

MAGDALENE

MATTERS

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UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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Welcome

Dear Members,

It has been such a pleasure to catch up with some of you in person at lunches, dinners and small get-togethers during the spring months, the first such in person events since the onset of the pandemic in 2020. To enjoy the company of Members again after the prolonged period of relative isolation has been wonderful and a reminder (if one was needed!) of the affection Members and Friends share for Magdalene. Indeed, it is the loyalty and warmth from the global College community which has ensured the success of the *Future Foundations* Campaign which will close this June. Many of you will read this missive after the New Library will have been officially opened by our Honorary Fellow, HRH The Duke of Gloucester (1963). The grand party to celebrate the successful conclusion of the *Future Foundations* Campaign will have taken place and an enjoyable time will have been had by all involved. We have much to celebrate: 2,500 donors have made more than 4,500 donations to the Campaign and we have surpassed our target of £25 million by almost £4 million. When we planned the Campaign some ten years ago there were more than a few concerns that we were overambitious in wanting to achieve our vision of building a state-of-the-art new library as well as raising very substantial funds in support of students. And yet, thanks to your astonishing response dear reader, we did just that.

We are enormously grateful to all of you for all we have achieved together but our need to support our students is ongoing. Strengthening our ability to support undergraduates in need of financial assistance, be that due to hardship, for research activities or medical electives; enhancing our ability to support postgraduate students whose PhD funding has run out when living costs to enable additional research or field work continue (due to delays from lockdowns); strengthening our teaching provision to ensure the supervision system remains as strong as ever; supporting those who are struggling with mental health issues and in need of additional welfare assistance – all of these challenges are already being funded but we are acutely aware that we must do even more and thus our work continues.

The past two years have been like no others for all of us. Loss, fear and uncertainty have become part of our collective lives in ways few of us could have imaged. The impact on all areas of College life has been significant, and our students and staff have sometimes struggled but always worked exceedingly hard to make life, as it is, work.

Keep well, stay safe and keep in touch. We post regular updates on our website www.magd.cam.ac.uk.

CORINNE LLOYD
Editor and Director of Development

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The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of Magdalene College Cambridge.

Cover photo taken by Mr Matthew Moon.

FELLOWS' NEWS



Professor Brendan Burchell (1990)

Professor Brendan Burchell's research on a four-day working week has been featured in *The*

Independent, *The Guardian*, and the *Financial Times*. A six-month pilot programme with the think tank Autonomy and the 4 Day Week Campaign, in conjunction with researchers from the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Boston College, will follow the progress of roughly 30 companies in introducing a four-day week.



Professor Holger Babinsky (1996)

Professor of Aerodynamics in the Department of Engineering and Magdalene's Director of

Studies in Engineering, Professor Holger Babinsky, has been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering. Professor Babinsky researches fundamental and applied aerodynamics with application to aeronautics, road vehicles and energy production.



Professor Amira Bennison (2010)

Magdalene's Director of Studies in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Professor Amira Bennison,

has been invited to give the keynote address at the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) conference this year in St Andrews. She also featured on The Siwan Project podcast on the history of Muslim Iberia. The Siwan Project produces music blending the different traditions of the Mediterranean.



Dr Philippa Steele (2010)

Magdalene Senior Research Fellow and a Senior Research Associate in the Faculty of Classics, Dr Philippa Steele, has been

awarded a large grant (2 million Euros) by the European Research Council to investigate the visual properties of pre-modern writing. The five-year project, *Visual Interactions in Early Writing Systems* (VIEWS), will employ a research team working on writing systems from Linear A and B and cuneiform to Egyptian hieroglyphs and even Mayan.



Dr Sara Caputo (2019)

Junior Research Fellow, Dr Sara Caputo, has been awarded The Society for Military History Vandervort Prize, for her outstanding

journal articles in the field of military history. The award-winning article '*Treating, Preventing, Feigning, Concealing: Sickness, Agency and the Medical Culture of the British Naval Seaman at the End of the Long Eighteenth Century*', appeared in *Society for the Social History of Medicine*.

Dr Hannah Critchlow (2003)



Neuroscientist and Magdalene Outreach Fellow, Dr Hannah Critchlow, has received an Honorary Degree in recognition of her

outstanding work as a neuroscientist and in science communication from Brunel University, where she studied as an undergraduate. Dr Critchlow also wrote and presented a five-part series on the brain for the Great Minds programme on the South Korean educational TV channel EBS.

Dr Adrian Baez-Ortega (2020)



Magdalene Research Fellow, Dr Adrian Baez-Ortega, has been awarded the prestigious Science & SciLifeLab Prize for Young Scientists. The international

prize created by *Science*, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and SciLifeLab, is awarded annually for outstanding life science research based on a doctoral degree earned in the previous two years.



Mr Vitali Vitaliev (2021)

Royal Literary Fund Writing Fellow, Mr Vitali Vitaliev, runs one-to-one writing tutorials for students during term-time. He is the

author of fourteen books, fiction and non-fiction, written in English and translated into a number of languages. A new paperback edition of his book *Life as a Literary Device. Writer's Manual of Survival* was released last year by Thrust Books. The same publisher also released *The Bumper Book of Vitali's Travels. Thirty Years of Globe-Trotting*.



A New President for Magdalene

by Professor Brendan Burchell (1990), President

On 1st October, Dr Jane Hughes (1987), retired after five years as President of the College. Professor Brendan Burchell, Drury Fellow in the Social Sciences and a member of the Department of Sociology, has been appointed to succeed her. Professor Burchell writes about his new role.



AFTER ALL THOSE EXPERIENCES I THOUGHT THAT I KNEW AND UNDERSTOOD MOST CORNERS OF THE COLLEGE, LITERALLY AND METAPHORICALLY. IT TURNS OUT THAT THERE WAS A LOT MORE TO LEARN ABOUT THE WORKINGS OF A CAMBRIDGE COLLEGE WHEN I TOOK ON THE ROLE OF PRESIDENT!

I am still in awe at how much goes on in College, and how well coordinated everything is (most of the time) to keep the show on the road. Working closely with the Master and Bursars I now appreciate how tough those roles can be. It has been a uniquely challenging time in the history of the College with the combination of Brexit and then the pandemic; we've relied heavily on the College staff so that university life could continue after a fashion. I have a renewed admiration for all those who put the food on our plates, maintain the buildings, keep the gardens looking stunning and clean up after us; the porters and the less visible but equally valuable roles in admin, HR, IT, and accounts.

There has been a lot to learn, but ultimately, I see the most important function of the President is to maintain the community of Fellows. That has been more difficult through the pandemic as we hardly saw each other for a year and a half. As a sociologist, I'm acutely aware of just how important communities are for so many aspects of our lives and our wellbeing, and for so many months we were deprived of all the interactions that make Magdalene such a special place.

In my first Michaelmas Term as President the College was starting to return to normal life; Covid rates were reducing, most Members of the College were getting vaccinated, and we could dine together in Hall. All was going so well until the new Omicron variant hit in December and it felt like we were back in crisis mode. Fortunately, that didn't last long and the route back to life as we knew it was on track again. Perhaps the highlight of Lent term was the Pepys Dinner, our first proper feast in two years with the Hall filled with the JCR, MCR, SCR, Choir and alumni. It made me realise how much we'd missed each other over the pandemic, and how important it is to re-establish Magdalene as such a special place in the lives of all Members of the College.

I cannot imagine a better 'day at the office' than wandering around College, chatting to gardeners, students, porters and Fellows, sharing lunch or dinner with colleagues, all mixed in with supervising exceedingly bright and motivated students and pushing ahead with my research. Just in the last few weeks it feels like we're back in that world, and I'm a very happy President.

It is six months now since I started in my new role as President of Magdalene College and it seems a good time to reflect back. Previous presidents told me that it's a great job, and in that respect, they were absolutely right. I'd been in awe of the Masters and Presidents when I was first elected to a Fellowship back in 1990, and I could not quite believe that it was now me doing the job of President.

Over my 31 years as a Fellow, I've played quite a few very different roles, each bringing me into contact with contrasting parts of College life. First, as a Director of Studies, my main focus was on the relatively small number of students studying SPS (later HSPS). Then, as Rooms Tutor, I was working with the JCR and MCR involving all corners of the College estates, some very grand sets and some, well, "quirky" or "quaint" rooms. I was a Tutor for several years, which meant helping undergrads through all sorts of difficulties in their path through Cambridge. For five years I was one of the Admissions Tutors specialising in outreach, taking groups of our students to big events in Liverpool and the North West, and arranging school visits to Cambridge. Those trips were a lot of fun, and it brought me into the world of schools and teachers.

A PATH IN SCIENCE

by Dr Adrian Baez-Ortega (2020), Junior Research Fellow



Dr Adrian Baez-Ortega using a Laser Microdissection Microscope

Dr Adrian Baez-Ortega is a Nevile Research Fellow in Biological Sciences at Magdalene, and a postdoctoral researcher at the Wellcome Sanger Institute. His doctoral work has received various international awards, including the 2021 Science & SciLifeLab Prize for Young Scientists.

This coming October will mark two years of my admission as a Junior Research Fellow of Magdalene College. It will also mark seven years since I was admitted as a PhD student in Biological Sciences at Cambridge, and ten years since I began my postgraduate studies in Computer Science at the University of La Laguna, on my native island of Tenerife. It often gives me pause to consider how my life has changed over those ten years. I may even argue that the Adrian who landed in Stansted in 2015 (equipped with two bags of clothing suitable for the cruelest Siberian winter), and the Adrian who defended his PhD work before the Master and Fellows of Magdalene in 2020, were in fact significantly different people.

In my childhood I kept a broad range of interests, which made it difficult for me to decide on a subject for my undergraduate

degree. In the end, I opted for computer science, perhaps due to a preference for solving problems rather than memorising facts. I never felt a serious inclination to study natural sciences or follow in my parents' entomological footsteps. To some extent, I had the impression that plenty of work had already been done in zoology, and that a younger and less settled discipline might hold better opportunities.

To me, applied computer science is the art of communicating with the most sophisticated human-made machines, and implanting in them one's own mental process on how to approach a particular problem, such that the machine can solve the problem with superhuman efficiency. It follows, of course, that the greatest advantage of speaking the language of computers is that one can coerce them to do all of one's work – certainly the best definition of my current situation

as a computational biologist. On the other hand, I must confess that learning how to program a computer is probably the most punishing task I ever undertook. I remember being often humbled and enraged in equal measure at discovering that the intractable programming error which had blighted my entire day (or week), once finally uncovered, was invariably not the computer's fault, but rather a flaw in my own logical reasoning, or in the translation of such reasoning into logical instructions. The computer itself is never wrong, since it only does as it is told – but it can certainly be a most balky fellow.

Despite its name, computer science is in essence a form of engineering: its focus is on addressing real-world problems, rather than understanding the laws of nature or society. In consequence, it was not until my final year as a Master's student that I encountered a computational problem which trespassed the boundary into science. One of my professors had asked me to come to his office to discuss a potential problem for my final project. The problem was one known as 'genome assembly', whose aim is to reconstitute the sequence of an organism's DNA from the multitude of tiny sequence fragments produced by the process of 'DNA sequencing'. This is somewhat analogous to reconstructing the entire text of a book from the millions of pieces of paper that would result from shredding a thousand copies of the same book. The professor had hung an oversized example of this on his wall, and it was the physical sight of that beautiful problem which irredeemably set me on the path to becoming a computational biologist.

The series of events connecting this moment with my arrival in Cambridge was remarkably out of my control, except insofar as I endeavoured to make the best of every opportunity. Whether swift or strong, or wise or otherwise, I surely partook of the proverbial 'time and chance'. My professor introduced me to faculty at the local genetics department, one of whom would later conspire for me to meet a prominent researcher working at Cambridge. Soon after, this researcher would convince my future PhD supervisor, Professor Elizabeth Murchison, to offer me an internship at her laboratory, thus paving the way to my admission as a PhD student in October 2015, and thence to the five most important years of my adult life.

As someone who had spent his entire life on a remote island, entering one of the world's foremost universities seemed a precarious dream that might fall to pieces if handled too intrepidly. But I was convinced that, as the biologist Sydney Brenner said, it was 'better to be a small frog in a large pond than an enormous tadpole in a small one'. I soon came to learn that my native island is as dear to the British as the memory of Lord Nelson – though I suspect this is helped by widespread ignorance of the fact that we still keep and

praise the cannon which took his arm in 1797. For me, the most intoxicating aspect of Cambridge was its being the polar opposite of Tenerife in every respect; from climate through architecture to cultural offer, this was a completely new world, but one closer to that which I wished to inhabit. Naturally, such a contrast brought losses as well as gains: the opportunity to participate in world-class science, attend lectures and concerts on a daily basis, and enjoy my much-anticipated independence, all came at the cost of forfeiting warm weather, pleasant food, and contact with friends and family. Yet I viewed this as the price of my new life, and was certainly willing to abide it – for, as A.C. Benson lucidly expressed it, 'one must pay a price for everything'.

Concerning my PhD studies, I was possibly blessed beyond my deserts. I found myself in a small and welcoming research group, devoted to investigating one of the most captivating phenomena in biology – transmissible cancers. These are exceptional cancers whose cells can physically spread between animals, enabling them to survive as long-lived parasites. I vividly remember first reading about one such cancer in a magazine at a Tenerife barbershop, and being somewhat nonplussed by the idea. By an uncanny turn of events, I now was to spend five years studying the biology of this bizarre creature. Although cancer research is kind to those with a computer-science background, I also owe the success of my PhD to the insight and kindness of my supervisor, who let much of her brilliance shine through the lantern of my own effort.

Spending my doctoral years in Cambridge, permanently motivated to develop my potential further, was nothing short of a life-defining experience. Once I was convinced that I could bring my research to fruition and produce a first-rate thesis, I determined to pursue a career in the same stimulating environment. Intent on staying in Cambridge, I scoured the riverbank for Junior Fellowships, and secured a research position at the Sanger Institute in Hinxton. Since 2020, I have investigated questions related to the role of DNA mutations in ageing and cancer across animal species; in a final stroke of irony, some of these are the same species once studied by my parents.

Despite the pandemic's impact, being part of Magdalene during this period has granted me a priceless place in the academic community, brimful of opportunities to exchange ideas with gifted and generous scholars, and to explore the fascinating perspectives of other fields of knowledge. The future remains dimmed by the prospects of endless competition and the struggle for academic survival – and yet it is this poised uncertainty which renders life attractive. Notwithstanding the challenges ahead, I continue to relish the everyday privilege of roaming this beautiful town of old Colleges, new ideas, and undying inspiration.

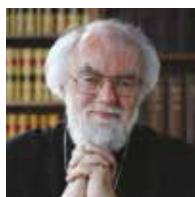


FUTURE FOUNDATIONS

Where We Are Now

The vision and the work behind the scenes which informed the planning of the *Future Foundations* Campaign began long before the public launch of the Campaign in 2017. Mr Duncan Robinson, Master from 2002 to 2012, was the first to articulate the idea of building a New Library to Members; Dr Rowan Williams, succeeded Duncan in 2013 and spent his Mastership persuading the Magdalene community of the merits of this most

ambitious project; and Sir Christopher Greenwood, Master since 2020, now has the pleasure of being in office when the New Library will finally be officially opened. His work, however, will not stop there as fundraising has become part and parcel of the job for Heads of House in Cambridge. It has been a privilege and a real pleasure to work with three such distinguished Masters on this very ambitious Campaign.



A Common Commitment to Worthwhile Work

by Dr Rowan Williams (2013),
Honorary Fellow

When I was getting ready to be interviewed for the Mastership of Magdalene, I came across a phrase in a book about a Canadian poet and scholar, who described the department he had worked in as 'a hardworking, coherent and meaningful community'. Yes, I thought, that's the sort of community I'd want to be part of; a community that is 'coherent' in the sense that its members know that they can talk to one another openly and confidently because they trust that they share something of the same purpose and values.

That kind of community is shaped by a common commitment to worthwhile work, of course – but also by all the other ways in which people build trust with one another, the leisure activities,

the shared meals, the times when ideas jump the wall and you begin to understand why different things matter to different people, but don't have to set people against each other.

Needless to say, Magdalene amply fulfilled that vision in all sorts of ways. But when the challenge was first put to me about the Library ('Well, if it's going to happen, you'll have to help make it happen' was how the Senior Bursar expressed it to me, as I recall), it seemed to me like a heaven-sent opportunity to flesh out the vision a bit further. A new and much-needed workspace, of course; but also an art gallery, a place to socialise, and, not least, a building that was comfortable, graceful and human-sized. I found myself saying quite often, 'We don't need an award-winning building' – meaning that we shouldn't be looking for something that architects thought spectacular, but for a building that expressed and 'housed' the values we cared about at Magdalene, a College which has always prided itself on its human scale and intimate proportions.

The wonderful irony, of course, is that we now have an award-winning building! Award-winning for all the right reasons, though, because of its gracefulness and space and harmony with its surroundings. It has been such a privilege to be involved in this project – largely because it felt like a confirmation of the intuition I had ten years ago that Magdalene was, and could go on being, a community with the coherence and meaningfulness that mattered. The New Library has surpassed our expectations; I am confident that it will be a key element in keeping our College alive to its priorities, human and academic alike.



Rebuilding the Magdalene Community

by Sir Christopher Greenwood,
Master

Although I became Master at a time when the *Future Foundations* Campaign still had almost two years to run, as things turned out, I had very little to do. The enormous efforts made by my predecessor, Dr Rowan Williams, and by our Development Director, Mrs Corinne Lloyd (2010), and her team, together with the remarkable generosity shown by so many of our alumni and other benefactors meant that by the time I arrived in October 2020, the New Library was almost complete. Indeed, the plan had been for the New Library to be opened a few days before I took office.

We all know why that did not happen. The pandemic delayed the practical opening to our students until May 2021 and the formal opening until July 2022. Yet the pandemic also provided powerful endorsement of the vision of my two predecessors, Mr Duncan Robinson CBE and Dr Rowan Williams, in deciding to build the New Library. Not only did

we end up with one of the finest libraries – I would go so far as to say the finest College Library – in Cambridge, the pandemic brought home to me how important the New Library is in rebuilding the Magdalene community after the months of isolation. As soon as students were able, they went there in large numbers, not only because it was a great place in which to work, but because it provided an environment in which they could study together.

For many of us, a library is a place of silence and solitude where scholarship is pursued in the presence, but not the company of others. The enforced isolation of the lockdowns has changed that vision for me as I have seen the enthusiasm with which our students have headed to the New Library to work together – whether in the study rooms where they can discuss their work or at the long tables where silence and companionship go hand in hand. Much as I am delighted by the accolades which the New Library has won – and continues to win – from the architectural community, the plaudits which it receives from our students mean even more.

Coming to the Campaign when I did, I was able to enjoy the fruits of others' labours but there was still work to be done. I inherited ambitious plans to raise much needed funds for bursaries and student support – particularly important given the sudden and dramatic change which the pandemic brought about in the finances of so many of our students. Here, as with the Library, alumni responded with immense generosity and in very large numbers. One of the many sources of pride I feel in Magdalene is that we have one of the highest participation rates of any College in response to our appeal for funds.

On behalf of the whole College, I want to take this opportunity to thank my predecessors for their vision and all of our Members whose contributions made that vision a reality.

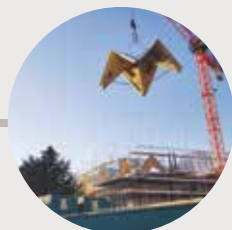
LIBRARY TIMELINE



SEPTEMBER 2018
Ground breaking ceremony.



MAY 2019
First floor construction.



DECEMBER 2019
Roof construction.



MAY 2021
Library opens to students.



MOVING MAGDALENE'S MEMORIES

by Mrs Katy Green, College Archivist

Magdalene is home to a treasure trove of historical records and documents which over the centuries have been stored in different locations around the College. The first priority was to bring together all of the College's archival records physically into their new home in the Archive Centre on the ground floor of the New Library, with a future aim to catalogue them onto a searchable online database to be made available for researchers worldwide.

In September work began on the important job of moving the College Archive from the Old Library and the Pepys Building. To ensure a successful move a lot of planning was involved, including assessing the number and size of records and the order in which they needed to be moved. The Archive contains items dating back to the 1400s, including the 1538 Grant of Arms to Lord Audley and the 1542 Foundation Charter, both recently beautifully conserved and now safely stored in the Archive's environmentally controlled storeroom. Other treasures such as the personal papers of notable College Members, records showing the running of the College and admission of students back to the 16th century, and photographs of all aspects of College life and buildings were then prepared to be moved. Time was spent carefully packing, as each document, volume, or file had to be wrapped in bubble wrap or boxed to ensure they were transported safely. The Archivist had the help of volunteer Mrs Rachel Perry Eichhorst and the Housekeeping Department, who worked hard to load up all the records and transport them the short way across First and Second Courts.

Perhaps one of the most important collections in the Archive are papers relating to mountaineer George Mallory, who attended Magdalene 1905–09. These papers include approximately 800 letters written between George and his wife Ruth. The Archivist was able to provide material relating to Mallory's time at the College and as a mountaineer for the first exhibition held in the Robert Cripps Gallery.

Now that most of the College's archives are safely in the storeroom the second part of the move is being planned, which involves relocating the contents of the storerooms in the Lutyens Building.

It is hoped the move and online catalogue will generate even more interest in the archive in addition to the varied and fascinating enquiries we already receive. Recent enquiries have included the College's connection with Copped Hall, payments made to builders for work to the Chapel in the 1750s, teaching in Colleges during the Civil War, the history of the Boat Club, and the significance of the green snake on the gates to River Court (no-one seems to know the answer to this so if you do, please get in touch!).

We have also welcomed our first researchers to the work room and we are open every Monday and Thursday 9.30m – 4pm. If you have any questions about the College history or would like to make an appointment please do get in touch: archives@magd.cam.ac.uk

The Robert Cripps Gallery – A Home for Art

by Professor Tom Spencer (1973), Fellow

On the ground floor of the New Library, and opening out through doors onto the Fellows' Garden is The Robert Cripps Gallery. Named in honour of Mr Robert Cripps AM, a passionate art collector, generous benefactor and supporter, and Honorary Fellow of the College since 2005.



Artist Tony Foster hanging the *Fragile Planet* Exhibition.



Everest 1921 – A Reconnaissance.

The Gallery, running almost the length of the building, benefits from wonderful natural light as there are four floor length windows which can be opened in warmer weather. A dedicated space for exhibitions the Gallery has three central museum grade display cabinets, a gallery grade picture hanging system, and the temperature and humidity can be controlled to gallery specifications. The space is both one for quiet contemplation and, when the end wall partition is rolled back to reveal the 'social space' at the south end of the building, an ideal area, already popular, for small to medium-sized social gatherings and drinks parties.

The Gallery opened in November 2021 with an exhibition kindly loaned to the College by the Royal Geographical Society, London. This showcased a selection of stunning platinum prints of the approaches to Mount Everest, and the mountain itself, from the 1921 British Mount Everest Reconnaissance Expedition; many of the images were taken

by our famous alumnus, George Mallory (1905). In Lent Term 2022, we were pleased to support an exhibition on loan from the Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro and the Foster Foundation of Palo Alto, California. Entitled 'Fragile Planet', it celebrated the wonderful watercolour paintings of the wilderness artist and environmentalist Tony Foster. The paintings capture, in remarkable detail, both the beauty and vulnerability of five landscapes - rainforests, water, arctic, deserts and, in a series of 'lockdown diary' tableaux, Cornwall (Tony's home county). We are now busy planning an Exhibition of East Anglian landscape paintings and examples of Australian Aboriginal art from the Collection of Robert Cripps to be in place for the official opening of the New Library in July 2022.



Further details on the Gallery, on past and future exhibitions, and on access arrangements, can be found at www.magd.cam.ac.uk/the-robert-cripps-gallery.

WHY MAGDALENE MATTERED: THE PATH FROM COLLEGE TO THE G7

by Miss Sophie Daud (2009)



© FUTURE LEADERS NETWORK

If you'd asked me on the day I left Magdalene what I'd be doing in ten years' time, I'm fairly confident I would have been quite assertive: "I'm going to work for the U.K. Government, bringing my passion for problem solving to the biggest public policy questions in society."

21-year-old me was right – in some ways. Immediately after graduating with a degree in Natural Sciences in 2012, I joined the Civil Service Fast Stream, a graduate programme aimed at equipping new entrants with the core competencies and experiences needed to deliver excellent public services. I both enjoyed my job – tackling big issues like child poverty or long-term unemployment spoke to the part of me that also led to my election as the JCR Charities Officer – and was lucky enough to also be quite good at it, with the curiosity,

tenacity and confidence derived from three gruelling years of back-to-back lectures, intense supervisions and tricky labs standing me in good stead in debates with senior decision makers and Ministers.

But... I was nevertheless frequently quite angry. Why were all of my leaders – both political and official – so, well... useless? It felt like the whole of Government seemed to trip itself up, time and time again, with poor leadership, poor leadership, and oh yes, that again – poor leadership.

As a rising star in the organisation, I was genuinely quite worried that I was going to recapitulate the mistakes I could see happening, time and time again, in the ranks above me. So I started seeking opportunities to improve my leadership

This was a pivotal moment for me. I discovered that whilst my career to that point had combined my love of problem solving (from my NatSci days) with my passion for public service, I had been missing a special secret sauce – people.

skills. In 2016 I was selected as Head of the U.K.'s Delegation to the Youth 7 (Y7) Summit – the official youth engagement group for the Group of 7 (G7) intergovernmental process. At the age of 24, I led a team of three men (all older than me) to Tokyo, Japan, where we negotiated with other young leaders to produce a series of recommendations (known as a communique) for world leaders.

This was a pivotal moment for me. I discovered that whilst my career to that point had combined my love of problem solving (from my NatSci days) with my passion for public service, I had been missing a special secret sauce – people. I love working with, nurturing, developing and inspiring people. I am a good leader, and I am good at helping others to lead. I'm sure Magdalene was in some way responsible for this. From participating in the Women's 1st rowing team, to playing an active role in the JCR, to just enjoying the tight-knit community in College... all of these experiences helped hone my natural instincts of empathy, compassion and coaching, which I realised had to become fundamental tenets of my career ahead.

And so it was that, in the subsequent years, I volunteered with the organisation that originally selected me, the Future Leaders Network, working gradually from rung to rung, until in 2019 I was appointed its Chief Executive Officer. I volunteered part-time, alongside my full-time job in the Civil Service, until a series of personal tragedies, including bereavement, forced me to stop in my tracks. I recall waking up in the morning and saying "I know what I want to do. I want to discover and develop the next generation of social, political and economic leaders in this country, and help them to succeed – and I can't do that part-time."

So in September 2020, in the middle of a pandemic, I took the rather terrifying leap to leave my established career in the Civil Service and take up my non-profit role full time. All in perfect timing for the biggest challenge of my professional career – in 2021 the U.K. hosted the G7 Presidency, and as a result, my organisation the Future Leaders Network was appointed to organise all youth participation in the multilateral process. Not only, therefore, was I responsible for the U.K.'s delegation of young leaders – I was responsible for the 50 other global young leaders from each G7 state, and accountable to the hundreds of millions of young people that these individuals represented. My task was two fold: to create spaces for young people at G7 decision making tables,

and to equip the young leaders I worked with with the skills, knowledge and confidence they needed to speak on behalf of their peers at these senior meetings.

I built a team of 20 young leaders to help me with this responsibility. Together, we arranged a four month training programme; a four week negotiation schedule; and a four day global virtual summit to develop evidence-based recommendations from G7 youth to world leaders. We successfully harnessed the voices of over 10,000 young people globally, and gave young people the chance to champion those voices in the highest echelons of power, with young people, for the first time in history, speaking directly to leaders at the G7 Digital and Technology Ministerial Meeting, the G7 Climate and Environment Ministerial meeting, a Roundtable with the Chancellor, an audience with the Prime Minister and several broadcast and radio appearances. Those voices did not go unnoticed, with young people for the first time achieving a direct impact on the G7's actions, through the inclusion and recognition of mental health in the Carbis Bay Leaders' Declaration.

And so it was, that on my thirtieth birthday, I emerged from Number 10 having interviewed the Prime Minister on behalf of young people and promptly met my old Magdalene pals for a celebratory dinner (albeit outside, in the cold – lockdown, and all that). It reminds me that not only was I lucky enough to have left College with skills for life – I've also left with a community who has celebrated and supported me along the way.

If I were to meet myself on graduation day again, I'd tell her:

- Don't get obsessed with 'what' you're going to do next – but do get preoccupied with 'why'. Find a problem that excites, inspires or fuels an angry fire in your belly (bad leadership, perhaps?!) and you'll never struggle to find a million different exciting options ahead of you;
- Great careers don't grow on trees. They are created through hard work, inspiration and bravery, that all come from following your passion; and
- Young people are incredible. Their vibrancy, dynamism and energy is infectious. Don't be ashamed of being young – use it to your advantage!

BUILDING ANGLO-IRELAND: Materials, Craft and Migration

by Professor Christine Casey (2021), Parnell Fellow



Southern façade of the Custom House, Dublin Ireland

Charles Stewart Parnell is widely known as a figure of world significance in the history of nationalist politics. Less well known is his passion for patriotic enterprise, in particular quarrying on his County Wicklow estate. From 1884 until his death in 1891 he employed 200 sett dressers preparing paving for the streets of Dublin. The material and artisanal dimensions of Parnell's industrial ambitions align with my current research on the role of craftsmanship in 18th century architecture. This lecture therefore takes its cue from Parnell's preoccupation with native resources by addressing the subject of stone usage in the creation of Dublin's monumental classical architecture. I argue that procuring and fashioning of stone are as eloquent as the processes of patronage and design which have hitherto dominated the history of Anglo-Irish architecture.

My focus is the ceremonial centre of the capital city, College Green, seat of the Dublin Parliament House and of Trinity College, closely connected institutions whose design and execution set the standard for the city's precocious public

architecture of the period, a phenomenon partially enabled by a determination not to return unspent revenue to London. The Parliament House, since 1801 the Bank of Ireland, is considered 'the greatest of all physical monuments to the Ascendancy class'. Commentary on the building has focused on three key issues: the quality and originality of the building, particularly in contrast to the then shabby accommodation at Westminster and the respective roles of William Conolly, Speaker of the House of Commons, and his architect, Edward Lovett Pearce, in its design and achievement. Contemporaries proclaimed it 'spacious, elegant and convenient much beyond that heap of confusion at Westminster' while historians have weighed its grandeur against the relatively modest powers of the Dublin Parliament, finding therein an overstatement which is mirrored in the remarkable scale of public building in Ireland in the period. When in 1731 the Dublin Parliament met in its newly completed chambers, designs for a new Parliament House at Westminster were mooted but none came to fruition. It would take a devastating fire a century later for Westminster Palace to be rebuilt. The speed and efficiency

with which the Dublin Parliament House was achieved was undoubtedly due in large part to William Conolly who was also a dominant member of the Revenue Commissioners, Privy Councillor and one of Ireland's three Lords Justices. Conolly's authority was combined with the talents of a young and brilliant architect who was a cousin of Sir John Vanbrugh. His design was an inspired synthesis of Antique and Palladian exemplars which produced what is arguably the most original public building of the Palladian Revival in any jurisdiction. However, the failure of British architectural history to position the Parliament House within wider narratives of 18th century classicism has provoked frustration among Irish architectural historians, most recently Conor Lucey for whom it was 'commissioned by the wrong parliament, designed by the wrong architect... situated in the wrong city on the wrong island...' and 'upsets established hierarchical narratives that insist on the authority of England... for the dissemination of architectural modernity in the British Empire'.

Accepting the many meanings of the Parliament House which may be construed or embroidered, we must still confront the astonishing material achievement of the building not least 34 giant columns of Portland stone just under 10 metres high which constitute the ceremonial colonnade and portico. While Portland stone was the material of choice for classical architecture in the period, in the Dublin Parliament House it is combined with extensive use of local granite. This reflects a burgeoning economic patriotism which favoured national resources in textiles, coinage, and building. The solution of combining the soft pale fossilised limestone with the gritty crystalline granite of the neighbouring hills would have long lasting impact on the architecture of Dublin city. Stone rustication or vigorously treated masonry characterises the Parliament House and innumerable other buildings throughout the city. Executed in the granite of Parnell's native Wicklow, they may have suggested a lithic simile to his biographer F.S.L. Lyons for his refusal to return to Magdalene following rustication for drunken behaviour in May 1869: 'a counter-rejection' wrote Lyons 'which could come easily enough to one whose

basic Wicklow granite had stubbornly resisted all those diverse and futile attempts to put an English polish on it'.

Quarried on hillsides south of Dublin the granite blocks were drawn on carts into the city. Transporting huge blocks of Portland Stone to Dublin was more problematic. The hero of my lockdown spent in a small county Louth coastal village was an 18th century mason

named Thomas Roper, 'guardian' of the Portland quarries, whose surviving letters, scanned by the Bodleian Library, opened a whole new vista of Anglo-Irish building exchange in the period. Roper also had connections to Magdalene, to be discussed in the upcoming College Magazine. From the pier at Portland, Roper watched as blocks of stone and bespoke elements of classical buildings were loaded onto vessels of varying capacity captained by seafarers from England and Europe. Out in the Channel, ships loaded with stone were seized by pirates from Spain, wrecked by drunken captains or inclement weather, or safely guided across the Irish sea to eager stone merchants and master builders in Dublin.

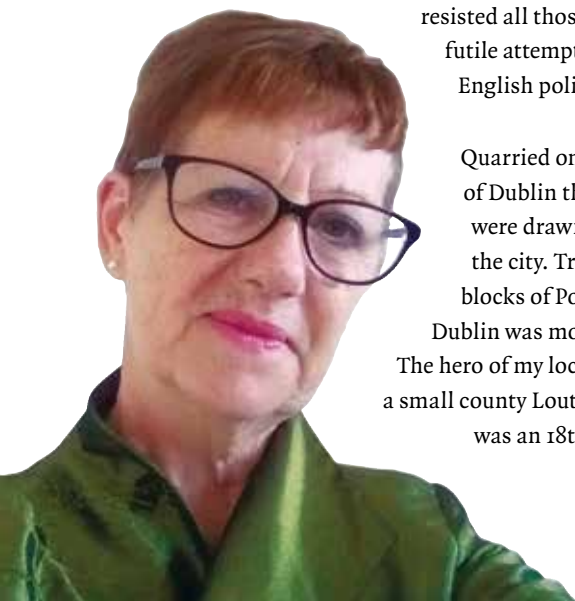
The Four Courts followed the example of the Parliament House in combining local granite with Portland stone. Extensive fire damage to the building during the Civil War in 1922 destroyed centuries of the public records of Ireland and also severely damaged the giant Corinthian capitals. By then an intense politicisation of building materials had emerged. In the newly established Dáil Éireann questions were posed as to how much 'foreign stone' was being employed in reconstruction and how much native. In a post-revolutionary economic recession, the hard-pressed architects of the Office of Public Works tasked chose to make do and mend, inserting a steel beam around the rim of the dome and turning the damaged sides of the capitals inwards, thereby passing the problem to their more affluent successors. In the current decade of commemorations, the capitals are being conserved and where necessary remade in Portland stone. In the 1920s reconstruction of the Dublin Custom House, devastated by fire during the War of Independence, no makeshift procedures would do. Though the architects argued for reinstatement in Portland stone, the dome was rebuilt in native limestone. Its grey volume above the Portland façade is among the most eloquent material statements of Ireland's revolutionary past.

The term Anglo-Irish is heavy in association but like stone has been amenable to dusting down and refashioning. It evokes an image of the Protestant ascendancy who instigated the great classical buildings of Dublin. But it also describes shared industrial, and creative processes which linked and continue to connect the craftsmen of London, Dublin and Portland. The architecture of Anglo-Ireland was the outcome of an Anglo-Irish building culture. Excellence in the building arts then, as now, knew no boundaries.



Professor Christine Casey

Professor Christine Casey is the Parnell Fellow at Magdalene. Christine is an architectural historian at Trinity College Dublin and is researching Anglo-Irish building culture of the eighteenth century.



MAGDALENE *Music Makers*

by Mr Tim Tian (2020)

The central musical scene in Magdalene is taken by the Chapel choir, a tight-knit sociable space with regular dinners, socials and sports.

The schedule is busy. There are always places to go and music to make! In addition to our regular Chapel services, this term we gave a charity performance in the Market Square, sang in St Edmundsbury Cathedral, performed for Pepys' Birthday in Hall, sang in First Court at a vigil for Ukraine and toured Spain over the Easter break.

The revival of the Magdalene Music Society, after the pandemic, brought back the weekly recital series in Benson Hall, and alongside the wonderful College musicians there have been some excellent external performances.

A special new addition to Magdalene's music scene is the new College Jazz Band, colloquially known as *Timothée* and the *Jazz Disciples*. As the co-founder and leader, I have organised many College musical events including *The Week 5 Blues Bluesy Night*, to raise money for charity and celebrate the middle of term.

Outside of College I play the bassoon for the Cambridge University Orchestra and the Cambridge University Music Society provide top-rate orchestral experiences. The Instrumental Award Scheme supports small ensemble coaching and with my group *Left Bank Quintet*, we have performed across the city. *Return to Normality* at Kettles Yard was a highlight where students from the Instrumental Award Scheme presented a challenging and invigorating programme of works.

My career aspirations lie in composition and conducting. I am the primary conductor of the *Orchestra on the Hill*, the combined orchestra of Churchill, Fitzwilliam, Murray Edwards, Magdalene, Girton, Robinson, St Edmund's and Lucy Cavendish Colleges. The orchestra exists to promote good musicianship and has built up an enviable reputation for innovative programming. In Lent 2022 we organised a fundraising concert for Ukraine, which included the premiere of my original composition *Kobza*, written to call for donations. Our recent concerts have also included Mozart's *Double Violin Concerto*, Beethoven *Symphony No. 1*, and Shostakovich *Cello Concerto in Eb Major*. We have packed out Murray Edwards' Dome, Fitzwilliam's Auditorium, Churchill's Wolfson Hall and we hope you will be able to hear us a Magdalene soon.



*Return to Normality
at Kettles Yard*

TRIUMPH IN SPAIN: MAGDALENE CHOIR RETURNS TO TOURING

by Mr Graham Walker (2016), Director of Music

TWO YEARS AFTER THE CANCELLATION OF THE CHOIR'S 2020 TOUR,
OUR SINGERS RETURNED TO INTERNATIONAL TOURING WITH A HUGE SUCCESSFUL
VISIT TO SPAIN OVER THE EASTER BREAK.

Such is the speed of turnover of our students that none of our 1st, 2nd or 3rd-year undergraduates had been on a College tour before, and excitement was running high as we made our way to Madrid airport. Even our Scottish contingent managed to avoid being delayed by a rather musical football supporter on their flight, and the choir gathered at our coach for the short drive to the monastery of El Escorial, just north of Madrid.

Built by King Felipe II, husband of our Mary I, the vast complex of buildings (planned, apparently, to stop the Devil emerging from the hills just behind the monastery) is home to an enormous domed basilica, easily the size of the entirety of Madgalene's old courts, as well as a small community of monks, ordinands and a famous boys' choir. After our students had assisted in an English lesson in the specialist music school attached to the monastery, we took part in a school choir rehearsal and short performance. A while later, before a private tour of the monastery, we were privileged to hear the renowned boys' choir. The director was adamant that we should sing for them as well, so we gave an impromptu and unrehearsed rendition of some of our repertoire. It was most interesting – and gratifying – to hear the difference in style and standard between our two traditions.

From El Escorial we drove to Segovia, where we rehearsed with a larger children's choir for a joint concert as part of the Festival of Sacred Music, which takes place every Holy Week in Segovia. The choir were extremely friendly, and keen to practise their English, so we had a delightful walking tour of that remarkable city. The evening's dining was enlivened by the traditional Procession of Our Lady of Sorrows (which takes place a week before Good Friday), with a huge float accompanied by musicians playing shawms and many people in tall pointed hats and masks.

On Palm Sunday we drove early to Madrid for a Mass at the beautiful Basilica of San Francisco, which has the third-largest

dome in Christendom (with frescoes by Goya and others). This Mass, and the day that followed, proved to be logistically complex, but to our relief a late bus journey deposited us satisfactorily at some very comfortable lodgings in Ávila.

Our final concert, in Ávila itself, was very well attended, including by a world expert on the music of Tomas Luis de Victoria, who lived and worked in the city. Cameran our Organ Scholar relished the challenge of playing Mendelssohn on an extremely uncompromising Spanish baroque organ with one manual and (apparently) no pedals, and an enthusiastic Spanish audience gave us a rousing ovation. One last, unplanned, performance took place rather later, after the nightclub closed, at the statue of Victoria. One can only hope that the residents of Ávila enjoy Renaissance polyphony in the early hours of the morning.

Our huge thanks are due to all our Spanish friends and colleagues who helped to make this possible, and to the College for their financial support, without which these trips, which are so vastly beneficial for our students, would not be possible.



FOCUSING OUR INNOVATION AND SKILLS into a New Venture

by Dr Emily Hung (1994)



Mask Factory in Hong Kong – Dr Emily Hung.

Dr David Viscott, American psychiatrist, author and businessman, said in this book titled *Finding Your Strength in Difficult Times: A Book of Meditations*:

The purpose of life is to discover your gift.

The work of life is to develop it.

The meaning of life is to give your gift away.

Being Prince Philip Scholars, my husband Mr Arnold Chan (1993) and I discovered our gifts in Cambridge. Arnold read Manufacturing Engineering at Magdalene and became an expert in due diligence and market entry. I read Medicine, Part II Virology and Cellular Pathology, and become a paediatrician with interest in primary prevention, vaccination and medical education.

Having worked in the epicentre of SARS, I was extremely alarmed when pneumonia of unknown causes was reported in Wuhan in December 2019. In the early days of the outbreak, a sudden surge in demand for surgical masks alongside mask shortages were causing panic in Hong Kong. While procuring masks for outreach vaccination programmes, we found that many companies were unable to provide masks or even shipment dates for deliveries.

To help meet the demand and with our backgrounds in medicine and engineering, we decided to focus our innovation and skills into a new venture and develop a surgical mask manufacturing and production line in Hong Kong. There were many challenges to overcome, there was huge worldwide

demand for the raw materials needed for mask production and supplier delays were frequent. Some suppliers even raised their prices to increase profits. Setting up a clean room for mask production also proved difficult, requiring high-quality renovation to meet international standards. There were also difficulties sourcing qualified technical support staff due to travel restrictions but despite the challenges, the mask production line began operation in July 2020.

In addition to supplying masks to public hospitals we partnered with philanthropists in Hong Kong to donate masks to charitable organisations including The Salvation Army, St James' Settlement, and Refugee Union.

Quality must be maintained over quantity, and we take pride in providing high quality masks for medical professionals and the public. Today, our masks have been sent to healthcare professionals and patients across the world.

As a paediatrician, I am a firm believer in disease prevention and have been involved in running outreach influenza vaccination events, established by the Hong Kong Department of Health, since 2018-19. We are now leading efforts in providing COVID-19 vaccination to the young and their families in schools and kindergartens across Hong Kong.

Like many Cambridge graduates, we are just doing what we should for humanity. We have to do the right thing to change the world and make it a better place.



Mr Arnold Chan and Dr Emily Hung.

QUESTIONING CONVENTION BOOKLAUNCH AND ENVELOPEBOOKS

by Dr Stephen Games (1974)

What attracted me to Magdalene, years ago, was its uniqueness. My future Director of Studies, David Roberts, in his 1960s refurbishment of what is now Benson Court and Mallory Court, had turned a College into a village. The originality of this confirmed what I had wanted confirmed: trends can be bucked.

Fellow students in the Department of Architecture wanted to become architects; I was there, by contrast, because I wanted to understand architecture – a different thing – and within three years of leaving I had become architecture critic for *The Guardian* and, a year later, a documentary maker for Radio 3. In the 1980s, when friends were either in the Labour or Tory Party, I joined the Greens and ran for Parliament. In the 1990s, when I went to live in Los Angeles and everyone else was writing movie scripts, I became a columnist on the *LA Times*.

And so the pattern continues. Four years ago, when all sensible media moguls were committing to social media, I started an old-fashioned print magazine company, Booklaunch, and, off the back of it, an old-fashioned book publishing company, EnvelopeBooks.

Neither depends on virtuality. Instead, they make objects you can pick up and turn the pages of. That gives rise to challenges, but also solutions. Magazines normally take years to build up a decent readership; Booklaunch gained a readership of over 50,000 overnight. Books struggle and shout to get noticed; our book covers stand out by being quiet.

Questioning convention is habitual. Booklaunch runs extracts from new books rather than reviewing them, letting readers decide how an

author writes and thinks, rather than relying on the opinions of a third party. And while other new publishers exploit niche genres, EnvelopeBooks is a generalist, demanding simply that all our books, fiction or non-fiction, be insightful and lucid.

High editorial standards are matched by brilliant branding. The first three issues of Booklaunch were designed by Pearce Marchbank, the original art editor of *Time Out* and the Monty Python books. EnvelopeBooks are designed to look like envelopes, with covers printed sideways (something you're not supposed to do) and stamps, addresses and other postal accessories that give visual clues about the content.

Life is short. You can do what everyone else does, and never know what would have happened if you'd stepped out of line, or you can invent. You might be terribly wrong; you might be miraculously right. There is no obvious answer. But if God smiles on you, the rewards can be stunning.

Find out more at www.booklaunch.london and www.envelopebooks.co.uk.



STUDENT LIFE



MAGDALENE-MAGDALEN SPORTS DAY

by Miss Francesca Ozog (2020)

Year-in-year-out (pandemic permitting) the Magdalene-Magdalen Sports Day rears its braggadocious head, dragging even the most sports-loathing students with it.

With last year's big day cancelled Cambridge had the pleasure of hosting this year, and O! what a pleasure it was. Over three hundred people, including Master Sir Christopher Greenwood, descended onto St John's Playing Fields to see what the long-standing Cambridge-Oxford rivalry was all about.

The day started incredibly well for Magdalene, Cambridge with an undefeated run of comfortable victories in ladies' netball (16-6), badminton (9-0), mixed hockey (8-4), football (4-2) and mixed netball. I'd love to share the final score of the mixed netball, but as anyone in attendance could testify, this is something we may never know. The match was all plain sailing until the end of the third quarter when umpires from both teams came to agree the score. Magdalen Oxford claimed to be winning 9-7 while we were certain it was 11-9 to us, having been ahead all match thanks to 6'8" goal-scoring wonder, Stanley Hinton. Here ensued a 15-minute interlude in the match as negotiations began and supporters swarmed the court in protest. The stately Sir Christopher stood sentinel and watched on as Magdalene students tried their hand at diplomacy in his image. Our proposition of a clean break was finally settled upon, and the scoreboard was reset. Fuelled by the injustice and an incredible home crowd, Magdalene of course went on, once again, to take the lead and win the sudden death final quarter 6-2.

Magdalene AFC have had a magnificent season chasing promotion. The Sports Day was no different and the football

really highlighted what it means to be Magdalene. We may not be the biggest College, but we have spirit and we have it in abundance. Students took it upon themselves to set up a commentators' desk complete with megaphones and a sound system, that would give Gary Lineker a run for his money. Witty commentary left Oxford quaking and spurred Magdalene onto a glorious win.

A special mention goes to the badminton team who truly trounced Oxford, in a 9-0 victory. Nothing more need be said.

The afternoon wasn't quite as successful for the mighty Magdalene with losses in tennis doubles (0-4), squash (2-3), and the heavily anticipated rugby (15-20). We didn't let this sway us and a great time was had by all on the courts and touchline.

Magdalene Lawn Tennis Club were sadly put to the sword and in the squash, Felix Matheson played a blinder taking Oxford University's top seed to a full seven set match after captaining a full 90 minutes in the football. Truly stunning! Anna Knight, a stalwart of Magdalene sports, narrowly lost (11-9, 15-13, 16-14) but can hold her head high given she'd only returned from covid-isolation that morning. Captain Tom Carlton gave Oxford a thrashing, winning in straight sets.



Despite the loss, the rugby was arguably the highlight of the day. It all went pear-shaped when a cheeky send-off for a minor facial assault resulted in us conceding. Heads turned for Isaac Fernandes, cementing him as the fan favourite and MOTM for his incredible tenacity.

The Magdalene Sitting Dragons lacrosse team held the vast might of Magdalen Oxford to a heroic draw. Many of the lacrosse team were new to the sport, having never played before Cambridge or even the Sports Day, but that didn't matter to the Sitting Dragons as excellent captaincy and a team spirit carried the underdogs to an incredible draw.

The sporting day drew to a close with a free-for-all in the three-legged and sack races, harking back to the good old

days of primary school. Now these may seem like trifling events to some of you more seasoned sporting types, but let me tell you, the sack race isn't a laughing matter. To anyone who participated, I sincerely hope your quads have recovered.

Later in the evening, the JCR and Games Room hosted darts, pool and table football. Darts was truly a triumph with Magdalene winning in straight sets and a glorious final dart – never before has the bar seen such drama. The pool and table football were equally victorious and served as an excellent finale to the day.

Up the blue and lavender! Garde Ta Foy!

JCR UPDATE

by Mr Harry Fishlock (2019), JCR President

It's been a busy Lent term getting College social life back up and running. Magdalenes are delighted to finally be able to meet and make friends. Events have returned including Jazz Nights with Magdalene's very own 'Timotheé and the Jazz Disciples', the infamous JCR BOPs and of course the Magdalene-Magdalen Sports Day. Fran Ozog served Magdalene most valiantly rebooting this hallowed tradition.

Storm Eunice tried to blow us away but Magdalene stood strong and the first Halfway Halls in two years were finally able to go ahead. I'm delighted to say that all students who missed out during the pandemic were invited to join for their belated dinner. Formals are slowly picking up pace with three a week now and guests are now allowed!

Ramsay is once again open for student dining and the College community is reknitting and healing its Covid wounds. The post-pandemic revival and optimism for the future is evident from the hum of the New Library to the hootenannies of the Bar, the Boat Club Bumping and Formal Hall buzzing once again.

I would like to thank the JCR committee for all their hard work this term and look forward to the next one with the greatest of anticipation.

MCR UPDATE

by Mr Diarmid Xu (2020), MCR President

The current academic year started in the midst of Covid, however the MCR were still able to pull off a Freshers' Week

with a variety of activities, starting with the International Students' tour and ending with the Ceilidh in Cripps. Other events include a Welcome Reception in the MCR and a black-tie cocktail evening in Benson Hall. All events were fully booked and offered Freshers a chance to have fun and make friends.

Despite the restrictions, the MCR also hosted two Banquets, a party and a BOP, not forgetting smaller one-off events.

For Christmas, a Banquet was held along with a party in Cripps, the first large scale events in months. Both the Hall and Cripps Gallery were transformed into Winter Wonderlands with a variety of lights and decorations. This was very well received and a much needed event at the end of term.

In Lent Term, a Tropical themed BOP was held in Cripps, in partnership with the Cambridge Latin American Society. This time the venue was transformed into a beach filled with inflatable decorations and a DJ.

Our Welfare Officers have worked tirelessly to host Welfare Tea and Yoga on a weekly basis, including other events that involved pets, mug decorating, and walks, offering all Members a time and space to relax and enjoy life.

Lastly, the MCR has had successful Officer Elections. New filled posts include the Academic Officer, IT Officer, Sports Officer and Guardian of the Chamber (the Chamber being the MCR room). The Committee is now made up of people from various background and in various stages of their studies. With Executive Elections just around the corner, the committee team is in a very good position to continue to serve the MCR community.

A Day of Unusual Measure

by Mr James Woodall (2017)

Last year a book of writings by a brilliant alumnus appeared posthumously, organised by his friends. Our former Royal Literary Fund Fellow, Mr James Woodall reports.

The death of James Malpas (1977), at age 56, was an uncommon shock to all who knew, loved and admired him: he was an uncommon man.

A cerebral haemorrhage in 2015 deprived the world of an enormously versatile and energetic lecturer and art historian. His topics included, as *The Guardian* wrote seven years ago, "19th-century German romanticism, Hogarth, late 19th-century Scandinavian artists, Japanese art, camouflage, alchemy and William Blake". He rode motorbikes, joined the Territorial Army and kept amphibians in his various London homes. He had multitudinous friends.

He arrived at Magdalene in 1977 to read English, switching two years later to Art History. After an MPhil at the Warburg Institute, he worked for Sotheby's, Christie's and the Tate. He wrote prolifically throughout his adult life, poems not least of all, and was published in the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *London Review of Books*. Some five years after his death a Cambridge contemporary and great friend, Stephen Romer, the prominent poet and critic, went painstakingly through James's papers. The result in 2021 was *A Day of Unusual Measure: Selected Poems – Extracts from the Diary and Letters*.

The poem here, from the book (a copy is in the New Library), was addressed to the sister of another rising Cambridge poet – also at Magdalene – of that era, Mr Michael Hofmann (1976).



Writing to Franz

You were photographed in a white interior
I know nothing about, the amateur camera
at a slight, disconcerting angle. Dark brown
hair asserts against the gentlemanly white
of someone's studio. Trees embrace beyond
the leaning window and a large fly or small
smudge has come to rest on the ceiling.
No matter, I'm sold on this celluloid
with your tremor of a smile at being caught
by surprise – I almost forgot to breathe.
Southern Europe now holds you within a more
radiant light than the trees filter here;
I vow to write post-haste an invitation
(and think of bringing it myself)
as you're only boat, train and a thousand miles away.

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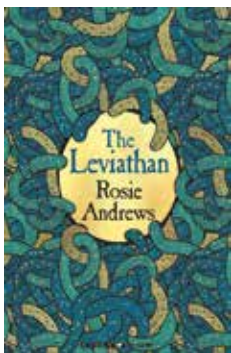
THE LEVIATHAN

by Mrs Rosie Andrews (2002)

WELL, I'M OFFICIALLY A NOVELIST. THE BOOK HAS BEEN OUT SINCE FEBRUARY 2022 AND IT'S BEEN SURREAL. ACTUALLY, THOUGH, I NEVER SET OUT TO BECOME A WRITER. AFTER FINISHING MY BA, I WENT INTO HEADHUNTING AS A 'RESEARCHER'.

It was during the second year of my undergrad at Magdalene that I used to head out of the back of Benson Court and along the concrete walkway under St John's, then down the Backs towards the Seeley Library, to take a course they called a Special Subject. These walks were leisurely, windblown, and I was usually late for lectures. I used to wonder, as I walked, whether I might be taking the same route (though it would have looked a bit wilder then), more than four hundred years after the fact, as a certain Thomas Hobbes, now the focus of my Special Subject, who completed his BA at John's in 1608. I asked myself whether he, too, was late for lectures...

Twenty years after those musings, I've just published my first novel, *The Leviathan*. The title takes its inspiration from some of Hobbes's teachings, and from his book, *Leviathan* (1651). Although I wrote it between 2019 and 2020, it has links to those walks down the Backs, through the ranks of daffodils, as straight as soldiers, worrying about whether my essays were going to be written in time for my supervision, and whether I would have any time to revise over the holidays as I worked shifts to pay my College bills.



Well, I'm officially a novelist. The book has been out since February 2022 and it's been surreal. Actually, though, I never set out to become a writer. After finishing my BA, I went into headhunting as a 'researcher'. My first years in London were a whirl of meetings, interviews, and spending too much money on coffee. I wasn't particularly skilled at my chosen

profession. I was introverted, a catastrophic quality for someone who needed to do sales, which was, as it turned out, pretty much the entire job.



Teaching seemed like it might be more my forte. Because my degree was in History, when I applied to Teach First to join their two year 'on-the-job' programme of working with economically disadvantaged young people, I thought I would become a History teacher. In the end, because of their broad interpretation of what you can do with an A Level in English Literature, I taught English. I had a knack for it, much more than for hunting heads, anyway. Teaching literature was really stimulating, but I preferred the nuts and bolts of creative writing, which gave me chances (they called it modelling, I called it showing off) to put together stories. And every once in a while, when they got really fed up with me, one of the students would suggest I might be a good novelist...

So, I wrote a novel. It turned out to be about witches, but not really, Hobbes, but not quite, and to reflect my lifelong fascination with the history of the seventeenth century. It's about mythology and power, and its roots are very much at Magdalene. In fact, I think I can say many of the seeds grew in Benson Court, just behind St John's.



Upcoming Events

24 September

25th and 50th Anniversary
Reunion Dinner for 1997 and
1972 matriculands

14 October

London Dinner at the Oxford
and Cambridge Club

15 October

NRM Night

22 October

Master's Guild Dinner

9 November

Washington DC Dinner

11 November

Annual New York Dinner

11 November

NRM Night

14 November

Seattle Dinner

15 November

San Francisco Dinner

26 November

NRM Night

2 December




Annual Carol Concert

10 December

Benefactors' Event: Festive drinks with
the Master

Please note that the above events may be subject
to change.

Additional events may be added; please check
www.magd.cam.ac.uk/events and look out for
updated listings in *Magdalene eMatters*. If you
are interested in attending an event or would
like additional information please email
events@magd.cam.ac.uk.

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