

Christ Church Matters

MICHAELMAS TERM 2005

Special Women's 25th Anniversary Edition

ISSUE 16

Editorial

Twenty-five years ago the first woman undergraduate arrived in Christ Church. A now hackneyed slogan referring to a woman's place greeted them. There were only 22 female undergraduates to over 400 men.

Most of these women pioneers were unaware of the momentous change they were inaugurating in the House and how they themselves were making history. It was a period of adjustment for all. Never before had anyone in the college had to be concerned with such matters as the height of the mirrors in the bathrooms, nor to contemplate words other than "Grace please gentlemen" in Hall, nor to consider revising the dress codes to accommodate the fairer sex. A woman reading grace was, for some, the pinnacle of preposterousness. Meanwhile, paucity of numbers meant that it was a resourceful woman who avoided being press-ganged into a rowing eight. But the women of the early 1980s gradually changed the face of Christ Church. Little by little they edged back the frontiers of our previously male dominated institution. Today, 44% of the college's junior members are women. There are fourteen women on the Governing Body. Women porters even.



Left: Fiona Holdsworth. Right: Sue Cunningham
Photograph by Cambridge Jones,
copyright cambridgejones.com

This issue of Christ Church Matters marks the 25th anniversary of the admission of women to Christ Church. Association News and Christ Church Matters have merged for this special edition. All the articles are linked to women. There are a couple where

you may have to ponder the link. But suffice to say that Fiona argued fiercely that the chemistry piece had a rightful place in this issue and Cambridge Jones came to the aid of the editors.

To mark the 25th anniversary, Christ Church has launched a range of new merchandising including the first ever Christ Church silk scarves, tastefully modelled here by the female editors of Christ Church Matters. Furthermore, Christ Church ties can also now be purchased directly from college. Full details of all the new merchandise designed for old members are available on the website www.chch.ox.ac.uk or by contacting the Development and Alumni Office at Christ Church.

SUE CUNNINGHAM, *Development Director & Co-Editor* and
FIONA HOLDSWORTH, *Editor Association News*

Women's Rowing

It has been twenty-five years since the Women's Boat Club first represented the glory of the House on the Isis. Today, our passion for the sport is just as strong and consecutive years of committed training and high-adrenaline bumps-racing has seen us climbing steadily up the charts, leaving us currently poised at 3rd in Torpids and 4th in Summer Eights. It is no over-statement to cite the heroism, or even the heroinism, of those who have made this happen. Anyone who has raced along the green bank, hurtling to the point at which you lose vision, hearing and any sense of who you are other than a Christ Church rower on the tail of a rival college crew in full flight, will tell you this. It takes some level of tenacity and sheer grit to be on the water, morning after morning, watching your breath freeze in the moonlight and the steam rise from your sweat-soaked, river-splashed leggings. "Why do we do it then?" is the question so often asked by tute-partners and room-mates, who have just rolled out of bed as we drag ourselves back into college. To be truthful, I'm not entirely sure. Surely one of the main reasons must be the camaraderie between a crew. The only other explanation I can offer comes in a series of moments: our first crew breakfast, which tasted so much better for the fact that we had earned it; watching the sunrise as we spun



'It was a brilliant boat to row in, as five members of the crew had already rowed for Oxford, and another two went on to row with Oxford the rest of that term.'

An extremely successful summer eights crew, bumping St Catherine's, Wadham and Merton to go up three places.'

SUMMER EIGHTS CREW 2004 (CHRIST CHURCH W1)

Left: Celebrating - drinking pimm's after the last race on the Saturday.



the boat, knowing that all our friends in college were asleep and missing out on what we were achieving; and, of course, the ecstasy of our first bump and every bump and victory after that. These will stay with me forever.

Like the Men's Boat Club, who enjoyed an immensely successful season last year, with two out of their three Summer Eights crews being

awarded blades, Christ Church women are pitched to do well again this year. With a new Janousek IV, the 'Jonny Searle', and continued support from our club sponsors, MERCER Management Consulting, all that is required of us is that we give of our best, for which the rewards are endless.

SARAH TILLER (2004)

Cardinal Sins

NOTES FROM THE ARCHIVES

Women were a force to be reckoned with at Christ Church long before the first 'official' one arrived in 1979. In fact, it could be argued that Christ Church wouldn't be here at all if it were not for the conviction of one holy but doughty lady way back in the 8th century. The priory that was founded by St Frideswide became the core of this unique foundation of college and cathedral. Some of the Norman monastery buildings still survive, the Priory House being one of the oldest continuously inhabited residences in the country.

It was in the Priory House that one of the early canons of Christ Church, Peter Martyr Vermigli, had to take refuge from furious Oxford citizens in 1551. Vermigli, the Regius Professor of Divinity, was an evangelical Protestant reformer who ran up against the revival of Catholicism under Mary. The conservative locals in Oxford found him controversial but, even more alarming to them, was his attempt to bring his wife, Catherine Dammartin, into college. This was a totally new idea; Catherine, with Dean Cox's wife, were the first two women to live within the walls of any Oxford college. The local population almost besieged Vermigli's rooms which overlooked St Aldate's. For his safety, the couple was moved to the cloisters, but the acrimony towards Catherine remained. She died in February 1553, and was at first buried in the cathedral, as one would expect for the wife of a canon. But this honour offended the

new Catholic regime, and so, on Cardinal Pole's orders, Catherine was exhumed and re-buried in the Dean's dungheap. It was another five years before she was re-interred, this time with her bones buried with those of St Frideswide.

Of course, although Christ Church had more women in residence than any other college, there were never many women here until the 20th century. To grow up here as a young woman must have been extraordinary. Many, perhaps as a consequence, seem to have been quite formidable. Mrs Fell, for example, defied the Parliamentary authorities, and sat tight in the Deanery in spite of the troops' efforts to remove her after the imprisonment of her husband, Samuel. After much debate and "ill language", three of the Puritan canons were obliged to carry Mrs Fell out into the quad in her chair.

In the early days, only mothers and sisters (with their maids) could be invited into chambers, and only then with permission. Laundresses were not permitted to cross the threshold of Tom Gate, but had to collect and deliver linen at strictly controlled times of the day and week. *"No seamstresses, stocking menders, and applewomen, or any suspicious persons of any kind [were to] be admitted into the college"*. By 1660, the rules were relaxing a little; female bedmakers were permitted provided that they were over forty! But this suspicion of women in college continued into the 20th century; the menu for the Ladies' Night dinner in 1954 carried a quotation from



'The Taming of the Shrew'. However, women had their uses; the choice of new curtains for the SCR was left to "Mrs Lowe and the other College Wives".

There were women who, although not resident at Christ Church, had a profound effect on the place: Mary Tudor helpfully topped up the endowment a bit; Elizabeth I created the Westminster Studentships; several exhibitions were provided by women including the Bostock, Holford, and Paul; and one of the first Library benefactors was Lady Burghley. Even the Meadow, one of the House's greatest treasures, was a gift from the powerful and well-connected Lady Elizabeth Montacute.

However, it is Alice Liddell who is probably the most famous female ever to be resident in Christ Church. The fourth child of another of those redoubtable House ladies, Lorina Liddell, Alice was the inspiration for *Alice in Wonderland* and very nearly, had Queen Victoria been amused by the prospect, married Prince Leopold. Romantically - perhaps rather too much so for a tale of just a few of Christ Church's proud women - the prince named his daughter Alice, and Alice named her son Leopold.

JUDITH CURTHOYS, *Archivist*

The Women's Debate

Some readers of *Christ Church Matters* may find it helpful to read about some of the background to the admission of women to the hitherto male Oxford colleges. Prior to a review in 1977, five colleges (Brasenose, Wadham, Hertford, Jesus, and St Catz) had been allowed to admit up to 100 women between them, from 1972, on an 'experimental basis'. So the question then was, after the Sex Discrimination Act - how could other colleges which wished to admit women, arrange to do so? University policy from the centre after a debate in Congregation, seemed to favour what was then called an 'orderly progression' - that is, the choice of another batch of five to seven colleges, and then some

years later, another batch, and so on. However at a meeting between the colleges, one of them, University, announced that whatever queuing arrangement might be suggested, it would admit women from 1979. This singular act of revolt immediately meant that the University and all the other colleges had to abandon any hope of an 'orderly progression' and that all could change, from 1979 on, though some colleges, including Christ Church, considered holding back for a while (for reasons outlined below). Since the statutes of most colleges specified the



Christopher Butler

sex of students and fellows, any decision to admit women would involve a vote to change the college statutes. Such changes generally could only be made by a two thirds majority. This condition had a paradoxical effect, for although some colleges (including St Hilda's to this day) could be prevented from action

through a narrow failure to get such a majority, it was also possible, in those colleges which saw it as very likely that they would go co-educational, for a minority against to air their views without provoking a serious division amongst the fellowship. I believe that this was the case in a number of colleges, including Christ Church.

The argument in favour of the admission of women was for most people absolutely simple - why should not women (including of course our own daughters) be admitted to exactly the same educational facilities (and trust funds) as the men? Why should Christ Church library only be used by men? And after the admission of women, what serious difference would it prove to have made?

The opposition, such as it was, had to rely upon rather more ingenious and less knock down arguments. For some, delaying tactics, masquerading as a concern for others, seemed appropriate. (Hardly anyone said, or admitted, that they just didn't want to teach women.) It was asked what would happen to the women's

...one prediction was that Christ Church would consequently have to buy lots of locks (to protect the women) and more mirrors (so that, unlike the men(?), they could look at themselves)...

colleges if Oxford as a whole went co-educational? Would they not find it hard to recruit clever women and so run the risk of becoming financially non-viable, let alone face a slide down the Norrington Table? Somerville would no longer be the Balliol of the north. And in the longer run, they would stay down there, if they had to recruit the sort of man who was willing to go to a formerly all female college. In the shortish run these arguments proved to have some force; in the longer not much at all - a coed LMH, for example, now seems to be able to get just as many firsts as anyone else.

In Christ Church, as a unique double foundation of college and cathedral, the complications involved in sorting out who, amongst the lay and clerical parts of the college,

could be statutorily specified as male and/or female, seemed to offer the prospect of a lengthy and time consuming series of adjustments to the statutes. (And so it proved). But in Christ Church as elsewhere, in the end, a single vote, very amicably debated, changed everything. Despite one prediction that Christ Church would consequently have to buy lots of locks (to protect the women) and more mirrors (so that, unlike the men(?), they could look at themselves), it is now very difficult to see why such an obvious change didn't happen much earlier. The early intake of women indeed faced some peculiar transitional difficulties, (detailed elsewhere in this issue) which had nothing to do with mirrors or locks, and which included enduring the childishly expressed resentments of some male members who professed to believe that 'women should be in the home rather than in the House'. But for those who were strongly in favour of the change, as I was, the new Christ Church has proved to be in many ways an immense improvement on the old.

CHRISTOPHER BUTLER, *Tutor in English and Co-Editor, Christ Church Matters*

Girls Up Front!

"My daughter found her musical voice at Oval House" a parent.

The arts have always relied on unexpected voices for originality and a new take on our society and what it is to be human. The success of Oval House has always been the ability to listen for voices and make them heard before anyone else realised they were worth listening to!

Founded by Christ Church men, Oval House was originally a club for boys and men. But true to form, as a pioneer of radical reform, Christ Church Oxford Clubs, as Oval House

was then known, began providing activities for girls before 1955.

Boys' and girls' activities were kept separate to the extent that a new building had to be acquired to accommodate girls, presumably to protect the boys from the rough and tumble of the Highland and square dancing and basketwork that was advertised for girls. However, perhaps the 'map work' and 'explorers club' advertised for boys, and their stated aims in 'encouraging initiative' rendered



the attempt to keep them apart in separate buildings ineffective.

There were some joint activities, including Discussion, Musical Appreciation and Ballroom Dancing, and the club had 89 girls as members, against 120 boys.

Now everybody does everything together, and given that the arts have never been short of talented inspiring women, we are particularly proud that our dance classes attract increasing numbers of committed boys.

Oval House still specialises in finding unheard voices - from talented new artists to the children of refugees and asylum seekers taking part in special drama projects which give them the confidence to try out their new language skills, the work that we do with young people now is as up front as it was to have a women's billiards club in 1955!

VALERIE BOULET, OVAL HOUSE



Murder in House

Summer 2005 marked the 70th anniversary of T S Eliot's verse drama, 'Murder in the Cathedral' for whose first amateur production Christ Church Dramatic Society takes credit; it was a production with some significance for Oxford student drama in general.

Frances Mary Podmore, a third year music undergraduate at the Society of Oxford Home Students (precursor of St Anne's College) was the producer. Up to then male and female undergraduates had not acted together in college productions. Male college dramatic societies relied on dons' wives; women's colleges made do with all-female casts. OUDS famously engaged professional actresses. Frances wanted to cast female undergraduates alongside the Housemen. She started with the Somerville classics student Iris Murdoch who she wanted to lead the chorus. Frances persuaded the Principal of Somerville to waive the rules and allow Murdoch to appear. Armed with Somerville's agreement, Frances then visited the head or dean of



other women's colleges, in each case alleging theirs was the only segregationist college left.

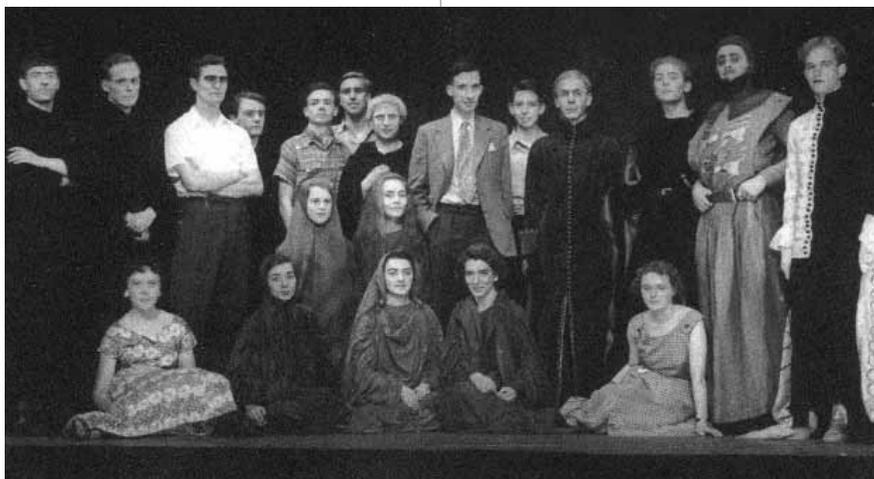
The play was performed in the cloisters on three nights, 6-8 June 1940, with a

Murder in the Cathedral 1960
Piers Plowright (right) as Thomas Becket, with Gavin Millar as First Tempter
Photograph Studio Edmark

matinee performance on the final day. The setting was commended by the press, with the action taking place in front of the open south door of the cathedral, and with 'the simplest of costumes and no lighting' (wartime black-out meant evening performances ended in darkness).

The Dramatic Society promised a new production to celebrate the anniversary in Trinity term 2005. But during the Easter vacation we were told that insuperable casting difficulties had arisen, leaving the director no choice but to retreat: not so much Murder, you might say, as death by misadventure; or maybe, as Eliot warns us, that's the way the world ends.

CHRIS SLADEN (1953)



Top picture: **MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL 1940**

Centre: Gordon Davies (seated); behind him L to R, T Madden, J Carpentier-Garnier, F Madden.

Right: the four knights/tempters, M Kinchin-Smith, M Higham, B Johnson, S Brand. Front, kneeling (in dark tabard) Iris Murdoch.

Photograph courtesy F Madden

bottom picture: **MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL, 1955**

Left to right:

Standing: J Farquharson (1953), M Fleming (Trinity C. 1951), H Wraith (1954), R Sawers (1953), R Holt-Wilson (Keble C. 1954), R Hurley (Keble C. 1954), T Conway (1951), C Sladen (1953), A Jenkin (1953), B Baldwin (1953), M Calder (1953), L Bain (1954), G Stavert (1954)

Kneeling: S A Franklin (St Hugh's C, 1954), A P Durham (LMH 1954)
Seated: G Drew, G Booth (St Anne's C, 1954), G Young (Dept. of Education), J Watson (St Hilda's C, 1954), H Sims (St Hugh's C. 1954)

Photograph courtesy M J Calder

Picturing Actors

I was lucky enough to spend the last year visiting the homes of a hundred of our greatest living actors all over the world. This was a commission to take the alumni portraits for the centenary of The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

Nobody has ever tried to collate or show the scope of RADA's output in its one hundred year history. RADA chose the list of a hundred subjects to try and show the variety and scope of their alumni and deliberately included some younger rising stars.

I later learned that I had been chosen because they liked the way I captured the character of my sitters rather than just going with the public persona.

These one hundred actors are obviously photographed regularly and repeatedly but it is interesting how they still fear the process to a greater or lesser extent. I think unlike acting they are being asked to do nothing and further, they are handing over complete control to the photographer.

My favourite response when I finish a session is when the subject says that they don't feel they have been photographed at all. That is as I would want it. The work must be done by me in capturing their character not by them having to project it.

Given the number of portraits these people have had taken it was enormously gratifying to receive the number of emails and letters I did

saying that it was their favourite or best portrait because it captured them as they saw themselves.

I find it very difficult to talk about my portraits or my style. I know when I have caught what I want and I know when to stop. The rest is instinct if I am honest and if I were ever asked to analyse it I think it would all fall apart.

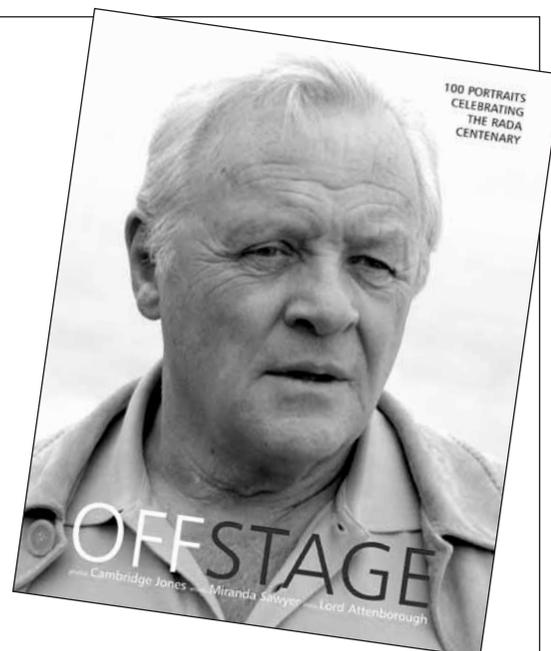
In return for a wonderful year's work for RADA I decided to set up a Centenary Bursary to help future students who gain a place but might not otherwise be able to afford the cost of living in London to attend the Academy.

If anyone is interested in purchasing a copy of the book (*Off Stage* – Publisher Dewi Lewis Media – Portraits by Cambridge Jones, Interviews by Miranda Sawyer, Foreword by Lord Attenborough) then to maximize the money that will go to the Centenary Bursary they should buy it through the RADA Box Office (0207 908 4800 or www.rada.org). These copies are also signed and discounted to £17+p&p (RRP £19.99) and 100% of the cost goes direct to RADA.

CD/DVD: All one hundred portraits and more set to a new composition by Adrian Munsey in record shops or www.amazon.com

Cambridge Jones Partnership and all images: www.cambridgejones.com

Incidentally Cambridge Jones is my *nomme de guerre*, used when battling through the cult of celebrity.

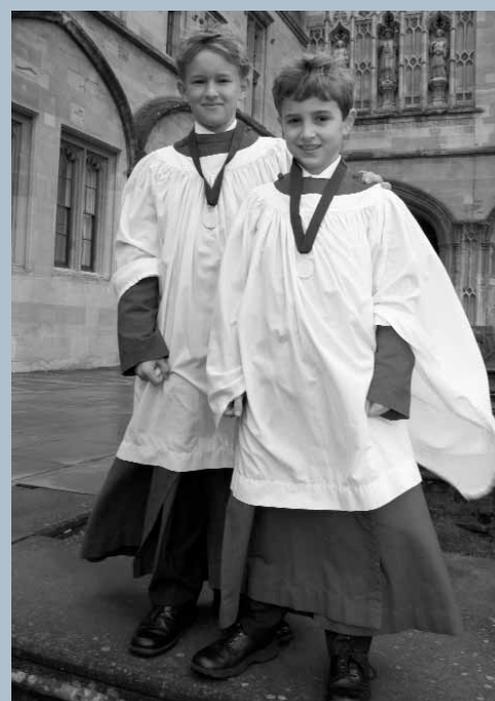


For anyone who was at Christ Church between 1985 and 1988 you will know me by my real name. But please don't tell!

CAMBRIDGE JONES,
(1985)



...Cambridge Jones now



Left: Benjamin Carpenter Right: Sam Clark

Celebrating Chemists and Chemistry at Christ Church

On the first of July, 143 chemists arrived in college to join in the celebration of chemists and chemistry in Christ Church. Toasts were given by Paul Kent and Richard Wayne and the replies came from Christ Church chemist David Franks and Professor Graham Richards, chairman of the Department of Chemistry.

In his speech, Wayne spoke of the importance of Robert Hooke, who was an undergraduate in the House, and who started his extraordinarily inventive career within these walls. Wayne said: "Hooke is probably undervalued, although his wide-ranging contributions were recognised at the conference centred on Christ Church that Paul Kent so ably organised two years ago to commemorate the three-hundredth anniversary of Hooke's death."

Wayne commented that while he could not welcome the first ever Christ Church Chemist to the dinner, he could welcome the first ever woman chemistry undergraduate: Fiona Holdsworth (editor of Association News). He also commented that there was at least one chemist at the dinner who matriculated before Wayne was born – Brigadier Fraser-Scott.

Wayne continued: "You don't need me to tell you how distinguished Christ Church Chemists are as a bunch. You have gone on from chemistry to the Church and to Music; to Medicine and



to the Law; to Banking and to Accountancy; to Publishing and to Television; and many have reached the very pinnacles of their professions. Nor should we forget, on this occasion, those many who have stayed in chemistry, teaching in schools and higher education, and pursuing important and innovative science in industry and in universities. Many hold distinguished positions in the academic world.

*Left to right:
Sean Murray (2000),
Dale Phipps (2000),
Andrew Ashley
(1998), Ed Hall
(2000), Gavin
Wilkinson (2000),
Alistair Davidson
(1999)*

"Our undergraduates continue to have success in their academic lives. In the Schools, we keep our heads well above water with the number of Firsts, and some years give us a real treat. In one recent year, five of the nine undergraduates reading chemistry here got a First.

"We congratulate all those who have brought distinction on the House in one way or another. Attracting able schoolchildren, and persuading them that their lives might lie in chemistry is, of course, an ever-present task for us.

"On the Tutorial side, we go on, but not always without worries. In inorganic chemistry, Jason Davis was appointed two years ago to succeed Matt Rosseinsky, who went to a Chair in Liverpool. But one difficulty that we had to cope with was the long period between Matt leaving us and Jason's appointment, brought about by the University's policy of releasing posts only after a delay, largely in order to save money. Matt himself had replaced Tony Cheetham, and once again there was a substantial interregnum between Tony's departure for Santa Barbara and Matt's arrival. Organic chemistry has been in an even more precarious position. Paul Kent was Tutor in both Biochemistry and

We congratulate all those who have brought distinction on the House in one way or another. Attracting able schoolchildren, and persuading them that their lives might lie in chemistry is, of course, an ever-present task for us.

Organic Chemistry for many years until he left in the early 1970s to become Master of Van Mildert College of the University of Durham. Christ Church appointed a new Tutor in Biochemistry, but it was soon apparent that the University was not about to provide a joint post for us in organic chemistry. It's extremely expensive for a college to support a post equivalent to that of a University Lecturer on its own. Very luckily, we have been able to rely on the exceptionally loyal support of Martin Grossel over all these years. Martin has managed to combine being a University Lecturer in a succession of other universities with being our Teaching Lecturer in Organic Chemistry. It's a huge burden on Martin, and we all thank him for taking it on so cheerfully.

"In physical chemistry, I came forty years ago this year to replace David Buckingham, who went to Bristol and then to Cambridge as Professor of Theoretical Chemistry. All those who know David will also know what a fine cricket player he is. I'm afraid that the same cannot be said of me! However, I have spent many happy hours over my forty years trying to persuade one generation of undergraduates after another that the reason for my inability to protect a wicket with a bat is a consequence not of my incompetence, but of the wave-particle duality and the tunnelling properties of the ball.

Dr Lee was a society physician in the eighteenth century who endowed Christ Church with some of the fortune that he made. That endowment – the Lee Trust – has enabled Christ Church to embark on many ventures which would otherwise have been impossible.

My time here is nearly up: I shall be put out to grass in September 2006. What happens after that is by no means clear. As I understand it, there is no guarantee that a lectureship in chemistry will be released to the Department by the Division, and no guarantee that the department will decide that the next lectureship it gets after my retirement should be one in *physical* chemistry. Least of all is it guaranteed that such a lectureship would be associated with Christ Church. Gone are the days when there was an assumption that a tutorial post in a college was linked to a corresponding University post as it were 'by right'.

"The Tutors are assisted as needs arise by Teaching Lecturers, who are generally appointed for limited periods, but who often leave a lasting impression. Junior Research Fellows are

appointed for periods of a few years by the college in open competition, and they may be Chemists. There are two other categories of senior people. One of the most important influences on science in Christ Church was the benefaction of Dr Matthew Lee, out of which was created a Readership first in Anatomy, and subsequently in Chemistry and Physics. I am currently the Dr Lee's Reader in Chemistry, and Paul Kent held the post before me. Dr Lee was a society physician in the eighteenth century who endowed Christ Church with some of the fortune that he made. That endowment – the Lee Trust – has enabled Christ Church to embark on many ventures which would otherwise have been impossible. Financed by the Lee Fund, we instituted the post of Lee Visiting Fellow in Science at Christ Church. The post was created to allow very senior and very distinguished visitors to Oxford the opportunity of becoming members of our community here for the duration of their stay. One of the Visiting Fellows from the United States, Professor Millard Alexander, generously endowed, along with his wife (somewhat confusingly in the circumstances named Lee) the creation of yet another new Fellowship, the Lee and Millard Alexander Fellowship. This Fellowship is intended to provide a postdoctoral visitor to Oxford, preferably one from the USA, Australia or New Zealand, with a close association with Christ Church. Jeremy Harrison, from New Zealand, has just been appointed as next year's Lee and Millard Alexander Fellow."

Wayne concluded by saying that the celebratory dinner gave everyone the occasion to review old times and to reflect on the future, and with that everyone toasted Chemistry at Christ Church.

LEFT:
Left to right:
Martin Humphries
(1991), Maxine Chow
(1991), Richard
Wayne, James Long
(1989)

BOTTOM LEFT:
Roger Cherry (1955);
Anthony Baker
(1956); Tony Harris
(1954)

BOTTOM MIDDLE:
Left: Paul Kent
Right: David
Neuberger (1966)

BOTTOM RIGHT:
Left: Matthew
Rosseinsky (1992)
Right: Martin Grossel



25 Years of Women at Christ Church – Special event on 24th & 25th June 2006



BACK ROW (from left to right)

Sally Sutton; Louise Chadwick; Jacqueline Butcher; Helen Brace; Penny Challoner (first woman JRF); Pamela Jones; Fiona Rice; Gaynor Williams; Henrietta Podd; Carolyn Morley; Judith Pallot (first woman official student); Susan Finlayson; Mary Mitchison; Josephine Taylor; Katherine Wall

FRONT ROW (from left to right)

Isobel Walder; Michele Totah; Alice Lumsden; Tania Brisby; Rachel Smyth-Osbourne; Katherine Paul; Sarah Dodgson; Annabel Freyberg; Nadine Artesani

On 12 October 1980 the first women were matriculated at Christ Church. To celebrate this important event in the history of the House, all the 1,404 women who have studied at Christ Church since 1980 have been invited to return to the House for a weekend of discussion, discovery and

reminiscence on 24th & 25th June 2006. If you want to join the event – please either complete the form enclosed or book on-line at www.chch.ox.ac.uk. Saturday's celebrations are exclusive to women members, but we are delighted to welcome partners and families on Sunday. Please be aware that there are only 300

places available and these will be allocated on a first come first served basis. If you would like to be involved in organising or contributing to this event, please contact Amelia Richards in the Christ Church Development and Alumni Office. E-mail: amelia.richards@chch.ox.ac.uk

A Weekend to Celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Women at the House, Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th June 2006

SATURDAY 24 JUNE 2006 – WOMEN MEMBERS ONLY

10.30	Broadwalk open for parking
10.30 – 17.00	Picture Gallery Open
11.00 – 12.00	Registration
12.00 – 13.30	Welcome and Buffet Lunch
14.00 – 14.40	Talks Session 1: A selection of talks by old members on careers and life experiences
	Art Workshops in the Art Room
	Gallery tours
14.50 – 15.30	Talks Session 2: A further selection of talks by old members on careers and life experiences
	Art Workshops in the Art Room
	Gallery tours
15.30	Tea
16.00 – 17.30	Sporting Activities (Netball, Rowing, Punting) + Croquet in Masters Garden
	Art Workshops in the Art Room
16.10 – 17.00	Concert in the Cathedral of old member musicians
18.00 – 18.50	Evensong in Cathedral
19.15	Drinks in the Deanery
20.00	Black Tie Banquet Dinner in Hall
22.30 – 00.30	Disco

SUNDAY 25 JUNE 2006 – WOMEN MEMBERS AND FAMILIES WELCOME TO JOIN

09.30	Broadwalk open for parking
10.00 – 12.00	Jazz Brunch in Hall
10.30 – 17.00	Picture Gallery Open
12.00 – 15.00	Family Entertainment; Harry Potter Tours; College Tours; Wind-up Workshop; Toddlers Activities; Face Painting; Entertainers
15.00	Tea
15.30	Finish

Rowing through the decades during the Women's 25th anniversary celebrations

Remember the swish of blades through water, that ultimate feeling of synchronicity as eight of you glided up the slides together in perfect harmony...before you caught a crab? Well here's your chance to relive that moment of heaven tempered by the fear of sudden hell...by (after a warm up) taking part in a mini regatta outside the boat house whilst your supporters take tea and shout "House, House!" (remember?!)

We are hoping to have a boat representing each decade at least – the crew of the new millennium chasing the crew of the 90s, chasing



Women's 4th VIII from 1999

the crew of the 80s, in a mini Eights race but if we managed a few more it would be great.

So why don't you send a text message to your old rowing friends, dig out your singlet and rowing sweatshirt (I know you've kept them for this very occasion!) and while you wait for them to reply do a couple of ratzburgs to put yourself in the mood for action. Rest assured, the course will be short.

If you are willing to join in please contact Kimberely Littlemore, c/o the Development and Alumni Office.

TRIENNIAL OVERVIEW OF EVENTS ORGANISED BY CHRIST CHURCH IN WHICH OLD MEMBERS MIGHT LIKE TO PARTICIPATE 2006 – 2008

Below is listed an overview of events organised by Christ Church and the Association, which may be of interest to old members. We will publish updated versions of the calendar in future editions of Christ Church Matters, indicating dates when they are confirmed. Christ Church Matters is published twice a year, in the Michaelmas and Trinity terms. Should you want any further information on any of the events listed below, please contact the Development and Alumni Office. Tel: +44 (0)1865 286325. E-mail: development.office@chch.ox.ac.uk

	2006	2007	2008
First Quarter	Vacation Job Placements Association Meeting 9th Feb - Nineties and Noughties cocktail party, London 18th Feb at 8pm - Christ Church Festival Orchestra performing in the Cathedral Careers Evening 1st-4th March - Torpids 28th March - Supper, Wine Tasting, and Waddesdon pre-opening preview 31st March - 2nd April Oxford North American Reunion (New York). Christ Church dinner on 1st April. <i>Hilary Term dates: 15th January - 11th March</i>	Vacation Job Placements Careers Evening 29th March - 1st April - Special Interest Weekend Proposed Behind the Scenes Event <i>Hilary Term dates: 14th January - 10th March</i>	Vacation Job Placements Careers Evening Proposed Behind the Scenes Event Spring - Oxford North American Reunion (New York). <i>Hilary Term dates: 13th January - 8th March</i>
Second Quarter	6th - 9th April - Special Interest Weekend: History Option (The Great War) Food & Drink Option (The Edwardian Table) 6th May - College Specific Degree Day 31st May - 3rd June - Eights Week 24th - 25th June - Women's 25th anniversary celebrations. 22nd June - Gaudy (1954-58) <i>Trinity Term dates: 23rd April - 17th June</i>	5th May - College Specific Degree Day 21st June - Gaudy (1959-62) 23rd June Proposed Summer Event - Activities Day: "Play in a Day", "Concert in a Day" etc. Details coming. Possibly with an evening event (1970's). <i>Trinity Term dates: 22nd April - 16th June</i>	3rd May - College Specific Degree Day 19th June - Gaudy (1963-66) June: Commem Ball <i>Trinity Term dates: 20th April - 14th June</i>
Third Quarter	3rd - 8th Sept - Conflict Series Conference: "Spies, Lies and Intelligence" 23rd Sept Day School Leonardo da Vinci and Christ Church Association Committee Meeting, AGM and Dinner 29th Sept - Gaudy (1984-87)	9th - 14th Sept - Conflict Series Conference Association Committee Meeting Association AGM and Dinner 28th Sept - Gaudy (1988-90)	31st Aug - 5th Sept - Conflict Series Conference Association Committee Meeting Association AGM and Dinner 3rd Oct - Gaudy (1991-93)
Fourth Quarter	Careers Evening Arts & Media Event Year Reps' Dinner & Meeting <i>Michaelmas Term dates: 8th October - 2nd December</i>	Careers Evening Proposed Legal Event Year Reps' Dinner & Meeting <i>Michaelmas Term dates: 7th October - 1st December</i>	Careers Evening Proposed City Event Year Reps' Dinner & Meeting <i>Michaelmas Term dates: 12th October - 6th December</i>

From a woman's point of view - Recollections of the first women



Catherine Blaiklock (1981)

I remember the difficulty in my first year of actually getting a reasonable woman's eight together. With only

about forty women in total, almost all who had never rowed before, even getting eight volunteers was a major task on a freezing winter morning at 6am! I was a terrible rower - far too light and small with no technical ability at all - but still I always had a place in the first and only eight simply to make up numbers. I also remember the boat house man who was about seventy at the time and had probably been there for fifty years giving us the heaviest, worst leaky wooden tub available.

With only about 40 women in total, almost all who had never rowed before, even getting eight volunteers was a major task on a freezing winter morning at 6am!

Carol Sullivan (1981)



Being only one of a few women scholars to regularly eat at the late sitting of dinner I was the first woman to be asked to read

grace. This happened soon after a circular stating we weren't to decline! With Gill Spokes my next door neighbour reading French & Latin I had some hasty tips on pronunciation and thought all went reasonably well. That is until I finished and was met by a tremendous noise of all the benches being pushed over. Our tutor P.B. Matthews later informed me that my high pitched female Welsh voice couldn't be ignored and suggested further training on pronunciation, even offering lessons from his colleague in classics - so maybe my gender was not all to blame! I was surprisingly asked to read again on several occasions.

Rachel Halvorsen (nee Smyth-Osbourne - 1980)



The only girl among three Etonian brothers, I was well prepared for the misogynistic tendencies of House men and took it in the good-humored, teasing way it was intended. At Christ Church, I simply extended the policy I pursued in family life: to prove that House women were in no way inferior to House men.

However, I was soon distracted by the wealth of talent strutting the quads. The ratio of girls to boys was so far in my favour that when I left Oxford I became quite depressed at my lack of pulling power.

My abiding memories of Christ Church are that I was extremely privileged to be there, but I secretly felt I didn't deserve to be in this ancient

seat of learning. I spent most of the time trying to look confident and hoped that no-one would see through me. However, the social side was great fun. Being one of the first girls was definitely a winning ticket.

Helen Brace (1980)



I married a Houseman, Sandy Gordon.....my first memory of him was his letting us into his room so that we could throw his room mate in Mercury. I remember thinking, 'What sort of a swine would do that to a friend?' I married him! 18 years this year. He is still my best friend.

I remember first visiting the House for my interview. I traveled to Oxford with a school friend who also became a Houseman (Jeremy

Williams 1980-1983). We arrived by train having bought two tickets for the price of one using a 'Persil' voucher.....since we both came from the Rhondda I feel this had overtones of 'How Green Was my Valley'.

When we arrived I remember the Dean telling us that we were not to prove difficult for the staff as it was harder to get good staff than good students.

I remember one of the staff pointing out which was the port glass at freshers' dinner....kind but unneeded advice!

Most of the women were put in single rooms in Blue Boar, I'm not sure of the reason why.

Most people were kind, a few were resentful, far too many thought the expression 'A woman's place is in the Home not in the House' was funny. To be fair, it was the first time.

Pam Jones (1980)



Memories of being in the first year of women at Christ Church: twenty-two women and 400+ men; Mercury Music; and sweaty discos in the Undercroft.

My father's recollection of taking me up to Christ Church is of nubile 18 year olds being gawped at from all corners of Tom Quad.

I'm sure there were some things the women did that were slightly out of order. Knickers and bras lying around in a previously all male laundrette. Insisting that a women's 8 would be on the river. And having the audacity to join the darts team (but hey, we were good at that!).

Susanna Nicholson (1981)

It was a privilege to make history and to connect with centuries of it at the House. Our presence was one of the last of the firsts for women. We were taking on the ultimate male bastion; it was bracing not brutal however. We were met with a mixture of exclusion and civility. "Grace



please gentlemen,” was called out every night in Hall – what was so hard about adding “gentlewomen”? There were endless debates on the subject that just mystified me.

Trivial cases of being made to feel like the exception reminded me that we were changing the House for the better. The experience changed me too. I have been more enterprising in my career than I might otherwise have been. I was gratified that the college was reverting to its essential nature: a profoundly civilised and civilising place.

Tania Brisby (1980)



I arrived at Christ Church with a lot of tea cups and pots and glasses expecting to entertain on a grand scale. Blue Boar was a bit of a shock to the system – there is nothing like a bed-sit to cramp your style.

For the first few weeks, other than fellow freshmen and dons who remembered my middle brother, the only friendly souls were the self confident, socially easy American graduate students. Nonetheless, I remember being very grateful for an old fashioned view of the fairer sex when one of the porters very kindly helped me with my bags as I arrived back in college the following afternoon laden with shopping.

The real shock to the system was Collections. Whether it was more of a shock for me or my tutors I am not quite sure. David Luke elegantly called my translation of the death scene from ‘The Sorrows of Young Werther’ impressionistic as, with my scant command of German, I had the hero kill himself with poison rather than a gun, even more remarkable is that I then made a brave attempt to justify the poison theory. David’s tutorials were a joy, he had a gift for bringing texts to life with his magnificent reading voice, for making you feel it was alright to prefer

You could also be unfortunate enough to come across a certain porter who steadfastly refused to believe that any woman entering the House really might belong there, while any male student seemed to be able to amble freely through the gates without interrogation.

German romantic poetry when set to Wolf, Schubert or Schumann, for mimicking Mrs Thatcher admiringly and for giving us Carlsberg Special Brew.

Alexandra Morgan (nee Henderson 1981)



I came up to Christ Church for my interview in early October 1980 because I’d applied under something called the Scottish scheme, which gave Scottish pupils the chance to win a place based on a meeting with tutors, because our curriculum put us at a disadvantage in the entrance exam.

Term didn’t start for several days and there weren’t many undergraduates about. I was walking across Tom Quad when a young woman rushed over and virtually fell at my feet. She was American and had arrived a week or so before to find she was the only female in the place apart from a handful of scouts. She was so thrilled to see me that I felt awful having to explain I was only up for interview and she would have to endure her status as Christ Church’s lone female for a few more days.

Jacque Butcher (1980)



On the inside of the college all seemed well, although approaching Canterbury Gate we were greeted by graffiti scrawled on the outside of Peck - “No to Co-ed”. Skirting that obstacle, you could also be unfortunate enough to come across a certain porter who steadfastly refused to believe that any woman entering the House really might belong there, while any male student seemed to be able to amble freely through the gates without interrogation.

A dress code for formal dinner was provided for the male undergraduates, but the college seemed to be at a loss to provide guidelines for female members of the House. Towards Trinity

term a directive of “no bare legs” proved difficult to implement.

The usual round of events persuading freshers to sign up for activities yielded not enough women to provide our own rowing eight, so we were despatched (ironically) to all female Somerville for that first year. When we did eventually muster enough support the following year, we were given a heavy, unwieldy craft and reluctant invitations to Boat Club events.

I am sure that many myths abound about what happened in those first years – but I think that most of us treated it all with an air of detached amusement. Living in what had been an all male environment certainly trained me well for dealing with the later rigours of City life.

Sarah Dodgson (1980)



We had all watched Brideshead before coming up and were half in love with those who were brave enough to wear white suits and take elocution lessons. But no-one carried a teddy bear until my third year.

Wimmin, brave souls, spent a lot of time out of college or in their own rooms as the insults could be vicious. They only once reduced me to tears and then the woman in the next room came to my help even though I hardly knew her. We all had the most peculiarly thick skins, and nearly all of us had brothers.

Dinners: college dinners were almost exclusively male affairs. We were invited to the Hockey dinner in March and I think that was the first time the men and women of the House sat down to an invited dinner together. The Bullingdon et al remained resolutely male. We debated whether we should get up and go somewhere else when the port was passed, so the boys could make fools of themselves in private with whatever men did after dinner on these occasions. We decided against it so we saw them solemnly climb on their chairs and sing. A bit like being present at a Masonic event I suppose.

So in the summer we had a dinner ourselves, the Women of Christ Church Dinner. We were all present for the drinks party at which the photograph was taken. It was interesting to shuffle round the table and talk to women we had nodded to for nearly a year, recognising that another woman in the quad must be a first year, but rarely getting to know them well.

Lost Women - can you help ?

Are you in touch with any of the women listed below? They are all old members of the House with whom we have lost touch.

About 15% of our old members are sadly lost to us at any given time. People move house, jobs and even country, so it is not always easy to stay in touch. The Christ Church Alumni Association is for all old members of the House. It enables you to keep up to date with Christ Church news, receive information on events that are being organised and gives you the opportunity to keep in contact with old friends and colleagues. And of course knowing how we can contact you means that we can invite you to gaudies.

We would like to be able to communicate with as many of you as possible; we hope you will feel as we do, that once you have been a

member of Christ Church, you always are. We are delighted to hear your news and see you whenever possible.

If you discover the whereabouts of any of the women on the lost list, please let the Development and Alumni Office know. For every lost woman you "turn in" we will enter your name in a draw for a Christ Church gift. For the men, we have a House tie and for the women, one of the new range of merchandise...a House scarf.

Simply send contact details of the lost member you have found, along with your name to Sarah Thomas in the Development and Alumni Office at Christ Church, or via e-mail: sarah.thomas@chch.ox.ac.uk

1980 Nadine Daniell
1980 Sian C Mason
1980 Isobel H Walder
1980 B Watson
1981 Belinda Dewsnap
1981 Serena K Hesmondhalgh
1981 Maureen E Parry
1981 Rachel C Stubley
1981 Margeret C Usher
1981 Helen M Warnock
1982 Catherine M Curtis
1982 Claire Ferguson
1982 Anastasia Kuperman
1982 Sarah S MacKean
1982 Anna M Misra
1982 Frances M Nethercott
1982 Katherine O'Shaughnessy
1982 Mary J Waterman
1983 Barbara M Clements
1983 Caroline M Dring
1983 Katherine A Nathan



Rhian W Owen, 1983

1983 Rhian W Owen
1984 Suzanne M Alexander
1984 Melanie J Houldershaw
1984 Andrea M Kirkby
1984 Catherine E Mears
1984 Lisa A Surridge
1984 Jemima J Whyatt
1985 Laura H Adshead
1985 Amanda J Coe
1985 Lorna S Hobbs
1985 Catherine M Jennaway
1985 Tania Kindersley
1985 Sophie J McLaughlin
1985 Pamela D Nickell
1985 Anna Pasternak
1985 Anne M Scotland
1985 Mary Sheeran
1986 Emily J Berens
1986 Diana Hill
1986 Leonora Wertheimer



Anna L Allwood, 1987

1987 Anna L Allwood
1987 Judith M Barnes
1987 Mary Bly
1987 Jennifer M Burchell
1987 Beata M Dytczak
1987 Stella J Freeman
1987 Emma J Kendall
1987 Claudia Lee Ainsworth
1987 Lie-Tjing Lim
1987 Christine R Scarlett Gajdowska
1987 Tessa Vines
1988 Theresa J Bradley
1988 Lisa C Gearing
1988 Janet Hill
1988 Kathryn O Ryder
1988 Achala Shetty
1988 Sarah E Townsley
1989 Colleen S DeLaney
1989 Geraldine T Evans



Amanda T Flood, 1989

1989 Amanda T Flood
1989 Adele J Keddie
1989 Jean Long
1989 Androniki Makris
1989 Naomi Morgenstern
1989 Jane H Stuart-Smith
1990 Katherine J Ardiss
1990 Moira R Jackson
1990 Anna Martini
1990 Elaine Miskell

1990 Rachel P Slater
1990 Elisabeth N Stewart
1990 Tiffany A White
1991 Christine C Fung
1991 Miriam L Handley
1991 Irene A Jones
1991 Kim L Worthington
1991 Mei M Yan
1992 Sarah Colvin
1992 Natasha Coplestone-Crow
1992 Rachel S Mable
1992 Fiona J MacBain



Karen A Maubach, 1992

1992 Karen A Maubach
1992 Deborah S Norton
1992 Zoe V Payne
1992 Delphine Psychoyos
1992 Rina Singh
1992 Rachel S Thomas
1992 Amy West
1992 Sophia M Willitts-King
1993 Catherine Chauvin
1993 Anne E Hall
1993 Gesche Ipsen
1993 Elizabeth A Le Vay
1993 Yeun-Joo Lee
1993 Catharine Macedo
1993 Anarkali K Moonesinghe
1993 Sarah J Nichols
1993 Laura-Jane H Rich
1993 Sylke Skar
1993 Gabriele P Stein
1993 Karina Terekhova
1993 Rachel E Toney
1993 Ann C White
1994 Clotilde M Davey
1994 Caroline D Fawkes
1994 Lynn S Fotheringham
1994 Susan E Lacey
1994 Helen L Lamb
1994 Sophie C Lorge
1994 Elizabeth Robinson
1994 Kathryn L Sykes

1995 Clare L Flello
1995 Linda J McCauley
1995 Kathryn A Whitney
1996 Emily A Carter
1996 Damilola Odimayo
1996 Bing B Yu
1997 Sarah J Braide
1997 Naomi C Bryan
1997 Linda Cummings
1997 Anita Karne
1997 Anne T Lejeune
1997 Jane S MacNaughtan
1997 Sarah R Pigott
1997 Rachel E Yould
1998 Celine Courpotin
1998 George M Courtney
1998 Karen Henson
1998 Kirstie Laird
1998 Michala E Pedersen
1999 Vivien C Collingwood
1999 Catriona M Gardner
1999 Hendrikje Nienborg
1999 Anna J Shepard



Emily T Abrams, 2000

2000 Emily T Abrams
2000 Jessica Lewis-Bowen
2001 Sabrina S Larbaoui
2001 Michaela Scheuermann-Freestone
2003 Ye Feng



Rachel E Toney, 1993

Women working in the House today

Fourteen women in different roles talk about what it is like to work in Christ Church in 2005.



Joanne Romera - Assistant Pastry Chef

I applied to Christ Church nine years ago because I thought it was a good college with large catering numbers. I like the lovely surroundings and the people the best. The work can get a little bit hard at times but that is the same with every job. We have different age groups working in the kitchen resulting in different opinions, which can be amusing at

Photograph by Cambridge Jones,
copyright cambridgejones.com

times. There are four women. The advantage of being a woman is that you can work around the men a bit more. Years ago it was a man's place to be in the kitchen but these days it is both a role for both men and women. The same is equally true at home. I really enjoy working at Christ Church. At lunch time in the staff room you get to see a whole range of people, such as custodians, gardeners and maintenance people. It isn't just one face I see every day, it is more like one big family.

Molly Gregory - Scout and Jackie Mansell - Senior Scout

Molly – “I am a scout working in Meadows 5. I am in my ninth year. I worked in Somerville College for 11 years as a scout until I reached the age of 67. Things have gone well for me here at Christ Church and I am very happy. I like the people best. I have worked on 1, 3 and 5 in Meadows and I always get to know the different tutors. I do miss the undergraduates when they move on. There was one man in particular who keeps in touch. He left about five years ago. I had an invitation to his wedding in America but I couldn't go because it was expensive. I always hear from him at Christmas. He used to call me his Mum.

“I am happy in what I am doing although with all the night life I often wish I was young again..

“I was honoured last year to be nominated for ‘Hospitality Employee of the Year’ for all the colleges in Oxford. I have had four children and most of my life has been at home looking after them. It is wonderful to think that at the end of my working days I have managed to achieve something like this.

Jackie – “ My job entails looking after stores and staircases and I only clean if they are short staffed. I have been just over 2 years in this role. Before that I was a floater – I went from one staircase to another. I have been in Christ Church for about nine years but have worked at Christ Church twice before. First time I was on Meadows 2 and then left to have my daughter. I came back but it was hard as she was so young and you had to work every Saturday then, so I left but then came back just

“I am happy in what I am doing, although with all the night life, I often wish I was young again..”

under nine years ago, starting just after Molly. What I like best about working in Christ Church is meeting people. It is such a friendly place. I like meeting the freshers. Some come to you when something is wrong and I love seeing them grow up. I also like talking to the delegates when we have a conference. One of the advantages of being a woman scout is that some people will help you carry things.

“I like all the old traditional things - the Gaudies and afterwards when they play the tricks. They didn't play too many this year which was a shame. Some students stand out, as do some of the dons and some of the conference people. In fact some of the conference people come back year after year.

“We have conferences here in June and one old member used to come back and ask Molly to do his washing. It got to the stage that Molly used to mend his pants. Molly said to him one day: ‘look here it's time you bought some new ones’. So the next time he saw her he had all new Marks & Spencers underwear.



Molly Gregory



Jackie Mansell

Judy Pallot – Official Student in Geography

I joined Christ Church in 1979, the first woman member of Governing Body. My election had taken place at the first Governing Body meeting of the previous Hilary term when the appointment committee established to consider applications for the post of Official Student in geography recommended me to GB, explaining my suitability for the post thus: 'Dr Judith Pallot was born on 25th July 1949 and is unmarried'. I was not, in fact, the first woman member of the House (not even the first unmarried one). Those accolades go to Dr Penny Challoner who had already completed one year of her four year Junior Research Fellowship in chemistry when I arrived on 1st October 1979. Penny helped to interpret for me what would otherwise have been a very strange experience for someone whose education had taken place in the local grammar school and red brick universities in Leeds and London. For a person with, for those days, such 'unorthodox' origins (and it is necessary to throw in two years as a postgraduate at Moscow University at the height of the Cold War for good measure), Christ Church held many surprises, some unwelcome, some glorious.

I suspect that some of my initial impressions of Christ Church are similar to those of the first few generations of women undergraduates, except that whereas the number of women undergraduates grew quite rapidly once the

initial 'breach' had been made, in the case of women senior members progress was rather more leisurely. I remained the sole woman on Governing Body for many years, before Catherine Andreyev, somewhat coincidentally like me a specialist in things Russian and Soviet, was elected the fourth history Official Student in 1987. Eight years on from this appointment Katya and I were forced to reflect upon whether Christ Church would ever be able to improve its one-a-decade rate for appointing women Official Students. But then there was a sudden surge forward at the end of the 1990s and we now have fourteen members of Governing Body who are women and there are so many of us at all other levels that counting has ceased to be enlightening or interesting.

I am very excited about the prospect of renewing the acquaintance of or, indeed, getting to know, the women who have studied at Christ Church in the past twenty-five years in June. The imminent prospect of our anniversary weekend has sent me scurrying to the archives to examine the run up to that momentous decision of Governing Body in 1976 to admit women as members. As those of you who will discover when the true history of the admission of women to Christ Church is finally told, the much more significant and troublesome decision for the college had taken place several years earlier when the senior members had had



to debate whether to allow wives (not spouses, same sex partners or Significant Others) to attend a Ladies Night twice a term on High Table....But more of this on the 24th!

JUDY PALLOT'S WOMEN'S FIRSTS

- ◆ First woman Official Student;
- ◆ First Official Student, who was a woman, to attend SCR Ladies' Night;
- ◆ First woman senior treasurer of the Boat Club;
- ◆ First woman food rep. for the SCR;
- ◆ First woman senior treasurer of the Drama Society;
- ◆ First woman Tutor for Graduates;
- ◆ First member of GB to be given maternity leave (or at least special leave);
- ◆ First Senior Proctor from Christ Church who was a woman;
- ◆ First woman Junior Censor;
- ◆ First woman Senior Censor.

Claire Smith – Commi Chef

The main thing I do is to cook all the starters and the main courses for the students. We all do the Gaudy meals as well as doing private ones. I have been here for four years. I came straight from school. In 2003 I won Junior Chef of the Year in Oxfordshire.

I love the surroundings and the people are great to work with. It can be stressful when we are very busy or we are short of staff. The Hall Manager, Andrew Hedges, always makes me laugh. Everyone here is treated as equal. The only real challenges are picking up heavy items such as food, flour bags, tins and other things, but people will come to help me. I work a six day week or a four day week as we have every other weekend off. I work 7.30 am – 1.30 pm and then we come back at 5 pm and finish at 8 pm unless we have a private function when we stay until 9 – 9.30 pm. Some places do straight shifts. But I think the split shifts work well in this kitchen. I do enjoy working here. Things constantly change – you are always learning.



Alex Webb – Conference & Events Administrator

I am responsible for marketing the colleges conference facilities and arranging conferences and events – both for clients and our in-house



programmes – such as Special Interest Weekends and the Conflict series. I have been in this role for four years. I particularly like working in the wonderful surroundings with very friendly people.

I was once invited to join the conference organiser of a prestigious international conference for dinner one night whilst they were in residence. During the after dinner speeches a bat made a guest appearance! If only I could have had a little more influence and arranged that for the Harry Potter Banquets!

Emily Baragwanath

Christopher Tower Junior Research Fellow in Greek Mythology

My research explores how Herodotus and his contemporaries of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. used mythology as a tool in the writing of history. A subject that particularly intrigues me is the power of mythic allusion to transform narrative. I have been at Christ Church for a year now. There is something



wonderful, if intangible, for a classicist, about living in a place that has such a hallowed classical tradition. Just to give a single example, every day I find myself walking beneath the statue of the famous classicist and Dean of Christ Church (not to mention father of Alice!), H.G. Liddell. More tangible, and extremely useful for me, is the awesome classics collection housed in Christ Church's library. But what I love most about being at Christ Church is the warmth of the academic community. The vibrant classics contingent here makes it a most stimulating environment in which to work. As for being a woman at the House, while I know that some female academics have misgivings about joining senior common rooms at Oxford colleges, I have found the SCR at Christ Church to be wholly welcoming.

Sally Druce – Manager of the Chapter House Shop

I run the Chapter House Shop which is a limited company run by the Friends of Christ Church. The Friends are all volunteers and all the profits of the shop go directly to the Cathedral. The shop has been running about 18 years. Our turnover last year was £293,000. We sell parish supplies, gifts and souvenirs. I have been here nearly eighteen months and came in as Manager. I like working with the volunteers as they are interesting. Some of them are very elderly but they are great. They do on average one session of three hours a week.

We have many tourists – in the last six months we haven't stopped. The tourists like buying things like pencils, plastic pens, but the American tourists will spend £150 on a tapestry. The Harry Potter link definitely helps with our turnover in the shop. Our best selling item is the postcard – mainly Oxford postcards, though we do sell a lot of the Hall, the Hall stairs, the Cathedral and Tom Tower. My favourite items are the tapestry handbags that I introduced this year and we have sold quite a few.

Jackie Webber

Tutors' Administrator



I have been at Christ Church nearly 13 years now. I had a baby break and before that worked in a Chemistry Lab. I have seen a lot of change over the years. When I first came I worked in the Junior Censor's office and we used to have to report anyone who wasn't in their room the previous night. No such ruling exists today and undergraduates have more freedom now.

I like the people at Christ Church. We used to have an office in the Meadow Building and knew the undergraduates on that staircase very well. I was like a mother to them, with tea and sympathy when they had problems or when they couldn't finish their dissertations. I even packed them off down to Schools at the last minute. I still see some of the old members sometimes and keep up with some from way back. I have seen a lot of incidents in my time, but I don't think any of them are reportable.

Women are noticed a bit more. Breaking down the male boundaries has been a bit of a challenge. I have seen the first woman tutor here (Judith Pallot) who became Senior Proctor and then Senior Censor and now we have a Junior Censor who is a woman (Belinda Jack). Seeing Judy Pallot on the day all dressed up when she was being taken down to become Senior Proctor was very memorable.



Mandy Robinson – Lodge Porter and Denize Noel – Deputy Head Porter



Mandy Robinson

Mandy – I have been here just over 2 years. The Lodge is the nerve centre of the college, everything comes through here – post, people, visitors, gossip and tears. My main role is customer service which takes up the greatest part of my job.

There are so many different aspects in my job which make it interesting – everyday is different. The people are all lovely so I consider myself very fortunate. It's a struggle with family as we work long hours (12 hour shifts) but it's worth it. One student opened an envelope in the Lodge and he was so excited because he had just found out that he had become a doctor that he came over and gave me the biggest hug. Those types of situations happen quite often - when you are the only person there and someone opens a letter and get a good piece of news, or sad piece of news, they just want somebody to share it with. I think we are quite a big part in their lives – we are like surrogate mums and of course we are here 24 hours a day.

Lots of students lock themselves out and come to the Lodge wearing a towel, sometimes a very



Denize Noel

tiny towel just covering their modesty. One bishop said after I had escorted him to his room and declined his offer of a tip – 'well do allow me to bless you instead'. So I did get a bishop's blessing. Some of our American guests seem to look at us and say 'Lodge, that's a really unusual name. They think my name is Lodge Porter! They also phone up and ask for room service and ice. We have to tell them that we don't do it (or extras)! I think in some situations women are more sensitive and possibly more diplomatic than the men. We don't tend to get the confrontations which the men do.

One of the challenges is that there are still a lot of men out there who don't believe we can do the job and do it as well, if not better, than a man.

Denize – I have been here for four years. Philip Toothill is the Head Porter and House Manager, based in the House Manager's office. I am always in the Porter's Lodge so I am in charge of the day-to-day running of the Lodge. There are four day porters, four night porters, two messengers and a relief porter. There are three women, of which one is a night porter. I am the first female Deputy Head Porter and Sue is

probably the first female Night Porter. She started off as a messenger then a porter and now a night porter. I worked in the House Manager's office for six months before I came to the Lodge and I worked in retail management for 19 years (Milletts Outdoor) before I came here. I like the people aspect. I think the image of the grumpy old porter has gone.

A lot of the American visitors like the quaintness but can't understand why we don't have all the mod cons to go with it, like elevators. During the summer we had some Chinese who, at about 5.30am, all stood in Tom Quad to do their exercises. Sometimes the Dean's wife joined them. Some of the men only had on their underpants and vests.

We have quite a few confrontations to deal with – mostly drink related. I have always found that in a confrontation situation if a woman goes up to a man he will accept it. I think it is good to have males and females in the Lodge for the students. I have found the last four years here very enjoyable and I am glad I made the change – it was a big step coming from retail, but it enriched my life.

Maggie Sleeman Head Gardener

I have worked at Christ Church in my current role for approximately 5 years. I like the variety of gardens, for example: the Memorial, Masters', Pockocks and Cathedral gardens, not to mention the lesser known and private ones. I work on plans for the re-creation and maintenance of the gardens, with Dr David Hine, Chair of the Gardens Committee, and it is satisfying to see these plans come to fruition. In particular I

enjoy selecting unusual and architectural plants which fit the splendid surroundings. I shall always remember Angela and John Morrison (the previous Archdeacon) and their rare and exotic crops of tomatoes, melons and gourds in the Archdeaconry garden off Tom Quad. As the first woman head gardener, I am certainly breaking new ground. But I wouldn't mind, some day, another woman or two in the gardening team!



Rachel Taylor - Penningtons' Student in Law

I joined Christ Church in Michaelmas 2003. My role is split between teaching and research. As a tutor, my main areas of interest are constitutional and administrative law, tort and family law. At the moment the focus of my research is family law and human rights, particularly the role of human rights in the law relating to children. Christ Church is a great place to work as a Law Tutor, not only because of its long history of producing eminent lawyers. The House has one of the best college law libraries in Oxford, a large and well-motivated group of students and a supportive teaching and research staff. These factors produce a stimulating environment in which to work.

Prior to joining Christ Church I had worked as a solicitor in the City. Having left a firm where women were represented at all levels, including a female senior partner, I must confess to having had some concerns about joining a 'traditional' senior common room. I am pleased to say that these concerns were utterly unfounded.

I have found the senior common room to be an extremely welcoming and supportive environment. Indeed the only aspect of life at the House that does not seem to have fully adjusted to the presence of women is the size of the portions in Hall!



Irene Tracey - Medical Tutor at Christ Church

I first came to Christ Church in October 2001 as a pre-clinical Tutor in Medicine. This post came with a joint appointment as a University Lecturer in the Department of Human Anatomy and Genetics, where I teach medical students from the whole year as well as conduct my medical research into pain processing. My personal research team comprises over twenty people and is in the field of neuroscience, specifically human neuroimaging – a technique that enables us to see the “brain in action”. In addition, I am Director of the Centre for Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging of the Brain, a large research facility that comprises many further scientists who investigate a broad range of neuroscience related problems, and is based in the Department of Clinical Neurology where I hold a further joint appointment. Juggling the teaching and research demands makes for a very full life in a modern-day university and I have found Christ Church to be extraordinarily supportive during this very busy stage of life.

Having studied at Merton College as an undergraduate and graduate, my impression of Christ Church was somewhat skewed by the usual college rivalries and the fact I was often caught by the Bowlers when using it as a short-cut through to the Abingdon Road!! I was somewhat hesitant therefore, when it became apparent that my university post was automatically attached to this particular college. However, within weeks of starting at Christ Church I rapidly realized what a fantastic place this was and how extremely lucky I had been to become a Fellow or “Student” here. This transition to life at Christ Church was aided by tremendous support from my co-medical tutor, Ian Thompson, as well as by one of the few female tutors at that time, Judy Pallot, and of course I must mention John and Clare Dury, who were wonderfully inclusive to new members and their families. What surprised me most, and still does, is the humour and friendliness of all

SCR members that is nevertheless combined with an efficiency and professionalism in their attitude towards organisation and committees. Business is done without fuss and when change is thought to be necessary, appropriate consultation is made, discussed and acted upon. It is a refreshing college environment and not perhaps what people assume from the “outside”. Furthermore, and unlike many Oxford colleges, Christ Church is particularly good at seeing you as a whole person, with a family life outside of work. They welcome and encourage participation from spouses and children at many regular events throughout the year, which is wonderful.

There are no particular challenges or difficulties I face because of being a woman at Christ Church. We are perhaps less vocal during committee meetings than our sex is traditionally given credit for, but this is changing as more women have joined the SCR! Personally, I think the undergraduates are perhaps less intimidated and more open regarding their needs and concerns because of my being a woman. For undergraduates who have left home for the first time and find the whole experience often intimidating, this is perhaps an important aspect we should not underestimate.

My only regret is that with the demands outside of my college life, I do not have as much time to participate at Christ Church as I would like. It is a wonderful place as many of you already know, and I am just thrilled to be a woman member of the House.



In this issue we hear from fourteen women as they reflect on their time at the House and their subsequent careers.

Michele Totah (1980)



I shouldn't be featured here on at least two counts: as a cloistered nun and as someone without a career. When I entered the monastery on 31st May 1985, my career ended. A vocation is not like a career since the initiative and choice come from God; by giving up the usual things that give a sense of identity – money, status, a partner, a career – religious life brings to light the true destiny and vocation of every human being before God.

Although the possibility of religious life had been a real one for much of my life, there is no doubt that that my time at Christ Church deepened my faith. For the first time I had to explain what I believed and why. I remember walking round the Meadow in the early hours of the morning trying to explain to a friend about prayer to the Virgin Mary.

Friendships, the weekly essays and tutorials, the art and architecture of the place, its music and natural beauty were allies in the search for God. But the friendships most of all, many of which persist to this day.

I was such a naive American, I did not know there was anything unusual about a woman

Benedictine life and Oxford share much common ground: both are places of beauty, tradition, and order; both at their best are a happy mix of discipline and freedom, solitude and communion with others, the divine and the human. Both enshrine an ancient way of life that is made new with each generation. Benedictine life gives back all the best of that privileged time.

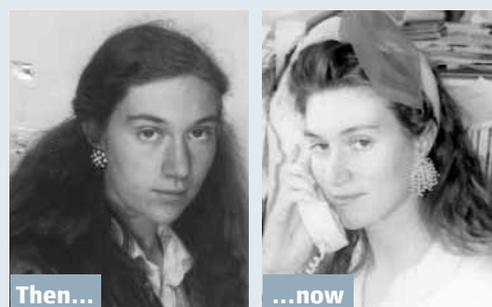
going to Christ Church, and blithely answered questions from a journalist. A few days later the Steward announced to our intake: "Members of the House do not give interviews to the press."

After completing my doctorate at Christ Church, I taught English for two years at a university in America, a valuable experience, but there was something more I was looking for and which I found in Benedictine life. Benedictine life and Oxford share much common ground: both are places of beauty, tradition, and order; both at their best are a happy mix of discipline and freedom, solitude and communion with others, the divine and the human. Both enshrine an ancient way of life that is made new with each generation. Benedictine life gives back all the best of that privileged time.

The apparent restrictions entailed in our rules of silence, poverty and enclosure are at the service of the greater freedom to be found in focusing wholly on the search for God.

For more than 10 years I have been Novice Mistress, a sensitive and demanding task which involves not only teaching but building up confidence and joy in the novice's vocation and standing by her in what St Benedict calls the "hardships and trials through which we travel to God." I also cook the supper regularly, practise calligraphy, and have published a book and some articles. In my final year at Christ Church I lived in the Old Priory House overlooking the cloister of St Fridewide. The chant sung by Frideswide I now sing for more than four hours a day. Her name means peace and strength, and sums up what I discover daily in monastic life. A peace and strength, hard won, but even more real for all that.

Annabel Freyberg (1980)



Undergraduates drawn to journalism will find that university friends and contacts can prove gratifyingly useful – and that applies to their peers as much as to anyone grand or important. My own first foray in the print media was thanks to an Oxford friend. A couple of years after leaving Christ Church I had embarked on a second degree in Fine Art and was tiresomely poor. My then flatmate, Cristina Odone, was working at the *Catholic Herald*, and roped me in to read page proofs at their printers in Chesterfield once a week. The future Editor of the *Telegraph*, Martin Newland, was one of the paper's news writers, as was Jack O'Sullivan, best known for founding Fathers Direct. I later sat alongside Jack at the *Independent*, where he wrote leaders and I was Deputy Obituaries Editor. That's the fun of journalism: the same people turn up in startlingly different guises.

In between I'd cut my design journalism teeth at *The World of Interiors*, as Chief Sub-Editor. This experience led to setting up design pages while at the *Independent*, which in turn led to becoming Arts Editor on the *Evening Standard*. As with the Obituaries job, this wasn't a post that was publicly advertised – many jobs on national newspapers are settled by word of mouth.

Working in arts and design journalism means attending numerous cultural events - how can you choose which artists, actors, designers to profile unless you are well informed about the fields in which they excel? – and these often take place in the evening, which can be difficult when you have children. It helps to be more than a little in love with the subject, which I am, but I am also fortunate to have a husband who is a writer and works from home.

As a journalist, it is also common to change jobs reasonably often. This can play havoc with maternity provisions – when my second child was born I had recently moved to *The World of Interiors* again, as Fine Art and Features Editor, and qualified for a paid six weeks off in just 2 days. I came back and worked there very happily for the next two years, but the pull of newspapers proved too strong, and this Spring I moved to the *Telegraph Magazine*. There is nothing more alluring to a journalist than a large circulation, and the *Saturday Telegraph's* is just that, at 1.3 million.

Sacha Baveystock (1981)



I didn't get it at the time. Having taken my A-Levels at a boys' school (boys/girls 10:1) being in the minority at the House barely impinged upon me. Sure, there was the odd twit (usually in cords) muttering about where a woman's place might be and I was thankfully ineligible to join the 'Loaders', but it never occurred to me that my male peers and I wouldn't be absolute equals.

My intention was to go into journalism, but beyond co editing the *Jericho Bugle* with friends in the 2nd year I did little to engage with career matters while at the House. It took two terms teaching English to school drop outs at a crammer to galvanise me. I got a job as a reporter on a film and TV magazine, but quickly concluded that I'd rather make it than write about it. I found work as a researcher, then director, on programmes like *Dispatches*, *Inside Story*, *the Late Show* and *Tomorrow's World*. Often restless, I travelled a lot, and wound up in Australia, where I worked as a producer for Channel 10 – and met my husband.

I've worked in many areas of factual TV but the critical link for me is the storytelling. Knowing how to craft an engaging narrative, constant questioning, having a rigorous eye for detail; all are skills which have their roots in my time at the House reading English. Ten years ago I joined BBC Science as a director/producer, became a series producer,

Sure, there was the odd twit (usually in cords) muttering about where a woman's place might be and I was thankfully ineligible to join the 'Loaders', but it never occurred to me that my male peers and I wouldn't be absolute equals.

and then Head of Development, overseeing the development and commissioning process of new programmes. Recently I made *Little Angels*, a BAFTA nominated series about child behaviour, and eventually became the show's executive producer. I now manage programme-making teams across several different series.

Television is a highly competitive, long hours culture, and inevitably the tension for me has been with the birth of my three children (now 8,6,3). It's almost a cliché now, but it was a shock to find myself so conflicted by my desire for close involvement in the daily fabric of my children's lives, however much I enjoyed the job. I worked full time after my daughter was born, but took a year out when I had my first son and now mostly work a three or four day week. Even so, it's still an immense juggle trying to fit everything in. I edit scripts at the weekends and field phone calls from the playground; the family at work often needs just as much attention as the one at home. It can be both punishing and exhilarating. So were the twits in cords right all along? I don't think so.

Nicola Shackleton (1981)



I came up to Christ Church in 1981, choosing physics because it seemed like a good idea at the time. On reflection, this choice turned out to be a wise move on my part.

To be honest, I had absolutely no idea of which career path I would like to take until the very end of my time as an undergraduate. My decision to enter the world of Intellectual Property arose because of the belief that I could combine knowledge acquired at Oxford in physics with an opportunity to branch out to the legal area. I had established that the easiest way of obtaining employment and qualifying as a Patent and Trade Mark Attorney would be to work in London. Clearly, my Oxford degree was influential in securing my first position as a trainee attorney in autumn 1984.

It soon became apparent that whilst a good grounding in Physics would be useful, a patent attorney would typically be dealing with novel and inventive developments at the forefront of technology which would make redundant some aspects of the theory indoctrinated during my time at Oxford. As with most legal careers, one has to be very methodical and able to work to strict deadlines – a skill which was acquired during my time as an undergraduate.

A clear difference in my approach now is to question everything put forward by an inventor rather than just accepting the academic facts as I did as an undergraduate.

I also manage trade mark portfolios for clients, handling issues arising in connection with novel concepts and products. Branding requires a rather more commercial approach than when dealing with patent issues – a skill which I definitely did not acquire as a physics undergraduate!

My career has also given me the opportunity to travel and meet a wide spectrum of people. The work is very varied, ranging from branding for jeans and batteries to the latest developments in constant velocity joints and medical inhalers!

I am firmly convinced that I made the right career choice and I am grateful for having been given the opportunity to spend three fabulously rewarding years at Christ Church.

Nicola is a Partner of Page White & Farrer, Patent & Trade Mark Attorneys.

I am grateful for having been given the opportunity to spend three fabulously rewarding years at Christ Church.

Kate Bingham (1983)



“And if you do insist on applying to a man’s college, whatever you do, don’t darn any socks – and stand up for yourself!” were the warning words of the headmistress of my girls-only school.

With these instructions in mind, I went up to Christ Church in 1983 to read biochemistry, without a sewing kit but with all the misplaced confidence of a seventeen year old. I chose Christ Church for entirely rational reasons: it wasn’t the college that either of my parents had gone to, it was mostly male; and the Biochemistry Tutor, Tony Rees, was a sporty, musical Welshman.

To make sure I wouldn’t become homesick for the bluestocking life, I immediately enrolled in the University Ladies Lacrosse team, with practices or matches almost daily.

Sadly, the 5:1 male to female ratio at Christ Church wasn’t quite as life-changing as I had expected. It was good to have a wide choice of possible boyfriends without much competition, but in fact it was the platonic friendships that made the difference. I met an astonishingly interesting and diverse group of people, the core of which has stayed with me ever since.

By my third year, I had to buckle down and concentrate on my degree. Tony Rees was pragmatic and supportive towards his students. He recommended that we identify the tutors or professors that we most admired at Oxford, and ask them to give us a personal tutorial or two. For some reason I found this highly motivating, and almost overnight turned from a dozy layabout to a rather embarrassingly keen student. The awful truth was that I secretly loved my clinical biochemistry.

I have stayed true to the fascinating, mysterious link between biology and medicine ever since. After a few years in management consulting, in biotechnology and an MBA at Harvard Business School, I moved to Schroder

Ventures, a large European venture capital partnership. I now run the Life Sciences group in Europe. From scratch we have built a venture capital group with \$1billion under management, focused exclusively on investments in health care and the life sciences.

But just to be sure I don’t take myself too seriously, I also competed in the World Bog Snorkelling Championships last year and came 19th in the world! I wonder what my old headmistress would have said to that.

Charmaine Damley –Jones (1983)



I came out from the House with a very average degree in engineering, but rich in experiences! Although it was the fourth year of women at Christ Church, we were still in the minority. Going directly from an all girls school was quite a shock. Few women were ever short of attention – both positive and negative. I learnt a lot about coping in a male-dominated environment and, in fact, became the first female JCR President.

With hindsight, electing a woman (of Indian origin, no less) was quite a strong signal for change. I took away lessons on the nature of leadership, how to get things done through other people and, (generalising hugely), the differences in how women and men ‘operate’. These lessons served me well during my subsequent career.

Although I did not become a practising engineer, I took away much from the course that has been useful. For example, taking problems back to first principles - I often find myself taking a step backwards and asking, ‘What is the root of the problem and how do I resolve that first?’

Twenty years on, I am now married and a mother of 3. For the last 11 years I worked for DIAGEO, who market alcoholic beverages. I joined as an International Marketeer. Latterly I was a member of their Marketing Development Team - I developed

My generation of women has been lucky enough to have options – career woman or full time motherhood? Something in-between?

and then taught courses on all aspects of Marketing to a wide variety of people within the business. Prior to DIAGEO I worked ‘in mens underwear’ for 4 years! Prior to that I did an MBA at INSEAD and before that I worked for Unilever in marketing.

This July I finally stopped paid employment. My generation of women has been lucky enough to have options – career woman or full time motherhood? Something in-between? Having tried the other two, I am now experimenting with full time motherhood. Guilt has been an ever-present emotion. Earlier it was about going away on business trips forcing me to leave young children with a nanny overnight or being unable to do more than the basics of my job. Now, I feel guilty about ‘wasting’ my education and career! But along with age has come the realisation that we simply have to throw ourselves into the ‘positives’ and just deal with the ‘negatives’ that come with the decisions we make. At least we have had a choice.

Fiona Lane (nee Stott) (1985)



Why did I put ‘full-time mother’ in the box marked ‘career’? Despite being a member of the first generation of my family to go to university, I decided to stay at home and look after my children.

I’m frequently asked why I made this decision, but for me there was no choice. After graduating from Christ Church with a degree in modern history, I trained to be a secondary-school teacher. I remember dealing once with a very irate mother who demanded to know why I could not make her child work at home.

I tried to point out that I came into contact with her daughter for just 70 minutes a week. Children are in school only a small proportion of their time. Home is where it happens.

Not that it is the easy option. A child's education starts in the home. There are playgroups and music lessons and playgrounds to visit. On wet days, there is baking and playdough and painting to do, and most of this comes without adult conversation.

I have no regrets. I saw my children's first steps, heard their first words, played in the garden in the rain and spent wet afternoons making papier-mache models of Thunderbird 2. All too soon, they gain independence and with my younger child now attending school full-time, is it time to return? It could be, but then who will listen to my children read, or take them to swimming lessons and drama club? Very few careers allow you to work from 10am until 2:30pm every day.

I am not arguing that mine is the only choice. Most children grow up to be well-balanced and emotionally stable if they come from a happy and caring home. And that's the point. My choice made me, and therefore our family, happier. I don't suffer from a working mother's guilt, but I don't have a career, either.

Sometimes it is implied that I wasted my education and Oxford degree, staying at home. I belong to the generation of women who were told we could have it all: a career and a family. Yes, perhaps, if one earns enough money to pay for first-class child-care but even then one has to make compromises. I have, latterly, used my education to nurture and teach my own children and if, in the future, my daughter or, indeed, my son, made the same choice, I would not be disappointed.

Sally Johnston and Melanie Fall (1986)

Melanie Fall and Sally Johnston met shivering on the steps of Tom Quad when they came up for interview on a freezing cold day in 1985. Four years later they graduated and lost touch. But unknowingly they had set off on similar career paths. In 1994 they found themselves at adjacent desks working for the BBC flagship Politics program *On The Record*. They have been close friends ever since.



Then...

Melanie Fall



Then...

Sally Johnston



...now

Left: Melanie Fall. Right: Sally Johnston

*Melanie Fall and Sally Johnston met shivering on the steps of Tom Quad when they came up for interview on a freezing cold day in 1985... In 1994 they found themselves at adjacent desks working for the BBC flagship Politics program *On The Record*. They have been close friends ever since.*

Melanie: *"It's not a surprise we ended up in the same place. We were both interested in politics, and were attracted by the dynamic environment of BBC Current Affairs. I had started work as an economist in the Treasury, but I was unsuited to the slow, academic atmosphere. The BBC was challenging, but also great fun."*

Sally: *"I don't think either of us has any idea at college that we'd go into the media. Neither of us was involved in student journalism or politics. But television is teamwork, a very social job as well as a creative one. This was a time of excitement and change. Labour was reinventing itself and the Tories' fortunes were waning. It was an unexpected surprise to discover that PPE would be so useful. A little knowledge of how parliament operates, the history of the Parties and their cultures helped us to discern the significant stories."*

Melanie: *"We'd venture out with a camera, sit a politician down in front of it and ask him difficult questions. The one-on-one tutorial system gave us a huge amount of confidence, not to be intimidated by distinguished people, and to learn how to interact with them. Christ Church has a formal male-dominated atmosphere, and certainly you can say that about the house of Commons."*

After several years at Westminster both decided to venture into new areas. Sally moved to *Newsnight* where she tried to persuade her editors to send her abroad as much as possible, before she moved to *Panorama*. Here she began concentrating on observational filming. Her last film was the result of six months spent with a persistent young offender who was one of the first people to be given an ASBO. She has since had a baby and has decided for now not to attempt to mix film making with family life. She is currently on sabbatical and living in Singapore.

Melanie left the BBC to become a freelance documentary maker. She now spends much of her time abroad. She has travelled across East Asia filming a series about the Tiger Economies with Chris Patten and spent months in Australia profiling its culture with the critic Robert Hughes. She is now working on her third series with the historian Professor Niall Ferguson which will cover major conflicts of the 20th century. "The War of the World" is due to broadcast on Channel Four in April 2006.

Sarah Llewellyn-Jones (1987)



Then...



...now

There's a reason why cello ends with 'o'. It's the sound most people make when I tell them I play it professionally. I play in orchestras for money, I painstakingly construct recitals for less money, I play in auditions with varying success, and I teach others to do it. I can't remember a time when I didn't play the cello: it's become a companionable comfort, an amazing expressive source, an addiction. It's weird, and it's marginal, but it's what I do.

Since back in 1987 I was good at the cello but abject at the academic side of music, I chose to read English. There's a studious side to cello-playing which bears faint similarities to

my time at Christ Church. I'm always trying to improve and diversify my playing, and I still have occasional tuition. My playing is judged, in an infantilising sort of way, regularly – the difference is I'm playing a Haydn cello concerto that I've refined for weeks, rather than reading out an essay on *The Wasteland* I've brazenly constructed overnight. I face rejection in the same way, with a stiff drink; these days the rejection is professional, not personal, and the booze is better quality.

After graduating my cello-playing melted into the background in favour of editing work. It was repetitive, uninspiring, and badly paid. In my late twenties I got a postgrad place at the Royal Academy of Music. It was never dull. But at Christ Church we all arrived on a level pegging; at the Academy I had to fight to be heard: it felt like a showcase for the most gifted students and it was weird to be near the bottom of the heap. I finally emerged with a distinction, but the struggle has never really gone away. There are occasional highs: auditioning successfully for the Royal Opera House, playing with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, triumphant recitals, accomplished pupils; but for each of those there are dozens more put downs and rejections.

Occasionally as a student I'd get carried away with characters in books, imagining what they'd be like if I met them. As a musician the creative force is more potent: performance takes you even closer to the neurotic voice of genius. The complex yearning of Schumann is woven tightly through his poignant tunes; Debussy's brilliant intolerant spirit is laid bare in his questioning phrases; and Beethoven's music transmits so powerfully his unimaginable pain. When things are going well, and I'm breathing through those musical lines, it's an unparalleled privilege. I'd take it over a conventional career any day.

Emma Fergusson (1992)



I was at Christ Church whilst I completed the clinical part of my medical training. Having been at a younger and less posh college in 'the other' place as an undergraduate, the austerity

and accents in the porters' lodge came as a bit of a shock to me. I had a wonderful time, however, and as a result have some precious friends from the interesting and international postgraduate group. I was given excellent accommodation and really enjoyed the privilege of living in such a place. The contrast of the college with the often grim reality of hospital life was stark, but helped me to keep a balance. For example the college provided life drawing classes run by Peter Rhoades and it was very important for me to spend two hours each week studying healthy bodies instead of diseased ones.

Having worked in a number of other cities I am now back in Oxford working as a child and adolescent psychiatrist at the Warneford hospital. I also have three children under five years and my work as a doctor often feels like my time off rather than the other way round. I am currently working with adolescents and their families in an Inpatient Unit. It is difficult, fascinating and an enormous privilege. I am still training which is good as the more I do, the less I realise that I know. I would like to make a small plug for working in the NHS. I was thoroughly abused by the organisation until I started my family, but since then it has been a considerate and accommodating employer. I have had a better deal than any other professional I know and managed to be with my children and continue to work in a family friendly way.

I still go to college regularly as it is a favourite family outing to visit the fountain and fish in Tom Quad. I was grateful to one of the porters who corrected me when I told him that I was an old member of the House; 'there is no such thing' he said, 'you are always a member of the House.'

Katya Melluish (1994)



When I went up to the House, my thoughts could not have been further from the small African country which was still reeling from a systematic and brutal genocide. Bodies were

still unburied there, while I explored the quads and launched into the first of many all-night essay 'crises'. Today I find myself intimately acquainted with the horrific events of 1994. I am a prosecutor for the UN's International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), working with many others to bring some of the key *genocidaires* to justice.

I left Christ Church with a degree in Modern History and went to London, trained as a barrister, and worked in the courts in and around London for five years, before realising my long-held desire to work abroad.

I am now employed as a 'trial attorney' which means working in a team to see cases through from the very beginning—the preparatory drafting of indictments, identifying and interviewing witnesses (both in Rwanda and dispersed around the globe), and eventually, conducting the trials. The ICTR is truly international which makes for a vibrant working environment and an interesting amalgam of legal systems. As such, it's a living experiment in multi-national law.

I often have reason to be grateful for my Christ Church education: the defence of a controversial essay, for example, is not so far from courtroom advocacy.

I live beneath a beautiful volcano in Arusha, Tanzania, where the ICTR is based. I am woken on Sunday mornings by the sound system of the local tin-roofed church rather than the bells of the cathedral, and my 'bulldog' is a Maasai warrior. Surely Oxford is a world away. Yet I often have reason to be grateful for my Christ Church education: the defence of a controversial essay, for example, is not so far from courtroom advocacy. Getting to grips with a vast quantity of material in a short time as we did weekly at the House has helped me to master the large and complex case I'm working on at the moment, as it did all the last-minute briefs I had at the Bar in London. Mixing with so many intelligent and interesting people has probably benefited me the most. I went up knowing no-one but found a strong yet diverse community. Since then I've never been afraid of the unknown – perhaps the most important qualification for a career which would take me halfway across the world and into worlds I hardly knew existed.

Kelly Rhodes (1995)



During my four years at Christ Church reading French and Italian I never imagined that my future lay in the army. I endured a well paid but stultifying office job in a London finance house for 18 months until I happened to attend a Royal Academy of Sandhurst Ball and began chatting to some of the female cadets there. I was struck by their camaraderie and confidence and impressed with how they were coping with the tough environment of Sandhurst training as well as the potential for travel, responsibility and excitement after they comissioned. So much so that within two months I had enrolled myself. My four years at the House had pushed me hard mentally but many was the time that I was close to vomiting with fatigue during training when I mentally beat myself up for not being fitter before I started. However, what Christ Church had helped with was a self belief and horror of failure which refused to let me give in and literally kept one foot in front of the other.

After my year at Sandhurst I was commissioned into The Royal Corps of Signals and underwent a further six months of communications training before taking command of my first troop of soldiers at 14th Signal Regiment (Electronic Warfare) and heading straight out to be part of the vanguard

into Iraq for Op TELIC 1. I was now beginning to assume that my linguistic skills would unfortunately fade. However, with Op TELIC came the need for Arabic speakers and so volunteers from any cap badge or service with language ability were encouraged to apply for the army Arabic course. And so for the last 15 months I have been attempting to master the elusive language of Arabic and I have needed everything I learnt academically at the House to do so.

When Christ Church Matters goes to press, I shall be back out in Iraq as an interpreter - something I'm looking forward to with a healthy combination of excitement and fear. This is precisely the kind of 'challenge' I had in mind when I left Christ Church and one which is a million miles away from the city office job I had left behind.

Jennifer Bagshaw (1999)



Christ Church was my home for three years whilst studying for my Music BA/Hons. The first rung on my careers ladder was the Guildhall School of Music & Drama where I learnt first hand how impatient I could become with routine, long meetings and never-ending admin. Perhaps a career in music wasn't the best option for me after all.

Determined to use this as a stepping stone I searched for jobs in growing, successful companies with graduate training - to make something more of myself. After a gruelling day's assessment with the recruitment agency Pareto Law I found myself with nine interviews lined up the very next week. But when I reached number three, it was an easy decision to cancel the rest. How could I refuse an offer from an MD who has such conviction in his company and such passion for his staff? Not to mention the promise of weekly training, free flights to the parent company in the States, monthly bonuses, regular sales nights out, weekly free-food day, table-footy for coffee breaks and a beer with the boss whenever I need a heart-to-heart?

I am now a Business Development Consultant for Rackspace but when I joined I did not have much to offer by way of IT knowledge or 'sales' skills. However my 3 years at Christ Church had equipped me with three vital qualifications: so-called 'people skills', a passion to meet high expectations, and a commitment to deliver on strict deadlines in times of heavy pressure.

Whereas at Christ Church I mixed with a wide spectrum of intellects through general socializing, I now use that skill to develop relationships with customers, to handle 'difficult' situations with a positive outcome and to make clients feel comfortable spending money. I face monthly and quarterly sales targets along with daily 'huddles' to check on the team's progress. I recall with amusement the frantic dashes across Tom Quad to hand in a particular paper for my 5pm deadline and having to battle (with seconds to go) through the ubiquitous crowds of tourists! These days the race is on to make the sales before the clock strikes. It's the same struggle, but now I get paid for it!

Notices

THE OXFORD REUNION BALL

Oxford's largest ever reunion, The Oxford Reunion Ball, will take place in London on 15 July 2006. The event is due to take place at the Old Billingsgate Market, the River Thames location that is home to the MTV music awards. The full music line-up will be released later this year. Tickets are now available and are strictly limited. To receive priority access and updates, including the music line-up, please visit www.oxfordreunionball.com.

SPORTS SHORTS

Simon Molden (1955) is researching the history of the Oxford/Cambridge Cross-Country Races, both the gentlemen's race from 1880 and the ladies' race from 1976. If anyone has any information that they would like to share, Simon would be very interested in hearing from them: scmolden@yahoo.co.uk.

FIRST OXFORD UNIVERSITY ORCHESTRA CD

The Oxford University Orchestra is to record its first professional CD on 9-10 January 2006 in the Oxford Town Hall.

The CD, to be released by Priory Records in summer next year, will feature two pieces: Organ Symphony, an early piece by American composer Aaron Copland (1900-1990), and an Organ Concerto by Jonathan Clarke, who is a recent music graduate from Trinity College.

The conductor is to be Dr James Ross, a Christ Church graduate and BBC Competition finalist who has worked with the Orchestra previously and is also the conductor of Oxford University Sinfonietta. He said: 'The project is an excellent opportunity for the students to gain

professional recording experience. The Orchestra will purchase 500 copies directly from the recording company and all profits from these will go back into the Orchestra's funds. Music for organ and full orchestra is extremely rare: the Copland is magnificent and Jonathan's work is a thrilling achievement.'

David Goode, a former Christ Church sub-organist and winner of the Calgary International Organ festival, will be the soloist.

More information about the Oxford University Music Society, www.oums.org which oversees six University ensembles including the University Orchestra, can be found on their website.

Christ Church, Oxford: A Portrait of the House

OLD MEMBERS HAVE PROVIDED a fantastic response to our request for contributions to the forthcoming book *Christ Church, Oxford: A Portrait of the House*. We have received copies of old members' diaries and letters home from as far back as 1911. We have learned of historical documents kept in old members' castles. We have the poem written by Albert Einstein in Robin Dundas' visitors' book when he was staying in college in 1931. A number of you have given us some excellent reminiscences from after the second world war. And one old member, Oswald Shuffrey (1920), at 103 has provided us with a wonderful insight into life at college after the first world war.

One contributor is compiling a list of fictional characters from Christ Church. Some old members recall not only their time at the House as undergraduates, but also what it was like to spend their childhood growing up in and around the college. And what a lot of sinners we have. My computer is brimming with anecdotes: like the story of the buttered communion wafers; the 1968 petition to stop the grassed areas of Tom Quad being converted into a large car park; and the truth behind the 1974 escapade involving the continuous ringing of Tom. As well as images of old, we will be commissioning new photography of the college for the book.

We are excited by what we are finding and thrilled by the enthusiastic response of so many old members. We are looking forward to being able to present you with the end result. Nothing like it has been produced before. We have created one page (right) containing some reminiscences by Jan Morris from her time in college.

Thank you to everyone who has been in contact. I hope you have had as much fun writing your articles as we have had reading them. Please be aware that we will not be making final decisions about which material we will publish until next year. The book will be available in November 2006.

The deadline for contributions is now past. However, if you have material which you feel we really should not miss, please let me know quickly. One area where we could do with some more material is that of anecdotes about tutors. Surely most of us have at least one tale about our



Christ Church, Oxford: A Portrait of the House
Jan Morris (1989)
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tutors that should be shared. Material should be sent to me, preferably by e-mail: fiona.holdsworth@bopenworld.com or by post to me c/o The Glebe House, Lighthorne Road, Kineton, Warwick CV35 0JL.

FIONA HOLDSWORTH, Managing Editor,
Christ Church, Oxford: A Portrait of the House

Working together to make a book worthy of the subject

General Editor: Professor Christopher Butler
280mm x 240mm / 192pp / 80,000 words

This magnificent, richly illustrated tribute to Christ Church is being prepared in association with Third Millennium Publishing and is well on schedule for publication in November 2006. We are asking for your subscriptions and last minute contributions to help us create a book that fully expresses the traditions and spirit of the House.

Christ Church, Oxford: A Portrait of The House will be neither a history of the college, nor a book solely designed to adorn a coffee table. It is intended to be a stimulating anthology of articles, vignettes and images capturing the history, habits and harmonies of the House. We hope that as you dip into the volume, it will not only serve to rekindle happy memories but unmask facts and stories about the college you never knew.

We would love you to play a part in the book. You may be one of the many people who have already sent in a contribution, or you may have simply wished to subscribe. If you have not subscribed, you will pay considerably less if

you do so now, rather than wait until the book is published. In addition you will receive your copy ahead of publication and have your name included in a special index with all those who will have made publication possible.

'We are delighted with progress on *A Portrait of the House*. The number of subscriptions we are continuing to receive is certainly one of the best responses we've ever had', comments Julian Platt, Chairman of Third Millennium Publishing.



- The first full-colour portrait, in words and pictures, of Christ Church in all its aspects
- Includes sections on college history, architecture, the college Archive, the Picture Gallery and treasures
- A rich cast of Christ Church personalities

How to Order

A Portrait of the House will retail at £45, but we are able to offer the book (including postage and packing) to subscribers in the UK at only £35, £38 for Europe and £45 for all other international addresses.

Subscribers will have their name listed in the book.

To order your copy, either fill in the form attached to the inside pages of *Christ Church Matters*, or order securely online at www.tmilt.com. Once there, please click on **Forthcoming Titles** in the **Books Gallery** section and follow the instructions.