Profile
M. G. Brock Junior
Research Fellow in History

The Big Picture
Corpus in watercolour

College Faces
Student and Alumni Mentoring Schemes

New Arrivals
David Phillips Chair in Molecular Biophysics
As the end of the edition of the Sundial that arrives in the long vacation, you will find Corpus in a reflective mood in these pages. We showcase some of the research that is the Fellows’ main focus at this time of year, as well as looking outwards – of texts, cultures and intellectual practices.

Victorian classicists are Emily’s special subject and one of their modern-day successors, Corpus Professor of Latin Tobias Reinhart, reveals in his article how intellectual debate and scrutiny are central to Cicero’s philosophical dialogues, the subject of Professor Oxford, 2023 OUP

Corpus Christi College Oxford, 2023

A new arrival at Corpus this year is Professor Simon Newbold, recently elected to the David Phillips Chair of Molecular Biophysics associated with the College. Like his colleagues in the humanities, Simon also locates his research within the rapid changes taking place in his discipline of biochemistry, changes that have enabled his research team to enhance understanding of drug transport in a range of conditions including cancer, inflammation, neurodegeneration and metabolic disorders.

Explore the latest instalment of the annual pleasure to welcome Visiting Professors, one of this year’s visitors, Dr Emily Rutherford, M.G. Brock Junior Research Fellow in History, as she combines her expertise in teaching gender and sexuality with her passion for early-modern British and European history.

My research focuses on how, in early-twentieth-century Britain, the concepts of heterosexuality and homosexuality – the ‘hetero/homo binary’ – came to be the primary structure through which middle-class people conceptualised gender and sexuality. Previous historians have largely sought to explain this development by focusing on expert scientific discourses and on radical political and artistic movements. My research has instead explored the intellectual impact of humanities disciplines such as classics, and has identified universities as key sites for understanding how middle-class conceptions of same-sex desire can be transmitted across generations but can also be challenged and change over time.

Putting care into action has been the hallmark of the Corpus alumni mentor scheme for women and minority ethnic students. In that spirit, we are delighted to feature PPE student Wes Bond as the ‘College Face’ of this issue, to introduce the newly-launched mentoring scheme for students who are the first in their families to go to university. As Wes puts it, the day he received his Oxford offer he felt like ‘a muddle who had got into Hogwarts’. It’s a different kind of magic we practise here, but we sincerely hope it works just as well.

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Academic scepticism in late Republican Rome

Already for readers in antiquity the corpus of Plato’s dialogues was open to two quite different interpretations. On one their author was a philosopher intent on developing doctrines relating to the nature of reality, ethics, moral psychology, and political theory. Plato so understood opted for the dialogue as a literary and didactic device, although a philosopher of this outlook could in principle have chosen the medium of the treatise to expound his thought. The character Socrates’ irony, on this reading, can be seen as a ploy to conceal substantial views which bore some relation to those of the historical Socrates or were in fact Plato’s. On the other interpretation of the corpus Plato was actually a sceptic. While he was attracted to some elements of Socrates’ outlook and while he had certain intuitions on various issues, these never came up to the level of what one might call a belief, a firmly held opinion, or even knowledge. For Plato what one might call a belief, a firmly held conviction, can in principle have chosen the medium of the treatise to expound his thought. The character Socrates’ irony, on this reading, can be seen as a ploy to conceal substantial views which bore some relation to those of the historical Socrates or were in fact Plato’s. On the other interpretation of the corpus Plato was actually a sceptic. While he was attracted to some elements of Socrates’ outlook and while he had certain intuitions on various issues, these never came up to the level of what one might call a belief, a firmly held opinion, or even knowledge. For Plato what one might call a belief, a firmly held conviction, can in principle have chosen the medium of the treatise to expound his thought. Academic scepticism is an attitude characterised by doubt, yet animated by a keen desire to know and the hope to find the truth. It is curious, open, and engaged, yet it finds, time and again, that those with firm convictions employ unreasonably low standards of what it means to know something, or find themselves committed to views just because they are entailed by other views which they hold or – worse – because, others with whom they think they share an outlook adopt the position in question. The Academic sceptic values independent judgement over authority.

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At the beginning of the first century B.C., the Academy was under internal pressure from two directions, represented by two high-profile departures from the school. One, Arsenidesmus, felt that the Academy had become too ready to entertain philosophical positions, if under sceptical proviso; he went on to revive Pyrrhonism and is an important intellectual ancestor of the above-mentioned Sextus. The other, Antiochus of Ascalon, became disenchanted with the sceptical stance and felt that a form of dogmatism, explicable as an exegesis of Plato’s works, but in its detail quite different from later Platonism, was a more accurate reflection of the school’s heritage and of Plato’s own outlook. In particular, Antiochus accepted the Stoic theory of knowledge, but appears to have emphasized that it can be viewed as a formalisation of lines of thought which we find already in Plato’s Theaetetus. While still a very young man, Cicero met and studied with the last head of the Academy as a functioning school, Philo of Larissa, under whose tenure the above-mentioned departures had happened but who was upholding a sceptical outlook. Philo had come to Rome as a refugee from Athens. The encounter proved a formative experience for Cicero, although it would take several decades for Cicero to start writing philosophical works himself – his dialogues are the product of two phases in his life when his greatest political successes were behind him and when circumstances prevented him from playing an active role in public life. Both as narrator and as a character in his own dialogues Cicero promoted Academic scepticism.

In the so-called Academicus, devoted to epistemology, there are two major strands to the discussion, one systematic and one historical. In the systematic strand, the Stoic theory of knowledge, which was very influential in the Hellenistic period and endorsed by Antiochus, is explained: it envisaged that there is a certain kind of thought arising from perception which is invariably true. Thoughts of this kind were, for the Stoics, the starting point for human cognitive development, our best path to living virtuously and wise (a state in which we hold only true beliefs and avoid acquiring false ones), as well as the basis for any kind of technical expertise. After these views have been introduced by a speaker who endorses them, they are scrutinised by an Academic speaker, who goes over them point by point, cites counter arguments, and offers possible alternative explanations for the phenomena the Stoics seek to explain. In the historical strand, we get two competing versions of the history of philosophy. Both serve a specific purpose: to validate the sceptical outlook and Antiochus’ revived dogmatism respectively, and to underpin each side’s claim to being the true heir to the intellectual heritage of Socrates and Plato.

My recent commentary tries to explain the Academicus in all its aspects, including its linguistic form: it is only the second text in Roman literature, after Lucretius’ didactic poem Epicurean philosophy, which attempts to discuss intricate problems in the philosophy of perception in the medium of the Latin language, mostly using its pre-existing resources rather than coining new technical terms. My critical edition aims to offer the closest approximation to what Cicero actually wrote based on the medieval manuscript tradition.
Why the Third Sector?  

Old Members who work in the Third Sector reflect on their experiences and offer advice to graduates considering the sector.

**International Rescue Committee**

Kathryn Hoven (English, 2016) joined the IRC after the Brexit vote but before the 2016 US election. Following her degree, she opted not to take up her DPhil offer in favour of trying to do some good. She is the Program Officer for Strategic Growth at the International Rescue Committee.

In 2018, I joined the New York and New Jersey resettlement offices, where we supported refugees, immigrants and asylum seekers. In 2021, I moved to IRC’s headquarters as the Program Officer for Strategic Growth, exploring public funding portfolio diversification for our network of 26 US offices. My proudest moment with IRC was during Operation Alles Welcome in 2021, when IRC worked in concert with federal departments to process over 78,000 airlifted Afghans. I spent three weeks on a Safe Haven in southern New Jersey helping IRC test in the largest refugee effort in a generation. It is an experience I will not soon forget.

For graduates considering the humanitarian sector, you will join a dynamic, chronically challenged but desperately needed world of like-minded spirits working towards a better future. It is challenging, but I know from my many conversations with friends in other sectors over the years that a sense of purpose is invaluable, especially as you begin your professional careers. And more importantly – it takes all skillsets!

Kathryn is such a great example of the range of talent that IRC is recruiting around the world. Humanitarian needs arising from conflict, the climate crisis and economic shocks have never been greater. Our belief is that “aid as usual” is no answer. That was almost all I thought about. We all need balance. Choose the “flavour” of your charity carefully. Do you want to work on local causes or international issues? Do you want to deliver services or focus on campaigning? Do you want to work in a corporate role or something more sector-specific?

We know that young people are growing up in a complex and increasingly challenging world. There are severe pressures on their mental health, employment prospects and physical safety. Youth work is an essential tool to help young people navigate these difficulties and set them up with skills for life. But over ten million young people are currently unable to access this life-changing and even life-saving support. UK Youth is changing this. You can find out more at www.ukyouth.org.

**Volunteering in Oxford**

Current students describe their voluntary work in Oxford.

A DPhil Student (Pharmacology, Year 2): I work with the Longford Trust mentoring pupils at a nearby education which currently are all over 18. People who experience the prison system are often indiscriminately excluded from full societal participation and re-integration both at the economic and moral level. I believe this to be wrong. I mentor a Longford Scholar studying here at Oxford, explaining the peculiarities of Oxford and how to thrive there.

Ellie Morhayim (Physics, Year 1): Following the Earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria in February, the Turkish community in Oxford organised charity work to help the victims. We gathered clothing, food and medicine and helped with a three-day bake sale, which raised £14,425 for the local NGOs. The help we gave to the earthquake victims was a reminder of hope and compassion at a time of intense mourning.

Elle Vohra (Classics with Oriental Studies, Year 3): I volunteer with the Youth Services at Asylum Welcome, a local organisation that provides information, advice and support to asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants in Oxfordshire. In the Youth Services, most of our clients are unaccompanied asylum seeking children. We help them to navigate their asylum claims, age assessments and housing and financial situations. We also provide them with emotional support at the Venda Youth Club. Volunteering offers me an incredibly rewarding opportunity to connect with and support the Oxford community and I have learnt about the complexities of the UK asylum system.

**The Sutton Trust**

David Bell (CAAH, 2012) arrived at Corpus in 2012 as the first person in his family to attend university, with a background quite different to most of his peers at Oxford: comprehensive school educated, from North East England and from a low income household. He is a Programmes Manager at The Sutton Trust.

Subsidising higher education as a transformative experience. Access to such transformative experiences, however, is far from evenly distributed. The educational opportunities and life chances of young people are strongly linked to their socio-economic background. It is this stark inequality which led to me taking up my current role at The Sutton Trust. The Sutton Trust, founded by Sir Peter Lampert (Chemistry, 1966), is a charity which champions social mobility through programmes, research and policy influence. I work on university access and school engagement, and manage the Trust’s flagship summer schools programme which supports over 2,900 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds every year to access leading universities.

I am fortunate to work in various guises in the public and private sectors, I now arrive at work every day knowing that what I do is supporting people against whom the odds have always been stacked. My work still involves plenty of spreadsheets, but being entirely bought into the end result makes quarterly budget meetings all the more palatable.

UK Youth

Jacob DIGGLE (History and Politics, 2009) has worked in the charity sector since he graduated, supporting causes relating to housing, mental health and youth work. He is Chief Impact Officer at UK Youth, which represents 8,000 youth work organisations. He is responsible for research, evaluation, service design, policy and strategy.

For any new graduate considering the charity sector, I’d say please do! Your intellect and talent will make a big difference. I have met some inspiring people during my career and have been privileged to have some incredible experiences, from trekking the Saharan to visiting 10 Downing Street. It is important to understand that the charity sector isn’t a soft option. You are held to higher ethical standards, may be working with limited resources and are often limited on unpredictable voluntary income. But these limitations can fuel incredible creativity and innovative thinking. You will be surrounded by some of the most passionate and driven people. It is hugely rewarding. You can find out more at www.stniachospice.org.uk.

**Pacific Foundation Services**

Angela Eshun (English, 2007) says that since graduating, the entire trajectory of her career has been dedicated to working in the charity and philanthropic sectors. Her motivation throughout has been working directly with communities to address economic issues, often disproportionately impacting marginalised groups, and empowering them to become agents of social change. She lives in California and is Director of Grants Management at Pacific Foundation Services (PFS).

PFS is a professional services firm supporting the grant-making of private and family foundations in the San Francisco Bay Area, providing operational and strategic expertise to support our clients in high-impact giving to non-profit partners. In my role I oversee all aspects of grants management, including developing and sustaining strategies, policies and procedures that ensure efficient grant-making activities. The aspect of my role I love the most is putting my commitment to equity into practice—exploring how we can implement fair, effective and transparent grant-making processes and streamlined systems for grantees and organisations applying for funding and removing barriers to participation by underrepresented groups.

I would strongly urge any new graduate searching for meaningful work to consider a career in the charity sector. As well as providing the opportunity to contribute to building a more just and equitable society, the sector offers experiences that can be transformative and allow you to find yourself at the start of a highly rewarding career path.
These watercolours span thirty years and have been pondering why Corpus Christi College is such a delightful place to paint. Having trained as an architect, I have always enjoyed painting fine buildings in their settings and the process is just as important as the product. Time spent selecting what to paint and looking hard at a building, door, window or drain-pipe in ever-changing light or weather conditions while drawing with pencil and brush can be wonderfully rewarding, but also frustrating. So often, the developing image fails to do justice to the subject. Corpus contains such a diversity of spaces and, unlike its vast neighbour Christ Church, the buildings, quad and gardens retain an intimate human scale. I also value the rich sensory appeal: smells of cooking or newly mown grass, echoing sounds of distant music or loud student voices calling each other, tactile doorknobs or handrails, rich associations, and the world’s greatest sundial.

These watercolours together with the image on the front cover complete a set of five greeting cards and five postcards to be sold from September on the College’s website ccc.ox.ac.uk/alumni/merchandise.
Equality & Diversity

Would you like to be a mentor?

We would love to hear from Old Members, from all professions, who are willing to join our alumni and student mentoring schemes. For more information please email sara.watson@ccc.ox.ac.uk.

The length of each mentorship is envisaged as being one year, after which mentors/mentees may continue or leave the scheme.

FROM THE EAST MIDLANDS TO OXFORD

Wes Bond (PPE) comes from a single-parent, working class background in the East Midlands. Throughout his school life he was a recipient of free school meals. He is excited about the new, parallel mentoring scheme for ‘first generation’ students. He talked to us about being the first in his family to go to university and what the mentoring scheme will mean for him.

What barriers did you experience that may have prevented you applying to Oxford?

Not being familiar with Student Finance, I was worried that I would not be able to afford to live in the South, particularly in Oxford. I also had doubts that I was the ‘right’ person for Oxford. None of my friends had applied to Oxford, none of my family had gone to university and I was worried that I would not be able to find friends or a group to fit in with. Finally, education was not valued in my family and further education was considered to be a waste of time particularly since I had been offered an apprenticeship with an accountancy firm.

What changed your perspective of Oxford?

I think the largest contributing factor was the interview. My visit to Oxford, spending time exploring the city and college dispelled my misconceptions completely. I realised that college food, the college bar and on-site accommodation were all reasonably priced. The people I met were from diverse backgrounds, some similar to mine, and were open-minded, non-judgmental and extremely respectful. The subject ambassadors explained about teaching and activities and reassured me that Corpus was an inclusive and exciting environment.

How did it feel when you got your offer?

The day I got my offer was stressful. After the interview I had decided I didn’t just want to go to Oxford, I needed to go to Oxford. The experience, the people, the teaching style, the architecture and atmosphere. It was the complete package. I remember waking up early, refreshing my email, checking the group chat. I was not the first to receive the email, four or five PPEists got theirs before me. When it finally came through, it felt like a muggle who had got into Hogwarts. The rush, the happiness, the excitement, it is not something that can really be expressed in words, but it was one of the best moments of my life.

What surprised you when you arrived?

I am a keen sportsman. Growing up, I played for two football teams as well as my local rugby team. I thought that all Oxford sports would be a low priority but when I found out in Freshers’ Week was that sport was almost guaranteed with the collegiate system. Also, I had seen a reading list for my subject and was wondering how I would afford the books. I was surprised to find the exceptionally well-stocked libraries, dotted all around Oxford, with the Corpus Library providing every book I would need. The final thing I had not taken into account was the scholarship and bursary financial aid I was entitled to. I was worried about how I would afford activities with friends. What I had missed was that, under the means tested criteria, I would be granted additional funds. With this being the case, a financial burden, which had caused me such stress over the summer, vanished.

What will having an alumni mentor mean for you?

I am looking forward to connecting with someone who has experienced Corpus like I have. Specifically, it will give me something I have not had before – guidance. With my background, I am not able to ask people around me for employment advice, whether I should be considering postgraduate studies, or where my CV or interview skills might need improvement. I hope my mentor will give me the reassurance, advice and opportunities that are not easily accessed by those of us who are ‘first generation’ students.

Gaining new perspectives

Mentors and mentees reflect on what they have learnt from the Black and Minority Ethnic Student and Alumni Mentoring Scheme.

Paul Balley (Maths, 1992) has been a mentor for Willow Farr (Maths and Philosophy):

Willow writes: “The outcome for me so far has been amazing. I have learnt about many careers which might suit my skills which I had never heard of before. I have learnt how to sell myself and built my confidence. Paul supported me through the process of applying for a job and gave me valuable advice on how to navigate the professional world. I am very happy to have accepted a graduate role in software development for a financial services company in London. I definitely hope to continue working with Paul in the future, and would recommend the scheme to anyone considering how best to develop and achieve their career goals.”

Paul writes: “Willow and I have talked through the areas of early career progression and job applications. We discussed the various roles she could consider, what those roles entailed, what recruiters were looking for, and how to demonstrate her skills and potential. Willow has incredible promise, so I was confident that in making herself known to various recruiters, she would soon attract interview offers and hopefully then job offers, as happened for her. She did this through application/CV discussions, interview preparation based on scenarios she had experienced, and promotion through LinkedIn, which generated a lead for the role she secured. We also spent time discussing the structure of the industry she was applying to, to give her the background she needed to be confident at interview. At the scheme dinner I was told that she had shared some nuggets from our discussions with her friends, so it is great to have a potential wider impact!”

Hassan Damulji (Oriental Studies, 2001) spoke at the Dinner for the Black and Minority Ethnic Student and Alumni Mentoring Scheme in February. “What is sometimes missed when thinking about mentoring, is how enriching it is for the mentor. This is not limited to a ‘good feeling’ that you are helping someone else. There is a lot that can be learned, that is tangibly useful, from the experience. Rarely as we go through our careers do we have the opportunity to step back, take some perspective, think about how far we have come. Rarely as we get older do we have the opportunity to engage deeply with people of a different generation, and think about what we might have lost or forgotten, or what simply we have never known, that younger people can teach us. Yes, there is a positive feeling of altruism associated with mentoring, but as I look back on the last year working with Effie on the Corpus mentoring scheme, what stands out most for me is what I have learned.”

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There are currently at least 55 manuscripts of Aristotle’s treatise known as the *Metaphysics*, a major landmark in ancient Greek philosophy. Three of them are in Oxford. One is in Corpus: ‘CCC ms. 110’ often abbreviated as ‘Oc’, bequeathed to the library by Hugh Turnbull (Corpus Scholar in 1532, Fellow in 1536) in 1566, who may be related to the Charles Turnbull (Scholar in 1575, Fellow 1579) who designed the famous Sundial in the college’s Front Quad. The other two are the ‘Oxon. Can. 121’, abbreviated as ‘O’, held at the Bodleian Library and the ‘Oxon. N.C. 230’, abbreviated as ‘Ob’, held at New College. Item O is in fact constituted of two manuscripts, the ‘Canonici anus Gr. 121’ and the ‘Lipsiensis Rep. I 44 c’, that at some point in the past formed a continuous whole as was shown by Silvio Bernardinello in his 1968 article ‘I Testi Bessarionei della Metafisica di Aristotele’.

What interests us here is that Dieter Harlfinger, in his 1979 study of the history of the transmission of the *Metaphysics* (‘Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Metaphysik’) classified the three Oxonian manuscripts belonging to the ‘Alpha’ family of manuscripts of *Metaphysics* (‘A-family’), as opposed to the ‘Beta’ family (‘B-family’). This classification had also been proposed by Bernardinello in his own work on the subject nine years earlier (‘Eliminatio codicum della Metafisica di Aristotele’). This classification of the Oxonian manuscripts has not been questioned since then. As we will show, however, there are good reasons for calling it into question in the case of Oc.

But first what are the two families? Recent work on the *Metaphysics* manuscript tradition and its stemma (notably by Oliver Primavesi in ‘The transmission of the text and the riddle of the two versions’ in 2012), has revealed that the two families are based on a single manuscript, now lost: the ‘common text’. This text is itself a copy of another manuscript, also lost, that was used by the great Aristotle scholar Alexander of Aphrodisias in the late 2nd century AD in his commentary on the *Metaphysics*, still extant today. The two main differences between the two families are that (i) the manuscripts of the B-family correct the common text in light of Alexander’s commentary and those of the A-family do not, and that (ii) the latter contain several additions to the common text that are absent from the former. To give an example, the manuscripts from the A-family, the ‘Canonici anus Gr. 121’ and the ‘Lipsiensis Rep. I 44 c’, refer to the Platonists in the first-person plural, ‘we’. This ‘we’ suggests that, at the time he wrote this Book, he regarded Aristotle, in Book 1 of the *Metaphysics*, a major landmark in ancient Greek philosophy. There is a very interesting complication. This is that Oc includes, throughout the manuscript, a large number of interlinear annotations which were made by a second copist, as was noted by Nigel Wilson in his 2011 *Descriptive Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts in Corpus Christi College*. What is striking here is that, in our passage, this second copist corrected Oc by writing the 1st person plural of the verbs just above their 3rd person plural forms as we can see in Figure 2, where the second copist wrote ‘[p]halmen’ (‘we say’) above ‘phasin’, and in Figure 5, where he wrote ‘[b]oulo[m]etha’ (‘we are more anxious’) above ‘boulontai’. There may be other passages in Oc that are typical of the B-family, but we do not currently know.

What conclusion may be drawn from these facts? There can be little doubt that we can affirm with certainty until a full collation of Oc is carried out, a task that is yet to be done. But here are a few conjectures that can be made. (1) The manuscript that was used by the first copist when he produced Oc in the late 15th century belonged to the B-family, not the A-family, which implies that the classification of this manuscript by Bernardinello and Harlfinger is wrong. (2) The second copist, who annotated Oc years later made the corrections on the basis of a manuscript or set of manuscripts that belonged to the A-family, and to which he had access but that are not currently in the library of Corpus Christi. Instead of (1), we can also conjecture that (3) Oc does belong to the A-family but is contaminated by the B-family as our passage would prove. The phenomenon of cross-contamination between the two families had already been noticed by Harlfinger though not specifically in connection with Oc. In any case, this third hypothesis is disquieting. The very existence of ‘hybrid’ manuscripts such as Oc puts into the question the boundaries between the two families and may imply the collapse of the distinction altogether if a better explanation of such manuscripts can be found. To quote Silvia Fazzo: ‘a radical rethinking of the whole tradition cannot be dealt with within the present contribution but must remain at least as an open possibility’ (in ‘Editing Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*: why should Harlfinger’s stemma be verified?, 2014).
Fundraising
Telethon 2023

Support present and future generations of Corpus students

Our annual Telethon Campaign will take place from 22 September to 1 October. The Telethon plays an important role in the life of the College; its success over the years is testament to the generosity of both our alumni and students who take part, and our collective commitment to supporting present and future generations of Corpus students.

As we move into the final phase of our capital campaign with the Spencer Building, it has been wonderful to see the Corpus community coming together in a shared commitment to safeguard our intellectual heritage and improve the study environment for our students. In this year’s Telethon, we will be continuing to seek support for this landmark project, alongside other strategic priorities including graduate scholarships, our access and outreach programme and student support initiatives.

This year, a group of nine students will be making calls to Old Members and they would very much appreciate it if you are but would prefer not to be contacted this September, please email development@ccc.ox.ac.uk.

To have your name included within the Spencer Building, and to visualise the location of the various opportunities please visit: www.thespencerbuilding.co.uk/tour.

If you wish to make a donation but would prefer not to be contacted this September, please email development@ccc.ox.ac.uk.

As the Captain of Oxford University Rugby Football Club, one of the highlights of my experience has been the opportunity to connect with a wide range of interesting people. Meeting them and hearing their stories about the club has been fascinating. I am excited as I look forward to connecting with Corpus alumni and sharing their memories of Oxford.

Lauren Webb (Law, Year 2), Telethon Caller 2023

In recognition of significant support to Corpus

We are grateful for the support of our benefactors, whose continuing involvement in the life of the College enriches the Corpus community.

We will continue to recognise all our donors in The Pelican Record Donor Roll, publishing the names of all who have supported the College during the academic year, and everyone who gives a donation to the Spencer Building, of whatever size, will be offered the opportunity to have their name included in a Spencer Building Benefactors’ Book.

We also acknowledge the generosity of our major donors through a range of new and existing recognition opportunities, in partnership with the University. This includes the recently launched President’s Circle, established to recognise those who have made substantial contributions to the life of the College.

The President’s Circle
Major donors may be invited to join. Each year the President shares college news and hosts a dinner in London for members.

The Vice-Chancellor’s Circle
An annual dinners reception is held for members who have provided generous support to the University and colleges.

Foundation Fellowship
Those who have given exceptional support to Corpus may be elected.

The Vice-Chancellor’s Guild
An annual dinner is held in Oxford to celebrate giving at a higher level. For further information please contact the Development Director at elizabeth.lyle@ccc.ox.ac.uk.

Professor Simon Newstead
David Phillips Chair in Molecular Biophysics

Corpus has a long and rich history of supporting innovative biochemical research. I look forward to carrying on this legacy.

Simon Newstead joined Corpus in Hilary Term 2023 as David Phillips Professor of Molecular Biophysics, a statutory Professorship held with the Department of Biochemistry in the South Parks Science Campus.

Simon joins us from our neighbour Christ Church, where since 2013 he held the position of Ordinary Student in Biochemistry and Professor of Molecular Membrane Biology in the Department of Biochemistry. He completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Bath in Biochemistry, followed by a PhD at the University of St Andrews. He held a post-doctoral fellowship at Imperial College London before moving to Oxford in 2009 as an MRC career development fellow to start his research group.

Simon becomes the third incumbent of the David Chilot Phillips Professorship, established in honour of Professor David Phillips, later Baron Phillips of Ellesmere KBE FRSE, who was a pioneer in the development of the new science of protein crystallography, which enables researchers to understand the atomic structure of molecules that make up our bodies. He says: “It is a great honour to take up this prestigious post at the University of Oxford and to join the Corpus community. Corpus has a long and rich history of supporting innovative biochemical research. I look forward to carrying on this legacy.”

Simon’s research concerns understanding how nutrient transporters function at a molecular level. In our bodies, many proteins that absorb nutrients from our diet are also responsible for drug transport and distribution into specific organs, including the central nervous system, liver, kidneys, and intestinal tract. Nutrient transporters, therefore, profoundly impact the effectiveness of many administered drugs.

Simon’s research group uses the latest structural biology methods to understand drug transport in cancer, inflammation, neurodegeneration, and metabolic disorders. Its goal is to understand, at a molecular level, how the body interacts with drug molecules to reduce side effects, increase effectiveness and generate a deeper understanding of how the cells in our body interact with and respond to nutrients and drugs. Simon’s latest research, for example, explains how a drug used to treat gout works by blocking uric acid uptake in our kidneys. He says: “Structural biology is going through a tremendous period of change right now. It is truly an honour to undertake this research in association with Corpus.” He looks forward to meeting any alumni interested in his team’s research.

Naming Opportunity | Gift Amount | Number | Remaining
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1st and 2nd Floor Bookcase | £10,000 | 8 | 7
3rd Floor Group Work Desk (1 x DDA compliant) | £7,500 | 2 | 2
1st and 2nd Floor Reading Room Desk (pair) | £5,000 | 14 | 4
3rd Floor Reading Room Desk (single) | £2,500 | 14 | 7
3rd Floor Singular Bookcase | £2,000 | 12 | 4
Corpus Christi College
Alumni events 2023
For more information on all these events please go to: www.ccc.ox.ac.uk/alumni/events-and-reunions

September 2023
Friday 29 September
1970s Decade Dinner
Fully booked. Email us to join the waiting list.

October 2023
Wednesday 11 October
Bateson Lecture
A Quiet Gathering: James Baldwin and the Art of Late Style in The Welcome Table. All welcome.

Wednesday 25 October
Brock Lecture Livestream
To be delivered by Dr Emily Rutherford. All welcome to attend in person or virtually.

November 2023
Thursday 9 November
President’s Circle Dinner
For members of the President’s Circle.

Thursday 30 November
College Carol Service Livestream
More information to follow.

December 2023
Saturday 2 December
Carol Service for Alumni and Parents
Booking to open in November.

Wednesday 13 December
London Christmas Drinks
Booking to open in October.

March 2024
Friday 15 March
Gaudy for 1961 to 1968
Invitations will be sent in December.

Donations support Corpus students
This year’s Expanding Horizons Scholars are making full use of the opportunity provided by the scheme to work and volunteer abroad. They are travelling to a range of countries, including the USA, Peru, Jordan and Hungary.

Zain Parvez (Law) will be studying music production at the world-leading 343 labs in New York. He hopes to learn specialist industry knowledge of systems, sound design, mixing and mastering. He will also be volunteering at the Holy Apostles Foundation, working in the soup kitchen and food bank.

Thomas Shotton (Maths) will be a teaching assistant in the maths department at an English-speaking school in Lima and will also be accompanying a trekking trip to Huaraz. He will also volunteer for the Bridges NGO, which is involved in building crucial infrastructure in local communities.

Ellie Vohra (Classics with Oriental Studies) will be doing an intensive language course in Ammiyeh (Levantine Arabic Dialect), continuation classes in modern standard Arabic, two internships in refugee policy, volunteering with a refugee charity, and visiting archaeological sites and nature reserves.

Effie Armah-Tetteh (Classics) will be doing voluntary work and community outreach in Miami, working with refugees and learning about the black diasporic experience from an African American perspective. She hopes to volunteer at the International Rescue Committee.

Maeve Ewing (PPE) will be an intern at an NGO, CEEweb for Biodiversity. CEEweb is completing essential work in the areas of climate change and biodiversity. She will learn about the world of EU politics and the work of NGOs.

We are grateful to all the Old Members who have donated to the scheme and are also delighted that, owing to further generosity, this year the College has introduced a fund for students who would find it difficult to participate in professional internships, research placements or professional training without financial support – the Career Development Fund. The new fund is open to internships across all disciplines, including for those students interested in a career in academia. It is also open to those who are going on to graduate study but would find the transition financially difficult. This year it has offered support to eight students.

A novel inspiration
Alumna Alis Hawkins (English, 1981) explains how a character in her novel A Bitter Remedy was inspired by her experience as a member of the Corpus women’s second eight.

Like most novelists, I’m not much of a team player. Sports-wise, the only team I’ve ever belonged to is the Corpus women’s second eight which I stroked for most of my three years at college. And I loved it, though early mornings in Hilary could be a bit grim.

So, when a walk-on character in the first of my new Victorian crime fiction series refused to walk off again and required some fleshing out, I made him a rower.

Not that this was entirely for nostalgic reasons: his eight’s being interceptible as they went to and from the river was an essential plot point.

I also made him a Corpus, partly for geographical reasons, but also because I needed him to be a man who might plausibly support women’s admission to the University. And my research into events in the early 1880s, when the book is set, revealed that the Oxford Union passed a resolution, proposed by ‘a Mr Williams of CCC’, calling for female householders to have the vote on equal terms with men. I may just have to put a Mr Williams into the Corpus eight with Tarley Askew for the next book – it’s too delicious an opportunity to pass up!