LMH
Lady Margaret Hall

THE **BROWN BOOK** 2026



Lady Margaret Hall
Oxford

THE BROWN BOOK



2026

Editor

Carolyn Carr
66 High Street
Tetsworth, Oxfordshire, OX9 7AB
cacarr1996@aol.com

Assistant Editors

Obituaries
Alison Gomm
3 The College
High Street
Drayton St Leonard
OX10 7BB
alison_gomm@msn.com

Reviews
Judith Garner
1 Rochester Avenue
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 3YE
judith01garner@btinternet.com

Lady Margaret Hall

Oxford OX2 6QA
Telephone: 01865 274362
development@lmh.ox.ac.uk
www.lmh.ox.ac.uk

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

Printed by Ciconi Ltd

© 2026 Lady Margaret Hall. All rights reserved. Neither this publication nor any part of it may be reproduced without prior permission of the Editor.
Opinions expressed in *The Brown Book* reflect those of the author alone.



CONTENTS

Editorial	2
REPORTS	
From the Principal	6
From the Chaplain	9
From the Librarian	12
From the Heads of Wellbeing	16
From the Senior Tutor	17
A reunion of linguists from 1981	19
ARTICLES	
The pursuit of (social) care	22
Returning to work through a fellowship from the Daphne Jackson Trust	25
Bonnets, Bennets and the Bank of England	28
Winning awards at the annual World Marmalade Competition	30
Shakespeare, Parliament, and Erkenwald: The sharing of insights sealed away for centuries and an update on the quit rents address	32
NEWS	
Personal and Career News from Alumni	36
Marriages, Births and Deaths	56
Alumni Publications	58
IN MEMORIAM	62
BOOK REVIEWS	108
END NOTES	
List of Fellows and Academic Staff	140
Editor's Notes	147
Notices from LMH	148
LMH Alumni Events	149
Social Media Accounts	151
Dining in College	151

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the 2026 edition of *The Brown Book* which marks the 30th anniversary of the first *Brown Book* I worked on! I started as assistant editor to Margaret Hodgson. She lived in County Durham and in those days, when email was in its infancy, it was felt that someone local should be on the team. The outgoing editor, Veronica Palmer, had been at LMH with my mother and suggested I helped out.

When Margaret stepped down in 2008, I took over as Editor. As I was working full time, I felt I couldn't do the whole job alone and so was joined by Alison, handling the obituaries, and Judith, dealing with the reviews. Vivienne Rösch commissioned articles for four years and, recently, Charlotte Crilly has helped with the proof reading. The work of commissioning, chasing and editing the content of *The Brown Book* takes quite a lot of our time, particularly in August and September. (I received over 50 *Brown Book* emails in one fortnight in August!) Nevertheless, Alison, Judith and I find it immensely satisfying to see each completed issue. Looking at the list of previous editors – recorded below – I see we have a way to go to match the 35 years of Agnes Fletcher.

In this year's *Brown Book* we have a diverse range of articles. Virginia Bovell writes about the challenges and joys of bringing up her autistic son Danny, which is also described in the review of her book *Danny's People*; Paula Sells describes the excitement of the World Marmalade Competition; and Susan Halstead tells us about learning to dance Mr Beveridge's Maggot!

We were sad and shocked to hear of the death of Ann Widdecombe and are grateful to Frances Thomas and Gillian Peele for writing her obituary. We also have an obituary for Rosemary Nockolds who has died at the age of 104. She came up to Lady Margaret Hall in 1940 to read modern languages and went on to work in the diplomatic service for over 30 years. It was interesting to learn that Ittai Dan Gradel, who died this year, was the antiquities dealer who alerted the British Museum to the thefts by one of its employees who had spent years smuggling out artefacts and selling them. Itai studied for his DPhil at LMH in the 1990s. He was a member of 'The Jolly Company' which also got a mention in an obituary last year.

The Reviews highlight the wide range of writing talent in our alumni. Allan Doig has reviewed the latest book from Jennifer Montagu, describing it as 'the crowning achievement of her career, drawing on so much of her earlier work'. We have reviews both of Marina Warner's book, *Sanctuary: Ways of Telling, Ways of Dwelling*, and of the catalogue for the exhibition she curated on the same topic. Fiona Chesterton has written about her time in the BBC, rising from being one of the first women trainees to senior roles over years of great change in the country and the broadcaster. There are books about art, plants and wildlife as well as a tempting selection of novels.



As always, Alison, Judith and I are grateful for the support of the team in the Development Office who gather entries for the News and provide information from the database. We would also like to thank all of you for providing updates on your lives and writing the articles, reviews and obituaries that make *The Brown Book* such an interesting read.

Carolyn Carr
Editor

Editors of *The Brown Book*

1892-????	Edith Langridge (1885 Classics) and Helen Bruce (Langridge 1888 Women's 2nd Exam)
19??-15	Dorothy Gardiner (Kempe 1895 English)
1916-20	Gemma Bailey (Creighton 1906 Literae Humaniores)
1921–56	Agnes Fletcher (1904 English)
1957–71	Christine Anson (1917 Modern Languages)
1972–79	Deaconess Elizabeth Souttar (1925 English)
1980–89	Hilda Pipe (1939 History)
1990–95	Veronica Palmer (Cordell 1947 Literae Humaniores)
1996–2007	Margaret Hodgson (Wise 1953 PPE) with Carolyn Carr (Jones 1977 Chemistry) as Oxford Editor; from 2005 Alison Gomm (1974 English) assisted with page-setting
2008–	Carolyn Carr with Alison Gomm as Obituaries Editor and Judith Garner (1977 Literae Humaniores) as Reviews Editor. Vivienne Rösch (1978 Philosophy and Modern Languages) was Articles Editor from 2008 to 2011 and Charlotte Crilly (1991 Jurisprudence) has helped with proof reading from 2024.



REPORTS

From the Principal 6

From the Chaplain 9

From the Librarian 12

From the Heads of Wellbeing 16

From the Senior Tutor 17

A reunion of linguists from 1981 19

REPORTS

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

I feel immensely privileged to lead LMH as Principal at an exciting moment in the history of the College and of the University. At the start of this academic year, the University opened two extraordinary new flagship buildings, the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, and the Life and Mind Building (Biological Sciences and Experimental Psychology). Each is only six minutes away from LMH. As the University's centre of intellectual gravity moves northwards, LMH students are well poised to harness the incredible cultural and academic resources of these new centres. Most of Oxford's humanities faculties, as well as the Institute for Ethics in AI and the Oxford Internet Institute, have relocated to the Schwarzman Centre, whose focus on cross-disciplinary interaction mirrors the exciting intellectual activities taking place inside our own walls. These new buildings have a symbiotic relationship with the array of intellectual and cultural activities generated by members of the LMH community.

Colleges are richly interdisciplinary spaces, and provide a hub for academic inquiry at all levels. LMH early-career researchers regularly gather together for the 'Crossing Boundaries' seminars in the Lodgings, exploring subjects as diverse as the *in-utero* development of the human heart; Tudor street-criers; and the social media 'Trad Wife' trend. This breadth of intellectual curiosity is reflected in the achievements of our students, who have performed extraordinarily well this year, with results showing a record number of first-class honours degrees. Among them, a First in English was awarded to a student who arrived at LMH in 2022 as one of the final cohort of our pilot Foundation Year scheme, which this year celebrates ten years since its launch in 2016. Our Fellows and tutors have also continued to make their mark across their fields: Professor Sophie Ratcliffe (Latchford Fellow in English) won the prestigious E. M. Forster Award; Professor Onyeka Igwe (Fine Art) won the 2025 Film London Jarman Award; Dr Grace Mallon (Clive Holmes Fellow in History) won the American Society for Legal History Article Prize; Professor Robin Harding (Gillian Peele Fellow in Politics) received the American Political Science Association award for his research on colonial legacies in Mozambique; and Professor Ana Domingos (Medicine) joined a major new international research programme to transform cancer research with $125 million in combined funding.

LMH's intellectual vibrancy extends beyond the intense work that takes place between students and their dedicated tutors week on week, year on year, into the wider life of the College. This year this vibrancy has been visible in all sorts of ways. The LMH Feminist Society hosted alumna and feminist art critic Griselda Pollock for a talk on feminist

intellectual histories; our History tutors took all three years of History undergraduates to explore the unrivalled art collection and historic gardens at nearby Rousham (the Principal and Senior Tutor also tagged along); and at the start of Trinity term, a group of students directed and performed from scratch in the LMH gardens Shakespeare's '*Twelfth Night* (in 24 Hours)'. Elsewhere, LMH students participated in the Oxford Student Venture Showcase at the Maths Institute. There have of course also been musical performances to enjoy, such as the Chamber Choir's excellent rendition of Handel's *Messiah*. And one of the most memorable moments of the year was the unveiling of alumna Malala Yousufzai's beautiful new portrait at our Founders and Benefactors Dinner in early February. As our guest speaker on the night, Malala offered some powerful reflections on the value of education and on LMH's long history of fostering greater access to education for women and others who have historically been excluded.

Malala's reflections on the value of education have stayed with me as we build towards our 150th anniversary in 2028–29, when we will celebrate and affirm LMH's special legacy. On 27 June, at our largest ever summer garden party, we publicly launched our anniversary fundraising campaign, *LMH 150: Thinking for the Future*. The University's Chancellor, William Hague, Lord Hague of Richmond, spoke at the event with conviction of, and optimism for, the vital role that Oxford colleges play in an increasingly atomised and screen-based world: the close social and intellectual relationships between students and tutors; the strong sense of community that colleges foster, nurturing and enabling high-potential students from all backgrounds to develop and flourish. These are at the heart of what our campaign seeks to secure for the generations of LMH students to come.

As one of the newer colleges, LMH remains one of the less well endowed, with real implications for our students and tutors. We aim to raise our endowment to £100 million, around the median for Oxford colleges, focusing on three main goals: endowing and thereby securing for perpetuity our tutorial fellowships and the precious tutorial teaching they make possible; securing our outreach programme and support for current students, including financial, wellbeing and study skills provision; and renovating and maintaining our historic buildings to provide the comfortable modern facilities our community needs.

But our 150th anniversary is about more than securing our financial future. It is also an opportunity to celebrate the College's pioneering role in the history of British education, and the people who have shaped it and been shaped by it. At the moment, chapters are coming in thick and fast for a beautifully illustrated (but affordable!) 'coffee-table' volume celebrating LMH and its people. As I write, we have just launched the call for nominations for the new *Portraits of LMH* project. Building on the much-admired photographic portraits in Deneke corridor, the exhibition will celebrate alumni, staff, tutors and others whose connection with LMH has made an impact, whether within the College or beyond.

As part of our anniversary celebrations, we will also make our long-running Oral History Project publicly available for the first time. Thanks to the extraordinary hard work and support of the LMH Volunteer network, more than 200 audio interviews have now been recorded with alumni and others connected to LMH across the generations.

Together, the interviews offer a vivid record of how people have experienced and responded to the College across the decades, and I am looking forward to sharing these voices with our community. There will also be plenty of opportunities to come together in person and celebrate LMH, including a special concert at the new Sohmen Concert Hall in the Schwarzman Centre, which promises to be a brilliant occasion, celebrating the College's musical talent and providing the opportunity to experience the new concert hall's unrivalled acoustics and reception facilities, including Oxford's longest bar.

Our community will be at the heart of our anniversary celebrations, and it depends so much on the people who work hard behind the scenes to keep things going. This has been a year of transitions and changes, but our College remains stronger than ever. I am particularly proud of the contribution of our outstanding Support Staff, who this year were awarded a Platinum Investors in People award, the highest accolade the scheme offers and a rare achievement for a higher education provider. This award recognised fantastic teamwork across the College, as well as our commitment to our values of Excellence, Knowledge and Understanding, Fairness, and Community. We owe a great debt both to our Head of HR, Tina Beard, and to our former Domestic Bursar, Bart Ashton, who left LMH at the end of last year after more than 20 years of service. We are delighted to welcome as his successor Jennifer Smith, formerly Domestic Bursar at Balliol and prior to that Executive Director of the Longborough Festival Opera.

Jennifer has already commented positively on LMH's strong sense of community, something that was particularly evident at our inaugural cross-common room Sports Day in May. Students and staff competed together in the tug of war, canoe racing, tennis and zorb bowling (among other things) in what was a wonderfully good-humoured event and a precious opportunity for our students to unwind during a busy exam term. The same spirit was also very evident in the success of the inaugural Katie Richard Prize for Volunteering Excellence, founded in memory of alumna Katie Richards (1984 PPE), a journalist and civic activist. The prize was awarded to undergraduate Luiza Villanova for her work in disadvantaged school communities and celebrated at a special Charity Formal, which recognised the huge amount of voluntary and charitable work undertaken by our students.

Of course, our community extends far beyond our corner of north Oxford to include our wonderful alumni, some of whom I personally taught from the late 1980s onwards. I'm often struck by how vividly both my former students and I recall memorable individual tutorials, a testament to the precious nature of the tutorial experience. The lifelong nature of those connections is also evident in the continued support of alumni across the globe, as I have seen first-hand during recent visits to Hong Kong and Malaysia, and (by the time this is published) to the west coast of the USA. This global community remains one of LMH's enduring strengths.

As we approach the new academic year we are filled with a sense of momentum and optimism – both for our new intake of students, as well as for the future of the College. Please do contact me personally at any time with suggestions or thoughts – and do drop by if you plan to come to Oxford, as I would love to see you.

Christine Gerrard
Principal

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Highlights of this academic year in Chapel began quite remarkably with the installation of our Principal, Professor Christine Gerrard, in Michaelmas Term followed by two packed carol services. In Hilary, the services included a joint Ash Wednesday service with three colleges, our Founders and Benefactors service and our International Women's day service; and in Trinity our Lady Margaret's Day celebration with the outstanding Dr Janina Ramirez as our preacher and the Leavers' service at which Dr Ed Sutcliffe gave a memorable and inspiring sermon.

Throughout the year, our community heard 15 different preachers, including the Revd Prebendary Dr Isabelle Hamley, Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge, and former Chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury (she thus played an essential role in designing the liturgy for the coronation of King Charles), the Revd Canon Dr Megan Daffern, Canon Chancellor of Wells Cathedral, and the Right Revd Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford, who retired at the end of July 2026. In addition to our weekly Choral Evensong and occasional Eucharist, we held services of night prayer (Compline) sung by our choral scholars, and a midday said service took place every Thursday in term to offer prayers for our community – we always welcome requests for prayers throughout the year. Many family members of recently deceased alumni wanted their loved ones to be remembered at our All Souls service in Michaelmas or on other occasions, and it is always a pleasure to hear back from alumni who wish to be married in chapel or have their children baptised.

Our choir, which was almost entirely new in Michaelmas due to many members graduating last year, grew from strength to strength. First of all, we welcomed a new Junior Organ Scholar, Scarlett Jenkins, and six new choral scholars: Beatrix Lepsoe, Yanran Geng, Imogen O'Connor, Ellie Guha, Christopher Trevett and Jacob Pawson. The whole choir was delighted to offer again this year the very popular 'Carols in the Quad' which around ninety College members attend, and the choral scholars sang at our annual Gaudy dinner and at the Founders and Benefactors dinner, very grateful for the opportunity to hear special guest Malala Yousafzai (2017 PPE). The Chamber Choir concert of Hilary featured Parts 2 & 3 of Handel's *Messiah*, and the Trinity concert featured superb music on the theme of light and love by composers such as James MacMillan, Johannes Brahms, Eleanor Daley and Ola Gjeilo. Many thanks go to our Director of Music, Paul Burke, for the guidance and professional expertise he offers to our students, and to George Ke, in his role of Senior Organ Scholar, for always seeking excellence in performance. The choir went on tour to Spain in July, singing in both Avila and Salamanca, to the delight of their hosts and audience. Very many thanks go to George Ke, Scarlett Jenkins, Freddie James and Joshua Bruton for their work and organisation, and to the Academic Office and the Development Office, as well as to generous donors, for their unfailing support.

I mentioned 'Carols in the Quad': this is one of many examples of the Chapel beyond-the-walls bringing beauty, inspiration and joy to our community. The termly flower-



Flower arranging

arranging workshops have become very popular, with more than 50 students signing up within 48 hours. Poetry reading paired with the exploration of LMH's sumptuous gardens by moonlight have also drawn a lot of interest, gathering 25–30 participants each term, with a wide variety of students (in science and humanities, home students and students from abroad) sharing their love of poetry in many languages. Much gratitude goes to our fantastic gardeners for taking me on walks ahead of these events in order to share *their* knowledge of the gardens, which become both a background and a focus of these walks. Thanks to our Vice-Principal, Prof Todd Huffman, and students involved in the astronomical society – Robin Wopalenski (also a choir member) and Yashvir Tibrewal, many a student had the opportunity to watch the moon or Jupiter through a telescope on those evenings and could both learn fascinating scientific facts and share a sense of wonder and awe.

Back within the walls of the chapel, the Year 2 Fine Arts students were delighted again this year to use the space as an inspiration for the art installation they curate. All artworks, stained glass, painting, installations as well as a performance in the Fellows' garden, were gathered 'Under the blanket of spring'.

Finally, we were delighted to inaugurate the Katie Richards Prize for Volunteering Excellence. Our deepest thanks to alumnus John Roome (1983 MSc Applied Sciences) for funding this prize in memory of his wife Katie Richards (1984 PPE) whom he met

at LMH. This year's recipient was Luiza Vilanova who, like both Katie and John, is a Rhodes Scholar. Our Principal, extremely supportive of this initiative rooted in the very early years of LMH, awarded her the prize at our annual Charity Formal. Several of our students are involved in outstanding work on a global or local scale, including our two runners up, Freddie Emms and Charlotte Walker: it was a privilege to celebrate them on that occasion. Yvette Young, JCR Charity Officer, did remarkable work in organising JCR-led fundraising and in coordinating with the JCR on the day.

On matters of faith and religion, a new Buddhist society (Tibetan) was created in the University this year, at the initiative of LMH student Joseph Layton-Smith. In general, our students who practice a faith are deeply grateful to be able to do so alongside their studies. This year, a Sukkah was put up in the garden during Freshers' Week as it coincided with the Jewish Festival of Sukkot; a Hindu celebration with outstanding singing was held in the gardens; an Eid meal was hosted in the hall; and a new Buddhist society was created. At a time when public figures are all too ready to spread fear and divisions, I am immensely proud that the LMH Chapel can stand as a symbol of solidarity among people of different faiths, religions and beliefs and none, and reflect the very diverse, curious and open-minded community which characterises LMH.

I wish to express my gratitude for the support provided by members of the Chapel Committee: the Dean, Dr David Campbell, Chair of the Committee, Dr Michael Fraser, Acting Chair, Christopher Pidgeon (former Admissions Manager), Elizabeth Rivers-Tan (Campaign Manager), and Bethany Alexander (JCR Faiths and Beliefs Officer).

I would only add that if you wander around the Chapel corridor around lunch time, your ears may be drawn to listen to Rachmaninov being played by one of our students and fine pianists in College, for whom music and faith are intimately entwined.

The Revd Dr Stephanie Burette
Chaplain



Art installation in Chapel



Carols in the quad December 2025

FROM THE LIBRARIAN

In Oxford libraries, the big news this year was the opening of the new Bodleian Humanities Library in the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, combining the English, Philosophy, Theology, Music, and History of Medicine libraries. The library is part of this beautiful new building, which also contains areas open to the public and designed to be a centre for arts engagement with the local community. However, there has been some friction between the building's use as a public events space and the library users, who would prefer to have fewer disruptions. There have also been complaints about the difficulties of finding seats to study in the library – a problem which occurs most times new libraries open in Oxford.

This just cements more than ever the importance of college libraries as spaces for students to study in. The expansion of LMH Library with the conversion of the ground floor 20 years ago continues to prove immensely useful, with students enthusiastically using the entirety of the library. LMH set a gold standard thanks to the number of seats we have, which several college libraries have tried to match by undertaking building works. This year we surveyed our students to discover their different preferences for working environments, and based on that survey we are allowing quiet conversations on the lower floor, while trying to keep the middle and upper floors silent.

We continue to try to make the LMH Library space even more beautiful, and are pleased to announce that *Hoot Hoot, Hoot Hoot* has been formally added as a permanent feature in the library. *Hoot Hoot, Hoot Hoot* is a set of four *pietre dure*-inspired collages depicting owls, made of hand-marbled paper by LMH alumna Erin Hughes (2009 Fine Art). The collages were made specifically for our library, using marbled paper to link to that used in antiquarian book bindings, and with the images based on the illustrations in our copy of Graves' *British Ornithology*. They were originally installed as a temporary exhibition in 2019, but have proved incredibly popular with our students, so we are delighted that they will remain here.



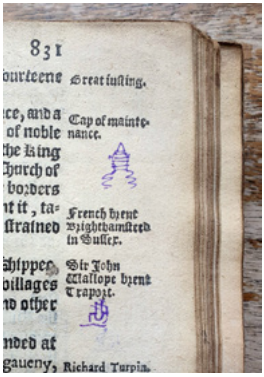
Tawny Hoot from Hoot Hoot, Hoot Hoot by Erin Hughes

The expansion of the Bodleian's provision of ebooks continues, and many students are primarily using digital material instead of printed books. In recent years the model by which publishers provide access to ebooks has moved away from buying individual ebook licences, or even

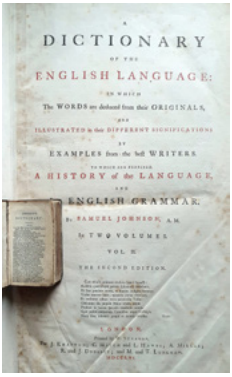
packages, to 'demand-driven ebook acquisition' – where the Bodleian gets access to an entire catalogue of books, many more than they could buy, and only pays for those that students actually choose to use. This means that there are far larger numbers of ebooks available to students than there were a few years ago – although key textbooks are still often not part of these packages, but are charged at an inflated price instead. The next big project from the Bodleian is an investigation into 'digital lending', where a book that they hold physically could be scanned and lent out digitally as long as the physical copy was then no longer used. This holds the potential for out-of-print books to become more available electronically for students.

This increase in ebook provision and use has led to a decrease in the number of physical books we lend and purchase over the last few years. We do buy some ebook licences, to supplement the Bodleian's offerings; however, there are always some students who prefer reading the printed word, and we are specifically aiming to support them. As such we are primarily focusing on buying physical books in response to student requests, rather than trying to get everything on a reading list (where perhaps the students will just use the ebooks). We often have new requested books ready to borrow within a day or two, giving students plenty of time to use them for their weekly essays. In addition, students make a lot of requests for books to support thesis research – these often include somewhat obscure books printed abroad, which the Bodleian has weaker support for in both ebook and printed formats.

This year's antiquarian books exhibition was on 'The Book As Object', curated by Assistant Librarian Sally Hamer. It focused on what we can learn from the physicality of books, rather than the contents. The first section looked at marginalia, from the little illustrative symbols in the margins of our copy of John Stow's *The Annales of England* (1604) to an entire extra sermon hand-written in the back of Hugh Latimer's *Frutefull*



Marginal illustrations in John Stow's The Annales of England (1604)



Two editions of Johnson's Dictionary (large from 1761 and little from 1845)



A medieval manuscript reused in the binding of Theodore Beza's Psalmorvm Davidis et Aliorvm Prophetarvm (1580)

Sermons (1571–2). Another case looked at the wide variety in the size of books – with the most dramatic being a comparison of two editions of Johnson's *Dictionary*. In the next section a selection of binding types were on display – from classic leather-bound books with a variety of decorative styles to limp parchment and fabric bindings. One of my favourite items was a book where a medieval manuscript had been reused as parchment to strengthen a binding – a common practice in the Reformation for old Catholic texts. The final section looked at what damage can tell us about a book's history, including bookworms and examples where nudity or previous annotations had been carefully cut out. The exhibition was seen by alumni in 2025 at Oxford Open Doors and the LMH Gaudy, and again at the 2026 Summer Garden Party. It can be viewed online at https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/lmh/the_book_as_object.

One item that has featured in many of our exhibitions, including this year's, is the *Barnacle*. This is a hand-written magazine from the 1860s, made by a group of young ladies who were fans of the author Charlotte Mary Yonge. They wrote stories, essays, and poems inspired by her work, gorgeously hand-illustrated them, and then sent them to Yonge. She collected them into issues of a magazine, and then sent the issue to one of the girls to read, who would then post it to the next girl, and so on. The *Barnacle* is a fascinating example of young women self-educating in the decades before LMH was founded and, as they are hand-written, they are completely unique objects. They are some of the most studied things in our collections, attracting several scholars a year from around the world – including, recently, one of our students who wrote her MSt English thesis on the first issue of the *Barnacle*. This year we had them digitised and now they are online for all to see, at https://lmh.polo.websds.net/.

Book donations from alumni and friends of the college are always gratefully received. We keep all books written by or about our alumni (including memoirs), all books about the college, and all books from before 1800 or that are particularly special. Other donations are carefully sorted – those not available inside Oxford are sent to the Bodleian; those which we think our students will use the most are added to the library; and the rest are given to the students (often under the library Christmas tree) or sent to online booksellers. Antiquarian donations this year included a collection of books from John Woodhouse via Peter Hainsworth, including eight volumes from before 1800; a 1617 book from the estate of alumna M. E. Holland, via her daughters (who are both alumnae themselves, Justina Binks and Sophie Holland); three antiquarian volumes and three fine press books from the estate of the cellist Rohan de Saram, originally given to him by the Deneke sisters when he lived with them at Gunfield; and from alumna Alice Fowler's mother Linda Fowler's collection we received books relating to Virginia Woolf, including several printed at the Hogarth Press during her lifetime. We would like to thank everyone who donated books this year, including Maliha Abidi, Tim Ashton, Ananya Bhatia, Virginia Bovell, Diana Brass, Nathan Budge, Frances Carey, Jenny Rose Carey, Fiona Chesterton, Margaret Coombe, Gillian Rosemary Evans, Alison Gomm, Wanting Gong, Peter Hainsworth, Howard Hogan, Richard Jenkyns, Linda Kvitkina, David W. Macdonald, Grace Mallon, Thomas Mannack, Ewan McKendrick, Joanna Miller, Jenny Pery, Sarah Searight, Nicholas Shrimpton, Anne Simor, Travis Tan, Grant Tapsell, and Susan Wollenberg.



Isambard Kitten Brunel and the Librarian as filmed by BBC Oxford

The college is currently launching the 150th Anniversary Campaign, which includes a focus on the library. The library's endowment of £1.1 million covers less than a quarter of our operational costs, so our goal is to raise £3.6 million to fully endow the library's operations and secure this vital facility for LMH forever. Opportunities to name reading bays, reading rooms and the library itself are available. This year we have received donations to the library endowment from Lucy Archer, Anne I. Baker, Catherine Beckett, Faith R. Boardman, Michael G. Debenham, Joanna Hitchcock, Ann M. Hutchison, William M. Lam, Catherine and Jean Lawes, Pamela Lighthill, John A. Locker, Adriana E. Turpin, Joella B. Werlin, and Zilong Yu. We would like to give particular thanks to Joella Werlin, who made a generous donation in order to name the anthropology reading room in celebration of Barbara Freire-Marreco, LMH alumna and the first woman to earn the University of Oxford Diploma in Anthropology in 1908.

It has been a delight to see some of our alumni this year, whether at the Garden Party and Gaudy, during visits organised by the Development Office, or just when you have come to use the library. Alumni are very welcome to study in the library, particularly during staffed hours in vacations – email librarian@lmh.ox.ac.uk to make an appointment. It is always a joy to meet you, even if I sometimes suspect that many of you are more excited to see Isambard Kitten Brunel, the library cat! This year Isambard has become a bit of a celebrity, being filmed by BBC Oxford and appearing on a range of news websites.

Jamie Fishwick-Ford
Librarian

FROM THE HEADS OF WELLBEING

It has been another busy year in the Wellbeing department with an office move to our new 'hub' in 1 Fyfield Road which has seen the Heads of Wellbeing, Study Skills and the college nurse provide wellbeing support to all of our students from under one roof. All three of these teams, alongside our three Junior Welfare Deans, continue to be well used by the student population with 516 separate appointments being delivered across the hub in Trinity Term 2026 alone. In addition, Study Skills has continued to thrive with the two lecturers now having delivered over 975 tutorials since these posts were created four years ago. They expect to pass 1,000 in the new academic year, a milestone to be celebrated.

This year saw the return of Emily Winfield-Jones who came back from maternity leave at the start of Trinity Term 2026 to the Head of Wellbeing role alongside Lizzie Shine. Emily, coming from a social work background, has this to say about her return:

> It has struck me how my experience of working with those who struggle in our society is entirely relevant to our student population, where the themes of poor mental health, grief, economic disadvantage and stress still apply. It has felt such a privilege to be welcomed into the lives of such bright and deserving students, to help them navigate what can be both a very fulfilling but also very stressful and difficult period of their lives.

Emily and Lizzie have continued to provide both proactive and reactive support to undergraduate and postgraduate students who need assistance with multiple and sometimes intersecting challenges. The weekly newsletter, listening to student views through the termly Wellbeing forum, and this year the addition of seeking direct and specific feedback on our service delivery, have enabled us to ensure the student voice is at the heart of the Wellbeing service.

Key themes from the year have been a rise in the number of students impacted by (either suspected or diagnosed) ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and/or autism spectrum condition, areas which Lizzie is especially passionate about and for which we are able to offer strategies, advice and signposting. High stress around exam and submission deadlines have led to a busy time for the Heads of Wellbeing, with us both supporting students to navigate the reality that doing a degree at Oxford is not, nor should be, easy, while providing a safe space for them to talk through their challenges and seek appropriate professional support. We have been reminded again this year that students across the full spectrum of academic achievement access and benefit from Wellbeing services, with some regular users of Wellbeing achieving the highest grades.

We continue to be grateful for the commitment to Wellbeing from all current areas of College and alumni in ensuring that we can offer robust and effective support across the student population. Now that the current iteration of Wellbeing has been in place

for four years, we are confident that the service is meeting the needs of a significant portion of the population. Our ambitions for the upcoming year include ensuring that the service is driven by meaningful feedback and being able to identify areas of the student population who may still hesitate to access our service.

Emily Winfield-Jones and Lizzie Shine
Heads of Wellbeing

FROM THE SENIOR TUTOR

Undergraduates
We are delighted with our final honours schools (FHS) results this year for 110 students: 95% of students have been awarded a First or 2:1 degree (91% in 2025). Strong 'school' performances include: mathematics and joint schools, history, English, fine art, music, PPE, biochemistry, chemistry, physics and PPE. Of our fourth-year maths and joint degree students, seven out of eight have been awarded a Distinction. The eighth received a Merit.

Five former LMH Foundation Year students completed their degrees: one First, two 2:1s, one 2:2 and one Third. This brings our current total of graduates who started with the LMH Foundation Year to 46: five Firsts (10.9%); 35 2:1s (76%); three 2:2s; two Thirds; and one Pass. Our final Foundation Year undergraduate is on track to complete their degree in 2027.

Preliminary Examinations and Moderations
A total of 115 students sat Prelims or Mods this year. Of these, 32 (27.8%) have obtained a Distinction (23.6% in 2025).

University Prizes
Twelve undergraduates across all four years of study, and one Masters postgraduate, have been awarded University Prizes for their outstanding achievements.

Two finalists in modern languages have been recognised: one with the Dolores Oria Merino Prize in Written Spanish (best performance in Spanish Prose Paper I), and one other with four prizes: Diversity Prize II (best performance in a dissertation essay, portfolio of essays, or linguistic project that engages with diversity and intersectional approaches); the David Gibbs Prize (*proxime accessit* for the best performance in modern languages); the David Gibbs Prize (*proxime accessit* for best performance in modern languages for best submitted work in Special Subject Paper XII); the David Gibbs Prize (best performance in modern languages for best submitted work in Dissertation Paper XIV).

Our two first-class FHS jurisprudence students have each won a university prize for the best performance in Environmental Law and Company Law, respectively.

Two fourth-year maths and computer science graduates have won 'Best Project' prizes: one for computer science (Department of Computer Science Prize); one for maths and computer science (the Gibbs Project Prize).

In biology, a fourth year has won the prize for the best research project dissertation in the field of evolution and development.

One of our Year 1 pre-clinical medics received a Letter of Commendation. The student was ranked in the top 10% of the cohort on the basis of overall mean mark for the three papers (exceptional quality of answers noted) as well as in the medical sociology assignment.

A Year 2 student in psychology and linguistics has been awarded the *proxime accessit* prize for Joint Second-best Overall Performance – Psychology Papers – in Part A; a Year 1 student on the same degree has been sent a Congratulatory Letter of Merit – Introduction to Probability Theory and Statistics in psychology, philosophy and linguistics prelims.

Our fourth-year student on the MSci experimental psychology course has been awarded the *proxime accessit* Gibbs Prize for Second-best Overall Performance in FHS of experimental psychology 2026.

One of our MSt students has won an award for the best dissertation in their field (economics).

Postgraduate Student Success (many results for taught Masters programmes won't be finalised before October 2026)

To date, out of some 145 Masters students, 16 Distinctions have been awarded (including economics, English, law, history, modern languages) and 25 Merits.

In the course of 2025-26, 39 DPhils have been awarded in areas such as: auto intelligent machines and systems; classical archaeology; classical languages and literature; clinical neurosciences; computer science; condensed matter physics; education; engineering science; English; geography and the environment; history; inorganic chemistry; international development; law; linguistics, philology and phonetics; pharmacology; physiology, anatomy and genetics; politics; population health; sociology; theoretical physics; women's reproductive health; zoology; health data science; synthesis for biology and medicine.

Anne Mullen
Senior Tutor

A REUNION OF LINGUISTS FROM 1981



The linguists dine at the Cherwell Boathouse, showing Mike Starkey, Vanora Bennett, Janette Sinclair, Linda Johnson, Lorraine Ford and Caroline Sawyer

A few months ago, fellow LMH alumna Liz Conway and I were reminiscing about the first days and weeks when we came up to LMH in 1981. One thing led to another and the first reunion of the LMH 1981 linguists was hatched. We were 13 people who came together around a love of languages 45 years ago, and, amazingly, we were keen to meet again after so many years. Eight of us – Vanora Bennett, Lorraine Ford, Linda Johnson, Joan Musselbrook, Caroline Sawyer (George), Mike Starkey, Liz and I made it on the day – a great turnout!

We organised ourselves around the 2026 LMH Garden Party, where we enjoyed the opportunity to meet other alumni from our own and other years. That evening, we had a lovely dinner at the Cherwell Boathouse and those of us with more time on our hands met at Gees on the Banbury Road for coffee and farewells the next day. We had a wonderful evening, mixing memories and perceptions of the past with accounts of the present and plans for the future. We recalled an early sherry party, hosted by the LMH language tutors, Joan Crow, Cathy Slater, Mary MacRobert, Pamela Currie and Peter Hainsworth. Our linguists group met there for the first time. Then there was French composition with the inimitable Mrs Balhatchet; and shared tutorials based on a variable geography of language combinations and subject timelines. When we returned from our year abroad to find most of our year group gone, the linguist group became a critical network for our finals.

We enjoyed swapping stories about our younger selves, especially when people had different perceptions, different versions, of the details. We were also keen to celebrate lives lived, recognising the value of our experiences. Of those present, we counted: 14 children, three grandchildren, two journalists, one vicar, two lawyers, one language teacher, one banker, three working for Government/EU institutions and two with international jobs.

Our thanks go to the Development Office for their support with organising the reunion. Here's to the next get-together!

Janette Sinclair (1981 Modern Languages) with contributions from the 1981 LMH linguists



ARTICLES

The pursuit of (social) care 22

Returning to work through a fellowship from the Daphne Jackson Trust 25

Bonnets, Bennets and the Bank of England 28

Winning awards at the annual World Marmalade Competition 30

Shakespeare, Parliament, and Erkenwald: the sharing of insights sealed away for centuries and an update on the quit rents address 32

ARTICLES

THE PURSUIT OF (SOCIAL) CARE

The prologue to my book *Danny's People* (see *Reviews*) recalls a time when LMH friends and I sought signatures for a Spastics Society (now the charity Scope) petition. The petition called for improved services to meet the needs of disabled people. What the book doesn't include is the subsequent sarcasm with which this campaign was greeted by colleagues in the Oxford University Labour Club. 'Spastics Society activist, I see' was the barely disguised ridicule that greeted me when I was being asked what kind of activity should be included on my manifesto to become a Students Union officer. I was embarrassed, internalising my colleagues' insinuation that support for disabled people was not a sufficiently edgy political cause.

The scorn elicited by charity work was also reflected in the teasing that I earned from peers when I expressed a basic desire to look after other people. It was as if human kindness and connection are inferior attributes in our world. I remember my first boyfriend at Oxford saying disparagingly 'Virginia will probably be a social worker', referring I think to the relatively low status of social work, and the sense that the caring professions (medicine aside) were 'beneath' those of us who were supposed to be the intellectual elite. (That relationship didn't last long.)

Likewise, it raised a few eyebrows in some quarters when I later chose to train as a nurse. This was a far cry from a career in NATO (suggested by someone in the LMH hierarchy). But it turned out that nursing was the perfect grounding I could have dreamt of, not only for handling the medical challenges I'd later face as Danny's mother, but also for the precious levelling experience it gave me. Illness is no respecter of status; working in Paddington and Ladbroke Grove introduced me to a wider panoply of human diversity than I could ever have encountered in a more 'established' career.

Nursing also generated a sense of solidarity with people who are often marginalised and disrespected. My first ward as a student nurse focused on gastro-intestinal (G-I) surgery. That turned out to be incredibly helpful, given that Danny has required extensive G-I procedures and has had a stoma and an ileostomy bag throughout his adult life. And in retrospect, it feels fortuitous that the patient I chose as the subject of my final-year case study was an elderly woman with Down Syndrome and dementia. What was memorable was the ward sister's approving 'surprise' that the doctor took so much trouble to save her life. Fast forward to the future exposure of arbitrary 'Do Not Resuscitate' notices placed (without consent) on the notes of some learning-disabled Covid patients during the pandemic, or the avoidably early deaths of learning-disabled people referred to in Professor Sara Ryan's recent book *Critical Health and Learning*

Disabilities: An Exploration of Erasure and Social Murder. The latest report of 'Learning from the lives and deaths of people with learning disabilities and autistic people' (LeDeR) shows a worsening picture of premature and avoidable deaths among people with learning disabilities. The median age at death for a person with a profound learning disability is 40.7 years – a whole 41.2 years difference from the general population.

When we hear stories like this, we parents are terrified about what will happen when we die. Who will protect our loved ones from these horrors? We spend much of our time engaging in advocacy for our children, not just in the early years but through their adult lives. The vigilance required to keep up to date with and involved with medical appointments, changes of support staff, changes in the benefits system – all in the face of regular exposés of abuse in care homes – is exhausting and seemingly never ending. For someone like Danny who does not use words to communicate, and whose behaviours and personality are only understood by those who know him well, one can never feel safe about his future. 'I will have to stay awake for the rest of my life' (a phrase I wrote *in extremis* during one of Danny's medical emergencies) is how I still often feel.

That's impossible, of course.

So what do I and other family carers do?

'Social care' is not just about care for the elderly and infirm and the pressure on the NHS (though that is clearly a huge area of policy challenge). Reform of the system is also needed for disabled children, and disabled adults of working age, and particularly those with intellectual disabilities and autism, for whom huge sums of public money are often spent on suboptimal care provided by private equity companies. People with the most complex needs can be assessed as needing 2:1, 3:1 or even 4:1 'care' – without a corresponding appreciation that this kind of overkill supervision and restraint may be because the 'carers' aren't trained, are low paid, don't stick around to get to know their clients, are often unmotivated and unsupervised. Carers become more like bodyguards at best, prison officers at worst. Hence scandals such as Winterbourne View and others.

I believe as a society we are throwing money at the wrong thing, without thinking what could happen if a career structure were promoted, with able student learners focusing on a long-term professional future in the important field of learning disability and autism. Bringing together the elements of my PPE trio, I am convinced that this would be a more efficient and more humane way to spend public resources. The wellbeing of more people like Danny would be dramatically improved if they were served by people who respected them, who are trained and supervised, achieve high professional standards and qualifications, and who thereby stay in an established and adequately remunerated career. (I dare to hope that the Casey Commission may come up with some strong recommendations in this regard.)

But when I step down from my soapbox, and when I park my fear for Danny's future, I should emphasise that life as his mother is full of joy. What has thrilled me about the unexpected trajectory my life has taken, thanks to being the mother of Danny, is the chance to meet people I'd otherwise never have had an opportunity to encounter. There is so much love and friendship in what can look from the outside only like a

distressed battleground. The desperate fight to be understood and supported is accompanied by love, friendship and humour, and – in my very lucky and atypical case – with the chance to meet royalty and football heroes!

Danny is now approaching his mid-thirties, and even though he is denied some of life's pleasures and liberties (eating food, being able to leave his home unaccompanied), he emphatically has a good life and provides inspiration and affirmation to people around him. He brings out the best in his support circle, and he widens the horizons of everyone he meets. His journey has required him to face excruciating pain and medical emergencies, both of which were near catastrophes for me as well as for him. But he's well enough these days, and – thanks to the loyalty of long-term carers – surrounded by a dedicated (and under-paid and under-valued) team, and an extended family who love him.

And just by being him, he has inadvertently been the catalyst for hope and support for hundreds (dare I say thousands? tens of thousands?) of other autistic and learning disabled people. He has been written about in books and in the national media by both his parents (who remain united around him, despite the failure of our marriage). He was one of the first pupils at TreeHouse School (co-founded with an amazing group of other parents) which evolved into Ambitious about Autism – the national charity that provides services and that campaigns for change. Danny is wonderfully unaware of this contribution to the establishment of other schools and colleges, of national alliances and UCL's CRAE (Centre for Research in Autism and Education).

Throughout, I am not oblivious to the fact that we have been fortunate. We coincided with helpful people, often at crucial and perilous points in the journey. We were able to employ carers who became like family during all our struggles and who continue to be with us to this day. And to all the people (LMH friends included) who supported us along the way – by sharing contacts, effecting introductions, running marathons and braving sponsored sky dives, by making generous gifts and attending charity events – I say thank you. From the bottom of my heart.

Virginia Bovell
1977 PPE

RETURNING TO WORK THROUGH A FELLOWSHIP FROM THE DAPHNE JACKSON TRUST

Professor Daphne Jackson was appointed Professor of Physics at the University of Surrey in 1971 – the first female professor of physics in the UK. She realised that a large number of women who took a career break to look after their family were lost to science research in academia. They were deemed to be out of touch with advances in their field and there were no clear ways for them to retrain. In 1985 she designed an innovative fellowship scheme to help these women get back into research. The Daphne Jackson (DJ) Fellowship provided a salary for two years' half-time employment. The part-time aspect of the fellowship was particularly valuable as it meant that women who had been away from the workplace for some time could make a gradual return. After Daphne's death in 1991, the Daphne Jackson (DJ) Trust was established. In 2003 it expanded the remit to include men as well as women, in 2020 it also funded research into arts and the humanities, and in 2023 it started to offer Research Technical Professional Fellowships. The overall remit remains the same, the fellowships are all part-time and to be eligible you should currently be on a research career break of at least two years' duration, taken for family, health or caring reasons, and have previously been in a paid research position.

Carolyn Carr (Jones 1977 Chemistry) and Abigail Ingram (2004 DPhil) have both returned to academia after a career break through a fellowship from the DJ Trust. Here they describe how they have benefitted from this excellent scheme.

CAROLYN

I read chemistry at LMH and in my Part II year I realised I loved doing research. When I graduated in 1981, I worked for Kodak at their factory in Merseyside, using mass spectrometry to analyse the compounds the research team developed to form the colours in film. In 1982 I married Paul, who was training to be a pilot in the RAF. I stayed with Kodak while he moved around the country for his training, but left in 1984 when he was posted to a squadron. I returned to Oxford to do a DPhil in the lab where I had done my Part II. At the end of my DPhil I was expecting my first child and I spent the next 11 years looking after my family and moving from one RAF base to another. I had a small job writing abstracts of chemical patents, which I could do from home, but when my children were both in school I started applying for jobs in research, without success. I was beginning to feel that I would have to abandon my dream of getting back to research when I saw an advert for the DJ Fellowship. I will never forget the excitement of realising that, perhaps, all was not lost after all.

When you apply for a fellowship, you have to find someone who will agree to take you on and then plan and write a research proposal. My previous supervisor in the Dyson Perrins lab was retiring but suggested a colleague who might be interested in

supporting me. Writing a research proposal after an 11-year break is quite a challenge, but with help from my supervisor and a friend from my DPhil days I managed it and in 1998 I was back in the lab, desperately trying to remember how everything worked! I loved it, I had missed the day-to-day challenges of research, the excitement of discovery and problem-solving with colleagues. The part-time aspect of the fellowship meant I could be home by the end of the school day and so gradually get the kids used to the fact that I wasn't going to be around all the time!

Towards the end of my two years, one of my colleagues told me that he was working for a university spin-out company which needed someone to do mass spectrometry. I joined the company as it was moving out to new labs at Harwell and had an interesting few years working on proteins associated with Alzheimer's disease. Sadly the company ran out of investment in 2004, but by then I had been back in the lab for six years and was able to get a job back in Oxford University, this time in the Department of Physiology. I was using techniques from my DPhil, but to study cardiac metabolism rather than chemical reactions. I have been there ever since. I am now an Associate Professor of Biomedical Science, I have supervised 18 DPhil students and 30 project students, I am an author on 96 papers and one book chapter and I have examined at least 25 PhD students. I have also supervised a DJ Fellow for her research project and am now part of the grants assessment panel for the DJ Trust. One of my favourite scientific meetings is the DJ Biennial Conference where I see all the current Fellows talking excitedly about their projects and the thrill of being back in research! The buzz in the room is exhilarating and demonstrates the value of this amazing scheme.

ABIGAIL

Unlike Carolyn, my route to a DPhil was less direct and more 'squiggly' (as these sorts of career paths are now termed!). I read biology at Exeter University and, having enjoyed my third-year research project, decided to approach my supervisor about postgraduate studies. Sadly, he was not taking on new students. Unsure where to apply next, I decided to do a PGCE while considering my next move. I completed the Newly Qualified Teacher year and then left to work for Raleigh International as a marine scientist on a coral monitoring project in Belize. I loved the research and, when I returned, applied for a PhD with the School of Ocean Sciences at Bangor University. My application wasn't successful, but I was offered a fully funded place on the MSc in Marine Environmental Protection. Following on from this, I applied for PhDs, but again, did not manage to secure anything. I took on a series of administrative roles, until my father chanced upon a job advert in a local paper while on holiday in Dorset, which led to a one-year contract at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology as a fish ecologist which, as it turned out, would later help secure a DPhil post at Oxford, to study fish parasite attachment systems with a view to improving marine fish tag design. The next three years were happy and culminated in my marriage, shortly after submitting my thesis. The following year, I was very fortunate to be offered a post-doctoral position at the Natural History Museum, which continued the theme of biomimetics – that is, mimicking structures or mechanisms in nature, to address human challenges. This time the focus was structural colour in butterflies and investigating the photonic

nanostructures interacting with light to produce their bright and often iridescent colours.

It was during this time that I had my first child. Towards the end of the contract, I began applying for lectureships, but I could find nothing part-time that would accommodate both a growing family and my husband's increasing overseas travel. As a result, I decided to take a career break, spending the next 15 years caring for my family and teaching a mixture of GCSE, A Level, and then access courses and foundation degrees. Throughout this time, I kept in my mind that I would return to research, but as time went on I could not see a way back. It wasn't until my late mother was listening to Pia Ostergaard talk about her return to research with a DJ Fellowship on *Woman's Hour*, that I realised this was my golden opportunity! Once my youngest child was at secondary school, I began looking at funded, advertised DJ Fellowships, but I could find nothing in my research area. Fortunately, regular fellowships are also offered, where applicants find a suitable host institution and supervisor. I had already approached Dr Suzanne Williams at the Natural History Museum with my ideas. She was very enthusiastic!

The fellowship application process takes around a year to complete. It began with an eligibility check with a DJ Trust advisor. Once through this first stage, I had around three months to write a draft research proposal, describing the project, but also importantly, the retraining programme. Daunting as this was after 15 years, I received lots of guidance and support from my advisor, Gillian Halket, and from Suzanne. The draft was then shown to potential funders and, within a few weeks, funding had been secured for three years from the Royal Society and the Natural Environment Research Council – I could not have been more happy! I then attended an interview with two Trust team members to discuss my background, the proposal and my future employment prospects. The interview was supportive and constructive – I received lots of feedback, strengthening the project. A month later, I submitted my final proposal. It was then reviewed by two technical referees who were experts in a field closely related to my research area. Finally, the proposal was assessed by the DJ Awards Assessment Panel and I began the fellowship in August 2023. It was so exciting to be back as a researcher at the Natural History Museum!

I'm now coming to the end of my fellowship: three years have flown by! I've presented at national and international events, including the Royal Society Summer Science Exhibition, published papers and re-established my career. I've thoroughly enjoyed my time at the Natural History Museum. The fellowship has enabled me to refresh many of the skills I routinely employed before I took a career break, when biological photonics research was still in its infancy, but also to acquire new skills and expand my research into exciting new areas through a collaboration with Diamond Light Source. The unique support provided by the DJ Fellowship scheme, in the shape of a dedicated Fellowship Advisor, together with the training courses offered and the DJ Biennial Conference, has helped ensure the success of the project. The friendship and support offered by former and current fellows is also invaluable. I feel extremely grateful to be part of this community of incredible people!

Evidence of the importance of the DJ Fellowship scheme includes a pledge by the government to more than double support for the DJ Trust from £1.7m to £4m per year. In addition, a recent DJ Impact Report shows how successful the scheme is, which has now been extended to technical professionals. Just some of the encouraging statistics include:

- more than 70% of former fellows remain in research active roles 5–10 years after their fellowship;
- 93% of respondents have worked in their first-choice careers after their fellowship;
- nearly two-thirds of DJ Fellows secured paid employment at the same institution after their fellowship, demonstrating their high employability.

If you know someone who would be interested in applying for a fellowship, please encourage them to have a look at the DJ Trust's website: **https://daphnejackson.org/**.

Carolyn Carr *(Jones 1977 Chemistry)*

Abigail Ingram *(2004 DPhil)*

BONNETS, BENNETS AND THE BANK OF ENGLAND

My first encounter with Jane Austen, at the age of not quite three, was not a promising one. 'Why are they always *crying*?' I asked in disgust as yet another Bennet (usually Mrs, but sometimes Kitty or Lydia) dissolved into tears. Having had it impressed upon me that big girls did not cry, I was at a loss to understand why the cast of the classic 1958 BBC dramatisation did so at every opportunity for reasons beyond my comprehension. My mother, who was addicted to the series, never answered the question but simply shushed me and continued to focus intently on the antics of Jane Downs and Alan Badel.

A year or so later I discovered ballet, refusing to budge from the television set and accompany my parents on a Christmas visit to relatives until the transmission of *The Nutcracker* had finished. However, my mother's devotion to Jane Austen was only matched by her implacable determination that I was not to have dancing lessons. I suspect that she was alarmed by such single-minded dedication (which persisted for the next ten years) in so young a child and feared that it would lead to an insecure and short-lived career on the stage.

For many O- and A-level students, being forced to read a classic text as a set book killed their interest in it for good. I was fortunate in having gifted and inspiring English teachers who achieved the opposite, bringing *Pride and Prejudice*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* vividly to life and inspiring a lasting and informed love of Jane Austen's work. Many years later, it was a delight to see my own daughter developing a similar passion for it. She was in her early teens at the time and, as with many young readers,

it was another BBC dramatisation (the 1995 version with Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth) which first introduced her to *Pride and Prejudice*. From an early stage, she too had shown an interest in dance, and we were intrigued by the recreations of the social dances of the Regency period and the conventions associated with them.

In 2004 I was appointed to a curatorship at the British Library, and for many years a lengthy commute from Oxford by bus, coach and tube left me with little time for evening activities. Lockdown, however, proved that many of my duties could be performed remotely, and I now had time to start acting again and explore new interests. When I saw a flyer promoting Georgettes of Oxford, a group performing Georgian and Regency dances and running talks and a book group, I decided that this was definitely worth investigating. It was an ideal time to join: 2025, the 250th anniversary year of Jane Austen's birth, meant that the group was in demand to give displays and workshops, with a special focus on the dances featured in the film and television adaptations. Some of these were preserved in the Playford collection, with indications of the popular tunes accompanying them. We learnt to dance Mr Beveridge's Maggot, Shrewsbury Lasses, Childgrove and The Trip to Oxford. My first appearance with the group was at the Oxford Festival of the Arts in June 2025, but the following month took us to Jane Austen's house in Chawton, where we danced in her garden, to Broughton Castle, and to Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare. At the Weston Library we performed to accompany an exhibition on 'Dance in Jane Austen', tied in with a series of talks. The grand finale, in December, was the Jane Austen Ball at the Bank of England Museum, where we gave a display and workshop for the many sumptuously dressed members of the public who had flocked to recreate a Regency event in such imposing surroundings.

The Chawton and Broughton Castle events also allowed visitors to dress up and take part in dances such as La Boulangère (the only dance Austen mentioned by name – in *Pride and Prejudice*), which is easy to learn by dancers of all ages, from grandparents to a tiny girl who was twirled about in her parents' arms. This July we will once again be back at Chawton, not only dancing but performing scenes from *Pride and Prejudice*, in which I am playing Charlotte Lucas.



Four Georgettes, including Susan Halstead (second from left)



The Georgettes of Oxford at the Weston Library

The composition of the group certainly defies all prejudices. It includes members of all ages, with a healthy number of men. Our dance mistress, Helen Davidge, is not only trained in a wide variety of dance forms but holds a PhD and works for Deutsche Bank. Another member, Anna Nekaris, is a professor of primatology and also, like many of the Georgettes, adept at sewing her own historically accurate costumes (we have a WhatsApp group devoted especially to this, exchanging patterns and construction tips). We have welcomed French and American recruits, and a mother and daughter from Ukraine. Last year our reading group covered all of Jane Austen's novels, and this year, in preparation for the October ball celebrating the centenary of her novel *These Old Shades*, we are turning our attention to those of Georgette Heyer.

On 4 October the Bodleian Library will be echoing to the sound of dancing feet and the stately rhythms of music that might have been heard at Versailles in the late eighteenth century. It promises to be an unprecedented event, but one which maintains, in a new medium, the library's tradition of preserving the treasures of the past and enabling a rising generation to rediscover them.

Susan Halstead
(Reynolds 1972 Literae Humaniores)

WINNING AWARDS AT THE ANNUAL WORLD MARMALADE COMPETITION

The World Marmalade Competition! What a laugh, we thought, in April 2025, as we motored through the park, noting the sheep with marmalade-coloured fleeces grazing around Dalemain House in Cumbria. This was the first of our two visits to the Marmalade Festival founded in 2005 by Jane Hasell-McCosh. It began as a local enterprise which has blossomed into a worldwide competition, raising hundreds of thousands of pounds for charity and sponsored by Fortnum & Mason, Lycetts and Westmorland Farmshop among others.



The yard at Dalemain House

Having seen a brief announcement of the competition in a magazine, my husband Robert and I had posted off several different jars of marmalade in January 2025, in blissful ignorance that over 3,000 jars are sent in from all over the world. We decided to go to the Marmalade Festival where the results would be announced and see what it was all about. I wore my

marmalade-coloured mac but nobody commented on it. My horizons were about to be blown away.

It was a bracing spring day, appropriate for the invigorating flavour of marmalade. Some food seems to have a gender and marmalade for me is definitely masculine. I imagine a hearty breakfast in the company of a handsome man in tweeds enjoying kippers and porridge and dark, chunky marmalade on Irish bread. Dalemain House is a Georgian stately home near Penrith which has been in Jane's family for over 300 years. Thousands of jars of marmalade covered every surface in every room on the ground floor. Entries were divided into several categories such as 'Seville Orange' or 'Any Citrus with Additions'. Others were for marmalade made by octogenarians, immigrants, those detained at His Majesty's Pleasure or by a grandparent and grandchild – truly imaginative and inclusive.



The competing jars of marmalade

We were amazed to see that each and every jar had under it a small, handwritten assessment from the judge. One feels for the gastronomic endurance of the judges and the faithful volunteers who organise such a huge task.

Most surprising was our beginners' luck to come away with two bronze certificates (17 out of 20 marks) and a handful of merit certificates. Each entry is graded according to presentation, texture and flavour. The winner of the commercial section was a Japanese lady with her yuzu and pear marmalade (which was subsequently marketed by Fortnum & Mason in London). The sweetness of the pear made us think that it was almost a jam rather than a marmalade, but it is apparently the presence of citrus – orange, lime, grapefruit, yuzu, kumquat, etc. – as the main ingredient which defines it as a marmalade. Afterwards, we sat in the cobbled home-farm yard with a cup of tea watching the crowd, so diverse yet united by the magic of marmalade.

So that was 2025 and we'd enjoyed it so much that we entered again this year. Throughout January 2026, our house was fragrant with the scent of boiling citrus concoctions with additions of cardamon, cranberries, ginger, quince and bergamot, and every surface was sticky. We sent off our best efforts and held our breath until April. After a comfortable night in a local pub, we arrived at Dalemain at 10am for the judging to kick off the 21st Marmalade Festival.

This time it was glorious hot weather, a true Seville day, and the crowds were waiting for the opening speeches on the gravel outside the house. The international marmalade glitterati were all on parade, including the Japanese Ambassador as well as the mayor of a Japanese town which also has its own marmalade competitions. The Lord-Lieutenant of Cumbria spoke eloquently of marmalade representing creativity and culture and connecting communities; the Spanish Ambassador was surprised to see how far north her Seville oranges had travelled; the Penrith Chamber of Commerce

and Fortnum & Mason representatives, and the Past Master of the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers, all contributed their views on the alchemy of marmalade and how it had brought us all together. King Charles sent a message of encouragement for the event which was warmly received.

The winners were awarded cups and certificates and applauded for their grapefruit, lemon grass and ginger marmalade, orange and lapsang, Seville and passionfruit, lime and sour cherry, and many more dazzling recipes. Local school children sang a marmalade song before everyone surged into the house.

We were delighted to be lucky again! In the non-Seville class, my kumquat with cardamon and ginger received a bronze certificate with the comment 'Good colour and nicely cooked peel but taste of cardamon and ginger should be stronger'. Robert's bronze award for dark and chunky marmalade came with compliments on its flavour, but the set was deemed slightly too hard. His lime and quince attracted a merit (although rather bitter). Non-starters were a grapefruit marmalade which was black (it had been left boiling unattended at home for far too long) and a Seville orange and quince which was condemned as 'gloopy'. Never mind, we shall go for gold again next year.

It is both serious and funny to find that something as mundane as marmalade is not just quirky and British but internationally appreciated. We all felt a warm sweet glow. An everyday marmalade can spread its gastronomic wings on so many imaginative flavourings and be elevated to a new orbit of deliciousness; the golden star of breakfast.

But tomorrow, I think I'll have honey instead – even as I order kumquats for my next attempt.

Paula Sells
(Muir 1967 Zoology)

SHAKESPEARE, PARLIAMENT, AND ERKENWALD: THE SHARING OF INSIGHTS SEALED AWAY FOR CENTURIES AND AN UPDATE ON THE QUIT RENTS ADDRESS

In a previous edition of *The Brown Book*, the editors kindly reproduced a 'Quit Rents' address. It is important to clarify that those words held more context than I was explicit about at the time; it was, in truth, an invitation extended by the City of London to help me move quietly through these matters in formal settings. That address allowed what I needed to be heard to be set out in a proper sequence, with the necessary support to

eventually bring this narrative into the light responsibly. There is a maxim of the law concerning the locking of chests and the throwing of the key down the ages. This legal concept perfectly captures the paradox of Soulton: a legacy preserved through the very act of its concealment.

I have recently requested that my representative in Parliament place on the record several startling findings concerning Soulton Hall. These entries summarise a convergence of heritage that includes the potential survival of the lost High Altar of Old St Paul's and the relics of Saint Erkenwald (d. 693 AD), the presence of sophisticated Renaissance cryptography within the estate's architecture, and documented links to the world of William Shakespeare. These findings have been formally reported into the journals of the House of Commons and supported by ministerial answers from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, recognising the estate as a site of national sanctuary.

The survival of this history was not accidental. For generations, the incumbent family maintained a disciplined and studied lack of clarity regarding our own history. The 'thawing' of this silence has required us to confront a deeply sensitive space associated with historical trauma. To a modern observer, the mid-sixteenth-century upheaval in England might be termed a form of cultural genocide. In that light, the legacy of Sir Rowland Hill was an act of threading a figurative needle, seeking harmony amid cultural violence. By protecting the seventh-century legacy of the Saxon Saint Erkenwald – the 'Lawgiver', Hill created a cultural reservoir intended for times of crisis. The veil only began to lift when we recovered the 'key' thrown down the ages: the specific geometry of the rhombic dodecahedron, a shape encoded in the garnet stone long associated with the family. The forced stillness of the pandemic finally allowed us to address what had been instinctively protected for 400 years, translating a half-remembered tradition into a verified piece of national history.

As an alumnus, it has been a privilege to bring these findings back to the academic community, including presentations at Lady Margaret Hall and at Magdalene College and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. However, there is a great deal of work ahead of us as we continue to reveal the legacy of Sir Rowland Hill and the heritage he sought to preserve for the nation.

Tim Ashton
(2005 Jurisprudence)



NEWS

Personal and Career News from Alumni	36
Marriages, Births and Deaths	56
Alumni Publications	58

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.

1952

MARGARET HARVEY (Lloyd): I was awarded an MBE in June 2025 (which I received at Windsor Castle in June 2026) for a survey of, and series of books about, Bermuda's architectural heritage over a period of 40 years.

1953

SONIA MACFARLANE (Haslett): My husband, Michael, died a year ago. He was very proud of his connection with LMH. His first wife was Isobel Sergeant (1951); my first husband knew Michael at Cambridge and the four of us were great friends. We enjoyed many holidays together at Michael's cottage in the Lake District and also went on Mediterranean cruises. Even in the last stages of his illness Michael would say how lucky we were to have each other. I miss him greatly but have the support of family and friends.

1954

SUJATA DESAI (Manohar): I am delighted to announce the arrival of my great grandson Arthur just before last Christmas. I still arbitrate and give legal opinions but much less frequently. I was particularly pleased to contribute to the oral history of LMH. My best wishes for a vibrant and creative LMH for years to come.

1956

MARJORIE WILLIAMS (Morris): Having retired in July 1987 from full-time special teaching as a SENCO (special needs coordinator) in a comprehensive of 1,500 pupils, my husband Bob (Robert Morris, Balliol, 1957) and I moved to the Somerset market

town of Frome, a decision which we never regretted. The town has a thriving artistic community and for the last 25 years a 10-day festival in July. Inevitably we both became very involved in a variety of voluntary activities: for the 25 years I ran and organised the local Society for Disabled Artists while Bob chaired the festival for 15 years. Sadly, he died five years ago but I've been completely overwhelmed by the help and support I've received.

1958

LISA BURNSIDE (Parkinson): I am very glad to keep in contact online with friends in many countries to give mediation training and consultancy occasionally and take part in international conferences. The fifth edition of my mediation book was published at the end of last year and I co-authored the *Council of Europe Guide to Child-Inclusive Mediation* with my colleague, Maria Conceicao Oliveira, the CoE's representative in Portugal. Our two younger grandchildren are graduating soon and our great-grandson, now 18 months, is walking and talking, enjoys imitating animals and looking at books. I keep in close touch with our Ukrainian friends and support them as much as possible. Gardening is difficult now as I have osteoarthritis, so we are encouraging our garden to go wild. The primroses are a lovely sight in spring and we have campanula and buttercups and lots of rambler roses, with a shady terrace to enjoy in hot weather.

1959

VIRGINIA WATSON (Allport): We moved from Oxford to Bath a year ago, and we have bought a house with my daughter so we live downstairs and she and her family live upstairs. Our son lives in Bristol so we are nearer him and the grandchildren too. I am just 10-minutes bike ride from the gym so I can go for exercises every week or more often. I have given up driving, but this is no problem as the bus goes down to the centre from us in Combe Down every 10 minutes. Having sung in a choir for 28 years in Oxford, I am now learning to sing without music, by ear, in my daughter's friendly folk choir. I recently had a cataract operation on my left eye, which was painful but has improved my sight. I regularly keep in touch with Liz Rogers (1959) by phone.

1960

JUDITH THORNTON (Doherty): Once a month, beginning many years ago, four of us from 1960 and two spouses get together by zoom: myself, in Philadelphia, with husband Roger Doherty (Balliol 1957); Sara Walker (Burkitt) in Brasilia; Angela Young (Mundy) and husband Ralph in Manchester; and Ann Marsh (James) in Melbourne. This tradition requires Angela and Ralph to stay up late on a Friday night in England and Ann to get up early on a Saturday morning in Australia, but despite our advanced ages we can usually manage to figure it out, even when the clocks change.

1961

FENELLA GREIG (Greig Heckscher): I have published a book about Jane Colden (1724–60) who described over 300 plants in the Hudson Valley of New York in her manuscript. Her work was unique amid the botanical patriarchy of that time, writing detailed scientific descriptions in the new Linnaean manner. This book examines her botanic descriptions and puts them in context with the emerging picture of the American flora.

1962

HILARY FISH (Potts): Ian Potts is writing as Hilary suffers from mild cognitive impairment. This year, in September, is our silver wedding anniversary. We went to see Machu Picchu in January: we got there but Hilary got food poisoning/altitude sickness and we had to come home early. She then fell and broke her hip. I just hope she survives to our anniversary!

JUDIE MINARDS (Threlfall): Having been known as Mama Mwarabu for some 40 years, my name changed again on 5 July 2023. I'm now Judie Threlfall. My husband, Ted, and I have been looking after each other for about 12 years; he is nearly 9 years my senior at 92. We are planning for his 'big double O' or rather '00' as he calls it, due in May 2034. We live permanently in lovely sheltered housing in Port St Mary, Isle of Man – a holiday destination well worth escaping to, as well as perfect for retirees.

1964

HILARY KILPATRICK: In April–May 2025, I spent two weeks in Syria, my first visit since 2006. The atmosphere was euphoric, with posters at the frontier proclaiming 'Syria belongs to us – to all of us'. It was also disorganised; I didn't have to pay for a visa (that has changed in the meantime). I gave a lecture at Damascus University on my experience of translating Arabic literature into English, and a lively discussion followed with faculty and later with students. The Syrians have been isolated academically for years and they are very keen to develop contacts with scholars beyond the Arab world. After Damascus, my son and I travelled to Aleppo, Hama and Homs. In Aleppo, which is still getting over the 2022 earthquake, we had a splendid guided tour of the citadel from the director; as we could see, it had suffered in the fighting between government forces and insurgents. But the famous souks, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, had suffered even more, shot to pieces by Bashshar al-Asad's army with Russian help. As one Syrian returnee we met said: 'How could they do this?' In Hama the memories of the 1982 massacre of the Muslim Brotherhood are still alive. I was invited to a hen party with the cream of Hama society's ladies and felt out of place with my travelling clothes and hardly any jewellery, but they were very friendly. In Homs we visited the grave of Father Frans van der Lugt, a Jesuit who stayed with his community, Muslims as well as Christians, during the siege by government forces. He was assassinated in 2014. All over the country are buildings in ruins, reminiscent of Beirut during the civil war or of Gaza. At the Lebanese frontier we saw lorries loaded with household possessions

making their way home to Syria. I had intended to go back to Syria during a visit to Lebanon this year, but with the Israeli attacks in Lebanon I have put it off till next year. I would be happy to forward any proposals for academic cooperation with Syrians to university contacts in the country.

GILL MATHER (Rowe): My romantic novel, *Sequences and Grace Notes*, was published on Amazon in kindle and ebook forms in July 2026. As the title suggests, the novel has music at its heart. I have previously published eight books of verse and a memoir but this is my first novel.

1965

ELIZABETH SYKES (Winder): My book on Charlotte Brontë, written under the name Elizabeth Imlay, is being re-published as a revised edition under the title *Charlotte Bronte's Psyche, a Close Reading of 'Jane Eyre'* by River Light Press (see *Reviews*). It is available from Waterstones, Amazon, or from the author at a special rate.

1966

SUE BATTERSBY (Weaver): I'm long retired and living in West Wales, tending a two-acre garden. My lifelong concern for human rights led me to become involved with the Defend Our Juries campaign of 2023, which focused on upholding the rights of jurors to acquit according to conscience, usually in the context of trials of climate protesters. Then in summer 2025 the Home Secretary decided to proscribe Palestine Action (PA) as a terrorist group and, linking it together with two obscure and violent terrorist groups, secured parliamentary approval. PA is a direct action group which seeks to destroy equipment in factories producing arms for use in Gaza, in what has been described as a genocide. PA says that it is totally opposed to violence against people. Since then, as part of a campaign to lift the ban against PA I have joined many others in sitting quietly in meditation, holding a sign 'I oppose genocide . . .'. My first sit, in Cardiff in July 2025, lasted one hour and led to 27 hours in a police cell, while my house was raided at 3.00 am. Fortunately I was equipped with a good book, Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, which led me to the insight of one of the characters, that he did apparently useless things in peaceful protest as a way of conveying that he 'was not afraid'. There have been other sits and other arrests, as I have joined with fellow citizens in resisting attempts by successive governments to roll back rights to protest. Our fate is uncertain, as we wait for the Supreme Court to rule on whether the proscription was unlawful. I may face trial for at least four 'terrorist' acts. I'm writing here because I feel sure there are other alumni who support or are involved in this campaign, just as there will be those who find it unacceptable. After friendly discussion with the *Brown Book* Editor, this piece has been edited in line with legal advice.

Editor's note: Palestine Action remains proscribed under the Terrorism Act 2000. The Court of Appeal held the proscription lawful in June 2026, and an appeal to the Supreme Court is pending. The views expressed are the author's, and publication does not imply endorsement by LMH.

1967

JESSICA KEMBALL-COOK (Yates): I received the annual Outstanding Contribution Award from the Tolkien Society at their Annual General Meeting in April 2026.

1968

SUSAN LEVITON (Goodman): I am still working, almost full-time, all of it online. I am an education consultant and, among other things, develop curricula for teaching English. It is a long way from my first degrees in physics, but my particular interest is teaching critical thinking . . . and physics is a very good grounding for that. Forty years ago my book *Gertrude Bell* was published. It is a very slim volume giving an overview of her life, including her time at LMH. Last week Bloomsbury reverted the rights to me and I am in the process of resetting the text (so as not to violate the typographical rights that Bloomsbury retain). If anyone would like a copy, I am happy to email it to you when I have completed it. I am sure you can get my email from the Development Office at LMH.

SARAH STEWART-BROWN: In August I experienced a fire ripping through my Headington garden, started by a neighbour who was not taking care. I was very lucky because the fire brigade managed to contain the blaze before it got to my house. But it was terrifying. I was still in a state of shock four days later, mourning two very beautiful, mature trees as well as the hedges and fences that were consumed in minutes. It should be no surprise to anyone that these fires are happening; it was entirely predictable. Yet so few of my friends, colleagues and even my children seem to be taking climate change seriously enough to alter the way they live and consume. I am taken with the observation that the embodiment practices I teach others and practise myself (www.wellbeing-ventures.co.uk/courses) leave me with a sense of contentment and a capacity to discriminate what I really need to live a joyful, engaged life in my late 70s. And it turns out that this is not very much. I wish I could be more effective in helping others to experiment with embodiment, which seems to manage to keep me out of hospital and my GP's surgery as well.

1969

RACHEL HOWARD (Cartland): Dilemmas and choices are part and parcel of everyday life. In April I really wanted to attend the reunion for my year at LMH, but my husband was recovering from major surgery and we are in Hong Kong where I've lived since graduation, more than 50 years ago. Our daughter-in-law and granddaughter came to stay, a real sacrifice as our 'guest room' consists of a camping mattress on the floor of my home office, and I trimmed my visit to five nights in UK, economically not very sensible but emotionally totally worth it. I stayed in Richmond, where we'd previously owned a flat, on the grounds that I knew and liked the area. While I was there, it was experiencing an explosion of wisteria so it was more attractive than ever. Our Oxford reunion began on the train from Paddington as Caroline Tucker (Macready) plus

husband Clive, Maggy Pigott (Toohey), Scilla Hother (Clark), Anna Walker (Butterworth) and I had managed to sit together. Our day at LMH was all I might have hoped for. It was a joy to see everyone, including particular friends from those days, Tricia Wilks (Hackforth) and Vicki Hamilton (Nelson). It was wonderful of Sue Macdonald (Yates) and all the LMH staff to have organised this. We are all aware that the shadows of mortality and frailty make such events to be treasured more than ever. All was well when I got back to Hong Kong and I returned to the round of various volunteering commitments, each with their own dilemmas and choices. I take English conversation groups at Belilios Public School, established in the nineteenth century as the first government school for girls. The first session requires a bit of thought as the most junior girls are often shy about speaking English and under-estimate their own capabilities. Snacks from Marks & Spencer and coffee-table books with pictures of Richmond and Oxford usually break the ice, with Christ Church Hall delightedly recognised as Hogwarts in the Harry Potter films. I am also immersed in shortlisting interview candidates for the China Oxford Scholarship Fund, where I have been honoured to be a trustee for many years now. I am used to the reality that many worthwhile candidates cannot make the cut, due to our modest Fund's limitations, though the whittling down remains painful. We get an impressive range of applicants, with increased numbers in the arts and humanities. Their calibre is such that we are confident that there will be a tremendous two-way benefit. Overall, Oxford and LMH have been such a force for good in the world and it is the greatest privilege to be a tiny part of it all.

GILLIAN MOORE: I recently completed a Master's degree (MSt) programme in history at the University of Cambridge and was awarded a distinction. My dissertation was on the Pacific labour trade in the late nineteenth century. My first degree was in biochemistry and I had not studied history since the age of 15.

1971

PAULA GRAYSON: LMH friends and others gathered in my 1828 chapel for a November 2025 party: Sue Scott, Joan Link, Gill Francis, Jackie Smith, Dorothy Percival. My role as a public governor for a mental health and community services NHS Foundation Trust ceased in June 2025. As Chairman of the local Rural Communities Charity, I rejoiced with our 85 vineyard volunteers when we had a record 2025 harvest. In addition to our normal sparkling wine, there is a special limited edition pink brut from our experimental red grapes. After a protracted tender process we won the contract to continue our Rural Community Agents, reducing the isolation of referred isolated people in villages. I stepped back to be a trustee from March 2026. I am still paid to provide employment law support to charities and a kindergarten and to an individual who has been treated unkindly by her organisation. As an enterprise adviser, and assisting other schools through Inspiring the Future, I have carried out mock interviews, assisted with CVs and put schools in touch with local businesses to improve career aspirations. As a volunteer for Turvey History Society website, funded by the Heritage Lottery with peer reviews of text, I carried out research, wrote articles and interviewed five people for

oral history recordings. We have been creating exhibitions in our church, first on Turvey bells and clock, for which I wrote the clock text, and then on our landscape, providing information on the built environment.

JOAN WILMOT (Link): I continue as a chaplain to the police and fire stations in Matlock where I live; supporting safeguarding training for churches in my diocese; running history talks at Arkwright's Mills in Cromford, Derbyshire; singing in the local church choir and a community choir in Wirksworth; and stitching, focusing on using 1930s to 1950s table cloths and doilies as my base. Most importantly, I meet up with my friends of over 50 years from LMH, a gang of about eight or so now elderly women. We see each other as a collective at some set-piece events, as well as in smaller numbers as ladies who lunch. Last, but not least, I am working on the Women Peace and Security agenda, delighted that there are now 113 countries with National Action Plans, which the UK started over 20 years ago to make sure the UN Security Council Resolution on this (1325) was turned into practical work. So much more is needed, of course, in these troubled times, when women are again increasingly a major target for violence and displacement.

1972

NICKY HARPER (Bull): In October 2025, my husband and I spent a wonderful month in New Zealand visiting our younger son and his partner. Together the four of us toured both the North and South Islands by train and hire cars, enjoying spectacular scenery and great hospitality. We look forward to exploring more with them in future. I continue to thoroughly enjoy working with members of the Development Office team on the LMH Oral History Project. It is a privilege and pleasure to have met and talked to a wide range of alumni, Fellows and staff representing a vast range of life experience over almost ten decades. In early 2026, I was delighted to see *Voices of the Voiceless* (by Susan H. Bull and Nicola L. Bull) published by Love Me Love My Mind. My late sister-in-law founded the charity and, following her death, I completed the write-up of a project she had been very committed to, evaluating local church care for people experiencing mental distress. I am still involved with local sustainability, creation care and peace-and-justice initiatives, so am being kept nice and busy. In July 2026 we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of our wedding, which took place soon after graduation. It seems hardly possible that half a century has elapsed, especially as my fairly frequent visits back to College help it to feel like 'only yesterday' that we were students!

MARGARET PERKINS (Greenwood): I have just completed my fifth year as a trustee for the Royal School of Church Music, during which time we have successfully negotiated the devastating effects of Covid to emerge well prepared and financed for the challenges of the future. We enter 2027 as our centenary year with many celebrations in the offing. On a personal level I am in the process of completing a Master's degree in art history, so very different from my undergraduate studies in physics and my academic career in accounting and finance. I hope to continue studying for the foreseeable future. I look forward each year to reading news of my fellow alumni.

1973

JANE BEDFORD (Martin): After 49 years I am still happily married to Fraser and we have three children and three grandchildren, all in Jersey with us. I am retired from full-time teaching but still busy with church, family and my youngest son's skincare business.

JOANNA COLLICUTT: I am still teaching psychology of religion at Oxford but trying gradually to wind down. I have published a number of books on the interface of psychology, neuroscience, and Christianity over the years, including *The Psychology of Christian Character Formation, Neurology and Religion*, and *So Longeth my Soul*, and am still busy with writing projects. I am also in the final stages of a PhD on visual art and the Bible at King's College London. I retired from licensed ministry in 2024 but continue to help out in my old parish from time to time. Our four grandsons keep us on our toes and I am enjoying singing with the Oxford Bach Choir.

ROSE WALKER: My most recent book, *Art and Artifice in Twelfth-century Iberia* was published in 2025 and was supported by a Leverhulme Emeritus Research Fellowship.

1974

BARBARA BUCHANAN (Tate): I am aged 70 and finally fully retired after 30 years as Network Systems Manager at Olney Middle School, with additional roles that have varied over the years from IT teacher to Business Manager. Now spending time indulging myself in my favourite crafts, gardening and visiting my favourite parts of the UK – in fact doing all of the things that there is never time for when you work full time in a primary school!

JUDITH COOMBER (Gleeson): I am settling into retirement after 31 years as a judge and am working on a book on the Bangalore Principles. I have recently been appointed as a research affiliate of the Refugee Law Institute and remain a Fellow of York University, Toronto. I am enjoying rediscovering live jazz and travelling as much as possible.

ALISON GOMM: In 2020 I reported that I had become a Branch Prison Support Officer for the Samaritans, leading a team which trains and supports men in a local prison so that they can give fellow prisoners the same emotional support on the inside that Samaritans offer on the outside. We call them Listeners, but they are effectively Samaritans, trained in the same way and subject to the same codes of practice. I have now become a Regional Prison Support Officer, working in the south and supporting ten prisons from the Oxford area in the north to Jersey and Guernsey in the south. It is fascinating – particularly given the prominence of the prison service in the news – to visit these different establishments.

VICTORIA SCHOFIELD: I have kept busy this year as Chair of the Oxford Union Literary Debating Union Trust (OLDUT) which has been challenging and rewarding, involving discussions about freedom of speech and no-platforming. It has meant periodic visits to

Oxford which I've enjoyed. I am also still involved with commenting on India–Pakistan relations. And this year my memoir of my friendship with Benazir – *The Fragrance of Tears* – was translated into Urdu.

1976

YVONNE GRACIAS (McLean): After graduating from LMH with a degree in modern languages (German), I decided to pursue a career as a solicitor. I trained at the College of Law at Lancaster Gate, London and was fortunate to study alongside another LMH graduate, Clare Hatcher (1976 History). My first placement as an articled clerk was at Hedleys, a small shipping firm with a strong litigation department, followed by a position for a year at Linklaters. Upon qualification in 1984, I joined Richards Butler (now Reed Smith LLC) as a general litigator where I specialised in intellectual property and defamation law. In 1989, following a divorce and seeking a change from London life, I joined Russell McVeagh, a prominent New Zealand law firm in its Auckland office in January 1990. Although I intended this to be a brief respite from my career in London, I settled in Auckland and continued my legal career, specialising as an intellectual property litigator. I met and married my New Zealand husband, Kieran McLean, in late 1991. Shortly after the birth of our first child, I was recruited by Microsoft Limited in the UK as their 'lead lawyer' and a member of the subsidiary's executive leadership team. When I returned from maternity leave in 2000, the demands and stress of juggling motherhood with two young children and a demanding and challenging job took its toll. We decided it was time to return to New Zealand in late 2003. Having been exposed to the value of executive coaching at Microsoft, I trained as a coach. For the past 20 years, I have worked as an executive/leadership coach and leadership development consultant, with a focus on women in leadership. I am on the international faculty of a UK-based ICF-accredited coach training organisation, Forton Coaching. With coaching, I finally found my true vocation. I cannot imagine fully retiring and so, despite now being past 'official retirement age', I continue to work as a coach, but with reduced hours. I've created the flexibility to be away for extended periods – to travel and pursue other interests.

SHEILA MARKHAM: As this year marks the 50th anniversary of my matriculation year, I should like to acknowledge the importance of my time at LMH in deciding the course of my entire career. Although barely numerate, I was appointed Treasurer of the Oxford University Society of Bibliophiles when John Sparrow was the Honorary President. It was the most privileged introduction to the world of antiquarian books, in which I have spent my working life. In 1979, when I was looking for my first job in the rare book trade, John Sparrow wrote my letter of introduction to Marlborough Rare Books. My boss was duly impressed, and I'm sure I was hired on the strength of it. Sally Chilver, then Principal of LMH, wrote to me to say 'There's nothing like starting at the top.' This would not have happened without the Oxford Bibliophiles, of which I'm now proud to be a member of the Senior Committee.

SUSAN McPHEE (Hawkley): Having spent more than 40 years working as a lawyer at Eversheds, I am now very happily retired and am spending my time collecting grandchildren (I have three – all girls – and another one on the way) and travelling, mostly by cruising the world.

1977

VIRGINIA BOVELL: I am approaching the two-year anniversary of the publication of my book *Danny's People: A Memoir and Manifesto about Autism*. Having donated a copy to LMH, I thought perhaps now is the time to provide some kind of update! While the book doesn't refer to my academic publications in the field of social and health policy, disability, ethics and autism, it does offer an account of the most significant things that have happened to me over past decades: voluntary work inspired by my wonderful son Danny (autistic, intellectually disabled and with complex health problems) as a founding parent of the charity Ambitious about Autism, as a campaigner, and latterly as an academic and author (see *Articles* and *Reviews*)

JILL GOODRUM (Cook): It's been a busy year as Chair of the Ladies Association of Barbershop Singers. I have travelled the country visiting some of our 60 clubs and meeting with members at concerts, competitions, and education events. I was privileged in June to be invited to the Barbershop Harmony Society annual convention in St Louis, Missouri where I enjoyed the best barbershop singing from across the world in quartets and choruses. It was fitting that this year, for the first time, a women's quartet won the contest and received gold medals as the first female champions. It was also a joy to support a fellow LMH alumna Jill Barnes (Hollingshead 1977) who sings with London City Singers and competed on the international stage. This is the 50th anniversary of our Association so lots more to look forward to, including our annual convention in October in Harrogate where we will be celebrating the legacy of those women who pioneered barbershop singing in the UK and looking forward to the next 50 years!

1978

SYLVIA ASHTON: I am now in my third year as Chair of Governors for a Sheffield primary school and continue to be shocked by the impact of government policy on education. Although I worked in education for 34 years before taking voluntary redundancy in 2017, I had not been in schools for many years. The changes under the Trust system have generated so much duplication and privatisation that I find it hard to navigate the sector and see how this benefits the children it is supposed to serve.

HARRIETT EGGLESTON (Baldwin): I was re-elected to Parliament as the Member for West Worcestershire in 2024 and am now beginning a seventeenth year on the Conservatives' benches. I am a member of the Treasury Select Committee and Shadow Business Minister and am mentoring LMH alumni with an interest in politics.

WENDY PICKERING (Munshi): My husband, Hafiz Munshi, passed away on 28 December 2024.

1979

JON DWYER: I retired from school teaching, back in 2018, and spent six years as a driving instructor before retiring from that profession in 2023. In 2024 I suffered a sudden cardiac arrest while cycling in Denmark and I was fortunate to have been brought back by Danish paramedics. I'm now settled into my 'second life' and enjoying being fully retired. I live quite close to Oxford, so I usually watch a couple of days of Torpids and Summer Eights each year. I'm also a race marshal at Silverstone circuit and I've marshalled at the British Grand Prix for ten consecutive years.

MARK HANLEY-BROWNE: In October 2023, I stepped down as CEO of the Alpha Plus Group (a private education group which owned and operated 20 schools, mostly in the UK) as our owners sold it to a much larger group. Since then, I have been working in various non-exec and business advisory roles and I am also a venture partner with two venture capital firms. As one of these is located in Malta, I have the opportunity to mix business with pleasure on my regular visits there!

1980

ANDREW CULLEN: I have been happily retired for the last five years. My time has been divided between joining, and then working on, the committee of my golf club, training guide dogs, and travelling, often to either Mayo or London to see my daughters.

1981

RACHEL BROOKS: I am living in Liskeard, Cornwall, where I was Mayor for two years and still serve on the Town Council. I am retired after a career in organisational development, working with the NHS and other public-sector and voluntary organisations. Rod and I are celebrating our silver wedding this year and our son Jago has just finished his undergraduate degree.

IAIN CAMPBELL: We have moved to our dream house and garden in the countryside. And it's only a few hundred yards from the flat on the High Street where we were before.

JANETTE SINCLAIR: We recently held a reunion of the 1981 LMH linguists. We prepared a short article – see *Reports*.

MIKE STARKEY: After studying Modern Languages at LMH I trained as a journalist and worked as a newsreader/reporter in commercial radio. In my late 20s a serious car accident led to a change of direction, and I was ordained in the Church of England. I worked for 20 years in London churches and wrote a few books on faith and popular culture. My last full-time role was Head of Church Growth for the Diocese of

Manchester. These days I'm a London-based freelancer, working on media and church projects. I write and present 'Pause for Thought' on BBC Radio 2, I write features and book reviews, and regularly help as a locum priest in English-speaking churches across Europe. I'm the voice of grumpy Edwardian MPs in the Pankhurst Centre's audio-visual history of the suffragette movement.

1982

TRACY COOK: My debut historical fiction novel, *Wings over Valletta*, was published on 21 May this year. It is a sweeping story set in wartime Malta, about a woman plotting aircraft battles at the top-secret nerve centre of the island's defences as she searches for the long-lost daughter she was forced to give up (see *Reviews*). I live in Surrey with my husband and love walking by the river every day. My two grown-up children now live and work in London.

1983

DOUGLAS SHAW: I am continuing my journey in not-for-profit education, having been the interim bursar at Brasenose College in 2025 and now a group bursar at St Paul's School in Barnes. I earned an MSc in charity accountancy from Bayes Business School.

1984

SUE RIMMER (Burgess): My husband, son and I have had the great enjoyment of raising a guide dog puppy, Quincy, from 11 weeks to 14 months. We have learnt a huge amount about the challenges faced by people with visual impairment and the fantastic support they can get from a guide dog. Quincy has now left us to go to the professional training centre in Scotland, leaving a huge gap in the house for us. Maybe we will have to do it again – lots of work, but lots of fun and love.

1986

SALLY CORNALL (Calder): I have taken early retirement from my 35-year career as an actuary to focus on my dream job – being a full-time author.

MAREK PRUSZEWICZ: In January I became CEO of Dialogue Earth, a media non-profit platform reporting on the impact of climate change on lives and livelihoods across the Global South.

1987

RICHARD GRANT: I joined Syneos Health in June 2024 as a Director Scientific Services. I've had several different projects, but the most exciting one – and the one that takes up most of my time – is helping a major pharmaceutical client prepare for a new launch.

I oversee our medical team and am responsible for scientific strategy and deliverables in support of medical and commercial functions. The new drug is undergoing priority review by the US FDA and we should be launching in the first markets in early 2027. The drug will be indicated for reducing the risk of recurrent stroke, a major health challenge worldwide.

1988

LEENA BRAMALL (Lane): After several years of freelancing in the publishing industry, I've been enjoying a role in-house again as an editor for HarperCollins Children's Books at The News Building, London Bridge. My work covers classics such as Paddington, Brambly Hedge, Judith Kerr and Narnia, as well as award-winning new children's and young adult fiction, picture book titles and media tie-ins.

1990

DAVID CATLING: I was elected as a new Fellow of the Royal Society in 2026. I am a professor at the University of Washington where I study planetary atmospheres and environments that allowed life to begin and persist.

SAMMY DUFFY (Jordan): The last year has seen the launch of two charities: one to hold the project I lead for work, The Hive Network, which develops training and resources to support Christians to live out our faith as part of everyday life; the other to hold our church plant, The Clockhouse Church. I don't recommend trying to launch two charities in nine months. It is definitely worse than childbirth!

CORYN JONES (Bailer-Jones): I have just published a book, *The Physics of Interstellar Travel*, with Cambridge University Press. The book is available to buy and is also published open access under a Creative Commons licence. The link is on my website at https://tiny.cc/pitbook

JOHN O'CONNELL: My book *A School for Scandal* – about Beacon Hill, a progressive school opened by Bertrand and Dora Russell in the 1920s – will be published by Profile Books in February 2027.

SIMON OXTON: A quick update for anyone who knew me at LMH 1990–93 and has wondered what happened. I am happily married and live in London where I work as a private tutor. I'm still passionate about music and some of my original audio is available to listen to on my YouTube channel (@simonoxton). Last year I was very glad to visit Los Angeles (where my wife is from) for the first time. This was a dream come true! I would certainly be happy to hear from anyone who remembers me, particularly my English cohort.

1992

JEREMY BENSON: In 2025 I decided to leave the civil service after almost exactly 30 years, over half of that in the senior civil service. My time in government was mostly spent in education, but with a stint in public health during Covid. Many years ago I led the team that set up Ofqual, the qualifications regulator, and I have now returned to the world of qualifications as the senior assessment adviser at AQA, the exam board, helping with their work to reform vocational qualifications. My children's exams are thankfully behind them: my daughter, Naomi, completed a Master's in composition last year and my son, Sam, has just graduated in sound engineering. My wife, Sue, works for a grant-making charity in the West Midlands.

CATHY NEWMAN: I started a new job as lead presenter on Sky News, hosting my own nightly programme, *The Cathy Newman Show*. I'll continue with my weekly Times Radio show on Fridays.

1993

HENDRICK MÜLLER: Last month I successfully finished my *Habilitation* (the classic path to a professorship) at the University of Hamburg and received the *venia legendi* (permission to teach) for the field of classics.

1995

NEIL CARBERRY and ALICE PERCIVAL (Carberry): We celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary on 15 July. We live in Wallingford, Oxfordshire. Neil was awarded the OBE for services to business and the economy in the King's Birthday Honours List in June 2025. He will step down as Chief Executive of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation this September to become the new Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). Alice is engaged in a wide range of community work in Wallingford, including leading a local scout group and working with a support group for new mothers.

JAMES CHARD: I completed a PhD on visual perception and social cognition in older adults.

1996

TERRANCE JOHNSON: I have completed the taught portion of my MSc in railway systems engineering and integration at the University of Birmingham, and am working on a dissertation on sustainable fuels for heritage steam locomotives. I have also obtained my Associate Certified Systems Engineering Professional designation, and completed the Certificate in Railway Control Engineering Fundamentals with the Institution of Railway Signal Engineering.

JONATHAN SAMUELS: I sold my business, Octane Capital Ltd, to Aldermore Bank. Octane is a property finance lender specialising in funding landlords and developers. We have lent £2 billion since 2017. I am continuing as CEO to run Octane. I previously sold a similar business called Dragonfly Property Finance to Octopus Investments.

EDWARD SONG: I have moved on from my former position in Santa Barbara and am now the Herbert Hoover Endowed Chair in the history and politics department of George Fox University outside Portland, Oregon.

1997

DAVID SAUNDERS: After 17 years as a curator in the Department of Antiquities at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, I returned to the UK to take up the post of Curator: Greek World at the British Museum.

1998

JANE BLISS: Now retired, even from the Oxford Anglo-Norman Reading Group, I am still pursued by interesting work. The colleagues who were intending to translate Hue de Rotelende's romance, *Protheselaus*, have decided to drop the project because of their own retirement. Would I like to do it? Of course! When the journal *Le Moyen Age* approached me for a review of *Medieval French on the Move, in honour of Keith Busby* (eds Tether, Moran, and Salamon), I felt very honoured . . . but the review was to be in French! Luckily my friend and colleague Graham Edwards, a medievalist and also bi-lingual, agreed to help me. We sent it off in February. Getting around Oxford to seminars or conferences is becoming more difficult in my 70s, but I manage quite a few. I still have copies of Douglas Gray's posthumous *From Fingal's Cave to Camelot* (edited by me) which I am hawking round for sale at only £17. I thought it was going to be my last book! The latest conference, Romance in Britain, was enjoyable. I gave a short paper on *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, a little-known romance, in honour of its editor, my friend Jenny Fellows, who is now in poor health. Her daughter brought her to the conference and the session was a triumph: it included a paper on *Bevis of Hampton* (edited by Jenny) and one about misericords, Jenny's very latest work, as well as mine. We mourn friends and colleagues as the years pass. In May we attended the memorial service at St Peter's for Tony Hunt, much-loved tutor and mentor to many of us. So many colleagues at LMH tell of their children and grandchildren. All I can claim is two (unrelated) god-daughters. However, we have recently learned that Esther and Christine Burrows, the first and second Principals of St Hilda's, were related to us: Esther (Elizabeth Esther, *née* Bliss) was our grandfather's aunt, so her daughter Christine, who matriculated at LMH in 1891, was his first cousin.

ERIC HENRY: This year I was appointed Full Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology, Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Canada. I also published a new Canadian textbook in linguistic anthropology with University of Toronto Press entitled

Keep Talking: An Invitation to Linguistic Anthropology.

THOMAS KLEINLEIN: I was a visiting student at LMH in 1998–99. I am now a professor of international law at Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

LISA MASON (Webster): I was elected as a Liberal Democrat councillor in the London Borough of Sutton (in a by-election in May 2025 and re-elected in May 2026). I am the new Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee.

SOPHIE WALKER: After two years in beautiful, green Munich, we moved back to south-east London in 2025 and I transitioned into a part-time role at my existing employer, EQT. This role transition is enabling me to tackle my second Master's: I'm in the 2025–27 cohort of MSt AI ethics and society at the University of Cambridge, which I am loving. At work, I'm now Senior Advisor – Sustainability and Responsible AI. I lead the firm's approach to responsible AI while continuing with some sustainability responsibilities, including as investment committee member for EQT Future, the firm's private equity impact strategy focused on climate and nature and health and wellbeing. My husband has just completed a Master's in sustainable food and natural resources, so we are certainly living the mid-life student experience. Our daughters are (mostly) tolerating their parents' intellectual indulgences and career pivots.

2000

TALAL ABDULLA AL-EMADI: I have been recently appointed as a judge in Qatar and I noticed leading British and international names onboard with me on the bench. I am also the focal point of the Oxford alumni group in Qatar.

TOM MOORHOUSE: My fourth full-length children's book, *Where the Dragon Waits*, was published in January by David Fickling Books. I continue to juggle being an independent researcher and ecological consultant with being an author, and am still wondering what I'll be when I grow up.

2001

RAKHI MEHRA: My family and I recently moved back to Italy after two rewarding years contributing to a transformative education project in Bhutan on entrepreneurial mindset for social impact. The experience offered me, both as an educator and a parent, opportunities for deep reflection on the purpose of education, and occupies a lot of my thoughts! Now based in Tuscany, I am really looking forward to this new chapter, and being intentional in everything one sets out to do! I'm discovering the *strade bianche* (the scenic cycling route), food culture and treasuring the olive oil from our neighbours. Also I am professionally interested in co-creating programmes and exploring how global university study centres can evolve into spaces for immersive learning for youth, fostering intercultural and meaningful community engagement. It was wonderful to reconnect recently with LMH alumna Louise Locock (1980) for the

oral history project and my dear friend Ruta Nimkar (1999) during their visit to Arezzo – a short but heartwarming time with the endearing LMH community.

SADIA ZOUQ: After completing my MSc at Oxford, I interned with the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague. I returned to Oxford to undertake research on a project examining the role of public media in conflict situations, working with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and BBC Monitoring. Following a period as Research Manager at Matrix Chambers, I obtained pupillage at One Gray's Inn Square and qualified as a barrister. My career has spanned practice in criminal law, professional regulatory and disciplinary law, employment law, and dispute resolution. In 2023, I was appointed as a Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal. I hold several appointments as a legal adviser, panel member and legally qualified chair across a range of regulators. I live in Qatar, where I serve as Senior Legal Counsel at the Qatar Financial Centre Authority, focusing on employment law, dispute resolution and mediation. In 2026, I became an accredited mediator. I am committed to mentoring aspiring lawyers and promoting access to the profession. I have spoken at university careers events and local sixth-form initiatives. I also take part in the annual Lincolns Inn scholarship interviews and outreach programmes aimed at supporting the next generation of legal professionals.

2002

MICHAEL HOLMES: I have been promoted to Captain with TUI Airways

2004

CHRISTOPHER TARRANT: I'm pleased to announce the publication of my second book, *The Composer's Toolkit: Classical Techniques for Modern Musicians*, which I co-authored with my wife, Natalie. The book is intended as a teaching resource aimed at supporting classroom music at GCSE and A level.

2005

ELINA RANTANEN: The Zoological Society of London, where I have worked for the past 15 years as the Journals Manager for our scientific journals, is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year. I was honoured with the task of writing for our bicentenary blog about the early history of our scientific meetings that have been held since 1830. The meticulous minutes of these meetings were then published as our first scientific journal, *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, making it possible to 're-live' these meetings and have a pretty good idea of how our broader scientific activities as a learned society began all those years ago. For instance, imagine being there and witnessing some late-Georgian zoologists gathered around a table to observe two live meerkats! To find out more, I invite you to read this blog, accessible at https://www.zsl.org/news-and-events/feature/history-scientific-meetings-zsl.

2006

JONATHAN WAGSTAFF: My first full non-fiction work was published this year – *Boum! A History of the Spad XII Canon*. A bit niche, but it's had some very positive reviews from the aviation history world/academic peers. Available on Amazon and from select retailers in the US and Europe.

2007

JOANNA THAPA: In 2026, I finished producing the fourth and final season of Apple TV's series *Silo* after also producing the first three seasons.

2008

ISOBEL BOOTH and OWEN ALUN JOHN: We were delighted to connect with Lara Sherwood (2012) this year at the King's College, London, studying Swedish at evening classes. Lara is learning Swedish ahead of her marriage to fiancé Björn while we are there to develop our interest in Scandinavian culture and would like to wish Lara *grattis på bröllopsdagen*! Lara works in fundraising in the charity sector, Owen is a special adviser in the UK government, and Isobel is a children's book editor. We have enjoyed sharing memories of LMH including the boat club of which all were members. We are looking forward to resuming our Swedish studies in the new academic year.

2009

ELI KEREN (Keren-Hetherington): I have launched a freelance editorial business – Eli Keren Literary Services. After 10 years in literary agency, specialising in adapting the work of academics and researchers for the mass market, I now run my own business and am available for hire. I'd love to chat to anyone hoping to write for the commercial market, in fiction or non-fiction, about how I might be able to help them.

2010

FRANKIE ARNULL: My husband Jamie and I welcomed our first baby, a little boy called Rory, in November 2025 – and we are very much in love with him!

SCOTT CAMPBELL: I was appointed a Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia (Canada) in November 2025.

JAMES LOMAX: The Government Art Collection acquired three major works of mine from my solo show at Sid Motion Gallery in 2025: *Hoarding*, 2024, *Shutter*, 2024, and *Store front*, 2024.

2011

ANNIEKE LOGTENBERG: My husband, Clément Vernet, and I would like to announce the birth of our second daughter, Éloïse Vernet Logtenberg, who joined our family in July 2026. Like her sister, she is a little ray of sunshine. We are incredibly proud of our two girls and, admittedly, a little tired. After my maternity leave, I will return to my post in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, where I work in the department responsible for borders, migration and anti-smuggling.

ANGELA TRUMBLE: I have been the design and visual arts teacher at Jeppe High School for Girls in Johannesburg since June 2023. After my design students took their final exams in 2025, my design department achieved a 100% distinction rate and we are currently the top design school department in the province.

2012

STEVEN HODGSON: I published my first monograph based on my DPhil thesis composed at LMH – *Between The Rod and The Rood: Childhood and Monastic Formation in England, c.950-1200*.

LARA SHERWOOD: see Isobel Booth 2008.

2013

DOROTHY HALLBERG: I was recently promoted to Senior Editor at the journal *Science Translational Medicine* where I have been working now for the past five years, editing and publishing papers in the area of cancer research. This directly relates to my MRes in oncology which I completed while at LMH.

BETH MABBUTT: This year, I am delighted to have launched the West Oxfordshire Performing Arts Foundation (WOXPAF), a new charity dedicated to making the performing arts accessible to all, regardless of age, background or financial circumstance. WOXPAF was founded on a simple but powerful belief: that creativity should be a right, not a privilege – and that the stage can be a space where confidence grows, communities connect and voices are truly heard. We are currently preparing for our inaugural annual event, the Oxfordshire Festival of Speech, Drama and Musical Theatre, taking place in Witney this November, and I look forward to working with others to contribute to Oxfordshire's evolving performing arts landscape.

KAMEEL PREMHID: I continue to practise as a leading junior advocate (barrister) in Johannesburg, South Africa. I recently successfully argued a case before the country's Constitutional Court (against some of the leading Silks of the South African Bar) that has resulted in the President of the country being subjected to an impeachment process before its Parliament in a massive win for the rule of law and constitutional accountability.

ALAN RAMEY: I wrote a book, *Pressing Matters*, about the world of wine. I was a study abroad student starting in the 2013 school year.

BEN WALTER: I attended the Oil Painters of America national conference for the first time as an exhibiting artist.

2014

MISCHA ANDRESKI: I got engaged to Alexander Trafford (Pembroke 2011) and screened my short film, *Inheritance*, at film festivals around the world.

2015

ELLIE SAKER (Saker-Todd): I married James in September 2025 with Hannah Sheridan and Anna Morgan from LMH as bridesmaids. We are expecting our first baby at the end of the year.

2016

PETER BUDRIN: I have just published my first book, which is a rethought and revised version of the dissertation I wrote at LMH and later developed into a monograph during postdoctoral fellowships at Harvard and Queen Mary University of London. It would not have been possible without five years at LMH and the kindness of LMH colleagues, in particular Professor Christine Gerrard.

ROBIN HARTLAND: Hannah Taylor and I were married on 7 June 2026 in St Peter's Church, Rendcomb, Gloucestershire. We met in Streatham Choral Society in London, and were privileged to hear choral music by Whitacre, Duruflé, Tallis and Rutter, and Einaudi's *I Giorni* and Elgar's *Salut d'amour*, performed beautifully by family and friends during the ceremony. We have bought a flat together in south London and look forward to a life of musical and other adventures together. Thank you to LMH chapel choir for honing my singing abilities!

SOPHIA SHAFIEE (Stevens): On 28 June 2025, I married Joseph David Stevens. We welcomed our firstborn son, Nathaniel Joseph Stevens, a few months later, on 25 October 2025.

2017

DANIEL KIRBY: I have a new job as a senior economist at the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG), working on regional growth and living standards.

TARAK NATH GORAI: Since completing my MBA at Oxford, life is still a rewarding blend of entrepreneurship, investment, technology and community building. I continue to grow MavensWood Investments while supporting ventures spanning culture, education, media and digital communities. Much of my recent attention has been devoted to MyMahotsav, a platform dedicated to connecting people through festivals, heritage, travel, learning and social impact. Following a substantial period of acquisition, redesign and market refinement, the platform celebrated its successful relaunch in 2026 – a milestone that has been both professionally challenging and deeply fulfilling. I remain an enthusiastic student of life, pursuing interests in writing, photography, public speaking, travel and lifelong learning. I continue to be fascinated by the ways technology can strengthen human connection while helping preserve cultural heritage. This year also brings a significant personal milestone as my son prepares to leave home and begin university – a reminder of how quickly time moves and how every stage of life presents a new opportunity. Frequent visits to Oxford in 2025 and 2026 have been a particular joy, allowing me to reconnect with the city, College, and the friendships that remain among the most enduring gifts of my time at LMH. Oxford continues to shape not only how I think, but how I approach leadership, learning and life itself.

2019

ELENA FOTHERGILL (Denton): Having met through OxMatch (if you know, you know!) in Michaelmas 2020, when it was rare to meet anyone outside of your college Covid bubble, John Denton (Lincoln 2018) and I got married in June last year. We had a beautiful day celebrating in the Yorkshire countryside with friends and family, including many we first met in Oxford. We have recently bought our first home in London and are looking forward to decorating it with photos from our university days. I first introduced John to parkrun in Oxford and, since graduating, we've travelled across Europe to take part, including in Lithuania, Poland and Austria – we even did a parkrun on the morning of our wedding!

2022

MIRANDA STOCKS (Mothersdale): I have a beautiful daughter called Pippa who was born on 7 February 2026 in Cambridge.

2024

ASHWIN PRABAHARAN: I recently received a Fulbright Award to teach English in Bulgaria for the upcoming year!

MARRIAGES

FOTHERGILL – DENTON: In June 2025, Elena Fothergill (2019) to John Denton
HARTLAND – TAYLOR: On 7 June 2026, Robin Hartland (2016) to Hannah Taylor

MWARABU – THRELFALL. On 5 July 2023, Judie Mwarabu (Minards 1962) to Ted Threlfall
SAKER – TODD. In September 2025, Ellie Saker (2011) to James Todd
SHAFIEE – STEVENS: On 28 June 2025, Sophia Shafiee (2016) to Joseph Stevens

BIRTHS

ARNULL: In November 2025, to Frankie (2010) a son (1s)
LOGTENBERG: In July 2026, to Annieke (2011) a daughter (2d)
MOTHERSDALE. On 7 February 2026, to Miranda (Stocks 2022) a daughter (1d)
STEVENS: On 25 October 2025, to Sophia (2016) a son (1s)

DEATHS

AUSTIN. On 1 June 2023, Rita (De 1960), aged 82
BATEMAN. In February 2023, Kathleen (Gill) (Chevassut 1946) aged 97
BROWN. On 20 January 2026, Jean (Bowyer 1963), aged 80 (*see obituary*)
EASON. On 7 October 2025, Isolde (Walker 1951), aged 94
FOLEY. On 11 June 2025, Katharine (Green 1978) aged 66
GEORGE. On 26 December 2025, Adrienne (1973 MPhil), aged 75 (*see obituary*)
GIBBINS. On 24 February 2026, Jennifer (Caradine 1952), aged 92
GORDON-WALKER. On 15 January 2026, Caroline (1956), aged 88 (*see obituary*)
GRADEL. On 28 April 2026, Ittai (1995 DPhil), aged 65 (*see obituary*)
GRIFFIS. On 7 April 2026, Katherine (2003 DPhil), aged 72
HARRIS. On 25 April 2026, Sylvia (Baggs 1957), aged 87 (*see obituary*)
HEWLETT. On 26 June 2026, Rosemary (Baker 1951), aged about 95
HOOPER. On 27 December 2025, Meredith (Rooney 1961), aged 86 (*see obituary*)
HOWES. On 10 February 2026, Mimi (Khedouri 1955), aged 88 (*we will publish an obituary next year*)
ISSLER. On 7 August 2025, Helen (1965) aged 77
JOHNSON. On 14 December 2024, Marigold (Hunt 1950) aged 92 (*see obituary*)
McMONIGALL. On 25 January 2023, Olivia Rose (1994) aged 47
MATTHEWS. On 24 November 2025, Margaret (Blears 1950), aged 93 (*see obituary*)
MAX. On 3 January 2023, Edward (1983), aged 57 (*see obituary*)
MURPHY. On 14 February 2026, Jane (1970), aged 74 (*see obituary*)
NATH. On 26 June 2025, Tani (1978), aged 65 (*see obituary*)
NEVIN. On 2 October 2024, Austen (1997 MChem), aged 45
NOCKOLDS. On 6 July 2026, Rosemary (1940), aged 104
PASCALL. On 22 March 2026, Gillian (Gregory 1965), aged 79
PERRY. On 28 January 2026, Jo (Anderson 1953), aged 91 (*see obituary*)
ISSLER. On 7 August 2025, Helen (1965), aged 77 (*see obituary*)
RABABEH. On 12 March 2025, Shaher (2001 MSt), aged 61 (*see obituary*)
REBURN. On 15 February 2026, Vanessa (France 1966), aged 77 (*see obituary*)
RENWICK. On 5 June 2026, Cynthia (Ward 1946), aged 97 (*see obituary*)
ROTHENBERG. On 30 May 2026, Ruth (Portrait 1959), aged 85

SANDERS. On 10 December 2025, Margaret (Wild 1955), aged 88
SHUTTLEWORTH On 18 March 2026, Laura (Honigsberger 1976), aged 68 (*see obituary*)
SISTER ANNE MARIE OSC. On 26 May 2026, Anne (Worster 1955), aged 90 (*see obituary*)
SLOPER. On 25 December 2025, Caroline Mary (1969), aged 75, sister of Katherine Pinching (Sloper 1967) (*see obituary*)
SOUTHERN. On 27 August 2025, Antonia (McAndrew 1952), aged 90
SYMINGTON. On 29 October 2025, Penelope (Craig-Mooney 1954), aged 90
TINDALL. On 1 October 2025, Gillian (1956), aged 87, daughter of Ursula Orange (1928) (*see obituary*)
TOLFREE. In September 2025, Priscilla (1949), aged 94 (*see obituary*)
WEAVER. On 7 June 2026, Marion (1950), aged 95
WIDDECOMBE. On 8 July 2026, Ann (1969), aged 78 (*see obituary*)
WIDDICOMBE. On 31 January 2026, Anastasia (Leech 1956), aged 88 (*see obituary*)
YOUARD. On 26 August 2025, Felicity (Morton 1956), aged 88

HASLETT. In 2025, Michael, husband of Sonia (Macfarlane, 1952)
HOWDLE. On 25 March 2026, Peter, husband of Susan (Lowery 1966)
MORRIS. In 2021, Robert, husband of Marjorie (Williams, 1956)
MUNSHI. On 28 December 2024, Hafiz, husband of Wendy (Pickering, 1978)
YATES. On 21 January 2025, Christopher, husband of Jessica (Kemball-Cook, 1967)

PUBLICATIONS

CORYN BAILER-JONES (Jones 1990): *The Physics of Interstellar Travel* (Cambridge University Press, 2026) (*to be reviewed in the next Brown Book*)
JANE BLISS (1998): *Shame on Who? Ke sera honni?* by Jessy Carlisle, Illustrations by Susantha Rangana, translated by Jane Bliss (Michael Raymond Astle, 2026)
VIRGINIA BOVELL (1977): *Danny's People: A Memoir and Manifesto about Autism* (Oneworld publications, 2024) (*see Reviews*)
PETER BUDRIN (2016): *Laurence Sterne and his Readers in Early Soviet Russia: The Secret Order of Shandeans* (Oxford University Press, 2026) (*to be reviewed in the next Brown Book*)
NICOLA BULL (Harper 1972): *Voices of the Voiceless* with Susan H. Bull (Love Me Love My Mind, 2026)
FIONA CHESTERTON (1970): *Not the Token Woman: My BBC Life 1975–92* (Bite-Sized Books Ltd, 2025) (*see Reviews*)
JOANNA COLLICOT (1973): *The Psychology of Christian Character Formation* (SCM Press, 2015); *Neurology and Religion* edited with Alasdair Coles (Cambridge University Press, 2019); *So Longeth my Soul* (SCM Press, 2024).
TRACY COOK (1982): *Wings over Valletta* (Allison & Busby, 2026) (*see Reviews*)
CAL FLYN (2005): *The Savage Landscape* (William Collins, 2026) (*see Reviews*)
FENELLA GREIG HECKSCHER (1961): *Jane Colden's Botanic Manuscript: Legacy of America's First Woman Botanist* (American Philosophical Society Press, 2026)
MICHAEL GRIMWADE (1984). 'Operational risk stress testing: Challenges and approaches' in *Journal of Risk Management in Financial Institutions*, 18(2), 2025

ERIC HENRY (1999): *Keep Talking: An Invitation to Linguistic Anthropology* (University of Toronto Press, 2025)

STEPHEN HODGSON (2012) *Between The Rod and The Rood: Childhood and Monastic Formation in England, c.950–1200* (independently published, 2024)

MARY JACOBUS (1962) *Last Stop: The Inside Life of an Average Nursing Home* (Free Association Books, 2026)

CLEMENT KNOX (2008): *The Scramble for America: How the United States Conquered a Continent* (William Collins, 2026) (see Reviews)

ANN LAUINGER (Jacobson, 1969): *St Fursey's Abbey, A Poetry Chapbook* (Broadstone Books, 2026)

TOM MOORHOUSE (2000): *Where the Dragon Waits* (David Fickling Books, 2026)

MICHELLE PAVER (1979): *Rainforest* (Orion Books, 2025) (*see Reviews*)

ALAN RAMEY (2013): *Pressing Matters* (Academie du Vin Press, 2026)

LORNA ROBINSON (1996): *Hamadryad* (independently published, 2026) (see *Reviews*)

GILL ROWE (Mather 1964): *Sequences and Grace Notes* (independently published, 2026)

AMARANTA SAGUAR GARCIA (2009): *Medievalism, Popular Culture and Politics in Metal Music: the Case of Hispanic Epic Themes* (Intellect, 2026); *Imaginando a Celestina. Tipo, mito, mujer / Imagining Celestina. Type, Myth, Woman*, eds. María Bastianes, Rachel Schmidt and Amaranta Saguar García (Edition Reichenberger, 2026)

CHRISTOPHER TARRANT (2004): *The Composer's Toolkit: Classical Techniques for Modern Musicians* with Natalie Wild (Faber Music, 2026)

ALISON UREN (Hill, 1973): *The Wildlife of the Avalon Marshes* (Pisces Publications, 2025) (*see Reviews*)

JONATHAN WAGSTAFF (2006): *Boum! A History of the Spad XII Canon* (Aeronaut Books, 2026)

JEHANNE WAKE (Williams, 1975): *The Countess: Seduction, Power and the Extraordinary Life of Emily Cowper* with Katie Wake (Bonnier Books/Ithaka Press 2026) (*see Reviews*)

ROSE WALKER (1973): *Art and Artifice in Twelfth-century* (Boydell and Brewer, 2025); 'Networks of Hagiographic Imagination and the Camino', *Ad Limina*, 16/1, 153–69; 'Order and disorder through the eyes of scribes and illuminators in the kingdom of Pamplona c. 970–c. 1000' in *Romanesque and the Year 1000*, eds. Gerhard Lutz, John McNeill and Richard Plant (Routledge 2025), 85–104; 'Reimagining relics and reliquaries between al-Andalus and the Northern Kingdoms in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', in *The Visual Culture of al-Andalus in the Christian Kingdoms of Iberia*, ed. Inés Monteira (Routledge, 2025)

MARINA WARNER (1964): *Sanctuary: Ways of Telling, Ways of Dwelling* (William Collins, 2025); *The Shelter of Stories – Ways of Telling, Ways of Dwelling Exhibition Catalogue* (Compton Verney, 2025) (*see Reviews*)

JESSICA YATES (Kemball-Cook 1967): 'Tolkien's Suitcase' in *Amon Hen* 295, 2022; 'A Vital Conversation' (revue sketch) in *Amon Hen* 306, 2024; 'Christopher Tolkien's lectures at Oxford' and associated bibliography in *Amon Hen* 312 & 314, 2025; 'Tolkien's lost lecture on Hamlet, Reconstructed' in *Mallorn*, 64, 2023; 'Five or Six Ponies?' in the *Proceedings of the Tolkien 2019* Conference (Luna Press, 2025) pp.175-185

MALALA YOUSAFZAI (2017): *Finding My Way* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2025) (*see Reviews*)


LMH
Gardening
Club

IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM

ROSEMARY NOCKOLDS, OBE, 1922–2026



Rosemary sailing as a child

Rosemary Nockolds, who has died aged 104, came up to Lady Margaret Hall in 1940 to read modern languages.

Born in London in 1922, Rosemary was the daughter of Humphrey Nockolds, a surgeon in charge of Lewisham Hospital. Her parents had met during the First World War, when he was running a field hospital in France and her mother was serving there as a volunteer nurse. Rosemary and her younger brother Geoffrey grew up within the close-knit community surrounding the hospital, almost a village in itself, with workshops, storerooms and an extensive network of underground corridors which they explored freely. Childhood was also marked by the Blitz. Bombs once shook the tennis court while they were playing, and the family home later received a direct hit, fortunately while no one was there.

Rosemary went to Blackheath High School before boarding at St Swithun's School, Winchester. She came up to LMH during the first full year of the Second World War to read Spanish and French. One story has her cycling into north Oxford early each morning to milk a cow as part of the collective wartime effort. Whether she displayed any particular aptitude for dairying is less clearly remembered. Among her contemporaries at LMH was Élisabeth de Gaulle, daughter of General Charles de Gaulle.

Life at Oxford extended well beyond her degree. She got a Blue as cox of the women's eight against Cambridge, was President of the University Spanish Club and a member of the University Experimental Theatre Club.

After university, Rosemary joined the Women's Royal Naval Service. Between 1943 and 1946 she served first in signals and later as an intelligence officer, with postings to Milford Haven, Scapa Flow and Gibraltar.

From 1946 to 1949 she worked as a temporary official at the Foreign Office, followed by two years in commerce as Assistant to the European Export Manager at J. Stone & Co., helping to sell ships' propellers and tram-lighting equipment. Finding the business world uncongenial, she returned to public service and in 1951 began a long career in HM Diplomatic Service. At a time when professional diplomatic careers had only recently become fully accessible to women, this was a considerable achievement.

Her involvement in theatre at Oxford also continued after the war in London. Tower Theatre Company records show that she stage-managed productions ranging from



Rosemary in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, in the 1990s



Rosemary in Australia, 1997

Shaw and Shakespeare to Ibsen, and in 1954 appeared as Honor Blake in *The Playboy of the Western World*.

Her fluency in French and Spanish, together with a working knowledge of Italian and some Portuguese, took her to postings including Paris, Brussels, Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo, Bogotá and Caracas. Her work involved foreign diplomatic contacts, research, Cabinet Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office committee work and political matters in Whitehall. She was particularly experienced in establishing new posts and developing them, often working independently or in small groups.

One of those with whom Rosemary worked was Daphne Park. Both had come up to Oxford in 1940 to read modern languages, Rosemary at LMH and Park at Somerville. Both remained unmarried and built distinguished careers in wartime and overseas public service, their paths taking each of them to Paris and the Belgian Congo.

Rosemary retired from HM Diplomatic Service at the end of June 1984. She was appointed OBE in the 1992 Queen's Birthday Honours for her work with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

She retained a warm attachment to LMH. When she returned to College about ten years ago, she was deeply touched by the kindness shown to her by the College Steward. Her affection for the college, and for Oxford more broadly, remained strong throughout her life.

After retirement, Rosemary moved from Lambeth, first to South Harting and later to West Meon in Hampshire. She continued to work part-time for the Foreign Office while becoming a prodigious traveller, often alone and well off the beaten track, visiting places including Syria and St Helena well into her late 80s. She volunteered for the National Trust at Uppark and in West Meon became an important part of village life, serving among other things as Parish Clerk. Private by nature, she nevertheless had friends across the world.

Sailing was also in the family blood. Her parents had owned *Juno*, and the family were among the first to cruise to Normandy and Brittany after the war. Into the 1990s Rosemary was still sailing with her brother in the Caribbean. In 1998 she was aboard during an extraordinary waterspout in the Bahamas, when the boat was lifted at anchor and driven violently around the anchorage before the anchor finally held. Rosemary appears to have met the episode with her usual lack of fuss.

She remained formidably independent into extreme old age, living alone in her own home until the end, with carers coming in only at mealtimes. Found among her papers was a quotation from Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Lucile*: 'But civilized man cannot live without cooks.' In later years, civilisation was duly maintained on a three-visits-a-day basis. Beneath it she had added: 'When you are 101 you cannot do the things you did when you were 80.'

Tough, self-reliant and disinclined to make a fuss, Rosemary kept the resilience that had marked her life from wartime Oxford onwards. She was devoted to her family, and her relationship with her brother (Emmanuel College, Cambridge, boo!) remained affectionate and fiercely competitive to the end.

My aunt Rose, or Rosie to her friends, belonged to the first generation of women able to build careers in British overseas public service. From wartime Oxford and the WRNS to diplomatic postings across three continents, London theatre and many years of service to her Hampshire community, hers was a life of unusual range. She seldom sought recognition, but what survives reveals intelligence, courage, discretion and a strong sense of duty to her country.

Stephen Nockolds, Rosemary's nephew

MARGARET YEO MORGAN, 1927–2025

Margaret Yeo Morgan was born in Derby on 9 November 1927. By the time she went to secondary school her family was living in south London and she attended school in Wembley where she distinguished herself in many ways.

Margaret took the open scholarship examination of the Oxford Colleges and was offered a place to study French Language and Literature at Lady Margaret Hall between 1946 and 1949. Her tutor observed that her very good second was well deserved due to her intelligence and industry. She went on to obtain the Oxford Diploma in Education. She had a range of characteristics that made her very well suited to the teaching profession, including enthusiasm and conscientiousness. She was also exceptionally well able to establish good relations with her classes.

Margaret's father taught chemistry at Truro High School for Girls and Margaret joined him at the school as a French teacher where she remained for many years, rising to a senior position in the school. To this day it is surprising how many of the ladies of Truro remember her with affection. In addition to her interest in French literature she took part in a number of archaeological digs.

In the late 1970s Margaret took early retirement from Truro High School for Girls

and moved to south London with the former Headmistress of the school. After a few years they moved to Exeter where they had a number of close friends. Throughout her time in London and Exeter, Margaret retained her property in Truro and in 1987 she moved back there. Soon afterwards a friend asked her to 'help out' at the Royal Institution of Cornwall (RIC)'s museum. So began over 37 years of steadfast service during which she became a much loved presence at the heart of the museum.

During her time there Margaret embraced many roles, but none more pivotal than establishing the digital catalogue of the museum's objects. In an era when few museums had ventured into digital work, she established a public terminal in the galleries so that visitors could delve into the collections themselves. It was forward-looking and characteristic of Margaret's commitment to learning.



Margaret Morgan at her graduation

Margaret played an enthusiastic part in several royal visits to the Cornwall Museum & Art Gallery, including those of Queen Elizabeth II and of Prince Charles, Duke of Cornwall (as he was then), during the RIC's Bicentenary in 2018. A devoted royalist, she took great pride in organising the decorations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 and preparing the display of royal memorabilia.

From 2020 onward, Margaret became increasingly involved in shaping the museum's programme. Her sharp observations helped guide the development of exhibitions and events, always prompting deeper consideration of the stories being told. She took great joy in drawing objects from the stores and sharing their stories with visitors, revealing the breadth and quality of the museum's collections.



Margaret at the museum

Margaret used to walk to the museum and then back up a long hill to her home in the evening, but in her late eighties she made the concession of using a taxi. She worked four days a week until a few months before her death. She spent more of her life as a volunteer than in paid employment.

Margaret's legacy lives on in the institution she loved so dearly; in the collections she helped reveal, and in the countless people she welcomed, guided and inspired. Her presence enriched the museum for nearly four decades.

In early 2025 Margaret had a fall while preparing to go to the Museum. This required a hip replacement which was initially successful but she never fully regained her vigour and she passed away in August 2025 aged 97 years.

Nicholas Ruxton (distant relative) – with thanks to Bryony Robins for information on Margaret's time at the Cornwall Museum & Art Gallery.

CYNTHIA MARGARET RENWICK (*née* WARD), 1928–2026



Cynthia Renwick aged 18





Cynthia Renwick later in life

Cynthia Renwick died peacefully at the age of 97 on Friday 5 June 2026 in Vancouver. She was born on 1 July 1928 in Goole, Yorkshire, to Thomas and Florence (*née* Everatt).

Cynthia went to the University of Oxford in 1946, on a scholarship to Lady Margaret Hall, where she graduated BM BCh (Oxon) and MA (Oxon). She met her future husband, Gordon, at Oxford. They married on 11 September 1954 in Goole, and emigrated to Canada in 1955. After serving as general practitioners in Ottawa, they moved with their family to Vancouver in 1974. Cynthia had an interest in Jungian analysis and began a private practice in psychotherapy which continued until her retirement.

Cynthia and her family spent many happy times at their summer cottage on Galiano Island. Following Gordon's death in 2002, Cynthia moved into Crofton Manor retirement home where she enjoyed many years of social activities and concerts. Due to declining health, she spent her final two years in Braddan Private Hospital. Cynthia was an avid reader and a kind and sympathetic friend to many people.

Cynthia was predeceased by Gordon James Renwick, her devoted husband of 48 years. She is lovingly remembered by her sons, James and William, their partners and her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the exceptional staff at Braddan Private Hospital who cared for her with grace and love.

Dr William Renwick, Cynthia's son

HEATHER MARGARET GOODARE (*née* YOUNG, previously KÁROLYI), 1931–2025



Heather Goodare as a young woman

Heather Goodare, who died in Edinburgh on 22 June 2025 at the age of 93, came up to LMH in 1948 from Christ's Hospital, Hertford, where she had been Head Girl. Born in London, she spent much of her childhood at some distance from her parents, who spent 30 years in Sierra Leone with the Church of England Mission – her earliest memory was of her father shooting a hawk there. From the age of five she boarded at St Michael's Prep School and later at Christ's Hospital, an experience that left her especially close to her aunts and to the Yorkshire of her wartime evacuation.

At LMH she read English – among her tutors was J. R. R. Tolkien – and threw herself into Oxford life with characteristic energy, joining choirs, drama societies and the sailing club. Sailing, a passion she shared with her brother John, became a lifelong love and a recurring lifeline. An accomplished violinist, she was an early member of the National Youth Orchestra, eventually leading the second violins, and music remained central to her life for the next seven decades.

After Oxford, Heather built a distinguished career in academic publishing, working at Heinemann Educational Books, where she rose to Chief Editor, and subsequently at Longman, Ginn, BBC Publications and the Open University. She often described those years as among the happiest of her professional life, she would proudly recount how she earned the respect of male colleagues in an era when women editors were too easily sidelined.

In 1956 she joined the effort to receive Hungarian refugees following the uprising in Hungary, and it was through this and their shared French fluency that she met Ottó Károlyi, a music student who became a distinguished musicologist and author. They married, and their son Julian was born in 1971. The family lived in Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, where Heather continued freelance editorial and translation work.



Heather Goodare later in life

Following the end of that marriage, she met Kenneth Goodare – again through music – and they married in 1978, settling in Horsham, where she also gained stepchildren. Horsham proved to be the setting of what her family came to call her renaissance. Diagnosed with breast cancer, she became an indomitable patient advocate, founding Crawley Cancer Contact and training

as a counsellor. She translated *An Introduction to Psycho-Oncology* from French and wrote two books of her own, *Fighting Spirit* and *Foiled Creative Fire* – titles that aptly capture her own character. A passionate advocate of the Bristol Cancer Help Centre, she was ahead of her time in championing the mind–body relationship and the role of diet in recovery, ideas which have since moved much closer to the mainstream.

A move to Edinburgh in her later years brought her closer to her grandchildren and into new musical and civic life. She loved being a member of the Meadows Chamber Orchestra and devoted herself to FOMBL (Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links), one of her last great causes. A small but tangible legacy of her energy is the improved path along Glengyle Terrace and Barclay Terrace, locally known as 'Heather's Corner'. Her correspondence with the NHS was, by family consensus, legendary, and continued to generate apologetic replies even after her death.

Heather is remembered by her family for her musical passion, her campaigning spirit, her generous hospitality – the home-grown raspberries and salad leaves of 'Organic Granny' – and an irrepressible sense of humour that her grandchildren delighted in provoking. In keeping with her lifelong belief in the value of education, she left her body to the University of Edinburgh. She is survived by her son Julian, her stepchildren, and her grandchildren.

Julian Károlyi, Heather's son

MARY PRISCILLA GILLIAN TOLFREE, 1931–2025



Priscilla Tolfree as a young woman

It was the founding Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Elizabeth Wordsworth, who suggested to her niece, Faith Wordsworth (who had read history at LMH), that she take up the post of Headmistress of the new Queen's School for Girls in Lagos, Nigeria. While working in that position Faith met Peter Tolfree and Priscilla was the first child of their marriage, born in London where Faith had come especially to have the baby.

Priscilla's early childhood was divided between Nigeria and the care of her grandmother in Wiltshire. Following a period in southern England she was evacuated to Northumberland at the outbreak of the Second World War under the care of her aunt, a general practitioner. Moving with her family to Cumbria in 1941, Priscilla developed a lifelong love for the landscape and flora of the Lake District although, aged 14, this was interrupted by being sent to a boarding school on the Norfolk coast and, a year later, by the sudden and unexpected death of her mother when Priscilla was 15.

After all these events, coming to LMH in 1949 aged 17 to read Modern Languages (German and French) must have been challenging, but it also seems to have been a time of consolidation and maturation. At Oxford, she formed enduring friendships and was a passionate oarswoman, rowing every day of the week for a year and (according to her) only missing the Women's Boat Race because she wanted to prioritise her final examinations, from which she graduated with a second class Honours degree.



Priscilla cataloging specimens in the Manchester Museum Herbarium

After briefly exploring teaching, Priscilla found her calling in librarianship. She earned a Diploma in Librarianship from University College London in 1953, successfully completing a bibliography of the novelist Mary Webb. Her early career included posts at Royal Holloway College, the Haddon Library in Cambridge, and three years at the House of Commons. In 1960, she joined the University of Manchester Library, where she spent the remainder of her career until her retirement in 1988. Renowned for her meticulous accuracy, she was an expert cataloguer, notably tackling the library's Russian collection on her arrival.

Outside her profession, Priscilla was an accomplished amateur botanist, mountaineer and skier. Her botanical expertise was highly regarded; she was a member of the Wild Flower Society and contributed as a participating recorder to three distinct regional *Floras* (Cumbria, South Lancashire, and Durham) as well as the *New Atlas of the British Flora*. In retirement, she volunteered weekly at the Manchester Museum Herbarium. A lifelong member of the Ramblers and the Lancashire Climbing and Caving Club, she tackled formidable alpine ski runs during her winter trips.

Priscilla was a generous independent spirit, valued friend, and devoted aunt. She was an active contributor to her local community in Manchester and attended a wide range of literary, historical and musical societies. She found deep happiness in later life with her partner, Tadeusz, a chemist whom she met on a botanical expedition in 1983, and whose death she survived.

Throughout her life, she displayed qualities of candour, self-reliance and determination, tempered by humour and goodwill, which made her a memorable companion to her many friends.

Francis Creighton, Priscilla's godson, and Mary Ellis, Priscilla's niece

MARGARET MATTHEWS (*née* BLEARS), 1932–2025



Margaret Matthews

College was deeply saddened by the death of Professor Margaret Matthews, Emeritus Fellow in Medicine, on 24 November 2025 following a short illness.

Professor Matthews was a distinguished anatomist whose association with Oxford and Lady Margaret Hall spanned more than six decades since she matriculated at LMH in 1950 to read Natural Sciences (Physiology). She joined Oxford's Department of Human Anatomy in 1957 as a departmental demonstrator, teaching in the dissecting room as well as in embryology and neuroanatomy classes. Alongside her teaching, she carried out research exploring the extent of shrinkage in nerve cells in the brain following the loss of their normal inputs. At that time, she was one of only two female demonstrators in the department.

In 1971, Professor Matthews was appointed University Lecturer, only the third woman to hold such a position in the Department of Human Anatomy (the first two being Dr Alice Carleton and Dr Pamela Mackinnon). In the same year she was elected as a Fellow of Lady Margaret Hall. She had been tutoring LMH students in anatomy since 1958, but with this new appointment her teaching responsibilities expanded to include the provision of classes in histology and neuroanatomy for physiology and psychology students.

With the advent of electron microscopy in the 1960s, Professor Matthews shifted her research focus to the autonomic nervous system, studying nerve cells outside the brain that were capable of regenerating their axons (output fibres). Her investigations into the neurones of sympathetic ganglia and their responses to axonal injury opened new fields of study and shaped subsequent research in neural regeneration.

Reflecting on her career, Professor Matthews once said: 'What I most enjoyed was making a really important and significant observation and recording it securely. Often one could not relax until the safety of the recording had been confirmed, because the material might perish; but the relief and pleasure were then all the more intense.'

Her achievements were recognised in Oxford and beyond. In 1987, she was elected to Honorary Membership of the American Association of Anatomists in their centenary year. In 1997, she was conferred the title of Professor of Human Anatomy in the second year of Oxford's Titular Professorships scheme, before retiring in 1999.

Within LMH, Professor Matthews was a much-loved colleague, known for her warmth and her curiosity about the lives and wellbeing of younger colleagues. She took a particular interest in supporting other women forging academic careers, and will be remembered for her incisive mind and deep intellectual strength. Professor

Matthews was also a generous benefactor to the College, for which we owe her a debt of gratitude.

Christine Gerrard, Principal

MARIGOLD JOHNSON (*née* HUNT), 1932–2024

Marigold Johnson spent most of her adult life as a peacemaker, whether working behind the scenes as secretary of the British-Irish Association to keep the opposing sides talking during the darkest days of the Troubles, or reconciling her irascible husband, the polemicist and historian Paul Johnson, to those of his friends whom he managed to offend. A friend commented: 'Paul is offence; Marigold, defence.'

Her lifelong friend, the historian and LMH alumna Lady Antonia Fraser, recalled her first evening at the college in the autumn of 1950 in her memoir *My History* (Orion 2015):

> There we were, we first-year students, assembled in the Junior Common Room of Lady Margaret Hall to be wised up about all that was hopefully to come. We were told we could ask any questions we liked about the way things worked in our new life. There was briefly silence. Then a very small, very pretty girl, sitting in the front row more or less enveloped by her huge scholar's gown, said in a loud, confident voice:
> 'I have a question. What can we ask the scouts to do for us in our rooms? Will they do some ironing?'... I remember a gasp. Someone nudged me. 'That's Marigold Hunt. The Headgirl of Benenden.'

Marigold Egerton Gignac Hunt, the daughter of Thomas Hunt, an innovative gastroenterologist, was at LMH to read English. After three highly sociable years – V. S. Naipaul was a lifelong friend; Roger Bannister was her first serious boyfriend; and the more interesting, well-turned-out male undergraduates were enviously classified by her fellow LMH students as 'Marigold men' – she was viva-ed for a First but did not fare well due to her lack of enthusiasm for Anglo-Saxon. Indeed, she attended only one of J. R. R. Tolkien's lectures on the subject, and found it boring. C. S. Lewis, on the other hand, she listened to assiduously – but female undergraduates were excluded from Lewis's post-lecture get-togethers at the Eastgate Hotel.



Marigold at the time of her graduation

After Oxford, Marigold considered social work but was soon enticed by Antonia into the more glamorous world of publishing. Her first major



Marigold as the Labour candidate for Beaconsfield, 1974

task for the legendary George Weidenfeld was to compile an index for a book by a rising American academic called Henry Kissinger, who was every bit as smitten by Marigold's charm and luminous beauty as all the men who ever met her. Years later Kissinger told my husband, Marigold's eldest child (Daniel Johnson, Magdalen 1975): 'Your father is a great historian. Your mother is a great *mensch*.'

She cut back her publishing work when her four children arrived in quick succession – and morphed into the perfect party-giving wife of the then Editor of the *New Statesman*, welcoming to their Buckinghamshire home an extraordinary roll-call of names from the literary, journalistic and political 1960s and 1970s: from Iris Murdoch and Kingsley Amis, Tom Stoppard and Harold Pinter, to random CND campaigners on their way to Aldermaston who camped on the drawing-room floor.

Marigold became Frank Field's deputy director at the Child Poverty Action Group, lobbying the Labour government to replace the family allowance with child benefit paid directly to mothers, not fathers. This was the stepping stone for her to stand for Parliament in the second General Election of 1974 as the Labour candidate for Beaconsfield, where she did rather better than the 1982 Labour candidate, Tony Blair. Strong support from celebrity chums, such as the TV host Michael Parkinson, helped: this was the 1970s, so naturally she had to be photographed sitting on Parkinson's lap. Her campaign poster photo, wide-eyed but intelligent, grave yet approachable, remains one of the loveliest photos we have of her.

With her intelligent mix of social charm and a social conscience, Marigold could have easily gone on to win a safe Labour seat. But when her husband Paul 'switched sides' and became an ardent Thatcherite, the conventions of the time dictated that Marigold's political ambitions had to end. It was her politics or her marriage – and as a devout Catholic, adoring wife and loving mother there was in her mind no contest.

So she became the Executive Secretary of the British-Irish Association, bringing together all sides bar terrorists. The conferences, mostly held at Oxbridge colleges, were not exactly secret but were unreported – and Marigold's skills as a mediator between people who hated each other were well used. She was awarded an MBE in the 1993 New Year Honours list, but had by then begun training as a psychotherapist – she worked in this capacity within the NHS and became a counsellor and fund-raiser for Cruse, the bereavement charity.

Marigold was not always the soul of tact and diplomacy that her career suggests. At a family wedding she joked to her niece, the journalist Celia Walden: 'You had to wear a really awful bridesmaid's dress at a wedding, didn't you, Celia? Oh yes,' (turning to me) 'it was *your* wedding, wasn't it, Sarah?'

But our enduring memory of Marigold is of her glorious ability to enjoy life, to bring people together and to light up a room with her smile.

Sarah Johnson
(Thompson 1978 Literae Humaniores)

ANNETTE JOSEPHINE (JO) PERRY (*née* ANDERSON), 1934–2026



Jo Perry as a young woman

Our mother Jo Perry (1953) has died at 91. She came up to LMH, ration book in hand, as a full Heron-Allen scholar in Zoology, and a kind of rebel. She had left the Perse School for Girls at 16 to train as a cook, but was persuaded back to the local technical college to take three A-levels in a year. The scholarship was her plan to lighten the financial load of her father, Dr Bruce Anderson, who at that time had two elder daughters at the family's preferred destination of Newnham College, Cambridge. Forging her own path out of the spotlight, at her own expense, with perceived minimal drama, was entirely characteristic.

At LMH she flourished, emerging from the shadow of her sisters, and finding her own intellectual and social identity. She was conscious of the privileges and responsibilities of communal life, and remembered with pleasure the female excellence and intimacy of the college, as well as the many entertainments offered by the university. Boyfriends were left at the main door without regret, and she would go back to her room to piles of notes laid out in circles around her on the floor as she completed essays. She told us about her field work in Wytham Woods and research at the Museum of Natural History. Her LMH lab partner Frances Hale (1953; afterwards the Revd Hancock) was a lifelong friend, and they later travelled through France and Italy together. Travel at that time, for them, meant setting out without much in the way of bookings, luggage or luxury, and it remained her preferred approach, whether travelling to Scotland, Namibia or Costa Rica. She loved to walk, ride buses, explore and eat as the locals did, and brought in particular the joys of French and Mediterranean food home to overlay her 'low living and high thinking' upbringing. For the rest of her life she grew, raised and cooked food of the highest possible standard, and an invitation to her table, or her garden, was a gift.

A first-class degree won her a scholarship to Radcliffe College (since incorporated into Harvard) for a year, where the lab lost its appeal in competition with the magnificent scenery, scale, sense of freedom and once again the food of 1950s America.



Jo Perry at her desk

She travelled across the continent with a US Army surplus sleeping bag and companions she never divulged to us. Her favourite memory was hiking alone in Yosemite, which with hindsight she did admit was dangerous.

Returning home, she started work in scientific publishing. She contacted friends again, including Bill Perry, an attractive and sociable graduate of Teddy Hall whom she had met on a skiing trip he had organised. Very soon they were engaged, and they married at the Charterhouse in 1958. It was a complicated marriage that ended in divorce in the 1990s, but she always said that she could never regret having her three children during the 1960s. Returning to work in the 1970s was a decision born of great financial necessity, but editing the guidebooks of Egon Ronay was a congenial pursuit in a team of those who also loved food and travel. She moved on later to edit further guidebooks at the RAC and then the AA.

Grandchildren were born, starting in 1991, and gave her a new lease of life as an energetic and beloved Granny.

The long and happy autumn of her life, based in first Hampshire and then Sussex, but travelling frequently, including annual holidays with Frances, Janet Gulland (Engineering 1953 – another LMH contemporary) and Janet's wife Sue Joslin, came to an end with a devastating stroke in 2021, which she unfortunately survived. Peace came at last in 2026, with numerous extended family gathering at LMH to remember her with love.

Matthew Perry, Susannah Perry, and Charlotte Robinson, Jo's children

SISTER ANNE MARIE OSC (*née* ANNE WORSTER), 1936–2026

Anne Worster read history at LMH from 1955 to 1958. After a career as a teacher and a lecturer, as Sister Anne Marie she entered the religious life as a Poor Clare, joining the sisters in a contemplative order in Lynton. During her time at Lynton she became variously Novice Mistress and eventually Abbess.

She was for some time the British Isles' Federal President of the Poor Clares. In this role she represented the British Isles at the world celebration of the founding of the order in Assisi in 2000.



Sister Anne Marie paddling

With the closure of the Lynton convent, Sister Anne Marie moved to join the Poor Clares at Arundel. She still had a clear singing voice despite being in her 80s, and she joined a group of nuns who recorded a CD for Decca: *My Peace I Give You*. The CD sold many thousands and the Poor Clares were able to give substantial funds to charity.

Sister Anne Marie died peacefully on 26 May 2026, and is buried in the enclosure at Arundel.

Sarah Worster
(1962 Zoology)

CAROLINE GORDON-WALKER, 1937–2026

Caroline Gordon-Walker was born on 22 December 1937 in Oxford, where her father, Patrick, was a don at Christ Church. Her mother, Audrey, had won a Jamaica scholarship to Oxford, to what became St Anne's, and they were married in 1934. Caroline had an older sister, Judith, born two years before. In 1939, there was discussion about evacuation once war had been declared. As their mother's parents were still in Jamaica, it was decided that they and their cousin would travel to Jamaica in 1940. Judith was four and Caroline only two. The belief was that it would be for a short time, but U-boats meant they did not return until 1945. It was a traumatic separation: Judith and Caroline were eternal friends, but they found it hard to bond fully with their mother.



Caroline punting at LMH

Their sister, Ann, was born in 1944; a year later the two older sisters returned and, in 1946, twin sons were born – a family of one became one of five in two years.

The family lived in Hampstead Garden Suburb, where Judith and Caroline went to the local school. They had made a pact to go to boarding school, but it was Caroline alone who went to Cheltenham Ladies College, where she flourished. She joined Judith at Lady Margaret Hall in 1956, reading classics, and then returned to London.

Caroline was married to David Brierley in 1960, soon after leaving Oxford, and she joined the Civil Service, which was to be her career. She was intelligent and was soon promoted to principal. Caroline and David took a sabbatical on the Greek island of Skopelos, then remote, but now overrun as *Mama Mia* was filmed there. Subsequently, they moved to Kings Langley where her daughter Margaret was born in 1970 and brought great joy to her.

Caroline was seconded to the National Economic Council (known as Neddy),



Caroline's wedding to David Brierley – her bridesmaid is Sally Sampson (Bentlif 1957)

and travelled to Europe and other countries, representing Great Britain at a senior level. She found her career enriching, but she was also a devout Christian and became involved in the local church. When Caroline retired, she and David moved to the Dordogne where they had had many holidays. The need for help with local churches was greater even than in England, and she soon became a lay reader. The marriage came under strain through her religious work and Caroline and David parted and were eventually divorced. She stayed in France and reverted to her maiden name, Gordon-Walker.

Caroline decided to become a priest and went to theological college in Durham for a year and was then ordained as a deacon in Berne and as a priest by Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 2003, before returning to France to continue her ministry.

Several years afterwards she found the travel and living alone more stressful and returned to the UK and set up home in Brighton with her daughter and family, helping at the local church. Her health slowly began to decline and she was diagnosed with a form of dementia. She moved into a nursing home in Worthing and was bedridden for her last four years. She died on 15 January 2026, aged 88.

Caroline was kind and generous and always saw the best of things. She was a brave person who made a difference to many lives.

Alan Gordon Walker, Caroline's brother



Caroline with her daughter, Margaret, after her ordination by Rowan Williams

ANASTASIA CECILIA WIDDICOMBE (*née* LEECH), 1937–2026

Anastasia was born in Mill Hill, north London, to Thomas and Anastasia Leech. Her father worked in printing despite his epilepsy, while her mother was a school administrator. The family's background was Irish Catholic, but Anastasia described herself as agnostic from early adulthood.

The war brought bombs to Mill Hill, and Anastasia experienced trauma that remained with her all her life. She recounted hiding under the stairs during air raids, and her grandmother throwing herself protectively over her. When a neighbour's house was bombed, Anastasia was evacuated from London and sent to stay with a family in the north. However, she became ill and was hospitalised for six months at the age of six, far away from family, unable to walk.



Anastasia at LMH

Despite this, Anastasia always described her family as lucky due to their large garden, which fed them with fruit and vegetables during rationing. She did well at St Mary's Abbey School (apart from maths, at which she was 'utterly abysmal').

At LMH, Anastasia was enrolled in 1956 to read history, but her real love was English, and she managed to attend English classes on the quiet. To the horror of her children, who went to university in the 1980s, she described the 10pm lock-up, at which time the young ladies had to be back in college. Fortunately, this restriction was overcome with late-night climbing in and out of windows by many of them.



Anastasia later in life

She made enduring friendships at Oxford. She met Margaret Hopkins (*née* Black) while waiting for their admission interviews; they both read history and later shared a flat and remained in each other's lives. Genette Dagtoglou (*née* Malet de Carteret) from Jersey, who studied law, was also a close, lifelong friend.

Anastasia was married at St Aloysius' Church, Oxford, in 1961 to David Widdicombe, a law graduate at Cambridge who had been introduced by her history tutor, Henry Pelling. The marriage ended in 1978. They had three children, Miri, Rupert and Daniel, and eventually nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She was very proud of her large family and her relationships with them all, and they of her as the strong foundation of the family as it is today.

Following her training at Bedford College, University of London, she became a psychiatric social worker at the Maudsley, King's College Hospital, and served as a magistrate for several years. In 1984, she started the newly established child psychotherapy training offered by the British Association of Psychotherapists (BAP), then remained at the Maudsley as a consultant child and adolescent psychotherapist until 1996. She subsequently moved to Edgware General Hospital, later setting up in private practice working with children and families.

Anastasia took on increasing responsibility within her professional body which included the Child Training and Post Graduate Committees and the Ethics Committee, contributing to procedures, standards and BAP policy. She was elected to full membership of the Psychoanalytic Section, and in 2012 she was listed as a senior member.

A friend described Anastasia as 'a beacon of how to be in later life; still engaged with life and taking joy in people, music, art, reading and ideas'. She enrolled in the University of the Third Age, and later jointly taught a literature and psychoanalysis group, leading a course on *Middlemarch* among other works. She was a member of a colleague book group of fellow psychotherapists, dear friends with whom she had trained decades before, their experience of psychoanalysis providing a framework for understanding what they read. These groups provided interest in her retired life. They were conducted online post-pandemic, which led to frustrating tussles with technology, but it did not defeat her!

Benjamin Britten was a favourite composer, and going to the Aldeburgh Festival in Suffolk gave her great pleasure, as well as attending the ENO and theatre.

Anastasia loved travel to places with ancient cultures and archaeology: Oman, Iran, Nepal and Italy. In recent years, her children accompanied her on trips to Andalucia and Cadiz; Milan, to La Scala; and to Corfu.

Anastasia died in her beloved home in Camden in January 2026, living independently to the end. She is dearly missed by her family and old friends.

Miriam Widdicombe, Anastasia's daughter

SYLVIA HARRIS (*née* BAGGS), 1938–2026

What a pleasure to catch sight of a copy of *The Brown Book* as we were ushered into the hospitable living-room of John and Sylvia Harris about 15 years ago! We had just moved to Caerwys and were soon to enjoy a firm and valued friendship with them especially through St Michael's Church. Until quite recently, Sylvia was a familiar sight as she made a stately progress around the town on her bicycle, in a skirt and with a silk headscarf, often *en route* to an activity such as a meeting at the church school.

Further enquiry at that first meeting revealed that Sylvia had gone up to LMH in 1957, a few years before my arrival in 1962. So I did not know her at College but of course we were soon discussing our memories, including our shared appreciation of the beauty of the place. But I was glad to have escaped the weekly scuttle of coal

needed to heat her room in Old Hall in those distant days! Later, she allowed me to interview her for the Oral History Project.



Sylvia as Sabrina in LMH gardens

Sylvia was brought up in Birmingham, her parents having moved from Wales in search of work, her father, Reginald Baggs, as a policeman and her mother, Rosie, on the Great Western Railway. Sylvia had been well prepared for LMH by King Edward VI School in Birmingham, not only academically (she was exceptionally gifted) but through a teacher who had inspired her love of acting and drama. Her husband, John, recalls sitting in the garden at LMH one Saturday evening in the summer term, when it was raining hard, to see Sylvia as Sabrina, the Spirit of the Severn, in a performance of Milton's *Comus, a Masque*. Fortunately, we still have a grainy photo of the event.

No wonder she caught the eye of the young John Harris (Magdalen 1957). They met at a playreading by Magdalen College Dramatic Society of Seán O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock* and together enjoyed the delights of Oxford, getting very wet again on May Morning. John and Sylvia were married in 1964 and it was a great pleasure to celebrate their wedding anniversary in Caerwys 60 years later.

Sylvia came to LMH as a classicist but she described how after Mods she thought:

> I don't want to spend my time doing this. I really would be interested in finding out more about Theology. Well they were horrified at first. But, bless their hearts, they saw that I meant it and they allowed me to do it.

Thus it was that Sylvia, we believe, was the first woman in Oxford to achieve a full MA degree in theology (as opposed to more limited diplomas). This took some courage, given that the other students on the degree course, scattered among the various men's colleges where she went for tutorials, were all young men destined for ordination. She had a mixed reception, especially from some of the more 'high church' among them who retreated to the other side of the room. But Sylvia persisted, and evidently enjoyed the course ('Oh! I loved the Heresies!'). This intellectual curiosity and profound scholarship remained with her for the rest of her life, but she used her exceptional intelligence to establish the truth, not prove a point. Knowledge and education mattered to her, as did a precise use of words and language. She was also a very good listener, treating everyone with respect. Children instinctively loved her because of this, as well as the inner calm and stability and steadfastness that she represented. She was consistent in her support for the local church, but with a spiritual, slightly mystical faith that was not afraid to question and tackle the inconsistencies and challenges that Christianity often presents.



A more recent photograph of Sylvia

Sylvia put her knowledge to good use after leaving Oxford, teaching wherever she went, from primary school children in Tenbury, to adults in Dubai. She taught at St Alban's Girls' High School, then at South Hampstead High School for Girls, and subsequently at the Alice Ottley School in Worcester. After moving to Caerwys, Sylvia read with primary school children there, becoming a governor of the school and for a time the Chair. Sylvia was also a valued trainer of ordinands for the church, first in the Diocese of Hereford and then, after moving to Wales in 1988, in the St Asaph Diocese.

Here in Caerwys we will all remember Sylvia's deep knowledge, faith and scholarship, but our most abiding memory will be of her modesty and graciousness. We shall remember Sylvia's softly spoken greetings, her kindness and her unfailing support for the church and its people. In Sylvia we had a very special friend and we shall miss her profoundly. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her husband, John, and their three children, James, Ruth and John, and their families.

Alice Wakefield
(1962 English)

GILLIAN TINDALL, 1938–2025



Gillian Tindall as a student

My lifelong, very rewarding friendship with Gillian Tindall was due to Lady Margaret Hall. Our mothers met there in 1928, becoming close friends. In 1940 Gillian, a very precocious two-year-old, and her mother came to live with us for 18 months while her father was in the army. I was a year younger so she became my all-knowing, multi-talented older sister whom I regarded with awe and admiration. That really summed up our relationship during the next 85 years.

Although we met regularly after her family moved, LMH was yet again important in our friendship as Gillian went up in 1956 and I followed a year later. My memories of Gillian at Oxford are of someone, once again, far above me, as in our early childhood, but also very kind. She invited me to coffee on my first night, sparing me, I later discovered, the attentions of a militant group of second years eager to recruit new disciples to their cause. The combination of having her first novel

published, together with a first in English, makes Gillian's description of Oxford as a 'rest cure and haven' seem improbable, but she had survived turbulent teenage years without any of the counselling or special consideration nowadays on offer. She was, as she always remained, a highly entertaining conversationalist, telling us for instance of the university production of *Hamlet* in which she played Ophelia. In one performance the actor playing Laertes entered delivering his final speech. With brilliant quick thinking, Gillian fed him his actual first line, 'But your necessaries are embarked?', whereupon he returned to Shakespeare's order of words. We spent a week together on a farm where I was one of many students picking strawberries. Gillian had done so the year before but was now promoted to cooking for us. Despite our very basic living quarters she provided excellent meals, as she did on many occasions in London and in her house in France. I also saw her teaching a grandson her skills.



Gillian Tindall, photographed by Richard Lansdown

Her first novel, *No Name in the Street*, was followed by more than a dozen others, one of which won the Somerset Maugham award, together with books of short stories and journalism, especially for the *Guardian*. However she turned to historical writing, in which she was also brilliantly successful. Her own two favourites of her books were *The Fields Beneath* which was described as having redefined the possibilities of social history and *Célestine* which made her very well known in France, where, for 40 years, she had a house. She was made a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government. Her history of Bombay, *City of Gold*, made her equally well known in India – an obituary there recorded that she 'had a huge impact on Indian readers and writers and strongly influenced Mumbai's urban heritage movement'. This was true of her campaigning in London, too. With her husband, Richard Lansdown, a distinguished child psychologist, and son Harry, she lived in the same house in Kentish Town for 62 years, working tirelessly to stop the bulldozers, particularly in Camden but also in many other boroughs. She has been described as having 'a lifelong hatred of planners' and could confront them with her encyclopaedic knowledge of local planning and ability to present her case.

In addition to all her literary and historical work, Gillian found time to be a JP, regretting that she had to retire aged 70. She also travelled very widely and was a devoted mother and grandmother. Her friends must often have noticed, as I did, that she was the one to make contact and enquire how one was, although she must have had far more pressing concerns than most people. She even had time for leisure activities, especially walking and swimming. When she stayed in our Portsmouth home with her husband and much loved grandsons she enjoyed sea bathing, even when it involved changing in our very small car, and a visit to a historical site with her was always rewarding as she was so interested and knowledgeable.

All in all, looking back on her life, I'm more than ever certain that awe and admiration were the right response to Gillian, who overcame so much and achieved so much.

Joanna Crooks
(Burkitt 1957 English)

MEREDITH HOOPER (*née* ROONEY), 1939–2025



Meredith Hooper

Meredith Hooper, scholar, researcher, explorer and writer, died on 27 December 2025 at her home in London aged 86. She was born in Adelaide, Australia, on 21 October 1939. After attending the Wilderness School in North Adelaide she did her undergraduate degree in history at the University of Adelaide, being awarded a First Class Honours. A postgraduate scholarship took her to the University of Oxford in 1961 where she did a BPhil in imperial history, first at Lady Margaret Hall and then at Nuffield College.

During her time at Oxford Meredith had a lively social life. Richard Hooper, who later became her husband, met her in 1962. Meredith and I became friends after meeting in the dining hall of LMH. I then introduced her to Charlotte Fawcett (1961 English) who married Stanley Johnson and became the mother of Boris while still an undergraduate. The Hoopers subsequently bought three of Charlotte's paintings, including a portrait Charlotte did of them shortly after they married. I too am the proud owner of four of Charlotte's paintings.

Meredith and Richard married on 21 March 1964 and settled in London. They had three children – Rachel who reports on Parliament for the BBC; Tom, the Oscar-winning film director; and Ben, a barrister who became a management consultant specialising in tech. It was Meredith who went to a play-reading of the *King's Speech* in London and persuaded Tom to make it into a feature film. Tom involved her in all the scripts of his films, which included the musical *Les Misérables*.

Meredith was a highly intelligent, independent-minded and hardworking professional who became an expert on Antarctica for which she had a fascination and an affinity from a young age, brought up as she was near the ocean in south Australia. Later, for her research she spent three summers in the region, the first with the Australian Antarctic Division in 1994/95 at their base in East Antarctica and again in 1998/99 and 2001/2 with the US Antarctic Artists and Writers Programme. These expeditions inspired her book *The Ferocious Summer*, highlighting the effect of climate change on the Adélie penguin colony at the US Base, Palmer. She also wrote two plays for BBC Radio 4 about polar exploration: *Kathleen & Con*, and *Beyond Endurance*, starring Dominic West, Sam

West and Emilia Fox. In 2015 she curated a major exhibition at the Royal Geographical Society in London entitled *Enduring Eye – the Antarctic Legacy of Sir Ernest Shackleton and Frank Hurley*. She revived interest in the extraordinary photographs and film work of the Australian explorer Frank Hurley OBE, who was on the Shackleton expedition. Through these various activities she was highlighting the strategic and environmental importance of the polar region.



Meredith in the Antarctic

In addition, Meredith succeeded in writing 58 books for children and adults which were translated into many languages. Her non-fiction book, *The Ferocious Summer: Palmer's Penguins and the Warming of Antarctica*, won the prestigious Australian Nettie Palmer Prize in 2008. In her numerous children's books she combined scholarship with exciting narratives written in simple, accessible language based on real events. For example, *Tom Crean's Rabbit* was a true story from Scott's last voyage. *The Journal of Watkin Stench* is about a rat who arrives on one of the first immigrant ships to Australia and has to adapt to a raw new country.

Meredith was a visiting scholar at Wolfson College, Cambridge and at the Scott Polar Research Institute. She was a trustee of the Brussels-based International Polar Foundation and the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust. In 2000 she was awarded the Antarctica Service Medal by the United States Congress. In 2014 she was nominated Australian of the Year in the UK. In all these roles she proved herself to be a kind mentor, a team player and a passionate advocate. She was also a loyal and good friend.

Julia Tugendhat
(Dobson 1960 History)

JEAN BROWN (*née* BOWYER) 1944–2025



Jean Brown as a young woman

Our great friend, Jean Brown, died suddenly, due to an aortic tear, in the middle of delivering a talk on Namibian birds on 30 January 2025.

Jean came up to LMH to study medicine in 1963. She was born on 6 July 1944 and went to Wycombe Abbey Boarding School before receiving an Exhibition to LMH. Four of us reading Natural Sciences became lifelong friends. Jean was an adventurous, enthusiastic person who was not taken aback by being tipped into the river at Port Meadow in mid-February after agreeing to crew for me (AT) in a yacht race, when I promptly capsized the boat! She showed similar confidence sailing our little cruiser (JL) through Chichester lock. Nothing fazed Jean, walking and travelling and working in difficult places to help people and children, in the West Bank, Gaza, Kenya, Uganda and Myanmar.

Jean came to London to St Thomas's Hospital for her clinical studies. Here she developed her love of paediatrics. Having spent some time unqualified, following a nurse in Jordan, she began a lifelong commitment to supporting Palestinian communities and children.

Jean married Vivian Brown in 1970. They had two boys, Matthew and Oliver, while living in Hackney. Here she also worked on her DM on lung function in children, particularly the disabled, at the Brompton Hospital. The family moved to Kingston where she worked at St Peter's Hospital Chertsey, developing the neonatal service. She and her family spent several years in Saudi Arabia where Vivian was seconded to the Foreign Office. They lived in Kingston-upon-Thames for many years until they moved to Cheltenham in 2023. Her teaching work abroad continued beside her hospital work. After 25 years at St Peter's she retired, but carried on with her work abroad.

Jean became an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH). The obituary published by the RCPCH says that Jean's life was marked by extraordinary variety and adventure. While still a medical student, she worked with Save the Children in Jordan and, after qualifying, in Lebanon and Jeddah. In the UK, over 25 years as a consultant paediatrician, she dedicated time and skill to teaching and developing training programmes for young paediatricians. Her encouragement and guidance to younger colleagues was hugely valued. She was an inspiration to many.

Jean was a long-standing supporter of RCPCH's global programmes, with a lifelong commitment to supporting Palestinian communities, families and children, both in

the Occupied Territories, across the region and globally. She supported the college's early programme interventions in the West Bank and Gaza, forging relationships with child health partners and supporting the development of RCPCH's programmatic support for children with disabilities in Palestine between 2014 and 2017. From 2005, Jean served as senior tutor for a child health diploma, which became the basis for a Master's in child health for doctors and nurses in the West Bank. She was a leading supporter of Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), becoming a Trustee and then Chair of one of its Boards over nine years.



Jean Brown later in life

Jean was instrumental in establishing the College's global partnerships in East Africa, playing a key part in rolling out and popularising the Expanded Emergency Triage, Assessment, and Treatment (ETAT+) training model, and adapting this for implementation in other regions including Myanmar. In recent years, rather than slowing down, Jean actually expanded her engagement with the College's global programme, bringing a lifetime of clinical expertise and geopolitical insight to many areas of work. She led the development of programme protocols for improving paediatric care in Myanmar, supported developmental and disability screening in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon (helping to navigate a complex local landscape), and developed an online neonatal care education and training package. From the committee rooms of the College to the refugee camp clinic, Jean's untiring commitment to supporting others came with characteristic calmness, kindness and clarity.

We both benefitted from Jean's illustrious career when we individually went to Kenya to see the work that she and Vivian had been doing when they went on Voluntary Service Overseas after retiring from St Peter's, in Jean's case, and the Civil Service, in Vivian's case. Trips with them on safari and to Lake Victoria were an added bonus.

We three celebrated our 70th birthdays together (in 2014) with a wonderful luncheon and tea party at LMH, taking in the recent new buildings, the old Hall, the gardens and punting on the Cherwell. Jean was full of life and energy as ever when she suffered the aortic tear in January 2025 and died peacefully a few days later.

Alison Jones
(Telfer 1963 Botany)

Janet Lockwood
(Mills 1963 Medicine)

RT HON ANN WIDDECOMBE, 1947–2026



Ann Widdecombe as a student

Ann Widdecombe, whose horrific murder on 8 July has been widely reported, had long before that been one of the best-known public figures in the country. Originally known as a Conservative MP, minister and shadow minister, and latterly as a Brexit MEP and then as a spokesman for Reform, Ann also, and perhaps even more importantly for the wider public, was famed as a TV celebrity, particularly through her appearances on *Strictly Come Dancing* and *Celebrity Big Brother*.

Her public life is well documented, but these are more personal recollections from myself and my husband David. We knew Ann for over 50 years and are left with many vibrant memories.

Ann was an undergraduate at LMH from 1969 to 1972 and was for a time Vice-President of the JCR. Up to read PPE (after reading Latin at Birmingham), her main mission, as she made quite clear to her tutors, was to become President of the Oxford Union Society. Although she was elected Secretary for Trinity 1971 and then Treasurer for Michaelmas 1972 (remaining in Oxford for that term despite having graduated), she did not become President, and indeed she stood for the Presidency only once, in Hilary 1972: subsequently she held back out of personal loyalty to one of the other candidates.

She was consistent and outspoken in her political beliefs throughout her life. Her first paper speech in the Union, in Michaelmas 1970, was to propose a motion supporting censorship, which she did with such courage and panache that she was elected top of the Standing Committee at the end of that term (which was certainly not because the undergraduate body agreed with her views!). She also spoke in October 1971 against joining what was then called the Common Market on the Heath government's terms. The main points in her first election manifesto, circulated as Conservative candidate for Burnley in 1979, were support for capital punishment and for restrictions on immigration.

Ann was loyal to her friends despite their differing views. For example, in Trinity 1975 the LMH JCR president, Barbara Margolis (now Roche), who went on to become a minister in Tony Blair's government, asked if I could let someone called Ann Widdecombe sleep on my floor in Old Hall. Ann was returning out of college loyalty to vote for Barbara to be President of the Oxford Union. My offer to give her my bed while I, a humble fresher, slept on the floor was very firmly rejected.

Despite this promising start, Ann took some time to accept me as a friend as I had the temerity to date David, one of her favourite men (the fourth most charming she had ever met, she said). We were roundly reproved for holding hands at table in The Mitre even though we were by then engaged. But she came to our wedding and

that of our daughter and was always a stimulating house guest, though sometimes a disconcerting one.

Given that she and David would weave along St Aldates as each competed to be on the road edge of the pavement – he as a gentleman's duty; she rejecting his male condescension – we always took it that she opposed direct discrimination against women. So, when in late 1992 Ann (who at that point was a professed Anglican) was staying with us and David had invited our local vicar and his wife Pam (who was a deacon and aspired to be a woman priest) to join us for dinner, we thought we were on safe ground. Eventually, Pam pressed the point and asked Ann directly about her views on women priests. She was most firmly against them – only a man could in her view be a priest. Later on, when it was just us, we were roundly ticked off for inviting them.

Shortly afterwards she publicly rejected the Anglican church because of its decision to permit the ordination of women as priests, and the following year was received as a Roman Catholic after a period of instruction – a rather long and argumentative period by all accounts, with the doctrine of Purgatory proving a particular stumbling-block. She was not used to being argued out of any of her opinions!

When I first knew her she was a militant agnostic: 'Them's as says there ain't is as bad as them's as says there is,' she would say. 'Me, I'm an aggie.' She was as definite in her agnosticism as in all her other positions. Her later Catholic faith was therefore not the basis of her moral convictions, which preceded her conversion to Roman Catholicism and persisted during her period of agnosticism. Rather, her moral convictions, and in particular the company that she kept as a result of them once she entered the House of Commons and became one of the leaders of the anti-abortion movement there, made the moral certainties of Catholicism seem her natural home.

Without doubt her faith steadily deepened from the time of her conversion. Perhaps as a result she mellowed in her manner – she even ceased to object to men letting her enter the room first. As a minister, she disarmed journalists by her direct, and well-informed, answers to questions, but also by turning hostile headlines into self-deprecatory jokes: dubbed 'Doris Karloff', for a time she answered the phone 'Karloff speaking', and when one entered her Dartmoor house, immediately to the left was a wall of political cartoons, funny but mostly unflattering. That is what I shall try to remember about 'Widdecombe's Rest', putting aside what ultimately happened there.

Frances Thomas
(Brown 1974 PPE)

Gillian Peele, Emeritus Fellow, adds:
I did not teach Ann (she had graduated well before I arrived at LMH) but shortly after I took up my post she came to see me and sought my advice on forming a branch of the National Association of Conservative Graduates. I was at the time writing about conservatism both in the United Kingdom and the United States and was active in a range of groups encouraging discussion of political ideology. It should be remembered that this period saw the ousting of Edward Heath by Margaret Thatcher and a radical reconsideration of Conservative philosophy. My initial conversations with Ann quickly



Ann Widdecombe

made clear that her interest was not in such questions as the proper role of the state or how best to control inflation but in substantive social policy issues, especially law and order where she held strident views. Indeed the more I talked to Ann the more evident it became that on almost every topic – British membership of the EU, climate change, abortion, women priests, crime and punishment – our views were diametrically opposed. Nevertheless I came to appreciate the robustness and clarity with which she advanced her views and her personal integrity even though I am sure she deplored what she would have seen as my wet liberal conservatism.

Ann did not alas come back to LMH much after she entered Parliament in 1987. I do however remember a weekend after she had left Parliament in the Lent of 2013 when she came to preach in LMH chapel. Her theme was broadening the perspective of faith in politics and she made an impressive impact, not least because of the care which she took to speak to all those who joined her for the buffet supper after chapel. As she was staying for the weekend I put on some drinks before Friday Hall so she could meet some politics students. Clearly she felt too many of those who were politically engaged were somewhat to the left for her liking and they included those involved in Conservative politics who were unaccountably far too close to Tory Reform which represented the liberal 'one nation' wing of the Conservative Party. Ann's presence at a student production of Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* intrigued the cast and the rest of the audience on the Saturday, while a trip out for Sunday lunch at a Burford hotel was made the more memorable by her insistence that the manager should bring a heater for the table so she would not feel cold.

Observers of her public image also might not appreciate some of the hidden sides of Ann. She was undoubtedly supportive and loyal to her friends; and, although her public positions may sometimes have seemed harsh, she was kind-hearted on a number of issues including animal welfare. Her public appearance especially in pantomime showed she did not take herself too seriously. Above all she did not mind being, as she often was, a minority voice on a number of issues. What was important was that all points of view should be expressed honestly and courageously and heard courteously. She was an able politician who was devoted to public service and whose contribution to democratic debate will be much missed.

The Editor adds:
It is poignant that this year, for the first time in a while, Ann Widdecombe sent an update for the News section of *The Brown Book* – and she delivered it early. We are including it here as testimony to her spirit, as described by Frances and Gillian above:

> Am still active in Reform and therefore have had a good year. I continue to live on Dartmoor with my cat, Aloysius, and am now not so involved in TV quizzes and debates because my once speedy retrieval is slowing down!!! I am however still a regular on shows such as Jeremy Vine.

HELEN CECILY ISSLER (1947–2025)



Helen Issler as a young woman

Helen was born on the way to the Military Hospital in Deolali, near Mumbai in India, delivered by her father, who was a medical officer in the British Army. Her parents were Polish Jews: her father had travelled to Montpellier and then Geneva to study medicine, and at the outbreak of the Second World War her parents escaped Europe by boarding a boat to India. Helen's father served as a doctor in the British army in India throughout the Second World War and afterwards until Indian Independence.

After Independence, Helen, her parents and her elder sister Sally, were 'repatriated' to Britain, a country they had never seen, and Helen's father became a GP in Peckham Rye, south London. This was where Helen grew up and was educated at a local grammar school.

Helen came up to LMH in 1965 to study medicine, at a time when only one in seven students at the university was female and only one in three from a state school. She was one of four medics in the college. She was always grateful to her tutor, Miss Ord, who made allowances for girls, like Helen, who had had insufficient teaching in chemistry. She regarded her time at LMH as transformational and highly enjoyable.

After LMH she went on to further training at University College Hospital in London. She specialised in paediatrics and had a distinguished career as a paediatric consultant. She was widely regarded as a brilliant clinician and teacher, with a great sense of humour. Above all, she was kind and cared deeply about her patients. She could be stubborn when it mattered – as she was when she refused to accept a High Court judge's order to change the treatment of a patient, forcing the Court of Appeal to sit urgently and vindicate her position. She was passionate about end of life care and served on the board of Demelza Children's hospices for three years. She strongly supported legal assisted dying.

Helen had been introduced to Dave Hall just before they both came up to Oxford.



Helen Issler

They were married in 1977 and their twin daughters Rachel and Jane were born in 1987. The family lived in south London.

Throughout her life, Helen had a wide circle of friends and kept in touch with them all, wherever they lived in the world. The four of us became close friends at LMH and remained so, spending increasing amounts of time together after retirement and enjoying memorable holidays.

Helen and Dave's hospitality was legendary. Helen was generous with her time, giving advice, whether medical or not. She would always put herself out for others and took pleasure in helping whenever she could. Helen enjoyed travel with family and friends and visited countries far and wide. She especially loved spending time in the family house in the Cevennes, France, where she became part of the local community and made many friends.

Helen was passionate about the theatre, reading, films, music, art and gardening. She was unwell for the last two years of her life with a serious blood condition, which she bore stoically and which didn't stop her living life to the full and even planning her next trip – to China.

Helen died on 7 August 2025 in University College Hospital, with Dave and their daughters at her side.

Sue Nicholl *(Lancashire 1965)*
Judy Cake *(Adams 1965)*
Diana Browne *(Aldwinckle 1965) – all reading modern languages*

VANESSA ANN REBURN (*née* FRANCE), 1948–2026

At the beginning of Michaelmas Term 1966, the three lawyers selected that year by Elizabeth Thorneycroft arrived: Genevra (Jenny) Caws, Vanessa France and myself. We immediately clicked and formed the firm friendship which saw us through our happy and successful years at LMH and all that came after. It is perhaps worth reminding younger readers of what a tiny minority the women lawyers formed at that time, and so the importance of such supportive friendship. Sadly, Jenny' s brilliant career was cut short by her sudden death in 1997. When Vanessa and I wrote her obituary for the 1998 *Brown Book* we mused about which of us would be left to write the other's in due course. Now the lot has fallen to me: in one sense a difficult task as Vanessa is so sorely missed, in another all too easy because she was loved and respected by so many people.

Vanessa (Nessa to her family and friends) was the third of four daughters born to Arnold and Frances France. She grew up in Lingfield in Surrey, attending St Michael's

School, Limpsfield. She enjoyed a warm and caring family life, reflected in her lifelong close relationship with her sisters and their families. By the time she came up to Oxford her father was a senior civil servant. Her mother had read French at St Anne's, but Vanessa opted to apply to LMH, the college of her much loved godmother, Patricia James (Vulliamy 1934 PPE).

My first memory is of a quiet, self-contained person in a demure periwinkle-blue woollen dress – whose hem gradually crept upward in the ensuing months as miniskirts became fashionably shorter and shorter! Never boastful, she nevertheless had a certain understated self-confidence in the areas of thinking and reasoning which she knew she could do well.

The late-night coffee sessions we three spent together will be familiar to many readers: listening to music (she had wisely brought her record-player and LPs) and simply talking. We talked about everything under the sun – from the exciting politics of the late 1960s to literature, art, fashion, our families, not to mention gossip about our fellow students and about the foibles of our tutors. We also talked a lot about law, and I think that probably sharpened our minds just as much as any formal teaching.

Vanessa enjoyed the many opportunities that Oxford offered, reflecting areas that were her life-long passions. So, she (and I) joined a variety of choirs – because of the imbalance of genders among undergraduates, women's voices were very much in demand; she joined the University Sailing Club; she spent time in the lovely LMH gardens; she was a regular member of the College Chapel congregation; she helped to organise a Jane Austen Ball in Abingdon Town Hall. She also joined the committee of the Oxford University Law Society, and gradually one name crept more and more into the conversation: Darrell Reburn (Oriel 1966). They were well suited to each other in intellectual capacity and even more so in their interests and outlook on life, not least their sense of fun.

In 1969 Vanessa graduated with a brilliant First (as did Darrell) and went on to train as a solicitor in London. She and Darrell were married in 1971, and lived for many years in Spencers Wood, just outside Reading. In due course Harriet and William were born. My husband and I were privileged to be asked to be their godparents, one of the greatest joys of our lives.



Vanessa Reburn in student days

Vanessa continued to practise, specialising in private client work, first with Lovell, White & King and then until retirement with Farrer & Co. The people who worked with Vanessa over the years have paid tribute to her as a colleague and mentor: 'understated, wearing her brilliance lightly, a quiet pioneer'. She brought to her work a sharp intellect, but also a compassionate understanding of human nature. She told me that she felt her job was not just to find the most legally and financially effective



Vanessa Reburn in Nepal

solutions for her often high-wealth clients but to balance that against the family relationships which were involved. Then there were the charitable trusts for which she was a trustee or adviser. She was clear-sighted and realistic about their aspirations when reading funding applications, but always genuinely interested and committed to the work they were doing.

Family life was central to her, with her unconditional loving care for Darrell, Harriet, Will and her beloved granddaughter Eve. Her many practical gifts included creating beauty in her home and garden, turning her hand to any kind of sewing, inventing entertainments for children. But it is for the qualities that she brought to whatever she did that we all remember her. Just some of the words with which people honoured her memory are: thoughtful, caring, kind, supportive, wise, patient. One striking memory came from a friend in the 'young mums' group: 'She would gently steer conversations amongst the group away from gossip, softly reminding people to be generous in the way they talked.'

Vanessa revelled in village life, particularly when retirement to the village of Little Cheverell in Wiltshire gave her time to devote to the local church as a lay worship leader and to the local school as a governor, welcoming every opportunity to be involved with children. This took a special direction when her consistent and enthusiastic support of the village charity which raised money for a particular orphanage in Nepal culminated a few years ago in the joy of going, accompanied by Will, to visit it.

In the later part of our lives, she and I were able to share precious time together in city breaks in the UK and further afield. Before I had got up in the morning, Vanessa would have devoured the guidebooks and planned our itinerary to get the most possible out of the day. She retained the ability to read and absorb information incredibly quickly: she would look at the captions in an exhibition and literally leave me standing as she moved on to look at the actual exhibits. Our UK visits were largely designed around cathedral cities where we amused ourselves deciding where each cathedral came in our league table (the criteria being as varied as the quality of the coffee shop to the tone of voice of the person chanting Evensong!). Everything was interesting and fun. But more importantly we could just as happily sit together just 'being'.

Essentially, Vanessa was a private person, with an inner core of silence. Life was not always easy for her, whether at an earlier stage when she had to balance so many pressing demands on her time and energy, and then more particularly in recent years when she had several periods of severe ill health, for which her friends all grieved. But the courage and faith with which she came through all that life held for her is something for which we honour her. When she received her terminal diagnosis last autumn, her care for all those who would be affected by it was poignant. My own abiding memory is

of how, time and time again, until the last few days of her life, she was telephoning me to express her concern for me and for my husband who was walking the same path as her, dying just a few weeks later. Hard as it is, I am privileged to be the survivor of our 1966 trio, and to pay tribute to Vanessa's memory.

Susan Howdle
(Lowery 1966 Jurisprudence)

ADRIENNE GEORGE, 1950–2025

Adrienne Ruth George, of Washington, DC, died peacefully on 26 December 2025 aged 75. Adrienne (also known as Ade) was born in Pittsburgh, PA, on 22 July 1950 to Austen George and Ruth Donnelly George. She went to Peabody High School, class of 1968, and was the valedictorian of her class.



Adrienne George

Adrienne received a Bachelor of Arts from Bryn Mawr College, *summa cum laude*, in 1972. She worked in advertising for a year, then received a Marshall Scholarship to attend the University of Oxford where she graduated with an MPhil in Victorian literature, specialising in the novels of George Eliot and the poetry of Alfred Lord Tennyson. Her college was Lady Margaret Hall.

After graduation, she was accepted at Harvard and Yale Universities to pursue her PhD in English Literature, but opted instead to work as a paralegal for Goodwin, Procter, and Hoar in Boston, then in advertising. After relocating to Washington, DC, she began working for Time-Life Books and became a writer–editor there. When Time-Life Books folded, she attended Georgetown Law School in Washington, DC, then practised law for several years with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Humble by nature, a good friend to all, she was modest, loving, deeply caring, and a loyal booster of her friends and family. Above all, her greatest joy was being a mother and grandmother.

Adrienne is survived by her husband, Ken Ludwig, a playwright, by her daughter Olivia, her son Jack, and her two grandchildren, Kinsley and Reagan.

In memory of Adrienne, donations were made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research and Bryn Mawr College to honour her lifelong love for education.

A celebration of life was held at the Church in Bethesda on Saturday 21 March 2026.

Ken Ludwig, Adrienne's husband, and her children Olivia and Jack

CAROLINE MARY SLOPER, 1950–2025



Mary Sloper

Mary matriculated at LMH in 1969 as a medical student, on a scholarship to read animal physiology. She moved to King's College Medical School for her clinical training, qualifying in 1975. At the end of her training for general practice, she went to the obstetric department at University Hospital in Kingston, Jamaica. This began her long and profound medical and social commitment to Jamaica – initially working in the University Hospital and in various health clinics, but at the core of which was her own general practice in Kingston, from 1987 until 2025. She worked in some of the poorest areas, often for free, often in conjunction with charitable organisations such as the missionaries for the poor. She was well known and loved across all of Jamaica. From 2006 she also came to the UK regularly to work on short-term locum placements in general practice and in prisons. By maintaining her registration as a GP in the UK, she was able to continue in medical practice through on-line GP services during her later years, despite her deteriorating health.

Mary was always particularly interested in research that could improve the care of her patients. Among other things, she made a study of depression following sexual abuse. She published several research papers, as well as loving her teaching at the Medical School of the University of the West Indies. Mary became president of the Jamaican Association of Family Practitioners, where her wide contributions to the community were much admired and celebrated. For many years she was a producer and presenter on a Jamaican radio show as 'Dr Mary', answering questions from listeners, offering medical information and education to the public. She was known for her directness and great wit with patients. She also advised on government public health policy in Jamaica. She was considered one of the best diagnosticians in that country. A staunch feminist, from her time at university Mary put her energies into supporting issues around women's rights, joining the Women's Liberation Movement in the UK and becoming a member of Jamaican women's organisations.



Mary as a young woman

Mary was strong, forthright and pioneering. She had a great sense of adventure and was involved not only in medicine, but also in the natural history and agricultural societies of Jamaica. She was a keen athlete and participated in triathlons and marathons there. She cared for very many people in both her professional and her social life, which was reflected by

the large and wide-ranging attendance at her funeral and the very moving speeches from colleagues, family, friends and patients alike.

Mary had three children, one of whom died tragically in an accident as a baby. Tessa, her second daughter, practises in London as a consultant psychiatrist and psychotherapist. Her son, Timothy, lives in Jamaica and has worked as a teacher. Mary's partner Alastair is a senior economist and worked as lead statistician for the UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence until retirement.

Mary died on Christmas day 2025 from complications after surgery. She is greatly missed.

Katherine Pinching (Sloper 1967 Physiology), Mary's sister, and Tessa Sloper Talbot (Mary's daughter)

JANE FRANCES MURPHY, 1951–2026

Jane Murphy came up to LMH in 1970 to read law. This obituary has been facilitated by her LMH friend Elisabeth Thom (Mardall 1970 English) and includes extracts from tributes paid at Jane's funeral by her Oxford friend, Mark Studer (Univ 1970), and her niece, Georgia Murphy. Mark begins.



Jane Murphy

The 1970s were not an easy time for a single woman seeking to make her way in the 'magic circle' of City law firms. Jane had a miserable experience during her solicitor's articles. Even though as a student she had been a Law Society prize-winner, obtaining a rare distinction in her final solicitors' exams, the firm where she served declined to offer her a permanent position because, they said, they 'already had a woman'. She was then successfully recruited by the much larger and more prestigious firm of Linklaters & Paines, where she soon became only the second woman to make partnership. Jane was a judicious lawyer, a 'safe pair of hands' who, on behalf of the firm, was involved in some of the biggest privatisations and financial deals of the 1980s and 1990s.

Jane could be sharp, sometimes even abrasive, in both professional and social interactions. But if on occasion her fuse was short, any explosion would rapidly be over and forgotten. A one-time timorous legal secretary, apprehensive at being assigned to work for Jane in her City office, was quite surprised to find a principal who actually listened to her and showed concern. Underneath Jane's seemingly combative carapace, there lay a tender heart.

Jane's greatest professional satisfaction perhaps came with her role in saving the Royal Opera House from insolvency in 1997–98. The House was due to close for a

major reconstruction, and the auditors advised frankly that it faced imminent collapse without an injection of substantial funds. Jane was retained by the Board of Directors, and although she had to bite her lip when the Chairman insisted that she wait in the corridor, rather than sit in on the crucial meetings, she was eventually able to steer the company to a proper re-ordering of its affairs, and the negotiation of a £15 million rescue package.

Ironically, Jane had not previously had a particular interest in opera, although an old Oxford friend, Nicholas John, was *dramaturg* for the English National Opera company, and would often invite friends to convivial first nights at the Coliseum. Nick died tragically in 1996 and Jane joined the Board of Trustees of the trust for young opera singers that was established under the terms of his will. She was still serving as the Treasurer of this trust at the time of her death. Among her other voluntary work, she was a director of the Solicitors' Pro Bono Group, personally involved with its scheme to help disadvantaged East End children with their reading. She was also a generous donor to LMH, and during Dame Frances Lannon's principalship served on the Advisory Committee.

No one who knew Jane and her maritime family background (her father and uncle served in the Navy during the Second World War) could doubt that she had always felt the pull of the sea. With instruction from her father Frank and brother John, she became a passionate and accomplished sailor. For some time she was a Director of the Royal Yachting Association. Her most significant sailing experience was perhaps her participation in the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, an annual transatlantic sailing event for cruiser yachts, of some 2,700 nautical miles, which starts in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria at the end of November, and ends before Christmas in the Caribbean. Jane eventually persuaded her Linklaters partners to institute a system of 3-month sabbaticals, allowing her to accomplish the voyage in 1993.

While Jane was battling with the Atlantic, her brother John had thoughtfully arranged for his friend Jeremy Harris to house-sit for her. So it was that Jeremy was on hand to welcome her back to London and, in due course, it came to pass that Jane acquired her own permanent shipmate, with whom to embark on the longest and happiest of her lifetime's voyages. In so doing, she also acquired new crew members in the persons of Jeremy's sons, James, Anthony, Charles and William, who joined Jane's beloved niece Georgia in sailing expeditions to Brittany and other destinations. Jane and Jeremy were married on 3 May 1997. She became a devoted wife and a generous, hands-on stepmother, in addition to a proud and loving aunt and, more recently, a contented and supportive grandmother.

Georgia Murphy, Jane's niece, adds:

Jane was a woman of wild contradictions. We all know the legend: the high-powered partner at Linklaters who could skim through a hundred-page contract and use fierce 'lawyer talk' to fight for any of us. She was the family's secret weapon; if Jane was in your corner, you were safe. But Jane had a list of fears a mile long: heights, small spaces, crowds, heat – and she got seasick. Logically, she should have stayed at home.

Instead, she spent most of her time walking, sailing and eating around the world. She sailed the Atlantic and went to the Pyramids. She threw massive parties, among them her favourite annual Easter egg hunts.

Jane lived by the tenet that life is short. She retired at 49 – partly triggered by the death of her brother, my father – and her realisation that life wasn't about following a script – it was about doing the things that made you feel alive.

When I lost both my parents by the age of 22, Jane inherited a 'stepdaughter'. At first, it was difficult. I had shut down, and we weren't close. But Jane was tenacious; she fought her way into my life. She went from thinking that perhaps children weren't on the cards for her, to being responsible for four teenage boys and later a grieving 22-year-old. It's incredibly difficult to rebuild a family after so much loss, but Jane was the architect of ours.

LAURA ANN SHUTTLEWORTH (*née* HONIGSBERGER), 1957–2026



Laura Shuttleworth

Laura Shuttleworth (*née* Honigsberger) was born on 20 November 1957. She died in Frankfurt (Germany) on 18 March 2026. The elder of two sisters, Laura was born in Cape Town, South Africa, and grew up in Alvechurch, near Bromsgrove in Worcestershire. She attended King Edward VI High School for Girls in Birmingham, where in 1975 she was elected to a King Edward scholarship. It was here that her passion for modern languages was kindled and nurtured.

Laura and I met on a bright October day in 1976, when we arrived at LMH and were assigned rooms close to each other in Deneke East, overlooking the college gardens and the River Cherwell. We both began our studies in French and German and were tutorial partners during our first term.

One of my strongest early memories is of a tutorial with our French literature tutor, Mrs Joan Crow. We both received a stern talking-to after writing vague essays on a topic from the set text, *Jacques le Fataliste* by Diderot. It was clear that neither of us had read the assigned set text before arriving at Oxford, and our attempt to bluff our way through the tutorial failed miserably. However, this experience brought us closer together, as we laughed about it on our way back to our rooms. That moment marked the beginning of a lifelong friendship.

Laura stood out as an exceptional linguist among her peers. She approached the art of translation with remarkable passion and a genuine curiosity for the nuances of language, which consistently earned her some of the highest marks in our group. During our third year Laura spent time as a teaching assistant at a school in Auxerre



Laura Shuttleworth after Finals, 1980

in Burgundy. Inspired no doubt by her gourmet experiences there, she returned to Oxford with a strong preference for French over German. Our final year at Oxford was 1979/80. We sat finals in June 1980 and then went our separate ways, with my life eventually taking me to New Zealand.

Laura met her husband, Mike Shuttleworth, during her time at GCHQ in Cheltenham (her first job after Oxford). They married in September 1983. Having moved to Frankfurt for Mike's work, Laura started working for the *Financial Times* (FT) there. In 1994 she discovered she had multiple sclerosis (MS). As the disease took hold, she began to lose her mobility, she resigned from her job at the FT and started working from home as a translator, full-time. She continued translating until her disease made it impossible for her to work.

Laura had a wonderful sense of humour and was a kind and generous friend. Despite the physical distance between us – living on opposite sides of the world – we maintained regular contact over the years. When I visited Laura and Mike in Frankfurt, their hospitality was always warm and genuine, making me feel welcome in their home. For me, this was especially remarkable given the challenges they must have been facing as they navigated life with Laura's degenerative disease.

Laura was deeply committed to her friendships, investing time and effort into staying in touch with those she cared about. Even after she became paralysed, she found ways to continue communicating by using her computer to dictate letters. She remained an excellent correspondent, frequently sharing stories about her and Mike's activities, her favourite books and films, and life in Frankfurt. She was always curious and interested in my life, family and career. In what would be her final year, Laura learned that I was facing health challenges. Without hesitation, she began writing to me daily, offering encouragement and support. I treasure her thoughtful letters, cheering me on during some gruelling treatment. Knowing now how unwell she was at the time, I can see that her actions revealed the depth of her character and the strength of her friendship.

Laura's illness progressed slowly over a number of years: it is a debilitating and cruel disease. Yet, Laura always came across as cheerful and upbeat. She was lovingly cared for by her husband, Mike, with support from her sister Julia and nephew James. She will be sorely missed by the many people she touched throughout her life.

Yvonne McLean
(Gracias 1976 Modern Languages)

TANI (AVTANSINI) NATH, 1960–2025



Tani Nath

I was devastated last year when her husband Martin Wilder (Hertford 1978) phoned to say that Tani had died unexpectedly at home in Peterborough. She had been struggling with COPD, but when I visited a fortnight earlier, she was very much her hospitable self, full of dry wit, expecting to resume her voluntary role on the Independent Monitoring Board for HMP Peterborough.

At LMH, where she matriculated in 1978 to read mathematics, she became, and remained, my closest friend. Our time in LMH was marked by endless laughter, music, coffee, and talk about the arts, politics, business and gardening. Tani liked to revise by teaching me what she had learned in maths. I was a terrible student and never did my homework, but it turned a stressful task into enjoyment. I like to think her wonderful skills as a mentor and teacher grew from trying to get me to cope with the basics of number theory!

Tani's career began in the oil and gas industry. She then moved into management consultancy, with Spicer & Pegler then Price Waterhouse, where she worked on privatisations of both water and electricity industries. She was headhunted for Enron Europe to develop opportunities in the gas and power sector. Her biggest success was the project management of Sutton Bridge gas power station, from conception through to completion of construction. She was immensely proud of her work.

Enron collapsed and Tani went to BP and was headhunted by Barclays Capital where she was COO of their commodities trading division. We would meet for a hasty sandwich and catch-up in Canary Wharf. She usually had no more than a few precious minutes to spare. Her fruitful career is a tribute to her tenacity, intelligence and guts in a corporate world in which her ethnic heritage and gender were still obstacles. Tani told me that on one international visit as the senior consultant, her hosts simply ignored her and looked the other way if she spoke.

Visiting her in her first tiny London flat, I saw her begin to apply her love of gardening, filling a small courtyard with architectural plants. We went to theatres, concerts, art galleries and museums. Scouring the paper for interesting things to see and experience with family and friends was a constant for the rest of her life. An annual treat was buying each other birthday books.

After retirement, Tani became a non-executive director of Energy Systems Catapult, a cause dear to her heart. She also spent more time in her beloved, scent-filled garden, raising vegetables and tending an orchard. I never left without gifts of plants, seeds or

even whole dinners!

My husband and children loved Tani dearly. She leaves Martin, her mother Indira, her brother Kabir, his wife Sharon, and her many friends and colleagues, to mourn her and treasure her memory.

Anne Richards
(1978 English)

Susanna Hillyard (1978 English) writes:

After the constraints of boarding school (Cheltenham Ladies College) Tani flourished in Oxford and LMH's freer atmosphere. Tani read maths under Dr Gabrielle Stoy but her polymath interests led her into all sorts of paths. It might be singing the Haydn *Nelson Mass* under Dr Joe Stoy at Blackfriars, the Indian Society – lots of Indian mathematicians came to call – or cooking.

Because of her, the corridors of Deneke were fragrant with the spices of North Indian cuisine, at other times they rang with her voice in rehearsal for various choirs – usually ad hoc as she was a reliable sight singer and could be depended on to provide an alto or first tenor line with no rehearsal.

She was an outstanding friend: stalwart, loyal, supportive and amusing. No matter what we had discovered – a painter, novelist, poet – she already had an informed opinion about them. She was curious about everything, but took no prisoners over holes in logic, woolly assumptions or incorrect facts.

She had a good sense of humour which she shared with her husband Martin. From an occasion when we made a libation of a horrible bottle of wine to the Cherwell, to epicurean delights at Veeraswamy, she could suddenly be tipped into uncontrollable giggles. She agreed to be one of my bridesmaids 'provided it's not pink nylon with frills'. It wasn't. And Martin and she not only shared principles but ways of supporting less fortunate people – in secret. Many tales could be told but won't ever be.

The shocked sadness, and an outpouring of love and tribute to her, were in evidence in the packed room at her memorial, as family, friends and colleagues came together to remember 'the best of us'. As in Gibbons' lute song 'The Silver Swan', which we sang at school and LMH, without her 'more geese than swans now live , more fools than wise'.

SHAHER RABABEH, 1964–2025

Already a qualified architect when he arrived at LMH from Jordan in Michaelmas Term 2001, Shaher Rababeh received the MSt degree in Classical Archaeology in 2002 and, in 2005, the DPhil for a dissertation published later that year as *How Petra Was Built: An Analysis of the Construction Techniques of the Nabataean Freestanding Buildings and Rock-cut Monuments in Petra, Jordan*. In it, Shaher demonstrated how the Nabataeans adapted construction techniques from Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and local traditions, with their innovations creating a distinctive style. He would become one of the world's

foremost experts on Nabataean architecture.

The Faculty of Literae Humaniores at Oxford served him well. The ancient historian Simon Price was his personal tutor at LMH, and he received supervision from Jim Coulton (Merton) and Margareta Steinby (All Souls), both well-known for their research on ancient architecture. But his *de facto* advisor and supporter at Oxford was Judith McKenzie (St Hugh's and formerly Commonwealth Scholar, LMH, 1986–7), author of *The Architecture of Petra* (1990), who later became a colleague on different archaeological projects after Shaher returned to Jordan in 2005 to take up an assistant professorship at the Hashemite University.

Born on 1 March 1964, Shaher came from the village of Kufr Rakib, near ancient Pella in the northern Jordan Valley. In her memoir *Life in a Cave in Petra with the Bdoul* (2022), Judith described his modest upbringing: 'Shaher grew up with everyone sleeping in the same room. His father later built a separate room for them to study in.' He attended primary and secondary school in villages around Kufr Rakib, a journey that required him to walk several kilometres every day. He later moved to Irbid to pursue a degree in architecture at Yarmouk University, where he had won a scholarship because of high marks and his father's service as a veteran.

After university, Shaher practised as an architect for 15 years. Those years were vital to his intellectual development, and he gained the vast knowledge of local materials and construction techniques that proved crucial to his research. He established a thriving architectural engineering firm that earned a strong professional reputation, but despite the firm's prosperity, long-standing academic ambitions led him to Oxford, one of a new generation of Jordanians who had benefitted from government schooling before completing postgraduate studies overseas.



Shaher Rababeh with Judith McKenzie in summer 2005, at the Oxford Degree Ceremony when Shaher received his DPhil degree. To celebrate the occasion, Judith wears a traditional Bedouin dress.

As a professor at the Hashemite University, Shaher founded in 2007 the Department of Architectural Engineering, serving as its head until 2012. He taught architectural history, technology, and design and held several administrative offices. He was Dean of the College of Engineering from 2012 to 2016 and vice-president of the university from 2016 to 2019. During this period, Shaher led major transformative projects that expanded the university and turned it into a sustainable

and green campus. At the same time, he continued research and published a range of academic articles.

Visitors to Shaher's book-filled home in Amman could expect warm conviviality and excellent conversation over meals shared with him, his wife Nawal, and their children, Asma, Serina, Mohammad and Ameen. In her memoir, Judith recalled dinners that included traditional fare such as chicken *maqluba* or *mjeddera*. The meal might finish with a Jordanian dessert such as *kunafa*, followed by tea or coffee.

After Judith died in May 2019, Shaher offered me, with characteristic kindness, condolences and any help he could give as I worked to complete her unfinished projects. In 2024, it became clear that, to finish her intended monograph on *The Reuse of Sacred Spaces in the Levant* (forthcoming), the site at Amman known as the Cave of the Seven Sleepers needed to be remeasured. I wrote to Shaher for advice. He replied immediately, and with Professor Rama al-Rabady, a colleague at the Hashemite University, we collaborated on a survey of the cave that was essentially complete by the end of February 2025. Shaher was already unwell. But according to Rama, he continued to participate fully in family life and in his final days delivered lectures to pupils using a computer video-system, speaking still with excitement about the subject to which he had dedicated himself. He died on 12 March 2025.

A. T. Reyes, Wolfson College
For help, comments, and corrections, I am grateful to Dr Mohammad Rababeh, Ms Asma Rababeh, and Professor Rama al-Rabady.

EDWARD MAX, 1965–2023

Edward Max, who came up to LMH in 1983 to read English, died from complications arising from type 2 diabetes on 3 January 2023. This obituary is reprinted with the kind permission of the Old Pauline Club – St Paul's School Alumni Association.

At St Paul's School Ed was a weekly boarder who adamantly declined to conform. He obtained a copy of the pass key to the Boarding House and used to roam at will, particularly to sample the delights of the public houses on the other side of the river. It was one night in the Blue Anchor that he was found with a pint of Fuller's London Pride in one hand and a cigarette in the other playing Space Invaders. According to legend, he politely asked if he could just finish his game of Space Invaders before being frog-marched back to school. That led to a week's suspension from school.

His contemporary Marcus Hardie remembers that 'he was always great company, very entertaining and with an innate sense of comedic timing'.

Ed played as a very good second row forward in rugby as well as being a rower. He performed in many of the school plays. He loved music and played the viola and violin – and later the bodhrán.

His offer of a place at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford came completely out of the blue as very few of the staff at St Paul's had noticed Ed's exceptional interest in, and

understanding of, a wide spectrum of English literature. Ed read voraciously from a young age, plenty of science fiction for sure, but everything else as well because this was something which he was interested in. His dramatic skills came into their own while he was at Oxford with him appearing in play after play, some of which travelled to the Edinburgh Festival, though it can't be said that this helped him focus on his studies.

After Oxford he went to study at the Central School of Speech and Drama and then embarked on a career as an actor. He worked extensively in repertory theatre as well as in the West End, for the RSC and the Royal National Theatre. Acting roles include Turkey in *Bartelby* (Redshift), Ollie in *Laurel & Hardy* (Derby/Watermans/Funfactory Productions), Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet* (Duke's Lancaster), Peachum in *The Beggar's Opera* (Belfast Lyric/Opera Northern Ireland), Harald Torfason in *The Pretenders* (RSC), Laser Wolf in *Fiddler On The Roof* (Belgrade, Coventry) and Birdboot in *The Real Inspector Hound* (Frinton).

In 2000 Ed trained as a teacher at the Institute of Education and in 2001 took up the post of Theatre Director at Ampleforth College (where he was greeted by an astonished Father Chad aka Ben Boulton). He left in 2003 to take up the post of Artistic Director of Frinton's Summer Repertory Theatre where he raised the bar with the quality of his productions. Ed was recently awarded an MA in Storytelling from the University of Loughborough.

Ed lived life to the full and was always kind and enthusiastic. He is survived by his wife Anna and his children Miriam, Johnny and Olivia. Ed described having a family as his greatest adventure and his proudest achievement.

Richard, Robert and James Max (with thanks to Simon Marriott and Marcus Hardie)

ITTAI DAN GRADEL, 1965–2026

In 2024, Ittai Gradel became known worldwide as the 'Sherlock Holmes of archaeology' when he discovered that an employee within the British Museum had spent years smuggling out artefacts and selling them online. His remarkable story began well before that.

Ittai Gradel is the kind of person who comes along once in a lifetime. Born in Haifa, Israel, in 1965 to a British-Jewish father and a Danish mother, the young Ittai inherited the Gradel family disease: insatiable curiosity. Eloquence and jocularity were passed down to him from his father, and he would go on to keep friends, family and eventually news reporters greatly entertained with stories, lectures and anecdotes, his turns of phrase, understatement, and ironic humour adding enough spice to leave a lasting impression on everyone who met him.



Ittai and Erik Müller playing croquet at LMH

Growing up in a not always trouble-free family, Ittai found refuge in his books. He would retire to the library and be consumed by the stories of ancient kingdoms, heroes and empires. His passion for history in particular would lead him to study archaeology at Aarhus University, where he would be remembered for always showing up to classes and student gatherings in his pyjamas, having overslept after studying for hours in the university's library. It was also while in Aarhus that he made his greatest discovery: the love of his life and future wife, Hanne.

In the early 1990s, Ittai arrived at Lady Margaret Hall as a postgraduate, taking up residence at 5 Fyfield Road. A student of Simon Price, he would write his DPhil on the Roman Empire's imperial cults, which would go on to become an Oxford monograph under the title *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford University Press, 2004). He would become part of The Jolly Company, named after Peter I of Russia's *All-Joking, All-Drunken Synod of Fools and Jesters, aka The Jolly Company*. The Formal Halls were the focal point of The Jolly Company gatherings, where they would indulge in various fermented liquids and attempt to 'solve world problems' through discussions and banter. Eventually, the gatherings would end up in someone's room where they would become more and more jolly until sunrise.

What many considered quirky about Ittai was simply a unique constellation of traits. According to LMH alumnus and Jolly Company companion, Gavin Smith (1990 MLitt), 'Ittai was amusing, funny, eccentric, erudite, and the more you knew about him, the more interesting it became, and the more there was to know.' A classicist, Ittai nonetheless had a deep knowledge of history in general, but would never flaunt his knowledge or show off (though he no doubt took great pleasure in proving others wrong, in particular those who were themselves prone to flaunt). Another Jolly Company companion, Tallis Barker (1990 MPhil), recalls Ittai's 'laser focused mind, a laser focused sense of humour that went with it, and deep humanity underlining the whole thing; and that's really quite rare in those top notch academic circles.'

Gavin also remembers Ittai as 'running around with a plastic bag filled with cigarettes and lots of books'. Though the smoking didn't last, the carrier bag did, and in later years, it would carry his clothes, wallet and precious gems as he travelled to antiquity shows in the UK, visited friends in France or showed film crews around the Acropolis. Friends, family members and eventually journalists would question whether carrying personal items and priceless artefacts in a single-use



A friend helps Ittai dress for Encaenia

plastic bag was sensible, but Ittai would insist it was the best disguise – looking at the carrier bag and its carrier, no one would suspect its content to actually be worth anything.



Ittai and his wife Hanne

Ittai had a way of acknowledging and including people whatever their age, regardless of who they were or what they had accomplished. There was no high or low culture with him, and he was equally as interested in (re)reading Tacitus as he was in browsing through the Donald Duck magazines of his nephew and niece. When he later took up work as a university teacher, his students instantly responded to his wit and charm. Ittai never got behind the rigid and bureaucratic life of academia, however. He quit his job and started his own business as an expert in gemstones and cameos. Often he rewrote history; from challenging the restoration of a cameo in the Medici collection in Florence to discovering the Cameo Wallmoden, which had been lost for 200 years. He used his knowledge of materials, artistry, and Roman high culture to dissect the stories, aesthetics and motivations behind millennia-old artefacts, and, later on, to bring justice to the British Museum.

In 2010, Ittai was first diagnosed with kidney cancer. His cancer would return two more times, and on 28 April 2026, Ittai Dan Gradel passed away quietly in his sleep, with newborn lambs frolicking on the meadow across from his hospice bedroom. Ittai found peace way before it found him. 'I've been given 16 years more than I expected,' he said with gratitude, and he had spent those years following his passion and doing what he loved, side by side with his favourite human and making an impression on everyone who met him along the way.

Until the very end, Ittai didn't believe that anything awaits us after death. Nonetheless, he decided to be baptised days before his passing, as a last gesture of love for his pious wife, promising my aunt that they would one day meet again. He is now free from the ailments of mortal life, and it is the rest of us who must carry on without him.

If there is another world, my uncle will no doubt make friends swiftly there too; for he is kind at heart and easy to love.

Miriam Gradel, Ittai's niece



REVIEWS

REVIEWS

Sanctuary: Ways of Telling, Ways of Dwelling

by Marina Warner. William Collins, 2025, ISBN: 9780008347543, £22 h/b, £10.99 p/b

Sanctuary is a beautiful word, containing its own holiness. In Marina Warner's remarkable and compendious book, sanctuary turns out to be as much about words as it is about places. She has a modest proposal for what sanctuary could become in the modern world: she believes shared stories unite us in a collective humanity. Through her eyes, one starts to countenance the romance of it, allows oneself to see narrative in an idealistic way, to imagine stories as shelters with infinitely extendable retaining walls. Reading the book, I thought of Médecins sans Frontières. Was there any chance Stories sans Frontiers could help? Every fugitive, after all, must have a story. There can be no such thing as Nothing to Declare.

But telling stories, as Warner herself knows, is complicated. Sometimes, it is safest not to declare at all. I kept thinking of Rabbi Hugo Gryn about whom I had recently been reading in Patrick Raddon Keefe's *London Falling*. He lied to save himself during the holocaust. The truth (about his age and lack of occupation) would have had him killed. A true story is not necessarily medicinal. Knowing all about such complications, Warner's tone is tentative.

And yet she has admirably put her ideas into action: in 2015, she won the Holberg prize and used her £380,000 award money to help set up Stories in Transit which encourages 'young arrivants in storytelling and other forms of imaginative play' (the word 'arrivant' is her choice, travelling more lightly than refugee or migrant). The arrivants in Sicily are from the Middle East, the Maghreb, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the eastern Mediterranean. The workshops sound lively, exploratory and brave-hearted but she acknowledges that this is work-in-progress, 'a process of learning for everyone'. In another context, it is wonderful to learn of the moving 2007 Malian opera *Bintou Wéré: The Opera of the Sahel* about migration (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5r4Gp33-Ow). It is a buoyant proof of her theory flourishing in practice.

Throughout, one is struck by Warner's formidable and supple scholarship and her phenomenal ability to make original connections. She is the unrivalled queen of cultural time travel. The bulk of this book is a history and an ambitious meditation on sanctuary and takes in more than can be captured here: the flight into Egypt, the flying house of Loreto, Gawain's Green Chapel . . . there is no end to the waystations on the pilgrim reader's route. An entire chapter is unexpectedly devoted to *Turandot*. Opera is, after all, musical sanctuary and, at least with Puccini at the helm, yearning itself. Warner gives a fascinating account of going to the opera in Kyiv before the war, describing the convivial market square atmosphere within the opera house – everyone chatting on mobiles with the opera rising above it all.

At the very beginning, she refers to the Greek principle of *xenia* for hospitality. *Xenia*, she does not need to spell it out, is what we are missing now. Her despair about the modern world is never far away and she confides her feelings about the drowning of migrants:

> These deaths pollute me, as does building high walls and unrolling kilometres of barbed, concertina and razor wire along national frontiers against border crossers and even suggesting that anyone attempting to enter Europe should be met with force (gunboats in the Channel?).

I found myself wishing she would go further still, risk polemic, even do a bit of tub thumping. But I see this would go against her grain. She writes with judicious politesse and uses the first person with frugality. One of the most interesting chapters from a literary point of view quietly reveals her impatience with autofiction. She tiptoes to avoid causing injury. But the implication is clear – many writers, such as Karl Ove Knausgård, are talking to themselves. She prizes Alice Oswald's 'mythic' poetry because it soars above the self. And she recruits Denise Riley, quoting her 2024 lecture on 'impersonal personhood that opposes the current cult of the self and promotion of the Great I AM'.

'Migration is the defining phenomenon of our era,' Warner writes. She champions stories that themselves migrate and are, rather than being self-serving, of general service. Her preference for myth and fairy-tale comes as no surprise from the author of *Once Upon a Time: A Short History of Fairy Tale* (2014). But Warner is at her most persuasive on the subject not so much of telling of stories as of the imperative of reading: 'When it comes to education in life and the detection of falsehood, critical reading is the best school; given the power of social media to sow rumours, such alertness is a vital defence, a serum against malice.' Stories teach us how to read the world outside the page, in each other's eyes, beyond sanctuary.

Kate Kellaway
(1976 English)

The Shelter of Stories – Ways of Telling, Ways of Dwelling, Exhibition Catalogue

by Marina Warner, Compton Verney, 2025, ISBN: 9781999965969, £20

This catalogue accompanied the exhibition at Compton Verney Art Gallery (25 October 2025 to 22 February 2026) curated by Marina Warner

Can words create a sense of belonging? Can stories offer safe haven and sanctuary to dispossessed people when all else fails? The recent exhibition at Compton Verney attempts to provide visual as well as verbal answers to these intangible questions. It is a first in exploring with images the interrelationship between storytelling and belonging. The idea for the show, picked up by Compton Verney's curators, was a spin-off from

Marina Warner's book *Sanctuary*, published by William Collins in 2025. In her book she asks 'Is there such a thing as a haven of the mind? Is it possible to narrate a place of belonging without a nation? Can strangers be united by stories held in common?' She surveys the long history of sanctuaries invested in ancient sacred sites, in holy relics, and also in shared stories: the many myths and fables, legends and fairy tales, that have deep, multinational, multigenerational roots. She also draws on experiences with the charity, Stories in Transit, which she founded in Sicily in 2016. Stories in Transit organises workshops to encourage displaced individuals to share stories from their places of origin and to invent new ones in order to stave off loneliness and create a new cultural space to inhabit. Reenacted stories can face down fears, share wisdom, and imagine other, better worlds. Storytelling helps displaced individuals and peoples find themselves at home in an immaterial country of words, when tangible places of refuge are no longer practicable. The existence of an intellectual heritage is now well recognised. In 2003 UNESCO declared protection for intangible cultural phenomena; and in 2016 the United Nations declared cultural heritage to be a human right.

The Compton Verney catalogue has a global compass with its eclectic collection of items on display. Scenes of storytelling are shown in early photographs of performances from many different cultures, including Niger, Zambia, Kenya, New Caledonia and Bhutan. Aids to the telling of stories – puppets from Uzbekistan and Sicily, masks from Nigeria, Mexico and Côte d'Ivoire – are included in the mix. Artefacts, both ancient and contemporary, mingle with embroidered and printed textiles, and individual depictions of home by contemporary sculptors. Paintings by Lucas Cranach the Elder (*Lot and his Daughters* c. 1530) and Pieter Huys (*The Descent into Hell* 1547–77) are exhibited alongside contemporary artists' works: Paula Rego's disquieting etchings (*Secrets and Stories* and *Encampment*); Ana Maria Pacheco's disturbing sequence of painted wooden panels; and a series of brooding etchings by Marcelle Hansellaar. Their sombre mood is countered by a delightful set of Baghdad-themed animal collagraphs by Susan Moxley.

The exhibition, with its companion book, is on a mission. It proposes, in images and words, that by the sharing of stories dispossessed people can unite in peace in a country of the mind, a safe place, a sanctuary. Verbally it pleads its case in written pieces by Marina Warner and Oli McCall; in poems by Denise Riley and A. E. Stallings; and in a thoughtful essay entitled 'The Shelter of the Poem' by David Herd, co-organiser of the project Refugee Tales, in which he sees the poem as 'the most relational of art forms'. This intriguingly varied collection presents a potent, thought-provoking mix of ideas. May its mission succeed.

Jenny Pery
(Stuart-Williams 1958 Modern Languages)

'The Most Acclaimed Sculptor': Giovanni Battista Maini (1690–1752) and Roman Sculpture of his Time

by Jennifer Montagu. London: The Burlington Press, 2025, ISBN: 9781916237858, £100

Jennifer Montagu is a renowned scholar of Roman Baroque sculpture and her new book, *'The Most Acclaimed Sculptor': Giovanni Battista Maini (1690–1752) and Roman Sculpture of his Time*, is the crowning achievement of her career, drawing on so much of her earlier work.

Explaining her chosen title, Montagu opens by noting that in 1734, the Oratorian responsible for finding a sculptor to carve a statue of his Order's Founder for St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, described Giovanni Battista Maini as 'the most acclaimed sculptor'. A figure as important as this surely deserves a monograph rather than the few papers that then existed, but writing a book about Giovanni Battista Maini presented a web of problems: two of his most important commissions, for a statue of Clement XII and for the Trevi fountain, were, in the end, completed by others; some important works have been destroyed, or are inaccessible, difficult to see or are simply upstaged; there are a great many drawings, but it is impossible to connect them all with extant works. As a further difficulty, biographical detail for Maini is limited.

The highly successful way forward was to set Maini in the context of his contemporaries and compare his artistic achievements and originality with theirs. In comparing and contrasting works of the different artists, the author has taken care to remain open to the possibility of there having been collaborative work, where one artist might have produced the sketch, another provided the full-size model, or another carved the marble. Direct comparison under precisely similar circumstances is, however, possible in the series of standing statues in niches commemorating the founders of religious orders in St Peter's Basilica. These were carried out by a number of contemporary sculptors, all in the same format for similar architectural niches. Again in 1731, Maini and others each produced relief panels for S. Giovanni in Laterano, and Maini produced work that stood out from the others and differed technically from what could be done by a painter. In his relief of 'John the Baptist Pointing to Christ':

> Maini instead [by comparison with painting] used two effective means: the force of human gesture and the visual power of line and form. John points, not with one arm but with both . . . ; like the group at the right, we hear the voice addressing us and follow his hands towards the figures walking in the left background. Everything underlines this movement, the strong diagonals set up by the listeners at the right and even the fronds of the palm; they are all eager and attentive till stopped by the central verticals. [p. 141]

That such subtlety is possible in hard, cold marble, is breathtaking. The author's power of description serves such comparison well, here and also for later works.

In terms of his reputation, the following quotation illustrates circumstances militating against Maini's proper recognition:

> Maini is not thought of as a portraitist and is not known to have made any portrait busts, but the head of this statue is one of the finest representations of Clement XII, possessed of great dignity and conveying the Pope's blindness and the sufferings of his troubled reign, even more successfully than the masterly image by Bouchardon. Consigned to a chapel in which few can see it properly, indeed only slightly more visible than Maini's statue of Benedict XIV in the Convent of S. Agostino, it has never achieved the recognition it deserves, as one of the noblest and most truthful images of the Roman popes. [p. 87]

Even more fundamental than the engaging description, is the expert detective work in the use of archival material reconstructing an artistic biography, so to speak, from scraps of invoices for example, and in the final chapter, 'Family, Students and Artisans', to flesh out his legacy and influence through registers, parish papers, wills, and personal inventories. In the end his legacy was limited by 'the failure of this original but powerful sculptor to found a school that would perpetuate his unique qualities in the Eternal City, something that may have contributed to his subsequent and unjustified neglect' [p. 241].

The depth of scholarship will be particularly appreciated by specialist colleagues, while for others, following the trail uncovered by Montagu can be challenging enough, never mind having to piece the evidence together from dispersed sources, as she has done, and, beyond a brief 'coda', retracing her steps in reestablishing Maini's reputation in a concluding summary would have been a welcome addition to close the argument.

The volume is magnificently illustrated, as you would of course expect from someone who had been Curator of the Photographic Collection of the Warburg Institute. There are a staggering 353 mostly colour plates, all beautifully photographed and reproduced. Altogether this work on Maini is a remarkable accomplishment, which will serve to restore his reputation as 'the most acclaimed sculptor' to our generation, as to his.

Rev'd Dr Allan Doig
Emeritus Fellow

The Path from Aulis: A study of Aeschylus' Oresteia

by Richard Jenkyns. Bloomsbury Academic, 2026, ISBN: 9781350534506, £85

The *Oresteia* is one of the greatest masterpieces of classical Greek literature, an overwhelming and challenging trilogy of plays by Aeschylus, first produced in Athens in 458 BC. It is an awe-inspiring achievement which raises a range of moral questions, and impresses the audience with the power of its language.

The three plays – *Agamemnon*, *Choephori* and *Eumenides* – progress from personal revenge to the beginnings of justice in the Athenian lawcourts. Aeschylus portrays a sequence of events: Agamemnon's sacrifice of his daughter Iphigenia at Aulis; his own death at the hands of his wife Clytemnestra on returning home to Argos; Orestes' killing of Clytemnestra to avenge his father; and Orestes' trial for matricide when Athena's casting vote acquits him.

Not all scholarly judgements of Aeschylus have been positive. The traditional view has often been that Aeschylus was more primitive and less sophisticated than Sophocles and Euripides. Richard Jenkyns states in his Preface his belief that, despite progress in scholarship in the field, the work of Aeschylus has been underestimated. *The Path from Aulis* seeks to redress this, to look critically at more recent scholarship, to identify gaps in the exploration of the text, and to provide a detailed analysis of Aeschylus' true greatness.

Focus on the portrayal of the central characters is key in understanding the dramatic effect of the plays. This applies particularly to Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. Much scholarship, the author observes, reduces these characters to 'small and disagreeable people'. But the contention of this book is that the characters are heroic in stature, and in fact command the sympathy of the audience.

Considerable space is given to the dilemma that faces Agamemnon at Aulis. Zeus requires him to sail to Troy and destroy it, but Artemis orders him to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia to enable a change in the winds and, consequently, Troy's destruction. If he kills Iphigenia his action follows the will of Zeus, but will ultimately bring about his own death and perpetuate the curse on the house of Atreus. If he does not kill her he opposes both Zeus and Artemis. This episode, described in the first choral ode, has been widely discussed, and the scholarly debate is presented and critiqued in detail in the second chapter ('Death of a Princess'). The question of Agamemnon's guilt is analysed in depth, with the conclusion that Agamemnon is neither weak nor foolish, but a figure of greatness whose fall makes the tragedy compelling.

The character of Clytemnestra is perhaps the most intriguing in the trilogy. Is she an evil woman or a woman driven to evil by Agamemnon's killing of Iphigenia? Does she command any sympathy at all? Jenkyns invites us to observe the literary achievement in Aeschylus' portrayal: in fact, 'to enjoy her'. She is given the greatest speeches in the trilogy, notably her reaction to her husband's death which is analysed in detail. The scene where she persuades Agamemnon to walk into the palace on the purple cloths is explored in depth with much new insight.

The scene in which Cassandra awaits her fate outside the palace is given a whole chapter ('The Captive'). The reader may not have previously considered how it finds its place in the drama as a whole: the exact place where the Cassandra scene begins, the fact that this scene is 'detachable' or the fluidity of Aeschylus' composition at this point. In addition, the 'psychic journey' of Cassandra, which has been short of analysis in the works of earlier critics, receives attention here. She reels under the weight of her destiny, but does she learn, as other critics suggest? This account suggests that she does learn to feel compassion, but that recognition is her final state.

Encouraging the reader to think beyond the conventional approach to imagery in Aeschylus, Jenkyns expertly explains the playwright's use of simile and metaphor, but also draws our attention to the motifs in the plays. These are strikingly impactful, and among the most memorable examples is the recurring use of textiles in *Agamemnon* and *Choephori*. I greatly enjoyed the way in which the author closely analyses the text, shedding light on its meaning and showing how the Greek may be interpreted. Readers with no Greek have translations throughout, though sometimes they may feel unable to access the nuances of the original language.

The view that the *Oresteia* is about the triumph of the patriarchy over challenge to its power is refuted, the last 250 lines of *Eumenides* being exclusively spoken or sung by female characters. The trilogy ends with rejoicing, but is Athena's casting vote at the trial of Orestes a contrived and convenient ending? We are encouraged to consider that the rejoicing in fact throws into relief the suffering that has gone before, rather than diminishing it.

This brilliantly argued book enables the reader to go deeply into the issues raised by the trilogy, and to understand the scholarly debate. It is a hugely detailed work which, like its predecessor, *Virgil's Experience*, I shall be returning to often for wisdom and enlightenment.

Judith Garner
(1977 Literae Humaniores)

The Countess: Seduction, Power and the Extraordinary Life of Emily Cowper

by Jehanne Wake and Katie Wake. Bonnier Books (Ithaka Press), ISBN: 9781804183717, £25

Emily Cowper – *née* Lamb, later Palmerston – was one of the most influential political figures of the nineteenth century that you've never heard of, according to this new biography. She never, of course, held public office herself, dying half a century before the first woman was elected to Parliament. But, as the sister of one Prime Minister and the mistress-turned-wife of another, she was a power-player of such dexterity behind the scenes that, when she died in 1869, her *Times* obituary referred to her as a 'politician' in her own right.

Hers was a long life that straddled the rackety Regency and the rise of Victorianism, but it had begun in the sophisticated world of the eighteenth-century Whig aristocracy into which she was born in 1787. Though officially the daughter of Viscount Melbourne, she was in fact the product of her mother's adulterous liaison with Lord Egremont, as was her favourite brother William. The latter would grow up, as Lord Melbourne, to be the first Prime Minister of the young Queen Victoria's reign.

From her upbringing, Emily inherited a sense of elite entitlement, unquestioning tribal Whiggery, and a flexible attitude towards marital fidelity. Wed herself at 18 to the fabulously wealthy Lord Cowper, she soon began an affair with the young Henry Palmerston that would prove the most significant relationship of her life, despite a few other sexual dalliances on her part and many on his. When they finally married in 1839, after she was widowed, he tellingly referred to her – unusually for the time – as 'my Partner'. That term eloquently suggests that he saw her as much more than a passive helpmeet in his own journey towards the premiership.

Emily's skill when it came to diplomatic manoeuvring had been honed in her youth at Almack's, the exclusive Regency club where she served as a 'patroness', policing entry to the elite circle that was 'Society'. In that incestuous ruling-class clique, there

was little distinction between the personal and the political. Although the Whigs embraced progressive causes such as abolition and later Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform, Emily's genius for politics appears to have had far less to do with ideology than with promoting the interests of her own clan.

She was also adept when it came to managing her personal reputation, making sure that her infidelities remained discreet. In that respect, she was the polar opposite of her brother William's tragic wife, Lady Caroline Lamb, whose extramarital affair with Byron tipped her, very publicly, over the edge. It was Emily who eventually engineered the couple's separation, as the scandal threatened William's political rise.

It was also Emily who, early on, persuaded her lover Palmerston to switch allegiance from the Tories to the Whigs, opening up the route by which he would ultimately make his mark on history. She played a long game. In 1855, Palmerston finally achieved power as Whig Prime Minister. Three years later, on the demise of the Whigs as a party, he would become the first ever Liberal premier.

Although it's tempting to split history into self-contained eras, this book emphasises the underlying continuity between the licentious, informal world of the Regency and that of the Victorians with their bureaucracy and social conscience. Symbolically, the meeting at which the new Liberal Party was formed took place at the old Almack's premises in St James's.

We're reminded, too, that the period which saw events of such historical importance as the Peterloo Massacre, the Abolition Act, the Reform Act and the controversy over the Corn Laws was also dominated by sex scandal after sex scandal among the ruling elite. Emily always seems to be there in the wings, helping to hush things up or at least to calm things down. That was especially the case when her brother Lord Melbourne was involved. She advised him, for example, over his notorious entanglement with Mrs Caroline Norton.

Less well known, perhaps, is that Palmerston had a historic allegation of attempted rape hanging over his head when he became Prime Minister in the 1850s, though it had been kept a close secret. Emily's correspondence is uncharacteristically silent on the matter. However, her biographers seem convinced not only that Palmerston did indeed sexually assault a lady-in-waiting at Windsor in 1837, but also that Emily herself would have overlooked the offence if, as seems likely, she knew about it.

Throughout her career, Emily's talent for politicking appears to have relied on a profound capacity for emotional compartmentalisation and self-suppression. Perhaps the most telling passage in the book is where she admits, in a rare moment of vulnerability, that 'the constant practice' of controlling her feelings is something 'I have unfortunately been obliged to exercise in every part of my life.'

Lucasta Miller
(1985 English)

The Scramble for America

by Clement Knox. HarperCollins, 2026, ISBN: 9780008447274, £26

Clement Knox's newly published overview of the near century of American continental expansion is a highly enjoyable read which dives deep into the nitty-gritty of six major jumps of American control over North America. It begins with a startling comparison – the United States expanded by more than most other expansionist states in the same period, and was better at populating the newly acquired land with settlers. This implicitly poses a rather interesting question: why the United States was distinct among the various settler colonial polities of the nineteenth century.

The book doesn't directly address this question, but it builds a compelling image of how 'contingency' contributed to the rapid accumulation of territory by the United States. This narrative is convincing as well as enjoyable to read. Knox successfully portrays the chaotic and haphazard process by which 'ordinary' Americans crept across the continent and dragged the United States into diplomatic conflict, territorial negotiations, and ultimately from 'sea to shining sea'. In this sense, there was no guiding mind or fundamental ideology, besides perhaps a desire by American settlers for cheap land, which pushed the United States to acquire land. 'Manifest Destiny' appears late on in this book, and is a post hoc justification for the almost inevitable continentalism of the United States.

Knox truly succeeds at conveying the complex mess out of which continentalism emerged. The fact that the United States was bounded only by the Atlantic and Pacific on either side was not inevitable in 1776. The book is an engaging read, which is not always easy to achieve when attempting to convey the complex geopolitics of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The argument for contingency raises some interesting historiographical questions. What is contingency? Aren't all events contingent on something? And how can we avoid arguments for contingency veering too close to 'random chance'? A case in point appears in the conclusion of Knox's book, where he identifies four key turning points, one of which is the 1844 Presidential election. Had Clay won, rather than lost, against Polk in that election, the major acquisitions of 1846–48 may not have occurred at all, or at the very least might have taken radically different shapes. The few thousand votes in New York which decided the Presidential election by swinging the state from Clay to Polk were truly pivotal. American expansion was contingent on the outcome of those votes. But as Knox alludes to, there were good reasons why Polk won the state of New York in that election and consequently its 36 electors. The challenge of arguing for 'contingency' is to highlight these turning points without reducing it inexorably to random chance.

At times, Knox's historical assessments fall slightly short. One example is the purchase of Alaska, which Knox argues was the final moment when statesmen high-handedly negotiated around the transfer of vast lands totally apart from democratic impulses. This might have been true in Czarist Russia, but Reconstruction-era America was a notably egalitarian and democratic society – and certainly more so than Bismarckian Germany, which Knox sees as the harbinger of 'mass democratic politics'.

It's a moment of mythologising, but Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, in which he sees the Union as the lamp of democracy and self-governance burning until daybreak, is surely accurate in a world in which few even had the right to vote.

Knox also points out that US expansionism took place in a relatively constrained time period of roughly a century, between 1776 and 1867. This poses another question: why did the American practice of purchasing large tracts of land effectively stop so suddenly in 1867? The failure of the Alaska Purchase, at least in its own time, introduces for Knox one element of the answer to this question: the energy and passion of Americans for homesteads and the frontier lifestyle began to slow down. More Americans lived and moved to cities, rather than towns and frontier villages. The American appetite for land had been sufficiently sated, and the United States now had an overwhelming surplus. Taken alongside eventual American hegemony and superpower status, Americans looked beyond further settlement and territorial expansion for economic advancement and diplomatic wins. Whether Knox is precisely right about the answer to the question, he is right to pose it and ask why 1867 marked a relatively firm end to American continental ambitions.

Knox's narrative format is highly persuasive in arguing for a thoroughly ground-up process, bringing in a complex and entertaining cast of characters who, in their own small ways, contributed and advanced the process of American continentalism. Continentalism was not a given, and the current shape of the United States was far from guaranteed.

Baruch Gilinsky
(2022 DPhil History)

Finding My Way

by Malala Yousafzai. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, h/b 2025, ISBN: 9781399619349, £25; p/b 2026, ISBN: 9781399619363, £10.99

There is no roadmap to life, particularly one marked by uniquely public tragedy that follows you, for good or ill, across oceans and throughout time. Malala Yousafzai's *Finding My Way* is testament to just that: her experience navigating a path that wasn't always hers to choose. It isn't ever a linear journey; she often welcomes pieces of the past into her present and other times sees them bleed through uninvited, but it always looks towards the future with hope. Most importantly, it's not the Malala story prompted or curated by anyone but Malala. She describes in the early chapters of the book one of her first interview experiences after the Taliban attack that changed her life, recalling what she said to the person asking questions and afterwards, in italics, the quiet things she had been thinking and had to keep to herself. Malala gets the opportunity in this memoir to tell her story as both interviewer and interviewee at once.

This is not to say that *Finding My Way* is a rejection of the public's Malala. Throughout insights into deeply personal experiences – the highs and lows of university, socially and academically; the rush of first crushes, the sting of first rejections – the reality of her situation as a highly public figure remains clear. The media attention she's received

– the awards, speeches, and activism; the criticism, online hate, and threats – these things are as real a part of her experience as any other, and they cannot be removed from her life without failing to tell the full story. The familiar and nostalgic experience of Freshers' Fair in a crowded hall is interrupted by her own face printed on the Oxford Union's banner and a crowd of people wanting to take selfies with her. Her essay crises and academic low points come with explanations like having had to speak at the UN. Malala's memory of student accommodation includes bodyguards posted in the room beside hers in halls. This is not a book about the 'real' Malala finally coming to light from out of the shadow of the 'false' Malala, but rather a space for these two parts to be in conversation – sometimes difficult, always worthwhile.

Despite larger-than-life anecdotes, the Malala of this book is down-to-earth and surprisingly relatable. This isn't just because she includes a healthy dose of LMH nostalgia in her narration of the adventures that take her from the college's library, near-fantastical in the mind of a young girl, through the infamous shack in the gardens, up to the top of the bell tower by night. Rather, it's because it isn't only her own journey which becomes the subject of this book. Malala is not shy or self-effacing; she describes ill-fated and temporary relationships with as much genuineness as the ones which remain. But the book is suffused with love and respect for all the people who have helped her find her way and for the journeys they are on too. She watches with interest as her first-year friends learn alongside her to define themselves inside and outside of cultural identity markers; she observes with surprise and pride as her mother develops and comes out of her shell, taking to her new life in England while Malala is at university. The motion of the world around her – family, friends, lovers – reassures and reminds that the process of finding one's way is never the lonely experience it feels like from the inside.

This book is a lively conversation between different versions of the same person – none of whom are really separate from the others. Especially as her trauma begins to rise back to the surface, Malala must confront this – even that split-second version of her from the moment she was shot, which she poignantly describes as not quite a memory, something like the 'and' in 'before and after', is not gone. The journey she speaks about – the way she's finding – is not travelled in one direction only.

There is no happy ending guaranteed in reality – a fact made all too clear as Malala copes with the immense grief of the rise of the Taliban and oppression of women and girls in Afghanistan. But this is not a fictional story, and Malala – for all that she must reckon with the mythologised version of herself projected onto her – is not a character whose journey ends when she puts down the pen and we put down her book. Perhaps ironically, one of the most valuable lessons enclosed within *Finding My Way* is of the limits of learning: 'None of us are ever certain – there's always the possibility of making the wrong choice or getting your heart broken. It never goes away,' her now-husband tells her, as she contends with the possibility of marriage and the heavy cultural connotations that come with it. And yet she, and the world around her, keep moving forward. This book is a reflection on the journey so far – not an end to it.

Elizabeth Hornsby
(2021 German & Philosophy)

Just Being: A Memoir

by Romila Thapar. Seagull Books, 2026, ISBN: 9781803096308, £32.50

Romila Thapar is not merely a magisterial voice on Indian history, but one with a substantial connection with LMH. This connection started with her acceptance of the Talbot Research Fellowship for a year in 1967–68 but continued with numerous subsequent return visits and the award of an honorary fellowship. During her long career her scholarship has rightly received international recognition (including an honorary degree from Oxford, corresponding membership of the British Academy and the prestigious Library of Congress Kluge Prize). Perhaps her best-known work in the UK is the first volume of the *Penguin History of India*, first published in 1966. Originally the first of a two (now three) volume work, it appeared in a new edition in 2003. This work was commissioned early in Romila's career. At that time the study of Indian history was limited both by the dead hand of colonial influence (scholars such as William Jones and James Mill) and by a rather static approach to the Indian historiography within India. (She wryly notes that at Oxford, when she came for her visiting fellowship, the only paper on Indian history then on the history syllabus related to Warren Hastings.)

Romila was herself a major agent of change in the understanding of how Indian history should be studied and the importance of using insights from other disciplines, especially the social sciences, but also archaeology and anthropology. She was also adamant about the importance of securing exacting evidence and asking the right questions of the material. Much of this transformative work was done in Romila's position at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi which became a vibrant centre of innovative historical research into Indian history.

As these memoirs document, her personal and professional life has been shaped in large part by developments in the status and politics of the Indian subcontinent. Born in 1931 she grew up in a period when India's position as the 'jewel in the crown' of the British Empire was being challenged by demands for independence. Romila was born in Lucknow, but she spent her early years in Lahore in the Punjab which after partition became part of Pakistan. Romila's father was a senior figure in the British medical corps and the family accordingly moved around India as his postings required. Her childhood was a happy one, and what clearly emerges from her account is a willingness by her parents to allow her the space to follow her own academic ambitions even if it meant leaving India and studying abroad. Romila realises that she was fortunate in having liberal and tolerant parents who allowed her freedom to follow her own career choice rather than, as might have been expected, to contract a suitable marriage.

The tension between traditional and modern values is one that still marks many aspects of Indian life resulting in profound inequalities based on caste, religion and gender. The promise of a liberal democracy, which had been so inspirational at the time of independence, has been eroded by the strengthening of an aggressive Hindu nationalism and the shaping of a populist style of politics far removed from the liberal tolerance and pluralism supported by Romila and like-minded intellectuals. As these memoirs underline, the advocates of a Hindu state have seen Indian history as an important weapon in their ideological campaign, and the period since 2000 has seen

blatant attacks on those such as Romila who have tried to protect the integrity of the discipline. Government control of school textbooks produced the removal of passages from the textbooks of Romila and others which allegedly offended Hindu sensibilities; and there were orchestrated vicious campaigns against Romila personally to try to deprive her of her emerita professorship at JNU and indeed to challenge her award of the Kluge fellowship. These latter did not succeed, but she and others who have tried to advance historical interpretations which do not accord with the views of the adherents of Hindutva have regularly faced disruptions of their lectures and physical threats. It is tragic that advancing the cause of freedom of academic expression now requires intense moral and physical courage in India.

Although the threat to intellectual freedom in India today casts a dark shadow over Romila's assessment of the state of India's academic life, these memoirs are not dominated by pessimism. They detail a rich tapestry of conversations with fellow historians, of travel around the world and of cherished friendships which have clearly been a significant part of a 'many splendored life'. I especially loved her descriptions of Indian landscapes, including her own specially designed garden, and of her pet dogs as well as her delight in the cosmopolitan offerings of London and Paris such as jazz clubs. As she acknowledges, these memoirs are in a sense a long conversation as well as a narrative of events in her life. They should be read by anyone who wants to understand something of the intellectual ferment engulfing modern India, but also to get a glimpse of the personality, humour and insights of its preeminent historical scholar.

Gillian Peele
Emeritus Fellow

Framing Myself: a 1940s and 50s Bradford Boyhood

by Peter Hainsworth. Troubador Publishing, 2026, ISBN: 9781806342952, £16.99

'Frame thissen'; 'Frame yourself'; 'Stop shilly-shallying; get on with it!'

What an extraordinary admonition with which to chide a small child, but what a brilliant title for a memoir in which the writer explores the places where he lived as a boy in meticulous detail, telling us just how it was.

Peter Hainsworth never knew his father who was killed in Italy during the war. Brought up by a young, hard-working mother, he describes life in Bradford in the post-war years. The tightened circumstances, the poor living conditions and the day-to-day cheerfulness and determination of the people who had few expectations, little curiosity, and rare diversion; where the changing seasons were hardly noted, except for the annual Wakes Week and Christmas.

Not much scope for a clever boy.

Looked after in turns by his grandmother and a loving, childless aunt and uncle, Sam and Grace, while his mother worked as a clerk, he describes the streets of Thornbury with topographical accuracy, recalling the layout of the narrow streets, their different surface textures, cobbled or cindered, the abandoned patches of waste land, the smoking chimneys of the 100 mills, the echoing clash of machinery from local engineering factories, the shunting yards, the soot-filled air, the snicket (alleyway)

where he could slip out the back of the terraced houses, the bus routes. The interior layout of the houses he knew is described with precision, each room with its specific function; the cigarette smoke stained paintwork, the heavy furniture permanently positioned by the coal fire or against the window, each chair allocated to a member of the household, the fold-back tables which were moved into the centre of the room for rare social gatherings, the electric lights on even during the day, the blackened cooking stove with accompanying kettle, the outside privy and coal hole. And eggs, bacon, white bread, corned beef, rice pudding, tea.

Of childish escapades and friendships we read little. He was most often in the company of adults, observant, silent. We learn little of their preoccupations. Relations with neighbours across privet hedges or low blackened stone walls were 'never too intimate or too long'. There seemed to be little wish for change, even with the advent of television as they gathered to watch the Coronation of 1953. Peter accepted it all as a 'straightforward Yorkshireman', rarely pushing the boundaries. Emotional bonds were 'stronger for not being expressed'.

Books were few. Yet strangely, in his aunt's house he finds a copy of Dante and poetry of Giosuè Carducci which he tells us he leafed through casually, little suspecting what lay ahead. Reading was limited to Biggles and Just William, with his ability for total absorption the only indication of a future path. His mother, with high expectations of good marks but no academic interests herself, arranged for him to go to Bradford Grammar School: 'I began to realise that I had to change my approach if I was going to fit into the new world in which I found myself.'

'It took years for me to realise how much good it also did me and that some degree of pain and resentment was probably inevitable, given how serious a redirection of my feelings and energies was required'.

The book is full of well observed detail which will jog memories and delight anyone interested in the social life of working-class England. The reader will find an almost documentary account of what people wore, what games were played; the sweet shops where cigarettes were sold in ones and twos; how the telephone was answered formally with precise location and number; fish and chips wrapped in newspaper bought every Friday; the appearance of oranges and bananas; family get-togethers; local dialects; the thrill of rare seaside holidays or coach excursions; even the 'purgatory' of accompanying mother for in-town shopping.

The memoir, albeit laconic in style, is full of tributes to past affections, an elegy for a lost world which few can truly regret, and yet do. To quote the publisher's endorsement of the book: 'Recalling that world means finding in it a significance, a wonder and a mystery that were barely apparent at the time, but which continue to resonate for the author decades later.'

What we don't learn, however, is what was the spark that led to a distinguished academic career in the magical worlds of Dante, Petrarch, Castiglione and Boccaccio.

Perhaps that is for later. I hope so.

Anne Simor
(Crowe 1958 Modern Languages)
Peter Hainsworth is an Emeritus Fellow.

Not the Token Woman: My BBC Life 1975–1992

by Fiona Chesterton. Bite-Sized Books Ltd, 2025, ISBN: 9781068280863, £17.95

Not the Token Woman is Fiona Chesterton's memoir of her nearly two decades rising through the ranks of the BBC, from being the only woman in the 1975 intake of eight trainees, up to senior roles at such widely watched programmes as *Nationwide* and *Newsroom South East*. There is a stint at Channel 4 as a deputy commissioning editor, before she returns to the education department of the BBC, reaching controller of Adult Learning.

But this is not only a personal memoir, it is also a portrait of a certain era at this rambling and probably unique public broadcaster. The years in question were years at once of great change, that included the political and social turbulence of the Thatcher decade, and in other respects almost none.

There was, though, one landmark development. As Fiona points out, 1975 was the year that Parliament passed the Sex Discrimination Act, and she never loses sight of this broader context. To an extent her own career reflected the changes that were afoot.

But those same changes as they affected the BBC did not come without effort on her part. As the first woman to be permitted to work part-time after her first child was born, and in jobs at the same grade as before, she paved the way for other women to be able to combine a high-powered job at the BBC with a family, although she notes that it was not easy and required the means to employ a nanny. It should also be said that her role as trail blazer here clearly reflected her value to the organisation rather than the BBC's unalloyed commitment to equal opportunities.

For women reading Fiona's account today it might evince some surprise that what would now be the norm, at least for a big organisation, was seen as such a breakthrough at the time. As someone whose early media career was also at the BBC and in many ways mirrored Fiona's – although I entered as a foreign affairs specialist and worked in World Service radio rather than domestic television – I can absolutely endorse that this was so, along with a host of largely assumed limits on the range of responsibilities deemed appropriate for women.

The trainee scheme that took Fiona into the BBC was one of the most sought-after ways into the mainstream media at that time. Her amazement at landing a place, despite her working-class Midlands background and a lack of student journalism credentials, testifies both to the relative openness of the selection process and the value of an Oxford degree, but also, clearly, to her own drive and gift for making her case. What she found was an institution dominated by men of a particular background – middle-class, often private school, invariably Oxbridge graduates – but also a set of attitudes that, while espousing equality – the relatively few women in journalistic roles were employed at the same grades on the same terms as the men – effectively excluded women from what were seen as some of the more demanding functions, including what would be called 'hard news' reporting and editing. I would add that the same attitudes pertained even more in the press, with women steered towards 'soft', human-interest, features and facing a battle to do anything else.

Quite soon, Fiona found her niche in television, where the gender balance was (a

little) more encouraging and she could combine the editing and production strengths she quickly acquired with her popular touch. At the same time, she also notes – with more resignation than resentment – that among the men she worked with at the same level were several already mysteriously marked out for advancement. They included Tony Hall and Mark Thompson, future Directors-General both. It was only much later that any women reached anything like these dizzy heights, and when they did, they tended to be recruited from outside the BBC. There has still been no female Director-General. As emerges from Fiona's memoir, there were, and still are, pluses to working at such a large and by nature relatively benign organisation, compared with some more cut-throat commercial outfits, inside and outside the media. The BBC offers a ready-made community with many shared values, even a cause. It is less male-orientated (and drink-orientated) than it was. And while periodic efforts are made to rationalise and streamline its structures, which filter down through the ranks to disruptive effect – these included the stormy advent of John Birt and his 'mission to explain' – they tend to leave much of the organisation's heritage in place, for better and worse.

A time of transition, and 1975 to 1992 is certainly that, is always a good time to consider the inner workings of an organisation. Anyone curious as to how one of the UK's most august institutions really functions will learn a lot from *Not the Token Woman*. They can also look forward to a fast-paced and very enjoyable read.

Mary Dejevsky
(Peake 1970 Modern Languages)

Danny's People: A Memoir and Manifesto about Autism

by Virginia Bovell. Oneworld publications, 2024, ISBN:9780861548385, £18.99

'If life gives you lemons, make lemonade.'

This was in my mind as I started Virginia's book about her life with her autistic son. How heart-breaking, I thought, and how courageous to make something positive of an awful experience. But as I read on, I saw it was less simple. She wrote early on in the book, 'I want to shout from the rooftops that Danny is the best thing that has happened to me.' Gradually I understood what she meant. Danny, despite being non-verbal and having severe gastro-intestinal problems, was (and is) loving, humorous and stoical, with a gift for friendship and *joie de vivre*. A carer once said: 'After a shift with Danny I feel charged up with positive energy, like he's deleted some of the pessimism from the world, or from me.' As Virginia fought for his life to be the best it could be, her own became enriched. She was buoyed up by constant encouragement and support, shared in the impressive feat of starting a school for autistic children, became a central figure in the often-heated debates about the condition, appeared on television, was honoured by the late Queen, met famous footballers, contributed to autism research, and made life-long friends.

This summary perhaps implies her journey was easy. It is true that she had no money worries, unlike so many other mothers in her situation, because Danny's father, Nick Hornby, to whom she was married for eight years, was able to provide unlimited

financial support for his son. Her education and connections also helped her, and she made full use of these to fight for Danny and all autistic families. But she had to struggle.

After his diagnosis, she and Nick explored many possible treatments and finally discovered Applied Behaviour Analysis, or ABA. The idea at first repelled her because it was a method similar to dog-training, with tiny incremental steps and rewards, but she was won over by research finding that it enabled nearly half the group who were taught by it to access mainstream school and 'appear indistinguishable from their peers'.

With Danny, it was a brilliant success. His tutors understood his love of crisps and of being swung and twirled, and used these to reward him. He bonded with them, and looked forward to his sessions. He acquired some rudimentary words and learned to do jigsaws. All this inspired Virginia to join a group of parents to set up TreeHouse School in Muswell Hill, a school open to any autistic child, funded by his/her local authority. This took 10 years, and countless meetings.

Later in her career she met bitter criticism of the method from autistic people themselves, who found it dehumanising and sometimes cruel. She was taken aback ('Fuck. Had I been doing the devil's work all this time?'), but showed great openness in listening to their views, in particular those of Dr Dinah Murray, a gifted autism specialist. They found common ground and became friends for life.

Virginia loathed the vitriolic controversy surrounding autism, its causes and treatment. She steered a path between opposing sides, staying friends with both. She focused simply on 'helping [our children] be all that they could be'.

She is deprecating about her poshness, financial security and connections. Yet one can only cheer when she uses them to rescue families from appalling official abuse – for example an autistic mother, Debbie, who was threatened with having her children removed. Virginia pulled a very impressive string (Lord Laming, head of the Social Services Inspectorate) to save not only her, but to curb a prevailing fashion for 'diagnosing' parents who were demanding and 'difficult' like Debbie (who wanted appropriate schooling for her two autistic boys) with Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII), the new name for Munchhausen's Syndrome by Proxy. Debbie was endlessly grateful for her intervention. 'It seemed to me so sad that the system had made a pariah of this grateful, weeping, vulnerable, feisty, intelligent woman, who had simply fought passionately for her children.' Sadly, Debbie died of cancer the following year. She'd been too afraid of being called attention-seeking to see her doctor.

Virginia makes a powerful case for greater public acceptance of autism, which she sees as a different but equally valid mode of being. ('Take away my autism', wrote Anya Ustaszewski, 'and you take away me.') Her high-achieving friend Dinah once related that, when asked if she was proud to be autistic, she replied: 'How could I feel proud, when everything I hear about autism tells me I'm broken, I'm inadequate, I'm impaired?' To receive this sense of disapproval, day in, day out, says Virginia, must surely be unbearable. 'And so, to mete it out – however unconsciously – must surely be some kind of abuse.' She deplores the research that aims to detect autism before birth, thus making abortion possible.

As well as being moving and deeply thought-provoking, this book is fun to read. It

may be wrong to say that Virginia has made lemonade, but it has some its qualities – sharpness, sweetness and sparkle. I'm grateful to have read it.

Joanna Lane
(Price 1966 English)

The Savage Landscape: How We Made the Wilderness,

by Cal Flyn. William Collins, 2026, ISBN: 9780008686529, £20.00

> This was the place of fire, of trumpets, pillars of smoke, of voices rattling from the deep. This was the place of visions, of fire leaping from the earth, where darkness turned to light, and where the exiles lost their faith and found it again. Or so they say. If ever were a god to speak, it makes sense that it would be here. Or somewhere like it.

So begins *The Savage Landscape*, as Cal Flyn, along with other hikers, or perhaps pilgrims, reaches the summit of Mount Sinai at daybreak. She begins her book about wilderness in the place where the Israelites wandered for 40 years; on the mountain where Moses received the ten commandments; and in a location that recalls the story of Christ spending 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness resisting the devil's temptations. 'Or so they say.'

It is the first of eleven chapters in which Flyn explores different kinds of wilderness, from mountain peaks to the depths of oceans, from dense jungle to the ice of the Antarctic, from a national park, visited by thousands daily, to the forbidden slopes of an active volcano. It is all first-hand experience – she travels widely, enduring discomfort and danger, and showing significant physical courage. Throughout, she questions the nature of wilderness, what it means to those who live there or merely visit, and – because of the apparent contradiction of the subtitle, 'How We Made the Wilderness' – the part that human beings are playing in fashioning and maintaining this supposedly ungovernable terrain. The Sinai chapter is subtitled 'Wilderness as Site of Spiritual Revelation'. Later we have 'as Aesthetic Experience', 'as Cartographic Conceit', 'as Protected Area', 'as the Home of Savage Man' and, finally, 'as Homeland', in a chapter set in Flyn's native Scotland.

Flyn explores the apparent paradox of the surely worthy instinct to protect the world's wild places which results in creating boundaries and regulations. In the chapter 'Wilderness as Exclusion Zone' she explores the 'Impenetrable Forest' of south-west Uganda where to create a conservation area and, in particular, to protect the endangered mountain gorillas, the Batwa people, natives of that forest, were forcibly and brutally evicted and now live in poverty and deprivation on the outskirts of society.

Flyn approaches her topic with an admirably open mind and presents cases that one suspects she might not instinctively support. In 'Wilderness as Hunting Ground', she accompanies trackers in Mozambique who are enabling their wealthy, trophy-hunting clients to shoot endangered wild animals. The paradox here is that the clients' money is used to fund conservation – to facilitate privately managed reserves where

the population of the very animals that they are shooting is able to grow: 'what I actually had to understand about trophy hunting was that it wasn't for me to decide'. In her final chapter, she tackles the topic of rewilding. She shares many of the values of the rewilders, but urges caution: 'In sculpting the landscape into a vision of what we call "wild", we risk adding only one more layer of artifice.'

The book contains a number of photographs, which are welcome. However, Cal Flyn writes so beautifully that she conveys all that one would want to see (hear, smell, touch and taste) and I would not have been disappointed if there had been none. Here is her description of an Icelandic volcano, which she breaks rules to approach, thus terrifying herself:

> Ahead of me . . . was a lake of fire, contained within a goblet of black rock, spitting globules of flickering orange into the air, which spun and revolved as if in slow motion, dashed against the blackened rim and dissolved away into darkness, only to be overlaid once more with new spatters of red.

Cal Flyn's previous book, *Islands of Abandonment* (2021), was a *Sunday Times* bestseller, shortlisted for the Baillie Gifford Prize for nonfiction, and won her the title of Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year in 2022. In it she describes visits to areas of the world which had been virtually destroyed by human actions and then abandoned, for example Chernobyl and the contaminated battlefield of Verdun, and explores how nature has reclaimed these areas. I can see how the subject of her current book would have been nudging at her thoughts as she researched the previous one. It surely deserves the same success.

Alison Gomm
(1974 English)
Editor's note: We are delighted to add that in September 2026 The Savage Landscape *was awarded the 2026 Wainwright Prize for Conservation Writing.*

The Wildlife of the Avalon Marshes

by Alison Uren. Pisces Publications, 2025, ISBN: 9781913994211, £25

Bitterns booming. Cranes honking overhead. Hobbies acrobatically chasing young swallows while marsh harriers float low over the reeds. No fewer than three species of egrets – little, cattle and great white – hunting for food in the watery channels and muddy fields. And that's just the birds! Otters and water voles – once near the edge of extinction here in Somerset – are now regularly seen, while a host of butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies fly up from the thick vegetation along the paths.

Yet nearly 20 years ago, when I moved down from London to Somerset with my young family, most of these were either absent or very scarce here on the Avalon Marshes. The transformation that has occurred within such a brief time is nothing less than miraculous, not least because during the very same period, much of Britain's wildlife has undergone a rapid and potentially irreversible decline.

So, what's the secret of this success? A combination of vision and opportunity: the vision of those farsighted conservationists who realised the potential of disused peat diggings; and the opportunity provided by that same, post-industrial habitat.

As Baroness Barbara Young of the RSPB once said, 'Just add water!'; or to use a famous phrase from the movie *Field of Dreams*, 'Build it, and they will come.' And with an awful lot of hard work, by staff, volunteers and local naturalists, those unsightly holes in the ground have been transformed into what is surely the best place to watch wildlife in south-west England.

And now Alison Uren has given us this magnificent book, documenting and celebrating the varied and fascinating fauna and flora of the Avalon Marshes. Alison is, like me, an incomer to the area, and brings a fresh eye to this miracle of nature and human effort.

This is a beautifully written and authoritative volume, starting with the history and natural history of the area, followed by a very useful visitors' guide to the key nature reserves to visit. The remainder of the book is based on the calendar year, each section starting with a useful summary of that month's highlights. This is followed by a more detailed – but still very accessible – account of what to look out for, packed with helpful hints and tips on status, identification and behaviour. Each chapter is illustrated with stunning photographs – not just of the species featured, but also showing off this unique and very special landscape. The book ends with a helpful bibliography, useful endnotes and a comprehensive index.

If you have never visited the Avalon Marshes, or have just arrived in the area, you will find plenty of helpful information packed into a very readable text. And even if you have lived here for a lifetime, you will, I'm sure, find something new and surprising.

Having reached the end, I just wanted to go back and read the book all over again. The Avalon Marshes has long needed to be celebrated in print, and now Alison Uren has done so – quite brilliantly!

Stephen Moss
Stephen Moss is a lifelong naturalist, former wildlife TV producer and bestselling author, who has lived for two decades on the edge of the Avalon Marshes.

The Essential Guide to Bulbs

by Jenny Rose Carey. Timber Press, 2025, ISBN: 9781643263243, £25

Jenny Rose Carey was born in England and read biology at LMH. She then moved across the Atlantic to study horticulture at Temple University and has lived and worked in the United States ever since, holding many prestigious posts, including Director of the Ambler Arboretum. Northview, her own four-and-a half-acre garden in Pennsylvania, is open to the public – and she has been a great supporter of the LMH garden for many years.

The Essential Guide to Bulbs follows two other practical books Carey has written – one on flowers in general and another on gardening in shade. If its subtitle – 'How to Grow a Bounty of Beautiful Bulbs in Gardens and Containers' – sounds rather on the gushing side to English ears, the content is admirably down-to-earth (pun intended).

After introductory pages on 'The Joys of Bulb Gardening', the main part of the book contains two sections. The first deals with bulbs, such as daffodils and tulips, that are planted in the autumn to bloom in spring and early summer, while the second considers those that are planted in spring to bloom later in the year. Each bulb is listed alphabetically, from Allium to Tulipa in the spring-flowering section, and from Agapanthus to Zephyranthes for later blooming flowers.

Zephyranthes is also known as the rain lily and it is helpful that Carey gives such common as well as botanical names – and out-of-dates ones, too, which is valuable nowadays when botanical nomenclature seems to change every week.

Within each listing we learn the best way to cultivate the bulb, what it likes in terms of soil, water and light or shade, and how it can be placed to its best advantage. Every bulb is not only clearly described but illustrated with photographs, mostly by the author herself.

After these two sections Carey moves on to more aesthetic considerations – planting schemes, formal or informal styles, placing of colour and shape, scent – and then, as her subtitle promises, planting in containers such as pots and window-boxes.

Even though the overall tone of the book is American, almost all of it would be relevant to the UK and other countries in Europe. The only difficulty might lie in relating your own winter weather to the North American Plant Hardiness Zones, which are given for every entry. Commonly quoted and understood in the US, they are puzzling to gardeners elsewhere. A map of the zones would have been helpful, as we all have some idea of how hot Florida, for instance, is.

Carey is enthusiastic about all the bulbs she mentions, though she is aware that fashion applies to flowers as much as to clothes. Dahlias and gladioli used to be equally abhorred by garden snobs, but dahlias returned to favour several years ago and 'glads' are making a comeback. There are sections on both plants here – though dahlias are not strictly bulbs.

Carey's approach is practical and encouraging. We are told that gladioli 'are deer and rabbit resistant' (perhaps a reason for the current revival) and, when faced with beetles on your cannas, she suggests you can 'hand squish the insects as necessary'. And I was glad Carey agrees with Milton that sporting in the shade is not the best tactic. 'Place your amaryllis in a sunny windowsill,' she advises.

Gillian Mawrey
(Butt 1960 English)

The Science of Art

by Ruth Millington. DK Children's, 2026, ISBN: 9780241733134, £14.99

Impressionism features some of the world's most celebrated and enduringly popular paintings. Energetic brushstrokes of vivid colours illustrate subjects from modern life in works by Renoir, Morisot and Monet. Out went carefully constructed, idealised scenes painted in the studio, and in came spontaneous, immediate canvases painted *en plein air*. Why did outdoor painting become indicative of Impressionism and make it

feel so new? There is a practical reason: painting in oils outdoors became possible with the invention of the metal paint tube in the 1840s. This small innovation fundamentally transformed artistic practice, liberating painters from the confines of the studio.

Ruth Millington explores just such convergences of technology and creativity in the children's reference book *The Science of Art*, her second children's art book following the award-winning *This Book Will Make You An Artist*. Aimed at seven-to-nine-year-olds, though certainly able to appeal to older children too, the book is organised into four thematic chapters on making, materials, technology and the science of seeing. Classic science-of-art themes such as perspective and colour theory are explored, but Millington also includes many more contemporary-feeling intersections, such as neuroaesthetics and how art can improve mental health. At around 100 pages, the book feels gratifyingly comprehensive for such a young audience. Each double-page spread covers a discrete topic, offering a new discovery for curious minds at every turn of the page. Millington explores these topics by posing plenty of questions: How does a camera work? What is paint made from? How do artists make paintings look realistic? Why do we find paintings beautiful and fascinating?

The book answers such questions while introducing the reader to a pantheon of masterworks including the *Mona Lisa*, *The Night Watch*, *The Ambassadors*, *The Girl with the Pearl Earring*, and *Starry Night*, alongside twentieth-century artists such as Bridget Riley, Jackson Pollock and Nam June Paik. Millington also includes a range of globally diverse art traditions and fresh names possibly new to its adult readers too, such as Lady Kwali and Faith Ringgold. The result is a collection that feels robustly comprehensive, allowing the traditional canon to sit comfortably within an expanded portfolio that has a firmly inclusive feel.

Like all the best art books, *The Science of Art* is a very attractive publication with generously sized photographic reproductions for all the artworks discussed. The matt paper stock does an excellent job of enhancing the book's contemporary, crisp typography and design, as well as the plentiful illustrations throughout by Rose Blake. Blake depicts childlike drawings of figures floating on bold blocks of flat colour to illuminate the topics and artworks on the page. Objects are whimsically mismatched in scale, so a figure can stand on the top of a tin of paint or steer the direction of a giant pencil. The resulting effect is a cheerful and playful aesthetic that sits harmoniously alongside Millington's engaging writing.

The success of the book lies in its capacity to prompt conversation and independent inquiry. Speech bubbles with a handwritten typeface ask additional questions of the reader, while within short text blocks Millington uses an enthusiastic and approachable tone to inspire young minds. There is plenty of new terminology for children to learn, such as chiaroscuro, daguerreotype and tessellation, and some unfamiliar names from an international roster of creators, but the clarity of Millington's writing makes the challenge feel approachable, and there's an implicit permission to ask questions and an encouragement to be curious. A satisfying glossary concludes the book to help answer any burning questions that remain.

Millington's skill is in making art history feel accessible, fun and full of possibility. At its heart, this is a book about looking closely at great works of art and discovering the

menagerie of ideas, materials and techniques behind them. Science and technology provide a fresh way into these masterpieces, encouraging young readers to look beyond what they see and ask how and why a work was made. For children beginning to discover art as something to enjoy not just as a maker but as a viewer too, it offers an inviting introduction to a rich and diverse world; for adults, it is a reminder of just how much there is to discover in even the most familiar of masterpieces.

Camilla Clark
(2010 History of Art and Visual Culture MSt)

Terence Davies Screenplays, Volumes I & II

edited by James Dowling. BFI/ Bloomsbury, 2025, ISBN: 9781350559448/ 9781839029752, £29.99 for each volume

The singular gaze and luminous imagery of the films of Terence Davies established his reputation as one of those rare poets and visionaries of world cinema who may justifiably claim to have created an original and utterly personal style of expression. His films have received countless international awards and are regularly screened to packed cinemas and festivals across the globe. A career which seemed still to have so much to offer ended with his death in 2023, and this publication of his screenplays, impeccably and authoritatively edited by James Dowling, was in part inspired by a determination to honour Davies's legacy, and to give future generations the opportunity to explore at first hand his astonishing creativity.

Terence Davies Screenplays was published by BFI/Bloomsbury in 2025, the year in which we had hoped to be celebrating, with Terence Davies, his 80th birthday. It comprises two weighty volumes (around 500 pages each), which reproduce all nine screenplays which actually made it to the cinema from Davies's initial inspiration, surviving the excoriating processes of funding applications and production development.

The screenplays are organised as follows: Volume I contains the openly autobiographical canon in which Davies, the youngest in a large working-class, Catholic family, explores both the miseries of his Liverpool childhood (abusive, violent father, problematic sexuality, relentless bullying), and its joys (the love of his mother and sisters, social gatherings with family and friends, Liverpudlian humour and – above all – the magic of cinema, his 'salvation'). Films in this category are the Terence Davies Trilogy: *Children* (1976), *Madonna and Child* (1980), and *Death and Transfiguration* (1983); *Distant Voices, Still Lives* (1988); *The Long Day Closes* (1992); and his subjective Liverpool 'documentary': *Of Time and the City* (2008). Alongside the autobiographies are Davies's two biographical works about the poets Emily Dickinson: *A Quiet Passion* (2016), and Siegfried Sassoon: *Benediction* (2021).

In Volume II, we find Davies's four literary adaptations: *The Neon Bible* (1995), based on the coming-of-age novel by John Kennedy Toole (and seen by Davies himself as marking his transition away from the strictly autobiographical); *The House of Mirth* (2000), inspired by Edith Wharton's classic novel; *The Deep Blue Sea* (2011), based

around the play by Terence Rattigan; and *Sunset Song* (2015) from the novel by the Scottish writer Lewis Grassic Gibbon, which Davies had, for years, planned to film.

As well as the screenplays, each volume offers critical insights through the editor's prefaces and Lillian Crawford's introductory essays. There are also two interviews with Terence Davies (he gave many, and they were guaranteed to make the reader smile) by Jason Wood (Vol. I) and Mark Cousins (Vol. II), and a brief foreword by Ben Roberts which, reading between the lines, gives some idea of Davies's perpetual funding struggles. To add to this feast, sixty or so previously unseen photographs are scattered through the texts, as are a number of original documents, often in Davies's own handwriting, which not only give a vivid flavour of his passion for detail and precision, but also seem to establish a direct, personal link between him and the reader.

This publication is a remarkable achievement: coherent and authoritative, as well as visually engaging. Davies's films are complex in every way so that, for example, even the decision to arrange the screenplays in categories will not have been simple, given the resistance of all his works to generic classification. That Dowling's approach is successful reflects the fact that both he and Lillian Crawford openly acknowledge, even welcome the fundamental permeability of all implied borders. By this I mean that the same preoccupations and patterns (time, memory, desire, anguish, identity, sexuality, love of cinema and so on) repeat themselves from film to film, no matter the generic classification, echoing, spiralling, and modulating like musical themes or the formal patterns of poetry. 'I think music is the closest of all the art forms to film,' Davies remarks in the interview in volume II (p. 42), and this was one of his certainties, endlessly repeated to students and cinema audiences alike. If his films are intended to function on musical principles, then surely one of the most inspiring consequences of having all his screenplays at your fingertips is the way the complex patterns they weave can be identified, and the linguistic and visual tropes which occur within and between films can be appreciated.

It is worth adding that the screenplays are a pleasure to read, for Terence Davies was also a prolific and talented poet and writer. The precision of his images and the shifting rhythms and registers that signal changes in voice and time make for stimulating reading. By offering us a wealth of information and detail, *Terence Davies Screenplays* will long play a seminal role in the understanding and enjoyment of this most fascinating of directors.

Wendy Everett

Wendy Everett is former Reader in European Cinema at the University of Bath. She published and lectured internationally on the films of Terence Davies.

Charlotte Brontë's Psyche: A Close Reading of 'Jane Eyre'

by Elizabeth Imlay. River Light Press (Aurora Metro Books), 2026, ISBN: 9781068467424, £15.99

Combining meticulous research of the period with Charlotte's exposure to place and family, plus her intellectual awareness of the world revealed through her reading (*Blackwell's* periodical, *Lemprière's Classical Dictionary*), this is a book to savour. It is written elegantly, sometimes succinctly, for example: 'Charlotte was Branwell's critic and competitor as well as his comrade', and is replete with fresh ideas and intriguing suggestions.

Jane's journey, significantly written in the first person (although Charlotte declared that Jane was not her), can be viewed as the necessary path of the soul through trials in life (fire, earth, water, air with their positive and negative aspects), without sacrificing independence of mind to a union of equals with self-knowledge in a world of Christian/humanist values.

Charlotte encourages us to consider what Jane learns from her experience in Gateshead with the bullying boy and incarceration in the Red Room, her education at Lowood and the people she meets there, and later from society at Thornfield, not to mention Rochester, St John Rivers and his sisters. This structure underpins the story.

In the first part, Elizabeth Imlay's technique is to find incidents in the novel and cite sources, judiciously based on Charlotte's reading, with proof or cited as probable/possible, reflecting the movements and intellectual mindset of the mid-nineteenth century. These are followed with direct quotations from the text of *Jane Eyre*. Jane says, here clearly speaking through Charlotte, 'Women feel as men feel, they need exercise for their faculties and a field for their effort as much as their brothers do.'

Philosophical views and attitudes to morality seen through the prism of classical works and religious movements are amplified in the second part, for example Christian variants: Roman Catholicism, Calvinism, Freemasonry (Mr Brontë and Branwell were Freemasons). Slavery (Jane calls John Reed a 'slave driver') and the use of wealth (Jane's attitude to her unexpected inheritance) are also touched upon. Charlotte is tussling with what is due to the soul in terms of respect for oneself (especially as a woman) and for others. Jane admires St John for his missionary fervour but also describes him as a 'marble column' (viz classical statuary). However, she ultimately recognises that a purely intellectual approach ignores the needs of individuals by rejecting his offer to accompany him to India as his wife. The depiction of Rochester and St John Rivers side by side can be seen as fire (passion but also warmth and loving generosity) and water (life giving but cold if meted out).

Parallels to the myth of Psyche and Cupid are cited. Echoes of popular fairy tales are ferreted out, especially from Cinderella (persecuted, spurned child, fairy godmother) and Beauty and the Beast (Rochester as the ugly, lone figure in the 'castle' of Thornfield with the invisible servant, Grace Poole).

There are striking examples of word play, which, according to evidence, Charlotte enjoyed. For instance, 'Eyre' is pronounced 'air', the element of air/spirit, but also the River Aire runs near Haworth.

The natural world in which the story is placed plays a significant role (the author quotes Mr Brontë's words that one should 'see Nature through nature's God'). The seasonal trajectory acts as a backdrop to the story. Even the weather plays a part, for example the escape from the rain after love is declared and the threatening skies on the wedding day.

With information and challenge, this book stimulates us to further explore nineteenth-century developments. Like a good meal, Elizabeth Imlay's book leaves you satisfied, while encouraging you to match her ideas with your own in a taste for more. 'Enjoy!' as waiters have a habit of saying.

Dorcas Fowler
(1965 English)

People in Love

by Claire Daverley. Penguin, Michael Joseph, 2026, ISBN: 9780241614594, £16.99

Claire Daverley's first novel, *Talking at Night* (2023), was very well received and shortlisted for a British Book Award. Her second, *People in Love*, published this year, looks set to follow suit. Its main characters are millennials, born between 1981 and 1996, but there is plenty to appeal to older readers, not least the nostalgia. The author is probably too young to remember the launch in 2000 of Friends Reunited, the site that set out to answer the question, 'Whatever happened to so-and-so from school?', and to prompt the follow-up question, 'How would I feel about them if I met them now?' This novel is sparked by similar thoughts.

The central characters, Nora, Robin and Bren, are roughly the same age. But while Nora and Bren knew each other and were very close at school, Robin has come into Nora's life more recently. Robin and Nora's relationship, adeptly established by the author, feels both comfortable but also like a jumping-off point for expansion and shared endeavours. There's no sense that they are settling down behind closed doors. At the start of the novel Nora and Robin become engaged – a seemingly spontaneous and unexpected decision; marriage wasn't in her plans, and her mother, Freya, is stubbornly opposed to it for feminist reasons. Nora impulsively sends Bren an invitation to the party they are throwing to celebrate. She doesn't expect him to come: after all, he's in New Zealand, isn't he? She hasn't seen him – although they've emailed – for 12 years. When he turns up on the doorstep, he triggers memories and opens wounds that haven't quite healed. Nora begins to question the life that she has chosen.

The story is layered and skilfully told. Secrets from the past threaten to poison long-standing relationships; twists are judiciously placed to wrong-foot the characters and the reader. Throughout, we are closest to Nora. We meet her mother and Freya's neighbour Josie; we hear from Nora's friend and confidante Shay, with whom she runs an art café; we even meet the homeless man for whom she regularly buys coffee. Nora's a good person and we are invited to understand her need to work through the painful history with Bren. Robin, almost inevitably, stands apart: how can he compete with the history that Nora and Bren have, the crucial shared adolescent years that no one

ever shakes off? On the other hand, Robin knows her: Nora discovers 'a list of surprises she'd found in Robin's notebook that meant he knew her, saw her, that what they have is real, as palpable as the ink on the page'. The author chooses to emphasise Robin's distance from the others by presenting his point of view in short chapters in the second person: 'She is here, but not with you. You are here, but not yourself.'

Friends Reunited lasted until 2016, when it conceded that Facebook could do similar things better. But during its successful years, stories began to circulate about disenchanted married people, bored with their spouses, who sought out the boy or girl whom they remembered from school and rekindled the romance. Does this happen to Nora and Bren? You'll need to read the novel to find out.

Alison Gomm
(1974 English)

Rainforest

by Michelle Paver. Orion Books, 2025, ISBN: 9781398723207, £20

It is the 1970s and Simon Corbett, an English entomologist in his forties, has travelled to South America with the purpose of finding an elusive species of mantid and thus salvaging his career. When he joins a Mayan dig in the Mexican rainforest, Simon, who is recovering from a breakdown, records events in a journal addressed to his doctor. These entries form the basis of *Rainforest*.

As the darker aspects of Simon's personality become apparent, it makes for compulsive reading. His first-person diary-style narration is suitably conversational, observant, confessional yet withholding, and occasionally gossipy and amusing. Superficially, Simon might appear too unlikable for the reader to care about, but Paver skilfully reveals enough about childhood cruelties, social isolation, and his excitement at being in the jungle to keep us invested.

The novel's description of the rainforest fauna and flora is both captivating and haunting. We may not like Simon's arrogance and snobbery, but we defer to his poignant observations and colourful turns of phrase. After his encounter with a snake, he records: 'Its eyes were a sulphurous yellow, the pupils vertical slits of fathomless black.' In the author's note, Paver references her own trips to the rainforests of Costa Rica and Peru, and the reader is unsurprised. On arriving, Simon describes the 'swampy heat, the rank sweetness of rotting vegetation, and the rhythmic rasp of billions of insects'. The novel is littered, like the forest floor, with these riches: 'Vines entwined the trunk and dripped from the boughs, which were clogged with epiphytes and moss.'

Simon's doomed relationship with a young woman called Penelope is revealed teasingly as events in the jungle ramp up. The reader is left wanting to know more about Penelope and what occurred, but this absence of detail reflects Simon's refusal to acknowledge his part in the proceedings. The lack of women in the story is notable but serves to reinforce the 1970s academic setting and Simon's inexperience. The other white men in the camp include a failed academic and a sexual deviant. None of the outsiders respect the traditions of the local Indian tribe, the fictional Yachikel. The

mantids Simon is searching for live in ceiba trees, which the tribe consider sacred. He barely acknowledges this.

Tension builds as Simon becomes obsessed with finding not only the mantids, but the ghost of Penelope. His arrogance and ambition drive him to venture by river into parts of the rainforest that are off limits, a journey which parallels his worsening mental state, a nod, presumably, to Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Simon's 'fogging' (gassing) of ceiba trees in order to find mantids horrifies his Yachikel guide, J. C. The act demonstrates Simon's single-minded and careless pursuit of what he wants – he notes with childish joy the wonders of the moths and beetles on his arrival, but is nonchalant about the deaths of hundreds of insects that fall from the ceiba trees.

The dangers of the rainforest – and the threat its animals and plants pose to life and sanity – are ever present. Simon constantly feels watched in the jungle and the ease with which one becomes ill or loses one's mind is underscored. Horrible carvings, howling monkeys, bad dreams, poisons and headaches prevail. As Simon observes, it takes a lot of work to stay healthy in the rainforest. It is a world in which life and death are not extremes but rather coexist, the perfect breeding ground for the ghost of Penelope. Without giving too much away, the climax of events dominates the last quarter of the novel and establishes it firmly in the horror genre.

At 222 pages, with short chapters which suit the journal form, *Rainforest* is a dark but highly satisfying and immersive read. It is the sort of book that you want to read again immediately, exquisitely written, bold, pacy and unique. It is Paver's fourth adult novel, and in my opinion, her best yet.

Joanna Miller
(1994 PGCE)

Wings over Valletta

by Tracy Cook. Allison & Busby, 2026, ISBN: 9780749033293, p/b £9.99

Wings over Valletta is set in war-torn Malta in 1941, where Kitty Campbell works at a school in Valletta and is the daughter of a Vice-Admiral. Before the war, she had been a photographer on a women's magazine, photographing stars like Margaret Lockwood. This exciting lifestyle led to a dalliance which resulted in her getting pregnant. Her father persuaded her that she could not keep the baby and arranged for her daughter, Alice, to be adopted. Kitty does not know anything about where Alice is, but she thinks about her all the time.

At the start of the book, HMS *Illustrious* has just arrived in the Grand Harbour of Valletta, hotly pursued by a squadron of Stukas, the first time the Nazis have bombed Valletta. Kitty's father is killed in the attack, and she realizes she has lost her only link to Alice. She learns that, in his will, her father left half his estate to a mysterious friend, and she decides to trace this person in the hope they may help.

Kitty's search for Alice is set against the backdrop of the Nazi bombing raids on Malta. As Winston Churchill is heard to say on the radio, whoever controls Malta controls the Mediterranean. The bombing raids are relentless and the squadrons on

Malta fight to keep the island safe from invasion. Kitty volunteers to work as an aircraft plotter in Fighter Command, plotting the movements of the RAF squadrons and the Nazi bombers. I had not realised that in Malta the women who worked in the plotting room were all civilians, and not WAAFs as in other theatres of war. Many of them were the girlfriends or the mothers of the airmen, bringing added stress to the difficult job of listening in to the radio calls and hearing when aircraft were hit by enemy fire. Kitty has met a reconnaissance pilot, whose role is to photograph the enemy convoys, and she listens out for his return from every trip.

Tracy Cook brings this world to life, the beauty of the island combined with the stress of living under such hazardous conditions, never knowing whether your friends or family will survive each raid. Kitty emerges from each shift to see further damage to the city. As she begins to fall in love with her pilot, Kitty realises 'how precarious happiness was in wartime, how, like life, it could be destroyed in an instant at any moment'. In this gripping story, Kitty's search for information about her daughter uncovers secrets her father kept from her which leads to conflicts of interest between her search for Alice and her duty to her country.

Carolyn Carr
(Jones 1977 Chemistry)

Hamadryad

by Lorna Robinson. Independently published, 2026, ISBN: 139798245560885, h/b £15.99, p/b £9.99

Hamadryad: a tree nymph bonded to a specific tree. Should the tree be cut down or die the nymph will die. A hamadryad personifies the beauty of nature, but will strike back when the natural world is violated by human cruelty.

Imagine a world where climate change has taken the human race into a dystopian future. For months each year, people must endure 'oven like temperatures', and projections suggest that there is worse to come. Then there is an election, and it happens: GREEN VICTORY.

The Labour party are lost in in-fighting, the Conservatives are gone, and Reform failed when the first severe drought occurred. Green Party members on the fringe are somewhat worried by the 'radical religious ideas of the charismatic leader', a classicist who turns out to be the leading protagonist. I am writing after the local government elections in May 2026 and in the middle of the subsequent record-breaking heatwave, and how prescient this all seems.

This book will take the reader into a future world which is deeply influenced by the classical world, and especially the work of the poet Ovid whose poem *The Metamorphoses* also inspired Lorna Robinson's previous novel *The Birder*. Thus, the pressing environmental and political concerns of the present are skilfully interwoven with the type of classical literature where the naturally impossible is mysteriously possible. The question is how the characters caught up in the events of the novel will react.

Before the landslide victory of the Green Party, its new young leader proposes a national programme to restore ancient traditions by pairing trees with humans. This is compulsory for all children born under the legally binding scheme, and a matter of choice for older people who want to opt in. Despite the fact that the Hamadryad Charter is presented five weeks before the election it does not change the landslide result. The visible effects will range from huge civic festivals to a change in personal names: Beech-Mary, Birch-Leila, Hornbeam-Niamh, and people will be found visiting their trees. If the allocated and closely associated tree should become diseased or be cut down, what could possibly go wrong?

Beyond British politics, the continued rise of technology is another theme running through this book. Do electronic communication and the rise of AI constitute a blessing or a curse for humanity? Should they be limited? Can people manage without them, and should they try to do so? These are certainly issues of current concern. In *Hamadryad* each individual communicates and receives information via a personal 'wiked' device. But this system is not without challenge. A community of people called Oreads forms in the deserted tunnels of the London Underground to return to the old ways and renounce technology. This separation from the upper world may seem liberating, but in fact theirs is a dark and limiting existence lacking the advantages of technology, crucially in the medical field. This neatly questions the definition of 'progress'.

But at the centre of the book are the leading characters who must navigate their way through this 'brave new world'. The leading protagonist is Ben, the young leader of the Greens who achieves such outstanding political success. His ideas are inspired by his degree in classics, and are revolutionary but rooted deeply in the past. His relationship with Mary, his Head of Science, Research and Innovation, shows clearly that in any age human emotion is just the same. The characters may age more slowly, but they still encounter physical illness, dementia and bereavement. As the story progresses, two more very different central characters must also negotiate their relationship with trees, and the humanity of their portrayal is central to the appeal of the novel.

The structure of this book also adds to the sense of mystery, since it does not progress in a linear manner, and the reader is invited to make connections between the characters and episodes. Indeed, the novel is intriguing on a number of levels as it blends the dystopian with both tragedy and humour. All in all, an excellent read and highly recommended. Praise is also due to the illustrator Lydia Hall whose drawings of tree rings enhance the text.

Judith Garner
(Literae Humaniores 1977)



END NOTES

List of Fellows and Academic Staff	140
Editor's Notes	147
Notices from LMH	148
LMH Alumni Events	149
Social Media Accounts	151
Dining in College	151

FELLOWS AND ACADEMICS 2025/26

Principal
GERRARD, Professor Christine
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
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

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
SHEPPARD, Dr Dean, Domus Fellow, Departmental Lecturer in Chemistry, with College Association
STAMATAKIS, Professor Michail, Tutorial Fellow in Chemistry and Professor of Computational Inorganic Chemistry
STEVENS, Professor Robert, Professorial Fellow, Herbert Smith Freehills Professor of English Private Law
STRACY, Dr Matthew, Tutorial Fellow and Associate Professor in Cell and Molecular Biology
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
LÜTZELBERGER, Dr Florian, Beaufort Visiting Fellow (University of Bamberg)

Senior Research Fellows
LOVERIDGE, Dr Andrew, Senior Research Fellow in Zoology
MALIK, Dr Adeel, Co-Founder and Academic Lead, Oxford Pakistan Programme; Globe Fellow, Oxford Department of International Development
MANNACK, Professor Thomas, Senior Research Fellow, Classical Archaeology
MURPHY, Professor Shona, Senior Research Fellow, Medicine; Stipendiary Lecturer and Director of Studies in Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
PACEY, Dr Holly, Postdoctoral Fellow, Particle Physics
SILLERO-ZUBIRI, Professor Claudio, Senior Research Fellow in Zoology
THATTE, Professor Niranjan, 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
GRIFFITHS, Professor Robert, Mathematical Genetics
HAINSWORTH, Professor Peter, Italian Literature of the Renaissance
JENKYNS, Professor Richard, Classics
KENNEDY, Miss Ann, Law
LORD, Dr Gordon, Engineering Science
MACROBERT, Dr Mary, Russian Philology and Comparative Slavonic Philology
†MATTHEWS, Professor Margaret (Blears 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, Justice of the UK Supreme Court
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 (Clore 1963 Modern Languages), 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 2002–2015
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 2015–2021, 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 2023–2027
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
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
ROBSON, Mr Mark, Treasurer 2004–2008, 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 Donald (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
BILBAO, Dr Paolo, Leverhulme-Peierls Fellow in Physics
BURNAP, Dr Sean, Chris Dobson Non-Stipendiary Junior Research Fellow, Molecular Biophysics
CONOLE, Dr Eleanor, Junior Research Fellow in Applied Artificial Intelligence
GILLHAMMER, Cosima, Career Development Fellow in Old and Middle English
JENSEN, Dr Mathias, Centre for Research on Outreach and Access, Economics
KHALID, Dr Aliya, Non-Stipendiary Junior Research Fellow in Education

KHAN, Dr Naeemullah, Associate Research Fellow in AI (KAUST)
KLUZEK, Dr Stefan, Non-Stipendiary Junior Research Fellow in Medicine
MALLON, Dr Grace, Clive Holmes Career Development Fellow in American History
MICHENI, Dr Makena, Levin JRF in Peace Studies
PAGONI, Dr Ariadne, Randall MacIver JRF in Classical Literature
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
AGOSTINELLI, Eleonora, Stipendiary Lecturer in Mathematics
AINSWORTH, Dr Tom, Stipendiary Lecturer in Philosophy
ASHCROFT, Dr Caroline, Stipendiary Lecturer in Politics
BAIER, Dr Jasmine, Stipendiary Lecturer in Economics
BATEMAN, Dr Chimène, Stipendiary Lecturer in Modern Languages (French)
BATES, Mr Sebastian, Stipendiary Lecturer in Law
BELL, Dr Jordan, Stipendiary Lecturer in Philosophy
BERRY, Dr Tracey, Stipendiary Lecturer in Physics
BHIMNATHWALA, Mr Talav, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Economics
BUNA-MARGINEAN, Mr Alex, Stipendiary Lecturer in Statistics
FITZ-JAMES, Maximilian, Stipendiary Lecturer in Biology
BROWN, Dr Felicity, Stipendiary Lecturer in English
BUNA-MARGINEAN, Mr Alex, Stipendiary Lecturer in Computer Science
CHRISTODOULOU, Dr Maria, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Statistics
CLARKSON, Dr Oliver, Departmental Lecturer in English, with College Association
CLANCHY, Dr Nick, Departmental Lecturer in Philosophy, with College Association
COEHLO, Dr Luisa, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Portuguese
COSTA, Dr Rui Luis, Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
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
DOWNS, Dr Jacob Kingsbury, Departmental Lecturer in Music, with College Association
FEIX, Dr Birte, Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine, Consultant Anaesthetist
FENDEL, Dr Victoria, Stipendiary Lecturer in Classics
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
GIORDANI, Dr Domenico, Stipendiary Lecturer and Director of Studies in Classics
GITIN, Mr Leo, Stipendiary Lecturer in Mathematics
HANDA, Professor Ashok, Stipendiary Lecturer in Clinical Medicine, Consultant

Vascular Surgeon
HARRISON, Ms Ava, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
HELMRICH, Mr Fabian, Stipendiary Lecturer in Linguistics
HENNESSY, Dr Conor, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
HIBBLE, Dr Alix, Stipendiary Lecturer in Psychology
HYNDS, Dr Daniel, Stipendiary Lecturer in Physics
HUNT, Dr Holly, Stipendiary Lecturer in Classics
JOHNSON, Mr Samuel, Stipendiary Lecturer in Maths (Applied)
KERR, Ms Amy, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Law
KITSAKIS, Dr Evangelos, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Law
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
MEDAGLIA, Dr Andrea, Stipendiary Lecturer in Mathematics
MESSORE, Dr Fernando, Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
MORGAN, Professor Ben, College Lecturer in German, Tutorial Fellow, Worcester College
NEELY, Mr Oliver, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
PACKHAM, Dr Jonathan, Stipendiary Lecturer in Music
PAPIEZ, Dr Bartlomiez, Stipendiary Lecturer in Engineering, Associate Professor in Machine Learning, Oxford Big Data Institute
PEARSON, Dr Sebastian, Stipendiary Lecturer in Engineering
PEFTINAS, Dr Athanasios, Stipendiary Lecturer in Law
PERRONE, Dr Joana, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Politics
READER, Professor John, Stipendiary Lecturer in Biochemistry
ROSSI, Ms Ysaline, Stipendiary Lecturer in Modern Languages (French)
RUSHBROOKE, Mr Thibault, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Philosophy
SOUTHERDEN, Professor Francesca, College Lecturer in Italian, Tutorial Fellow, Somerville College
SUABEDISSEN, Dr Rolf, Stipendiary Lecturer in Mathematics
SUTCLIFFE, Dr Edward, Stipendiary Lecturer in Study Skills
SWEENEY, Dr Owen, Non-Stipendiary Lecturer in Medicine
TANNER, Mr Jonathan, Stipendiary Lecturer in Computer Science
TARRANT, Mrs Ruth, Stipendiary Lecturer in Economics
VIOLET, Dr Alice, Stipendiary Lecturer in Modern Languages
YU, Ms Yuhan, Graduate Teaching Assistant in Politics
XIAO, Miss Julie (Huiyuan), Stipendiary Lecturer in Biochemistry

EDITOR'S NOTES

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

News items
In addition to responding to the annual call for news from the Development Office, news can be sent by post or e-mail to the Development Office at any time 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; 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 +44 (0) 1865 274239 or at graduation@lmh.ox.ac.uk for more information.

Alumni holding BA degrees become eligible to be conferred with their MA 21 terms after matriculation. A fee (currently £115) is payable. Please note that conferral in person is dependent on ceremony availability and, in general, we only offer conferral in absentia. 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 visit our website https://www.lmh.ox.ac.uk/alumni/graduation-information/transcripts-and-official-documents for more information about transcripts and official documents, including how to order an academic transcript from College.

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 £17. 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. For third parties there is a connection fee of £20.

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 £55. 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 a Reunion Lunch each year. The next Pre-1960 Reunion Lunch will take place on Thursday 15 April 2027.

Information and dates for the 2027 Gaudy are below, along with a note about those matriculation years which will celebrate in 2028.

ALUMNI EVENTS 2026/2027

2026 Beaufort Circle Lunch for Legacy Donors
Saturday 17 October 2026

Principal's Circle – Michaelmas Round Table (by invitation only)
Sunday 15 November 2026

LMH Chemistry Dinner
Saturday 21 November 2026

Engineering Society Dinner
Friday 27 November 2026

Alumni Christmas Carols
Friday 4 December 2026

London Alumni City Networking Event
Thursday 21 January 2027

Founders and Benefactors Dinner (by invitation only)
Friday 5 February 2027

LMH History Reunion
Saturday 6 March 2027

2027 Wordsworth Lecture and Tours of Dunn School
Sunday 14 March 2027

2019 MA Celebration and Reunion Dinner
Saturday 20 March 2027

Pre-1960 Reunion
Thursday 15 April 2027

Principal's Summer Lunch (by invitation only)
Saturday 26 June 2027

Alumni Garden Party
Saturday 26 June 2027

Gaudy 2027
Saturday 18 September 2027

1967, 60th Anniversary Reunion Lunch
1977, 50th Anniversary Reunion Lunch
2002–2006 Gaudy Dinner

FUTURE GAUDY DATES:

2028 Gaudy
Saturday 16 September 2028

1968, 60th Anniversary Reunion Lunch
1978, 50th Anniversary Reunion Lunch
1989–1993 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)
Instagram: @LMHOxford (www.instagram.com/lmhoxford)
YouTube: LMH Oxford (www.youtube.com/lmhoxford)
LinkedIn: @LMH Links

DINING IN COLLEGE

The Senior Common Room of Lady Margaret Hall is pleased to invite alumni to dine at High Table at a Guest Night once a year. Alumni may also bring one guest.

Each Tuesday in term is alternately a Guest Night (three courses) or a special Guest Night (four courses plus dessert), as is each Friday. A list of Guest Nights and Special Guest Nights is available on the LMH website. Please be aware that 1st Week and 8th Week dinners are very busy and are often fully booked. Pricing information can be obtained from the Development Office.

College rules require alumni who dine at High Table to have an SCR host. If required, the Development Team will link alumni to an appropriate host.

There is a limit of three alumni and their guests (or six alumni without guests) per Guest Night. If you would like to book, please contact the Development Team, with at least one month's notice, on 01865 274362 or email development@lmh.ox.ac.uk.

Alumni may also book SCR guest rooms, subject to availability. To confirm availability and to book a guest room please telephone the Conference Office on 01865 274320 or email conferences@lmh.ox.ac.uk.



Lady Margaret Hall
Oxford OX2 6QA

Tel: +44 (0)1865 274362
Email: development@lmh.ox.ac.uk
www.lmh.ox.ac.uk