



# Sundial

- 03**  
**New Arrivals**  
Inaugural Cullen Junior  
Research Fellow
- 08**  
**The Big Picture**  
Corpus under  
canvas
- 12**  
**The Corpus Papers**  
Using the past to  
predict the future
- 15**  
**College Faces**  
Finalists in  
lockdown





# Welcome

From the President  
*Dr Helen Moore*



All universities in 2020, like institutions, businesses and families across the nation, have been faced with two profound challenges to our way of life and stability, and Corpus is no exception. The first challenge, Brexit, has been long anticipated but nonetheless poses a significant threat to the networks of collaboration and innovation across the EU that have underpinned and enhanced our intellectual culture for decades. The second, the Covid-19 pandemic, developed from a notional to a very real threat in a matter of mere weeks at the beginning of the year. The impact of each, let alone in combination, is of a magnitude the College has rarely encountered in peacetime. Yet as you will see from the articles in this issue of the *Sundial*, the determination of Corpus members to surmount these difficulties is undimmed. Prof Alastair Buchan, who was Pro-Vice Chancellor (Head of Brexit Strategy) from 2017-19, is also the Founding Director of ‘Oxford in Berlin’, a collaboration with four leading research universities in Germany that aims to secure and develop the University’s longstanding place at the heart of European research. Alongside Prof Buchan’s look into the future of UK-EU research on pp. 6-7 sits the retrospective by Honorary Fellow Leo Sharpston QC of her time as Advocate General of the Court of Justice of the European Union. Elsewhere in this issue, you will find pictorial and personal evidence of the resilience, pragmatism and optimism demonstrated in particular by the Finalists of 2020 who have persevered despite the many disruptions and disappointments brought by the pandemic, and are looking positively to the future.

On the subject of looking to the future, we are delighted to announce that the plans drawn up by architects Wright & Wright for the new Special Collections Centre and library improvements have been granted planning permission and listed building consent. Providing significant new space and facilities for the College at the same time as respecting the scale and intimacy of our site, the new building has been designed to sit sympathetically within the existing setting of Garden Quad, while providing a striking contemporary addition and improvement to the streetscape of Oriel Square. As the architects describe on pp. 10-11, ‘reciprocity and transformation’ have been the watchwords of this project. Corpus has always been about people as well as buildings, of course, and so it is a particular pleasure to report the progress that has been made in fundraising to endow the Andrew Glyn Fellowship in Economics, which now stands at two thirds of its target of £1m. It would be wonderful if we could reach our total in time for the planned celebrations next summer (pandemic permitting) of 100 years of PPE teaching at Oxford.

As the ‘Big Picture’ on pp. 8-9 reveals, life in College during the past few months has looked and felt different – notably in the decidedly un-Corpus phenomenon called social distancing – but the essentials of Michaelmas Term (Freshers’ week in October, Christmas trees in November) have still been present. As revealed in the interviews with some of our students who hold leadership positions in the College and University (pp. 14-16), ingenuity and adaptability have proved the watchwords in student social as well as academic life. More than anything, this term has reminded us all of the need to cleave to the things that matter and enjoy life to the full when we can: as Rhiannon Ogden-Jones, former JCR President, observes, ‘part of the beauty of living is learning how to adapt and finding the joy in that’. ‘Hopeful imaginings’, in the words of our current JCR Vice-President, Augy Allain-Labon (p. 8), are what higher education ought to be about. It is a blessing to live, study and work in this place of hope and imagination, and at the end of this peculiar year, we send our very best wishes for your own ‘hopeful imaginings’ for 2021.

*Helen Moore*

## Sundial

Issue 13  
December 2020



**Editors**  
**Sara Watson**  
*above, top*  
sara.watson@ccc.ox.ac.uk

**Ben Armstrong**  
*above, bottom*  
ben.armstrong@ccc.ox.ac.uk

**©Corpus Christi College**  
Oxford, 2020  
www.ccc.ox.ac.uk

**Designed by**  
www.pelotondesign.co.uk

**Printed by**  
Taylor Brothers Bristol Ltd

If you would prefer not to receive copies of this publication in future, please email  
**ben.armstrong@ccc.ox.ac.uk**

All details are correct at the time of going to press.

COVER: King Charles’ Gate, like its now blocked-up counterpart on the other side of Corpus’ garden, was created in summer 1643 to allow King Charles I, then resident in Christ Church, to visit his queen, Henrietta Maria, who was then living at Merton.  
Photograph: Nick Read

## New Arrivals

Dr Méadhbh Brosnan  
*Cullen Junior Research Fellow*

Méadhbh Brosnan was welcomed to Corpus as the Cullen JRF, and to the Department of Experimental Psychology and the Wellcome Centre for Integrative Neuroimaging as a Marie Curie Fellow in March 2020. She was previously a postdoctoral research fellow at the Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health in Melbourne, Australia. She holds a PhD from Trinity College Dublin, an MSc Research from Maastricht University in the Netherlands and an undergraduate degree (BA, Psychology) from the National University of Ireland, Galway.

Méadhbh is delighted to be joining the Corpus community. “It is difficult to imagine exploring Corpus without feeling inspired. Traversing the creaking boards of the impressive age-old library, I am both humbled by my small place in the history of the College, and reminded of the timeless potential of our work. During this turbulent and challenging time where our post-pandemic plans weigh heavily on the fruits of research, it is a privilege to be conducting my work within the rich academic community at Corpus.”

Méadhbh’s work explores how our capacity to process sensory information influences neuroplasticity (or malleability of the brain) to subsequently impact function. Under the mentorship of Anna C (Kia) Nobre, she is currently investigating the neural underpinnings of resilience to cognitive ageing. In particular, she is interested in how individual differences in day-to-day levels of cognitive engagement culminate over a lifetime to protect against clinical symptomatology in neuropathological conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease and stroke. Guided by emerging research in this area, she is assessing the feasibility of novel intervention techniques (brain stimulation, fMRI neurofeedback, and pharmacology) to meaningfully improve the cognitive ageing trajectory and protect against cognitive decline. In collaboration with Robin Murphy she is looking forward to teaching at Corpus during Hilary term. She says, “Students bring great energy and I love the opportunity teaching offers to marvel at the field of psychology through a fresh lens.”



“

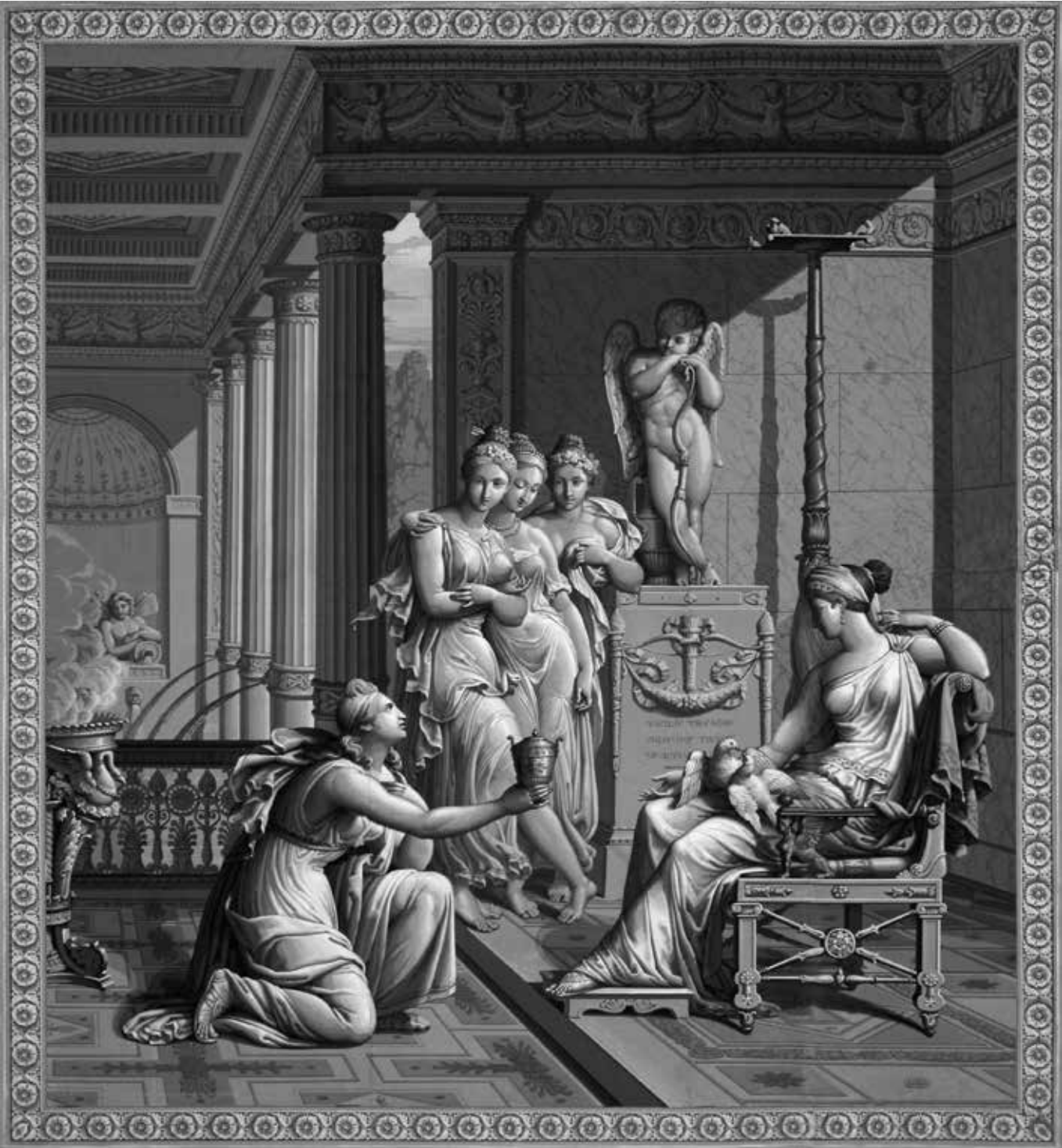
It is difficult to imagine exploring Corpus without feeling inspired



Research

Stephen Harrison  
Senior Research Fellow, Professor of Latin Literature

LOVE & THE SOUL:  
CUPID AND PSYCHE



➡ Professor Harrison has been a Fellow at Corpus since 1987 and was Tutor in Latin until this year.

Over the last few years I have been working on a study of the reception of the long two-book love story of Cupid (*Amor* or ‘Love’ in Latin) and Psyche (‘Soul’ in Greek) in European literature since the time of Shakespeare. Cupid and Psyche (C&P henceforward) forms the centrepiece of the Latin novel *Metamorphoses* or *The Golden Ass* by the second-century CE writer Apuleius, on whom I have written two previous volumes, one a general account of the author and another which looks at the literary texture of the *Metamorphoses*. This current research is aimed at a third book to complete the series with a reception study, a joint enterprise with another Apuleian scholar, Regine May, Associate Professor at the University of Leeds (whom some may recall as a CCC DPhil).

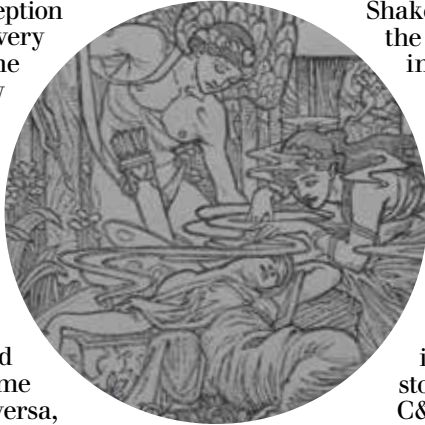
Apuleius’ tale narrates how the beautiful princess Psyche gains the enmity of Venus but the love of Venus’ son Cupid, and how after a series of tribulations and adventures (involving jealous sisters, a husband of mysterious identity, a dramatic revelation scene, surreal speaking objects and animals, and an epic-style journey to the Underworld) Cupid and Psyche are united in happy marriage and Psyche becomes a goddess. This story has enjoyed an extraordinarily rich reception through the five centuries from the rediscovery of Apuleius’ novel in the Renaissance to the present day. Our project ranges across literary genres in English, French, German and Dutch, encompassing poetry and drama as well as prose fiction, with occasional glances at opera, film and the visual arts.

This is the first full scholarly study which takes up the key question of the story’s relationship to the development of the modern fairy-tale, which it obviously resembles in its fantastic elements and happy ending. The scholar Detlev Fehling has argued persuasively that Apuleius’ novel generated some supposed folk-tale patterns rather than vice versa, as commonly held previously. The ‘Cinderella’ story with its malevolent pair of older sisters and its beautiful, suffering and ultimately gloriously married youngest sister derives from C&P, while the tale’s idea that a handsome husband could be a monster looks like the origin of ‘Beauty and the Beast’ (see further below). The consequences of this perception for the reception history of the *Metamorphoses* and its resulting key role in the history of the modern fairy tale have never been followed up.

A major context for the study is the court of Louis XIV of France in the 1660s, then the cultural centre of Western Europe. The fabulist Jean de La Fontaine’s interesting 1669 adaptation of the story (presented as narrated in the gardens of the then-rising Versailles) was itself adapted for the stage by Molière and others with music by Lully. It also stimulated a controversy with one of the founders of the modern literary fairy-tale, Charles Perrault, who in the well-known ‘quarrel of the ancient and moderns’ suggested that his own verse fables were morally more improving than the equivalent stories of antiquity and that of Psyche in particular. As already noted, C&P was also a



The scholar Detlev Fehling has argued persuasively that Apuleius’ novel generated some supposed folk-tale patterns rather than vice versa, as commonly held previously



ABOVE: Cupid rescues Psyche – Herbert Granville Fell, 1926 [author’s photo from engraving in author’s collection]  
LEFT: Psyche appeals to Venus – Dufour wallpaper, Paris 1816 [by kind permission of Prof. Dr Christiane Reitz]

point of origin for the fairy story of ‘Beauty and the Beast’: in Apuleius there is initial ambiguity about whether Cupid is a monster, and his magic palace has invisible servants, both elements still recognisable in the Disney ‘Beauty and the Beast’ films of 1991 (animation) and 2017 (live action).

This link with ‘Beauty and the Beast’, a story shaped in its best-known form by a series of French female writers between 1695 and 1757, as Marina Warner has shown in her excellent *From the Beast to the Blonde*, points to a fascinating feature of the reception of this particular classical tale. Unusually, C&P presents a narrative from the Greek and Roman world in which a woman is the successful protagonist; as in the Greek love novels of the early Roman empire to which C&P is clearly related, the heroine Psyche is the central character, who perseveres in her quest to find and marry Cupid and is rewarded with the immortality more often associated with male figures such as Hercules. Psyche has consequently been a popular topic with female writers, including Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Sylvia Plath and the Pulitzer-winning Mississippi novelist Eudora Welty.

Illustrations of C&P in the period since Shakespeare are also legion, as they had been in the Renaissance. The story of Cupid and Psyche in La Fontaine’s version became the subject of a celebrated series of high-art Empire wallpapers by Dufour (Paris) in 1816, while William Morris’ extensive poetic treatment in the quasi-Chaucerian *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-70) led to a considerable number of artworks by Edward Burne-Jones; the two projected an illustrated edition for the splendid Kelmscott Press which never emerged, but some of the illustrations survive alongside a number of important Burne-Jones paintings of the Psyche story, many now in UK and US public galleries.

C&P was also an object of fascination to the Decadent writers at the end of the nineteenth century, who saw Apuleius as late and mannered like themselves; *Marius The Epicurean*, the 1883 historical novel by Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde’s Oxford tutor, contains a famous version of the story narrated by Apuleius as a fictional character, a version which had an impact on Wilde’s early fairy stories. More recent receptions include a 1944 radio play by Louis MacNeice, a 1956 fantasy novel by C.S.Lewis (*Till We Have Faces*), and elements in A.S.Byatt’s 1990 Booker-winning novel *Possession*.

This gives only a small taste of the rich material available. There is far too much for a single volume; Regine and I have just co-edited a multi-author conference book which contains more than twenty essays as part of the project (*Cupid and Psyche: The Reception of Apuleius’ Love Story since 1600*, De Gruyter, 2020), and our joint monograph covers only some highlights from which the above details are in turn a selection. We hope to finish it in the next year or two. This should be easier for me as I have stepped down as Latin tutor after more than three decades this October, though I am continuing as a senior research fellow at Corpus and will carry on supervising doctoral students.



Professor Alastair Buchan  
Professorial Fellow in Medicine

# Neue Ära

Professor Alastair Buchan was the University’s Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Head of Brexit Strategy) between 2017 and 2019. He is the founding Director of Oxford in Berlin.

As the UK heads towards the end of the transition period, having already formally left the European Union at the beginning of 2020, one can be forgiven for wondering what – economically, politically, socially – the next few years might bring for the country. We know what the last four years or so have brought: a country and its people embattled and embittered, with its outlook on how to deal with the current pandemic, to name but one major preoccupation, generally following the fault lines of Brexit.

Universities in the UK have occasionally been criticised for not doing their best to get the message of the dangers of Brexit sufficiently into the public domain, or at least not getting them sufficiently well-comprehended. My view is that the debate over continued membership of the EU was so visceral, so steeped in the last century of European and British history, so bound up in our political divides and cultural battles, that there was little that British universities could have done to influence the outcome of the referendum.

Whether we could have or not, here in Oxford we have taken steps to ward off the worst implications for UK higher education of leaving the European Union. Nationally, much ink has flowed, and many miles have been traipsed, rehearsing those arguments of leaving or remaining. I was appointed as the University’s Pro-Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for Brexit Strategy in late 2016. While I discovered that there was little that Oxford individually, or UK universities collectively, could do to mitigate the worst policy failures of a government intent on taking us out of the EU, finding a way for Oxford to work inside and to effectively remain in Europe was absolutely essential. To do this I founded ‘Oxford in Berlin’.

In 2017, Oxford University signed a memorandum of understanding with four of the leading research-intensive institutions in Germany: the Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin and the medical school at the Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin. The MoU covered a wide range of possibilities, including the intensifying of research links as well as the establishment of an Oxford Research Centre in Berlin. It’s been a deeply interesting and enjoyable three years, two of which I have spent in Germany on sabbatical, as the Founding Director of Oxford in Berlin working at the Charité with a concurrent fellowship at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

During 2018 and 2019, the five partners have between them supported over 48 multidisciplinary workshops, involving some 1200 faculty members, researchers and students, and we have seed-funded 57 research projects, to the total tune of almost 1.2M euros. Several of those projects have now gone on to gain larger competitive research grants from the EU or other European funding agencies.

In 2018 a University subsidiary company was established, entitled Oxford in Berlin gGmbH. We have a centre and open lab space housed at the Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin’s Natural History Museum, that now provides Oxford’s faculty, visitors and students with workspace when they are in town. Aside from our main relationship with the Berlin University Alliance, as our first four partners are now known, we have flourishing links with many research institutions within Berlin-Brandenburg. Our original partners have been successful in gaining additional research funding having been designated as a Centre of Excellence by the Federal government, with some of which they are establishing a virtual Oxford-Berlin Centre for Advanced Studies. Its first thematic research programmes will be focussing on Social Cohesion and Global Health, but programmes in other disciplinary areas will be identified over the coming years, as will be other funding mechanisms to encourage faculty and student mobility between Oxford and Berlin. We are working closely with colleagues at the Einstein Foundation, which will be supporting several major research initiatives and funded a



“  
Finding a way  
for Oxford  
to work  
inside and  
to effectively  
remain in  
Europe was  
absolutely  
essential

Profile

# Working at the ECJ (actually, the ‘CJEU’)

Until 10 September 2020 Eleanor (‘Leo’) Sharpston QC was Advocate General of the Court of Justice of the European Union



For anyone intrigued by the process of deciding cases in a multi-cultural, multi-lingual environment, the CJEU is an extraordinary place to work. Problems arrive in any one of 24 languages of procedure, presented in a way that made perfect sense to the draftsman but that may seem weird to a lawyer trained in a completely different legal tradition who is trying to understand them via the medium of elaborate administrative French (French being the unofficial internal common working language). The solution has to be one that simultaneously ticks the academic boxes (intellectual rigour, coherence with the whole mosaic of existing case law) and is severely practical (capable of being applied by a tired local official or judge on a Friday afternoon in a small town somewhere in the EU). Sounds surreal? Yes, in a way it is – and also completely exciting and challenging and addictive.

As an advocate general, you get to tackle everything that EU law can throw at you. You are the AG in all cases allocated to you (not just those that end up with Opinions), so you deal with one-eleventh of the total case-load. You’re meant to make sure, with the reporting judge, that the case follows a sensible path through the Court, taking up an appropriate amount of time and judicial resources. In the more difficult puzzlers, your task is to deliver a non-binding Opinion – publicly available on the internet together with the later judgment – that explains the issues (and the bear-traps), sets out and analyses the options and proposes (ideally, with compelling logic) which solution the Court should take and why. You cover everything from refugees to GMOs, from proposed EU – third country trade agreements to employment rights for Muslim women wearing the hijab.

Fourteen and a half years in what has always been my dream job is more luck than anyone has a right to expect out of a professional career. Although my service at the Court came to an end in rather dramatic circumstances on 10 September 2020, my abiding memory will be of the great privilege and honour of working there as an advocate general trying to contribute towards the forging of EU law.



# The Big Picture

Corpus under canvas  
Covid-19

In order to provide socially distanced space for our students, at the beginning of this term, the Domestic Bursar Andy Rolfe arranged for marquees to be erected in the Main Quad, Gentlemen Commoners' Quad and the Fellows' Building garden. This picture shows the garden marquee being used for inductions during Freshers' Week. In the evenings, it transforms into the student bar, with table service provided by college staff. JCR Vice-President Augy Allain-Labon says: "Although it doesn't quite have the same atmosphere as the Beer Cellar (surely nothing else does?), the marquee buzzes with potential. I like the feeling of expansiveness in there, and something about the vastness of the space above you at once makes you feel safe from the dangers of the virus 'out there', and encourages hopeful imaginings about life post-pandemic. It's a space for everyone to come together at a time when the value of community has never been more apparent."

RIGHT: Garden marquee used for inductions during Freshers' Week.



NICK READ



# Fundraising

## Special Collections Centre



efficient and experientially uplifting conditions for readers and staff. A new entrance to the enlarged Library will be created at the current entrance to Staircase 6, affording first floor access to the existing Library for users with mobility needs. In expanding user provision, the remodelled building will create sixty new reader spaces for Corpus members and six additional spaces within the Special Collection's area for researchers. An additional 1200m of shelving will be added for the storage of manuscripts and early printed books.

Split over three floors, the new Reading Room has been designed to ensure that all of the desks are in the brightest part of the plan, overlooking Garden Quad. This reduces the need for artificial lighting and provides excellent views, ensuring that there is no overlooking of neighbouring Christ Church. Each of the floors has a different character and will provide a range of working environments, from the monastic sequestration of individual carrels to larger shared desks for group collaboration. Beautifully detailed bespoke furniture and lighting enhances the reader experience. Despite the rise of digital media (and looking beyond the current proscriptions of the coronavirus pandemic), there is still a need for physical engagement, both with people and objects, in spaces of study and contemplation.

The Design Team has worked to ensure that the scheme is designed with very effective passive energy solutions throughout. A small amount of mechanical intervention is required but the building will work very effectively with minimal mechanical and electrical services. The current design is the first building in Oxford, other than a café at Kellogg College, to meet Passivhaus standards.

The relocation of books currently stored in the lower rooms in the old Library will free up these areas for use as high-quality teaching spaces. They have the potential to become delightful historic rooms, with windows letting in light on both sides. Throughout the project, existing elements and conditions are a jumping-off point for reciprocity and transformation, the new emerging out of the old to generate unexpected synergies and breathe life into assemblages created over time.

We are delighted that the scheme has been positively received by the planners and Historic England and that planning permission and listed building consent were granted in November.

LEFT: Exterior North Elevation

ABOVE CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Proposed Reading Room, Internal looking to Oriel Square, Exterior Garden Quad

## Fellowship

# Investing in Economics

**In 2008 the College began to endow our Fellowship in Economics in the name of former Economics Fellow Andrew Glyn.**

Andrew taught at Corpus from 1969-2008 and tutored more than three hundred and fifty of our alumni including many of our more prominent names in the fields of politics and journalism as well as others who have made their careers in the City. The campaign got off to a great start: £300,000 was raised in very short order and the money placed in the College accounts where it has been growing happily ever since.

Following discussions with a number of PPEists from the 1990s, it has become apparent that the students' love for Andrew and high regard for his teaching remain as strong as ever. Each and every one of them has a story to tell about how Andrew helped, from putting them at ease during the interview to settling into College life, and then throughout their studies in Oxford.

A while ago, it was suggested that the campaign be reopened and we have just reached £667k, almost exactly two thirds of the way towards our goal of £1m. Placing a ringfenced million pounds in the College Endowment would allow drawdown to happen at a rate which would cover most of the costs of the successive Economics Fellowship holders' salaries in perpetuity and thus ensure that there will be forever an Andrew Glyn Fellow at Corpus Christi College.

As it happens, 2020 sees the 100th anniversary of the teaching of PPE at Oxford and we hope (Covid permitting) to take advantage of the centenary by holding an event in the summer to mark Andrew's contribution to the discipline for nearly forty of those one hundred years.

If you would like to contribute to the Fellowship Fund and join us at Corpus for that celebration, please do pick up the phone or email Ben Armstrong in the Development Office.

# A modern library

**Architects Clare Wright and Kirsty Shankland explain how the project to extend and redevelop the Corpus Library respects the heritage of the site and buildings.**

With works by Galileo, Erasmus and the Venerable Bede, among others, the library collections of Corpus Christi are among the finest of any Oxford college. Yet though its sixteenth-century Library is of national architectural and historical significance, it no longer meets the needs or expectations of students and staff at a modern, world-class university. Designed to meet these needs and safeguard the College's Special Collections, the remodelling project by Wright & Wright Architects, whose previous work includes libraries at Magdalen and Corpus Cambridge as well as Lambeth Palace, extends and redevelops the Library, while respecting the heritage of the site and buildings.

As one of Oxford's oldest and smallest colleges, Corpus Christi is characterised by a spirit of architectural and academic intimacy. "At Corpus, everything is on the small side; that is what makes it so lovable", declared the architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner. Wright & Wright's proposals carefully unpick, restore and augment the existing building fabric, while adding distinctive contemporary elements. Notably, a new ashlar stone facade on Oriel Square replaces the existing garage and flat originally designed in the 1950s. A large glazed opening alludes to the historic notion of the 'library window', acting as a new marker for the College, consolidating its civic presence and reframing its relationship with the wider urban realm.

As well as creating more suitable conditions for holding and maintaining the College's valuable archive, the project also improves accessibility to the Special Collection and creates more spatially



# The Corpus Papers 13

## MYSTERIES OF THE SUN: USING THE PAST TO PREDICT THE FUTURE

Julie Blyth, Assistant Librarian,  
Corpus Christi College

The BBC television programme *The Sky at Night* recently featured an image from Corpus manuscript 157, the *Chronicle of England* by John of Worcester. This 12th century manuscript, which is one of our most studied and most frequently reproduced, featured in an episode entitled *Stars: a Matter of Life and Death*. The manuscript contains a renowned sequence of images known as the dreams of Henry I, illustrating the mental torments of a king who knows he has failed to rule justly. However, the image used by the BBC in its astronomy programme is of a very different nature; dating from ca.1128, it is John of Worcester’s depiction of his sighting of two black spheres on the surface of the sun.

The study of weather, geography and climate was inconsistent in the medieval West, but many important naked eye observations were recorded in India, China, Korea and Japan. John of Worcester was one of these skilled amateur observers who over the centuries have added to our knowledge of the sun’s behaviour. Historians have recently become more aware of the influence of Arabic science on the *Chronicle*, and have uncovered evidence that John of Worcester had access to specialised astronomical and mathematical texts. John’s scientific knowledge was rare for his time, and although it may have been utilised as a means to interpret heavenly portents, as a keen observer of natural phenomena his observations have relevance for scientists today. John’s depiction of the sunspots joins a corpus of reference data that informs the ongoing study of sunspots – what has been called the most studied time series in astrophysics. In fact, John’s description and the accompanying diagram is the earliest known recorded observation of sunspots.

In the programme, Professor Lucie Greene explains that sunspots are a visible

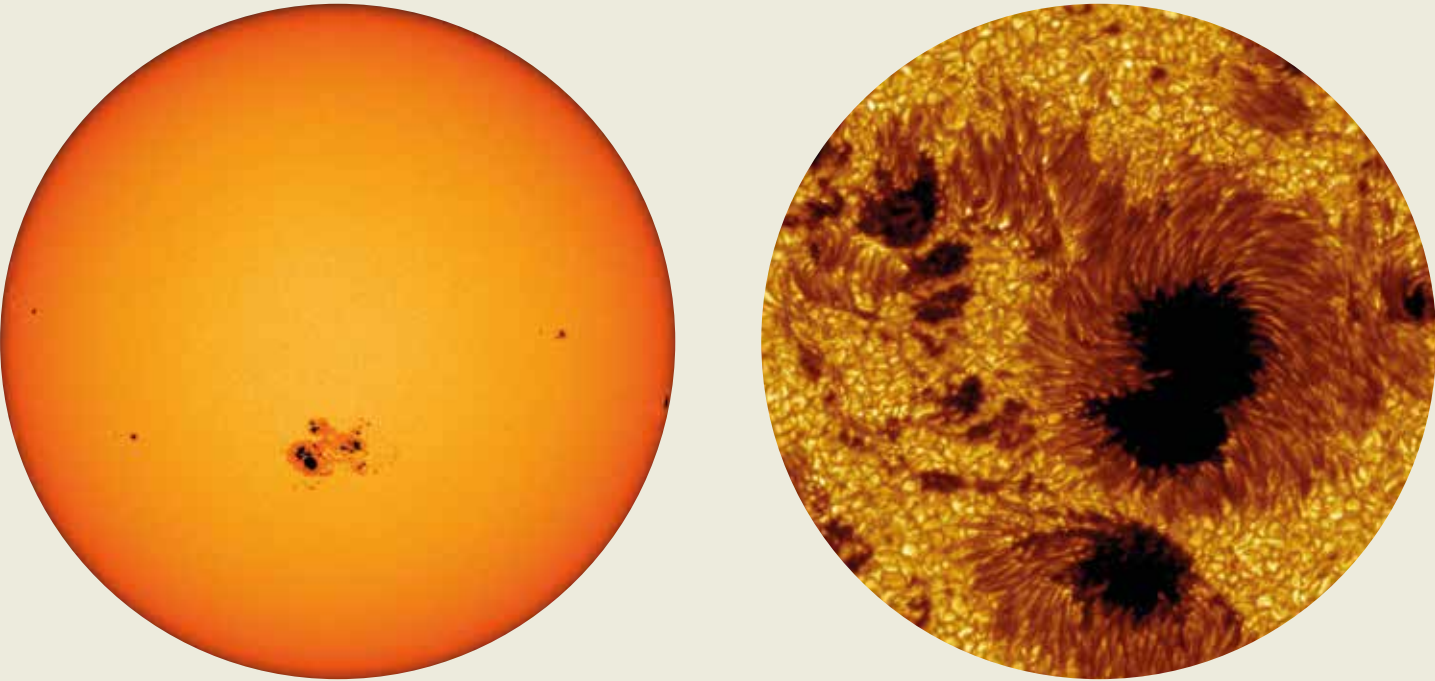
manifestation of the sun’s magnetic field, and that the number of spots on the sun varies over the course of each eleven year solar cycle. Each dark spot represents a patch of gas that has cooled down due to being pierced by the magnetic field. Energy released from the Sun’s magnetic field can trigger massive explosions, such as solar flares or coronal mass ejections. The particles take 3-5 days to reach the Earth, but can then induce geomagnetic storms, disrupting Earth-orbiting satellite systems and causing damage to power grids. Understanding and predicting patterns of solar activity is therefore of vital importance in the modern world. In the Programme, Dr Hisashi Hayakawa of Nagoya University describes his work in improving the predictive modelling of future solar cycles. Historical evidence, such as the drawing from MS 157, helps scientists like Dr Hayakawa to better forecast how the sun might behave in the future. Previously, scientists had perceived an upward trend in the number of sunspots recorded. However, when the historical data recorded before 1700 had been taken into account, the sunspot number was revised, almost negating the upward trend.

The manuscript now known as MS 157 was given to Corpus in 1618 by Henry Parry (CCC 1607). The manuscript was compiled from earlier sources, and elaborated upon, at Worcester Cathedral Priory over a number of years terminating in 1140. Written in the hands of at least three scribes, including that of John of Worcester himself, it is a major source for the early medieval history of England. The description of the sunspots and the accompanying diagram appear in the entry for the year 1128.

Recent publications featuring reproductions of the sunspots description from MS 157 include: Barrett, K. *The sun: one thousand years of scientific imagery* (Scala Arts & Heritage, 2018) Brown, N. *History and climate change: a Eurocentric perspective* (Routledge, 2001) Miyake, F. *Extreme solar particle storms: the hostile sun* (IoP Publishing, 2019).

The programme, *Stars: a Matter of Life and Death*, was broadcast on 12 July on BBC Four, and is available on iPlayer for another 3 months.

OPPOSITE PAGE,  
TOP LEFT:  
NASA's SDO Observes  
Largest Sunspot of the  
Solar Cycle by NASA  
Goddard Photo and  
Video is licensed under  
CC BY 2.0  
TOP RIGHT: Sunspot  
group by NASA Goddard  
Photo and Video is  
licensed under CC BY 2.0  
BOTTOM:  
CCC MS 157 fol.192v





# College Faces

**Matt Carlton and Faseeha Ayaz**  
*JCR and MCR Presidents*



## In conversation

Representing the JCR and MCR has had its challenges this term. We asked Matt Carlton and Faseeha Ayaz to compare their respective roles.

**For its Michaelmas Term reopening, Corpus has made some changes. What does it look like now?**

**Faseeha:** As soon as you step into college you are immediately aware that things are different. To get to the Auditorium from the Lodge, I have to sanitise my hands, get my temperature checked, and use the one-way system. Everyone is socially distanced and masked. Both the MCR and JCR are closed.

**Matt:** The masks are weird, especially in tutorials. We can only take them off when we are eating or drinking. The Beer Cellar has been replaced with a bar in the garden marquee. Hall, which has been takeaway until now, reopened as a restaurant where you book a table for your accommodation household. The Library has a fancy new booking system and a load of Perspex creating socially secure booths.

**What do the JCR and MCR think of the 'new normal'?**

**Matt:** There was a certain amount of mixed feeling in the JCR. The government has kept pubs, restaurants and cafes open, allowing people from different households to mingle in a non-socially distanced manner. Yet it has brought in guidance which is strictly household orientated for college and university spaces; it doesn't leave much wiggle room for inter-household socialising. We felt that the regulations were forcing us out into Oxford rather than keeping us in the safer space of Corpus. The College quickly took this feedback on board and worked on aspects of college life like the bar, JCR teas and the Hall to provide us with spaces to socialise in Corpus. I think it has dealt with the pandemic rather well.

**Faseeha:** MCR members saw a lot of departmental changes over the summer. The College has followed a similar trajectory with sanitation, room capacities and one-way systems. Without the MCR, the graduate community became quite dispersed. Everything moved on-line: welfare teas, seminars, meetings, so we really appreciate being able to socialise again in-person, even if events are socially distanced. The MCR, which is the real hub of grad life remains closed though. All socialising has to be organised with plans and risk assessments. This makes it hard to do anything impromptu.



As soon as you step into college you are immediately aware that things are different

**How did Covid impact the social side of Freshers' Week?**

**Matt:** Well it was very different from last year. Normally we have subject drinks with tutors. The tutors didn't come this year and with subject drinks and all other drinks events, seating was in socially distanced groups of six with one or two students from the years above. Instead of the 'Big Night In' down in the Beer Cellar, Syren (the Entz Pres) and I sat in the JCR with some ales and a webcam going through a pub quiz with all the different households in front of us. As the week went on, we got more ambitious. Instead of a freshers' formal we had a BBQ in the main garden marquee with live music followed by household Karaoke. Of course, the highlight of a normal Freshers' Week is the C-BOP on Saturday. This was on Zoom with a live DJ set streamed from one of the smaller marquees, decked out with blue lights. We even did a pelican delivery service to make up for the bar closing at 10pm!

**Faseeha:** Freshers' Week for the MCR was not too dissimilar to what we normally have. Events included freshers' drinks, movie night, takeaway night and the walk to The Perch. The highlight was a graduate BBQ in the garden marquee. I wanted our Freshers' Week to be as inclusive as possible and in a perverse way Covid helped because this year we were more creative and in consequence appealed to a wider range of people. I am really happy about that.

**How has Covid affected your studies?**

**Faseeha:** I recently completed my transfer of status, the first major milestone for a DPhil student, and this involved an on-line viva. With that completed and the labs reopened, I now need to get on with experiments and generate data for my project. In terms of events, we will continue to organise a mixture of on-line and in-person socials.

**Matt:** I've got Classics Finals and an extended essay looming on the horizon so I'm going to be knuckling down for the rest of the year. Covid has not affected me too much. It has just meant that I don't have to get up early for lectures as they are all filmed and put on-line!

### Graduates

## Finalists locked down

**Two former JCR Presidents reflect on the before and after of sitting their Finals during Covid.**

**Shiv Bhardwaj** (Classics, 2016)

There was a hollow atmosphere at the final Formal Hall of Hilary term 2020. Perhaps it was the contrast between the joy of the second year Classicists having finished Mods and the nervous anticipation of finalists waiting to see where they would be spending their Easter vac. Maybe it was the dawning realisation that a 'shirts vs skins' football fixture against Brasenose that afternoon was probably not the wisest idea as the pandemic began to find its way into Oxford. By the next day it was clear that we would not be returning to Corpus for a long time and, for us finalists, perhaps never again as undergraduates.

Having frantically scoured the library for Loeb editions of Hesiod and commentaries on Aeschylus' *Oresteia* it was time to bid Oxford a likely farewell.

As a finalist under lockdown, the days rolled by in a blur; the Easter vac soon passed and the prospect of a virtual Trinity term loomed ahead. Yet despite the obvious disappointment of missing out on pre-exam subfusc breakfasts in hall and trashings in the Merton Street sun, the circumstances did provide many surprising upsides. I found myself wholly immersed in my studies, pouring over Plato's *Republic* for afternoons on end whilst the pandemic dominated the world around me. Knowing that I would be leaving the world of Classics to start my career in finance shortly after my last exam, I was fully aware that this was the time to truly relish my degree. Under lockdown, I embraced my passion for Classics as all the uncertainty around me actually served to lift the pressure of finals. Revision sessions with Professors Harrison and Güthenke were without doubt the highlight and the Corpus Classics community grew even closer as our tutors found innovative ways to keep our studies engaging. Thesis submission day saw the customary photoshoot outside Exam Schools replaced by Zoom drinks, and by the end of June the virtual trashing was well established.

Now three months into my new role in investment banking, the days of undergraduate life at Oxford feel like a different world. Whilst I have fortunately been able to go into the office on most days, the now well-documented challenges of starting a career when working from home is the norm remain. The pandemic has reminded me that the importance of community cannot be overstated. Throughout the Easter vac and remote Trinity, the close collaboration of the JCR, MCR and SCR ensured that support was given to those most in need and the dedication of many meant that lots of traditions, JCR tea included, were carried out remotely. Oxford's 'small and friendly' college has proven once again that its reputation is no mere stereotype.



**Rhiannon Ogden-Jones** (Law, 2017)

The summer of my final term didn't pan out quite as I'd imagined it would. Finals were hard (I guess that's the point) but looking back on it all, in fact they provided a monumental distraction from everything else. Spending March to June hunched over my laptop, preparing for the raft of exams provided a degree of continuity. I can even look back on that time with some fondness: there were regular Zoom calls with tutors, a lively group chat of "I don't get its" and pigeon hole welfare was replaced by real post. It was almost as if I was still at Corpus after all.

Harder still were the months which followed my final submission on WebLearn. I'm very grateful to my friends at Corpus and at home, who between them made finishing that last exam comparable to what I imagine the euphoria of leaving Exam Schools must be like. I also learnt a valuable lesson about why the University is so against trashing, having spent the following three months clearing my garden of glitter and confetti.

After that everything seemed a lot more real. Gone were plans for punting and balls, all to be replaced by this loneliness. All of a sudden I was confronted by a great big nothing. What made matters more frustrating was having been awarded the Oxford Canada Scholarship last November I was meant to be going to McGill University, yet my August travel plans were becoming as much of a dream as wearing that ballgown I'd bought.

For the first two weeks post-finals I watched A LOT of TV. As I ran out of things to binge on Amazon Prime, I decided it was time to do something productive. I knew the Centre for Teaching and Learning was running a student experience internship. This provided me with the opportunity to fill the long summer weeks with useful work: once again my days were filled with a sense of purpose as I worked through the 17 August, which had been scheduled departure day.

So, where I am now? Well I'm still sitting at that same dining room table, though less hunched over, working on my LLM at McGill University. Each day I see my screen light up with faces from across the globe. There's something strangely comforting in hearing my classmates talk about government Covid measures, anti-mask demonstrations and whether they'll get to see their families in the holidays. It reminds me that despite us being scattered across the world, our Masters experience is very much the same, just lived out by a thirteen-inch portal. I hope I'll get to Montreal after Christmas; in the same way I hope I'll return to Corpus and get to say the goodbyes I never did. But if the pandemic has taught me anything it is that not every catastrophe in life can be planned for and part of the beauty of living is learning how to adapt and finding the joy in that.





# Listing

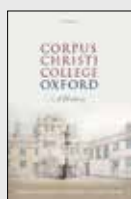
► Did you know that we regularly send out College news and invitations to events by email? Please be sure to let us have your current email address if you want to keep in touch.

## Merchandise

These products are available through our website:  
ccc.ox.ac.uk/merchandise



*The Great Little College*



*Corpus Christi College - A History*



*Treasures from the Library*



*Daring to be Wise*



*Corpus Silver - Patronage & Plate*



*The Fox, The Bees and The Pelican*



*Raising the Ladder*



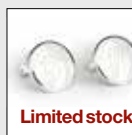
*Corpuscles*



*An Oxford College At War*



*Whisky Glass*



*Earrings*

Limited stock



*Mug*



*Stylus Pen*

## Fostering a caring community

### Effie Amah-Tetteh

This year I have the honour and privilege of being the Vice President of the Oxford African and Caribbean Society. It comes with many challenges which are inextricably linked: the restriction on social gatherings with our community, our members feeling more isolated as we can no longer see each other as much as we were accustomed to, and freshers whom we won't be able to meet properly for a considerable amount of time. It's difficult to keep the family vibes going when we're limited to Facebook, WhatsApp and Zoom, but it's also a chance to think more creatively and broadly about the needs and wants of all our society's members.

With the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, the world is questioning its explicit and unconscious race biases. In a university as prestigious as Oxford, we as a community have found ourselves questioning our identities in a state of quasi-lockdown, while the realities of systemic racism are debated, our struggles often forgotten or overlooked and our University absolving itself of responsibility in many cases – like putting a statue above the welfare of its black students. It's very difficult to take up space here in a normal year, constantly feeling the need to prove something as a student, more so as a black student. This year, the welfare of black students is more important than ever. While the ACS is a diverse community, we all support each other through our societal hardships

as well as the usual, crazy amount of work.

Within College, the Chaplain Judith Maltby, the MCR Diversities Officer Zeinab Ali and I put together a Black History Month film series to give fellow Corpuses an opportunity to learn, unlearn and discuss. I'm proud to say this is not Corpus's first step in unlearning and de-structuring systemic racism within our community; the black Corpuses have been in talks with the President; Jessica Fatoye and Tyrell Gabriel raised £650 with Students Support Black Lives Matter t-shirts (sold out but still in demand!); and our JCR President, Matt Carlton, has been proactive and supportive throughout. To me, this and more is a testament to the ethos of our community and the wonderful human beings whom our college attracts.

What do I want to achieve in my year of Vice Presidency? This is difficult to sum into an amount or even a phrase, but ultimately my goal is to continue to foster the lively and loving environment of our community for every African and Caribbean student, to grow our social media presence and help as many prospective applicants of African and Caribbean descent as we can.

By the end of my year, I want each of our members to have at least one fond memory of our time here as a community, even if it is virtual. I want to lighten the weight of the world for our members, even if just for one Zoom call. I want everyone to be able to say that they were still able to feel a little bit of home.

### The ultimate self-study guide

Tom Flatters, third-year materials scientist, is one of four Oxford undergraduates who helped to make self-study easier for students in Britain and beyond. During lockdown, they produced an e-book called *Learn Better at Home*. Drawing on scientific research and the anecdotal experience of its four authors, the e-book explained how students can find and harness motivation, get down to work, and work effectively. It was offered on a pay-as-you-want basis, with half of its proceeds going to GiveDirectly and the other half to The Life You Can Save, a non-profit body that advances the most cost-effective interventions against developing-world hardship. £1,000 has already been raised.