



The Pelican

Issue 32 Autumn 2023



Corpus Christi College
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Contents

Welcome: Rachel Lawson	1
Fit for a King: Corpus at the Coronation	2
40 YEARS ON : WOMEN OF CORPUS	
Professor Philippa Hoskin	4
Professor Alison Smith	8
Professor Emma Wilson	12
FEATURES	
Francesca Warner:	
Obstacles to entrepreneurial growth	16
Cat Davison: EduSpots	19
Dr Alexis Joannides: The brain drain	22
Dr Peter Pedersen: SPIRIT of exploration	26
Dr Charles Read: Lessons Learned	28
LECKHAMPTON AT 60	
Leckhampton Anniversary Weekend	31
Professor Mark Berlin: The post-grad experience	34
Leckhampton: Facing Forward	35
CORPUS LIFE	
Dr John C Taylor OBE: Time flies	37
50 years of the Nicholas Bacon Law Society	40
Nick Bliss and Peter Hall: Rowing – then and now	42
Tim Rhodes: 30 years a boatman	45
Mayeule Huard: La vie à Cambridge	46
Extracurricular	47
Miscellany	50
Gardens Diary	52
Corpus Crossword	Inside back cover

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Welcome

Rachel Lawson

Fellow and Director of Development and Alumni Relations

Welcome to your 2023 edition of *The Pelican* magazine, the first full edition since 2019. *The Pelican* provides a wonderful opportunity to share College triumphs. There's rarely a day goes by without something important, special or historic happening, and Corpus' role in the Coronation (page 2) qualifies in each of these categories, with further details to be shared for posterity in *The Record*.

The time lapse between publications has given us the opportunity to ring the changes, design wise, and I hope you are uplifted by the articles here, which shine a light on the scholarliness and accomplishments of our students, Fellows and Old Members. As ever, it is just a snapshot.

In this edition, if there can be said to be any overarching theme it is anniversaries and celebrations. It is a privilege to communicate some of the buzz of College life. The articles about Professor Philippa Hoskin (page 4), Dr John C Taylor OBE (page 37) and the 60th anniversary of Leckhampton (page 31) are further testament to this, and we hope you enjoy reading the articles as much as we have enjoyed commissioning them.

The 60th anniversary of Leckhampton weekend in November was very special, and celebrated Corpus' status as the first college to open a postgraduate site. But now it is time for renewal, and we need to upgrade the Leckhampton campus for its next 60 years and beyond (project cost £7-8 million). This project has been defined after a review of the condition, form and function of the whole College estate, in a masterplanning exercise by WWM architects which was presented to the Fellowship in 2022.

It is the people who make a place, and some are more visible than others. I would like to thank all our contributors to this publication, principally written and overseen by our Head of Communications, Fiona Gilsonan, to whom I owe particular thanks; and to recognise the tireless work of the Development Office team and College staff.

This publication is written with you in mind, and I am lucky to have the opportunity to meet so many of you in my role. Thank you to everyone who supports our work and, as ever, please get in touch if you are inspired to donate to our current and future activities.





Fit for a King Corpus at the Coronation

The Augustine Gospels are one of the great treasures of the nation and, given their provenance, it was fitting that they be presented by the Master to King Charles III at his Coronation.

The sixth-century Gospels of Augustine of Canterbury are the oldest surviving illustrated Latin Gospels in the world and the oldest non-archaeological artefact of any kind to have survived in England, continuously owned and in use for 1,400 years. Matthew Parker acquired them for his collection and they have been in the care of the Parker Library for 450 years.

This precious manuscript was shown to HM the King (then Prince of Wales) when he visited the Parker Library in March 2001. He immediately recognised its importance as the most precious and important medieval manuscript to survive in

England. Twenty years later he requested that it be carried in his Coronation on Saturday 6 May 2023 at Westminster Abbey.

Their fundamental significance to the nation was recognised when the Gospels were inscribed in 2023 on the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register.

The Master, Professor Christopher Kelly, carried the Gospels in the ceremony. He said “The Parker Library is at the heart of Corpus Christi College and reflects the centuries of teaching and research that have been our core mission since 1352. I am delighted that the King recognised the outstanding significance

of the Augustine Gospels, one of the great treasures of Britain. Corpus Christi College – the only college in Oxford or Cambridge to have been founded by townspeople – is proud to hold in safekeeping for the nation a manuscript that has been in continuous use for teaching, preaching and research for over 1,400 years.”

There and back again

The Augustine Gospels rarely leave the Parker Library’s secure and climate-controlled vault, so Director of the Parker Library Professor Philippa Hoskin made careful preparations to ensure their safe passage to and from Westminster Abbey. These included a custom display mount to be carried by the Master, designed to present the best view of the full manuscript while not compromising its safety. Head of Conservation Flavio Marzo built a custom phase (archival) box out of conservation-grade boards to house the Gospels in transit, and they were then further placed in a closed, padded and rigid case. Philippa transported the book to London in the safe care of a driver who specialises in moving precious artefacts. She accompanied the Gospels on every stage of their journey.

After several days of rehearsals at Westminster Abbey, the Coronation service began. Philippa handed the Gospels to the Master behind the altar screen. The Master processed with the Gospels and held them during the Gospel reading, open at the page illustrated with the portrait of the Apostle Luke. After the reading, the Master presented the Gospels to the King, after which he returned them to Philippa, who immediately repacked them for their return journey home.

A few weeks after the Coronation, Philippa arranged for the Gospels to be displayed in the College Chapel for viewing first by the staff and students of Corpus, and then by several hundred members of the public. “It was wonderful to hear the different reasons people wanted to view the book. Many people had a very emotional reaction. There were staff who had seen the Master on television and wanted to see the book he had shown to the King. There were people who had seen the book before and wanted to see it again, like an old friend. And there were people who told me they had waited 40 years to see the Gospels,” she said.



Professor Philippa Hoskin speaks to visitors at the public display of the Augustine Gospels in the Corpus Chapel.



About the Gospels

Like many medieval manuscripts, the Gospels were written in Latin on vellum (prepared animal skin) by Italian monks in the late sixth century. In 601, they were sent from Rome by Pope Gregory the Great to help Augustine, who had been dispatched from his monastery five years earlier to convert the pagan English to Christianity. Within a few years Augustine was successful in his mission when Ethelbert became the first English king to convert to Christianity. Augustine himself became the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

Professor Philippa Hoskin said, “This book is a key formative moment in British history. Books were fundamental to the success of Augustine’s mission. Without this volume we would lack a tangible connection to the point in British history where the influence of the Roman Church began through the teaching of the Gospels.”

Only two illustrated pages survive, the frontispiece for the Gospel of Luke (above) and a further page of 12 framed vignettes depicting scenes from the Passion of Christ. These illustrations have been studied by Professor George van Kooten, Lady Margaret’s Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge. He notes “It’s very easy to follow Christ through the succession of scenes from the Gospels, from his arrival at Jerusalem to the carrying of the cross to the crucifixion.”

Philippa reflects on the experience: “I think what I learned most from the Coronation was how beautifully the Gospels fitted with the Coronation as a process, and with the other objects that featured in the ceremony.”



Director of the Parker Library and Donnelley Fellow Librarian Professor Philippa Hoskin is bringing people to the Parker – and Parker to the people.

Photograph by Pari Naderi

When Philippa Hoskin saw the job advert for the role of Parker Fellow Librarian in 2019, she was teaching at the University of Lincoln, where she had spent ten years setting up a centre of medieval studies. She was proud of the work she had done in Lincoln, but the role at the Parker seemed like it was ‘built for someone like me’. A historian of the high middle ages who specialises in the religious, legal and administrative history of the English Church, Philippa has a background both in archives and academia. “I am interested in the study and cataloguing of manuscripts, and also in their preservation and care,” she says. “And I am passionate about outreach around manuscripts and early books.” Philippa and the Parker seemed to be a perfect fit.

Nearly four years on, her role at the Parker continues to tick all the boxes. Despite the intervention of COVID, Philippa has welcomed scholars from around the world, encouraged innovative research into manuscripts using both traditional and new technological methodologies, and overseen a variety of multidisciplinary exhibitions for College members and the public. Parker on the Web, the digital collection of over 500 of Parker’s manuscripts is widely used by scholars and non-academics around the world. She has brought on board a new post for early-career researchers for which funding is sought. And then of course, there was the presence of the Augustine Gospels at the Coronation of King Charles III, when Philippa was responsible for the transport and safeguarding of one of the nation’s greatest treasures.

Looking and listening

Philippa is a Tutor at Corpus and a Professor in the Faculty of Divinity, where she instructs students on the medieval church and pastoral care, ecclesiastical administration, and the history of the book. Her approach to teaching is similar to the way she explores a manuscript, from the meaning of the words on the page to the material qualities of the object. She says, “A former Corpus Fellow, Christopher Cheney, used to say medieval manuscripts are like good children from long ago: they don’t speak unless they are spoken to, and they never talk to strangers. And so you have to not be a stranger. I always tell my students when we’re looking at a manuscript that you have to ask the right questions. You have to say to it ‘what do you want to tell me? What are you about?’ Even some documents that we think are very mundane contain a multitude of intriguing possibilities. What were people using this book for? Why is it so heavy? Was it a working document? An administrative handbook? Could it have been a status symbol? These are the kinds of questions that interest me.”

Professor Philippa Hoskin

MA (Oxon) DPhil (Oxon)
DAA FRHist.S. FSA

1992
BA in History,
University of Oxford

1995
DPhil in History,
University of Oxford

1995-2010
Borthwick Institute
for Historical
Research,
University of York

1999
DAA

2003-present
General Editor of
the Lincoln Record
Society Kathleen
Major Series
of Medieval
Records, and the
British Academy’s
English Episcopal
Acta Project

2004
Fellow of the Royal
Historical Society

2008
Vice-President
of the Canterbury
and York Society

2010-2019
Professor of
Medieval Studies
and School Director
of Research,
University of
Lincoln

2016
Fellow of the
Society of
Antiquaries

2019-present
Gaylord and
Dorothy Donnelly
Fellow Librarian
and Director of the
Parker Library

2019-present
Professor in the
Faculty of Divinity



“Seals are very personal. They belong to a person who has chosen something as a representation of themselves and attached it to a legal document. They can provide important clues about self-representation and identity.”

PROFESSOR PHILIPPA HOSKIN

Although it is the job of Parker Sub-Librarian Tuija Ainonen to assist readers who wish to study items from the Library, Philippa also likes to touch base with visiting scholars to deepen her own knowledge about the collection. “There are things you learn by looking and others you learn by listening. This is the advantage of having researchers around because not only do they tell you what they’ve found out but they also ask you questions that make you think more clearly about what you’re doing, or your understanding of a text. And of course they often know something about the collection that I’m not aware of, because they may have published on it years earlier. And I just like talking to people!”

Sealed with wax

Philippa turns her expertise to practical uses. “In some disciplines it can be difficult to measure whether you have changed what somebody does or think, or how they work. I believe in making the material objects we historians study accessible to people who are just starting their academic careers, or even those who aren’t academic at all.”

One of these areas of expertise is the study of wax seals and their matrices. Libraries and museums are filled with thousands of these seals, which were in widespread use in Britain across all classes of people by the end of the thirteenth century (the Parker Library alone contains several hundred). Documents were sealed as validation of ownership, gifts, grants, wills and many other attestations.

Philippa explains, “Seals are very personal. They belong to a person who has chosen something as a representation of themselves and attached it to a legal document. They can provide important clues about self-representation and identity.”

With Dr Elizabeth New of Aberystwyth University, Philippa developed the Imprint Project, a forensic and historical investigation of fingerprints and palm prints on medieval seals. The Project makes use of technology and interdisciplinary collaboration to answer questions and think in new ways about the practice and meaning of sealing for those many individuals of lower status in the central Middle Ages whose involvement in legal and administrative practice is so often disregarded. It also allows scholars to search the growing database of seals and matrices.

Daily life in the Parker

Philippa oversees not only the Library itself, but also the Modern Archives and the Conservation team. Archivist Dr Genny Silvanus is responsible for papers from the late nineteenth

century up to and including the current day, which includes the papers of naturalist and former Master Professor Oliver Rackham, which are currently being digitised. “We have to choose which papers and records to keep, and how we can engage with College members on their use. We want them to be accessible to the Communications Office to share interesting stories about the College history, and with the Development Office to engage alumni.” For instance, Genny has been working with students and former members on an oral history project looking at the time around the entrance of women to the College. Old Members enjoy sharing their memories, students deepen their knowledge of the College, and the whole College community is learning new things about this critical period in our early efforts to widen participation.

The Cambridge Colleges Conservation Consortium is housed behind the Library, in a small building called the Elephant Pen. The studio is filled with tools both ancient, such as specialist Japanese papers and gold embossers, and modern equipment for humidifying and cleaning centuries-old parchment and paper. Philippa works closely with Head of Conservation Flavio Marzo and his team, who care for manuscripts from the Parker and 14 other colleges. “The biggest enemy to the collection is time. Over the centuries time slowly destroys organic materials like those of manuscripts. Archives and manuscript libraries fight to slow down that damage. In terms of damaged or poorly preserved manuscripts, well, you don’t tell a conservation department what to do, because they are the specialists and they tell you. I do discuss with Flavio what I’d like to work with in the collection and he will advise me on the best possible way forward. Sometimes that’s actually doing nothing.”

The Library and the conservation team also collaborate on outreach to the public and to prospective students. This year, in collaboration with the Admissions Office, they hosted the Medieval Worlds residential programme for Year 12 state-school students to immerse themselves in medieval manuscripts, literature and history, from hands-on demonstrations on the preparation of medieval parchment by Flavio, to practising Middle English Poetry with Tuija and current ASNaC and History undergraduates. Likewise, the Bridging Course, the College’s flagship widening participation programme, always includes sessions in the Parker.

Collecting for the collection

Philippa sometimes makes acquisitions for the Library, such as the recent purchase of a manuscript of nine roundels given by Matthew Parker to Queen Elizabeth I in the sixteenth century.

“The roundels felt very much that they were coming home to the Library, not just because they were a gift from Parker to the Queen, but because we could draw links directly from the text on the roundels to other books that Parker owned and studied.”

Similarly, Old Members may offer items suitable for the Library collection. Recently the daughter of a former Fellow donated her father’s collection of papers of the nineteenth-century cartoonist and book illustrator George Cruickshank; it will be named the Dr David Bruce Collection. Another alumnus left a collection of books that Philippa describes as ‘very much a Parker collection of books’, including first editions of Charles Darwin. “We certainly can’t take everything,” she says, “but we try to accept collections in the style and tradition of Matthew Parker’s own interests.”

New ways of looking

Three years ago, the College approved an annual, 12-month research post based in the Parker Library, subject to finding donors to fund the post long-term. The Parker Early-Career Research Fellowship is an opportunity for researchers to look at manuscripts and early printed books in different, interdisciplinary ways. The first of these Fellows, Dr Laure Miolo, focussed on the little-studied Elbing Collection which was donated to the College in the early seventeenth century by a former Fellow, Richard Pernham, and Mary Pernham, whose name appears in almost all the manuscripts. Dr Eleanor Parker has finished her tenure as the second Parker Research Fellow by curating an exhibition in the Wilkins Room that draws on different connections she has made between Parker manuscripts, material objects and original artworks.

“We are encouraging these young researchers to explore something in the Parker collection that they may have come across in their early research or that may lead them to a different path of scholarship. The year they spend with us allows them to put something together that makes them more credible candidates for the bigger research fellowships and posts in other institutions. And then we hope they will take their knowledge and ideas forward into their careers both nationally and internationally, becoming a modern and increasing part of Matthew Parker’s legacy.”

Right: Seals from two sections of of the four-part indenture of 1574 concerning the care of Matthew Parker’s books. They include the seals of Parker himself and of the Colleges of Corpus Christi, Gonville & Caius and Trinity Hall.

Below: The wax seal on the deathbed will of Margaret Andrew (d. 1349), the College’s first benefactress, provided Philippa with the inspiration for the logo of Forty Years On • Women of Corpus. The seal shows a figure holding a book and standing beneath an arch, a shape that was picked up as a motif for the 40th anniversary.





One of our earliest female Fellows is retiring – but she has no plans to slow down.

Photograph by Pari Naderi

Professor Alison Smith

BSc PhD FRSB

1977
BSc in Biochemistry,
University of Bristol

1978
MPhil in
Biochemistry,
University of
Cambridge

1981
PhD in Biochemistry,
University
of Cambridge

1981-1983
Postdoctoral
Research Associate,
Department of
Botany, University of
Cambridge

1984-2023
Fellow of Corpus
Christi College

1984-2023
Head of Group,
Department of Plant
Sciences, University
of Cambridge

2007-2023
Professor of Plant
Biochemistry,
University
of Cambridge

2012
Fellow of the Royal
Society of Biology

2014-2015
Acting Head of
Department,
Department of Plant
Sciences, University
of Cambridge

2017-2022
Head of Department,
Department of Plant
Sciences, University
of Cambridge

Professor Alison Smith has been a Fellow of Corpus for almost 40 years. As she retires from her position as a professorial Fellow and Head of the Department of Plant Sciences she will become a Life Fellow of the College. But her research into innovative biotechnology will continue, with some exciting prospects ahead.

Alison was the first in her family to attend university, at a time when even the brightest young female students were not encouraged to pursue science. She attended a girls' grammar school in Buckinghamshire where — despite the emphasis on becoming 'young ladies' — her interest in science was supported, and she went on to the University of Bristol to study for a BSc. She says, "The science teachers at my school were great. Because there were no boys, you couldn't be put off doing science because of them. My interests have always been in chemistry and biology."

These interests have been driven by her curiosity about the basic (if fiendishly complex) processes of life. "Life appears to contradict the second law of thermodynamics, which is that everything gets simpler as entropy increases. Living organisms do that by taking energy from the environment and using it to build up more complicated things. That energy allows cells to build up complex molecules, which is metabolism. And then it arranges those molecules into structures within the cell, and then cells into tissues, tissues into organs, organs into organisms. Without being able to do that first step, which is called energy transduction, then you would not be able to fight against entropy."

In Bristol, she studied mammalian and bacterial biochemistry but decided to do research in plant biochemistry because of the great breadth of metabolism. She came to Darwin College Cambridge for an MPhil in 1978, followed by a PhD. Although the perception is that there were few female scientists in Cambridge at the time, Alison found many women in the Department of Biochemistry, and there were also plenty of postgraduate women at Darwin. And, she observes, "I didn't know any different."

Even with a PhD in Biochemistry, her path to becoming a working scientist was not completely straightforward. Alison spent a year in London working in scientific publishing ("the early 80s were great time to be living in London") before applying for postdoc jobs in Cambridge in the emerging field of molecular biology. She took a position in the lab of Dr John Gray in the Department of Botany (now Plant Sciences), where she met Professor Christopher Howe, now a Corpus Fellow. "This was one of the first labs in the world studying plant



Left: Dr Payam Mehrshahi, manager of the Algal Innovation Centre in the Cambridge Botanic Garden, demonstrates the operation of one of the photobioreactors in which algae are grown.

Opposite: *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*, a type of microalgae that Alison studies for its potential to serve as an industrial biotechnology host.

molecular biology using recently developed microscopic and genetic techniques. Chris taught me a lot about those techniques, and it was such fun to be in a lab with lots of other people who were doing the same.” At this time Alison started to look at chloroplasts, organelles in plant cells that photosynthesize, turning light into sugars and other molecules.

A Career... and Corpus

Alison had done some supervisions during her PhD and she very much enjoyed the ‘instant buzz’ of teaching. After a year picking up lecturing duties for John Gray during his sabbatical, Alison applied for ‘New Blood’ Lectureships around the country. She accepted a position in Cambridge at the Department of Botany as a Demonstrator in 1984, essentially a temporary Lecturer position with a focus on teaching – and colleges came calling.

“I was overwhelmed with offers of a Fellowship because many colleges had recently gone co-educational and were looking for women, especially scientists.” She settled on Corpus and was quickly made Science Admissions Tutor, a position for which she says she was ‘completely unprepared’. She filled that role for four years, then became a Tutor and Director of Studies in Biology, which she carried out for many years, enjoying seeing students through their undergraduate journeys, and then for many into exciting careers.

With her own lab and teaching responsibilities, Alison progressed through the Cambridge academic ranks despite not ‘having a plan’, was promoted to Professor in 2007 and eventually became Head of the Department of Plant Sciences in 2017. “At that time the academic career path involved a lot of teaching. If you had time, you could do some research.” Alison believes that the current system has reversed, rewarding research over teaching. “Nowadays they appoint people who are very good at research. By the time they have a full teaching load, it is hard for them to become immersed in teaching and develop new teaching methods, as I was able to.”

That’s one reason why Alison, along with Fellow Dr Jenny Zhang, has started a mentoring group at Corpus for female Fellows and postgraduate students to tackle the particular challenges of being a female academic. “I am keen on mentoring because I think it’s really difficult now for junior academics. Even before I was Head of Department, I really did make an effort to see whether I could give the junior staff any advice. My experience means I understand the system and I’ve seen it evolve. Young academics are expected to do research, to teach, to be administrators; they’re supposed to be strategic and do public outreach. It’s a lot to juggle.”

The promise of algae

Although teaching was a priority for Alison through much of her career, her research into the energy transduction of photosynthesis led her to focus on the biochemistry of microalgae, which she calls “little round green things with no morphological features to distinguish them from one another”. Despite their lack of individual personality, microalgae are photosynthetic powerhouses and 20 years ago there was great interest in their potential as biofuels. That promise failed to materialise due to issues of scalability. She says, “There was no agronomy for algae. We don’t know how to grow it like wheat or oilseed rape.” But Alison realised there were other metabolic products in algae that could potentially be exploited.

For over a decade, her research group has worked on tackling this opportunity, particularly the production of high-value compounds such as vitamins, lipids and diterpenoids. One method uses genetic engineering, inserting specific plant genes into the algal genome, where they then instruct the algae to produce a molecule of interest; essentially the algae become tiny biological factories. Other research focuses on cofactor metabolism, where algae are naturally able to interact with bacteria to accrue molecules such as vitamins. In research recently highlighted in the media, Alison’s group showed that algae can accumulate vitamin B12 from bacteria in their surroundings. They identified the form of the vitamin that can be absorbed by humans, and hope that this could be manufactured as supplements to address vitamin B12 deficiency in those who don’t get sufficient amounts of the vitamin, such as vegans and others following plant-based diets.

Although technically in retirement from the University, Alison continues to bridge research and commercialisation in this field. How that develops remains to be seen. She says, “There are lots of people interested in our skills, in our facilities and our services. To expand the sector we need new products, whether high-value compounds such as therapeutics, pigments and antioxidants, or sources of protein. And they need to be produced in a sustainable way; that’s the promise and the power of using photosynthetic organisms like algae. There are lots of elements we have to join up. But I think we have the know-how and the resources to make a real difference in this sector.”

The women (and men) of Corpus will continue to benefit from Alison’s experience. Although she didn’t set out with a plan to be the ground-breaking female academic she has become, Alison has a wealth of insight as a teacher, a scientist, and a woman – and the generosity to share it.



Science Photo Library / Biophoto Associates / AMI Images



A linguist and dedicated teacher who shares the imagination and intimacy of film and literature with her students.

Photograph by Pari Naderi

Fellow in Film Professor Emma Wilson

BA PhD FBA

1988
BA in MML,
University of
Cambridge

1991
PhD in French,
University
of Cambridge

1995-present
Fellow of Corpus
Christi College

2010-present
Professor of French
Literature and
Visual Arts,
Faculty of Modern
and Medieval
Languages

2022
Fellow of the
British Academy

Research
interests:
modern and
contemporary film,
women filmmakers,
gender, life-writing
and intimacy,
20th century
literature

A Fellow of Corpus since 1995, Emma Wilson is Professor of French Literature and the Visual Arts and a Lecturer in Modern and Medieval Languages. Her research focuses on modern French literature, contemporary French cinema, and gender and sexuality. In addition to her academic work in the arts and visual humanities, she is highly regarded at Corpus for her commitment to teaching, supervising and tutoring students for nearly 30 years. Last year she was elected a Fellow of the British Academy.

Her election to the British Academy marks Emma's contribution to the fields of modern and contemporary French cinema, gender and sexuality, the visual arts, writing by women and contemporary Italian cinema. "I am proud to have been elected in a year when, in the words of Professor Julia Black, 'the tide is finally turning for women in academia'. In addition to reflecting the substance and volume of my research outputs, I believe my election recognises my role in supervising and mentoring research students who have gone on to be successful in securing posts in the fields of French Studies and Film Studies."

Female footsteps

Emma was an undergraduate at Newnham, matriculating in 1985. She says, "It was important to me to go to a college associated with the history of women's achievement in Cambridge. I was a reader of Sylvia Plath. I was inspired by Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. I loved her image of a women's college, and of the gardens of Newnham, 'wild and open, and in the long grass, sprinkled and carelessly flung, were daffodils and bluebells'."

Emma came to Cambridge just two years after Corpus accepted female undergraduates and she has always valued the opportunity to be taught by gifted women academics. When she took up her Fellowship at Corpus, she worked with Professor Ann Hallam Caesar, an Italianist and specialist in Italian women's writing, and the history of female literacy in Italy.

As a girl growing up in a small flat surrounded by books with her mother, the author Jacqueline Wilson, Emma developed a desire to express herself through writing at a young age. She says, "My mother is an Honorary Fellow of the College, something of which both she and I are very proud (she, a woman who started writing at a table in our living room, with, at that time, neither money nor a room of her own)".

When it comes to her research, Emma is passionate. Her interest in film in the French-speaking world was nurtured by cinema-going in Paris and also by working as an usher at the





Alamy

Cambridge Arts Cinema when she was a postgraduate student. She has published extensively on cinema. Her most recent book is *Céline Sciamma: Portraits*.

“I love my subject. I feel empowered to pursue the research topics that interest me the most.” She is pleased that film, particularly European cinema, has been introduced into a growing number of courses in the Modern and Medieval Languages (MML) Faculty because it gives students the chance to engage closely with visual material.

Professor JD Rhodes, Professor of Film Studies and Visual Culture in the MML Faculty, describes the impact of Emma’s work, “Emma Wilson has exerted an enormous influence on the way that we think about contemporary cinema (especially, but by no means exclusively French cinema), women’s cinema, art cinema, and experimental moving image media. She has written exquisite single-author studies on figures like Céline Sciamma and Chantal Akerman, as well as field-defining thematic monographs on childhood and cinema, mortality and the moving image, and the reclining nude. Across all of these works, Emma’s interest in cinema’s representation of intimacy as well as the medium’s powerful ways of effecting intimate encounters is reciprocally embodied in her close attention to formal and textual detail. Her writing is itself a study in the intimacy that can exist between the writer and the work of art. To read her work is to watch a film anew, and with better eyes. As a teacher and supervisor, Emma’s influence is felt just as strongly. Her former supervisees hold prestigious positions at universities across the UK, as well as at Cambridge. Emma has not sought to create a school of thought, however. Rather she has exemplified a method of combining conceptual rigour and imagination with the thrill of discovering and describing the strangeness of the artwork.”

“To read her work is to watch a film anew, and with better eyes.”

PROFESSOR JD RHODES

Of teaching, Emma says, “I love the opportunity to supervise people and find ways of enthusing them. I love the sense of possibility that comes from hearing someone’s ideas and responding to them. Academia can be a competitive, driven environment and everyone experiences doubts that can hold them back. At those points it can really help to have someone encouraging you to hold your nerve and believing in you. I think there’s a sense in which to be successful is to be able to help others to move forwards. If some students look at me and think I can be an academic and I don’t have to fit the mould and I can do more creative work or I can make these choices then I’m thrilled.”

In the years 2010-12, Emma participated in the Equality and Diversity project ‘The Meaning of Success’ and was a member of the Senior Gender Equality Network (2012-14). She has focused on ensuring the diversity of the curriculum at undergraduate and graduate level, foregrounding gender perspectives and ensuring coverage of works by female, queer, and non-binary writers, artists, and filmmakers. She was shortlisted for a CUSU Student-Led Teaching Award for ‘Inclusive Teaching’ in 2017.

Emma is pleased to belong to a College with a growing female representation in the Fellowship, led by a female Senior Tutor, Dr Marina Frasca-Spada, and with a history of female benefaction and commitment to education, religion, learning and research. She is looking forward to the celebration of Forty Years On • Women of Corpus taking place this year.

Opposite page:

1. Chantal Akerman’s *Jeanne Dielman*.

2. Alina Marazzi.

3. Céline Sciamma’s *Portrait of a Woman on Fire*.

4. Céline Sciamma’s *Water Lilies*.

5. Maya Deren’s *At Land*.

6. Alice Rohrwacher’s *Les Merveilles*.

ALUMNI

Obstacles to entrepreneurial growth

Alumna Francesca 'Check' Warner (m.2009) of Ada Ventures is helping remove obstacles to entrepreneurial growth and making investment more inclusive.



This year we celebrate 40 years of accepting female undergraduates at Corpus. What were your experiences as a female student at the College? Did you meet many inspiring women?

I had a wonderful Director of Studies, Sarah Cain, and I studied English with four other women (and one man!) in my year so I spent a lot of my academic time at Corpus surrounded by impressive and thoughtful women. Outside of my course, I spent a lot of time at the Corpus Playroom, co-directing two plays with my talented friend Amrou Al-Kadhi, casting a number of female students in our plays. I had a great time as a student at Corpus and have incredibly happy memories from my time there.

Tell us about your career journey after leaving Corpus.

Initially I worked on a graduate scheme at an advertising agency before joining the financial services industry at an asset management firm. Whilst there I co-founded a non-profit called Diversity VC focused on creating a more inclusive venture capital industry. Through the work of Diversity VC I realised that there was an opportunity to create a venture capital firm which embedded inclusive investing into every aspect of its process – from how we sourced founders, to how we selected them, supported them and what the underlying companies were working on. That firm is called Ada Ventures and was founded in 2018, named after the mathematician Ada Lovelace. We raised our first fund in 2018-19 and we are now investing out of our second fund with \$100m under management, with companies in the portfolio tackling workers' rights, mental health, obesity and enabling small business owners to thrive.

What made you pivot away from the path you had taken towards advertising?

I realised that technology was going to be the defining force in the global economy over the next ten years and I wanted to learn as much as possible about it and to work with the most inspiring early-stage entrepreneurs, building at the cutting edge of technology. The best place I could find to do that was in venture capital, which I initially discovered by following American venture capitalists on Twitter. I became fascinated with venture capital and the outsized influence it has as an asset class on the most successful global technology companies (seven out of the ten most valuable companies in the world today were initially VC-funded). My background was completely non-traditional to get an entry level analyst role at a VC fund, but I was fortunate to meet a venture capitalist who was willing to take a risk on me and teach me the art and science of early-stage investing. We have worked together ever since and he is now my business partner at Ada Ventures.

Getty Images/ Klaus Vedfeldt/ Smith

Was this easy to do?

It certainly wasn't easy but despite having a non-traditional career background in many other ways I had come from a position of privilege – I had been privately educated, grew up in London and had good networks which made my access to the field far more straightforward than it would have been for someone else from less privileged circumstances, something I am working hard to change.

Why ethical investing?

We are pioneering a new category of investing which leads with an inclusive approach in order to realise best in class returns for our investors. This unique approach is already working to find companies in places that others aren't looking at to invest, in markets that are both massive and untapped.

How have you found the shift to working for a non-profit organisation?

I had never worked in non-profits before co-founding Diversity VC. What I love about working in a non-profit is the ability to attract passionate and driven people who are inspired by the mission and keen to help.

At Diversity VC you work towards creating a more diverse and equal landscape within the VC world. What hurdles have you come up against? How are you navigating this?

The VC landscape is currently not as diverse as it should be – given its importance to the global economy and role in funding innovation. At Diversity VC we have published several studies on the UK VC industry, showing that 85 percent of investment committees are all male, just 13 percent of partners are female, just 1 per cent of VC decision-makers are black and the majority come from the same socio-economic and education backgrounds. This is not conducive to funding the very best talent and discovering the problems faced by over 70 percent of the global population which is not represented in VC. The main hurdles we have faced are not in people's willingness to work on making their organisations more inclusive, just the pace of change and to what extent they are willing to prioritise it



amongst the many other things that fund managers are navigating – particularly in the last three years with a global pandemic and tech recession.

At present is VC an appealing industry for females to go into? How do you see this changing in the short term?

VC is a fantastic industry for anyone, of any gender. In particular, people who thrive in VC are those that are good at building trusted relationships with entrepreneurs, people who are very good at analysing investment opportunities and predicting future trends, commercial thinkers and people who are passionate about technology. One thing that you have to learn how to do as a VC is say “no” a lot, as 98 percent of companies you look at will ultimately not end up resulting in an investment opportunity.

Tell us about your work with universities, educating students on careers in VC?

At Diversity VC we co-founded Future VC to create pathways for junior people into the industry. This programme has been successful at creating a route for people who come from a wide range of backgrounds, genders, ethnicities and socio-economic circumstances. There are more than 65 people working in venture capital full time who got their opportunity to break into VC through the Future VC programme.

What made you decide to support a bursary in your own name at College?

I am focused on removing barriers for people who are unable to access opportunities. One of those barriers is financial and I want to contribute in a small way to students being able to experience Corpus, whatever their financial circumstances.

You were recently made an MBE, how did this feel to be recognised at such a high level for your endeavours?

Extremely surreal and humbling. Everything I have done has been a collaboration, so I very much feel like I have received it on behalf of the people at Ada Ventures and Diversity VC who have worked so far to effect change.

“We are incredibly ambitious with Ada Ventures and so we are continuing to focus on investing in the very best founders through our inclusive approach and supporting those founders to grow global businesses through fund II and eventually funds III, IV and beyond. I won't feel as though I have succeeded until we are sending many multiples of capital back to the investors that have entrusted us with their capital.”

FRANCESCA WARNER

EduSpots

An educational charity founded by Corpus alumna Cat Davison (m.2009) centres learning in the community.

Cat Davison developed a sense of justice early on. Now a charity CEO after spending 11 years in the classroom, she says, “I was very young when I started asking philosophical questions and remember I was always fascinated by notions of fairness. As I moved into high school I remember standing in the mock election for the Green Party and created a mini social business making jewellery called ‘Bracelets for Change.’”

Those instincts led Cat through an academic and then educational path to her current position as Founder and Chair of EduSpots, a collaborative, community-driven education charity currently developing its model in Ghana and Kenya which reflects her belief in the transformative power of locally led learning, teaching and knowledge-sharing.

Coming to Cambridge

The combination of an analytical, questioning mind and an entrepreneurial streak brought Cat to Corpus in 2006 to read the Philosophy Tripos, which she followed in a fourth year taking Part II in Management Studies at the Judge Business School.

“Studying philosophy at Cambridge gave me a useful foundation in analysis, critical thinking, building arguments, how to work out solutions to questions of identity and knowledge,” says Cat. She ‘did a deep dive’ into Plato’s *Theaetetus*, which “is all about knowledge. I’m really interested in how knowledge is constructed, especially where it connects with human behaviour and culture.” Cat was also involved in various leadership roles during her undergraduate years, leading events, sports and societies for the JCR, and captaining a University hockey team. The year she spent at the Judge was a ‘jump’ from philosophy which introduced her to systems of economic theory and operations management that she would continue to explore in a social justice context some years later.

Although she hadn’t planned a career in education, after graduating Cat successfully applied for a position teaching philosophy and ethics, engaging her students in questioning the sources of their knowledge and encouraging them to interrogate their perspectives on social justice issues. Whilst teaching full-time, she completed a PGCE at Buckingham University and later a part-time MA in International Development and Education at University College London. There, her research focussed on literacy as a social practice, considering the

potentially divisive consequences of community literacy programmes and exploring decolonised models of educational development.

How do we educate?

Cat’s thinking about knowledge and education continued to evolve as she started spending time in Ghana in association with a UK school partnership. Early in her teacher training, she says, “I used to believe that education at its core should enable students to have the freedom to fully explore their own character development. I still believe that, but now position all educational activities in a wider community context, examining the relationship between education systems and wider concepts of justice and equity in societies.”



After some years of research, in 2016 Cat worked with Ghanaian educators and a driver, Francis Yeboah, to create a new charity EduSpots, aiming to create a model for community-driven education through the co-creation of community-led and -owned hubs across Ghana. The concept of a ‘Spot’ is a play on the Ghanaian labelling of bars as ‘Spots’. “We aimed to invigorate the often quiet (western) concept of libraries to become vibrant centres of knowledge exchange, rooted in Ghanaian culture.”

The first Spot, lit by solar, was in a disused classroom space in Abofour. Since then, EduSpots has supported the creation of 50 community-led education spaces, with an estimated 15,000 annual users supported by a network of over 250 local volunteers (‘Catalysts’).

The Catalysts enrol onto three staged leadership programmes and are given support in creating structured community-based clubs for students focused on creative literacy, STEM and environmental education and girls’ empowerment, alongside mentoring relating to wider Spot operations and resource management.

Building a ground-up network

Cat and the EduSpots team have spent considerable time reflecting on their model of a community-led education space or library, which they have now formally codified into their ‘Dream Spot Model’ handbook. Cat also realised early on that creating a network between Catalysts often held more value to them than the resource and construction support.

“I think it was when we had five different Spots that I connected the leaders together on WhatsApp. I began to see the really strong impact that was gained through them sharing ideas and being inspired by each other, and having that intercultural understanding as well, because within Ghana there’s huge regional cultural diversity. Over time, we employed Catalysts in part-time roles to strengthen this network.”

Coming from a teaching background, Cat had to pick up an entrepreneurial skill set relatively quickly, with fundraising strategies driven through extensive crowdfunding, endless applications to trusts and foundations, and writing and selling courses on community-led development and charitable ethics.

She has also learnt extensively about community engagement through working with stakeholders in Ghana, taking this experience back to the UK where she continued to work in a

school overseeing over 60 school and community partnerships.

“At its core, EduSpots is trying to model what community-led education looks like: what it means to truly place responsibility and funding in the hands of a mix of local teachers, community members and students, to advance their local educational opportunities, and build their own plans for their community’s future.”

Cat is highly aware of her position as a non-Ghanaian working in Ghana. EduSpots continuously reflects on the reproduction of power inequalities, ensuring all decisions relating to the local context are made by local community members, with over 60 percent of the 26-strong staff team bringing experience of being Catalysts in Spot communities. Over 100 flexible grants have been awarded to communities since 2016, driven by their own analysis of their needs and aspirations for the future.

She is sometimes asked why EduSpots doesn’t simply work in schools. “The community education space has a very important role to play in advancing educational equity,” she says. “When I ask students accessing the Spots why we involve communities in education, they quickly explain the need for community support for students to stay in school in the Ghanaian context, the wealth of knowledge and skills the community bring, and the need for students to have learning support beyond the classroom setting to open up opportunities, especially where a high percentage of their parents may not have accessed formal education.”

The EduSpots team are currently exploring strategies to deepen and extend the impact of their work, share their practice and facilitate wider community-driven change. As part of this, they are developing an app which they hope will enable community members across the world to have the tools needed to create their own school-connected but community-led education hubs.

EduSpots won the TES International Award in 2018, alongside being selected as a Finalist for the Theirworld Education Innovation Prize in 2023, and shortlisted for the EDUCOM Award for NGO Contribution to Education in Ghana. Cat herself was recognised for her innovative curricula and her approach to community-centred education when she was selected as a finalist for the 2021 Varkey Foundation \$1 million Global Teacher Prize in partnership with UNESCO. Read more at www.eduspot.org.

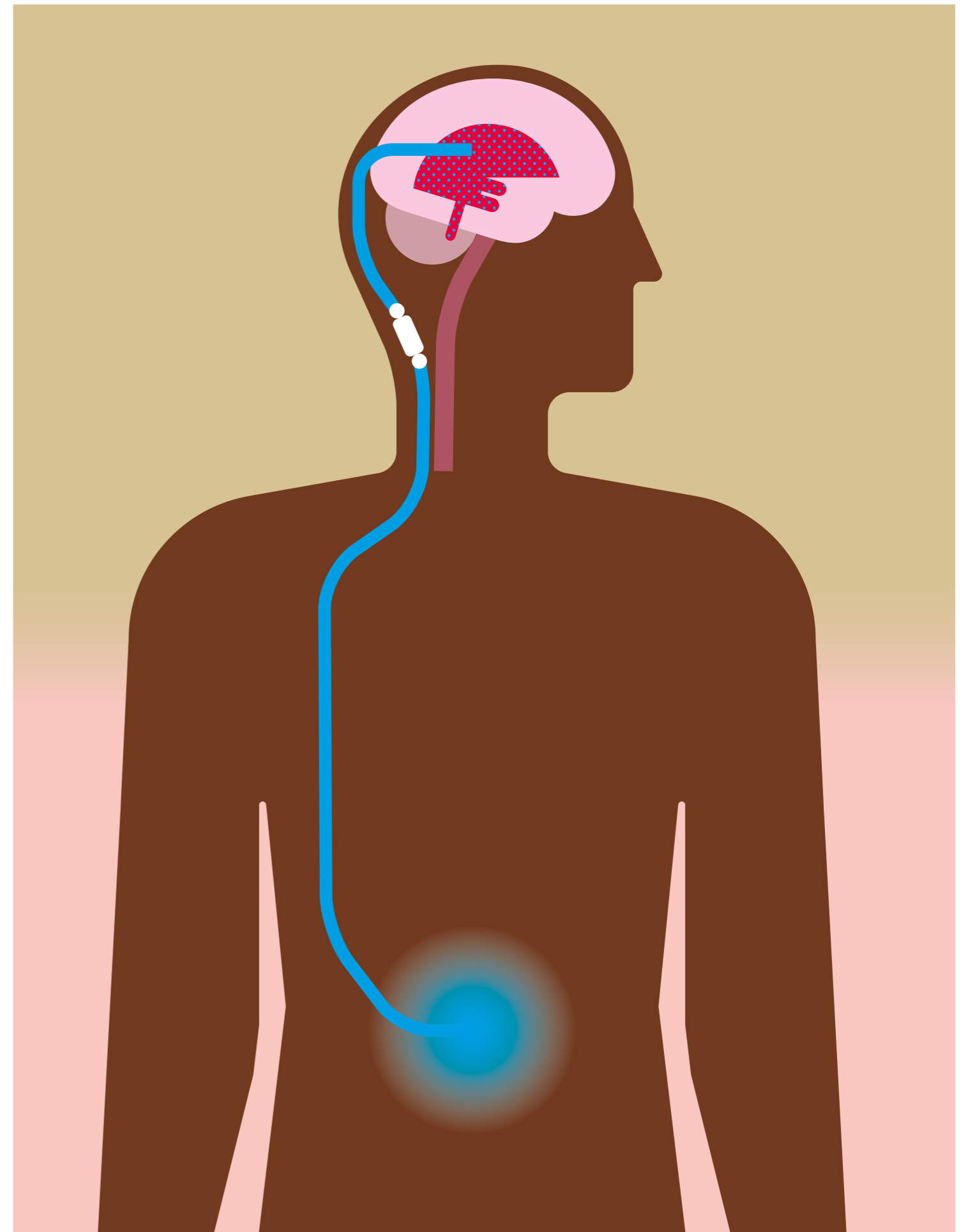
“EduSpots is continuously reflective on the reproduction of power inequalities, ensuring all decisions relating to the local context are made by local community members, with over sixty percent of the staff team bringing experience of being Catalysts.”



The brain drain

Specialist clinic headed by Fellow of Corpus Dr Alexis Joannides treats a common form of dementia.

Illustration by Smith



Dr Alexis Joannides appeared on the BBC programme *Surgeons at the Edge of Life*.



Anyone who has lost a loved one to dementia will understandably long for news of a cure. To witness the gradual and inevitable decline of someone's independence, their memory and their dignity can be agonising. Tragically, a cure for most forms of dementia is still a long way off, and with many of us living longer into old age, the likelihood of being personally affected by neurodegenerative diseases is unsettlingly high.

However a small but significant glimmer of hope exists in the case of one particular form of dementia: Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus, or NPH. A surgical means of potentially reversing the effects of NPH was developed as long ago as 1962, but it was an invasive and expensive procedure that yielded varying results. Now, thanks to the Reversible Dementia (REVERT) project, launched in 2020, and headed by consultant neurosurgeon at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Corpus Fellow Dr Alexis Joannides, there is a real chance that many of those receiving treatment can once more live normal lives.

The precise cause of NPH is not yet fully understood. In a healthy brain, cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) is produced in chambers called lateral ventricles, from there it circulates in a steady flow to cushion and protect the central nervous system, eventually becoming absorbed into the bloodstream. Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus is a disturbance in this circulation, that causes an accumulation of fluid in the brain's internal cavities, while the pressure, as the name suggests, remains constant.

The treatment offered by Alexis and his colleagues at a specialist clinic at Addenbrooke's Hospital involves the insertion of a 'shunt valve' into the brain, which then drains the excess fluid through a thin and flexible tube, into the abdomen.

Although this treatment is remarkably effective, the difficulty lies with correct diagnosis. The symptoms of Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus — loss of cognition, co-ordination and bladder control — are almost identical to those of Alzheimer's, the commonest form of dementia. It's estimated that between 14 and 20 per cent of patients permanently consigned to nursing homes may have NPH and not Alzheimer's and may therefore potentially be able to make a full recovery.

"Our multidisciplinary clinic improves the patient experience: the one-stop approach saves time and money and reduces the number of hospital visits for patients. It also provides more in-depth assessment to help us offer tailored care and support to patients with NPH alongside their clinical treatment," says Alexis.

Diagnostic difficulty

Traditional testing for NPH involves taking CSF from the lumbar region of the spinal cord to simulate the effect of a shunt, but a negative result cannot rule out the possibility that the symptoms are not those of NPH. Through a technique pioneered by the Brain Physics Laboratory in Cambridge, Alexis and his team have turned this procedure on its head: instead of a lumbar puncture to remove fluid, resistance to CSF outflow from the brain is measured by infusing fluid into the spinal cord. Used in conjunction with state-of-the-art MRI-based brain imaging, CSF velocity, flow and pressure from different areas of the brain can yield a considerably more accurate diagnosis and an estimate of the likely response to treatment. By selecting only those patients who stand the strongest chance to benefit from shunt surgery, more people can be treated successfully.

The Reversible Dementia project is a collaborative international programme involving not just clinical researchers and health professionals, but physicists, IT specialists, and mathematicians from the Universities of Artois, and of Picardie Jules Verne in France, the University of Cambridge, and University Hospitals of Cambridge, Amiens, Brest, and Caen. Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the project has recently been renewed.

Through his multidisciplinary clinic at Addenbrooke's Alexis is directly involved with coordinating research and seeing first-hand the difference his collaborative work makes to the lives of real people. Although it is sadly true that only some dementia sufferers stand to benefit from this groundbreaking treatment, and not every NPH case will be suitable for that treatment, each and every life reverted will bring relief to those in despair and restore quality of life.

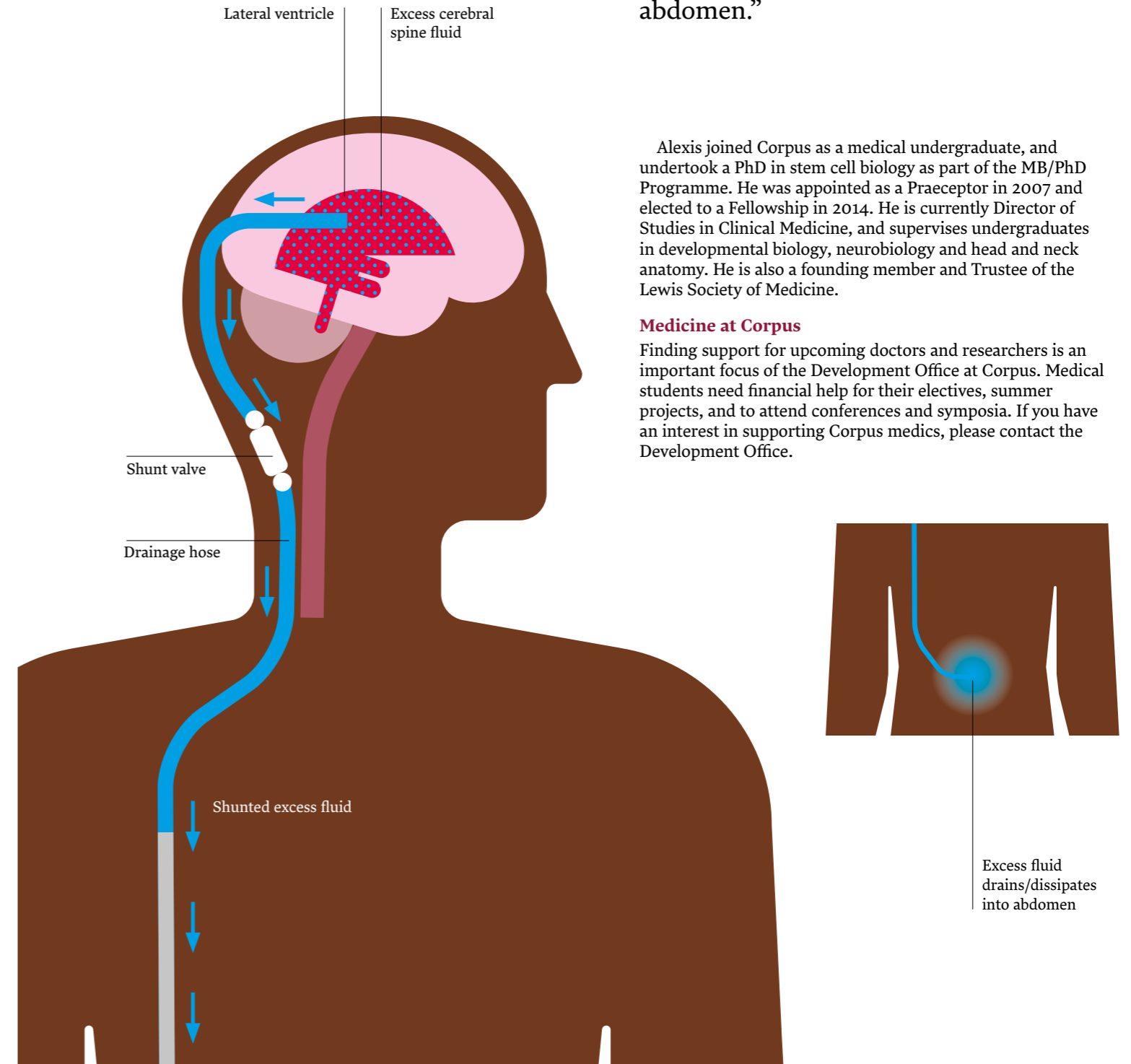
About Alexis

Alexis specialises in the management of brain tumours and hydrocephalus. His surgical practice includes techniques such as fluorescence-guided surgery, awake craniotomy, brain mapping, and neuroendoscopy.

His research interests include the use of complex healthcare datasets to understand epidemiology, identify unmet clinical needs, and evaluate treatment outcomes in neurological disorders. He is also Deputy Director of the Brain Injury MedTech Co-operative, which supports the development of new medical devices and healthcare technologies for improving the quality-of-life of patients following brain injury.



It's estimated that between 14–20 percent of patients permanently consigned to nursing homes may have NPH and not Alzheimer's and may therefore potentially be able to make a full recovery.



“The treatment offered by Alexis and his colleagues at a specialist clinic at Addenbrooke's Hospital involves the insertion of a 'shunt valve' into the brain, which then drains the excess fluid through a thin and flexible tube into the abdomen.”

Alexis joined Corpus as a medical undergraduate, and undertook a PhD in stem cell biology as part of the MB/PhD Programme. He was appointed as a Praeceptor in 2007 and elected to a Fellowship in 2014. He is currently Director of Studies in Clinical Medicine, and supervises undergraduates in developmental biology, neurobiology and head and neck anatomy. He is also a founding member and Trustee of the Lewis Society of Medicine.

Medicine at Corpus

Finding support for upcoming doctors and researchers is an important focus of the Development Office at Corpus. Medical students need financial help for their electives, summer projects, and to attend conferences and symposia. If you have an interest in supporting Corpus medics, please contact the Development Office.

RESEARCH

Peter Pedersen SPIRIT of exploration

High up in the Chilean Atacama Desert the hillsides are dotted with clusters of telescopes. The absence of clouds and lack of light pollution make it an ideal spot to inspect the night sky. Beginning with his PhD research, Peter Pedersen has been using one of these telescopes to search for signs of habitable planets in our galaxy.

Peter came to Corpus as a student in the Centre for Doctoral Training Sensor Technologies for a Healthy and Sustainable Future, a four-year interdisciplinary and research-focused training programme structured as a one-year Master of Research (MRes) course followed by a three-year PhD research project. It was his interest in sensor technology that led him to his PhD subject, working on instrumentation for astronomy under Professor Didier Queloz, a pioneer in the discovery of exoplanets for which Queloz was awarded a Nobel Prize in 2019.

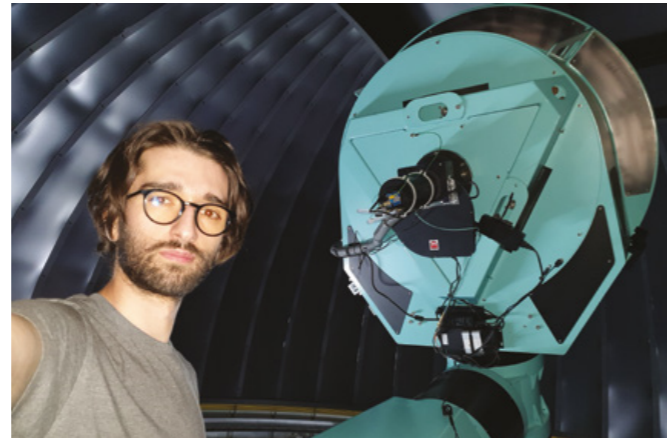
Peter's research is part of a survey called SPECULOOS (The Search for habitable Planets Eclipsing ULtra-coOL Stars), which looks for potentially habitable exoplanets orbiting nearby stars. Promising target planets identified by the mission can then be examined in more detail by giant observatories such as the newly launched James Webb Space Telescope. Ultimately, the goal is to find rocky worlds similar to earth, with the possibility of finding signs of biological activity.

SPECULOOS operates a network of robotic telescopes which include four located at the European Southern Observatory (ESO) of Paranal in Chile. Named Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto, each telescope has a primary mirror one metre in diameter and is equipped with a highly sensitive astronomical camera.

The telescopes are operated remotely and focus on stars to look for 'transits', dips of light that indicate a planet passing across the disc of a star. The project follows on from a previous transit study known as TRAPPIST, which discovered a promising planetary system orbiting a cool star, TRAPPIST-1.

SSO is looking at stars similar to and cooler than TRAPPIST-1: ultra-cool dwarfs (UCDs). As a star's temperature decreases, its

Peter Pedersen's infrared camera 'SPIRIT' is on the hunt for distant planets – and perhaps signs of life.



Peter with his SPIRIT camera.

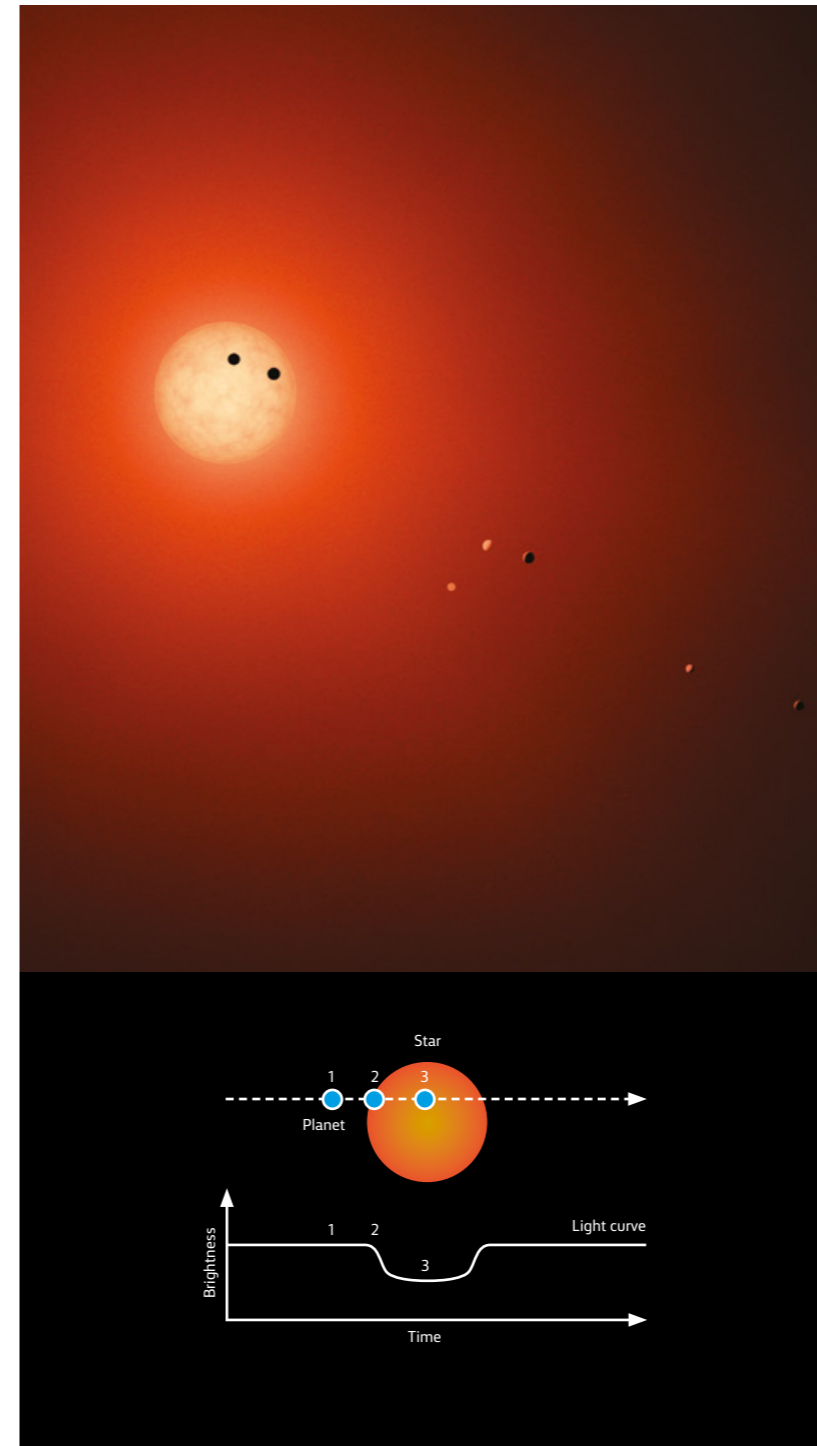
peak light emission shifts towards longer wavelengths than those of visible light, into the infrared. So UCDs must be imaged using cameras that capture infrared light. The data from the images can then be plotted to produce a light curve, a graph that shows the varying brightness of the starlight reaching the telescope.

Peering through the mist

Even using infrared light to observe UCDs presents challenges, mainly because the varying precipitable water vapour in the earth's atmosphere causes the measured brightness of a star to change with time. When Peter joined SPECULOOS, the telescopes were observing light at near-infrared wavelengths, but the resulting data were sometimes contaminated by noise induced by this atmospheric variability.

Corpus aims to attract the most brilliant minds from around the world to advance knowledge and harness inventions such as Peter's SPIRIT camera. Such cutting-edge research is only possible if funds are made available to support PhD students. It is core to the College's ambition to be a leader in world-class research by increasing our PhD funding programme and we seek conversations with those Old Members, trusts and foundations who are in a position to enable our researchers in their work.

Right top: This artist's impression/illustration shows the seven TRAPPIST-1 planets as they might look as viewed from earth using a fictional, incredibly powerful telescope.



NASA/JPL-CALTECH/R. HURT (IPAC)

He says, "With our telescopes, it's sometimes like trying to look outside through a moving, dirty window. I wanted to find a way to see more clearly through that window."

Furthermore, instruments that traditionally use infrared cameras are not only extremely expensive, but they require high-maintenance cryogenic cooling systems, something that wasn't possible for SPECULOOS' unmanned robotic telescopes. Peter looked for a new type of camera that could capture the specific short-wave-infrared wavelengths to improve the signal-to-noise ratio of the resulting light curves as well as try and find a way to overcome the effects of atmospheric variability.

"My job was first to figure out if it was possible to find this type of instrument and also whether it was financially viable. There are not many of these infrared cameras. They are usually employed for military applications so getting hold of a good one is quite hard", says Peter. After contacting various manufacturers, he was able to identify a short-wave-infrared camera with an indium gallium arsenide-based sensor that he believed could be installed on one of the telescopes.

The camera had to be ordered from the United States and it was delayed by two years due to the COVID pandemic. When it finally arrived, Peter set to work, developing a correction method and filter bandpass to mitigate the effects of water vapour in the atmosphere and writing software to enable the camera to work with the robotic telescope and to transmit its data to an archive. He also had to engineer a liquid cooling system to maintain the camera at a steady temperature on a moving telescope.

At the end of 2021, Peter shipped the camera off to Chile (placing an electronic tracker in the box so he could follow its journey over the busy Christmas period). He and the camera were reunited in Chile and he set off for the observatory to affix the camera to the telescope Callisto. "My first mission was about just testing the camera and making sure that we actually saw an image that made sense because I hadn't actually attached a telescope to this camera before. And then a second mission involved ironing out any of the software bugs or hardware issues we were having so we could start to do some science."

Once Peter and the other astronomers were confident that the final images were of the data quality that they had hoped for, they permanently connected the camera to the telescope. "We look extensively at a target star every night for a few weeks. This allows us to get phase coverage which includes enough periods of time that if a planet did exist, we would see a dip in the starlight. We're getting about 1,000 images a night, sometimes even more than that." Early results have revealed features that would not have been visible before SPIRIT, and Peter feels that the camera is already making an impact. "I think it offers a new opportunity with small- and medium-size telescopes. Infrared has been out of the reach of many astronomers because of the complications and the expense. But this technology presents an interesting avenue for the future of exoplanet exploration."

Peter is now a Postdoctoral Researcher at ETH in Zurich.

"Early results have revealed features that would not have been visible before SPIRIT, and Peter feels that the camera is already making an impact."

IN PRINT

Dr Charles Read Lessons Learned



When it comes to economics, Dr Charles Read wants to stop history repeating itself.

By Professor Simon Heffer
MA PhD (Cantab) FRHistS

Dr Charles Read appears to be doing the work of several people. In the University, he is a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow in the Faculty of History and an affiliated lecturer in the Faculty of Economics. He is also the Junior Proctor during this coming academic year. In Corpus, he is a Tutor, a Director of Studies and a College Lecturer. He has won a wide range of prizes for his work and has recently published two books: *The Great Famine in Ireland and Britain's Financial Crisis* (Boydell Press), an extension of his PhD thesis, and *Calming the Storms: The Carry Trade, the Banking School and British Financial Crises since 1825* (Palgrave Macmillan). A third book, on the 1847 financial crisis and the development of the British Empire, is in the pipeline. As if that isn't enough, he also edits *The Record*.

Perhaps even more important, Charles co-directs the Bridging Course, an innovative residential scheme for new undergraduates, which was the first of its type at a Cambridge college designed to significantly increase the share of student body from under-represented backgrounds. Unlike most widening-participation schemes in Cambridge and Oxford that do not increase the overall number of places, Corpus expanded the number of undergraduate places by more than ten percent for the Bridging Course. He explains, "This comes from the College's view, for which there is lots of empirical evidence, that the only sustainable way to increase social mobility is to increase the number of opportunities at the top of society." The College now has alumni from the first year of the Bridging Course and they have done just as well in their exams overall as students from better-off backgrounds. He continues, "Those alumni are among the most enthusiastic students in terms of putting back their time into the College community: whether that be volunteering for JCR positions, for Corpus Open Days or other widening participation programmes."

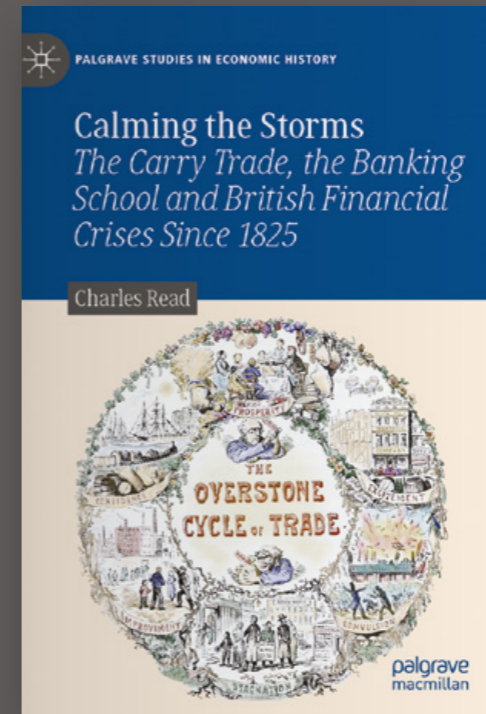
Charles grew up north of London and went to school in St Albans. "I went to a school that was re-founded by Nicholas Bacon, whose statue stands proudly in New Court at Corpus", he tells me. His specialist academic interest was provoked by the financial crisis of 2008 – Lehman Brothers collapsed two weeks before his Freshers' Week. Always fascinated by history, politics and economics, these events 'crystallised' what really interested him in the subjects. In his childhood Britain had been a land of "low inflation, moderate interest rates, relatively stable economic growth, and now all this had ended."

Charles went up to Christ's to read

History; he chose that college because "it then had a very long line of historians, particularly a long line of historians interested in public engagement." He was particularly attracted by the legacy of Sir Jack Plumb – "I never met him – he died when I was only 11, but he was the founder of that school of thought that says that history is not just about talking to other academics about esoteric questions that most people would have no interest in. He was in many ways Cambridge's AJP Taylor, though he ended upon a very different side of the political spectrum from where he began. But he also wanted to increase participation, in that he came from a not very privileged background, and breaking into the upper echelons of Cambridge history was not a very easy task for him in his early career. He spent three years after his PhD on the equivalent of zero-hours contracts."

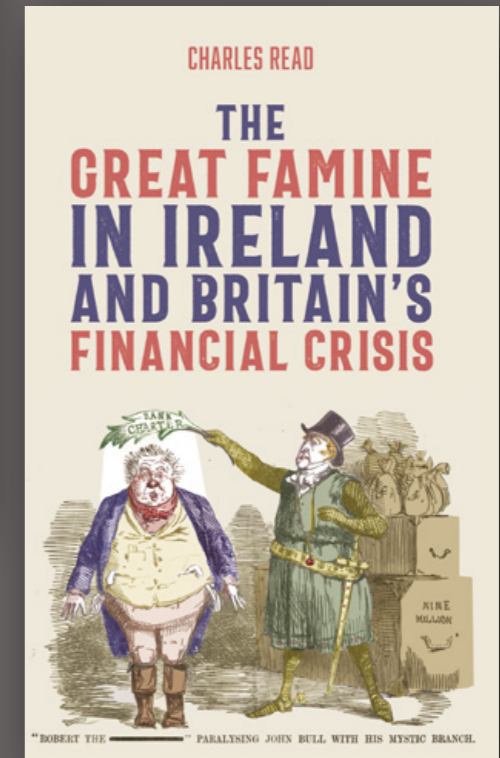
What Charles also admires about Plumb was that he 'championed talent wherever it was on the political spectrum' including notable practitioners such as David Cannadine, Linda Colley, Simon Schama and Niall Ferguson. Charles clearly shares not just that interest in ideas, irrespective of who is advancing them, and has none of the sectarianism with which some contemporary historians are too often associated, but also that commitment to public engagement. In his time at Christ's he admired Professor David Reynolds, who – in the days when the BBC still made serious documentaries about history – was a frequent face on television.

Taking the History Tripos at Christ's College was stimulating, but Charles found some of the divisions within it 'slightly artificial'. "There was an assumption within the Tripos that economic and social history were linked together and that political history was its



Risky interest

The launch of *Calming the Storms*, which focuses on British banking crises, ironically took place before the collapse in March 2022 of Silicon Valley Bank, for reasons that Charles outlines in the book. "Between 1866 and the secondary banking crisis of 1973-75 there isn't really a problem with banking in Britain," he tells me. "But then crises start to come back. It's not credit and liquidity risk that are the main causes of banking crises, in fact the underlying cause, which hasn't had much attention in recent decades, is interest-rate risk." After 1866, he says, the Bank of England learned that a policy where rates were too low for too long and, for example, the currency came under threat, suddenly spiking those rates to restore equilibrium in an emergency caused enormous problems. "After that, rates moved in waves, raising earlier than before and declining more slowly," he says, which lessened the risk. As his book outlines, excessive interest-rate spikes did not happen again until the Heath administration panicked over the boom in the money supply in 1973 and 'unlearned the lessons' of the nineteenth century.



"After 1866, he says, the Bank of England learned that a policy where rates were too low for too long and, for example, the currency came under threat, suddenly spiking those rates to restore equilibrium in an emergency caused enormous problems."

(continued from page 28)

own thing,” he says. “I don’t think that you can write good historical narratives without bringing things together.”

After graduating he had some internships in banking and journalism, then did a Master’s at Cambridge before working as a research analyst at Citigroup for 18 months, a period that included the Eurozone crisis. “This gave me an inkling of what it was like to work in the markets, and not to be thinking of things entirely in theoretical terms, but to study animal spirits and investor behaviour, and how Draghi’s ‘do whatever it takes’ suddenly changed expectations.”

I ask Charles whether he wasn’t tempted to stay in the financial markets and make his pile.

“Unfortunately, that was probably the wrong moment to be a research analyst, as the European Union passed MIFID II (a new regulatory framework designed to stop 2008 repeating itself), which made it very difficult for banking institutions to make money through equity research, for which there was going to be a collapse in demand. So I thought that if I wanted to do a PhD and make a contribution to economic history, that was the time to do it.”

In his PhD thesis on the economic crisis in Ireland from 1841 to 1853, he argues that what is often interpreted as the mismanagement of Ireland by the British was not intentional, and that the subject has become a “sectarian football between nationalist historians who say that it was genocide, that it was intentional, and revisionists who say that British policy had nothing to do with it.”

He asked why the British government had not considered what we would now call a ‘Keynesian expansion’ to mitigate the effects of the potato famine. “I discovered that the government had attempted to do a Keynesian stimulus

but it had gone spectacularly wrong, triggering a financial panic and a U-turn that led to the biggest humanitarian disaster in the modern history of Great Britain and Ireland.” The long-term consequences of the death rate and subsequent mass emigration from Ireland means that it is now has a population lower than it did in the 1840s. It also caused Irish separatism to surge and the eventual departure of the Irish Free State from the United Kingdom in 1922.

His interest in Ireland is not through any ancestry, though his own background is pleasingly diverse. “The Read family is as English as you can get, but my mother’s family is a mixture of Welsh, Armenian and Ethiopian. Perhaps that accounts for my quite different interpretations of established subjects.” He agrees that he has “half an outsider’s perspective” and reflects that “you can learn most from people who are half in your culture and half in another.”

After some teaching and further journalism at *The Economist*, Charles followed the route of another Corpus alumnus, Norman Macrae (m.1942), who worked there from 1949 to 1988 and was a prophet of privatisation. “He started a PhD but then got lured by the instant gratification of journalism. I got lured away just like him, but there was something in me that said I could not allow my research to disappear into the UL and never be found again. I felt there was some public importance in explaining how the received wisdom about the Irish famine was wrong.”

Charles took up a Fellowship at Corpus in 2018. I ask him to reflect on the teaching of history in universities in general in the era of ‘woke’, trigger-warnings, decolonisation and other trends that seem to some to politicise the subject to its overall detriment. “I think there are two trends that are to

be regretted. The first is the idea that we are no longer interested in elites or high politics, and, worse than that, in policy. We are no longer interested in the intentions or the causes of policy, or in its results. I think that’s incorrect.” The second, he says, is “there’s been this fit towards tropes and buzzwords, and we want to move history into pre-conceived ideas about a period. Both of those do a great disservice to society.”

He stresses, “Understanding mistakes from the past does matter because mistakes and incompetence in policy do change everyday people’s lives. The focus on tropes and buzzwords in the history of the Irish famine was a contributory factor to the Truss mini-budget in September 2022. Academics obsessed with attacking *laissez-faire* ideas and putting Ireland in a colonial context missed that the disaster was actually a fiscal and monetary policy failure. We can still learn from such failures, because the way that markets work has not fundamentally changed since the nineteenth century.

If people knew that unfunded tax cuts and a borrowing spree at a time of rising interest rates would cause a financial panic and have dreadful effects in terms of austerity afterwards, people would have thought twice before re-enacting that set of policies.” As Santayana said, those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

Charles is passionate about the Bridging Course and is keen to encourage donations towards it. If you’d like to contribute, you can do so on our website at corpus.cam.ac.uk/alumn/make-donation.

“In his PhD thesis on the economic crisis in Ireland from 1841 to 1853, he argues that what is often interpreted as the mismanagement of Ireland by the British was not intentional.”



Leckhampton at 60

After a unique beginning as a Cambridge experiment in postgraduate living, and following six successful decades, Leckhampton is looking to the future.

Leckhampton Anniversary Weekend

November 2022

The 60th Anniversary of Leckhampton Weekend in November 2022 was a brilliant opportunity to bring our whole community together to celebrate six decades of rich experiences of Leckhampton life. In this time, over 2,700 postgraduate students have advanced their studies and enjoyed being part of our postgraduate community. We enjoyed talks, dinners, panel discussions and performances by current and former members, and it was an opportunity for old friends and colleagues to catch up and share their academic successes and life experiences.

We even had a spectacular fireworks display on the crisp autumnal Friday evening followed by drinks in the Leckhampton Bar, bringing back memories for many Old Members of catching up with fellow research students at the end of a long day. Many spoke over the weekend of enduring friendships and professional relationships formed during their Leckhampton days.



(continued from page 31)

At the centre of the weekend's events, Dr Richard Henderson (m.1966), Leckhampton alumnus and 2017 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry, gave a keynote address in a lecture named for former Master Professor Haroon Ahmed, who was also in attendance. Richard spoke of his memories of Leckhampton and shared some of his own photographs from his time as a PhD student. In his address, *Using Electron Microscopy to Understand the Molecules of Life*, Richard describes how he began his PhD as an X-ray crystallographer, using the method that had been so successful in helping to understand the structure of DNA. But there were many biological structures – micromolecules – simply too small to view using X-ray crystallography. Richard traced the multiple technological developments that led to the use of electrons as a source of illumination to view these tiny structures. The technique is used today in a wide range of applications included, said Richard, by Corpus Fellow Professor Judy Hirst, who uses cryo-electron microscopy to study the structure of mitochondria.

From fond memories to current research

Additional talks crossed a wide range of disciplines by Corpuscles at various stages of their academic careers. Warden of Leckhampton Professor JD Rhodes discussed the role of film studies, which sits in the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages. He was joined by Dr Rhiannon Harris (m.2012), Dr Isabelle McNeill (m.2002), Dillon Mapletoft (m.2012) and Corpus Fellow Professor Emma Wilson (m.1995), who is profiled on page 12.

JD also participated in a 'walk down memory lane' session with former Leckhampton Wardens Professor Chris Howe (m.1977), Professor Haroon Ahmed and Professor David Ibbetson (m.1973). Haroon's wife Anne Ahmed also contributed to the conversation. All recalled the wonderful social atmosphere at Leckhampton in the early days, and how quickly it became a community. Fond reminiscences included evenings spent playing Trivial Pursuit (with Haroon becoming an expert), Sunday tea and cake from Fitzbillies, Christmas carols, pantomimes and theatrical performances (in which Chris Howe was a frequent participant, along with Oliver Rackham and former Senior Tutor Richard Bainbridge).

Former Head of the Department of Architecture and Life Fellow of Corpus, Professor Peter Carolin (m.1957), shared Reflections on the Architecture of Leckhampton. Peter has deep knowledge of the buildings at both Old House and Leckhampton, and has written extensively about their history in *The Record* and in the book *The Courts of Corpus Christi* (written with Oliver Rackham).

Fittingly, given the subject of Richard Henderson's Ahmed Lecture, current postgraduates discussed their research in the panel presentation *Investigating Life from Molecules to Organisms*. The talks revealed the range and depth of scientific research conducted by today's Leckhampton PhD students. Darius Kosmützky, who was MCR President and is a Gates Cambridge Scholar, works in the lab of Professor Chris Howe studying microalgae, as does Alberto Scarampi, who has a 'passion for synthetic and systems biology'. Robert Waddell works in Professor Judy Hirst's group at the MRC

Mitochondrial Biology Unit. Emma Siragher is based at the Centre for Trophoblast Research, which studies the placenta and maternal-fetal interactions during pregnancy. Gabrielle McClymont, also a Gates Scholar, studies signalling pathways in the immune system at the Cambridge Immunology Network. Roberta Cacioppo is in the Lindon Group in the Department of Pharmacology. Cristina González López is a PhD candidate in Chemical Engineering working in collaboration with the Department of Oncology on cellular senescence.

Academic paediatric oncologist, Fellow Dr Sam Behjati, who is a Group Leader at the Wellcome Sanger Institute and Consultant Paediatric Oncologist at Addenbrooke's Hospital, discussed his work on childhood cancer. His research is focused on unravelling the origins of cancer, using a variety of cutting-edge nucleic acid sequencing technologies.

Corpus Fellows Professor Emma Spary, Dr Amar Sohal and Professor Shruti Kapila discussed History in the Global Age, a conversation about current issues in global politics, such as identity, minority rights, nationalism and globalisation.

Head Gardener Andy Pullin was happy to give tours of the garden as well as participating in a panel on Sustainability and Biodiversity at Leckhampton, along with Fellow Dr Jenny Zhang, and PhD students Katrina van Grouw, George Garnett and Henry North. The gardening team has been making great strides in introducing sustainable practices across the site, encouraged by the Sustainability Committee (see page 52).

Fellow Professor Drew Milne, the Judith E Wilson Professor in Poetics in the Faculty of English, also gave a presentation called *Lichen Beacons: Film and Poetry*.

Opposite – clockwise from top left:

- 1. The Master, Professor Christopher Kelly.
- 2. Corpus Fellows Professor Emma Spary, Dr Amar Sohal and Professor Shruti Kapila discussed History in the Global Age.
- 3. Audience members included Fellow Professor Jenny Zhang, PhD student Satish Viswanathan and alumna Alison Gregson.
- 4. Professor Christopher Howe spoke with other former Wardens of Leckhampton.
- 5. Dr Jacob Lundwall (m.2016)
- 6. Dr Jean Jacques (m.1973) and Dr Michael Tilby (m.1968) consult the programme.
- 7. Director of Development and Alumni Relations Rachel Lawson.
- 8. Dr Richard Henderson with Warden of Leckhampton Professor JD Rhodes and Rachel Lawson.

LECK AT 60: THE POSTGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

Professor Mark Berlin



We were delighted that Professor Mark Berlin (m.1979) travelled from Ottawa to join us at the event. To say that Mark is an international lawyer in human rights barely scratches the surface of his long and varied career across academia, government practice and the non-profit world.

He has been a professor of practice, a policy advisor, government legal counsel, and the author of numerous articles and co-publisher of the book *Human Rights in Canada*. He is a Trustee of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and is a member of the Advisory Council for the LGBT 'Purge' project to recognise historic human-rights violations of LGBT people in the Canadian military, police and civil service.

Mark grew up in Montreal and came to Corpus after attending Law School in Canada. At the time Corpus was an 'all white, male Christian student body', which he is delighted is no longer the case. Still, his experience here made a deep and lasting impression. Mark credits his time at Leckhampton as having forever changed him. He explains, "During my time at Corpus, what I studied, what I wrote about, and what I started thinking about put me on a career path. Without my degree from Cambridge, my opportunities wouldn't have been the same. I couldn't have taught law for 30 years at a university, I don't think I would have worked for Attorneys General and Ministers of Justice. And certainly, the substance of what I have devoted my life to in terms of human rights and international law all stemmed from my exposure to those subjects at Cambridge. It empowered me to be bold and to want to make a difference in the world."

Mark has generously pledged a legacy to Corpus and encourages other Old Members to consider also supporting Corpus in this way.

We look forward to welcoming Mark back again soon.

Alumni Mark Berlin (m.1979), Dr Jacob Lundwall (m.2016) and PhD student Nanna Saeten.

At the 60th anniversary event Mark joined Dr Jacob Lundwall and PhD student Nanna Saeten for a wide-ranging conversation that touched on populism in the US and Canada, Mark's extensive work to help develop strong institutions of statehood in places such as the Middle East, Bangladesh and the Sudan, and the potential outcomes in Ukraine (the conversation can be viewed on the College YouTube channel).

Mark also shared the following advice for today's Leckhampton resident scholars: "Embrace the splendour and awe that is Corpus Christi and never take for granted the privilege. Enjoy every walk, every pint, punt, every class and let this experience guide you both morally and deliberately as you make your future career and life decisions."

Believe in your own good fortune and make your own luck. Don't be afraid to make decisive changes as opportunities present themselves. I once had a chance encounter at a Leckhampton breakfast with a Professor of International Law, Colin Warbrike, when he was on sabbatical from the University of Durham. As he enquired about my academic plans, the more intrigued I became by his own path in public international law. He went on to become my academic and thesis supervisor and I switched from the LLM to the MPhil, which was much more suited to my talents and interests.

Finally, continue doing what Corpus has in its core DNA and practice kindness. Mentor younger persons who come into your orbit. You have no idea how much of an impact you can have on somebody's life trajectory and career path decisions."



LECK AT 60: PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Facing Forward

The event was also a springboard to hold conversations and to consider our provision for Leckhampton's future generations of students and academics. The Master, along with JD Rhodes, Senior Tutor Marina Frasca-Spada, and Admissions Tutor Michael Sutherland held a final session to discuss Leckhampton as we move forward into the next six decades. How do we continue to attract, fund and support future generations of the brightest minds?

The Master said:

“One thing that we know about institutions is that if they don't change, they decline, that they roll backwards. One thing that we have been celebrating here today has been the extraordinary energy, vision and foresight of the founding of Leckhampton in 1961. One of the interesting, and I think, lasting legacies of Leckhampton is that it did not become a separate graduate college. This is not Corpus's answer to Clare Hall.

The relationship between our graduate community and our undergraduate community has changed significantly in the last 15 or 20 years, not only because the PhD has now become something which so many more people do as a gateway to research, but perhaps more importantly, because of the creation in the last 15 years of the one-year MPhil in a range of subjects. This has led to a completely different kind of graduate experience. In the same period, the STEM subjects as undergraduate degrees are now four years long, rather than the traditional three years, which remains in humanities.

“..we need to work out a built environment, both at Leckhampton and at Old House that would reflect some of those transformative social and intellectual ambitions. We've commissioned a Masterplan, which embraces the whole site.”

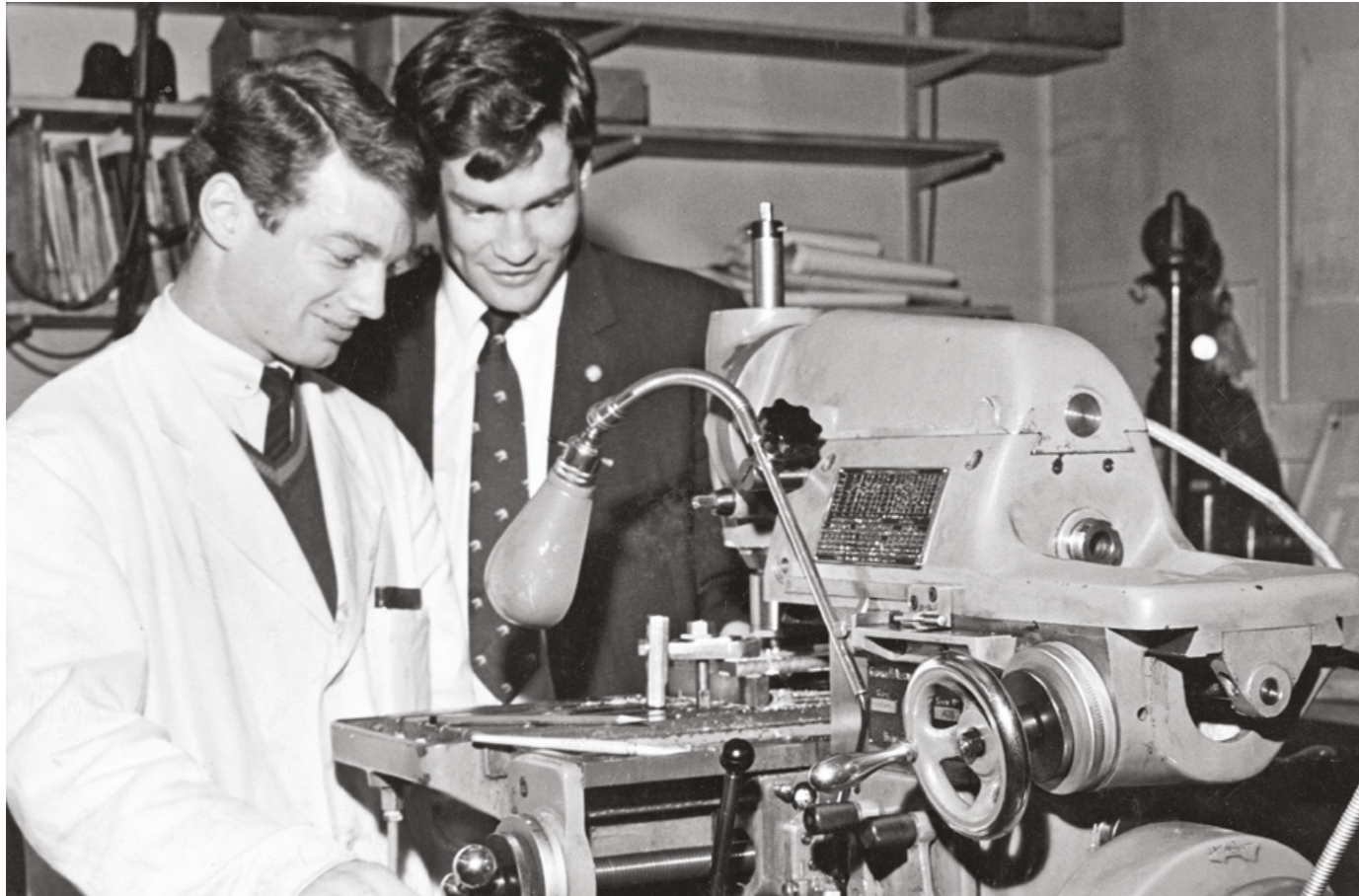
The Master, Professor Christopher Kelly, with Professor JD Rhodes.

So there's been a blurring of the once more rigid boundaries between the undergraduate experience and the graduate PhD experience.

The College's flagship initiative of the years before COVID was a concentration on the Bridging Course, an initiative that expanded our undergraduate intake by 10 to 15 percent, with a particular concentration on those from underrepresented and disadvantaged, educational and social backgrounds. Last year we had one of our best years in top examination results, so the Bridging Course project has worked extraordinarily well and it has led to a significant transformation of our student body.

Now we need to think about how we extend something of that commitment to widening participation across our graduate community. The other strand that we are thinking about is that we need to work out a built environment, both at Leckhampton and at Old House that would reflect some of those transformative social and intellectual ambitions. We've commissioned a Masterplan, which embraces the whole site, because I think it's important that when we talk about the College, we think equally of the Old House, and Leckhampton, and that we think how the architecture and facilities of both these places can express some of the fundamental and different strengths of those two complementary communities.”





Images: (top) Picturethepast.org, (bottom) courtesy Simon Park (www.simonparkphotography.co.uk)



Time Flies Dr John C Taylor OBE

In September, before the busy rush of a new Michaelmas Term began, the College was delighted to welcome back alumnus and Honorary Fellow Dr John C Taylor OBE to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the opening of the Taylor Library and the unveiling of the Corpus Chronophage Clock. This wasn't Dr Taylor's first visit this year; in June the University bestowed upon him an Honorary Doctorate, the highest accolade the University can offer, in recognition of his outstanding achievements in innovation.

We were pleased to host a luncheon for Dr Taylor and members of his family, including his daughter, Corpus Guild Fellow Dr Laura N Young MBE. With this recognition in mind, we asked Dr Taylor for his insight into innovation and entrepreneurship, his approach to design, and advice he would give to budding inventors today.

Left top: Renton Murray with Dr John C Taylor at Otter Controls.
Left bottom: Dr John C Taylor is a noted horologist and collector of clocks and timepieces.

As the Taylor Library turns 15 we have Honorary Fellow Dr John C Taylor OBE to thank for his generosity as one of its major donors – and for the gleaming golden timepiece that has become a top tourist attraction in the city.

You've spoken openly about having undiagnosed dyslexia, and yet you have a namesake library containing thousands of academic books. What made you want to fund a library specifically?

I had no fear of libraries even though I found reading very difficult. As you point out, nobody in those days knew about dyslexia. You were just called lazy or thick, and I had to find a way to work around it, especially for writing essays. One way I coped was by turning to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which usually gave a very good synopsis of a subject so I could get started. Even when I was at Corpus, I used to look up subjects in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* in the Butler Library. And one thing that brought me joy was randomly discovering new information. I would be thumbing through an encyclopedia or a reference book and there, through complete serendipity, stumble across some item that was absolutely fascinating.

You very often pick up an object to demonstrate an idea that you have. Would you say you are a visual thinker?

Yes, I see things in three dimensions. I think this has helped me overcome the disadvantages of my dyslexia. When I was a child I was amazed that not everyone had this ability. Everything I see, I want to pick up and look at. I wonder how it was made. Was it moulded? How did the mould open and close? How was it manipulated to add that piece? Everything I pick up I think, 'oh that's interesting'. And then I naturally think, 'how could I improve it?'

What do you think your Cambridge education gave you?

Cambridge, for all its peculiarities, taught me how to think. I always say that even if you've forgotten everything you've been taught, you'll still know how to think. That's why I wanted to do something for Cambridge, and for Corpus, because I wanted to give something back.

What about innovation? Do you believe that it can be taught?

The modern educational system tends to teach you that every question has an answer. Every course has a syllabus and every syllabus has a crammer. So you could in theory get a first-class degree by answering every question in the syllabus, even without going to a single lecture. But most problems in real life are not clear-cut. You often have to make a decision without complete information. I think the educational system stops innovation because it teaches you what you need to know, but not to think outside the box. The syllabus is not going to change the world.

(continued from previous page)



Dr John C Taylor and Director of Development Rachel Lawson.

Innovation is not just having a good idea, it's achieving the practical embodiment of an invention. In engineering you're taught that there's a designer and then there's a person who puts the design into production. If you can't as a designer know how something will be made, how can you do something interesting? I have always taken my ideas, figured out the best production method and then taken them through the manufacturing process myself.

You've endowed the Dr John C Taylor Professor of Innovation in 2017, a post which is held by Professor Tim Minshall at the Institute for Manufacturing. What were you trying to achieve with this professorship?

You've got to have people who move the world forward: innovation is essential to trade, industry and the economy. My hope with this post is to help people actually create and do things that will improve the world. The British are renowned for their creativity but all too often our inventions are commercialised by other countries. I speak with Tim Minshall regularly, and I know that he's introduced new elements into the teaching of the syllabus and research. We want to ensure that young engineers combine innovation with practicality when approaching design.

You've obviously been a successful businessman. The model for invention now seems to be to try and get as much venture capital as you can, but you aren't convinced that's the best way to start?

I've never borrowed a penny. When I came to the Isle of Man, it was to raise my children. We had a company and some engineering capacity here, but very little money. So we set to and got something into production in just a few months. We immediately started selling in the replacement market which didn't require endless approvals. And then we started to have turnover of £2,000 a week, which paid the wages, and we

were able to increase production. You've got to have cash. Start by getting something into production, mortgage your house if you need to and put your money where your mouth is. Then you get an income stream and you can increase production. You also need to be clever with patents. You can only patent something that's new. So if you have a new invention and you make samples and give them to all your customers and they start to order them, you can't patent it because it's known. On the other hand, you can't patent on an idea; it has to be the practical embodiment. If you rush off to the Patent Office with a good idea, by the time you've made that practical embodiment you may find that the product would be better if it was square rather than round. You should have held off with the patent. You can file another patent but that takes money up front. Only when you have models that you've tested should you apply for patents.

You've been a pilot for 70 years. Would you go into space?
Oh yes, I would happily go into space. After all these years of flying, I still want to go higher.

Secrets of the Chronophage



Hypnotically beautiful yet slightly disturbing, the Corpus Chronophage Clock designed by Dr John C Taylor is one of the most distinctive public monuments in Cambridge. For its 15th birthday, we take a look at some aspects of its remarkable design.

1 The Rhodium Dish
A rhodium dish at the base of the clock has ten peaks and nine troughs, representing the 1/10th of a second accuracy that John Harrison was able to achieve with his clocks. At times, the pendulum points to each of these peaks and troughs in turn. When stopping, starting, and skipping beats, the clock gets a little out of time, but have no fear, it can run 10 percent faster to get itself back into phase to GMT on every fifth minute. This also enables the clock to cope with daylight savings time.

2 The Time Eater
The 'Time Eater' atop the clock opens its ghastly mouth at thirty seconds past each minute, snapping shut when the minute is over. It is an example of the rocking grasshopper escapement mechanism invented in the 1700s by John Harrison, who also invented the marine chronometer that enabled sailors to determine longitude. The Time Eater's 20 teeth are hand-forged and polished stainless steel, plated with gold. Its tongue is forged copper with gold leaf inclusions under crimson enamel – created by the sculptor Matt Sanderson and enameller Joan MacKarell.

3 The Pendulum
A Latin inscription adorns the pendulum: Joh. Sartor Monan Inv. MMVIII, which translates as follows: Joh. is Johannes, Sartor is the Latin for tailor, Monan is the Isle of Man, Inv. is invenit, a verb with multiple meanings (discovered/made/brought to fruition), and lastly MMVIII is the year 2008. Thus, 'John Taylor of the Isle of Man made it in 2008'.

4 The Clock Face
The clock face was formed from a single sheet of 1mm-thick high-quality stainless steel, about 1,500 mm (5 feet) in diameter, plated in pure gold. The radiating ripples allude to the Big Bang, the seminal event that formed the universe and could be considered the beginning of time. The steel was formed into this shape by a series of five controlled explosions, carried out at a secret and specialised military site in the Netherlands, enclosed in a tank, with water in front of the steel and a vacuum behind it to diffuse the impact and to avoid possible disfigurements from the escape of air.

5 The Inscription
Matthew Parker, the former Master, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the great benefactor of the Parker Library had his own portrait painted with an hourglass through which sand runs. Around the edge of the portrait is the quotation from I John 2:17, 'Mundus transit et concupiscentia eius' – 'The world and its desires pass away'. This phrase was carved by stone letter-cutter Lida Kindersley along the face of the two steps below the clock, linking the early College (founded in the wake of the Black Death) with the expression of mortality implicit in the clock. The clock was built under Dr Taylor's supervision by the firm of Huxley Bertram Engineering in Cottenham. The specialist engineer who still cares for the clock, Stewart Huxley, is a great-grandson of the Victorian scientist and biologist Thomas Huxley, friend and supporter of Charles Darwin.





CLUBS & SOCIETIES

50 Years of the Nicholas Bacon Law Society



Portrait of Nicholas Bacon, 1579.

Clockwise from top left:

1. Terence Etherton (m.1969).
2. Philippe Sands (m.1979).
3. Patrick Hodge (m.1972).
4. Natasha Godsiff (m.2017).

Law at Corpus has a proud history and an enthusiastic present. This pedigree was resoundingly celebrated in March 2022 at the 50th anniversary dinner of the Nicholas Bacon Law Society (NBLS). Its name was conceived by then-student, Terence Etherton while he was dining in Gray's Inn Hall in 1972. He noticed an identical portrait of Nicholas Bacon to that on display in Corpus' Hall. The subject, splendidly garbed in Elizabethan ruff, and holding his staff of office, was Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, a passionate educator, Corpus alumnus and College benefactor; in fact, the perfect inspiration for a name.

Fifty years on, Professor Robert Upex, the first Chair of the Society, and Lord Etherton, the second, still regularly attend the NBLS annual dinners, continuing the tradition of networking and support by established Corpus lawyers for current law students and young alumni. The current President, The Rt Hon Lord Justice Jeremy Stuart-Smith, completes the line of illustrious judicial presiding members.

The anniversary celebrations also provided an opportunity to recognise donors to the Nicolas Bacon Fund which was set up in 2006 by Lord Etherton to provide financial help for law students. Since its creation, the Fund, overseen by Trustees, and of which Mark Bridges is the current Chair, regularly disburses student grants and awards, including purchasing the student law reading list books. Additionally it helps support the dedicated Law reading room of the undergraduate library.

For a small College, Corpus has a veritable Who's Who of the British legal system and beyond, such that to mention some makes one fearful of leaving others out. Lord Etherton has had a stellar career, including as Master of the Rolls and Head of Civil Justice and Chancellor of the High Court. Honorary Fellow, Lord Patrick Hodge, Deputy President of the Supreme Court, is also Lord High Commissioner of the Church of Scotland's General Assembly. Other NBLS members include author Philippe Sands, Caroline Flanagan (who runs an organisation on Imposter Syndrome in Law), Christopher Vajda (European Court of Justice), Mr Justice Lavender of the High Court (King's Bench Division), Beatrice Collier (host of The Pupillage Podcast) and recent high-flying graduate Natasha Godsiff. Baroness Butler-Sloss, Honorary Fellow, who was the first female Court of Appeal judge in English history, is also an NBLS member.

With such an impressive 50 years behind the NBLS, we look forward with excitement to what the next 50 years will bring.



Antonio Zazareta Olmos



Peter Hall



2

Rowing – then and now

Nick Bliss and Peter Hall



3

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Corpuscles Nick Bliss (m.1978) and Peter Hall (m.1950) sat down in conversation with our 2022 Captain of Boats Lucy Hall and Men’s Captain Jack Morley to discuss their experiences rowing with the Corpus Christi College Boat Club (CCCBC) and the University Boat Club (CUBC), as well as the lasting impact rowing has had on their lives.

The rowing careers of Peter, Nick and Jack all began at Corpus. Peter began as a novice in 1951 and quickly rose to success with the College, winning the St Neots and Bedford regattas, as well as blades in the Lent Bumps campaign of 1952. Peter later went on to win the Wyfold Challenge Cup at Henley Royal Regatta, the first Corpus crew to win at this prestigious event. These achievements with the College catapulted Peter to triumph with CUBC, beating Oxford in The Boat Race of 1953 by eight lengths.

Peter remembers that day 70 years ago and the celebrations that followed the race, “After we’d chucked Little Brian Eddy, our cox – we always called him Little Brian, it was almost his title – in the river, a lot of drink was involved,” he says. “At the time I had an old converted taxi, and everyone piled in to head to the official dinner that evening. I’d already had far too much to be driving, I’m afraid, and I went the wrong way up a one-way street. We were stopped by a policeman who said: ‘Do you realise you’re going the wrong way up a one-way street?’ I said: ‘I’m so sorry officer, but we’ve just won the Boat Race by eight lengths and we’re a little over-excited.’ And he escorted us up the street in the wrong direction, and saluted us on our way. Incredible when you think about it.”

A talented rugby player and swimmer, Nick enjoyed similar sporting success as a novice rower at Corpus. In his first year Nick earned blades in both the Lent and May Bumps campaigns of 1979. The crew had subsequent success at Henley Royal Regatta, winning their first round of the Ladies’ Challenge Plate against Nottingham University. Nick earned further accolades with CUBC, rowing for Goldie in 1981 and the Blue Boat in The Boat Race of 1982.

The success of both Peter and Nick at the College demonstrates the nurturing environment Corpus creates for its talented novice rowers, an environment that Men’s Captain Jack has experienced for himself. Jack also rowed this summer for the Cantabrigian Rowing Club at the Henley Royal Regatta.

1. Peter Hall and the rest of the CUBC crew after their victory in the 1953 Boat Race.

3. Corpus VIII bumping at the first post in the 1952 Lent Bumps. Peter Hall at 7.

2. The Corpus IV at the 1952 Wyfold Cup Challenge at Henley. Peter Hall at 3.

Corpus is also a great setting for the development of more experienced rowers joining the College. Lucy learned to cox at school in 2015, with rowing at the College further sharpening her previously honed abilities. Lucy is now excited to trial alongside Jack for CUBC in the next academic year, both having been inspired and encouraged by their conversation with the Club veterans.

Rowing has not only brought athletic achievement and gratification to Peter and Nick, but also valuable life lessons. For Nick, rowing helps him deal better with stressful situations.

“What rowing taught me was how to react under pressure. In times of stress you’ve just got to breathe and think as clearly as you can. Particularly there have been moments in my career where I have consoled myself with ‘well this isn’t as bad as The Boat Race’, and it would calm me down”. Indeed, Jack and Lucy can relate to this sentiment; learning to manage the anxiety in the anticipation of an important race has helped both improve their resilience to the academic stresses every student experiences. Nick further elaborated, “You learn a lot from stressful situations, and I think it is a great experience to have been through, just to understand how you react when you have a challenge and, the next time it comes, how to grab the opportunity.”



Peter highlighted the importance of rowing in his understanding of teamwork: “Rowing has a dramatic effect because you learn what it means to be a team. Because you can’t win the race by yourself, you have to work all together amazingly carefully, and that team spirit leads you on to do all kinds of things.” Teamwork is held in high regard at Corpus Boat Club, with college rowing providing a unique opportunity to connect with a new group of like-minded individuals working towards a common goal. Both Nick and Peter say they are still in touch with their Corpus and CUBC crewmates.

Rowing, beyond being a physically demanding sport, offers profound life lessons that can shape students into resilient, disciplined and collaborative individuals. The dedication, teamwork and perseverance required in rowing provide a solid foundation for personal growth, helping individuals navigate life’s challenges with grace and determination. Corpus hopes to continue to develop these characteristics in its athletes as it has done for Peter, Nick, Jack and Lucy.

Supporting the Boat Club

Unlike many other colleges, Corpus has no endowed funds for rowing, which means the CCCBC relies on volunteer coaches. The Club regularly reaches out to Boat Club alumni to help fund training camps, equipment and sessions in Downing College’s rowing tank. As the Club’s 200th anniversary approaches, we are asking all Corpuscle ‘boaties’ to consider how they might contribute to the long-term support of the Club.

Sadly, Peter Hall passed away in September, shortly after this conversation took place. We remember him fondly.

“Rowing has a dramatic effect because you learn what it means to be a team. Because you can’t win the race by yourself, you have to work all together amazingly carefully, and that team spirit leads you on to do all kinds of things.”

Below: Corpus M1 at the Lent Bumps in 2023.

Above right: Corpus M1 at the Head of the River Race in 2023.



Tim Rhodes 30 years a boatman

Mornings on the River Cam can be chaotic. During term, the river is filled with dozens of college eights jostling for space between the banks from Midsummer Common to Bait’s Bite Lock. Keeping an eye on them from the Corpus boathouse is Tim Rhodes, the College Boatman for the last 30 years.

As a boy Tim spent his school days in St Ives gazing out of the window towards the river, much to the consternation of his father, who was the school’s headmaster.

By age 12 Tim had taken up rowing with a local club and has been on the water ever since. An excellent and passionate rower himself, Tim is a former World Rowing Masters Champion in single, double and quad sculling. When forced onto dry land, Tim is a keen cyclist and has completed several long-distance rides to raise money for charity.

“All those years sitting staring out the school window at the river turned out to be an apprenticeship of sorts; I now have the river in front of me all day. Thirty years has gone by in almost a blink of an eye,” he says.

Tim’s primary duty is to take care of the boats. He says, “When I started we still had some wooden boats, but now there is only one up in the rafters. The boats are now carbon fibre, super-light and strong. Although our crews do a very good job of testing the limits of that strength.” Damage can be caused by collisions on the busy river, over-zealous bumping, and even careless handling when getting the boats in and out of the water.

Corpus shares Tim’s services and the Boathouse with three other colleges: Sidney Sussex, Wolfson and Girton, which means he gets invited to at least four Boat Club dinners every year. It was the then-Bursar of Sidney Sussex who first hired Tim back in 1992. After a stint in the Army, Tim had just returned from a year’s travel in South America when he heard about the role. He contacted

the College only to be told that there was no such job! Fortunately he left his phone number and was contacted the next day to meet with the Bursar.

His boat-building skills and rowing achievements secured him the job.

Tim also coaches, travels with the crews to races and training, gives advice and cheers on crews from the towpath. Hundreds of Corpus rowers remember him for his expertise and support.

“Tim was so patient despite all the trouble we in the Boat Club caused him, and he was so supportive of Corpus. We all delighted in his cheer from the bank ‘Well done Corpus!’ which boomed across the river. I remember one time asking him if he had ever seen a crew out of our boathouse so good that he felt he had nothing left to teach – the answer to that was a quite confident ‘no’. I’ve perhaps never been prouder as a cox as when he gave me credit for an M1 bump to my coxing of grassy corner, saying it gained us half a length.” says Liz Elder (m.2015).

Clearly there are times when Tim’s patience can be tried. Jonathan Cobb (m.1994) says, “When I first arrived at Corpus I remember being terrified of him. The first few times I had to explain some damage to Tim he’d look at me and say in a tone of weary resignation ‘why did you do that?’. Over the years I came to realise that Tim was actually a massive supporter of rowers, the Boat Club, and Corpus and was always willing to help.”

Says Tim, “The fortunes of the Boat Club rise and fall as the years go by. But I’d like to think that my commitment to them – and the boats they row in - never wavers.”



“Three decades later and we’re still so lucky to have the best boatman on the Cam: he’s devoted so much time to training our crews, fixing our boats, trailering us up and down the country and overseas. The Corpus Christi College Boat Club would not be the same without him.”

KATIE BARKER
FORMER BOAT CLUB CAPTAIN

Mayeule Huard

La vie à Cambridge

A MML student finds herself in a documentary about being a Frenchwoman in this most English of towns, “Doesn’t it make you think of Harry Potter?”

It was the third time the reporter filming the Dining Hall insisted on asking me that precise question. I gave up, and simply spoke into the microphone fixed on my gown. Yes it does, we’re just missing the flying candles and dishes that appear by themselves.

The TV crew from the French channel M6 first contacted me in January about filming the life of a French student in Cambridge. I could see by the questions they were asking me that they were looking for specific aspects of la vie à Cambridge. After a week of shooting, a 45-minute documentary featuring me and four other French members of the University was aired. Suddenly, my fourth-year slightly jaded view of Cambridge was brightened with colour once again as I saw it through fresh eyes.

Coming to Corpus at age 20 after two years of Prépa in Paris, I wanted to live the English – and more specifically Cantabrigian – life to its fullest. From the little town of Annecy where I was born and raised, I had only ever dreamed of coming to this mythical institution and I intended to have the most authentic experience. That, for me, implied getting involved in activities such as rowing, and keeping away from my fellow French expatriates. I am always happy to mingle with the loud crowd of the Cambridge University French Society, especially mid-term when homesickness inevitably hits. However, I have also been cautious not to fall into what I perceive as the trap of living in a Little France within Cambridge. This, I feel, would defeat the point of my exploratory ambitions across the Channel.

Watching the documentary was a great way for me to realise I had partly succeeded. I will always be French,



Stills from the Grand Format M6 documentary featuring Mayeule.

no matter how long I stay in the UK. I have spent enough time here however, that I could see with some critical distance what intrigued the French journalists and what they selectively displayed.

In the documentary, perhaps unsurprisingly, the place of honour was given to food, followed closely by the Harry Potter folklore that the tourists love, and finally by the numerous traditions which form the daily ritual of a Cambridge life. The respect for the rules and decorum, the system of the colleges, and the way in which traditions with deep religious roots are still strictly kept à l’anglaise surprised the French public, a public which is known for its unruliness and tendency to strain against the most rigid aspects of its past. I know a few French people who, on seeing a sign that says ‘Do Not Walk on the Grass’, would walk on the grass just in the spirit of contradiction. I cannot really explain why, but at the same time, I understand.

There may be mild mockery of French peculiarities in Cambridge, but it is never ill-intended, and I love my own country

and people too much to let it get to me. In the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages, I study in an environment which celebrates every culture through the beauty of its language and the expression of that language in literature and the visual arts. Learning Italian and Russian at the same time as I have been perfecting my English has shown me how civilisation goes far beyond simple comparison and crude chauvinism.

Many of my friends watched the documentary and were impressed that under its Potteresque varnish, the documentary gave a faithful representation of the academic challenges we face and the intellectual benefits we reap from our studies, a reaction that encouraged me to return to Corpus and pursue an MPhil in Italian literature.

Post Brexit, European students are subject to international fees, resulting in reduced undergraduate numbers. If you can help fund student awards, this would be welcome news to our European students and our Senior Tutor. Please get in touch.

Cambridge offers opportunities for students to expand their horizons, explore new opportunities, and give back to the community. We take a look at some of their extracurricular activities in 2022-23.

Extracurricular

Delyth Roberts

HISTORY

“I am the President of a Cambridge student-led initiative called Embrace which supports local homelessness charities. We also aim to raise student awareness and tackle stigma surrounding homelessness. We have done several fundraising and donation drives but our main projects surround systemic change. We are working on an initiative that encourages Cambridge colleges and businesses to employ people who have experienced homelessness. We also oversee the building of modular homes on Cambridge land. Homelessness is quite severe in Cambridge, and it stands out more against such a wealthy and privileged backdrop. Students can often feel helpless or unsure of how they can make change or support local causes. We work closely and communicate with local charities, especially Wintercomfort, to ensure we are providing donations and advice that are the most impactful. Meeting and talking with people who have experienced homelessness to deepen our understanding and sensitivity is also key to making the most effective change. I oversee a committee with a co-president, we run the Embrace social media, and have one or two meetings a week to check in on progress and plan our next endeavours. It has been incredibly rewarding and has helped me figure out that I want to work in the charity sector in the future. Cambridge, and especially Corpus, has enabled and encouraged me to take on such a role.”





SPRI



Tom Shortland and Andre Ediangbonya-Davies

Former Fletcher Players President Tom Shortland and Andre Ediangbonya-Davies (both m.2020) have taken their show on the road to the Edinburgh Fringe. *Peer Gynt: A Jazz Revival* was directed by Tom and is described as a “lively and original fusion of music, drama, comedy, surrealism, and dance, Ibsen’s groundbreaking classic is reimagined by an ensemble of actor-musicians into a unique piece of gig theatre, accompanied by original jazz versions of songs from Grieg’s *Peer Gynt* Suite.” *Plays International* gave the performance four stars and said it “embodies the very essence of the original Edinburgh spirit.” Tom returns to finish his Classics degree in Michaelmas; Andre graduated with a History degree this year.



Aimee Hallsworth

ENGLISH

Aimee is fascinated with the history of the dress, and in March she took on the challenge of recreating one of the most eccentric items in the Polar Museum: Dorothy Irving Bell’s polar-themed party costume. “Dorothy was big fan of polar research, the costume was her way of showing her love for polar explorers and sharing her passion with others. The creativity that went into Dorothy’s outfit is crazy! The archivists are a bit baffled by it. She was clearly very creative,” says Aimee, who was thrilled to take up the challenge to recreate the quirky creation. Aimee had to learn some new skills along the way, including fabric painting. “Although the images of Dorothy wearing the dress show it without writing on it, we believe after the party Dorothy painted the names of all the polar explorers onto the dress and the names of the boats onto ribbons, which I have tried to recreate.”

“I got my first sewing machine when I was ten. I also worked in a haberdashery shop, took a GCSE in Textiles and enjoy making clothes for myself.”



Perrin Ford

MUSIC STUDENT, ORGAN SCHOLAR & FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE FLETCHER PLAYERS SOCIETY

“As someone who is interested in pursuing a career in the arts, I’ve really appreciated the experience of being on a committee, seeing how funding works from an executive perspective. Going between various people and boards, it quickly becomes very clear what matters to different people and what doesn’t. I’ve learned how to approach (sometimes) quite daunting and intimidating situations, such as pitching a show. I’ve also seen how other students deal with these challenges, and formed opinions on what I think works, what doesn’t, what I would like to emulate, and what I see of myself in others – and want to avoid! It has been completely invaluable to be able to focus on something practical aside from my studies. My degree work in the humanities largely focuses on the conceptual, such as how to draw meaning from works, or how to frame them in history. The Fletcher Players provides an antidote: a chance to see first-hand the practical considerations of putting on a show, the experience of creating a performance for a paying audience to see (and hopefully to enjoy). And it’s a bonus to do all this with friends, to make new ones, and to get out of my own room and my own head and grow in ways not possible just through my academic work.”

Freddie Sehgal

THEOLOGY, RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Freddie served as the Corpus JCR Ethnic Minorities Officer, and is Vice-President of the Majlis Society. “Majlis is a South Asian cultural and debating society that was established in Cambridge in 1891. I joined the Majlis as soon as I heard of it – Lent term of my first year. I remember seeing the Sanskrit crest of the Majlis: वन्दे मातरम्/Vande Mataram/ I bow down to thee, mother. That immediately piqued my interest; those words were the mantra of the Indian independence movement. This year I served as Vice-President. We’ve organised the usual socials, debates and speakers, but the highlight was putting on an exhibition based on newly discovered archives of the Society. The exhibition charted the fascinating story of the growth of the South Asian community in Cambridge and its role in the Indian independence movement. Through minutes, letters and speeches it pieced together the social, academic and political lives of some of the key forebearers of modern South Asia. The exhibition was held in the beautiful Wren Library at Trinity College.”

Cora Sehgal Cuthbert



MISCELLANY



New society for biologists

Under the direction of Fellow of Corpus Professor Ewan St. John Smith and named after former Fellow, Master and Life Fellow Oliver Rackham OBE FBA, the Society brings together undergraduates, postgraduates, Fellows and alumni to provide a network for Corpus biologists to support their studies.

Following on from a Michaelmas Term quiz and Lent Term careers event at which alumni Hannah Austin (m.2001) and Luke Henry (m.2001) provided insight on non-academic career paths, the Society was delighted to welcome an enthusiastic 50 members to its first Annual Lecture and Dinner. Attendees were treated to a lecture from Jeremy Thomas (m.1966) who provided some personal memories of life at Corpus with Oliver before giving an awe-inspiring talk about his lifetime's work on the conservation of the large blue butterfly.

Oliver's intellectual legacy bridges science and the arts and humanities. One of the distinctive features of his work was its interdisciplinary nature, and particularly the way it related scientific observation to historic and cultural context, revealing the nature of our interaction with our surroundings. The ability to work with medieval manuscripts assisted him in this, and his antiquarian knowledge was far-reaching, so it is appropriate that the College holds the Rackham Archive of notebooks, correspondence and photographs.

Above: Rackham's wealth of notebooks are in the process of being digitised and made available in an online archive.



Right: Oliver Rackham with his portrait.

Fenland Poet Laureate

Corpus student Qu Gao (m.2021) has been named Fenland's Poet Laureate 2022. Here the Physical Natural Sciences student shares her award-winning poem and the inspiration behind her work. "I have lived in Cambridgeshire since I was two years old: first in St Ives, and now in Chatteris. I used to take the train to go to school; the 30-minute train journey between March and Cambridge became a precious time in my day to read and daydream. '0732, March to Cambridge' is, in some ways, a product of many years of long train commutes, and a homage to some of the extraordinary landscapes I used to see through the train windows."

0732, March to Cambridge

I try to fix it, hold it, hang it in my fogged-up windowpane, yet curiously and curiously, it escapes: sliding past, hurtling behind, receding to whispers in the mistier, murkier fields of my fading memories. Fixing, holding, hanging me; laughing at my inane desperation, my Sisyphean futility. I trust those pop-up trees, those cut-out fields will probably remain, but really, who the hell am I kidding? No atom encased in a looking-glass so false and slippery could ever stay quite the same. Anyway, the train pauses: a chance to gaze at the swirling phantom of a mist, afloat, a cold winter's breath caught mid-air. For just a moment, all the world rests perfectly still ... until I see the trees shivering in the wintry chill. Softly it dawns. Brilliant gold streaks spill upon a foggy haze of grey, and, blinking in the light of the molten copper spray, unsure, uncertain, I watch the train begin its infinite journey again. Together with the arrow of time it goes, and I'm haunted by the thought that the world stopping and starting and reversing might be possible on board a train of (un)certain terminality and (un)sure destination. Please sir, would my glitching frame of reference be enough to buy me a return ticket for today? Unless — All change it was I who was moving forward and the world had never moved away.



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Under the floorboards

Leckhampton renovations reveal unusual finds from the past.

When builders removed the flooring from the office that was to become part of the new, enlarged MCR at Leckhampton, they found a scattered time capsule underneath. Whether the cigarette packages, postcards and Bovril jars were deliberately concealed in the underfloor, or somehow slipped down there will never be known, but the objects are now in the care of the Warden of Leckhampton.



Petal plating. Head Chef Ilias Arsenis loves to garnish dishes with gorgeous petals from an array of edible plants. Spicy nasturtium, sweet violet, delicate daisies – all manner of scented blossoms help turn delicious dishes into miniature works of botanical art.

Gardens Diary

The gardening team, under the direction of Head Gardener Andy Pullin, is transforming our approach to gardening and landscaping on the College grounds, with a greater emphasis on sustainability and creating habitats for wildlife.

Standing tall

We are lucky to have numerous mature trees across our estate, many of which are under protection orders, including the grand copper beech (*Fagus sylvaticus atropurpurea*) that was planted at Leckhampton House when the house was built in 1893, several Atlas cedars (*Cedrus atlantica*) in excess of 75 feet high and wide, planted circa 1890 as prestigious exotics, a dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) near the swimming pool and a Persian ironwood (*Parrotia*) which blazes with colour in autumn. We also have two recently planted ‘memory trees’ – a flowering dogwood planted in memory of former Fellow Dr Aaron Rapport and his wife Dr Joyce Heckman and an oak tree planted for Charles Allen by his son Malcolm Allen in recognition of his father's support for postgraduate students from Australia. Mature trees such as these provide invaluable habitat for birds and other creatures (buzzards regularly perch on the dawn redwood), create shade and of course absorb carbon dioxide.

The gardening team carry out an active programme of tree management, clearing out trees in a lot of the neglected, background areas which has given space and light to the remaining trees. Any trees that have to be cut down are turned into mulch or compost, or stacked as logs to create wildlife habitats across the site. A surround of such stacked logs frames the memorial bench that was placed in the garden for Life Fellow Professor Mark Warner.

Andy's approach is to ‘put in more trees than you take out’. By next autumn the team will have planted 650 trees at Leckhampton. Many of these trees come from the Woodland Trust, who offer saplings to schools and colleges, with various themes. The team chose a 480-tree wildlife pack, which includes hawthorn, hazel, silver birch, rowan, sessile oak and blackthorn. The saplings were delivered in March 2023, then potted up, and kept at our greenhouse facility on Sidgwick Avenue until they can be planted out.

Greener and greener

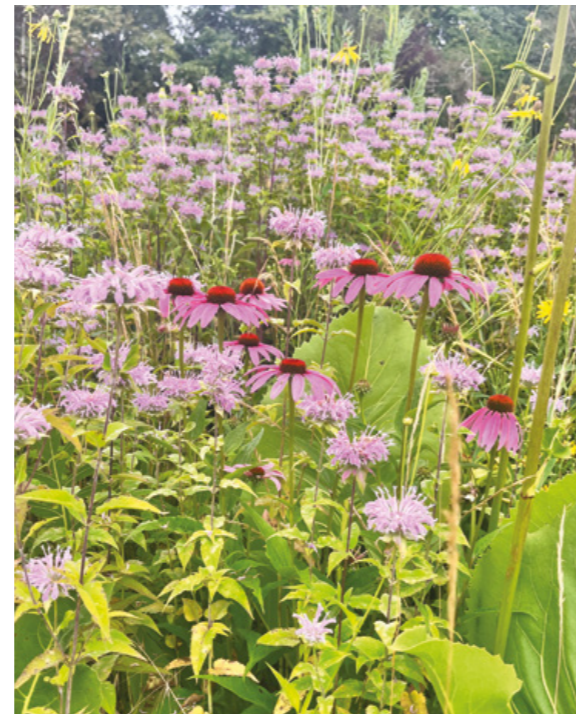
At both College sites, the emphasis of the Gardening Team has very much been on sustainable practice, and

Head Gardener Andy Pullin and his team have worked with the Sustainability and Gardens Committees to introduce nature-friendly measures.

These include renovation of the existing meadows by clearing out moss and thatch and re-seeding with a ‘throw-and-go’ seed mix that was developed at the Cambridge University Botanic Garden to encourage bees and other pollinators. Senior Gardener Matt Mace has started a propagation programme in the College greenhouses and these home-grown perennial plants now surround the Kho Building and attract a bonanza of bees, butterflies, beetles, dragonflies and other beneficial insects.

The team also installed wildlife cameras in various spots and captured an array of nocturnal wildlife including badgers, foxes, hedgehogs, deer and more. Students, Fellows and staff are now recording their wildlife sightings on an app called iNaturalist, and you can see photos and videos in the Sustainability section of our website.

“The team chose a 480-tree wildlife pack, which includes hawthorn, hazel, silver birch, rowan, sessile oak and blackthorn.”



Right: Meadow planting at Leckhampton.

CORPUS CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 4 The other place
- 6 Downton Abbey alum
- 9 Former College name
- 13 MS 002 (4,5)
- 15 Piped instrument (6,5)
- 16 Rooftop canine
- 18 Medieval disease circa 1349 (5,5)

- 19 College symbol
- 20 GTB architect
- 21 Floreat Antiqua
- 23 Drinking horn
- 24 Shining gate

DOWN

- 1 King James' tree
- 2 Elizabethan playwright (and spy?)
- 3 Library court rename
- 5 New arrival
- 7 Conservation Consortium home (8,3)
- 8 Current Master
- 10 Time eater
- 11 Patron saint of boundaries; old neighbour
- 12 JCR disco
- 14 Widening participation residential (8,6)
- 17 Library benefactor
- 22 DNA pub



John Turner / Alamy



Corpus Christi College
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Alumni Events

2023

Tuesday 19 September
15th Anniversary of
the Taylor Library Lunch

Saturday 23 September
MacCurdy
Reunion Dinner

Friday 29 September
1352 Foundation
Society Day

Friday 6 October
Old Members
(up to 1965)
Reunion Lunch

Saturday 21 October
Old Members & Fellows'
Guest Night

Saturday 4 November
Thirty Years of Classics
Reunion Dinner

Sunday 3 December
Friends of Corpus
Carol Service

2024

Saturday 10 February
Old Members
& Fellows' Guest Night

Friday 8 – Saturday 9 March
Forty Years On
• Women of Corpus
celebration –
International Women's
Day Weekend

Saturday 2 March
Lent Bumps Dinner

Saturday 16 March
Nicholas Bacon Law
Society Annual Dinner

Saturday 13 April
Beldam Reunion Dinner
(1978–1982)

Saturday 18 May
Old Members
& Fellows' Guest Night

Saturday 22 June
Forty Years On
• Women of Corpus
Garden Party