



TRINITY

THE NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE OXFORD – SUMMER 2026



Chapel choir – May morning to the Baltic

The chapel choir sings in May morning and makes a summer tour to Latvia and Estonia

PLUS Jackson Building award • Trinity Ball • Cuppers victories



The President, Henry Shohet (1972) and Dame Hilary Boulding, photographed at the event in May to officially 'open' the new long border, the creation of which was generously sponsored by Henry. Following a dinner in the Old Bursary, there was an opportunity to return to the gardens and visit the newly illuminated gate piers of the Parks Road gates.

Reflecting on hard work and musical talent

My first Trinity term as President ended with the college community proving once again that it knows both how to play hard and to work hard. More than 1,700 students, alumni and guests enjoyed the fantastic Surrealist-themed Commemoration Ball on 26 June, while our undergraduate finalists aced it in their exams, achieving a higher proportion of Firsts, 47 per cent, than any other class of degree for the first time in college history.

Inspiration and talent

Both achievements reflected inspiration and perspiration across the college. Bertie Low and the Ball Committee worked closely with our wonderful staff to plan, execute, supervise and clear up after the Ball, with rave reviews

'The exam results reflect the hard work and talent of the finalists themselves, of course, but also that of the Fellows and everyone else who contributed to their teaching and other forms of support.'

from attendees both on the night and after the event. The exam results reflect the hard work and talent of the finalists themselves, of course, but also that of the Fellows and everyone else who contributed to their teaching and other forms of support. Congratulations and thanks to all!

Music was of course a real highlight of the Ball, including not just the headlining Fratellis, but many other bands and solo artists from the college, the University and further afield. Experiencing the musical life of the college has been one of the real pleasures of coming here in this role. I have been hugely impressed by the student vocalists and instrumentalists who perform at the termly Presidents' concerts, and we have also hosted a thriving professional concert programme in the de Jager Auditorium.

More music at Trinity

Another musical highlight followed hard on the heels of the Ball, namely the Chapel Choir's tour to Latvia and Estonia in July. As is evident from the quality of its singing and organ accompaniment at evensong and compline each week, the choir is thriving and has been on cracking form this year—admirably led by organ scholars Florence Robinson and Sebastian Frank. Those who know about these things rate it as the finest non-auditioned choir in Oxford. As with the Trinity Players, it is very telling that the choir attracts talent from other colleges who are drawn by its quality and camaraderie.

The tour was a great success and my older son Micah and I were delighted to offer moral (rather than vocal) support at their concerts in the Anglican church in Riga and the Lutheran and Catholic cathedrals in Tallinn. Each attracted good and appreciative crowds for a combination of English choral music and local repertoire, as did the final concert in the Arvo Pärt Centre in Laulasmaa. Many thanks to everyone who helped finance the trip by sponsoring the choir's eight-hour online 'Hymnathon' in May.

Trinity's active musical life is of course an important part of the legacy of my predecessor, Dame Hilary. It will be reinforced by the graduate scholarship that we can now endow in her name thanks to the generosity of so many Old Members, current members and Friends, for which we and future beneficiaries are and will be hugely grateful.

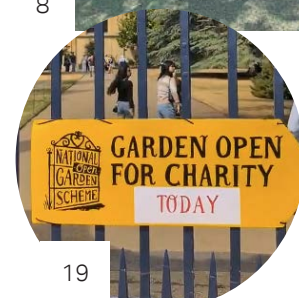
Sir Robert Chote



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On the cover

Members of the Chapel Choir waving to the crowd below after singing madrigals on May Morning.

With the statues on the tower in poor repair, work is now underway for their replacement (see page 13).



Low carbon award for the Jackson Building

The college is delighted that the Jackson Building has won 'Best Low Carbon Building of the Year' at the 2026 Oxford Property Awards, recognising the ambitious project to decarbonise one of Trinity's historic listed buildings.

The award was presented at the OxProp Awards ceremony at Keble in September, attended by more than 400 people from across Oxfordshire's property and built-environment sectors. The Estates Bursar, Chris Ferguson, accepted the award for the college, alongside Andrew Dawson of Original Field of Architecture, the project architects.

The Jackson Building was short-listed alongside Brasenose's Frewin Hall and the University's new Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities (the UK's largest Passivhaus scheme), making the award a particularly significant recognition of Trinity's approach to combining sustainability with the conservation of its historic estate.

A team collaboration

The award reflects the work of a much wider project team. In particular, Clerk of Works Andrew Hooper played a major role in managing and delivering the project. He was supported by Accommodation Manager Jonathan Davies and the estates teams, who oversaw the fast and effective refurbishment of all 57 bedrooms. Meanwhile, colleagues in the Gardens team followed on with the beautiful restoration of the gardens.

The Jackson Building project involved replacing gas-based heating with a ground source heat pump system, together with substantial improvements to the fabric and energy efficiency of the Grade II listed building. Twenty-two boreholes, approximately 170 metres deep, were installed beneath the lawns to supply the system.

Alongside the new heating infrastructure, the project included a new central heating system, secondary glazing and loft insulation.

The scheme represents an important part of Trinity's wider programme to reduce emissions from its estate. The college estimates that the ground source heat pump project has reduced its carbon footprint by around 100 tonnes of CO₂e each year. Forty per cent of the funding was provided by a grant from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.



Above: drilling equipment on the Lawns

Below: secondary glazing has been installed in the Jackson Building



National recognition

The Jackson Building has also featured as a case study in the Government's Warm Homes Plan, which highlights the project as an example of how significant energy-efficiency improvements and clean heating technologies can be introduced successfully into complex historic buildings.

The case study notes that the Jackson Building, dating from the 1880s, had previously been Trinity's largest consumer of gas, and describes the project as a model for adopting sustainable practices without compromising architectural heritage.

The award and case study are a recognition of the technical achievement of the project and a welcome vote of confidence in the work of Trinity staff and the many external specialists involved in its delivery.

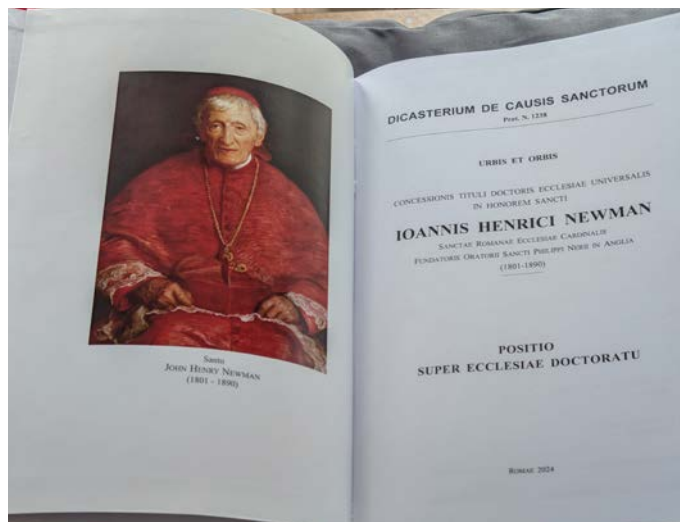
The Jackson Building has also been submitted for an Oxford Preservation Trust award, with the results due to be announced at the trust's awards ceremony in November.

'The case study... describes the project as a model for adopting sustainable practices without compromising architectural heritage.'

Beyond Gold

The award for the Jackson Building follows wider recognition for Trinity's environmental work. Earlier this year, the college received a Beyond Gold Award, the highest level of accreditation in the University of Oxford's Green Impact programme, reflecting the college's continuing work to reduce carbon emissions and embed sustainability across its operations and estate.

Presentation of the Newman *positio*



■ Following the proclamation by Pope Leo XIV of St John Henry Newman (Scholar 1817, Honorary Fellow 1877) as a Doctor of the Church, the college was delighted to receive a copy of the *positio*, a volume prepared to support the case for conferring this rare title upon Newman, which was generously donated to the college in Trinity term by the Oxford University Newman Society.

The *positio* contains an appreciation of Newman's life and theological contributions, together with a series of letters and statements, including one from Trinity, advocating for his cause. Newman is only the 38th individual to be declared a Doctor of the Church, and only the second from England, after the Venerable Bede (d.735).

To celebrate the presentation of the *positio*, the archivist, Clare Hopkins, put on an exhibition in the Lodgings of various items of Newman memorabilia. These included a lock of Newman's hair, now kept as a relic in the care of



A new plaque for the Newman bust

In July, an event was held in the gardens to unveil a new plaque, with updated wording, on the plinth below the bust of St John Henry Newman. Among those present (and pictured above, with the President) were Cardinal Timothy Radcliffe, Fellow of Blackfriars Hall, and Roger Michel (1984) and Alexy Karenowska, who generously donated the plaque.



the Oxford Oratory. Other items on display included Newman's entry in the Admissions Register, his family Bible, and the record of his election as Trinity's first Honorary Fellow in 1877. The most precious exhibit was the founder's silver-gilt chalice and paten, from which Newman took his first communion in November 1817.

Top: the title page of Trinity's copy of the *Positio*

Right: The President with Joseph Harrison of the Newman Society

Staff news

■ After five-and-a-half years as Head Gardener, Kate Burtonwood has moved on from her role at Trinity. Kate led the college's Gardens team to more contemporary and sustainable practices in the garden, designed planting for the south border, new woodland garden, Library Quad, Front Quad and Fellows' Garden and oversaw the planting of the college's new long border. We are extremely grateful to Kate for her enduring contribution to the college and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

There have been several changes within the Bursary team over the past few months. Linda Mensah was appointed to the position of Fees and Battels Administrator in June. Linda joined Trinity from Sherwin-Williams in Witney, bringing

valuable credit control experience to the team. In July, the team said farewell to Jun Li, Management Accountant, after four years in the role. The team was delighted to welcome Sandy Wang as Jun's successor. Sandy is a fully qualified ACCA accountant and has come to Trinity from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

In the SCR, Tomasz Zielinski joined Trinity in July as the new SCR Butler, having previously worked at New College, and before that at Hertford.

In September, we welcomed Kate Shawcross the new HR Manager. Kate has a wealth of generalist HR experience and was most recently HR Partner at the Institute & Faculty of Actuaries.

Trinity Ball 2026...



■ The survivors' photograph for the 2026 Commemoration Ball taken from the Chapel Tower. The theme of this year's Ball was *La Révolution Surréaliste*. Headlined by the world-famous Fratellis, there were four stages, six bars, eight food vendors, and nine marquees. The entertainment ran for 10 hours, from 7pm to 5am, with 1,700 people partying—of whom over 1,000 people made it to the survivors' photograph.

Photo Credit: Coco Cottam

...And looking back to Balls in 1951 and 1976



■ In the year of a Commem, it has been pleasing to have records of two earlier College Balls come into the Archive. Seventy-five years ago, in the summer of 1951, a young man from New College called John Hope bought a double ticket to the Trinity Ball. We can infer that he had a good time, in that he purchased this survivors' photo, taken from an upper window of Staircase 16 (above).

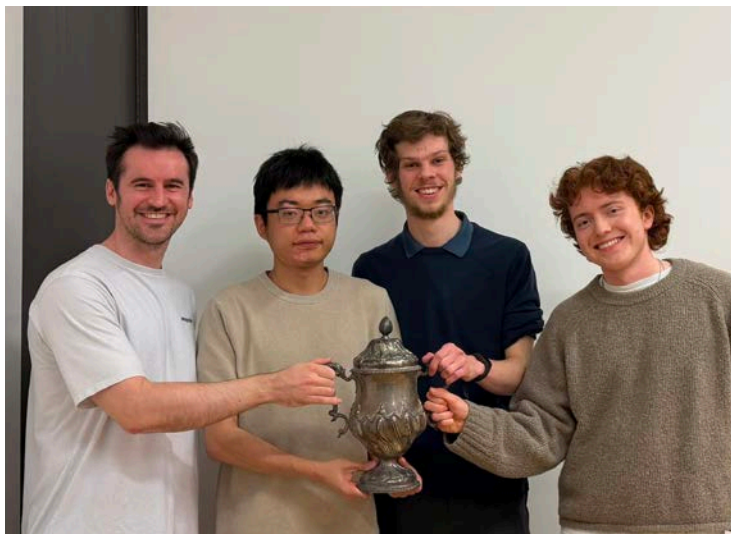
It was not, however, one for the family archives, as a later pencil note on the back reveals that he couldn't remember the name of the girl he danced the night away with... Which is why the Archive was able to acquire the photo via eBay. We love the dresses and the traditional behaviours of clutching champagne bottles and pulling silly faces, and it's fascinating too to observe the transition from white-tie to black-tie.

Ball records of a very different kind came in from Neil Barker (1974). Neil was chair of the 1976 Ball Committee, which was a joint event with Lady Margaret Hall, and he has donated to the archive a wonderfully comprehensive and well-organised collection of files, which record every aspect of the event.

We were delighted as well to acquire this beautifully framed poster, shown here (left) on the day it arrived in the Archive Reading Room (earlier examples from 1974 and 1967 Balls can be seen on the wall behind). Besides the big names—Showaddywaddy, Humphrey Lyttleton—the poster showcases a mouthwatering choice of refreshment, and a mindboggling array of attractions. If anyone has any memories or snapshots of the voluptuous belly dancer, the plate smashing, the oompah band, or even the breakfast with hot sausages, please do get in touch.

Clare Hopkins, Archivist

Cuppers victories



■ There were Cuppers victories for three Trinity teams last term. Alexander Hughes, Ryan Pang, Kai Beaumont, and Teddy Onslow (above) won Chess Cuppers, while Trinity's netball team, pictured right in their new kit, beat an imposing Brasenose line-up in a nail-biting final (23-20)

A third Cuppers win was secured by the joint Trinity-Univ Volleyball team. Congratulations to the them all!



The Boat Club's summer



■ The Boat Club entered a men's and a women's VIII in Summer Eights, with another three TCBC members joining a composite women's crew with Queen's. The crews gave it their all, with the men maintaining their place in the first division, and the women keeping their heads in the game, even through a last-minute extraordinary substitution due to injury.

Members of TCBC have not been idle since then, with several participating in events over the long vacation. Among them, Francesca Wilson and Rachel Rhodes both rowed at Henley Women's Regatta, Francesca in an eight with the OUBC development squad, and Rachel subbing in a Merton College four. At City of Oxford Royal Regatta, TCBC entered two pairs and a four, which all made it to the finals, while Catie Kohler also rowed in a Reuben College eight—both she and Emma London had been participating in Reuben boat club's summer rowing programme.

Rachel Rhodes, the incoming president for 2026-27, also raced in two eights at Peterborough Summer Regatta, both of which came second in the top band, and in a double, with Peterborough City Rowing Club. She also raced in a double at Milton Keynes Regatta in September.

Trinity Players—*The Picture of Dorian Gray*



■ The highlight of the Trinity Players' calendar is always the summer garden play. This year's production was *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and the President kindly offered up his garden for the Players' Gothic backdrop. The sold-out run featured decadent costumes, five destroyed paintings, and many

fake cigarettes, thanks to the hard-working crew. Talented performers brought the play to life, delivering speeches of classic Wildean wit and embodying the depravity and hedonism of Dorian's world.

Chapel choir summer tour

■ Shortly after the end of Trinity term, the Chapel Choir embarked on a tour to Estonia and Latvia. Beginning in Riga, the choir sang choral evensong at St Saviour's Anglican church and gave a concert, before travelling on to Tallinn. There, over four days, they staged two further concerts, including one at St Peter and St Paul's Cathedral (pictured right), and on the final day gave a recital at the Arvo Pärt Centre, just outside the city.

The tour was made possible thanks to the support given in response to the choir's Hymnathon appeal on Saturday 9 May, for which the choir sang hymns continuously from midday to 8pm, raising £3,000 towards the cost of the tour, as well as receiving moral support from current students and Old Members during the day.



The competition winners, Romy Davies, Fynn Hyde, Demi Akinya, with, far left, Ted Meron, and from centre, Gail Trimble, Leigh Large, Michael Beloff and Victoria Wilson

Double anniversary

■ The Gryphon Society's annual Michael Beloff After-Dinner Speaking Competition was held in Trinity term, 20 years after it was established by the Trinity Society to mark Michael Beloff's retirement as President. Mr Beloff was joined on the judging panel by Victoria Wilson (1996), chair of the Trinity Society, Honorary Fellow Judge Ted Meron, and Dr Gail Trimble, Classics Fellow. The judges praised the exceptionally high standard of the speeches and selected three joint winners.

In the 30th anniversary year of the current incarnation of the Gryphon Society, current members were delighted that among those present was Leigh Large (1995), one of the two refounding Masters.



First scholarship holder

■ Charlotte Wayment, winner of the inaugural Marconi-Moseley Scholarship for Science in the Service of Humanity, is pictured with Roger Michel (1984), who funded the award.

The scholarship is intended for a graduate or final year undergraduate scientist whose research and approach shows originality, conceptual clarity, and a willingness to question established assumptions in pursuit of fundamental understanding.

Startup prize winner

■ Catherine McMullan, a History undergraduate, is part of a team with four students from other colleges behind a startup, Ictus, which won the £10,000 top prize at StEP's 2026 Demo Day in August. The startup is developing a wearable device for low-cost epileptic seizure detection. The interdisciplinary team includes two Engineering Science undergraduates, a Biology undergraduate and a Nanotechnology postgraduate.

StEP is an eight-week educational accelerator run jointly by Oxford Edge and Oxford University Innovation, designed to introduce Oxford students to entrepreneurship and develop the skills they need to start a venture of their own.

Catherine and her teammates worked through the fundamentals of building a business, from market sizing to fundraising, received expert mentoring, and heard from Oxford alumni who have gone on to found companies.

Experiencing student journalism

Izzy Moore, who completed her degree in English this summer, was part of the editorial team of *The Radcliffe Magazine*, a new student enterprise giving a platform for writing about business, policy, and entrepreneurship. As reported in the last Newsletter, it featured an interview with Huw van Steenis (1988) in the first edition, and Izzy has followed that up with this impression of her experience.

■ Working on the first edition of the Radcliffe Magazine was one of the most rewarding experiences of my time at Oxford. There is something distinctive about being involved at the very beginning of a project—before its direction is fixed, and when identity is still open to being shaped.

My role was primarily on the creative side, and it has given me a much clearer sense of how much thought goes into building a publication from the ground up. I enjoyed helping develop the magazine's visual identity and layout, to shaping its presence online—particularly how it presents itself across social media—where each of these elements required careful and intentional design. It reinforced for me that even in spaces oriented towards business and policy, a creative perspective is often what gives ideas their clarity, coherence, and reach!

Having worked on student publications before, I had some sense of the process, but the level of energy and ambition within this team was contagious. I feel very fortunate to have been involved from the outset, and I am excited to see how the magazine develops in future editions.



A Japanese tea ceremony

■ The Upper SCR was the venue for a Japanese tea ceremony in Trinity term, a joint event for members of the SCR and MCR.

Tea Master Yuki Okamoto introduced the Japanese tea culture and the art of the tea ceremony, explaining both its aesthetic form and underlying philosophy, before conducting a tea ceremony, where participants were able to taste traditional Japanese green tea. The session explored tea not only as a cultural practice, but also as a way of engaging with attention, perception, and presence, drawing connections between the traditional Japanese thought and contemporary discussions of mindfulness.

Fellows' news



■ Professor **Katherine Ibbett**, Caroline de Jager Fellow and Tutor in French, has taken up her appointment as Director of Ertegun House, a three-year post.

Ertegun is both a programme and a place: a graduate scholarship programme in the

humanities, funded by the generosity and vision of Mica Ertegun, who imagined graduate students from the world over thinking together across disciplines, and who designed workspaces for them to do that in Ertegun House on St Giles. The programme exemplifies a commitment to postgraduate education, and aims to encourage encounters and dialogue across academic disciplines, cultures and generations. Members of Trinity may recall that Bryan Ward-Perkins, Emeritus Fellow, was its first director, and he still sits on the Board.

During her time at Ertegun House, Professor Ibbett's college and departmental teaching will be covered by Dr **Alice Roulli  re**.

■ **Marta Kwiatkowska**, Professorial Fellow and Professor in the Department of Computer Science, has delivered this year's Rejewski, R  zycki and Zygalski Computer Science Lecture. The lecture series was established in 2008 to honour the achievements of Polish cryptography by inviting distinguished computer scientists to present their research and discuss contemporary trends in computer science. It is named in honour of three graduates of Adam Mickiewicz University in Pozna  , Marian Rejewski, Jerzy R  zycki and Henryk Zygalski, who succeeded in breaking the German Enigma cipher, laying the foundations for the achievements of Alan Turing.



■ **Christopher Butler**, Professorial Fellow and Professor of Primary Care in the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, has been co-leading the PANORAMIC trial to examine the effectiveness of the antiviral treatment Paxlovid in people with Covid-19.

Now published alongside results from the Canadian CanTreatCOVID trial, the research provides important evidence for clinicians and policymakers on how best to target antiviral treatments as the pandemic evolves. The results suggest that the benefits of Paxlovid may be more limited in highly vaccinated populations than earlier studies indicated.

■ **Janina Dill**, Professorial Fellow and Dame Louise Richardson Chair in Global Security at the Blavatnik School of Government, has been named among the winners of the 2026 Social Sciences Teaching Excellence Awards. The awards recognise outstanding contributions to teaching and learning, as well as the academic development of students, across the Division.

Early-career researcher awards

■ Two Trinity tutors are among four University of Oxford researchers who have been awarded prestigious European Research Council (ERC) Starting Grants, each worth  1.5 million over a period of up to five years.

The ERC is the premier European funding organisation for excellent frontier research. The grants, part of the Horizon Europe programme, are designed to support exceptional researchers at the beginning of their careers to develop ambitious ideas, build their own teams and establish their independence at a pivotal stage in their careers. This year, the scheme attracted a record 4,807 proposals, with just 421 being funded.



Dr Alison Andrew

Dr Andrew, Fellow and Tutor in Economics, will use the ERC Starting Grant to study how people in low- and middle-income countries—where populations are aging fast, yet access to sizeable pensions is rare—support themselves in old age through their own work and savings, through money

and care from family, and through government programmes and how these different sources of support fit together. The project combines detailed data on households across 11 countries with a large-scale field experiment built around the rollout of a new pension scheme for informal workers in rural Uganda. The findings will speak to the design of pension and social policies that protect older people while taking into account impacts on families.



Dr Stephen Turton

Dr Turton, Lecturer in English, will use his Starting Grant to create a digital edition of the letters of James Murray, the first chief editor of the Oxford English Dictionary from 1879 to 1915. Making the Dictionary would not have been possible without the information Murray received about words, their meanings

and their origins from hundreds of scholars, authors and volunteers writing to him from around the world.

The largest collection of these letters, over 7,000, is held by the Bodleian Library. The aim of Dr Turton's project is to transcribe and publish the entire collection, using it to reconstruct and analyse Murray's global web of correspondence through commentaries, maps and network graphs.

Book launch



■ Michael Beloff KC, President 1996-2006, has published *Four Faces of the Law*, a collection of published writings, covering advocacy, judging, recent legal history, and sports law.

The book was launched at Trinity in May, in the de Jager Auditorium, with a conversation between Michael and Dinah Rose KC, President of Magdalen College, which was followed by a speech given by Kate O'Regan, Emeritus Professor of Human Rights Law and a former judge of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, who spoke about Michael's role in the development of sports law.

Four Faces of the Law follows Michael's memoir *MJBQC – A Life Within and Without the Law*.

Earlier in May, Michael gave a talk in the Trinity Talks series on the subject of Sport, Politics, the Law and Morality, in which he explained how as an author advocate and arbitrator he had dealt with the collisions between those four elements in the global arena.

Above: Michael Beloff in conversation with Dinah Rose
Right: the poster for the Trinity Talks event



Above: Ted Meron during the interview

Below: Nick Robinson and Flora Murray (2018) in the studio

Ted Meron on *Political Thinking*

■ Judge Theodor Meron, Honorary Fellow, was interviewed by Nick Robinson for Radio 4's *Political Thinking with Nick Robinson* podcast in June, in an episode produced by a Trinity Old Member.

Following the release of his memoir, *A Thousand Miracles*, Judge Meron reflected on his childhood surviving the Holocaust in Poland, and a life dedicated to international justice — including his recent role in serving on the ICC panel that issued arrest warrants for the leaders of Hamas and Israel.

Judge Meron is regularly in College and has given several talks and lectures in College recently.

Nick Robinson said interviewing Ted Meron was 'one of the privileges of my career'.

The podcast episode was produced by Flora Murray (2018), who works across BBC political programmes.

You can listen to or watch this episode of *Political Thinking with Nick Robinson* on BBC Sounds or on iPlayer.



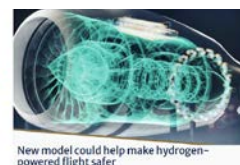
Read more on these and other news stories on the website:
trinity.ox.ac.uk/trinity-news



Trinity Fellow Natalia Gromak awarded title of Professor of RNA Biology



Trinity student part of team behind Ictus's £10,000 win at StEP Demo Day



New model could help make hydrogen-powered flight safer

Plans to replace the Chapel tower statues

Described as a masterpiece of English baroque architecture, Trinity's chapel, which was consecrated in 1694, is surely the most iconic of Trinity's buildings.



The four female figures on the tower are an integral part of its design, and it is possible they were added at the suggestion of Sir Christopher Wren, who advised Trinity's president, Ralph Bathurst, on the plans while the building work was underway.



The need to replace the statues, again

Inspections have revealed serious weaknesses arising in the current statues to the point of becoming dangerous, and the college has been advised that the need to replace them again is now urgent.

Alex Wenham, a highly experienced, Oxford-based stone carver has been appointed to lead the project. Using 3D imaging he has captured a considerable amount of detail of the existing sculptures to create full-size polystyrene models that will be used as a model for the new sculptures.

In a presentation to the college in May, he shared more about the history of the statues and the ongoing analysis of the stone, and he explained how the new replacements will be created and installed.

Planning permission for the works was granted over the summer, and we look forward to bringing you news of developments soon.



History of the statues

The four figures represent a unique quadrivium of the liberal arts: theology, geometry, astronomy and medicine. Medicine seems likely to have been chosen by, or for, Ralph Bathurst who—although it was contrary to the college statutes—had abandoned the study of Divinity to train as a doctor during the English Civil Wars. Each statue was identifiable by the attributes it held, although not all are still visible today.

Medicine incorporates a phial and a snake encircling a rod (the staff of Asclepius), with books held beneath the rod that can still be seen; Astronomy, an orb; Theology, a book (The Bible); and Geometry, compasses and a set square (probably made of lead; these were the first features to be lost).

Traditionally the original statues have been ascribed to Christopher Wren's master carver Caius Cibber, although there is no evidence for this. The stone used is likely to have been from the Burford area, where Bartholomew Peisley, the stonemason in charge of the project, had a quarry.



Alex Wenham with a polystyrene copy of Medicine

The 1822 replacements

By the turn of the 19th century, Oxford's stone buildings were being severely damaged by air pollution. In 1822 the Governing Body took the decision to repair the chapel tower and replace the statues with new figures, carved in Bath stone, at a cost of £30 each. An invoice for the work from the Oxford architectural firm of John Plowman also survives. Again, the name of the sculptor is not known. The original Medicine statue was installed in the President's garden, where it was both sketched and photographed, but it is not known what happened to the others. Earlier this year, the college publicised the research into the statues, with a plea for help in locating missing statues.

The evidence of engravings and early photographs suggests that the replacements were modelled closely on the originals, with similarities in stance, head shape, and drapery.

Refurbishment in 1959-60

By the 1950s the majority of Oxford's buildings were in poor condition, following two centuries of industrial pollution and a lack of maintenance during two world wars. Assisted by the University's Historic Buildings Fund Appeal, Trinity embarked on a major refurbishment project, which included the refacing of the chapel. After much discussion, it was decided not to replace the tower statues, but to take them down, make them safe, and put them back. The physical evidence and archived correspondence suggests that the statues' central metal 'spikes' were renewed, and the sections rejoined. The 1694 Medicine, or perhaps just part of it, was replaced on the tower at this time, as being in better condition than the 1822 figure.

Top: detail of William Williams, *Oxonia Depicta* (1733), showing Theology (left) and Geometry
Middle and above: Michael Burghers engraving (1691), details showing Astronomy and Medicine

EXPLORING THE PARADOXES OF MEDIEVAL BAGHDAD

Dr **Fanny Bessard**, Fellow and Tutor in History, has been researching the history of Baghdad, looking particularly at the city through the lives of its inhabitants in the Middle Ages. Here she writes about her research focus, and her ambitions for an exhibition at the Ashmolean.

As I began developing a new special subject in 2022, I became increasingly absorbed in the history of Baghdad, not simply as the capital of the Islamic caliphate until 1258, but as a lived and living city. This eventually became a book project on inequality in both life and death. Parts of this research are now forthcoming in *Der Islam* and an edited collection with Cambridge University Press.

In the Middle Ages, Baghdad was one of the largest and most extraordinary cities on earth. Founded in 762 by the 'Abbāsid caliph al-Manṣūr, it had grown far beyond the circular city first imagined by its founder. By the 10th century, Baghdad stretched along

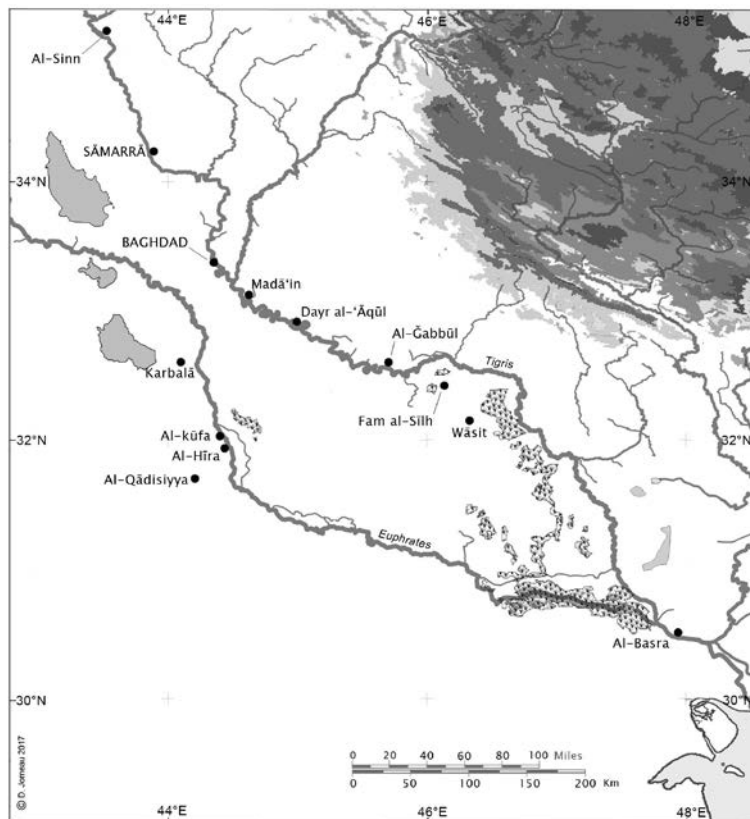
'In the Middle Ages, Baghdad was one of the largest and most extraordinary cities on earth.'

the Tigris as a vast and crowded metropolis. Ships brought goods from distant lands; merchants, soldiers, scholars and craftsmen moved through its streets; books and ideas travelled alongside spices, textiles and precious metals. Yet, from 945, Baghdad occupied a paradoxical position. It was still the capital of the 'Abbāsids and the symbolic heart of the Islamic world, a



city whose name carried immense political and cultural authority. However, the caliphate was no longer the political power it had once been.

From the middle of the century, the Buyids, a powerful Shi'i dynasty from Iran, took control of Baghdad while leaving the caliph on the throne. A century later, the Seljuks would arrive and establish another form of political authority. The caliph remained, but the nature of power had changed and political authority was increasingly shared, negotiated and contested.



Top: Fanny Bessard

Above: a map of central and southern Iraq, showing the principal settlements and geographical features including al-Madā'in, Dayr al-'Āqūl, al-Kūfa, al-Ḥīra, al-Qādisiyya, Wāsiṭ, and al-Basra.

Baghdad through the lives of the people

It is tempting to look at Baghdad from the perspective of its rulers and institutions. But what did it actually mean to live in such a city? My current research explores Baghdad in the 10th and early 11th centuries from the ground up, through the lives of the people who inhabited its streets and neighbourhoods. I am particularly interested in how inequality was experienced and negotiated in everyday urban life. Rather than treating inequality simply as a relationship between people, I explore how it was embedded in the fabric of the city itself: in the spaces people occupied, the resources to which

they had access, the ways they were perceived by others, and the ways they could shape those perceptions. This reveals three interconnected dimensions of inequality in the medieval city. It was produced by space, as the organisation of streets, markets, neighbourhoods and gathering places shaped access to resources and opportunities. It was made visible, through the social and aesthetic signs by which differences in wealth and status could be recognised. It could be negotiated through performance and protests. People did not simply experience inequality; they encountered it in particular places, recognised it in one another, and found ways of responding to it. A flood was not merely a natural disaster; its consequences depended upon where people lived and what resources they could draw upon. A funeral was not only a religious ceremony; it could also be a statement about status, community and political power. A popular uprising was not just disorder; it could reveal the ways in which people understood the city and their place within it.

A future exhibition?

This research aims to provide the intellectual starting point for a future exhibition project to be submitted to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

The exhibition would begin with the extraordinary decision of Caliph al-Manṣūr to found a new capital in 762. From its beginnings, Baghdad was an ambitious political experiment: a city deliberately created to embody the power of a new dynasty and to place itself at the centre of a vast and rapidly expanding world. Over the following centuries, Baghdad would grow far beyond its original plan.

The exhibition would follow this process of transformation, asking a simple but fundamental question: how does a city designed by rulers become a city made by its inhabitants? This would provide a way of telling the history of Baghdad without reducing it either to a succession of dynasties or to the familiar story of an Islamic ‘golden age’. Visitors would encounter the city at different scales: the caliph and the palace, but also the marketplace, the neighbourhood, the household and the street. They would see Baghdad as a place of extraordinary movement, where people, goods and ideas travelled across enormous distances, but also as a place where those movements had to be organised, regulated and negotiated.

The central story of the exhibition would be the tension between the city imagined from above and the city created from below. In this sense, Baghdad offers a much broader historical question: what happens when a city becomes more than the people who founded it imagined it could be? The exhibition would use Baghdad to explore how cities acquire lives of their own—how political power, economic wealth, migration, inequality, religion, collective action and the environment interact to create an urban society that no single ruler can fully control.

The exhibition would offer an exceptional opportunity to bring together the material world of medieval Baghdad,



Gathering of Young People at the Gates of a Town, from *Al Maqamat* by Al Hariri, c.1240

from objects of extraordinary beauty to the humble things through which everyday life was sustained. Alongside gold dinars of the ‘Abbāsids, Iraqi lustreware, illuminated Qur’anic manuscripts, textiles, metalwork and architectural fragments, would be displayed the objects that belonged to ordinary life: cooking and eating vessels, lamps, tools, weights and measures, and objects associated with work, trade and religious practice. Such objects would allow visitors to move beyond the palaces and monuments of Baghdad and encounter the city through the hands of the people who lived there. Bringing together masterpieces and everyday objects from the Ashmolean and other British collections would create a vivid material portrait of Baghdad—a city of extraordinary wealth and creativity, but also one built through the labour, ingenuity and daily lives of countless people whose stories have rarely been told.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in helping to fund this exhibition, please get in touch with the Alumni & Development team, who will forward your message to Dr Bessard.

TRINITY AND THE GENERAL STRIKE

This year marks the centenary of a key event in British history: the nine-day General Strike of 4-13 May 1926. Largely peaceful and well-organised, the action succeeded in paralysing major sectors including heavy industry, transport, and printing, but it was ultimately ineffective. The government was able to mobilise middle- and upper-class volunteers who maintained key services, and the strike ended without achieving its aims. **Kathryne Crossley**, Modern Records and Digital Archivist, has been exploring the strike from a Trinity perspective, through the diaries of one Trinity undergraduate.

In May, the city of Oxford commemorated the centenary of the General Strike, with events including a march, rally, workshops and talks. The strike had been called by the Trades Union Congress in support of British coal miners, who, in a post-war slump, were being asked to accept significant wage cuts as well as a longer working week. Despite the strike's initial impact, the colliers were eventually forced to return to work exhausted by widespread hunger and poverty. The strike can be seen as a key turning point in the long-term decline of the British coal industry.

While Cambridge is remembered as united in its opposition to the strike, Oxford is described as more divided. Not so at Trinity, where all but 15 of 175 undergraduates registered for voluntary work to maintain essential services—strike-breakers. Seven of these men went to Hay's Wharf in London, among them Marcus Cheke (1924), who would later have a distinguished career in the diplomatic corps. Cheke left his diaries to the college archive, in them, he recorded a day-by-day account of the strike.

First days of the strike

Cheke left Oxford for London by car on May 3rd to attend an interview with the Foreign Office the next morning. He wrote, 'All along there was lots of traffic & a lot of soldiers in lorries were being rolled down the Bath Road into London, & near Henley we saw staff officers & police with field glasses at a cross-roads. It was all very exciting.'

After his (successful) interview, Cheke had lunch 'at a most sordid Lyons' and then secured a lift back to Oxford.

On the first day of the General Strike, Cheke reported that life in College continued as usual with a tutorial and dinner in Hall. Outside though, he listened to a labour demonstration in St Giles and noted 'Everybody most anxious'.

On May 5th, 'the excitement and anxiety increased beyond any description: enhanced by there being little news & the British Gazette telling one nothing at all, only columns of propaganda, vague shouts about the Constitution being attacked, and news of riots. It is astounding how the University authorities, so keen on a Grammar School outlook and structures regarding



Marcus Cheke, whose diaries give a day-by-day account of the strike

exams, etc quite out of sympathy with the cause of culture, have lost all control at this moment.

'Hundreds of men leave with no definite job to go to at all. The life of the place is at an end—the Versailles Ball really was a Versailles Ball! All this notwithstanding the fact that Oxford is about the only place where the buses are still loyally running, food is plenty, the local papers appearing—but the University struck work & departed! I was in a perfect frenzy.'

Nevertheless, Cheke found himself dining at the Mitre with a friend later that evening, sharing two bottles of claret. The next morning he struggled to decide if he ought to stay in College. 'Frightfully depressed & restless. It is an extremely difficult question whether to remain here in an empty college, trying to calm & do some work, or to go away—but to where? There is London, home—to be isolated unbearably—or to the docks at Hull or Bristol.'

Delivering mail bags

The third day of the strike, Cheke was more pragmatic. 'A considerably calmer outlook on life. I met Teddy at the Morris Garages at 9:30 & we delivered mail bags in his six-cylinder AC all round Gloucestershire—rushing through the quiet country and startling the yokels with our officious dispatches.' Cheke rounded off his day with a set of tennis

in North Oxford, dinner at the George and then a roulette party, where he won 14/- on the evening.

On May 7th, Cheke and Teddy again transported mail bags, this time to Banbury. After a lunch party, they ‘flew back, averaging over forty’. In Oxford, he met friends in the union and listened to Baldwin’s speech over the wireless. Cheke was one of only a few undergraduates who stayed in Trinity, ‘All my friends have gone. I am left a solitary and dramatic figure, but even the cool quiet position I had taken up, pretending I really was doing useful work here having a daily joy-ride in a fast car helping Sir Edward Hulton to do work he could do alone even better, is being now assailed by doubts. How frightful all this is.’

Heading to the docks

By the 5th day of the strike, Cheke was feeling pressure from the college authorities, ‘Interviewed the President and officialised my mail job. Then read in the garden and the dean tried to get me to go off to the docks in Hull. My position is truly untenable in anything like a serious examination of the facts: all the Blood has left the place; at 12:45 ...I set off from the college on foot to reconnoitre. I was worn out wandering up and down the streets, when at last at 3:30 I enrolled at the Town Hall for the Docks in London. At 4:30, I was at the station in an immense crowd that had to wait an hour for the trains.’ He passed the time profitably, however, joining a ‘rough party’ in the waiting room and winning over half a crown at *vingt et un*.

After a ‘long, painful, harrowing journey’ they arrived at the docks. There, Cheke observed ‘everywhere gentlemen volunteers working and engaged in the job of labourers’. They were accommodated in a Danish ship, the Ballata, ‘...packed four or five in a cabin and my companions are exceedingly trying. Slept very badly.’

On Monday, May 9th, Cheke was put to work. ‘All day we shifted gigantic crates of foreign eggs, up in a warehouse, with all the strain of the last few days, I am sorry to say that I absolutely broke down—not outwardly, *bien entendu*—the afternoon to me was perfect hell. We are prisoners here—prisoners! Not allowed outside the dock!—and the length of the strike uncertain. Cut off from my friends & surrounded by people I loathed. I gave myself up, as I gasped under the eggs, to despair. Liberty! I must have freedom. Freedom is the very breath of my nostrils. What the cool water is to the

river-trout; what the spring is to the flowers; what the sun is to the Neapolitan melons, liberty is to me. Under discipline, I collapse like a caged bird starved.’ Cheke attributed his low mood to physical exhaustion, relieved by a good night’s sleep ‘in my narrow bed with its pillow full of dried hay and the port hole and the smell of the mud, more divinely than I have ever slept before.’

Well rested, Cheke had a sunnier outlook. ‘All the world seemed kinder to me. A hundred and fifty new people arrived, amongst them several acquaintances. And the day’s work was piling cheeses & then thousands of boxes of tinned milk, which was pleasanter than yesterday and there were several handsome young men working with me.’

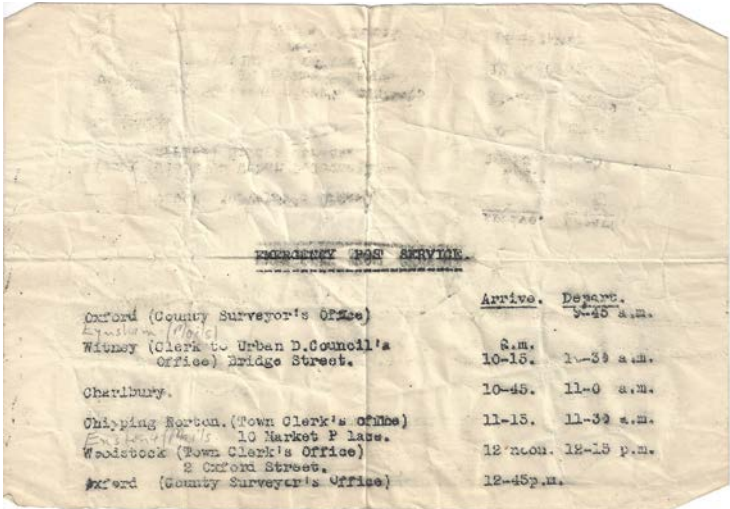
The strike ends

May 12th was the ninth day of the strike. ‘For lunch, we all trooped over to the Fishmongers’ Hall, where a very good cold meal was given us, and I felt positively happy. All the dear old foremen like walruses adore me. At five I changed

and we joined the Count von Tichy, who had sat next to me at lunch; when Peter Knox whom I had never spoken to in my life, came across and asked me to dine with him that evening. Mr Deacon, somebody to do with this wharf, gave us a lift to the Hungarian Embassy in Chester Square, where I had a bath—one of the funniest things I have ever done, I think.’

The next day, news of the end of the strike came during the lunch hour, ‘...and people who thought as everybody did that that meant the strike was over, went quite

mad.’ Still, there was work to be done in the afternoon. ‘Work was very pleasant on the wharfs, trucking about the carcasses of half-cured pigs in sacks, in nice weather’. Later that evening, Cheke joined other Trinity men for dinner at the Fishmongers’ Hall afterwards listening to Paul Whiteman’s band at the Tivoli ‘which was something divine, as was Jack Hylton’s which preceded it.’ For Cheke, the General Strike was a lark. ‘It was enormous fun. You know I am an adventurer. If I am nothing else, I am that.’



	Arrive.	Depart.
Oxford (County Surveyor's Office)		5-45 a.m.
Widney (Clerk to Urban D.Council's Office) Bridge Street.	8 a.m.	10-30 a.m.
Charlbury.	10-45.	11-0 a.m.
Chipping Norton. (Town Clerk's Office)	11-15.	11-30 a.m.
Woodstock (Town Clerk's Office)	12 noon.	12-15 p.m.
Oxford (County Surveyor's Office)	12-45 p.m.	

A General Strike schedule for mail delivery was found interleaved in Cheke's diary—presumably having spent some time folded in his pocket and hurtling along at 40 mph.

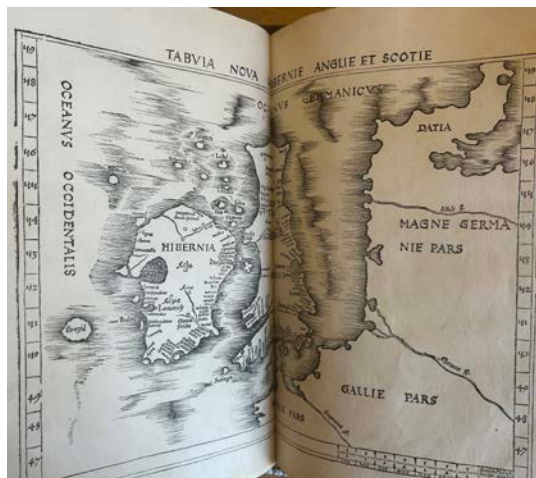
The diaries of Marcus Cheke are being catalogued for the Archive by Jan Martin, Librarian 1980-2006; a feature about the diaries is planned for a future edition of the Newsletter.

ex Hampton Court: Trinity's royal atlas

■ A remarkable treasure has been shelved in Trinity's Old Library since the college's foundation. Recent cataloguing work has brought renewed attention to a rare 1520 edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia*, one of the earliest printed atlases and widely regarded as the first 'modern' atlas.

The maps are based on Ptolemy's (a Graeco-Roman mathematician, astronomer and geographer) geographical manuscript work, originally written around 150CE. Several printed editions were produced in the late 15th century, but in 1513, German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller produced 20 new maps to go with those based on Ptolemy's work. Trinity's copy is the 1520 reprint of this edition, printed in Strasbourg by Johann Schott.

Geographia shaped European cartography for centuries, with later mapmakers adopting not only its innovations but also some of its inaccuracies. His greatest contribution



was the systematic use of latitude and longitude to locate places, recording the coordinates of around 8,000 sites.

Beyond its cartographic importance, Trinity's copy of the atlas has a remarkable royal connection. A faint, crossed-out inscription reading *ex Hampton Court* reveals that it was once part of Henry VIII's library. It was later presented to Trinity by the college's founder, Sir Thomas Pope, who acquired a number of books from the royal collections while serving in Henry VIII's administration. In

total, Pope donated more than 90 books and manuscripts to the college, including 41 volumes from Henry's libraries.

Further cataloguing work is expected to uncover more rare books from the Tudor monarch's palace libraries. Our discoveries will be shared in a future edition of the Newsletter once the cataloguing project is completed.

Sophie Floate, Rare Books Cataloguer

The Norrington Room turns 60

■ The college's Library Quad was transformed during the construction of the Levine Building; gone is the rather dated and austere paving and in its place a raised lawn and planting area with spring bulbs and low-growing herbaceous plants. The changes are, in one sense, superficial, since deep below the transformed surface of the quad, the Norrington Room of Blackwell's bookshop

remains relatively unchanged, and June this year marked the 60th anniversary of the room's official opening, an anniversary recorded by the President in his weekly blog post.

Blackwell's bookshop opened in Broad Street in 1879 and over the following decades it expanded into neighbouring premises, but by the 1960s it was constrained and short of space. Trinity had already been contemplating developing new buildings around the War Memorial Library and discussions then began between the college and Julian 'Toby' Blackwell (1950) about a project of mutual advantage to the college and the bookshop.

The outcome was a scheme to excavate the former garden between two new accommodation buildings that would form the Cumberbatch development—of which Staircase 3, at the southern end, remains—and create a basement retail space of 930m², with 5km of shelving. Its size soon earned it a place in the *Guinness Book of Records* (editors Norris and Ross McWhirter (both 1943)), as the largest single room in the world selling books.

The negotiations were led by President Norrington, and his portrait still hangs over the stairway that leads down to the basement bearing his name.



Excavating the former rose garden, which lay between the Jackson Building, to the right, and the library, to the left, to create the Norrington Room

News from the gardens

■ On Sunday 2 August, the college opened its garden gates for the National Garden Scheme (NGS). Trinity has been opening for the NGS since the 1990s, the proceeds from admission fees going to the charity. This year, 621 people visited the college, raising £4,394. Teas and refreshments were provided by Yellow Submarine, a local charity that supports people with learning disabilities and autism, which raised £401 for its work.

Earlier in the year, the Gardens team featured in a video produced to show the progress in the gardens after several years of disruption, and following the long-awaited creation of the new long border. An email with a link to the video was sent out earlier in the summer; for anyone who has not seen it, it's available on the college's YouTube channel, youtube.com/@trinitycollegeoxford1555.

It has been a very challenging summer for the Gardens team, who have worked magnificently to mitigate the worst effects of the drought and succession of heatwaves in difficult conditions. As the gardens begin to recover after some late summer rain, there will be work to do to repair damage and reconsider some planting for future resilience.



Commemorating John Woodcock

A plaque commemorating John Woodcock (1945), journalist and cricket writer, was unveiled in St Nicholas Church in Longparish, Hampshire, on 8 August, the 100th anniversary of John's birth in that village. Trinity was represented by **Mike Gretton (1965)**, who sent this report.

■ John had many interests, but his passions were Longparish, trout fishing in the River Test, which runs through the centre of the village, and, of course, cricket, for which he was the *Times* correspondent for many years.

The Woodcock family had a long association with

Longparish and provided the vicar at St Nicholas for over 250 years. John was born and died in the family home, the Old Curacy, close to the church and the local pub; he knew every villager as well as their circumstances, whatever their status in life. As you can see on the plaque he was the 'Sage of Longparish'.

John was a keen trout fisherman from a young age: this is reflected in the glass window just above the plaque, which had been created earlier in memory of the whole Woodcock family: a woodcock is portrayed in the top right section with two trout below.

But it was his passion for

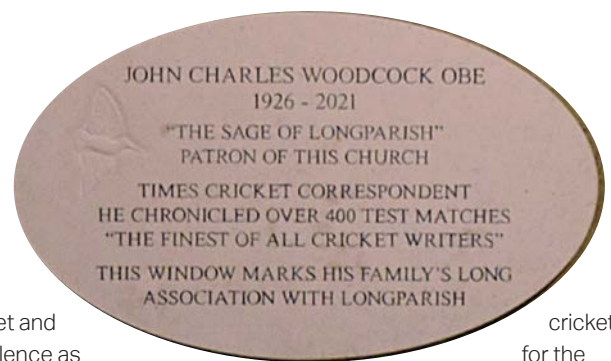
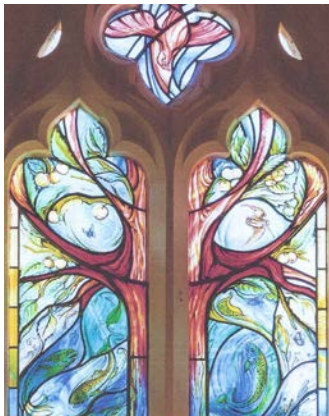
cricket and excellence as a reporter that was the focus of the remarks by England captain and *Times* reporter Mike Atherton—he spoke very warmly about his friendship with John and the wise advice he received. He spoke of how John would be invited into the England dressing room whether their fortunes were up or down.

His modesty, highlighted by all, was demonstrated by his refusal to write an autobiography.

John faced challenges in his life, as he was seriously ill as a teenager and a knee was badly affected. Despite this he got a hockey Blue, in goal, and played

cricket for the Authentics.

One of John's greatest moments was when his beloved Longparish Cricket Club won the National Village Knockout Cup in 1972. No doubt he caught a trout next day.



Left: detail of the window commemorating the Woodcock family
Right: Mike Atherton speaking at the event to unveil the plaque

Photo credits: Stephen Nicholls



Events at Trinity

■ The fifth season of the Events at Trinity series has been launched. This year's programme brings together an inspiring mix of musical performances, thought-provoking talks, and guided garden tours.

Open to the public, the college, and the wider Oxford community, the programme offers something for everyone: from distinguished speakers exploring timely topics, to world-class classical musicians showcasing the exceptional acoustics of the de Jager Auditorium.

More details can be found on the website, trinity.ox.ac.uk/events-at-trinity

Calling Trinity golfers!

■ The Intercollegiate Alumni Golf Tournament is being revived after a few years' hiatus, and will take place next year on 14 April, at Frilford Heath Golf Club near Abingdon, followed by a dinner at St Edmund Hall.

We very much hope that Trinity, which has entered a team in previous competitions, will be able to do so again. More details will be circulated shortly to those on the golf mailing list; please contact alumni@trinity.ox.ac.uk if you haven't received emails about golf in the past and would like to be added to the list.

If you have any questions about the event, you can contact Tim Gulliver (1971), who's kindly agreed to continue his role as team captain, via the Alumni & Development Office.

Alumni vs students tennis match



■ It was grey and muggy on the last day in May, when four Trinity alumni returned to the hallowed turf at Marston Road to take on the current students in the annual tennis match. The groundsman Paul Madden prepared the grass courts beautifully, as always, despite the heat wave that had preceded the match, this year adding the twist of blue lines on the court to keep the players on their toes.

This year's alumni team was strong, with accomplished recent students Louise Fitzpatrick and Alicia Middleton, supported by the guile and bludgeoning of Mike Haddrell and Matt Johnston (respectively). With Finals decimating the student ranks, the Trinity team began with four Freshers (Harvey Qin, Alvin Lee, Hamish Hutchison and Charlie Aspinall), while captain and former JCR President Adham Saeid paused his revision to bolster the student team for the second half of the match.

The students put up a determined fight; in particular Alvin played beautifully, despite borrowing a racket for the afternoon, and his tricky leftie serve caused havoc with Matt's backhand returns. However, Mike's devastating net play saved the day, while Louise and Alicia comfortably put the students to the sword, and in the end an 8-0 win for the alumni was completed in a jovial atmosphere.

The players made a pitstop in the Up in Arms pub for a refreshment break, before finishing the day in style with a sumptuous dinner at High Table. Our thanks go to Jonathan Flint and the Hall staff, and also to the Trinity Society for funding the dinners of the students. If you would like to take part in the 2027 match, please email the Alumni & Development Office.

Matthew Johnston (1999)

Trinity merchandise online



The Trinity College online store.

Shop your College
Ethically sourced, high quality and design-led apparel and gifting.




www.thecollegestore.co.uk

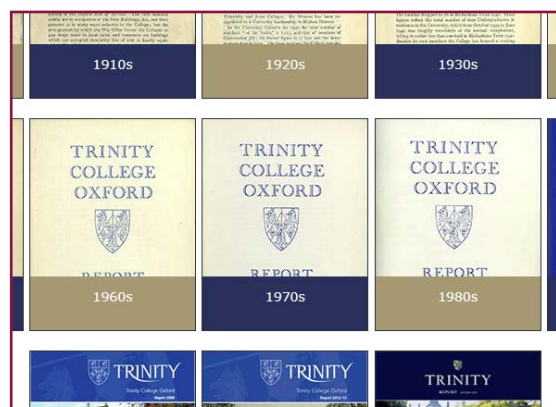
■ Trinity has joined the College Store, an online shop that offers Oxford- and Trinity-branded merchandise. Follow the links or the QR code above.

Trinity publications archive online

■ All editions of the Report and Newsletter, from the earliest Reports in the late 19th century, are available to view and search online. Visitors to the site can now browse through the catalogue of publications and images, and also search the collection.

We hope that members of all generations will enjoy looking back at the publications, whether editions from your own years, or to learn about Trinity life at other times.

Find links to the site at trinity.ox.ac.uk/publications-old-members.



The Gang of Three

■ Trinity's own Tony Crosland takes centre stage in *The Gang of Three*, the acclaimed political drama by Robert Khan and Tom Salinsky, which is coming to the Oxford Playhouse, from 27 to 31 October.

Set during the Labour leadership contest of 1976, the play follows Crosland, Roy Jenkins and Denis Healey as they battle for the soul of the party against a backdrop of economic crisis.

After a sold-out London run, the production comes to the Playhouse as part of a national tour, with the original cast of Alan Cox, Hywel Morgan and Colin Tierney, directed by Kirsty Patrick Ward.

There will be a post-show discussion on Wednesday 28 October, featuring the President, Sir Robert Chote, historian Robert Saunders, and Robert Khan. Tickets can be booked at oxfordplayhouse.com.

Photo credit: Manuel Harlan



ALUMNI EVENTS

Following on from the Gaudy in March, for years 1992–1995, when Hall was completely full, and a trip to America, when Sir Robert and Sue Broers met many Old Members at events across the West and East coasts, Trinity term brought a varied events programme.

In April we were grateful to Jonathan Spence (1985) for his invitation to hold the London Reception at Tallow Chandlers' Hall, during his term as Master. It was a lovely opportunity for Old Members from across the generations to meet Sir Robert, and each other, in beautiful and historic surroundings.

The graduation in May was a wonderful event, bringing 100 graduands back to College to celebrate the end of their degrees, and was like a mini reunion for the undergraduate graduands, many of whom had finished their studies in June 2025.

The graduation event, with some of our newest Old Members, was followed by the 'Fifty Plus Years on' Lunch attended by some of the oldest. This is a lunch for those who matriculated 50 or more years ago; the youngest being those who matriculated in 1976 and the oldest (on this occasion) having matriculated in 1954. It was a great pleasure to



Above: Professor Johannes Zachhuber, Theology Fellow, speaking at the Theology dinner

Below: Jonathan Spence speaking at the London Reception in April

Events in 2026-27

Details of events in the coming months can be found on the inside back cover and at trinity.ox.ac.uk/events.

The 2026-27 Programme of Events is now available on the website.

welcome so many Old Members to this lunch, and holding it in the marquee, used the previous day for graduation, meant many of them could bring guests as well. Next year's lunch, on Sunday 16 May, will be the 20th anniversary of the inaugural event, and for all those who matriculated in 1977 and before.

At the end of Trinity term, was the annual Ralph Bathurst Society dinner, an opportunity to thank major donors to the college. Before dinner we were treated to an exquisite wine tasting, with a selection from the college cellars, by Michael Palij, Master of Wine, who some readers may remember from the online wine tasting events held during the covid pandemic. As usual, the dinner was delicious and Michael had chosen excellent wine pairings for the menu.

Towards the end of the summer vacation, Old Members from years 2014 to 2016, attended their Gaudy, which was greatly enjoyed. The Trinity Weekend then saw a subject dinner on the Friday for all who had studied Theology, followed the next day by an enjoyable talk by Michael Beloff on some of Trinity's sporting legends, and the annual Trinity Society dinner.



Old Members' news

David Fairer (1966) has published his latest novel, *Graham and the Fitchcombe Murders* (Book Guild Publishing, 2026). Following his Queen Anne-era Chocolate House trilogy, David has changed direction with a contemporary 'cosy crime' story, in which a thriller writer takes on a new pseudonym and a relocation to the Cotswolds, being re-branded by his agent as the 'Mistress of cosy crime', only to find fiction and reality collide. It is a characteristically literary novel that explores the genre while simultaneously developing a plot.

Nick Reynolds (1971) is the co-author of *Ortiz's War, The Allies' Secret Weapon against the Nazis in France* (HarperCollins), a partial biography that was published in the USA in August and, it's hoped, in the UK thereafter. It is the story of an American commando trained by SOE who parachuted twice into Occupied France on Anglo-American-French missions, and won acclaim not only for fighting the occupiers, but also for saving the citizens of an Alpine village under threat. It has received positive feedback, with AppleBooks designating it as a Best Book of the month.

Huw van Steenis (1988) writes, 'After 4 wonderful years at Oliver Wyman, in August I joined Apollo as Partner and Strategist for European economics and policy.'

Richard (1982) and Fiona (née Young, 1984) Gameson, who were married in the chapel in September 1986 (the first Trinity couple to be married in College), returned to College this September to mark their ruby anniversary.

As Richard has, over many years, assisted Trinity with its collection of medieval manuscripts, he and Fiona were invited by the

Library team to celebrate with a lunch in the SCR, where they were joined by Jan Martin (Librarian 1980-2005)

and Alan Coates (1980), Honorary Librarian of the Old Library, both of whom had been guests at the wedding.

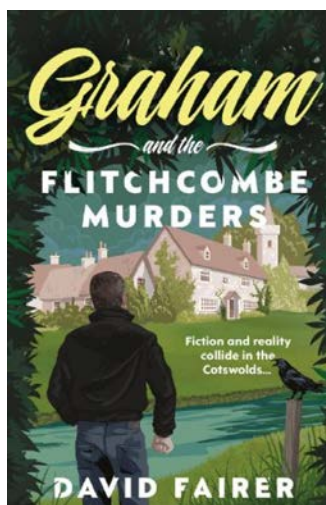
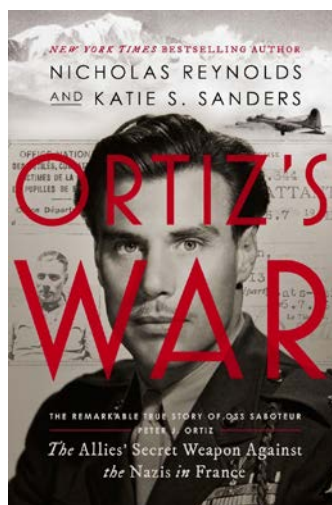


Sarah Hill (Mayo, 1991) writes, 'I have recently published a mental health self-help book *Images of Hope for Your Mental Health: Finding Diamonds in the Darkness*, which uses images I have drawn to help people explore and discuss their mental health with others, drawing on my personal and professional experience of various mental

health issues over the years. It is available on Amazon and The Great British Bookshop, as well as directly (UK only) through my website DiamondsInTheDarkness.org.'

Ben Giarretta (1992) has recently become the chair of the board of trustees of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators. He recently published (as a co-author) a commentary on the Arbitration Act 1996.

Christopher Insole (1993) has been elected as a fellow of the British Academy and, in September last year, as the president of the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion. He has recently published an accessible book for the general reader, *If God is the Answer, What is the Question?* (Oneworld Publications). Rowan Williams described the book as 'marked by formidable intellectual clarity', and A N Wilson wrote that, 'Reading this book is like having



From left, the front covers of the books by David Fairer and Nicholas Reynolds, and Sarah Mayo at the launch of her book

Developing feminist evaluation and humanitarian action

■ Rai Sengupta (2021) writes:

I am currently based in New Delhi, working as an Evaluation Consultant with the UNICEF Evaluation Office, reporting to UN Headquarters in New York. In this role, I support global evaluations of UNICEF programming across child protection, nutrition and health, climate change, and WASH.

Since May 2025, I have been leading a project on feminist evaluation innovations in crisis contexts, funded by the Global Evaluation Initiative's Feminist Innovation in Monitoring and Evaluation Small Grant for Young and Emerging Evaluators. Out of 280 global applications, I was honoured to be selected as one of six grantees.

Over the past year, this has led to the development of two outputs: a global synthesis of feminist evaluation innovations in crisis contexts, based on 17 evaluations and introducing a four-part typology across design, methods, analysis, and ethics; and



Rai Sengupta at the World Bank in Washington DC

as a Weidenfeld-Hoffmann Scholar at Trinity. The programme provided a strong foundation in evaluation methods, evidence synthesis, and the use of research to inform policy and practice, and it is especially rewarding to see those skills reflected in work that is now contributing to global conversations on feminist evaluation and humanitarian action.

a practical tool kit to support the application of feminist evaluation across the evaluation cycle, with tools and templates for real-world use.

Over the course of 2025, this work has reached global platforms, and I was invited to deliver presentations on it at UNICEF's Evaluation Office (New York), UN Women (New York), World Bank Independent Evaluation Group (Washington, DC), Asian Development Bank (Manila).

This project builds directly on the knowledge and skills I developed during my MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation at Oxford, while studying



Véronique Rapetti

a really interesting conversation with a wise, learned man, by turns dense and learned, by turns light and humorous. It addresses the deepest questions we could ever ask ourselves; it draws on a profound knowledge of the great philosophers, especially Kant; and it is warm and loving.'

Véronique Rapetti (1994) has been made a 'Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur', the

award having been conferred at a ceremony in May 2024. The honour was conferred in recognition of Véronique's pro-bono cultural activities and commitment to the betterment of France in the UK, in particular for her outstanding entrepreneurial qualities coupled with a high civic sense, over 27 years of service.

Angela Hall (1996), after 26 years at the Bar, has been appointed as a District Judge.

Julian Ellacott (1996) has been re-elected for his third and final year as chairman of the Conservative Party's National Convention, which is the party's volunteer 'wing'. This makes him a deputy chairman of the overall party, and the leading voice for grassroots members and activists, as well as being heavily involved in overseeing the party's finances and selection of its Parliamentary candidates. His day job remains as an actuary, now working as chief actuary and CFO at insurance company National Friendly, based in Bristol.

Roxanne Selby (1997) continues to work as a commercial litigation solicitor at White & Black Limited, and continues to live in



Julian Ellacott

North Oxford with partner, Michael, and son, George, who is currently preparing to take his GCSEs. In April, she travelled to Tokyo, where she took her Nidan (2nd Dan Black Belt) in goju ryu karate under Akio Takahashi Hanshi, of the All Japan Karate-Do Goju-Ryu Kenwakai, in a gruelling nine-day seminar. She trains and assists with karate at Oxford Karate Academy.

Judging for Democracy, a monograph by the late Julius Yam (2017), has been published by Cambridge University Press. The book examines the role of the judge in hybrid regimes, those states characterised by both democratic and authoritarian elements, and it is a fitting tribute to his research into the role of courts in protecting democracy and the rule of law. Thanks to funding from Trinity and Hong Kong University, where Julius was an associate professor, the book is open access and available to all.

Tamio Nakajima (2021) has been awarded a prize for the research he did during his DPhil, namely the Association for Constraint Programming (CP) Doctoral Research Award, which is presented every year to a promising young researcher working in the area of constraint programming and who defended their thesis in the previous two years. The winning researcher receives a cash prize and is invited to give a talk about their PhD thesis at the CP conference.

Correction

The news item in the last edition of the Newsletter for S S Vasan (1998), who is known by his surname, was incorrectly headed; the heading should have read: **Seshadri 'Vasan' Vasan (1998)**.

Marriages



William Arthurs (1983) to Ziba Norman, on 15 October 2025, at All Saints, North Street, York. The officiant was the Rt Revd Glyn Webster, former Bishop of Beverley. The bride was given away by Sir Philip Bobbitt.

Ben Crompton (2012) to Helen Springbett (Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, 2010), on 21 June 2025, in Ringmer, Sussex



Clockwise from left:
William Arthurs and Ziba Norman; Ben Crompton and Helen Springbett; Nick Kenny and Kaitlyn O'Neal

Nick Kenny (2014) to Kaitlyn O'Neal, on 27 September 2024, at Powell Gardens in Kansas City, USA, with an additional reception at St Columba's Church Hall in London on 5 October 2024. The wedding was attended by a number of Trinity members, including fellow former members of the Chapel Choir.





Georgina Mordue to Thomas Fabes (both 2014), on 21 June 2025, at Our Lady and All Saints' Church, Otley. Dan Mulryan (2014) was best man and Loris Raimo (2014) one of the groomsmen; they celebrated afterwards at Goldsborough Hall, with many Trinity friends present.

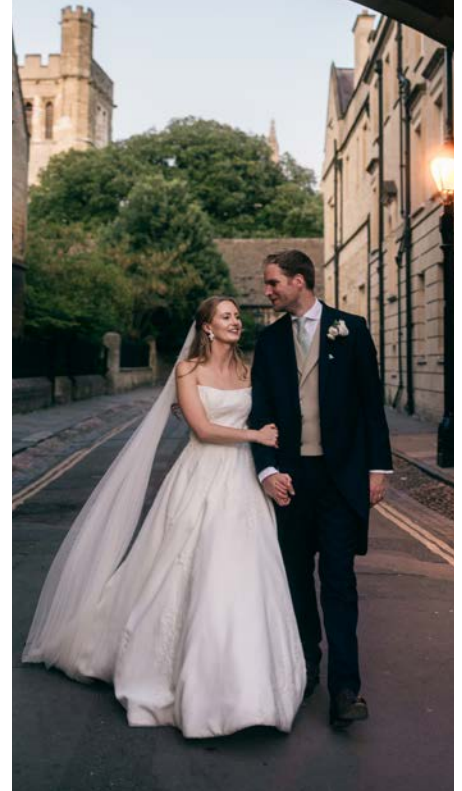


Henry Tan (2015) to Alice Jackson (2016), on 8 August 2026, at St James' Church in Shaftesbury. Samuel Smith (2015) was best man, Hannah Bannister (née Berry, 2015), Faye Kitchen (née Calow) and Vivien Hasan (both 2016) were bridesmaids, and Christian Holland, William Holliday (both 2014), Conrad Bannister (2015), and Thomas O'Driscoll (2016), were ushers, with readings given by Nicole Rosenfeld (2015) and Freddie Follows (2016), with other Old Members present.

Michael Garstka (2017) to Charlotte Austin (Magdalen College, 2017), on 17 August 2025, at a ceremony in Oxford.

Clarice Mihele to James Scarsbrook (both 2021), on 9 June 2025, at St Osyth's Priory, Essex. Araminta Plumstead, Olivia Endacott and Poppy Agarwal (all 2021) were bridesmaids.

Clockwise from top left: Georgina Mordue and Thomas Fabes; Michael Garstka and Charlotte Austin; Clarice Mihele and James Scarsbrook; Henry Tan and Alice Jackson



Births

To **Ciara Stratford (2006)** and Glen Jeffries (Brasenose, 2007), in May 2025, a son, Caelan Kimi Jeffries

To **Marco Diciolla (2010)** and Anastasia, on 7 August 2026, a son, Alexander Theodore Diciolla

To **Ben Crompton (2012)** and Helen, on 2 May 2026, a daughter, Elizabeth Claire Crompton

To **Amanda Thomas (2018)** and Stephen Thatcher, on 20 September 2025, a daughter, Josephine Thatcher-Thomas

Deaths

The college has learned, with sadness, of the following deaths:

Professor Frank Adrien Louis Anet (1950), on 18 May 2024

John Frederick Mann (1950), in 2026

(Timothy) Barnabas Hans Brunner (1951), on 3 July 2026

Peter George Corran (1951), on 24 May 2026

Michael John Leslie Attfield (1952), on 9 February 2021

Dr (John) David Bell (1952), on 24 June 2026

The Revd Francis Douglas Gardom (1952), in August 2025

Gordon Charles Smith (1952), on 16 June 2026

The Revd Prebendary David Meeson Morris (1953), on 27 June 2026

Sydney Herbert Wood (1953), on 27 April 2026

David Child Moor (1955), in June 2025

Dr Denis Pemberton (1955), on 15 May 2026

John Laing Roberts (1959), on 16 April 2026

Professor Randal Robert Alexander Marlin (1961), on 15 May 2026

John Lionel Templeman (1961), on 21 August 2026

Professor John Christopher Raymond Charvet (1962), on 4 March 2024

Rudy Joseph Turkel (1962), on 23 May 2026

Philip Clement Keevil (1965), on 17 August 2026

Benet Walter 'Ben' Bano (1973), on 16 June 2026

Professor Robert Charles Peveler (1973), on 26 May 2026

Dr (Edward) Richard Pearce Edgcumbe (1974), on 26 May 2026

Rebecca Jane Newsome (2007), in September 2025

*Offers to contribute obituaries (up to 300 words) for the **Report**, or assist with information, would be very welcome: please email report@trinity.ox.ac.uk.*

Forthcoming events

The full Programme of Events (PDF to download) and more information and booking details for each event, as they become available, can be found on the website at trinity.ox.ac.uk/events. Please email Sarah Jenkinson (contact details below) with any event enquiries.

William Pitt Society Lunch

Saturday 17 October

Benefactors Lunch

Saturday 7 November

Informal London Drinks

Thursday 19 November
All Members and Friends are welcome to join us at this informal gathering

London Carol Service

Wednesday 2 December
at All Saints, Margaret Street, London

College Carol Service

Saturday 5 December

2027

Chemistry Lunch

Sunday 6 February
Invitations will be sent in Autumn 2026

Economics & PPE Dinner

Saturday 13 March
Invitations will be sent in Autumn 2026.

2027 Gaudies

Gaudy 2017–2019

Saturday 20 March

Gaudy 1984–1987

Saturday 11 September

Gaudy 1988–1991

Saturday 26 June

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This Newsletter is produced by the Alumni & Development Office. Feedback and suggestions for articles for future editions are very welcome.



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