

Sundial

03

Profile

Dr Kanmin Xue, Medical
Research Fellow

04

Research

A brief history of the arrival
of women at Corpus

10

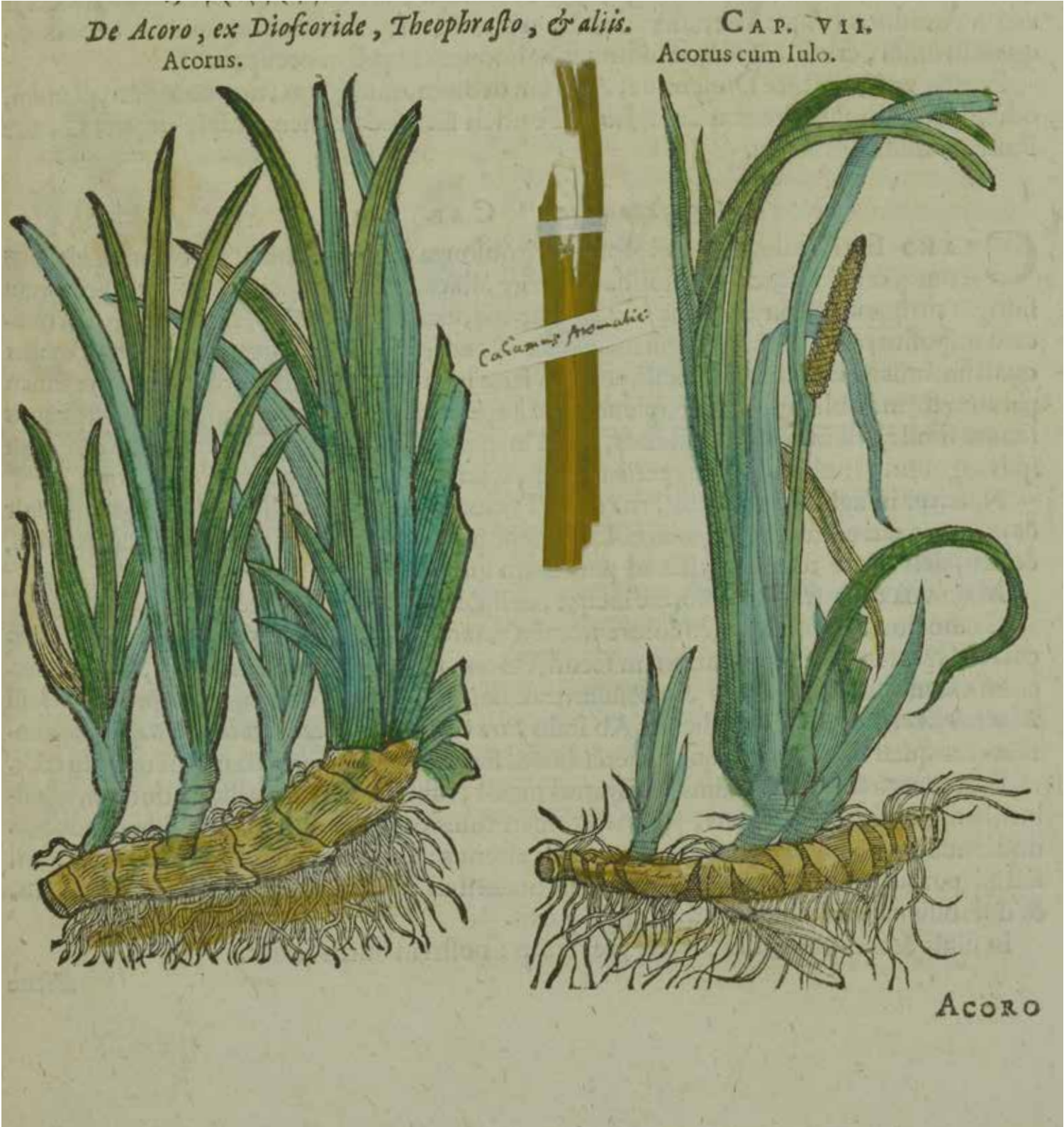
College Faces

The College's Student
Support Officer

12

Corpus Papers

A Hebrew poem from the
pen of Edward Burdon



Welcome

From the President
Professor Helen Moore



In this New Year edition of the *Sundial*, the authors of our ‘Corpus Papers’ article on an unpublished Hebrew poem by sixteenth-century Corpus Fellow Edward Burdon observe that ‘the trail of academic research always leads one down unexplored paths and into unanticipated terrain’. On this occasion, the new terrain comprises the significant evidence of poems being composed in Hebrew (by non-Jews) to greet Queen Elizabeth I on her visit to Oxford in 1566. This visit has been the subject of renewed scrutiny in recent years for the light it sheds on the tussle for supremacy between Calvinists and Catholics in early Elizabethan Oxford (which served as a political microcosm of the country as a whole). With a young and Protestant monarch back on the throne, Catholics needed to retain or regain the Queen’s favour, and a display of loyalty couched in the form of multilingual praise for this learned woman provided the ideal opportunity. Four hundred years after the Queen’s Oxford visit and the writing of Burdon’s poem, Corpus took a small but significant step towards achieving equal rights for women, with Dorothy Horgan, lecturer in English, becoming the first woman to matriculate at Corpus. The first women arrived as graduates in 1974, the first female Fellow was elected in 1978 and the first women undergraduates were admitted in 1979. As celebrated by Harriet Patrick’s article, 2024 therefore marks 45 years since the arrival of women students at Corpus.

Today, our doors are very much open to students of all backgrounds and we have recently welcomed two new staff members as part of our efforts in access

and more broadly in student support. Young people today face an array of global, national and personal challenges but are nonetheless inherently optimistic and determined to advance society in positive ways, and it is our privilege to give them a helping hand in doing so. To that end, we welcome Edith Richardson as Assistant Outreach Officer, and Sarah Warbrick as Student Support Officer. With 2,600 visits across three Open Days in 2023 and a plethora of online and in-person outreach events, our contact with schools and their pupils has never been higher. Once students arrive at Corpus, Sarah is on hand to help them navigate student life, thrive academically and enjoy their lives here to the fullest extent. A highlight of each term for me is the President’s Seminar, which provides a wonderful forum for discussing the world and its challenges and opportunities with our students. An invited speaker, typically an old member, introduces a topic followed by a period of interactive discussion with the student audience. Unlike most Oxford seminars, there are no tutors present so the students very much hold the floor and the discussion is deliberately free-flowing. We identify themes arising from the talk and questions to pursue over dinner, which takes place in the SCR dining room, and pool our thoughts again between courses. Last term the seminar took the form of an ‘in conversation’ with Corpuses from the world of publishing; their perspectives, together with those of old members working in journalism and the media more generally, are gathered together in our feature on pp.6-7 and bear witness to the strong value Corpuses find in the creativity and variety of their media careers. We are proud at Corpus to play our part in nurturing creativity in all its forms, from sixteenth-century Hebrew poems to modern fiction, freelance journalism and radio broadcasting.

Sundial

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COVER: Rembert Dodoens, *Stirpium historiae pemptades sex sive libri XXX* (Antwerp, 1616), p.249, one of the herbals examined by Huntington Exchange Fellow Amanda Arceneaux during her November visit to the College. Read more about Amanda on page 16.

Profile

Dr Kanmin Xue
Medical Research Fellow, Wellcome Trust Clinical
Research Career Development Fellow & Honorary
Consultant Vitreoretinal Surgeon

Dr Kanmin Xue is interested in retinal diseases and the development of gene therapy. He joined the College as a Medical Research Fellow in October 2021.

I first came up to Oxford as an undergraduate medical student at Brasenose College where I was inspired by Dr Richard Boyd, Prof Nicholas Proudfoot, Prof Jeremy Taylor and Prof William James. While each of these tutors transmitted great enthusiasm about their individual disciplines in biomedical science, I became profoundly fascinated with how understanding genes and proteins can enable us to develop specific treatments that tackle the roots of many diseases.

Thus, I combined my clinical training with molecular research through an MB-PhD programme in Cambridge. For my PhD, I joined Prof Michael Neuberger’s lab at the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology and investigated how the genes encoding antibodies in immune cells undergo hypermutation and recombination to target a wide range of microorganisms. At the time, the Lab was excited to discover a group of enzymes called cytidine deaminases which actively mutated our own DNA. This initially seemed unbelievable

given the obvious risk of creating cancerous mutations, but it turned out to be the price we pay for generating the massive diversity of antibodies required to counter the ever-evolving onslaught of infections. Cytidine deaminases edit C residues within DNA, leaving behind mutation signatures which can be found in both genetic evolution and cancer evolution. Now we know of many other gene editors, including proteins that edit other DNA or RNA residues, and more recently bacterial enzymes that recognise and cut specific DNA sequences. The latter (called CRISPR/Cas) is deployed by bacteria as a primitive form of immune defence against viruses, but one that we can harness for the purpose of molecular surgery to correct disease-causing genetic mutations.

After Cambridge, my medical training took me to London, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Australia and back to Oxford as a clinical lecturer and later Wellcome Fellow. I saw enormous potential for molecular therapy in ophthalmology since the eye contains a specialised part of the brain responsible for detecting light, called the retina. Using current technology, we can observe the retina at incredibly high resolution using non-invasive methods. Furthermore, the retina is surgically accessible within

a confined and relatively immune privileged environment. And for the experimental scientist, having a pair of eyes provides the ideal experimental control for any unilateral treatment!

Under the mentorship of Prof Robert MacLaren, I co-led the world’s first clinical trial of gene therapy for two genetic eye diseases, called choroideremia and X-linked retinitis pigmentosa. These studies showed that it is possible to use a man-made virus as a vehicle to deliver working copies of the mutant disease-causing genes into the retinal cells, thus rescuing visual function in patients who would normally go blind. Since those early trials, the field of gene therapy has exploded, including the first clinically approved retinal gene therapy, but there is increasing realisation that even the simple man-made viruses can trigger immune responses in the eye which hamper the potential benefits of gene therapy. To overcome this limitation, my lab has helped to delineate the immune responses to viral vectors in the eye and discover novel therapeutic adjuncts to prevent retinal inflammation. Alongside this, we developed safer surgical techniques for delivering gene therapy with application of intraoperative retinal scans and first-in-man robotic retinal surgery.

Having now established and refined the delivery vehicle (i.e., viral vectors) and technique, I am excited to explore a range of different payloads to achieve different therapeutic effects. So now as a Wellcome clinician scientist, I have come full circle back to gene editors which my lab is trying to package and deliver into the retina to correct disease-causing genetic mutations (an emerging treatment modality called gene editing). Our current research is focused on age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and uveitis (autoimmune or autoinflammatory retinal inflammation), both major causes of sight loss globally.

One of the great joys of being an academic surgeon is the opportunity to combine practical science with clinical trials and surgical innovations. My academic journey has taken me all over the world. My interactions with patients with retinal diseases are a continuous source of motivation to drive translational research. My interactions with fantastic colleagues and students in Oxford continue to inspire me to apply the latest scientific advances to the understanding and treatment of blinding conditions.



“One of the great joys of being an academic surgeon is the opportunity to combine practical science with clinical trials and surgical innovations.”

Research

Harriet Patrick
Assistant Archivist

A brief history
of the arrival
of women at
Corpus



LEFT: P/Fo A/14b: CCC Freshmen, 1979 (this is the first photograph to feature women undergraduates at Corpus)
RIGHT: B/4/1/19: College Minutes, 12 February 1972 (showing the change of statutes to allow women to become CCC senior members and graduates)

15. The following amendments to the Statutes were agreed unanimously:

(1) Statute I: delete present clause 2 and substitute:

"2. Women shall be eligible for election or appointment as President, Fellow, Tutor, Officer, Chaplain, or Lecturer of the College and for admission as members of the College to read for any advanced degree diploma or certificate of the University. Eligibility for admission as members of the College to read for any other degree of the University shall be restricted to men."

(2) Statute I: add new clause

"3. In these statutes (and in all by-laws made under them) words importing the masculine gender shall include the feminine and vice versa, where the construction so permits and the statutes do not otherwise provide."

Michaelmas 2024 hails 50 years of women matriculating as graduate members at Corpus and 45 years matriculating as undergraduates. This piece, taken from a 2019 *Pelican Record* article, provides a brief overview of the history of women’s entry into the academic life of Corpus Christi College.

In 1964 the Warden of New College circulated a memorandum to other colleges within the University, seeking comments on their proposal to admit women to New College. Discussing this memorandum at the College Meeting of 15 February 1965 Corpus replied that:

The College welcomes the initiative taken by New College in raising the question whether there is a case for admitting women undergraduates to the present men’s colleges, and agrees that the proportion of women students at Oxford should be increased provided that the effect of such an increase would be to improve, or at least to maintain, the general academic level of students.¹

A landmark in women’s arrival at Corpus occurred during the College meeting of 13 March 1967 when ‘Mrs. D.M. Horgan was elected to a Lectureship in English Language from the beginning of Trinity Term 1967.’² Dorothy Horgan was the first woman to be employed as a Lecturer at Corpus, and remained as a College Lecturer until 1981. In 1973 Dr. Horgan was granted CCC MA status, and thus became the first woman to matriculate through Corpus Christi College.³

In May 1968 Governing Body agreed to ‘frame terms of reference for a Committee of members of the Governing Body and representatives of the Junior and Middle Common Rooms to consider matters of concern to junior members.’⁴ This Joint Committee discussed the issue of co-residence throughout the early 1970s. Much of the impetus for co-residence discussions came from the JCR, who repeatedly raised the issue in their own meetings. In 1968 the JCR proposed to hold a referendum on the proposition, ‘We should welcome the admission of women

as junior members of Corpus Christi College’. The motion was carried by 33 to 16 with 7 abstentions.⁵ Subsequently, in March 1969 the motion ‘The JCR instruct its joint committee with the SCR to discuss at the beginning of its next term the possibility of admitting women as members of the College’ was passed nem. x Somewhat paradoxically, however, in January 1969 a motion to allow women into the JCR had been narrowly defeated (15 to 17 with 6 abstentions).⁶ Women’s entry into Corpus had both supporters and critics among its junior and senior members.

During an Extraordinary Meeting of the JCR on 13 February 1970 the motion ‘that the ban on the admission of women to the J.C.R. should be temporarily lifted for the evening of the 14th February’ was ‘passed overwhelmingly’, although ‘the suggestion that this relaxation be extended in perpetuum was voted controversial.’⁷ Evidently the presence of women in the JCR on Valentine’s Day assuaged lingering junior members’ reluctance, since the following day the motion ‘that henceforward women be allowed into the J.C.R. at all times’ was passed by 33 votes to 7 with 1 abstention.⁸ Three months later the motion ‘that equal opportunity should be given to male and female candidates for election to Fellowships of Corpus Christi College’ passed by 33 votes to 0 with 3 abstentions. At the same meeting, the motion ‘that equal opportunity should be given to male and female candidates for admission as junior members of Corpus Christi College, and that the Governing Body be asked to change admissions policy to this effect’ passed by 28 votes to 6 with 2 abstentions.⁹

The question of co-residence remained on College agenda throughout the 1970s. Governing Body met at the start of Michaelmas Term 1971 to vote on changing the College statutes to allow the admission of women to Corpus. Although Governing Body narrowly voted in favour of co-residence (13 votes to 12), the two-thirds majority required for alteration of statutes was not obtained.¹⁰ It was, however, agreed to discuss the admission of women as Fellows and graduate members

of the College at the next meeting. Duly, in November 1971 Governing Body was in favour of admitting women both as Fellows (14 for, none against) and as graduates (15 for, none against).¹¹ This momentous decision was subsequently enacted in December 1971 when the College voted to ‘change its statutes to allow the admission of women as Fellows and graduate members reading for advanced degrees, diplomas and certificates’ by a two-thirds majority of those present (17 votes to 2).¹² On 12 February 1972 Governing Body further agreed by a two-thirds majority that the College should also change the Statutes ‘to allow a woman to be elected President’. The statutes were accordingly altered:

Women shall be eligible for election or appointment as President, Fellow, Tutor, Officer, Chaplain, or Lecturer of the College and for admission as members of the College to read for any advanced degree diploma or certificate of the University. Eligibility for admission as members of the College to read for any other degree of the University shall be restricted to men.¹³

It was official: from 1974, women could be graduate and senior members of Corpus – but not undergraduates.

The first six women matriculated as graduate members of the college in 1974.¹⁴ Numbers rose gradually over the next few years; their successful integration into college life greatly aided the case for full co-residence. The Women’s Boat Club was extraordinarily successful; contemporary Corpuscles suspected that its rapid rise to prominence was ‘one of the factors which facilitated the full integration of women into College as a whole.’¹⁵ Miss. Z.H. Szymanska was elected President of the MCR for the academic year 1979-1980, becoming the first woman to hold this post. *The Pelican Record* remarked that ‘within five years of their first admission to the College, women graduates have achieved a full measure of integration within it to the point of penetrating the “club-land” that has so often been man’s last exclusive resort’.¹⁶

Corpus’s first female Fellow arrived in 1978. A Meeting of Residents agreed to elect ‘Miss J. Hornsby to the Tutorial Fellowship in Philosophy with effect from 1 October 1978’; and Governing Body duly elected her at the College Meeting a week later.¹⁷ Jennifer Hornsby remained a Fellow of Corpus until 1994.

The final change of statutes was near at hand. In February 1977, having ‘discussed and unanimously accepted’ the report of the Working Party on Co-residence, the College Meeting of 14 March 1977 was fixed as the appropriate time for effecting the required change of statute.¹⁸ This was duly done, and the statutes were amended so that

Both men and women shall be eligible for election or appointment as President, Fellow, Tutor, Officer, Chaplain of Lecturer of the College and for admission as members of the College to read for any degree, diploma or certificate of the University.¹⁹

In 1979 Corpus saw the arrival of 25 women: three graduates, two visiting students and, for the first time in its 462-year history, 20 undergraduates.²⁰

Contemporary Corpuscles found the arrival of undergraduate women ‘sudden but undramatic’.²¹ First-years were accommodated in the New Building, arranged on corridors rather than staircases. But there were signs that college buildings were not adequately prepared for women’s arrival in 1979: the showers in the Plummer were unisex, ‘a source of embarrassment to some and entertainment to others.’²² To some extent, women’s arrival shamed College administration into introducing measures that male undergraduates had wanted for some time, including better cooking and washing facilities. One junior member later remembered that upon women’s arrival, ‘as little as possible would change by design – the impact of women undergraduates would in due course have its consequences, but these would be allowed to take place on their own accord’.²³

¹ CCCA/B/4/1/18: College Minutes, 15 February 1965.
² Ibid.: College Minutes, 13 March 1967.
³ P.A. Hunt (comp.) and N.A. Flanagan (ed.), *Corpus Christi College Biographical Register 1880-1974*, p.66.
⁴ CCCA/B/4/1/18: College Minutes, 1 May 1968.
⁵ CCCA/E/2/1/6: JCR Minutes, 1 December 1968.
⁶ Ibid.: JCR Minutes, 9 March and 26 January 1969.

⁷ CCCA/E/2/1/6: JCR Minutes, 1 December 1968.
⁸ Ibid.: JCR Minutes, 9 March and 26 January 1969.
⁹ Ibid.: JCR Minutes, 13 February 1970.
¹⁰ Ibid.: JCR Minutes, 15 February 1970.
¹¹ Ibid.: JCR Minutes, 24 May 1970.
¹² CCCA/B/4/1/19: College Minutes, 6 October 1971.

¹³ Ibid.: College Minutes, 6 November 1971.
¹⁴ Ibid.: College Minutes, 6 December 1971.
¹⁵ Ibid.: College Minutes, 12 February 1972.
¹⁶ A. Nockels (ed.), *Corpus Christi College Oxford supplement to the Biographical Register, 1974-1991*, pp.28-39.
¹⁷ Brian Harrison (ed.), *Corpuscles: A history of Corpus Christi College, Oxford in the twentieth century, written by its members* (Oxford, 1994): Boris Rankov, p.378.
¹⁸ *The Pelican Record*, 1978-1979, p.5.

¹⁹ CCCA/B/4/1/19: College Minutes, 11 January 1978.
²⁰ Ibid.: College Minutes, 12 February 1977.
²¹ Ibid.: College Minutes, 14 March 1977.
²² Nockles (ed.), *Supplement to the Biographical Register*, pp.95-106.
²³ Harrison (ed.), *Corpuscles*: Chris White, p.403.
²⁴ Harrison (ed.), *Corpuscles*: Gregory Wilsdon, p.409.
²⁵ Ibid.: Chris White, p.403.

Feature

Media and Publishing Special Feature

Why Media and Publishing?

Old Members who work in media and publishing reflect on their experiences and offer advice to graduates considering the industry.

Publisher

Alice Wright (Classics, 2003) writes: “Everyone assumes that to be a good (book) editor the most important thing is to be mad keen on reading, or have exemplary grammar and spelling, or be extremely organised. I would never deny that these are great skills to have, but as I look back over the last fifteen years, I am struck by the fact that publishing is really all about people and collaborating across complex teams. If you love meeting and working with a wide variety of people from all walks of life, then a career in publishing is hugely rewarding.

The team behind a book involves experts in design, digital platforms, finance, the law, marketing, metadata, picture research, rights, sales – I could go on. It is a great career for working closely with – and learning from – a huge number of people with different skillsets and knowledge.

In my current role at Bloomsbury Academic, I commission books for the academic and student markets in the field of Classics. This means that I work with authors to develop the concept for new books, and review projects that are offered to me for publication within Bloomsbury’s Classics ‘list’. I don’t imagine I’ll burst many bubbles by acknowledging that publishing is not the most financially remunerative of careers, but the flexibility, intellectual satisfaction and innovation of the industry have kept me hooked.



One of the reasons I love working in book publishing so much is that it reminds me of my days studying English at Corpus: lots of reading; storied history; weird customs; fascinating meetings.

Anna Sproul-Latimer (English, 2007), Founding Partner and President, Neon Literary

Broadcaster

Jack Evans (History and Politics, 2009) writes: “I am a senior journalist and output editor on Radio 4’s Today programme. My day-to-day duties include leading a team to decide who and what goes on air, shaping running orders, booking interviews with the day’s key opinion leaders, writing interview briefs for presenters, and thinking about innovative ways to move a story on for a fresh audience at 7am. Given how frenetic the news agenda has been over the past decade there is no room for complacency and every day is different.

For anyone considering a career in broadcasting Corpus is one of the best places to start. Working with outstanding academics gives you the confidence to think about ideas in a fresh and innovative way. The culture at Corpus encourages speaking up, straight talking, and seeing challenges as opportunities. Those values are central to the way journalism works.

Creativity is also the lifeblood of the BBC so you should be thinking about ways you can get your journalism seen by as many people as possible. If you are not pitching ideas about the student experience to a national newspaper, why not? Most of all though, be curious!”

Journalist and Author

Alex Bellos (Maths & Philosophy, 1987) writes: “In my first week at Oxford I got involved with Cherwell. A year later, I was editor. When I graduated my first job was as a cub reporter at the Evening Argus in Brighton, which led to a job on the Guardian in London and then a stint as foreign correspondent in South America.

It is a natural progression to move from journalism to books, and in Brazil I wrote my first book, about Brazilian football. The most important thing when thinking about writing a book is to ask yourself why you are the person who should be writing it. In the case



Magazines mean variety and variety is the spice of life. There are very few professional avenues left with such creative freedom, even with a commercial publisher looking over your shoulder and often frail finances.

Richard Lofthouse(Teaching Fellow in Modern History, 2000-2004), Editor of the University magazine QUAD

of my Brazil book, I was in Brazil and was being paid to travel across the country as part of my job. When I returned to the UK, I decided to start writing popular maths: it seemed a logical move, since my degree had been in mathematics and philosophy, and at the time there were no other journalists (that I knew about) with maths degrees. Popular maths led to books on puzzles, and I also co-write the kids’ series Football School.

My advice to anyone thinking about a career in journalism is to get stuck in immediately. If you want to be a writer, write. Write a diary, set up a blog, submit articles to magazines. Whatever you like. Being a journalist is as much a state of mind – always be on the lookout for stories, have no fear in pitching them and make sure you can spell!”

Literary Agent

Clare Grist Taylor (Modern History, 1981) has worked in publishing since leaving Corpus in 1984. She has published everything from trade books and textbooks to online reference works. More recently, she founded her own literary agency, The Accidental Agency.

I became a publisher because I believe in the power of the written word. But publishing is also where creativity meets business, where your job is not just to bring books to life but to get them to their readers too.

Publishing In Conversation’

On 23 November, forty students gathered in the Rainolds Room for a publishing ‘in conversation’, moderated by the President, in which three alumni and one current College lecturer discussed the world of books, writing and publishing from the perspectives of commissioning editor, author and publishing consultant.



LEFT, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Julian Loose, Struan Murray, Flora Rees and Elodie Harper

The discussion started with Elodie Harper (English, 1998), author of *The Wolf Den* trilogy and Struan Murray (Corpus Lecturer in Biochemistry), author of the *Orphans of the Tide* trilogy, explaining the importance of only writing in a genre you are truly passionate about and finding the right fit with a literary agent. They discussed the power of stratification and classification in commercial publishing, learning to live with uncertainty, and the ‘big break’ when a publisher made the decision to invest properly in a book with all the marketing and publicity opportunities that brings.

The discussion then turned to the material dimension of publishing, such as cover art. Julian Loose (English, 1985),

Editorial Director, Trade & Academic at Yale University Press, and Flora Rees (English, 1994), publishing consultant specialising in developmental editing, talked about the beauty of a book as a physical object as well as the rising influence of TikTok and BookTok on book sales. Flora, who is also experienced in literary festival management, added that literary festivals can also draw buyers to new titles.

The discussion ended with a lively Q&A from the audience, covering increased diversity in publishing, the strength of the unostentatious paperback market and the benefits of BookTok as a means both for readers to identify what they want to read and for publishers to spot future trends.

The Big Picture

Student Subject Ambassadors (English, Year 5)
Iris Hamilton

Every year the College appoints student Subject Ambassadors to help answer questions about what it is really like to live and study at Corpus. Iris Hamilton, Subject Ambassador for English, says: “I adored English literature, and I knew that I would be content with wherever I went if I was studying it. Initially, I did not apply to Corpus. I was not aware that it existed until I had a remote interview at Corpus, and I had not even visited Oxford – or any of the Universities I applied to – because of the pandemic. So, I was delighted to find that it was a wonderfully warm, welcoming, and eclectic place; it is the community here, and perhaps the Library, which makes me thank whatever inter-collegiate exchange of interviewees made possible my place at Corpus.

I enjoy my role as English Subject Ambassador enormously. I hope my page on the College website paints a clear picture of life as an English student. Prospective students can also email me with further questions. On Open Days Subject Ambassadors give general tours, participate in mock interviews, and answer questions relating to their subject or broader questions about the College. We work closely with Emma Gregory, Senior Outreach and Admissions Officer. I personally find it to be a wonderful opportunity to help prospective students get the information and answers they need to make applying to Oxford – a somewhat intimidating prospect – less daunting and as easy as possible.”



➤ This initiative expands the College’s existing welfare provision, under the oversight of the Dean of Welfare.

Student support



CORPUS
EXPANDS ITS
EXISTING
WELFARE
PROVISION

Sarah Warbrick joined Corpus in September as its first Student Support Officer, offering help and advice to any students who request it. She talked to us about the role and what she hopes to achieve.

What is your background and why did you decide to apply for the role of Student Support Officer?

For 25 years, I worked in educational publishing developing literacy resources for Primary schools. After that I went on to work as Deputy Head of Sixth Form in a large inner-city comprehensive, responsible for pastoral support. The job was interesting, varied, and excellent training for working with young people. I then decided that providing support in the next phase of young people’s lives would be an interesting new challenge – and it is! Working with these amazing students is an absolute privilege and helping and supporting them is the best job.

What do you see as the key issues facing students today?

Keeping mentally healthy, learning to be independent, dealing with imposter syndrome, and juggling workloads, social commitments, and personal needs. Life can be tough for young people today. Alongside all the usual challenges of growing up and becoming a fully functioning adult, there are the additional Oxford pressures for our students. Most of them worry that everyone else is sorted and they are not – social media has a lot to answer for. I reassure them that they are not alone in this. It is encouraging to see the range of support that Oxford has to offer. Oxford is a beautiful place to live and study, and there is a temptation to try to do everything. Short terms mean that life can feel like a bit of a whirlwind. Students need to pace themselves, and pay attention to the basics – eating, sleep, exercise, keeping connected with other people – alongside the demands of their degree.

“

Life can be tough for young people today. Alongside all the usual challenges of growing up and becoming a fully functioning adult, there are the additional Oxford pressures for our students.

What were your first impressions of Corpus Christi?

Beautiful, quiet, focused – different to a large inner-city comprehensive school! The students have been very welcoming, and I have enjoyed getting to know them. It has been encouraging to see students from a wide range of backgrounds studying here. I am particularly keen to make sure that disabled students and students from disadvantaged backgrounds know how to access the support they need. I am impressed by the amount of training and support that is available for members of the JCR in welfare roles.

What does successful student support look like?

Students who are comfortable about asking for help, and who advise their friends to come and talk if they need to. Positive word of mouth is important and a good sign that things are working well. I would be worried if we did not have any students reaching out with issues. Part of my role is to ensure that students have what they need at their fingertips, such as links to online sources of support, information about how to contact the university services (e.g. counselling service) and how to find me.

What are you most excited about in this role?

Getting to know the students and understanding what their challenges are. I hope I can make a difference, seeing Corpus students graduate and move on to the next phase of their lives, well-equipped academically, socially, and emotionally to deal with what is coming next.

➤ To learn more about outreach work at Corpus, please read the yearly Outreach Reports on the College website www.ccc.ox.ac.uk/schools-and-outreach-corpus/outreach-reports.



Outreach at Corpus

Emma Gregory, Senior Outreach and Admissions Officer, describes the work of the College’s Outreach Team.

The College’s Outreach Team works together to fulfil the College’s policy of engaging in a variety of outreach activities and initiatives for both pre-16 and post-16 students and their schools and colleges. Corpus focuses on offering these activities to students in Years 9 to 13 at state schools in our link area of Manchester, Oldham, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, and Trafford, as well as to schools in the wider North West.

Last year, we enjoyed a packed year, filled with a variety of events. These included school visits, tours, career and HE fairs, residential and developing new projects to deliver to students in Greater Manchester and the North West. In total, we held 111 events and activities, interacted with 2,500 state school students, welcomed twenty-seven different state schools to the College for day visits and visited sixteen state schools on outbound visits to Manchester.

In relation to our subject projects, I am particularly delighted that last year:

- The North West Science Network expanded its hub to include Blackburn College alongside Xaverian College in Manchester and Cheshire College, South and West which is based in Crewe.
- We launched a new English Literature Outreach initiative – a Book Club for students in Years 10 and 11. We launched the Book Club to engage

students with a variety of texts and to give them the opportunity to discuss literature with our academics.

- We welcomed over 2,600 people across three different Open Days, giving prospective students the opportunity to talk to our current subject ambassadors, have a tour around college, and view a mock interview in a science or humanities subject.

Corpus, Pembroke College, the Queen’s College, and St Peter’s College make up the North West Consortium, which held three online events for prospective applicants, parents and carers, and offer holders respectively. The sessions were extremely popular, with many attended by over one hundred people.

Thank you to Professor Robin Murphy, Tutor for Admissions and Access, and Professor Pete Nellist, Director of the North West Science Network, for their support, and a very warm welcome to Edith Richardson, who joined Corpus as our new Assistant Outreach Officer in October 2023.

Edith says: “I am so happy to have joined the team at Corpus Christi – it is so rewarding to work with students and dispel some of the myths around Oxford, letting them know that Oxford is a place to aim for and giving them the tools and confidence to get here.”

The Corpus Papers 19

A HEBREW POEM FROM THE PEN OF EDWARD BURDON (c.1540–1588), FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, DEDICATED TO QUEEN ELIZABETH I

Gary A. Rendsburg (Rutgers University) and Aaron D. Rubin (University of Georgia).

Imagine the scene, imagine the hope and glory, imagine the pomp and circumstance. On 31 August 1566, Queen Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603) entered the city of Oxford for her celebrated one-week visit, remaining until the 6 September. Her Majesty lodged at neighbouring Christ Church, but Corpus Christi College Fellows were among the most active in lauding the monarch. Or at the very least, more such praise is extant in the CCC Library than in other college libraries.

To our good fortune, the CCC library serves as the custodian to MS 280, which includes a compilation of materials relevant to the College’s history during the 16th century. Within that large collection are thirty-two pages (fols. 171–186) with fifty-six poems and praises, written by thirty-seven individuals, addressed to Her Majesty to celebrate her visit. Among the authors are several well-known Corpus Christi fellows, including George Napier, the brothers Edmond Rainolds and John Rainolds, Thomas Twyne, and Miles Windsor.

As one might expect, most of the poems are in Latin, but several are in Greek, and most striking of all is a poem by Edward Burdon in Hebrew. We know of only two other Hebrew compositions to honour Her Majesty, both of them (one in prose, one in poetry) written by Thomas Neale (of New College), which today are preserved in Bodleian MS 13, Part I. Two eyewitness accounts – both by Corpus Christi Fellows – imply that there were Hebrew verses beyond the ones penned by Neale and Burdon, though all such compositions appear to be lost.

The highlight of the Queen’s visit to Oxford was her arrival at St Mary’s University Church on Tuesday, 3 September. The aforementioned Miles Windsor wrote as follows: “As the Quene entred into the Churche theare weare dyvers sheetes of verses in Lattyn, Greeke, & Ebrewe sett vpon the doores & walles.” Richard Stephens left a shorter overall account, but he made the same observation, in fact, with strikingly similar language: “As the Queene entred into the Churche, there were diverse schedes of verses in Greeke, Latin and Hebrew set vpon the dore & walles of the saide Churche.”

To repeat our opening sentence: Imagine the scene, imagine the hope and glory, imagine the pomp and circumstance – and imagine the number of Hebrew compositions which may have adorned Oxford generally and/or the Church specifically on that day. And yet all that remains are Neale’s poem, his prose encomium, and Burdon’s poem (found in CCC MS 280, fol. 175v).

What do we know about Edward Burdon? He was born in County Durham c. 1540, entered Corpus Christi College in 1558, graduated with his B.A. on 25 June 1561, and then completed his M.A. degree on 19 December 1566. This chronology means, of course, that Burdon was still relatively young and in fact still engaged in his studies at Corpus Christi when Queen Elizabeth’s visit took place in 1566.

As is well known, Corpus remained a centre of Catholic fervour, at least until 1568, when the ‘conversion’ (for lack of a better term) to an officially Protestant institution took hold. To be sure, Burdon would have been one of the Catholic Fellows at Corpus Christi during Her Majesty’s visit. His religious affiliation, however, did not deter Burdon from expressing praise for the Queen in three (!) languages. For in addition to the Hebrew poem, Burdon also wrote elegiacs in Latin and in Greek (also preserved in CCC MS 280). As such, Burdon stands as a stellar instantiation of Corpus Christi’s founding earlier in the sixteenth century, with its famous *biblioteca trilinguis*, to use Erasmus’s oft cited and yet always felicitous expression. In fact, could there be any better illustration of the College’s mission than that which emanates from the writings of this early Corpuscule?

As scholars of ancient and medieval Hebrew, our main interest is in Burdon’s Hebrew poem, which we will publish for the first time ever in *The Bodleian Library Record*, forthcoming in 2024, along with copious annotations and a

► Burdon’s Hebrew poem will be published for the first time ever in *The Bodleian Library Record*, vol. 36, due out in 2024. More information can be found on the Bodleian Library website www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/about/about-bodleian/journal.



It truly has been a pleasure to work on Burdon’s poem, and to discover more about his personal life, about the academic atmosphere at Corpus Christi during the sixteenth century, and of course about Queen Elizabeth I’s visit to Oxford in 1566.

detailed linguistic analysis. To be sure, Burdon’s Hebrew is not eloquent, and the grammar is riddled with mistakes. Nonetheless, the poem stands as remarkable testimony to the discovery of the Hebrew language by Oxford dons and divines during the Tudor period. Here it is important to recall that there were no Jews in England during the period of 1290–1656, so that the fellows and students in Oxford and Cambridge could learn the ancient language only from grammar books and dictionaries written on the continent, mainly by German scholars who in fact did learn Hebrew from their Jewish neighbours.

It truly has been a pleasure to work on Burdon’s poem, and to discover more about his personal life, about the academic atmosphere at Corpus Christi during the sixteenth century, and of course about Queen Elizabeth I’s visit to Oxford in 1566. The trail of academic research always leads one down unexplored paths and into unanticipated terrain. In the present instance, the existence of Neale’s and Burdon’s Hebrew compositions reopened the question: to what extent did the Queen know Hebrew?

The only direct piece of evidence is the single comment by the Italian scholar Giulio Cesare Paschali, who dedicated his *De’ sacri salmi di Davidde* (Geneva, 1592) to Queen Elizabeth I. In the celebratory poem at the beginning of the volume, Paschali mentions her ability in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin (in that order), in addition to Italian, German, French, and Spanish. One further indirect piece of evidence is the fact that the then still Princess Elizabeth was tutored by Antoine Rodolphe Chevallier, who had studied Hebrew on the continent and who one day would rise to the position of Regius Professor of Hebrew (Cantab.). We know for sure that Chevallier taught Elizabeth French, and perhaps other European languages, so it is not hard to imagine him teaching her Hebrew as well. (As an aside, note that Chevallier also tutored Thomas Bodley in Hebrew!)

Herewith our translation of Burdon’s poem, which is overly literal at times, as we attempt to capture his sometimes clumsy and yet always expressive Hebrew verse.

BELOW: MS.CCC.280, fol. 175v



I am not ashamed to put my folly in poems for you.
Made in Hebrew, because there are commentators.
My instruction, as it were, I will declaim with my lack.
Not with pride, but rather to express my soul.
For this is our Queen, the one who brings my joy:
Thus, not payment, but rather truth, I receive.
God desires this way, (for me) to indite, and I strike.
For without my ability, (my) wish ceases.
Before writing, and the grace of the LORD.
In order that he may give to you the skins of your foes.
And may he strike them all, may you arise (over) your enemies.
Indeed, a continual wonder, unto under your feet.
He is humble forever, and he overtakes you unto the sea.
The Name of Jacob, and also to you he gives life.
And length of days forever, and until your heirs.
From his Holy-Place may he send forth, and may
he grant according to your heart.
And may he remember your offerings and your treasuries.
Everything may he fulfill, peace and goodness upon you.
May he grant (you) and may he advance you the blessings of his grace.
Which his desire may not have done until now.
Amen and amen.
Long live the Queen!

The Dial

► **The Telethon raises funds** for a variety of initiatives, including student support, graduate scholarships and outreach and access projects. Thank you for your support.

Telethon



LEFT: The Telethon raised just under £45,000 of new income towards the Spencer Building, captured here from Oriol Square
ABOVE TOP: Daniella Lomotey (History, Year 3), Telethon Caller 2023
ABOVE: Lauren Webb (Law, Year 3), Telethon Caller 2023

Our latest Telethon Campaign, held from 22 September to 1 October 2023, raised over £93,000 for Corpus’s current fundraising priorities. On behalf of the College and all our student callers, a big thank you to those who participated.

Alexandra Fice, Development Officer, writes: “The Telethon is always an exciting event in the College calendar. It presents a rare opportunity for current students to talk to alumni, to share news from College, discuss life after Corpus, and reminisce about the good old days!

“Before the line even connects, our callers can always be certain of the following: that they have dined in the same Hall, paced the same paved quad, attended parties in the same beer cellar, and raced to finish assignments in the same medieval library as the person they are about to speak to. These are just some of the common threads that connect every generation of Corpuscles; the Telethon invites our alumni to tug on these threads and unspool memories from their time here with a current student.

“It also gives Old Members an opportunity to hear about what is happening in College

from students who are living and studying here today. Our nine student callers spoke to three hundred alumni this year, sharing news of the College’s current fundraising priorities, from graduate scholarships and student support to access and outreach projects. Our main fundraising priority for this year’s Telethon was the Spencer Building, which is now entering the final stages of its completion. This once-in-a-lifetime project promises to transform life in College, expanding our medieval library and connecting it to the twenty-first century, for future generations of staff, Fellows and students to enjoy.

“We are delighted to report that the Telethon raised over £93,000 of new income for these priority areas, with half of the total raised in support of the Spencer Building. This is a remarkable result that reflects the excitement of both students and alumni as we draw closer to the completion of this landmark project.

“We would like to thank all those who donated to the 2023 Telethon. Your philanthropy has helped to enhance the lives of current students and to sustain the College in its mission to support the brightest minds in their academic pursuits. It would not be possible without you.”

Business and Finance Network Relaunch

The Development Office is pleased to announce that we are relaunching the Business and Finance Network.

Our objective is to bring together Old Members who work in the sector at informal events to share ideas and experiences in ways that might enhance careers or improve businesses. If you would like to be part of the Network, please register by 19 April on the Corpus website: www.ccc.ox.ac.uk/alumni/events-and-reunions/business-and-finance-network-opt.

We hope to host the first gathering, including a panel discussion and drinks reception, during Trinity Term. Invitations will be sent in the Spring.

New Arrivals

Professor Michael Cotterell
Fellow and Tutor, Associate Professor of Chemistry

Michael Cotterell joined Corpus in September 2023 as Tutorial Fellow in Physical Chemistry. He is also an Associate Professor in the Department of Chemistry and holds an Independent Research Fellowship from the Natural Environment Research Council.

Michael completed his undergraduate degree in Chemical Physics and his PhD in Chemistry at the University of Bristol. During his PhD research, he worked with Professors Jonathan Reid and Andrew Orr-Ewing FRS, to develop novel spectroscopy approaches to study aerosol particles. These particles have mesoscopic dimensions, ranging from sizes as small as ten nanometres to as large as one hundred micrometres, and their societal importance includes their role in Earth’s climate and environmental air quality, the transmission of disease, the manufacture of materials and products, and the delivery of drugs via inhalation. From 2016 to 2019, Michael conducted postdoctoral research at the University of Exeter with Professor Jim Haywood, where he worked closely with the Met Office to develop new laser-based spectroscopy instruments for in situ observations of aerosol particles in Earth’s atmosphere. In 2019, he was awarded an Independent Research Fellowship from the Natural Environment Research Council which enabled him to develop his own research group at the University of Bristol.

At Oxford and Corpus, he is continuing to develop his exciting

research programme. Its applications include improving our understanding of atmospheric aerosols and their impact on Earth’s climate; looking at the potential for accelerated chemical reactions in aerosols; and exploring the shapes and structures of aerosol particles comprised of multiple chemical components. To enable this work, his group develops and applies sensitive laser-based spectroscopy techniques for aerosol measurements. Excitingly, it often applies these techniques to single, levitated aerosol particles, using laser beam optical traps or electrodynamic fields to levitate single particles in air. Such single particle studies enable measurements of particle properties and processes with unparalleled precision.

Michael enjoys teaching Physical Chemistry and is thrilled to have joined Corpus to tutor Physical Chemistry. He says: “The College is incredibly welcoming. It is wonderful to belong to a multi-disciplinary intellectual community, which promotes discussions and interactions that are otherwise difficult to come by outside College. Corpus attracts some of the best Chemistry students, and I am excited to support their journeys through higher education and beyond.”



“
At Exeter University, Michael worked closely with the Met Office to develop new laser-based spectroscopy instruments for in situ observations of aerosol particles in Earth’s atmosphere.”

Listing

► Did you know that we regularly send out College news and invitations to events by email? Please email development@ccc.ox.ac.uk if your contact details have changed and you would like to keep in touch. More information about the Development Office can be found on the College website www.ccc.ox.ac.uk/alumni.

Corpus Christi College

Alumni events 2024

For more information on all these events please go to: www.ccc.ox.ac.uk/alumni/events-and-reunions

March 2024

Thursday 7 March

New York Reunion

A lecture by Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, followed by a Drinks Reception. All welcome.

Friday 15 March

Gaudy for 1961-1968

All welcome. Please register online.

April 2024

Friday 19 April

Frederick Pollock Law Society Dinner

All who studied or work in Law welcome. Please contact the Development Team for further details.

May 2024

Saturday 25 May

Eights Week Lunch

More details of the annual riverside celebrations to follow.

Wednesday 29 May

Frost Society Virtual Event

Open to our legacy society members. More information to follow.

June 2024

Friday 21 June

Gaudy for 1960 and earlier

Invitations will be sent in March.

September 2024

Saturday 21 September

The Benefactors' Garden Party

By invitation only.

Friday 27 September

Biennial Dinner

All welcome. Bookings open in the Summer.



Corpus Christmas University Challenge team breaks festive record

Congratulations to the Corpus Christmas University Challenge team for achieving the highest ever score on a Christmas University Challenge episode.

The team members were Alex Bellos (1987, Maths & Philosophy), Michael Cockerell (1959, PPE), Francesca Happé CBE (1985, Experimental Psychology) and Steve Waters (1984, English).

The Corpus record was set in the first round when the team won against the University of Edinburgh with a staggering score of 265. Correct answers covered a broad range of

subjects, including art, obscure words, church architecture, European football, politics and geometry. The semi-final was a more nail-biting affair with Corpus narrowly triumphing over Royal Holloway, London 180 points to 160. The team was eventually beaten in the final by a strong Middlesex team.

The team said: "It was immense fun and a great honour to represent the College. We thoroughly enjoyed each other's company; it was thrilling to get to the final. The BBC team was hugely welcoming, and Amol Rajan created a warm and energetic atmosphere."

Exchange Fellowship

Herbals in Fox's 'bee garden'

Huntington Exchange Fellow Amanda Arceneaux spent the month of November 2023 ensconced in the Corpus Library.

She says: "I am studying for a PhD in History at Brown University, examining scientific knowledge production in early modern Europe, with a focus on herbal texts. Physicians, apothecaries, naturalists, students, and ladies of the house used herbals to learn and record plant descriptions, virtues, and medicinal uses. I am interested in the ways people consumed and produced this knowledge on a personal level.

I look for evidence of personal knowledge production in texts that have annotations—notes on which herbs worked, the name of plants pencilled in, or dried herbs between the pages. While I can view the text of a book digitally, this gives no clues as to the interaction of individual



readers with personal copies. Being able to examine the Corpus Library's significant collection of herbals and natural history books, which as well as annotations, contain plant specimens and hand-coloured illustrations has been truly wonderful. The hospitality I received from the library and archives staff made my visit even more special."