Library project – an update
Page 2

20th Anniversary of women Fellows
Page 9

Canterbury Gospels
Page 10
Message from the Master

The year 2002, the 650th anniversary of our foundation, has been marked with many events for members of the College and its alumni. We have been able not only to celebrate but also to re-affirm our commitment to education, religion, learning and research.

A series of five highly stimulating lectures by distinguished members of the College brought the anniversary year to a fitting climax for an institution that values above all its academic achievements. The College hopes that it may be possible to endow an annual Lecture in the McCrum Lecture Theatre for Old Members to attend.

In 2002 the Governing Body has been able to make provision for the future of the College’s Parker Library, both for its preservation and its availability to scholars and visitors, and has turned its attention to the future of the Butler Library. A new and much enlarged student library with state-of-the-art facilities for learning and teaching is the College’s next ambition to be realized hopefully, by 2006. The College, mindful of its position in the league tables of College performance, has placed a strong emphasis on the academic performance of undergraduates. The new student library will be an important aspect of the support we give to their education.

Library project update

The first phase of the project was to fund the refurbishment of the Wilkins Room, which currently houses the entire manuscript collection. We can now happily report that this phase of the project is complete, and the College holds regular public and private exhibitions of its precious manuscripts.

In addition, funds raised through the Parker Library Appeal will allow the College to fund the construction of a secure vault to ensure the safety and protection of the manuscripts as well as a reading room for scholars and administrative space for Parker Library staff. Thank you to all who have generously contributed to this major undertaking.

As many of you will know, the College has now decided to relocate the Butler Library in order to expand its educational facilities. This is great news for current and future students at Corpus, who will have the opportunity to study in one of the most advanced library facilities in Cambridge.
Saturday 14 September 2002

Cello and piano recital

Purcell Room, London

More mature Old Members may remember when the Corpus Association used to hold a biennial Dinner in London. It was replaced in the calendar by the very popular garden party held at Leckhampton. Early in planning our 650th celebrations we decided to include an event in London, though not necessarily a dinner. Our final choice of a musical evening preceded by a reception arose from a conversation between myself and Liz Winter, who is our editor, when she first joined the team in the Development Office. I agreed to sponsor the reception as part of my contribution to the celebrations and Liz did the organizing since she had previously arranged a very similar event for a national charity.

We are very lucky that Andrew Quatermain came up to Corpus in 1993 to read music. He is now an accomplished solo pianist and he joined forces with the cellist, Pavlos Carvalho, to give us a truly memorable evening. The first half comprised pieces by Debussy, Shostakovich and the Argentine composer, Ginastera. The second half was devoted to Rachmaninov’s Cello Sonata in G minor, his last great chamber work. The ensuing rapturous applause elicited two encores. The second was a familiar piece by Chopin, the slow movement in the Sonata for Cello and Piano, but the first was a beautiful piece new to most of us and engendered much discussion afterwards. Ultimately we discovered that it was Hungarian Rhapsody by

Dr Peter Lewis

David Popper. The superb acoustics of the Purcell Room enhanced our pleasure at listening to two such talented musicians.

Although the music provided a fitting focus for the evening, our primary objective was to encourage as many Old Members as possible to gather to celebrate our 650th. And in that we certainly succeeded. Well over two hundred people attended the reception, which was held in the next building to the Purcell Room. A number of Fellows were there, ranging in age from the early twenties to the late seventies, an age range reflected among the guests who included both children and parents of Old Members. Food and wine and conversation all flowed freely and were all of high quality. It proved so successful that I hope the College will find it possible to arrange a similar event in the near future.

Dr Peter Lewis

The Pelican Lent 2003
Corpus Christi College Cambridge

Anniversary lecture series

Five distinguished Old Members of the College, linked only by their eminence in their chosen fields and their association with Corpus, recently delivered the 650 Anniversary Lectures in a series that ran from early October to mid-November. The lectures provided a fascinating and stimulating insight into five different worlds, as diverse as cancer treatment and war, and proved to be one of the most popular features of the 650 celebrations.

The College benefited greatly from an association with another Old Member, Dr Peter Ringrose, President of the Research Institute, Bristol-Myers Squibb, who arranged generous sponsorship of the entire series, together with receptions after each lecture and a grand dinner after the first. This was all funded by the UK arm of Bristol-Myers Squibb, under the management of Dr Giovanni Sperti, medical director.

The first lecture was delivered by Professor Karol Sikora, who is visiting Professor of Cancer Medicine at the Hammersmith Hospital and one of the leading names in the field of oncology. Professor Sikora matriculated in 1966 and went on to achieve international recognition in oncology research and the clinical treatment of cancer. During his many years at the Hammersmith he established a major cancer research laboratory funded by the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. Karol has also been chief of the World Health Organization Cancer Programme to which he remains an adviser. He is the author of over 300 papers and many books including the standard British postgraduate text Treatment of Cancer which is now in its fourth edition.

The second lecture was given by Professor Colin Blakemore, Waynflete Professor of Physiology at Oxford University and Director of the Oxford Centre for Cognitive Neuroscience. He delivered an erudite and concise review of the history of our understanding of vision, referring to the role played by Corpus scholars since the foundation of the College. Professor Chris Andrew delivered the third lecture on espionage and Cambridge spies in particular, a subject on which he is internationally recognized. The fourth lecture was given by Professor Hew Strachan, former Senior Tutor at Corpus. Hew is now a Fellow of All Souls, Oxford and Chichele Professor of the History of War. His lecture ranged across the history of wars and their present and future status.

General Sir David Ramsbotham was our final lecturer. An Honorary Fellow of Corpus, David was, before his recent retirement, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons, the subject on which he gave his talk. He spoke forcibly and impressively on the social and economic requirement for prison reform.
Launch of the ‘Paul Syred’

Paul Syred was an engineer at Corpus, who spent rather a lot of his time at College on or around the river. After university he joined the army, and it was while on exercise on Salisbury Plain that he was tragically killed in a tank accident.

A memorial service for Paul was held at Corpus a year ago. It was after this that the idea was raised of arranging some sort of memorial to Paul and, as he spent rather a lot of his four years at Corpus in a splash hoop, a boat of some description seemed like a suitable memorial.

While all the other colleges were busy coaching their novices, the Corpus boaties, together with Paul’s family and friends, stood on the bank, drinking champagne and watching two senior members of the current boat club take the Paul Syred out for its first spin on the Cam. After speeches from the Master and Nick Peacock, Dr Syred launched the ‘Paul Syred’ with a good dousing of champagne.

It was a lovely ceremony and a fitting tribute to Paul. Many thanks to the Development Office, Tom Simpson, Tim Rhodes and Dr Martland for all their help.

Alexandra Lawton

A few of us who had rowed with Paul got together over a few beers and decided to write to Old Members of College who had known him to raise money towards a coxless pair for the boat club. After an amazingly short fundraising appeal, and a very generous donation from Paul’s father Dr Syred, we managed to raise over £5,000 - more than enough to buy the boat we wanted.

The launch of the good ship Syred took place on a rather cold Saturday afternoon on 12 October 2002, down at the boat house.
The Caltech/Cambridge Exchange offers an excellent opportunity for undergraduate scientists at Corpus Christi (and three other Cambridge colleges) to gain valuable research experience at one of the foremost establishments of its kind in the world.

The California Institute of Technology is situated in Pasadena, on the outskirts of Los Angeles. Each year, during the summer vacation, it runs a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship program (catchily abbreviated to SURF). Students from Caltech and other universities across the United States and the world undertake a paid 10 week research program. This has been running for several years and is very well structured, with particular attention paid to the needs of international students. Lunchtime seminars and careers advisory talks are laid on in an effort to broaden the perspectives of participants. Social events, such as barbecues, films shows and trips are also organized.

In the summer of 2002, Corpus Christi was represented by two engineering students, Rob Baldock and David Pickavance, as well as economics student, Zhikang Chua. My research, in the field of mechanical engineering, involved computer simulations of the effects of material phase transformations. Fellow students found themselves involved in a broad range of projects, including LIGO (the Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory), and work at the NASA affiliated Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). Participants were required to submit monthly progress reports and give a summatrial oral presentation, as well as writing a final report in the form of a Nature magazine article. All of these helped cultivate strong communication skills. I found all those with whom I worked to be very helpful and encouraging. The common arrangement seemed to be for students to meet with their supervisor (generally faculty professors) weekly or fortnightly, and confer with a post-doctorate researcher more frequently.

The university campus and Californian climate combine to create a very pleasant working environment, with pleasing architecture and a compact layout which makes getting around very easy. The only drawback is the distance of campus from anything else to do! Caltech gives the impression of being a highly industrious establishment with a very positive work ethic. Experiencing life at another academic institution was an eye-opening experience and provided a taster for more involved research.

At the weekends, Caltech provided an excellent base for exploring a range of local attractions. We made trips to Hollywood, Santa Monica and the Pacific island of Santa Catalina as well as hiking in the nearby mountains. David and I were also fortunate in being able to travel extensively in South Western USA during September before returning to Cambridge for the final year of our degrees.

Rob Baldock
A Year in Germany

A degree in Modern and Mediaeval Languages or Oriental Studies at Cambridge generally consists of four years of study: two years of Part I, a so-called "Year Abroad" and then a fourth and final year of Part II. The student, longing to set his eyes once again upon King's College Chapel, yearning to remigrate to his adopted home, is welcomed back with open arms.

The ostensible rationale behind splitting up an undergraduate degree in this manner is that one can improve, nay perfect, one's skills in a foreign language. So we get a year off in a country of our choosing. 

I chose Germany. "Why?" I hear you cry. Well, firstly - and this may indeed be obvious - one of the languages I study is German. Secondly, I happen to like the place. When we close our eyes and think of Germany, what springs to mind? Elegant, charming big cities, picture-postcard small towns, pagan-inspired harvest festivals, a wealth of art and culture and the perennial pleasures of huge tracts of forest, delightful castles and fine wine and beer?

Frankfurt-am-Main

For better or worse, I chose Frankfurt-am-Main. Aptly referred to by the locals as Bankfurt or Manhattan and with a skyline to match any in Europe, Frankfurt had to be the best place to see what it would be like to sell my soul to the giants of the commercial world. I had a flat on the river Main, and a steady, decently-paid 9-to-5 job. Well, more like 8-to-7, but then I suppose that's the way of the world these days. I liked Germany. I love sitting outside in coffee-bars, chatting to friends just to pass the time.

"I love the postdiluvian licensing laws, cheap prices in restaurants, friendly service, reasonably-priced theatre and opera tickets for students, and the fact that the public transport system actually works."

The country that produced the most influential philosophers, composers and physicists, the home of Goethe and birthplace of Bach, was almost a succedaneum for Cambridge.

Jared Greenblatt:
Corpus Fellows honoured

The College's greatest living benefactor, and Honorary Fellow, Robert Beldam CBE with HRH the Duke of Edinburgh on the occasion of Mr Beldam's admission to the University of Cambridge Guild of Benefactors.

Professor Hansen

Jean-Pierre Hansen, 1968 Professor of Chemistry at Cambridge and Fellow of Corpus, has recently been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London, the premier learned society for scientists. He first came to Cambridge in 1997 following a distinguished career in France. After graduating from the Athénée Grand-Ducal de Luxembourg in 1960, he took a degree in physics at Université de Liège (Belgium) and obtained his PhD from the Université de Paris-Sud. He joined CNRS as a Research Fellow in 1967 and was appointed to a Professorship at Université Pierre et Marie Curie in Paris, in 1973.

In the 1980s, Jean-Pierre Hansen helped create the new Ecole Normale Supérieure in Lyon, at a time when setting up a Grande Ecole outside Paris was considered enterprising and not a little risky. In 1987 he created the Laboratoire de Physique de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon, now one of France's leading physics departments. In 1990 the French Académie des Sciences awarded him the Grand Prix de l'Etat, while in 1998 the Société Française de Physique awarded him the Prix Spécial. In 1992 he was elected to the Institut Universitaire de France.

He was lured to Cambridge in October 1997 to take up the 1968 Chair of Chemistry, and act as Head of Theoretical Chemistry at the Department. Today his group, which includes Schlumberger Visiting Fellows, is working on statistical mechanics of complex fluids and biomolecular assemblies. In March 2002, the Cambridge University Centre for Computational Chemistry, created by Jean-Pierre Hansen and his theoretical chemistry colleagues, was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society the day before his 60th birthday.

When he is not in Cambridge, Jean-Pierre and his wife Martine may be found swimming in the sea in Port-Naual in Southern Brittany, visiting museums or art exhibitions or admiring architecture and frescoes throughout Italy.
20th Anniversary
of the Admission of Women Fellows

A dinner was held on Friday 22 November 2002 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the admission of women fellows to Corpus Christi College. In honour of the occasion, all female former and life Fellows of the college were invited back to Corpus, and we are delighted that several were able to come, including Diane Dawson and Charlotte Erickson, the first two women to be elected to the Fellowship in 1982. The three Masters of College during the period, Mr McCrann, Professor Wrigley and Professor Ahmed, and their wives also participated. Undergraduates and graduates greatly enjoyed the opportunity of joining in the celebrations, and the Senior Tutor kindly agreed to fund their participation. Both the JCR and MCR Women’s officers have been involved in planning the event with Dr Emma Wilson and Dr Juliet Foster.

This event presages a similar landmark in Corpus history, the 20th anniversary of the admission of women students, which will be celebrated next summer with a Garden Party at Leckhampton, to be held on Saturday 14 June 2003. All women members of college past and present will be invited to this event, which will hopefully provide not only a chance to mark this significant occasion in style, but also to meet up with friends and acquaintances.

Dr Juliet Foster
The Canterbury Gospels

Gospels of Saint Augustine

For about 30 seconds on Thursday 27 February 2003, Parker Library Manuscript 286 will be the most famous illuminated manuscript in the world, for this is the volume on which by tradition each new Archbishop of Canterbury takes his oath of office. It is brought to Canterbury for the day under tight security, by the Master and the Librarian.

The manuscript is commonly called the Gospels of Saint Augustine, for it is supposed that this was one of the actual manuscripts brought to England by Saint Augustine of Canterbury, who was sent by the Pope, Saint Gregory, or Gregory the Great, to bring Christianity to England in 597.

Could this book really have belonged to Augustine? The question has doubtless provided dinner party conversation for well over a thousand years. The manuscript is certainly old enough; for it is sixth-century Italian work; and it is, in fact, the earliest extant Latin manuscript of the Gospels with pictures. Its antiquity is not in doubt. We know from his letters that Gregory the Great encouraged the production of illustrated Gospel Books, as a means of bringing New Testament stories to illiterate people. We also know from Bede’s account of the conversion of England that Gregory furnished Augustine with all the books that would be necessary for his mission. The manuscript was certainly already in south-eastern England by about 700 AD, for it has annotations in an Anglo-Saxon hand of that date, and it was demonstrably at Saint Augustine’s Abbey in Canterbury by the tenth century, regarded as one of the monasteries greatest relics. In the eleventh century one of its miniatures was actually copied into the Bayeux Tapestry (the French have always liked to imagine the Tapestry was made in Bayeux; the English have always known that it is really from Canterbury). By the late Middle Ages the Gospel Book was one of several books in a shrine on the high altar of Saint Augustine’s Abbey, venerated by the monks there as having come from their founder.

It can probably never be proven one way or the other. There is nothing whatsoever to discredit the suggestion that the manuscript was brought from Rome in 597, but doubtless other books were being sent from Italy during the course of the seventh century, as the missionaries established and strengthened their presence in England. It could even have arrived in Canterbury, already a hundred years old, in the time of Archbishop Theodore, 668-690, who is also recorded in the chronicles as bringing books from Italy.

However, it has almost certainly been in England longer than any other surviving manuscript. It is probably the oldest artefact of any kind in English history which is not archaeological, that is, which has survived above ground, passed from one hand to another, for over 1,300 years. It belongs at the dawn of literacy and Christianity in England. As a timeless symbol of religion, learning, education and research, the four functions of the College as declared in its statutes, it is without equal.

Dr Christopher de Hamel
Events and publications

Saturday 8 February 2003
Organ scholars and choir reunion
Anyone who was involved in the musical life of Chapel is welcome to come to this reunion. There will be a lunch in Hall, followed by a rehearsal for evensong, with a specially commissioned piece by Tanik O'Regan, and then service in Chapel. Please contact Liz Winter in the Development Office to reserve your place. Tel: 01223 339731.

Saturday 14 June 2003
Reunion of women students
To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the admission of women students, there will be a garden party at Leckhampton. All women members, past and present, are invited not only mark this special occasion in style, but also to reunite with friends and acquaintances.

Saturday 28 June 2003
Corpus Association Dinner
Spouses and partners are welcome. This year's speaker is Professor Colin Blakemore, Waynflete Professor of Physiology at Oxford University and Director of the Oxford Centre for Cognitive Neuroscience. The AGM will be held before dinner.

Student May Ball Friday 20 June 2003
The May Ball 2003 offers to bring a little magic into the hallowed air of Corpus's ancient courts. The aim is to combine the best of the traditional Cambridge Ball with some modern entertainment tastes. The emphasis is on fun and friendship, with a little mystery and surprise thrown in.

This year's Ball will once again be the traditional biennial student ball, after last year's Anniversary Ball, and everyone is welcome to come. Take a look at the flyer in this magazine or visit www.corpusmayball.com for more details.

Derek Marshall (president)
Ellen Weavers (publicity)

STOP PRESS

Treasures of Silver at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge
Dr Oliver Rackham has written about the treasures of silver at Corpus, investigating the construction of the objects, how the College acquired them, their meaning and context, and what they are used for.

Please contact the Bursary if you would like to buy a copy (£20 plus postage).

Corpus: Within Living Memory Life in a Cambridge College
The book of memories of Corpus is now in production. However, there is still time to take out a subscription and have your name included in the subscribers' index, as this will be the last section to be produced. If you would like to participate, and benefit from the reduced advance price of £35, then please contact the Development Office.