



Merton College Choir sing Silent Night (Franz Gruber arr. John Rutter) for Merton's Christmas video for the 750th Anniversary Year

THE GIFT OF SONG: MERTON'S CHRISTMAS VIDEO IS UNWRAPPED

To celebrate Christmas and the end of the 750th Anniversary Year, Merton College has made a special festive video for Mertonians to enjoy from the comfort of their own home.

The two-minute film features a performance of John Rutter's arrangement of Silent Night by the

College Choir, which has been described as "one of the UK's finest choral ensembles" by *Gramophone* magazine. To this festive backdrop, a host of Christmas messages from familiar College faces are played; including the Warden, Fellows, students and staff (such as Dave Hedges from behind the bar).

The Director of Development, Christine Taylor, commented: "At the end of such a momentous Anniversary Year, with Merton reaching its £30 million *Sustaining Excellence* target, we could not think of a better time to give a little gift of song back to our alumni." ♥

[WATCH THE VIDEO ONLINE](#)



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Professor David Paterson – photo courtesy of www.voicesfromoxford.org

SUB-WARDEN MADE HONORARY FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

Professor David Paterson, Sub-Warden and Tutor in Pre-Clinical Medicine at Merton College, was one of only two Honorary Fellows to be elected by the Royal Society of New Zealand (RSNZ) in October. Professor Paterson, who was born and educated in New Zealand, and is a leading cardiorespiratory physiologist and a world authority in cardiac-neural control, commented on this honour, saying that it was “highly valued by me as an expatriate New Zealander, as not too many kiwis abroad have been awarded this Fellowship.”

[WATCH PROFESSOR PATERSON ON 'VOICES FROM OXFORD'](#)



Dr Prag & Dr Pardos-Prado – photo © John Cairns, courtesy of the Learning Institute

MERTON TUTORS WIN AT THE UNIVERSITY'S TEACHING AWARDS

Three Merton Fellows were honoured at November's 2013–14 Oxford Teaching Awards ceremony, in acknowledgement of excellence in teaching and learning: Fellow in Politics, Dr Sergi Pardos-Prado, was presented with a Social Sciences Teaching Excellence Award and a Classics Faculty team led by Tutor in Ancient History Dr Jonathan Prag was awarded a grant for their project *Digital techniques in the study of ancient epigraphy: transforming MSt/MPhil teaching*. A Saïd Business School team that includes Tutor in Management Studies and Senior Proctor Dr Kate Blackmon (pictured on the page 1) was presented with a 2013 Social Sciences Division Project Award.

[READ MORE](#)



Henry VIII

DR STEVEN GUNN TO GIVE 2015 FORD LECTURES

The Ford Lectures – long established as the one of the most prestigious lecture series in Oxford and an important annual event in the History Faculty calendar – will be delivered by Merton's Tutor in History, Dr Steven Gunn. Entitled 'The English people at war in the age of Henry VIII', his talks will run from 2nd – 7th week in Hilary Term 2015. In the talks Dr Gunn will explore the century of military, political and social change that lay between Edward IV's invasion of France in 1475 in the aftermath of the Hundred Years' War and Elizabeth I's attempts to shape a trained militia to defend England in a Europe increasingly polarised by religion.

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SPECIAL FELLOW IS YOUNGEST RECIPIENT OF RAMANUJAN PRIZE

Newly elected Clay Research Fellow and Merton Special Fellow, Dr Miguel Walsh, was awarded the 2014 Ramanujan Prize, which recognises young mathematicians from developing countries. The award recognises his outstanding contributions to Ergodic Theory and Number Theory.

Dr Walsh, from Argentina, obtained his Licenciatura en Matemáticas (approximate to a Master's degree) from Universidad de Buenos Aires, and then went on to complete his doctorate in two years under the supervision of Román Sasyk.

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SIX MERTON FELLOWS RECEIVE RECOGNITION OF DISTINCTION IN 2014

Six Merton Fellows have had the title of Professor conferred upon them, for their strong records in research, teaching and citizenship within the University. The 2014 Recognition of Distinction Awards announced that Jonathan Thacker (Tutor in Spanish), Radek Erban (Tutor in Mathematics), Daniel Grimley (Tutor in Music), Alex Schekochihin (Tutor in Physics), Alan Barr (Tutor in Physics) and Julian Knight (Supernumerary Fellow) should all receive the title of Professor.

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The Revd Canon Dr Simon Jones

THE REVD DR SIMON JONES IS APPOINTED HONORARY CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Merton College's Chaplain has been recognised for his distinguished service to the diocese and will be installed as an Honorary Canon of neighbouring Christ Church Cathedral at a special Evensong service on Saturday 31 January. He will hold this post concurrently with his roles as Chaplain of Merton and head of the Welfare team. ♥

[READ MORE](#)

SUPERNUMERARY FELLOW WINS MAX BORN MEDAL

Congratulations to Supernumerary Fellow and Physics Lecturer Professor Andrea Cavalleri who has been awarded the 2015 Max Born Medal and Prize for his pioneering work on ultra-fast studies of materials. It is presented for "outstanding contributions to physics", and goes to physicists based in Germany, the UK or Ireland. ♥

[READ MORE](#)

MUSIC UNDERGRADUATE MADE AN FRCO

Peter Shepherd (2013) has been made a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists – an outstanding achievement given that he is about to enter his second year at Merton, aged just 19. ♥

[READ MORE](#)



Herizo Andrianandrasana, winner of the Tusk Trust Conservation Award 2014

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE PRESENTS CONSERVATION PRIZE TO POSTGRADUATE

Herizo 'Hery' Andrianandrasana (2012), a Merton DPhil Zoology student, was announced as the winner of the 2014 Tusk Trust Conservation Award at a ceremony in London, on 25 November. HRH The Duke of Cambridge presented Hery, Head of Landscape Conservation in the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust's Madagascar & Comoros team, with the prize, which recognised his work integrating local people into conservation management in Madagascar. Hery commented that the "slash and burning" of forests and illegal logging was destroying 60,000 hectares a year in his homeland. He said: "The award will be an important tool for international lobbying, a means to push the government to improve the management [of the ecosystem]." ♥

[READ MORE](#)

WOMAN OF THE FUTURE MAKES 'TOP 10' LIST OF BREAKTHROUGHS IN 2014

Research by Physics DPhil student Jena Meinecke (2011) is included among the top 10 breakthroughs of 2014 listed by Physics World. The work involves using high-power lasers to simulate shocks that follow a supernova explosion. Jena was also a runner-up in the Science Woman of the Future Award in October. She is the Founder and President of the Oxford Women in Physics Society, which promotes career development of women in physics. ♥

[READ MORE](#)



'Illumination' by Terese Agnew

CHEMISTRY COMMENDATION

Organic Chemistry DPhil student Anna Rydzik (2009) has been awarded a commendation for her thesis, making her the second Merton DPhil student to achieve this in the last three years. ♥

[READ MORE](#)

MERTONIANS MYSTIFIED BY THE TAPESTRY CODE

As of yet, no Mertonians have come forward with the correct translation of the code concealed in the stitched dots and dashes of Terese Agnew's tapestry, 'Illumination' (see detail above), which hangs in the Porters' Lodge. If you have spare time over Christmas, why not try your hand at breaking the code before the 750th Anniversary Year is out? We cannot think of a better Christmas brainteaser to keep you puzzled this holiday! Email your solutions to leah.mclaren@merton.ox.ac.uk. ♥

[CRACK THE CODE](#)

OXFORD GARGOYLES MAKE CHOIR OF THE YEAR FINALS

If you missed the Choir of the Year finals, broadcast on BBC4 on Saturday 12 December, you will not have heard Merton students Olivia Williams (2014), alto, and Jacob Swindells (2012), tenor and Musical Director, sing as part of The Oxford Gargoyles' choir. See how they did on BBC iPlayer. ♥

[WATCH ONLINE](#)

DEVELOPMENT NEWS



“Thank you
once again
for your
incredible
generosity”

THE ICING ON THE CAKE OF THE ANNIVERSARY YEAR: £30 MILLION HAS BEEN SECURED TO HELP SUSTAIN MERTON'S 750 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

At the beginning of Michaelmas Term the Warden was delighted to confirm that Merton College had reached its ambitious fundraising goal of £30 million, in advance of the official end of the Anniversary Campaign, *Sustaining Excellence*. The College's thanks go out to all 2,825 Mertonians and Friends of the College for their generous support which has enabled this remarkable feat.

Each and every penny of the £30 million raised over the course of this seven-year campaign (which was launched publicly on Tuesday, 24 May 2011 at Drapers' Hall in London) will help ensure that Merton's excellence – as a world-renowned seat of learning and research – continues to flourish into the future.

Of the total raised, £15 million is being invested to help guarantee the Tutorial System which is so central to Merton College and the University of Oxford's excellence; £8 million will go towards supporting students, to help with the College's goal of continuing to attract the world's best students at undergraduate and graduate level, regardless of their financial situation; and £7 million will go towards protecting and resourcing Merton's historic buildings.

The *Sustaining Excellence* Campaign runs until 31 December 2014 and there are still multiple ongoing priorities and projects that require urgent funds:

- We still have £453,000 to raise to re-endow one Law Fellowship, which will strengthen and secure the College's teaching of Jurisprudence.
- There is a shortfall of £340,000 in the Undergraduate Student Support Fund. All money donated to this Fund will help provide much-needed undergraduate bursaries, which ensure that the best students can study at Merton, regardless of their financial circumstances.
- £204,000 is needed for the essential renovation and extension of the Merton Boathouse, which was last upgraded in the 1940s!

If you want to read more about any of our completed or ongoing projects please visit our [Sustaining Excellence](#) webpage. 🍷

[DONATE NOW](#)



750TH ANNIVERSARY ROOM NAMED

In recognition of the Campaign Board's incredible leadership of and generosity to the College's 750th Anniversary Campaign to raise £30 million, from 2007 to 2014, the College has re-named one suite in Fellows' Quad, previously named the TS Eliot Room, as the 750th Anniversary Room. A plaque, containing the names of the Campaign Board, Co-Chairs John Booth and Charles Manby (1976), Mustafa Abbas (1990), Hilary Evenett (1982), Ed Field (1986), David Harvey (1957), John Mills (1958), Laurie Rabinowitz (1983), Hugh Scott-Barrett (1977), David Ure (1965) and Tom Willett (1986), will be unveiled in May. 🍷

OLD MERTONIAN NEWS



Sir Alec Jeffreys speaks at the Merton Conversation 'The Real Science Behind CSI'

PROFESSOR SIR ALEC JEFFREYS (1968) AWARDED THE COPLEY MEDAL

Mertonian and Honorary Fellow **Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys FRS (1968)** was awarded the Royal Society's Copley Medal in August, in recognition of his pioneering work on variation and mutation in the human genome. The Copley Medal, the world's oldest scientific prize, was first awarded in 1731, and has been presented to such notable figures as Darwin, Faraday, Einstein, Stephen Hawking, Dorothy Hodgkin and Francis Crick. 🏆

[READ MORE](#)



Professor Sir Rick Trainor

PROFESSOR SIR RICK TRAINOR (1971) IS INSTALLED AS RECTOR AT EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD

On 1 October, **Sir Rick Trainor (1971)** was officially sworn into office as Exeter College's new Rector. Sir Rick comes from his position as Principal of King's College London. He commented: "I am honoured and excited to be succeeding Frances Cairncross, and joining the Exeter family in the College's 700th anniversary year." 🏆

[READ MORE](#)



Sir Roger Bannister

SIR ROGER BANNISTER (1950) WINS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD AT OXFORDSHIRE SPORTS AWARDS

Sir Roger Bannister (1950), famous for running the first ever sub-four-minute mile in 1954, received the first ever Lifetime Achievement honour to be given by the annual Oxfordshire Sports Awards. Despite being unable to attend the Awards Ceremony at the Kassam Stadium, Sir Roger commented in a pre-recorded message: "This lifetime achievement award means so much to me because Oxford has been the centre of my life for so many years." 🏆



An example of a complementary scone

BROWSE THE COLLECTION: MERTON@750 ARCHIVE ONLINE

The Merton@750 project has launched an online collection of Merton memories which paint a picture of life at Merton for the College's 750th Anniversary. Merton is the first Oxford college to run a digital archive project like this.

The Merton@750 Anniversary Collection allows visitors to browse items in Merton's historic archive, as well as donate their own stories, images and memorabilia to a digital archive to be stored for future generations to enjoy. So, at the end of the 750th Anniversary Year, what better time to take a wander down Merton's memory lane? 🏆

[BROWSE THE ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION](#)



Professor Stuart Hall (1951)
photo: © Getty Images

THE COLLEGE REMEMBERS MERTONIANS WHO HAVE DIED

As reported in the Merton Messenger, Hilary Term 2014, **Professor Stuart Hall (1951)** sadly died in February. On Saturday 29 November, Merton celebrated the life and work of Professor Hall, the "godfather of multiculturalism" and founder of the *New Left Review* with a panel discussion, and screenings of documentary '[The Stuart Hall Project](#)' and of his memorial, which was held concurrently in London.

It is with great sadness that the College learned of the death of Honorary Fellow and former president of the Merton Society **Sir Maurice Hodgson (1938)** in October. He spent 40 years of his career at ICI, becoming its first strategic planner in 1965, and chairman in 1978. Under him, the company became a truly global leader. He was knighted in 1979, and was awarded the George E Davis Medal by the Institution of Chemical Engineers in 1982. 🏆



“Just look at
the Merton
College
Warden’s
Quarters...
like a
toaster with
windows”

Bill Bryson
Notes from a Small Island

MERTON COLLEGE TOASTS THE END OF ITS STAR-STUDED 750TH YEAR BY INVITING BILL BRYSON TO THE FINAL ANNIVERSARY & CAMPAIGN DINNER IN LONDON

As Michaelmas Term 2014 draws to a close, so too does Merton College’s 750th year. On Friday 5 December, 300 Mertonians toasted the end of the College’s Anniversary Year at a special dinner in London with guest speaker Bill Bryson OBE FRS.

As Bill Bryson was introduced, we were reminded of the fact that he described the Merton Warden’s Lodgings as being ‘like a toaster with windows’ in his book *Notes from a Small Island*. The Lodgings was later renovated in 2012, as part of the College’s £30 million *Sustaining Excellence* Campaign.

Bill’s speech featured his favourite ‘Bear story’ in which he recounted the advice imparted to him before a trip to the Appalachian Mountains. As well as the obvious advice to “go hiking with someone who can’t run as fast as you can,” he was told to wear bells to ward off the grizzly bears, and to keep an eye out for bear droppings. “And the way you can tell that it’s bear scat,” he went on “is that it has little bells in it”. Judging by the ensuing laughter that filled Middle Temple Hall, an entertaining evening was had by all.

He ended his speech with some startling comparisons between UK universities and his own native US institutions. “I once sat next to the Head of Fundraising at the University of Virginia at a dinner,” he said “who had a five-year fundraising target of \$3 billion. To achieve this they employed a team of 250 fundraising staff. Here’s the thing: they were, when I most recently checked, 130th out of the world’s top universities. Britain has, despite the austere economy here, three of the top 10 universities and 11 of the top 100. It has 1% of the world’s population but 11% of the very best universities. It receives just 3% of the world’s spending on research... These are extraordinary achievements and is possibly the most outstanding thing about Britain today.” Here at Merton, we couldn’t agree more. 🍷

[VIEW THE EVENT PHOTOS](#)

THE ANNIVERSARY YEAR IN PICTURES

Over the course of 2014 more than 4,000 Merton College alumni and members of the public have taken part in the College’s celebrations around the world. Take a look at the photos online via the link below. 🍷



[EXPLORE PHOTOS FROM 2014 ONLINE](#)

EVENTS NEWS

ALUMNI EVENTS CALENDAR: COMING UP IN 2015



MARCH

21 March | Gaudy for the years 2003 to 2005 | Venue: Merton College

[MORE INFO](#)

27-29 March | Passiontide at Merton | Venue: Chapel

[MORE INFO](#)

APRIL

8 April | Merton Golfing Society Spring Meeting
Venue: The Newbury and Crookham Golf Club

[MORE INFO](#)

10 - 12 April | MC3 AGM and Weekend in Brooklyn | Venue: various

[MORE INFO](#)

17 April | Inter-collegiate Golf Tournament | Venue: Frilford Heath Golf Club

[MORE INFO](#)

24 - 26 April | Oxford University Reunion in Vienna for all Mertonians

[MORE INFO](#)

MAY

date tbc | Merton London Lecture

1 May | College Choir concert | Venue: Merton College Chapel

[MORE INFO](#)

10 May | Oxford Town & Gown 10k race with brunch in College to follow

[MORE INFO](#)

30 May | Summer Eights Dinner in Hall | Venue: Merton College
All Mertonians and their guests are welcome.

[MORE INFO](#)

JUNE

3 June | Merton in the City Association Meeting
Speaker: Sir Gerry Grimstone (1968) | Venue: FTI Consulting, Aldersgate, London

[MORE INFO](#)

27 - 28 June | 'Merton at Home' | Venue: Merton College
We are planning an exciting new 'Merton at Home' weekend of events to bring Mertonians of all ages back to College next summer.

[MORE INFO](#)

SEPTEMBER

18 - 20 September | Oxford University Alumni Weekend in Oxford
25 September | Merton Golfing Society Meeting | Venue: Frilford Heath Golf Club

[MORE INFO](#)

26 September | Gaudy for the years 1992 to 1996 | Venue: Merton College

[MORE INFO](#)