



Postmaster &  
The Merton  
Record  
2021



MERTON COLLEGE  
OXFORD



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**Front cover image**

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Unless indicated, content is correct as of 30 September 2021.

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# FROM THE WARDEN

The Olympic Committee decided this summer to change its motto 'Faster, Higher, Stronger' by adding one word – *Together* – at the end, symbolic of the year that's been. If I had a motto for Merton this year, it would be 'Together as Community', and the pages of *Postmaster* reflect an Olympian spirit of determination and resolve in the face of adversity. But let me start by congratulating our Japanese alumnus, His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, Naruhito (1983), and his country on hosting such magnificent Olympic and Paralympic Games.

It is perhaps fitting that I'm writing this in isolation while down with Covid – caught, I hasten to add, from my 15-year-old son. That said, there are worse places to be isolating than the Warden's Lodgings while listening to peals of bells as happy couples get married in the autumn sunshine. But it is a stark reminder that we are not out of the woods yet, despite the fantastic work of the University's research over the past year alongside efforts by many alumni in the fight against Covid. I hope this edition of *Postmaster* finds you well, and that it provides some uplifting reading. I'd like to start by thanking the editorial team and the Year Representatives plus contributors for their efforts in producing this year's edition.

Two years into the job, and I've yet to have a normal year. Nonetheless, it's been hugely rewarding and the resilience

and positivity in our staff, students and Fellows have been remarkable. We too have felt the love and support of our alumni through your online engagement and generosity through financial support as well as your time and expertise. Thank you, deeply.

The academic year began with a change in Sub-Wardens as we said our thanks to Professor Jennifer Payne and welcomed Professor Kate Blackmon into the role. Across the University we were bracing ourselves for the return of students to what we knew would be a very different Michaelmas term. We've charted through *Merton Messenger* the efforts required to prepare for 600 students arriving from all corners of the world, requiring quarantining, feeding, teaching and living in changing household 'bubble' regulations. 'Hands, Face, Space' became the catchphrase and Front Quad looked very different with snazzy Merton-branded face masks on students in their bubble groups. The new marquee erected on Chestnut Lawn to help maintain food service as well as a bar offering soon became part of the fabric of Merton and was rapidly nicknamed 'Chestnut Hall'. It has been a lifesaver and I suspect we'll be sorry to see it go.

We were determined not to let Covid dominate. Events were adapted and moved online; the Chapel and Choir



Geoffrey Biscuit judging the pumpkin carving competition, October 2020

communicated via livestream, becoming a huge hit with what is now a global audience. I'm so pleased that people both inside and outside our community can enjoy the richness of our beautiful Chapel, the services led by Simon Jones and our new Associate Chaplain, Melanie Marshall, as well as our choral music. We were proud to be part of the Christmas Vaccine Tribute Concert in the Sheldonian, yet another indicator of how well regarded our Choir has become under the leadership of Ben Nicholas. Long may it continue. Determined not to miss celebrating 40 Years of Merton Women, which coincided with the University's 100th anniversary of the formal admission of women, we expanded our online profile offering and created a series of live talks and pre-recorded interviews of Merton women drawn from students, staff, Fellows and alumni and covering all walks of life. As representatives of all the Merton women to have walked across Front Quad, this has been a feast to enjoy. Witnessed in these profiles is what can be accomplished when women are given the opportunity to flourish. We must continue to do our part in supporting others less fortunate than our Merton Women. Perhaps it was fitting that we started the series in Michaelmas term with Alison Blake CMG who, until June this year, was the UK Ambassador to Afghanistan. Our thoughts are with the people of Afghanistan, as well as with Alison and her colleagues. The University, and Merton, are

playing their part in supporting the resettlement of academic families from the region.

The series that has run all year will shortly conclude, and we hope to hold an in-person event and develop a mentorship scheme. Let me thank Chelsea Chisholm, Milos Martinov, Emily Bruce, Simon Cope and the Development Office for all their hard work in making this series such a success.

No additional mini-lockdown in Oxford mid-Michaelmas was going to deter our students from enjoying term. I particularly enjoyed a pumpkin-carving competition, judged by my very popular Golden Retriever, Geoffrey Biscuit. Merton was for the first time at the bottom of college rankings ... in terms of infection rates! We had precious little spread and few isolation cases, largely because of our students' sense of duty to the wider community. I cannot thank them and all the young enough. Our students were selected to be part of an early trial assessing the usability and tolerability of lateral flow tests, and this important experiment held in College at the end of Michaelmas term provided data to guide the broader rollout across the University. Finally, after some muted Christmas celebrations to mark the end of term, we exhaled a collective sigh of relief. A successful online admissions exercise led by Dr Jane Gover, our Senior Tutor, concluded the term.



Hilary term was tough. Many of our students were studying remotely, though far less so than in Trinity term 2019. Old hands shared tips with those for whom this was a new experience. We felt particularly sorry for our freshers and our final-year undergraduates and graduates, and our graduate students on one-year courses. Fortitude, relentless support from the JCR and MCR Committees and their fantastic Presidents, the Academic Office, Welfare team, kitchen and cleaning staff, the Lodge team, plus postal deliveries of goodies from College helped us all get through a long and bleak period. I particularly enjoyed a Zoom evening with our Emeritus Fellows, who were sent a bottle of wine from our cellars and some chocolates to enjoy while we chatted about the College. It provided a welcome opportunity for our former Fellows to connect with each other and with me after a long physical absence from College.

Maintaining our commitment to broadening inclusion and diversity, the Merton Equality Conversation was a popular online discussion between Ruth Ramsden-Karelse, a Stuart Hall doctoral student at Merton, and Lady Phyll on 'Intersectionality, solidarity and building community'. Many

of the points raised chimed with things we had identified as in need of progressing at Merton; I remain committed to this issue. Our upcoming Equality and Diversity webpage will chart our progress and provide an opportunity to celebrate a diverse Merton community, and also hold us to account. New targeted graduate scholarships, new links with the Social Mobility Foundation, greater visibility through a change in our portraiture and the commissioning of works of art and music, as well as better in-house training and listening to our students' experience and implementing change, are just a few examples of the steps we are taking and will continue to take. Allowing civil partnerships to be registered at College and providing a multi-faith room also show the efforts we are taking to create an inclusive and safe environment for all to thrive. I am so pleased by the engagement and support of the College's Governing Body on these issues. We recognise that we should be a beacon for change. Merton was founded on access, diversity and inclusion and this is core to our DNA. We welcome engagement with our alumni on all these issues.

Spring came and, with it, hope. The vaccine programme was rolling out well in the UK, the University was being praised for



From left: Matilde Soares da Silva, Irene, Constanța Burlacu, Phoebe Mountain, Charlotte Kilpatrick, Amanda Thomas and Clara Kummerer after their rowing session in June 2021

what we had achieved, and our students were back. Teaching was still online but, with the better weather, life felt as if it was returning to a new normal. It was heartening to see lots of happy students around, the Chapel with the Choir at full throttle, and the sports fields and river full of Merton athletes winning Blades and getting Blues. I even got in a boat myself after a 30-year absence, and with current and former women's boat club captains as part of the *Merton Women: 40 Years* celebrations – terrifying but such fun! Still got it....

We extended term by two weeks to coincide with the hoped-for end of national lockdown so that our students could relax post examinations and enjoy Merton and Oxford in all its summer glory. Alas, liberation did not come but the Delta variant did ... and we were hit hard. Students, staff and Fellows were up against it during those two weeks as we scurried to support those in isolation and yet still maintain some sense of celebration. Our amazing Welfare, Domestic and Lodge teams supported by student 'runners' helped deliver food and checked on wellbeing for students in isolation, and again I'd like to acknowledge and thank them for their herculean efforts.

I'd also like to express my gratitude to the JCR President, Ellie Hall, and her committee as well as the MCR Presidents, Lucas Haugeberg (2020-21) and Francesca Lovell-Read (2021-22), and their committees. Without their displays of wisdom well beyond their years, we simply could not have managed. On behalf of the entire fellowship, I want to thank them here publicly. They've been a significant part of history making and the success of this past year. And while I'm thanking people, I'd like to list all the College Officers: Charles Alexander, Kate Blackmon, Sam Eidinow, John Gloag, Jane Gover, Simon Jones, Tim Lightfoot, Julia Walworth and our newest arrival as Development Director, Mark Coote, as well as my team in the Warden's Office (Lisa Lawrence, Han Kimmett, Lesley Walsh and Carol Webb) for all their hard work over the past year. The loyalty and dedication shown by them and their teams cannot be overstated. And I must mention that Lesley Walsh has retired after 34 years of dedicated service and kindness to the College. We profiled Lesley for *Merton Women: 40 Years*; she epitomises all that is good among our staff, so do read her story and the tributes paid to Lesley from the many Sub-Wardens she has served.



Irene attending the drinks reception before the Diamond Jubilee Lunch for 1960 and 1961 matriculands in September 2021: the first in-person alumni event since the pandemic began

Our students have done Merton's intellectual standing proud with another set of stellar results despite the challenging circumstances. Testament again to the Academic Office team and the tutors for their dedication to the task and willingness to adapt and put in the extra hours required to get such fantastic results. Our students have also excelled in other quarters: two Merton final-year medical students, Hannah Bacon and Georgina Whitaker, were commended for playing a significant part in urgent recruitment to the Cov-Boost (third vaccine) clinical trial: an Oxford team that included Merton Physics undergraduate Andrei Eftimie took first place at this year's PLANCKS international finals; Team LevelUp,

founded by Law undergraduate Nicholas U Jin, won the 'Best Undergraduate Idea' award at All-Innovate, Oxford's inter-college competition run by the Oxford Foundry; and History DPhil student Eamonn O'Keeffe appeared on BBC One's *Songs of Praise* talking to presenter Claire McCollum about a diary entry that is complicating assumptions about British attitudes to homosexuality in the early 19th century. And there are many other examples illustrating the creativity, hard work and good citizenship that is the hallmark of a Merton student.

So, with term ended we drew breath. For the first time, I had the joy of attending Warden's Progress with our Estates

Bursar, John Gloag, and some of the Fellows. Touring our various estates in Suffolk, Surrey and Kent gave us all real witness to Merton's long history and connectedness to land and the dedication of our tenant farmers. I am excited to be working with John and his team as we consider innovative ways by which we might use our lands to go carbon-neutral and create a larger biodiversity footprint.

Our Fellows continue to excel. Two Merton Fellows were recognised for their entrepreneurship and research at the annual University of Oxford Vice-Chancellor's Innovation Awards. Bodley Fellow Professor Robert MacLaren's eye disease research won the Inspiring Leader section as well as being overall winner for his retinal gene therapy spinout company Nightstar. Professor Jonathan Prag's award was for *I.Sicily*: an ongoing project to create an online, open-access corpus of ancient Sicilian inscriptions. Professor Steven Gunn has been appointed as Academic/Research Trustee of the Royal Armouries for four years from March 2021 to February 2025. Professor Matt Higgins was awarded the 2021 CA Wright Memorial Medal of the British Society for Parasitology for his work on malaria and African trypanosomes. Professor Simon Hooker was awarded the Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin Medal and Prize by the Institute of Physics in recognition of his contributions to plasma physics. Supernumerary Fellow Professor Frances Platt was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society. We were delighted to welcome new Fellows to our community this year, and sadly said goodbye to Junior Research Fellows Dr Lia Costiner, Dr Elizabeth Stubbins-Bates, Dr Matthew Thomson and Dr Sebastian Vásquez-López. These early-career academics are a vital part of the College's research life, and the major investment we make in these outstanding individuals is increasingly essential. We wish them all every success and take great pride in our association with them.

Turning to our Honorary Fellows, I'm delighted to report that Guy Weston (1978), Honorary Fellow, was knighted in the New Year's Honours for services to philanthropy and charity. And we welcome several new Honorary Fellows to our fold: the Honourable Mrs Justice Kelyn Bacon DBE (1992), the Honourable Mr Justice Andrew Baker (1983), Professor Dinah Birch CBE, Alison Blake CMG (1980), and the Rt Revd Michael Lewis (1972).

On a sadder note, we lost many dear friends this year, but I'd like to single out the unexpected, sudden passing of a very recently retired Fellow, Professor Peter Neary. A brilliant economist and active member of the College, Peter is greatly missed.

We are aiming to share more alumni news via our website, so do let us know your news. As a fast sports car enthusiast, I was particularly excited to learn that Ravin Jain (2012) took a seat on the pit wall with Formula One Ferrari's strategy team. Mena Mark Hanna (2006) is set to become the next General Director of Spoleto Festival USA, one of the USA's major performing arts festivals, which runs for 17 days each spring. Neh Thaker (1992) is part of the four-person team behind HedgeFlows who have been included in the latest cohort of entrepreneurs selected for the Oxford Foundry's OXFO Elevate programme. And Mertonians were recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours lists: John Allen (1963) was awarded an MBE for services to safeguarding; Justin Gilbert (1978) was awarded an OBE for services to promoting UK education and culture overseas; Kate Josephs (née Kelly, 1996) was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath for public service; Professor Charles Knight (1985) received an OBE for services to the NHS and people with heart disease; Professor Calum Semple (1992) was granted an OBE for services to the Covid-19 response; Professor Catherine Sudlow (1988) was awarded an OBE for services to medical research; and Michael Tatham (1984) was awarded a CMG for services to British foreign policy. Congratulations to them all.

And now after a much-needed holiday and the opportunity to get back into the laboratory for the first time in 18 months, I am grateful that we have largely come out of this pandemic unscathed and have been able to push forward with new initiatives as well as support old ones. To end on a Paralympic theme, 'United by Emotion' is the zeitgeist. It will be all go for the start of a new academic year, welcoming the class of 2021 and (I hope) the opportunity to enjoy a normal year, to meet more of our alumni around the world and to take forward some of our major projects, such as a new nursery for students, staff and Fellows as well as an exciting new library project. Thank you again for your support, and stay well one and all.

**Professor Irene Tracey (1985)**  
Warden



# JCR NEWS

This year has, unsurprisingly, been unusual in many ways for Merton JCR. Online OGMs, pidged welfare teas, a lack of bops and a remote Hilary term are just the headlines of the adaptations that we have had to make. However, underlying all this is great consistency. The JCR has been unfaltering in its care for each other, perseverance, hard work and enthusiasm.

We began the year by welcoming in a wonderful new cohort of freshers who, despite a disruptive end to their pre-university lives, threw themselves into a socially distanced Freshers' Week with aplomb. They took all the limitations in their stride, and truly made the best of the situation by getting involved in OGMs, committee roles, Entz events and College sports. The freshers have competently filled a gap in our sporting repertoire with a new netball team, which has been incredibly popular and very successful in an undefeated season. In a year of enthusiastic adaptation, we maintained the space-time continuum unconventionally, with a Time Ceremony-themed bar night that marked the coinage of the Port-Power-Pint. It seems this valiant effort did the job, as the year has flown by as usual. Delighted to be back at Merton, we were determined to celebrate at every opportunity, marking Halloween, Bonfire Night, Diwali, Thanksgiving and Christmas alongside our usual Black Tie Formal events in Michaelmas alone. For these, great thanks must go to so many of the

College staff, especially in the Domestic team, without whom they would not have been possible.

A packed Michaelmas soon led into a remote Hilary, which was incredibly disappointing for everyone. However, unsurprisingly, the JCR rose to the challenge, ably supported by the wider college. The sense of community that was achieved over such distances (or Zoom) was admirable. From book swaps to brownie deliveries to at-home cookery classes, we supported each other through the difficult times. Our brilliant peer supporters held drop-ins at all times of the day and night, while the Exec ran 'Zoom library' sessions in an attempt to recreate the studious concentration that can be achieved in our beloved Mob and OWL. The incredible welfare support at Merton shone in Hilary, with at-home chocolate tastings, yoga sessions and hyacinth bulbs posted out alongside a gardening tutorial from Head Gardener Lucille Savin, keeping us all going and keeping us connected to the College we are so lucky to call home.

We have also been determined to ensure that our year has not entirely been dominated by the pandemic, and there have been numerous wonderful developments that are happily Covid-free. In Michaelmas, following a JCR-organised Trans Pride week, the College flew the Trans Pride flag for the first time,



Black Tie Formal, Trinity 2021 © Anna Stephen (2020)

A *Midsummer Night's Dream*-themed Entz event at Freud, Oxford © Hollie Goodwin (2020)

An end-of-year JCR photograph © Hollie Goodwin (2020)

highlighting the solidarity with the trans community. After speaking with Ginny Knox, the first woman to be JCR President in 1983, I learnt of her mission to add unisex bathrooms in Mob Quad that resulted in her being the first woman to live there the following year. Almost 40 years later, I am pleased to report that all en-suite bathrooms now have their own bathroom bin, as we continue to ensure that no Merton woman feels as though she is simply occupying a man's space.

Looking outwards to the wider community, we have set up a foodbank donation point, which has been overflowing at the end of Trinity term thanks to the generosity of our members. Our fantastic JCR Disabled Students Rep, Ella, alongside her guide dog and honorary JCR member Rio, held a raffle to raise money for Guide Dogs which should result in the JCR choosing the name of a new puppy!

With a focus on access and inclusivity, a new social sports team has been set up, ensuring that anyone – no matter their ability or experience – can get involved, meet new people and have fun. Dodgeball was particularly popular for finalists needing to let off steam. This June, the College filled with colour as the JCR provided an array of LGBTQ+ Pride flags, which flew out of windows in every quad and was joyful to see. We have also been working with the College on setting up a multi-faith

prayer room, so that all students have access to the spaces and facilities that they need, and Merton can be a home for all. The cross-year community spirit was stronger than ever as the pidge room filled up with treats for 'adopt-a-finalist' and carnations to support those who sat exams.

It has been a true honour to represent and serve this wonderful JCR within the best college in Oxford. Working alongside the JCR Exec and General Committee, and the College staff, has been a privilege, and I am so proud of the increasingly inclusive, diverse and welcoming direction the JCR and wider college continue to take. It will be a joy to watch the irrefutable community spirit embrace new generations in the capable hands of the incoming Exec.

**Eloise Hall (2019)**  
JCR President 2020-21



# MCR NEWS

The past year has been historic in many regards. Throughout Merton's long and illustrious history our community has experienced its fair share of plague and pestilence. In fact, epidemics constituted a reoccurring pattern shaping the lives of Mertonians through the centuries. But although the pandemic has brought many challenges and interrupted many of our time-honoured traditions it has also uncovered the remarkable resilience of Mertonians in the face of adversity.

One of the greatest joys of serving as MCR President in the past year has been to see how we have come together as a community to protect the health and wellbeing of our fellow Mertonians. It has been impressive to see how Fellows, students and staff have risen to the challenge of keeping our community safe, and keeping research and teaching going despite the circumstances. Undoubtedly, the pandemic has brought to the fore the exceptional character of our community. If I were to define Mertonians with two words then I think I would choose the words 'understated brilliance'. People here are wickedly smart, but they have their feet firmly planted on the ground. And where other colleges might even encourage a stereotype of 'effortless superiority' we Mertonians know that nothing worthwhile comes about without hard work. I think this humility and tenaciousness have been an important factor in why we as

a college community have weathered this pandemic so well. We are not afraid of making sacrifices in order to get things done, and this is a defining feature of being a Mertonian.

Throughout the pandemic the MCR committee has worked hard to keep organising events for the graduate community under constantly shifting Covid-19 restrictions. The Social Secretaries Antonia Anstatt, Silvia Trinczek and Lachlan Hughes (all 2019) wrote endless Covid risk assessments and applied much creativity to devise events that could be organised in a Covid-safe way. Some of these events proved so popular that they will in all likelihood be retained even when the pandemic is over. Zorbing, for instance, was a huge success as it enabled contact sport while ensuring social distancing. Another highlight was the MCR international evenings where we explored the remarkable cultural diversity of the graduate body at Merton. As a result of tireless work by Antonia, Silvia and Lachlan, we were arguably the most active MCR in Oxford throughout the year, while keeping Covid infections among the graduate community at a remarkably low level – a handful of cases per term.

Our diligent Information and Returns Officer (IRO) Charles Tolkien-Gillett (2019) documented all these social activities on the MCR Instagram page, and it was not uncommon to



Zorbing



From left: Lucas Didrik Haugeberg (President), Francesca Lovell-Read (Treasurer), Charles Tolkien-Gillet (Information), Silvia Trinczek (Social), David Craig (Sports), Antonia Aristatt (Social), Lachlan Hughes (Social)  
Not in photo: Thomas Heywood (Vice-President), Clara Lepard (Welfare), David Oliver (Welfare)

hear comments from non-Mertonians jealously bemoaning why so much was going on at Merton. Charles has done a great job in further dispelling the myth that Merton is where fun goes to die. Furthermore, he took it upon himself to refurbish the MCR webpage ([www.mertonmcr.co.uk](http://www.mertonmcr.co.uk)). It looks amazing, and will be a great asset for prospective graduate students looking for the best college in Oxford.

The pandemic also increased the need for welfare provision at Merton and the MCR Welfare Officers Clara Lepard and David Oliver stepped up to the challenge of supporting the MCR community in this time where many Mertonians experienced increased isolation. Special thanks also go to MCR Vice-President Thomas Heywood and Treasurer Francesca Lovell-Read who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure that the housing ballot ran smoothly and that money was where it needed to be in order for events to go ahead.

Another reason why the past year has been historic is that we celebrated 40 years of women at Merton. Many MCR members have taken part in the various events and speaker series organised by the College to mark the occasion. Also in commemoration of this important milestone in Merton history the graduate community voted to have on permanent display in the MCR the blade won by the 1989 women's crew

– the first blade won by a women's crew in Merton history. This artefact commemorating a considerable sporting achievement is a great symbol of how the admission of women to Merton has immensely enriched our community over the past four decades and made our community into what it is today.

As the new MCR committee led by Francesca Lovell-Read took over at the beginning of Trinity term they faced the task of reclaiming many of the MCR traditions that defined our community before the pandemic. They have been doing a terrific job – for instance, organising a Covid-safe version of our annual Trinity term garden party and initiating MCR barbecues and outdoor pizza nights that were a great success. I am looking forward to seeing how Francesca and her team will bring the MCR back to post-pandemic normality in the year to come and I wish them all the best.

**Lucas Didrik Haugeberg**  
MCR President 2020-21

# Merton Sport





# Football

## Men's Football

Following great success for both teams in the 2019-20 season, including two long cup runs and a league promotion, Covid precautions meant a condensed and restricted window for football matches. Teams were reduced to five a side, and the valiant Ms 1s and 2s were drawn in their own leagues with competitive group stages before the knockout tournament. In typical Merton and Mansfield fashion, it was a season of highs and lows as we enjoyed the wonderful rollercoaster that all football fans and players know all too well. Examples of such extremes came in the form of several convincing wins (including a flattering 13-1 scoreline) and, ironically, the agony of missing out on qualification to the knockout stages on goal difference.

Again, Covid caused the abandonment of the annual Merton vs Mansfield football match held on Sports Day. This eagerly anticipated fixture will be held at the beginning of Michaelmas 2021, and will showcase the strength and depth of both parties.

Many thanks to Harry Morrison (2019, Mansfield) for leading the 1st team this year, and heroically undertaking the task of sorting venues, fixture times and friendlies with other colleges throughout the term. Thanks also to James the groundsman for tirelessly preparing the Pav pitch and to College for providing every opportunity for us to play as frequently as possible.

**Will Barker (2019)**

M&Ms Football Captain 2020-21

© Jack Monach on Unsplash

## Women's Football

The M&Ms women's football team got up and running at the end of Trinity term, during which we had two training sessions. So far, we have worked on getting to know each other during some relaxed football drills and mini-matches, and in Michaelmas term 2021 we hope to start in earnest with regular training sessions involving both drills and small matches. We also hope to play against the women's football teams of other colleges, and a mixed football match against Mansfield at the Merton Sports Day is in the works. Anyone thinking of joining next year is more than welcome to come along in October.

**Rachel Blackhurst (2020)**

M&Ms Women's Football Captain 2020-21



M&Ms women's football team



## Hockey

Despite the obvious opposition of Covid, it's been a hugely successful season for the M&Ms hockey team. With little hockey in either Michaelmas or Hilary, we arrived back in Trinity raring to go for the Cuppers/League replacement summer tournament.

A high-scoring match lacking a keeper for either team ended in a 7-4 triumph against LMH, getting us off to a great start. Before the next match we had the game-changing addition of an experienced keeper to our ranks in Vikaran, who would come to save us literally and figuratively many times in the season. One of the toughest matches of the season followed, in a feisty affair against a Lincoln side suffering from a collective case of small-man syndrome. With some especially brilliant battling in midfield from Ben, jabbing of the highest quality from Will, and one hell of a flair drag flick from Eloise, we claimed a deserved 4-2 triumph. A couple more straightforward wins against Hertford and Magdalen followed, before a nervy draw in our final game of the group claimed us top spot, and a place in the grand final (against the winners of the other group).

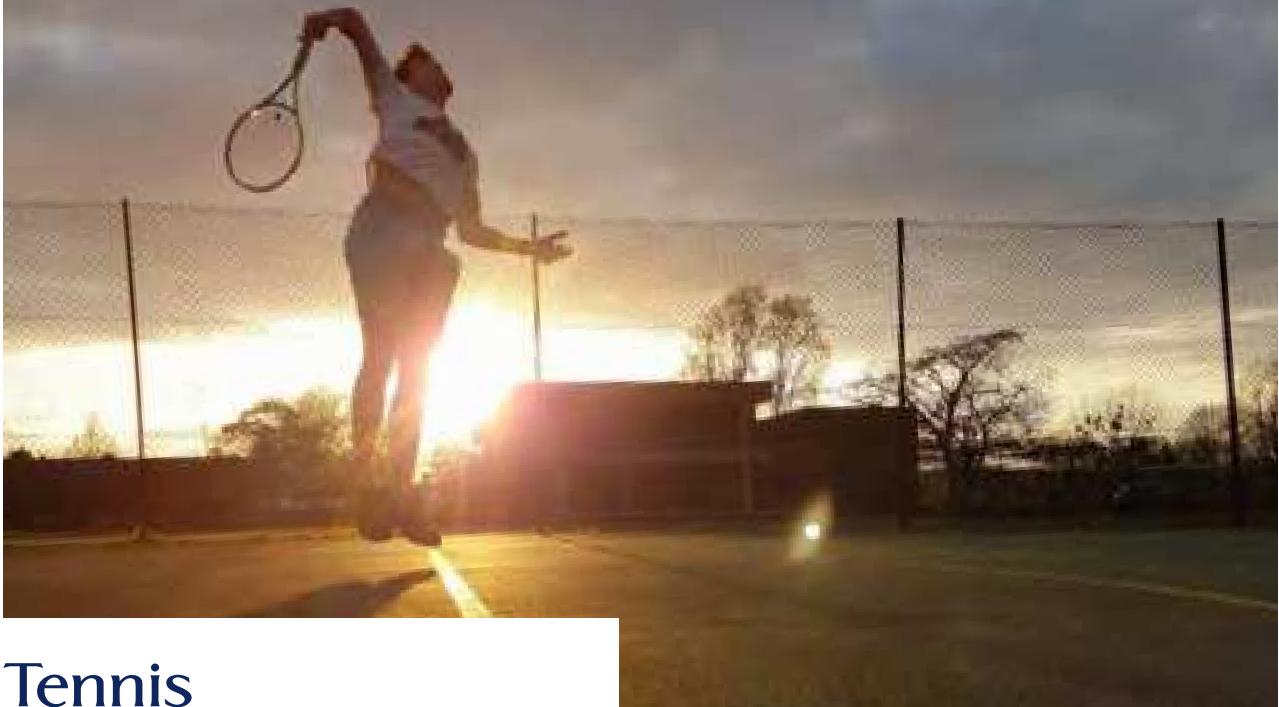
A David vs Goliath match it was, as the plucky M&Ms and their team spirit took on Queen's and their five Blues players, but it was a neck-and-neck affair to the very last. Benedict took to clattering his University coach to the floor at every

opportunity, which distracted him enough to result in a couple of goals. Hannah S swept in gloriously from 8cm, Christian tackled Blues players like his life depended on it, and all across the pitch players busted a lung chasing every ball to keep us in the game. With two minutes to go it was 3-3, and there were golden opportunities at each end, a penalty stroke for us and a short corner for them. Sadly in the crucial final seconds their clinical nature shone through and we fell to a cruel 4-3 loss in the most scintillating of finals. All in all, however, in a team without a single Blues player up against an entire league full of them, it was a phenomenal team effort to take home silver, and bodes well for the season to come.

Casual training open to all and socials were rather limited by Covid, but we're looking forward to October and a resumption of regular service. By then our kit orders should be fully sorted as well, so keep an eye out for the soon-to-be-best-dressed-college-hockey-players-at-Oxford. Until next time, up the M&Ms.

**Will Barker, Benedict Yorston and Elysia Zdolny (Mansfield) (all 2019)**  
M&M Hockey Co-Captains 2020-21

*Follow M&M hockey on Instagram: @mertonmansfieldhockey*



## Tennis

The Merton tennis team officially got back onto its feet in May 2021, when James Hua volunteered to be its captain. In the time since, we have primarily organised weekly practice sessions on Saturdays (5-7pm) at the Merton tennis courts to enjoy some practice sessions, play friendly matches together, go through some basic training, and relax with some convivial chat. The sessions were open to everyone and we were fortunate to have a range of students join in: we trained up a few complete beginners and refined the skills of those already acquainted, but also played some (quite intense) matches with the more advanced among us. Overall, these sessions have been a great way to meet new Mertonians and have fun in a responsible, Covid-safe way.

Next year, we aim to continue holding these practice sessions and focus more on serious training. With weekly or (time permitting) bi-weekly sessions, we hope to be set for some Cupper games (and victories) once the season starts. To facilitate this, we purchased some new

communal MCR tennis equipment (four racquets, two sets of balls, three grips, one bag) for the courts in June, and we hope to expand our gamut of tennis equipment both for competition and general use next year. I shall also advertise the availability of this equipment and the use of the tennis courts more directly to students (e.g. through our Facebook page), with a particular emphasis on encouraging players of all levels to join in. I also aim to liaise with the Oxford University Lawn Tennis Club regarding Covid safety rules and Cuppers, and shall keep in touch with other Mertonian tennis players competing for the University (who have been very successful this summer).

It's a promising time for Merton tennis, and I look forward to working alongside my fellow tennis enthusiasts to make next year as productive for our team as possible.

**James Hua (2020)**

Merton Tennis Captain 2020-21



# Rowing

## Men's Rowing

New year, new challenges! After the past academic year of rowing was not less than drowned in an endless drizzle, new developments – apparently, there was some kind of virus going around – should see the new rain-induced creativity in our training schedule to be carried over to 2020-21. However, the motivation to enjoy the water-time whenever restrictions would allow it may have been higher than ever. With the combination of a great amount of experience remaining in the club and new energy from the novice ranks, it turned out to be a fantastic year for rowing in Merton, which is best summed up by sheer excellent performances in Summer Torpids.

As customary in Michaelmas term, we focused on those Mertonians new to the College or who are taking a new interest in the sport. Many appreciated the companionship, structure and beautiful sunrises which accompany rowing in an otherwise isolating and chaotic start into the term. And so, it was not 20, not 30, but 60 novices between the women's and men's sides who gave rowing a go. Given the precious opportunity of outdoor activities during that time, every effort was made by our novice captains and many additional helpers to safely run a relentless programme that saw up to five boats out on a single day and a record-breaking total of 22 confirmed training sessions in week 2.

The initial euphoria was soon dampened by what would soon be known as 'the second wave' of Covid cases flooding the UK and Oxford, halting all in-person training for Hilary term.

MI during Summer Torpids © Al Craigie

Furthermore, cancellations of all novice regattas or Torpids meant that, once more, the experience of an actual boat race was delayed into the foreseeable future. Making the best of the situation (after all, if there has to be a period without actual outdoor rowing, what better time than the coldest and darkest of the year?), training buddy-ups, regular online circuit-exercises, a virtual training camp and theoretical sessions built the bridge to keep us going over the winter.

With spring it came. Rowing was back and there was 'some sort of summer bumps event' in the pipeline. After all, Trinity would be the term to remember. Training back in full force, MI chopped away the miles at Godstow while M2 found its mojo on the Isis stretch. The Isis Summer League races gave many of us our first race experience as both crews zipped down the Isis in anticipation of the rowing year highlight: Summer Torpids.

In a week of nothing but sunshine, MI fiercely continued our campaign up the Torpid charts, bumping up the first three days and just about missing Univ M1 on day 4, thus bringing us within reach of division I. Meanwhile, M2, having seen how it's done, went to make a statement themselves and won blades despite having to repeatedly bump a boat three places ahead.

With all this new energy, it will be exciting to see what the next year is going to deliver.

**Paul Zimmer-Harwood (2019)**  
Men's Rowing Captain 2020-21



MCWBC 1st VIII celebrating with their coach Alex after Summer Torpids

## Women's Rowing

After the washout (and lockdown) that was the 2019-20 rowing season, many of our girls returned to the water in Michaelmas term full of optimism. A year of erging certainly builds in grit and determination. We had a wonderful start to Michaelmas, being able to train up nearly 25 novices (on the women's side alone). Everyone banded together to get boats out on the water and there was a great sense of community between seniors and novices alike.

Once again, coronavirus (and rain) provided turbulence towards the end of the term, with the cancellation of Christ Church Regatta. The hopes of a better term in Hilary soon disappeared as many of our rowers were advised to stay at home and once again had to embrace lockdown training, this time in the bleakness of winter. We didn't let this stop us, as we partook in weekly Zoom circuits to keep up morale and threw ourselves into cross training – running, cycling and even rowing for those lucky enough to have an erg.

Our wonderful Entz reps ran a fun Easter Bootcamp in place of our annual training camp. Allocated into teams, we ran, cycled and squat-jumped across our home towns completing fun challenges.

With the vaccination programme and brighter weather lifting everyone's spirits we went into Trinity term with a huge sense of opportunity. Despite having far fewer outings under our belt than we would have liked by this point (and many of our rowers being novices), we transported

the women's boat to Godstow and started preparing for Summer Torpids.

Under the calm and knowledgeable words of our coach Alex, we trained and trained. We were determined and focused, and as a result became more and more comfortable rowing with one another. Each 5.30am alarm was met by a beautiful sunrise and another opportunity to be better.

After the successes of Constanta's term with Oxford University Women's Lightweight Rowing Club, she returned just in time for Bumps. Things really started to come together and we felt ready, though we had no idea what to expect or how well we were going to do.

Torpids fell on a beautiful sunny and warm week. The nerves started to rise as we all finalised our race plan, but a calmness was also felt in the crew – we knew what we needed to do. As we all fell into silence in those final moments before the cannon fired I thought of what had got us to this point, through all those hours training alone and cancelled races – a real sense of team spirit.

On the first day we bumped St Antony's, then Exeter on the next day, then Worcester, Queen's and St Hugh's. Blades for the women's 1st VIII! Despite the hurdles it has really been the most rewarding year to be captain and I can't thank everyone who helped out along the way enough. We did it!

**Phoebe Mountain (2019)**

Women's Rowing Captain 2020-21



# Cricket

After its ambitious conception in an online Trinity in 2020, the 2021 season saw the introduction of a new T20 Fortress League, providing greater competition and fixtures for college cricket. Four groups of six each battled for two qualifying spots, leading to progression to the final knockout stages of the competition. Alongside the established Cuppers matches, this tournament provided ample entertainment and opportunity to play at some scenic grounds and against some quality opposition. We were drawn in a group with some established cricketing pedigree, namely New, Univ, St John's, St Hugh's and Wolfson, many of whom had OUCC representation.

Our first match provided a nail-biting final-over finish against St John's. After a spirited effort, accumulating exactly 100 in our 20 overs (including 44 from Will Barker (2019) and 28 from Trajan Halvorsen (2020)), our score was eventually proved to be under par, as John's chased the target eight wickets down. Wickets were shared around the bowling unit, with Amy Hearn (2018), Thomas Corner, Halvorsen, Hannah Sirringhaus and Jack Feehan (all 2019) bowling tight spells to keep us in the game. Second week took us to New College, where a strong team humbled a mercurial, if somewhat inexperienced, team. A century from

the opening batsman set the tone for a one-sided affair, redeemed only by an accomplished 12\* from star batsman of the day, Joe Hyland Deeson (2018), as he dominated the New College attack. Conceded matches from Hugh's and Wolfson left us with a tantalising final game against Univ: the winner taking the second spot in the group, and thus progressing to the final stages. On a soggy late May pitch, Benedict Yorston (2019) led the way with a composed 50, ably assisted by some lower-order hitting, which dragged us to a competitive 120. Impressive early spells from experienced duo Kempton and Hearn put us in the driving seat, making the most of beneficial overhead and underfoot conditions. The miracle was not to be, however, as some dogged lower-order resistance drew the game to its final over, and streaky shots led the Univ pair to victory.

A respectable third-place finish ended a season filled with isolation scares, availability crises and weather interventions. Many thanks to James for adapting to such circumstances and allowing us to play at the Pav at such short notice.

Will Barker (2019)  
Cricket Captain 2020-21



## Netball

The year 2020-21 has been one of reinvention for the Merton netball team. Despite starting late in the year, the team has demonstrated unbelievable dedication, rewarded with no small amount of glory in the Cuppers matches. Given Covid, it was tough to get the team up and running until Trinity, at which point it was clear that the regulations could be complied with. Despite having had only one practice session before the first Cuppers match, the Merton team emerged triumphant with a score of 9-6 against St Peter's. From there, the team went from success to success, eventually emerging from the Cuppers tournament with an unbeaten record, finishing third in our court due to goal difference.

Some highlights include the perseverance of the members despite some very non-Trinity weather (we were quite literally blown away), an 11-0 win against Regent's, and of course the huge level of involvement by the JCR. Practice sessions often numbered around 25, a level of interest to which our current JCR Sports Rep Benedict is still trying to discover the secret.

Looking forward to next year, the team has high hopes for future leagues and Cuppers games, and we aim to build on our strong start. In addition, we would like to include more social events as part of club activities as Covid lightens up, and perhaps even a few crew dates. In light of this, Roheena moved to the position of Social Sec, and Ellie Owen joined Ebube and Vicki as a fellow Captain.

Whatever the weather or the challenges, all have been faced with an unprecedented level of enthusiasm and resilience, and there are high hopes for future years.

**Ebube Akojie, Vicki Moon and Ellie Owen (all 2020)**  
Netball Co-Captains 2020-21



## Social Sports

The newly formed Social Sports Club got off to an encouraging start in Trinity term, despite Covid-19 leading to an early curtailment of planned sessions. The aim of the club is to provide a social space for all Mertonians to participate in sport in a pressure-free, non-judgemental environment, where all students, including those who have little or no sporting experience, are welcome to come and try their hand at both new activities and old favourites. This takes place through in-house sessions, with the sports rotated every week.

We began with rounders, a secondary school favourite for many of us, and followed this session with dodgeball. Dodgeball led to some healthy competition among us and certainly got our heart rates up too. Although the club is primarily a place for in-house sport, some JCR members also took part in an informally organised Rounders Cuppers tournament at University Parks. Despite going out in the group stage after winning one match and losing two (albeit one in very controversial circumstances in the absence of a neutral umpire), we had a great time and look forward to setting up a more formal Merton rounders team next Trinity.

Unfortunately, sessions planned for 9th and 10th week respectively were called off due to the concerning spread of Covid-19 within Merton and Oxford more widely. We had planned to play volleyball and diamond cricket, in addition to continuing our rounders and dodgeball traditions. Hopefully, we can find some patches of good weather in Michaelmas 2021 and Hilary 2022 to get started again but we are looking forward to a more consistent schedule, uninterrupted by the pandemic, in Trinity 2022.

**Zak Angell (2019)**  
Social Sports Captain



Henry Grub (2016), Elliott Thornley (2019), Kabir Bakshi (2020, with orb and sceptre), Charles Tolkien-Gillett (2019) and Matthew Lennon (2020) at the Cuppers semi-finals

## Croquet

Croquet has returned to Merton! For the first time since Trinity term 2019, students are now able to play croquet within the College.

Having spent two years alone in its cupboard under the stairs of the Grove Building, the croquet equipment was in need of some attention when I came to inspect it at the end of April. Over our 757 years, Merton has acquired quite a bit of croquet kit – and on one nice, sunny day, I cleared out the cobwebs and took stock of the assorted mallets, bisques, balls, posts and hoops. The MCR and JCR Sports Officers and I deemed it time to invest in a new complete set of equipment which the older (still intact) pieces can complement. The new set has already received a lot of use and we hope it will serve many generations of Mertonians to come.

Due to the presence of Chestnut Hall on the croquet court's usual site next to Mob Quad, the College has kindly allowed for a court to be set up in the Fellows' Garden which has been prepared wonderfully by Lucille Savin and her team of gardeners. And with the help of Head Porter Huw James, College Web & Media Officer Simon Cope and Housekeeping Supervisor Joanna Twardowska, a safe croquet booking system is in place for junior members. A temporary cupboard has been provided (between Front Quad and St Alban's Quad near the newly renovated Benefactors' Arch) to reduce both the number of non-residents entering the Grove Building and the distance to the new court. It has been very rewarding to see how keen students and staff alike have been to hear the thwack of mallets return to College grounds.

Merton also fielded two teams for this year's University Croquet Cuppers: Merton 1 (Elliott Thornley (2019), Henry Grub (2016), Matthew Lennon (2020), Kabir Bakshi (2020) and myself) and Merton 2 (Gian Piero Milani (2017), Maxwell Geurts (2018), Angela

Falezza (2018) and Philippos Roussos (2020)). The first round's matches saw Merton 1 vanquish St Anne's College, though sadly Merton 2 was ousted by University College. Merton 1, however, was able to avenge their peers by defeating Univ 21-13. Continuing on to beat Wycliffe Hall, Merton 1 secured a place in the semi-finals. They faced Brasenose in the University Parks on Saturday of 8th week – a match well attended not least by the Warden, the Warden's husband and Geoffrey Biscuit. Unfortunately this was the end of Merton's run in this year's Cuppers. I am incredibly proud of how well Elliott, Henry, Matt and Kabir played this year, being undefeated in all encounters ahead of the semi-finals. I trust that Merton has returned to the Oxford croquet scene on the right foot. A future Cuppers victory would see the trophy return to the College for the first time since the Golden Age of Merton Croquet which saw three consecutive undefeated seasons from 2001 to 2003. We wish next year's team the best of luck.

I would also like to note that Professor Minhyong Kim, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in Michaelmas term 2019, served as the Senior Member of the Oxford University Association Croquet Club throughout his time at Merton from 2011 to 2020. Professor Kim took up the Christopher Zeeman Professorship at the University of Warwick last year, and when reflecting upon his tenure at Oxford he found only one regret: the unavailability of flamingo mallets. On behalf of the Merton croquet community, I would like to thank him for his service and wish him luck in his new position.

Now all there remains to do is hope the weather holds so that we can continue to enjoy the new croquet court with the best views in Oxford.

**Charles Tolkien-Gillett (2019)**  
Croquet Captain 2020-21



The M&M rugby sevens team

## Rugby

Depending on how you look at it, this year has been one of the M&Ms' most successful seasons – unbeaten in both league and Cuppers. All you have to do is ignore the fact that there were no matches this year.

Obligatory pandemic comment aside, the Ms' first challenge was writing the Covid risk assessment. After many back-and-forths between Merton, Mansfield and the club, this was finally signed off and the boys were released onto the rugby pitch, if only for non-contact training. We also had the privilege of an actual rugby coach, Magdaleni's own Simon Brown. This brought on one of the most successful training spells the Ms have had in the past few years, consistently getting double figures to train, including several freshers. However, as all good things must come to an end, so would this. With the second lockdown starting in November, the boys had to take a long break, and so could only focus on individual skills for their 'champagne rugby'. If there was a competition for the number of beer bottles hit from 30-metre passes, we certainly would have won.

Fast forward to Trinity term, the Ms returned in full force, getting ready for the sevens tournament in 4th week. Again, with numbers reaching a high of 12 at training, and a full squad going into the tournament, the Ms were ready. In the first match, it showed that we were a new team, and we didn't quite have the organisation needed for try scoring. Through the second and third match, bits of rugby started to appear, with tries from James Buckingham and Kentaro Machida, and the lads looked like a team once again.

With this positive, albeit not victorious, end of the season, we are looking forward to next year under the capable hands of a new captaincy team. We wish the best of luck to the team next year. May it be so much better than the last!

Forever Standing.

**Max Wormsley (Regent's Park) and Alex Fisher (Mansfield) (both 2019)**  
M&Ms Rugby Captain and Vice-Captain 2020-21

# Sports Overview

When I took over as Sports Rep this Easter, it did not look likely that there would be much of a Sports Overview to write. College sport had never got going for the 2020-21 year, and only a handful of University teams had managed to play a fixture before they too were shut down due to Covid. After some very promising results last year, it was disheartening to see our opportunities to build on those fading away.

However, with Trinity came the return of sport, and the return of Merton (and Mansfield) triumphs. Not content with merely competing where we had previously, this term saw the birth of whole new teams. The Merton netball team rose from the ashes after years of lying dormant, a brand new women's football team took to the field, and the comatose tennis team was coaxed back to life. Huge thanks must go to the respective captains for the impetus and drive to get the teams running again. Special mention must go to netball for regularly boasting turnouts of more than 25 people, despite far fewer than that actually knowing the rules of the game. Also created this term was the Social Sports Club, inclusive of all, with classic PE games such as dodgeball being enjoyed by participants on the Merton fields. Members of that team also formed the backbone of the all-important netball Cuppers team who I hear represented the College with great aplomb.

Across the board, those sports that were able to compete in Trinity enjoyed great success. The hockey team soared to the top of their league, and narrowly lost 4-3 in the Ultimate University final (against a Queen's team boasting five Blues players to our zero). The distinguished and phenomenally well-dressed croquet team made it all the way to the semi-finals, a huge achievement. With such a wonderful lawn in Fellows' Garden, it is of little surprise that Merton is creating croquet players of the highest quality. The tennis team got out on the courts training for the first time in years and, given the quality of University players we also have in College, we'll be looking to the inter-college competitions next year with great hopes. Rain and a practically new line-up each match led to a rather inconsistent cricket season, but the team still represented themselves gainfully against colleges with great cricketing pedigree, culminating in a third-place position in their league.

The brand new netball team, unlike most sports not linked with Mansfield due to such incredibly high turnouts, was a true success story. As well as reportedly 'lit' socials, the team went impressively unbeaten all term. Though goal difference meant they had to be content with a third-place finish, it was a great tale of triumph for a team with merely one training session before its first match (and occasionally the JCR Sports Rep at centre, who refused to believe the captains when they told him some of the rules). Further triumph could be found in women's rowing, who successfully bumped a phenomenal five teams across Torpids, resulting in well-deserved blades for all those taking part, providing at least some solace for the hours of sleep they all must lose due to 6am erg sessions; rowers really are just built different. Finally, the football team enjoyed some excellent victories as well, as the team continue to show themselves a force to be reckoned with after their incredible Cuppers run last season. They will approach October with great anticipation for the new season.

In other news, the Merton Armada is coming along nicely, and dwarfs those of almost all other colleges. The MCR and JCRs combined to procure both a canoe and paddleboards to add to our three punts. Students took full advantage of the new online booking system, and rarely a day went by when Merton students were not on the river (as opposed to the end of 8th week when most of them were in fact *in* the river). Sadly the true highlight of our sporting calendar, the annual sports day, was cancelled at the end of 9th week, as a surge of Covid brought Oxford to somewhat of a standstill. We hope for a rescheduling to October, when the all-important egg-and-spoon-race and three-legged-race champions can be crowned.

As well as these great team successes, Merton is the proud home of a vast number of highly successful individuals, who are representing the University in their sports' respective top teams. Charlie Peters (2019) and Kaiyang Song (2018) starred for the men's football team in their triumphant Varsity match; Amy Hearn (2018) and Hannah Sirringhaus (2019) were leading lights for the women's cricket team. Will Barker (2019) similarly represented the University cricket team on the men's side, including playing on the hallowed turf of Lord's in the one-day Varsity match. Constanta Burlacu (2018) was integral to the University's women's rowing boat, and Jack Pickering (2020)

had a meteoric rise up the Oxford University Lawn Tennis Club to earn his Blue as a mere fresher. Laura Neill (2018) bowed out as the leading light of the Ladies' Squash Club, sadly without a final chance to shoe tabs as Covid cancelled the Varsity, but she was able to claim another accolade, representing the real tennis team at Lord's as they whitewashed Cambridge 6-0. Benedict Yorston (2019) was similarly there, as part of the men's team who also triumphed, winning the final deciding match to pip Cambridge in a much closer affair. Meanwhile, Toby Adkins (2014) pedalled his way to 1st team colours in the cycling squad in yet another Oxford triumph.

Although sport likely would not be the first area that comes to mind when considering Merton, the last two years have produced a remarkable number of successes on this front. I might be a little biased towards the hockey club, but I think their performance this term summed up what all our teams have done so brilliantly recently – a genuine team spirit, inclusive of all, that manages to overwhelm odds and reputation even against colleges that on paper would have expected to best us. Though it is great to have an increasingly growing number of successful individuals across the College, even better is the continued triumph of our often underdog teams that infuriate and shock colleges that still view Mertonians as library-obsessed individuals without the sporting prowess to compete with them. Here's to another year of annoying those colleges!

As a final note, I would like to pay tribute to just a few of the people who help Merton sport thrive as it currently does. Firstly, James Lisle as Head Groundsman does a phenomenal job keeping the grounds and pavilion in perfect condition, a task made even harder this term with practically simultaneous football and cricket matches. Secondly, Professor Jonathan Prag is the administrative titan who keeps the entire show on track; perhaps most impressive is how he puts up with us Sports Reps who are not always quite as on top of things as we should be. Finally, Tim Lightfoot as Domestic Bursar and Irene Tracey as Warden are always hugely supportive of our endeavours, and it is both noticed and hugely appreciated.

#### **Benedict Yorston (2019)**

JCR Sports Representative 2020-21, Admiral of the Fleet, and mediocre Tiddlywinks player

## Blues and Half Blues

### *New Full Blues and Half Blues in 2020-21*

Will Barker (2019)	Cricket
Constanta Burlacu (2018)	Rowing
Amy Hearn (2018)	Cricket
Laura Neill (2018)	Squash, Real Tennis
Charlie Peters (2019)	Football
Jack Pickering (2020)	Tennis
Hannah Sirringhaus (2019)	Cricket
Kaiyang Song (2018)	Football
Benedict Yorston (2019)	Real Tennis

## Haigh Ties

### *Awarded in June 2021*

Will Barker (2019)
Ollie Bowling (2018)
Kentaro Machida (2019)
Suryansh Mehta (2019)
Gian Piero Milani (2017)
Phoebe Mountain (2019)
Eppie Sharp (2018)
Hannah Sirringhaus (2019)
Charles Tolkien-Gillett (2019)

# Clubs & Societies





## History Society

Despite the disruption caused by the pandemic, this year has been a successful one for the Merton History Society. It began with a virtual Freshers' Tea, our first chance to connect the freshers with the finalists. This was followed by a quiz, in which we were pleased to see many entries for our first round, as attempts to recreate historical events from Michaelmas modules using the props available in people's rooms included Percy Pig as Joan of Arc being burnt at the stake, a bathtub full of tea representing the Boston Tea Party and recreations of David Bowie album covers.

This was followed by a well-attended talk by Merton's new Junior Research Fellow Emily Rutherford entitled 'Gender difference and gender segregation in British universities after coeducation', which commemorated the centenary of women being granted degrees at Oxford and the 40-year anniversary of the first female students at Merton.

Hilary term saw virtual events continue, with another quiz attended by the tutors, Merton historians and their families. Professor Steve's Gunn's wife, Jacquie, was invited

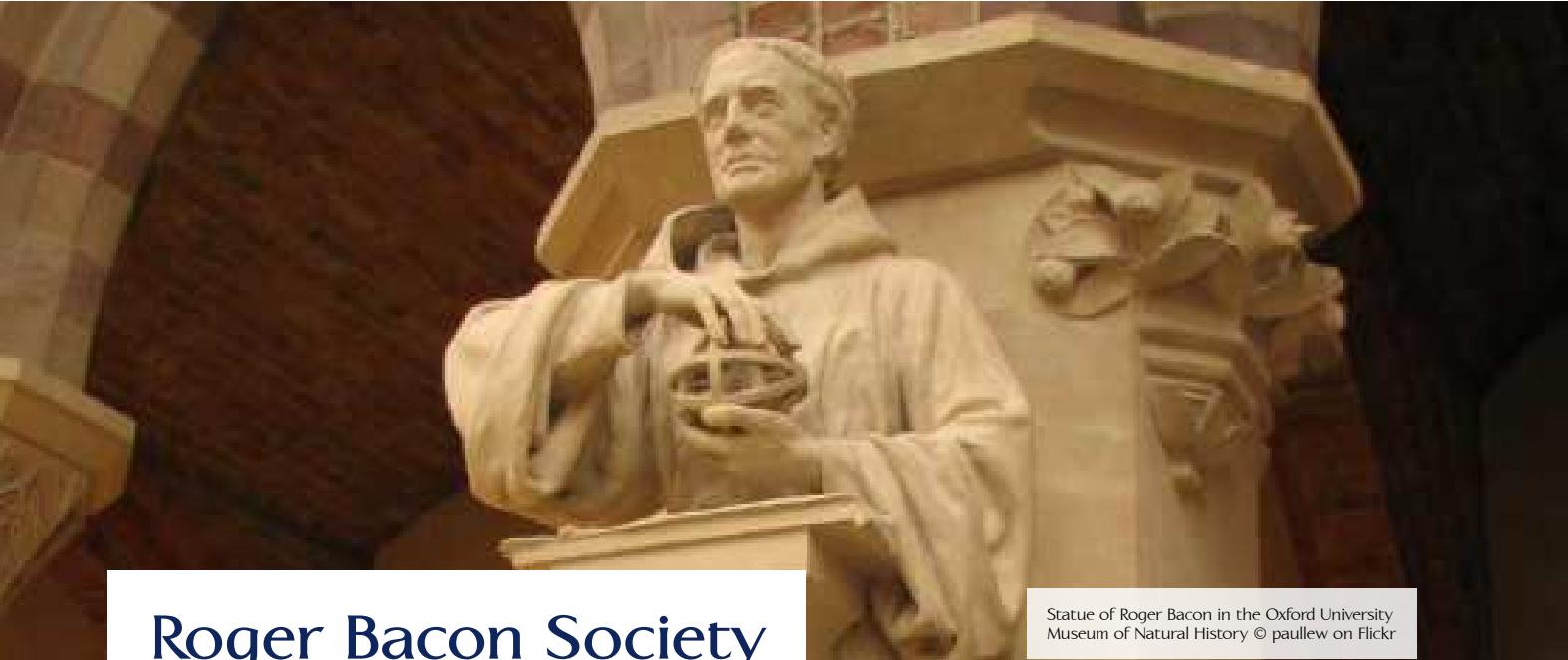
History Schools Dinner, Trinity term

to judge culinary recreations of historical events, including a breadstick in the eye of a potato smiley face (the arrow in the eye at the Battle of Hastings), six cupcakes representing the wives of Henry VIII and a chocolate log Anderson shelter.

Trinity term saw the welcome return of in-person events, with the success of the Schools Dinner for finalists and the annual society Garden Party, with Pimm's and croquet aplenty. This offered us finalists the chance to put some names to the faces of freshers we had seen on screen all year.

Throughout the year, I have been ably assisted on the History Society committee by the Secretary, Jess Hinks (2018), and the Treasurer, Rachel Lo (2019). It has been my pleasure to serve as President for this year, and I am pleased to leave the responsibility for the society in the hands of Michael Zajac (2020). I wish him all the best for next year.

**Joe Hyland Deeson (2018)**  
History Society President 2020-21



Statue of Roger Bacon in the Oxford University Museum of Natural History © paullew on Flickr

## Roger Bacon Society

Occam Lectures cancelled. Physics dinner cancelled. Garden party cancelled. (We're gonna need some filler later to make up for this lack of events.) Only some of the students have been in Oxford some of the time. But the core of learning and researching and teaching physics has remained alive and strong here at Merton.

It has surely been the hardest for the freshers. Catching up with them about halfway through the year, I was impressed by their attitude and focus. They approached the year mostly unperturbed: as keen as ever to get to grips with the new Physics and managing to still work together to understand the harder material/problems. \begin{filler} We are perhaps lucky that the work in Physics partially involves an escape to a world of symmetry – of Gaussian sculptures intersecting curling electromagnetic field lines, of Einsteinian folk with metre sticks and wristwatches at every point in the dancing geometry of spacetime, of lattice-based particles caring only for themselves and the MFT-defined group identity or with nationalistic tendencies (“It’s just me and my nearest neighbours”) – where there is the dependable satisfaction of successfully completing a derivation or calculation that may also be profound. I expect in some of the essay subjects the mood of the student and the mood of the world may have a more direct impact. \end{filler}

In lieu of other events the online quiz was held and had a good turnout. There was World, Oxford and Merton-Physicist trivia. The winners were awarded £10 vouchers.

For the election of the next RBS president, we had three candidates step up to the plate: Jan, Nic and Marcell. David Hosking (President 2017-18) began the tradition of humorous campaign videos that are then posted to the RBS Facebook page. Marcell and Nic delivered with classic in-jokes and their own funny, distinctive touches. These videos and my encouraging (nagging) emails must have galvanised the electorate: we had 20 votes cast and a tie, for the first time since historical records began, with Nic and Marcell elected the society’s co-presidents. I think they’ll make a really great team, so watch this space.

Though not strictly within the domain of the Roger Bacon Society, I must mention Schools Dinner (for the exiting fourth years and their tutors). It will stand as one of the warmest memories from all of our time here at Merton, and we are very glad it could go ahead.

**Richard Chatterjee (2017)**  
Roger Bacon Society President 2020-21

# Neave Society

The Neave Society has seen many evolutions and changes this year – from having everyone online at the start, to being back in person for our final debate of the year.

Despite this tumultuous year, the Neave Society has continued to host its bi-weekly debates as it always has done. It has been fascinating to hear from students from a variety of years and subjects, who consistently provide fresh perspectives and lively discussions no matter the topic.

We kicked off the year with the traditional 'no confidence in the government' debate, which this year revolved (as you might expect) mainly around coronavirus and the policy response. Michaelmas saw us consider topics as varied as drug legalisation and education, making for a wonderful term of discussions.

Our highlight from Hilary term was the debate on space exploration which asked whether private individuals or governments should be able to own space (when the time comes). Along with questions of fairness and government power came concerns about the likelihood of territorial wars in space, which – though slightly fantastical – provided for some very interesting discussion.

At the start of this term, fitted with a new President and Treasurer, we were unfortunately limited to online discussions – despite this, they were engaged in with gusto. Our first debate was on whether porn should be legal. After a fascinating discussion on bodily sanctity as well as the reality of sex work, the house voted in favour of pornography being legal. We followed this up with another online debate, this time on the benefits and drawbacks of national service. We spent much of this debate mulling over the different forms which national service could take – from military to educational. We concluded that this house would not introduce compulsory national service, primarily based on concerns about the power of government to control the lives of its citizens.

Finally, towards the end of term we had our first in-person debate in quite some time (we have been online since the end of Hilary term 2020). In this debate we considered the

proposition that wealth should not be divided equally after divorce. We ended up voting in favour of the motion, after considering how varied and diverse marriages are. This debate was held around the beautiful Tolkien Table, although we hope next term to be able to move back into the JCR for a full term of in-person debates.

**Poppy Jagger (2019)**

Neave Society President 2020-21

## This year's motions and outcomes

**'This House has no confidence in Her Majesty's Government'**

The Neave Society voted against the motion

**'This House would legalise all drugs'**

The Neave Society voted against the motion

**'This House believes the US election does not matter'**

The Neave Society voted against the motion

**'This House would scrap the use of exams for university admission'**

The Neave Society voted against the motion

**'This House believes no one has the right to own outer space'**

The Neave Society voted in favour of the motion

**'This House would criminalise pornography'**

The Neave Society voted against the motion

**'This House would introduce compulsory national service'**

The Neave Society voted against the motion

**'This House believes that wealth should not be equally divided after divorce'**

The Neave Society voted in favour of the motion

# Christian Union

Merton Christian Union (CU) has continued in fellowship despite a turbulent and unpredictable year. In Michaelmas term, when students were permitted to live in College residence, we held a (socially distanced) Freshers' Fair, and were overjoyed by the opportunity to meet freshers who were keen to join the Christian community at Merton. In compliance with the Covid-19 regulations, we had weekly group meetings in the College Chapel, where we shared God's word and prayers with each other. It was a wonderful chance to spend time with others, from all different years and subjects – and in person, which was an absolute blessing, given we were all craving some community.

In Hilary term, our CU meetings still took place, albeit online, as the majority of Oxford students had been working remotely. Fortunately, we were still able to share a lot with each other, despite being spread throughout the country (and across the world). We continued to read through Philippians and spent time catching up with each other every week of term.

As we returned to Oxford in Trinity term, the Oxford Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (OICCU) held its annual events week with the theme of 'KNOWN'. There were two talks each day, exploring how Jesus responds to the big questions in life, and how being fully known yet fully loved – especially by Jesus – could be something we all yearn for. With Preliminary and Final exams taking up the rest of term, we didn't always have a chance to meet regularly. However, throughout the summer, we've continued to keep in contact and hope to be meeting in some configuration, in person, next term. It's been a difficult time for fellowship and community, but there is still a lot for which we can be very grateful to God – and grateful most of all that He has borne us, and our faith, through it all.

**Alex Beukers (2018)**  
Christian Union Rep 2020-21



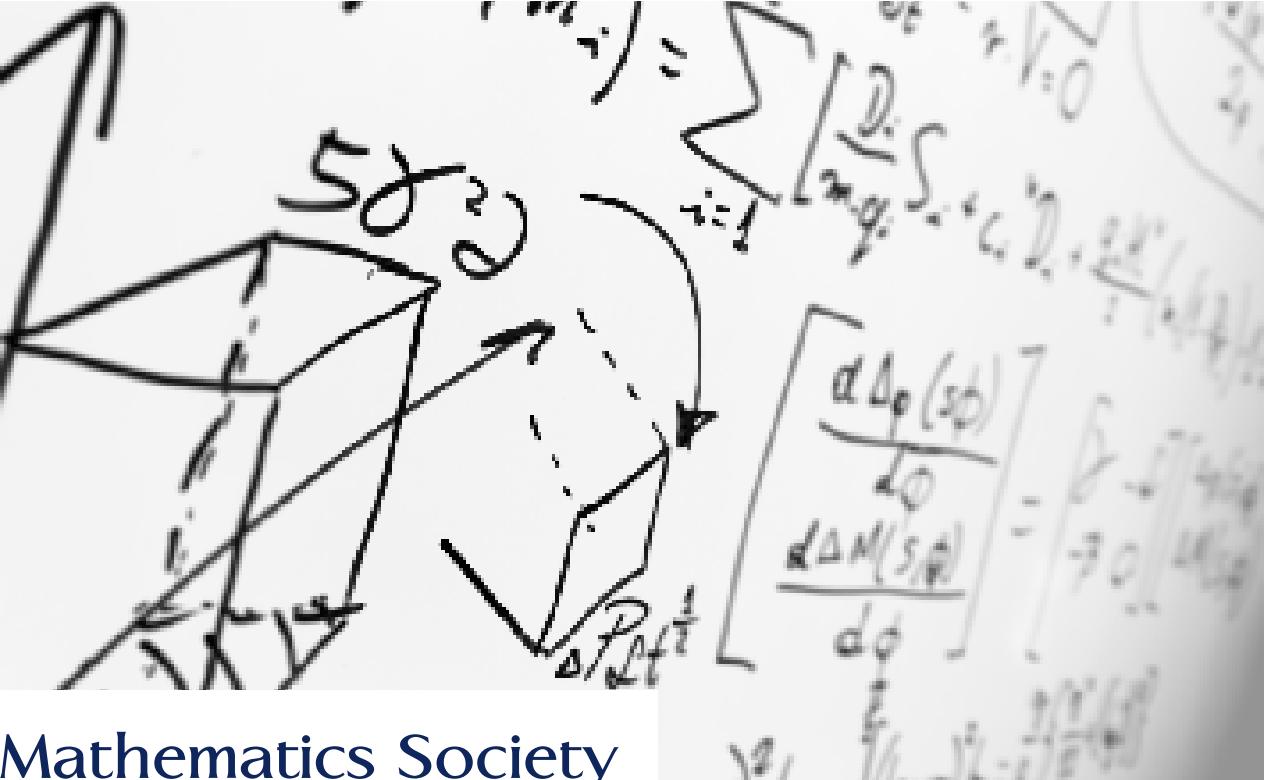
The Bodley Memorial in the College's Antechapel  
© Claire Spence-Parsons

## Bodley Club

Unfortunately this has been a very quiet year for the Bodley Club, as the ongoing pandemic has made it rather difficult to fulfil the Club's mandate to invite speakers from without or within the College who are deemed to be 'fabulously interesting' and from wide-ranging disciplines. Although it is a shame to have had to delay or cancel events throughout the year, including our Annual Dinner and Garden Party, we very much look forward to resuming our series of speakers as things begin to open up. Watch this space for Michaelmas 2021!

I am delighted to be handing the presidency of the club to Guy Smith (2018), whom I'm sure will take the lead in reinvigorating our programme of speakers once we can return to in-person events. I would like to thank Alex Beukers (2018) and Victor Ajuwon (2015, Secretary) for their continuing efforts in running the Club, as well as to our Senior Member, Fra' John Eidinow (1986, Fellow), whose advice is always invaluable.

**Wick Willett (2017)**  
Bodley Club President 2019-21



## Mathematics Society

It has been a very different year for the Mathematics and Joint Schools Society, with events taking place online and learning to adapt to new ways of socialising. Following an excited contested election, co-presidents Emily Slade (2019, human) and Rio Caulfield (dog) were elected, taking over from last year's amazing presidents, Jonny Durston and Rodrigo Marlasca Aparicio (both 2018).

The year began with a virtual subject tea, which was a great chance to see all the freshers and get to know them. Attended by first years through to fourth years, this set the tone for future events to come, with different years being able to mix together and get to know one another.

Keeping up with tradition, the year has been filled with the weekly maths help sessions. Excitingly, some of these were in-person in Michaelmas term, and provided great relief from other Zoom and Teams socials. Accompanied by baked goods, these sessions consisted of providing help to the first years with their problem sheets, and giving general mathematical advice.

One bonus of having a mixture of in-person and virtual maths help sessions was the ability to keep them going over the holidays and remote Hilary term, and to maintain contact with students who weren't returning to Oxford, both for mathematical help and for keeping in touch with other students during these strange and unprecedented times.

With many students returning for Trinity term, and with the weather growing warmer, maths help sessions were once again able to take place in person: this time in Fellows' Garden. Blessed with sunny weather, the annual Mathematics Society Garden Party also took place, with a great turnout and a chance to wave goodbye to the current maths students until next year.

**Emily Slade and Rio Caulfield (both 2019)**  
Mathematics Society Co-Presidents 2020-21



## Quiz Society

The year 2020-21 was one of mixed fortunes for the Quiz Society.

Early in September, before Michaelmas started, our *University Challenge* team – comprising Conor Ó Siocháin (2017), William Isotta (2019), our reservist Elisabeth Le Maistre (2016) (team member Tom McLean (2017) being stranded in New Zealand due to the pandemic) and myself – returned to Manchester to film our second-round match. Following on from our resounding victory against Wolfson College, Cambridge, which briefly had us hailed on Twitter for beating the college that produced *University Challenge* celebrity Eric Monkman, we were disappointed to be squarely beaten by the team from Warwick.

Regardless of the result, we did our best and found appearing on *University Challenge* a thoroughly rewarding experience,

The 2020-21 Merton College *University Challenge* team © ITV Studios

even if the second time we lacked a studio audience and had to have plexiglass screens between us to prevent the spread of Covid-19. We fielded a team for the applications process of the next series, but sadly did not make it to the televised rounds. Lockdown also put paid to our dreams of a victory in the Inter-Collegiate Quiz, but we hope to come back stronger in Michaelmas.

In the meantime, Merton's JCR and MCR ran successful bar quizzes on Monday nights, both online and in person, and many of members attended and enjoyed these.

Keep an eye out. We hope to be returning to your screens as soon as we can.

**Pax Butchart (2019)**  
Quiz Society President 2020-21



Photo: Kilyan Sockalingum on Unsplash

## Arts Society

This year has been a busy and challenging one for the Arts Society, as we have had to significantly reconsider what sorts of events we could run due to Covid restrictions. Nonetheless, the year still turned out to be fairly successful, with engagement being particularly high during Trinity. We have, through this time, continued to encourage engagement and appreciation with culture and the arts, through events, competitions and continually informing students about the various available art and cultural activities going on around Oxford.

It has been especially pleasing to see that, despite nearly all events of the Arts Society being online this term, attendance has been consistently high, with the amount of people attending our weekly movie nights during Hilary and the various events we planned collaboratively with other societies and JCR reps being especially high. We are eager to continue these collaborations next year, to increase the scope of engagement that we can create with culture and the arts.

We were delighted by how the JCR Arts and Culture Week turned out, despite it being very different from what it has been before. Although we had only two weeks to plan everything properly, because of changes in Covid guidelines, thanks to the efforts of everyone involved, we were nonetheless able to run a large number of events, most of which turned out to be very successful, and some of which (like our romantic poetry nature walk) we hope to continue on a regular weekly or biweekly basis next term.

In all, despite being unable to have any events in person, we nonetheless had a surprisingly successful year, and we all look forward to in-person events next year. We hope that new students will be eager to join us in our exploration of culture and the arts provided by the society next year.

**Aryaman Gupta (2020)**  
JCR Arts Society Rep 2020-21



One of the virtual ensemble performances

## Music Society

It has been a productive year for the Merton College Music Society, despite the challenges of the past year, thanks to the input of students across all years. Michaelmas 2020 saw the foundation of a new initiative to promote chamber music in College, in which musicians were paired up into several duos and small ensembles. Unfortunately, the implementation of a four-week national lockdown in November made it difficult for ensembles to rehearse and prevented progress with the scheme. Nevertheless, it demonstrated that such a scheme is viable and that there are musicians in College willing to take part. We hope that this will take place again next year, and that ensembles will have the opportunity to perform to an audience.

With most students away from College during Hilary, MCMS was forced to move online, but the society still managed to remain active during this time. Fortnightly social events on Zoom allowed musicians across College to come together and discuss ideas for what the Music Society could do virtually as well as in the future. Particularly pleasing was

the creation of two virtual ensemble performances, in which students recorded their parts separately and these were then edited together. The Zoom socials also provided a platform for live online performances and a chance for musicians to share what they had been working on.

For Trinity term, the Music Society decided to put on a virtual concert. A request for contributions was well received and, with many students back in College, the concert was presented by putting up QR codes around College, each taking the viewer to a different recording. The end of term also saw the first in-person recital in the TS Eliot Theatre in a long time, with Eric McElroy (2018) on the piano. The society hopes that the easing of restrictions will allow for further in-person recitals next year and a chance to work with the composer Cheryl Frances-Hoad, the Visiting Research Fellow in the Creative Arts for 2021.

**Jamie Cochrane (2019)**  
MCMS President 2020-21

Rachel Jung and Luke Bateman holding up the Society's pamphlet *Pekes and Pollicles*.



## Poetry Society

It's been another busy year for the Merton College Poetry Society. We kicked off the year with events in both Freshers' Week and International Freshers' Week, welcoming in a new group of regular attendees with one night of poetry in translation and a night of comic poetry. Our events throughout the term, from feminist poetry to poems themed around the environment, played a vital role in bringing together Merton's new creative community during a term of increasing isolation.

With the sad news that we wouldn't be able to return in Hilary, MCPS provided a comforting on-screen meeting place every week of the virtual term. In addition to themed reading nights (such as our Valentines' Poetry evening or our incredibly well attended Pride Poetry event), we hosted several workshops to get the creative juices flowing. One workshop was a surrealist crossover with the JCR Art Society Rep. producing a mind-bending collaborative poem to feature in our pamphlet. We also conducted our first ever 'Chain Storytelling Project' where Mertonians from around the world took it in turns to add 100 words to a strange and fantastical short story entitled 'Something was afoot in Fellows' Garden ...'

In Trinity, finally reunited in Oxford, MCPS was happy to host a number of summery events. We spent an evening revelling in the beauty of Shakespeare's language, as well as collaborations with the Oxford University LGTBQ+ Soc for a University-wide Pride Open Mic and the Merton Chalcenterics Classics Society for a University-wide Classics and Poetry Evening. We were also fortunate to be able to host our first in-person sessions since Hilary 2020, with an in-person night of poetry inspired by the College as part of Arts Week.

This year we produced three wonderful pamphlets, packed full of poetry, prose and art. In Michaelmas and Hilary, our virtual launch events were attended by in excess of 30 people across the world, and in Trinity, our first in-person launch party gathered 20 Mertonian poets in Fellows' Garden. We express our great gratitude to all those who have trusted us with their work, and can't wait to see what they produce next.

Links to our pamphlets can be found here:  
[bit.ly/MertonPoetrySociety](https://bit.ly/MertonPoetrySociety)

**Luke Bateman and Rachel Jung (both 2019)**  
Poetry Society Co-Presidents 2020-21



'40 Years of Progress: Oxford, gender equality and academia since 1980'

## 1980 Society

1980 Society has had a very successful third year. In Michaelmas term, at Merton's own Freshers' Fair many undergraduates were very excited to join. We started off the term with a pyjama party and movie screening of *10 Things I Hate About You*, a feminist pop culture classic which the entire audience enjoyed. We also started an event series of an online discussion group, where every fortnight a different theme is focused on and the participants are encouraged to share their views in a friendly discourse. This event often served as an introduction to feminist theory, as we used current news, movies, music or online phenomena to begin the conversations. Some themes included social reproduction and women's role in the family, problems we find in current feminist discourse such as lack of intersectionality or transmisogyny, beauty standards faced by young girls and children online, as well as what gender equality can do for men.

In Hilary term, we hosted a second movie night for International Women's Day (this time online). Another highlight was the collaboration with Merton's gender equality representative and the 40 Years of Women at Merton series. To honour this special anniversary we hosted a discussion panel titled '40 Years of Progress: Oxford, gender equality and academia since 1980'. The inspiring guests we were lucky enough to have join us were Honorary Fellows Professor Dinah Birch CBE (Pro-

Vice-Chancellor for Cultural Engagement and Professor of English Literature at the University of Liverpool) and Professor Lyndal Roper (Regius Professor of History at the University of Oxford), and former Fellow Professor Alison Finch (Honorary Professor Emerita of French Literature at the University of Cambridge). The discussion was chaired by Merton's Warden Irene Tracey and included some questions from Phoebe Mountain (2019, JCR Gender Equality Representative 2020-21), Jessica Searle (2018, JCR Gender Equality Representative 2019-20) and me. We all left feeling very hopeful about how far the JCR has come in including women, but also inspired to work towards further progress and a more equal college and society overall. We also continued the online discussion groups, which have become a beloved and popular event.

In Trinity term, we started recording a podcast series where we invited back the founder of the society Emily Capstick (2017), as well as last year's president Olivia Tan (2018). The podcast will hopefully be launched over the next year, allowing the society to expand to reach an audience outside Merton's walls. We are very excited to see what the next academic year has to offer for the 1980 Society.

**Merit Flügler (2019)**  
1980 Society President 2020-21



## Halsbury Society

This year has been another fantastic year for Merton's Halsbury Society. Although many of our annual events had to be modified to follow Covid-19 guidelines, we still had a great time together and got to enjoy many fine events.

One of the highlights for many of us was the annual lecture, which this year took place as a discussion panel also to celebrate the wonderful anniversary of 40 years of women at Merton. We were fortunate enough to welcome two Merton law alumni, the Honorable Mrs Justice Kelyn Bacon DBE (1992) and Ms Teniola Onabango (2004). The panel was chaired by Merton's Professor Mindy Chen-Wishart, who did an excellent job at facilitating a lively conversation leading to many interesting insights by the two panellists. The topics included being a woman in law, a career at the Bar and the effects of Covid-19, as well as their experience of Merton. The discourse was inspirational to all of us, but especially to our female students.

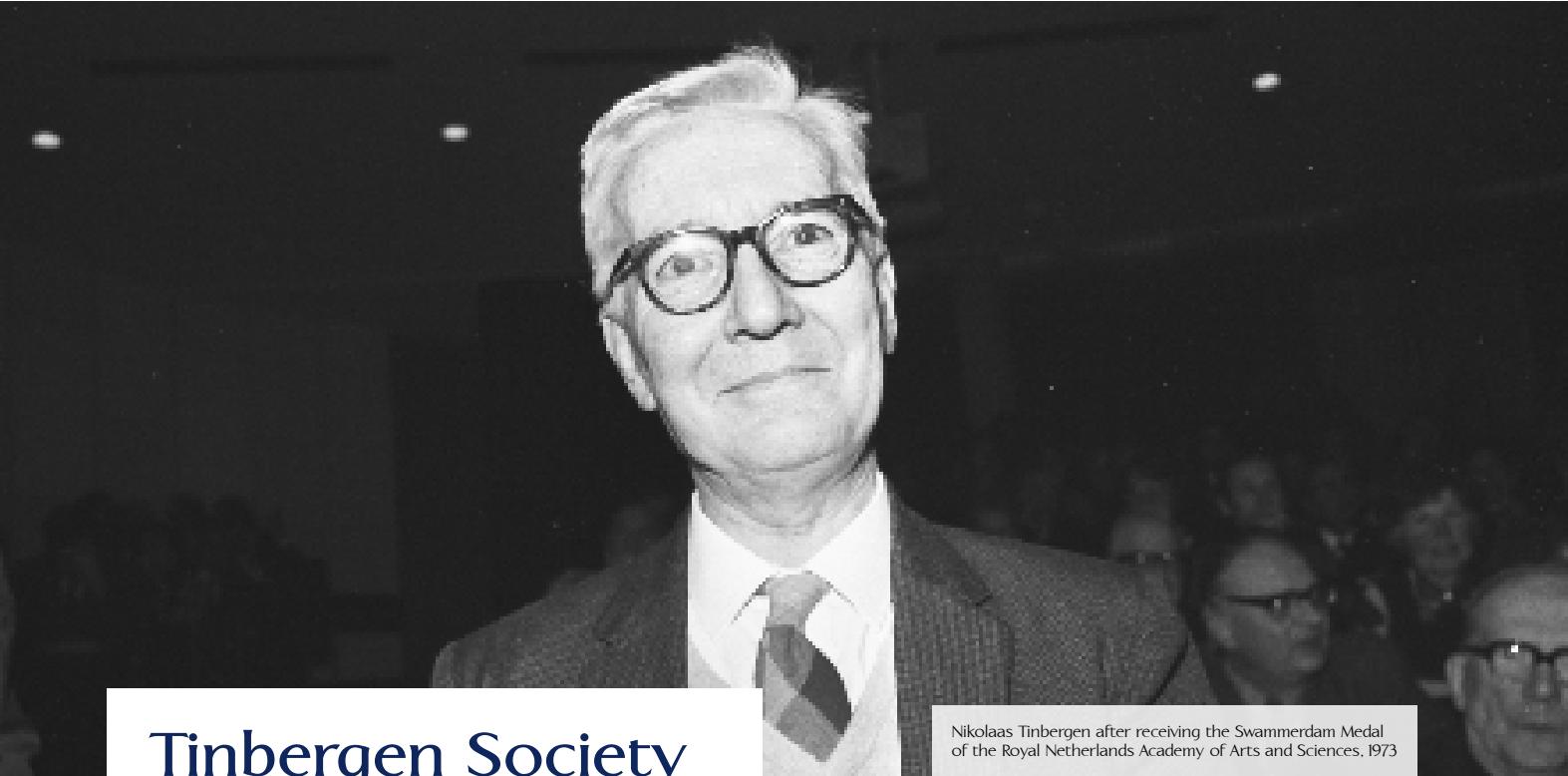
Halsbury Society lecture via Zoom, with the Hon Mrs Justice Bacon (1992) and Ms Teniola Onabango (2004), chaired by Professor Chen-Wishart

In Trinity term, we enjoyed several lovely and informal picnics in the Fellows' Garden, which were a great Covid-friendly replacement of our usual summer garden party. The weather was great and there were many delicious snacks and nibbles.

Many of our members have had very successful years themselves, with achievements such as Rhiya Bhatt winning the Graduate Intercollegiate Mooting Competition and Carlos Cremer winning the Merton Moot.

I am happy to announce that Isabel Howarth will be our society's President for the next academic year. I am confident that she will do a splendid job in leading the Halsbury Society in a hopefully more normal year.

**Merit Flügler (2019)**  
Halsbury Society President 2020-21



## Tinbergen Society

This year has been a difficult yet interesting one for the Tinbergen Society.

Unfortunately, the government coronavirus restrictions have greatly limited our ability to run our usual activities this year, such as the annual trip to Otmoor nature reserve to observe starling murmurations. Fortunately, many students have had the opportunity to learn and develop the skill of bird ringing this year, an essential ability for any individual who wishes to study bird behaviour and distribution. As this skill is not often taught by the department, the opportunity to develop outside of teaching with postdoctoral researchers is something we are all grateful for and have very much enjoyed.

In addition to these opportunities, one of our second-year undergraduates, Alexander Tchernev (2019), has become the Vice President for the Oxford Society of Ageing and Longevity, a newly founded group focusing on ageing from a biological, social, economic and treatment perspective.

Nikolaas Tinbergen after receiving the Swammerdam Medal of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1973

The society has hosted numerous interesting talks throughout this year. In Michaelmas term, Aubrey de Grey gave a talk on recent developments in rejuvenation biotechnology and their applications in combating Covid-19. Also in Michaelmas term, Sebastian Brunemeier and David Wood gave excellent talks on investing in longevity biotech and on the ethics of anti-ageing, respectively. The talk by David Wood incorporated real-world socioeconomic impacts and truly showed how science can affect society. In Hilary term, Sebastian Brunemeier was back for an enlightening talk on brain ageing, and Dr Andrew Steele gave an overview talk on longevity, both of which served as reminders of the advancements and impacts of anti-ageing technology.

Despite the limitations, the society's members have been active and engaged, and we are all looking forward to next year as restrictions are hopefully lifted.

**Hope Clutterbuck (2019)**  
Tinbergen Society President 2020-21



Dr Henry Tang, Lecturer in Classics, who gave a Chalcenterics talk in Trinity term

## Chalcenterics

The Chalcenterics started off Michaelmas term 2020 with the virtual Freshers' Tea as we gave a warm welcome to our new students and three new tutors: Dr Olivia Elder, Dr Henry Tang and Dr Henry Spelman. It was a lovely chance to get to know the new students and tutors, as well as catch up with the other undergraduates and enjoy delicious snacks. For this, we must especially thank my Co-President Guy Smith (2018) who delivered the snacks to each household in the autumnal wet and windy weather.

The term also saw the launch of the Merton Classics Access Instagram and Facebook pages, through which Classics student ambassadors provided information about the different courses available and insight into studying Classics at Oxford in a series of engaging posts.

In Hilary term, we held a study skills session, in which students from different years shared their tips and experiences, discussing everything from note-taking and essays to exams. It was especially valuable to hear about what strategies students were using for remote studying and immensely heartening as we encouraged each other. The students also showed their support for our second-year students undertaking their Honour Moderations in the annual Mods tea which took place in fifth week.

Trinity term featured a fascinating talk by Dr Tang on 'The study of Greece and Rome in China'. It was very well attended, with members of the Christian Cole Society and Oxford students and tutors coming to listen. The engaging discussion that followed the talk highlighted the importance of inclusivity and diversity in Classics, and I am very grateful to Dr Tang for his contribution to this. Sadly, we must say farewell to Dr Tang as he leaves Merton at the end of this year, and so I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his hard work and wish him all the best for the future.

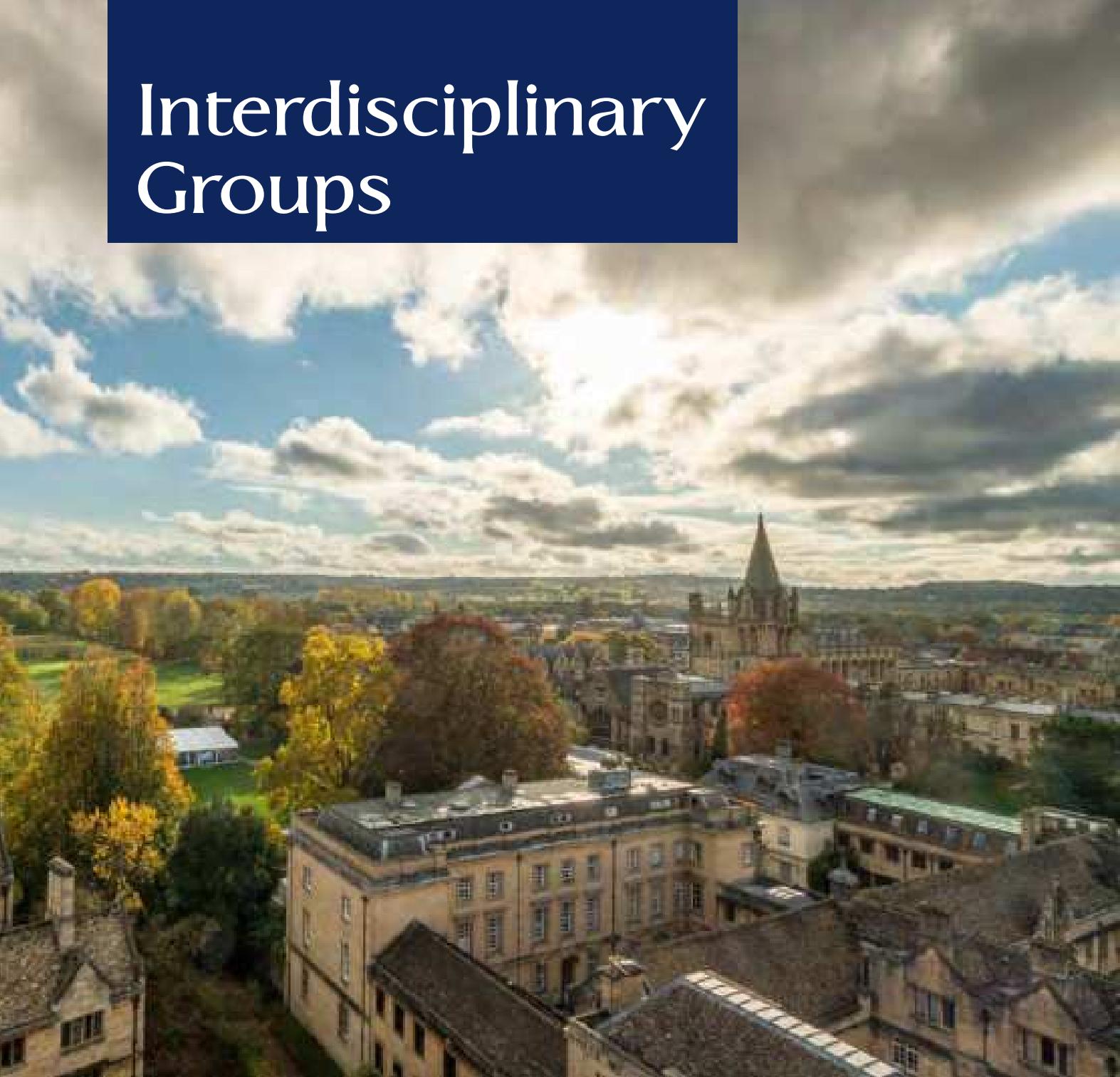
In the final term of the year, we held a Classics and Poetry evening, co-hosted with the Merton College Poetry Society. It was a relaxing and informal event, with students sharing poems inspired by Classics. It was particularly amazing to listen to the poems written by our own Classics students and the co-presidents of the Merton College Poetry Society, Rachel Jung and Luke Bateman (both 2019).

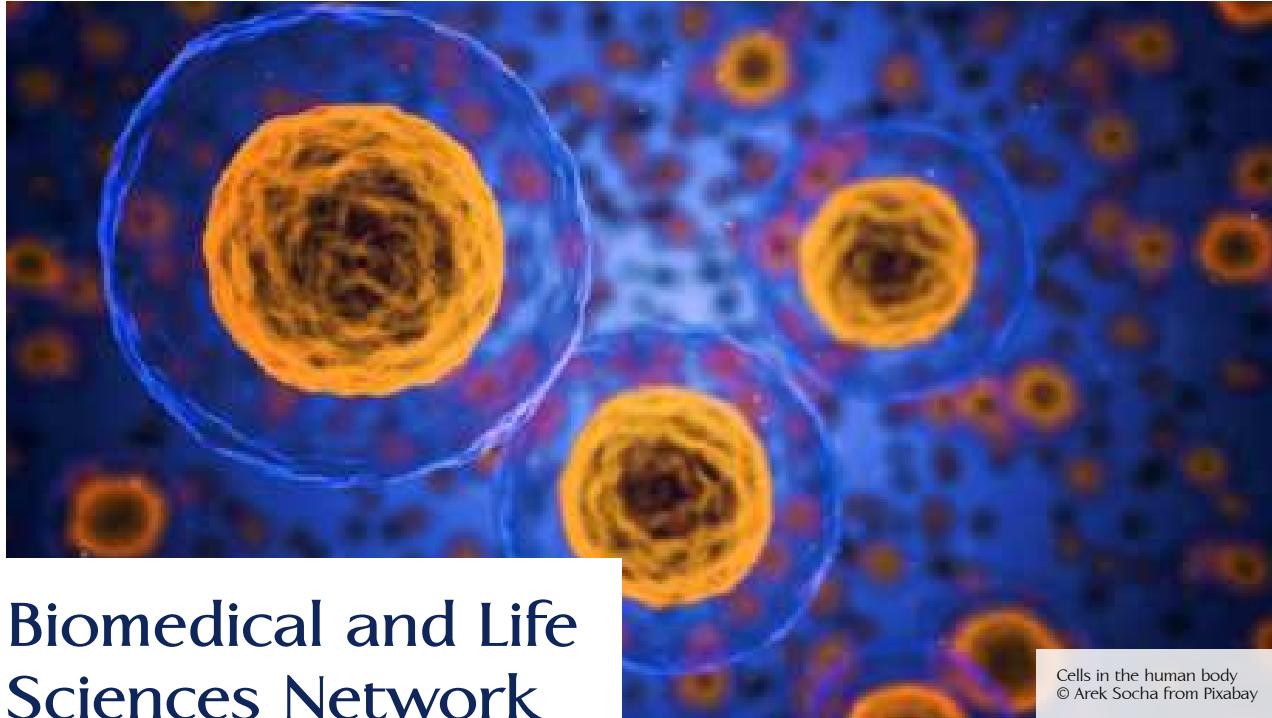
We also welcomed back four Merton Classics alumni for our Classics and Careers panel event. In this event, we heard from Fergus McIntosh (*The New Yorker*), Alex Walsh (HM Treasury), Jane Chan (Royal Society of Chemistry) and David Hunt (Boies Schiller Flexner) as they discussed their career journeys since leaving Merton. It was wonderful to hear their experiences, and I'm very grateful to the panellists for giving up their time and speaking to us.

In all, it was a very successful year for the Chalcenterics, and we look forward to seeing what next year holds for the society.

**Cristina Chui and Guy Smith (both 2018)**  
Chalcenterics Co-President 2020-21

# Interdisciplinary Groups





Cells in the human body  
© Arek Socha from Pixabay

## Biomedical and Life Sciences Network

The Merton College Biomedical and Life Sciences Network brings together past and present Mertonians who are involved in the biomedical and life sciences sector. One of the aims of the network is to provide an easy way for current students to find alumni to contact for advice or help – for example, when looking for internships, jobs or academic posts. As an additional benefit, the network enables Mertonians engaged in research or work in similar fields to find out about and get in touch with each other. The network was created in March 2020 and is hosted on LinkedIn. Since the report in *Postmaster* last year, the network has grown to comprise 136 members covering a range of occupations and geographical locations.

A notable and crucial development over the last year has been the marvellous initiative shown by one of the student members, Isabelle Goodridge (2018), who took the lead in organising the inaugural event for the network. This took place online on 17 September 2020 and featured four alumni speaking about their careers following postgraduate degrees. Those taking part were Gregory Lim (2006), Sonia de Munari (2012), Jan Domanski (2013) and David Clark (1984). The presentations were followed by questions and answers with

the students who had joined the event, which was hosted on Microsoft Teams.

Another student member, Ethan Prince (2019), joined Isabelle to assist in the preparation of the second virtual event held on 24 February 2021. This time, the focus was on three alumni and the careers that they had followed without a PhD/DPhil. The speakers on this occasion were James Hayles (1983), Lynnette Pearson (1987) and David Holbrook (1984). Once again, there was a lively interchange between the students attending and the alumni.

Events such as these are exactly what the network was set up for and I'm very grateful to the organisers and participants for enabling them to take place.

If you'd be interested in joining the network, please either email me (david.clark@merton.oxon.org) or send me a connection invite on LinkedIn (you can find me by searching for 'David Clark Charles River'). I look forward to hearing from you.

**David Clark (1984)**



## History of the Book Group

*The History of the Book Group meetings were paused this year due to pandemic conditions, but Merton students continued to be very active in exploring the College's collections using and creating digital resources. Sebastian Dows-Miller (2016) analysed and created a digital edition of one of Merton's treasures. He kindly provided an introduction to this manuscript for Postmaster.*

### Merton's Beasts: A bestiary in Oxford, Merton College Library, MS 249

Merton's Manuscript 249 is a composite manuscript donated to the College in 1374 but perhaps dating back to the 13th century. The codex contains a number of Latin texts, largely related to preaching, but is most notable for its first text: one of only three surviving copies of Philippe de Thaon's *Bestiary*.

Philippe de Thaon is widely credited as the first Anglo-Norman poet, and his is the oldest known bestiary to be written in French. As with most medieval bestiaries, the text is a largely moralising one, presenting various animals and their behaviours before going on to explain their symbolic importance, often through examination of how those behaviours mimic important moments in scripture.

Merton's copy of Philippe's poem is interesting because it shows the enduring popularity of a text originally composed at the English royal court in the first half of the 12th century, and because it has an unusual page layout.

A lion hunting a zebra (fol. iv). This image and those following are reproduced with the kind permission of The Warden and Fellows of Merton College, Oxford

The other two surviving manuscripts of this text (now in Copenhagen and London) are physically smaller than Merton's copy, but were planned as more ornate books with illuminations. The text is presented as short lines of verse, whereas the scribes of the Merton manuscript concatenated lines one after the other into prose. This layout, as well as the relatively rudimentary nature of the illustrations in Merton 249, suggests it was intended primarily for scholarly study rather than as a luxury item, something which is reinforced by its early appearance in the Merton collection.

The images that accompany the text in Merton 249 are its most striking feature and can also tell us a lot about the manuscript's creation, and how it has been treated in the centuries following its arrival at Merton. There are 43 images in the manuscript, but I have chosen three that pose questions about the working practice of scribe and artist. In the above image, which is the first depiction of an animal in the manuscript, we see a lion hunting a zebra. Accompanying this is the only major piece of rubrication (captions in red ink) in the text. The separation of the rubric by the lion's tail suggests that the illustration was completed after the main text in black ink, but before the



A stag eating a snake (fol. 4r)

rubrication, pointing to a degree of cooperation between the scribe and the illuminator at this point in the text, or even that they could have been the same person.

This next illustration, only a few folios later, is interesting in that it shows much less cooperation between scribe and illuminator. Whereas the lion and the zebra were neatly slotted into the text and appeared to be drawn in the same ink as the text itself, here the horns of the stag, eating a snake, have run over into the text, making it difficult to read. This seems unlikely to have been a conscious choice, and it's perhaps more likely that the illuminator simply ran out of space, having not been left enough room by the scribe. In this case, too, the stag appears to have been drawn with a different ink to the main text, since it has faded to be browner in colour than the surrounding text.

At the top of folio 5v we see an onocentaur (a donkey centaur) who sadly has been decapitated, most likely by an over-zealous 17th-century rebinder. This is particularly interesting in that it reveals that what has been considered valuable about the manuscript has changed over time. For the original 12th-century scribe, the text and accompanying images were likely of equal importance, since each complements the other in terms of the moral lessons contained within the text, but by the 17th century it was perhaps only the text that was considered worthwhile.

As fascinating as the materiality and illustration of Merton's bestiary may be, we must not lose sight of the content of the text itself. In the moralising elements of the text, and not unusually for a 12th-century text with a heavily Christian flavour, there are numerous diatribes directed at Jews, 'pagans' and women, which form an uncomfortable – and yet integral – part of the text. The tension which this creates for a modern reader is arguably manageable, even healthy, since it reminds



A decapitated onocentaur (fol. 5v)

us that we can appreciate medieval art and material culture without condoning views we recognise as incompatible with our values, informing our relationship with the past.

This medieval bestiary is a fantastical, material, troubling object, and it is only by addressing each of these characteristics, fully and in turn, that we are truly able to engage with it.

Sebastian's digital edition of the poem may be consulted online at: [editions.mml.ox.ac.uk/editions/bestiary](http://editions.mml.ox.ac.uk/editions/bestiary)

A recording of Sebastian's short presentation with the manuscript may be viewed at: [youtu.be/G0bLy3LhjTA](https://youtu.be/G0bLy3LhjTA)

The full manuscript can be viewed at: [bit.ly/MertonBeasts](https://bit.ly/MertonBeasts)

## Manuscripts

Copenhagen, Kgl. bibliotek, GKS 3466 8°  
London, British Library, Cotton MS Nero A V  
Oxford, Merton College Library, MS 249

*Sebastian Dows-Miller (2016) recently completed an MSt at Merton, and is about to begin a DPhil at St Hilda's College, with a particular focus on text transmission within manuscript culture and short texts written in Old French.*

*The author would like to thank the library team at Merton, particularly Dr Julia Walworth, for providing digital access to the manuscript despite difficult circumstances. The suggestions and support of Professor Henrike Lähnemann of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, Professor Daron Burrows of St Peter's College, Oxford, and Dr Mary Boyle and Dr Tristan Franklinos of Teaching the Codex have also been hugely instrumental in the completion of this project.*

# Departments



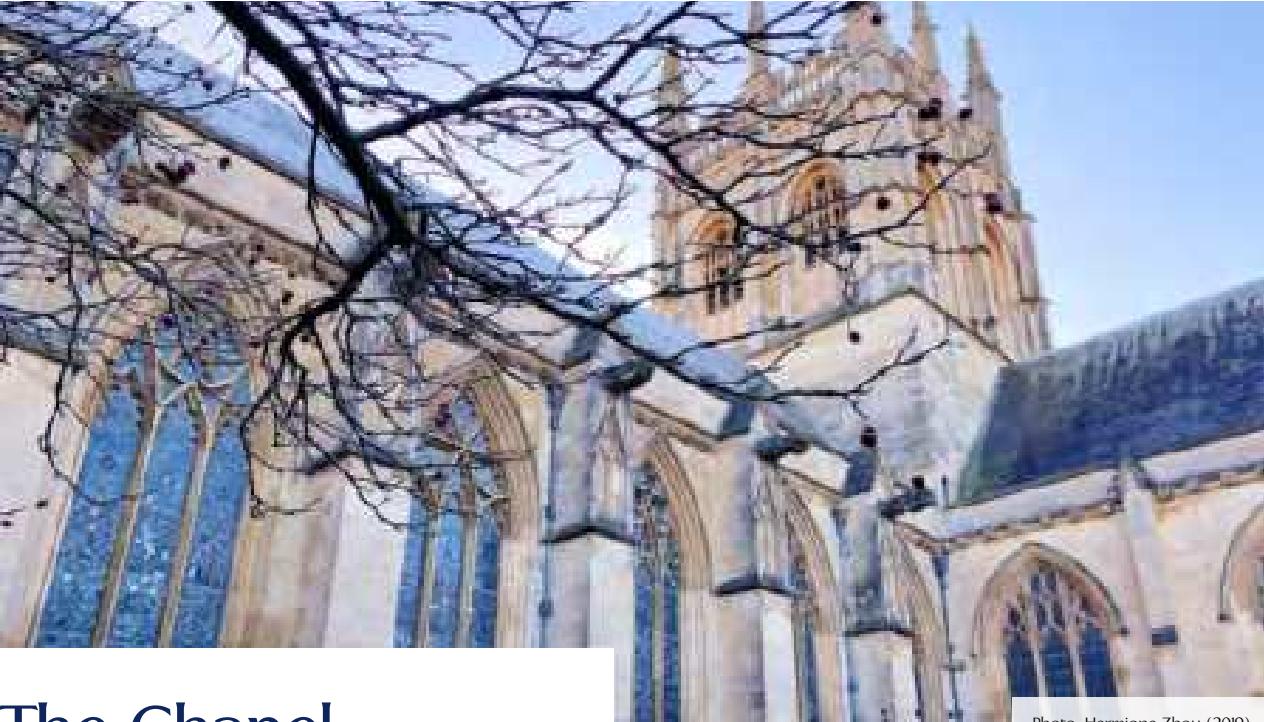


Photo: Hermione Zhou (2019)

## The Chapel

When I wrote last year's report, it was impossible to know what would unfold over the next three terms. Twelve months later, I'm very grateful that we were able to develop a pattern of services that has enabled worship to continue in the Chapel throughout the year, and for us to adapt it according to the changing circumstances. Whenever we have been allowed to have in-person congregations, we've done that, and it has been wonderful to welcome new members of the College as well as returners. Even when government restrictions have prevented people from being physically present, the introduction of livestreaming equipment, thanks to the generous donations from the Reed Foundation and the McElwee family, has enabled us to attract a global congregation of Mertonians and others in a way that was hitherto impossible. Henry Grub (2016), Seb Dows-Miller (2016), Leah Collins and Lizzie Casey have become skilful operators of the equipment. With three or four sung services a week during Michaelmas and Trinity, as well as the weekly organ recital, this was no small task. I'm hugely grateful to them all, and particularly to Henry Grub, who will be leaving Oxford this summer to begin a PhD at

Imperial College London. You can admire their handiwork on the Merton Choir and Merton Chapel YouTube pages.

In Michaelmas, we got as far as the All Souls' Requiem at the beginning of November before the second lockdown required us to continue services without an in-person congregation. Fortunately, the regulations didn't deprive us of the College Choir, who have gone from strength to strength this year, a feat all the more remarkable because they weren't able to meet in Hilary. And then, at the end of Michaelmas, when the regulations changed again, we were able to have two in-person Christmas Carol Services at the end of 8th week.

Hilary is often the most challenging term, and this year was no exception. Most students studied from home, and we missed them hugely. For those who were in Oxford, restrictions severely limited our ability to meet, not least in Chapel. Daily Morning Prayer moved to Zoom, there was a Eucharist in the Chapel at noon on Sundays and, in the evening, three cantors led a simple evening liturgy with an in-person as well as online congregation.



© Foxbrush Films

Trinity was a much more positive experience. The College Choir went back to singing three services a week, and our girl choristers returned to sing Evensong on Wednesdays. Throughout the year, our worship has been enabled and sustained by our largest ever group of student chapel officers. I'd like to thank them all and, in particular, those leaving Merton this year, among them Molly Clark (2014) and Victor Ajuwon (2015), who have clocked up many years of service both as undergraduates and as graduates. Other leavers include Gian Piero Milani (2017), Lucas Haugeberg (2019), Jamie Judd (2018), Rowan Wilson (2017), Ollie Shaw (2018) and Beth McCullagh (2017). Huge thanks, too, to my colleagues Ben Nicholas, Leah Collins and Lizzie Casey, who have often had to work in challenging circumstances, and have not just kept the show on the road but have enabled the Chapel and Choral Foundation to grow and develop in the past year. It has been very good to welcome Mel Marshall to the team as our new Associate Chaplain. Despite the restrictions, she has got to know the chapel community very quickly, and her new initiatives, among them groups to read Plato and to learn New Testament Greek, have proved very popular. Our Pastoral Assistant, Oliver Wright, has also contributed much, and we look forward to his placement with us continuing next year.

We have had fewer visiting preachers this year than we normally would. I'm very grateful to those who, despite the lack of the usual incentive of a guest night dinner, have nevertheless contributed to our worship, among them: the Revd Canon Dr Stephen Edwards, Residentiary Canon of Worcester Cathedral; the Revd Canon Richard Peers, Sub-Dean

of Christ Church; the Revd Canon Dr Jennifer Strawbridge, Fellow and Tutor in Theology at Mansfield College; the Revd Kevin Morris, Vicar of St Michael & All Angels, Bedford Park; and the Rt Revd Professor Tom Wright, one of our Honorary Fellows. Another Mertonian, Andrew Mackie, who is a Fellow of the College and Director of Legal Services in the University, gave the address at this year's Postmasters' Evensong and, on the feast of Pentecost, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick, gave the address at Evensong.

I very much hope that, with fewer restrictions in place, we will be able to welcome many more people to Chapel next year. Whether in person or online, do join us!

## Welfare and Student Support

The beginning of the new academic year saw the arrival of new members of the welfare team. Alex Brown and Will Brockbank joined us as Junior Deans for Welfare, and Nicole Coulon and Kate Tempest shared between them the role of College Nurse. During the course of the year, we welcomed back Lucille Champion, and I'm delighted that Lucille will be our College Nurse next year. Michaelmas term was not the easiest time to start a new job, particularly as part of the welfare team. Alex and Will have made a huge contribution to our welfare provision this year. Their support of our students, including Will's stargazing sessions, has been much appreciated. Will leaves us over the summer to take up a postdoc position, and he will be replaced by Lachlan Hughes, one of the current MCR Welfare Reps.

Within the welfare team I work closely with Jenny Barrett, the Welfare Adviser. She and I have sought to support large numbers of students one-to-one, either in person or online. As already mentioned, Hilary term brought particular challenges. Each year group was affected in different ways and, although Trinity term enabled the community to come together in a way that hadn't been possible until that point, the effect of the pandemic on mental health and wellbeing are not to be underestimated. For many of us, the last 16 months have revealed the significance and value of normal, day-to-day interactions. In a community like Merton, with an annually changing membership, this is particularly true, and there is much for us to learn from this as we plan for next year.

A significant aspect of our work this year has been to support self-isolating students. This has been very much a team effort, and I'm very grateful to colleagues in the Lodge, as well as the accommodation, housekeeping, and catering departments, for enabling us to do this. I would also like to pay tribute to our JCR and MCR presidents for the way in which they have supported their common rooms and worked constructively with the College, as well as the whole student body for the way in which they have helped us to reduce the spread of infection and keep the community safe.

An important part of the College's response to the pandemic has been the financial support it has provided to students. Although the University has provided some funds for this purpose, in many cases the College has matched these



grants, and also supported students whose needs have fallen outside the scope of the University fund. Unsurprisingly, the year has also seen a significant increase in the need for private therapy of various sorts. We have also supported a number of students to access private ASD and ADHD assessments. A shorter waiting time results in students receiving a diagnosis within a matter of weeks, and then being quickly supported with appropriate treatment. Given the demands of an eight-week term, this is particularly beneficial, and our students who have been helped in this way are deeply appreciative. I, too, would like to thank our alumni who support our students in this way. Your donations make a significant difference to many people. The cost of private assessments and treatment makes up a large proportion of the College's total spend of £145,000 on student support this year. If anyone would like to know more about this or any other aspect of my work, please feel free to get in touch.

**The Revd Canon Dr Simon Jones**  
Chaplain

## Patronage

The Revd Katherine Tuckett, Vicar of St Alban, North Harrow (Diocese of London) has been appointed Vicar of Wolvercote and Wytham (Diocese of Oxford).

The Revd Linda Fletcher, Priest-in-Charge of St John, Parks and St Andrew, Walcot (Diocese of Bristol) has been appointed Team Vicar of Warlingham, Chelsham and Farleigh and Parish Development Officer in the Croydon Episcopal Area (Diocese of Southwark).

## Ordinations

Alex Banfield Hicks (1999) was ordained deacon by the Rt Revd Martyn Minns on 20 March 2021. He is serving his title in the Church of the Ascension, Pittsburgh (Diocese of Pittsburgh, Anglican Church in North America).

Dr Henry Hope (2010) was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Newcastle on 3 July 2021 in St George's Church, Jesmond. He is serving his title in the benefice of Hexham Abbey (Diocese of Newcastle).



Recording sessions in Chapel © Matthew Johnson

## The Choirs

It was something of a triumph that both the College Choir and Girl Choristers managed to sing services in both the Michaelmas and Trinity terms. All credit is due to our singers for the way they coped with the restrictions in Chapel, not least standing two metres apart. In spite of this, the College Choir quickly adapted to the new layout, and at the end of October broadcast and recorded services for BBC Radio 3. An invitation from the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra for the College Choir to take part in a concert in the Sheldonian Theatre, given in honour of the Oxford Vaccine Team, made for an exciting end to the Michaelmas term. The soloists in the concert included Bryn Terfel, and John Rutter conducted his new *Joseph's Carol* and his arrangement of *You'll Never Walk Alone*.

The restrictions announced in early January did not enable more than three singers to take part in services in the Chapel, so for Hilary term differing trios sang at the service on a Sunday evening. The Girl Choristers adapted to Zoom rehearsals once more and were able to learn some music for the services which they returned to sing in the Trinity term.

The College Choir was relieved to be able to resume singing after Easter, and we worked hard to restore much of the repertoire that had not been sung since Trinity term 2019. Although we were unable to ascend the Chapel Tower on Ascension Day, we were able to celebrate Ascension,



Concert given in honour of the Oxford Vaccine Team in the Sheldonian Theatre, December 2020 © Nick Rutter

Pentecost, Trinity Sunday and Corpus Christi on the Chapel floor. The choir's year ended with recording sessions for a new CD of music by Herbert Howells and Ian Venables, recorded with orchestra and choir distanced between the high altar and the screen. This recording was made with the generous support of the Morris-Venables Charitable Foundation. The choir's summer concert was the final event of the year, and we were thrilled to include the world premiere of Daniel Kidane's *Christus factus est*, commissioned for the choir by Dr Simon Jones.

The Friends of the Choir, David Harvey (1957, Bodley Fellow) and the Reed Foundation have continued to support the

choir very generously, and I look forward to some exciting events next year, as the choirs resume their activities beyond the Chapel services. Carys Lane, Leah Collins and Elizabeth Casey were particularly key to the success of the online rehearsals for the choristers: my thanks to them for all that they have contributed this year. Finally, on behalf of all the singers and organists, a huge debt of gratitude to Simon Jones and Mel Marshall for all that they have done to keep the Chapel community together during the last year.

**Benjamin Nicholas**

Reed Rubin Organist and Director of Music

19 Dicembre 1960

Así es como el Dr. Moreau, que es un científico que se dedica a la creación de criaturas heteroplasias, a los que presenta como maravillas de la naturaleza, pero que en realidad son criaturas que tienen la apariencia de humanos pero que tienen deseos y deseos de bestias.

Can a library be too quiet? The reading rooms of the Merton libraries reopened to members of the College in Michaelmas term 2020. Students had to book online in advance for one of the reduced number of seats (to comply with social distancing). A thick sweater or jacket (even a woolly hat) was useful to cope with the open windows needed for plenty of natural ventilation. The library was almost eerily quiet as masked students bent over their books and papers. Library staff organised a click and collect system so that books could be borrowed without entering the library. We were happy to be able to offer at least some library study space, and we are grateful to the Student Library Assistants without whom we could not have operated these services. Many thanks to the library staff who kept all this running.

Since it was not possible to accommodate the usual visiting researchers or to admit professional photographers, library staff were kept busy taking 'snaps' of relevant pages of early books and manuscripts to send as a substitute for in-person consultations. A smartphone camera proved a new essential librarian's tool – even making it possible to stream images from a manuscript for a Zoom webinar.

## #MertonMSS

A smartphone camera also played a major role in the #MertonMSS project. In last year's *Postmaster* I mentioned the social media project to post on Twitter a daily comment and at least one image of every medieval manuscript book in the College library. This started as a way to connect people with one of Merton's main collections during the first lockdown and to encourage those who were curious to link through to the online manuscripts catalogue which had just been completed. The (self-made) rules of the project were very simple; each manuscript was taken in catalogue number order and viewed for no more than 20 minutes, and photographs were taken with a phone camera. Twitter permits messages of 280 characters and up to three images, so posting involved some quick decisions: was the emphasis going to be on the decoration, the text, the binding or the history of the volume?

One of the attractions of social media is the almost-instant response to each post. Some of my initial assumptions



Julia Wellworth  
@JuliaWellworth

The late Bishop John Grandisson (d. 1369) left instructions that this volume of commentaries on Augustine's *City of God* was to be assigned for the use of a lucky 'poor scholar' in Oxford. And after that it was to go to @MertonCollege which it did; MS. 256B. #MertonMSS 1/2



proved to be incorrect in surprising ways. For instance, I had assumed that images of illuminated manuscripts with sumptuous decoration or humorous marginal drawings would attract the most attention. In fact, the posts that generated the most 'likes' and 'clicks' fall into two categories. The first of these were posts that highlighted aspects of the materials of which the book was made, such as medieval repairs to torn parchment, or the recycling of materials such as older legal documents or manuscript fragments inserted to strengthen bindings. One of the most popular posts had a photograph of a parchment end leaf that was 'blank', but which bore marks (holes, staining and indentations) that revealed a lot about how the book had been chained in different ways and rebound over the centuries.

The second, and most popular, group of posts were those that managed to tell a mini-narrative about the history of a given book. This was the case for MS 256B – a volume of commentaries on Augustine's *City of God* that Bishop John Grandisson (d. 1369) had directed should be assigned to a 'poor scholar' in Oxford for his use, after which it was to go to the Merton library. All of this information is found in

religiosissime famulatur; Cui sit gloria in  
secula seculorum amen;

## distinctio Octava

**P**OST SACRAMENTVM  
BAPTISMI ET CON-  
FIRMATIONIS ECCE; Pos-  
t ergo regit de baptismio quo rege-  
neramur: et de confirmatione qua roboramur:  
hic agit de sacramento eukaristie quo nutri-  
muntur & in bono consumantur; Et dividitur  
in duas partes; Primo continuat se ab E.  
cedentia; Secundo determinat de eukaristia  
in se; Ibi; Dic quidem; Prima in duas par-  
tes; Primo ponit continuatio[n]es dictorum ad  
dicta; Secundo subiungit continuationes ra-  
tiones; compando eukaristiam specialiter

ab Red initials added by hand to the printed text of Duns Scotus's commentary.  
donated by Messel (MER II.9.F.18)

eo de re; Ibi; Numquid ibi sacramentum; Pris-  
ma in duas; Primo agit de institutione sec-  
undum veritatem; Secundo excludit contra hoc  
errorem vel dubitationem; Ibi ubi confide-  
tione dignum; Prima in duas; In prima  
de institutione; in secunda de forma; Se-  
cunda ibi; Forma vero est &c;

**Q**uicunque banc diuinum querendum est  
principaliter de tribus; Primo: an  
eukaristia sit sacramentum nouae legis  
Secundo: de forma: an ipsa sic que ponitur in  
canone missae; Tertio: de institutione: an hoc  
sacramentum sicut coquemur et institutum  
est cernam; **Secundum** Prima.

**A**lloquitur de primi sic proceditur: & arguitur  
et eukaristia non sit sacramentum no-  
ue legis; Primo: quia sacramentum  
nouae legis est signum gratiae collatum in eo secundum

an inscription in the front of the book. And this is what happened, as there is other evidence that the book was in use in Merton in the 15th century. At some point, however, the book left the library, only to resurface at an antiquarian book dealer's in the 19th century. The College purchased the book in 1878, and it is to be hoped that this time it is back in the College for good. This story of one manuscript's adventures has been viewed more than 30,000 times. Not much by the standards of a celebrity personality but pretty good for a post about a 14th-century book (that did not include a cat, dog or capybara in any of the photos). The series #MertonMSS started on 18 March 2020 and ended on 19 July 2021 with MS 238. Perhaps it will inspire some future research projects.

Many large international library projects aim to support and inspire scholarly research, and the College library contributed to two such projects this year: *Ktiv* and *Material Evidence in Incunabula* (MEI). Participation is particularly important for libraries like Merton's, which is not large in number of items but which punches well above its weight in the significance of its historic and special collections. These resources help students and scholars locate items that are relevant to them.

## Ktiv

*Ktiv* (Hebrew for 'written word') is the name of an ambitious project at the National Library of Israel (NLI) to provide access via a single internet platform to images and information about all extant manuscripts written in Hebrew. The project had its origins in a microfilming initiative that began in the 1950s. Almost all of Merton's Hebrew manuscripts were filmed for this earlier project, and Merton will also be represented along with 587 other collections in the next development. Recently the NLI began converting the film images to digital images that can be viewed by researchers around the world, as well as providing access to freshly digitised manuscripts. Researchers using the *Ktiv* database will, for example, be able to follow a link to view the Merton *Zohar* manuscript that was digitised last year. Thanks to the generosity of several Mertonians, the College will also supply new digital images of a few rare instances of Hebrew writing found on the end leaves of medieval manuscripts, such as the tiny note saying '[I] took [this] ancient book to sell [it]' in MS 294 – a concordance to philosophical texts. New insights about the significance of such inscriptions may be possible once they can be studied in a more comprehensive context via *Ktiv*.



Leonard Messel (in the Myrmidons photo of 1893) gave the College a 15th-century book originally made for the abbey of Scheyern in Bavaria (MER III.D.3: MCPh/A16/25).

## Merton's 15th-century books

This year also saw the completion of the entries for Merton's 15th-century books and fragments in the Material Evidence in Incunabula (MEI) database. This international database brings together information about individual volumes, including past owners, annotators, bindings and artists. Unlike individual library catalogues, the MEI database enables scholars to search across collections that are held all over the world. The database can also help put Merton's books in a wider context and even solve questions about their individual histories. To take one example, a medieval ownership inscription provided evidence that a large volume of a theological commentary by Duns Scotus, given to the College in 1935 by Mertonian Leonard Messel, had once been in the library of the German Benedictine Abbey of Scheyern. It was only the details of other books from Scheyern in the MEI database that confirmed that an ink annotation on one of the end leaves was a shelfmark added by the Bavarian State Library when the abbey was secularised in 1803. A further pencil annotation ('Duplum'), then made it clear that this was one of the volumes sold as a duplicate. It may even be possible eventually to identify the antiquarian booksellers

through whose hands this volume passed before being purchased by Messel and donated to Merton. Over the past several years a number of students, librarians and specialists have made contributions to Merton's entries in MEI (Geri Della Rocca de Candal, Rahel Fronda, Matilde Malaspina, James Misson and Emma Sillett), but by far the greatest number of books and fragments have been examined and recorded by current postgraduate Constanta Burlacu (2018).

Looking forward, the coming year will bring progress on several long-planned activities, such as the conservation of the stained-glass windows in the Upper Library, and further additions to the number of fully digitised items such as historic maps from Merton's Library and Archives. Watch the *Merton Messenger* for updates. Finally, after the past 18 months, we are even looking forward to reminding students to keep noise levels down as our libraries open up fully!

**Dr Julia Walworth**  
Fellow Librarian

## Donations to the Library and Archives 2020-21

It is a pleasure to record the following particularly noteworthy donations to library and archive collections:

A photo album belonging to Richard (Dick) Summers, best friend of Sandy Irvine (1921), with some previously unknown photos of Sandy, donated by Julie Summers

*Lazlo Heltay remembered*, a commemorative publication compiled and donated by Giles Dawson

Several books from the library of John R Lucas (d. 2020; Tutorial Fellow in Philosophy 1960-96), including some authored by him and two antiquarian volumes by writer Grant Allen (Merton 1867), donated by the Lucas family

A pen and wash large drawing of society figures set in the Hotel de Paris, attributed to Max Beerbohm, donated by Philip Waller (Emeritus Fellow)

Twenty books (primarily on philosophy) from the library of the late David Bostock (d. 2019, Tutorial Fellow in Philosophy 1968-2004)

Papers of David Bostock, including typescripts of monographs and articles, research and lecture notes, donated by Rosanne Bostock

Programme of Christmas Music performed by Merton Music Club Choir (later the Kodaly Choir), 5 December 1957, donated by Richard Kenyon (1956)

Recollections and photos of Michael Roberts (1962) while at Merton, donated by Michael Roberts

*The Origins and Development of the Madehurst Music Week*, Mary Heron (2020), containing references to Lazlo Heltay and Merton Chapel Choir, donated by Janet Edwards (née Makower, 1982)

Merton College Boat Club Summer Eights cards, Lawn Tennis Club fixtures card, and Merton College Commem Ball programmes, 1954-57, donated by Araminta Morris and Tony Verdin (1953)

Poster for a student party held on 2 November 1957, donated by John Isherwood (1956)

Two Merton College Ball posters, Christmas 1984 and summer 1985, donated by Susan Roller (1983)

Nine black and white/tinted postcards of views of Merton College, donated by Richard Hamer, formerly tutor of Christ Church

Merton College Commem Ball programme and beer mat, 25 June 1963, donated by Alexander Lovell

Glass lantern slide of two women in late-19th-century [?] dress standing outside the former Warden's Lodgings in Front Quad, donated by Charles Tolkien-Gillett (2019)

Sixteenth-century Nuremberg jeton found on the Chestnut Lawn together with reference information on jetons, donated by Lucille Savin, Head Gardener

Digital photos of Merton Floats production of Love's Labour's Lost Trinity Term 2018. Donated by Sebastian Dows-Miller (2016)

**Grateful thanks for gifts and support are extended to:**

Rhiannon Ash (Fellow), Bodleian Library, Harriet Campbell Longley (Deputy Librarian), Jeremy Catto, Isobel Fray (2012), John Gibbons, Kirsty Gunn (VRF 2020), Eckhart Hellmuth, Anne Hudson, Joe Hyland Deeson (2018), Magdalen College Library, Richard McCabe (Fellow), Philosophy and Theology Faculties Library (Oxford), William Poole, The Royal Society, Dr Paul Saenger, Elizabeth Solopova, St Peter's College Library, Julie Summers, Mark Synnott, Varsity Publications Ltd, Julia Walworth (Fellow Librarian), Elias Weinbach (1967), Anthony Williams (1946)

## We also thank Mertonians who have given copies of their publications to the College:

Allen, RH (1967). *Fools' Copper (Not to be Confused with Ghost Beer)* (PublishNation, 2017)

\_\_\_\_ *Inland. Illicit and Incompetent* (PublishNation, 2020)

\_\_\_\_ *Between the Mountains and the Sea* (PublishNation, 2020)

\_\_\_\_ *In a Rich Man's World* (PublishNation, 2020)

\_\_\_\_ *The Murders at the Putney Debates* (2020)

\_\_\_\_ *Murder in a Time of Plague* (2020)

\_\_\_\_ *Empty Lands* (2020)

\_\_\_\_ *Sunrise, Sunset* (2020)

\_\_\_\_ *No Stranger on the Shore* (2020)

\_\_\_\_ *Reflections on the Plague Year* (2021)

\_\_\_\_ *We Saw the Sea* (2021)

\_\_\_\_ *Kenavo* (2021)

Austin, F (2009). *Brontë's Mistress: A Novel* (New York: Atria Books, 2020)

Barker, D (Fellow and Development Director 2017-20) (contributor). In D Cescotti and F Fortunato (eds) 'A Harmless Music': *Il Grillo del Focolare di Charles Dickens Sulle Scene del Teatro Lirico* (Rovereto: Accademia Roveretana degli Agiati, 2015)

Matsubara, N and P Boxall (VRF in the Arts 2019). *In Praise of Hands* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2020)

Boyle, M (2011). *Writing the Jerusalem Pilgrimage in the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2021)

Burnyeat, G (JRF). *Chocolate, Politics and Peace-Building: An Ethnography of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, Colombia* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019)

Chytry, J (1967). *Cosmotheism: Cytherean Sittings between Heraclitus and Kittler* (New York: Peter Lang, 2020)

Currie, JP (1971). *Thirty Sparkling Gems* (Leominster: DayOne, 2020)

English, G (1963) and C English. *Elizabeth Andrew Warren: 1786-1864. Algologist and Botanist of Flushing* (self-published, 2020)

Fortnum, R (VRF in the Arts 2019) and A Hunt (eds). *A Mind Weighted with Unpublished Matter* (London: Slimvolume, 2020)

Franklinos, TE (2011) and L Fulkerson (eds). *Constructing Authors and Readers in the Appendices Vergiliiana, Tibulliana, and Ouidiana* (Oxford University Press, 2020)

Bullock, PR and DM Grimley (Fellow) (eds). *Music's Nordic Breakthrough: Aesthetics, Modernity, and Cultural Exchange, 1890-1930* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2021).

Houghton, LBT (1996). G Manuwald and LR Nicholas (eds). *An Anthology of British Neo-Latin Literature* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020)

MacLachlan, I (Fellow). *Louis-René des Forêts and Inner Autobiography* (Cambridge: Legenda, 2020)

Merton College Poetry Society. *Pekes and Pollicles*. Michaelmas Term 2020 (Oxford, 2020)

\_\_\_\_ *Pekes and Pollicles*, Trinity Term 2021 (Oxford, 2021)

Morris, M (1998). *The Anglo-Saxons: A History of the Beginnings of England* (London: Hutchinson, 2021)

Gullifer, L and J Payne (Fellow). *Corporate Finance Law: Principles and Policy*. 3rd edn (Oxford: Hart, 2020)

Peberdy, R (1975) and P Waller (Emeritus Fellow) (eds). *A Dictionary of British and Irish History* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2020)

Radda, G (Emeritus Fellow). *My Life in Science: Not an Autobiography* (self-published, 2020)

Scattergood, J (VRF 2008). N Pattwell and E Williams. *Trinity College Library Dublin: A Descriptive Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Middle English and Some Old English* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2021)

Schneer, J (VRF 2020). *The Lockhart Plot: Love, Betrayal, Assassination and Counter-Revolution in Lenin's Russia* (Oxford University Press, 2020)

Waller, P (Emeritus Fellow). See Peberdy, R.

Walworth, J (Fellow Librarian). *Merton College Library: An Illustrated History* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2020) [2 copies]

Westwood, G (Leventis Research Fellow in Ancient Greek 2013-17). *The Rhetoric of the Past in Demosthenes and Aeschines: Oratory, History, and Politics in Classical Athens* (Oxford University Press, 2020)

Winston, B (1960) and M Winston. *The Roots of Fake News: Objecting to Objective Journalism* (London: Routledge, 2021)

We would also like to thank those who anonymously returned missing books to the library – we always welcome such returns!

Chamberlain, M.E. *The New Imperialism* (London: The Historical Association, 1970)

1527. 919  
neglecta & humiliata in die natali Viri in fabre ante affitioem domini mississ p[ro] celum. a m[od]estis  
p[ro]p[ri]is & a[cc]ommodata in h[ab]itu diversitate genere diversitate fuisse. Speciebus h[ab]ent  
fusges & formulos.

Don't you think it is a good idea to have a small group of people to work on the problem?

compiu' l'anno e' del quinto anno d'Inghilterra quando' il re fe' l'anno

In June 1527 the Bursar leased a property in Burford in which the College could take refuge 'for fear of the plague' (*proper metum pestis*) in Oxford. A later scribe has drawn attention to the entry with a series of little hands

# The Archives

The past 15 months or so have been strange for all of us, and the College has found ways of adapting to the extraordinary circumstances. Yet the College archives provide a longer perspective, and demonstrate that what we are experiencing as extraordinary was for much of the College's existence simply the norm. We have become accustomed to peace, security and prosperity when, for much of its history, the College has faced interruptions caused by civil unrest, disease, famine and instability.

The College was founded during a time of civil unrest and during 1263-64 the estates of Farleigh and Malden, acquired by the Founder as part of the College's endowment, were occupied by members of the Monfortian party. The estates were to support students in Oxford, or in any other place where learning might flourish. As a wise precaution, the Founder acquired property in and around Cambridge in the event that Oxford ceased to be sufficiently peaceful for

In June 1527 the Bursar leased a property in Burford in which the College could take refuge 'for fear of the plague' (*propter metum pestis*) in Oxford. A later scribe has drawn attention to the entry with a series of little hands

learning to flourish. An alternative existence for the House of the Scholars of Merton, Oxford, as Mertonhouse, Cambridge, was a very real possibility.

Volatile climatic conditions in 1315-17 resulted in famine across northern Europe, followed 30 years later by the Black Death that is estimated to have killed between a quarter and one third of the population of England. The effects on the College's rural tenants are revealed in the manorial court records and bailiffs accounts. The court rolls, in which changes of tenancy were recorded, reveal higher mortality rates than normal among tenants, while the accounts reveal a succession of poor grain harvests, and high mortality among flocks of sheep and herds of cattle. The effects, both social and economic, were disastrous.

The Black Death was to recur at intervals for the next 300 years and, from 1483, the College Register provides evidence

of the more local effects on the College. On 30 June 1527 the Bursar secured a property in Burford, 18 miles west of Oxford, where the Fellows might reside for the duration of the plague. In April 1533 it was resolved that no Fellow residing in the country (*in rure*) on account of the plague might return to College unless expressly summoned: a resolution repeated four years later. In August 1545 the Warden and eight Senior Fellows (the Tudor equivalent of the Bronze Group) resolved that all members of the College, with the exception of the eight seniors, were to repair to Cuxham (a College manor 14 miles south-east of Oxford). They were to remain until at least the feast of Michaelmas (29 September), or later if the Warden and seniors judged it appropriate. Occasionally we glimpse how the provisions affected individuals. As on 11 April 1564 when John Hancock, who was serving a year as junior Linacre lecturer in medicine, was given permission to retain two books from the library (*Themistius: On Aristotle's Physics*, and a book on medicine) while he was rusticating in Cuxham. On the understanding, however, that he was to ensure that he returned both books to the library when the Cuxham refugees returned to Oxford. These precautions have a familiar ring.

In line with the general College policy of the exclusion of all unnecessary visitors during the pandemic, there have been no external visitors undertaking research in the archives since March 2020. The archives have, however, continued to fulfil their function of supporting the work of the College, as well as responding to external requests for help. Understandably, the Academic and Development offices generate much of the internal activity: the 40th anniversary of the admission of women in particular has generated requests for information and images. The latter has proved challenging, as readers of the profiles of Merton women published on the College website will be aware. In these days of instant photography we forget how cumbersome and expensive, relatively speaking, photography was only 20 or 30 years ago, so that very few photographs beyond the formal and official ones ever made it into the archives.

Enquiries have come too from the Warden's and Estates offices, and requests for information and plans from the College surveyor. Information on the bastion next to Deadman's Walk and the history of the garden seat there was provided

preparative to the commissioning of a new seat. The receipt of the gift of the portrait of Sir Henry Savile by Hieronymus Custodis generated interest in its history and provenance.

External enquiries tend to fall into one of two categories: biographical and topographical. The former can refer either to members of the College community or to College tenants, and this year have encompassed virtually the full time span of the archives, from the 12th to the 20th century. The Pageham family of Cuxham, from c.1190 onwards, challenged the archives to just about as far back as they go. John Dumbleton and John Wyliot (both 14th-century Fellows), early Savilian Professors, Griffin Higgs (Fellow and library benefactor in the early 17th century), Surawongse Lek (a Thai student of St Alban Hall in the 1870s), and Walter Harrison, a Merton student killed in the First World War, all featured as subjects of enquiries.

Some enquiries are tried-and-tested old favourites, such as the real tennis court or the history of Postmasters' Hall. Others are generic and addressed across the colleges: college-owned pubs in Oxford; Oxford colleges during the Second World War; trees in college landscapes; and the architects of 20th-century college buildings. Other enquiries are much more localised, such as individual college estates in Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire; the grave of prior Michael Kympton of Merton Priory; Walter de Merton as rector of Sedgefield; or the table of the ten commandments in Embleton church, Northumberland.

This year we were unable to hold the archives workshop for first-year historians at the end of Michaelmas, but I was able to contribute to an online webinar for second-year history students preparing to research their dissertations. For the second year in a row, we were sadly unable to welcome Year 12 history students from Robert Smyth Academy, Market Harborough, to look at records relating to the College's historic estates in Leicestershire. We remain in communication, however, and I hope that, a year from now, I will be able to report that we have once more been able to welcome them to Merton.

**Julian Reid**  
College Archivist



# Development and Alumni Relations

2020-21 was a challenging year for the College, the UK and the world, as we continued to grapple with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. In this context, the mission of the Development Office acquired an even greater importance. While in-person events were suspended, we kept alumni and friends connected to the College and each other through online channels. Furthermore, with the pandemic impacting Merton's finances and affecting our students, the Development team worked hard to raise critical funds.

## Celebrating Merton women and keeping connected

October 2020 marked 40 years since the first women matriculated at Merton. We were proud to celebrate this milestone, and it served as the focal point for alumni engagement throughout the year. We published profiles of

more than 40 inspiring and diverse Merton women on the College website, and we held 10 online lectures as part of the *40 Years Series*. The lectures covered subjects as diverse as gender equality, Chinese history and fluorine chemistry. We are grateful to all who took part in the celebrations.

*Merton Messenger* arrived twice per term in the email inboxes of our alumni and friends. Along with a range of news, it featured regular updates from the Warden and JCR and MCR Presidents, which provided a flavour of college life. Our friends at MC3 hosted a virtual reunion in April, featuring a wonderful programme of activities, including a lecture on early galaxy formation, a virtual tour of Prague and an afterparty on SpatialChat. Thank you to Marina McCloskey (2003) and Grace Tiao (2010) for their efforts in planning the reunion.

## £3.7+ million raised to support future generations

In terms of fundraising, 2020-21 was the most successful financial year for the College since the 750th Anniversary Campaign. More than £3.7 million was raised to support students at Merton and ensure that our tradition of academic excellence is preserved despite difficult conditions. Many thanks to everyone who donated.

We announced in August 2020 that Merton secured permanent association with the Regius Professorship in Mathematics, of which Professor Sir Andrew Wiles (1971, Fellow) is the first holder. Mertonians played a critical role, before and during the last year, in ensuring the financial sustainability of this prestigious post for future generations. For their support and exceptional generosity, we would like to thank John Booth (1976, Wyliot Fellow), Peter Braam (Wyliot Fellow), Charles Manby (1976, Wyliot Fellow), the MC3 Board of Trustees, Andrew Robertson (1988) and Howard Stringer (1961, Honorary Fellow).

The campaign to endow the Michael Baker Tutorial Fellowship in Physics has made excellent progress. As of August 2021, £810,000 has been raised in gifts and pledges towards the £1 million target for underpinning this Fellowship with a permanent endowment. Special thanks go to MC3 Life Trustee Reg Hall (1954) and Stephen Quake (1991), whose generous matching gifts inspired many donations to this appeal, and to Dr Simon Orebí Gann (1968) and his daughter Professor Gabriel Orebí Gann (2004) for their munificent contribution.

After the cancellation of the Telethon in 2020, we were thrilled to reconnect with alumni by holding a virtual campaign in April 2021. A team of 14 students called alumni from their rooms, raising a remarkable £222,000 for causes ranging from hardship support and bursaries to the tutorial system and buildings. The students were thrilled to have spoken to nearly 400 alumni during the Telethon, more than half of whom chose to give.

The year concluded with two successful smaller-scale campaigns. An appeal to replace the College's weathered Bastion bench exceeded its target within a matter of hours. Nine Mertonians kindly made donations to fund the construction of new bespoke benches, which will be installed

in 2022. We were also thrilled by the generosity of the 2021 cohort of leavers, 97% of whom made gifts of £12.64 each towards student welfare and mental health initiatives as part of a 'leavers' gift'. It is heartening to see the enthusiasm our newest alumni have for supporting their successors. We are grateful to Mustafa Abbas (1990) for kindly matching all gifts made by finalists, and we look forward to welcoming 2021 leavers back to College for a Returners' Dinner in January next year.

## Development Team – new arrivals

2020-21 saw the arrival of a number of new people in the Development team. For most of the year, I had the honour of serving as Acting Development Director and was ably supported by Emily Bruce (Alumni Communications Officer), Chelsea Chisholm (Alumni Relations Officer), Elizabeth Lynn (Alumni Events & Stewardship Officer), James Vickers (Development Operations & Data Manager), and several temporary staff.

In May 2021, we were delighted to welcome Mark Coote as Development Director. He brings a wealth of experience from previous roles at Christ Church, Oxford, Wells Cathedral School and Cancer Research UK, among others. We have also appointed Gaby Beckley as Development Officer and Olivia Wrafter as Graduate Associate in Development.

We have sadly said goodbye to James Vickers and Elizabeth Lynn, who left their posts in September 2021. Chelsea Chisholm is expecting her second child and has gone on maternity leave. We wish Chelsea well and have appointed Krista Karppinen as the maternity cover.

I hope you will have the chance to meet the new (and old) members of the Development team at one of our upcoming events. If you have any questions, do contact us at [development@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@merton.ox.ac.uk) or call +44 (0)1865 276316. We are always happy to hear from alumni and friends of the College.

### Milos Martinov

Deputy Development Director



Academic Office

When I looked back at my first *Postmaster* contribution in 2020 as Merton's new Senior Tutor, I did not imagine that I would be reflecting again on another strange year. My concluding comments highlighted how much I was looking forward to a period in which it would be possible to meet College members in person and to get involved with the range of activities that make Merton so special. Thankfully, some of that proved possible, though it has been far from a typical year.

We approached Michaelmas term with optimism and plans for some normality, including for welcoming freshers. However, as the autumn drew nearer, it was clear that arrival and teaching arrangements would need altering, and so began a year of frequent adaptation. Our JCR and MCR committees, working closely with a number of teams, creatively changed Freshers' Week timetables to take account of social distancing, limits on mixing, and students who were quarantining or unable to reach Oxford. Teaching room capacities were reviewed, reducing the TS Eliot Theatre (a key venue at the start of each year) from 118 seats to just 23. The Chapel proved to be the only place able to hold the first-year cohorts in a Covid-secure way and became the unusual location for a number of induction talks. As Michaelmas progressed, further government restrictions were introduced and more teaching shifted online. We were fortunate in being able to draw on tutors' and students' considerable experience from the previous term, but it was an unwelcome development nonetheless. Further changes were needed to a range of practices, including switching the undergraduate admissions exercise to a remote process. Going into the December interview period, we collectively held our breath as we hoped that Microsoft Teams would support hundreds of simultaneous online interviews and we sighed with relief when it proved to be the case.

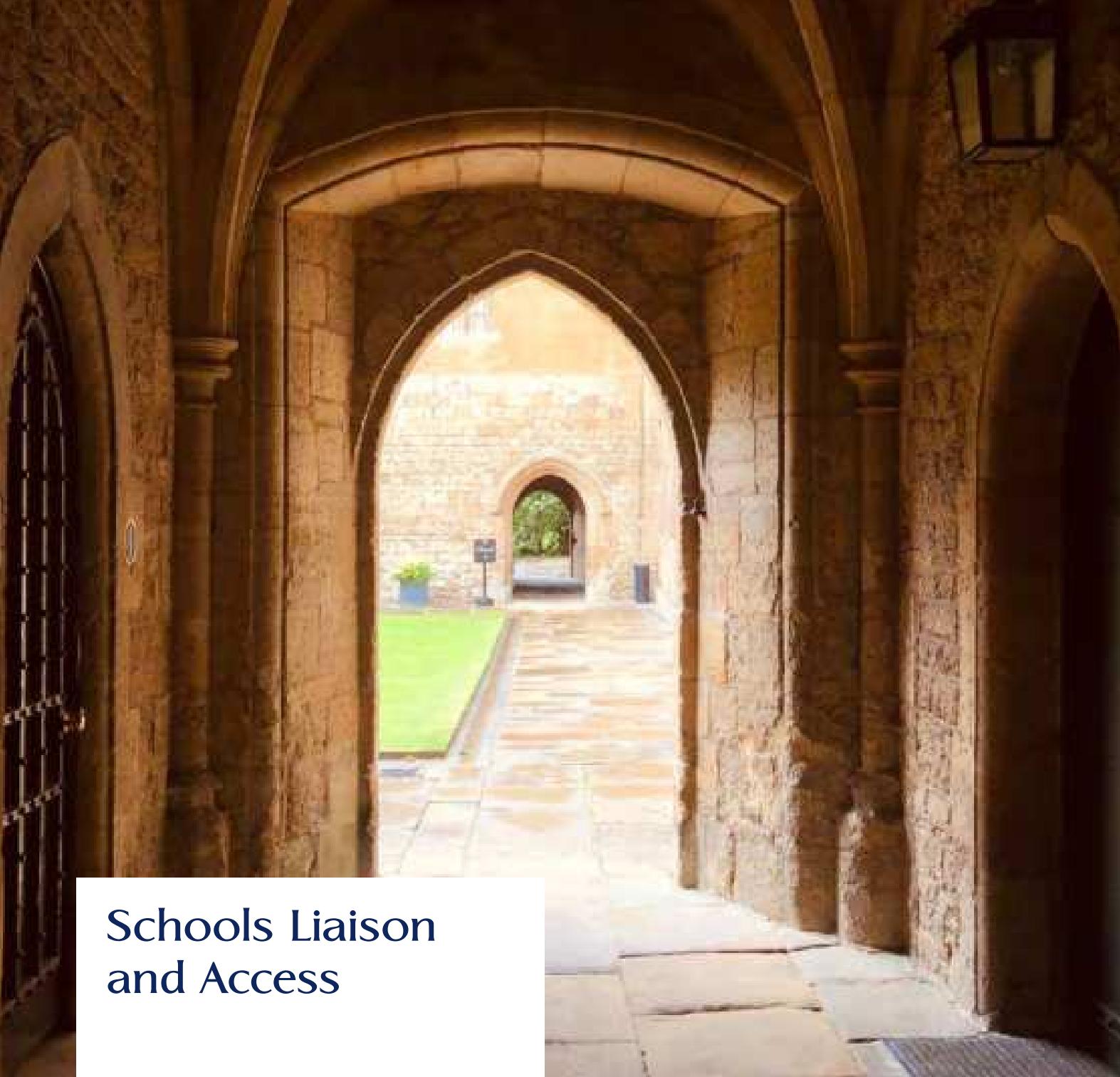
Hilary term began with the announcement that the UK was entering another national lockdown and most of our students adjusted to studying from across the UK and the world. For some it brought insights into their working practices that have subsequently proved beneficial, while for others it was a challenging time in which study routines were not easily created. We were therefore delighted and relieved that most of our students were able to return in Trinity, albeit in a staggered way. For the second year in a row, the summer term brought

largely online examinations and two further virtual open days. Throughout the year, the Academic Office team, skilfully led by Katy Fifield, has worked tirelessly alongside tutors to support the processes that underpin our admissions and teaching activities. My huge thanks go to Katy, Julie Gerhardi, Charlotte Pawley, Frances Raimo and Rachel Wilkins for all they have done behind the scenes to help maintain academic provision. At the start of the year we welcomed Adele Bardazzi as the Admissions Officer and Jack Wands as the Schools Liaison and Access Officer and although they will both be moving to new endeavours, as will Charlotte, we are grateful for all they have done for our admissions and access work.

It is difficult to look back at 2020-21 and not focus on the influence of the pandemic, but I would like to end by recognising the considerable successes and achievements of the last 12 months. Despite the challenges of Trinity 2021, over half of our finalists achieved Firsts – an extraordinary accomplishment for them and a testimony to the commitment and care of their tutors. Online equality and access events took place, with the latter being facilitated by our fantastic student ambassadors. Our new students transitioned into their Oxford studies despite the educational disruption that so many had faced before their arrival. International undergraduates and graduates demonstrated their educational commitment by engaging with online teaching from multiple time zones or by isolating for days in order to be here. We recruited new members of staff remotely and welcomed them onto our teaching teams, including Dr Nathan Lane, Associate Professor in Economics. Demonstrating their enduring enthusiasm, students applied in record numbers for the annual essay and creative writing prizes, and devised some extremely creative ideas for undergraduate summer research projects that could be conducted remotely. Our JCR and MCR committees worked harder than ever to represent their constituencies and to enhance the student experience in challenging times. That all of this has been possible is a reflection of the adaptability, dedication and flexibility of colleagues and students alike. So while I still hope for more normal times, I also now know enough about the spirit of Merton to be assured that any version of normal is still one to look forward to.

**Dr Jane Gover**  
Senior Tutor

# Schools Liaison and Access



Our access and outreach work has changed dramatically over the past year. The challenges of the pandemic and the focus of our activities have presented both opportunities and difficulties. We are, however, proud to have reached thousands of students across the UK and beyond, to let them know that Oxford and Merton are for people like them. A 16-year-old who attended a virtual visit summed up the impact of our work: 'I realised the type of person that goes to Oxford isn't about what school you go to or what your parents do, it's about working hard and loving your subject.'

This year saw the launch of the new Oxford for South West consortium, in which Merton is working with Lady Margaret Hall and Exeter College. The consortium arrangement aims to enhance coordination between colleges that work in specified link areas. The consortium's first year has been a great success. The initial programme, working with three Cambridge colleges (Robinson, Downing and Trinity Hall), delivered Oxford and Cambridge Information Days that reached hundreds of students. Later this year we plan to run subject taster sessions for students across the region. The success of both events depended on the involvement of multiple colleges and it was undoubtedly beneficial for attendees to hear from a number of college tutors, staff and students. Over the coming year, we plan to expand our collaborative work in the Bristol area.

The impact of Covid-19 on our access and outreach activities will be felt for years to come. This year, we successfully developed and delivered a virtual schools liaison programme that we hope can remain a part of our future work, complementing face-to-face school visits and tours of the College. Virtual activities have enabled us to reach schools, students, parents and teachers that we would otherwise miss. One highly successful event was the BAME Humanities Study Day, hosted by the History Faculty and involving several other colleges. The day-long programme welcomed prospective applicants from BAME backgrounds from across the country who joined taster lectures and admissions workshops, and heard from current students. We also hosted our second set of online open days this summer with students chatting virtually to undergraduates and tutors, and able to watch pre-recorded materials about Oxford and Merton life.

As always, our work would not be possible without the time and experience of our student ambassadors. This year

they joined dozens of virtual events and created their own Merton JCR Access Instagram which has found great success with more than 1,500 followers. Grace Walters, the outgoing JCR Access Rep, commented: 'The Instagram account has become a real emblem for everything Merton strives for, and something we're always really proud of at access events. It's helped create a sense of community for applicants and offer-holders, and has also been an opportunity to spread the word about diversity-based events in College, whether spotlighting upcoming socials or gift bags for religious celebrations.' We're excited about working with the new JCR Access Officer, Nikita Nunes, and MCR Access Officer, Shekinah Vera-Cruz (both 2020), and are all looking forward to resuming face-to-face events when safe to do so.

We are also delighted to announce that Merton College has entered into a flagship partnership with the Social Mobility Foundation (SMF). This charity supports high-achieving young people from low-income backgrounds and helps them to enter top universities and competitive professions. The SMF and Merton will work together to support students in Year 12/S5 across the UK through Oxford admissions workshops, taster lectures and a residential visit planned for the summer of 2022. We look forward to the collaboration developing over time and to working with the SMF to help support disadvantaged young people. As the serious challenges of access and outreach can't be solved by individual colleges or universities, we see the value of close collaboration and the sharing of expertise with Oxford and Cambridge colleagues, and with organisations such as Study Higher in Swindon.

How access and outreach activities will look next year remains unclear but we hope to spend more time working with applicants face-to-face. We've greatly missed showing pupils around our beautiful college and are excited to be able to host in-person events soon.

As always, our schools liaison and access work would not be possible without the support of all members of the Merton community – our students, our staff, our Fellows and our alumni.

#### Jack Wands

Schools Liaison and Access Officer



## Domestic Bursary

In my last report for *Postmaster* I reflected on the first six months of the pandemic and how Covid-19 had impacted upon almost every aspect of college life. Twelve months on, the many challenges associated with supporting and protecting the college community have been both extraordinary and unprecedented. Covid-19 has created layers of complexity and a very significant additional workload for many staff, including perhaps most notably heads of department, who have been totally brilliant in adapting and pulling together to maintain college operations. This wouldn't of course be possible without the hard work, loyalty and good grace shown by each and every member of staff – the College is hugely grateful to you all.

Preparations for the past year have taken many different forms but perhaps none more prominent than the arrival

Students enjoying lunch in Chestnut Hall

in September of a large temporary building on Chestnut Lawn. Such buildings would normally be found in hospitality villages at major summer events such as Silverstone, Ascot and Wentworth, but with most of these cancelled or being held behind closed doors, the unused buildings were repurposed for use by schools, universities and the NHS. For Merton, the requirement came from a significant loss of dining capacity due to social distancing requirements and to fulfil the need to ensure students without access to kitchen facilities could be fed.

Working with GL Events, which is a market leader in the events sector, permission was kindly given by Christ Church to remove a large section of metal railing and lay a 500-metre-long protective roadway across the Merton Sports Field from Christ Church Meadow. The roadway was required to provide

access for an articulated lorry loaded with the temporary building and a crane to lift each component high above Deadman's Walk onto Chestnut Lawn.

Within a week, a temporary dining hall incorporating the College bar was built and ready for the arrival of students – a time-lapse video of the build can be viewed at [bit.ly/ChestnutHall](https://bit.ly/ChestnutHall). Complete with heating, lighting, furniture and a food servery counter, the new facility has played an essential part in maintaining catering operations by enabling students and staff to dine safely in a socially distanced manner. Perhaps more importantly, the building has also helped to retain a sense of community through some of the darkest moments of the pandemic.

Affectionately named 'Chestnut Hall', its versatile nature meant that between mealtimes the space quickly became used for study and more recently for the highly popular weekly afternoon teas. Looking ahead, an extension to planning permission is being sought to retain Chestnut Hall for a further 12 months as a contingency and while the College returns to more normal dining arrangements.

Although coronavirus has been at the forefront of our efforts, in other areas the maintenance focus continues to be on safety compliance work – notably the ongoing testing and upgrading of an extensive and ageing electrical system. In accordance with a recent fire risk assessment, arrangements are being made to renew some of the older fire detection systems located in both Fellows' and student accommodation. Investment is also being made in upgrading analogue security cameras and the system on which these operate; for the first time CCTV is being installed at the Sports Pavilion. Although the infrastructure is largely unseen, plant equipment and services play a critical part in the operation of the College. This is why obsolete water pumps hidden in the basement of Holywell Blocks A, B and C are being replaced this summer and why the IT team is progressively replacing out-of-life network switches and upgrading back-up servers.

More visibly, many college rooms, buildings and facilities are increasingly showing signs of wear and tear from years of extensive use. A detailed survey is being planned to document and report the condition of the College estate, the results

of which will inform decisions about future maintenance priorities and expenditure over the next five years onwards and lead into a strategic review of accommodation.

Originating from the celebration of '40 Years of Women' at Merton, work has been taking place on an exciting project to create a new childcare nursery. Unfortunately, progress in 2020 was slowed by the pandemic; however, the Nursery Subcommittee has been making great strides since meeting regularly again this year. One of the major developments has been the selection of 22 Manor Place as the preferred location for the nursery. Over the coming months, the subcommittee will consider how the building will need to be adapted along with creating an operational and commercial plan for the new business. Subject to funding, it is hoped that the nursery will open in the autumn of 2022.

After a number of years spent renewing the building lease with Christ Church, plans have been submitted to Oxford City Council to extend the College boathouse. The extension will provide much needed additional storage and workshop facilities to the original building. At the time of writing, tenders have been sent out to prospective building contractors and it is hoped that work will start before Michaelmas term 2021.

Ordinarily, the Conference Office would expect to organise in excess of 2,000 meetings and conferences per year. With the vast majority of internal meetings moving online and external events being postponed, in some cases for two consecutive years, the team have been busy liaising with organisers and rescheduling bookings. As restrictions start to ease we are expecting the College to become very busy as the backlog of events is cleared.

After the difficulties of the past year, the summer provides an opportunity to pause, reset and prepare for the new academic year. Perhaps more importantly than ever, this summer also provides an opportunity for staff to take well-deserved holidays and spend time with families and loved ones, who in some cases have not been seen in person for over a year.

**Tim Lightfoot**  
Domestic Bursar



## The Gardens

Gardeners are a large body of people who can make a huge contribution to conservation efforts, and we were thrilled to help with the trial of a biodiversity audit which colleges plan to use in future.

A 'Top Trunks' guide to tree carbon performance is available for most tree species allowing people to maximise carbon storage potential according to the space their gardens allow. The two Himalayan cedars that replaced Merton's yew tree (blown over in Storm Ciara in February 2020) should each lock up more than two tons of dry weight of carbon at maturity ([www.barcham.co.uk/carbon-calculator/top-trunks-guide](http://www.barcham.co.uk/carbon-calculator/top-trunks-guide)).

*Anacamptis pyramidalis*, the pyramidal orchid

Sharing our skills and knowledge about everything from sustainable compost to buying plants from reputable sources feels like a contribution to conservation efforts. People often don't think twice before purchasing rare plant material.

Australia has one of the oldest and rarest trees. For instance, the Wollemi Pine was thought to be extinct until 1994 when it was rediscovered and declared a new genus. In order to preserve it, the horticultural market was flooded with millions of baby plants and this propagation programme paid dividends, because the original few trees were almost burnt down during the New South Wales bush fires in 2020 which devastated the area.



Carnivorous plant display

The time to shift from food security to 'nutrition security' is now, but I am loath to give advice on foraging because of the obvious pitfall – someone collecting the wrong plant. However, I understand that it can help alleviate fears of food security so we are planning a Tea bed where everything will be edible. Plants will range from Arabian jasmine, Moroccan mint, lavender and lemon balm to mountain tea (so-called because *Sideritis syriaca* originates from high-altitude mountainsides in Mediterranean regions). My favourite tea is made from lime tree flowers which I discovered in Poland when lime tree branches were delivered to each house in the village by a local farmer.

Wildlife is continuing to surprise us. The buff-tailed bumblebee is able to signal to a plant that it is short of nectar or pollen by nibbling holes in its leaves, thus stimulating the plant to open its flowers sooner. Mowing later because of the change to exam patterns meant we caught sight of pyramidal orchids flowering on some of the bulb banks in Fellows' Garden. Previously, these would have been beheaded by the strimmer.

Encouraging a greater diversity of wildflowers on Great Meadow and Music Meadow has meant a rapid recap of wildflower nomenclature. Many of these are British natives.

In College we are more concerned with selecting species that can adapt to our changing climate, so if you are missing plants from sunnier climbs because of travel restrictions, be sure to take a look. Carnivorous plants featured for the first time in St Alban's Quad which has proved a hit.

We continue to introduce new species. Canadian bloodroot, *Sanguinaria canadensis*, is clumping up well in a shady border; it secretes a red fluid when cut, giving the plant its name. *Astilboides tabularis* is a new introduction to our Oriental area; this has rounded leaves up to one metre in diameter.

We aim for the garden to be a place to cultivate the mind and not least give us a dose of Vitamin G!

**Lucille Savin**  
Head Gardener

# Hail to New Fellows



## Dr Gwen Burnyeat

Junior Research Fellow in Anthropology

I joined Merton in October 2020, after my PhD in Social Anthropology as a Wolfson scholar at UCL. Previously, I lectured in Political Anthropology at the National University of Colombia, where I did an MPhil in Social Anthropology as a Leverhulme Study-Abroad scholar. I work on peace, conflict and politics in Colombia, especially the recent peace process with the FARC-EP guerrillas. I am currently researching political polarisation in the aftermath of the peace accord, building a framework for an anthropology of divided societies.

I retrained as an anthropologist after working in human rights and conflict observation in Colombia. My first book, *Chocolate, Politics and Peace-Building: An Ethnography of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, Colombia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), based on my MPhil, is about a grassroots community attempt to build peace in a conflict zone, and is accompanied by my documentary film, *Chocolate of Peace* (2016). For my PhD, I turned from studying victims of state violence to embedded research inside the state. My forthcoming second book, *The Face of Peace: Government Pedagogy amidst Disinformation in Colombia*, focuses on the government officials charged with negotiating, implementing and communicating the peace agreement to Colombian society, before and after a referendum that narrowly rejected the accord. It analyses their culturally liberal tendency to resort to rational explanations in reaction to emotive campaigning by the accord's opponents, offering insight into how liberalism responds to 'post-truth' politics.

I am thrilled to be able to develop my research in Merton's welcoming, supportive and beautiful environment.



## Mark Coote Development Director

I joined the Merton community at what seemed like an altogether auspicious time – at the beginning of May 2021, with a thaw in lockdown restrictions. It allowed a period of face-to-face induction, providing a welcome pause from the two-dimensional exposure of the now only-too-familiar Zoom and Teams cycle.

At Merton I will continue to enhance the work of philanthropy and benefaction that has sustained the College for eight centuries. If we needed any reminder of the importance of giving to a community's needs, the pandemic has underscored it.

Before Merton I served the Governing Body at Christ Church as Director of Development for three and a half years, coming to Oxford in autumn 2017 having led the Foundation at Wells Cathedral School in Somerset for seven years. Visitors to the smallest city in England might perhaps visit Cedars Hall, a performing arts facility, opened in 2016, which, as someone commented, was the single most important building to be constructed in Wells in 200 years, if you don't include Waitrose. It was the focus of my time there, raising funds to deliver what has become a great arts venue for the West Country.

Six years as a director of Cancer Research UK preceded that and was the culmination of more than 20 years of teaching history and politics in a range of secondary schools, often preparing sixth form students for Oxbridge entrance.

Merton feels a fitting destination that brings together a working life of education and, more latterly, fundraising. It has offered me the warmest of welcomes.



## Dr Nicholas Irwin Junior Research Fellow in Biology

I joined Merton in October 2020 as a Junior Research Fellow in Biology, soon after completing my PhD at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.

I am an evolutionary biologist interested in the diversity and evolution of cellular biology. Since the beginning of life, major evolutionary transitions, such as the diversification of microorganisms, the origin of complex cells and the evolution of multicellularity, have redefined the Earth's biosphere by altering cellular systems. My research focuses on identifying the drivers of these changes and reconstructing how these ancient events unfolded. In particular, I am interested in studying the role that viruses played in influencing these transitions. Although commonly perceived solely as infectious agents, viruses can also act as evolutionary catalysts, accelerating evolutionary processes by creating selective pressures on their hosts and by serving as a source of novel or modified genes. Indeed, viral genes have been acquired by many organisms, including animals where they are important in development, but the nature and impact of these genes on cell biology in general remains unknown. To resolve this, I am using a combination of computational and experimental approaches to understand how viruses and their genes have affected cellular evolution and evolutionary transitions across the tree of life.

Despite arriving during an unusual time, the warmth and solidarity of the Merton community have been inspiring. I am grateful and excited to be able to pursue my research in such an eclectic and stimulating environment.



## Dr Xiangyu (Michael) Jie

**Junior Research Fellow in Chemistry**

I became a Junior Research Fellow in Chemistry at Merton College in October 2020. I completed my DPhil in Inorganic Chemistry at Oxford and worked in the group of Professor Peter Edwards as a postdoctoral research associate before taking up this fellowship.

My expertise and research interests are in hydrogen technology, heterogeneous catalysis, microwave-initiated catalysis, fossil fuel decarbonisation and carbon neutral technology. My research combines discovery science and innovation: pursuing a fundamental understanding of the new discovery of microwave-initiated heterogeneous catalysis and also to explore its application in solving major environmental challenges such as the production of 'turquoise hydrogen', fossil fuels decarbonisation and the controlled deconstruction of plastics waste.

As an important part of my JRF research projects, I aim to develop innovative chemical recycling processes for solving the scourge of plastics waste. Our group's work on turning plastic waste to hydrogen was a finalist in the Royal Society of Chemistry's 2019 Emerging Technologies Competition; and our work on the circular economy for plastics was highly commended in the Oxford Vice-Chancellor's Innovation Awards 2020.

I am proud to be a part of Merton College and I appreciate this opportunity to be a Junior Research Fellow, which allows me the freedom to focus on my research and develop my own research idea and projects in such a stimulating environment.



## Dr Emily Rutherford

**Junior Research Fellow in History**

I joined Merton as a JRF in October 2020. I moved to Oxford from New York, having completed my PhD at Columbia University in May 2020.

I am a historian of 19th- and 20th-century Britain, with research interests in gender, sexuality and queer history; the history of universities and other elite institutions; and intellectual history. I am currently working on two book projects. The first, 'Coeducation in British universities and the remaking of gender difference, 1860–1935', offers a new, extensively archivally researched, account of how students, faculty, administrators, donors, national politicians and the news media negotiated gender relations in coeducational universities across Britain, with consequences for how we understand the broader role of concepts of gender difference and gender segregation in the making of modern Britain. The second, 'Intellectual aristocracies: the intellectual history of male homosexuality in England, c. 1850–1967', examines the roles that elite educational institutions, the Greek and Latin classics, and antidemocratic political thought played in the emergence of conceptions of male homosexual identity and community in England. It traces several thinkers and the lasting influences of their ideas, even into the later 20th century.

I'm grateful for the warm welcome I've received from everyone at Merton, despite the unusual circumstances of the pandemic. I have enjoyed teaching widely across the undergraduate and master's history curriculum, and learning more about college and university administration. I look forward to meeting more people as in-person activities resume.



## Dr Henry Spelman

**Fitzjames Research Fellow in Ancient Greek**

I returned to Oxford in October 2020 after travelling to Cambridge for four years in order to see the world and also serve as WHD Rouse Junior Research Fellow in Classics at Christ's College. Before that journey, I had completed graduate work across town at Balliol and an undergraduate degree across the pond at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

I mostly research Greek poetry in the half-millennium or so between Homer and Callimachus, but my interests also include ancient education and the rise of literate literary culture. During this past plague year, I was writing my second and, I hope, final book on Pindar, trying to use the tools of modern linguistics to make sense of the most difficult and most worthwhile of all ancient lyric poets. I hope soon to start on another project about what is funny about the gods in ancient Athenian comedy.

Merton has provided a most friendly and intellectually stimulating home. It has been a great pleasure to teach the College's brilliant students and also to get to know its warm fellowship. I look forward to spending more time in this welcoming and flourishing community.

The College was also pleased to welcome Nathaniel Lane, Associate Professor of Economics, this academic year.

Formative

Excitement

Preeminent

Rigorous

Hidden

Serene

Fascinating

Welcoming

Caring

Generous

Cosy

Idiosyncratic

Lifeshaping

Privileged

Serenity

# Features

Warm

Collegial

Steadfast  
Visionary

People

# Beautiful

Academic

Ancient

Social

## Challenging

Continuity

Classical

Brilliance

Inclusive

## Community

## History

Male

40 Years of  
Merton Women:  
1980-2020

# Quirky

Harmony

Devoted

Historic

# Empowering

Traditional

Music

# Scholarly

Enlightening

# Intense

Old

Vibrant

Storied

Adaptable

# Enduring

Stimulating

Medieval

# Supportive

Contradictory

# Beauty

Stars

Home

# Intellectual

Freedom

Glorious

# Friendly

All the women featured were asked to describe Merton in three words: this is a Word Cloud of what they said.

# Liberating

Wisdom



My passion for women's history was fostered at Merton under the guidance of Professor Steven Gunn, Fellow and Tutor in History and Professor of Early Modern History, and I now work as an academic in this field. I was therefore delighted to learn about the College's new project, *40 Years: Merton Women 1980-2020*. The project was designed to coincide with the 40th anniversary of women first being admitted to Merton as students, and serves as a fantastic record of the achievements and impact of Merton women all around the world.

As we have progressed through the year, new profiles have been added to the College website, and there are now a huge number of these available to peruse – from Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of King Charles I, who made Merton her home during the English Civil War; to the Revd Katherine Price, the first female Mertonian to be ordained as an Anglican priest; to Lucille Savin, the College's Head Gardener; to Dr Catherine Paxton, whose name is forever engrained in my memory as being the person who signed my Merton acceptance letter ('I am pleased to inform you that') in her role as Senior Tutor. Many of these women have been interviewed for the project, and it's fascinating to be able to read memories (and see photographs) of Merton across the ages. There are also some hidden gems, if you dig deep enough. (Quiz question: which Conservative MP, a Merton alumna, was once President of the Oxford University Liberal Democrats?)

To complement the project, there is an online exhibition put together by the College Library team, celebrating the lives of some of the women associated with the College in earlier centuries. As with much women's history, there is a

surprising amount of agency on display here, in particular in the section of the exhibition which showcases female benefactors of the College from the 13th century onwards. There are also some wonderful photographs from the College archives accompanying the exhibition.

A sign of the times is that I've been unable to visit College since before the pandemic, but the project team have done a brilliant job of organising the *40 Years Series* of online lectures to accompany the project, which have helped me feel connected with College. The bonus is that these were almost all recorded, and are still available to view on the project website. I'd recommend whiling away some hours catching up with them. I particularly enjoyed hearing more about the research of the prolific Dame Jessica Rawson, our first female Warden (who once told me off in Warden's Collections for wanting to play cricket during Finals; perhaps she had a point). From a career perspective, as someone who works in academia, the event on '40 Years of Progress: Oxford, gender equality and academia since 1980' was very enlightening, featuring panellists Professors Dinah Birch, Alison Finch and Lyndal Roper.

Overall, the 40 Years of Merton Women project has reinforced my sense of feeling part of a broader, global community of female Mertonians. It's also a great resource for future generations. You can find it here: [www.merton.ox.ac.uk/40-years-merton-women-1980-2020](http://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/40-years-merton-women-1980-2020)

**Dr Raf Nicholson (2006)**

*Senior Lecturer in Sport and Sustainability, Bournemouth University*



## Merton Women

Below is a list of the many women we have featured during our celebrations.

### Fellows

**Dr Julia Amos**, Junior Research Fellow & Research Lecturer in Global Wellbeing 2011-16  
**Professor Judith Armitage**, Emeritus Fellow  
**The Hon Mrs Justice Kelyn Bacon** (1992), Honorary Fellow  
**Dr Sarah Bendall**, Fellow Librarian 1994-2000  
**Professor Dinah Birch**, Honorary Fellow  
**Professor Mindy Chen-Wishart**, Professor of the Law of Contract & Tutor in Law  
**Professor Alison Finch**, Fellow & Tutor in French 1995-2003  
**Professor Usha Goswami**, Junior Research Fellow 1986-89  
**Professor Véronique Gouverneur**, Professor of Chemistry & Tutor in Organic Chemistry  
**Professor Sunetra Gupta**, Supernumerary Fellow  
**Dr Catherine Paxton**, Bodley Fellow  
**Professor Dame Jessica Rawson**, Honorary Fellow, Warden 1994-2010

**Professor Lyndal Roper**, Honorary Fellow

**Christine Taylor**, Emeritus Fellow, Development Director 2006-17

**Professor Ulrike Tillmann**, Professor of Mathematics

**Dr Julia Walworth**, Fellow Librarian

**The Hon Dame Philippa Whipple** (1984), Honorary Fellow, President of the Merton Society

### Alumnae

**Alison Blake CMG** (1980)

**Emma Bullimore** (2005)

**Catriona Cannon** (1990)

**Molly Clark** (2014)

**Susanna Curtis** (1982)

**Eleanor Grey QC** (1984)

**Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington** (1992)

**Professor Gunilla Karlsson Hedestam** (1990)

**Ginny Knox** (1982)

**Dr Charlotte Mason** (2009)

**Her Imperial Highness Princess Akiko of Mikasa** (2004)

**Professor Fiona Murray CBE** (1986)

**Amna Naseer** (1997)

**The Revd Katherine Price** (2001)

**Pippa Shirley** (1983)

**The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP** (1993)

**Professor Anna Watts** (1992)

**Dr Leana Wen** (2007)

**Dr Nussaibah Younis** (2004)

### College Staff

**Leah Collins**, Chapel Verger  
**Sally Hague**, Head of Conference & Accommodation

**Lucille Savin**, Head Gardener

**Malgorzata Skalik**, Head Steward

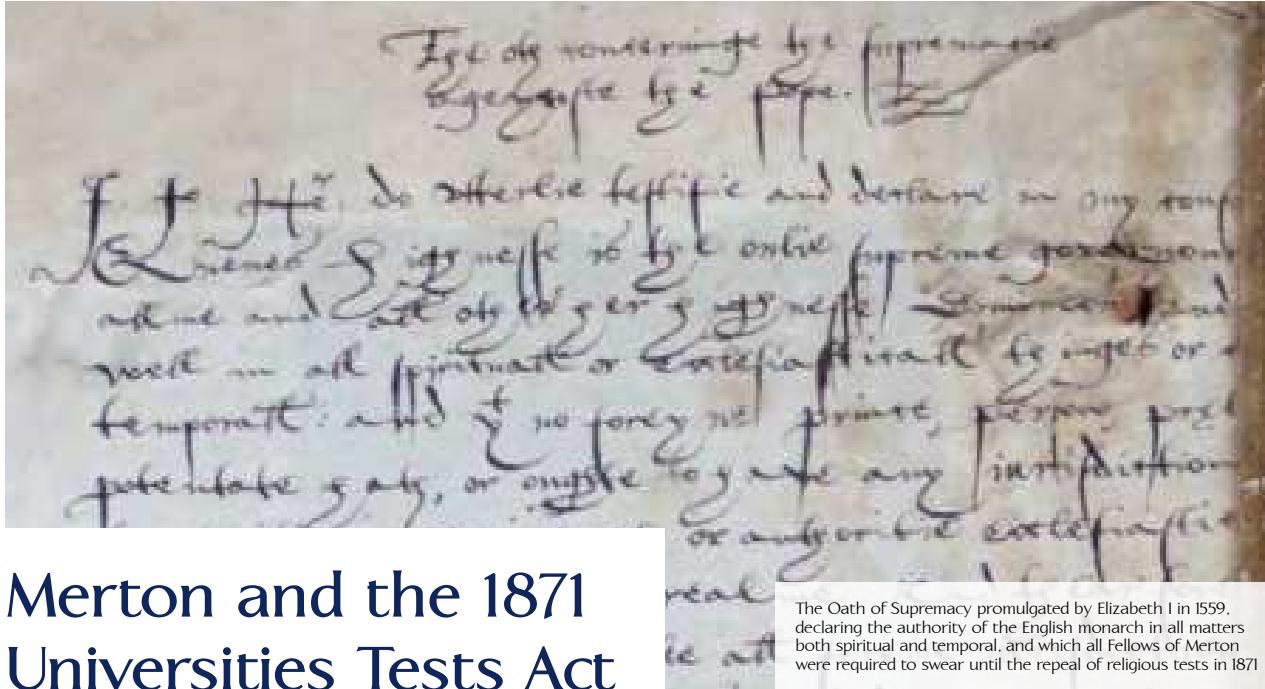
**Lesley Walsh**, Sub-Warden's Secretary 1987-2021

### Historic

**Ela, Countess of Warwick**, the College's first female benefactor

**Queen Henrietta Maria**, resident in College 1643-44

**Julia de Lacy Mann**, Merton's first female Honorary Fellow



# Merton and the 1871 Universities Tests Act

By 1864, the year of Merton's 600th anniversary, the Warden Robert Bullock Marsham had been in office for more than 40 years. Son of a canon of Windsor and brother of the earl of Romney, educated at Eton and Christ Church (1803), he was a natural conservative, 'whose main ambition for the College was that it should be filled with young men of good county families'. In that year the College invited to its anniversary celebrations all Mertonians of the status of MA and above, with the exception of those who had seceded to the Church of Rome. Among those excluded was the former Fellow Henry Edward Manning who, only a year later, would be consecrated as the second Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster.

Yet there were leavening influences at work in the College, in the form of younger Fellows such as Mandell Creighton and George Brodrick, who was to succeed Marsham as Warden in 1881. Brodrick played a prominent role in the national campaign to scrap religious tests in the 1860s. In 1868, the College resolved that candidates for admission should not be questioned as to their religious beliefs, and undergraduates who were not members of the Church of England could be excused attendance at chapel. From 1872 there appeared a small trickle of students from Roman Catholic schools.

such as the Oratory and Stonyhurst, in defiance of a papal inhibition against Catholics attending Oxford and Cambridge, an inhibition upheld by the now Archbishop Manning.

Although it took some time for these changes to be felt more widely, by the 1890s members of the College, both students and Fellows, were being drawn from a wider range of denominations, and religious and cultural traditions. The College's earliest-identified Jewish students were admitted in 1888 and 1890. A Methodist, Arthur Dixon, was admitted to a fellowship in 1891. Whereas scholars from overseas had previously been restricted to European Christians in sympathy with the Church of England, in the following decades the College's intake became increasingly international. Consequently the College admitted students from India (1892 and 1897), Ceylon/Sri Lanka (1899), Siam/Thailand (1904 and 1908), Egypt (1907 and 1911) and China (1908 and 1913). The removal of the religious tests thus paved the way for the diverse, multicultural and multi-faith community that Merton aspires to be in the 21st century.

Dr Matthew Grimley, Mark Reynolds Tutor in History  
Julian Reid, College Archivist



## The Merton Meadows

Merton has two wildflower meadows. Music Meadow floods annually along with the willow carr (waterlogged wooded terrain, wetlands dominated usually by small trees) adjacent to the River Cherwell; Great Meadow (opposed to Little Leaze) is beside the Sports Pavilion and provides a transition into the countryside beyond.

Grasslands around Oxford have been known and documented for centuries and were the product of long-standing farming methods that persisted until the Second World War. While some fields remained as permanent pasture, others alternated between grassland and crops. We do not know enough about the longevity of seed banks to judge definitively the age of existing grassland.

Pre-human-era Oxfordshire was clothed in oak-lime-elm-alder forest proportionate to the topography, drainage and soils; however the introduction of cattle, sheep and later rabbit had a profound effect preventing tree clearings reverting back to trees. Grassland seeds quickly colonised from cliffs and dunes, areas too exposed or unstable to support woody vegetation, aided by animals and hay making.

From 1927 an agricultural depression and then the Second

World War brought about substantial changes to the countryside, closely followed by a new agricultural revolution. Most meadows were ploughed up and either converted to arable or monocrop pasture 'improved' by the use of fertilisers.

For decades Merton's meadows were topped with a rotary mower, but this produces a thick layer of mulch and any gardener knows this is the best way to smother seedlings. Important species have been lost such as Yellow Rattle, Great Burnet, Bedstraws and Ragged Robin among many others.

More recently the meadows have been cut for hay so we could study the existing floristic diversity in the height of summer. Native species can recolonise from fragments of original diverse grasslands in corners of fields and on field margins, but at Merton we didn't even have that.

Hope has come from the Thames Valley Wildflower Meadow Restoration Project, headed up by Catriona Bass and Professor Kevan Martin, whose aim is to reconnect wildflower meadows in the Upper Thames floodplain and co-ordinate a long-term, interdisciplinary study of the ecosystem of floodplain meadows. Fragmented Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) still exist and



the hope is that farmers and landowners coming together in 21st-century agriculture will halt the catastrophic decline in biodiversity.

Catriona and Kevan have experience of providing 'green hay', cut from a donor meadow full of diverse wildflower seeds, to spread over new ground. Strips of Merton's meadows will be rotovated and the disturbed roots allowed to dry out in the sun to provide a receptive seedbed with reduced competition from existing grasses. 'Green hay' will then be spread and rolled in to ensure good soil contact; we wait to see the results.

Cultivation of any soil releases carbon into the air which modern agriculture has been doing for more than 100 years. But instead of complicated bioengineering to trap carbon, the best machines for binding carbon in the ground are plants. This kind of perennial meadow planting will not only help build biodiversity but also regenerate the soil.

Corporate volunteering is becoming popular – so who knows, we may all be scything in future.

**Lucille Savin**  
Head Gardener

This project is one of many things Merton is doing to try to become as sustainable as possible. Here are a few more examples.

- A Green Impact Group of Fellows, staff and students meet on a termly basis and report their activities at staff briefings. A sustainability workshop is planned to think collectively as a College what we can and should be doing.
- A specialist energy surveyor has been employed to audit the College estate in terms of carbon; natural capital and biodiversity in conjunction with the University research project run by the Oxford Partnership for Operationalising the Conservation Hierarchy.
- The refurbishment of student rooms in North Lodge and Rose Lane involved replacing and upgrading windows, and installing high-efficiency electric heating, LED lighting and centrally stored hot water systems.
- Food produce is carefully sourced from approved small specialist suppliers; coffee supplies come from Fairtrade and Rainforest Alliance suppliers. We strictly only use palm oil products from ethical sources, and no endangered fish species are used in our cooking.
- Food waste reduction initiatives are in place. Most meals are pre-booked to avoid waste and we have portion control at the food servery. Where possible in accordance with safety requirements, the kitchen team recycle leftover food in other meals.
- Food waste is sent to a local anaerobic digestion plant where it is converted into green energy and fertiliser products.
- We have reduced single-use plastics in packaging and introduced 100% recyclable cups in coffee facilities.
- Recycling bins have been installed throughout College.
- We recycle printer cartridges and batteries.
- Garden waste is composted and reused.



Mertonians in...  
Schoolteaching



## Philip Matthews (2002)

*Philip Matthews has held various positions at Watford Grammar School for Boys, where he is currently a maths teacher and the lay chaplain.*

When I first joined Watford Grammar School for Boys as a pupil aged 11, I would have been horrified at the thought I might still be there 26 years later. So events have transpired though, and thankfully my extended stay at my alma mater has for the most part been a very happy and fulfilling one.

My primary role for the past 13 years has been as a maths teacher. Having received a world-class mathematical education at Merton under the expert tutelage of Ulrike Tillmann and Dominic Welsh, it's a privilege for me now to be passing on a love (or at least a tolerance) of the subject

to the next generation. The contexts vary widely though: I can go from a lesson with Oxbridge-aspiring sixth formers to one with lower-set pupils struggling with their times tables – something a colleague once described as like cruising along the motorway then pulling up the handbrake. There is great satisfaction in tailoring methods to particular groups though, and one of the highlights of the past few years has been introducing a Core Maths course as an alternative to A-level, to give non-STEM students the data-handling and financial skills they don't always realise they'll need.

The pastoral aspect of teaching is the one I find the most rewarding. I have had stints as a Head of Year and as Head of Maths, but am currently School Chaplain. This role was created partly in response to the number of mental health

concerns that have come to light in the pandemic, and is one I have been delighted to take on, having worked for a Christian organisation in Paris before becoming a teacher. It involves me offering a listening ear to anyone who seeks it, regardless of their background, as well as taking assemblies and services for special occasions.

A big part of education is giving pupils opportunities to discover new passions, and I have always relished having the chance to do this through school trips. In recent years, I have taken pupils skiing in the Canadian Rockies, house-building in a Johannesburg slum and (rather extravagantly) cross-country training in Majorca. Sadly, such opportunities have been limited in the past 18 months, but the extracurricular activities that have taken place have seemed all the more precious for it. Personal highlights of the last term have been resuming the football sessions I run with the Sixth Form and umpiring the Under 13B cricket team for their first fixtures since joining the school.

The fact that the pandemic has curtailed much of what brings colour to children's schooldays has been a real sadness. In educational terms, it's amazing what video-conferencing software allowed us to offer during the lockdowns, but it was a fairly soul-destroying experience teaching a screen of pupils' avatars, knowing full well that for many the Google Meets tab was sharing the browser with video games, YouTube and messaging apps. The loss of the structure and discipline of being in a classroom, coupled with the variability of access to technology, meant some pupils sadly made far less progress than they would have done in school, and it is our challenge now to respond to this.

Of course the other big challenge in education has been the need for teachers to determine exam grades. Having spent more hours on this than I care to remember when still of Head of Department in 2020, I have certainly not envied my successor's workload this past term.

As for the future, I cannot tell whether I'll escape the clutches of the school any time soon, but for the time being I am certainly very happy to be working in such a stimulating environment and to be investing in its brilliant young people.



## Kabir Miah (1993)

*Kabir Miah is an English teacher and Deputy Headteacher at Swanlea School in Tower Hamlets, London.*

I knew I wanted to be a teacher from Year 4 in primary school: it was amazing teachers and the education that they provided that gave me the opportunity to study at Merton, as well as go on to work in the most rewarding job in the world.

Growing up in a migrant family, we didn't speak English at home, so I was placed in the 'slow readers' class. That was until Year 4 when Mr Pitchers came along: he was one of those teachers who believed in everyone – you know the type, they are relentlessly positive and refuse to let you give up. He helped me with my reading and by the end of the year I won the 'Striver's Cup', a tiny trophy. With it came a £2 book voucher, with which I brought *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle* and *The Wind in the Willows*. My love of reading truly began that day. What's the only thing better than being a teacher? Being a teacher of English!

English at Merton was a phenomenal experience, cementing my love of reading. We were a group of four and our lessons with Professor Richard McCabe, Professor John Carey and the inestimable Mr Edward Wilson (who was at Worcester) provided the best possible knowledge of English Literature that we could have wished for. It's this priceless education that I now have the privilege of passing on to my pupils.



Kabir being sponged as part of a 'sponge a teacher' fundraiser for Macmillan Cancer Research. Sponging the Deputy Head was a good money-maker!

Twenty-five years on from those days, I am Deputy Headteacher and teacher of English at Swanlea School in Tower Hamlets, London. Our borough is one of the most socio-economically deprived areas of the country, with the majority of children from minority ethnic groups, learning in their second language. However, our borough and the school that I work in are exceptional: we are united in our aspiration to achieve, believing that social disadvantage is not insurmountable but can be overcome through education.

I work every day with some of the most talented, dedicated and committed staff in the country, alongside a phenomenal headteacher. We are a school full of Mr Pitchers, helping young people from challenging contexts become the doctors, lawyers and entrepreneurs of tomorrow. It's not an easy job, but it's one that we love.

These last few years have seen us face even more challenges as a school. Before 2020, we only had to contend with the latest wheeze from Ofsted, but suddenly a pandemic struck.

We now had to get our heads around teacher-assessed grades, social bubbles and Google Classrooms. If I had a pound for every time I heard 'You're on mute sir.' I could probably retire. All of this, alongside having to become an NHS testing site overnight (thanks, Boris), means it has been an extraordinary time in teaching.

Thankfully the end is in sight and as a school we celebrated the end of term with some fundraising activities (including sponging a teacher) and taking our young people out on their first trips in over a year and a half. We went to Thorpe Park, Chessington, Legoland and Southend-on-Sea Funfair – not very educational I'll admit, but sometimes it's more about the memories than the lesson plan.

Who knows what the future will bring to teaching? What I do know though is that in our little corner of Tower Hamlets we will continue to do the very best for our young people. As teachers what we do truly makes a difference to the lives of young people and their families. That's a great thing to be able to say about your job, isn't it?



## Rebecca Rundle (2012)

**Rebecca Rundle** is a maths teacher at Heartlands High School in North London.

It took three months working in the city to confirm what I had long known – I wanted a job where I felt like I was giving back, and the city did not give me that. Teaching makes me feel needed and valued but it is definitely not without its challenges. I work in a comprehensive secondary school in North London and have been here for five years, since my teaching career began and I love it. Despite reading History, I work as a maths teacher, having gone into teaching through Teach First, which allocates you to a school based on your A-levels and the needs of their partner schools. I always loved

school as a child, and was desperate to learn and achieve academically, so becoming a teacher was in many ways inevitable, but not something I always wanted. I thought I should aspire to do something 'better' or 'more impressive', but what could be more important than helping young people, many of whom have not had the start in life I did?

When I tell people I am a teacher they ask about naughty kiddies and hours of marking, and these are both inevitably part of my job but there is also another side to my job which non-teachers (understandably) haven't considered. I think of myself as having two jobs: one that is reactive and 'in the moment', from 8am to 3pm in the classroom, and the other, which is forward looking and considered, from 3pm to 6pm. This second job involves planning schemes of learning, organising sets, managing colleagues and changing assessment structure, all of which looks wildly different to the first part of my day. A (very bad) date once tried to tell me my job wasn't strategic – he got an earful!

Teaching in the past 18 months has been exhausting. As public sector workers, we have, like many, received pay freezes which is nothing short of insulting given our commitment to educate and care for the most vulnerable children across the country. We have faced bubble systems, bubble closures, online teaching, real life teaching, then back to remote teaching, mask wearing, corridor fogging, isolating staff and lockdowns when we were still required to be in school without any kind of protection. The colleagues I have worked with have been phenomenal and I don't know how I would have made it through without them.

Mostly though, it is the humour and compassion of the children that have made my days manageable, from them shouting 'It's coming home' in lessons, to a child in Year 11, who I had not taught for 12 months, giving me the most heartfelt card I have ever received. In the notes section of my phone I have endless stories of children being ridiculous and hilarious in equal measure and they never fail to amuse me. (From the beginning of my teaching career, though, the stories tended to be meaner and result in me crying rather than laughing.) Today (admittedly, the last day of school), I have already been asked 'Ms, have you ever been bitten by a snake?' and 'Ms, are you planning on going skydiving?' For the record, no and no.



## Charlotte Smith (1993)

**Charlotte Smith** is a retired deputy headteacher and is currently both a part-time teacher of History at Stratford Girls' Grammar School and a company director of Industrial Metal Forms Ltd.

'It's like Hotel California,' quipped the Headteacher on 1 September 2020 as I walked back into a school which I thought had seen me say farewell to teaching after 20 years in the job just two years previously. Covid had brought me back when the school had been unable to recruit and the Head had contacted me on the off chance that I might be interested in doing 'a bit of A-level'.

'Teaching by accident' isn't new for me; in fact, that's how I started. I had no idea what I wanted to do while I was at Merton, but the prospect of a year working in Greece seemed appealing, so off I went to teach English as a foreign language. Travel can lead to seduction for many a naïve 21-year-old and, like so many others, I fell in love. It happened in my first week working in a school. I laughed, I cried, I agonised over the right thing to do; it had all the hallmarks of a romantic affair but I had fallen for teaching.

Comprehensive schools were where I began my career and where I took up my first role as an assistant headteacher. At that time, I also learnt far more about social deprivation and poverty than I had ever fully understood before. In that job I collected children who didn't turn up for GCSEs from their home, attempted a conversation with a parent who was incoherently drunk, broke up fights, took a knife off a pupil and tried to understand how in 21st-century Britain I was working with a child who didn't have a bed and slept on cardboard under the kitchen table.

I originally spent 20 years in teaching, 12 of those in senior leadership. I worked in comprehensives, state grammar schools and an independent school, and all settings have their challenges. Being a senior leader in a school is varied and schools divide up responsibilities and roles in different ways to suit their circumstances. The challenge, though, is often in being the person in the middle of different stakeholders who all have the wellbeing and success of the child at heart but can have contradictory perspectives. Parents, classroom teachers, heads of department, outside agencies and of course government all bring pressure to bear on senior leaders in schools and sometimes one party is unaware of or finds it hard to understand the viewpoint of another party. In short, senior leaders in a school are between a rock and hard place.

My work now is very different from the job I left in education a few years ago. I had been a deputy headteacher in two different schools but had left education to help run the small family business of which I am now co-director. The energy, optimism, capacity to learn, determination and warmth of young people moved me as I taught Year 9 one of their first classroom lessons for over a term following the initial 2020 lockdown. They have not had it easy throughout all this but their resilience is astonishing. Covid has brought new opportunities for teaching in terms of technology. Some of the opportunities for collaboration, assessment and communication are definitely for keeps but nothing can replicate the experience of learning in a group with others. That first classroom lesson left me smitten again. The buzz from a group of teenagers who shared ideas, disagreed with one another, asked challenging questions and were just great fun to teach; that was the Hotel California's magic. Covid had led me to return but it is the sheer joy of teaching that will keep me coming back for more.



**View from the Top:  
Dr Chris Murray**

*Chris Murray (1984) is Director of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) and Professor and Chair of Health Metrics Sciences at the University of Washington, Seattle. He is also Visiting Professor at the Nuffield Department of Population Health at the University of Oxford, a member of the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) and was 2018 co-recipient of the John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award.*

*Dr Murray has been heavily involved in Covid-19 forecast modelling, research and commentary over the last 18 months, including the creation of a forecasting model that predicts the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on health systems around the world. In 2020, he was appointed by the Council on Foreign Relations to serve on its Independent Task Force on Improving Pandemic Preparedness.*

*Postmaster spoke to Dr Murray about his time at Merton, his career, Covid-19 and more.*

**Tell me a little about your educational background and what led you to take your DPhil at Merton?**

Well, I did my undergraduate degree at Harvard and then received a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford. I requested Merton as my college and got it – I’m not 100% sure why I asked for it, other than that I had talked to other Rhodes Scholars who spoke highly of Merton, and also it was famous for its food!

The food here is still of a high standard, I’m pleased to say. Leading on from that question, how did Merton – and the University of Oxford in general – compare to Harvard?

It was super interesting to me, because at Harvard students worked very, very long hours – and at Oxford people worked very hard, but had what people now call a work-life balance, or student-life balance, so come 5pm they would stop working. That was great, and the amazing thing was that people seemed no less productive at Oxford, despite a little bit more balance to life – so that was very nice, I thought.

The other aspect of graduate school at Oxford is that there is much more independence – at least compared with PhD programmes in the USA.



Chris Murray in his matriculation photo from 1984

**You are a founder of the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) approach. Can you describe this in layperson’s terms?**

The idea is to take all the data that one can find – either published or from governments, or other sources – and use a standardised way of measurement to measure all the major diseases: what are the consequences of those in terms of death, and in terms of how much time people are sick and disabled? Also to look at how much of the disease burden is related to risk factors.

It started off as a small effort, and then turned into a large global collaboration. We’re now getting about 7,000 collaborators participating in the GBD assessment each year.

**From 1998 to 2003 you served as the Executive Director of the Evidence and Information for Policy Cluster at the World Health Organisation (WHO). What brought you there?**

The Director-General at the time was Gro Harlem Brundtland. She had been a multi-term Prime Minister of Norway and came to WHO at a critical juncture, actually – because if you think about it, many of the efforts that we still have ongoing, like the Global Fund, started when she was Director-General and she was instrumental to those. And her Executive Directors were responsible for the areas of policy analysis and health information.

So it was interesting. I was pretty young at the time for that sort of role, and it was partly because she had read the *Global Burden of Disease* and wanted to bring that sort of thinking to WHO that I got the job.



From 2003 until 2007 you returned to Harvard, as Director of the Harvard Initiative for Global Health and the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, as well as the Richard Saltonstall Professor of Public Policy at the Harvard School of Public Health. What were the highlights of your time there?

There was a tremendous amount of student interest in global health at Harvard during this period – I think recent AIDS activism had captured their attention, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had recently kicked off, and they were becoming aware of challenges in the low-income world. The highlight for me was teaching a general undergraduate course on global health, and that was a large class but super active, super engaged – and it was great to see that degree of interest.

It was also at Harvard that we had the idea of creating the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). Initially, it was going to be at Harvard, funded by Larry Ellison, but then he pulled out. But Bill Gates stepped in, so that was great.

So that led you to Seattle where the IHME was established at the University of Washington in 2007. What led to its creation, what does it do and how has it developed since then?

It's very interesting – even back when I went to WHO in 1998, I remember having discussions with Gro Harlem Brundtland about the need for arm's length reporting and monitoring on health, because of the risk of political intervention getting in the way of reporting what's happening in the world, and the value of that sort of arm's length data.

And then at WHO, we published this analysis of the efficiency – or effectiveness – and performance of all the world's health systems, which was the *World Health Report* 2000. It was famous or infamous, depending on who you talk to, because it created a huge amount of interest, and also a huge amount of political backlash because governments did not want WHO reporting on how well they were doing in terms of health.



Bill Gates and Chris in discussion

I think we still live with some of the consequences of that backlash, mainly because it's very difficult for WHO to take a stand that's politically unpopular with the United States. And we're going through this again with Covid-19 and the debate on whether or not WHO was too slow to act because it didn't want to upset China. I haven't participated in these investigations, but it creates a very real set of limitations for WHO.

So the idea behind the Institute was to have a group of people dedicated to the scientific measurement of what's happening to health – What are the trends? What are the likely future trajectories for health? Where are the opportunities for intervention? – and to make the findings freely available to everybody.

We then persuaded Bill and Melinda Gates that it was worth investing in, and so far it seems to have proven valuable enough for us to keep growing and keep going. I think the experience with Covid-19 has been indicative of that.

By having this sort of capacity, you can pivot quickly to whatever the current threat is.

That leads well onto my next question. You have been very involved in Covid-19 forecast modelling, yours being called 'the Chris Murray Model' in a White House briefing. How does this work?

The reality is we've had, at this point, probably seven generations of our model, because of course everybody was scrambling to model the epidemic when Covid-19 unfolded.

We started off primarily trying to serve a local need – our own hospital system and then other hospital systems in the US – about what would be the surge in hospitals in a relatively short timeframe, such as a six-week window. But very quickly, in April 2020, we found that we were being asked to help inform national policy in the US and then other countries, which required a longer-term modelling framework – and so our model evolved.

The main concept behind the model is that we look for the key predictors of transmission, things like mask-use, mobility, seasonality, the amount of testing – and then a whole series of local factors, and the social distancing mandates that governments put in place. And what we learnt – which was a surprise, because it's not true for other infectious diseases – is that because there's such a government and behavioural response, the challenge in predicting the epidemic became one of predicting human behaviour and government behaviour – not the biology, which was much simpler and straightforward. And that is not something the infectious disease world has had to deal with before, because usually with something like flu or dengue or malaria, for example, people don't modify their behaviour in response to the epidemic or the transmission – but that's the key for Covid-19.

As time went by, we kept improving the model – then vaccination came along, and so in November 2020 we revised our modelling framework to include it. Then the Alpha variant appeared, and so we started taking into account different variants. In January 2021, we learned that some of the other variants coming along – Beta, Gamma, Delta – are 'escape variants', so there's immune escape from past infection, or in fact from vaccination, and so again our modelling has evolved to include this.

It has been a constant trying to keep up with the virus, trying to modify the model to reflect what we know to keep abreast of the virus. I think we have been more right than most models for some simple reasons, such as how we focused on seasonality – which we had in our model for over a year, compared with others – so we predicted the northern hemisphere winter surge when most did not. We model every country, whereas others do not, and on the side of the modelling exercise we have this enormous data analysis exercise, where we look at data on mask-use, vaccine hesitancy, vaccine supply, testing rates, variants, genome sequencing, and so on.

Ultimately, it's not as if there is one model, it is actually all these components that come together to create the final model.

#### **What do you feel is your greatest career achievement?**

It has been setting up and being able to institutionalise the Global Burden of Disease work.

I think there's a very big difference between one-off academic studies, which have their challenges, but at some level you do it, set it aside and you move on to the next thing – this is a normal rhythm of academia – versus creating something that you do constantly, and keep up to date. Creating the institutional architecture, the culture and the tools to achieve this has been the most interesting thing for me.

I often tell people it is much harder to do the same thing multiple times, because it usually turns out that the second time you do it, you uncover all sorts of issues that, chances are, you wish you had known the first time. Unless you go through that process of repeating an analytic effort, you often never come to realise those problems.

The other aspect of what we've done with the Global Burden is to build up the largest collaboration in science – and so that's also been part of why it's particularly satisfying to see the Global Burden of Disease keep going.

#### **Finally, is there anything else you want to talk about – about your time at Merton, career, or anything else – which we've not covered?**

Yes: I think that what was fantastic for me at Merton, which is why it was such a formative part of my career, was the tailoring of the educational experience to the students. In my case, I was interested in global health policy. There wasn't really the right faculty person at Oxford, yet it wasn't a problem – I went off and had my main supervisor be Brian Abel-Smith from the London School of Economics. I'd get the train down once a week to go and see him, and the fact that the University is that flexible and the dons at Merton – and the Warden of Rhodes House – were so supportive just made that amazing experience.

#### **That's really great to hear. Have you managed to come back to visit?**

Yes, I come back periodically. When I visit Oxford I always pop into College and wander around, but I haven't been back to High Table. When I was in the MCR I used to have High Table dining rights, so that was very nice! The Head Chef back then drove a Rolls-Royce down the cobblestone street outside Merton – all part of the Oxford experience!



© Daily Mirror

## Visit of Richard Burton & Elizabeth Taylor

Fifty-five years ago on 1 February 1966, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor came to Merton to discuss a production of Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, in which they appeared without charging a fee. Here they are pictured with Professor Neville Coghill (centre) – Burton appeared in the play to thank Professor Coghill who had, according to the BBC, 'championed Burton's acting talent when the young Welshman had a brief stint studying English at the university's Exeter College'.

Do you remember Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor's visit to College? We would welcome any memories you have to add to reminiscences collected for the College's 750th anniversary in 2014 – please email [development@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@merton.ox.ac.uk) with them.



## Merton Cities: Manchester

Mertonians live all over the world, but in this edition of Postmaster we take a look at a city closer to 'home', so to speak – Manchester in the North East of England. We spoke to **Alannah Jones** (2013), Fundraising and Development Manager at the Pankhurst Trust, for an insider's view of one of the UK's largest cities by population, and one of its most vibrant.

### Where is the best place to eat and drink?

Manchester has a thriving independent food scene. One of my favourite places is The Sparrows, a tiny restaurant underneath the railway arches near Victoria Station. They serve a combination of Eastern European dumplings and spätzle (a kind of pasta) along with Japanese sake. An odd combination, but it really works.

### What is the best way to spend a morning?

You can't beat a leisurely brunch at the Mackie Mayor food hall based in the beautifully restored 19th-century Smithfield Market building.

### ... an afternoon?

Go for a poke around the Aladdin's cave that is Affleck's Palace and the quirky independent shops around the Northern Quarter.

Manchester's Media City  
© James Johnstone: flickr.com/jetjohn

### ... an evening?

Catch a show at one of Manchester's brilliant theatres. The Royal Exchange and the Hope Mill are my favourites.

### What is Manchester's best-kept secret?

Manchester has a plethora of museums and galleries all tucked away. I work at the Pankhurst Centre which is a small museum based in the former home of Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters. The building was scheduled for demolition in the 1970s but a hard-core group of activists came together to save it.

### What is the one place you must visit?

Manchester Art Gallery's world-beating collection of Pre-Raphaelites is a must-see.



Affleck's Palace in the Northern Quarter © Ismael Olea



The Pankhurst Centre, where Alannah works



Alannah with her partner Rory, and Ginger

### What is the best view in Manchester?

The view from the 20 Stories restaurant is absolutely stunning. You can see all the way out to 'the tops' (the moorland between Manchester and Yorkshire) and beyond.

### What do you love most about living in Manchester?

It has basically all the benefits of living in London (culture, food, arts) but everyone is friendlier, and most things are cheaper (and much closer together). Plus there's a real sense of community pride that I haven't encountered anywhere else in the UK.

### How has the pandemic affected Manchester?

Manchester faced some of the harshest lockdown restrictions for the longest time periods in the UK. It hit the city hard and exacerbated all the pre-existing inequalities. Andy Burnham has been great as Mayor in standing up for Manchester, and

it's so heartening to see the city catch its breath and rally as it has done in the last few months.

### During lockdown, what was your favourite thing to do in or around Manchester?

Where we live in the Northern Quarter it's usually buzzing with people, so lockdown brought an eerie quiet to the streets and squares. I spent a lot of time walking along the canals around Ancoats and New Islington, listening to the longest audiobooks I could find to take my mind off things. Getting a puppy (Ginger, a fox-red Labrador) also helped boost our spirits immensely.

# Lost, Little Known and Unbuilt Merton (18)

## The College Gatehouse in c.1820



1



2

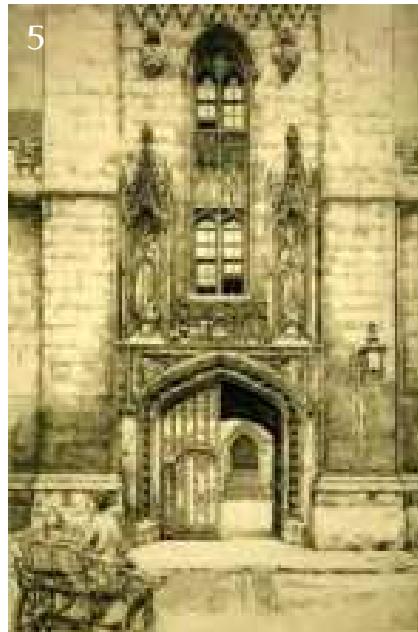


3

Henry V, in 1418, granted the College a 'licence to crenellate' its entrance Gateway (Plate 1). This was a normal requirement for the construction of a battlemented tower. To many since, for the last seven centuries – including Anthony Wood and Professor HW Garrod – this marked the date of the building. However, with the guidance of Dr Roger Highfield, my tutor, we discovered in the College archives the actual building accounts for the Gatehouse kept, by Thomas Bloxham, later Warden. This placed the construction of the Gatehouse firmly to 1464-5.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the elaborate heraldic carvings in the vault within probably mark the coming together of the Houses of York and Lancaster during the Wars of the Roses. Outside, on the façade, the patrons of the College, the Holy Trinity and St John the Baptist as well as the Founder, were celebrated. Below, the coats of arms of the donors, Henry Sever, Warden, and John Chedworth, Fellow and Bishop of Lincoln, were recorded on the corbels of the entrance. In the centre of the façade is an elaborate stone-sculptured tableau displaying St John the Baptist and Walter de Merton. The Founder is depicted kneeling in front of a background of mysteries, symbolically summarising the major doctrines of the New Testament.

The earliest illustration of the Gatehouse is in the monument to Sir Henry Savile, 1621 (Plate 2). Subsequently it was to undergo several changes, including the loss of some of the sculpture at the top (the Trinity) and some re-fenestration (Plate 3). Fortunately, during the Civil War, Richard Symonds, a cavalry officer stationed in Oxford in 1633-4, noted that the royal figure was captioned 'E primus under him', not, as sometimes imagined, for Henry III. Indeed, either would have been appropriate, for Walter de Merton, the other figure on the façade, was Chancellor for both kings and had contemplated the terms of his foundation during both reigns. There have been several drawings of the Gatehouse before its complete reconstruction in the 19th century. AC Pugin drew the whole piece and also details for incorporation in his *Specimens of Gothic Architecture*, 1824 (Plate 4).

In 1838, however, the College resolved that, under the plans of Edward Blore, 'Mr Plowman be directed to refront with Bath Stone the tower and gateway towards the street'. In accord with the imagined taste of the period, this was done



- Plate 1. Plate 1. Gatehouse Tower, for which Henry V granted a licence in 1418.
- Plate 2. Gatehouse of 1464-5. Monument to Sir Henry Savile, 1621, detail.
- Plate 3. North front of the College, Almanack, 1772.
- Plate 4. Details of statue of Edward I and AC Pugin's drawing, as printed in *Specimens of Gothic Architecture*, 1822, p II, Plate xxxix.
- Plate 5. The Gatehouse of 1838, ML Menpes, c.1800.
- Plate 6. The Gatehouse, Charles Wild, c.1820

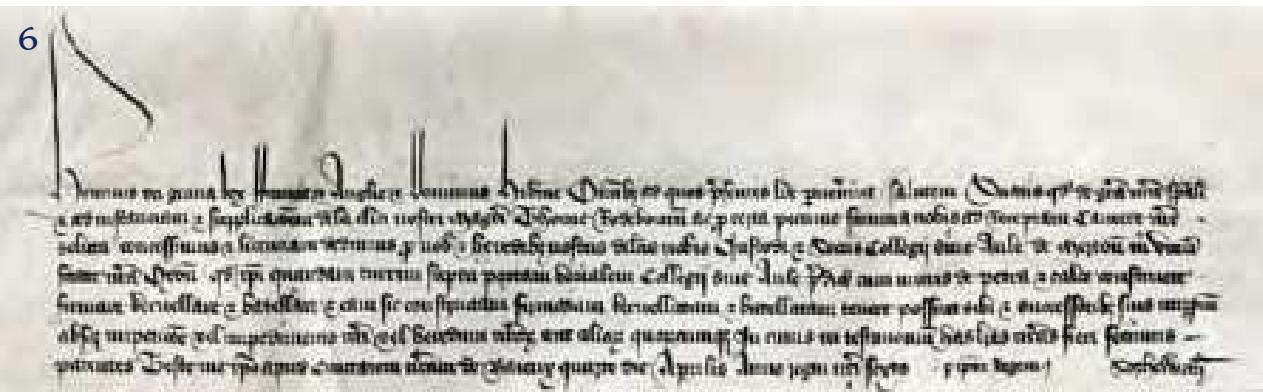
in Decorated Gothic (14th century) style rather than the more appropriate Perpendicular (later 15th century) style. This is especially the case in the style of the canopies above the figures (Plate 5). Blore brought what Anthony Wood described as 'The History of St John the Baptist' down to the lintel of the Gatehouse, where it remains.

I have recently acquired a pencil and wash drawing of the Gatehouse in c.1820 (Plate 6).<sup>2</sup> It is by Charles Wild (1781-1835). The drawing is particularly interesting as it shows, in

detail, the carving of the figures of Edward I and Walter de Merton of 1464-5, before their replacement in 1838.

The drawing will come to Merton in due course, together with my collection of some 150 prints and drawings of the College – but not yet!

**Alan Bott (1953)**  
*Bodley Fellow*



# Records

## Merton College 2020-21

### The Visitor

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

### Warden

Irene Tracey, MA, DPhil, FRCA, FMedSci

### Fellows

Steven John Gunn, MA, DPhil, FRHistS *Professor of Early Modern History & Tutor in History*

Ulrike Luise Tillmann, MA, (BA Brandeis, PhD Stanford, Habil Bonn) FRS, FIMA, FAMS, Mem Leopoldina *Professor of Mathematics*

Richard Anthony McCabe, MA, (MA Dublin; MA, PhD Camb), FBA *Professor of English Language & Literature & Tutor in English*  
Chih-Hao Luke Ong, MA, (MA Camb; PhD Lond) *Professor of Computer Science & Tutor in Computer Science*

David James Paterson, MA, DPhil, (MSc, DSc Western Australia), FRSB, FPhysiol, Hon FRSNZ *Professor of Cardiovascular Physiology & Tutor in Pre-Clinical Medicine*

Mindy Chen-Wishart, MA, (BA (Hons), LLB, LLM, Otago) *Professor of the Law of Contract & Tutor in Law*

Timothy Charles Guilford, MA, DPhil *Professor of Animal Behaviour & Tutor in Zoology, Garden Master*

Véronique Gouverneur, MA, (Licence en Sciences Chimiques, PhD Louvain), FRS *Professor of Chemistry & Tutor in Organic Chemistry*

Jennifer Payne, MA, (MA Camb) *Professor of Corporate Finance Law & Tutor in Law*

Artur Konrad Ekert, MA, DPhil, (MSc Cracow) *FRS Professor of Physics*

Alan David Morrison, MA, DPhil, (MSc Lond) *Professor of Law & Finance*

John Stuart Gjers Gloag, MA, MRICS *Land Agent & Estates Bursar*

Julia Caroline Walworth, MA (BA Swarthmore; MA, PhD Yale) FSA *Librarian, Secretary to the Harmsworth Trust*

The Revd Canon Simon Matthew Jones, MA, DPhil, (BA, MA Durh; PhD Camb) *Chaplain*

Peter William Harold Holland, MA, (PhD Lond; DSc Rdg) FRS *Linacre Professor of Zoology*

Kathryn Lee Blackmon, MA, (BS Clemson; MBA, PhD North Carolina) *Associate Professor of Operations Management & Tutor in Management Studies, Sub-Warden*

Simon Martin Hooker, MA, DPhil *Professor of Atomic & Laser Physics & Tutor in Physics*

Irene Stavros Lemos, MA, DPhil, FSA *Professor of Classical Archaeology, Dean of Graduates*

Alexander David Scott, (BA, PhD Camb) *Professor of Mathematics & Dominic Welsh Fellow, Tutor in Mathematics*

Jonathan Ralph Warburg Prag, MA, (PhD Lond) *Professor of Ancient History & Tutor in Ancient History*

Michael Hilton Whitworth, MA, DPhil, *Professor of English Literature & Culture & Tutor in English*

Ian MacLachlan, MA, DPhil *Professor of French Literature & Tutor in French*

Béla Novák, MA, (MSc, PhD, Dr Habil, TU Budapest; CSc DSc Hungarian Academy of Science) *Professor of Integrative Systems Biology*

Alan James Barr, MA, DPhil, (BA, MSci, PhD Camb) *Professor of Particle Physics & Tutor in Physics*

Rhiannon Ash, MA, DPhil, (MA Toronto) *Professor of Roman Historiography & Tutor in Classics*

Patricia Thornton, (BA Swarthmore; MA Washington; PhD Berkeley) *Associate Professor of Chinese Politics & Tutor in Politics, Equality Adviser*

Matthew Grimley, MA, DPhil *Associate Professor of Modern History, Mark Reynolds Fellow & Tutor in History*

Alexander Schekochihin, MA, (BSci MIPT; MA, PhD Princeton) *Professor of Theoretical Physics, & Tutor in Physics, Steward of Common Room, Peter J Braam Secretary of the Harmsworth Trust*

Daniel Grimley, MA, DPhil, (BA, MPhil, PhD Camb) *Professor of Music & Tutor in Music*

Sir Andrew Wiles, MA, DSc, (PhD Camb) *FRS Royal Society Research Professor of Mathematics*

Charles Alan Heathcote Alexander, BA, (MBA Harvard) *Finance Bursar, Wine Steward*

Andrew Mackie, MA *Professorial Fellow, Director of Legal Services & General Counsel, University of Oxford*

Simon Saunders, BA, MA, (MMath Camb; PhD Lond) *Professor of the Philosophy of Science & Tutor in Philosophy*

Julian Charles Knight, MA, MBChB, DPhil, FRCP, *Professor of Genomic Medicine & Tutor in Medicine*

Bassel Tarbush, MPhil, DPhil *Tutor in Economics*

Radek Erban, MA, (Mgr RNDr Prague, PhD Minnesota) *Professor of Mathematics & Tutor in Mathematics, Senior Treasurer of the JCR*

John Samuel Christopher Eidinow, MA, (Dip Law City Univ; Barrister Middle Temple) *Dean & Keeper of the Statutes*

Hugh Watkins, MD, PhD, FRP, FMedSci, FRS *Radcliffe Professor of Medicine*

Timothy John Lightfoot, MA, (BSc Hons Brunel) *Domestic Bursar*

Lorna Hutson, MA, DPhil, FBA *Merton Professor of English Literature*

Ehud Hrushovski, (BA, PhD Berkeley) FRS *Merton Professor of Mathematical Logic*

Matthew Kenneth Higgins, (BA (Hons), PhD Camb) *Associate Professor of Biochemistry Microorganisms & Tutor in Biochemistry, Principal of the Postmasters*

Matthew Thomson, BA, MSt, DPhil *Fitzjames Research Fellow in Music*

Madhavi Krishnan, (BTech Madras; MS, PhD Michigan) *Associate Professor in Physical & Theoretical Chemistry, Tutor in Chemistry*

Helen Small, MA, (BA Hons Wellington; PhD Camb) *Merton Professor of English Language & Literature, Research Convener*

Alice Brooke, MSt, DPhil, (BA Camb) *Associate Professor in Spanish Golden Age Literature & Tutor in Spanish*

Elizabeth Stubbins Bates, BA, (LLM Harvard) *Junior Research Fellow in Law*

Lisandra Costiner, MSt, (BA Harvard) *Junior Research Fellow in the History of Art*

David Lukas Benjamin Brantner, (MA, MMath Camb; PhD Harvard) *Junior Research Fellow in Mathematics*

Daniel Sawyer, MSt, DPhil, (BA Lond) *Fitzjames Research Fellow in Medieval English Literature*

Elias Nosrati, (BSc Bath; MPhil, PhD Camb) *Peter J Braam Junior Research Fellow in Global Wellbeing*

Jennifer Altehenger, (BA, MA Camb; PhD Heidleberg) *Associate Professor of Chinese History, Jessica Rawson Fellow in Modern Asian History and Tutor in History*

Marc Roth, (BSc, PhD Saarland) *Junior Research Fellow in Computer Science*

Frances Susan Dunn, (BSc Warwick; PhD Bristol) *Junior Research Fellow in Geology*

Thomas Richards, MSc, DPhil, (BSc Lond) *Professor of Evolutionary Genomics & Tutor in Zoology*

Jane Gover, (BSc Newc; PhD Bris) *Senior Tutor*

Nathaniel Lane, (BA Mass, MA Columbia) *Associate Professor in Economics & Tutor in Economics*

Henry Spelman, DPhil, MSt, (BA North Carolina) *Fitzjames Research Fellow in Ancient Greek*

Alice Gwen Nora Burnyeat, (BA Leeds; MPhil Camb; MPhil Bogota; PhD UCL) *Junior Research Fellow in Anthropology*

Emily Margaret Rutherford, MPhil (BA Princeton, MA MPhil PhD Columbia) *Junior Research Fellow in History*

Xiangyu Jie, DPhil (BSc Beijing) *Junior Research Fellow in Chemistry*

Nicholas Aidan Thomas Irwin, (BSc Hon, BColumbia) *Junior Research Fellow in Biology*

Mark Coote, MA (BA (Hons) Nott; MA Lond) *Development Director*

### The following Fellows resigned

Sebastian Alonso Vasquez Lopez, MSc, (BSc (Hons) Newcastle) *Junior Research Fellow in Neuroscience*

Collis Tahzib, BA, BPhil *Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy*

## Emeritus Fellows

Courtenay Stanley Goss Phillips, MA, DSc

Robert Basil Champneys Hodgson, MA

Michael Simpson Dunnill, MA, (MD Bris), FRCP, FRCPath

David Charles Witt, MA

Christopher John Hamilton Watson, MA, DPhil

John Carey, MA, DPhil, FBA, FRS

The Revd Mark Everitt, MA

Sir Gyorgy Karoly Radda, CBE, MA, DPhil, FRS

Dame Olwen Hufton, DBE, MA, (BA, MA Harvard; PhD Lond), DLitt, FRHistS, FBA

Nicholas James Richardson, BPhil, MA, DPhil, FSA

James Anthony Dominic Welsh, MA, DPhil

Michael George Bowler, MA, (BSc, PhD Bris)

Henry Shue, (AB Davidson College; MA, PhD Princeton)

Vijay Ramchandra Joshi, MA

Philip John Waller, MA

Paul Francis John Chamberlain, MA, (BA, MD Dublin), FRCS(C), FACOG

Guy Manning Goodwin, BM, BCh, MA, DPhil, FRCPsych, FMedSci

David Gordon Ellis Norbrook, MA, DPhil, (MA Aberd)

Simon Wren-Lewis, (MA Camb; MSc Lond)

Robert Nigel Gildea, MA, DPhil, FRHistS, FBA

Boris Zilber, MA, (MSc, CandSc Novosibirsk; DSc Leningrad)

Douglas John Bamber, MA, MIH

Jane Christine Holmes Taylor, MA, (BA Hons Bris)

James Jeffrey Binney, MA, DPhil, (MA Camb), FRS

Timothy Softley, MA, (PhD S'ton), FRS

Judith Patricia Armitage, MA, (BSc, PhD Lond) FRS

Gail Fine, MA, (BA Michigan; MA, PhD Harvard)

## Honorary Fellows

Sir John Boardman, MA, (MA Camb), FBA, Hon RA, FSA

Sir Christopher John Ball, MA, Hon DLitt, (CNAA)

HIM Emperor Naruhito of Japan, Hon DCL

Sir Alec John Jeffreys, MA, DPhil, (DUniv Open), FRC Path, FLS, FRS

Vassos Karageorghis, DLitt (PhD Lond) FSA, FBA

The Rt Hon Sir Jack Beatson, DCL, (LLD Camb), FBA

Richard Charles Levin, LittB, Hon DCL, (BA Stanford; PhD Yale)

William Peter Cooke, CBE, MA

David Robert Holmes, BA Hons, MA, Hon DCL

Robert Owen Paxton, MA, (PhD Harvard)

Sir Howard Stringer, MA

David Francis Kerr Finlay, OBE, CFA, CMG

Jonathan Alan Hodgkin, MA, (MA, PhD Camb), FRS

The Rt Hon Sir Brian Henry Leveson, MA, (LLD Liv)

Sir Howard John Davies, MA, (MS Stanford)

Sir Charles Antony Richard Hoare, MA, FRS

Sir Anthony James Leggett, MA, DPhil, FRS

Sir Richard Hughes Trainor, MA, DPhil, FRHistS

The Rt Revd Nicholas Thomas Wright, MA, DPhil, DD

Sir Robert Andrew, MA, FRSA

Sir Jeremy Isaacs, MA, FRSA

Sir Ian Kershaw, DPhil, Hon DLitt, FRHistS, FBA

Martin Peter Read, CBE, DPhil

Mark John Thompson, BA, FRTS, FRSA

Adam John Hart-Davis, BA, (DPhil York), FRSA

Sir Callum McCarthy, BA, (PhD Stir; MS Stanford)

Sir Guy Howard Weston, BA

Peter Warry, MA, (LLB Lond; PhD Rdg), FREng, FSA

Martha Piper, (BSc Michigan; MA Connecticut; PhD McGill), DSc (Hons), LLD (Hons)

Timothy Dewe Phillips, CBE, MA, (AMP Harvard)

Julian Blackwell

Anastasios Leventis, CBE, OFR

Dame Jessica Mary Rawson, DBE, MA, DLitt, (MA, LittD, Camb), FBA

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, QPM

Lyndal Roper, (PhD Lond), FBA

Dana Scott, (PhD Princeton), FBA

Lord Williams of Oystermouth, PC, FBA, FRSL, FLSW

Erich Gruen, (BA Columbia; PhD Harvard)

The Rt Hon Dame Philippa Whipple, MA, DBE

Sir Gerry Grimstone, MA, MSc

Martin Ney, MA

Lady Hollick, OBE

Sir Martin Taylor, MA, (PhD Lond), FRS

Dinah Birch, CBE, BA, MA, DPhil, FEA

Alison Blake, CMG

The Hon Mrs Justice Kelyn Bacon, QC, DBE

The Most Revd Michael Lewis, BA, MA

The Hon Mr Justice Andrew Baker, BA, (MA Lond)

## Bodley Fellows

Richard Bellerby Allan, MA, FCA

Alan John Bott, OBE, MA, FSA

Robert Gould McKelvey, MA, (BA Wesleyan)

David Harvey, MA, DPhil

Reed Rubin, BA

Robert McLaren, MB, ChB, DPhil, DipLATHE, FRCOphth, FRCS, FMedSci

Adrian Vickers, MA

Peter Phillips

Christopher Ramsey, MA, DPhil

David Ure, MA

Benjamin Nicholas, MA

Nick Allard MA, (JD Yale)

Catherine Paxton MA, DPhil

## Sir Henry Savile Fellow

Eleanor-Jane Milner-Gulland, MA, BA (PhD ICL)

## Supernumerary Fellows

Andrew John King, MA Status, (BSc, PhD Lond), FMedSci, FPhysiol, FRS

Francis Platt, MA Status, (BSc Lond; PhD Bath), FMedSci, FRS

Simon Draper, MBioch, DPhil

Michael Keith, BA, DPhil

Sunetra Gupta, MA, (AB Princeton; PhD Lond)

Anant Parekh, MA, DPhil, FMedSci, FRS

Hilary Greaves, MA, (PhD Rutgers)

Andrea Cavalleri, (Laurea, PhD Pavia)

Nicole Zitzmann, MA, (MSc, PhD Dundee), FSB

Susannah Katherine Orkin, MA, MPhil, DPhil, (BSocSc Cape Town)

Helen Barron, (MA Camb)

Michael Booth, (MChem S'ton; PhD Camb)

Craig MacLean, MA, (BSc, PhD McGill)

## Wylot Fellows

Charles Manby, MA, (MBA Insead)

John Booth, MA

Peter Braam, MA, DPhil, (BSc, MSc Utrecht)

John Moussouri, MSc, DPhil, (AB Harvard)

## Visiting Research Fellows

Will Eaves, Michaelmas term 2020 (Creative Arts, Writing)

Michael Lucey, Hilary term 2021

Cheryl Frances-Hoad, January to December 2021 (Creative Arts, Music)

## Elections

*To Junior Research Fellowships with effect from 1 October 2021*

Ms Helen Rachel Craske, BA, MSt

Dr Chloe Deambrogio, MA DPhil (BA, MPhil Florence)

Dr Hadleigh Frost, MMathPhys, DPhil (BSc Cant)

Dr Lukas Krone, MSc MD (deferred to 1 October 2022)

*To a Peter J Braam Junior Research Fellowship in Global Wellbeing with effect from 1 October 2021*

Mr Vatsal Khandelwal, MSc (BA Mumbai)

*To a Tutorial Fellowship in Mathematics with effect from 1 September 2021*

Dr James Newton, (BA Camb; PhD ICL)

*To a Professorial Fellowship as the WH Handley Professor of Psychiatry with effect from 1 November 2021*

Professor John Richard Geddes, (MB, ChB, MD Leeds) FRCPsych

## Fellows' Honours and Appointments

Dr Lukas Brantner was awarded a Royal Society University Research Fellowship.

Dr Gwen Burnyeat was a co-recipient of the 2021 Latin American Studies Association/Oxfam America Martin Diskin Dissertation Award.

Professor Simon Draper was appointed to the Board of Scientific Counsellors for the Vaccine Research Centre at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institute of Health, USA.

Professor Radek Erban was a recipient of the 2020 Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council's New Horizons award. He was an external member of the University of Edinburgh's Internal Periodic Review of Mathematics panel in 2020-21.

Professor Robert Gildea was awarded a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship for 2020-22 for a project on 'Class, community and family: the 1984-1985 miners' strike in history and memory'.

Professor Véronique Gouverneur received a 2021 Adolf Lieben Lectureship, Austria; a 2021 Organic Reactions Lectureship at the University of Alberta, Canada; and a 2020 Frontiers in Chemistry Distinguished Lectureship at the Scripps Research Institute, USA. In 2020 she became a member of the organising committee of the 27th Royal Society of Chemistry Oxford and Cambridge Synthesis Meeting to be held in 2023.

Professor Steven Gunn was appointed by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as Research/Academic Trustee of the Royal Armouries.

Professor Sunetra Gupta was appointed Visiting Research Professor of the Center for Research and Development in Immunobiology, Laboratório e Biofármacos,

Instituto Butantan, São Paulo, Brazil.

Professor Matt Higgins was awarded the 2021 CA Wright Medal of the British Society for Parasitology.

The Revd Canon Dr Simon Jones became a member of the Fabric Advisory Committee, York Minster.

Dr Kate Orkin was appointed to a permanent faculty position at the Blavatnik School of Government from September 2021.

Professor David Paterson was elected a member of Academia Europaea in 2021. He is President of the Physiological Society 2020-22 and a core member of the Advisory Panel of the UKRI-BBSRC (UK Research and Innovation Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council) Bioscience for an Integrated Understanding of Health Strategy 2020-22.

Professor Jennifer Payne was appointed to the Expert Advisory Groups for the Law Commission on Intermediated Securities and on Digital Assets. She was appointed as a member of the Oxford University Press Board of Delegates in 2020.

Mr Peter Phillips was elected as an Honorary Fellow of St John's College, Oxford.

Professor Frances Platt was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society in May 2021.

Professor Jonathan Prag received a European Research Council Advanced Grant for the project 'Crossreads: text, materiality and multiculturalism at the crossroads of the ancient Mediterranean'.

Dr Sebastian Vásquez-López was the winner of the Win-A-Lab 2020 competition for his design of an immersive linear algebra lesson taught in virtual reality.

Mr Guy Weston was knighted in the New Year Honours for services to philanthropy and to charity.

# New Students 2020

## Undergraduates

### Biochemistry

Ms E Jones, Ms C Kummerer, Ms M Kyei, Mr T Western

### Biology

Ms A Ahlberg, Mr M Flegg, Mr P Giridhar, Ms C Longley, Ms S Nadeem

### Chemistry

Ms S Borghi, Mr E Day, Ms E Garrigan Mattar, Mr J Graf Haller Von Hallerstein, Mr J Pickering

### Classics and Modern Languages

Ms K Rezakhhanlou

### Classics

Ms F Flynn, Ms J Nedelkoska, Mr M O'Connor, Mr A Smith, Mr P Walker

### Economics and Management

Ms X Birkinshaw, Mr E Fage, Ms R Liu

### English

Mr G Adams, Ms S Barrows, Ms A Boshier, Mr B Crossley, Ms H Goodwin, Ms A Stephen, Ms R Tait

### English and Modern Languages

Ms N Simukulwa

### History

Ms D Aitchison, Ms S Chamberlain, Mr G Crosfield, Mr B Hughes, Mr C Kunchur, Ms A Leonard, Ms V Moon, Ms E Owen, Ms J Shaw, Mr M Zajac

### History and English

Ms B Ganjvar, Ms E Stevens

### History and Modern Languages

Ms D Foghish, Ms N Nunes, Ms H Plater

### History and Politics

Mr J Martin, Ms I Walsh, Mr K Wetherick

### Law (Jurisprudence)

Ms E Akojie, Mr C Cremer, Ms E Fleeman, Mr M Kelly, Mr S Mazhar, Ms S Prakash

### Law with European Law

Ms I Howarth

### Mathematics

Ms I Borchers Arias, Ms A Gambles, Mr J Nohel, Mr J Oakland, Mr W Towler

### Mathematics and Computer Science

Mr T Loader

### Mathematics and Philosophy

Mr O Chan, Mr A Gupta, Mr R Iacob

### Medicine

Ms R Blackhurst, Ms E Clarke, Ms M Gee Olmedilla, Mr M Gunther, Mr H Smith

### Modern Languages

Ms L Butcher, Ms I Dobson, Ms K Javorcekova, Ms E McGrory, Ms E Thwaites

### Music

Mr J Kenney, Ms C Moorsom, Ms K Thickett

### Philosophy, Politics and Economics

Ms R Buckland, Mr A Gattegno, Mr N Gupta, Ms J Hancock, Mr S Mandal, Mr D Nelson, Mr M Risher, Ms N Thu

### Physics

Mr T Iosif, Mr L Kemp, Mr N Maslov, Mr S Moore, Mr C Mosquera, Mr M Vasile, Ms A Wierzchucka

### Visiting Student (French and History)

Ms P Verger

## Graduates

In the following, *Merton* signifies Merton College, Oxford

### 2nd BM

Miss C I Fields, *Merton*, Miss K S Gadsby, *Merton*, Mr V Himic, *Merton*, Ms I Rayment-Gomez, *Brasenose College, Oxford*, Miss M L Tamblyn, *Merton*

### BCL

Miss R K Bhatt, *Merton*, Mr B Dziubinski, *University of Technology, Sydney*, Mr J L L Fee, *Hong Kong*, Miss T I Janssen, *Merton*

### BPhil

Mr K S Bakshi, *Ashoka*

### DPhil

Miss G Acton, *Merton*, Mr A Arora, *Lady Margaret Hall/St Cross College, Oxford*, Mr R K K Cheah, *Mansfield College/St Antony's College, Oxford*, Mr J G Classen-Howes, *McGill*, Ms E Cullinane, *Paris-Sorbonne*, Miss K R Davies, *Southampton*, Miss F Devoto, *Genova*, Miss A Falezza, *Durham/Queen's College, Oxford*, Mr B Feddersen, *Leibniz/Hanover Medical School*, Mr D Frey, *Munich*, Mr M L Goh, *Australian National*, Mr E Gutiérrez, *Francisco Marroquín (UFM)/St Catherine's College, Oxford*, Mr J Hammond, *St Andrews*, Mr D Hand, *Oriel College, Oxford/Clare College, Cambridge*, Mr M R E Hepplewhite, *Peterhouse College, Cambridge/Merton*, Mr J Jovanovic, *Trinity College, Cambridge*, Mr P Kravljancic, *Belgrade*, Mr J J J Lau, *NUS/Wadham College, Oxford*, Mr M Li, *Wuhan/ETH*, Dr P D L MacLean, *Monash*, Mr M J McCarthy, *Sydney/St Cross College, Oxford*, Miss

K E McClinton, *Texas at Austin/Indiana*, Mr S Ortalli, *Queen Mary, London*, Mr C Patel, *Imperial College*, Dr S Pokharel, *Tribhuvan/Wolfson College*, Mr E Powierski, *Hamburg*, Mr J H Robertson, *Merton*, Miss J Stadlmann, *Merton*, Miss V J Strachan, *Edinburgh/St Hugh's College, Oxford*, Mr J A S Sunderland, *SOAS*, Mr H Takahashi, *Tokyo*, Mr A M Tanaka, *Queens' College, Cambridge*, Mr M T Thorne, *Merton*, Miss H P N Tran, *Brown/MIT*, Ms S Trinczek, *Ulm/Merton*, Mr C Vagge, *Maastricht/UC, Dublin*, Miss H Zhang, *UC, Berkeley/Merton*

### EMBA

Miss R J Hopkins, *Somerville College, Oxford/Royal Holloway, London*, Mr R Sgalardi, *Princeton*

### MBA

Mr D Carvallo, *Georgia Institute of Technology*, Ms M Cheng, *Waseda*, Miss S Mpanga, *Cape Town/Merton*

### MPhil

Ms E T Buckland, *Cape Town*, Miss M G Clifford, *Bond/Merton*, Mr J J Hua, *Durham*, Miss A Peled, *Stanford*, Mr F M Roussos, *Crete*, Mr F S Tokarski, *Merton*, Mx S Vera-Cruz, *Oriel College, Oxford*

### MSc

Mr R Boudet, *McGill*, Mr T J S Bryant, *Loughborough*, Mr J Dede Lopez, *King's College, London*, Mr M F P Jackermeier, *Technische Universität München*, Miss S C Kraiczy, *Glasgow*, Miss J Lada, *St John's College, Cambridge*, Dr M J Lennon, *New South Wales*, Mr S C Liebana Garcia,

*Girton College, Cambridge*, Mr M Lutz, *Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München*, Professor C A Matz, *Irwin S Chanin School of Architecture/St Hugh's College, Oxford*, Mr D A Nascimento, *Leonard Stern School of Business*, Mr L Riedel, *Heidelberg*, Miss K S Sarguroh, *Strathclyde*, Miss I Yeom, *University College, London/London School of Economics*, Ms X Yu, *Cape Town*, Mr L-M Zhang, *Waterloo*

### MSc

Mr S H Dows-Miller, *Merton*, Miss H I Han, *University College, London*, Mr C A Perry, *Durham*, Mr J M Phillips, *Merton*, Mr P Scheffer, *King's College, London*, Miss R L Snell, *Warwick*, Mr W J Wolf, *Notre Dame, USA/Chicago*

### Visiting Students

Mr L L Dabadie, *École Normale Supérieure*





# Undergraduate Leavers 2021

## Biochemistry

Mr D Adlard, Ms A McQueen, Ms E Tasker

## Biological Sciences

Mr P Lewin

## Classics and Modern Languages

Ms A Coleman

## Chemistry

Mr E Alisauskas, Ms K Fielding, Mr P Namnouad, Mr F Nightingale

## Classics (Literae Humaniores)

Ms S Bennett, Ms R Miller, Ms E Pope, Mr R Taylor, Mr R Willett

## Economics and Management

Mr O Bowling, Ms O Disun-Odebode, Ms L Neill, Mr E Spiers, Mr M Stepanik

## English

Ms C Bronzoni, Ms A Hearn, Ms C Kilpatrick, Ms A Mullock, Ms M Whitlock

## English and Modern Languages

Ms E Coomber

## History

Ms M Archer-Zeff, Ms G Clark, Ms V Desselberger, Ms I Farooqui, Ms J Hinks, Mr J Hyland Deeson, Mr J Morrison, Mr O Shaw, Ms O Tan

## History and English

Ms L Fletcher, Mr A Linn, Mr F Munro

## History and Politics

Mr J Judd, Mr D Ostrowski, Mr D Storey

## Law (Jurisprudence)

Mr F Amodeo, Ms L Berger, Mr J Horrobin, Mr S Iyer, Mr C Lippert, Mr R Moore, Ms P Stojnic

## Mathematics (4)

Ms A Manning, Mr M Ortiz Ramirez, Mr W Whitehouse

## Mathematics and Computer Science (4)

Ms M Craciun

## Mathematics and Statistics (4)

Ms X Ouyang, Mr R Yao

## Mathematical and Theoretical Physics (4)

Mr R Chatterjee, Mr O Maatta, Mr R Mahmud, Mr R McDonald

## Medical Sciences

Ms J Jindal, Ms K Malhi, Ms C Portwood, Ms L Renals, Mr K Song

## Modern Languages (4)

Mr F Cheatle, Mr B Gowers, Ms E Haughton, Ms B McCullagh

## Music

Ms A Smith

## PPE

Mr M Baccaglini, Mr N Bailey, Mr J Handley, Mr A Jest, Mr A McGinley, Ms J Searle, Mr S Van Teutem, Ms T Wibault

## Physics (3)

Mr A Pett

## Physics (4)

Ms Z Dai

# Undergraduate Results, Awards and Prizes 2020-21

All academic results, awards and prizes are correct as of 30 September 2021.

	Entry	1st	2.1	2.2	3rd	Pass
Final Honours School	78	46	30	2	0	0

	Entry	Distinction/1st	Pass/2nd	Partial Pass/Fail
First Public Exam*	94	43	47	3

\*One result is still unpublished

## Awards and Promotions

*Awards renewed at the beginning of the academic year*

### Exhibitioner for a third year

Mr R Chatterjee (Physics)  
Mr F Cheatle (Modern Languages)  
Ms A Coleman (Classics and Modern Languages)

### Exhibitioner for a second year

Mr C Aberle (Computer Science and Philosophy)  
Ms M Archer-Zeff (History)  
Mr B Botlik (Chemistry)  
Ms E Coomber (English and Modern Languages)  
Mr L Embley (Chemistry)

Ms I Farooqui (History)  
Ms I Hawkins (Biological Sciences)  
Mr J Hyland Deeson (History)

Mr A Jest (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)  
Mr F Munro (History and English)  
Ms L Renals (Medicine)  
Ms E Ressel (English)  
Ms R Smithson (Modern Languages and Linguistics)  
Mr K Song (Medicine)  
Mr S Van Teutem (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)  
Ms B Watkins (Chemistry)  
Ms T Wibault (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)

**Postmaster for a third year**  
Mr B Gowers (Modern Languages)  
Ms B McCullagh (Modern Languages)

### Postmaster for a second year

Mr E Alisauskas (Chemistry)  
Ms Z Dai (Physics)  
Mr F Felfoldi (Biochemistry)  
Ms I Goodridge (Biochemistry)  
Mr R McDonald (Physics)  
Ms R Miller (Classics)  
Mr P Namnouad (Chemistry)  
Mr F Nightingale (Chemistry)  
Mr M Ortiz Ramirez (Mathematics)  
Ms W Rolls (Biochemistry)  
Mr W Whitehouse (Mathematics)

## Promotions approved during the year

### To Postmaster

Mr N Bailey (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)  
 Ms A Beukers (English)  
 Ms L Buxton (Classics and Modern Languages)  
 Ms G Clark (History)  
 Mr M Doica (Mathematics and Computer Science)  
 Mr J Durston (Mathematics)  
 Ms K Fielding (Chemistry)  
 Ms L Fletcher (History and English)  
 Mr R Grabarczyk (Physics)  
 Ms R Herring (History and Modern Languages)  
 Mr C Kirk (Biological Sciences)  
 Mr P Lewin (Biological Sciences)  
 Mr O Maata (Physics)  
 Mr R Marlasca Aparicio (Mathematics)  
 Mr N Mitchell (Physics)  
 Mr J Morrison (History)  
 Ms A Mullock (English)  
 Ms I Sanders (Modern Languages)  
 Ms J Searle (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)  
 Mr O Shaw (History)  
 Mr J Siuta (Physics)  
 Mr M Stepanik (Economics and Management)  
 Mr M Szakaly (Physics)  
 Mr R Vickers (Physics)  
 Ms E Webber (Modern Languages)  
 Ms M Whitlock (English)  
 Mr G Wolfe (Mathematics and Computer Science)  
 Mr L Wolff (Physics and Philosophy)  
 Mr R Yao (Mathematics)

### To Exhibitioner

Mr Z Angell (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)  
 Mr L Bateman (History)  
 Ms S Bennett (Classics)  
 Ms E Bogert (Medicine)  
 Ms H Bond (Modern Languages)  
 Mr L Cameron (English)  
 Mr T Chatbipho (Chemistry)  
 Mr A Christie (Physics)  
 Mr J Cochrane (Music)  
 Ms E Cope (History)  
 Ms M Craciun (Mathematics and Computer Science)  
 Ms I Cree (Modern Languages)  
 Mr D Crisan (Mathematics)  
 Mr Y Deesomlert (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)  
 Ms E Down (History)  
 Mr A Eftime (Physics)  
 Ms M Evans (Physics)  
 Ms A Eyres (Modern Languages)  
 Ms M Flugler (Law)  
 Mr A Gan (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)  
 Ms V Giaimi (Modern Languages and Linguistics)  
 Mr J Handley (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)  
 Mr I Hawcock (History)  
 Ms E Hudson (English)  
 Mr W Isotta (Physics)  
 Ms O Jenkins (CAAH)  
 Mr E Kelly (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)  
 Mr J Litarowicz (Physics)  
 Mr R Madan (Physics)  
 Mr R Mahmud (Mathematical and Theoretical Physics)  
 Mr J Malone (Biology)  
 Ms A Manning (Mathematics)  
 Mr G Matthews (Physics)

Mr A McGinley (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)

Mr S Mehta (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)

Ms L Neill (Economics and Management)

Ms J Neves Teixeira (History and Politics)

Mr H Ng (Law)

Ms T Ng (Chemistry)

Mr D Ostrowski (History and Politics)

Ms X Ouyang (Mathematics and Statistics)

Ms S Owusu-Addo (Chemistry)

Ms T Ralph (History)

Mr H Roberts (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)

Mr B Roose (Music)

Ms H Sirringhaus (Economics and Management)

Ms A Smith (Music)

Mr E Spiers (Economics and Management)

Ms O Tan (History)

Mr A Tchernev (Biology)

Mr D Testa (Physics)

Mr N U Jin (Law)

Mr S Wang (Mathematics and Philosophy)

Mr O West (Chemistry)

Ms A Wuppalapati (Medicine)

Mr B Zhang (Mathematics)

Ms X Zhang (Chemistry)

There were in all 42 Postmasters and 78 Exhibitioners at the end of the year.

# College Prizes

Members of the College who had achieved First Class in Schools or Mods, or Distinctions in Prelims, Law Moderations or the First BM, were given College book prizes in accordance with College Bylaw 87. Members of the College who had been awarded University prizes were given College book prizes in accordance with the same Bylaw. The number of prizes awarded is given in brackets.

<b>Fowler Prizes for good work in Collections</b>	Luke Embley (1) Megan Evans (1) George Adams (1) Daisy Aitchison (2) Federico Amodeo (1) Zak Angell (1) Matteo Baccaglini (2) Nathan Bailey (4) Luke Bateman (3) Sarah Bennett (3) Tara Biddle (1) Xixi Birkinshaw (1) Ines Borchers Arias (2) Sara Borghi (2) Arden Boshier (1) Bence Botlik (3) James Bowen (2) Roheena Buckland (1) Laura Butcher (2) Yijie Cai (1) Louis Cameron (3) Ella Caulfield (1) Owen Chan (2) Thanawitch Chatbipho (2) Freddie Cheatle (1) Alex Christie (2) Christina Chui (1) Amalie Coleman (2) Emily Cope (2) Carlos Cremer (2) Dragos Crisan (2) Eddie Day (2) Yossapat Deesomlert (2) Rore Disun-Odebode (1) Izzy Dobson (1) Holden Eaton (1) Andre Eftime (2)	Edmund Kelly (2) Myles Kelly (2) Callum Kunchur (3) Megan Kyei (1) Charlie Lamb (1) Alex Leonard (2) Jeremi Litarowicz (2) Rebecca Liu (2) Rachel Lo (1) Toby Loader (2) Rishin Madan (2) James Malone (1) Shiv Mandal (2) Jared Martin (1) Nick Maslov (2) Graham Matthews (2) Sameer Mazhar (2) Alex McGinley (1) Evie McGrory (1) Suryansh Mehta (2) Rosanna Miller (1) Nicholas Mitchell (2) Ross Moore (1) Samuel Moore (2) James Morrison (2) Phoebe Mountain (1) Jana Nedelkoska (2) Declan Nelson (3) Tang Ng (3) Jeremy Nohel (2) Fergus O'Brien (1) Matthew O'Connor (1) Daniel Ostrowski (1) Nana Owusu-Addo (2) Jack Pickering (2) Holly Plater (1) Smriti Prakesh (1)	Ethan Prince (1) Thea Ralph (1) Kiana Rezakhanlou (2) Joseph Rhee (1) Max Risher (2) Henry Roberts (2) Willow Rolls (2) Jessica Searle (2) Eppie Sharp (1) Oliver Shaw (1) Hannah Sirringhaus (1) Jan Siuta (2) Emily Slade (1) Alexander Smith (2) Amelia Smith (1) Guy Smith (1) Henry Smith (2) Kitty Sparrowhawk (2) Edward Spiers (1) Mario Stepanik (3) Anna Stephen (3) Daniel Storey (2) Marcell Szakaly (1) Rachel Tait (3) Alexander Tchernev (2) Miles Testa (1) Ellen Thompson (1) Nayah Thu (2) William Towler (2) Nicholas U Jin (1) Simon Van Teutem (1) Mihai Vasile (2) Pauline Verger (1) Robert Vickers (1) Shichen Wang (2) Beth Watkins (2) Oliver West (1)
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Tim Western (I)  
 Kieran Wetherick (I)  
 Tiphaine Wibault (I)  
 Agnieszka Wierzchucka (2)  
 Lasse Wolff (2)  
 Dolly Xu (I)  
 Benedict Yorston (I)  
 Michael Zajac (I)  
 Boran Zhang (2)  
 Xiyu Zhang (2)

*NB: In terms where two small prizes were awarded separately due to a delay in receiving marks, these have been counted as one large prize.*

**Other College prizes**  
 Ms E Akojie, FE Smith Memorial Mooting Prize (runner-up)  
 Mr L Bateman, Second Year and Above Undergraduate Essay Competition (joint winner)  
 Mr B Botlik, Phillips Prize for best performance in Chemistry Parts IA and IB  
 Mr L Cameron, Second Year and Above Undergraduate Essay Competition (joint winner)  
 Mr D Crisan, Dominic Welsh Prize for best essay in Mathematics  
 Mr C Cremer, FE Smith Memorial Mooting Prize (winner)

Mr N Gupta, Sam McNaughton Prize for best performance in PPE Philosophy Prelims (joint winner)  
 Ms I Howarth, Norton Rose Prize for best performance in Law Moderations  
 Mr J Judd, Conrad Russell Prize for best History thesis  
 Mr E Kelly, Raff Prize for best performance in second-year Economics (joint winner)  
 Mr P Lewin, Wilder Penfield Prize in Medicine and Biology  
 Ms R Miller, Professor WM Edwards Prize in Classics (joint winner)  
 Mr J Pickering, Phillips Prize for best performance in Chemistry Prelims  
 Ms H Plater, First Year Undergraduate Essay Competition  
 Ms S Prakash, FE Smith Memorial Mooting Prize (runner-up)  
 Mr M Risher, Sam McNaughton Prize for best performance in PPE Philosophy Prelims (joint winner)  
 Mr H Roberts, Raff Prize for best performance in second-year Economics (joint winner)  
 Mr K Song, William Harvey Prize for best performance in Principles of Clinical Anatomy  
 Mr R Willett, Professor WM

Edwards Prize in Classics (joint winner)  
 Mr N U Jin, Allen & Overy Prize for most promising second-year Law student  
**University Prizes**  
 Ms A Ahlberg, Prize for Excellence in Biology Prelims Examination  
 Mr N Bailey, Gibbs Prize (Proxime)  
 Ms R Blackhurst, Gibbs Prize (proxime)  
 Mr O Bowling, Saïd Foundation Prize for the Best Performance in the Technology and Operations Management Paper  
 Mr H Eaton, Commendation for Psychology for Medicine  
 Ms M Evans, Commendation for Physics Part A Practical Work  
 Mr B Gowers, Arteaga Prize for best performance in Final Honour School Spanish; Fred Hodcroft Prize for Spanish Studies; Dolores Oria Merino Prize for Written Spanish  
 Mr R Grabarczyk, Commendation for Physics Part A Practical Work  
 Ms D Krouzkova, Commendation for Psychology for Medicine  
 Mr P Lewin, Gibbs Prize for best results in Biology Finals  
 Mr N Maslov, Prize for Physics

Prelims Practical Work  
 Ms C Murray, Commendation for Psychology for Medicine  
 Mr F O'Brien, De Paravicini Prize for best overall performance in Classics Prelims  
 Mr A Pett, Prize for Physics Part B Practical Work  
 Mr M Stepanik, Saïd Foundation Prize for the Best performance in the Global Business History Paper  
 Ms A Stephen, Gibbs Prize  
 Mr M Szakaly, Prize for Physics Part A Practical work  
 Mr S Van Teutem, Gibbs Prize  
 Mr R Vickers, Prize for Physics Part A Practical Work  
 Mr L Wolff, Gibbs Prize for best Physics performance in Physics and Philosophy Part B



# Graduate Leavers 2020-21

## 2nd BM

Ms H Bacon, Ms A Gooda, Ms G Loncarevic Whitaker, Mr C Short, Ms K Wilson

## BCL

Ms R Bhatt, Mr B Dziubinski, Mr J Fee, Ms I Janssen

## BPhil

Mr S Diggin (Philosophy), Mr L Haugeberg (Philosophy), Ms A Von Goetz (Philosophy)

## DPhil

### (2019-20)

Mr C Ohman (Information, Communication and the Social Sciences), Mr M Parlasca (Economics)

### (2020-21)

Mr A Bernini (Economics), Mr A Bojko (Mathematics), Ms B Casaba Somashekhar (English), Ms L Chandler (Clinical Neurosciences), Ms M Frainier (Medieval & Modern Languages), Ms N Gillies (Interdisciplinary Biosciences DTP), Ms C Greenland (Mathematics), Ms K Gurnos-Davies (English), Mr T Harrison (Biochemistry), Mr E Howell (Politics), Mr R Hurford (Clinical Neuroscience), Ms G Jakobsdottir (Genomic Medicine & Statistics DTC), Mr A Kulanthaivelu (Theoretical Physics), Ms F Lazzerini (Classical Languages & Literature), Mr K Loi (Law), Mr N Norwitz (Physiology, Anatomy & Genetics), Mr J Parisi (Theoretical Physics), Mr M Parlasca (Economics), Ms J Phillips (Zoology), Ms D Sridhar (Zoology), Ms L Veerus (Zoology), Ms S Wang (Archaeology), Mr A F Wiegandt (Atomic & Laser Physics)

## EMBA

Ms R Hee, Mr A Kulik

## MBA

Mr D Carvallo, Ms M Cheng, Ms S Mpinga, Ms L Zhuang

## MPhil

Ms A Anstatt (Medieval History), Mr J Chater (Modern Chinese Studies), Mr G Farace (Politics: Comparative Government), Ms C Guo (Politics: Political Theory), Ms A Ketterle (Economics), Mr A Pavoni (Greek &/or Roman History), Mr C Tolkien-Gillett (English Studies), Ms R Yang (Economics), Ms X Zhou (Economics)

## MSc

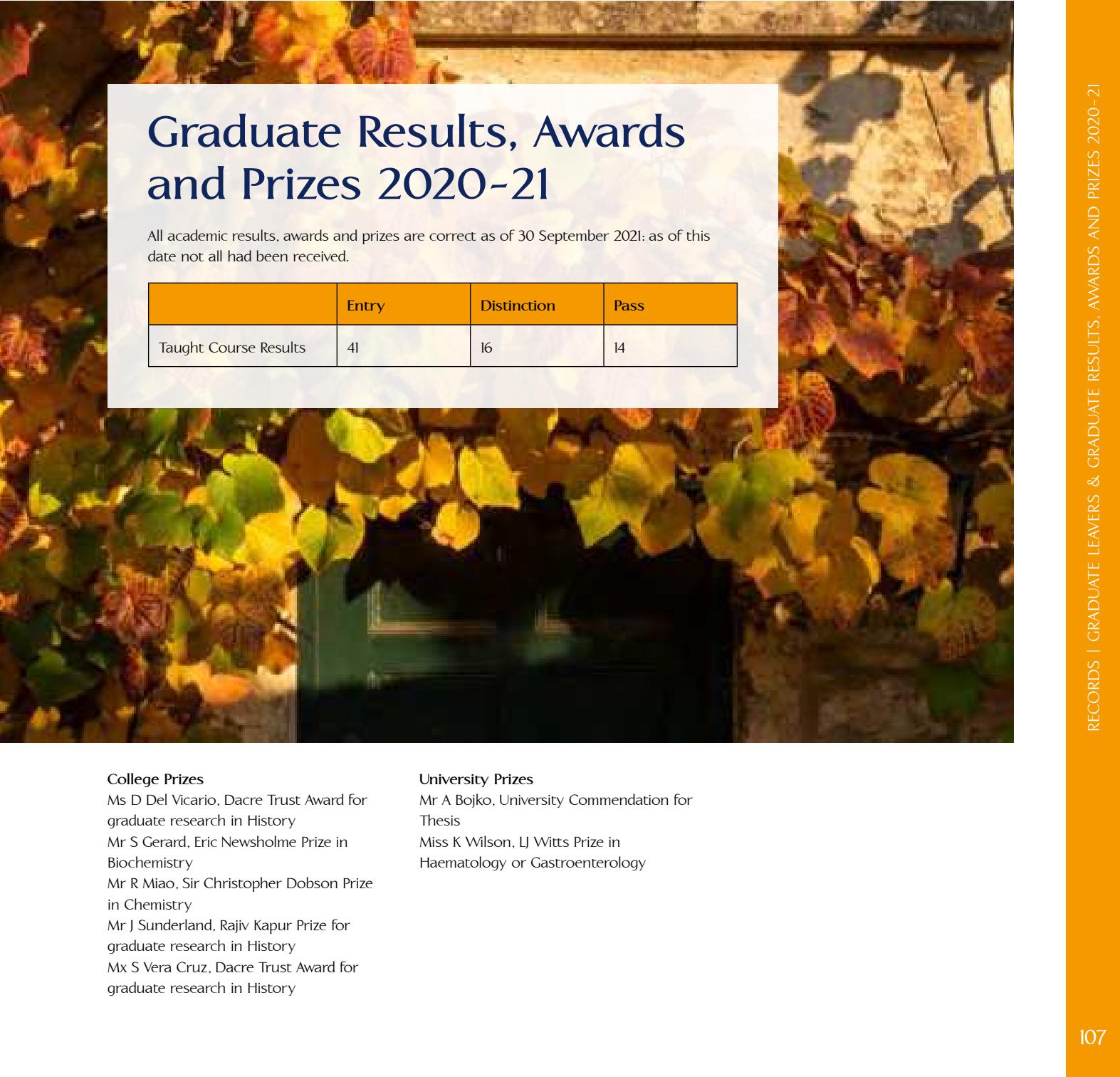
Mr R Boudet (Mathematics & Foundations of Computer Science), Mr J Dede Lopez (Economics for Development), Ms S Kraiczy (Mathematics & Foundations of Computer Science), Mr M Lennon (Neuroscience), Ms C Lepard (Zoology), Mr M Lutz (Mathematical & Theoretical Physics – Distinction), Mr W Midwinter (Clinical Medicine), Ms A Morgan (Major Programme Management), Mr L Riedel (Contemporary Chinese Studies), Ms L Zhang (Mathematics & Foundations of Computer Science)

## MSt

Mr S Dows-Miller (Modern Languages), Ms H Han (English), Mr T Heywood (Music), Mr J Phillips (Medieval History), Mr P Scheffer (English), Ms R Snell (Classical Archaeology), Mr W Wolf (Philosophy of Physics)

## Visiting Student

Mr L Dabadie (Medieval History)



# Graduate Results, Awards and Prizes 2020-21

All academic results, awards and prizes are correct as of 30 September 2021: as of this date not all had been received.

	Entry	Distinction	Pass
Taught Course Results	41	16	14

## College Prizes

Ms D Del Vicario, Dacre Trust Award for graduate research in History

Mr S Gerard, Eric Newsholme Prize in Biochemistry

Mr R Miao, Sir Christopher Dobson Prize in Chemistry

Mr J Sunderland, Rajiv Kapur Prize for graduate research in History

Mx S Vera Cruz, Dacre Trust Award for graduate research in History

## University Prizes

Mr A Bojko, University Commendation for Thesis

Miss K Wilson, LJ Witts Prize in Haematology or Gastroenterology



# College Staff

Name	Appointment	First appointed	Name	Appointment	First appointed
Mr R J Wiggins	Decorator	16/3/1987	Mr M Furse	Senior Gardener	2/1/2007
Mrs L S Walsh (until July 2021)	Sub-Warden's Secretary	16/11/1987	Mrs G Norridge (until Mar 2021)	Payroll/Personnel Administrator	25/6/2007
Mr J S Lisle	Groundsman	17/10/1988	Miss N Harrison	Estates Administrator	23/7/2007
Mr J P McVeigh	Quadman/Storeman	15/10/1990	Mr P Macallister	Chef de Partie	22/10/2007
Mrs J Gerhardi	Graduate Officer	2/1/1991	Mrs K Adamczyk	Housekeeping Supervisor	1/11/2007
Mr J E Tomkins (until Aug 2021)	Assistant Groundsman	11/8/1997	Ms S T Hague	Head of Conference & Accommodation	2/2/2009
Mrs S A Allen	Hall Assistant	7/7/1998	Mr I Knight	Accommodation & Conference Porter	13/7/2009
Mrs L J Pullen	Scout	19/10/1998	Miss H Bednarczyk	Deputy Head Porter	4/1/2011
Mr M Wender	Head Chef	20/9/1999	Miss G Hanson	Gardener	28/3/2011
Mrs C L Turner	Cleaner	27/3/2000	Mr S Bowdery	Senior IT Operations Officer	1/4/2011
Mrs N S Mahmood	Cleaner	23/4/2001	Mr M Weavers (until Feb 2021)	Lodge Porter	9/8/2011
Miss S L Bird	Chef de Partie	8/10/2001	Mr T Cortes Rodrigues	Cleaner	31/10/2011
Miss L Reveley	Bursary Clerk	11/2/2002	Mrs S Rai	Cleaner	31/10/2011
Mrs C Lewis	Resource Description Project Librarian	7/5/2002	Mrs J Rusaitiene	Cleaner	16/1/2012
Mr C D Joyce	Kitchen Porter	29/7/2002	Miss M Kowalska (until Dec 2020)	Cleaner	30/1/2012
Miss L Savin	Head Gardener	7/10/2002	Mr S Cope	Web & Media Officer	3/12/2012
Mr J A Reid	Archivist	2/12/2002	Mrs L E Collins	Verger	23/9/2013
Mr C E Shackell	College Accountant	20/1/2003	Miss J I Dziadosz	Hall Steward	27/1/2014
Miss L Lawrence	Warden's Secretary	1/9/2003	Mrs S Lawino (until Sep 2021)	Cleaner	10/3/2014
Mr C Bridgman	Third Chef	29/9/2003	Miss M Lasota	SCR & Hall Supervisor	1/10/2014
Miss J Baker	Cleaner	2/1/2004	Mrs G Pal	Cleaner	3/11/2014
Mrs M Skalik	Head Steward	10/8/2005			
Mr J Pawlowski	Lodge Porter	24/10/2005			
Mr D Brown	Second Chef	2/1/2007			

Name	Appointment	First appointed	Name	Appointment	First appointed
Mrs F Lawrence	HR Manager	2/12/2014	Miss R Johnston	Library Assistant	8/1/2018
Mrs S Hoverd	Chef de Partie	23/5/2015	Mr C Soares Godinho	Cleaner	5/2/2018
Miss N Lane	Lodge Porter	19/8/2015	Mr M Martinov	Deputy Development Director	19/2/2018
Mr N Hall	Bar Manager	21/9/2015	Ms H Campbell Longley	Deputy Librarian	26/2/2018
Miss I Siwczak	SCR & Hall Supervisor	27/10/2015	Mr J Vickers (until Sep 2021)	Development Operations & Data Manager	5/3/2018
Mrs M Serhej	Cleaner	6/6/2016	Miss M Dziadosz	SCR & Hall Assistant	3/4/2018
Mrs S Camino Carrera	Cleaner	1/12/2016	Miss A Nowakowska	SCR & Hall Assistant	6/4/2018
Mrs A Antofie (until Dec 2020)	Cleaner	1/12/2016	Mrs A Ostoja-Starzewska	Butler	16/4/2018
Miss C Chisholm	Alumni Relations Officer	9/1/2017	Miss J Twardowska (until July 2021)	Housekeeping Supervisor	1/5/2018
Dr K Fifield	Academic Registrar	1/3/2017	Mr M Carroll	Chef de Partie	8/5/2018
Ms M Clarke	Accommodation Coordinator	20/3/2017	Mr I Kozadinos (until Dec 2020)	IT Operations Officer	8/5/2018
Miss R Raftery (until Aug 2021)	Conference & Events Coordinator	27/3/2017	Miss E Lynn (until Sep 2021)	Alumni Events & Stewardship Officer	10/9/2018
Mrs S Moore	Conference & Events Manager	19/4/2017	Miss C Pawley (until Aug 2021)	Academic Officer	10/9/2018
Mr K Watts	Maintenance Manager	3/7/2017	Ms L Champion	College Nurse	20/9/2018
Miss J Wingrove	Chef de Partie	3/7/2017	Mr D Spencer (until Jan 2021)	Maintenance Technician (Plumbing & Building Services)	1/10/2018
Ms C De Souza Lima	SCR & Hall Assistant	14/8/2017	Mr K Lau	Lodge Porter	8/10/2018
Mrs F Raimo	Student Support Administrator	25/9/2017	Mr A Lopez Munoz	Bar & Catering Assistant	15/10/2018
Miss P Martin Montalvo	SCR & Hall Supervisor	28/9/2017	Miss I Blasco Checa	SCR & Hall Assistant	18/11/2018
Ms C Long (until Dec 2020)	Executive PA	2/10/2017	Mr H James	Head Porter	7/1/2019
Mrs J Cullen	Estates Secretary	30/10/2017	Mrs R Wilkins	Academic Officer	25/2/2019
Mr E Tesfalem	Servery Assistant	16/11/2017			
Mr P O'Keefe	Servery Assistant	27/11/2017			
Ms V Parkinson	Resource Services & Support Librarian	3/1/2018			

Name	Appointment	First appointed	Name	Appointment	First appointed
Mr S Saprykin	Lodge Porter	8/4/2019	Mr J Wands (until Aug 2021)	School Liaison and Access Officer	9/11/2020
Mr L Fekete	Lodge Porter	9/4/2019	Miss B Sarkozi	SCR & Hall Assistant	7/12/2020
Miss K Leach	Assistant College Accountant	27/8/2019	Miss A Musa	IT Officer	22/2/2021
Ms J Barrett	Welfare Adviser	1/10/2019	Mrs S Storey	Payroll Administrator	8/3/2021
Mr D Page	Commis Chef	7/10/2019	Ms C Webb	Administrative Officer	12/7/2021
Mr C Evans (until June 2021)	Housekeeping Manager	21/10/2019	Mr M Jedrzejewski	Maintenance Technician	19/7/2021
Ms E Casey	Chapel Administrator	21/10/2019	Mr C Parsons	Lodge Porter	19/7/2021
Mr J Ottaway (until July 2021)	Lodge Porter	02/12/2019	Mr M Francis	Maintenance Technician	9/8/2021
Miss S Horder	Gardener	6/1/2020	Miss K Calvert	Conference & Events Coordinator	16/8/2021
Miss E Ochiela	Bursary Clerk	27/1/2020	Mrs G Gerum Saunce-la	Housekeeper to the Warden	16/8/2021
Miss A Forrai	HR Officer	3/2/2020	Mrs M Horanyi	Housekeeping Supervisor	16/8/2021
Miss C Francis	Bursary Clerk	24/2/2020	Ms O Wrafter	Graduate Associate in Development	24/8/21
Mr T Jeffrey	Lodge Porter	2/3/2020	Ms G Beckley	Development Officer	31/8/2021
Ms E Bruce	Alumni Communications Officer	31/3/2020	Ms F Paterson	Schools Liaison & Access Officer	31/8/2021
Mrs E Ortega Palazon	Cleaner	13/7/2020	Mr A Chivers	Lodge Porter	1/9/2021
Mrs S Meldere	Cleaner	6/8/2020	Ms K Karppinen	Alumni Relations & Events Officer (Maternity Cover)	9/9/2021
Miss S Ximenes	Cleaner	6/8/2020	Mr J Madeley	Lodge Porter	20/9/2021
Mr D Durrant	Lodge Porter	18/9/2020			
Ms C De Fatima Hanjian	Cleaner	21/9/2020			
Mrs J Reid	Clerk of Works	1/10/2020			
Ms H Kimmett	Governance Officer	5/10/2020			
Dr A Bardazzi (until July 2021)	Admissions Officer	12/10/2020			
Miss K Walker (until July 2021)	Lodge Porter	2/11/2020			

# Publications

## Selected Fellows' Publications 2020-21

**Altehenger, J** (2020). 'Industrial and Chinese: Exhibiting Mao's China at the Leipzig Trade Fairs', *J Contemp Hist* 55(4): 845–70

**Altehenger, J** (2021). 'Dictionaries post-1949' in JW Chen *et al.* (eds) *Literary Information in China: A History* (Columbia)

**Ash, R** (2021). 'The staging of death: Tacitus' Agrippina the Younger and the dramatic turn' in A Damtoft Poulsen and A Jönsson (eds) *Usages of the Past in Roman Historiography* (Leiden), pp.197–224

**Barr, AJ** (2021). 'Testing Bell inequalities in Higgs boson decays', arXiv:2106.01377

ATLAS collaboration *et al.* and **AJ Barr** (2021). 'Search for new phenomena in events with two opposite-charge leptons, jets and missing transverse momentum in  $pp$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s} = 13$  TeV with the ATLAS detector', *J High Energy Phys* 165

ATLAS collaboration *et al.* and **AJ Barr** (2020). 'Performance of the missing transverse momentum triggers for the ATLAS detector during Run-2 data taking', *J High Energy Phys* 80

**Barron, HC** (2021). 'Neural inhibition for continual learning and memory', *Curr Opin Neurobiol* 67, 85–94

**Barron, HC**, *et al.* (2020). 'Neuronal computation underlying inferential reasoning in humans and mice', *Cell* 183(1): 228–43

**Barron, HC**, *et al.* (2021). 'Cross-species neuroscience: closing the explanatory gap', *Phil Trans R Soc B* 376(1815), 20190633

**Barron, HC**, R Auksztulewicz and K Friston (2020). 'Prediction and memory: a predictive coding account', *Prog Neurobiol* 192: 101821

Heinze, K, *et al.* and **HC Barron** (2020). 'Impaired inhibitory processing: a new therapeutic target for autism and psychosis', *Brit J Psychiat* 218(6): 295–8

Arone, GZ and **DLB Brantner** (2021). 'The action of Young subgroups on the partition complex', *Publ.math.IHES* arXiv:1801.01491

**Costiner, L** (2021). 'A newly-discovered illuminated manuscript of the *Meditationes Vitae Christi* produced in fifteenth-century Veneto (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, MS Reg. Lat. 478)' in H Flora and P Toth (eds) *Meditationes Vitae Christi Reconsidered: New Perspectives on Text and Image* (Brepols)

**Costiner, L** (2021). 'An illuminated fifteenth-century Milanese manuscript of the "Meditationes Vitae Christi"', *Burlington Mag* 163: 324–31

Aubry, M (moderator), **L Costiner** and S James (2021). 'Artificial intelligence and art history: a necessary debate?', *Histoire de l'art* 87: 1–6

Fominykh, M, *et al.* and **L Costiner** (2020). 'Model augmented reality curriculum', *ITiCSE-WGR '20: Proceedings of the Working Group Reports on Innovation and Technology in Computer Science Education* 131–49 doi: 10.1145/3437800.3439205

Gonzalez Carabarin, L, and **L Costiner** (2021). 'An unsupervised learning approach to text line detection in complex illuminated Medieval manuscripts' in S Reinsone *et al.* (eds) *Post-Proceedings of the 5th Conference Digital Humanities in the Nordic Countries 2020, CEUR Workshop Proceedings*. April 2021

Frost, JN, *et al.* and **SJ Draper** (2021). 'Hepcidin-mediated hypoferremia disrupts immune responses to vaccination and infection', *Med* 2(2): 164–79.e12

Milne, K, *et al.* and **SJ Draper** (2021). 'Mapping immune variation and *var* gene switching in naive hosts infected with *Plasmodium falciparum*', *eLife* 10

Minassian, AM, *et al.* and **SJ Draper** (2021). 'Reduced blood-stage malaria growth and immune correlates in humans following RH5 vaccination', *Med* 2(6): 701–19.e19

Nielsen, CM, *et al.* and **SJ Draper** (2021). 'Protein/ASO<sub>B</sub> vaccination elicits stronger, more Th2-skewed antigen-specific human T follicular helper cell responses than heterologous viral vectors', *Cell Rep Med* 2(3): 100207

Rahkainen, R, et al. and SJ Draper (2021). 'Overcoming symmetry mismatch in vaccine nanoassembly through spontaneous amidation'. *Angew Chem Int Ed Engl* 60(1): 321–30

Dunn, FS et al. (2021). 'The developmental biology of Charnia masoni demonstrates the eumetazoan affinity of the Ediacaran rangeomorphs'. *Sci Adv* (in press)

Erban, R, and R van Gorder (2021). 'On the sum of positive divisors functions'. *Res Number Theory* 7(25), doi: 10.1007/s40993-021-00240-6

G Enciso, R Erban and J Kim (2021). 'Identifiability of stochastically modelled reaction networks'. *Eur J Appl Math*: 1–23

Fine, G (2021). *Essays in Ancient Epistemology* (OUP)

Gildea, R, and I Tames (eds) (2020). *Fighters across Frontiers: Transnational Resistance in Europe, 1936–48* (Manchester University Press)

Ibba F, et al. and V Gouverneur (2020). 'Impact of multiple hydrogen bonds with fluoride on catalysis: insight from NMR spectroscopy'. *J Am Chem Soc* 142(46): 19731–44

Josephson, B, et al. and V Gouverneur (2020). 'Light-driven post-translational installation of reactive protein side chains'. *Nature* 585: 530–7

Kee, CW, et al. and V Gouverneur (2020). '<sup>18</sup>F-Trifluoromethanesulfinate enables direct C–H <sup>18</sup>F-trifluoromethylation of native aromatic residues in peptides'. *J Am Chem Soc* 142(3): 1180–5

Roagna, G, et al. and V Gouverneur (2020). 'Hydrogen bonding phase-transfer catalysis with ionic reactants: enantioselective synthesis of  $\gamma$ -fluoroamines'. *J Am Chem Soc* 142(33): 14045–51

Sap, JBI, et al. and V Gouverneur (2020). 'Organophotoredox hydrodefluorination of trifluoromethylarenes with translational applicability to drug discovery'. *J Am Chem Soc* 142(20): 9181–7

Bullock, PR, and DM Grimley (eds.) (2021). *Music's Nordic Breakthrough: Aesthetics, Modernity, and Cultural Exchange, 1890–1930* (Boydell Press: Woodbridge)

Gruen, ES (2020). *Ethnicity in the Ancient World: Did it Matter?* (Berlin: De Gruyter)

Gruen, ES (2020). 'The Sibylline Oracles and resistance to Rome' in JJ Price and K Berthelot (eds), *The Future of Rome: Roman, Greek, Jewish and Christian Visions* (Cambridge University Press), pp. 189–205

Gruen, ES (2020). 'Judaism in the Diaspora' in M Henze and RA Werline (eds), *Early Judaism and its Modern Interpreters* (Atlanta: SBL Press), pp. 69–91

Gruen, ES (2021). 'Jewish Voices on Rome and Roman Imperialism' in AM Berlin and PJ Kosmin (eds), *The Middle Maccabees: Archaeology, History, and the Rise of the Hasmonean Kingdom* (Atlanta: SBL Press), pp. 379–90

Scott, RH, et al. and SM Hooker (2020). 'Electron trapping and reinjection in prepulse-shaped gas targets for laser-plasma accelerators'. *Phys Rev Accel Beams* 23(11)

Picksley, A, et al. and SM Hooker (2020). 'Meter-scale conditioned hydrodynamic optical-field-ionized plasma channels'. *Phys Rev E*, 102(5)

Baral, S, et al. and S Gupta (2020). 'Leveraging epidemiological principles to evaluate Sweden's Covid-19 response'. *Ann Epidemiol* 54: 21–6

Dejnirattisai, W, et al. and S Gupta (2021). 'The antigenic anatomy of SARS-CoV-2 receptor binding domain'. *Cell* 184(8): 2183–200.e22

Pinotti, F, et al. and S Gupta (2021). 'Potential impact of individual exposure histories to endemic human coronaviruses on age-dependent severity of Covid-19'. *BMC Med* 19(1)

Pinotti, F, et al. and S Gupta (2021). 'Real-time seroprevalence and exposure levels of emerging pathogens in infection-naïve host populations'. *Sci Rep* 11: 5825

Swarthout, TD, et al. and S Gupta (2020). 'High residual carriage of vaccine-serotype *Streptococcus pneumoniae* after introduction of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine in Malawi'. *Nat Commun* 11(1): 2222

Alam, N, and MK Higgins (2020). 'A spike with which to beat Covid-19?'. *Nat Rev Microbiol* 18, 414

Campeotto, I, et al. and MK Higgins (2020). 'The structure of the cysteine-rich domain of *Plasmodium falciparum* PlI3 identifies the location of the RH5 binding site'. *mBio* 11(5). e01566–20

Gérard, SF, et al. and MK Higgins (2020). 'Structure of the inhibited state of the Sec translocon'. *Mol Cell* 79(3): 406–15.e7

Harrison, TE, et al. and MK Higgins (2020). 'Structure of the Plasmodium-interspersed repeat proteins of the malaria parasite'. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 117(50): 32098–104

Harrison, TE, et al. and MK Higgins (2020). 'Structural basis for RIFIN-mediated activation of LILRB1 in malaria'. *Nature* 587: 309–12

Dai, Y, R Pracana and PWH Holland (2020). 'Divergent genes in gerbils: prevalence, relation to GC-biased substitution, and phenotypic relevance'. *BMC Evol Biol* 20, 134

Dai, Y, S Trigueros and PWH Holland (2021). 'Compromised function of the pancreatic transcription factor PDX1 in a lineage of desert rodents'. *J Mammal Evol* doi: 10.1007/s10914-021-09544-x



Lewin, TD, AH Royall and PWH Holland (2021). 'Dynamic molecular evolution of mammalian homeobox genes: duplication, loss, divergence and gene conversion sculpt PRD class repertoires', *J Mol Evol* 89(6): 396–414

Xu, F, et al. and PWH Holland (2021). 'Evidence from oyster suggests an ancient role for Pdx in regulating insulin gene expression in animals', *Nat Commun* 12, 3117

King, AJ (2020). 'Feedback systems: descending pathways and adaptive coding in the auditory system' in B Fitzsch (ed.) and B Grothe (vol ed.) *The Senses: A Comprehensive Reference*, vol 2 (Elsevier, Academic Press), pp. 732–48

King, AJ, and KMM Walker (2020). 'Listening in complex acoustic scenes', *Curr Opin Physiol* 18: 63–72

Lohse, M, et al. and AJ King (2021). 'Subcortical circuits mediate communication between primary sensory cortical areas in mice', *Nat Commun* 12(1), 3916

Rahman, M, BDB Willmore, AJ King and NS Harper (2020). 'Simple spectral transformations capture auditory input to cortex', *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 117(45): 28442–51

Lemos, I (2021). 'The transition from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age in Euboea and the Euboean Gulf' in M D'Acunto and T Cinquantatutto (eds), *Euboica II. Euboeans in the Northern Aegean and Central Italy* (Naples) pp. 37–54

Lemos, I, A Mazarakis Ainian and V Vlachou (2020). *Excavations at Oropos. The Protogeometric and Sub-Protogeometric Period (10th – 9th centuries BC)* (University of Thessaly Press) (in Greek with English translation)

Lucey, M (2021). 'How You Read *Madame Bovary*', *Representations* 156 (to be published November 2021)

Garlick, R, K Orkin and S Quinn (2020). 'Call me maybe: experimental evidence on frequency and medium effects in microenterprise surveys', *World Bank Econ Rev* 34(2): 418–43

Gerard, F, C Imbert and K Orkin (2020). 'Social protection response to the Covid-19 crisis: options for developing countries', *Oxford Rev Econ Pol* 36(SI): S281–96

Burton, RB, et al. and DJ Paterson (2020). 'Optical interrogation of sympathetic neuronal effects on macroscopic cardiomyocyte network dynamics', *iScience* 23(7): 101334

Davis, H, N Herring and DJ Paterson (2020). 'Downregulation of M current is coupled to membrane excitability in sympathetic neurons before the onset of hypertension', *Hypertension* 76(6): 1915–23

Herring, N, and DJ Paterson (2021). 'The heart's little brain: shedding new light and clarity on the "black box"', *Circ Res* 128(9): 1297–9

Sverrisdottir, YB, et al. and DJ Paterson (2020). 'Human dorsal root ganglion stimulation reduces sympathetic outflow and long-term blood pressure', *JACC Basic Transl Sci* 5(10): 973–85

Payne, J (2020). 'The institutional design of financial supervision and financial stability' in F Amtenbrink and C Herrmann (eds) *The EU Law of Economic and Monetary Union* (OUP)

Payne, J, and L Gullifer (2021). 'Intermediated securities: the European perspective' in JH Binder and P Saguato (eds) *The Law and Regulation of Financial Market Infrastructure: A Trans-Atlantic Perspective on Securities and Derivatives Markets* (OUP)

Gullifer, L, and J Payne (2020). 'Intermediated securities and investor protection'. *Law Quart Rev* 201 [Case Note]

Gullifer, L, and J Payne (2020). *Corporate Finance Law: Principles and Policy*. 3rd edn (Hart)

Phillips, P (2020). 'The Masses of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina'. *Music Times* autumn: 3–72

Radda, G (2020). *My Life in Science. Not an Autobiography* (self-published)

Rawson, J, KV Chugunov, Y Grebnev and H Limin (2020). 'Shang culture and its contacts with Mongolia: a perspective from burial patterns at Yinxu' in Beijing Daxue Chutu Wenxian Yanjiusuo (ed), *Bronzes and Bronze Inscriptions* (Shanghai Guji Chubanshe), pp. 1–38

Rawson, J, et al. (2020). 'Chariotry and prone burials: reassessing late Shang China's relationship with its northern neighbours'. *J World Prehist* 33(2): 135–68

Liu, C, et al. and J Rawson (2020). 'Metallurgy at the crossroads: new analyses of copper-based objects at Tianshanbeilu, eastern Xinjiang, China'. *Acta Geol Sin-Engl* 94(3): 594–602

Sawyer, D (2021). 'Form, time, and the "First English Sonnet"'. *Chaucer Rev* 56(3): 193–224

Bott, AFA, et al. and AA Schekochihin (2021). 'Time-resolved turbulent dynamo in a laser plasma'. *Proc Natl Acad Sci* 118(11): e2015729118

Hosking, DN, AA Schekochihin and SA Balbus (2020). 'Elasticity of tangled magnetic fields'. *J Plasma Phys* 86(5): 905860511

Ivanov, PG, AA Schekochihin et al. (2020). 'Zonally dominated dynamics and Dimits threshold in curvature-driven ITG turbulence'. *J Plasma Phys* 86(5): 855860502

Kawazura, YA, AA Schekochihin et al. (2020). 'Ion versus electron heating in compressively driven astrophysical gyrokinetic turbulence'. *Phys Rev X* 10: 041050

Kunz, MW, J Squire, AA Schekochihin and E Quataert (2020). 'Self-sustaining sound in high-beta collisionless plasma'. *J Plasma Phys* 86(6): 905860603

Aru, J, et al. and A Scott (2020). 'Exceptional graphs for the random walk'. *Ann Inst H Poincaré (B) Probab Statist* 56(3): 2017–27

Bonamy, M, N Morrison and A Scott (2020). 'Partitioning the vertices of a torus into isomorphic subgraphs'. *J Comb Theory A* 174: 105252

Chudnovsky, M, A Scott et al. (2020). 'Proof of the Kalai-Meshulam conjecture'. *Israel J Math* 238: 639–61

Chudnovsky, M, A Scott et al. (2020). 'Pure pairs. I. Trees and linear anticomplete pairs'. *Adv Math* 375: 107396

Goldschmidt, C, S Griffiths and A Scott (2020). 'Moderate deviations of subgraph counts in the Erdős-Rényi random graphs  $G(n,m)$  and  $G(n,p)$ '. *T Am Math Soc* 373: 5517–85

Dooley, K, H Shue, et al. (2021). 'Ethical choices behind quantifications of fair contributions under the Paris Agreement'. *Nat Clim Chang* 11: 300–305

Shue, H (2021). *The Pivotal Generation: Why We Have A Moral Responsibility to Slow Climate Change Right Now* (Princeton)

Stubbins Bates, E (2020). 'The British Army's training in international humanitarian law'. *J Conflict Security Law* 25(2): 291–315

Stubbins Bates, E (2020). '"Impossible or disproportionate burden": the UK's approach to the investigatory obligation under Articles 2 and 3 ECHR'. *Eur Hum Right Law Rev* 5: 499–511

Kastrati G, I Tracey et al. (2021). 'Genetic Influence on Nociceptive Processing in the Human Brain – A Twin Study'. *Cereb Cortex* bhab206

Soni A, I Tracey et al. (2020). 'Hospitalization in fibromyalgia: a cohort-level observational study of in-patient procedures, costs and geographical variation in England'. *Rheumatology* 59(8): 2074–2084

Peberdy, R, and P Waller (eds) (2021). *A Dictionary of British and Irish History* (Wiley Blackwell)

Walworth, J (2020). *Merton College Library: An Illustrated History* (Oxford: Bodleian Library)

Walworth, J (2021). 'Private press books, & two kinds of academic library: a personal view'. *Matrix* 36: 51–4

Whitworth, MH (2020). 'Literature and science' in J Frow et al. (eds) *Oxford Encyclopaedia of Literary Theory* (OUP)

# Graduate Publications 2020-21

**Dernie, F, and D Adeyoju (2021).** 'A matter of time: circadian clocks in osteoarthritis and the potential of chronotherapy'. *Exp Gerontol* 143: 101163

**Geurts, MMG, et al. (2020).** 'The SERCA residue Glu340 mediates interdomain communication that guides  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  transport'. *Proc Natl Acad Sci* 117(49): 31114–22

**Lennon, MJ, et al. (2021).** 'Changes in the proportions of authors in Australian medical journals who were women', 2005–2018'. *Med J Aust*, 214:376–7

**Lennon, MJ, et al. (2021).** 'Does antihypertensive use moderate the effect of blood pressure on cognitive decline in older people?'. *J Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci* 76(5): 859–66

**Lovell-Read, FA, et al. (2021).** 'Interventions targeting non-symptomatic cases can be important to prevent local outbreaks: SARS-CoV-2 as a case study'. *J R Soc Interface* 18(178): 20200104, doi: 10.1098/rsif.2020.0104

**O'Keeffe, EW (2021).** "A natural passion?" The 1810 reflections of a Yorkshire farmer on homosexuality'. *Hist Res* 94(263): 181–90

**Phillips, JA, et al. (2021).** 'Foraging conditions for breeding penguins improve with distance from colony and progression of the breeding season at the South Orkney Islands'. *Mov Ecol* 9(22), doi: 10.1186/s40462-021-00261-x

**Phillips, JA, et al. (2021).** 'Consistent concentrations of critically endangered Balearic shearwaters in UK waters revealed by at-sea surveys'. *Ecol Evol* 11(4): 1544–57

**Roagna, G, et al. (2020).** 'Hydrogen bonding phase-transfer catalysis with ionic reactants: enantioselective synthesis of  $\gamma$ -fluoroamines'. *J Am Chem Soc* 142(33): 14045–51

**Santos, CM (2020).** '(Hy-)Brazil, Celtic land? An ethnomusicological study of the formation and characteristics of the Irish-Celtic music scene in Brazil'. *Ethnomusicology Ireland* (6): 41–60

**Humphries, J, and B Schneider (2020).** 'Losing the thread: a response to Robert Allen'. *Econ Hist Rev* 73(4): 1137–52

**Thornley, E (2021).** 'The impossibility of a satisfactory population prospect axiology (independently of Finite Fine-Grainedness'. *Philos Stud* doi: 10.1007/s11098-021-01621-4

**Batten, C, and C Tolkien-Gillett (2021).** 'Translating *Beowulf* for our times', *Transl Lit* 30(2): 209–18

**Tolkien-Gillett, C (2021).** 'Arthurian transformations: Tristan and Iseult' in T di Carpegna Falconieri et al. (eds), *Middle Ages without Borders: An International Conversation on Medievalism* (Rome)

**Tolkien-Gillett, C (2021).** 'Journey to "Sagaland": WH Auden and Louis MacNeice's *Letters from Iceland* (1937)' in KL van der Linde Mikaelsdóttir (ed) *Proc 10th Háskóli Íslands Student Conference on the Medieval North* (Reykjavík)

**White, JA, et al. (2021).** '3000-year-old shark attack victim from Tsukumo shell-mound, Okayama, Japan'. *J Archaeol Sci Rep* 38: 103065

**Yusuf, IH, et al. (2021).** 'The Royal College of Ophthalmologists recommendations on monitoring for hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine users in the United Kingdom (2020 revision): executive summary'. *Eye* 35(6): 1532–7

**Birtel, J, IH Yusuf et al. (2021).** 'Diagnosis of inherited retinal diseases'. *Klin Monbl Augenheilkd* 238(3): 249–59

**Yusuf, IH et al. (2021).** 'Deep phenotyping of the *Cdhr1*– mouse validates its use in pre-clinical studies for human *Cdhr1*-associated retinal degeneration'. *Exp Eye Res* 208: 108603

**Yusuf, IH et al. (2021).** 'Comment on: Comparison of surgical repositioning rates and outcomes for hydrophilic vs hydrophobic single-piece acrylic toric IOLs'. *J Cataract Refract Surg* 47(6): 831–2

**Yusuf, IH et al. (2021).** 'Comment on: Effect of anti-inflammatory regimen on early postoperative inflammation after cataract surgery'. *J Cataract Refract Surg* 47(6): 833–4



## Selected Alumni Publications

Below is a list of publications by alumni in the 2020-21 academic year that we have been made aware of. If you would like yours featured in the next edition\*, please get in touch at [development@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@merton.ox.ac.uk)

**Allsopp, Niall** (2008). *Poetry and Sovereignty in the English Revolution* (Oxford English Monographs, 2020)

**Austin, Finola** (2009). *Brontë's Mistress: A Novel* (New York: Atria Books, 2020)

**Azhar, Azeem** (1990). *Exponential: How Accelerating Technology Is Leaving Us Behind and What to Do About It* (London: Penguin Random House, 2021)

**Bentley-Davies, Caroline** (1991). *How to Make Your Students Remember What You Teach Them* (Carmarthen: Crown House, 2021)

**Boyle, Mary** (2011). *Writing the Jerusalem Pilgrimage in the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2021)

**Chytry, Josef** (1967). *Cosmotheism: Cytherean Sittings Between Heraclitus and Kittler* (New York: Peter Lang, 2020)

**Currie, Peter** (1971). *Thirty Sparkling Gems* (Leominster: DayOne, 2020)

**English, Guy** (1963) and C English. *Elizabeth Andrew Warren, 1786-1864. Algologist and Botanist of Flushing* (self-published, 2020)

**Franklinos, Tristan** (2011) and L Fulkerson (eds). *Constructing Authors and Readers in the Appendices Vergiliania, Tibulliana, and Ouidiana* (Oxford University Press, 2020)

**Gekoski, Rick** (1966). *Guarded by Dragons: Encounters with Rare Books and Rare People* (London: Constable, 2021)

**Houghton, Luke** (1996), G Manuwald and LR Nicholas (eds). *An Anthology of British*

*Neo-Latin Literature* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020)

**Marletto, Chiara** (2010). *The Science of Can & Can't: A Physicist's Journey through the Land of Counterfactuals* (London: Allen Lane, 2021)

**Morris, Marc** (1998). *The Anglo-Saxons: A History of the Beginnings of England* (London: Hutchinson, 2021)

**Reid, Alison** (1990). *Unleash Your Leadership: How to Worry Less and Achieve More* (Hummingbird, 2021)

**Watson, Rebecca** (2013). *little scratch* (London: Faber & Faber, 2021)

**Winston, Brian** (1960) and M Winston. *The Roots of Fake News: Objecting to Objective Journalism* (London: Routledge, 2021)

\*Please note that books need to have been published during the academic year relevant to Postmaster.

# Mertonians



Merton Society Garden Party, September 2021

# The Merton Society

I am delighted to provide a report for *Postmaster* on the Merton Society. The purpose of the Merton Society, founded in 1930, is to further the interests of Merton College and of its members past and present, by fostering social contacts between Merton alumni and by encouraging Merton alumni to maintain contact with the College.

The Society works with the College to provide alumni with opportunities to connect or reconnect with Merton, particularly to meet fellow Mertonians and to return to visit the College. In normal times your committee organises a broad calendar of events open to all Mertonians such as lectures, dinners, drinks, a carol concert and the annual summer weekend.

During the past year we have tried to do this with in-person events, but the pandemic has made it difficult. What we have learnt is that online events can be popular and attract large audiences, particularly appealing to those based overseas or outside the Oxford-London axis, but that there is also hunger to return to physical meetings and interactions. I suspect we may develop a hybrid approach which combines the best of both formats to maximise our audience.

As I write things are finally beginning to look more positive and I am looking forward to a strong programme of activities for 2021-22 which we kicked off with a Garden Party in College on 26 September 2021. And our belated 2021 Merton Society Lecture with Dr Leana Wen (2007), part of the Merton Women: 40 Years celebrations, took place via Zoom on 29 September.

An important development during the year was the approval at the AGM in October of the Society's updated constitution. This marks a step in the modernisation of the Society to address new challenges and better support the ambitions of the College. I would like to thank the Constitution Working Group for their hard work and particularly our retiring Secretary Gary Backler (1973) for so ably wielding the drafting pen – and for all the support he has given me and the Council over the long term of his office.

I would like to thank Dame Philippa Whipple (1984) for the dynamism, the fun and new ideas she continues to contribute as President of the Society. Council and Committee members have also provided lots of great ideas and input over the last few months, which is also much appreciated. A big thank you too to the Warden for her very active support of the Society.

The Development Office have provided consistent support in this challenging time and I look forward to working with Mark Coote, the new Development Director.

At the Merton Society we are always looking to engage with as many alumni as we can, of different ages, interests and backgrounds. If you would like to become involved, please do get in touch with me via the Development Office. Perhaps you have ideas for events or have thoughts and views on what we can do to further the aims of the Merton Society; I am always interested to hear from you.

**Mark Davison (1978), Chairman**

## Merton Society Council 2020-21

**President:** Dame Philippa Whipple (1984)

**Vice-Presidents:** RB Allan (1959), Professor Dame Jessica Rawson (Honorary Fellow), Sir Martin Taylor (Honorary Fellow) and Lady Taylor, AM Vickers (1958)

**Chairman:** MPH Davison (1978)

**Secretary:** GBS Lim (2006)

**Committee:** NSMMK Abbas (1990), NW Allard (1974), GG Backler (1973), T Bamiro (née Onabanjo) (1994), JDS Booth (1976), AJ Bott OBE (1953), EL Capstick (2017), DE Clark (1984), M Cowan (née Raine) (1983).

TJ Foot (2011), AJ Haggerty (2007), Professor M Higgins (Fellow), the Revd Canon Dr S Jones (Chaplain), R Miller (2008), RB Peberdy (1975), M Pretzler (1996), A Salvage (2008), DJO Schaffer (1986), AL Smith (1991), NJD Weller (1982), JS Young (1993)



MCR Annual General Meeting in April 2020, held on Zoom

## MC3: Merton College Charitable Corporation

Ordinarily this space would focus on the most recent grounds for claiming that over 25 years MC3 has become the most successful and active overseas alumni organization of any Oxford college. Readers might expect news detailing how our unique extension of the College carried on its friend raising and fundraising throughout the *annus horribilis* and its aftermath while conducting virtual board meetings, engaging with several Merton programs, and providing financial support for special initiatives such as the Hardship Fund and the Regius Professorship. No doubt we would have also highlighted the

extraordinary contributions of all those who, like Marina McCloskey (2003) and Grace Tiao (2010), made it so worthwhile for so many Mertonians to participate in special MC3 events organized in conjunction with the University's North American Reunion, including a virtual guided walking tour of medieval plague-stricken Prague, an event which Warden Tracey gamely joined well after midnight her time.

Instead, now is the bittersweet moment to acknowledge the invaluable service to MC3 and to Merton of Sue Stukane. Any



Sue Stukane getting a round of applause during an evening drinks and dinner cruise around Manhattan in 2014 as part of the Merton 750th celebrations

Mertonian who called the MC3 headquarters inquiring about a reunion reservation or contribution learned with regret that Sue, our administrator for 15 years, retired as of 31 May. In 2007 Sue became the executive assistant at MC3 Founder Bob McKelvey's investment advisory firm. She agreed to 'help out' with the then growing MC3 organization. In those early days MC3 was still struggling to help both Merton and Oxford build successful alumni relations and development programs which the American universities had done with a positive impact on their endowments and educational missions. Early on MC3 sponsored one scholarship, the Americas Scholarship, which was only partially funded. MC3's endowment grew to \$1.55 million and annual contributions ranged from \$200,000 to \$400,000. Thanks to an increasingly active Board of Trustees, a strong committee system and Sue's strong administrative support for reunions and mailings, MC3 now supports three full-time and fully funded scholarships: the Americas Scholar, Roberts-MC3 and Kirby. The endowment is over \$4.5 million; contributions totaled \$900,000 in 2020 and are already

approaching that figure in 2021.

With trustees scattered across North America and the object of our affection located 3,000 or more miles away from each of us to the East, Sue became a key component in providing timely reporting, meeting agendas, development letters and the other support important to our growth. Without exaggeration, although for a quarter of a century many people contributed their time, skills and resources to MC3, but for Sue Stukane's efforts none of its success would have been possible. We are searching for another part-time administrator to fill her role, but for many Mertonians on both sides of the Atlantic there will never be anybody to take her place. The Board has voted to make Sue one of the first non-matriculands to join MC3 as a lifetime member.

**Nick Allard (1974)**  
MC3 President  
*Bodley Fellow*



LHS MARCH 2020 (LEVEL 1) 100% LOCAL

LHS MARCH 2020 (LEVEL 1) 100% LOCAL

# Merton in the City

On 23 June 2021, Merton in the City was privileged to host a discussion between the Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP (1993) and Professor Fiona Murray (1986). At the time, Liz Truss was Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade, though she is now Foreign Secretary; Fiona Murray is Associate Dean for Innovation and Inclusion at MIT Sloan and a member of the UK Prime Minister's Council for Science and Technology.

The theme was entrepreneurship and its interaction with the UK's new role in the world following its exit from the European Union.

The UK is a powerhouse for innovation. UK cities make up around 10% of the world's top 100 locations for scientific and technological advancement; London is easily the most important location for innovation and business in Europe and is in the top five of such cities globally.

Along with London, Oxford and Cambridge both rank as top 25 global hubs for biotech and nanotech as well as a source of venture capital to support these technologies. The UK attracts (with France) the highest levels of foreign direct investment in Europe and the UK's Fintech sector stands second only to that of the United States and constitutes almost 50% of the entire volume of Fintech investment made in the whole of Europe.

Skills, of course, are one of the keys to unlocking innovation in any society, and reference was made to the importance of mathematics in education and how there are clear links between a society's mathematical capabilities and its propensity to grow and prosper. Maths has the highest earning premium of any academic subject and this is even more so in the UK than elsewhere which indicates, comfortingly perhaps, huge demand for mathematical ability in the UK. Improving our mathematical capability will improve our entrepreneurial capability.

Beyond mathematics, it was also noted that the UK is part of a global scientific 'power hub' with the United States. UK-based research is at the cutting-edge of new development in science and UK institutions are hugely respected the world over. It is also recognised that international collaboration at all levels in Europe and across the world is vital in maintaining that position. Through collaboration comes access to greater resources and ideas.

In developing companies to serve businesses and consumers we are now moving from an information age into an automation age. But it is interesting to see the UK has not yet produced the technology groups which reach into most of our daily lives and which have been largely developed in the United States and China. Of course, those groups, in addition to having come into existence in highly entrepreneurial environments, have benefited from huge local markets and greater access to development capital in North American markets in particular.

The UK also offers a cost-of-compliance burden that is very low compared with that in most European territories for start-ups. Entrepreneurs often find themselves staying in the UK given its comparatively light tax and compliance burdens for entrepreneurs and the incentives provided to start-up companies for both investors and operators. The questions are now how to enhance that and provide those companies with a fair chance to remain in the UK in the latter stages of development rather than being acquired by US or Asian interests whose tax and political systems often provide incentives to acquire overseas groups.

In a dynamic world, letting loose the UK's entrepreneurial and innovative capability is a process not a simple end-state, but it is doing so from a very promising starting point.

**Richard Baxter (1983)**  
Chair, Merton in the City

# News of Old Members

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## Up to 1948

**Year Representative: Michael Millard**

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Tel: 02476 414776 Email: millard172@tiscali.co.uk

Surely this year's most exciting contribution comes from **Nicholas Jaco** (1938) who last September celebrated his 100th birthday. I wonder if there are any other living Mertonians who matriculated before the war. One event that has not yet taken place, **David Lane** (1948) tells me, is a meeting related to four Postmasters celebrating 75 years since their election; namely **Tony Williams** (1946) and David Lane and their wives, and the widows of **Michael Summerskill** and **Paul Ledger** (both 1948): this had to be postponed from 16 January but David hopes it will be reinstated in the autumn.

**Martin Reynolds** (1948) writes from Portugal somewhat oppressed, like many of us, by thoughts on Covid. In particular he comments on the conditions forced on new undergraduates: but we enjoyed our conditions and they are denied them.

**Gerald Dearden** (1941) writes sadly that his wife of 72 years died on his 97th birthday. But he is pleased to have been taken by car through some of his favourite Yorkshire villages; and is sorry for those of our age group who just exist and survive. **Harry Corben** (1944) suffered the effects of the virus in that he was unable to visit his wife in hospital for the last fortnight of her life.

**Philip Holden** (1943) remembers what must have been an interesting time. Among other things he captained the hockey XI which narrowly missed winning the cup. He was also leader of the University orchestra. **Christopher Rose-Innes** (1943) is still active. He is at present President of the Stockport Art Guild and is a member of the Royal Society of Sculptors. He still functions as an artist and is thankful that he can still drive a car. Sadly his wife Barbara died in January. **Leonard Allinson** (1944) expresses his sorrow at the death of **Michael Hinton** (1945), whose obituary features on page 205 of *In Memoriam*. At present he is helped by his daughters and spends most of his time reading. He says he has a desirable old age.

Old age does not seem to be part of **Claver Toalster**'s (1948) lifestyle. He travels much through Germany and France. He tells us that he is now a German citizen. Despite his free lifestyle he still remembers, and profits from, the rigours of tutorials under **Robert Levens**. Since the deaths of our wives **Brian Chapple** (1944) and I have not seen each other. However each of us is well looked after; he by his son and I by my second son. **Guy Harris** (1948) and I meet less often than of yore but occasionally I receive a letter from deepest Warwickshire. The latest reminds me that we each have an oar bearing both of our names.

*Celeres ramos Mertonae fortuna sequatur.*

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## 1949, 1950, 1951

*There is currently no Year Representative for the years 1949–51. Please contact [development@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@merton.ox.ac.uk) if you are interested in the position.*

**John Mays** (1951) writes: 'I came up to Merton in 1951. In those days there were four distinct types of undergraduates – those who had been in the Forces and were 22 or 23 and the rest of us who came up directly from school and were 18 or 19. The other categories were those who'd been to a public school and those who hadn't. I belonged to the group who came from a grammar school and had yet to serve my country.'

'Merton was very different – it was male only and far from comfortable. Undergraduate rooms were just that, a

bedroom plus sitting room – no bathroom, not even a wash basin. There was a bowl and the scout brought a large jug of hot water every morning for washing and shaving purposes. If you were lucky you had a single bar electric fire. Winters seemed in my memory to have been very cold and very damp.

'After Merton I went into the Army (Royal Artillery) for two years' National Service and served in Hong Kong. In 1956 I was demobilised and returned to Hong Kong, met my wife and worked in the Far East (Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand) for 11 years. Subsequently I returned to Europe and had six years in Denmark followed by a similar period in London and then about ten years in Dubai.

'I was then one of the Lloyd's of London Names who fought the litigation throughout the early 1990s. We won every case and secured for our fellow investors a settlement which enabled most to recover from their losses and Lloyd's to continue to trade. We set up a run-off company (Equitas) to take the liabilities and eventually passed the whole thing to Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway (its insurance subsidiary), thus relieving the Names of any future responsibility. I retired in 2004 and have been a trustee and chairman of various local charities. It has been a satisfying experience – in principle using one's experience to help others.'

'I married in 1959 in Singapore Cathedral and have three children who in turn have produced nine grandchildren, three each. One family lives in Sydney, Australia – the rest in the Home Counties.'

'I've visited Merton on a number of occasions including three Gaudies. I suspect there will be no more of these for my year – we must be a comparative rarity.'

Ian Skeet (1949) writes: 'Nick Allard (1974) wrote a fine memorial for Prosser Gifford (1951). However, he failed to mention (probably didn't know) that Prosser initiated, and was the first editor of, *Postmaster*. The first edition, of September 1952, was 38 pages long.'

## 1952, 1953 & 1954

Year Representative: Mike Rines

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All this year's contributors have told me of their gratitude to Dick Lloyd (1954) for all his years as our representative on *Postmaster*, ended only by ill-health. Happily, he has sent a personal contribution. I am conscious that he will be a hard act to follow. A number of us who tended to group around him and the acerbic Gilchrist at dinner in hall, followed by coffee in Dick's room, will also remember with deep nostalgia the annual lunches he organised for us in London. I know we all wish him and Audrey well.

The saddest news of the year was of the departure of Frank Bough and Cedric Andrews (both 1952), obituaries for whom can be found in the *In Memoriam* section.

I am grateful to all this year's contributors and apologise for the fact that there was not sufficient space to carry all some wrote. For myself, the boredom of the lockdown has been relieved by my continuing programme of lectures, more recently delivered on Zoom.

Tony Marland (1952) places a high value on friendships initiated more than 60 years ago at Merton, saying: 'Their dwindling number are among the oldest and dearest of my entire life.' He describes two hammer blows last winter.

First, the death of Frank Bough. 'One morning in October, when I called him for a chat, it was his wife Nesta who returned the call, telling me he had died the previous day. Memories surged through, from our first meeting at Merton, then the widening of our relationship to include Nesta and my wife, Sylvia. We attended their wedding in Oswestry in 1959, and so much in between. It was with a heavy heart that I accepted Nesta's invitation to write a note for *Postmaster*.

'Then, four months later, Cedric Andrews's wife Jane called to tell me that he had died and asked me to notify his closest

Merton friends. I recalled their wedding in Oxford in 1958 as part of another enduring relationship.'

In March 2020 **Dick Lloyd** suffered a major brain haemorrhage, and although he has made a good recovery and regained his driving licence, it has severely impaired his general health. Moreover, it is aggravated by osteoarthritis. So he is almost completely disabled. However, he keeps himself fit by half an hour daily on his exercise bike and by yoga.

He is still trying to complete the history of Priestman. Although almost two years have elapsed since he moved from Devon to Oxford, he and Audrey still have a lot of refurbishment to do and a garage full of furniture to be got rid of. Fortunately, they have a lot of help in both the house (via Age UK) and a garden that gives them much pleasure with a long lawn and fruit trees.

Dick takes pleasure in being surrounded by a large supportive family, and one of his daughters is married to a retired Oxford history professor. He has been blessed by the arrival of his first great-granddaughter. He enjoys living close to his old Merton friend, **Henry Mayr-Harting** (1954), who sadly lost his wife, Caroline, early this year.

**Gerard Green** (1954) has been superbly looked after during the pandemic in sheltered accommodation run by a charitable foundation (15 years older than Merton) where he now lives. He has spent some of the time during the lockdown writing an account of his father's career; he was a Fellow at Merton from 1919 to 1981. Otherwise, he says life has not been much different for him.

**Peter Westwood** (1954) still has very clear memories of Merton, helped by a photograph on his wall of the rugby team captained by 'Honk' Hammond who, like him, joined the Colonial Service: he in Nyasaland and Pete himself in Fiji.

**Bob Paxton** (1954) is now completely retired as a history professor at Columbia University. His last book, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (Penguin Random House, 2004), was translated into 14 languages. The pandemic kept him and his wife, Sarah, from spending their usual summer in France last year, but perhaps they will get there later this summer, before moving to a retirement community in the next year or so.

**David Law** (1952) has found the past 18 months remarkably dull, enlivened occasionally by family and friends, and usually at a distance. He has made many perambulations round his garden, not yet with a frame, but frequently with a stick.

Over the past 20 years, **Mike Jordan** (1954) and his French wife have been living exponents of the principle of 'free movement', enjoying roughly six months in the UK (mainly in London) and six months in France. Since the lockdown, it has been difficult to sustain this lifestyle. However, they managed to get to Provence for most of the summer. Then they had a brief visit to London, before returning to Paris. There, they were forced to adapt to the severe limitations on social interaction. Finally, by May 2021 they managed to meet the UK requirements for re-entry.

He sums it up: 'While we must consider ourselves among the more fortunate survivors of the pandemic, it has proven to be a challenging period in our lives. We have learned to use electronic media such as Zoom, but only after revealing the limits of my IT skills.'

'During the initial lockdown in London, we were able to enjoy picnic lunches in Green Park with **Sir Peter Heap** (1956) and his wife.'

**David Barber** (1954) writes: 'Finally, my wife and I are fully vaccinated and have been released from lockdown! Having wintered at our shore house in New Jersey, we are now back in Vermont for the summer and are ready to start our vegetable garden. We celebrated the arrival of our 12th grandchild in March.'

**John Turvey** (1952) points out that we are a naturally declining cohort. However, for those of his generation who remain and are interested, he tells us that he is still around at 89 in not too bad shape.

He says: 'The pandemic has let us off fairly lightly here in Cyprus.' He spent much of the winter reading long 19th-century French novels to keep his brain ticking over. In the summer he expects to resume daily swims, and might even get to England again.

Like most of us, **John Shore** (1953) suspects, he doesn't have much to report. He has family nearby, which is very helpful, and some further away, including a daughter with learning difficulties 90 miles away in Rutland. He has not seen her (except on Zoom) for a long time, but will go to her soon.

He has no personal contact with any Merton alumni, except for **George Tusa** (1953), who occasionally phones. In the past few years, he has been able to join in a few meetings for ex-chemistry students, including a look around the amazing new laboratory facilities on Mansfield Road, which made him feel 'very out of date!'

The pandemic has brought **Robin Purdue's** (1954) hotel barge operations in France to a complete standstill. His passengers all came from what might be called the Anglo-Saxon countries, the French regarding a holiday on the canals akin to how we would regard a coach trip round the M25. So Robin is bringing his vessel back to a residential mooring in Blackwall Basin, London.

He wonders how we have all adapted to the unprecedented challenges. He is sad that they almost by accident had put down roots in France and says: 'It is the devil of a job uprooting them.'

**Charles Dodd** (1953) and Jenny have now been married for more than 60 years. Among their celebrations, they went to Oxford, but were able to go only briefly to Merton, which had been taken over by a film crew making an *Inspector Morse* production. They went on to Lincoln, their son's college, and to St Hilda's, of which his wife, daughter, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law and niece are all alumnae.

Apart from a short holiday in Qatar, Charles has been sitting out the pandemic in Cyprus, where they have lived for 20 years, and where Charles has been Chairman of the Oxford Society for ten years.

**Peter Dalton** (1953) has been in an old people's home in Ashby de la Zouch for about a year, but is mentally totally alert. He is learning to play the piano. He loves classical music, but also plays Johnny Cash numbers. Though he uses a walking frame, he has a very positive attitude and is training

himself to do without it. He had retired early, aged 50, after a teaching career, and is still passionate about cricket.

He was saddened by the death of **Frank Bough**, having been one of the famous group who drove to Rome in an ancient Morris one vacation. The others were **Tony Marland**, **Roy Peacock** (1953), **Cedric Andrews**, **Keith Buxton** (1952) and **John Humphry** (1952).

**Ray Quinlan** (1952) reports that, like many of our Merton friends, life has been quiet for some time. And also like other alumni, he mourns the loss of Frank Bough and Cedric Andrews, both members of a small group of Mertonians who had kept in touch for years. He is still in contact with **Gordon Whittle** (1952), **Tony Marland** and **Keith Buxton**.

He has had to give up golf, instead walking with his dog, an 80th birthday present from his wife, intended to keep him young. He plays bridge regularly, and continues to paint fakes in acrylic.

He and his wife of 57 years are lucky to have a very supportive family: a retired police inspector, a superintending matron at Papworth, a GP and a lawyer working in Dubai.

**Reg Hall** (1954) says he is reasonably healthy and fit, and joins his wife most days for a brisk walk. He has had non-aggressive prostate cancer, which was zapped out of existence at the turn of the year.

They have finally downsized from 600 square metres to 180, in the same part of town. Their condo/flat has been thoroughly modernised and is plenty big enough.

The second big decision was to buy a flat in Woodbridge in Suffolk, near their daughters. They hope to be there shortly until the end of October, having enjoyed a similar visit last year, in spite of having to quarantine for two weeks. They now know how to get around, enough to feel confident about hiring a car during their stays.

Reg is concerned by the collateral damage of our efforts to control the pandemic, such as forgone treatment of cancer, depression and an assortment of lesser illnesses. Also, he

reckons educational hurdles loom, particularly for children from deprived backgrounds.

He is surprised that the US economy is now recovering quickly, perhaps too quickly for the supply chains, and inflation pends, but he signs off: 'Three cheers for the vaccine developers, especially at Oxford.'

**John Garrard** (1954) wishes he could say he had developed new interests or acquired new skills. However, he and his wife do now use Zoom and Skype to keep in touch with their children and eight grandchildren.

Almost one year ago, their daughter Michelle gave birth to a miracle baby girl, healthy and beautiful. She was 39 and husband Ian 46 when the miracle occurred. John himself had been 46 and 48 when his daughters were born, so he could reassure Ian that he would survive the sleepless nights.

John plans come to England by the end of the year, and visit his sole remaining family, a cousin in Devon, and of course visit Merton. In October, he will attend a reunion of his Cambridge military class, 'F' Course of the Joint Services School for Linguists.

His sole professional activity is continuing to send off to Harvard archival materials he had accumulated during his research. This includes three books written with his wife Carol, two of which are still in print. They are *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia* (Princeton, 2008), and *The Life and Fate of Vasily Grossman* (Pen & Sword, 2012). Sadly, this ongoing activity, begun in 2014, taught him no new skills in this technologically driven world.

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## 1955

**Year Representative: John Mitchell OBE**  
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Email: [johncmitchell36@gmail.com](mailto:johncmitchell36@gmail.com)

Dear contemporaries!

The contributions all reflect life with Covid.

**Nicholas Davie-Thornhill** sends his best wishes to us all after a very interesting 12 months with his Stanton Park Farm estate. He also much enjoyed Dr Julia Walworth's book *Merton College Library* and had a copy bound for his library. He is in excellent health.

**Rex Jamison** reflected on a tumultuous year in the USA, when 'democracy prevailed by the skin of its teeth'. Now that vaccinations having been accelerated, he reflects that wildfires top the worry list for Californians. I am also informed by Rex that my earlier use of 'behaves' as the plural of behalf is obsolete as, according to guru Google I should write 'behalfs'. However, Rex generously encourages me not to modernise.

**Mike Thornton** wrote after his jab at Epsom Downs racecourse that a visit to a beer garden did not appeal in our cold spring. He mused that a 'social occasion' had taken on a whole new meaning, his six-monthly visit to the dentist becoming a social highlight in the lockdown. The barber was to be the next big outing. He has badly missed chess, but has started playing on the computer, albeit he says, at a modest level – but 'not too badly'. However he did notice, with ill-disguised satisfaction, that the current world champion, playing a blitz match online recently, 'left his queen *en prise*'; something that he could console himself with when he next made a dreadful blunder.

Horace (65-8 BC) described **Mike Gazzard**'s feelings about the last year with this: '*Eheu fugaces. Postume. Postume Labuntur anni.*' which he recalls can be translated as, 'Oh for the years that are lost to me, lost to me.'

**Dermot Killingley** attended several online meetings, mainly of the S Y Killingley Memorial Trust and with the editors of the journal *Religions of South Asia*. He also wrote two coronavirus poems, displayed them in his window and watched people stopping to copy them on to their phones. Like Mike above, he was vaccinated at a racecourse (Newcastle) but 'did not see or smell a horse'. However he enjoyed the bike ride through the woods to get there. He had two chapters published in multi-author books. As ever, he is a very busy man.

Over the last year, **Martin Redfern** has walked like never

before – from 'Boston to Philly and back', his pedometer tells him – and clocked up many Zoom meetings and livestream sessions, some 150 of the former with a local book group, the Richmond Rhythm Club and the Global Music Foundation, and 25 or so of the latter, from the Wigmore Hall, Kings Place, and sundry others.

Martin also heard from Professor Sir **George Radda** (1956) who, while convalescing, had written an autobiographical *My Life in Science*. The book describes an extraordinarily wide-ranging and impressive career and is strongly recommended reading for contemporaries. The book also contains two poems from another who shared digs with Martin, **Ron Tamplin**.

I 'hear' at Christmas from **John Adams** in Sydney and **Lionel Jepp** in Shropshire. Like me, they get the odd ailment, but it is always good to get their news. Because of replaced joints and some medical procedures, plus Covid, I find I have hardly golfed for two years. But now, I am back to it, in a buggy, with a vengeance!

I wish you all the very best of fortune and reasonable health. Be happy!

## 1956

### Year Representative: Richard Kenyon

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What a different year for collecting news this has been. Last year we saw only the start of the Covid impact but this year there have been fewer contributions. Most respondents commented that they had little or nothing to report but had at least survived. In the hope of providing stimulation for contemporaries and interest for readers I took a leaf from the *Spectator* columnist Lucy Vickery's book and invited reminiscences of life at Merton in the style of Wordsworth's *Daffodils* or as limericks, and this generated a few verses.

**Ian Hodson** and **Mike Renton** have both survived with nothing else of note to report. **Michael Edwards** and Alison

continue to be well: gardening and golf keep him flexible. Alison has published two collections of poetry this year.

A significant exception as usual was **Brian Roberts-Wray** who says that as a result of a combination of personal carelessness and bad luck, he fell and fractured his femur and left hip in April. He has been assured that he will eventually regain all lost mobility but that could take up to six months to accomplish. Sadly this prevented us meeting when I visited Wells in May. In the meantime he feels very frustrated at home, because he had been eagerly looking forward to the end of lockdown.

More occupied despite his restricted mobility was **Jay Keyser** who said, 'We're doing well sending Covid to Covidtry.' His wife's hairstylist of over 30 years, also a friend, was happy to come to their apartment where she also cut his hair. He has a habit of falling asleep which would be very rude, of course, were it not for the fact that she and Nancy always have a great deal to talk about. Last year Jay's book *The Mental Life of Modernism: Why Poetry, Painting, and Music Changed at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (MIT, 2020) was published. In May this year he lectured on the book for the University of Hyderabad. 'The Cogtalk' webinar session may be seen at [youtu.be/apuK87EWdm8](https://youtu.be/apuK87EWdm8)

Among other authors was Professor Sir **George Radda** who completed his book, *My Life in Science: Not an Autobiography*. **Richard Thomas**, having moved in October to Wye in Kent published in July his autobiography and memoir, *Lucky Dip: A Diplomat's Tale* (Austin Macauley, 2021). A summary and an order form is available at [austinmacauley.com/book/lucky-dip-0](http://austinmacauley.com/book/lucky-dip-0). I look forward to reading it as his last appointment was to Bulgaria from where, in the late 1990s, we acquired two Bulgarian 'daughters' who came to study at Warwick University. We are still in touch with both.

**Mike Trevanion**, kindly replying to ensure this column was not empty, joined others who felt, thanks to the pandemic, they had almost no news of interest. Mike and his wife downsized a year ago to a house in a pleasant estate on the edge of Bath about a mile away from their previous house. They find that they have kind and helpful neighbours, several friends living nearby and there is convenient access to walks

on and around Lansdown Hill. Self-isolating for medical reasons, they have not yet been into the city although in theory there should be a good bus service to the centre. They have done a good deal of reading and have also found that playing bridge online competitively or socially has helped to pass the time. Mike has even been able to play regularly with his brother in Yorkshire who was widowed a year ago. Last summer he also played regularly in brilliantly organised club competitions at the local bowls club under a set of rules and procedures that minimised the risk of Covid transmission. When travel restrictions allowed they have driven regularly to their house in Plymouth to see their two granddaughters aged 5 and 3, acquired late in life, and enjoyed seeing them develop. They are now coming round to a decision to move permanently to Plymouth as advancing age increases the stress of keeping up two houses and travelling frequently between them.

On the home front your correspondent has been lucky to have company, all from Italy, through both lockdowns. During the first our grandson stayed and worked locally as an assistant window cleaner. He then moved to Kent where he has set up his own successful business, Fenestrelli. His parents were here through the second lockdown during which they received both vaccinations and, after quite appalling service from DVLA, renewed their public service vehicle driving licence and were able to return home. I have been kept very busy with Bond's Hospital Almshouse Charity where we completed and opened 45 new apartments. In early June, when Prince Charles visited Coventry at the start of the City of Culture year, he came and cut the birthday cake for the 75th anniversary of the Almshouse Association. Naturally I wore my Merton tie for the occasion.

Sadly we have lost **Michael Clanchy**, **Peter Dickens**, **Cedric Evans** and possibly **Saeed Qureshi** whose email no longer accepts messages. Michael's obituary appears on page 218 of *In Memoriam*. **John Isherwood** recalls inviting Michael to speak at a local charity having read his book *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307* (Oxford, 1979), but without noticing the Merton connection. After a most entertaining presentation entitled 'The Great Train Robbery in the Pass of Alton, 1248', while being driven to the station Michael gently said, 'I think we have met before.'

## Memories of Merton

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by *Jay Keyser*

Duns Scotus walked the library.  
They say it was his nightly beat.  
And those who saw him said that he  
Walked on legs that had no feet.  
That never stopped him from advancing.  
Alas it crimped his style in dancing.

He spent the summer on Brighton beach  
Pondering the Anglo-Saxon corpus  
He did it to enlighten and teach  
In other words, he did it on purpose.  
Alistair Campbell – I almost forgot – he  
Also raced his beloved Bugatti.

For two long years Geoffrey Smithers  
Beowulf and Chaucer he imparted  
Steeped as he was up to the withers  
His sessions weren't for the faint-hearted.  
But underneath that stern demeanor  
He played ragtime piano. No one was keener.

My favorite don, I cannot lie for  
Tolkien was the very best.  
To hear him translate was to die for.  
He raised dead poets from their rest.  
Alas, poor Tolkien, him I knew.  
'Both heart and head are gone with you.'

---

by *Ron Haydon*

Sixty years since our age-group left Merton,  
Further lifespan is rather uncertain.  
Did you know Poet Ovid  
Prophesied 'Don't catch Covid  
Or you could face the most final curtain.'

---

by Richard Kenyon

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
Through Fellows' Quad and Front and Mob  
When all at once I saw a crowd  
Of freshers come to their first job;

Beside the Hall, beneath the Gate,  
In subfusc to matriculate.  
Dean Levens took us all in hand  
And led us to Sheldonian

Where formal admission was grand  
As we became Oxonian.

And so the College welcomed us  
With gentle but no urgent fuss.

Our mathematics once a week  
Took place in Philip Watson's world,  
And there his guidance we would seek,  
Also the taste of wine unfurled.

Philip very lucky fellow,  
Managed the high table cellar.  
When finals came for us on date,  
Those testing times we struggled through.

So then at last to graduate  
And move on to our pastures new.  
In the family of Merton  
Proud are we, and that for certain.

---

by Richard Kenyon

There once was a young man at Merton,  
Of his name I am not too certain.  
He took up a goat  
To the tower top of note,  
Then saw Roberts and ran with a spurt on.

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## 1957

**Year Representative: Graham Byrne Hill**

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It was a delight to hear from so many of you after a bleak year. This summary of goings-on may serve as a warm greeting to those who were unable to respond, but who nevertheless read these words.

**Michael Leach** writes how the pandemic affected his and Margo's lives. Early in the year three holiday/breaks had to be cancelled. 'However we were determined, consistent with government rules and regulations, to get out as much as possible. So we visited many well-known gardens no more than 2.5 hours away. These included Highgrove in Gloucestershire, Great Dixter and Sissinghurst Castle and many others.'

He was able to continue his long-term assistance to the Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, who was re-elected with an increased majority (boosted by Michael's efforts) in December 2019 and is now Secretary of State for Transport. As a contrast, he and Margo now keep chickens in their garden: 'Fresh eggs are a great joy.'

**Keith Lloyd** reports from Adelaide. 'Corona lockdown did not make such a big difference to our life as we have slowed down so much. Fortunately, our two daughters and families live nearby, so they did shopping for us when we were not allowed out of our house.'

Of the many books I read, Molly Greeley's *The Clergyman's Wife* (Penguin, 2020), Pip Williams' *The Dictionary of Lost Words* (Ballantine Books, 2021) and David Lough's *No More Champagne: Churchill and His Money* (Picador, 2015) stand out in my memory. And with respect to TV, Australia gave heaps of coverage to the British Royal Family's comings and goings.'

**David Beetham** writes with gratitude. 'The experience of Covid has forced us into reflective mode even more than usual for our age. Those of us who have survived till now and are

in reasonable health belong to a supremely lucky generation. We have mostly had good jobs, affordable housing, secure pensions, and have been the chief beneficiaries of a free NHS and its medical advances. In my case, by the time I had my second heart attack in 2001, coronary bypass operations had become routine, and the damage to the heart has been minimised by new medicines and an internal defibrillator which saved my life after a recent incident of cardiac arrest. And now we have so far survived Covid and its worst effects by being front of the queue for the vaccine. So join me in saluting our good fortune.'

**Peter Donovan** is 'stranded in New York'. **Ian McMillan** has been much impressed by the press obituaries of **Martin Woollacott**, our contemporary, who died earlier this year and whose obituary can be found on page 221. Martin made two significant contributions to this year's 200th anniversary celebration from the *Guardian*.

**Tony Wood** writes: 'As with most of us, I assume, my activities have been mainly domestic, garden, allotment, reading, walking etc. The last has diminished as the first two take more and more of my energy. However I have managed to organise the faculty and the funding to install a suitable toilet in our parish church. The actual work starts next month. I consider it an achievement in that, unlike my previous fund gathering efforts, it all had to be done online and we could have no fundraising events because of the restrictions.'

'As for reading I very much enjoyed Peter Frankopan's *The New Silk Roads: The Present and Future of the World* (Bloomsbury, 2018) and Michael Wood's *The Story of China* (Simon & Schuster, 2020). Quite separately I enjoyed *Wilding* by Isabella Tree (Picador, 2019), and Robert Macfarlane's *Underworld* (Penguin, 2020).'

My experience, with Elizabeth, of lockdown has been that of one kind of Londoner, solitary but not lonely. There are people all around. We encountered one another frequently, socially distanced, in neighbouring shops, gardens and parks. A sense of neighbourhood developed, based on Zoom-based discussion groups, church services online, gardening tips. Unexpected conversations, both near the house and while out walking have been lively, personal and memorable.

At the beginning of the first lockdown, after ritually re-reading, with new interest, Camus' *The Plague* (Hamish Hamilton, 1948), I was swept away by Kyle Harper's *The Fate of Rome* (Princeton, 2017), the Roman Empire buffeted and finally toppled by plagues and climate change – beautifully written. The end of lockdown (half-term in the Radnor Forest) has been a time of buoyancy and looking to the future, accompanied by Jonathan Rée's witty, lively and unexpected *Witcraft: The Invention of Philosophy in English* (Allen Lane, 2019).

**David Harvey** has the last word: 'Not too many upsides in being over 80. However, we are still surviving... But if you need some copy: Out to pasture after ten years as Chair of the Americas Development Committee.'

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## 1958

### **Year Representatives: Bryan Lewis**

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### and **Peter Parsons**

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Given Year Representatives were asked to be relatively brief in their reports 'to save printing costs' this was not likely to be a problem this year. A common refrain was 'been nowhere, done nothing' albeit some have been able to pursue interests, and in at least one reported case continued to work (see below). **Colin McEachran** added: 'Not only have I been nowhere and done nothing, I can remember little. My only report is that have achieved over 50 years of married life living in the same Edinburgh Square but in three different houses.' Presumably the pantechnicons didn't clock up much mileage.

**Adrian Vickers** said: 'You're so right about "been nowhere, done nothing". I started off the last year with grand ambitions to read the Russians (sic), learn to cook more than omelettes, clear out 20 years of accumulated paperwork from my "office", etc. I've ended up doing none of these things. I think that, as

a result of the torpor brought on by Covid, I may be suffering from “non-responsive to my own wishes” syndrome.’

**Stephen Reynolds** says he has been in Glasgow since 2004 carrying out pastoral duties and much enjoying life in Scotland. **Richard Hawkes** volunteered for the Oxford Covid Vaccination Trials in June 2020 but was rejected because antibodies showed he’d had a mild dose of Covid-19 in the February. He continues as Treasurer of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight branch of the Oxford University Society and is joined by **Peter Parsons** on rambles in the Hampshire countryside. ‘Men only,’ says Peter, ‘to give our wives a bit of space!’

**David Greene** says: ‘As someone with no qualifications in history (not even GCE O-level) I completed a Magna Carta hat trick in 2020. In previous decades I had seen original 12th-century documents at the British Library and in the Chapter House adjacent to Salisbury Cathedral. A stay at a hotel in Lincoln in September enabled me to see another ancient document displayed at the nearby castle.’ **Neil Davidson** also pursues interests way beyond his professional career. He has continued to spend his time collecting antique maps (and globes) mainly for himself but also for the British Library and the National Library of Scotland with a particular interest in those of Florimi, trying to separate those issued by him c.1600 and those by Petrucci re-issued c.1640 who acquired the original copper plates. One of his latest and most apposite acquisitions, of which only one copy he has found in public hands, is that in the British Library but which lacks the entire lower calendar area.

**John Simms** is resident in New Hampshire where the motto is ‘Live Free or Die’, a sentiment he has never subscribed to but which means a good 10% of the people there will do nothing the government asks them to do. He continues: ‘Even though the grizzled Yankees say just wait till next year (heard often in Boston as each sports season ends), global warming has resulted in a short dry winter and a short dry spring. I only wish I could be around to see this disaster play out.’ He and Veronika have gone nowhere, learned lots of new recipes and survived well so far. Their last restaurant meal was 15 months ago but John’s model railroad project has finally begun after years of ups and downs. ‘Anyone who knows what an interactive semi-virtual museum will look like in 2040 is asked

to contact me through your Year Representatives. None of us old folks have a clue about predicting mid-21st century social habits, let alone today’s.’

**Richard Salkeld** spent all last year as a reluctant landlubber. While at home in Switzerland his yacht was on the hard in Valetta. He was pessimistic about the chances of renewing his postponed cruise up the Adriatic to Venice, not least because of closed sites ashore still closed and two weeks quarantine onboard. And so to the worker.

**Oliver Ford Davies** writes: ‘At the risk of boring our readers about my theatrical life I am now about to embark on a tour of a new play *A Splinter in the Ice*, where I play Graham Greene on a visit to Kim Philby in Moscow in 1987. Greene was 82 at the time so I am still too young for the part – well by a year at least – but it has got me reading Greene again and watching his films like *The Third Man* and *Brighton Rock* so there is a silver lining.’

1960 postgraduate **John Crossley** enquired recently about the ‘Coghill peacocks’. I replied that they were white, probably arriving c.1960 or 1961 but had certainly gone by the 1964 Septcentenary celebrations, banished it was said because of their dawn chorus screeching.

## 1959

### Year Representatives: David Shipp

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### and Roger Gould

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Everyone we have heard from has survived the year in reasonable shape and, being all of a certain age, is now fully vaccinated. Many were complimentary about the College’s *Merton Women: 40 Years* series of profiles and online lectures.

We were sorry to hear of the death of **Stephen Blow** in March 2020. At College, he was a keen oarsman and actor,

and apparently ignored his tutor's ruling that you can row and act, but not both. Stephen studied physics and went on to obtain a DPhil. He married Kirsten from Denmark, and worked for the Danish Atomic Energy Commission. Later he worked for the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell, and then in research liaison for the Central Electricity Generating Board.

**Richard Allan** and his wife Diana are well, and met **Peter Hayward** and his wife Ann for a pub lunch in the North Downs last summer. Peter and Ann plan a get-together for all ten of the Hayward family (including four granddaughters) in the Forest of Bowland in August. They are looking forward to the resumption of music and singing in their church. Peter was very complimentary about the Merton Choir, now back in Chapel and in good voice. The evensong in remembrance of the Duke of Edinburgh was first rate.

**Graham Boulton** has survived the year and has a new partner.

**John Dance** and his wife Doris are in relatively good health. Lockdown has given John time to do a lot of painting and to extend his interest into computer graphics and animation. He is looking forward to a delayed trip to China.

**Michael Diamond** has weighed in with a letter to the *Times* about the threat to the National Theatre and performance collections held by the Victoria & Albert Museum posed by the Museum's planned reorganisation. As things stand his large collection of 19th- and early-20th-century material relating to Victorian theatre and entertainment, accumulated over 50 years, is bequeathed to the V&A. The museum claims that it needs to save £10 million over each of the next four years, but Michael wants to be assured that there will be enough curatorial expertise left to handle these collections after the reorganisation. Michael has also lent items from his collection to an exhibition of the work of the poster and graphic artist John Hassall, at the Heath Robinson Museum in Pinner.

**Alan Drinkwater** has enjoyed cultivating his garden, and walks in the Hampshire countryside around his home in Rowlands Castle. He and his wife Joan managed a short stay in the Gower, and a longer one with Joan's family in Guernsey.

He is involved in the Rowlands Castle Heritage Centre ([www.rchc.org.uk](http://www.rchc.org.uk)) which is well worth a visit, virtual or in person.

**Antony Ellman** and his wife Constance have been busy in their garden near Richmond Park, where they have been able to walk and cycle regularly. He has been mentoring some tropical agriculture students, brushing up his French and Spanish, and playing a lot of music — the tenor sax is his instrument. His band, the St Margaret's Elastic Band, has made a number of lockdown videos which you can see on [www.elasticband.org](http://www.elasticband.org)

**David Forsyth** has been able to spend time at his favourite hotel, the Berry Head Hotel in Brixham, where he has done much of his writing. His book *The Hollow Secret* (Sundial House Press) is centred on this hotel. His tally of books so far is Adult: 10, Children: 6. Two are awaiting final typing and publication.

**Hume Hargreave** and his wife Mary Ann moved to a new house in May near the hospital in Newcastle where he goes for chemotherapy. They hope soon to be able to go to their other home in Kirkby Lonsdale for short periods. Their morale has been lifted by many kind messages of support from Merton contemporaries, and they thank everyone who has been in touch.

**Martin Hawkins** says that all is well, and they are still enjoying the outdoor life presented by the garden, the Bowland Fells and the Dales. Travel restrictions have put the Lakes somewhat off the map, and also the use of climbing huts, but most of lockdown has left them unaffected.

**John Latham** writes that his son George was lucky to have a year's internship with Intel, fulfilled from his bedroom at home. Two of John's old collections (on economic history) have been reissued in paperback this year, one from 1986!

**Tony Leggett** has survived the year with his wife and daughter.

**Joe McDonald** had planned to return to Texas to visit **Bob Krueger**, but like many other things this was not possible. His grandson, in his first year at Oriel, laments that all the enticements of Oxford have yet to happen. However, Latin for the over-eighties of Haslemere is alive and well, although

Zoom for Computerphobics taxes some of them even more than Ovid does.

**Bill Woods** says that all three of their children moved house during the year. As a result two have properties within easy walking distance of their home in Hereford, but neither has moved back in with them as seems to be common nowadays. They have given up on TV, it proving ever more difficult to find something worth watching.

**David Shipp** reports that both their children and their families moved abroad during the year – one family to Belgium and the other to Germany. He and Phillida were able to visit the German family in Greifswald on the Baltic coast just before Germany locked down. They have walked the paths of Saddleworth throughout the year, with afternoon tea and cake becoming a staple after-walk repast. Their walking group has started up again after a year's respite, and a residential walking holiday in North Devon is planned.

**Roger Gould** reports that, by the time *Postmaster* is published, he and Cathy expect to have moved to a new abode in Keyworth, Nottingham, where their daughter and her family live. However, they have also bought an apartment in Saddleworth, the area where they have lived for the past 47 years, so that they can keep in regular contact with friends there and other family members in the North West. They are looking forward to freedom from some of the local commitments they have had for many years!

## 1960

**Year Representative: Keith Pickering**  
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**Andrew Devine, Jasper Holmes, Alan Keat, Roger Laughton, Richard Mulgan, Tim Phillips, Nick Silk, Michael Thorn and Mike Williams** are all still with us but have nothing of note for *Postmaster*.

**Keith Aspinall** is calculating the odds as to whether he will be able to go to Spain for the middle two weeks of September.

Around evens at the time of writing, in the hopes that he and Rosemary will have had both their inoculations by then.

**Stuart Blume** continues to be very busy. His family history, now called an auto fiction, has been held up by his not being able to travel. His vaccine-history related activities, however, have been pushed into overdrive. He has had countless interviews with journalists, has written a number of op-eds, is editing a book on the politics of vaccine production for Routledge, and his 2017 book *Immunization: How Vaccines became Controversial*, was republished in paperback in April. Though active, like all of us, he sees only a handful of people in three dimensions.

**Gerald Cadogan** continues to write up the excavation at Knossos, but Covid and age are doing their best to slow him down. He looks forward to returning to Crete – but when?

**Patrick Cafferkey** took **Keith Pickering**'s tracking him down in his otherwise tranquil existence in very good part and kindly furnished a summary of his post-Merton life. Patrick moved to Japan after going down, spent time teaching and translating before setting up an advertising operation with friends. After several years he returned to the UK, did much the same thing for a while and then retired peacefully some time ago. Through his performing he was fortunate to meet a fellow musician, Elizabeth, while she was visiting from Denmark, and they have now been happily married for over 20 years. He kindly corrected the urban myth that **Nigel Stenhouse** and **Julian Perry Robinson** had upset the authorities via an unauthorised Ancien Régime picnic in the grounds of Bletchley Park (see the 2020 *In Memoriams* for Nigel and Julian), by noting that he too had been at the picnic and that it had actually taken place in Ditchley Park.

**John Cotton** chanced to be in Switzerland when the epidemic got going, opted to stay there and at the time of writing had not been in England for over 14 months. He has been home working from his retreat in the Alps, more agreeable than London, but by no means safer, as both he and his wife contracted the virus.

**Geoffrey Copland** has been kept busy with his various responsibilities as a trustee, most notably with Trinity Laban

Conservatoire of Music and Dance, and Trinity College London. His many Zoom meetings have worked well and the various institutions have learnt how to conduct their operations under the ever-changing regulations. He has joined the knee replacement club, successful so far in that he is able to walk pain free.

**John Crossley** and Sara are fine, he paradoxically discovering that travel restrictions have resulted in more rather than less interaction with distant colleagues, an example being when on 1 April 2020 he gave a talk about Maurice Oldfield (see *Postmaster* 2020) at Monash University, his old friend Peter Stansky from Stanford was able to attend by Zoom – a great honour and a nice reunion. Life has been busy with Zoom meetings, principally those on the China-Philippines project, and the weekly Mediæval-Renaissance gatherings, which now attract an overseas audience. He has had two book chapters published: 'Juan Cobo, el Códice Boxer y los sangleyes de Manila' in M Ollé and J-P Rubiés (eds), *El Códice Boxer: Etnografía colonial e hibridismo cultural en las islas Filipinas* (Barcelona, 2020); and '...and so on: Schütte on naming ordinals' in R Kahle and M Rathjen (eds), *The Legacy of Kurt Schütte* (Berlin, 2020). He thinks the latter will be his last technical mathematical paper, though more elementary work is in hand. A further paper, 'An unexpected excursion: The first account of Spaniards in Ayutthaya (1585)', was published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in April 2020. Other papers are with referees and John hopes to publish another book next year.

**George Darroch** is fully recovered from his medical setbacks of 2020, is doubly vaccinated and looking ahead to post-lockdown life. Fortunately he and Angela are aided in this endeavour by their daughter, Francesca, and their son, Alasdair, both of whom feel their parents are wholly irresponsible.

**John Davies** reports that lockdown has enabled him to push forward with tasks which only he can do, so the list of papers now 'in press' has lengthened and he has done a number of assessments for publishers and universities. He is frustrated to sense his remaining active years being eroded and seeks lockdown liberation, achieved simply by his catching a train to just beyond Nantwich, walking along the canal to Whitchurch, and getting a train back home again; job done.

**Leslie Epstein** had his latest novel *Hill of Beans: A Novel of War and Celluloid* published by the University of New Mexico Press in February 2021 and is working on his next.

**Peter Fattorini** continues to cycle and is lucky to live in the Yorkshire Dales, an area bursting with pleasant rides, all leading uphill, thus so much the better for exercise. He has not yet succumbed to an electric bike but suspects that he might yield to one in the not-too-distant future.

**David Fletcher** is close to finishing his book and reports that his son-in law has started a primarily robot-run brewery which, among other products, offers a stout worthy of comparison with **Keith Pickering**'s lifelong income provider, Guinness.

**Bruce Gilbert** and Dot have continued walking in the Moors and Wolds, including the Cleveland Way, with some swimming and cycling too, and have worked with Zoom gatherings embracing pilates, book group, university choir, and some Schubert and Scott Joplin on the piano. In a couple of the lockdown windows they were fortunate in being able to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with the children and grandchildren at Middlethorpe Hall on Ebor Day. Both their sons have been involved with Covid: one as a consultant oncologist married to a GP; and the other an accountant whose wife, attached to the university DNA sequencing unit, was swiftly drafted in to run the initial Covid testing system.

**Francis Glassborow** is frustrated at not having been nearer to the centre of Oxford and Merton than a couple of hundred metres east of the Plain. Neither punting nor bridge has featured except the latter of late, following the development of an online system where you can actually see the other players at your table. He has had his arm twisted into becoming secretary of his allotment association. Gwyneth, a Mertonian gardener in her own right, has spent much of the year on full, or more recently 50%, furlough. She is very protective of his great age and has reminded him that he learnt to make ice cream over the summer.

**John Hartnett** has escaped Covid; he and Sally have had their second vaccinations and so both feel much safer as a result.

**Philip Hawkes** and Patricia are in fine form. Though they had hitherto failed to mention it, **Keith Pickering** was advised by **Patrick Cafferkey**, and had it cheerfully confirmed by Philip's daughter Lucy, that the World Ice Croquet event takes place on the moats of their Chateau Missery, when both the temperature and the number of guests are sufficient to render the battle worthwhile.

**Arthur Hepher** celebrated his and Barbara's 80th birthdays with a 15-family-member Zoom dinner party. Côte delivering food and champagne immaculately to all five addresses. Way to go, Arthur.

**Alan Heppenstall** has little to report other than that the pandemic and lockdown measures have finally persuaded him to retire completely from tourist guiding, which he could have done three or four years ago but never quite wanted to take the decision.

**Mike Hind** has undergone lengthy hospitalisation and surgery but is now recovering and has plans to visit Sicily in September, which he hopes will allow him more time for sightseeing than during his first trip in the early 2000s, when he was working as an examiner in spoken English for Trinity College London.

**Keith Pickering** felt that this year his first email to everyone was like taking a roll call and hoping all hands would go up, saying 'Here'. He is both relieved and happy to report that such was indeed the case. Thank you all for your continued support and let us hope we have increased activity to record in 2022, once this current pestilence has faded into the background.

**David Price** and Sue were lucky in being able to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary when it was legally possible to go out for a very good lunch, even if only *à deux*. Another lucky break was a week's trip on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal before the gates slammed shut again.

**Martin Roberts** has returned to the fold after **Keith Pickering** caught up with his new email address. Prior to a stroke which has affected his left hand side he had been enjoying retirement, working with the Princes Teaching Institute, running courses for young teachers. He had also

collaborated with other authors and had written two books on aspects of education, both published by Routledge. He and his wife had been able to do a lot of travelling and are now entertained by their children and five grandchildren, the youngest of which he took to a hugely enjoyable Merton Family Day. He is still in touch with **Jonathan Wright** and **Anthony Fletcher** (1959).

**Glynne Stackhouse** has stepped down from the management committee of the local chamber music series and has temporarily been obliged to relinquish his piano duet playing because his 90-year-old partner has been compelled to shield. He and Patricia were able to see something of their children and grandchildren and between lockdowns had a short holiday in Poole and took a boat trip to see the Jurassic Coast from the water; mostly they live according to Bing Crosby and Bertrand Russell – busy doing nothing, in praise of idleness.

**Richard Thompson** and Jane hope to return to France and Sicily later in the year. He continues to take pleasure from learning Italian and all being well would wish to join **Alan Keat** and **Keith Pickering** in their annual Gentlemen's Luncheon, perforce postponed from last year.

**Jim Trefil** is still professing at George Mason, the main event of the year being the publication of a book titled *Cosmic Queries* written with Neil deGrasse Tyson and published by National Geographic.

**Bruce Walter** reports that Greece is struggling with the impact of Covid. While his emphysema is troublesome it is happily manageable and his career as a translator has taken a turn from archaeology and children's books to cookery, of all things: a beautifully illustrated 350-page tome on the recipes of Limnos, many of them unique to the island. His granddaughter, Natalie, is reading History of Art at St Peter's and his grandson, George, has been accepted to study jazz guitar at the Codart performing arts university in Rotterdam, so all is well with the future generation.

**Philip Webb** as usual kindly submitted what he would authorise to have printed: 'Philip Webb (Toronto) has moved. His lengthy command of the U71 – the Kaiser's most successful submarine – has come to an end and he is now in command

of the UI21, a much more modern boat. He continues to be in good health for most ages and to do his tiny bit to oppose *die feindliche Engländer* and their destructive Brexit policy. He also continues to look forward to independence for all the Celtic lands, not least his own Cymru. In his new apartment, trams run by the end of the street as they have done since the 1890s, part of Toronto's status as one of the world's four most liveable cities.'

**Brian Winston** has been able to enjoy yet another year of ceaseless self-promotion, producing what he believes to be his 21st book, *The Roots of Fake News: Objecting to Objective Journalism* (Routledge, 2020), in conjunction with his son Matthew. He has written four pieces on pandemic incompetence, his line being that the press, not understanding probabilism, has not managed to speak truth to science very effectively. He finds lecturing online to be a soul-destroying absurdity, but happily this has been offset by his taking delivery of a second grandchild, looking like a cheerful emoticon. He would appreciate being able to hug the little lad, however, before he gets too big to be so embraced.

**John Wood** reached 80 this year and was thus prompted to bow out gracefully from a number of community roles, notably the chairmanship of the trustees of the Wymondham Arts Forum, which incorporates the arts centre gallery in Wymondham's 13th-century Beckett's Chapel, and the biennial literary festival, though he is happy to see post-lockdown stirrings of activity in both these areas. His two saxophones have been rather neglected but he is again enjoying the less physical strain of the alto sax and the deeper voice and easier blowing of the tenor. He and Kate continue to rejoice in the constant support and close physical proximity of the majority of the Wood clan.

**Nick Woodward** is in good form, noting that on the same day he chanced to have coffee with **Roger Laughton** he encountered **Martin Woollacott** (1957)'s obituary and **Oliver Ford Davies** (1958)'s appearance in *Sense and Sensibility* – a Merton triple salchow.

**Jonathan Wright** is fit and well and continuing to write.

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## 1961

**Year Representative: Bob Machin**

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## 1962

**Year Representative: Martyn Hurst**

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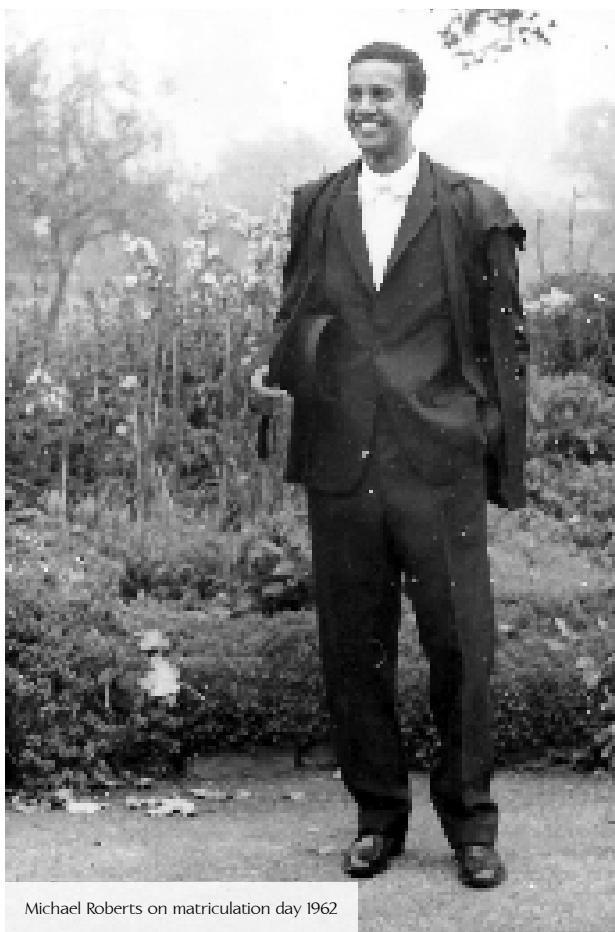
Tel: 01483 414809 Email martyn.hurst@tiscali.co.uk

**Christopher Rogers** managed a holiday in Namibia just before lockdown took hold. His main diversion has been a 14-strong 'choronochoir' with individuals recording a piece and then some editing and blending. He has also been giving some Zoom lectures to art societies around the country. In support of the Merton 1264 Challenge last year he achieved a 'Double Merton' of 25.8 miles over the Wiltshire Downs.

**Alan Eastwood** managed a number of overseas trips between the various stages of lockdown. He is currently recovering from a 'winged scapula' which his consultant insisted on parading in front of his trainees as it is rare. Coincidentally I suffered from the same ailment and my physio girlfriend was far more interested in the condition than the patient!

**Charles Webb** reports that life in Windsor Castle has been absolute bliss without the tourists and is campaigning to make lockdown permanent. He had a ringside seat for Prince Philip's funeral but we were all disappointed that he did not feature in person in his splendid uniform.

**David Nunn** is Emeritus Professor at Southampton and has recently published papers on space physics and plasma physics in conjunction with UCLA and Kyoto University. His worldwide cruising has been somewhat restricted by the lockdowns, but there are worse places to be incarcerated than the Isle of Wight.



**Michael Roberts** cannot recall why he missed the matriculation photo but has sent a very dashing picture of himself in sub fusc in the beautiful surroundings of Merton Gardens.

**Keith Burton** is now editor of the magazine for the Association of British Philatelic Societies, and is bringing it into the 21st century by digitisation. His lectures on postal history are now given on Zoom. We must congratulate him on being elected a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society of London. Despite his focus on stamps his garden has never looked better.

**Colin Stewart** reminds us that he joined us as a postgraduate student from our 'sister college' Peterhouse to do his DipEd – at least this is his excuse for missing the matriculation photo. He then went on to teach at St Paul's before retiring to Dartmoor which he finds a suitable place for lockdown.

**Paddy Millard** has, during lockdown, become an adherent of the Cartesian philosophy of Vegeto. His battles with HMT and HMRC via teleconferencing lack the vitality and zest of face-to-face encounters. He is brushing up his semaphore to better engage with the DWP. On the positive side he is relieved not to feature in the left-hand column of my recent attachment.

**John Keane** is surviving lockdown but looking forward to the next Merton Weekend when he can get together with his contemporaries for their annual mathsfest.

**Martyn Hurst**, frustrated at the miserably low interest rates offered by the building societies, has concluded an Aston Martin Vantage has reached the point on its depreciation curve that it is a better investment. He is making good use of the lifting of lockdown restrictions.

**Keith Shuttleworth** has been using the lockdown to hone his bridge skills and is wondering when the next Gaudy for 1962 will be held. (Development Department to note.)

**Callum McCarthy** has spent the second lockdown in the UK rather than France to ring the changes and get vaccinated.

**Nick Bardsley** is no longer among the ranks of the missing. He is still working (unlike most of us) and is looking forward to an upturn in his travel business as lockdown eases.

**David Jenkins** points out that longevity for men in the UK is 79.4 years and the fact that 72% of us are still around is a positive. He pays tribute to the excellent **Dennis Parsons** (1936) who taught him the difference between Idleness and Laziness and inspired his recent paper for the *Quarterly Journal of Medicine*. This finds that, of the early great innovators of medicine, 25% would have been considered unacceptable for medical school, 25% acceptable, and the remaining 50% – maybe.

**Jim Doty** has retired from chairing the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board which has raised the standards of auditing and attracted favourable comment in the recent Kingman Report on the Carillion collapse. Along with the 17-year cicadas he is emerging from lockdown and looks forward to meeting up with Old Mertonians in this changed and uncertain world.

**Andrew Varney** divides his time between the Gower peninsula and the Lot-et-Garonne. He says that **Jeremy Hummerstone** visited to escape the Sussex's wedding — merely to find a celebratory jamboree had been organised by the jolly, resourceful and bibulous expats of the region. He has not revealed whether a similar party was arranged to celebrate the Oprah interview (*sic transit gloria*).

**Footnote:** *During his time as President of the Oxford Engineering Alumni, your Year Rep had to endure the fact that Merton no longer takes engineering students. How can this be in an age when applied science underpins almost every aspect of daily life? Previous entreaties have fallen on deaf ears. Surely there is a place for even a token one.*

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## 1963

**Year Representative:** Guy English  
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**Stephen Ralls** writes: 'As our Ontario spring turns rapidly into summer, we look longingly across the Atlantic at friends and relations in Britain where, we are reliably informed, an end to the lockdown is about to begin. Here, we are still very much in the third wave: restaurant meals, theatre visits, haircuts are all distant memories. Will we remember how to behave when those possibilities finally rematerialise? Daily life for me and my partner, Bruce Ubukata, continues with a fair degree of monotony, enlivened with Trollope novels, the 'Chips' Channon diaries and re-exploration of Wagner's Ring, at the piano and on CD. Almost our last gesture in support of the cultural sector, before shutdown, was a modest donation towards the Canadian Opera Company's premiere production of *Parsifal*, postponed. What opera

could be less adaptable for physical distancing? There are hopes for next season.

'One real pleasure has been the ability to watch services in Merton Chapel. The establishment of the choir and the new organ have enormously increased the prestige and value of the College. It is extraordinary to peer back and see myself and friends, founder members of Schola Cantorum, as 'amateur' members of the chapel choir; we did our best under the benign leadership of Mark Everett not to be put off by the explosions of glass candle-holders, shattering the serenity of William Smith's responses. Memories must sustain us until that happy day when we can visit again.'

**Peter Hay** reports: 'A first communication from me! I left England immediately after Oxford for the new Simon Fraser University near Vancouver, where I met my wife, Dorthea; I got deeply involved in theatre and in publishing; in 1980 we moved to Los Angeles where I taught, wrote books and owned a couple of antiquarian bookshops; in 2007 we returned to British Columbia to enjoy our retirement in the beautiful Okanagan valley. Home confinement finally drove me to deal with the accumulation of papers of six decades. I keep EVERYTHING. All is to go to the Archives, with a narrative of my Oxford life in the '60s. The largest part of the hoard is letters from my circle of friends during the four years we spent together and in the period following my departure for Canada. I have lost touch with most of these contemporaries, so this is to alert them to the fact that their youthful writings will become part of Merton's archives. If they kept any of my letters, I appeal to them to send them to Dr Walworth. Of course I'd love to hear from any of these friends, [peterbooks@gmail.com](mailto:peterbooks@gmail.com). Thank you!'

**Gordon Whatley** and Mary celebrated his 75th and her 70th birthdays (and grandson Niko's 4th) in southern Sicily. They also managed to spend a few weeks of the ensuing winter in New Orleans (which was pleasantly warm and diverting) before reluctantly hurrying back in mid-March to suburban Connecticut, to begin Covid-quarantine. While Mary has adapted her busy social life to Zoom, her increasingly deaf spouse could not, but has kept up his routine of editing/ translating medieval Latin (and very slowly, medieval Greek), then jogging most afternoons, and sharing the crossword or

some TV in the evening. One publication to report this year: a short article (in a festschrift for a City University of New York colleague) discussing the legend of the Freemasons' patron saints, Quatuor Coronati. He writes: 'Enjoyed Dr Highfield's *A History of Merton College*. My copy was a gift from **Peter Smith** (still much missed), who worked hard to keep Mertonians '63 in touch. It was good to have email exchanges with my erstwhile roommates **John Bamfield**, **Larry Danson** (1964) and **John Wormald** and to swap commiserations with **Rick Allen** about Newcastle United and Blackburn Rovers.'

**Roger Garfitt** is very happy to be celebrating his silver wedding with Margaret, to whom he dedicated his latest book of poems, *The Action* (Carcanet, 2019). He still runs his Poetry Masterclass for the University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education at Madingley Hall and lunches with Cambridge-based 1963 Mertonians **Richard Allen**, **Derek Hughes** and **Robin Kirkpatrick**, and with **John Arrowsmith**, who drives down (up?) from London for the reunion.

**David Goda** writes: 'I can only report being well but currently missing our grandchildren – four in Durham (whose father, **Keith Goda** (1998) was also a Merton mathematician) and one in Chengdu, China. I'm still actively involved with a Cub Scout pack (my ninth, over nearly 60 years), which has kept active, usually outdoors or online, almost throughout the pandemic, though camping has been impossible.'

**Peter Livsey** reports: 'Since my retirement I have worked on local history projects and aspects of national commemorations in Newcastle. These linked street-level, archive and online research. Denied access to the streets (I do not live there) and my favourite libraries, I had a gap to fill, so engaged with the local history of the rural/mining area where we have lived for 40 years. We have used it as the basis of the daily walk with follow-up online. I have also benefited from friends' engagement with the history of their own families and localities, through the English Civil War, Napoleonic and world wars. This has taken me (virtually) to the streets of London (where I have never lived) through their connections, or photographs from their walks and jogs. Recent events and debates have taken me to an ongoing interest in the function of public sculpture.'

'For the record, I taught history and then became an LEA inspector for History. I finished as a Senior Inspector (team leader) for the LEA and OFSTED. But that was a long time ago!'

**John Allen** writes: 'It would be going too far to call this a nothing year. At the risk of immodesty, the main event was the receipt of an MBE after my final retirement from the Northern Ireland Office just before the pandemic. I have for many years been researching church architecture in Sussex, which has remained my focus (see my website: [www.sussexparishchurches.org](http://www.sussexparishchurches.org)), though I now live in Blackheath. Recently I decided to produce an England-wide website listing church artists and architects, optimistically a ten-year project. Life is beginning to open up and we have both our daughters and their families living within ten minutes' walk (one is a doctor specialising in Covid-19, which is useful) so we have been able to see our grandchildren regularly, if as yet no more.'

**Alan Malcolm** finally retired from running the Royal Society of Biology in 2009. He used to bump into his junior chemist, **David Giachardi** (1967), at meetings. Getting bored with retirement, he ran the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee for five years. When exhaustion and common sense finally clicked in, he retired from that in 2018. Somewhat to his surprise, he has become an official guide at Fulham Palace. He now knows lots about the history of the Church of England which, as a devout atheist, he finds odd. He was tickled recently to receive a copy of *My Life in Science: Not an Autobiography* from his tutor, Professor Sir George Radda (1956).

His tutorial partner, practical partner, flatmate and good friend **Robert Freedman** died in 2017 (obituary in *Postmaster* 2018). Robert's unfinished project was on the work of female scientists 100 years ago. His wife, Penny, took up the cudgel, and this has now been published as *A Life Force in Life Science: Discovering Ida MacLean* (Book Guild, 2020). A review should appear in *The Biochemist* in the near future. Alan has been godfather to Lucinda, daughter of **Guy English**, since 1972. He has recently retaliated, and Guy is now godfather to his daughter, Rebecca. What goes round ...

**Patrick Scott** writes that he retired in 2011, and still lives in South Carolina near his daughter and family; his son visits

regularly from San Francisco. Glad they didn't sell the house and downsize before the lockdowns. For his last 15 years at the university he doubled as the library's head of rare books, and since 2012, improbably, he has been editing the journal *Studies in Scottish Literature*, writing on Burns and Stevenson, justifying occasional 'research' trips to Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Professor **Derek Hughes** reports: 'For a retired academic, it was embarrassing to discover how closely lockdown life resembled the normal version. I and my wife, Professor Janet Todd, are both functioning as usual and continuing to write. I have completed two articles on German Wagner criticism to 1945, which will appear in *The Wagner Journal* next year. Janet has completed her third novel, *Jane Austen and Shelley in the Garden* (Fentum Press, 2021), which will appear in July.'

**John Wormald** writes: 'We've had a pretty comfortable year, thanks to all the retail and service people. Groceries via click-and-collect to minimise our exposure, other things bought online, careful distancing. Keeping in touch electronically, including with my two other children and my grandchildren in Australia. Otherwise, much reading, attempting to push the very limited sales of my latest book, trying to get my Italian going again, listening to music, mild exercise in the form of walks, cycling and gentle weights in the garage. All helped last year by the long period of warm and dry weather. Finally saw some of my wife's family, after a long interruption. Managed a visit to my house in Burgundy in July, hopeful we can go again some time, to face the jungle that the garden will have become. I was surprised in July at how casually people in France seemed to be taking the pandemic. Heaven knows when I shall get to Australia again. In what respects has life permanently changed?'

**Rick Allen** reports: 'I have nearly "absolutely nothing to report" other than universal lockdown experiences. I'm on my third (and by far the happiest) marriage of 20 years. I can sympathise with the stress caused by a house fire; my wife suffered one nearly 30 years ago and still mentions it at least once a month. I am currently experiencing some domestic disruption through the simultaneous installations of a heat pump and a downstairs loo. Two modest, sensible projects, but delays due to lockdowns have brought them into awkward collision.'

**Les Holborow** writes: 'I lost my wife eight years ago but have been very fortunate to meet up with another emeritus professor who lost her husband, whom I knew, even longer ago. Lucky in New Zealand to have just had a full production of *Don Giovanni* featuring singers who but for Covid would have been pursuing their careers in London, New York, Germany ... We travel to Auckland soon to see a *Fidelio* with another international cast. I had an 80th birthday party with nearly 80 people present, but sadly not a San Diego brother.'

**Richard Boyd** is retired but still doing a bit, like teasing epidemiologists to be less ignorant about molecules, and vice versa. He read George Radda's scientific autobiography with astonished wonder that 'stuffy old Oxford' had so embraced, as an undergraduate chemist, this young Hungarian refugee. Apparently due to the Merton chemistry tutor in 1957 taking a 'risk' on a bright, unusually hard working youngster. Long may colleges be self-confident enough to dare to be different, and effective.

**Peter Rhodes** reports: 'Having read for my first degree (Lit Hum) at Wadham, I was a Harmsworth Scholar from 1963 to 1965 (beginning a DPhil thesis on Ancient Greek History), and a University award took me out of the UK for half of my time, so I didn't get to know very many people in Merton.'

'I spent my career in Classics at Durham, eventually Professor of Ancient History; retired in 2005 but still active generally and academically; I have suffered less than many people from Covid inconveniences, since my pensions continue to be paid and in retirement I have all my books at home and am used to working there. My movements and social contacts are much reduced: I used to enjoy travelling to exotic places, but the farthest in 2020 was to Edinburgh for a few days in September, fortunately just before tighter restrictions were reintroduced; as an elderly singleton I've taken advantage of the opportunity to have a support bubble, to which I've recruited friends who live nearby; and I'm on the side of those who think official policy is too cautious rather than those who think it isn't cautious enough. I look forward to becoming more active while still capable.'

After completing his history degree, **Peter Moss** went to Liverpool University for a social work qualification, before

ending up, rather serendipitously, at London's Institute of Education, where he worked at the Thomas Coram Research Unit up to retirement; his academic interests included early childhood education, the relationship between employment, care and gender, and democracy in education, and much of his work was international. These days he is an emeritus professor at what is now UCL Institute of Education, and enjoys combining leisure activities (including walking and reading history) with some work, and has just published a book: *Neoliberalism and Early Childhood Education* (Routledge, 2021). He lives in London, as do his three children; his wife Rosemary died in 2015.

**David Pennock** writes: 'Jane and I live in East Sussex, as we have for the last 47 years. Much of my time has been spent running my own manufacturing company, based in south London, which still keeps me occupied although much of it by Zoom these days. Over the years I have been involved in a number of other organisations, Chair of Wilton's Music Hall, Chair of the Dulwich Prep Schools and much involvement with the CBI. I have now consolidated these down to chairing Hastings Contemporary art gallery. A very different world from manufacturing but it keeps my brain active.'

**Lawrence Fenelon**, imperceptibly retired, gardens and oddly owns a gym he doesn't visit.

Somewhat disconcerted but pleased to receive so much pent-up input this year! For myself, I lost my wife just a year ago, having achieved Golden status; we had just, by a day, completed a book on a 19th-century botanist of this village (*Elizabeth Andrew Warren, 1786-1864. Algologist and Botanist of Flushing*) and I will have to complete a couple of other joint projects as well as disposing appropriately of her creative output – paintings, sketches, quilts, poetry – which fortunately survived a fire. Still rowing and sailing to stay fittish and sane. Ish.

## 1964

**Year Representative: Richard Burns**

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Twelve Covid-filled months have passed since last year's report and, unsurprisingly, most of us seem to feel that nothing newsworthy has happened in our lives. Our two Stakhanovite authors, Messrs **Irwin** and **Stokes**, however, continue their labours unabated. **Robert Irwin** continues at his 'big history' of mediaeval Syria and Egypt, still a work in progress, unlike the two novels he has completed in lockdown, the first of which, *The Runes Have Been Cast* (Dedalus, 2021) will be published later this year. His first novel, *The Arabian Nightmare* (Dedalus, 1983), has just seen its seventh impression this year. In his spare time, he is Middle East editor of the *Times Literary Supplement* and is consulting on a TV documentary on the Arabian Nights.

**Richard Stokes** is less prolific, with only two music books coming out this year, but his subjects are formidably Germanic. *Memoirs of an Accompanist* by Helmut Deutsch (Kahn & Averill, 2020) which Richard has translated and describes as 'fascinating', deals with Deutsch's partnerships with some 30 great singers, several with fantastic names such as Angelika Kirchslager and Brigitte Fassbaender, others more homely such as Grace Bumbry. There are also chapters on various aspects of art song, such as rehearsing, grand pianos and page-turners. *The Complete Songs of Hugo Wolf* (Faber & Faber, 2021), previewed last year but whose publication was postponed because of the pandemic, will be launched at the Wigmore Hall on 1 October.

**Mike Stepan** continues his not-for-profit work as a family mediator, on which he has been engaged since returning to London from Singapore 15 years ago. This year, of course, he has had to do it remotely, which has 'brought new complications', but he comments cheerfully that this new way of working also brings a number of (unspecified) benefits to all concerned.

**Tony Webster** has had a quiet year, the memorable parts being a long, sunny holiday in Normandy in July and August with much good music to hear and a visit to Liverpool for rugby league's 'Super League Magic Weekend' with his younger daughter. The six matches they watched at Anfield were so good that they plan to repeat the experience, but will not be staying at the 'appalling' accommodation Tony found near Goodison Park again. The younger Webster

commented 'What do you expect for £25 a night for two, Dad?' and is taking over travel agent duties.

**Andrew Curtis** says that, despite being retired, he is as busy as ever, particularly with the affairs of Wimborne Minster, where he chairs the Minster Makes Music appeal, which is well on the way to reaching its £1 million target. **Peter Wood** is also engaged in community work, having served as a city resident representative on the City of Longmont, Colorado's Climate Action Task Force. Perusal of the city's website reveals that the task force is concentrating on water conservation in this city north of Denver at the foot of the Rocky Mountains so as to protect against the reduction in water supplies anticipated as a result of climate change.

**David Ireland**, like me, has little to report other than that he hopes to see all his 15 grandchildren in the next few months; this will be a challenge as ten of them live abroad. I have already achieved this goal, but it has been a lot easier as two live in Edinburgh and one trip to London sufficed to knock off the other four. My commitments continue to shrink as my last investment trust directorship ended in February and my charity trusteeships are down to three. In theory this will give more time for travel, but the short-term omens are not promising. Ten days' quarantine/incarceration in the Edinburgh airport Hilton on return at the behest of our Nictator does not appeal!

*Slàinte mhath!*

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## 1965

**Year Representative: Peter Robinson**

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Not unsurprisingly, in view of the pandemic, there have been fewer contributions than usual this year. Personal greetings came in from **Paul Everson, Bill McGrew, Adrian Scheps** and **Paul Slack**; all well, their families, too.

**John Dryden** wrote to say: 'It's that time of year again – but with the difference that due to Covid there's even less

to report than there was last time. You'd think that given the lack of other options available to us we'd be able to use the time for the big projects we never managed to fit in before.' And he was sure that many of our cohort have done just that. But, if anything, his attention span has got shorter not longer. Reading Proust in the original, writing our own *In Search of Lost Time*? No. One of the trips he says he missed out on was a week in Paris watching the whole of the Ring cycle at the Bastille. He compensated by plugging his computer into the TV and watching a recorded version instead, but even then he was nodding off halfway through *Götterdämmerung*. Just like most of us, he has retired from work, but many of his former colleagues haven't so he still gets a few draft reports and papers to comment or review. Over the years his contribution has steadily become less substantive criticism and more correcting the punctuation so he doesn't know how much longer that will last. John says that his moving parts have become quite creaky in recent years, so he scarcely ever goes for a run any more – he rides a bike instead. He hopes the weather warms up soon: so far he still has to layer-up like Michelin Man.

**Peter Robinson:** 'Now fully injected, we are looking forward to being with our children and grandchildren in August, moving from our home near Stafford eastwards to a beach near Hunstanton, then westwards to a beach at the tip of the Lleyn peninsula, at Aberdaren. Hopes of visiting family in Peru are very thin, but we are hopeful of a rail journey to Scotland or France in September.'

**Bob Wilson** said that he hoped that you and yours are keeping well. That is the leitmotif for the past year, as keeping well is what we have been all striving to do. A worthy goal, but not newsworthy. Elisa and Bob both had Covid at the same time (the family that ails together wails together) but fortunately they were not seriously sick. They are now completely Pfizered, and looking forward to the reopening of the world. They have been sparing a thought for the students at Merton who have missed a huge part of the college experience. Kudos to them for studying throughout the plague. Over there in Florida, they have two grandchildren in college, and they are both on campus, one at the University of Florida (pre-med) and the other at Florida State (chemical engineering). Of course both got

Covid. Again, they were fortunate not to be badly ill, but were in solitary confinement for a while. They didn't enjoy it.

**Jonathan Zamet** wrote to say for sure it's been some kind of year, but they are all healthy, the kids had jobs that could be done remotely, and so they have much to be grateful for. Jonathan's pottery activities were disrupted because all the fairs were cancelled. But he managed to sell quite a lot online which was nice. And there was an unexpected result. His #2 son, Alec, and his girlfriend Britt spent a couple of months with them in the fall. Britt is a videographer and worked with him on a short film about the inspiration and making of a series of 'Neolithic' pots that he made last year. Here's the link: [vimeo.com/490488764](https://vimeo.com/490488764). It can also be reached via his website: [www.jonathanzametpotter.com](http://www.jonathanzametpotter.com)

## 1966

### Year Representative: David Holmes

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**Chip Filson** writes: 'The abrupt shutdown of all normal activity in March 2020 opened up many new opportunities and experiences. The Oxford class of '66 here in the US reconnected via Zoom and have continued a monthly conversation around personal and national events. All of us are semi-retired and I find their wisdom enlightening. Have had additional contacts digitally with our extended family, more than in normal times! I've retired as a co-founder of Callahan & Associates, but continue to write a daily blog about credit unions in America. These cooperatives are tax exempt and approaching \$2 trillion in total assets. They are the largest financial depository option, after banks, for consumers in the USA. To read the latest post, go to Just a Member on [chipfilson.com](http://chipfilson.com). Joan and I are well; we enjoy the chances to be with our two daughters and four grandkids as circumstances permit. And the yard and garden look splendid, a newfound joy.'

**Rick Gekoski** reports that he is currently living in New Zealand, and loving it. His novel, *Darke Matter*, was published by Constable in May 2020. His most recent book, *Guarded*

*by Dragons: Encounters with Rare Books and Rare People*, is to be published by Constable in July 2021.

**Christoph Harbsmeier** is Visiting Professor of Cultural History of Antiquity, University of Munich (LMU) in 2020-21. He has succeeded the Oxford Egyptologist, Professor John Baines.

**Anthony Holden** reports that his memoirs are being published, in October 2021, by Simon & Schuster, under the title *Based on a True Story*. It will contain a vivid chapter on his four years at Merton 1966-70.

**Denis MacShane** has been busy speaking and writing on European politics. He continues to work for the global consultancy firm Avisa Partners as a special advisor on UK and EU politics. His book *Brexiternity: The Uncertain Fate of Britain* published by IB Tauris-Bloomsbury in 2019 completes a trio of books on Brexit after his 2015 book *Brexit: How Britain Will Leave Europe*, which predicted Brexit would happen at a time when the London business, political, media and diplomatic establishment insisted the EU plebiscite would be easily won by the Remain side.

Denis continues to speak via Zoom for most of this year on Brexit both here and to audiences in France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. As a French speaker he is much in demand on French radio and television for instant UK punditry on events like the death of the Duke of Edinburgh, UK domestic political crises or the way the UK handles the Covid pandemic.

2021 saw his first grandson arrive. Looking after the next-generation baby who with luck will see in the 22nd century has given him more joy than anything else in many years he says.

His next project after writing a short book asking the question *Must Labour Always Lose?* (Claret, autumn 2021) is to try and sort out two million words of diaries dictated each evening during his 18 years in parliament, including eight in a ministerial role at the Foreign Office. If any Mertonian teaching politics at university who has a graduate student who would like to use MacShane's contemporaneous political diaries with vivid insights into Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, Robin Cook and others he worked with, please get in touch.

**Stuart Sleeman** writes that he has finally ceased all forms of useful employment. He no longer sits as a deputy circuit judge and has retired after five years from the Jesuit Safeguarding Commission. His hopes of spending time in the Alps to ski in 2020 and 2021 disappeared and he is thankful that, though he and his wife had the virus, both survived without any recurring problems.

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## 1967

**Year Representative: Rory Khilkoff-Boulding**  
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I am grateful to those who have put fingers to keyboard to let us know they are well after this Year That Never Was.

My family and I are very lucky indeed to be surrounded by several square miles of woodland, such that the year's lockdowns were not claustrophobic for us while 'shielding', as they were for so many. Genuinely alarming for an asthmatic until vaccination, and very sad in that I lost a very good, lifelong, friend to Covid in March this year, it has not been an uninteresting year in many respects.

Surprisingly, it turned out to be an unremittingly busy though difficult practice year for me, with the court system, like most large governmental organisations, struggling to cope on an unpredictable skeleton staff basis and failing quite badly at the start. But things have to keep moving, so lawyers turned to virtuality and remote higher tech features which have finally broken into everyday law practice and the courtroom and will likely stay. I am pretty sure the wigs will continue too. Serendipitously, I find I am now practising (remotely) in the Middle East on a seven-month project with a major international law firm in Dubai – which is as demanding, fascinating and stimulating as it was unexpected. Different job, same room, same computer.

**Peter Richmond** reports that he and his family are well, but more than a little frustrated by most of the current nonsense. This is a theme echoed by others.

**Martin Sands** finds that social life has picked up since the spring, at least at the local level. He has now been up to London several times and visited the Thomas Becket exhibition at the British Museum. He also managed a short break in Dorset including Corfe Castle and Second World War defence structures at Studland Bay where there was a very important D-Day rehearsal. The weather was not quite like the Mediterranean and so he is looking forward to better times.

**Richard Allen** reflects that being able to say we have survived is good enough news in itself, although his golden wedding celebrations were inevitably missed. However, neither his trail running nor his writing were stopped. Indeed, he took advantage of the lockdown to write a historical detective story set during the 1665 Great Plague of London. In researching for it, he found more similarities between then and now than he had expected – not least that the poor suffered disproportionately – though he adds that we have, at least, avoided blaming cats and dogs, periwigs or effusions from the ground. He has enjoyed being able to keep up with life at Merton online, especially Dr Julia Walworth's fascinating talk about the Library.

**Bill Clendaniel** and his partner have had a good year compared with so many. They were able to take walks in parks near their condo in Back Bay, Boston and explore nearby state parks. Bill was able to see his two grandchildren and his son on several occasions due to testing, although they had to give up their usual trips to Florida and skiing in Vermont. Now he and they are gathering in Maine for their usual summer. 'We know we are very fortunate,' he writes.

**Terry Riordan** escaped from the UK and had a month's climbing in Italy in the summer of 2020. He has used his time creatively in his business, producing a new Escape Rooms Genre 'Spyrooms' based on real Second World War spy training and events, marketed through Amazon in hard copy, eBook and cloud formats. He has also developed a table-ordering app to help smaller businesses give better service more economically than by using existing commercial products.

**Sir Brian Leveson** has been continuing his work as Investigatory Powers Commissioner remotely throughout the period, which has been challenging at times.

Keith Wade, Clive Richardson, John Wroe and Chris Starr are alive and well, and joined with Brian, Terry, me and our respective spouses for a yearly get-together in the spring, for the second time via the ubiquitous Zoom platform. We hope of course that next year will return to being an 'in person' event, with better catering.

To those I have not heard from, I send our collective good wishes and hopes for your continued safety and health in the coming year.

## 1968

### Year Representative: Ian McBrayne

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Two comments and one experience sum up the year. At the start of lockdown, **Stephen Powell** could see two high buildings from his study window. As spring turned into summer, they disappeared behind the leaves of intervening trees. Over winter they appeared again, and now they are no longer visible. Thus a year has passed. And **Nicol Webster** comments on how much we now need the hugs of loved ones and value good neighbours, key workers and technology. Genealogical research plus a new e-reader have rekindled his interest in history and he is persevering with musical efforts 'even though I have to report that practice cannot always be relied on to make perfect'.

**Bill Hart** retired from general practice seven years ago, continuing as a part-time medical member of HM Courts & Tribunals Service. When face-to-face sittings became impossible, he applied to rejoin the NHS in any capacity it thought helpful. So tortuous was the process for getting approved that he lost heart. Tribunals restarted as conference calls, not particularly satisfactory but better than nothing. Later he was approached again to be a vaccinator. Following online training, he became an expert on different types of fire extinguisher as well as the relative merits of the various vaccines. His old practice took him back and he thoroughly enjoys chatting with old patients as well as jabbing them.

Stephen Powell also commented on the account in last year's *Postmaster* of the Memorial Meeting for Rex Richards, with a tribute from **David Gadian**. David himself reports that he has now written a memoir of Rex for *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the Royal Society*. It was published in March and is available at [doi.org/10.1098/rsbm.2020.0039](https://doi.org/10.1098/rsbm.2020.0039). David and his wife Rosemary recently celebrated their 43rd wedding anniversary. Rex inadvertently brought them together by employing Rosemary as a technician in his lab during her gap year; David was a DPhil student of his at the time.

It was especially good to hear again from **Peter Bibby**. 'To my surprise,' he writes, 'I am still alive with metastatic lung cancer. In April 2020 the cancer, which had spread to my spine, proved resistant to radiation. I started immunotherapy with pembrolizumab which empowers my white blood cells to attack the primary lung cancer. The tumour in my lungs has reduced in size. The radio-resistant spinal cancer has been slowed by denosumab which inhibits bone metabolism. Nevertheless one of my vertebrae has collapsed. Taking all that into account, I am quite well. I can walk two miles or cycle five miles as well as drinking and dining with friends. My autobiography *Always Up to Something* was published in January and is available from [www.peterbibby.com](http://www.peterbibby.com). I hope you will read it and remember me.' I recommend it; watch out for the Merton section.

**Nigel Webster** reports that the remote Dorrigo Plateau in New South Wales escaped the pandemic, though the twisted fingers of pandemonium seem to reach everywhere. Without Laura to bring him back to earth with a gentle 'Ground control to Major Tom', he spends hours cruising the multiverse musing on the shape of time. **Alastair Henderson** has doubts about the Australian handling of the situation, especially using unsuitable hotels for quarantine, rather than purpose-built facilities. The difficulty with a federal system of government, he says, is the scope to pass the buck between the states and the centre, though the self-discipline of the people has been impressive as they knuckled down to restrictions.

**Neil Loden** and Susan now live full-time in Chagford, Devon, having relinquished their home in London, and have established a delightful new Merton connection. **Freddie Crowley** (2015) brought his choir, the New Oxford Consort,

consisting mainly of current or former members of the College choir, to perform a series of concerts. Now the renamed Corvus Consort is to be part of an enlarged local festival of which Neil has agreed to be a trustee. Freddie is the artistic director and the festival manager is Katalin Oldland (Pembroke, 2017), who sang with the Merton choir. The inaugural festival will take place in September 2021. If you would like to hear more or become a friend or patron of the festival, please contact Neil.

**Danny Lawrence** observes that life in Manchester is opening up slightly. 'A recent milestone for me was to book to see a play, a live play, performed by real living people. It really doesn't matter whether it's good or bad; just the fact of its taking place will be enough.' **Nicholas Richardson** was awaiting the resumption of real tennis at the Merton court, meanwhile enjoying some translation work for a revised English version of the Roman Catholic Breviary ('lots of Augustine!') and giving a paper online to an Oxford seminar on Prudentius ('a bit like an essay crisis all over again').

**Scirard Lancelyn Green** hails the return of ice skating, lamenting that Britain has been the only European country to close its rinks entirely since Christmas. Meanwhile, for several months he found himself electrician, plumber and roofer for the properties he looks after when it was hard to get anyone to do these jobs. At home, although the usual summer garden openings were lost, four evening Winter Wonderland Walks were held, much appreciated despite almost continuous rain and the need to tow several cars out of the car park. Two hundred tons of additional hardcore have solved the problem.

With friends, **George Daly** has put together a life story of Siddhartha set to music called *Zen and Now* (see [www.zenow.net](http://www.zenow.net)). The African Prisons Project, now Justice Defenders, has expanded thanks to good publicity in the USA and the opportunity to do Zoom teaching sessions in several prisons, building up online training and court hearings. George and a friend are doing a 125-kilometre sponsored walk beside the Rance between the palliative care centres in St Malo and Rennes in aid of Hospice Africa.

Also active as ever is **Steve Drinkwater**, who reports walking every day for the past 12 months on a good network of

paths readily accessible from his Pembrokeshire home. He has also been cycling in the local forest, swimming occasionally in the sea, studying French every day and continuing to participate in two creative writing groups. He is still heavily involved in running the environmental charity Friends of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

**David Allen** has not quite got round to retiring yet. His tribunal work has been a mixture of remote sittings, based in court with counsel on video, and home working. Video hearings work well at appeal level, where it is mainly legal argument rather than taking evidence, which can be more problematic virtually. The future is unclear, but David suspects many lawyers will prefer, if given the choice, to continue working from home.

**Simon Orebi Gann** had a childhood ambition to follow his father into the Civil Service, but his career took him into technology and the commercial world. Last year he was called in by the Cabinet Office to resolve the problem of providing a single sign-on and identity assurance to members of the public that would span all central government systems. A cross-government programme is now under way. It will feel as if the childhood ambition has been achieved if it continues to a successful outcome. Meanwhile, this exciting work provided distraction from the cancellation of motor racing, including his first race at Le Mans.

**David Pelteret** writes that for the first time in nigh on half a century he has not visited a library in the past year. Fortunately, advances in technology have not left mediaevalists like him totally bereft. Some of the great manuscript depositories such as the Bodleian and the British Library have in recent years digitised many of their manuscripts. The originals will still need to be examined but much time has been saved by making draft transcripts at home. Often books and articles are now available online, obviating many car and train journeys. The advent of Zoom and Teams means that he has attended conferences and seminars in distant places. Lockdowns can be turned to one's advantage, he says.

As a retired academic, **Alastair Northedge** agrees. A few days before writing, he had given a paper in a colloquium in Almaty in Kazakhstan in the morning and taken part in a PhD viva

at Aix-en-Provence in the afternoon. He had also spent an agreeable French lockdown in Brittany, watching the fishing boats go off to confront the *rosbifs* in the Channel Islands.

**Nick Bicât** has continued work on his new choral piece *Nova Drift*, with performers recording their parts for him to edit in his home studio. He has also given a talk to students on the Film Music course at Berklee College of Music, where one of his scores is part of the curriculum, and had a movement from his *Requiem* played and well received on Radio 3. The local community choir has been meeting on Zoom, and Nick comments on what a lifeline this has been for people who are used to singing being part of their lives.

For **Alan Harland** and Jude, things are starting to look up, with their first dinner party and first sighting of family in over a year, and cancelled concerts and travel plans being resurrected. They have converted a Dodge ProMaster 2500 into a very well appointed campervan, so Alan's bucket list of visiting every US national park and monument has just become more fun than ever.

**Richard Hofton** has been making daily visits to the recycling centre, shifting three decades of detritus after selling his house in Abingdon the day after putting it on the market. He found he was cohabiting with two dead video recorders, mountains of unplayed video cassettes, a broken CD player, a gammy golf trolley and ring binders galore of university notes and essays last consulted in 1971. His ancient spaniel has had a good pandemic, with bonus walks and Richard ever present.

**Kit Heasman** is enjoying a Raspberry Pi. For the ignorant like me, this is a small electronic board with a large number of ports so that all sorts of gadgets can be connected to it and controlled with simple programming language. He has amused himself with turning lights on and off, teaching a robot to differentiate between black and white objects and play chess, and making a remote temperature sensor for a greenhouse and a motion sensing video camera. The Pi bridges the gap between his childhood hobby of electronics and the new world of computing.

**Chris Simmons'** son got engaged and slotted the wedding in when 30 guests were allowed, with his fiancée's family

watching the service from France and contributing reception speeches via Zoom. His daughter has left Swansea for a year's MA course in Iceland, studying coastal communities' regeneration just outside the Arctic Circle. Chris and Dorothy are fine, watching birdlife on the local reservoir and maintaining an active social life as far as permitted.

**Alan Taylor** is frustrated by travel bans and other restrictions. The highlight of the year was being flown around York in a four-seater plane by his son (under supervision) on the latter's 13th birthday. Alan looks forward to the much delayed launch of the James Webb Space Telescope later this year.

Last but not least, **Martin Wainwright** reports that the hospital treehouse, for which many of you generously sponsored his Thames sculling in 2018, opens in June. Martin also reports that he is planning an invasion of an island belonging to the College. He gave the College warning as an honourable invader should, but it denied owning any islands. The Land Registry says this one is the property of the Warden, Fellows and Scholars of Merton College, so Martin plans to claim his share. He will provide the clue of a map detail to anyone minded to identify the island and join the invasion. I hope we shall hear more next year.

## 1969

**Year Representative: John Symes**

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This has been an extraordinary year with almost continuous restrictions on social activities and travel, which of course are so much part of the pleasure of retirement, that phase of life most of us have now reached. Indeed for many of us, 2021 will mark the biblical milestone of threescore years and ten. Some of the entries below reflect the challenges of this time in our lives because of the pandemic, and also because of the health issues associated with growing older, but there are uplifting notes as well. I was grateful to receive reports from several colleagues who had not sent an update in a while. It was also a pleasure to hear from **Jonty Boyce**, **Michael Collins**, **Robert Elam**, **Mike Garton** **Sprenger**,

**Martin McNeill** and **David Roe**, who have nothing new to report this year and for whom 'no news is good news', and I have to add myself to this list.

After a career working with major chemical companies, **Will Barton** has moved on to support the commercialisation of novel technologies in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, particularly from Oxford Chemistry. This started in 2005 with the spin-out of Oxford Catalysts (now known as Velocys) which is focused on the production of sustainable aviation fuels from waste. He then supported the spin-out of Oxford Biotrans in 2013 and as chairman helped scale up and commercialise novel biotechnology to produce natural flavour and fragrance products. For the last nine years, he has been a judge in the Royal Society of Chemistry's annual Emerging Technologies Competition. The first winners were also a team from Oxford Chemistry, and this year he helped them to spin out as HydRegen to take their exciting biotechnology to market.

He also led the establishment of the UK's High Value Manufacturing Catapult Centre for Innovate UK, and the analogous Dublin-based centre called Irish Manufacturing Research. Since March 2020, this has meant much time on Teams and Zoom meetings. This in turn has released significant travel time and allowed Will and his wife to walk for at least an hour every day, a habit which they look forward to keeping up.

**Duncan Campbell Smith** reports progress on his latest two books. His biography of Sir Frank Whittle (*Jet Man: The Making and Breaking of Frank Whittle, Genius of the Jet Revolution*) was published by Head of Zeus in December 2020, and is scheduled for a paperback launch in August 2021. *Crossing Continents: A History of Standard Chartered Bank* (Penguin, 2021) finally made it into the bookshops in May.

**Jeremy Cook** added a further 41 to his tally of amateur orchestral concerts between March 2019 and March 2020, but only **one** in the corresponding period of 2020-21 to a small and, of course, socially distanced audience. Lockdown video projects and Zoom sessions have kept some of his ensembles on life-support; but he reports that video-recording oneself playing solo at home, and in exact time

with a pre-recorded click-track from an earpiece, is not an enterprise to be taken lightly.

**David Cunningham** reports on a hard year. In February 2020 he had to put his work and travelling to Edinburgh on hold to look after his wife Lesley who became seriously ill. In March, Covid-19 arrived and found him working from home, with the attendant loss of contact with colleagues. Then he was himself diagnosed with cancer, and subsequently given a prognosis of only a few months. He caught Covid-19 in December last year, and nearly died before a fairly miraculous recovery. He writes: 'I am now pretty relaxed about it all, and waiting my turn; and going on a fortnight's holiday to Cornwall later this month [June], which is much needed in the circumstances!'

In addition to his role as Chairman of the NatWest Group, **Howard Davies** has become Chairman of Inigo, a new insurance company at Lloyds. Inigo is a start-up, handling both insurance of property (mainly) and reinsurance, and it has substantial private equity backing.

**David Freud** was able to publish his account of the years spent as Minister of State for Welfare Reform (2010-16) in June. Called *Clashing Agendas: Inside the Welfare Trap* (Nine Elms, 2021), it's an account of how difficult it was to introduce Universal Credit, among other reforms. The book took almost as long to clear through the Government machinery as it did to write. This is because it carries the story of how civil servants and politicians interact, driven by dialogue. It was quite painful to write because it brought back the trauma of trying to mount a major reform at the same time as the Chancellor was determined to reduce welfare spending by staggering amounts. No less traumatic was the failure of the IT in the early years.

**Tony Hansen** reports a challenging year of both positive and negative changes. In August 2020, a much-loved forest cottage was consumed in a vast forest fire ignited by a freak lightning storm: the entire area was consumed with heat so intense that metal melted, rocks and cement split. Later in 2020, he was diagnosed with lymphoma and prostate cancer. Both were detected at the earliest and most treatable stage. Following a successful foray into internet dating, he has met Lee with whom he has shared the lockdown and acquired a second family, so his report ends on a positive note.

**Will Pedder** and Rosie were quick to travel as soon as permitted in May to their yacht in 'Red' Turkey, whence none may return as yet. Here they will stay till our country allows them back. Not a bad exile: sailing between Roman temples, Byzantine churches and Greek theatres dotted along the Turkish coast.

**Michael Prather** and Charlotte have been living in Irvine, California since 1992, and have acquired a small near-beach house on California's Central Coast. He has been busy at the university and other odd jobs (IPCC climate assessments, State Department), but is retiring from university teaching duties. He will continue research efforts from UC Irvine and maintains connections with colleagues in the UK. They made it back for the glorious 750th Ball, which was extravagant and delightful. Old Mertonians are welcome to visit.

**Richard Underwood** is semi-retired so that he can concentrate on what he loves most – the patients – and leave the bureaucracy to others. He continues as Emeritus Professor of Cardiac Imaging at Imperial focused on clinical work. Working remotely much of the time from the beauties of the Yorkshire Wolds, he has fortunately avoided the ravages of the pandemic and hopes that our year is now fully vaccinated, and that new variants do not bypass our immunity. He has been involved in educational activities for his specialty in China, and recent presentations have been to audiences up to 25,000. China is a different world!

## 1970

**Year Representative: Nick Skinner**  
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Many thanks as always to you all for supporting this year's news gathering, in what I know for many of us has been a most difficult time.

Sadly, last October we lost another of our Classicists, namely **William 'Philip' Bagge**, whose obituary can be found in the *In Memoriam* section, courtesy of **David Grimes**.

**David Gilchrist**, who also read Classics with Philip, writes: 'My news is that I am about to be ordained a deacon in the Greek Orthodox Church. I will serve as assistant minister at St Michael's Church in Margate, where I have been worshipping for about seven years. I was an Anglican priest for 32 years, serving mostly as a school chaplain. But I retired early in 2012 (following the death of my wife), left the Church of England and became an Orthodox layman. There is life in the old dog yet! So my knowledge of Greek comes in useful.'

Another moving on to pastures new is **Andrew Neighbour** who reports from New Mexico. 'My recent dream to become a farmer is now being realised. Desert Verde Farm, the first indoor, commercial aquaponics farm is being built in Santa Fe, New Mexico. We will raise tilapia to feed our vertical grow beds, producing up to 3,500 heads of leafy greens each week, year round. Our intended consumers will be children in the local public education system and senior living centres. We will grow lettuce, spinach, herbs, tomatoes, cucumbers and, of course, peppers – it is New Mexico after all! Working closely with the Santa Fe Community College, where I now teach advanced aquaponics and hydroponics as an adjunct, we will provide workforce opportunities at a commercial farm for students studying controlled environment agriculture.'

**John Saunders** reports that he is still a principal examiner for Cambridge Assessment and still very much enjoying his work, while fortunate to be able to work from home. His two grandsons are showing great potential at an early age (12 and 10) at landscape painting and football, and fortunately all the family are enjoying good health. His gardening skills are improving.

**Peter Moizer** finally retired at the end of June 2020, dropping down to 10% at the University of Leeds for another two years. Peter has found that retiring into a Covid world has been challenging to say the least: 'Most of the things I would have hoped to do, disappeared with the lockdowns!'

**Tony Woodruff** has sent an update regarding the charity he supports in Uganda. 'During this past year of global pestilence, our work on water, sanitation and hygiene training has continued productively, with over 100,000 more people keeping safe from water-borne disease, along with enhanced

economic prospects in these 140 new villages. Our website is [www.waterschool.com](http://www.waterschool.com). A generous donor has challenged us to expand our work to include experimenting with a solar electric mini grid in a remote area, and we are now developing the concept. So I am learning new technologies which cranks my creaky brain up a notch. Frustratingly, I have not been able to travel to Uganda this year but have stayed very much in touch – imagine the world without the internet! Anyone with knowledge of mini grids, or just wanting to get involved, can contact me at [babull5@outlook.com](mailto:babull5@outlook.com)’

**Richard Horton** reports on an eventful year. ‘I am still working in a small part-time role, but the bigger news is that after over 30 years we have moved from southeast London to the West Midlands where both our children are settled. Navigating the various Covid restrictions proved relatively straightforward and we had a fairly smooth move. We have been here since mid-November. Linda and I have both avoided Covid, as have the rest of our family. We are hopeful that my daughter’s wedding, postponed from last year, will now take place this August in Malta (the original plan). My son and his partner are expecting a child later this year which will be our first grandchild.’

**Les Hewitt** continues to flourish in Warrington. ‘Like most people, our activities have been curtailed somewhat in the last year. I still take regular exercise, although my weekly 5k parkrun has paused since March 2020. I’ve been doing more walking, with the occasional cycle ride, and I continue to practise Tai Chi daily. During the various restrictions, I have especially missed my weekly visits to the cinema and watching my local non-league football team, Warrington Town. Weekly visits to the virtual pub and to weekly Tai Chi classes have continued, both via Zoom. Anne and I have both stayed well. My big news this year is that I am learning to play the piano. I have listened to music all of my life but have never got round to playing an instrument. Last autumn, in passing, a neighbour offered to loan me an unused keyboard. I borrowed this and in December 2020 started weekly piano lessons via Zoom – my teacher is very patient with this old man! In February, I bought a Yamaha electric piano which gives amazing sound for a relatively modest outlay. It’s challenging and sometimes frustrating, but practice is slowly paying dividends.’

It was good to hear from **Richard Hayward** and we hope his continuing cancer treatment is successful. ‘Apart from the corona pandemic, this last year has been special for me for other reasons. In the first place I returned to Stockholm, a bit reluctantly, having spent nine enjoyable years in Malmö. But then I saw that the move was providential, because on arriving here I was invited to take part in a programme for bowel cancer screening (the programme has not yet been introduced in southern Sweden) and the doctors discovered that I had a tumour in the colon. The treatment has gone very well, and in early March the tumour was removed. I have to continue with new sessions of chemotherapy, but if they’re like the ones I had before the operation, they shouldn’t cause me too much discomfort. It has also been an opportunity to break down stereotypes. The medical staff that I have met have not been the cold-hearted types as portrayed in *Broen/Bron/The Bridge*, but rather they have shown a lot of empathy, together with professional competence.’

Very best wishes to you all.

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## 1971

### **Year Representative: Allin Cottrell**

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This year I have been pleasantly surprised to hear from a number of Mertonians of my cohort: **Michael Cotton**, **Ian Cullis**, **Robin Grayson** and **Stephen Mills**. They have interesting stories to tell.

First, I was sorry to hear of the death of **John MacAuslan**, aged 66; his obituary appears in *In Memoriam*. As his son Ian reports, John worked for HM Treasury, the National Gallery and as a Civil Service commissioner. He believed in public service, and used his intellect with compassion, integrity and wisdom to enrich and strengthen many debates, institutions and, particularly, people. He is survived by his wife, Karen, whom he met at Oxford in 1971 and married in 1979, Ian and granddaughters Amilya and Nyra. **Stephen Mills** describes him as ‘a genius really’, adding that following his retirement John did a PhD in Music and wrote a book on Schumann.

**Michael Cotton** sent me a resume of his activities since his Merton days, 'now an amazing 50 years ago'. I'll leave his account (lightly edited) in the first person.

'After switching from Chemistry to Medicine, for which I received great understanding and support from my tutor, Courtenay Phillips, who I am glad to see is still going strong at 95, I graduated MBBS from St Thomas's in London, and thanks to Professors Sloan and Stansfield (who ran an iconic course for this exam), gained my FRCS in 1983. I then followed a long-held dream to go and practise surgery in Africa, first in Umtata, South Africa (now famous as Nelson Mandela's birthplace), and then in Harare. Having met my wife there, we moved to her home city of Bulawayo, and I set up a Flying Surgeon service to outlying districts. I also helped inaugurate the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa. Much new pathology emerged with the advent of HIV in the 1990s, which gave me much to write about in publications. But as Zimbabwe's political climate and economy worsened, maintaining a surgical service became more and more problematic.

'When, finally, I had to resort to making my own saline solutions for child trauma victims, my wife and I decided to stuff what we could in our suitcases and head for Germany where I had been offered a temporary consultant post in Mannheim. When funding for this post dried up we migrated south to Switzerland where we had a chalet. I then ended up in charge of the surgical section of the Emergency department at the University Hospital in Lausanne (and rapidly improved my French!), from which I retired at the age of 65. I have continued work in an Emergency clinic actually on the no. 1 platform at Montreux station, and am currently Chief Editor of *Tropical Doctor*, now in its 50th year. So life remains busy. Travel back and forwards to England, where our married children (both doctors) and grandchildren live, has become rather complex with Covid restrictions, but we hope to enjoy more Merton events now we have a base in Royal Wootton Bassett.'

Michael also reports on contacts with other Mertonians: 'We met up with **Paul Le Druijnenec** and his wife at a lovely Merton garden party. We keep in touch with **Geoffrey Gaskill** whose daughter Katriona is my goddaughter; he has now retired and moved to Kent to be nearer grandchildren.'

**Ian Cullis** reports that after Merton he studied ferromagnetism for his PhD at Nottingham University, then embarked on a career in the science of ballistics, spending the last 40 years engaged in some fascinating and challenging research programmes. His main interests have been simulation and physically based modelling to study the dynamic response of materials when subjected to explosive loading and hypervelocity impact. He was actively involved in the analysis of the Pam Am Flight 103 disaster at Lockerbie and was a witness at the Scottish Court in the Netherlands. He also played a leading role in research into the protection of transport systems and other national infrastructure. He was a founding member and past president of the International Ballistics Society. He is now semi-retired but keeping his hand in by lecturing to the Security MSc course at Imperial College.

**Robin Grayson** remarks that this has been a strange year in which to retire, after 15 years in the parish of Langley Marish, in Slough. Finding, buying and preparing a new house, alongside caring for and saying 'Goodbye' to his Team Ministry and the local Deanery, have made lockdown busier for Robin than for most. Now he and his wife are settled in South Wales, in reach of family and with great scope for walking in the hills, woods and valleys around. Robin hopes to resume work as a spiritual director in due course and meanwhile has started learning Welsh – but as a former logician (five years postdoctoral work in logic and foundations in the Netherlands, Israel and Germany) he longs for a more structured approach to language than the usual 'Bore da. Robin dw i. Pwy dych chi?!

## 1972

### Year Representative: **Mark Signy**

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Sadly the pandemic has continued to disrupt all our lives and affected the health of many; I hope you have all survived and are beginning the slow trudge back to normality. Unsurprisingly there wasn't a great deal of communication (I imagine we don't all want to report spending the year locked

in!), but after a bit of nudging I'm pleased to say we have news of several of our contemporaries, quite a few of whom have been having regular old Mertonian Zoom meetings.

I always remember being told as a student that the main point of alumni reunions and news was to keep track of which old friends had become bishops and which ones had ended up in prison. We have hit the jackpot this year as we now have an archbishop ...

**Michael Lewis** was elected an Honorary Fellow of Merton in May 2021. He says: 'It's a great honour which I wasn't expecting. I suppose it's because I've been bishop for quite a while and then recently archbishop in this often *too* interesting Middle East region, in seriously torrid times.' I had to press him to elaborate. He is Archbishop-Primate of the Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East, continuing at the same time as Bishop of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf.

This was Dr Azim Lakhani's fifth year as Diplomatic Representative to Kenya for the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). The last year was challenging for him personally due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with erratic travel schedules, lots of tests, quarantines at both ends and endless uncertainty. However, a task force, set up by AKDN, coordinated a substantial contribution to Kenya's response to the pandemic, for example: financial contributions to the Government's Emergency Relief Fund; working with the US Embassy to set up a 100-bed temporary field hospital for Covid-19 patients; vaccinating eligible people; training some 22,000 nurses, healthcare workers and education staff on Covid-19 care; supply of PPE; training 350 teachers on distance-learning methods; research and clinical trials; supporting vulnerable families and rural communities; free meals to frontline workers; media awareness campaigns; rent discounts; and subsidised loans.

**Mark Anness** writes: 'Despite the restrictions, I continue to be very busy with church and charity commitments as a trustee of a Christian charity [www.myraswells.org](http://www.myraswells.org). Myra's Wells operates in Burkina Faso which is very useful for anyone taking part in *Pointless*. The Covid situation there is far less severe than in the UK – the locals think this is because we are too clean here. So, despite some restrictions,

this year has turned out to be an exceptional year with 32 new wells being drilled. There have been some incredibly good sustainable supplies of water which have enabled us to provide solar-powered pumps and water towers at five of the boreholes. There is no pay for this job, but huge satisfaction.'

**Kevin Saunders** says: 'I guess a "Confined Covid Year" has little news. It helped getting through winter months Zooming every week with some Merton historian contemporaries. It was often a highlight of the week. Pool exercises replaced the gym (albeit in a wetsuit in winter) and long walks in the beautiful salt pans of the Ria Formosa Natural Park, mainly with flamingos for company. Now green-zoned Portugal is welcoming Brits by the thousands and hoping to get through the economically important summer season without another lockdown. My own rental places, in the country and at the beach, are reasonably full until mid-October, which will be a huge improvement on last year's cancelled season.'

**David Hogarth** has also been in regular contact with old Mertonians. 'After many years working in consultancy and project management, I finally retired at the beginning of November 2020. Of course it had never been part of my plan to start my new freedom under virtual house arrest, but these are strange times. I'm using some of my spare time to study some quantum mechanics, to which I devoted far too little attention back in the seventies. During the pandemic, I've also been enjoying a weekly Zoom call with a group of Merton friends – the most we have all been in contact with one another for many years!'

After retiring from 21 years of headship at Woodbridge School, poacher-turned-gamekeeper **Stephen Cole** (who you will remember was on our JCR committee and captain of rugby) continues to lead inspections of schools around the world, most recently in Brazil and Kenya. In a classroom abutting the equator just outside Nairobi he used his Merton physics knowledge to debunk the myth that water drains in different directions on different sides of the equator.

And our JCR president **John Heaton** is another old Mertonian Zoomer. 'The class of 1971-72 Merton Zoom cocktails continued too (see last year's *Postmaster*), with the addition of **Kevin Saunders**. As he knows the USA well, with our

correspondent from Montana (Tony Boote, 1971), we enjoyed a regular update on events across the Atlantic throughout the election campaign and a lively debate/banter on that and other topical matters. We're continuing, but less frequently than weekly.

'Having run Census 2011 in the west of West Sussex, I had asked to be kept informed of arrangements for 2021 and, when the time came in summer 2020 to decide whether to become involved, with most unusual foresight, I decided that having something to keep me out of mischief and the brain functioning during the cold, dreary months of winter and early spring was worthwhile, and carried out a similar role from late September to late May on what has proved to be a successful Census 2021. With my ongoing involvement with the Chartered Governance Institute entirely virtual during that period, the two were compatible. Here's hoping that will revert to a mix of online and face-to-face.'

**Paul Weindling** writes to update us on the Max Planck Society 'brain tissues of Nazi victims' project: 'Pleasingly the Max Planck has renewed the grant for a further three years. I have traced brain specimens taken from Warsaw Jews in 1940 still in a Frankfurt institute for neurology among hundreds of other victims showing the necessity of the provenance research. In 2019 I was awarded an honorary doctorate in science by the Swiss University of Fribourg. As co-President of a Strasbourg University project on its medical collections from the period German annexation 1941-44, I am steering the project to conclusion including my chapters on pathology and virology at the concentration camp of Natzweiler.' His latest book is *Victims and Survivors of Nazi Human Experiments: Science and Suffering in the Holocaust* (Bloomsbury, 2014).

Your correspondent is still propping up the health service (for one day a week anyway).

Here's hoping for a healthier and less stressful year. We must be due a Gaudy soon (I think they come more often as we get older). Please keep the correspondence flowing.

## 1973

**Year Representative: Gary Backler**

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Heartfelt thanks to all those who got in touch this year. It's always good to hear from contemporaries, but never more so than this year.

I am very sorry to have to report the death of **John Myatt** on 6 May 2021. Please see the *In Memoriam* section for a fuller appreciation of John's life at Merton and beyond.

John's death leaves only six members of the 1973 Maths and Medics group. The six report that they have struggled on through the lockdowns and their first opportunity to get together was at John's funeral at the end of May. **Graham Andrews** is working on various projects and as a director of half a dozen companies, including companies involved in oil and gas, mining, solar power and producing antimicrobial materials. **Rob Lewis** submitted his PhD thesis on extremal circulant graphs, and successfully navigated his viva examination in early June, on Zoom rather than face to face. **David Melville** and his wife Sarah have resumed medical work by volunteering to be part of Jab's Army and are doing their bit to help the vaccination programme – thank you, Melvilles!

**Bill Souster** is working from home in South Wales and reports that he has only rarely been allowed out of Wales. **Roger Urwin** continues to work for pension and sovereign wealth funds in Europe, the USA, Australia and New Zealand for Willis Towers Watson, but unusually for him he has been unable to travel this last year either for work or to see his family. **Richard Veryard** is still 'following the data' for Inmarsat as a data architect.

As of 31 March 2021, **William Alden** retired as Clerk of the Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers. He still lives very close to the church in Iffley Village, East Oxford and is looking forward to a quiet retirement sorting out the archives of the Alden Press, which had been stored in a completely inchoate fashion in a whole load of cardboard boxes at Stationers' Hall.

John Bowers had such success with his book *Tolkien's Lost Chaucer* (Oxford, 2019) that Oxford University Press has given him a contract for a follow-up volume *Tolkien on Chaucer: 1913-1959* bringing into print all of the author's published and mostly unpublished writings on the 14th-century poet. Despite the Bodleian's lockdown during the Covid epidemic, he was able to continue working remotely in Las Vegas because of the generous assistance of the Tolkien Estate's lawyer and the Bodleian's Tolkien archivist who provided scans of the writer's Chaucerian papers.

Having given up his Merton Society Council commitments to spend more time with his personal projects, **Gary Backler** agreed to become chair of the local environmental charity of which he has been a trustee for the past ten years. This will delay even further his poetry, family history and transport history projects. He spent much of lockdown compiling a register, spanning 1950-75, of all the families who lived on the council estate where he grew up. *Then your wife says she thinks that you're losing your sanity – oh, calamity!*

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## 1974

**Year Representative: Mike Hawkins**

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In writing the news account a year ago I talked about the world beginning to 'open up' again after several weeks of enforced isolation. With 12 months of hindsight, how optimistic that statement now appears! Despite several months of additional isolation in the UK, however, it does feel that we are in a much better place now than in summer 2020 as a result of vaccinations. A good thing too, as few would have imagined we would still be gripped by a pandemic 18 months on. Even so it is easy to forget that Mertonians are a global community and many live in situations different to those in the UK. Let us hope that everyone can soon have confidence to go about life in a more normal way without triggering further chaos.

The temporary respite in the pandemic in the summer of 2020 did allow my wife and me to make our move back to the UK from America. It was a nervous time having a team

of strangers in our home for three days packing everything followed by a three-flight, four-airport journey to the UK. It all felt rather like the famous ending to *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, although rather more successful. Fourteen days' quarantine in an Airbnb showed that we had escaped contamination. And while the quarter-full 787 Dreamliner flight reminded me how blissful trans-Atlantic flying was in the early 1980s, the lack of food at airports and on the flights turned the 24-hour journey into somewhat of a fast. However the chance during quarantine to binge-watch free-to-air live World Championship snooker, test match cricket, the FA Cup Final and Formula One racing more than made up.

Fortunately **Nick Allard**'s pen is still active. He writes: 'Over the last year I was not as prolific nor as romantic as Sir Walter Raleigh was while imprisoned in the Tower despite the charms of my strict jailor Marla. Even so, working from my cell in the eaves high atop our Georgetown home in Washington, DC it was a busy year of writing, remote teaching, legal work and campaign-related advocacy for voting rights and election reform. Marla and I have much to be grateful about including the birth of a robust, blond, seventh grandchild on 2 March 2020, thankfully named Joseph and not Covid or Pan. No Little Joe he; this good-natured, solid tank of a boy is more of the 1960s popular *Bonanza* TV character Hoss Cartwright-type prospect for the Princeton and Merton rugby sides. We can hardly wait to get back to see our Merton friends and colleagues and fulfill a promise to Teddy, the oldest of the magnificent seven grandkids, to introduce him to London and Oxford. We are confident that the College can survive a visit from Ted if not yet the others.'

'Business as usual or rather business as unusual carries on in the **Downie** household.' **Neil** continues: 'Diane and I are still beavering away on Exovent. The Exovent negative pressure ventilation (NPV) charity has now passed its anniversary, with prototypes across the world, scientific results beginning to come out with healthy volunteers, and progress towards clinical use with patients. As we have worked, it has become clear that NPV might be tremendously useful in a range of lung diseases globally. Covid, yes, but probably bigger in the long run will be the use in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and pneumonia.'

'In addition *Engineering & Technology* magazine once again invited me to do "Lockdown Challenges", a further 20 pieces with pictures and video clips of fun science things to do for youngsters and their parents under lockdown ([eandt.theiet.org/tags/lockdown-challenge](http://eandt.theiet.org/tags/lockdown-challenge)). Orchestras can now have two additions to their armoury of instruments: the Saxotron and the Swanee Banana.'

**David and Jane Hamer** report that they 'continue to enjoy a busy retirement in Toronto'. They have had a largely uneventful pandemic so far, and appreciate deeply how much easier it has been for them than for so many others, particularly working folk. With two daughters and families living nearby in the city, there have been many porch visits and park excursions, though no indoor activities whatsoever. Jane continues to tune up her bridge-playing skills, albeit online, and to spearhead the renaissance of the University Women's Club of Toronto. In 2020, David cycled some 2,500km on the side streets and trails of the city and on the back roads of Huron County (Alice Munro country) near their cottage. He has been honing his photographic passion in the field and at the computer screen. As well, he has spent considerable time helping to lobby Canada's federal government in support of liberalisation of the law relating to medical assistance in dying, in honour of an old friend and law partner who missed his chance at a good death due to the inadequacies of the old law. More generous legislation finally passed in the spring of 2021, but much remains to be done, so the effort continues.

News again from **Guy Johnson**, our '1974 Scottish correspondent'. 'I've been busy climbing up and down the worn tenement staircases of Edinburgh's Southside since mid-March, delivering endless newsletters and campaign cards extolling the virtues of the Scottish Green Party. How much difference any of this feverish activity makes to the results of elections is anybody's guess, but they've turned out well, in the opinion of this writer. And it's an excellent way of keeping fit and dry at the same time. A record number of Green MSPs at Holyrood able to exert, once more, a benign influence on the SNP minority government, and no room for a Salmond in the smallish pool of Scottish politics, still dominated by a formidable Sturgeon. I wonder what Duns Scotus would have made of

all these shenanigans? After a few years when owning up to a degree in PPE was something of an embarrassment, it's a great relief to be in such demand again. At last I understand the mysterious connection between PPE and health care.'

**Sandy MacIver** has had a heavy year of teaching and other academic duties. He writes about his two big Covid-related realisations and developments. First: 'After 34 years of pretty much exclusively teaching leadership face to face, I have become appreciative of, and a burgeoning master at (provided I have a technical assistant like my brilliant PhD daughter Erin) the use of Zoom-type technology to provide meaningful, experiential, highly reflective leadership development experiences, including higher-level leadership development. Who knew? A year ago I would have told you that was impossible! So much for my understanding of how to embrace technology. My favourite feedback from an MBA student: "In teaching this course your character as a leader and role model for leadership comes through even with the limitations of the technology." I am looking forward to applying my newfound "wizardry" (Hal!) at the end of the month to leading Canadian "Rhodies" in a session on leadership philosophy and values. My other great rediscovery harkens back to rowing with **Nick (Allard)** at Oxford and training for two marathons. Throwing away decades of reliance on indoor gyms for fitness, I am now a 13-month devotee to fitness in the great outdoors! Slow learner or what?'

**Rob Mitchell** lets us know that 'I have much for which to be thankful. Our children and grandchildren have been part of our pod throughout the pandemic. Emily moved home when the lockdown began; Carrie, Prince and their children live close by; and Grayce has served as Carmella's childcare provider and teacher. While contact with most people became more infrequent and less personal, we have spent far more time together as a family than would otherwise have been the case. For each of the adults in the family pod, work-related challenges and opportunities have enlisted our energies and engaged our imaginations. Carrie and Prince both work in global public health, and Emily is a pastor. My appellate law practice has never been busier.'

## 1975

Year Representative: Robert Peberdy

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Shortly after last year's article was completed **Ian Taylor** died, aged only 64. His death leaves our year bereft of a central figure; as a result, future gaudies and other year-gatherings will seem incomplete. Like quite a few 1975 Mertonians, Ian came from a modest northern background, having been educated at King's School, Macclesfield. At Merton he read PPE, which prepared him well for later activities. His sociable personality, and involvement in rugby, soon made him well-known, and unsurprisingly he was elected President of the JCR (for 1976–7). His occupancy of the post further expressed his personality. He was not authoritarian; rather, he pursued his aims through argument and gentle cajolery. He had inherent advantages for life in possessing an inner self-confidence, and in not being cowed by authority. **Steve Roser**, the Vice-President, found Ian 'an easy person to work with'. **William Ford**, who was JCR Secretary, observes that Ian was a 'consummate networker'. Ian also impressed the MCR's President, **Glenn Bacal**, who expected that he 'would do great things in life'. Glenn recalls how Ian visited him as part of a delegation to 'persuade' him not to choose certain rooms in Fellows' Quad which Ian had his eye on. **Philip Waller**, who as Principal of Postmasters dealt regularly with Ian, remembers him as always affable and cooperative, while never diminishing his purpose as a determined representative of undergraduates.

Although Ian seemed set to be successful after Merton, probably nobody expected him to become, in worldly terms, the most successful member of our year, and spectacularly so. After working for Shell, he developed the oil-trading company Vitol (as Chief Executive and Chairman) into one of the largest global companies (by turnover), and entered a world of big company directors, top politicians and sheikhs. Ian famously helped to depose Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, and hit national headlines in 2016 when he acted pre-emptively to avoid the award of a knighthood in Prime Minister David Cameron's resignation honours list. He also served as Chairman of the Trustees of the Royal Opera House.

When he celebrated his 60th birthday, a former Warden of Merton was in attendance. Despite the distance Ian travelled in life, he remained for us, miraculously, the warm-hearted, unpretentious person we had first been fortunate to know many years ago at Merton.



The JCR Committee 1977 with Ian Taylor as President.  
Clockwise from top left: Christopher Mann (Steward), Crispin Poyser (Treasurer), Stephen Roser (Vice-President), Ian Taylor (President), William Ford (Secretary)

Like the rest of the world's population, 1975 Mertonians continued in 2020–1 to be affected by the coronavirus pandemic. In Nottingham, cardiac surgeon **Arif Ahsan** remained assigned to Covid-19-related work until spring 2021. Fortunately his hospital received ample good-quality 'personal protective equipment'. By May 2021 his work was returning to normal, though a backlog of elective surgery had built up. Over in the USA, **Glenn Bacal** reports that Arizona fulfilled expectations in resisting restraints on liberty. It did not fully shut down its economy; yet despite that the infection rate was lower than in some places which had tight 'lockdowns'. Its success was due partly to a lack of dependence on mass transit systems. Once vaccination had become widespread, new infections and hospitalisations plummeted. Throughout, Glenn remained busy with intellectual-property legal work, operating mainly from home. Unable to visit his gym, he kept fit by using his own Peloton Bike and a new Peloton 'Tread'. For Glenn, the 2020 US presidential election had a particular sad consequence: as a former pupil of **Sir Martin Gilbert** (Fellow 1962–2015, official biographer of Winston Churchill), he was dismayed that President Biden removed Churchill's bust from the Oval Office.

In March 2021, when Croydon Arena reopened after a year's break, **Alan Dolton** resumed athletics coaching and club running, though he was disappointed to discover that solo running had left his fitness severely reduced. The pandemic also roused a heart-breaking family memory: of the death in 1919 of a great-grandfather from the 'Spanish Flu'. Appropriately, his lockdown reading included *Pandemic 1918* by Catharine Arnold. **Ian Doolittle** has continued to pursue historical research and writing alongside his 'day job' as a consultant (formerly partner) with the law firm Trowers & Hamlins. His calendar of London Fire Court decrees was published in 2020, and the *London Topographical Record* has published his article 'Who owned the City of London in 1666?' He is currently writing a history of the City of London Corporation. (The calendar can be purchased by writing to: [idoolittle@btinternet.com](mailto:idoolittle@btinternet.com))

**Marek Effendowicz** reports, mysteriously, that during lockdown the 'Learning Shed' at his home in Teddington (SW London) was replaced by a 'Library Cabin'. He can be observed there working on a project 'devoted to all things board games and puzzles' and also acting as a consultant to an agency which is facilitating the installation of broadband in social housing. The pandemic brought **William Ford**'s life of golfing and sailing to a halt; he consoled himself by catching up with tasks in house and garden. **Stephen Gardiner** adopted a positive attitude to lockdown conditions, which prevented him, for example, from giving live concerts. Instead he brought forward 'back-burner' projects for the transcription of music into braille, including work on *Klavierstück XI* by Karlheinz Stockhausen, for which the score was a sheet measuring 21×36 inches. While recently watching the 1982 BBC television series *The Barchester Chronicles*, he was surprised to hear Merton's clock chime, even though the story is not set in Oxford. He has often noticed the Merton bells in other films and TV programmes, and suspects that they are the most frequently relayed bells in England after Big Ben.

The marvellous book on *London Bridge and its Houses, c.1209–1761* by **Dorian Gerhold**, which was published in 2019 mainly for subscribers, sold out rapidly. It has now been republished by Oxbow Books. On 20 October 2020 Dorian participated in the online public planning inquiry into the government's choice of Victoria Tower Gardens by the Palace of Westminster as the location for a Holocaust memorial and learning

centre. The location has been widely opposed, by many Jews among others, because it involves a major building project in a small and much-loved open space, and other sites are available. The proposed site was acquired by the government more than a century ago on the basis (enshrined in law) that it would remain for ever a garden open to the public. Dorian's evidence challenged the arguments that there is a connection between the Holocaust and Parliament, and that the memorial would form a series with smaller monuments already in the gardens, as well as criticising the obscurity of the decision-making process. **John Harrison**, who is usually busy with running societies and leading expeditions, has done little in the last 12 months worthy of record; it has been a sunburst in the firmament: his best historian at Ye Olde Eton Coll. has been awarded a conditional place at Ye Antike Merton Coll.

After lockdown began in March 2020, Revd Dr **Gordon Jeanes** was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Months of treatment followed, culminating with radiotherapy. Fortunately the cancer is now in remission. During this difficult period he somehow managed to edit, and contribute to, a publication about the Bible and liturgy. When lockdown restrictions were eased in spring 2021, **Ed Martley** began to play more links golf in Scotland with a friend. He also looked forward to an event-filled August, playing in golf tournaments and driving his 1973 Simca 1301 Special saloon car around Silverstone race track.

Professor **Nicholas Mays** of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has remained professionally involved with the pandemic. His research team adapted an ongoing study of older people with long-term health difficulties to include their experiences of support during part of 2020. They are also investigating use of the NHS Covid-19 smartphone 'app', and how the Netherlands, Scotland and Italy have learnt from the experience of the pandemic. Nick has also published a paper on the use of social media in pandemic modelling. Professor **Stephen Oppenheimer** experienced the pandemic in Baltimore. In the early stages, the availability of toilet paper, and the incidence of crime, both fell. Scandal also occurred: in April 2020, half a million coronavirus testing kits which were acquired by Maryland's

Governor at great expense and with great publicity from South Korea proved inadequate for use. Later, the ineptitude of the Trump Administration prevented the development of an efficient vaccination programme. Stephen is relieved that 'professionals' have been restored to the White House.

**Crispin Poyser** has continued to sustain the procedural operations of the House of Commons following its adaptation to maintain business during the pandemic. **Steve Roser** retired as Senior Lecturer in Chemistry at the University of Bath in 2017. Before lockdown, he enjoyed 'a very cheerful life' in Bristol, which included acting and 'a lot of singing'. He survived the last year with vegetable growing, playing the tenor saxophone, and 'a lot of urban flaneurism'. He also chairs the trustees of the development charity the Global Goals Centre. **David Salter** has been reappointed as an honorary professor at the University of Plymouth. He has also been involved in advising the UK government's famous SAGE committee via the SPI-B sub-group dealing with health, behaviour and anthropology.

Mertonians who are perplexed about the significance of recent experience can turn for divine illumination to a 1975 Mertonian: Bishop **Tom Wright** has helpfully published *God and the Pandemic* (SPCK, 2020).

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## 1976

**Year Representative: John Gardner**  
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It was a very pleasant surprise to hear recently from **Mahesh Jethmalani** in Mumbai, where he has been a barrister since 1981. Qualifying in London two years after leaving Merton, he has for the last five years also practised at the Supreme Court in Delhi, and this year additionally became an MP in India's second chamber, the Rajya Sabha. Married with three children, he has never been a stranger to England, keeping a house in London and making two or three visits a year.

Following a career as a TV and film director, **Richard Spence** became an executive coach about 20 years ago. Always interested in counselling, he was a volunteer for the

Samaritans for 15 years and became the first Chairman of Trustees for The Listening Place, a charity working with people with suicidal feelings. For the last six years he has juggled his coaching job with the academic work and training needed to qualify this year as a Gestalt psychotherapist, practising in London. Someone else nowhere near ready to retire yet is **Mark Thompson**, who recently stepped down after eight years as President and CEO of the *New York Times*, following eight years as Director-General of the BBC. Now a trustee of the Royal Shakespeare Company, advisor to the supervisory board of Axel Springer SE (Bild, etc.) and Chairman of Ancestry, shareholders are advised to hold until 2029.

Some of us, however, are winding down. **John Gardner** and wife Tracey are now settled in New Zealand, atop a hill by the beach, and enjoying the scenery, weather and Covid-free lifestyle. While taking care not to crow about it, obviously. **Robin Barracough**, a district judge in Huddersfield, retires this year and hopes to get to Spain to enjoy the house he bought there but hasn't seen for two years. Physicist and forensic scientist **Craig Adam** has recently retired from Keele University, but for the time being will continue to do some consulting. **Charles Wookey** will soon be standing down after ten years running A Blueprint for Better Business, a charity that helps companies define a purpose beyond the generation of profit, and will likely be doing some university teaching from next year.

For keen singer **Antony Townsend**, missing the Merton Advent Carol Service was a disappointment. Balanced, however, by his two youngest children now singing in the National Youth Choir, as their parents did. Having several children in the house means enforcing rules, clearly a transferable skill as he is now the undisputed go-to guy for monitoring naughty professionals. Initially the regulator for professional bodies overseeing accountants and surveyors, then with the Ombudsman Commission, then Financial Regulators Complaints Commissioner, also Investigator of Harassment in the House of Commons, his latest job is resolving disputes between businesses and their banks as Chairman of the SME Liaison Panel of the Business Banking Resolution Service.

Congratulations to **Michael Taylor**, whose long-standing partner Helen has finally made an honest man of him.

Rules is rules, so the nuptials just included witnesses and were celebrated with homemade tuna sandwiches and a bouquet from the garden. A proud Scotsman, he insists the timing of a cost-effective wedding was purely coincidental. Congratulations are also in order for Andrew Pettegree, Professor of History at the University of St Andrews, who has been elected a Fellow of the British Academy. Known best as an expert on the Reformation and for running the Universal Short Title Catalogue, he made good use of the lockdowns to write his latest book *The Library: A Fragile History*. And it was good to hear again from **David Humphrey** in Johannesburg. Following a career in the Royal Navy he has since worked in banking and construction, specialising in the financing of big-ticket power and infrastructure developments in the UK and South Africa. Now Finance Director for Africa for Hive Energy, the solar power company, he is busy managing green hydrogen and other renewable energy projects.

Like many others, pharmaceutical consultant **Ken Parkes**'s exercise regime has taken a back seat, in his case the orienteering that he and his wife enjoyed until 18 months ago being replaced by pottering around the allotment. So with few reports of sporting prowess these days, hats off to **John Bland** for rowing the Thames from Oxford to Teddington Lock, 'going for hours at a time while the world receded slowly and backwards'. His next excursion will be a climbing holiday in Scotland with **Laurence Ormerod**. Keen batsman **Ian Coote** (Gloucestershire over-60s) appreciates the frequent breaks which come with cricket, as does **Nigel Metcalfe** (Durham University staff XI). With teaching being from home, as at June he had visited his office only twice in 15 months, but kept busy supervising the generally excellent online work his astrophysicist students did. His other role, a trustee of the Kielder Observatory, was quieter, as it closed for a year following a ruling that stargazing is an indoor activity.

Elsewhere in education, **Richard Dendy** at Warwick University has managed to increase his PhD student numbers during the pandemic and **Adrian Schweitzer**, still enjoying teaching Classics and mathematics at Tonbridge School, wonders whether teacher-assessed grades will further boost the nation's apparent intelligence. **David Warwick**, examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and Chairman for AQA Music A-level, is no longer teaching but uses

the time to compose and perform as a freelance musician. **Peter Truesdale** OBE lives in Lambeth, where he was a councillor for many years, including leader of the council. Still active in corporate consulting he also finds time to volunteer locally, currently as chairman of governors at two parish schools.

Pathologist **Ken Fleming** is Chairman of the Lancet Commission on Diagnostics, whose report now being published details the access (or lack of it) to diagnostics around the world. Due to the relevance of its recommendations, he has been appointed by the World Health Organisation to help develop diagnostics plans in different countries. Also focused on the role of diagnostics during Covid is **Jonathan Flint**, Professor of Genetics and Psychiatry at UCLA. Part of a team that has spent the last 18 months looking at transmission by asymptomatic carriers, his account of the ups and downs of testing was in *The London Review of Books* (6 May 2021). And in what we all hope will be the last year that Covid is mentioned in these pages **Robert Cotton**, Rector at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford, has managed to keep congregation numbers up by preaching via Zoom and other livestreaming. Though he won't miss the humming of hymns through a mask.

**David Douglas** in London has been enjoying lockdown bridge with **Charles Manby**, **George Davies** and **Toby Farrell**, happy that 40 years on their Cuppers-winning skills are still intact. Others are also planning to meet soon, with **Peter Bernie** arranging to see **Christopher Coombe** and **Tony Brown**, who has just moved to Suffolk. And many are busy as normal: **Dan Rickman** WFH (working from home) in London for BAE Systems, **Robert Hannah** in New Zealand researching and publishing on ancient astronomy, **David Pitman** still in the thick of intellectual property disputes over trade into the USA from China but appreciating how WFH means getting up late and missing the LA traffic, and **Tim Matthews** in Nova Scotia, practising law and golf in more or less equal measure. My thanks to all for taking the trouble to send an update.

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## 1977

### Year Representative: Edmund Wright

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As I write this report, **Simon Saville** is preparing to spend June–July 2021 cycling the length of the country, 1,200 miles from Land's End to John O'Groats, to raise money for Butterfly Conservation ([butterfly-conservation.org](http://butterfly-conservation.org)) and draw attention to the biodiversity and climate crises. His ride is called Bike for Butterflies, and details of how he fared can be found at [www.bikeforbutterflies.org](http://www.bikeforbutterflies.org).

**Paul Smith** retired as President and CEO of CFA Institute at the end of 2019. Since then he has taken up a number of non-executive directorship and advisory positions in financial-services companies – mostly in Asia, where he continues to live (in Hong Kong).

**Adam Southwell** has managed to avoid Covid so far and continues to work with some of Cambridgeshire's vulnerable and fragile teenagers.

**Matthew Lonsdale**'s big news is that he and his travel business are still here after a year of hibernation. When he bought the business at the turn of the century, he remembers he was rather pleased with himself: "I go on holiday for a living" was my rather smug reply to those who asked what I do. But now, after more than a year with no income but many staff to look after, he says that 'My perspective is, like a deflated Tigger, somewhat diminished.' Matthew promises to update us next year, so fingers crossed...

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## 1978

*There is currently no Year Representative for 1978. Please contact [development@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@merton.ox.ac.uk) if you are interested in the position.*

**Paul Curtis Hayward** writes: 'I still chair a small broking firm, a corporate finance boutique, and farm a smallholding in

Hampshire. When the weather is fine I have been planting trees and tending sheep; when bad, I potter into my home office and try to put together debt finance for renewable energy projects. Our daughter got married last September, squeezed between the various restrictions which enabled us to have a manageable party that felt like a wedding, but didn't entail large tents on the lawn.

I am getting a little bored by the cycle trails and walks in the immediate vicinity and relish the thought of being able to go off in my camper van to explore more of the UK and possibly call in on folks I haven't seen for a number of years.'

**Robert Waller** contributed a chapter on 'Ramsay MacDonald (1924, 1929–35)' to *The Prime Ministers*, edited by Iain Dale (Hodder & Stoughton, 2020), winner of the 2020 Parliamentary Book Award for best political book by a non-parliamentarian. He also wrote an essay 'What if Franklin D. Roosevelt had died of polio in 1921?' for *Prime Minister Priti and Other Things that Never Happened* (Biteback, 2021), the fourth in the series of counterfactual history books.

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## 1979

### Year Representative: Noel Privett

Email: [noelprivett@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:noelprivett@yahoo.co.uk)

This year, we hear about the tranquillity of Heathrow, bottom lines and waistlines, accidental professorships, more history books than you can shake a stick at, cross-fertilising with Archimedes in the bath, published poets, NATO strategy, grandparenting for physicists, enclosure, socially distanced justice and the injustice of being shot on Armistice Day, retirement-on-sea, the ghostly writings of yogi-novelists. That must have been some weekend. So, here we go:

**Jamie Barr** tells me: 'We've come through unscathed. Let's hope it stays that way. As residents of Putney, we have enjoyed relative tranquillity as Heathrow has largely closed down. We are not looking forward to a resumption of international air travel. Our daughter finishes at Cambridge in a few weeks and will have a quiet year before starting a two-year master's programme in International Affairs at Columbia.'

He goes on to say: 'As for me, with the pandemic putting paid to travel to Asia, my face-to-face legal training sideline morphed into an online training business. The loss of interactivity was a small price to pay for the convenience of delivering training from my study. My bottom line benefited, unlike my waistline. My on-off retirement took a further knock as I have been appointed honorary professor in the School of Law, Queen Mary University of London, where I am developing a major online training programme on mergers and acquisitions, which should be available through Coursera towards the end of the year.'

**Jeremy Black** has published a dozen books since our last update. Given that he clearly can't have time for anything else, the least I can do is list them:

- A Brief History of the Mediterranean* (Robinson, 2021)
- George III: Majesty and Madness* (Allen Lane, 2020)
- Tank Warfare* (Indiana, 2020)
- A History of the Second World War in 100 Maps* (British Library Publishing, 2020)
- To Lose an Empire: British Strategy and Foreign Policy, 1758-90* (Bloomsbury, 2021)
- A Brief History of Britain, 1851-2021* (Robinson, 2021)
- The World of James Bond: The Life and Times of 007*. 2nd edn (Rowman & Littlefield, 2021)
- A New History of England*. 3rd edn (The History Press, 2020)
- A History of the Twentieth Century: Conflict, Technology & Rock 'n' Roll* (Arcturus, 2021)
- England in the Age of Austen* (Indiana, 2021)
- How the Army Made Britain a Global Power, 1688-1815* (Casemate Academic, 2021)
- France: A Short History* (Thames and Hudson, 2021)

**Armand D'Angour** tells me that Princeton University Press will publish his latest book this year called *How to Innovate: An Ancient Guide to Creative Thinking*. It distils the findings of the research he presented in his 2011 academic book *The Greeks and the New*. It is a guide for businesspeople and laypersons to the four fundamental principles of innovating for success: creating the right conditions, adapting, cross-fertilising and disrupting. These are all illustrated with stories from ancient Greek history, including Archimedes' Eureka moment, and the 'skewed phalanx' that disrupted centuries of traditional Greek

warfare and created an unexpected winning strategy. He sent me a detail from the cover of the book, showing Archimedes in his bath. I couldn't see a skewed phalanx anywhere.



## \* OTHER SAINTS ARE AVAILABLE

**Mark Fiddes**

LIVE CANON

Mark Fiddes' latest poetry collection

**Mark Fiddes** is still in Dubai. He says he has not much news except that he had a second poetry collection published in the spring called *\*Other Saints Are Available* (Live Canon, 2021). He also sent me a picture of the cover, which shows three mixed-up figures, saying he wasn't sure which of the three characters he's meant to be. I was fortunate enough to join the online launch of the collection, where I was able to wave virtually at **Dave King**. Mark is also writing a regular

column for *Arabian Business* on innovation and creativity while continuing to write ads.

**Schuylar Foerster** and a colleague recently had a paper published by the NATO Defense College about NATO strategy. I am grateful for this as I'm now able to invade places like Cyprus and Finland. If you'd like to join me, take a look at [www.ndc.nato.int/research/research.php](http://www.ndc.nato.int/research/research.php)

**Professor John Girkin** — I believe quite rightly — suspects that 'like everyone else my last year was dominated by staying at home'. Not wishing to waste the opportunity, John kept on top of the garden ('just') but says that singing for various choirs was totally off the agenda. He also mentions that monitoring final-year university student projects where students were doing practical optical physics in their bedrooms created a new challenge. He concludes by saying that, having recently become a grandparent for the first time, once life returns to a more normal footing he thinks he knows where his spare time is going to be spent.

**Nicholas Horton** has no news but would like to use his precious column millimetres by pointing out that 'we need to offer free and open public access to land that has been enclosed since, say, the Reformation'. My newly learned NATO skills could come in useful here.

**David King**, I fear, is losing the plot. He says: 'Apart from a brief sabbatical on the International Space Station, I have spent most of the last year within a one-mile radius of my home in Harrow.' Ground control to Dr King, your circuit's dead, there's something wrong. Back on earth, he's been kept busy by helping to manage Covid-19 research ([www.nihr.ac.uk/covid-19/](http://www.nihr.ac.uk/covid-19/)). Ironically, he did manage to catch Covid in March, three days after being vaccinated (which, he says, 'was a bit like being shot on Armistice Day'), but thankfully doesn't seem to have suffered any lasting effects. He also managed to fit in a spell of socially distanced jury service. David: take your protein pills and put your helmet on.

**Roger Pearse** confesses that after a quarter of a century of successful freelancing in industry, he has decided to retire this October. Mind you, he made the same decision last year, but when lockdown happened, he was lured into 'one last

job'. Once he discovered that, while forced to stay home, he could get paid to attend endless Zoom meetings by using a smartphone with the camera off, while reclining on the sofa, he felt his duty was clear. Now cleansed of all guilt, Roger intends to pursue his interests in the ancient world, write his blog, and walk by the sea every day. One day he hopes to travel a bit. At the moment (it being May when this was written) he is just enjoying winding down, and the novel feeling of spending his days at home in the spring rather than in a hotel somewhere.



Simon Petherick's daughter getting married in Chelsea, London

**Simon Petherick** tells me he was reminded to respond to my request for news when listening to Guy Garvey on Radio Six, who played a rare Fleetwood Mac song recommended to him by one **Dave King**. 'I am assuming that is the Dave King of this parish,' says Simon. Fleetwood Mac? Are you mad? Have they even heard of Sheffield? Sorry. Anyway, Simon goes on to say: 'The last 12 months of lockdown were rounded off in a buoyant way yesterday by my daughter getting married in Chelsea in London, which has cheered us all up immensely.' You can see a very cheery Simon in the photograph. He also had a novel published earlier in the year called *Like Fire Unbound: A Novel About London* (TSB | Can of Worms, 2021). Simon spent the rest of the year 'like everyone else, shuffling from the kitchen to my office in my pyjamas, mostly working on the ghost-writing projects I undertake for clients. Early

morning yoga has prevented too much old-man posture at the desk and I'm looking forward like everyone else to getting out and about soon. Bring on the next Gaudy.' Hear, hear to that. Although we will be about 90 by then.

**Noel Privett** (that's me) didn't really do a great deal. All I had published was this update of Mertonians of 1979. I didn't visit a space station, or even a railway station. One month, Google told me my travel highlight of the past four weeks was a trip to the Holiday Inn in Winchester to get a Covid jab. But I don't care. I'm enjoying being there as my four grandchildren grow up (when you read this they will be 5, 4 and two 2s).

## 1980

### Year Representative: Laurence Reed

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## 1981

### Year Representative: Graham Dwyer

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When compiling last year's column, we all faced an unprecedented situation with the onset of the then-new Covid-19 pandemic. Little could many of us have suspected that we would be still facing this serious issue 12 months later. Under these circumstances, I was thankful to hear from Mertonians in various parts of the world. I was also sad to note the passing of two of our number. We lost in October 2020 legendary mathematician **Robin Chapman**. Many thanks to all who contributed to the obituary on page 202. The other was **Cathy Rendon**, an enthusiastic contributor to this column, whose life was warmly profiled in last year's *Postmaster*, having passed away in March 2020.

Many of us 40 years after matriculation are getting near retirement age or have even passed it, as in the case of **Jon**

**Cooper**. Six years on, Jon reports he has kept busy in the various lockdowns writing articles and papers. 'Early retirement was excellent training for the lockdowns,' he writes, 'and the lockdowns have allowed me to make significant inroads into the decades-long backlog of neglected domestic chores.' He says he is actively maintaining his 'jalopy collection' and the small woodland he owns near Guildford, as well as taking online maths courses at the City Lit and volunteering at a local steam railway.

**David Llewellyn Dodds** thankfully survived a personal brush with Covid-19 and has managed to maintain one active choir out of five he runs – a Gregorian schola (usually two to five people), so is getting more acquainted with the Roman Liturgy. Meanwhile, he has been reviewing books about Tolkien (in Dutch) and working on a paper on faithful cultus in his Númenor and Middle-earth.

**Paul Duggan** communicates that he was lucky to join Oxford Brookes University a few months before we were all confined to quarters. 'My research is in anthropology, focusing on prehistoric human conflict and competition,' he writes. 'We are told at Brookes to write in language readable by "your granny", or alternatively, by an imaginary mechanic.' He says any Mertonians who'd like to test a sample for such easy legibility, or just for interest, are welcome to get in touch.

**Alec Findlater** was kind enough to share memories of **Robin Chapman**, some of which I fed into the obituary. He is largely retired but is dipping his toes tentatively back into academic waters. He has also spent the past few years continuing to visit Oxford regularly, as his twin daughters graduated a few years ago from University College and Lincoln College. 'It is fascinating to observe how so much may change but the feel of the place does not,' he writes. 'Maths now has what seems like a whole campus to itself compared with the little building that we made do with.'

Meanwhile, **Stephen Haywood** is also enjoying retirement. He loves sailing his brand new Aero dinghy and has recently married. So congratulations to him!

Still very much active is **Jesse Norman**, who as Financial Secretary has been in the thick of the UK Treasury response

to Covid-19. This includes the furlough and self-employed schemes and an array of other tax relief and grant measures. 'What has made things even crazier was that for most of last year my wife Kate Bingham (Christ Church, 1987) was the unpaid expert Chair of the UK Vaccine Task Force,' he reports. 'As is now widely recognised, she did an astoundingly good job in procuring the vaccines on which the UK vaccination rollout has relied. But it did mean that we were Mr Tax and Mrs Vax for a while, and barely saw each other – despite living in the same house.'

Like many people, my old tutorial partner in Music **Nicki Paxman** has been largely working from home since the onset of the pandemic. The BBC World Service Arts Show she produces has not been on the road since a programme from Miami in January 2020. 'Instead, we did online shows from Rome and Stockholm, with everyone, including bands and audience, joining from their own homes or studios,' she writes. 'It worked, but not quite the same thing! In a difficult and tragic year for so many, she at least was able to spend time at home with her partner and son who has been on his 'gap' year.'

Reporting from Vienna, **Graham Tebb** has witnessed the same cycle of lockdowns and brief periods of near-normality as elsewhere in the world, and he notes the youngest are among the hardest hit. His elder daughter was able to spend five months in France but her term at Moscow State University is taking place from his living room while his younger daughter is preparing for the entrance exam for International Law at Vienna University. Good luck to both of them! He managed to leave Austria just once last year, roaming a good 5km from the border into Hungary for a lecture on bats.

Over in Thailand, **Tira Wannamethee** reports on one bright spot in a dark 2020, attending the scholarship awards ceremony in August at Siriraj Medical School, one of Thailand's top medical schools and hospital. He joined his wife, a long-time benefactor, in sponsoring a five-year medical scholarship at Siriraj. 'Despite the difficult economic conditions, it was heart-warming to see that 50 scholarships were awarded in 2020 (a big increase over 28 in 2019),' he writes. Also notable, about 75% of the scholarship recipients were female students.

Graham Dwyer (left) is given a night tour of London's East End by CUP's Peter Phillips



As for me, I have been working from home for ADB in Manila since mid-March 2020, but used my quasi-diplomatic status to negotiate the various travel bans and undertake a month-long trip to the UK in December and January to visit my 90-year-old parents. A highlight of an otherwise limited trip was a socially distanced walking tour of the London East End given by **Peter Phillips**, who I am happy to report will be Chief Executive of the new organisation combining Cambridge University Press and Cambridge Assessment from August. I joked that if he ever tired of being a CEO, he has a promising second career waiting as a highly knowledgeable tour guide!

Stay safe everyone for next year.

## 1982

### Year Representative: Nick Weller

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Thank you very much for everyone who's been in contact; it's been good to hear that you have been keeping well.

It's been particularly encouraging to hear that **Andrew Corrie**, **John Holland**, **Richard Ryder**, **James Thickett** and **Steve Walsh**, along with **Martin Giles** (1980), **David Holbrook** (1984) and **David Parkinson** (1979), have kept in contact in various electronic ways and have now started to meet again in person.

**Andrew Corrie** has been coping with teaching virtually; his children, with learning virtually.

**Jasper Gaunt** has been appointed Curator of Ancient Art at The Al Thani Collection, and is now based in London. The Collection is opening galleries in the Hotel de la Marine on the Place de la Concorde in Paris later this year.

**David Holden** has been working at home and has been more productive as a result of the restrictions on other activities imposed by lockdown. David is still running once a week and playing plenty of computer games, but has missed going to Madeira and attending anime conventions.

**John Holland** has been continuing to modernise the Home Office's data systems and working to complete his MSc in Pure Mathematics. John has been bringing up his three youngest children as a single dad. His two younger daughters, Faith and Grace, will be joining their brother Samuel at secondary school this year. John's two older daughters are finishing their degrees this year, Lucy in Illustration and Niamh in Physics and Philosophy.

**Peter Kessler** has settled back at Oxford, with his wife, Dinah Rose QC (Magdalen, 1984), now being President of Magdalen. Peter has been impressed most of all by the resilience, good humour and maturity of Magdalen's students. During the lockdown Peter has been running a series of online events called 'The President's Husband's Lockdown Lifeline', with quizzes, games, a film club and magic tricks. Merton students have been included along with Magdalen students in these events. Peter and Dinah's dog and cat have also been helping out, their dog Scrumpy being available for walking by students and their cat Spangle 'graciously' making himself available for stroking.

**Virginia Knight** and her husband Gregory celebrate their silver wedding in June 2021. Virginia's daughter Naomi takes

Finals in Cambridge in June 2021. Her elder son, Alban, went up to Edinburgh University and will hopefully see more of the city in his second year. Her younger son, Magnus, has taken GCSE substitute exams. Virginia has been working at home, but meetings in the office were being planned. Outside work, Virginia hopes to be singing in Portsmouth Cathedral later this year. She has been in contact with **Nicholas** and **Jenny Richardson**.

**Ginny Knox** (née Mitchell) has been profiled in the *40 Years: Merton Women 1980–2020* section of Merton's website, as Merton's first female JCR President. Ginny's profile includes an interesting interview by **Ellie Hall** (2019), Merton's 2020–21 JCR President.

**Randall Martin** has been dividing his time between writing the last chapter of a book and leading an international research project and website. The project is called *Cymbeline in the Anthropocene*. It is a network of environmentally oriented productions of Shakespeare's late tragic-comic romance, *Cymbeline*. There are ten contributing theatre companies on five continents. The performances were supposed to begin in 2020 but were postponed due to the pandemic. However, the first collaborating production took place in Melbourne, Australia in April 2021, with the second in Montana beginning in June 2021. The project will culminate in a performance festival and symposium in late 2022. The project and website ([www.cymbeline-anthropocene.com](http://www.cymbeline-anthropocene.com)) have been supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Randall hopes to make a postponed research trip to Britain, including a visit to Oxford, in October 2021.

**Peter Moger** sent details of his move to the Outer Hebrides. 'The past 18 months have been a time of great change. In October 2019, after nine years as Canon Precentor of York Minster, I moved to become the Scottish Episcopal priest on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. Here, I look after two churches – St Peter's in Stornoway and St Moluag's, Eoropaidh – with an eclectic congregation drawn from across the island. The diocese spans about 350 miles of islands and coastline, and boasts a grand total of eight clergy! Having been in the post four months, we entered the first lockdown and moved online, but have been glad to have been under less severe restrictions than on the mainland. We have

adjusted to the dark, wet and windy winters, and are now enjoying the long summer evenings, where it stays light until well past 11pm. It is a privilege to live and work in such a beautiful place.'

**Peter Roberts** has been impressed by how Canterbury Cathedral has commemorated the 800th anniversary of the translation of St Thomas Becket's relics to the Corona with services, talks and an exhibition at the British Museum.

**Richard Ryder** has celebrated the birth of his first grandchild, Clara. Richard has found working at home quite liberating, with less travelling and a better work-life balance.

**Mark Shuttleworth** came back to the UK over Christmas but then was caught out by quarantine requirements when travelling back to Hong Kong. Mark had to spend three weeks in Dubai too as a result of being in the UK (on the insistence of the Hong Kong government). Mark considered the possibility of travelling overland by camel, but finally got back to Hong Kong by other means and then had to spend three more weeks in quarantine.

**James Thickett** is still Deputy Chair at the National Centre for Social Research which keeps him abreast of the world of work. James has been fortunate that his granddaughter Ella (2) lives very close by. James has been able to see Ella regularly and observe how she is growing bigger and more interesting every day.

**Laura Thompson** was interviewed on the television series *Great British Railway Journeys* by Michael Portillo at Chilworth, Surrey, talking about Agatha Christie's disappearance nearby.

I've settled into a routine of working at home, trying to keep exercised by local walks. Like everyone. I would like to get back to some normality soon, but the main thing is hoping everyone stays well and safe.

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## 1983

**Year Representative: Meriel Cowan**  
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It has been a strange year and I don't have much news to report from the 1983 cohort.

**Ian Andrews** continues to work as a partner at Linklaters LLP. He has been fortunate that the pandemic has allowed him to work for several months from his house on Paros, Greece, so while starting early in the morning he has still been able to enjoy swimming before breakfast.

**Rob Baker** reports that he moved to the countryside in Norfolk two years ago, with his new partner, Annie. 'It's been particularly painful being so far from my grown-up sons during the pandemic, but working at home has been relatively easy and I have worked without interruption.' Rob and Annie are currently in Barbados having just got married there and are honeymooning in blissful paradise. Unfortunately, the guests had to stay at home in Blighty because of the quarantine rules and had to settle for watching the ceremony from afar. Rob writes: 'It feels great to have done this in these times, and a more perfect location you could not wish for.' Rob has started a new contract in legal IT with DLA Piper. He also managed to catch up with **Jeremy Smith**, who he had previously lost touch with. Jeremy is a published author, his books include *Red Nations: The Nationalities Experience in and after the USSR* (Cambridge, 2013). He is a professor of history in Abu Dhabi at the moment, and has a grown-up family in Finland.

**James Collings** told me that he continues to work as a compliance officer at Kleinwort Hambros, still full time, but he was able to work at home since March 2020 without going into the office once. James and his family did the NC500 (North Coast 500, a 516-mile route round the top of Scotland) over two weeks in September/October. They had stunning weather and excellent quiet Airbnb places to stay. 'Highlight was the few days we spent on Orkney in a remote farm cottage overlooking the Atlantic near Skara Brae.' James and Kim are still based in Haywards Heath, and James has

been able to walk the dogs every morning before work while based at home: 'lovely at the moment with the bluebells in the Sussex woods'. His main hobbies remain pottering in the garden and tinkling the piano ivories.

I've been very happy to be able to visit **Susan** and **Michael Roller** a few times when driving to the West Country, at their beautiful house near Amesbury. Michael is Chief Financial Officer at medical device company Circassia which is based in Oxford (though he has of course been working primarily from home), while Susan is a partner working for Smith & Williamson specialising in private client tax services. Their children are now both working in London.

**Simon** and I continue to live and work in Oxford. Simon has had a term's sabbatical after a year as head of the economics department and has returned to his role as Economics tutor at Worcester College. I continue to work in general practice in Oxford, which remains rather tough, although being part of the Covid vaccination programme (and personally as an AstraZeneca trial subject) has been rewarding.

## 1984

**Year Representative:** **David Clark**

Email: [david.clark@merton.oxon.org](mailto:david.clark@merton.oxon.org)

Congratulations to **Michael Tatham** who was one of four Merton alumni recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours in October 2020. I spotted this news on the College website. Michael has been Deputy Ambassador to the USA since January 2018. He previously served in a number of diplomatic postings and has specialised in supporting post-communist transition processes and conflict resolution in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. He was awarded a CMG for services to British foreign policy.

Otherwise, it has been, understandably, a fairly quiet year news-wise from the class of 1984.

**John Newton** writes: 'It was good to reach out to **David Smith** and hear about his role in the Kuyers Institute at Calvin University. It seems all of our children are growing up

very fast!' Sadly, due to the pandemic, John and his wife could not attend the wedding of their eldest child last year and their fourth and youngest child is now well into his first year at university in Cardiff. Meanwhile Scotch College, Adelaide, where John is the Principal, has just started building its \$26 million Wellbeing and Sports Centre, which will open in Q2 2022. In closing, John remarks: 'Australia has been blissfully stable during the pandemic even though that has meant no prospect of travel to see loved ones.'

I also heard from **Adam Levitt** who is hoping for a lot more boating activity this year after all the restrictions of 2020. Adam and his family sail from Chichester Harbour. Like many, **Mark Rhys-Jones** and his wife have had a full house for most of the past year with all three of their boys at home during the pandemic. This has led to what Mark diplomatically terms an 'interesting challenge on the Wi-Fi front'! An experience that will resonate with many, no doubt.

Finally, congratulations also to **Francis Marsland** who has started a new job as Head of Legal and Compliance (Europe) at Global Blood Therapeutics. I learned of Francis's new role via the Merton College Biomedical and Life Sciences Network, of which we are both members. There's an update on the network elsewhere in *Postmaster* and it's been a great pleasure to continue to be involved in this LinkedIn group and also with the Merton Society Committee currently chaired very ably by our own **Philippa Whipple** (neé **Edwards**). It has been sad, however, not to be able to visit College in person, but I hope that will have been possible well before next year's update.

Until then, please do get in touch with your news any time – it's always a pleasure to hear from you.

## 1985

**Year Representative:** **Madeleine Barrows (née Fontana)**

Email: [MadeleineFontana@outlook.com](mailto:MadeleineFontana@outlook.com)

Every year I really enjoy reading what everyone has been up to, and here I now am as your new 1985 year rep. **Ben Prynn** has done a fantastic job over the years, keeping us

all in contact, and I'm really grateful to him for that. Taking a turn at this role is proving to be enormous fun, and I've loved hearing back from people. If anyone who was in the JCR would like to team up with me, that would be even better! If you didn't get an email from me in April or May, then please can you let me or Merton know, as you're not on the 'old members' mailing list. It'd be so good to be in touch again.

Firstly, I think the award for 'coolest update' has to go to **Simon Steel**, who is currently living in California (Silicon Valley), where he is Senior Director of Education and Outreach at the SETI Institute (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) and a NASA Principal Investigator and Education Specialist with NASA's Office of Planetary Protection. After leaving Oxford, he got his PhD in astrophysics but says he has always loved teaching and education a little more than research. His career took him to Harvard for 15 years, as lecturer and a Dean of Students, then back to the UK (2009-19) working in international education for Tufts University and then taught for eight years at UCL as part of its continuing education programme in astronomy. Family-wise, he has a semi-retired wife, two grown-up kids, one living in Brighton and one in New York; sadly they've seen neither in person for 18 months owing to the pandemic, but they are hoping to return to the UK in the summer.

**Sonia Johnson** is a clinical academic in mental health, combining research, teaching and clinical work, and has been at University College London since 1997. She has been a Professor of Social and Community Psychiatry since 2008, and is currently the Director of the National Institute for Health Research Policy Research Unit, which is commissioned to provide evidence to inform national mental health policy. She is particularly interested in researching the impact of loneliness on mental health and what to do about it. She lives on a hill in south-east London with her husband Justin, a health policy academic at City University, and son Anton (14). When circumstances allow, she also does a lot of singing, including in a chamber choir called Londinium.

**Chris Green** is still working for IBM, and currently engaged in a massive data migration exercise for a client, which is just the sort of project he really enjoys. Otherwise, he keeps busy with music – as far as it's been possible this past year. Chris

writes: 'It's been somewhat humdrum this last year, with the postponement or cancellation of so many of the musical events that I'd normally be organising or participating in. The Romsey Abbey choir, or at least a few of us adults, have been able to sing at some services since around Easter time, which has been a pleasure. I also coordinate concerts at the Abbey, and we have ten events by various choirs and orchestras in the diary in the coming months, mostly during the local arts festival in July (postponed from last year) – so we're optimistically looking forward to those.'

**Elizabeth Uwaifo (née Iyamabo)** says she has been practising as a solicitor at various London law firms focusing on finance. In September 2014 she set up her own law firm to focus on Africa. She writes: 'I had this burning desire to use the skills I had acquired in structuring funding solutions for corporate and financial institutions in the western international markets to support the dire need in Africa for creative funding solutions. In September 2020 my law firm merged with an international and pan-African law firm Asafo and Co, where I am now the Managing Partner of its London office, building a law firm that supports investors in Africa.' Elizabeth would love to hear from anyone in our year who is involved with, or has an interest in, Africa.

**Mark Medish** writes: 'This year due to the pandemic I travelled less than any time since the age of two: a new feeling, at once unsettling but also settled. My family "sheltered in place" at our home in Washington, DC with all four children back under one roof. Our son Nikolai finished his master's program in international affairs at Georgetown, and our daughter Kira graduated from Harvard College. I continue to work in the fields of international law and strategic consulting. I have rejoined the board of the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown. Last year, together with several former Members of Congress, I co-founded a non-profit civic organization called Keep Our Republic to help protect election integrity and constitutional order in the US. Our mission is not complete.'

**Karen Wilson** also writes from the USA. She continues to teach in two part-time jobs and is also her church organist. As with all academics, her work continued through quarantine, though much of it went online, which, she says, 'made it

about 50% more time-consuming'. She's still involved in all things Sherlock Holmes, and was excited to be invited to the Baker Street Irregulars Dinner this year; sadly, of course, it had to take place over Zoom, but the invitation felt like an honour nevertheless. She's now co-editing a volume of essays on Sherlock Holmes and music. Her sons are grown up, with the youngest at college and signed up to take his mum's Logic class! The eldest is a musician, which has proved very tough during the pandemic, and her middle son is a web developer who has made Karen a grandmother.

**Chris Aston** writes: 'One of our three sons, Joseph, is getting married in August to Abby, a vet (nearly). They met whilst at Nottingham University. I finally accepted that I am not going to get around to restoring my two Morris Minors that have not moved for over 20 years and need a lot of work doing to them so I have sold them. However, I still have two fully functioning Morris Minors remaining, a 1959 Convertible and a 1968 Traveller, so no withdrawal symptoms. Just waiting for some decent weather to take them out for a spin.'

For my own news, I'm still CEO at the British Academy of Management, the learned society for management scholars, and, like so many, have been working from home since March 2020, with plenty of Zoom. My four daughters were all at home for lockdown 1, which was an unexpected pleasure. The youngest has now followed in her mum's footsteps and is at Merton, studying English, living in Rose Lane 5. It's been a very odd year to start university, but it's been wonderful to see our College 'from the inside' showing itself a truly caring and supportive institution. The food still looks pretty good too. When possible, I enjoy singing with Portsmouth Baroque Choir, and Chris Green tells me that he was once a member. I'm in touch with **Diana Altegoer**, who is still working as Executive Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations at the University of Pennsylvania, and is very involved in MC3. I'm hoping to see **Tony Trowles**, who is still at Westminster Abbey as Head of the Abbey Collection and Librarian, soon when I finally manage to run the London Marathon (very slowly) for real this October. I'm also in touch with **Christine Biggs** (née **Winzor**, 1986), and **Sonia Johnson**.

## 1986

**Year Representatives:** **Simon Male** (undergraduates)  
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and **Daniel Schaffer** (graduates)

Tel: 07711 927122 Email: [daniel.schaffer@btinternet.com](mailto:daniel.schaffer@btinternet.com)

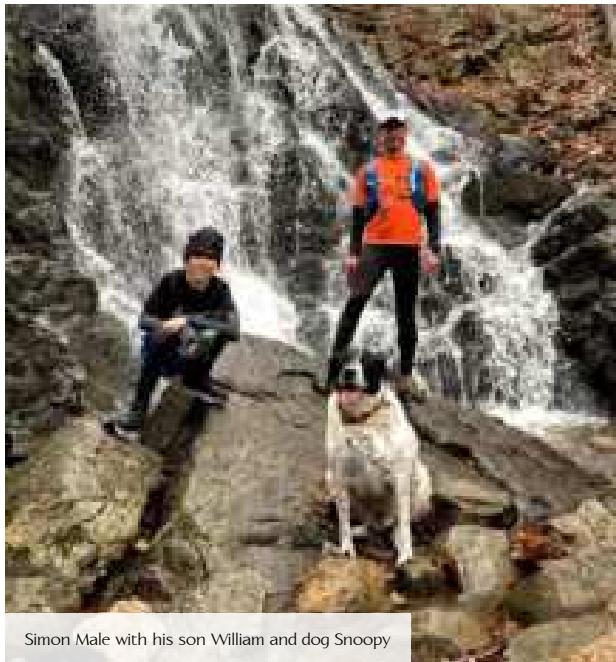
### Undergraduates

**Jeremy Cooper** has found running a bus company during a pandemic to be a challenge, and is looking forward to resuming musical activities. His daughters are currently both at university and he is profoundly grateful not to have had his time at Merton disrupted in the way that theirs has been.

**John Shaw** is now head of product management at R3, makers of the Corda blockchain platform. He is still living in Oxford, now in Summertown.

**Nancy Dawrant** has had a very challenging year as a teacher, but also one that forced the rapid development of new skills. The need to be there for her classes and to deliver the curriculum in an engaging way remained constant, whether remotely or physically in school. She hopes that her GCSE and A-level students obtain the grades that they rightly deserve and that they thrive as they move onwards to follow their dreams and aspirations. Pool closures helped her discover a local open water swimming venue, and at the end of the summer she managed to enter the Action Challenge Chiltern 50k which was superbly organised in a Covid-secure manner.

**Jonathan Thomas**'s work focuses on UK immigration policy, and having seen that **Matthew Rycroft** has been appointed as the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office, he contacted Matthew whom he had not caught up with since his Merton days. They were able to take advantage of one of the brief periods of lockdown relaxation to grab a couple of pints and a burger in a pub. They enjoyed catching up on a personal level and not just on immigration policy.



Simon Male with his son William and dog Snoopy

**Simon Male** launched Simon's Bike Repair to help out those looking to get rusty old bikes back on the road for some pandemic fresh air and exercise. He is overjoyed that his son William (12) has also developed a love of cycling and the outdoors, and they now ride and run regularly together in the New York countryside. He is busy building a new investment-focused social media platform, Seersite.

#### Graduates

**Ben Alpers**, an Associate Professor of Cultural History at the University of Oklahoma reports: 'Under the difficult circumstances of the pandemic, this past year has been a good one for my family and me. Our daughter, Mira, has just completed her freshman year at Harvard where, among other accomplishments, she directed the first-year musical (an original, student-written play, this time written to be streamed online). Our son, Noah, transferred to Cornell in the fall to start his junior year of college, but decided to take the spring semester off so that he could maximize his

non-pandemic experiences there. He'll be back in Ithaca next fall to continue his film major. While home this past winter, he completed a terrific documentary about city politics in our town of Norman, Oklahoma, which have grown suddenly nasty during this last year in a way that will be familiar to any of you who have been following US national politics. My wife, Karin Schutjer, and I both taught our courses at the University of Oklahoma online this year. I feel I am now pretty good at teaching on Zoom, a skill I hope never to have to use again. This spring, Karin was named the new co-editor of the *German Quarterly*, one of the premier journals in her field. And I received the University of Oklahoma's Distinguished Teaching Award. Most importantly our entire family, including our extended families, have come through the pandemic alive and healthy.'

**Ricardo Bianconi**, a maths professor at São Paulo University writes: 'The year 2020 brought lots of challenges because of the pandemic. I had to learn to teach online, which has created a lot of extra work. I research in mathematical logic, mostly applied to other areas of mathematics. I am also involved with the Professional Master's course on Teaching of Mathematics. I am now trying to write an undergraduate book on logic, a seemingly endless work. My wife and I live in a small city near São Paulo, with too many cats for my liking.'

**Christine Biggs** (née **Winzor**) reports: 'I very much enjoyed reading the updates from the class of '86 in last year's *Merton Postmaster*, but honestly, with Covid and the international travel ban placed on Australians, not to mention the closure of state borders within Australia, this past year has been such a quiet one, with no exciting travel (hence no photos) nor anything new to report regarding my job situation (librarian at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra). My husband Ian has returned to a desk job in the North & South Asia Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and dreams of boarding a long-haul flight again instead of conducting meetings via Microsoft Teams, Webex and Zoom in the early hours of the morning.'

'Our daughter Alexandra remains stuck overseas and relocated from Cairo to Erbil (in Iraqi Kurdistan) in February to take up a position with the UN's IOM (International

Organisation for Migration). We are hoping that the vaccination rollout may see an easing of Australia's strict quarantine requirements and perhaps she'll be able to return to Australia for Christmas this year. And our son Joshua works as a field officer for the Australian Institute of Marine Science, based in Darwin, and spends his time patrolling Australia's vast northern coastline monitoring water quality. I was saddened to hear of the death of my Oxford supervisor and Merton Fellow, Jim Coulton, in August last year.' (Ed: see page 199 for Professor Coulton's obituary.)

**Aaron Byerley** is now retired from the United States Air Force.

**Susan Craighead** is a judge of the Superior Court, Seattle.

**Mari Izumi** writes: 'I've been a researcher on agriculture and agricultural policy for recent years. My research topics are on young entrants into farming and agri-environment policies.'

**Andrew Jenkins** is retired and reports that nothing has changed in the last year.



**Louis Jacobs** reports: 'The past 12 months have challenged me as a businessman but made me exceedingly proud as a father. While the United States and world reeled from the devastation of Covid-19, my family's global hospitality company was almost fully shut down in across our

concessions, travel and gaming portfolio. I share the role of CEO with my brothers, and the pandemic was far and away the biggest professional challenge we have ever faced.'

'I am proud to share that our company is recovering, and even prouder to share that my wife Joan and I watched as our children, Louie and Charlotte, navigated the tumult and uncertainty of the past year and grew into their own as adults. Louie moved to Austin, Texas and Charlotte is thriving in Wellington, Florida. They are both following their professional passions and enjoying time with their significant others. As a father, nothing could bring me more joy. We adopted a dog called Arlo during the pandemic and he comes to the office with me every day. I attach a photo of me, Arlo and my brother Jerry.'

**Julee Kaye (née Greenough)** writes: 'Finding myself stuck in the world's most beautiful province all year and looking for silver linings, my husband Jerry and I were glad of our previous outdoor experience and stock of camping equipment. Buoyed by some comfortable boat trips on the Pacific coast, we together with our son Ryden bravely (perhaps foolishly) took three inexperienced teenaged friends on a multi-day wilderness canoe trip inland. There we endured daily rain and ceaseless clouds of mosquitoes to find moments of such transcendent beauty that fully one in three of the novice teens agreed it was all worth it. On the plus side, everyone returned with a new appreciation for the pleasures of being at home! I wish that all of you might enjoy the same perspective even in the midst of the continued restrictions and losses brought about by the pandemic. Please take care of yourselves!'

**Larry Mathews** is a solicitor specialising in criminal law.

**Mark Newton** is a professor in the Department of Physics at Warwick University.

**Daniel Promislow**, Professor of Pathology and Biology at the University of Washington, reports: 'Much of my time in 2020 has been devoted to leading the Dog Aging Project, a national community science longitudinal study of aging in pet dogs. We were supposed to have our annual in-person meeting in Seattle on 5 March 2020. We cancelled the meeting two days before that, and have spent the past year working on

Zoom. We have a nationwide team of more than 70 people building and running this project, and I have been amazed at the flexibility, resilience and understanding of this amazing group. On the personal side, the pandemic meant not only that I was working from home, but also that much of that time was spent at home not in Seattle but in Boston, where my wife moved for a position at Boston Children's Hospital. Notable milestones: my stepdaughter Carly received her PhD based on her work on single-cell analysis of tissue from Covid-19 patients, and is now back in the clinic to finish her MD. My stepson Joey moved back home to start a master's degree in acupuncture, and is living with me. It's very sweet to be sharing the same home again, and I'm not sure which of us is working harder on school!'

**Chris Parker** writes: 'I am Professor of Prostate Oncology at the Royal Marsden Hospital. In 2021, our eldest daughter completed her medical studies in Oxford (with rather more distinction than her father did 32 years ago).'



**Dan Schaffer** reports: 'I am a solicitor and partner at Slaughter and May in London specialising in pensions.

The last year has been the busiest of my professional life, locked down in my study on Teams. That said, I discovered Zwift racing (virtual bike racing) which has been a saviour – competing daily against riders all over the world. On the family front my wife Marianne says she has seen far too much of me and is looking forward to my return to the office in September! Antoine our eldest son (25) is in Germany as he now works in Munich for fashion company myTheresa.com. Vincent (23) has finished his junior (third) year at Yale majoring in computer science. He will take the next semester off to work and then restart in 2022. Covid has impaired the university experience and deferring the start of his final year is sensible to maximise the uni life. Louis has just finished his freshman year at the University of Chicago. He's loving it there (part of the campus is a replica of Christ Church). We did manage to be a family unit under one roof at the end of December 2020/beginning of January 2021, which was really great. Marianne (who is French) and I have booked a holiday in Brittany this summer and hope to get to the USA and Israel later this year. A real highlight of 2021 was teaching an undergraduate Trust law class and tutorials for Professor Jenny Payne. The students are so impressive. I stay in touch with **Lionel Hogg** and with **Ben Alpers** and also had a lockdown Zoom with **Larry Mathews**. We are also in touch with Nick (and Marla) Allard.'

**Luc Tremblay** is a professor in the Law Faculty at the University of Montreal.

**David Wright** is a journalist in New York.

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## 1987

**Year Representative: Simon Male**

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**Jo Withers** has returned from the adventure of a lifetime sailing to the South Pacific, and is working as a GP, combining work in Bucks with a role supporting remote and rural GPs in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. A new challenge will be to provide emergency pre-hospital care as required until the emergency services arrive. She says she has lots to learn.

After almost a decade as CEO of BBC Global News, **Jim Egan** left the BBC in late 2020 to join Media Development Investment Fund (MDIF). MDIF makes private equity and debt investments in independent news media businesses in countries where access to capital is limited and press freedom is under threat. The fund has its origins in the media market liberalisations which accompanied the end of the Cold War in Central and Eastern Europe. Jim works as MDIF's Chief Investment Officer, overseeing MDIF's portfolio of around 50 media companies.

**Shaun O'Callaghan's** three children have graduated, one starting university this year and the youngest starting A-levels. This should leave him more time for his own studies on business history from 1850 to 1950, in particular the development of retail. He is always happy to hear from Mertonians working in the City, living in Cambridge, working with the Business School at City, University of London, or who are members of the Athenaeum Club.



After last year's promotion to running the under-11s team at St Peter's Cricket Club in Brighton, **Russ Mould** is running the entire boys' cricket programme, which covers more than 150 players from ages nine to 16. He is looking to take

his Foundation Level 2 coaching badge, and is also running the All-Stars programme for 5- to 8-year-olds. When not on the cricket pitch or training ground, or watching Lewes FC or going to the racecourse, the other way in which he manages to neglect wife Clare and children Alice and Tom is by making regular appearances on the BBC, Sky and other leading media outlets at strange times of day on behalf of AJ Bell, as he tries (in vain) to make sense of financial markets.

**James Cross** has had a quiet year, but did manage to have pizza in the garden with **Sally Keating (née Ronald)** and **Annabel Bell (née Littlewood)** and their other halves.

After three years as UK Ambassador to the Netherlands during Brexit, **Peter Wilson** moved to be Ambassador in Brazil in January. Priorities are climate, trade and science, including vaccines. The political debate in Brazil is vigorous. The desire to expand ties with the UK is strongly felt across the spectrum.

**Mike Tappin** has been practising in intellectual property, particularly patents, for the last 30 years. He has kept his interest in science and technology alive without having to go into the lab. He worked on a significant case about antibody-producing mice with **Rob Stephen** (1988) and against **Will Duncan** (2006). He married Mary in Merton in 1991 and still lives in Oxford, where Mary has been a city councillor since 1998, and was Lord Mayor in 2009. They have four children aged between 18 and 24 who are trying, with optimism, to find their way in the world at a difficult time for their generation.

## 1988

**Year Representative: Tim Gardener**

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Following two decades in corporate biotech and pharma spent mostly on developing stem cell therapeutics and similar, **Christian van den Bos** set up in full-time consultancy in 2007. Initially work was indeed focused on cellular therapeutics but then, and somewhat surprisingly, gravitated towards supporting vaccines development and production. A major project was in supporting a site to set up for producing MSD's Ebola vaccine

in the vicinity of Hannover, Germany. Last year he began similar work for a site preparing to produce a Covid-19 vaccine. Specifically, it's a WuXi site aiming to produce AstraZeneca's vaccine. He writes: 'It would be nice to claim that I selected this project in an act of loyalty to my alma mater; however, consulting work tends to be rather opportunistic.'

To qualify for serving in one of the legally prescribed pharmaceutical roles one needs to demonstrate a completed course of study in subjects such as biology or chemistry. Presenting his MSc in Biochemistry from the University of Oxford apparently was just a bit too exotic for the German government agency and so he found himself in the surprising position of having to prove that his degree actually was the result of proper studies – about 30 years after obtaining it. Working under the supervision of the late Eric Newsholme there was no getting away with half-baked work! Christian sought help from Merton and was delighted to receive the requested confirmation within a few days. 'I suppose I should have considered that 30 years really is pretty close to nothing for a college 800+ years old. Anyway, I am really grateful and wish the College, my co-alumni and current students the very best!'

**Susanna Kleeman**'s first novel *Twice* is published by Zero Books in June 2021. A thrilling look at coercive control on a global and personal scale, *Twice* is about doubles, false fronts, ex-loves, the secret history of the world and what we've lost now that digital tech tightens its grip on our hearts and souls.

**Mike Porter** is now a professor in the Chemistry Department at University College London, although he has not set foot in the department for over a year. The last year has been spent at home in Buckinghamshire with his wife and son (10), learning very rapidly about both home schooling and long-distance undergraduate teaching. While missing the face-to-face interactions with students and colleagues, he has rather enjoyed not having to commute.

**Jenny Condron** (née **Hawley-Groat**) writes: 'I've worked with Mercer across the UK – from Edinburgh, south and back – becoming Chief Actuarial Officer, and leading the profession chairing the Association of Consulting Actuaries.

Married to Mark, our two children are starting work and second-year university – I'm not sure where the years have gone! We've been fortunate through lockdown: plenty of space; the children unexpectedly home for months; and time enough to teach my daughter to sew and enjoy making scrubs together. But oh to be able to travel again ...'

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## 1989

**Year Representative: Matthew Grimley**

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Understandably given current circumstances, there has not been a great deal of news from our year group this year, but I look forward to hearing more when we are finally able to meet for the Gaudy next year.

**Myles Ogilvie** has published *Sooner Safer Happier: Antipatterns and Patterns for Business Agility* (It Revolution Press, 2020), a book documenting patterns and anti-patterns for new ways of working. **Aidan Eardley** has been appointed a part-time Recorder (Crime), Wales Circuit. Since the West End run of her play *The Girl Who Fell* in 2019, **Sarah Rutherford** has moved into TV, and is currently writing a BBC drama commissioned by World Productions.

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## 1990

**Year Representative: Christine Barrie**

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**Azeem Azhar**'s first book, *Exponential*, which bridges the gap between technology and society, will be published in September 2021. In 2020, he also published a global research report, *The State of Climate Tech*, on the growth of start-ups tackling climate change. He continues to invest actively in early-stage technology companies. Azeem's newsletter and podcast, *Exponential View*, are marching along happily. His work focus is increasingly on how to bring deep technologies and new business models together to tackle climate change.

The UK's first 1GHz NMR spectrometer came to field in November 2020 at the UK High-Field Solid-State NMR Facility of which **Steven Brown** is Director at the University of Warwick, where he is a Professor of Physics (even though he studied chemistry at Merton). You can read more in this *Chemistry World* article: [www.chemistryworld.com/news/uk-reaches-the-gigahertz-nmr-level-behind-other-nations/4012642.article](http://www.chemistryworld.com/news/uk-reaches-the-gigahertz-nmr-level-behind-other-nations/4012642.article)

**Harriet Griffiths** (née Drybrough) and her husband **Jonathan** (1987) met at Merton and are about to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary at home in Perth, Western Australia.

**Alison Reid** continues to run a business as an executive coach and speaker. She made use of lockdown downtime by writing a book which was published this spring: *Unleash Your Leadership: How to Worry Less and Achieve More* (Hummingbird, 2021). She says it is full of practical strategies, grounded in neuroscience, to help professionals realise their leadership potential and accelerate their career.

**Lindsay Tanner** (née Dow) became Oldham Council's Principal Social Worker for Children in November 2020, with responsibility for workforce development and quality assurance of practice; she and Mark moved to Chester when Mark became Bishop of Chester. Both their children study in Oxford so it is a delight to be able to visit and rekindle memories!

**Zaid Al-Qassab** and **Claudia Drake** (1991) met at Merton 30 years ago this year and have been married for 20 of those years.

## 1991

**Year Representative: Anna Smith (Chairman of the Year Representatives)**

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**Caroline Bentley-Davies** has written a book for teachers: *Sticky Teaching and Learning: How to Make Your Students Remember What You Teach Them*, which was published by Crown House Publishing in June 2021.

## 1992

**Year Representatives: Andrew Davison**

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and **Steve Maxwell**

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**Kelyn Bacon Darwin** reports that she is now a Dame. Congratulations! She left Brick Court Chambers upon her appointment to the High Court bench on 1 October 2020, assigned to the Chancery Division, and has been happily doing hearings via Microsoft Teams ever since. Otherwise life continues much as normal in the Bacon Darwin family (as much as the last year could ever be described as normal).

**Bill Barry** had a busy year in 2020. He retired as NASA Chief Historian at the end of July and moved from Maryland to Western Massachusetts to be closer to family. In addition to enjoying more family time, he's continuing to do air and space history research and writing (and he no longer has to spend several hours each day on video conferences). As the pandemic lifts (hopefully), he is planning on doing some travelling as well.

After a varied career in various sectors (PwC, Walkers Crisps, the British Museum and principal of a further education college), **Zoe Hancock** is back in Oxford as Principal Bursar at St John's College. She says it is lovely to be back in Oxford, particularly now the students are able to return. She is happy to report that the Bursar at Merton College has provided great support in her first few months and she is looking forward to being invited over for lunch!

**Simon Thomas** has achieved success after just over a decade of effort studying for two six-hour written exams and two oral exams mixed around helping to bring up three lovely children in France. The Director of Anglophone Studies at the engineering school INSA had said that it was impossible for an Anglophone to pass, but he's done it! Perhaps the presence in the oral exam library in Paris of one of Emeritus Fellow

Dominic Welsh's probability books was an inspiring light in the middle of a long dark tunnel. In 2020, Simon was placed in the top 100 of the maths *agrégation* competitive exam for teachers. A significant promotion, especially working in his second language. Hopefully this will permit him sometime in the future to be able to fulfil his ambition of teaching maths in English (full-time instead of just on Wednesday afternoons) in higher education in Lyon.

**Jenny Nevins** started a company a few years ago, Savor ([www.savor.us](http://www.savor.us)), where they have designed and manufactured modern curated keepsake boxes to help families save what matters most. She is still living in Tribeca in Lower Manhattan, married to Ian McAllister, whom she met at Oxford, and they have three kids ranging in age from 16 to 11.

**Tom Reusch** shares that 2020 was definitely the worst year ever as his wife Sara had two operations for cancer. She's now six months into her multi-year recovery, which so far is mostly going well. Thankfully she's avoided the most side-effect-laden of the follow-on treatments, but while the physical recovery continues at a slow pace the psychological impacts have a longer lasting and more insidious effect. He generously sends his full love and support to any Mertonians going through anything similar, for yourself or with your loved ones. And for anyone who needs a shoulder to cry (or laugh) on, or an ear that will hear (attached to a mind that will truly listen), for any reason at all, please drop him a line to meet up in the best way possible.

Professor **Raymond Jagessar**, FRSC, CChem (RSC), MemACS, a former DPhil student, has been lecturing at the University of Guyana in South America. His areas of speciality are organic and inorganic chemistry. His research interests are broad, covering the spectrum of pure and applied chemistry and medicinal chemistry. He has published more than 100 peer-reviewed articles, his most recent being, 'Covid-19: origin, effects on humanity, prevention and in pursuit of a cure'. He enjoys reading, watching TV news and sports. He is a fan of cricket and football. He remembers his many friends at Merton during the years 1992-95. Professor Jagessar is also currently the President of the Caribbean Academy of Sciences.

**Andrew Davison** was promoted to Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge at the beginning of the 2020-21 academic year.

Dr **Owain Tucker** was made an Honorary Professor by Heriot-Watt University where he also lectures in carbon capture and storage. This also recognises his contribution to the subject from his book *Carbon Capture and Storage* (Institute of Physics, 2018).

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## 1993

**Year Representative: Joanna Cooke**

Email: [jvcooke@hotmail.com](mailto:jvcooke@hotmail.com)

Hi everyone. It's a mixed bag from the class of 1993. Some straightforward updates and some reflections of lessons learned during Covid times.

Updates: **Anna Jones** (née **Rees**) has no major news. She simply says that really, it's generally been more of the same, but it'll be good to hear if others have enjoyed greater excitement. Anna, I'll see what we can conjure up. For **Charley Smith** (née **Haines**) Covid brought some changes. It turned out no one wanted to work in secondary schools during a pandemic so, having left teaching three years ago to run the family business, Charley returned to teaching part-time and she is loving it (I haven't heard from her lucky pupils). She greatly prefers it to being a Deputy Head. As she says: 'Seeing 13-year-olds thrilled to be in a classroom again is a new and quite emotional experience!' When not training the next generation, the Smiths are to be found on their local lake. They spent the first lockdown teaching their kids to water-ski and wakeboard and now they've expanded to even teaching my kids too! Charley was kind enough to comment: 'When she visited, Jo acted in her traditional managerial role ...' Hmm.

In September 2019 **Emma Cayley** moved from Devon to take up a role as Head of the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies at the University of Leeds. She had barely had a chance to hold one champagne reception before lockdown deprived her and her new colleagues of the opportunity for more convivial social interaction. She continues to adore

being in Leeds and back up North and says that her children have now partly overcome the shock of being torn from the South and are broadening their culinary tastes to include the many local delicacies such as Betty's 'fat rascals' and curd tart.

And now onto the lessons (most of these came from **Jim Freeman**, so wise, so reflective, ageing so well).

1. Assembly of basic office furniture in the home setting will always be acutely stressful.

2. A lockdown is not a great time to have four children.

3. The chord progression of a French rock classic remains inexplicably marvellous.

4. The optimal rate of Twix consumption when working at home is clearly one per day minimum.

5. Simply not getting divorced feels like a major achievement over the last 18 months.

6. There are small moments of joy occasionally to be found in home schooling. (Jim, I can't agree with this one. I'd go with 'There are small amounts of joy to be found when you abandon all hope of home schooling.')

7. Twenty-five years after leaving Merton, the enduring power of friendships is there, however strange the times.

And although there's no update from **Richard Marsh**, he gets a much deserved honourable mention for organising an excellent class of 1993 Euros sweepstake.

## 1994

**Year Representative: Nick Quin**

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It's always interesting to test Darwin's theory on the most adaptable to change surviving, and the recent year has certainly required this of many. Darwin might also have

highlighted the ability to apply a liberal dose of sarcasm in one's general direction, which it seems Mertonians continue to excel at, in a humble sort of way which seems to have allowed many of us to succeed not just at surviving but indeed in passing on our genes, knowledge or inspiration to others.

**Martin** and **Catherine Kimber** have replaced their second sofa with an organ so that their older son can practise, alongside their younger son's drumkit and Catherine's systematic reviews in the use of convalescent plasma for Covid-19. Halloween in Abingdon may be an interesting experience for any trick-or-treaters.

**Ben Woolley** has been Zoom teaching alongside his three kids in Tacoma, Washington throughout 15 months of lockdown, while his wife Elizabeth has apparently hidden her irritation well and avoided cabin fever by escaping for many hours at a time on her bicycle.

**James McEvoy** writes that he has declined to learn a new skill or to see the bright side of lockdown and consequently has been made head of his department, apparently an unaccountable honour.

The **Quins** (three smaller ones and my wife, Sophie) continue to live near Weybridge with a cacophony of musical instruments interrupting our 'working from home' routines. At least we now have been able to free up the living room from the five puppies who recently inhabited it, and the associated, smells, noises and outputs that one may imagine.

**Stephen Davies** meanwhile has abandoned the joys of the classroom and entered into the world of education management with the Education Development Trust, an international charity, the ubiquitous pandemic video meetings allowing him to support projects in Sierra Leone and Brunei while the kids home-school and his various church commitments evolve in line with the latest guidance.

He tells that **Philip Waller** recounted Bishop Shute Barrington's words (his portrait being in Merton Hall): 'Remember gentlemen, no enthusiasm!' Well, middle age may have snuck up on us, and it may be several years yet until our

next Caudy enables us to share each other's company again in Front Quad, but I hope like many of us you have failed to follow the Bishop's advice and are pursuing your lives, careers, aspirations with a strong spirit, a dash of humility and a touch of self-deprecating humour if your constitution allows it.

*'I have always maintained that ... men did not differ much in intellect, only in zeal and hard work'*

— Charles Darwin

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## 1995

**Year Representative:** Tom Brown

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## 1996

**Year Representative:** Maria Pretzler

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Many of the 1996 Mertonians spent the past year dealing with the pandemic, working from home and adapting to new ways of working, often while also home-schooling their kids. It's always great to hear from people, and **Anna Hatt** (née Price), **Sam Kessler** and **Richard Taylor** got in touch with variations of this typical 2020-21 story. **Richard** currently lives in Northampton and works as a finance manager in the NHS, having left the world of chemistry.

**Anna Woodman** (née Simmons) has been Course Director of Medicine at the Society of Apothecaries since June 2020 and is enjoying being able to teach more on the institution's history. The Society's livery hall in Blackfriars is a lovely place to visit; some Mertonians (including several of the 1996 cohort) will remember it from the enjoyable alumni event there in autumn 2019. Anna also reports that as teaching has been online, she has been carrying out her responsibilities from Jersey, but she hopes to return to London soon, which will also mean catching up with friends there.

**Malte Herwig** spent most of his last year finishing the biography of Hitler's magician, *Der Grosse Kalanag*, which came out with Penguin Random House in Germany in March 2021. Helmut Schreiber, aka Kalanag, was famous for his brilliant, exotic and breathtaking shows. After the Second World War, he built a gigantic magic revue from the ruins of post-war Germany and became one of the most celebrated magicians in the world. But Kalanag's biggest trick was to make his shady past during the Nazi dictatorship vanish into thin air. Malte adds that, to him, this shape-shifting, morally suspect and crafty German magician embodies the contradictions of 20th-century Germany like few other people. He is currently looking for a UK/US publisher to bring out the English translation.

Congratulations to **Lucy Allais**, who got married last month. Her husband Abe Stoll is from San Francisco, works in theatre and in early modern English literature at the University of San Diego. Lucy caught Covid early on (last April) — the most unwell she's ever been, she says — but has since had a good year. She managed to get back to South Africa at the end of September, and took up a wonderful fellowship at the fantastic Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study.

**Maria Pretzler** is compiling this report in Athens, where she arrived in early June 2021. After a tough autumn semester figuring out how to deliver online teaching and making sure that students could cope with such a difficult situation, she has been on sabbatical since late January. Once travel restrictions were lifted sufficiently she could finally take up her visiting fellowship at the British School at Athens, where she intends to spend two months catching up on much-missed library time.

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## 1997

**Year Representatives:** Catherine Sangster

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OX2 6DP  
Email: catherine.sangster@oup.com

and Jill Davies

jilldavies1997@yahoo.co.uk

## 1998

Year Representative: Alex Edmans

Email: aedmans@london.edu

The last year has been unusually quiet for the 1998 matriculation year, likely due to the pandemic constraining activity. Despite this, **Ben Garner** was able to relocate from Baltimore, USA to the Oxford area in November 2020, with his wife and children, Grace (11) and Tony (8). He says that despite moving mid-winter and mid-pandemic, they are settling in well and loving it here. Ben is a general manager for 2U, an EdTech company that partners with universities and organisations to deliver online degrees, short courses and boot camps.

**Alex Edmans**' book on responsible business, *Grow the Pie: How Great Companies Deliver Both Purpose and Profit* (Cambridge, 2020), was named in the *Financial Times* list of Business Books of the Year and is being translated into Chinese and Korean. The paperback was published in September 2021, updated for the pandemic. Alex and **Stephanie Niven** (2002) worked together to develop a framework for assessing corporate culture, in Stephanie's role as Global Sustainable Equity Portfolio Manager at Ninety One.

## 1999

Year Representative: Andrew Tustian

Email: andrewtustian@hotmail.com

**Serena White** (née Eade) and her husband **Paul** (1995) have been hunkering down Down Under during the pandemic with their children Dominic and Callum. The sudden switch to working from home caused them to re-evaluate and they chose to move a little further away from Sydney's central business district. They're now based in Freshwater and live 15 minutes' walk from the beach. They have been comparatively lucky during Covid and have great admiration for their friends in the UK (and elsewhere) who have had to home-school their children for months on end while trying to work. However, at time of writing, Australia's borders are

essentially closed and the rate of vaccination is slow so sadly there seems to be no prospect of a visit to Blighty or any UK visitors any time soon.

**Henry Day** notes his book, *Lucan and the Sublime: Power, Representation and Aesthetic Experience*, about the classical Roman poet (not the murderous aristocrat), came out in paperback from Cambridge University Press in 2020. Otherwise, he continues to practise as a commercial Chancery barrister at Radcliffe Chambers.



Sophie Law's daughter Henrietta holding her baby brother, Edward

**Sophie Law** (née Hamilton) gave birth to her son, Edward Thomas Carmichael Law, on 30 December 2020. He was born at the John Radcliffe in Oxford during lockdown, and the masked midwives ushered them out of hospital almost immediately he was delivered! His elder sister, Henrietta, is rather thrilled with him, as are Sophie and her husband James.

**Nathaniel Adam Tobias Coleman** is keeping well. He recently gave a keynote speech at the Stephen Lawrence Research Centre, which is available on YouTube if you are interested in finding out more about Nat's work: [youtu.be/ZkQWzwuK8go](https://youtu.be/ZkQWzwuK8go)

## 2000

Year Representative: Alex Perry

Email: alexpperry@gmail.com

Many thanks to all of the class of 2000 who replied to my usual chaotic entreaties for news. This year we have the usual mellifluous melange of personal and professional accomplishments, though it's clear what some have been up to while supposedly working from home!

**François Bonnici** is Director of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship and Head of Social Innovation at the World Economic Forum. He has a new book being published by OUP in August 2021 called *The Systems Work of Social Change*. The book takes a deeper look at how social purpose organisations navigate the most complex and entrenched social challenges, in the context of systemic inequalities and barriers.



Adam and Roslyn Gamsa with their son Max

**Adam and Roslyn Gamsa** (née Gill) are delighted to announce the birth of their first child, Max, in June 2021. Roz was recently made a partner at PwC in London, where

she has worked since graduation. Adam is a barrister at 11 South Square, Gray's Inn, where he is instructed mainly on intellectual property litigation.

**Donna Bridgett** (née Peel) writes: 'After 12 years with a few gap years along the way I finally became an Emergency Medicine Consultant in February 2020. Advice to take your time, settle in, and learn to say "No" lasted a matter of seconds before pandemic mode was activated. It has been an honour to be a member of the wider Emergency Medicine team during this past year and my thoughts will always be with those who have been affected by Covid. I'm looking ahead to brighter times and turning 40 this year and being able to celebrate with my pals from Merton.'

**Nancy Zhang** writes: 'Our daughter Kira arrived in May 2020 so I am now the mother of two lovely girls who have kept the house full of joy during lockdown.' Nancy has left the private sector behind and embarked on life as a public servant at UK Government Investments.

**Marc Stoneham** reports that he was elected a partner at Development Partners International, a leading pan-African private equity firm, and has had a busy year looking after a portfolio of 18 companies operating in 35 African countries through the pandemic. He has enjoyed more time at home, and has been working on his piano playing, cooking and gardening with varying levels of success.

**Joanna Kenner** and her husband John welcomed their third daughter, Noa Margaux, into the family in April. They are currently preparing to move back to the UK after eight years in France, and will be based in West Sussex.

**Brad John-Davis** returned to the UK in 2019 with his wife, Kerry, and two sons Noah (11) and Harry (3) after two and a half years in Costa Rica. He has been pursuing a career change having completed a law conversion and academic Bar training at Cardiff University. He may yet return to what remains of the travel industry post-pandemic, at least until a pupillage can be found!

**Robert Sears** reports: 'I was thrilled when my son Matthew was born in November. We have been enjoying the

Buckinghamshire countryside with a full household of four children born in the last five years (Hannah, twins Peter and Emma, and Matthew). When the children aren't keeping me busy the markets certainly do, in my work as Chief Investment Officer at Capital Generation Partners.'

**Sian Alexander** and husband Ben welcomed their son Arthur in March 2020, born in Cambridge where Sian works as a junior doctor.

**Peter Cousins** and partner Andrea Rodríguez are planning their wedding in Bogotá later this year (if Covid doesn't get in the way). Peter continues to enjoy his PhD at the University of Granada's Institute of Peace and Conflict Research.



**Jenni Hall** (née Close) and husband Dan were thrilled to welcome Finn Alexander in March 2021, a little brother for

Matthew. A speedy home delivery means Dan can now add midwife to his CV! Jenni writes that she is making the most of her maternity leave. If you are in the London area and would like to meet up, get in touch via her alumni email address.

**Gøril Havro** and Aleksander Askeland welcomed their son Yoran Olav Havro Askeland in June 2020, a little brother to proud big sister Mali.

Finally some news of our own to share: Rachael and I welcomed our third child, Matilda Elizabeth, in 2020. She is a constant source of delight for older brothers Theo (5) and Arthur (3). We abandoned London (again) a few years ago but this time only made it as far as Kent.

It is an absolute pleasure to hear from so many old classmates about their varied adventures and achievements; don't hesitate to reach out if you have anything you would like to share.

## 2001

### Year Representative: Katherine Millard

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## 2002

### Year Representative: Ben Zurawel

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Tel: 0207 832 0500 Email: [ben.zurawel@gmail.com](mailto:ben.zurawel@gmail.com)

**Daniel Rees** and Rachael, together with their daughter Rosalind and son Hugh, moved to the United States in March 2020 as Daniel took up a new role leading EY's UK tax desk in New York. They live in Greenwich, Connecticut.

**Ben Parry-Smith**, a partner at Payne Hicks Beach LLP, reports that he continues to divorce people (professionally!) and has moved to the country – Otmoor in Oxfordshire – with his wife, Emma, and daughters Stella and Thea.

**Stephanie Niven** is still working as a portfolio manager and has recently moved into a new role leading Ninety One's sustainable global equity strategy – in which she has been collaborating with fellow Mertonian **Alex Edmans** (1998) on what she describes as a fantastic project assessing culture in an investment context. She still finds time to be mother to three lively children, who have very much kept her on her toes throughout the pandemic.

**Joseph Noss** is working as a diplomat (no, really!) for the G20 in Switzerland. He and Roxna had their first daughter, Noa Kapadia Noss, in November 2020. At the time of writing, Joe was very much looking forward to a summer cycling trip with **Dan Botting** (now Principal of Bobby Moore Academy in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park), **Ben Zurawel** (who keeps himself busy with law, rowing, cycling and climbing) and **John Jenkins** (whose third child, Eleanor, was born in April). It remains to be seen if all four make it from London to Shropshire without incident.

Congratulations to the Reverend **Samuel Carter** whose appointment as Rector of Barcombe, East Sussex, was announced in April 2021.

Finally, **Ryan Soh** would like it to be known that, having finally secured his dream job as an investment analyst looking at securities in Asia, he now works opposite the Oxford and Cambridge Club and is keen to reconnect with fellow Mertonians, particularly any active members who would like to help him apply! Ryan has found his way back to London after career break which took him to China to study Mandarin in the wake of the 2015 stock market crash. Having attained a passable fluency but looking forward to spending the rest of his life struggling with jokes, cultural references and idiomatic expressions, Ryan then went to Malaysia in the wake of the \$675 million IMDB scandal to serve as a volunteer in the 2018 general election. He describes the opposition victory as being 'like England winning a football tournament, but with consequences!'

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## 2003

**Year Representatives: Andrew Godfrey-Collins and Helen Nicholas**

c/o The Development Office, Merton College, Oxford, OX1 4JD  
Email: publications@merton.ox.ac.uk

There have been a few new arrivals for the Mertonians of 2003 since our last update.

**Adam Bryan** and Christina welcomed twin girls Electra and Noémie in October last year. They are now living just outside Annecy in France and slowly getting used to having two new faces around the house.

Over the border in Hamburg, **Caroline Taylor**'s son David Randall Taylor Duensing was also born that month.

**Tom Furlong** writes that he and Eleanor 'were pleased to welcome Oscar. Astrid has been dangerously enthusiastic with her cuddles so far. At the time of writing we've been unable to leave Singapore for 15 months, and we're impatient to be able to visit grandparents, family and friends in England at the first opportunity.'

Meanwhile, **Tom Jeffreys** has published his second book, *The White Birch: A Russian Reflection* (Little, Brown, 2021).

**Helen Nicholas** (née **Beggs**) has been baking more adventurous family birthday cakes this year (owl, Elmer and toadstool house designs so far), and was delighted to bump into **Kirsten Claiden-Yardley** and **Andy Jarvis** (2004) at her local farmers' market in between lockdowns last year.

In far sadder news, my fellow year group rep **Andrew Godfrey-Collins** very unexpectedly lost his husband, Jerry, to cancer in March of this year. He's very grateful for the kindness shown by other Mertonians during this difficult time, including some people he hadn't been in touch with for years.

Don't forget that we have set up a year group Facebook group. Please email us if you haven't already received a link and would like to join.

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## 2004

**Year Representatives:** Nicola Davis, Gavin Freeguard and Natasha Zitcer  
Email: merton2004@gmail.com

**Sarah So** (née Roberts) and Eric welcomed baby Elliot in October 2020. Sarah writes that he's been their ray of sunshine this year. Oscar (3) is enjoying being a big brother.

**Stewart Pringle** is looking forward to reopening the National Theatre to the public this summer. He is currently working as dramaturg on new versions of Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood* and Sophocles's *Philoctetes* for the first season back.

**Rory Holmes**, his wife Esme and Santi (2) welcomed Rafael to their family in May (a few weeks earlier than anticipated!).

**Tom Hanna** has grown his business to six employees, now has clients in the UK and Canada as well as Australia, and is hoping to expand further overseas. They are doing operations research and scheduling solutions for mining and logistics companies ([www.hypercubescientific.com.au](http://www.hypercubescientific.com.au)). More importantly, Tom, his three kids and one wife are all doing well, although like many he has found the last year a blur and is quite sure it can't have been a year since he last updated us all. He wishes all the best to the whole 2004 Merton clan.

**Gabriel Ling** writes that he is now in Hong Kong and says: 'If you ever visit, let me know and I can show you around the city.' He hopes that the troubles of 2020 and 2021 will soon be past for everyone.

Having left his posting (with two hours' notice) at the Consulate General of Canada in Bangalore due to the pandemic, **Matt Paradis** spent the last year back in Ottawa doing government-y things in his pyjamas. Luckily, it took only ten months for all his belongings to be shipped back to him in Canada. His bosses have decided that life is too quiet for him at headquarters, so (pending vaccinations) they'll be shipping him to Beirut in Lebanon as a Counsellor at the Embassy of Canada for the next two to four years. He'll be responsible for managing the 30 or so staff in the migration section, notably

a large programme selecting refugees for Canada from among those who have been displaced in the region.

**Carl Anglim** reports that Oxford Fashion Studio, of which he is director, is set to return to both New York and London Fashion Weeks from September. Determined to help the industry bounce back from the pandemic, they have introduced a new platform to support early-stage designers launching in the UK. In April they also launched Faduma's Fellowship in honour of 34-year-old Faduma who was rendered partially paralysed by a near-fatal case of meningitis in 2011 and subsequently became frustrated by the lack of clothing available to her. The fellowship will offer an opportunity for a designer to create an adaptive wear collection for wheelchair users.

Carl has not only been busy on the professional front. Over the past year the Oxfordshire Youth charity he chairs has grown from 11 employees to over 50, introduced Young People's Supported Accommodation services and continued to support more than 150 youth sector organisations during the pandemic. Almost as impressive, Carl and Tiffany are still holding, rather tightly, to their International Tray Racing Association Doubles World Championship – aided slightly by the December 2020 competition not taking place! The competition looks set to return this December, so if there is no mention of it in Carl's next update then we will know what happened.

**Dr Mikhail Kizilov** (together with his co-author, Ludmila Nikiforova) published a biography of Russian-Jewish-American writer and philosopher, Alissa Rosenbaum (Ayn Rand) in Russian in 2020. The book was published in Moscow in the series *Life of Remarkable People*.

**Chris Bryan** spent the first two months of the Covid outbreak in Malaysia in his wife Stephanie's hometown of Penang, before returning to Hong Kong where he has now been for almost ten years. Chris says it's still a great place and has also fared very well during Covid with life continuing pretty much as normal throughout. The only problem is that the border remains firmly closed. Their daughter Olivia (2) is very happy with a busy social life despite the pandemic. Chris enjoys working as a renewable energy investor with

deals across Asia, and has just closed a large deal in India. Unsurprisingly Stephanie was laid off from Cathay Pacific last year, but has found a new job at Citibank in customer service.

And as for your year reps...

**Nicola Davis** writes that the past year has been very intense: she was promoted to science correspondent at *The Guardian* and has been working hard on all aspects of the pandemic coverage, from myriad news articles to podcasts, including *Science Weekly*, which she co-presents. Her hard work is paying off: she was thrilled to be nominated for the 'British Science Journalist of the Year' award by the Association of British Science Writers (the winners will be announced this summer). Her business teaching Japanese temari continues to grow, and she is working hard for her Level 3 exam with the Japan Temari Association. Nicola and her partner Nick are also very excited about the imminent arrival of four paws into their home: Tosca the flat-coated retriever should have settled in well by the time you are reading this.

**Tash Beth (née Zitcer)** returned to work at the Department for Education in September 2020 after a maternity leave that was rather scuppered by lockdown. She's hoping for a much more normal experience when she goes on maternity leave with baby number two this autumn – possibly even involving coffees in actual cafés rather than freezing park benches, and being able to do something other than go for endless walks.

**Gavin Freeguard** decided that a global pandemic was a great moment to quit the Institute for Government after seven years and go freelance. He still runs the Institute's monthly Data Bites event series, but is also enjoying working with a range of organisations including the Ada Lovelace Institute, the Open Data Institute and Imperial College London. He's also, hopefully, about to start work on his first book.

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## 2005

**Year Representative: Emma Bullimore**  
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## 2006

**Year Representatives: James Dobias (undergraduates)**  
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and **Gregory Lim (graduates)**  
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### Undergraduates

Though we have continued to live through strange times this last year, it is encouraging to hear of the numerous positive life events and career achievements among our year group, plus the mere fact of so many of us managing to keep in touch with one another and the College.



Leonid Romanenko marrying his wife Ali (with Henry Stewart-Brown on the far left and Benjamin Kett next to him)

On this theme, **Leonid Romanenko** is happy to report that he got married this last year, getting in just in time during the summer/autumn 2020 relaxation of the lockdown rules with a 20-person wedding in Edinburgh, his wife Ali's hometown. The wedding was held in the Scotsman Hotel, semi-outdoors in the brisk, but thankfully dry, Scottish autumn. Also in attendance from Merton were **Benjamin Kett** (on joint best man duties) and **Henry Stewart-Brown** (as an usher).

Many congratulations are also due to **Harry Hurrell** and his Mertonian wife **Laura Hurrell** (née Davies, 2005) on the birth in March 2021 of their second child Olivia, a sister to their eldest Freddie (who is besotted already).

**Jennifer Webb** (née **Henry**) – who married fellow Mertonian **Robert Webb** straight after finals in 2009 – has been teaching for 12 years and is currently an assistant principal at a large state school in West Yorkshire. June sees the release of her third best-selling book in education, *The Metacognition Handbook* (John Catt, 2021). During the past year, while on maternity leave with their second little boy, Jennifer took the opportunity and the rise of Zoom to provide flexible subject knowledge training to English teachers, raising over £16,000 for various educational causes. Now that Jennifer has returned to work full time, she is continuing this side-project while beginning her fourth book, *Essential Grammar*, with Professor Marcello Giovanelli, which will be published by Routledge in January 2022.

Continuing the education theme, **Danielle Quinn** has moved this year to Ark Schools as the Network Lead for maths, working with Ark's 23 secondary schools on curriculum, teaching and assessment, and as subject tutor for PGCE students and other teachers new to the profession. Danielle's previous school (Michaela Community School in London) had its first GCSE results in 2019, with her department setting a new national record for progress in maths (value-added from the end of primary).

**Harriet Keane** is living in New York, working for McKinsey & Company.

**Alexandra Walsh** took a break from Whitehall and enjoyed her first foray back to Oxford in a while this year (albeit via Zoom) when she attended a Merton careers event to give her perspective on life as a senior civil servant at the Treasury.

**I. James Dobias**, continue to live in Bermondsey, London in the same building as fellow Mertonians **Anna Bond** and **Kristina Schapiro** (both 2005) and a short walk away from **Danielle Quinn** and **David Hunt** (2005). Though at times we have been limited to waving at one another from our balconies, we, alongside many from the 2005 and 2004 year

groups, had our spirits lifted via regular weekly Zoom calls, monthly 'TED'-style Zoom presentations on our specialist subjects of choice and the odd murder mystery, fostering a strong sense of Mertonian community.

## Graduates

**Teeraparb Chantavat** is living in Thailand and working as an assistant professor in astrophysics at Naresuan University.

Despite the challenges of the past year, **Aleksandra Gadzala Tirziu** was married in October 2020 in a small yet charming civil ceremony in the heart of Old Town Zurich. She and her husband, Paul, have been in Zurich for the past four years. She works as Head of Research for an innovation investment fund. The Singularity Group; is Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Zurich; and Senior Non-resident Fellow at the Atlantic Council in Washington, DC. And, with a bit of luck, she managed a few trips to visit her family in Palm Beach over recent months.

In March 2021, **Ean Hernandez** joined Google as a Technical Program Manager, working in the cloud computing group. The onboarding and everything he has done for Google since have all been remote, so he works for one of the biggest and most famous software companies in the world ... in his basement! Not quite as glamorous as he had imagined. For the past few years, he has also been running the annual Seattle Pop Punk Festival ([fb.com/TheSeattlePopPunkFestival](https://fb.com/TheSeattlePopPunkFestival)), a three-day, 40-band music festival for local pop punk bands, drawing visitors from around the USA and beyond. Of course, they had to cancel for 2021, but they are looking forward to starting back up in 2022. Ean always likes to hear from MCR pals, so please contact him through Facebook at [fb.com/Ean-Hernandez](https://fb.com/Ean-Hernandez).

**Gregory Lim** has been elected secretary of the Merton Society Council. He remains the chief editor of *Nature Reviews Cardiology* and celebrated his tenth anniversary working with the journal this year.

For the past two years, **Stephanie Loizou** has been working in the legal team at the alternative investment firm, EnTrust Global. She currently serves as Deputy General Counsel, covering funds, regulatory matters and corporate for a

variety of jurisdictions, including EMEA, Hong Kong, Korea and Singapore — so the past year has been anything but quiet, despite the pandemic.

A book by Professor Julie Curtis (Wolfson College) in a translation into Russian by **Yulia Savikovskaya** was published in 2020. It is called *The Englishman from Lebedyan (Anglichanin iz Lebedyani* in Russian) and is the most comprehensive biography of the Russian writer Evgeny Zamyatin, author of the dystopian novel *We*. Yulia's play *The Leak* won a Moscow Brewhouse staging prize after being shortlisted and read at the Lyubimovka New Drama Festival in Moscow in September 2020. It will be staged in September 2021. She has also started a website [yuliasavikovskaya.com](http://yuliasavikovskaya.com), dedicated to the anthropology of art.

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## 2007

**Year Representative: Alistair Haggerty**

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Thank you to all who sent me updates. There was a fantastic response, and it was really heartening to hear of lots of good things happening during these difficult and uncertain times.



Despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic, exciting life events have continued unabated. Not least in the case of **Felicity** and **Gordon Wai**, who welcomed their first child,

Samuel, in March. Gordon is still working for the Civil Service and, when Felicity returns from maternity leave, she will continue her work as a corporate solicitor for an offshore firm.

Also celebrating a relatively recent arrival are **Kambez Benam** and his wife Cigdem, who had a daughter, Delara, last year. They, together with their son Arman, moved from Denver to Pittsburgh in January, where Kambez has started a post at the Departments of Medicine and Bioengineering at the University of Pittsburgh. They would be very keen to meet up with any Mertonians visiting America and travelling through Pittsburgh once travel restrictions are eased.

The last 12 months have seen several of our cohort tie the knot. In between lockdowns, **Katherine Watson** squeezed in a small Covid-compliant wedding on a beautiful day last summer. There was much laughter, much hand sanitiser and only one guest needing to be transported to A&E. The Civil Service continues to keep Katherine busy.



In that same lockdown interval, **Amy Smith** and **Alan McKee** celebrated their wedding in October at Elmore Court in Gloucestershire. With wedding guests limited to 15, many family and friends were greatly missed on the day, but **Gregory Lim** (2006) and **Claire Christensen** (2005) were in attendance as valued members of the bridal party. Guests even managed to fit in some extra dancing after the 10pm curfew.

Amy is currently working as Assistant Head of Sixth Form at Cheltenham Ladies' College and says that she still struggles to be objective when asked for advice on Oxford college choices.

In April, **Myriam Burr** married Richard Mitchell on a wonderful sunny day in North Yorkshire. Myriam's brother **Jonathan** (2010) was able to travel over from Germany and played a role in the service held at St Mary's in Birkin, which was followed by food and fireworks at the village hall.

Be prepared for a bumper report in 2022 as there will be a spate of weddings involving our year group over the next 12 months. Despite starting work as a respiratory doctor just as the Covid pandemic struck, **Katharine Pates** has managed to get engaged to Alex Broadhurst and buy a house, with just enough time left in the year to plan a small wedding for the summer.

Congratulations are also imminently due to **Kriti Upadhyay**, who is marrying Daniel Frank in August, in what they hope will be the third and final attempt to have a wedding after several postponements caused by the pandemic. Kriti continues to practise as a barrister in Bristol.

**Charlie Dawkins** and Jessica Lowry got engaged in the brief respite between lockdowns in June of last year and they are looking forward to their wedding in October.

**Matthew Martin** and **Rebecca Price** will be getting married next July and are most-fittingly hoping to celebrate the occasion at Merton.

Several of our year continue to be involved in exciting work overseas. **Harry Beeson** told me that I had been in touch just as he was about to move job and home. Having worked in Parliament during Brexit and then Covid (and no doubt developing some adroit crisis-management skills), Harry is moving to Strasbourg in June to start a job at the European Science Foundation.

**Christian Jorgensen** has also been on the move. He is now based in Washington, DC where he has a research position at Georgetown University. As always, Christian is happy to get in touch with Mertonians who are visiting the East Coast.

Like Christian, **Ellen Feingold** is living in Washington, DC. Although the Smithsonian Museum, where Ellen works, remains closed for the time being, when it reopens it will showcase a new gallery project called *Really BIG Money*, curated by Ellen and her daughter **Hannah** (3). The project is designed to teach children key concepts about money through surprisingly large monetary objects. They are looking forward to sharing it with young visitors when they return to the museum in the year ahead.

## 2008

**Year Representative: Alice Salvage**

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**Verity Parkinson** and **Rob Day** have bought a house together in Caversham in Reading, a couple of streets away from where they've been renting for the last few years. They're enjoying being free of the tyranny of renting, and particularly enjoying having their own garden, which is host to occasional hedgehog visitors – one of which had a broken leg and had to live in a cardboard box in the kitchen for a day before being collected by the animal hospital. Rob is now working for Microsoft UK, after it acquired Metaswitch Networks last year, but still working on telecommunications software; Verity is still working as Merton's Resource Services and Support Librarian.

**Camille Tassi** (née **Sage**) and her husband welcomed their first daughter, Olive Aurelia Tassi, on 17 June 2021.

**Lucy Serocold** has been working at Oxford University Press for the last few years. She moved to a new role as Editor in the Primary English team in January, working on materials for early literacy. She's happy to meet Mertonians passing through Oxford for a cuppa, and/or try to offer advice to publishing hopefuls.

**Alice Salvage**, **Prakash Parameshwar**, **Rosie Birchall** and **Niall Allsopp** are still living together in London. This was a blessing in March 2020; by March 2021, each had begun to fear they would never be alone again. They moved house in the spring, a process which briefly made them question the number of books they collectively own. They are genuinely

delighted by the number of bus routes that stop near the new house. Niall is still teaching at the University of Exeter, while Rosie and Prakash continue to work at the Treasury. Alice joined Channel 4 in April, working in production finance across drama and comedy.

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## 2009

**Year Representative: Stephanie Cadoux-Hudson**

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Tel: 07814 951309

**Pari Kritsiligkou** and Alan Weids welcomed their son Georgios Thomas in July 2020 and also sadly mourned the loss of Pari's mother Zoe in November 2020. For her current research at the German Cancer Research Centre (DKFZ) in Heidelberg, Pari received an award in 2021 from the Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard (CNV) Foundation sponsored by the German Stem Cell Network. The CNV Foundation supports talented young women with children to enable them to create the freedom and mobility required to further their scientific careers.



Harmeet Grewal and her daughter Kavleen

**Harmeet Grewal** has recently relocated back to London with Hillhouse Capital after six years in New York. Her daughter Kavleen turned one this year.

And finally, your year representative, **Stephanie Cadoux-Hudson**, still resides in Oxford. She was earlier this year promoted to group lead of the Platform Analytical Group at Oxford Biomedica, focusing on the development and optimisation of analytical methods to support the delivery of novel lentiviral vector-based gene therapeutics.

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## 2010

**Year Representative: Martin Schmidbaur (undergraduates)**

Email: martin.schmidbaur@gmail.com

*There is no graduate Year Representative for 2010. Please email the Development Office if you are interested in volunteering: development@merton.ox.ac.uk*

### Undergraduates

With over a year of not seeing friends behind us, reaching out to the year of 2010 at the start of summer 2021 provided a refreshing glimpse of optimism from so many of you. So many new roles, new family members, and exciting plans for the year ahead.

First up, the newborn section.

At the time of writing, **Hannah Polonsky** was expecting a baby boy due at the start of the summer. Raised in an all-girl family herself, she reports being 'mildly terrified' but we're all sure they'll get on great! She continues to work as a lawyer in the city, though with some time on secondment she reports having met exactly zero of her colleagues in person.

**Catrin Bucknall (née Lloyd)** had a baby girl called Lily last summer and is enjoying spending family time with her and Tom.

Managing both a house move to the suburban bliss of Kent and the birth of his newborn son Callum, **Jonny Carver** has now settled into life as a proud new dad. He's trying to keep

up his exercise regimen on Strava, where you'll now find him pushing a stroller more often than his road bike.

Next up, the wedding section. Congratulations to **Ruth Mitchell**, who got married on a beautiful summer day in early June, with Mertonians including **Nick Black**, **Jess Furness**, **Catriona Hull** and **Sarah Harrison** in attendance.



**Sarah** sent in this lovely photo and let us know she's changed jobs. She's now working for a Labour Shadow Minister and says her life has become a version of *The Thick of It*. Iannucci fans be jealous.

Staying on the subject of folks working in and around Whitehall, **Luke Hughes** accepted a new role working for fellow Merton alum **Matthew Rycroft** (1986), the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office.

Also working with tech companies, **Oscar Hayward** changed jobs for a new role at Latham & Watkins, representing (big?) tech in the face of new and stringent regulation in the UK and EU. On the side, he's back in his voluntary police uniform and described his move to policing in Hackney and Tower Hamlets from Oxford as a 'reverse hot fuzz' and reports 'inexplicably still dealing with swans'.

**Marie Winter Sall** writes from Copenhagen, where she's started a BA in Theology and after five years of working with clinical trials, she even reports enjoying writing essays again. Her dog Luna keeps her company. She says 2020 was filled

with Zoom lectures, Zoom classes, Zoom study group, Zoom socialising and Zoom drinks, and she's very much looking forward to travelling and seeing her fellow students and Mertonian friends in person.

**Laura Burnett** is still in south London, still working in tech, and survived the lockdown by doing sewing, darning, cross-stitching and learning to code. She was eagerly awaiting **Sam Jauncey**'s re-wedding in the autumn (having watched the real thing online last year).

**Andrew O'Flaherty** is still working hard at Credit Suisse, albeit in a new role working on what was euphemistically (or understatedly) described to yours truly as 'special situations' and 'distressed' investing now.

Making (big) moves mid-pandemic, **Ania Dulnik** relocated to the United Arab Emirates last year. She's keen to meet up with any Mertonians in the Middle East – seek Ania out if you are!



**Thomas Codrington**, a hard man to track down, took a radical approach to life during the pandemic and lived out

of a converted builder's van in the Alps for three months. Together with his partner Chloe, they took working from home to the next level by parking up for a day's work on Zoom from a mountain pass, and closing their laptops at the end of the day to go climbing.

**Charlie Robinson** had plenty of adventures and exciting news to report: after first starting an MA course in Music, they changed tracks and completed an RHS horticulture qualification and are excited to start a plant science degree at the Eden project in September. They're looking forward to moving to Cornwall, escaping the 'limited' costal offerings of Sheffield, and being nearer the sea again.

**Kendall Crean** wrote in from Madrid, where she works at Real Madrid, heading up Partnership Strategy (when not plotting how to bring down European football, that is). For the summer, she was most looking forward to travelling internationally and following the team around Europe.

On the other side of the pond, **Wesley Wilson** is working for a law firm in New York City, before entering his final year at Columbia Law School.

**Freya Edwards** moved back from New Zealand and made a three-point plan. The first point was to get a flat, which she did; the second point was to get a car (TBC); and she forgot about the third point.

**Chas Lake, Mike Geeson and Laurie McClymont** were planning on going to the pub together.

I cannot wait to hear what the next (hopefully pandemic-free) year holds in store for you all and look forward to reporting back next year.

## Graduates

**Emanuele D'Osualdo** writes: 'After finishing my Marie Curie Fellowship at Imperial College London, in September I joined the Max Planck Institute for Software Systems in Saarbrücken (Germany) as a postdoc. At MPI I am working with Derek Dreyer and Viktor Vafeiadis on verification of concurrent programs and program logics.'

**Chiara Marletto** is a Research Fellow at Wolfson College, Oxford, working at the Physics Department. Within Wolfson, she is an active member of the Quantum Cluster and of the New Frontiers Quantum Hub. Her research is in theoretical physics, with special emphasis on quantum theory of computation, information theory, thermodynamics, condensed matter physics and quantum biology. In May, her book *The Science of Can and Can't: A Physicist's Journey Through the Land of Counterfactuals* was published (Allen Lane, 2021), which gained global traction with coverage in *New Scientist* and the BBC.

**Nuno Miguel Oliveira** writes: 'Since completing my DPhil I have been working at Cambridge with personal fellowships. I am currently a BBSRC Discovery Fellow and a Wellcome Trust Interdisciplinary Fellow, hosted by the Departments of Mathematics (DAMTP) and Veterinary Medicine. Since last year, I have been Director of Studies in Zoology at Christ's College, which is rather special for me because it was where Darwin studied back in the day. I am also a Bye-Fellow and supervisor at Christ's, where I supervise Evolution and Behaviour, Evolution and Animal Diversity, and Mathematical Biology.'

'Perhaps the most exciting (and unexpected) news is that I got a place at Cambridge to do a part-time PhD in History and Philosophy of Science, which I will start in Michaelmas 2021. I have always loved history and have been studying it as a part-time student. Last year I finished an MA in the History of Medicine at Johns Hopkins (in the USA) while at Cambridge. As I loved it, I decided to continue. So, a DPhil in Biology at Oxford and a PhD in History at Cambridge sound a bit crazy (and lots of work to come!) but I really enjoy learning new things that can make my science better.'

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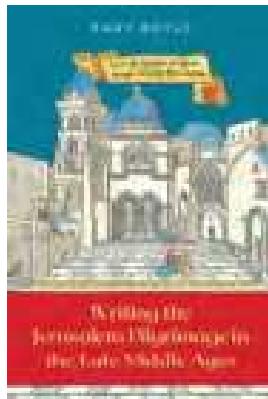
## 2011

**Year Representative: Timothy Foot**

Email: [tim.foot@gmail.com](mailto:tim.foot@gmail.com)

By the time this *Postmaster* hits our doormats, it will be near enough a full decade since the 2011 cohort matriculated. All I can say is that the last year's semi-permanent lockdown has done its best to make that decade feel like a century.

Notwithstanding international chaos, the year has brought several achievements for the academics in our midst. **Nana Liu** has been promoted to Associate Professor at Shanghai Jiao Tong University. **Katee Woods** was last year selected as a Sound Pioneer by the Yorkshire Sound Women Network, and will this year be starting a residency in Ambisonics at the University of Hull's studios. Her paper, 'Listening in anger: neuroscience, psychology and phenomenology to understand music as a mood regulator', is shortly to be published in the *Journal of Music, Health and Wellbeing*. Adding to the reading list, **Mary Boyle** has this February published a book entitled *Writing the Jerusalem Pilgrimage in the Late Middle Ages* (Boydell & Brewer, 2021), building on her DPhil thesis. Although I cannot claim to have read this work (yet), I can heartily recommend to you the splendid cover image.



The front cover of Mary Boyle's book

**Joe Hutchinson** writes to say that he has been working over the last year at St George's and the Royal Marsden hospitals. This summer, he will start speciality training in clinical neurophysiology at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery (in Queen Square, Bloomsbury). **Georges Rouillon** is busy setting the world to rights. In summer 2021 he will begin a new job in Brussels, working on trade policy at the UK Mission to the EU. Good luck with that, Georges!

**Katariina** and **Jonas Mueller-Gastell** got in touch with wonderful news of the birth of their second child, Charlotta. Hearty congratulations to mother and father, both continuing with their PhDs at Stanford.



Keeping the Merton flame alive, **Jon Burr** (2010), **John Brazier**, **James Flannery**, **Lucy Meredith** (2012), **Dan Bregman**, **Jeannette Smith**, **Rob Price** and **Kess Tamblyn** held a Zoom Time Ceremony (pictured), involving a modest and seemly quantity of both academic dress and port.

The last year has, I know, brought immense grief to some of our number. I hope that, when global circumstances allow, we will be able to come together in person to revisit old friendships and support some of those whose lives have changed forever.

## 2012

**Year Representative: Stephanie Cadoux-Hudson**  
101 Plater Drive, Oxford, OX2 6QU  
Tel: 07814 951309

After three and half exciting years in Barcelona, **Kasra Amini** moved to Berlin in March this year to join the Max Born Institute as Junior Group Leader. His group is investigating ultrafast chemical dynamics in molecular and solid-state physics using ultrafast electron diffraction and optical pulses.

**Tanatorn Khotavivattana** is currently assistant professor at the Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science, Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. His research group focuses on medicinal chemistry and drug development, aimed at discovering novel anticancer agents and various other drugs for tropical diseases.



Welcoming a new addition to her family since the last *Postmaster* is **Julia Wang**, with the birth of a son, Felix, in January of this year. She continues to teach Latin at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, where her husband will also take up a post teaching maths in September.

## 2013

*There is currently no Year Representative for 2013. Please contact [development@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@merton.ox.ac.uk) if you are interested in the position.*

**Marcia Favale** has been elected to the Saïd Business School's Oxford Business Alumni Advisory Council: [www.oxfordbusinessalumni.org/aac](http://www.oxfordbusinessalumni.org/aac)

**Hamish Forbes** was lead author of a report for the United Nations Environment Programme, the *Food Waste Index Report 2021*, published in March.

**Rebecca O'Sullivan** has been awarded a Humboldt Research Fellowship at the University of Bonn (Germany) to study the prehistoric art traditions of coastal East Asia. The project (titled 'Trans-national connections between the Sea of Japan and Eurasian mainland reflected in prehistoric art, c.2000 BCE – 500 CE') aims to bridge modern state boundaries and counter local nationalisms by combining data published in Chinese, Korean, Russian and Japanese to create an overarching narrative of the region's early art.

**Rebecca Watson**'s debut novel *little scratch* was published by Faber & Faber in January of this year to critical acclaim: the *New Yorker* called it an 'extraordinary debut' and the *New Statesman* has said it is 'a coherent, gripping account of how it feels to be alive'. *little scratch* is one of three books shortlisted for the 2021 Desmond Elliott Prize, an award for debut novelists.

## 2014

**Year Representative: Sarah Bosworth**

12 Stambourne House, Lansdowne Way, Stockwell, SW8 2DH  
Tel: 07540 079711 Email: [sarahbosworth@gmail.com](mailto:sarahbosworth@gmail.com)

In what has been an unprecedented year for us all, for many of our year group it has seen our university days at Merton feel like an increasingly long time ago as the daunting reality of adulthood has landed heavily on our shoulders.

For a lucky few, their days are still being spent in the dreaming spires of Oxford. **Sofia Simoes Coelho** completed an MPhil in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies at University College and is now in the first year of a DPhil in History at Corpus Christi – clearly the charm of Merton Street everlasting. **Naomi Gardom** is also back in town (having married Matthew in 2019 and spent time in Wisconsin) in the first year of training for the priesthood at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, a few miles outside Oxford. This gives her the dubious pleasure of sitting Finals again in 2022. **Jemma Paek** is studying for a master's in Russian at New College, her passion for food leading her to win the 2020 AA Gill Award for Emerging Food Critics for her review 'Smoked eel sandwich'. **Amy Chard** has also found a hobby in food and drink in the last year, sharing cocktails on her Instagram @amymakescocktails, alongside the serious day job working on higher education law textbooks as a publishing editor at Oxford University Press.

Others are continuing to live out their academic dreams further afield. **Henry T. Drummond** is now a postdoctoral researcher at the KU Leuven in Belgium, where he is researching early music repertory of the Low Countries and Spain through digital technology. He is in the final stages of completing his first monograph on the *Cantigas de Santa María*, and is preparing further publications on Gregorian chant, liturgical music and pilgrimage, and the use of optical music recognition and machine learning. **Nanae Hart** is due to start a BA in History in Amsterdam in September, ready for a change of scene from the UK although she will miss the house martins in Rutland.

Two of our number are off to the Bar (no, not that type, although that may be where most of your memories of them are from). **Oliver Pateman** finished his second BA in Law at Harris Manchester last year. He hopes to be called to the Bar in October where he has an offer of (criminal) pupillage at 5 Paper Buildings to start in October too. **Bertie Beor-Roberts** also recently finished the Bar Course at City Law School and is enjoying a few final months off before moving to Bristol in the autumn to begin pupillage at Enterprise Chambers. While coronavirus has sadly put a halt to most of his photography work, he has enjoyed using spare time during lockdown to dig out pictures from old Merton events and share them with fellow alumni.

As for those of us already in the world of work, we have generally been less forthcoming with updates of celebration over the last year. **Sam Banks** is still working at the Financial Conduct Authority on stock market governance, alongside which he has recently become involved in a campaign to improve the governance of professional football. Fair Game UK. If there was anyone with an eagle eye for the detail of the JCR standing orders it was Sam, so no doubt he is the person for the job! Meanwhile, **Danni Whittle**, an English graduate, bravely chose 2020 of all years to begin nurse training. They are currently coming towards the end of their first year of MSc Adult & Mental Health Nursing at London City University, while also picking up as many extra shifts in hospitals all over east London at the same time. Given what the last year has brought us, an impressive career swivel indeed.

As for me, I am now a research manager at Cicero/AMO working in market research and public affairs, a job that allows me to continue to be as nosey as ever into the political and reputational happenings of big businesses and pretend that I know what is going on in the world.

For all the 2014 intake, as life begins to hit a steady rhythm or happen in unexpected spurts or new directions, it would be great to hear what you are up to and let the wider alumni community know.

## 2015

*There is currently no Year Representative for 2015. Please contact [development@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@merton.ox.ac.uk) if you are interested in the position.*

**Baruch Gilinsky** writes: 'I got engaged to my partner, Yael Jaffe, who is working towards rabbinic ordination at the Hadar Institute in New York, and we are hoping to get married in early September.'

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## 2016

*There is currently no Year Representative for 2016. Please contact [development@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@merton.ox.ac.uk) if you are interested in the position.*

**Jonathan Tot** will start a PhD in Mathematics this autumn at Dalhousie University (Halifax, Nova Scotia).

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## 2017

**Year Representative: Adrian Burbie**  
Flat 1, 3 Rugby Street, London, WC1N 3QT  
Email: [adrian.burbie@outlook.com](mailto:adrian.burbie@outlook.com)

It was most pleasing to receive such a healthy and varied array of replies to the call for updates this year. The news that many of our number have managed, in spite of the circumstances, to do so much since summer 2020 will make for a heartening antidote to any studying- or working-from-home-induced fatigue.

A healthy cabal of Mertonians is taking shape among the Westminster corridors of power. **Thomas Nightingale** has spent the year working as a parliamentary researcher in foreign affairs and human rights for Baroness Heli. Meanwhile, across Central Lobby in 'the other place', **Rob Lentz** is now an MP's parliamentary assistant; **Emily Pope** will be joining their ranks, also as an MP's parliamentary assistant, this July. Controlling the purse-strings to all their plans, however, has been **Dylan Gutt**, who has spent the past year as a policy adviser across the way at the Treasury. Plans for a 'Merton at Westminster' supper club are afoot, apparently. And on the subject of government, **Zheng Hong Lieu** is now working as a software engineer for the Singaporean government.

The past year has been one of immense change for many. None more so than **Cyara Buchuck-Wilsenach** who has become the youngest trustee for Response, an Oxfordshire-based mental health charity providing housing and other forms of support. Not content with that, however,

Cyara has also founded a feminist theory website ([www.grabbingback.com](http://www.grabbingback.com)), regularly publishing pieces alongside fellow contributors. Meanwhile, **Sam Gibbs** is working in children's services as a student social worker for Surrey County Council while completing his master's in social work; he hopes to qualify come October.

On the subject of masters' degrees, **Conor Ó Siocháin** has been studying for an MSc in Statistics at St Andrews and is looking forward to starting as a data scientist in London in September. **Will Thomson** will be commencing his master's in musicology at the University of Toronto this autumn, having spent the year working for the NHS in the administration of the Covid vaccine effort. Completing the Merton musician pair, though not subjecting herself to such frosty climes, **Lucy Gibbs** is off to the Royal College of Music this autumn where she will be starting her master's in singing, having spent the past year filling Liverpool Cathedral with her mellifluous tones as a choral scholar.

Venturing less far is **Edward Turner-Fussell** who has spent his year completing a master's in Byzantine History, to the surprise of absolutely no one, in the OX2 wilderness that is Wolfson. Edward writes to say that he looks forward to the lifting of Covid restrictions, for the sole purpose of resuming his Merton Hall habit of subjecting us all to lectures about Byzantium when we can gather again. And finally, **Andrzej Fanner Brzezina** has proved that he is ever the expert at juggling strange life-forms, managing to land a DPhil offer in Microbiology from Oxford while working as a paralegal at various law firms.

# Upcoming Events

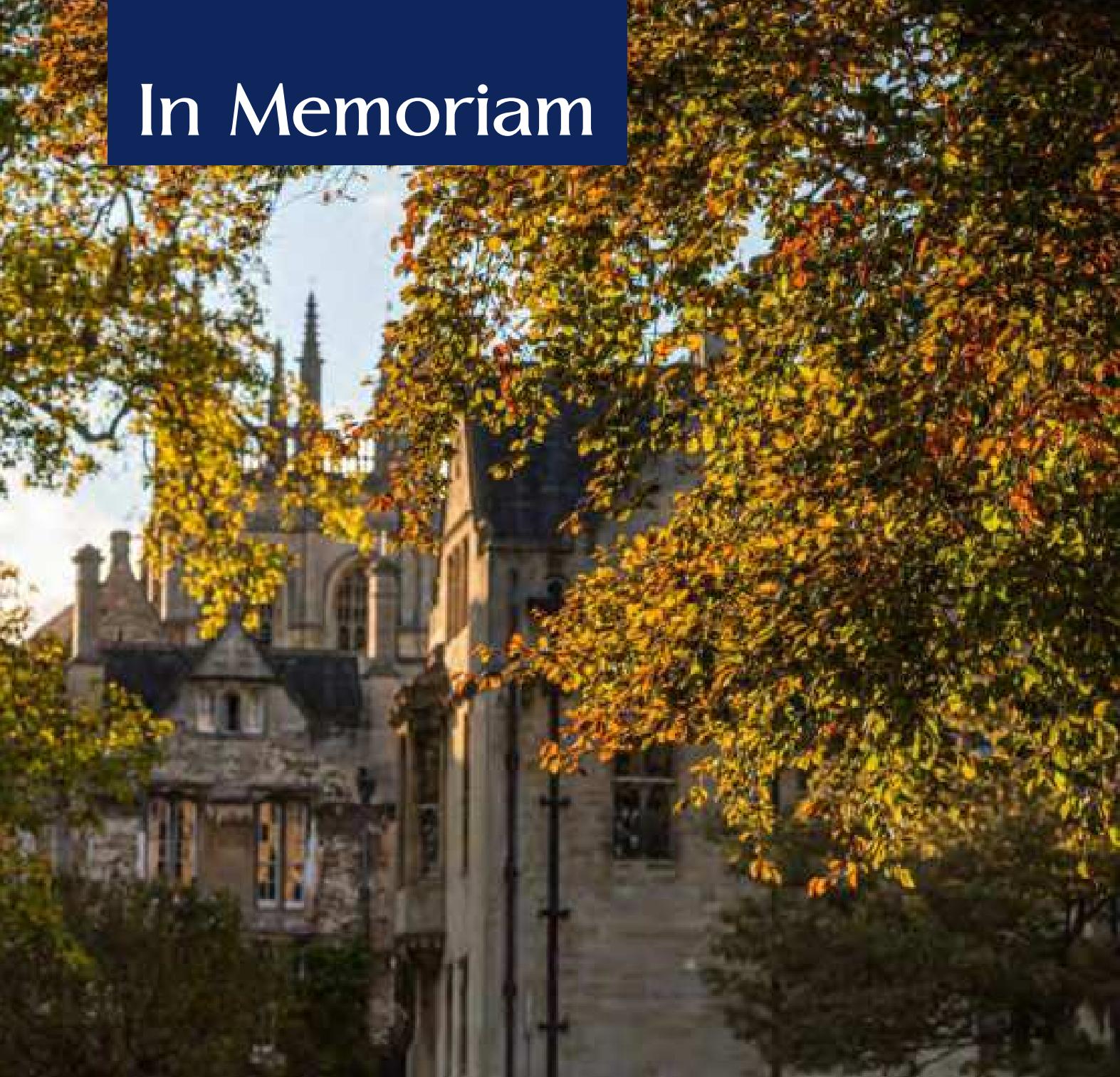
Due to the uncertainty created by the pandemic, our events programme has undergone significant postponement and amendment.

For events during the coming academic year we will resort to emailing and/or mailing alumni and friends about forthcoming events. Additionally, details will feature in the *Merton Messenger* e-newsletters and on the College website: [merton.ox.ac.uk/alumni-and-friends/events](http://merton.ox.ac.uk/alumni-and-friends/events).

All queries relating to events can be sent to [development@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@merton.ox.ac.uk).

If you are not receiving emails from the College, please get in touch with the Development Office to update your contact information.

# In Memoriam



# Deaths Notified

We have been made aware of the sad passing of the following Mertonians:

Fellows & Staff		1949	1959
Emeritus Fellows		John Lewis*	Stephen Blow
Jim Coulton*		Alastair Manson	Malcolm Faber
Peter Neary*			
Former Fellows and Lecturers		1950	1960
Robin Chapman*		Donald Matthew*	Paul Jennings*
Zbigniew Pelczynski*		Patrick Roney*	
Trevor Williams		Peter Sterry	
Former Visiting Research Fellows		1951	1962
Bryan Magee		Kenneth Davey	Clive Sweeting*
Paul Schroeder		Alun Thomas	
Robert Summers			Mark Gallop*
1941			Peter Neumann
Gerald Dearden		1952	1964
		Cedric Andrews*	Roger Worthington*
		Frank Bough*	
		Roger Brown	
		Michael Glover	1966
		Robert Hardy*	Alan Behn
1943			Mark Cousins*
John McOmie		1953	Philip Rosser*
1944		George Tusa	
Antony Allen		Stuart Woolf	1969
Godfrey Brown*			Chris Stanford*
1945		1954	1970
Michael Hinton*		Andrew Scott	Philip Bagge*
1946		David Watson*	
Michael Franks			1971
Lionel Lewis		1955	Tom Bello
1947		David Evans*	John MacAuslan*
John Byrt*		Brian Scott	
David Calder		1956	1972
1948		Michael Clanchy*	Nigel Millett*
John Hardy		1957	1973
		Graham Cansdale*	John Myatt*
		Nick Hussey	
		David Summerfield*	1982
		John Turp	Henry 'Hank' Tillinghast
		Martin Woollacott*	
		1995	Paul Rowe

\* denotes full obituary

## Emeritus Fellows



Dr John James (Jim) Coulton died on 1 August 2020 in Edinburgh, after a long illness, aged 80.

Jim came to Merton as a Fellow in 1979, when he was appointed to succeed Sir John Boardman as the Reader in Classical Archaeology, a post from which he retired in 2004.

Jim and I first met at Winchester College, where he was a Scholar, and we were contemporaries.

He then read Classics at St John's, Cambridge, and around this time I remember a mutual friend telling me that 'Jim is happily spending his time in Greece, measuring temples and other ancient buildings.' He went on to do a PhD in Cambridge with Hugh Plommer, an expert on classical architecture, and from this work came his first book, *The Architectural Development of the Greek Stoa* (1976). As two of his former pupils, Tyler Jo Smith and Lynne Lancaster, comment in the *American Journal of Archaeology* (January 2021): 'Despite its age, the book remains the best starting place for the subject.' Only a year later Jim published *Ancient Greek Architects at Work: Problems of Structure and Design* (1977), a truly original work, since he looked at the buildings from the point of view of the architect himself, asking what was the process involved in their creation. This book was to prove an inspiration for younger scholars who followed in his path.

Before coming to Oxford Jim had taught in Canberra, and then in Manchester and Edinburgh. As a field archaeologist he worked not only in Greece, but also in Turkey, Libya, Jordan and Iran. While he was working at Zagora on the island of

Andros Jim met his future wife, Mary Burness, whose father was Scottish and mother Greek. Here and at other sites in Greece the drawings and reconstructions of buildings which he made have stood the test of time. Such was his reputation among Greek archaeologists that he was the only British scholar who was later asked to take part in meetings to discuss the conservation of the buildings on the Acropolis at Athens.

Later in Jim's career his most important contribution to field archaeology was as Director of the Balboura Survey in Turkey, between 1985 and 1994. This was focused on the Greek city of this name, in the remote highlands of southwestern Turkey. It was one of the first intensive field surveys ever undertaken in Turkey, and it covered the history of the site and the surrounding area from prehistoric times to the present day. No large-scale maps of the area existed, and so Jim simply made them himself. To meet the challenge of mapping accurately the extensive remains of the city, he took on a team of architecture students, who in return were able to include this work in their degree portfolios. His colleague Pamela Armstrong adds that he learnt Turkish to a high standard, and relations with the local people were always good. Living conditions were, however, extremely basic. For example, the newly built house booked for the team proved to have no taps, and the mountain water was ice-cold. So Jim devised a system of hanging bags full of water on the south-facing wall, so that they could wash in warm water every evening. He believed strongly in the duty of the archaeologist to publish his results, and the Survey was finally published in 2012 in two volumes (*The Balboura Survey and Settlement in Highland Southwest Anatolia*), to wide critical acclaim.

In Oxford Jim played a crucial role in the creation of the new degree in Archaeology and Ancient History, as well as being Director of the Institute of Archaeology for some years. He was a devoted teacher, whose tutorials often lasted much longer than the standard hour, and he and his pupils could become so immersed in solving a problem that they lost all sense of time. Jim was by nature a problem-solver, practical and down-to-earth in all that he did. At Merton he readily took his share in college administration, especially as Secretary to the Harmsworth Trust and Sub-Warden, as well as serving on committees. What struck me most when we worked together (for example on the creation and

maintenance of the Leventis Senior Scholarship, for graduates of Greek origin) were his great thoroughness, patience and close attention to detail, the same qualities which he brought to his research and teaching.

Jim knew Greece extremely well and was completely at home there. After he retired, he and Mary lived in Athens for some years until he became seriously ill, when they moved back to a flat in Edinburgh. Immediately after his death a very touching tribute to him was paid by Lina Mendoni, the Greek Minister of Culture. It is headed simply 'Jim Coulton, a Greek', and she writes of his lasting love of Greece, and the very strong ties he forged with that country throughout his life.

Jim is survived by his wife Mary, their children Joanna and Richard, and grandchildren. In the words of Tyler Jo Smith and Lynne Lancaster: 'A rare scholar who bridged the Greek-Turkish divide, he will be remembered for his modesty, generosity, and honesty.'

**Dr Nicholas Richardson**  
Emeritus Fellow

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Professor Peter Neary, 1950–2021.

*Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h'anam dili*

(An old Irish blessing for the departed, loosely translated as  
*May his faithful soul be at the right hand of God*)

Why would the discovery of oil and gas cause a country's unemployment rate to soar? How does the rise of global superstar firms affect the workings of the international economy? Is technology really bringing about a 'post-

geography' trading world, where physical proximity no longer matters?

These are only some of the crucial questions pursued by Peter Neary. One of the world's leading economists in international trade and a Professorial Fellow at Merton College, Peter sadly passed away on 16 June 2021, aged 71.

Peter was my mentor when I joined Merton as a Junior Research Fellow in 2013, and he continued to mentor me informally ever since. He shone with positive energy, generosity and warmth. One could not help but be enthusiastic about Economics, about life, in Peter's presence. Peter delighted in his work and in understanding, and developing, the ideas of others. He had an ability to hear more in your words than you could identify yourself. We had many a lunch after which we would be the only ones left in the Merton SCR, deep into the afternoon, discussing the implications of what I had at first thought to be a trivial angle to my work, only to understand its relevance and importance with his guidance.

Given these qualities, it is unsurprising that Peter was a prolific institution builder. His contemporaries at University College Dublin cite Peter's return to Ireland aged 29 as Professor of Political Economy as a key moment in the modernisation of the discipline in Ireland. In due course, Peter served as President of the Irish Economic Association (1990–92), the European Economic Association (2002–03), and the Royal Economic Society (2017–18). He was the inaugural Director of the International Trade programme at the Centre for Economic Policy Research, the leading network of European economists, and played a crucial role in developing the *Journal of the European Economic Association*. His rigorous approach to teaching and research, combined with his great natural humour and wit, raised the bar in every institution fortunate enough to employ him.

Peter's research revolutionised thinking in economics right from the start of his career. Shortly after finishing his DPhil at Nuffield College in 1978, he developed a framework for understanding the 'Dutch disease', a term coined to describe the falling competitiveness of the Dutch economy after large gas reserves were discovered there in 1959. His model captured the changes in prices and spending patterns that a

resource boom engenders, and linked these to the direct and indirect pressures for deindustrialisation.

Peter's thinking continued to shape the discipline, even in an increasingly politicised landscape. His work funded by the ERC Advanced Grant (2012–17) shed new light on the role of global firms in international trade. Despite large firms dominating exports, foreign direct investment, and research and development, policy-makers have typically been keen to include small firms in their public statements, proclaiming them as engines of growth and drivers of export performance. Academia similarly took a view of the world that ignored the market power of key firms. Peter's work, however, focused on the 'Matthew effect', foreshadowing the rise of multinational companies like Amazon: 'To those that have, more shall be given.' He demonstrated how globalisation can compound the incumbency advantage of larger firms, rather than leading to more competitive markets. As President of the Royal Economic Society in the aftermath of the Brexit vote, Peter saw the role of the economist as being, as he so memorably put it, to put 'the sense back into the sensational'. True to form, he provided many an important fact-check on politicians' claims, elucidating the central trade-offs in hand.

As tributes from all over the world have shown so clearly, Peter will be sorely missed by everyone who knew him. His rare combination of a brilliant intellect, sharp wit and warm heart made him truly remarkable. I will always hold on to his joy of economics, and life: there is no better lesson to pass on to future generations of scholars.

#### **Professor Abi Adams-Prassl**

Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Economics,  
University of Oxford; Junior Research Fellow at Merton  
College, 2013–15

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## Former Fellows and Lecturers



Dr **Robin Chapman** died on 18 October 2020 at the age of 57.

Robin grew up in Swansea with his younger brother Keith and parents who had received little in way of formal education but always filled the house with books and classical music and opera. Keith remembers a brother who was always 'reading, reading, reading,' and at around ten years old buying *Teach Yourself* books to learn everything from algebra to Esperanto.

This love of learning shone through at what Keith described as a 'bog standard' comprehensive school in Swansea, where Robin excelled in every academic subject. His mathematical potential was quickly spotted there and he was encouraged to apply to Oxford, where he won a Postmastership to read Pure Mathematics at Merton College in 1981. 'He was the first person from our family to attend university, let alone Oxford,' writes Keith. 'My parents were of course immensely proud.'

At Merton, his peers have memories of him as a scourge of lecturers or sitting cross-legged on the floor of his room completing the then new Rubik's Cube. Otherwise, he would be covering pages with his spidery and hard-to-decipher writing and solving the most complicated mathematical problems with apparent ease (including all over his plimsolls). 'His proofs, for the more mathematical among us, had a sort of manic passion,' said fellow mathematics student Alec Findlater (1981).

Another feature many of his contemporaries remarked upon was his surprising passion for 20th-century avant-garde music such as Ligeti and Varese. Meanwhile, I remember him

as an unmistakable bearded anoraked figure shuffling around the quads and practically living in the TV room enjoying cult and sci-fi programmes with his pals.

Particularly stuck in my mind are his hilarious hustings speeches during his two doomed attempts to win the JCR presidency that had the audience rolling in the aisles. Keith mentions Robin as having a dry sense of humour, but for an apparent introvert, he also knew how to play to the audience.

At one of the many small gatherings for students hosted by the Warden Sir Rex and Lady Richards, Robin was asked if he would like a dry or sweet sherry. 'Do you have any Newky Brown?' he responded. After confirming what Newcastle Brown ale actually is, the hosts dispatched gofers to the College bar to bring back half a dozen bottles for him. Graham Tebb (1981) who witnessed the event remembers that Lady Richards asked Robin what he was interested in and what he did in his spare time. 'As a result, we were all treated to a monologue (in what sounded like Welsh) on the application of higher number theory to analytical topology,' he writes. 'Sir Rex and Lady Richards were highly polished operators and generally able to hold up their end of any conversation but Robin had even them flummoxed. A wonderful moment.'

Robin continually confounded the wider Oxford, almost as an anti-establishment figure that went against the University's stereotype. He continually came top, including in his finals, yet tutors hesitated to trust the evidence of their eyes. Noted British mathematician Dr Tony Gardiner saw Robin not as a 'swot,' but an 'unsophisticated excitable young boy'. The UK community has no idea what do with such people,' Tony says. 'Someone senior should have realised that here was something very special – and something very fragile.'

After Merton, Robin moved to Trinity College, Cambridge, and took Part III of the Mathematical Tripos in 1985, where to continuing amazement of all he still came top. He remained in Cambridge to start a PhD with Sir Martin Taylor (later Warden of Merton), moving to Manchester when Sir Martin was appointed to a chair in UMIIST. Robin returned to Merton as a Junior Research Fellow, but after only one year he was appointed to a lectureship at the University of Exeter in 1989, where he remained for the rest of his career. At the

time of his death, he was the longest serving member of the Mathematics Department. According to Exeter University, his published papers were mostly in number theory, particularly its more combinatorial aspects, but also included contributions to graph theory and coding theory.

Besides Rubik's Cube, Robin had a love of all puzzles, crosswords and mental tests. When trivia gaming machines started to be put in pubs, he would be barred from them for always winning, his brother remembers. In 2005 he took the chair for the daunting TV quiz show *Mastermind* and made it to the grand final.

Around that time, Robin was seconded to a new maths institute in Bristol called the Heilbronn Institute for Mathematical Research, beginning a 15-year collaboration that saw him splitting his time between there and Exeter.

'That he touched so many people throughout the global maths community is a source of comfort to me and our family,' Keith says. 'Robin never settled down, never did the obvious, was never conventional. Yes, a life cut woefully short, but he lived life as he wanted to; it was a life well lived.'

**Graham Dwyer (1981), with thanks to all contributors**



**Zbigniew Pelczynski, 1925–2021.**

Zbigniew Pelczynski, who taught politics to PPE students at Merton for decades, died on 22 June 2021, aged 95.

He was born and brought up in Poland. A teenager when Germany invaded, he was active in the resistance. In the 1944

Warsaw Uprising he was twice wounded before taking to the sewers with thousands of others. Emerging from a manhole surrounded by regular German soldiers he was captured (those coming out of manholes surrounded by the SS were shot as they emerged) and was a prisoner of war for seven months. Liberated by Allied Forces, he was left to hitchhike his way back to Poland. On the way he met with a Polish army unit under British command. He volunteered to join them. With them two months later he spotted a British Army notice, aimed at Polish exiles, offering places at a Faculty of Polish Law at Oxford. He applied and was accepted. So began his academic career.

At Oxford in 1946 the Polish Law Faculty was housed in Oriel, the first of seven Oxford colleges in which Pelczynski was to study or teach. After a few months he became disillusioned with the course, which consisted of Polish exiles teaching other Poles the law of pre-war capitalist Poland. He applied unsuccessfully to several Oxford colleges before being accepted by St Andrews University, where he duly got a First in Economics and Political Science. He followed that with a BPhil at The Queen's College, Oxford, and then started a DPhil on Hegel at Nuffield College. Concurrently he took a two-year teaching post at Trinity College. That was followed by a two-year lectureship at Balliol to be shared with Merton, followed by a two-year shared appointment between Pembroke and Merton. Meanwhile in 1956 he was examined, successfully, for his doctorate by Isaiah Berlin and WH Walsh from Merton. To those of us who remember both, it comes as no surprise that Berlin scarcely allowed Walsh to get a word in edgeways, nor that it was apparent that Walsh had read the thesis and that Berlin had not. At Merton it was a disappointment to Pelczynski that the Warden, Geoffrey Muir, a Hegelian scholar, never discussed Hegel with him: those of us there then will recall that Muir's college interests seemed to concentrate heavily on Merton's prowess on the river. Although Pelczynski had taught longer at Merton than at Pembroke, it was Pembroke that offered him the coveted fellowship in 1960. Thereafter, although he continued to teach at Merton, Pembroke was his base.

In the late 1960s Pelczynski was asked to supervise the work of a Rhodes Scholar at University College by the name of Bill Clinton. Over the years they kept in touch, to include, while Clinton was US President, two meetings in Warsaw and one at

the White House. When President Clinton came to Oxford to receive an honorary degree, to some amusement Pelczynski's less than wholly flattering tutor's report was read out.

A strange episode occurred in 1976. In a contest to become Master of Pembroke Pelczynski favoured and campaigned for the losing candidate. From then until 1985 when Sir Roger Bannister in turn became Master of Pembroke College, Pelczynski, although retaining his fellowship, took some substantial absences. In this period he spent six months at Yale, a year at McGill, six months at the University of Jerusalem, four months at the Australian National University in Canberra, and spells at Harvard and Waseda University, Tokyo.

During his years of tutoring at Oxford Pelczynski established himself as an authority on Hegel. He wrote an introductory essay to *Hegel's Political Writings* in 1964 and contributed other writings and broadcasts. Hegel had been out of fashion in Britain and America and Pelczynski thought that his part in resuscitating interest in him was one of his more noteworthy achievements.

Another he rightly believed was the creation in 1982 of the Oxford Colleges Hospitality Scheme to bring Poles to Oxford. Single-handedly he persuaded the Polish communist government to release students, and Oxford colleges to receive them with free board and lodgings and open access to libraries and other facilities, for several weeks each summer. The intent was to broaden the outlook of those reared exclusively on a communist diet. More than 600 Poles came to Oxford under this scheme. A meeting with George Soros in 1984 led to a partnership to extend the scheme to Hungarians as well as Poles, and to come to Oxford for a year. Soros told Pelczynski it was the best thing he had ever done with his money.

A third achievement that Pelczynski rated highly came after his retirement from his Pembroke Fellowship in 1993. He persuaded the Polish government in 1994 to accept the establishment in Poland of a School for Leaders which would run short courses to show how open societies worked. Again the motivation was to broaden the outlook of future leaders brought up under a communist regime. Pelczynski helped design the courses and taught them in the early stages. It

was an instant success and soon attracted funding from charities and other governments.

For these achievements Pelczynski was showered with honours and honorary degrees from Poland, and an OBE from Britain. In 2013 came the publication of *Zbigniew Pelczynski: A Life Remembered* by David McAvoy who had studied under him at Pembroke, which recounts Zbigniew's reminiscences on his life, and to which I am indebted for some of the experiences related here.

On a more personal note, as a PPE pupil of Pelczynski in the 1950s I and my colleagues found him younger, more lively and more in tune with the world we knew than many of his fellow dons. And for the many of us who had done our compulsory military service before coming to Oxford his wartime experiences struck a chord. His tutorials were challenging and always interesting. In my second long vacation at Merton I thought it would be interesting to see something of a communist country, having been to the United States for the first. I went to Poland, initially to an NGO camp in Cracow, before meeting up with Zbigniew in Warsaw and then touring more of the country with him and his mother.

He married, in 1961, Denise Cremona who had been born and brought up in Italy to Maltese parents. The family fled the Mussolini regime for Britain in 1938. Denise studied at Somerville and was an editor at BBC TV News when they met. They had three children. Jan was born in 1962; Wanda was born prematurely in their Twickenham home so suddenly that the midwife couldn't get there in time, leaving Zbigniew to conduct the delivery: I visited them shortly afterwards and Zbigniew had barely recovered from the shock. By the time of the third child, Antonia, the Pelczynskis had moved to Oxford, to a 17th-century house adjoining and owned by Pembroke where they lived until Zbigniew reached retirement age for his Fellowship in 1993. To mark his retirement he gave a party at Merton for former colleagues and pupils. The couple had earlier, in 1971, bought a house in Barton-on-the-Heath in the Cotswolds as a weekend retreat, where they lived after his retirement from Pembroke. Denise sadly passed away before him, but not before they had celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 2011. After her death Zbigniew, in declining health and losing his sight until he became totally blind, lived

on in the Cotswold house, largely looked after by his son Jan. My last meeting with him was there in August 2019. Despite his physical frailties his mind and his memory were as sharp as ever. His death will sadden many Mertonians.

### Sir Peter Heap (1956)

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## 1944



**Godfrey Norman Brown**, 13 July 1926 – 7 April 2021, died peacefully in his sleep at his home in Betley Court, near Newcastle-under-Lyme.

In his long life, Geoffrey volunteered for the army at the end of the Second World War, serving within the Intelligence Corps, where he learnt Cantonese. This experience encouraged his belief in the power of education to create a better world and he was truly a World Citizen. After graduating from the University of Oxford, he worked at the United Nations in New York in its early days, before moving to West Africa to help with the establishment of universities in Accra, Ghana and Ibadan, Nigeria. It was in Ghana where he met and married the love of his life, Freda. Upon returning to the UK in 1966 for the education of the three boys, Godfrey was appointed Director of the Institute of Education at the University of Keele, a position he held until his retirement in 1983. While at Keele he continued his links with African universities as an external examiner. At Keele he became a member of the Council for Education in World Citizenship and led one of the first overseas delegations to visit the People's Republic of China in 1975.

In 1977 he took on what was to be one of the major projects of his life, the restoration of Betley Court. He developed the

concept of 'living conservation' in his book *This Old House: A Domestic Biography* (1987) – a book which describes a complex restoration of a neglected historic building, done in a manner sensitive to both its history and its former owners over the centuries. This chartered the creation a vibrant community of tenants at Betley Court, with hundreds of inhabitants calling the Grade II building home.

He will be joining his beloved wife Freda, who passed away a few years ago. He is survived by three children and seven grandchildren. He was laid to rest at a small private ceremony at Crewe Crematorium.

### Nigel Brown

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## 1945



**Michael George Hinton**, born 25 May 1927, died 22 October 2020.

My father, who has died aged 93, must be rather unusual in having been the headmaster of a grammar, an independent and a comprehensive school. Later in life, after having worked as a parish priest, he was astonished to become briefly a bestselling author when his 2005 book, *The 100-Minute Bible*, hit the headlines and sold in vast numbers all over the world.

Michael was born in Bristol in 1927. His father, George, was a schoolmaster; his mother, Minnie, a nurse. He suffered two cruel blows early in life, losing his mother to cancer when he was only 13, and losing an eye in a childhood accident, but the accident meant that he was exempt from military service

and in 1945 he went up to Merton with a Postmastership and a local authority scholarship.

At Merton he read history, rowed at a humble level, and devoted much time to the Scout Movement, which remained an important part of his life until he was in his seventies. It was at a Scout and Guide dance that he first met Jean Lee, who was working in Oxford as a medical technician. They fell in love and married in 1950 – a marriage that lasted 60 years and produced five children: Christopher, Mary, Sally, Geoffrey and myself. (I would eventually follow my father up to Merton in the seventies.)

Michael's teaching career began with four cheerful, if poverty-stricken, years at Reading School. He was then appointed head of history at Lancaster Royal Grammar School, and while there he completed his PhD, writing his thesis on the general elections of 1806 and 1807. He also became an examiner, and later a chief examiner in history.

In 1960, at the age of only 33, Michael became head of Dover Grammar School for Boys, and began a long association with the SCM in Schools – later to become the Christian Education Movement. In 1968, he was appointed head of Sevenoaks School, but it soon became evident that the move was an inappropriate one. He had already been converted to the principle of comprehensive education, and he was glad to move to Weston-super-Mare in 1971 to take over the task of combining three schools into a single comprehensive. The experience transformed his views about education and life, and led him to write the book *Comprehensive Schools: A Christian's View* (1979).

He had long hankered after ordination and began to train for the priesthood, securing early retirement in 1984 in order to pursue a non-stipendiary ministry full time. He was offered the parish of Shepherdswell in Kent, and during his ten deeply fulfilling years as a vicar there, he wrote his most substantial book, *The Anglican Parochial Clergy: A Celebration* (1994).

In 1995, he and Jean retired to live on the seafront at Dover, but he continued to serve the Church in many different ways. He edited the *Dover Christian Chronicle*, wrote a weekly

column in the *Dover Express*, was secretary of the Dover Christian Aid committee, campaigned on behalf of Fairtrade and taught English to immigrants.

It was during this time that he wrote *The 100-Minute Bible*, which was launched at Canterbury Cathedral and generated a brief media frenzy that took him completely by surprise. The book was described by the *Times* as 'the slimline Bible that leaves out all those boring bits', and he very much enjoyed his spell in the limelight as the 'bestselling vicar'.

Jean died in 2009 and Michael spent his last years at the College of St Barnabas, a community of retired Anglicans in Surrey.

Although his gangling physique meant that he was never any good at ball games, he always adored rugby, which he watched avidly on television right up to the end of his life. His other great leisure interest was reading, both serious and frivolous. He dug deep into history, theology and philosophy – but he also loved thrillers, which he read in vast numbers.

Michael always felt that he had had an exceptionally happy and fulfilling life. Teaching had been rewarding, ministry even more so: he was proud of his children and grandchildren, and had been incredibly fortunate in his wife. Above all, his faith had stood him in good stead, and he remained deeply grateful to the countless souls who had assisted him on his spiritual journey.

He said that life had taught him the elementary but profound lesson that what really matters is love. 'When other things have been taken away, nothing is really lost so long as love remains.'

**David Hinton (1973)**



His Honour Judge **Henry John Byrt QC** was born in Hastings on 5 March 1929. He died on 2 January 2021, in West London, at the age of 91.

John, as he preferred to be known, spent his first seven years in India where he lived with his father, mother and two sisters. His father, Albert, was an esteemed journalist and editor working for the *Times of India*. His family's passion for India and all its people engrained a social conscience in John that would define the man he became.

At the age of eight, John returned to England and went direct from the boat to Langley Place Preparatory School, near Hastings. The harsh realities of a small prep school in pre-war Britain was a far cry from the comforts and care he had enjoyed on the Indian subcontinent. After initial hardships, John settled and then began to thrive. In 1942 he received a scholarship to Charterhouse. Highlights of his time at Charterhouse included scoring 22 goals in a single hockey match and playing cricket with the young Peter May. In 1947, he left as both Head Monitor of his house and Deputy Head Monitor of the school.

In September of that same year, he went up to Merton where he studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics. It was unusual, in 1947, to arrive directly from school as the majority of the year's intake would have served in the war. During these formative years, he made many lifelong friends, joined various clubs including the Myrmidons, and fell in love with rowing. On the river he enjoyed success, going from a novice oarsman to stroking a pre-eminent Merton College eight.

After leaving Oxford University, John applied to join the Middle Temple, received the prestigious Blackstone Scholarship, and started his pupillage. He was called to the bar in 1953, and joined Chambers at 4 Paper Buildings where he remained for the entirety of his career. Despite many offers from others, this highly respected and talented young advocate remained loyal, became 'an inspirational' head of chambers in his early forties and helped kick-start a transformation which resulted in these chambers becoming one of the largest law practices in London.

In 1957 on 31 August Henry John Byrt married Eve Hermione Bartlett. They were happily married for 63 years until the time of his death.

John took silk in 1976 and became a Queen's Counsel. Seven illustrious years later, on 1 April 1983, he became a Judge. That same year he was approached by the then Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, and asked to start an apolitical position to establish the Social Security Appeal and Medical Appeal Tribunals. John was the tribunals' first president between 1983 and 1990. He sincerely believed that these tribunals provided a system whereby the least advantaged could achieve justice. Following this extended posting, he was called back to the bench and rewarded with a position at the prestigious Mayor's and City of London Court adjacent to the Guildhall. Here he served as the Senior Judge until his retirement in 1999 at the age of 70.

As a volunteer, he worked in the evenings at the Working Men's College in London for 35 selfless years between 1952 and 1987. Initially he taught Classics but he preferred to teach reading and writing. This college was an institution for some of the most disadvantaged in London. It helped men and women gain skills and qualifications that enabled them to better their opportunities in a divided society. In 1978 John was made Vice Principal and from 1982 until 1987 he served as Principal.

John was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, friend, teacher and inspiration to many. 'A keen intellect with vision and drive.' 'He enriched everything he did and everyone he met.' 'A man of the highest moral integrity.' 'One of the finest men I have ever met.' These are just a few of the kind words from the many people he touched. These words serve to exemplify the extraordinary spirit and character of an exceptional man.

John Byrt was the finest of gentlemen. He was compassionate, caring, considerate and had a genuine interest in all the people he met. His life was a life well-lived and well-loved and for those he has left behind, we thank him for being such a significant and influential part of our lives.

### Charlie and Hermione Byrt

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## 1949



Owen John Lowis died on 8 January 2021 aged 90.

John, as he was known to family and friends, was born on 29 June 1930 in Derby. He was educated at Kingswood School in Bath before going up to Merton in 1949 to read Mathematics. On graduating in 1952 he went to work at Vickers Armstrong's aircraft division in Swindon as part of a graduate training scheme. From there he moved to Saunders-Roe in Eastleigh, Southampton, and worked on the development of the P531 helicopter, subsequently known as the Wasp. During his time at Saunders-Roe he worked part-time at what was then Portsmouth Polytechnic, now Portsmouth University, bringing his valuable practical experience to the polytechnic.

He obviously enjoyed this environment and in the early 1960s he moved along the south coast to become a full-time lecturer in mathematics. He obtained an MSc from the University of Southampton in 1963, the work of which resulted in a paper entitled 'The stability of helicopter rotor blades' flapping motion at high tip speed ratios' and which was published by the Ministry of Technology. He spent 25 years teaching at the polytechnic before taking early retirement in 1985. He then taught A-level maths at Barton

Peveril Sixth Form College on a part-time basis before fully retiring in the late 1980s.

In 1955 John married Olive Harding, whom he had met at Oxford where she was reading Geography, and they set up home in Southampton where they brought up their three daughters, Susan, Helen and Alison. After retiring he and Olive bought a house in southwest France where they made many good friends and would spend the summers immersed in French village life. Outside work he led an active life, walking, sailing and playing badminton and tennis. He was a member of the John Wesley Society while at Oxford and became a member of Bitterne Methodist Church when living in Southampton. He gave up a great deal of time for many years doing work for the charity Christian Aid which included organising door-to-door collections during Christian Aid Week. He loved rugby union and enjoyed attending the Varsity matches, always preceded by a good lunch and many stories about Merton with his son-in-law Mark and often with fellow Merton alumnus Gary Backler (1973). He was an avid cryptic crossword enthusiast and continued doing the *Times* crossword until the end of his life.

### By his family

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## 1950



Donald Matthew, 1930–2021.

*The following is from a tribute given at Donald's funeral at Letcombe Regis church on 19 March 2021*

Donald Matthew combined, to a degree that I have otherwise rarely encountered, warm-heartedness, generosity and acute

intellectual penetration. When he felt at ease in company, his conversation had wit, insight and sparkle. He loved conversation if it did not descend into mere smart-alecry; if it did, he would preserve a stony silence. He was incapable of being glib and was allergic to platitudes. I once happened to be in his room in Liverpool University (he and I had been friends since our Merton College days and were colleagues at Liverpool), while he was going over a student's essay with him. Donald was scowling at the page, and suddenly said sharply 'Cut out the wisecracks.' One had only to look at this young man to see that he would never make a wisecrack. 'Wisecracks?' he said, shifting uneasily on his chair. 'How else can I interpret this?', replied Donald and read out a ripe, juicy platitude. However, many a Liverpool student would have been surprised at how generous he was as an examiner. That was because he had the perceptiveness to appreciate the best in them.

At Liverpool, those students intent on getting the best out of Donald were well rewarded. One of these recently told me that Donald's lectures were the best and most interesting that he heard. On occasion, admittedly, he could be perverse. A paper he composed on Medieval Love was read first to the Liverpool Medieval Society, an interdisciplinary group of medievalist colleagues. It was brilliant, and superbly written and read. It lasted a full hour, and everyone said they could happily have listened for another hour. Not much later he read the same paper to a large group of third-year students. It fell flat; and some of this audience were outraged because they thought Donald was saying that love was an aristocratic thing that peasants couldn't feel. Instead of explaining that he was talking about an aristocratic literary culture of love, he replied: 'Do you really think peasants can feel love?' More outrage, of course!

From the time that Donald had studied under the charismatic Ho Woodgate at Whitgift School, if not from before, History was not only his subject; it was also his life. He bought a house here in Letcombe Regis, opposite the east end of the church, before he became Professor at Reading University, while Reader in Medieval History at Durham. Here, as yet a bachelor, he cooked wonderful Sunday lunches for his friends and their families (as Elizabeth and he would do later in Reading). And he cultivated a bed of roses in the middle of the garden so lush that it looked like the work of a fertility

goddess. Since Letcombe Regis had been held in the Middle Ages by the Angevin royal nunnery of Fontevrault, he named the house Fontevrault. I suggested that if he called it 'Church View' – everyone would more easily be able to find it. But History prevailed over practicality!

History, however, was not the whole of life. Donald was very well read; he belonged to the Folio Society, and he knew a lot about music. He played the piano with a good technique, if rather tentatively. He was a good sight-reader, and thus could play through, and get to know, much music. He particularly loved the chamber music of Brahms. And after his first stroke, he asked me to learn to play a particular Sonata in F Minor by Domenico Scarlatti. I asked him why that sonata, and he replied, in his faltering speech: 'because it's haunting'. In 1964 he and I went to the wonderful revival of Mozart's opera *Idomeneo* in London. Ronald Dowd sang the title role of *Idomeneo* and, among much else, Donald enthused about his superb phrasing.

Donald didn't take to Liverpool as I did and always identified himself as southern English. As we sat down before *Idomeneo*, he surveyed the faces of the audience and exclaimed: 'Thank God for the South of England!' He once greatly annoyed my Teeside mother-in-law by maintaining that the function of Durham had always been to *hold* the North for the South – as if the North ever needed holding, she declared.

If I were like St Anthony of Egypt in his youth, visiting various hermits and noting the pre-eminent virtue of each in order to imitate it, I'd say that a pre-eminent virtue of Donald was loyalty to his friends, and sympathy for us. And when his historical work is looked at closely, more of it is about friendship as a historical force than at first meets the eye. In his marvellous book *The Medieval European Community* (1977), he saw as the core of that community privileged groups of educated men who sought to unite Europe around spiritual ideals. In his much later book, *Britain and the Continent 1000-1300: The Impact of the Norman Conquest* (2005), he again took up the same theme, writing of scholars of the British nations studying at the great European schools, especially Paris. 'Shared experience in the schools provided the basis for lasting friendships which could be made to serve political purposes.' Donald's own friendships among

his European contemporaries were spread exceptionally wide. I was once impressed to learn, almost incidentally, that one of his friends was none other than the then rising, later famous, German biblical scholar Martin Hengel.

Donald once said to me that in England a person could pass anywhere in society by reason of his education. I'm not sure how true that is, unless education is allied with high intelligence, as in his case. Anyhow, this shows that for him, to be a member of an elite group of educated friends was not so much a route to a rise in social class as a route to an Elysian-like classlessness.

On another occasion, Donald said to me that the point of a true aristocracy was as a group that took *responsibility* for upholding a civilisation – or something to that effect. Once again we can see this principle in action in his seriously undervalued book *Norman Conquest: Fabric of British History* (1966). Much of this book is a study of the dynamics that held together the newly settled Norman aristocracy, their mutual interests and friendships, their common religious, architectural and educational concerns.

Despite the fact that I have spoken here, as a long-standing friend and colleague of Donald, it is Elizabeth, his wife of over 40 years, who has the most intimate knowledge and best understanding of his work, besides being a first-rate historical scholar in her own right. She also cared for him most tenderly in his last, incapacitated years (though not incapacitated mentally), during which his children, Jenny and Paul, were also wonderful.

We now bid farewell to Donald, as a great friend, and we pray that he will rest in peace. But we also know that his spirit lives on among us, stimulating, if not goading, us to live better lives and think more intelligent thoughts.

**Henry Mayr-Harting (1954)**

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**Esmond 'Patrick' Thomson Roney CBE MA**; 3 June 1931 – 26 January 2019.

My brother Patrick, or Pat as he was called by many, was born in what is now the London Borough of Merton on 3 June 1931 and died in East Ham in the house of his wonderful carers, Eva and Angel, on 26 January 2019.

His death was a blessed release for him as he had no quality of life. His dementia, which began over ten years ago, had got to the point where he had no idea of where he was or who was there with him save perhaps Eva's young daughter Amy. Not only that but despite having the constitution of an ox, living as he did for over 87 years, he had melanoma of the skin which he contracted about two years earlier and which killed him. He also died with the prostate cancer that he'd had for many years. Thankfully though he had no pain from either cancer.

Patrick had an interesting life which was privileged, entertaining, sometimes difficult, yet one which required hard work, thoughtfulness and intelligence.

When he was three his mother left a note for Father telling him she was abandoning them both and was emigrating to Australia. Thankfully for Father his old nanny was still living with his parents and they agreed that Patrick should go to live with them, in Sidlaw, Southside Common, Wimbledon and that Nanny would look after him. My father's elder sister, Margaret, was also there to help.

When my parents married Patrick was six years old but despite my grandparents asking for him to move to live with them, my parents thought that as he had settled well into a life at Sidlaw it was better he remained. Little by little as our grandparents grew older our Aunt Margaret (or Auntie as Patrick called her) took over his upbringing.

No doubt to Patrick's understandable consternation Father and my mother produced his four half-siblings, Caroline, Annabel, myself and John. He changed his mind about us later on in life although perhaps he saw Caroline the least since she had a career in medicine which often involved working nights. Annabel on the other hand in her bachelor days

would be taken by Patrick to parties, night clubs, dinners and the like and be introduced to a number of his friends whereas John and I both became partners in Roney & Co. and got to know him very well through that association.

As children we used to go to Sidlaw every Sunday to see our grandparents. Aunt and Patrick and also went to stay with our grandparents in their country house Crespiigny in Aldeburgh in the school holidays until the house was sold after Grandpa's death in 1952. Patrick was certainly in residence at Crespiigny on some of those visits. Aldeburgh was where the family learnt to sail.

Our Roney grandparents, when they heard in 1938 or 1939 about Winston Churchill's plan to place Jewish Czechoslovakian children with foster parents in the UK, decided to take in one of them, a girl of about the same age as Patrick called Vera. They had two reasons for doing so, one being to help a child escape a persecuted life and the other to ensure that Patrick did not become too spoilt as an only child in a house of mainly much older people. We all became close to Vera, an intelligent and generous soul, as indeed did Patrick who from the age of eight grew up with her and regarded her as a sister.

Patrick went to King's College School, Wimbledon where he played the usual sports and became captain of the school shooting team. He then went on to Merton College, Oxford like Father. Loving all stuff military Patrick was mortified to be rejected for National Service as a result of suffering from petit mal, for which he swallowed a small daily dose of a barbiturate until about four years ago. He read Law at Oxford and got a second which Father thought appalling as in his view only swots got a second. You either got a first or a third, with the latter having nothing to do with your academic ability but signifying you had had a good time!

Armed with his law degree, Patrick went on to become a solicitor and then joined Roney & Co., the family firm. Swot or not, he had a good brain and always kept abreast of changes in the law and not only kept old clients of the firm by providing a good service but also introduced new ones. Indeed, there is a book about taxpayer defender clients he introduced in which he gets an honourable mention.

Not content with being senior partner Patrick decided to take on the City establishment. He had always scorned the way the City was run and when they increased the business rate by some huge percentage he decided to run for office as a Common Councilman in order to stop the same thing happening again and perhaps to reduce the rates. As it was, I was the Ward Clerk of Bishopsgate where Patrick chose to seek election. One of the clerk's duties is to run ward elections which is a time-consuming and tedious business. As I was very busy at that time I tried to dissuade Patrick from standing. My pleas failed. Patrick was adamant he would stand and fight. He did and he came top of the poll.

Patrick was always a clubbable man and his gregarious nature brought him many lifelong friends, though sadly many of them are no longer with us. He played tennis and golf but eventually gave up tennis for golf. He was a member of Royal Wimbledon Golf Club all his adult life and at some point, was a member of Wentworth and Aldeburgh Golf Club too. He was a member of Aldeburgh Yacht Club and of the Royal Thames Yacht Club. His other clubs included Brooks's, the City Pickwick Club, the City Livery Club, the City of London Club, the English-Speaking Union, the Royal Over-Seas League, Annabel's, and Les Ambassadeurs and some others you wouldn't have heard of nor would wish to frequent. Having found he loved being a Common Councilman he changed his mind about livery companies too, joining the Fan Makers and the Tallow Chandlers as well as the City of London Solicitors' Company in the incorporation of which both our Great Uncle Julian and Father's cousin Mary had been involved. Patrick eventually became Master of the Solicitors.

Patrick was still a practising solicitor while following his Corporation of London career, becoming not only a Deputy in his Ward but Chief Commoner, for which in 1987 he was awarded the CBE. His CBE should have appeared on the order of service, but I forgot to have it included. Patrick would not, I think, be pleased.

He might not be pleased either for me to tell you that he once told me that he had wanted to marry in his twenties but that he had been rejected. Patrick was though an 'escort' to a number of ladies over his lifetime, but he was basically an unreconstructed and confirmed bachelor which I always

put down to the fact that his mother and father divorced and to his marriage rejection.

Father told me that Patrick's mother was a party girl. I think we can all agree that Patrick was a party boy. To me when I was young, Patrick (some 12 years older) seemed terribly serious. He never drank at lunch time and hardly at all in the evening until he'd been in Roney & Co. for four or five years when he realised that the City demanded sociability. He read a lot of history books, his specialist period being 18th-century Europe. According to his old friend Otto Forgacs he did read thrillers too. He was also fond of paperback cowboy books and would pass these on to me rather dog-eared as birthday and Christmas presents. I'm not sure exactly when but he then started expanding his reading to include science fiction and what I believe are called adventure stories, often reading them through the night.

There will be very few of you here who did not share in a bottle or two or three with Patrick. He came to the engagement party for his goddaughter Charlotte (my daughter), which started off sedately enough with a rather grown-up dinner. Charlotte and Adam and their friends then went off to the Leopard Lounge in Fulham with Patrick following. They were refused entry and told that in any case Patrick was too old to be allowed in. Miraculously on him giving the bouncer a large tip they were ushered in and when Patrick bought bottle after bottle of champagne, they offered him membership. Patrick danced with all the girls in the party, all of whom thought Charlotte unbelievably lucky to have such an uncle.

These are some of my memories. You will all have your own. Whatever they might be, he will be thrilled that we'll all be drinking a toast to his life later on.

**Richard Roney.** from his eulogy given at Patrick's funeral

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## 1952



**Cedric Gordon Andrews**, 6 September 1933 – 8 March 2021.

I first met Cedric Andrews in Roger Highfield's rooms when the historians of 1952 were gathered for a briefing. He was from the Lewes Grammar School where he had been Head Boy.

At that time rationing was still in force, and we had our portion of butter delivered by our Scout to last the week. There were no washing facilities in our rooms, so the Scout brought us boiling water every morning, and we had to get up promptly and shave while it retained its heat.

We had to pass a set of exams known as Prelims at the end of our second term, which included Latin translations, and I got to know Cedric quite well as we were tutored together. Cedric was a long-distance runner and represented the College and the University in athletics. I well remember on 6 May 1954 him bursting into College with the cry 'He's done it!' to anyone in Front Quad willing to listen. He was of course referring to Roger Bannister breaking the four-minute mile.

Cedric had joined the University Air Squadron (now disbanded) and learned to fly, which stood him in good stead when he did National Service on leaving Merton. He flew transport planes for the Royal Air Force, and later joined British Overseas Airways Corporation as a pilot, and then was a senior captain with British Airways.

He met his wife, Jane, at a dance in Oxford. Their wedding reception was in the Randolph Hotel in Oxford, and together they had three children: Wendy, Julian and Mark.

His other achievement at Oxford in his second year was to join a syndicate of five who purchased a 1934 Morris Major for £7.00 a head, christened 'Miss O'Reily' and together that summer they got to Rome and back. Cedric spoke fluent French and was designated as interpreter (even though Italy was their destination), and somehow navigated them there and back.

I kept in touch with Cedric long after Merton, and my wife and I enjoyed many a meal with him and Jane. He was a good friend and I shall miss him.

**Gordon Whittle (1952)**

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**Frank Bough** died on 21 October 2020.

It was in the week before Michaelmas 1952 and the joyous sounds of Hérold's *Zampa* overture were sweeping out from a piano in Mob 2.3. Frank and I had both seen a note in the Lodge inviting anyone interested in soccer to attend a meeting there. Our 68-year friendship began then.

Frank Joseph Bough was born in January 1933 in Stoke-on-Trent. When he was ten, his father, an upholsterer, lost his job and moved his family to Oswestry on the Welsh border, where he set up his own business. Frank attended the local high school and became Head Boy. He represented the school and the county in many sports and acted in several school productions, including the parts of Malvolio and Hamlet. In 1952, he won a County Scholarship and a place at Merton. He suggested that he had possibly got in because, in the entrance exam, having been required to write about either orthodoxy or furniture, he chose the latter, though he was possibly better informed than most people on both subjects.

His room at Merton was Front 2.3, convenient for both the Lodge and the Hall, though less so for the facilities of the Chapel Wall or Stubbins Underworld. Nearness to Hall was valuable on wet mornings, when one needed to carry both an umbrella and a tin tray with milk and butter rations. Kept up to the mark by his scout, Bert Davies, it was also convenient for dropping in. Frank rarely sported his oak.

In his second year, he moved to St Albans 2.5 from where he looked out to the ancient mulberry tree and the meadows beyond. From his bedroom, he looked across Merton Street to the Italian girls in the Old Warden's Lodgings. His scout was now Jack Bough, who pronounced the name as in cow.

He read History, just enough to satisfy John Wallace-Hadrill and Roger Highfield but his heart wasn't really into Locke or de Tocqueville. He preferred those endless coffee sessions, in which he was generally more interested in the people themselves than in the matters which they were discussing. He was valued in any group because, if he did express an opinion it would be given unthreateningly and without trying to persuade others that his was better than theirs. Throughout his life, this style reassured and pleased people. They enjoyed his presence.

His other great love was sport. He was particularly fond of cricket. To stroll up Magpie Lane and along Holywell to the Mansfield Road ground for an 11.30am start against a non-collegiate team was blissful. He opened the batting and he was a handy third change bowler. He also played in Sunday fixtures for the Merton Mayflies against local villages and, in the vacation, based in the Sheffield Arms in Sussex, against such teams as Balcombe and Rottingdean.

He was captain of Merton's football team and won his Blue, as a solid centre-half. After the Varsity match, he commented on the size of the Wembley pitch, compared with Merton's. It had made him so tired that he couldn't prevent the Cambridge centre forward scoring three goals in the second half to win the game 3-2.

In his second year we and three others paid £7 each to buy a 1934 Morris Major which we took to Scotland in the Easter vacation and to Rome in the summer. The Italian autostrade were not yet built and we travelled on the old narrow roads.

In Imperia, shortly after crossing the border from France, a man stepped out of a bar and we knocked him down. Frank said: 'Should I stop?' By the time that he had done so, a crowd had gathered and two armed cops were revving their motorbikes. With our Italian limited to an unsuitable '*È possibile accamparsi qui?*', an international incident was in prospect and we made for the police station in some anxiety. However the Chief smiled and thanked us for 'helping his numbers', which had been worryingly low.

Nearing Rome, Frank, a Catholic, was yearning to pray in St Peter's. Yet on the first day there, he preferred to take two of us along, to instruct us in the Mass. He returned individually on the next day.

Our third year passed too quickly. After finishing the afternoon paper on the penultimate day of Schools, Frank remarked to the other historians that he was relieved that there was only one more paper to go. When they corrected him, asserting that there were two, Frank thought that they were teasing.

After college, he did two years of service, mostly in Germany as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Tank Regiment. Apart from driving his tank gun through a large shop window, he had an uneventful war but he did some broadcasting and enjoyed it.

Meanwhile, at home, he developed a relationship with a delightful Welsh physiotherapist, Nesta Howells, whom he met on the dance floor in Oswestry. Then, on a glorious summer day in 1959, they married. They enjoyed life together for the next 60 years and had three sons. They became great-grandparents in 2020.

Frank followed a conventional Oxbridge arts graduate's path to a management traineeship at ICI in Billingham but he soon recognised that it wasn't the place for him. He determined to get into broadcasting and, following a successful BBC competition, he joined their Newcastle studio as a presenter of local news programmes.

In 1964, he headed south and started to present *Sportsview*, which evolved into *Saturday Grandstand*. Bringing live coverage of multiple unrelated events into the nation's living rooms, his particular strengths were flexibility, improvisation and

apparent unflappability. They enabled him to cope, seemingly effortlessly, with all manner of unexpected happenings and changes. Producers and viewers alike could relax. He became known to millions and to yet more in 1972, when he began to present the evening news programme, *Nationwide*. When the BBC launched its new *Breakfast Time* programme in 1983, Frank was already at the top of his professional tree and was the obvious person to present it.

In 1984 he was named News Presenter of the Year for the Television and Radio Industries Club. He was rightly seen by viewers and producers as reliable and reassuring. He prepared thoroughly for each programme without appearing to do so. These characteristics also led to his being in great demand for conferences, company annual meetings and the like. In 1990, after parting with the BBC, he transferred his skills to LWT, where he led *Six O'Clock Live*.

Exposures about his private life had caused his departure from the BBC. Further incidents now cost him his job at LWT. Frank argued that he still possessed all his skills and that they were unaffected by his private life, he being still the same person with the same characteristics as before. As his Merton friends had previously remarked: 'With Frank, what you see is what you get' and 'He's the same On as Off'. Now others disagreed; they had built an image of him, and they could no longer perceive it.

In 2001 he had a liver transplant, following which he made only infrequent appearances in public life. He could spend more time with his recording company Thames Valley Television, which he had started in 1987. He confided that he was relieved to have finished broadcasting, particularly when it demanded his rising daily at 4am.

Living in Holyport, near Bray, Frank, with his fine bass voice, could also give more time to his singing with his much-loved Royal Free Singers in Windsor. He was particularly proud to have sung Bach's *B Minor Mass*. He and Nesta now also delighted to see more of those old Merton friends and their wives.

Things became more difficult during 2020 when his sight and mobility both deteriorated significantly. For sustaining an unshakeable friendship, he depended more on the telephone.

In October, after I had left a phone message for him, Nesta called back to tell me that Frank was dead.

Extensive obituaries appeared in the national media. His sons spoke movingly at the funeral service and bore his coffin to the graveside at Braywick Cemetery in Maidenhead.

### Tony Marland (1952); helped by Nesta Bough



**Robert Hardy, 15 August 1932 – 12 October 2019.**

Robert Hardy read *Literae Humaniores* (Greats) at Merton College, Oxford from 1952 to 1956, achieving a Second (BA 1956, MA 1959). He was the third member of his family to study at Merton: his clergyman father, Charles Hardy, read Modern History (BA 1922, MA 1926); and his elder brother, John Hardy, read PPE from 1948 to 1950.

Surprisingly to anyone who knew him, he was born in Perth, Western Australia (the family were near Colombo on their return to England in August 1939 on the *Orama* steamship when Germany declared war). Less surprisingly, before coming up to Merton he had completed a successful school career at Winchester College (to which he won a scholarship in 1946, having also that year won the top scholarship to Radley), by becoming Prefect of Hall (Head of School) in his final year, 1951.

Cricket was an enduring feature of his life. Described by Jim Swanton in his book *Arabs in Aspic* as a 'quickish left arm bowler', Robert played for the Winchester XI for three years and at Oxford he played a lot of Authentics cricket and was secretary of the club in 1954-55. Indeed, Robert Levens, his Classics tutor at Merton, told him he had 'bowled

away a perfectly good First' in his Mods. However, cricket, like Classics, was pivotal in his route into his future career. When secretary of the Authentics, he made contact with David Macindoe, an Oxford Blue, Harlequin and Arab, which in the end led to his being taken on at Eton College by Robert Birley in 1956 to teach Classics and Ancient History.

He guided and inspired many boys at Eton over a span of 31 years. His legacy included not only outstanding academic results, but also wider guidance and influence, beyond the classroom and the sports pitch, on the boys in his care. He drew particular satisfaction from his time as a housemaster (1969-84) in charge of a happy and successful boarding house ('RHH'), by then ably supported by his wife Penny (née Sherston; they married in July 1970 in Ditcheat) and he devoted great attention to the wider educational role of a 'modern tutor'. After his time as a housemaster, on top of his teaching role he applied his shrewd judgement to chairing Eton's games committee and boarding house inspectorate. Beyond Eton, he became a Justice of the Peace (sitting on the Slough bench) and a governor of North Foreland Lodge School.

Robert left Eton in 1987 to become headmaster at Milton Abbey in Dorset. When he retired in 1995, having guided Milton Abbey through a challenging period for all independent schools, he left the school with its reputation enhanced. He had applied, as at Eton, a belief in the value of every child; an approach that was sympathetic and fair-minded; a sense of duty and commitment to help each pupil make the most of himself; and a conviction that every child should aim high.

Ill health impaired him physically for much of his contented retirement to West Somerset, but he was nonetheless able to maintain his passions for cricket, golf, fishing, reading, antique glass and the fine arts. He also enjoyed walking on the Quantock Hills and sharing with friends and family bottles from a good cellar. He eventually succumbed to Parkinson's disease.

Reserved and modest but kind and generous, he was a greatly loved husband, father and grandfather. His wife Penny survives him, together with their children Caroline and James and four grandchildren.

**By his family**

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## 1954



**David Alexander Watson, 1934–2020.**

David, younger brother to Ian, grew up in Sevenoaks. He was five on the day before war broke out, so he lived through the Battle of Britain, and regularly watched the waves of enemy aircraft fly over his house. He was in the garden one day when a German plane came over his house at rooftop height. The eyes of the rear gunner were strangely visible. Had his end come? But the plane continued on its way and crashed within minutes.

Being a bright young man, David did his A-levels at Sevenoaks School, and then joined the Royal Air Force. Having an O-level in Latin (he was one of only two who did), he was sponsored to Oxford University and placed in Merton College to read Engineering. This degree prepared the way for David to spend his working life with Rolls-Royce, which employed him because of the general and varied content of the course, meaning he ticked all the boxes. Well done Oxford!

While studying at Merton, David attended St Aldates Church and after one very challenging sermon he went back to his room, knelt by his bed and asked the Lord Jesus into his life. Later, he explored the possibility of becoming an ordained minister in the Church of England and studied at Wycliffe Hall. Not surprisingly, on qualifying, he was told to go and get some life experience before applying for a parish. This he did, working in central London, Hull and on the buses. ‘Any more fares please?’

One day David read an advert for a job that wanted someone with an engineering degree who enjoyed working with people.

He decided to apply. When he was offered an interview and a job, he discovered it was to work for Rolls-Royce. He was a systems analyst for most of his time there before taking early retirement. His tales about the first computer were compelling.

David never did get to be a vicar. But he was a Reader in the Church of England for more than 50 years. His Christian faith took him into Glen Parva Young Offenders’ Institution with the Ashby Youth for Christ team as a Chaplain’s Assistant, manning a Christian bookstall in Ashby market, helping to set up and run a dry pub for teenagers in Ashby and much more. He served the town as an Independent Councillor while in Ashby, being the Mayor on three occasions.

David’s hobbies centred mainly around cricket, hockey and steam engines. He played a significant part in the restoration of ‘Boscastle’, both on the board and in the workshop, only falling off the locomotive once while cleaning it. No damage done.

David was married twice: to Janet soon after leaving Oxford, with whom he had three children, Angela, Phoebe and Richard and five grandchildren; and to Pam, to whom he proposed at the kitchen sink, in 1985.

His last two years were significantly restricted by the development of heart failure. He had stents fitted in Derby and Stoke, but died peacefully in Stoke on 6 September 2020, four days after his 86th birthday and 15 days before our 35th wedding anniversary. His funeral was in Ashby cemetery, and being outdoors with social distancing, attended by over 120 people. It was an amazing experience, such as I have never known before. The weather was brilliant, our special friend who is in prison was allowed to come, and I was fully supported by Jesus – three amazing miracles. David’s last words, spoken by our Rector, were an invitation to anyone who has not given their life to Jesus, to do it. They would not be disappointed or regret it. I leave that invitation with you too. Thank you for journeying with me through this short ride.

God bless you.

**Pam Watson**

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## 1955



David Evans, 1937–2020.

David Evans was at Merton from 1955 to 1958 where his warm and sympathetic personality made him many friends, several of whom remained close to him until his death, aged 83, from cancer, on 4 March 2020.

He grew up in Stoke-on-Trent and from his local grammar school gained entry to Merton. He studied history under Roger Highfield and John Roberts. He was an interested student, but was known more for his wit than his scholarly diligence. I recall him saying at the time that, in the unlikely event of his ever doing a graduate degree, his thesis would be on the fathers and grandfathers of historical figures, since to prepare for his weekly essay his tutors kept forcing on him weighty biographies, of which he rarely got beyond the opening chapters about the subject's family origins, and on which he had thus become an authority.

While at Merton he fostered an interest in the theatre, which became a lifelong passion. He missed few productions at the Oxford Playhouse, then one of the foremost repertory theatres in the country, as well as OUDS and college performances. He supported Merton's theatrical group, the Floats, and became its treasurer. He appeared in its 1956 Machiavelli's *Mandragola*; *Oxford Magazine* wrote that 'David Evans acted Fra Timoteo very well, portraying unctuousness and subtlety.' He played Palamon in *Two Noble Kinsmen*, the 1957 Floats production. It received more attention than most college offerings because its producer was Neville Coghill, one of the University's literary giants,

and because Shakespeare and John Fletcher were shown as authors on the 1634 title page while chances to see it were very rare ('not seen in Oxford this century' wrote Coghill in his programme notes). The review in *Postmaster* of December 1957 was by Reynolds Price (1955), an American graduate Rhodes Scholar at Merton whose novels and short stories were soon to bring him literary fame. Reynolds wrote of David's performance that he 'obviously took the play more seriously than anyone else [in the cast] ... and that he indulged in an anthology of tricks half mastered from Gielgud, Olivier, and, alas, Wolfson'. In *Isis* the critic wrote that David's was one of the only two performances to impress, and added that his acting 'identified successive strains of Richard III, Tarzan, and Tony Curtis'. The play proved less attractive to the Merton Senior Common Room who objected to the noise and disruption in the Fellows' Garden, the home of all previous Floats' productions, and denied them permission to play there the following year. I was in the play too and recall nothing untoward, but perhaps David's Tarzan strains played a part.

In later years David was to put his theatrical interest to good use. While still keeping his day job he wrote theatre reviews for *Time Out*, and also contributed regular articles on the London stage to American publications. In his and my retirement we and our wives were frequent theatregoers, sometimes joined by fellow Mertonian contemporaries John Isherwood (1956) and Michael Jordan (1954). After performances at the National Theatre, the Almeida, the Royal Court and the Donmar (and we rarely went anywhere else), David invariably had penetrating and insightful comments on what we had seen.

After Merton, David went to the USA where initially he taught at a private school in Pennsylvania. Later he moved into advertising with a prominent agency in Manhattan ('trainee of the year'). Some years later, on returning to Britain, he joined SH Benson, which subsequently merged with Ogilvy & Mather, before in 1982 joining with a colleague, Richard Lynam, to form their own agency where he stayed until his retirement. Their most prominent account was with BP, handling BP's extensive cultural sponsorship activities, among them the annual BP Portrait Award at the National Portrait Gallery.

David married while at Merton, although his wife was only seen there in short weekend visits, during which much oak was usually sported. After they had moved to the USA they divorced. He married again in America and his American wife returned to the UK with him, but divorce again followed. In 1976 he married Annie Nice, a professional pianist who shared his theatrical interest, who survives him. David was highly supportive of her musical career: one birthday present was a Steinway grand piano, which she still cherishes.

All who knew David found him engaging and amiable. He was a good listener as well as a good talker, always ready with a sharp wit. Sadly his death, at the Royal Free Hospital, not far from their Hampstead home, occurred after a very short illness just when the coronavirus epidemic was gathering strength. Annie, who herself suffered a major stroke only a few months before David's death, hopes to hold a memorial event when post-Covid conditions permit, since none was possible at the time of his death.

**Sir Peter Heap (1956)**

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**1956**



**Michael T Clanchy**, a historian and author of ground-breaking books about the Middle Ages, died in Oxford on 29 January 2021. He came to Merton from Ampleforth College in 1956 with an Exhibition and returned in 1961 to take his DipEd. He returned a second time after he retired and moved to Oxford in 2003, having honorary membership of the Senior Common Room and access to the library and the gardens, in which he delighted.

He is remembered by his contemporaries as 'a thoughtful and courteous fellow student, one of the quiet studious ones, in contrast to the rest of us'. Mike Trevanion recalls: 'Michael and I were fortunate to study under the marvellous tutorial team of Ralph Davis, Roger Highfield, John Roberts and Stuart Woolf. We both opted for the Italian Renaissance as our special subject and our joint tutorials remain one of my most pleasant memories for Michael's insight and intelligence, and for his personal charm. He was very strong on the cultural and intellectual aspects. According to Roger Highfield, one of the examiners was impressed by the "individual quality" of our Schools papers and I feel sure that an important contribution to this was our enjoyment of each other's company.'

Michael became one of the most distinguished medievalists of his time. His iconoclastic *From Memory to Written Record: 1066-1307* (1979) examined how medieval England shifted from a non-literate to a literate society and how writing was used by government and by ordinary people. It challenged the 'humanist propagandists', with their ideas about the importance of the Italian Renaissance, whom he had studied as an undergraduate. It grew out of his studies of 13th-century county records and drew on the work of European and American social anthropologists. The book remained in print and its third edition was published by Wiley-Blackwell in 2013. It has been called a 'monument of 20th-century historiography'.

His widely used and admired textbook *England and its Rulers, 1066-1272: Foreign Lordship and National Identity* (1982) likewise remained in print for the rest of his life. His biography *Abelard: A Medieval Life* (1997) was described by the French historian Jacques Le Goff as 'a great book, "unique" like its hero'. It was translated into several languages, including French. His last book, *Looking Back from the Invention of Printing: Mothers and the Teaching of Reading in the Middle Ages*, was published in 2018.

Michael Clanchy was born on 28 November 1936 and travelled at six weeks old, with his mother and elder brother, to Moscow where his father was Naval Attaché. They returned home to Oxfordshire in the summer of 1939. Aged 5 he went to prep school, and from there to Ampleforth, National Service in the Royal Navy, and Merton.

At Oxford, he became President of the Oxford University Archaeological Society. The society at that time was divided into two factions: the diggers and the rubbers. Michael was leader of the rubbers, having had a passion since childhood for visiting churches and rubbing medieval brasses.

It was in Oxford that he met his wife, Joan (née Milne), another historian, who was at St Hilda's. After they married in 1963, they moved to Glasgow, Joan's native city, where Michael became a lecturer at the university, subsequently Reader, in medieval history. In 1985, they left Scotland for London when Joan took up the post of head of North London Collegiate School.

In London, Michael taught at UCL and at the Institute of Historical Research, where he became a professor. He was also elected a Fellow of the British Academy.

Scholars in London, Glasgow, Oxford and around the world have spoken of Michael's kindness, generosity, wit and charm. He took pleasure in many things but he suffered from depression in later life.

He and Joan supported each other in everything. When Joan was in hospital in Oxford, in early January, in her final struggle with lupus, Michael made an end-of-life visit to her there and contracted Covid-19. Already suffering from debilitating Parkinson's disease, he suffered a stroke and died serenely at home two weeks after Joan's death. They are survived by their two children, James (St Anne's, 1982) and Kate (Exeter, 1984), and five grandchildren.

**Richard Kenyon (1956) with James Clanchy and Kate Clanchy**

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1957



The Revd **Graham Cansdale** was born in Rugby in August 1938, the second of four children.

He won a scholarship to Rugby School, aged 13, where he ultimately became Head Boy of Town House. In 1957 he went to Merton College, Oxford, to study Theology, following in the steps of his Mertonian grandfather Walter Bentley. He was in Merton's hockey team, was very involved in the Christian Union and played violin in the Oxford City Orchestra. After graduating, he completed a Diploma in Education, a training put to good use throughout his varied life. During that course he met his future wife, Daphne Smith, a history graduate of London University.

Leaving Oxford, Graham taught in Cheadle, Cheshire for a year before getting married and moving to Bristol to train for the Anglican ministry at Clifton Theological College. A three-year curacy followed at St John's Church, Parkstone, Dorset, and during this time two of their children, Stephen and Esther, were born. Their third child, Michael, was born during their time in Kenya.

From the age of 17 Graham felt God calling him to work overseas. In 1968 the family sailed to Kenya to work with the East African church. He was the only European member of the big parish team in Nasokol, serving the whole Pokot tribe. He also taught RE in the only secondary boys school in Pokot. These experiences gave Graham a wonderful insight into life in rural Kenya and the opportunity to become highly proficient in Swahili, (the lingua franca of Kenya).

Two years later, Graham was appointed Principal of the diocesan Bible College at Kapsabet, training church leaders from many tribal groups. He taught the students entirely in Swahili and on Sundays took church services all around the local region. He used his practical skills to teach students how to make blackboards and creative visual aids for use in their pastoral work. Throughout his life he was known for his inventive, unusual visual aids.

In 1972 Graham joined the staff of St Paul's United Theological College near Nairobi, which provided the highest academic level of clergy training in Kenya for several denominations. He taught academic theology courses, Swahili language classes and guitar lessons. He was also chaplain to two English-speaking congregations.

The family returned to England and in 1976 Graham became Vicar of Clapham, near Bedford. For 13 years he devoted his life to parish work across all the ages. He was chaplain to the local geriatric hospital, encouraged closer cooperation with the nearby Methodist Church and took an active part in village life.

In 1989 Graham became chaplain and RE teacher at Bedford School. He had struggled with depression and he enjoyed the change of returning to teaching, including sharing his conjuring skills with the prep school boys.

The new century saw Graham and Daphne, now retired, move to Mytholmroyd, West Yorkshire, to be nearer their three children, all married and with their own families. Graham joined the busy parish team, preaching, teaching, starting a music worship group and supporting home study groups. He produced two music CDs for which he composed the music and wrote many of the lyrics. He enjoyed membership of art and creative writing courses and continued his love of Africa with visits to churches in Kenya, Ruanda, Uganda, Burundi and DR Congo.

In 2013, Graham was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease which progressed, severely limiting his energy and activity. He continued to be involved where possible within village and church life. On the evening before he died he joined in as usual with the Zoom Bible Study.

Graham's life is best expressed by his love for people, his delight in his family and his longing to share the good news of Jesus.

Graham died peacefully in his sleep at home on 14 October 2020, aged 82.

**Daphne Cansdale**

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**David Summerfield, 1938–2020.**

The first 18 years of David Summerfield's life were inextricably linked to his education at Newcastle Royal Grammar School, the rhythm and rituals of the local Jewish community and a fascination with films produced in Hollywood.

David's horizons significantly broadened when he was awarded a state scholarship to study law at Merton College in 1957. When he travelled to Oxford for the first time he met on the train John Knox, who was due to commence a degree in History at Merton. From that day, David and John became lifelong friends and their chit-chat and laughter through the years did not go unnoticed.

David relished the freedom that university life offered, studied hard and felt great pride in being an Oxford student. Because of this experience, he regularly returned to Merton for the gaudies and enjoyed meeting with friends and acquaintances in Oxford. On one occasion he gave his grandchildren a gentle tour of the College and city and talked with pride and affection about his time at Merton.

David graduated in 1960 and moved to London. He began work as a solicitor; his speciality was family law and the

majority of his clients were dependent on legal aid. He worked long hours, including Saturday mornings and many weekday evenings. As a volunteer, he lent his legal expertise to the local Citizens Advice Bureau.

In the early 1980s, for health reasons, David ended his legal career and a decision was made to sell the London home and move to rural Sussex to start a new life. Within a short period, David realised there was an opportunity to develop a business based on his lifelong passion for cricket and books. He established and entered partnerships with several second-hand bookshops in London and Sussex, including a cricket bookshop close to Lord's, the international home of cricket. Working with his younger son Keith, David was well known on the cricket circuit for running bookstalls at cricket grounds at Kent County Cricket Club, Sussex CCC, Essex CCC and, on occasion, around the country. In later years, the bookshops had to be closed and the business became home-based and focused on the sale of memorabilia.

For many years, David enjoyed reading books and newspapers, particularly sports reports. He watched cricket, listened to *Test Match Special* on the radio and laughed loudly when watching episodes of *Bilko*, *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Yes Minister* and *Frasier*.

David had a gentle manner, an easy conversational style and was a deeply loved husband, father, grandfather and friend. In early 2020, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer and died peacefully in hospital on 16 August 2020 at the age of 81. At the funeral in Eastbourne, many friends from the cricket and cricket book community came to pay their respects.

David leaves his wife, Ruth, a former nurse and wonderful home-maker, who he married in 1962; his elder son Paul, who works for a military think tank in Whitehall; daughter-in-law Francesca, who teaches children with special needs; and younger son Keith, who continues selling cricket books and memorabilia. There are three grandchildren: Joshua who works in the hospitality sector, Gideon, an artist and Miriam, who works for the Royal Society of Medicine as an events executive.

**Paul Summerfield**

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**Martin Woollacott**, journalist; born 29 April 1939, died 24 March 2021.

At the end of April 1975, North Vietnamese tanks were approaching Saigon, and journalists reporting the war had to decide whether to accept the invitation to leave by helicopter from the US embassy. Max Hastings, there for the *London Evening Standard*, encountered Martin Woollacott, correspondent for the *Guardian*, and the paper's future foreign editor. Martin told him that, while his own resolve to remain had not changed, he anticipated the next 24 hours might be 'extremely unpleasant'.

Hastings regarded Martin as being both 'a superb wordsmith' and 'exceptionally cool and steady'. He recalled that 'if Martin, of all people, is feeling apprehensive then I'm bloody terrified', and shortly after scrambled over the embassy wall to leave.

Martin, who died aged 81 after suffering from lung cancer, had been covering the Vietnam War off and on for the previous four years. The quality of his dispatches since the start, five weeks before, of what became the last communist offensive won him the international reporter of the year prize in the British Press Awards.

While by no means a war junkie, if the story warranted it he would take a calculated risk. The fall of Saigon and the end of Vietnam's 30 years of war was the kind of historic moment that was an obvious candidate. What concerned Martin was what might occur in the hours between the last helicopter leaving the US embassy roof and the arrival thereabouts of the first Soviet-made tank.

I was there for the *Observer* (then unrelated to the *Guardian*), and we had already tasted the anarchy that could ensue during this kind of hiatus at Da Nang, when the outer defences of South Vietnam's second biggest city collapsed overnight like an old tent. Hysterical crowds gathered at the airport, which started to come under rocket fire. The lucky ones, plus some military and media, escaped in horrendously overloaded civilian planes. Later we learned that as ours took off, an abandoned rearguard had pursued us down the runway bowling grenades at the wheels to puncture them before we got airborne.

Martin was always convinced that, as long as we survived this sort of thing, Hanoi would prefer to exploit rather than liquidate any lingering traces of the Saigon press pack, of whom about 90 out of 1,000 remained. On the other hand, the remnants of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam – betrayed, as some of them saw it, by a western media that had constantly undermined their cause – might well turn on us. We changed hotels to one with a single entrance judged easier to control.

In the event, abandoned soldiers did not run riot. Most fought until their commanders ordered them to surrender, and a few zealots beyond that. Snipers near the Catholic cathedral surprised us, not to speak of their targets, by shooting at some North Vietnamese close to the Reuters building, giving most of us our first close-up glimpse of the other side in action.

'An instantaneous and almost balletic rearrangement', Martin wrote. 'Soldiers who had been lounging and smoking a minute before were suddenly prone and judiciously returning fire.' Yet before long, off-duty and often unarmed, pairs of North Vietnamese sightseers were everywhere. Saigon became Ho Chi Minh City (except to the majority of its citizens) and we paid \$100 each to board an elderly Soviet Ilyushin, which flew us to Laos on the first leg of our various journeys home.

Then in his mid-thirties, Martin was based in Hong Kong with his wife, Mori (Morvarid) Faruha, an Iranian-born doctor, and their infant daughter, Katy. Martin had a great interest in things culinary: he once astonished his friend the *Sunday Times* reporter Jon Swain by declining a nightcap because he was eager to finish reading a cookery book. Once the family were back in Hampstead, north London, he and Mori loved to entertain. 'High politics, reminiscences and gossip', recalled the *Guardian's* former diplomatic editor Hella Pick. 'Never a dull moment. Martin had a singular gift for longstanding friendship and I was one of the lucky beneficiaries.'

Born in Manchester, Martin had two younger sisters, Susan and Janet. His father, Victor, served in the RAF during the Second World War as a motorcycle dispatch rider and physical training instructor until he could resume peacetime teaching and ultimately a deputy headship. His mother, Mabel (née Thompson), was the daughter of a confectioner, which may have accounted for Martin's sweet tooth.

He grew up in the outer city suburb of Blackley (pronounced Blakely) without, like most people, a TV, a fridge, a telephone or a car. But the family had books, hundreds of them, public libraries and the *Manchester Guardian*. Apart from cinema newsreels, their only other source of information and entertainment was BBC radio. Both parents voted Labour.

In 1950 Martin won a scholarship to Manchester Grammar School, and in 1961 left Merton College, Oxford, with a BA in history. By this time he had been introduced to Mori, a Manchester medical student to whom his parents had rented his old bedroom; they married in 1967. On graduating he almost immediately started his career on the *Warrington Guardian*, a venerable Lancashire weekly. By the time he joined the *Guardian* as a London-based staff reporter in December 1968, he had worked for the *Oldham Evening Chronicle*, the English-language section of *Agence France-Presse* in Paris and the broadsheet *Sun*, which was the successor of the old socialist *Daily Herald* until Rupert Murdoch changed everything but its name.

His career as a foreign correspondent did not start well. Sent to cover the strategic arms limitation talks in Helsinki in 1969 he got as far as Heathrow when he discovered he was without his passport and the next flight was in two days and fully booked. For a moment he wondered if he could get away with making some careful calls to Finland and filing a story from an airport hotel. Then he decided he might as well try to persuade passport control to let him board his flight on his press card. It worked. 'Heathrow let me go and the Finns let me in,' he wrote some years later.

After serving as a Nicosia-based Middle East correspondent mostly covering the Lebanese civil war and the Iranian revolution, in 1985 he became foreign editor for six years. Pick noted that, though it was quite obvious he would much rather be doing the writing than the editing, he was popular in the post and 'coped fairly with the foibles of his writers'. As the paper's chief international affairs commentator from 1991, he displayed the qualities observed by the *Guardian's* former Middle East correspondent David Hirst: 'Martin the veritable polymath, Martin the observer, so extraordinarily swift and sure in his ability to grasp the essentials of any situation and then expound them.'

As a columnist he was sometimes able to visit the places he was writing about. In April 1991, a few weeks after the end of the Gulf War, he produced what Paul Webster, then on the *Guardian* foreign desk and now editor of the *Observer*, called 'the finest piece of reporting ever to cross my desk'.

After the ceasefire agreement that followed the ejection of Iraqi troops from Kuwait, all Saddam Hussein's aircraft were grounded, but a loophole allowed him to fly his helicopters, which he used to bomb and strafe the Kurds of northern Iraq. They had risen up against him and were fleeing for the Turkish border while the American-led coalition insisted the war was over and there were no legal grounds for intervention.

'A monstrous crime is being perpetrated in Kurdistan,' wrote Martin, who with other journalists had trekked miles into the foothills to report from the Kurdish side of the border. 'They are and will be subject not only to the effects of a war waged without restraint or morality but to the reimposition of Saddam Hussein's brutal rule ... Why this sudden excess of legalism, this prating about internal affairs?'

His reporting from Kurdistan, which won him a James Cameron award, undoubtedly made a major contribution to the UN resolution that permitted Anglo-American forces to intervene.

In 2004, having reached the then pensionable age of 65, he retired from the *Guardian*, though continued to contribute articles and book reviews, and in 2015 a memorable 40th-anniversary piece on the fall of Saigon. In 2006, the 50th anniversary of the ill-fated Anglo-French intervention at Suez, he also published his only book, *After Suez: Adrift in the American Century*, a brilliant summary of most western attempts at military intervention during the second half of the 20th century. Until 2016 he contributed to the paper without a byline, as a foreign policy leader writer.

He is survived by Mori and Katy.

#### Colin Smith

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## 1960



**Paul Jennings**, 23 February 1942 – 10 June 2021.

*The following is the eulogy I read at his funeral service on 3 July 2021.*

I hope it will become clear why Carole has kindly asked me to speak at Paul's funeral. Well over 90% of what follows is taken from notes that Paul drew up as far back as October 2014 and is in his words. I have added one or two personal memories from our time at College and since.

Paul was born in 1942 in Wolverhampton to Joe and Queenie Jennings. Joe was a junior partner in a family tailoring business that went back three generations. Paul was an only child. He had a modest childhood, supported by wonderful parents and family. He went to a primary school in a poor area, but passed the 11+, top boy in Wolverhampton, one of only three to gain entry to Wolverhampton Grammar School. He continued to flourish academically there and was introduced to several lifelong interests (music, bridge and fell-walking).

He won a state scholarship and Postmastership (Major Scholarship) at Merton College, Oxford in 1960. (The *Wolverhampton Express and Star* headline was 'Temporary postman wins postmastership'.)

It was there Paul and I met as I was the other Postmaster reading Mathematics that year and we found we had other things in common, for example, we were both grammar school boys and both followed our home town football teams, something Paul did for the rest of his life.

At Merton, he found Maths hard-going and had to work hard to get a second class degree. He also managed to become captain of the College darts team and Master of the Winks (the title given to the University Captain of Tiddly Winks). When he arrived at Merton, most of his formal clothing was hand tailored by his father; although more than 40 years later when we sat next to each other at a reunion dinner, he did admit that the dinner jacket he was now wearing was second hand from Oxfam as the original no longer met his (or maybe Carole's) standards.

The darts team, of which I was also a member, used to play pub teams in an area of Oxford known as Paradise Square (definitely misnamed) where most of the opposition seemed about the same age as I am now and where Paul demonstrated his mathematical ability by both keeping the score and announcing that he could only throw good darts if he had consumed a multiple of 1.5 pints of the local brew which retailed at 11d per pint (or less than 5p for those unused to pre-decimal currency).

On a holiday in Iceland with friends from university, he met Carole, who was having an adventure holiday with her friend Jeanette. There followed visits to London by Paul and visits to Oxford by Carole and Jeanette. Paul would never tell us which one was the attraction and it was only when Carole was his partner at the College's septcentenary ball in 1964 that we knew. After a courtship consisting of frequent overnight bus journeys from/to Burnley/Harrow, they got married in 1966. Earlier in 1966, Paul had very efficiently carried out his duties as best man at my wedding.

In 1964 he had been appointed maths master at Burnley Grammar School by Noel Stokes, who had taught him maths at Wolverhampton Grammar School ten years earlier. He was promoted to Head of Maths (1971), and then Deputy Head (1979). At Burnley Grammar School, apart from maths he taught bridge; the Burnley Grammar School team in 1979 won the English Schools Cup and three players went on to play at the highest level.

He umpired cricket; his note says he never gave an LBW. He competed with David Clayton (a good friend and later, head) over departmental performance. He was curriculum

deputy and constructed the annual timetable, which became amazingly more complicated between 1975 and 2002, by which time Burnley Grammar had combined with Burnley High to form Habergham High School. This was long before there were computer programs to help with such complexities.

He also took on responsibility for finance and kept a tight rein on spending when education cuts bit. After setting up a City of Guilds course for pupils with special needs he was seconded as Schoolmaster Fellow at St Martin's College, Lancaster to research into new curricula.

He never applied for a headship, but treated county administration with as much respect as it deserved. On one occasion asked to complete a complicated curriculum analysis, he did it under protest, but then submitted a faulty version with two copies of Year 8 and no copy of Year 7. No one complained! In a school curriculum policy document, in a section about liaison with external agencies, he added to the list the training agency OFFSKOOL, being Paul's pun on Ofsted.

He retired in 2002, having been wonderfully supported by Carole throughout. Their family consists of children Helen (born 1969), Jonathan (1972) and Richard (1980), and grandchildren Joseph, Charis and Edward – all much loved.

In retirement, his many interests included genealogy (his family traced back 13 generations) and long-distance walking. He was a member of Fence Gentleman Walkers (FGW) and president three times – it should be noted he is wearing his FGW tie as we speak.

This activity also reminded me of another episode which we shared while at College. One Easter, we went youth hostelling with another of Paul's friends named Phil with whom he had been at school. We had to abandon when persistent rain turned to snow at relatively low levels. Phil slipped and fell, banging his head, when we were walking in single file with Phil at the back. Fortunately, we looked back before we had progressed more than 50 yards so all was well. This led to a 10-mile road walk the next day (which we all hated) and terminated in a pub in Little Langdale. The final insult was that they only stocked mild beer.

Other interests in Paul's list include being a member of Blackburn and Brierfield bridge clubs (his bridge partner of 40 years, Robin Atkinson, is here today); choir singing at St Anne's, Fence and here at St John's, Worsthorne (he was a member of the congregation at each); writing general knowledge quizzes and participating in them; watching the Wolves online every week (although the glaucoma started to affect this); and reading lessons at church (having in 1958/9 won the reading prize at Wolverhampton Grammar School for public reading of seen and unseen passages — rumour always had been that Paul was the only person in Wolverhampton who could read!).

He was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease more than ten years ago which, together with glaucoma, progressively prevented him from enjoying a number of his interests, especially the walking, choir singing and bridge. However, he maintained his sense of humour, well demonstrated by his comments about educational administration and the reply he made to me at the last College reunion he attended in 2011 when I remarked how steady his hands were. His response was 'You should see my legs,' which were hidden under a very long table in Hall.

The final illustration of his humour is from the last sentence in his prepared notes which I read now: 'Please treat this screed with the contempt it deserves, but extract whatever facts you may think worthwhile.'

My comment on this is: Nothing concerning Paul should be treated with contempt and everything he did was worthwhile.

### Keith Aspinall (1960)

*Later in the service, Paul's daughter bravely read the following monologue which was found in his papers after his death. It is not known when he wrote it but it illustrates wonderfully well his sense of humour and his courage in facing a long, progressive and debilitating illness. The Aynuk and Ayli reference can be googled and understood by reading Wikipedia.*

1. No more monologues at concerts,  
Aynuk, Ayli put to rest.  
Silly rhymes can be forgotten  
not much missed I do confess.

2. No more groaning with the basses,  
never could sing bottom Es.  
Badly written, repetitious  
hymns that sometimes did not please.

3. No more Mathematics problems,  
No more calculus or trig  
No more algebra statistics  
geometry could be a pig.

4. No more spending all the summer  
writing timetables for school.  
Marking or preparing lessons.  
Up till all hours was the rule.

5. F G W is finished,  
no more long walks from now on.  
Put away my maps for ever.  
Cotswold Way is long since gone.

6. No more bridge on Thursday evenings,  
no more three no trumps to play.  
No more botched defending causing  
patient partners such dismay.

7. No more general knowledge quizzes,  
never knew the picture clues.  
Nor the music from the 90s  
nor the stuff from last week's news.

8. No more Wolverhampton Wanderers.  
endless conversations done.  
Going right back to the 50s,  
when the league they often won.

9. No more watching local actors,  
marvelling how good they are.  
Rarely being disappointed.  
Lots of them could be a star.

10. No more record office visits,  
trying to find a death or birth.  
Ancestors the usual aglabs,  
tillers of the ancient earth.

II. So I bid farewell to all who  
made my life a happy time.  
Carole, children and grandchildren.  
Love you all. I'm out of rhyme.

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1962



Clive Bruce Sweeting, 1943–2020.

A pleasurable afternoon for Clive Bruce Sweeting, who died in September 2020 at the age of 77, would be spent comparing a Syriac version of the New Testament with the original Greek. This scholarship he carried out seated at his desk, whether in Paris (his home for the last 20 years) or in his wife's historic countryside retreat in Couture-sur-Loir – the town, as he was proud to point out, where the 16th-century French poet Pierre de Ronsard had been born.

A disciple and friend of two distinguished Merton Fellows, Tom Braun and John Lucas, he might have come near to matching their academic eminence but for a serious health problem that interrupted his *Literae Humaniores* studies. Winner of a state scholarship and an Exhibition to Merton in 1962 from Cardiff High School, where a strong classical studies tradition existed, he maintained a correspondence with both his former tutors throughout his career. This took him from early teaching posts in England and Wales (and a short interlude at the National Library of Wales) to a life in Paris consumed with his interests in and study of Greek and Latin, ancient philosophy, the Armenian and Syriac languages, Greek palaeography and papyrology, Indo-European and Near Eastern Christianity and the Benedictine tradition.

In his teenage years he had developed a strong attachment to the Anglicanism of the disestablished Church in Wales, worshipping at Llandaff Cathedral in his native city. His contacts with senior clergy were maintained after heading for Oxford and an early somewhat peripatetic career. Indeed, in 1971 the dean, and later bishop of Llandaff, the Right Reverend Eryl S. Thomas, assisted at Clive's trilingual French-English-Welsh marriage in l'Église Saint-Séverin in Paris. He had met his new wife, Marie-Therese (née Luquet), while both were visiting an Armenian church in the city. Their honeymoon was spent in Istanbul as guests of the Ecumenical Patriarch.

At Merton Clive missed the first class degree his tutors thought he was capable of because of his illness which obliged him to sit his exams from a bed at the Warneford Hospital. His symptoms were initially misdiagnosed by his doctors as a mental condition but were later recognised by a more junior medical staff member as Cushing's disease. Treatment for this glandular condition, which can have psychiatric effects, left him dependent on medication for the rest of his life. He did, however, secure the College Logic Prize as a small consolation, and moved to Jesus to take a Diploma in Celtic Studies, enabling him to become fluent in the language of his native Wales.

A kind and courteous soul, he associated with academics in his chosen fields of interest, teaching, researching, reading and writing, converting to his wife's Roman Catholicism but retaining a deep interest in Anglican affairs. He never secured the tenure in the French university system he would have liked and deserved, but that did not dissuade him. As his interests in the Near East deepened, he went on to teach English and Latin in Yerevan University, Greek at Sevan seminary in Armenia, and New Testament Greek and classical Armenian at Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam.

Back in Paris he spent his later years (apart from a short period teaching Greek, Syriac and Patristics at Lviv Catholic University, Ukraine), working with other academics, translating French and Armenian articles on Ancient Near Eastern History and Philosophy into English for international journals (not always receiving the acknowledgement he deserved from the original authors), as well as translating articles into Armenian for that country's philosophical journal.

Thomas Braun greatly admired Clive's mastery of Armenian, being told by his Armenian hosts on a visit he made to the country that they had never known another foreigner achieve similar success. Clive developed a special interest in Philoponus' Armenian commentaries on Aristotle's *Prior and Posterior Analytics*, which throws light on Armenian reception of Greek learning. 'The subject matter, so difficult that nearly all professors of classics shrink from it, had no terrors for him,' Braun wrote.

Despite the rarefied nature of his interests Clive was excellent company, with an intense interest in current affairs, contemporary politics and society, equally at home discussing the latest television drama series as Indian East Syriac. Clive succumbed to sepsis while being treated for cancer. Marie-Therese, his wife of 50 years, died a week later of the same cancer. The dogged and stubborn determination that never saw him give up on his academic interests (despite the lack of apparent recognition and repeated setbacks resulting from his illness) were seen also in the endless hours he spent traversing Paris from the start of 2020 to make daily visits to his wife in hospital care, a considerable challenge for a cancer patient himself who was hospitalised intermittently for his recurring sepsis in the same period.

His death has deprived a rare field of study in the West of one of its most dedicated scholars, and his family and friends of a deeply loyal and joyous companion.

**Rhys David** (Worcester, 1962)

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1963



**Mark John Bruce Gallop** died peacefully on 1 April 2020, at the age of 79, with his wife and sons at his bedside.

Born in Oxford, England, on 22 January 1941, Mark was the middle son of Kate and Kingsley Gallop.

Earning his MA at Cambridge University and his DipEd at Oxford, he went on to teach at Hampton Grammar School. He emigrated to Canada in 1967, bringing the sport of rowing to Ridley College in Ontario, where he taught history. From there he went into public education and taught history and economics for more than 30 years for the Toronto Board of Education. He married Karen Grimshaw in 1981 and they had two sons, Duncan Ross and John Kingsley, who will miss their father sorely. Grandpa Gallop will also be much missed by grandchildren Audrey, Aurora, Everett and Malcolm, by his daughters-in-law, Alix Hagman and Jacqueline Beaudry, and by his brothers Richard (wife Ruth) and Peter (wife Mandy) and their families, but most of all by his wife Karen.

Mark was diagnosed in late March with aplastic thyroid cancer and learned that it had spread virulently throughout his body. His illness and sudden decline were immense shocks. Besides being a wonderful father, husband and grandpa, Mark is remembered as a chef, a carpenter, a gardener, a rower, an opera aficionado, a rugby fan, a world traveller, a dog lover, and a master teacher. One of the greatest loves in his life was rowing. From his races in his early days rowing for Cambridge and Oxford to his success at 70 in a Canadian Indoor Rowing Championship, Mark was a keen oarsman. Letters of condolence have shown him

also to be a kind, sympathetic and supportive friend. He will be greatly missed.

#### Karen Grimshaw

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1964



**Roger David Worthington** grew up in Stockport near Manchester, where his parents ran a newsagent's shop. He attended Cheadle Hulme School and gained an Open Exhibition at Merton to read Chemistry; John Taylor and I were his fellow Chemistry Exhibitioners. Not long after Roger came up to Oxford, his parents sold the business and retired to live in a cottage in the village of Llanddona on Anglesey. It was largely due to the proximity of Snowdonia that Roger developed his passion for hill-walking. While at Merton, Roger was a regular attender of services at the College Chapel, and he maintained a lifelong quiet but deep faith.

Roger experienced mental health problems throughout his life, but completed his Part I examinations and went on to undertake a Part II project in George Radda's laboratory. After leaving Oxford, Roger worked for a short time in industry before undertaking a PhD in organic chemistry at the then Leicester Polytechnic (now De Montfort University). This was followed by postdoctoral work at the Department of Chemistry at the University of Aberdeen. Roger used weekends and other free time to explore the local Grampian mountains. It was while he was at Aberdeen that he met Maureen, who was a technician in the department. I acted as best man to Roger at their wedding in Maureen's home town, Prestwick in Ayrshire; they then returned to Aberdeen to set up home in a flat near the city centre, but sadly the marriage

ended within a few years. He went on to work with the John Wood Group in Aberdeen, which was very much at the forefront of the burgeoning North Sea oil and gas industries, and was involved in the development of anti-fouling agents to protect marine structures.

After leaving the Wood Group, Roger eventually decided to spend most of his time in the cottage in Anglesey, helping to support and care for his mother. Roger made occasional trips up to Aberdeen and en route he would visit our house in Bridge of Allan, near Stirling; we also kept in touch via phone calls and Christmas letters. In Anglesey he joined the local branch of U3A (University of the Third Age), Probus, the National Trust, and various groups where he could share with friends his interests in hill-walking, classical music and wine. Roger always kept himself very much up to date with developments in science, politics and current affairs.

The last few years proved very challenging for Roger as the cruel Parkinson's disease took its toll on him. We kept in touch with occasional chats on the phone and it was evident that he faced the deterioration in his health with great fortitude, sustained by his faith. His good friend Michele Hudgell, whom he had met at U3A, helped to provide and arrange care and support for him when he could no longer look after himself at home and they remained close friends for many years, until his death on 30 November 2020. A small private funeral was held at Llaniestyn Church in Llanddona on 11 December at which Michele gave a very moving tribute.

Roger loved to travel and visited several European countries. My favourite memories stem from a four-week camping holiday in the summer of 1969 where Roger and I were joined by another Mertonian, Lyndon Woodward (Mathematics, 1963). We drove my very basic model 100E Ford Popular across Belgium and Germany, before labouring over the San Bernardino Pass in Switzerland and descending into Italy. Driving in Italy presented its own challenges, never more so than in Rome. Italian drivers are not noted for their patience, especially when a slow British car is holding up the traffic. On one occasion, we had completed three circuits of a dual carriageway ring road, without finding a way of getting over to the opposite carriageway, where we wanted to be. Finally, after much discussion, we decided that an 'Italian approach'

to the problem was necessary; after all, when in Rome...! So, at a suitable location, we drove over the flower beds between the carriageways to reach our goal; no one seemed to bat an eyelid.

Rather more challenging was a later part of the journey, in which we travelled from Vienna to Berlin, at that time a divided city deep within East Germany. The direct route would have taken us through Czechoslovakia, but its border with Austria was closed as the authorities in Prague were in a state of high alert on what was the first anniversary of the suppression of the Prague Spring by Soviet forces. Accordingly, we made the much longer trip via Bavaria, to reach the town of Hof near the heavily fortified border between West and East Germany. At the border crossing, a 'transit visa' was purchased which allowed us to travel on that part of the Autobahn originally built by Hitler to link Berlin and Munich. The visa was time-stamped and we were under strict instructions not to leave the Autobahn under any circumstances. Our Ford was struggling to keep pace even with the East German Trabant cars, so it took us well over four hours to cover the 160 miles to the border with West Berlin, where we would be camping. At the border crossing, we were given a real grilling by the guards about why we had taken so long on the journey. Roger was keen to show off his prowess in the German language and tried to inject a note of humour by pointing out to the guards: 'We didn't have a Mercedes, you know!'; this remark fell on very deaf ears. Eventually, it was decided that we weren't spies and we were allowed into the 'island' that was West Berlin.

The following day, we decided to explore the historic heart of the city which was in the Eastern sector, a trip which involved taking our car through Checkpoint Charlie, the principal crossing point in the city. The searches of the car were extremely thorough because of the suspicion that we might be planning to smuggle someone across. At bayonet point, we were ordered to take out the back seats of the car; up to then we hadn't even known that they could be removed.

The highlights of our trip to the East were visiting the Pergamon Museum, and using our otherwise worthless East German marks in a busy restaurant on Unter den Linden, within sight of the Brandenburg Gate. We ended up sharing

a table with a dentist and his wife (a teacher) from the East, who spent the time criticising their government and the communist system in general; were the Stasi listening in, we wondered? Our journey out of Berlin and back to West Germany via the Autobahn to Helmstedt was uneventful apart from the frustrating delays at the borders. Incidentally, in 1971 I gave the much-travelled Ford Popular to my younger brother who still looks after it lovingly; on its 60th birthday recently it looked in mint condition!

Over more than 55 years, despite the distances between us, Roger and I maintained a close friendship with many shared interests. He was a real gentle man, who was unfailingly courteous and had a good sense of humour. May he rest in peace.

Nicholas Price (1964)

## 1966



Mark Cousins, 8 October 1947 – 26 September 2020.

Mark Cousins, who died from illnesses of the heart shortly before his 73rd birthday, came up to Merton in October 1966. He had been a pupil at Christ's Hospital and Senior Grecian (Head Boy) at the school. We stumbled up the staircase in Rose Lane and it was the best of friendships for over 50 years. We studied history – him to a first, me to work in journalism and political activism.

All the time Cousins was the sharpest intellect I was in regular contact with, lacing acute political analysis with a coruscating wit that was for private consumption especially

as the Swiftian language of scorn and derision became less and less acceptable in *Guardian*-reading company.

Cousins, born in Bristol, was the son of Constance 'Connie' Chapman, who was one of Lindsay Anderson's favourite actors at the Royal Court. He loved the world of theatre. He dressed in his very own remarkable, colourful style.

We both failed prelims, I in Latin and Mark in French which was odd as he went on to be a leading interpreter of the French Marxian structuralist philosophers. But there was no stopping his scholarship and extraordinary width and depth of reading. He helped me with the editing of early books on the Polish trade union Solidarity and the first biography of François Mitterrand in English which I wrote in 1981. His deft editing was as good as any of the star sub-editors I worked with on the *Daily Mirror*.

He added a year to the usual three at Merton claiming a schooltime glandular fever left him weak at times. I think he just wanted to stay on living on a houseboat on the Isis with his wife Jane, who by now was working as research assistant for Merton's Martin Gilbert as he embarked on his monumental Churchill biography.

Like others of his generation, he read Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Roland Barthes and Louis Althusser. He loved analysing the politics of the day, which he did with caustic dismissal of the lack of seriousness of most practitioners of the political arts — a scorn he sustained until his end.

The Architectural Association's most famous graduate, the internationally recognised architect Zaha Hadid, sought Cousins' advice in planning MAXXI (National Museum of 21st-century Arts) in Rome. His insight and readiness to discuss projects and arguments at length contributed to AA graduates becoming significant figures in ways that contributed to its international reputation as an *avant-garde* cultural centre located in three houses in Bloomsbury's Bedford Square.

Cousins was widely recognised as one of the best minds among his contemporaries, and a brilliant speaker, whether sitting around a dinner table or standing behind a lectern. In contrast to the university teacher who relies on written

output, Cousins delivered talks, given without notes, to groups of students who recorded and transcribed them. His intellectual contribution lay in *la parole*, not *la page écrite*. His book *Michel Foucault* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1984) with Athar Hussein and a few articles were the exception to the rule.

Cousins was at Merton during the heady days of the 1968 student upheavals though he preferred the library to the picket line, demonstration or student occupation. After Merton Cousins studied art history at the Warburg Institute and taught at London polytechnics until he found his perfect home at the Architectural Association in London from 1980 onwards. He was the Head of History and Theory Studies at the Architectural Association. For over 30 years his Friday evening lectures were the place to be, not only for those who worked and studied at the AA, but for people from all walks of life.

He spent the last 45 years with Parveen Adams, a feminist and psychoanalytic art critic. As he felt his heart closing down and his days coming towards an end, he refused to die in hospital and went home to be with her.

#### Denis MacShane (1966)

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**Philip Anthony Rosser** died on 10 February 2021 aged 73.

Philip was my elder brother by two years and was the only son of an industrial chemist and a former nurse. He was born in Doncaster and he followed in his father's footsteps by attending Doncaster Grammar School and reading Chemistry as an Exhibitioner at Merton. In his final year of his BA he conducted a year's research in gas chromatography with Courtenay Phillips. He then did a PGCE in Chemistry and Religious Education.

Philip always said his years at Merton were the happiest of his life and he remained a donor and supporter of the College for as long as he was able. At the end of his life he was still in touch with several friends from his college days and they all remember his caring nature and great sense of humour and his strong Christian faith. It was at St Aldates Church that he found the two enduring loves of his life – his Christian faith and his choral singing. He went on to receive his MA in 1973 and became a proud member of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

On leaving his beloved Merton he started out on a teaching career for which he felt he had a vocation. He taught chemistry, physics and maths in several private Christian boys' boarding schools, where he helped with the choirs and Christian fellowships. After a few years he decided to move into the state sector and this took him to the north east of England which became his spiritual home for the rest of his life. Here he specialised in teaching chemistry at all levels and shared his love of music, chess, bridge and his faith. Sadly his career was cut short in 1981 when he was involved in a serious motorcycle accident forcing him to take early retirement. However, Phil threw himself into charity work, singing in church and male voice choirs, and being a very active member of his local church. He suffered poor health in his later years and spent his last three years in a care home where he was much loved. He was blessed with a peaceful death with his family around him.

Phil was a larger-than-life character and was fondly described as the gentle giant. He was a loving, caring man with a glorious bass voice and an offbeat sense of humour. He is sadly missed by all who knew him and his passing has left a huge hole in our lives.

#### Helen Simmons

Phil and I were the only two Chemistry Exhibitioners who matriculated in 1966. We met and were effectively bound together during tutorials for three years, being tutored by Courtenay Phillips, George Radda and then Kelvin Roberts for a year or so as a Research Fellow.

What I remember most about Phil was his abundant enthusiasm and exuberance for chemistry as a subject

which he really enjoyed studying. I don't remember the same enthusiasm in our German for Chemists lessons but at chemistry tutorials he was enthusiastic on every occasion as well as hard working at lectures and practicals.

I remember working adjacent to Phil in the stuffy atmosphere of the Old Warden's Lodgings library and in the very large, ground-floor Dyson Perrins organic chemistry laboratory; as we left we both cursed the foul aromas and fumes that always infested this large laboratory. A memorable experience for all chemists at the time and I am sure it is much healthier and safer now.

Apart from tutorials we were never that close, as I was more involved in sports at Merton, but Phil was always pleased to see me and his tutors and I hope that in later life he was able to transmit his good nature and enthusiastic exuberance for chemistry to those he worked with or taught.

Robert Audas (1966)

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## 1969



Rear Admiral **Chris Stanford**, 15 February 1950 – 10 July 2020.

Christopher David Stanford was born on 15 February 1950 in Stockport, Cheshire. His parents Dr Elspeth Harrison, a medical doctor and captain in the RAMC, and Bill Stanford, an officer in the Orient Line and later a managing director at EMI, met in 1944 aboard the troopship RMS *Ormonde*, which was travelling to Bombay. Growing up in London, Chris was educated at St Paul's School and went on to read Modern History and French at Merton College from 1969 to 1972.

Having joined in 1967, Chris spent the next 35 years in the Royal Navy, with a wide range of appointments including major sea commands during the Cold War and the Gulf and Bosnian conflicts. Frontline operational tours were interspersed with senior positions within the Ministry of Defence, and in his final, much lauded, role, Chris led the Change Implementation team with personal responsibility for revitalising the UK's Defence Medical Services. Working closely with the Department of Health, he transferred the last military hospital to NHS ownership and established the innovative Royal Centre for Defence Medicine in Birmingham.

Retiring from the Navy in 2002, Chris moved seamlessly into a second career as a top-level international headhunter at Odgers Berndtson, handling senior roles across government, and in the commercial and not-for-profit healthcare sectors, life sciences and education. As a partner and head of Odgers' Global Healthcare Practice, he specialised in academic health science systems, which encompassed research and clinical academic posts, and very senior appointments in higher education. Notable appointments under his stewardship included the President and Provost of UCL, the President and Principal of King's College London, the Chief Medical Officer, and the Chief Executive of NHS England, Sir Simon Stevens.

Chris travelled widely during his career, but his fixed point, where the foot of his compass remained firmly planted, was the Somerset cottage – with thriving gardens and magnificent views across the Blackmore Vale – that he shared with his wife, Annie, and their beloved dogs. Always enthralled by British railway history, in 2006 the pair rescued and renovated an 1882 Victorian railway carriage, which they transformed into a unique and much-loved holiday let. From childhood, Chris was deeply attached to the South West, especially the Devon and Cornish coastline, where his family spent many holidays, and he remained fascinated by the area's maritime and coastal histories. He adored swimming, walking and photographing wildlife, and was committed to local issues relating to sustainability, natural history and heritage. His other passions included live music, singing and playing the guitar (and entertaining the ship's company during long stints at sea), the arts, theatre, visiting historic houses and gardens, collecting antiques and railway paraphernalia, rugby (he was capped for Merton), and

evenings spent in the Chelsea Arts Club or enjoying leisurely restaurant meals with his children.

In 2012 Chris was diagnosed with aggressive terminal cancer and given less than a year to live. Approaching his illness with incredible fortitude, practicality and humour, he became assiduously well versed in the developing treatment programmes and medical trials relating to his disease.

Chris will be remembered as an enormously reliable, open-hearted, gregarious and good-natured person, with a joyfully entertaining wit and irrepressible sense of fun. He was also a highly engaging conversationalist, driven by an incisive intelligence and great facility with language. Fundamentally generous, he took joy in the flourishing of others, and was a greatly valued mentor and friend to so many. Years ago, at one of the College's vibrant alumni events held on the lawn at Merton, Chris picked up a conker and popped it in his pocket. In our garden it has grown into a beautiful and thriving tree, and Chris always delighted in showing it to friends and family and recalling, with affection, his own roots at the College.

Chris was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Birmingham City University, was made a member of the Order of St John in 2001, and appointed CB in 2002. He was a Fellow of the Nautical Institute and of the Royal Society of Arts, a Master Mariner, a Freeman of the City of London, Chairman of the Somerset & Dorset Marine Society and Sea Cadets, a Younger Brother of Trinity House, a board member of the White Ensign Association and a governor of King Edward VII's Hospital.

Chris is survived by his wife, Annie, an artist and illustrator; daughters, Emmie, a vet, Liz, an archivist and associate curator, and Henrietta, an academic; and son, Tom, a user experience designer. He has four grandchildren, whom he adored.

### **The Stanford family**

## 1970

**William 'Philip' Bagge** died on 12 October 2020 at the age of 69. He had been seriously ill in hospital for several weeks and contracted Covid-19 shortly before his death. Philip was brought up in Newcastle-under-Lyme in Staffordshire and went to the grammar school there.

He and I met on our first day at Merton and remained in touch after we left Oxford. He was one of seven classicists in that year, as another of them, David Gilchrist (1970), remembers. David notes with sadness that there are now two fewer, following the deaths of Philip and Mick Polley. I suspect Philip's choice of subject was made for no better reason than that he was good at it at school. He didn't always find life at Oxford easy, but he enjoyed his music and took it seriously and knowledgeably. John Saunders (1970) remembers time spent listening to music in Philip's room, and being impressed by his record player with an additional speaker – state of the art for 1970!

In three of the long vacs, Philip joined June and me on the Birmingham University archaeological dig at the Roman site at Wroxeter, near Shrewsbury. His artistic skills (remembered with affection by his sister at his funeral) were quickly recognised and put to good use in his work as an on-site draughtsman.

After Oxford, Philip eventually moved to Reading and worked in the emerging computer industry. Increasing health problems curtailed his career, but he stayed in Reading and had the support of loyal local friends. He became involved in community projects, particularly those concerning the countryside and the natural world. He wrote local guides and pamphlets, and for a time co-led courses for a substance misuse service. John remembers a poster in Philip's room at Merton, protesting against an extension to the M5, which reflected concerns for the environment that Philip held dear throughout his life.

He had a magpie mind, absorbing and retaining information on a wide range of subjects. He was able to surprise with the unexpected things he knew, usually offered in a self-deprecating way. He hoarded books, maps and newspaper cuttings, which piled up in the rooms and corridors of his

house as the years went by. All those friends who contributed to the eulogy at his funeral commented on what one of them described as 'the sheer range of his interests and the depth of his knowledge'. Conversations with Philip were sometimes infuriating but seldom dull.

Philip is survived by his sisters, Melanie and Fiona, and their families.

### David Grimes (1970)

## 1971



My friend **John MacAuslan**, who has died aged 66, is remembered with huge affection. He was kind, generous, patient, brave and loyal. He used his immense intellect with compassion, integrity and wisdom to enrich the lives of all around him.

Brought up in Weybridge, John's education at Charterhouse and Merton was merely the start of a lifetime of self-education and public service. His professional career began in HM Treasury, where that intellect was put to good use on public spending, foreign currency, labour markets and corporate development. Yet, more at ease with the real world than ivory towers – except those of Muslim architecture – John grabbed the chance of an industrial secondment, even using it as an excuse for a self-taught science A-level.

In 1994 he left the Treasury to become the highly respected Director of Administration at the National Gallery, where his love of the artworks and making them accessible to all was matched only by his commitment to staff. John chose to stay

and provide continuity when Neil MacGregor moved to the British Museum.

Later John was appointed as a Civil Service Commissioner, at the same time throwing himself into roles for charities close to his heart. He became Company Secretary of War Child, protecting and supporting children affected by conflict, initially in Bosnia. He had a long relationship with the Indian charity Seva Mandir going back to his gap year in Rajasthan. What John loved about these organisations was partly how well they trust the understanding, good sense and commitment of the people they work with.

Retirement to Wiltshire gave his community work a more local focus: governor of Pewsey Vale School, trustee of the Pilsdon Community in Dorset, lead roles in repairing the village hall, archiving village history, running a music festival, auditing church and charity finances, devising church reflections, even acting as pandemic village hub despite being confined to a wheelchair as a paraplegic since a hang-gliding accident in his twenties — not something you noticed, he wore it so lightly. John also chaired the London Society for the Study of Religion, and his enthusiasm for philosophy and self-taught passions for music and German led to an unusual conference presentation in Lithuania, examining Mozart via Aristotle, as well as a Manchester PhD on Schumann and E.T.A. Hoffmann, which became a brilliant book: *Schumann's Music and E.T.A. Hoffmann's Fiction* (2016).

John was at his happiest when debating — nothing to do with winning or losing but all about bringing together interesting, powerful, valuable thoughts. His astonishing critical faculties were used for building connections and for opening doors; he was a natural teacher, able to challenge without judging, adept at listening between the lines. He loved the past, cared deeply about people in the present, and thought intensely about the future. At the end John faced considerable physical challenges (not Covid-related) but they were just not what interested him — other things on his mind mattered far more, particularly the people close to him. He is hugely missed by his wife Karen, son and daughter-in-law Ian and Araddhya, and granddaughters Amilya and Nyra, and his mother Constance and brother Harry.

Andrew Scott (1971)

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1972



**Nigel Millett**, 23 July 1953 — 1 October 2020.

Nigel studied History at Merton from 1972 to 1975.

After graduation Nigel went into business, where he spent much of his adult life. However his great passion remained history. His knowledge was encyclopaedic, building on the foundations laid during his time at Merton. He also loved cricket, following several English touring teams around the globe. In addition he was an enthusiastic football fan, being a lifelong supporter of Queen's Park Rangers.

After retiring at a young age, Nigel became a magistrate as part of the High Wycombe circuit, eventually becoming a Chair of Magistrates. He derived huge pleasure from this role, taking his duties extremely seriously.

Subsequently, after retiring from the bench, he finally 'returned to his roots' and set up his own small enterprise offering history walks around London. He derived enormous satisfaction from imparting his huge knowledge of the city to tourists, both foreign and domestic. The feedback he received was very complimentary and he left a lasting legacy of a wider knowledge of the remarkable story of London. Sadly the combination of his illness and Covid-19 cut this venture short, just as it was flourishing.

Nigel never married or had a family, but he was a kind brother and devoted uncle to his nieces and nephews.

Trevor Millett



**Dr John Myatt, 3 August 1955 – 9 May 2021.**

John was born in Luton and when he was a young boy, he moved to Worcester where he attended the Royal Grammar School. This gave him an excellent education and a lifelong love of West Bromwich Albion Football Club.

He joined Merton College to read medicine in 1973 and was tutored by Dr Dennis Parsons who, as an expert on rehydration, would have been delighted by John's subsequent MD thesis research on sodium levels in the transurethral resection (TUR) syndrome. For this study John had to develop a sodium electrode to monitor blood sodium levels continuously. John's favourite tutor at Merton was the New Zealander Dr Murray Jamieson, not only because he enriched the tutorials with stories of his time as a MASH (mobile army surgical hospital) medic in Vietnam but also because of his habit of listening to test matches on his transistor radio during undergraduate anatomy tutorials. Presumably it was hard to take anatomy tutorials too seriously after serving in the Vietnam War. At Merton, John also served as JCR Treasurer in 1975.

After Merton, with fellow Mertonian David Melville, he followed Mark Signy (1972) to St Thomas's Hospital in London from where he graduated as a doctor in 1979.

Having qualified as a doctor, John chose to specialise in anaesthetics. In addition to training in London and completing his MD thesis at St Thomas's, John worked for a period at Stanford University in the United States. He flew back from there for his consultant interview and was appointed to Poole

Hospital in 1989 and he worked both there and at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital for the remainder of his career. As a consultant anaesthetist, John was adored by his patients, his surgeons, his colleagues and his trainees. He was technically very accomplished: his orthopaedic colleagues couldn't ever remember him failing to perform a spinal anaesthetic. But it was his honesty, discretion and his calm and measured judgement which won him so many admirers. He served for many years as clinical director for anaesthetics as well as chairman of the medical staff committee, taking a Diploma in Health Management from Keele University to assist him in these roles.

John was 6'6" tall and throughout his life was described as a gentle giant. He was extremely bright but did his best to hide the fact behind a modest and sympathetic manner. He had a great sense of humour and love of the ridiculous; his wry smile and twinkle were never far away. He loved playing cards, at which he was very good, and so became lifelong friends with the card-playing 1973 Merton mathematicians Graham Andrews, Clive Hendrie, Rob Lewis, Paul Schofield, Bill Souster and Roger Urwin. He and Paul were a dangerously good, if adventurous, bridge partnership. He also excelled at poker where he was able to keep his cards close to his chest. These abilities were demonstrated in his business ventures. When a fellow Mertonian was dying and needed to sell his medical instrument business, John found time in the midst of his medical commitments to fly to America and negotiate the sale of the business to some tough American businessmen.

John married Suzie in 1979 and they have two children, William and Jenny, and two grandchildren, Eleanor and Joseph. They enjoyed an extremely happy family life in Dorset. He jointly bought a Cornish Shrimper which he sailed around Poole. He loved watching all sports and enjoyed skiing. An exceptional doctor and friend, he will be much missed by all who knew him.

**By John's family and friends**



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