

JESUS NEWS

2023



**Jesus
College**
OXFORD

Contents

Principal's Welcome	2
Don't Just Visit. Stay.	4
A Future Prime Minister Writes Home	8
A Day in the Life ...	14
Saying No to Swipe Culture	18
Remembering John Walsh	22
Unfinished Business	30
Private Passions: Motorcycling	34
Historic Royal Palaces	39
A New Writing System to Revitalise Osage	42
Artists in Residence	44
Shaping Destiny Revisited	50
A Life of Adventure	56
Letter from Hong Kong	60
Sports & Club Reports	66
Esports: A new digital age in University sport	70
Events at the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub	72
Development Update	76
Events Preview 2023/24	80
2023/24 Events Calendar	83



Photo by Ed Nix

Summer Vllls marks the halfway point of Trinity Term at Oxford, and provides a welcome opportunity for Jesus students, staff, and alumni to come together at the College boathouse and enjoy a University sporting tradition that dates back nearly two hundred years.

This year's Eights was set against a backdrop of glorious spring weather. The warm May sunshine and clear blue skies brought large crowds of spectators to the banks of the Isis across the four-day regatta. I had the privilege of joining the crew in the Men's 2nd Eight boat, and it was with great pride that I stepped out of the boathouse on day one and again on the final day, in the colours of Jesus College, to take my place at 4th oar. Pursued by strong opposition – both St Hilda's and Regents Park's 1st Eights were behind us in the starting order on day one – we raced hard, driven on by the cheers of the Jesus community from the bankside. Ultimately our efforts across the week yielded Spoons rather than Blades, but the experience of being part of a team, supported by so many current and old members, was a memory I will treasure. My hope for next season is that JCBC Men's squad is sufficiently deep that they won't need to call up the Principal!

Front cover photo: Sarah Jones.

Follow us on...



@jesus.alumni



@jesuscollegeoxford



Jesus College Oxford



@JesusOxford

Welcome from the Principal

Professor Sir Nigel Shadbolt FRS FREng FBCS

It has been a pleasure to see so many of you back in College over the past twelve months, in a year which began with the formal opening of the Cheng Yu Tung Building in October, and culminated in the installation of the new Patron Wall on the first floor of the building in late May. In April, Bev and I were delighted to be part of a major donor trip to West Wales, during which we explored several of Pembrokeshire's most picturesque and historical sites, and enjoyed reflections from Jesus alumni Dr John Rhys (1962) and Dr Brian John (1959) on the area's history and stunning coastline. In such an evocative setting, it is easy to understand how the beauty of the Welsh landscape, its people and heritage, have inspired generations of writers and poets.

In this edition of *Jesus News*, we hear from one such poet – Dr Grahame Davis LVO – who grew up in the former coal mining village of Coedpath, near Wrexham in north east Wales. Grahame has been a Friend of Jesus College for many years, and most recently wrote a commissioned poem in celebration of the new Welsh Access Fourth Quad, a line from which is inscribed in the Quad's stonework. In 'A Day in the Life', Grahame explains how the landscape he grew up in, with the great Anglo-Welsh boundary of Offa's Dyke forming one side of the village, created an early sense of borders and questions around identity that has influenced his writing ever since.

Another of our contributors, Carole Souter CBE (1975), also has a deep understanding of the power of place on people. Carole, an Honorary Fellow at Jesus and former Master of St Cross College, is currently Interim Chair of Historic Royal Palaces (HRP), and has overseen its work during a notable chapter in the story of our nation. She describes how the six palaces in HRP's stewardship each played an important role in recent events, from commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement at Hillsborough Castle, to the proclamation of King Charles III at both Hillsborough and the Tower of London.

Closer to home, we also hear from Dr Janina Schupp, SOUTHWORKS Career Development Fellow for the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub, on the inaugural year of activities in this dynamic new College space. It has been wonderful to experience and participate in the diverse range of events the Hub has hosted. Particularly memorable was an immersive performance by actor,

composer, and Zimbabwean Mbira musician John Falsetto. John explored how ancient oral storytelling traditions can meet at the intersection of technology and education in the digital age. As well as performing the music of his ancestors and his own compositions, he also commissioned ChatGPT to create a new work based on the rhythms and beats of his musical heritage. The AI tool's resultant piece had the audience on their feet clapping and chanting, setting the stage for what we hope will be a vibrant programme of musical and cultural events in the Hub in the future.

This year we have heard a great deal about the perceived dangers from advances in AI. Despite much dystopian rhetoric, AI can augment and enrich our lives, as was demonstrated at the Hub's most recent event, the Creative Machine Oxford Symposium, which I both attended and contributed to. The Symposium gave a brilliant exposition of the ways in which AI is being used and embraced by whole swathes of society – creative artists, museums, writers, scientists, and engineers. We will most certainly need to govern, manage, and oversee the development and deployment of AI, but the application of brilliant young minds to these and other challenges is what gives me confidence for the future: young minds nurtured and educated here in Oxford and at Jesus College.

As always, I would like to thank you for your continued support of College, for your enthusiasm and commitment to all that we do. We look forward to welcoming you back to Jesus soon.





Don't Just Visit. Stay.

Rachel Angell | 1998 | Modern History



Photo: Rachel Angell.

Rachel Angell read Modern History at Jesus College, matriculating in 1998. After graduation, she carved out a career in ultra-luxury hospitality, holding senior roles in London's most exclusive hotels. She co-founded Domus Stay in 2020 as Chief Operating Officer, establishing the business as London's premium short-stay operator. She says, "Domus Stay opens the doors to the city's most remarkable homes, while offering a uniquely intuitive level of guest service." To find out more about Domus Stay, visit www.domusstay.com

Tell us a little about yourself

I grew up in rural Worcestershire, in a tiny village with a church, a postbox, and not much else; I wanted to live in London from the age of about 12. My parents ran their own business, and we'd spend holidays in a family-run hotel near Blackpool. I'm pretty sure that's where the original idea struck me, though it wasn't until after my A-levels that I got my first hotel job: in the restaurant of a gorgeous old

coaching inn in the Cotswolds. I was hooked instantly, and (probably to my tutors' dismay) worked there in the holidays throughout my time at Jesus. On graduating, my GM wrote a lovely letter to The Savoy, and the rest, as they say...

You started off predominantly in the hospitality space. What prompted the pivot to property?

I'm still very much in hospitality; just in a different shape at the

moment. Of course, it's a privilege to see inside some of the most beautiful homes in London, and it's wonderful to be able to welcome people to enjoy them. Our clients – homeowners and guests – stay and live in the best places in the world, and they know what good service looks like. It's my job to deliver that.

It's said that most entrepreneurs have 10 ideas on the boil simultaneously in order to find the one that flies: is that you?

As a concept, short-term property rental is nothing new. And while I certainly wouldn't advocate trying to launch a new luxury hospitality brand in the middle of a global travel shutdown, it's generally accepted that the pandemic accelerated the trend for choosing to stay in private property, rather than in hotels. Ours is a crowded marketplace, so I'd definitely agree that an entrepreneurial mindset is required to deliver a brand which doesn't just stand apart from the competition but, I'm proud to say, is leading the field after three short years. We've achieved this not by worrying about what the competition is doing, but rather by recognising our customers, and paying close attention to what they want. Naturally, this can change daily, so there are a lot of plates spinning!

These days, Jesus College has an Entrepreneur Network – a cohort of alumni whose collective expertise cultivates innovation and entrepreneurship within the College community. How did your time at Oxford contribute to your career or equip you for what you're doing today?



I had a brilliant time at Oxford, and wouldn't swap my experience there, but I definitely did not join the milk-round, and the truth is that for a long time, I probably ran away from it. It's fantastic that today's students have access to a supportive and diverse network of mentors from a range of business disciplines. I guess my ability to think on my feet was honed in the tutorial sitting room, but really what I cherish most about my experience is that it shaped the person I am outside of my job. It opened my eyes to a world of ideas, art, music and design that could enrich multiple lifetimes, and the friends I made at College are like family to me. Plus, I was the JCR Bar Rep, which helped!

What's been your biggest business challenge in the development of Domus Stay?

Take your pick from Covid, Brexit, a general workforce exodus, and global inflation... I'd have given a lot for a crystal ball in 2020, that's for sure. For all its rewards, building a business in any climate requires a huge amount of resilience and determination; it can take over your life. It's a cliché, but finding balance is probably the biggest challenge for me.

What makes Domus Stay better than the competition?

Our people are genuinely our greatest asset. As a business, we have a clear set of values, which start with a can-do approach and a spirit of generosity; we absolutely keep our customers at the heart of everything we do. Every day is different. I've had a billionaire writer ask me to help him move a shipment of coffee table books



What advice would you give to your undergraduate self and to those with a burning ambition to build a business for themselves?

I really wish I'd taken a year out after I finished my degree. I've been incredibly lucky through my career, and have had opportunities to travel and work alongside colleagues from hugely diverse cultures. I'm proud that I've worked my way up from the bottom. Without doubt, it takes patience and plenty of mistakes to hone your craft. But I'd definitely advise not being in so much of a rush. Or, in Oxford terms, to read around the reading list!

And, finally, what inspires you – both professionally and personally?

My friends and family – the best of whom will mercilessly take the mickey out of whatever I say here – mean everything to me. I grew up in a house full of records, so music is really important to me. I love books, and I'm a swimmer; one day I will give everything up, move to the sea and become a writer. Maybe.

to Florence that day, by way of a private airfield, and a stressed-out bride call me at 6am because she hated her dress, and could I help? The answer is always yes (or that's the idea): by lunchtime, we'd lined up a couturier ready to turn around a new gown in a week. Things don't always go to plan of course: I found myself (and my dad) in one of our apartments on Christmas Day a couple of years ago, trying to breathe life into a boiler which had resolutely given up the ghost. Not fun. But we retained the client's trust, and their business, because we showed up, and we cared.



A Future Prime Minister Writes Home: The Student Letters of Harold Wilson

Robin Darwall-Smith | Archivist



Harold Wilson the serious student (Jesus College Magazine, Vol. IV no. 55, June 1937).

J. H. WILSON
(Gladstone Prize :
George Webb Medley Junior Scholarship) .

Dear all,

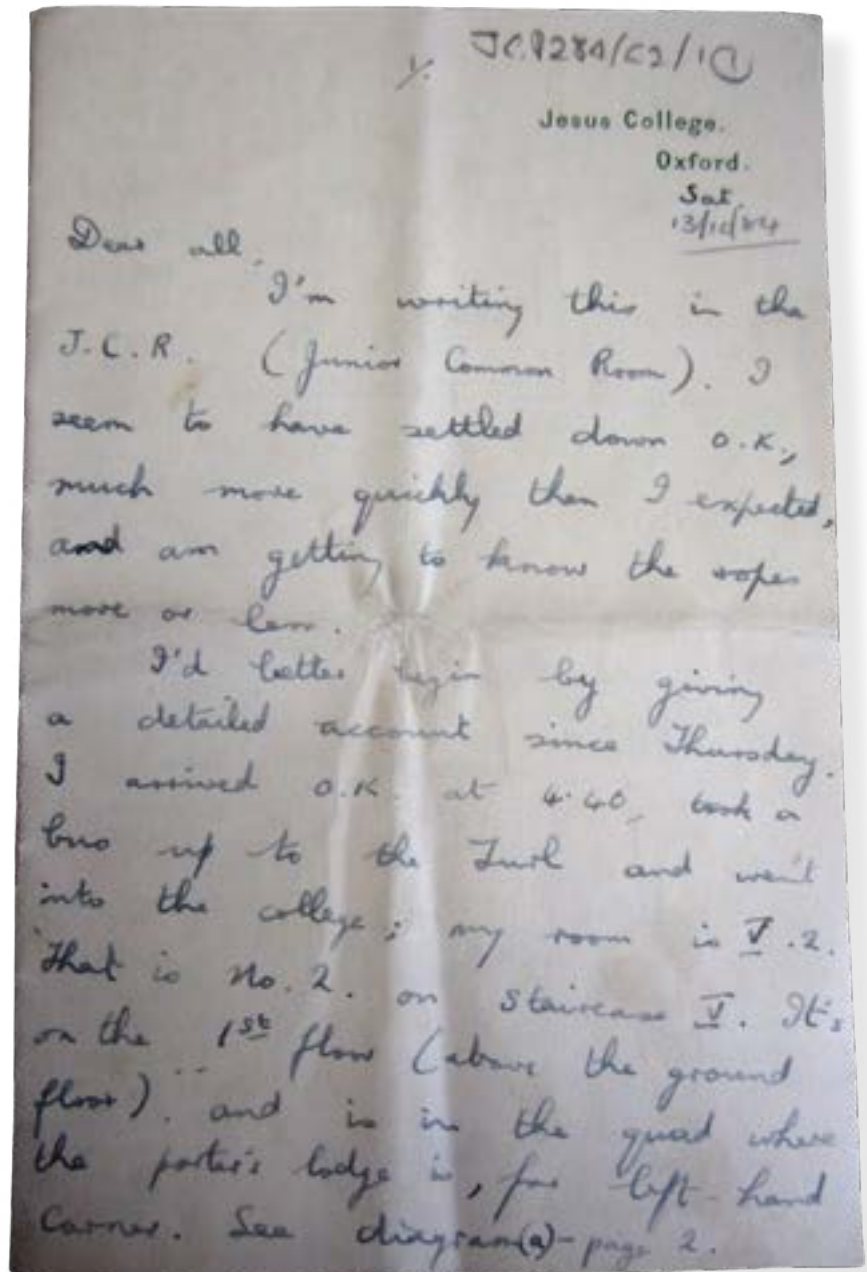
I'm writing this in the J.C.R.
(Junior Common Room).
I seem to have settled down
O.K., much more quickly than
I expected, and am getting to
know the ropes more or less.

Thus opens the letter (*right*) from a Jesus College Fresher reassuring his family that all is well. Even if newly arrived Freshers today use other forms of communication, they no doubt say something similar.

This letter, however, was written by Harold Wilson, future British Prime Minister. It is one of over 50 written to his parents and his sister Marjorie which the College has recently acquired. They were offered to us in March 2023 by a London dealer and had an interesting provenance. When Ben Pimlott and Philip Ziegler wrote biographies of Wilson in the early 1990s, they used these letters which were then among Wilson's private papers. In December 1993 Wilson gave his papers to the Bodleian, without these letters. Instead, he gave them to his former political secretary Marcia Williams, Lady Falkender. After her death in 2019, her family sold the letters. Jesus College bought them with funds from the Archives and the Development Office, and they are now in our archives (ref. JC:P284),

Harold Wilson came up in 1934 to read History, but switched to PPE. He was a serious student and this report of his activities on 12 May 1935 is characteristic:

I averaged 7 hours per day last week – which is very good in summer term, & I went to the track 4 times; I'm not wasting time going to see people & mess about in their rooms, & this is more interesting.



His College tutors were Albert Goodwin and Thomas Knox. They got on well. On 20 May 1935 he writes that his tutorials with Knox "are very fine. We get into all sorts of arguments (we are meant to, really)." On 20 October 1935, Wilson reports that Knox praised him because he "had showed knowledge for the whole of Kant, whereas very few people get past

half-way". Knox had also "been giving me much more advanced work this term".

Lecturers elsewhere spotted the young Jesus PPE-ist. One was G. D. H. Cole, Economics Fellow of Univ., whom Wilson admired. Cole ran an informal discussion group, which Wilson attended. He describes them on 19 May 1935:

G. D. H. Cole's discussion classes are very good. About 8 or 10 of us – in his rooms on settees etc, while he offers cigs., sits down, smokes, gasses, and stops for discussion. It's rather good to put questions to a man like him.

On 23 May 1935, Wilson describes how he suggested that one of Cole's definitions implied a contradiction. He was delighted to report: "He admitted it, too, when I produced an example!!!" He concluded: "So that's one up. He's a very nice chap!"

Another friendly lecturer was Sir Alfred Zimmern, Professor of International Relations. On 2 June 1935, Wilson wrote that they had discussed armaments before a lecture, whereupon Zimmern said "I've got some good stuff on that at home, are you doing anything this afternoon?" Wilson visited Zimmern, where "We discussed politics, internat. affairs, economics, armaments & everything". Wilson proudly told his parents "Zimmern is supposed to be the greatest living authority on International Affairs" – and then, in a change of mood typical of the letters, he discusses Albert Goodwin's marriage, his new running shoes, and his decision not to run in the Scout Sports.

Wilson's tutors were supportive. On 25 November 1935 Wilson reported that Knox advised him to concentrate on the Gladstone Prize Essay Prize during the Christmas Vacation, and his letters until early March regularly report news of his Gladstone essay. The College even permitted Wilson to spend a few days working in the Gladstone Library at Hawarden. Wilson won the Gladstone Prize, and this



Harold Wilson the athlete.

collection includes several letters of congratulation. On 14 June 1936, Wilson wrote of meeting Lord Sankey, former Lord Chancellor. Sankey expressed pleasure at his prize, saying "he remembered the result, & had a good breakfast that morning. He says that he

always does when a Jesus man gets anything."

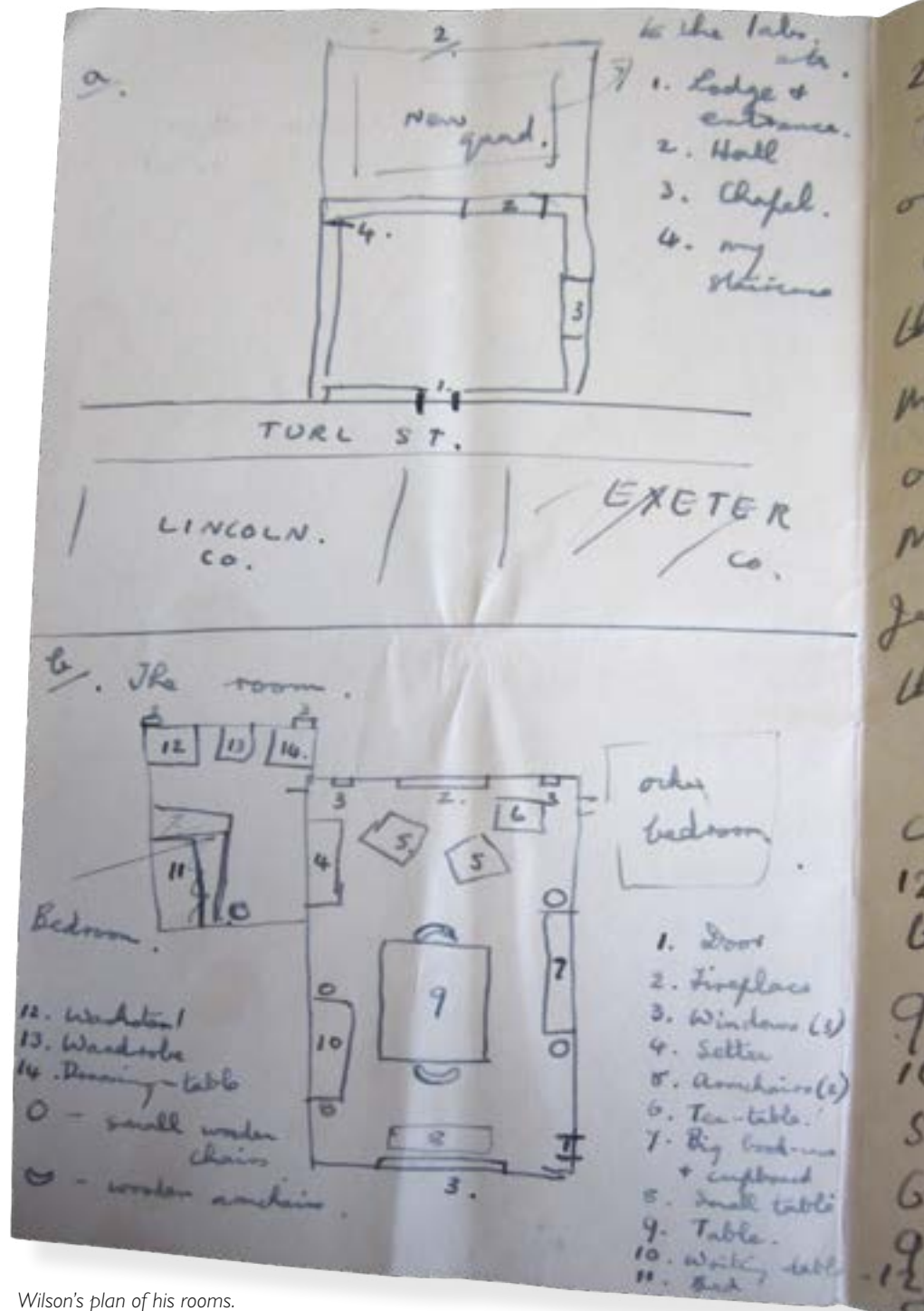
Outside work, Wilson's favourite recreation was athletics. He was a keen runner, as this photograph found with the papers shows. On 16 February 1935, Wilson reported

that "the cross-country captain came in and asked me to run for the Varsity Second Team [Wilson's emphasis] v. Reading A.C." Sadly, Wilson finished seventh overall. But he kept up his running. On 22 May 1935 he wrote: "Am feeling very fit & getting a bit sunburnt, with going to the track." Another recreation was his being elected Secretary to the Sankey Debating Society, named after Lord Sankey, in December 1935.

Wilson had been brought up a Congregationalist, and attended services in the Congregationalist Chapel in Mansfield College, so he made sure in his first letter home to report that he'd visited Nathaniel Micklem, Principal of Mansfield ("a really nice fellow").

A striking revelation of Wilson's student letters is that, although he took great interest in contemporary politics, this future Prime Minister was not an active party politician. At the end of Michaelmas Term 1934 he was nominated as College secretary of the Labour Club, but in January 1935 he dropped this: he was "much more interested in foreign affairs than Labour politics." Instead he attended Liberal Club meetings. He joined the Oxford Union and enjoyed debates there: on 5 March 1935 he reports of one such: "The Speeches were very good! ... There were some brilliant epigrams, besides solid arguments." But he never spoke there, and his main reason for membership seems to have been its excellent library.

During his first year, Wilson lived in Staircase V Room 2. Because Staircase V has been extensively



Wilson's plan of his rooms.

rebuilt, especially after the creation of the Mansell Room, it is not easy to work out where V:2 was. However, in his first letter home, he drew a plan of his set, as seen above.

T. E. Lawrence had lived in Staircase V, and this interested Wilson. On 14 May 1935, just after Lawrence's motorcycle accident, Wilson reported on his scout Cooper, who remembered him from thirty years before:

JC 4220/22/42

JESUS COLLEGE,

OXFORD.
TEL. 3118. 30.1.36.

Dear all,

Thanks for letters and biscuits.
Torpido are the same date as
last year, that is the weekend
round Feb. 22nd

Are you coming?

I wanna see my li'l pup
again.

I expect to come down next
Thursday: booking to Chester, get
there about 1.30 p.m. bus to
Harnden to see what papers
there are & get an idea of
where to buy; then bus to
Queensferry to Brom. arriving

The dog-loving student.

Lawrence appears in a bad way. Cooper's very upset of course. His one explanation to Frank as to who L of A was, was "He was in Five-four". Such is greatness when Lawrence is just 5-4 and Sankey 3-2!

A week later, when students had to choose new rooms, Wilson chose Lawrence's. Once there, as he wrote on 20 October 1935, he admitted that the view was not great, but because it was above the kitchen, it was very warm, and saved him from having many fires there.

Wilson liked Cooper. On 17 November 1935 he reported

that "one silly idiot" proposed a motion at a JCR meeting to ask the College to sack him. Wilson wrote "I opposed it very vehemently". The motion lost. The JCR minutes confirm that Wilson "hotly defended" Cooper. Cooper retired at the end of 1935, and on 19 January 1936 Wilson had to admit that, with his new scout, West, "My room absolutely gleams with polish etc."

Wilson was an Exhibitioner, but he had to budget carefully. So in his first letter he wrote "I've kept minute accounts of expenditure & am correct even to the nearest ½d." Admittedly, by the end of term he regularly asked for

some help. On 6 March 1935, for example, he asks for £5, to cover his fare home, and tips to his scout, Cooper; the boot boy, the porter, and for postage costs. Food concerns him: he often debates whether it is cheaper to eat College breakfast and lunch, or provide it himself. For a while he even encourages his parents to send him food parcels to save money, and on 8 December 1934, he thanks his parents for sending him a ham.

There was room for some frivolity. On 28 April 1935, he reported on being given permission to own a gramophone: "it's very nice & cheers things up a bit." He does not say much about his listening, but on 10 November 1935 he mentions owning a Gracie Fields recording.

The letters suggest an easy relationship with Wilson's parents. He is always delighted when they visit him, and he discusses detailed plans for entertaining them (and, like any student, sending long lists of things to bring down with them). He enjoyed sending them society termcards, dinner menus, and even his lecture lists. Undoubtedly his parents in turn were proud of their clever son.

Wilson regularly sent back one other thing to the Wirral – his laundry. It proved cheaper regularly to package up his dirty clothes to send home than to use a local laundry. Many students probably did this; but Wilson is one of the few people to discuss it.

Wilson's love of dogs is evident in the letters. He regularly asks after Gyp, the family dog, and was delighted when, after Gyp's death in the autumn of 1935, the family

Thanks for Birthday Letters + £5 received
 How no news except

- ① Thanks for entertaining Saturday's visitors.
- ② Have done a lot of pubbing
- ③ Received this pen (+ pencil) from Miss G. M. Baldwin esq.
- ④ Have just seen a notice re the Gladstone Memorial library at Rowden — that students can use — so if I can't get all the books I want at Hayses etc I

bought a puppy. On 30 January 1936, when discussing seeing his family soon, he suddenly wrote "I wanna see my li'l pup again".

A touching aspect to these letters are regular allusions to "G.B." or "G.M.B." This is Gladys Mary Baldwin, Wilson's girlfriend. At first, worried at their separation, Wilson asks on 28 October 1934: "Do you ever see G.M.B. now? How many walk her home from chapel? Why not give her a lift home some night?" He should not have worried: "G.B." stayed in touch with his parents, and for his birthday in March 1935, he "Received this pen (& pencil) from Miss G. M. Baldwin esq." [sic!] On 3 June 1935, as his parents are due to visit, Wilson suggests things to

bring down, namely his camera, Marjorie's chemistry books to sell — and Gladys. Eventually they married in 1940. Mrs. Wilson now used her second name, and became known as Mary Wilson.

Just one letter survives from Wilson's last year, but of course he got a brilliant First in 1937, and won the George Medley Scholarship. His photograph appeared in the Jesus College Magazine. Wilson became a Junior Research Fellow at Univ., and he might have become a don, but for the Second World War, when Wilson was seconded to Whitehall. During this time he turned to politics, and was elected an MP in 1945. The rest is history.

When a student writes home, they may well not reveal everything

A welcome birthday gift.

that they get up to. Other people's memories of Wilson, however, support the picture painted in his letters. There are no tales of his misbehaving at an Elizabethan Society dinner, for example.

Perhaps in some ways it is the very ordinariness of these letters which makes them special. Not only is it exciting to have these undergraduate letters from one of our greatest alumni but, even had Harold Wilson done nothing noteworthy afterwards, his letters still tell us so much about Jesus life in the 1930s.

We are very grateful to Robin Wilson for permitting us to quote and reproduce extracts from his father's letters.

A Day in the Life ...

Grahame Davies LVO | Welsh poet and author

Welsh poet, author and Friend of Jesus College, Dr Grahame Davies LVO was born in the former coal mining village of Coedpoeth near Wrexham in north east Wales. He gained a degree in English Literature at Anglia Ruskin University and qualified as a journalist with the Thomson Organisation at Newcastle. He was awarded a doctorate by the University of Wales for his study – written in Welsh – of the work of R.S. Thomas, Saunders Lewis, T.S. Eliot and Simone Weil. More recently, he was commissioned by Jesus College to write a poem in celebration of the new Welsh Access Fourth Quad, a line of which is inscribed in stone in the Quad.



Tell us a little about yourself

I was born and brought up in Coedpoeth, one of the industrial villages in the hills to the west of Wrexham. Linguistically, it was a mixed upbringing. English was the dominant language in the home and the community, but I was always able to speak Welsh, particularly with older relatives and at school. My father was a quantity surveyor, director of a building company, and later a

college lecturer, and my mother was a journalist. My elder brother, Mark, is a lawyer. Offa's Dyke formed the boundary to one side of the village and I grew up with a keen sense of borders and identity questions, which have been a preoccupation throughout my work.

When did you know you wanted to be a poet and/or what drew you to poetry particularly?

Do you see it as an extension of your creative writing?

Well, my infant school teacher, Millicent Hopwood, told my parents I would be a writer, but I struggle to remember any signs of promise quite that early in my life! I really became conscious of it when I was 16 and attending Yale Sixth Form College in Wrexham. There I was fortunate enough to meet the poet Bryan Martin Davies (1933-2015), who was one of the lecturers. He

was a distinguished Welsh-language poet; he taught me the art of writing, and was in many ways a role model for me until well into my twenties. He was the first person from south Wales I had ever met, and was a saturnine, charismatic figure. I emulated his style for many years until I discovered a voice of my own. I can still find touches of his distinctive approach in my work from time to time. And the experience made me conscious of the responsibility anyone has who finds themselves a gatekeeper to opportunity, whether that is educational, occupational, or creative. We all have a duty to open the door and help bring people through.

How is writing poetry different from your other writing? Is the creative process the same?

I'd say it was quite different. I spent countless hours on learning the craft when I was young, and I internalised the techniques over a long period. Now, when I write, it feels more instinctive than intellectual. There's an element of it that is almost physical. When a poem is approaching, I can feel it like one anticipates a challenge or an encounter: a frisson of excitement and, always, the apprehension that you might not be able to rise to the occasion and that this might be the last time such a feeling comes. It's like that every time. Until the next time.

Sometimes, when discussing a project with the person who is commissioning it, I can feel the moment when the potential poem is ready to be written. It's an idea or an image wrapped in a feeling. If it doesn't have the feeling, I can't take

the work forward. Recently, I had a conversation with a potential commissioner who had a perfectly good idea for a project, but as we discussed it, I couldn't feel that tingle so I knew it wasn't for me. By contrast, if I think of the commission I wrote for Jesus College, it was while I was having lunch with Nigel Shadbolt that I knew I could do the work. As he talked about cosmology, intelligence, and the limits and possibilities of knowledge, I knew immediately I could write the words, and, roughly, what they would say.

Who is your poetry for?

When I was young it had a large element of self-expression: I was trying to develop and express my own view of the world. There was also a strong current of social conscience – first of all in portraying the challenges facing the post-industrial South Wales Valleys, where I lived from 1986 -1997 while working as a journalist. Then in the early 2000s, the focus changed to a satirical look at Cardiff's Welsh-speaking media middle class, to which I at that time belonged (I lived in Cardiff from 1997-2021). In the first case, I was trying to change the way the society looked at the underprivileged Valleys, and in the second I was trying to change the way that quite privileged section of society looked at itself. So there was a wider social purpose. But, by the start of the second decade of the millennium, I felt I had said all I wanted to say about those things. Irony is a tool that hurts the hand that uses it. For years now, I have found more satisfaction in writing for other people, other communities and institutions. Usually this is via

commissions, where I am asked to express something they want to say: their celebration, their commemoration. This allows me to enter into a different way of seeing the world, rather like an actor playing a role. It's quite a relief not to have to express one's own views all the time, not least because they can become over-familiar, even to oneself, let alone anyone else. If the person commissioning the work says that I have expressed what they wanted to say, I count that as a success.

That said, alongside such public work, there's a continuing stream of personal work, much of it inspired by dreams.

Thinking about A Day in the Life of, is there a typical day for you in the poetry and creative writing process?

I've never been a full-time writer. I have always carried out a demanding day job unrelated to my literary work. I learned early that this arrangement worked well for me. The day job took care of life's necessities and made use of my professional resources, leaving the creative resources untouched and ready to be used in any time I could find for them.

Knowing that I would never have an extended period when I would be free to write means that I have lived with a perpetual deadline. We all know that we can often do our best work in a brief period as a deadline approaches. For me, it's always a deadline. If a poem comes, it has to be written very quickly, while that initial frisson can still be felt. That means writing it into the notebooks I keep with me, composing in my head while

I'm driving (I have a long weekly commute) and dictating it to the voice-activated recorder on my phone. Or if, as often happens, the poem has come as a vivid dream, it means tapping it into my phone as soon as I wake up. In any more extended periods of spare time, if there is a writing project underway, there are the usual techniques of walking while stopping periodically to make notes or, of course, spending time at my computer. I'm a bit of a night owl and don't seem to need a great deal of sleep, especially when there's writing to be done. The creative mind is incredibly resourceful and will cooperate readily with even quite unpromising circumstances if one trusts to it and commits to do one's part.

Poets that inspire you?

R.S. Thomas was a great hero, and I knew him quite well, though I don't think he's an influence. In Welsh, I admire R. Williams Parry – and Bryan Martin Davies, of course. I also have the greatest respect for those who can write in cynganedd, though the skill has always proved beyond me. T.S. Eliot's achievement never ceases to astound me: the ground-breaking innovation of *The Waste Land*, and then the controlled mature wisdom of the *Four Quartets*. Emily Dickinson's extraordinarily individual vision is always thrilling. Robert Frost is definitely an influence, particularly on my English language work, and an audience member once shyly, but correctly, identified Betjeman as an influence too. I would own up to Housman and Edward Thomas as well. Generally, I would always tend towards the poets who are brave enough to risk simplicity rather than hide in cerebral complexity.

Tell us about the importance of Welshness in your poetry and the use of your native language

There's no doubt that it has been central. Like many culturally conscious Welsh-speakers, I live and breathe questions of identity and belonging, and I am acutely attuned to the status and health of the language that means so much to us. A great deal of my material over the years has dealt with these issues, though for probably 10 years or more I have felt that I have said all I want to say about it and, in recent years, I have tried to move beyond identity labels - which can be limiting - whether they are self-imposed or applied from without. That said, when doing readings in England or internationally, I would always make sure that the audience hears some Welsh and gets a chance to learn something about this invaluable minority culture. I long for the time when identity questions are unnecessary, but never expect to see it. I long too for the time when the language will be secure.

Challenges you've faced and advice for aspiring authors or poets

The first challenge was the hardest: learning the basics of successful creative writing. Learning how to show, not tell, how to think in images not in adjectives, how to 'kill your darlings', how to avoid clichés. That these are familiar ideas doesn't make them any easier to achieve. There simply isn't an easy road. You have to submit to the tuition, the criticism, the drafting and redrafting, the thousands of hours spent on learning your craft.

Then there's the challenge of finding your own voice: your own distinctive style. Copying your masters and heroes or heroines is a good start but eventually, all being well, you will find your own voice. Then there's the challenge of finding your own material: the things no one else has written about, or not written about in that way. All of these things are difficult, but they can be worked through. The support of more experienced writers can help, whether through formal or informal tuition. And maintaining your own wellbeing throughout is an art in itself. I doubt if any writer – anyone who believes their words are worth sharing with the world – can be devoid of egotism. There's nothing wrong with egotism: it's a fuel, but it's a combustible and volatile one, and it does its best work in controlled conditions.

What's next for you? Is there a new collection on the horizon, or a new book?

My second volume of poetry in English is with my publisher currently, and I have various upcoming commissions for lyrics and libretti for classical and folk composers. The lyrics of one of my songs was performed in the Coronation, by the South African soprano Pretty Yende, to a wonderful tune composed by Sarah Class. And I contributed a verse in Welsh to one of the liturgical pieces in the service as well. So that was a day to remember.

*"In the night, and in ourselves, there is a star."
Translation of the poem commissioned to mark the dedication of the Welsh Access Fund Fourth Quad.*

Mae seren yn y nos — ac ynom ni.

Gethinfe Davies

A poem to mark the dedication of the
Welsh Access Fund Fourth Quad

Saying No to Swipe Culture

Michael De Lazzari | 2016 | BA Biological Sciences

Michael De Lazzari came up to Jesus in 2016 to read Biological Sciences, and from there pursued a Master's degree in Radiation Biology at Linacre College. On his return to Vancouver, he set up the dating app SideKick, which utilises cutting-edge encryption techniques to ensure that users can confidently share personal information exclusively with their chosen partner and not with unknown third-party digital advertising platforms.



Michael De Lazzari.

Tell us a little about yourself

Feels like I'm on the spot for making my own dating profile! Where to begin...

I grew up in Vancouver, Canada. It's an absolutely beautiful coastal city sandwiched between mountains and the beach. One of my favourite childhood memories was spring skiing in the morning, and having a picnic dinner by the ocean at night! I have one sibling, an older sister who is currently a patent attorney in San Francisco. We are of both Italian and Croatian descent, hence our shared passion for great food and lively conversations!

I attended Collingwood School in West Vancouver. They have a full K-12 curriculum, so I stayed local for all of my schooling; however, I was extremely fortunate to partake in an exchange programme to St Stithians Boy's College in Johannesburg, South Africa, when I was in Grade 10. This was right before the 2010 World Cup, so the atmosphere was incredible!

The experience of living and studying abroad left a lasting impression on me. I loved immersing myself in a new country and culture, and decided that I would try to apply for university outside of Canada after I graduated high school.

Right around that time, Oxford was undertaking their first North America informational tour. I was able to attend one of the presentations, and immediately



knew that I wanted to apply; I completely connected with the tutorial system, focused programmes, and rich history. I was very honoured to receive an acceptance for Biological Sciences at Jesus College.

Enduring memories of your time at Oxford?

Definitely many, and in a variety of areas. Let's start with academics: professors and lecturers really do a fantastic job with conferring their excitement and passion for their subjects. Dr Timothy Walker's lecture on plants and people stood out (even though I spent most of my time in Zoology and the ORCRB). Most notably, I credit Dr Mark Hill at the Department of oncology for developing my passion for Radiation Biology. In all honesty, I found my interactions with all lecturers, regardless of their impressive accomplishments, immensely positive. I always felt comfortable and welcome, even if at first intimidated.

As for clubs, I did join JCBC rowing (it's hard to avoid at least trying it in Oxford!). While I enjoyed the social aspect, I'm not really one for early mornings and getting on the water in winter! By my third year, I joined the wine circle instead, and understandably found tasting wine

indoors at much more reasonable times of the day far more palatable! I also co-founded an existential risk student society at the Future of Humanity Institute called "Stop the Clock," in reference to human extinction

and the "Doomsday Clock" from the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists – not the lightest chats regarding nuclear holocaust and AI safety, but always absolutely fascinating.

Finally, friends and your social groups really do make all the difference to your experience. I was fortunate to have a close social circle both through Jesus, and the Department of Zoology/Plant Sciences. We shared many fantastic times together – nights out, and nights in – and are still in touch, despite the geographical distance between all of us.

What have you done since graduating from Jesus?

Definitely not what I thought I'd be doing, that's for sure! I was extremely interested in Radiation Biology, specifically for human spaceflight, as a result of the fantastic mentoring I received, and my own lifelong interest in astronauts and the space programme. I stayed at Oxford – this time at Linacre College – and completed an MSc in Radiation Biology. I investigated the effects of neutron radiation on Lens Epithelial Cells, completing my project at (what was then) PHE Didcot.

When I was ready to take the next step of my academic career,

there were several post-doctoral positions in human tissue/spaceflight radiation interactions; however, PhD funding and opportunity was scarce. I could have continued in oncology, but ultimately made the difficult decision to leave academia, as I did not want to specialise in an area that I was not as interested in.

Back in Vancouver, I serendipitously met my future co-founder (I was acting with his son in a school play I participated in while tutoring), and we eventually came up with SideKick Dating during the Covid lockdown.

The opportunity to develop a new business presented itself, and we decided to act on it – it's funny and unusual, the directions that life can take you.

How did your time at Jesus shape or influence your future?

My time at Jesus has been instrumental in the formation of SideKick Dating – even if I didn't realise it at the time.

Jesus has a reputation as one of the friendliest and most welcoming colleges in Oxford. I can absolutely attest to that. What the Covid lockdown really showcased was just how important social connection is. While at Jesus, it is incredibly easy to make friends and have personal interactions on a daily basis – it's really something you take for granted while in uni. When the world was in lockdown, the negative effects of isolation really took their toll. Thinking back to how crucial it was to feel supported while going through my time at Jesus was a strong personal catalyst for creating a new social networking app.

Why online dating?

The sixty-four-thousand-dollar question! I mentioned the social isolation during Covid lockdowns as a major source of inspiration; the other part of the picture is from my personal experiences. During lockdown, I experimented with other popular platforms for the first time.

My experience was marked with a repeating pattern of 'catfishing', being misled by differing intentions, and finding it difficult to make meaningful connections, with so many conversations happening at once. At one point, I even had a stalker who I had to block on multiple apps and platforms!

After speaking with friends who were also on dating sites, I realised that these experiences and frustrations were ubiquitous. I decided to investigate further, and found that various large sample surveys,

including those conducted by the Pew Research Center, showed this to be the case across a much larger sample set, and across various major platforms. While I was aware of some of the more negative stereotypes of dating apps through pop culture, analysing more robust data sets appealed to the scientific training I undertook at Oxford.

SideKick Dating was founded on the belief that app-based online dating can be safer, more effective, and more genuine. Our novel features are designed to increase compatibility-based matching, move away from the "swipe" and disposability culture of current apps, and reduce catfishing and dishonest user intentions:

- We limit matches to 3 at a time, so you can focus on making real connections.
- You can hold up to 3 profiles for 24 hours and come back to them if you can't decide right away.
- All photo verification is mandatory
- You have the option to have a friend act as a Verifier for your identity by having them fill out your biographical details via a link on their own device – profiles that use a third-party Verifier receive a mark visible to all other users.
- The app is used in either Fling or Flame mode – Fling for something Casual, Flame for something more. You are only shown users in the same mode.
- Communications on our app are end-to-end encrypted, and our databases do not store or sell user information.

SideKick is not designed for any particular age group, gender identification, or sexual preference.





We believe safe and effective dating should be for everyone.

For the initial release, SideKick is non-monetised, and free for everyone to use (iOS platforms for the first release, Android to follow). We are eventually targeting a subscription service further down the road.

Business high spots?

One of the most exciting features of this entire experience has been the need to remove myself from my comfort zone, and find ways to deal with the uncertainty of forging a non-standard path forward. Every day is something different, which not only provides variety, but also represents a fresh set of challenges. The main takeaway is to turn what is often the most frightening part of entrepreneurship into the most positive aspect of it.

And lows?

The delays and the troubleshooting: anyone involved in large software projects like this will tell you how normal this is. However, coming in

from the outside world, it certainly has been a test of my patience. This has been yet another aspect where my scientific training has been quite helpful.

Tips for would-be entrepreneurs

- The Number One thing is that a good idea is a good idea – it doesn't matter what your background or experience is. If it's worth pursuing, consider it.
- On that note, who you surround yourself with is key. If you are lacking in a technical area, make sure someone on your team can fill that role – everyone should be complimentary.
- Be prepared for frustration, and have lots of patience.
- Remember that life is still going on while you are working on a company, project, idea, or the like. You want to be focused, but try to not get too lost on everything else.
- Finally, there are great resources at Jesus (including the Jesus

Entrepreneur Network) and the University as a whole. The 'self-made person' is a myth – never be afraid to ask for help!

What's next for you?

I do have other businesses and ideas I am investigating. However, my main goal in the immediate future is to see SideKick Dating grow, and incorporate any feedback we get from our users – I think the world has had enough of other services that don't deliver what they promise, and with SideKick Dating, I hope to pay it forward by providing an effective and safe platform to help people connect in a meaningful way!

For any further information, please check out our website, social links, and join the app. Let's change the attitude around online dating, and say no to swipe culture!

The SideKick dating app is due to launch later in 2023. Please keep an eye on the website for more information: sidekickdating.com.

Remembering John Walsh

04.09.1927 - 03.11.2022



Photo of John Walsh by Aider McInyre

John Dixon Walsh was Fellow and Tutor in History at Jesus from 1958-1992, Senior Research Fellow from 1992-1994, and Emeritus Fellow from 1994. During his time at College he was also Junior Dean, Fellow Librarian, and Editor of the *Jesus College Record*.

A distinguished scholar, John was regarded as one of the leading authorities on 18th century Christianity and particularly of Methodism. His publications include seminal works on John Wesley and the early years of the Methodist movement.

College has received so many warm tributes and messages that an online booklet has been compiled and can be viewed and downloaded at: bit.ly/3P0K14W

The following tribute was written and read by Felicity Heal, Emeritus Fellow and former Fellow and Tutor in Modern History, at the Memorial Service held for John Walsh in April 2023.

John once described himself to me as thoroughly 'institutionalised'. It was an unusual observation, especially from one who enjoyed a happy domestic life with Frances and his family, and whose leisure activities – climbing in his early years, and gardening later – were individualist. But I think that his choice of language was deliberately designed to emphasise that he had always been thoroughly integrated into communities, and that those communities had in turn moulded and nurtured his public life.

The first of these communities was of course the Methodist church, the bedrock of John's life. More specifically it meant growing up in the manse through which his parents served their congregations. Then Kingswood school at Bath, which added with an excellent academic training within a Methodist environment. Kingswood was followed by National Service. Now the army and service in post-war Germany was certainly not John's idea of an ideal community, but it opened his mind to remarkable, and in some ways terrifying life experiences which remained remarkably vivid throughout his later years.

Magdalene College, Cambridge – his home from 1948 to 58 – was bliss after the grimness of the army years. John, in his reminiscences on this Cambridge decade, observed that his Magdalene was not an intellectual powerhouse. Rather self-consciously conservative it stood for values some of which at least were inherited from the pre-war past. John warmed to

this sense of connectedness and continuity with earlier times, though not to the social conservatism. In Magdalene, he wrote, the 'raucous present' did not obliterate the sense of being 'haunted by the past'. In his day there remained Edwardian survivors to whom the First World War still seemed very close. The College also nurtured convivial hospitality and the art of good conversation – the latter being something that he particularly prized having overcome what he claimed was his early shyness. It was there that John encountered C.S. Lewis and connected with those whose meetings of the Inklings he later attended at Oxford's Eagle and Child.

The move to Jesus followed in 1958. There were inevitably contrasts between the two colleges, though similarities of size and organisation. This was, of course, before the great university expansion of the 1960s. John often reminded us that on his arrival the GB could sit comfortably around the table in the Old Bursary, whereas, and I quote him, at his retirement in 1992 'meetings looked more like the 1815 Congress of Vienna in



Felicity Heal.

plenary session'. Principal Christie had a vision of the College as becoming more focused on public-school admissions. But meanwhile he made the best of what he had: telling his new fellow that 'there are three categories of young men in this College – 'the English, the Welsh and the very Welsh'. It was a frustration to John that he was unable to persuade the History Faculty that the very Welsh should be able to use their native tongue in the text paper in the first year exams. 'Difficult to mark and a minority interest...' were comments to me much later.

John undertook many College duties during his teaching career, from being junior dean (his climbing

skills helped) to being Dean of Degrees, Fellow Librarian and Vice-Principal. Two of the other roles he undertook seem to me to show how he played a key part in sustaining the sense of community in the College. He was steward of the SCR for many years, and then editor of the *College Record* from 1992-95.

John greatly valued the SCR: it provided the opportunity to share in relaxation and conversation, a break from the pressures of teaching and research and a process of enrichment. This is the behaviour he himself practised, both in regular contact with colleagues and particularly in the entertainment of visitors. Friends and acquaintances were often swept up from encounters in Bodley and brought to lunch. In this sense the proximity of Jesus to Upper Arts was one of the many reasons that he valued his College. There were rarely any occasions when he did not go out of his way to welcome and talk to those visiting the SCR. He delighted in the congenial hospitality of the Common Room, and the discourse of his colleagues. Of course colleagues could occasionally try even his saintly demeanour. I have vivid memories of a coffee time when we were both hijacked by our wonderfully eccentric Classicist John Griffith, who was propounding the idea of building a monorail along Botley Road. Anxious not to cause offence, but very late for a tutorial, John began a rather desperate retreat, reversing and bowing like an Ottoman vizier before the sultan until he reached the safety of Second Quad.

Jesus, for John, was far more than the sum of its senior members and

his own pupils. It comprehended students of all status and subject, and all of those who might just be visitors for an afternoon, who were warmly welcomed. John's upbringing as a son of the manse influenced every aspect of his later life, including above all the sense that a true society was constantly open to the needs of others. The model was his hero John Wesley. As John wrote in a passage that Frances chose for reading at his funeral, for Wesley his life's work had a core 'in the concern for outsiders', and in openness to the needs of others.

One of the groups he most valued were the College staff. John described them as 'the bedrock' of the system and the focus of so much student loyalty. In a memorable speech at the opening of the staff Common Room, he averred that to write the history of the College in the last 100 years he would turn first not to the archives but to the collective memory of the older staff, who could shine light on the past. When I came to edit College history I had his injunction in mind, and turned in part to 'those who had served us'. They were part of the organic experience of the community, though John was probably of the last generation of dons who could really appreciate the longevity of staff memory as those generations who served for forty or fifty years began to die out. He was an excellent listener, who readily brought out the best in his interlocutors. He was also a teller of anecdotes, and so framed his conversation in vivid language supported with suitable accent. When telling the well-known tale of Edwin Stevens's return to Jesus, he has Fred Reeley, the Head Porter,

who recognised him, 'putting on his specs and saying, "Hello Mr Stevens, very nice to see you again"'.

John was of the Oxford generation that tutored on a wide range of subjects, carrying a heavy load of teaching sessions and essay commentary without complaint. And he continued to see his teaching afresh each year. I remember an occasion when we left at the end of a College dinner; I complaining a little of tiredness, John remarking that he needed to read over his notes on Gladstone ahead of a tutorial the next day. 'Mr G.' was a particular favourite, his public persona made more vivid for the undergraduates with the anecdote about John's grandfather walking to hear a Gladstonian lecture. That was the type of story through which he made his subject live.

It need hardly be said that John was supportive and compassionate to any struggling students. Only the idle could attract his ire: mainly because they failed to take advantage of their privileged situation. John had a strong moral compass and was prone in pre-term meetings to remind students that they were in College 'by the sweat of other men's brows'. This was, of course, a career lived in the balmy days of full grants. He was particularly alert to those who could not or did not have the capacity to cultivate the 'Brideshead' image of Oxford: black tie for Schools' dinners seemed to him unnecessary – students rarely agreed.

It is interesting that, despite this strong commitment to teaching, John was happy enough in



retirement to shed the tutorial load. Thereafter his collegiate interests became ever more focused on the broad community and its long experience. I can evoke a sense of this in the pleasure with which he pursued any renovations to the buildings and the finds they might unearth. One staircase renewal produced amongst other things a cache of clay pipes and an 18th century playing card, sufficient to stimulate him to a lively disquisition on the past sociability of Jesus.

John loved the parish of the College, but he was never parochial. His catholicity of interests and engagements were shown at the university level in his great contributions to teaching on the CI8th and his key role as a graduate supervisor across three faculties. His broad interests were shown in another sense in his North American experiences. He had three research periods in the States – at Brown, in South Carolina and at The Huntington Library in Los Angeles, each

reinforcing his fascination both with the scholarship and the culture of the USA. Somewhere among his papers I think that Frances still has the verses, an elegant pastiche in the style of Alexander Pope, that he penned in praise of the Huntington.

In thinking of our many years of friendship I returned to a notion that I had often had about John, though one that I am not sure ever expressed clearly to him. He reminded me of the Clerk of Oxenford from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Like the Clerk, John eschewed ostentation and all forms of show. He had, as I observed above as 'a strong moral compass' within a Christian framework. No question that the clerk and John would have occupied adjacent desks in Upper Arts. Above all John, like the fictive model 'gladly learned and gladly did teach'.

Such a parallel cannot be pursued too far. The Clerk lacks a key characteristic that was central to John as a colleague and friend – wit and humour. And it is that wit, combined with a pleasure in telling good stories and anecdotes to which I constantly return in my memories of John. He built friendships upon a deep understanding of, and engagement with those who lived and worked with him. I can conclude no better than by quoting Montaigne on friendship, the antithesis of institutionalisation: 'within a fellowship the peak of perfection consists in friendship'. That friendship was experienced by so many of those here today, an affection that enriched all our lives. I was so fortunate to be his colleague.

This address, also given at the Memorial Service for John Walsh in April, was written and read by Thomas Laqueur, Helen Fawcett Distinguished Professor Emeritus, and Professor of the Graduate School's Department of History, University of California, Berkeley.



Thomas Laqueur.

More than half a century ago my DPhil supervisor Brian Harrison went on leave, and I was placed for one or two terms in John's care; a supernumerary burden beyond the astonishing number of graduate students – sometimes as many as ten or twelve – he supervised at any one time. Our first meeting was I think in his rooms at Jesus; I probably talked nervously at him about my thesis topic: Sunday Schools and Working-Class Religion in the late 18th and early 19th century. I don't remember the conversation because it blends into five decades of conversations during which his role in my life, as in the lives of so many others, remained a constant: as a friend, which he very

soon became; as tutor, which he was and always remained; and as a historian, whether as teacher or colleague.

As Jane Garnett and Colin Matthew say in their introduction to the Festschrift they edited for John thirty years ago, these roles were never separable. "All those who know him recognise how quickly a conversation with him becomes, in the best possible sense, a tutorial that broadens and develops the mind." Conversation was perhaps his greatest gift. Anywhere, in the house or garden at 253 Woodstock Road, or in College, often on walks in the Scottish Highlands, or on the Lakeland peaks in winter, or on

Otmoor, or Port Meadow on the way to the Trout or Perch. John loved walking and what he called the "natural order" more generally, which I think included his allotment and his garden with generations of resident foxes. Nature was, he said, an "important part of his religious life." It was also an important part of the intellectual and personal life he shared with us.

At our last meeting in May, six months before he died, we discussed – with Frances' encouragement – the virtues of hearing aids, which I demonstrated by giving him one of mine to try. He was not convinced. In one sense everything had changed between then and the spring of 1971. I met him as a callow American post-graduate, and we last spoke as two old men – now seemingly much closer in age – about infirmities and, more happily, about children and grandchildren.

John would resist the notion of timelessness in the life he shared with us. He began his essay on his years at Cambridge, as a student and young don, by thinking about change, about ruptures, as if the John Walsh whose name appears as someone who read a paper on Victorian nonconformity to the Paralytic Society might not really be him. "The discontinuities of one's life and personality suddenly seem more evident than the coherence. The past returns all too often as a series of unconnected images; one's younger self seems another person," he says. He asks himself, "was the scowling, anxious-

looking youth in that fading college photograph really me?"

Of course, he has a point. There is a reason that the problem of the continuity of personhood has troubled philosophers. He was, and remained, of another generation from almost everyone here this afternoon. His world extended back into Edwardian times. He exploded munitions in Germany a year after the war ended; he fired warning shots into the night as he saw the feet of unidentified marauders climbing through the window of his room, amidst scenes of despair and murder. He climbed in the Alps with a former SS man only recently released from Soviet captivity, and thought to himself how odd it was that they trusted their lives to one another – an extreme example perhaps of John's ability to get on with anyone. This is the John Walsh into whose rooms the Master of Magdalene came unannounced to find him practising a traverse on the high mantelpiece. His thesis on early Yorkshire evangelicals, that has been read in its samizdat version by hundreds and influenced many more, was finished in 1956 almost seventy years ago.

I can't speak to how he understood the ruptures and discontinuities in his long life: his sense of himself as a child of missionaries in India who spoke Bengali for his first six years; the grandson of a Methodist lay preacher who remembers the sound of workers' clogs as they walked to the mill; the son of the manse who became a fellow of College after a decade in Cambridge. "I felt rather like one of the barbarians who broke into the Roman senate," he writes about his

scholarship interview at Magdalene.

But my sense of John is of him existing, not in a past or a sequence of ruptures, but in an abiding present: the John of John and Frances for six decades; the John of 253 Woodstock Road; a cultivated, cosmopolitan man – he had studied in Germany and Sweden and taught in the United States, north and south – who was at the same time profoundly rooted in place and in things that mattered to him. I think of how finely attuned he was to the spire he saw at the end of the road as he left Jesus and to church spires more generally. I think of his Methodist ceramics collection and his grandfather clock.

There was a sort of aria da capo quality about his work, a circling back. In the early 1950s the young John Walsh, motor biking in search of evidence for his thesis, befriended a Yorkshire vicar who gave him the manuscript records of the Elland Society, a late 18th, early 19th century clerical evangelical discussion group. John claimed that he had long felt guilty about not returning them. I do not know where they ended up, but John's last project was an edition of these papers for the Church of England Record Society.

There is also the continuity of his handwriting: a loopy abseiling script in which he wrote thousands of letters and notes to a broad swath of the scholarly world that had asked for his help. His cursive seemed to mirror his speech with its slight hesitations and sense of intimacy: "I am well... [loop] as far as I know [loop]... as my granny used to say."

John was a man with an almost

preternatural gift for conversation that he bestowed profligately on all with whom he dealt in pretty much any context. A subtle and generous teacher; a consistently beautiful writer of unassumingly elegant prose; a captivating speaker in his living room or College rooms and before large audiences; a profound historian, too modest about his work. John would not want to be compared to Wesley, for a variety of reasons, but what he says of the earlier John could be said about ours. He "ignored differentials of rank and respect and spoke directly to people of all stations of life, whether kings or paupers, conversing naturally with those on varied steps of the social ladder". And so could the observation that our JW found in reports about the other JW: he spoke "like the placid flow of a clear stream."

"The thing about him, our John," writes a former pupil, "was that you bumped into him in the street, and he was exactly the same person [as in tutorials]. Friendly. [He] knew who you were, remembered past conversations and personal details, dealt with your overawed parents when he met them as if they were his equals. There was no side to him."

"His changelessness I needed no reminding about," wrote another of his undergraduate pupils in response to a colleague's reminiscences. "His genuine interest in one as a person, his unforced readiness to watch, attend and comment upon Jesus rugby, his encouragement in the far from sparkling tutorial framework."

A gift for conversation and an interest in others on the level

of John's is probably, like musical talent, inborn. But early training may have helped. "For a shy junior don, sitting in the candlelit half-circle of the Combination Room [at Magdalene]..." John writes, "keeping up one's conversational end with Lewis [that is C.S. Lewis who became a good friend and influence on his life] was part ordeal, part delight, and certainly an education." Being the son and grandson of Methodist ministers must have helped. But John was by nature interested in and able to talk to anyone. To Alan, the traveller, who for years came and scrubbed the Walsh's doorstep, with whom John easily engaged; to mentally ill friends; to all of us; to hundreds at an early History Workshop.

John spoke on "Methodism and the common people" to a "full-to-standing Workshop" on "People's History" in 1969. He was one of only two Oxford historians – the other was Tim Mason – and the only speaker out of 53 to speak about religion. This was not his crowd, but he often said that he was honoured to be an early supporter. By 1983, History Workshop, the editors say, "recognised the power of religion as a shaping force in the contemporary world", and the volume that that conference generated that year was dedicated to John.

The rapporteur on the 1969 occasion tells readers that "Walsh, having first to recover from his introduction as the outstanding religious historian of England" began by saying that he hoped to generate debate. The debate it generated disappointed the rapporteur but through no fault of Walsh's. He had, we are told, "a preacher's

problems" i.e., that of involving most of the congregation most of the time, which he met with the grace and modesty we would expect: "he spoke in the English language" we are told, did not "resort to the pseudo precision of jargon," or to the "mystification of casuistry." In sum, "there was as an opening out of historical problems" which engaged many, although perhaps not at a level to satisfy the rapporteur.

It is easy to position John in a certain historiographical landscape. He encouraged social historians to look beyond the function of religion to its experiential core, and historians of religion to see beyond the parochial issues that dominated church and denominational histories. He himself did precisely that. He was an exemplary, influential, and ecumenical social historian of religion.

But he also understood religious experience at a level beyond its social and institutional embeddedness. He claimed that neither he nor anyone had, as he put it, "examined the interior landscape ... of a religion of the heart, a religion of experience, often very passionate experiences of doubt and guilt," of humble lives suddenly "transformed by moments of extraordinary mystical insight." But he did precisely examine these matters.

John often spoke of being disappointed that he did not publish more. This was not a matter of writing more: his thesis is famous but unpublished; there are manuscripts on Moderate Calvinism and much more in his desk drawer. Nor is it a matter of research. John

was in Bodley's upper reading room at every opportunity. According to Frances he recited to himself these lines from Donne's *Satire III* as he ascended its stairs:

*On a huge hill,
Cragged and steep, Truth stands,
and he that will
Reach her, about must and about
must go,
And what the hill's suddenness
resists, win so.*

He did win.

John in fact published a great deal in the old-fashioned sense of "to make public." There are more than twenty books dedicated to him. That is, not books in which he is thanked for his help, but dedicated to him. And there are the myriad theses he supervised and the talks to history societies. And the conversations: had I thought of the importance of place in thinking about churchyards? he asked on a walk around Otmoor. John told me once that he was disappointed that he could not offer his students as much as his teachers had offered him. It is hard to imagine what more he could have offered. If publishing were understood as propagating, John would be thought prodigious.

At a funeral in 1996 John spoke to the Donne lines from *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*: "All mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated..."

As always, he found the right words for the occasion.



Photograph by Brittany Welner James.

Unfinished Business

An interview with Ed Horne | 1974 | Literae Humaniores



Ed Horne read Literae Humaniores at Jesus, matriculating in 1974. He represented Oxford in the rugby Varsity match at Twickenham in 1975, '76 and '77, and was a member of the Jesus 1976 Summer Ball Committee.

In 2017, Ed swam the 10 miles of the Gibraltar Straits to Point Cires in Morocco in 3 hours 36 minutes. A year later, he completed the 10.25 miles Lake Windermere end-to-end swim in 6 hours 22 minutes, but in 2019 his first attempt at a solo English Channel swim was cancelled due to bad weather and a boat breakdown. Repeated attempts in 2020 and 2021 were hampered by rough seas and cramp, leaving Ed and the Channel with unfinished business. As reported in the 2022 Jesus College Record, in July 2022 Ed was back in the water to successfully complete his cross-Channel swim in 15 hours and 51 minutes; at 67 years old, among the oldest 15 people in the world ever to complete the challenge.

Tell us a little about yourself

I was born in 1955 and brought up in Southfields in South West London. My granddad drove the night bus and my dad had left school at 14. My mother was

a war refugee, smuggled out of Czechoslovakia on a forged passport by her father in 1945 as the Iron Curtain came down. I was the middle child of five, the forgotten one.



Ed crossing the blue waters of the Gibraltar Straits.

I went to a local primary school, Sheringdale, and then to Emanuel School in Clapham Junction. Now a co-ed private school, Emanuel back then was an inner city all boys grammar school. Tim Berners-Lee was in my year group. Whatever became of him?

School was a haven for me in my teenage years as my home life was fraught with the increasing tension between my parents. I drifted into Classics partly because I was pretty good at these three subjects and partly for the smaller class sizes and more individual tuition.

My A level results surprised everyone. I had already secured a place at Manchester University but, on the advice of the Head of Classics, Paul Moreland, I returned to school for the Autumn term 1973 and sat the Oxford entrance exams. Remarkably, I did well enough to be selected for interview and, on 23 December 1973, I received the best Christmas present I have ever received – a telegram which simply read; 'Place awarded Jesus College'. It changed my life.

An important/enduring memory (or memories) of your time at Oxford?

If getting into Oxford had changed my life, Hilary term in 1975 launched my sporting life at Oxford. I played for the Freshmen B and A rugby teams, the Greyhounds and the Blues and, at the end of term, I found myself on tour with the Blues team in Italy. For the ensuing three years I never lost my place in the team, culminating in a most memorable varsity match win in 1977. As a team, we are still in touch with each other and, every

five years, we get together at the eve of Varsity match dinner. Shockingly, the next reunion will be 50 years after!

That same year, I was honoured to play for the Blues team in a test match against the Japanese National XV in Tokyo's Olympic Stadium, live on Japanese national television, to celebrate the Japanese Rugby Football Union's 50th anniversary. We somewhat spoilt the party by narrowly winning the match.

Long before I completed my degree course, I knew that I wanted to forsake Classics and go into the world of business, without really knowing precisely what field I wanted to specialise in. Academically, I found Oxford to be a challenge. I worked extremely hard, particularly in my final year, to secure a second class degree. I succeeded but only just!

What did you do after graduating from Jesus?

Having qualified as a Chartered Accountant with Coopers & Lybrand, my game-changing moment was getting accepted onto the exchange programme to the New York office, returning to London three years later having made many lifelong friends, learnt to ski and play golf, and met the lady who seven years later became my wife.



On Swimmers' Beach before a 10-hour dress rehearsal swim.

Coopers and I parted company in 1989. I had had ten fantastic years of a business apprenticeship. I now knew that I did not want to be an advisor or a consultant, I wanted to be a principal where you have to live with your decisions, both good and bad. I have been privileged to do precisely that for over 30 years for the Klesch Group, including being a crisis Chief Executive bringing businesses out of bankruptcy and completing several large complex acquisitions of companies in the transportation, chemicals and oil sectors. I have so many 'war stories'.

More recently, I launched Longview Capital Limited as a corporate vehicle for me to take on M&A and corporate finance projects as the project leader and to take on one or two part time executive director roles.

You say getting into Jesus College and going to work in New York were seminal moments. Have there been others?

My next seminal moment was my wedding. As I turned 38 in June 1993, I was single, I had no children and I lived in rented accommodation. In May 1994, I married Dale, my lovely wife of 29 years and, in April 1995, we had our only child, Elizabeth (aka 'Fizzy'). By the time I reached my 40th birthday, I had finally become an adult.

I also had a 'life changing' event in the summer of 2011. It was simply hearing my urologist say the words 'Mr Horne, I have to tell you that you have traces of cancer in your prostate!' I'd had a recent biopsy following a raised PSA blood test result. I was 56 years old with a daughter of only 16 years. Thankfully, it was very early stage and the urologist and I agreed a plan of active surveillance and no immediate treatment. Nearly twelve years on and there are no signs that the cancer is becoming active. This scare made me re-evaluate my lifestyle. I reduced my alcohol intake, vowed to remain fit and healthy, and to live every day as if it is my last.

Describe a typical day during your swim training?

There is no such thing as a typical day! The objective is to be ready to swim approximately 35 kilometres in varying weather and sea conditions in water somewhere between 16-18 degrees C.

You start in the sea in early May doing split one hour swims (an hour in, an hour out to warm up



Ed in festive polar bear trunks at the unheated Tooting Bec Lido.

and an hour back in) building up as the sea slowly warms up to doing a weekend or two before your slot when you swim seven hours on a Saturday and six hours on a Sunday – that is your 35 kilometres. Midweek swims are for recovery and speed work to prevent getting into a plodding rut. For good measure, I also added a ten-hour dress rehearsal swim before each of my three attempts.

Any advice for would-be cross channel swimmers?

The extreme open water swimming 'tribe' is very open and welcoming and there are lots of people you can talk to. My key pieces of advice are:

- Make sure you want to do it. It's painful and it's mentally and physically draining;

- Speak to as many people as you can about the process and decide what is right for you;
- Get yourself 'hooked up' with a mentor and a training group. I had Kevin Murphy as my mentor and his training group is known as 'The King's swimmers' but there are several other very experienced groups out there; and
- Come and speak to me.

People say that swimming the Channel changes your life. Has it? Are there any further itches to scratch?

Although I don't think that swimming the Channel has changed my life, it gave me the most enjoyable couple of weeks of fame in late July last year. I posted an

eighteen second video on LinkedIn of me swimming into the dawn in the Channel. The only sounds that can be heard are my arms gently entering the water- not exactly mainstream social media. The video went viral with over 550,000 views and 20,000+ reactions. An icon to the lethargic, middle-aged business person. I was subsequently asked by Life Redefined, an online group promoting employment for the over 55s, to become one of their Redefiners. If I have managed to inspire just one or two people to become more physically active then that is a very humbling bonus.

My 'extreme swimming' career has so far stretched about 10 years. It was very much a stepping stone process with the Channel being the pinnacle for me. There are a couple of iconic swims in the USA that combine with the English Channel to form the internationally recognised 'Triple Crown'. If I am to continue, it will be those two itches (around Manhattan Island in New York and the Catalina Strait in Southern California) that I'll need to scratch.

Are you still swimming?

Of course! Swimming saved my life. I can be found regularly at Brockwell Lido with friends enjoying a cold water swim (in temperatures as low as 2.8 degrees C) and most Wednesday evenings training with the RAC Masters squad in the nicest pool in central London on Pall Mall. These two pieces of my weekly routine will endure. The bigger question is: 'Did I get back in the sea in early May?'



Private Passions: Motorcycling

Julian Greenwood | 1970 | Jurisprudence

As a child in the 1950s and 60s I began to notice motorbikes. Whenever I heard the roar of a Triumph Bonneville or Norton Commando I felt an escalating excitement. Perhaps it was in the genes? For my father and his siblings growing up before the war, motorcycles were a rite of passage. He courted my mother on a Norton; she was always safely in the sidecar, never a pillion! Then, throughout the war in the Royal Engineers, he was continuously on two wheels – usually a Matchless.

I didn't come out to my parents with what had basically become my secret passion. I knew it would have distressed my mother beyond measure. Furthermore, motorcycling fathers in my experience fall into one of two categories: namely those who actively encourage and support their sons to follow them into biking; or those preferring to steer them away from the risks into more innocuous interests, as I think would have been my father's position.

So my passion, albeit intensifying, was consigned to the closet until some point later in adult life. Reading Law at Jesus, qualifying as a solicitor, and marriage swiftly followed by the arrival of three children in the 1980s, combined to propel the potential fulfilment of my ambition much further into the future.

By the mid-noughties, when my son and daughters were all proceeding through medical school, I found myself increasingly faced with the realisation: if you don't do it now, you never will! One of my closest friends was a committed biker who announced that he had a particular present in mind for my 54th birthday in the summer of 2005: namely, riding pillion on the back of his Honda CBR1200 from Newport to Abergavenny – iconic biking territory – and back. His riding style was adventurous, particularly on the overtakes, generating such a surge of excitement and purpose that, in less than a week, I signed



up with one of Cardiff's motorcycle training schools.

On a sweltering July day, I turned up in full black leathers and boots for my CBT (Compulsory Basic Training). This certificate of basic competence has to be achieved before one can ride a 125 learner bike with L-plates on a public road. I had been warned by other bikers

that, despite having driven cars for more than thirty years, riding a motorcycle might not come easily. How right they were! The other riders were renewing their certificates – which give you two years to pass your test – so they all knew how to control a bike. I turned out to be a very slow learner, but made better progress once I got the instructor to myself.



I'm not sure who was more frustrated, him or me! I eventually got my CBT and for the rest of 2005 regularly hired a 125cc bike from one of the Cardiff dealerships, building up my confidence and experience often with the assistance of other bikers.

During that winter, the DVSA Theory Test for Motorcyclists had to be negotiated, the preparation for which is often underestimated. I did not make that mistake. As the days lengthened I returned to the training school, transitioning from a 125cc to a bigger bike (500/600cc) for my test in April 2006. To this day I can feel the elation of those words, "You've passed!"

The next six months or so were occupied with a house move, ensuring a suitably secure garage for my forthcoming first big bike. The house also had to be detached so as not to disturb neighbours, as I'm also a bit of a classical pianist – another of my principal passions. By the autumn of 2006 I was ready to ride again, but felt I needed to recover my confidence level with a few refresher lessons from a former police motorcyclist whose riding school was linked to

a Suzuki dealership in the Vale of Glamorgan. Within days I was in the showroom perched upon a black Suzuki Bandit 650 S. I fell in love with it straightaway and rode it home before Christmas.

We are very fortunate in South Wales to have so many wonderful biking roads on our doorstep – in the mountains, along the coast, and with the Vale of Glamorgan in between. The roads within the Brecon Beacons National Park are absolutely amazing and attract motorcyclists from all over the country. Initially in the company of more experienced riders, I began to savour the delights of the Welsh roads, buoyed-up by a BikeSafe course in the summer of 2007 (repeated in 2009) conducted by serving police motorcyclists. I also quickly found my way to the regular haunts, cafés, and stop-offs where the bikers gather, admire and inspect each other's bikes, and exchange biking anecdotes. It continues to be the case that the majority of the bikers I meet out on the road are, like myself, of a more mature age group. Many have become good friends and regular biker mates, each with a compatible

riding style. This is an important point as you must carefully consider who you ride with, particularly in groups, avoiding those likely to take unnecessary risks or to ride recklessly. With experience, you can easily identify the 'nutters', or bikers likely to give motorcyclists a bad name.

The Bandit was a suitable, solid, reliable motorcycle for my first five full years in the saddle, although a little top-heavy. It purred along contentedly and came with a spacious top box which was ideal for trips away, overnight stops and annual CPS union conferences in Grantham and Loughborough, where it invariably attracted a degree of interest and attention. However, out on the road I noticed and became familiar with many different makes and styles, the most exciting of which were the sports bikes (aka racing replicas/café racers) recognisable from the low position of the handlebars in front of the tank and a riding position more horizontal than vertical.

So, exactly five years on from the Bandit it was time for a second bike – a Suzuki GSX-R750 sports bike, also known as a Gixxer 750. I ran

the two bikes until the spring of 2016 when one of my biker mates, who'd always had his eye on the Bandit to take his wife pillion, finally persuaded me to part with it, with about 27,500 miles on the clock. The Gixxer 750 remains my pride and joy to this day, and is currently on about 33,500 miles.

Now well into my 17th full year in the saddle, and after more than 60,000 miles, my passion for motorcycling continues unabated. Unlike some others who take their bikes off the road during the winter months, I ride throughout the year subject to the conditions. Whilst not exactly a fair weather biker, I ride to the forecast and unless, for example, the bike is booked in for a service, there is little point going out in adverse conditions – although I have been caught out in the rain many times.

I go out for a 'blast' as often as I can, either on my own or with others, and there are so many more opportunities since I fully retired from my legal career at the end of 2019. My exhilaration level mounts from the moment I know I'm going out, through wheeling the Gixxer out of the garage for its pre-flight checks, getting into my leathers and finally setting off, opening up the throttle and controlling the 150 bhp under my seat. Whilst continuously endeavouring to balance my own capabilities with those of the bike, I ride defensively managing the risks, focusing entirely on the bike; how I'm riding it, the road surface, and the behaviour of other road users, on the safe assumption that many are not looking out for bikes and are likely to do something impulsive or ill-advised. It is a particular joy to experience the excitement and

sense of freedom that motorcycling provides and that wonderful sense of oneness and closeness with nature, particularly in the spring with the daffodils at the roadside, the lambs in the fields and the fresh green leaves on the trees.

Becoming a biker is definitely one of the best things I have ever done. Members of College who are bikers, or are thinking of becoming one, are most welcome to contact me: biker;jules@hotmail.co.uk





The Imperial State Crown, worn by King Charles III at his coronation this year.

Historic Royal Palaces

Carole Souter | 1975 | PPE

Carole Souter CBE studied PPE at Jesus College between 1975 and 1978. She was Chief Executive of the Heritage Lottery Fund from 2003 to 2016 and Master of St Cross College from 2016 to 2022. Since August 2022 she has been Interim Chair of Historic Royal Palaces.



Carole Souter welcoming guests to the Good Friday Agreement dinner at Hillsborough Castle.

Heritage has played a big part in my life, since my childhood in a small Cornish village that had been home to generations of my family. After twenty years in the Civil Service, I have spent the last twenty working with heritage organisations.

I've held senior leadership roles at English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund (now the National Heritage Lottery Fund), but I've also enjoyed serving as a trustee. The Horniman Museum in south east London (currently the Art Fund's Museum of the Year), the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (with its wonderful twitter handle @morethanadodo), the Oxford Preservation Trust, and George Washington's ancestral home at Sulgrave Manor near Banbury all have their place in my heart.

For the last seven years, I have also been a Trustee of Historic Royal Palaces (HRP), and am currently Interim Chair. I took up that role at the beginning of August 2022, just two months before I stood down

as Master of St Cross College, and will continue until a new permanent Chair is appointed later this year.

HRP looks after six of the most wonderful palaces in the world: the Tower of London, Hampton Court, Kensington Palace, Kew Palace, the Banqueting House, and Hillsborough Castle and Gardens in Northern Ireland. It does so as a charity, dependent on visitors and on donations rather than the public purse.

In the past year I've seen the many different ways in which HRP and its palaces contribute to the life of the nation. I've also been privileged to witness some most extraordinary moments in our recent history from the inside.

I have attended special exhibitions including royal photography in *Life through a Royal Lens*, and high fashion old and new in *Crown to Couture* at Kensington Palace – and a celebration of diversity in *Permissible Beauty* at Hampton Court.

I've seen glorious gardens throughout the seasons, admired a moat full of flowers at the Tower, and watched the Palaces' exceptional staff ensure exciting visits for schoolchildren and reach out to those that might not always see themselves as fitting easily into such places. Some 1500 schools submitted designs for our 'Coronation Bench' competition, and many of the winners will be visiting their benches at the Tower and Hillsborough in coming weeks.

I have spent time with staff who care for the most fragile of historic royal dress, tapestries and palace fabric; engaged with the work of buildings curators and historians; heard astounding music in the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula at the Tower; and admired close up the glory that is Rubens' ceiling at the Banqueting House. I've learned more than I'd ever imagined about the challenges of running visitor attractions, informing, catering for, and selling to audiences from around the world.

This has also been a remarkable year in Britain's history.

The death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II led to an outpouring of respect and affection in which Historic Palaces had a major part to play. Hillsborough Castle alone saw 78,000 people visit its gardens during the period of mourning. The proclamation of King Charles III was also made at Hillsborough Castle and the Tower of London, with gun salutes to mark both occasions.

Representing HRP at the funeral of Her Late Majesty was a huge honour. There was a moment as the coffin was borne in through the



With former President Bill Clinton at Hillsborough Castle.

Great West Door of Westminster Abbey when a shaft of sunlight struck the jewels in the Crown which sat on top of the coffin, refracting coloured light around the space. The power of great jewels to capture the imagination became clear in that single moment.

The Coronation of King Charles III was another major event at which I was honoured to represent HRP.

A new exhibition on the Crown Jewels, which HRP cares for and displays at the Tower of London, opens this year, reflecting this new chapter in their history.

In April, Hillsborough Castle was a partner in events to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Belfast Good Friday Agreement, a key moment in the Northern Ireland peace process. With colleagues, I hosted

a dinner for those speaking at a three-day conference organised by Queen's University, including former Prime Minister Tony Blair, former US President Bill Clinton (*pictured*), and former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The role of women was crucial in building momentum towards the Agreement and we were delighted to welcome friends and family of the late Dr Marjorie (Mo) Mowlam and put her contribution as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to the front and centre of this commemoration.

Looking back, this seems a very different world from the small village in Cornwall where I grew up. But, at the Heritage Lottery Fund we used to say that heritage is whatever people value from the past and want to hand on to the future. It certainly isn't just

bricks and mortar: it includes music and dialect, oral history and dance, stories of immigration and migration, the history of the lives of unnamed working people, as well as of the names we know from history books. It brings together the lives of people from many different places and histories of many different kinds, acknowledging that all aspects of the past, positive and negative, have come to make up what we know now as our present.

Britain's historic royal palaces are wonderful, exciting and challenging places to tell those complicated stories. I'm incredibly proud to be part of the team that works so hard to welcome the world to them and share those stories with imagination, honesty and understanding.

The White Tower.



A New Writing System to Revitalise Osage

Daniel Altshuler | Associate Professor of Semantics | Tutorial Fellow, Jesus College



Daniel Altshuler.

The Osage are Native Americans who, according to legend, originated in Kentucky, near the Green River. Archaeological evidence tends to support this legend.

Like other native populations, the Osage have a tragic history of forced relocation, including the especially troubling period from the 1910s to 1930s, when many Osages were murdered for land and wealth from oil production. Most of the murderers were never prosecuted, as described in the book, *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*, by David Grann. A movie based on this book and directed by Martin Scorsese is set to hit the big screen in the UK in October 2023.

An important aspect of my research is the structure of Osage (Wahzhazhe), a recently extinct Native American language (part of the Siouan Dhegiha subgroup) whose largest communities reside in Oklahoma, USA. It's estimated

that there were approximately five to ten fluent native speakers of Osage alive in 1996, and these numbers had been reduced by half by the close of the century.

My initial research on Osage began in the early 2000s, as a PhD student at Rutgers University, where I worked with recordings of Osage speakers in the 1970s-1990s to explore the phonetics and phonology of the language. To date, one of my most influential articles, published in the *International Journal of American Linguistics* (2009), argues that **Osage has a metrical system that was previously thought to be impossible by linguists**. In particular, I argued that Osage has an iambic stress pattern – stress on even syllables – that is not affected by vowel length.

Traditionally, Osage expressions were written using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), which allows linguists to be precise about how a given expression is pronounced: this is important since writing systems are hardly reliable in this respect. For example, words like 'knight' and 'Worcester' are a nightmare for some learners of English because the letters hardly

reflect the current pronunciation. Such a shortcoming in a writing system is inevitable. To see why, imagine inventing a new writing system that more accurately reflects how we currently pronounce words. In 500 years from now, the chosen writing system will no longer be accurate; it will be a fossil of how a language was once pronounced because languages continuously evolve. Indeed, linguists can and often use current writing systems to deduce historical change.

A staggering statistic is that there are approximately 7,139 living languages, but only 34 writing systems, and **more than half of the world's languages don't have a written form**. This is especially troubling when we consider how languages are distributed among speakers. If we divide the number of people in the world (roughly 6+ billion) by the number of living languages, we get roughly 900,000 speakers per language. However, as noted by David Harrison in his book *When Languages Die*, the top 10 languages have hundreds of million speakers each, and the top 83 languages cover 80% of the world's population. 3,500 languages are spoken by 0.2% of the global population. In 2005, 204 languages had speaker communities of less than 10 speakers, and another 344 languages had speaker communities of less than 99 speakers. Given that a large proportion of the world's languages are endangered and will soon be extinct, how will their linguistic and cultural information be preserved if no writing system is employed?

To quote David Harrison: "When you lose a language, you lose a

xõ: 'tsoõi: brã

'smoke cedar'

a'wala: xyye

'I crunch up my own (e.g. prey) with teeth'

In these Osage expressions, the 2nd and 4th syllables have short vowels and are stressed, even though there are long vowels in the vicinity with a known affinity for stress. Such a pattern had been ruled out by linguists and psychologists for decades, underscoring the importance of research into understudied and marginalised languages.



*The Rosaline Wong Gallery in the
Buchanan Tower Room.*
Photo: Andrew Ogilvy.

Artists in Residence

Short-Term Visiting Fellows, Peter McDonald & Marcus Coates

Peter McDonald and Marcus Coates joined Jesus College in February 2023 as Short-Term Visiting Fellows, thanks to the patronage and support of art collector and philanthropist Rosaline Wong. Their work has been featured in the College's Rosaline Wong Gallery, which is located in the new Buchanan Tower Room and exhibits a wide-ranging art collection.

Over the coming months, both artists have access to College buildings, libraries, and archives, and are spending time with members of the Jesus community in order to inspire a new body of creative work from each. *Jesus News* caught up with them recently to explore their work, this new College connection, and their ambitions for their year-long association with Jesus.

Peter McDonald

Born in Japan in 1973, Peter studied at Central St Martins School of Art, at Kobatake Kobo Studio School, Japan, and then the Royal Academy Schools. He currently divides his time between London and Tokyo and, in 2008, was the recipient of The John Moores Contemporary Painting Prize.



Peter McDonald. Photo by Angus Mills.

My mother is Japanese and my father was British. I was born in Tokyo and lived there until I was eight when I came to school in the UK. My family are still in Japan so I visit for a few months every year. Being from two cultures has given me a particular perspective on identity. I never feel I am either British or Japanese. There's always an element of being on the outside looking in, which influences the way my paintings depict social situations.

Drawing pictures, colours, and storytelling have always fascinated me from a very young age, so going to art school seemed like a natural progression. Finding a way to embody these interests in a visual language relevant to the contemporary world was something which took me some time after graduating from art education. Once I had found this language though, I felt I had a voice through which to express my fascination with colour, form, and narrative.

My studio is in Bromley by Bow in East London. I have been based in this part of London for the last 23 years and my gallery, Kate MacGarry, is also in nearby Shoreditch. I live a 20-minute cycle ride from my studio, so a typical work day begins after dropping off my daughter at nursery and



Study for Mobile by Peter MacDonald.

cycling along the Whitechapel Road. I begin work straight away, sometimes making smaller works on paper which might be studies for larger paintings. The studies usually never look exactly the same as a larger work on canvas as I find improvisation adds energy and life to the image. I mainly use acrylic gouache paints which I source in Japan; I like the matt flatness of the colour. I do, however, also use acrylic paints, glitter paints, and collage metallic foil or any other materials I think the painting needs.

Ideas come to me from everyday life, so I carry a small pocket sketchbook with me in which

I draw ideas and note passing thoughts. Some of these can lead to a series of paintings. I've learnt not to discount any idea, no matter how irrelevant or silly it might seem at the time. I want to create a parallel universe in my painting; one which the viewer can enter into and explore through their own imagination. This space doesn't need to adhere to realistic or photographic parameters: as long as there is enough information so the viewer can inhabit the space, it doesn't matter if the horizon line is wonky or if a figure seems to have only three fingers and no face.

My paintings depict figures with amorphous see-through coloured

heads. Where two or more heads meet, the heads overlap. The background is also visible through this transparency, and the colours are mixed individually to create this illusion. The merging of the head in the foreground with everything behind it suggests a dissolution of boundaries between people and their environments. The individual becomes intrinsic to everything around it and vice versa. The figure is literally and physically part of its environment.

Humour is a really important aspect of my practice. I use it to disarm the viewer so they approach my painting relaxed, at ease, and with an open mind.

To be part of the community at Jesus College has given me the opportunity to start a series of work based on the life of the College. I'm interested in finding subjects to paint, both in the grander scheme of life at Jesus, and also in the more mundane aspects of daily College life. On my last couple of visits, I've felt slightly overwhelmed by the history of Oxford, so I envisage visiting regularly and acclimatising myself to the University and city.

In 2011-12 I had an exhibition at the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa, Japan, called Visitor. The premise of the exhibition was that I reacted

to the local community through my work, communicating with the residents through my art. This experience gave me the confidence that my visual language has the capacity to depict all types of situations and, through this, create an opportunity for people to meet and exchange ideas. The Fellowship allows me to immerse myself in a completely new and unfamiliar environment over the course of the year. I am looking forward to seeing what kind of images I will find and develop.

I first met Rosaline Wong in 2012 through my gallerist, Kate MacGarry. She has become a good friend and has really supported

my practice ever since. She has an excellent eye and I really appreciate her independence of thought and judgement. As an artist, I am so grateful for her interest and input. Kate and I have visited Rosaline in Hong Kong and we've made trips together to see exhibitions in Paris and Tokyo.

Later this year, I will be travelling to California for a residency at the JB Blunk House - he was a sculptor who worked primarily in wood and clay. He also had deep ties to Japan, where he was apprenticed to the potters Kitaoji Rosanjin and Kaneshige Toyo. While there, I plan to create paintings for a show in 2024 at the Blunk Space.

Marcus Coates

Born in London in 1968, Marcus graduated from the Kent Institute of Art and Design with a First in Fine Art, and went on to postgraduate study at the Royal Academy of Art. Much of his inspiration is taken from the lived realities of people, animals, and nature, exploring relationships with the 'unknowable' to understand how we relate to each other and the world around us.



(l-r) Peter MacDonald, Kate MacGarry, Rosaline Wong, and Marcus Coates at the opening of the Rosaline Wong Gallery. Photo by Andrew Ogilvy.

I grew up in St Albans, Hertfordshire, and my family were very supportive of my creativity. I struggled with the rigidity of school; the way learning was dispensed. Art became a refuge, a place where I could be myself, and use what I regard now as a skill, an empathetic imagination. I knew in my early teens that I wanted to be creative, I saw a path for myself to art school and, from there, the possibility of being a professional artist emerged.

I consider part of my role as an artist is to show us ourselves; to bring new perspectives to how we make sense of who we are and how we define ourselves in relation to the world around us. My interest in the natural world started from a young age and my knowledge of British wildlife has given me a relational tool that I use in this way. The use of 'nature' as a cultural concept and comparative entity is a fascinating lens through



Marcus Coates.
Ritual for Reconciliation: Kestrel (Falco Tinnunculus) England, 2013.
Pigment on Hahnemuhle 100% α -cellulose, laid finished rice paper.
56 x 42 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kate MacGarry, London. Photo: Angus Mill.

which to observe the way societies have historically needed to regard themselves.

The way I learned about the natural world was through others; from people who shared their knowledge with me, whether scientists, amateur naturalists, wildlife sound recordists, or primatologists. These relationships have often evolved into collaborations where a shared passion for a subject has developed into creating artwork. I see my role as bringing these often niche areas of knowledge into relatable forms for the audience, bringing research into the everyday worlds of the public and exploring its wider relevance. Although I have a studio practice that allows for more personal reflection using drawing, photography, and sculpture, most of the time I am meeting people, discovering their fascinating research and complex knowledge, and getting new projects off the ground.

A couple of examples of my scientific and academic collaboration include working with the Wellcome Trust to make the artwork *Dawn Chorus*. I worked with sound recordist Geoff Sample to map and record multiple individual birdsongs within a single UK dawn chorus. With these recordings I created an accurate audio replica dawn chorus using human voices. It was both a unique collation of data and a commentary on the cultural lives of humans and birds.

In *Degreecoordinates: Shared Traits of the Hominini (Chimpanzees, Bonobos and Humans)*, I collaborated with Volker Sommer, a primatologist and

anthropologist at UCL. Together we took Darwin's statement about differences between apes not being of kind but of degree, and created an artwork which challenged the viewer to define themselves not in relation to other ape species, but in relation to other acculturated individuals who are also apes. The audience found they might have certain behavioural traits in common with an individual Bonobo or Chimpanzee, rather than the human they were standing next to.

At the time of writing, I have initial ideas for research during my Jesus College Fellowship. I am researching historic and contemporary diary notes of wildlife recorders and historic amateur naturalists. For example, the events that happen at specific times of the year for fauna and flora: flowering, spawning, mating, hibernating, migrating and so on. I have an extensive data set already for the UK, but am keen to develop this. This culture of recording nature has a strong tradition in Britain and has recently become an important aspect of phenology – the mapping of climate change with seasonal nature events. My interest is twofold: to increase this data set, but to also engage the public in their day-to-day parallel lives with other species.

More widely for the Fellowship, I am excited to meet experts in their fields and others who are keen to communicate ideas, and also have some time to personally reflect on where there is a need for ways to relate to the natural world.

I've been lucky enough to know Rosaline Wong as a patron of my work, particularly through my representations of extinct species.



Recently she commissioned my photographic series, *British Birds of Prey*, for the new Rosaline Wong Gallery. I was inspired by the array of portraits of prominent figures in the Hall and throughout College. The portraits of these birds is a representation of their power and charisma, but also their vulnerability as key species. Their placement and position in the Gallery reflect a need to elevate their status and importance as cultural figures in our consciousness.

When making work about the human relationship to the natural world, it is impossible not to be

driven by a need to increase climate crisis awareness and cultural change. I think collaborations between the arts and sciences have an important role here and I'm keen to find ways of working that can positively contribute.

To mark the opening of the new gallery at Jesus, Rosaline Wong worked with Kate MacGarry of the Kate MacGarry Gallery in London to commission special works by both artists.

To find out more about the Kate MacGarry Gallery, and to view more of Peter and Marcus' work, visit www.katemacgarry.com.



Shaping Destiny Revisited

A multi-disciplinary public engagement project



Shankar Srinivas.

Last year, *Jesus News* reported on the first phase of an innovative co-creation project called *Shaping Destiny*, which set out to showcase Oxford University science and humanities research using virtual reality, dance, and theatre to convey the biological and societal concepts of embodiment and destiny.

The project is a major interdisciplinary collaboration between the Srinivas Group, led by Jesus College Zeitlyn Fellow and Tutor in Medicine Professor Shankar Srinivas, the University's

Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics (DPAG), and The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH), led by director Professor Wes Williams.

We revisited the project earlier this summer to review its final phases and report on the impact and findings of this unique collaboration.

Phase I of *Shaping Destiny* in 2022 saw the co-creation of a dance performance, inspired by the University's medical and humanities research. The dance was developed and delivered by young dancers from Oxford-based charity the Parasol Project and non-profit dance theatre company Body Politic, with the help of Alexander Whitley, a digital dance choreographer, and Kostas Pataridis, a virtual reality specialist. In July 2022, dancers from the Parasol Project and Body Politic presented their performances to families and friends during a special Sharing Day at Oxford's Rose Hill Community Centre.

The project's evaluator, Amy Hong, conducted mixed-methods evaluation to capture *Shaping Destiny's* outcome and impact. For her, the Sharing Day was a defining moment in the project: "I'm so proud to be part of the *Shaping Destiny* team, to be working alongside cutting-edge researchers and artists who have our Oxford local community in their hearts. *Shaping Destiny* has brought people together who wouldn't otherwise meet. At the Sharing Day, I watched dance performances co-designed by young abled and disabled dancers, and inspired by Oxford's biological and humanities research. I was so moved by the dancers' persistency, compassion, positivity, and creativity, that the dance brought tears to my eyes that day. It really brought us researchers and Oxford local residents together as one community".

Throughout this first phase of the project, Alex and Kostas worked together to create a prototype



Dancers from Body Politic and Parasol Project present their dance interpretations at *Shaping Destiny's* sharing day.

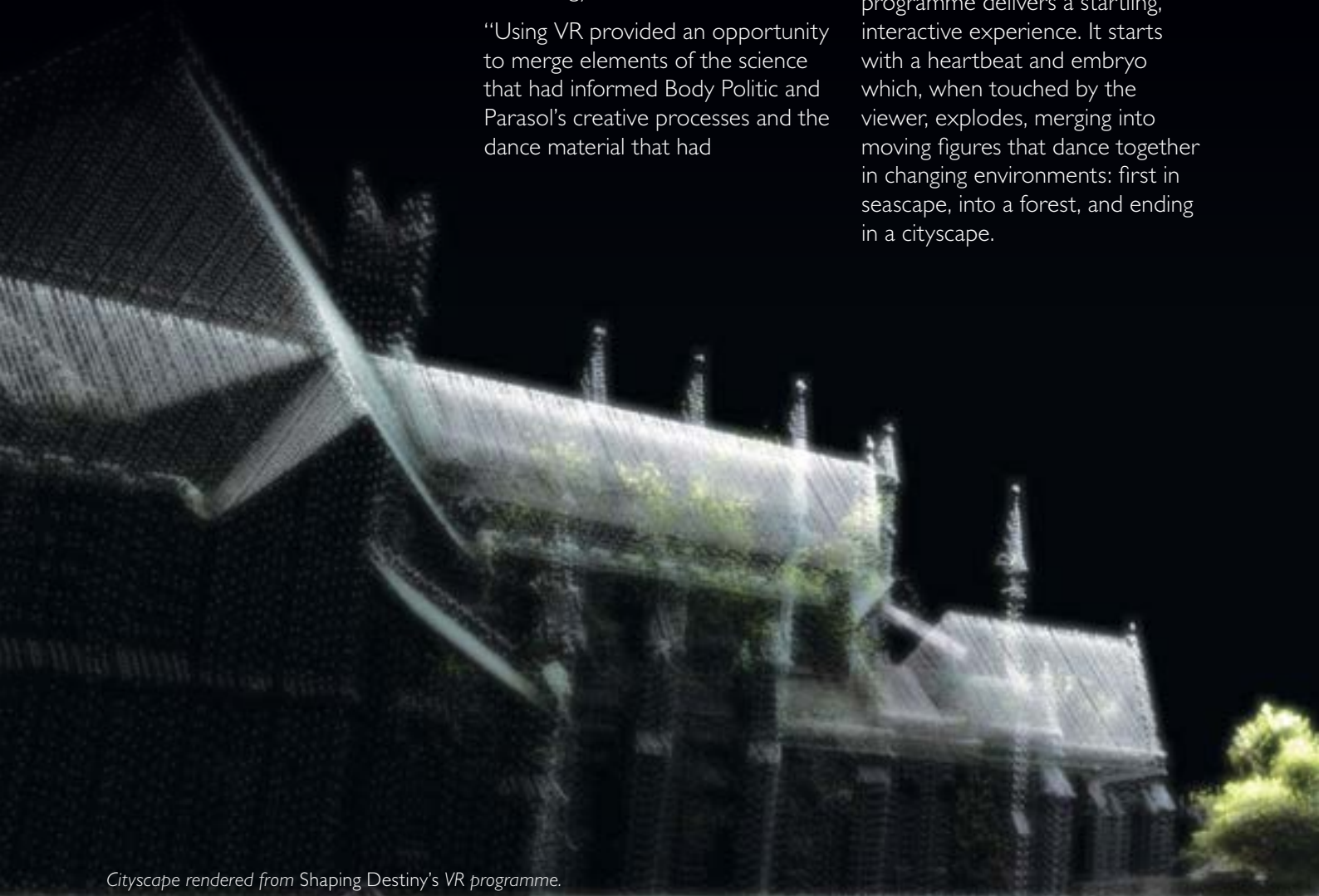
digital VR programme based on the developing dance interpretation and, in October 2022, *Shaping Destiny* participated in IF Oxford, the city's science and ideas festival, presenting the VR programme to visitors at the exhibition for the first time. Shankar and Wes were on hand to discuss their work, and the festival also presented an opportunity for the research team to conduct a survey about people's attitudes to human embryonic research.

Working with Kostas to create a virtual reality experience presented unusual challenges for choreographer Alex, "I'm fascinated by the opportunity virtual reality affords in providing a richly embodied engagement with ideas, provoking action, exploration and ultimately a felt experience of concepts that can often remain abstractly out of reach. Dance and choreographic thinking have a long history of thinking about the organisation of ideas in three-dimensional space and therefore has a lot to offer this emerging technology.

"Using VR provided an opportunity to merge elements of the science that had informed *Body Politic* and *Parasol*'s creative processes and the dance material that had

been inspired by it. Our challenge was to create an experience that encapsulated the many fascinating ideas that had been circulating through the collaborative layers of the project and present the public with a first-hand interaction with them. I hope the outcome demonstrates to the young people involved, and the public more broadly, how artistic and scientific process have more in common than we're often led to believe and can be mutually inspiring of one another."

Shaping Destiny's finished VR programme delivers a startling, interactive experience. It starts with a heartbeat and embryo which, when touched by the viewer, explodes, merging into moving figures that dance together in changing environments: first in seascape, into a forest, and ending in a cityscape.



Cityscape rendered from Shaping Destiny's VR programme.

The final phase of the *Shaping Destiny* project began earlier in 2023 with the design and development of a theatre piece performed by the Oxford People's Theatre at the city's old Radcliffe Infirmary. The performance comprised elements of promenade, choral movement, and interactive scenes with the audience, lasting between five to fifteen minutes each and performed on a loop. Audiences arrived throughout the afternoon, engaging with performers as they navigated their own routes through the Infirmary and its outdoor spaces.

Over the past two years, the entire project has been captured in a documentary by Man in a Hat videographer Gary Tanner, and a series of short films documenting the project's progress can be seen at [youtube.com/@shapingdestiny](https://www.youtube.com/@shapingdestiny). Gary faced new challenges in telling the *Shaping Destiny* story:

"As a filmmaker it was interesting to capture Shankar, Tomoko and Wes communicating their research to the young people. It's quite a tricky thing to attempt, but the enthusiasm and engagement of all the stakeholders made telling an inspiring story possible.

"For me, the main challenge was

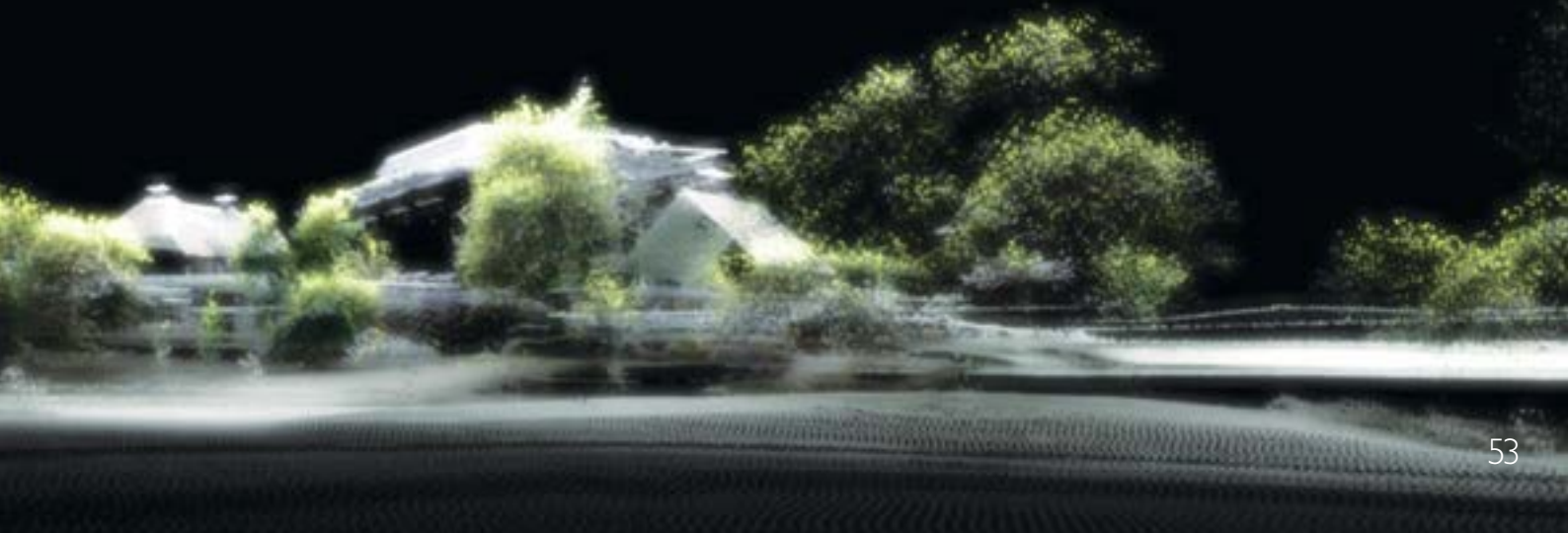


Shaping Destiny at IF Oxford. Photo courtesy of IF Oxford.

depicting all the moving parts within the project – and there were many. Each element of the project had equal value, but accessing those elements wasn't always possible because of logistics. The responses and ideas from the dancers developed quickly and so

the potential narratives changed with every session. It was clear quite early on in the filming that the narrative wasn't going to reveal itself until in the edit, so I focused on the experiences and interactions of the groups".

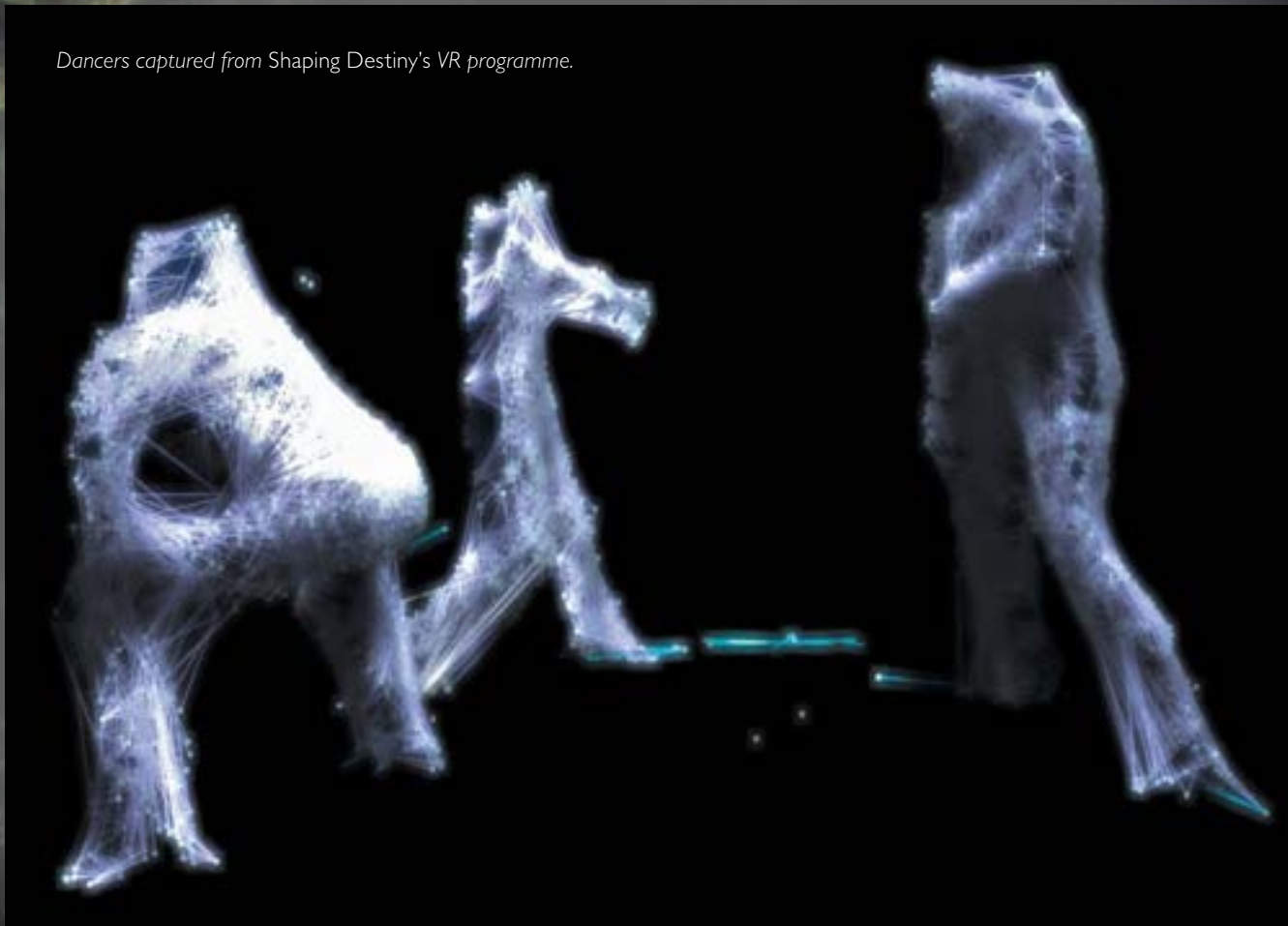
Shaping Destiny's overarching goals





A forest scene from Shaping Destiny's VR programme.

Dancers captured from Shaping Destiny's VR programme.



were to foster connection across Oxford community groups and university researchers, providing researchers with opportunities to formulate public dialogue-inspired research questions. Some important takeaways from the project so far have included an interest in continuing engagement with the University and its research, the desire for this creativity project to continue beyond its funded period, and a willingness to collaborate with other sectors within the University.

The parents and carers of the young people involved through Body Politic and the Parasol Project reported positive changes in their confidence, critical thinking,

vocal communication, and interpersonal relationships. While other findings highlighted some of the existing barriers to engaging with disadvantaged communities, in part created by financial barriers such as the cost of travel and childcare.

This unique project has enabled its researchers to reflect on their approach to public dialogue, especially around sensitive research topics, and to better understand public perception of the University's work. The final word goes to project lead Dr Tomoko Watanabe of DPAG:

"The project has been very fulfilling and inspiring. The idea started as a desire to connect and work with

people across different communities and step out of our lab. Working together we learned about joys and challenges for each community and partner. We learned how our research is received and perceived by members of public, placing our work within wider society. To see our research bringing joy to the young people and to inspire our professional partners to create art has been an extraordinary experience".

You can view a screen recording of Shaping Destiny's VR experience here: youtu.be/VDzurqONLAE.

The Shaping Destiny project also has a website at www.shapingdestiny.art

A Life of Adventure

Jonathan Thompson | 1996 | Modern History

Based in Dallas, Texas, award-winning travel and lifestyle journalist Jonathan Thompson has written for, among others, *The Times*, *The Telegraph*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Esquire*, *GQ*, and *Condé Nast Traveller*. You can follow his travels on Instagram @JT_Travels.



Jonathan at Kakadu National Park, Australia.

Human beings, a wise man once said, are born with three things: the need to eat, the need to sleep and the need to escape.

As a professional travel writer, my business focusses on that third urge: the desire to evade the doldrums of day-to-day existence – and our personal comfort zones – and jet off into the unknown.

Travel writing has been my full-time career for 12 years now, after learning my trade as a journalist on *The Independent* and *Men's Health* for a decade after leaving College. During that time, I've visited all seven continents, all 50 states of America and both magnetic poles, charting my travels in publications ranging from *The Sunday Times*, *The Financial Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* to *Esquire*, *GQ*, *Condé Nast Traveller*, and *National Geographic*

Traveller. I've also recently started filming my first TV show, *Adventure Cities*, which is broadcast on the Discovery Channel.

So what's it like, travelling semi-permanently for a living? It certainly has its glamorous moments: I've been sent lava tubing in Tahiti, heli-biking in New Zealand and jet-packing in Hawaii, not to mention having 'studied' everywhere from underwater DJ school in the Maldives to cosmonaut academy in Russia and gladiator camp in Rome (I got to take a couple of friends from College on that trip too, which was a lot of fun).

But it's not all sunsets, swords, and spacesuits. Plenty of people imagine this job as a corollary to the life of a rock star on tour: waking up in a new luxury hotel in a different city every morning, with nothing to worry about and the bill already paid by somebody else. In reality it's more like being trapped inside a game of Jumanji, with jetlag – and a deadline laser-sighted on your forehead.

For freelance travel writers, our experiences of destinations are usually fast and frenetic – a hastily-cut trailer rather than the full Hollywood movie – as editors aim to minimise our time on the ground, speeding stories to pages and us writers to return flights. On average, we'll spend two to



Jetpacking in Hawaii.



Diving in Tahiti.



Wing walking over Gloucestershire.



Jonathan's Top Travel Tips

- Pick up some 'fragile' labels and stick them all over your suitcase. Not only will airport staff be reminded to take care of your case, but fragile bags are likely to be unloaded first, saving you time.
- Always ask for an exit row seat at check-in if you haven't booked one in advance: airlines usually hold back too many for travelling staff.
- Snack on cherries during long flights. They're a natural source of the hormone melatonin, which will help reset your body's clock.
- Pack an eye mask with a nose guard, for extra light blocking and easier sleep on planes.
- Request a corner room at hotel check-in – they're always bigger.
- Forgot your international power converter? Almost all hotel TVs will have a USB port at the back – perfect for charging your phone or tablet.

Top five places to travel this autumn

Insider tips for the best hotspots this season

1. Melides, Portugal

Check out Portugal's next big beach town before everyone else discovers it. Picture soft white sand beaches fringed by fragrant pine forests – and a cluster of new boutique hotels.

2. Budapest, Hungary

A favourable exchange rate, a raft of new spas and a growing Michelin-starred food scene make Hungary's capital an excellent weekend city break option right now.

3. Zamora, Spain

Famed for its remarkable collection of Romanesque architecture and access to Spain's best wine country, Zamora was recently named a European World Heritage Site. Now a new high-speed train from Madrid has made it easier to reach than ever.

4. Aqaba, Jordan

Brilliant beaches, a great food scene and incredible snorkelling and diving in the Red Sea; what's not to like about Jordan's second city? Not only is Aqaba itself a great holiday destination with direct flights from London and reliable year-round sunshine, but it also has easy access to Jordan's must-visit sites like Petra and Wadi Rum.

5. Austin, Texas

Yes, I'm biased. But Austin is a superb city, with two airlines now flying direct from London (BA and Virgin). The weather in October still calls for shorts, flip-flops, and ice cold drinks at rooftop bars – and I'm always up for beers with fellow Jesubites...

At the South Pole.



At the North Pole.



three nights in a place before heading back to the airport – to fly onto another story or, if we're lucky, to head home.

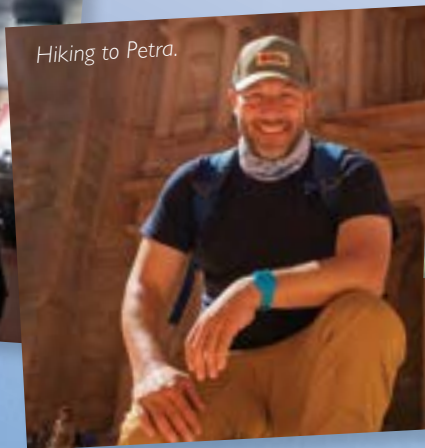
For me, home is now Dallas – after meeting my wife on an assignment in Texas ten years ago. I still get back to the UK a lot and am in regular contact with plenty of friends from Jesus, including a core group of ten, who chat on WhatsApp pretty much every day. Recently, we all returned to Oxford for our gaudy – which was just as much fun as ever, within the

reassuring, time-twistingly familiar confines of College.

Of course, despite the jetlag juggling and dizzying deadlines, my job has plenty of upsides – many of them borderline preposterous. I'm near-permanently tanned to the colour of builder's tea, have amassed more air miles than I'm ever going to use, and have become a solid sounding board



On the bridge of a nuclear icebreaker in the Russian Arctic.



Hiking to Petra.



Hot air ballooning in Cappadocia.

for everybody else's holiday plans. In recent years, I've ticked off a bumper bucket list of daredevil, money-can't-buy adventure experiences too, from wing-walking and cliff camping to ice surfing and Olympic ski-jumping (I came back down to Earth hard after that one, shattering my coccyx on a 40-metre jump). But, despite its downsides – from broken bottoms to missed weddings and birthdays – I wouldn't change my profession for the world.

As the late, great Anthony Bourdain memorably said: "travel is about the gorgeous feeling of teetering on the unknown." As travel writers, we balance on that unknown edge

indefinitely, tiptoeing around the rim on our daily commute. What keeps this job interesting is that there's always somewhere else new and exciting to explore. Right now, I've got my eye on a list of fascinating second-tier US cities with good stories to tell, particularly Savannah and Santa Fe, as well as a cluster of resurgent Latin American countries, including Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Guyana. I'm also filming the new season of *Adventure Cities*, and planning a ski trip with the Jesus crew for this winter.

One of the best things about attending gaudies back at College is chatting to older generations about

their time at Oxford, and their lives since. One fascinating octogenarian told me that you can classify each year group at a gaudy depending on their life stage, from the 'London flat share gaudy' to the 'marriage gaudy' and 'kids gaudy'. As midlife sets in, you get 'divorce gaudy', followed by 'remarriage gaudy', 'empty nest gaudy', 'bad back gaudy', and finally, 'funeral gaudy'. Right now, I'm hopeful of travelling the world until I make it at least as far as the bad back gaudy. And even then, I know a few nice beaches to escape to for a nice long lie down.

Jonathan's top five beaches

1. Sunset Beach, Oahu, Hawaii
2. Clearwater Beach, Florida
3. Spiaggia della Pelosa, Sardinia
4. Palombaggia Beach, Corsica
5. Praia da Falesia, Portugal

Clearwater Beach, Florida.

Photo: Stepheneric9, CC BY-SA 4.0, commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=71562637.

The other side of Hong Kong! A hike over Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong's highest mountain on 21 October 2021.



Letter from Hong Kong

Gordon Jones | 1970 | Modern History

I entered Jesus College in October 1970 to read Modern History and graduated in August 1973. The senior History tutor at the time was the incomparable John Walsh, one of the finest History tutors and mentors whom any undergraduate studying in that honour school could be privileged to have. Although John took my tutorials in 'English History III' covering the period from 1688 to the mid-20th century, many of my tutorials took place outside College as a consequence of my wish to specialise in Early Medieval History and the then cutting-age topic of 'late antiquity'. My Special Subject was 'British Imperial History in the 18th century' which I studied with Freddie Madden at Nuffield, a very prescient choice given my future career path!

From an early date, I've been interested in China and Chinese civilisation, and was very conscious of the British Empire as my school years, from the mid-1950s to early 1970s, coincided with the Empire's gradual dismemberment. When the Oxford University Appointments Board advertised in Hilary Term 1973 that there were vacancies in the Administrative Service of the Hong Kong Government (the top policy making grade with significant political responsibilities), I thought that this was too good an opportunity to miss and applied to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. After surviving the selection process, I was appointed as an Administrative Officer and arrived in Hong Kong in the early evening of 4 October, jet-lagged and disorientated, after a 24-hour flight from London. At the time, I had no premonition that I would still be here 50 years later!

Undoubtedly, a major reason for making Hong Kong my home is my fascinating, unique and unrepeatable civil service career in the Hong Kong Government from 1973 to 2007 which spanned a phenomenally wide spectrum of government activity: the New Territories Administration; transport policy; labour policy; arts,

culture and sports administration; a District Officer in the Eastern and Kowloon City Districts; the Finance Branch (Hong Kong's equivalent of HM Treasury) and the Registrar General's Department with the specific task of reforming the Companies Division. With the dissolution of the RGD in 1993, I was appointed to the post of Registrar of Companies to head the new Companies Registry. During my 14 years as the R of C, until my formal retirement in 2008, I was very heavily involved in modernising and computerising the CR's operations, corporate governance reform and company law reform, including the complete re-write of the Companies Ordinance, probably the longest and most complex law reform exercise ever undertaken in Hong Kong.

Another major personal reason is the fact that, in 1985, I married Gloria, whose family and roots are very firmly based in Hong Kong. Our daughter was born here and received her primary and most of her secondary education at the English Schools Foundation schools. Hong Kong provides a very safe and secure environment for raising a family. As a consequence of marrying into a Chinese family, I've been able to experience an aspect

of Hong Kong life and culture denied to those expatriates who live in segregated bubbles.

Although an often-quoted cliché, Hong Kong is really a mixture of East and West and continues to have an international dimension which distinguishes the city from China's most international cities like Shanghai. Unlike Mainland China, where the official language is Putonghua (Mandarin Chinese), the predominant Chinese dialect in Hong Kong is Cantonese which is quite different and one of China's principal dialects, widely spoken throughout Southern China and the Chinese diaspora throughout the world. We also use traditional Chinese characters (like Taiwan) unlike the simplified characters used on the Mainland.

We enjoy an incredible variety of Chinese and Western Festivals including Christmas, Lunar New Year, Easter, the Tuen Ng (Dragon Boat Festival), and very colourful Mid-Autumn Festival (my favourite), as well as a number of unique Hong Kong Festivals such as the Cheung Chau 'Bun Festival'. Cantonese cuisine is one of China's eight great Chinese cuisines featuring seafood, vegetables and 'dim sum' (a huge variety of snacks like prawn balls, 'siu-mai' and steamed pork buns). Hong Kong is one of the top culinary destinations in the world with virtually every national cuisine represented in restaurants ranging from top-end establishments with multiple Michelin stars to the ethnic but very good seafood restaurants on the islands of Lamma, Cheung Chau and Lantau. I would, however, not be a very good guide to Hong Kong restaurants as the Hong

Kong Club, Hong Kong Jockey Club and Hong Kong Country Club, of which we're members, have some of the best Chinese and Western restaurants in Hong Kong. I can, however, recommend the one Michelin Star Zhejiang Heen which specialises in Zhejiang cuisine (the province adjacent to Shanghai). I particularly enjoy Peking cuisine (noodles and dumplings) and hot, spicy Sichuan cuisine.

There are many misconceptions about Hong Kong. The Special Administrative Region is much larger than many people realise and, apart from the past three years, it's very easy to travel to China and other countries in the Asia-Pacific Region. We also have much beautiful countryside with genuine wilderness areas, stunning scenery and off-shore islands (40% of Hong Kong is designated as country parks) and undoubtedly the best hiking trails in Southeast Asia. Our home in Tregunter Towers is within 10 minutes of the Central Business District, but also has wonderful hiking trails up to the Peak and many of the country parks on Hong Kong Island. There is no other big city in the world where you can leave the urban area and get into beautiful countryside so easily and I always ensure that our visitors see something of our countryside in the New Territories and offshore islands.

Hong Kong has a fascinating history, predating the establishment of the British Colony in 1841 by several thousand years, which goes back to the Neolithic and Bronze Ages. Although on the fringes of the Chinese Empire, there were imperial garrisons and custom stations since at least the Tang Dynasty (618-907), and important ceramic and salt making centres. When the East Kowloon line of the Mass Transit Railway was being constructed several years ago, a major high-status Sung Dynasty settlement was discovered in To Kwa Wan which could well have been the final refuge of the last Southern Sung Dynasty emperor who fled to Hong Kong in the 1270s after the Mongol conquest of China. Although many buildings from the colonial period have been demolished, there have been recent very imaginative redevelopments, such as the transformation with Jockey Club funding of the old colonial police station, magistracy and prison in Central into the Tai Kwun Performing and Visual Arts Centre.

Hong Kong has a superb Chinese and Western cultural and performing arts scene with well-established professional orchestras, ballet, theatrical and opera companies. The Hong Kong Philharmonic is widely recognised as one of the best symphony orchestras in Asia, while the annual

Hong Kong Arts Festival and regular visits by major symphony orchestras ensure that we're very much on the international arts circuit. Hong Kong's numerous excellent museums are also a largely unknown success story. The huge West Kowloon Cultural District's modern Xiqu Theatre regularly holds Chinese Opera performances while the M+ Modern Art Museum (opened in 2021) and Palace Museum (opened in 2022), which showcases wonderful permanent collections of Chinese art as well as visiting exhibitions of Western Art, have rapidly established themselves as major world-class museums.

With the reopening of Hong Kong to the outside world since early 2023, major sporting and cultural functions are returning: the famous Rugby Sevens (started in 1976), the Hong Kong Marathon, the long-distance Oxfam Trailwalker along the 100 kilometres Maclehoose Trail and Art Basel. However, the most popular sporting activity must be horseracing, and the Hong Kong Jockey Club is one of the best-known international racing bodies. In 2008, Hong Kong hosted the equestrian events of the Beijing Olympics.

My career in Hong Kong has enabled me to directly witness and experience first-hand some of the most interesting and politically turbulent years in Hong Kong's modern history, covering the final

years of British rule, the transitional period from 1984 to 1997 after the signing of the Joint Declaration, the resumption of Chinese sovereignty on 1 July 1997, and the first two decades of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. One of my most memorable experiences was attending the functions on 30 June and 1 July 1997 to mark the end of British rule and resumption of Chinese sovereignty over Hong Kong. Jesus College was very well represented at the transfer of sovereignty ceremony, attended by 4,000 people, by Sir Peter North in his capacity as the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford and me as the head of a government department.

It would be remiss if I did not say anything about Hong Kong's four very difficult years from 2019 to 2023, when we experienced the social and political disturbances from June to December 2019 followed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These years saw Hong Kong adopting some of the most draconian social distancing and quarantine arrangements in the world and the introduction of the National Security Law and electoral changes in 2020 and 2021. Suffice to say, the NSL and electoral changes were entirely predictable in the light of the gradual deterioration in Hong Kong's governance since 2014 and the seven months of increasingly senseless and violent street protests in 2019. Under the Basic Law (Hong Kong's

post-1997 Constitution), Hong Kong's government is essentially 'executive-led' with the Legislative Council providing a 'support role'. Unfortunately, the radicalisation of the opposition parties in LegCo led to gridlock and much-needed legislation not being enacted.

Similarly, since 1997, there has been a constitutional obligation, under Article 23 of the Basic Law, for the Hong Kong government to enact national security legislation, although there was a failed attempt to introduce such legislation in 2003. The protests in 2019 left the Chinese government, as the sovereign power, with no option but to enact the NSL.

Regrettably, the reporting of Hong Kong news in the UK and US media has been largely OTT, biased and uninformed. In the UK, much of the narrative is driven by the so-called political 'refugees' who left after the enactment of the NSL, which includes those who would face charges of rioting, criminal damage, and criminal intimidation if their actions during the 2019 protests had taken place in the UK. In reality, the NSL is heavy on human rights and incorporates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which guarantee fair trials. It is less draconian than the equivalent laws of other Southeast Asian common law jurisdictions like Malaysia and Singapore, none of which have adopted the ICCPR.

The NSL is being applied with restraint and, to date, only about 20 people have been convicted of national security offences. The Rule of Law is demonstrably alive and well in Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Judiciary continues to be robustly and self-evidently independent. The World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index 2022 ranked Hong Kong 22nd of the 140 jurisdictions surveyed, ahead of the US at 26th!

Hong Kong has now reopened to the outside world and is rapidly re-establishing itself as 'Asia's World City' with a steady increase in the number of tourists over the past six months. It is a much safer place than most UK cities, while our excellent, cheap and very modern public transport system, ranging from the Mass Transit Railway to the iconic Peak Tram, Star Ferry and 'ding dong' trams makes getting around very easy. One of the best ways of seeing Hong Kong is to take a tram ride along the north shore of Hong Kong Island from Kennedy Town to Shau Kei Wan, which will take you through some of our most modern and 'ethnic' districts for the princely sum of a few Hong Kong dollars. The best time to visit is from mid-October to January when humidity is low and the temperatures in the low 20s. The Hong Kong Jesus College Alumni Group, of which I'm the convenor, would be delighted to welcome you!

2023 Visit to Hong Kong

Brittany Wellner James | Director of Development

After a long Covid hiatus, it was a joy to have the opportunity this March to visit our alumni and friends in Hong Kong. It was wonderful to reconnect with our extended College family and break bread together at the Hong Kong Club after such a long time apart. The Covid restrictions in Hong Kong made travel to the country especially difficult in recent years for non-residents, but it was clear when we arrived that the outlook was much more positive and hopeful for the future.

We wish to thank Dr Henry Cheng Kar Shun, major donor and friend of College, for his exquisite hospitality at the Wan Chai Grand Hyatt and for organising a tour of special places in the city, including the Henry Cheng International Conference Centre. Thanks to Rosaline Wong, another great supporter of College, we also had the privilege to be introduced to the art and studio of contemporary painter Stephen Wong (Jesus College's summer 2023 Artist-

in-Residence) and had a private tour of Rosaline's own HomeArt Gallery. During our visit, the Principal was invited to give a talk on AI and ethics at Asia Society in conversation with AI and deep tech entrepreneur Jen Zhu Scott. We also had the pleasure of celebrating 90 years of the Yew Chung Yew Wah school and education network over tea with alumna Dr Lydia Chan (MSc Educational Studies, 2005; DPhil Education, 2006) who, since following in the footsteps

of her founder grandmother, has become an inspiring leader in early education in her own right.

As ever, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to alumnus Gordon Jones (Modern History, 1970) who always does a fantastic job of organising our expat Jesus alumni base. Thanks to Gordon, the group has remained connected during difficult times.

Cheers Hong Kong, we missed you all and can't wait until our next visit!





Photo: John Cairns.

Sports & Club Reports

Football

Oliver Smith | 2021
Mathematics

In the 2022/23 season, after winning the coveted Cuppers trophy last year, we knew we had to win silverware once again, and a year of success it was for the boys in green. We won the Division 1 title in dramatic fashion with a 3-3 draw against St Peter's on the last game of the season to beat Keble to the title. Unfortunately, we did not win Cuppers this year losing narrowly 4-3 after extra time in the semi-finals. The fans on the side line and players on the pitch all gave it everything they had and, despite



the result, it will be a game to remember. The mighty Stags hope to continue their success into next year, now in the Premier Division, and with their new captain, Ed Bingham.

Netball

Charlie Leach | 2020 | PPE

This season has been the best one yet for the netball team at Jesus. We achieved promotion into Division 1 of the mixed league after an unbeaten Michaelmas Term and wanted to back this up in the subsequent Hilary league. We have had a term of hard work, one training session, and faced potential sabotage as Worcester tried to infiltrate our team during our match against them. However, we ultimately managed to beat out all the opposition to win Division 1! I joined the club in my Fresher year – we were in Division 4 and rules dictated we could only have one man on the court at once out of seven players. The league and our position in it has changed a lot since then. The rule change to allow three men on court at once, and an influx of talented new players into our team, resulted in our climb up the tables to win Division 1. With the increase in Freshers this year and a few experienced returning members, I know I am leaving the club in safe hands for huge future successes.





Rugby

Charlie Rosen | 2021 | Physics

With the end of the season looming and only the Sevens competition left, we look back on the success of this season as a club and a team.

Kicking off Hilary with a tough start, the boys faced a renewed Brasenose team that came out of the blocks with a fight. Picking up a few injuries along the way, we managed to claw the game back to

12 points each way. In true league fashion, we then moved to secure a win with some Pembroke cavalry against a Queens/Oriel mashup.

Over the Easter break the team was lucky enough to secure funding from College to travel across the Channel in the hopes of taking some French flair back from Paris with us. Despite leaving little time away from the pitch, we found ample opportunity to unite as a team.

This exceptional preparation led us excitedly to our next round in the Plate competition. Little did we know, Worcester would be recruiting the teamless Trinity and Lincoln players. The team showed its truest colours with heart and fight, but unfortunately the College trio had the edge.

We have had success on the pitch as players, off the pitch as a team, and laid the groundworks for strength in coming seasons as a club.



Dancesport

Schyan Zafar | 2018
DPhil Statistics

The annual inter-college Dancesport Cuppers competition took place in May. Jesus entered a team of four couples: St Catz alumna Anna White and James Somper dancing the waltz; Tiffany Walmsley and Schyan Zafar dancing the quickstep; Ann-Kathrin Maurer and Jesus alumna Rose Alice Amelia dancing the jive; and Tereza Be and Francis Bristow dancing the cha-cha. Although the team was made up almost entirely of beginners, with only one practice session three days before the competition, Jesus participated with heaps of enthusiasm and was placed third overall.

Hockey

Isobel Strevens | 2021
Classics and English

Jesus Hockey has had a very strong year, joining forces with Pembroke and Worcester. Having to start in Division 2 as a new team didn't stop us from battling our way up the rankings to secure promotion

to Division 1 at the end of the league, so watch this space for next year's domination! This win was quickly followed by another on the day of the Cup tournament: a busy morning of matches led to a respectable third place finish for our women, but more importantly our men's side won the tournament! Unfortunately we had an early exit from Trinity Term's Cuppers competition after struggling to field a 0th week team, but looking forward to big things for this team next year.



Rounders

Isobel Strevens | 2021
Classics and English

At the time of writing the 2022/23 Rounders season has not yet begun; however, the Jesus rounders collective made a strong start in our 2021/22 Cuppers campaign before being unfortunately knocked out in the quarter finals by St Anne's. Jesus-Jesus Varsity in Cambridge saw a long-anticipated return to the pitch: Jesus Oxford battled long and hard but unfortunately lost by a mere 1.5 rounders to the inferior Jesus Cambridge. We'll get them next year. Trinity Term's sports day rounders match showed some great promise for the upcoming Cuppers campaign, so watch this space!

Men's Rowing

Toby Kerr | 2021
Engineering Science

2023 began with a gruelling Tideway training camp, thanks to the generous hospitality of our alumni and Thames RC. The men's first eight then narrowly missed

out on winning Bedford Head's Collegiate Eight category by one second. Torpids went less to plan. Surrounded by competitive crews the men's first eight had to fight down the course on multiple days, coming within a canvas of Magdalen, and bumping Trinity (who crashed) along the way. Unfortunately, on days three and four the M1 were caught by Hertford (who were on for blades) and LMH. The crew bounced back in Summer Vllls where they recovered from being bumped by LMH to bump Trinity and then row over at the top of Division II and chase aggressively, but alas unsuccessfully, at the bottom of Division I as sandwich boat on subsequent days. They will continue next year as sandwich boat for the third Vllls in a row.

The second men's eight had a successful Torpids bumping Balliol II, Anne's I, and rowing over the last two days. Summer Vllls proved more of a challenge faced with the formidable opponents of St Hilda's, Regents Park 1st Eights, St Catherine's II and Magdalen II. In an enjoyable week's rowing, including a cameo from the Principal, the crew earned spoons with -5.

Women's Rowing

Martha Heggs | 2021 | English
JCBC Women have had a fantastic academic year, competing in several competitions from the start of Michaelmas. Special shout outs to our Blues Sarah Marshall and Molly Cressey-Rodgers. The W1 also came second in the Open

IVs category at Chiswick Regatta. Other highlights include our trip to Jesus College Cambridge for the Fairbairn Cup, and coming in the top two Oxford crews at Bedford Head in the Open Vllls category. Despite both crews earning spoons (and W2 with footship) in Torpids, W1 still secured a bump on Hertford, and finished top of Division II (not looking forward to sandwich next year!). Summer Vllls saw their hard work pay off, and the W2 fought off St Edmund's Hall II on day one in a tight race, and then bumped every day thereafter. The W1 bumped New College on day one and then rowed over to reach their highest point on the river since 1997. However, we are feeling more optimistic than ever after a hard season of training!



Esports: A new digital age in University sport

Paul Davis | 2021 | Inorganic Chemistry



Paul Davis.

If the University of Oxford can attract some of the best rowers, rugby players, and track and field Olympians, then why not also esports athletes?

In truth, a university with a sporting pedigree like ours should, but we have been lacking the resources to pull these top-level athletes in and allow them to continue to train. Esports athletes do not require traditional sporting facilities like tracks, boots, or boats, but rather PCs powerful enough to handle the games in which they compete. In particular, many international students who may be amongst the highest-ranked players in their home countries see their standings slip as they are often unable to bring their PCs to the UK, leaving them to play on sub-optimal laptops.

The thrashing Oxford received at the latest annual Oxford-Cambridge esports Varsity event, spectated by over 200 people at

any one time (with half of those watching over the internet), and which saw Oxford lose 4-3, brought this lack of training facilities into sharp focus.

Jesus College is set to make history as it prepares to approve the development of a high-powered IT/esports suite, the first of any Oxbridge College to do so. In partnership with the Oxford University Gaming and Esports Society (OUGES) and commercial partner AFK Creators Ltd, the initiative will propel the University of Oxford to the highest leagues alongside other institutions like the University of Warwick, Cornell University, and Columbia University that have invested into dedicated training facilities for esports athletes.

Esports are a growing field of sport whereby players lock horns, usually in teams, against each other in competitive video games. Many of the skills that make someone successful in traditional sports – lightning-fast reflexes, coordination, teamwork, strategy, endurance – are also needed in and developed through esports. At the highest echelons, esports competitions can have prize pools for winning teams totalling in the tens of millions of dollars.

By establishing this esports ground for both training and fixtures, Jesus College will be ushering in a new era of Oxford sporting achievement, one that embraces new digital media and brings it in to these hallowed and ancient walls. It also firmly sets College apart as a modernising force within the University, building on the successes of the Digital Hub in which I was honoured to host a History of Gaming event in Michaelmas

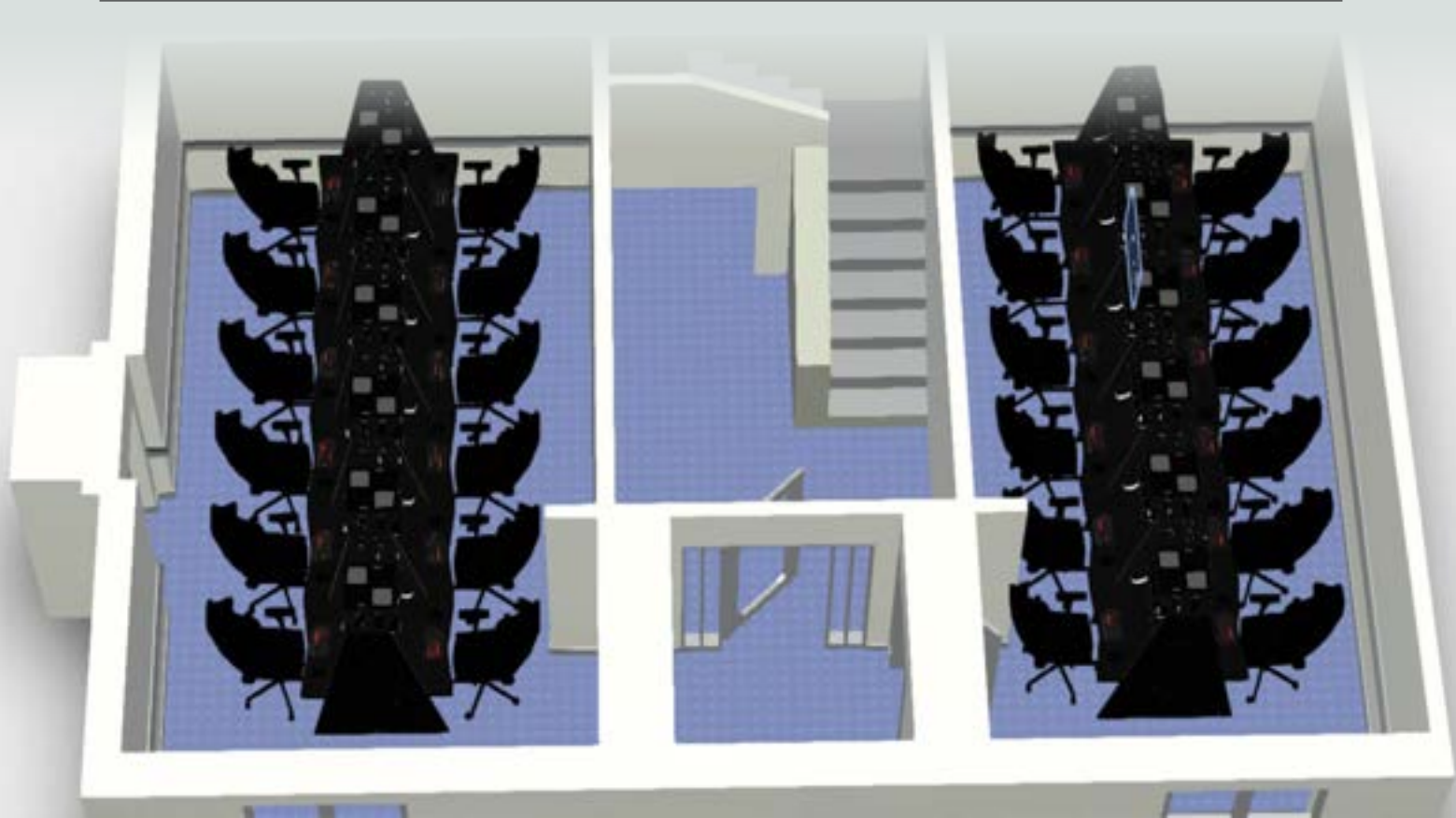
Term 2022, and meshing well with the other active digital-focused partnership with SOUTHWORKS on the Hub's Digital Media Lab and the continued funding of the Career Development Fellow.

The new high-powered IT/esports suite (final name pending) will be housed in the hitherto underused Computer Room in the basement of Staircase XV in Third Quad. The existing furniture will be replaced with 24 high-powered PCs, monitors, peripherals, desks, chairs, and furniture, all provided by College's partner. It will revitalise an otherwise overlooked corner of our historic building.

The benefits to the College will go far beyond simply attracting the best athletes to Jesus and the clout and media coverage that comes with providing the home ground to a very successful University esports team.

The PCs by their very nature act as a direct upgrade from the existing facilities, which will benefit students with projects involving coding, simulations, graphic design, or other similarly computationally demanding endeavours.

Fixtures and events put on by OUGES will give Jesubites the chance to get involved with all the complementary activities that occur during these events, such as planning, logistics, streaming, podcasting, recording, journalism, graphic design of promotional materials... I could go on! This means that the suite will provide opportunities for skills and career development not only to STEM students and esports athletes, but also students in the Arts and Humanities.



CAD/3D designs of the proposed gaming suite. Designs by Draft Design Build Ltd

The proposal includes plans to work the new suite into College's highly successful outreach and engagement programme. OUGES and the Oxford University Computing and Technology Society have collaborated to draft a Coding for Women curriculum that will serve to narrow the gender skills gap in STEM. The suite will also undoubtedly become a key feature in future tours for prospective applicants and will add a distinctive flair to College's social media, already the most popular of any Oxbridge college.

Sameer Mazhar, former OUGES President and the originator of the idea to set up the suite, says: "It has been really exciting to work with Jesus College and AFK to submit this proposal. With some of the

top University esports athletes attending Oxford, having a base to practice and grow together is an incredible opportunity. We are looking to elevate and showcase Oxford Talent both within the UK and the world. This space, as a first not just in the University but the City of Oxford will be a key asset for developing our activities and ambitions in the coming years."

Matt Woods, CEO and Co-Founder of AFK and himself an Oxford alumnus, writes "I am extremely excited to be helping elevate gaming and esports at Jesus College, and in turn the wider University. It's truly a privilege for AFK and myself to be involved in bringing to life the vision of an esports hub at Oxford, building the foundations for the future and

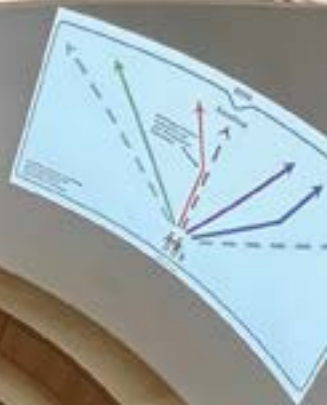
continuing to contribute to the long-term success of the project."

For me personally, working with both College Officers and partners to bring this initiative all the way from conception in early 2022 to its upcoming implementation over the summer of 2023 has been one of the most rewarding endeavours of my time at Jesus so far. It has allowed me to work on many of the transferrable skills that College successfully provides the opportunities to develop, and proves that Jesus College is an institution where anyone can make their mark with the right drive and enthusiasm.

Please look forward to the anticipated launch of the suite in early Michaelmas Term 2023!

CHENG KAR SHUN DIGITAL HUB

The launch of the student-led Next Era publication at the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub.



Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub: An exhilarating first year

Janina Schupp | SOUTHWORKS Career Development Fellow for the Digital Hub
Will McBain | Digital Hub Co-ordinator

Thanks to the support of Dr Henry Cheng Kar Shun, the College has built an incredible new centre for learning in the Digital Age. With its elegant architecture, impressive three-floor elevation and state-of-the-art technological capabilities, the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub is really starting to put Jesus on the map as a forward-thinking Oxford college for research and learning in the 21st century.



Will McBain.

Through our curated Digital Hub events programme, we have also been able to open the doors of this exciting new space to wider public audiences, build networks and partnerships across the University, and reach out to academic institutes across the UK, and globally. It has moreover enabled Jesus students to create and deliver innovative events on themes as broad as digital fiction, digital art, and computer gaming, as well as learn new digital skills, such as 3D imaging and videography.

The first year of the Digital Hub's new events programme began before the Cheng Yu Tung Building was even complete, so it was with great anticipation that we launched the Michaelmas 2022 programme in the actual space it was designed for. Across the term we welcomed over 300 participants to a diverse range of events, including the launch of Professor Vili Lehdonvirta's latest book *Cloud Empires: How Digital platforms are overtaking the state and how we can regain control* (MIT,



Janina Schupp.

2022), and College Archivist Dr Robin Darwall-Smith's exploration of the future of archiving in the digital age. DPhil student Andrzej Stuart-Thompson hosted two Digital Hub Reading Clubs for fans of contemporary science fiction, while another DPhil student, Lisa Zillig and undergraduate student Shathuki Perera launched *HerStory* – an exhibition of portraits celebrating Jesus' female alumni. One of our most popular events was *A History of Gaming*, developed by former MCR President Paul Davis, which brought together experts and gaming fans to examine how the games industry is driving technological change and what it can teach academia.

Hilary 2023 presented an expanded and more ambitious programme of events, kicking off with the *Oxford Synthetic Media Forum (OSMF)* – a day-long symposium that brought together over 150 researchers and experts from academia, industry, government, and journalism to explore the prescient theme of

generative AI and synthetic media. What made the Forum so exciting was that it had been developed by a committee of students led by Jesus postgraduate Cassidy Bereskin, a Clarendon Scholar at the Oxford Internet Institute, whose research focuses on interventions for restoring online trust and reducing users' susceptibility to online misinformation. Cassidy and her team's academic insights enabled a diverse selection of panel discussions, art displays and talks that captured emerging challenges and opportunities in the world of generative AI and the kinds of media content that are fully or partially generated using AI.

Another Jesus student-led event was the launch of *Next Era*, a new online publication and event series that aims to be a voice of optimism in a time of societal uncertainty and instability, and helps imagine and understand the potential pathways towards a brighter tomorrow. The project is spearheaded by postgraduates Nour Attalla, Cassandra Dugi and Otto Barenberg. The launch saw the team present their ambitions for *Next Era*, and guide a vision-boarding exercise designed to engage participants' creativity, hope, and imagination in exploring



Cassidy Bereskin. Photo by Frank A. Tarimo.



Kassandra Dugi.

optimistic futures. Challenges of a different kind were addressed at the *Social Datathon 2023: Finding Green Skills*, which tasked participants to define and identify essential green skills and job roles for the UK by leveraging a unique dataset and competing in a week-long hackathon.

The academic research of several Jesus Fellows also featured strongly in the Hilary programme. Dirk van Hulle, Professor of Bibliography and Modern Book History, led a talk on *Digital Keys to Invisible Texts*, which showcased new digital tools that can reveal hidden texts in modern manuscripts, and rediscover long-lost medieval treasures. At *Regenerative Medicine in the Digital Age*, Professors Paul Riley, Shankar Srinivas, and Georg Holländer (pictured above) shared insights into how digital technologies have shaped their research in developmental and regenerative medicine.

Before we had the chance to catch our breath, the roof of the Digital Hub almost lifted off twice thanks to our inaugural, digitally themed music events. At Zimbabwean Mbira and Storytelling, actor, composer and Mbira musician John Falsetto brought together a unique



Jesus Fellows Paul Riley, Georg Holländer and Shankar Srinivas.

blend of ancient oral storytelling traditions and digital technologies. As vibrant Zimbabwean rhythms and enthralling narratives filled the space, the lively and immersive atmosphere created an unforgettable evening for everyone who came. The event also showcased the potential for dynamic cultural experiences in the Hub, and highlighted the value of fostering creative expression in

our increasingly connected world. Our second performance featured 'Cyborg Soloist', pianist, composer, and technologist, Zubin Kanga, who pushed the boundaries of piano recitation by incorporating cutting-edge technologies such as motion sensors, AI, and virtual reality.

Together, our Hilary Term programme exemplified the Digital Hub's commitment to fostering



The Social Datathon 2023: Finding Green Skills.

innovation and collaboration, demonstrating the incredible potential of combining technology with various research fields to create new ideas and experiences.

Trinity Term began with an even larger version of our Immerse-eXpo, which we inaugurated exactly one year ago with our collaborators at the Oxford X-Reality Hub. The event saw a day of immersive hands-on demos and talks from a range of invited speakers, as we explored the latest applications of VR technology in academia and industry.

For Africa Day 2023, we hosted an *Afro-Futuristic Celebration with Jally Kebba Susso* organised by postgraduates Jeffrey Fasegha (Jesus) and Abdel Dicko (Magdalen). Susso is a musical and cultural ambassador for Gambia, and the 75th generation of griot in his family. A griot is a traditional West African storyteller, historian, musician and diplomat who steers their community and its leadership to a better future. During Susso's interactive performance, he guided the audience in the use of the kora – a stringed instrument used extensively in West Africa – and played a range of both traditional and contemporary musical pieces. The event also featured traditional instruments and African food for an authentic experience.

We then turned the Digital Hub into a centre of AI and creativity for *Creative Machine Oxford*. This symposium was organised in collaboration with Goldsmiths, University of London and supported by the Alan Turing Institute. Invited speakers from the worlds of AI, computing, digital



Mbira musician and performer, John Falsetto.

art, molecular science, music, and neuroscience came together to address topics such as 'Can AI be Creative?', 'AI and Visualisation in Scientific Discovery', 'AI as a Partner', and 'Curating AI and Digital Art'. The talks featured academics from across arts and sciences, in combination with industry experts from Spotify, King.com, DeepMind, and the V&A Museum.

To complete this academic year, our final event entered the *Digital Labyrinth* of the Ashmolean's current exhibition, *Labyrinth: Knossos, Myth and Reality*. The curator of the exhibition, Jesus College Fellow Dr Andrew Shapland was joined by three speakers, who each presented their unique contributions. We heard about Ubisoft's creation of a model of Knossos used in the

game *Assassin's Creed: Odyssey* and their involvement in the exhibition. We then travelled through a digital 3D model created of the site of Knossos and lastly explored the digital visitor engagement specifically devised as an experiment for the exhibition. Using their experience, the panel discussed the role of digital technology in exhibitions.

From musical performances in the digital age, to Datathon, and VR demonstrations – our first year inside the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub was an exciting one. Seeing the incredible ideas of our College community come to life as large-scale events was certainly inspiring – and we cannot wait to see what the next year has to offer!

If you would like to support Digital Hub programmes, please contact janina.schupp@jesus.ox.ac.uk.



*Alumni visiting the newly opened Cheng Yu Tung Building.
Photo: John Cairns*

Development Update

Brittany Wellner James | Director of Development



Georgie Plunkett (left) and Brittany Wellner James.

The Development Update is our opportunity to thank our alumni community for the myriad ways in which you have supported College over the past year. The support you give comes in many forms and your engagement helps us create a stronger alumni programme each year.

I composed this update following our 1571 Society annual Legacy Luncheon in June. It was a bright and sunny day in College, and a particularly gorgeous one for taking drinks outside in First Quad with College friends and supporters following an inspiring talk from alumna and poet Ankita Saxena (2014, English). Ankita's enthusiasm for poetry began in childhood but was honed here at Oxford. Her love for both creating and reading poetry was not only evident, but infectious; I found myself a bit of a fangirl by the end of her talk and eager to purchase her newest published collection of poems entitled *Mother|Line*. Ankita's poetry was a delightful new discovery for many of our alumni attending the luncheon that day and it was a solid reminder of why I love my role at Jesus. The Development

Office is always looking to find new and creative ways to celebrate and showcase our talented alumni and wider College community, and our objective is not only to stay curious about the incredible research and talent that currently resides in College, but to also be interested in everything that our alumni and friends go on to do.

It is our pleasure and our pride to present an alumni engagement programme that nurtures intellectual curiosity across all disciplines. It is our philosophy that although you may have graduated from Jesus long ago, you can always return to College and learn something new. Thanks to our Alumni Engagement Manager, Dr Peter Sutton, we have another exciting programme of alumni events scheduled for 2023-24, both in-person and online, which you can read about on pages 81 and 83. A standout new addition to the events roster over the past couple of years has no doubt been the Jesus College Shakespeare

Project. These cleverly devised productions not only serve our access community with Friday afternoon school matinees, but also offer College members and alumni the opportunity to watch high-quality Shakespeare performances delivered on their College doorstep. If the 80-plus audition roster of students across Oxford is anything to go by, the Jesus College Shakespeare Project has certainly caught fire as one of the best ensembles in the Oxford amateur dramatic scene. Not a speck of our College Hall space is wasted in the near in-the-round performances, which often see the nimble actors racing from High Table to the balcony between scenes – as the Bard would say, "youth is full of sport"! Thank you, too, to the many College alumni who have supported these performances, either financially or by coming to watch. We are proud to enrich the arts offering at College with the Project and look forward to seeing you at a future show.



Summer is a great time to visit the Cheng Yu Tung Building and take advantage of the new Quad. Photo by John Cairns

Whether it be by attending our events, commenting on a social media post, or donating what you can to support future generations of Jesus students, we thank each and every one of you who have made College a priority this year. Thanks to you we had our second-best telethon ever, securing over £200,000 in March in support of the Development Fund. We were also pleased to have the opportunity to thank many of you in person at the Patron Wall of Recognition event held in College on 27th May, where we unveiled a beautiful tribute plaque in the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub dedicated to over 800 patrons who gave to College during our 450th Anniversary Campaign.

Each year your support, no matter how small, gathers momentum with other contributors to change the course of College history and improve our students' lives. One of the ways in which your support has made a difference in 2023 is in the endowment of the Dr John Walsh Bursary in History, and the creation of two additional spend-down History graduate studentships in John Walsh and Professor Hamish Scott's memory. Thanks to your enthusiasm for the appeal it was one of the fastest fulfilled bursaries we have been able to secure for College. It might surprise alumni to hear that not all our supporters for the bursary were former Jesus Historians. The stories we collected from donors who only knew John in passing at College were just as poignant as those who had been taught by him and knew him more intimately. John's warmth, wit and empathy was not reserved for a selection of College members,



In front of the Patron Wall of Recognition. Photo by Ed Nix.

but was clearly felt by all Jesubites who came into his orbit. We enter College not knowing what memories we'll take away, but the stories collected from our alumni about John (see web link on page 20) is a testament to the power of the smallest kindnesses that can remain with us so many years later. It is sometimes the simplest gestures of compassion, or an insignificant shared experience, that can end up meaning the most to us and stand the test of time. Thanks to John, Jesus College is forever a kinder place, and we are thankful to the many alumni and friends who have responded to John's legacy by paying it forward for future Jesus Historians.

The creation of means-tested bursaries and new studentships is not the only way in which we are able to offer access opportunities to potential and current Jesus students. Programmes like Target Oxbridge, in which Jesus is a participant, are a great example of how we attract the best and brightest applicants to College. Target Oxbridge was launched by Rare in 2012 to help improve the

representation of Black students at Oxford and ensures that students who have the aptitude to aim for Oxford and Cambridge are supported and encouraged to apply. A decade later, the data released this year shows that the number of UK-based students of Black heritage accepted to Oxbridge has quadrupled since 2012, totalling over 350 students of Black heritage who have secured Oxbridge offers. We are particularly grateful to Julian "Dougie" Douglas (1994, Geography) who has supported two consecutive cohorts of Target Oxbridge students at Jesus. We look forward to welcoming our next cohort to College this Michaelmas.

New access opportunities have also been created through the visionary development of College spaces and internships for current students. Thanks to renewed support from SOUTHWORKS, a software company founded by associate alumnus Alejandro Jack (2011, PGDip Global Business) and his business partner Johnny Halife, we can continue to support a Career Development Fellow to curate

academic and artistic programmes in the Hub. SOUTHWORKS has also generously supported the creation of a new Digital Media Lab for College which will become a permanent part of the Hub's offering to students. The Digital Media Lab will create opportunities for students to learn podcasting and produce other forms of digital communications for College, giving them the opportunity to build new technological skillsets and create exciting new content for the Jesus community. This exciting development, combined with the support we have received from alumnus Jan Pethick (1966, Jurisprudence) for student Access and Outreach Digital Internships, will help Jesus level-up its position as one of the leading Oxford colleges in the online educational space. Our online presence makes us more accessible to future Jesus students, and no one knows this better than our Access Fellow Dr Matt Williams, whose online resources for student support have now been downloaded over one million times, making us the single most-viewed college access platform across Oxford



Photo by Ed Nix.

and Cambridge! Supporting access at Jesus and the Digital Hub helps a 452-year-old educational institution stay not only relevant, but cutting-edge.

Last, but not least, one of the best and easiest ways you can help your College is by staying in touch. Improving our communications offering has been one of my key aims for the alumni office since I joined College nearly six (!) years ago. One of my favourite projects in this time has been the creation of *In the Loop*, the bi-weekly

e-newsletter that captures the best of what we publish online across our social media channels, and the latest news and updates from our College website. This e-newsletter is a great summary of all current happenings in College and also a great way to tap into and explore social media without needing to create an account. We are constantly reviewing and seeking new methods to reach and connect with our alumni audience through our online channels, whilst also remaining committed to producing high-quality content through more traditional publications. College's commitment to becoming greener is another important reason why we continue to review and improve the ways in which we bring you College updates with a mix of online and printed offerings, with the ever-increasing aim to deliver our news in the most responsible format. Contact eve.bodniece@jesus.ox.ac.uk in the Development Office to sign up and stay in the loop!

Thank you all for another incredible year of support.



Alumni visiting the Cheng Yu Tung Building.

Photo: John Cairns.



Events Preview 2023/2024

Peter Sutton | Alumni Engagement Manager



With the 450th Anniversary Campaign now complete, we are delighted to present an alumni events programme for 2023/2024 which combines fresh concepts alongside well-loved annual highlights. Last autumn we contacted a focus group of 50 alumni across the generations and continents to ask them about our events going forward, and we are grateful for their insights which are helping us shape our future programmes. In particular, we look forward to hosting more informal drinks, networking, and cultural events in London, as well as presenting new ways of reuniting with College contemporaries beyond Gaudies – look out for more details about our plans in the autumn.

Apart from our flagship events such as Gaudies and the All Alumni Dinner, the Cheng Yu Tung Building

provides us with a number of exciting opportunities for hosting new events. In October, we are delighted to welcome Visiting Fellows in Visual Art Marcus Coates and Peter McDonald, to discuss their work exhibited in the Rosaline Wong Gallery, as well as their College-inspired commissions which will be unveiled at the end of their year-long Fellowship in January 2024. On St David's Day, we will host our first all alumni event in the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub, celebrating our special relationship with Wales before the traditional tea and Chapel service. The 2023/2024 year also sees the 70th anniversary of the death of the great Welsh poet Dylan Thomas, and we are delighted that on 9 March we will reimagine his iconic radio play *Under Milk Wood* using the full technical capabilities of the Hub, and inviting both alumni and students – born, raised or residing in Wales – to take part in this ambitious project as we conjure the community of Llareggub through the voices of Wales today. We will also be marking this anniversary with further events in March, including a visit to Thomas's birthplace in Swansea followed by our first Welsh 'Happy Hour'.

From a Bard of Wales to the Bard of Avon, the Jesus College



The cast and creative team of Henry VI, part three, the Jesus College Shakespeare Project's latest production.

Shakespeare Project continues to go from strength to strength, and we have been thrilled with the enthusiasm across all our audiences of alumni, supporters, and schoolchildren, both from our local area and from Wales. Over 600 people have attended one or more of the six plays we have produced so far, and nearly 80 students across the collegiate university have participated. This year we will stage *Richard III*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *King John*, three early plays that show depictions of tyranny at its most ruthless and bloodthirsty. Grippingly political, these plays walk a tightrope between horror and dark comedy as they expose the depths to which tyrants can stoop, and those that suffer as a consequence.

Whether you attend our events regularly or have not reconnected with College since graduating, we hope that you will join us, on Turl Street, in London, Wales, or via our lunchtime Zoom talks. And we already have some exciting plans in place to mark the 50th anniversary of co-education in the 2024/2025 events programme, but they are for a later article...!

For the full events calendar, see page 83.



Alumni enjoying the sun and views at our Lawyers' Drinks event at Taylor Wessing.



Photo: Eve Bodnice

Photo by Eve Bodnice.

2023/2024 Events Calendar

For your convenience, and to help the environment, we now send all events invitations electronically via our events mailing list. These will contain details of when and how to book.

In-person events at College

Friday 15 September	Cadwallader Club Dinner
Friday 29 September	Gaudy (1966, 1981, 2001, 2006)
Thursday 26 October	Contemporary Art evening in the Rosaline Wong Gallery
Saturday 25 November	Jesus College Shakespeare Project: <i>Richard III</i>
Saturday 2 December	History research event and lunch in memory of Dr John Walsh
Saturday 17 February	Jesus College Shakespeare Project: <i>Titus Andronicus</i>
Friday 1 March	St David's Day Celebrations
Saturday 9 March	<i>Under Milk Wood</i> in the Cheng Kar Shun Digital Hub
Friday 22 March	All Alumni Dinner
Saturday 23 March	Postgraduate Research Coffee Morning
Friday 12 April	Gaudy (1962, 1997, 2012, 2017)
Tuesday 23 April	Commemoration of Benefactors
Saturday 11 May	Jesus College Shakespeare Project: <i>King John</i>
Saturday 25 May	Summer Eights at the College boathouse
Saturday 8 June	1571 Society Legacy Luncheon
Friday 21 June	Gaudy (1959 and before, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1992)
Saturday 22 June	XL (JOMG) Day

In-person events in London and Wales

Following the recent success of events in London and in Wales, we are currently scheduling more events in both locations. Please look out for events emails with further announcements and details throughout the year.

Thursday 12 October	London Happy Hour at the White Horse, Broadgate
Thursday 14 December	Donor Carols and Reception at St George's, Hanover Square
Wednesday 20 March	Guided tour of the Dylan Thomas Birthplace, Swansea followed by Happy Hour

Lunchtime Zoom Talks

We will continue our Zoom events, with an ad hoc series of lunchtime talks showcasing their latest cutting-edge research. Please look out for events e-mails with further details of these and other Zoom events.

Friday 20 October	Dr Dorothee Boulanger: Post-Colonial Literature
Friday 26 January	Professor Vili Lehdonvirta: Cloud Empires

Graduations

Saturday 23 September 2023
Saturday 4 November 2023
Saturday 2 March 2024
Saturday 13 July 2024
Tuesday 23 July 2024

