

POSTMASTER

AND THE MERTON RECORD



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Contents

College News

From the Warden	4
JCR News	10
MCR News	12
Merton Sport.....	14
Football, Rugby, Rowing, Cricket, Netball, Tennis, Squash, Sports Overview, Blues and Haigh Ties	
Clubs & Societies.....	28
Merton Floats, Frederick Soddy Society, History Society, Roger Bacon Society, Neave Society, 1980 Society, Mathematics Society, Arts Society, Music Society, Poetry Society, Halsbury Society, Tinbergen Society, Chalcenterics	
Interdisciplinary Groups	42
Ockham Lectures, Biomedical and Life Sciences Network, Merton South Asia Network, History of the Book Group	
Departments	48
The Chapel, The Choirs, The Library, The Archives, Development and Alumni Relations, Academic Office, Schools Liaison and Access, Domestic Bursary, The Gardens	
Hail to New Fellows	72

Features

Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton: memories	76
Members' memories of the 1966 visit	
A new Bastion Bench	80
Unveiling a new Bastion Bench	
Cheryl Frances-Hoad at Merton	82
An Appreciation of Merton's Visiting Research Fellow in the Creative Arts	
Twenty Years as College Chaplain	84
Simon Jones on his two decades at Merton	
Merton Library stained-glass conservation project	88
Mertonians in... the charity sector	90
Contributions from Lizzie D'Angelo, Joanna Grossman, Tony Woodruff and Caroline Doan	
View from the Top: Michael Ridpath (1979)	96
Michael Ridpath's story of banker to author	
Merton Cities: New Delhi	100
Sonali Chowdury's view from New Delhi	
Lost, Little Known and Unbuilt Merton by Alan Bott	102
'Mr William Orpen' by Sir Max Beerbohm	

Records

The Warden & Fellows 2021-22	104
Elections, Honours & Appointments	107
Undergraduate Results, Awards & Prizes 2020-21	109
Graduate Results, Awards & Prizes 2020-21	110
College Staff	111
Publications	114

Mertonians

The Merton Society with 40 Years of Merton Women	121
MC3: Merton College Charitable Corporation	126
Merton Society Lectures	128
Town and Gown	130
News of Members	132

In Memoriam

In Memoriam	198
Emeritus Fellows: Courtenay Phillips; Honorary Fellows: Vassos Karageorghis; Former Staff: Peter Morrish and Mertonians 1952-76	

Events

Alumni Events 2022-23 and future Gaudies	222
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FROM THE WARDEN

Change is in the air at Merton and now also for our country. Despite our parched lawns from the blistering hot summer, autumn is bringing a crispness to the evening air and with it a magical light. Low angled beams warm the college stone. Seasonal and climatic change are upon us. But there are other changes too, in the leadership of our nation.

Just before we went to press, we learned of the deeply sad passing of Queen Elizabeth II. Her lifelong service, devotion and decency cannot be overstated. Our sympathy and thoughts go to the King and all the Royal family. Let us remember a great and much-loved monarch and matriarch. Let us give thanks for our Queen who gave lifelong and devoted service to our country, this collegiate university and the world. And let this wonderful woman of enduring faith now rest in peace.

Very recently, we also heard the historic news that the Right Honourable Elizabeth Truss MP (1993) has become Prime Minister – the first Mertonian ever to hold this post. I congratulate her on winning the Conservative Party leadership election and becoming the UK's PM. We wish her well during these challenging times and hope that her grounding and education at Merton will put her in good stead to lead our country. There will be change at Merton's helm and at the University's too, come 2023.

And of course, we have turmoil in the world, notably with the war in Ukraine. Let me here confirm Merton's commitment to support the Ukrainian people and those brave Russians standing up to this unwarranted aggression. And let me assure you that Merton is providing direct support through various programmes for Ukrainian students as well as families in need. We will continue to do what we can, and support our Russian students too during this troubling period.

On a happier note, let me take you on a romp through what has been an otherwise fabulous academic year at Merton.

Michaelmas heralded the return to in-person events. A glorious Merton Society garden party in September kicked off the year and our spirits were lifted. Shortly thereafter we welcomed students back to what we anticipated would be a near-normal term. And it was. Formal Hall was back, students could have guests and socialise beyond a 'bubble' and all the usual sporting, theatrical and musical events took off with gusto. Staff, Fellows and students were embracing the fact we'd got through the worst. The College was once again being led by four women: Warden, sub-Warden (Professor Kate Blackmon, Tutor in Management and Economics), MCR President (Francesca Lovell-Read,



The Warden at the Gaudy for 1987-1991 matriculates (by Richard Wakefield)

DPhil Mathematics) and JCR President (Roheena Buckland, second-year undergraduate in PPE). What a joy it's been to work alongside these dedicated women. They have given enormous service to our community, and I acknowledge their support here, particularly Kate who has been terrific and such a mainstay to me.

A key project that we took forward in Michaelmas term was a commitment to build a new library at Merton — the first in nearly 700 years and likely the last building to go up in Merton's grounds. Our ratio of students to library seats is inadequate, and accessibility is not good enough. We provide an amazing service to our students, thanks to our wonderful Fellow Librarian, Julia Walworth, and her team, but she will join me in saying that we must address this vital need for more and better space for our students — and our books. You will hear more about this in due course.

By the end of term everyone was on their knees, our social batteries drained after such a long period of disuse. But we rallied, as Mertonians do, and ended the term with festive dinners and Christmas choral concerts from the Merton choir, celebrating Simon Jones' 20th anniversary at Merton with a new carol composed by John Rutter and premiered by our choir.

In the Christmas vacation, Mark Coote, our fabulous new Development Director, and I decided to make a dash to the USA to see our beloved alumni. It was so good to greet dear friends again, and we held a joyous evening in Manhattan, courtesy of MC3 and Amna Nasser (1997), who graciously opened her home to us.

Hilary term started well and culminated in saying farewell to the marquee, Chestnut Hall, at the end of term. What a life-saver it proved to be. We welcomed to Merton our First Africa-Oxford Visiting Fellow, Stephen Kennedy, a clinical scientist who led Liberia's response to the recent Ebola outbreak. It has been a real honour to host Stephen, and we look forward to welcoming more academics from the African continent via this excellent scheme.

The term went quickly as we moved from dark winter to hopeful spring, and the students proved magnificent on the river in Torpids, and in a cascade of other sporting events from football to cheerleading at both a college and Blues level. Who said Merton wasn't sporty!? And the finalists from 2021 topped the Norrington Table once more. Let me express here my congratulations to them and their tutors, as well as our Senior Tutor, Jane Gover, and the entire academic office, for this achievement. Other successes from



The Warden with members of the Boat Club

our students, amongst many, included Alex Peplow winning the 2022 Jon Stallworthy Poetry Prize, and Caetano Santos winning the 2022 Student Paper Prize at the British Forum for Ethnomusicology.

Our Fellows were knocking it out of the park too. Professor Veronique Gouverneur (Tutor in Chemistry) has had a spectacular year, being awarded the 2021 Henri Moissan Prize, the 2022 Arthur C Cope Award and being elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. No wonder that Magdalen College has lured her away with her recent election to the University Waynflete Chair in Organic Chemistry. Sadly, this means that Veronique will leave us in 2023, but we have time yet to thank her for her years of dedicated service to Merton. Our Professorial Fellow Ehud Hrushovski (Mathematics) was awarded the 2022 Shaw Prize; Ulrike Tillman, Sir Henry Savile Fellow and currently Director of the Newton Institute in Cambridge, was elected to the European Academy of Sciences; and our tutor in Music, Professor Dan Grimley, was appointed as Head of the Humanities Division.

We should take considerable pride in these awards and appointments. They reflect not only the excellence of our academics on the international stage, but also their

willingness to take on leadership and administrative roles to ensure the continuing success of research and teaching in our academic institutions.

The term ended with Passiontide being held for the first time since the pandemic started and our choir performing in the Sheldonian Theatre and Merton Chapel. The choir visited Swindon and Bath, and choral scholars performed an ambassadorial role to young people at several schools as part of our broadening access initiative. The Girl Choristers, who are drawn from our local Oxfordshire community and receive free music and singing lessons from the College, have also been busy with invited performances at Westminster Abbey and in Gloucestershire. It's great to witness their voices maturing. We should be very proud of our magnificent choir and the outstanding leadership that Ben Nicholas provides as Music Director, and of Simon Jones, our wonderful Chaplain, by his side providing support and mentorship.

Hilary term ended on a real high for me personally: a Gaudy that took place after three postponements captured year groups overlapping with my undergraduate and graduate years at Merton. A glorious weekend of spring sunshine brought many dear friends from around the globe back to Merton. And my oh my, were we party-ready! We've still got



The Staff Party on Salter's Steamers (by Irene Tracey)

it. We were able to bring everyone up to date with life at Merton, as I will do for the Gaudy up to and including 1968 taking place shortly.

Trinity term was probably the most normal term we've had since 2019. Teaching and examining were largely in person, and our students enjoyed all that an Oxford summer has to offer. It started with welcoming our 2021 finalists to our newly created Returners' Dinner, and a grand evening was had by all. The annual Town & Gown 10K race culminated in the usual humiliation for the Warden as I puffed my way across the finish line long after everyone else, but a great turnout of staff, students and Fellows made for a memorable day. We had strong and impressive forward movement in Summer Eights, followed by the usual and highly enjoyable celebrations. Our Merton cricket team spectacularly made the finals of Cuppers only to be narrowly beaten, and we had the glorious return of Merton Floats performing *Much Ado About Nothing* to a packed garden each evening. We have some very talented directors, writers and actors in the making, believe me. And I was delighted to launch the founding of the Merton South Asia Network during Trinity term. The network aims to anchor a support system for both students and alumni of South Asian heritage (past, present and future), and to create opportunities for professional interactions and collaborations.

I was pleased to host the first in-person Merton Equality Conversation since the pandemic. The event was chaired by our politics tutor Professor Tia Thornton and featured Teresa M Bejan, Professor of Political Theory and Fellow of Oriel College and Dr Temi Ogunye, Postdoctoral Prize Research Fellow in Politics at Nuffield College. Professor Bejan spoke on 'Free speech vs equal speech' and Dr Ogunye's remarks were entitled 'Social norms and informal activism: On the efficacy of 'cancel culture''. I'm proud that Merton provides a space for calm and thoughtful conversation on key issues of the day.

A highlight for me during Trinity was being able to welcome local members of our Oxfordshire Muslim community, local dignitaries and students for an Eid celebration and meal. For many it was the first time they had entered an Oxford college, despite having lived in Oxford for decades — something we must change. The joy was palpable.

We were able to also host a lovely reception in Fellows' Garden for our treasured staff who had retired during the pandemic but had not received the send-off they deserved. And a boat cruise for all our staff was much enjoyed at the end of a busy term. My thanks go to our domestic bursar, Tim Lightfoot, and his entire team for another great year looking after us all so well. And let me take this opportunity



Alumni Event at the Getty Villa in Los Angeles

to thank Mike Wender, who has retired as Merton's chef and who has fed us and you so well over many years. I wish him a happy and healthy retirement and thank him here for his service – and for the Last Baked Alaska!

And, of course, we honoured and celebrated the Platinum Jubilee for our late Queen Elizabeth II with services and a delightful picnic for staff, students and Fellows. The memory of that event is now more poignant than ever.

Towards the end of term, more honours and awards came through for our Fellows and alumni. To name but a few: Professor Fran Platt (Senior Research Fellow) was awarded the 2023 Thudichum Medal; Professor James Binney (Emeritus Fellow, physics) was elected to the US National Academy of Sciences; Professor Alex Schekochihin (Fellow and Tutor in Physics) was appointed Simons Investigator in Astrophysics; former Warden Professor Dame Jessica Rawson was awarded the prestigious Tang Prize in Sinology; our dear alum, John Booth (1976, Wyliot Fellow), was appointed Chair of the National Gallery Trustee Board; and Cheryl Frances-Hoad was commissioned to compose a piece of music for the Platinum Jubilee BBC Prom. Earlier in the year, I (1985) was honoured to be awarded a CBE alongside my husband, Myles Allen; Kathryn Boyd (2002) was awarded an OBE for public service; and Simon

Wain-Hobson (1974) received an OBE for services to virology. And in the Queen's Birthday Honours: Marnie Hughes-Warrington (1992) was appointed an Officer in the Order of Australia for service to tertiary education and governance; Steve Drinkwater (1968) an MBE for voluntary service to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme; Ruth Plummer (1989) an MBE for services to medicine; and Prudence Dailey (1984) an MBE for services to the Book of Common Prayer.

Congratulations to them all.

We ended term saying our sad farewells to the student cohort – the Class of 2019 – and students on shorter or longer duration courses, with whom I began my tenure as Warden. They join the ranks of alumni and a welcoming Merton community around the world. I'm particularly thrilled that the Merton Society has with resounding success launched its mentorship pilot programme for these 'covid year groups'. Please do get involved. Let me here thank Sam and Philippa Whipple (1984) for their sterling work on this important programme. Finally, the year ended with another Merton weekend where we took the opportunity to close the celebration of 40 years of Merton women with a lunch and panel discussion. Thank you to all who took part. The entire celebration has highlighted just what can be achieved

by women (and for that matter other marginalised groups) if opportunities are afforded.

The long vacation heralded Warden's Progress visiting our farms and lands in Lincolnshire where we discussed regenerative farming and ways to improve our carbon footprint and biodiversity. We have ambitious plans in that regard and we recognise that as a major landowner we have both an opportunity and duty. Fortunately, we are in great hands with our expert land agent, John Gloag, as well as our finance bursar, Charles Alexander, and Sam Eidinow, Dean and Keeper of Statutes, all of whom are helping me create a workable net zero and biodiversity policy alongside their other busy roles. A flying visit to the West Coast of the USA culminated in wonderful gatherings with alumni in San Francisco and Los Angeles. My heartfelt thanks go to Mike McCaffery (1975) and his wife, Marg, for hosting us so graciously in their home, and Timothy Potts (1983) and Jeffrey Spier (1983) for generously hosting a tour of a Persia exhibition that they had curated at the John Paul Getty Museum.

Naturally, there are always alumni, Fellows and staff who sadly pass throughout the year and whom we thank for their service. Featured in the In Memoriam pages, they have each left a lasting impact. Mertonians will remember particularly our Emeritus Fellows, Courtenay Phillips and Christopher Watson, Honorary Fellows Peter Cooke (1958) and Vassos Karageorghis, and former Fellow Derek Bergel.

And we say our farewell to Simon Saunders, who retires as Philosophy tutor this term. We thank him for years of dedicated teaching and many contributions to college life – especially his championing of environmentally friendlier buildings at Merton. Plus a fond farewell and enormous thanks to Professor Luke Ong who has moved to pastures new in Singapore. And farewell to our leaving Junior Research Fellows who bring such vigour to Merton life.

And now for the hard part. It has been one of my greatest honours in life to serve you as Warden these past three years. The community's resilience and sense of togetherness, at one of the world's darkest hours, shone through. I could not be prouder of our College and all the staff, students, Fellows and alumni that I have had the great fortune to

meet and work alongside. I have made such lovely friends here. I would like to particularly highlight our amazing and dedicated College Officers and my wonderful office staff: Han Kimmett but especially the ever patient and utterly fabulous Lisa Lawrence who has been my anchor. Thank you all. I will miss you deeply. My family and I have loved every moment at Merton, and we were eager to stay for the long haul. However, I am bid to serve you in a different role. I am delighted and proud to have been elected as the next Vice-Chancellor of our great University, even if it means I must leave my beloved Merton at the end of Michaelmas term 2022. A heartfelt thank you for all your generous responses to what I know was unexpected news. I leave confident that the direction of travel in Merton's evolution will continue under the expert leadership of the Acting Warden and then of course our new Warden. There are great times ahead for Merton.

As Geoffrey Biscuit, my notorious Golden Retriever, tweeted: "...know that I will always be Merton's Biscuit."

Ditto.





JCR NEWS

People often don't talk about what happens after a major event. Most of the time, it's easier (and arguably more worthwhile) to focus on what will happen in the future, while discussion of the past can seem overdone or less relevant. Instead, the reality sits in a sort of limbo, at a cross-roads between continuity and opportunity, the old and the new, rediscovery and redirection. So it has been with this last 'post-Covid' year in the JCR, though I couldn't imagine a better place to do it.

Starting the year felt a lot like rebuilding: in with the new set of Freshers came a return to clubbing, to OGMs (JCR meetings), formals and BOPs in earnest, and to planning for the next White Tie Winter Ball. With most of the committee having only spent one year at Merton previously, there was incredible energy and excitement for seeing things finally opening up (though a great deal of stressed planning regarding how things should be done). In any case, the tireless attitudes of particularly the JCR Exec Committee and Katarina Javorcekova (2020), as they worked with college to regenerate previous Freshers' favourites really made it go with a bang, or so I have been assured by its intended recipients. Yet equally warming was the amount of people willing to sign up and help out to ensure the community was as welcoming as it has long been known to be.

Later through the year the JCR witnessed the return of the time ceremony joint with the MCR, Sports Day led by James McCulloch (2021), the recommencement of the orchestra, and the expansion of student publications including the top-notch news in the Merton Chronicle. With summer came the revival of the Merton Floats, with a phenomenal performance of *Much Ado About Nothing* (though its popularity made me worried for the grass)*. To top it all off, the JCR finished with an inspiring number of awards at the Sports Dinner, and a strong effort at the Summer Eights.

Still, things took a little time to settle, frequently with adjustments, contingency plans, or significant rethinking still needing to be done as the transition from Covid occurred, while the loss of institutional memory often made things feel like plans needed to be made from scratch. Here again though, the attitude of the JCR was incredibly impressive: while still rebuilding the old, there was also a great deal of excitement for the new. Particular elements of note included:

Welfare: The genuinely tireless work of Jana Nedelkoska (2020) and George Crosfield (2020) throughout the year as they put more emphasis than ever into supporting the welfare of students, and built a strong community, in a time when Covid had made University life especially challenging.



Merton matriculates 2021. This photograph has been reproduced by kind permission of Gilman and Soame photographers and can be ordered online

Inclusion and equality: One area which needed a particular focus were JCR practices and support for the JCR LGBTQIA+ community, where the passion and initiative of Izzy Dobson (2020) enabled both new events and improvements to previous practices. Meanwhile, the energy of Sadie Chamberlain (2020) in her roles as both Gender Equality Rep and President of the 1980 Society led to both thoughtful and (incredibly) well-attended events.

Review and redo: The willingness of Marcell Szakaly (2018), Joe Bell (2021), Sameer Mazhar (2020) and Niall Pearson-Shaul (2021) in their roles as Returning Officer, Affiliated Organisations Rep, or IT officer, whose support enabled the introduction of a new JCR website, a constitutional review, and the passing of a new conflicts of interest motion at the Student Union level.

Academic and career support: With the return to in-person exams for the first time in a while, there was even more of a need to offer academic support this year. The work towards offering mock exams, and facilitating both Finalists' cake and the quiet study room by Holly Plater (2020), and with support from the Welfare team, has really made a big difference. Further, the strengthening of the subject societies, the beginnings of greater interaction with alumni, and the

amendment of the affiliated organisations rep to include careers roles will support students better into the future.

Fundraising for Ukraine: In spite of the short amount of term time left, one of the most impressive things I witnessed this year was how strongly the community came together to offer support to Ukraine. Fundraising efforts were immediately commenced, including charity buckets at nearly all major JCR events, a charity rounders match, and visible support through posters.

While the list above only gives a snapshot of some of the changes made this year, and some of the things that have been brought back, there are some things that seem to remain true: as President, I have been incredibly honoured to work and learn with such a passionate and innovative team, and as ever, have been blessed to be part of a JCR that cares and looks out for each other. Looking to the future once again, I hope that the committee in 2022 have been able to provide a solid enough base from which the incoming committee can fly, and I am so excited to see what new elements they choose to build!

Roheena Buckland (2020)

JCR President, 2021-2022

**Never fear, college approval was sought.*



MCR NEWS

I'm no historian, but even I know it's safe to say that our College has been around for a while – and has seen its fair share of difficulties. Merton has survived two world wars, the Black Death, and Oxford losing the Boat Race to Cambridge no less than 85 times. It's even survived being – to put it colloquially – absolutely roasted by American author Bill Bryson, who, in his book *Notes from a Small Island*, described the Warden's lodgings at the time as being 'a little dash of mindless Sixties excrescence', reminiscent of a 'toaster with windows'. In true Merton style, however, the College rose to the occasion by refacing the building – and then, in a gesture of great magnanimity, asked Bryson back to act as the guest of honour at the reopening ceremony.

I think that sums up what it means to be a Mertonian – resilient, adaptable, and never afraid of a challenge, with a healthy sprinkle of good humour mixed in. It goes without saying that the past couple of years have presented their own challenges to us all; navigating the Covid-19 pandemic, the ever-changing restrictions and their implications for student life has certainly proved a trying task. Throughout, what has really struck me is how remarkably we as a college community have stuck together to support each other through the ups and downs. I've been at Merton for seven years now; although admittedly that's less than 1% of the

time the College has been around, it is more than long enough to be able to say with confidence that the strength of our community here is a fundamental part of what makes Merton so special. We should all be very proud to be a part of that.

It's been wonderful this year to see our beloved traditions and events slowly coming back to life. From bops and second desserts to welfare 'brinners' and pottery painting, the MCR room is once again the heart of our community (and our coffee machine is accordingly feeling the strain). Particular highlights have included the many exchange dinners we have held in partnership with other colleges – it's always a great opportunity to meet new people (and, of course, to consolidate the firm knowledge that Merton is in fact the best college). The termly black-tie dinners have also been huge successes: who doesn't love a chance to get dressed up, especially when there's a chocolate fountain thrown into the mix? We're all glad the social distancing and mask-wearing have gone, but one thing that is greatly missed about the Covid era is the wonderful Chestnut Hall. For students who arrived in 2020 or 2021, Chestnut Hall has been as much a part of Merton life as the main hall, and Chestnut Lawn looks very strange without it. We're delighted though that the weekly welfare afternoon teas have continued despite



From left: Lewis Fisher-Reeves (Social Rep), James Hua (former Social Rep, now President), Francesca Lovell-Read (former President, now Information & Returning Officer) and Antonia Anstatt (former Social Rep, now Welfare Rep)

this loss of venue, and very impressed at our gardeners' skill in restoring the lawn to its former glory.

I am honoured to have served as MCR President this year and to have played a part in supporting our community. Of course, the president is but one part of a much wider team. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the hard work, dedication and enthusiasm of the rest of the MCR executive committee: Silvia Trinczek (Vice-President); David Craig (Treasurer); Antonia Anstatt, James Hua, Charles Tolkien-Gillett, Lewis Fisher-Reeves (Social Reps); Georgia Acton, Lachlan Hughes and Corinne Clark (Welfare Reps); and Eamonn O'Keeffe (Information & Returning Officer). They have all put so much love into their roles and I am extremely fortunate to have had such a wonderful group of people to work with. Thank you as well to all those who have taken on non-executive committee roles over the past year – your contributions have been highly valued.

At the beginning of Trinity term I was delighted to pass on

the role of president to our former Social Secretary, James Hua. He and the new committee have taken over the reins with great aplomb, and I wish them the best of luck for the coming year. I am certain that in true Mertonian style they will rise to meet all the challenges that will face them, and can't wait to see what the future holds for our MCR.

The end of the academic year is always bittersweet: while we celebrate the achievements of the past terms, we must also say goodbye to some members of our community as they move on to pastures new. To those of you who are leaving us, we wish you all the very best as you move on – you will be very much missed, but forever a part of many fond memories and lasting friendships. As our wise Warden often reminds us, 'Once a Mertonian, always a Mertonian' – and not least thanks to the hard work of our Development Office, who will make sure we don't forget it.

Francesca Lovell-Read
MCR President 2021-22

Merton Sport



Football

Men's 1st Team

This year marked the return of competitive 11-a-side college football in Oxford following a year's absence as a result of the pandemic, with the Ms 1st team competing in both the league and in Cuppers.

A return to league action saw us finish fourth with 19 points, establishing ourselves as one of the better footballing sides in the division, perhaps let down slightly by a lack of goals when it mattered. While a loss to a strong St Hugh's side in Cuppers was a major disappointment, it should not take away from what I believe to be a learning season in which we have developed a playing identity throughout both the 1s and 2s.

There was also a relative degree of success in the 5-a-side Cuppers tournament, in which both our teams made it to the knockout stages.

Although we face losing some key players from the group at the end of the year, I am confident we have set a solid foundation for Alex Selby, Josh Soanes (both Mansfield, 2021) and Will Wickstead (2019) to build upon next year.

I would like to say a big thanks to everyone who wore an Ms (or rather OUAFC Old Boys) shirt this season, with special mentions to Kieran Wetherick (2020) for overseeing the 2s this season, Ollie Harding (Mansfield, 2018), Harry Morrison (Mansfield, 2019) and Joe Hyland Deeson (2018).

Further thanks must go to Adam Austin (Mansfield, 2018), who has organised all college football this year and has provided us with kit from OUAFC throughout the season, and to our groundsman James Lisle, who has made sure we've always had a pitch to play on even when he's not expected us.

To everyone moving on this year I wish you the best, it's been a pleasure.

Euan Vosper (Mansfield, 2020)
MMAFC Captain 2021-22



Merton vs Mansfield football match, Trinity 2022. Merton won 6-4

Men's 2nd Team

The Mighty Ms 2s had a season to remember. As Ronan Keating once said: 'Life is a rollercoaster,' and this is certainly true of our season. Entering our first season in the top division of reserves football, avoiding relegation was the aim. This is the story of how a ragtag bunch of underdogs achieved that against all the odds. Strap in ...

2pm. A cold, drizzly day in Michaelmas 2021. A new captain, a new season, a renewed sense of hope which soon took a beating. As the ten men of Merton and Mansfield walked on to the pitch to face Jesus in the first game of the season, they knew they would be up against it. A man down against the best team in the division? Could they do it?

After the sixth goal went in, and the captain left to be sick from 'too many oranges', the answer was a resounding 'probably not'.

That disappointing result was not the start any team would hope for. Indeed, any other team in this great league we call the Oxford Men's Reserves Division I would have given up. But not these likely lads. Mertonians (and Mansfielders) are made of sterner stuff.

The comeback started through wins against St John's and Hertford. The manner of those victories is irrelevant. These crucial points meant that Merton faced Teddy Hall in 7th Week of Hilary knowing a victory would secure top-flight football for another year. All the hard work had come down to this. All the wintery afternoons, gruelling training sessions and Bridge Thursdays.

As the rain poured down onto that hallowed grass at the Pav, once more it was ten, not the typical eleven, who donned the shirt. But to those ten, this meant more than your average game. They knew what was at stake. 'Spears shall be shaken, shields shall be splintered, a sword-day, a red day, ere the sun rises.' And boy did they perform.

With two goals from centre-back George Adams (2020), and contributions from talisman Trajan Halvorsen (2020) and veteran Nick Ridpath (2015), the boys left that day 5-0 winners. They were staying up. Champagne and power pints were had in abundance that night, and we live to fight another day.

Finally, old scores were settled as the traditional Merton vs Mansfield Exhibition Match™ returned. It goes without saying that Merton walked out winners, despite the chat from Mansfield. Heart and desire triumphed over their fancy footwork. Even Ben Crossley chipped in with a goal.

Here ends the story of one hell of a season. Special thanks to all our finalists leaving us this year. Especially to former captain Joe Hyland Deeson for four years of blood, sweat and tears. A charismatic and courageous left back who never turned down a hearty slide tackle. His contributions on and off the pitch will be sorely missed. Also, to another former captain Nick Ridpath, who has given nearly a decade of service to the team – we are pretty sure he is the all-time JCR football top scorer. In the words of Pep Guardiola: 'We cannot replace them.'

Many thanks also to Euan Vosper who led the 1st team to a similarly eventful season; his dedication and tactical nous were second to none.

Furthermore, and most importantly, we wouldn't even be able to play if it weren't for the amazing work of our groundsman James. A big thank you from all the lads for all you do for us.

Bring on next season and good luck to our incoming captains.

Kieran Wetherick (2020)
MMAFC Reserves Captain 2021-22



Women's Football

The women's M&Ms football team has had an absolutely stellar year, involving not only weekly training sessions where we perfected our trusty old drills but also tried inventive new ones (including a complicated bow-tie-shape manoeuvre that we hope to 'finally' get to grips with next year) but also a number of matches against other college teams. We played plenty of friendlies and also came second in our inter-college league, securing a promotion to the next division. Several of our players (as 'Purple Rain', due to our funky new kit) also had great success in the 5-a-side futsal competition in Trinity. As well as this, we played several Cuppers matches, and despite being knocked out of the main competition by Saints, reached the semi-finals of the Hassan's Cup competition.

As we look to next year, the team hopes only to improve from here, always receptive to new drill suggestions from team members, and hoping to secure even more wins. We head into next year with open arms to new recruits from any year and experience level, excited at the prospect of new teammates and hoping to do our best to fill the shoes of this year's finalists.

We remain convinced that our relaxed and positive team spirit are the key to our success as a group. Our termly team pizza and game nights (and picnic and awards ceremony in Trinity) only help to strengthen the sense of community that we've built. Those of us who are staying on next year are really looking forward to another year of playing for the team, while those of us who are leaving feel assured that we have found lifelong friends within the M&Ms.

Lumi Westerlund (Mansfield, 2019) and Rachel Blackhurst (2020)
M&Ms Women's Football Co-Captains 2021-22



Rugby

This season has not been the easiest for the M&Ms. The first game of the season was the first round of Cuppers against Univ. Unfortunately, limited numbers meant that a 10v10, reduced-time match was played. Univ's fly-half scored three tries in the first half but an impressive and imposing performance by the Ms in the second half and a try from Max Wormsley meant the game finished 21-7. This put the Ms in the quarter-finals of the bowl against Jesus. Again, a full 15v15 was not possible and the Ms played at a two-man disadvantage. Despite a strong effort from the Ms and no one giving up, the two-man advantage proved too much. The Ms went out of the bowl to a 50-0 defeat.

Hilary would prove even harder for the Ms. The Ms were unable to put a side out for the league due to a mixture

of injuries and players competing at University level. The Ms, however, were not completely deprived of rugby. In the annual Peterhouse match, which was played as 7s, the Ms won 7-14 with the help of some players from St Hilda's, Peterhouse's other sister college. In this match, David Craig stepped up and began his stint of captaining the Ms, after Oliver Elliot-Williams was forced to step back from rugby by a series of concussions. Additionally, an Old Boys' Match went ahead, which the Old Boys won. Nonetheless, this was an enjoyable event for all involved which provided some joy and respite after a very difficult season for Ms rugby.

Oliver Elliot-Williams (Mansfield, 2020)
M&Ms Rugby Captain 2021-22



Rowing

Men's Rowing

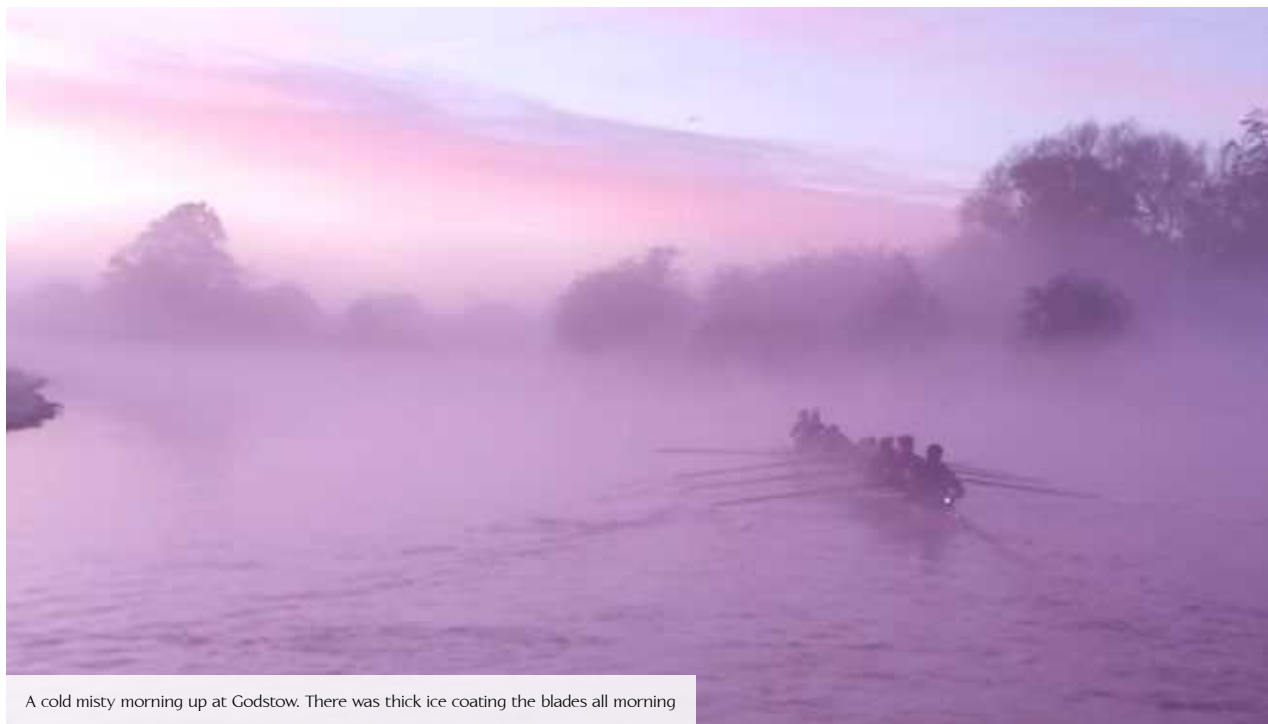
Woah! So THAT is what rowing in Oxford is really like! Post-Covid, and a year with only a handful of days on red flag river levels throughout the entire year, men's rowing sprang headlong into relatively normal training for the first time in three years. With a culture to nurture back from hibernation, our success in regattas and bumps through the year is something I, my co-captain Max Risher and the rest of the squad can be incredibly proud of.

We started off the year with a beautiful sunny afternoon – the perfect time for a taster day to invite newcomers to the sport. We saw an impressive uptake from the first-year undergraduates as they learnt under the watchful gaze of some of our senior rowers on the towpath. As they got to grips, our senior men raced in Autumn Fours for some side-by-side racing on the Isis to gauge fitness and begin gaining some

The men's first eight on the Saturday of Summer Eights

race miles in DC Winfield. With Nephthys and Christ Church Regatta at the end of term, this meant that a huge proportion of the squad raced competitively in Michaelmas and must have caught the bug for it – rowing fever was on its way!

Over the Christmas vac, with help from our wonderful head coach Adam, the men set to work training through the cold to build up fitness for Hilary. Once it arrived, the squad was feeling fit and ready to prepare for Torpids. Come February, the first 2k test for apparently a long time was organised. Turnout to such a demanding test of fitness was incredible and was a testament to how keen our rowers are (as well as competitive). The shared ambition running through the squad was inspiring, and I believe it set the tone for the coming weeks. In Torpids, M2 were unfortunately bumped by several strong crews, yet showed impressive team moral to keep fighting for spots up the bumps charts every stroke they took. M1 began Torpids 13th on the river, at the top spot



A cold misty morning up at Godstow. There was thick ice coating the blades all morning

of Division 2. On the first and second day, they rowed over comfortably, making their first appearance in Div 1 since 2001. On day 3, they bumped Magdalen MI and on day 4 bumped Trinity MI, bringing them to 11th on the river and firmly in Division 1 for the first time since 1967.

Bouncing off the successes of Torpids, MI then turned their heads towards the Thames and the famous Head of the River Race. This 6.8km course was set to be a gruelling test of endurance and courage – something these lads had in spades! We used this race as an opportunity to reunite alumni with the club, filling the crew of those remaining in the UK over the vacation with previous MI rowers. This gave the crew a big challenge, making the 20k session the evening before the race important to dial in technique and crew feel with our incredible cox, Natasha. Come race day, the crew would climb 48 places from its seeding and gain a few brutal blisters along the way.

To top off a fantastic vacation, 12 of the men's squad (some of whom had only begun rowing weeks earlier) flew to Portugal for our training camp abroad with head coach Adam. For the first time since 2019, we were able to organise this wonderful opportunity for the club and it served as the perfect chance to develop our up-and-coming rowers and coxes. With a few lost phones and watches in the bottom of the Douro river, and a few 'crash' courses on coxing, our men's side explored a wide range of what rowing has to offer.

Trinity then came, and with it spectacular weather. Blue skies in May = bumps every day? Our crews certainly hoped so and set their eyes on crew selection happening early in 2nd Week. Three crews were then ready to race in Summer Eights and were looking fast: M1 and M2 for example breaking our course records up at Godstow and on the Isis respectively by astounding margins. With a successful Bedford Regatta also under their belt, beating Wadham M1



Celebrations at Summer Eights Dinner



Merton M1 at the Head of the River Race, London



The men's first Torpid celebrating on the Saturday, reaching 11th on the river for the first time since 1967



The mixed third eight at Rowing On

and Univ M2, ambition spread like wildfire from the M1/2 composite crew who raced and soon all three crews were ready to hit the Isis alongside our M3.

The third eight raced hard in rowing on, unluckily missing out on a place in Bumps. M2 rowed well through Eights each day, following a mishap on the start line on day 1 and showing more self-motivation and resilience than any captain could ask for. M1 then bumped within 30 strokes on both day 1 (Hugh's) and day 2 (New), with an appealed bump on day 3 (Queen's) which was unfortunately not allowed due to lack of evidence. Saturday saw M1 and M2 have strong, impressive row-overs past the crowds on Boathouse Island, pushing off Hertford M1 and Queen's M2 respectively. This placed M1, again, at the highest place in 20 years, so maybe alongside M2, they were holding off just so they could put a show on for everyone. With a wonderful atmosphere, it was personally incredibly rewarding to see so many people come

down and watch the rowing.

Post-Summer Eights sees the men's side now involved with filming in a new George Clooney film – *The Boys in the Boat*. They were hired as extras for the Navy and French crew, contributing to a screen adaptation of the famous story from the 1936 Olympics. Keep your eyes peeled for that in cinemas.

What a wonderful year to see Merton go from success to success. The support and interest that Mertonians now have for rowing (something to do with Eights-fever, I presume) has given me much hope for the future of sport and rowing at Merton, and I look forward to seeing how we progress in the coming years.

Tim Western (2020)
Men's Co-Captain 2021-22



The Women's Boat Club at the Summer Eights Dinner, May 2022

Women's Rowing

It is safe to say that this year started with mixed feelings. Following the Blades victory in Summer Torpids 2021, and most of the crew members having graduated over the summer, there were big shoes to fill and little resources to do so. Thanks to committed novice captains, solid weather and keen freshers, more than 20 novices joined the club in October, competed in Christ Church Regatta and returned to rowing in Hilary term. Their incredible commitment and enthusiasm led one of the two women's boats competing in Christ Church Regatta into the finale, where they placed second.

Hilary term was fundamental for creating a great sense of community, with the no-longer-novices joining the senior members for erg sessions, circuits and outings. It didn't take long for the crew to integrate, helped by post-outings snacks and pizza socials. IWLs provided great chances to measure ourselves on the Isis against other college's crews and different types of weather conditions (Eunice, we don't fear you). Under the coaching experience of Dan and Alex, we managed to enter two boats into Torpids, opening the 2022 bump season, which was the first one for most rowers on our boats. After successfully qualifying in Rowing On, W2 initially bumped successfully but unfortunately this upward trend was stopped and we lost two positions overall. W1 managed to remain in third division, securing a bump on the last day. During the Easter vacation, the boat club spent a week training in Porto, enjoying the sun and the spectacular

views and surviving two-and-a-half-hour sessions on the Duoro river. The momentum of the Torpids campaign was kept and the mild weather as well as steady progress in the boat created a strong sense of excitement and commitment for Summer Eights. Besides rowing in the eight, many rowers tried sculling and coxing for the first time.

Back from Portugal, everyone was hyped about Summer Eights and the two boats started a very intense training regime with seven or eight training sessions per week. The commitment paid off. W2 maintained their position in sixth division, with their cox having only a bit more than a month of experience. W1 suffered multiple injuries in the weeks leading up to Summer Eights and the crew, made up of many rowers who had never stepped into a boat until nine months ago, competed fiercely in a tough field. After closing on crews multiple times, the boat rowed over twice and dropped two positions.

We are looking into the future of women's rowing at Merton with content and excitement. Next year will start with a strong squad of committed rowers and a supportive, fun team spirit, which will welcome any novices. Overall, the team spirit is at its highest, with a large number of amazing rowers who had never stepped on a boat until nine months ago. We've definitely managed to lay the foundations for the years to come.

Angela Falezza and Clara Kummerer (both 2020)
Women's Rowing Captains 2021-22



Cricket

Merton had an outstanding season for cricket, reaching the Cuppersfinal in a highly dramatic fashion and ultimately falling short by just 10 runs.

In the Round of 32, excellent batting from Trajan Halvorsen (2019) and Tom Corner (2019) set us up on our road to the final, which also included a 100-run win against Jesus in the following round. This was due to an outstanding fielding performance to bowl our opposition out for 50, with Hannah Sirringhaus (2019) and Ittihad Hasib (2020) both taking multiple wickets in this game.

We then made it through to the quarter-finals against Teddy Hall where a slew of impressive batting performances saw us set a target of 126. We started well in the field with a magnificent opening spell from James Kempton (2011), but it was a nervy finish with Teddy Hall needing two runs off the last ball. Tom Corner, who had an exceptional season with the bat, proved just as brilliant in the field; taking one catch in the deep in the final over and then carefully and efficiently rolling the ball to the stumps to win the game by one run. Our support, led by Kieran Wetherick (2020), at the side came running onto the pitch to celebrate this adrenaline-

filled win, highlighting the drama and spirit of college cricket.

Then we came to finals day on the Thursday of 8th Week, starting with a semi-final against New College. The Warden helped to gather the troops and we had a crowd of spectators to watch a confident performance, featuring a fantastic final over from Joshua Navarajasegaran (2016), to set up the final against Magdalen in the afternoon. To get to this point, credit has to be given to Benedict Yorston (2019), our wicketkeeper Jack Feehan (2019), and countless others who stepped up when we needed them. Our supporters particularly enjoyed both a superb diving catch at slip and an entertaining batting performance from Will Barker (2019). In the middle overs, he and Akram Ghauri (2020) bowled a spell of spin bowling to cut down Magdalen's run rate and keep us in the game.

Although we were ultimately unsuccessful in chasing down Magdalen's score of 125, the spirit displayed by both the players and spectators showed that it was not only a season to be proud of, but one to build on as well.

Ellie Owen (2020)
Cricket Captain, 2021-22



Netball

Merton netball team, having been formed in Trinity term 2021, had a great entry into the proper netball league this year. Being a new team, we entered the league in Michaelmas in Division 5. We had some great players show up (despite some injuries throughout the term) and managed to win six out of eight of our games to come second in the league (we were aided by some teams failing to turn up). Some highlights included the match against Linacre where we managed to get a score of 23-3 as well as against Brasenose and St Benet's where we won both matches with scores of 11-2 and 8-2 respectively. Despite some initial mathematical errors by the league giving us false hope of coming first in the division, we managed to secure second place overall, just missing out on promotion but feeling pretty confident going into the Hilary league.

With our close loss in Michaelmas, going into Hilary we were determined to secure a promotion into Division 4. We got off to a great start winning 15-9 against Keble, the team we were expecting to be our closest rival through the term. We managed to keep up our momentum throughout the term, securing a season where we were unbeaten as a team

although ending it on a draw with Univ in a tough game where we were neck and neck throughout. Despite this tense end to the season we managed to secure our position as first in the division and won promotion to Division 4.

I'd like to give a special shout out to the following who were all nominated player of the match at some point across the year: Emily Jones (2020) and Eppie Sharp (2018) whose shooting was always on point, and Ellie Owen (2020) consistently coming out of nowhere with some incredible interceptions. Also, a shout out to Evie McGrory, Imogen Walsh, Nikita Nunes and Jess Hancock (all 2020) for being our most committed second years as well as Hajrah Hafeez, Eleanor Clark and Eleanor Bogie (all 2021), our newest members who were so committed throughout the year. The one-off appearances of Benedict Yorston (2019), Fergus Waterhouse (2019) and Kieran Wetherick (2020) as well as Declan Nelson's (2020) commitment to the club being a last-minute sub on multiple occasions (one time even showing up in chinos) should also be noted – it's great to have such diversity of involvement in the club!

However, it hasn't just been a term of serious competition and we have also taken on some more light-hearted competition this year. In Hilary we entered into the Pink Week Tournament and despite only managing to field two players, managed to team up with Oriel to secure victory with our very own Ellie Owen securing Player of the Tournament too! We also played against Peterhouse, Cambridge at the Peterhouse v Merton sports day in a very tough match and just about managed to maintain our unbeaten streak by getting a draw of 11-11. In Trinity our netballing has been somewhat minimal but we did have a great turnout in the Merton–Mansfield derby at Sports Day. In this tough grudge match (which definitely questioned the title of netball being a 'non-contact sport') we unfortunately lost out to our long-time rivals but persevered and showed our strength as a team.

Overall, it's been a great year for Merton netball and hopefully we'll carry this year's success into Michaelmas. Good luck to our new captains Eleanor Bogie and Eleanor Clark.

Vicki Moon (2020)

Netball Captain 2021-22



Tennis

Equipped with the tennis racquets and balls acquired by the MCR last Trinity term, we spent much of Michaelmas term training up for our Cuppers endeavour this Trinity term. We held regular sessions every Saturday afternoon, when the weather held out, and both trained up students and learnt more about competition strategies and scoring.

Hilary term saw a slight hiatus due to the unamenable weather, but we finally signed up for Cuppers at the beginning of Trinity term. We played a series of matches against Hertford College at the Merton tennis courts on Saturday 7 May. We were unfortunate and did not get through, even with some last-minute recruitment help from our wonderful

JCR Sports Rep, but we entered into the Consolation Draw and advanced to Round 2 against Balliol.

We look forward to more success next year, and plan to continue the systematic practice sessions and welcoming new Mertonian tennis players. Most importantly, I am very grateful to our wonderful players this year, and everyone else who expressed interest. This year would not have been possible without you. Go Merton!

James Hua (2020)

Merton Tennis Captain 2021-22



Squash

I think it's fair to say that the 2021-22 season has been extraordinary. After a superb league performance in Michaelmas, the team finished joint second, picking up 37 points, and were promoted from Division I to the Premiership, where we finished third place in Hilary, an outstanding achievement which will prove a strong foundation for next season's campaign. A huge thank you goes out to everyone who contributed to the 2021-22 league games: without you this success would not have been possible.

On Sports Day in Hilary, we played a friendly fixture against Peterhouse, Cambridge, including performances from Jonathan Utterson (2018), George Adams (2020), women's second team player Khadija Sarguroh (2019) and Trajan Halvorsen (2019), who beat the Peterhouse first seed 3-2 in a competitive and entertaining final game.

The highlight of the 2021-22 season was winning the College Squash Cuppers. After receiving a bye due to the cancellation

of the final in the 2019-20 season, the M&Ms beat Brasenose 3-2 in the play-offs, Wolfson 4-0 in the quarter-finals and Corpus Christi 3-0 in the semis. In the final, all-round performances from men's blues player Trajan Halvorsen (2019), and second team players Timothy Bennett (2019) and Benedict Yorston (2019), as well as Dr Henry Spelman and Alexander Cliffe, meant the team won in the fewest number of games, beating Balliol 3-0 to be crowned Cuppers champions. This is the second final the team have reached in as many tournaments — clear evidence of the squad's talent and perseverance.

A special mention goes to Trajan Halvorsen, Benedict Yorston and Dr Henry Spelman for being unbeaten throughout the entire year, and to Khadija Sarguroh, who has been appointed women's second team captain for next year.

George Adams (2020)
Squash Captain 2021-22



Sports Overview

Had I not been sitting at my desk writing this overview having just tested positive for Covid the previous evening, it would almost be easy to forget that this virus has been such a reckoning force in our lives over the past two and a half years. Sport at Merton has enjoyed a relatively 'normal' year, if you consider a normal year here to be full of triumphs and admirable displays of team spirit.

My assumption of the post of JCR Sports Rep coincided with the first joint sports day with our sister Cambridge college Peterhouse for several years. Our College sports teams did us very proud, with notable performances coming from the netball and the rounders teams. We also won what was undeniably the most important competition of the event: the evening's drinking contest in the now sadly dismantled Chestnut Hall bar. This joint sports day was mirrored again in Trinity with a Merton-only version, perhaps even more fun given the lack of Cambridge students in attendance. But we were still able to demonstrate our sporting prowess, with a 6-4 victory against Mansfield in the football, celebrations taking the form of free ice cream courtesy of the Sports Rep budget.

The win in the rounders at the Peterhouse sports day proved not to be the year's only success in this sport. Trinity term 2022 saw the inaugural Oxford University Rounders Club league and we cemented ourselves as a team

to beat, remaining unbeaten throughout the entire season and securing our place in the top league for next Trinity's iteration. However, despite our winning streak in the league, we did suffer one important loss, against a brave team of Merton academics. At the end of Hilary, the Merton sports ground hosted a students vs staff charity rounders match to raise money for the Disasters Emergency Committee's Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal. Not only did the academics team deliver a humbling victory, but we also raised a few hundred pounds for the appeal.

Merton's other sports teams have awed us with their impressive Cuppers and league runs this year. As reported in last year's sports overview, despite being in their first year, the netball team emerged from their season with a totally unbeaten record. This was of course going to be impossible to beat this year, but against all odds this record was maintained, seeing the team finish at the top of their division and secure promotion for next season. Similarly a team of relative infancy, the women's football team reached the semi-final of the Hassan's Cup and finished second in the league, also looking forward to promotion for next season.

Outstanding Cuppers runs this year came from the cricket and the squash teams. Contrary to widely held belief, this year's most impressive cricketing performance was not England's

498-4 ODI score against the Netherlands but Merton's Cuppers campaign led by Ellie Owen (2020). Although we suffered a narrow loss in the final against Magdalen, our predominance in the earlier rounds demonstrated our skill, including a thrilling win over New in the semis. The squash team, captained by George Adams (2020), managed to go one better. Their victory over Balliol at the start of Trinity earned them the title of Cuppers Champions 2022.

As ever, the success of Mertonians on the University-level sports scene continues to be apparent. While not often the sport of choice, Eppie Sharp (2019) and Charlie Lamb (2019) both helped Oxford on their way to success in cheerleading varsity, and Kabir Bakshi (2020) earned a Half Blue in ultimate frisbee. Real tennis also saw varsity victory with the help of James Kempton (2011) and Benedict Yorston (2019). Jack Pickering (2020) once again was an essential part of the slightly-less-bizarre University lawn tennis team, and Alexander Wythe (2020) and Phoebe Mountain (2019) both competed for OULRC in their respective lightweight rowing boats. Euan Dyer (2021) earned his Blue in hockey in his first year and can now put playing for the Oxford team above playing for the Welsh national team on his CV. Caitlin Frank (2019), who lent her hand-eye coordination to the rounders team, also earned herself a Blue in baseball, and Trajan Halvorsen (2019) not only assisted the College squash team with its Cuppers victory but demonstrated his skills on the University-level circuit as well.

To finish off, I must thank all those who have supported Merton sport this academic year. The AMALGAS committee (Merton & Mansfield's joint sporting body) work behind the scenes and largely without thanks to ensure the continued operation of sport at Merton, and in particular the Domestic Bursar Tim Lightfoot and the chair Professor Jonathan Prag work tirelessly. Our wonderful Warden Professor Irene Tracey is very deserving of recognition for her support for Merton's sports teams and is certainly our most dedicated spectator (along with Geoffrey Biscuit). Finally, Merton's sporting endeavours could never happen without the work of the groundsman James Lisle always keeping the grounds in perfect condition.

James McCulloch (2021)

JCR Sports Representative 2021-22

Blues and Half Blues

New Full Blues and Half Blues in 2021-22

Kabir Bakshi (2020)	Ultimate Frisbee
Euan Dyer (2021)	Hockey
Trajan Halvorsen (2019)	Squash
James Kempton (2011)	Real Tennis
Caitlin Frank (2019)	Baseball
Phoebe Mountain (2019)	Rowing
Claudia Murray (2019)	Swimming
Jack Pickering (2020)	Tennis
Alexander Wythe (2020)	Rowing
Benedict Yorston (2019)	Real Tennis

Haigh Ties

Awarded in June 2022

George Adams (2020)
 Ebube Akojie (2020)
 Kabir Bakshi (2020)
 Natasha Bradley (2019)
 David Craig (2019)
 Ben Crossley (2020)
 Emily Jones (2020)
 Myles Kelly (2020)
 Charlie Lamb (2019)
 James McCulloch (2021)
 Vicki Moon (2020)
 Ellie Owen (2020)
 Jack Pickering (2020)
 Max Risher (2020)
 Matilde Soares da Silva (2018)
 Alexander Smith (2020)
 Timothy Western (2020)
 Kieran Wetherick (2020)
 Arundhati Wuppalapati (2019)
 Alexander Wythe (2020)

Clubs & Societies





One of the *Much Ado About Nothing* performances © Jana Nedelkoska (2020)

Merton Floats

After Covid restrictions were eased in Michaelmas, Oxford drama bounced back – and with it, the Merton Floats. The Floats acts in two main areas: as a funding body and as a production company. Determined to facilitate student theatre and not let money get in the way, this academic year we have funded seven student productions at the Oxford Playhouse, the Burton Taylor Studio and the Michael Pilch Studio, and are currently funding Fringe shows and short films. These productions have ranged from original to well-established musicals, from Shakespeare to exciting new writing.

January 2022 saw the formation of the new committee, with Anna Stephen (2020) as president, Aryaman Gupta as secretary (2020), and Sebastian Dows-Miller (2016) continuing as treasurer. Our first priority was to organise the summer garden play, a tradition the Floats had not revived since 2018. As early as February, we were taking pictures of the lawn and brainstorming the works of Shakespeare, Wilde and Noel Coward. A quick vote on the Oxford University Drama Society Facebook page confirmed our choice: Shakespeare's much-loved *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Three months of auditions, rehearsals, snack-buying and last-minute lighting panic later, *Much Ado* was performed in Fellows' Garden in 6th Week, directed and produced by Anna

and Aryaman. The cast included Mertonians Lukas Ruediger (2021) as Benedick, Kate Harkness (2021) as Beatrice, Izzy Dobson (2020) as Don Pedro, Caroline Longley (2020) as Leonato, Rowena Sears (2021) as Antonio, and Anna Ahlberg (2020) as Ursula. We were assisted by a fantastic crew, including Mairi Franklin (2019), Emily Jones (2020), Clara Kummerer (2020) and May McEvoy (2021).

We set the play in the late 1960s, in the heat of student counterculture and anti-war protests. With a main set structure of a 'washing line' decorated with hand-painted protest posters, an entrance on bikes to Thin Lizzy's *The Boys are Back in Town*, and a megaphone with a very loud siren, the play was a fantastic success. Several days threatened rain, but luck was on our side and the sky cleared up in time for all five performances to take place outside. We received excellent feedback and turned an impressive profit, which we will use to fund Merton and University-wide drama.

We would like to thank the Merton Floats, Kelly Calvert and the Events team, Huw James and the porters, Jane Reid and Khristopher Watts, and Lucille Savin. I am very excited for the future of the Floats in the next academic year.

Anna Stephen (2020)

Merton Floats President 2021-22



Frederick Soddy Society

The flagship annual Frederick Soddy Society Dinner

The Frederick Soddy Society is the community for Merton chemists, both undergraduates and postgraduates. With events no longer virtual, it was lovely to reunite with chemists of all years at the Freshers' Subject Tea. The chance to get to know new faces and catch up with those more familiar proved popular as ever, especially over afternoon refreshments in Chestnut Hall. Questions about the year ahead were asked and answered, followed by a traditional orientation tour of the lecture theatres and labs – key chemistry landmarks! Two more events followed in Michaelmas term, with a Formal providing opportunity for advice and anecdotes (often more specific to the Merton chemistry experience), while a light-hearted, chemistry-related quiz provided many laughs and new memories to round off the calendar year.

The flagship annual dinner occurs in Hilary term, this year beginning with an excellent talk by Dr Xiangyu Jie, hosted by Professor Véronique Gouverneur. Dr Jie's work on the circular economy of plastics and hydrogen economy was well received, eliciting interesting points from chemists of all experience. The wonderful evening continued, with conversation flowing throughout the drinks reception. A scrumptious three-

course meal followed, provided by Merton's Kitchen and Hall staff to whom we are always grateful. With the pandemic having prevented two annual dinners, previous Mertonian chemists were also invited, reminiscing over good times and sharing their current experiences. It was great to see so many people, with the event running late into the evening.

Trinity term saw Tara Biddle become president of the society, organising two more events. An engaging talk was given midway through term by Dr Jianlu Hu on the activation of stable molecules by microwave-initiated catalytic processes. The annual Trinity picnic provided a welcome catch-up before the long vacation ahead, and a celebration of another year completed.

With the new academic year approaching, I reflect on the warm support and strong friendships between the Merton chemists which have made this presidency such a pleasure, as the Frederick Soddy Society looks forward to more successes ahead.

Tang Ng (2018)

Frederick Soddy Society President 2021-22

Second-year historians gathered together after attending a Formal Hall



History Society

This year has been hugely successful for the Merton History Society as the society adapted to and enjoyed an academic year with fewer Covid restrictions. During this year, existing History Society traditions were able to return, such as the Annual Subject Dinner and in-person Freshers' Tea, alongside the introduction of new events such as an afternoon tea at the end of Hilary.

Michaelmas was an exciting and eventful term with numerous events for Merton historians. The term started with the Freshers' Tea, offering an opportunity for the freshers to be introduced and integrated into Merton's History community. It was great to see a wide range of historians across various years offering their insights and wisdom to the freshers. Following this, we celebrated Black History Month with a fascinating talk on Toussaint Louverture. We were privileged to have Dr Sudhir Hazareesingh give us this talk, based on his book *Black Spartacus: The Epic Life of Toussaint Louverture*, which won the 2021 Wolfson History Prize. Dr Hazareesingh's talk offered an engaging insight into the extraordinary life of Toussaint. After the talk, the Merton historians enjoyed Formal Hall together. The term concluded with a quiz in the Chestnut Hall Bar with a range of unique rounds provided such as completing the Horrible Histories song. The quiz was well attended with both fellows and students competing to win the coveted prize, a £20 Marks & Spencer voucher.

Hilary also was a busy term for Merton History Society. In collaboration with Sadie Chamberlain, Merton's 1980 Society President, Merton History Society organised a talk to celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month. The event was open to the whole College community and raised significant money for the Black Trans Alliance. Merton's Junior Research Fellow Dr Emily Rutherford gave a talk entitled 'Historians Will Say They Were Just Good Friends', which celebrated the stories of female academics in Oxford who failed to conform to the heteronormative moulds of their time. The talk offered an important opportunity to reflect on the application of modern labels to historical accounts of queer people. Hilary also saw the return of the History Society Dinner, the first since 2020. For the majority of historians, this was their first annual dinner; it proved not to disappoint. Despite the excellent food and drink, the tutors' humorous and entertaining speeches proved to be the highlight of the evening. The night ended with numerous 'powerpints' in the College Bar. The historians finished Hilary with an afternoon tea in the MCR in 8th Week, giving the finalists a moment to relax with their looming thesis deadlines. The afternoon tea rounded off an enjoyable term.

Despite some form of examinations for each year group, Trinity term saw multiple events for the society. We were honoured to have Merton history alumna Tanvi Ravel Mehta (2011) visit to give us a talk. The talk, which was based on Tanvi's experience of running a public history website in India, was stimulating and captivating. After the talk, Merton historians attended Formal Hall which was then followed by a cocktail evening in the MCR. During the evening a short quiz also took place, with rounds provided by students across various year groups based on their home towns. The term concluded with the History Schools Dinner for the finalists as well as the Garden Party. Pimm's and Eton mess were enjoyed at the Garden Party which also acted as the official handover for the History Society committee, with Tom Allen elected as the next president. I have enjoyed the role immensely and would like to thank my committee, Jared Martin and Jen Shaw, for their support this year. I wish Tom and his committee luck for next year.

Michael Zajac (2020)

History Society President 2021-22



The Roger Bacon Society Summer Garden Party

Roger Bacon Society

The Roger Bacon Society unites the physics community of Merton and provides a space for the notoriously anti-social physicists to interact. The society went dark last year due to Covid restrictions, but with the relaxed restrictions in the 2021-22 year, activities could resume as usual.

The year began with the Freshers' Tea, an opportunity for the fresher cohort to get to know each other, as well as some physicists from higher years.

In Hilary term, the society held its flagship event, the subject dinner and presidential election. The Hall staff treated us to an excellent dinner, and Tesco's perfectly timed discount allowed us to get plenty of wine to wash it down. Near the end of the dinner, the two of us co-presidents gave a speech filled with poorly written jokes, continuing the tradition of including as many audience members (including tutors) as possible.

At the end of the speech, it came time to announce the results of the election. Perhaps unsurprisingly, physicists are indifferent towards student politics, and hence the election had a low turnout. This year, out of two candidates, Megan

Evans was elected, despite running on a platform of being an A.W.F.U.L. candidate with B.A.D. policies. We wish Megan the best of luck with keeping the society running smoothly, for another year.

With exams looming over everyone in sunny Trinity term, the society organised its yearly garden party in Fellows' Garden. The date had to be picked well in advance, and unfortunately fell on an overcast day, but the event was a success nonetheless. The guests were treated to Tesco's finest snacks, crisps and Pimm's.

On the last day of term, during Finalists' Bop, even the tradition of 'physics shots' was resurrected, where all physicists present gather near midnight, for shots.

In short, it was a great and eventful year for the Roger Bacon Society, and we were able to hold all events that would be expected in a normal year.

Nic Mitchell and Marcell Szakaly (both 2018)
Roger Bacon Society Co-Presidents 2021-22

Neave Society

This year has been an exciting one for the Neave Society, being the first year (for most of us) entirely in person. Each term has brought a host of fresh debates, sparking lively discussions from a range of perspectives.

Michaelmas term began with the extremely well attended Freshers' Debate on the issue of 'Is all art political?'. The motion invited views from students of all disciplines, unpacking what can be fairly described as 'art', and whether anything can ever be apolitical. The Neave Society was also thrilled to host economist and Merton alumnus John Mills (1958) to discuss his books *The Elephant in the Room* and *Why the West is Failing: Failed Economics and the Rise of the East*. Shiv Mandal (2020, president in Michaelmas term) chaired this interesting discussion on how reindustrialisation could rebalance and repair the UK economy.

Hilary term kicked off yet again with the debate on 'no confidence in the government'. On the back of 'Partygate' allegations, this debate was largely themed on the intersection and implications of the private/public life divide of politicians. Other topics that cropped up this term included a debate on euthanasia, and another on whether children should be taught to be sceptical of parental authority – both engaged some truly fascinating insights on balance between personal autonomy and security.

Trinity term was undoubtedly the highlight of the Neave Society's 2021-22 calendar. Our first 'presidential' debate was between JCR President candidates Zakariya Bux and Ivan Vasenov (both 2021) on the issue of the extent to which tech companies should regulate social media. As an (unaffiliated) preview to the presidential hustings later this week, this debate drew an attendance of over 20 in the audience. Following this flagship debate, the change in format from round-table discussion to one-v-one openings accompanied by floor discussion was a great success. One notably divisive debate in this format was between Niall Pearson-Shaul (2021, Affiliated Organisations Rep 2022-23) and Charlie Rand (2021, Social Backgrounds Rep 2022-23) on the topic of whether the UK should implement affirmative action. Niall took the

proposition and Charlie acted for the opposition. After some thoughtful discussion on the long- and short-term benefits of positive discrimination, we voted in favour of the proposition.

The Neave Society has had a spectacular year. It has been a journey from strength to strength, and we look forward to re-joining once more in October.

Shivanii Arun (2021)

Neave Society President 2021-22

This year's motions and outcomes

'This House believes all art is political'

The Neave Society voted against the motion

'This House has no confidence in Her Majesty's government'

The Neave Society voted in favour of the motion

'This House would support demonetisation in the UK'

The Neave Society voted against the motion

'This House would legalise euthanasia'

The Neave Society voted in favour of the motion

'This House would teach children to be sceptical of parental authority'

The Neave Society voted against the motion

'This House believes it is the duty of technology companies to regulate online speech rather than the government'

The Neave Society voted in favour of the motion

'This House would introduce affirmative action in the UK'

The Neave Society voted in favour of the motion.

1980 Society

I am so grateful to have been the president of the 1980 Society this year. Following on from the celebrations of *Merton Women: 40 Years* and being able to host more in-person events has made this experience so fun and rewarding for me.

This has been an amazing year for the 1980 Society, seeing an increasing number of people becoming involved with the society. We have continued classic events of the society every term, including 'Wine and Whine' and 'Cake and Compliments' as a collaboration with Welfare. Our discussions in Wine and Whine have been extremely productive and interesting, discussing feminist issues on anything between 'What does feminism mean to me?', 'Is masculinity always toxic?', 'Career gaps vs pay gaps', 'Singlehood from a feminist perspective' and 'Sex work'. This allowed students of all genders to share their experiences, and for us to talk about how we believe things could be improved within Oxford and in wider communities. Our collaboration events with Welfare, 'Cake and Compliments', have also been extremely popular with the JCR. This allowed students to come together in a friendly way, and also to enjoy some cake.

In Michaelmas, we hosted a Big Night In as an counteract to increasing spiking of drinks nationwide. Big Night In events were hosted across various colleges and other universities across the country, so it felt amazing for Merton to be involved in this. The premise of this event was to emulate a classic night in, making it a chill night. Attendees were also able to sign an open letter that I wrote addressed to clubs and bars in Oxford demanding them to suitably counteract spiking.

Hilary was an especially exciting term for the 1980 Society. We held our first collaboration event of the year with another college, which was a mixer with University College's 1979 Society. It was amazing to meet like-minded people and for feminist societies across Oxford to share solidarity. Next, I worked with Michael Zajac, Jennifer Shaw and Jared Martin (all 2020, and on the committee of Merton's History Society) to host Dr Emily Rutherford for a talk entitled 'Historians Will Say They Were Just Good Friends'. The talk followed the story of female academics in Oxford who did not fit

heteronormative stereotypes of their time. Especially after the *40 Years* celebrations, it was so refreshing and interesting to hear about some of the lives of the women at Oxford despite its masculine cultures. We are so grateful to Emily for joining us in this event, which was enjoyed by various students and staff members. At a drinks reception following the event, we were able to raise money for the Black Trans Alliance charity.

The end of Hilary saw our International Women's Day celebrations in Merton. I hosted a Formal in College, followed by a women's drinks reception where people were able to share their experiences. I am grateful to the Warden, Professor Irene Tracey (1985), Olivia Elder (2010, Corpus Christi), Francesca Lovell-Read (2015), Nikita Nunes (2020) and Isabella Dobson (2020) for starting the discussion and talking about their own experiences. The society was also involved in International Women's Day celebrations outside Merton, contributing to the organisation of an IWD Gala, held at Freud. This was a lovely collaboration with other colleges, and a wonderful way to celebrate International Women's Day.

In Trinity, we collaborated with the feminist societies (or equivalent) at University, St John's, St Hilda's and Wadham colleges to host an event, which was an exciting start to term, and we hosted the first book club of the year. In this term, 1980 also developed and launched a podcast on Spotify, entitled 'Winning and Whining by Merton College 1980 Society'. This podcast discusses feminist issues and was so exciting to create and record. We celebrated the launch of the podcast with a party, which was an amazing send-off to this year for the society.

I am excited to see where 1980 goes in the coming years, especially for an upcoming alumni dinner, which will hopefully happen next year. This society has been an integral part of my experience at Merton, and I look forward to reading about it in further *Postmaster* editions.

Sadie Chamberlain (2020)
1980 Society President 2021-22



Mathematics Subject Dinner

Mathematics Society

This has been the first normal year in a while for the Mathematics and Joint Schools Society, with all events taking place in person. Following an uncontested election, co-presidents Dragos Crisan and Inés Borchers Arias were elected, taking over from last year's presidents, Emily Slade (human) and Rio (dog).

We had the chance to meet the freshers in the subject tea that happened in 0th Week. We discussed what Mertonian mathematicians' lives look like over some refreshments. This was an amazing opportunity to relax and catch up before term started.

Maths help sessions were the main thing done during the year. Happening each Saturday in different College locations, some of us gather to help each other with maths questions or challenges (specially targeted for first years) over some snacks and apple juice (sometimes in shot glasses). They're always very fun and a cool way of keeping the mathematical (and joint schools) community together. In Hilary term we had two

bigger events: Thirsty Meeples night out and Subject Dinner. In the games night we played some (vaguely mathematical) board games (they involved numbers, we swear) and had a lot of fun. Subject Dinner featured an amazing menu in the New Common Room, followed by a great speech on the history of maths. Overall Hilary was a good term for the Maths Society.

Trinity saw the return of the Mathematics 'Garden' Party. However it was sadly not in the garden as the weather didn't permit it. The party was saved, though, as we ended up holding it in the Games Room. This turned out to be an advantage as we had fun playing pool. It happened slightly earlier than expected but it was a good break from revision right before the last period before exams.

Looking back, the Maths Society has been really active this past year. We hope to keep up with the fun activities next year.

Dragos Crisan (2019) and Inés Borchers (2020)
Mathematics Society Co-Presidents 2021-22



Much Ado About Nothing being performed in the College gardens
© Jana Nedelkoska (2020)

Arts Society

This year, as Covid has subsided, arts at Merton has seen a huge resurgence, with the scale of and attendance at events being much better than last year. In Michaelmas, for example, the mask-making event (a tie-in for the masquerade bop) had so many people that I ran out of masks for people to paint and had to turn people away, until Caroline had the brilliant idea to cut out masks from paper using the plastic masks I had as a silhouette.

In Hilary, the major event was the Ceilidh held at the Pav. For this, Bahar Ganvar (2020) and I led people through a few traditional Scottish dances. Although it was quite demanding (if nothing else because it requires levels of stamina and hand-eye coordination far beyond what I usually possess), it was well worth it to see people pull off the complicated sets of manoeuvres required so effortlessly at the end.

In Trinity, we managed to revive the Merton Floats after two years of Covid dormancy by staging a '60s French new wave/

student protest/youth culture adaptation of *Much Ado About Nothing* in the Merton gardens throughout 6th Week. Co-directed by myself and Anna Stephen (2020), this production consisted of about 50% Merton students, and in addition to selling out on several nights (once even after adding 20 extra seats) also made some money for the Merton Floats, which they will be able to use to fund drama and film throughout Oxford. (See page 29 for more on the Merton Floats.)

Next year, in addition to continuing my favourite events from this year (the sword duel, a termly dance etc.), I hope to expand arts at Merton by collaborating with magazines such as the *Isis* and *Industry* for inter-college arts events. I also hope to establish more long-term projects (such as commissioning student-made art for the JCR redesign) that can carry on after I leave.

Aryaman Gupta (2020)
JCR Arts Society Rep 2021-22

Music Society

The Merton College Music Society has had an exciting year, with the return of many ensembles and events, including the Fidelio Orchestra, the Kodály Choir and the weekly lunchtime recital series in the TS Eliot Theatre. This year, the Music Society has focused on providing musical opportunities and reviving and establishing College ensembles that were not possible during pandemic restrictions, and to do so in a way that drives inclusivity.

The Music Society expanded at the start of this academic year to include a number of committee positions, including a concerts coordinator (Cecily Moorsom, 2020), a chamber music coordinator (Lewis Lee, 2021), a secretary (Jamie Cochrane, 2019), a treasurer and social secretary (Shaunak Desai, 2021), and a social media officer (Kit Thickett, 2020), with a view to making the music society more inclusive to non-music students. At the start of the next academic year, the role of president, traditionally taken up by second-year music students, will be open to students from any subject area for the first time in many years.

MCMS has hosted a series of Beginner's Conducting Workshops this year, led by Senior Organ Scholar Kentaro Machida (2019), giving students the rare opportunity to conduct a piano duet version of the orchestra's repertoire and to receive feedback on their technique in a low-pressure environment, with no previous experience required.

In Michaelmas term, the society hosted a 'Freshers and Re-Freshers' concert at the start of term, giving first- and second-year students the opportunity to perform after what was for many a long hiatus. Michaelmas term also featured a return of the College Showcase, an annual event with performances by instrumental award holders from the JCR and the MCR. In the final week of Michaelmas, to celebrate 'Oxmas', members of the Kodály Choir and the newly formed Chamber Choir, directed by Eleni Thwaites (2020), went carol singing in various locations around the city centre, raising an impressive total of £275 for the Oxford branch of Sing Inside, a charity that provides singing workshops and musical opportunities in prisons.

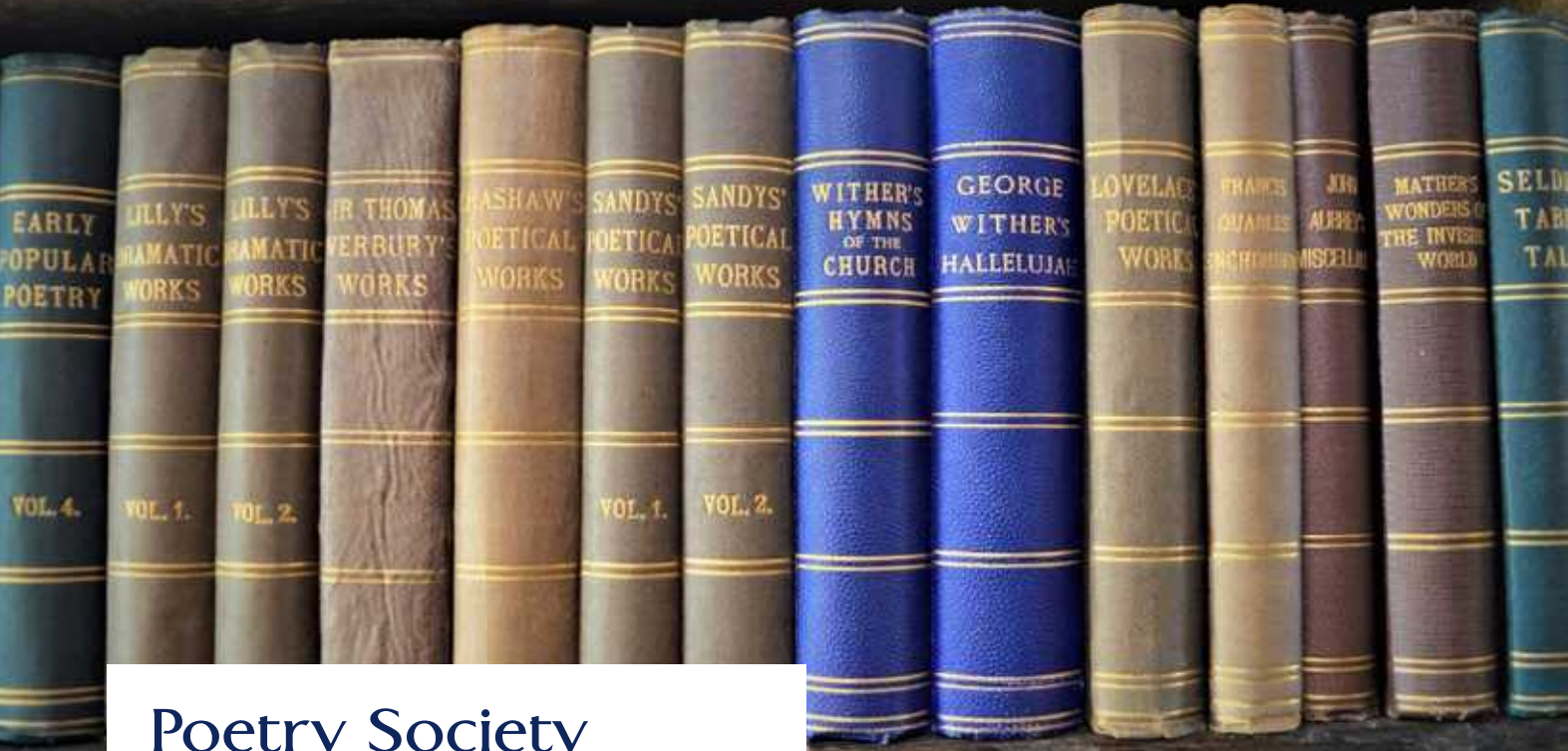
In Hilary term, the Fidelio Orchestra performed its first concert since combining forces with the orchestras of Magdalen and University colleges to form a larger intercollegiate ensemble. The concert also featured a performance from the newly formed Chan Quartet, made up of JCR musicians Owen Chan (2020), Megan Harfield (2021), Catherine Dixon (2019) and Anna Stephen (2020). Hilary term also saw the return of the annual Musical Soirée with a variety of performances including an impressive performance by Eric McElroy (2018) of his own original piano composition, a piece for recorder player and two interpretative dancers, 'The Actor with the Monkey', performed by Cecily Moorsom, and a debut performance by the College Chamber Choir. Towards the end of Hilary term, MCMS held the society's first chamber music concert, featuring performances from some newly formed College chamber ensembles, including the Chamber Choir.

The lunchtime recital series, now operating on a weekly basis, has seen a high standard of solo and chamber music performances throughout the year, and even original compositions, by students both from the JCR and the MCR. The series has included a termly Baroque Recital in the College Chapel, newly established by choral award holders Ciara Williams (2021), Kit Thickett, and Cecily Moorson at the start of this academic year. While the lunchtime recital series has featured student performers from a wide range of subjects, it has also provided an excellent opportunity for final-year music students to perform repertoire in preparation for conservatoire auditions and for Finals recitals.

Final-year music students Jamie Cochrane and Kentaro Machida both scored very highly in their final recitals, achieving marks in the high 70s and 80s. Jamie secured scholarships in courses at both the Royal Academy of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Next year, the Music Society hopes to see the continued success of the many College ensembles and traditions that were revived and newly established this academic year, and to continue to strive towards greater inclusivity and a broader reach in the College community.

Catherine Dixon (2019)
MCMS President 2021-22



Poetry Society

The Merton College Poetry Society (MCPS) has been busy all year, holding weekly meetings that include poetry readings, structured writing workshops, collage workshops and opportunities for students to keep working on their WIPs with other aspiring poets.

The year started under the benevolent eyes of Luke Bateman and Rachel Jung (both 2019), who had been co-presidents since 2020. They kept the society chugging along through Michaelmas, producing a gorgeous pamphlet while keeping their degrees going, before handing over to the comparatively unoccupied second-years Anna Stephen, Hollie Goodwin and Nayah Thu (all 2020), in anticipation of Finals.

Although we had big shoes to fill, the house hasn't burnt down (yet!) In Hilary term, highlights of the various workshops and readings include an (anti) Valentine's Day collage and blackout poetry workshop in collaboration with the Welfare Reps and a highly successful evening of sharing our favourite songs and lyrics. There were barely enough

chairs in the JCR, which the co-presidents have decided to take as a sign of success. Additionally, lyrical analysis of rap songs and their social implications, novelty or otherwise, has become a recurring feature of the meetings, both with and without PowerPoint presentations.

While warm weather, coursework and Finals have all made Trinity a relatively quiet term on the poetry front, this didn't stop a successful co-hosted writing workshop with the Teddy Hall writing society, or the production of the year's third *Pekes and Pollicles*, highlighting work from both published and unpublished students of all ages, colleges and degrees, as well as their artwork and photography.

A special thank you to Luke and Rachel, and we are looking forward to seeing what next year brings.

Nayah Thu (2020)

Poetry Society Co-President 2021-22



The Rt Hon Dame Philippa Whipple addresses the Halsbury Society

Halsbury Society

This year has been another incredible one for the Halsbury Society, and we have enjoyed a wide variety of fantastic events and opportunities, with the return to a more normal year with in-person events welcomed by all.

Over the summer vacation, many second- and third-year law students were fortunate enough to take part in a weekend-long virtual mock ICC arbitration workshop as part of the Doshisha-Merton Advocacy and Networking Initiative (DOMANI), organised by Professor Anselmo Reyes. We worked in teams with students from universities in Japan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Indonesia and Switzerland, and had a range of distinguished tutors to help us develop and practise cross-examination skills. It was a unique and exciting opportunity to work on key legal abilities in an engaging and novel context.

During Michaelmas term, the Halsbury Society held a Welcome Tea to introduce the incoming law freshers to the rest of Merton's law cohort. We also subsequently enjoyed termly afternoon teas, which have proven a lovely way to have an informal catch-up, relax and spend time together over tea and cake. We had several talks and workshops with leading law firms. In particular, we enjoyed a presentation from Merton alumni at Slaughter and May, followed by a wonderful meal at Quod. We also held our annual Christmas Drinks in the MCR, sponsored by Milbank, which was a fantastic evening and well attended by law and interested non-law students alike.

In Hilary, we were honoured to welcome Lord Andrew Burrows QC, Justice of the Supreme Court, to Merton. He delivered the 20th Annual Halsbury Society Lecture, addressing us on the

topic 'Dreaming Spires to Supreme Court: Some Insights'. The lecture was thoroughly fascinating and enjoyable, exploring some of the less obvious differences between being an academic and Supreme Court Justice, and the importance of statutory interpretation. We were delighted that Lord Burrows was able to join us afterwards for a drinks reception and dinner, which was kindly sponsored by Slaughter and May.

Trinity saw us welcome several notable Merton alumni, including Justice Kelyn Bacon (1992), who delivered a talk about her journey to the Bar, as well as The Right Hon Dame Philippa Whipple (1984), who was our guest of honour and after-dinner speaker at the Annual Halsbury Dinner, for which we are grateful to Sullivan & Cromwell for sponsoring and joining us. We were thrilled to hear from such distinguished and inspirational women, and learnt a lot from their advice and experiences. Their insights will be formative as we think about our own next steps. Both the Annual First- and Second-Year Moot Competitions took place in June, with impressive performances across the board. Finally, we had our Garden Party in the last week of term, and this was a fantastic chance to come together to celebrate what has overall been a very successful year for the society and its members, and enjoy some drinks, snacks and croquet in the sunshine.

It has been an absolute pleasure to be the president of the Halsbury Society 2021-22 and I am pleased to announce that Shivanii Arun will be the president for next year. I have no doubt she will do an amazing job.

Isabel Howarth (2020)
Halsbury Society President 2021-22



Tinbergen Society

The early evening sun casts a golden glow over the Otmoor wetlands as we wait for the starlings to emerge. Photo: Max Flagg

The Tinbergen Society has had a successful year following a relative drought of activity due to Covid the previous year. As this year's president, I made it my goal to revive the traditions that last year's freshers, including me, had missed.

Our first major event was the Michaelmas Otmoor Nature Reserve trip, returning with an impressive turnout. While there were some transport difficulties, the trip was a success. For many attendees including myself, it was the first time they had seen a starling murmuration, a truly mesmerising experience. It was cold, and the heavens opened towards the end, but we dried out and warmed up over a delightful festive-themed dinner in the nearby Abingdon Arms pub. The trip was an excellent chance for staff, graduates and undergraduates to get outdoors and appreciate the natural world beyond the context of teaching or research. The second major event came in Hilary

term, with a talk on the origins of life from the biochemist and award-winning writer Nick Lane of University College London. A passionate, captivating and brilliant speaker, Nick Lane attracted major attention and tickets sold out within days of the event's announcement. For Tinbergen Society members, this was followed by a drinks reception and formal dinner.

That evening was a celebration for the Tinbergen Society's return to form, and its revolution. The society now includes all Mertonians whose work relates to biology. Also, anyone from within the Society, rather than just the freshers, can now run for next year's presidency. Expect continued activity from the Tinbergen Society next year and beyond.

Max Flagg (2020)

Tinbergen Society President 2021-22



Chalcenterics

The year for the Chalcenterics started with the first in-person Freshers' Tea since we ourselves were freshers in 2019. It was a great opportunity for students of all years to meet, some for the first time, without screens in the way. We were really excited to meet the new first years and it was a very enjoyable afternoon. The start of Michaelmas also marked the return of Professor Rhiannon Ash from her sabbatical. The students were certainly happy to have her back!

A few weeks into Michaelmas, we took part in a study skills workshop with the freshers, passing on advice about lectures and essays. It was a valuable experience for freshers, postgrads and third years alike, providing a chance to answer any questions as everyone settled into the routines of the new year.

We also organised and held the first Classics Society dinner in Hilary. Thank you very much to everyone who came. It was a wonderful evening and great to see everyone together after so long. It's always fun to hear some of Professor Jonathan Prag's anecdotes about his time at Corpus. Soon after the dinner, it was time for the Mods Tea, an opportunity to wish good luck to the second years who were preparing

to sit their Honour Moderations in 7th and 8th Weeks. Over tea and biscuits, the older years passed on the best advice they could. Congratulations to all the second years for all their hard work this year!

Trinity came and brought the sunshine with it. We spent a lovely Friday afternoon in 3rd Week on the Sundial Lawn for the Chalcenterics Garden Party. Although the wind meant that cups of Pimm's kept flying away, everyone had a great time and it was really nice to be able to bring everyone together once more. Our last event of the term was a Challenging Classics talk hosted in the JCR on the theme of sexuality and emotion across disciplines. It was nice to bring together students from a range of humanities subjects, alongside the tutors, for an informal discussion and sharing of ideas.

With the end of the academic year also comes the time to say some goodbyes. We'd like to say goodbye to Dr Henry Spelman and wish him good luck for everything he goes on to do next.

Rachel Lo and Rachel Jung (both 2019)
Chalcenterics Co-Presidents 2021-22

Interdisciplinary Groups





Ockham Lectures

Ockham lectures (named after William of Ockham, famous for Ockham's razor) are organised once a term by Professor Alexander Schekochihin, for the past and current Merton physics community, as well as sympathisers. Researchers on the frontiers of physics and connected sciences present their work, giving attendees an insight into cutting-edge research and fields which are not covered as part of our degree. Previous topics have ranged from vast scales of cosmology and the Sun, to microscopic objects and quantum mechanics.

The Ockham lectures resumed in Trinity term 2022, ending a two-year hiatus. This lecture strayed from its usual format of having a single lecturer, and instead we had the second Ockham debate in the society's 13-year history. The two debaters, Professor Simon Saunders and Professor Ard Louis, debated whether Physics implies Atheism.

Before the debate, the attendees gathered in the foyer of the TS Eliot Theatre for a reception of wine and orange juice. The

turnout was one of the highest I've ever seen, almost filling the lecture theatre. Whether that was due to the broad appeal of the topic, excitement due to the two-year hiatus or divine intervention, is anyone's guess. The speakers gave a short introductory presentation of their viewpoints, followed by the debate, where the moderator Professor Minhyong Kim asked the questions.

The debaters briefly descended into a meta-debate, discussing how debates of this topic were often unproductive, since everyone talks over each other. Thanks to this, they managed to keep the debate on track. Of course, no one can expect a thousand-year-old philosophical discussion to be settled in under two hours, but the debate certainly managed to spark conversations in the audience, after the debate during Formal Hall, and continuing late into the night in the MCR.

Marcell Szakaly (2018)

Roger Bacon Society Co-President

A close-up, high-magnification photograph of numerous blood cells, likely red blood cells, viewed through a microscope. The cells are circular with a distinct, lighter-colored center (nucleus) and a darker, reddish-brown outer ring (cytoplasm). They are densely packed and overlap, creating a complex, textured pattern. The background is dark and out of focus.

Biomedical and Life Sciences Network

Microscope showing blood cells. Photo ThisisEngineering RAEng on Unsplash

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 instance 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. It continues to grow and now comprises 168 members covering a range of occupations and geographical locations.

The organising committee for the network has also expanded and now consists of myself and Stephanie Cadoux-Hudson (2009) from the alumni and Ethan Prince (2019) and David Bernstein (2019) from the current student body. I would like to thank Isabelle Goodridge (2018), who was instrumental in taking a lead from the students' side of things, for her commitment to and enthusiasm for the network as she steps down from the committee at the end of her Merton student career.

Three online events have been held since last year's report in *Postmaster*.

The first was organised by Ethan and took place on 6 October 2021. It featured two alumni – Dr Jasleen Jolly (2017) and Dr Christian Jorgensen (2007) – speaking about their experiences of DPhil research including the application process, how they

decided to pursue one, their current research, and the benefits it has had for their career. As usual, the presentations were followed by questions and answers with the students who had joined the event hosted on Microsoft Teams.

The second event held on 26 January 2022 focused on the biotech industry with three alumni giving overviews of their careers in that sphere together with some excellent advice to the students. On this occasion, the speakers were Dr Andrew Tustian (1999), Dr Tamara Davenne (2014) and Dr Stephanie Cadoux-Hudson (2009).

Finally, Professor Paul Trippier (2001), Dr Rhona Cox (1993), Dr Giulia Roagna (2017) and Dr Anna Rydzik (2009), four alumni engaged in medicinal chemistry research, in academia and industry, took part in a panel discussion held on 5 May 2022, answering a range of questions about their careers and day-to-day work.

I'm very grateful to all the alumni who have willingly given their time to take part in such events and also to those who have responded to students seeking internship opportunities and careers advice.

If you are 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)



Merton South Asia Network

Launch of the Merton South Asia Network, June 2022

On 16 June, 2022, the Merton South Asia Network (MSAN) was launched in the presence of the Warden, the Chaplain and members of the Development Office. The network creates a platform to connect Mertonians of South Asian origin, past, present and future. Fifteen current Mertonians from the JCR and the MCR were also present at the launch.

During 2021-22, the year in which we emerged from the pandemic (we hope!), the South Asian community at Merton developed into a tightly knit group, having bonded over numerous second desserts and potlucks. Perhaps the period of flux contributed to the genesis of this network, alongside a newly found appreciation for the contributions made by South Asian alumni to Merton throughout the history of the College.

Alumni from the region have had considerable success in various fields since leaving Merton, in the UK as well as abroad. The network will celebrate this legacy and create opportunities for future Mertonians to interact with their predecessors and to be inspired to follow their well-trodden paths.

The launch event was held in the MCR, and featured scrumptious South Asian snacks, all procured locally from 'network favourites' such as Oxon Groceries and Tahmid. The drink of choice was Cobra Beer, which in itself has an origin story rooted in the entrepreneurial endeavours of a South Asian immigrant in the UK, and Rooh Afza for the less alcoholically inclined.

During the event, the Warden highlighted the relevance of networks such as these in attracting future students from the region. Merton has been a warm and welcoming home to current members of the network, and who better than for them to be ambassadors of the College in the years ahead?

As the network develops over the coming terms, the founding members will develop a constitution, engage with the Merton Society and the Development Office to ramp up membership, and plan MSAN's first events for students and alumni.

Surbhi Karwa (2021) and Nagadarsan Suresh (2021)
Merton South Asia Network Co-Founders



History of the Book Group

Leaves from liturgical manuscripts were used as sturdy wrappers for college estates records from the early 17th century

History of the Book Group events were concentrated in Michaelmas term this year, with two well-attended talks concerning different aspects of the production, circulation and survival of medieval books.

On 11 November 2021, in an event sponsored jointly by Merton and the Oxford Bibliographical Society, Dr Julia King (University of Bergen and associate member of Merton's MCR) spoke about 'Syon's abbesses, women's leadership, and book networks in 15th-century England'.

Syon Abbey, founded in 1415 in Isleworth in Middlesex, was a dual monastery of the Brigittine order, comprising men and women (housed separately) in overall charge of an abbess. Syon was extremely wealthy and is well known for its extensive libraries and its close relationships with London printers and late-medieval nobility. Dr King argued that the abbesses played a much more active role in the development of Syon's social and bibliographical networks than has previously been thought. While the wealthy women who joined this popular

convent brought books with them, they also maintained links with family members (often women) who were a source of books for the convent. Several abbesses were also active in obtaining books from London printers such as William Caxton and Wynken de Worde.

On a cold evening later in the same month, Mertonians and guests gathered in the TS Eliot Theatre to hear a talk by Dr Daniel Sawyer, Fitzjames Research Fellow in Medieval English Literature, titled 'Manuscript fragments and manuscript concepts'. Dr Sawyer was a member of an interdisciplinary research team investigating methodologies for estimating the survival rates of narratives and books from medieval Europe.

At one time or another, all those who study medieval books and medieval texts will encounter fragmentary works and/or material fragments of books. Some researchers may be lucky enough to spot evidence of a hitherto unknown text preserved incomplete only on fragments of parchment. This happens only rarely, and when it does it captures the



Dr Sawyer examines fragments from Merton's collections with seminar attendees

imagination of a wider public. In the past generation, the term 'fragmentology' has emerged to denote the study of (primarily medieval) material fragments. If this has already started to sound confusing, that is exactly why Dr Sawyer invited his audience to take a step back and think about the question, 'What do we talk about when we talk about fragments?'

He suggested several helpful distinctions: for example *textual fragments* of works that are known from other evidence to have once existed in a longer or complete version, and, in contrast, *material fragments* — leaves or partial leaves from a medieval book that were later reused in another context, or illuminations cut from manuscripts by 19th-century collectors. Fragments are sometimes cited as evidence of 'lost' books, but such fragments are survivors of *partially* lost books.

Dr Sawyer also observed that very few medieval manuscript books are now in their original state. Equally, many shorter medieval texts circulated for years as unbound gatherings (like pamphlets) before they were bound together with

other works between two covers — so even if these sections have once more become separated from their bindings, they are not really 'fragments'. He suggested that researchers should consider how a material fragment might relate to the structure of the book from which it came. The increasing number of fragments now available as digital images has made it easier for researchers to identify fragments originally from the same volume, and these can helpfully be thought of as belonging to the same 'family'. Digitisation enables scholars to reunite members of these 'families'.

At the conclusion of the thought-provoking talk, the audience had an opportunity to examine some examples of fragments from Merton's library — leaves from liturgical books used to strengthen the bindings of 16th-century printed books or employed as covers for paper notebooks used by the College to keep later administrative and financial records.

Dr Julia Walworth
Fellow Librarian

Departments



The Chapel

With much gratitude and great relief, Chapel life returned to normal during the academic year. Apart from the services and concerts planned for the Christmas vacation, everything ran to schedule, enabling us to welcome significant numbers of people both in person and via YouTube.

It has been particularly encouraging to welcome many new members of the College to Chapel this year, and also to respond to requests for baptism and confirmation. Michaelmas term 2022 will begin with the baptism and/or confirmation of 11 members of the Chapel community. As we have returned to our normal schedule of services we've been greatly assisted by the excellent team of student chapel officers who have worked with Leah Collins, our Verger, to set up for services, welcome people, operate the sound system and livestream our services. I'm grateful to them all and especially, from among this year's leavers, to Kabir Bakshi (2020), Pax Butchart (2019), Lizzy Down (2019) and Liv Jenkins (2019).

Michaelmas term 2021 included its usual highlights of the All Souls' Requiem, the Postmasters' Evensong, at which the address was given by the Dean and Keeper of the Statutes and Bylaws, Fra' John Eidinow, and our Advent and Christmas Carol Services. A particular highpoint for me was the first performance of the carol *Was I the Lamb?*, written by John Rutter to mark my 20th year at the College. The Epiphany Carol Service at the beginning of Hilary term attracted its highest ever congregation, and attendances remained buoyant throughout the year, assisted by increasing numbers of visitors as we moved towards the summer.

On Sunday 8 May the College hosted its first Eid celebration. Working in partnership with Imam Monawar Hussain, High Sheriff of Oxfordshire 2021-22, we invited guests from the local Muslim community, together with representatives from the Lieutenancy of Oxfordshire, and the City and County Councils. Before Evensong, the Sufi Tariqa Burhaniyya processed down Merton Street into the Chapel singing devotional songs. During the service, Imam Hussain gave a moving address on the common ground between Muslims

and Christians in relation to the call to love God and our neighbour. After drinks on the lawn, we moved to the Hall for a celebratory Eid dinner, at which the Warden and the Imam spoke. The event coincided with the opening of the College's new multi-faith prayer room (in St Alban's Quad). It was enthusiastically received by members of College and guests alike, and provides a good model for future collaborations with different faith communities.

Trinity term also saw us return to the Chapel Tower for the sung service on Ascension Day, as well as celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at the Sung Eucharist on feast of Pentecost.

Among episcopal visitors to the College this year, we were very pleased to welcome our Honorary Fellow, the Most Revd Michael Lewis (1972), Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf and Primate of the Province of the Middle East, who preached in Hilary term, and the Rt Revd Willie Pwaisiho, formerly Bishop of Malaita in the Solomon Islands, who helped us to mark the 150th anniversary of the martyrdom of Mertonian Bishop John Coleridge Patteson. Other preachers this year included the Revd Dr Michael Brierley, Director of Formation at Ripon College, Cuddesdon; the Revd Prof William Whyte, Professor of Social and Architectural History at St John's College; Naomi Gardom (2014), who is currently training for ordination at Ripon College; the Revd Dr Laura Biron-Scott, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Headington Quarry; the Very Revd Dr John Hall, formerly Dean of Westminster, who preached on Accession Day; the Revd Emma Dinwiddy Smith, Vicar of St Mary Abbots, Kensington; the Revd Dr Nicholas Bundock, Team Rector of Didsbury; the Revd Canon Dr Joanna Colicutt, Supernumerary Fellow in Psychology of Religion at Harris Manchester College; the Revd Canon Dr Jennifer Strawbridge, GB Caird Fellow in Theology at Mansfield College; the Revd Hannah Cartwright, Assistant Priest at the University Church; and the Revd Dr Michael Lloyd, Principal of Wycliffe Hall.

Choral and organ music of the highest quality continue to enrich the worship offered in the Chapel. Enhanced by its recordings, concert programme and the possibility of reaching

a wider audience through livestreaming, the reputation of the College Choir continues to grow and the Girl Choristers are quickly establishing themselves as a first-class choral ensemble. Their Christmas disc, *In the Stillness: Christmas at Merton*, is scheduled for commercial release later this year. The tireless commitment, dedication and skill of Ben Nicholas, our Director of Music, is the driving force behind all this. In addition to thanking Ben, I'd also like to express my gratitude to our departing organ scholar, Kentaro Machida (2019), for all that he has done to support the Choral Foundation and the worshipping life of the Chapel over the past three years.

Among other members of the Chapel team, Lizzie Casey and Leah Collins support all that we do with great energy and enthusiasm, not least through their work with our girl choristers. Leah will be going on maternity leave at the end of September. She and Jack will be in our prayers as they prepare for the arrival of their baby, and we look forward to welcoming Jen Crompton to the team, who will be covering Leah's role for the next academic year. The Revd Dr Mel Marshall, our Associate Chaplain, has been on maternity leave during Hilary and Trinity terms, and will be leaving Merton at the end of September. She has contributed to the life of the Chapel in a number of different ways, and we wish her, Mark and Clement all the best for the future. Oliver Wright, an ordinand from Wycliffe Hall who was on placement with us last academic year has stayed with us for another three terms, and took on additional responsibilities as Lay Assistant Chaplain to cover Mel's maternity leave. I'm hugely grateful for all that Olly has done during his time with us, liturgically, through his weekly book group, and in supporting those preparing for baptism and confirmation. Olly moves to Keble for his DPhil, and we assure him of our prayers for his research and future ministry. Mel will be replaced by the Revd Lyndon Webb, who is currently serving his title as Assistant Curate of Broadstone, Dorset, in the Diocese of Salisbury. I'm very much looking forward to working with Lyndon, who will be licensed by the Bishop of Oxford at Evensong in the Chapel on 28 September.

I know I'm biased when I say this but, 20 years into the job, I think the Chapel is in reasonably good shape! Do join us in the coming year either in person or online. We look forward to welcoming you.

Welfare and Student Support

The welfare team has also seen several changes in personnel in the past year. Lachlan Hughes joined us last August, working with Alex Brown as Junior Deans for Welfare. I'm very grateful to them both (together with Jenny Barret, the Welfare Adviser, and Tess Johnson, the Deputy Principal of the Postmasters) for ensuring that there's always someone on the end of the welfare mobile when it rings, and enabling us to respond to urgent welfare situations at any time of the day or night. Lachlan will be leaving his welfare role in August, and will be replaced by Philippa Warman, who comes to us from Lincoln College. The year has also seen a change in College Nurse. Lucille Champion retired after several years of exceptional service to the College. She was replaced in Hilary by Sarah Sobo, who was previously a midwife at the John Radcliffe Hospital. At the end of the academic year, we said farewell to Frances Raimo, our Student Support Administrator. Frances was the first person to hold this post and developed it in various directions, supporting large numbers of students as well as the welfare team. The College is in her debt, and we hope to be able to appoint her replacement before the beginning of next term.

At Merton, the welfare and wellbeing of all members of the community remain a priority, and the members of the welfare team work in partnership with our GP practice, the University's Counselling and Disability Advisory Services and a range of private therapists to support our students in different ways. During the course of this year, the focus of the welfare team's work has moved away from Covid-related matters (supporting self-isolating students, and giving advice to reduce the spread of infection and keep the community safe) and back to our core activity. For me, it has felt like getting my old job back, and for that I'm very grateful. Seeing students one-to-one is at the heart of my role, and for the Sarah, the nurse, Jenny, the welfare adviser, and me, it's this that occupies most of our time, and rightly so.

The welfare team has also been busy organising a range of welfare activities. Walks with two of the canine members of the community, Geoffrey Biscuit and Rio, have proved particularly popular this year, as have our weekly doughnut welfare teas. Opportunities for the whole College (students,

academic and support staff) to gather in an informal setting have been appreciated in the wake of Covid, and we hope to develop more of these next year.

At a time when NHS adult mental health services are increasingly stretched, Merton continues to fund private ASD and ADHD assessments for our students, as well as CBT and other forms of talking therapy. Every year we see this make a transformative difference to students who are supported to develop strategies for living and working in a way that enables them to fulfil their potential. This wouldn't be possible without the generosity of alumni. The cost of private assessments and

treatment was a large proportion of the College's total spend of £185,000 on student support this year. I'm always happy to speak to alumni about the difference this money makes to the wellbeing of Merton's students. If you'd like to find out more, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Finally, Merton's welfare provision is a team effort, and I'm grateful to all my colleagues for their dedication to supporting this wonderful community.

The Revd Canon Dr Simon Jones
Chaplain

Baptisms

Elise Elia, daughter of Julian Stevens (1977) and Luisa-Marie Elia, was baptised on 14 August 2021

William Lyon and Oliver Lyon, sons of James Lyon and Jennifer Lyon (2002), were baptised on 21 August 2021

Sebastian Zachariah, son of George Zachariah (1991) and Susanna Mullard, was baptised on 20 March 2022

Sebastian Dafinca, son of Alexandru Dafinca (2006) and Ruxandra Dafinca, was baptised on 13 June 2022

Ordinations

The Revd Alex Banfield Hicks (1999) was ordained priest by the Rt Revd Martyn Minns on 30 October 2021 in the Church of the Ascension, Pittsburgh, where Alex is serving his title (Diocese of Pittsburgh, Anglican Church in North America).

The Revd Dr Henry Hope (2008) was ordained priest by the Bishop of Berwick on 2 July 2022 in Newcastle Cathedral. He is serving his title in the benefice of Hexham Abbey (Diocese of Newcastle).

Weddings

Johannes Moeller (2010) to Charlotte Richards-Taylor on 7 August 2021

Joshua Baldwin (2009) to Eloise Barker (2008) on 4 September 2021

Henry Spelman, Leventis Research Fellow in Ancient Greek, to Christine Sévigny on 5 September 2021

Oliver Lobo to Clare Webb, former Choral Exhibitioner, on 2 April 2022

James Bowling (1994) to Rani Noakes on 3 April 2022
Anthony Ashmore, former Junior Research Fellow in Physics, to Julia Rossi on 11 June 2022

Andrew Doyle (2016) to Megan Hunt on 2 July 2022.
Matthew Martin (2007) to Rebecca Price (2007) on 9 July 2022

Patronage

The Revd Ben Dyson, Pioneer/Associate Minister, South Warwickshire Seven Benefice (Diocese of Coventry) has been appointed Team Rector of the same benefice.

The Revd Rhona Floate, Team Vicar of Whitton and Rural Field Officer in the Wilts Archdeaconry (Diocese of Salisbury) has been appointed Team Rector of the Vale of Pewsey Benefice (Diocese of Salisbury).



At Westminster Abbey, April 2022 © Lizzie Casey

The Choirs

Martin Randall's Oxford Choral Festival in September 2021 provided a welcome opportunity to have the College Choir resident in Oxford for a week when we were able to focus on rebuilding the core repertoire following the disruption of the previous year. Our involvement in the festival included singing Matins (at 1am) with the Lay Clerks of Westminster Cathedral, as part of a day devoted to the Divine Office, and a concert performance of Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* at the Church of St John the Evangelist with Sophie Bevan and the Instruments of Time and Truth.

Cheryl Frances-Hoad's period as Visiting Research Fellow in the Creative Arts has been enormously productive, and the choir has been fortunate to premiere both the *Merton Service* and the *Merton Responses* during this year, the latter receiving their first performance as part of the Oxford Lieder Festival. It was fitting that we were able to include the *Merton Responses* in one of two broadcasts that we recorded for BBC Radio 3 in early November. Cheryl has continued to connect with the Girl Choristers and has included some of their ideas in a setting of the Evening Canticles which she is currently writing for them to premiere in the autumn. Another notable premiere was of *Was I the Lamb?* with music by John Rutter and words by Marc Bratcher, written to mark the 20th anniversary of Simon Jones' arrival as Chaplain of Merton. It was a great pleasure

to welcome John Rutter to Merton on 16 January when he conducted his new carol as part of the Epiphany Carol Service.

The College Choir received several invitations to give concerts during the year. In November, the choir joined conductor Graham Ross to perform Handel's *Saul* in a concert sponsored by the Morris-Venables Charitable Foundation. In the same month, the choir performed Mozart's *Requiem* in the Sheldonian Theatre with the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra, and the final concert of the year took place in Gloucester Cathedral as part of the Cheltenham Music Festival, and included a new commission by Andrew Chen, alongside works by Poulenc, Part and Tavener.

After an enforced break of two years, it was particularly good to re-establish the Passiontide at Merton festival in April. Thanks to the generosity of David Ure (1965), the opening concert took place in the Sheldonian Theatre, and included Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* performed by the College Choir, the Girl Choristers and Florilegium. Concerts by the Gesualdo Six and Margaret Phillips attracted large audiences, and the final concert of the weekend, on the afternoon of Palm Sunday, included two world premieres from Francis Grier: the College Choir sang *Osanna filio David*, and Stephen Farr played Grier's new organ cycle *A Celebration for All Saints*. Ivan Hewitt, writing



Recording session with Britten Sinfonia © foxbrush.co.uk

in the *Daily Telegraph*, was full of praise for the College Choir's contribution to the festival, finding the performance of Howells and Finzi at the Festival Evensong to be 'wonderfully sung, the choir's radiant fullness of tone yielding nothing to Oxford's more famous ancient choral foundations'.

The continued generosity of the Reed Foundation enabled the choir to record a disc of English music with the Britten Sinfonia. The repertoire included music by Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Howells and Finzi and will be released in June 2023. A number of these pieces have been recorded in their orchestral versions for the first time, and I am grateful to the editors of *The Complete Elgar Edition* for making the orchestral parts available before their publication in 2024. We have also recorded a CD of music for Advent and Christmas for *BBC Music Magazine* which will be released with the December issue.

Following the pandemic, it has been particularly good to focus on developing our relationships with schools in Oxford and beyond. On 10 February, we were able to hold a Choral Day for potential choral scholars from as far afield as Scotland, and in March we spent two days visiting schools in the College's link areas of Swindon and Bath. We also hosted Dean Close School Chamber Choir and Gloucester Cathedral Youth Choir to sing joint services with the College Choir.

The Choristers have made a significant contribution to worship in chapel this year, not only singing Evensong on Wednesdays during term, but also joining the College Choir for the Epiphany Carol Service and singing for a service to mark the 40th anniversary of the Archway Foundation. A highlight of their year was undoubtedly the visit to Westminster Abbey to sing Evensong on Saturday 23 April, preceded by a boat trip from Greenwich to Westminster. I am enormously grateful to David Harvey (1957) for his generous financial support of the Choristers.

Our organ scholars, Kentaro Machida (2019) and Owen Chan (2020), have been a great support this year, and Kentaro leaves with our best wishes as he takes up a post at Magdalen College School and pursues his conducting studies. Leah Collins and Elizabeth Casey work incredibly hard on behalf of both choirs, and I would also like to thank Mel Marshall, Oliver Wright and, above all, Simon Jones, for their support of the music, and for making the Chapel the thriving community that it is.

Benjamin Nicholas

Reed Rubin Organist and Director of Music



The Library

Burnt Book II – a sculpture that started as a real book

Merton acquired two particularly noteworthy books this year – and the value of both lies beyond their contents.

The first conveys an important message but cannot be read because it is made of bronze. The sculpture, *Burnt Book II*, by Oxford artist Lydia Segrave began life as a real book that was burnt as part of the process of creating an unusual and thought-provoking work of art.

The inspiration for Burnt Book II

In 2001 while listening to the BBC World Service, I heard a reporter describe the effect of seeing a village in Afghanistan razed to the ground by the invading Taliban. The only remaining evidence of civilisation was the sight of a smouldering book lying on the ground, the pages of which were blowing in the wind. It left such a powerful image that I was determined to capture it in bronze, both to serve as a reminder of this war and of the other deliberate acts of book burning throughout history.

To create the sculpture, I had to commit the same sin and burn a book – with care, as I needed to retain the bulk of the pages. These I painted with molten wax, supporting the individual pages as they set. The foundry then divided the wax piece into sections so that several moulds could be made for casting in bronze. The bronze pages were then reassembled to create the finished sculpture.

Lydia Segrave

It seems particularly appropriate that at Merton, known for its historic library and archive, we should keep alive an awareness that books and other cultural treasures have a fragile existence and remain under threat in many areas of the world today. We owe this special work of art to the

generosity of Emeritus Fellow Vijay Joshi.

The second special accession is a printed book that has survived from the personal collection of a notorious Mertonian, Henry Cuffe (1563–1601). Cuffe, who became a Fellow of Merton in 1586 and was later Regius Professor of Greek, is known today not so much for his Greek studies as for his unfortunate end. Having become private secretary to Robert Devereux, Cuffe was implicated in the Essex rebellion against Queen Elizabeth and hanged at Tyburn in 1601. The newly acquired volume, which joins several other books at Merton that previously belonged to Cuffe, is the first printed edition in Greek of some of the works of the philosopher Philo of Alexandria. It bears Cuffe's ownership inscription, and the 16th-century binding incorporates parchment leaves, from a 15th-century manuscript, that undoubtedly require some further investigation (see the History of the Book Group report).

Many of the historic manuscripts and printed books in the Merton Library were 'previously owned' – usually by men. They include inscriptions, signatures and sometimes annotations that bear witness to their histories before they came to the college. When Oxford postgraduate Jake Arthur requested permission to examine books in the Merton Library for signs of ownership by *women*, the entire library team were intrigued and enthusiastic about helping out. If a researcher could accumulate loyalty points, Jake (now Dr) Arthur would have earned a Platinum Card at Merton.

The Early Modern Women's Marginalia project

Although I have consulted nearly 535 titles at the Merton College Library, I was nonetheless surprised when Fellow Librarian Dr Julia Walworth told me I may have seen more of Merton's collection than any other researcher. What have I gleaned from turning all those pages, examining all those bindings, feeling the heft of all those volumes?

What first comes to mind is a new appreciation for the art of print. The weight and variety of the 16th- and 17th-century codices cannot help but evoke the controlled chaos of the early modern print house. The unwieldy machines, the delicate letter setting, the labyrinthine ordering of pages in gatherings and with signature marks. All that labour and craft is immediately apparent when handling an early modern book. This is especially true of imposing folio volumes with which Merton Library is so replete, including bibles, historical chronicles, maps of the world – even a volume with fold-out pyramids.

These oversized pages leave space in the margins, and it is these that led me to Merton in the first place. I am working on a project, led by Professor Rosalind Smith at the Australian National University, about the book ownership and book *use* of early modern women: especially their writing of marginalia – the notes, drawings, scribbles and doodles they add to their books.

Merton may not sound the most likely port of call. Many of its books were bought or gifted to the College around the time of their publication and may not have been handled

by a woman until the late 20th century, when women were admitted to the College. A select few, however, must have taken a different path into the library, because they show traces of women's ownership and women's writing.

The most frequent thing these women readers do is sign their name, writing for example 'Isabella Snapes her book' or simply a name, like 'Elizabeth Groome'. Elizabeth signs many times in *The Sickemans salve*, a book of Christian comfort. She may also be responsible for transcribing into the book a poetic lament, which begins 'Joy to the person of my love though her do me disdain'. These kinds of poems were extremely popular with women and men alike, but whether Elizabeth was the disdaining or the disdained party is tantalisingly out of reach.

A surprising find was the repeated signature 'Margaret Kent' in a Latin-language copy of Seneca's tragedies, published in 1678. As the century progressed, women's literacy increased dramatically, but they were rarely taught Latin. Kent may have been an exception; certainly she lays claim to the book, adding not only her signatures but a decorative rendering of the word 'Seneca' on a front flyleaf.

It is the mission of the Early Modern Women's Marginalia project to bring together this fragmentary evidence and to construct a history of women's reading – and women's writing while reading. Merton's unique collection has given us more pieces of that puzzle.

Jake Arthur

Jake Arthur was just one among many researchers who were able to resume their work in person this year, making full use of the newly refurbished consultation space made by possible by the generosity of John Mitnick (1985). It was a pleasure to welcome them back along with the many Merton students who filled the two libraries.

In fact for some years now it has often been difficult to find a vacant seat in the libraries. This situation is due to change,

however: the College is beginning the exciting process of designing a new library that will welcome students, members of the College and visitors. Future issues of *Postmaster* will track the progress of this project.

Dr Julia Walworth

Fellow Librarian



Lucy Hatch at work

Picture conservation project June–July 2022

In early summer, the Beerbohm Room was converted into a temporary photographic studio for a special conservation project sponsored jointly by the Oxford Conservation Consortium (OCC) and Merton. Over the course of four weeks, Lucy Hatch, a conservation student from the

University of Northumbria, recorded and photographed 78 framed items from Merton's collections. Selected items were taken to the OCC studio for treatment. Verity Parkinson, Merton's Resource Services & Support Librarian, guided and organised the work from the Merton end.



Donations to the Library and Archives 2021-22

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

An annotated manuscript score of *The Merton Fanfare* donated by its composer, Cheryl Frances-Hoad (VRF in the Arts 2021-2022)

A copy of Joseph Hall's *Resolutions and Decisions of Divers Practicall Cases of Conscience*. 1650, with the ownership inscription of Edmund Gregory (Merton 1651), donated by Nicholas Fisher (VRF 2008)

Touchstones in Time: Poetry Dedicated to the Memory of Roger Highfield, Merton Fellow 1948 by Lynne Wycherley (Library Assistant 2003-2012) [privately printed], donated by the author

The original typescript of *Dr Griffin Higgs and Merton College Library* with notes, by P.S. Morrish (Assistant Librarian 1959-1965), donated by his daughter Sarah Hilton

Student memorabilia including chapel cards, Merton student newsletter, invitations, etc., donated by Gabrielle Higgins (1996)

Records and student memorabilia including JCR Steward and President's papers, 1961-63, donated by Nicholas Woodward (1960)

Merton Commemoration Ball programme, 20 June 1960, donated by Howard Wright (1957)

Draft of *Among the Archives*, poem by Lynne Wycherley (Library Assistant 2003-2012), donated by the author

Grateful thanks for gifts and support are extended to:

Rhiannon Ash (Fellow), Pieter Beullens, Corpus Christi College, Green Templeton College, Kirsty Gunn (VRF in the Arts 2020), Peter Hay (1963), Hertford College, Jesus College, Simon Jones (Chaplain and Fellow), Peter Jordaen, Keble College, Peter Francis Kornicki, Henrike Lähnemann, David Roland Leighton, Jason McElligott (Lyell Research Fellow 2005-2008), Chris Nicholls, John Randle, Jessica Rawson (Warden 1994-2010), Brian Roberts-Wray (1956), Dr Paul Saenger, Benjamin Schneider (2014), Somerville College, St Antony's College, Mark Synnott, Lorna May Wadsworth, Julia Walworth (Fellow Librarian), Elia Weinbach (1967), Robert Whelan, Worcester College Library

We also thank Mertonians who have given the college copies of their publications:

Allen, RH (1967). *The Legend of the Collector's Clock* ([no publisher information], 2021)
 _____. *Murder at the Restoration* ([no publisher information], 2021)
 _____. *Murder in a Time of Fire* ([no publisher information], 2021)
 _____. *Just One Look* ([no publisher information], 2021)
 _____. *Carillon* ([no publisher information], 2022)
 _____. *The Road to Nowhere* ([no publisher information], 2022)

Azhar, A (1990). *Exponential: How Accelerating Technology is Leaving Us Behind and What to Do About It* (London: Random House Business, 2021)

Quillen, DG and G Blower (JRF 1989–1992). *Topics in Cyclic Theory* (Cambridge University Press, 2020)

Bott, A (1953). *A History of the Churches of Hambledon, Busbridge & Farncombe, Milford & Haslemere* ([no publisher information], 2022)

Cooke, P (1952). *One Man's Journey: A Life Recalled* ([Gerrards Cross]: [William Peter Cooke], 2017)

Currie, JP (1971). *Opening Up Romans* (Leominster: DayOne Publications, 2022)

English, G (1963) (contributor). In The Arts Society Falmouth (sponsor) *Origins of Cornish Exotic Gardens: A Myth Questioned* (Falmouth: Arts Society Falmouth, 2017)

Frances-Hoad, C (VRF in the Arts 2021–2022). *Everything Grows Extravagantly: For Baritone and Piano. Vocal Score* (London: Chester Music, 2021)
 _____. *The Merton Responses: For SATB choir unaccompanied*. (London: Chester Music, 2022)
 _____. *Scenes from the Wild: For Tenor and Piano Reduction. Vocal Score* (London: Chester Music, 2021)

Garfitt, R (1963). *The Action* (Manchester: Carcanet, 2019)

Grimley, DM (Fellow of the College). *Jean Sibelius: Life, Music, Silence* (London: Reaktion Books, 2021)

Gunn, K (VRF in the Arts 2020) (writer of introduction). C Rosetti, *Goblin Market* (London: Batsford, 2021)
 _____. (ed.). *Such a Sweet Singing: Poetry to Empower Every Woman* (London: Batsford, 2021)

He, Y-H (Fitzjames Research Fellow in Mathematics 2005–2009; Lecturer in Mathematics). *The Calabi-Yau Landscape: From Geometry, to Physics, to Machine Learning* (Cham: Springer, 2021)

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

The Archives

Reference to the calendar for the past year confirms the perception that life in the archives, as elsewhere, has in many ways returned to normal following the disruptions of the past couple of years. We have been pleased to re-open the doors of Mob Library to researchers wishing to access all areas of the College's special collections: not just the archives but also the manuscripts, and rare and early printed books. Those researchers have also returned, as perhaps one might expect, in numbers exceeding those before the pandemic. In the months of August 2021 to July 2022 we hosted 138 visits, compared with the 106 visits made during the same period in 2016-17, and 125 visits in 2018-19. Visiting researchers have also been able to enjoy the improved facilities of a renewed reading room in Mob Library kindly sponsored by John Mitnick in memory of his father, and reported about in more detail in the Merton Messenger of December 2021.

Among the researchers working in the archives in recent months has been a project officer from The National Archives (TNA) revising the Manorial Documents Register. Manorial estates had been in existence since at least the early Middle Ages but ceased to have any meaningful existence following the passing of the Law of Property Act in 1922. During their long existence, manors had generated many records, dispersed across the country. In 1926 the Master of the Rolls established the Register as a central inventory of the existence and whereabouts of manorial documents in England and Wales. It has been revised intermittently and since 2003 it has been maintained by TNA. TNA is currently undertaking a pilot project to assess the feasibility of revising in full the Register of manorial records held by the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. Historically, Merton owned estates in several counties, including Oxfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Surrey, Leicestershire, Essex and Yorkshire and, as a result, the archives hold records relating to at least 23 manors. Merton is one of the colleges participating in the pilot, which has already highlighted a number of anomalies, such as the fact that a late-nineteenth century cataloguer had failed to distinguish between two separate manors owned by Merton in the village of Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire. It has also confirmed, what has long been suspected, that earlier historians concentrated on

medieval records, as the stuff of 'real' history, while ignoring later records. Should the pilot lead to a full-scale project, a large step will have been taken in identifying and promoting manorial records of the post-medieval period.

The return to normality has also been demonstrated by the return of old Mertonians to celebratory events, such as Anniversary Lunches and Gaudies. Due to the pandemic, there were no such events in 2020, so 2021-22 has been a bumper year, with special anniversary lunches for the Freshers of 1960 and 1961, and 1970 and 1971, as well as a Gaudy for the years 1987-91. It is always interesting preparing displays of archival material for such events, selecting photographs, and documents such as JCR minutes and suggestion books. The minutes of the Merton Floats from the 1960s are always a rich mine as they were treated as a scrap book, with the minutes of administrative and production meetings interspersed with playbills, programmes, photos and performance reviews. Mertonians who matriculated in 1961 were also in residence for the College's septcentenary in 1964, which provided an opportunity to display items relating to that occasion, including the autograph score of Zoltan Kodaly's *The Music Makers*, commissioned for the occasion. The Gaudy also marked the time at Merton of one Irene Tracey who was, appropriately, captured in action in the women's First Torpid in 1992. One final observation is that, at some time between 1964 and 1987, Merton, photographically at least, moved from black and white to colour!

Between the return of researchers and the mounting of displays, the everyday work of the archives has continued, balancing the answering of enquiries from both within and without the College, and receiving new accessions of records to the archives and recording them. Some of the accessions are of an expected kind, such as the annual transfer of records from the Academic Office, or the occasional transfer of records from departments occasioned by a turnover of staff or reallocation of office space. Less expected were the decommissioned College flag and the model of the new garden bench in the Bastion, created as a prototype by the seat's maker, Philip Koomen. We are grateful too to old



Mertonians who have responded to appeals for memorabilia from their time at Merton and which help fill gaps in our records of student life over the past 60 years. Further details of gifts to the archives are included in the list of Donations to the Library and Archives appended to the Library Report.

Topographical and biographical enquiries have featured again this year, including Kibworth and Barkby (both in Leicestershire), Cuxham (Oxfordshire), Leatherhead (Surrey) and the former Merton Arms public house in Cambridge. Enquiries about Mertonians, interpreted in the widest sense, have included Nobel Laureate Frederick Soddy, the rooms occupied by T.S. Eliot, Russian students at Merton in the eighteenth century, James Rochford Maguire and the Oxford Home Rule Club in the 1870s, the household of Henrietta Maria while resident at Merton, and the Hale and Kirkpatrick families of college servants in the nineteenth century.

This year I was pleased to be able to offer once more a workshop for first-year historians at the end of Michaelmas term, looking at a range of original documents from the archives. The annual class for second-year history students preparing to research their dissertations was similarly able to go ahead in person at the start of Trinity. Finally, having closed my report last year by stating that we had been unable to host Year 12 History students from Robert Smyth Academy, Market Harborough, for the second year in a row, I am pleased to be able to report that we welcomed 13 students and two teachers to Merton in early July. Their engagement and enthusiasm were one of the highlights of the archival year. "Welcome back!"

Julian Reid
Archivist



Development and Alumni Relations

We have emerged from the pandemic to what feels like normality – but with some serious catching up to do.

In terms of events, the year began with a happy gathering for the Merton Society Garden Party held in College in September 2021. Following this, we re-established Golden and Diamond (50 and 60 year) Reunions, organised drinks in London, and relaunched the annual Merton Society Carol Service in the City of London. In December, we gathered with Mertonians in New York, where a social event was generously hosted by Amna Naseer (1997) in her beautiful Manhattan home.

We began 2022 by holding our first Gaudy in two years and 'road show' events in Bath and Edinburgh. In Trinity term, we

hosted the first ever Returners' Dinner for the 2021 leavers, a Finalists' dinner for 2020 leavers, a Merton Family Lunch for Freshers, an MCR Garden Party for recent graduate leavers and a Merton Society Annual Lecture in London, with Dr Gwen Burnyeat, Junior Research Fellow in Anthropology, as the speaker. Thanks go to Patrick Long (1995) for generously hosting the Lecture at Lazard & Co. in their Mayfair offices.

Trinity ended with the Merton Society Weekend, which included a lunch and panel discussion celebrating 40 years of women at Merton (see page 123 for details). The panel was chaired by Philippa Whipple (1984, Honorary Fellow), who also gave an insightful and reflective speech at the lunch. Particular thanks must go to Philippa, Mark Davison (1978),

Greg Lim (2006) and all Merton Society Council members for their engagement in the Weekend and for everything they do all year round.

New initiatives come from the Society all the time. This has included the launch of a mentoring scheme for young alumni and an expansion of the subject-based discussion groups, linking alumni, students, and Fellows. The Biomedical and Life Sciences Network, curated by David Clark (1984), acts as a particular inspiration.

It really has been an exciting and liberating year. We were pleased to round it off in July 2022 with further events in San Francisco, with thanks to Mike (1975) and Margaret McCaffery, and in Los Angeles where we were kindly hosted by Timothy Potts (1985) and Jeffrey Spier (1983) at the Getty Villa. As I write, we are preparing for the imminent Choir tour to the US, where we look forward to holding several events on the East Coast. More on this in the next Postmaster!

In fundraising terms, we have surpassed the previous year, raising more than £4 million in new gifts and pledges in 2021-22. This is an impressive result – the strongest since the 750th Anniversary Campaign – and a testament to Mertonians' generosity and commitment to the College.

The conclusion of the £1 million campaign to endow the Michael Baker Tutorship in Physics, whose first holder is Professor Simon Hooker, was a major highlight. Support for graduate students was also a particular focus. We funded two brand new endowed Graduate Scholarships, with the support of alumni and University match-funding. We are grateful to Sir Howard Stringer (1961, Honorary Fellow) for fully funding one of the scholarships and to John Booth (1976, Wyliot Fellow) for leading a syndicate of ten Mertonians to finance the other, with helpful added support from MC3. Additionally, we were delighted to receive further generous support from Reed Rubin (1957) for the College Choir.

Last November, we launched with MC3 a special 'menu' of fundraising projects for their annual appeal. We owe a debt of gratitude to Nick Allard (1974), Bob McKelvey (1959), Amna Naseer (1997) and MC3 Administrator Thom Yu for their leadership of the alumni community in the Americas.

We were delighted to learn that MC3 received remarkable support to the tune of \$1.53 million in the 2021 calendar year.

A revised fundraising menu was relaunched for Mertonians outside the US in July 2022. It featured seven key projects: the Library Medieval Stained Glass appeal, support for a Ukrainian graduate scholarship and an at-risk academic, a campaign for a new women's rowing boat, the Black Academic Futures and Reach Scholarships, the meadows rewilding campaign, and instrumental bursaries for our Girl Choristers. Thank you warmly to everyone who supported these appeals with such generosity and enthusiasm.

We have curated two Telethons this year, whose combined total of nearly £250,000 makes this one of the best years yet. 95% of our 2022 undergraduate leavers opted to support the second ever leavers' gift with a donation of £12.64 each, and once again the total sum has been kindly match-funded by Mustafa Abbas (1990).

Our next mission is to fundraise for a new library, about which many will have heard the Warden speak with energy and passion. Watch this space!

I would like to finish by paying tribute to my colleagues in the Development team who have gone beyond the extra mile – Milos, Krista, Gaby, Emily, Olivia and Mark. I also thank the entire Fellowship for their support and advocacy. Last, but by no means least, I must mention the Warden. Irene, you are a lightning conductor. You have propelled the College forward with optimism, purpose, fun and laughter. We will miss working with you and wish you every success in your new role as Vice-Chancellor from 1st January 2023.

Thank you again to everyone for supporting the College and looking after the future of this remarkable community of scholars.

Mark Coote

Development Director



Academic Office

The 2021-22 academic year has been one in which we've collectively taken steps back to normality after the challenges posed by the pandemic. Those steps have sometimes seemed minor while others, for example an almost normal freshers' week and resuming in-person Warden's collections, have felt significant. The transition has not always been easy for all members of our community but we've worked together to revive old practices and traditions, and to reinvigorate face-to-face learning and wider student experiences.

Michaelmas term was the term of two halves. Incremental changes were evident and the College took steps to ensure that it was well placed if the return of our students after the summer caused any short-term operational challenges. For the first time since January 2020, in-person collections were held in 0th Week in preparation for the expected return to pre-pandemic examination arrangements later in the academic year. As some online formats were expected to continue, Rachel Wilkins did a fantastic job of managing

a very complex set of arrangements catering for a number of different assessment types. We welcomed three new members of staff to the team over the course of the term. Fiona Paterson joined as our new Schools Liaison and Access Officer, Joe Daniel as the new Admissions Officer and Oliver (Ollie) Gamble as the new Academic Officer. Joe's and Fiona's arrival coincided with the start of the busy admissions period and the second year of online interviews. Getting to grips with new processes and bespoke IT systems at speed was undoubtedly a challenge and I'm grateful to them for their hard work and to all our tutors who provided invaluable insights into the variances of their subjects.

Michaelmas also saw the University transition to a new tutorial reporting system and, despite having joined only recently, Ollie played a crucial role in helping with the college implementation. After five years with the College, Katy Fifield left her role as Academic Registrar for pastures new. Her skills, knowledge and compassion were highly appreciated by colleagues and students alike and we wish her every success in the next stage of her career. Throughout these changes, Julie Gerhardt, who has been with the College in a number of roles for over 30 years, used her amazing knowledge of Merton and the University to help the Academic Office team through its transitional arrangements.

Hilary began with some uneasiness about the Omicron variant but the term soon settled into its usual pattern. In February we welcomed a new Academic Registrar, Jemma Underdown, who brings a wealth of experience to Merton from her previous Oxford role and who we look forward to working with. As term ended, the demise of the University's Covid testing service and the disappearance of Chestnut Hall signalled further steps towards normality. Watching the Chestnut Lawn transformed from a patch of mud to a lush green lawn through the windows of the Academic Office seemed to be a suitable metaphor for new beginnings and the summer term.

The start of Trinity saw the arrival of a new Tutor in Philosophy, Professor Daniela Dover, who joined us from UCLA. After two years of online assessment, the majority of undergraduate and graduate examinations returned to in-person sittings and Merton Street and the High Street were once again busy

with students in subfusc chatting about their papers. Late in the year, we received formal notification that Merton was at the top of the 2020-21 Norrington Table, reflecting the hard work and academic commitment of our undergraduates and tutors in what have been challenging years. Our graduate students have also demonstrated impressive academic performance and the ability, where necessary, to adapt their DPhil projects in response to restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Term ended with two in-person open days that saw over 2,500 visitors come through Merton's doors and it was a joy to have them. As ever, our student ambassadors were crucial to the success of the events. They were unfailingly helpful and cheerful throughout, even as the rain set in on day two. We also said farewell to Merton's fabulous Student Support Officer, Frances Raimo, who was the first to hold the post, providing administrative support to the welfare team and advising students on the various funding schemes available through College and the University. She will be much missed by those who have benefited from her help over the years. The long vacation sees the departure of two of our wonderful tutors, Professor Luke Ong (who has taken up a new role as Professor of Computer Science at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore) and Professor Simon Saunders, who will be retiring. We shall miss them a great deal, as will those who have benefited from their teaching and guidance over the years.

It is my sincere hope that my fourth contribution to the *Postmaster* in 2023 will not include the word 'pandemic' and will instead simply be a celebration of the individual academic triumphs of our students, at whatever level, of the work of their tutors, and of the opportunities and resources provided by Merton to enable all those who study here to reach their potential and to thrive.

Dr Jane Glover
Senior Tutor



Schools Liaison and Access

Merton's access and outreach programme has continued to develop and evolve over the past academic year, as we have enjoyed the opportunity to run our virtual events established during the pandemic alongside a welcome return to in-person visits from schools and colleges. Through this hybrid approach, we have reached thousands of students throughout the south west and beyond, spreading the message that Oxford and Merton are diverse, welcoming and supportive communities. Following a webinar, one Year 12 told us they were pleased to see that Oxford 'actually had students from different walks of life studying different subjects, so we got a clear idea that there was no such thing as an Oxford or Cambridge "type"'.

This year saw the continuation of the College's partnership with the Social Mobility Foundation (SMF), a UK-wide charity that aims to make practical improvements to the social mobility of young people by providing opportunities and networks to sixth form students who can't get these elsewhere. With the generous help of Merton's academics and student ambassadors, we have been able to provide a programme including webinars with application advice,

a mini-lecture series and interview skill workshops, which culminated in a residential visit to Merton in June, where more than 20 Year 12s were given the opportunity to experience college life and develop the skills necessary to make a competitive university application. We are looking forward to continuing our work with the SMF over the next academic year.

We have also worked closely with our colleagues at Robinson, Trinity and Downing colleges in Cambridge to provide a range of virtual and in-person outreach events. We worked together to deliver our annual Oxford and Cambridge Information Days, which provide information and advice sessions for potential applicants as well as for their teachers and supporters. Merton and Robinson also embarked on a tour of schools in Swindon, visiting pupils from Year 9 to Year 13 at six schools and colleges across the area.

We are currently collaborating with Robinson to create a 'thinking skills' workshop series, designed to help pupils develop strong critical thinking skills, as well as allow the colleges to form longer-term relationships with groups of pupils at an



earlier stage in their academic journeys. The workshops are being piloted at the Deanery Academy in Swindon with a Year 9 group, who are being encouraged to create and answer their own 'big questions' about the world around them. We have delivered three workshops virtually and at the Deanery, and the pupils are looking forward to concluding the programme with a visit to Merton in the autumn.

The easing of restrictions has happily allowed us to resume our visits to schools, and in March Merton embarked on an exciting joint outreach and choir trip in Bath and Swindon, which offered school choirs the opportunity to sing with the Merton College Choir, hear more about choral scholarships and being part of an Oxford choir, and chat to current Merton students about life at university. The trip concluded with a joint performance by the Merton and Bath Abbey choirs, which included many school pupils from the surrounding areas. A Year 9 pupil at the Dorcan Academy in Swindon said that singing with the choir showed them that 'university is more than just studying and going to lectures'.

We have also been fortunate to see a return to in-person

open days this summer, and thousands of potential applicants came from across the country and abroad to see the College, hear from our tutors and current students, and enjoy some ice cream. We received positive feedback from visitors who commented on how friendly and welcoming they found Merton to be. We are very grateful to the students and tutors whose enthusiasm and hard work enabled the days to be such a success.

As we move towards the next academic year, we look forward to meeting more pupils and teachers both online and in person, and welcoming many more school groups to Merton, as well as continuing our productive relationships with the SMF and our colleagues in Cambridge. Outreach work at Merton could not take place without the generosity of our academics, graduates and team of more than 30 student ambassadors, who have helped to give tours, deliver lectures, sit on Q&A panels and lead workshops. We look forward to their continued involvement in 2022-23.

Fiona Paterson
Schools Liaison & Access Officer



The Warden gives an address at the retirees' garden party in June 2022
© Simon Cope

Domestic Bursary

At the end of an academic year that has seen the restrictions necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic being gradually and – we hope – permanently lifted, I am once again both pleased and privileged to be able to thank the College staff for their outstanding contribution over the past year in continuing to deliver to the very highest standard.

The summer of 2021 was not only cooler than it is at the time of writing, it was also the second year running that the College's conference activity was effectively shut down by the pandemic. Restrictions on international travel, and continued concerns regarding the vulnerability of some of our regular conference delegates, meant that we faced another year of empty rooms and lost income.

Things started to brighten in Michaelmas term as, to the delight of us all, students were able to return and freshers commence their life at Merton, albeit with social distancing arrangements still in place to protect members of the community and, crucially, our ability to sustain operations.

Although the rules had been relaxed, they were still in force, meaning for example that guests were not permitted to dine in College, and that proof of a negative Covid-19 test was required to gain admission to bops. Thanks to the temporary marquee which had been lovingly christened Chestnut Hall, we were able to reopen the College bar, with app-based ordering and table service. College dinners recommenced, with formals on four nights of most weeks.

Disappointingly, towards the end of Michaelmas this all started to look like a false dawn, as despite the rollout of the vaccine programme in which Oxford played such a critical role, the threat from the highly infectious Omicron variant increased. By the end of the Christmas vacation and the start of Hilary this impelled us once again to reduce food services as we reintroduced social distancing measures in our kitchen and dining teams, and at formal halls, and to suspend society dinners to enable these teams to focus on core meal services and supporting College members having to self-isolate. We also decided to extend our rental of Chestnut Hall through to Easter.

Thankfully by 4th Week the Covid-19 situation had improved to the extent that we were able to ease restrictions and teams could return to normal working arrangements. By Easter on-site working had resumed across all departments, and after 18 months we – and especially the students who had enjoyed its undoubted ambience to the full – bid a fond farewell to Chestnut Hall as it was disassembled and craned away over the ancient city walls at the end of term.

That I have little to say about Trinity term is remarkable given the huge disruption of the preceding two years. Suffice it to say that normal service, including Schools Dinners, was resumed – no news is indeed good news. One major event that brought the whole community together was the Platinum Jubilee Picnic in the Park that we organised in conjunction with Christ Church. Around 600 Fellows, staff and students from both colleges enjoyed an afternoon on Merton Field, with picnic bags and free ice creams provided, and a steel band and jazz ensemble providing musical entertainment.

In June we welcomed back a number of those who had retired while the pandemic restrictions were in effect, and who had consequently missed out on celebrating their years of service with their colleagues. On a day of brilliant sunshine, Natalia Harris, Glenda Norridge, Lyn Pullen, Clive Shackell and Iain Walker – who between them can boast an extraordinary 84 years of service – returned to enjoy a garden party in the company of family, friends and former workmates. The Warden presented each of them with a token of gratitude for all that they had done for the College, and we also raised a glass to Lesley Walsh and Julian Tomkins, who were unable to join us on the day.

On the subject of retirement, we recently learnt that Mike Wender will be hanging up his apron and retiring in September after 23 years as the College's Head Chef. During Mike's tenure, the kitchen team have produced thousands of meals enjoyed by College members, guests and alumni. We are naturally very sorry to be losing Mike, and we wish him a long and happy retirement; he is, of course, irreplaceable, but recruitment is underway to appoint his successor.

Now as we head into the summer we are welcoming back record numbers of conference guests, finally able to travel

from as far afield as California to enjoy the unrivalled surroundings and unparalleled service at Merton. Staff social events have recommenced, with end-of-term briefings, coffee mornings, bar evenings; and we are planning an afternoon boat trip along the Thames in late August.

The long vacation brings with it an opportunity to carry out maintenance work that is so essential to the continued safe and smooth running of the College. Two large-scale projects are underway.

A major survey of the College's Oxford estate is being carried out by a team of expert building surveyors; they will be visiting 133 properties, and an estimated 1,120 rooms, in order to document the individual condition, compliance and energy performance of our buildings and service infrastructure. They will employ drones to record high-level aerial images of building roofs, chimneys, lead work and guttering, and thermographic imagery to identify areas of significant heat loss. In conjunction with this condition survey, each building is being laser-measured, providing us with a full and accurate set of electronic drawings and floorplans. The findings from this exercise will be used to develop a ten-year refurbishment plan and cost forecast.

After a year of pre-planning, the fire alarm systems in Fellows 3 & 4 are being renewed during the long vacation. Before the building contractors started work, all the residents living and working in the two staircases had to be moved out – the equivalent of 23 individual house moves. The new system will comply with the latest fire safety legislation and will be connected directly to the Porters' Lodge.

As we look forward to the successful completion of these projects, and to the cooler weather of Michaelmas heralding the start of what we earnestly hope will be a 'normal' academic year, I would like to reiterate my thanks to all the College staff for their extraordinary efforts and the resilience that they have shown over the past two years.

Tim Lightfoot
Domestic Bursar



The Gardens

Our new bee: *Colletes daviesanus* © Richard Paton

For the first time we had groups of student volunteers helping in the gardens, a new venture for us. We were unsure what they would expect to be doing, whether it was more for a mindfulness activity than horticulture lesson, but they all seemed to get a lot from it. Seasonal tasks included planting out bedding, dead heading Iris, cutting back spent bulb foliage, spreading bark mulch and weeding. It was a chance for them to ask questions plus an opportunity for us to get feedback on what we are doing – the garden is mostly for them, after all.

Their interests slant towards biodiversity and, as a consequence, we now publish a weekly plant highlight. It's proving popular, with groups of students concentrated on the different adaptations we point out. We knew we'd cracked it when one student (who had no previous experience of horticulture) is now observing the plants around him and emailing us questions. Bring it on!

Climate change is predicted to bring high temperatures, possible flooding and most likely high winds, so selecting

trees for the future is becoming tricky. Scientists have worked out 115cm distance per day is the average velocity of climate change – how fast the effects of global heating are moving across the surface of the planet. Nonetheless Merton has two new tree additions.

The first, a *Davidia involucreata* (Chinese handkerchief tree), planted for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, kindly donated by alumni of Berkeley, California, who reside in College for summer school each year.

The second began as nuts collected in the Cumberland State Forest, Sydney, in 2011, and airmailed back to the UK. They were sown nose down (nothing unusual about that). However, then the plant employs a 'cryptogeal' germination strategy, which involves relocating food stores and the growing plumule from inside the nut to a site several centimetres below ground, creating a storage tuber within six weeks and waiting until the right weather conditions to complete germination, often a year or more later. Our *Araucaria bidwillii* (Bunya pine) was donated by Peter Girling.



No other city in the world has the quaintness of Oxford, where planning restrictions on building height benefit the amount of sunlight available. Our physical health largely depends on our exposure to the outdoors. Sunlight boosts vitamin D and encourages us to exercise; people instinctively gravitate towards sunlight. If a site is shaded you won't have such a diversity of flora; a few insects can warm themselves by buzzing their wings, but most often insects aren't able to do that and rely on the warmth of the sun to do it for them. Too much shade is limiting people's life experience, and their wellbeing; we are lucky at Merton to be the south-facing side of the city.

Sharon Horder left us in June to become Deputy Head Gardener at Wadham College. It is nice to know you helped in someone's journey into horticulture and it's a bonus she has stayed within the University. Changes in horticulture keep the rest of us enthralled: did you know the Yew tree evolved in the same habitat as elephants, hence its immensely strong wood? (Mike's just glad he doesn't have to pick up the droppings.)

We failed miserably this year at growing Cotton plants for the first time (*Gossypium hirsutum*). 'They require heat' were the instructions from staff at Eden Cornwall but even waiting to plant out until June had no effect; they reached 5 inches tall and have sulked ever since. One for growing permanently in the glasshouse in future.

And lastly a new type of bee to Merton – *Colletes daviesanus*, here photographed on *Anthemis tinctoria* in the Asteraceae family. These bees commonly nest in dense aggregations in sunlit vertical surfaces such as sandstone cliffs and sand pits, or mortar joints of brickwork, so our limestone walls should provide an ideal habitat.

Your anthophiles.

Lucille Savin
Head Gardener

Hail to New Fellows



Dr Helen Craske
Junior Research Fellow in Modern Languages

In October 2021, I became a Junior Research Fellow, having completed my BA, MSt and DPhil at Merton.

I specialise in 19th-century French literary culture, focusing on novels, reviews and magazines. The JRF gives me the opportunity to work on two projects: turning my doctoral thesis into a monograph and undertaking a study of the *revue légère* ('saucy magazine').

The first project, entitled 'Complicity in fin-de-siècle literature', analyses the representation and creation of shared crime and guilt in late-19th-century France: an era when writers, publishers and editors, could — and did — face trial alongside one another as accomplices in literary crimes such as obscenity, libel and political sedition. Throughout my analysis, I ask questions about reading and reception, highlighting the ways in which authors encouraged readers to share responsibility for ideas and works considered immoral, if not outright illicit.

My second project is a literary history of the saucy magazine: a journalistic genre that blended gossip, smut and risqué humour with satire, polemic and radical politics. In a period of French history when the newspaper trade was booming (c. 1880–1914), an array of low-cost titillating reviews entered the mass media marketplace and flourished there. Combining archival research with close literary analysis, my study charts the genre's evolution, themes and aesthetic tendencies, in order to assess its contribution to turn-of-the-century French culture.

At Merton, I have found an intellectual home and scholarly community that provides ongoing support and inspiration for my academic development.

The College was also pleased to welcome Daniela Dover, Tutor in Philosophy and Associate Professor of Philosophy, this academic year.



Dr Chloé Deambrogio

Junior Research Fellow in Law

I joined Merton in October 2021 as a Junior Research Fellow in Law, after completing a DPhil in Criminology at the University of Oxford as an ESRC and an Amelia Jackson Scholar. Before starting my JRF, I was a Modern Law Review Fellow and a Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Exeter.

I am currently working on two projects, both of which sit at the intersection of critical legal theory, death penalty scholarship, and race and ethnicity studies. My first project, which will result in the publication of a monograph titled 'The mind on trial' (Stanford University Press), draws on unpublished trial records to explore how race and gender stereotypes shaped expert and lay understandings of mental illness and criminal responsibility in Texas capital cases over the 20th century.

My second project, a genealogical analysis of due process and antidiscrimination law in Texas, Georgia and Alabama, draws on court opinions and interviews with legal actors to identify the strategies used by local criminal justice officials to advance and/or deny the due process and equal protection rights of marginalised groups in capital cases. The project will integrate traditional normative analyses of US Supreme Court rulings with an empirically grounded approach, aimed at advancing a contextual understanding of the capacity of courts of law to operate as agents of social and political change.

Merton has provided an incredibly inspiring academic community to discuss and develop my ideas, and I am grateful for all the encouragement and support I have received during my first year as a JRF.



Dr Brianne Dolce

Fitzjames Research Fellow in Music

I joined Merton as a Fitzjames Research Fellow in October 2021, after a year as a Past & Present Postdoctoral Fellow at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. I completed my PhD in 2020 at Yale University, and spent the last years of my doctoral work as a visiting researcher at Ghent University in Belgium.

I am a historian and musicologist, and my research interests lie in medieval religious culture (especially that which is dissident), vernacular song, and the history of women and gender. While at Merton, I am working on two book projects. The first, 'Alternative orthodoxies: religious culture and the vernacular arts in arras, 1025–1250', focuses on a city known for its flourishing of vernacular song and literature in the 13th century. This book argues for a link between religious dissent and the rise of vernacular culture, offering a new interpretation of the circumstances that led to Arras's medieval cultural revolution. The second project, titled 'Voicing dissent', moves to what is now southern France, and considers how medieval women's voices sound from records of inquisition, and the roles they played in both Latin and Occitan culture.

My first academic year at Merton has been an absolute joy, and I have found the environment to be kind, welcoming and intellectually robust. It has been a particular delight to teach Merton undergraduates: they are a truly exceptional group, and I have learned so much from them. I could not be more grateful to be part of such a wonderful community.



Dr Hadleigh Frost

Junior Research Fellow in Mathematics

I joined Merton in October 2021 as a Junior Research Fellow in Mathematics. I first came to Oxford, and to Merton, to do a master's degree in mathematical and theoretical physics. I have been delighted to return to Merton.

I am a mathematical physicist studying quantum field theory. Since the discovery of subatomic particles, particle physicists have been studying these particles in scattering experiments. These data forced major developments in quantum physics, culminating in quantum field theory, which has been verified to remarkable accuracy. My research is about the limits of what can be done with quantum field theory, and seeks new computational methods. In particular, for quantum processes involving large numbers of particles, or particles that are 'strongly coupled', the traditional approach is ineffective: the computations quickly become out of reach of computer methods, and they also obscure important facts about the answer. Indeed, the traditional approach requires us to compute a sum over all the ways that so-called 'virtual' particles can be produced by the particles that we see in experiments. It is only when all such contributions are summed that we arrive at acceptable answers. To move beyond this, I am using ideas from algebra and results from my thesis to find new formulas for making quantum field theory predictions.

Merton has a well-deserved reputation for prioritising research and teaching excellence, and a strong track record in mathematics and physics. It was a pleasure to teach at Merton earlier this year, and I am grateful for the academic interest and support of the Merton Fellows.



Professor John Geddes

WA Handley Professor of Psychiatry

I joined Merton in November 2021 as WA Handley Professor of Psychiatry, shortly after a ten-year spell as Head of the Department of Psychiatry. I first arrived in Oxford in 1995, and was Professor of Epidemiological Psychiatry from 2002 to 2021. I am Director of the NIHR Oxford Health Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) and also a practising consultant psychiatrist with Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

My research has focused on the development and evaluation of treatments for people with bipolar and mood disorders. I have developed new approaches to self-management and monitoring, and run some large clinical trials. Most recently, I have worked with colleagues in mathematics and engineering, in Oxford and at the Alan Turing Institute in London, to use new digital methods – and wearable technology – to improve our methods of measuring mood and behaviour. By measuring mental disorders more accurately, I hope to generate better understanding of the mechanisms that underlie mood disorders; this in turn will enable us to develop more effective treatments.

Being Director of the BRC has provided me with a wonderful oversight of translational neuroscience in Oxford. I am very keen on building interdisciplinary research collaborations with colleagues across all the divisions of the University, from mathematics to the humanities and the rich libraries, gardens and museums of Oxford. Merton is an incredible academic and intellectual community – and is one of the most vibrant and beautiful places in Oxford. I'm thrilled to join the College and look forward to working with its staff and students looking for ever better ways of optimising human mental health and wellbeing.



Dr James Newton

Tutor in Mathematics and Associate Professor of Number Theory

I joined Merton as a Tutor in Mathematics in September 2021 (part of a joint appointment with the Mathematical Institute). Before coming to Oxford, I completed my PhD at Imperial College London, did postdoctoral work in Cambridge and London, and was most recently a lecturer at King's College London for five years.

My research interests are in number theory and its interactions with algebra and geometry. One of the richest families of problems in mathematics is to understand whole-number solutions to algebraic equations. For example, Pythagorean triples represent right-angled triangles with whole-number side lengths, e.g. (3,4,5) and (5,12,13). They are whole-number solutions to the Pythagorean equation $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$. The famous problem known as Fermat's Last Theorem asks if we can find positive whole-number solutions to the generalised equation $a^n + b^n = c^n$ when n is greater than 2. Fermat claimed there were no such solutions, and a proof of this was finally provided by Merton's own Professor Sir Andrew Wiles. Some of my recent work has developed key ingredients from the proof of Fermat's Last Theorem and applied them to solve problems in the Langlands programme, a broad collection of mathematical theories and techniques describing symmetries of algebraic equations.

During my first year at Merton, I have been made to feel very much at home by the welcoming College community. Returning to teaching in-person within Oxford's tutorial system has been particularly inspiring. I look forward to pursuing research and teaching in such a vibrant and stimulating place.



Dr Vatsal Khandelwal

Peter J Braam Junior Research Fellow in Global Wellbeing

I joined Merton as the Peter J Braam Junior Research Fellow in Global Wellbeing after completing the requirements of my DPhil in Economics at the University of Oxford.

I am a development economist with an interest in social networks. In my theoretical work, I study how networks can lead to the formation of inaccurate beliefs when agents exhibit behavioral idiosyncrasies, observe each other's choices, and update beliefs in a dynamic process. In my empirical work, I identify the effect of policy interventions on socio-economic outcomes by running experiments in which a randomly chosen subsample is exposed to the treatment. This includes joint work in which we test, for instance, if misperceived beliefs about peers can prevent low-income individuals in New Delhi, India from using their social ties to address mental and financial health-related concerns. We find that belief correction can strengthen network ties through increased willingness to participate in savings groups, volunteering for a listening service, and financial contributions for a public good. In other completed and ongoing projects, my co-authors and I study the impact of teacher expectations and peer support on education outcomes of students in Pakistan and are just about to launch an intervention to test whether financial trainings and role models can improve female entrepreneurship outcomes of women in rural Nepal.

It has been a delight to be a part of the vibrant academic environment at Merton and a privilege to receive unconditional support conducive for research. I look forward to developing my work and discussing it with the College community in the days to come.

Features



Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton: memories

In last year's edition of Postmaster, we asked for memories of the day when Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton visited College, on 1 February 1966, to discuss a production of Doctor Faustus. Here's what you told us.

Yes, it did happen: Nevill Coghill was the implausible instigator; and Merton the most unlikely spot for such glamour.

In my pigeonhole the College porters had placed an envelope. In it was a note, not in handwriting that I recognised. It was very odd, along the lines of 'Dear Richard, So many people in the thespian world here are keen to meet you and Liz. What about coming for drinks in my room this evening at about 7pm? With very best wishes, Neville.'

Of course, further study of the envelope showed the addressee to be a certain Richard Burton. I never got that drink.

Richard Boyd (1963)

In February '66, I seem to remember that the word had gone out that we weren't to mob the visiting couple or pester them for autographs. Pretty pointless — I knew none of my fellow-students would have been so un-cool as to go out of their way to get in the Burtons' way. But my rooms were on Front Quad 2, so from my window above the Lodge I had a bird's-eye view of the famous pair and Professor Coghill as they crossed the near-empty quad. Miss Taylor, in white fur and a Jackie Kennedy toque, looked the very image of a film star and was as beautiful off-screen as on.

At that time I was secretary of Merton Floats, the drama society which was soon to perform *A Scent of Flowers* at the Playhouse and *Murder in the Cathedral* in the College Chapel. Of course I wanted to audition for a part in *Faustus* — didn't we all? I was too naïve to know of the importance of preparing an audition speech and thought that the fact I knew a *Hamlet* soliloquy by heart would stand me in good stead. Professor Coghill and his deputy director heard

me make a complete fool of myself by forgetting my lines halfway through. I was not cast.

Doctor Faustus is essentially a two-person play with a host of bit parts. I watched it from the second row. Andreas Teuber (St John's, 1964) won the coveted role of Mephistopheles, giving what the *New York Times* called a 'fine, very pious performance'. I think Mertonian David Jessel (1964) also appeared. And of course, Elizabeth Taylor had perhaps the most famous walk-on role in British theatre as the face that launched a thousand film reviews. She entered stage left, stayed to be kissed and hear 20 lines of Burton's blank verse, and exited again.

We should all have been massively disappointed at this production but, ever cool, we shrugged, applauded and walked away. I admit having dined out on the memory once or twice.

Keith Bradford (1965)

Although I personally don't remember the visit (it was eight years before I was born), my mother does.

She was in the props department for the production of *Doctor Faustus*. She had to make some polystyrene books which Richard Burton used in the production. My mother's friend, Sheila Dawson, was understudy to Elizabeth Taylor in the production.

She tells me that after the production she was invited to a party with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor in Crick Road. Apparently Elizabeth Taylor discussed knitting as being one of her hobbies.

Mark Denning (1992)

I stood a little behind the photographer as Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor made their royal entrance, posed for a moment on the steps of the Lodge and were then smartly chaperoned across Front Quad by Nevill Coghill to his elegant rooms in Fellows' Quad where they were served lunch. I remember being struck by how small they both were, even though Richard appeared to be wearing shoes that made him look taller.

I managed to get tickets for one of the sell-out performances of *Doctor Faustus* and, of course, to see what everyone came to see — the face that launched a thousand ships. Some days later I heard the astonishing news that a friend of mine at St Hilda's had eloped with the Burtons' chauffeur and all four were en route to Rome and Cinecitta. Happily, the student in question was back before the end of Hilary in time to prepare for her finals the following term, unscathed, but with some interesting tales to tell!

Graham Lane (1963)

I was intrigued to read about the visit of Burton and Taylor to Merton. I went to see the production and my girlfriend was helping backstage as the wardrobe mistress. She managed to get the two stars to sign my programme. Sadly the signatures have faded in the intervening years.

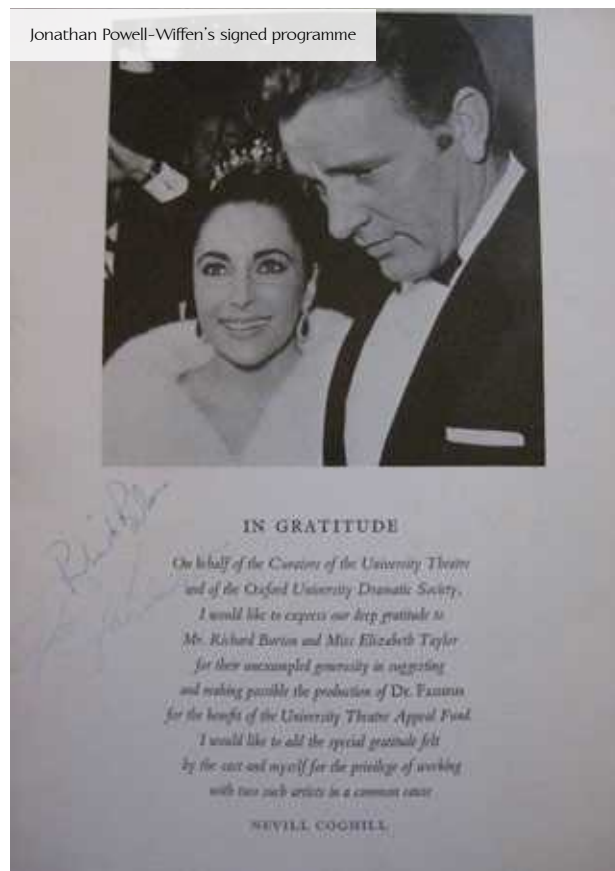
Jonathan Powell-Wiffen (1963)

I had a bird's-eye view of the remarkable events from first meeting in the Savile Room to final departure to the Dorchester.

I was President of Oxford University Drama Society (OUDS) at the time and surrendered my 'right' to organise the OUDS major that Hilary term at Nevill Coghill's request. In return, he gave me the doubtful gift of being Richard's understudy and playing the Chorus. Don't worry, I loved Nevill dearly. I also had to run probably one of Oxford's biggest ever press conferences in the Playhouse to introduce the Burtons to the world and his wife in the afternoon of 1 February — Nevill told me he would rather die than take on such a task!

There were four Mertonians in the cast: Richard Durden-Smith (1963) as the Evil Angel, David Jessel (1964) as A Knight, Anthony Braime (1964) as Envy, and me.

Robert Scott (1963)



I wasn't there at the time but I recall reading, possibly in *Postmaster* some years ago, that they were given lunch in College. Apparently they were served a chive mousse, which Elizabeth Taylor enjoyed so much she wrote to the then Head Chef asking for the recipe.

Chris Madell (1974)

I was sitting alone in the College bar when I walked Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor. They sat down alongside me and Richard ordered a pint which he swallowed without taking a breath, just poured it straight down! And then after a short conversation he did it again! Then I managed to look at the extraordinary profile of Ms Taylor whose violet eyes were unforgettable. As a proud Welshman I was happy to talk about the valleys with the actor who was very funny. Then Nevill Coghill came to take him away while he still could. It was a brilliant Merton experience!

Howard Stringer (1960)

As a humble second-year student of Engineering Science, any involvement was well above my pay grade. However I do recall their arrival in Merton Street in a foreign-registered limousine with the country identifier CH. I found it somewhat risible that in all their pomp they were being transported in a Swiss Rolls.

Colin Tyrrell (1964)

My friends were fairly snooty about the impending appearance of the great stars and said they would not hang around to catch a glimpse. But, of course, they did, and Front Quad was pretty crowded when the pair emerged from Fellows' Quad with Professor Coghill and the wild boy of our year, Redmond O'Hanlon (1965).

David Ure (1965)

Postmaster mentioned a visit by Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor to Merton in 1966. They were at College again during my time at Merton (1967–70). I cannot recall the exact year but it was in the Trinity term, possibly in 1968 when I had rooms in Grove. Richard Burton had stayed in Fellows' Quad and I remember him sitting reading outside at the back of Fellows' Building as I walked past. At one point Burton and Taylor appeared in the gardens in Rose Lane and Elizabeth Taylor was wearing a quite stunning white dress.

Martin Sands (1967)



A new Bastion Bench

Bastion Bench donors take their seats with the Warden and Head Gardener, May 2022

For over six centuries, the Fellows enjoyed the Fellows' Garden all to themselves. It didn't occur to them to open it to students, but these days it can hardly be imagined without Junior Members!

The Bastion Bench is an integral part of the Garden, with students using it for contemplation, study or socialising, and Fellows holding tutorials there in fine weather. It has been a favourite spot for many Mertonians, J. R. R. Tolkien famously being remembered as one.

But it wasn't always that way. As part of the original Oxford city wall, the Bastion Bench area was initially used for defence. By 1643 the Bastion changed from having a protective role (last used to position a cannon during the civil war) to a recreational asset. Fellows' Garden changed from geometric

formalism to the romantic asymmetry we have today, and land adjacent to the city wall was raised to provide a view over Christchurch Meadow and the east of Oxford. There are records of grants of money for the repair of seats on the Bastion from 1763.

In November 2020, with the old Bastion Bench in a very worn-down state, I approached local bespoke furniture makers and was impressed with Philip Koomen. We tasked him with constructing a new Bastion Bench in the spring of 2021. We were able to do so thanks to the generosity of Mertonians, nine of whom kindly funded the new bench with donations.

Sustainability is integral to what Philip Koomen does, and his creativity focuses on exploring the rich diversity of



Philip Koomen, who designed the new Bastion Bench

wood from local woodlands within a 30-mile radius of his workshop in Checkendon, South Oxfordshire. He did his Sustainable Furniture Design PhD at Brunel University and has over 45 years of experience.

Alongside his own workshop, Philip now coaches for The Sylva Foundation at Long Wittenham. This is a charity which seeks to promote understanding of the good care and stewardship of woodlands. The Sylva Foundation are working on 'Future Forests' and what they may look like in the diversity of climate scenarios we have ahead of us: strong winds, flooding, high temperatures, and of course drought.

Due to social distancing rules in 2020, Philip transferred us short videos of his two proposed bench designs which the Gardens Committee voted on in Hilary term of 2021. A full-



size mock-up was erected in situ to check for the irregular nature of the old walls before Phillip set about making the final piece.

Discussions on how to stop the legs rotting guided the use of lead as feet, and the College crest was carved into two of the panels. The wood took time to source, dry and settle, so the bench was delivered in late March 2022. It bears the names, in the form of plaques, of the nine Mertonians who helped make the new bench a reality. We were pleased to welcome most of them back for a celebration in May 2022, and I hope that all alumni will have the chance to visit the new bench in the near future.

Lucille Savin
Head Gardener



Cheryl Frances-Hoad
at her Proms premiere

Cheryl Frances-Hoad at Merton: An Appreciation

Merton was fortunate during the past academic year to host as its Visiting Research Fellow in the Creative Arts one of the leading English composers of our time: Cheryl Frances-Hoad. Although she was elected in 2020, the pandemic delayed Cheryl's residency until 2021, at which point she moved to Oxford and became completely invested in the academic, creative and social life of the College. A list of Cheryl's extensive achievements during this time must be summary. Her music has appeared in venues ranging from the Royal Albert Hall to Carnegie Hall with performances from the BBC Singers, BBC Concert Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Marcus Farnsworth, Libby Burgess, the City of London Sinfonia, and many others. The compositions Cheryl has completed during her tenure — numbering over a dozen, with more underway — are hugely diverse. In terms of scale, they span from *Le Vampyre*, a brief art-song commissioned by the Oxford Lieder Festival that sets the eponymous poem by Baudelaire, to *Scenes from the Wild*, a massive 80-minute, semi-staged work for tenor and chamber orchestra that adapts text from Dara McNulty's best-selling *Diary of a Young Naturalist*.

But a visiting fellow who can boast a distinguished record of external success is not itself unique. What is uncommon is

the level to which Cheryl has engaged with College during her residency. This is evident in the compositions she has written specifically for College forces. As part of the 2022 Bodley Dinner, Cheryl composed *The Merton Fanfare*, a flourish for three trumpets. Her compositions for the College Choir include *The Merton Responses*, the premiere of which was broadcast on Radio 3, and *The Merton Service*. A set of canticles for the Merton Girls' Choir is forthcoming. External ensembles are scheduled to perform these works in the coming season, and it is hoped that these will also remain staples of Merton Chapel's repertoire.

Cheryl's dedication to College life is further evident in the interactions she has had with students and staff. Looking back, Cheryl considers these to have been a highlight of her time at Merton.

'It is just so amazing to go to Hall or pop into the SCR and suddenly find yourself surrounded by so many interesting people. And everybody is so kind. You sit down for dinner and end up chatting to someone who is a world expert in something. I've been having conversations I never thought I'd have!'



These chance encounters have proven to be more than casual conversations. For Cheryl, they have been an important point of inspiration. Her talks with Lay Assistant Chaplain Oliver Wright influenced her settings of the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*. Cheryl recalls insightful conversations with Professor Ian MacLachlan about Baudelaire while she was preparing to compose *Le Vampyre*. *The Wrath of Troilus*, a work for soprano saxophone and choir that will be premiered at the Presteigne Festival in August 2022, sets a passage from Chaucer that was recommended to Cheryl by Dr Daniel Sawyer and Professor Sarah McNamer. Conversations with Professor Thomas Richards about climate change are working their way into a cello concerto that Cheryl will have premiered in 2023 by Laura Van Der Heijden and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. The musical material of *The Merton Fanfare* is derived from the initials of various College Fellows. Cheryl's most high-profile performance during her tenure, the premiere of *Your Servant, Elizabeth* for the Platinum Jubilee Prom on 22 July 2022, uses a text that was greatly influenced by discussions with Chaplain Simon Jones. In her words: 'My discussion with Simon had a huge influence on the work, transforming the commission in my eyes from something rather dry and historic to something modern and relevant.'

Cheryl is a composer who understands that classical music at its best is not a restrictive repertoire but a medium that is in constant dialogue with its surroundings. In that sense, it is unsurprising that Cheryl's recent work engages with some of the most pressing issues of our time, such as climate change, gender dynamics and mental health. And more locally, it is clear that Cheryl's compositions from 2021 and 2022 are not merely contemporaneous with her residency at Merton — they are *the result of* her engagement with College. College has supplied Cheryl with an environment that has allowed her work to thrive, and in return Cheryl has gifted College a body of work that pays tribute to its landscape and people. The friendships that Cheryl has established at Merton will ensure that this collaboration continues long after she has left her post. And so Cheryl concludes her time at Merton in that ideal situation where both the visitor and the host feel equally lucky.

Eric McElroy
Tutor in Music



Twenty Years as College Chaplain

Many Mertonians will know and recognise the College Chaplain, Simon Jones, whether it is from their time at the College or from visiting as alumni. Simon is an integral part of College life: as well as being responsible for the day-to-day life of the Chapel, he heads up Merton's welfare team and chairs the committee that makes grants to students for various purposes.

Simon trained for ordination at Westcott House in Cambridge and, as a member of Selwyn College, completed a PhD in Syrian baptismal theology. Before coming to Merton, he served his curacy at Tewkesbury Abbey in the Diocese of Gloucester.

He is a member of the University's Faculty of Theology and Religion, and a consultant to the Church of England Liturgical Commission. He also chairs the Board of Trustees of the charitable company Hymns Ancient & Modern. He was installed as an Honorary Canon of Christ Church in 2015 and as a Wiccamical Prebendary (Honorary Canon Theologian) of Chichester Cathedral in February 2016.

Simon is celebrating his 20th year as Chaplain of Merton. *Postmaster* sat down with him for a cuppa in his office in Fellows' Quad to catch up with him about the past two decades, and to look ahead to the years to come.

What was your first day at Merton like?

I moved to Oxford in August 2002, and my first day was 1 September. The previous term I'd had a conversation with Mark Everitt, my predecessor, to get a bit of an understanding of what his role was like. In those days, there was no induction for new Fellows. I arrived and was shown my room. 'There's your room, there are some files, and there's your computer.' It was a bit like: 'Well, there we are, off you go!' In trying to work out what the role might be for me, what really helped was the fact that everyone was so welcoming and friendly when I arrived. Being able to get to know people helped me to work out what my role in the community might involve.

You recently had your 20-year anniversary of joining Merton. Why have you stayed so long with the College?

It's tempting to answer 'because no one else would have me!' But actually there are two things.

One is that the job has changed hugely over the last 20 years – I'm not doing the same job now that I did when I started at the College. It's changed on the welfare side, and also on the Chapel side of things. When I was appointed in 2002, one of the tasks was to set up a welfare team in the College – that's been a major part of what I've done over the past 20 years, and that's grown and developed in all sorts of ways, so it's a very different job from the one I did then. And on the Chapel side, things have changed and developed as well, not least because of the introduction of the Choral Foundation.

I think the other reason why I am still here 20 years on is that I really believe in what Merton does, and I'm passionate about the College. It's a huge privilege to be here and to be part of this community, and I really enjoy my job.

What's your favourite memory of Merton?

Well, the Chef's Baked Alaska is always a high point!

There are obviously the big Chapel events each year which I really look forward to. Carol Services, the All Souls' Requiem – they're high points.

On the welfare side, the high points are not so obvious, but they're just as significant. So, for example, being with a student at their graduation party having known them

throughout their time in College – at times of difficulty, at times when they've asked for support, times when I've tried to help – seeing them when things are really tough, and then also seeing them when they've completed their degree and graduated. And sometimes a few years later as well, when they come back to College and you see what they've gone on to do. That for me provides a huge sense of fulfilment, and happy memories as well over the past 20 years.



Simon conducting the Girl Choristers

What are you most looking forward to in your time to come at Merton?

I think some of the most interesting, significant things that have happened over the past 20 years have been things that haven't been planned; they've been quite unexpected. For example, the way in which the Choral Foundation was set up; it wasn't anything anyone particularly planned to do, and yet an opportunity presented itself and the Choral Foundation resulted from that. Thinking about the future, I'm looking forward to unexpected things, things that I'm not aware of at the moment that might come along.

The danger for someone like me, who has been in post for 20 years, is that that you can become quite set in your ways and think you know the job; you know what it involves and you know what to expect day to day. The wonderful colleagues that I work with in the Chapel and welfare teams are very good at helping me to keep an open mind to new possibilities.

Can you tell us about an interesting conversation you recently had with someone at Merton?

Just in the past few months, I had a conversation with Cheryl Frances-Hoad, our Visiting Research Fellow in the Creative Arts, who is a composer. She had been asked by the BBC to write a piece for the Jubilee Prom, and to make use of a text that William Byrd set for Elizabeth I: 'O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth', but to give it a new twist to make it appropriate for the Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II.

I have a very clear memory of a conversation we had in the New Common Room over a cup of tea – we were talking about the text and how it might be adapted. Batting ideas backwards and forwards, it occurred to me that we might incorporate and intersperse within Byrd's text some of the Queen's own words. I came straight back to my room and started working on what that might look like. Cheryl's setting of 'Your servant, Elizabeth' resulted from that, and will be premiered at the Proms this summer.



Simon at the dedication of the Dobson organ by the Bishop of Oxford in 2014

What's your favourite part of your role as Chaplain?

That's a difficult question to answer! It's hard to think of what my favourite part of the job is, because I enjoy so much of it.

I know the bits I don't enjoy so much: I'm not keen on writing minutes following meetings, for example.

But if I were to identify one thing that I enjoy about my role, and really value, it's the one-to-one conversations with students. Whether it's in a welfare capacity – when a student comes to see you to talk through some issues, and you try to offer support and signpost them to appropriate sources of further support – or whether it's talking to someone who, on the Chapel side, is interested in being baptised or confirmed, or wants to become more involved in the Chapel. It's those one-to-one conversations that I value most.

What led you to become a college chaplain, and why Merton?

When I was a graduate student in Cambridge in the 1990s, I was also training for ordination. I was doing a PhD, and for two years was Lay Chaplain at Selwyn College. That gave me a taste of what college chaplaincy was like. I was ordained in 1999 and went to Tewkesbury Abbey in Gloucestershire – that was the most amazing job and I look back on it now still as a golden time. I was there from 1999 to 2002 (curacies are three to four years) and during that time I thought about what might come next.

My experience of the chaplaincy role in Cambridge led me to think that I'd apply for a chaplaincy. Having already spent four years in Cambridge, I thought I'd give Oxford a try: two colleges were advertising for chaplains, Merton being one of them, and for some strange reason I got the job!

What do you think Merton will be like in 20 years' time?

I hope it will be the same and different. There's something about Merton's DNA: there's a strong sense of community here, and I think we take what we do very seriously in terms of teaching, learning, research. But hopefully we don't take *ourselves* too seriously – that's one of the things I really like about the place, and I hope it will still be true in 20 years. But also, I hope it will be a more diverse community. I hope that on the welfare side we're still providing the best support that we can for our students, meeting whatever needs there are at that time; and I also hope that the Chapel and Choral Foundation are flourishing.

In 20 years, whoever is the Chaplain will be my successor, or my successor's successor, and I hope that they're as happy in their job as I am now.

What does your typical day look?

Since I've moved up to Headington, I walk in to College most mornings, normally leaving home around 7am. That gives me time when I get in to do a few admin things, write a few emails before Morning Prayer at 8.15am. Then a quick breakfast in the SCR before going back to my room to start the day.

I'm on quite a few College committees, so a day rarely goes by without at least one meeting. But I probably spend most of my time seeing people one-to-one as part of the welfare side of my role. That can be seeing people for the first time because they've got in touch saying they'd like to have a chat, or it might be someone that I see regularly – perhaps weekly or fortnightly – just to check in and see how things are going.

Financial support is another aspect of my role, in which I work closely with our Student Support Administrator. Most days we'll discuss requests for support and respond to queries from students, giving advice about available support.

The other aspect of my role is patronage. Merton is patron of 20 parishes across the country, and I represent the College in the appointment of clergy to those parishes. We normally have one vacancy at any one time, and so there's often some patronage work each week.

Then, of course, there are services. I mentioned Morning Prayer at the beginning of the day, and there's also a service in the evening – four times week it's a choral service. That provides a wonderful moment in the day. Although it requires preparation, and involvement from me in taking the service, it's a rejuvenating moment, because we're so privileged to have such wonderful music from both of our choirs enriching the worship in the Chapel. It's a moment in the day I always look forward to.

After that it's often dinner in Hall, sometimes with a guest. On non-guest nights, I'll often return to my desk after dinner before getting the bus back to Headington.

What do you consider special about Merton Chapel, and what sets Merton apart from other colleges or academic institutions?

I'll go back to what I said earlier about the community, and

that we take seriously what we do, but hopefully don't take ourselves too seriously – and also that we see ourselves as being part of a living tradition; a tradition that's growing and developing, not something that's static. I think that's important: we've got deep roots, and we're conscious of them, but we're also conscious of the need to develop, and for the tradition to go forward. And I think that's a very healthy aspect of the life of any community – you're conscious of the roots that give you identity, and sufficiently confident in that identity that you can move forward.

The same is true of the Chapel. We pride ourselves on excellence in worship, and also on being an open, supportive and inclusive community that welcomes everyone. For the Chapel and the College, it's the strong sense of community, being outward-looking and inclusive, that sets us apart.

Finally, what is different about being a chaplain at an Oxbridge college rather than being a priest elsewhere?

When I was appointed, my predecessor, Mark, was a tutor (in Russian) as well as being the Chaplain. When he retired, two people were appointed – a new Modern Languages tutor, and a new Chaplain who was to have welfare as half of the role. In a number of Oxford and Cambridge colleges, the Chaplain is the Fellow for welfare, but is very much there for the whole community – not just for people who identify as Christian or who attend Chapel, but for the whole community, and I think that's really important.

And I think it's important that there's a variety of people in the welfare team that students can go to: there's the Welfare Adviser and the College Nurse as well as me, and the Junior Deans and the student welfare reps.

Reflecting on my ministry as a priest, pastoral care is really important. And I think there's something about the Church of England as well – with our parish system the vicar or rector is there for the whole parish, not just for the people who go to their church. And so, looking at the College, I see myself as being someone who is available for, and tries to serve, the whole community in its widest sense, and to be as inclusive as possible in doing that. I feel my welfare responsibility fits very well within the overall chaplaincy aspect of the role.



Merton Library stained-glass conservation project

The College is currently in the middle of three-year project to conserve and protect all the stained-glass windows of the Upper Library.

The library windows contain stained glass ranging in date from the late 14th century to the early 20th century. In the Middle Ages, glazed windows – an expensive, high-quality option – protected precious books from the Oxford weather and enabled Mertonians to study in relative comfort. Remarkably, the original medieval library glass is still preserved in seven of the east-facing lancet windows – the oldest surviving examples of glazing in situ in an English library. Other library windows contain assemblages of medieval glass that has survived from elsewhere in the College, providing valuable evidence about the subjects of the transept and west windows in the Chapel. Mertonians of the 19th and early 20th centuries commissioned several memorial windows in addition to the 16th-century panels

that give the oriel window its distinctive golden glow.

Keeping glass windows in good repair is a recurrent concern, and work to the Upper Library windows is documented from as early as the 15th century. During the Second World War, the windows judged most historic were removed to safe storage. Breakage is not the only threat to historic glass, however. During a detailed condition survey of the library windows in 2015, it was discovered that moisture from condensation was causing corrosion and irreversible paint loss. The College engaged specialist conservators from the York Glaziers Trust (YGT; the oldest and largest specialist stained-glass conservation studio in Britain) to undertake a year-long trial of a ventilated secondary-glazing system that would prevent the temperature fluctuations causing the damaging condensation. This pilot project proved successful, and the College decided to commission the YGT to protect all the library windows in this way.



There are several stages to the project, which is being carried out in phases to minimise disruption to the running of the library. Each window panel is carefully removed and taken to the YGT studio in York. There, the windows are dismantled, individual pieces of glass are cleaned, documented and receive conservation treatment as necessary. Detailed treatment records are made of each window, for future reference. The secondary-glazing panels are custom-made to fit each window opening. The glass used in the secondary glazing is hand-blown in Germany using centuries-old techniques so as to minimise visual disruption when it is installed in the medieval library walls. One very modern beneficial feature is the composition of the secondary glass, which has inherent anti-UV properties. The secondary glazing will thus provide protection to the Upper Library's contents, such as the leather book bindings and the hand-coloured globes. Once treated, the window panels are set in steel frames and installed in the interior of the stone window openings,

protected by the new secondary-glazing panels which are set into the medieval glazing grooves. Ventilation openings allow air to circulate around the historic glass, preventing moisture from forming.

When the project is complete, all 39 Upper Library windows, including the east oriel window, will be cleaned, repaired and protected. Mertonians can already view the completed windows. One of the distinctive features of the library windows is that students and visitors can get a close-up view of different types of medieval glass without the need for ladders and scaffolding. It is a particular satisfaction that this project is supported by members of the extended Merton community, joining together to ensure that the library windows can be enjoyed by generations to come.

Dr Julia Walworth
Fellow Librarian



Mertonians in...
the charity sector

Lizzie D'Angelo (2004)



Lizzie is Marketing & Communications Director for Tommy's, the pregnancy research and baby loss support charity. Lizzie has a BA in Ancient and Modern History from Merton, and an MA in Classical Studies at the Open University. She is a trustee of iprovision, the benevolent fund for communications professionals.

When I packed up my laptop and grabbed a handful of pens and Post-its from my desk drawer in March 2020, I had no idea just how much was going to change.

The pandemic hit everyone hard, but like many voluntary sector organisations, Tommy's fundraising income disappeared overnight. With the cancellation of mass participation events, community fundraising and corporate cutbacks, we saw a £4 million drop in a matter of months. For a growing £8 million organisation, this was catastrophic.

Thankfully, prudent financial planning meant that Tommy's had healthy operating reserves. With demand rising, we made a bold decision to ride out the pandemic without cutting services.

Our people are our biggest asset. We redeployed as many as possible into fundraising innovation and cut all non-business-critical expenditure. Even so, things were looking dire until we received a significant legacy towards the end of 2020. It was an unsolicited gift which came from years of brand and awareness-building work. It was a morale boost, as well as an income boost, during the darkest days.

I never expected to end up in charity. I left Merton in summer 2007 as the financial markets started to wobble. I took the first role I found – an internship at a small private equity firm in the City. The people were great, the work dulled my

senses. I've always loved learning but, try as I might, studying for finance exams felt impossible.

I took a breath. The things I enjoyed most were communicating with people, so I made a move into PR. I joined a consultancy, and my days were packed from early to late with creative client briefs. The work was interesting, but once again I felt restless.

At the time, my sister was working for a disability charity – the Children's Trust. A role came up in its marketing and communications department and I applied. I remember arriving on site, meeting children and young people with the most profound disabilities and complex health needs. It was a shock. It felt hard, it made me want to cry.

Now, when I talk to new starters during their induction, I sometimes recognise this bewilderment. Society can be sanitised. We are often removed from some of the most difficult, painful experiences – media delivers reality which creates barriers. Those barriers don't exist when you're working directly with people.

Working at the Children's Trust reframed my thoughts. I celebrated the small things – a flicker of eye contact, a hand squeezed. Later, a worry allayed, a family given the time to say goodbye. A life saved.

When I start work every day at Tommy's, I feel I'm doing battle for some of the most vulnerable in our society. If that sounds paternalistic, it isn't meant to. We work with people who are at breaking point, who need our support to navigate the complexity of our healthcare system to access the care and support they are fully entitled to.

Black women have the worst maternity experiences in the country. Women from poorer communities have higher chances of stillbirth. Who you are and where you live can make the difference between whether your baby lives or dies. This is unacceptable.



Lizzie D'Angelo accepts the Overall Award for Excellence at the 2022 Charity Awards for Tommy's Miscarriage Matters campaign

My team campaigns to make sure maternity improvement remains a national priority, so every family has the same opportunity to take home a healthy baby. And we disseminate research breakthroughs that improve care and save babies' lives.

The charity sector is full of talented individuals who want to change things and who believe we can be and do better. The struggle for funding is endless and the scale of the issues we address can feel unsurmountable. However, speak to my colleagues across a multitude of causes and their passion and pride shine through.

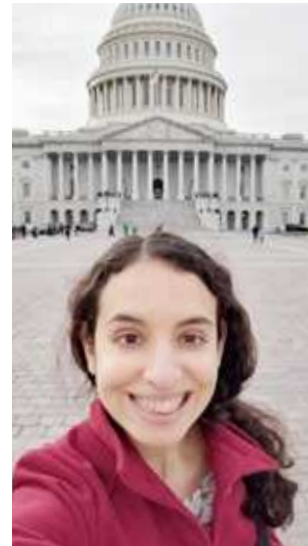
In my role there's always a new challenge. Reproductive health research is decades behind other areas. For every £1 spent on pregnancy-related care in the NHS, less than 1p is spent on pregnancy research. We need to change this. Only by understanding what's going on, can we find out what's going wrong in pregnancy and identify new treatments to prevent this.

'It wasn't meant to be.' It's 'just one of those things'. This is the vernacular of pregnancy and baby loss.

Every day I am working to change this.

Find out more: tommys.org

Joanna Grossman (2007)



Joanna is a Senior Advisor at the Animal Welfare Institute. Her writings on animal protection issues have appeared in numerous media outlets, and her chapter on political advocacy was published in the Routledge Handbook of Animal Ethics. While completing her graduate studies, she worked on animal welfare legislation at the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Humane Society of the United States, and in the US House of Representatives.

After graduating from Princeton, I pursued graduate studies in English Literature — first completing my MSt at Oxford before earning a doctorate at Harvard. My focus was on Shakespearean drama, specifically on Shakespeare's representations of plant and animal life, and how his plays offer an anti-speciesist view of the natural world. My passion for nature and for the preservation of other species led me to pursue a career in animal protection. In 2014, I began working in government relations at the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) in Washington, DC — one of the oldest animal protection organizations in the United States. Over the last several decades, AWI was instrumental in securing landmark laws to improve the treatment of animals.

My job primarily involves meeting and communicating with lawmakers, agency officials and other policymakers to advocate for reforms needed to protect animals from abuse and harm. Over the years, I've worked on such diverse areas as protecting horses from slaughter, ending the use of inhumane traps that mangle wildlife, improving the treatment of farm animals, and many other issues within the animal protection movement. At the risk of sounding clichéd,

it's incredibly rewarding to serve as a voice for the voiceless while working to foster a more humane and compassionate ethic in society.

The pandemic – and specifically the uncertain origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus – has put a spotlight on humanity's tenuous and fraught relationship with wildlife. The possibility that the virus originated from large markets selling live animals prompted a re-evaluation of how animals are used and exploited. Lawmakers in Congress have taken note and are pushing for reforms aimed at curbing zoonotic disease transmission, which in turn would positively impact animal welfare – from combatting wildlife trafficking to bolstering oversight of (and ideally phasing out) mink and other fur farming operations, which can fuel the spread of Covid-19. Europe especially saw large coronavirus outbreaks on fur farms, which led to the killing of millions of mink. The inhumane conditions on fur farms have long been a source of concern, but such operations pose distinct public health risks as well.

Early in the pandemic, we also saw significant supply-chain disruptions and the rampant spread of infections among workers in the meat industry, leading to the mass depopulation of healthy farm animals. Unfortunately, particularly gruesome methods such as ventilation shutdown, which involves shutting off the airflow so that the trapped animals die from heat stress after an extended period, were used. Reducing such egregious and needless suffering is a high priority as inevitably new crises will arise. On a positive note, millions of Americans adopted pets during the pandemic and welcomed their newest family members into their homes.

Animal welfare causes often attract broad interest and support among the general public; fortunately, that desire to effect change has not ebbed during the pandemic. For better or worse, the last two and half years have compelled all of us to reconsider how we can build a better world – and that includes our interactions with other life-forms.

Find out more: awionline.org

Tony Woodruff (1970)



Tony holds an MA in Chemistry from Merton and is the African Program Director for the Canadian clean water charity Water School. Previously, Tony was president of FPI Ltd. an international manufacturing and distribution company. He also holds an MBA from the University of Chicago.

In 1969, aged 18, I worked as a Voluntary Service Overseas teacher in a village in northern Kenya. Then life happened – degrees, marriage, children, career, grandchildren, different countries ... retirement. What now? A friend introduced me to a Canadian charity called Water School. And so began one of the best chapters of my life.

I volunteered to be the link between raising funds in Canada and planning and monitoring the operations on the ground in Uganda. So, after 40+ years I found myself again wandering through African fields and villages – back in paradise!

We are very decentralized – we employ no full-time paid staff in Canada and send 95% of funding to programs in Uganda. The 60 Ugandan team members are our paid professionals. The core of our water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) program is using solar disinfection to purify contaminated water in plastic drinking water bottles – this is a simple, cheap process and only works close to the Equator where the UV is strong enough. The program has other elements to totally transform village life, like rainwater harvesting tanks, 'tippy-tap' handwashing stations, vented energy-efficient cooking stoves (made from termite manure), deep latrines with tight lids to stop flies and smell, and much more. In every village we set up Village Savings and Loans schemes which prompt economic development – buying pigs, cows, goats etc. In the right places, we drill 80-metre-deep wells into aquifers and use solar pumps to transport the piped water to several villages.



Villagers around a tap stand providing clean water from one of the deep aquifers that Water School has drilled into

Our first approach to a new village is to hold a 'triggering meeting' where we draw a map and discuss with all the villagers where they poop and where they get their water. Eventually the penny drops, and we hear 'Am I drinking my neighbour's poop? What can we do to stop this?' Bingo! The village is triggered. Our team teaches, the villagers do the work.

To hear accounts from people who have transformed their village is awe inspiring. 'I cannot believe we used to live like that.' 'My husband is a local politician and now when people come to meetings, they can use my beautiful latrine – I am so proud of my home now.' I often come away with thank-you gifts of fruit and vegetables.

When Covid struck, the Ugandan government, with lots of experience of epidemics – cholera, Ebola, and so on – came down hard with restrictions. Travelling in private vehicles was forbidden without a permit. Border restrictions were very tight. Bars and restaurants were closed and in the cities a curfew was in place from 7pm to 5am. State schools were closed for two years. And the result was that few people got Covid and few died. Western countries should have asked Africa how to handle Covid. Our team adapted and started working with local health officials to teach about Covid as part of our normal program. They got travel permits and our work could continue almost as normal.

As in most of the developing world, the greatest impact of Covid was economic rather than medical. In towns and cities,

millions of day labourers couldn't find work and people faced extreme hunger. The cities emptied back to traditional villages. In rural areas life was less affected. Crime and violence also increased as people became desperate, and had more time on their hands. Child abuse and teen pregnancy rates skyrocketed with children not in school and adults not working as much, and the latter is at epidemic proportions.

I visited Uganda in May and there is no Covid in the country. No one really knows why. The lasting impact of the epidemic will be on education. The country missed two years of schooling. This was a big mistake by the government. Teachers have now got other jobs and three grade years have entered the system at once.

Find out more: waterschool.com

Caroline Doan (1997)



Caroline Doan took a BA in PPE at Merton, and an MSc in NGO Management from the Cass (now Bayes) Business School, University of London. She has worked for a number of different international charities both in the UK and abroad, most notably for Concern Worldwide in Haiti before and during the 2010 earthquake, and was part of the early humanitarian response. Her most recent position has been Head of Finance & Services at Médecins Sans Frontières UK.

My parents were Vietnamese refugees – the original 'boat people' of the late 1970s. Unlike hundreds of thousands of others who died at sea or had horrific experiences in refugee camps, they had the extreme good fortune to be rescued by a British submarine and offered asylum in the UK. I myself was born and grew up in the UK, but I always understood

that I and my family belonged to another community, culture and identity that stood alongside my own British identity. Furthermore, I grew up being acutely aware of the difference in fortune between my own life and opportunities, and those of my cousins back in Vietnam.

Studying PPE at Merton gave me both the opportunity to frame and examine those thoughts and feelings: it gave me the language and concepts for how individuals, communities and nations interact with each other and, critically, how those interactions can fail the least fortunate. I had realised early on that this was an area that I wanted to work in, but I was not attracted to the potentials in the public or private sectors. Instead, I was drawn to the 'third sector' — to the roles charities play as representatives of civil society, in terms of direct aid and also social activism.

I trained and qualified as a chartered accountant for practical reasons, mostly because I felt I needed a skill to offer, and PricewaterhouseCoopers was a good training ground for that. My first job in the sector was with Merlin (now merged with Save the Children), and I was soon sent on a field visit to Darfur, Sudan — something about jumping in the deep end! Since then, I've worked with a number of different international charities both in the UK and abroad, mostly around West and Central Africa. My longest field job was in Haiti with Concern Worldwide: I started in 2008 and was still working there at the time of the 2010 earthquake, and for a few months afterwards as part of the early relief response. My last position was UK-based as the Head of Finance & Services for Médecins Sans Frontières UK, where I spent six and a half years.

There is a huge variety in the types of charities that work in the aid/development sector: from large complex federated organisations such as Save the Children and MSF, to small start-ups. The experience can therefore be very different depending on the type of organisation you work in, and if you work internationally or in a head office. For those of us who work in finance, HR or other business support functions, the principles of what you need to deliver remain the same whether you are in London, Juba or a small project office in eastern DRC. The difference and the challenge is the operational reality, which can encompass everything

from the availability of banking services to your personal security. Wherever you are, you will most likely not have the staff, tools and resources that you need to deal with your operational reality.

I have found that the reward of working in this sector is in some ways the challenge of it. There is something about working in an extreme that can focus energy, bring people together and create opportunities for creativity and innovation, whether you are a nurse, an engineer or indeed an accountant. However, for me, the main reward has always been the inspirational people who I have met along the way: the Congolese nurse who stayed behind in Darfur while other international staff were evacuated; the Rwandan country director who lost three children during the genocide and has focused her grief to rebuild communities; the gang member in a slum of Port-au-Prince who reached out to his enemies to ensure aid could reach the elderly after the earthquake.

The future looks very bleak for poorer countries. The pandemic has been devastating economically if not health-wise, and it is not pleasant to think through the current and future impacts of food insecurity and climate change. The current political environment combined with a potential recession does not bode well for charitable funding. However, the charity sector is a sector founded on hope: not hope as a feeling that comes and goes, but hope as a choice and a call to action. So I ask you all to hope and, if you can, to support the charity sector in whatever way you can over the next few years and beyond.

Find out more: [msf.org.uk](https://www.msf.org.uk)



View from the Top: Michael Ridpath (1979)

Michael Ridpath © Chris George

*After graduating from Merton in 1982, Michael Ridpath joined Saudi International Bank where he worked as a bond trader. When his first novel, *Free to Trade*, was published in 1995, he left the City to become a full-time writer. He wrote several more financial thrillers and then began a crime series featuring the Icelandic detective Magnus Jonson, the latest of which is *Death in Dalvik*. He has also written five stand-alone historical thrillers set in the 20th century. He splits his time between Old and New England.*

Postmaster spoke to Michael about his diverse career and what's next for him.



Michael matriculating at Merton in 1979

You read History at Merton. What drew you to study it, and has your degree and/or time at Merton impacted your writing and storytelling?

I enjoyed History, I enjoyed reading history books and I liked analysing the causes of events and setting out this analysis in a clear argument, which is essentially what much of history boils down to.

At Merton, I learned how to write a clear, well-thought-out argument in crisp prose. It turns out that clarity and crispness are important for thriller writers.

One thing that frustrated me about History, at least when I was studying it, was the primacy of social causes over the individual. The 'great man' theory of history was sneered at. I found the characters of participants in history, and in

particular their sense of morality, fascinating. You are not supposed to write about any of that in a history essay, but you certainly are supposed to write about it in a historical novel. And it's actually pleasingly difficult.



Michael at Merton celebrating hitching to Paris and back in 24 hours with his friend Simon Petherick (1979)

Why did you decide to go into a career in banking?

I needed a job after Oxford. Many people were applying to banks, so I did too. But the more I found out about banking, the more interesting I found it. Banking was a lot of fun in my twenties, especially in the days when you could leave the office at six in the evening. The prospect of middle-management in banking, although well remunerated, was much less appealing.

Oddly, the discipline that studying History gave me – analysing the causes and consequences of real-world events and clearly explaining them – was extremely useful in banking.

What led you to change career paths and become a writer?

It wasn't a plan. At the age of 29 and a half, I realised I was doing nothing creative with my life, so I decided to write a short story, about a bond trader like me. After the first ten pages, I was hooked and I just kept on writing, frequently getting up at four in the morning, until I had completed a novel. I put the manuscript to one side, but then I rewrote it over a period of a year and then rewrote it again over another year. The result was a financial thriller: *Free To Trade*. After all that work, I submitted my manuscript to literary agents, with the knowledge that it probably wouldn't get published.

But one agent, Carole Blake, invited me around to her office for a cup of tea and asked if she could represent me. I said yes.

Carole had a plan. She sent overexcited faxes to all the top publishers about the discovery she had just made (me) and coaxed them into bidding against each other for the right to publish *Free To Trade*. She secured a massive advance from one of them, Heinemann, but only if I agreed to write a second book, which was fair enough. This would involve changing jobs and becoming a full-time writer. I enjoyed banking, but I loved writing. I was also a single parent at the time, so the change of career was timely.



Michael (right) in discussion at a Merton Conversation in 2014 entitled 'The Real Science Behind CSI' with Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys (1968) and Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe © John Cairns

What appealed to you about writing thrillers as opposed to other genres?

I was unsure about my abilities as a writer, so writing a thriller seemed to me more achievable than writing a more

literary novel. Writing thrillers turned out to be harder than I expected, but the skills I do have as a writer — clarity, crispness, a sense of pace, an interest in people's moral flaws and values — turned out to be well suited to the genre. I am better at describing clearly what something is, than beautifully what it is like.

You are currently writing a blog about Iceland, a place you say you fell in love with. Tell us more about that, and what drew you to write stories based there.

Eventually, after eight books, my financial thrillers ran out of steam and I needed a Plan B. I decided to write a detective series — there is always a market for a detective series. But the shelves of Smith's and Waterstones are groaning with so many detectives. Mine had to be different.

I had visited Iceland on a bizarre book tour when *Free To Trade* was published, and the country had really grabbed my imagination. I remember thinking I would love to set a novel there, but how could I possibly set a financial thriller in such a tiny country? (Ironical given the financial meltdown that hit Iceland a couple of years later.)

So I set out to find out all I could about Iceland, reading its literature, meeting its inhabitants, visiting its shores. I loved it.

After I had written five detective novels set there, I had hundreds of pages of notes about all aspects of Iceland: its geography, its history, its society, its literature, its criminal system, its folklore, its politics, and extensive notes about the streets of Reykjavik and the valleys and mountains of the countryside.

It seemed a shame not to share this information, but I wasn't sure how. Then it occurred to me I could frame all these facts within the story of how I researched Iceland. I like telling stories. Very quickly, a certain wry humour crept in. Iceland has an eccentric landscape and is inhabited by eccentric people: plenty to smile at.

So I began my blog, *Writing in Ice: A Crime Writer's Guide to Iceland*. Last year I published a book under the same title. If you are a crime writer and you want to write detective stories set in Iceland, this is definitely the book for you! Somewhat niche, perhaps.

What do you feel is your greatest career achievement?

My greatest career achievement occurred right at the beginning, with the publication of *Free To Trade*. It was a good book, but I was very lucky. It was a white-collar thriller when publishers were fed up with the Cold War and were looking for a 'British John Grisham', it was brilliantly published by Heinemann, it was serialised in the *Daily Telegraph* over Christmas, and my agent was an enthusiastic saleswoman with a sound knowledge of geography. The book reached the top ten in the UK for three months, galloping along at number 2, a nose behind *Sophie's World* by Jostein Gaarder. It was published in 35 different languages, including Estonian and Tagalog. I was invited on a series of book tours all over the world, from Australia to Iceland. It was surreal, but it was also fun.

It turned out I never was the British John Grisham. I have written 20 novels, but now they don't sell nearly as well as *Free To Trade*. This has been difficult sometimes. For many years I – and my publishers – were desperately trying to achieve the 'international-bestselling-author' status I had so nearly attained. It took a while, but now I am happy writing the best novels I can for a loyal band of readers. I enjoy writing them, they enjoy reading them, and I am still learning.

What is the best bit of advice (career or otherwise) that you have received?

After *Free To Trade*, there was quite a bit of pressure on me to write a good second novel. I decided to write a thriller about a budding virtual reality company, which eventually became *Trading Reality*. My first draft wasn't too bad, but a host of people weighed in with their conflicting advice: British and American editors, my agent, my agent's husband and others. The second draft was becoming an exercise in compromise: the proverbial camel that was a horse designed by a committee. The book was getting worse, not better, and I was worried.

I mentioned my fears to my wise German publisher, who told me to write the book I wanted to write. It was the job of him and his colleagues to make it work, and if it didn't work, I could always write another one. I have often remembered that when I am tempted to change a story to please 'the market' or an editor.

The other piece of useful advice given to me many years ago by Bill Morrison, a grizzled Middle Eastern banker, was 'Rule 1: No princes'. I pass it on in case you ever need it.

Your upcoming book, a thriller set in Guernsey in 1962 and Jerusalem in the 1930s, sounds fascinating. Tell us more about it.

It's about a young Canadian woman named Beth who is writing a biography of Hector Chalke, the bestselling English author of *Bring Me My Bow*, which was a novel about a love affair in Jerusalem before the war that made its author millions. Beth suspects that the novel was not written by Hector, but by his sister Celia, whom Hector had visited in Jerusalem, and who was blown up by a bomb in 1939. After Beth visits Hector at his home in Guernsey, she falls to her death from a cliff path. The police think it's an accident, or possibly suicide.

Her brother, Iain, is a geologist in the Canadian Rockies. He travels to Guernsey to collect his sister's body. Iain soon discovers that Beth suspected *Bring Me My Bow* was not actually written by Hector. Iain and Beth were adopted, and Iain realises that the novel contains clues that imply that Celia was in fact their birth mother, and so Hector is their uncle. Beth must have figured this out, hence her interest in Hector and his novel. Iain begins to doubt that Beth's death was an accident.

Then it all gets a little complicated! But I'll sort it out.

Finally, who is your own favourite author?

William Boyd. In each book, he seems to me to be trying, and *almost* succeeding, to create the perfect novel: well written about something profound, with an absorbing story and interesting, complicated characters who inhabit an atmospheric setting. It's an impossible goal, but I admire him for having a go.



Merton Cities: New Delhi

Mertonians have settled in many places around the world, and we are proud of the truly global nature of our community. Postmaster spoke to trade economist Sonali Chowdhry (2015) for an insider's view of New Delhi.

Where is the best place to eat and drink?

Café Lota is a beloved institution, well known for its contemporary takes on regional Indian cuisines. Housed in the National Crafts Museum in Pragati Maidan, this outdoor restaurant is perfect for a lazy brunch. Afterwards, one can walk around to admire traditional textiles, handcrafted items and wall murals in the museum complex.

What is the best way to spend a morning?

Taking a quiet morning stroll through the Lodhi Gardens. It's a serene place, removed from the capital's daily clamour and bustle. The gardens also offer an opportunity for learning about Indo-Islamic architecture and history as they are dotted with beautiful medieval monuments such as the Bada Gumbad ('Big Dome') and the Shish Gumbad ('glass dome').

...an afternoon?

Browsing for books in The Bookshop, located in Delhi's quiet Jor Bagh market. It's a long-running independent bookstore dedicated to the joys of reading — a wonderful place to discover translated works by Indian writers and to spend time with the resident cats. If you're there, seek a copy of *Capital: The Eruption of Delhi* by Rana Dasgupta for a vivid portrayal of the city's extraordinary economic transformation since the 1990s.

...an evening?

Catch the light show at the Old Fort (Purana Qila) which takes the love of Delhi as its central theme and traces the city's history through imagery and sound. Alternatively, look out for evening plays staged by the National School of Drama — a renowned theatre training institute that has contributed immensely to performance arts in India.



The Bookshop in Jor Bagh

What is the one place you must visit?

Explore the leafy campus of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). Spread over a thousand acres, this is a public university that occupies a central position in Indian political discourse and has a rich history of scholarship in the social sciences. It's also a great place to begin connecting with the Indian student and research community.

How has the pandemic affected New Delhi?

The second Covid-19 wave brought the city's health infrastructure to a near collapse. The lockdowns severely affected the livelihoods of the vast number of essential workers, daily-wage and migrant labourers who keep the city running. Altogether, this was a frightening period in the history of the capital.



Sonali Chowdhry

What do you love most about living in New Delhi?

Delhi has been the seat of power for numerous political regimes and dynasties over the centuries, each of which left an indelible imprint on the city's landscape and culture. The city's deep historical roots and many contradictions make it an exciting (and chaotic!) place to live.

Lost, Little Known and Unbuilt Merton (19)

'Mr William Orpen' by Sir Max Beerbohm

Some years ago, I acquired this drawing of William Orpen by Max Beerbohm, which dates from 1909 (Plate 1). It is, in fact, the second of three sketches on the subject. On re-framing it, I discovered the first sketch on the back, and I have now placed glass on both sides of the drawing. As is often the case, the penultimate sketch of a cartoon like this one has

a spontaneity lost in the more polished final version (Plate 2). The caption in this, the second version, reads 'Mr William Orpen painting *more suo* a portrait of one of our merchant princes'. The caption in the final version has replaced the saltier earlier version with 'Mr William Orpen executing in his own way, a commission for a portrait'.



For many years, the original drawing of 'Mr William Orpen' was owned by Sir John Rothenstein. He was the son of Max's lifelong friend Sir William Rothenstein. The latter, himself a distinguished portrait painter, presented his drawing of Max addressed 'For the Fellows of Merton College' (Plate 3).

Sir William Orpen (1878–1931) was a fashionable portrait painter of high professional skill. He was an official war artist from 1917 to 1919.

The drawing is destined, in due course, for the Beerbohm Room in the College Library.

Alan Bott (1953)
Bodley Fellow

2



70 Mr William Orpen executing, in his own way, a commission for a portrait.
1909
Sir John Rothenstein (1130)

3



Records

Merton College 2021-22

The Visitor

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable
the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

Warden

Irene Tracey, CBE, MA, DPhil, FRCA, FMedSci,
MAE

Fellows

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

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), FRBS, FAPS, FPhysiol,
MAE, 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 Giers Gloag, MA, MRICS *Land
Agent & Estates Bursar*

Julia Caroline Walworth, MA (BA
Swarthmore; MA, PhD Yale) *FSA Librarian*

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 & Michael Baker Tutor
in Physics*

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

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, Senior Treasurer of the
Amalgamated Clubs*

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

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 & Secretary to the Harmsworth Trust*

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*

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, (M Math 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, Principal of the Postmasters*

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*



Members of Governing Body 2021-22

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*

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*

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* (finished 31 December 2021)

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

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 Charlotte 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) *Leventis 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 PhD BColumbia) *Junior Research Fellow in Biology*

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

James John Michael Newton, (BA Camb; PhD ICL) *Associate Professor in Mathematics & Tutor in Mathematics*

Brianne Kathleen Dolce, (BM Michigan; Mmus KC, Mphil Mphil PhD Yale) *Fitzjames Research Fellow in Music*

Chloe Floriana Thérèse Deambrogio, MA DPhil (BA, MPhil Florence) *Junior Research Fellow in Law*

Vatsal Khandelwal, MSc, DPhil (BA Mumbai) *Peter J Braam Junior Research Fellow in Global Wellbeing*

Helen Rachel Craske, BA, MSt, DPhil *Junior Research Fellow in Modern Languages*

Hadleigh Robert Douglas Frost, MMATHPhys, DPhil (BSc Cant) *Junior Research Fellow in Mathematics*

John Richard Geddes, (MB, ChB, MD Leeds) *FRCPsych WA Handley Professor of Psychiatry*

The following Fellow resigned

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

Emeritus Fellows

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, FRSL
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, FRSA
HM Emperor Naruhito of Japan, Hon DCL
Sir Alec Jeffreys, CH, MA, DPhil, FRCPATH, FLS,
FRS
The Rt Hon Sir Jack Beatson, MA, DCL, (LLD
Camb) FBA
Richard Charles Levin, BLitt, (BA Stanford;
PhD Yale)
William Peter Cook, CBE, MA
David Robert Holmes, MA, Hon DCL
Robert Owen Paxton, MA, (PhD Harvard)
Sir Howard Stringer, MA, Hon DLitt
David Francis Kerr Finlay, CMG, OBE, CFA
Jonathan Alan Hodgkin, MA, (MA, PhD
Camb) FRS, FEng
The Rt Hon Sir Brian Henry Leveson, MA
Sir Howard John Davies, MA, (MS Stanford)
Sir Charles Antony Richard Hoare, MA, FRS,
FEng
Sir Anthony James Leggett, KBE, MA, DPhil, FRS
Sir Richard Hughes Trainor, KBE, MA, DPhil,
FRHistS
The Rt Revd Nicholas Thomas Wright, MA,
DPhil, DD, FRSE
Sir Robert John Andrew, KCB, MA, FRSA
Sir Jeremy Israel Isaacs, MA, FRSA
Sir Ian Kershaw, (BA Liv), DPhil, Hon DLitt,
FRHistS, FBA
Martin Peter Read, CBE, (BA Camb), DPhil
Mark John Thompson, MA, FRTS, FRSA
Adam John Hart-Davis, BA, (DPhil York), FRSA
Sir Callum McCarthy, BA, (MS Stanford; PhD
Stirling)

Sir Guy Howard Weston, BA, (MBA INSEAD)
Peter Warry, MA, (LLB Lond; PhD R'dg),
FEng, FSA
Martha Piper, OC, (BSc Michigan; MA
Connecticut; PhD McGill))
Timothy Dewe Phillips, CBE, MA, (AMP
Harvard)
Julian Blackwell, DL
Anastasios Leventis, CBE, OFR
Dame Jessica Mary Rawson, DBE, MA, DLitt
(MA, LittD Camb) FBA
The Rt Hon Lord Hogan-Howe, Kt, QPM, MA
(MBA Sheff)
Lyndal Roper, (BA Melbourne, PhD Lond)
FBA, FRHistS
Dana Scott, (PhD Princeton), FBA
The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Lord Williams of
Oystermouth, PC, DD, Hon DCL, FBA, FRSL,
FLSW
Erich Gruen, (BA Columbia; PhD Harvard)
The Rt Hon Dame Philippa Whipple, DBE, MA
The Rt Hon Lord Grimstone Of Boscobel, Kt,
MA, MSc
Martin Ney, MA
Lady Hollick, (BA Sussex), OBE
Sir Martin Taylor, MA, (PhD Lond), FRS
Dinah Birch, CBE, MA, DPhil, FRSA, FEA
Alison Blake, MA, CMG
The Hon Dame Kelyn Bacon, MA, DBE
The Most Revd Michael Lewis, BA, MA
The Hon Sir Andrew Baker, MA (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 MacLaren, 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 Fellows

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

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

Julia de Lacy Mann Fellows

David Lukas Benjamin Brantner, (MA, MMath
Camb; PhD Harvard) (finished 1 February 2022)

Marc Roth, (BSc, PhD Saarland) (finished 30
September 2022)

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)

Wyliot Fellows

Charles Manby, MA, (MBA Insead)

John Booth, MA

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

John Moussouris, MSc, D Phil, (AB Harvard)

Visiting Research Fellows

Cheryl Frances-Hoad, January 2020 to
August 2022 (Creative Arts, Music)

Domingo Gyax, Hilary term 2022

Hye-Won Kang, Trinity term 2022

David Wood, Trinity term 2022

Elections

*To a Tutorial Fellowship in Philosophy with
effect from 24 March 2022*

Daniela Josefina Dover, (BA Yale; PhD NYU)
*Associate Professor in Philosophy and Tutor in
Philosophy*

*To a Julia de Lacy Mann Category C Fellowship
with effect from 1 October 2022*

Martina Astrid Rodda, DPhil (BA, MA Pisa),
*Leventis Early Career Researcher in Ancient
Greek*

Lucy Brookes BA, (MA York), DPhil *Fitzjames
Early Career Researcher in Medieval English
Language & Literature*

Caspar Jacobs, BPhil, MPhysPhil (from 1
September 2022) *Early Career Researcher in
Philosophy*

Alex Lipp, (BA, MSc Camb) *Early Career
Researcher in Geochemistry*

David Philipp Nadlinger, (BA, MSc Zurich)
Early Career Researcher in Physics

Krishnan Ram-Prasad, (BA, MPhil Camb)
Early Career Researcher in Classics

*To a Visiting Research Fellowship in the
Creative Arts with effect from 1 October 2022*
Ben Haggarty



Fellows' Honours and Appointments

Nick Allard was appointed Inaugural Dean at the Jacksonville University College of Law, and became Chair of the Standing Committee on the Law Library of Congress at the American Bar Association.

Dr Jennifer Altehenger was awarded a Leverhulme research fellowship for the academic year 2022–23.

The Hon Mrs Justice Kelyn Bacon was appointed as the President of the Upper Tribunal, Tax and Chancery Chamber in February 2022.

Dr Helen Barron was awarded the Thomas Willis Intermediate Career Researcher Prize and a UK Research and Innovation Future Leaders Fellowship.

Professor James Binney was elected as an International Member of the US National Academy of Sciences.

John Booth was appointed Chair of the National Gallery's Board of Trustees.

Dr Frankie Dunn was awarded the NERC independent research fellowship (2022–27) and became a Senior Research Scientist at Oxford University Museum of Natural History.

Professor Artur Ekert was elected a foreign member of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Professor Véronique Gouverneur was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences as an International Honorary Member, and awarded the 2021 Henri Moissan Prize and 2022 Arthur C Cope Award.

Professor Daniel Grimley was appointed as Head of the Humanities Division at the University of Oxford.

Professor Peter Holland was elected Chair of the Trustee Board for the BBSRC Earlham Institute, Norwich, and Chair of the Scientific Advisory Board for Villefranche-sur-mer Developmental Biology Laboratory.

Professor Ehud Hrushovski was awarded the 2022 Shaw Prize in Mathematical Sciences.

The Revd Canon Simon Jones was appointed Chair of the Steering Committee of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation.

Professor Elizabeth Milner-Gulland was appointed Head of the Department of Zoology, University of Oxford; became part of the Government of Uzbekistan's Advisory Committee on the Sustainable Development of the Aral Sea region; and a member of HM Treasury's Biodiversity Valuation guidance group.

Dr Kate Orkin was awarded an Oxford Policy Engagement Network Fellowship and was promoted to Associate Professor in Economics and Public Policy at the University of Oxford.

Professor Jennifer Payne was appointed editor of the *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*.

Professor Frances Platt was awarded the 2023 Thudichum Medal, for eminent scientists who have made outstanding contributions to neurochemistry and related subjects.

Professor Dame Jessica Rawson was awarded the 2022 Tang Prize in Sinology.

Professor Alexander Schekochihin became a Simons Investigator in Astrophysics, 2022 and was elected a Member of Oxford University Council, 2021.

Professor Irene Tracey was appointed CBE in the 2022 New Year Honours List and nominated as the next Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

Undergraduate Results, Awards and Prizes 2021-22

All academic results, awards and prizes are correct as of 8 September 2022

	Entry	1st	2.1	2.2	3rd	Pass
Final Honours School	88	47	33	8	0	0

	Entry	Distinction/1st	Pass/2nd	Partial Pass/Fail
First Public Exam*	90	33	50	7

College prizes

Ms E Bogert, William Harvey Prize for best performance in Principles of Clinical Anatomy (joint winner)

Ms Z Bux, Sam McNaughton Prize for best performance in Philosophy in PPE Prelims

Mr T Chatbipho, Phillips Prize for best performance in Chemistry Finals (Parts IA and IB) (joint winner)

Mr J Clark, First Year Undergraduate Essay Competition

Mr H Eaton, William Harvey Prize for best performance in Principles of Clinical Anatomy (joint winner)

Ms E Fleeman, Slaughter & May second-year mootng competition (runner-up)

Mr M Gamble, second-year F.E. Smith Memorial Mooting Prize

Ms I Howarth, Allen & Overy Prize for most promising second-year Law student (joint winner)

Mr S Mazhar, Allen & Overy Prize for most promising second-year Law student (joint winner)

Mr S Mazhar, Slaughter & May second-year mootng competition (winner)

Mr S Mehta, Second Year and Above Undergraduate Essay Competition

Ms J Neves Teixeira, Conrad Russell Prize for best History thesis

Ms A Shivanii, first-year F.E. Smith Memorial Mooting Prize

Ms A Shivanii, Norton Rose Fulbright Prize for best performance in Law Moderations

Ms K Sparrowhawk, Dominic Welsh Prize for best essay in Mathematics

Mr W Tangamornchaipattana, Phillips Prize for best performance in Chemistry Prelims

Ms B Watkins, Phillips Prize for best performance in Chemistry Finals (Parts IA and IB) (joint winner)

University prizes

Mr J Bell, Prelims Prize in Physics & Philosophy

Mr B Botlik, Gibbs Trust prize for outstanding performance in Inorganic Chemistry

Ms A Hilder Jarvis, Gibbs prize for exam performance in Philosophy

Mr W Isotta, Commendation for practical work in Physics Part B

Mr R Madan, Gibbs Prize for best performance in Physics papers in Part B of Physics and Philosophy

Mr N Maslov, Gibbs prize for practical work in Physics (Part A)

Mr N U Jin, Martin Wronker Prize for Administrative Law

Ms B Watkins, Prize for best performance in third-year Practical Chemistry

Mr W Tangamornchaipattana, Prize for best performance in Chemistry Prelims

Graduate Results, Awards and Prizes 2021-22

All academic results, awards and prizes are correct as of 16 September 2022, with 7 results still outstanding.

	Entry	Distinction	Pass
Taught Course Results	41	21	13

University prizes

Ms J Icaza Wilfert, Diploma in Legal Studies
Prize for Overall Best Performance

Ms S Karwa, Law Faculty Prize for
Constitutionalism in Asia

Ms S Karwa, Law Faculty Prize in
International Human Rights Law

Ms S Karwa, Law Faculty Prize in Families and
the State: Adult Relationships

Mr R Moore, Law Faculty Prize in Private Law
and Fundamental Rights (shared)

Mr J Hua, Ancient History Prize 2022

College Staff

Name	Appointment	First appointed	Name	Appointment	First appointed
Mr R J Wiggins	Decorator	16/3/1987	Mr P Macallister	Chef de Partie	22/10/2007
Mr J S Lisle	Groundsman	17/10/1988	Mrs K Adamczyk	Housekeeping Supervisor	1/11/2007
Mr J P McVeigh	Quadman/Storeman	15/10/1990	Ms S T Hague	Head of Conference & Accommodation	2/2/2009
Mrs J Gerhardi	Graduate Officer	2/1/1991	Mr I Knight	Accommodation & Conference Porter	13/7/2009
Mrs S A Allen	Hall Assistant	7/7/1998	Miss H Bednarczyk	Deputy Head Porter	4/1/2011
Mrs L J Pullen	Scout	19/10/1998	Miss G Hanson	Gardener	28/3/2011
Mr M Wender	Head Chef	20/9/1999	Mr S Bowdery	Senior IT Operations Officer	1/4/2011
Mrs C L Turner	Cleaner	27/3/2000	Mr T Cortes Rodrigues	Cleaner	31/10/2011
Mrs N S Mahmood	Cleaner	23/4/2001	Mrs S Rai	Cleaner	31/10/2011
Miss S L Bird	Chef de Partie	8/10/2001	Mrs J Rusaitiene	Cleaner	16/1/2012
Miss L Reveley	Bursary Clerk	11/2/2002	Mr S Cope	Web & Media Officer	3/12/2012
Mrs C Lewis	Resource Description Project Librarian	7/5/2002	Mrs L E Collins	Verger	23/9/2013
Mr C D Joyce	Kitchen Porter	29/7/2002	Miss J I Dziadosz	Hall Steward	27/1/2014
Miss L Savin	Head Gardener	7/10/2002	Miss M Lasota	SCR & Hall Supervisor	1/10/2014
Mr J A Reid	Archivist	2/12/2002	Mrs G Pal	Cleaner	3/11/2014
Mr C E Shackell	College Accountant	20/1/2003	Mrs F Lawrence	HR Manager	2/12/2014
Miss L Lawrence	Executive Assistant to the Warden	1/9/2003	Mr S Hoverd	Chef de Partie	23/5/2015
Mr C Bridgman	Third Chef	29/9/2003	Miss N Lane	Lodge Porter	19/8/2015
Miss J Baker	Cleaner	2/1/2004	Mr N Hall	Bar Manager	21/9/2015
Mrs M Skalik	Head Steward	10/8/2005	Miss I Siwczak	SCR & Hall Supervisor	27/10/2015
Mr J Pawlowski	Lodge Porter	24/10/2005	Mrs M Serhej	Cleaner	6/6/2016
Mr D Brown	Second Chef	2/1/2007	Mrs S Camino Carrera	Cleaner	1/12/2016
Mr M Furse	Senior Gardener	2/1/2007	Miss C Chisholm	Alumni Relations Officer	9/1/2017
Miss N Harrison	Estates Administrator	23/7/2007			

Name	Appointment	First appointed	Name	Appointment	First appointed
Dr K Fifield	Academic Registrar	1/3/2017	Mr A Lopez Munoz	Bar & Catering Assistant	15/10/2018
Ms M Clarke	Accommodation Coordinator	20/3/2017	Miss I Blasco Checa	SCR & Hall Assistant	18/11/2018
Mrs S Moore	Conference & Events Manager	19/4/2017	Mr H James	Head Porter	07/1/2019
Mr K Watts	Maintenance Manager	3/7/2017	Mrs R Wilkins	Academic Officer	25/2/2019
Miss J Wingrove	Chef de Partie	31/7/2017	Mr S Saprykin	Lodge Porter	08/4/2019
Ms C De Souza Lima	SCR & Hall Assistant	14/8/2017	Mr L Fekete	Lodge Porter	09/4/2019
Mrs F Raimo	Student Support Administrator	25/9/2017	Miss K Leach	Assistant College Accountant	27/8/2019
Miss P Martin Montalvo	SCR & Hall Supervisor	28/9/2017	Ms J Barrett	Welfare Adviser	01/10/2019
Mrs J Cullen	Estates Secretary	30/10/2017	Mr D Page	Commis Chef	07/10/2019
Mr E Tesfalem	Servery Assistant	16/11/2017	Ms E Casey	Chapel Administrator	21/10/2019
Mr P O'Keefe	Servery Assistant	27/11/2017	Miss S Horder	Gardener	06/1/2020
Ms V Parkinson	Resource Services & Support Librarian	03/1/2018	Miss E Ochiela	Bursary Clerk	27/1/2020
Miss R Johnston	Library Assistant	08/1/2018	Miss A Forrai	HR Officer	03/2/2020
Mr C Soares Godinho	Cleaner	05/2/2018	Miss C Francis	Bursary Clerk	24/2/2020
Mr M Martinov	Deputy Development Director	19/2/2018	Mr T Jeffrey	Lodge Porter	02/3/2020
Ms H Campbell Longley	Deputy Librarian	26/2/2018	Ms E Bruce	Alumni Communications Officer	31/3/2020
Miss M Dziadosz	SCR & Hall Assistant	03/4/2018	Mrs E Ortega Palazon	Cleaner	13/7/2020
Miss A Nowakowska	SCR & Hall Assistant	06/4/2018	Mrs S Meldere	Cleaner	06/8/2020
Mrs A Ostojka-Starzewska	Butler	16/4/2018	Miss S Ximenes	Cleaner	06/8/2020
Mr M Carroll	Chef de Partie	08/5/2018	Mr D Durrant	Lodge Porter	18/9/2020
Ms L Champion	College Nurse	20/9/2018	Ms C De Fatima Hanjan	Cleaner	21/9/2020
Mr K Lau	Lodge Porter	08/10/2018	Mrs J Reid	Clerk of Works	01/10/2020
			Ms H Kimmett	Governance Officer	05/10/2020
			Miss B Sarkozi	SCR & Hall Assistant	07/12/2020
			Miss A Musa	IT Officer	22/2/2021

Name	Appointment	First appointed	Name	Appointment	First appointed
Mrs S Storey	Payroll Administrator	08/3/2021	Mr O Wright	Lay Assistant Chaplain	04/1/2022
Ms C Webb	Administrative Officer	12/7/2021	Miss A Tecza	SCR & Hall Assistant	11/1/2022
Mr C Parsons	Lodge Porter	19/7/2021	Miss V Varosi	Conference & Events Coordinator	17/1/2022
Mr M Jedrzejewski	Maintenance Technician	19/7/2021	Miss S Fazekas	SCR & Hall Supervisor	13/1/2022
Mr M Francis	Maintenance Technician	09/8/2021	Mr J Ionita	Lodge Porter	01/2/2022
Mrs C Gerum Saoncela	Housekeeper to the Warden	16/8/2021	Mrs S Sobo	College Nurse	24/1/2022
Miss K Calvert	Conference & Events Coordinator	16/8/2021	Mr T Orlik	SCR & Hall Assistant	21/2/2022
Mrs M Horanyi	Housekeeping Supervisor	16/8/2021	Ms G Arroyo Payan	SCR & Hall Assistant	28/2/2022
Ms O Wrafter	Graduate Associate in Development	24/8/2021	Mr J Clark-Johnson	Chef de Partie	07/3/2022
Miss G Beckley	Development Officer	31/8/2021	Mrs J Cable	Executive Assistant	16/5/2022
Miss K Karpinen	Alumni Relations & Events Officer (maternity cover)	09/9/2021	Miss D Koleva	Cleaner	22/4/2022
Ms F Paterson	Schools Liaison & Access Officer	31/8/2021	Mr A Pereira Da Silva	Cleaner	22/4/2022
Mr A Chivers	Lodge Porter	01/9/2021	Mrs A Ponting-West	Bursary Clerk	25/4/2022
Mr J Madeley	Lodge Porter	20/9/2021	Mr P Wiczorek	Bar & Catering Assistant	21/4/2022
Mr D Idiahi	Housekeeper	25/10/2021	Mr C Leong	SCR & Hall Assistant	11/7/2022
Mr M Randolph	Database and Operations Manager	08/11/2021			
Mr J Daniel	Admissions Officer	08/11/2021			
Mr O Gamble	Academic Officer	22/11/2021			
Mr A Pilendiram	Senior IT Officer	13/12/2021			
Mr D Lay	Cleaner	13/12/2021			
Ms A Szymanska	Cleaner	13/12/2021			
Ms I Naruseviciute	Cleaner	13/12/2021			
Ms E Madejska	Cleaner	13/12/2021			
Ms S Hines	Cleaner	13/12/2021			

Publications

Selected Fellows' Publications 2021–22

Allard, N (2021). 'Mad about the First Amendment, our beacon of liberty, equality and democracy', *Washburn L J* 61(6): 45–83

Allard, N (2021). 'Sweet are the uses of adversity', *U Tol L Rev* 52: 197–240

Allard, N (2022). 'Change is nothing new teaching public policy', *St Louis U L J* 66(3): 511–40

Altehenger, J (2022). 'Modelling modular living: *Furniture and Life* magazine and interior design in 1980s China', *J Des Hist*, doi:10.1093/jdh/epab043

Armitage, JP, and RM Berry (2021). 'Assembly and dynamics of the bacterial flagellum', *Annu Rev Microbiol* 74:181–200

Armitage, JP (2022). 'Swimming using a unidirectionally rotating, single stopping flagellum in the alpha proteobacterium *Rhodobacter sphaeroides*', *Front Microbiol*, doi: 10.3389/fmicb.2022.893524

Khoo, JH, H Miller and JP Armitage (2022). 'Measurement of macromolecular crowding in *Rhodobacter sphaeroides* under different growth conditions', *mBio* 13(1): e0367221

Barr, AJ, P Caban and J Rembieliński (2022). 'Bell-type inequalities for systems of relativistic vector bosons', arXiv:2204.11063

ATLAS Collaboration, including AJ Barr (2022). 'Operation and performance of the ATLAS semiconductor tracker in LHC Run 2', *J Instrum* 17(1) P01013: 1–56

FPF Collaboration, including AJ Barr (2022). 'The Forward Physics Facility at the High-Luminosity LHC', arXiv:2203.05090

Koolschijn, RS, et al. and HC Barron (2021). 'Memory recall involves a transient break in excitatory-inhibitory balance', *eLife* 10: e70071

Ekhtiari, H, et al., including HC Barron (2022). 'A checklist for assessing the methodological quality of concurrent tES-fMRI studies (ContES checklist): a consensus study and statement', *Nat Protoc* 17(3): 596–617

Beatson, J (2021). *Key Ideas in Law: The Rule of Law and the Separation of Powers* (London: Hart)

Carey, J (2021). *100 Poets: A Little Anthology* (Yale University Press)

Craske, H (2022). 'Periodicals as proxénètes: erotic complicity in *Don Juan* (1895–1900)', *French Studies* 76(3): 366–84

Minassian, AM, et al. and SJ Draper (2021). 'Controlled human malaria infection with a clone of *Plasmodium vivax* with high-quality genome assembly', *JCI Insight* 6(23): e152465

Ragotte, RJ, et al. and SJ Draper (2021). 'Human Basigin (CD147) does not directly interact with SARS-CoV-2 spike glycoprotein', *mSphere* 6(4): e0064721

Willcox, AC, et al., including SJ Draper (2021). 'Antibodies from malaria-exposed Malaria generally interact additively or synergistically with human vaccine-induced RH5 antibodies', *Cell Rep Med* 2(7): 100326

Mitsi, E, et al., including SJ Draper (2022). '*Streptococcus pneumoniae* colonization associates with impaired adaptive immune responses against SARS-CoV-2', *J Clin Invest* 132(7): e157124

Ragotte, RJ, et al., MK Higgins and SJ Draper (2022). 'Heterotypic interactions drive antibody synergy against a malaria vaccine candidate', *Nat Commun* 13(933), doi:10.1038/s41467-022-28601-4

Dunn, FS, et al. (2021). 'The developmental biology of *Charnia* and the eumetazoan affinity of the Ediacaran rangeomorphs', *Sci Adv* 7(30): eabe0291

Vixeboxse, PB, CG Kenchington, FS Dunn and EG Mitchell (2021). 'Orientations of mistaken point fronds indicate morphology impacted ability to survive turbulence', *Front Earth Sci* 9: 762824

Dunn, FS, et al. (2022). 'A crown-group cnidarian from the Ediacaran of Charnwood Forest, UK', *Nat Ecol Evol* (in press)

Darroch, SAF, et al., including FS Dunn (2022). 'The life and times of *Pteridinium simplex*', *Paleobiol* 48(1): 1–30, doi:10.1017/pab.2022.2

Lim, CC-W, X Feihu, J Pan and A Ekert (2021). 'Security analysis of quantum key distribution with small block length and its application to quantum space communications', *Phys Rev Lett* 126: 100501



Guilford, T. et al. (2022). 'Unexpectedly deep diving in an albatross'. *Curr Biol* 32(1): R26–28

Kempton, JA, et al., including **T Guilford** (2022). 'Optimization of dynamic soaring in a flap-gliding seabird impacts its large-scale distribution at sea'. *Sci Adv* 8(22): eabo0200

Padgett, O. et al. and **T Guilford** (2022). 'Shearwaters sometimes take long homing detours when denied natural outward journey information'. *Biol Lett* 18(2): 20210503

Wynn, J. et al. and **T Guilford** (2022). 'How might magnetic secular variation impact avian philopatry?'. *J Comp Physiol A: Sens Neural Behav Physiol* 208(2021): 145–54

Wynn, J. et al. and **T Guilford** (2022). 'Magnetic stop signs signal a European songbird's arrival at the breeding site following migration'. *Science* 375(6579): 446–9

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):19. doi:10.1186/s12916-020-01887-1

Paton RS, et al. and **S Gupta** (2021). 'Malaria infection and severe disease risks in Africa'. *Science* 373(6557): 926–931.

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. doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-84672-1

Giubilini A. et al. and **S Gupta** (2021). 'A focused protection vaccination strategy: why we should not target children with Covid-19 vaccination policies' *J Med Ethics.* 47(8): 565–566.

McNaughton A. et al. and **S Gupta** (2022). 'Fatal Covid-19 outcomes are associated with an antibody response targeting epitopes shared with endemic coronaviruses'. *JCI Insight.* 7(13): e156372. doi:10.1172/jci.insight.156372

Ragotte, RJ, et al., **MK Higgins** and SJ Draper (2022). 'Heterotypic interactions drive antibody synergy against a malaria vaccine candidate'. *Nat Commun* 13(933). doi:10.1038/s41467-022-28601-4

Darwin Tree of Life Project Consortium, including **PWH Holland** (2022). 'Sequence locally, think globally: The Darwin Tree of Life Project'. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 119(4): e2115642118



Danson, CN, et al., including **SM Hooker** (2021). 'A history of high-power laser research and development in the United Kingdom', *High Power Laser Sci* 9: 1–86

Jakobsson, O, **SM Hooker** and R Walczak (2021). 'GeV-scale accelerators driven by plasma-modulated pulses from kilohertz lasers', *Phys Rev Lett* 127(18): 184801

Alejo, A, et al. and **SM Hooker** (2022). 'Demonstration of kilohertz operation of hydrodynamic optical-field-ionized plasma channels', *Phys Rev Accel Beams* 25(1): 011301

Kershaw, I (2022). *Personality and Power: Builders and Destroyers of Modern Europe* (London: Allen Lane)

Behjatian, A, and **M Krishnan** (2022). 'Electrostatic free energies carry structural information on nucleic acid molecules in solution', *J Chem Phys* 156(13): 134201

Behjatian A, R Walker-Gibbons, AA Schekochihin and **M Krishnan** (2022). 'Nonmonotonic pair potentials in the interaction of like-charged objects in solution', *Langmuir* 38(2): 786–800

Bespalova, M, et al. and **M Krishnan** (2022). 'Opto-electrostatic determination of nucleic acid double-helix dimensions and the structure of the molecule-solvent interface', *Macromolecules*, doi:10.1021/acs.macromol.2c00657

Walker-Gibbons, RF, et al. and **M Krishnan** (2021). 'The role of surface chemistry in the orientational behavior of water at an interface', *J Phys Chem B* 126(25): 4697–710

Lemos, IS (2022). 'Contributions to the archaeology of Euboea' in J Driessen and C Knappett (eds), *Megistos Kouros: Studies in Honour of Hugh Sackett* (Louvain), pp.169–80
Booth, H, WNS Arlidge, D Squires and **EJ Milner-Gulland** (2022). 'Bycatch levies could reconcile trade-offs between blue growth and biodiversity conservation', *Nat Ecol Evol* 5(6): 715–25

Booth, H, et al. including **EJ Milner-Gulland** (2022). 'Investigating the risks of removing wild meat from global food systems', *Curr Biol* 31(8): 1788–97.e3

Bull, JW, et al. and **EJ Milner-Gulland** (2022). 'A roadmap to biodiversity net gain for large organisations', *Nature*

Doughty, H, **EJ Milner-Gulland** et al. (2022). 'Evaluating a large-scale online behaviour change intervention aimed at wildlife product consumers in Singapore', *PLoS One* 16(3): e0248144

Oyanedel, R, et al., including **EJ Milner-Gulland** (2022). 'A way forward for wild fungi in international conservation policy', *Conserv Lett*, doi.org/10.1111/conl.12882

Carranza, E, R Garlick, **K Orkin** and N Rankin (2022). 'Job search and hiring with limited information on workseekers' skills', *Am Econ Rev*

John, A, and **K Orkin** (2022). 'Can simple psychological interventions increase preventive health investment?' *J Eur Econ Assoc* 20(3): 1001–47



Wang, G. et al., including **DJ Paterson** (2021). 'Electrophysiological and proarrhythmic effects of hydroxychloroquine challenge in guinea-pig hearts', *ACS Pharmacol Transl Sci* 4(5): 1639–53.

Li, D. et al. and **DJ Paterson** (2022). 'Abnormal cyclic nucleotide signaling at the outer mitochondrial membrane in sympathetic neurons during the early stages of hypertension', *Hypertension* 79(7): 1374–84

Neely, OC, AI Domingos and **DJ Paterson** (2022). 'Macrophages can drive sympathetic excitability in the early stages of hypertension', *Front Cardiovasc Med* 8: 807904

Payne, J (2021). *Schemes of Arrangement: Theory, Structure and Operation*, 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press)

Payne, J (2021). 'An assessment of the UK restructuring moratorium', *LMCLQ*: 454–77

Sarra, J, **J Payne** and S Madaus (2022). 'The promise and perils of regulating *ipso facto* clauses', *Int Insolv Rev* 31(1): 45–80

Rawson, J, L Huan and WTT Taylor (2021). 'Seeking horses: allies, clients and exchanges in the Zhou period (1045–221 BC)', *J World Prehist* 34: 489–530.

Sawyer, D (2021). 'Form, time, and the "First English Sonnet"', *Chaucer Rev* 56(3): 193–224

Sawyer, D (2021). 'The influence of *Pearl* on Thom Gunn's "Lament"', *Notes Queries* 68(3): 363–6

Sawyer, D (2022). 'Verse-craft, editing, and the work: shadows of *Orfeo*', *Rev English Stud* 73(309): 219–38

Kestemont, M, et al., including **D Sawyer** (2022). 'Forgotten books: the application of unseen species models to the survival of culture', *Science* 375(6582): 765–9

Hosking, DN, and **AA Schekochihin** (2021). 'Reconnection-controlled decay of magnetohydrodynamic turbulence and the role of invariants', *Phys Rev X* 11: 041005

Meyrand, R, J Squire, **AA Schekochihin** and W Dorland (2021). 'On the violation of the zeroth law of turbulence in space plasmas', *J Plasma Phys* 87(3): 535870301, doi:10.1017/S0022377821000489

Behjatian A, R Walker-Gibbons, **AA Schekochihin** and M Krishnan (2022). 'Nonmonotonic pair potentials in the interaction of like-charged objects in solution', *Langmuir* 38(2): 786–800

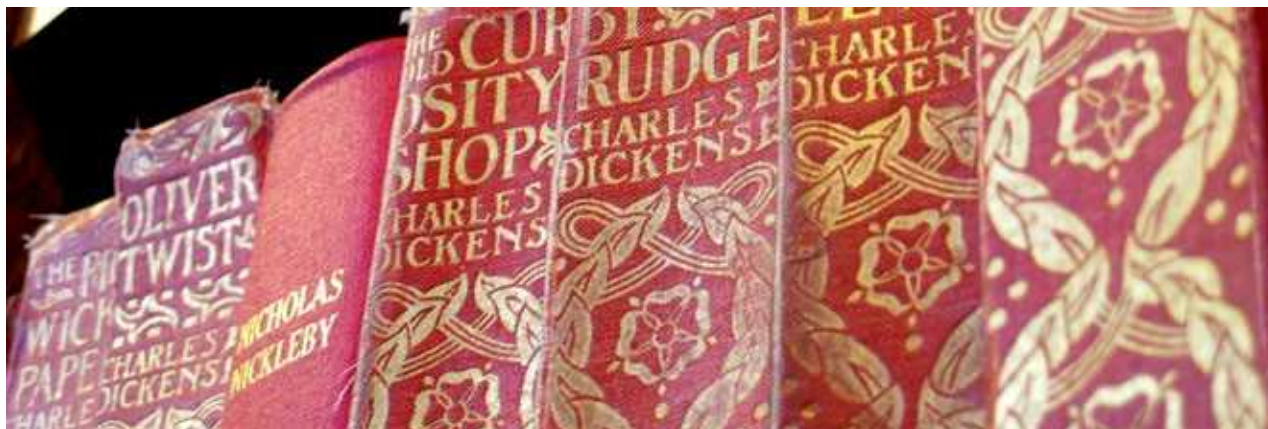
Meinecke, JP, et al., including **AA Schekochihin** (2022). 'Strong suppression of heat conduction in a laboratory replica of galaxy-cluster turbulent plasmas', *Sci Adv* 8(10): eabj6799, doi:10.1126/sciadv.abj6799

Squire, J, et al., including **AA Schekochihin** (2022). 'High-frequency heating of the solar wind triggered by low-frequency turbulence', *Nature Astron*, arXiv:2109.03255

Whitworth, MH (2021). 'Traces of war in Virginia Woolf's *Night and Day*', *Mod Cult* 16(3): 408–29

Graduate Publications 2021-22

- Bakshi, KS** (forthcoming). 'Against Broome's "Against denialism"', *J Ethics Soc Philos*
- Carter, AN**, et al. (2021). 'Enhancing the inpatient ward learning environment: a practical guide', *Clinical Teach* 18(6): 590–5
- Heit, S, **MMG Geurts**, et al. (2021). 'Structure of the hexameric fungal plasma membrane proton pump in its autoinhibited state', *Sci Adv* 7(46)
- Gonzalez, U** (2021). 'De la autonomía a la cooperación. El cambio de targeting del Banco Central de Chile en la década de 1930', *Invest Hist Econ* 7(4): 47–57
- Gonzalez, U** (2021). 'El sistema financiero chileno frente a la Gran Depresión y la crisis de la deuda', *Anuario IEHS* 36(1): 217–37
- Robles-Ortiz, C, I Gonzalez-Correa, I, N Reyes and **U Gonzalez** (2021). 'Agricultural workers' standard of living during Central Chile's agrarian expansion, c. 1870–1930', *Rev Hist Econ - J Iber Lat Am Econ Hist* 1–30, doi:10.1017/S0212610921000100
- Evans, G, and **M Hepplewhite** (2022). 'Class and educational inequality in electoral participation: from resources to representation' in M Giugni and M Grasso (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Participation* (Oxford University Press)
- Rassios, AE, et al. and **J Hua** (2022). 'The geoheritage of Mount Olympus: ancient mythology and modern geology', *Geoheritage* 14: 15, doi:10.1007/s12371-022-00649-0
- Hughes, L** (2021). "'Le note di questa comedia': music and metapoiesis in *Inferno* 16", *Ann Ital* 39: 229–45
- Cataldi, BR, C Dellacasa and **L Hughes** (2021). 'Italy at work: representations of labour in Italian culture', *Notes Ital Stud* 1: 5–8
- Davranoglou, L-R, et al. and **J Kempton** (2021). 'New records and ecological observations on Greek cave crickets (Orthoptera: Rhaphidophoridae)', *J Nat Hist* 55(1-2): 1–13
- Hlaváč, P, et al. and **J Kempton** (2021). 'Endogean and cavernicolous coleoptera of the Balkans. XXIII. A new species of Paramaurops J. Müller (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Pselaphinae) from Greece', *Zootaxa* 4970(1): 195–200
- Karaouzas, I, L-R Davranoglou and **J Kempton** (2021). 'First record of the genus and species *Oligotricha striata* Linnaeus 1758 (Trichoptera: Phryganeidae) in Greece', *Zootaxa* 4995(1): 198–200
- Kempton, JA**, et al. (2022). 'Optimization of dynamic soaring in a flap-gliding seabird affects its large-scale distribution at sea', *Sci Adv* 8(22): eabo0200
- Lovell-Read, FA**, S Shen and RN Thompson (2022). 'Estimating local outbreak risks and the effects of non-pharmaceutical interventions in age-structured populations: SARS-CoV-2 as a case study', *J Theor Biol* 535: 110983, doi:10.1016/j.jtbi.2021.110983
- Linton, NM, **FA Lovell-Read**, et al. (2022). 'When do epidemics end? Scientific insights from mathematical modelling studies', *Centaurus* 11(1), doi: 10.1484/J.CNT.5.130125
- Santos, CM** (2022). 'Pandemics, populist necropower, and regimes of mobility in the Global South: Haitians' silent exodus from Brazil during the Covid-19 pandemic', *Routed: Migration & (Im)Mobility Magazine* (Oxford Migration Conference, online)
- Saroldi, A** (2021). 'An Italian Peter Robinson', in T Phillips (ed.), *Peter Robinson: A Portrait of His Work* (Shearsman Books)
- Saroldi, A** (2021). 'Memoria e prolungamento: aspetti di pratica e teoria dell'autotraduzione in Jacqueline Risset' in J Galavotti, S Giovine and G Morbiato (eds), *I gesti del mestiere. Traduzione e autotraduzione tra Italia e Francia dal XIX al XXI secolo* (Padova University Press)
- Humphries, J, and **B Schneider** (2021). 'Gender equality, growth, and how a technological trap destroyed female work', *Econ Hist Dev Reg* 36(3): 428–38
- Thornley, E** (2022). 'Is global consequentialism more expressive than act consequentialism?', *Analysis* 82(1): 75–84
- Thornley, E** (2021). 'A dilemma for lexical and Archimedean views in population axiology', *Econ Philos* 1–21, doi: 10.1017/S0266267121000213
- White, JA**, et al. (2021) 'Turning eastward: new radiocarbon and stable isotopic data for Middle Holocene hunter-gatherers from Fofanovo, Trans-Baikal, Siberia', *Archaeol Res Asia* 28: 100323



Selected Alumni Publications 2021-22

Below is a list of publications by alumni in the 2021-22 academic year that we have been made aware of. If you would like your book featured in the next edition, please get in touch at development@merton.ox.ac.uk*

Blume, Stuart (1960) and B Baylac-Paouly (eds). *Immunization and States: The Politics of Making Vaccines* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022)

Butterworth, Brian (1963). *Can Fish Count? What Animals Reveal About Our Uniquely Mathematical Mind* (London: Quercus, 2022)

Davies, Howard (1969). *The Chancellors: Steering the British Economy in Crisis Times* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022)

Davies, Roy (1969). 'The dramatically changing face of computer vision' in ER Davies and M Turk (eds) *Advanced Methods and Deep Learning in Computer Vision* (London: Elsevier, 2022) pp. 1-91

Dunajski, Maciej (1996). *Geometry: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2022)

Favale, Marcia-Elizabeth (2013). *Risk, Recovery, and Empowerment: The Kazakhstan Bank Restructure Case Study* (self-published, 2022)

Gekoski, Rick (1966). *After Darke* (London: Constable, 2022)

Holden, Anthony (1966). *Based on a True Story: A Writer's Life* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2021)

Hughes-Warrington, Marnie (1992) and A Martin. *Big and Little Histories: Sizing Up Ethics in Historiography* (London: Routledge, 2021)

Irwin, Robert (1964). *The Runes Have Been Cast* (Sawtry: Dedalus, 2021)

Kruer, Matthew (Visiting Student, 2013). *Time of Anarchy: Indigenous Power and the Crisis of Colonialism in Early America* (Harvard: 2022)

Latham, Anthony (1959). *Rice and Industrialisation in Asia* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022)

Lloyd, Matthew (2010), R Konijnendijk and C Kuciewicz (eds). *Brill's Companion to Greek Land Warfare Beyond the Phalanx* (Leiden: Brill, 2021)

McGrew, William (1965). *Chasing after Chimpanzees: The Making of a Primatologist* (self-published, 2021)

MacShane, Denis (1966). *Must Labour Always Lose?* (London: Claret Press, 2021)

Parry, Julia (1988). *The Shadowy Third: Love, Letters and Elizabeth Bowen* (Richmond: Duckworth, 2022)

Pettegree, Andrew (1976) and A der Weduwen. *The Library: A Fragile History* (London: Profile Books, 2021)

Waller, Robert (1978). 'Rutherford B Hayes 1977-81' in I Dale (ed) *The Presidents: 250 Years of Political Leadership* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2021)

Wright, Jonathan (1960). 'Foreign policy: the dilemmas of a revisionist state' in N Rossol and B Ziemann (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Weimar Republic* (Oxford University Press, 2022).

*Please note that books need to have been published during the academic year relevant to *Postmaster*.

Mertonians



The Merton Society

I am delighted to provide a report for *Postmaster* on the Merton Society.

All alumni are members of the Merton Society. The purpose of the Society 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. 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.

In the past academic year, despite some continuing pandemic-related constraints, we have worked with the College to bring back a strong calendar of events that allow Mertonians to meet physically again whenever possible.

The customary Summer Party, postponed from June to September 2021, was very well attended in lovely weather. The 2021 Society Lecture, also postponed from lockdown, was held online in September. Dr Leana Wen (2007), Visiting Professor at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health, spoke about her new book on the future of medicine and public health. This was followed by a lively Q&A session.

We held Michaelmas drinks in London in November which once again proved popular with recent graduates. Our annual Carol Service at St Vedast-alias-Foster in the City was a complete sell-out. And this prompts us to look for a larger venue for this year.

In May we met again, thanks to Patrick Long (1995) this time at the spacious offices of Lazard & Co. in Mayfair, to hear Dr Gwen Burnyeat, Junior Research Fellow in Anthropology, speak about 'Peace, Politics and Polarisation: Lessons from Colombia'. Her excellent lecture and Q&A drew out lessons

that are directly relevant to current political trends in the United States and Europe. This was our first ever hybrid physical and virtual event which allowed greater attendance, although those online missed out on a glass or two of excellent champagne (page 128 contains a full report).

We held the Merton Society Weekend in College at the end of June. The sun shone on the gardens and the rain stayed away. It was a wonderful opportunity to make new friends and acquaintances. This was our final celebration of *Merton Women: 40 Years*, with the Saturday offering a lunch and panel discussion in the afternoon (see page 123). There were many highlights for me, including the beautifully sung Evensong in the Chapel and a tour of the stunning renovated stained glass in the library. At the AGM we elected new and younger members of the Council. Afterwards Professor Matt Higgins, Fellow and Tutor in Biochemistry, gave a fascinating and informative talk about his work with malaria and the search for effective vaccines.

In conjunction with our customary events and spurred on by our President, The Rt Hon Dame Philippa Whipple (1984), the Merton Society decided earlier this year to pilot a mentoring scheme, by which the Society will offer mentoring to 2020 and 2021 undergraduate leavers. The pilot involves offering one-on-one mentoring with a Mertonian with relevant career and life experience. If this small pilot is successful, we will look to expand it to involve other Mertonians. The aim of the pilot is simply to provide a little extra support to recent undergraduate leavers, whose experience of Merton was adversely affected by the pandemic.

The Society has always worked with the College to create associations of Merton alumni with interests in a particular area; the Merton Lawyers' Association and Merton in the City spring to mind. We are now also looking to help develop more informal subject-based groups among alumni, based on the model of the successful group already created for Biomedical and Life Sciences. Watch this space!

I owe a big thank you to the Warden for her very active

support of the Society and sadly also a farewell. We will certainly miss her as she moves on to even greater things.

The Development Office has provided consistent support to me and the Council in this challenging time for which many thanks, particularly to Mark Coote.

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)
Chair

Merton Society Council 2021-22

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), 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), A Gupta (2018), AJ Haggerty (2007), the Revd Canon Dr S Jones (Chaplain), G Kalani (2009), R Miller (2008), RB Peberdy (1975), E Pope (2017), M Pretzler (1996), A Salvage (2008), DJO Schaffer (1986), AL Smith (1991), N Suresh (2021), Dr B Tarbush (Fellow), MJ Vickers (1990) NJD Weller (1982), JS Young (1993)



Merton Women Through the Decades

The final event in the Merton Women: 40 Years series was a panel discussion, Through the Decades, with four panellists and chaired by the Merton Society President, Dame Philippa Whipple.

On Saturday 25 June 2022, we celebrated the end of the *Merton Women: 40 Years* series to mark the arrival of women at the College in 1980. Like so many other things, that celebration had to wait for the end of Covid; hence it took place two years later than originally planned. Around 50 Mertonians gathered for a lunch in the Savile Room. We were honoured to have not just one but two wardens present at that lunch: our current Warden Professor Irene Tracey (1985), who presided expertly, as always; and our former Warden and Honorary Fellow, Professor Dame Jessica Rawson, whom we were able to congratulate in person for winning the 2022 Tang Prize for Sinology, an enormous achievement.

After lunch, I spoke about the way Merton was in 1984 when I started as an undergraduate, about my impression that 1980 had marked an important moment in Merton's journey towards greater diversity but that a shift in culture towards real inclusion of women at Merton had come later, and about some of the obstacles still faced by women in

the workplace. This opened into a wider discussion, where we acknowledged the slow pace of change, the desirability of women supporting each other through mentoring and wider groups and associations, and the need for men and women to continue their efforts to press for equality not just for women, but for all groups who had historically been disadvantaged.

We then moved to the TS Eliot Theatre for a panel discussion. There were four women Mertonians on the panel, one for each decade since 1980.



Dame Philippa Whipple reflects on her time at Merton at the 40 Years of Women Lunch



Laura Thompson (1982) read English and has since written ten books on wide-ranging subjects including horse and greyhound racing (her book *The Dogs* won the Somerset Maugham award), the Mitfords, Agatha Christie, her pub landlady grandmother and recently an account of heiresses from the 17th to the 21st centuries: *Heiresses: the Lives of the Million Dollar Babies*.



Dr Sam Martin (1994) read Jurisprudence at Merton but after a short career in law became a digital sociologist and digital analytics consultant. She specialises in research at the intersection of digital health and data science, working on rapid response research and the impact of Covid on public health services at University College London, as well as research with the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, the Alan Turing Institute and the Ethox Centre at the Big Data Institute, Oxford.



Emily Unia (2001) read English and has more than ten years' experience as a reporter for BBC News. She currently works for the BBC's Central News Service delivering live coverage of breaking news stories. She has travelled extensively with her work while carrying out in-depth investigations and producing original journalism for other BBC outlets.



Dr Kitty Gurnos-Davies (2015) completed an MPhil in Women's Studies and a DPhil in English at Merton. Her research exposed untold women's experiences stretching back to the Victorian period through a reconceptualisation of underused resources including objects, architecture and art history. She now works as a cataloguer for a large auction house, specialising in modern and contemporary African Art, with a particular interest in figurative painting by contemporary African artists, Nigerian modernism and emerging artists in Ghana and Nigeria.

What was your experience as a woman at Merton?

Two of our panellists, Sam and Emily, spoke of how they had been discouraged by their schools from applying to Merton. Sam's school had refused her request for an application form, but that had not deterred her and she applied anyway, successfully. Perhaps their schools were trying to protect them from possible disappointment; but our panellists thought that it was more likely that their schools, which were not schools with a track record of sending students to Oxbridge, simply did not consider Oxford education was for them or their students. Laura had a similarly unconventional entrance, coming from a ballet school, but with a great deal of encouragement from one particular teacher. Our panellists wished that they had found more encouragement at school, rather than being held back, and hoped that schools' practice had changed.

All our panellists spoke of how they felt that they did not 'fit in' when they arrived in Oxford. Was that because they were women in a predominantly man's world? In part it was, but it was more because they arrived knowing nobody at all, and found that other students, notably those who had attended large private schools, seemed to have a ready network of friends at the University and were familiar with the sorts of rules and traditions of an Oxbridge college.

These were initial impressions and not concerns which lasted beyond the early days of Oxford life. Each panellist spoke of what Merton had given them over the full length of their study here: confidence, socially and intellectually; an ability to debate and reason; close friends; and a deep appreciation of their surroundings. With time, they had all found their place at Merton and within Oxford. Studying at Merton had been a privilege, a high point in their lives and something never forgotten, for which they were extremely grateful.

What has been your experience as a woman in the workplace?

The panellists' experiences in the workplace varied. Two of our panellists, Laura and Sam, are self-employed. They have the flexibility to choose who they work with. Many of their collaborators at work are other women. They did not think that they currently suffer discrimination at work (although previous challenges were noted). Both talked of the expertise of the other women that they worked with, giving examples of

women-led projects they had participated in: Laura talked about an all-female team to get a TV script developed; Sam talked about a predominantly female team which had responded to emerging data during Covid to target public health initiatives.

Our panellists thought that the experience of women working for large corporates or in the public sector might well be different. The panel discussed the prejudice against women, directly and as a result of the male-dominated culture in some of these workplaces. Panellists spoke of colleagues who assumed that they were the tea lady or the receptionist; some spoke of the disapproval they felt when they did not behave in precisely the same way as their male counterparts; it was a common experience to be interrupted or spoken over by men in meetings. Our panellists all felt frustrated by the common refrain that as much as possible has already been done to accommodate women and the rest is just a matter of time.

What do you think remains to be done to ensure greater equality for women?

Our panellists thought that greater flexibility in the workplace was a good thing for women, but also for men, many of whom have domestic responsibilities which they want to share. We had some positive examples within the panel of women not feeling discriminated against at work at different stages of their career, and our panellists liked the concept of organisations that had a flat hierarchy and a willingness to listen to all voices around the table, male and female. All agreed that it was important to support other women at all stages of their career and to ensure that women are visible in any organisation or profession. Senior women have a particular responsibility here. It is easy to think that equality is an issue for and about women, but our panellists thought that equality should be a priority for everyone in the workplace because, quite apart from ordinary fairness, the data shows beyond argument that greater diversity and inclusion improves performance.

These were inspirational women and this was a wonderful discussion, helped along by an engaged and questioning audience. It was a fitting way to close the *40 Years* series.

The Rt Hon Dame Philippa Whipple (1984)

Honorary Fellow & President of the Merton Society



MC3: Merton College Charitable Corporation

For MC3 trustees and Mertonians scattered across North America, the news that our Warden, Professor Irene Tracey, had been nominated to serve as the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford was regarded as a great moment for the University. It also is a source of enormous, if not selfless, poignant pride among those who live several thousand miles to the west away from the object (Merton) of our affection and leader (Warden Tracey) who we respect, admire and have grown to love. Warden Tracey's selection (we find it hard to say elevation) for the world's hardest job in higher education is further evidence that the College truly deserves the appellation given Merton by Warden Sir Martin Taylor: Merton is 'the best of the best'.

MC3 looks forward to benefiting from its continuing involvement with Warden Tracey throughout the remainder of her term, and then to the prospect of engaging with Professor Tracey as her new responsibilities evolve. As one irrepressible red-headed MC3 admirer succinctly put it: 'MC3 and Merton are not losing a Warden, we are gaining a Vice-Chancellor.' Most immediately MC3 participated and supported her remaining visits to America in her capacity as Warden. In late July 2022 the Warden traveled to the San Francisco Bay area in California, where Mike McCaffery (1975)

and his spouse Margaret once again hosted a reception at their home for Mertonians. A visit to Los Angeles followed, featuring a tour and reception at the Getty Museum and Getty Villa. From 12 to 17 September 2022, our Warden will accompany an ambitious week-long Merton Choir tour in New England and the Middle Atlantic States, generously made possible by Reed Rubin (1957). MC3 members will enjoy the opportunity to attend Choir performances and personally congratulate the Warden in Boston, New Haven, New York City, Princeton, and finally, after the Choir returns to Oxford, attend a reception in Washington, DC.

We are delighted to report that MC3 raised a record \$1.53 million in 2021. The amount raised in 2022 at the time of writing is typical for this time of year. We are proud of the dedicated and generous MC3 community in North America who have made these results possible year after year. It is also worth noting how fitting it is that the new MC3 Chair of Development is Amna Naseer (1997). Amna has the unenviable task of following David Harvey's long successful service in that role, and in that capacity Amna already has done so exceptionally well while introducing several useful innovations. Amna was MC3's first recipient of MC3's initial endowed scholarship. Today it is one of three permanently funded MC3



Nick Allard (1974) addresses Mertonians as President of MC3

scholarships (the Americas, the Roberts-MC3, and the Kirby scholarships). In a tangible sense the transformative gifts that North American donors made in the past have come full circle. That is, the first recipient of this early generosity is herself now generating new gifts for the College.

Highlights of the 2021 fundraising program include \$677,000 for the Regius Professorship of Mathematics (courtesy of a single donor), \$252,000 for the Michael Baker Fellowship, \$221,000 for the Chapel and Choir, and \$29,000 for the stained-glass window in the Upper Library. MC3 has also committed an additional \$624,000 to the Regius Professorship of Mathematics, to be funded over a five-year period.

These results were made possible, in part, by various initiatives MC3 took last year. For example, our outreach to smaller donors generated a total of \$195,747 from 65 donors. The additional contributions made by recipients in 2021 relative to 2020 represented a year-on-year increase of 293%.

Although 2021 was again held hostage by Covid and we were once again unable to conduct an in-person reunion, we were delighted to have the opportunity to see the Warden and her team for the first time since the pandemic on US soil at a December 2021 reception in Manhattan, hosted at Amna's beautiful Manhattan home. Over 40 Mertonians attended the event, including a significant number of recent graduates and alumni who had not previously attended an MC3 event. The Warden spoke to our US-based community about the strategic priorities of the College. She also noted the important role MC3 plays in supporting the College's alumni programs and its fundraising objectives. Events such as the NYC reception continue to engage, expand and inspire our MC3 community.

In 2022, MC3 is implementing other new initiatives. Recently, MC3's distributed its first ever Donor Honor Roll, recognizing ALL donors — large and small — who had contributed to the 2021 fundraising efforts. We are also soon launching an initiative to recognize our largest and most loyal donors. And our revamped MC3 website will be up and running shortly, thanks to the efforts of Marina McCloskey and Amna Naseer. It is designed to serve as a source of all information related to donation opportunities, and past and upcoming events.

Finally, in this space last year you learned of the retirement of Sue Stukane, who had been the MC3 administrator for 15 years. Sue enabled the successful emergence of MC3 as an effective and significant alumni organization, perhaps the best of the best of the best. We are very pleased to report that Mr Thom Yu has been hired to take over Sue's responsibilities. We are grateful but not surprised that Thom has done so seamlessly and performed so well. He has been working part-time for several years concurrently for the Rhodes Scholarship Trust, for its American Secretary, and for the Association of American Rhodes Scholars. Consequently, Thom already is familiar with Oxford and Merton, not to mention our unique characteristics and personalities. Many of the MC3 trustees and members have previously worked and interacted with Thom. As we hoped and expected, Thom has been able successfully to add MC3 to the other Oxford-related organizations he is serving.

Nick Allard (1974), *Bodley Fellow*

MC3 President

with contributions from Bob McKelvey (1959),

Marina McCloskey (2003) and Amna Naseer (1997)



Merton Society Lectures

Since the publication of last year's *Postmaster*, two Merton Society Lectures have been held: a virtual one on 29 September 2021 (postponed from earlier in the year because of the pandemic) and a hybrid event on 26 May 2022.

In 2021, the lecturer was Dr Leana Wen (2007), who is a Visiting Professor at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health, a columnist at the *Washington Post* and a CNN medical analyst. Her book *Lifelines: A Doctor's Journey in the Fight for Public Health* had also recently been published.

The lecture took the form of questions from three Merton Society Council members, followed by a general question and answer session. First, Emily Capstick (2017) asked about major shifts in US health policy over the past 15 years, as Dr Wen had been the national president of the American Medical Student Association. Dr Wen talked about her campaigns to improve access to healthcare, address health disparities, and combat conflicts of interest between physicians and pharmaceutical companies.

Next, Alice Salvage (2008) asked Dr Wen about her time as Baltimore Health Commissioner and the idea that public health is a social justice issue. In 2020, Dr Wen had written that 'racism is not only a public health issue, but a public health crisis'. She now highlighted how the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the important influence of health inequalities and social disparities on disease outcomes. Finally, Gregory Lim (2006) asked Dr Wen about her work on patient advocacy and empowerment and the idea that public health depends on public trust – a concept that featured in her TED talk on transparency in medicine. Dr Wen talked about how public health policy can empower patients and what we can do to ensure that we are well informed in order to advocate for better care for ourselves when we encounter the healthcare system.

As well as being the 2021 Merton Society Lecture, this event was the last in the College's series of lectures celebrating 40 years of women at Merton.

In 2022, Dr Gwen Burnyeat, Junior Research Fellow in



Dr Gwen Burnyeat, Junior Research Fellow in Anthropology, gave the 2022 Merton Society Lecture

Anthropology, spoke on the topic of 'Peace, Politics and Polarisation: Lessons from Colombia' to a crowded room, with many more joining remotely. Attendees included some who had recently returned from time in Colombia — clearly looking to prolong the magic of the country — and some who were about to travel there and were keen to get a sense for the patchwork quilt of the history behind a place whose reputation hides its rich and complex cultural story.

Dr Burnyeat took her audience on an evocative tour, beginning with the story of a small village, the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, which is caught in the crossfire of a tripartite war between the FARC (the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army), the cartels and the paramilitaries. She described how the inhabitants of the Peace Community decided to live collectively in order to protect themselves from being in the middle of the armed groups, with local democratic practices and shared storytelling to keep alive the memories of those lost to the conflict and extrajudicial killings. We were shown a short excerpt of her documentary *Chocolate of Peace* (www.chocolateofpeace.com) to bring the village to life.

From there, we were transported to an analysis of the politics of the region. Dr Burnyeat described her work with the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace and the referendum on the peace treaty. She gave us a brief snippet of the myths and realities and introduced us to the concept of *dar la cara* — giving face through officials turning up to community events to represent the decisions made. The audience was shown how rational arguments seldom change political opinions substantially and the importance of this analysis to policy communication through some of the posters used during the Colombian peace treaty referendum and the government changes that followed.

Following the pre-drawn map for our travels, we finished with reflections on polarisation, with Dr Burnyeat deftly drawing the comparison closer to home through parallels between Colombian society, the US political divides and the effects of the UK Brexit referendum. We were left with a key message that 'in the face of stories that simplify and divide, [we should] complicate the narrative' — a message that resonated with us in the audience, because of the rational argument that had been made and the clear passion and enthusiasm that Dr Burnyeat conveyed for her field of research.

At the end of the talk, the Warden took the opportunity to say a few words and open the Q&A, also giving the audience an opportunity to congratulate her on her recent nomination as the next Vice-Chancellor of Oxford. The talk was met with a number of insightful questions from those in the room and at home, including from some fortunate to be acquainted with Colombia and its history, and some personal reflections on experiences of the peace process in the country and its politics.

Finally, drinks were served to provide an opportunity for further reflections and discussion on a fascinating topic. Particular thanks go to Patrick Long (1995) for hosting the event at the Lazard offices in London and to Dr Burnyeat for a captivating talk. As always, the Merton Society is indebted to the staff of the Development Office for their expert organisation of all alumni events.

Sarah Hird (2007) and Gregory Lim (2006)



Town and Gown

Sunday 8 May 2022 celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Oxford Town and Gown run, which, as its website explains, is 'the oldest run in the series'. The race raises money for Muscular Dystrophy UK (MDUK), whose research this year showed that muscle-wasting conditions affect 110,000 people in the UK. This semi-professional run attracts thousands of runners every year, with the Junior 3k starting at 9.15am and the 10k at 10am. The route is complex, beginning on South Parks Road, and winding through the city centre to finish in the University Parks by the Event Village. One Sunday morning in Trinity term each year, much to the inconvenience of early-morning library users, pop music blares through speakers around the city as Oxford is taken over by security tape, crowds, guards and streams of runners.

The Merton team assembled at the Event Village ahead of the race. Stylish T-shirts emblazoned with the College crest were handed out, race numbers were secured with paperclips, there was a smiling team photo, and Geoffrey Biscuit lifted morale with his usual buckets of doggy energy. Merton had 19 runners, including student, staff and alumni. The most high-profile competitor was the Warden herself. Alexander Armstrong was there, but unfortunately not running.

Soon it was time for stretching, warm-ups, and then the nervous wait behind orange markers for the staggered start. It couldn't have been any more than 19 degrees, but the sun-and-tarmac combination meant it felt significantly hotter. In the long starting queue, I spotted a few peaky-looking



survivors from the St Peter's Ball the night before. After what felt like an eternity, we were off in a mass of cushioned soles, fitness watches and sweat-wicking T-shirts.

The intricately planned course often doubles back on itself so there is the welcome opportunity to wave to friends going in the opposite direction. Crowds cheering, occasional high-fives and the general supportive environment of everyone taking part mean that, fortunately, the race avoids taking itself too seriously. The orange distance markers and water stations, with environmentally friendly water browsers rather than plastic bottles, were greatly appreciated by all. Undoubtedly, the final 2km circle round University Parks is one of the hardest parts of the route. I am eternally grateful to the race's photographers for forever capturing the sweaty grimaces of that final push – the photos, sent via email, are available for free after the race.

Over the finish line we were handed a 0.0 Heineken packed full of electrolytes, some high-calorie snacks, and a medallion that read '2022 Finisher' with #musclesmatter on

the ribbon. Then it was back to Merton for a hearty brunch and refreshing shower. Congratulations to everyone who took part, particularly Ollie Bowling (2018), who took 138th place overall with an excellent time of 39min 20sec. Also, a huge thank you to all the volunteers who helped with setting up, coordination and hydration, and everyone who came to support friends and family, as well as those who helped and encouraged complete strangers around the track.

The Town and Gown event isn't only an enjoyable and community-focused way of getting some exercise (vitaly important in a post-pandemic environment) but has a massive and beautiful impact: in June an email announced that the race raised over £212,000 for MDUK. The email also thanked me once more for participating, as well as suggesting that the 2023 event is open for pre-registration this July. Hopefully the Town and Gown can get an even bigger turnout from Merton and Oxford next year.

George Adams (2020)

News of Members

Up to 1948

Year Representative: Michael Millard

Email: millard172@tiscali.co.uk

I had written to our contemporaries asking for news of events in their lives and especially contacts with other Mertonians. **Christopher Rose-Innes** (1943) replies that he has no events but is still alive and is in reasonably good shape. This seems to be true for most of us.

I think that the youngest from whom I have heard is **Rudolf Klein** (1948) who has escaped major health disasters but writes that he has limited energy and mobility. **Claver Toalster** (1948), who is almost as young, also mentions limited mobility but on the whole can do everything that he could do when he was a stripling of 80.

Towards the other end of the age spectrum is **Nicholas Jaco** (1938) who, at 101, lives in a 'dump for seniles' with his 93-year-old wife. He does fishing and watercolour painting.

Harry Corben (1944) has reached the age of 95 and is at present President of the Epsom Rotary in which he is ably assisted by **Clive Richardson** (1967).

Guy Harris is in good health but confesses that he wonders whether he ought to have spent more time on his studies in his youth: don't we all?

My eighth great-grandchild arrived this year. I wonder how he will react if he learns that his mother (2001), his

grandfather (1972), his great-uncle (1975) and his great-grandfather were all Mertonians. Recently I had a letter from Mrs Doreen Walwyn James telling me of the death of her husband **Donald** (1946).

Last autumn I heard from **David Lane** (1948) that he and his five Postmasters had at last met to enjoy their centenary lunch together. He concludes his letter with the words '*stet fortuna domus*'. Since we are again reminded of our classical heritage, and remembering that what I learnt thereof took place within a few paces of Verulamium, I thought I might quote some words from the wall of Stubbins:

Qui timet deum faciet bona

1949, 1950, 1951

There is currently no Year Representative for the years 1949–51. Please contact development@merton.ox.ac.uk if you are interested in the position.

Hugh Podger (1949) writes: 'Very sadly, my wife (of over 58 years) died in February. Our four children and 11 grandchildren were at a well-filled church for the funeral, also streamed to 90 recipients. I continue to serve on a diocesan finance committee but otherwise am busy doing little of consequence.'

John Mays (1951) reports: 'There is no representative for the year 1951, the year I arrived at Merton. Not surprising perhaps – most of us who came up that year have gone on and are no longer interested in their old College.

'I contributed an item to the *Postmaster* last year so won't repeat what was written then. These remarks therefore will be of a personal nature but hopefully of interest to a few.

'My wife and I have celebrated our 90th birthdays. We were able to enjoy the occasions attended by friends and family and to have a splendid weekend in Devon with all our children and grandchildren plus their partners. A large manor house was the venue – those there included the Mays contingent from Australia as well as a Danish group. Twenty-two in all

and although the weather was to say the least inclement the party went with a swing.

'Like most of our generation our offspring are approaching anniversaries of their own – the oldest will have his 60th in September followed a month later by the next generation having a 30-year-old in their midst. All to be followed by similar events in the subsequent few years.

'I have continued my charity activities but am now slowly reducing the frequency and extent.

'Travel has been difficult for obvious reasons but now that restrictions are easing we hope to revisit Australia and Thailand. Noteworthy that we travel with 'assistance' (walking being a little problematic), which is a bit humiliating but has great advantages – we're always through the security, passport and customs checks first.

'I'm looking forward with caution to the next trip.'

1952, 1953 & 1954

Year Representative: Mike Rines

Tel: 01394 610034 Email: mrines@outlook.com

Inevitably, at our age, *Postmaster* carries news of the departure of notable old Mertonians. This year we lost **Tony Marland** (1952) who had maintained strong links with the College and with other old Mertonians. **Adrian Esdaile** (1951) says he was particularly saddened to hear of Tony's death, because they had become close after they came down. For some time, Tony had shared a flat with Merton friend **Ian McMichael** (1952), and Adrian often joined them for a pint after work. They used to meet in a pub called The Captain's Cabin south of Piccadilly, and gradually their numbers grew until that pub became a regular meeting ground for those Mertonians who worked in London. Adrian says this grouping lasted almost to the present day, though with changes of venue and diminishing numbers as death took its toll. The very last meeting was on 23 March this year, Adrian's birthday, when he achieved the venerable age of 90. By that

time, numbers were down to four: himself, Tony Marland, **Raymond Quinlan** (1952) and **Keith Buxton** (1952). The latter lives in Hathersage, but valiantly undertook the long journey. Adrian's son, with whom he now lives, drove him and his wife to London, where they met their elder son, who had driven down from Cambridge. 'We met the other three old codgers for an enjoyable gentlemen's lunch. A treasured last memory.'

Adrian is finding that 'things fall off from time to time!' He has just had a successful new hip, but now has a knee operation to look forward to. He recently celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood with a glorious festival choral evensong on Trinity Sunday. With some help, he is able to take occasional communion services, and he still does a few duties as the Assistant Chaplain at Epsom College. He finds preaching to nearly 1,000 teenagers at 8.30am on Saturday morning quite a challenge.

Dick Lloyd (1954) keeps up with **Henry Mayr-Harting** (1954), who lives quite near him in North Oxford, and seems to have adapted well to life without his beloved late wife, Caroline. He has visited Dick in Horspath, refusing the offer of a lift on what Dick describes as a 'filthy, cold and wet winter afternoon, but insisting on using buses, of which he has an intimate knowledge'. Dick is also still in touch with **Ted Mullins** (1954), who he thinks is still writing, despite being almost blind. Because of his haemorrhage two years ago, Dick says he is 'on a cocktail of tablets. Also, my balance is very bad, but I have managed not to have any bad falls like last September, when I was in hospital for 10 days. I am still physically incapacitated and tire very easily, but try to keep fit with an exercise bike and yoga exercises prescribed by my middle daughter, who often spends weekends with me.' Dick still has a garage full of furniture that needs sorting out, following his move from Devon, and his house needs renovations inside and out. However, he has a lovely long garden down to a disused railway line, high above on an embankment, where deer and foxes lurk. He is still trying to finish writing the history of Priestman, the crane builder for which he worked for so many years. The magazine *Cranes & Access* is ready to publish it, so the ball is in his court to finalise the last days before the company went bust in around 1990.

Gordon Whittle (1952) is another who has remained in close touch with the College, as has **John Garrard** (1954). Having

stayed healthy through the pandemic, John and his wife Carol attended the Warden's farewell tour in Los Angeles in July. He explains that it was a dinner, followed by a private viewing at the Getty of its exhibit on Persia. It had particular interest for him, because he took his degree in Persian, Turkish and Arabic (called 'Oriental Studies') at Merton, from 1954 to 1958. 'It was an extra year for Arabic,' he explains. He never went on with it as a career, as his only option seemed to be to go to Iran and guard Shell Oil's pipeline, as his tutor in Ancient Persian, R.C. Zaehner, recommended. 'He had even got me summer jobs at Shell Oil, where I wandered among immense tanks writing down numbers, and trying to avoid the mystified engineers and operators who wondered why I was there. However, I had seen enough of religious conflict when I served in Omagh, Northern Ireland, and had no desire then to be in the middle of the Shia-Sunni divide. So I had gone back to Russian, which the army had helpfully sent me to Cambridge to do as the rest of my National Service. Now I had a wonderful opportunity to see the Warden for the last time and to tour a beautiful exhibit.'

'In other news, I got an email from Harvard saying that it had got a grant to digitise my China archive, and now all its parts are on the internet. You can see it simply by Googling 'John & Carol Garrard, China after Mao collection'. My travel diary, all propaganda, ephemera and over 1,200 slides are now available for anyone to see. I had been there, on the spot in 1978, when the Gang of Four was fighting the supporters of Dung Zhao Ping – then under house arrest. Since the Gang has been erased from the history books by the Party, their political propaganda was erased too.'

John Shore (1953) remains in reasonably good health in Abingdon-on-Thames.

The news on the Rines front is of an unexpected boost to health through the receipt of a heart pacemaker. This followed a dash to the hospital by ambulance after my elder son noticed I had been behaving strangely. I was given every imaginable test, and it was found that my heart rate was too slow and needed to be speeded up. This simple operation has given me an energy boost that has transformed my life. Clearly my need for the operation should have been diagnosed years ago. How many people who would benefit from the procedure are walking about unaware of its possibility?

1955

Year Representative: John Mitchell OBE

Email: johnnmitchell36@gmail.com

This year provided 'thin pickings' for your scribe – only five replies and that included my own! So, this will not take you too long.

Dermot Killingley has *Zoomed* rather than flown much, though he is now starting physically to travel again. In June 2021 he contributed to an online lecture series in Kolkata on Ram Mohun Roy, the first Indian intellectual to be internationally known during his lifetime, and the subject of his London PhD long ago. Dermot recently emerged from his Covid purdah in Geordie-land to attend a family wedding, which of course gave him great cheer.

Contemporaries contrasting Dermot's high activity in later life with their own should not thereby be put off from penning contributions next year. Whatever you write will certainly complement his offering, should he be kind enough to humour us yet again.

Rex Jamison and Dede enjoy their thriving family and many friends in their retirement community in California. Having reflected on the horrors that are Putin and Ukraine, he muses: 'How things fall apart in the USA. On the one hand are Americans who grasp the danger of Covid, the importance of the vaccine to protect themselves and the wearing of masks to protect others, and know Joe Biden was elected President. On the other hand are those who believe the vaccine is useless, wearing masks an infringement of their freedom and the election is a fraud that stole the presidency from Donald Trump. Even though the latter group has a higher death rate from Covid, they will probably win the House of Representatives and the Senate in 2022, and Trump might win the Presidency in 2024. *The center cannot hold.*'

... Much better than Alistair Cook, I believe.

Mike Gazzard replied early too, having nearly forgotten

to reply at all last year. Unlike much of his family, he had escaped Covid entirely at the time of writing in reply to what he referred to as my 'Round Robin' letter. Having used that description, he looked up its origins only to discover that it has two meanings, neither of which are what he had believed: '1. Petition, esp. with signatures in circle to conceal order of writing and 2. Tournament in which every competitor plays against each other'. Thank you, Michael!

Ron Tamplin has been locked down since 2020, with Anne, spending much of the time finishing his *Piers Plowman* translation, some 7,000 lines of it, the first bits of which were published 40 years ago. Ron comments that it has been a hugely important and formative poem for him. Inter alia, he has also managed a few poems including one translated from Hungarian which he did with **George Radda** (1956), reviving fond memories of Merton. Two such translated poems were published in George's *My Life in Science*. Ron has also been much in touch with his close friend and roommate at Merton, Martin Redfern. He quotes three blessings from lockdown: memories, nostalgia and friendship.

As for me, I have had a few physical problems, all currently in abeyance or better. Our annual three months in Sutherland [Dornoch] are over, due firstly to Covid restrictions and now to ageing, the indirect effects of which included giving our Dornoch house to our (Mertonian) daughter, **Virginia Knox** (née **Mitchell**, 1982), who is 'developing' it at some length, but we will manage four weeks up there this year.

I dread to tell you my golf handicap (from a buggy), so I won't!

With every best wish to you all, contributors and otherwise.

1956

Year Representative: Richard Kenyon

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Inevitably we have still been doing less than we did before

Covid afflicted us and the volume of news is not what it used to be. Nevertheless highlights there have been.

As readers will no doubt remember, **Laszlo Heltay** (1957), a pupil of Zoltán Kodály, came to Merton in our first Hilary term after fleeing the Russian takeover in Hungary. **Bob Lowrie** (1955) recognised Laszlo's talents immediately and handed over the baton of the College Choir to him. By Christmas Laszlo had transformed the choir to be the equal of any in Oxford. This was the trigger both for the development of music at the College, which continues to this day with generous funding from **Reed Rubin** (1957), and for Laszlo's spectacular conducting career far beyond the 'dreaming spires'.

Sadly Laszlo died two years ago in Budapest. It was not possible to celebrate his life properly until this May, when it was beautifully achieved by some 70 or so singers in St Mary-at-Hill church in EC2. I was the first of those present to have met Laszlo, in Merton all those years ago. It was also an opportunity for me to sport the Merton tie, as I had done last year when Prince Charles visited Bond's Hospital Almshouses in Coventry for the 75th anniversary of the Almshouse Association.



Richard Kenyon, complete with Merton tie, meets Prince Charles in Coventry in 2021

Ian Hodson said his only news was a change of telephone number. **Richard Thomas** may be resting on his laurels after last year's publication of his most enjoyable and informative autobiography and memoir, *Lucky Dip: a Diplomat's Tale*. I was engrossed reading it. The only activity reported by

John Isherwood was of his memory from 1960 when, after crossing the Pacific by boat, he spent several weeks in Japan and had admired its art and culture ever since. This had been prompted by an enquiry from **Oliver Impey**'s daughter Harriet about her father's overland travels to India in the same year. I think of these now as 'Oliver's Travels'!

Mike Renton reported the death of mathematician **Peter Wells** on 3 March. Their homes being in Bath and near York had provided convenient stopovers when travelling. On one occasion Peter and Celia stopped on their way to Cornwall when using only local bus services for their whole route. They did not stop on their return by first class rail! Mike recalled Peter's love of orienteering and jazz. A full obituary may be found in *In Memoriam*.

Our surviving mathematicians are thus **David Pringle** in Australia, **Richard Kenyon** and **Tony Wynn-Evans** who lives nearby in Kenilworth. Tony had a triple heart bypass in January and is still recovering slowly but steadily. He is well supported by his son **Charles Wynn-Evans** (1989) and Charles's sister-in-law **Nemone Wynn-Evans** (née **Bridges**, 1992).

On 30 Aug 2021, too late for inclusion in the last issue, **Richard Harvey**'s wife, Sue, died after 58 years of marriage. The last few years were difficult for her because of her illness. She stayed at home with carers as going to a care home during the pandemic was not an option. For them, as for many others, the lockdowns had little effect as they were both confined largely to the house anyway.

As so often, **Jay Keyser** won the gold award with a response time to the *newsgatherer* message of only 11 minutes. Those who remember his book *The Man Who Was Told He Would Never Walk Again* will understand that his limited mobility is not due to Covid. He keeps himself occupied with his writing and has given a series of Zoom presentations with the Kronberg Academy entitled 'The mental life of modernism'. Recently, he also reviewed Leonard Bernstein's lectures entitled 'The unanswered question': www.berfrois.com/2022/02/samuel-jay-keyser-on-leonard-bernstein

In March the wretched Covid attacked both myself and my wife, but luckily we tested negative with two days to spare before a

Fred Olsen cruise 'In search of the Northern Lights'. The aurora was disappointingly faint and we hope for better experiences when visiting Svalbard in June, seeking acquaintance with polar bears and other inhabitants. With luck, by the time of publication the final Covid hangovers will be long gone.

1957

Year Representative: Graham Byrne Hill

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Tony Wood continues his work for the neighbourhood community in Okehampton. After 20 years he has finally succeeded in arranging the faculty and grants to put a toilet in the parish church. He gives occasional lectures for the Local History Society. His latest theme was 'The Civil War across the Tamar'.

I was immobilised by a hip failure last November, with an operation which is due only this month. It was eye-opening to learn that everyone contributing to this newsletter has recently had the same problem – until the very last minute when **David Harvey**'s email popped up. He has been lucky; he has not been troubled. For staying in touch he recommends TV Oxford crime mysteries.

Michael Leach had a hip replaced in November. He continues to keep chickens – providing them with regular fresh eggs. Due to the Covid-19 lockdowns, 2021 has not been the most exciting year. 'As I thumb through our diary, things which stand out are one-day garden and National Trust visits, and trips to our local multiplex cinema.' He is still active on the political front, maintaining Grant Shapps MP's constituency database – Grant being Transport Secretary in Boris Johnson's Cabinet. He now has three great-grandchildren with a fourth on the way. (I suspect that, on this, we're all out of step: I merely have grandchildren, but 13 of them.)

John Carey has had two hip operations, with each a tremendous relief. He has published two books during lockdown: *A Little History of Poetry* (Yale, 2020) which sold very well and *100 Poets: A Little Anthology* (Yale, 2021).

Both are great fun and full of surprises and pleasures. Yale is publishing *Sunday Best*, a selection of his *Sunday Times* reviews, later this year.

1958

Year Representatives: Bryan Lewis

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and Peter Parsons

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In his Christmas letter 2021 **Alistair Simpson** wrote of 'the sadness when learning of the passing of lifetime friends and family and I suppose that experience, as we move into our eighties, is not all that uncommon'. Sadly, Alistair himself died in February. His life is recalled in *In Memoriam*. News of the death of two more of our contemporaries has just been received (I am writing this in June). **Alan Furse** died in February and **Colin McEachran** in June. It is hoped to have entries in *In Memoriam* in due course.

In my email to 1958ers asking for any news they might like to share, I reflected on the acronym BABLE (Book Accumulation Beyond Life Expectancy) which my bookshelves give witness to. **Roderick Abbott** replied: 'I belong to the same BABLE community as you, and many others of our vintage probably share the same record keeper concept.' **Brian Laventure** has clearly been dipping into his library during lockdown encompassing recollections of the Early Roman Empire which are relevant today, he says. In his *Annals and Histories* Tacitus was very critical of the emperors after Augustus, labelling them deviant personalities. Brian added, though, that he successfully killed off interest in Classics for his children by taking them to Mycenae at an early age. Nonetheless, one of his granddaughters is doing Latin at an old-style grammar school and enjoying it.

John Gooding leads a quiet life punctuated by illnesses. In the autumn with **Sean O'Connor** he enjoyed gentle walks on

the banks of the Tweed 'shadowed by the ghosts of Walter Scott whose heart is buried amongst the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey'; and **Hugh Trevor-Roper** (Fellow 1937-39) whose ashes were cast into the Tweed there. **John Simms** wrote from New Hampshire and said that though age is noticeable nothing has broken down yet. He remains absorbed with the model railway museum in Wolfeboro which will be housed in the former local railroad freight house. Its restoration has taken four years so far. When finished – another two years? – it will be the first fully interactive model railroad museum in the area.

Oliver Ford Davies writes: 'Like all 80-year-olds with little work I've written a memoir. *An Actor's Life in Twelve Productions*, to be published by the Book Guild on 29 October.' It seems he had some work though: 'A Swedish film *The Triangle of Sadness* in which I play a 90-year-old arms manufacturer blown up by one of his own hand grenades, unexpectedly won this year's Palme d'Or at Cannes. I look forward to more parts for 90-year-olds, preferably not exploded.'

Adrian Vickers writes: 'Emma and I are greatly looking forward to meeting up shortly with **Rick Gallop** and his wife Ruth who are embarking from their home in Canada on a post-Covid UK tour catching up with friends and relatives.' Rick's bestselling *GI Diet* published in 2002 had more than two million copies sold worldwide, available in 22 countries in a dozen languages.

Andrew Adam, learning that **Bryan Lewis** had keyhole surgery for aortic stenosis in February, was reminded of this incident in his career. 'As an NHS pathologist back in the 1980s, I was keen to participate in an organ donation scheme. It was – and still is – life-saving work. An organ bank in London received hearts donated mainly by the families of road accident victims. The valves were dissected out and supplied to hospitals throughout Europe. The protocol for supplying the hearts was, of course, governed by strict rules regarding consent. I completed the paperwork and familiarised myself with the protocol. But when our first eligible donor was received and I performed the autopsy, I ran into difficulty. The victim carried an organ donation card but appeared to have no next of kin. I made extensive fruitless inquiries. Time was running out and I decided to ignore the rubric. A

dispatch rider was summoned to take the refrigerated box to the railway station. I told the rider: "There's no panic. I've spoken to the manager and he'll take care of it." The motorcyclist had a Shakespearean sense of drama. He ignored my instruction and persuaded a porter to flag down the next train. A local headline ran "Torbay Express halts at station for mystery heart". That nearly stopped mine and for days I cringed whenever the phone rang, expecting the General Medical Council or the police. I never broke the rules again.'

The saga of the 'Coghill Peacocks' continues. **Jonathan Pope** believes, too, they ended in 1961. 'I'd been reading in the garden when the gardeners began to corner them in a circle of fencing. They knew how to catch them but were getting pecked, so I showed them how you tuck their heads under a wing to calm them down. If they had come as pullets in 1960, that would have been a summer of quiet immaturity, and I don't believe they would have lasted two seasons.' **John Bradshaw's** own significant role in the matter was that as a Postmaster it fell to his lot to say the College grace at the dinner 'where the "sacrificed" birds, long offensive for their unconscionable racket, were served up for high-table delectation. I can still recite the grace from memory (*Oculi omnium in te respiciunt, domine; tu das escam illis tempore opportune*) but this time I substituted *pavones* for *escam*: *you provide peacocks in a timely fashion*. The Chaplain, who was not amused, summoned me to his rooms immediately afterwards and pronounced me probably guilty of the abominable crime of heresy. I still hope I was and am.

By the time the 2022 *Postmaster* is published, the September Gaudy will have taken place. It would be good to renew acquaintance for what, in all probability, will be the last one for many of us, so infrequently do they come around. I was reminded of 'Verses on the Death of Dr Swift' not so long ago. I suspect the extract below applies to more than one of us.

*Besides, his memory decays:
He recollects not what he says:
He cannot call his friends to mind:*

*Forgets the place where last he din'd;
Plies you with stories o'er and o'er;
He told them fifty times before.*

I certainly have a tendency to follow the last two lines but I do remember my friends — I think.

1959

Year Representatives: David Shipp

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and **Roger Gould**

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The death of **Malcolm Faber** on 18 September 2021 was briefly reported in *Postmaster* last year. A full obituary appears this year on page 211.

We have been told of the death of Bob Krueger on 30 April and a tribute to him by Joe McDonald appears on page 209.

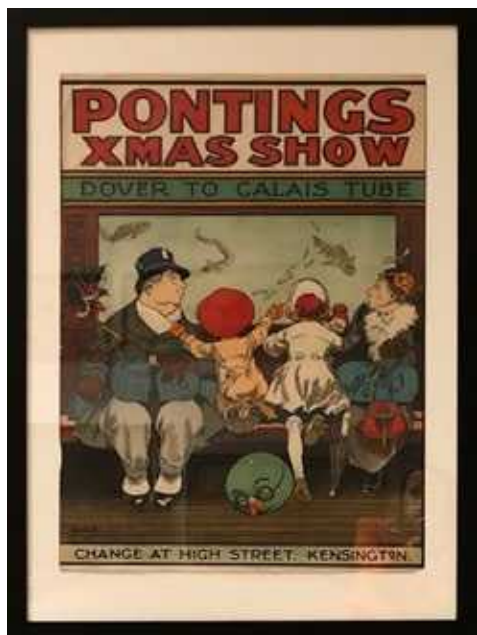
News has also been received of the death of **Jack MacIntosh** on 15 February 2020. An obituary appears on page 212.

Brief messages have been received from **Graham Boulton**, **Nick Fiennes**, **Mike Whitfeld** and **Bill Woods** assuring us that they are still here and in reasonable health.

Richard Allan reports that he and Diana have survived another year, another lockdown and their first (very slight) bout of Covid. Life is slowly returning to normal and they enjoyed a return to Merton for the excellent September garden party. They have also enjoyed LMH hospitality, as well as the regular flow of information from their respective colleges and the UofO Development Office. As has been frequently commented on, the University can take great pride in its vaccine rollout to

the world on a no-profit basis. The Allans' London garden is a source of great pleasure (and gentle exercise), and Richard maintains some level of fitness with regular outings with the SOA Wanderers, a senior walkers' subset of the South Oxfordshire Amateurs Cricket Club, which he joined when at Merton. Otherwise, he likes to think that various volunteering activities keep some of his brain cells active

Michael Diamond reports that he lent nine posters from his collection to an exhibition of the work of the graphic and poster artist John Hassall. ('People do not know the name until I say "Skegness is SO bracing".'). Also, many illustrations from his collection were used in two lavishly illustrated books: one on Hassall and the other on the history of the London Hippodrome. He is very keen that his collection of theatre and music hall ephemera should be used as widely as possible.



One of Michael's Hassall posters: Pontings Xmas Show. Pontings was a department store in Kensington High Street

Antony Ellman writes: 'Constance and I enjoyed most of 2021 despite the pandemic. We moved between my house in Barnes, the little house we bought in Oxford (Jericho) ten years ago, and the boat we keep on the Upper Thames at Lechlade. Growing fruit and vegetables and keeping bees in the garden in Barnes, cycling and walking regularly in Richmond Park, and playing saxophone in a local wind band (St Margaret's Elastic Band) kept me busy. During lockdown my band recorded several remote performances which can be seen on our website, www.elasticband.org (go to 'Gallery' and click on 'Videos'). As lockdown began to be lifted we

returned to practising in person in members' gardens, and gave a number of public performances for local charities.

'All this came to an abrupt halt in late October 2021 during a cycling trip to Normandy, our first overseas visit since the pandemic hit. Pedalling up a steep forested hill near Lyons-la-Forêt, east of Rouen, I began to experience quite severe chest pain and breathlessness. After a rapid return to the UK, our wonderful NHS sprang into action. I was diagnosed with narrowed coronary arteries, for which open-heart surgery was unfortunately the only remedy. I had the operation on 21 January and am now a fully paid up member of the 'Cabbage Club', the entry requirement for which is to have had the Coronary Artery Bypass and Grafting experience.

'This came as a big shock as I have always considered myself fairly indestructible. My previous hospital experience was to have my tonsils removed at age ten! The need to join the Cabbage Club did not result from a dissolute lifestyle – it might have been easier to accept if it had – but from bad genes inherited from my maternal grandparents, both of whom died of heart attacks in their eighties. The bypass and grafting technology didn't exist in those days, but it has served me well and I am on the road, albeit a fairly slow one, to recovery. I fully expect to be back in the saddle in the next few months, and look forward to seeing surviving Mertonian friends at the Gaudy in September.'

John Gardner has sent the following 'News from the Gardners'. 'At the tail end of life, I have wound down my professional and managerial activity, as well as the governance responsibilities I used to enjoy. The final involvement was 20 years as chair of the Fields Institute for mathematical research. Encarnita, whose home was in Granada, Spain, and I became engaged at the 1964 Commemoration Ball and celebrated our golden anniversary at the 750th anniversary ball. Our time and energy are now spent between Canada and Spain enjoying our family, including two granddaughters who are Olympic track athletes. Over the years in Canada Encarnita continued to paint and publish, and I am completing a book recording my experiences walking Europe's medieval pilgrims' routes.'

Hume Hargreave was very sad to hear that Bob Krueger has died. He continues: 'We had news of him from time to

time from Joe McDonald and knew that he was not well. For someone who made so much of his talents, he was not one to big himself up and, I remember, made great efforts to fit in with lowlier souls. I wonder whether he was really tough enough to cope with the rough world of US politics.

'As for Mary Ann's and my news, yes, we are still around. Magically my chemotherapy has been working better than expected; the dosage has just been reduced in an effort to boost my resistance to infections which has stayed disappointingly low and meant we have had to keep a low profile and avoid indoor gatherings. We are daring to look a little further forward and, now being able to spend longer there, have decided to move to a better house in the NW. Mary Ann has had problems with her blood pressure and pulse which look as though they can be controlled with medication, so on we go.'

Martin Hawkins reports: 'Julia and I remain fit and active I'm glad to say. Given the opportunities to travel again it was wonderful to welcome our family from Chicago for an extended visit late last summer and for us to visit our family in Zimbabwe for several weeks earlier this year. It's still a wonderful country to go to despite its deprivations. Each day is a laugh, a challenge and the sun shines. Another pleasure at Christmas was to be given a copy of Ambra Edwards' *Head Gardeners*, published about five years ago. Among the featured 14 head gardeners whose vision and achievements are recorded in a chapter of their own is Merton's very own **Lucille Savin** (Merton's Head Gardener). Our garden, if I may express a sense of belonging, needs no further words but I wasn't aware that many of Oxford's colleges no longer have gardeners of their own, instead relying on contractors and garden managers. Mertonians past and present are fortunate.'

Peter Hayward says: 'We have been keeping our heads down and only making occasional ventures to country pubs to do a little eating, walking and sightseeing. We have yet to venture beyond our shores since a very successful trip to Cuba just before the first lockdown. We hope to resume our foreign travels in the summer. We are both pretty well and, whether it is a result of four vaccines or taking basic precautions, we have avoided the dreaded virus.'

John Latham reports: 'I have now finished my long-standing project on rice and got it out. But this leaves me with time on my hands and there is only so much gardening I want to do! All is well with us as we start to emerge from Covid.'

[Note from Year Reps: The rice project is John's new book: *Rice and Industrialisation in Asia* (Routledge, 2022). As an economic historian John is the author of many academic works in his field. This book shows how, before 1869, rice had been exported from Asia in the husk to be milled in Britain, and the rice shipped back having been milled. After 1869, mills were transferred to Asia, resulting in a major saving in transport costs, and also marking a crucial step in the industrialisation of Asia.]

Joe McDonald writes: 'On the morning when I wrote this, way back in mid-May, I had just staggered in from the gym after being among the toned bodies of people 50 and more years younger than I. And I thought, "Yes, I AM still here!" This fulfilled the minimum rubric from our excellent Year Reps to "say that you are still with us". By the time this is published, I may even have been with many of you to yet another Gaudy and will be hoping for two or three more of those before the gym and many other activities become a fading memory.'

'It's the many other activities that have been the great feature of retirement. When Anne and I moved down to leafy Surrey in 2006 after retirement, we were leaving the greyness of industrial Scunthorpe for the charming but uncertain prospect of the South Downs. How will it be down there? Will they all be standoffish? How much will a beer cost? Will anyone else vote Labour? In reality it's been a joy and a revelation. There have been inevitable sadnesses: losing Anne six years ago was a great blow and several good friends have gone, most recently the excellent Bob Krueger from 1959 about whom there is more elsewhere in this copy of *Postmaster*. The compensations have been great: no job to drain daily energies; children grown up and off the payroll; activities to choose or reject at will; grandchildren living close by who are a fount of inspiration but who can be handed back to Mum and Dad when they get obstreperous; enough money and adequate health to make a new life attainable; access to London — what a joy! Most of this will be no surprise to many of you but retirement has been a thrill, as

it must be *ceteris paribus* to everyone who experiences it. If anyone from any other year group, e.g. 20 years younger, ever reads what another year group write about themselves and reads this, the message is: Come in; the water's warm; the natives are not hostile; and a few of them even vote Labour!

Finally your Year Reps:

Roger Gould writes: 'Cathy and I have been gradually adjusting to our new life, based mainly in Nottinghamshire and only occasionally back in Saddleworth, and making new friends here as well as enjoying having various family members dropping in more frequently than before. The open-plan house has taken some getting used to but spring, coming earlier than further north, has sprung some welcome surprises in the garden. Overall, we feel the move to be nearer family has already been a success and it may well prove more so in the years ahead.'

David Shipp writes: 'Our lives have gradually returned to normal during the last year. Our walking group resumed in April and we were able to go on our delayed residential walking holiday to Ilfracombe. In fact we had two bites at the cherry, re-seeing walks there in June and taking the full party in October. Our plans to walk on the Northumberland coast were again put on hold, but instead we spent a number of days walking in Yorkshire along the Ouse, with a watery landscape and large skies, quite different to our side of the Pennines. My choirs have also resumed with concerts at Christmas and this spring. As a remnant of Covid our u3a German group continues on Zoom, but our birdwatching group is for real!'

1960

Year Representative: Keith Pickering

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George Darroch, Andrew Devine, John Hartnett, Alan Heppenstall, Alan Keat, Roger Laughton, Tim Phillips, Nick Silk, John Wood and Nick Woodward have all reported on parade, but have nothing of note for *Postmaster*.



Lunch for 1960 Mertonians on 17 November 2021 in London

Keith Aspinall has taken on a rescue dog which travels on a Bosnian passport and will be accompanying the family should they move to Somerset later in the year.

Stuart Blume had planned to visit his friends in Ecuador but then contracted Covid, fortunately the mild sort, but sufficient to postpone his travel plans until later in the year. A second edition of his 2017 book *Immunization: How Vaccines became Controversial* came out in paperback, with a new Epilogue, in April 2021. (**Keith Pickering**, having read it, commends it both for its prescience and its fascination.) Later, together with Baptiste Baylac-Paouly from Lyon, he edited *Immunization and States: The Politics of Making Vaccines*, published in November 2021 by Routledge. He was invited by *Psychology Today* to write a blog and, unable to resist the idea, has now published six blog posts there. Work on his family history slowed down commensurately but he did manage a brief trip to Zagreb, where he had the pleasure of meeting relatives of whose existence he had been unaware. They will be a new chapter in the book to which he is now returning.

Gerald Cadogan continues writing archaeological papers, while also managing to put in ten days of on-site activity in Crete, which he hopes to re-visit this coming autumn.

Geoffrey Copland is in good form but has little to report other than his continuing involvement as a governor or trustee of various bodies.

John Cotton, following advice in the UK not to go to the office, has spent 18 months with his wife in their second home in the Swiss Alps. A large part of his work being done by Zoom, it made absolutely no difference whether he was in his Alpine fastness or in Tunbridge Wells. Seeing a full cycle of the seasons in the Alps was a great privilege, and though the lockdown was strongly enforced up there they were able to experience some wonderful valley and mountain walks and to breathe in the pure Alpine air. They both caught Covid but to no great effect, so consider themselves lucky. He continues to work, despite their business having been acquired last summer, and though this has caused lots of worries, he considers them as providing a healthy challenge to which he must learn to adapt.

John Crossley, after a visit to East Gippsland with his wife, Sara, and a Mertonian friend, **John Bradshaw** (1958), wrote that the highlight of Sale Botanic Gardens was the peacocks, which reminded him of their forebears roaming the Merton grounds until their abrupt departure during the Michaelmas term of 1960. Otherwise, travel has been mainly in the mind via Zoom, research meetings on this forum benefiting by having recruited people who would otherwise have been unable to attend. His work has continued apace, publications including: 'A missing preface in Mendoza's *History of the Great Kingdom of China, 1585*' in *Philippiniana Sacra* (2022); 'An early Monash pioneer: appointed 1964, retired 2003' in the *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association* (2021); 'Jean des Murs and the return to Boethius on music' in *Early Music History* (2022); and 'A sense of proportion: Jacobus extending Boethius around 1300' in *The Intellectual Dynamism of the High Middle Ages* (Amsterdam University Press, 2021). Two books in the pipeline drew the remark from one correspondent: '*Mucha suerte y ánimos con vuestra titánica tarea*', which seemed a bit two-edged. A young colleague has assembled a gratifyingly distinguished group of John's students and colleagues in mathematical logic for a three-day Zoom conference and special (sort of Festschrift) journal issue in June this year, which is very flattering. John thought he had published his last logic paper in 2020 but the organiser has put his name on one that has just been submitted: never say 'Never'.

John Davies continues to be very active, pursuing an eclectic mix of projects. He and a Liverpool colleague are

jointly editing one volume of a multi-volume Bloomsbury set, entitled *A Cultural History of Business. 1: Antiquity*, while as editors they are each writing a half-chapter to fill a gap left by the unavoidable withdrawal of one contributor. He is finding this latter task unexpectedly difficult, trying to write from the point of view of business activity rather than the activity of the state, or of 'the economy' in general. As he has deadlines to contribute a paper to each of two Festschriften for colleagues, his current magnum opus, a portrayal of the emergence of the Athenian upper class before 465 BCE, is in consequence embarrassingly and irritatingly in abeyance. Aside from academe, he and his wife make periodic trips to South Devon to visit his 101-year-old father-in law, who despite suffering from limited mobility still happily retains his full mental acuity. Lastly, as his wife is currently Master of one of the London livery companies, he regularly house-sits for two cats and their medication, while also on occasion being freed from such duties in order to attend lunches and dinners in London as her 'consort'.

Leslie Epstein has had a busy and productive year – perhaps, as he says, the candle flaring up before the wax runs out. Exactly a year after publishing his novel *Hill of Beans* in February 2021, he has just sent off a new novel, written over the past year, *Book of Vilna*, to his agent. Very soon his three Leib Goldkorn novels are going to come out in one big fat book, *The Goldkorn Variations: a Triloggy* – a title which is not a misprint. Meanwhile, he has published two articles on that character in *Tablet*, and a short story online in *Joyland*. Another short story, *The Forest*, should be appearing in *Tablet* in the near future. He still teaches full time and tries to exercise an hour a day while watching French movies or French serials (*A French Village* being the best thing ever to appear on TV) and to eat a handful of nuts every day.

Peter Fattorini replied from Australia, two weeks into a visit to his family, throughout which time it had not stopped raining. He is in good form but regrets that he will not be able to make the Gaudy.

David Fletcher has been in a bubble grappling with a plan to answer *Breaking Boundaries*, the Netflix 2021 documentary that sends shivers the way it warns of the existential mess we face – rather, must face down – on nine environmental

fronts. He has set himself a hard deadline to publish in June and be damned, warts and all. Thereafter he and Bonnie plan to be in the UK in the summer, two weeks of which will be spent in the Isle of Man where he grew up, celebrating there the 80th birthday of his old Manx friend (David Johnson: Pembroke, 1960). **Keith Pickering** aims to revisit their Merton days together over lunch.

Bruce Gilbert is still going strong, having survived a very mild dose of Covid, contracted as a result of he and Dot having spent the New Year with the large number of medics in their family.

Francis Glassborow regards the highlights of last year as meeting with three old friends: in June Gwyneth took him, **Keith Pickering** and his wife Sandy on a private tour of Merton Gardens prior to lunch in The Bear; in August he and Gwyneth took one of his most talented ex-pupils and his family punting on a nice sunny afternoon; and in September they met up with **George Darroch** and his wife Angela at the annual garden party – at which he thinks he may have embarrassed George with some of his recollections of their student days. Apart from that, he has had solar panels installed, which are already proving their value as energy prices rise, their next project being to switch to a heat pump and so disconnect themselves from gas. He wishes to close by reiterating his standing invitation to any and all of his contemporaries to let him know if they plan to be in Oxford so they can arrange to meet.

Philip Hawkes and Patricia are well. Covid worked to their benefit in that as from 15 March 2020 they were compelled to spend a happy and unbroken 18 months locked down in Burgundy, enabling them to experience all the seasons, something they had never been able to do in the 43 previous years of owning their château there. Winter was bitter, however, so second time around and still lacking central heating, they capitulated last December and went back to Paris. Then the Covid downside reared its head when they tested positive in December, so had to spend a cheerful but solitaire Christmas in their Paris apartment, both feeling super well and fit throughout. They continue to work on their châteaux sales, and although their portfolio is diminishing it keeps them busy, hopeful and active.

Arthur Hepher, most surprisingly, has no Nobel prizes to record for the past year, but hopes to be at the Gaudy.

Mike Hind is in good form and has little to report other than to say that after the closures of Covid, and having spent many years of his life in desert countries, he is finding it a noticeable pleasure to be in Britain in the spring.

Richard Mulgan has just clicked into 82 mode and though in good form is happy primarily to be able to express his pleasure at being able to join the list of survivors.

Keith Pickering would like as always to thank his correspondents for so kindly responding to his annual call to arms. Last year he was delighted to meet Emily Bruce, who looks after all the alumni, and to spend an hour walking round Merton gardens with her. Merton gardens also came into play later in the year when **Francis Glassborow** and his wife, Gwyneth, took him and Sandy on a guided tour of the same gardens; Gwyneth, as a Merton gardener, being able to open to the door to many secret and unknown corners. The gardens were yet again a splendid background for the cheerful Diamond Jubilee in September 2021. He and Sandy now have the great pleasure of looking forward to meeting up with his fellow chemist **David Fletcher** later this summer when David and Bonnie are travelling across the water from their home in Canada.

David Price has cautiously waited until his 80th year before embarking on major dental intervention as a means of generating a 40% discount arising from less IHT on his eventual estate. Aside from that he feels it should be reported that he seems still to be alive.

Glynne Stackhouse carries out a lot of local organ playing for weddings and funerals and as a stand-in for Sunday services. A year ago he was asked to help out at Streatley church on the Thames, close to where he lives, whose organist had died suddenly, and has since played there almost every Sunday, along with other events. He is just about to take over the permanent running of the small choir (whatever that means at 81), as well as providing organ accompaniment to hymns and service music – and modest voluntaries. He will be summoning up all the choir-directing techniques learnt

at Merton from the great László Heltay in the Chapel Choir, Kodály Choir and the Schola Cantorum. A small boast is that Making Music (the National Federation of Music Societies) conferred their President's Award upon him in recognition of his several years of voluntary work carried out on its Young Artists Scheme and as a board member. The framed certificate, signed by the President, the composer Debbie Wiseman, is waiting to be hung on his study wall, and he is thinking of having his long-ago Oxford degree hanging next to it.

Richard Thompson and Jane made a trip to their house in France in November. It was very much an exploratory trip to assess the repairs needed after two years of shutdown. The bureaucratic travel processes were a nightmare, but they managed to navigate them safely, being rewarded for all their efforts by being able to meet up with old friends and to return once again to eat in their favourite restaurant. A highlight of the year was the Merton reunion, and he is looking forward to further such events. Meanwhile, he is still enjoying developing his interest in the Italian language and all things Italian, with a visit there to be a goal for 2022.

Michael Thorn has had a quiet year, though like many of us he clocked up 80 in 2021. The main events this year have been the construction of a large rock and shrub garden and the acquiring of a dog originally bred for lion hunting – the Rhodesian Ridgeback, his being actually very gentle. He has also set about downsizing his library, discovering it to be full of history items which nobody wants.

Jim Trefil is still professing at George Mason and has been honoured this year, being interviewed and filmed, for 50 years in the Virginia university system. He has no intention of retiring, but the forced move to online classes worked really well for him as he was able to record his lectures and then spend class time one on one with his students. To his pleased surprise his latest book (with Neil deGrasse Tyson) actually spent a little time on the *New York Times* bestseller list, which makes him think if the time has now come for him to ride off into the sunset.

Bruce Walter is having to cope with lessened mobility, so his greatest pleasures have been vicarious, following the progress of his talented grandchildren. Granddaughter

Natalie was recently awarded an exhibition by St Peter's, where she is reading History of Art, and his grandson George has passed his first-year exams with flying colours at the Codarts University for the Arts in Rotterdam, where he is studying jazz guitar; so Bruce enjoys their success without having to do any of the work. Good scheme, Bruce.

Philip Webb is enjoying his new apartment in Toronto, which is further from the stores, ensuring he gets plenty of exercise. He has just started choosing parts for his sixth computer, in which he will continue to run Gentoo Linux. His pride in Canada has become even stronger since all three levels of government dealt promptly and effectively with the neo-fascist insurrection in Ottawa and elsewhere. The ringleaders and some well-armed terrorists in Alberta have been arrested and face lengthy jail sentences, if convicted, but not a single person was detained in hospital. It is the motto in our constitution: 'Peace, order and good governance'.

Jonathan Wright continues to work and has a minor publication to record: 'Foreign policy: the dilemmas of a revisionist state' in *The Oxford Handbook of the Weimar Republic* (OUP, 2022).

1961

Year Representative: Bob Machin

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Eight of us made it to the Jubilee Lunch on 12 September. There was much reminiscing, particularly about nuclear fallout shelters in the cellars and the mysterious appearance of a plastic planter on the Chapel roof (eventually removed by the local fire brigade).

Some of us are still doing some serious scribbling. In 2021 **Henry Shue** published *The Pivotal Generation* (the urgent need to do something about climate change). Go to the College website and follow the link to Henry. **Frank Kelsall** has been researching the career of Nicholas Barbon ever since he went down. Barbon was one of the leading property developers after the Great Fire of London. Now the London

Topographical Society has offered to publish it. Frank is proofreading and arguing about the illustrations. When folk living in Marshwood Vale, Dorset, heard that **Bob Machin** was researching landscape history there, he was pressed to publish something. Sixty copies have been sold so far. I'm sure Henry and Frank will be able to beat that!

Alan Slomson continues to try to enthuse youngsters about maths, this time volunteering at the newly opened Mathematics Discovery Centre in Leeds. He also gave his first ever history lecture to the Thoresby Society: it can be viewed at youtu.be/qbXvmZXEZto

Peter Lee is in good health but notices challenges in everyday life like remembering people's names or how to put his socks on. Fortunately his grandchildren keep him up to date on the important things in life. He is now ridiculously well informed about subjects that he previously knew nothing about, such as football.

Old age is proving more challenging for some of us. **Peter Richmond** is impatiently waiting for two knee replacements. **Ian Packington** developed lung problems at Christmas and so far the standard treatments are not helping. Let us hope that the medics can come up with a solution, as they did for **Peter Cope** who was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2021. After numerous hospital visits, it was decided that he was suffering from something else. The treatments have worked and once again Peter is strolling with his rambling group, blowing his clarinet in the jazz band and singing in two amateur choirs.

If you didn't receive an email request from me for this report, it's either in your spam account or you forgot to send me a change of email address.

1962

Year Representative: Martyn Hurst

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Michael Roberts is still playing cricket in Adelaide but the pace of his tennis has slowed and his play become somewhat

erratic. He runs the Thuppahi website which is full of fascinating articles about Sri Lanka.

Callum McCarthy's response was admirably taut. '*J'ai vecu.*' which he tells us was the usual response when participants were asked what they did in the French Revolution.

David Jenkins had the perfect excuse for not attending our Jubilee Lunch on the original date as he is being inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame. Happily, he assures us it is not for being an exceptional patient. He recalls questions from the General Paper he sat for Merton entry: 'Was Machiavelli right?' and 'Does art have a function?'

Jim Doty is profiting from old age and retirement to catch up on his reading. The novels of Edward St Aubyn provide light diversion, while Andrew Robert's *Churchill* and *The Last King of America* provide an insight into how people dealt with international crises of their time. In the future, what will be written about the current international crisis with Ukraine?

John Palmer has been in Finland lecturing on a Global Forestry MSc course. Preparations for May Day include the first-year students being thrown into an icy fast flowing river – rather a contrast with the gentle Cherwell celebrations. In June he plods around the muddy foreshores of Guyana researching on the livelihoods of fishermen whose catches have greatly reduced of late. Their concern is that offshore oil exploration and production is affecting fish stocks but evidence is weak in either direction.

Andrew Morton is basking in the glory of winning the 2021 Offshore Cruising Club Regatta in the good ship *Balerno*. The downside is that he has to organise this year's regatta on the day of our Jubilee Lunch. His golf continues to improve.

Martyn Hurst celebrated the publication of the book by his father (**AW Hurst**, 1933), *The Armadillo*. It concerns the fate of an armadillo overcome by an earthquake. On arrival at the Pearly Gates and placed on the Heavenly Scales of Justice they remain in the neutral position. How will the Almighty determine whether the Armadillo should be admitted to the Everlasting Pastures of Heaven or be consigned to the less agreeable environs of outer darkness?

David Ambrose has graduated to the role of tutor and is supervising younger less lazy writers working on screenplays of two of his novels. He was recently interviewed on Radio 4 in a programme on great hoaxes. His notorious book *Alternative 3* was billed with the equally notorious Orson Wells' *The War of the Worlds*. He is now virtually unapproachable.

Martin Hall is working with two colleagues from Queen Mary University of London on a book of documents about student life in medieval universities. He has also translated documents charting the lives of Jews in medieval Poland. His planned trip to Alaska morphed through a cruise to Greenland to a tour of Iceland to zero as the ship ran aground in Norway!

Footnote: We look forward to meeting up at our Diamond Jubilee Lunch on 16 October. How can this be?

1963

Year Representative: Guy English

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After last year's flurry of '63 reports, most seem to have crawled back under their stones – but a few fresh names have emerged from the woodwork (no metaphors knowingly unmixed).

Derek Hughes continues to publish on Wagner. Along with Janet Todd, he also made a *Times Literary Supplement* podcast on Aphra Behn.

Rick Allen writes: 'My "absolutely nothing to report" submission last year, apart from garrulous banalities never intended for publication (I know, they all say that), amused some and embarrassed me. So, in a mild attempt to restore self-respect, I will mention this time that I continue to be an active Vice-Chair of the Dickens Fellowship Cambridge branch (which I co-founded ten years ago); that I've just published two articles on 19th-century fiction (which shows I haven't really moved on since 1964); and that I'm still Secretary of the Cambridge Commons, a pressure group (in this most unequal of cities) affiliated to the Equality Trust. None of this is quite as enjoyable as coaching grandchildren in cricket and chess.'

John Bamfield reports: 'As usual I don't have any dramatic, memorable or unique things to report but lots of nice things resulting from having moved next door to daughter and grandchildren ahead of the pandemic.'

John Allen writes: 'Actually there's precious little to report about a spectacularly uneventful post-pandemic year. I continue to spend most of my time on researches into architectural history and what's left over enjoying the company of our grandchildren. Both sets live within ten minutes' walk of our house and the third grandchild was born in January so we've been kept busy.'

How good to hear from Cornwall, with its clotted cream and rich widows. The good news, though, is that **Richard Boyd** has become so epigrammatic that he has nothing to report at all. Greetings!

David Pennock reports: 'In terms of things to report I have little to add. I continue to chair the Hastings Contemporary Art Gallery which has survived Covid remarkably well. However trying to keep the Arts Council happy, increase our diversity and fundraise is a continuing challenge. Meanwhile I continue to be kept busy by six grandchildren, two of whom are based in the liberal heart of Texas, Austin. Hence delighted that we were able to get into the USA again.'

Brian Butterworth writes: 'This is my first contribution to *Postmaster*. I'm afraid I remember very few of my contemporaries at Merton. My tutor was **John Lucas**, who tried to get me kicked out, but succeeded only in getting me rusticated in my second year. I met him again at the British Academy when I was elected in 2002. My closest friend was **Mimo Takidin**, a Lebanese Druze, who wanted me to teach him how to play chess and poker. When he left he was better than me at both. I taught psychology at Cambridge 1972–80, and retired from a chair at the University College London Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience in 2009 but continue to do research. My most recent books are *Dyscalculia: From Science to Education* (Routledge, 2019; Italian translation, 2021) and *Can Fish Count? What Animals Reveal About Our Uniquely Mathematical Mind* (Quercus UK, Basic Books US, 2022). I live in London with my partner, Diana Laurillard, also at UCL. I hope all is well with you and yours.'

Gordon and Mary **Whatley** (twice-vaxed and once-boosted) managed to avoid testing positive until the very last week of 2021, during the London family's Christmastide fortnight in Connecticut, but symptoms were few and mild. GW's right-ear surgery (October 2021) and new hearing aids have somewhat improved his wretched hearing, especially for the phone and streaming audio (the magic of Bluetooth), but now there are mild 'imbalance' issues: you can't win ... Meanwhile (during 'No-mow May') he's neglecting the front lawn and slowly nearing completion of the pandemic project, to edit and translate the earliest Greek version (6th–7th centuries) of the legend of St Eugenia of Rome: hoping another Covid wave doesn't curtail the recent gradual reopening of Yale's libraries. Mary just managed to visit the BL or Bodleian later in 2022.

Ralph Abraham writes: 'I have little to report but thought I would reply so you have a list of survivors but will contribute at some point in the future!'

Bob Scott reports: 'Apart from making me rather cheerfully antisocial, lockdown has given me the necessary nudge to write a memoir. To my surprise I have found a publisher and *Win a Few, Lose a Few* was published on 28 May. Two chapters on Oxford are offered with Merton stories about **Dick Durden-Smith**, still my closest friend, **Nevill Coghill**, **Robert Levens** and **John Barton** also emerging. Building theatres, Olympic and Commonwealth Games bids in Manchester, the Dome which brought me to Greenwich, Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008, dealing with Mrs Thatcher and Vladimir Putin, stories of fun with Pavarotti and Nureyev all get an airing. The bugger of the lockdown has been stopping my wife's and my passion for travel, which became our life from 2010. Life became most enjoyable again once I had sorted out two hips and a back. Nothing stops me thinking our generation has been the fortunate one.'

Peter Hay writes: 'On our first trip to Europe in three years, Dorthea and I are visiting old friends in England. I am writing from our guest room in Fellows 3 looking out at the blooming garden and the Merton Meadow beyond. We were hosted last night at High Table by Dr **Julia Walworth**, Fellow Librarian, who has just given us a quick tour of the Old Library. I recall giving that tour to visitors during one Easter

vacation working for **John Cantwell**. I am still working on the archive I described last year.



From left: **Peter Hay**, **Derek Hughes** and **Robin Kirkpatrick** at a country inn, during Peter's visit to Cambridge in late May

For myself, I continue to sail, fail to complete projects, fight the garden, and made another positively last appearance at the World Pilot Gig Championships, with oddly my best results. So ...

1964

Year Representative: Richard Burns

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This year's request for news has produced a higher response rate than some of its predecessors but, while I am grateful for this and thank all my correspondents for getting in touch, the truth is that nearly all of us are leading quieter lives than we once did and have correspondingly less real news to share.

A prime example is **Andrew Curtis**, living in Wimborne Minster in Dorset and continuing to busy himself with the affairs of the minster as well as other church and community associations of which he is a member. Another with little to report is **Steve James**, though he is in regular contact with

Eric Colvin, Keith Thomas and David Ireland. As regards the latter, I would like, very belatedly, to report that he was awarded the British Empire Medal in the Birthday Honours List in 2018, for services to the community. His wife Angela emailed this news to me in November of that year, but, shamefully, my filing system was so bad that I omitted to mention it in either the 2019 report or subsequently. She had correctly surmised that David would be far too modest to mention the honour himself.

David Jessel, living in Cumnor, is near enough to attend 'sublime choral evensong at Merton', as well as burnishing his grass management credentials and missing Italy (though he has compensated by completing his collection of Donna Leon first editions). As a humblebrag, he also reports that his son has 'betrayed the family tradition' by achieving an Oxford First in History. **Tony Webster**, after spending months of lockdown trying without success to learn 'all the useful scales' on the baritone sax and looking wistfully out to sea from the South Downs and moping about not being able to go over to Normandy, finally got to France (and will probably have spent a good more time there by the time you read this). **Mark Price** visited Berlin in May to mark the 60th anniversary of a school exchange there; he has kept in touch continuously since 1962 with his exchange partner Wolfgang, who has visited Merton several times over the years and been suitably impressed. He also remains impressed by Mark's continuing competence in speaking German. Mark has been trying, without success, to persuade the Warden that Merton should recommence teaching Engineering (discontinued after the retiral of **David Witt** in 1999); perhaps her successor will prove more receptive to his arguments.

Paul Mahoney is looking forward to the Gaudy in September and brought me up to date with the slow waning of his legal career in Europe. He finished as the UK Judge on the European Court of Human Rights in 2016 on reaching the compulsory retirement age of 70. He then became chair of a very recondite body, the Appeals Committee of the European Patent Organisation in Munich. This was meant to be a part-time appointment dealing with disputes between the EPO's staff and its administration, but turned out not to be so. Paul had had enough of it by the time he reached 75 at the end of last year and has decided to spend more time with his family, while

continuing with a couple of consultancy roles (one of which involves vetting candidates proposed to sit on his old stamping ground, the Human Rights Court). His family includes his wife Parvin, who he has been with for over 50 years, and their three children: a son with a Finnish family and living in Helsinki working as a lawyer for an EU agency, a daughter working in investment management in London, and the youngest son now owning a pub in Mexico City after leaving HSBC's private bank there. Paul recommends any Mertonian visiting the city to head for the Duke of Lisbon pub on (unsurprisingly) Calle Lisboa and ask for Alex Mahoney, who has been instructed by his father to offer him or her a first drink on the house.

Robert Irwin, self-confessed challenger to the Reverend Casaubon and his 'Key to all mythologies', promises us that the 'lengthy history' of late medieval Egypt and Syria should be finished this year. Perhaps the reason for the slow progress on this magnum opus is the fecundity of his non-academic literary work: *The Runes Have Been Cast* was published in November 2021, its sequel (unnamed) 'needs just a week or two's work' and *A Madman's Guide to Stamp Collecting* should be finished this summer. And an animated film based on *The Limits of Vision* premiered at Brooklyn's Museum of the Moving Image in April.

Finally, from the fringes of the Colorado Rockies, **Peter Woods** tells us that with the arrival of Covid he wrapped up his climate change work with the Longmont city council and returned to his lifelong interest in African American history, producing a new edition of *Strange New Land: Africans in Colonial America*, to be published by OUP in 2023. He is delighted that the Metropolitan Museum in New York is running a major exhibition of Winslow Homer, which will come to the National Gallery in London in September, and featuring several of Homer's powerful Black images, such as 'Near Andersonville' and 'The Gulf Stream', about which Peter has written books.

As for me, the big news has been the holding of a very successful party, albeit over two years late, to celebrate my and Catherine's silver wedding and our daughter Mary's 21st. This was attended by 90 people and took place in mid-May at our house in Berwickshire on the hottest and sunniest day of the year. It went on, I am told until 4.30am; I had retired to bed sometime between 2 and 3.

1965

Year Representative: Peter Robinson

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Again, unsurprisingly, in view of the pandemic, there have been fewer contributions than usual this year. Personal greetings came in from **Paul Everson**.

John Dryden reports that he is actually at the moment on crutches. He went out (suitably arrayed in lycra) for a long bike ride in Dorset with a couple of old Oxford running friends, got a little too careless and crashed, sustaining a broken femur. Luckily, if that's the right word, he ended the afternoon in A&E in Poole. Given the age demographic of the greater Bournemouth area, the local orthopaedic team are unrivalled in their skill and experience in fixing injuries of this nature. He was out in a few days, home now, hopping around nicely and expecting to make a full recovery. John ended by saying he looked forward to seeing me at the Gaudy in September.

Paul Everson writes to say that he continues to research and write. He hopes to see the volume of the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture on Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire*, which he has prepared with his long-term collaborator Professor David Stocker for the long-running, landmark British Academy series, to publication this coming year. It is the last of their three contributions to the multi-authored 15-volume series, now approaching completion. He looks forward, similarly, to his input to the much revised and enlarged second edition of Sir Nikolaus Pevsner's *Staffordshire* in the Buildings of England series being published. Here, as previously with the *Cheshire* and *Derbyshire* volumes, he has fulfilled the book's limited requirement for archaeological content. He anticipates the additional pleasure of donating both publications to the College library.

David Mumford writes that although he is now officially retired (the church pays a pension and not a stipend), he is still on the Diocese of Europe's list as well as that of the Episcopal Church in Scotland. This last year David was asked

to do two locums in the Netherlands (he has some Dutch as he worked there for five years), both in Weldam, Twente in the East Netherlands. The services are in English but much of the pastoral work and work with children is in Dutch. He came home in December 2021 and then found himself in hospital over Christmas with bleeding stomach ulcers. The upside of this was a visit from Santa and his elves (and a very good Christmas lunch, courtesy of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh), and the sight of ward staff wearing the most bizarre headgear. As an aside, David mentions that he was informed that ulcers are now not caused by worry or too much port but by one of the bacteria that decides to eat the stomach lining rather than do its proper job of helping to digest the food. It did mean that he lost a lot of energy and so withdrew from standing as a candidate for the Scottish Green Party for local elections in May. He represents the local area on the consultative committees for their two major carbon emitters, the cement works and the incinerator. PPE did not prepare him for technical discussion about small particle emissions and their threat to health. The family (four children and 11 grandchildren) are flourishing, but alas no one is yet going to Oxford. Two of the three older ones are currently at Cambridge in spite of efforts to persuade them otherwise. The rest are still working their way through school so maybe there is still hope. David met someone on retreat who knew John Lucas and much appreciated him. He is, he thinks, firmly based in Scotland but looks forward to the next Gaudy, as and when it proves to be possible.

Bill McGrew first reported to me last year how a bird-feeding habit over the winter had habituated a cock-pheasant and his five hens to come to the patio every morning for their breakfast. The story now continues – about the pheasant saga. 'We had up to 12 females at a time over the winter, coming to our back patio for breakfast. They became very tame, coming up to the back door to take their daily seeds and mealworms. Now, it's breeding season, so the male whose territory includes our garden seems to have recruited a harem of four females.' They are old hands at the game, but he's still wary. Bill hopes his wimpiness will subside, so he can maintain the territory, especially when the chicks are hatched. Meanwhile there is important news on the honours front from Bill: nothing really new to add, except that St Andrews University has renewed his Honorary Professorship for another three-year term. This will

take him to 2025, when he'll be 80 years old, so that will be time for real retirement, he thinks.

Peter Robinson: 'At last we have managed to go abroad, firstly to Madrid in March, where we met family members from Peru; secondly, on a long-awaited rail trip to northern Italy in April. We look forward to other trips in the UK and abroad to visit family and friends, now that Covid restrictions have been removed. Daily walks in the local area help to keep us fit, but macular degeneration is making some day-to-day activities more difficult. However, I still manage to act as Group Leader for a U3A Biblical Hebrew group in Stafford, and progress on the piano with waltzes, polkas and tangos.'

Bob Wilson replied, saying: 'As always, a pleasure to hear from you. As you say it is indeed heartening that the world, and particularly Merton, is getting back to normal at least as far as the plague is concerned.' He says they organised a family Easter Egg Hunt to celebrate all that, and of course six of the 19 came down with Covid. All are recovering nicely. They are hosting a family of Ukrainians who are with them for a couple of months or so until they are established, and thank heavens for Google Translate. Their presence makes another reason for Bob and his family to stay home in Florida, but they are finding out more about Ukraine than any Cook's Tour could possibly offer. 'Lovely people.'

Jonathan Zamet wrote to say that all is well with him, and hoping it is with me, too. For once, nothing comes to mind as worthy of reporting. He has seen that there would be a Gaudy this fall, and he is sorely tempted. But, as of now, he is exploring a trip to California with the object of playing golf with his sons at Pebble Beach, if they can get tee time!

1966

Year Representative: David Holmes

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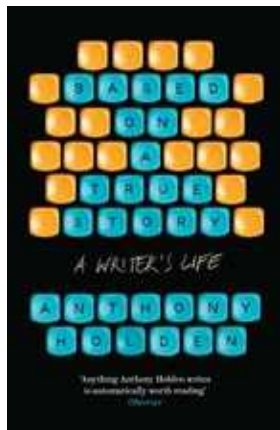
Chip Filson writes: 'Life is good. Grateful for opportunities to serve. Singing with local groups. Working with nature in

the garden especially flowers and plants, less so with rabbits. Watching grandkids become adults. Writing observations on credit unions in America. Trying to help Ukrainians succeed. Finding my spouse more loving every day.'

Rick Gekoski reports two recent publications: *Guarded by Dragons: Encounters with Rare Books and Rare People* (Constable, 2021) and *After Darke* (Constable, 2022). Of the former, John Banville of the *Irish Times* wrote: 'Gekoski is wonderful company on the page'; of the latter, the *Times* reviewer wrote: 'Its snarky hero is a joy.'

Michael Hebbert reports that having lived since 1979 beside Nicholas Hawksmoor's magnificent pile, the church of St Anne's Limehouse in the London Docklands, he is in the process of moving to Oxford. He still serves as Emeritus Professor of Town Planning at both University College London and the University of Manchester, doing less teaching now but still active as an examiner, reviewer and researcher. One of his current projects is to write a biobibliography of a recently deceased Mancunian colleague, Brian Robson, a Cambridge geographer whose active career as a leading expert on the distributions of wealth and poverty was followed, post-retirement, by a remarkable second flowering as a historian of cartography. He hopes his own flowering will be musical. A Jeffries Duet concertina has been a constant companion ever since Merton days, and its repertoire continues to grow. An online collection of tunes on the SoundCloud website attracts a steady stream of visitors from all corners of the globe. It's a most satisfying type of publication.

Anthony Holden has recently published his autobiography, including a chapter on his time at Merton (1966–70). A review of this appears separately, kindly written by **Patrick Worsnip** (1966).



Based on a True Story: A Writer's Life by Anthony Holden (Simon & Schuster, 2021)

Anthony Holden has had a life many would envy. He is a man of many talents – an award-winning journalist, a biographer whose subjects have ranged from Shakespeare to Prince Charles, a translator of Greek poetry and a world-class poker player, among other accomplishments. Charming, quietly spoken,

highly knowledgeable and good-looking, he has always found it easy to make friends, and, as this autobiography demonstrates, prominent among them have been the famous and others of influence who could help advance his career. Celebrities throng his pages. Journalists tend to meet big names, but whether it was Princess Diana, Simon Russell Beale, Mick Jagger or Michael Atherton, Holden seems to have struck up at least a matey, drink-sharing relationship with even ones who did not become lifetime buddies, as the editor Harold Evans and the critic Frank Kermode did.

Holden's time at Oxford was also one that many would, and did, envy. He edited *Isis*, appeared on University Challenge, had his translation of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* performed at the ancient Greek theatre in Delphi and began setting up the Fleet Street contacts he would need. Readers of *Postmaster* will focus on his account of Merton. Undecided which subject to read, he was interviewed for entry by both 'the terrifying head of Classics, **R.G.C. Levens**' and English tutor **John Jones**. He opted for English. The biggest sensation of his time there, though, was in 1968 when a *Cherwell* article bylined by another Mertonian, Denis Matyjaszek (later the Labour junior minister **Denis MacShane**) suggested his appointment at *Isis* was part of a shady deal with its then owner, Robert Maxwell. *Isis* staff (Holden says without his advance knowledge) seized Matyjaszek, drove him 20 miles out of Oxford, coated him with pink spray and abandoned him.

As a former 'hack' myself, I enjoyed Holden's account of the rambunctious national newspaper world, especially the skulduggery at the *Times* following its takeover by Rupert Murdoch in 1981. Music buffs will be interested in his English versions, done jointly with his first wife, the pianist Amanda Holden, of librettos for Mozart operas. Card players will be fascinated by his presidency of the International Federation of Poker from 2009 to 2013.

The publisher's blurb describes Holden as the 'son of a seaside shopkeeper' in Southport – slightly disingenuously, maybe, since his maternal grandfather, Ivan Sharpe, had played football for England and later became a BBC commentator. But behind the book one can perhaps see the boy from the provinces who will not be satisfied he has shed his provincialism until he has stormed the last bastion of the élite.

Good fortune, which had always bolstered Holden's innate abilities, abandoned him in 2017, when a stroke disabled his left side, largely ending the kind of life he had led, though sparing his life and his mental capacities. As emerges from his last chapter, he has faced this disaster with courage and good sense. This autobiography is one thing he has done despite it. It is written with fluency and humour, and anyone looking for an account of the British media and arts world – perhaps even a social history – of the last half-century could well start here.

Patrick Worsnip (1966)

Ian Kershaw has a new book coming out in September: *Personality and Power: Builders and Destroyers of Modern Europe* (Penguin, 2022).

Denis MacShane continues to write about politics and policy at home and especially in Europe where he works as a special advisor at Avisa Partners, a consultancy based in Brussels, Paris and London. His latest book is *Must Labour Always Lose?* (Claret Press, 2021). 'I have been trying to edit down 2.5 million words of diaries I kept as an MP and Minister during the Blair years. But it struck me that since I came up to Merton in 1966 Labour has only won elections in four years – 1974, 1997, 2001 and 2005 – and I stood for Labour in

all four of those years. That is a very poor record for a major national governing party so I set down to write a list of my reasons why Labour was so bad at winning elections in an easy non-academic way. It is a kind of book I wish someone had written and I had read when starting down the path of political engagement five decades ago. There are a few dozen suggestions often based on my work in politics here and in other countries that Labour might adopt (but won't) to become more electable. Over to the next Labour generation to see if they can learn from my generation's capacity for losing elections,' says Denis.

1967

Year Representative: Rory Khilkoff-Boulding

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Probably for most of us the last year was somewhat uneventful because of lockdowns and Covid-associated difficulties. As it has receded (at the time of writing) the importance of contact with family and friends at this stage of our lives seems to me to be much more important and desirable than perhaps it once was, and a little more urgent. I hope the September 2022 Gaudy will bring many of us together, albeit briefly. It may be the last or next-to-last time for some of us.

Richard Allen reports that he and his wife finally managed to celebrate their golden wedding with family in Deal. Otherwise, he has continued writing, trail running, keeping the garden in order, grandparenting and working with a couple of charities to improve how they measure what they are achieving. He also attended the Ceremony of the Oath and Installation of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath in Westminster Abbey, the first time he has seen pageantry like this at first hand.

Russell Sleigh writes that he and Janet are still living in their log cabin in the backwoods of Vermont, on a property they share with lots of deer and wild turkey, the occasional silver fox, black bear, or pack of coyotes, who hunt and howl at night. Late in life he is going to learn about the book trade, because Janet is opening her own esoteric bookshop in the lovely village of North Bennington, in what used

to be the livery stable. When not felling trees and raising chickens or organic vegetables he contributes book reviews to online book groups (mainly classic European literature, some history, some contemporary novels), a welcome form of social interaction during the last two years of Covid. He advises that it is still possible to find quiet corners of the internet where discussion is rewarding and sane.

Arthur J. Shartsis has been given the Citation Award by the Berkeley Law School at UC Berkeley, which is the law school's highest alumni honour, for which many congratulations are due.

Colin Frazer is still teaching A-level Greek at Marlborough and summering in Naxos in a village close to **Andrew Hobson**. He participated in celebrations for 150 years of OUAFC by enjoying a lively dinner at SEH, hosted by **Stuart Ferguson**. His wife, Maria, has family in Ukraine and they are now sadly helping to settle a hundred or so refugees into the Marlborough community.

The world of showbiz has welcomed **Clive Richardson** into its ranks — he ran a two-hour streamed variety show in 2021 and followed it with another in 2022 (although he has given me no details of the content). True to his professional background in telecommunications he has also carried out a murder mystery evening meal (with everyone in costume) and then a grand gin-tasting — both events via Zoom, such that no designated drivers were required.

Terry Riordan and his wife Claudia have managed a great deal of recreational travel — almost as a political statement — by way of perpetually pre-packed luggage and astute timing as to official variations in quarantine and travel restrictions at both ends. They visited the Lake District climbing Fairfield Horseshoe, walked on Dartmoor, and played squash and badminton. There was a four-week walking holiday in the French Pyrenees, sampling a goodly quantity of the wares of Saint-Émilion, and revisiting the Normandy D-Day sites. Afterwards there was a four-week visit to friends in various mountain areas of Italy, and a Christmas spent in Lanzarote.

John Wroe, who was at the Merton Weekend, is well and is well settled into his retirement from the legal world of crime.

Also at the weekend were **Peter Richmond** and his wife Lou Baxter, the latter retired now from psychological practice. Peter is working hard on local history matters in Hexham, and currently involved in projects (and fundraising for projects) to digitise large quantities of very old local and ecclesiastical records. Not many organisations have muniments rooms of the quality of the one at Merton to preserve historical records for posterity and in a way which assists analysis.

David Giachardi was also present, although suffering a very painful knee injury after a recent tripping incident; he had been helpfully accommodated in a room three floors up over the Lodge. He is otherwise well, but still very much acutely learning to be a widower, after the death of Helen, his wife of 50 years, from cancer, just before the first lockdown.

He has sent me a picture of them both at a lunch in Hall in 2019 organised by the Horners' (livery) Company of London, of which he was the Master that year. Sitting in the Warden's Chair at dinner, he half expected to receive a thunderbolt from our *Fundator* for wrongful occupation.



David Giachardi and Helen in Hall, 2019

I have been in regular touch with **Martin Sands** and his wife Carol. As ex-MOD, Martin is very carefully and knowledgeably watching the tragic events of the current war in Ukraine as well as maintaining his wider interests in military history generally. At a talk at the Merton Weekend on the architectural history of Merton, when we were seated

at one side top table in Hall, Martin remarked upon one of the gleaming silver sconce pots on it, and spontaneously recalled an incident where **Robert Venables** (1966) came to some unfortunate grief when challenged. Coincidentally, I have this year instructed Robert, a prominent QC and member of the Revenue Bar, on an interesting and complex High Court tax case (not at all my usual field of activity). Robert is now an Honorary Fellow of St Edmund Hall.

For my part, Marina and I both continue on, unretired, working our differing practices from home. The legal world for me here and abroad did not cease from mental strife during the pandemic years, even though the courts themselves in the UK were either moribund or wheezing on life-support ventilators with completely duff and highly expensive computer case management programmes, staff cuts and unavoidable Covid absences. They are now, with a few notable and honourable exceptions, clearly still badly affected administratively by juridical 'long Covid', backlogs, bewigged barristerial strikes, and perhaps the 'Great Resignation' although personfully striving to catch up and challenge Zeno's paradox. Property legal practice for Marina has not ceased either and is busier than before. But happily, in recent months, we have been able to get back into a little choral singing together, initially well socially distanced with rehearsal room doors wide open to the chill winds, but latterly back to normal, including a symphonic chorus for a Jubilee concert.

Sad news this year has been the passing of **Stuart Jack**, CVO, a Merton linguist with a distinguished Foreign Office career and always a very friendly, cheerful presence at Merton. His obituary is on page 217.

1968

Year Representative: Ian McBrayne

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I must start this report by expressing our sadness at the death of **Nigel Webster** in Australia in July 2021, not long after contributing to last year's report. Nigel's obituary appears later in this edition of *Postmaster*.

The good news that we are invited to a Gaudy in September is tempered slightly by the realisation that it is 'for years up to and including 1968'. We have officially entered the ranks of the very old. Undeterred, several of my correspondents have declared their intention to attend, and I am sure we can expect a good turnout as ever.

Scirard Lancelyn Green, however, will be singing in Toledo Cathedral that night. His choral activity restarted last autumn with *Elijah* and Christmas concerts, followed by more this year, mainly with patriotic content, including six in Jubilee week. Building maintenance had to continue in lockdown despite difficulties, not least installing a new boiler in a shared house while five residents worked from home. Scirard congratulates all concerned on their forbearance. He has also been installing solar electric systems to combat rising energy costs, and enjoying the return of skating and skiing holidays despite the Covid paperwork.

Another man who remains physically active is **Steve Drinkwater**. No longer leading walking trips for HF Holidays because of a recurring leg problem, he still takes part as a guest, recently visiting Dolgellau, Church Stretton and Brecon, as well as rambling with local groups. Since 2018 he has lived happily in Narberth, a really nice town with a strong local community, and says that Pembrokeshire is as idyllic as ever. He continues as Chair of the Friends of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, and is still trying to study French every day and participating in two local creative writing groups.

But the really big news is that after 49 years supervising and assessing candidates for Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions, Steve has been awarded an MBE in the Queen's Jubilee Honours List. Many congratulations, Steve, for this recognition of such a long period of selfless voluntary service.

Another active man is **Martin Wainwright**, who undertook a walking marathon in May on behalf of Maggie's Centres. With donations surpassing his target, he started with morale so high that he failed to notice the afternoon drizzle; he also met a mole along the way. Penny joined him for the last four miles and made the whole thing possible through her logistical support.



Back home, they have been absorbed for two years in growing the beautiful and historically fascinating *Paulownia tormentosa* (below), whose seed pods provided 18th-century bubble wrap for Far Eastern porcelain. On a recent visit to Merton, they were thrilled to discover a fabulous example in Rose Lane. With the help of a very tall student, they gathered some seeds which they hope to germinate.



Nicholas Richardson is glad to report that real tennis resumed some time ago. His older son Alexis and family have moved to Wytham, as their daughter Ursula has started at the Dragon School; Nicholas and Jenny can see more of them, which is good. Otherwise, life carries on rather as before, only socially much busier. Many of us can empathise with that.

Among several others who mention grandchildren is **Chris Simmons**. 'Against our better judgement, and rather belatedly', he and Dorothy became novice grandparents to Jules on 7 February 2022. Jules is half mongrel English, quarter French and quarter Polish; Chris says Brighton seems a good place for him to start life, but a long way from Hexham. Chris has retired again from clerical duties, almost; given up learning Welsh; and had a cryptic crossword published in *Third Age Matters*. He is about to replace a dead apple tree in Her Majesty's honour.

The granddaughter whom **Tim Cole** has been bringing up has been doing A levels. Tim is still working at University College London and has been appointed to the Home Office Age Estimation Scientific Advisory Committee, advising on methods to improve age assessment of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Alastair Northedge has reached a landmark: his last PhD student has defended her thesis. 'That doesn't mean of course that you are free of them,' says Alastair ruefully. 'They still need to have their careers supported for the rest of your days.' Congratulations to Alastair on a Tamayouz Lifetime Achievement Award for contributions to the history of Middle Eastern architecture.

Sadly, but to be expected at our age, illness majors in a couple of contributions. **Peter Bibby** has been distracted from writing at any length by hospital visits associated with his incurable lung cancer. 'Surprisingly, there is some prospect of my being alive in a year's time.' He promises more news then. A reminder for those who haven't read Peter's memoir *Always Up to Something* that the 11 remaining copies are available from www.peterbibby.com. **Kit Heasman** has been suffering with Lyme disease, which he describes as very nasty, and there have been other medical problems in his family. All are

recovering, but the medical issues mean no other interesting activities to report. Very best wishes to Peter and Kit and all around them.

As restrictions lift, so do horizons. **Danny Lawrence** has begun to travel again, to Europe and the United States. **Alan Taylor** has recently moved back to the UK after 20 years in Hong Kong, and is enjoying life in York. **Simon Orebi Gann** is travelling too, and fast. He had a successful year of motor racing, winning overall the prestigious GT & Sports Car Cup series in his rare 1961 Morgan SLR, and his class in his modern Morgan in the Morgan Challenge. He balanced this by continuing as a senior independent director in the water industry and serving on various government major infrastructure investment decision panels. Grounding was maintained by demanding grandchildren aged from one to six.

George Daly visited Merton in April with all the trustees from Justice Defenders. The charity has been expanding rapidly, thanks to excellent publicity in the United States from Anderson Cooper and others. George is also enjoying lots of follow-up to *Zen and Now* with Buddhists from around the world. He invites anyone interested in either project to contact him.

Stephen Powell continues to work from home as a consultant to patent attorneys Williams Powell. In a fascinating recent case, they have been arguing for the patentability of inventions made by an artificial intelligence machine rather than a human. They have succeeded in some jurisdictions, but at the time of writing were heading for the Supreme Court in the UK.

Gary Stevens and Rebecca grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In May they revisited for the first time in many years to see family and the Greenwood neighbourhood where the Tulsa Massacre of members of the black community took place in 1921. Before coming up to Merton, Gary hoped to research the riot for his senior honours thesis at Fordham University. The incident was rarely mentioned at the time and not taught about in school in Tulsa. He was told by the Fordham history department that there was no one at Fordham with the expertise to supervise him, so he chose a different topic. On the recent visit, Gary discovered that Olivia J. Hooker, a

survivor of the riot who lived to 103, had been a professor at Fordham when he was there; the history department had not looked hard enough for someone with applicable expertise. For more about the Tulsa Massacre, Gary points us towards the excellent www.tulsaahistory.org

I have had fewer responses than some years, perhaps because people are still gearing up again after the Covid lockdowns. Maybe there will be more to report next year. Meanwhile, **John Reynolds** compensates with news of two others from the 1968 cohort. Last September he visited **Neil Loden** and Susan at their beautiful National Trust house on the edge of Dartmoor. Then in November John and Juliet had an excellent couple of days walking with **Martin Knight** and Deborah in the Malvern Hills. John himself reports 'very little in the way of real achievement, aside from sometimes challenging grandfatherly duties'. He is grateful to Merton Archivist Julian Reid, who threw much light on the life of John's first cousin once removed, Wilfrid Rogers, an undergraduate at Merton between 1909 and 1912, who sadly was killed near Arras in 1917.

I, **Ian McBrayne**, find myself increasingly busy at my church, as treasurer and magazine editor, because of an energetic new vicar who is rousing the congregation from recent doldrums. Alison and I have four delightful if tiring grandchildren, aged from ten to five. As often as we can make our diaries coincide, I enjoy lunches with **Barry Blackburn**, **Paul Engeham** and **Simon Orebi Gann**.

I look forward to seeing as many as can make it from 1968 (and all previous years!) at the Gaudy.

1969

Year Representative: John Symes

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After two years of restrictions and degrees of lockdown many of you report the pleasure of resuming former activities in person rather than via Zoom. Many are also looking forward to travelling again – I look forward to hearing about your new adventures in next year's report. Meanwhile I was pleased to hear 'no news is good news' from the following

correspondents: **Jonty Boyce**, **Peter Forster**, **Chris Moore**, **Will Pedder** and I can add myself, **John Symes**, to this list.

Algis Anilionis has gone from a molecular biology PhD student in Edinburgh (1973–77) to a postdoc in the USA, where he met his wife, and went on to be a research scientist. Over the next 20 years and with two daughters, they moved up and down the East coast of the USA working with various biotech companies. He became more involved with patents, studied for the New York bar and became a US patent attorney, which colleagues referred to as going over to the 'dark side.' Thereafter, he was an associate in various law firms and in-house patent counsel in a biopharmaceutical company, and finally a sole practitioner in the intellectual property field. They love to travel and get together with friends, and enjoy two grandsons, walking the dog in the local neighbourhood, and their garden.

After his foray into the aero-engineering world to write a book on Frank Whittle (*Jet Man*, published last year), historian **Duncan Campbell-Smith** has begun exploring related ideas for a new book.

Richard Craven is back rehearsing, post pandemic, with the band in which he plays. The Taxable Prophets (there are three accountants in the band) are looking for their next gig. He is not yet, however, giving up the day job.

Jeremy Cook has been digging into his Merton past, recreating in digital format his colour-slide-and-audio-tape records of a camping trip around Scotland with **Rob Alecio**, **Gareth Glynne Davies**, **Andrew Nicholson** and **Brian Witherden** in the summer of 1970. Unlike the original transparencies and analogue tape, of course, we could all share the digital version over the web. Our campfire singing was no less atrocious in digital form but we all enjoyed seeing the scenery again, and ourselves with a bit more hair.

Howard Davies set himself a lockdown project to write another book about the Treasury, *The Chancellors: Steering the British Economy in Crisis Times* (Polity Press, 2022). It is largely based on interviews with Chancellors and permanent secretaries since 1997. He has also joined the College's Investment Committee.

Robert Elam is a keen Rambler, and since retiring from the civil service eight years ago has spent more time out and about in the countryside, combining the pleasures of walking with work as a volunteer countryside access warden with Kent County Council, helping to keep part of the network of public rights of way between Faversham and Canterbury clearly marked and accessible. The work involves fixing waymarker discs where paths change direction and number signs where paths leave the road. His indoor pastime is a course in advanced French with the Kent Adult Education service, and he is looking forward this summer to resuming regular visits to Marseille and walking in the hills to the east of the city.

Gareth Glyn (Gareth Glynne Davies) recounts that Covid-19 kiboshed the production and nationwide tour of his second opera, *Un Nos Ola Leuad* (One Moonlit Night), but – following discussions with Channel 4 and S4C (the Welsh fourth channel) – it has now found a new outlet in the form of a production made for television, and location filming is set to begin this summer. Earlier this year, to coincide with **Jeremy Cook's** (q.v.) project to digitise the slideshow of a 1970 campervan holiday in Scotland, Gareth mined his diary of that year as supporting material, ruefully noting that in those days he had legible handwriting.

As reported last year, **Tony Hansen** found one special person with whom he formed a 'bubble' just in time for delightful isolation. To pass the time of enforced isolation due to immuno-suppression, he renovated his old kitchen. The new induction cook-top is a 'physics demonstration' for all: the cooking energy will pass through a thin towel, which catches all the spills and splatter. Frying an egg on top of a tea-towel is a sight not to be missed. In summer 2021 he took his partner Lee to his beloved Slovenia, found a ruined Gothic chapel deep in the woods, and 'popped the question' – in Slovenian.

Bill Hedley is looking forward to visiting the Istituto di Studi Storici Postali 'Aldo Cecchi' in Prato, Tuscany this summer for a congress on 'Postal History: Multidisciplinary and Diachronic Perspectives'. It will be attended by a large international gathering of historians to talk about such fascinating topics as 'Renaissance postal wars: a fight over the lucrative mail connection between Rome and Venice' and 'Letter writing by Muslim women in Early and Mediaeval Islam'. Further details

available to anyone interested. Well, it beats mowing the lawn (and Prato is an interesting place to visit).

After leaving Merton, **John Peters** joined the firm that became PricewaterhouseCoopers, qualified as a chartered accountant, and worked with PwC in various locations in the UK and Canada until he retired as a partner in 2008. He now lives near Vancouver with his wife of 48 years, Lesley. He is still remarkably busy with volunteer work for various organisations, primarily Rotary, and another local non-profit that provides services for people with mental health and homelessness challenges. Two adult children and their significant others live locally and visit regularly, as do three grandsons. He and Lesley are hoping to start doing some more travelling later this year.

Patrick Traill and Margot have for the past few years participated in the Go and mountain walking week in Ischgl in July (much quieter and less infectious in summer) and the small Venlo Go club is playing in the pub again: much more agreeable than online. They also continue to learn Russian, more in spite of than because of current events. Their daughter Judith has finally got her architecture degree from Aachen and son Thomas continues to work in nature conservancy in Wesel.

Richard Underwood was honoured to receive a medal for 'lifetime achievement' and contributions to the speciality by the British Nuclear Medicine Society. As he now commutes every week between Yorkshire and London, he decided that he needed a motorbike at both ends and invested in a beautiful Triumph Bonneville, a classic from the 1960s and similar to the model used by Steve McQueen in the attempted escape in *The Great Escape*. The Bonneville was also used to great effect in May for the annual Distinguished Gentleman's Ride, an international charitable event to raise money for men's health in general and prostate cancer in particular.

The Revd Dr **Robert T. Walker (Bob)** has continued to publish on the theology lectures of Thomas F. Torrance (1913–2007), Professor of Christian Dogmatics at Edinburgh University, the eminent Scottish theologian under whom he studied prior to coming to Merton (1969–76). Since 2016, he has been Honorary Fellow in Systematic Theology at New College, School of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh. In June 2014 he married Miyoko Usui from Japan and they have one young son, Ray.

1970

Year Representative: Nick Skinner

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Many thanks as always to you all for continuing to support the gathering and dissemination of news during what I know has been for many a difficult time.

On Saturday 23 October 2021, with gratitude to the Warden and College, we were able to meet for a Golden Jubilee reception and lunch, albeit one year late due to the pandemic. Life was only just beginning to normalise and unfortunately travel restrictions precluded any overseas contemporaries from joining us. In the circumstances for 18 of us to gather, including some returning to Merton for the first time since graduation, was a very healthy return. As an added bonus we were able to meet up with the 1971 cohort, who shared the occasion for their own Golden Jubilee Lunch.



Golden Jubilee Lunch, October 2021

Back row (from left): Professor Irene Tracey CBE (Warden), Mr Bob Rutherford, Revd David Gilchrist, Revd John Paton, Mr Nick Skinner, Professor Peter Moizer, Mr Bob Senior, Revd Geoff Ellis, Mr Tony Sharp, Dr John Crabtree, Mr Toby Ibbotson, Professor Godfrey Keller and Mr Mick Holloway

Front row: Mr Roger Powell, Mr John Saunders, Mr Richard Horton, Dr Stephen Goss, Mr Laurence Campbell and Mr Les Hewitt

David Gilchrist writes: 'I celebrated my 70th birthday by taking my children and grandchildren to lunch at the OXO Tower, and then up the Shard! Two important things have happened since then — one a cause of great sorrow, the other a cause of great joy.

My beloved partner Mollie died last July. She was my constant companion for the last ten years, since my wife died. (Mollie was one of those people with a wet nose and a waggly tail!) And then in February I was ordained to the priesthood by the Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain, to serve at the Orthodox church in Margate. I am delighted that even at my advanced age the Lord still has work for me to do.'

Peter Moizer reports that in January 2021 he became Chair of the Board of Governors of the Northern School of Contemporary Dance.

Laurence Campbell has confirmed 1970 as the year for volcanoes. 'A number of years ago we acquired a house in the tiny island of La Palma and we spend the winters there. Aware that it was still potentially volcanically active, we took advice from the **Seniors**, who had lived through the Monserrat eruption, and then went ahead and bought it anyway. Given our house in the UK had blown up in a gas explosion, we felt the probability of a further disaster was negligible. This badly flawed logic was laid bare by the

eruption on 19 September, whose lava flows passed within 1km of our house and cone is about 3km away, and it dumped mountains of ash on us. The island is resilient and we will return each winter; if any members would like to visit, we rent the house out at other times.'

Mick Holloway continues to be very busy. 'Approaching three score years and ten in August, still enjoying life as a grandfather to Lucy (6) and Edie (15 months). Remaining cancer free and having had just one bout of asymptomatic Omicron Covid in April, I am able to join Wendy on the allotment as often as I can. Still being treasurer of the Frederick Bonhart-Braunthal Trust (a family endowment funding PhD scholarships and part-time masters at Birkbeck researching discrimination and the means to combat it), Bridging the Gap Mentoring based in Islington and surrounding boroughs for people at risk of offending and the church where I am still a licensed lay minister.'

Tony Sharp is another who has just celebrated his 70th birthday. Tony is just restarting his leadership of battlefield tours to Normandy et al., after a gap of over two years due to lockdown. Very best wishes to you all.

1971

Year Representative: Allin Cottrell

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This year, **Peter Currie** describes his trajectory since graduation. After leaving the College, he spent 20 years working with an insurance company before becoming part of a team producing computer software for insurance companies worldwide. During this time, Peter's main spare time activity was as one of the leaders of a Crusader Bible class for boys. He retired early to care for his elderly mother and also started writing books. Peter's first book, *What Happens When ...? Answers to Questions for New Christians*, was published in 2010 by Day One. His latest book, *Opening Up Romans*, is a short commentary on the apostle Paul's epistle to the Romans. (Studying Romans was the Damascus Road for the great reformer, Martin Luther.)

In addition, **Paul Le Druillenec** tells us of high jinks at Merton in the early 1970s. There exists a photograph of Paul sitting in the false roof of the Chapel with a plaster cast on his arm. How might this have come about? Attaining the false roof was due to an unnamed 'friend with special skills', who had made a pass key for the door to the Chapel tower. In his defence, Paul asserts that he did no damage there (left no port bottles or twiglet packets lying around!). As for his damaged arm, this derived from a particular squash game that apparently engendered a thirst that could be assuaged only by copious quantities of beer ('I have never drunk so much beer in one day either before or since'). Back at Paul's rooms in Grove, one of the inebriates decided that Paul needed a haircut, and grabbed a knife that lay to hand (presumably intended for buttering crumpets). Unfortunately somebody had sharpened this knife well beyond the pitch required for its presumed purpose, and when Paul threw up his hand to fend off the would-be jocular attempt at cutting his hair he sustained a deep cut that landed him in hospital. A couple of days later Paul was summoned by **Philip Waller**, the Principal of the Postmasters, to explain what was by then known around the College as 'the stabbing'. Paul was able to convince him that no punishments were required for what was only a ridiculous concatenation of random circumstances.

1972

Year Representative: Mark Signy

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I hope all our friends and colleagues of the 1972 intake have had a great year and are thriving. We do have a few excellent contributions but always welcome more.

David Lund sends news of himself and Sally (who many of us remember). 'Sally officially retired from Public Health England in September 2019 (where one of her crusades had been the proper management of flu outbreaks in care homes). Once she had retired we went travelling. Horse riding in Argentina, sailing up and down the Beagle Channel and a cruise to Antarctica. And then came Covid. Further plans for travelling

had to be put on hold. We are now trying to catch up on the holidays we missed. Sea kayaking, skiing, sailing, walking, horse riding and then Nepal. We have a trek planned in the Mustang region and visits to NGOs we support through a small charity. When not travelling I can be found on the Westway climbing wall in London on Mondays and Thursdays, exercising a friend's old race horse in Epping Forest — at 28 he still hasn't forgotten he was a race horse! Maintaining the Alpine Club's website provides some intellectual stimulus.'

John Millard says (and I particularly loved the bit about his grandchildren's relationships to Old Mertonians): 'I was wondering what those of us who haven't become archbishops or made contributions to learned journals should write about. Perhaps a significant reason for writing is to inform our contemporaries that we are still alive, even though some body parts are not working as well as they used to be. Many years ago I heard that in some areas of France you needed a *carte de non-décès* as proof of identity. Assuming that's not an apocryphal tale, I'm glad to say I'm still a member of that club.'

'I've now been retired for six years. I haven't left the world of finance and accountancy completely, as for much of that time I have been our church treasurer, and I'm also treasurer of Derby City Mission, an organisation which aims to meet the physical, mental and spiritual needs of disadvantaged members of our community. It's a tough job in trying times, and things don't look as though they will be improving anytime soon.'

'Also keeping me busy from time to time are six grandchildren who live in Derby, Sheffield and Bath — three of these are the children of our 2001 Merton representative (**Katherine Millard**) and all six are great-grandchildren of our oldest representative (**Michael Millard**, who has eight in total). Other post-retirement hobbies continue, such as playing in a local orchestra and walking around this amazing county (Derbyshire) with a group of friends who are doctors but fortunately keep medical talk to a minimum.'

Azim Lakhani has just completed his sixth year as Diplomatic Representative to Kenya for the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), which has collaborated with the government of Kenya over 100 years to create opportunities and improve the quality of life of Kenyans through education, healthcare,

social and economic development initiatives. Substantial effort during this year went into developing relationships with the United Nations in Kenya, starting with joint commemoration of World Environment Day in 2021 and discussions between Azim and the UN Resident Coordinator, Dr Stephen Jackson.

A trawl of collaborations between agencies of the UN and AKDN showed nine existing initiatives and a further 12 potential initiatives under discussion. Azim hosted a joint high-level meeting between agencies of the AKDN and multiple UN agencies to discuss these collaborations and create a partnership framework.



Azim Lakhani (centre) with participants at the UN and AKDN meeting, April 2022

David Hogarth reflects: 'A year and a half into retirement, I'm still loving it. I completed my quantum mechanics study, and am now moving on to special relativity and classical field theory. I'll probably still be bogged down in these by the time next year's update comes round. My group of close Merton friends has managed to maintain our weekly Zoom call, the one positive to be taken from the two years of madness we've endured. Looking forward to seeing more old Mertonians this year as things return to normal.'

Your correspondent's joints are suffering from many years of cricket and rugby injuries (but now's a bit late to wish I'd played less and worked harder). I'm about to have a knee replacement done by one of my former housemen ('intern' for those who watch US medical dramas).

Come on the rest of you — it's great to hear how life is going 50 years on from Merton days. Let's have lots more contributions next year. Meanwhile I wish you all a great

year and look forward to seeing huge numbers at the 50th anniversary lunch at College on 22 October.

1973

Year Representative: Gary Backler

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Thanks to all those who got in touch this year – it's good to hear from you.

Graham Andrews reports that last year has been less eventful for the Maths & Medics group than the previous year. The group has managed a few get-togethers, the first, post-Covid restrictions, being **John Myatt's** funeral. The group had a weekend in Oxford with dinner at the Cherwell Boat House on the Saturday night followed by the wonderful and moving All Souls service in the Chapel where John was remembered, as well as **Paul Schofield** and **Clive Hendrie**. The group has also made a few cultural visits: the Nero exhibition at the British Museum and the Titanic exhibition, as well as their traditional beer and curry evenings. Two of the group, plus wives, also enjoyed hearing **Iain Burnside** (1974) playing in a trio at the Wigmore Hall.

Rob Lewis has successfully defended his doctoral thesis on extremal circulant graphs. Well done, Dr Lewis! He now has more time available for his pro bono management consultancy for charities addressing human welfare issues, as a volunteer with the Cranfield Trust. **David Melville**, having given up work as a surgeon on various organs, is now able to devote more time to playing the organ (the musical one, for the avoidance of doubt). **Bill Souster** is working from home in South Wales, but is at least occasionally allowed out of Wales these days. **Roger Urwin** is mixing the joys of grandparenting – II and counting – with continuing work at the big pension and sovereign wealth funds: now virtual and sustainable consulting, with no pressing need to get back onto planes, except for the grandkids. **Richard Veryard** is pleased to report that he doesn't have any news. **Graham Andrews** himself is going into overdrive and is now a director of ten companies, involved in oil and gas, mining, solar power and producing antimicrobial materials.

John Bowers was invited by the College as a Visiting Scholar for the month of June 2022, and provided with a flat at 22 Merton Street. Since his research project concerned JRR Tolkien, this location was particularly apt, as Tolkien spent the final months of his life, quite happily, next door at 21 Merton Street.

The pandemic has restricted **Simon Pallett's** activities, but he remains busy with his work as a trustee and a treasurer to a number of charities, which have in some cases been quite challenged by the pandemic. He hopes to go abroad for some short breaks this year, the first such trips since 2019. Above all though, he has been enjoying having a granddaughter, even though she lives 250 miles away in Norwich. Born in the middle of lockdown, she's now two. Fortunately Simon and his wife have been able to see much more of her recently and share one great bonus of getting older.

As a former volunteer, **Gary Backler** attended the Oxford Nightline 50th Anniversary Symposium at St Hilda's College, and appreciated again the generosity of Merton's 1975 JCR donation to the then fledgling Nightline. He completed his first year as Chair of the Friends of the River Crane Environment, which now has some 800 members and is currently working to transform three derelict sites in deprived parts of Hounslow into public open spaces. He enjoyed the hospitality of **Dave Adamson** and the company of **Phil Hudson** for Brentford's away fixture against Burnley (much more than the match itself!).

1974

Year Representative: Mike Hawkins

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I have had the pleasure of hearing from more of you this year as you will see below. As for myself and wife Sara it has been another year of re-establishing our life back in the UK while, at the same time, trying to keep a centenarian parent safe and well with whom we reside. Our son remains in the USA having now, thankfully, secured his first job after a pandemic nightmare of trying to finish a PhD while university laboratories and funding bodies were closed for many months. Character building for all of us I suppose!

Nick Allard tells us: 'Our year has been one of several pandemic era firsts, such as my first return visit to the College since late 2019 to attend Merton Society meetings, crashing the Gaudy dinner that our Warden shared with her own cadre of not so old Mertonians, returning in May for Eights Week and vicariously reliving the old glory days when yours truly, **Madver**, **Tross Youle**, bless his memory **Bobier**, **Scantlebury**, **Madell** and all the rest in the Boat Club could still fit our butts into and ably drive a boat, and later in June enjoying the annual Merton Society Weekend. It is amazing how all the years just fall off when we meet in person. This also was our experience during a wonderful visit in Washington, DC with **Crispin Drummond** and Ann Marie during their amazing long North American tour, as well as a great visit with **Rob Mitchell** and Grayce, their two daughters and grandchildren in beautiful adjacent hilltop homes overlooking the water in Seattle. We have been in constant virtual contact with **Dave Hamer** and Jayne on all sorts of topics but most often swapping Canadian and US perspectives on the fraught issues of our day. We are in touch almost as often as when we were married students together along with the **Mitchells**, **Madvers**, **Kyles** and the **Hamers**.

Neil Downie writes: 'Diane and I are moving to Hexham, Northumbria soon. I am still doing physics/engineering project work with kids in schools, such as Highgate, and maybe northern schools going forward.

'We are both still working with the Exovent medical charity, which is making steady progress on its mission: getting negative pressure breathing equipment developed, tested and adopted. I've been ventilated lots of times, and Di and other medics have supervised lots of tests with other healthy volunteers, including most of the charity's members. There are companies producing production-ready prototypes in the UK, and also Bangladesh, where first clinical trials are running on patients. Exovent has a test facility in Chiswick, a wearable lightweight prototype, and I'm helping a UBC Canada team with R&D on an advanced exoskeleton Exovent concept.'

David Hamer and his wife Jane continue to enjoy their retirement in Toronto, despite each having contracted a late-breaking Covid infection that has now just about passed. When not bicycling thousands of kilometres per annum,

David continues to be deeply engaged in federal and provincial politics at a grassroots level, working for four different Liberal candidates in three different ridings in the federal election of 2021 and the Ontario election underway at the time of writing. All his candidates have been elected in cliff-hanger campaigns so far, including Canada's current Minister of Public Safety.



David Hamer (clearly a Mertonian!) and Jane on their wedding day, 1975

A nice footnote to the year was that the photographer who covered their wedding in the summer of 1975 was still alive and well and in possession of all of his original colour negatives. He was kind enough to turn the images over *gratis*. David was embarrassed but somewhat pleased to be reminded he'd already become such a Merton fanatic that he'd had a navy-blue blazer made to wear at the wedding with the Founder's coat of arms prominently displayed. The good townspeople of Guelph, Ontario were doubtless bemused, but too polite to say anything.

Graham Kemp says that 'The receding tide of Covid-19 finds me still at the University of Liverpool, still a slightly

oddly configured clinical academic: Professor of Metabolic and Physiological Imaging, Head of the Department of Musculoskeletal and Ageing Science, and Honorary Consultant in Chemical Pathology.'

Simon MacPherson wrote that rowing at Merton helped get him his first teaching job in the classics department at City of London School followed by Harrow a few years later. He is delighted to have managed a career in supportive, vibrant and stimulating departments being paid for doing what he enjoys. Now enjoying retirement with Diana in Monmouthshire, Simon is pursuing some academic interests, hacking a few brambles and taking advantage of a VW campervan to venture further afield. He adds that it was 'Good to see **Iain Burnside** a few weeks ago [while a] soloist at a London concert Diana was playing in.'

Sandy MacIver describes himself as a late '60s guy learning new tricks after his daughter taught him how to use Zoom technology to teach on the internet. After 30-plus years of face-to-face tutoring in experiential leadership, he has teamed up with JanaLee Cherneski (Oriel, 2004) to 'facilitate on Zoom the first six months of what we hope will eventually be a national Canadian Rhodes dialogue on leadership, community, and living by principles. **David Hamer** has enlivened two of the gatherings with his interest in leadership and his ongoing experience with political activism.'

Rob Mitchell is still in Seattle and still practising law at K&L Gates, where he focuses on appellate litigation and serves on his firm's pro bono committee. He and Grayce, married in 1975, have two daughters, Carrie and Emily. Carrie works in global public health, as does her husband, Prince Bahati Ngongo. Emily is a Presbyterian pastor; Rob and Carrie are elders in a different church. Thankful to have their children and grandchildren nearby, the Mitchells welcome visitors to the Pacific Northwest.

Jeremy Pemberton is still living in Southwell, Notts, and this July retires from the choir, where he has been a lay clerk for 15 years. He lives with husband Laurence Cunningham. He says: 'Marrying him had quite an impact on my life because I was the first clergyman in the Church of England to marry their same-sex partner.' As a consequence Jeremy lost a job

in the NHS 'as the bishop would not license me. I took him to an employment tribunal and then to appeal and then to the High Court, but I lost. The courts decided that I was discriminated against, but that the Church of England had the right to do it, because of its exemptions from equality legislation.' As he cannot now get permission to act as a priest he has 'worked as an independent celebrant taking funerals and weddings for the last six years, until I gave up doing that at the end of last year. Leaving the choir will be the end of paid employment for me, and I shall be happy to retire.'

To keep his brain active he is doing a PhD in theology entitled 'Ecclesiological responses to the decline of the Church of England 1960–2020)' through the Advanced Research Degrees in Theology programme run out of Lambeth Palace. This derives from the archbishop's personal right to award degrees granted by Henry VIII in 1531 after a pandemic, when clergy could not travel to Oxford or Cambridge to take their degrees. Jeremy has a large family and stepfamily, is active in politics, a keen open water swimmer, cooks enthusiastically and is a member of the embroidery guild at Southwell Minster. On top of all that he keeps in touch with friends from Merton days, particularly **Iain Burnside**, **Philip Endean**, **Guy Johnson**, **Ruairidh Milne** and others. 'We meet with some of our closest friends from university days once or twice a year for a very convivial dinner.'

John Sykes is still at work writing, translating and guiding visitors around Cologne Cathedral, but has begun a new project: a walk around the margins of England planned in stages over ten years. He will go along the coast path and the Welsh and Scottish borders, recording what he finds at www.beatingthebounds.eu. He is looking for companions to join him for a couple of hours, days or weeks.

Simon Tross Youle writes: 'I am still in the land of the living, thankfully, still in employment, surprisingly, in reinsurance broking and still based in Japan, where I have been since 2011. The Warden's visit to Tokyo in January 2020 was a highlight, fortuitously timed just before the pandemic closed Japan's borders. As restrictions lift and travel to Japan becomes easier, it would be a pleasure to hear from any Mertonians intending to visit Tokyo.'

Jeremy Warren's work as Sculpture Research Curator for the National Trust was put on hold during the pandemic but has now restarted. During lockdown he wrote various articles on subjects such as collecting sculpture in late Renaissance Italy, alabaster sculpture in Sicily and also on a newly discovered bronze by the Renaissance master Giambologna. He also 'masterminded a fundraising campaign to buy an important Italian Renaissance bronze relief celebrating the Battle of Ravenna in 1512 for the Ashmolean Museum, and have written about the work in the latest issue of the *Ashmolean* magazine'.

Ed Humphreys, Paul Hulme, Guy Johnson, Simon Lord and Chris Madell also made contact to say hello rather than with any specific news. Good to hear from you all.

1975

Year Representative: Robert Peberdy

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There is a presumption within Merton's oral tradition, untested by academic scrutiny, that as the College's undergraduate body improved its academic performance during the 1960s, its interest and attainments in sport declined. Certainly in the mid 1970s Merton, unlike some colleges, was not renowned for sportsmen. The 1975 intake nevertheless included sports enthusiasts, and other junior members participated, with a range of outcomes.

One highlight was the achievement of the Merton–Mansfield rugby team in reaching the semi-final stage of Cuppers in 1977. The 1975 players were: **David Brown, John Cloughton, John Fogwill, Nick Hitchon, Chris Mann, Ian Taylor, Richard Waghorn** and **Peter Wickstead**. Sadly, the game – against Worcester College – was lost in the final minutes when a tight-angled conversion which would have levelled the scores flew just wide. Merton also did well in squash in 1977, finishing second in Division One. (The 1975 players were: **William Ford, John Kightley, Richard Waghorn**.) In the context of the era, the same year saw notable achievements in rowing. Merton's IV (including **Bob Scantlebury** and **Charles Target**) won the University IVs for only the second time, and the First

VIII (featuring **Bob Scantlebury, Charles Target** and **Peter Wickstead**) achieved four bumps in Division Two, elevating Merton back to Division One for the first time for some years. A bump supper and boat burning in Front Quad followed. A different type of record had been set in 1976 when no fewer than nine Merton eights began preparing for the summer races. Unfortunately three boats failed to row on, and the Ninth VIII was unable even to keep a straight course and so was banned from the river (the names of its crew are interred in the College archives).

At University level, several 1975 Mertonians won Blues or Half-Blues, including **John Fogwill** (athletics), **Vic le Grand** (athletics, cross-country), **Mike McCaffery** (swimming, water polo) and **James Oxley** (volleyball). The most successful sportsman was undoubtedly **John Cloughton**, who won four cricket Blues. He was also the last OU cricketer to score a century on debut against a county (Gloucestershire, in April 1976) – an achievement that seems unlikely to be superseded because the universities have since lost First Class status. John Cloughton somehow also found time to achieve Firsts in 'Mods.' and 'Greats'.

Back in the present, **Arif Ahsan**, a cardiac surgeon in Nottingham, has been working on the backlog of treatment created by the coronavirus pandemic. Morale in the NHS has sunk very low because of pressures from the pandemic period and departure of staff. He considers that NHS authorities are often poor managers with insufficient concern for the welfare of staff. Over in Chicago, **Simon Babbs** has fulfilled the course requirements of the 'doctoral program' in the Philosophy Department of Loyola University, but progress on his dissertation remains 'glacial'. He has, however, co-authored a paper which will be published in *Argumenta*, a journal of analytic philosophy.

Glenn Bacal, in Arizona, has lately been recalling early times in Oxford. On his first day at Merton, he found Oxford to be the coldest place he had experienced, and when out of College he entered shops to keep warm. Friends noticed that he also automatically avoided shaded pavements: he then realised that he had adopted this practice in Columbia (NY State) to avoid being mugged. He soon learnt that Oxford was 'safe and wonderful'. **John Cloughton**, from so-called

'retirement', has recently co-founded 'WoLLoW' ('World of Languages and Languages of the World'), a project which provides resources to develop the teaching of languages, mainly in primary schools.

After the Matriculation Dinner in October 1975, new undergraduates housed in 22 Merton Street gathered in a room there to meet each other. The host was a quietly spoken chap from Cardiff, **Oliver Davies**, who was reading Modern Languages. Forty-seven years later, he is now retired from one of England's most prestigious chairs in theology, the professorship of Christian Doctrine at King's College London. He has also been a professor in China, a visiting professor or fellow at universities in the USA, a guest lecturer around the world, and President of the Society for the Study of Theology. He is the author of books on late-medieval European mysticism, Celtic Christianity, and systematic theology, and of numerous articles and book chapters. Yet somehow Merton has failed to notice the worldwide eminence of this 'Son of the House'.

Alan Dolton, in Croydon, continues to coach athletics, but fears he will be unable to restore his own fitness to its pre-pandemic level. Amongst recent reading, he has been fascinated by Anna Reid's *Borderland* (about Ukraine, published in 1997). Across London in Twickenham, **Marek Effendowicz** is replacing his scullery with an extension, escaping for rides on a new e-bike, and continuing to provide consultancy services for the installation of broadband infrastructure in social housing. **William Ford**, in Wiltshire, reports that life has largely returned to normality, with lots of golfing, sailing and travelling. **Stephen Gardiner** will soon retire from 40 years of transcribing music into braille. He considers it an honour 'to have been able to do something to help visually impaired people gain access to printed material which many sighted people may take for granted'. He observes that sadly the quality of presentation of printed music continues to decline, and even examination material often contains errors and omissions. He is looking forward to devoting more time to his own musical activities.

In July 2021 planning permission was granted for a scheme to site London's proposed Holocaust memorial and learning centre in Victoria Tower Gardens by the

Palace of Westminster, despite opposition to the choice of location from many parties including **Dorian Gerhold** (see *Postmaster*, 2021, p.159). In April 2022 a judicial review in the High Court quashed the decision because it ignored legislation of 1900 requiring VTG to be a garden open to the public in perpetuity. The judge paid tribute to Dorian's role in highlighting the legislation, which had been ignored by the original planning inquiry, and for revealing through research the intentions behind the legislation. The legal commentator Joshua Rozenberg described Dorian as 'the hero of the day' and suggested that 'a small plaque bearing Gerhold's name could be added to the gardens' Buxton memorial fountain'.

The Eton College debating team supervised by **John Harrison**, former President of the Oxford Union, has recently won five major competitions. In October 2021 John spent a week at Casa Guidi, Florence, which is owned by Eton, living in the former apartment of the poets Robert and Elizabeth Browning (1847–61). The Revd Dr **Gordon Jeanes** has retired from his benefice in Wandsworth (London). A new parishioner who contacted him on the eve of his departure proved to be none other than Morar Lucas, widow of **John Lucas**. Gordon is now resident in Oxford (Headington), and has enjoyed evensongs and High Table back at Merton – a kind of Second Coming.

Merton's 'Thespian in the North', **Chris Mann** of Congleton, has been involved in filming for television. He will appear in two forthcoming ITV crime series: *Happy Valley* and *Ridley* (in which the famous actor Adrian Dunbar can be spotted alongside Chris). In February 2022 Professor **Stephen Oppenheimer**, denizen of Baltimore, made a visitation to the Old World. His expedition had an Edwardian ambience, in that he stayed in London in a hotel redolent of a gentlemen's club and returned by liner. During the voyage – perhaps inspired by Henry James – he energetically composed short stories. In November 2021 **Crispin Poyser** retired as a House of Commons clerk after 43 years' service. Since then his principal new activity has been to walk the Paddington arm of the Grand Union Canal weekly as a volunteer 'towpath ranger'.

Neil Smith has also made a vigorous start to retirement. After leaving Thales in early 2022 he spent several weeks exploring Sri Lanka. It was an experience of contrasts: he

visited religious sites and plantations, and enjoyed meals with residents, but also witnessed troubled conditions (e.g. deployment of police to prevent riots). Neil plans to revive clarinet-playing and interest in academic physics and maths. The late **Ian Taylor** has appeared posthumously in the prize-winning book *The World for Sale* by Javier Blas and Jack Farchy, a study of international commodity traders. It mentions his adventures in Cuba, Iran, Libya, Nigeria, and in Russia and other former Soviet republics, and relates how he expanded Vitol into the world's largest oil trader. Back in 2020 Professor **Chris Wickham** (Lecturer in Medieval History 1975–76) was elevated from retirement to a top throne in Rome, not in the Vatican but as Acting Director of the British School (to September 2021). He reported afterwards: 'I loved being in Rome. The second lockdown meant that the streets were empty; it was like being back in the 1970s.' Meanwhile, books by Bishop **Tom Wright** have continued to pour from printing presses, including an ultimate work for enthusiasts: *On Earth as In Heaven: 365 Days with N.T. Wright*.

Sadly in summer 2021 another of our cohort died, the chemist **Peter Lyne** (see *In Memoriam*). In conclusion, the author offers thanks to **William Ford** and **Simon Tross Youle** (1974) for valuable help with this year's article.

1976

Year Representative: John Gardner

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'Elvis fans will love it.' The first, and worst, film I ever saw was *Fun in Acapulco* in 1964, starring Elvis. But it did have the cleverest review. So I was concerned when a review of **Andrew Pettegree's** latest book *The Library: A Fragile History* was headed 'Bibliophiles will love it'. I needn't have worried. It's had rave reviews, and is one of the good things to come out of the lockdowns. History Professor at the University of St Andrews, Andrew's next book will be *The Book at War, A Study of The Role of Print in Conflict*. Possibly for research, or maybe not, he visited the D-Day landing beaches recently with **Ian McVeigh**, **Jeremy Palmer** and **Peter Truesdale**.



Ian McVeigh, Andrew Pettegree, Jeremy Palmer and Peter Truesdale in Normandy

Covid continues to occupy many. **Jonathan Flint**, Professor of Genetics and Psychiatry at UCLA, is focused on why some people become superspreaders while others keep it to themselves. His research team recently did their millionth test. Pathologist **Ken Fleming**, Chairman of the Lancet Commission on Diagnostics, published a report showing how access to diagnostics can be accelerated. Learning to navigate international health politics, he is lobbying to set up a global diagnostics alliance. **Richard Spence** (day jobs: executive coach and psychotherapist) finds that a charity where he is a trustee, the Wren Project which helps people with auto-immune disease, is now also dealing with long Covid.

Others are involved with charities too. Too many to list here, but recent ones include **Anthony Levy** joining the trustee board of Kidasha, which works with deprived children in Nepal, and **Ralph Ashton** labouring to revive the Aln Valley Railway. Several have offered a home to Ukrainian refugees, with **Geoff Lee** the first to negotiate the bureaucracy and welcome a family from Odessa.

John Booth, Chairman of the Prince's Trust and a trustee of the Tate, became Chairman of the National Gallery. **Nicholas Cranfield** (1974), Vicar of All Saints', Blackheath, notes that with John's appointment Merton's takeover of the north side of Trafalgar Square is now complete, given that Canon **Sam**

Wells (1984) is next door as Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields. It's a small (Merton) world, Sam also being Honorary Canon Theologian at the cathedral in Guildford, the town where **Robert Cotton** is Rector of Holy Trinity Church. Robert is doing jail time this year, in his fourth tour of duty as Chaplain accompanying the High Sheriff of Surrey on prison inspections across the county.

Clearly on a mission to regulate every professional body in the land, **Antony Townsend** has run out of victims close to home and been forced to look offshore for fresh meat. The latest addition to his portfolio is as a director of the Channel Islands Financial Ombudsman service, 'which sees me boarding small turbo-prop planes four times a year to dispense my remaining wisdom to the people of Jersey and Guernsey'.

Guido Montgomery is now a German national, enjoying rural life with his wife and daughters in a Brandenburg village. He recently treated (?) the locals to a Brechtian production of Roald Dahl's *Hansel and Gretel* and keeps busy teaching tai chi and working on forest garden projects promoting sustainable agriculture and wildlife diversity. Which also keeps him fit, as he's due to walk through the Pyrenees later this year from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, the Gil route on the Spanish side.

Other trips are down memory lane. **Tony Brown** and **Chris Coombe** rocked up at the O2 for a Genesis concert this year, 44 years after seeing them at Earls Court during their second year at Merton. It was definitely, absolutely, certainly the last ever Genesis gig. Until the next one. **Rod Roberts-Dear** did an MBA in France in 1985 and arranged a tour of Merton for his Insead cohort recently, seeing more of the Upper Library than he had as a student. And **Jonathan Stephenson** remembered his time in a band at Merton on page 220. It's also ten years since **Dan Rickman's** brother **Ben Rickman** (1972) died.

Otherwise, as full-time work is shrinking, it's hats off to those like **Jeremy Richardson** at the Reserve Bank, New Zealand who continue to pay the tax to fund our pensions (full disclosure: I mean mine). Grandchildren and hobbies proliferate. **Peter Bernie** learns that a two-year-old can

outwit you, **Andrew Townsend** (with five) and **Adrian Schweitzer** (with four) both keep chickens ('against better advice, they have names'), **Mike Taylor** travels from Scotland to Somerset to catalogue fossil ichthyosaur collections there, **Nigel Metcalfe** opens the season for Durham University staff XI with 2-7 off seven overs, **Kevin Parkes** gets back into orienteering events and **Laurence Ormerod** sails his boat to Spain and runs when he gets there. General contentment with the mid-60s. Not a bad result.

1977

Year Representative: Edmund Wright

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1978

Year Representative: Paul Curtis Hayward

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I'm compiling this while awaiting the imminent arrival of our first grandchild whose parents have decided that they want to move in with Edwina and me, so the next few years could be very different on our tranquil farm.

It seems that having a Year Rep does make a difference in collecting news.

Victor Mallet writes: 'I've been Paris bureau chief of the *Financial Times* since 2019, and have — inevitably — been covering the French elections this year. Previously I was in India (hence the book on the Ganges mentioned below), and then Hong Kong, until my journalist's work visa renewal was denied at the end of 2018, at the start of Hong Kong's latest and most severe round of troubles. *River of Life, River of Death: The Ganges and India's Future*, published by OUP, is out worldwide in English. Amazon and other links via victormallet.org

Fernando Cervantes reports: 'I've had quite an ordeal since I saw you at the Gaudy. Annabelle was the victim of one of those allegedly "rare" AstraZeneca clots in February

2021, just before the news about clots hit the press. The paramedics were therefore a bit clueless and just said it was a “normal though severe” reaction to the vaccine. By the time they decided it was more serious (after the third time I called them) it was too late to prevent severe damage to the cerebellum. She pulled through with the help of a brilliant surgeon who did an eight-hour decompression procedure, followed by a week in ITU and another month in the acute stroke unit at Southmead, before being transferred to the BRI. She came home in late March 2021, skin and bones, and has been making a slow recovery. She’s doing well but we still have a good haul ahead of us.

‘On more cheery news, we welcomed two grandsons this year, in close succession. One lives in Brisbane, Australia; the other one in Newcastle (our Newcastle, so we can see him more often). They were both here at the same time just before Easter, so we could celebrate in style.

‘I don’t have long to retirement. If things go according to plan, we are hoping to move to a charming farmhouse about 20 minutes from Bristol with five acres that include an orchard and a couple of fields: the perfect place to unwind and write the stuff I haven’t had time to finish while holding a full-time academic post with a full teaching load. Having said that, I did manage to publish a book in 2020: *Conquistadores: A New History* (Allen Lane); it came out as a Penguin paperback in 2021 and I expect you all to buy it and give it as a priceless present to all your friends.’

Philip Suttle writes: ‘I’m into my fifth year of running a one-man economic research firm (with the real admin work done by my wife, Ruth). Nice and stable, which is more than can be said for the global economy. Hard to believe that Ruth and I were married in Merton Chapel 40 years ago this coming July. We split our time between rural Georgia (USA) and urban Washington, DC. All visitors welcome (**Martin Glenn** is about to arrive for his annual golf trip). One of my neighbors in GA is **Reg Hall**, who was at Merton 22 years ahead of us (Chemistry). Talk about a small world.’

Martin Glenn reports: ‘I stepped down from full-time work at the end of 2019 after nearly five years at the Football Association – the hardest job I’ve ever done. Since then I’ve

taken on the chairing of a charity (the Football Foundation – which gives grants to build and improve football pitches), Chapel Down Wines – the UK’s biggest (but still small) wine producer and I am a Non-Executive Director on a joint venture with Nestlé and a private equity company in ice cream.’

‘I ran the 2022 London Marathon and have been injured ever since. I now know the joys of grandparenting through Harry in his terrible twos and his newly arrived brother Liam.’

Robert Waller published ‘Rutherford Hayes’ in *The Presidents* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2021).

Jo Inkpin writes: ‘Partly to be closer to family in the midst of the Australian State border Covid-19 closures, I moved to Sydney in 2021, after four happy years in Brisbane teaching church history and opening up new ground as the first out transgender priest in Australia. Whilst remaining an Anglican priest, I am now serving as Minister of Pitt Street Uniting Church in the Sydney CBD, as well as continuing as co-chair of Equal Voices, the Australian national network of LGBTIQ+ people of faith. As an adjunct lecturer of the University of Divinity in Melbourne, my wife and I will also lead the first Queer Theology university course in Australia this July – better late than never!’

1979

Year Representative: Noel Privett

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It’s only the middle of the year, at the time of writing, but Merton 1979ers have already achieved nine magnificent publications. **Jeremy Black** has contributed eight of them, but there’s also **David Chaloner**’s magnum opus, a wondrous letter about parkin in the *Guardian*. Although, to be fair, David wrote that one last November. More of that later.

As far as Jeremy’s oeuvre is concerned, one can’t help wondering if he’s had two for the price of one this year with his Smollett and Fielding books, given that there was only 17 years between their deaths. What’s next? Wales in the Age of Richardson, perhaps. But I jest. I hope you’ll forgive

the gentle ribbing, Jeremy. All I've managed to write this year is this contribution to *Postmaster*. As Jeremy's blurb on the University of Cambridge website says, 'Jeremy's work adds up to the most sustained presentation of British history in recent decades.' Prolific is terrific.

Anyway, Jeremy's books are *The Game is Afoot: The Enduring World of Sherlock Holmes*; *Geographies of War: A Short History of London*; *A Short History of the Atlantic*; *A Short History of Germany*; *England in the Age of Fielding*; *Britain in the Age of Smollett*; and *Britain in the Age of Nightmare*.

Colin Hammond, on the other hand, has been 'doing lots of due diligence on parking information technology. It's as exciting as it sounds.' Parking and parkin. There must be a joke there somewhere.

Roger Pearse has done even less than Colin, and good luck to him. He tells me that he has retired from IT contracting and indeed from work in general. Like all the other chemists, he started work 39 years ago, and he feels 'that's really quite enough of that sort of thing'.

As for me, **Noel Privett**, even though I also feel that I've had enough of that sort of thing, I still keep doing that sort of thing. I got fed up working for a subsidiary of a subsidiary of Defra and am now doing communications at the University of Winchester. It's only maternity cover, mind. And speaking of maternity, we have been blessed with our fifth grandchild – Cicely, sister to Romola and August, and cousin to Hugh and Benji. I can't get enough of *that* sort of thing.

Meanwhile, **Edward Paine** is starting to go places again. He reports that his specialist Latin America travel company, Last Frontiers, is emerging from enforced hibernation after Covid-19 paralysed travel. 'I'm pleased to report our first post-pandemic Oxbridge group (accompanied by Cambridge's Professor Nicholas Davies) have just returned from Peru,' he says, 'where they were lucky enough to spot a jaguar in the Tambopata rainforest.' I wonder if the jaguar was moving or just parked?

He goes on to say: 'Sadly, as some of you may have heard, Oxford are withdrawing from the joint travel programme so from 2023 it will be promoted to Cambridge alumni only

unless we keep encouraging the University's Development Office to resume. The effects of lack of tourism income on poorer countries like Bolivia has been devastating, so it was nice to be able to send some clients there. All our other clients seem to want to visit Costa Rica or Colombia.'

Mike Ryan has also come out of hibernation and has started wandering about the place. He says: 'As most people, we have found our lives getting back into some kind of normal after the past couple of years. We have just enjoyed a lovely holiday. The planned "New England in the fall" from two years ago converted to "Madeira and Canary Islands in the spring". Not quite what was planned but a very welcome break nonetheless.'

It's good to see, though, that like Roger, he's probably had enough of chemistry for one lifetime. 'Just after Christmas, I was asked if I would consider being on standby to cover teacher illness at my old place. I agreed and within no time found myself gainfully employed for quite a few weeks. It was good to be back in the saddle but not good enough to persuade me to take on the 0.4 timetable I was offered for next year.'

What else does Mike share with any of his fellow 1979 cohort? I'd say prolificness with Jeremy (a word my spellchecker doesn't recognise but fortunately one that the OED does. Prolificness, that is, not Jeremy). Mike continues: 'What is in the year ahead? Our elder son is about to get married (after a couple of postponements) and we will hopefully get to travel a bit more widely.' May I suggest lastfrontiers.com – which I've read about somewhere, I'm sure – a small and enthusiastic team who travel extensively throughout South and Central America?

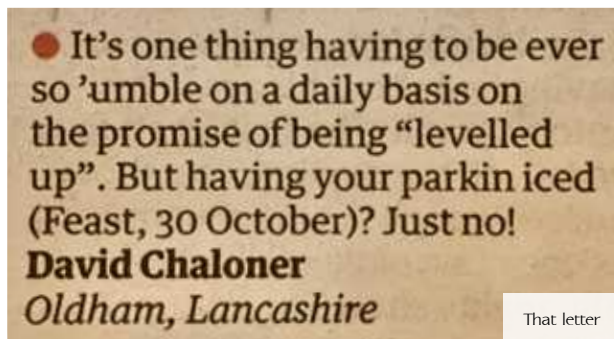
Mike ends his missive on a melancholic but fond note: 'It was sad to hear of **Courtenay Phillips**' passing. Our year group missed out on his teaching for much of our time because he was Acting Warden. I remember his tutorials with affection.'

Oh, my goodness. Another chemist who's slowing down a bit: **Frank Dean**. He says that he's 'taken a respite from chemical sensor manufacture in which I was engaged following a meander in academic bowers extending to my early thirties. I sold my shares in the business a few years

ago now.’ However, Frank can’t quite bring himself to take his foot completely off the gas (or should that be nose or other sensor off the gas?) – he continues to engage with the company, ‘notably in a photoionisation detector and hydrogen-in-steel analyser that we came with in the last millennium.’ Concludes Frank: ‘In this one, I try to keep my lantern burning in anticipation of Christ’s return.’ A lantern free from impurities, that’s for sure. As any fule kno, excess amounts of hydrogen present during the solidification and cooling process have an adverse effect on both physical and mechanical parameters including embrittlement, porosity, cracking and flaking.

Ah, now, here’s someone who isn’t slowing down. It’s adding bio to chemistry that does it, I guess. That someone is **David King**, who continues to work for the National Institute for Health and Care Research (www.nihr.ac.uk) in Twickenham – ‘although mostly based at home in Harrow, partly to annoy Jacob Rees-Mogg’. Nice one, David.

But David’s socialism is clearly fragile, because he goes on to admit that, ‘in an attempt to become a property magnate, and to provide space for my expanding record collection’, he has just bought a house in his home town of York. He doesn’t say if he’s moving to York or if his record collection will be living alone. Given David’s aversion to motorways [*Postmaster* passim], I suspect it’s the latter. Best park that one until David’s report next year.



And speaking of parking (see what I did there?) and parkin, it’s time to reveal that magnum opus I alluded to earlier. The

Guardian published a letter responding to a recipe for iced parkin that it had featured in its Feast food supplement. There have been great letters and great letter writers in the past. Emile Zola’s *J’accuse!*, Martin Luther King’s ‘fellow clergymen’ from his Alabama jail, Charles Darwin’s letter introducing the idea of evolution and natural selection, Winston Churchill on his refusal to make a deal with Germany, and just about anything from the two Janes, Austen and Carlyle, to name but a few. And now we have a new name and a new gem to add to the list. This, from one David Chaloner of Oldham in Lancashire:

‘It’s one thing having to be ever so ‘umble on a daily basis on the promise of being “levelled up”. But having your parkin iced? Just no!’

I rest my cake.

1980

Year Representative: Laurence Reed

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1981

Year Representative: Graham Dwyer

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More than 40 years on from our matriculation there is now a steady flow of news of retirements and it is inevitable at our age that there will be occasional sad news too. So I start off this *Postmaster* edition noting the passing of **Clive Smithers** in July 2021 at the age of 59 after, I understand, an accident at his home. He particularly rose to prominence in our second year as JCR President. A full obituary will follow in a future *Postmaster* edition if details from his family are forthcoming.

As always, I am grateful to hear updates from Mertonians and for their words of encouragement. Despite the challenges of a lingering pandemic, I was able to connect personally with a

few Mertonians since last year. These included a sunny walk in the park and lunch with **Paul Duggan** in Oxford in September, another catch-up with **Peter Phillips** in London where I was able to admire his Triumph motorcycle, and snacks with my old tutorial partner **Nicki Paxman**, the first time we have met in person since the mid-1980s. She reports that she has resumed her travels as part of her work staging shows for BBC radio around the world, including a whistle-stop tour of USA with four entertainment stage shows for the BBC World Service. She is now back for a stint on domestic radio, with *Front Row*, while her son has started university in Manchester.



Graham Dwyer (left) and Peter Wardle enjoy a reunion in Makati, Philippines

Peter Wardle was over in Manila as an observer for the May 2022 Philippines elections leading a team from the Carter Center. He had a few years ago left the civil service to run the UK's Electoral Commission and since 2015 has been a freelancer working in the field of elections and democracy. I very much enjoyed our catch-ups in between his poll observing.

I heard from **Jon Cooper**, who had two scientific papers published and was invited to be the editor of *Crystallography News*. 'My main academic-related hobby is still writing

scientific and teaching aids,' he writes, 'mainly in the form of web-calculators, which all have one thing in common – they don't make any money.' Elsewhere, he pursues classic car restoration, volunteers at a steam railway, and looks after his 3.3 acres of woodland in the North Downs.

David Llewellyn Dodds reports from the Netherlands that he has embarked on a preliminary study of Tolkien (very much topical this year) and his interest in Magyar – and possibly other matters Hungarian – about which he hopes to publish something soon.



Mark and Isabel Evans on their visit to Merton

It was great to hear for the first time from **Mark Evans** who is retired and living in Gloucestershire with his wife Isabel. After his French/German degree, Mark went on to learn Russian and Arabic to postgraduate level. He stayed in the field of languages throughout his career, working for various government departments. Mark also has a career playing traditional music, an interest he developed while at Merton. He plays flute and cittern and sings traditional songs and

ballads and has even recorded and produced a couple of CDs, including one titled *A Rival Heart*. He still performs at arts centres, festivals and pubs, and recently played a charity concert in Gloucestershire for the Ukraine appeal.

Also retired is **Alec Findlater** who reports that having spent the last 20 years ago working on pensions, 'I am now at last in receipt of two of them, while continuing to do bits of research and consulting in the area. Theory becomes practice.'

In May, **Stephen** and **Maria Haywood** celebrated their 60th birthdays and their marriage one year on from their actual wedding (only 15 could attend the original event because of Covid-19). They were joined by many friends and family, including **Peter Whibberley** and **Lucy Foster** (née **Emsden**).

For **Valya Dufau** (née **Hopewell**), big trips have been on hold, as for many of us, but she managed camping and windsurfing in Corsica and sailing from Greece. She also has been putting her Oxford linguistic skills (French and Russian) to a worthy cause in remotely helping out Marina, a Ukrainian who fled from her house in Kyiv and who has found shelter on the Atlantic coast of France. Valya translates over the phone for her with the French authorities etc. since Marina speaks no French or English.

I was pleased to hear from **Susanna Ramsey** who has been undertaking online courses at the Oxford Department for Continuing Education and has spent much of lockdown brushing up on Ancient Greek and reading Thucydides. '**Tom Braun** would have been pleased,' she writes. 'It is much more fun when you don't have to revise it all for finals!' She is also busy creating educational resources for primary schools, plus enjoying walking, swimming and wildlife photography.

For **Graham Tebb** the gradual easing of travel restrictions means birdwatching abroad is possible again and for the first time in three years he saw some new birds during two extended trips to Mexico. He is also planning the rounds of the opera festivals in summer, going to Salzburg, Bregenz and Bayreuth before seeing the new Ring Cycle in Berlin in October.

Over in Thailand, **Tira Wannamethee** has been attending another senior executive course, the Top Executive Program

for Commerce and Trade Class 14, which brings top business executives together with senior officials from the public sector to listen to lectures and discuss issues of economic importance for the future development of the country. He was also taking to the catwalk in a Royal gala fashion show, showcasing Thai textiles and top Thai fashion designers. 'This will be my first time performing on the catwalk as an honorary fashion model and must admit I am a bit nervous,' he writes. 'Hopefully I won't trip and ruin the show.'

It was particularly pleased to hear from one of my tutors, **Andrew Wathey** (JRF 1982–85), who stepped down as Vice-Chancellor at Northumbria University in May this year, after slightly more than 14 years. In April 2022, he was appointed Chair of the Board of The National Archives, which is a non-executive role. 'Meanwhile travel has been largely on hold,' he writes, 'and the family has now grown up, with our son working in London and daughter finishing a master's.'

As for me, I remain in Manila at the Asian Development Bank. I have managed five trips to the UK since the start of the lockdown, attending to my parents (both 91) and my two children at university in London. In between, I continue to paint and record music. As always, I welcome hearing from anyone and you are even more welcome to see me if coming to the Philippines.

1982

Year Representative: Nick Weller

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Thank you very much to everyone who has been in touch. We seem to have been quite busy, whether at work or with retirement activities, taking advantage of the relaxation of Covid restrictions.

David Brown is writing a book about small business restructuring and insolvency law for publication this year. He is also being kept busy by a new puppy. David is looking forward to his daughter getting married in November.

Susanna Curtis seems to be working more than full time and to be involved in more projects than ever before. Susanna's inclusive dance project, *Everybody*, has got off to a good start and they have been invited to perform in Glasgow in July at *Gathered Together*, an international inclusive dance festival. Susanna is hoping to get federal funding for this project. Other productions have been selected for the Bavarian Theatre Festival, a showcase of the best productions in Bavaria in the last two years, and *Ulm Moves* at Ulm.

Susanna also uploaded her *Do You Contemporary Dance? A Digital Handbook* at the end of last year (available on www.contemporary-dance-handbook.com). It is in both English and German, and gives a comprehensive insight into contemporary dance for the lay(wo)man and professional. The handbook includes videos, quizzes, interviews and articles. Susanna remains busy with her work as a hospital clown and attended an International Healthcare Clown Conference in den Haag in April with 650 clowns from 32 countries.

Outside work Susanna had the holiday of a lifetime, together with her son Milo, in Peru in March/April 2022 – staying on the Uros floating islands on Titicaca lake, canyon trekking, hot springs and much else. Susanna's husband Horst retires in the autumn. Her son Oscar takes his first law Staatsexamen this year and Milo is finishing the second year of a biology degree in Hamburg.

Hilary Evenett continues in Clifford Chance's insurance practice.

Rupert Evenett continues his not-for-profit board life in the education and charity sectors, having recently become Chair of the John Wallis Academy in Ashford, Kent as well as being chair of an inner London sixth form college. Rupert is retiring as a trustee and Chair of Finance of the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich, but is staying as a trustee and Audit Chair of leading dementia charity Alzheimer's Research UK. Hilary and Rupert's older and younger daughters are at UCL and taking A levels next year respectively.

John Holland is still ploughing through his Maths MSc. John's children, Lucy and Niamh, both graduated last year. John was going to meet up with **Richard Ryder**, **James Thickett**

and **Steve Walsh** from 1982 and also **Dave Holbrook** (1984), **Martin Giles** (1980), **Dave Parkinson** (1979) and **Chris Edwards** (1983) from other years. The gathering would mark 40 years since the 1982 intake first met as fresh-faced freshers.

Michael Jary has been appointed as the government's lead non-executive director, joining the board of the Cabinet Office. Michael has also become a trustee of The Prince's Foundation, the charity founded by HRH The Prince of Wales to undertake education, training and regeneration to create sustainable communities.

Peter Kessler is finding at Magdalen that things are now more like the Oxford he remembers from 1980s Merton. Peter has been giving advice to a couple of theatrical productions and has found that the lighting hire company that the productions used still has some of the same lights that he hired for plays when at Merton. The postgraduate research group that he set up for the study of comics and graphic novels is going strong, and he is now creating a new one to provide a focal point for people studying film. Peter and Dinah's second daughter is about to take her finals (Japanese at Pembroke), and they are about to become grandparents for the first time.

Randall Martin had a wonderful visit to Buenos Aires to see a contributing production, *Cimbelino en la Patagonia*, to his international research project *Cymbeline in the Anthropocene*. While there, Randall gave a talk about the project for the Canadian Embassy to Argentina, which also sponsored the new play. The project's final event is a performance symposium in Montana in July (www.cymbeline-anthropocene.com). Randall hopes to be coming over to England in the autumn for a much delayed research trip and to visit Oxford while in this country.

Peter Roberts retires as headmaster of King's School Canterbury this summer. Peter has taken out French nationality and has a house in France. Any Merton friends following the Santiago pilgrimage route across Aquitaine will be most welcome to call.

Laura Thompson's book *Heiresses* came out in paperback in May 2022. Laura is currently doing another book with **John Mitchinson's** (1983) publishing house Unbound, and is also adapting one of her books for hopefully TV production.

I continue to write and mark exams and work more or less full time. I also have been involved with my school's alumni association's centenary, helping to curate an exhibition at a celebration event.

1983

Year Representative: Meriel Cowan

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Thank you to all the 1983 contingent who updated me with their news. **Ian Andrews** I'm sure writes for many of us when he describes the pandemic as a watershed experience. It was very disruptive for Ian and Helen's children Lily and William in their university careers, although William was able to undertake a master's at Cambridge although unable to take up his place in Chicago. Lily is now at Columbia, NYC. Ian and Helen spent six months of each of the last two years working from their home in Paros, Greece. 'As something of a theatre and concert goer I surprised myself by how quickly I felt at home in the open air and how little I missed London. When my law firm Linklaters asked for a reversion to the new normal I decided life is just too short. So I ceased being a partner of the firm at the end of April.' Last year Ian became a director of Athens International Airport, and so far he is enjoying it immensely. This year his and Helen's main challenge will be deciding how to divide their time between London and Paros. 'I intend to do a great deal more sport (swimming, boating, tennis, cycling, partying) and cultural trips abroad as well as optimistically attempting to revive my piano playing.'

I'm very happy that **Andrew** and **Phillipa Baker** and **James Collings** are attending the Merton Society weekend in June so I will see them in person. Phillipa writes that Andrew and she 'both feel pretty blessed to be able to say that we very much enjoy what we are doing — Andrew sitting as the judge in charge of the Admiralty Court, me at nursery. I still find what children say endlessly funny/inspirational so not yet time to retire. Our youngest left for university last September but we see as much of all four lads as we can, a great excuse for visiting four different cities of the UK.'

Robert Baker is still working on a finance system conversion for DLA Piper LLP. Annie his wife continues as a clinical site coordinator at West Suffolk Hospital and their first wedding anniversary is coming up. Both boys have places at university. Milo to Birmingham to study Maths and Philosophy and Jason to Edinburgh Napier to study Sports Science but he is deferring a year.

John Chatham got in touch from Alabama, where he moved in 2000 to start work at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). He is currently a tenured professor in the Division of Molecular and Cellular Pathology in the Department of Pathology where his research is focused on basic molecular mechanisms of heart disease. In 2016 his wife of eight years died from brain cancer, a very hard three-and-a-half-year journey. Happily in 2018 he met Amy, and they married in 2019. Amy has a PhD in Public Health and is currently Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Research at the UAB School of Public Health. 'We have two dogs and Amy has four adult children, successfully making their own way in life. My immediate family, mother, sister, nieces and nephews all live in Plymouth, UK and we finally visited them in April 2022 after a Covid-enforced three-year separation.'

In Hong Kong, **Earnest Cheung** is still practising at the Hong Kong Bar. He has not been back to Oxford for some years, but hopes to visit Merton again in 2023. Closer to home, **Sarah Crofts** and **Michael Everett** are enjoying life in Oxford to the full. Sarah is occupied as a school governor with a mission to undo the Covid effect in children's education. Michael spends a lot of time in water (ideally outdoors) but he is finding time in London to expand his KPMG tax team, focused on transport and leasing transactions. One of his colleagues in the last decade has been **Peter Casey** (2000). Their two daughters Belinda and Honor are in education: Belinda now at KCL studying Philosophy, Honor entering sixth form.

With Covid acting as a catalyst, **Chris Edwards** retired from international school headship a few months ago and is now acting as a senior advisor in international education for an organisation called RSAcademics. The work is part time and much of it can be done from home in Warwickshire. 'All this means I can become reacquainted with my wife Rachel, the UK, my piano, getting up after 6am, and Everton's descent

into the inner circle of the footballing inferno. I should be in London and Oxford a fair bit from now on, so I look forward to catching up with Mertonians who have aged with greater dignity than I.'

Bridget (1982) and **Michael Jager** moved back to the UK in 2019 from California, to live closer to family in Surrey. Michael still works remotely for his employer Qualcomm based in San Diego.

Producer **John Oetjen** works on film and television projects including a film, *Sky Burial*, based on the best-selling book by Xinran. For the past couple of years he has also been working to develop a metaverse to be used for online concerts where one attends as a customised avatar. Their team's upcoming concert will be a fundraiser for Ukrainian refugees.

I'm always happy when I hear from people who have been out of touch. **Simon Peck** retired from full-time employment in April 2019 and he and his wife moved down to North Cornwall later that year. Simon holds a couple of non-executive positions with private investment companies, as well as being a trustee of a grant-making charity. He qualified as a game angling instructor in June 2021 and now spends his spare time teaching people how to fly fish.

Susan Roller (née **Harris**) retired from Smith & Williamson in March 2022 in order to have more time to travel, see and learn about art, tend her garden and help various aged relatives. **Michael Roller** is continuing as Finance Director at Circassia plc which is based in the Oxford Science Park. They have met up with **Paul Chavasse** and his wife Sonia, **Andrew** and **Philippa Baker**, **Sarah Crofts** and **Michael Everett**, **Steve Walsh** (1982) and his wife Jill, **Jonathan** (1982) and **Diana Thornton** and **Simon Cowan** and myself over the last two years in between the various lockdowns. 'The main topic of conversation seems to have moved on from people's respective children to how their elderly parents are coping and when and if they should retire.'

From the USA, **Daniel Seymour** is glad that New York is coming back to life 'which is a big improvement'. His son Jamie has just completed his first year at NYU. Meanwhile **Richard Weaver** reports that all is pretty relaxed as he retired pre-

pandemic and he is enjoying his book- and share-dealing. He's been keeping in touch with a few Mertonians over recent months: **Fraser Dillingham**, **Julian Drinkall**, **David Carwardine** (1982) and **David Holbrook** (1984).

Simon Cowan and I have now been in Headington for more than 30 years. Simon continues at Worcester College where he is Vice-Provost (again!) and continues to research, teach and to be responsible for endless sets of examinations and interview panels, it seems to me. Meanwhile I continue to work as a GP in central Oxford but will resign from my partnership at 19 Beaumont St next year to focus on other aspects of medicine around safeguarding and looked-after children. I have been involved in a project supporting medical students to provide advocacy for unaccompanied migrant children and the medical students have been inspiring and enthusiastic. Simon and I recently attended a concert in Merton Chapel to support fantastic work organised by Dr **Helen Ashdown** (2005) a GP colleague at 19 Beaumont St, who is arranging donation and transfer of life-saving medical equipment from the UK to Ukraine. We hope to welcome a young Ukrainian guest to live with us in the near future.

1984

Year Representative: **David Clark**

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As always, it's been great to hear from some of you with your news. Let's take the responses in chronological order of arrival for a change.

First, many congratulations to **David Smith**, whose book *On Christian Teaching: Practicing Faith in the Classroom* (Eerdmans, 2018) received the 2021 Lilly Fellows Program in Humanities and the Arts Book Award. The biennial Lilly Fellows Program Book Award honours an original and imaginative work from any academic discipline that best exemplifies the central ideas and principles animating the Lilly Fellows Program. These include faith and learning in the Christian intellectual tradition, the vocation of teaching and scholarship, and the history, theory or practice of the university as the site of religious inquiry and culture.

Next up was **John Newton** who writes: 'Sadly this is my last report to *Postmaster* from Australia. Towards the end of last year, I announced that I was returning to the UK at the end of 2022 to look after my family and to start a new consultancy. We will have had eight very happy years in Adelaide, but we sense the arrival of the next generation of Newtons, and it is time to be close to home. Ageing parents are also a major factor. Scotch College has been good enough to name its new \$26 million building, the biggest in its 100-year history, the Purruna Spencer Newton Centre (Purruna is a local aboriginal term for wellbeing). The college has reached the largest number in its history, and it is well placed to support the arrival of a new and innovative principal.'

Steve Babbage also got in touch to say that he left Vodafone in October 2021, after 26½ years there, and is now semi-retired. He does some part-time consultancy, and a bit of academic work, but is now happy to have free time for walks, travel and other interests that he was never able to pursue while in full-time employment.

Philippa Whipple (né **Edwards**), as Chair of the Merton Society, is working on setting up a series of subject-specific discussion groups between Merton alumni and current Merton students. This builds on the Merton Biomedical and Life Sciences Network on LinkedIn (see report on page 44), which seems to have met with an enthusiastic response in the JCR and MCR. She says you should expect to hear more from her about these groups! Meanwhile, in her day-to-day job, she has been promoted becoming a judge of the Court of Appeal and is enjoying her new role very much.

Philippe de Gentile-Williams writes that he is still with the same employer – John Swire & Sons – and is now based in London with the family holding company, having spent the best part of 30 years living overseas.

Finally, like Steve Babbage, your Year Rep has also taken a first step towards retirement, going down to a four-day working week from June 2021. This has definitely given a bit more breathing space, especially at weekends, and more time for activities to do with Merton, particularly the aforementioned Biomedical and Life Sciences Network, and 'Good News for Everyone!', a Christian charity for which my wife and I are

volunteers. We also have a major family milestone coming up in July 2022 when our son Theo will get married to his fiancée in Guernsey.

Please do keep in touch and send any news items for *Postmaster* at any time – it's always a pleasure to hear from you.

1985

Year Representative: Madeleine Barrows (née **Fontana**)

Email: MadeleineFontana@outlook.com

The 1985 year group remains busy. Of course, our most famous member, **Irene Tracey**, will almost have become the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford by the time you read this, having also been awarded a CBE in the 2022 New Year's Honours for service to medical research.

It was great to see that **Mark Newman** has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society for his work in complex networks. He writes that he recently passed the landmark of having lived longer in the United States than in the UK, having moved out there in 1991. He continues to work in physics and since 2015 has been the Anatol Rapoport Distinguished University Professor of Physics at the University of Michigan, which is in the small but lively college town of Ann Arbor. In 2009 he married Carrie (née Ferrario), a fellow professor at Michigan. He is able to get back to the UK to visit family and friends once or twice a year, and was able to spend several weeks working in Oxford (at Keble) in 2016. It was a pleasure, he said, to be back in town, which in many ways has changed very little.

Karen Welbourn (née **Wilson**) welcomed a second grandchild, Oliver Finn Welbourn, in May 2021. Also in 2021, she co-edited a volume of essays on Sherlock Holmes and music, entitled *Referring to My Notes: Music and the Sherlockian Canon*, for the BSI Press. And, she writes, in January 2022 she was delighted and honoured to become a member of the Baker Street Irregulars, with the investiture of 'Bartholomew Wilson'.

Marcus Green writes that he had a pretty eventful year, with some heart issues, but is now 'perfectly fine – thanks to

some very kind and helpful medical staff at the Horton and John Radcliffe hospitals'. In the New Year he was able to keep long-established plans for a sabbatical, which (while focusing on producing the basic text for his next book) included trips to Atlanta, New York and the Holy Land. Highlight of the US trip included catching up with **Karen Wilson** at MoMA. Highlights of the Holy Land were 'too many to recount', having visited just after they re-opened the borders, which meant there were hardly any visitors there and they had every place they visited to themselves. 'It was a remarkable experience to (for example) spend a day at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and see nobody else in the building.' Back in the UK he leaves his role as rector of three North Oxfordshire rural parishes in June 2022 before becoming Chaplain at Worcester College, Oxford.

Mark Medish writes that last summer he joined Project Associates Ltd, a strategic consultancy headquartered in London, as vice chair. His home base remains Washington where he also has a boutique law practice focusing on international corporate compliance and regulatory matters. His philanthropic work is centred on a civic education project he co-founded called Keep Our Republic dedicated to promoting election integrity in the USA.

Simon Steel is now Deputy Director of the Carl Sagan Center for Research at the SETI Institute in the USA. He's now working to bring the education and outreach teams and the research scientists closer together. Lots of exciting projects are in the works, especially building collaborations between the institute and Astronomers for Planet Earth, an action group of astronomers bringing awareness of climate change from a planetary perspective, and Astronomers without Borders, with whom they plan to bring SETI science to the world's amateur astronomy clubs. Simon's wife Paula has been serving as interim director for the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles, and his son Conor (29) is working in New York City as a software engineer for American Express.

I'm still CEO at the British Academy of Management and becoming reacquainted with the 'joys' of commuting from Portsmouth to London. I enjoyed a lovely trip to Merton Evensong recently where I bumped into a few old acquaintances including **Marcus Green** and **Caroyln**

Chapman (née **Fenwick**, 1986). My youngest daughter, Susie, is studying English at Merton. Do get in touch. I'd love to hear from more of you.

1986

Year Representatives: Simon Male (undergraduates)

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and **Daniel Schaffer (graduates)**

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Undergraduates

Mark Hubbard's eldest son, Henry, is about to start last his year of a Classics Civilisation course at Trinity College Dublin. His younger son, Phin, is about to go up to Corpus to read English, so Mark is dusting down his old gown for reuse.

Soni Zuberi Shah has just published *101 Dishes for the Emperor*. This is her first children's picture book, and is inspired by a true story her father used to tell her about her ancestral heritage. Set in 16th-century India, the story is about a little boy who dares to invite the Emperor to dinner to try his mum's delicious dal. With universal values of sharing, kindness and the love of good food, the book is as relevant today as it was in 16th-century India.

Having brought Go-Ahead Group's East Anglia bus subsidiary back into profit, **Jeremy Cooper** is leaving shortly, although he will return to the group part-time in September as part of the strategy team. His wind orchestra has returned to public concert-giving, with the first event including the first performance of the commission from composer Nicola Renshaw. His daughter Rosie is studying Liberal Arts at Durham, and has been conductor of the Durham University Concert Band, reviving inter alia a few of the pieces Jeremy conducted at the OU Wind Orchestra.

Over 20 years ago, **Juliet Davenport** founded the AIM-listed company Good Energy, a 100% renewable energy utility specialising in decentralised small-scale renewables. She stepped down as CEO in 2021, and has moved into a non-

exec and advisory career including a non-executive board director role for Good Energy. In addition, she serves on the board of the Crown Estate, chairs the Atrato Onsite Energy listed Investment Trust, is non-exec on Ombudsman Services and the EV infrastructure company Connected Kerb. She has recently been commissioned to write a book by Bonnier, called *The Green Start-Up*, which is due to be published in October 2022, and just received an honorary degree from Bath University.

It has been a year of politics and activism for **Dominic Minghella**, spending more time advising parliamentarians and political parties at home and abroad, including the Australian Labor Party as it regrouped ahead of its recent electoral success, and founding a new activist movement, #takebackBritain. The television drama series Dominic created in 2003, *Doc Martin*, is shooting its final season in 2022 in Cornwall. That show has made him friends around the world, and he will be sorry to see it go.

Simon Male has had enough of the start-up world, and is returning to work in New York City for Bloomberg. He is looking forward to restarting his photography during his early morning bike commutes, and is enjoying cycling, running and skiing with his son William.

Graduates

Ben Alpers is an associate Professor of American Intellectual and Cultural History at the University of Oklahoma (balpers@ao.edu). Ben posts regularly on Facebook.

Ricardo Bianconi, maths professor at Sao Paulo University, writes: 'I am now the co-chairman of the Master of Sciences course on mathematical teaching and supervise students. I did a lot of online teaching during Covid and now I am back to face-to-face teaching it is wonderful.'

Christine Biggs (née **Winzor**) reports: 'I was deeply honoured to be recognised in the Australia Day 2022 Honours List with an Order of Australia Medal (OAM – equivalent to an MBE) for services to the international community through diplomatic service. My investiture was at Government House in Canberra with the Governor-General on Monday 2 May 2022.'



Aaron Byerley is now retired and Professor Emeritus at the Department of Aeronautics United States Air Force Academy.

Susan Craighead retired in 2021 as a judge of the King County Superior Court, Seattle. See 'The compassion and grace of Judge Susan Craighead' in *Bar Bulletin*, 1 August 2021 (kcba.org).

Gbolahan Elias, partner at GElias (www.gelias.com), writes: 'At the end of my Junior Research Fellowship time in late 1989, I left the United Kingdom to experience a different life, to work as an associate in Cravath, Swaine & Moore, an elite "Wall Street" law firm. I was called to the New York Bar in 1990. I returned to Nigeria in May 1993. I have lived in Lagos since then. But for Covid, I at least pass through London three times every year. GElias, the eponymous Lagos business law firm where I work, was started in 1994. I married Aramide in 1994. We are still married and hope to have many more years together. GElias is now a 50-lawyer business law firm and still growing rapidly. It has received much commendation over the years in leading international directories of lawyers.'

It practises corporate, financial, disputes, energy, projects, tax, commercial and digital economy law. I have dabbled in academic matters from time to time: an OUP monograph *Explaining Constructive Trusts* in 1990; a dozen or so articles over the years; and a visiting professorship at Babcock University (nearly 60 miles north of Lagos) since 2013. I am now the Chancellor of the Lagos State University. It is one of Nigeria's "Top 10" generally, and is the leading university in the country that is controlled by a state government (as distinct from the federal government). There are more than 100 universities in the country.'



Lionel Hogg with his daughter Lauren

Lionel Hogg, partner at Gadens in Brisbane, writes: 'I am able to report only the mundane — a year of quite fulfilling work (not planning to pull up stumps any time soon) and the nest starting to empty, with our two eldest (Lauren and James) moving out of home but (fortunately) not nearly far enough away to thwart regular returns. Our youngest (Alex) is in year 9 and enjoying the increased attention. There is nothing better in the world than a Queensland beach and we all managed to scurry down the highway for a decent break earlier in 2022 — good surf and a few decent books is a fine recipe. Gift to self: a vintage typewriter. Amazing how it focuses the mind, I highly recommend it. Best wishes to everyone.'

Mari Izumi: no news, but see ap.fftc.org.tw for her reports on agriculture in Japan.

Louis Jacobs, CEO of Delaware North, USA, writes: 'After the most challenging time in the 107-year history of Delaware North, my family's global hospitality company, I'm proud to share that our business has fully rebounded. While I often joke that I don't love putting on a suit anymore, truthfully, I couldn't be more excited to get back out and to see our operations thriving. My wife, Joan, and I are delighted that our daughter, Charlotte, is engaged to be married, with a wedding planned to take place in Ireland in the summer of 2023. Our son, Louie, is based in Austin, TX with his significant other, and I'm pleased to share he's currently learning our family business.'



Louis Jacobs and family

Andrew Jenkins is retired.

Julie Kaye (née **Greenough**) writes: 'My husband Jerry, youngest son Ryden and I enjoyed time in the backcountry of Algonquin Park while driving Ryden across Canada to start Commerce at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. In April 2022 Jerry and I went for a much anticipated, pandemic-delayed walking trip. I also did Spain's Cami de Ronda in May 2022 as a warm-up for Wainwright's demanding Coast to Coast trek across England in June 2022.'

Larry Mathews is a solicitor consultant specialising in criminal law at Edward Fail, Bradshaw & Waterson.

Mark Newton is a professor and head of Department of Physics at Warwick University: m.e.newton@warwick.ac.uk

Chris Parker is a professor and consultant oncologist at the Royal Marsden Hospital.

Daniel Promislow, Professor of Pathology and Biology at the University of Washington USA, reports: 'It's been a busy and fulfilling year in our lives. Much to my delight, our son moved back home last year to earn a master's degree in traditional Chinese medicine (acupuncture and herbal medicine), and on the other side of the country, both literally and figuratively, our daughter earned her PhD with a thesis on single-cell sequencing of SARS-COV-2, and will earn her MD next year. She'll be getting married this fall, to a fellow PhD student from the same lab, so yet another scientist in the family. Now that meetings are beginning to be held in person, Leslie and I are both back to traveling on airplanes a lot, and while we don't enjoy flying so much, it's great to see colleagues in person.

'During the past year, my work has been really fulfilling, as our team has shifted from building the infrastructure for the Dog Aging Project, to finally collecting and analysing data. The Dog Aging Project is a long-term observational study on aging, much like the birth cohort studies in the UK, or the Framingham Heart study here in the USA. In our case, we collect huge amounts of information, including surveys, climate data, biospecimens and more, about each dog for its entire life, to understand the biological and environmental determinants of healthy aging. As of writing this, more than 38,000 owners have signed up their dogs, and we continue to recruit. If you are in the USA and have a dog — any age from puppies to oldsters, any size, male or female — consider joining the study. I'm especially excited about the countless interdisciplinary ways in which we can extend the study, from ethics to sociology to climate change and more. And the project hits close to home too. Our 40lb mixed-breed dog Frisbee is now 16, and is a poster dog for long lifespan, albeit with multiple geriatric morbidities. She moves a whole lot slower than she used to, but she seems happy in the

moment, as long as she has grass and trees to sniff slowly and deeply. I'm pretty sure there's a lesson there for us.'



Dan Schaffer standing by Lake Michigan, visiting Louis at UChicago

Dan Schaffer, partner in Slaughter and May, writes: 'Another very busy year professionally in the City of London. I was very pleased to have been able to attend in person in 2022 the College's Halsbury Lecture and the dinner which my firm sponsors, teach a Trusts class and tutorials to undergrads, and write and judge the second-year mooted competition. I also organised the Merton Lawyers' Association event in November 2019 and have organised it again on 30 November 2022 — a conversation between Mertonians Lady Justice **Philippa Whipple** (1984), **Laurence Rabinowitz QC** (1983) and **Philippa Hopkins QC** (1989).

On the family front, our eldest son Antoine who has been working for myTheresa.com in Munich for three years has just transferred to London. I enjoyed going to visit him and we'd always have a retreat at Das Tegernsee. Vincent, our middle son, is in his final year at Yale and will major in Computer Science, though he has also been a student fellow in Yale Law School. He is back over the summer doing an internship in London for Palantir Technologies. He took a semester out in 2021 to work in a start-up in London so while he is Class of '22, he will actually finish his course at the end of 2022. We are really looking forward to going over to New Haven for Commencement on 22 May 2023.

Louis, our youngest son, is finishing (in June) his second year at UChicago and is having a fantastic time. We were delighted when we were able to visit him in November 2021. The UChicago campus has echoes of Oxford. Chicago is a beautiful city. Louis will major in Linguistics and Political Science. He has a summer internship in Ivory Coast and part of next academic year will be studying in Senegal. I am always very pleased to read Daniel Promislow's work on aging dogs as our "daughter" Roxy (pedigree Labrador) will be 12 on 7 July 2022. Marianne (who is French) and I have just bought a second home – in Dinard, Brittany – and are very excited now to have a two-year project to get it to just how we want it. It's a beautiful part of the world and we have a fabulous sea view. 2022 has though not been all rosy. Sadly, I lost my dear mother (alumna of Girton College, Cambridge) on 19 January.'

Luc Tremblay is a professor in the Law Faculty at the University of Montreal: luc.tremblay@umontreal.ca

David Wright is a journalist and contributing reporter to WSBE *Rhode Island PBS Weekly*.

1987

Year Representative: Simon Male

Tel: 001 845 548 7825 Email: simon_male@yahoo.com

Jeffrey Zink was retained by worldwide IT enterprise Trace3 as the Director of Culture & Wellness, and will oversee all efforts to ensure that the company maintains a values-based culture of integrity, respect and partnership. He will be focused on addressing the mental and emotional health of employees and business partners.

James Cross was elected a member of Council of the Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys (CIPA) last year, and still sees **Annabel Bell** (née **Littlewood**) and **Sally Keating** (née **Ronald**) often, including at Annabel's recent Eurovision party. **Jo Withers** is enjoying working as a GP in remote and rural Scottish practices with the 'Rediscover the Joy of General Practice' programme based in Shetland and is currently working on Skye.

Pippa Chevenix Trench is back in Oxfordshire after living and working/volunteering in the USA, the Netherlands, Kenya and France over the past 18 years. She is now working as Research and Impact Manager for Oxfordshire Youth, a Headington-based organisation that supports the youth sector and young people across the county.

Juliet Knollys has enjoyed a teaching career of 30-plus years. She changed tack in the last ten years and studied for an MA to re-train as a diagnostic assessor and specialist teacher of specific learning differences such as dyslexia. She has three children and a cocker spaniel.

This year **Fiona Harris** became Assistant Housemaster for a boys' house alongside teaching maths at Dean Close School in Cheltenham. She's had great fun, and feels she's learnt a lot more about teenage boys than she ever knew before! She has been travelling again, making the most of the school holidays, and found it particularly lovely to be back at Merton for the Gaudy in March and meeting up with lots of familiar faces.

After 14 months as UK Ambassador to Brazil, **Peter Wilson** moved back to London in mid-March 2022 to be Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, and was reunited with his family after being separated by Covid-19. It was wonderful that this happened a week before the long-postponed 30-year Gaudy, so he was able to come to a very special evening, and be reunited with many old friends.

1988

Year Representative: Tim Gardener

c/o Development Office, Merton College, Oxford, OX1 4JD
Email: publications@merton.ox.ac.uk

David May writes from Twickenham: 'I greatly enjoyed attending the two-years'-postponed Gaudy in March, and to meeting again many of the cohort whom I have not seen for over 30 years – though it only felt like last week! Nowadays I am in charge of running a charitable project which provides drop-in support to adults experiencing loneliness or social isolation; so it was a pleasure to hear how seriously Merton has been, and is, taking support for student welfare.'

David McDowell finally completed his book *Duty and Sacrifice: Fettes College and the First World War*, which is now available in paperback and for Kindle.

Peter Howe is happy to report that Anna Gomez and he finally married in June 2021 and are living in Cambridge. On a similar theme, **Rachel Downer** (née **Hartley**) got married to Paul in July 2021 (11 months later than planned) and is now **Rachel Effeny**. Their daughter Rowan thoroughly enjoyed being a bridesmaid.

Beth Williamson continues as Professor of Medieval Culture at the University of Bristol. In 2022 she was appointed as a trustee of the British School at Rome, the advanced research institute which creates an environment for interdisciplinary work on Italy by scholars from Britain and the Commonwealth. She continues to serve on the Fabric Advisory Committee of Bristol Cathedral, in which capacity she helps to advise the Dean and Chapter on matters relating to the care, conservation and development of the cathedral. In 2021, after years of researching and publishing mainly on the art and architecture of the medieval Mediterranean and Continental Europe, she published her first article on Irish medieval art.

1989

Year Representative: Matthew Grimley

Email: matthew.grimley@merton.ox.ac.uk

It was wonderful to see so many of our year group at the Gaudy in March, which was a most enjoyable occasion, despite the fact that several of us contracted Covid after visiting the newly reopened College bar!

I'm very grateful to those who have passed on news updates. After 25 years running Dechert's London employment law team, **Charles Wynn-Evans** became the firm's International General Counsel with effect from 1 January 2022 when he also stood down as an employment tribunal judge after 12 years' service. The third edition of his monograph *The Law of TUPE Transfers* was published by Oxford University Press in February 2022.

Gwilym Jones has moved on from Niger and is now based in Mauritania where he's the EU Ambassador. His wife has moved with him, while his son Etienne, now almost 22, has long flown the nest and is doing a master's in Paris.

Congratulations to two members of our year group, **Aidan Eardley** and **Lucy Wyles**, who have been made QCs.

1990

Year Representative: Christine Barrie

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1991

Year Representative: Anna Smith (Chair of the Year Representatives)

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1992

Year Representatives: Andrew Davison

Email: apd31@cam.ac.uk

and **Steve Maxwell**

Tel: 001 510 4425 Email: stevemaxwell99@gmail.com

Andrew Davison is a visiting fellow at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton (2022–24). Following a successful grant application, he is enjoying working with a group of scientists at the new Leverhulme Centre for Life in the Universe, in Cambridge, where he oversees the Arts and Humanities programme.

Kelyn Bacon Darwin is very much enjoying life as a judge in the Chancery Division and was appointed as the President of the Upper Tribunal, Tax and Chancery Chamber earlier

this year. Her husband Pete has recently also returned to full-time employment after nearly 18 years of freelancing. Their children are now, unbelievably, 16 and 18 years old, very independent, and far cooler than their parents.

Sara Lourie: 'We currently live in Cambridge, Vermont, USA where I teach in an afterschool program, play piano for the local church, and do a lot of work with the town Conservation Commission.'

Mark Freeman *still* lives in St Albans, and *still* works at University College London. He *still* spends a lot of time at Lord's, but *still* has at least ten years to wait before becoming a Full Member of the MCC.

Hector Macdonald fractured his clavicle and hand in a crash during a bike race with **Jim Ratzer** (1993) in the New Forest. Despite that setback, he finally managed to complete an Ironman race in Mallorca in October 2021. He is enjoying rural life in Wiltshire, where he has built a natural swimming pond and is currently working on a book about pharmaceutical innovation.

1993

Year Representative: Joanna Cooke

Email: jvicooke@hotmail.com

It's a short but sweet report from class of 1993. As I write I think at least three of us are considering running for PM so it is a busy time.

Matt Nelson is delighted not to have been on an aeroplane for almost a year and continues to embrace life in south London. He says keeping up with two children is proving difficult as both now swim and bowl better than him – the writing may well be on the wall. **Martin Millar** filmed a romcom in February '22 for the Hallmark Channel in the USA which will hopefully be out October time. It is called *Christmas in London* and Martin plays a pompous store detective. **Jonathan Young** is still a civil servant living in Andover, Hampshire with his wife and daughter. He says that 'the only interesting thing that has happened to me this year

is being diagnosed with autism'. **Richard Marsh** is still on a high from the amazing summer '21 Euros sweepstake that dominated the lives of many of us in the class of 1993. He wants anyone interested in the World Cup to get in touch so that the sweepstake can expand (richardmarsh@gmail.com).

Charley Smith (née **Haines**) shared three Merton-oriented highlights: the meet-up of a trio of Mertonians for a small but perfectly balanced yoga retreat in windy Whitstable; a 2021 Merton Christmas party complete with Christmas jumpers courtesy of the lovely Leo; and the reinstatement of the Laurier Cup (a hugely competitive table tennis draw) which, at least for Jim Freeman, is a sporting highlight worthy of months of training. **Jim Freeman** has seen his younger boy start secondary school and his older boy graduate from college; he has been swimming off the Norwegian coast (apparently that was not warm); he got a new guitar at last; and has spent far too much time studying the oeuvre of Mark Knopfler.

And now for our international contingent. From Australia, **Declan Kelly** says: 'I was appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland in September 2021'. Declan matriculated in 1993 and read for the BCL, graduating in 1994. **Ravindra Sapkota** reporting from Kathmandu has a son going to university in the USA in the autumn (Rav said 'in the fall' but I opted for the translation). He goes on to say 'Thankfully our daughter is just 9, so many more years left of the joys of active parenting.' Joys? Discuss. And finally, some important self-reflection from Rav: 'I had always been sure I was musically gifted, and so I took up some piano lessons for the first time during Covid. I have realized how wrong my intuition was, and I am looking for ideas on other things I might take up and excel at.'

1994

Year Representative: Nick Quin

Email: nickaquin@yahoo.co.uk

Greetings to fellow 1994 matriculands.

'There are decades where nothing happens and weeks where decades happen' (Lenin). Having lived in Dnipro in Ukraine,

I am saddened to see for how long the post-Cold-War turbulence has impacted the East of our continent, and its peoples. **Anna Goodman** shares her delight that her Refugees at Home guest mentioned last year now has leave to remain and her hope that those of you hosting refugees are realising that too can be a privilege for the host as well as the guest. I'm sure many Mertonians have opened their doors, hearts or thoughts to those in need during these last challenging years.

Anna also feels privileged to have worked on the AZ vaccine and thankful for the amazing impact of vaccines. The NHS seems to have got even busier but the cakes have stopped. As the chair of a local charity supporting our health centre (and witness to the vitriol and abuse received by a system we know is not perfect), I join with her in asking for your continued support for our hospitals, and community healthcare professionals whose dedication is too often taken for granted.

James McEvoy, reflecting on the sad passing of **Courtenay Phillips**, advocates strongly against a recent petition to give chemists a periodic table in their Finals, although has now acquired a black cocker spaniel puppy presumably called Wolfram. **Anthony Costella** remains in The Hague with his daughters Caitlin and Meghan, and continues to refresh the parts other beers cannot reach as Global Head of Consumer Insights for Heineken. Inspired by them both I plan to spend the summer taking the dog for a walk to a local pub, and enjoying the freedoms and liberties that so many Mertonians continue to protect and support, at home and abroad.

1995

Year Representative: Tom Brown

Tel: 0207 827 4008

1996

Year Representative: Maria Pretzler

Email: m.pretzler@swansea.ac.uk

Thanks to all who have been in touch this year – there has not been a lot of news, but the main update this year comes all the way from Japan.

Some years ago, **Yasuko Goto** (née **Niwa**) quit her job as a reporter for a TV channel, had a baby boy, and became a tutor in Japanese tea ceremony (Chado), presenting and promoting Chado to children and visitors from abroad. However, with the Covid-19 pandemic (which is still heavily affecting the Japanese society today), pursuing this particular path became extremely difficult. She went on another job hunt and now has a temporary position in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She is currently working as a civil servant for the International Press Division, in charge of inviting foreign press to Japan.

1997

Year Representatives: Catherine Sangster

Email: catherine.sangster@oup.com

and **Jill Davies**

jilldavies1997@yahoo.co.uk

Jill Davies writes: 'After a slightly surreal couple of years for us all, life seems to be returning to some sort of normality. We're lucky to live near my family, but this year it was great to eventually get back to Belgium and France to see **Max Tse** (1999) and his family and have them visit us from Hong Kong and Germany. I am sure many of us are in the same situation, and have been enjoying catching up with family, friends and travel. Thank you to Freya and Tom for sharing their news.'

News from **Freya Koepping**: 'Not much to report, but I'll fill some column inches anyway. Loved the garden party at Merton on 26 September, would be great to see more 96/97/98 faces there next year. Started a new job at another asset manager; this time I'm staying until I retire. The kids continue their rampage through my sanity, and I have resigned myself to enjoying gardening. The hopes and dreams of all the years are in decline.'

News from **Tom Miller**: 'I'm still writing about China, India and various bits of Asia from my study just off the Cowley Road. I managed to get into Ethiopia to look at Chinese investment there just before Covid and the civil war closed it down. After twiddling my thumbs for a couple of years, I'm belching carbon again. With China shut, I've turned my attention to Latin America, making research trips to Mexico, Brazil and Colombia. My daughter Penny just returned from a fantastic half-term in Barbados, where she enjoyed the hospitality of **Scott** and **Liz Fursessedonn-Wood**. Scott's the High Commissioner there, and our daughters met at school in Oxford.'

Catherine Sangster and I look forward to receiving more news next year and hopefully, as Freya says, we will be able to meet up at Merton events.

1998

Year Representative: Alex Edmans

Email: aedmans@london.edu

Alex Edmans joined *Principles of Corporate Finance* (then by Brealey/Myers), the finance textbook he studied as an undergraduate at Merton, as a co-author for the 14th edition published in April 2022. He gave his third TEDx talk, 'The Pie-Growing Mindset' in March 2022. Alex and his wife welcomed a son, Caspar, in December 2021; in August 2022 they relocated to Wimbledon, in the London Borough of... Merton.

Anne-Marie Kent (née **Bougeard**) welcomed a third child to her family: Rosanna, born in September 2020. Last year, they moved back to Poole where Anne-Marie took up a post as a consultant in anaesthesia and perioperative medicine. Life is busy but they are happy to be settled in a beautiful spot by the sea, where her boys can launch their dinghies from the end of the road and where kiting and windsurfing on the harbour beckon.

Pamela Noakes (née **Shorney**) has joined M&C Saatchi as its Global Sustainability Director, after 11 years at Virgin Group.

1999

Year Representative: Andrew Tustian

Email: andrewtustian@hotmail.com

Helen Mallalieu reports she is still in Yorkshire. She is now a partner at the Tax Advisory Partnership, a tax advisory firm. From September 2022, she notes that both her children will be in secondary school. Ollie is a cricketer while Charlotte plays hockey, so there are lots of sports fixtures for Helen and husband Steve to attend.

Kieran Fenby-Hulse (née **Hulse**) and his husband Guy adopted their second child in the summer of 2021. Jayden is now two years old and has settled in well. Kieran lives by the sea in Teesside and recently took up a new post as senior lecturer in Responsible Leadership at Teesside University. He is currently working on developing a leadership cabaret.

Emily Whitehead and Marty had their third baby last year; Hugh, known as Huey, was born in July 2021. Emily notes: 'Huey is a very smiley, happy baby. His big sister Clara and brother Heath compete to make him laugh, which is an easy game because he laughs at everyone and everything. Since he discovered how to crawl and climb, he hasn't stopped. Being the third child with a little less supervision we've rescued him from everywhere, from under the sofa, to up a bookcase, to down the side of the bed.' I think it'll be an even busier time when he learns to walk! Finally, Emily says: 'Being a family of five is brilliant, and we feel very lucky.'

2000

Year Representative: Alex Perry

Email: alexpperry@gmail.com

2001

Year Representative: Katherine Millard

Email: katherine.l.millard@gmail.com

Updates from the 2001 cohort were sadly thin on the ground this year.

From a personal perspective it has been fairly busy. Having moved back to the UK from Australia in January 2021, I completed my medical training in June and was subsequently appointed as a consultant neonatologist 12 days before our third child arrived. I'm currently enjoying maternity leave looking after Edward and will be taking up my post in Leicester from September. It would be wonderful to hear from more of the 2001 contingent over the next 12 months.

2002

Year Representative: Ben Zurawel

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ben.zurawel@gmail.com

2003

Year Representatives: Andrew Godfrey-Collins and Helen Nicholas

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Email: publications@merton.ox.ac.uk

In summer 2021, **Charlotte** and **Tom Ravenscroft** (2004) moved from Epping to Oxford with their two children. They are enjoying visiting places in the city they never got to as students, while also introducing their kids to its major landmarks like Ben's Cookies.

Over the other side of the Atlantic, **Rami Chowdhury** is still living in Washington, DC with his wife Kathleen. Their first child, Mikhail (Miki for short) was born in June and is reportedly 'the cutest'.

Also stateside, **Johannes Ströbel** has been in New York City for nine years now, where he teaches finance at the NYU Stern School of Business. He and Theresa have just welcomed their third child, Maximilian (joining Anton, born in 2018, and Konrad, born in 2015). In 2022–23, Johannes will be spending a sabbatical year in Munich. He is happy to meet with any Mertonians passing through.

Harry Thomas has also been based in the USA since 2008. He now practises gastroenterology in Austin, Texas, where he lives with his wife and two sons. Outside work, he serves on the boards of some non-profit organisations and enjoys watching the new Major League Soccer team, Austin FC.

As for ourselves: **Andrew Godfrey-Collins** moved back to Southampton from Cardiff last year and is settling in well. **Helen Nicholas** has had a fairly uneventful year, but is enjoying being back in the office a couple of days a week and the resumption of the merry-go-round of children's birthday parties and activities. If anyone finds themselves in Leeds, feel free to stop by and say hello.

2004

Year Representatives: Natasha Beth, Nicola Davis and Gavin Freeguard

Email: merton2004@gmail.com

Post-pandemic, it's been a busy year for the class of 2004. We start our updates with several new additions.

The **Hulme** family – **Gabi** (née **Norrish**), **Nathan** and **Arthur** (3) – were joined by baby **Felix** in April. They are still living in Stratford, London and enjoying life as a family of four.

Also adjusting to life as a foursome, **Tash Beth** (née **Zitcer**) and her husband **Ian** welcomed **Evie** in September 2021. Tash reports that her older daughter **Tilly** is loving being a big sister, although she not sure whether that will still hold true once **Evie** wants to share her sister's toys. Tash is planning to return from maternity leave to the Department for Education in October, and it remains to be seen which minister/government she'll be working for by that point!

Jon de Peyer has had a particularly momentous last 12 months. He married Laura Smith (now Laura de Peyer) last July, with **Gavin Freeguard** as the celebrant. Laura gave birth to their first child, Leo David de Peyer, on 5 June. Leo weighed in at a very healthy 9lb 11oz. Laura, Jon and Leo live near Macclesfield.

Staying in the North West, **Aaron Borbora** is completing his sub-specialist training in forensic pathology and, all being well, will be on the Home Office List in a few years (though he is keen to emphasise, not *that* register!). He has also started working for the British Boxing Board of Control as a ringside doctor. Aaron notes that it seems that most of his (professional) life involves violence. He and his wife have bought a place in Wirral which is less violent and quite exciting.

Down south, **Martin Ash** is still in London, benefiting from the return of freelance professional music post-lockdowns and running a wedding/function string quartet (Flux Ensemble).

Staying with the musical theme, **James Biggin-Lamming** (né **Lamming**) reports that his daughter Olive (8) has started to learn to play the saxophone, just like her dad. He, Olive and his wife Eleanor live in Harpenden and James has been working as Transformation Director for London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust for the past two years. He is involved in projects across three hospitals, including better A&E performance, creating a new strategy, and lots of digital changes.

Nicola Davis has had a busy year as science correspondent for the *Guardian*, covering everything from Covid to monkeypox and peculiar fossils. By the time you read this she will have married her partner Nick in the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, with **Laura Hurrell** (2005) and **Amy Taylor** among her Ladies of Honour. Besides work, Nicola is busy shooting with her archery club, training Tosca the flat-coated retriever, and running classes in the art of Temari.

Stewart Pringle continues his work as Senior Dramaturg at the National Theatre, as well as continuing to write for various media (most recently quite a lot of *Doctor Who*). He married his partner Lauren in May.

Following Stewart, Nicola and Jon's matrimonial examples, **Carl Anglim** got in touch to let us know that he and his partner Tiffany are engaged and planning to marry next year. They still hold the International Tray Racing Association Doubles World Championship after the competition resumed post-pandemic in December 2021. Also resuming post-pandemic were live fashion shows and Carl was thrilled to be able to launch several collections at London Fashion Week. After more than ten years on the board, Carl's term as Chair of Oxfordshire Youth is due to come to an end this year. He is very proud that Oxfordshire Youth has supported more young people and youth organisations in this last year than ever before in its 75-year history. Finally, Carl reports that it was a joy to be back at Merton with the Warden and others on a sunny day in May for the unveiling of the new Bastion Bench.



Carl Anglim and his fiancée Tiffany

Chris Bryan and his wife Stephanie have returned to the UK after ten years in Hong Kong and are now living in Hampton Court with their daughter Olivia, who is starting school in September. Chris is a renewable energy adviser working for a financial consultancy called Apricum, helping to drive forward the energy transition.

Franck Silva writes that it has been a few years since his last update. He still lives in the UK, having settled in Reading with his now wife Lucy. They were fortunate enough to get married in Chapel by Merton Chaplain the Revd Canon Dr

Simon Jones in 2017. They've since welcomed their first child Arthur in 2021, who is a typical active boy, keeping them very busy. Workwise, Franck has transitioned from hands-on medicinal chemistry to global project management, now working for ADC Therapeutics in London, still in the field of oncology.

2005

There is currently no Year Representative for 2005. Please contact development@merton.ox.ac.uk if you are interested in the position.

Helen Ashdown continues to work as an academic GP in Oxford and has been recently appointed to a Clinical Lectureship in Primary Care. In May 2022 she organised a fundraising concert in Merton Chapel with the Dragon School choir, fundraising for her medical supplies project for Ukraine: justgiving.com/fundraising/medicalequipmentukraine

Emma Harris (née Allinson) and her husband Neil welcomed their first child, a little girl called Bethany, into the world last year.

2006

Year Representatives: James Dobias (undergraduates)
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and **Gregory Lim (graduates)**
Email: gbslim@gmail.com

Undergraduates

Jason Borbora and **Dani Sheen** (2009) welcomed the arrival of their baby daughter Beatrix Aurelia Chandra Borbora-Sheen. Congratulations!

Graduates

Andrea Pauli was elected a Member of the European Molecular Biology Organisation in spring 2021 and received a European Research Council Consolidator Grant in early 2022. She is a group leader at the Research Institute of Molecular Pathology at the Vienna BioCenter in Austria. Research in her lab links developmental biology with biochemistry, molecular and cell biology, and genomics to study how the egg transitions into an embryo, and more specifically the molecular mechanisms underlying vertebrate fertilisation, egg dormancy and subsequent egg activation. To achieve this, her group are using zebrafish as the main model organism, in combination with a variety of other in vivo and in vitro systems.

Yulia Savikovskaya had some success with her play *The Leak* (Утечка) at the end of 2021: it was staged in the Vsevolod Meyerhold Theater Center in Moscow and was part of the New European Theatre Festival, which managed to bring international performers together in November 2021. Therefore, the production of her dystopian play was in a line-up with performers from Austria, Belgium, Lithuania, Russia and Switzerland. The play was staged on the basis of its win in a new drama festival called Lyubimovka in 2020, and there were about ten performances of it in 2021–22, before it was removed from the repertoire by its producer and director due to current events (it does not have open political references, but could be considered to be political by some). Yulia is also translating a play by Michael Frayn into Russian, but is not sure whether he will ultimately allow its production (also due to current political events). She has published several articles about Russian culture in the *Moscow Times* and *Russian Art and Culture* (but they have now stopped accepting articles about Russian culture).

2007

Year Representative: Alistair Haggerty

Tel: 07809 357351 Email: alistairjhaggerty@gmail.com



Matthew and Rebecca Martin's wedding

As I write this report, it was only a week ago that I was back at Merton to celebrate the wedding of **Matthew and Rebecca Martin** (née Price). It was fantastic to catch up with so many familiar faces (and their expanding families) and at the very place where Matthew and Rebecca first met 15 years ago.



Kriti Upadhyay's wedding to Daniel Frank

As was foreshadowed in my last report, Matthew and Rebecca's was one of several weddings over the last 12 months. In August, **Kriti Upadhyay** married Daniel Frank in Bristol in a two-day celebration over a mostly sunny bank holiday weekend. Several Mertonians were in attendance for the multicultural celebration. I conducted the wedding

ceremony on the Saturday afternoon and **Katherine Watson** then regaled guests with a roster of very funny and embarrassing anecdotes from Kriti's undergraduate days.

Then, in October, **Charlie Dawkins** and Jess Lowry celebrated their wedding in London. Jess was taken aback by photographs from the archive of Charlie's hair from his time at Merton. I think it's probably time for the hairstyle to make a comeback.

Births, as well as weddings, have been a feature of the last year. **Katharine Broadhurst** (née Pates) and Alex received a wonderful late Christmas present with the arrival of their daughter Arya at the end of December. On Good Friday, **Katherine Watson** and Stella Dilke welcomed baby Isabel.

I received several welcome updates from across the pond. **Ellen Feingold** reports that she, Hannah and Alex are all doing well and enjoying an increasingly reopened Washington, DC. This spring they celebrated the opening of the gallery Ellen curated (with Hannah) for children called 'Really BIG Money'. Ellen tells me that it has been a joy to watch young visitors and their parents and teachers explore it. Fittingly, given current events, Ellen has also just opened a separate new display called 'Ukraine's Distinct History', which uses numismatic objects to help visitors learn about Ukraine's complex origins and the formation of its national identity.



Kambez Benam and family

Kambez Benam moved, with his wife Cigdem and their children Arman and Delara, to Pittsburgh last year, where he holds an associate professorship at the university. He reports

that he really likes 'the academic environment and research ecosystem here at Pitt'. He was also keen to remind everyone that, as always, if any Mertonians are passing through Pittsburgh and want to catch up, please email him directly.

After four years in the USA, **Christian Jorgensen** is now back in Denmark. Having completed postdocs at Johns Hopkins and Georgetown, he has returned to carry out work funded by a Marie Curie Fellowship from the European Union.

2008

Year Representative: Alice Salvage

Email: alice.salvage@gmail.com

Katie Bryan (née **Tiller**) and her husband **Joe** (MSt, 2011) are delighted to announce the birth of Lily Charlotte Bryan, born on 12 April 2022 at 00:18, weighing 7lb 4oz. They are all doing well and enjoying lots of family time together.

Richard and **Sarah Miller** (née **McAvoy**) welcomed their second child, Eric Benjamin Miller, on 19 March 2022. They currently live in the countryside in West Sussex with their daughter Imogen (Immy, age 3) and cat Molly. Richard is practising as a tax solicitor in London and Sarah practises as a pensions solicitor, although is currently on maternity leave. They still keep in touch with lots of their old Merton friends regularly and indeed **Fiona Verkaik** (née **Prowting**) and **Camille Tassi** (née **Sage**) will be little Eric's godmothers.

Eloise Barker and **Joshua Baldwin** (2009) got married at Merton College in September 2021 and are still uncovering confetti in different pockets several months later. They've moved to a house in central Bristol with Queen Mab, the cat.

Following the Great Schism of '22, **Rosie Birchall** and **Niall Allsopp** now live in their own flat, where they have been joined by their little cat Micky. They still see **Alice** and **Prakash** regularly, and have also enjoyed seeing many of their other Merton friends over the last year.

Following the break-up of the band, and befitting his more mature surroundings, **Prakash Parameshwar** decries the

loss of his youth with increasing regularity in East Dulwich, where he shares a flat with **Alice Salvage**. However, he still manages to enjoy some of his youthful pursuits, albeit tempered by more days of rest and an appreciation of simpler and gentler pleasures. Alice and Prakash both enjoy the Saturday market held on their doorstep and frequenting Luca's café in occasionally questionable outfits, as if it were Merton Hall serving brunch. Alice remains happily at Channel 4, where she has contributed in a non-glamorous way to such gems as *Big Boys* and *The Curse*. Her devotion to the dogs of southeast London remains undimmed.

Leen Van Broeck is pleased to find a few years' long work coming to fruition this year, with the publication of *Comics & Archaeology*, which she co-edited, by Palgrave Macmillan.

2009

Year Representative: Stephanie Cadoux-

Hudson

Tel: 07814 951309



Dani Sheen with her daughter, Beatrix

On 31 October as the clocks went back – and as we all know the space time continuum was being saved by our dear fellow Mertonians in College – **Dani Sheen** and **Jason Borbora**

(2006) welcomed the arrival of their baby daughter Beatrix Aurelia Chandra Borbora-Sheen.

Vanessa Johnen and Franz have had an adventurous start to 2022 by completing the Atlantic Circuit with their 11-metre sailing boat *Rewind*. They left Gibraltar in October 2021 and sailed to the Caribbean via the Canary Islands, and returned through the North Atlantic via Bermuda and the Azores, making landfall in Falmouth, UK, in June 2022. They covered more than 8,000 nautical miles as a couple. 'We are very thankful for all the new memories and friendships we made on this trip.'

David Howlett and his girlfriend Nia took a three-week holiday to Indonesia together. They met Nia's family and holidayed in Bali. David proposed at sunset on the beach on the island they first met. She said yes! A December wedding is being planned. Congratulations, both.

Amber Hood Highcock is back doing fieldwork, excavating the tomb of one of ancient Egypt's earliest queens, Meret-Neith, who lived and perhaps even ruled some 5,000 years ago. Amber is the archaeological scientist for the project which is located at Abydos in Upper Egypt.

Huge congratulations to **Claire Higgins** and her fiancé Patrick Headney who celebrated the birth of their son Sam Redmond Headney on 1 June 2022.

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

Once again, I have the pleasure of summarising what the year of 2010 has been up to – and as always, I loved hearing your stories.

Some, if not quite a few, of us got to celebrate our 30th birthdays this year, and we'll just do away with the commentary of what that means. Suffice it to say that one thing that stood out this year was hearing of more recent career changes some people have made.

After reading Classics/Ancient and Modern History at Merton, **Emma Moyse** decided to change direction and completed a second undergraduate degree in marine biology, followed by an MRes, with the aim of pursuing a career as a scientist. She is now doing a paid PhD at the University of Plymouth, researching how light pollution affects camouflage in marine animals.

Will Bennett's updates are always somewhat hard to sum up, but the gist of it seems to be that he has been working as an actor and playwright since 2020, after finishing his second undergraduate degree (philosophy) in London. He's planning on moving across the pond to Los Angeles, which apparently has something to do with the 'sweet money Benjamins coming thicker and faster'. Last we heard, he was planning on throwing a big party for his 30th birthday.

Laura Burnett writes that she is now working in Edtech (education technology, for the uninitiated), helping schools navigate the aftermath of the pandemic and helping pupils make up for lost learning time. She still lives in south London (in the borough of Merton), is working on improving her sewing skills and tending to home-grown vegetables, and got to visit Sara and her growing family (more on that shortly) in Brussels.

Laura reported on a lovely dinner she had with **Richard Hill**. He's back on the musical theatre stage while finishing off a master's in psychology, and Laura reports that their conversation was 'remarkably similar to those in the Holywell kitchen in second year: deep topics, acting anecdotes and food that was too posh for students'.

Bringing us into the 'weddings and engagements' section, Laura also reported from **Sam Jauncey's** wedding celebration, (overleaf) where she got to reunite with a few other Mertonians and snap a picture with the groom. Congratulations, Sam.



Laura Burnett with Sam Jauncey at his wedding

We heard that **Sarah-Jane Legge** (of Holywell 4/5 fame) got engaged this year, and we wish her and her fiancé many, many congratulations.

Sam Love is 'loving life outside the City', and has turned her rowing obsession into squad captaincy at Reading Rowing Club. When Sam wrote, she buried the lede in that she also got engaged last summer, and is planning to move to The Other Place sometime soon. Congratulations on the engagement, Sam (and a successful run at the Henley Women's Regatta in June).

I should add some personal news to the engagement-section: My now-fiancée Molly said 'Yes' just as we started to get settled in New York City, and we are planning a wedding in Boston (her home) in December.

We heard news of some new arrivals to the extended Merton family, starting with **Sara Wehlin**, who together with her partner Ludovic, welcomed baby Theo to this world. In Sara's words: 'the most fantastic thing that has ever happened to me, he is an adorable (in my own, unbiased opinion), happy little boy with boundless energy.' Sara and her family live in Brussels, where she continues to work for N-SIDE, a company she started two years ago to help pharma companies optimise their supply chains for clinical trials.

Ruth Mitchell also had a baby daughter. At the time of writing, she celebrated little Evelyn's six-month-birthday and was planning on taking her to Oxford for the first time over the summer.

In more newborn news, **Luke Hughes** and his partner Anna are proud new parents to Edward ('Teddy') George Rory Hughes, born on 15 May. Teddy and his mother are well, and Luke is pumped to be a parent. My words, not his.

Meanwhile **George Lockett** is also spending lots of time in delivery rooms, albeit in a more professional capacity, working as a doctor. When he's off duty, George can be found in London watering holes all the way from Fulham to Elephant & Castle.



Laurie McClymont and Martin Schmidbaur

On that note, **Laurie McClymont** came to visit the United States, and together with yours truly immediately defaulted to frequenting the British pubs in town, including the aptly named Elephant & Castle in Washington, DC (no relation to the London original). In more important news, Laurie is now the proud owner of a home in south London, and continues to work for the Civil Service on apprenticeships.

Hannah Polonsky enjoys spending time with her baby boy Samuel, who will be a little over a year old by the time you read this. Back from maternity leave, she is still working for an American law firm in London and living in Sevenoaks. Hannah occasionally catches up with **Fabienne Cheung** (2009), who teaches locally at Sevenoaks School and, in Hannah's words, 'keeps me updated on latest teenage fashion trends (pink socks, apparently) and hairstyles (we never thought it would happen, but mullets are back).'

I'll leave you with that meditation on mullets and the fact that **Alex Oulsnam** lives in London, though his exact whereabouts remain unknown.

Finally, my apologies to anyone I missed this year, a reminder to please stay in touch with what you're up to, and a special shoutout to George's mum, who I'm told likes to read these updates.

Graduates

Matthew Lloyd writes: 'I would like to announce the publication in December 2021 of *Brill's Companion to Greek Land Warfare Beyond the Phalanx*, of which I was co-editor and contributor: brill.com/view/title/61308'

2011

Year Representative: Timothy Foot

Email: tim.foot@gmail.com

A fairly brief update this year, of which the headline is that most of our cohort appear to be making the most of rediscovered freedoms in the post-Covid world. It has been a great pleasure to see so many of them this year, whether at the Merton Society Garden Party in September 2021, the 'Oxmas' drinks in the City, the carol service or more informal catch-ups. There was a strong 2011 turnout across Merton events this year, and I hope that will long continue.

As to those I have seen *en chair et en os*, I can report that they are looking bright of eye and bushy of tail – especially after a pint or two. A few brave souls also wrote in with more

substantial news. **Matt Booth** has returned to the UK and taken up a post at Lancaster University as a Senior Research Associate in Mathematics. **Joe Hutchinson** has been elected to membership of the Royal College of Physicians, having started training in clinical neurophysiology last summer at Queen Square in Bloomsbury.



Emily Chow-Kambitsch

Emily Chow-Kambitsch sends an update on her life as Associate Core Faculty in the Mythological Studies Program at Pacifica Graduate Institute in Santa Barbara, California. In splendid fashion, she hosted a ritual – appropriately named 'Nostos' – to mark the return to campus after two years of Covid-induced remote teaching.

Finally, **Louis Cowling** and **Georges Rouillon** write in, mid cycling holiday in Switzerland ('a pretext for eating lots of cheese fondue'), to say that they both continue to work in the Civil Service, Georges with the Foreign Office at the UK Mission to the EU and Louis in the Department for Levelling Up.

As for me, I am (at the time of writing) near the end of pupillage as a barrister. One product of my lockdown endeavours that I have been pleased to see come to fruition is a co-authored book, *Executive Power: The Prerogative, Past,*

Present and Future, which Hart is publishing this autumn and which arose from a project with Professor Robert Hazell at the UCL Constitution Unit.

It has been real delight to see so many of the 2011 cohort this year, and I very much hope to see even more over the coming months.

2012

Year Representative: Stephanie Cadoux-Hudson

Tel: 07814 951309

Congratulations to **Dominik Fischer** who has been conferred with the title of Full Professor at the University of Oxford and continues to work at the Oxford Eye Hospital.

Alexandra Leigh will be moving to Bogotá in August where she will teach English at the Colegio Anglo Colombiano. She would be delighted if any Mertonians, visiting or local, want to meet up.

Huge congratulations to **Glenn C. Th. N. Sluiter**, who will be getting married to his fiancée (Baroness) Donata von Waldenfels on 3 September 2022.

Barry Hawkey was able to retire in 2020, and now that international travel has (mostly) resumed, he is travelling full time while working on a PhD in systems engineering remotely with Colorado State University. He is currently in Split, Croatia, and has visited the Faroe Islands, London, St Moritz, Ecuador, the Galapagos, Whistler, Park City, Amsterdam and Los Angeles this year. He is off to run with the bulls in Spain next week, and will spend the fall in Scotland. No permanent home anymore – he has dropped down to just two suitcases, and has been ‘on the road’ for ten months so far. Next year’s plans include Bali, Tokyo, Sydney and Panama.

In the last year **Charlie Warren** has moved to a new job as Director of Music at St George’s Church, Beckenham, and has been promoted to manager of Travis & Emery Music Bookshop in Covent Garden, and recently became

an Associate Member of the Antiquarian Booksellers’ Association. He has also continued to conduct Hesperos choir, with several former members of the Merton chapel choir involved.

2013

There is currently no Year Representative for 2013. Please contact development@merton.ox.ac.uk if you are interested.

Jamie Lynne Boutilier welcomed a new baby named Charles William Bare Mallonee on 20 May 2021 and started a new job at Vizient as Senior Product Manager on 14 February 2022. She qualified for and will compete at the US National Triathlon Championships in August 2022.

Laura O’Driscoll moved to a new posting with the HALO Trust, clearing landmines and electric resistance welding in Angola.

2014

Year Representative: Sarah Bosworth

Tel: 07540 079711 Email: sarahlbosworth@gmail.com

2015

There is currently no Year Representative for 2015. Please contact development@merton.ox.ac.uk if you are interested.

Freddie Crowley reports: ‘Since graduating in 2018, I’ve been pursuing a freelance musical career, including founding and running a vocal ensemble called the Corvus Consort: www.corvusconsort.co.uk. (We performed a Christmas concert in Merton Chapel in 2019 under a former name, before rebranding in 2020.) We recently made our debut CD recording on a prestigious record label, and it is coming out in September this year.

‘Last year I also set up a vocal and chamber music festival across several villages of Northern Dartmoor in Devon

(where I grew up), called the Whiddon Autumn Festival. We held our inaugural Festival in 2021, and there's lots about it here: whiddonautumnfestival.co.uk/2021-festival-archive. September 2022 will see the second edition of the festival, and I'm hoping it will grow progressively in the coming years to become a cornerstone of Devon's cultural calendar.'

Mohamed El Dahshan has been offered an appointment with the United Nations, working with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen as Senior Economic Advisor. In this capacity, he is leading the international community response and planning for economic development in Yemen – during the ongoing phase of mediation, as well as the transition and post-war phases.

Matthew (Asher) Lawson writes: 'I am finishing my PhD at Duke University this year and will be starting as an Assistant Professor of Decision Sciences at INSEAD in July.'

2016

Year Representative: Henry Grub

Email: henrygrub@outlook.com

Andrew Dixon is soon to be Mr Rauer, with the announcement of his engagement to childhood sweetheart Rebecca Rauer. They are getting married on 26 July in St Peter's Church, Woolton, Liverpool. We wish them all the best of luck for their married lives. This year is a busy one in their household, as they bought their first house together in March, and Andrew begins a pupillage with 18 St John Street Chambers in Manchester in September.

In further great news: **Ameer Ismail** married Nuha Ansar at North Mymms Park, Hertfordshire back in June 2021. Nuha studied medicine at Exeter College, and now works as a junior doctor, while Ameer is climbing the law ladder with a new job as a trainee barrister at Cloisters Chambers, London, which he began in October last year.

I'm pleased to report that, six years after they started, all six of our year's medics have finally finished their degrees, and will have graduated as Drs in July. **Daniel Adeyoku**, **Ibrahim**

El-Gaby, **Josh Navarajasegaran** and **Francesco Dernie** are staying in the Thames Valley for their first year of foundation training (aka 'junior doctor' jobs), while **Adam Carter** will be transferring to south of London.

Dr **Liisa Veerus** (who is currently a postdoctoral fellow in microbiome at Rutgers University) and Dr **Axel Almet** (who is now a postdoctoral scholar in mathematics at UC Irvine) are engaged as of May 2022. It is always lovely to see two Mertonians planning to tie the knot – all our best wishes to them both for their upcoming wedding.

Jonathan Tot, after finishing his master's in physics, has now moved back to Canada and started a PhD programme at Dalhousie University, Halifax. He is being supervised by Alan Coley, and will work on applying dynamical systems methods to cosmology and gravity. While these topics are far beyond my comprehension, I am sure his Merton education will stand him in good stead, and we wish him all the best of luck with his research.



Tsvetelina van Benthem speaking at the International Conference on Cyber Conflict

Tsvetelina van Benthem is now in the final year of her DPhil in public international law (still at Merton), and is simultaneously working as a research officer at the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict. Earlier in June, she was in Tallinn at the International Conference on Cyber

Conflict, where she presented her recent paper on how new emerging technologies redefine what the 'battlefield' is, and how international law regulates such technologies. Highly relevant work in today's world. All the best of luck with completing your doctorate.

Finally, please allow me to indulge myself in news of my own. Last September, I started my own PhD jointly at Imperial College London (with Caroline Howe) and the Institute of Zoology at ZSL London Zoo (with Rosie Woodroffe), studying how the government can use vaccination schemes in badgers to protect cattle against bovine tuberculosis. It has been great fun so far, and the largest advantage is an ample supply of complimentary zoo tickets for my friends — please get in touch if you'd like some! I'm also pleased to say I will be taking over from **Max Flagg** (2020) as President of the Tinbergen Society at Merton, so I look forward to writing two reports for *Postmaster* next year.

2017

Year Representative: Adrian Burbie
Email: adrian.burbie@outlook.com

A shorter update from the class of 2017 this year as people settle into the rhythm of their new post-Merton and (hopefully) post-Covid lives.

Julianna Barker writes to tell that she is enjoying her master's degree in philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, while **Conor Ó Siócháin** is looking forward to starting his PhD in statistics at Yale University in September.

Wick Willett, ever the keen OTC'er while at Merton, has been doing his British Army officer training at Sandhurst since May and is thoroughly enjoying himself despite the early mornings, strict discipline and angry Sergeant Majors. **Verity Stuart** is also getting along swimmingly, having received a Rising Star Award from the Printing Charity, an organisation that recognises youth talent within the publishing industry. She has spent the last year as an editorial coordinator at Wiley-Blackwell's social sciences and humanities book division in Oxford.

2018

There is currently no Year Representative for 2018. Please contact development@merton.ox.ac.uk if you are interested.

Jamie Judd writes: 'I've been spending the last seven months in Jordan learning Arabic. I'm currently living in an apartment in Amman, and I've made a few trips around to Jerusalem, Beirut and Erbil, and I'm sticking around here for another couple of months before I come back to the UK and Oxford for an MPhil at St Antony's College.

'I've been studying full time at a language school, and I've split the rest of my time between a bit of remote work, travelling around the country to see the sights (Petra, Ajloun Forest, Jerash, Madaba etc.), and working towards all the qualifications I need to prep for my PADI Rescue Diver course.'

2019

There is currently no Year Representative for 2019. Please contact development@merton.ox.ac.uk if you are interested.

2020

There is currently no Year Representative for 2020. Please contact development@merton.ox.ac.uk if you are interested.

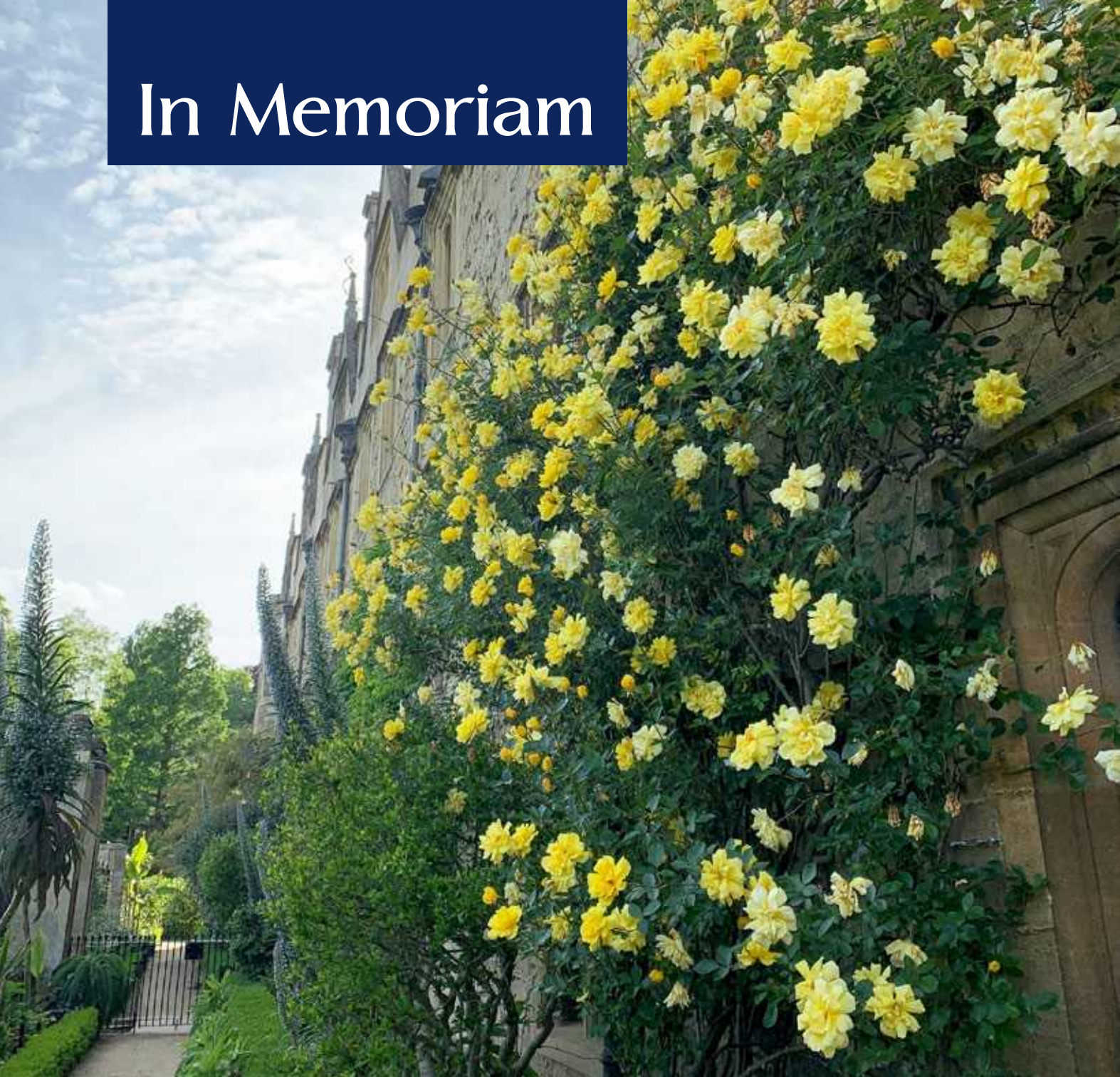
2021

There is currently no Year Representative for 2021. Please contact development@merton.ox.ac.uk if you are interested.

John Haidar will direct a new production of *Hamlet* at Bristol Old Vic theatre from 13 October until 12 November 2022. This will be the second production he has directed there — in what is the oldest, continuously-working theatre in the English-speaking world — following *Richard III* in 2019.



In Memoriam



Deaths Notified

We have been made aware of the sad passing of the following Mertonians:

Fellows & Staff

Emeritus Fellow

Courtenay Phillips*
Christopher Watson

Honorary Fellows

Vassos
Karageorghis*

Former Fellows & Lecturers

Simon Ross Barker
Derek Bergel
Gavin Lightman

Former Visiting

Research Fellows
Malcolm Greenwood

Former Staff Members

Jeffrey Brooks
Peter Morrish*

Friends of the College

Joseph Hotung

1938

Nicholas Jaco

1940

Geoffrey Curtis

1943

John McOmie

1946

John Irwin
Anthony Rhodes
David Wawlyn-James

1948

Ray Payne
Lionel Stephens

1952

Peter Cooke
Carter Revard*
John Humphry*
Tony Marland*
Kenneth Pearson
Chester White

1953

Donald Richards
George Tusa*

1955

David Archer
Michael Cooke
David Marsh

1956

Peter Wells*

1957

David Beetham
Peter Koe*

1958

Alan Furse*
Colin McEachran
Brian Ripley
Alistair Simpson*

1959

Malcolm Faber*
Bob Krueger*
Jack MacIntosh*

1960

Paul Jennings
Jasper Holmes*
Martin Roberts*
Mike Williams*
Brian Winston*

1961

Bob Spray

1963

Robin Lenman
Peter Rhodes

1963

Ken Jones

1966

Robert Reichenbach

1967

Stuart Jack*
David Jeans

1968

Nigel Webster*

1975

Peter Lyne

1976

Patrick Huntrods*

1981

Clive Smithers

1985

Clare Salaman

1987

Ruth Barron

Emeritus Fellows



Courtenay Phillips was born in Newport, Monmouthshire in 1924 and educated at Haileybury College before arriving at Merton College as a Postmaster to read Chemistry in 1942. He was destined to spend almost 80 years of his life at Merton, first as a student and then as a Fellow, spending less than one year away from the College in that entire period to 2022. After achieving a first-class degree in Chemistry and a Half Blue in Golf, he was appointed a Fellow and Tutor of Merton in 1948 at the age of 24, and he educated many generations of chemists, both at Merton and as a University Lecturer in the Inorganic Chemistry Laboratory at Oxford. He was also a Sub-Warden of the College from 1957 to 1959 and Acting Warden in 1979–81 and 1984–85.

In his research, Courtenay made very important contributions to the development of the technique of gas chromatography – a methodology still used today for separating and analysing gas mixtures – and published the first textbook on the subject, *Gas Chromatography*, in 1956, as well as about 100 research papers over his career. His work was recognised by awards in the UK, the USA and the USSR, and he was a founder member of the discussion group that became the Chromatographic Society.

His two-volume book written with RJP Williams and published in 1965, *Inorganic Chemistry*, was a classic textbook of its day, conveying a depth of understanding of the subject matter, illustrated with graphical data, that went well beyond the mere cataloguing of chemical reactions and periodic trends that typified textbooks at the time.

* denotes full obituary

Courtenay was exceptionally dedicated to his teaching, and to Merton College. He cared passionately about supporting his tutees to achieve their best, he always wanted to convey the interest and importance of chemistry as a discipline, and he expected nothing short of excellence. His breadth and depth of knowledge – both chemistry and general knowledge – was extraordinary. Following his retirement in 1992, having given tutorials and classes for 43 years, Courtenay continued to give revision classes to Merton chemists, especially in the lead-up to their finals, for several years. His record as the longest-serving chemistry tutor in Merton's history is unlikely to be surpassed.

Outside Oxford, Courtenay acted as an advisor to British and US government bodies on security and matters relating to the Middle East; he helped to set up the first university in the Sultanate of Oman; and was an advisor to chemical industries in the UK and overseas. In his retirement he dedicated time to the development of Frilford Golf Club in Oxfordshire.

Above all, Courtenay was a loyal Mertonian, through and through, whose contributions to the College were immense over many decades. He will be remembered with great fondness and admiration by those who were able to enjoy his company in that period.

Professor Tim Softley
Emeritus Fellow

Honorary Fellow



Vassos Karageorghis, who passed away on 22 December 2021, was born in Trikomo, Cyprus in 1929. After graduating from the Pancyprrian Gymnasium in Nicosia he obtained a scholarship to study archaeology at University College London. He returned to Cyprus in 1952 to take up the position of Assistant Curator at the Cyprus Museum and, meanwhile, obtained his PhD from the University of London in 1957. In 1960 he became Curator at the Cyprus Museum and in 1963 Director of Antiquities, a position he retained until his retirement in 1989. In 1989 he became the Director of the Anastasios G. Leventis Foundation, a post from which he retired in 2010. From 1992 until 1996 he was Professor of Archaeology at the newly founded University of Cyprus where he established the University Archaeology Research Unit. More recently, he was appointed as one of the four founding members of the Cyprus Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts (2016).

He excavated extensively in Cyprus and his excavations included Salamis (Gymnasium, Theatre, Stadium, Amphitheatre, Necropolis), Necropolis of Late Bronze Age at Akhera and Pendaria, Kition, Maa-Palaeokastro and Pyla-Kokkinokremos.

During his long career he held visiting positions at various universities including the universities of California Berkeley, Laval, State University of New York at Albany, Aberdeen, Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sorbonne Paris, Harvard and the Institute of Advanced Study Princeton. In addition, in the late 1970s and early 1980s he was a visiting fellow at Merton College and All Souls College, Oxford.

He was awarded the Prix de la Société des Etudes Grecques, Sorbonne (1966), RB Bennett Commonwealth Prize (1978), Onassis Prize 'Olympia' (1991), Venice International Prize 'I Cavalli d'oro di San Marco' (1996) and the State Prize for Archaeology (Cyprus) (2011). He also received honorary doctorates from the universities of Oxford, Athens, Brock, Brussels, Dublin (Trinity College), Lyon, Göteborg, Birmingham and Mariupol.

A prolific writer throughout his career, he authored over one hundred books and 450 articles.

In 1952 he married French fellow archaeologist Jacqueline Girard (1932–2018) with whom he had two children, Clío (1956) and Andreas (1958).

He is survived by his two children, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

By his family

Former Staff

Peter Morrish

We were sorry to learn of the death on 30 December 2021 of Peter Morrish, former Assistant Librarian at Merton who greatly enriched our knowledge about the life and work of Griffin Higgs (d. 1659) and the establishment of the position of Librarian at Merton.

Peter studied history at King's College London, and after his National Service he worked in the Greenwich Public Library. Moving to Merton in 1959, he was encouraged by Fellow Librarian Roger Highfield to list and analyse the books bearing the donation inscription of Griffin Higgs. This resulted in the publication in 1990 of *Bibliotheca Higgiana: A Catalogue of the Books of Dr Griffin Higgs (1589–1659)* – an important contribution to 17th-century book and library history.

In 1965 Peter was appointed sub-Librarian at the Brotherton Library at the University of Leeds. He continued to be active

in book and library history, holding several offices in the Thoresby Society, the historical society for Leeds and district. His last major publication was *Libraries in Leeds: A Historical Survey, 1152–c.1939* (Leeds: Thoresby Society, 2019).

Julia Walworth, Fellow Librarian

1952



Raymond John Humphry, 1933–2021.

John Humphry read Geography at Merton College from 1952 to 1956. He had wanted to read History, but fellow Mertonian and great school chum at Lewes Grammar School, **Cedric Andrews**, had already nabbed a history spot!

Dad loved his time at Merton. He played for the College first teams in rugby, football, cricket and athletics – and he even tried out for the University rugby team. Photos of various Merton sports teams hung on the wall above his desk for over 50 years – providing a daily reminder of these happy times. Dad also made lots of great friends at College, falling in with what he called the 'grammar school crowd'. During the summer of his second year, five of them (including Frank Bough, Cedric Andrews and Tony Marland) took a trip to Rome – all in a 1934 Morris Major!

College days over, Dad opted for a commission in the RAF where he continued his sporting prowess, winning RAF caps in rugby and cricket. Posted to Ceylon in 1956, there he met a Princess Mary Royal Nursing Sister called Frederica Woods. They married in Ceylon and together returned to the UK where Dad completed a PGCE at Merton in 1958/59 before

embarking on a teaching career with the RAF in Singapore. There, they had three sons in quick succession, Marcus, Nicholas and Christopher.

Dad also wrote a textbook on the geography of Singapore and Malaya which was used for many years in Singapore schools. Returning to the UK in 1965, the family settled in Cambridgeshire where Dad was Head of Geography at Soham Grammar School. When the grammar school system was abolished in 1972 ('a travesty!'), he moved to teach at the City of Ely College, retiring as Director of Ely Sixth Form Centre in 1992.

Growing up, Dad played endless games on the lawn with us, whether it was kicking a ball around, playing tennis, cricket or just catch. He organised in minute detail our summer family holidays and we remember the day when he showed us around Merton College – he was so happy.

In retirement Dad indulged his passion for gardening and passed hours tending to the lawns, fighting a constant battle against moss. He also spent lots of time watching rugby and cricket on TV, with many trips with his sons to Twickenham or to Lords.

Most of all, Dad loved it when members of the family came to visit. He developed a deep affection for his three granddaughters and two great-granddaughters.

Dad was a very special person. He didn't just transmit to us his love of sport and thirst for knowledge. Possessed of great calmness, he always attempted to navigate troubled waters with grace and sympathy. He gave us a strong sense of honesty, integrity, loyalty, and love for the family. We only hope that we can transmit these values to the next generation in our family.

By his wife Frederica and his sons, Marcus, Nicholas and Christopher



Tony Marland (1952), 2 December 1934 to 28 April 2022.

Tony Marland was a proud Lancastrian, born in Walkden, near Manchester. His father worked as a clerk for the LMS railway, and his mother was very active in the local Methodist church. It was at his local Methodist primary school that the Headmaster saw his potential and encouraged him to apply to Manchester Grammar School. This led on to his winning a Postmastership in Maths at Merton, going up in 1952. He always felt that going up to Oxford as a 17-year-old was a transformational event, and he remained a proud Mertonian for the rest of his life.

Tony freely admitted that despite having worked very hard to get into Oxford, when he got there he spent more time on the many other attractions university life had to offer, and only managed to scrape a third. In this he did better than his great friend and famous broadcaster Frank Bough, who apparently achieved a fourth, or as it would be known today, a fail. Too much sport was the main reason in both cases, in particular cricket, in which he represented the College. In the 1980s the Head Porter, Bill Dawkins, still remembered Tony fondly, particularly having once put him in hospital with a particularly vicious fast ball which, as a confirmed tail-ender, Tony couldn't handle.

Probably his greatest adventure during his time at Merton was buying an old Morris 8 with four other Mertonians, including Frank and Keith Buxton, for £35, and driving it all the way to Rome. Fully laden with five young men and all their camping gear, this poor car was unable to make it over the Alps so they took it around the Riviera, camping in farmers' fields, despite speaking little French and absolutely no Italian. This

linguistic deficiency nearly caused serious problems when Frank managed to run over a pedestrian in a small town in Liguria. Deploying their only Italian phrases 'Can we camp in your field' and 'Five eggs please' when the police arrived landed them in gaol, but eventually the police chief let them go, actually thanking them for having provided justification for continuing to have a police station in his sleepy town. Amongst his many other qualities, Tony was always a shrewd businessman, and after all this, somehow managed to sell the car at a profit for £45 when they got back.

In national service days, if you had gone to Oxford you automatically became an officer, and so Tony joined the Royal Navy in 1955 as sub-lieutenant. You may know the old ditty; "We joined the Navy to see the world, but what did we see, we saw the sea!" In his case he didn't even get to see the sea, spending his time trying to predict the weather in northern Scotland and western Wales, where the locals apparently called him 'Tony the Cloud'. In 1958 he took a job in London with IBM, where he was responsible for training in marketing and sales and remained with the firm until his retirement, by which time he was responsible for managing relations with some of IBM's biggest global clients. He could recall the invention of the disc drive and retired at the dawn of the World Wide Web, but he wasn't that interested in the technology itself. It was working with people that led to his success. After his death, many former colleagues contacted the family saying that he had been "a kind, helpful and encouraging boss", "an outstanding teacher" and that "he really helped me at the start of my career". The most important contact he made during his years at IBM was a young secretary he met in the early days at the Wigmore Street office, Sylvia Blackmore, whom he married in 1960, and with whom he had three sons and a daughter, and subsequently seven grandchildren.

Retiring early at 55 gave Tony many opportunities to pursue his two main passions, travel and helping others. He was involved with a number of charities, and derived particular satisfaction working with young entrepreneurs from disadvantaged backgrounds through the Prince's Trust. He and Sylvia never stopped travelling, visiting children and grandchildren in Canada and Hong Kong, travelling independently to Africa, India, Pakistan, Syria and Iran, going on walking holidays throughout

Europe, probably beyond the point at which others might have considered it prudent to call a halt, given the Parkinson's which gradually restricted his physical independence in his last years. Despite the considerable pain and discomfort he suffered, he would never appreciate being asked about his illness, considering it too boring to talk about. His funeral in Wimbledon in May was a largely joyous occasion, and the large number of family and friends included two of his Merton contemporaries, Ray Quinlan and Gordon Whittle, who had been best man at his wedding.

His last trip to Merton was in April this year, a couple of weeks before his death, for the Passiontide festival sung by the Merton Chapel Choir, which he supported over the years, and which incidentally is so much better than when I sang in it in the 1980s. As Sylvia struggled with his wheelchair on the Merton Street cobbles, the Warden emerged from her lodgings and kindly offered her assistance in pushing him along the street to enjoy his last trip to the College.

Julian Marland (1980)



Carter Revard, professor emeritus of English in Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St Louis, died on 3 January 2022, at his home in University City, Missouri. He was 90.

Born in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, in 1931, Revard was raised, along with six siblings and numerous cousins, aunts and uncles, in the Buck Creek Valley on the Osage reservation — a great, extended 'mixed-blood family of Indian and Irish and Scotch-Irish folks', as he described it in his 2001 autobiography, *Winning the Dust Bowl*.

Revard attended the one-room Buck Creek School while working a series of odd jobs, from harvesting fields to training greyhounds. After graduating from nearby Bartlesville College High School, he won a radio quiz scholarship to study at the University of Tulsa, where he earned a bachelor's degree in 1952. That same year, Revard also won a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship to study at Merton College at the University of Oxford, and he received his Osage name, Nom-peh-wah-theh ('fear inspiring'), from his grandmother, Josephine Jump.

In 1956, Revard met and married Stella Hill Purce, a Milton scholar, while both were pursuing their doctorates at Yale. In 1961, after teaching for two years at Amherst College, he joined the Washington University faculty as an assistant professor of English, rising to associate professor in 1966 and full professor in 1977.

Known for his ground-breaking scholarship on the Harley manuscript, a 14th C. collection of secular and religious lyrics housed in the British Library, Revard was also an accomplished poet whose work frequently explored Native American themes, beginning with the chapbook *My Right Hand Don't Leave Me No More* (1970). In class, his syllabi could seamlessly range from Boccaccio and Chaucer to Native American myths and contemporary novelists such as Louise Erdrich.

A regular presenter at St Louis' famed Duff's Poetry Series, Revard's numerous books include the poetry collections *Ponca War Dancers* (1980), *Cowboys and Indians*, *Christmas Shopping* (1992), *An Eagle Nation* (1993), *How the Songs Come Down: New and Selected Poems* (2005) and *From the Extinct Volcano, a Bird of Paradise* (2014), as well as an earlier autobiography, *Family Matters, Tribal Affairs* (1998).

Revard was named professor emeritus in 1997 but remained a regular presence on the WashU campus — teaching courses, visiting classes and reading from his latest works. In 2003, the journal *Studies in American Indian Literatures* dedicated a special issue to his writing and intellectual legacy.

'Retirement has hardly slowed Carter Revard's pace,' wrote guest editor Ellen L. Arnold, 'and his work as a poet and a scholar just keeps on expanding, developing and becoming more complex.'

Other major honors include the Oklahoma Book Award (1994), a Writer of the Year Award (2000) and Lifetime Achievement Award (2005) from the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers, and an American Indian Festival of Words Author Award (2007).

A former secretary and president of the American Indian Center of Mid-America, Revard was a member of the Modern Language Association, the River Styx literary organization and the St Louis Gourd Dancers, among other groups.

Revard was preceded in death by his wife in 2014. He is survived by his children, Stephen Revard, Geoffrey Revard, Vanessa Roman and Lawrence Revard; brothers Louis 'Jim' Jump and Addison Jump Jr; and sister, Josephine.

Liam Otten

This obituary was originally published on the Washington University in St. Louis website. It is reproduced with kind permission of its editors.

Photo: Washington University Archives

1953

George Tusa died in August 2021 following complications after a fall while on holiday with his daughter, Helen, in France.

My memories of George go back to the start of term in October 1953 when our rugby skills were being assessed at the Merton College sports ground in Mansfield Road. The College had a successful season that year, moving up a division. George was a very solid prop who more than held his own as well as being an unerring place-kicker. In addition to rugby George was captain of the tennis VI. Golf was also a lifelong enthusiasm. We used to cycle up to Southfields with clubs on our backs; my memory was that we always got very wet! He was a founder member of the Merton Golf Society and played regularly until lockdown. At home he was a member of Hockley Golf Club where he played all his life.

George was born in Czechoslovakia in 1932. He moved to England with his brother Johnny seven years later when his father was appointed to run the British branch of the Bata shoe company. With Europe in turmoil it proved a perilous journey but the family finally made it in June 1939.

After school at Gresham's, Holt, George was elected a Postmaster at Merton to read chemistry with his lifelong friend Tony Verdin. After graduating he worked for Fisons for seven years before joining IBM UK where he stayed for the rest of his working life. Apart from two stints in Paris in the 1980s at IBM's European HQ in Paris he was based at Cosham and London and made his home in Winchester.

In 1963 George married Daphne Phillips. They had a daughter, Helen, and two sons, Andrew and David. Very sadly Daphne was diagnosed with progressive supranuclear palsy and died in 2004.

In his retirement George made a great contribution to the Winchester community. He was a member of the Cancer Research Committee for 20 years and gave support in many ways to the City of Winchester.

George was a great friend. He was best man when I married Jackie in 1957 and although we lived a hundred miles apart we met regularly, often for a round of golf. He was always a gentleman, scrupulously polite and very kind – I remember the loving care he gave to Daphne during her long illness. For the last 16 years of his life he was devoted to his companion, Phillida Leavett-Shenley, to whom he showed the same care after her own neurological disease was diagnosed. He was a lovely man and I shall miss him.

Michael Jenkins (1953)

1956



Peter Wells, 1936–2022.

Peter came to Merton from Wolverhampton Grammar School in Michaelmas term 1956 to read Mathematics, having been awarded an Exhibition. He was always friendly, courteous and cheerful, and quickly became a popular member of the JCR. He is remembered with great affection. Mike Renton recalls Peter's enthusiasm for jazz, especially Count Basie, and thinks of Peter every time he hears the CD present he received of the wonderful Nikki Iles playing Christmas carols in *Jazz on a Winter's Night*. It is sad that we shall have no more opportunity to enjoy his company at Gaudies.

Peter John Wells was born and brought up in the West Midlands. As an only child it was a quiet wartime childhood. Good fortune saw him gain a place at Wolverhampton Grammar School where, being bright, he studied Latin and Greek. He admired them both but maths was his main interest and he prospered under excellent teaching and won his place at Merton in 1954.

He spent the next two years doing National Service near the mid-Welsh coast. His role was to train new recruits in the arts of marching and rifle cleaning. He did not enjoy it. Next off to Oxford which he loved and where he made good lifelong friends. Whenever he got the chance he would revisit Merton for a formal occasion or stroll around the gardens.

Armed with his maths degree he spent a year in Bristol at Bristol Aircraft Company but soon decided that number crunching was not for him. No computers in 1959, just hand-

cranked calculators. They had actually been working on the shape of the nose cone of what became Concorde.

He began teaching at Haberdashers' Aske's in Elstree which gave him a very good start to his new career, and this was followed by a few years experiencing boarding school life at St Peter's School in York. He was by then married to Celia, also a maths teacher. The next move was to Nottingham College of Education, training teachers. They stayed there eight years. Peter eventually seconded part time to the newly formed Shell Centre for Mathematical Education at the University of Nottingham. These were busy, happy years exploring new ideas in the teaching of maths and producing materials for teachers to use in the classroom. He was often away on writing weekends with colleagues from the Association of Teachers of Mathematics. A new booklet packed with fresh ideas would be the result.

In 1974 Peter moved northwards again to become the Senior Maths Adviser for North Yorkshire. The new authority was very big, with over 140,000 pupils in nearly 500 schools, some with 2,000 pupils but many with only 20. He had to get to know the heads and the teachers and run many training courses. He was in his element, enjoyed the challenge and stayed in that post until he retired. Peter loved mathematics and his career was all about helping others, be they teacher or pupil, to enjoy it too.

When not working he was often to be found running through a forest. The family took up orienteering in 1971 and never looked back. It was a time-consuming passion as holidays often involved a major event in Scotland or Sweden. They all, including their daughter Emma, were keen competitors and Peter was happy planning courses round the North Yorkshire forests and moors for the local club. As retirement approached they found time for cycling, rambling, fell walking and travel and in later years he treasured time spent with his two grandchildren.

A full and active life.

Richard Kenyon (1956) and Celia Wells

1957



Peter Joseph Koe, born 11 April 1936, died 11 November 2021.

We write in appreciation of the close friendship we enjoyed with Peter, spanning the decades from October 1957 when we first met at Merton. It was immediately apparent that he had a quiet but pleasant and gregarious disposition with a ready smile and well developed sense of humour.

It would be fair to say that Peter had an adventurous start to life. In 1942 he was evacuated from Singapore, together with his mother and younger brother, in one of the last ships to get away before its fall to the Japanese in February of that year. His father was serving with the Royal Army Ordnance Corps at the Singapore fortress and was incarcerated in the notorious Changi prisoner of war camp for the duration of the war (which fortunately he survived).

On safe return to England with their mother, Peter and his brother, Christopher, were educated at Worth, the junior boarding school located at Downside and thereafter from 1950 to 1955 at the Blackfriars School, Laxton, where Peter was latterly head boy.

In 1954 he successfully completed the nautical training course at the Aberdovey Outward Bound School which was to stand him in good stead in later adventures on the Norfolk Broads and elsewhere. Peter came up to Merton in October 1957 having completed his National Service with the Royal Army Service Corps in Cyprus. Merton was a natural choice for him as he followed in the footsteps of his father Miles Koe (1921) and his grandfather Digby Koe (1883).

Early in Peter's career at Merton there came about an event which was destined to have a felicitous impact on his life. This was initiated by his aunt, a Catholic Sister; she had taught a certain young lady, Miss Nicola Percival, at St Leonards Holy Child Convent. As they both now lived in Oxford, with the permission of both sets of parents she arranged an introduction; the result was that Peter duly found his way to 40 Park Town in North Oxford, where Nicola was living with her sister, Drusilla. With many similar interests they were inseparable from that moment and Nicola's bubbly personality enlivened many convivial gatherings for us all at Park Town and elsewhere.

On the sporting front Peter was in the College hockey and lawn tennis teams and a particularly enthusiastic captain and secretary of the table tennis team; the latter activity was one which he carried through to old age. A new and very strenuous activity for him was Scottish country dancing, in which we indulged every Saturday evening at the Catholic Chaplaincy at St Aldate's. One event which memory suggests took place on only one occasion was a hockey match arranged between a College team, including Peter, and a ladies' team styled, appropriately enough, the Banbury Road Beauties, including the fair Nicola. The result is lost to us but it was clearly a very sociable and enjoyable occasion.

On graduating Peter joined the sales team of Kalamazoo Limited, pioneers in record-keeping systems, based in London. He was married to Nicola at the Catholic church of St Mary's, Cardigan Street, London on 26 May 1962; we were very pleased to act as ushers. They set up home at Carshalton in Surrey but in 1966 moved to the more urban and crowded environment of Northfield, Birmingham, headquarters of Kalamazoo, where Peter was involved in setting up the firm's new computer centre. In 1972 they headed back south with three sons and one daughter, to St Leonards-on-Sea where Peter joined Kalamazoo's south-east region sales team in Hastings until 1988; later there was work with two other computer-related posts and a move the short distance to Bexhill.

In his various local parishes Peter dedicated himself to their wellbeing, in particular as chair of the parochial church councils at Northfield and at St Leonards-on-Sea; also later as foundation governor at two Catholic schools in Bexhill.

In addition, at Bexhill he was the leader of his parish youth club and also helped with Cubs and Scouts (in the latter case attached to the local Anglican church). That is not to say that he neglected a wider caring role in the community as a whole: unselfish service to others was always of great importance to him. This was apparent, for example, in his role as organiser of the Hastings CRUSE support group for some years, arranging day visits to Hastings for inner-city families and managing Grail family holiday weeks in different parts of the country.

From about 1997 Peter changed the direction of employment; having acquired the RSA certification for Teaching English in a Foreign Language he was in a position to offer appropriate courses based on his home and including wider cultural activities. A heart attack in 1998 was followed a few years later by the gradual onset of Parkinson's which, characteristically, he bore without complaint. Following the death of Nicola in January 2015 Peter remained in their much-loved house in Bexhill; in those familiar surroundings he was still able to continue with activities that he enjoyed locally, notably chess and table tennis, while at the same time happily maintaining contact with his scattered family via the internet.

While staying in Cambridge to attend his brother Christopher's funeral Peter passed away suddenly, only two days before having played table tennis and a distanced game of Scrabble with his daughter, Vivien. We recall with affection the halcyon days we spent with him at Merton.

Graham Williams and Paul Feeny (both 1957)

1958



Alan Furse, who has died at the age of 83, was a star pupil at Newquay Grammar School. He was awarded an Exhibition and entered Merton College in October 1958 to study chemistry.

In his first two years in Oxford he had rooms in Mob Quad and 22 Merton Street. He was an enthusiast for badminton and became secretary and later captain of the College team. He also had similar appointments in the Church Society in his second and third years. His musical talents were displayed at chapel services and in the Kodály choir.

In the vacation between his third and fourth years he married Gill Banwell, a Cornish contemporary who had qualified as an SRN at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London. Consequently his visits to College became rarer. They raised three children.

After Oxford Alan became a chemistry teacher. His early career consisted of three years at King's School in Chester, followed by five years at Clifton College in Bristol. His longest employment was at Blundell's School in Tiverton, where his duties included being a housemaster and later head of the science department. He also found the time to write textbooks for A-level chemistry.

After retirement he moved to Teignmouth, where he had five years as a part-time educational consultant. He was able to develop new musical skills in campanology, which involved both large bells in churches and small handbells.

David Greene (1958)



The news that **Alistair Simpson** died in February did not come as a total shock. In his annual Christmas letter he wrote that in October 2021 a consultant oncologist told him that life-limiting lung cancer had spread widely and thought he might live at most nine months or so. In the event he lived for another barely four months. He died at home, not in hospital, which he was determined to do.

Alistair was born in Potters Bar, the only boy with four sisters. It was a buoyant and happy family. His early childhood was in Bethnal Green where his father was minister of a Congregational Church. This was at the height of the Blitz in the Second World War when nightly bombings were the norm. Subsequently the family moved to Blackheath when his father served as Moderator of the London Province of the Congregational Church. Alistair won a scholarship to the City of London School near Blackfriars Bridge. Among his younger contemporaries was cricketer **Michael Brearley** who a prescient Alistair told us was a future England captain in the making, a good 15 years before that happened.

As a Commoner at Merton he read Lit Hum, entering fully into College life. He played a variety of sports. He was secretary of AMALGAS, treasurer of the hockey team, stage manager of the Floats production of *Arden of Feversham* and, beyond College, he played Eton Fives for the University and was the OU Secretary in 1960–61. He wrote: 'I cannot claim in any way to be an academic and I certainly would not be accepted into the Merton of today where position on the Norrington Table is the priority and not the position at the Head of the River. In the late fifties times were very different.' As it happens though, he did not row.

After graduation Alistair considered teaching classics and sport – he turned down the offer of a place at Shrewsbury – but in the event he went into the packaging industry with both Reed and Bowater. He said: ‘I used to say I was a boxmaker, but that was far from the truth. The people I worked with made the boxes; I added my two cents’ worth to the administration of the companies where they worked and made the boxes!’ He rose from trainee manager to general manager then production manager, finishing as Production Director Europe.

He kept his home and family in Larbert, Central Scotland, and travelled when necessary rather than uprooting Joy, whom he married in 1966, and their three sons. His business acumen was acute, honed no doubt by the roles he took on at Merton. His negotiating skills were such that he represented the companies in tough talks with union representatives both locally and nationally. I recall him telling me that after an exhausting 48 hours of gruelling negotiations in London he boarded a flight at Heathrow for Edinburgh in the days when internal flight tickets could be bought without security checks, only to remember as the flight took off that he’d flown to London from Glasgow where his car was. Joy had to pick him up in Edinburgh and drive him to Glasgow. He kept himself physically fit playing golf and hill and mountain walking. Indeed he was able to play a full round of golf on three successive days in September walking the courses, albeit he did own an electric buggy.

Memories of a gregarious Alistair at Merton are fond. **Andrew Adam** wrote: ‘He was such joyous company to be with and so gentle in spirit.’ **John Simms** with his wife Veronika recalls losing his way in fog trying to find the Simpson home in Larbert. Roads in that part of Scotland foxed someone used to driving on wide thoroughfares in New Hampshire. In 2013 with **Michael Parry** and **Richard Allain**, Alistair set the pace ahead of **Robert Harvey**, **Peter Parsons** and **Bryan Lewis** on a ‘recherche du temps perdu’ walk along a section of Hadrian’s Wall. His exuberance and peals of laughter are a fond memory.

At Larbert Alistair and Joy entered fully into the life of the church community and enjoyed being grandparents to eight grandchildren of Andrew, Timothy and Philip, albeit with youngest Philip’s offspring in Bermuda this had to be more

often than not ‘remote’. In his eulogy at the funeral the minister recalled Alistair’s pastoral work and his treasurership where he delivered messages about finance ‘firmly, fairly and with a diffusing laugh’.

In that Christmas letter Alistair wrote: ‘The privilege of a fine Christian upbringing has been mine throughout my life. I reflect on my father’s life with pride, and on my mother who brought us all up and in time herself was ordained into the ministry. Their influence on my life has been of value beyond measure, and I daily give thanks for my simple and yet very deep faith. I face the future months with a confidence that I am in the hands of the Almighty, who cares for and loves every single one of us.’ **Andrew Adam** wrote to me saying: ‘Not many dying men sit down and write such a thing without a hint of regret or self-pity.’

Bryan Lewis (1958)

1959



Bob Krueger, 1935–2022.

I came up to Merton in October 1959 to study Classics or, more formally as it was called, *Literae Humaniores*. On almost my first day at the College I met in the dining hall a tall, elegant and gracious young man who had rooms very close to my own in St Alban’s Quad. He spoke with a slight American accent but, as he had already been studying for a master’s degree in English Literature at Nottingham University, his accent by now had an English overlay. He explained early on that his Texan friends were already referring to him as ‘a limey’! The young man’s name was Bob Krueger.

He was my first ever American and, whereas I was only 18 years old and had just left school to study for my first degree, he already had a couple of degrees to his name and to me he was like an exotic species — not just American (and therefore different anyway), but seemingly wise, learned and very well dressed in that smart-casual way that had not quite arrived in England yet, comparatively soon after the end of the Second World War.

Bob was in Oxford to study for a DPhil in English Literature and he was a very serious and determined student. Aged already perhaps 24 or 25 at that time he had a sense of purpose and a goal in life which was quite striking. We were all serious students but mostly five or six years younger than he was and most of us had left home for the first time, eager to get away from the discipline of family homes and to enjoy life as well as to do a bit of work.

Early on Bob explained, in one of many conversations about the future, that he had been an undergraduate at Duke University in North Carolina and wanted to advance his qualifications so that he could go back to teach there. He never seemed to have any doubt that he would achieve that and his focus was extraordinary. The many of you who knew him well, as I and many others came to, will recognise that focus, that determination after setting a goal, to do everything in his power to achieve it. As a result, while we 18-year-olds after the evening meal would be inclined to go off to a pub and sink a few beers, Bob would generally go off to his room to do more studying.

I found that I learned something from that attitude, something about the strength of setting goals and doing all in my power to achieve them; it has stayed with me for the rest of my life.

Those of you of a certain age, especially if you are politically aware, will recall that the year in which Bob joined Oxford University, 1959, preceded the presidential election of 1960 and Kennedy v. Nixon. I was already interested in politics in the general sense of knowing about English elections. I knew nothing, however, of elections 'across the pond' and that was where my introduction to American politics started. I found myself intrigued by the whole process and had the

curiosity to pump Bob for information. I remember so many conversations about this on walks through Christ Church Meadows, myself eliciting, Bob elucidating, and, as 1959 became 1960, it became clear in England and elsewhere in the world that this election was going to be momentous. Bob was already a confirmed Democrat and I too was easily swept up in the fascination of the race and the candidates. It was difficult not to be caught up in the grace and charm of the Kennedys, and Bob was a ready tutor, indefatigable in explaining the politics and the personalities to this English neophyte who wouldn't stop asking questions. We all remember the results of that riveting election year.

After his own graduation he did go on to pursue successfully the dreams he had nurtured at Merton. He taught with distinction at his alma mater, Duke University, and rose to the point where he became Vice Provost and Dean of Trinity College of Arts and Sciences, but then the politics bug got him and in 1974 he went to the House of Representatives as a member for his own Texas district. After two terms there he was asked by President Carter to become US Ambassador-at-Large and Coordinator for Mexican Affairs. He then served in Washington as one of the two senators for Texas and moved on thereafter to become US Ambassador to Burundi. He left that only because assassins tried to murder him as a result of his international condemnation of the government-inspired murders of Hutu refugees.

He saw further government service as US Ambassador to Botswana before retiring with his wife and young family of three in 1999. Merton College provided accommodation and academic support in 2000 to enable him and his wife Kathleen to write a book about their experiences in Burundi (*From Bloodshed to Hope in Burundi: Our Embassy Years during Genocide*, 2007).

He continued teaching and lecturing in America for the next 16 years until declining health caused him to retire permanently from active life, although his mind remained active till the end. He died at home on 30 April 2022.

I learnt so much from Bob, mostly in long phone calls over many years. This learning continued until our final face-to-face conversation in the family home in New Braunfels,

Texas in November 2019. When I arrived for a four-night stay, I asked him in my naïve way if he could give me a brief run-down of his political career, thinking it might furnish a conversation for an evening. Many of you will remember this remarkable man as an inveterate and well-informed narrator of events and personalities and four days later, as I left the house for Austin airport to return home, Bob said: 'So that's it, Joe; that's about the story of my career. When you come back next, can we talk about yours?' That 'next visit' was to have been in November of this year and Bob has been spared the unspectacular memories of a retired English schoolmaster.

I must finish with a quote, as Bob often did. His great love in literature was Shakespeare and some lines from the very end of *Julius Caesar* seem to me to describe Bob better than any lines I have ever seen or heard spoken in praise of one human being by another.

*His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, 'This was a man!'*

Joe McDonald (1959)



Malcolm Stuart David Faber, 1940–2021.

Malcolm was born on 14 December 1940 at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Rhyl, to where his mother had been evacuated in 1940 because of the severe Blitz bombing of Birmingham where she lived with her husband Harry, a Birmingham solicitor.

When Malcolm was seven he started his education at the Edgbaston Preparatory School, Birmingham, where he excelled academically and in most sports. In September 1954 he won an Exhibition Scholarship to Clifton College in Bristol where he entered Polack's House, the Jewish house. Again, he was in the top rank academically and in sports, and was an outstanding boxer captaining the school team, and also became head of his house as a senior school Praeposter (prefect). After achieving very high AS-level marks in Latin, Greek and Ancient History he won his place at Merton to read Jurisprudence under John Barton. (He was followed to Merton in 1965 by his youngest brother, Trevor, who also read Jurisprudence under John Barton.)

At College Malcolm continued his interest in all sports and in particular in amateur boxing. Most of his contemporaries knew little of this sport, and Malcolm was their source of education – that it was all about speed and footwork, and not punching. He was selected for the University team in 1959 and gained his first Blue in 1960 when he beat fellow Mertonian and Rhodes scholar Kris Kristofferson (1958) in an elimination bout; he won his Varsity match, and did so again in 1961, and again in 1962 when he captained the team at the Town Hall to a memorable defeat of Cambridge. Some of us, who had become great supporters of Malcolm in his bouts, recall that occasion when he was in fine form.

Malcolm was a very sociable person and many anecdotes are told about him. **Martin Hawkins** recalls being dragged out of bed one sunny June morning in 1961 to go with Malcolm and two others to the second Test at Edgbaston against Australia. They enjoyed the cricket and had a sumptuous supper with Malcolm's parents in Edgbaston, followed by an erratic drive back to Oxford in Martin's car!

Bill Woods, a fellow lawyer, adds: 'Given our very different backgrounds, it was perhaps surprising how quickly we became friends. But among Malcolm's many qualities was a great sense of humour, which soon led to quite a bit of mutual leg-pulling.

'We were both reading Jurisprudence, and we would swap notes about how our tutor, John Barton, (described as "an Oxford don of the old school"), entertained himself, while

we wended our way through the weekly essay. He would for example groom Monty, his pet poodle, or clean his collection of pipes.

'We also swapped notes about our respective sporting interests. While Malcolm was a Blue and a successful Captain of Boxing, the rowing VIII, of which I was a member, had to be satisfied with rowing over third in the Summer Vllls. But at least I never turned up for breakfast with a black eye!

'In short, the warm memories which I have of Merton stem from the good times I spent with people like him.'

After going down with his degree, Malcolm went to London to complete his solicitor's articles in the firm of Herbert Oppenheimer, Nathan & Vandyk, and when fully qualified returned to Birmingham to join his father's solicitor's practice as a partner. In due course his younger brother, Roger, joined them in the practice as a partner. Malcolm had several strings to his solicitor's bow including being a member of the Birmingham Law Society Council, prosecuting solicitor for the Midlands Area Board of Trade, and solicitor to the Smethwick Police Force. He continued to play rugby and cricket for local clubs, and then took up soccer for a pub team where he became a famous right back known as 'the Chest Freezer' with his motto '*ils ne passeront pas*'.

While in Mexico for the 1970 World Football Cup he met his first wife Liliane, who was a lecturer at New York University and a beauty queen. They had two lovely daughters, Anna and Stephanie, who are now successful businesswomen in the world of entertainment. Sadly, Liliane died in her thirties, leaving Malcolm to bring up the girls, which he did magnificently. He met his second wife, Patricia, who was a schoolteacher in Solihull and they married on Christmas Eve in 1982.

Malcolm and Roger retired from their practice at the same time in 2012.

In November 2018 Malcolm suffered a fall which fractured his spine, and he spent the next two years in hospitals having treatment, but never recovered full use of his legs and was wheelchair-bound. He never lost his fortitude and

cheerful attitude to life, but, after another fall, he fractured an arm and then contracted sepsis and passed away on 18 September 2021. He leaves his wife, daughters, brothers and four grandchildren. He will be remembered by all as strong in mind and body.

David Shipp (1959) and Trevor Faber (1965)



John James (Jack) MacIntosh, 30 July 1934 – 15 February 2020.

Jack was a New Zealander who studied and worked in Oxford before moving on to become a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Calgary, taking Canadian nationality and spending the rest of his life there. He arrived at Merton in 1959, completed a BPhil in Philosophy in 1961, was a lecturer at Merton from 1961 to 1963 and a Fellow and lecturer at St John's College from 1963 to 1966 before moving to Canada.

Roger Gould (1959) writes: 'Others may know more than I do about his time in Oxford. As a mere undergraduate, I didn't move in his graduate circles! However, he clearly made his mark very noticeably in Calgary. The university's tribute to him began as follows.

'The Department of Philosophy is mourning the loss of Dr Jack MacIntosh, PhD, who passed away on February 15 at the age of 85. MacIntosh was one of the UCalgary's original professors, joining the Department of Philosophy as an associate professor in 1966 when our university was still the University of Alberta at Calgary. He was promoted to professor in 1970. His primary research interests were in the history and philosophy of science and the philosophy of religion. He was one of the world's foremost experts on

the 17th-century natural philosopher, chemist, physicist and inventor Robert Boyle. After earning his BA and MA at the University of New Zealand (now University of Auckland) MacIntosh went on to the University of Oxford where he earned his doctorate. Before coming to Calgary, he served as a Fellow and lecturer at St John's College, Oxford. He was a highly respected and extensively published researcher and an inspiring, much-loved teacher for generations of undergraduate and graduate students.

'He is survived by his partner, Karen Walde, sons Geoffrey and Daniel, daughters Becky and Tess, and three grandchildren.'

1960



Jasper Holmes, 1941–2021.

Jasper Hamilton Holmes, Merton 1960–62, died on 6 December at his home in Wiltshire. He came up to read Law but did not meet with the approval of his tutor, the formidably bearded Dr Barton (or his equally formidable giant black poodle, Monty) and was rusticated at the end of his second year, having in the meantime coxed the Merton First Eight and begun to develop his entrepreneurial talents, importing silks and antique artworks from India. In this he was following in the footsteps of his Danish mother, a lifetime collector of Indian art and artefacts.

Jasper chose not to resume his studies, instead soon making a successful foray into the notoriously closed shop of the rag trade; and in the late sixties and early seventies Stirling Cooper Jasper shirts became the height of Carnaby Street fashion, outstanding for their innovative style and choice of materials.

Next came a launch into the wine and spirit trade, the field in which Jasper made a lifetime career, and within a few years his Magnum chain of off-licences had become well known and highly respected in the west of England. It was now that the disease that was to dog the last two decades of his life first made its appearance. At first laughingly dismissed as back pain due to lifting too many crates of champagne, it proved instead to be multiple sclerosis. It slowly imprisoned him over the next 20 years but revealed the measure of the man, for he bore his worsening condition stoically, never uttering a word of complaint or self-pity.

However, MS can be a very slow, if ineluctable, affliction and in the coming years Jasper continued to polish his skills as a trout fisherman on the Test and the Blackwater. These skills he passed on to his sons, whose fishing has since taken them as far afield as Patagonia and Iceland.

Then there were the memorable holidays in Greece and France, a favourite being at a charming farmhouse near the amusingly named Condom in the Gers, home of the Three Musketeers. To these I was invariably invited, for Jasper was the soul of hospitality and his courage in adversity was matched only by his generosity.

An example of the latter can be seen in his continuing relations with Merton. He came to our Gaudies, kept up the friendships he had made as an undergraduate, and his very generous donation to the College Boat Club enabled the 2011 purchase of the scarlet coaching launch which gave many years of service and bore his name in large white letters port and starboard.

Jasper's home for the last few decades of his life was in the charming Wiltshire village of Milton Lilbourne, where the family soon became popular local figures and where he served for many years on the parish council. It is a friendly, close-knit community where invitations abound to lunches, drinks, dinners and garden parties, all of which Jasper was able to enjoy as his MS slowly but inexorably confined him to a wheelchair, a weekly highlight being Wednesday evening drinks with friends and neighbours at the village local, the Bruce Arms. He celebrated his 80th birthday with many of these only three weeks before his death.

Jasper, who never lost his sense of humour and gift for repartee, is survived by Kate, his wife and loving sparring partner of close on 50 years, and by their sons Thomas and Seth. He has left a gap which is hard to fill in many people's lives, including my own.

Bruce Walter (1960)



Martin Roberts, 9 October 1941 – 7 November 2021.

Martin Roberts came up to Merton as a Postmaster to read History in 1960. He had been at Christ's Hospital school where his father, who died young, had taught history. His tutors at Merton included R.H.C (Ralph) Davis, who had himself at an earlier stage in his career taught history at Christ's Hospital, as well as Roger Highfield and John Roberts, in their different ways a demanding and impressive team. Martin was able and ambitious. He enjoyed the History papers – particularly the one on the Italian Renaissance for which he had a travel scholarship to study in Florence. He narrowly missed a First and was disappointed. Perhaps he suffered under the weight of the expectations others had of him.

He was also a sociable man who enjoyed Merton to the full, from the Rugby Club to the Avignon Society, the latter a paper-reading group founded by Bob Moore (1959) in protest against the perceived exclusivity of the then Bodley Club. In politics he was a committed Labour supporter, as was common during the last phase of what became 13 years of Conservative government. It is hard to remember that David Butler was soon to publish his influential study of voting behaviour, predicting that Labour would become the natural majority party in the UK, as (among other things)

the pre-1914 working class Conservatives died out. One of them was Bert Gardner, the diminutive but assertive scout on Grove I, who remembered being reprimanded by the idealist philosopher, F.H. Bradley, for using his hat brush to sweep the crumbs off his dining table. Bert surprised Martin once by saying to him 'I suppose you're an atheist' – an exaggeration but on the right lines. Music was a passion for Martin and particularly opera – he found time to visit Glyndebourne with his family during term. He also enjoyed other good things, for instance the pleasure of a pale lager after fine brandy at a Postmasters' dinner. But above all, and most importantly, he was an immensely likeable man, trusted by all.

From Merton, he took the Diploma in Education and then went into teaching. He enjoyed his first job at Leeds Grammar School but after six years he decided to move to the comprehensive sector. He became head of history in Harlow and deputy headmaster in Bedfordshire before, in 1981, he was appointed headmaster at the Cherwell School in North Oxford. Here he found his true *métier*. He steered the school over the next 22 years while it grew from a secondary modern of some 300 pupils to a comprehensive of 1,800. By common consent it was a success story (with an 'Outstanding' rating from Ofsted) and Martin was at the heart of that success. He had the great gift of listening to people and they warmed to him.

He also found time and energy to publish – in addition to the history of the Cherwell School – a number of A-level textbooks on British and European history with OUP and Macmillan and, more unusually, a three-volume history (for schools) of Pakistan from ancient times to the modern period with OUP Pakistan. He was also active in other bodies, including the Academic Steering Committee of the Prince's Teaching Institute which offers continuing professional development to teachers and head teachers. In the 1980s he became a founder member of EuroClio, the European history teachers' association, where staff from across Europe met and shared their experience. This became particularly interesting with the end of the Cold War division of Europe after 1989. All in all, he was a remarkable example of the Merton history school's contribution to teaching. He remained, of course, a loyal and active Mertonian.

In 2015 he suffered a stroke which left him partly paralysed. But with the devoted care of his wife, Diana, he continued to be active visiting exhibitions, theatre and opera in London as well as films and streamed opera at the Phoenix cinema in Walton Street. His family, Diana, two children and five grandchildren gave him enormous pleasure and survive him. A very large company attended his funeral, which was a true celebration of his life with many tributes — and the music he loved.

Jonathan Wright (1960)



Mike Williams, 1937–2022.

Mike was one of our older undergraduates, having taken both a degree and a DipEd at Cardiff before reading for his Lit Hum at Merton. He was a constantly cheerful and ebullient presence, his goodwill visible to all in the Freshman's photo, where judging by his smile he was clearly the happiest man on parade. Once again, 50 years later in the Golden Anniversary photo, his beaming face stood out among all of us. **Bruce Gilbert** recalls recruiting Mike's services for hockey, a game he had never played, but at which he turned out to be a natural. In addition to starring at hockey we allowed him, being Welsh, to play rugby for the College, his passion for the game culminating in a state of unalloyed euphoria, when in 2005 Wales became the first team ever to win the Six Nations Grand Slam playing more games away than at home.

He and Rosemary were close from the time he came to Merton, but there was a minor rift in the lute during his early days here, which **Leslie Epstein** felt required swift intervention: so he parked Mike in his one-strap Morgan and drove him off to the wilds of Selsey for amicable debate with

Rosemary, this leading happily to a rapprochement. **Bruce Gilbert** recalls that Rosemary's music teacher, Percy Fletcher, wrote a Bridal March for her, which he (Bruce) played at their wedding in 1963.

Mike was then teaching Classics at the King's School in Rochester, which he followed with a stint lecturing, again in Classics, at Northwestern Polytechnic. Thereafter he joined the Civil Service, making his way up to being appointed Deputy Director of the Civil Service Selection Board in 1977. In 1984 he was seconded to the Cabinet Office, where inter alia he assisted Sir **Robert Andrew** (1949) in conducting a review of Government legal services. He left the Civil Service in 1991 and pursued several senior roles in the administration of higher education before deciding to retire in 1998.

He was as busy and as multifariously occupied in retirement as he was during his working life, variously being involved in male voice choral singing (the Rushmoor Oddfellows Male Voice Choir), assisting people with learning difficulties (Mencap), acting as treasurer of the local Community Care organisation, and somehow finding time in all this activity to maintain regular visits to his daughter Amanda and her two children in Switzerland, helping steer her and her sister, Lucy, through some unusually troublesome spells. Following his retirement, he kept *Postmaster* cheerily informed of his life and times, he and Rosemary celebrating their golden anniversary in 2013, Mike continuing throughout to make us aware of his unceasingly sunny disposition: he was altogether just the man to have around when you were feeling low.

Keith Pickering (1960)



Brian Winston, 1941–2022.

During his first term at Merton Brian was remembered by a contemporary thus: ‘Brian was then, and remains, the cleverest person I’ve ever known.’ Pretty accurate, given Brian’s subsequent achievements in life. He came up to Merton bent on keeping kosher, initially not an easy task, given that his first-year roommate, Sheridan Morley, had little awareness of the exigencies of the regime, leading on one occasion to his using Brian’s milk knife to cut meat. This caused Brian to throw an epi, tossing the offending implement with a cry of pain out the window into the quad, happily without casualty. Later, Brian occupied his own ground floor room, the bedroom window of which gave on to the non-collegiate street outside. This afforded the opportunity of demonstrating Brian’s altruistic feelings towards his fellow man. At the time, young maidens were required to be off College premises by 9pm, frequently missing this deadline by being occupied in various pursuits, doubtless intellectual, which led to many a pre-dawn exodus of escapees clambering over Brian’s recumbent form in desperate search of the outside world.

Brian took a degree in Jurisprudence then left Merton, guided by his intrinsically peripatetic nature, to pursue a stellar career. After eight years in media, he began his lifelong association with academe in an Oxfordshire school, moving then to university life successively in Bradford, Glasgow and New York, where he was Chair of Cinema Studies, and during which time he won an Emmy in 1985 for his script in the documentary series *Heritage: Civilization and the Jews* for WNET-TV. Subsequently he became Dean of the College of Communication at Penn State University, Director of the

Centre for Journalism Studies at the University of Wales, College of Cardiff, and Head of the School of Communication, Design and Media at the University of Westminster. Eventually he settled down in 2002 at the University of Lincoln, where for the rest of his life he remained closely involved with the city’s Jewish community, becoming its Pro-Vice-Chancellor until being obliged to give the role up at the statutory age of 65, whereupon in 2007 the university awarded him its highest honour, the title of the Lincoln Professor.

Throughout all these years he somehow managed to find time to publish a steady stream of books, 20 in all, his *Media, Technology and Society* being named the best book of 1998 by the American Association for History and Computing and the last of which *The Roots of Fake News: Objecting to Objective Journalism* being written in collaboration with his son, Matthew, a fellow academic at the University of Leicester. He maintained a constant and witty discourse with *Postmaster* throughout, latterly making it clear that he felt the arrival of first one, and then another, grandson, thanks to his daughter, Jessica, was a blessing above rubies. With his unfailingly self-deprecatory comments, his constant good humour and wry observations on the demented world around us, his is a voice which will be greatly missed.

Hasta luego, Brian.

Keith Pickering (1960)

1967



Stuart Duncan Macdonald Jack, CVO: 6 August 1949 – 16 February 2022.

Stuart Jack read Russian Literature (and for his first year, French). He was a member of the Oxford Union and played an active role as secretary and member of Jacari. His student days provided ample room for adventure: his first summer touring the Soviet Union with friends in a clapped-out Land Rover, and his third year at a provincial Soviet university in Voronezh with a British Council scholarship. Never one to shy away from an unreliable vehicle, an eventful camping trip in a 2CV to the South of France marked the end of his Finals. These trips served as lessons in navigating foreign bureaucracy and developing some early cooking skills.

Following a First in 1971, he briefly considered a DPhil in obscure early Russian novelists of the pre-Pushkin era. Instead, he applied to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) and, on acceptance, deferred it in favour of a year of adventure as a VSO English teacher in Luang Prabang, Laos. This was one of Stuart's happiest years, despite scorpions in his shoes, an incorrigible monkey ransacking his home, and the impact of the Vietnam War (the latter resulting in bombs regularly landing close to his classroom, and near misses with the North Vietnamese Army and a Viet Cong death squad).

The year 1972 saw the start of a long, varied career as a British diplomat. His first year was at the Eastern Europe and Soviet Department in London, where much of his work was determined by a breakdown in bilateral relations with

Moscow and tit-for-tat diplomatic expulsions. With no immediate prospect of British diplomats receiving new visas for the Soviet Union, Stuart was trained up in another 'hard' language – Japanese – in preparation for his first overseas posting to Japan, where he met his future wife, Mariko, and to which he developed a lifelong attachment. A two-year stint in London followed, after which he returned to Moscow in 1981 as First Secretary and Deputy Head of Chancery. There, both he and Mariko learnt to adapt to the rigours of Soviet life, stockpiling and bartering with other expats for baby products and wrapping up their Ford Cortina in blankets and cardboard to mitigate the impact of significantly sub-zero temperatures.

In 1984, Stuart spent a year 'on loan' to the Bank of England, looking at ways to address the indebtedness of various Eastern and Central European countries. Returning to Tokyo in 1985 as First Secretary in the Economic Department, he successfully negotiated the acceptance of foreign lawyers to practise in Japan, personally drafting some of the text in the Foreign Lawyers Act of 1987. He and Mariko were also heavily involved in setting up the British School in Tokyo, where he later served as a governor.

As a Scotsman, Stuart was particularly proud of his role in negotiating the reduction in Japan of discriminatory import tax and tariffs on Scotch whisky (something he later wrote about in *Britain & Japan: Biographical Portraits*, edited by Sir Hugh Cortazzi). This tax reduction was the principal catalyst for the development of a flourishing whisky trade between the UK and Japan.

In 1989, Stuart was appointed to the Foreign Office Inspectorate, travelling to 40 embassies, consulates and high commissions in 26 different countries to review their operations and finances. His findings were generally well received; it was only on one occasion that he was locked up in an empty conference room by an angry ambassador.

As new Consul-General in St Petersburg in 1992 (following the collapse of the Soviet Union), Stuart's responsibility was to set up and establish the British Consulate – one of the most challenging posts of his career. There he hosted the country's first royal visit since the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, welcoming (variously) HRH The Prince of Wales and

HM The Queen to visit the new mission, and resulting in his being honoured as a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (CVO). His role also involved regular meetings with the then Deputy Mayor, one Vladimir Putin, to negotiate the opening up of St Petersburg to British businesses. It was also thanks to Stuart's relationship with the Japanese Consul-General that the infamous 'tank chase' scene in James Bond's *GoldenEye* could be filmed (his Japanese counterpart initially refusing permission for filming outside their consulate until Stuart convinced him otherwise).

As Head of Research Analysts (1996–99), Stuart headed the FCO's body of geographical experts. This was followed in 1999 by his third four-year posting to Tokyo, this time as Minister, or Deputy Head of Mission. During this period, he entertained extensively at his Embassy home, welcoming visiting dignitaries, and on one occasion former old Mertonian HIM Emperor Naruhito of Japan (1983). He led British preparations for the FIFA World Cup in Tokyo in 2002, earning a personal thanks from the Japanese Cabinet.

Back in London, Stuart oversaw key security and intelligence reviews. In the wake of increasing international terrorist threats, the then Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, announced the commissioning of an independent review of the FCO's security strategy for posts abroad, to be carried out by Stuart. The Jack Report and the Jack Guidelines 2004 were summarised in a report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons and adopted in full.

Following the success of the security review, Stuart was asked to step in as Director: Iraq, which involved regular meetings at COBRA and No. 10 and time spent in theatre in Iraq. He also oversaw a key review of intelligence analysis across government – a follow-up to the high-profile Butler report and the apparent misinterpretation of intelligence about weapons of mass destruction (WMD). His analysis involved a review of the Joint Intelligence Committee itself, and led to recommendations that would reduce groupthink hazards and professionalise governmental intelligence analysis. The details of his recommendations remain secret.

Stuart's final posting was as Governor of the Cayman Islands from 2005 to 2009. There, he oversaw the introduction

of a new modernised Constitution, overhauled hurricane preparedness in the wake of Hurricane Ivan, improved arrangements for parole, and tackled issues within the judiciary. He valued his time in Cayman as one of the most interesting but also most challenging. He placed principles ahead of popularity, authorising investigations into alleged police corruption. This turned out to be a longer process than anyone had anticipated and one that, contrary to public opinion, he was explicitly unable to curtail or interfere with once initiated. It was typical of Stuart's integrity that while the investigations were ongoing, he bore the weight of silence, choosing not to rise to the criticisms of others.

Stuart flourished in retirement. He carried over his work ethic from decades in the Diplomatic Service and invested his skills, time and effort in the local community. He was passionately involved in numerous charitable causes during his time as a member, and subsequently president, of Bromley Rotary Club. He set up a youth award scheme to recognise young carers and students who contribute to society. Latterly, he became a prolific writer, dabbling in children's stories for his grandchildren, as well as penning five fictional novels, each with a nod to his overseas experiences. Above all, he was in his element with his five grandsons whom he showered with love, wisdom and occasional titbits on linguistics, environmental issues and current affairs.

Stuart died on 16 February 2022, aged 72. He is survived by his wife Mariko, three children Katherine, Sarah and Andrew, five grandchildren, and his brother Michael. His unfailing moral compass, encyclopaedic knowledge, brilliant intellect and incredible storytelling will be missed by all who knew him.

By his family and Rory Khilkoff-Boulding (1967)

1968



Nigel Harvey Webster, 1949 – 2021.

Nigel was born and spent his formative years in the mining village of Worsborough Bridge near the South Yorkshire town of Barnsley. His dad, Fred, was a master butcher, who built a successful family business after the Second World War. Prior to decorated service in the RAF, Fred was at Merton, in the late 1930s. His parents were very proud when Nigel followed him to the same college. (Incidentally, for those who have read the autobiography of the Chinese renowned scholar Yang Xianyi, *White Tiger*, Fred was a good friend of Yang's at Merton and he features in the book.)

Attending Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Wakefield for ten years, Nigel was a studious pupil who passed through the academic years and exams with consummate ease. He finished his sixth form studies by flying through his A levels and passing his Oxford entry examination in 1967 at the age of just 18. Nigel excelled at chess and was a major force in the school chess club. By the age of 15 he was a match for most amateur chess players, particularly his dad. Biology was also one of his key interests and while in the sixth form he helped organise and manage the school's biology laboratory.

Another passion for him at this time was travel, hiking and, in his later teens, more extreme activities such as rock climbing. His parents made an attempt to ban him from this sport. Nigel, being Nigel, just hid his climbing paraphernalia in the garden and continued. At the age of 15 he managed to cause mayhem by getting lost in the Peak District when on a hike during the winter months. While the emergency services

were scrambled and his parents roamed the hills, Nigel strolled into the house and put the kettle on. Before Merton his flair for independence was very evident. Excursions would include hitching to see his brother Saul at the University of Lampeter.

Nigel went up to Merton in 1968. His tutor was Dennis Parsons. While at College, outside his studies, he loved to spend his spare time listening to an eclectic range of music. This included bands such as Grateful Dead, Dr Strangely Strange and the Incredible String band, attending concerts with his close friends and, at times, with Saul. His knowledge of music of this period influenced his younger brother Neil, who has carried this music with him throughout his life. His friends at Merton recall that he was an enthusiastic proponent of the different lifestyle philosophies, widespread in the late 1960s. They remember the regular strumming of his beloved Yamaha guitar. His 'old box' (as he called it) is now with his niece in Wiltshire and still belts out Dylan songs. After a colourful three years at Merton, he graduated with a degree in agriculture.

Following Merton, his life went from colourful to exciting, including many forays to exotic lands and unusual places. This period of his life ended in 1976 with him living in Lerwick on the Shetland isles crewing boats off the North Sea oil rigs.

In 1977 Nigel emigrated to Australia. He settled in Darwin in the Northern Territories working for the government. He met and married Laura (from Dalmatia) in Darwin and they took advantage of the generous holidays, by travelling the globe to such destinations as Peru and Tibet and dropping into England to catch up with family now and again. He still enjoyed sailing. His own boat was called *Roast Beef* with the tender called *Yorkshire Pudding*. He also helped crew chartered boats out of Darwin.

Nigel and Laura retired to Dorrigo in New South Wales in 2001. A place with a more temperate climate for potential retirees. His house was typical Nigel. A bungalow in a large plot surrounded by wildlife, flora and fauna. He spent a quiet and happy 20 years in Dorrigo, making many friends and observing the world through his calm but perceptive eye. In his later years he still travelled the world, this time from his computer. Sadly, Laura died in 2019 and Nigel died of cancer

in July 2021 after a two-year battle. The stories from his 'time difference' late-night phone calls and email updates will be missed by his family and friends in England.

Friends greet you on the way, say,

'There you go'

You may wonder where you're supposed to be going

Dr Strangely Strange

Hopefully, Nigel has gone to quiet rolling hills, wildlife and music. Gone but not forgotten.

Rest in peace.

Neil Webster, Saul Webster, family and close friends

1976



Patrick Huntrods (known as Pat Fish), 20 December 1957 – 5 October 2021.

I first met Patrick in Rose Lane annex, both freshmen. He was always very open, with a dry sense of humour, kind hearted and my first friend in Merton. Within a few minutes we found we were both musicians. He was a talented sax player, song writer and singer. His subject, Classics, always played a secondary role, but he had a pretty comprehensive library of classics books, which of course he had read long before Merton.

We formed our first band within weeks and some will remember us playing in the JCR. By our second year we had formed the next version, The Institution, and we played

various balls and a few gigs in London. I still have a tape of that band made in the University recording studio.

Pat went on to create The Jazz Butcher in 1983 and has been a prolific composer of alternative rock all his life. He has produced 15 albums, one scheduled for release this year: he toured the world and made a devoted worldwide fan base. It is hard to describe his music because it is so original but he was above all a master of lyrics, totally original and meaningful. His website jazzbutcher.com is full of tributes from a vast list of fans.

Some quotes follow.

'Thank you, Pat Fish, for being a light in so many lives. I will miss that twinkle in your eye, the sound of your voice and guitar and the many recent visits to Fishy Mansions. Your living room concerts were a ray of hope in a dark time and it still shines. Raising a glass in your honour.'

'Pat continually strummed his guitar and sang, like a songbird happy to be alive. You were always so funny and so kind ...'

'More than a brilliant songwriter, he was truly a lovely person.'

'God, your music, untouchable in my eyes ...'

'Thank you for so many great songs, memories and smiles.'

'He was a bloody lovely chap.'

His cat Raoul will miss him too.

Rest in peace, Pat.

Jonathan Stephenson (1976)





Alumni Events 2022-23

Further details of all events are available from the Development Office. We add events to the schedule throughout the year and regularly update the Merton website with information as it becomes available. Chapel and Choir events are also available on the College website.

October

- 16 1962 Diamond Jubilee Lunch
Location: Merton
- 22 1972 Golden Jubilee Lunch
Location: Merton

November

- 23 Merton Michaelmas Drinks
Location: London
- 26 Merton Winter Ball
Location: Merton
- 30 Merton Lawyers' Association Annual Meeting
Location: London

December

- 09 Merton Society Carol Service
Location: All Saints, Margaret Street, London

March

- 18 Gaudy for the years 1969 – 1972
Location: Merton

May

- 14 Town and Gown
Location: Oxford
- TBC Merton Society Annual Lecture
Location: London
- 27 Merton College Boat Club Dinner
Location: Oxford



June

- 23 1963 Diamond Jubilee Lunch
- 24 Merton Society Garden Party

September

- 24 Gaudy for the years 2012 – 2014
Location: Merton

October

- 21 1973 Golden Jubilee Lunch
Location: Merton

Upcoming Gaudies

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| March 2024 | 1973 – 1976 |
| September 2024 | 2004 – 2008 |
| March 2025 | 1992 – 1995 |
| September 2025 | 1996 – 1998 |
| March 2026 | 1977 – 1980 |
| September 2026 | 1999 – 2003 |
| March 2027 | 1981 – 1984 |
| September 2027 | 2015 – 2017 |



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