



# THE MARTLET

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OXFORD

ISSUE 18 | 2026



## OPENING DOORS

Redefining access and opportunity

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

#### GROWING THE FUTURE

The making of Univ North's living landscape

#### BEHIND THE SCENES

Transforming Univ's estate for the future

#### REVEALED

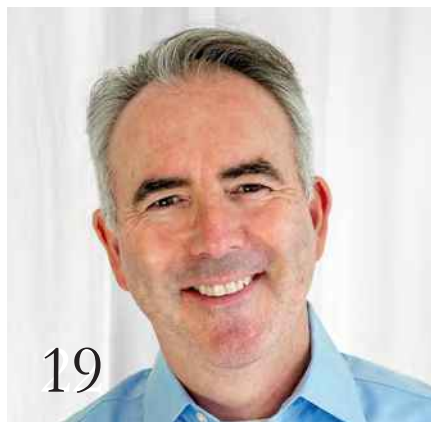
Tolkien's gift to C S Lewis

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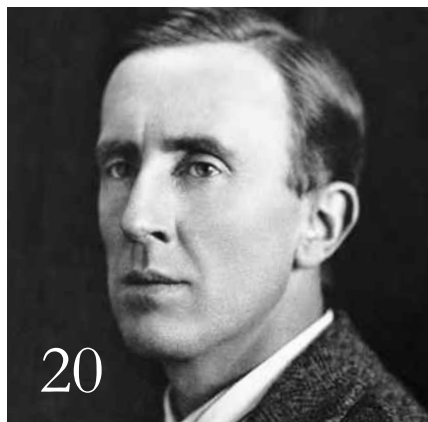
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The opinions expressed in *The Martlet* are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of University College. All content correct at the time of going to print.

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Back cover: Photography by Philippa James

If you would like to share your view, please email: [communications@univ.ox.ac.uk](mailto:communications@univ.ox.ac.uk) or write to us at the above address.

### Important note

From next year, *The Martlet* magazine will be published online. This decision reflects our commitment to environmental sustainability and will also help reduce our significant printing and postage costs, as well as our overall carbon footprint.

We understand that some members may prefer to continue receiving a printed copy, and we would be pleased to arrange this on request.



If this is your preference, please scan the QR code to complete the online form or complete and return the enclosed postcard by 30 September 2026. Thank you.

If you have any questions, please email [database@univ.ox.uk](mailto:database@univ.ox.uk)

“

**Widening participation is about more than shifting statistics or increasing application numbers. It is about ensuring that talent – wherever it is found – has the opportunity to flourish.”**

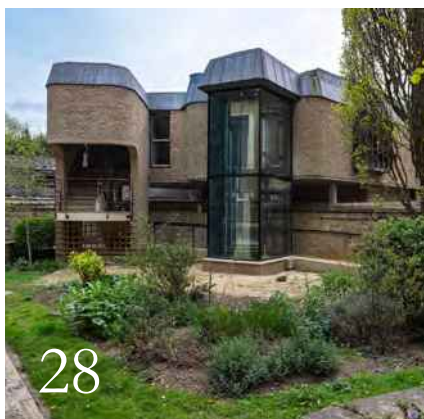
Savannah Phillips, School Liaison and Access Officer

## Features



### Growing the future

The making of Univ North's living landscape



### Behind the scenes

Transforming Univ's estate for the future



### A view of the High

Rediscovering Thomas Malton's Oxford



### Between Oxford and Rome

In the shadow of Shelley



### Fragments of a life

Edmund John Bowen's recollections



### Memories of Univ Cricket

Peter Sauerman (1956, Engineering)

“

**Several strands of Univ's work resonate with me around a single conviction: that the privilege of a Univ education carries with it an ongoing invitation for giving.”**

Alastair Dorward (1987, PPE)

## Endnotes

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# From the Master

I am delighted to introduce this issue with news of the completion of the major construction and renovation phase at the College's Staverton Road site, Univ North. Univ North is a beautifully landscaped modern and welcoming environment, for Univ students and staff in north Oxford. My thanks to our Old Members, friends and supporters whose generosity and engagement have been instrumental in helping us to achieve this major extension of the College's footprint with community and sustainability at its heart.

There are 120 study bedrooms in the development (including five accessible study bedrooms), all benefiting from ensuite facilities with bright, modern shared kitchens. The expansion helps us to consolidate our accommodation across the High Street and Staverton sites and enables us to house all our second-year students in one place. We look forward to welcoming a full cohort of students to Univ North in October. The Nursery and Café are both due to open in September.

My thanks to all the College staff who have worked so hard to make this possible.

“This has been another year of notable achievement across the College. Our Fellows continue to excel...”

This has been another year of notable achievement across the College. Our Fellows continue to excel, with Professor Tamsin Mather FRS recognised with an OBE and Professor Gideon Henderson FRS with a CBE in the King's New Year Honours. Teaching – especially tutorial teaching – remains the lifeblood of the College, and we are deeply grateful to our Fellows and academic staff for their dedication to academic excellence and to supporting our students' intellectual development.

We also remain strong in extracurricular activities. Sport has always been important to Univ students and we were delighted to see our Women's First Boat regain Head of the River at Summer Eights, and many of our crews earned blades. Our choir and music continue to play an important role in College life and the inaugural Frank Marshall Instrumental Prize, which supports extracurricular music study, was awarded this year for the first time to violist Lucy Baker.

Within this issue, you will find news from across the College, including updates on our successful Beacon programme, introductions to our Beacon Junior Research Fellows, insights into access and outreach at Univ, a round-up of alumni events and news from 2025–26, and photographs documenting the transformation of Univ North.

My thanks to all who support the College and help ensure our continued success.



Baroness Valerie Amos LG CH PC

# Fellows' news

Recent appointments

## Emeritus Fellows



Professor Jotun Hein, former Professorial Fellow at Univ and former Chair and Professor of Bioinformatics at Oxford.



Professor William Roscoe (1975, Computer Science), former Senior Research Fellow, Senior Tutor at Univ, and former Head of the Department of Computer Science at Oxford.

## Junior Research Fellows



Dr Lauren Dogaer is the Lady Wallis Budge Junior Research Fellow in Egyptology, researching religious and funerary practices in Graeco-Roman Egypt, focussing on the Theban region.



Dr Rowan Dowling holds the Salvesen Junior Research Fellowship in Russian and Slavonic Languages, researching LGBTQ+ representation in Russian literature with a focus on how science fiction authors have imagined queer futures.

## Beacon Junior Research Fellows



Dr Tareeq Jalloh is the Beacon Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy, whose work interrogates influential critiques of rap music.



Dr Jordan Scott is the Beacon Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy, working in epistemology, metaethics and the philosophy of race.

## Visiting Fellows



Professor Nancy Cartwright is the Centenary Visiting Professor in PPE for 2025–26. She is Professor of Philosophy at Durham University and Distinguished Professor at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD).



Professor Andrew O'Shaughnessy is a Visiting Fellow in History and Fellow-in-Residence at the Rothermere American Institute. He is Professor of History at the University of Virginia.

## Tutorial Fellows



Dr Nate Goehring is the Old Members' Fellow in Biochemistry, researching the principles underlying cell polarity and its role in developmental programmes that define cell fate, form and function.

## Stipendiary Lecturers



Dr Alix Hibble is a Stipendiary Lecturer in Experimental Psychology, studying how visual pathways respond to motion cues using behavioural psychophysics and eye tracking in both healthy observers and stroke patients.



Ms Laura-Bianca Pasca is a Stipendiary Lecturer in Inorganic Chemistry, researching machine-learning-driven modelling of amorphous and polycrystalline  $\text{BaZrS}_3$  for thin-film photovoltaics and solar energy conversion.



Dr Pany Xenophontos is a Stipendiary Lecturer in Russian, focusing on Greek literature in Ukraine from the late eighteenth century to the present.

## Research Associates



Dr Gwion Jones (2020, History), Research Associate in History, specialises in the religious and political history of the nineteenth-century United States.



Dr Cheuk Yee Wai is a Research Associate in Gender Studies, with interests in literary representations of female activity and sexuality, popular religion and cultural perception.



Dr Haoyu Wang is a Research Associate in Engineering, focusing on transport systems and supply chain resilience, particularly in sustainable and low-carbon transitions.



Dr Kang Wang is a Research Associate in Physics, working on computational condensed matter physics, electron–phonon interactions and exciton–phonon coupling.

### Africa Oxford Initiative (AfOx) Visiting Fellows



Dr Mohamed Zahir Alimohamed, AfOx Fellow, is a molecular geneticist, biomedical scientist and genetic counselling practitioner. His research focuses on advancing genomic medicine in Africa, including gene therapy for sickle cell disease, pharmacogenomics in African populations and rare disease identification in Tanzania.



Mr Dawit Getachew Assefa, AfOx Fellow, is leading a project on trachoma among Ethiopian children using advanced analytical and machine learning methods. His work addresses poverty-related and neglected tropical diseases, including visceral leishmaniasis, trachoma, malaria and tuberculosis.

### Senior College Lectureships



Mr Jakob Kalb (2024, Economics) is a Junior College Lecturer in Economics and a DPhil scholar at Univ, specialising in macroeconomics.



Mr Medhansh Kumar is a Junior College Lecturer in Roman Law and winner of the Law Faculty Prize in Law and Society in Medieval England (2024–25) from St Catherine's College.



Mr Jonathan Raby is a Junior College Lecturer in Medicine and Clinical Research Fellow in the Lewis Group (Spatial Cardiology) in the Radcliffe Department of Medicine.



Dr Heloise Robinson is a Junior College Lecturer in Administrative Law, with interests in medical law and bioethics, disability law and philosophy, equality and feminist legal theory.



Dr Florence Smith is a Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in History, specialising in twentieth-century British and Irish women's history, with interests in education and elite women's history.



Dr Linda van Bijsterveldt (2017, Oncology) is a Junior College Lecturer in Biochemistry and Principal Investigator of the van Bijsterveldt Lab at the Generative Biology Institute (EIT) in Oxford.



The Revd Canon Dr Peter Groves is a Senior College Lecturer in Theology and Religion, an ordained priest and prominent Oxford academic, with particular interests in theology and the arts, especially poetry, film and music.

### New Year Honours 2026



Professor Gideon Henderson FRS, Senior Research Fellow, was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) for services to science.



Professor Tamsin Mather FRS, Supernumerary Fellow in Earth Sciences, was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to volcanology and science communication.

### Departmental Lectureships



Dr David Eichert is a Departmental Lecturer in International Relations, studying the politics of sexual violence through feminist, queer, poststructural, decolonial and anarchist approaches.



Further Fellows' news can be found in the *University College Record* and on the College website.

# College news

A Royal Visitor and a new Master

## His Majesty The King visits Univ

His Majesty The King visited University College on Friday 10 July. The King was welcomed by the Master, Baroness Amos, before meeting the College's Vice Master and Senior Officers.

The Crown has been the official Visitor (which is to say statutory overseer) of the College since 1729. His Majesty King Charles last visited the College as Prince of Wales in 2022. On that occasion he spoke with students who had participated in the College's access initiatives about their experiences in their home communities and at Oxford.

During this visit, His Majesty met students, staff and community representatives to hear their perspectives on community and social cohesion. The King learned more about Univ's efforts to encourage participation of students from diverse communities, the breadth of research interests of Univ academics, and the involvement of Univ students and staff in community activities in Oxford.

The visit was an opportunity for Univ students to share with His Majesty their perspectives on barriers to inclusivity, the role of social media in facilitating connection and the ever-evolving technological landscape, including AI and its impact on learning.

Academic and professional services staff spoke to His Majesty about the importance of collaboration, the College living its values through developing impactful practices for inclusion and encouraging respectful dialogue on challenging subjects.

The visit was a significant occasion for the University College community, highlighting the College's commitment to inclusion, collaboration and engagement. It also provided an opportunity to showcase the contributions of students and staff to the College, the University, the city of Oxford and wider society.



Photography by Fisher Studios

## Maria Balshaw appointed new Master



Following our announcement in January 2026 that Baroness Amos LG CH PC will step down as Master of University College next year, we are delighted to confirm that Dr Maria Balshaw CBE, former Director of Tate galleries, has been appointed as her successor.

Dr Balshaw will take up the post on 1 September 2027, becoming the College's second female head of house after Baroness Amos' successful seven-year tenure. With a distinguished career

spanning academia and the cultural sector, she brings extensive leadership experience.

Maria Balshaw began her academic career in 1993 as a lecturer in cultural studies at University College Northampton. She later moved to the University of Birmingham as a research fellow and lecturer in visual culture. In 2002, she became Director of Creative Partnerships in Birmingham, an initiative connecting artists with schools to support creative learning.

After being selected for the Clore Leadership Programme in 2004, she went on to senior roles including Regional Director for Creative Partnerships in the West Midlands and Director of External Relations and Development at Arts Council England (West Midlands). She then became Director of the Whitworth Art Gallery at the University of Manchester, later serving as joint Director of the Whitworth and Manchester City Galleries, as well as Director of Culture for Manchester City Council. She was awarded a CBE in 2015 for services to the arts.

In 2017, Maria became the first woman to lead Tate, overseeing Tate Modern, Tate Britain, Tate St Ives and Tate Liverpool. During her tenure, she expanded access to Tate's programme, strengthened the collection through greater gender balance and global representation, and guided the organisation through the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. She also helped establish an endowment fund to support Tate's long-term financial sustainability.

Her leadership included major initiatives such as Steve McQueen's *Year 3*, alongside acclaimed exhibitions including *Women in Revolt* and *Life Between Islands*, and significant solo shows. In 2022, she was appointed Slade Professor of Fine Art at the University of Cambridge, later publishing *Gathering of Strangers: Why Museums Matter* (2024).

After nine years at Tate, Maria stepped down in April 2026, concluding her tenure by curating *Tracey Emin: A Second Life* at Tate Modern. She has since joined the board of University of the Arts London and will become deputy chair designate of its court of governors in September 2026.

Dr Balshaw will visit Univ over the coming year to meet Baroness Amos and prepare for her new role. We look forward to welcoming her ahead of her official arrival in September 2027.

# Student news

Current Univ students making their mark



Violist **Lucy Baker** (2025, History and Politics) is the inaugural winner of the Frank Marshall Instrumental Prize. Lucy receives £500 to support extra-curricular music studies and performed a recital in the Master's Lodgings on 29 May. The judges commended a strong field, also awarding £100 scholarships to Edison Fu (2025, Physics), Teresa Yu (2025, Philosophy) and Arthur Bird (2023, Music).



**Charlie Corbett** (2024, Philosophy) and **Michael Wong** (2024, Medicine) are hoping to climb Mount Kilimanjaro this summer. Participants in the University of Oxford's Kilimanjaro Trek Challenge aim to raise up to £4,970 each for the Amnesty International UK Charitable Trust.



**Dr John Eraifej** (2022, DPhil Clinical Neurosciences) is lead author of a study published in *Nature Communications* demonstrating the potential of non-invasive ultrasound in the treatment of Parkinson's disease. The team showed that transcranial ultrasound can produce effects on brain activity comparable to those of implanted deep brain stimulation (DBS) electrodes, opening the possibility of new therapeutic approaches that could improve or even avoid neurosurgery.



**Holly James Johnston** (2019, DPhil English) contributed to two BBC broadcasts. She features in *Sunday Feature: Queer Gothic* (BBC Radio 3), exploring the queer roots of Gothic culture through Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill House, and in *Three Transformations of Virginia Woolf: Gender* (BBC Radio 4), in which Fiona Shaw examines Woolf's challenge to gender norms.



**Julia Magin** (2025, MSc Biomedical Sciences) took part in the "5k a day in June" challenge, raising money for the charity Young Lives vs Cancer. Julia is involved in research aimed at improving prognosis for patients with leukaemia and Richter transformation as part of her MSc in Applied Cancer Science at Oxford.



**Heath Martin** (2018, DPhil Computational Discovery), **Rusko Ruskov** (2018, DPhil Atomic and Laser Physics) and **Eduard Atonga** (2015, DPhil Atomic and Laser Physics) contributed to research highlighted in a paper on high intensity laser physics published in *Nature*. The research was led by Univ alumnus **Dr Robin Timmis** (2020, Physics) and

**Professor Peter Norreys**, Univ Supernumerary Fellow. The team demonstrated a new method for dramatically increasing laser intensity using a plasma "mirror", potentially enabling laboratory conditions for probing fundamental physics, including the quantum vacuum.



**Niyati Sharma** (2024, Law) was named in Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia (Social Impact) for her leadership of the Pratisandhi Foundation. Founded in 2017, the organisation delivers sex education across India and has run over 550 workshops. It recently secured funding of 10 million rupees (£82,000) to expand consent education programmes in schools.

# Development news

Sustaining excellence in teaching and research



SPOTLIGHT SERIES  
EPISODE  
ONE



SPOTLIGHT SERIES  
EPISODE  
TWO

As the Univ North fundraising campaign reached its conclusion on 31 July 2026, the College is reflecting on a decade of achievement while turning its attention to future priorities. This landmark campaign has supported one of Univ's most ambitious developments and its completion marks a significant milestone in the College's recent history.

The College extends sincere thanks to the many Old Members and friends whose generosity has brought Univ North to life. Their support has created a transformative space for students and academics alike. We are rolling out the naming and donor recognition across the site this year, on the Univ North donor board and across named spaces, including rooms, staircases and study areas.

While Univ North has been central to recent efforts, it sits alongside a broader programme of investment. Over the past decade, the College has strengthened its commitment to scholarships and delivered impactful access and outreach initiatives, opening doors for talented students from a wide range of backgrounds.

Now, the focus is returning to the core of Univ's mission: teaching. At the heart of this lies the tutorial system, a defining feature of the Oxford experience. Renowned for its personalised approach, intellectual intensity and close mentorship, the tutorial system is widely regarded as one of the University's greatest strengths.

Of course, the people who deliver this model are Univ's Tutorial Fellows – distinguished academics who combine leading research in their fields with a commitment to teaching and developing young minds. These highly sought-after positions are essential to maintaining the College's academic excellence and the quality of its student experience.

To that end, the next phase of fundraising will focus on supporting Tutorial Fellowships. An educational model like this is expensive to deliver and requires investment. This fundraising campaign will support Univ to keep doing what it does best: attracting and retaining outstanding scholars, while safeguarding the bespoke and rigorous teaching environment that defines it. It represents an investment not

only in individuals but in the long-term quality of education at the College.

Univ remains deeply grateful for the loyalty and generosity of its Old Members and friends, whose contributions continue to shape its future. This support is recognised in meaningful ways across Univ, reflecting the enduring relationship between the College and its community.

To highlight the impact of this work, a new "Spotlight" video series showcases the research and teaching of some of Univ's academics. Early episodes feature Dr Natalya Benkhale-Vince, Sanderson Tutorial Fellow in Modern History, and Professor Tamsin Mather OBE FRS, Supernumerary Fellow in Earth Sciences, offering insight into the intellectual life of the College.

As Univ North reaches completion, the College looks ahead with purpose – investing in teaching and people to ensure its distinctive educational model continues to thrive.

*Felice Nassar*

*Director of Development, Communications and Alumni Relations*

# 2025 Event highlights

View event reports, photographs and videos on the College website at [univ.ox.ac.uk/news-and-features](http://univ.ox.ac.uk/news-and-features)



From garden gatherings in Oxford to international receptions and intellectual exchanges across the globe, the 2025–26 programme of events showcased the breadth and vitality of the Univ community.

The summer began with the **Leavers' Going Down Drinks** on 18 July, where 2025 finalists gathered in the Master's Garden as guests of the Master, Baroness Amos. With drinks and canapés, the occasion offered a fitting send-off, marking the transition from student life to membership of the global Univ community. (01)

Earlier that month, the **Univ Seminar** on 3 July brought together distinguished alumni – Professor Charlotte Deane MBE (1993), Philippa Malicka (2007), Dr Chris Mammen (1993) and Professor Pireeni Sundaralingam (1986) – to explore *Creativity and AI*. (02)

The **1249 Society Garden Party** (for donors who give regularly) on 12 July offered members and their families an afternoon of music, tea and activities in the Hall and Fellows' Garden. (03)

Connections continued beyond Oxford in August, as younger alumni gathered for **Young Univ Drinks in London** on 1 August. (04)

**Milestone Anniversary Reunions** on 5 September welcomed those who matriculated in 1954–55, 1964–65 and 1974–75. (05)

**Alumni Drinks in Edinburgh** on 8 September brought together a multi-generational group in Scotland.

In London, **Univ in the Arts** on 11 September hosted a conversation on “The Bard and the Borders” with Jake Murray (1990) and Dr Seán Lang (1979), followed later in the month by the **2009–2012 Gaudy** on 27 September. (06)



October combined professional insight and cultural engagement. **Univ in the City** on 16 October, hosted at the *Financial Times*, featured Baroness Amos in conversation with alumna Joanna Welsh (1991). (07)

A participatory **Poetry Tour** on 27 October, led by Pireeni Sundaralingam, invited participants to experience the College through verse (08), while a **Beacon Conversation** on 29 October saw Professor Iyiola Solanke, Jacques Delors Professor in European Union Law at Oxford, discuss “Decolonisation in Practice?”

A **Futures Innovation Day** on 2 November, organised by Pireeni Sundaralingam, brought together alumni and Fellows to consider emerging ideas and challenges.

The **PPE Centenary Professorship Lecture** on 12 November, was delivered by Professor Nancy Cartwright, Centenary Visiting Professor in PPE at Oxford 2025-26, on “Is Economics the Queen of the Social Sciences?” (09)

The **Eldon Society Reunion Dinner** on 15 November was attended by more than 120 lawyers, past and present. Guest speaker was renowned human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson KC (1970). (10)

Festive traditions marked December, with an online **Univ North update** on 2 December, **Winter Drinks** in London on 4 December, **Advent Carols** in Chapel on 6 December and the **London Carol Service** at Temple Church in London on 12 December, featuring the Univ Chapel Choir.

# 2026 Event highlights

View event reports, photographs and videos on the College website at [univ.ox.ac.uk/news-and-features](http://univ.ox.ac.uk/news-and-features)



In January 2026, receptions in **Hong Kong** on 13 January (11) and **Singapore** on 15 January (12), brought together alumni communities in Asia.

Rowing traditions were celebrated later in the month at the **Dinosaurs and Cassandrians Dinner** on 31 January.

Alumnus, Pianist **Rupert Egerton-Smith** (1992), gave a recital at the Holywell Music Room on 11 February (13), while Dr Laura Varnam, Lecturer in Old and Middle English Literature, delivered a **Univ Online Talk**, “Poetry as Creative Criticism: A Reading of *Beowulf*”, on 25 February.

The month concluded with **Alumni Formal Hall** on 27 February, which this year also marked LGBT+ History Month.

The **Cawkwell Lecture** on 5 March was delivered by Professor Lynette Mitchell, from the University of Exeter, titled, “*George Cawkwell and the ‘conscientious historian’*”. (14)

Sporting tradition returned with **Univ Football Day** on 14 March (15), bringing together students, staff and alumni, followed by the **2013–2016 Gaudy** on 21 March. (16)

April’s programme featured global and local engagement. Alumni in the United States attended a private tour of **The Frick Collection in New York** on 11 April, followed by a cocktail reception. (17)

Back in Oxford, members enjoyed a guided tour of **Univ North** on 17 April.

Meanwhile, Old Members in France gathered for **drinks in Paris** on 25 April, joined by Professor Peter Norreys, Supernumerary Fellow, who was in Paris to receive the Fernand Holweck Medal and Prize.

The **Chapel Choir Reunion** on 3 May welcomed former choristers, while the **Univ London Reception** on 7 May (18–20), held at the House of Commons, was attended by a large number of guests.



Music featured prominently in the inaugural **Sir Ivor and Lady Crewe Chamber Concert** on 9 May. (21)

The **HLA Hart Memorial Lecture** on 22 May was delivered by Professor Danielle Allen from Harvard University on, “The Radical Duke: Universal Suffrage and the Modernization of Constitutional Monarchy.”

Also in May, alumni gathered for the **USPGA Spring Meeting** on 18 May and the **William of Durham Day** on 23 May, which recognises people who have pledged a legacy to the College. (22)

Current Univ students joined **Nick Robinson** (1983), journalist and presenter of BBC Radio 4’s Today programme, for a discussion about the impartiality of broadcast news, at Univ on 21 May. (23)

The month concluded with the **Frank Marshall Instrumental Prize recital** on 29 May, given by this year’s winner, Lucy Baker (2025), alongside **Summer Eights** (24), where the Women’s First Eight reclaimed the Headship. Celebrations included the Boat Club Dinner – featuring a 1995–98 reunion – and the **Martlet Regatta** on 31 May.

Members attended another guided **Univ North tour** on 3 June, followed by a **Univ Online Talk by Dr Lyn Kouadio** on 10 June and a further **Univ North online update** on 11 June.

Sporting life continued with a **Cricket Day** on 13 June, before the **Leavers’ Going Down Drinks** on 17 June welcomed the next cohort of graduates into the Old Member community. (25)

The programme concluded with **Univ in the Arts: The Power of Art** on 30 June, where Dr Caroline Campbell (1991), Director of the National Gallery of Ireland, discussed her work and career with Dr Oliver Cox (2006), Head of Academic Partnerships at the V&A, at Leighton House in London.



# OPENING DOORS

How University College, Oxford is redefining access and opportunity

*Savannah Phillips, School Liaison and Access Officer*

For centuries, Oxford has stood as a symbol of academic excellence, attracting some of the brightest minds in the world. Yet for much of its history, access to institutions like ours has been shaped as much by social background as by intellectual ability. In recent decades, however, colleges such as Univ have been working to change that narrative. At the heart of this effort lies a commitment to widening participation: ensuring that high-achieving students from every background have a fair chance of studying at one of the world's most prestigious universities.

Univ has been a leader in this work. In 2008, it became one of the first Oxbridge colleges to appoint a full-time access officer, signalling a serious institutional commitment to outreach. Since then, its approach has evolved into a multifaceted programme blending school partnerships, residential initiatives, financial support and digital resources – all designed to break down barriers that prevent talented students from applying or even imagining that Oxford might be within reach. Its transformative Opportunity Programme and flagship Beacon Programme have played crucial roles in delivering these ambitions.

## Beyond the myth of “positive discrimination”

One of the most persistent misconceptions about widening participation is that it involves favouring students from some schools at the expense of those from others. In reality, the situation is far more nuanced.

Educational disadvantage does not map neatly onto school type. Some independent school students have had very disrupted personal journeys through education, while some state schools offer extensive support for applications. Widening participation work therefore accounts for a range of factors, including income, geography and personal circumstances, rather than relying on simple categories such as school type. Crucially, our approach to widening participation is one in which we ask, “how might this student perform academically at Oxford if they had the chance?”

## A broader landscape of inequality

Behind individual experiences lie deeper, systemic issues: disparities in school resources and disparities in educational opportunities between communities. Outreach work highlights striking differences between schools, even within the same regions. Some cannot offer subjects like history or modern languages at GCSE; others lack functioning libraries. Funding pressures, staff shortages and curriculum cuts limit what students can study – and, in turn, what they feel able to pursue at university. Likewise, unequal access to academic enrichment opportunities beyond the school curriculum can limit the ideas and skills to which a student is exposed and the pathways they are encouraged to consider.



### Building partnerships through link regions

A central element of Univ's outreach strategy is its work within designated "link regions" – areas assigned to each Oxford and Cambridge college in order to ensure that every school in the UK has a link. Univ works primarily with schools in Staffordshire, Shropshire and parts of Berkshire, focusing particularly on the pockets of deprivation seen in urban areas such as Stoke-on-Trent and Telford.

These partnerships allow for sustained engagement and outreach may involve visits, workshops in schools or subject-specific study days. Financial support, including help with transport costs, ensures that participation is possible for schools with limited resources.

### Opportunity Oxford

Among Univ's most influential initiatives is "Opportunity Oxford", a bridging programme pioneered at the College as "The Opportunity Programme" and later adopted across the University. Launched at Univ in 2016 with just ten students, it had grown to support the successful admission of over 300 young people per year by 2025 through the University-wide "Opportunity Oxford" programme. Designed to support students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds, it provides a sustained contact programme of online classes and a one-week residential course before term begins.

Participants receive academic preparation – covering essay writing, tutorials and expectations – as well as opportunities to build friendships. Importantly, they return home after the programme before starting university, allowing time to reflect and prepare.

The programme gives admissions tutors greater confidence to offer places to applicants who show potential but may lack certain educational advantages. In effect, it creates additional flexibility within the admissions system – broadening access without displacing existing places.

### Open Days

Large-scale events like University of Oxford open days also play a vital role. Welcoming thousands of visitors each year, Univ offers prospective students the chance to tour the College, attend demonstration interviews and speak directly with tutors and current students. These experiences demystify the admissions process and challenge perceptions of Oxford as inaccessible.

Our Student Ambassadors are central to this work. Trained but encouraged to speak honestly, they share their experiences authentically rather than "selling" the College. Their enthusiasm is often rooted in genuine satisfaction with the College, making their interactions particularly effective.



## Digital outreach and the Staircase12 initiative

Outreach increasingly extends beyond physical visits. Univ's Staircase12 platform, named after the College staircase where the outreach team was originally based, provides online resources for students aged 14–18, helping them explore subjects beyond the school curriculum.

The Staircase12 social media presence complements this by sharing opportunities not only at Oxford but across the UK, including competitions, grants and local initiatives. This broader focus ensures that students receive practical, relevant information regardless of their eventual university destination.

Such efforts are especially important in an era of online misinformation. Forums and social platforms often circulate inaccurate advice about university admissions. Clear, accessible guidance can help students navigate these spaces and make informed decisions.

## Small interventions

Not all initiatives are large in scale. Some of the most effective are simple. Our “book box” project, for example, provides curated reading materials to schools without libraries. Recommended by Univ students and tutors, these books help students engage with subjects more deeply and develop critical thinking skills.

Support from our alumni and friends also enables practical interventions, from covering transport costs to improving outreach materials. These contributions, however modest, make a tangible difference to our wider support network.

## The bigger picture

Ultimately, widening participation is about more than shifting statistics or increasing application numbers. It is about ensuring that talent – wherever it is found – has the opportunity to flourish.

The challenge remains significant. Structural inequalities in education cannot be solved by outreach alone, and lasting change requires sustained investment in schools and communities. Yet the work at Univ demonstrates what is possible when institutions commit to addressing these disparities.

The goal is not simply to bring more students to Oxford, but to ensure that all students have the chance to think critically, explore their interests and access a high-quality education. In that sense, widening participation is not just about opening doors – it is about equipping the most talented and deserving with the educational experience that can change lives.



# Leading questions

Alastair Dorward (1987, PPE) is a consumer products serial-entrepreneur based in San Francisco's Bay Area. He has built brands in the food, personal care and household categories and was the founding CEO of Method, the pioneering household brand recognised for design and sustainability. Currently Senior Advisor to Novi, the leading platform for AI-driven product discoverability, he helps brands ensure their products are recommended by Large Language Models.

## Could you tell us a little about your journey from Scotland to San Francisco, and how your PPE degree at Univ shaped that path?

No AI model could have predicted that reading PPE at Univ would propel this Edinburgh-born lad towards founding a soap brand in San Francisco. In the 1980s, Univ was a mecca for bright young Scots seeking to broaden horizons. Several influential Fellows – notably Iain McLean and Roy Park – helped forge this path by recognising the Scottish Higher during admissions.

The rigours of PPE equipped me for a career as a professional hand-waver, and my first calling – management consulting – rewarded this skill. Bain & Company proved an excellent training ground for an inexperienced graduate and I was able to travel widely.

I tend to zig where others zag, so rather than pursuing a career with budding tech bros, I have spent my career building brands employing business as an agent of change.

## Do you have a favourite memory from your time at Univ?

In May 1990, Univ's First Men's VIII reclaimed Head of the River after 76 years. I was rowing in the Second VIII for Summer Eights. On paper, the Second Boat was no match for the First – yet in practice, the collective enthusiasm of the lower crew applied pressure. Iron sharpened iron, and the final bump over Oriel felt like a victory for every UCBC member, celebrated full-heartedly at the Bumps Supper. I was heartened to read of the recent UCBC Women's success – congratulations to all involved.

My friendships deepened at the Chalet des Anglais in the French Alps. The exquisite beauty of the mountains and dramatic thunderstorms formed the backdrop to successive reading and walking days. The conversations held on the trail and around the dinner table remain a highlight.

## Were there any characters or mentors at Univ who left a lasting impression on you?

Bill Sykes brought compassion and grace, underpinning Univ's culture of kindness. I had lost my mother in the months before coming up to Univ, so it was to Bill that I turned for guidance. He never pressed religiosity upon me yet kept alive a spark of spirituality during one of the more testing passages of my life.

David Soskice cut an elegant, distinguished presence at Univ and brought PPE to life with an infectious passion and an unforgettable guffaw. I am grateful for him challenging us and setting the academic bar high – my peer group is highly accomplished thanks to David's inspiration.

Sandra Williamson, Hall Manager, presented a warm maternal figure for us all. Her cheery smile and down-to-earth Scottishness was a haven for those of us from north of the border. We are grateful for her culinary prowess during Burns Suppers.

## Is there something you learned during your time at Univ that continues to shape your thinking or approach today?

Univ broadened my horizons immeasurably, exposing a parochial young Scot to brilliant minds and perspectives and cultures far removed from anything

previously encountered. The more I submitted my ideas to the constructive scrutiny of that environment, the more they evolved and gathered strength.

## In your view, why is it important for alumni and friends to support Univ?

I attended Univ when, for many, higher education was effectively free. My four children, by contrast, attended American universities where we paid eye-watering fees. I hold a conviction, that higher education is a human right and must be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. I also hold the belief that the pedagogical model offered by Univ is of profound value. It is difficult, however, to argue that the tutorial system can be sustained from public funds.

## Which aspects of the College's work or impact resonate most strongly with you?

Several strands of Univ's work resonate with me around a single conviction: that the privilege of a Univ education carries with it an ongoing invitation for giving.

Univ's access agenda speaks to me most. I arrived at the College when individual Fellows were quietly widening the path for Scottish pupils. What strikes me is how that instinct brought forth the Opportunity Programme – a bold idea proven at scale across the University, that has transformed access and strengthened diversity. I am grateful to Baroness Amos – her lifetime's dedication to opening doors has made Univ stronger.

## Is there a book that has inspired you or changed your perspective?

*Cradle to Cradle* by Bill McDonough and Michael Braungart.

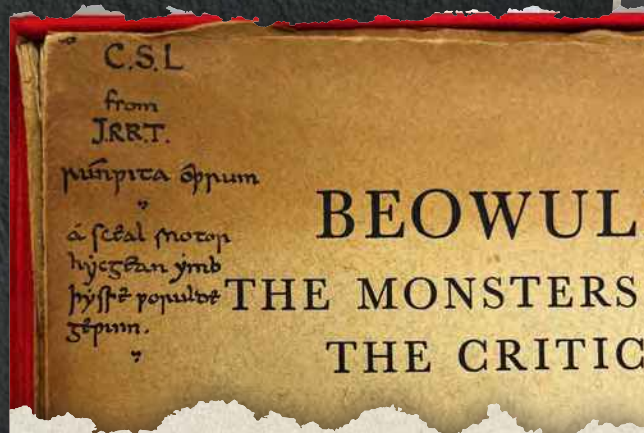
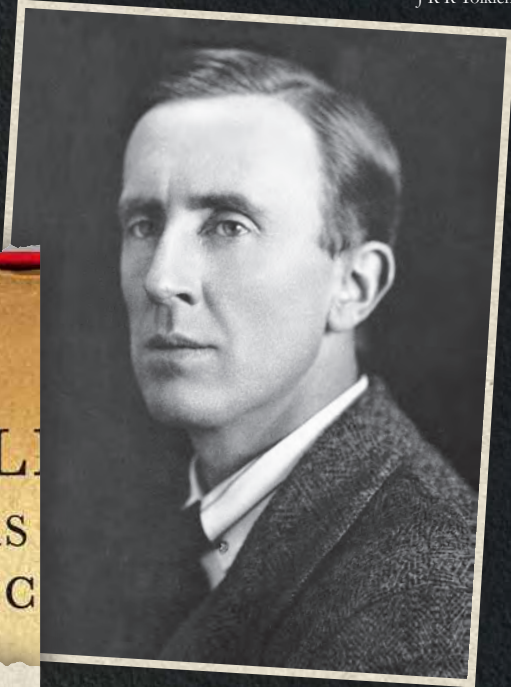
# REVEALED

## TOLKIEN'S GIFT OF WISDOM TO C S LEWIS IN A WORLD OF TROUBLES

JOHN GARTH

A remarkable gift to University College, Oxford, reveals that J R R Tolkien and C S Lewis – now the world's most influential modern fantasy authors – were as concerned with their own troubled era as they were with ancient myth.

J R R Tolkien



Tolkien inscribed the copy of his now-famous *Beowulf* lecture to his friend C S Lewis with an Old English maxim that a wise man should always attend to the troubles of the world.

Both Lewis and Tolkien had fought in the trenches. But now the expansionist ambitions of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy were undermining the fragile peace that had held since the Great War. Spain was already the cockpit of savage civil strife. Russia was eating the architects and children of its Bolshevik Revolution in cruel purges.

The pristine copy of Tolkien's 1937 "*Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics*" has come to Univ because both Lewis and its American donor, Frederick William Nardin (1972, English), studied here as undergraduates. The late Walter Hooper, Lewis's literary executor, originally gave the lecture offprint to the present donor.

When Tolkien, 45, inscribed the copy to Lewis, 38, the two Oxford English dons were at the height of an unlikely friendship. They were respectively philological Catholic family man and philosophical Protestant bachelor. Lewis, on meeting the "smooth, pale, fluent" Tolkien at a Faculty meeting back in 1926, had commented in his diary that there was "no harm in him: only needs a smack or so."

Yet Lewis had a weakness – Norse myth. Tolkien persuaded him to join a club he had formed to read the Icelandic sagas in their original tongue. In 1929, Tolkien showed him the verse romance of Beren and Lúthien, part of his private "Silmarillion" mythology. Lewis was bowled over.



"It was such a thrill to be able to show my first-year students this special copy of Tolkien's *Beowulf* lecture. I set the lecture as the first piece of criticism for them to read on *Beowulf* as Tolkien's argument for placing the monsters back at the centre of the poem is foundational for modern criticism. But the inscribed quotation from the Maxims is especially exciting because it shows how Tolkien saw Old English texts as vital tools to think with in the modern world. This is crucial both for my own creative practice as a poet and for my teaching as I always encourage our students to connect the medieval and the modern."

*Dr Laura Varnam, Lecturer in Old and Middle English Literature at Univ*

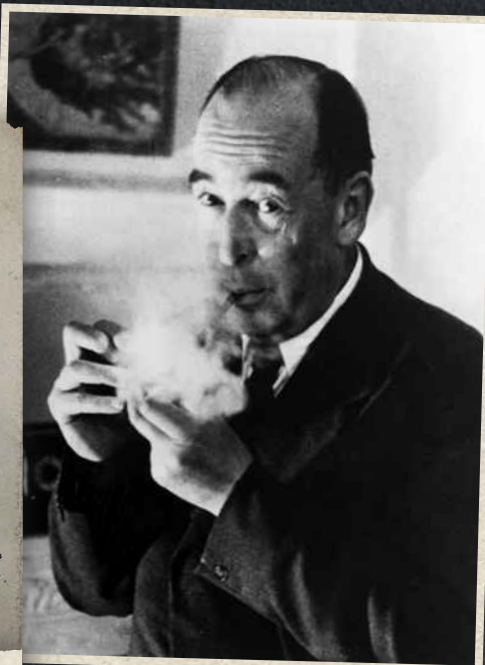
CS Lewis

# BEOWULF THE MONSTERS AND THE CRITICS

By  
J. R. R. TOLKIEN

SIR ISRAEL GOLLANCZ  
MEMORIAL LECTURE  
BRITISH ACADEMY  
1936

*Given to me by  
C. S. Lewis and now  
passed on to  
Ric Nardin with  
love from  
Mallen Hooper  
13 Sept. 1971.*



\* John Garth is the author of *Tolkien and the Great War* and *The Worlds of J.R.R. Tolkien*. He contributed the chapter on the Inklings, Lewis and Tolkien's Oxford circle, to the 2018 Bodleian Library exhibition book, *Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth* by Catherine Mellwaine. Scan the QR code to read more of his writings on Tolkien and Lewis, where he is crowdfunding to support his late-life Oxford doctoral project on *The Lord of the Rings*.



In 1936, Oxford University Press published Lewis's study of medieval courtly love poetry, *The Allegory of Love*. For Tolkien, lecturing on *Beowulf* to the British Academy that year was a major coup, proving deeply influential in the reception of the Old English epic poem.

Neither man was yet famous for their creative writing or non-academic ideas – and their primary audience was each other. They read their work to each other and, over a regular Monday pint (or more) they exchanged ideas.

One attendee of Lewis's *Beowulf* soirées recalled how Tolkien often turned up to lend an expert hand. "It was very obvious that the two of them were great friends – indeed, they were like two young bear cubs sometimes, just happily quipping with one another."

Both men, dressed in "shaggy tweeds" shared an "inveterate habit of playing at smoke rings" recalled the student, E L Edmonds. "Sometimes, each would try for the best sequence of rings, and it is still a source of wonderment to me how they managed to send up one ring and then put two or three more rings through very quickly before the first ring dissipated."

The year Tolkien inscribed his lecture to Lewis, 1937, was also the year Lewis proposed to Tolkien that they should write science-fiction stories embodying their deeper ideas about myth.

With characteristic fluency, Lewis wrote *Out of the Silent Planet* in the Long Vacation. A philosophical thriller about a voyage to Mars, it would be the first of a trilogy.

Tolkien, less sure-footed at this point, began but abandoned *The Lost Road*, about modern Englishmen time-slipping to Atlantis – or Númenor, as he called it in one of his invented Elvish languages.

Both stories speak powerfully against the 1930s ascendancy of power without morality, the conviction that ends justify means. Lewis's Earthlings want to exploit and invade a Mars whose natives dwell harmonious under a benign planetary guardian angel. Tolkien's utopian Númenor has been turned into a tyrannical dystopia bristling with armaments.

Both authors, very different in their Christianity but equally devout, felt that totalitarianism and materialist "progress" went hand in hand with the abandonment of faith.

The *Beowulf* lecture inscription to "C.S.L. from J.R.R.T." addresses him as *rinnwita óþrum* or "fellow confidant" and quotes a line from the Old English text known as *Maxims II*: *Á sceal snotor hygean ymb þysse woruld gewinn* – "Always should the wise think on this world's strife."

It was a rallying cry for two imaginations on the long road to inspiring others against material greed, tyranny, and the despoliation of nature. *The Hobbit* would be published later in 1937. In the Second World War, Lewis would become famous for his talks and books on Christian apologetics. In the post-war world, his Narnia chronicles and Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* would help to nurture hearts and minds – as they continue to do today.

*John Garth is an award-winning author and journalist*

# MEET OUR NEW BEACON JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOWS

The Beacon Junior Research Fellowship is a core component of the Univ Beacon Programme, a major initiative launched by University College aimed at driving participation, equity and inclusion in education and research.



**Dr Jordan Scott** is a Beacon Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy at Univ. His research interests are in epistemology and the philosophy of race. In epistemology, Dr Scott is interested in questions about the nature and normativity of epistemic rationality, and about how the rationality of belief differs from the rationality of action. In the philosophy of race, he is interested in questions about the nature of racism, and about how we can distinguish good theories of racism from bad ones.

“The Beacon Junior Research Fellowship has been a great opportunity! Building on some of my published work, I’m using this time at Univ to write a book on theories of racism. It addresses questions like: Should theories of racism centre on individual racist-things, or broad, abstract structures? Is the concept of racism inherently a moral concept, a political one, or neither? And, is it possible to have a single, coherent theory of racism that covers everything from people, to algorithms, to institutions? As well as the monograph, I’m also working on a series of papers across epistemology and the philosophy of action, concerning the rationality of getting stuck in difficult decisions, and puzzles about arbitrary choice.”

**Dr Tareeq Jalloh** is a Beacon Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy at Univ. His published work interrogates popular and pervasive critiques of rap music, particularly critiques underpinning the criminalisation of rap music. He is currently working on a project titled “The Philosophy of Rap: An Aesthetic, Political and Legal Framework.” He is a member of the Prosecuting Rap Network and Art Not Evidence Campaign and has served as an expert witness for the defence in a case where the prosecution looked to use the lyrics of the defendant to secure conviction.

“The Beacon Junior Research Fellowship is an excellent opportunity to develop my research in Black aesthetics, social/political philosophy and ethics. During the fellowship I will develop an aesthetic, political and legal investigation of contemporary rap music. This builds on my doctoral work at the University of Sheffield, which brought frameworks from analytic philosophy to bear on prominent public debates about rap music’s putative link to violence, its role in perpetuating oppression, and policies and practices that criminalise it. It also builds on postdoctoral work at the University of Manchester, which investigated how to build archival collections of Black British music in a way that retains and strengthens knowledge and agency within source communities and creatives. I hope that this research will contribute to some of the Beacon Programme’s aims, such as driving conceptual diversity in research.”

Scan the QR code to find out more about Univ’s Beacon Programme





# GROWING THE FUTURE

## THE MAKING OF UNIV NORTH'S LIVING LANDSCAPE

**A**s construction work concludes at Univ North, a quieter transformation is underway. With the next cohort of Univ students due to arrive in October, the buildings may be complete, but the landscape continues to evolve. Lawns are taking root, orchards are being revived and a layered planting scheme is beginning to bring the site to life.

Guiding this transformation is renowned landscape architect Kim Wilkie CBE, whose masterplan balances design with ecology. His vision is already emerging in a network of gardens, orchards and green spaces that combine mature trees with new planting, shaping a landscape that feels both rooted and forward-looking.

Delivering this vision on the ground is Tom Bartlett, Head Gardener, who designed the border planting schemes, alongside Robbie Eason, Head of Grounds Maintenance, and the gardens team. Together, they have translated plans into a living environment, beginning with extensive foundational planting. Hundreds of metres of hedging have been established, alongside 70 carefully selected trees chosen to complement the character of north Oxford and support local wildlife.

The orchards are a key feature of the landscape, combining heritage with renewal. The orchard near Fairfield Residential Home was replanted in 2022, with ongoing work since 2023 to restore its vitality. Diseased trees have been removed and reused, and new fruit trees introduced, including heritage varieties such as Eynsham Dumpling, Swans Egg and Oxford Hoard, many from the historic Wastie collection. A second area, “Sophie’s Orchard” on Banbury Road, also features local varieties. In the heritage orchards, biodiversity is being enhanced through yellow rattle to encourage wildflowers, alongside native planting, and the addition of beehives, bird boxes and bat boxes to support wildlife.



Sustainability is integral to the project. Organic, food-waste-based lawn feed is used, and plants are sourced from local, peat-free suppliers. Future plans include growing pumpkins and squashes, extending the productive potential of the landscape.

In July 2025, a major planting phase saw around 1,600 plants installed around the site. The mix of herbaceous perennials, grasses and shrubs – such as oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*), *Astrantia* “Roma”, purple moor grass (*Molinia* “transparent”), *Veronicastrum* “Fascination” and *Eryngium* “Pen Blue” – has been designed to provide a long flowering season. This “bloom sequence” ensures visual interest from spring to autumn while supporting pollinators, with seedheads and grasses adding structure through winter.





Tom Bartlett, Head Gardener  
Univ North photography by Philippa James

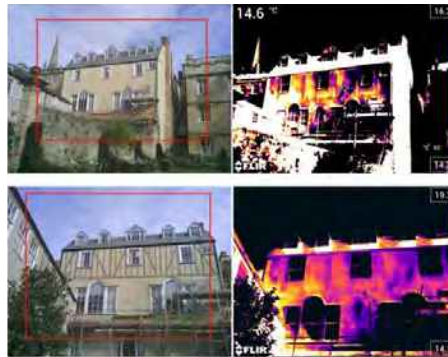
Additional enhancements include the rejuvenation of the terrace at Redcliffe-Maud House, allowing the mature Chinese scholar tree (*Styphnolobium japonicum*) to flourish. The focal point Katsura tree (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*) at the end of the Water Rill, valued for its striking autumn colour and distinctive scent, was chosen by Tom Bartlett and Chris Leyland, Tree/Landscape Officer at Oxford City Council. The magnificent Cedars of Lebanon at the Banbury Road entrance have been given space to mature, with a third cedar planted to secure their long-term presence.

Univ North is more than a new development; it is a landscape designed to be inhabited and appreciated. By combining traditional orchard management, thoughtful planting and sustainable practices, it creates a rich environment for both people and wildlife. As the site matures, it will continue to grow into a living, evolving landscape – one that reflects both its heritage and its future.

Right: The south facing elevation of 90 High Street and corresponding thermographic imaging

Opposite page: the Mitchell Building with its new lift tower. Construction, Lamburn Geekie, photography @elliewalpolephotographer

Below: The Merton Street houses



# Behind the Scenes

Transforming Univ's estate for the future

“It is still possible to see evidence of the times the College was heated with open fires, and dry summers cause the lawns to give away the location of buried oil tanks, which were in use before the College switched to gas boilers.”



Whilst focus for the last few years has been on the development of Univ North, the College's own Works Department has continued to deliver schemes around the College.

An inclusive accessibility plan was developed in 2019 for the functional estate and the College has steadily been delivering these projects across its sites. A recent example being the relevening of the Main Quad and Radcliffe Quad, which brought level access to the Lodge, Dining Hall and the ground floors of each of the staircases. This scheme was recognised through an award from the Oxford Preservation Trust.

The latest project to fulfil the accessibility plan is the Mitchell Building lift. This scheme has provided much-needed inclusive access to the WCR, which is located on the first floor of the Mitchell Building. While not listed, the Mitchell Building was recognised by the conservation officer as being a good example of its era and therefore a sensitive and high-quality approach was needed. Oxford architects Original Field developed the lift tower to straddle the wall of the enclosed Kybald House garden, in the same way that the building's staircase does. A ramp



now runs down to a new entrance opening into Kybald Street, meaning that those arriving from this direction no longer have to pass through the back of house service yard, an improvement that completed the scheme and added to its scope. We await the visit of the Oxford Preservation Trust's judging panel.

The College continues to look to the future and is about to commence the first phase of its decarbonisation masterplan. It is still possible to see evidence of the times the College was heated with open fires, and dry summers cause the lawns to give away the location of buried oil tanks, which were in use before the College switched to gas boilers. The next step is to remove the fossil fuel burning equipment and replace it with air source heat pumps (ASHPs). The first buildings to get this treatment are the Merton Street houses, with plans for a centralised ASHP enclosure in the grounds behind. Services will be threaded through the adjoining basements to bring each house online, allowing the removal of the gas boilers, and each property will receive improvements to its thermal envelope as part of the process. Prior to submitting the scheme to the Local Planning Authority

for consideration, every room, including its windows, doors and all other heritage features, was meticulously catalogued and its alteration carefully designed. The intention is to commence work before the end of 2026.

A plan is also being developed to decarbonise the Dowson Buildings at Staverton. The option to provide ASHPs is being considered, alongside the possibility of connecting the buildings into a city-wide heat network, with an energy hub currently planned to take residual heat from a data centre being proposed to the north of the city.

Sometimes, our projects consist of honest, simple maintenance. This is the case for 90 High Street, with preparations underway to refurbish the rear and side elevations. Back in the 1980s, our predecessors removed the lime render from the rear elevation and replaced it with a rigid, cementitious render on metal lath, fixed to the existing structural timber frame. The passage of time, and a better understanding of the need for permeability in historic structures, has shown that this needs removing and the lime render and oak laths need to be reinstated.

Whilst the old ways are sometimes the best, a little assistance from technology helps, and thermographic surveys of the building have allowed us to predict the timber frame layout beneath and prepare for the repairs to the structure once the render is removed. The opportunity to insert thermal insulation within the timber frame will be taken, and we will also complete a full refurbishment of the fenestration and installation of secondary glazing.

As we await planning and listed building consents for these schemes, the next round of developments are being prepared for Premises Committee consideration. A lift to the basement gym in the Master's Lodgings, utilising an existing lightwell which has been covered over, is being developed following approval in principle by the conservation officer. The project brief for a scheme to provide level access to the entrance of 10 Merton Street is currently being finalised, with the first drafts and costings going to Premises Committee in Michaelmas term 2026.

*Hum Davies*  
*College Surveyor*

# A VIEW OF THE HIGH:

## Rediscovering Thomas Malton's Oxford

Angus Haldane (1994, Classics)

Director of Haldane Fine Art, London

In the “Canon of landscapes of the British Isles”, which does not exist and which I have imagined purely for the purposes of this article, there are certain views which would be instantly recognisable. The impact on the viewer of seeing these landscapes would nearly always stimulate a memory, anecdote or redolent sigh. I would hazard that, amongst these potent visions, there would be a depiction of Stonehenge, The Lakes, Cadair Idris, The Giant's Causeway and perhaps even The River Thames.

However, I would argue that a vision of The High in Oxford might generate a resonance of equal significance and recognisability, not simply for those who attended the University but for anyone who has ever visited Oxford. If one can ignore the tourist buses and signs of modern life, the sweep of architectural grandeur, which stretches from the medieval period through to the Enlightenment, carries the eye of the viewer past the colleges of Univ, Queen's, and All Souls. The eye briefly alights on the spire of St Mary's before landing on Carfax Tower and the spire of All Saints' Church, which is now the library of Lincoln College. It is almost as if The High were a canal and Oxford the Venice of Central Southern England.

It was with this same feeling that I first confronted the present landscape. The work had been consigned to a sale by an institution, which had owned it for a considerable length of time. My subsequent attempts to identify the consignor to the sale never resulted in a concrete identification but the investigation was sufficient to indicate that they had owned it for a very long while and almost certainly did not want anyone to know that it was being sold.

The colours of the work in its presented state had a sickly pallor. There was a homogeneity to the palette as if the surface had been stained by centuries of nicotine rich cigarettes. In reality, of course, this pallor was the effect of layers of discoloured and oxidised varnish, but I do not want to get ahead of myself.

The work was attributed to William Turner of Oxford, a name which immediately arrested me since, although paintings in oil by William Turner are known, they are extremely rare. Turner of Oxford was a talented but prolific artist who usually preferred to work in pencil, watercolour and gouache rather than on a grand architectural scale in oil.

I was engaged by the buyer to research the work and became committed to the idea that Univ should own this vision of Oxford, not least for its depiction of University College on the left, including the prominent details of the corner of Logic Lane and the entrance to Radcliffe Quad.

My research led me firstly to the conservation studio, where I arranged for the work to be cleaned of its old varnish and restored to the artist's original chromatic intention of umber stone, juxtaposed with an elegant sweep of green carpet up The High, all surmounted by a cool blue sky. The next stop was the archives, which led me to the true artist of this vision – Thomas Malton the Younger.

Thomas Malton was an important painter of topographical and architectural views. He studied at the Royal Academy and exhibited there from 1773 until his death. Malton worked in both watercolour and oils and many of his compositions were turned into aquatint prints. Both J M W Turner and Thomas



Girtin were briefly his pupils and they came to him in order to learn how effectively to render perspective. It was, in part, the precise draughtsmanship of the architecture and perspective in the present work which led me to investigate Malton. Late in his life, Turner remarked “my real master was Tom Malton”. Turner himself would eventually paint in oils an almost exact replica of the present view. Painted in 1809-10, the painting was eventually exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1812 and the debt which Turner owed to his former teacher of perspective is apparent. In a masterclass of fundraising, this same canvas by Turner was acquired by the Ashmolean a few years ago.

As I alluded to above, Malton’s view of The High, Oxford, bears a striking similarity to Canaletto’s precise architectural visions of the canals in Venice. The works of Canaletto were widely known in England at the end of the eighteenth century and particularly popular amongst the architectural community, notably Sir John Soane, who purchased a View of the Rialto and a View of Saint Mark’s Square from the sale of the Earl of Bute’s pictures at Christie’s in 1796.

Malton painted the High Street, Oxford, in 1799 and exhibited this work at the Royal Academy Summer Show (no. 895). There is a good likelihood that the present work is this exhibited canvas. However, there is another view of The High at the Yale Center for British Art, also by Thomas Malton, which might carry this distinction. It was quite common in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for artists to paint multiple versions of popular compositions and it is hard to be certain which one was the exhibited work.

What we do know, however, is that, between 1802 and 1803, Malton exhibited nine further views of Oxford, including All Soul’s College and St Mary’s Church from the High Street, Oxford (1802), Queen’s College, Oxford, from the High Street (1802) and another View of University College (1803).

Without question, Malton had a fondness for Oxford and a passion for The High and, through the generosity of Bruns Grayson (1974), Univ was able to acquire this magnificent work for the walls of the College. The work can be admired in the Swire Seminar Room, separated only by a few metres of medieval masonry from the road which the canvas depicts.

*“Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,  
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;  
[...]  
Rome’s azure sky,  
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak  
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.”*

# Between Oxford and Rome

## In the shadow of Shelley

**T**hus read the lines from Percy Bysshe Shelley’s poem *Adonais* that decorate the interior of Univ’s Shelley Memorial, an elegy for his friend John Keats. During a sweltering week in August 2018, I worked as a Univ tour guide, taking the many daily visitors through the College’s history, student life and, crucially, introducing them to Percy Shelley the tortoise. While trying my best to impress both the visitors and the late, great Head Porter Bob Maskell, who had taken me through the main facts and details, a key moment of every tour was when we could hide from the heat amongst the cool stone of the Shelley Memorial. We speculated

over the verity of the old story of a student prank involving water and rubber ducks (or goldfish?) We marvelled at the “strangely feminine aspects” of Shelley’s prostrate form, admiration “coupled with the uncomfortable realisation that one is being invited to linger over the beauty of a drowned corpse washed ashore” (Dr Robin Darwall-Smith, *A History of University College Oxford*).

As a student, the vision of Shelley washed up under golden stars at Viareggio stopped me in my tracks as I rushed past to a tutorial in 90 High Street. The College Register reports that he was sent down after only a year for “contumaciously refusing to answer questions proposed to

[him], and for also repeatedly declining to disavow a publication entitled *The Necessity of Atheism*”. He became one of England’s greatest Romantic poets, crossing Europe with his wife Mary. He drowned in the Ligurian Sea in 1822.

A couple of months ago, I visited the final resting place of Shelley and Keats, a peaceful, sun-dappled place tucked behind a quiet Testaccio street in Italy. The Non-Catholic Cemetery of Rome is where the Univ Memorial was originally destined to be, but was deemed too big for the site. Shelley’s daughter-in-law Jane offered it to his old college, and soon the familiar domed ceiling crowned the High Street wall, a link between the two cities.

Above: The Shelley Memorial at Univ (detail)



Walking north along the Tiber, passing major ancient sites of the Eternal City, you will find the true jewel of literary Rome in the hubbub of Piazza di Spagna: The Keats-Shelley House. Rising up alongside the Spanish Steps, this wonderful museum is a pilgrimage spot for enthusiasts of the Romantics, particularly Shelley and Keats, the latter of whom died in the House.

I first visited the Keats-Shelley House with my parents and felt I'd stepped right into the 19th century and found a quiet haven in the gloriously chaotic Italian capital. While my (fellow Univite) husband and I are in Rome, this continues to be so. The House welcomes its visitors

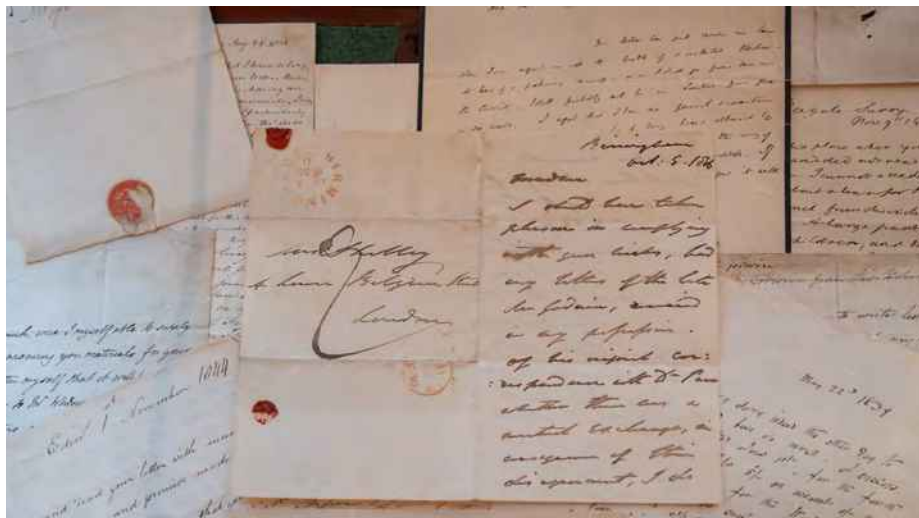


Percy died young, aged twenty-nine, and was survived by his wife Mary. It is her extraordinary legacy, including *Frankenstein*, that the House is celebrating

imagination.” I have worked in publishing since leaving Univ, and long before today’s bookshelves were plentifully stocked with sci-fi, speculative and dystopian novels, Mary Shelley used a fictional future to pinpoint what she considered to be the vices and fragility of the all-too-real society around her. I would wholeheartedly recommend anyone planning a Roman trip this year to venture through the wooden door at the foot of the Spanish Steps and look around in wonder, and to marvel at the inspirational legacy of a visionary writer.

Recently, my husband and I had the joy of returning to Univ for a Gaudy and for our MA graduation with a group of friends. On both occasions, I found myself standing yet again in front of Shelley, the stars of “Rome’s azure sky” shimmering in the centre of Oxford. I’ve often wondered what he would think of his own statue lying there in his *alma mater*. I, for one, am grateful it is there.

Matilda Warner (2016, *English*)



with regular events and exhibitions, along with the comforting scent of old books. Indeed, it houses one of the best libraries of Romantic literature in the world, with more than 8,000 volumes. The treasured collection includes Mary Shelley’s travel-writing slope and a vast array of manuscripts, letters, artworks and books that belonged to Keats, Shelley and Byron. There is even an urn containing a fragment of Percy’s jawbone.

in a new exhibition from late May–November this year. “A World on the Verge” marks the bicentenary of the publication of her remarkably prescient and lesser-known novel *The Last Man*, in which humanity’s extinction is caused by a global pandemic. In the House’s words, the exhibition combines “autograph letters, first editions, paintings, and contemporary artworks, offering visitors an immersive journey through biography and dystopian



Read more on the  
College website



# Fragments of a Life

## Edmund John Bowen's Recollections

Professor Jonathan P Bowen FBCS FRSA (1974, Engineering Science) has kindly shared with the College excerpts from the biographical notes of his grandfather, Edmund John Bowen, a former Honorary Fellow of Univ, written in April 1973.

E J Bowen FRS, Fellow and Praelector in Chemistry at Univ from 1922 until his retirement in 1965, was renowned for his pioneering research in photochemistry and fluorescence, as well as for his seminal book *The Chemical Aspects of Light*. A room at the College is named in his honour.

In December 1914, at the age of 16.7, I was sent up to try for a science scholarship at Oxford. The First World War had begun, and paper money had just been issued to take the place of gold. I remember that the landlady at the lodgings where I stayed in Walton Street was a little reluctant to accept this new currency. The scholarship examination went well, but the weather was cold, and in the physics practical, which involved stopping up a tube of water many times with the finger, I was alarmed to find that my hands were almost too frozen to write up the results at the end. To everyone's surprise, I found myself awarded the Brackenbury Natural Science scholarship at Balliol College.

Three generations: Humphry, Jonathan and EJ Bowen in academic dress at Oxford in 1977



Professor Jonathan Bowen and Dr Alice Bowen (2008, Chemistry) with the portrait of EJ Bowen in the Bowen Room at Univ in 2013



At last, the time came to go into residence at Balliol College for the Michaelmas Term 1915. Most members of the college had gone off to the war, and an officers' cadet school was quartered there. The undergraduates consisted of a few Indians and other foreigners, together with medically unfit or under-age persons. The university ran an O.T.C. contingent in which I spent much time. The Balliol science tutor, H.B. Hartley, had already left for military service, and his tutoring was taken over by D.H. Nagel of Trinity College, a kindly old gentleman with a walrus moustache, a wise advisor, not one who insisted on regular hard work. The main laboratory at Balliol behind the Hall, was freely open for practical work; the uncrowded conditions of the time made working there pleasant.

At the end of 1916, though conscription had not yet been brought in, I felt that I ought to join up, so I volunteered for army service. I was selected for training as an artillery officer and sent to Maresfield Camp, Sussex. War casualties had been so great that there was a severe shortage of gunners, and we were put through a crash course, ending with a ridiculously simple examination. We were allowed to take Training Manuals in (or at least, no one objected), so as to copy out answers, and the day before one of the instructors had said "If you should get a question tomorrow on how to service the buffer and recuperator of the 6" howitzer, this is what you should say...". We wrote it down, and, sure enough, there was the question the next day. Everyone in the course passed.

The battery was commanded by Major Collins, who received me with the words "We all drink whisky here; I hope you do". Till then, I had never drunk anything alcoholic, but I took the glass of whisky and pretended to look mature. The guns were then behind the "Spoil Bank" of the canal to the east of Ypres. The operational quarters were in a trench roofed over with sandbags; a small deep dug-out nearby was used for sleeping in. Spare battery stores and the tractors were kept a mile or two in the rear at the ruined village of Dickebusch.

Shelling by both sides was very active at the time. Fighting had been going on and continued for several months on the Ypres sector. I had not joined the battery for more than a few days before a shell killed Major Collins and wounded some other officers. By luck, I happened at the time to be on duty at Dickebusch. Not long afterwards, there were other casualties, and the battery was left for a few days with only two officers, until replacements were sent from headquarters.

During the next ten days or so there was a lull. Two episodes I remember: one was being caught in the open by shrapnel; the shells were bursting in the air with puffs of black smoke, followed by a savage rain of shot on the ground all around – no hits, fortunately. The second was while I was wandering about the area, looking over the devastated state of the ground over which fighting had taken place, when shelling started. A shell burst about 200 yards away behind me, to the right, and as I turned round, I could see a splinter coming straight towards me. There was no time to move; it was travelling fast, and I could see it only because I was looking almost exactly on its line of flight. The splinter cut across the back of my trench coat making a jagged tear without leaving any mark on myself.

Arrowhead found by  
EJ Bowen during WWI



While running down a sandy lane (Dead Man's Lane on the map) I picked up a nice flint arrowhead (but not a useful weapon at the time!) The battery personnel regrouped at the base at Fins. It was not long before a British counterattack regained the lost ground. Near the battery position, we found that abandoned stores of rum, intended for those in the line before the counterattack, had been locked and several men had drunk themselves to death. (Army rum was a very strong, potent, fiery liquid, issues of which were later supplemented by very concentrated unsweetened lime juice.) Our guns being unusable, we enjoyed a period away from the front and later received six new guns of improved pattern to replace the original four.



EJ Bowen's WWI 1918  
Christmas card

For most of the troops, demobilization was to take months, and units had great difficulties in handling insubordination by frustrated men. Coal miners and students, however, came in the top category for early release, and I was able to become a civilian again in time for the Oxford Hilary Term 1919, having been away for exactly six terms. Five terms later, in June 1920, I took the Final Honour School of Chemistry and managed to obtain a First Class. The chemistry tutor at University College, R.B. Bourdillon, had decided to take up medical studies, and to fill the vacancy I was soon appointed "Percy" Fellow of the college. There were then only eight Fellows; the Master was Dr Macan, just about to retire. Sir Michael Sadler was elected in his place. My Fellowship started at £300 p.a., and in addition, I acted as a demonstrator in the Balliol and Trinity Laboratories, where a practical physical chemistry course was available to undergraduates from all colleges, my stipend being £150 p.a.

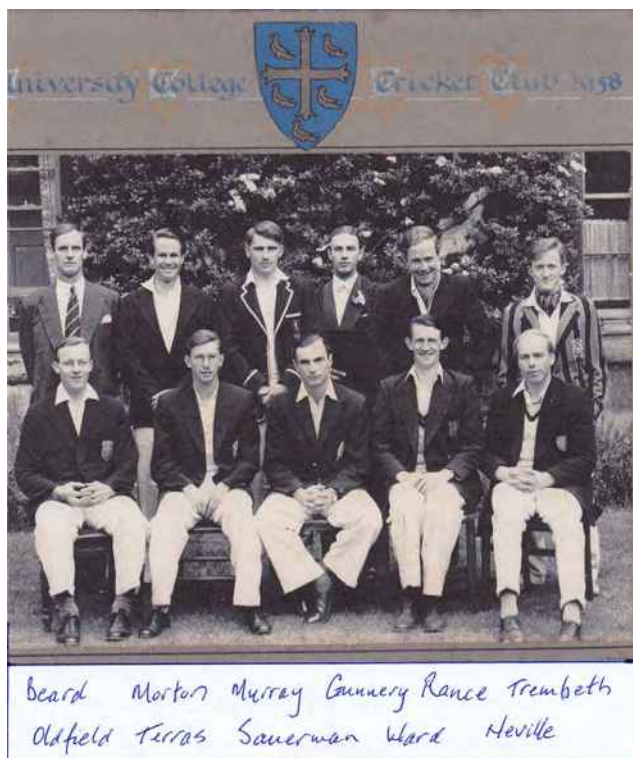
We lived at 15 Banbury Road, a house belonging to the college. Margaret was born on June 28th, 1927. Later that day, I drove a senior colleague Dr Farquharson to Dr Dawkins' house in North Wales to see the total eclipse of the sun, due on June 29th. However, the next morning was overcast with rain. All we saw was the dark moon shadow racing towards us over the sea, and the sudden darkness, lighting up rapidly after a minute or so.



Read more on the  
College website

# Memories of Univ Cricket

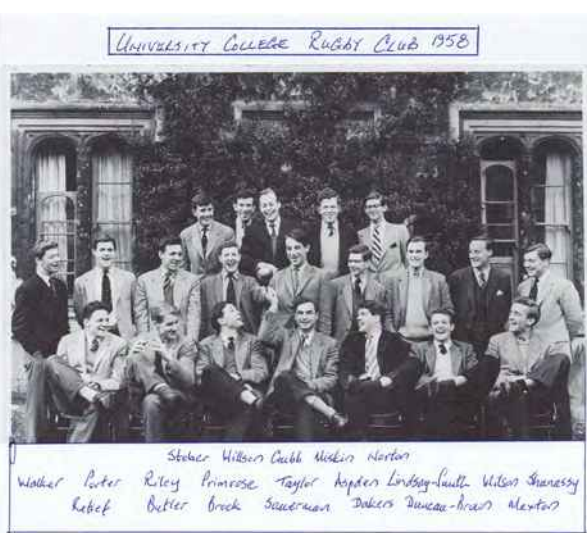
Peter Sauerman (1956, Engineering)



Talk of the Univ Ball 2026 reminds me of the Univ Ball in 1958 (or was it 1959), when my partner was the woman I went on to marry in September 1959. Univ was a very popular college with South Africans, and names that come to mind include Retief, Brock, Duncan-Brown and Huxter – all in residence at the same time as me. During my three years at Univ, I captained both the College rugby and cricket teams and gained a great deal from my involvement with them. I even managed to earn a degree!

The Univ cricket team played 17 matches – all one-day games – between 29 April and 18 June, a span of just 50 days. I played in 13 of them, thanks largely to the fact that I had no exams to sit at the end of the summer term! It seems, even now, a remarkably busy schedule for the team. It is also striking how few runs were scored, with one or two exceptions – notably Mudnani and Ward.

I am not sure why the rugby team was not photographed in College colours (bottom left). Why the informality? What was actually happening, I do not know, but it seemed to be very amusing – something to do, perhaps, with the brass ball in my raised hand. There were five South Africans in the team: Francois Retief, David Brock, Ian Duncan-Brown, Nick Gubb and myself.



Top: The Univ Cricket Club, 1958  
Above: The Univ Rugby Club, 1958  
Right: Fixtures for the batting season of 1958

| NAME OF BATSMAN | Runs | Wickets | Runs | Wickets | Runs | Wickets | Runs | Wickets | Runs | Wickets | Runs | Wickets | Runs | Wickets | Runs | Wickets | Runs | Wickets | Runs | Wickets |
|-----------------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|
| J.A.T. BEARD    | 4    | 13      | 15   | 10      | 14   | 7       | 7    | 82*     | 1    | 0       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| R.E. STOVOLD    | 0    | 11      | 1    | 4       | 11*  | 1       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| A.K. MUDNANI    | 11   | 33      | 30   | 13      | 22   | 21*     | 1    |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| T.R. WARD       | 88*  | 28      | 2*   | 5       |      |         | 51   |         | 0    | 46      | 41   |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| T.D. NEVILLE    | 0    | 14      | 2    | 0       | 26   | 1       |      | 0       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| D.E. RANCE      | 20   | 14      | 0    | 1       | 0    | 9*      |      | 6       | 0    | 3       | 2    | 0       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| P.H. SAUERMAN   | 13*  | 13      | 6*   | 25      | 9    | 15*     |      | 46      | 12   | 0       | 81   | 4       | 17   | 14      |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| C.R. TERRAS     |      |         | 47   | 6       | 57   | 10      |      | 13      | 20   |         | 47   | 4       | 7    |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| R.B. TREMBETH   |      |         | 6*   | 4       |      | 17      | 1*   | 7       |      |         | 0    | 4       | 10*  |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| D.E.A. MORTON   |      | 7       | 0    | 2*      |      |         |      |         |      |         | 0    | 0       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| S. LAZARUS      |      | 5*      | 0    |         |      |         |      | 0       |      |         | 0    | 0       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| E. OLDFIELD     | 27   | 4       | 1    | 5       | 33   | 21*     | 60   | 24      | 20   |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| R. BUTLER       | 5    |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| W. HADDOX       | 1    |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| H.C. SEAGER     |      |         | 15   |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| H. PARKER       |      |         |      |         |      |         | 3    |         |      |         |      |         | 2    |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| C. GUNNERY      |      | 0       | 28   | 6*      |      |         | 8    |         |      |         | 11   | 1       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| A. GUNTER-SMITH |      | 6       |      | 16      |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| M.A. GRIFFITHS  |      | 1       | 15   |         |      | 19      | 0    |         |      | 42      | 6    | 0       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| G.S. MURRAY     |      | 4       |      |         |      | 0*      | 2    |         | 33*  | 0*      |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| D. MARRS        |      | 0       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| R. I. MACKENZIE |      | 0*      |      |         |      | 4       | 0*   |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |
| I. DUNCAN-BROWN |      |         |      |         |      | 1       |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |      |         |

# Sports and Societies



## UCBC

The 2026-27 season has been very exciting for UCBC, culminating in our Women's First Eight reclaiming the Summer Eights Headship.

In Michaelmas term, we were blessed with good conditions the entire term, which allowed our novices to get stuck into the beginning of their rowing careers and at the end of term, they participated



in their first races, both on the Isis and at the Fairbairn Cup in Cambridge. The seniors also raced at Fairbairns, as well as at Fours Head.

In Hilary term we were less lucky and had to train out of Oxford due to flooding. Bumps was cancelled, but our higher boats were able to race in a Head race format, with W1 finishing 2nd and M1 finishing 4th.

Finally, summer rowing arrived, and we were excited to take six boats to Bedford Regatta. We entered and qualified nine

boats into Summer Eights, the most of any college. Results included two blades-winning crews (W3 and M3), who are also the two crews gaining the most places (+8 and +6). W1 bumped Pembroke right in front of the boathouse on Saturday to win the Women's Headship, which was a very exciting moment enjoyed by all.

*Amber Ford (2023, Medicine)*  
*President of UCBC*





## FOOTBALL

From 2024 to 2026, things have changed for the University College 1st XI. I joined as a fresher expecting football; instead, I was met with a team in the lowest division, on negative points, and finishing 27th out of 27 college teams. In that first season, Univ battled for its first league win in over a year – we still finished last overall, but the hunger had set in.



The most exciting prospect for the 2025/26 season was our fresh batch of talent. The loss of our Blue Tim Auth was more than compensated with Amari “Starboy” Bateman. Alongside Joe Ellis, Ludo and “Milk” Palmer, Alex Tollit, Shinedine Shidane, and new goalkeeper Po Narke, we lost only two league games, finishing third in our division.

Taking Univ on tour to Cambridge, we toppled Trinity Hall in collegiate varsity after some doggyish man-to-man coverage. On the annual Univ Old Members Football Day,

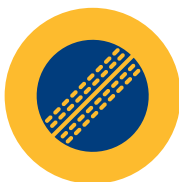
we made it to the final without conceding a single goal. Unfortunately, facing Auth (once our greatest asset) we lost on penalties. Regardless, it was a successful year. Even in Cuppers, we were knocked out by Division One Worcester just 4-1, instead of the 18-1 battering from St Hilda’s in my 2024 debut.

Over two years ago, Univ FC was a mud-flat, swamp. Today, this is a real team. Ten years from now, this will be a Premiership side. Never fear.

*Will Morris (2024, English)*

## CRICKET

University College Cricket Club has had an excellent season! Our strong squad from last year has been bolstered by an exceptionally keen batch of freshers and some excellent post-grad recruits. Our first game of the season was a thriller at the lovely Worcester CC grounds, with Univ sadly going down to a loss in the final over of a nail-biting chase. We then played another excellent game against St Hugh’s in the first round



of cuppers. Despite a poor showing from our top order, our middle order finalist contingent took us to a competitive total of 133. St Hugh’s struggled in reply before a strong partnership took them some of the way towards the target. However, in the end, Univ held their nerve and defended 8 off the final over to triumph and progress to the next round of cuppers.

Unfortunately, another exciting game against Lincoln CC again went down to the wire but Univ were not quite able to get over the line. Our cuppers run ended there, and we also didn’t quite advance to the

next stage of the league season. Despite this, we have had a wonderful season of cricket in the sun and are very excited for our final game of the season – the annual Old Members’ game! Huge thanks must go to our groundsman Robbie who has prepared excellent pitches and generally been an incredible support. Thanks also to our squad this year who have been a pleasure to share the field with. We look forward to another Univ CC season next summer.

*Fred Eccleston (2024, PPE)*

# Music at Univ

Celebrating a thriving year



2026 has been incredibly productive for Univ's musicians. We are lucky to have the College's chamber groups, the Martlet voices and Martlet ensemble, put on concerts with topics ranging from folk songs around the British Isles to Brahms's sextets. We are also glad to see Fidelio, our joint orchestra with Merton and Magdalen, make a comeback. In Hilary term, they played pieces from Haydn and Márquez, as well as tunes from *How to Train your Dragon*.

Termly events have also been going strong. Three choir song concerts were held, with an especially flamboyant performance featuring songs from musical theatre concluding a year of music for Univ. Gig nights have continued to be held with increasing success, with high attendance even deep into Trinity term. They provided a great avenue for student bands to reach a wider audience. This is helped by Univ's well-equipped band room, which UCMS is continuing to refurbish with new instruments.

We also saw new events taking place. We had the inaugural Sir Ivor and Lady Crewe Chamber Concert, featuring works of old English composers reinterpreted through a modern lens. The Frank Marshall instrumental prize was also set up this year, awarded to Lucy Baker (2025, History and Politics). A new student concert series was also launched by UCMS, beginning with a piano concert in Trinity. We hope that even more people can be involved in Univ's music scene the coming year!

*Edison Fu (2025, Physics)*

# In memoriam

## Honorary Fellows

Kay Glendinning MBE died on 8 December 2025.

Professor Rudolph A (Rudy) Marcus, Visiting Professor 1975 to 1976, died on 16 July 2026 aged 102.

His Excellency Festus Gontebanye Mogae (1965, PPE), former President of Botswana, died on 8 May 2026 aged 86.

## Emeritus Fellows

Dr David Bell, Emeritus Fellow and former Solla Fellow, died on 24 June 2026 aged 92.

## 1940s

Professor Geoffrey Leon Sewell (1944, Maths) died on 18 July 2024 aged 97.

Professor Patrick John Fitzgerald (1945, Classics) died on 6 April 2020 aged 91.

Dr Ronald Sidney Cormack FRCA (1948, Medicine) died on 16 June 2022 aged 91.

Cecile William (Bill) Saunders (1948, Geography) died on 21 December 2025 aged 99.

John Peter (JP) Hudson (1949, Classics) died on 10 March 2026 aged 96.

John Alexander (Alex) Paul (1949, Classics) died on 23 March 2025 aged 93.

## 1950s

John William Rawson Fox (1950, Law) died on 5 August 2025 aged 95.

Derek John Harrison (1951, Classics) died on 21 February 2026 aged 94.

Edmund John Bernard Leach (1951, English) died on 30 June 2025 aged 94.

Dr Neville Rosen (1951, Medicine) died on 9 September 2024 aged 95.

Colin John Ford CBE (1952, English) died on 21 December 2025 aged 91.

Geoffrey Alan Barclay Foster (1953, English) died on 17 June 2025 aged 93.

Dr John Hodgson MRCGP (1953, Medicine) died on 23 November 2025 aged 90.

Sir Jeremy Frederick Lever KCMG KC FRSA (1953, Law) died on 25 August 2025 aged 92.

Henry John Woolston (1953, PPE) died on 28 December 2025 aged 90.

Paul DiBiase (1954, Law) died on 1 October 2025 aged 91.

Cedric Gunnery (1955, Engineering) died on 16 March 2023 aged 88.

Stanley William Frederick Martin CVO OBE (1955, Law) died on 6 April 2026 aged 91.

John Horton Morrison OBE (1955, Law) died on 12 March 2026 aged 92.

The Hon. Terence Christopher O'Brien (1955, History) died on 30 December 2022 aged 86.

Keith Stuart Parry (1955, PPE) died on 2 August 2025 aged 90.

Kenith George Todd (1955, English) died on 1 March 2026 aged 90.

Graham Cyril Mason OBE (1956, Modern Languages) died on 15 February 2026 aged 90.

Professor Roger Cobban Sanders FRCA FFICM MRCP (1956, Medicine) died on 22 March 2026 aged 89.

The Rt Hon. The Lord John Alston Maxton (1957, History, Education) died on 20 November 2025 aged 89.

Sir Andrew Edward Wilson Park (1957, Law) died on 14 August aged 86.

Lawrence Albert Dale (1958, Geography, Education) died on 1 February 2026 aged 89.

Richard Lawson Finlayson (1958, English) died in June 2021 aged 82.

Selwyn Barnett Kossuth (1958, Law) died on 9 December 2025 aged 88.

Cedric Charles Barfoot (1959, English) died in 2022 aged 85.

Dr James Sanderson Birtwistle (1959, Chemistry) died on 24 August 2025 aged 86.

The Hon. John Donovan (1959, History) died on 21 January 2024 aged 85.

James Vivian Bateman Westwood (1959, Maths) died on 4 March 2026 aged 84.

## 1960s

Byron Davies Rogers (1960, English) died on 3 August 2025 aged 83.

The Rt Hon. The Lord Jeremy Hugh Beecham DL (1962, Law) died on 9 April 2026 aged 81.

Paul Raymond Bowden (1962, Modern Languages) died on 19 June 2024 aged 80.

Alexander (Sandy) James Macdonald (1962, History) died on 17 December 2025 aged 81.

David Roger William Potter (1962, PPE) died on 20 August 2025 aged 81.

Thomas Richard Holland Sowler (1963, Law) died on 4 July 2026 aged 82.

Professor Emeritus Anthony Rowland Warner (1964, English) died on 27 May 2026 aged 81.

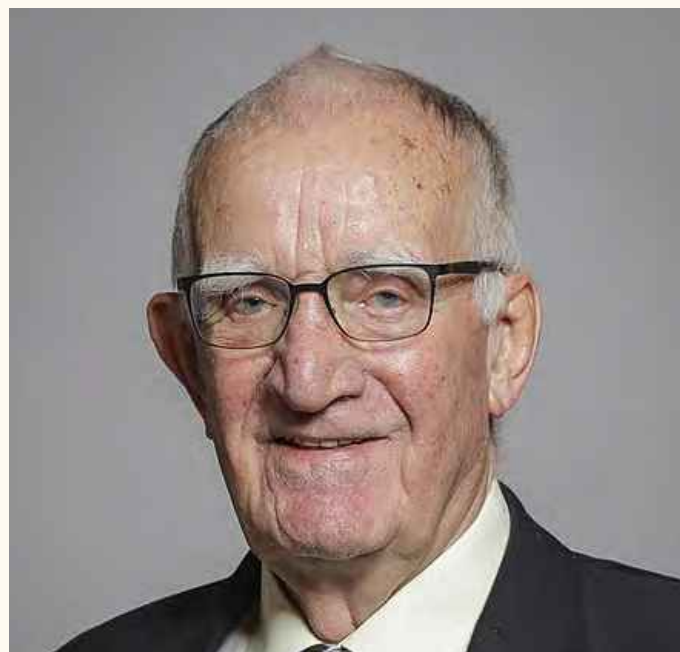
John Philip Boxall (1965, History) died on 21 October 2025 aged 78.

John Raymond Slater (1965, Classics) died on 7 November 2025 aged 79.

Professor Alfred Harry Charles Ward (1965, Oriental Studies) died on 4 March 2025 aged 92.

Peter Arthur Stone (1966, Law) died on 19 April 2022 aged 75.

Professor Peter Christian Stangeby (1967, Engineering) died on 26 October 2025 aged 82.



Dr Timothy (Tim) Woods (1968, History) died on 7 September 2025 aged 81.

## 1970s

Dr John Michael Maud (1974, Chemistry) died in 2025 aged 71.

Peter John Millson (1977, English) died on 17 December 2025 aged 66.

## 1980s

Peter Doyle (1980, PPE, Economics) died on 4 December 2025 aged 64.

Professor Anthony Vivian Powell (1982, Chemistry) died on 2 June 2026 aged 62.

## Former Stipendiary Lecturers

Dr Lucy Van Essen-Fishman, Stipendiary Lecturer in Classics 2018-19, died on 28 December 2025.

## Former Staff

Robert (Bob) Turner, College Porter from 2002 to 2011, died in 2026.

William (Bill) Graham Warren, former College Porter, died on 6 January 2026 aged 86.

## Apologies

*We would like to offer our sincere apologies to Professor Ian Aitchison for incorrectly reporting his death in the previous issue. This error arose from a miscommunication to the College, and we deeply regret any distress or confusion it may have caused.*

# Announcements

If you have news you would like to submit for the next issue, please email [communications@univ.ox.ac.uk](mailto:communications@univ.ox.ac.uk)

## 1960s

**Dr Peter Slinn** (1960, History) was made an Honorary Life Member of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association in 2025 in recognition of his contribution to the work of the Association in promoting the rule of law in the Commonwealth.

Television and radio broadcaster **Alastair Lack** (1964, History), former head of English programmes at BBC World Service, led a series of sellout walking tours as part of the Oxford Literary Festival.

Celebrated consultant neurosurgeon **Henry Marsh CBE FRCS** (1969, PPE) chaired a discussion about mental health and waste in the NHS at the Oxford Literary Festival.

## 1970s

**Dr Henry Noltie** (1975, Plant Sciences) co-curated *Flora Indica: Recovering the lost histories of Indian botanical art*, an exhibition at Kew Gardens from October 2025 to April 2026.

Cultural and architectural historian **Dr Steven Parissien** (1978, History) spoke to Alison Gomm about Britain's drinking culture at the Oxford Literary Festival.

## 1980s

**Professor Trisha Greenhalgh OBE** (1980, Medicine), Professor of Primary Care Health Sciences at Oxford, shared her views on living in Oxford in an article in the *Daily Telegraph* about UK cities with the best health metrics.

**Neil Moody KC** (1984, History 1984) was approved as a High Court Judge, from January 2026. The Honourable Mr Justice Moody was called to the Bar in 1989 and took Silk in 2010.

**Pireeni Sundaralingam** (1986, Psychology), the College's inaugural Poet Laureate, composed a cycle of poems and lyrical essays, tracing the changing patterns of time at Univ across the centuries.

## 1990s

**Professor Frank Thurmond** (1990, English) married historian Dr Kimberly Rush in August 2025, in Little Rock, Arkansas. His novel, *Lottie Deno: A Novel of the Civil War and the American Southwest* won the 2026 Phillip H McMath Post-Publication Book Award for Prose.

In November 2024, **Andrew Dyson** (1991, Ancient and Modern History) was appointed as Managing Partner for the UK, at global law firm DLA Piper, having previously led the firm's international Data, Privacy and Cybersecurity practice.

**Joanna Welsh** (1991, Biology), Chief Risk Officer at hedge fund Citadel, has been listed for a third year in a row by Barron's as one of the 100 Most Influential Women in US Finance.

**Professor Charlotte Deane MBE** (1993, Chemistry), Professor of Structural Bioinformatics in the Department of Statistics at Oxford, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

**Professor Sara Lodge** (1994, English), Professor of Nineteenth-century Literature and Culture at the University of St Andrews, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

**Professor Najib M Rahman** (1994, Medicine), Univ Supernumerary Fellow, Professor of Respiratory Medicine at Oxford and Director of the Oxford Respiratory Trials Unit, received the British Thoracic Society President's Award in November 2025.

Commotio, one of Oxford's foremost chamber choirs, founded and conducted by **Matthew Berry** (1995, Music), held an Advent and Christmas Concert and Music for Passiontide and Easter concert in Oxford.

**Professor Nandini Das OBE** (1997, English) discussed her latest book, *This Little World: A New History of Tudor and Stuart England*, at the V&A South Kensington on 28 May.

**Natasha Edwards** (1997, Economics), Managing Director of The Garlic Farm on the Isle of Wight, appeared on a recent episode of BBC TV series *The Apprentice*, which saw the candidates travel to the island to source nine iconic Isle of Wight items.

**Rohan Gunatillake** (1999, MChem Chemistry), founder of the best-selling app buddhify and host of Meditative Story podcast, published a series of Work Mindfulness Cards.

**Dr Ananya Dutta Gupta** (1999, English) was promoted to the position of Professor of English at Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, India.

**Luke Ramsden** (1999, History), a former choral scholar at Univ, was appointed to lead St John's College in Cardiff from September 2026.

**Olivia Ricketts** (1999, PPE) was appointed His Majesty's Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation and His Majesty's non-resident Ambassador to the Principality of Liechtenstein, from January 2027.

**Can Yeğinsu** (1999, BA English and BCL), international human rights barrister and arbitrator, has been appointed Co-Chair of the International Bar Association's Investment Arbitration Subcommittee for 2026 to 2028.



Images (clockwise from top left): Ivo Graham (credit: Matt Stronge), Olivia Ricketts, Rohan Gunatillake, Joanna Welsh



Dan and Mema Nackasha-Keyworth

## 2000s

**Councillor Maria Cleminson** (2000, Modern History) was elected Mayor of Cambridge in May.

**Dan (and Mema) Nackasha-Keyworth** (2000, PPE) completed a round-the-world adventure which began on 1 August 2025 and concluded on 12 April 2026, during which they endeavoured to circumnavigate the globe without flying.

**Avin Rabheru MBE** (2001, PPE) and his company Housekeep took home the London Established Business of the Year Award at the 2025 Great British Entrepreneur Awards.

Stand-up comedian and comedy writer **Ivo Graham** (2008, Modern Languages) performed at the Oxford Playhouse on Wednesday 29 April as part of his extended sellout *Orange Crush* tour.

## 2010s

Former Radcliffe Scholar, **Dr Tin Hang (Henry) Hung** 洪天恒 (2017, DPhil Plant Sciences), was named in the Forbes 30 under 30 Europe Science and Healthcare 2025.

**Mx Alex Benn** (2018, Law) talks about class, gender and being a barrister in the *Off the Beaten Track* video series, founded by the Nuffield Department of Surgical Sciences at Oxford.

**Dr Odysseus A Archontikis** (2019, Environmental Sciences) was joint winner of The Micropalaeontological Society (TMS) Image Competition 2025, for a striking scanning electron micrograph of two phytoplanktonic organisms.

**Harriet Atherton** (2019, Biochemistry) was part of an international all-female scientific crew on a pioneering research voyage from Auckland to the Bay of Islands, contributing to the first global study mapping ocean plastics from source to sea in April to May 2026.

**Dr Catherine Phipps** (2019, History), Senior Research Associate at the University of Bristol, delivered a lecture on 16 April 2026 at the National Portrait Gallery in London on “A history of sex in Victorian Britain and the British Empire.”

## 2020s

**Dr Robin Timmis** (2020, DPhil Atomic and Laser Physics) won the Institute of Physics’ Culham Thesis Prize: Plasma Physics Group for her thesis titled, “Attoseconds and the exascale: on laser plasma surface interactions”.

Read the stories in full on the College website at: [bit.ly/ufm130](https://bit.ly/ufm130)

## Honourable Mentions



**Christina Lamb**  
**OBE** (1983, PPE), Honorary Fellow, received an honorary degree from the University of Oxford on 24 February 2026.

## King’s 2026 New Year Honours List



**Peter Clark** (1991, History) was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to Further Education. Peter is Head of 16-19 Funding and Financial Support Policy at the Department for Education.



**Dan Corry** (1979, PPE) was appointed an OBE for Public Service. Dan is a Non-Executive Director of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, where he previously led an independent Review of Environmental Regulation.



**Andrew Scott** (1988, History) was appointed a CB for services to Government and the Legislative Process. Andrew is Second Parliamentary Counsel at the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel within the Cabinet Office.



**Kim Wilkie** was appointed a CBE for services to landscape architecture. Kim was the landscape architect for the College’s University North development.

## My View of Univ

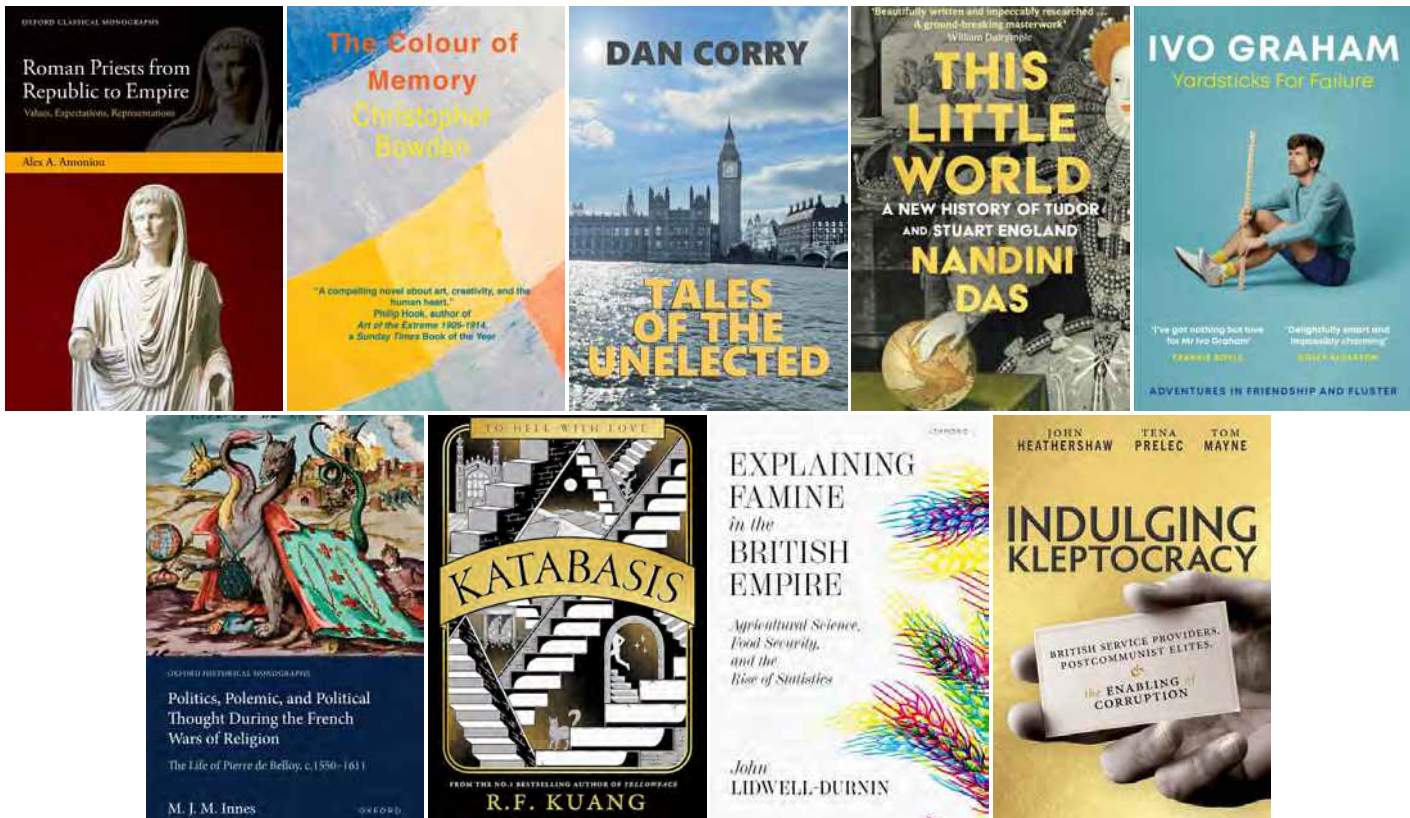


I took this photo in my first Trinity at Univ, over five years ago. I was studying for prelims in my first year room and needed some inspiration. I went to open my curtains and saw two beautiful rainbows had formed over the College, framing the buildings beautifully. I watched as the sun set and the backdrop went from blue to pink. That was the hope I needed that my exams were going to be alright!

*Ayesha Ali (2021, Medicine)*



## Publications



**Dr Alex Antoniou** (2018, DPhil History), Lecturer in Classics at the University of Glasgow, published his first monograph, *Roman Priests from Republic to Empire* (OUP, 4 December 2025).

**Christopher Bowden** (1971, Modern History) published his eighth novel, *The Colour of Memory*, an art-world literary mystery set in London, Sussex and New York.

**Dan Corry OBE** (1979, PPE) published a collection of short stories based on his time as a special advisor in the last Labour government, titled, *Tales of the Unelected: "Empty Boxes" and other short stories from the world of the special adviser* (Bridge House Publishing, 29 August 2024).

**Professor Nandini Das OBE** (1997, English), Professor of Early Modern English Literature and Culture, published, *This Little World: A New History of Tudor and Stuart England* (Bloomsbury, May 2026).

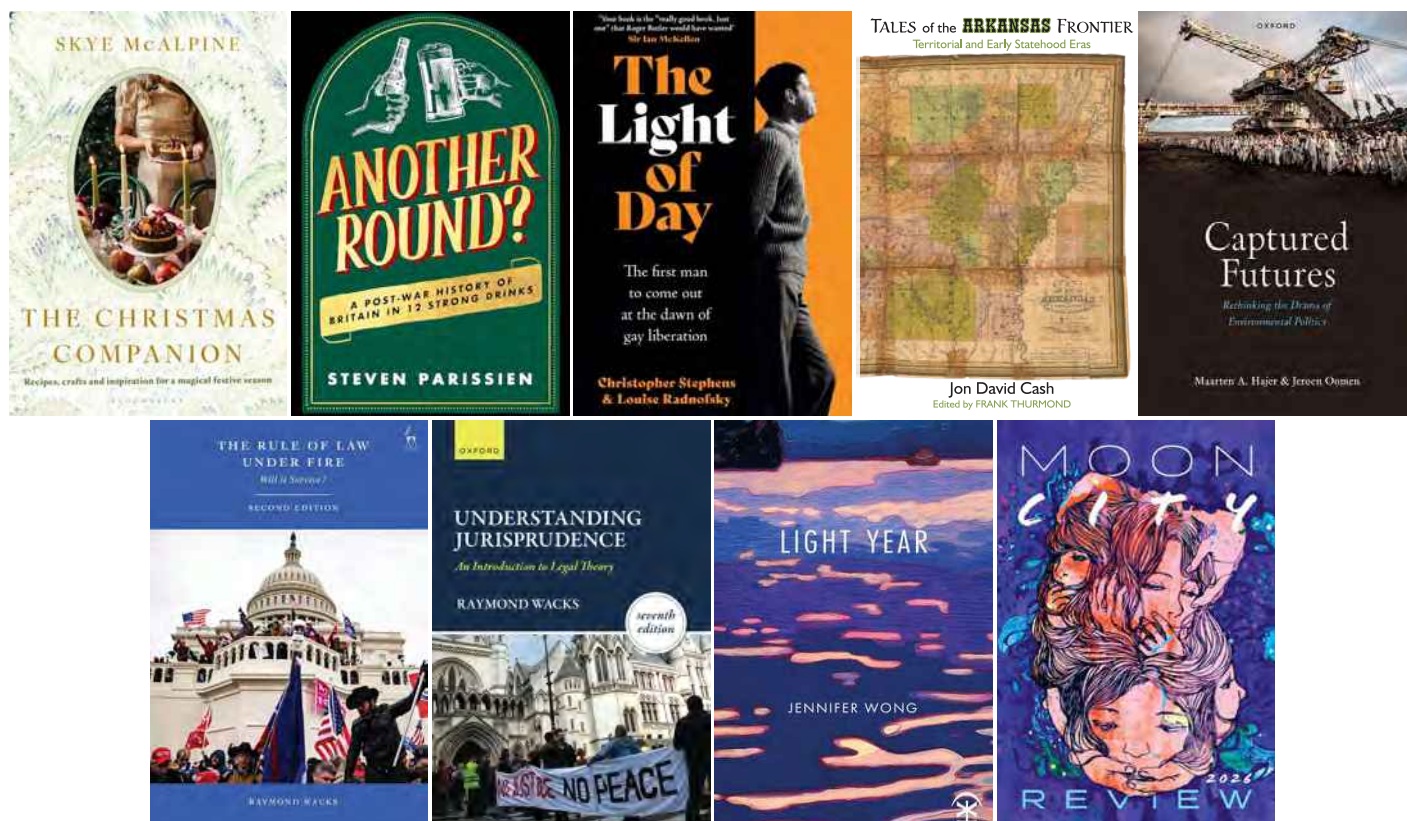
**Professor Dr Maarten Hajer** (1988, Politics) published, *Captured Futures - Rethinking the Drama of Environmental Politics* (OUP, May 2025). Professor Hajer is Professor of Urban Futures and Futuring at Utrecht University, The Netherlands.

Comedian **Ivo Graham** (2008, Modern Languages) published his first book, *Yardsticks For Failure: Adventures in Friendship and Fluster* (Headline, 22 May 2025). According to fellow comedian Sophie Duker, "His writing is as unpredictable and brilliant as he is."

**Dr Matthew Innes** (2016, History) published a monograph: *Politics, Polemic, and Political Thought During the French Wars of Religion: The Life of Pierre de Belloy, c.1550–1611* (OUP, 12 February 2026).

**Rebecca F Kuang** (2019, Contemporary Chinese Studies), writing as R F Kuang, published *Katabasis*, a 2025 fantasy novel that follows two magicians, doctoral candidates, who must venture into hell to save their thesis advisor in order to get letters of recommendation (HarperVoyager, August 2025).

**Dr John Lidwell-Durnin** (2008, BPhil Philosophy, DPhil History of Science and Medicine) published his first book, *Explaining Famine in the British Empire: Agricultural Science, Food Security, and the Rise of Statistics* (OUP, 2026), an academic monograph in the history of science published Open Access thanks to a Leverhulme award.



**Dr Sara Lodge's** book (1994, English) *The Mysterious Case of the Victorian Female Detective*, was shortlisted for the Wolfson History Prize 2025.

**Tom Mayne** (1997, Modern Languages) published *Indulging Kleptocracy* (co-written with John Heathershaw and Tena Prelec) (OUP, February 2025).

**Skye McAlpine** (2003, Classics) published, *The Christmas Companion: Recipes, crafts and inspiration for a magical festive season* (Bloomsbury Publishing, October 2025).

**Dr Steven Parissien** (1978, History) published, *Another Round?: A Post-War History of Britain in Twelve Drinks* (August Books, September 2025).

**Louise Radnofsky** (2001, History) published, with Christopher Stephens, *The Light of Day: The moving true story of the first man to come out as gay* (Headline Press, 22 May 2025).

**Professor Frank Thurmond** (1990, English) published (as Editor) *Tales of the Arkansas Frontier* by the late Jon Cash (Parkhurst Brothers Publishers, 2025).

**Professor Raymond Wacks** (1971, Law), Emeritus Professor of Law and Legal Theory, published *The Rule of Law Under Fire: Will it Survive?*, Second Edition (Bloomsbury, February 2026) and *Understanding Jurisprudence: An Introduction to Legal Theory*, Seventh Edition (OUP March 2026).

Writer and poet **Dr Jennifer Wong** (1998, English) published a new collection of poetry, *Light Year* (Nine Arches Press, 19 February 2026), a meditation on the journeys of a migrant and a mother, on time, memories, love and healing.

**Jingwen Zhang** (2022, English) contributed a piece to the 2026 edition of literary anthology *Moon City Review 2026*.

# Your Legacy

Since 1249, members of Univ have been making a difference in the world.

## Can you help sustain this remarkable tradition for future generations?

A gift in your Will can support the areas of College life that matter most to you. You may wish to help talented students take up their places at Univ and thrive during their time here or provide lasting support for vital teaching and academic posts; or simply to support the College as a whole. Whatever your chosen area of support, your legacy will have a lasting impact, helping to shape lives and strengthen the College for years to come.

Please consider leaving a gift in your Will and help ensure that Univ continues to flourish.

Thank you.



THE  
WILLIAM OF DURHAM  
CLUB

The William of Durham Club recognises the generosity of those Old Members and friends who have made a future provision for Univ in their Estate Plans. The Club is named after William of Durham who, in 1249, bequeathed a portion of his estate to support scholars in Oxford, resulting in the foundation of University College.

### Members of the William of Durham Club receive:

- Special recognition in the annual Roll of Donors
- An invitation to the annual William of Durham Club Luncheon with the Master in College. The programme traditionally includes lectures and exhibitions, drinks and lunch in Hall, a musical or theatrical performance, and afternoon tea
- A commemorative William of Durham Club pin

For more information about leaving a gift in your Will to Univ, joining the William of Durham Club or potential inheritance tax benefits, please contact: [martha.cass@univ.ox.ac.uk](mailto:martha.cass@univ.ox.ac.uk) or see our Legacies booklet at: [univ.ox.ac.uk/giving/gifts-in-wills/](http://univ.ox.ac.uk/giving/gifts-in-wills/)

# Dates for your diary

## 2026



### Milestone Anniversary Reunions

Classes of 1956 (Platinum), 1966 (Diamond) and 1976 (Golden)  
4 SEPTEMBER



### 2017-2020 Gaudy

26 SEPTEMBER

### Piano recital and drinks reception in Los Angeles

6 SEPTEMBER

### A fireside chat with Baroness Amos and Kevin Hartz (1992) followed by a cocktail reception

San Francisco  
10 SEPTEMBER



### Univ in the City

The Financial Times  
22 OCTOBER



### Advent Carols

University College Chapel  
5 DECEMBER



### London Carol Service

The Temple Church  
11 DECEMBER

Please check the website for updates: [bit.ly/univ0169](https://bit.ly/univ0169)



**“Univ North is more than a new development; it is a landscape designed to be inhabited and appreciated.”**

**Tom Bartlett, Head Gardener**

