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A message from the Master

This last year has been a very exciting time for the College.

I'm delighted to report to you that our £5m fund raising campaign for the new Student Library is close to completion, due to the exceptional generosity of a few Old Members.

The architects are now working with the College to complete the designs. Building will start in March 2005 and we will open the Library in October 2006 in time for the Michaelmas Term.

“At this moment in our history, we look forward to the realisation of one of our greatest ventures in securing the future of the Parker Library and constructing a new Student Library and Student Centre.”

Professor Haroon Ahmad,
Master of Corpus Christi College
New Student Library, Library Court and Student Centre

The new Library, which will be housed in the building currently occupied by the Nat West Bank on the corner of Trumpington Street and Bene’t Street, will offer students greatly improved facilities, not only in terms of the numbers of books, but also in terms of space for studying and for meetings, projects and seminars. There will also be an e-learning and media centre.

The state-of-the-art Library will be incorporated into the heart of the College via a new entrance through Hostel Yard. This whole area is being redesigned as a new Library Court, with a cloistered entrance to the Library, and will become the College’s third Court.

I am also happy to report that fund raising is now complete for the final stage of the refurbishment of the Parker Library.

It will expand into the floor below (currently the Butler Library), providing a secure vault for the most precious manuscripts, a reading room for scholars and the Library offices. As soon as the Butler Library has moved to its new building, work will start on the final stage of the Parker Library improvements.

The beautiful Winkin Room on the first floor of the building was refurbished in 2001. Since then, many Old Members and visitors have come to the Library to see the frequent exhibitions of books and manuscripts.

One of our priorities is the conservation of our ancient books and we have long had the intention of building a new Conservation Centre. We now have raised the funds needed to build this, and work will start as soon as possible.

Our conservators Melvyn Jefferson and Elizabeth Bradshaw not only carry out essential work on our own manuscripts, but also lead the Cambridge Colleges Conservation Consortium. They accept external commissions, preserving the heritage of Corpus and many other Colleges.

“The College has benefited so much from the extraordinary generosity of its Old Members. I hope that this project, which focuses on improving the facilities for the student body, as well as the Parker Library, will appeal to our alumni who remember their own student days with affection.

Our aim is to ensure that Corpus remains a place where future generations of students will be both happy and successful.”

Elizabeth Winter, Development Director
Ground Floor Plan, northwest College site

1. The ground floor of the Student Library will encompass the main entrance area, frequently used sections like the Reference Collection and a number of work places in different arrangements. Special collections and rooms for seminars, meetings and reprographics will be adjacent.

2. The relocated JCR will be accessed mainly from Old Court. A staircase will connect it with the basement and the new College Bar.

3. The new Library Court will function as a central link between the Library and the College. A staircase will allow direct access to the new College Bar underneath it.

4. The College will modernise the bathroom facilities.
Our new plans for Corpus

As we near the completion of our libraries project we turn our attention to another pressing need. The communal facilities for our students are woefully out of date now. We plan to create a new Student Centre for recreational and social activities.

As all Old Members know, the College is on a very restricted site and we do not have any spare land. The solution we have chosen is to create a new basement floor, some of which will be taken up by the new Library. It will run underneath the northern end of the Library Court. The Student Centre will occupy a considerably enlarged purpose-built area, with a JCR, reading room, games room, bigger bar and social area for students to relax and meet friends. There will be space for social functions and the area will be sound-proofed. Access to and from the bar will be quite separate from the entrance to the Library, so that students leaving the bar will not disturb those studying. However, as you can see from the plans on page 13, study areas and social areas will be in close proximity so that students can move from one to the other with ease.

This development conveniently gives the College the opportunity to build new offices above the Student Centre. These modern premises will not only give the administrative staff of the College a better working environment, but it will also allow the many rooms currently used as offices in New Court to be released and returned to student rooms or ‘Fellows’ sets. The College will fund this development from its own resources. We will also take the opportunity to modernise the bathrooms in Old Court at the College’s expense.

Why do it all now?

Building the Student Centre, the staff offices and the modern bathrooms at the same time as the Student Library is the obvious course of action for the College to take.

To build just the Library and delay the rest of the plans would involve more disruption to College life in the future and add considerably to the cost.

Once the project has been completed, Corpus will benefit from:

- An enlarged Student Library with modern learning resources
- Improved facilities with greater security and access for the Parker Library
- A third Court – ‘The Library Court’
- A Student Centre with up-to-date facilities
- Modern bathroom facilities
- New Court returned to an academic court
Please support our Fundraising Campaign

We are now inviting all our Old Members to join us in a campaign of fund raising to complete the Student Library, to create the Library Court and the new Student Centre.

We have completed the fund raising for the Parker Library and the Conservation Centre, and have already raised more than 80% of the funds needed for the new Student Library from donations and legacies from Old Members.

We need to raise a further £3.25m to fund the remaining proportion of the Student Library, the Library Court and the Student Centre.

Every gift, whether large or small, contributes to the future of Corpus and the generations of students ahead of us.

We are pleased to name sections or rooms in the buildings, or even a whole building, after donors. The Development Director, Elizabeth Winters, would be delighted to discuss naming opportunities with you. She can be contacted directly on +44 (0)1223 338048.

In today’s competitive world of higher education, Corpus must continue to offer the very best facilities and support to its students.

In the pages that follow, you will find detailed descriptions of the projects, and ways of giving. We have explained how the generosity of our Old Members is essential to the successful achievement of these targets.

Will you help us to continue the tradition of benefaction on which the College is founded and ensure that Corpus remains the dynamic and well-resourced College it deserves to be?

“\textit{It is truly exciting to be planning this major improvement to the College’s historic site – a project which will provide future generations of Corpus students with some of the best educational and social facilities in Cambridge.}”

Dr Nigel Yandell, Bursar
The Student Library

Section of the new Student Library: Three new floors will be fitted into the building. The cloistered entrance to the new Library is visible on the right. The new basement underneath will be part of new Student Centre.

"The new Library itself will be a splendid additional facility for the College, but as a former resident of X staircase, I can see the great benefits of the other works which are needed to transform Hostel Yard (a backwater) into Library Court (a destination). This is one of those exciting projects where the value of the whole is going to be greater than the sum of the parts."

Robert Bowles MICE, Corpus Alumnus and Structural Engineer of Alan Baxter & Associates.
The College site culminates on its northwest corner in a stately Victorian building overlooking Trumpington Street, Bene't Street and Kings Parade. This spacious property, which has been a bank since it was built in 1866, will now be transformed into a new Library for all 400 of the College’s students and its Fellows.

The exterior of this fine neo-Gothic building will be left almost completely unaltered. But internally, two new floors will be fitted, creating a Library arranged on three levels. A wonderful sense of space will greet visitors as they enter the Library lobby, created by a six metre high window reaching from floor to ceiling. They will enjoy a spectacle of all three floors in one sweep.

The Library will have a hundred study places in a variety of forms ranging from tables for six near the entrance to single desks tucked discretely behind bookcases. All in all, the architects have designed a generous and excellently equipped work environment. State-of-the-art e-learning opportunities and wireless network provision will supplement an abundance of books.

A Project Room and a Media Centre will provide students with ideal opportunities to pursue their academic interests individually and in groups. Modern entry control, security and self-borrowing systems will allow for 24 hour access to the Library on any day of the week. The Library’s book stock will eventually increase from 28,000 to 60,000 books.

The architects have paid particular attention to environmental issues and low running costs. The Library has been designed to be passively rather than mechanically environmentally controlled. Cool air will be introduced through opening windows in the lower floors facing St Bene’t’s Churchyard, with a draw created by openings at roof level. During warm summer spells, cold night air may be drawn over the building fabric, which will cool it effectively for the next day. This and other means will considerably reduce energy consumption and the creation of CO2.

The materials used in the building will all be chosen to last. The outside walls and paving will be York stone; carpets throughout will make the Library relatively quiet, and the joinery will be oak. All this will engender a sense of quality, permanence and respect, thereby maintaining the ethos of the College.

The current entrance door to the bank from Trumpington Street and King’s Parade will be removed. It will be replaced by a smaller but extremely attractive stained glass window looking out on the street. By doing this, a striking and beautiful object will make a visual statement at this most public corner of the building.

The new Student Library will expand the College site by incorporating a building already owned by Corpus for its own academic use. The design and planning work is progressing well and we are on target for construction to start in April 2005, as soon as the lease expires. The new Library will open in time for the start of Michaelmas term 2006.
The Library Court

The new development will utilise an impressive building looking out towards the town and increase the College’s physical size and visual presence in Cambridge. Nonetheless, the College site will remain self-contained – not only for reasons of tradition and architectural layout, but also in order to make the new library a secure and easily accessible work place.

This project also gives the College the opportunity to add value to an underdeveloped and neglected area of its site. Placing the Library at the north-western corner of the central city block occupied by Corpus raises the status of Hostel Yard and brings it into play as a Court. This new Court of Corpus Christi College has been named provisionally “The Library Court.”

From within the College, the outward sign of the Library will be a six metre high window occupying the full width of the northern end façade of the new Court. The entrance, through a relatively small oak door, will be within a beautiful, stone clad cloister along the Court’s eastern side. Visitors will enter the new Student Library only from here, and authorised users will have 24-hour access through personal swipe cards. Functioning as a link between Library and College, the new Court will be a private and pleasant place for students to sit, away from the main tourist route.

“The extensive redevelopment of this area in Corpus will be of great benefit to all post-graduate students at the College, both academically and socially. In addition, I am confident that these improvements will help bring the undergraduate and postgraduate communities much closer together.”

Phil Cox, MCR President.
The artist’s impression of Library Court by Peter Hull illustrates:
1. The new Library window.
2. Cloistered entrance to the Library.
3. Staircase to the Student Centre.

“It is rare for an architect to have the opportunity to work on a high quality building in a complex setting for an informed client who takes the long-term view. This is just such a project, and we at Wright & Wright are delighted and honoured to have been chosen to design this project for the College.”

Clare Wright and Sandy Wright, of Wright & Wright Architects
The Student Centre

Within the Library Court and adjacent buildings, a new Student Centre will be created. This modern centre of social life in College will comprise the relocated and expanded College Bar, the Junior Combination Room (JCR) and modernised bathrooms for the inhabitants of Old Court.

In a new basement underneath the Library Court, students will be able to relax in purpose-built recreational facilities. Divided into several seating areas, a games zone and a main bar area, these rooms will become a suitable venue for a variety of events – from College bar operations to student parties. Upstairs, students will find their JCR in a new, comfortable location on the ground floor, providing them with newspapers, journals and television. Access to both JCR and College Bar will be from the new Library Court, but acoustic separation will ensure that despite the proximity, leisure and work will not interfere with each other.

By relocating the JCR and College Bar, the College will release the rooms in New Court that are presently used by these facilities. New Court today accommodates substantial parts of the College administration and services, although it was originally built as a purely academic court. The College has therefore decided to allocate the rooms above the new Student Centre as a set of offices.

These new offices enable many rooms in New Court to be returned to the students and Fellows of Corpus Christi and increase the total accommodation capacity of the College. They will also provide administrative staff with a more appropriate working environment in purpose-built office space.

Ideally, and if the funds permit, the Student Centre will be built in 2005/06 at the same time as the Student Library and the Library Court. Doing all phases of the work in one go will minimise disruption to academic life and make better economic sense.

“Having seen Wright & Wright's libraries in London, it is wonderful to look forward to the Library they are designing for Corpus. With a media centre and wireless internet access, the new Library will offer students the most up-to-date study resources as well as an ever-expanding collection of books.”

Dr Emma Wilson, Deputy Senior Tutor
Floor Plan of the Student Centre

The relocated JCR on the ground floor (1) will be connected with the new basement and the College Bar (2) via a staircase. A second staircase will link the College Bar with the Library Court (3).

"The Undergraduate Student Body is fully supportive of these plans, which will provide future generations of Corpus students with wonderful academic and social resources, whilst simultaneously improving, beyond recognition, an underexploited area of the main College site."

Leo van-der-Borgh, JCR President
The Parker Library

The Parker Library is currently housed in the beautiful Grade One listed Wilkins Room, situated on the floor above the current student library in New Court. The College’s plans to greatly improve the provision for the Parker Library will achieve three objectives: enhanced security, conservation and accessibility to scholars, Old Members and the public.

Sub-Librarian Gill Cannell have welcomed a great many visitors to the library for private and public tours, exhibitions and scholarship.

Imaginative planning has meant that all of these changes can be affected with minimal alteration to the fabric of the College. Fundraising for this project has been extremely successful, thanks to the considerable generosity of Old Members of Corpus. Funds are already in place for the planned development of the Parker Library and the building of a Conservation Centre.

As soon as the student library has moved into its new building, part of the ground floor will be developed into a secure vault, office space for the library staff and a scholar’s room. As many Old Members and friends already know, the Wilkins Room was beautifully refurbished in 2001. Since then, the Librarian Dr Christopher de Hamel and the

“The creation of a new Library for Corpus has been under discussion since 1922. It is finally taking place. This imaginative new Library will transform the academic facilities of the College and will, in turn, create the space to secure the future of the Parker Library.”

Dr Christopher de Hamel, Donnelley Fellow Librarian
The Conservation Centre

The Parker Library contains some of the world’s most significant and valuable medieval manuscripts and early printed books. The conservation and care of these books is an important task, and the College is committed to looking after this collection.

A Conservation Centre will be built in the space now occupied by the Master’s garage and gardening services. A two storey block will enable the garage to be maintained while building a state-of-the-art conservation facility in the floor above. This development will also provide better facilities for the College gardeners.

The funds needed for all the building works have now been raised, efforts in the future will be concentrated on raising an endowment for the conservation staff.

“Building the new library is the most exciting project I have taken part in since moving to Cambridge. It really means a lot to me to be involved in designing the most advanced and modern library service for our readers – and to feel that I am helping to add something beautiful to the architecture of Cambridge.”

Iwona Krasodomska-Jones, Butler Sub-Librarian

“I look forward to being able to offer scholars a much expanded range of facilities in the new manuscripts and rare books reading room. It is comforting to know that the rarest material will be stored in a purpose-built strong room which will safeguard their physical well-being for the foreseeable future.”

Gill Cannell, Parker Sub-Librarian