From the commanding heights – a pelican’s eye view

Professor Lucia Zedner
Our newest FBA: teaching Law at Corpus

Silver service
Polishing up our knowledge of the College’s silver

The big picture
The Colditz Cox

Seeing is believing
Are atoms really so small as to be invisible?
Simon Chapman is no longer true of all colleges. Our front-line research, something which Fellows who are actively engaged in upon receiving tutorials from College all our undergraduates can count an unequalled means of developing the fundamental part of what we do, we do it well. The tutorial remains cherish our teaching and believe 2

It is recognised that universities of special and unexpected hardship additional schemes to tackle cases these University-wide measures with alumni, Corpus is able to supplement our endowment and the generosity of reduced tuition fees and bursaries university, through a combination of end, and in concert with other colleges, to ensure that no student with the charges of £9,000 a year, following the arrival of the first generation of undergraduates to face the new tuition quinquennium, as we move towards just of a new academic year but also in the College. We hope you will find it up-to-date with what's happening in Oxford.

I warmly welcome your ideas and very much look forward to hearing from you. I certainly was delighted and surprised, but I was even more surprised to be asked by the Academy to supply material in preparation on election, to supply the necessary background for studying here. To that end, and in concert with other colleges, we are offering the most generous financial support of any British university, through a combination of reduced tuition fees and bursaries, to help with living costs. Thanks to our endowment and the generosity of alumni, Corpus is able to supplement these University-wide measures with additional schemes to tackle cases of special and unexpected hardship as they arise. I want to reiterate the College’s special thanks to all our Old Members who have made this possible.

It is recognised that universities generally will be under intense scrutiny from those paying the new fees. Corpus welcomes this, of course, since we cherish our teaching and believe we do it well. The tutorial remains the fundamental part of what we do, an unequalled means of developing intellectual independence and individual responsibility. At Corpus, in part because we are small but also, more importantly, because of the commitment of our Tutorial Fellows, all our undergraduates can count upon receiving tutorials from College Fellows who are actively engaged in front-line research, something which is no longer true of all colleges. Our undergraduates express consistently high levels of satisfaction with their academic experience.

Students, of course, have expectations beyond the academic. With that in mind, the College continues to review its quality of accommodation. As I write, our contractors have begun building a new residential block on a Corpus site in the developing student quarter beyond Oxford Castle. As you will see from the feature on page 10, this will give us forty-five additional study bedrooms next year and provide the space to evacuate and fundamentally refurbish the 1960s Powell & Moya ‘New Building’ in Magpie Lane. When both projects are complete, Corpus will offer some of the best student accommodation in Oxford.

We are on the threshold of not just of a new academic year but also of what promises to be a historic quinquennium, as we move towards our big anniversary in 2017. The five hundred years of our history deserve to be celebrated with joy and in style: we aim to do just that. Several projects are already underway, including a much-needed modern history of the College, which Professor Thomas Charles-Edwards is writing with the aid of Julian Reid, our archivist. Others are in the advanced planning stage. Of these, the most ambitious is a proposed extension of the Library to provide more study space and house the College’s magnificent collection of manuscripts and early printed books. The gift of the early presidents, these collections express the Renaissance purposes of our Founder; of incalculable scholarly value, they deserve to be made more much accessible to readers.

Equally, we intend our Quincentenary to be a time for Old Members to return to enjoy a wide range of festive events – academic, cultural, sporting, and of course gastronomic. We may lack the resources to emulate Danny Boyle’s opening Olympic ceremony (and I have no plans to travel by zip wire across the front quad) but we do want this to be a memorable episode in our history. So, as we shape our programme for 2017, I warmly welcome your ideas and very much look forward to hearing from you.

I am thrilled to have been elected as a Fellow of the British Academy and honoured to join such a distinguished and important academic institution. I was just a little surprised to be asked, on election, to supply material in preparation for my obituary.
Charity events

The Tortoise Fair

This year’s Tortoise Fair, held on Sunday 3 June, shared the same day and, therefore weather, as the Queen’s Jubilee. However, there were still queues into Merton Street and the Tortoise Race went ahead undeterred. This year, Bishop Fox faced competition in the lettuce leaf surrounded circle from Oscar de la Tortoise (Magdalen), Percy (Unk) and Sampras (Christ) as the Queen’s Jubilee. However, there were shared the same day and, therefore weather, which though slightly less than last year, was very impressive, given the appalling weather. The JCPC voted to send the money to Reprieve, a charity, which assists prisoners facing the death penalty and those held beyond the rule of law.

The Tortoise Fair

As we looked at the shelves of carefully organised and beautifully polished items, it became obvious, as that as well as being highly decorative, they also represent the spirit of generosity among our Old Members, which was clearly very active, long before the arrival of the Annual Appeal. There are some items which, despite their age, are still used every day. For example, there is a collection of small tankards, dating from 1753, which the Fellows regularly use for water on High Table. Then, there is the elaborate two-handled silver gilt Mosely cup and cover (1796) by Paul de Lamerie which his always placed in front of the President. Another fine cup is the 1924 Swiney Prize, awarded to Sir Paul Vinogradoff, a Russian émigré and a Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence, for his work on Historical Jurisprudence (1920-2). Not all the silver however relates to academic pursuits... There is a wonderful collection of squat, often heavily ornate, lidded sconce pots. These were a way of imposing penalties for breaches of etiquette during a meal, the offender being required to drain the contents of the sconce. The earliest of these dates from 1685 and is inscribed ‘William Schlater’. Sconcing came to an end in the 1970s, but the pots bear witness to this three-hundred-year-old tradition.

Robert Patterson
Hall Manager

There is an atmosphere about dining in Hall which comes partly from the soaring 16th century roof and partly from the light glinting off the silver ware that parades down the tables, but where did these pieces come from and what is their history?

I went to see Robert Patterson who has been Hall Manager since 2001. As well as being in charge of the cellar and the Hall, his many responsibilities include looking after the College silver and its appearance on College occasions. My visit to the walk-in safe was a revelation. As we looked at the shelves of carefully organised and beautifully polished items, it became obvious, as that as well as being highly decorative, they also represent the spirit of generosity among our Old Members, which was clearly very active, long before the arrival of the Annual Appeal.

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Tours to food, my favourite subject was a George II copper tureen with, on its lid, a carefully sculpted half-open rose, nesting on 3 leaves. There is also a fine range of mustard pots each sporting a pelican, as well as gravy boats and pepper mills. And then, of course, the essential candleabra... Robert admitted that he had found a couple, a 1930s triple branch pair by Ramsden & Carr, tucked away at the back of a cupboard. There are some items which, despite their age, are still used every day. For example, there is a collection of small tankards, dating from 1753, which the Fellows regularly use for water on High Table. Then, there is the elaborate two-handled silver gilt Mosely cup and cover (1796) by Paul de Lamerie which his always placed in front of the President. Another fine cup is the 1924 Swiney Prize, awarded to Sir Paul Vinogradoff, a Russian émigré and a Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence, for his work on Historical Jurisprudence (1920-2). Not all the silver however relates to academic pursuits... There is a wonderful collection of squat, often heavily ornate, lidded sconce pots. These were a way of imposing penalties for breaches of etiquette during a meal, the offender being required to drain the contents of the sconce. The earliest of these dates from 1685 and is inscribed ‘William Schlater’. Sconcing came to an end in the 1970s, but the pots bear witness to this three-hundred-year-old tradition.

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Four years ago I was a rather misfit 16-year-old, watching the Beijing Olympics on TV, having accidently flicked it to the right channel at the right time, to see the men’s coxless 4 – GB’s top boat – win the Olympic final. Like many future rowers, I had never been very good at the school sports of Rugby and Football, so on a whim, I decided to give this somewhat niche sport a try.

After 18 months of rowing with the local club on a 700m lake, I was coming to Corpus to read Classics. At the college fresher’s fair, the rowing team’s few but enthusiastic members had set up a rowing machine (an ergometer, or ‘ergo’), and were inviting people to row as low a split as possible for 30 seconds. I attempted up, a tall gangly fresher in a t-shirt and jeans, and promptly produced a score that only the incumbent captain could match.

“So... um... you’re in.”

I was introduced to the Corpus training routine, which involved getting up before the sun at 5:30 to row in the cold darkness on the Isis, running the Three Bridges or Headington Hill runs, circuits, and of course, ergos. By the time Torpids came around, I was striking the first boat, and over the 4 days, we moved up 5 places, heartbreakingly missing out on a win and promptly producing a score that only the incumbent captain could match.

“...I am keen to keep rowing, and so joined Development Squad of the OUBC.

Having had a disappointing month with them, where I failed to make any boats, I decided to triall nevertheless and see how long I could last before getting cut. Much to my surprise, I never did get cut, won several seat races, knocked 45 seconds off my 5000m ergo test, and made the 5-seat of the Reserve crew. We beat Cambridge, set the reserve course record, and remain the third fastest winning crew in the history of the Boat Race.

Afterwards, I returned to row with Corpus for Summer Eights. On the last day, we set off from the Corpus Boathouse in blistering heat and moved past the thousands of people who had turned out to watch. As you row up Greenbank, towards Longbridges, you get a fantastic view of all of Boathouse Island, and on that day, I looked up to see the yellow and blue Pelican banner of Corpus snapping in the breeze. Ten minutes later, we bumped Linacre in front of that banner, to the cheers of most of the College who had turned up to watch. The pride of rowing with College and the adrenaline of bumps racing was, and remains, the highlight of Corpus College life.

At the time of writing, I am for the second time attempting to balance academic commitments with trialling for the Boat Race Squad. The OUBC is playing host, not for the first time, to Olympians, two of whom got medals (of different colours) in the Men’s 8 at London 2012. The post-Olympic year usually sees the strongest athletes of the four-year cycle turn up to trial, and from my vantage point at the start of the season, the squad looks to be one of the strongest Oxford has seen in recent years. The squad and the year will however be judged in very binary terms by an eager public, on the first day attempting to balance academic commitments with trialling for the Boat Race Squad.

Four years ago, when I was a rather misfit 16-year-old, the rain held off for the annual Alumni golf match against St Edmund Hall, but nonetheless, by the end of the day, Corpus spirits were severely dampened as they trailed their Queen’s Lane rivals for the second year in succession. One rare glimmer of golfing sunshine was provided by Richard Atkinson, who came third overall. The Corpus performance wasn’t helped by the fact that we were only able to field a team half the size of the Teddy Hall side. Corpus captain, Bill Morris, issued a rallying call to Corpus golfers, “It is imperative that the trophy is returned to its proper place in 2013. If you can play, your College needs you!” If you want to keep up to date with details of forthcoming Corpus golf events, contact the Development Office.
Escaping Colditz

Flt Lt Dominic Bruce MC (far left), cox to the 1947 Men's First VIII, was also the most prolific escaper from Colditz Castle during WWII. His diminutive stature allowed him to hide in a tea-chest which was removed by guards from the British dormitory to a storage room. From there he was able to escape to Danzig, where he was recaptured. Flt Lt Bruce was later portrayed by David McCallum in the popular BBC drama series, Colditz.
New accommodation

New building underway

In response to the increasing demand for good quality undergraduate accommodation, a brand new building is being constructed for the College on site of the old Cantay warehouse off Park End Street. The new building will comprise 45 en-suite rooms, arranged in groups of five around a common kitchen and dining area. This part of the city has proved popular with Oxford undergraduates in recent years, being close enough to college and university facilities, within a short walk of the railway station and close to most of the student night-spots. A number of other colleges have already invested in student housing in the area and the development of the Corpus building means that more peripheral accommodation, which is expensive to operate and maintain, can eventually be released. JCR representatives have been closely involved in the design of the rooms, which will be light and comfortable and sound-proofed from the evening hubbub of this lively area.

The cost of the new development is being met through the sale to a private buyer of 8 Park Town, a Victorian building which currently houses just twelve students. There is an increasing demand for modern summer accommodation from international summer schools and it is anticipated that the letting of rooms in this new building will add to the College’s income during the long vacation. If the work proceeds to schedule, the first students should be moving in at the beginning of the 2013/14 academic year.

This is an extremely exciting development, adding to the College’s stock of excellent student rooms within the City centre.

Colin Holmes, Corpus Domestic Bursar

Corpus Association Biennial Dinner

Biennial dinner

Bookings were brisk for the Biennial Dinner this year and so it was no surprise to see the hall brimming with Corpusians from an extraordinarily broad range of years from Rolf Christophersen (1938) to Glen Smith et al (2001).

The unexpectedly warm and sunny weather meant that pre-dinner drinks could be served on the Handa Terrace, above the new MBI Auditorium, with its fine views of the gardens and Christ Church meadows all at fused with an early autumnal glow. After dinner, Bill Morris, Chairman of the Corpus Association, replied to the President’s welcome and expressed his pleasure at being back at Corpus, amongst old friends and new. This year, there was a break in tradition and the festivities continued in the newly-refurbished JCR Bar with some of the younger cohort reliving past sporting triumphs and taking advantage of the table-football, dartboard and pool-table.

The next morning, there was a chance to see the new Corpus-made documentary The Treasures of the Corpus Christi Library. This was followed by a plenary presentation from the President and the Bursar about preparations for the College’s Quincentenary in 2017. This ranged from a discussion of the form the celebrations will take (there will be plenty of them throughout the year!) to the projects which the College hopes to have underway, or even in place, to mark this significant date. The Bursar, John Harrison, described the proposals for an extension to the Library to house and display our manuscripts as well as for the acquisition of the Park End Street building (see adjacent story) and ambitious plans for the refurbishment of the Chapel. The aim of these developments would be to strengthen and enhance the College’s next 500 years.

From the present and future of the College, the morning then turned to a look at past relations between the Dutch and the English.

In a lecture entitled ‘The Best of Enemies’, Geert Janssen, Fellow in Modern Dutch History, gave a thoughtful and very well received talk on the Anglo-Dutch wars of the 17th century (see opposite page).
Atoms are the fundamental building blocks of all matter. As a Materials Scientist, one thing that particularly excites me is our ability to measure where the atoms are in a material and how they bond together. Relating this atomic detail to the measurable macroscopic properties of the material, understanding the so-called structure-property relationship, gives us an opportunity to develop ways to process materials to modify their atomic structure and thereby improve their properties. Indeed, improving materials properties and processing has been one of the cornerstones of our development as a civilisation. For example, the development of metals processing allowed us to move on from the stone age though the bronze and iron ages. Today, we are improving semiconductor materials to develop new solid-state lighting technologies that are aiming to be 10 times more efficient than conventional light bulbs, improving materials properties and processing has much higher than that found experimentally. A type of defect in the crystal, known as a dislocation, had been proposed as a way of explaining the observed plasticity. In one type of dislocation, an extra plane of atoms exists in just part of the crystal and where this plane terminates is known as the dislocation core itself. Like pushing a kink across a rug to move it easily over a carpet, movement of the dislocation through the crystal allows the atoms to move over each other.

The existence of the dislocation was hotly debated with indirect evidence slowly mounting for it. In the late 1950s, Peter Hirsch in Cambridge led a group that decided to put a thin foil of metal into one the newly developed commercial electron microscopes that had been developed during the post-war years. They were able to see the dislocations (see image above, centre) as lines in the microscope image, and to their surprise, watch them move as the foil of metal deformed slightly. This observation was one of the key developments in Materials Science, and has led to using impurities in metals, forming alloys, that can help to stop dislocations moving and preventing metals bending. Aluminium alloys are now one of the main materials used for aircraft frames. Peter Hirsch later moved to Oxford (1966) and became the Wolfson Professor of Metallurgy, successfully building up what, at that time, was still a very new effort.

In the 21st century, electron microscopes is now undergoing a new revolution in performance. Electrons are focused using lenses formed from magnetic fields, and technology has been developed that significantly improves the quality of the lenses available. Observing the arrays of atoms in crystals is now possible and I am able to use these new instruments in the study of dislocations, but this time of the material gallium nitride. The question this time is not of plasticity, but in the way dislocations reduce the efficiency of solid-state lighting, which relies on gallium nitride. Finding ways of reducing the density of dislocations will improve the efficiency and extend the life of these new lights, and the processing involved with doing this relies on detailed studies of the structure of the dislocation. The image shows a recently recorded image of a dislocation in gallium nitride viewed along its edge in projection, and a challenge to the reader, in this more complicated structure, is to identify the extra half plane of atoms. The microscopes needed to observe features like this are multimillion pound instruments, and providing and maintaining these crucial capabilities at a research intensive university like Oxford is becoming increasingly challenging during a time of tightened research funding. Nonetheless, I find these pictures of atoms in materials to be things of beauty, and I feel privileged to have the opportunity to look at nature at this scale.
New arrivals

The Michael Brock
Junior Research Fellowship

Following a lunch to celebrate the 90th birthday of their former tutor, Michael Brock, a number of Old Members thought it would be a good thing to do something tangible to acknowledge all that Michael had done for his students during his 16 years as Fellow and Tutor in History and Politics at Corpus. They also wanted to acknowledge his later contribution to the wider academic world, as Vice-President and Bursar of Wolfson College, and then as Warden of Nuffield College and Editor of the History of the University of Oxford (1800-1914).

They approached the College with the suggestion that they might collectively fund a three year Junior Research Fellowship in History, to be named after Michael. They were keen that this should also provide a springboard for the career of a promising young historian. The College eagerly agreed and set about searching for a suitable candidate who specialised in nineteenth/twentieth century history, reflecting Michael's own particular area of interest.

Following a superb fundraising effort among their contemporaries, a sufficient amount was raised to make the appointment possible. In the face of strong competition, Dr Ben Mountford, an Australian-born historian, was appointed to the post. His interests centre on modern British history and the history of the British Empire. His research project will investigate the evolving relationship between Britain and the rest of the British World from the 1850s to the early twentieth century. It will focus on the imperial tours of a number of prominent metropolitan Britons, starting with Lord Salisbury and Sir Charles Dilke. As a mark of Michael's and the College's appreciation of the generosity of his former pupils, a special lecture will be given by Ben in 2013 to which all donors to the fund will be invited.

RIGHT: Dr Ben Mountford

More chairs

The Corpus Teledthon 2012

The Corpus Telephone Appeal 2012 came to a close on the night of Sunday 7 October. The seventeen Corpus undergraduates who made the calls were based in the University Development Offices in Wellington Square, alongside teams from Wadham, Herford and Mansfield. To help them make the best of their opportunity, the students had a half day of training in College and then another two days with members of the University Development Offices who are running this year’s Telethon. As the two weeks progressed, there was plenty of friendly rivalry between the Colleges over which team made the most money, the Corpus team came a very respectable second (after Wadham) having raised over £35,000 through a combination of single and regular gifts. Donations are still coming in, so we confidently expect the final total to be more than £100,000.

The College has just acquired a copy of a portrait of Thomas Hornsby, who was admitted as a fellow at Corpus in 1760. Hornsby was one of the College’s most eminent early scientists – Reader in Experimental Philosophy, Savilian Professor of Astronomy, Sedilian Professor of Natural Philosophy and the first Radcliffe Observer, as well as serving as Radcliffe Librarian. He was to spend the rest of his life in Oxford and marked his well as serving as Radcliffe Librarian. He was to spend the rest of his life in Oxford and marked his...
Conference

Discount on Conference Facilities for Corpuscles

The College has a range of meeting rooms available for hire, mainly during the vacations, but also some limited availability during term-time. Room capacities range from 10 to 120 people and the College also offers comprehensive catering and audio-visual facilities. Old Members are entitled to a 20% discount on the College’s standard room hire fees. Please contact Colin Holmes (colin.holmes@ccc.ox.ac.uk) for further information.

Hotel

Oxford Hotel Discount for Old Members

The College has arranged a discount for Old Members on rooms at the newly-refurbished Head of the River at Folly Bridge. Double en-suite rooms with full English breakfast, normally priced at £180 per night, will be available at just £95. Bookings must be made through Sarah Salter in the College Development Office (sarah.salter@ccc.ox.ac.uk).

Corpus Christi College

Alumni events

November 2012

Tuesday 27 November
London Drinks

Annual drinks party for Old Members based in the London area. Generously hosted by a Corpus Alumnus. Further details to follow.

December 2012

Saturday 1 December
Carol Service for Old Members

The perfect start to Christmas. Details of how to book for this very popular event will follow.

Thursday 6 December
Varsity Rugby Match

Let battle commence! See page 7 for more information. To book, call The Blues Village booking line on 0844 847 2492 and ask for ‘The Varsity Match Blues Village’ or go to www.thevarsitymatch.com to book your tickets.

Friday 14 December
Gaudy for 2002-2004 Matriculands

Invitations to this black tie reunion dinner in College will be sent out shortly.

February 2013

Saturday 16 February
The Michael Brock Lecture – 11am

New arrival, Ben Mountford (see page 15), delivers a lecture in honour of former Tutor and Fellow in History and Politics, Michael Brock CBE, in the MBI Auditorium.

April 2013

Friday 26 to Sunday 28 April
Oxford University European Reunion in Madrid

Following the huge success of the University Reunion in Paris in 2011 (for pictures, please see www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/page.aspx?pid=728), the Madrid Reunion promises to be even more spectacular. The programme of events will include a reception at the British Embassy, as well as a private dinner for Corpus Old Members. If you are interested in this event, please email Sarah (sarah.salter@ccc.ox.ac.uk), so that we can start to gauge numbers.

May 2013

Date to be confirmed
New York Reunion Dinner

New York in the spring time...The President will be hosting a Dinner in May for Corpus Old Members and their partners. Details of this event to follow.

Saturday 25 May
Eights Week Lunch

After lunch in College, come down to the river and cheer on the Corpus teams from the vantage of the Boat House.

June 2013

Friday 21 June
Gaudy for 1959-64 Matriculands

A not-to-be-missed Gaudy, as for many it will be, 50 years or more since they first set foot in Corpus!

October 2013

Friday 4 October
Decade Dinner for 1990-99 Matriculands

A Gaudy – but on a larger scale...