcester College, who is writing psalm-settings especially for the services. ‘High quality music is what we expect at Christ Church’, says Canon Newell, and ‘After Eight allows us to explore different musical styles. We’re very fortunate to have both an excellent music society and Andrew’s services, as he was a professional in music theatre before going into the church.’

Full details of After Eight can be found on the cathedral website, www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedral

As well as new initiatives, the cathedral continues to offer high quality choral services, attracting thousands of visitors from around the world. Choral Evensong remains the ‘jewel in the crown’ of cathedral worship, and Christ Church has one of the finest professional cathedral choirs in the country, ably supported by a thriving voluntary choir, the Cathedral Singers. ‘We’re currently exploring the possibility of web-casting services,’ says Canon Newell. ‘It would be wonderful if we could offer alumni and others the opportunity to participate remotely in our worship. As well as Choral Evensong, we could make After Eight and other services accessible world-wide. There’s potential, too, for web-casting lectures and other events from the cathedral. It’s an exciting possibility.’

Earlier in the year the Cathedral Choir released its latest CD ‘More Divine than Human: Music from the Eton Choirbook’, which is receiving rave reviews, including the following from the BBC Music Magazine: ‘Stephen Darlington masterfully paragraphed these monumental pieces through the careful pacing of his dynamics...This is a stellar recording.’

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Henry VIII’s half millennial anniversary was clearly one that the House could not miss. Scheduled to coincide happily with the University’s autumn Alumni weekend, and with the prospect of filling the newly completed Blue Boar Lecture Theatre, all was set for a memorable weekend commemorating an unforgettable monarch.

Old Members were evidently attracted by the unique opportunity of sending the late king an email to make their booking on henryVIII@chch.ox.ac.uk, and they were joined by many other guests from amongst those who attend the House’s regular public programmes.

The weekend began with a reception and welcoming dinner in Hall preceding a quite outstanding programme of choral music from the Christ Church Cathedral Choir under the direction of Dr Stephen Darlington. The concert included Henry’s own composition Past Time with Good Company as well as other music from his court and glorious sacred music by Christ Church’s own John Tavener, and from the famous Eton Choirbook.

The Saturday programme of five lectures was under the direction of Dr Steven Gunn, Fellow and Tutor in History at Merton College and serious Henry specialist. Dr Gunn delivered talks on Politics and the Tudor Court and War and Foreign Policy. The House’s own Dr Christopher Haigh, in one of his last Oxford lectures before retirement, gave an incisive and warmly received talk on Henry VIII and the Church.

The University of Cambridge’s outstanding contribution to the day was a lively, erudite and dazzlingly delivered lecture by Dr John Guy of Clare College. Dr Guy’s BBC experience shone through his
illuminatingly illustrated talk on Wolsey, Cromwell and the Reform of Government as he painted a picture of medieval England under Henry, ‘a half formed society’ in which Henry’s ruthlessness and brutality ran unchecked. The weekend bookshop traded briskly all day and it was not only John Guy’s A Daughter’s Love: Thomas and Margaret More that sold out.

The House’s Executive Head Chef, Chris Simms, and the kitchen brigade, supported by Hall Manager Andrew Hedges and the food service team, delivered a fine celebratory banquet, an event which filled the Hall with weekend guests and others. Dr David Starkey told us, with his customary verve and edge, Why Henry VIII Still Matters. The foundation of David Starkey’s Henry scholarship rests partly on his work in making historians and the wider public think about the material worlds of Henry VIII’s court, this through his work on inventories of the King’s goods, and his own central role in the 2009 British Library exhibition about the King. But he still managed to mention President Obama, Carla Bruni and Gordon Brown in his survey of the man who dissolved the monasteries, broke with Rome, issued the English bible, fortified the coast and paved the way for the Elizabethan Renaissance: the king who ‘changed England for ever’.

If guests felt they had been doing a lot of sitting, listening and eating on Saturday, then the Sunday was a more active programme. A fruitful collaboration with Historic Royal Palaces led participants to a hugely enjoyable day at Hampton Court Palace, under the direction of Suzannah Lipscomb, its Research Curator. Hampton Court’s Tudor apartments have been reinterpreted to take them back to their 16th century glory and Henry weekenders enjoyed a tutored tour by the curatorial team.

The House’s next programme is the 2010 Spring Special Interest Weekend between 15–18 April with a choice of topics: Climate Change or the Korean War! Details may be found on the inside back cover.

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In the 500th anniversary year of Henry VIII’s Coronation, it is particularly appropriate that Christ Church Cathedral Choir should release a recording of C16th liturgical music. It was Erasmus who commented on the dominance of florid choral writing in the church’s liturgy, and the repertory he had in mind can be found in The Eton Choirbook which epitomises a style of composition that demanded extraordinary virtuosity from its performers. On a visit to England in 1515, Nicolo Sagadino, Secretary to the Venetian Ambassador wrote of hearing Mass ‘sung by the king’s choristers, whose voices are more divine than human; and as to the counter bass voices, they probably have not their equals in the world.’ This was praise indeed from a Venetian!

The early C16th collection known as The Eton Choirbook consists of a vast range of works to be sung as part of the daily worship in Eton College Chapel. Formally opened in 1443, the Chapel choir consisted of ten clerks ‘skilled in chant’ and sixteen choristers. The virtuosity demanded of these singers is plain to hear on our recording. The Choirbook itself is in Eton College Library: it is a magnificent manuscript, nearly three feet wide by two feet high, so the performers could stand round it to read the music. You can see the clarity and beauty of the notation in the illustration [right].

The idea of our Choir recording some of this repertory was to bring the music to life by using the original forces of men and boys, as well as to bring to public attention some of the hitherto unrecorded works. Timothy Symons, a former Christ Church Music undergraduate who specialises in the music of this period, greatly helped me in the task. We included two of the best known works, John Browne’s wonderful setting of the Stabat Mater, generally regarded as the finest work in The Eton Choirbook, and William Cornysh’s Salve Regina, one of the most beautiful settings of that text from the period. We also included an amazingly complex setting of the text Gaude rosa sine spina by John Fawkyner (the picture shows the opening of the tenor part of this work), as well as a beautiful Magnificat by Walter Lambe, twelve of whose works are in The Eton Choirbook, and the large-scale setting of In honore summe matris by Richard Davy.

Music was specially prepared for the recording by Timothy. Despite the clarity of the notation, there are plenty of issues for the editor to address. For example: apparent mistakes in the original copying, and questions about so-called musica ficta, the raising or lowering of the note although it is not specifically indicated in the manuscript. We also had to consider the problem of pitch: the one we have chosen calls for particularly low basses. This provides a great richness of timbre, particularly in Browne’s Stabat Mater which is scored for a lavish six parts.

This was a thrilling project for the singers. The scale of the imagination involved in the conception of the music is sensational and represents a great challenge to performers. Above all, we have sought to replicate something of the contemplative quality of a liturgical musical repertoire which was a glorious feature of the early years of the reign of Henry VIII.

More Divine than Human
Music from the Eton Choirbook

Stephen Darlington
Director of Christ Church Cathedral Choir

More Divine than Human is now available for Old Members and Christ Church Family Programme members to purchase from the Development Office.

Please send your address details and a cheque payable to ‘Christ Church, Oxford’ for £12.00 plus p&p (£1.50 for UK, £2.50 for Europe, £3.50 for Worldwide) to:

Development & Alumni Office
Christ Church
OXFORD OX1 1DP
On 30 September a dinner was held in Hall to mark the retirements of Hugh Rice (in 2008) and Jonathan Wright, both after 40 years. Some 180 people attended with matriculation dates ranging from 1948 to 2007. Lord Lawson recalled his experience as an undergraduate in the early 1950s and proposed a toast to Hugh and Jonathan. They then replied and this is a summary of their speeches.

Jonathan: Since this occasion is to celebrate PPE in Christ Church not simply to mark our retirements, we thought we would talk a little about the history of the subject of which we are all part, concentrating naturally on Politics and Philosophy – no slur intended towards the economists.

PPE was launched by a decree in Congregation in November 1920. In Christ Church, it started with the election of Roy Harrod as a Lecturer in 1922 to teach Economics. He had taken a first in Lit. Hum. followed by a first the following year in Modern History. He was given two terms leave ‘not so much in order that I should learn economics, as that I should broaden my mind by foreign travel’. That seems to have been the usual practice and was after all understandable at a time when people were appointed to tutorships immediately after taking their first degrees. Harrod, however, did not go abroad. Instead he took the opportunity to study with Keynes in Cambridge, starting an association which left a permanent influence on his life and thought. He retired in 1967 after 45 years as a tutor, a record unlikely ever to be equalled. Apart from his distinction as an economist, he published and lectured on philosophical topics. He was also active influencing government, providing a private source of advice to Harold Macmillan as Prime Minister.

I have not been able to discover which of the History tutors taught Politics originally. It could have been Keith Feiling or J. C. Masterman, or, for one year after his election in 1931, Patrick Gordon Walker (subsequently a Labour minister and, briefly, Foreign Secretary in 1964–5). But in 1932 the first Lecturer in Politics was appointed – Frank Pakenham, later Lord Longford. He gives a vivid picture of his life as a tutor in an early volume of autobiography, Born to Believe, describing a morning of three tutorials followed by a lecture by Harrod in Hall on ‘Marx in the Keynesian analysis’. During the lecture Harrod turned on Cardinal Wolsey’s portrait scolding him as though he were Marx. The late 1930s were overshadowed by the looming prospect of war. All three Christ Church PPE tutors, Harrod, Ryle and Pakenham sponsored the anti-Munich candidate, A.D. Lindsay, at the Oxford by-election of 1938 against the victorious Conservative candidate, himself a Christ Church graduate and later Honorary Student, Quintin Hogg (Lord Hailsham).
Pakenham became an ardent Labour supporter, worked on the Beveridge Report and served in junior posts in the Attlee government, including as Minister for Germany in the tough postwar climate of 1947-48.

Pakenham was succeeded by Robert Blake in 1946. Blake maintained the connection with public life though in his case as an active Conservative, and in 1947 a Conservative peer, as well as an authority on the Constitution. Blake was also a distinguished historian whose Disraeli remains one of the outstanding English political biographies.

The rest of the story, so far as Politics is concerned, can be briefly told. I succeeded Robert Blake who was elected in 1946. He became Provost of Queen's in 1969, David Hine succeeded Peter on his election to the Gladstone chair in 1985 and this year Edward Keene succeeds him. That makes a tally of only 6 Official Students up to three, but, when Lindsay Judson succeeded Oscar and David in 1987, it went back to two. And finally my own successor, Joseph Schear, was elected in 2008.

Hugh: The first great figure in our period was Gilbert Ryle. He was elected in 1924 and a Studentship in 1925 and remained till the war. Afterwards he returned to the Wayneflete chair of Metaphysics. His early work was on Husserl and Heidegger, but he is best known, of course, as an ‘ordinary language’ philosopher, and most especially for The Concept of Mind – a brilliant attack on Cartesian dualism.

PPE was launched by a decree in Congregation in November 1920. In Christ Church, it started with the election of Roy Harrod as a Lecturer in 1922 to teach Economics.

A few years later Michael Foster was elected. He was a man of a very different character, with a particular interest in Germany and in German Philosophy. Indeed, after the war he went as a Visiting Professor to Cologne University to help to re-establish their academic life. He also left money to fund a scholarship to enable Oxford graduates to go to Germany, and German graduates to come here. Philosophically he is particularly known for his book, Mystery and Philosophy; and for his thesis that the Christian view of creation was a necessary and sufficient condition for the development of modern science. I suspect that many of his pupils found him a difficult man; he himself found life difficult and sadly committed suicide in 1959.

In 1935 Freddie Ayer became a Student. After the war he went to UCL as Grote Professor, before returning to Oxford in 1959 as Wykeham Professor of Logic. Ayer had been one of Michael Foster’s pupils, and it is no surprise that they did not hit it off. While at Christ Church he published one of the best known philosophical works of the century – Language Truth and Logic. It was remarkable, not so much for originality of thought as for the verve with which it was written. And it caused a good deal of consternation with its claim that metaphysical statements (‘God exists’, for instance) were literally meaningless.

Jim Urmson, who is particularly known for his work on Mill and on Aristotle, was elected in 1946. He subsequently moved to Corpus to be replaced by David Pears who moved from Corpus to Christ Church. He was my own tutor, and I am greatly indebted to him, but he rarely taught PPEists. That brings me to Oscar Wood. What shall I say? I had the great privilege of giving the address at his memorial service, and was deeply touched by the affection he had inspired in many of his pupils. For me he was a wonderful colleague, appreciative and supportive. And, what is more, introduced to me some spectacular clarets. I will mention just one remarkable thing about his philosophical life: when he was an undergraduate, Wittgenstein visited Oxford to reply to a paper of Oscar’s. Now that is something.

My own election brought the number of Philosophy Students up to three, but, when Lindsay Judson succeeded Oscar and David in 1987, it went back to two. And finally my own successor, Joseph Schear, was elected in 2008.
Economic musings

The centre of gravity, in all senses, of the world economic crisis, is the North Atlantic area, especially the United States and Britain. That is where the delinquent banks which triggered the crisis are located, and where public finances are in the biggest mess.

Two things are particularly concerning in Britain. One obviously is the gigantic sums paid out to rescue the failed banks, coupled with extreme uncertainty as to the prospects for recouping this money through piecemeal sell-offs of the banks in question. The other is the unhealthy state of the British economy at large, following ten years of economic mismanagement by Gordon Brown as Chancellor of the Exchequer. This last may sound like a mixture of party politics and hindsight. It is neither.

For those professionally aware of the British economy’s ups and downs in the past half-century, there are striking comparisons to be made between the Gordon Brown expansion of 1997-2007 and several earlier episodes under Tory stewardship, notably Reginald Maudling in 1962-64, Edward Heath and Anthony Barber in 1971-73, and Nigel Lawson (Ch.Ch. 1951-54) in 1986-88. All of them were instances of unsustainable expansion. Not in the trivial sense that no upswing lasts forever, because the business cycle has been an ineluctable element of economic life for two centuries, but in the sense that the structure of demand and output in the upswing was unsound from the start and not calculated to further the country’s long term economic strength. In a word, private consumer spending loomed too large, capital investment and, above all, exports too small.

Fortunately the three Tory episodes were brought to an end rather swiftly, the two earlier ones chiefly by balance-of-payments crises, the Lawson one by the threat of resurgent inflation. The difference with Gordon Brown is that circumstances enabled him to persist with his misguided policies for a whole decade, rather than being called to account after a couple of years. As a result, the imbalances in Britain’s economy became that much sharper: poor export performance, weak investment and productivity growth, soaring indebtedness, both public and private, internal and external.

The main permissive circumstance in question was the fluidity of international money markets, fed first and foremost by the huge payments surpluses of China, Japan, Russia, Germany and a few others. Also significant though secondary was labour immigration into Britain, not least from new East European members of the EU. Altogether, the greater part of Britain’s GDP growth of some 2½% a year was attributable not to domestic productivity gains but to newly imported factors of production, both capital and manpower.

Can the lost ground be made up, or at least further slippage avoided? An encouraging feature is the depreciation of sterling. Its previous occurrence in 1992 worked wonders for the subsequent quinquennium. Provided the recent devaluation is maintained, it will improve prospects both for exports and for attracting fresh foreign investment to British industry.

Most significantly, the world economy has crossed a watershed, in that global growth is now spearheaded no longer by the North Atlantic area but by the emerging giants of Asia...

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Access all areas

Demystifying the ‘Oxford experience’...

Early-evening sun falling on glorious 16th-century stonework. Undergraduates in gowns strolling across neatly mown quadrangles. Men in bowler hats standing guard in imposing gateways. Latin graces, tolling bells, inspiring tutorials. These are the treasured memories of Old Members of Christ Church.

For many potential applicants for an undergraduate place, these are our college’s USPs – our Unique Selling Points. The desire to be a part of this beautiful place, to study with world authorities, to consult astounding library collections and to be inspired by the historical surroundings is what drives these young people. Their families and their schools do everything they can to support them in realising their ambitions. This is just how it should be.

But for many other potential applicants, the very things we treasure are perceived as threatening, as belonging to an alien world of which they have no right even to dream. We are all aware, I’m sure, of the kinds of rumours that still circulate, perpetuated by those with an axe to grind or with no experience of the place. The able boy who is the first in his Middlesbrough family to think about going to university; the bright girl at a comprehensive in the heart of London’s poorest borough; the talented mature student at a Further Education college who wants a chance at the degree of which she was deprived when she was forced to leave school at sixteen.* All these people have what Christ Church needs: a curiosity about the world and a passion for learning. All these people have a right to be here, and would bring much to our communal life. But they don’t apply to us because they think they won’t fit in, because they think it’s “not for people like them”.

The Outreach and Access work of the Christ Church Admissions Office is attempting to break down some of these barriers. We visit schools and colleges across the country to spread the word. We invite sixth-formers and their teachers into Christ Church to meet current undergraduates and to get a taste of what life here is really like. In the academic year 2008–9 we ran 64 separate outreach events involving 216 schools and colleges, and a total of 5,400 students, parents and teaching staff. Thus, in just one year, we worked with approximately 4% of all UK schools.

Lynn Featherstone, the Admissions and Outreach Officer, has been spearheading these activities. “Most weeks I’m out visiting a school or welcoming groups of students into college”, she says. “My message is always the same. Christ Church welcomes applications from all gifted and talented students, whatever their background. It’s amazing the misconceptions some students and teachers still carry round with them. But personal contact is the quickest way to show them that the place and the people are very different from how they imagine!”

Edie Greaves is a current second-year PPE undergraduate and the JCR outreach rep. She concurs with Lynn’s view. Speaking to students and teachers is the most enjoyable part of her role. “I love meeting visitors to college and telling them about what we get up to here. There’s no such thing as an Oxford or even a Christ Church ‘type’. We’re all pretty normal really. I was told by my school that I wasn’t good enough to get into Christ Church, but I put in an application anyway, and here I am.”
The Proverb says “There is a time and place for everything”. They weren’t looking to park a car at Christ Church!

Old Members are frequently annoyed by the apparent impossibility of finding a car parking space at Christ Church when they visit. This article seeks to explain the issues.

The parking which exists by the workshops is used by staff, there are fewer spaces than employees, which is a cunning plot by the Treasurer to ensure everyone gets to work early. Tom Quad must be left clear for deliveries, the gardeners, VIP’s, those with disabilities and emergency vehicles. As a result there are rarely spare places for visitors during the day.

But what of the Broad Walk? This area is an open space which must allow for public access. It may be augmented. Thus we hope that Old Members will be as helpful as possible. However the awkward fact remains that compared to the number of requests there is both a shortage of parking spaces and a limit to the number of times they can be restricted parking on it to the official limit of 28 days per annum. Once one takes into account the big annual events, the beginning and end of terms, and the number of special dinners each year, it is very hard not to exceed this number.

The City Council seeks to discourage cars from entering the centre of Oxford, hence the large park and ride facilities on the outskirts. Colleges are pressured not to undermine this and to support the use of the train, bus and walking. Some also point to the aesthetics of having cars all over the place. Should we not allow our Members, residents of Oxford and visitors unobstructed views across the Meadow?

Of course there are occasions when parking is a vital facility to offer, especially for events and for those with walking difficulties and the disabled. Christ Church will always try to find space and be as helpful as possible. However the awkward fact remains that compared to the number of requests there is both a shortage of parking spaces and a limit to the number of times they can be restricted parking on it to the official limit of 28 days per annum. Once one takes into account the big annual events, the beginning and end of terms, and the number of special dinners each year, it is very hard not to exceed this number.

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There can be no doubt that 2008-9 has been a vintage year for the Christ Church Boat Club, culminating as it did in victories at pretty well every level of the Club, most notably the Men’s 1st Eight’s capture of the Headship of the River, both in Torpids and in Eights – a feat unmatched in some years.

Following on from a very sound year in 2007-8, where both Torpids and Eights saw splendid rises by crews on both sides of the Club, it was clear that this ought to be a good season - and it certainly began well. The ChCh Regatta was marked by the sheer number and enthusiasm of our novices who went on afterwards to figure so largely in the fortunes of the Club – especially on the Women’s side. Michaelmas saw steady progress and plenty of work, both on and off the water, at all levels and the shape of the Torpid crews for Hilary began to appear as successes were recorded at the Cambridge Head. Torpids itself brought more – and better, the girls boated two crews and each rose, the 1st to bump Oriel and finish second (matching any previous position) while the 2nd won blades. Since all the Men’s crews also went up – the 1st by three bumps to take the Headship – and since not a single House crew suffered a single bump, this was truly a tremendous result for the Club.

With three returning (and winning) Blues added to the strength of the Torpid, the Men’s 1st VIII was expected to do well – and so indeed it did, bumping Oriel and Balliol at the head of the Gut and then rowing over by wide margins (eight lengths on the Saturday.) The Ladies’ 1st VIII alone suffered a fall, losing two places in plucky racing against far larger and more experienced crews. All the same, the results for Summer Eights were genuinely spectacular; the Ladies’ 2nd VIII gained the status of being the highest in its class for the first time ever, while the Men’s 2nds tightened their grip on their own 2nd VIII Headship with two bumps, leaving them one place away from Division II. The Ladies’ 3rds won blades and the Men’s equivalent just missed out – rising an amazing six places and entering the Fixed Divisions to win the 3rd VIII Headship – just like their female counterpart. Overall the House finished Eights holding the top crew for Men’s 1st, 2nd and 3rd Eights, while the Ladies now hold the 2nd, 3rd and even 4th crew top positions – a truly remarkable dominance of the Isis, and one not equalled by any college in previous racing history.

In summary, then, a truly wonderful year – and celebrated by the Club, SCR, Old Members and college staff in due style, with two ritual boat burnings on the Long Walk and plenty of good cheer. Although unable to match the 2008 Henley result of a place in the Final of the Visitors’ Fours, in all this was an even stronger year, coming on top of successes before. Well done to all the House crews, and many thanks to all the Old Members who support our work with the Club; it really does make a huge difference.
Something to retire into...

This issue we hear from four Old Members who are in retirement as they reflect on their time at Christ Church and their subsequent careers.

**EMERITUS PROF. BASIL ANAGNOSTOPoulos (1947)**

I was a postgraduate student at Oxford, who undertook, immediately upon my return to my home country, lecturing duties at a young age and then at the peak of my career I was forced into retirement at a still reasonably young age, under circumstances outside my control.

I matriculated in October 1947 as a Postgraduate student in the Faculty of Theology for the degree of B.Litt in Patristics, which I received in June 1950. I was member of the House for 9 terms. My supervisor was the Rev Professor F. L. Cross who lived at Prior House of Christ Church. When I was supporting my thesis on “A study of the life and writings of St. John of Damascus”, my examiners were the Rev Professor F. Jenkins and the Warden of Keble College H. J. Carpenter.

I was appointed a lecturer at Halki Theological School from which I graduated in 1946. This School is an old institution of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in Istanbul. This School was functioning from 1844 and was sadly closed by the Turkish government in 1971 after the latter’s decision to close all private academic institutions in the country. So, after 21 years of teaching as a Professor, I was obliged to leave Istanbul in 1980 and come and settle here in Athens, Greece.

In 1982, my withdrawal from the academic and lecturing career compelled me to accept the presidency of the Halki Theological School Graduates/Alumni Association (www.estiahalkis.org), which is based in Athens. I still have today quite an active role along with the members, in the running of the Association, publishing scientific works, as well as fighting for the support of the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the rights of the Greek minority and ultimately and quite dear to all our members’ hearts, the reopening of the Halki Theological School. So at the age of 86, I am not retired yet! If anything, sometimes I feel that during the last 27 years as president of the Alumni, I have been busier than when I was an academic lecturer for 21 years.

It is one of my very burning desires to see the Halki Theological School of Halki reopen its doors to fresh students. I spent seven whole years of my life studying in Halki. I was an academic lecturer for 21 years. As president of the Alumni, I have been busier than when I was a postgraduate student at the Ecumenical Patriarchate; the rights of the Greek minority; as well as fighting for the support of the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

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before going up to Oxford and later another 21 years lecturing there. For fellow members interested in the plight of the School there is a bilingual website about the School and information on our Association’s struggle to have it reopen www.estiahalkis.org/en/reopen.htm

Returning home from Oxford I took back a lot of beneficial values of English scholarship and very happy memories of my stay at Oxford and in particular Christ Church. I have always tried to pass on the traditions and English scholarship values to my students. My love and affinity toward Christ Church and Oxford has always been determinedly strong.

MICHAEL STANNARD (1948)

Since I was still in the Army in Nigeria in October 1947, I missed the Michaelmas term and was one of the small handful of men who only came up in January 1948. For most of my first term, I was still on demobilisation leave tending to teach the younger age-group and perhaps later head my own school – as indeed I later did – I opted for P.P.E. rather than history, since I thought that the broader course would serve me better.

The majority of undergraduates were still ex-servicemen, some of whom had been decorated for gallantry, wounded or made captive, though the number coming straight from school, particularly from the State sector, was increasing. Dons too had varying backgrounds. The more elderly were steeped in academic, though some, like R.H. Dundas – ‘D’ – had experienced the full horrors of the 1914-18 War. Some younger Dons also had battle experience, been captured, or had served in Intelligence or at Bletchley Park etc. There was perhaps therefore an unusually wide range of experience as well as greater maturity in both undergraduates and many Dons. All were also inevitably hugely influenced by living surrounded by many centuries of history, architecture, knowledge, service etc. that the House provides. Who could not fail to succumb to the effects of dining nightly in Hall, beneath the portraits of the Great and Good and reason logically.

Having been granted so many blessings and opportunities, I realise, like so many others, that one is surely bound to try, in one’s own small way, to put back into society at least as much as one has received.

I have therefore much for which to thank the House. Having been granted so many blessings and opportunities, I realise, like so many others, that one is surely bound to try, in one’s own small way, to put back into society at least as much as one has received.

ALAIN CAMU (1952)

After reading PPE at the House (1952-55), I took a specialized economics degree at Louvain University in Belgium. During that time, at the early age of 21, I married Taisa Crossley, whom I fell in love with in the Alps, while I was captain of the Oxford ski team. I
then completed my military service in Belgium, where I ended Captain in the air force (having belonged to the Oxford University Air Squadron). My first job was as ‘attaché’ to the cabinet of the Prime Minister, trying to bring foreign investments to the depressed coal mining areas.

I then joined the Central Bank in Belgium, during which time I went to Yale University to take an MA in economics. I also spent some time at the IMF and World Bank in Washington. Again I held various posts as Economic Advisor to successive prime ministers, and was part-time lecturer in economics at the University of Lille in France.

After a short stint in politics, I felt that my call was more in the sphere of international banking. I started a few years with Banque de Bruxelles, then decided to go to London in 1972, to become Director of Hill Samuel Bank, where I ended in charge of International Capital Market operations. While still working with Hill Samuel, I returned to Belgium in 1982, to become a partner of Petercam, a large stockbroker-merchant bank, until my official retirement in 1994. I nevertheless stayed on half-time with Hill Samuel, until it got absorbed by Lloyds Bank in 1996, when I became International Advisor to Macquarie Bank of Australia until 2004. During those years, I was as well Deputy Chairman of Belfin, state-owned financial organization to restructure the steel industry, and Chairman of two Italian holding companies, one based in Brussels, and one in Luxembourg. In 2001 I founded a private equity company, specializing in communications and logistics.

On the non-business sphere, I founded in 1993 what is now called the Oxford University Society of Belgium. After a career in finance, my two main interests focused on furthering European integration and gardening. From 2000, I was International Treasurer of the European Movement, an NGO created by Winston Churchill in 1948, and President of ‘Open Gardens of Belgium’. I have just given up both functions to found a new European NGO: ‘Parks and Gardens of Europe’.

In my spare time I look after 3 gardens: one in Brussels, one in the country nearby, and one in Porto Ercole (Italy). Apart from gardening, my other hobbies are mountaineering, skiing, photography and travelling.

My wife is Italian. We live in Brussels. I have four children and nine grandchildren who all live in England !

Nicholas Grey (1955)

Founding President GCR, 1960-61, Founder & Chairman of Wells for India

Looking back at life I can see how the seeds sown during my six years at Christ Church have now ‘in retirement’ blossomed. For example - from my entrenched Catholic English background, to the friends I made and the Canons of the Cathedral I got to know, to the deep spirituality of India. I moved towards a deep commitment to the ecumenical movement, then to a position where I have a deep respect for the spiritual values of all the great religions of the world. I met my wife Mary in my last year at Oxford. From her Irish Catholic background, our views have moved in parallel. She is a theologian and evident in her books is the deep commitment to Justice, to Peace and to Reconciliation. We share a passionate belief that the priority for both the Church, and for politicians, needs to be a focus on the poor sections of society. Now ‘in retirement’, our lives move on from doing, to one of sharing and enabling others to continue the work. Our life is the happier for the convergence of these passions.

My days at Oxford were some of the happiest days of my life. I read Chemistry and completed a DPhil. I then joined ICI spending time in Research, Production and then a total of 14 years in Holland and Belgium. Soon after our family of 6 moved back to the UK, we set up a pick-your-own fruit farm. It was a visit to see a Gandhian friend in 1987 that then changed our lives: Rajasthan was that year experiencing a catastrophic drought. Something had to be done, Wells for India was started. We began with emergency work building wells but soon focused on harvesting rainfall.

Wells for India has shown that even in the Thar Desert, water can be harvested and stored to give individual families clean drinking water throughout the year and at a modest cost. In India, this is known as ‘The ancient wisdom of the desert people’. It is also deeply rewarding to visit the neighbouring Aravali Hills where whole valleys have been transformed by the villagers constructing a multitude of small structures to capture the rain, so that the once dry wells come replete with water. There are in the world over one billion people without access to clean drinking water. In every region of the world enough rain falls to provide, on a small scale, everyone with clean water. Our work will never end till every village person regularly enjoys the taste of clean fresh water. The work goes on ‘in retirement’ seems a distant dream.
The York Minster Dinner

On Friday 30th October 50 Old Members, their partners and friends met for dinner in the magnificent setting of the 13th Century Chapter House of York Minster. House men and women came from all over the North East and included alumni reaching back to the 1930s.

Dinner was preceded by drinks in the Lady Chapel which stands beneath the Great East Window of York Minster. As guests entered through the South Transept and under the central tower they were drawn towards the East End by the clear, beautiful singing of two choral scholars from York University, Anna Page and Louisa Dobson. Amidst the great space and serenity of a softly lit cathedral it was a truly uplifting start to the evening.

The event was blessed with the presence of two Deans (collective term “a forest”, according to the Dean of Christ Church), the Very Revd Keith Jones, Dean of York and the Very Revd Christopher Lewis, Dean of Christ Church.

Dining in Hall in Christ Church is always a wonderful experience but to dine amongst the spectacular richness of stained glass, stall carvings and the painted vault of the clear span octagonal Chapter House in York Minster was very special. After an excellent three-course dinner and toasts to the Queen and to the House, the Dean of York spoke first, to welcome us. Educated in the other place, the Dean had the kindness to admit that he had been influenced by two House men in his life, Sir Thomas Wolsey and Sir Philip Sidney. The Dean of Christ Church, in his response, referred also to Wolsey and how he had founded those two great centres of learning in Oxford and in Ipswich, known of course today as Oxwich For those Old Members who were not in touch with news from the House, the Dean informed us that the college these days was more likely to be in the top five rather than the bottom five of the Norrington Table, and the 1st VIII are Head of the River in both Eights and Torpids, with the women second on the river. On our table, we felt this information called for an “Oggy Oggy Oggy House House House!” but sadly our nerve failed us and the moment was lost. (Where is Mark Williams (1981) when you need him?)

The dinner having ended, we remained in the Minster for some moments to savour its peaceful grandeur when empty of all but a few souls, before setting off in search of the one pub in York which still served drinks after 11 pm. The event was a much appreciated foray by the House into the regions and I wish the Association good luck with the others which are planned. Many thanks to both those who supported the occasion, and the organisers of such a unique and memorable event.

History Dinner and Henry’s House Party

Having, in the words of my doctors, ‘miraculously recovered’ from a severe head injury in June that had required brain surgery in July, it was a particularly life-affirming thrill for me to be able to spend two successive late summer weekends at a largely sun-drenched Christ Church. I had the good fortune to be able to attend, successively, the History Dinner and Henry’s House Party in late September, shortly before my permanent relocation from London to San Francisco. Although at a particular fork in the road I chose to practice law for 41 years rather than become a professional historian, I have always loved the subject and usually at any one time am immersed in half-a-dozen books on history.

The House is, of course, steeped in history. Additionally, one of my favourite maxims is Santayana’s “he who does not remember history is condemned to repeat it” [eg, Afghanistan!]. History properly viewed encompasses rulers, wars and dates, politics, economics, religion, culture, philosophy and geography and the House has always been strong in the School of Modern History so broadly taught by a continuing cadre of brilliant tutors. Thus, what could have been better than a History Dinner at the House, amongst other things marking Christopher Haight’s retirement? Dr Haight’s scholarship has revolutionized the portrayal of the English Reformation, so critical to the country in which I have lived the last 12 years (as well as two additional
ones much earlier on when I read Modern History at the House). At the dinner, Dr Haigh (left) and History Tutor Brian Young made worthy addresses and I found myself fascinated by the various walks of life from which the attendees had come: academia, government service, business, journalism, writing and the professions.

Henry’s House Party was particularly enjoyable for me as it filled in gaps in my knowledge of Tudor History, all in the context of Henry VIII’s founding of the House, when he reconfigured and vastly expanded Cardinal’s College after Cardinal Wolsey fell out of power and royal favour. The Friday evening of the weekend included a brilliant performance of Tudor music by the Christ Church Cathedral Choir. The next day was like being in college again, as Dr Haigh, Dr John Guy and Dr Steven Gunn (the latter doing two tints on short notice as one speaker was claimed by the flu) gave absolutely brilliant lectures on various aspects of Henry’s reign, arguably the keystone period of English History. The day ended with a Gala Dinner done in the House’s inimitable style, with Dr David Starkey as the keynote speaker, Dr Starkey most recently having been the curator of an excellent exhibition on Henry’s reign at the British Museum, which I had greatly enjoyed.

The next day, after a seemingly interminable wait at a traffic-filled adjacent roundabout, the attendees travelled to Hampton Court and enjoyed fascinating presentations by Ms Suzannah Lipscomb and Dr Lee on the year 1536 (which Ms Lipscomb viewed as the watershed year in Henry’s reign) and on the architectural history of Hampton Court Palace, respectively followed by a tour of the Palace. I bought all too many books during the weekend, but especially enjoyed Ms Lipscomb’s book on “1536”, a marvellous illustration of the historian’s art, as, among other things, she sorts through the five different explanations of why Anne Boleyn met such an unhappy ending.

Sadly, I had to go from Hampton Court back to my flat in London for two arduous final weeks of packing as I consummated the sale of the lovely flat in Hampstead I had occupied for so many years. The siren song of children and grandchildren all living in San Francisco was irresistible – how can anyone resist a four and a half year old grandson who sightreads, multiplies, does squares and square roots and plays chess and 10 different card games?

50 years on – 1959 Reunion Dinner

October 1959 saw Harold Macmillan win his only General Election as Prime Minister and in the same week 150 young men who had survived post war austerity and some who had even survived National Service came up to the House to start their studies in a grimy Oxford yet to enter the ‘Swinging Sixties’ of the Beatles and the ‘Beyond the Fringe’ satire boom. In the equivalent week of 2009, 50 survivors from those far off days came together to remember old times and endeavour to match some wizened 2009 faces with those fresh faces on their starkly black and white 1959 Matriculation photo.

The reunion was conceived after the 2007 Gaudy when a well arranged and well attended post Gaudy breakfast tour of the college ended in a session of reminiscences about the Tom Quad ‘1812’ concert and a few less reputable events. Someone realised that in two years time it would be a half century since they had arrived in Oxford and the idea of a suitable reunion was born and on 15th October 2009 it happened. The Dean kindly hosted a pre dinner reception and this ice breaker enabled the 1959 Matriculates to relax and try and recognise some at least of the worthies and not so worthies who had assembled for this exercise in nostalgic amnesia therapy. The dinner that followed in the spell check proof Friend Room was a culinary delight and an occasion at which the SCR staff coped admirably and flexibly with a very informal dinner bereft of a grace, of a loyal toast and of women. If the Dean felt a little young in this gathering of 59ers he seemed able to relax into anonymity and at least appreciate that those there, after toasting dead and absent House men from 1959, raised their glasses in warm appreciation of Christ Church then and now.

The Buttery stayed open until midnight and on the morrow those who had stayed overnight were joined by partners and others for a special tour which ended with a very convivial brunch in the McKenna Room.
The events of the season

Photos left: Wellington College/Christ Church reunion 23 October.

Photos right: York Minster dinner 30 October.
Photos left: Henry’s Gala Banquet and Christ Church Association dinner, 26 September.

Photos right: 1959 Reunion Dinner, 15 October.
'90s and '00s event

An evening drinks and networking event for young alumni was held on Friday 6th November 2009. The event was a chance for alumni to catch up with old college acquaintances and make new ones. A private area was set aside in a club in central London and conversation and cocktails were flowing throughout the night. Indeed some decided to stay on at the club until late to dance the night away with the rest of the patrons to the pumping tunes spun by the resident DJ.

Over 70 attended the event from a wide variety of matriculation years. Attendees at the event included lawyers, doctors, academics and bankers plus the odd radio producer and NGO policy writer to name but a few. It was fascinating to hear what others have achieved since their student days.

I left the event rather merrier than when I started but with a handful of business cards and a smile on my face.

Wellington College and Christ Church Reunion Dinner

25 alumni of Wellington College and Christ Church met for a Reunion Dinner in the McKenna Room on 23rd October. It was a convivial evening attended by a wide cross-section of ages; the oldest had been at the House in the 1940s, the youngest is still an undergraduate here. Professor Sir Michael Howard spoke eloquently about the particular values that characterised Wellingtonians, values that were inspired by the example of the Great Duke himself and which were rounded off at Oxford. Sir David Scholey noted that Christ Church with its characteristic eye for advancement had wisely made the First Duke of Wellington an Honorary Student of the House before he became Chancellor of the University, though this had almost backfired when the Duke’s two sons were subsequently sent down from the college for bad behaviour. All attendees agreed that they were highly privileged to have studied at two such great foundations and hoped that the links between the two establishments would continue to strengthen in the future.
Our new Chairman

At the Christ Church Association’s AGM in September, Nick Nops was appointed Chairman of the Association. Nick came to Christ Church in 1968, to read Modern History. He has been a member of the Christ Church Association Committee since 2004 and is a Year Representative for his matriculation year.

Nick lives and works in London. He is with Hampden Private Capital, the largest provider of third party capital at Lloyds, and works on the research side in deciding how to allocate their capital within Lloyds.

Nick has always been a strong supporter of Christ Church and the Association and is a Member of the Board of Benefactors. He has attended numerous Association events, helped to organize some and even sponsored a few. Nick will be working very closely with our previous Chairman and now Deputy Director in the Development Office, Simon Offen, to ensure a smooth handover of responsibilities and a continuity of Association activities. Although Simon stepped down as Chairman, he will remain very closely linked to the Association in his role in the Development Office and as a Vice President of the Association.

Songs from the Other Side of the Wall

The day the Berlin Wall came down, Jennifer returned to England, abandoning her week-old daughter, Szandi, to grow up on a Hungarian vineyard with 300 years of history. Now 18, Szandi is part of Budapest’s cosmopolitan art scene, sharing a flat and a bohemian lifestyle with her lover and fellow sculptress, Yang. She has finally found her place in the world. Then a letter arrives that threatens everything, and forces her to choose once and for all: between the past and the present; between East and West; between her family and her lover.

Songs from the Other Side of the Wall is a coming of age story that inhabits anti-capitalist chatrooms and ancient wine cellars, seedy bars and dreaming spires; and takes us on a remarkable journey across Europe and cyberspace in the company of rock stars and dropouts, diaries that appear from nowhere, a telepathic fashion mogul, and the talking statue of a bull.

Praised as showing “genuine promise” by Scott Pack of The Friday Project and Harper Collins Fifth Estate, Songs from the Other Side of the Wall was a number one novel out of thousands in 2008 on the leading writers’ websites Youwriteon, sponsored by the Arts Council UK, and Authonomy, run by Harper Collins. The book has been the subject of well-received academic papers by the author at international conferences, relating it to philosophical and cultural studies topics.

Dan Holloway is a major commentator on the publishing industry, in particular on issues relating to publishing and social media. As well as running his own blog, he has been an invited guest blogger on a number of leading industry blogs. In January 2009, Dan established the Year Zero Writers collective (www.yearzerowriters.wordpress.com), a group of 22 writers from 8 countries, committed to delivering the highest quality contemporary fiction direct to readers. He is also the organiser of the Free-e-day festival (www.freeeday.wordpress.com), an online celebration of independent music, literature, art and film. Dan is committed to the direct interaction of the producers and consumers of culture, writing his latest novel, The Man Who Painted Agnieszka’s Shoes, interactively on Facebook. As well as presentations, he gives regular readings of his work, and has performed at the infamous Book Club Boutique in Soho. He also runs a semi-regular column on the UK music scene for the US journal The Indie Handbook.

You can find details of everywhere Dan appears on the web through his central website www.danholloway.wordpress.com where you will also find details of how to order Songs from the Other Side of the Wall in paperback, or download it for free.

The book is exclusively stocked in Oxford by the Albion Beatnik bookstore on Walton Street.

Dan Holloway (1989)
Marathon des Sables

In April 2010, Jasper Reid is running the Marathon des Sables to raise money for Mencap. The Marathon des Sables is a genuinely tough race. It takes place over six days in the Moroccan Sahara and covers 151 miles (a marathon a day). The route is harsh: desert, wadis and some of the world’s highest sand dunes (3000ft). There are camel spiders, scorpions and snakes and the average daytime temperature is 40 degrees centigrade.

Jasper was inspired to race because of the extreme mental challenge and the small insight this might provide in to what it means to live with learning difficulties. Jasper writes: “I think that we sometimes take for granted what it means to have clear minds and clear faculties and what a privilege this is. I think this is especially true when we’ve been lucky enough to have been part of a great centre of learning like Christ Church. Please help me in getting behind Mencap and the people who find learning much much harder than we probably do”.

If you would like to sponsor Jasper and support Mencap, please visit www.justgiving.com/jasper-reid

The fundraising target is £50,000.

The Alastair Ramsay Charitable Trust (ARCH) was founded in 2007 in memory of Alastair Ramsay, a former member of Christ Church ( History and Economics 1986 to 1990) who died in May 2007. Those who were privileged to know Alastair remember his lack of pretension and sincere interest in and concern for others. One way in which this concern found expression was in Alastair’s work for a variety of charities with an international development focus. It is this work that ARCH aims to carry on in Alastair’s name. ARCH is a UK registered charity that is currently established as a grant giving body with the object of promoting the physical and mental well-being of children and young people. ARCH’s first project is to support the establishment and work of Saúde Criança Recontar in southern Brazil (‘Recontar’). Recontar is an organization that supports chronically ill children and their low income families to enable them to transform their living standards and health, following a model pioneered by Saúde Criança Renascer in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro www.criancarenascer.org.br.

ARCH’s commitment to Recontar is to provide approximately £200,000 of initial funding over the three year period 2009 to 2011 with the goal of Recontar having established its own sustainable funding basis by the end of the period.

ARCH is only able to support Recontar and future projects through the donations it receives and monies it raises through its fund-raising efforts. ARCH is very keen to hear from anyone who is interested in supporting these efforts, whether through participating on the fund-raising committee, helping organise a particular event or donating raffle prizes or auction items. In the UK ARCH held a very successful Brazilian evening at the London Rowing Club in Putney in April of 2009 and proposes to repeat that event in 2010. In addition, a London to Oxford cycle ride is proposed for early summer 2010 for which ARCH is looking for riders. Fund raising activities also take place in Ireland and the United States.

You can find more information about ARCH or make a donation at http://alastairramsay.net/. More information about Recontar is available through the ARCH website and at www.recontar.org.br/en. If you have any questions about ARCH or would like to get involved in its activities please contact Geoff Peters at gapplep@yahoo.com or Bebhinn Ramsay at bebhinn@alastairramsay.net.
Talent spotting
aka supporting ‘emerging artists’!

Oval House Theatre has a unique place in the ecology of theatre. With a history of spotting early-career talent that stretches back to presenting the first performances by Pierce Brosnan and Tim Roth, and more lately Sanjeev Bhasker, (and a full range of the famous and thoroughly infamous in-between), we are known as a place where talented people develop their craft, realise their early visions and nurture a professional reputation.

In our Strictly X-factor culture, it seems easy to decide who can make it and who can’t at the shake of a head to a screeching top note – but of course theatre is a far more complex process, and there are times when we have to make a decision about an idea, rather than its execution. The most fantastic vision can fall flat on its face, while a subtle, hard to explain on paper outline can result in magical theatre.

Here at Oval House, we have a particular specialism in supporting talented early-career artists/practitioners, making Oval House much more than just a presenting venue in the heart of London. Over and above our presenting house remit, we help companies to develop their skills to forge careers in the arts – valuing long-term sustainability over short-term or one-off projects. Our staff supports visiting companies with advice, mentoring and practical support throughout the production process, from conception to Press Night, from artistic embryo to national and international advocacy and touring.

Valerie Boulet
Head of Fundraising,
Oval House

We are known as a place where talented people develop their craft, realise their early visions and nurture a professional reputation.

Theatre development programme sits within an organisation that also develops new audiences, and engages some of the most marginalised young people as participants. We have pioneered work that gives a professional platform to young artists under 25 who can be marginalised within mainstream theatre, supporting them to achieve professional standards. 33% London, our festival of work for, and by, young people has launched the professional careers of artists whose work has not previously been taken seriously.

And we make a difference: In 2008, the second year of this programme, one of our supported artists won Best Production in the Fringe Theatre Awards for her very first production as a professional director.

Emerging artists are not always young: what of the artist who has come to the field ‘later’, having taken time to raise a family, arrive in theatre from a visual arts or other background, or has just ‘discovered’ the joys and pleasures of drama after a successful career in some other form?

For pension-aged Alistair Bain who attracted sell out audiences for his first-professional production of a play last year, Oval House was a platform for a new voice, a new perspective, which is the only justification for meaningful art – whoever the artist may be.

For further information: www.ovalhouse.com
With the Copenhagen talks taking place at about the time this edition of Christ Church Matters is being printed it is good to be able to report that Christ Church members are playing their part in helping towards a low carbon future.

Dr Malcolm D McCulloch is a University Lecturer and Senior Tutor in Engineering. He tutors at Christ Church in Electrical Engineering, Control and some mathematics, and his research is on climate change, resource depletion and social inequity because he believes they are the major challenges facing our civilisation. As an electrical engineer, his particular interest is in developing, and eventually commercialising, sustainable energy technologies. He is currently developing research programmes in three sectors: domestic, transport, and generation.

In the domestic area Malcolm is co-founder of "Intelligent Sustainable Energy", a company which creates revolutionary technologies aimed at helping people reduce and manage their energy consumption. For example it produces fully itemised energy bills so you know how much energy each domestic appliance is using, "smart metering". Swarraton Partners Ltd in which Stephen Brooke (1993) is a partner, are investors in the project.

In the transport sector, Malcolm hopes his high impact research will make a real difference in the world. He has some twenty patents out at present! Much of his work in this field is being assisted by Dr Tim Woolmer, who is also at Christ Church, and involves hydrogen based projects and developing high efficiency low weight motors using new materials as well as developing the power electronics and the control. Projects include: the BOC Eco2e eco-marathon car which does 5500 m per gallon, the Morgan Life car, the Hyrban urban hydrogen car, an eco delivery van developed at Millbrook Proving Ground, and work with Delta Motorsports to configure a motor for a new four-seater car.

"British engineering spurred the original growth of the automotive industry, and we believe engineering excellence can reinvigorate the industry."
Recent good news for Malcolm is that the new University spin-out firm, Oxford Yasa Motors, has secured £1.45 million of investment from Seven Spires Investments to bring his revolutionary lightweight motor for electric cars to the market. This private investment company invests about £5 million each year in high-tech ventures. OYM is now based near Abingdon and aims to commercialise the lightweight electric motors for use in high-performance cars.

OYM together with the University and Morgan have also received a grant from the UK Government’s Technology Strategy Board as part of the consortium’s work on developing a new version of the motor suitable for higher-volume production. The company aims to keep volumes low in its first year, but then scale up production and develop new models. The motor was originally devised for the Morgan Lifecar, a zero-emissions car that uses hydrogen fuel cells to produce electricity, which does 0 to 60mph in six seconds. Oxford University’s technology transfer company Isis Innovation has also invested £75,000 in OYM through the University’s Challenge Seed fund.

Malcolm is involved with policy work in addition to the practical side of these developments. His work for the Institute for Carbon and Energy Reduction in Transport, part of the James Martin 21C School, declares an aim for a zero carbon transport system.

In the field of renewable energy generation, "Electric motor technology will reduce energy consumption and also help us move away from fossil-based fuels to alternative energies."

Malcolm is part of a team developing tidal flow devices and a related project to develop slow speed direct coupled generators. Essentially this is a new design of water turbine which can be scaled horizontally so that it can work in the shallower waters off our coasts.

In addition to his research Malcolm teaches a full timetable at Christ Church, and lectures. Not only is he a brilliant engineer but he has such immense energy that one of his students suggested the House could solve its own power needs by tying him to a treadmill!

Do feel free to contact Malcolm yourself at malcolm.mcculloch@chch.ox.ac.uk.
Haydn Rawstron (Christ Church 1968), the distinguished impresario and agent of his wife, the German soprano Dorothee Jansen, as well as of many other first-rate singers, generously invited those Old Members of Christ Church who had attended the July Gaudy alongside himself as well as senior members of the college, to a Schubert song recital (Dorothee Jansen and Francis Grier, piano) at the Wigmore Hall in London on 13th July 2009.

This recital was the third in a series of Schubert recitals entitled Neue Perspektive; it was of songs dedicated by Schubert to women. "An die Frau", say the programme notes, "is compiled from the seven separate opus numbers of songs which he dedicated to women: singers, musicians and aristocratic hostesses of important musical soirees." Schubert was always keen to have his songs published, but the grouping of these particular songs is original to Neue Perspektive, and in itself gives us a new insight into them.

As the July event was such a success Haydn Rawstron has kindly offered the Christ Church Association tickets for the next Schubert recital in the series: 'The Therese Grob Songbook' (songs Schubert wrote for his first love). Featuring the same performers, it is on Sunday 27th December 2009 at 7.30pm, also at the Wigmore Hall. Tickets are priced at £25 or £35 per person to include a programme and drinks reception. Thanks to the generosity of Haydn we are using this recital as a fundraiser for the Christ Church, Oxford "Wakefield" scholarship for a New Zealand Graduate student from the eponymous Christchurch to study for a year at The House. It is named after the doyen of 19th century British colonial reform, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who co-founded Christchurch, NZ, (together with Houseman, John Robert Godley). Helen Bones was the first Wakefield scholar at The House, 2008/09.

Should you be unable to attend please consider a donation of the ticket price to the ‘Wakefield’ scholarship. This scholarship was recently created to help support a New Zealand graduate student from the eponymous Christchurch to study for a year at The House. It is named after the doyen of 19th century British colonial reform, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who co-founded Christchurch, NZ, (together with Houseman, John Robert Godley). Helen Bones was the first Wakefield scholar at The House, 2008/09.

For further details please see the website. To apply for tickets or donate please e-mail development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk or write to The Development Office, Christ Church, Oxford, OX1 2JP.

We need to know your name, address, phone number, e-mail address and receive either a cheque (Payable to ‘Christ Church, Oxford’) or for a card payment the number, start and expiry dates and security code. You can pay over the phone. Your tickets are to be collected at the door on the night.

CDs from this Schubert Series are available on the night and from: www.somm-recordings.demon.co.uk
The first and more major phase of repairs to the library has now been completed, allowing the use of the ground floor reading rooms, as intended, from 5th October.

Whilst the repair programme had been precipitated primarily by the poor state of the electrical wiring, the opportunity has been taken to carry out a wide range of external repairs simultaneously. What has now been undertaken is the most comprehensive repair of the exterior since the re-facing of the building in the early 1960’s. The roof slating has been re-laid to an improved specification with insulation introduced for the first time, with corresponding roof ventilation. The opportunity was taken to repair one of the principal roof trusses, which had been weakened by death-watch beetle, whilst the roof covering was removed, and also to renew all the lead gutters to ensure long life.

During the extensive stone renewals of the 1960’s the south elevation received little attention and so a substantial area of stone has been renewed, including the central pediment facing the cathedral. There is a certain irony in that the stonework built originally by William Townsend up to 1738 has now been renewed under the direction of Knowles & Son, the firm that acquired Townsend’s firm from his grandson in the last decade of the 18th century!

Internally, there have been a number of changes, most conspicuously the new lighting in the East and West Libraries, but also the rationalisation of the entrance hall with the removal of the electrical gear beside the front door. Lighting has been refined in the Upper Library also, in preparation for the improved display of John Fowler’s ceiling colour scheme which is to be cleaned in 2010, together with the staircase hall.

Less visible have been the improvements resulting from the complete renewal of the heating and electrical systems, but the urgency of dealing with these was an important factor in determining the timing of the contract.

The second phase of work will be undertaken in 2010 with the redecoration of all the principal spaces, and the cleaning and restoration of Fowler’s colour schemes in the entrance, stair hall and Upper Library.
Lost Labyrinth

Going underground in search of the Minotaur...

Most people have heard the ancient myth of Theseus, the Athenian hero who travels to Crete to slay the half man, half bull Minotaur—a monster concealed at the centre of a deathly Labyrinth. The story goes that Theseus wins the heart of King Minos’s daughter Ariadne, who won by his bravery, supplies him with a sword and a ball of thread, so that he may slay the Minotaur and find his way out of the labyrinth to escape with her to Athens. Visitors to Crete will also almost certainly have heard of the Palace of Knossos as the location where the action in the myth takes place. In the words of Arthur Evans, who excavated the site from 1900–1935:

“There can be little remaining doubt that this huge building, with its maze of corridors and tortuous passageways, its medley of small chambers, its long succession of magazines with their blind endings, was in fact the Labyrinth of later tradition which supplied a local habitation for the Minotaur of grizzly fame.”

Arthur Evans, 1901

What is less well known is that there are several competing theories to the Labyrinth’s location. And when Christ Church geography D.Phil student Nicholas Howarth saw a Labyrinth motif on a 16th Century Venetian map he decided to investigate further.

Nicholas Howarth

After seeing Venetian maps while teaching on a geography field trip with the first year undergraduates (a trip now sadly no longer available), I decided to apply to the Royal Geographical Society for a grant to investigate why the Venetians thought the Labyrinth was somewhere other than Knossos. If there was something indeed there, it seemed like it could be an interesting story.

As it turned out, there was a real labyrinth there, comprising of kilometres of intersecting passageways under the ground! What had probably originally been a Roman quarry had then had the Labyrinth myth transposed on top of it. Nicholas assembled a group of seven fellow students, five from Christ Church, and partnered with the Hellenic Speleological Society and the Swiss Labyrinth expert Thomas M. Waldmann.
who had been investigating the site for over 10 years (see www.labyrinthos.ch). This partnership gave rise to the University’s Expeditions Council approving and funding the Oxford University ‘Labyrinth Lost’ Expedition to Crete.

After researching the literature, we found out that in academic circles the idea of Knossos as ‘the Labyrinth’ had been widely criticised. Since at least the 1400s through to the start of World War II, when people went to Crete and visited ‘the Labyrinth’, they mostly went to this other site shown on the Venetian maps. However, after the war, this stopped.

The site was used during the Second World War by the Nazis to store their ammunition. To stop it falling into the hands of the Allies, during the retreat from Crete they tried to blow it up. They were only partly successful. In the initial explosion, stones collapsed on the fuse wires and only the entrance was destroyed, sparing the majority of the Labyrinth. The remaining ammunition has been gradually removed by locals and the Greek military, but some corroded remnants remain.

Today most of the Labyrinth is off limits to tourists, so special permits are required. We were also fortunate to have an ammunitions expert from the Greek military on the team, as well as speleologists who knew the caves well. The Expedition Team also spent time with the local community around Mires and heard of their aspirations that one day the site might come out of the shadow of Knossos.

What is sad is that what was once a ‘must see’ on the Grand Tour of the archaeological sites of the ancient world is now unused and at risk from illegal activity. We also had the unexpected experience of discovering an active illegal excavation deep in the Labyrinth which planned to use dynamite to blast through to a suspected hidden chamber. Fortunately, we informed the archaeological police and they immediately investigated and confiscated the thieves’ tools, preventing, for now, another tragedy.

As a student project, we are only focused on telling the intriguing story of the competing claims to the location of the Cretan Labyrinth. It provides a fantastic case study of where myth and history collide across time and space, physically and in our imagination.

However, after speaking with local authorities there is the need to organise a civil engineering and de-mining assessment and this is something we have offered to assist with by doing some fundraising. Only then can archaeological and restoration work probably proceed.

The students were joined by their Greek and Swiss research partners for the launch of their key findings in Week 1 Michaelmas, 2009. The launch was attended by current members of the JCR, GCR, SCR and alumni who were shown a 30 minute documentary film made by the group. An easy to follow fact sheet, media release and pictures are available at the expedition web site at www.zestcambridge.co.uk/labyrinthlost. More academic publications are to follow.

Maps which helped inspire the idea behind the expedition. Why did the Venetians and others pre-WWII think that the Labyrinth was not at Knossos?
In the last edition I wrote about visiting Saakshar in Delhi at Easter. Here I would like to say a little about some of the children Saakshar has helped.

Saakshar is an educational project with a small classroom in each of three slum communities, which prepares children for mainstream school and supports them once they are there. It combats the problems of school non-attendance and drop out among India’s poorest communities. Most of its children are about five years old and will go on to mainstream school after a year at Saakshar, with ongoing support. A few are older and have come to Delhi with little or no education and get remedial help from Saakshar’s teachers.

One of the first children to benefit from Saakshar’s work was Antosh, shown here with his family in their home in Nasirpur slum. They moved to Delhi from a village and Antosh had little education before he arrived. As ‘Scheduled Caste’ (previously ‘Untouchable’), he had been treated badly in the village school. When they moved to Delhi, where Antosh’s father pulls a cycle rickshaw, Antosh found that there was no discrimination at school, but he was very behind with his studies. Asha Kumar had just set up the first Saakshar classroom and with Saakshar’s help he became a hardworking pupil who caught up with his peers. In the last few years has been very helpful to Asha. He says he does not want to hang around with local boys, but to work for Saakshar and study. Both his younger sisters have also been to Saakshar and are now at school, but Antosh says they should work harder!

Sonya is eleven and lives in Nasirpur slum with her parents, two sisters and two brothers. Her father finds work as a painter, while her mother is a cleaner who goes out early to work, until late. Her older sister is 15 and works as a cleaner too, and makes Sonya go cleaning with her after school every day. Sonya started at Saakshar and is now at primary school and hopes to become a teacher herself. On the day I met her she was on her school holidays and was attending Saakshar for extra lessons. She had done badly in the end of year exams. With tears in her eyes she told us...

There is much more to do. We would love to be able to help more children and to offer more English teaching to bright pupils like Anita. Can you help?

Above: Anita, in the one room she shares with her family, and with her mother outside their home in Nasirpur slum.

Ralph Williamson
College Chaplain

Three Saakshar Lives
Helping to educate Delhi’s poorest children
that she cannot do her schoolwork because her sister forces her to go cleaning, and she feels ashamed because she is falling behind. She told us that her sister beats her if she will not go cleaning. “Does she beat you with her hand”, I asked, “or with a stick?” She glanced at her teacher, looked down and said, “With a stick.”

Asha Kumar is trying to persuade Sonya’s mother that she should have time to study, as this will be much better for her and for them in the end. The light at the end of the tunnel for Sonya is that her sister was getting married and would no longer be around to make her go cleaning. She is about to move to secondary school, and hopes her parents will now let her study hard.

Anita is thirteen years old and was another of Saakshar’s first pupils. Her burning ambition is to be a lawyer. Despite living in a crowded single room with her family in Nasirpur slum she comes top in her year for all her exams. She explained to me how poverty is perpetuated by illiteracy for girls in India’s slums. Illiterate parents come from rural communities where girls are not educated and are quickly married off. After moving to the city slums they are reluctant to send their daughters to school as they are intimidated by offices and forms, and often need them to help with work, chores and caring for younger children. At fourteen or fifteen years old a girl without education is married to an uneducated boy, often with a dowry her parents cannot afford, which compensates her husband’s family for her lack of economic worth. Anita told me that a girl in that position moves to her husband’s parents’ house and becomes the virtual slave of his mother. Her husband may have little interest in her, and because she is ignorant she is beaten for being stupid and worthless. This is what happened to Anita’s older sister, and Anita is determined that it will not happen to her. She says that an educated girl is valued and respected, is likely to marry an educated boy, and will be received warmly as an asset since she can work and contribute a lot to the family. She will hope her husband will respect her and see her as a partner in life. Unfortunately, Anita’s local school only teaches in Hindi, and to become a lawyer or to have any professional job she needs to study in English. Anita says her parents are very kind, but cannot send her to a fee paying ‘English Medium’ school. Saakshar is hoping to help her a little with a few English lessons, but will this be enough?

The trustees of the Saakshar School Appeal are Edwin Simpson (Christ Church Tutor in Law), John Briggs (Cathedral Registrar) and myself. Since we began the Appeal in May, we have received encouraging support, including a generous donation to buy a little minibus to take children on visits and trips. There is much more to do. We would love to be able to help more children and to offer more English teaching to bright pupils like Anita. Can you help?

Saakshar School Appeal:
http://saakshar.chch.ox.ac.uk

Ralph Williamson is the College Chaplain and Web Editor

There will be an exhibition of Saakshar images in the Cathedral during January and February 2010.
Antony Flew's conversion

Antony Flew was a Philosophy lecturer at the House from 1947 to 1948. He went on to have a distinguished career in Britain and North America, and wrote extensively in support of atheism.

Then, remarkably, about five years ago he became convinced of the existence of God as the result of a philosophical argument. His reasons were set out in his (immodestly entitled) book, *There is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind.*

What convinced Flew was a sort of teleological argument, the so-called fine tuning argument. This argument starts with the claim that the existence of life in the universe depends critically on some apparently fortuitous features of the laws of physics and the structure of the universe, in particular on the values of certain physical constants. It concludes that it is more likely that the universe was designed expressly to enable life, than that it should have been just an extraordinary fluke that life was possible.

What should we make of this argument?

Well, in the first place we should notice that, as it stands, it is open to an immediate objection. Why suppose a creator just because it is highly contingent that the laws of physics should have had features which enabled life? If the laws had had different values, wouldn’t it have been equally contingent that they should have had those features? And, in that case, wouldn’t there have been an equally good argument for the existence of a creator whose purpose was to design a universe with those features? But, if the argument would have worked whatever the features had been, we should conclude that it doesn’t work at all – unless we have some reason to suppose that it is particularly likely that a designer should have wanted to make life possible.

In fact there is a possible reason. We might appeal to the fact (if it is a fact) that a universe in which life is possible is a better universe than one in which it is not. But notice that this appeal to goodness must be an appeal to objective goodness. If facts about goodness are, at bottom, just facts about subjective preferences, the argument will fail. It will fail because there would be no reason (as far as this argument goes) for supposing that a creator would share our preferences. But, if there is such a thing as objective goodness, it would seem to be a less arbitrary object of desire than any particular natural features of a universe for their own sake. Whether this is enough to rescue the argument I shall not discuss. In particular I shall say nothing about the problem of evil. I want instead to point out that, if the argument is a good argument, a better argument is available which does not appeal to esoteric physical facts.

The reason is this. The fine tuning argument has a rather restricted basis; it takes as given a universe whose laws have a certain overall structure, and appeals to the apparent flukiness that, inter alia, the constants in these laws have certain critical values. But, actually, one does not need this information to generate a teleological argument. It is enough to claim that the laws, whatever they
are, are contingent; that there is no logical necessity that there should have been these laws rather than very different laws, and no logical necessity that anything but a tiny minority of universes with such different laws should have been as good as ours. So, if the fine tuning argument is successful, so is this less restricted one. And the fact that it does not appeal to specific facts about the laws of this universe gives it an important advantage. The fine tuning argument appeals to the lack of a scientific explanation for the apparently flukish features of the universe which made life possible. It is, therefore, vulnerable to the discovery of such an explanation. And, in fact, such a discovery is perfectly conceivable. It is conceivable that there should turn out to be a theory of everything which explains why these features are as they are. And it is also conceivable that this universe has been generated by a process which has generated very many (perhaps infinitely many) other universes, most of which are not fit for life, so that it is just a fluke that our universe is fit for life, we are just winners in a cosmic lottery. But the less restricted argument is not vulnerable to the emergence of such scientific explanations. It could still appeal to the contingency of any particular theory of everything, or to the contingency that universes were generated by a process which was capable of generating a universe as good as ours.

So what should we say of Flew’s conversion? This: if it was not ill founded, it was overdue.

Charity Climb

A fundraising trek to the roof of Africa

As regards the latter I did some army training with the Officers’ Training Corps, rowing and swimming. I also participated in the Deathmarch which is a long distance walking event in Belgium. You have to walk 100km in 24 hours. Unfortunately, I had to stop after 57.5km due to an injury, but nothing serious. Now back at Oxford I am doing all over exercise, toning and strengthening my muscles, as well as regular running for cardio-vascular exercise.

My fundraising is going quite well, but I need all the support I can get! I have to raise £3200 and am over half way there, but still have some other friends and family to hassle! To help with the rest I have organised some events – a college party and a Christmas dinner, and then I have little things, like having a donation box in the Porters’ lodge. Many thanks to those of you who generously donated after reading my first article; if you would like to donate now please go to www.justgiving.com/islakennedy

I have not been back to Headley Court for a while, but I’m still in contact with a lot of the patients that were there with me. All are still determined to get better and are doing very well, it is great to see, and makes me think how lucky I have been to have made such a quick and full recovery. I am truly thankful. It also reinforces my desire to give something back and do my bit for Help for Heroes so I am also asking for money from the Christ Church JCR’s charity fund, which I hope the undergraduates will support.

I have my guide book to Tanzania and have started reading all about Kilimanjaro and the wildlife I will see. Whilst in Africa I will have the opportunity to do a 4 day safari followed by a few days in Zanzibar to explore the island and enjoy the beaches. It will be a well earned break after the gruelling ten day expedition to reach the summit of Africa’s tallest mountain.

Isla Kennedy

(2006)
W. E. Gladstone came up to Oxford in 1828, having spent a two-term gap with a tutor improving his classics and mathematics. He took his final papers in Lit. Hum. in 1831 and underwent a rigorous viva. It is well known that when one of his interrogators said “We will now leave that part of the subject” Gladstone replied “No, Sir, if you please we will not leave it yet.” What is not so well known is that before turning to theology the examiners tried to trip him up by a series of detailed questions on Herodotus, only to find that he used each question to air his knowledge more fully. 

Having honed his debating skill in the Eton Society he became President of the Union, and spoke stoutly against parliamentary Reform. His speech was shown to the Duke of Newcastle by his son Lord Lincoln, Gladstone’s friend and contemporary, who thereupon offered the young man his interest at Newark. Gladstone became an M.P. in the first reformed parliament in 1832, and retained the seat until 1846.

After the repeal of the Corn Laws, Newark was no longer open to Gladstone, and in 1847 he was elected one of the two members for the University of Oxford. As an undergraduate he had had to attend the daily service in the cathedral, and he had noted with dismay in his diary the small number of communicants. With a few friends, all moving from an Evangelical towards a High Church position, he had attended a reading party at Cuddesdon in 1830 and began to think seriously of ordination. (He was dissuaded by his father on the grounds that his influence as a parish priest would be so narrow). Although he could not know it, he was playing his part in the first rumblings of the Oxford Movement. By the time he became a Member for the University in 1847 controversy was in full swing, the atmosphere poisoned by the ‘exclusion’ of Hampden, the Professor of Divinity, his efforts, and was awarded a first. Technically the subject was Mathematics and Physics, and it could only be taken by those who had already taken Lit. Hum.

Gladstone worked hard at Mathematics during his Gap, and during his early terms at The House. He then got his father’s permission to drop the subject, but shortly afterwards began to redouble
the 'delation' for heresy of Pusey and the deprivation of W.G. Ward. Gladstone disowned the label of 'Tractarian' and insisted "I have committed myself to no party in the Church, and no party has a right to reckon me among its members".

The furore, with the assumption by the University of authority rightly belonging only to bishops and ecclesiastical courts, persuaded many M.P.s and voters that Oxford, an Anglican stronghold and indeed virtually a constituency of Anglican clergy, must be reformed. In 1850 Lord John Russell, "worked upon" as Morley puts it "by a persevering minority" proposed a Royal Commission, which duly reported in 1852. It was this that led to Gladstone’s most important contribution to the University. It was he who sifted through the huge volume of responses, answering each one. It was he who researched the Laudian University Statutes and the ancient legal rights and privileges of every college. It was he who steered the resulting bill through the House of Commons, finding the work more congenial than his duties as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Rather than accepting the radical school of thought in favour of a centralised ‘professorial’ university, Gladstone preferred to "work with the material we possess, improve our institutions through the agency they themselves supply, and give to reform the character of return and restoration”. But this classic reformer’s stance was driven by necessity, for he believed that the daunting complexities of the legal rights of colleges and individuals made radical change impracticable. Every detail would be contested by clever lawyers and the task would never be concluded.

The University consequently remains a federation of partially reformed (as Margaret Thatcher discovered) colleges. The Act provided for ‘Governing Bodies’—a new term greeted with a good deal of derision—and it applied ancient endowments, on the basis of competition, to the fulfilment of definite functions. The Dean said that it was "inexpedient, unjust and tyrannical" and Pusey said that the University was "ruined and overthrown", but Jowett saw that it must be acceptable to any reasonable reformer and wrote to Gladstone "It is to yourself and Lord John that the University will be indebted for the greatest boon it has ever received."

Like his mentor Peel, Gladstone had achieved the rare distinction of a double first; like Peel he represented the University in the House of Commons, and like Peel he was thrown out.

In 1865 he stood ‘unmuzzled’ before the working men of Lancashire. But he retained his lifelong affection for Oxford, as did Oxford for him. His last act, when over eighty and prime minister for the fourth time, was to give the inaugural Romance Lecture in the Sheldonian.

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Reading for pleasure

Dr Mishtooni Bose
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If Robert Burton established melancholy as a Christ Church theme, he also provided an outstanding example of the energy with which he and many others among the best writers in English sought to come to terms with it. This theme has assumed particular importance for me, as I am insatiably curious to learn about the many different ways in which others have faced suffering. The concept of ‘private reading’ is inadequate in such a context, since one’s private and professional reading selves always leak into one another, and non-fictional genres are as fertile as fiction in addressing the perennial enigma of suffering. In my quest, I find not only the intimacies of poetry but also those of letters and diaries particularly useful. As critic, reader and unfinished human being, one takes notes when Samuel Beckett writes to Lawrence Shainberg in January 1983: ‘I remember an entry in Kafka’s diary Gardening. No hope for the future’. At least he could garden; or when Keats, in his last letter (to Charles Brown, 1820), observes: ‘I have an habitual feeling of my real life having past, and that I am leading a posthumous existence’. One is as attentive to these moments as to Tennyson standing outside the deceased Hallam’s door in In Memoriam, or to Spenser’s Fradubio in The Faerie Queene, lamenting his transformation into ‘tree mould’ through a particularly savage blast of Ovidian energy. Recently, and utterly fortuitously, these private explorations received public validation from an Old Member, David Lawton (English, 1966), who is currently Leverhulme Visiting Professor in the Faculty of English. In the first of a short series of lectures on the theme of ‘Public Interiorities’, he invited his audience to think about thematic and temperamental affiliations between writers as apparently disparate as Chaucer, Beckett and Rilke. These three connoisseurs of suffering and loss have long been bracketed together in my mind. Should anyone be curious to know why Chaucer might be included in such company, I urge them to read and re-read his poem The House of Fame. Like all of the best works, this was emphatically not written in order that it might be studied in universities, and so it is all the more wasteful that it seems barely to have a life outside them. It deserves that life. It is, among other things, a raucous parody of Dante, a meditation on dreams, an appraisal of the reliability or otherwise of human knowledge, an expose of the many torments of social life and a satire on the rapacious desires of readers and writers. It would appear that Chaucer left the poem incomplete. But one grows with it, and it works, as Beckett intended his own works should, ‘like yeast in the mind’.
2 November 2009–February 2010
CHRIST CHURCH PICTURE GALLERY
THE POETRY OF DRAPED FIGURES
Christ Church

In low dignity and without undue elevation a human figure and how to depict the varied qualities of material used and remain one of the challenges in art. With more than thirty oil master drawings the exhibition will explore this ever changing mundane topic and will illustrate its richness and creative power.

Opening times: Monday to Saturday 10am–5pm and 7–9pm, Sunday 10am – 4pm.
The Gallery will be closed from 21 December 2009 to 6 January 2010.

Contact: Picture Gallery +44 (0)1865 278672 pictureg@chch.ox.ac.uk

December 2010
23 December
SCHUBERT RECITAL AT THE WIGMORE HALL
3.30pm The Wigmore Hall, 36 Wigmore Street, London W1

The Christ Church Association would like to invite you and your spouses/partners to a post-Christmas rivel of Schubert songs, in London’s sumptuous Wigmore Hall. See page 4 for details.

Tickets: £21 or £25
Contact: Emma Sinden, Alumni Relations
Office: +44 (0)1865 286 585
emma.sinden@chch.ox.ac.uk

February 2010
16 February – 20 May
CHRIST CHURCH PICTURE GALLERY
AFTER MICHELANGELO

Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni (1475 – 1564) is regarded as one of the most influential artists of all times. In his fresco of the Last Judgement in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican is the most replicated work of art. Artists from Raphael to Tintoretto copied his works in order to further their own artistic ideas. This exhibition brings together thirty-three drawings from the Christ Church collection of Old Masters in order to trace and understand Michelangelo’s genius through his followers, imitators and admirers.

Opening times: Monday to Saturday 10am–5pm and 7–9pm, Sunday 10am – 4pm.
Contact: Picture Gallery +44 (0)1865 278672 pictureg@chch.ox.ac.uk

March 2010
14 March
SCOTTISH CATERING, GAME TASTING
Rosedale Dear Farm, Auchterarder, Scotland.

Enjoy a game tasting for Sunday lunch led by award winning author and game cook, Mark Hix.
Numbers are limited so please book early.
Contact: Emma Sinden, Alumni Relations
Office: +44 (0)1865 286 585
emma.sinden@chch.ox.ac.uk

15 March
FAMILY PROGRAMME LUNCHEON
Christ Church

Parents of current undergraduates are invited to attend a lunch in Hall.

Booking forms will be sent out in January 2010.
Contact: Emma Sinden, Alumni Relations
Office: +44 (0)1865 286 585
emma.sinden@chch.ox.ac.uk

20–22 March
SUNDAY TIMES OXFORD LITERARY FESTIVAL
Christ Church

Christ Church is pleased to announce that the Sunday Times Oxford Literary Festival will once again be taking place here in 2010 and we will be offering accommodation during the festival. To register your interest in booking accommodation please email, festival@chch.ox.ac.uk.

For further information about events during the festival and to go the booking list please check the Festival Website www.christchurchoxfordliteraryfestival.co.uk
Contact: The Steward’s Office +44 (0)1865 286 588

25–27 March
OXFORD UNIVERSITY INTER-COLLEGIATE GOLF TOURNAMENT 2010
18th Heath Golf Club

Old Members with a recognised club handicap (with an upper limit of 16+) are welcome to take part in this tournament. Please contact Robert Seward as soon as possible if you would like to be considered for the team of 10.
Contact: Robert Seward, Team Captain
Rcseward@blueyonder.co.uk

30 March
PRIVATE TOUR OF SIR JOHN SOANE’S MUSEUM
Sir John Soane’s Almshouse, 2 Lincoln’s Inn Fields, London, WC2A

Helen Donny (Hilary), the Deputy Director of Sir John Soane’s Museum will lead an exclusive evening for Association Members and their partners/patrons. Starts at 6.30pm with a tour and finishes with a drink or two of wine and nibbles.
Numbers are limited to a maximum of 10 per tour.
Tickets: £25 per person
Contact: Emma Sinden, Alumni Relations
Office: +44 (0)1865 286 585
emma.sinden@chch.ox.ac.uk

April 2010
1 April
OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE BOAT RACE
6.30 BST

Details of where the Association and Boat Club Society will be gathering for the race will be circulated nearer the time and posted in eMatters.
Contact: The Development Office +44 (0)1865 286 325
development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk

15–18 April
SPECIAL INTEREST WEEKEND: THE KOREAN WAR & CLIMATE CHANGE
Christ Church

Each Spring Christ Church holds a Special Interest Weekend Conference, open to all, with a choice of themes. The weekend concludes with a gala banquet in Hall.

This year the two options are:
1. THE KOREAN WAR
2. CLIMATE CHANGE: EVIDENCE, IMPACTS & SOLUTIONS

Contact: specialinterest@chch.ox.ac.uk

May 2010
5 May
RECEPTION FOR FINANCIAL PROFESSIONALS
6:30pm at Pimlico Race Course, Embankment Place, London

Diners, canapes, and the chance to network with others in the financial sector.
Contact: emma.sinden@chch.ox.ac.uk
+44 (0)1865 286 588

26 May
SCHEND’S WEEK
Christ Church Boat House

There will be a special gathering for Old Members on the Saturday of Eight Weeks. Come to support the House as the Men’s 1st VI fight to retain their Headship!
Contact: emma.sinden@chch.ox.ac.uk
+44 (0)1865 286 588

June 2010
16 June
TBC

JUNE
BOAT CLUB SOCIETY DINNER
Christ Church

Members of the Boat Club Society are warmly invited to their annual dinner.
Contact: The Development Office +44 (0)1865 286 325
development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk

24 June
GAUDY (1972-1975 MATRICULATES)
Christ Church

Contact: Helen Smith, Steward’s Secretary
+44 (0)1865 286 586
helen.smith@chch.ox.ac.uk

September 2010
16–19 September
50TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND
Christ Church

Keep this weekend free for a programme of events to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Christ Church Graduate Common Room. The weekend will contain more details in the New Year.
Contact: The Development Office +44 (0)1865 286 325
development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk

25 September
CHRIST CHURCH ASSOCIATION AGM AND DINNER
Christ Church

Old Members and spouses/partners are invited to attend the annual Association Dinner in Hall.
Contact: Jenny Sinden, Alumni Relations
Office: +44 (0)1865 286 585
emma.sinden@chch.ox.ac.uk

October 2010
1 October
GAUDY (1977-1980 MATRICULATES)
Christ Church

Contact: Helen Smith, Steward’s Secretary
+44 (0)1865 286 586
helen.smith@chch.ox.ac.uk

November 2010
5 May
COMMUNITY SERVICE WEEKEND
Christ Church

For further information please contact:
Special Interest Weekend
The Steward’s Office
Christ Church OXFORD OX1 1DP
Tel: 01865 286460/286477 Fax: 01865 286328
Email: specialinterest@chch.ox.ac.uk www.chch.ox.ac.uk

For news and more information about events, please visit our website www.chch.ox.ac.uk
Longhorns

The most beautiful girls in Oxford, with merit and potential — grass-fed, Meadow-bred, Oxford-educated. Old Members have already begun to support us, and there are naming opportunities for progeny.

If you are interested in joining them, please contact Emma Sinden in the Development Office.

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Millbank Josephine  Logan Beauty  Hurstlow Michelle

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