Editorial

Selecting the main feature for this issue of Christ Church Matters was an easy job for the editors; working out how to do justice to it a different matter. After 12 years of enthusiastic and dedicated service, John Drury’s departure from the Deanery had to be marked; but how to capture the essence of this subtle and prevailing influence on the House? By asking for personal contributions from a wide range of sources, we have attempted to give an indication of the many different areas so benignly touched by the Dean’s leadership, and thereby to attest to just some of his vast and varied skills. Be they current students or a Vice-Chancellor, all correspondents were eager in response and generous in praise. Running through the tributes is an appreciation of the warmth and friendliness which has characterised John’s Deanship; he has always been a personality first and an office second. In the Cathedral, a determination to set and meet the highest standards has been coupled with a lightness of touch which has allowed the individual skills of others to shine through. In the College, both tutors and students have been reminded of the same need for constant review and improvement, whilst also being sure that their presence and efforts are known to, and valued by, the Head of House. Leading by this example of involvement with, and value of, the disparate elements of Christ Church life, John has been instrumental in ensuring that an institution is a community, and a community infused with a commitment to education, tolerance and hard work as means of bringing fulfilment and joy. As a result, many of the best features of Christ Church reflect John’s personal passions. The importance attached to seeing beyond the bounds of the University, and unlocking potential where it is most threatened has informed not just the Dean’s work for Oval House but also the Wells for India project and the Chaplain’s recent involvement in it (see p.3).

An appreciation of the enduring value of friendships formed at the House can be seen both in John’s hospitality and support of American Members and the activities of the Christ Church Association (see pp.14-19). Most fundamentally, the uniqueness of Christ Church as an institution, and of the Deanship as an office, can be seen most clearly in the uniqueness of John as a person. It will not be easy to find a comparable successor.

Ben McFarlane
Pennington’s Student in Law & Co-Editor, Christ Church Matters

Cardinal Sins

NOTES FROM THE ARCHIVES

In a corner of the City of Oxford Museum is a small fire engine that belongs to Christ Church. The Treasurer’s disbursement book for 1808/9, which is kept in the Muniment Room, records the expenditure of £20 3s on a ‘new small fire engine’ supplied by a Mr Birdson. Its purchase, along with that of a number of leather buckets, was made on the advice of a University Committee, set up on 20 March 1809, to consider the best means for guarding against the ‘ravages of fire’. The University bought itself a new engine, sent men to London to be trained in its use and a permanent volunteer fire brigade was established.

Both the University and Christ Church were responding to the great fire which broke out in Tom Quad on the night of 3 March that year. It was first discovered around midnight in the roof space of the south-west bastion. The fire burnt so fiercely that it was feared the Hall and Tom Tower were both in danger. However, Town and Gown came together in a huge concerted effort; bucket chains of undergraduates, senior members, college servants, and townsmen passed water between Mercury and the fire. The Oxford Loyal Volunteer regiment turned out in force and, with the assistance of fire engines from colleges, churches, and businesses all over Oxford, everything was brought under control by 5 am. No lives were lost – the only injury was, apparently, to Mr Smith of Oriel College who dislocated his knee trying to force open a door – but the whole of the south-west side of Tom Quad, probably the quarters that Wolsey himself had used when he visited Oxford, was gutted. The Dean and Chapter sent letters to the University and to the Mayor – ‘...they do not offer their thanks simply for the assistance that was given, but much more, and much more strongly, for that zealous and active benevolence, which united all in a common cause, and which alone could have produced and supported the severe exertions of the night’.

One of the greatest concerns on the night of 3 March 1809 was the fate of the Hall. Only by valiant efforts and sheer good fortune – there was no wind that night – was it saved. This was not the first time, however, that Christ Church had come close to losing perhaps Wolsey’s greatest contribution to the college. In 1720, the splendid roof caught fire when choristers were burning the Christmas decorations in the open central grate. The damage was so great that the roof as it is now is almost entirely an eighteenth century reconstruction of the original, funded largely by a generous gift from George I. As further precautions, the fire was moved from its medieval position in the centre of the room, the side fireplaces were constructed and the stone vault under the Hall (now the ceiling of the Law Library) was built.

Another serious fire, when Dr Gardner’s lodgings burnt down on 19 November 1669, required quite drastic action to prevent real disaster. The house stood roughly where the east end of Meadows Building now is and the fire burnt violently towards the Priory House, the Old Library, and the Cathedral. To create a firebreak, part of the Priory House and one end of the Chaplain’s Quad were blown up with gunpowder. Gardner was relocated to grander new accommodation in Kilcanon, but it was evidently determined that such an explosive technique would not have to be used again. In 1670 he funded the digging of the reservoir in the centre of Tom Quad, and the erection of the fountain in the centre. It cost more than £250, and the Dean and Chapter promised that both reservoir and fountain would be maintained in perpetuity. And what good fortune that the promise has been kept; without Mercury it is possible that the whole of the south side of Tom Quad would have been lost in 1809, and those undergraduate and student fire-watchers on the roof of the Library in 1941 would have had been less assured of their and the College’s safety.

Judith Curthoys
Archivist
Access, Equity, Excellence

‘Access’ is much in the news. Figures show startlingly high, and apparently widening, differentials in access to higher education across social classes. A government White Paper is now exhorting Britain’s top universities (and not just Oxford) to do something about it. The sector has been threatened with an ‘access regulator’. Formidable sums have been announced to assist those universities with high drop-out rates to retain students. And now the inevitable reaction has set in. Independent schools believe they are competing on a worryingly un-level playing field. There are threats of boycotts and legal action. Higher education is in the political firing line. Trust between everyone involved – candidates, parents, schools, and academics – is at risk.

Against this unpromising background it is worth emphasising some simple truths about access, admissions and equity. The first is that in Oxford we select our students solely on merit. Our task is to deliver a top-quality education to those who most deserve it. As individual subject tutors, we want to educate the best and brightest. We are interested only in how they will perform in the Oxford environment and how much they will benefit from the tutorial system.

That requires equity of treatment and a high degree of professionalism. We seek out potential, and we do so by various routes. We bring candidates to Oxford and keep them here - sometimes for as long as three days. We give them at least two interviews. We set tests that are independent of what candidates can be prepared for. We probe the ability of candidates to think critically, analytically, and with imagination. But there are limits to this. There are also skills and knowledge – in science, mathematics, languages, history – without which students simply cannot keep up and benefit from what Oxford has to offer. Making judgements that balance existing achievement against potential requires a high level of professionalism. It has to lie where it is performed most effectively – with the individual and collective efforts of the admissions tutors.

Keeping it there is even more important against the background of another truth: that access to most Oxford colleges has never been more competitive than it is today. Christ Church, like most former men’s colleges, went co-educational twenty years ago. From that decision, the pool of talent has now doubled. Meanwhile the number and quality of top-class independent day schools has also increased. Encouragement to candidates from state schools has generated a much greater flow from that source too, while the beginnings of a global market for undergraduate higher education is even swelling overseas demand.

Sadly, growing numbers of applicants and a more or less fixed number of places means more disappointment. Today, most candidates apply with A-level predictions at the three-\(A\) standard or above. All the more reason for applying standards of unswerving fairness in selection and of making sure we probe for qualities that are not revealed by A-level grades alone.

In this there is no room for complacency. We need to be transparent and robust in what we do, and examine our performance regularly and honestly. In the last two decades we have tried hard to do so. But against the sorts of pressures we now face we also need to keep hold of further truth: we are here solely to provide education; we can admit students on no other basis than merit and proven potential. Oxford needs to be open to the best and brightest wherever they come from and makes no apologies for seeking out that talent from every quarter. However, its tutors cannot be turned into social engineers, still less can they be held responsible for the consequences of underlying class inequalities or long-term under-funding of state-provided secondary education.

Dr DAVID HINE
Tutor in Politics

Coming Back to the House

What would you read anyway?’ asked the Dean. ‘I haven’t a clue,’ I replied.

We were sitting in the Deanery after dinner with our wives, just chatting. When the question arose as to what I would do after I retired in a couple of years I said I thought I might do a study course of some kind. ‘Well why don’t you come back here? After all you are a member of the House already.’ And so the idea, which had honestly never occurred to me, was born.

Forty years on the House is a different world from the one we knew, when post-war rationing was a thing of the recent past and there were perhaps a dozen decent restaurants in all England – about half of them within reach of Oxford! The food in Hall is miles better than it was, and as often as not it is a real pleasure to eat there (the value of the wines in the Buttery is as good as ever!). For another thing, the academic standards are awesomely high and work is taken with real seriousness, though by no means to the exclusion of play.

Most striking for my generation however is the presence of women, who make up just under half the college and who have brought a welcome sense of naturalness to its social life.

We older ones are touchingly well received at all levels. Having lunch with one of the professors during the long vac, he commented how much fun we were to teach; we tend to do a good deal more work than is strictly required (!) and above all we are not overawed by dons, so we challenge them by answering back. ‘It keeps us on our toes,’ he said. ‘So why don’t you make it a policy to recruit some more?’ I asked. Hence this article...

Be assured, an encounter with the House in later life is a wonderful, bracing shot of ozone through the brain. Most often I am asked if the sheer business of learning facts isn’t a lot harder when you get older. The answer is an emphatic ‘no’; for education is not a question of memorising facts but of absorbing them. Anyone, particularly a regular reader, who has spent a lifetime in the civilized world, does not need to learn ‘the facts’ about the Renaissance or Communism. Such concepts have become part of our normal field of discourse, and so without realising it we already have a much better context for absorbing new material than when we had just left school. Moreover, crucially, a working career engrains good habits.

We know how to get up in the morning, to a working career engrains good habits. We have always looked for potential as well as achievement. We set tests that are independent of what candidates can be prepared for. We probe the ability of candidates to think critically, analytically, and with imagination.

But there are limits to this. There are also skills and knowledge – in science, mathematics, languages, history – without which students simply cannot keep up and benefit from what Oxford has to offer. Making judgements that balance existing achievement against potential requires a high level of professionalism. It has to lie where it is performed most effectively – with the individual and collective efforts of the admissions tutors.

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Wells for India: Saving and Transforming life in India’s poorest communities

Wells for India is a charity founded by Christ Church GCR’s first President, Dr Nicholas Grey. It is committed to helping India’s poorest rural communities. In January, the Revd Ralph Williamson, the College Chaplain at Christ Church, travelled to the drought-stricken areas of Rajasthan to see its work.

In Rajasthan’s Thar Desert, the people follow a way of life which has changed little in hundreds of years, farming when there is rain and keeping cattle, goats and camels in a beautiful landscape of sand dunes, scattered trees, peacocks and thorn bushes. The only water is what falls from the sky, mostly in one week at the end of June. In summer the temperatures soar as high as 50° C, with sand and dust storms choking the burning air.

In their fourth year of severe drought, the people are suffering deeply. Agriculture has virtually ceased, leaving three quarters of the population without work, food or income. Animals have died in large numbers and last October The Independent newspaper reported the deaths of children. Only deliveries of water by tractor-tanker, paid for by Wells for India supporters, are keeping the poorest communities alive.

The vision which has motivated Nicholas and Mary Grey since they founded Wells for India in 1987 is simple: access to clean water for the poorest people, their crops and families and the removal of the deprivation caused to women by the endless search for water. Securing water can change the life of the whole community, as attention shifts from survival to development and education.

My visit to Pabupura convinced me that, despite the terrible drought, this vision is slowly becoming a reality through Wells for India and its local partner, the GRAVIS Rural Development Organisation.

Life is being made better, even in the most severe conditions, through a wide but integrated range of activities, including:

- collecting rainwater and building water storage tanks
- delivering emergency water supplies by tractor-drawn tankers
- constructing hi-tech tubewells
- literacy and health initiatives
- re-forestation and fruit tree projects
- low-tech deepening of village ponds in readiness for the monsoon
- food-aid distribution to the most needy
- encouraging women’s self-help groups
- construction of permanent water storage tanks
- food-aid distribution to the most needy
- secure the renewal of ten traditional bories, underground caverns which each collect and store half a million litres of monsoon water for the use of the whole community.

As peacocks strutted across the dry ground and goats wandered in and out the thorn-bush fences, the people of Pabupura were keen to prove to us that they are facing their difficult futures with dignity and hope. I came away moved by their courage and by the practical compassion of the people who work for Wells for India and its dedicated Indian partners.

If you can help Wells for India or would like to know more about their work, please contact them at Wells for India, The Winchester Centre, 68 George Street, WINCHESTER SO23 8AH (tel. 01962 848043). Their website is at www.wellsforindia.com

The Chaplain with a village leader near Diyatra, where donations from Christ Church Cathedral, the JCR and GCR have paid for the renewal of ten traditional bories, underground caverns which each collect and store half a million litres of monsoon water for the use of the whole community.

Two New Lecture Rooms – Thanks to Old Members

Thanks to the overwhelming support and generosity of our Old Members following the 2001 Telethon appeal, both the College’s principal Lecture Rooms will be refurbished during the Easter vacation. We initially set out to raise funds for the refurbishment of Lecture Room Two. The support we received surpassed our target by so much we are also able to refurbish Lecture Room One.

The four-week project will be completed in time for the beginning of Trinity Term. These improvements will make a vast difference to tutors and members who regularly use both lecture rooms, and will greatly enhance the facilities that we are able to offer to Conference clients. Space Efficient Interiors will carry out the work following the excellent refurbishment of Old Library One in the early autumn.

Lecture Room 1 – This room will now have fixed seating with writing tables for 50 people – the room will also have a centre aisle, making the room much more practical and accessible. A raised platform at the front of the room will make it particularly suitable for lectures.

Lecture Room 2 – This now offers great flexibility of layout, including: Theatre style (up to 60), U Shape style (up to 19) and Boardroom style (up to 16). As an important contribution to making Christ Church more accessible, Lecture Room 2 will also be fitted with a hearing induction loop.

Both rooms will be re-decorated and re-carpeted and have state of the art teaching and conference facilities, including: data projectors, Internet connections and telephone lines.

Thank you to all of you who contributed to this appeal; you have literally made this work possible. We hope you are as heartened as we are, to see very tangible and immediate results of your kindness. A recognition plaque is being placed in each of the rooms to acknowledge those who have contributed to the upgrading of these rooms.

ALEX WEBB Conference Administrator
Robert Hooke joined the House in 1653 as a servitor and became assistant to Thomas Willis, the College’s teacher of Anatomy and Chemistry, living in Willis’ house Beam Hall in Merton Street. There he studied with his talented contemporaries John Locke and (Sir) Christopher Wren as they engaged in the new concept of discovery by experimentation.

Robert Boyle came to Oxford at about this time and Hooke moved on to work with him in helping to develop the air pump which led to the formulation of Boyle’s Law.

Hooke matriculated in 1653, never took his BA and was admitted as an MA in 1653 after he had gone with Boyle to the Royal Society in London.

Robert Hooke was one of Christ Church’s most outstanding scientists and, fittingly, the tercentenary commemoration of his life and work will take place on Thursday 2nd October 2003 under the auspices of the House.

It will take the form of a one-day public symposium, meeting in the Examination Schools and with a luncheon in Hall at Christ Church.

I suspect many Christ Church undergraduates never make it up the sweeping marble staircase to the Upper Library. That is their loss, for the room that houses the main early printed book collections of the House is one of the finest in Oxford and is rarely seen by the public. The leather-bound volumes that line its shelves are not merely there for show however – this is the richest collection of early books in the University outside the Bodleian. It has as its core the personal libraries of four old members of the College from the 17th and 18th centuries: the polymath Dean Henry Aldrich; William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury; Canon William Walton. Bindings range in style from the sturdy productions of local binderies in the 16th century, often using medieval manuscripts as end leaves, to elaborately finished bespoke bindings for dukes and archbishops, and may come from as near at hand as Cat Street or as far afield as Tranquebar in India.

Despite these bibliographical riches the library remains less well known than it should be. A library is nothing without a catalogue, and Christ Church’s collections have never been fully described for the first time range from over 12,000 books have been catalogued, chiefly material printed abroad between the 15th and 18th centuries. Books which are now catalogued can only half be used. It is hoped that a new catalogue compiled as a matter of urgency.

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The catalogue was revised in the 1930s by W G Hiscock but its inadequacies remained – in the late 1960s the then Librarian was calling for a new catalogue to be compiled as a matter of urgency.

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**Alice Chess Set**

The Library’s Lewis Carroll collection has benefited from the generous gift of a magnificent chess set, depicting characters from *Through The Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*. The pieces were designed and carved by Margaret (Meg) Emes Chappell, an accomplished American artist, who sadly died in 2001 at the age of 49. Her parents, Dr. and Mrs. Bartlett Chappell of Pinehurst, North Carolina, wished to find a home for the chess set where it could be preserved and enjoyed in memory of their daughter, and, happily for us, they thought of Christ Church. Their initial contact by e-mail in September 2002 was followed by the arrival of the chess set in November, accompanied by the Chappell’s good friends Jack and Mallory Hickey. We were sorry that the Chappells were unable to come themselves, but we were delighted to be able to welcome and entertain the Hickeys.

The chess set is beautifully carved, with many delicate details, such as the old Sheep’s knitting and the wisps of hay protruding from the bag round the neck of Haigha, the Anglo-Saxon messenger. Alice is a white pawn, as indeed she is at the start of the book, but she is holding the crown which she will wear at the end of the book when she becomes a queen. The pieces include characters from the poem ‘Jabberwocky’: a Slithy Tove (described by Humpty Dumpty as something like a badger, something like a lizard and something like a corkscrew), two Mome Raths (a sort of green pig) and a pair of Borogoves (a thin shabby-looking bird with its feathers sticking out all round, something like a live mop). Among the most charming characters are the little Oysters: the pair on the red side have red shoes, while those on the white side have white shoes.

Meg Chappell had a passion for Lewis Carroll, and this chess set was one of her favourite pieces. She was once offered $15,000 for it, but chose to keep it as part of her personal collection. As an artist, she was meticulous in

**One Foot in the Quad**

December 1953: I turned up, with hope and a hot-water bottle, to take the Oxford Entrance Examination. My neoteric grammar school (school motto from Marx, school song by Auden) had little to go on, and so we decided that I should try the first college in the first group, which happened to be Christ Church. It was an occasion – my first suit, the unimagined splendour of Tom Quad, the last rabbit pie before mixomatosis. Even the examiners appealed to propriety – if we allow this, said Edward Burn, then Senior Censor. Large is it; and so for forty years I’ve watched the world from Killcanon 8, Canons gardening on one side, the Library rising like a pristine Palmrya on the other. At some point I evolved into a professor, but it was one of Henry VIII’s professorships: the new chair enjoyed the old view.

Through *The Looking-Glass* Chess Set by Meg Chappell

Our society too has evolved. In 1964 there were real seniors – Dundas; Roy Harrod; the volcanic Dean Simpson (always anxious to get downstairs for a cigarette, so that the High Table consumed its four courses at lightning speed). There was usually dessert after dinner, the newcomer did well to take cover, at least before the bridge began. Meetings of the Governing Body were less passive than now, and went on longer; Dean Simpson had his way of hastening closure – ‘Now for God’s sake, it’s teatime, let’s get this done with.’ Conservatists fought it out, most politely, with middle-aged Radicals (who referred to their elders as ‘The Colonels’).

The battles make a social history in miniature. Should we continue to require white tie and tail coat for the Gaudy? Should we acquire a television set for the Smoking Room? (Carried by an alliance of bachelors and cricketers.) Should we replace the black leather arm-chairs (five of them only) with something more comfortable? (The papers of the Committee on Domestic Comfort deserve a place in the archives.) And of course there was the question of women. Originally, women guests (defined as ‘academic females’) were allowed to dine twice a term. When the radicals pressed for more, the conservatives appealed to propriety – if we allow this, said one, ‘the Research Lecturers will be bringing in floozies’. Perhaps the prospect appealed; certainly the argument was won. Then, it was women tutors; then, women undergraduates. There the battle was longer and more heated. There too, the issue once settled, it took only a year or two to forget that things had ever been different. One battle of my own I fought for ten years, and lost. Tom Quad would be a grand sight, if it were closed to the motor-vehicles that destroy its harmony with their overtones of a noisy and polluted city. Where else in Oxford is a great Quad adorned with asphalt and oil-splats? But convenience has always proved more powerful than conservation.

Fifty years on, it’s time to go, though I hope to keep one foot in the quad. ‘Christ Church is too grand to be stuffy’, they told me; and I can speak to the truth of it. I owe the House humane education, liberal support, scholarly companionship and the pleasure of many friends: House, and home.

**George Parson Regius Professor of Greek**
The Oxford Alumni Association of New York

Oxford alumni based in the tri-state area of the United States are very well catered for in having two active branches of the Oxford University Society: Edition 9 of Christ Church Matters included an article about the recently established Oxonian Society – set up by two Old Members of the House, Louise Bagshawe (1989) and Joseph Pascal (1997). The Oxonian Society continues to grow from strength to strength.

In this edition the President of the Oxford Alumni Association of New York, Daniel Schlein, has kindly written the following article providing information on their programme. Joseph Lau (1999) an Old Member of the House, is actively involved on the OAANY Finance Committee.

As many Old Members are aware, Oxford and her colleges provide a wealth of opportunities for alumni to reconnect with others who have shared the Oxford experience, no matter how far from Oxford they may eventually travel. New York is no exception, with a variety of organizations providing numerous events for Oxford alumni. Founded almost a decade ago, the Oxford Alumni Association of New York (OAANY) is an official branch of the Oxford University Society, the University’s overseer of alumni chapters around the world. Since its establishment, it has served as a vibrant means for Oxonians in the New York area to participate in many alumni-oriented events.

A wide range of creative social, cultural and networking events have enriched the OAANY’s events calendar, reflecting the truly varied interests of Old Members. In 2002, for example, the group carried on its longstanding tradition of attracting outstanding speakers from the fields of business, arts, politics and diplomacy. During the past Michaelmas Term alone, alumni had the opportunity to meet the Bush Administration’s Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs; the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations and the Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States. The group’s 2003 calendar began with a visit by Professor David Cannadine, the highly entertaining and insightful historian whose new book on post-war Britain, In Churchill’s Shadow, has received widespread critical acclaim. The American television channel, C-SPAN, joined the OAANY for the evening to film Professor Cannadine’s presentation for its Book TV series.

Variety has been one of the hallmarks of the OAANY over the years as we have explored the myriad opportunities New York holds for entertaining and engaging activities. Our series of casual and informal young alumni happy hours, pub quizzes and other gatherings around town has proven very popular with the University’s recent graduates. Other social activities such as wine tastings and networking receptions attract a diverse group of alumni from many fields. Cultural activities continue to be among the most popular we organize, including our recent visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for an extraordinary display of Leonardo da Vinci drawings, as well as our regular group visits to plays and concerts.

While the OAANY sometimes partners other groups to enhance the range of its offerings for Oxonians living in New York, it will never lose its essential character as an association which exists chiefly for the benefit of all tri-state Oxford alumni and friends of the University. We are always seeking creative ways of working with Oxford, her colleges and newer University entities such as the Said Business School to enhance their profiles in the New York area and support their programmes and activities wherever possible.

We welcome Christ Church Old Members to our events and invite them to join us in developing interesting and stimulating programmes.

For more information, you can contact us at info@oxalumny.org or visit us on the web at www.oxalumny.org.

Daniel Schlein
President, OAANY

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The Christ Church Series is run in collaboration with Academic Study & Travel
Second in the Christ Church Series of late summer conferences on the theme of international conflict

‘Churchill and Roosevelt: The Atlantic Alliance’

Sunday 31 August –
Friday 5 September 2003
at Christ Church, Oxford

A comprehensive residential programme at one of Oxford’s premier college conference venues.

This five-day event provides an accessible and scholarly examination of the role of two towering 20th Century figures in the evolution of the Atlantic Alliance from World War II to the present day, and includes lectures by leading historians as well as tutored excursions, and a diverse social, cultural and hospitality programme.

For brochure with detailed information please contact:
Churchill & Roosevelt Programme
The Steward’s Office
Christ Church
Oxford OX1 1DP
**Churchill and Roosevelt – the Atlantic Alliance:**
31 August to 5 September 2003

The detailed programme is now available for this year’s conference on the theme of conflict, second in the *Christ Church Series*. The list of conference speakers is fortunate again to include Professor Sir Michael Howard, formerly Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford and a member of the House, who will be examining *Churchill, Roosevelt and the War in the Far East*. Professor Warren Kimball, Professor of History at Rutgers University, New Jersey, an academic and writer with challenging views on Churchill’s achievements, is crossing the Atlantic to be the event’s opening speaker. The distinguished speaker list also includes Professor Alex Danchev from Keele University and Dr Geoffrey Best of St Antony’s College, Oxford, author of an acclaimed Churchill biography – *Churchill: a Study in Greatness*.

This year’s Christ Church conference includes a day visit to Winston Churchill’s birthplace: Blenheim Palace, home of the Duke of Marlborough. The Duke’s Archivist, John Forster, will be speaking on *Churchill and Blenheim*.

Bookings have opened, and despite international uncertainties, at the time of going to press there has been an encouraging number of bookings from delegates who attended last year’s memorable programme: *Enigma and the Intelligence War*.

I believe we have another challenging subject of wide and topical appeal. The event has again been designed to encourage members of the House to come back to Oxford and experience a stimulating, scholarly and social event in their old college.

A £50 price reduction is offered to members of the House and a copy of the conference prospectus will gladly be mailed or e-mailed. Please contact: Alex Webb, Conference and Events Administrator, tel 01865 276174; fax 01865 286326; e-mail churchill@chch.ox.ac.uk

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**Son et Lumiére Culinaire at the House**

Elizabeth I watched a play, Charles II held his parliament, Charlie Chaplin came to dinner after taking his degree and, by his own calculation, Lewis Carroll ate eight thousand meals here. But even with this pedigree, Christ Church Hall broke new ground just before Christmas when it was the venue for the first Oxford ACE (Awards for College Excellence).

College bursars have introduced an awards scheme for the approximately three thousand College support staff employed by the collegiate University, and the ACE Dinner was the culmination of a year of competition for four prizes.

Christ Church achieved finalist short-listing in all four categories. Mark Thompson, who has worked in the College kitchens for over two years, carried off the *Young Chef of the Year* award. His prize was presented by guest of honour Raymond Blanc and includes a trip to the annual National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago.

Whilst members should not anticipate seeing a laser light show at their next Gaudy, the ACE event did yield some memorable images.

**John Harris**
The Steward of Christ Church
**Farewell to the Dean**

With the Dean's departure to take up the position of Chaplain of All Souls the Editors felt that tributes were due from many quarters. John Drury has been Dean of the House since October 1991. He will leave at the end of September 2003. Seven friends and colleagues have provided their perspective in this article. We are grateful to the contributors for sharing the immense warmth and respect felt for John Drury. He will be much missed.

**The Dean and the Cathedral**

The unique status of Christ Church as both College and Cathedral places a special burden on the Dean to ensure that all parts work together. John Drury has achieved this with a combination of deep trust and a very close eye for detail. Thus the day to day life of the Cathedral is very much in the hands of those in the Cathedral office and the vergers; at the same time the lay out of service sheets, the behaviour of the choir and the aesthetic implications of changes to lighting or new installations have all been very finely supervised by the Dean. John's experience at Norwich Cathedral and King's College, Cambridge has given him a feel for the very best. This has been true also of his sermons, which are always scholarly and thoughtful (but not without humour). His statutory requirement to preach at Christmas and Easter was turned by him into a new genre-explaining doctrine through the insights of great paintings. This has led to a major book, a TV series and others taking up his example.

His time as Dean has been marked by the clearance of a lot of clutter from the Cathedral; a new lighting system which won an award; the Bell Altar; a new portable organ; the rebuilding of St Frideswide's shrine and new memorials to leading College figures like Locke, Ruskin and the Wesleys. Cathedral and King's College, Cambridge has given him a feel for the very best. This has been true also of his sermons, which are always scholarly and thoughtful (but not without humour). His statutory requirement to preach at Christmas and Easter was turned by him into a new genre-explaining doctrine through the insights of great paintings. This has led to a major book, a TV series and others taking up his example.

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John's vision for the academic life of the House is well captured by his foreword to the College prospectus. Happiness, he tells the reader, is the leading light of the lives here in education and research. From their first arrival he has made it clear to graduates and undergraduates that this happiness is to be sought by their relieving the opportunities available, but his message has also been that this personal enrichment is to take place in the context of a co-operative community, and not as part of a self-interested competition.

It would be a mistake to suppose that his contribution to the academic life of the College can be gauged by looking from the outside; by looking at the outward forms. Nevertheless he has, in fact, been responsible for significant changes in these outward forms. He has instituted 'rolling reviews' of subjects within the College - opportunities to gauge the health of the various subjects, not least by encouraging tutors and pupils to make their own assessments, and typically he has made sure that he has received plenty of input from the undergraduates by involving them as well as tutors in the discussions. He has made sure that the assessment forms that undergraduates fill in each term are designed to encourage them not to think passively of what their tutors have done for them, but to think of what they have done for themselves and what they hope to achieve. He has extended the time available at end of term collections. He has had individual meetings with all second year undergraduates. And of course he has entertained - lunches for fresher, drinks parties for second years; and so on.

But it is not only Junior Members who have cause to be grateful to him. Senior Members too have enjoyed the same encouragement, the same interest in their doings, the same sense of being valued.

On a broader cultural front he has made notable contributions in the field of Art. First there is the Art Room. The provision of an art room and an art tutor was entirely his doing, and provided for by decanal funds. Needless to say this makes Christ Church unique - in yet another respect. And then there is his recent book, Painting the Word, and his television broadcasts this Christmas, Painting the Christmas Story: sensitive, inspirational, delightful.

'It is an uneasy lot at best,' George Eliot remarks, 'to be what we call highly taught and yet not to enjoy: to be present at this great spectacle of life and never to be liberated from a small hungry shivering self.' John has fostered a pursuit of learning such as to nourish, to warm and, above all, to bring joy.

**The Dean’s Secret Life**

It may come as a surprise to some members of Christ Church that once the Dean has put down his theological texts for the day, he takes a close interest in a very different organisation. An organisation where the participants are young, wild and have little regard for convention or even decorum. Their dress sense frequently challenges the boundaries of decency and they indulge in a notorious nightlife.

On second thoughts, perhaps Oval House is very similar to Christ Church after all, and John Drury’s appreciation of this has underpinned his loyalty and commitment to Oval House throughout his time as our President. Oval House, in South London, was founded by Christ Church graduates in the 1980’s as a very progressive version of the philanthropic missions of the time. The Red Hat Balls ensured the survival and financial development of the activities and facilities, and Oval House was entirely dependent on donations raised through the founding Christ Church churches and others.

As a busy theatre and arts centre, Oval House maintains the original ethos and vision at the heart of our work. Based amidst the highest levels of urban deprivation, we use the arts to enable young people to discover their true potential, imaginatively, intellectually, spiritually and emotionally. Whether it be our Back on Track course which uses drama to enable young people excluded from school to re-ignite their relationship with learning, or the youth arts programme in which talented but disadvantaged young people work with professionals in order to explore the limits of their creativity, this is where our true links with Christ Church lie. John Drury has always understood and appreciated the role of the arts in the most fundamental and enlightening approach to education.

During his 12 years as our President he has introduced Oval House to a closer relationship with the Governing Body, the Association, the JCR and SCR. He has chaired our meetings with wisdom and humour (and arts folk can be very unruly), and most valuable of all, backed us up in his belief that young people in any circumstance deserve the best education and opportunities.

**John Drury – The Dean**

Do you have any aspirations? David Hine asked me at my interview fourteen years ago. I told him that I just wanted to get from one end of the day to the other to the best of my ability, without too much fuss or bother. When, five years later, I was asked whether I would move from the Tutors’ Secretary’s office to become the Dean’s Secretary, I was worried that my aspirations would have to change. Although the Dean’s job varies from long term planning, regular committee meetings and...
dealing with sudden crises, from the very exciting to the most humdrum activities, I’ve found, as his secretary, that my original aspiration still works. The Dean is a master of the understatement and a prince of prioritisation. He has taught me to streamline his day, helping me to cut out the unnecessary and adding his special magic of dry humour which makes for a very happy working environment.

Life in the Deanery is never the same from one day to the next. People are always coming in and out, bringing a range of interesting and important matters. The regular meetings with the Censors and with the Cathedral Clergy are fixed points each week in term when the business of College and Cathedral is discussed. The sometimes very serious business is lightened by the presence of the Dean’s pets. The place of the much-loved King Charles spaniel, Toby, was taken by a very lively terrier, Twiggy who likes to play a positive role in the proceedings.

Life as the Dean’s Secretary is very unpredictable and a great delight. I shall miss getting from one end of the day to the other with John and Clare, who will be a very hard act to follow.

JAN BOLONGARO The Dean’s Secretary

The Old Members’ Dean

When John Drury retires at the end of this academic year, American resident Old Members will be losing a valued friend and a sympathetic supporter, who has made the effort to get to know a sizeable number of us over the years. I refer not only to the series of dinners in both New York and Washington, hosted by The American Friends’, which John and Clare have attended, but also to the individual visits which so many of us have enjoyed at the House. At the Deanery, each of us invariably received a warm welcome, a drink or a meal, and the companionship of two thoughtful, charming hosts.

The office of the Dean of Christ Church is sui generis – being concomitantly religious, academic and administrative, often in ways mysterious to the outside world. To these John has added yet another role, that of ambassador to the not insignificant body of Old Members here in the U.S. In this role he brought us closer to the thoughtful, supportive community of the House and its alumni. We are so much the better for his presence among us and his concern for our well being.

Nothing could have exemplified John’s qualities better than his reaction to the terrible events of 9/11. His letter to all American resident Old Members engendered a widespread and heartfelt response. For those of us present at the American Friends’ dinner in his honour in March 2002 (which took place within a few hundred yards of Ground Zero), his remarks on 9/11 and its implications for human society as a whole, led to a prolonged standing ovation.

The Junior Members’ Dean

I remember walking round Meadows in Trinity 2002 and meeting the Dean. Toby, his well-known eccentric dog joyed and surprised, brushing my feet with some suspicion (I should note that the Dean’s cat is more promiscuous in her affections and is a regular intimate in Canterbury). The Dean remembered mine and my companion’s names immediately and enquired about our eighties, who were to row that afternoon. Such an encounter is typical. Undergraduates meet the Dean in Collections and at the lunches or drinks, but it is striking how well informed he manages to be as to the goings on in College and to the particulars of individuals. Anyone who stays beyond the three short years of an undergraduate degree must notice how quickly faces come and go, and it is remarkable that the Dean is able to fulfil his role as the Head of College with such integrity.

Michaelmas first year brings each new member an invitation to the Deanery, where the rich and idiosyncratic personality of John Drury is quickly apparent. It is an opportunity to meet and speak with him outside more formal contexts and also a chance to see his pottery, one of his many artistic interests. But the purpose of these invitations is also symbolic. They represent a personal welcome into the House. Trinity third year, then, will bring the final visit and there is something rather fitting in these gestures of hospitality. They contribute to a sense of privilege in belonging.

No body of students would be whole without its bones of contention; and the Dean will, doubtless, have seen many come and go. I have witnessed his dealings with individuals and with students collectively. What is most striking is his firm commitment to the ideal of Christ Church as a community. In years when the College has needed to rely more and more on its own resources this sense of the common endeavour has helped to counteract any sense of us and them, and brought the focus back on the interests of the House. Whatever their view on a matter, the Junior Member has been able to rely on the Dean’s fairness and impartiality in weighing-up the different interests of our College for the present and the future, but without disregarding the past. That said, successive generations of JCR committees will testify that it was very often the Dean who could be relied upon to back the undergraduates’ cause in the various Committees, when faced with the conscientious pragmatism of the Treasurer and Steward.

RALPH MCCLELLAND JCR President 1999-2000

John Drury – Head of House

By virtue of the office itself, the Dean of Christ Church is necessarily a person much in view in Oxford. He is the head of one of the most distinguished colleges – imposing in architecture, distinctive in history and fortunate in the support of successive generations of members. The ecclesiastical character confers a special quality too on the office, more subtle now perhaps than in the more distant past but none the less perceptible. However, individual Deans have engaged themselves formally in the business of the University with quite differing degrees of intensity and visibility.

It has never suited John Drury’s temperament, I think, nor indeed his sense of what is important, to put himself forward for election to the governing bodies of the University, nor want to spend time in those useful but time consuming groups which address particularly thorny problems. His very real influence on the life of the collegiate university has been exercised more discretely and often in a very private way.

An excellent example of that was the part he played in the resolution of the conflict between Oxfbridge and the government over college fees in 1997-8. He took an active lead in at an early stage to help clarify the issues by providing a college context where officials could discuss and explain matters informally. He took the lead also in organising support among Old Members in Parliament. Finally, he was instrumental in a quiet way in keeping the colleges together behind the University’s approach to the problem.

Indeed, from my personal point of view, I feel considerable gratitude to him for his support for the Vice-Chancellor in what are difficult times. It does, I think, exemplify the qualities which have both endeared him to and given him stature among his colleagues. He has, and displays, firmly held principles, but he declares them with courtesy and gentleness. He is committed to the general good and to the good of Christ Church and the University within which it stands. To those ends, he brings reason and restraint to debate, a commitment to dialogue and a talent for personal friendship. Those who work in universities are predisposed to admire good arguments and to salute principle, but they are not always adept at restraint and dialogue. It is these very personal qualities that have given John Drury his influence in the collegiate university during his period as Dean.

COLIN LUCAS Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford
A great deal is happening. The University now has a new Chancellor, Mr Chris Patten. Unfortunately the unexpected occurrence and speed of the process have meant that we were not able to alert you to the hospitality being provided by the House to its old members during the election days. Hopefully those of you who voted will have learned of it through other means however. We know that over 200 of you came to the lunch in Hall on either the Friday or the Saturday, which was by all accounts, a great success.

This autumn our own Dean, John Drury, retires after 12 years which have seen considerable challenges to the future not just of the House but of the whole University. The Dean has steered a well-balanced course through these choppy waters but further storms lie ahead.

There is a chance to say goodbye to the Dean when he and his wife attend our Dinner in Hall on 20th September: more information is on these pages.

There is also an opportunity to learn more about the increasingly controversial issues of university and college admissions at a lecture by Dr David Hine at our summer event on 28th June, again more information can be found in these pages. We hope that this will be the centerpiece of a varied and fascinating Open Day. This year our AGM will take place at 6 pm prior to our Dinner on 20th September. I hope that as many as possible of you will attend and I am pleased to report that the Committee is doing well in attracting a greater number of our younger and female candidates but more are always appreciated.

I am also pleased to be able to publish in this issue a letter from one of our older members, Geoffrey Athelng Wagner 1939, sharing a number of reminiscences. I hope that you will enjoy these memories of a time gone by and that others of you will write with more for us to publish in the future.

As ever we are always interested to hear your comments and ideas so do share them with us.

Finally I would like to thank Fiona Holdsworth for already taking on the editing of a considerable amount of these Association pages and for being willing to take on the Editorship from the next issue.

NICK ALEXANDER 1973

City Reception on 27th November 2002

Seventy seven members of the House, who matriculated between 1945 and 1998, employed in positions as varied as co-head of Corporate Equity Advisory and Head of Institutional Debt Placement, met in Lloyd’s Old Library, which was neither old because it was built in 1980, nor a library as it has no books. The meeting was a success and people appeared to enjoy themselves. We were fortunate to have representatives from Christ Church in Dean John Drury, David Hine and the Christ Church Development Office, together with members of the Oval House.

It was a great pleasure for those of us who work in the City to renew our association with Christ Church and with fellow Housemen and to forget the difficult anxieties of working in the City at the present time. John Drury spoke at the meeting about the role of Christ Church and advised us of the position of the Oxford College of Christ Church in the difficult environment that this Government places on educational establishments of the quality of Christ Church.

We were particularly fortunate that the Dean came to the meeting as he will retire next July and therefore it gave us an opportunity to meet him before he leaves the House. It was also a great pleasure to meet representatives from the Oval House and to hear more of their valuable work.

We intend to hold another meeting at Lloyd’s and those of you who have not seen the building, nor the collection of antique silver that Lloyd’s presented to Nelson after the battle of Trafalgar, which is in close proximity to the Old Library, are very welcome. The meeting tended to be dominated by many of us who sadly are nearing the end of our careers in the City, rather than those at the beginning and also many more male than female. It is hoped that those who matriculated more recently from Christ Church will come next year and also more women who have left Christ Church and work in the City. It is also a great pleasure that many people brought their wives or husbands and friends and this made a most relaxing occasion. If anyone who attended the meeting, or those who did not, has any particular suggestions on any changes of the time or nature of the meeting, please contact me and I would be very happy to discuss it.

NICK NOPS 1968

Association Dinner in Hall
Friday 20th September 2003

It will be two years since the last Association Dinner in Hall and if previous experience is anything to go by this should be an excellent evening. Past dinners have been amongst the best supported and most popular of Association events and this year’s will be even more special as it will mark the retirement of the Dean, John Drury, who has been held in increasingly warm and high regard by members young and old.

We are pleased to be able to announce that the Dean and his wife Clare will be our guests of honour for the evening.

In response to requests from members, you may bring a guest.

Tickets will be sold on a first come first served basis. The ticket price is £49 per person. This includes three courses, aperitif, wine and port.

If you would like to book one, rooms in College are available for the night at a price of £30 per person for a standard room or £45 per person for rooms with en suite facilities.

There is a chance to say goodbye to the Dean and his wife Clare who have left Christ Church and work in the City. It is our hope that you will join us for what should be a very pleasant and entertaining evening and a chance to say goodbye to our Dean.

To book tickets please contact the Development Office on Tel. 01865 286598, Fax. 01865 286587 or E-mail development.office@chch-ox.ac.uk.

Web Enabled?

We originally intended to write an article advertising the new web pages on http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/alumni. To this end we contacted a number of people who had recently been into the site, to get their comments. Thank you to those of you who did respond with quotes. Sadly there were so many frustrations that the article would have been a depressing read.

Somewhat concerned I spoke to College. They were aware of a number of the web problems but were keen to get as much feedback on the site from Old Members as they could. As a result of the comments, a decision has been made to undertake a major review of the website.

Pending the major review, some of the problems have already been addressed. Those of you who have used the site will know of the password issues. Some progress has already been made here with all the passwords now in lower case and no passwords being issued with the number one (1) or zero (0).

There is still a lot of work to do to make the site fully user-friendly but rest assured, the issues are being addressed. Christ Church would be delighted, however, to hear your comments, good or bad. So next time you log on – why not also send a mail to development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk and let them know what you think.

Old Members’ feedback will help to make the web site into the useful, informative and interactive vehicle that we would all like.

FIONA HOLDSWORTH 1981
**Association Annual General Meeting**

**FRIDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER 2003 6 PM**

The next AGM of the Association will take place at Christ Church at 6 pm on 20th September 2003 prior to the Association’s Dinner in Hall, see elsewhere in these pages.

It is hoped that as many members as possible will attend in order to give us your views on what the Association is and should be doing. We will also be electing members to the Committee. We are fortunate in already having four excellent candidates this year, but there will be more places coming up so please do let us know if you are interested in joining.

Stephen Brien is standing for re-election having already served an initial 3-year term. Tony Pastor has already given us considerable help with the Careers Advice Scheme and I am delighted that he has agreed to stand for the Committee.

**Martha Hillier**

Martha came up to Christ Church in 94 and studied English. She became involved in university theatre, ran the Christ Church Drama Society, was secretary of OUDS and directed The Oxford Revue. After College she studied for an MA in Text & Performance at RADA/KCL and worked as an assistant director at Shakespeare’s Globe. She then joined the BBC as a graduate trainee and worked on a variety of shows including EastEnders and Vic & Bob’s Families at War. She now works as a script editor in BBC Drama and is developing two films that will be directed by, coincidentally enough, Richard Curson Smith (Ch Ch 84-87)

She would like to join the Committee to concentrate on building more links with younger members.

**Fiona Holdsworth**

Fiona read Chemistry from 1981 to 1985. After Oxford she spent three years in marketing for Rover Cars before joining ACNielsen, the world’s leading marketing information company, where she held a variety of roles in marketing and communications. In 1994 she was promoted to Communications Director and became the first woman on the UK board of ACNielsen. From 1998 to 2001 she served as the senior communications executive for ACNielsen in Europe. In February 2001 Fiona became the Communications Director for Europe, Middle East & Africa for the dot com joint venture ACNielsen eRatings.com. She now is fulfilling a personal ambition and has set up her own marketing, media and PR company, Holdsworth Communications Limited.

Fiona is married to Richard Marsh, another House chemist from the 1981 intake. They have a two year old daughter, Jennifer, whom Fiona describes as ‘more fun than I could ever have imagined, more active (and occasionally dangerous) than a volcano and more inquisitive than the Inland Revenue.’

Richard and Fiona are keen walkers and recently completed a 1200 mile walk from Land’s End to John O’Groats, which took them five years, walking 10 to 15 miles each day during holidays and at weekends.

Fiona says ‘I loved my years at the House and have always enjoyed coming back to Christ Church whenever I can. The draw of dinner at High Table and meetings back in College was certainly an incentive to join the Committee and to work on the newsletter. But the real reason I joined is that I wanted to use my communications skills in a voluntary capacity to work on something which I enjoy and which will benefit others.’

**Tony Pastor**

I arrived at Christ Church in the autumn of 1990 as an English undergraduate. The then Dean told us at our matriculation dinner that the Brideshead image was dead but I’m afraid we didn’t believe him. Three years and much fun later I left with a 2.1 and the belief that anyone who survived tutorials with Peter Conrad had a reasonable chance of surviving the rest of their life.

I immediately joined the Liverpool Echo as a graduate trainee journalist and spent two years in Merseyside as a reporter before joining the BBC in London as an assistant producer in the sport department in 1995. After five years at the Beeb, which included working on two Olympic Games, the football World Cup and five seasons of Match of the Day, I left to join ITV Sport. I’m now the editor of the Premiership, ITV’s Saturday night highlights show. After nine years, I’m finally marrying my partner Sarah Shannon this summer.

When I was at college, a group of former students came back and told us about life in the media. This left an enormous impression on me, and I’d like to offer similar assistance to current undergraduates.

**Stephen Brien**

Stephen was up at Christ Church from 1989 until 1997. He is now a Partner at Mercer Management Consulting in London. He has been actively involved with the Boat Club Society and has been on the Association Committee for three years where he has been involved with keeping in touch with the younger generations in London. He has also provided some pro bono consulting services to the Cathedral and to the College.

He would be pleased to serve for a second term on the Association Committee.
In this issue we hear from five medicine graduates as they reflect on their time at the House and their subsequent careers.

Then

Now

Looking back to my time at Christ Church (1990-1996), at the time it seemed as though there was a world of difference between studying medicine and the other subjects. For a start, Medicine was very much a University based subject and I remember trudging wearily up to the Science Parks every day of the week for nine to five lectures, biochemistry practicals and anatomy demonstrations. Because of this, sometimes it seemed as though we missed out on parts of college life, even simple things such as lunch in the JCR. Christ Church was, to me, a haven to return to in the evenings, a beautiful place to live, somewhere to socialise and play sport, quite apart from the competitive world of medicine.

For Medicine is fiercely competitive and remains so in my working life today. From day one it really mattered where you came out of one hundred students in the anatomy viva and similarly six years later in the ranking schemes for your first job as a house officer. However, once I left Oxford, I realised that how well you did, didn’t depend on your intellectual abilities or your photographic memory for facts (although there is a place for that in Medicine as well). Clinical Medicine is very much a practical subject; there is no point deliberating over pros and cons when you are faced with a life-threatening emergency.

You need to make instant decisions and act immediately.

Since leaving Christ Church, like most doctors I have been lucky enough to work in a variety of different parts of the country, in different specialities and see different walks of life. I started off as a house officer by spending a year in Scotland, then went to London to do a six-month job in Accident & Emergency. Following on from there I did a two-year medical rotation to gain experience of different medical specialities while attempting to pass my post-graduate exams for the Royal College of Physicians (where the photographic memory would have been useful).

I am now a medical registrar, specialising in Gastroenterology and have found myself back in Oxford. I rotate around some of the surrounding district hospitals on a five-year programme to become a consultant. It is strange being back where I started, particularly teaching medical students having once been in their shoes. Although it’s hard at times, particularly the long hours, I count myself lucky to still enjoy my job. No two days work are the same, I am constantly learning new skills and there is real satisfaction when a patient thanks you, as you know that however hard the job, you did it well.

JAMES NEUBERGER (1968)

I went to Christ Church straight from school in 1972. I was never in much doubt that I wanted to do medicine. Coming from a middle-class, professional family, it was assumed that I would go to university and that Oxford or Cambridge would be the first choice. Then, different medical schools offered different types of medical courses. Oxford offered a pre-clinical degree course of three years when medics did a degree course in physiology (which included the first part of the BM) and after two terms, doing pharmacology, would complete the clinical course, usually in London. I did not research the different medical schools and compare their courses – I actually applied to Magdalen but was offered a place at Christ Church.

Despite coming from a medical background, my perceptions of medical life were way off beam. Visions were of a friendly, hard-working doctor, loved by his patients, striding through an idyllic countryside, curing people with old-fashioned but effective remedies. Reality is different: I ended working as a Consultant Physician and a professor of medicine in Birmingham, in one of the busiest liver transplant units in the world, trying to juggle the activities of clinical work, research and teaching: trying to do one’s best for the patients with inadequate resources and trying to meet targets that are determined more by political expediency than good governance.

Medical training has changed greatly – mostly for the better. Now, most universities offer an integrated course with an ever increasing pressure for uniformity. There is a need for variation in the types of course offered and I do hope that Oxford will continue to stand out for offering one that is more academic. Academic is not intrinsically better than vocational – just different. Post-graduate training too is becoming more formalized. The European working time directives mean most training doctors are working shorter hours but at far greater intensity, often in a shift system with patients who are sicker and more medically demanding.

If this sounds like a whinge, it is not – I enjoy what I do. Oxford provided not only a good grounding in medicine but also in science which has stood me in good stead throughout my professional life. There were only four medics in the year of about 100, so most of my social life was spent with non-medics. Regrets? Only that while at Christ Church while we were taught by some of the greatest scientists of the time I did not appreciate this: it was later that I realized the missed opportunities of, say, the tutorials with Peter Matthews. The pull of friends, beer, punting and all the other activities on offer in Oxford usually overcame the academic priorities. I appreciate Christ Church and Oxford much more now than I did at the time – I was too busy enjoying myself.

EMILY JOHNS (1990)
Let’s face it, Oxford is wasted on the young and immature. Or at least it was on me aged barely 18. Modern Languages simply got in the way of learning bridge, going to lectures and reading outside my field, honing skills on the water and the testosterone-driven pursuit of a social life! It was in some ways the best time of my life, but my goals changed and I had to change course. So I learned the medical trade in London and in 1972 went to South Africa where I have lived and worked more or less continuously ever since.

This was a good move professionally as I was able to do both general practice and specialist internal medicine (but not at the same time), as well as a stint of teaching and working in the field with paramedics. This breadth of experience allowed me to do locum consultant work in Emergency Medicine departments in the UK on my occasional visits.

The idea of going to sea became feasible once my children had grown up, and the prospect of earning an untaxed (so far) income in a hard currency was irresistible. Being a ship’s doctor requires the skills of general practice, and of internal and emergency medicine in equal measure. The responsibilities are high, but the pressure is considerably less than any clinical work in the British NHS. One has to be able to function in isolation, even on large cruise ships where there may be one or two other doctors.

On the negative side, continuing education is very difficult to pursue, and each tour of duty is four months long. This is made easier by having my wife and (occasionally) children on board during each tour, which has been a wonderful benefit particularly for the youngsters, who are now considerably better travelled than their contemporaries. On the positive side is home leave of two months at a time, hosting a table in the dining room, and the acquisition in middle age of unusual new skills, such as survival craft handling, crowd control, fire fighting and food hygiene, among others.

What an adventure!

Did my time at The House help? Not directly, perhaps, but rusty German and French, bridge, water skills, and an ability to talk sensibly on most subjects are certainly no disadvantage! And I wouldn’t have missed it for the world.

Henry Chadwick was one of the wisest of men. In collections he suggested that I was ‘hiding my light under a bushel’. After achieving a first, I turned down the chance to do research, and am now a GP in Bradford. The Dean was right but ‘all human life is here’ and I am content with my decision.

For three years (72 - 75) Christ Church was Head of the River. Witnessing the vandalism in Hall and around College after three consecutive bump suppers was good preparation for inner city life. The broken surgery windows are small beer in comparison.

During my House years, streaking around Tom Quad at midnight was quite commonplace. Nowadays, if I am called to a psychiatric patient who has been parading up and down the street in the nude (twice as far) I can hear the chimes of Old Tom echoing through the years.

The photo will give you an idea as to the means I have devised to empty a busy waiting room. I was inspired to learn to play the bagpipes after hearing them early on May Morning after returning from the festivities at Magdalen. Could this reduce waiting times throughout the NHS if adopted nationally?

The tutor-pupil relationship is sometimes like the doctor-patient one and some consultations resemble a tutorial with P B C Matthews. He told us that most preclinical science was totally irrelevant in daily medical practice. I have found this to be very true. At medical school now my daughter communicates via e-mail with her tutors for the most part. Such is progress. Perhaps people will only see their physicians electronically in the future.

From about 12, with the family GP as a role model, I intended to become a doctor. I was offered a place at Edinburgh, but chose the House on family grounds. An uncle, an Edinburgh doctor, had been at the House and loved it and my great uncle, R H Dundas, was a Student: supposedly retired. Sipping sherry one evening before Hall in his rooms – now the GCR – Sir Adrian Boult walked in to borrow a gown. I was introduced to him as a promising young horn player and was more or less offered an audition on the spot. That is the nearest the House came to directly influencing my career. Indirect influences are more subtle but difficult to quantify.

Apart from the warm glow induced in its members by the House, Oxford medical students enjoy the great advantage of mixing with non-medics for the first 3 years, slightly offset by being separated from patients until the clinical course begins. The modern trend is to blur this division.

My choice of ophthalmology was made one Saturday afternoon when I had gone fishing, during a junior hospital post in Plymouth. I decided that, fish or no fish, I must chose a medical career by the end of the day. General practice was still a possibility, but eye surgery won. I consulted a local mentor and asked about requirements for manual dexterity. ‘If you can put a needle on a gramaphone record, you’ll be fine’, he replied.

Thus emboldened, the next hurdle was the now-superseded Primary FRCS exam - material irrelevant to daily medical practice. So I took a job as assistant lecturer in physiology at a London medical school, and my Oxford background, with the extra year in physiology, was an undoubted help. I then started ophthalmology in Edinburgh, gaining unexpectedly rapid promotion because the registrar senior to me left suddenly. Thence, via another post in Oxford, I found myself, married, with 2 children, appointed consultant in Bath at the age of 35.

I am extremely fortunate to have chosen a specialty which was not particularly sought-after at the time, but which ‘took off’ dramatically about 10 years later, due mainly to innovations in the fields of micro-surgery and lasers. It has proved hugely rewarding, both in job satisfaction and, for those so minded, financially. My activities outside the routine have included being senior examiner for our Royal College and a lifelong interest in delivering eye surgery in sub-Saharan Africa.

Any young doctor intending to take up ophthalmology now has to surmount vastly greater competition than was the case a generation ago; but for those clever and/or determined enough, the training is more comprehensive and the rewards are great. I have not for a moment regretted my serendipitous and timely choice.

RICHARD NEWELL (1963)
Letter from Geoffrey Atheling Wagner 1939

Sir, it is a great thing to dine with the Canons of Christ Church. Samuel Johnson to Boswell.

Many thanks for the copy of your excellent 'Christ Church Matters' from this old lag, recently retired from a teaching career at the City College of New York, as full professor (full of something or other!). For O Tempora, O Mores, indeed.

Professor Alistair Cambell, sometime Chair of Anglo Saxon, opined in 1965 that 'English literature proper stops at 1830 - after then it is only books'. However the President of our City of New York Hostos College scoffed, 'I know English anyway, just not how to speak or write it.'

On the other hand Tom Dreyfus recalls having a tutorial during which a youth put his head round the door to tell the tutor, 'I thought that I should let you know that I shan't be able to come to any tutorials or lectures this term as I have been able to get four days hunting a week.'

This puts me in mind of a debate I hosted for the Christ Church Twenty Club in my rooms in Peck on the spurious subject 'that sheeting is better than skiing'. It broke up, I recall, when Gilbert Ryle, who could be the wittiest man in the world, accused Hugh Trevor Roper (subsequently Lord Dacre) of Tally Hoss!

I forget how many otiose Canons lodged on establishment, without any particular pedagogic duties, not excluding the Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History who liked to pour soda water into his coffee and rimmed his sleeves with a snuff guaranteed to produce paroxysms in nearby dons at High Table.

But I can still remember stumbling over the nomenclature of 'Students'.

Thus on applying to the Philosophy Department of Columbia University I met a suspicious group headed by the late Hans Rosenhaupt, Dean of Admissions, who required documentary proof of any degrees earned. My reply that all his office had to do in my case was to walk a few paces to consult the appropriate issue of the Oxford University Gazette did not suffice. All over immediately post war America so called students were applying for university admission on the fraudulent basis that their educational certificates had been destroyed in bombing raids.

Accordingly I wrote to my tutor F.A. Taylor for a letter of recommendation. He replied with alacrity but it did me no good as he signed himself 'Student' and I was tartly told that I could not be sponsored by an undergraduate!

As for climbing in at night, I think that I can rival most past members. One of my subsidiary rooms in Peck overlooked a narrow passage parallel to the High. Its windows were iron barred against egress or entry. However the previous incumbent had cut out one of the bars and replaced it with a cleverly painted trompe l’oeil wooden strut that could be slid in or out. I was innocent of this as, apparently, was my scout Clifford until one Hilary half when the concupiscence of spring started some heavy window traffic, it seemed no undergraduates (as they were then known) minded the squeeze through the bars or the drop into the street below. Eventually Clifford stumbled on the illusion when clearing up one day and I was grateful as I was being woken at all hours to help out cupid.

Other clandestine means of late exit then became fashionable including climbing under via a man hole leading to saturnine alleys where coal was delivered, our rooms being still ‘heated’ by such.

From House to House –
The Presentation of the Lord Mayor's Hat

At the beginning of October last year, I had the privilege of being elected as Master of my Livery Company, The Worshipful Company of Feltmakers of London. The Livery Company is one of 103 City Guilds with Livery which, from the Middle Ages and some even until today, controlled and regulated the quality and standards of production, as well as the qualifications of those who work within that trade, industry or profession.

The Feltmakers are the Hatters. Each year, for many years, it has been the custom and the privilege of the Master of our Company to present The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of the City of London with his hat. This is no mere trilby, but a hand-made, made-to-measure tricorne, with beautiful black ostrich feathers and a badge. This hat is traditionally given its first airing when the Lord Mayor rides through London in his carriage in the Lord Mayor’s Show. This year, it was seen by an estimated 800,000 people.

As readers of Christ Church Matters Issue 10 - Michaelmas Term 2002 - may recall, this year’s Lord Mayor is a Houseman. Alderman Gavyn Arthur was an undergraduate at the House from 1971-73. I was at the house from 1959-62. We both read Law.

The ceremony is a very pleasant one and, despite the formal dress, a relaxed and relatively informal occasion. It was held in the heart of the City of London, at The Mansion House, the Lord Mayor’s home during his year of office.

The party from the Court of the Feltmakers’ Company usually consists of the Master and his four Wardens, dressed in black morning dress wearing our badges of office, together with the Clerk to the Company. On this occasion, due to the unavoidable absence of three of my Wardens, I invited a couple of other people. One was the Immediate Past Master and the other an earlier Past Master. The latter was a former Judge, His Honour Keith Devlin, before whom Alderman Gavyn Arthur had appeared as a barrister. When not being Lord Mayor, Gavyn is now a Recorder.

Having entertained my own party to lunch at the City of London Club, we repaired to the Mansion House to await the return of the Lord Mayor, together with his Lady Mayoress, Carole Blackshaw, from hosting a luncheon at Guildhall for the President of Mexico.

The occasion was made an additional pleasure by the presence at the ceremony of His Honour Judge Bernard Lever and his wife Anne. Bernard and Gavyn read Law together at Oxford, and despite Bernard being at Queen’s they became and have remained very close friends, upholding the three generations tradition of Levers and Bentatas friendship.

I formally presented the Lord Mayor with his Hat and very splendidly he looked in it. Thanks to the generosity of Past Master His Honour Keith Devlin, I was also able to present the Lady Mayoress with a large hatpin.

We then toasted the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress and wished them a very successful year of office - a unique House occasion!

David Bentata 1959
Summer Event at Christ Church 28th June 2003

After the success of our open day two years ago we have decided to run something similar again this summer, but, we have increased the range of events to include a series of lectures, featuring one by Dr David Hine on the issues surrounding current admission processes to university. With this subject having become so controversial in recent times, this lecture is likely to be of considerable interest to parents of children in their teens.

We also have lectures from leading experts in their respective fields: on Pain Management from Dr Irene Tracey and Astronomy from Professor Roger Davies.

All three of these should be fascinating and well worth attending.

The wide-ranging programme will provide something of interest for everyone and there will even be Art Workshops for children aged 5 years old and over.

THE PROGRAMME FOR THE DAY IS AS FOLLOWS:

FROM 10.30AM     PICTURE GALLERY OPEN
Croquet in Cathedral Garden
10.30-12.00PM    ART WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN
run by Peter Rhoades in the Art Room
11.00PM          LECTURE ONE
‘IMAGING PAIN IN HUMANS: FROM AGONY TO ANAGNOSIA’
Dr Irene Tracey, Tutor in Physiological Science
12.30-2.30PM     TWO COURSE LUNCH WITH COFFEE IN HALL
2.00-3.30PM      ART WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN
run by Peter Rhoades in the Art Room
2PM-4.30PM       TOURS (KITCHEN/GARDENS/COLLEGE)
TREASURE HUNT FOR CHILDREN
3.15PM           LECTURE TWO
‘TAKING THE POLITICS OUT OF UK UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS’
Dr David Hine, Tutor in Politics
3.15PM-5.15PM    ART WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN
run by Peter Rhoades in the Art Room
4.15-5.00PM      TEA IN HALL
4.30PM           ANNOUNCEMENT OF RAFFLE PRIZE WINNER IN HALL
5PM              WHISKY TASTING
6PM              EVENSONG

P R I C E S

Prices will be £15 per adult and £5 per child under 10
(with special children’s menu).

A family ticket for two adults and two children under 10
is available at £35.

These prices include:
Lunch, tours, lectures and activities except
for the Whisky tasting which will be charged at a
supplement of £9 per head with a maximum attendance
of 40 people. The Buttery will be open for the purchase
of drinks during meals.

Art workshops are each for a maximum of 8 children
aged 5 years old or over so pre booking
and clothes that don’t mind paint are both strongly
advised.

*To book your tickets please complete the booking
form on page 19.

Careers Advice

In previous editions we have reported on the
Christ Church Association Careers Advice
Scheme which is run by two members of the
CCA Committee together with the JCR Careers
Representative. The Scheme offers advice
and support to Members of the House
looking for a job or trying to decide what
career to pursue.

In this issue we look at two graduates who
used the Advice Scheme to help them. Ben
Sendrove (1998), now an Account Executive
for marketing agency TBWA London, went to
one of the Scheme’s regular careers evenings.
He remembered it because it showed him
which careers he did not want to follow. Ben
recalls: ‘The House Association came into its
own, however, when I was in Barcelona on
my third year and I called Tony Burden. He
gave me the number of a graduate of the
House, David Tarsh, who talked to me for an
hour about how to approach filling in
application forms, what to read, who to
contact, etc. Without David’s advice, I’m not so
sure I would be in the job that I am in today’.

Subhi Sherwell (1997), now an Analyst at
Ernst & Young, went to the career evenings
over the course of four years and says he was
always amazed at Tony’s patience with him.
‘First it was advertising contacts that I was
after, then journalists, then civil servants, then
strategy consultants and finally corporate
financers, by whom I now find myself
surrounded. Every time I would queue up to
peek in that invaluable Directory of Members
and write down a few of the more exotic
sounding old Housemen’s names. I would
forget about it all for a few days, and then, to
my surprise, be rung by deputy editors and
knights of the realm offering their advice as
to how to break into their chosen professions
and whom I should contact next’.

He continued: ‘Tony and John’s evenings
afforded a unique opportunity for those like
me, unsure of where to take their degree, to
compare and interrogate representatives from
every almost line of work worth doing, and
so check how true the stereotypes were.

Though ultimately there was no job for me
straight from their Directory, I have no doubt
that I would not be in my current position
were it not for the confidence those evenings
gave me. They helped me work out the right
questions to ask people about their lines of
work, and learn from others there how to
show focused enthusiasm for what they did.

It was also always reassuring to receive
encouragement from all the top brass that I
should keep plugging away to get on to the
job ladder as they had. It was always too
tempting at Christ Church to delay the job
hunting to the vac; but in putting human
faces to seemingly faceless companies and
professions, the Careers Association Evenings
sweetened the pill!’

If you would like to be an adviser at one of
the careers evenings or offer your services to
helping members in their career search,
please contact either:

Tony Burden on tel: 020 7834 7057
or e-mail: tony.burden@btopenworld.com;
or John Ellison on tel: 01993 830158 or
e-mail: eli2255@attglobal.net.
Forthcoming Events

**APRIL**

**Cathedral**

24th – 26th  
FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE MUSIQUE SACRÉE  
de LOUBDES, FRANCE  
Tickets available from the Festival Office  
Tel: 00335 62 46 11 56  
Fax: 00335 62 46 11 91  
24th  
L’EGLISE PAROISSALE DU SACRÉ COEUR, LOUBDES  
Choral Music from the Renaissance to Negro Spirituals  
25th  
BASILIQUE NOTRE DAME DE ROSAIRE, LOUBDES  
Music by Purcell, Haydn, Mozart with orchestra

**MAY**

**Cathedral**

14th  
CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL  
BBC CHORAL EVENSONG – LIVE TRANSMISSION

**JUNE**

14th  
Cranleigh School Concert

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**Christ Church Association News**

TRINITY TERM 2003  
Issue 11

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STOP PRESS  
E-Mail News!

The Development and Alumni Office are now using e-mails to inform Old Members of breaking news and forthcoming events.

If you have an e-mail account and are not receiving e-mails from Christ Church and would like to, please send us your e-mail address to:  
development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk.

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The Christ Church Association  
**Summer Event**

Please send me tickets to the Summer Event on Saturday 28th June 2003

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<th>Number of Adult Tickets at £15.00</th>
<th>Number of Child Tickets at £5.00</th>
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<th>Whiskey Tasting</th>
<th>Art Workshops</th>
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NAME  
ADDRESS  
POSTCODE  

TELEPHONE NO.  
YEAR OF MATRICULATION  

I enclose a Cheque for £  
Made Payable to the “Steward of Christ Church”  

Please Charge My Visa/Access/Mastercard/Switch/Delta  
AMOUNT  

CARD NUMBER  
EXPIRY DATE  

SIGNATURE  
ISSUE NUMBER (IF SWITCH)  

Please send completed form with a stamped addressed envelope to:  
The Development and Alumni Office (Garden Party), Christ Church, Oxford, OX1 1DP or visit our website on www.chch.ox.ac.uk to book on-line.