



LMH
Lady Margaret Hall

THE **BROWN BOOK** 2025



**Lady Margaret Hall
Oxford**

THE BROWN BOOK



2025

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The Brown Book is produced by Lady Margaret Hall alumni for fellow alumni with the support of the College.

Front cover illustration : Flooding at LMH taken by Katie Brown, College's Head of Communications. This photo was awarded second place in the University of Oxford's Sustainability Photographer of the Year competition
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Printed by Ciconi Ltd

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the 2025 edition of *The Brown Book* which, as always, we hope you will enjoy. As far as we know, we are one of the few colleges, or maybe the only one, where such an alumni publication is produced entirely by alumni volunteers. We are very proud of this and immensely grateful to all of you who help us with news, articles, reviews and obituaries.

The articles this year are an eclectic mix. We start with a talk given by Tim Ashton at the ancient Quit Rents ceremony about his ancestor, Sir Rowland Hill, who served on the Privy Council through the tumultuous reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth I! In contrast, Sylvia Ashton (no relation to Tim) describes her difficult start at LMH coming from a council house in a small village. Her experiences contrast strongly with the report from the Welfare Team which details all their work to ensure students are supported during their time at LMH. Amir Pichhadze tells us of his father's work as an artist and about how both he and his father changed career plans to care for their parents. Ruth Bullivant Pedley describes her transition from working as a lawyer to being an author, editor and a book coach. I am sure this will be of interest to any alumni considering writing a book

The Reviews have an international feel this year, with *Cypria* by Alex Christofi, Ann Wilks writing of Sir Henry Dobbs in the Middle East, and Ann Shukman describing a British diplomatic mission to Prague. Further back in time we cover the Roman Principate and Simeon standing on a pillar in Syria. Of course we also have a wide range of subjects, from Helen Barr's excellent translation of *Patience*, through the Liturgy of the Church, notes on nature and poetry, to a tempting selection of novels.

In Memoriam highlights the breadth of experience in our alumni, including Celia Sisam who was a Fellow of St Hilda's College from 1957 and Joanna Matthews who was a magistrate and head of the junior bench in Carlisle. There are teachers of chemistry, biology and history and then those with a multiplicity of careers. Linda Montgomery taught French and German for ten years and then combined motherhood with being an executive director of three successive IT companies, governor at three schools, and volunteering in a wide range of organisations. Katya Batchelor was a lawyer, a law lecturer, a writer, a student of Italian Renaissance art, and also trained as a psychotherapist!

As I mentioned, *The Brown Book* is produced by a team of volunteers. I collate the News, Articles and Reports; Judith handles the Reviews, from contacting the publishers to selecting reviewers and ensuring the reviews come in time; Alison reaches out to



friends and family of those who have died to bring us the Obituaries and, with help from Charlotte (Crilly 1991 Jurisprudence), draws everything together and checks all the proofs. The team in the Development Office supports us by sending out requests for news, forwarding suggestions for articles, reviews and obituaries, and checking details such as matriculation dates. Many thanks to everyone for all their work.

Carolyn Carr
Editor

Breaking news: As you have probably heard, Professor Stephen Blyth has been appointed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as External Member on the Financial Policy Committee of the Bank of England. By the time you read this, he will have stepped down as Principal of the college to take up this role. During his three years at LMH, Stephen has been very supportive of *The Brown Book*. We send him our very best wishes for the future.



LADY MARGARET HALL
University of Oxford

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REPORTS

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Everything we do at LMH is guided by a clear purpose: to ensure that each student has the support to tackle the academic challenges ahead, and the opportunities they need to thrive academically, socially and personally. That commitment is evident from the first days of the academic year.

Freshers' Week begins with a Welcome Fair for new students, often with parents and supporters in tow, followed by events to orient and connect new members of our community. Meetings with tutors, Freshers' Dinners, and subject-specific gatherings – including my own favourite, the Mathematics Drinks – all help establish a sense of belonging from the outset. These early experiences matter. They shape a student's confidence, outlook and ambition for their time here.

One thing that makes a real difference at LMH is the strong relationship we maintain with our JCR and MCR representatives. I meet regularly with the Presidents, hearing student perspectives and responding to emerging needs. These conversations are a helpful reminder that creating and maintaining a supportive culture is not the work of one individual or group, but a shared responsibility. This is particularly distinctive and meaningful within Oxford's collegiate system, which allows for a much more personal approach.

Academic progress remains at the heart of our mission. At the time of writing, we await this year's Finals results; but academic success is acknowledged and celebrated in many ways. This year's Scholars' Dinner recognised students who have demonstrated outstanding progress, while Halfway Hall offered our second years an opportunity to reflect on what they have achieved so far and to look ahead to making the most of the challenges to come. Whatever the outcome of exams, our aim remains the same: that our students leave LMH having fulfilled their academic potential and made the most of every tutorial, lecture and lab session.

As you will remember from your own time here, there is much more to life at LMH than the purely academic, and our students continue to squeeze everything they can out of their all-too-brief 24 weeks in Oxford. This year's Choir Formal offered a chance to thank those who contribute so much to College's musical life, and our annual Sports Dinner brought together our College captains and those representing the university across a range of sports – from rowing and cricket to powerlifting and walking.

This year also saw the introduction of several new initiatives, including the inaugural LMH–Harvard cricket match, a spirited contest featuring some good-humoured social media sledging on both sides. Harvard won by four runs; as someone with strong

links to both institutions, I was obliged to remain impartial. During Hilary, students organised LMH's first Women's Formal to celebrate the College's history as a pioneer in women's education. The evening featured a keynote from alumna Sonia Tolaney KC, who reflected on her legal career and the formative role LMH played in her life.

Extra-curriculars play an important role in preparing our students for life after Oxford. Events hosted by the Daisy Circle (our PPE Society) welcomed alumni including David Pares and Lord Gove for thoughtful discussions on public service and politics. A small group of students revived the Trinity term Garden Play with a production of Aristophanes' *Clouds*; and our Fine Art students staged an impressive exhibition in the Chapel, temporarily transforming it into an art gallery.

Some of these initiatives come through my office for logistical and practical support, while others are entirely student-led. All of them reflect the energy and imagination of our community. They also offer students valuable experience in planning, presenting and working with others – skills that serve them well beyond their time here. One aspect of my role that I particularly enjoy is offering support and encouragement, and sometimes a reference, for students as they think about their future career plans. Some seek advice on career directions; others want to test out a business idea. In some cases, we can connect students with members of our wider College network, and our thanks go to those alumni who offer their advice and expertise so generously.

Providing this level of support requires significant financial resource. We were pleased to report a record high in philanthropic income last year, which saw our endowment rise above £60 million for the first time. But LMH remains among the least well-endowed Oxford colleges on a per-student basis, and this continues to affect both students and Fellows. This reality has a direct impact: on our students, who face some of the highest rents in Oxford; and on our Fellows, who may receive up to £15,000 less in annual support compared to peers doing the same job at better-funded colleges.

We are committed to closing this gap. As we look ahead to our 150th anniversary in 2028–29, we are preparing to launch a major fundraising campaign that will focus on building financial flexibility and securing long-term support for our student and academic community. LMH has achieved a great deal with very modest means. The question we now ask ourselves is: what more could we do with a stronger financial foundation?

I firmly believe that education remains the surest driver of economic, social and intellectual progress, not just in the UK but in the world at large. Your generosity enables us not only to help students succeed, but to ensure they leave LMH equipped to make an impact on the world. We are deeply grateful. We look forward to welcoming many of you back to College in the years ahead as we celebrate all that LMH has achieved, and everything still to come.

Stephen Blyth
Principal

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

This academic year has been rather busy in Chapel: we hosted two to three services every week in term time, most of which were sung by our choir, along with *ad hoc* services, such as memorials, baptisms and an Armenian Liturgy. Our highlights included our most popular College and alumni services of Lessons and Carols, an International Women's Day Choral Evensong, a Benefactors Service ahead of our annual Benefactors Dinner, Lady Margaret's Day, as well as joint services, notably with Corpus Christi College (All Saints Choral Eucharist) and Mansfield College (Ash Wednesday Choral Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes at Corpus Christi).

We were delighted to hear some excellent preachers, including the Revd Professor Sabina Alkire, Director of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), Dr Jacob Downs, LMH Organising Tutor in Music and Departmental Lecturer in Music and Chair of the Music Faculty, the Revd Canon Professor Simon Oliver, Van Mildert Professor of Divinity at Durham University, and the Revd Dr Mariama Ifode-Blease, Associate Priest at St James Piccadilly. Canon Professor Carol Harrison, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity and alumna of LMH (1979 Theology), preached a most inspiring sermon at our Lady Margaret's Day Choral Evensong, on which occasion the choir performed the premier of the beautiful Anthem for Lady Margaret's Day composed by Paul Burke, Director of Chapel music.

In Michaelmas 2024 we recruited four new Choral Scholars (Lila Frazier, Meg McDonald, Reuben Bignell and Benjamin Waterer) – bringing the number of Choral Scholars to our usual eight – and welcomed our new Junior Organ Scholar, George Ke. As the year drew to a close, we bid farewell to no fewer than six Choral Scholars and to our Senior Organ Scholar, all graduating. As our Junior Organ Scholar now becomes Senior, we look forward to welcoming a Junior Organ Scholar this autumn and anticipate welcoming another batch of inspiring new Scholars along with other choir members.

Alongside the services, the Chamber Choir performed three concerts: Fauré's *Requiem* in Michaelmas Term, Mozart's *Requiem* in Hilary Term and a variety of pieces, including Handel's 'Zadok the Priest' and Parry's 'I was glad' in Trinity Term. This last concert gave a foretaste of the choir tour taking place in Paris in July.

Other activities of the Chapel included Carols in the Quad in Michaelmas, a 'full moon poetry and walk' in the gardens each term (with significant input from LMH gardeners), as well as a Charity Formal organised in collaboration with the JCR, and with gracious permission from the SCR President, Dr Michael Fraser. The formal was very well received, and the Chapel Committee was pleased to announce the introduction of a volunteering prize next year to recompense a student who distinguishes themselves in voluntary work in a local charity. This academic year, we were particularly pleased to develop a partnership with The Porch, where several LMH students volunteered to support a variety of people living in precarity in Oxford. To support the work of charities, the Chapel will be delighted to be able to receive donations by card at services from this autumn.



Carol service in LMH Chapel, December 2024

In order to foster better religious literacy and mutual understanding among communities, the Chapel was pleased to organise interfaith events, notably with the Hindu Society in both Michaelmas and Trinity, and an Iftar with the Islamic Society during Ramadan in Hilary. We hope to hold joint events with other societies next year as may be relevant to our student body.

Finally, it is a particular pleasure to receive regular requests from alumni who wish to be married in the LMH Chapel. This summer, we were delighted to host the weddings of Annabel Rowntree (MSt and DPhil, Spanish, 2019) to Gregory Smith, and of Chloe Wilson (DPhil Computational Chemistry, 2025) to Joseph Smith.

Stephanie Burette
Chaplain

FROM THE LIBRARIAN

This has been a somewhat quieter year for LMH Library, after the years of lockdowns, computer system changes, and window replacements. Following Professor Jan Westerhoff's year as interim Fellow Librarian, Professor Marion Turner stepped up to fill the position, chairing Library Steering Group and representing the Library on Governing Body – hopefully for years to come. Meanwhile the Bodleian's current final big infrastructure development, the emptying of the English Faculty Library, History of Medicine Library, Music Faculty Library, Oxford Internet Institute Library, and Philosophy & Theology Faculties Library, took place over this summer, with the new combined Humanities Library due to open in the Stephen A. Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities at the start of Michaelmas 2025. We are intrigued to see how this will impact our students, and keen to get to look inside!

At LMH over the past two years there have not been as many book purchasing requests as previously. This might just be a blip, or it might be due to the vast increase in the number of e-books the Bodleian has invested in recently. It is possible that, as in so many spheres, the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated changes in the way people consume information – as, perhaps, has the rise of AI technology. However, those students who find it harder to work with e-books do really value our policy of buying any books they request – we often get students asking if we can buy books that are available online but not in hardcopy inside any Oxford library. In addition, many works are simply not available via academic e-book licences, or are ruinously expensive if they are – physical books are still popular to cover that gap. Of course, we also continue to support students by buying books to help with their theses, which often includes books published abroad, or not available in the Bodleian or as e-books. We also buy some e-books, although it is increasingly hard to get good academic licences for ones that the Bodleian has not already purchased via various packages.

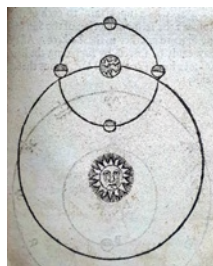
The decrease in book purchasing requests has certainly not meant a drop in usage of the library as a working space. This past term in particular the library has often been almost full of students industriously studying, looking for a space separate from their rooms where they can work in a conducive atmosphere. There are tensions around different ways of working, with students divided between those seeking pure silence and those wanting to work informally around a table with friends. Currently the upper and middle floors are used solely for silent study (alone or around a table), while we allow quiet group study with some talking on the lower floor and in the Law Library – for the most part this works well and enables our students to choose what works best for them on a given day. The lower floor already had comfy sofas and armchairs as well as two large group study tables – this year we added a number of bean bags to sit on, which have been very popular.

One project we undertook this year was an expansion of the portraits collection. Last year's report mentioned seven portraits we had hung upstairs in the dictionaries and linguistics rooms, all distinguished former humanities academics; this year we

added another seven portraits, some to the existing collection and some downstairs, from across all disciplines – with a particular emphasis on trying to show the diversity of our current Fellows. Represented are: Xiaowen Dong, Romila Thapar, Roxana Banu, Denise van der Kamp, Xon de Ros, Aziz Aboobaker and Monima Chadha.

The Library has contributed to several exhibitions this year. On the occasion of two SCR Art evenings the Librarian, Jamie Fishwick-Ford, curated small book exhibits to tie in with the topic and talked to the SCR about the books exhibited: one on the Pre-Raphaelites, and one on Orpheus and the Underworld. The Librarian also displayed some books for the LMH second-year historians at their thesis evening.

Sally Hamer, the Assistant Librarian, curated the main exhibition, entitled ‘Science, Religion, and the Space In-Between’. The science case included works by Francis Bacon, Isaac Newton, and Charles Darwin (a first edition of *The Descent of Man*, from 1871 – which was on the open shelves until a few years ago!). My favourite book, however, is John Wilkins’ *Discovery of a New World, or, a discourse tending to prove, that ‘tis probable there may be another Habitable World in the Moon* (1684) – a book describing the discoveries the Bishop of Chester made with a telescope. It is in some ways fascinatingly correct (it was part of the process confirming that planets are rocky bodies, not simply lights in the skies, and that the Earth is just another planet) but it does go a bit too far when it speculates on the likelihood of extra-terrestrial life on the moon . . . The religion case included a magnificent Latin *Biblia Sacra* from 1566, our gorgeous seventeenth-century manuscript of the *Qur’an*, the British Museum’s 1895 facsimile of the *Book of the Dead: the Papyrus of Ani*, and Ralph Cudworth’s refutation of atheism, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe: the first part; wherein, all the reason and philosophy of Atheism is Confuted; and its Impossibility Demonstrated* (1678). The ‘space in-between’ case looked at examples of conflict and cooperation between science and religion – conflict being amply represented by Galileo’s *System Cosmicum* (1663); while cooperation included an array of marvellous titles – John Ray’s *Three Physico-Theology Discourses* (1713), William Derham’s *Astro-Theology* (1719), and Thomas Browne’s *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (1653). The final case looked at the tensions between religion and science at the local scale, with a selection of works related to the early years of Lady Margaret Hall (religion) and Somerville (science), particularly featuring a range of religious pamphlets by our first principal Elizabeth Wordsworth.



Wilkins's Discovery of a New World (1684), *Qur'an* (17th century), *Galileo's System Cosmicum* (1663), and *Derham's Astro-Theology* (1719)

This exhibition was opened to the public at Oxford Open Doors in September 2024 and to alumni at the LMH Gaudy the week after, and was also very popular among alumni at the 2025 Garden Party. We are now busy planning the next exhibition, which should have launched by the time that you read this. All our previous exhibitions can be viewed online – the link for the most recent one is: https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/lmh/science_religion_and_the_space_inbetween

The library is very grateful for all the support from donors, and book donations from alumni are gladly received. Books written by or about alumni (including memoirs), and books from before 1800, are automatically kept. Other donations are carefully looked through and the books most useful to LMH students are added to the library, while the rest are offered to the students (we put them under the library Christmas tree, and they are very popular) or sent to an online bookseller if the students do not take them. We would like to thank everyone who donated books to the library this year, who included Tim Ashton, Emmanuel Awolowo, Sarah Baxter, Simone Beauchamp, Zahaan Bharmal, Nathan Budge, Elizabeth Clarke, Isabella Collins, Allan Doig, Kirsteen Donaldson on behalf of Pam and Ken Donaldson, Amelia Dovell, Emilie Dunn, George Garnett, Paula Griffiths, Peter Hainsworth, Sherri Hong, Tahy Lim, Ewan McKendrick, Aubrie Miller, Linda and Alan Montgomery, Sophie Ratcliffe, Fidelia Danielle Renne, Francois Sennesael, Nicholas Shrimpton, Grant Tapsell, Omid Veganeh, Charlene Wang and Guy Westwood. One particularly fascinating donation was a gift of several *Illustrated London News* editions, dated 1939 to 1941, from Benjamin Waterer. Not quite a donation, but equally gladly received, were three long overdue books, returned 20 years late – a story that was popular on social media, and ended up on the BBC local news! Name omitted to protect the guilty . . . And, finally, just days ago we received a complimentary copy of Bodleian Library Publishing's latest coffee table book, Geoffrey Tyack and Dan Paton's *Oxford Libraries Architecture*, a gorgeous and hefty book full of photographs of many Oxford libraries.



Illustrated London News (30 December 1939), books returned 20 years late, and Tyack & Paton's *Oxford Libraries Architecture* (2025)

As I say every year, alumni are very welcome to visit the library, and I am always happy to give tours and to show off the rare books collections. Alumni are also welcome to study in the library, particularly during staffed hours in vacations, and fob access can be arranged for other times if needed. Appointments are made by emailing librarian@lmh.ox.ac.uk. It is always a joy to see you and to talk about the library and our books!

Jamie Fishwick-Ford
Librarian

FROM THE HEADS OF WELLBEING

Staying healthy, fulfilling their intellectual potential and navigating the challenges of a transitional period of life remain top student priorities for the LMH Wellbeing team. As Heads of Wellbeing, we have experienced a rich and varied year, working both reactively and proactively to offer guidance and support to our students.

Both undergraduate and graduate students continue to engage directly with all aspects of our extended team, including three Junior Welfare Deans, our highly experienced College Nurse and our reassuringly practical study skills lecturers. As a collective, we have had over 1,400 individual student meetings this year, not including the weekly GP surgery.

There are a wide variety of reasons why students use the wellbeing service in College. Examples of the most common reasons include seeking signposting for mental health assessment and treatment, exploring ways to navigate their work/life balance while at university or dealing with stressful life events such as bereavement. We hope we continue to be seen as a confidential ‘port of call’ when students are struggling. We send regular weekly wellbeing newsletters to the whole student community to both promote the availability of a range of support services but also to offer resources to encourage their proactive management of their wellbeing.

We recognise the role that wellbeing has in supporting the central college mission of academic excellence. When students encounter difficulties which significantly limit their capacity to perform to their highest potential, we value our collaborative working relationship with the college academic team to support decision-making and determine fair outcomes. It has been a highlight this year to observe that some of the students who make regular use of wellbeing services have achieved first-class results. We are pleased to be able to evidence that wellbeing doesn’t just shore up those who might be struggling academically, but is also valuable to students who are high-performing, and may in fact be part of what enables them to be so.

Developing our service according to the needs of our community remains an ongoing priority. During the next academic year, we are invested in exploring ways to evaluate the impact of wellbeing services more broadly, and we aim to gain further

insights into the nature of potential barriers to accessing the support available in College. Engaging directly with students through our termly wellbeing forum, where we listen to the student voices and respond directly to issues raised by relevant JCR members, is key and we have revamped this forum to improve its functionality.

Across the university, it has been acknowledged that one of the challenges significantly impacting the wellbeing of our students is a wider cultural issue of social ostracism. We hope to explore new ways of working proactively with the students at LMH to build a trusting and collaborative community. This year, we ran a pilot self-development workshop for all undergraduate students. We focused on the types of interpersonal challenges they might encounter at university and our aim was to encourage compassionate behaviour towards self and others. We hope to further develop the psychoeducational space here so that students continue to feel safe and welcome in this community, developing their interpersonal skills alongside their academic capabilities.

Lizzie Shine and Erin Ferguson
Heads of Wellbeing



FROM THE SENIOR TUTOR

We have students studying on more than 30 degree programmes and this summer 109 students completed their degrees and 91 per cent of the cohort obtained a First or 2:1. Outstanding performances are in history (modern, and ancient and modern), modern languages and joint schools, and PPE. There were strong performances also in law, English, biology, biochemistry, physics, engineering, and philosophy joint schools with mathematics and computer science. LMH graduands were awarded a rich array of University prizes also, most notably the best overall and second-best overall students in law; outstanding performances in modern languages; mathematics; psychology, philosophy and linguistics.

Summer 2025 saw an additional five former LMH Foundation Year students (FYs) graduate with their University of Oxford degree, with four 2:1s, engineering, English, PPE and law, and a 3rd in physics. This brings the total to date of University of Oxford graduates via LMH Foundation Year to 41: four 1sts, thirty-three 2:1s; two 2:2s, one 3rd and one Pass. Three former LMH FYs continue on their undergraduate journey at LMH.

Results in preliminary examinations this summer are excellent, with Distinctions obtained in biochemistry, biology, biomedical sciences, engineering, classical archaeology and ancient history, physics, mathematics and computer science, English and modern languages, PPE, music, English, history, ancient and modern history and experimental psychology.

Some of our graduates on taught courses have completed their studies at this point, but many more continue on course through to the end of September. Many of those who have completed have been awarded Distinction or Merit in the following programmes: Bachelor of Civil Law; MPhil in modern Chinese studies; development studies; economics; linguistics; philology and phonetics; water science, policy and management; nature, society and environmental governance; MSc in contemporary Chinese studies; law and finance; mathematical finance; mathematical sciences; mathematical and computational finance; mathematics and foundations of computer science; MSt in Asian and South Asian studies; English; history; Slavonic studies; modern languages; and successful completion of the Postgraduate Certificate in Education.

Anne Mullen

Senior Tutor and Tutor for Admissions

A DAY TO CELEBRATE ELIZABETH MACKENZIE



*Elizabeth Mackenzie,
pictured in 1978*

A programme of readings and reminiscences, with musical interludes, held in the Simpkins Lee Theatre at LMH on 14 November 2023 and attended by some 59 alumni and colleagues, celebrated the life and work of Elizabeth Mackenzie (1921–2021). After the Principal's greeting, Dame Frances Lannon introduced the proceedings with a synopsis of Elizabeth's life.

A many-sided profile of Elizabeth emerged in the recollections that followed. This ranged from her love of horse-racing, shared by her tutorial pupil Chris Ferguson (1985 English: his choice of reading, Yeats's 'Galway Races', introduced one of her favourite poets), to the modernist qualities of her poetry as noted by her colleague Nicholas Shrimpton, who read Elizabeth's poems set by Egon Wellesz as his *Four Songs of Return*. Gill Perrin (1961

Music) outlined further Elizabeth's fruitful collaboration with Dr Wellesz; both were Gill's tutors.

Among Elizabeth's former English students, Helen Barr (Chignell 1979), Richard Danson Brown (1985), both reading their own poetry, and Lucasta Miller (1985), reading from T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*, helped to convey variously her special qualities. These included her wry sense of humour, as well as the deep and lasting impression made by her devotion to her subject, opening doors for them onto new areas of literature with her finely judged suggestions for reading. Helen Barr quoted Elizabeth as encouraging the cultivation of 'humane English studies'. Eira Davies (Picton 1965 English), stressing Elizabeth's kindness, remembered her tutor's warm support of her marriage to Alan Davies while both, unusually, were still students.

Opening the final session, Mari Prichard (1966 English) contributed an expressive reading of *Ginger and Pickles*, reflecting Elizabeth's childhood love of Beatrix Potter's tales. Dame Frances spoke of Elizabeth's last years, remarking *inter alia* on the stack of poetry piled up in her room at the care home in Wheatley, and the necessity of 'sharpening up' before visiting her there. The music at the conclusion of the day's proceedings ended with the poignant lullaby that closes Schubert's song-cycle 'Die schöne Müllerin', selections from which in an arrangement for piano duo were performed by Christopher Churcher (2022 Music) and Susan Wollenberg (1966 Music).

The day offered the chance to renew and to make new connections among those attending.

The affection, admiration, and appreciation that Elizabeth elicited shone through the memories shared by the speakers, and are reflected in the tributes that follow here. We are grateful to all who supported the event and contributed to making this such a memorable occasion.

From Ann M. Hutchison (1963)

I love the photo of Miss Mackenzie! She was my moral tutor, and I also had the tutorial for Chaucer with her. I especially remember her Afghans which she tried to keep behind her chair, as I was allergic to dogs, but every now and then the dog (possibly named ‘Gower’) would come and drool on my paper – I think, in disapproval! She was a very kind and caring tutor.

From Marilla Satterwhite (Benedek 1967)

I remember her well. Gentle. Encouraging.

From Ruth Turnbull (Jenkins 1970)

I have fond memories of Miss Mackenzie and remember her with respect and affection. She was a wise and perceptive tutor whom I was lucky to know. I particularly remember the courtesy and kindness with which she treated everyone, even a gauche and apprehensive seventeen-year-old as I was when we met for the first time at my entrance interview! Miss Mackenzie demonstrated superbly the quiet, non-confrontational manner of academic discussion. She showed me how this approach enhances our understanding of the wider subject matter and offers a framework to express alternative views without rancour. I have drawn on this ever since. I just wish I could have conveyed something of my debt to her while she was alive. I appreciate the generous way LMH is offering hospitality to those who remember Miss Mackenzie. I am sure the day of celebration would have pleased her enormously!

From George Hart (Honorary Research Fellow)

Elizabeth and I didn’t overlap for long at LMH, but I valued our time together, after lunch in hall, with affection and admiration. She gave me more insight than anyone else about LMH during the ‘old days’. She spoke with quiet sensitivity and a willingness to embrace change, but she didn’t tell me about her home in the Thames valley, nor their canine companions!

From Barbara Hodgson (1983)

Miss Mackenzie, as I knew her, was both my tutor and mentor when I studied English at LMH from 1983 to 1986. I’ve always thought of her very fondly and with great respect. She also had a wicked sense of humour and delicious note of irony on occasion. I remember when it was time to study *Ulysses* by James Joyce, the most incomprehensible novel of all time in my view. She looked at me with a wry smile and said: ‘Take two weeks on this one – and trawl as many critical analyses as you can find in the library, because someone somewhere will have made sense of it. Good luck!’

She was approachable and warm as well as one of the most acute brains I've ever encountered. If my experience of Miss M was anything to go by, hundreds of alumni will feel the same affection as I always have for a remarkable person.

From Clare Howes (Cunliffe 1962)

I can think of no better thing than remembering all she did. I particularly remember going into her study, with the lute hung on the back of the door and having long discussions about Poussin, rather than English literature.

From Helen Hackett (Cobb 1980)

Elizabeth was important to me for numerous reasons: as a brilliant teacher during both my BA and my MPhil; as the person who, very sensitively, broke the news to me of my mother's death during my finals; and as someone who gave invaluable support to the early stages of my academic career, including some of my first teaching opportunities. I remember her with great affection and admiration.

Other respondents to the invitation for the day who regretfully could not attend referred to their 'affectionate memories of Miss Mackenzie' (Zoe O'Sullivan, KC) and to 'the unforgettable, kindly and elegant Miss Mackenzie' (Joanna Godfree), remembering her also with 'great respect and affection' (Marna Gowan).

Helen Barr and Susan Wollenberg, Emeritus Fellows



Sit for a minute

"We delight in the beauty
of the butterfly, but rarely
admit the changes it has
gone through to achieve
that beauty" - Maya Angelou

mindfulness bench



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ARTICLES

SIR ROWLAND HILL AND THE QUIT RENTS CEREMONY

In October 2024, Tim Ashton gave an address at the 813th Quit Rents Ceremony in London. This ceremony is an ancient tradition, older than Magna Carta, where the City of London symbolically pays (and is then essentially excused) rent to the Crown for certain pieces of land, some of which are in Shropshire. This tradition is concerned with manifesting the ancient independence of London to function in some ways like an old European city state from Saxon times. On occasions, such as the 1066 Conquest when it was defended by Bishop William, and during the Reformation, the settlement has been perceived to be under review and this ceremonial activity is part of the theatre of statecraft manifesting the position. You can also see this, potentially, in the traditional ceremony where the Lord Mayor greets the King at the Temple Bar and symbolically hands over the keys to the City. The Quit Rents Ceremony is held annually at the Royal Courts of Justice.

Tim Ashton's prominent role in the 2024 Quit Rents Ceremony stems from his connection to the legacy of his forebear, Sir Rowland Hill (Tudor polymath, Lord Mayor, Privy Councillor, theologian, architect, merchant and philanthropist and contended Shakespeare muse) of Soulton Hall (home of Thomas Lodge Jr, the writer of the *As You Like It* source book). The growing recognition of 'Old' Sir Rowland's significant contributions to Renaissance thought, encoding of information in his building at his rural headquarters at Soulton, and Tudor statecraft, has brought his family's history into sharper focus, making Ashton's participation in this historical event particularly relevant.

Address to the 813th Quit Rents Ceremony before His Majesty's Remembrancer

*Court of the Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales, Royal Courts of Justice
9 October 2024*

*First, in this forest, let us do those ends
That here were well begun and well begot:
And after, every of this happy number
That have endured shrewd days and nights with us
Shall share the good of our returned fortune*

These words are spoken by the virtuous Duke Senior at the close of Shakespeare's beloved play *As You Like It* (which is set in Shropshire where the Quit Rents fields are located). Then, the god Hymen commands a dance of eight to be done to celebrate the recovery of harmony, which has been the play's quest. These sympathetic dancing characters should be interpreted as embodying the nature of Plato's guardians, and the dance as manifesting the duties of such people.

Today, I am concerned with the duties of Plato's guardians, and how these duties are explored by the life and legacy of my forebear, Sir Rowland Hill of Soulton: Lord Mayor of this great City in 1549–50 – a year in which his statecraft was called upon to prevent a civil war as the Protectorate of Somerset collapsed while he took his oath.

Shakespeare (his cousin) wrote *As You Like It* as a cultural monument to him: he is the Old Sir Rowland who is the father of Orlando and the embodiment of virtue in the universe of the play.

That this is so has already been set out in a lecture given in this city in January of this year at St Mary Abchurch, a 55ft cubed Wren building with a dancing pavement that is an homage to Old Sir Rowland's house at Soulton Hall. The recording of that lecture is on the website of Byrga Geniht under the title: 'Who is Old Sir Rowland?'¹ (I take this opportunity to thank James D. Wenn for his scholarly support of my family in these matters).

Sir Rowland Hill was one of the most brilliant, exotic, brave and remarkable people of the Tudor period, but his name is lost to us. Sir Rowland was many things – including a judge who sat on treason proceedings. However, *in their moment* (under the Catholic dispensation of Queen Mary), a number of the secret actions of my forebear were very clearly treason and heresy. I am aware that I have just outed him (in the court room of the Lady Chief Justice, and before two sheriffs of the City of London) as having made out offences of treason and heresy. However, I am content to have finally brought that out of the closet after half a millennium, because what he did was subsequently ratified by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Parliament, the Commission for Ecclesiastical Causes and Queen Elizabeth I herself.

What he did in his pursuit of harmony, as he saw it, was immensely dangerous, such that it was still unsafe to talk about until well into the twentieth century, which is why it was not discussed and some of this feels startling to relate now. Without his brave work – sheltering at Soulton Hall artefacts, scholars and texts (including at least one copy of Magna Carta) – the glorious Renaissance that gave us Shakespeare and a renewed and confident England would have been impossible.

The office of Sheriff, which we have seen conferred on officeholders today, is ancient indeed. It reaches back over 1,000 years, perhaps as far back as the time of St Erkenwald, 'the light of London', and the founder of St Paul's. The unique and ancient constitutional status of London is manifested both by the city electing its own sheriffs, and by the nuances of the Quit Rents ceremony. Sir Rowland Hill was made sheriff of London in 1541–42. As with so many of the public offices he held, it was a remarkable term of office, and his time laid the foundations for the concept of Parliamentary Privilege because he was put in an impossible position when he was ordered to effect the arrest of an MP attending the Commons (an institution grappling with its growing

powers that was sorely offended by this insult). For his (blameless) troubles he was sent to the Tower of London, only to be released and promptly knighted to make amends! This incident is the reason the attempt of Charles I to arrest members of the Commons, exactly 100 years later, was so shocking and precipitous; and in our own times was one of the reasons why the 2019 prorogation crisis was so charged.

Old Sir Rowland was no stranger to walking tightropes and was remarkably good and successful at it, as shown by his service on the Privy Councils of each and all of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth (which is virtually unique) and on both the Commission Against Heretics and the Commission for Ecclesiastical Causes (absolutely unique and frankly extremely suspicious). Under these violently contradictory commissions he had the power to save art and artefacts that were an anathema to both dispensations. We know he did because we have the Parker Library, which he hid at Soulton, along with Mathew Parker himself, and the Mercers' Christ, which he buried under the floor of the chapel that interconnected with his house in London.

All of this could indicate a shrewd politician, who was a businessman first and foremost, but I have also said he is an exemplar of Plato's Guardians. He had a fortune that was colossal, and it is obvious he held office, but am I entitled to say he held it for the public good? Absolutely: he dealt with the ongoing collapse of social welfare by liberally:

- founding schools and refounding and superintending all the hospitals in London,
- patronising the arts, funding scholarships,
- attending to architecture, public works, labour exchanges, the needs of the mentally ill and the poor.

I do not have time to take you fully through all this, so I will quote from a contemporary, who was just as exhausted by Old Sir Rowland's Renaissance magnificence as we might all be:

This Sir Rowland Hill, to the great praise of his vocation, and . . . singular comfort of the public wheel of his country, erected many notable monuments and good deeds, which were too long here to write. Wherefore I referred them to my Summaries.²

As a Renaissance mind he published on diverse topics from classics, philosophy, the discovery of America, the state of English allies, and mathematics. His house at Soulton has the only ancient Rithmomachia board surviving in the world and is so densely planted in code that references Alberti, the Bible, and the geometry of the Platonic solid that is the rhombic dodecahedron that it would take access to Soulton and three hours to set before you properly.

Returning to *As You Like It* and the dance I referred to earlier, it is symbolised by a rose of eight-fold symmetry, or a star of the same. This symbol is seen on old Sir Rowland Hill's chair of estate which survives at Soulton, as well as the famous dancing pavement there that actually shows the choreography of that dance, known to the ancients at Eleusis. This symbol is all over the Mansion House, the British Museum, and London.

I do not have time to develop fully the life and legacy of one of the most remarkable and sadly (for the moment, but not for much longer) marginalised Englishmen that ever lived and one of the greatest ever fathers of this wonderful city. However, I hope I have done enough to get you to cherish and want to become more familiar with this man who is so important that he lives a little outside of time, of whom Shakespeare causes his two best romantic leads to say:

*I am more proud to be Sir Rowland's son,
His youngest son; and would not change that calling,
To be adopted heir to Frederick.*

and:

*My father loved Sir Rowland as his soul,
And all the world was of my father's mind.*

In this spirit, and at a time when Shropshire, London and our country all find themselves again questing for renewal and a better destiny, I hope we can find the values and value of Shakespeare's Old Sir Rowland.

*Tim Ashton
(2005 Jurisprudence)*

¹ See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGoEM6SanXo>

² Modern spelling is used. *Stow, John. The summarie of English chronicles (lately collected and published) nowe abridged and continued tyl this present moneth of Marche, in the yere of our Lord God. 1566. By J.S. Thomas Marshe, London: in Fletestrete, 1566.*



Cropped portrait of Sir Rowland in the collection of the Worshipful Company of Mercers

WRITING A BOOK MIGHT LEAD SOMEWHERE YOU DON'T EXPECT

Around seven years ago, I began to write a book. Two years later, I finished it and changed the focus of my career from working as a solicitor in large banks to running my own business, writing, and coaching other writers to finish their books.

They say it takes a village to write a book. As an editor and book coach, I am one of the villagers. We read of books by alumni and Fellows in *The Brown Book* and – especially when we know the author – we admire their achievement. An author is the creative source of a book. They are the inspiration for it. Unless they employ a ghostwriter, the author puts in the hard effort of writing the text.

But nobody who wants to see their book read by strangers writes all alone. Writing a successful book in a chilly, dusty garret is a myth. Maybe experienced writers, writing decades, centuries ago in a less competitive and narrower market, managed it, but now? You may be surprised by just how many other people are involved in producing a book and getting it into the hands of readers.

The writer's family and friends, perhaps (although beware! marriages and friendships can be ruined by well-meant feedback), but there are many more: the book coach who helps the writer to understand the market they are writing for, to get their ideas clear and to structure the book accordingly; multiple editors; for non-fiction, an indexer and a researcher or fact-checker; the book cover designer, and the interior layout designer. If the book is published by a third party then there might be an acquiring editor and a commissioning editor. In big publishing houses, up to 30 people might have input into a book: sales and distribution teams, marketing teams, PR teams. There might be a literary agent; there is certainly a printer and an e-book formatter and audio team. Writing a book is a labour-intensive, highly professional activity.

Let's go back to the earliest stage, the moment when the writer first had a flash of inspiration and said to themselves, 'I have to write a book about that!' That's where book coaching comes in: a book coach supports the writer as they nurse their ideas for a book into the first draft. It's a relatively new profession that developed out of the trend of publishing houses to stop employing in-house editors who would work with commissioned writers to help them write their books. Those in-house editors adapted and survived by turning freelance, and some of them trained new entrants to the profession. The organisation that sets the industry standard for certified book coaches is Author Accelerator™, run by Jennie Nash.

Jennie and I encountered each other when I was struggling to find the best way to write my first book. By that time, I had entered my fourth decade as a solicitor working in London banks so I was feeling I might have got the hang of this law thing by now. It seemed a good time to take writing books seriously. I got myself certified in fiction book coaching, thinking that would just teach me how to write a better book, but the Author

Accelerator certification course is completely practical. In order to qualify, you have to help real, live writers with their manuscripts in a kind of apprenticeship. I discovered I loved the client side of book coaching. The following year, I gained my certification in non-fiction book coaching and also learned how to undertake professional editing and indexing.

Like my book coaching colleagues across the world – over 400 of them in 2025 – I work with writers at every stage of their book writing journey. I have helped bring into life books as varied as a history of US transportation policy (*Shifting Gears*, by Susan Handy of UC Davis, published by the MIT Press), an investment handbook for young professionals (*Ready-Made Investing*, by Walter Coxon) and a guide for business leaders who wish to create positive change by working to reduce their sense of disconnection from themselves, each other, and from nature (*Conscious Impact*, by Susanne von der Becke, published by the UK's Triarchy Press).

One of the great things about book coaching as a profession is its flexibility. You design your own business. You decide what type of books and writers you want to work with – do you love to work with fictional or factual worlds? Do you adore historical romance or elf-and-hero based fantasy or intellectually challenging contemporary literary fiction? Do you want to learn more about niche areas of history or bring complex philosophy to a general readership? You decide how much work you want to do. You decide at what stage of the writing process you want to offer your expertise: are you good at helping to shape big concepts and to probe ideas? Can you support a writer as they write the first draft, offering feedback, say, chapter by chapter? Would you rather analyse and assess a manuscript of, say, a whopping 650,000 words and show the writer how they can cut it down to make it more impactful and, perhaps, more publishable?

You work independently, as a freelancer, and so you choose your specialism, your hours, your charges, your place of work. It suits people who have responsibilities such as raising children or caring for seniors. It suits inveterate travellers: so long as you have internet connection for video calls and emails, you can coach or edit anywhere. One of my colleagues spends a third of her year on cruise ships (giving history lectures) and she fits in her coaching business very effectively.

So far, so good, and apparently all rosy. But it's a giant step to move from the corporate world to 'solopreneurship'. It's a step that can turn into a stagger. You wouldn't want to do it on a whim. You have to take the step with your eyes wide open. Starting five years ago, I made the change slowly, gradually reducing my working hours as a lawyer and slowly building my book business (www.ruthbullivant.com). There are so many pits you can fall into, and missteps you can take, that the process can feel like tiptoeing across a minefield. In the early years, you are your own marketing department, sales team, R&D team, and accountant – and then there's the actual work you wanted to be doing. The first year or two of business can be so confusing and emotionally draining I wrote a short book about it (of course!) called *Dear New Book Coach – A Quiet Companion*. It's quite a good way to understand the emotional risks of making a career change into the book world, or, indeed, any other type of coaching career.

And so, here we are again, talking about writing books. Writing a book is hard work. It requires focus and commitment and a large amount of time. Up to two years is a reasonable estimate if you are writing non-fiction and are on top of your subject, or if you are writing fiction and have mastered your craft. Provided you keep your reader in mind and never compromise on the quality of your writing, and provided you pull in a team of experts to support you from the start to the finish, publishing a book is within your grasp.

You should try it some time. You never know where it might lead you.

Ruth Bullivant Pedley
(Hargreaves 1981 *Literae Humaniores*)

FROM ‘BELOW STAIRS’ TO TUTORIALS IN FYFIELD ROAD

In 2021 during the Covid restrictions, Alan Rusbridger wrote in his Principal’s Update in *LMH News* that he spent six weeks sitting in a gazebo in the garden of 6 Fyfield Road and met every new undergraduate joining the college. He asked each student two questions: ‘Why LMH?’ and ‘Do you have worries?’ That provided such a sharp contrast with my own experience as a ‘fresher’ at LMH in 1978. How I wish someone had taken the time to ask me those questions!

My mum once handed me a worn little book called *Steps to the Altar*. She told me that her mother had been given the book by ‘her mistress’ when she was a maid. My grandmother had been sent to a home for ‘fallen women’ in Oxford from her village



Sarah’s book

near Stratford-upon-Avon, having become pregnant while very young and unmarried. Inside the book, ‘Sarah Parker, 8 Fyfield Rd, Oxford’ is written in careful capitals and the S of Sarah is reversed – as the letter often is by a beginner writer. I find it very moving when I think about how little education my granny had. Two generations later I was able to apply to the world-famous university in the same city. Both my interview for LMH and my economics tutorials were held in Fyfield Road, near to the house in which my grandmother reported that she ran up and down ‘so many stairs’ in service.

My grandmother was firmly ‘below stairs’ but, when I arrived in Oxford, I struggled hard to fit into a group of people from a different class. My dad was dead, my older siblings had left home (none having stayed at school beyond the age of 15) and my mum and I lived in a council house four miles from where my grandmother was born. I went to the local grammar school, the only child from the Catholic village school to pass the eleven-plus.

No one from my school seemed to go to university until, when I was in the sixth form, we got a new head teacher on the look-out for likely candidates to improve his school’s record. I was persuaded to apply. I was very good at exams and particularly good at English, but at the age of 18 I knew absolutely no one who had been to university (except presumably some of my teachers and the local doctor). Mum and I loved words and she helped me so much with my revision that I was sure she could have taken the exams herself and shared my grades. She left school at 14 and was the first girl in the family to work in a factory rather than go into service.

In the summer of 1978, after doing my A levels, I got a job at Halfords working in the warehouse directing forklift trucks, and I loved it. I was becoming involved in the union, the TGWU, and beginning to find a place for myself when my results arrived. I’d almost forgotten the weird interviews I’d had at Oxford the year before. I debated whether to leave the warehouse but my mum was so proud of my university place I felt I had to take it. In answer to Alan’s first question, ‘Why LMH?’, the answer is quite simple – it wasn’t my decision. My head teacher had some association with LMH and he decided I should apply for politics, philosophy and economics. It seems unbelievable now, but I’m pretty sure a lot of this happened without me being in the room. Our education in that school was mostly rote learning of exam answers and the curriculum was narrow. There were no books in my house. Again, hard to believe, but I went up to read PPE not knowing what left and right meant in politics and not sure what economics and philosophy actually were.

As to the second question, my main worry was how to survive in such an alien environment. I had never lived away from my village or my family before and the locked doors on the corridors of Deneke made me feel like I was in prison. All the young women I met had gone to public school and I remember one of them refusing point blank to believe that my mum lived in a council house. I was so lonely I cried for eight weeks and rang my poor mother every day from the phone box at the bottom of the stairs. Neither of us knew how to get me out of there or who to ask for help.

I did the best I could with my work ethic and my ability to sift information. I made myself a sandwich for lunch then worked from nine till five each day in the PPE reading rooms and went to as many lectures as I could – and I tried to read every book on every reading list from cover to cover. I had no study skills, no guidance and no pastoral care. Often when I turned up for one of the two tutorials in a week which were my only point of contact with the teaching staff, there would be a note on the door saying ‘Tutorials cancelled today’.

Somehow I made it to Christmas and then I joined an organisation called JACARI where students volunteered to teach English to migrant children living in East Oxford. That was my salvation and I virtually moved in with a family living off Cowley Road. I

had more in common with my Pakistani friends than with my student peers as I knew what a working-class family looked like and it felt like home.

I made it through the degree and now I would dearly love to do it again and take time to engage with the ideas and the discussion enjoyed by many of my fellow students. I was too scared to raise my head, too confused to complain at my lot, and way too intimidated to argue with my teachers about the dearth of support. Of course my Oxford degree has given me a level of confidence and privilege, although I became a primary school teacher not a prime minister, but I still bear the scars of that first miserable term. I became a university lecturer and have co-written a book about teaching in higher education. I feel proud that I've learnt how things can and should be for all students starting at university. I also talked to two young women at LMH who wanted to volunteer for the charity whose trustee board I chair. It's a charity about volunteers providing English language support – I am still committed to that work and so grateful I discovered it.

From the literature I receive, it sounds as though LMH has changed beyond recognition since 1978 – and I hope it keeps on changing.

Sylvia Ashton
(1978 PPE)

RELIGION, ART AND LIFE

In this article, I share with the LMH community my experiences of the interrelationship between religious morals, art and life.

During his studies at the Tbilisi State Academy of Arts (Georgia), my father, Jacob Pichhadze, was gaining recognition for his artistic abilities and accomplishments. For example, his works were featured at the Georgia National Museum (1969) and reviewed in local and national newspapers. Driven by his ambitions and abilities, Jacob and Zinaida (my mother) sought to immigrate to the West where opportunities for artists were more extensive than in his native Georgia. Yet, his plans were derailed by the death of his father, Shalom Pichhadze, from a stroke. To support his mother, Hannah Pichhadze, who decided to immigrate to Israel in the early 1970s along with Jacob's siblings, Jacob and Zinaida deferred their personal goals and followed their family to Israel in 1972.

While the process of immigration was challenging, Jacob's determination and skills enabled him to find a path towards realising his ambitions and potential as a visual artist and art teacher. He was given his first opportunity to feature his artworks at the Beit Am Jewish Community Center (Jerusalem, 1973), with an opening reception that included the Minister of Justice, Jacob Shimshon Shapira, among others. This was followed by numerous other solo and group exhibitions at other museums and public centres in Israel. Many of Jacob's exhibitions were fundraisers for different public

needs: charities, hospitals, immigrants, and social organisations such as B'nai B'rith, among others. David Peled, the Director of Beit Nurit, a charity which Jacob supported, commented in 1987 that 'Jacob Pichhadze, an artist and teacher, is a man of inspiration possessing powerful artistic expression. He is, as well, a public personality of the highest order among the Jewish immigrants from Russia and Soviet Georgia.'

As Jacob gained recognition, he was also receiving professional opportunities abroad. Yet, considering his mother's need for support, he remained close by and committed to her. His dedication was based not only on love but also on his sense of morality. He was particularly inspired by the lessons of morality drawn from the biblical story of Ruth and Naomi, which were instilled in him since childhood. Following the death of her husband, brother-in-law, and father-in-law, Ruth's mother-in-law, Naomi, had decided to leave Moab to return to her homeland Judah. Naomi encouraged her two daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, to stay in their own homeland to start a new life. While Orpah welcomed Naomi's suggestion and turned towards a new path, Ruth refused to leave Naomi unattended and accompanied her to the land of her late husband, trusting that God would not forsake them in their need.

Ruth's story exemplifies self-sacrifice for others, loyalty and modesty. It informs and inspires people of different religions worldwide. It has influenced my father personally, as reflected by his own self-sacrifice and loyalty to his mother. Jacob also sought to convey the story and its messages through his art, in numerous works over time. An early version of this series was featured at the Beit Emanuel Museum (1982, Israel), in a solo exhibition that was attended by Shimon Peres, former Israeli President. Following his mother's death, Jacob and his family immigrated to Canada, where he featured his artworks at the Galerie Heritage in Toronto.

Growing up, I benefited from my father's teaching of both art and morality. He and I increasingly cooperated in creating and teaching art. Like my father, I pursued opportunities to use my art for philanthropic purposes. For example, while studying visual art at York University, I initiated and organised a fundraising art exhibition to benefit student scholarship. When asked at the time about my future plans, in an interview for the university's *Excalibur* newspaper, I commented that law school was my next step. Perhaps foreshadowing, I added that 'art, I believe, is something that is always going to stay with me'. Indeed, I ended up pursuing legal



Exhibition at the Beit Emanuel Museum. From left: Jacob Pichhadze, Shimon Peres and Zinaida Pichhadze. In the foreground, Amir Pichhadze.

studies at the LSE and the University of Michigan Law School, after which I also obtained practical legal training as a judicial law clerk at the Tax Court of Canada. I also pursued teaching law and lecturing at universities and conferences worldwide. Most recently, I presented some of my research on legal pedagogy at the 2025 STORIES conference, which was held by the Department of Education at the University of Oxford.

In 2020, after three years of teaching law at Deakin Law School (Australia), I took time off to pursue the MSc in Higher Education at Oxford's Department of Education, where, among other things, I undertook in-depth research on issues in legal pedagogy. Halfway into my studies, my father unexpectedly suffered a stroke. With the support of LMH and my department, I managed to complete my studies, but then withdrew from teaching in Australia so that I could stay in Canada to support my parents. Together, Jacob and I returned to creating art together. In the circumstances, my role was understandably a more active one. I undertook the finishing of previously commenced works while we cooperated to create new artworks together. Among these is our ongoing portrayal of the story of Ruth and Naomi and its moral messages.

In these new versions, unlike previous ones which focused on portraying the biblical characters themselves, we have placed the characters in contexts related to their story, with their body language suggesting their mental state as they deal with their challenges. The image shown here places them in a landscape with fields, suggestive of their journey.

Jacob's experiences in dealing with his father's death as well as the need and desire to support his mother, inspired him to convey those challenges through the portrayal of the story of Ruth and Naomi. As I was growing up, his art taught and inspired me and perhaps also others who have seen the work. Now, having found myself in similar circumstances, I have drawn inspiration and guidance from that art. Thus, as exemplified by our experiences, the relationship between art and life can be cyclical, dynamic and evolving, and art can communicate religious morality while also inspiring it in lived experiences.

Amir Pichhadze
(2020 MSc Education)







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PERSONAL AND CAREER NEWS FROM ALUMNI

Items of news can be sent to the Editor directly or via the Development Office, by post or by email, at any time of the year. Please include your date of, and your name at, matriculation. We do not publish personal email addresses, but the Development Office is always happy to facilitate contact between alumni. Members are listed by the names used at the time of entry to the Hall; current names, if different, are placed in brackets afterwards.

1949

JENNIFER MONTAGU: I have just published my last book (*'The Most Acclaimed Sculptor: Giovanni Battista Maini (1690–1752) and Roman Sculpture of his Time*) and, alas, have decided the time has come to retire. Mobility is now more of a problem, and declining eyesight means that I can no longer do research. Otherwise all is well, and I am still enjoying life, friends, family, and music.

1952

MARGARET HARVEY (Lloyd): I have spent much of the last 30 years working on a survey and then a series of books about Bermuda's architectural heritage. We have published a volume for each of the parishes (ten in total) and are now working on a revised edition of one of the early ones.

1954

SUJATA DESAI (Manohar): My son Aneesh V. Manohar and daughter-in-law Elizabeth E. Jenkins were jointly awarded the J. J. Sakurai Prize for Theoretical Particle Physics in 2025 for their work on baryon physics. My son-in-law Jayant Udgaonkar was awarded the national award of Vigyan Shri in biological science under the Rashtriya Vigyan Puskar Scheme (2024) from the President of India.

1958

ELIZABETH BURNSIDE (Lisa Parkinson): We are thrilled to have a great-grandson, full of smiles and gurgles and trying hard to talk. It is strange to think of our daughter being a grandmother! Our youngest grandchild is in her first year at Nottingham, studying

Urban Planning. Our Ukrainian guest family – mother and 16-year-old twin daughters – lived with us for a year and moved at the end of January to a two-bedroom flat provided by Bristol City Council, rent free. The girls are doing very well at school and take GCSEs this summer in sciences, maths and music. Tanya, their mother, works online and they go back to Kyiv in school holidays. I continue to give training and consultancy online for family mediators in Italy, Ukraine and other countries. Recently I gave training on talking with children and young people in mediation, arranged by a mediator in Greece and another in Belgium, for an international group of trained mediators from nine countries, including Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary and Sweden. Fortunately they all spoke excellent English. I am glad not to travel and we do not go abroad on holiday because of climate change. The long grass in our garden encourages wild flowers and attracts butterflies, moths and other insects.

1960

JANE HUTCHINS (McLaughlin): I continue to write poetry and short stories and belong to several writers' groups, often taking part in readings and events. My collection of 30 poems on the theme of the climate emergency and the natural world we can still celebrate was one of the winners of the Dreich Classic Chapbook competition and was published in 2024. In April this year my partner David and I visited my daughter-in-law's family in Buenos Aires and made a trip south to the incredible landscapes of Patagonia. I enjoy living in south-east London near the Horniman Museum and Gardens and the Dulwich Picture Gallery.

1962

HELEN BEST (Constantine): I am the General Editor of the series of City Tales by Oxford University Press, who are publishing *Athens Tales* and *Venice Tales* this year. I am currently translating *Colette* for Oxford World Classics. David and I have just acquired a new great-granddaughter called Soffia!

1967

MARION COLLEDGE: I continue working as an assessor of SpLD (Specific Learning Deficiency), producing fruit and vegetables, and teaching dyslexic children one-to-one. I have two lovely grandchildren, aged 11 and 5, and am also writing a memoir.

JANE WITHERINGTON (Parkin): The last year has gone well: a grandson started at BNC to read economics (he is enjoying using game theory to explore possible reactions to Donald Trump's trade tariffs) and a granddaughter accepted as an organ scholar at Magdelene College, Cambridge. I'm working on organising the 34th European Conference on Operational Research in Leeds which will be attended by another grandson who is doing a PhD in artificial intelligence. It's nice to see that my interests in maths and music are being carried on down the generations.

1968

PAULA GRIFFITHS: I'm still enjoying taking services two or three times a month in our local churches. The big news of the year, however, has been getting a book published, which has been long in gestation: *The Mystery of John: Reflections on the Fourth Gospel*. Having a publisher comb through your work with their trenchant editing comments took me back to tutorials – but it significantly improved the final version. At the time of writing this I am also preparing to appear in July before the Parliamentary Select Committee investigating protecting built heritage, who say they are interested in my direct experience with rural churches. It is a tremendous opportunity to make the case for all that churches contribute to the community – and the problems facing them.

1969

MARGARET TOOHEY (Pigott): It's been a time of endings and beginnings. My fulfilling six years on the Public Service Honours Committee and nine years on the Board of the wonderful charity Open Age both came to an end, but have been replaced by an uplifting new role as a National Assessor for the King's Award for Voluntary Service. My little book, *How to Age Joyfully* (2019), hasn't quite ended its shelf life but an Arabic edition is imminent. I'm waiting for the book tour! The best beginning was becoming a grandmother to our gorgeous grandson. I hope our Zoom catch-ups over three continents with Anna (Butterworth 1969), Tricia (Hackforth 1969), Rachel (Howard 1969) in Hong Kong, and Miren (Letemendia 1969) in the USA, which began during the pandemic, will not end any time soon.

VICKY WHIPP (Davis): Since 2017 I have been working in Kyrgyzstan alongside an NGO supporting women in the country. I am Chair of Trustees of Erayim Aid Trust UK (www.erayim-aid-trust.uk), a UK charity raising money to provide professional development courses for Kyrgyz teachers of English. I am there for a few weeks every year and am always interested to hear from potential volunteers to form part of the professional development training team. We also provide extra-curricular courses in English for children in deprived areas of the country. Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, we have been assisting UK universities by offering year-abroad placements for students of Russian, who are now forced to the Baltic states and republics of Central Asia if they wish to improve their fluency in Russian.

1970

ELISE ELDERKIN: I celebrated my big decade birthday by attending a concert in Munich by the wonderful *Chor und Symphoniorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks* performing the Brahms Requiem; throwing a brunch party for 30-odd people; and singing in a performance of Bach's *B Minor Mass* in Exeter Cathedral. An excellent way to enter one's 81st year.

1971

PAULA GRAYSON: LMH friends and others gathered in my 1828 chapel for a November 2024 party, resuming the annual party which had been paused after 2019: they included Sue Scott, Joan Link, Gill Francis, Jackie Smith, and Dorothy Percival. My role as a Public Governor for a mental health and community services NHS Foundation Trust continues to be challenging. Still rated as 'Requires Improvement' by CQC, we now have the Statutory Inquiry Chair interviewing the patients and their families going back to 2000. We are using our culture of learning to consolidate actions improving the safety of our services. As Chairman of the local Rural Communities Charity, I fully appreciated the distress of our 85 vineyard volunteers when pigeons stripped the ripe grapes just before harvest. The four-ton crop became half a ton. Sue Scott joined me when the volunteers held their annual entrepreneurs' open day at the vineyard. After a protracted tender process, we won the contract to continue our Social Prescribing activities, re-engaging people with gardens, woods and wellbeing walks; reducing the isolation of referred patients for many of our county's GP surgeries. Our Heritage Railway Station Museum has been visited by enthusiasts delighted that trains are again running along our line. I am still paid to provide personnel support to charities and unusually to two individuals being treated unkindly by their organisations. As an Enterprise Adviser and assisting other schools through Inspiring the Future, I have carried out mock interviews, helped with CVs and put schools in touch with local businesses to improve career aspirations. As a volunteer for Turvey History Society website (turveyhistory.org.uk), funded by the Heritage Lottery with peer reviews of text, I carried out research then wrote articles, interviewed four people for oral history recordings and completed transcripts of those recordings. Articles are: 'Independent Wesleyan Chapel', 'World War II Memories', 'Turvey Tic Beans to Egypt', 'Wonky Potatoes', 'Fishing with Crisps', 'Turvey and Canada', 'Turvey Sheep Shearing and Turkey Plucking Champions', 'Turvey Skiffle Group' and 'Esteemed Visitors to Turvey'. I abridged a neighbour's dissertation into two articles: 'Philanthropy in Turvey 1850 to 1900' and 'Turvey Reformatory'.

JOY HENDRY: My first novel, *Sharing Worlds: A Novel*, has been published and is available digitally, on Amazon.

JOAN WILMOT (Link): Still in Matlock, Derbyshire, still a Lay Chaplain to the Police and Fire Station, back on the Church Parochial Council, still volunteering at Cromford Mills. Especially still seeing friends from over 50 years ago, when we came to LMH, including Janis Baines, who is back visiting the UK from Australia at the moment, and Alison Coulthard, over from Norway. There is indeed life after work, although I am missing my older son Mat, who died at 46 in 2023, after a troubled life, but who had moved into a better space a year or so before. His brother Adam is not having it easy either as he is on kidney dialysis after a childhood kidney problem. But we have all learned resilience through these things, and lifetime friends are family too I find. So sending love to anyone who might remember us, and, at the time of writing, looking forward to the Garden Party!

1972

NICKY HARPER (Bull): I am continuing to thoroughly enjoy my involvement with LMH's Oral History Project – interviewing a wide range of alumni, Fellows and other staff members either in person or via Zoom. This addition to the College's archive promises to be hugely valuable as a social history both of LMH and of the many students and others who have been associated with it over many decades. In family news, we welcomed our second grandchild, Sophie Susannah Bönisch, in April 2024. Two of our four children have settled with their spouses in St Albans, only about 30 minutes away from us, which is especially pleasing as the other two are in New Zealand and Germany. We are grateful for modern technology! Regular trips to Oxford are a joy and I have maintained my unbroken run of attendance at all the University's Alumni Weekends so far. Although I have recently become an alumna of Cambridge University, having completed a one-year undergraduate diploma in creative writing, nothing can match the family feel and warm welcome of my first *alma mater*!

1973

JANET CARISTO (Caristo-Verrillo): I have completed the non-fiction work: *The Collective Will of Nations, Clean Energy from Space for the Planet: One Woman's Journey*. It has been edited and I'm seeking a publisher.

LYNDSAY GEE: Two special events in 2023: the 50-year Gaudy (the gardens are a delight) and then a 70th birthday party in York with several LMH alumnae and other Oxonians, together with some members of my old law firm. Both pleasantly memorable.

1974

BARBARA BUCHANAN (Tate): I've finally retired after 30 years in education – as Teaching Assistant, IT Network Manager, Computing Instructor, Business Support Manager and School Governor – definitely a Jill-of-all-trades! Looking forward to time spent crafting, gardening, photography, travelling and exploring on my e-bike. I've never quite lost the Oxford cycling habit!

JUDITH COOMBER (Gleeson): I have retired as a Judge of the Upper Tribunal after 31 years in the judiciary. Setting out to see the world, preferably by train.

JOSEPHINE HAYES: I have had an article published on the Equality Act 2010 and political parties' candidate selection arrangements in *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law* (see Publications). I'd love feedback on it.

1975

JANE BROOKS (St Aubyn): An exciting invitation gave me and my husband Nick (Trinity 1974) the chance to return to Oxford this spring for the first time in many years. We came to remember our dear friend Benazir Bhutto, President of the Oxford Union, at her 20th annual Memorial Lecture, this year given by her son Bilawal. It was a joy to share the evening with Benazir's LMH successor as President in 1976, Victoria Schofield, and the very hospitable and lively Union Officers plus speakers from the night's later debate on cancel culture. The lecture and debate were, serendipitously, held exactly 50 years on from a debate on fox hunting, featuring my husband (for) and Benazir (against). All provided an interesting change from retired-from-teaching life as grandparent (to five), gardener and pets as therapy (PAT) dog handler in Surrey.

CHRISTINE ODELL (Sheasby): Last summer (2024) my husband, who has been a Methodist minister for over 40 years, retired (or 'sat down' as our denomination puts it!). This means that we have moved out of the manse and away from itinerancy and retired to our own new home in the small former mill village of Steeton in the Aire Valley, not far from our beloved Yorkshire Dales or from our one child, Anna, who suffers from chronic illness. So now we are trying to work out what life not in the manse means, and what we should best be doing with our time! I hope to continue my prayer/worship writing and to see friends from LMH at the get-together in September.

1977

JILL GOODRUM (Cook): In March 2025 I was elected Chair of the Ladies Association of Barbershop Singers, having served two years as Vice-Chair on the Board. We have over 2,000 women members who all sing four-part unaccompanied harmony in clubs across the country. We are busy planning for our 50th anniversary year in 2026. I took up singing when I retired from the City and sing in a large women's barbershop chorus (Spinnaker Chorus) and in a quartet (Truly Medley Deeply). I live in Chichester with my husband Mike who also sings barbershop!

LORRAINE HERMANN (Muth): Announcing the birth of my first grandchild – a girl.

1979

KATE WALLIS (Hickmott): After working for over 15 years in the heritage industry, I have recently established a CIC (Community Interest Company): Cluniac Network – Education and Involvement. For over 500 years the monks of the abbey of Cluny (in Burgundy, France) were in charge of a vast network of sites – priories, churches, farms and vineyards – throughout Western Europe. From the tenth to the twelfth century they were at the height of their influence and responsible for advancements in architecture, art and music, the development of towns and local economies, and bringing some stability and peace across the region. There were over 50 Cluniac sites in the UK and

although most were ruined on the orders of Henry VIII, these remains are well worth a visit. However, at a local level the history and significance of the Cluniacs and their sites has largely been forgotten. The time is right to reinvigorate understanding and the network. The present-day European Federation of Cluniac Sites researches, celebrates and promotes the network and has started the process of putting together a bid for UNESCO World Heritage status for the network as a whole. My CIC will support this work in the UK with education and exhibition resources, and will work to encourage exchanges with our Cluniac cousins. These connections are so important today in our fractured world. I live in Brighton, close to my mother, Elizabeth Wallis (Kenyon 1948) who will be 95 in May this year. She is delighted with her first great-grandchild – Percy – born in 2023. Both she and I have participated in the LMH Oral History Project.

1980

MATTHEW JOCELYN: My latest opera collaboration as librettist for composer Bernard Foccroulle's *Cassandra* was performed at the Staatsoper in Berlin in June 2025.

LOUISE LOCOCK: I'm very much enjoying partial retirement, and doing some voluntary work with Oxford Mutual Aid to support families on low incomes with food and other necessities. I'm also pleased to have joined the LMH Oral History Project, helping out with interviews with alumni. I am still working (mostly remotely) for the University of Aberdeen, currently on a project looking at how to reduce inequalities in health care and outcomes for people living in rural Scotland. Now that I'm spending less time in Aberdeen, my husband and I have joined Corpus Christi chapel choir, singing evensong weekly during term. This takes us full circle to when we first met, singing in Balliol chapel. Retirement is also giving us more time to travel. We're very much looking forward to a month in Florence later in the year, where he will have a visiting fellowship.

1981

SYLVIA ASHTON: I've just finished my first novel, some of which is set in Oxford. It's called *Now Approaching*.

IAIN CAMPBELL: We moved permanently to our home in the Scottish Borders some five years ago. Grandchild-minding is now for fun or emergencies only, but the stairs are becoming too much for us and we're hoping to move to a bungalow in the same area.

JENNY ROSE DODGE (Carey): I am excited to announce that my third book, *The Essential Guide to Bulbs: Grow a Bounty of Beautiful Bulbs in Gardens and Containers* was published by Timber Press in mid-September 2025!

1983

SAM KILEY-WORTHINGTON: After seven years as Senior International Correspondent, I am now with *The Independent* as World Affairs Editor, spending a lot of time in Ukraine.

DAVID SANKEY: After undertaking a PhD in particle physics at Liverpool University (1986–89) to ‘get physics out of my system’, I finally retired from full-time physics in December 2024. I started on the H1 experiment at DESY in Hamburg, and for the last 21 years have also been on the ATLAS experiment on the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN. On ATLAS I played a key role in the original (LHC Run-1) e-gamma Trigger contributing to two of the primary channels used to discover the Higgs Boson particle in 2012, continuing with the upgrade of the Trigger for Run-2, for which I am one of 13,000 named scientists to win the 2025 Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics. Since then I have played a leading role in the e-gamma Trigger upgrade for the current Run-3 and for the past 10 years have been one of the coordinators of the ATLAS Global Trigger upgrade for the high luminosity LHC, due to start in 2030. I am now an Honorary Professor of Physics at University College London and an Honorary Scientist at Rutherford Appleton Labs (my UK base since 1991). I am enjoying walking in and around London, and the many other attractions of both London and our holiday home in Suffolk, with my wife Kathryn Davis (1983 Jurisprudence) and our two grown-up daughters, Amy and Jessica.

1985

IAN (Bison) ATKINS: I am living in Cape Town.

SIMON WADDINGTON: In 2021, after nearly 30 years living in the San Francisco Bay Area, I took advantage of new work-from-home policies and relocated to Las Vegas. Later that year I married my partner of 25 years and we are enjoying a life in the sun and heat together. I’ve taken up running, DIY, being ‘pool boy’, and cat-daddy to five cats and as many foster kittens as we can manage. For the last seven years I’ve been a Principal Software Engineer for Demandbase, an advertising and marketing company based in San Francisco.

1986

NEIL PUGMIRE: In September 2024, the third edition of my book, *100 Ways to Get Your Church Noticed* was published by Church House Publishing (previous editions were published in 2006 and 2014). It is the manual for communication by churches, now fully updated to reflect experiences during the Covid pandemic and other digital developments. Find out more on www.getyourchurchnoticed.com.

STEPHEN WELLBOURNE: My first update in nearly 40 years, which makes me feel seriously old! After graduating I got married, had two lovely children, and worked for a long time in the IT industry. I had a minor mid-life crisis and went back to university to study psychology (which annoyingly is what one of the crusty dons who interviewed me had recommended I study at Oxford instead of physics). I was lucky and got a lecturing position immediately after my PhD and specialised in building neural network models of the human brain, which I then did unpleasant things to – mimicking the effect of brain injury. More recently I have joined the National Foundation of Educational Research as a research director, my first job was to direct the evaluation of the government's national tutoring programme. Our children flew the nest long ago, but we have since filled it by fostering a lovely and very funny 13-year-old. I have published quite a few papers, but they are too boring to mention here. If anyone is interested they can find them on my ResearchGate page.

1988

IAN PINDAR: *Joyce*, my biography of James Joyce, which was first published on Bloomsday 2004, has been given a new lease of life. A revised edition with a new preface appeared on Bloomsday 2025.

MICHAEL RICHARDS: In the most recent King's Birthday Honours, I have been appointed MBE.

1989

SOONDRA APPAVOO: I've spent 30-odd years in finance since I left LMH in 1993, including accountancy, investment banking, asset management and a few false starts. I recently sold my wealth management and corporate finance business and have moved into a non-executive chairman role. I live in the country outside East Grinstead with my wife of 25 years, Olive, and three of our four children, one having flown the nest. I have also started a Doctorate in Business Administration degree (part-time) at Bocconi in Milan, having returned to Oxford for an MBA 22 years ago. I'd love to hear from people from the 1989–93 olden days (easy to find me on LinkedIn, I'm the only Soondra Appavoo, I think).

1991

KARL HOLMES: After a decade working for Sky, I have started a new role as General Manager for Disney+ in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. I hope you are all subscribers!

CATTY THORNTON-FIRKIN (Hannam) and **GILES HANNAM:** We are living in London. We have three children: Libby just finishing her medical degree in London; Jude living his best life in his second year studying Liberal Arts at Durham; and Kitty doing A levels currently. Doesn't time fly? Super proud of all of them, while secretly wishing they'd

gone to LMH! Ada the Dog on stand-by to lend emotional support when Kitty flies the nest in September. But they always come back. Don't they?

1992

DANNY COHEN: I've been lucky this year to work with some brilliant creative teams. A film I was Executive Producer for – *Conclave* – won an Oscar and Best Film at the BAFTAs. I also opened my first play on Broadway as a producer – *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, starring Sarah Snook.

1995

JANE SCOTT (Richardson): I am now Chief Executive of National Museum Wales and this year was a judge on the Art Fund's Museum of the Year. I live in North Wales with Mark (1995) and our two teenage children, Sam and Amy.

GRANT TAPSELL: I am serving as Junior Proctor of the University for 2025–26.

1996

TERENCE JOHNSON: I have started an MSc in Railway Systems Engineering and Integration at the University of Birmingham. I achieved a distinction in the Institution of Railway Signal Engineers Certificate in Railway Control Engineering Fundamentals.

PAWEL KOTLA: I have furthered my academic career with a new doctorate at Fryderyk Chopin Music University in Warsaw (in orchestra conducting but focusing on cultural diplomacy) and have recently been awarded the 'Meritorious for Polish Culture' title by the Polish Minister of Culture. I was appointed to the Advisory Council for Countering Foreign Information Manipulation & Interference at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March 2025. I led a series of 'Concerts of Freedom and Solidarity' in Lviv, Tbilisi and Kyiv (the latter streamed worldwide on Medici TV channel) within the framework of the Polish Presidency of European Union in January–June 2025. I am chair of the Temida Arts & Business Foundation board which organises the 'Beskid Classics' festival (one of the largest classical music festivals in Southern Poland).

FARIS YAKOB: My wife Rosie and I finally bought a house after more than a decade as nomads. We are in Chattanooga TN – anyone else here?

1997

SAM CRANE: My debut film *Grand Theft Hamlet* won the Jury Award for Best Documentary Feature at SXSW, The Frontier Competition Grand Prize at DMZ Docs (South Korea), Best Documentary at Sitges, two British Independent Film Awards and was longlisted for a BAFTA. It was released theatrically in the UK and USA and is currently streaming on Mubi. I am in my final year of a creative practice PhD at the

University of York doing autoethnographic research into performance practice in physical and digital spaces.

LUCY CLISSETT (Weber): I received my Masters in Teaching in June 2025 and started a new job as a fourth grade teacher at Wheaton Christian Grammar School in Winfield, IL (USA) in August this year.

1998

JANE BLISS: My work this year has been rather sad: I have been working on Douglas Gray's obituary for the British Academy. Vincent Gillespie was doing it, but realised he would not be able to finish it. The editor and I were greatly helped by contributions from Helen Barr. Just as we were submitting the final draft, we heard that Vincent had died. More happily, I have recently completed a very unusual task: that of translating a modern short story for young people into Anglo-Norman! This threw up any number of interesting thoughts, and I am preparing a talk or even a journal article on the subject. Finally, another goodbye: at the end of this academic year I am retiring from the Oxford Anglo-Norman Reading Group. It has been more than 20 years, and I hope somebody else might take over; I would be very happy to support them!

STUART BURNSIDE: Courtney and I are delighted to share the birth of our daughter Margot, in November 2024. I am currently working in London as M&G's Head of Product, Sustainability & Governance.

1999

MAXIMILIAN HARDY: In spring 2024 I 'prosecuted' Lord Lucan in a mock trial podcast produced by the *Daily Mail*. Perhaps not surprisingly the listener jury convicted him. In June we welcomed our third (and final!) child Johann, who joins his brothers Frederick and Konstantin.

2000

TALAL ABDULLA AL-EMADI: I have been appointed as Judge in Qatar International Court. I am the Dean of the College of Law at Qatar University and the founder of the Oil and Gas Law course. I have focused on the legal aspects of petroleum investment, particularly emphasising the importance of trust and long-term relationships between Qatar and international oil and gas companies. I also founded Qatar University Press, which achieved accreditation as a member of the Association of University Presses in less than four academic years.

JOHAN BERGSTRÖM-ALLEN: I've lived in beautiful York since my MPhil graduation from Oxford in 2002. In 2017 I completed my PhD at the Université de Lausanne on religious writings by medieval Carmelite friars in England (my Masters thesis supervisor, Professor Vincent Gillespie, kindly hosted the private viva part of the examination at

LMH). The Covid pandemic was quickly followed by the deaths of both my parents and redundancy from my job in church communications. Finding a similar part-time post for a charity in Leeds allowed me time to study for a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (university teaching qualification) at the University of Liverpool, which brought with it Fellowship of Advance HE (FHEA). I'm also a Research Associate at the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of York, an Associate Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, Fellow of the Centre for Marian Studies, and Fellow of the Institutum Carmelitanum in Rome. An enduring interest in counselling and psychotherapy led me to three years' training at York St John University, and I hope to qualify in the summer of 2025. Having completed a Diploma in Pastoral Ministry at Loyola University Chicago, I'm involved in various church activities, including the Diocese of Middlesbrough's affirming ministry to the LGBTQ+ community. I'm very interested in Catholic Social Teaching and serve as a Trustee/Director of Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN), the social action agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. I often think back fondly to my time at LMH. I was saddened to hear of the death of my supervisor, Professor Anne Hudson, in 2021. When her extensive book collection was sold, I was able to secure a few items of personal significance, including copies of some of her own prolific publications.

2001

DIANA ROMAN (Shaw): In April 2024, I left my role as Acting Inspector General of the US Department of State and became a partner at the DC-based law firm Wiley Rein. My work now focuses on internal investigations, good governance, risk management, and compliance.

2002

SADIA ZOUQ: After completing my MSc, I secured an internship with the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague. I returned to Oxford University to work as a Research Assistant for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and BBC Monitoring Service looking at the role of public media in genocide. I was fortunate to speak about the project at an international media conference in Europe and at the Oxford Summer School in 2004. Following a stint as the Research Manager at Matrix Chambers, I went on to complete my pupillage at a Chambers in Gray's Inn Square in 2005. Practice at the independent and employed bar followed over the years. In 2023 I was appointed as a fee-paid tribunal judge, and I currently undertake judicial sittings alongside a self-employed career at the independent bar in the practice area of professional regulatory and disciplinary law.

2004

CHEE HOONG CHUNG: I now live in Melbourne, Australia and recently commenced reading for a Master's in Theological Studies at Trinity College, Melbourne.

CRAIG KELLY: I was elected as a partner at Skadden on 1 April 2025.

KAREN MECZ (Rowe): I was promoted to Partner at Addleshaw Goddard LLP within the energy and infrastructure team.

BETH MURTAGH (Hughes): John and I welcomed our baby daughter Jasmine Hughes in November 2024, along with big brother Jack and big sister Jessica. Mum and Dad are very proud and hoping to bring Jasmine for her first visit to LMH in the summer.

2006

LAURA MacPHEE (Burrell): I would like to announce the birth of Oliver James Cedric Burrell on 29 April 2025 at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, Hammersmith, weighing 7 lbs 1oz (the anaesthetist was also an LMH alum!).

2007

JON MITROPOULOS-MONK: In 2024 my book *The Connell Guide to Sam Selvon's 'The Lonely Londoners'* was published.

2010

HARRY ANDREWS (Salvaterra Andrews): In June of 2024 I got married in Portugal to Carolina Marcelino Morgado Salvaterra Andrews and would like to thank all those LMH friends who were able to attend.

HANNAH BENNETT: Following three years of intensive participant observation (spent exploring gender, class, migration, and vocational education in China), I have graduated from my PhD in Social Anthropology. Since January 2024 I have been working as a lecturer in Social Anthropology and Anthropology BA Programme Convenor at SOAS.

BHAVEET RADIA: Working alongside two close LMH friends, Andrew Grey (2012 Theology MPhil) and Marjolein Poortvliet (2010 Linguistics MPhil), I have been leading online healthcare education at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust and Guy's Cancer Academy for the last few years. Together our work has reached more than 300,000 healthcare professionals and patients across the NHS and beyond. It's a real joy to do both important and creative work with such good friends. We are now excited to be launching The Learning Lab, a new education technology spin-out from the Trust designed to scale this work further.

2011

MARA GALEANO MARSHALL: My husband, Django Antonio Marshall, and I would like to announce the birth of our baby daughter, Zaya Toni Marshall, on 22 March 2025 in Padova, Italy. We named her Toni to commemorate her late grandfather, Lancel Anthony Marshall, who passed away in early December 2023.

ALESSIA WALLER: I am ‘starting over’ as a resident in emergency medicine in the Bronx, NYC, after five years working in the NHS. In preparation for this I have given up boxing (my sport while at LMH) for baseball; it turns out there is a small but fervent subset of Bristolians who are fans and they have an active club. I also got married to the lovely Charlie and had an article published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

2012

ANDREW GREY: I have written the report, ‘The Meaning of Dignity: What’s Beneath the Assisted Dying Debate?’ for Theos think tank. It is a revised and updated version of my 2018 report, ‘Dignity at the End of Life’, produced and circulated to MPs and other stakeholders in time for the legislation debated and scrutinised in Parliament over the summer. Electronic and hard copies of the report are available at www.theosthinktank.co.uk

ALICE KING: This year I started Café Madre, which sources high-quality coffee entirely from women’s cooperatives. We actually sold out of all our coffee in the first week, which took me completely by surprise! We’re scaling bit by bit, and looking forward to some exciting developments in the future. Check out cafemadre.co.uk or @cafemadreuk on instagram for more information.

SELMA MEZETOVIC MEDIC: I work as an Assistant Professor at the Prince Sultan University College of Law in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where I teach International Contract Law and Arbitration Law. I am also a fourth-year student of Gestalt Psychotherapy and I volunteer, working with students on their mental health challenges.

HANNAH SPENS-BLACK: My partner Miguel and I are delighted to announce the birth of our daughter Miriam Willow Spens-Black Fernandes on 2 April 2024. Now one year old, she’s incredibly curious and just loves books. She very much enjoyed her first visit to LMH last October.

2013

SOLÈNE KLEIN: My husband, Scott, and I welcomed our daughter Neave on 19 June 2024.

KAMEEL PREMHD: I continue to practise as an advocate (barrister) in Johannesburg, South Africa, and recently argued a case in the Namibian Supreme Court to try and overturn that country's elections. Although unsuccessful, it was my first time there and a great experience litigating at that level!

PING SHEN (Veldhuis-Shen): My daughter Fleur Shen Veldhuis was born on 9 October 2024.

2015

VICTORIA FENDEL: My third book has just been published by De Gruyter Brill (*Giving Gifts and Doing Favours: Literary Classical Attic Greek Support-verb Constructions*), which is a milestone I am beyond delighted to have reached.

2016

BEN ANGELL: As Narrative Lead at CaptureAge, I oversaw the development of the recently released 'Battle for Greece' downloadable content (DLC) for the beloved video game 'Age of Empires II'. 'Battle for Greece' is currently the highest-reviewed DLC for 'Age of Empires II: Definitive Edition', garnering particular praise for its writing, voice acting, and historical detail. The DPhil in Ancient History certainly helped there.

SAM DALRYMPLE: My first book, *Shattered Lands*, was published by William Collins on 19 June this year!

LAMIYA RAHMAN: I gave birth to a baby girl on Christmas Day 2024.

2023

YUHANG WEI: I met two of my LMH friends, Yuhua and Sui-Hin in Hong Kong this summer and we had a lovely chat! Plus, I am returning to Oxford this autumn for my DPhil in Mathematics. (Un?)fortunately, my college is Keble this time (sorry LMH!)

2024

FRANZ MILTZ: I have moved to Hong Kong to work as a software engineer and have started getting into open water swimming and learning Cantonese.

MARRIAGES

ANDREWS – SALVATERRA: In June 2024, Harry Andrews (2010) to Carolina Marcelino Morgado Salvaterra

WALLER – RICKETTS: On 25 October 2024, Alessia Waller (2011) to Charlie Ricketts

BIRTHS

BURNSIDE: In November 2024, to Stuart (1998) a daughter (1d)

BURRELL: On 29 April 2025, to Laura (MacPhee 2006) a son (1s)

GALEANO MARSHALL: On 22 March 2025, to Mara (2011) a daughter (1d)

HARDY: In June 2024, to Maximilian (1996) a son (3s)

HUGHES: In November 2024, to Beth (Murtagh 2004) a daughter (1s 2d)

KLEIN: On 19 June 2024, to Solène (2013) a daughter (1d)

RAHMAN: On 25 December 2024, to Lamiya (2016) a daughter (1d)

VELDHUIS-SHEN: On 9 October 2024, to Ping (2013) a daughter (1d)

SPENS-BLACK: On 2 April 2024, to Hannah (2012) a daughter (1d)

DEATHS

ACHESON. On 6 February 2025, Pauline (Wilson 1968) aged 75 (*see obituaries*)

BARNES. On 6 April 2025, Jennifer (Postgate 1962) aged 81, daughter of Patricia Postgate (Peet 1932) (*see obituaries*)

BATCHELOR. On 12 June 2024, Katya (Belyaeva 1993) aged 49 (*see obituaries*)

BLACK. On 18 September 2024, Jane (Bolton 1956) aged about 87

CROWE. On 18 May 2025, Helen (Dale 1958) aged 85 (*see obituaries*)

FARR. On 5 July 2024, Suzanne (1975) aged about 88

FISKEN. On 13 June 2024, Jenny (Street 1968) aged 73, mother of Rachel Fiskén (2003) (*see obituaries*)

GOODARE. On 22 June 2025, Heather (Young 1949), aged 93 (*we will publish an obituary next year*)

GREGORY. On 10 September 2024, Jennifer (Byrne 1957), aged 96 (*see obituaries*)

KING. On 17 January 2025, Amanda (Zinkin 1974), aged 69

LANGELUEDECKE. In summer 2024, Henrik (1987) aged 62 (*see obituaries*)

LONGFORD. On 12 September 2024, Joan (Cory 1946) aged 100 (*see obituaries*)

McLAUGHLIN. On 15 January 2025, Helen Claire (Carlton 1962) aged 81 (*see obituaries*)

MATTHEWS. On 6 June 2024, Joanna (Roberts 1948), aged 95 (*see obituaries*), mother of the late Hubert Matthews (1980)

MELLOR. On 11 April 2025, Carol (Atkinson 1957) aged 86 (*see obituaries*)

MONAGHAN. In April 2025, Susan (Pyke 1954) aged 89 (*see obituaries*)

MONTGOMERY. On 6 March 2025, Linda (Merrall 1969) aged 74 (*see obituaries*), mother of Helen Montgomery (2002), sister of Ruth Bamforth (Merrall 1972)

MORGAN. On 14 August 2025, Margaret (1946) aged 97 (*we will publish an obituary next year*)

NEVILLE. On 23 April 2024, Denise (Taylor 1967) aged 75 (*see obituaries*)

OWEN. On 11 December 2024, Philippa (Reid 1976) aged 67 (*see obituaries*), daughter of Jane Reid (Harwood 1951)

SANDERS. On 1 September 2024, Susan (Pedder 1951) aged about 91

SANGER. On 4 March 2025, Hazel (Archer 1959) aged 84 (*see obituaries*)

SEYMOUR. In 2025, Philippa (Mollet 1965) aged 78 (*see obituaries*)

SISAM. On 26 March 2025, Celia (1944, 1952 Research Fellow) aged 98 (*see obituaries*)

SKIDMORE. On 25 December 2025, Felicity (Hall 1954) aged 88 (*see obituaries*)

WHIPP. On 26 April 2025, Elizabeth (1966) aged about 78

SLATER. On 26 September 2024, Michael, husband of Catherine (Phillips 1964)



PUBLICATIONS

- HELEN BARR** (Chignell 1979). *Patience* (Broadview Press, 2024) (see Reviews)
- SARAH BROWN** (1976). *Winning by Being Good* (Fuzzy Flamingo, 2025) (see Reviews)
- NANCY CAMPBELL** (1996). *Nature Tales for Winter Nights* edited (Elliott & Thompson, 2023) (see Reviews)
- JENNY ROSE CAREY** (Dodge 1981). *The Essential Guide to Bulbs: Grow a Bounty of Beautiful Bulbs in Gardens and Containers* (Timber Press, 2025)
- SAM DALRYMPLE** (2016). *Shattered Lands* (William Collins, 2025)
- VICTORIA FENDELL** (2015). *Giving Gifts and Doing Favours: Literary Classical Attic Greek Support-verb Constructions* (De Gruyter Brill, 2025)
- PAULA GRAYSON** (1971). Articles on the Turvey History Society website (turveyhistory.org.uk)
- ANDREW GREY** (2012). *The Meaning of Dignity: What's Beneath the Assisted Dying Debate?* (Theos, 2024)
- PAULA GRIFFITHS** (1968). *The Mystery of John: Reflections on the Fourth Gospel* (Instant Apostle, 2025) (see Reviews)
- JOSEPHINE HAYES** (1974). 'Political parties, candidate selections, inequality, proportionality and Mr Dhamija' in *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law* 25(1), 2024
- JOY HENDRY** (1971): *Sharing Worlds: A Novel* (Leaf of Life, 2025)
- SIMON MASON** (1981). *A Voice in the Night* (riverrun, 2025); *The Finder Mysteries* (riverrun, 2025) (see Reviews)
- JANE McLAUGHLIN** (1960). *Ephemeral* (see Reviews)
- JOANNA MILLER** (1994). *The Eights* (Penguin Books, 2025) (see Reviews)
- JON MITROPOULOS-MONK** (2007): *The Connell Guide to Sam Selvon's 'The Lonely Londoners'* (Connell Guides, 2024)
- JENNIFER MONTAGU** (1949). 'The Most Acclaimed Sculptor': Giovanni Battista Maini (1690–1752) and *Roman Sculpture of His Time* (Yale University Press, 2025)
- JANET MONTEFIORE** (1967). *In the Here and Now* (Shoestring Press, 2024) (see Reviews)
- SARAH MOSS** (2004). *My Good Bright Wolf* (Picador, 2024); *Ripeness* (Picador, 2025) (see Reviews)
- CATHY NEWMAN** (1992). *The Ladder* (William Collins, 2024) (see Reviews)
- LORNA ROBINSON** (1996). *The Birder* (independently published, 2024) (see Reviews)
- SARAH SEARIGHT** (1957). *Simeon* (Claret Press, 2024) (see Reviews)
- ANN SHUKMANN** (1969). *44 Days in Prague. The Runciman Mission & the Race to Save Europe* (Hurst & Co, London, 2024) (see Reviews)
- ALICIA WALLER** (2011): 'Ways of Seeing' in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 2024
- SUSAN WEINGARTEN** (Shannon 1965): *Ancient Jewish Food in Its Geographical and Cultural Contexts: What's Cooking in the Talmuds?* (Routledge, 2025)
- SUSAN WILKES** (Dickman 1976). *Young Workers of the Industrial Age* (Pen & Sword Books, 2024) (see Reviews)
- SUSAN WOLLENBERG** (Bookin 1966). *The Cambridge Companion to Women Composers* co-edited with Matthew Head (Cambridge University Press, 2024)



IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM

JOAN MARY BARNARD LONGFORD (*née* CORY), 1924–2024

Joan was born in what was then the small village of Far Cotton; it is now part of Northampton. Much of her young life was spent on the south coast with her elder brother Paul, their father being Vicar of various parishes in the Portsmouth Diocese. Much of what she did before university was connected with the sea. For example, she talked of watching at Spithead while King George V and Queen Mary reviewed the Fleet.



Princess Elizabeth talks to a group of ex-service undergraduates, after receiving her honorary civil law degree at St Hilda's, 25 May 1948. Joan Longford is on the left.

While at school in Headington in Oxford, Joan watched as swarms of German bombers flew overhead to attack Coventry. After leaving school, she joined the WRNS and was stationed in Liverpool helping to arm the ships and submarines at the docks. One highlight for her while she was in the WRNS was being chosen as a poster girl to stand on a captured submarine while it was paraded along the Manchester Ship Canal.

In 1946, when the war was over, Joan went up to LMH to study English. She was tutored by both C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien during her time there. While at LMH she was in the Chorus in a Greek play. Playing the part of Theseus was her future husband Edward Longford. Perhaps it was love at first sight! She is also first in line (on the left) in this iconic photo of Princess Elizabeth in Oxford.

After leaving LMH Joan taught English briefly at Latimer Upper School. She was married by her father to Ted Longford at All Saints Ryde in the Isle of Wight on 25 July 1951. Ted was appointed Precentor at Ely Cathedral in 1954 and went on to be Rector at Gamlingay in Bedfordshire in 1969. Joan and Ted had three children (two of whom went up to Christ Church, their father's college). Joan was a devoted wife and mother.

Ted retired in 1990 and they moved back to Ely for the rest of their lives. He died in 2010 aged 85. She remained living in their bungalow until her death.

It was on the day of the funeral of our late Queen that Joan's health really started gradually to deteriorate and she was bedbound with a live-in carer for her final two years. She spent her days reading in bed and passed away like that, aged 100, with her glasses on her nose and her book in her hand!

Nicholas Longford, Joan's son

CELIA SISAM, 1926–2025

We thank St Hilda's for permission to reprint this obituary of Celia who was a Fellow there for many years.

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our esteemed Fellow Emerita, Celia Sisam, who died on Wednesday 26 March 2025, in the Isles of Scilly at the age of 98. Celia retired there during the academic year 1985–86, concluding a distinguished career dedicated to the study and teaching of English language and literature.

Celia became a Fellow of St Hilda's College in 1957. According to the Principal's Report in the 1985–86 *Chronicle*, she was 'a brilliant and effective tutor, and in her own work she combined meticulous scholarship in the language field with a wide and sympathetic knowledge of Old and Middle English Literature'. Her contributions to the college were immeasurable, and in the Senior Common Room she was a kindly and reassuring presence. Both her permanent colleagues and every guest of the SCR, including temporary visitors from overseas, benefited from her friendliness and generosity. In the Governing Body, she consistently ensured that the college upheld its commitment to the highest academic standards and prioritised the interests of its junior members.

Celia's academic journey was shaped by her rich intellectual heritage. Her grandparents emigrated to the North Island of New Zealand in the mid-nineteenth century, and both her parents were born and raised there. Her father, Kenneth Sisam FBA, a Rhodes Scholar, brought the family to Oxford, where Celia was born on Boars Hill. She was educated at the Dragon School, where she excelled in Latin and Greek, before moving on to Oxford High School and then Lady Margaret Hall. Initially reading Classics, she later switched to English, specialising in the medieval period under the guidance of Dorothy Everett, a distinguished medievalist.

During the Second World War, she played hockey and cricket for the University and took part in the 'Dig for Victory' campaign in the LMH gardens. After a year of research on the early Middle English Lambeth Homilies under J. R. R. Tolkien – who, deep in *The Lord of the Rings*, encouraged his students to work independently – she unexpectedly secured an Assistant Lectureship at Queen Mary College, London. Her years there were formative, as she taught a generation of talented students, including future professors in London and Cambridge. She also served as Warden of the College's women's hostel before returning to LMH as a Research Fellow.

Her father had taught her how to work with medieval manuscripts, and their collaboration led to her first major research project, an edition of *The Salisbury Psalter*, published by the Early English Text Society. She later co-edited *The Oxford Book of Medieval English Verse* with him, cementing her reputation as a meticulous scholar of early Middle and late Old English texts and manuscripts.

At St Hilda's, Celia played a key role in College governance, helping to redraft the By-Laws alongside Miss Major. As the College expanded, she took on numerous responsibilities, from serving on the English Faculty Board to playing an active role

in the Building Committee. Ever practical, she kept a pair of ‘Dean’s trousers’ by her bedside, ready to quell nocturnal revelries when necessary.

A strong advocate for change, Celia supported Oxford colleges in becoming co-educational and campaigned vigorously for St Hilda’s to do the same. She remained disappointed that the College did not seize the opportunity when the time was right.

Celia’s commitment to education extended beyond her own scholarship. In 1987, she made a generous gift to St Hilda’s in memory of her father, helping to establish a bursary fund to support students from New Zealand. Together with an earlier bequest from Maureen Chute Raymond, the fund provides financial grants at the Principal’s discretion, with a particular focus on enabling students from New Zealand to study at the College. Over the years, the bursary has supported both undergraduate hardship grants and graduate scholarships.

Retirement to her beloved home in the Scilly Isles brought many joys: travelling, including visits to her relations in New Zealand; working for the local museum, particularly in the botany section; tending a windswept garden that kept her in vegetables and flowers year-round; and enjoying life on the water, whether boating or fishing. She remained connected to her academic field through her membership of the Early English Text Society’s Council, which brought her back to Oxford each June.

Celia’s legacy at St Hilda’s and in the wider scholarly world is profound. Her intellectual rigor, kindness and generosity of spirit will be remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing her. Our thoughts are with her family, friends, and former colleagues.

JOANNA MATTHEWS (née ROBERTS), 1929–2024



Joanna as a young woman

On one of my mother Joanna’s mid-80s birthdays I met her in London at the south end of Blackfriars Bridge. We had lunch at Tate Modern, and then I suggested a quest. We looked for the site of the Blackfriars Rotunda, initially a museum in the Regency period, badly damaged in the Blitz. We poked around on the west side of Blackfriars Road for an hour or so. Eventually I concluded that the site was now a vast hole in the ground where a new building was coming.

Joanna told me then that the search was just the sort of thing she liked, far better than Tate Modern. It was a case of the journey being more important than arrival at the destination. Also during her 80s, with my brother Roddy, she visited Allahabad, the childhood home of her mother Nan Jennings.



Joanna in 1995

She was born Joanna Roberts in London in 1929, and spent her early years in a farmhouse near Lanercost in Cumberland. Her father Wilfrid, a farmer, was in 1935 elected a Liberal MP, which meant a move from a dame school in Brampton to King Alfred's in Hampstead, well known as a progressive school. Wilfrid was an anti-fascist campaigner and Left Book Club activist.

For safety, Joanna and her younger sister Teresa were sent across the Atlantic in 1940 to be fostered in the family of Kenneth Webster, a Harvard professor. She went to a boarding school in Vermont founded by Max Bondy, a German-Jewish progressive educator persecuted by the Nazis. Later the school became well known as the Windsor Mountain School. In 1945 Joanna was offered a place at Radcliffe College.

Joanna did not go to Radcliffe, the first of a number of roads not taken. Back in England she lived in London with her mother Nan, her parents having separated. She clashed with Nan (maths at Girton, teacher), over an ambition to be a psychoanalyst like Gertrud Bondy, Max's wife. After St Paul's School for Girls, it was chemistry at Lady Margaret Hall.

At Oxford Joanna met Jimmy Matthews of Brasenose College, her future husband, who then worked for some years as a screenwriter. They were married in 1953, and lived at the top of Nan's house in Hampstead. Joanna was working on patents, absent encouragement in her final year from Cyril Hinshelwood to go on into science. She gave up a chance of patent agent training in Nottingham, because, as she told me, waiting for a family was not going to work.

In 1959, Joanna's grandfather Charles Roberts died: he had been an MP and minister under Asquith. The Matthews family, by then of four, moved north to Cumberland, to his house Boothby between Lanercost and Brampton. Jimmy, who had been in advertising, had a job on the *Carlisle Journal*, now owned by Wilfrid Roberts.

At Boothby Joanna was a passionate gardener, as well as a caring and resourceful mother. I remember her packing a trunk for me as I went off to prep school in 1963,

a kind of furious concentration on her face, name tapes on everything including the toothbrush.

Joanna knew she was not only a mother and gardener. By 1966 Hubert, her third son, was of school age, and Roddy and I were at boarding school. Her ambition was to be an educational psychologist, but the dearth of tertiary education in Cumberland stopped that. She had read Piaget and other child development writers, but decided their theories didn't survive contact with real children. In consequence, I think, her intellectual independence increased. Joanna became a magistrate, and was for 20 years head of the junior bench in Carlisle. Her other interests included education and children.

My mother was, though not for long, a chemistry teacher. She told the story of a lesson for Brampton school students where she gave them test tubes of a clear liquid to drink. She then told them it was sulphuric acid, and serve them right. The acid was very dilute, of course. The lesson, good for their intellectual independence, doubtless, was 'think before you drink'. The teaching style might reflect interwar progressive education. And the storytelling is reminiscent of Nan's anecdotes about herself.

Joanna really was better suited to being an active school governor in Brampton. She was involved in merging the grammar and secondary modern schools there, and in an exchange with a school in the coffee region of Tanzania, which brought African school students to Boothby, and sent her to Uru.

Joanna was also a Preschool Playgroups Association organiser, a role which included what we now call consciousness raising. She talked often about giving advice to young women starting a playgroup about opening a bank account, at a time when banks weren't exactly falling over themselves to have them as customers. With Jimmy, she started Parents Postal Bookshop, initially producing a mail order list for parents of small children, then dealing in second-hand works on child development. Later she took part in the Children's House organisation of the remarkable Olive Kendon, a nonconformist educator turned Quaker radical.

Jimmy died in his 60s, followed shortly by her father Wilfrid at 90, and Joanna moved south to Oxford after 35 years in Cumberland/Cumbria. Another blow was the death from cancer of Eileen Stammers-Smith (Faurey 1948), with whom she had shared digs while at LMH. She launched herself into work on garden history, in the style of Mavis Batey, and for the Oxfordshire Gardens Trust. In the winter months she was busy with family history, and she became a figurehead in the extended family.

Joanna told me, when she turned 90, that she wanted to live to 100, and to write a book. These were two destinations which she did not reach. She suffered also in 2019 the loss of her youngest son Hubert, an LMH graduate who became a successful software developer. At 95 she was very frail, but still could rise to the occasion with visitors. I worked with her on a memoir in seven chapters.

Life lands us in circumstances we don't choose, and then throws events at us. I say that it is fortunate to be able to engage, regroup and rise above them. I see my mother Joanna's life as exemplary in those terms. Many will remember her, in their own ways.

Charles Matthews, Joanna's son

SUSAN MONAGHAN (née PYKE), 1935–2025



Susan celebrating with fellow undergraduates who became lifelong friends. Sue is on the left in the back row; other LMH students from 1954 include Liz Hill (Bailey), Charmian Blake (Walser), Jenny North (Barratt), and Fiona Eadie (Gillies).



Sue pictured a few years after graduation.

became increasingly involved in recording and protecting the cultural heritage of Street, both as a founder member of The Street Society and through her engagement with local planning, church recording and architectural conservation.

In her final years she took on the challenge of the first year of a degree course at Strode College, where she gained a new energy from the mental stimulation of the course and the fact that she was 60 years older than the other students. After John died in 2023, a very rapid decline in her mobility began to constrain her ability to engage with the world in the way she wanted, and she spent her last few months in residential care with her sharp mind frustrated by a deteriorating body.

She leaves two sons, David and Ben, and seven grandchildren.

David Monaghan, Susan's son

Sue died in April 2025 in Keinton Mandeville, Somerset, after a short period of declining health. She will be remembered for her interest in intellectual pursuits, for the support she gave to the local community, and for walking everywhere.

Sue Pyke grew up in Kent. During the Second World War she was evacuated to Canada, an experience that had a profound influence on her and coloured her approach to many things.

After studying modern languages at Lady Margaret Hall, Sue had a short stint working at the CBI in London before moving to Garnett College, where she met and married John Monaghan in 1965. In 1974, with two young sons in tow, they left London for a dilapidated smallholding in Somerset, where she built a new life for the family in idyllic surroundings and did freelance interpreting for local farmers selling livestock to France.

As her sons became more independent, Sue started her second career, as a teacher of modern languages at Sunny Hill School in Bruton, and then at Millfield School in Street. She found her time at Millfield rewarding, as high-calibre colleagues engaged her intellectually in a way that she'd not experienced since Oxford and the CBI.

On retirement from Millfield she put her energies into developing a splendid garden at a new house in Street, into a full-time cabinet-making course, and into walking extended sections of the Camino de Santiago pilgrims' route with John. She also

FELICITY SKIDMORE (*née* HALL), 1936–2024



Felicity and Tom on their wedding day

Felicity was born in Oxford but she and her sister spent the war years in Toowoomba, Australia, with her Australian father's family. The sisters were reunited with their parents in England in 1945, growing up in Oxford and going to the Oxford High School for Girls. Both parents were economists – her father becoming Principal of Hertford College and Economic Adviser to the Government while her mother was a don at Somerville. When Felicity arrived at LMH in 1954 to read PPE she already had a life in Oxford, a home in Woodstock Road and links with the economic establishment. She had tutorials in Magdalen with the economist David Worsick. When her father was knighted her mother was often incorrectly referred to as Lady Margaret Hall, a tired joke which Felicity bore uncomplainingly.

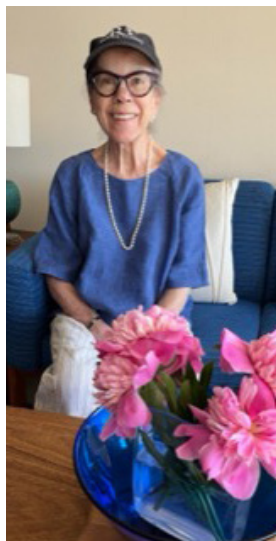
Felicity was a bright student with a wide circle of friends in LMH and other colleges. (They included Dudley Moore of *Beyond the Fringe* fame who was then sharpening his comic skills at Magdalen while studying music.) These were the days when student rooms were heated by coal fires and, with coal still rationed, Felicity and her friends gathered in whichever room was warmest to drink cocoa, listen to Fats Waller or discuss the latest essay crisis. She was a diligent student. (Firsts were hard to get in PPE and for Felicity it was a definite possibility, though ultimately a near miss.) A lively, attractive girl, Felicity was much in demand socially. She fell for the handsome Tom Skidmore, an American Fulbright Scholar who was at Magdalen reading history. She and Tom were married in St Cross Church immediately after graduation and she left for a new life in America.

The young couple went first to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where Tom did a doctorate at Harvard while Felicity worked as assistant to the Nobel prize-winning economist Paul Samuelson. Then in 1966 they moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where Felicity joined the new Institute for Research on Poverty established by President Lyndon Johnson. Research into economic hardship and inequality became a lifetime focus of her interests. Meanwhile Tom was making a name for himself as an historian of Brazil, publishing a number of books that Felicity helped edit.

Felicity commuted to Washington, DC, working for the Mathematica Policy Institute and the Urban Institute before becoming an influential freelance editor and writer. She was much in demand but her contributions were often uncredited. She was always modest about her own achievements.

In 1986 Tom took up a professorship at Brown University and the couple moved to Providence, Rhode Island (RI), with Felicity still paying regular visits to Washington. Disaster struck when Tom was involved in a car accident that left him in a wheelchair. Pursuing her own career while supporting him and bringing up her three sons must have been a challenge. But Felicity was nursing a dream: to live by the sea. She bought and renovated an old house directly on the beach at Westerly, RI. They moved there in 1993. Later she built another beautiful modern house on stilts in a slightly more sheltered position looking over the marshes behind. This was designed with Tom's needs in mind but he had to move into a nearby care home and never lived there. Felicity visited him twice daily until his death in 2016.

Felicity's final move was to Chicago where two of her sons were living. Here she took a penthouse apartment with views over the lake in a fine retirement block. She quickly made a new set of friends and settled down to her needlework and to playing serious bridge. Felicity died after a short illness on Christmas Day 2024. She was 88.



A more recent photograph of Felicity

*Juliet Campbell
(Collings 1954 PPE)*

JENNIFER MARGARET GREGORY (*née* BYRNE), 1938–2024



Jennifer at a Ball, 1960

Jennifer grew up in rural Northamptonshire, the only child of parents whose principal hobby was gardening, so an interest in biology was assured. She was educated at the Convent of the Holy Ghost school in Bedford. Her A level grades were good enough to give her a state scholarship, so she stayed on at school to take the Oxford entrance examinations and she was awarded the Heron-Allen Exhibition at LMH. She said later that she discovered that she was the only candidate taking the zoology paper to answer the genetics question, which must have pleased Wilma George.

Jennifer went up to LMH in 1957. She loved life at LMH, in Oxford and in the zoology department. They were all places where she made lifelong friends.

Jennifer's main recreation was choral singing. She sang in the Bach and 'baby Bach' choirs and in the Sine Nomine, an eight-part motet choir run by Christopher Robinson. Graduating with a First in 1960, she stayed in Oxford and studied for a DPhil (awarded 1964) under Dr J. R. Baker.

We married in 1963 and Jennifer came to live in Winchester, from where she was able to continue her research into cell structure at Southampton University, as a research assistant in electron microscopy. After the birth of her two children, she abandoned research and moved to Winchester College to teach A level biology. At the time she was appointed, she was the first full-time 'dona' in the (then) nearly 600 years of the College's history. Jennifer was a gifted teacher: rigorous and demanding, yet kind and supportive. In the 30 years Jennifer taught at the College, she served as head of the biology department for 10 years, acting head of science and as 'don' in charge of the timetable.

Alongside her College commitments, Jennifer was involved in examining A level biology for UCLES (now Cambridge Assessment). In addition to setting, marking and awarding the examination, she wrote sections of the students' textbooks and teachers' guides. She also wrote successful textbooks for other publishers. In the 1990s, the HMC set up the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI). Senior teachers from independent schools were trained by Ofsted to carry out formal inspections. Jennifer was one of the first group to receive training and carried out 14 inspections of major schools.

Jennifer retired from teaching in 1999. This removed the constraints of school terms and enabled her to go on expeditions to the Galapagos, Costa Rica, south-east Asia, and to visit family based abroad. She was able to continue school inspections and A level examining, working for Cambridge International Examinations, setting papers, writing associated texts, and helping with courses for teachers in the countries served.

Sadly, over the period of the Covid pandemic, Jennifer was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. In her case, that led to increasingly restricted mobility. She died peacefully on 10 September 2024.

Martin Gregory, Jennifer's husband



Jennifer in her laboratory, 1999

HELEN CROWE (*née* DALE), 1939–2025

Helen was born in Greenwich two months before war broke out. After the war she went to Charlton Manor Primary School nearby. She took the 11 plus and won a scholarship to Christ's Hospital. Thanks to the advice of the primary school headteacher, her parents, who had no familiarity with boarding schools, recognised what an opportunity this offered Helen. Besides being a scholar there, she became a gifted pianist and an able needlewoman who subsequently made her own wedding dress and going-away suit. Later, she loved teaching her grandchildren to sew.

Helen always said that it was due to the fearsome Latin teacher at Christ's Hospital that she gained her place at LMH to read history; she matriculated in 1958. Helen's time at LMH was a constant joy to her: her experience there shaped her whole life. In May 1960, during her second year, she was asked by a fellow LMH undergraduate to accompany her and two male companions on a train trip round Spain in the long vacation. I was one of the young men and she married me three years later.

After Oxford Helen was employed by Shell as an administration assistant in international oil supply. She was one of the first female graduates ever employed by the company. Her Shell starting salary was £750 per year, enough for us (I was a solicitor's articled clerk) to live on after we married in 1963.

When Sarah, our elder daughter, was born in 1967, Helen left Shell and gave Sarah her full attention. She joined the local Housewife's Register where she made friendships and was able to discuss with other housewives suffering similarly all the problems which young mothers encounter. Lucy, our younger daughter, was born in 1971.

Helen was a wonderful and fulfilled housewife. She cared for our daughters, taking and collecting them from school, did all the housework for our large house and all the



Helen Crowe in around 2018

laundry and ironing and cleaning. She really enjoyed ironing while listening to classical music. She became an outstanding cook and enjoyed producing delicious meals from sometimes complex recipes for regular dinner parties for friends and special clients of my law practice.

While Helen was at Shell, she was able to get discounted opera tickets at Sadlers Wells which subsequently became English National Opera. As a result, our interest in opera took hold. After the family income had grown we were able to indulge this interest. From then until Covid, when disabilities overtook Helen, we went hundreds of times to opera performances, maybe an average of every other week: Covent Garden, English National Opera, Glyndebourne, Garsington, and further afield, Paris, Venice, Vienna, Lisbon, Sydney, New York, La Scala, Berlin. Helen kept the programme for every performance – there are shelves of them in the house!

Even so, Helen's life also included a huge commitment to the community and its wellbeing. She devoted time, thought and effort to that aspect of her life. Indeed, her death certificate described her as 'housewife and voluntary worker (retired)'.

In 1975 Helen joined the management committee of Bromley Marriage Guidance, now Relate Bromley. She was not herself a counsellor but for the next 29 years was heavily involved in running the organisation. For ten of those years she chaired the board. It was a period during which the organisation was transformed. It made the gradual transition from taking voluntary contributions from clients to a service which charged for its paid counsellors; it changed its name to Relate, recognising that relationships other than marriage needed support too. The Bromley organisation was incorporated as a limited company; and it moved to a new office in Community House, Bromley. Many meetings and much paperwork claimed her attention.

Another of Helen's important voluntary commitments was to serve for ten years on the local Community Health Council, a body which sadly was abolished in the late 1990s. Its primary function was to represent the interests of the public in the planning, provision, and delivery of our local NHS services.

Additionally, for many years Helen was a non-executive director of Bromley Voluntary Services Trust, whose function as owner of Bromley Community House was to make available both temporary meeting space to local charities and permanent office space to other charities, including CAB, Age UK, Deafplus and Relate. Somehow or other she found time to do door-to-door collections for Cancer Research as well.

And not least, she was a massive support to me, as Mayoress of the London Borough of Bromley, when I was its Mayor in Millennium Year. She was always perfectly dressed, often with a beautiful hat, at the many functions, whether formal or informal, which we attended.

Helen was a special person who always put the wellbeing and interests of others above her own. She was happy and joyful and invariably good company. Kindness itself, she had a profound social conscience and an abundance of generosity. Until disabilities and ill health overtook her, she enjoyed whatever she did. Even in the last challenging years of her life, she said that she regarded herself as one of the lucky ones.

David Crowe (Christ Church 1958), Helen's husband

CAROL MELLOR (*née* ATKINSON), 1939–2025

Carol was always a clever girl and did well at O and A levels, receiving a scholarship to LMH to read chemistry. On graduating in 1960 with a first-class degree, she studied for a Master's for a year in the laboratories. After graduation in 1961, Carol went into the chemical industry, first with Albright & Wilson and then with ICI Plastics Division.

Carol married Barry Mellor in 1962. They had met at Oxford – he was also studying chemistry, at Magdalen – and it was always a talking point that he only gained a second-class degree! In 1966, she became ‘the following spouse’ when her husband's job took him to Sydney, Australia. While in Australia, she did a PGCE at the University of New South Wales, and then embarked on a new career as a chemistry teacher.

Her career as a secondary school chemistry teacher was a long and happy one. She started teaching at Francis Holland Sloane Square in 1976 and loved the school, but moved on to City of London School for Girls in search of bigger career challenges in 1984. After 5 years there she moved to St Paul's Girls' School, which was a very special place for her: she was happy, fulfilled and retired at the pinnacle of her career.

Her time at St Paul's is summarised here (written at the point of her retirement by her colleague Christine McCormick), and really captures her principles and character:

Carol came to St Paul's Girls' School in September 1989 to head the Chemistry Department; in September 1994 she became joint Science Co-ordinator, a post which she held singly from September 1996. An inspiring and gifted teacher, she had the reputation in the laboratory as a fearless demonstrator of colourful and spectacular reactions, very much in the tradition of the Royal Institution lecture demonstrations, which she constantly encouraged girls to attend. She had a deep, intellectual interest in and an infectious enthusiasm for chemistry that she imparted to staff and girls alike.

Being a form tutor gave Carol immense pleasure and she forged many lasting relationships with her pupils. She encouraged girls at all levels in the school but took particular delight in the A-level students, enthusing many to further their science studies at university. She spent hours planning and designing the refurbishment of the Science Department. Many visitors are astonished at how spacious and light the north-facing S8 has become, in no small measure due to Carol's vision.

Highly principled and tenacious, Carol set and expected the highest standards. She was forthright in her views and not afraid to give a frank opinion on matters she considered important and to raise issues that needed airing. Her religious and political views were strongly held and she was a great believer in the vital importance of education, and particularly the education of women. She was particularly interested in the less advantaged, whether they be in the developing world or in an inner city primary school, of which she recently became the Chair of Governors. When relaxed, Carol displayed a delightful sense of fun and was extremely kind and supportive towards younger members of staff. The popular farewell lecture demonstration in the summer term attests to her success in making chemistry and science in general exciting and attractive.

Carol had a long and happy retirement, the first 10 years of which saw her become very involved with William Tyndall Primary School in Islington, where she served as Chair of Governors for 12 years, and taught weekly maths extension classes. Trips to Dorset sailing and to Scotland walking were fixtures in her calendar. She travelled all over the world with her sisters, her friends and husband, including to China, Iran and Brazil, as well as cruises up the Rhine, to Norway and around the British Isles. In later years she enjoyed music, literature and language classes and courses at the City Lit, University of the Third Age and the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution. She continued to support the arts, making the most of the wonderful cultural opportunities London has to offer. And she spent much enjoyable time with her grandchildren.

Carol is survived by her husband, Barry, her two daughters, Nadine and Louise, two sons-in-law, Colman and Peter, and five grandchildren, Lizzie, Thomas, Esme, Sami and Cormac. She will be and already is greatly missed.

Barry and Nadine Mellor, Carol's husband and daughter

HAZEL SANGER (*née* ARCHER), 1941–2025



Hazel Sanger

Hazel Sanger, who died in Atlanta in March 2025 after a highly successful career in financial institutions, left a legacy of service to a wide variety of organisations, all dedicated to making the world a better place.

Leaving St Paul's Girls' School, where she had been a Foundation Scholar and subsequently Head Girl, she came up to LMH in 1959 to read PPE. Her room in Toynbee rapidly became the venue of crowded discussions, often late into the night, over endless cups of Nescafé, prepared in an idiosyncratic way which she typically and dogmatically insisted produced a better

result, a conclusion contested by those present as strongly as the weightier matters in hand. This circle of friends, which included a few other high achievers from the 1959 intake, remained in sporadic touch for many years despite geographical distance. She enjoyed the challenges of the PPE cursus, appreciated her tutors and read widely around her subject. Her three years at LMH were happy ones, and she was always notably pleased to return after vacations.

In August 1965, after a couple of years working in London with John Chown, a small but highly reputed financial management company, Hazel married Paul Sanger, an American from North Carolina posted to the American Embassy, and moved across the Atlantic to a very different world. Her unconventional and somewhat defiant farewell to London included bicycling up and down the corridors of Claridge's Hotel on her

wedding night on a machine thoughtfully provided as a wedding gift by friends who knew little about urban life in the US but thought that this would be a useful reminder of pedalling in Oxford!

She settled with Paul in Atlanta, still a deeply conservative society in social terms, and in addition seething with controversy over the Voting Rights Act which had just been passed. Integration into this world cannot have been easy. She was fortunate to find an asset management company to hire her at a time when there were few or no women in professional positions in the financial area. Her abilities were swiftly recognised, however: she was rapidly given major asset management assignments and went on to have a highly successful career, finishing at BNY Mellon. She served as President of the Association of Atlanta Chartered Financial Analysts.

Paul was a dedicated supporter of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, with a social and political conscience, strongly supportive of civil rights, campaigning successively for Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and then for the Atlantan Jimmy Carter. With him, Hazel was instrumental in creating the Atlanta Opera, of which she was Financial Director for many years in its various avatars. Her other roles in support of not-for-profit organisations were numerous: they included the CDC Foundation and the Georgia Trust for Public Land, where she was instrumental in securing funding for the BeltLine green park that now surrounds Atlanta. Education was also a priority: for years she was on the Georgia State Selection Committee for Rhodes Scholars, and executive in residence for the Tuck Business School at Dartmouth.

Peter Watson, former Development Director at LMH, recalls that Hazel reconnected with college during the late 1990s by attending the gatherings organised by the Development Office during the University's biennial Oxford Alumni Reunions, held at the Waldorf Astoria in New York. She made regular generous donations and was invited to join the LMH Advisory Council by the then Principal Sir Brian Fall. She took over as chair of the Council from Anna McNair Scott in 2004 and held the position for the next two years, during the LMH 125th Anniversary campaign, adeptly fitting in meetings in Oxford or London to coincide with visits to her work clients in Europe. She brought her considerable experience of fundraising in the USA to the college's development activities. After relinquishing the chair she continued to support the college, both financially and by staying on as a member of the Council, throughout the period of the New Buildings Campaign. She had quite firm views on how best to run development campaigns, robustly expressed, but always with the best interests of the college at heart.

Most of the time, work took priority over leisure, but Hazel enjoyed going up with her two children to their house in Highlands, North Carolina, with its gardens and water, and paid occasional visits to a small house she bought in the south of France, although in recent years she was reluctant to plan international travel.

Hazel leaves a daughter, Georgina, a son, Christopher, and four grandchildren.

Maggy King
(History 1959)

(HELEN) CLAIRE MCLAUGHLIN (*née* CARLTON), 1943–2025



Claire at Oxford



*Claire at her daughter
Cressida's wedding*

In June 2024, 250 miles apart, Claire and I sat with mobile phones at the ready, preparing to reminisce about our days at LMH. The recording we made is a contribution to the Oral History Project. It is all the more precious because, mercifully, we had no idea that only seven months later I would be drawing upon it for material for Claire's funeral. Tragically, only a few short weeks after that, we also lost her husband, John McLaughlin, after their decades of happy marriage. We know that members of the LMH community who knew Claire and John will join in sending their deepest sympathy to Lee, Cressida, David, their families and many friends.

It was in October 1962 that Claire and I, two callow 19-year-olds, arrived at LMH and found ourselves in those Deneke rooms where the grammar-school girls were housed – Claire had attended Putney High School. These were somewhat turbulent times both internationally (the Cuban Missile Crisis) and nationally, as the winter of 1963 brought the longest period of consistent snow and ice on record. We slipped and slithered down to lectures on our bicycles and obtained toasting forks from Woolworths to use with the little two-bar electric heaters in our rooms. Thus our life-long friendship was forged and,

of course, together we began to explore the wonders of literature under the expert guidance of Miss Lea and Miss Mackenzie.

Those first rooms were a bit gloomy but as we moved into other buildings in later years, we came to appreciate the grounds and gardens, the trees and the river. Claire loved the Hall with its portraits of previous Principals: good examples of successful academic women. She also enjoyed the library, and the challenge of the tutorial system. Above all, Claire relished many aspects of the course itself and worked hard at it.

Claire's time at Oxford wasn't all plain sailing. She was struggling with uncomfortable full-size contact lenses when I first met her, and her optician had already diagnosed the retinitis pigmentosa which eventually took most of her vision. Fortunately, she did retain her central vision until well on into her later life. Claire also struggled with mental health issues in her second year, resulting in a long period in hospital. She treasured until the end of her life a card sent to her there by Miss Lea in which, in her neat italic hand, she quoted an extract from one of John Donne's sermons. Above all, Claire told me, the course enabled her to focus, remarking that:

it helped me so much that I could use my mind to understand and mould my emotions and my relationships. A different way of being. Literature is full of people in various kinds of distress and difficulty . . . John Clare, Dr Johnson, Keats.

Everyone who knew her has remarked on the tremendous courage with which Claire faced every challenge. After leaving LMH, she moved into a successful career in magazine and book publishing. As her own sight deteriorated, she took a course in counselling, gaining a qualification with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy. And, of course, who better than Claire to help others losing their sight? As she modestly said, 'I did help some people quite a bit . . . and it was good for me as well.' What a wonderful thing. The more Claire understood herself, the more she could, and did, help others.

There has been much love and laughter over the years, but little space here to enlarge upon the memories of planting yellow hyacinths, visits to Eltham Palace and the exploits of our cats. Claire was interested in the ideas and well-being of everyone she met – hence her son-in-law's recollections of their philosophical discussions in the kitchen. 'How on earth did she manage to be such a good cook, when she couldn't even see!' exclaimed David. Literature remained a shared interest, with members of the family reading aloud, everything from *The Odyssey* to Ursula Le Guin. And, of course, Claire was herself a fine poet, featured in several publications and notably in her memorable collection, *Remembering Blue* (Survivors' Press, 2014, ISBN 9781906742737). It is to be hoped that some of her more recent poems will also be published in due course.

Alice Wakefield
(1962 *English*)

JENNIFER MARY BARNES (*née* POSTGATE), 1944–2025



Jennifer in Venice, 1983

Jennifer's parents Patricia (*née* Peet) and Ormond Postgate, both teachers, were married in 1940 in Jerusalem, where Ormond was involved in intelligence work. Patricia, who graduated from LMH (modern languages) in 1935, made a risky and circuitous wartime journey to the Middle East from Oxford. With the defeat of Italy in Ethiopia and the return of Haile Selassie, Ormond was seconded to Addis Ababa, and it was there that Jennifer was born in March 1944. When she was only a few months old, her parents proudly placed her on the Emperor's knee, hastily removing her after the appearance of a large damp patch on the imperial lap.

At the end of the war, after this exotic start in life, Jennifer and her parents made the long journey to England on a troop ship. They settled in Malvern, where she was joined by a brother Nicholas and a sister Kate, along with George the cat and a grumpy donkey.

In 1962, Jennifer followed in her mother's footsteps to read modern languages at LMH. While still at Oxford she married the Balliol philosopher Jonathan Barnes. The couple, soon joined by their first daughter, Catherine, and their first cat, had a flat next to the Oxford Botanic Gardens, where Jennifer would rock the restless baby while admiring the historic herbaceous borders. In 1967, Jonathan took a sabbatical year in Chicago. Jennifer often recounted her alarm at the level of crime there, with shootings reported every day and, even worse, the theft of Catherine's pram from a playground. The family travelled back to Oxford on a Dutch cargo ship, Jennifer's second long sea voyage.

In 1969 the couple moved into a tall, chilly redbrick in north Oxford, where Camilla arrived, unexpectedly early, Jennifer having mistaken the onset of labour for the effects of a suspect Chinese meal. Childbearing completed, Jennifer started her career at Oxford High School, as a 'perceptive, thorough and conscientious' teacher of French and German, also finding time to grow many of the family's vegetables. Clothes too were home-produced: the girls' summer dresses hand-smocked and endlessly adjusted as they grew. After teaching, Jennifer joined Oxford University Press, where she worked as a translator and, later, senior editor on the *Oxford-Hachette French Dictionary*, whose Managing Editor described her translation skills as outstanding.

Throughout her life, Jennifer had a keen interest in music. She had a strong alto voice, successfully auditioning for the Oxford Bach Choir and later establishing the Cherwell Singers, a small madrigal group. One of her last outings with the family was to a performance of *The Cunning Little Vixen* at the Paris Opera.

During many summers, Jonathan led Balliol reading parties at a chalet high in the French Alps. Its isolation was conducive to academic endeavour, but Jennifer's responsibility – catering for 20 – was made challenging by the lack of road access, running water and electricity. She ran the kitchens with a hand of iron, the largest of saucepans, and a brimming carafe of *vin de table* that she called 'Cook's Bounty'. She also undertook some demanding walks, developing an interest in Alpinism which led her to translate the memoirs of the first woman to scale Mont Blanc (*Henriette d'Angeville: My Ascent of Mont Blanc*; HarperCollins, 1992).

In 1992, Jonathan and Jennifer moved to a château in a small hamlet in central France. Again dealing with practicalities and showing her usual determination, Jennifer passed her driving test, after numerous attempts, at the age of 57. Naturally, a series of cats joined the household, as well as a pair of llamas and a quacking procession of ducks. Visitors to the house, who included Jonathan's current and former pupils, admired the extensive gardens which provided ingredients for her kitchen and freezer. Employing her gift for teaching, she set up an English conversation group she referred to as 'My Old Ladies' (despite the fact that they were all roughly her own age). In her 60s she developed an interest in astronomy, entrancing her granddaughters Marie and Hazel with a giant telescope trained on the moon. She also shared her lifelong love of literature, writing and illustrating stories about the family cats for the amusement of the little girls.

Jennifer's life took her from Addis Ababa to Malvern and then Oxford. It ended contentedly in France, where she was surrounded by cats and books and tended the garden she loved.

Catherine and Camilla Barnes, Jennifer's daughters

PHILIPPA SEYMOUR (née MOLLET), 1946–2025



Philippa punting with her future husband

Philippa had a lifelong love of languages. Perhaps this was partly inspired by her father, who was a translator for the United Nations, and her early childhood in Paris. It led her to read German and French at LMH, emerging in 1968 with a 2:1 and a modern-linguist fiancé, whom she had met on the steps of the Taylorian following a lecture on *Der Zauberberg*.

Philippa's career started at the Post Office and then the University of Sussex; after her first baby was born she continued working for a student placement agency, combining work and motherhood flexibly in a way that was unusual in the early

1970s. A supposedly temporary move to Luxembourg in 1976, where husband Edward had been offered a job as a translator with the European Parliament, followed by the arrival of three more children, kept Philippa from formal employment for a while. During this time she set up a local breastfeeding support group in Luxembourg, became an accredited La Leche League Leader and went on to establish the Luxembourg branch of the charity with her friend Rita, providing breastfeeding support to new mothers in German, French, English and Luxembourgish.

Once the children were all at school, Philippa looked for a return to work that would fit round family schedules and take advantage of her language skills. She found this at the *Luxembourg News Digest* – an English-language weekly news review. As with any periodical, there was generally a late-night push to get everything finished before it went to print, particularly after she became the editor. So although she enjoyed the excitement of the news cycle, this made the predictability of a translator's job at the European Parliament quite appealing and she passed the exam to apply. Philippa spent the remainder of her career working there alongside her husband, and adding Spanish and modern Greek to her set of languages. (She went on to learn ancient Greek for fun after she retired.) Having shared lectures with Dr Ganz at Oxford, she and Edward now shared notes on EU Directives, in matching offices on the same corridor.

Horses were another lifelong passion. In fact she renamed herself Philippa aged 11 because of this and shortly afterwards bought her first pony at an auction, with friend Susie's help. No one is sure how two schoolchildren made a successful bid, and their mothers were none too pleased when they found out, but Shadow was allowed to stay. A series of equine companions followed, and many happy years at the Woodland Pony Club. Philippa gained honours in the Pony Club 'A' Test just before sitting her Oxbridge entrance exam. When it was announced in 1964 that women would be allowed to ride in the next Olympic Games, Philippa formed an ambition to be selected with her horse

Micky Regan in the British team for Mexico 1968. This proved slightly beyond their reach, but by the time she went up to Oxford they had competed all over the country, winning hundreds of rosettes.

Alongside the drag-hunting and polo clubs at Oxford which she took part in, Philippa established the University riding club, where she captained the team competing in inter-university one-day events which involved dressage, showjumping and cross-country courses. Philippa came fourth as an individual in the national British Universities Riding Championships, after the team had won the area qualifying match, but missed out on a 'blue' because Cambridge had no competitive riding team to field! Philippa campaigned for women to be allowed to compete in the Drag Hunt point-to-point races, which she knew Micky stood a good chance of winning, but several exchanges of correspondence with the Jockey Club were to no avail, and in fact the first win for a female jockey in an official horse race was not until 1972. Philippa counted this as the only time she remembers suffering discrimination on grounds of gender, although on another occasion the Riding Club was asked to field an all-female team for a competition held by the RAF College in Lincolnshire because the entirely male establishment was hosting a dance afterwards.

Philippa continued competing in long-distance endurance riding into her 60s, but her main competitive focus after moving to Luxembourg was supporting and training younger riders. She co-founded the Luxembourg national team for mounted games and supported them competing in events including in England, Northern Ireland, Germany and Sweden. Sports, including swimming and ski-ing but especially horse-riding, were an expression of Philippa's wider sense of adventure and zest for life, which she never lost. She was still riding her horse Tulley until a few months before she died. Last summer she joined her grandchildren swimming in the Atlantic breakers on the French coast, and on a previous family holiday in Lac d'Annecy, she jumped



Philippa riding Micky

off a boat to swim in the middle of the lake, very excited to do something she had never tried before.

Close family bonds and enduring friendships were things Philippa treasured. She loved being a grandmother and building relationships with her grandchildren, happy to engage with them at their level whether they were toddlers practising their counting or teenagers working on their university applications. This generosity of spirit extended to her local community and beyond. In 2015 Philippa and Edward

offered shelter in their home for several years to a Syrian refugee who had made the Mediterranean crossing in a dinghy and a long trek to reach Luxembourg. He was later able to bring his wife and daughters to join him, and Philippa greatly valued the close bond that developed with the family.

Philippa is remembered by many for her warm smile, but also for her sang-froid. This combination served her well in all sorts of tricky situations, from children's minor injuries requiring a dash to hospital, to her role as churchwarden in later life. She was described as a stalwart of the English-speaking church in Luxembourg, appreciated for her supportive, forward-thinking, theologically intelligent attitude, diplomatic constructive feedback and wry sense of humour. Philippa was passionate about finding ways to alleviate the climate crisis, showing up for protests and lectures on sustainable farming, as well as making sure nothing artificial was used in her own vegetable gardening – after all, there was a plentiful supply of horse manure.

Philippa was also a great lover of a party. She was an unapologetic participant in Oxford's student social scene, where the uneven gender ratios of the 1960s normalised dating several boyfriends at once. She found that the midnight curfew and 'no men after 10.30 pm' rule suited her, because it meant she could go out every evening but still get back at a reasonable time to sustain the weekly averages of 36 hours' work and 56 hours' sleep, a formula for success she had worked out in her second term and stuck to throughout her degree.

As a fresher Philippa was impressed by her fellow students' sophistication, once memorably being invited to someone's room for coffee that she noted was not Nescafé but real ground coffee made in a jug with a filter that looked like an old sock. In her third year living in the Fyfield Road flat Philippa hosted a dinner party where she served a roast roadkill pheasant that a friend had salvaged after running it over and taken to the butcher's in Summertown to be plucked and prepared.

Throughout her life Philippa enjoyed hosting parties ranging from a few friends round for dinner, to a huge barn dance with a live band, riotous children's birthday parties, big celebrations for her 70th birthday and golden wedding, to more sedate music or poetry recitals. A few days before she died, Philippa was dancing the paso doble with the rest of the audience at a concert of Spanish music.

Philippa died in February following a severe stroke from which she didn't regain consciousness. This was her seventh stroke in five years after being diagnosed with cerebral amyloid angiopathy. She tackled the long and difficult recovery from each stroke with enormous determination, perseverance and courage. After one of the later strokes left her with aphasia, the first phrase she was able to say again was 'That would be good', typically optimistic and pragmatic.

Philippa is survived by her husband Edward (Brasenose College 1964), children Guinevere, Susanna (Wadham College 1996), Hugo (Corpus Christi College 1998) and Augustina (Brasenose College 1999), and eight grandchildren. After cremation in Luxembourg, her ashes were scattered under the copper beech at LMH and on the Sussex Downs.

Guinevere Webster (Seymour 1993 Psychology and Philosophy)

DENISE NEVILLE (*née* TAYLOR), 1948–2024

Having graduated from LMH in 1970 with a degree in mathematics, Denise spent most of her working life as an administrator with the University of London's School Examinations Board, running the O/GCSE/A levels.

On taking early retirement, she studied at Birkbeck College, gaining a Diploma in Egyptology (with Distinction); she could translate at sight, at near-speaking speed, the hieroglyphs on ancient Egyptian monuments.

Latterly, her great social interest was choral singing, until she suffered a stroke in 2023 and ultimately died from its effects.

Peter Neville, Denise's husband

(SUSAN) PAULINE ACHESON (*née* WILSON), 1950–2025



Pauline and Malcolm

Pauline was born on 13 November 1950 and at six months old was adopted and brought up in Castleford, Yorkshire by steady and caring parents. It was a modest background but Pauline, with many dreams and ambitions, earned the opportunity to study French and Russian at LMH.

While a student, Pauline ran a very busy schedule – keeping up with her demanding studies while acting in open-air plays, singing with university choirs, attending Evensong in Magdalen College Chapel and socialising. She had the opportunity to join the Maison Française for a year to bring up her spoken French, and it was here

that she met her future husband, Malcolm Acheson.

After her rich experiences at Oxford, Pauline trained to be a teacher of languages and moved to Malvern to teach at the Abbey School. Her relationship with Malcolm blossomed into marriage and then family life.

At first Malcolm was managing a large fruit farm in Much Birch, Herefordshire, and Pauline was extremely busy looking after four beautiful children, Gemma, Miriam, Joseph and Delia, at the same time as teaching – now at the Cathedral School in Hereford – and helping out on the farm with pick-your-own events, accounts and driving tractors when needed. It was very demanding but somehow she was able to juggle everything and make lifelong local friends.

Then came a big move, when Malcolm followed his calling to become an Anglican priest, and gave up farming to train at the theological college in Salisbury. Pauline was now the wife of a vicar and this was a huge sea-change for her. She had to be very visible in the community and responsive to the needs of all the parishioners. She brought her wisdom, humour and understanding to those who would arrive at the vicarage door to be invited in and listened to.

There were also often dinner parties involving senior members of the Church and

other people in the local community. Pauline loved cooking and had bookcases of abstruse and very varied cookery books. She continued to cook for others with care and interest even when her own poor health later made it necessary for her to follow a very limited diet.

After a time in Highgate where Malcolm had a curacy, the family moved to a big vicarage in Chilmark, Wiltshire where Malcolm had responsibility for six small parishes.

It was then that everything was suddenly shattered by unutterable tragedy. In the early hours of 15 March 1989, a terrible fire engulfed the Chilmark vicarage and though some members of the family sleeping there were able to escape, Pauline's three daughters, Gemma, Miriam and Delia, all perished from smoke inhalation before help could reach them.

How could Pauline deal with such overwhelming shock and loss? She and Malcolm and Joseph had all the support that friends could give, but of course it was beyond life-changing. One thing that brought her through it was her profound spiritual faith. I know that she was not afraid of her own death and believed it would mean she could be reunited with her daughters.

Pauline continued her life with enormous courage and creativity. She gained a music teaching certificate at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and took an active part in musical life in the parish. Malcolm became Rector at Storrington in West Sussex and Pauline taught for some years at Lancing College. She also for a while co-directed the choir of Storrington Parish Church, supported parishioners as the Rector's wife, and in her own home tutored individual children and adults in singing, piano or flute, and French and Russian. She found this very rewarding and took a great interest in her students. Pauline was interested in psychology and counselling and how people thought and acted in their lives.

Eventually it was time for Malcolm to retire, and there was a move to Eastbourne and a fresh way of life in a new church community. Life was not simple in Eastbourne, though, owing to a complex saga involving flooding in the area where their house was. It was eventually sorted out, with much restoration needed in the house, but then Covid hit. Through everything Pauline's stoic strength, dry humour and sheer courage prevailed. Her health became increasingly problematic in several ways which limited her greatly. Throughout it all, she steadfastly supported Malcolm who was weathering his own serious health matters. Her son Joseph, now a successful musician and composer, and two small grandsons were a great pride and pleasure to her.

In February 2025, after a recent successful operation for lung cancer, Pauline was just entering what she thought was going to be a period of respite, when death came unexpectedly in her sleep. She is very greatly missed. Hers was a particularly brave life, and there is comfort in feeling that now she is surely together again with her girls.



Pauline more recently

*Hester Seddon
(1968 English Language and Literature)*

JENNIFER MARY FISKEN (*neé* STREET), 1950–2024



Jenny Fiskén

Jenny decided when she was about 12 years old that she wanted to become a doctor; this may have had something to do with the fact that her family included a radiographer, a nurse and a laboratory technician. She was accepted to read medicine at Lady Margaret Hall. After some initial apprehension that this was the ‘deb’ college, she settled into life at LMH and had an enduring love of the college. She was in the first year of medical students taught by Alison Brading and was proud of the legacy

of the college in educating women. Her time at Oxford had a lifelong impact, most notably the making of close friends, especially Mariel Udokang (MacCormack 1968 Medicine), and meeting Roger Fiskén (St John’s 1967), a fellow medical student who would become her husband of 53 years.

Jenny and Roger married in 1971 and, in 1972, moved to Birmingham for clinical training. At this time Birmingham Medical School boasted many distinguished academic staff among its clinical teachers, including no fewer than five presidents of their respective royal colleges. Jenny took an early interest in paediatrics, in which she excelled and for which she won a prize in final MB. After house jobs and, later, the birth of two children, Jenny decided that a career in hospital paediatrics would be too demanding. She had an instinctive knowledge and understanding of small children and therefore became interested in developmental paediatrics and its disorders. She worked in community paediatrics in Birmingham, Liverpool and North Yorkshire, rising eventually to the rank of associate specialist. Subsequently she focused more and more on hearing and speech disorders which led to her studying successfully for the MSc in audiology of the University of Manchester. She then became the designated lead for paediatric audiology in the district and developed a range of ingenious methods (including many variants of common children’s toys) for testing hearing and speech discrimination in the very young. She also averred that having her own children (or, as she termed it, ‘autopaediatrics’) had been hugely valuable to her professionally.

When I showed an interest in going to Oxford in 2001, Jenny took great pleasure in taking me to the LMH garden party to show me the college and make sure I considered not just the well-known central colleges. After attending the garden party, I fell in love with the grounds stretching down to the river and the proximity to the science park, with the walk across the University Parks. She was delighted when I was offered and accepted a place at LMH, also to read medicine, matriculating in 2003. I was therefore lucky enough to be in the last year that was tutored by Alison Brading, which was a lovely symmetrical connection that we shared. Since we had different surnames, Professor Brading was unaware that she had taught my mother. Part-way through

my first year, we were fortunate enough to have a tutorial with Margaret Matthews, who had also taught Jenny. I mentioned this to her and she was immensely gracious and interested. Later that week, I was mildly upbraided by Professor Brading for never mentioning that she had also taught my mother, and she then went back to the business at hand of critiquing my latest essay!

Jenny retired in 2010. In retirement she played the organ in the local church (passing her grade 6 examination), renewed her interest in gardening and knitting and became closely involved in the care of her grandchildren.

Jenny died from complications of motor neurone disease on 13 June 2024. She is survived by her husband, Roger, three children and two grandchildren. She has passed on her love of nature and music and her insatiable curiosity about all manner of interesting things.

*Rachel Fiskén
(2003 Medicine)*

LINDA MONTGOMERY (*née* MERRALL), 1950–2025

My wife Linda once said that she didn't really have a career. Yet after 10 years of teaching, she combined motherhood with being an executive director of three successive IT companies, governor at three schools, and volunteering in a wide range of organisations. Throughout her life she influenced many people, always earning their gratitude and admiration.

Linda came to LMH in 1969 to read French and German. Born in Stockport, her parents both teachers, Linda won a scholarship to Cheadle Hulme School. A keen



Alan and Linda celebrating after Finals

Girl Guide, she achieved Queen's Guide and became a Leader. Guiding brought her a Swedish penfriend, so she learned Swedish to add to her Esperanto. At school Linda took Latin and Russian alongside French and German. She was also good at science and an excellent dressmaker. For A level she decided on modern languages.

With offers at both LMH and Girton, she chose LMH, blown away by its gardens and bright redbrick buildings, a far cry from Manchester's then grimy stone. She found LMH 'a quiet out-of-town college and a refuge from

pursuing men'. She loved music, literature and art, observing that lectures in the Taylorian were conveniently close to the Ashmolean. At LMH Linda made lifelong friendships, especially with other 1969 modern linguists: Chris Coleman (*née* Abel), Anna Pope, and Mary Brady (*née* Sellers).

We met in Linda's first term, Scottish dancing with the university Scout and Guide Group. Courtship was long walks and talks, punting, theatre, curries; it helped that I had a salary and a car. She'd come up with three hobbies, bell ringing, guiding, and choral singing. All involved visiting other colleges. Linda rang several peals and as secretary supported Stuart Bamforth (New College 1970) to become Master. Stuart went on to marry Linda's sister Ruth (Merrall 1972 Music), also a ringer.

I proposed at Linda's 21st birthday party in November 1971. She told her friends, 'We decided to stop fighting and get married instead.' Then she gave me a reading list. 'I can't marry a man who hasn't read Jane Austen, *Madame Bovary*, *Le Rouge et Le Noir*.' I read them all. We married at Wilmslow Parish Church in September 1972, emerging to joyful bell ringing. She set objectives for our life including travelling to Athens, Rome, Madrid, St Petersburg and Moscow, and visiting the National Gallery, Louvre, Prado, Uffizi, Hermitage and Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Linda trained to be a teacher like her mother and grandmother. We rented an attic flat in a semi-derelict country house with squatters in the flat below. What a contrast with LMH! We moved to Stoke-on-Trent where for 10 years Linda taught French and German in nearby Congleton Girls' Grammar, sending three state-school girls to LMH. At a memorial ceremony for Mrs Curry in 2013, Trish Weston (1983 Modern Languages) recognised Linda. Through Trish, Linda re-connected with many former pupils, bringing much happiness. Their tributes on Linda's 65th birthday, and on her death, showed what a great teacher she was.

Linda created her first garden and was adopted by stray cats. A wine tasting course revealed her fine nose and palate. Holidays ticked off objectives, with camping trips to Paris, Pisa, Vicenza, Venice, Ravenna and later Santiago de Compostella. Visiting the National Theatre in Weimar and the homes of Goethe and Schiller meant driving and camping behind the iron curtain.

In 1982 Ian was born. We bought a wonderful house in Hampshire complete with large garden and woodland. Helen (2002 English) was born two months before we moved in. Linda taught our children to read and write. She experimented by speaking only German to Ian with some success, despite Dad having to use English.

Six years later with five colleagues, Linda and I started an AI Business, Integral Solutions Ltd (ISL). Who'd do the non-tech jobs: Finance, Personnel, HR, Company Secretary? Step forward Linda! She soon mastered all. Linda's attention to detail, people skills, and careful finance management were just what ISL needed. She loved managing our network of distributors in France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Hungary, USA, Mexico and Singapore. Languages again.

A US company wanted to buy ISL. Smart due-diligence lawyers and accountants pored over documents. Linda's careful work meant they found nothing to challenge. We signed on New Year's morning 1999, a wide smile on Linda's face. That sale enabled donations to LMH.



Two generations of LMH alumnae: Linda, daughter Helen, and sister Ruth in Linda's garden

Linda's first 'retirement', lasted 10 years. She added an MA in Education from the Open University to her Certificate in Advanced French from Manchester, managed adult education language teaching for Hampshire, and volunteered in the Citizens Advice Bureau. A project with Cancer Research UK to apply AI in clinical research and healthcare resulted in a second AI company, InferMed. At a crucial moment Linda stepped forward once again. 'If you're putting more of our money in, I'm coming to oversee it.' We commuted into Bedford Square for many years. At InferMed's sale Linda's work was once again scrutinised by accountants and lawyers – again no errors. In 2015 we both retired.

Linda served over 20 years as governor at Farnborough Sixth Form College, becoming Chair of the Estates Committee. Asked to be a primary school governor, she became Chair and stayed 23 years. Her Gardening Club cultivated vegetables with selected children; some were amazed to learn that potatoes grew under the soil. The school's new sensory garden is named after Linda. She became governor at a pupil referral unit in Aldershot, a far cry from LMH. She was an examiner in GCSE French and German oral exams and gave interview practice to aspiring university entrants. She was a business advisor for Young Enterprise, becoming chair of the YE Hampshire steering committee and marking YE exam papers. For the last four years, Linda mentored students at Queen Mary College Basingstoke. A QMC student is currently at LMH.

For 20 years Linda served on Farnham Humanists Committee. She donated to Humanists UK and enjoyed attending the annual conventions, and Blackham Society *soirées*, meeting authors Ian McEwan and Stephen Pinker, whose books she had read.

Linda loved travelling in Europe, visiting museums and galleries, opera, plays and ballet, not to mention vineyards. She regularly wrote to friends in Japan, Singapore, Germany, France, Norway and Switzerland. She gave English lessons and conversation practice to Ukrainians. Brexit nearly broke her heart.

Linda had cats most of her life. In the garden she had multiple bird feeders, and protected frogs, newts, toads, grass snakes, dragon flies and foxes. Deer were a menace but tolerated. On walks she would seek out horses; one clamped its mouth over her hand and held her there for five minutes. She remained calm and was released unhurt.

Linda grew most of the family vegetables, leaving me boxes of potatoes and onions, and a freezer full of peas, beans, courgettes, etc. In the conservatory there is an orange tree she grew from a pip, and cacti inherited from her gran.

At NE Hampshire Ramblers Linda volunteered as a footpath monitor. For over 20 years she walked a network of 40 paths twice a year, reporting on the gates, stiles, fingerposts etc., replacing way marks and cutting back brambles. She brought about the replacement of bridges, creation of boardwalks, steps down slippery banks, and reopening of blocked paths.

When diagnosed with osteopenia Linda decided walking was the best medicine. From 2016 we walked a dozen long-distance footpaths. We began with Hadrian's wall, 82 miles. Next the D'Arcy Dalton Way, created to remember the Lincoln College alumnus who pioneered the preservation of Oxfordshire's footpaths. On the Pilgrim's Way, we claimed the pilgrim's dole at St Cross Hospital. Our last long walk was the Kennet and Avon Canal, 94 miles.

Linda was liberal. Live and let live, but don't hurt others. We lived in one of the safest Conservative seats with a majority of 29,916. The local Lib Dems, including Linda, knew the seat was winnable. All worked tirelessly, leafletting and canvassing door to door. Linda's donations allowed extra targeted newsletters. Alex Brewer won the seat by 634 votes. Alex said, 'Without Linda, I would not now be an MP.'

At an LMH dinner in Middle Temple Hall, we met Professor David Macdonald, head of OU's wildlife conservation unit, WildCRU. With no money, we offered AI software which was used to research vole populations. Later Linda donated for WildCRU's first website.

Helen went up in 2002, the year Dame Frances Lannon became Principal. Excited by her building plans Linda began to make larger donations and we became regular visitors to alumni events. Our golden wedding anniversary dinner was held in the Mary O'Brien Room, where 51 years previously Linda had accepted my proposal.

Linda died of cancer, at home after a mercifully short spell in hospital. We held a celebration at LMH to commemorate her life. Linda had recorded an interview as part of LMH's 150th anniversary oral history project and we played excerpts. It was a wonderful occasion celebrating a wonderful life. Thank you, Linda. Thank you, LMH.

Alan Montgomery (Lincoln Physics 1963)

VINCENT GILLESPIE (1954–2025)

Professor Vincent Gillespie died on 13 March 2025 at the age of 71. He is survived by his wife, Peggy, sons, Thomas and Edward, and grandchildren.

Vincent joined LMH as a Fellow in 2004 when he was appointed to the J.R.R. Tolkien Chair in English Literature, coming here from St Anne's, where he had been a long-standing and highly valued Tutorial Fellow in English. St Anne's loss was LMH's gain. In Vincent LMH acquired not only a scholar of towering academic distinction, but a colleague whose warmth, compassion and humanity shone through all that he undertook. It's no small measure of his loss that he is deeply mourned not only by family, academic colleagues and former students, but by the gardeners, maintenance and catering staff who make up the very fabric of LMH, who knew Vincent well, as he did them and their families. One of his most prized possessions on his retirement was their gift to him of a chef's hat and coat with his name embroidered under the LMH logo.

Vincent's career as a scholar and teacher of medieval literature was both prolific and distinguished. He published extraordinarily widely. He is very well known for his work on devotional writing and mysticism. Many of his essays – including field-defining pieces such as 'The Apophatic Image', 'Postcards from the Edge' and 'Strange Images of Death' – are collected in the magisterial volume, *Looking in Holy Books*. Vincent's work on Syon Abbey (the only house of the Bridgettine order in England) brought together his interest in religious communities, especially the Carthusians and Bridgettines, and his interest in material texts. Another important book was *After Arundel* (co-edited with Kantik Ghosh, and arising from a seminal conference held in Oxford), which revisited fifteenth-century writing in the wake of censorship and radical religious and political change.

Vincent also published on secular medieval literature, on Langland, Skelton, and a brilliant article on Chaucer's engagement with Italian ideas of laureate poets, as well as co-editing the multi-volume *Chaucer Encyclopaedia*. His essay on medieval understanding of poetic theory and thought experiments was structured as a thought experiment itself. Indeed, his essays, while deeply scholarly, were also witty and attention-grabbing. He had an eye for a catchy title ('Dial M for Mystic', 'Chapter and Worse',



Vincent Gillespie

‘Never Look a Gift Horse in the Mouth’). His working title for *Looking into Holy Books*, ‘A Dog Returns to its Vomit’, was, he tells us in his preface, perhaps a step too far. His intellectual power dazzles in his work on later medieval literary theory. Across all his works Vincent identified a common thread:

At the core of most of what I do is a curiosity about the psychology of literary response: the ways in which writers struggle to express experiences and acts of imagination, the strategies they use to articulate their understanding of these experiences and imaginative acts, and the codes and conventions that develop between texts and readers to allow communication and understanding to develop and to be manipulated.

He was fundamentally a theorist, interested in how language and literature work.

Vincent’s extraordinary academic productivity is all the more remarkable set within the context of sometimes close to full-time roles of academic citizenship and leadership, including Chair of the Faculty Board. He was editor of the Exeter Medieval Texts and Studies Series, and the executive secretary and then director of the Early English Text Society. In 2003 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London. In 2013 he was elected a Fellow of the British Academy. As J.R.R. Tolkien Chair he undertook numerous University and Faculty roles: Curator of the Bodleian; Co-ordinator for the English Research Excellence Framework; Membership of the Humanities Divisional Board; and Chair of Masters’ Examiners to name but a few. Fund-raising for medieval studies in Oxford was also a time-consuming activity. Overall, he raised £9 million and part of that was the £4.2 million needed to endow the Tolkien Chair. Vincent played an important role in supervising and mentoring numerous graduate students in his field, and acting as personal tutor to LMH graduate students both within and outside medieval literature. He supervised over 80 DPhil and Master’s theses. Students, initially daunted by his intellect, were quickly overcome by his warmth, kindness and genuine concern for their lives and careers.

Vincent also cared deeply about College life, governance and finance. He took his role as Fellow and Trustee of the college very seriously and valued Governing Body as a place for the open expression of informed opinion on College business. He was never afraid to speak out in Governing Body meetings and to hold processes and decision-making to account. He was also great fun as a lunch and dinner companion, charming and playful, able to move easily across a dazzling array of cultural forms. Conversations that ranged from Tarantino to Shakespeare, from medieval architecture to modern jazz, made one realise that there was little that Vincent had not read, seen or heard. Following a conversation which ranged across all of Jane Austen’s novels, he graciously accepted a birthday gift of the one Austen screen adaptation he hadn’t yet seen: *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*. He later donated this to the LMH Library.

Professor Christine Gerrard, Barbara Scott Fellow and Tutor in English, and Professor Marion Turner, J.R.R. Tolkien Professor of English Literature and Language

PHILIPPA MARY OWEN (*née* REID), 1957–2024

This is something no one wants to write: a daughter's obituary.

Philippa was born in Paris in 1957 – a first child (of four) for me and my husband Martin, a young diplomat at the British Embassy. Her childhood was shaped by the peripatetic nature of diplomatic life – perpetual adaptation to new places, new friends and, of course, boarding school. It's no surprise that Philippa was gifted at making connections with people. Philippa went up to LMH in 1976 to read history (where, a generation previously, I had read English). After university, she taught in Malawi, then in London, before getting married to David Owen and starting a family.



Philippa Owen

In her adult life, Philippa combined her love of history and of art – enjoying Dulwich Picture Gallery and Westminster Abbey, for example – with abiding concern for the underdog and, above all, her passion for family and friendships. She was involved with numerous community groups, either as a crucial support to colleagues or in a leadership position, her style being to lead from behind and by example, rather than by issuing commands. She supported many people to achieve their ambitions, sometimes by holding back herself.

Once her children, Kitty and John, were old enough, Philippa decided to become a Blue Badge Guide, a qualification for which she was ideally suited but, in her view, far harder than getting her Oxford degree. Despite her conspicuous modesty and aversion to the commercial aspects of selling her skills and accepting payment, she was extremely successful, constantly in demand and receiving the highest approval ratings from grateful clients. She was ultimately persuaded to become Chair of the British Guild of Tourist Guides, doing what she could in that role to improve access to the profession by introducing bursaries and reorganising the administration of the Guild. Philippa designed and rolled out several educational programmes for London primary schools – on the Fire of London, for example – culminating, in 2023, in Wren 300, a programme to mark the 300th anniversary of the death of Christopher Wren.

There is so much more to say about Philippa. She was fiercely loyal to her friends, a wonderful, inventive cook, a welcoming host, a passionate gardener and a joyous grandmother. Above all, she touched the lives of so many. Her funeral at St John's Waterloo was a standing-room-only event. Every single person there had reasons to respect, mourn and love her. I am proud to be able to say I was her mother.

Philippa died of cancer of the oesophagus in December 2024.

Jane Reid (Harwood 1951)

HENRIK LANGEUEDDECKE, 1962–2024



Henrik Langelueddecke

Henrik was born in Germany in 1962, the youngest son of older parents. He was in awe of what his parents and their generation had lived through: the many fronts on which his father had served in the Second World War and amazingly survived, the horror of the war, their post-war poverty, living under Russian occupation initially, and the flight to the West. He grew up principally in Stuttgart listening to these stories and reading voraciously and inquisitively the wide-ranging books in his parents' library. This interest was enhanced by his secondary education at a humanistic Latin school founded in the late 1600s, with ancient Greek and history offered in his final years.

Henrik left school in 1981 and joined the German army artillery as an officer. He served for three exciting, formative years during the Cold War, participating in huge NATO exercises and continuing for a time after leaving the army in reserve officer training with the Franco-German brigade. These experiences shaped his personality, enhancing his determination and giving him strength to withstand physical hardship. He spent the majority of his service in a unit whose cohesion and camaraderie were

exemplary and through which lifelong friendships were established. His superiors were benevolent and supportive which shaped his view of leadership and teaching. He carried responsibility and led and trained soldiers older than himself.

After three years, however, in 1984, Henrik felt the need for intellectual development and decided to start studies in history, politics and geography at the University of Heidelberg. He joined and lived in one of the traditional student fraternity houses in Heidelberg. Henrik's involvement included the obligatory academic fencing match in his first year. He combined his duties (and excesses!) at the fraternity house with good grades in his studies. He went to Munich's Ludwigs-Maximilians University as a visiting student for a year where he was first exposed to English history. This led him to Oxford, helped by his fondness for England and things English.

Henrik first came to Lady Margaret Hall for the 1987–88 academic year as a visiting student, then returned to Heidelberg for two academic years to complete his master's

in history, politics and geography. That visiting year introduced him to Clive Holmes, under whose supervision and inspiration he researched and wrote his master's thesis in Trinity term. It set his course for his later doctorate at Oxford, several lifelong friendships (including his marriage to me, a fellow LMH graduate student, and our eventual three children), a total of 17 years living in England, and most importantly, a widening of his horizons.

Returning to LMH in autumn 1990, Henrik commenced his doctorate. He undertook archival research not just at the Bodleian but also at county record offices across England. He gained an appreciation for many corners of England and became an expert in B&Bs and comparative breakfasts. He submitted his doctoral thesis, 'Secular Policy Enforcement during the Personal Rule of Charles I: The Administrative Work of Parish Officers in the 1630s' in 1995. Clive Holmes viewed his thesis as one of the best two or three that he had supervised, a model of archival research. Henrik later condensed his doctoral thesis into a talk at Clive's 2011 retirement conference and contributed a chapter to the *Festschrift* (*Revolutionary England, c.1630–c.1660 Essays for Clive Holmes*) entitled 'Policy Enforcement during the Personal Rule of Charles I: The Perfect Militia, Book of Orders and Ship Money'. He was delighted when our daughter, reading history at Lincoln, showed him the first-year faculty reading list with that article in it. He was equally delighted when she reported that an old acquaintance was still running the history library at the Radcliffe Camera. 'His' Oxford still remained.

The times had and friendships established at LMH were magically special, an academic and cultural Alice in Wonderland. Henrik had a gravitational ability to bring together a wide range of academic disciplines, personalities, a United Nations of characters, life experiences and world perspectives. He did everything with enthusiasm, whether this was punting, trying out cricket and rowing, socialising (he was usually the last one to turn off the lights) or an unwavering commitment to reviewing Bodleian microfiche images of ledgers on who did and did not pay Charles I's ship money. Tuesday's Formal Hall would see the Jolly Company (the nickname that stuck in our family for the group of LMH friends) gathered, loudly exchanging ideas, sometimes respectfully disagreeing, and sharing knowledge, laughter and jokes. This often ended in someone's room on Fyfield Road, usually with classical music turned up far too loudly. The friendship extended to the porters and scouts at LMH, too. Lily at no. 5 and her scout friend Dolly always had time to listen and give a hug. When one of the porters heard of Henrik's experiences in the army, he was graciously invited to come to his gentlemen's club in Cowley.

In the uncertain months after doctoral submission from 1995 to 1996, Henrik had a period of applying for academic posts in the UK, Germany and North America while staying on in Oxford. He supported himself partly



Henrik with Lily (left) and Dolly

through continued tutoring at LMH and Worcester, lecturing and deputising for the director of the Oxford Associate Students' programme and for Clive Holmes. Eventually, seeing that the chances of an academic post were slim, but having realised through tutoring at Oxford that he loved teaching, he turned his energy towards secondary school history.

Teaching teenagers proved to be Henrik's calling. He spent 10 years in English independent schools teaching history, starting first at Alley's School in London, then moving on to a girls' school in Colchester, St Mary's, doing the Open University PGCE in his 'spare' time, and finally as Head of History and re-establishing the Scholar's Society at Emanuel School in London. By then married and with two small children, we made the choice to move to the Frankfurt area to be closer to his ageing parents, to raise the children in at least one of their parents' cultures, and for Henrik to teach history and geography at one of the first international baccalaureate (IB) schools. This he did for 16 years with all three of his children attending as students.

Henrik was immensely popular with his students who loved his jovial kindness, classroom control, respect, engagement, and excitement for his subject. His secondary teaching career allowed him to bring history to a wider range of impressionable young international students than he could ever have done in a university. He challenged them. He debated with them as equals. He supported them. He made them think. Some pursued further studies in the humanities because of his influence, some did not, but he touched the lives of many. Over the course of his own career changes and the departures of successive students, he built an archive of student letters, of in-jokes, illustrations, and thank-yous. On the last day of school at his last teaching post, his classroom was always filled with posters displaying hilarious political and historical jokes and classic quotations and phrases from his lessons. When Henrik died, our family received many heartfelt messages of gratitude from his students, their parents, and colleagues.

Henrik was diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumour in summer 2022. He met the challenges of the treatment and accompanying worries and fears by delving deeper into his Christian faith. It had always been part of his life yet not always as central. Looking back on his life he saw that God had set him on new courses at various points: at the time they may have been disappointments but in the fullness of time were clearly blessings. He lived his life more consciously, appreciating his surroundings and his present, not being focused on the next vacation, the next project, the next week. He died in summer 2024 at age 62 after a great two-year fight with brain cancer. He did not give up, yet he also accepted his situation with grace and with faith.

Henrik lived his life enthusiastically, with his booming voice and laughter that echoed from his heart and shone in his eyes, and with kindness to others. Through the wonderful and funny memories that remain in the hearts and minds of his wife, three children, extended family and friends, comrades, fellow students, and former students and colleagues, he continues to accompany us, at times with the pain of the loss but always with gratitude that he touched our lives.

Heather Caswell (1992 BCL), Henrik's wife

KATYA BATCHELOR (*née* BELYAEVA), 1975–2024

Katya Batchelor was born Ekaterina Nikolaevna Belyaeva on 20 April 1975 in Siberia, in the Soviet Union, to parents Nikolai and Tamara, both scientists.

She grew up in Akademgorodok, an academic and scientific centre in Siberia, surrounded by scientists and academics, but also by culture and the arts which influenced her own love of music, poetry, literature and art. Her grandfather, Dimitri Belyaev, was a world-renowned geneticist who was one of the leading figures in Akademgorodok, as well as in the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

Katya's family moved to the UK in 1991, when her father took up what he intended to be a short-term teaching post at Birmingham University. She was 16 years old and found herself in the middle of an English A-level academic year, which she took on with energy and enthusiasm, not only managing to pass her A levels in a foreign language but also achieving an unconditional offer to read history and Russian at Lady Margaret Hall.

As a result, Katya's parents decided to stay on in England to support her studies, notwithstanding their original plan to return to Russia. This decision changed the course of their own lives, as well as the lives of Katya, her family and friends.

At Oxford and at LMH, Katya enjoyed her studies and made friends who would remain close for the rest of her life. She studied with Clive Holmes, Mary MacRobert and Masha Unkovskaya, among others.

After graduating, Katya first took a year out working and then travelling in Italy, a country which she loved, and to which she would return many times during her life to enjoy its art and architecture. In 1997 she embarked on post-graduate studies in law, and met her future husband, Duncan Batchelor, in her first weeks at the College of Law in London. Katya and Duncan married in the year 2000, and Katya then started her career as a solicitor at Freshfields in the City of London; the couple also spent several months working in Moscow together.



Katya celebrating the end of Finals



Katya



Katya more recently

In 2003, Katya became a mother for the first time, giving birth to her daughter Anna in London. She was a devoted mother from that first day to her last, giving huge amounts of love, thought and attention to Anna and to their son Sasha, who was born in 2006 in Germany.

From 2004 until 2009 the family lived in Munich, Katya working at Clifford Chance, and then they returned to the UK to settle down for the children's schooling. Katya found a beautiful farmhouse in Kent, and transformed the house and gardens to make a haven for her family and many visiting friends.

In addition to her time practising as a lawyer, Katya became a law lecturer, a writer, a student of Italian Renaissance art, and also trained as a psychotherapist.

She made a great many friends, all of whom loved her kindness and generosity of spirit, as well as her wisdom and intellect. She always sought out beauty and meaning in life, and her love of literature and culture was reflected in the way she lived her life selflessly and generously. Everyone who met her recognised that, and she has the great achievement of leaving this world with the imperishable crown of a good name.

Katya loved travel, and was fortunate to have travelled widely in the final year of her life, not knowing that it would be her last. In the year before she died, she visited Finland, the Maldives, Canada, Italy, Antigua, and Peru – hiking the Inca trail to Machu Picchu just before she went to hospital to investigate what turned out to be advanced and incurable bowel cancer.

Katya died on 12 June 2024 of sudden complications from chemotherapy, just a little more than two months after being diagnosed with cancer. She leaves her husband Duncan, and children Anna and Sasha. Her family and friends have been raising money for Cancer Research UK, and more details can be found at www.TeamKatya.org.

Duncan Batchelor, Katya's husband





REVIEWS

REVIEWS

Patience

by Helen Barr (translator and editor). Broadview Press, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, 2024, ISBN: 9781554815395, £19.95

In the introduction to his 1952 translation of *Beowulf*, the Scottish poet Edwin Morgan argued that in translation ‘communication must take place; the nerves must sometimes tingle and the skin flush, as with original poetry’. Helen Barr’s new translation of *Patience* does precisely that. It is deliciously tingly in its poetic and acoustic effects, and as dynamic a delight for the ear and the eye as the original fourteenth-century poem. *Patience*, a lively and imaginative adaptation of the Biblical story of Jonah, is less well known to modern readers than its more famous siblings by the same anonymous author. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, for example, has been treated to innumerable translations, including an energetic and bombastic version by poet laureate Simon Armitage, so a serious poetic translation of *Patience* was long overdue. Helen Barr’s version was well worth the wait. In her wise and good-humoured hands, the poem bursts into new life and with a facing page original text, fascinating notes on the translation, and generous appendices, both students and scholars are well served in this edition. There is a richness here, born out of the original poet’s stylistic, theological, and emotional complexity, and also of Barr’s ability to capture the poem’s linguistic acrobatics in a vibrant modern English that feels fresh and inviting.

The edition wears its deep learning lightly – and with grace and trademark humour. Simon Armitage described an early draft of the translation as having a ‘cheeky grin on its face’ (p. 7) and that playful quality is transmitted to the reader in spades; you cannot help but smile when in its company. There is wit, relish and ingenuity on display, in the deft rendering of the original poem’s challenging alliterative metre and in its vigorous approach to narrative action and dialogue. A brief sample of words beginning with the letter ‘g’ alone gives a flavour of the gorgeous vocabulary on offer here – ‘grumble and grouch, gobbled, gurning in a grump, grizzling and growling’. The original poem’s narrative propulsion is captured in spirited internal rhymes (‘rough and gruff’; to ‘Tarshish- sharpish!’) and its speeches fizz off the page (from the sailor who advises the unfortunate Jonah, ‘best get praying, pal, before you walk the plank’, to God’s sly and self-satisfied ‘no way you’re going to Nineveh, then, eh?’).

The northwest dialect of the *Gawain*-poet presents a significant challenge to the modern reader (and scholar), and the few existing prose translations of *Patience* are accurate but uninspiring, lacking both the vim and vigour necessary to truly communicate with the reader and the corresponding capacity to transmit the original poem’s emotional impact. But Barr’s translation is generous and capacious in language

and style. As she rightly points out in her introduction, ‘not every reader of Middle English poetry is a standard English speaker’ (p. 40) and this northerner particularly enjoyed the use of regional terms such as ‘gob’ and ‘jiggered’ and the wide cast of its net to include US colloquialisms such as ‘barf’ and ‘guff’. The translation sizzles with emotional veracity when Jonah ‘lets rip, / rabid with rage, he gives God both barrels’. And when he accuses the ‘Lord who lounges aloof on His lofty perch’ of not giving ‘a damn / were I nabbed in Nineveh and stripped naked / on a cross, sharked shamefully by a crew of scum’, we not only recognise Jonah’s role as a type (or anti-type) of Christ but become alert to the very real fear that this cavalier God may not care for his prophet or even his Son. When Jonah confesses in his final speech in the poem, ‘I want the earth to yawn open and swallow me up’, we too feel at the end of our tether, struggling to reconcile the poem’s bully boy deity with his nonetheless convincing acts of mercy. *Patience* is by no means an easy poem but the precision and subtlety of Barr’s translation holds out a welcoming hand to its reader.

In the acknowledgements, Barr writes that she came to ‘know and to love *Patience* through sharing it with generations of students at Lady Margaret Hall’ who were the inspiration for making ‘this extraordinarily profound (but linguistically difficult) poem more friendly-facing’ (p. 8). Barr is characteristically modest in underselling her achievements here. Having already used the translation with students at my own college, I know that she has not only made the poem more ‘friendly-facing’ but irresistibly communicated its literary and linguistic power for a new generation of readers. Translations of this calibre are rare – and teachers of Professor Barr’s quality even more so. As a former supervisee, I am proud as punch to put this profoundly wise yet playful book on my reading lists, it is truly a pearl of great price.

Laura Varnam
(2004 English)

Cypria: A Journey to the Heart of the Mediterranean

by Alex Christofi. Bloomsbury, h/b 2024, ISBN: 9781399401883, £20, p/b 2025, ISBN: 9781399401906, £10.99

Like all the larger Mediterranean islands, Cyprus has seen conquerors, settlers and traders come and go. Alex Christofi’s engaging, vigorous and at times passionate account of the island’s troubled history amply reveals how it has served as the crossroads of the eastern Mediterranean. In the Middle Ages, it attracted masters (and, in the case of the Venetian queen Caterina Cornaro, a mistress) from as far west as Genoa and Venice, whose merchants fanned out from Famagusta to Turkey, Syria and Egypt, and exploited the island’s sugar plantations. Then, in the late nineteenth century, the British arrived, and they are still present, both wearing uniform and – in the nightlife of modern Ayia Napa – wearing rather less. Christofi offers a personal account as well as a carefully annotated history that begins with dwarf elephants 100,000 years ago, and remains unresolved: attempts to settle the division of the island following the Turkish invasion 50 years ago are still getting nowhere.

Christofi is at his best when he describes the extraordinary careers of those who have attempted to rule over the island. There was the fourteenth-century regent John I, who suspected his Bulgarian bodyguards of treason and had them thrown one by one out of the highest window in Hilarion castle, whose impressive ruins still tower far above Kyrenia in northern Cyprus. And there was the Italian-born Emanuele Palma di Cesnola, who in 1865 became US consul in Ottoman Cyprus. Obsessed by the archaeological riches of the island, he dug up ('excavated' would be too scientific a word) tens of thousands of ancient artefacts, 35,000 of which were bought by the Metropolitan Museum in New York, of which he later became director. A comparable amount of his loot was dispersed across museums in Europe, which partly explains why so many still have entire rooms devoted to ancient Cyprus.

Under British rule Cyprus was managed by governors who had little understanding of the subject population; one of them, Field Marshal Harding, was an old Kenya hand whose ideas about how to suppress inter-communal violence only exacerbated it. In 1955, prison sentences of up to two years were decreed for those who carried stones in their pocket. Christofi argues that a large part of the trouble in those years originated not so much in hostility between Greeks and Turks, but in deep divisions between the right-wing Greek terrorists of EOKA who wished to force *Enosis*, union with Greece, and those on the left. The wily Makarios III, archbishop and eventual president of Cyprus, worked closely with the terrorist leader George Grivas, while Nikos Sampson – another eventual president – gloried in the shedding of Turkish blood and proposed to 'eliminate them to the last one'. Christofi tells a shocking story of murders, massacres and conspiracies, with the British government largely clueless about how to handle the crisis, and with British troops caught in the middle, as they had been in Palestine and would be in Ulster.

One important reason for this was that Cyprus was not valued for its own virtues (its economy remained undeveloped), but as a strategically valuable point on the map. This was reflected in the terms under which the island was granted its independence in 1960, whereby Britain retained two Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs) that to this day are not part of the Republic of Cyprus. They are perfectly situated for surveillance of the Middle East, and the runway at Akrotiri in particular makes Cyprus into what Nikita Khrushchev called 'an unsinkable aircraft carrier'.

Christofi's book is rich in curious information. He explains, for instance, that one ingredient of the perfume Chypre used to be obtained by brushing out the beard of goats that had been grazing on a certain shrub. It is a pity he does not spend more time describing some of the remarkable sites on the island – ancient Kourion (in the British SBA), or, in the north, ancient Salamis and nearby Famagusta, with its ruined Gothic churches. But he describes Bellapais, with its abbey, where Lawrence Durrell began to write *Justine* (1957). Durrell is still celebrated there, though I could not find copies of *Bitter Lemons* (1957), his autobiographical book about Cyprus, in the village shop. It's

sad, because *Bitter Lemons* suggests how not so long ago Greeks and Turks co-existed in harmony. Alex Christofi feels understandable nostalgia for those days.

David Abulafia

(Emeritus Professor of Mediterranean History and Fellow of Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge)

With thanks to the TLS where this review previously appeared.

Britain's Man on the Spot in Iraq and Afghanistan: Government and Diplomacy by Sir Henry Dobbs at the Apex of Empire

by Ann Wilks. London, I.B. Tauris, h/b 2023, ISBN: 9780755651320, £85, p/b 2025, ISBN: 9780755651283, £28.99

Sir Henry Dobbs (1871–1934) is hardly a name which will be instantly recognised today even by historians. Indeed, as Ann Wilks remarks in her insightful and informative biography, he has remained relatively unknown despite a few references to him in the literature of the period. His remarkable career as an administrator, starting in India but also in Afghanistan and Iraq where he was its longest serving High Commissioner under the Mandate, have now in her words been ‘brought out of the shadows’. This recognition has been made possible by the discovery of a remarkable collection of letters which Dobbs had written on a regular basis to his wife and to his mother over the course of his career. These letters, along with other materials and personal papers, had remained undisturbed for 80 years in a room in Dobbs’ family house in Ireland which now belongs to Dobbs’ great grandson, who is the nephew of Wilks’ husband. These letters and papers have provided a rich source for understanding not just the detail of the policy conflicts and administrative problems confronting those charged with the responsibility for running Britain’s far-flung outposts of empire, but also the personal impact an individual such as Dobbs could have in a series of postings. But, of course, the burdens of the job inevitably had an impact on the personal lives and health of the administrators themselves, requiring physical and mental resilience.

Three points in particular stand out for me as a result of reading Wilks’ fascinating narrative. The first is how little formal training the new recruits to the Indian Civil Service like Dobbs received. Dobbs had been recruited to the ICS from Winchester after which he spent two years at Oxford, studying languages relevant to the area where he was likely to serve. It was assumed that ‘such elite generalists supported by Indian subordinates would be equal to tackling whatever they faced’, as Wilks remarks. Nor was there any systematic effort to give advance understanding of the country to which they were going or of the conditions in which they would be working. Yet in the case of Dobbs the system clearly worked, as he acquired an impressive range of skills from his initial eight years in India: settling local legal disputes, dealing with burglaries, managing problems with the sanitation and handling famine. All this was in addition to lessons from his work in the secretariat of Sir Anthony MacDonnell, the Lieutenant Governor of the United Province of Agra and Oudh.

The second point which emerges is the changing context of empire. When Dobbs started his career, the British empire seemed unchallenged, as did Britain's place in the international order. By the time his career concluded in 1929 the situation had been transformed. Although the territorial extent of the British Empire had been extended, the new territories added to British responsibilities at the end of the First World War as a result of the break-up of the Ottoman Empire were inherently problematic. These so-called Mandate Territories had contested borders and acute minority problems. And new ideologies and movements challenging the rights of the British to rule in its imperial possessions echoed Woodrow Wilson's advocacy of self-determination and strengthened demands for self-government in various parts of the Empire including India. At home also the political world had changed beyond recognition with the rise of Labour and the new competing claims for public expenditure.

The third point of importance was that Dobbs was able to navigate these changes with dexterity. His range of sympathies and skills, not least the ability and willingness to pursue what he thought was the correct line, even if it was not the official policy of London or Delhi, underlined both his conviction about priorities and his wiliness in negotiation as well as his confidence in pursuing a policy which arguably exceeded his authority. It was in Iraq that Dobbs' career achieved its greatest success. Dobbs took up his formal appointment as High Commissioner in 1923 and he left Iraq in 1929 as Iraq was firmly launched on the path to independent statehood with membership of the League of Nations. Along the way Dobbs had had to negotiate a range of contentious issues including the borders of Iraq, the position of Mosul and securing a treaty between Britain and Iraq. In all of these controversies Dobbs' experience and clarity of mind stood him in good stead, as did his friendship with King Faisal I of Iraq and the quality of Dobbs' knowledge of Iraq. (Dobbs had been able to draw on a series of expert advisers from the beginning of his term of office, including, for example, LMH alumna Gertrude Bell whose turn of the century portrait Wilks includes in the book.)

Above all this book reminds us of the difference which individuals made to the outcome of policy struggles through their character and their commitment to the well-being of the countries in which they served. It should be read by all interested in the evolution of the contemporary conflicts in the Middle East and by anyone interested in the debates about the merits and demerits of administration in the British Empire.

Gillian Peele
Emeritus Fellow

44 Days in Prague: The Runciman Mission & the Race to Save Europe

by Ann Shukman. Hurst & Co, London, 2024, ISBN: 9781911723042, £25

This is an account of a little-known British diplomatic mission to Prague in summer 1938, intended to save Czechoslovakia from dismemberment by Germany and prevent the outbreak of a new war in Europe. Its failure opened the way for the now infamous Munich agreement, today standing as a byword for appeasement – a term that was

ideologically neutral at the time, but assumed only negative connotations as a result.

The author, Ann Shukman, is the granddaughter of the mission's leader, Walter (Lord) Runciman, who was called out of his pleasant retirement as a National Liberal MP and sometime minister, to serve his country one more time. She has drawn on family papers, newly opened archives and personal interviews to tell the story of that doomed expedition, as it appeared to the participants over their 44 days in Prague. In so doing, she has a modest mission of her own: to right what she sees as the injustice done to her grandfather, who was blamed for the failure of the mission and branded thereafter an arch-appeaser.

There can be few people educated in the UK who, at the mention of Munich, do not have in their mind's eye those grainy pictures of Neville Chamberlain on his return from meeting Hitler in Munich, waving his piece of paper and boasting that it heralded 'peace for our time'. With the benefit of hindsight, of course, we know that it did nothing of the kind.

If all-out war had been postponed by a matter of months, however, the tragic denouement for Czechoslovakia was immediate. Britain and France had bought their temporary peace at the expense of Czechoslovakia. By agreeing, over the heads of Czechoslovakia's leaders, to the ceding of Sudetenland to Germany, Britain and France had precipitated the end of Czechoslovakia as a viable sovereign state. With Sudetenland went some of Czechoslovakia's richest natural and industrial resources, and almost a quarter of its population.

Many reasons can be advanced as to why this came about, and they emerge with admirable clarity from Shukman's account of the Runciman mission. There was the inherent weakness of Czechoslovakia as a centralised state made up of several disparate ethnic groups; the pro-German, if not pro-Nazi, sympathies of the German-speaking population; Germany's annexation of Austria in March, which had left Czechoslovakia bordering Nazi-controlled lands on three sides. Last, but not least, were the grievances of Sudeten Germans, who now looked across the border at what seemed more prosperous German-speaking lands.

The failure of the Runciman mission can be seen as a key stage in this sad tale. Shukman emphasises that Runciman saw his job not as mediation, but as facilitating direct talks between the Sudeten Germans and the Czechoslovak authorities, with a view to bringing about a degree of devolution by consent, while keeping Czechoslovakia intact.

The task was complicated by sharp divisions among those purporting to speak for the Sudeten Germans – between those in open sympathy with the Nazis and those of a more moderate persuasion; also by uncertainty about how far the pro-Nazi leader, Konrad Henlein, was free to negotiate and how far he was an agent for Berlin. Recently discovered documents suggest more of the latter. A rosier view than was justified of the prospects for Runciman's success may also reflect the fact that Runciman's deputy, the diplomat Frank Ashton-Gwatkin, had struck up a personal rapport with Henlein.

There was less fellow feeling, it seems, between the British delegation and the more moderate Sudeten German leaders. And while Runciman himself seems to have enjoyed good relations with the Czechoslovak President, Edvard Benes, he also felt

some frustration over an initial lack of flexibility from Prague. Benes, for his part – understandably perhaps – regarded Sudetenland as an internal Czechoslovak affair, in which the British had turned up to meddle, uninvited.

In her meticulous chronicling of the six-week mission, Shukman gives a vivid impression of what appears a very different age. The pace of life was sedate, with country-house (and castle) weekends with local aristocrats, hunting expeditions and carriage drives, as well as Runciman's adult offspring, among others, arriving and leaving at the controls of their private planes. The diaries of Runciman's wife, Hilda, are an important source, although Shukman notes that she seems to share the pro-German sympathies of some of her age and class.

In weighing Runciman's personal responsibility, it is probably fair to say that this would have been a mission impossible, whoever had led it. But the team as a whole was also lamentably deficient in local knowledge, and Shukman hazards that Runciman was also traduced: by some freelance diplomacy conducted by Ashton-Gwatkin, and a lack of consistency from Lord Halifax as foreign secretary. At the very least, Shukman suggests, the blame should be shared.

That said, Runciman, who had shortly before been ennobled as consolation for his omission from Chamberlain's Cabinet, seems not to have been the strongest of leaders. A man of integrity, certainly, but perhaps a little short on curiosity about what his underlings were up to, and with a physical and mental constitution perhaps not up to the task in hand. He is described as being near collapse at several points in those 44 days.

As expertly told by Shukman, this sorry saga stands by itself, but it has wider resonance, too, in the light of more recent events, up to and including Ukraine. In essence, the Runciman mission was faced with a long-standing conundrum. How does democratic government work in a country where a significant ethnic or religious minority commands a majority in a particular locale? Walter Runciman is far from alone in having failed to square that circle.

Mary Dejevsky
(*Peake 1970 Modern Languages*)

The Cambridge Companion to Women Composers

edited by Matthew Head and Susan Wollenberg. Cambridge University Press, 2024, ISBN: 9781108733519, £22.99

In her sole-authored chapter in *The Cambridge Companion to Women Composers*, a volume she co-edited with Matthew Head, Susan Wollenberg (Professor Emerita of Music, University of Oxford, and Fellow Emerita in Music, LMH) addresses a salient issue regarding women composers' continued exclusion from the Western art music canon: the persistent dearth of detailed, critical work in the field of music analysis that focuses on women's music. For too long, there has been a 'lack of serious attention' to women's musical works, partly due to prevailing 'assumptions of superficial attractiveness rather than depth' (Wollenberg, p. 36). If musicologists were to devote

more sustained analytical attention to this repertoire, it might more readily gain the enduring recognition it deserves. Such engagement would constitute a ‘feminist act’: treating women’s music ‘as the object of close analytical scrutiny’ (p. 38) would serve to demonstrate the richness and complexity of these works and contribute to the broader ‘process of embedding these erstwhile neglected composers and their music rightfully, not only in the current consciousness but also in the musical heritage we can hope to pass on to posterity’ (p. 46). The keyword here is ‘embedding’: a canon is not simply a means of compiling a handy list of important figures and works from the musical past, but a template for the future.

Such progressive insight and critical clarity are characteristic of Susan’s work. Many will know her as the Fellow in Music at LMH from 1972 until her retirement in 2016, and as the first woman appointed to a University Lectureship in Music (also in 1972). Her undergraduate lectures, which often involved vivid, engaging analyses of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century music, left a lasting impression on those of us fortunate enough to study with her. I recall beautifully precise handouts of musical extracts, written in her own hand; and she would regularly take to the piano to illustrate her points, guiding us through the intricacies of the music with the kind of passion characteristic of a true expert. There can be little doubt, then, that Susan has already succeeded in passing her wisdom ‘on to posterity’.

Susan’s teaching introduced me to the central themes and questions of feminist musicology, a field in which she remains a pioneer. This new *Companion*, a crystallisation of her decades of scholarship and pedagogy, is nothing short of a landmark contribution – scholarly, accessible, and urgently relevant.

There is much to celebrate in the volume. It strikes a careful balance between thematic and historical structure, weaving together broader cultural perspectives with detailed case studies. The chapters explore how women have navigated and challenged social constraints across centuries. After a wide-ranging opening section on key disciplinary themes (Part I), the remainder of the book turns to focused examinations of women composers’ lives, music and contexts (Parts II–IV). Its historical span is impressive, ranging from medieval figures such as the Comtessa de Dia (in Margot Fassler’s chapter) to living experimentalists such as Jennifer Walshe (in Louise Gray’s chapter).

The clarity of expression that characterises the volume makes it a valuable resource for scholars, students and lifelong learners alike. Particularly striking is the book’s prologue (pp. 1–15), which – to borrow a favourite expression of Susan’s – is a case of *multum in parvo*. In just 13 pages plus endnotes, the editors survey a wide body of foundational literature on women composers and incorporate recent data from the music profession. A key aim is to move ‘away from the myth of “great women composers” to “women who composed”’ (Head and Wollenberg, p. 11) – that is, a desire to attend to the diversity of musical practice that extends beyond the traditional view of composition as a wholly professionalised discipline. The editors’ approach, then, is critical and synergistic – but, most importantly, their vision is demonstrably original and productive.

Each chapter is authored by a subject specialist and draws thoughtfully on existing

scholarship while challenging entrenched narratives. Among the highlights is Paula Higgins's trenchant contribution on the 'transience of female musical fame'. Her writing is both urgent and rigorous, dismantling what she calls 'obdurate music historical myths' and 'misogynous shibboleths of the past', such as the oft-recited claims that there were simply fewer women composers in earlier centuries, and that those few who did compose produced music unworthy of attention (Higgins, pp. 19–20). Instead, Higgins calls upon us to break the 'recurrent cycles of amnesia that have consigned the music of women . . . to oblivion' (p. 20) in order to imagine a more critically rich and inclusive musical culture.

I was especially pleased to see LMH well represented in the volume. Alongside Susan's editorial and authorial contributions, her successor, Gascia Ouzounian (Associate Professor of Music, University of Oxford, and Fellow in Music, LMH, since 2016), contributes an invigorating feminist critique of the gendered exclusions that persist in the history of sound art; and Joe Davies (formerly Lecturer in Music at LMH) co-authors a rich chapter on women's 'creativity as pianist-composers' in the nineteenth century. That others from LMH are part of this project feels no coincidence: it speaks to Susan's enduring influence as a scholar, teacher and mentor whose legacy continues to shape musicology from this college outwards.

Dr Jacob Kingsbury Downs

(Departmental Lecturer in Music at the University of Oxford and Organising Tutor in Music at Lady Margaret Hall)

The Julio-Claudian Principate: Tradition and Transition

edited by Christina T. Kuhn, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2025, ISBN: 9783515137485, €48

Christina Kuhn, Fellow and Tutor in Ancient History at LMH, has edited a sparkling volume of ten scholarly essays (all in English) on the period of the formation and consolidation of the Roman Principate, founded by C. Julius Caesar Augustus and carried on by descendants of his wife, the Claudii.

The cover illustration of the *Gemma Claudia* evokes the world of Robert Graves' novels on Claudius. It is of a cameo carved in five layers of sardonyx, now in Vienna, probably produced in about AD 49 for the private delectation of the emperor's family. It shows four heads. Two males in profile in the foreground are the emperor Claudius and his brother Germanicus, who had died in AD 19. Behind them are portraits of Germanicus's dead wife Agrippina the Elder and their daughter Agrippina the Younger, who had married her paternal uncle Claudius (after a decree legalised the incest).

These are top people, three of them descended by birth or adoption from Augustus. He had presided over what Ronald Syme (after the pattern of the English regime change of 1688) famously called the Roman Revolution. As Christina Kuhn points out, there were no 'revolutionary ideas, plans, or socio-economic crisis'. She cites Fergus Millar's formulation: 'a revolution of consciousness, in which, on the part of Romans and non-Romans alike, an awareness arose everywhere of being part of a system where power was held by a single ruler'. One thinks of Matthew 22.20–21: 'Whose is this image and superscription?' ... 'Caesar's'. Syme in 1939 focused on the elite, a tiny section of the

Roman citizen population – and citizens were far outnumbered by other inhabitants of the empire, who belonged to their own city, kingdom, or tribe, or were slaves.

Before Augustus, the Roman state, the *res publica*, ‘the People’s Thing’ or ‘the commonwealth’, was represented (on military standards and so on) as SPQR: (the) Senate and (the) Roman People’. That did not change. Augustus, the victor after decades of civil war, imposed himself as a leader, *princeps*. As Peter Wiseman argues in a hard-hitting chapter, his elected offices, special powers, and honours were bestowed by the People; contemporaries show gratitude for stability and acceptance of his leadership. ‘I shall not fear emergency nor death by violence while Caesar holds the world’, as Horace said (*Odes* 3.14.14–16). Augustus experimented, revised, introduced changes gradually: ‘You shoulder so many great tasks by yourself, you protect the life of Italy by arms, adorn it with morals, and reform it with laws’ (Horace; *Epistles* 2.1.1–3). It was his responsibility to see the new order continued: he trained and promoted men who might take over his ‘sentry-post’ but was repeatedly frustrated by death. Eventually, his wife’s son Tiberius was adopted and received special constitutional powers like those of Augustus, so that in AD 14, when Augustus died, he was automatically *princeps*, a head taller than his fellow senators.

Eleanor Cowan, inspired by theory on ‘post-conflict transitional justice’, studies the contemporary historian Velleius’s emphasis on law and order under Augustus and Tiberius (under whom Velleius had served). John Drinkwater portrays the Julio-Claudian principate as ‘plastic’. (His previous formulation was a ‘dog’s breakfast’.) It was not a foregone conclusion that it would last and produce the template for dynasties of emperors unrelated to Augustus. The Julio-Claudians did not merely imitate the founder. Annika Kuhn explores Tiberius’s nuanced treatment of honours offered by the Senate; Christopher Mallan has Caligula adopting and botching Tiberius’s example. The interesting Jewish princes who lived in Rome for extended periods (e.g. in the house of Mark Antony’s daughter Antonia, Claudius’s mother) allow Martin Goodman to speculate about the influence of ‘exotic’ royal personages on the ‘court’ of the emperor. Courtiers and palaces crept in. Werner Eck surveys changes to the consulship, which remained a coveted honour for the elite and a qualification for provincial governorships. Government required an ample pool of administrators. Josiah Osgood examines the wealth, influence and status of women related to senators. (Women of the imperial family occur throughout the book.) Finally, we turn to material evidence: Andrew Burnett on the successful provision of low-denomination coinage by Nero (doing better than Augustus) and Clare Rowan on the lead tokens (used for instance as tickets) which show motifs of Julio-Claudians, including wives and children of emperors.

Wiseman reminds us of the lesson hammered into Greats students and other Oxford historians and followed by all the contributors: ‘the elementary rules of empirical enquiry: primary evidence before secondary interpretation, and within the category of primary evidence, contemporary sources before those who wrote with hindsight’. This spirited and accessible book deserves a wide audience.

Susan Treggiari
(Franklin 1958 *Litterae Humaniores*)

Young Workers of the Industrial Age: Child Labour in the 18th and 19th Centuries

by Sue Wilkes. Pen & Sword, 2024, ISBN: 9781036113834, £25

In this excellent survey of child workers in industrialising Britain, Sue Wilkes starts by explaining that many things to be found in a well-to-do Georgian or Victorian home were made by people under the age of 13: bricks, glass, cutlery, candles, pins, buttons and lace. Wherever you looked – in factories, workshops, mines, mills, alleys, and open fields – you would see small people, some as young as four, girls as well as boys, slaving for up to 16 hours to pump out consumer goods in an increasingly acquisitive capitalist market. In return the children earned a few coppers to add to the meagre family income.

Inevitably conditions were harsh. Not every child was as unlucky as 12-year-old James Hume who lost his whole arm in a Dundee flax mill and was forced to return to work after a couple of months ‘having no other means to support his miserable existence’. But still factory machinery was chillingly efficient at taking off stray fingers, while the fabric fibres that floated in the air in a textile shed could play havoc with developing lungs. Match-makers, meanwhile, found themselves developing ‘phossy jaw’ – highly disfiguring necrosis of the jaw caused by handling the toxic phosphorous that was used to make the ignitable matchhead. Boys who were intended for the mines had their elbows and knees rubbed with brine to make them tough enough for all the crawling over hard rock that was an essential part of their daily existence.

And then there were the more generalised hazards. Cramming dirty bodies into unventilated spaces created ideal conditions for infections and epidemics to sweep through over-crowded factories and mills, laying waste to the weakest members of the workforce. These were also the circumstances where sexual abuse might flourish, either between adult and child workers or at the hands of employers. At Litton Mill in Derbyshire, the foremen were often seen ‘tak[ing] up the petticoats of big girls’. And then there were the disproportionate punishments – sharp blows meted out to children who could not turn a treadle fast enough, or who dreamt of answering back. The people of Wigan were horrified to learn in 1833 about William Swanton, the foreman of a factory in Eccles, who punished a 10-year-old ‘hand’ called Ellen Hooton by attaching heavy weights to her tiny body as a punishment for running away.

Inevitably, a new breed of socially responsible reporter started to write novels aimed at shining a light on these appalling conditions. Dickens’ *Hard Times* makes a mockery of the bleak ethic of utilitarianism with its emphasis on material self-interest and its reduction of individuals to mere products or units of labour. Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Mary Barton* likewise critiques the aridity of Manchester mill culture while Charles Kingsley wrote *The Water Babies* as a direct commentary on the iniquity of sending small boys up chimneys.

Some employers took notice, and Sue Wilkes takes us carefully through attempts made by well-meaning factory owners to do their best for their juvenile workforce. Samuel Oldnow, a self-made cotton manufacturer in Derbyshire, provided his child

labourers, many of them orphans shipped out from inner London parishes, with fresh meat every day. He even planted fruit trees so that the children would have a constant source of good nutrition and employed a doctor to look after them when they became ill. Titus Salt was a benefactor on an even greater scale. At his alpaca wool factory in Bradford he built an entire model village called ‘Saltaire’ which came complete with several schools and ‘an abundance of playgrounds’.

Another approach was taken by the social reformer Lord Shaftesbury who campaigned hard for legislation to limit the number of hours that a child could work in a factory. In 1833 the Factory Act prohibited the employment of children under nine, limited working hours for older children and introduced an inspectorate to uphold the law. Not everyone was pleased. Employers who were committed laissez-fairists bitterly resented having to throw open their doors to nosy parkers. As far as they were concerned, it was the beginning of what we now call the Nanny State.

In time more and more legislation was introduced to protect young workers, although Sue Wilkes makes the sombre point that even by the early twentieth century, boys wearing harnesses could still be found dragging sledges of coal like pit-ponies in the thin seams of the Forest of Dean. While Britain may no longer have a large child labour force, Wilkes’ book makes us think hard about the disturbing fact that many of the goods that we order casually over the internet today may well be made by children in sweatshops on the other side of the world. It is a sobering thought.

Kathryn Hughes
(1978 History)

Light on Darkness: The Untold Story of the Liturgy

by Cosima Clara Gillhammer, Reaktion Books, 2025, ISBN: 9781836390435, £15.99

A study of the liturgy of the Church may in the modern world sound like a niche interest (which I happen to share), but in *Light on Darkness: The Untold Story of the Liturgy* Cosima Gillhammer boldly claims that the liturgy has been central to the development of western culture as a whole:

Liturgy is at the roots of Western culture. Our music, art, literature and architecture are shaped by it and developed out of the liturgy. Without it, Dante’s *Divine Comedy* would not exist, and neither would Michelangelo’s *Pietà*. Not even *Star Wars* would have its memorable soundtrack had it not been for medieval liturgy.

A bold claim such as this demands bold argument, and she does not disappoint. In later chapters on ‘Hope’, ‘Grief’ and ‘Death’ she makes good these specific claims. For example in ‘Grief’ she takes the tradition of *Stabat mater* (the Virgin Mary at the foot of the cross of her dying son) and traces it from its biblical origin to a thirteenth-century Italian poem used in liturgies of the Passion on Good Friday, through a whole body of poetry. She shows it being developed further through painting including the *Isenheim Altarpiece*, exquisitely varied in sculpture in Michelangelo’s and Käthe Kollwitz’s

versions of the *Pietà*, and more recently how it has been recalled even in *Lord of the Rings* and the Bond film *Skyfall*. The liturgical theme has haunting echoes in all these forms.

The argument of *Light on Darkness* is not narrowly drawn or written for the specialist liturgist, historian or even necessarily the Christian; early in the Introduction it provides a sketch of Christian doctrine clearly drawn in terms of the Apostles' Creed. Little can be assumed in this secular age. In conversation with a young woman recently, I was asked what I do – 'I'm a clergyman'; 'And what do they do?', she asked. I doubt my startled response was as clear about the liturgy and its function as this introduction. Still, the theological discussion will not always be easy for the uninitiated.

Each chapter takes an aspect of the liturgy and shows how over time it has become pervasive in the culture. The first chapter, 'Petition', takes the psalms and follows from the poetic text to plainchant to Allegri's *Miserere* to Arvo Pärt and James MacMillan via 'Byrd, Bach, Handel, Gounod, Wesley and Brahms', and that was just for Psalm 51. The examples can leave you breathless, and moved by both the musical analysis and theological commentary. Then it's on to poetry and Shakespeare, the *Agnus Dei*, relief sculptures on sarcophagi and architectural ceiling-bosses, and English pub signs for the 'Lamb and Flag'.

This journey of imagination and erudition continues with a chapter on 'Love' and the 'Song of Songs'. Like further chapters, universal human emotion and experience is explored in a liturgical and cultural setting. To be fully understood, the liturgy itself must be experienced first-hand, with its formal development, its sounds, smells, movement and gestures, all within a worshipping community in its own particular architectural setting, wherever that may be. All these aspects will contribute to the understanding of the particular celebration. During Covid, I was asked to celebrate the Eucharist and preach online with only a single participating technician. I was alone addressing a camera and the isolation itself both emphasised the importance of all that was missing, but also poignantly underlined the human cost of lockdown and the spiritual healing that even this impoverished liturgy could bring.

More than any other book I know, *Light on Darkness* strives to give access to such a visceral understanding of the liturgy of the Western Church in all its dimensions, and furthermore to reveal how it continues to shape the arts of Western culture as a whole. It is a splendid achievement.

Allan Doig
Emeritus Fellow

The Mystery of John: Reflections on the Fourth Gospel

by Paula Griffiths. Instant Apostle, 2025, ISBN: 9781912726875, £13.99

It is a great pleasure to be asked to review a book by Paula Griffiths, whom I have known since we were at LMH more than 50 years ago. I write from the perspective of an interested lay person, while noting the excellent reviews by clerical luminaries such as Rowan Williams.

As history students, Paula and I had to read swiftly through lengthy booklists every week, making notes, with the need to write essays to tight deadlines. Later, however, some of those books could be read more slowly for pleasure, and for their insights and wisdom. In the same way, my first reading of this book enabled me to pick out the author's most striking insights into the writer of John's Gospel, his message and its presentation. I knew at once that I would be returning to it again and again, sometimes to just one paragraph, for instruction and for an aid to reflection and prayer.

The question of the identity of John is one that I have always been interested in, and this book allowed me to consider it systematically. It is addressed in chapters 2 and 3, explored on the basis of available evidence, using sound historical methods, and I found the conclusions very convincing. John was present at the time and, as Paula shows in chapter 11, wrote deliberately and carefully for those to come, testifying to the truth of Jesus. John's relationship with the synoptic gospels is also investigated, and I found the book a helpful guide to understanding why the church chose to canonise these four accounts in particular, rather than adopting another solution.

With regard to language, the explanations of the subtleties of Greek vocabulary used by John are valuable, while the elucidation of a practical and confusing issue – the approach of different denominations to admittance to the Eucharist – was welcome.

The chapter on the wedding at Cana has given me a new perspective on that sign, while ideas on the parts played by some of the other apostles are intriguing. I was particularly moved by the discussion of the last meeting of Jesus on the beach with a group of disciples – one of my favourite stories – which shows John bringing the account to a cohesive conclusion while demonstrating Jesus's 'extravagant' and 'overwhelming generosity'.

Paula illumines her text with her own experiences and reflections, both as a lay person and as a priest. As a book for individuals and for church groups to use for study, it is accessibly written, each chapter ends with questions to consider and a prayer, and it has useful notes (but not too many) and a bibliography.

In conclusion, I am very glad that Paula made use of her downtime with a broken leg to consolidate her thoughts and produce this book. I can happily recommend it.

Christine Shaw
(1968 History)

Simeon

by Sarah Searight. Claret Press, 2024, ISBN: 9781399987745, £12.99

After reading history at LMH Sarah worked as a journalist in Beirut, often visiting Syria on assignment. She has a deep knowledge and love for Arabia. Her books include *The British in the Middle East*, *Steaming East* and *Lapis Lazuli*, all inspired by research-based travel.

Some 30 kilometres west of the great city of Aleppo lie the remains of Qalaat Simaan, beside the main road between the Mediterranean world and the East. High on a hillside stand the ruins of the huge octagonal Basilica built by the emperor Zeno in

477 only some 18 years after Simeon's death; at its centre a worn stone about one and a half metres high, the remains of the pillar on which Simeon lived for some 36 years.

Simeon is a book quite unlike any other; original, daring, many-layered, imaginative. As a writer, Sarah recreates the life of an eccentric and revered saint, Simeon Stylites, about whom there is little factual record. As an historian, she describes the political, spiritual and social turbulence of his times. The site has been a focus for pilgrims, merchants, soldiers ever since. As a journalist and skilled travel writer, she examines her deeply personal engagement with Syria, recalling with affection the individuals who welcome her. She revisits the site, sometimes mysteriously accompanied by a Jinn. Is he Simeon's re-incarnation? A *genus loci*? Or simply a lonely, old, wild man? We never learn.

Simeon elicits natural curiosity – why and how did he do what he did . . . 36 years on a pillar, totally dependent on devoted servants? What did he teach or preach? Why did this eccentric action have such impact? Was he mad? Was he truly inspired? Has he any relevance today? People seeking renewed faith, travellers, painters, poets and film-makers, not least Tennyson and Luis Buñuel, have been inspired by his remarkable tenacity and strange vocation.

Simeon is a new departure: part travelogue, part reflective commentary, part imaginative novel. Sarah takes the reader into a world where past and present intertwine. She seeks to recreate the atmosphere of that early Christian era with its fears, its instabilities, political and doctrinal, and the crippling sense of guilt which took hold of those holy men and hermits. Sarah sets off with Simeon from his peasant home near Antioch for the Holy City of Jerusalem. He stops and stays at Telnessin, seeking redemption through suffering. Simeon subjects himself to extreme fasting and total denial of physical comfort, rejecting cleanliness and shelter. He does not hide himself away like the other desert fathers, but has his followers build a three-stone pillar (referencing the Trinity which was being so hotly disputed, together with the nature of Christ, at the Councils of Nicaea, Ephesus, Chalcedon). His devotees Jacob, a Manichean, and Zerco, a deformed Hun, loyally feed him and ward off invasive visitors. His reputation grows and the small town thrives.

Simple people come to hear his admonitions; the great come too, some seeking blessing; some understanding; many simply curious. Situated beside this much travelled road, those who came were not only Syrians but also the Israelites, Persians and Armenians; also travellers from further west – Spaniards and Britons and Gauls. 'It is unnecessary to speak about Italy, for they say that at Rome Simeon was so celebrated that they set up small images in all the forecourts and parishes to provide protection and security,' writes the Patriarch Theodoretus.

It is a complicated book, full of historical echoes and reverberations. There is no clear message – that was how Simeon was, how the world around him was; how is it now? and how will it be? What Simeon preached apart from violent warnings to pray and pay heed to God, we do not learn. His words are simple and shockingly demotic, even rough; his privations are described with some humour – he stands on one leg exposed to the heat of the sun for hours, a hoopoe perched on his head; his body is filthy and invaded with lice; onions seem to be the essential diet. But we are assured

that many found comfort and reassurance as they sought him out – and many have continued to do so over the centuries. He is a phenomenon.

Qalaat Simaan is one of those few places in the world where, even amidst crowds of pilgrims and noisy tourists, and pursued by children offering bunches of wild irises which grow in abundance between the cracks of the rocks, one can experience a rare sense of peace, which is both humbling and inspiring, a feeling of timelessness, an assurance that all will be well. Sarah's book makes me want to return to find those things I might have missed; only a book can do that.

Anne Simor

(Crowe 1958 Modern Languages)

Nature Tales for Winter Nights

edited by Nancy Campbell. Elliott & Thompson, h/b 2023, ISBN: 9781783967421, £16.99, p/b 2024, ISBN 9781783967469, £10.99

It was a joy to walk into a bookshop and discover another book by Nancy Campbell. *Nature Tales for Winter Nights* is a wonderful compendium of work by a wide range of authors from across the world and across the centuries on the theme of winter. It is a literary treasure trove which celebrates the natural world, and lights up even the darkest time of the year. Thus, the collection has the effect of transporting the reader to another time and place, and the result is moving and profound.

The introduction sets the scene. Just as winter begins to set in, the author learns that she has been granted a research fellowship in a 'once-ruined now-restored castle'. Nancy decides to use this opportunity to travel deep into the winter season, ultimately searching for spring at its conclusion. She describes the castle library, uncatalogued and rich in literary treasure awaiting discovery. With access to the internet limited, the collection of authors is gathered from real books on library shelves, and discussed with real people. The relationship between human beings and the natural world is explored and illustrated in so many of the excerpts. How wonderful to escape technology for a while, to have time for personal study, to meet with like-minded readers and to explore the yew-lined avenue. The robin who accompanies winter walks and perches on holly outside the library somehow recalls the robin of *The Secret Garden*.

It is hard to choose examples from the authors included in this anthology because there are so many to revisit or discover. To give a flavour of the content, Anne Frank poignantly longs for fresh air, Walt Whitman visits the New Jersey seashore in December, Virginia Woolf recalls the Great Frost which froze the Thames, while Tove Jansson describes an encounter with an iceberg. James Frazer is there too, describing mistletoe (*The Golden Bough*), and Longus is a voice from the ancient world, showing how snow limits human activity in any age. When about to research some of the authors online, I found that there is a biographical paragraph on each of them included for reference, and it was refreshing to escape the internet and find a completeness in the book itself.

This book with its beautiful cover will find a permanent place on the bookshelf because its wide-ranging content can be revisited year on year. It would make a wonderful gift, too. It is a book inviting hibernation on winter nights, but it is also filled with hope. However dark the winter is, spring is its inevitable successor. Intending that each copy of the book should acquire its own inscription, Nancy Campbell concludes by saying: 'I assembled these tales for all who light fires and tend a hearth, and welcome travellers in from the storm.'

Judith Garner
(1977 *Litterae Humaniores*)

My Good Bright Wolf: A Memoir

by Sarah Moss. Picador, 2024, ISBN 9781035035816, £18.99

In this powerful memoir, Sarah Moss suggests that events from her childhood and ideas instilled in her then – particularly by her parents – resulted in an eating disorder in her teenage years that returned even more dangerously when she was in her forties. It is also an account of her development as a writer and a scholar against the backdrop of centuries when women fought hard to be taken seriously in those roles. While her parents played their part in forming her sense of herself as a girl and a woman, both helpfully and unhelpfully, so too did her childhood reading, from Beatrix Potter to *The Bell Jar*, via *Swallows and Amazons*, *Little Women* and *Jane Eyre*. It is not, as Moss stresses, a self-help book (although she includes a reading list). However, many readers, particularly women, will find that it chimes with their own experiences and makes them reflect.

In the first part, covering the period from her birth to leaving home for university, Moss speaks to herself, not to us:

You couldn't read. Everyone else could read. Almost everyone else had been able to read for a whole year. *You're just not trying, are you, you just don't want to do it*, but you were trying and you did want to do it.

The words in italics, we assume, are those of her parents, who could not bear her 'dullness'. Moss also uses italics to represent a critical voice, harsh in tone, which constantly interrupts, jeering at her, accusing her of self-pity as it calls her memories into question, from a laconic '*Seriously?*' to more extensive reproaches: '*So? I hope you're not complaining that being taken hiking constituted suffering. Do you have any idea, even now, what a lucky girl you were?*' At first the voice seems to represent what she remembers her parents (the Owl and the Jumbly Girl) saying, but gradually she assimilates it until she carries this critic in her head, always ready to jump in and undermine her.

At the start, Moss is careful to acknowledge that others may have different memories of the times she describes. However, what she describes so clearly and powerfully is compelling in spite of the sniping of the critical voice and I think I know who to trust.

To counter the critic, Moss seeks comfort: ‘if you in midlife could send an emissary, a familiar, to you in childhood . . . You need a reverse ghost here, a present voice to haunt the past’. She conjures a familiar, taking the form of the wolf of the book’s title, and sends her to revisit her childhood memories and spread much-needed kindness. When Moss remembers, for example, her parents preventing her from experimenting with make-up, she sends the wolf to say ‘it’s fine to paint your face in pretty colours, . . . but then out you go, you go into the world with your whole strong body, not just your painted face’. The Jumbly Girl struggles with her body; the Owl chides her for being fat, and praises Sarah for resisting puddings and losing weight. At the age of 14 she is diagnosed with anorexia and referred to a psychiatrist: ‘Wolf, walk beside that fading girl.’

In the second part, Moss is in her mid-forties. A successful novelist and academic, she has recently moved her family to Ireland. We are mid-pandemic. Here she recounts what happens in the third person and it begins when she steps onto the bathroom scales: ‘The number was horrifying, higher than it had ever been . . . She should have caught it earlier . . . She had lost control without noticing.’ Her eating disorder takes hold again. She ends up in hospital, fiercely resisting an intravenous drip for fear that it will make her fat – even when doctors are warning her of imminent organ failure.

In the final section, Moss addresses herself again. She has been discharged from hospital, but her recovery is precarious and her work is suffering: ‘you could no longer build or inhabit the world of a novel, only document your own unravelling’. Finally, she finds a therapist whom she can work with and sets about it in the way she knows best – scholarly analysis. ‘This is all very interesting,’ her therapist says wryly, ‘but . . . you can’t read or analyse your way to health, you have to eat and you have to keep eating.’ By the end of the book, she has reached a place of safety where she can even venture to help others. ‘No making of art,’ she says, ‘without a body, no body without food.’ She conjures a feast: ‘Come then, wolf, to the table, for soles with a counterpane of the whitest cream, for partridges with potatoes thin as coins but not so hard.’

I imagine this was a difficult book to write, but I’m certain it is an important one. Moss brings together her analytical dexterity and her novelist’s skill at picking just the right words to light up the pages and take us straight to the unhappy little girl’s gruelling family holidays, or to the confrontations adult Sarah has in hospital during lockdown. Her animal familiar continues to spread kindness:

‘Watch over me, wolf, while I eat.’

Alison Gomm
(1974 English)

Ephemeral

by Jane McLaughlin. Dreich Press, 2024, ISBN: 9781739596934, £6

Ephemeral is a 32-page pamphlet of poems about the natural world. What first struck me was the vividness of the descriptions. Each poem is like a small painting – exact, colourful, complete in itself, and yet the poems are not static but full of movement.

In 'The Thames at Mortlake', for example, the colours of the water change as it moves and reflects its surroundings:

khaki silk rumped under pewter
ripple-shoals....

light brushed over dark
in shifting aquarelle

In 'Peacocks in the Park', the birds are first seen as 'rocks of black opal / among the ragwort'. Then, with the 'rustle and fall of a crinoline' one of them shakes out its dramatic tail. Birds are a favourite subject. At the garden feeder, 'goldfinches flare' in 'February Sonnet' and a blackbird's beak, a robin's breast are 'like struck matches, two points of colour' in 'The Beat'. In 'Geese', those birds 'swirl and swoop' at the end of summer, then 'fall into line' and form a 'perfect wedge' behind the leader. 'Buzzards' is even more lively – the whole poem describes the movements of these 'weavers of sky-patterns' and in 'By the Banks of the Murrumbidgee' a flock of cockatoos 'crashes upwards in a flurry of white wings an upside-down snowstorm with sunspots of sulphur'.

Interestingly, in 'Territory', a place of many robins, it is not the birds' appearance or movements which the poet concentrates on, but the territorial nature of their rival songs. 'Each sharp little trill / is saying "Mine! Mine! Keep off!"' so that the poet feels she is 'crossing an unseen net / of fierce-fought boundaries'.

As well as birds, many other creatures appear in the poems. Black lambs in 'The Yalding Flock' run into an enclosure, 'their ebony intense as a cosmic hole / from which no light escapes'. There are fish ('Fish at Amritsar'), an elephant ('The Elephant in the Traffic Jam') and fireflies ('Fireflies in Maine'), where a storm brings them to life. And, though I'm less keen on spiders, there are wonderful descriptions of *araneus diadematus* in the poem of that name – their webs 'circled strands of light stuck with stars' and their young 'a jewelled pod / of vivid yellow spiderlings'.

Weather conditions are described, too. 'Jack Frost' paints the inside of the window with 'ferns and whorls . . . filigree forests, etched trees of the ice-world', which takes me back to my childhood. The storm which brought out the fireflies in Maine is vividly described. And there are two snow poems, and one about a flood.

But Jane McLaughlin's intention in these poems is not just to provide us with pretty pictures, to remind us of birdsong or the scent of lavender fields. We are preoccupied with our own work and worries, the need to maintain ourselves and our families and our responsibilities to wider society, but the main point of this collection, hinted at in its title, is the responsibility of human beings towards the natural world. Animals, birds and the countryside are being harmed by us. We need to become more aware of this and take steps to preserve them.

The title poem, 'Ephemeral', tells us indeed to 'catch it now / the richness the gift the utter magnificence' but goes on to warn us. We must see and appreciate nature: 'write it sing it draw it paint it' before 'bees stop flying . . . before glaciers melt . . . before trees

drop for the last time'. 'The Grass under the Skin' reminds us that 'town river water' has been polluted, that 'in a city square the apple blossom / holds in shadows between branches / ghosts of orchards long rooted up' and the former villages 'have been digested, / cast out like owl's pellets'.

In 'The Nocturnal House' (presumably in Australia) the poet remembers extinct or endangered animals: 'Outside the sky boils / the land burns red brick.' In 'Flood Video' she watches a flood on a screen:

This video tells me of stripping out
the living land, burrows and nests, all
the small living creatures, bulbs....corms

These poems come at the beginning of the collection and we are supposed to read the ensuing celebrations of nature with their message in mind. And these losses and extinctions are not just local problems. Poems referring to Australia, India and the polar regions present the problem as a global one. In the final poem, 'Legacy', an old sea-chest, a grandfather's legacy, is now found to contain a block of ice, 'as if he's saying: / I travelled the polar floes . . . My gift is the cold. / Do not let it go', reminding us of the shrinking of glaciers and the animals affected by the thinning of Arctic and Antarctic ice caused by global warming – which is caused by us.

Chris Considine
(*Maney 1960 English*)

In the Here and Now

by Janet Montefiore. Shoestring Press, 2024, ISBN: 9781915553546, £10

Janet Montefiore's poetry is skilful, thoughtful and varied. I was surprised to see that she has not previously published many collections, though I am aware that her academic career must have taken up much of her time and energy.

Considering this collection as a whole, I was reminded of the 'left brain versus right brain theory', the left side being associated with logic and analysis and the right with creativity and intuition. Janet Montefiore's poems seem to draw on both sides.

The poems nearer to the beginning of the book seemed for the most part to be more direct, more emotional and perhaps more accessible. Many readers can relate to subjects such as childbirth and the deaths of parents and other close relatives. In particular I could relate to the poems where the writer refers to her mother's dementia, such as 'Another Time',

My mother's face is a tombstone – blank, but for a few
semi-legible lines.
In loving memory?
So I like to believe. But how can I guess what
if anything, she recalls?

though the poet remembers that ‘in another time / she loved language and the world.’

Another memorable poem, unusual in its subject matter, is ‘What Mothers Do: Canterbury and Baghdad 1991’. The TV news is on. The poet’s son is playing nearby ‘not knowing yet that his journalist father / has gone back to the war zone’. She dreads ‘his fearful questions’ and nightmares such as he has had in the past.

On the screen is a dead 10-year-old Iraqi boy, ‘his mother sitting beside him’. Although her son is ‘broken past help or comfort’ she must stay with him, ‘doing what mothers do’. Then the camera shows some Western newsmen. ‘There....stands my husband.... his face twisted in pity.’ The writer’s son looks up but doesn’t react, ‘apparently seeing nothing’. She puts him to bed, ‘I tuck him in safe and warm, / wait for his breathing to quieten, doing what mothers do.’

The poems further on in the book seem more intellectual, more analytical – though I am generalising here.

And throughout the collection, though more often nearer the end, there is frequent and accomplished use of rhyme and of verse-forms such as the sonnet and ottava rima. I loved the verse-form used in ‘Feathered the bed of Nightmare’ – not sestina, not villanelle – is it the poet’s invention? The last words of the first three lines: guilt, nightmare, quilt, are used as the last words of the last three lines in every subsequent stanza (with one small variation). This poem exemplifies the combination of cleverness and emotion in the collection as a whole. One admires the form, but at the same time responds more viscerally to the subject of nightmare – surely something we have all experienced. The repetitions of guilt, quilt, nightmare, and several references to the intense cold ‘the pane of icy glass / covered with fronds of branching frost’, the repeated message that an innocent bird was ‘maimed and killed’ to provide feathers and down for the quilt, set the scene powerfully, though we are never given details of the nightmare itself (surely something in addition to the slaughter of the bird).

The standout poem in the later part of the collection is ‘The Lecturer’s Dream’, consisting of thirty-seven 8-lined stanzas. This is definitely a *tour-de-force*: witty and knowledgeable. A note tells us that the poem was ‘inspired by the experience of teaching an undergraduate course on “The Novel” in the 1970s’ and that parts of it are ‘derived from phrases often used in student essays’. Some of these words and phrases are less familiar to me – formerly a mere secondary-school English teacher – but the poem is lively and humorous.

The lecturer falls asleep and dreams. A ‘Mythological Entity’ leads the dreamer up a ladder to a hollow chamber which, the dreamer is told, is ‘the inside of your head’ – very similar to the British Museum’s Reading Room, full of famous novelists including ‘Tolkien sitting with a group of elves’. We are told that these novelists are relaxing by playing ‘Literary Happy Families’, a card-game in which they take turns to request cards from each other. The following stanza gives a small taste of the style and subject-matter:

(The strain of keeping up *ottava rima*
Has tempted me to slack half-rhyming ways:
Apologies from your distracted dreamer.)

Jane Austen's turn, and as you'd guess, she plays
 A wily game, getting a Moral Theme, a
 Symbolic Paradox (a card that pays
 Double) and Biting Irony from Dickens,
 At which a vein upon his temple thickens.

There is so much in this collection to enjoy and think about. It is impossible for me to pick out every memorable passage. The collection is well worth reading, perhaps several times. I hope to see more of Janet Montefiore's poetry in the future.

Chris Considine
(Maney 1960 English)

The Eights

by Joanna Miller. Fig Tree at Penguin Books, 2025, ISBN: 9780241662434, £16.99

This novel is set in Oxford in 1920, when, for the first time in its thousand-year history the world's most famous university formally admitted female students. It tells the story of the friendship that developed between four young women who moved into Corridor 8 at St Hugh's that year, dealing not only with the challenges we've all experienced at university – the essay crisis, the awkward fellow-students, the tricky tutors, the complex feelings – but also with a university packed with young men suffering in one way or another after the First World War and, in many cases, not welcoming to women; a tense atmosphere around the admittance of women; colleges filled with young women with their own personal memories of pre-war unrest including violent suffragette marches, or of traumatic experiences nursing in wartime; and an exhausting code of conduct requiring chaperones when meeting men and a gown and cap for every visit to town.

It's a promising scenario – an historic moment of hope and social change set against a backdrop of pain, an interplay of light and shade offering all kinds of possibilities. The protagonists are, in so many ways, pioneering heroines.

The reader is quickly introduced to tall, awkward Beatrice Sparks, a suffragette's daughter; to Marianne Grey, vicar's daughter, wondering whether to stay at Oxford; to pretty, unhappy Dora Greenwood from a new money family in the suburbs, who would never have thought of going to university if her brother George and fiancé Charles hadn't both been killed in the war; and to Otto – aka Ottoline Wallace-Kerr – funny if terrifyingly posh in an Evelyn Waugh way, who is jaunty and caustic, keeps alcohol in her room, and loves maths. We set off with them through their first year of study, as the various Henrys and Teddys and Franks who gravitate towards them make their appearance.

I wasn't sure about the way all the picturesque trappings of the Oxford experience were frequently referenced. The chapters are dated in Oxford-speak, from Noughth Week on, and matriculation, punting, lectures, Head of the River, speeches at the Union, the Randolph Hotel, etc, each get held up in turn for meticulous attention. And yet, bit by bit, the novel grew on me. To avoid spoilers, I can't write here exactly

when and why. What I can say is that the backdrop – the war so close, and memories weighing on every protagonist – felt increasingly convincing. The novel is beautifully plotted, too, carrying you forward from one surprise to the next and bringing you very close to the four friends' vulnerabilities and secrets, some of them very dark indeed, as they are gradually revealed.

Even if I'd started by thinking that I would like to have learned more about what the heroines were learning and reading while at university, I ended in a far more accepting frame of mind, since the story does explicitly make sense of this tension.

At the end of the book, when the last secret is out, it is left to Otto – who is the one of the four who has unexpectedly felt the magic of the academic life – to spell it out. 'We don't all go to Oxford to become Marie Curie,' she says. 'Most of us are ordinary people grasping the opportunity of an extraordinary education – and that goes for the men too.' By now, knowing what the reader has learned about the very hard experiences all four women have faced, and the courage it has taken to put a brave face on and go to university with smiles on their faces, this feels completely fair as a judgement.

Vanora Bennett

(1981 *Modern Languages*)

The Birder

by Lorna Robinson. Independently published, 2024, ISBN: 9798345195857, h/b £15, p/b £9.99

The Birder, by classicist Lorna Robinson, is a novel set in Oxford in a parallel universe where people end their lives by metamorphosing rather than dying.

In this universe, metamorphosis is an ordinary, rather than an awe-inspiring, occurrence and is described using the clinical terminology and conventions of death and disease. Most people metamorphose in their 80s, but some transform when still young; doctors have learnt how to detect the onset of metamorphosis with brain scans; the NHS provides public information about the different types of metamorphosis, and there is a scientific institute which researches the distressing problem of Sudden Onset Metamorphosis.

The novel, which blends elements of science-fiction and fantasy, draws heavily on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a collection of myths and legends focused on transformation – and a work well-known to those who have studied Latin at any level. Just as in Ovid's work, characters in *The Birder* transform into a variety of insects, animals and birds (particularly birds) but, unlike the source text, they do not retain a connection with the person they were; there is no sense of a soul that endures in their changed form. In the alternate universe of the novel, the prevailing societal belief is that metamorphosis constitutes the absolute death of all that is human.

Yet the protagonist, Meryl, a PhD student who traumatically witnessed her own brother transform at an early age, is convinced that the way society views metamorphosis is wrong. The novel describes her journey as she seeks evidence to challenge the assumption that metamorphosis spells an end to all that is human –

indeed, the assumption that metamorphosis has to happen at all.

Meryl's journey meanders gently through science, religion, art and philosophy and, on the way, she meets people who share her views and aspirations: an old lady who believes that the sparrow who visits her regularly is her daughter, long-since metamorphosed; a vicar who, through a dream, is convinced that he knows how to put an end to metamorphosis; others who have experienced the early metamorphosis of loved ones or are facing their own transformation.

The novel is driven by conversation, both external dialogue and inner musings, with the predominant tone of the interactions between the characters being one of quiet empathy and affection. As well as revealing their shared intellectual curiosity, the author gently draws the reader into the characters' struggles with loneliness and grief. Meryl's attempts to make sense of her early experience with her brother and her struggles to accept the imminent transformation of a good friend are depicted with sensitivity; the vicar's growing affection and concern for a young man in his parish, as well as his quiet determination to spread the news about his vision, endears the reader to him.

The author lives in Oxford and her love of her home city comes through strongly in the novel. The landscape encompasses well-known historical landmarks such as the Martyrs' Memorial, the Sheldonian and Blackwells, but also takes us out to ordinary buildings in the suburbs: a care home in Barton, Cheney School in Headington, even a lovingly described Co-op! In many ways, the landscape, with its mixture of the magnificent and the mundane, reflects the blend of the book: traditionally awe-inspiring metamorphoses being treated as everyday occurrences.

As this is an independently published book, there are a few rough edges that would have been polished by a professional editor. However, this does not detract from the originality of this novel or the thought-provoking treatment of its themes. Lydia Hall's beautiful linocut prints of birds, found at the beginning of each chapter, further enrich this touching and intriguing story.

Flora Carnwath
(1994 *Literae Humaniores*)

A Voice in the Night

by Simon Mason. Quercus, 2025, ISBN: 9781529425901, £16.99

DI Ray Wilkins and DI Ryan Wilkins are police officers who often find themselves working together. They have the same name but opposing characters: Ray smooth and sophisticated, Ryan streetwise but battling a series of disciplinary procedures at work. Ray is solid and dependable, and Ryan has flashes of inspiration. Ray likes a sharp suit, and Ryan lives in joggers and puffas.

In *A Voice in the Night*, the two detectives solve their fourth set of crimes together in modern-day Oxford. Sent by the new authoritarian female Chief Superintendent (call me 'Sir', she says) to a hotel in Sandford-on-Thames where a body has been discovered, they find themselves investigating the murder of an elderly professor of ancient

languages. They find the victim lying on the grass in his pyjamas showing signs of having been beaten up. Talking to his wife, the two DI Wilkins learn that the professor appears to have left his house in the middle of the night and walked to the hotel from Iffley Village, despite being paralysed in one leg. Could the previous night's debate at the Oxford Union, at which the professor had spoken quite controversially, hold a clue?

At the same time, an investigation rumbles on into the murder of a security guard during a botched attempt at a robbery at the Egyptology institute. And Ryan's toddler son, out with his aunt, has had a worrying run-in with the McNulty's, the local gangster family.

One of the things I most enjoyed about reading this book, and the others earlier in the series, was the developing unlikely friendship between the two detectives, leading to Ray making a surprising sacrifice for his colleague this time around. The partners are at their double-act best when interviewing suspects, where Ray is 'eye-catchingly beautiful' and Ryan 'interestingly ugly'.

The personal lives of both are fondly drawn. The chaotic Ryan is a loving single father, and his relationship with his small son is a real heartwarming aspect of the story. 'Little Ryan', nearly four years old, is chatty, perceptive and full of words of wisdom and comfort for his sometimes lost dad. Numerous little touches bring their relationship to life: Ryan watching his son sleeping, soothing him when he has a nightmare, taking him to the playground while his son talks about fish, headaches and car fumes.

Simon Mason paints a vivid picture of Oxford, both town and gown. The city is brought to life as the enquiry takes the detectives from the world of the Oxford Union, evocatively described, to the run-down Rose Hill estate and the Botley Road. There's a clear sense of how well the author knows and appreciates the many different aspects of Oxford.

This is a great read with a gripping plot and plenty of suspense, beautiful characterisation and a good dose of humour. As with all good Oxford crime fiction, the city plays its part to the full. *A Voice in the Night* can be read as a standalone, or read the series to enjoy the developing relationship between the two DI Wilkins and learn some more of their backstories, and to experience some seriously good crime storytelling.

Charlotte Crilly
(1991 *Jurisprudence*)

The Finder Mysteries

by Simon Mason. Missing Person: Alice, Quercus: riverrun, 2025, ISBN: 9781529425987, £9.99; The Case of the Lonely Accountant, Quercus: riverrun, 2025, ISBN: 9781529426038, £9.99

Talib is a finder: in fact, the police he consults for refer to him simply as 'Finder'. He's also an outsider, bereaved, a reader and a literary descendant of Simenon's Maigret.

Simon Mason is well-known for his atmospheric Oxford-based crime series, featuring two detectives who share little but the surname Wilkins. Mason's first two novels in his *Finder* series look at the disappearances of 12-year-old Alice Johnson in July 2015 and

of reserved accountant Don Bayliss in 2008. They're set in dusty provincial Kent and *nouveau-riche* Bournemouth. Melancholy and nostalgia pervade the books despite their near contemporary settings.

Each short novel (they stretch to barely more than a couple of hundred pages, reflecting Mason's economical, direct style) weaves the reader's growing understanding of Talib's complex personality and tragic backstory with the central mystery: can the missing person be found, dead or alive? Talib has a deep personal interest in 'the missing, the lost, the regretted, the badly remembered or badly surprised, the blamed and the desired, those whom time will never simplify'.

In *Alice*, nine years on from Alice's disappearance, another schoolgirl has been abducted and murdered. Her killer hints that Alice suffered the same fate, revelling in the uncertainty and notoriety his innuendoes bring. But did he murder Alice, or did things end differently for her?

In *The Case of the Lonely Accountant*, more than seven years have passed since Don's clothes were found at Poole Harbour, and he is presumed dead. His widow, however, finds new evidence in the form of a mysterious business card and link to a notorious gangster. Dorset Police ask Talib to investigate: what was Don's fate and was he actually what he seemed to be?

Mason depicts characters deftly and sympathetically: Talib is private, formal (often referring to his witnesses as Mrs X or Mr Y), bookish – but Mason brings out the richness and underlying sadness of Talib's life and his understated attractiveness to women; Alice's mother was forever changed from the day her daughter failed to return from her paper-round; Don's widow is a powerhouse of local politics, but also grieves for their lost future and immutable past.

Talib stays in boarding houses and inexpensive inns while on a finding mission – whatever the limited police budget stretches to. He whiles away his limited leisure time with a novel selected from his well-stocked bookshelves to be read during his investigation: subconsciously, or perhaps consciously, his literary choices mirror elements of the case in hand. And Mason's novels themselves have drawn comparisons with the *Maigret* series, although the heavily overcoated, outgoing Maigret and the elegant, slightly vulnerable Talib are very different. Readers looking for material for their 'to be read' lists will find plenty of inspiration: Simenon, Stevenson, or Fielding, perhaps.

In Barnum's (alleged) words: 'always leave them wanting more'. Simenon wrote 75 *Maigret* novels: let us hope there are plenty more in Mason's locker. *The Woman Who Laughed* was published in mid-2025 and is most definitely on my to be read – or rather savoured – list.

Daff Richardson
(Powell 1981 *Literae Humaniores*)

Ripeness

by Sarah Moss. Picador, 2025, ISBN: 9781529035490, £20.00

Sarah Moss's last three novels – *Ghost Wall*, *Summerwater*, *The Fell* – have been quite slender works and minutely focused. They describe a circumscribed group in a small setting, although through it illuminating a much wider world. This, her ninth novel, like the plump fruit that its title evokes, is more generously proportioned than those which preceded it. Here we have two stories wound together: one set in Italy in the late 1960s, the other in Ireland in the mid-2020s. Issues that Moss has explored in other work – Covid, Brexit, immigration, colonial guilt, consent and rape, belonging and family, brain and body – all find their place here.

The events recounted in the novel are linked in a number of ways, but most obviously by the central character, Edith. In the 1960s, Edith tells her own story, looking back on a summer when she was 17. On the brink of accepting a place at Oxford University, she is sent by their mother to Italy to assist her older sister Lydia, a ballet dancer in the late stages of pregnancy. For the alternate chapters set in the 2020s, Moss employs close third-person narration: the focus is still on Edith, now in her 70s, but we stand a little apart, observing her. We might wonder why Moss has chosen the first-person narration for the events that are more remote in time. It is quite a way into the novel – perhaps a third of the way through – when Edith's narration says 'I don't know how much of this you want to know either' and we realise that she is telling her story to a particular person. It is Edith's connection to this person that drives the story and links the 1960s to the present day.

Travelling alone and arriving at a large house set in extensive grounds near Lake Como, Edith is tasting adulthood and independence for the first time, but she is still a child. She has always been ahead of her age group at school and her mother insists that she takes some time out to grow up before university. Various ideas for travel and language learning settle into a plan for her to spend time with Lydia and other members of her ballet company as they while away the summer and the last weeks of Lydia's mysterious pregnancy. (There is no father in evidence.) The contrast between the sisters is marked: Edith prioritises the brain (frequently mentioning her place at Oxford in rather a naïve way), whereas Lydia expresses everything through her body. Although she has decided to go through with the pregnancy, she is anxious that her body should recover quickly, allowing her to dance the roles that she aspires to and not fall behind the other female dancers in the company. One of the most touching scenes in the novel is when Lydia expresses something through dance that she has been unable to speak of.

Decades later, 73-year-old Edith is vigorous, physically and mentally active, but conscious that she is now approaching the end of her life. As a seventeen-year-old, she had considered the difference between ripeness and readiness, referencing Lear and Hamlet. Now we assume she has reached ripeness, which 'happens to us as to plums and pears, regardless of agency or volition'. Divorced with one grown-up son, she has settled on the west coast of Ireland, near the extraordinary limestone pavement of the Burren, which features in the story. She seems to be part of the community (belonging

is a theme of the novel), with a lover, Gunter, and a close female friend, Méabh. But what happens if your closest friend reveals an attitude that you find unacceptable? Edith has to wrestle with disappointment in Méabh while at the same time supporting her friend when something happens in her life that makes Edith think again of that summer in Italy and Lydia's baby.

The novel closes a satisfying circle, with the first word and the last word both being 'Yes'. It suggests completeness – ripeness, indeed. But Edith is too wise to think that she has solved every problem, answered every question. 'None of us is truly autonomous,' she tells the person she is writing to, 'and none of us truly belongs. . . . You'll belong by caring for people and places. . . . You come from where you were last.'

Alison Gomm
(1974 English)

The Ladder

by Cathy Newman. William Collins, h/b 2024, ISBN: 9780008567460, £18.99, p/b 2025, ISBN: 9780008567507, £10.99

Cathy Newman is well known to many of us as the first female main presenter of *Channel 4 News*. In addition, on Friday afternoons, she presents a drivetime show on Times Radio which includes a segment called 'The Ladder' in which she interviews a trailblazing woman who has achieved something extraordinary. The stories she has heard in the interviews have resulted in this book which has the subtitle *Life lessons from women who scaled the heights and dodged the snakes*.

Cathy Newman has drawn inspiration from the many amazing women she has interviewed to provide examples of the ups and downs of their paths to success. She begins with a chapter on 'Becoming and belonging' in which she discusses what can shape us, for good or bad, and what can inspire us to decide on a particular path in life. Some of us gain ideas and inspiration from our parents and follow a similar path, others break away and adopt a very different career. Jess Phillips described growing up in a household making posters and leaflets for the Labour Party. Simone de Beauvoir grew up as a dutiful Catholic schoolgirl until she met Sartre at the École Normale Supérieure.

The subsequent chapters cover topics we all now know well, such as imposter syndrome, recognising success and failure, and 'dodging the snakes', and at first I wondered if there was anything new to learn. Although a lot of what is described is familiar territory, I found it reassuring to discover that some had experienced situations similar to those I had encountered, and that others had overcome much greater hurdles. When I graduated with my chemistry degree in 1981, the careers office told me that women don't do research in industry and I should consider teaching or patent law. I didn't fancy either of those and became the only female research scientist in the Kodak labs in Liverpool. (This was not as ground-breaking as it sounds, many of my year also went into research, which shows how out-of-touch the careers office staff were!) I was lucky, the team around me were very supportive and I didn't experience many of the issues described by some of the women in this book. However, when I

returned to research after a career break, I experienced imposter syndrome in spades!

I could fill this review with examples of the amazing women Cathy Newman has talked to. I was particularly struck by the career of Nisha Katona who grew up in a working class town in the north-west. Her parents were doctors and she was expected to follow the same career. She said that ‘in the immigrant Asian population there is a pressure not only for you to be a doctor but for you to be financially useful to the nation . . . if you do not work harder than the next person, then you will fall off the face of Britain’. She started off studying psychology but then switched to law, becoming the first female Indian barrister in Liverpool. As if that wasn’t enough, she went on to found the restaurant chain Mowgli with a delicious menu (which I highly recommend!) and a zero-tolerance policy for the psychopathic behaviour adopted by some chefs. There are many, many inspiring and informative stories in this book and it is well worth reading. At the end of each chapter we are given a few pointers to help us consider how our life to date has been influenced, how to deal with hurdles or adversity, how we can embrace change and what we can do to steer our career in the direction we want to go.

Carolyn Carr

(Jones 1977 Chemistry)

Winning by Being Good

by Sarah Brown, Fuzzy Flamingo, 2024, ISBN: 9781068763717, £12.99

Sarah Brown (1976 PPE) has written a highly accessible and eminently practical book about winning as a company, charity or social enterprise by *Being Good*. The book reflects her passion for inspiring and assisting individuals who aim to make a positive change in the world, as well as her belief that an ethical foundation enhances an organisation’s ability to succeed. The book is packed with sensible advice, examples of organisations *Being Good* and not so *Good*, parables and anecdotes. What sets this management book apart from others is its holistic approach – how to combine traditional management principles and ethical values into a practical strategy for success, and how such principles interrelate and reinforce each other. By providing a structure for their thought process and business design, this book will be particularly useful for organisations seeking an ethical basis for their business but uncertain about how to accomplish this goal.

Sarah has spent 40 years consulting with enterprises of all kinds. *Winning By Being Good* is her legacy, encompassing all she has learned during her professional life, as well as her belief that an ethical foundation enhances an organisation’s ability to succeed and make money. She began the book in 2013, but wrote most of it during sea-days on long cruises – a perfect environment devoid of interruptions.

The book outlines 15 operating principles grouped under five themes – leadership, culture, relationships, product offering and financial success – in a Responsible Organisation Charter© (ROC©), a diagnostic tool for organisations to first assess and then monitor where they stand in relation to *Being Good*. Throughout, readers are encouraged to score their business on each of the principles from one (weakest) to ten

(strongest), as well as to ask employees, suppliers and other stakeholders to evaluate the enterprise on these metrics. Part 1 of the book discusses the individual principles in detail and how they fit together. Part 2 moves from theory to practice – how to effectively implement the 15 principles in your organisation. In each chapter in Part 2, Sarah provides ‘Your ROC© Challenge’ – thought-provoking questions about how your organisation measures up against each of the principles.

Sarah does not define *Being Good*, leaving it to readers to supply the detailed ethical foundation that fits their vision and the core activities of their organisation. However, the principles include some high-level values that should be incorporated into any organisation’s operations, such as treating employees well and suppliers fairly, acting as a good citizen in the broader community, and minimising the organisation’s environmental impact.

A recurring theme is how for-profit organisations can learn from charities. Sarah notes that charities are particularly good at defining their core purpose and being mission-focused, cultivating staff who share their values, and attracting and keeping loyal donors. However, she does not shy away from some criticism of charities, which provide ‘the worst examples I have found of chasing money rather than being true to values and purpose’.

Another useful concept is what Sarah calls ‘pioneer learning’, a mode of learning that encourages employees ‘to try things and take the initiative to improve all aspects of the business’. It involves learning from what other businesses have done, pushing boundaries and taking risks, and being willing to admit to failures and to learn from them. ‘If your business is good at pioneer learning, then it is more likely to attract and retain people with a growth mindset who believe they can learn, get better and fulfil their potential.’ As in other chapters, Sarah highlights how the principle of pioneer learning interrelates with and reinforces other principles; it is a part of treating employees well, being collaborative with all stakeholders and generating sustainable profit.

Sarah underlines that having an ethical core is not enough to ensure an organisation’s success and longevity. Winning requires a good product and financial success – you cannot win if you are broke. Products must be life changing in some way and reliably consistent. Businesses need to identify a market niche, as well as a route to innovative growth and sustainable profit.

Winning By Being Good is fundamentally optimistic about human beings and our willingness to make changes to create a better world. As well as a practical guide on how to be successful by being ethical, the book is also a call to action to businesses of all kinds to think about their operations holistically and to replicate their values in every aspect of their operations. As such, it provides a thought provoking counterpoint to the recent actions of some notable, large companies away from their prior commitment to corporate social responsibility, whether in relation to the environment, social issues and governance, or diversity, equity and inclusion.

Angela Jameson
(1976 PPE)



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FELLOWS AND ACADEMICS 2024/25

Principal

BLYTH, Professor Stephen

Vice-Principal

HUFFMAN, Professor Todd, Tutorial Fellow and Professor in Physics

Fellows

ABOOBAKER, Professor Aziz, Fellow and Tutorial Fellow in Biology and Professor of Functional and Comparative Genomics

ASHTON, Mr Bart, Domestic Bursar, Official Fellow

BANU, Professor Roxana, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Law

BASHFORD-ROGERS, Dr Rachael, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Biochemistry

BATES, Mrs Anna, Director of Development, Official Fellow

BENNETT, Dr Joshua, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in History

BIGGIN, Professor Phil, Margery Ord Tutorial Fellow and Professor of Computational Biochemistry

BOGOJEVIC, Professor Sanja, Tutorial Fellow and Professor in Law

CAMPBELL, Dr David, Tutorial Fellow in Law, and College Dean

CHADHA, Professor Monima, Tutorial Fellow and Professor in Indian Philosophy

CHILDS, Dr Ann, Supernumerary Fellow, Associate Professor in Science Education

DI TRAGLIA, Professor Francis, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor of Economics

DOMINGOS, Professor Ana, Tutorial Fellow in Medicine and Professor of Neuroscience

DONG, Professor Xiaowen, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor of Engineering Science

ECKHOFF, Dr Hanne, Tutorial Fellow in Russian and Linguistics and Associate Professor in Russian Linguistics and Comparative Slavonic Philology

FERREIRA, Professor Vanessa, Supernumerary Fellow, British Heart Foundation Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine

FRASER, Dr Michael, Supernumerary Fellow, Director of Infrastructure Services, University of Oxford

GALIONE, Professor Antony, Professorial Fellow, Professor of Pharmacology

GERRARD, Professor Christine, Barbara Scott Tutorial Fellow and Professor of English Literature, Director of TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities)

GOLDSCHMIDT, Professor Christina, Tutorial Fellow in Statistics and Professor of Probability

GREGORI, Professor Gianluca, Tutorial Fellow and Professor of Physics

GRIFFEL, Professor Frank, Statutory Professor in Abrahamic Religions

HANKINS, Professor Nick, Tutorial Fellow in Engineering and Professor of Chemical Engineering

HARDING, Professor Robin, Gillian Peele Tutorial Fellow in Politics and Professor of Politics

HE, Professor Li, Professorial Fellow, Statutory Professor, Rolls-Royce/Royal Academy of Engineering Professor of Computational Aerothermal Engineering

HIGGINS, Dr Ben, Tutorial Fellow in English and Tutor for Graduates

IGWE, Dr Onyeka, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Fine Art

KANADE, Professor Varun, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Computer Science

KILLEEN, Professor Marie, Eve Dawnay Tutorial Fellow in French and Professor of French Literature

KOENIGSMANN, Professor Jochen, Tutorial Fellow and Professor in Mathematics

KUHN, Professor Christina, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Ancient History

LAWLOR, Dr Hannie, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Spanish

MACDONALD, Professor David, Supernumerary Fellow, Professor of Wildlife Conservation and former Director of WildCRU

MACDONALD, Mr Andrew, Treasurer, Official Fellow

MCKEOWN-JONES, Professor Shelley, Tutorial Fellow in Experimental Psychology and Professor of Social Psychology

MONOYIOS, Professor Michael, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Financial Mathematics

MULLEN, Dr Anne, Senior Tutor, Official Fellow

NICHOLLS, Dr Sophie, Domus Fellow and Stipendiary Lecturer in History

O'REILLY, Professor Jill, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Experimental Psychology

OUZOUNIAN, Professor Gascia, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Music

QING, Professor Yujia, Tutorial Fellow in Organic Chemistry and Associate Professor in Organic Chemistry

QUINN, Dr Natalie, Tutorial Fellow in Economics

RATCLIFFE, Professor Sophie, Tutorial Fellow in English, Professor of Literature and Creative Criticism

STAMATAKIS, Prof Michail, Tutorial Fellow in Chemistry and Professor of Computational Inorganic Chemistry

STEVENS, Professor Robert, Professorial Fellow, Herbert Smith Freehills Professor of English Private Law

STUDD, Professor James, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Philosophy

TAPSELL, Dr Grant, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in History

THOMAS, Professor Adrian, Tutorial Fellow in Zoology, Professor of Biomechanics

TURNER, Professor Marion, Professorial Fellow, J.R.R. Tolkien Professor of English Literature and Language

VAN DER KAMP, Professor Denise, Non-Tutorial-Fellow and Associate Professor in the Political Economy of China

WESTERHOFF, Professor Jan, Tutorial Fellow in Theology and Religion; Professor of Buddhist Philosophy

WESTWOOD, Dr Guy, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Classics

Visiting Fellow

DICKSON, Professor Eric, Beaufort Visiting Fellow (New York University, Department of Politics)

Senior Research Fellows

LOVERIDGE, Dr Andrew, Senior Research Fellow in Zoology

MALIK, Dr Adeel, Co-Founder and Academic Lead, Oxford Pakistan Programme; Senior Research Fellow

MANNACK, Professor Thomas, Senior Research Fellow, Classical Archaeology

MURPHY, Professor Shona, Senior Research Fellow, Medicine; Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

RIGOPOULOU, Professor Dimitra, Senior Research Fellow, Physics

SILLERO-ZUBIRI, Professor Claudio, Senior Research Fellow in Zoology

THATTE, Professor Niranjana, Senior Research Fellow, Physics

WAGNER, Dr Claudia, Senior Research Fellow, Classical Archaeology

Emeritus Fellows

ABULAFIA, Professor Anna, Study of the Abrahamic Religions

ADLINGTON, Dr Robert, Organic Chemistry

ARDEN, Professor Nigel, Rheumatic Diseases and Consultant in Rheumatology

BARR, Professor Helen (Chignell 1979 English Language and Literature), English Literature

BROERS, Professor Michael, Western European History

BROWN, Dr Garry, Biochemistry and Medical Geneticist

DAY, Professor John, Old Testament Studies

DE ROS, Dr Xon, Modern Spanish Literature

DOIG, The Revd Dr Allan, Chaplain, Tutor for Graduates

†GILLESPIE, Professor Vincent, J.R.R. Tolkien Professor of English (Medieval)

GRIFFITHS, Professor Robert, Mathematical Genetics

HAINSWORTH, Professor Peter, Italian Literature of the Renaissance

JENKINS, Professor Richard, Classics

KENNEDY, Miss Ann, Law

LORD, Dr Gordon, Engineering Science

MACROBERT, Dr Mary, Russian Philology and Comparative Slavonic Philology

MATTHEWS, Professor Margaret (Bleas 1950 Physiological Sciences), Human Anatomy

MCKENDRICK, Professor Ewan, English Private Law and Anglo-American Law

PEELE, Professor Gillian, British, American and Comparative Politics

PROBERT SMITH, Professor Penny, Engineering Science

SANDERS, Professor Jeffrey, Computation

SHRIMPTON, Dr Nicholas, English Literature

SMITH, Professor Anthony, Pharmacology

SOMMERS, Mr Richard, Treasurer 2008–2016

STOY, Dr Gabrielle, Mathematics
 STROUMSA, Professor Guy, Study of the Abrahamic Religions
 WATSON, Mr Peter, Development Director 2000–2016
 WOLLENBERG, Professor Susan (Bookin 1966 Music), Music

Honorary Fellows

BELL BURNELL, Professor Jocelyn, Astrophysics
 BUCKINGHAM, Professor Margaret (Cross 1964 Biochemistry), Developmental Biology
 BURROWS, Lord Andrew, Philosophy, Politics and Economics
 CAMPBELL, Mrs Juliet (Collings 1954 Philosophy, Politics and Economics), British Diplomat, Mistress of Girton College
 DE CHASTELAIN, General John, British-Canadian Diplomat
 DUFFIELD, Dame Vivien, Philanthropist
 FALL, Sir Brian, Principal 1997–2002, British Diplomat
 FRASER, Lady Antonia (Pakenham 1950 History), Author
 HARRISON, Professor Carol (1979 Theology), Theology and Religious Studies
 HARTER, Mrs Caryl (Churchill 1957 English Language and Literature), Playwright
 HOGG, Baroness Sarah (Boyd-Carpenter 1964 Philosophy, Politics and Economics), Economist, Journalist and Politician
 JACOBUS, Professor Mary (1962 English Language and Literature), Literary Scholar
 KENDALL, Ms Bridget (1974 Modern Languages), Journalist
 LANG, The Hon Beverley (1974 Jurisprudence), Justice of the High Court
 LANNON, Dame Frances (1969 Modern History), Principal 2002–15
 MACGREGOR, Dame Judith (Brown 1971 Modern History), British Diplomat
 MACMILLAN, Professor Margaret, Historian
 MANNINGHAM-BULLER, Baroness Eliza (1967 English Language and Literature), Intelligence Services
 MANOHAR, The Hon Sujata (Desai 1954 Philosophy, Politics and Economics), Justice of the High Court (Bombay)
 MONTAGU, Dr Jennifer (1949 Philosophy, Politics and Economics), Art Historian
 NEVILLE-JONES, Baroness Pauline (1958 Modern History), Politician and Civil Servant
 RUSBRIDGER, Mr Alan, Principal 2015–21, Journalist
 SLADE, Dame Elizabeth (1968 Jurisprudence) Justice of the High Court
 STALLINGS, Ms Alicia (1991 Greek and Latin Languages and Literature), Oxford Professor of Poetry 2023–27
 THAPAR, Professor Romila, Indian Historian
 TREGGIARI, Professor Emeritus Susan (Franklin 1958 Literae Humaniores), Scholar of Ancient Rome
 WARNER, Professor Dame Marina (1964 Modern Languages), Historian and Author
 WEST, Mr Samuel (1985 English Language and Literature), Actor, Director and Narrator
 YOUSAFZAI, Ms Malala (2017 Philosophy, Politics and Economics), Peace Activist and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Honorary Research Fellows

BARNES, Mr Michael, KC, Queen's Counsel of Wilberforce Chambers in Lincoln's Inn, Bencher of the Middle Temple

BRAUN, Professor Alexandra, Lord President Reid Chair of Law, University of Edinburgh

BURROWS, Lord Andrew, Justice of the UK Supreme Court

CARLEY, Professor James, Distinguished Research Professor, York University, Toronto

CHANNON, Professor Keith, Field Marshal Earl Alexander Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine, University of Oxford

CLARK, Mr David (1987 Modern History), Managing Director, Academic, Oxford University Press

DAVIS, Professor Colin, Professor of French and Comparative Literature, Royal Holloway, University of London

DAVISON, Professor Anthony, Chair of Statistics, EPFL, Lausanne

DOUGLAS-SCOTT, Professor Sionaidh, Anniversary Chair in Law, Queen Mary, University of London

HART, Professor George, Honorary Professor of Cardiovascular Science, University of Manchester

PAREKH, Professor Anant, Professor of Physiology, University of Oxford

POULTON, Professor Joanna (1973 Physiological Sciences), Professor of Mitochondrial Genetics, University of Oxford

QUIGLEY, Mr Conor, KC, Arbitrator, Serle Court, Research Fellow, Institute of European and Comparative Law, University of Oxford

† REDMAN, Professor Christopher, Emeritus Professor of Obstetric Medicine, University of Oxford

ROBSON, Mr Mark, Treasurer 2004–08, Governing Council Member, Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation

SHIELDS, Professor Christopher, Professor of Philosophy, UC San Diego

SLATER, Dr Catherine (Phillips 1964 Modern Languages), Freelance Language Consultant, France

Foundation Fellows

COOMBE, Dr Margaret (Mallaband 1971 History and Modern Languages)

DUFFIELD, Dame Vivien (Clore 1963 Modern Languages)

FOTHERGILL, Mr John (1980 Jurisprudence)

MCNAIR SCOTT, Mrs Anna (Colquhoun 1964 English)

MONSON, Mr Guy (1981 Philosophy, Politics and Economics)

O'SULLIVAN, Mr Michael (1982 Philosophy, Politics and Economics)

SIMPKINS, Mr Neil (1984 Physics)

WANG, Mrs Mei

WANG, Mr Jinyu

Chaplain

BURETTE, Reverend Dr Stephanie

Junior Research Fellows/Career Development Fellows

BUCK, Dr Sophia, Manby Junior Research Fellow in Modern Languages (German)
 BURNAP, Dr Sean, Chris Dobson Non-Stipendiary Junior Research Fellow, Molecular Biophysics
 BUTTI, Dr Silvia, Non-Stipendiary Junior Research Fellow in Computer Science
 CONOLE, Dr Eleanor, Junior Research Fellow in Applied Artificial Intelligence
 GILLHAMMER, Cosima, Career Development Fellow in Old and Middle English
 KHALID, Dr Aliya, Non-Stipendiary Junior Research Fellow in Education
 KLUZEK, Dr Stefan, Non-Stipendiary Junior Research Fellow in Medicine
 MALLON, Dr Grace, Clive Holmes Career Development Fellow in American History
 PAMBOS, Dr Oliver, Chris Dobson Non-Stipendiary Junior Research Fellow, Molecular Biophysics
 PIRZADA, Dr Talha, Co-Founder and Development Lead, Oxford Pakistan Programme, Junior Research Fellow

Lecturers

AINSWORTH, Dr Tom, Stipendiary Lecturer in Philosophy
 ASHCROFT, Dr Caroline, Stipendiary Lecturer in Politics
 BARNES, Dr David, Departmental Lecturer in English, with College Association
 BATEMAN, Dr Chimène, Stipendiary Lecturer in Modern Languages (French)
 BATES, Mr Sebastian, Stipendiary Lecturer in Law
 BATH, Dr Ellie, Stipendiary Lecturer in Biology
 BELL, Dr Jordan, Stipendiary Lecturer in Philosophy
 BUNA-MARGINEAN, Mr Alex, Stipendiary Lecturer in Computer Science
 CLARKSON, Dr Oliver, Departmental Lecturer in English, with College Association
 COEHLO, Dr Luisa, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Portuguese
 CUBBIN, Mr Dan, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Mathematics for Chemistry
 DANNER, Dr Marlene, Stipendiary Lecturer in German
 DE GASPERIN, Dr Vilma, Stipendiary Lecturer in Italian
 (Information Engineering)
 DOWNS, Dr Jacob Kingsbury, Departmental Lecturer in Music, with College Association
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 FEIX, Dr Birte, Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
 FLETCHER, Dr Ai, Stipendiary Lecturer in Chemistry
 GARNETT, Professor George, College Lecturer in History, Tutorial Fellow, St Hugh's College
 GELDBACH, Mr David, Stipendiary Lecturer in Statistics/Probability
 GILDAY, Dr Lydia, Stipendiary Lecturer in Chemistry
 GIORDANI, Dr Domenico, Stipendiary Lecturer in Classics
 HARRISON, Ms Ava, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
 HELMRICH, Mr Fabian, Stipendiary Lecturer in Linguistics
 JOHNSON, Mr Samuel, Stipendiary Lecturer in Maths (Applied)

LAIDLAW, Dr Michael, Stipendiary Lecturer in Chemistry (Inorganic)
LALANDE, Ms Emma, Stipendiary Lecturer in Study Skills
LEGER, Dr Marie, Stipendiary Lecturer in Modern Languages (French)
LIN, Mr Kida, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Philosophy
LITTLETON, Ms Suellen, Stipendiary Lecturer in Management
MCFARLANE, Mr Ian, Stipendiary Lecturer in Maths (Applied)
MELLON, Dr Stephen, Stipendiary Lecturer in Engineering; Senior Researcher in Oxford Orthopaedic Engineering Centre (OOEC) at the University of Oxford.
MORGAN, Professor Ben, College Lecturer in German, Tutorial Fellow, Worcester College
NEELY, Mr Oliver, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
NICHOLLS, Dr Sophie, Stipendiary Lecturer in History
PACKHAM, Dr Jonathan, Stipendiary Lecturer in Music
PAPIEZ, Dr Bartłomiej, Stipendiary Lecturer in Engineering, Associate Professor in Machine Learning, Oxford Big Data Institute
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SUTCLIFFE, Dr Edward, Stipendiary Lecturer in Study Skills
SWEENEY, Dr Owen, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
SZANYI, Dr Szilvia, Departmental Lecturer in Theology, with College Association
TARRANT, Mrs Ruth, Stipendiary Lecturer in Economics
VIOLET, Dr Alice, Stipendiary Lecturer in Modern Languages
XIAO, Miss Julie (Huiyuan), Stipendiary Lecturer in Biochemistry

EDITOR'S NOTES

The following is a reminder about *Brown Book* contributions.

News items

News forms can be sent by post or e-mail to the Development Office and will be passed on to the Editor. Please quote your year of matriculation. News need not be confined to what has happened over the past year; if you have not sent anything in for some time, the Editor welcomes a report of what you have been doing since you were last in contact, but requests that it is succinct. The Editor normally exercises only a light editorial hand on News items, but it may be necessary to shorten, for example, lengthy entries and details of children's careers.

Articles

Planning for articles starts almost before the previous *Brown Book* is sent out. Ideas may emerge from News items or discussions with alumni. Suggestions for the sort of items you would like, or would like more of, should be sent to the Editor.

Reviews of publications

Potential publications for review are usually identified by books being sent to the Reviews Editor, from the News forms or from press notices; the publisher/author will be asked to provide a review copy. The Reviews Editor has discretion over the selection of a reviewer, and advises the potential reviewer on the format for the copy, word length and deadline. Word length is determined by the nature of the publication, the appropriate balance within the review section and the amount of space available. Some publications submitted for review may be given short notices or listed as 'Publications Received'. Publications for review in *The Brown Book* should be with the Reviews Editor by the end of March at the latest.

Obituaries

Obituaries are normally written by alumni, or in some cases by family members. Obituary requests are sometimes made by a friend or by the family, in these cases the Obituaries Editor would appreciate suggestions for a writer. The Obituaries Editor advises on format and length. As an alternative to a full obituary, we may include a short obituary notice, using material from the Register or available from College records with, where possible, some comments of a more personal nature.

Editor

NOTICES FROM LMH

Conferment of Degrees

The Academic Office handles the administration of all degrees and they can be contacted on 01865 274311 or at graduation@lmh.ox.ac.uk for more information. Alumni holding BA degrees become eligible to take their MA in Trinity Term, 21 terms from their term of matriculation. A fee (currently £105) is payable. Please note that we do not offer conferral in person. If you would like to receive your MA please contact the Academic Office via graduation@lmh.ox.ac.uk.

Degree Transcripts

If you matriculated *before* Michaelmas Term 2007, you can order an official academic transcript from the Academic Office at LMH. Please e-mail academic.office@lmh.ox.ac.uk allowing three weeks for processing.

If you matriculated *in, or after*, 2007 and require an academic transcript, degree certificate, degree confirmation letter, or diploma supplement, please refer to the University website <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/graduation/edocuments>. For students and alumni there is a one-off fee of £16. This fee provides unlimited access to all available documents, and will include any further documents that are issued in the future. The service can also be used to print copies of documents at home.

If you require a replacement certificate because yours is lost, damaged or destroyed, please visit <https://www.oxforduniversitystores.co.uk/product-catalogue/degree-conferrals/degree-certificates/dc-replacement-certificate>. The cost of a replacement certificate is £45. Please note that you are only permitted to have one copy of your certificate in your possession at any one time; multiple copies cannot be requested. If you are currently in possession of your certificate, but you require proof of your degree or need a certificate for an application, please use the degree confirmation letter available through the eDocuments Service. Once a new copy of your certificate is printed, previous copies are rendered invalid.

Gaudies

Annual Gaudy celebrations take place in College each September, coinciding with the University's Alumni Meeting Minds weekend. This enables alumni to enjoy a longer and more varied visit to Oxford. The event includes an Anniversary Lunch (to mark the 50th and 60th anniversary of matriculation), a garden party, and a Gaudy Dinner. Accommodation is available when possible.

Please note that alumnae who matriculated in or before 1960 will also be invited to join us for the Anniversary Lunch each year.

Information and dates for the 2026 Gaudy are below, along with a note about those matriculation years which will celebrate in 2027.

LMH ALUMNI EVENTS 2025/2026

2025 Beaufort Circle Lunch for Legators

Saturday 18 October 2025

Prof. Vincent Gillespie – Memorial (Keble College)

Friday 24 October 2025

Principal's Circle – Michaelmas Round Table (by invitation only)

Saturday 15 November 2025

Engineering Society Dinner

Friday 28 November 2025

Alumni Christmas Carols

Friday 5 December 2025

Founders and Benefactors Dinner (by invitation only)

Friday 6 February 2026

Alumni City Networking Event

Thursday 26 February 2026

Wordsworth Lecture: Dr Eleanor Conole, Junior Research Fellow in Applied AI

Sunday 15 March 2026

2018 MA Celebration and Reunion Dinner

Saturday 21 March 2026

1969 Gaudy Reunion Lunch

Saturday 18 April 2026

Law Dinner

Friday 1 May 2026

The Principal's Summer Lunch (by invitation only)

Saturday 27 June 2026

Alumni Garden Party and 150th Anniversary Campaign Launch

Saturday 27 June 2026

Gaudy 2026

Saturday 19 September 2026

Pre-1960 Reunion Lunch

1966, 60th Anniversary Reunion Lunch

1976, 50th Anniversary Reunion Lunch

1997–2001 Gaudy Dinner

2026 Beaufort Circle Lunch

Saturday 17 October 2026

FUTURE GAUDY DATES:**2027 Gaudy**

Saturday 18 September 2027

Pre-1960 Reunion Lunch

1967, 60th Anniversary Reunion Lunch

1977, 50th Anniversary Reunion Lunch

2002–2006 Gaudy Dinner

Receiving your invitations

Information about upcoming events is posted online and all dates are circulated within our regular eBulletins. You will also be informed of specific events by email or postal invitation, so do please ensure we have your up-to-date details.

For further information and for all events organised by the Development Team, please visit: <https://www.lmh.ox.ac.uk/alumni/events> and for any questions, please contact us on +44 (0)1865 274362

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

LMH has a number of social media accounts and encourages you to keep in touch with College news in this way:

 Facebook: Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford (www.facebook.com/lmhoxford)

 X/Twitter: @LMHOxford (www.twitter.com/lmhoxford)

 Instagram: @LMHOxford (www.instagram.com/lmhoxford)

 YouTube: LMH Oxford (www.youtube.com/lmhoxford)

 LinkedIn: @LMH:BuildingLinks



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