ORIEL NEWS

ISSUE 22 | SUMMER 2020

ORIEL’S SAINT: CARDINAL NEWMAN

Newman is Canonised in Rome by Pope Francis

GILBERT WHITE TURNS 300:
Pioneer of Natural History and Ecology

EXPLORING AND DISCUSSING
THE LEGACY OF CECIL
RHODES AT ORIEL COLLEGE
Introducing the members of the Commission of Inquiry investigating the key issues surrounding the Rhodes statue

A HUB FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
AND ENERGY RESEARCH
Oriel’s academics are leading the way on issues surrounding climate change

ORIEL HALL RENOVATION
Oriel’s Hall is refurbished for the first time in 100 years
A lot of the content in this issue of Oriel News was finalised earlier in the year. Owing to recent events, we have had to change and add new content frequently. As a result, we apologise if any seems out-of-date.

ISSUE 22 | SUMMER 2020

PROVOST’S WELCOME

COLLEGE NEWS
Some general updates from Oriel

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE
Reports from Oriel academics tackling COVID-19

EXPLORING AND DISCUSSING THE LEGACY OF CECIL RHODES AT ORIEL COLLEGE
Introducing the Commission of Inquiry

TAX-EFFICIENT GIVING
Gifts that max your tax breaks

JCR REPORT

MCR REPORT

STUDENTS LEAD THE WAY
Students reduce Oriel’s environmental impact

INSIDE STORY
Interview with Oriel’s Head Butler

SCR SPOTLIGHT
Getting to the Heart of Metabolism

JIM MELLON PROGRAMME
Orielensis and Honorary Fellow supports the study of Longevity Science

FELLOWS’ NEWS
Updates from the Fellows

A HUB FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY RESEARCH
Oriel’s academics discuss their research

ORIEL’S SAINT: CARDINAL NEWMAN
A look at Newman’s time at Oriel

CANONISATION OF ST JOHN HENRY NEWMAN
Oriel travels to Rome

HIDDEN TREASURES
Book of Lending Records featuring Newman

BECOMING THE BRAIN OF BRITAIN
An interview with David Stainer (1996)

LIBRARY APPEAL RAISES OVER £24,000
Students supported through lockdown

GILBERT WHITE TURNS 300
Pioneer of Natural History and Ecology

ORIEL HALL RENOVATION
Oriel’s Hall renovated for the first time in over 100 years

INTERVIEW: ROSS WARBURTON MBE
Orielensis and Executive Director of Warburtons

EXERCISE CLOCKWORK 2019/20
Captain Bryony Hastings (2004) recounts Arctic expedition

ORIEL WOMEN’S NETWORK
The launch of the Oriel Women’s Network

INTERVIEW: SOPHIA HEATH
Oriel College Boat Club Coach

ALUMNI NEWS

BOOK CORNER

THE TEMPEST
Pictures from the 1965 Oriel production

YOUR VIEWS
Photographs from Annabel Bosman’s (1993) time at Oriel

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Front cover image: Newman’s canonisation in Rome
I hope that you, your families and loved ones are well. I am writing this introduction at the end of what has been an extraordinary first half of 2020, not just for us here at Oriel but for everyone, all over the world. This has been a time of rapid change for the College, with the challenges presented by the response to the global pandemic followed swiftly by an increased focus on contested heritage. The debate about ongoing injustices in the US, Britain and other parts of the world following the shocking death of George Floyd has led to renewed discussion of Oriel’s statue of Cecil Rhodes.

When the UK went into COVID lockdown at the end of March, the College, like every other organisation, had to adapt quickly to a new way of working. Oriel transformed itself over the Easter vacation into an institute of online learning. We were spurred on by our determination to continue delivering the highest possible quality of teaching to our students and to ensure they had the best experience possible. Our community has had to learn to speak to one another in new ways, adapting quickly to each new development. I am extraordinarily proud of the College’s staff for the hard work and dedication they have shown in very difficult circumstances. I am also proud of our academic staff and students, who have overcome all sorts of challenges to ensure that the College’s primary educational purpose has not been compromised.

It seems clear that the repercussions of this pandemic will be felt in Oriel and elsewhere for many years to come, and we are not yet sure when things will return to normal.

I am greatly saddened to see the impact COVID-19 has had on our whole community, and we send our condolences to all those who have lost loved ones.

By the time you read this introduction, we will be moving towards autumn and the commencement of a new academic year. Although we don’t yet know what Michaelmas Term will look like, we are hoping to get as close to a ‘normal’ experience as possible. It has been confirmed by the University that all applicant interviews this coming December will take place online to avoid bringing thousands of young people into and out of the city. This seems a very sensible measure, although it will of course be disappointing for some.

It is also likely that, by the time you read this, you will have been invited to submit your thoughts and views to the independent Commission of Inquiry announced by the Governing Body in June in response to ongoing protests relating to the College’s statue of Cecil Rhodes. The role of the Commission is to look at the issues surrounding the Rhodes legacy and how to improve access, attendance and experiences of BAME undergraduate, graduate students and faculty, and to review how the College’s 21st century commitment to diversity can sit more easily with its past.

I believe the Commission of Inquiry will play a key role in setting a clear blueprint for Oriel to drive forward progress in the areas of contested heritage and diversity, and to position the College at the forefront of the national conversation about these issues. The Governing Body has expressed its wish to see the Rhodes statue and the King Edward Street plaque removed – a wish that has been welcomed by some and criticised by others. The Commission will be crucial in determining the future of the statue and plaque, and the Governing Body believes its formation will allow for a thoughtful, considered process to deliver a productive resolution to a complex series of interlinked issues.

This debate is a difficult and emotive one for many of our alumni and current students, as well as for other members of Oriel and the wider community, and strong feelings have been expressed on all sides. Although such debate has the potential to cause divisions, I hope our members will take the opportunity to move forward as a single community of Orielenses, with open minds. With the help of the Commission, I believe we can create a stronger, more resilient Oriel for the future.

We are so sorry that we will not see more of you in person this year, and I would like to thank you for your continued support and for the well-wishes we have received. We in return send all our best wishes to you and your families.

Floreat Oriel!
Norrington Table Success

Oriel had another successful year for academic achievements in 2019, moving up four places on the Norrington Table to eighth place. Last year saw 35 undergraduate Finalists achieving a First Class degree, which is the second-highest total in Oriel’s history. Congratulations to the many students awarded University awards and prizes this year, including Tom Davy, who received the top First in Philosophy and Theology, making this the fourth year in a row that Oriel has had the top First in either Theology or Philosophy and Theology.

At the time of writing, the Norrington Table announcement for 2020 is moments away. We already know that more Firsts have been achieved than in 2019, which is a fantastic result. Congratulations to all those who have achieved so much in very challenging circumstances.

David N. Lyon Scholarship in Politics – The Politics of Sex and Gender Equality in Diverse Societies

Thanks to a generous benefaction from David N. Lyon (1980), the College will be offering a new postgraduate scholarship to support one student to undertake research into the politics of sex and gender equality in diverse societies. This scholarship will encourage the holder to explore the connection between political theory, practice and policy.

The College’s long-standing position in historical and theological study, as well as its commitment to progressive research, makes it the perfect environment for a postgraduate scholarship dedicated to this under-explored intersection between politics, sex and gender, religion and cultural traditions.

We hope the first scholar will join Oriel in October 2021. They will be supported by our Politics Fellow Dr Teresa Bejan, who will serve as their Academic Mentor.

The David N. Lyon Scholarship will be open to candidates for the MPhil, MSc or DPhil in Politics and the successful candidate will receive a financial award of £8,500 per year (equivalent to 65% of the total annual DPhil Politics course fee in 2020–21). The College is very grateful indeed for David’s generosity in supporting this important scholarship.

The Development and Alumni Engagement Team – Hello and Farewell

We have welcomed a few new faces in the last year, including Lorraine Hare, who has arrived from Christ Church as the new Head of Development, managing the fundraising team with responsibility for regular mid-level and major gifts to Oriel; Kathryn Ferguson as Alumni Relations and Events Officer; Philippa Wadsworth as Development Officer (Regular Giving and Legacies); and Florence Walker as our new Development Assistant.

We sadly said goodbye to three of our team: Henry Carter has returned to his former employer in a senior position; Rob Buckett has moved to Loughborough to work for British Triathlon, after becoming an ‘Iron Man’ himself last year; and last but by no means least Hillary Reitman has left to join the central University Development Office in a new role.
Dr Sumana Sanyal Secures Government Funding for COVID-19 Research

New Oriel Fellow in Medicine, Dr Sumana Sanyal, secured £0.2 million in government funding for her research into how SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) spreads within infected hosts.

Sumana and her team aim to investigate how SARS-CoV-2 spreads within infected hosts in order to develop strategies to arrest viral spread within and between individuals. Viral infections spread based on their ability to overcome multiple barriers and move from cell to cell, from tissue to tissue, from person to person and even across species. Host expansion, transmissibility and tissue tropism of coronaviruses are primarily determined by host adaptations of the viral spike, which drives binding and entry into cells. Alignments with related coronaviruses have revealed that the SARS-CoV-2 spike carries additional protease-cleavage sites. However, which cellular proteases are exploited by the virus to undergo maturation and become infectious has not been studied systematically.

The study aims to identify the cellular proteases which contribute to the infectivity of SARS-CoV-2 and to test using genetic and pharmacological means whether inhibiting these proteases can block virus spread. The outcomes will help inform the development of host-directed antiviral therapies.

Sumana joined Oriel from the University of Hong Kong in January this year and is based in the Sir William Dunn School of Pathology. Her general area of research investigates virus–host interactions, with a particular focus on the two major mosquito-borne flaviviruses, Dengue and Zika.

Sumana’s grant of £0.2 million was receive funding as part of the £24.6 million rapid research response funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the Department of Health and Social Care through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

Research Led by Orielensis and Supernumerary Fellow Professor Max Crispin has Revealed the Fundamental Features of the SARS-CoV-2 Coronavirus that Causes COVID-19

The researchers based at the University of Southampton produced the first model of a spike of the virus, showing how it disguises itself to enter human cells undetected, and the viral proteins that are the target of antibodies and vaccine research. The findings of this study could provide crucial information to help scientists currently searching for a vaccine.

The SARS-CoV-2 virus has a large number of spikes sticking out of its surface, which it uses to attach to and enter cells into the human body. These spikes are coated in sugars, known as glycans, which disguise their viral proteins and help them evade the body’s immune system.

The research team studied the structure of the glycans covering the surface of a mimetic of a viral spike using equipment previously purchased through a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through the Collaboration for AIDS Vaccine Discovery.

They were then able to map the structure of the glycans, providing important information about how accessible the viral protein surface is to antibodies. This is an important step in vaccine design.
‘By coating themselves in sugars, viruses are like a wolf in sheep’s clothing,’ explains Professor Crispin. ‘But one of the key findings of our study is that, despite how many sugars there are, this Coronavirus is not as highly shielded as some other viruses.

‘Viruses like HIV, which hang around in one host, have to evade the immune system constantly and they have a really dense coat of glycans as a shield to the immune system; but in the case of the Coronavirus the lower shielding by sugars attached to it may reflect that it is a “hit-and-run” virus, moving from one person to the next. However, the lower glycan density means there are fewer obstacles for the immune system to neutralise the virus with antibodies. So this is a very encouraging message for vaccine development.’

Professor Crispin’s team includes PhD students Yasunori Watanbe and Joel Allen, and they worked closely with Jason McLellan’s team from the University of Texas, who were the first to determine the structure of SARS-CoV-2. They released their findings ahead of a peer review on the BioRxiv preprint server.

Professor Crispin’s team has a very strong history of analysing the glycans of viruses and they have made key discoveries determining the features of the natively folded spike of HIV.

They are now working with partners who have developed candidate vaccines, including Prof. Rogier Sanders at the University of Amsterdam, and are now analysing the glycan content in Southampton. Evaluating the glycans on immunogens will determine how closely they mimic a natively folded viral spike and will help understand the immune response to vaccine candidates.

Professor Crispin’s laboratory is currently funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through the Collaboration for AIDS Vaccine Discovery, the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, the European AIDS Vaccine Initiative, the Scripps Consortium for HIV/AIDS Vaccine Development and Against Breast Cancer.

CREATING A ROADMAP FOR UK’S POST-COVID CULTURAL RECOVERY

In late May, Provost Neil Mendoza was announced as the UK’s first Culture Commissioner by Secretary of State Oliver Dowden CBE. Neil’s remit in this role is to provide an expert and independent voice to the government, work on the rescue package and advise on how UK culture and heritage can begin to recover from the disastrous impact of the pandemic. Neil is undertaking this work while continuing to give priority to his role as Oriel’s Head of House, guiding the College through its own pandemic response.

In July, it was announced that Neil would co-chair an Expert Advisory Panel for the DCMS and UKRI Arts and Humanities Research Council Joint Research Project. The launch of the Joint Research Project followed the announcement of a £1.57 billion support package to support and protect Britain’s cultural, arts and heritage institutions, which Neil played a lead role in.

Slated to run until July 2021, the Joint Research Project looks to explore and demonstrate the role of innovation, collaboration and participation in shaping cultural experiences during the pandemic, and to provide an evidence base to inform cultural recovery, renewal and future growth. It will advise on measures that can be taken to restore public confidence in face-to-face cultural participation and make recommendations that will allow the sector to maximise the potential of new digital and immersive technologies in engaging and diversifying audiences.

Alongside co-chair Professor Andrew Thompson, Executive Chair of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Neil will bring together leaders from across the arts, cultural, creative and HEI sectors to guide, review and report on the subsequent findings to provide an evidence base that informs cultural recovery, renewal and future growth, and make recommendations for future actions.

This project is part of the Boundless Creativity campaign created by the AHRC in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project aims to explore and demonstrate the role of innovation, collaboration and participation in shaping cultural experiences in the current pandemic, and provide an evidence base for future growth.
The work of an independent Commission of Inquiry into the Rhodes statue and related issues is now well underway, with a number of submissions already received. Launched in mid-July, the Commission was established at the behest of the College’s Governing Body, after it expressed its wish to see the Cecil Rhodes statue and King Edward Street plaque removed. The Commission, whilst noting the Governing Body’s wish, will consider a full range of options for the future of the statue and plaque.

In addition to its work on the Rhodes legacy, the Commission is examining how to improve access, attendance and experiences of BAME undergraduate, graduate students and faculty at Oriel, and will also review how the College’s 21st century commitment to diversity can sit more easily with its past.

Chaired by Carole Souter, CBE, the Commission is inviting contributions from members of the College (including students, faculty, staff and alumni), from Oxford City Council, from the Rhodes Must Fall movement, from other interested parties in the city, and from individuals with particular expertise in aspects of its terms of reference. A panel of historians has been brought together to support the Commission in their work, and a series of online public sessions will be held in the autumn to give interested parties the opportunity to engage with experts representing a range of views.

Findings from the Commission are due to be published in late January 2021, with Orielenses receiving updates via email in the lead up to this. The College’s Governing Body believes that the work of the Commission will be key to ensuring that Oriel lives up to its forward-looking commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion alongside academic excellence.
MEET THE COMMISSION

Carole Souter, Chair

Carole Souter, CBE, studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) at Jesus College, Oxford. She was Chief Executive of the Heritage Lottery Fund/National Heritage Memorial Fund from 2003 to 2016, when she was elected Master of St Cross College, Oxford. Carole is a Trustee of Historic Royal Palaces, the Horniman Museum, Oxford Preservation Trust, London Emergencies Trust and also Chairs the Board of Visitors of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. She is a Lay Canon of Salisbury Cathedral.

Peter Ainsworth

Peter Ainsworth was appointed Chair of The Heritage Alliance in December 2018. Formerly an Investment Banker, a Local Councillor and Member of Parliament, he was Shadow Secretary of State for Culture Media & Sport and for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. He chaired the Environmental Audit Select Committee. He served as Chair of the National Lottery Community Fund until 2019 and was also a Board Member of the Environment Agency for six years. He chaired the Elgar Foundation and Plantlife and currently is also Chair of the Churches Conservation Trust.

Geoffrey Austin

Geoffrey Austin is Chair of the Oriel Alumni Advisory Committee, a Trustee of the Eden Project, and a member of the Childline Board of the NSPCC. He has over 25 years of investment banking experience and is a Managing Director at Moelis & Company, the leading independent investment bank, where he specialises in advising clients in the media and communications sector.

Cllr Shaista Aziz

Shaista Aziz was elected to Oxford City Council as Labour Party Councillor for Rose Hill and Iffley ward in 2018 and is also the Council’s race and equalities champion. She is a former BBC and CNN journalist and a national anti-racism, equalities and ending Violence Against Women and Girls campaigner. Shaista was born and raised in Oxford, where she attended Cheney School. She is the founder of the platform Anti-racist City Oxford.
William Beinart
William, an historian, is an emeritus professor at the University of Oxford. He was educated at the University of Cape Town and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. William was formerly Rhodes Professor of Race Relations and founding director at the University of Oxford’s African Studies Centre, established in 2002. His research and writing has focused on southern Africa and environmental history. William was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2009.

Margaret Casely-Hayford, CBE
A British lawyer, businesswoman and public figure, Margaret is active in the voluntary sector. She is Chancellor of Coventry University, chairs the board of trustees of Shakespeare’s Globe, and was formerly chair of ActionAid UK. Margaret is at the forefront of working to create diversity on boards. Margaret’s portfolio includes advising young entrepreneurs, supporting and advising organisations on governance and advising those, in particular women and BAME or LGBTQ+ people, who wish to embark upon board careers. She studied Law at Somerville College, Oxford, where she is now an Honorary Fellow.

Zeinab Badawi
Zeinab studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) at the University of Oxford and obtained a Master’s Degree (with distinction) in History and Anthropology from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Zeinab has been awarded Honorary Doctorates from SOAS and the University of the Arts London as well as the British Academy’s President’s Medal for services to international broadcasting and women’s education. Her current TV work for the BBC includes a 20-part documentary series on the history of Africa, Global Questions and HARDtalk.

Michelle Codrington-Rogers
A teacher at the Cherwell School Academy, Oxford, Michelle was elected national president of NASUWT (National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers) in April 2020. Michelle was educated at the University of Winchester, where she attained a BA in American/United States Studies/Civilisation and at the University of Leicester. Earlier this year, Michelle called for a review of the national curriculum to ensure that the black contribution to British society, past and present, is fully recognised.

Laura Van Broekhoven
Laura is the Director of the Pitt Rivers Museum at the University of Oxford. She holds a Professorial Fellowship at Linacre College, and is also associated with the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography at Oxford. Laura previously led the curatorial department of the National Museum of World Cultures (Amsterdam, Leiden and Berg-en-Dal). Her current research interests include repatriation and redress, with a focus on the importance of collaboration, inclusivity and reflexive inquiry.

For full details about the Commission of Inquiry, including details of how you can submit your views, please visit: www.oriel-rhodes-commission.co.uk
TAX-EFFICIENT GIVING
GIFTS THAT MAX YOUR TAX BREAKS

Philanthropic gifts to Oriel help the College thrive, providing much-needed financial support for students, protecting the tutorial system, preserving historic buildings and advancing cutting-edge research. Donors can make their gifts go further by taking advantage of a variety of tax breaks.

Gift Aid

- If you are a UK taxpayer, charities like Oriel can reclaim the basic rate of tax you have already paid on your gifts at no additional cost to you. A gift of £100 is boosted by 25% to £125 with Gift Aid, which is paid directly to the charity by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). When you next donate, simply tick the box to declare that Gift Aid may be claimed by the charity.
- If you pay tax at the higher rate, you can claim further tax relief on your self-assessment tax return.
- Donations from companies are not eligible for Gift Aid. The company can treat the gift as an allowable expense, however, making a saving on corporation tax.

Give As You Earn

- Making charitable donations straight from your gross salary if you are a UK taxpayer paid through Pay As You Earn (PAYE) offers immediate tax relief at the highest eligible rate of tax on the value of your gift. Request an application form from your employer and your gifts will be automatically deducted from your salary before tax. Also, ask if your employer ‘matches’ their employees’ gifts to generate additional funding for your favourite cause.
- With payroll giving, if you are a 25% tax rate payer, a gift of £100 would cost you £80. At a 40% tax rate, the same gift costs you £60; at 45%, the cost is further reduced to £55.
- Payroll giving is not only beneficial for you – regular income helps charities plan for the future.

Shares

- Giving HMRC-qualifying shares is one of the most tax-effective ways of supporting charities, providing tax relief at your usual rate on the value of the shares and exemption from Capital Gains Tax.
- UK taxpayers may donate shares and securities listed on the UK Stock Market, the Alternative Investment Market and recognised stock exchanges overseas. It is also available for units in a UK open-ended investment company and some similar foreign investments.

Legacies

- Gifts to charity left in your will are exempt from inheritance tax, and leaving 10% or more of your net estate to charity will result in a reduced rate of inheritance tax, which is discounted from 40% to 36%. Taking advantage of this reduced rate means that both charities and your loved ones receive more of your estate.
- Those who intend to include Oriel in their will are invited to join the Adam de Brome Society, which offers special benefits, including an annual lunch in College.

To learn more about giving to Oriel, please visit alumni.oriel.ox.ac.uk or call 01865 276 521.
As always, we could fill a whole magazine with everything Oriel undergraduates have achieved and enjoyed during this year, both as individuals and as a collective.

The Netball Club had the standout success of the year in College sport, with both Oriel A and B undefeated in Division Two and ready for promotion. The men’s rugby team, the women’s football team and the Alternative Ice Hockey team all reached cuppers quarterfinals and the squash team continued to enjoy both social and competitive games. Infrequent outings due to the condition of the river did not put a damper on the spirits of the Boat Club, with the women’s team brightening up their training with Zumba sessions and Zoom workouts. The cancellation of Torpids brought the inaugural ‘Tug-of-Warpids’, in which Oriel stormed to victory.

This year, Oriel College Music Society and our Arts Rep introduced a wonderful series of Classical concerts which culminated in a Christmas concert in the Senior Library. At our annual charity auction, JCR members had the chance to win ballroom dancing, organ and German lessons, crocheted animals, photoshoots, wine and cheese nights, and even haircuts. Charity formals and charity stash continued to be popular, and an end-of-term cake sale (which also sold handmade earrings and knitted Christmas puddings) was a particular favourite. We also had our first inter-college women’s formal with Merton and Corpus Christi, with an amazing all-female high table. Tea and Toast, run by the Welfare reps, continues to be an oasis of calm in the commotion of College life. The organisers of other amazing events such as Welfare Week, Equality Week and OXmas must be thanked for their hard work. Halfway Hall, with a ‘Roaring 20s’ theme, lit up the Dining Hall with light and happiness.

We have not been able to give the Finalists the send-off they deserve but I know all the undergraduates are so grateful to them for the life and happiness they brought to College.

This term, although we are far apart, we remain a close-knit community. The JCR has kept up with online pub quizzes and open meetings; we even have an online library and recently introduced mock ‘invigilation’ exam sessions via Zoom to help people revise. The Poor Print has carried on publishing the poetry, prose and artwork of the JCR and the College competitive spirit persists with our high standings in the Strava inter-college running cuppers. Our JCR baking competition is especially popular.

We have not been able to give the Finalists the send-off they deserve but I know all the undergraduates are so grateful to them for the life and happiness they brought to College. We are faced with a rather different Trinity to the one we might have imagined. There are many things we might have hoped for but which we have been unable to do. It makes the experiences we have shared more important than ever, and we are thankful to everyone in the College community who has worked, and continues to work, to bring us together in whatever ways they can.

Kate Whittington, JCR President (2019–20)
As I write this from a College in lockdown, where Hall, the Library and Chapel have become uninhabited islands in a sea of potential infection, I reflect that this year has turned out differently to anything the MCR could have expected.

We started this year welcoming 91 new graduate students representing over 35 nationalities. During a lively Freshers’ Week, the MCR committee collected their annual supply of compromising photographs to be used as extortion material against future successful members (commonly called ‘The Oriel Excursion’). To the Bar Manager’s delight, the Freshers (helped by returning members) made significant inroads into 12 bottles of Lamb’s Navy Rum found during a start-of-term cleanout of the store cupboard. With no correlation whatsoever between the quantity of rum consumed and the amount of enthusiasm displayed, the MCR had one of their most hotly contested Michaelmas elections, filling all 15 remaining committee positions with eager new Freshers and 4th Years.

Michaelmas Term once again demonstrated why Oriel has the best MCR in Oxford. Afternoon tea returned as a highlight of the week, with scarcely a crumb or crumpet left after 5pm. The MCR had successful exchanges with St Anne and St Hilda’s College, receiving such compliments as ‘Well, this is better than Wadham’. For the first time in memory, the MCR had a real Christmas tree delivered for Oxmas, which infused the MCR with a lovely pine smell and dropped fewer needles than a gramophone party.

The start of Hilary saw us running dangerously low on rum, with only a few litres remaining. The MCR was honoured to be invited to the SCR Burns Night ceilidh and lent youthful joie de vivre to the occasion, dancing enthusiastically with everyone present. The MCR returned the invitation to their own ceilidh a few weeks later but was surprised at the lack of SCR take-up.

Weather-wise, Hilary was characterised by a succession of storms, disintegrating the usual sporting calendar. Torpids was replaced with a tug-of-war competition, where seven MCR members were chosen for the 1st VIII and took home the inaugural headship! Due to a relaxation of the usual participation rules, the team was made up of current, alumni, associate and mature members, demonstrating the strength of the MCR (pun intended) across its extended community. The rugby pitch was similarly turned into a boggy mire, but this didn’t stop Oriel winning coin-toss match after coin-toss match, only losing a Division 1 promotion with a badly thrown penny against Keble. Individual mentions go to Jemma Williams (victorious in Varsity Touch Rugby) and Achim Harzheim (selected for the Blue Boat for the second year running).

During 5th week, we started to hear reports of Coronavirus affecting Italy. During Torpids, we were reluctant to hug an MCR alum recently returned from Milan. As a precaution, the committee decided to cancel the traditional end-of-term Night of the Elephant celebration. Two weeks later, we were in full lockdown and the majority of the MCR had scattered to their homes across the globe. These are challenging times for the College and University, but, in the words of Haile Selassie, ‘We must become bigger than we have been: more courageous, greater in spirit, larger in outlook.’ We do not know exactly what the MCR will look like next term, but we know we will find ways of carrying on, supporting each other and remaining a home and friendship base for all who need it.

Eleanor Thomson, MCR President (2019–20)
A s the Oriel Environmental Reps for the JCR and MCR, we have been working hard throughout the year to reduce the environmental impact made by the College.

Two of the most prominent initiatives we have been involved with are the Planet Pledge and the Student Switch Off Campaign.

The Planet Pledge is an ever-popular competition run by the Student Union by which members of colleges pledge to take climate action. Last year’s pledge saw 1,500 students participating and is estimated to have saved approximately 50 tonnes of carbon. The College at large participated in the pledge, which included the weekly MCR Afternoon Tea switching to only plant-based, locally produced and organic options.

The Student Switch Off Campaign is an international sustainability competition rewarding groups of students who achieve the biggest savings in energy and water and/or have the best recycling rates. Oriel came a close second among Oxford colleges last year and are currently in the lead for this year. At the time of writing the results are not yet in, but we are very optimistic!

Moving on to Hall, the kitchen and the Bar, we have banned plastic in the Bar (except for at BOPs, where it is a health and safety risk!) and reduced the amount of sauce sachets being used in Hall by using refillable pots instead!

There are also now many delicious vegetarian and vegan (not to mention eco-friendlier) food options in Hall and most of our friends choose them simply because they taste better!

Asefay, the College Butler, and the kitchen staff have been instrumental in helping us facilitate all these changes.

On a slightly less glamorous but no less important point, we now have food waste bins in all the student kitchens and recyclable and non-recyclable bins in every room, meaning every student in Oriel can help reduce waste.

We are proud of how well Oriel has taken on the challenge of being more environmentally friendly and know that we, as a College, can do even better next year.

Grace Dearden (2018, Theology and Religion), JCR Environment Rep
Henrietta Flodell (2019, MSc Environmental Change and Management), MCR Environment Rep

STUDENTS LEAD THE WAY
ON REDUCING ORIEL’S ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Student Switch Off Campaign is an international sustainability competition rewarding groups of students who achieve the biggest savings in energy and water and/or have the best recycling rates.

OxUnboxed. Here, students were able to shop for essentials that were all plastic-free. OxUnboxed now has a permanent home in Jericho, so we encourage anyone in or visiting Oxford to pay them a visit and reduce their carbon footprint.

We also set about organising a collection of unwanted books so they would not go to waste and would instead be reused.

While we have thoroughly enjoyed getting involved in these rewarding environmental competitions, we have also focused on several initiatives within College. The JCR have passed a motion to support only ethically sourced stash that gives workers a fair wage, so now we can wear our Oriel stash with even more pride!

In Michaelmas Term we hosted an entirely plastic-free pop-up shop, OxUnboxed. Here, students were able to shop for essentials that were all plastic-free. OxUnboxed now has a permanent home in Jericho, so we encourage anyone in or visiting Oxford to pay them a visit and reduce their carbon footprint.

We also set about organising a collection of unwanted books so they would not go to waste and would instead be reused.

Moving on to Hall, the kitchen and the Bar, we have banned plastic in the Bar (except for at BOPs, where it is a health and safety risk!) and reduced the amount of sauce sachets being used in Hall by using refillable pots instead!

There are also now many delicious vegetarian and vegan (not to mention eco-friendlier) food options in Hall and most of our friends choose them simply because they taste better!

Asefay, the College Butler, and the kitchen staff have been instrumental in helping us facilitate all these changes.

On a slightly less glamorous but no less important point, we now have food waste bins in all the student kitchens and recyclable and non-recyclable bins in every room, meaning every student in Oriel can help reduce waste.

We are proud of how well Oriel has taken on the challenge of being more environmentally friendly and know that we, as a College, can do even better next year.

Grace Dearden (2018, Theology and Religion), JCR Environment Rep
Henrietta Flodell (2019, MSc Environmental Change and Management), MCR Environment Rep

Ebony Moody Collecting the Student Switch Off Award
How long have you worked at Oriel?
I started working for Oriel on 1st March 2006. I was at Exeter College briefly for one year but the opportunity came up to work here – so I came!

What does a normal day look like for you?
It varies! You might find me coordinating the setting up of the Hall for breakfast or Champneys for SCR lunch as well as meetings in various rooms. These all need to be cleared. You might also find me at my desk answering countless emails and wondering if I’m late for my next meeting! Before I know it, it’s time to go home. But then again there are the dinners that need to be planned for, wine taken out, pre-dinner drinks sorted, briefing my management team who are doing the dinners, and so on. I have to make sure there are enough staff for all events and make sure we are ready for them all. Some days I do get to sit at my desk and answer the phone and look at pricing, orders and staffing, but always with constant knocks on the door from people asking questions.

What is your favourite part of being the Head Butler?
There are many. Being a Head Butler in a prestigious place such as Oriel College is one of them, as is the variety of my responsibilities – the Hall, the SCR, the Bar, sorting the wine cellar and the College Silver. There are wine tastings to select wines for the College, which is a big part of my job, along with the wine stewards. A lot of people depend on me, which is a huge responsibility, but that’s the challenge I like. As many have said and will say in the future, Oriel is the best college in Oxford!

What is the most challenging aspect of your role?
Staffing! First and foremost, getting the right staff and keeping them. In today’s climate, where there is pressure on us to grow the conference business, we do not only do SCR and student dinners; we now almost operate 24/7 and don’t close for vacation! Because of the increase in business and the need for us to increase income and improve standards to keep us competitive with other, bigger colleges, it’s very hard to get and keep the right staff. The conference business is probably the second biggest revenue generator for the College after the Development Office!

What has been your greatest professional triumph?
Being Head Butler in this prestigious place and also meeting the Queen. All the preparation and attention to detail that was involved in her Majesty’s visit was very time-consuming, but rewarding.

Apart from family, who or what inspires you?
Well, I normally get inspired by unsung heroes. People who do good in life, people we don’t talk about – people who keep the country safe, transplant surgeons, researchers, charity workers who give their time and effort without asking for reward. Watching BBC’s Children in Need is inspiring, seeing how much ordinary people raise and seeing that the amount increases year on year. My ultimate aim would be that developing countries should find themselves in a similar position, where almost everyone is equal in terms of job prospects and education, not just the elite.

Do you have any unusual hobbies?
I like gardening and reading books, mostly historical, and watching films. I don’t think I have unusual hobbies! From time to time, for my sins, I do a bit of acting in plays. My most prominent roles (I took two parts: one as Prospero, and the other as myself telling my story as a child fleeing Ethiopia to Sudan as a nine-year-old boy – others played me during various stages of my life) were in Storming Utopia in 2017, which took us to Saint Georgio Maggiore in Venice to perform.

Do you do any voluntary work or work in the community?
I don’t have the time! One of the things I want to do but don’t have the time, but is on my to-do list in the future, is to do volunteering work of some sort.

What one luxury would you take on a desert island?
Well, I will probably say an Omega watch worn by 007, James Bond. It doesn’t just tell the time, it has many survival gadgets in it as well. But in all seriousness, I probably would take my wife, as I don’t want to be alone on a desert island.

What is the one piece of ‘life’ advice you would offer to a student?
Work hard and be nice.

Who would you invite to Formal Hall (dead or alive)?
Anyone who is willing to donate big money to the College!
SCR Spotlight – Associate Professor Lisa Heather

GETTING TO THE HEART OF METABOLISM

The word ‘metabolism’ comes from the Greek word ‘metabole’, meaning ‘change’, and encompasses all the chemical reactions necessary to sustain life within a living organism. Its role is to provide energy and building blocks to underpin all cellular processes. It is how we make energy to power muscle contraction, how we make DNA molecules for a cell to replicate and how we store fuels for when food is scarce. Nobel prizes for work relating to metabolism are numerous and span both Chemistry and Physiology, with the first female Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine awarded in the field of metabolism (Gerty Cori in 1947).

Metabolism is divided into pathways, each with a starting point (such as the food we eat), an end point (such as energy we produce) and points of convergence when different metabolic pathways intersect. In many ways, a metabolic pathway map looks very similar to a London Underground map. Just like the London Underground, if a metabolic pathway becomes blocked or overloaded, this affects traffic through other areas of the metabolic network. However, unlike the London Underground, the consequences of this reach beyond being late for work; they result in a wide range of diseases.

Historically, the focus on metabolism was on the chemistry of the pathways and the enzymes involved. More recently, though, metabolic research has undergone a renaissance, focusing more on the role of metabolism in disease. This was particularly driven by cancer research, where abnormal metabolism is not only a consequence of cancer but can also cause cancer in its own right. Over a relatively short period of time, many societies have shifted to being in a permanent state of nutrient overload, accompanied by more sedentary lifestyles. Metabolism is at the front line of this onslaught as metabolic pathways are having to cope with this fuel overload, which we have not evolved to accommodate. This has resulted in our bodies having to store fuels in places and at concentrations not traditionally encountered, such as storing fats in the liver, muscle and the heart rather than predominantly in our adipose tissue. These metabolic derangements have been implicated in diseases throughout the body that are becoming more prevalent in modern society, including Type 2 diabetes, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and sleep apnoea. Diabetes prevalence is estimated to have risen to over 8.5% of the global adult population worldwide – 400 million people.

The heart is an amazing metabolic organ; it is never at rest and requires more energy than any other organ in your body. As a consequence, it burns through fuel at an impressive rate: metabolism is at the heart of powering cardiac contraction. Research has shown that changing metabolism in the heart, either by increasing or restricting fuel breakdown, can have profound effects on the ability of the heart to contract and pump blood around the body. The heart sits within a ‘Goldilocks zone’ – too much or too little to fuel metabolism is a bad thing; it needs things to be just right.

The leading cause of mortality in diabetes is cardiovascular disease, accounting for over 50% of deaths. We don’t fully understand why diabetes has such profound effects on the heart; we don’t understand the disease progression, or the mechanisms involved. My research asks why and how changing metabolism within the heart in diabetes results in decreased survival after a heart attack. Given the increasing global prevalence of Type 2 diabetes, these are pressing questions that need answering. Our work has shown that, in Type 2 diabetes, we shift the heart out of its ‘Goldilocks zone’, forcing it to use more fats from the blood and less glucose, resulting in the heart becoming loaded with lipid droplets. To remedy this, the heart tries to increase the rate at which it burns the fat, but this just ends up generating a vicious cycle, with even more fat coming in to replace that. To remedy this, the heart tries to increase the rate at which it burns the fat, but this just ends up generating a vicious cycle, with even more fat coming in to replace that being metabolised. Our research has shown that these metabolic changes have far-reaching effects on many cellular processes, controlling which genes are expressed and affecting how well proteins can work, how we remove toxins and how much energy we can make. Our findings have opened up new avenues into developing metabolic therapies for the heart, the idea being that targeting metabolism may provide a route to remedy these pathological changes in the heart in diabetes. By getting to the heart of metabolism in diabetes, we may be able to find novel treatments for treating cardiovascular disease.

Lisa Heather is a British Heart Foundation Fellow at the Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics and an Isobel Laing Career Development Fellow at Oriel. Lisa read for her DPhil at Corpus Christi before being awarded an RD Lawrence Diabetes UK Fellowship. Please visit https://www.dpag.ox.ac.uk/research/heather-group for more information.
We are delighted to announce that Jim Mellon (1975, PPE), British investor and philanthropist, has gifted £1 million to support and advance the study of Longevity Science at Oxford, and specifically at Oriel. The gift will establish the Mellon Longevity Science Programme at Oriel to help the most vulnerable in society by advancing research into health resilience in ageing populations.

The gift is the largest of its kind dedicated to Longevity Science to a UK university, making Oriel and Oxford a focal point for efforts to improve future health resilience by boosting the immunity and healthspan of ageing populations. More specifically, the gift will support the work of Professor Lynne Cox, George Moody Fellow in Biochemistry at Oriel, and a principal investigator in the Department of Biochemistry. Her lab studies the molecular basis of human ageing, with the aim of reducing the morbidity and frailty associated with old age through better health resilience.

The gift will also allow the creation, in perpetuity, of a DPhil scholarship in Ageing and Cell Senescence, to be based at Oriel. It is intended that the first recipient of the DPhil scholarship will join the College for the 2020–21 academic year.

Jim’s gift will help foster a closer network of leaders in the longevity field, with Oriel at its centre. It will also promote and support interdisciplinary research into ageing through collaboration between the University’s Oxford Ageing Network (OxAgeN), co-led by Professor Cox, and the Ageing Research Collaborative Hub (ARCH), which includes researchers from Oxford’s numerous academic divisions (including Humanities, Social Sciences, Medical Sciences and Mathematical, Physical, Engineering and Life Sciences).

Provost Neil Mendoza says of the gift: ‘We are very grateful to Jim for his generosity and continued support for the College and the University. This gift will allow us to establish Oriel as a focal point for what we believe is an essential area of research with a potential for high impact and positive returns for science and the economy.’

This gift will allow us to establish Oriel as a focal point for what we believe is an essential area of research with a potential for high impact and positive returns for science and the economy.

Jim supports a variety of different business ventures, but his most recent include co-founding Juvenescence Limited, a company investing in the development of therapies for ageing and the diseases of ageing, as well as Agronomics Limited, an investment company focusing on opportunities within the nascent industry of environmentally friendly and cruelty-free modern foods. He is also an Honorary Fellow of Oriel.

JIM MELLON PROGRAMME

The impact of Jim’s investment in this important area of research is explained by Professor Lynne Cox: ‘With the incidence of chronic health conditions such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes and dementia rising rapidly with age, and older people most at risk of both becoming infected with, and suffering adverse outcomes from infectious disease, the ability to support better health through the life-course via early intervention presents a cost-effective approach to improving national health and resilience. This gift will significantly bolster our ability to study the process of cell ageing and advance interventions that can improve health and immune resilience.’

Explaining why he has chosen to support Oriel and Oxford’s research in this area, Jim said: ‘There has never been a more important time to address the frailty of human health. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the huge economic and social costs connected to the lack of immune resilience in our increasingly ageing population and the need for greater scientific research into this area. ‘Boosting immuno resilience among the most vulnerable in society and advancing healthspan are critical to helping more people reach their potential as well as, more urgently, improving our collective resilience in the face of future pandemics. Oxford’s leadership in the field of researching and understanding the ageing process makes it a natural home to advance longevity science and support the growth of the longevity industry, and I am proud to support this work.’

The impact of Jim’s investment in this important area of research is explained by Professor Lynne Cox: ‘With the incidence of chronic health conditions such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes and dementia rising rapidly with age, and older people most at risk of both becoming infected with, and suffering adverse outcomes from infectious disease, the ability to support better health through the life-course via early intervention presents a cost-effective approach to improving national health and resilience. This gift will significantly bolster our ability to study the process of cell ageing and advance interventions that can improve health and immune resilience.’

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Lyndal Roper won a Humboldt Research Prize. The award will enable Lyndal to spend 12 months attached to the Free University Berlin over the next five years to research her book on the German Peasants’ War 1524–25. It will also enable her to support the Oxford–Berlin partnership.

Hugh Collins Rice (Music Lecturer) was announced as a prize winner in the Kazimierz Serocki 16th International Composers’ Competition 2019. His *Canto Celato*, a work for clarinet, violin and piano, was performed in Warsaw in November and broadcast on Polish Radio.

It was announced on Friday 31st July that Oriel’s Provost, Neil Mendoza, is to be conferred with a Life Peerage by Her Majesty the Queen. Neil was nominated by Prime Minister Boris Johnson and will become a member once he is introduced to the House of Lords in October.

Lynne Cox has been appointed as a scientific advisor to the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Longevity to provide strategic and practical advice to the government on implementing its policy of an extra five healthy years of life by 2035. This group, comprising members of the House of Commons and House of Lords across all political parties, together with a panel of subject experts, was launched by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the Rt Hon Matt Hancock, in Parliament in May 2019. It has met regularly in Westminster over the past year and has conducted a national consultation, culminating in the publication of its report ‘Health of the Nation: a Strategy for Healthier Longer Lives’ – Lynne wrote a key chapter of this report. The official launch was endorsed in a keynote speech by Matt Hancock. The APPG has continued to work remotely, most recently running a series of roundtables to forge a business coalition to support healthy older age.

In further parliamentary work, Lynne gave evidence as an expert witness for the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee on Ageing Science last November.

She has also been elected as co-chair of the Ageing Biology special interest group of the European Geriatric Medicine Society (EuGMS). This group aims to build capacity in ageing research across Europe through regular pan-European meetings, the scientific exchange of researchers and the development of a new Europe-wide accredited training course in ageing research.
College Chaplain Publishes New Book on the Reformation

The Revd Dr Rob Wainwright, Fellow and Chaplain, has published his new book on the Reformation. *Early Reformation Covenant Theology* is both a forensic analysis of the doctrine of covenant in the early 16th century and a fresh approach to the nature of religious reform under King Henry VIII. The classic tutorial essay question ‘Was Henry’s Church “Catholicism without the pope” or “Lutheranism without justification by faith alone?”’ is surpassed by a detailed survey of continental theological influences from Switzerland. As Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch writes in the Foreword, ‘Dr Wainwright demonstrates not merely “the strange death of Lutheran England”, but ... the positive English turn towards what in the course of the 16th century gained an identity as Reformed Protestantism.’

Professor Andrew Boothroyd Publishes New Textbook

Tutorial Fellow in Physics Professor Andrew Boothroyd has recently published a new textbook, *Principles of Neutron Scattering from Condensed Matter*, with Oxford University Press.

Neutron scattering is arguably the most powerful technique available for looking inside materials and seeing what the atoms are doing. This new textbook provides a comprehensive account of the many different ways neutrons are being used to investigate the behaviour of atoms and molecules in bulk matter. It provides a modern and pedagogical treatment of the principles behind the various neutron scattering techniques that are used at facilities around the world.

The book is intended to be used as a course textbook for advanced undergraduate and graduate training courses, or as a ‘one-stop-shop’ for anyone wanting to learn about modern neutron scattering techniques and their applications.

Professor Boothroyd leads a group within the Department of Physics that carries out research into novel electronic, magnetic and superconducting materials, with emphasis on emergent phenomena associated with strong electronic correlations.

Dr Teresa Bejan Appointed Fulbright Visiting Research Chair at McGill University

Associate Professor of Political Theory and Fellow in Politics, Dr Teresa Bejan, has been appointed as the Fulbright Visiting Research Chair in Constitutional and Political Theory at McGill University in Montreal, Canada for the 2020-21 academic year.

Professor Yadvinder Malhi Becomes Trustee of Natural History Museum

Jackson Senior Research Fellow in Biodiversity and Conservation, Professor Yadvinder Malhi FRS, has been appointed as a Trustee of London’s Natural History Museum.

Yadvinder has been a Research Fellow at Oriel since 2005; he leads the Ecosystems Programme of Oxford’s Environmental Change Institute. You can read more about Yadvinder’s work on page 21.
Dr David Maw Becomes Oriel Fellow in Music

Oriel’s Director of Music, Dr David Maw, has been made a Fellow of the College and was formally admitted on the 22nd January.

David has a long association with Oriel, joining the College as a lecturer in 1999 and taking up the role of Director of Music. Many Oriel musicians and Choir members have been taught, or indeed conducted, by David and he is the driving force behind many of Oriel’s musical events.

David is responsible for the recruitment of the Choir, as well as for the appointment of the College’s Organ and Choral Scholars. He also helps organise the annual Choir tour, of which many Orielenses hold fond memories, and has produced a number of CD recordings of the Choir during his time at Oriel. He is a member of the Music Committee, which is responsible for arranging Visiting Musicians and performers for the Oriel Champagne Concerts.

Two Oriel Academics Shortlisted for Prestigious Wolfson History Prize

New books by Emeritus Fellow Professor John Barton and College Lecturer in English Professor Marion Turner were both shortlisted for this year’s Wolfson History Prize, the most prestigious literary history prize in the UK. The prize was ultimately awarded to David Abulafia’s The Boundless Sea: A Human History of the Oceans.

Professor Barton’s A History of the Bible: The Book and Its Faiths has achieved huge success since its publication in June 2019. Described as ‘nothing short of a masterpiece’ by The Sunday Times, it offers a unique guide on how the books of the Old and New Testaments came to be written, how they were collected to form a unified Bible and how they have been received and interpreted in Judaism and Christianity down to the present.

Since its publication, Professor Barton’s book has become a Sunday Times Bestseller and was listed among the Sunday Times and Observer’s ‘Books of the Year’ for 2019. In April, Professor Barton was awarded the 2019 Duff Cooper Prize, which celebrates the best in non-fiction writing.

Professor Turner’s book, Chaucer: A European Life, looks at Chaucer’s life from an unusual perspective and ‘reveals him as a great European writer and thinker. To understand his accomplishment, she reconstructs in unprecedented detail the cosmopolitan world of Chaucer’s adventurous life, focusing on the places and spaces that fired his imagination.’ Her book expands our understanding of Chaucer as a great and instrumental figure in English literature, showing how he was influenced by his travels and experiences beyond British shores.

Leibniz’s Discourse on Metaphysics

Gonzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra, the Colin Prestige Fellow in Philosophy, has published a new translation and commentary of Leibniz’s Discourse on Metaphysics with OUP. The Discourse on Metaphysics is one of Leibniz’s fundamental works. Written in French around January 1686, it is the most accomplished systematic expression of Leibniz’s philosophy in the 1680s, the period in which Leibniz’s philosophy reached maturity. Leibniz’s goal in the Discourse was to give a metaphysics for Christianity – that is, to provide the answers he believed Christians should give to the basic metaphysical questions. Why does the world exist? What is the world like? What kinds of things exist? And what is the place of human beings in the world? To this purpose Leibniz discussed some of the most traditional topics of metaphysics, such as the nature of God, the purpose of God in creating the world, the nature of substance, the possibility of miracles, the nature of our knowledge, free will and the justice behind salvation and damnation. This volume provides a new translation of the Discourse, complete with a critical introduction and a comprehensive philosophical commentary.

The book is fully an Oriel product, since the idea for the book originated from two undergraduate seminars on the Discourse Gonzalo gave in Michaelmas Term 2012 and Trinity Term 2013 for a group of spectacularly good Oriel students: Hugh Acland, Ksenia Harwood, Patrick Penzo, Philip Saville, Alec Siantonas, Anatole Sloan, Emily Smith, Amit Visana and Alexandra Wilson. Among the many people with whom Gonzalo discussed parts of the book when writing it are the following Oriel academics and students: Maria Rosa Antognazza, Juliane Kerkhecker, Brian Leftow, Tien-Chun Lo, David Maskell, Thomas Møller-Nielsen, Martin Pickup and Bill Wood.
Oriel is fortunate to have so many academics who are leading the way on environmental and energy research. From investigating the impact of emissions, to assessing the resilience of ecosystems to change, their work is proving to be increasingly vital as the world looks to address climate change.
It’s early March 2020, in a South African savanna on the edge of Kruger National Park, just a week before the UK and much of the world will judder to a halt. A team of scientists nurse eggs-and-coffee breakfasts, slip into dusty field boots, gather an assortment of field equipment and drive out into the bush, past the bemused gaze of three giraffes. The researchers locate their field research plot for the day and fan out. Yadvinder Malhi (Oriel Jackson Senior Research Fellow and Professor of Ecosystem Science) pulls out a T-shaped tool, his trusted tree corer, and strains as he twists it into a selected tree to pull out a beautiful wood sample decked in delicate tree rings. Imma Oliveras (Oriel Junior Research Fellow in Tropical Ecology) collects and organises branches and leaf samples that will later be scanned, weighed and analysed in the laboratory. Eleanor Thomson (DPhil student and Oriel MCR President) checks over her drone before it buzzes over the plot and maps the trees through visible and infra-red eyes. Alexander Shenkin (a postdoc at the Environmental Change Institute, Oxford) prepares to scan the bush with a laser to map the shape and architecture of the trees. The Oxford team is working together with partners from the UK (Universities of Liverpool and Lancaster) and South Africa (University of Pretoria) to understand what makes this savanna ‘tick’ – how it cycles energy, carbon and nutrients and how that is shaped by animals such as termites and ants.

At the same time, half a continent away, a team led by Stephen Adu-Bredu in Ghana, West Africa is conducting almost identical measurements along a transect of forests and savannas. Leaping from Ghana over the warm waters of the tropical Atlantic, the same work is going on in the savannas and steaming humid forests of the Amazon. Just south of the river port city of Santarém, a team led by Dr Erika Berenguer (another postdoc at the Environmental Change Institute) is tracking the response of forests that were devastated by drought and fire in 2015–16, which hit this region harder than anywhere else in the world. She is trying to understand which trees were most vulnerable or resilient.

There is an increasing push towards increasing the extent and health of natural ecosystems in the UK, both as a strategy to partially tackle climate change and to reverse the long-term decline in biodiversity in the British landscape.

FROM GLOBAL TO LOCAL

Professor Yadvinder Malhi

Professor Yadvinder Malhi is the Jackson Senior Fellow in Biodiversity and Conservation at Oriel. He has been a Research Fellow at Oriel since 2005 and he leads the Ecosystems Programme of the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford. Professor Malhi is also a Fellow of the Royal Society.
to this extreme, and how interventions
can help prevent a catastrophic ‘dieback’
of the Amazon forest. Moving further
west by several thousand miles, similar
measurements snake from the lowland
rainforests up the slopes of the Andes to
a literally breath-taking 3,500 metres in
elevation, where the forest treeline laps
against high mountain grasslands under
harsh azure skies. Here a team has spent
over a decade trying to understand how
temperature shapes the biodiversity and
functioning of tropical forests, and how they
will cope with a rapidly warming world.

And so on around the world: through the
lush temperate rainforests of Chile, which
host massive trees that are thousands of
years old; the majestic towering rainforests
of Borneo, where the Oxford team recently
participated in the discovery and mapping
of the tallest tree anywhere in the tropics
(‘Menara’ – ‘the tower’ – a neck-stretching
100 metres tall); the forests of Gabon in
Central Africa, shaped by an abundance of
elephants and gorillas; and the idyllic atoll
of Tetiaroa in the South Pacific, a necklace
of islands formerly owned by Marlon Brando
where invasive rats will be eradicated in 2020
in an attempt to bring back nesting seabirds
and to restore the nutrient cycle of forests
and coral reefs. The global journey ends
just outside of Oxford, at Wytham Woods.
Here a wild woodland drapes a hill that
looks over Oxford, where trees and animals
are being closely tracked over decades by
University researchers. A new project has
begun that will look at how the new disease
of ash dieback will reshape this forest
and the plants, microbes, invertebrates,
birds and mammals that inhabit it. At
the heart of the University Science Area,
the data streaming in from these global
sites are carefully checked and sorted
and entered into a specifically designed
database, then analysed and compared with
satellite data to see if we can understand
at scale how ecosystems are changing.

All of these sites form part of a
global research network, the Global
Ecosystems Monitoring network,
initiated and coordinated from Oxford by
Professor Malhi’s Ecosystems Lab, in the
Environmental Change Institute within the
School of Geography and the Environment.
The broad scope of this research is to
have a holistic understanding of how
ecosystems are shaped by plants, animals
and the environment, with the aim of better
understanding how they are being changed
by factors ranging from climate change to
local logging, invasive diseases and the loss
or gain of animals. This work is assisted by
technologies ranging from laser scanners
to the latest generations of drones and
satellites. We can thereby understand how
policy and management interventions can
work alongside ecology to maintain a healthy
biosphere under the challenges the planet
faces in the 21st century.

While the global work continues at
full intensity, a particular new focus of
Malhi’s research activity is local. There is
an increasing push towards increasing the
extent and health of natural ecosystems
in the UK, both as a strategy to partially
tackle climate change and to reverse
the long-term decline in biodiversity in
the British landscape. There is a need to
understand the science behind different
types of ecosystem restoration, whether
in increasing biodiversity and health on
farmlands, increasing tree cover or, in some
cases, ‘rewilding’ landscapes by letting go of
intense management. There is also a need
to understand the social science, economic
and policy issues around such a change in
the countryside. The landscapes around
Oxford provide an ideal opportunity to
explore these ideas and to become a sentinel
for the UK and beyond. In this way, over the
coming years, Malhi hopes to bring some
of the insights and approaches of the global
network home to Oxford’s very doorstep.
I am a Jackson Senior Fellow in Land Use and Environmental Change at the Environmental Change Institute, School of Geography and the Environment, and Senior Fellow at Oriel College. My research focuses on one complex question: how does governance shape outcomes for forests, landscapes and human wellbeing? I’ve approached this question at multiple scales, from the study of international processes addressing forest carbon emissions, illegal logging and sustainable supply chains to in-depth, field-based studies of the impacts of these processes in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania.

I have focused my research on governance due to its pivotal role in mediating who benefits and loses from land use decisions. I’ve been particularly concerned with how the scale of governance (whether global, regional, national or local) shapes governance strategies. Land use has become an increasingly global concern as rising consumption drives the conversion of tropical forests to agriculture, mining and infrastructure, with associated greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity loss. Yet land use is also profoundly local; the increasing concentration of land and resources in many parts of the world threatens local livelihoods, culture and voice in land use decisions.

A core finding of my research is that, despite the importance of international and urban consumption as a driver of land use change, the current focus of global conservation efforts on trade-based initiatives has failed to meet conservation objectives and resulted in inequitable outcomes. For example, sustainability certification, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) and Zero Deforestation pledges aimed at excluding palm oil and other ‘deforestation commodities’ from international supply chains have generated an ever-expanding web of environmental and social standards and monitoring, reporting and verification systems as a means of strengthening external control and/or building trust in international sustainability claims. Yet these systems have had limited impact on the large and growing domestic supply chains in the Global South, have contributed to industry consolidation and the exclusion of local producers and have largely failed to address forest loss. This highlights the need for a greater diversity of strategies based on a better understanding of the multiple scales and contexts that shape production, consumption and land use change.

While I continue to study these mainstream conservation initiatives, a growing priority for my research is to uncover more transformative approaches to governance, for example in line with the ‘de-growth’ and ‘solidarity economy’ movements that seek a more radical and equitable approach to human/nature relations. This includes studies of how new technologies can be harnessed to improve benefit-capture among coffee farmers in the Global South, as well as the study of domestic and locally oriented production systems and markets and their contribution to resource conservation and local welfare.

This focus on social transformation is controversial, as some fear that social goals will distract us from urgent action on climate and land use change. I disagree. Social equality itself is not only a core goal, with equal footing, in the globally agreed United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the rise of authoritarian, anti-environmentalist populist movements around the world also speaks to an equally urgent need for more inclusive approaches to environmental governance.
I am an ecosystem ecologist who explores the vulnerability and resilience of ecosystems to global change. I study how organism-level changes aggregate to explain community structure and dynamics, as well as ecosystem- and biome-level functions. To date, my research has mostly examined ecological patterns to improve our understanding of how and why ecosystem form and function changes across environmental settings, along with our ability to predict the ecosystem- and biome-level consequences of these changes. Most significantly, my work addresses the impacts of abiotic stressors (e.g. droughts) and disturbances (e.g. wildfires) on vegetation composition, structure and dynamics.

Most of my research is in the tropical forest/savanna/grassland transitions of South America and Africa, which are the most widespread ecotones in tropical areas, which separate two of the most productive terrestrial ecosystems: the closed-canopy rainforests and the savannas, the latter being more open and less wooded ecosystems that include a significant proportion of grass cover. The relative abundance of two very different plant life forms (trees versus grasses) strongly shape ecosystem biogeochemistry, microclimate, fire regimes and fauna. Also, while forests are fire-sensitive ecosystems that did not evolve with natural occurring fires, savannas and grasslands are fire-adapted ecosystems that evolved with a natural fire occurring more or less regularly, with many species depending on it for flowering and reproducing.

These transitions are expected to be especially sensitive to global change, since relatively minor shifts in environmental drivers (e.g. climate, soils or herbivory) can translate into dramatic changes in ecosystem structure and composition. With increasing human-caused disturbances and landscape fragmentation, ecotones will become even more common and important to the dynamics of ecosystems on either side of the transition, redefining their boundaries and influencing their structure and function. As a result, forest–savanna transitions may be key indicators of the net effects of environmental change, and...
it is important to understand the many processes that drive these transitions if we are to interpret observed changes correctly.

My efforts in this regard are focused on studying the impacts of fire and droughts in these transitions. For example, in Brazil, my research has shown that the woody biomass in the savannas is increasing (a term called woody encroachment) partly due to a decrease in fire frequency in the savanna. Less fire in the tropical savanna results in more biomass, which excludes several herbaceous and forb species, as well as much of the fauna that lives in open grassy environments – that is, it results in a loss of biodiversity. At the moment, we are studying the impact of reintroducing fire on the biodiversity and dynamics of some tropical savannas. We are working with different national and local stakeholders to find the best way for maximising biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and decreasing hazardous wildfires.

Tropical forest–grassland transitions also occur in mountainous areas such as the Andes and the Atlantic forest. These occur at high altitudes, where fires have long-lasting effects on tropical montane forest structure: burned forests have fewer big trees than undisturbed forests, and do not reach the tree size distribution of undisturbed forests until up to 30 years after a fire. Fire also severely impacts carbon dynamics, with 28-year-old burned forests having much less above-ground biomass than unburned forests.

In the Atlantic forest, we are studying how fire has transformed those environments, as well as the rate of change in forest composition with disturbance frequency. We aim at providing guidelines for managers and stakeholders for prioritising ecosystem restoration practices that maximise biodiversity, ecosystem functioning and fire safety.

Last but not least, we are also trying to improve our understanding of the socio-ecological drivers of fires. At the moment we have active research with this regard in the Colombian Amazon and in California.
If you walk through a tropical forest, your eyes may be able to distinguish different shades of green and brown. If you are a botanical expert, you may be able to identify different species of tree. Simply by using our eyes, however, we can say very little about the chemical content of the trees, how much carbon dioxide they are absorbing from the atmosphere, how healthy they are or how they might respond to increased warming or drought.

Predicting how tropical forests will respond to climate change is an important question. Tropical forests cover just 7% of the Earth’s land surface but absorb 18% of human CO₂ emissions and store 250 billion tonnes of CO₂ (humans emit around 10 billion tonnes of CO₂ per year). Even a small change in these numbers would mean many tonnes of CO₂ added or removed from the atmosphere, with significant planetary impacts. Therefore, it is vital to have global information on these forests to provide advanced warnings regarding if, and when, this important carbon sink may begin to reduce, and how this may impact climate and climate change policy.

The aim of my PhD is to use infra-red light captured by satellites to create the first global maps of tropical forest carbon absorption. Infra-red is light that our eyes cannot detect, but which contains a treasure trove of ecological information. Viewing a tropical forest using infra-red light is like putting on a new pair of glasses – suddenly the muted shades of green and brown are transformed into a kaleidoscope of colours that make it very easy to distinguish between different species of tree, their chemical make-up, their carbon absorption rate and their resilience under different climate scenarios.

The infra-red light is calibrated and validated on field measurements. Set up by Prof. Yadvinder Malhi, our lab group has over 70 tropical forest monitoring plots across the world, including in Brazil, Peru, Ghana, Gabon and Borneo. Oriel has provided me with a travel grant to visit some of these sites to take carbon absorption measurements and to fly a drone mounted with an infra-red camera (essentially a mini satellite) to test our prediction algorithms.

Industry partnership is vital to the success of this project. To this end, I am collaborating with the European Space Agency and Google Earth Engine to use their satellite products and computing power. I am in the penultimate year of my DPhil and hope to complete next year.

**Eleanor Thomson, Current DPhil Student and MCR President (2019–20)**

![A part of Ankasa National Park in Ghana mapped using infra-red light. The colours represent the different combinations of chemicals present in each tree. Particular combinations of chemicals can be used to estimate carbon dioxide absorption rates. For example, the blue/purple colours denote high leaf nitrogen and phosphorus, which is generally indicative of high CO₂ absorption.](image)
Britain was one of the first countries to make legally binding commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Last year, in response to the latest climate science and changes in public sentiments, the ambition was raised from 80% reduction by 2050 to ‘net zero’. What does that mean for the way we live?

The significance of this ambition was felt when the Court of Appeal ruled earlier this year that a third runway at Heathrow is incompatible with our commitments under the Paris climate agreement. In the coming years more such rulings and changes in policy and regulation may affect us in our everyday activities.

Research at Oxford is at the forefront of understanding and advancing the technical, societal and political challenges of transitioning towards a net zero society. Oriel is home to a network of environmental scientists, who cover work on tropical forests and ecosystem governance and lead the Oxford Energy Network of interdisciplinary researchers.

Dr Phil Grunewald is conducting pioneering work on household electricity consumption patterns. These patterns dictate to what extent renewable electricity can be relied upon to deliver our energy services and what scale of storage investments may ensure secure supplies. His modelling has shown that small changes in demand can save billions of pounds for the wider system. Individual load profiles are extremely spiky – lots of short bursts of high demand for kettles, ovens and other appliances, as shown at the back of Figure 1. If each of us attempted to serve those peaks with our personal batteries, the capacity requirements would be four times higher than if we shared the resources with our immediate neighbours. Local energy communities with shared generation and storage assets have the potential to replace the currently dominant large centralised systems at much lower costs. New business models with data-driven approaches for energy trading can help make this happen.

Focussing on demand reveals four more pieces of good news:

1) UK demand has fallen by 20% in the past 10 years due to more efficient use of electricity, allowing old coal power stations to be phased out.
2) Emissions from electricity have more than halved during this time.
3) Further significant reductions are still possible, especially during critical peak demand periods.
4) Some of the most enjoyable activities use the least energy: reading, sleeping and socialising. Let’s do more of those and living in a net zero society might not be so bad after all.

Dr Phil Grunewald (FICE) is our Jackson Junior Research Fellow in Energy. Find out more about his work on energy-use.org. When he isn’t researching energy demand, he rows with our students, regaining both Torpids and Summer Eight headship in the past three years.
Visiting parishioners and talking to Hawkins brought him to realise, however, that people ‘are not so good as they should be, and better than they might be’.

ORIEL’S SAINT: CARDINAL NEWMAN
John Henry Newman, who was declared a saint by Pope Francis last October, was elected a Fellow of Oriel on 12th April 1822. Gifted, but reserved, he was in awe of the prestigious Oriel Senior Common that was reputed to 'stink of logic'. Nevertheless, he made many friends there. It was the colourful Richard Whately, the future Archbishop of Dublin, who initially took Newman under his wing and drew him out. Later, of course, he came close to those who were – with him – leading figures in the Oxford Movement, notably John Keble, Edward Pusey and Richard Hurrell Froude. Reflecting on Newman at Oriel, however, there is one relationship that can easily be overlooked: Newman’s relationship with the Provost, Edward Hawkins.

When he was an undergraduate, Newman heard Hawkins preaching on tradition. At the time, Hawkins was not yet Provost, but Vicar of St Mary's. What he said impressed Newman deeply. Then, as a young Fellow and newly ordained Anglican deacon with a curacy at St Clement's, there were the two long vacations in 1824 and 1825 when, because of their duties, the two saw much of each other, walking, talking and dining together. At the time, though not extreme, Newman was still under the sway of his early evangelical conversion, which had led him to the view that more people were damned than saved. Visiting parishioners and talking to Hawkins brought him to realise, however, that people 'are not so good as they should be, and better than they might be'. His viewpoint had shifted.

In 1828, Oriel had to elect a new Provost. Keble was one possibility, but Newman voted for Hawkins instead, believing he was the kind of man the College needed. Soon afterwards, two further events occurred. First, Newman was appointed as Hawkins’ successor as Vicar of St Mary’s; second, the two men clashed over the responsibilities of tutors. Newman argued that gifted undergraduates should receive more individual attention, while Hawkins maintained that lectures should be delivered irrespective of the students’ talents. Hawkins’ view prevailed and, although Newman never resigned as a tutor, no more students were allotted to him.

The consequences were far-reaching. In the first place, without pupils, Newman had the freedom, when the time came from 1833 onwards, to throw himself wholeheartedly into the work of the Oxford Movement, seeking to restore to the Church of England the vigour of the Catholic tradition; as Vicar, he had also acquired a pulpit at St Mary’s, from which he was to preach many of his most influential sermons. As Matthew Arnold observed, ‘Who could resist the charm of that spiritual apparition, gliding in the dim afternoon light through the aisles of St Mary’s, rising into the pulpit, and then ... breaking the silence with words and thoughts which were a religious music?’

Despite Newman’s clash with Hawkins, the two remained cordial. On Newman’s return from Sicily in 1833, where he had become seriously ill and might have died, Hawkins was one of the first people to whom he wrote and Hawkins replied, regretting that he would not see Newman because he had to be away from Oxford. Later, when Newman resigned his Fellowship, some days before being received into the Church of Rome, Hawkins answered him graciously, though expressing understandable regret.

Nineteen years afterwards, while writing his Apologia, which explained why he had become a Catholic and spoke most warmly of his earlier life, Hawkins wrote, ‘I cannot forbear troubling you with a line to express my great pleasure in your expression of such very kind feelings towards myself and others among your old friends.’ When Hawkins died in 1882, aged 93, his wife wrote to Newman, who replied recalling his friendship with Hawkins and promising, ‘I shall never forget to pray for him, till I go too.’

In 1878, Newman became Trinity’s first Honorary Fellow. He was relieved it was Trinity, his undergraduate College, that had asked him, rather than Oriel. His life at Oriel had been more complex. Oriel was associated with painful struggles, although with valued friendships as well. This combination of struggle and friendship is illustrated not least in his relationship with Edward Hawkins.

Mons. Roderick Strange, DPhil (1970). Professor in Theology at St Mary’s University, Twickenham and Newman scholar.
Another great event in the history of Oriel took place this past October in Rome: the canonisation of John Henry Newman by Pope Francis.

The canonisation of John Henry Newman, one of Oriel’s most famous sons, was a matter of huge pride for the College. A delegation of over 80 Orielenses (including a number of current students) led by Provost Neil Mendoza travelled to the Eternal City to participate in the events around the canonisation, as well as in the ceremony itself.

On Saturday 12th October Orielenses were, with the kind permission of the Rector (a Mertonian and sometime Fellow of Magdalen College), invited on a tour of the Venerable English College. Originally founded in 1362 as a hospice for English pilgrims visiting Rome, it was re-established in 1579 by Cardinal William Allen, another Orielensis and former Fellow of the College, to train English and Welsh men for the Catholic priesthood. It continues to do so to this day, and as such is seldom open to the public. There followed a traditional Roman lunch for our group, which numbered 50, at a trattoria close to the College. That evening a number of events took place around the city, organised by the Oratorians, the Religious Order of which Newman was a member and which he established in England in the later part of his life.

The next day was an early start for those attending the ceremony in St Peter’s Square. Presided over by Pope Francis and attended by HRH the Prince of Wales, St John Henry Newman was canonised alongside four women hailing from Switzerland, India, Brazil and Italy, giving a vibrant and international feel to the celebrations. Following the Mass, the Provost hosted a lunch reception for Orielenses on the roof of the Hotel Minerva overlooking the Pantheon. Over 85 people attended this event, including guest of honour Cardinal Gerhard Müller, a well-known Newman scholar and friend of the College.

John Henry Newman now joins the canon of Oriel Saints alongside Thomas More (confirmed in his Oriel connection by Jeremy Catto in his 2013 Oriel College: A History), Edmund Powell, another martyr from the reign of Henry VIII. Newman is also now forever associated with St Edward the Confessor, King of England, whose feast day is 13th October and whose namesake, the second King Edward, founded Oriel in 1326.

For those of us who were privileged to be present on this occasion it was an experience never to be forgotten, and one that will forever associate Oriel with sanctity, scholarship and the city of Rome.

Sean Power, Fellow and Director of Development & Alumni Engagement
2019 was a big year for John Henry Newman, but Oriel College Library & Archives have been quietly facilitating research into one of our most famous alumni for decades.

One thousand six hundred letters between the key players of the Oxford Movement period are held by the Library and housed in 15 cloth-covered guard books from the 1940s. Many of them are in Newman’s hand; many more are to him or about him. Together they comprise a vital resource into the national history of this period. Only 191 of these letters, which had been left loose, have been transcribed and published. In 2017 we received a grant from the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust (NMCT) to stabilise these guard books and begin the huge task of digitising the letters. The generosity of the NMCT was matched by the College and 569 letters were digitised. This included 378 letters that were carefully cleaned of 1940s Sellotape, which was affecting the integrity of the paper and causing the text to become obscured through discoloration and stickiness.

Even before Newman was writing his letters, however, he was making use of Oriel Library himself in his role of Tutor and Fellow. For the last year we have been working with the Oxford Conservation Consortium (OCC) to stabilise and protect the fascinating resource that is the collection of ‘Register[s] of Books borrowed from the Library’. Newman appears as a prolific borrower in many of the volumes, but especially the one for the period between February 1823 and February 1850. His name should, in fact, appear more often, but in several places has been carefully cut out from the volume, presumably by enthusiastic relic hunters.

The register lists the books borrowed by shelf-mark alongside the borrower’s name, giving the dates the books were borrowed and returned. As such, it contains information that could allow huge insight into Newman’s studies, sermons and ecclesiastical path.

Unfortunately, the shelf-marks listed no longer correspond to the current arrangement of material in the Senior Library, largely due to the fire of 1949. While some records exist of the movement, it is no easy task to track down the books Newman borrowed. One researcher, however, Kenneth Parker PhD, Ryan Endowed Chair for Newman Studies, Professor of Historical Theology, Duquesne University, has been attending Oriel Library for nearly two decades doing just that and the fruits of his labour have finally become available for all to see online at https://digitalcollections.newmanstudies.org/library-records.

Going forward, we are currently looking into opportunities for funding to complete the conservation, cataloguing and digitisation of the remaining Newman Letters and how best to host them online to ensure the widest access. We continue to work with the OCC to conserve more of our borrowing registers and manuscript library catalogues to help increase our knowledge of the amazing collections hidden in the Senior Library.

Hannah Robertson, Librarian
How did you get into quizzing?
I’d been interested in facts and non-fiction books since a small child: my first memories of books are of children’s reference books, and I became very keen on the Guinness Book of Records aged about six or seven. I think the first realisation I had that most other children were not like me in this respect was representing my Cub Scout pack in a quiz with other local packs aged 10 or 11 – we won quite comfortably two years running and I recall our pack leader expressing surprise at the things I knew.

Tell us about your time at Oriel. How were you involved in the quizzing community as a student?
I came up to Oriel in 1996 to read PPE, taught at that time by Mark Philp, Derek Morris, Rowland Stout and David Charles. I wasn’t a very diligent student, sadly – I think I’d got too used to doing the minimum required to get by at school, and lacked the maturity at the time to focus properly on my studies.

The amount of time I spent watching quiz shows in the TV room, participating in pub quizzes in Oxford and reading books unrelated to my studies probably helped my quizzing, though! I was lucky enough to meet other keen quizzers like Robert Dougans (Modern History, 1996) and Toby Cox (Classics, 1995), and we began regularly attending the weekly quiz at the Oxford Union, set by Roger Mortimore (at the time one of the country’s leading quizzers). It was a very tough quiz but we slowly began to improve and found that very rewarding. Strengthened by the arrival of David Brewis (Chemistry, 1997), we applied for University Challenge and were accepted for the 1998–99 series, ultimately reaching the final, for which see below. Later I went on to co-found (or, more precisely, re-found) the Oxford University Quiz Society with Ian Bayley, a friend from Balliol (who has gone on to win Mastermind and Brain of Britain himself). The society has since gone from strength to strength and the University has a very strong and active quiz scene today.
What was it like to reach the final of the University Challenge as the Oriel captain?

The whole experience was very enjoyable. We weren't entirely sure how we'd do but we won our first four matches pretty straightforwardly to reach the final, including racking up 220 points in the first half of our game against the University of Leicester, which I'm not sure has been bettered since. In the final we faced a formidable side representing the Open University. At least a couple of team members had previous 'quiz pedigree' and one, David Good, later went on to be a series champion on Fifteen to One. I think we let their age and experience overawe us a bit and lost narrowly to them. The final featured a controversial moment when Jeremy Paxman allowed them Ecclesiasticus as an answer to a question where the answer was Ecclesiastes – unfortunately, we lacked the Biblical knowledge to challenge it. It is said to have attracted the largest postbag of complaints in University Challenge history! But I must stress they were a very good side who deserved their win, and I look back on the whole experience very fondly.

The following year I helped select another Oriel team for University Challenge consisting of Isabella Pereira (English, 1997), Neil King (Modern History, 1997), David Follows (Chemistry, 1997) and Ian Hodgson (Geography, 1997). They also lost in the final, this time to Durham University, but I enjoyed the opportunity to revisit the Granada studios in Manchester to support them!

After graduating from Oriel where did life take you?

After a spell back home in Guildford, I eventually decided to do a law conversion course and qualified as a solicitor in 2004. I've worked in the City since then, specialising in corporate tax, initially for various law firms and in recent years working for a bank in the city. I can't pretend I particularly enjoyed the early part of my career, working very long hours and often feeling out of my depth, but enjoy my career nowadays and am glad that I stuck with it through difficult times.

I am married with two children aged 5 and 7 and live in Hertford, Hertfordshire. I met my wife, Dr Katie Bramall-Stainer, at a quiz tournament in 2002 – she had previously appeared on University Challenge representing University College, London, and enjoys quizzes herself (although is perhaps not as obsessive as me about it, not least as she's pursued a very demanding career as a general practitioner who also works representing the GPs of Cambridgeshire). We still attend pub quizzes together and even competed against one another on a TV quiz show (for which see below)!

How did you continue your quizzing career?

My leaving university roughly coincided with the foundation of a national quizzing circuit by the British Quiz Association, with written quiz events happening around the country on the first Saturday of the month ever since. It's a little like doing an exam – a paper of 240 quiz questions that have to be completed in 90 minutes – except quite a lot more fun. My first event was in 2001 when I competed in the British Quiz Championships, held in Oxford where I was studying for my law professional qualifications at the time, competing against some of the leading names in British quizzing such as Kevin Ashman, one of BBC's Eggheads who has won countless major quizzing titles. I surprised myself by finishing 11th in the country, and Ian Bayley won! After that promising start, I began attending these events pretty regularly, and am nowadays ranked somewhere in the top 10 of British quizzers. I've competed regularly against leading players in other countries in the World and European Quizzing Championships. My best finish in one of these international events was fifth in Europe at the latter in 2017, and I have captained the England B team a number of times in recent years.

On moving to London in 2002, I formed a team in the Quiz League of London (QLL), probably the country's strongest quiz league, in which I've played with the odd break ever since. My team has never managed to win the league title, but in 2018 I did win the league's individual title, so for that year I was the 'Brain of London'!

What TV quiz shows have you been on and which was your favourite?

I've been on quite a number over the years. The one which had the most dramatic impact on my life was Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?, which I appeared on in January 2001. I was very fortunate to get on it – I knew people who spent thousands of pounds ringing the contestant line without getting on, but I only rang twice and managed to get on the show. I won £64,000, deciding to take the money when I was unable to identify the animal of which a silverback is a type (natural history never was a strength of mine – it's a gorilla). The show was very popular at the time and I acquired a certain degree of short-lived celebrity in Guildford, which was quite an odd experience. After holding a celebratory party for family and friends, I saved most of the money until Katie and I bought our first London flat in 2005 when it formed our deposit.

In terms of enjoyment, it is difficult to top University Challenge (see above), but I should also mention Only Connect, which was similarly good fun in terms of going away to film matches on a team with friends – in this case, Ian Bayley and Mark Grant, one of the UK's leading quizzers, whom we knew through the QLL. We won the first series in 2008 and went on to win several champion of champions matches, the last of which was against a team captained by Katie, whose team had won the third series! We only won very narrowly, fortunately, so it did not cause serious marital disharmony.

How does it feel to be crowned the 66th Brain of Britain in 2019 and what is your next challenge?

It was a big relief. Players are permitted to reappear on Brain of Britain after a five-year
break and this was my third go at it – I had previously appeared in 2006 and 2013 but lost in the final, on both occasions to BBC Eggheads (Pat Gibson and Barry Simmons). I was some way behind at half-time in the 2019 final, to Frankie Fanko, whom I know from the QLL, and thought lightning was going to strike a third time, but in the second half of the game the questions fell really well for me and less well for Frankie and eventually I won by a couple of points. Even if you’re a strong player you need a lot of luck to win big quizzing titles so I felt relieved to have won: before winning my recent titles I had developed a bit of a reputation as a serial runner-up, which I’ve been pleased to shake off. I felt sorry for Frankie, of course, who played excellently – I hope she will return in the future to become a Brain of Britain champion herself.

In terms of my next challenge, I’m intending to take a bit of time off from competitive quizzing. It’s probably a good time to do that: while there is a lot of online quizzing going on during lockdown, the regular quiz circuit has of course come to a halt.

How do you prepare for competitions?
One of the things I like most about quizzing is that leading players all prepare in very different ways. While some players prefer to rote-learn lists or old questions using flashcards, I have never been very good at organised learning like that, and in any case I find I quickly forget what I’ve learned by rote (I once went on Mastermind and found that the 1,500 or so questions on my specialist subject that I wrote and then learned using flashcards had largely disappeared from my mind within a month of filming).

I therefore try to rely on more ‘organic’ methods of learning: regularly reading a newspaper; reading lots of books on my commute to and from work; and trying to remember questions I get wrong in the quizzes I do and watch on television. It seems to work fairly well and once I have acquired the knowledge it generally seems to stick with me.

What are the challenges?
I think for me it’s been combining quizzing with real life, particularly my career when I was younger, but in more recent years my family. Improvement at quizzing, as with any competitive endeavour, requires time that could be spent doing other things. I don’t think I’ve always got these judgements right and in the past have probably afforded too high a priority to quizzing. One of my aims from a spell away (see above) is to get life back in balance a bit.

What do you enjoy the most about taking part in these competitions?
Being realistic, it’s probably taking pride in doing well and getting better at what is probably the only thing I am capable of being competitive at on a national and international level

I love the intellectual challenge, particularly in a written quiz, of trying to use logic or lateral thinking to work out answers I’m not sure about from the clues in the question, or racking the deepest recesses of my mind for something I know I came across years ago but am struggling to recall. In recent years I’ve come to enjoy setting quizzes as well, and the frisson of excitement from coming across an excellent fact is something that has never left me.

I have a lot to be thankful to quizzes for – chiefly for meeting Katie, of course (for which see above), but I’ve made many very good friends through quizzing and am very proud to be a member of ‘the quizzing community’.
The unprecedented closure of the College at the end of Hilary Term 2020 presented the Library with a huge challenge: how to support students remotely, while not even the College Librarian had access to the familiar and well-stocked shelves of the Library? Under the pressure of time and stress caused by the increasingly serious news about the pandemic, and leaving College in many cases quickly and without being able to pack all of their belongings, many students found that they had left Oxford without most of the resources they needed to prepare for Trinity Term, to revise for Finals, or to continue with research for dissertations.

The overwhelming generosity of the response to the appeal from Fellow Librarian Dr Kathryn Murphy, which raised over £24,000, has allowed the College Library to ensure the inaccessibility of our own print collections has not disadvantaged our students, and in these extraordinary times, has enabled us to maintain a strong connection to them, maintaining the support the Library can offer their studies, even at a distance. It allowed us to successfully adapt and respond to the needs of students through the introduction of new initiatives and the expansion of online resources. We were able to buy new and additional copies of books to be delivered directly to students’ home addresses (and to those still in Oxford). We increased our purchasing of e-books, which have the advantage of allowing multiple users to access the same book simultaneously. Now that it is again possible for the staff to have limited access to the library, we have initiated a postal loans service, and will continue to use this in the future.

The invaluable support of the alumni has allowed the Library to meet the immediate challenges it has faced due to the pandemic. It has directly supported the teaching and learning of Oriel students through the provision of library resources in Trinity Term and into the Long Vacation. It has reached both Undergraduates and Graduates in their exam and Finals revision, students completing their Dissertations and DPhil students who are still unable to access material required within their departmental or faculty libraries. It has also allowed the Library to retrieve loans from Finalists unable to return to Oxford at no cost to the student, ensuring that these materials are returned to the Library’s collections, ready to be used by other students.

The new difficulties posed by the pandemic, and the restrictions it requires, continue. We are working on new ways to deploy the generous alumni donations to ensure that students arriving and returning in the academic year 2020-2021 will also be supported. We have worked with the College’s tutors to ensure that students received copies of or access to the necessary reading for their summer vacation. The need to quarantine books for three days after use once the Library reopens means that we will need multiple copies of items in high demand, and we are in the process of anticipating and meeting that challenge. We will continue to adapt and evolve our library provision to meet the changing needs of our students.

We are tremendously grateful for the ways in which the generosity of alumni has enabled us to continue to support students whose time in the College has been so dramatically disrupted by the pandemic. Tutors – including Kathryn Murphy – can testify to the extraordinary resilience, commitment, good humour, and achievements of our students under the circumstances. The students are very grateful to the alumni for their support, and have written accordingly:

‘I’m a Modern Languages Finalist, so my course is very literature heavy. The libraries closing was stressful as many of the books I needed were not available online as they were very niche. Being able to have some of the books I needed delivered to Oriel was incredibly helpful and helped me immensely with my revision. Thanks so much!’

Colleen Cumbers (BA Modern Languages)

‘Having had to leave Oxford at short notice, I was only able to bring a number of books home with me to complete my HT and TT assignments. Due to the specific nature of my dissertation, I knew I would need access to extensive primary material, otherwise normally available at the Taylor Library and at Oriel. I am very grateful to have received a key primary text for my study from Oriel College, courtesy of the generosity of alumni. I appreciate the commitment of Orielenses to the pursuit of learning and their support for the advancement of all subjects, something that I have benefitted from first-hand during this Trinity Term.’

Philip McGuinness (MSt in Modern Languages).

‘I’m a Modern Languages Finalist, so my course is very literature heavy. The libraries closing was stressful as many of the books I needed were not available online as they were very niche. Being able to have some of the books I needed delivered to Oriel was incredibly helpful and helped me immensely with my revision. Thanks so much!’

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Gilbert White was born on 18th July 1720 in Selborne, Hampshire, where his grandfather was vicar. From his grandfather and father, a retired barrister, he learned to love the country and parish life. He celebrated his 10th birthday by planting an oak and ash in his father’s garden.

White attended school in nearby Farnham and Basingstoke, and in 1740 entered Oriel College as an undergraduate commoner. Little information survives about his academic career, but he is recorded as loving English literature, hunting, playing cards, drinking and chess. He was a gregarious young man and, as a student and after his graduation in 1743, spent much of his time visiting wealthy and aristocratic friends.

In 1747 White was ordained deacon and appointed curate at Swarraton in Hampshire. During the next few years, he explored two different paths of life. In 1751 he began to keep a ‘Garden Kalendar’, a diary which, eventually, he would keep almost daily until his final illness. In the same year he became curate-in-charge at Selborne, a cure he held again in 1756, 1758 and from 1784 until his death. He could not become vicar of Selborne because he had no connection with Magdalen College, the patron of the living. At the same time, he was attracted by a career at Oxford. He had been made a
Fellow of Oriel in 1744. In 1752–53 he served as Junior Proctor and also became Oriel’s Dean. In 1757 he stood, unsuccessfully, for the Provostship.

Having failed to become Provost, White returned to Selborne and in 1758 moved into his father’s house, The Wakes. He lived there, unmarried, for the rest of his life, refusing several offers of wealthy parishes which would have taken him away. His interest in the natural world steadily deepened. The Garden Kalendar records the weather, improvements in garden design and his experiments in cultivation (he was one of the first English gardeners to grow sea kale and sweetcorn), but also the migrations of birds, the activities of insects, reptiles and mammals, and what he saw and heard as he walked and rode the surrounding countryside. His observations prompted reflection and deduction; theories were developed and tested by further observation.

White advocated studying flora and fauna in their natural habitat. He identified the harvest-mouse and the noctule bat and differentiated three species of warbler by their song. He was among the first to recognise the significance of birdsong and to map the territories of birds. A century before Darwin, he made a detailed study of earthworms. In 1766 he wrote his first book, Flora Selborniensis, which remained unpublished until 1911, followed by monographs for the Royal Society on the house martin, the bank martin, the swallow and the swift, and many contributions to the Gentleman’s Magazine.

In 1767, White met the zoologist Thomas Pennant and began to correspond with him. A few years later he started corresponding with the naturalist Daines Barrington. From these letters and others written to an increasingly wide network of fellow-scientists, White created The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne, which has become one of the most famous books in English. Published in 1789, it is celebrated almost as much for its limpid prose as for its contribution to science and has never been out of print.

White is celebrated as one of the founders of natural history and ecology. He helped to move the study of the natural world beyond taxonomy to the study of ecosystems, in which he included the lives and activities of human beings. He died on 26th June 1793.

Professor Teresa Morgan, Nancy Bissell Turpin Fellow and Tutor in Ancient History

White was known for his humorous writing style. This letter is such an example, written from the perspective of his pet tortoise Timothy to Miss Hecky Mulso.

A pen and ink drawing of White, kindly supplied by Gilbert White’s House (www.gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk)
Over 100 years since its refurbishment by Sir Ninian Comper, the renovation and restoration of Oriel’s Hall forms a significant component of Oriel’s forthcoming fundraising campaign. The project provides a unique opportunity to restore key historical features to the Hall while also implementing 21st century standards.

With plans underway for scheduled completion in 2021 and initial investment from the College made, Oriel is seeking to raise £1 million in philanthropic support for the Hall renovation project. There are numerous ways for alumni and friends to have an enduring impact, including naming opportunities. Here is an overview of the exciting work taking place to restore Oriel’s magnificent Hall to its former glory, and beyond!

Conservation
With the help of acclaimed conservation architect Richard Griffiths and following a thoughtfully-considered heritage strategy, we will retain and enhance the Hall’s unique and impressive historical features.

This will include carrying out roof and stained-glass window repairs, restoring the wooden panelling, and refurbishing existing furniture. The Gallery will be brought back into regular use, creating additional seating and allowing students, alumni and guests of the College to admire the spectacular timber roof structure.

Ornate embellishments will be painted and gilded in accordance with the heritage plan and with reference to Sir Ninian Comper’s original vision for Oriel’s Hall, adding colour and interest.

Modernisation
As part of this ambitious project, the Hall will be brought up to 21st century standards. Lighting will be upgraded for both day and night time use to accentuate its architectural features and finishes for all to enjoy.

The public address system and hearing loop will be improved so that speeches and addresses can be accessed by all. Heating will also be upgraded and improved so that the Hall will be a comfortable environment in which to dine and socialise all year round, whilst a new fire detection system will ensure maximum safety.

The existing furniture will be carefully restored to its past glory, whilst modernised to allow for greater flexibility, storage, and allowing for the use of the Hall for different purposes during the course of the year.

We are very excited about this project, and look forward to sharing the results with you soon. Look out for future communications about the Oriel Hall renovation, or visit www.alumni.oriel.ox.ac.uk for more details.
Where has life taken you since you left Oriel?
Firstly to London, where I worked in investment management for five years, then home to Bolton.

When you were Chief Executive of Warburtons (1991–2001), what challenges did you face while you oversaw its rapid expansion?
Focusing the bakery business on its core strategies and exiting peripheral activities, which were often the pet projects of older family members.

What is the secret to Warburtons’ successful branding? How has the company maintained its much-loved household name over the years?
There’s a real family running the business (even appearing in the TV ads). Authenticity is paramount for a branded business.

Can you describe the impact that Warburtons has had on the community of Bolton, and vice versa?
We’re the biggest private employer in the town and realise this comes with responsibilities. We have a family tradition of service to the community and encourage all our colleagues to do the same.

How has your role changed in Warburtons over time?
In the 2000s I went plural and gave up line management, chairing several other food businesses.

What do you most enjoy about working in the food and drinks sector?
The products are great and there are some strong, long-lived brands.

What was/is one of the greatest challenges in your sector?
Consumers want interest and variety on the supermarket shelf. Quality is not enough – it needs to sit alongside provenance.
Finally, there is no easy fix for the legitimate concerns around the extensive use of plastics by the industry.

Who or what inspired you during your time at Oriel? How did Oriel prepare you for your career?
I had two great tutors in David Charles and Derek Morris, who taught me how to think through complex problems.

What is your best memory from being a student at Oriel?
I’ve plenty, but rowing in a Head of the River crew takes some beating.

What has been your greatest personal/professional triumph?
I’ll let others be the judge of that.

Do you have any unusual hobbies?
I recently retired from racing Le Mans prototypes.

Do you do any voluntary work or work in the community? Why was joining the Board of OnSide Youth important to you?
I’ve been involved in youth clubs for 20 years. OnSide is at the heart of a revolution in youth provision.

What is the one piece of ‘life advice’ you would give to a current student?
This is a great college in a world-class university – make sure you work hard and play hard.

What advice would you give to a student wishing to join your industry?
Pick a brand to work for where you like the product!

Consumers want interest and variety on the supermarket shelf. Quality is not enough – it needs to sit alongside provenance.
Orielensis Captain Bryony Hastings RAMC (2004, Physics) is a British Army Medical Officer serving in the 4 Armoured Medical Regiment. Here is an account of her Arctic expedition!

My first deployment as a General Duties Medical Officer for 4 Armoured Medical Regiment was to Bardufoss, Norway for EXERCISE CLOCKWORK. My role was to provide medical cover for the annual Arctic exercise. My pre-deployment training included completing the Cold Weather Survival Course in Norway and qualifying as a Military Aviation Medicine Examiner at RAF Henlow.

EXERCISE CLOCKWORK
2019/20

EX CLOCKWORK IN BRIEF

EX CLOCKWORK is an annual winter exercise that has been conducted in Bardufoss by the Commando Helicopter Force (CHF) and its predecessors since 1969. The British and French were located at Bardufoss Air Station in the Second

My first deployment as a General Duties Medical Officer for 4 Armoured Medical Regiment was to Bardufoss, Norway for EXERCISE CLOCKWORK. My role was to provide medical cover for the annual Arctic exercise. My pre-deployment training included completing the Cold Weather Survival Course in Norway and qualifying as a Military Aviation Medicine Examiner at RAF Henlow.
World War and played a key role in keeping the Luftwaffe at bay during fighting on the Narvik front in the 1940 Norwegian Campaign. The original living conditions were very austere and old railway carriages were used for accommodation blocks. However, in 1984 and 2016 the site was updated, and permanent buildings now provide warm and comfortable single living accommodation for up to 300 personnel.

Bardufoss is located 200 miles inside the Arctic Circle. The region experiences winters lasting from November to early May. The days can be short, with just three hours of twilight. Temperatures can drop as low as -30°C. The air station is surrounded by mountainous terrain, which makes operating from both land and air challenging. Bardufoss is an ideal base from which to train UK military personnel to survive, operate and fight in extreme cold weather environments. During the exercise, Cold Weather Survival, Tent Group Commander and Snow and Ice driving courses are conducted to train personnel to operate in the harshest of environments.

British Army Apache attack helicopters returned for the second year running for training in providing an aviation strike capability to the Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade, the British military’s extreme cold weather warfare specialists. The training was vital to ensure that both the weapons and the crews could handle freezing temperatures. Wildcat helicopters worked alongside the Apaches on the Setermoen ranges to provide crucial air support and to identify targets for Apaches to destroy. Chinook helicopters carried out Arctic environmental training, which involved mountain flying by day and night, mixed formation flying with Apache and Wildcat and practising degraded visual environment landing techniques.

COLD WEATHER SURVIVAL COURSE

In order to work on EX CLOCKWORK, I had to complete the Cold Weather Survival Course (CWSC). The course consisted of a one-day briefing at Royal Navy Air Station, Yeovilton, two days of lectures and kit preparation at Bardufoss and a four-day field exercise period.

The CWSC field exercise schedule included the following.

Days 1 and 2
- 1.5 kilometre snowshoe move to the 10-man tent harbour
- A lesson in how to build and use an Arctic toilet
- A practical demonstration of avalanche crossing drills and the use of transceivers
- Noise and light demonstrations
- Night navigation
- A snowshoe walk to tactical harbour (a defensive position used primarily for administration between tasks)
- Fire position and ski march discipline lessons
- A camouflage and concealment demonstration
- A four-man tent night with night attack

Day 3
- Ice breaking drills were the pinnacle of the CWSC. On the final day, and to prove my survival credentials, I completed self-rescue drills following immersion in an ice hole in a frozen lake. The course was completed by a written exam and an awards ceremony in the Junior Rates Mess
MEDICAL

The medical centre was one small room with emergency equipment and a limited amount of medication. I was working in a team with two Navy medics. The population at risk was around 300 people. The types of medical presentations I saw were very similar to those in the UK. Most patients presented with coughs and colds, dermatological complaints and musculoskeletal injuries. I was able to refer patients to a military physiotherapist if required. There was also a dentist available and I could arrange for blood tests etc. to be organised by the local Norwegian military medical centre. I asked for medical advice on difficult presentations from a qualified GP who was based at Commando Logistics Regiment Medical Reception Station a few minutes’ drive away, or from the patients’ own unit Medical Officer back in the UK. I aeromedically evacuated four people with more serious injuries during the seven weeks I was in Norway. I attended a cold weather lecture at the University of Tromso, which helped me manage some of the cold weather injuries I saw while deployed.

EXTRACURRICULAR

I attended a Mountain Skills refresher course organised by the Mountain Leaders. The course included activities such as crossing crevasses using rope pulling systems, skijoring (skiing behind the back of a Bandvagn), building snow anchors and watching avalanche rescue demonstrations from the Norwegian Military Dog Rescue Team. I was very privileged to ride in the middle seat of a Chinook helicopter during a training Navigation Exercise. I had a ‘white-out’ while landing on top of a mountain and experienced first-hand the degraded visual environments that make landing in Arctic conditions so dangerous and challenging. Skiing was organised each weekend at the local slopes so I was able to practise the skills I had learned during a Ski Foundation 1 Qualification. My secondary role was as Bar Manager in the Officers Mess, so I acquired new skills in stock-checking or ‘mustering’ a bar and organising quiz nights. Regular activities such as trips to the swimming pool, five-a-side football at the local gym and film nights at a local cinema were organised to maintain morale among personnel. The meals in the galley were made by chefs from all three services, led by the CHF catering team. It was the best food I have had in my military career so far!

SUMMARY

Overall, EX CLOCKWORK was a fantastic experience. It was a unique opportunity to work with all three services during a long-standing exercise. I was physically pushed to my limits by enduring cold weather, jumping into freezing water and functioning in an austere environment. I experienced first-hand the treacherous Arctic conditions that some military personnel operate in and was amazed by how they can function and fight in conditions in which most people would struggle just to stay alive.

Temperatures in Bardufoss can reach drop to as low as -30°C

The views in the Arctic are often spectacular
The goal of the Oriel Women’s Network is to foster a community for the College’s female alumni to meet, form meaningful connections and provide support for one another. For the inaugural event, members of the alumnae community gathered to listen to a thought-provoking discussion with panellists Claire Toogood (1991, Law), who is now a Barrister with the Crown Office Chambers; Sara Vaughan (1989, Modern History), Innovator, Creator of Brands with Purpose, Global Chief Purpose and Sustainability Advisor at Marie Claire; and Annabel Bosman (1993, Modern Languages), Head of Relationship Management at the Royal Bank of Canada. The panel discussion was moderated by our Development Officer, Hillary Reitman.

The theme of the panel discussion was ‘How to build up and support the women around you’. Claire, Sara and Annabel talked about how their time at Oriel helped shape their careers, the importance of mentoring others, creating diverse workplace cultures and the best life/career advice they have received. Following the conversation, attendees enjoyed getting to know one another over food and drink.

Since the first Oriel Women’s Network event, the community has come together online. Groups have been set up on both Facebook and LinkedIn, with alumnae sharing their experiences of lockdown and reminiscing about their time at Oriel. It has been a wonderful opportunity to stay connected and support each other during difficult times, and we’ve enjoyed sharing memories and seeing photos of pets, bakes and our beautiful College.

We look forward to the time when we are able to meet again and are still planning events and activities for the future. Please do get in touch if you have ideas for themes for our next events, ideas for our social media pages or are interested in being a speaker or hosting an event at your place of work or elsewhere: email events@oriel.ox.ac.uk.
High-quality, consistent coaching makes a big difference in developing a squad who will dominate Torpids in Hilary Term and Summer Eights in Trinity Term. Thanks to generous donations from Boat Club alumni, OCBC can employ a skilled and experienced coaching team. Sophia coaches rowing at Oriel alongside her studies for a Masters in Sports Business Marketing and her own, very intensive, rowing training schedule. She has represented Great Britain as part of the country's under-23 squad and aims one day to be selected for the senior squad and compete at an Olympic level.

How did you get into rowing yourself and how is your career as an athlete going so far?

I’m originally from Gloucestershire and, after my GCSEs, I was identified by a national Olympic talent identification programme for rowing called World Class Start. In 2017 I competed at the Euro U23 Championships, winning bronze as Stroke of the women’s 8+ while studying at Oxford Brookes University. I’m currently studying for my Masters with The Open University, as well as coaching Oriel and training two to three per day with Oxford Brookes and the GB squad. Eventually, the aim is to compete for my country at the Senior World Championships and the Olympics.

INTERVIEW

SOPHIA HEATH
OCBC COACH

Orielensis and member of the Tortoise Club Committee Sarah Kiefer (2003, Modern Languages) interviews Sophia Heath. Sophia is a coach for OCBC and plans to lead the club into its sixth consecutive decade as a winner of more headships than any other Oxford college.

Bumps racing has been surprising! I’d never seen it before working with Oriel. Honestly, I didn’t realise there were people crazy enough to want to hit each other with a rowing boat.
How did you come to be coaching the Oriel crews?
When I was an undergraduate I coached at Falcon BC, who also train on the Isis. Once I graduated I wanted to coach professionally to support myself while training so seriously. I did a few trial runs for different Oxford colleges and they’d go well, only for me to be told they didn’t have the funds to pay me after all. Finally, I applied for the coaching role at Oriel and it was a great fit.
I’m now in my second year of coaching for Oriel. It has ended up becoming a bit of a family affair, as my brother Alfie is now an assistant coach, coaching the novice programme at Oriel. I also put forward Matt Aldridge as the Men’s 1st boat coach. He just so happens to be my long-term boyfriend and we live together, so OCBC coaching planning meetings are generally conducted around our kitchen table.

What does a typical week of coaching look like for you?
The women’s first boat do evening ergo training sessions twice a week, evening weights sessions twice a week and then water training sessions at Wallingford on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays.
Being able to train at Wallingford has made a big difference to us, and I’d like to say a big thank you to the alumni who funded the purchase of the minibus so we can get there, as well as often driving us there when we’re short of drivers. Because of high water levels, most colleges have not trained much on the water this year, but because we have access to training at Wallingford it’s been different for us.

What are the crews’ strengths this year?
One big strength has been the enthusiasm shown by the novices. They have a really positive attitude and have not been put off by a lot of land training while the river level has been so high. Most of the top ergo scores this year are from novices. I just need to harness that enthusiasm and turn that power into speed on the water.

What has surprised you about coaching at Oriel?
Bumps racing has been surprising! I’d never seen it before working with Oriel. Honestly, I didn’t realise there were people crazy enough to want to hit each other with a rowing boat. The most impressive thing is how much academic work the crews manage alongside training, while still having a great time and staying positive.

What do you think is the most important element of coaching rowing? What makes a good coach?
I’m not necessarily the best technical coach in the world, but I think that instilling the right culture and sense of teamwork is the most important thing. I’d rather have eight people who want to pull together and feel part of a team than eight who are technically perfect but don’t row together. Everyone’s got so much going on in their lives, so I support them in their training as whole people.

Why do you think rowing plays such a big role in college life at Oriel?
I think the most important factor is the way everyone has a role in the club, whether they’re a captain, a wellness officer or a novice who is just starting out. The club takes responsibility for its members and looks after people who may be away from home for the first time. There are events like movie nights for the crews to get together outside of training and the captains run open hours to address any concerns. The alumni are also all so involved and dedicated to the club. It’s unusual and special.

Coaching for Oriel crews is financially supported by contributions from alumni. If you would like to join the ‘Blades’ scheme to contribute towards the cost of high-quality coaching or would like to explore other options to support Oriel College Boat Club, please email tortoise-president@orielrowing.org.
Wedding Bells

Many congratulations to Betsy Jones (2013, Musculoskeletal Sciences), who married Matthew Georgiou (2014, Physics) on 25 May 2019 in Kingston-upon-Thames, where they live. They were joined by quite a few other Orielenses.

Herman Voaden National Playwriting Competition

The DAN School of Drama and Music at Queen’s University has announced that it has awarded Damian Tarnopolsky (1998, English) first place in the 2019 Herman Voaden National Playwriting Competition for his play *The Defence*. Damian is the author of *Goya’s Dog* and *Lanzmann* and *Other Stories*; his fiction has been nominated for numerous prestigious awards and prizes. He works as an editor at Slingsby and Dixon in Toronto, and teaches writing to healthcare practitioners with the Centre for Faculty Development at St Michael’s Hospital.

Michael Johnson Rugby Shield

In memory of Orielensis Mike Johnson (PPE, 1979), who tragically died in March 2017, the Michael Johnson Rugby Shield was awarded in 2019 for the first time to undergraduate Alexey Kapustin for his Outstanding Contribution to Oriel Rugby. Rugby was one of Mike’s passions, so we are delighted that this student award has been made possible in his name and that Mike’s Shield will become part of OCRFC’s long history.
AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID HASSELL (1948)

Written by Adam de Brome Fellow, John Cook (1965)

David Hassell, who attended the Alumni Weekend last September, was born in 1925 and educated at Haberdashers, a school then located in West Hampstead. Brought up in Hornsey and Hampstead Garden Suburb, at the age of 17 he registered for the Royal Navy despite wearing glasses and being, in his own words, ‘not a likely subject for a jolly jack tar’. After training as a coder (not, he emphasises, to be confused with the experts at Bletchley Park), he served on the Infantry Landing Ship Queen Emma, a converted ferry, seeing active service in the Channel, the invasion of France in 1944 and subsequently in India and the Far East. It was in the Saigon Estuary, Vietnam, that the Queen Emma set off an acoustic mine, causing a huge explosion but happily with no loss of life, although the ship’s engines were dislodged from their seatings and the vessel was totally disabled. She was towed to Singapore docks, where repairs took six weeks. Later, he was posted on three other ships – Formidable, Norfolk and Loch Eck (a steam frigate) – for short periods and to Trincomalee Signal Station, Ceylon (Sri Lanka). But his best memory of the Navy will always be comradeship with his messmates.

Demobbed in December 1946, David spent a year at the Conference Centre for Moral Rearmament in Switzerland, interrupted in March by the entry exam to Oriel. This consisted of nine papers, invigilated by the retiring Provost Sir David Ross. The Provost emphasised that successful candidates would not come up to the College until January 1948. So it was that David arrived in Oxford in January funded by a Further Education and Training Scheme grant. ‘This was a complete lifeline,’ David recalls: ‘at last I was no longer reliant on the bank of mum and dad.’ After nine months in digs down the Iffley Road, David moved into a room in Second Quad (now an office). Oriel at that time, he confesses, was ‘exceedingly uncomfortable’. The College was cold, each room heated by a coal ration that meant fires from teatime only. Water came from one tap in the scout’s cubby hole and was controlled by the scout himself. The nearest toilet was in the far corner of the Quad, the nearest bathroom in St Mary’s Quad.

Despite rationing, David recalls that food in College was ‘quite adequate’, though he would often eat out. As had been the case for several years, the College intake at that time was split between school leavers and ex-servicemen, with the latter in the majority. While he enjoyed his time at Oriel, David regrets that he did not do more to befriend the younger members. Then, as now, the Boat Club played an important role in college life. To be in the swing of things, David recalls one had to be in either the drama group or the Boat Club. After a period as a cox, David moved into the second VIII at No 2 and got an overbump in 1950 Torpids.

He also met regularly with a group of Moral Rearmament friends from various colleges.

Two College events at this time obtained national news coverage. The first was the visit of Princess Elizabeth in 1948. As David recalls, the Princess, who appeared quite shy, was greeted by the new Provost, Prof. George Clark, who also seemed a bit anxious as he presented her with a copy of the statutes in Latin (‘charming bedside reading for her, I’m sure’). What promised to be a rather difficult visit was transformed by a group of undergraduates who placed the College tortoise on the path so as to block the progress of the Princess through the Quad.

This had the effect of breaking the ice and the resulting pictures were circulated worldwide, so that for 24 hours our tortoise became the most famous tortoise in the world.

The second event was the serious fire in the Senior Library in 1949. David took part in salvage parties led by Mr Pantin (History Tutor) and the Dean, Colonel Christopher Seton-Watson DSO. Fifty years later, David described the event in the ‘Oriel Record’ for 2009.

David did much voluntary work for Initiatives of Change (successor to Moral Rearmament) in France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine, including 25 visits to their European Conference Centre at Caux-sur-Montreux, Switzerland. For over 20 years, he was on the editorial committee for the bi-monthly educational magazine Polestar, which was read by many MPs.

Professionally, he was a language teacher for 36 years, approximately half of that time in schools and half in EFL at the HGSI (for young men and women, European and Asian, wanting English for work in the hotel industry, in import–export and as interpreters).

He studied harmony and composition at the WSM and in 1976 wrote and produced a Nativity cantata in French sung by eight to nine-year-old boys and girls.

He retired in 1992.

David studied under Arthur Crow, ‘an excellent tutor’, and in Trinity Term 1950 took a top Second in French and Philology. David is a also regular guest at the Adam de Brome lunches.
Orielensia

It is not widely known, but the Senior Library is home to ‘Orielensia’. While this may sound like a faraway magical land, it is in fact a section of the Library where the College collects books written by or about Orielenses, and current students can borrow these books like any others. If you have written a book and would like to donate a copy to be kept in Orielensia then please do contact library@oriel.ox.ac.uk.

Oxford Unravels Salvator Mundi

Orielensis and Oxford art historian Dr Margaret Dalivalle (Oriel, 2003) has published a book entitled Leonardo’s Salvator Mundi and The Collecting of Leonardo in the Stuart Courts, co-authored with Prof. Martin Kemp and Dr Robert Simon (available from Amazon and other retailers). While a postgraduate at Oriel, Margaret was asked to join a team researching the painting working towards its first public exhibition at the National Gallery, London.

The Salvator Mundi is the first Leonardo painting to be discovered for over a century. This book looks at evidence of Leonardo’s Salvator Mundi in the collections of Charles I and Charles II. It explores the appraisal of works by Leonardo at the Stuart courts and proposes that works attributed to Leonardo were first encountered and understood in 17th century Britain and would shape the wider evolution of Leonardo as a cultural icon.

Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World

David Horn (1961, Modern Languages) is one of two principal editors of a major music reference work, the Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World. This is an international collaborative project that has so far (since 2002) published 12 volumes, the most recent in January 2019. Available from Bloomsbury.com.

The Arrow of Apollo

Philip Womack’s (2000, Classics and English) The Arrow of Apollo tells the story of the children of Orestes and Aeneas as they face new dangers. The dark god Python is rising and massing an army of immense power. The only thing that can save the world is the Arrow of Apollo – but it has been split into two. Silvius and his friend Elissa must travel to the land of their sworn enemies, the Achaeans. Meanwhile, Tisamenos is facing his own dangers in Achaea. A plot is afoot against him and his father, and it falls to him to stop it. When Silvius, Elissa and Tisamenos meet, they enter a final, terrifying race to bring together the pieces of the Arrow and use it to lay Python low once more.

100 Years of Futurism

John London (1983, Modern Languages) has published a book entitled 100 Years of Futurism, which reassesses the Futurist movement from its Italian roots to its international ramifications. In wide-ranging essays based on fresh research, the contributors to the collection examine both the original context and the cultural legacy of Futurism. A large part of the book covers the Futurist performances John produced some years ago. These involved dance, food, street protest and exploding canvases.

A New Dictionary of Art and BREAKING

Robert Good (1981, Philosophy and Theology) has published A New Dictionary of Art with Peculiarity Press. The one term not found in most dictionaries of art is the term ‘Art’ itself, so the Dictionary comprises 3,000 definitions compiled from the internet as well as more established authorities, artists and institutions and allows you to pick your favourite definition. Robert gained a Masters in Fine Art from Cambridge School of Art in 2011 and the Dictionary also reflects some of Robert’s continued interest in Philosophy since he left Oriel. This book has been very well received and has been stocked at the Tate Modern bookshop and gallery shops across the UK.

He also published BREAKING in 2019, which looks at the picture painted by a daily drip-feed of news/information over 12 months. Every day during 2018, Robert collected the headlines offered to him by the Google News feed and compiled them into BREAKING, a mesmerising mix of sport, fashion, gossip and gloom.
Orielensis Wilson Ransome (1964, PPE) has kindly sent in these images from the College’s production of *The Tempest* in 1965. Were you one of the performers?
YOUR VIEWS

In every issue we would like to feature a few ‘retro’ photographs from student days gone by. This issue features photographs from Orielensis Annabel Bosman, who was at Oriel in 1993.

Rowing was such a huge part of my College life and I still love being on the water, albeit on a paddleboard these days.

The whole female quota of my year in First Quad. A disappointingly low ratio but we made for a tight girl squad.

My reason for picking Oriel. A proud father and Orielensis getting his head around his daughter rowing for College ...

... and being slightly shocked she knew the same bawdy songs he had learned in the same place.

We didn’t have the bonfire but it didn’t stop us from trashing the boat.

Rowing was such a huge part of my College life and I still love being on the water, albeit on a paddleboard these days.
FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2020-21

Please be aware that due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all our future events are under constant review. If we do have to cancel any, we will inform all registrants as soon as possible.

October 2020
7 Decade Drinks – The Nineties (1990–99)

November 2020
18 From Romans to Rogers – 2000 Years of City History Tour

April 2021
30 Returners’ Dinner

May 2021
8 Adam de Brome Lunch
15 Provost’s Lunch
29 Oriel Garden Party

For any queries on events please visit http://alumni.oriel.ox.ac.uk/events/ or email events@oriel.ox.ac.uk.

Please note that for all events in College, we have an induction hearing loop permanently installed in Hall. For further information regarding any of the above events, please contact our Alumni Relations and Events Officer. Tel: 01865 276585; email: events@oriel.ox.ac.uk. You can book online at www.oriel.ox.ac.uk.

Development and Alumni Engagement Office

Sean Power
Fellow and Director of Development and Alumni Engagement
01865 276964, sean.power@oriel.ox.ac.uk
Responsible for the work of the Development and Alumni Engagement Office, which covers both fundraising and alumni relations for the College.

Lorraine Hare
Head of Development
01865 286541, lorraine.hare@oriel.ox.ac.uk
Responsible for overseeing the fundraising function of the Development and Alumni Engagement Office.

Bobby Higson
Head of Alumni Engagement and Operations
01865 276585, bobby.higson@oriel.ox.ac.uk
Responsible for overseeing alumni events and the communications functions of the Development and Alumni Engagement Office, as well as for prospect management and research.

Verity Armstrong
Alumni Communications Officer
01865 613528, verity.armstrong@oriel.ox.ac.uk
Editor of Oriel News magazine and other brochures, e-newsletters, website and social media for alumni.

Philippa Wadsworth
Development Officer (Regular Giving and Legacies)
01865 286541, philippa.wadsworth@oriel.ox.ac.uk
Responsible for the annual telephone campaign and regular giving and legacies.

Kathryn Ferguson
Alumni Relations and Events Officer
01865 276599, kathryn.ferguson@oriel.ox.ac.uk
Organises our alumni events and looks after alumni needs.

Louisa Chandler
Researcher/PA to the Director of Development
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Researcher for the Development Office and PA to the Director of Development.

Florence Walker
Development Assistant
01865 276521, florence.walker@oriel.ox.ac.uk
Administrative support in all aspects of the fundraising and alumni relations strategy.

Diary for 2020-21

Terms

Michaelmas Term 2020
Sunday 11 October–Saturday 5 December

Hilary Term 2021
Sunday 17 January–Saturday 13 March

Trinity Term 2021
Sunday 25 April–Saturday 19 June

Oriel News | Summer 2020 | 51