

# Editorial

This edition of *pieces* is rather a sad one, being the first since the early retirement and subsequent premature death of our former Master, Professor Malcolm Bowie. Several members of College were able to attend his funeral service, which can be seen on the College web site ([www.christs.cam.ac.uk/people/bio/bowie.html](http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/people/bio/bowie.html)) along with links to his obituaries in the national press. There will be a memorial event in College and also a fund in his name. Details of these can be found overleaf.

The sad news about Malcolm does, of course, mean that we have a new Master. Professor Frank Kelly was unanimously elected by the Fellowship to be the 37<sup>th</sup> Master, taking up office in December. As it happens, the Vice-Mastership was also due to change and Professor Martin Johnson, who matriculated as an undergraduate here in 1963, took up that role in January. Read about them both on page 3.

Elsewhere in this edition you will find interviews with Claire Scobie (page 6), who matriculated in 1991 and is now an Australian-based journalist and author; with Nils Blythe (page 7), who matriculated in 1975 and now works as a BBC business correspondent, and with teacher and rugby referee, Rowan Kitt (page 10), who came to Christ's as a graduate student in 1991.

Professor Jim Smith, who was a student at Christ's in the 1970s, is one of a small number of Fellows who seem to enjoy running marathons! He is running the Flora London Marathon in April. If every *pieces* reader sponsored him just £3, he would exceed his target but if you can afford more, please help Jim to help us. Read also about his research and work on pages 8–9.

It is always a pleasure to meet members of the College. Please do come and visit us if you are in the area.

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**The editor welcomes**  
all comments on *pieces* and suggestions  
for future editions. Please contact:  
Elizabeth Norris  
Development Director  
Christ's College  
Cambridge CB2 3BU  
Telephone: +44 (0) 1223 766710  
Fax: +44 (0) 1223 766711  
E-mail: [campaign@christs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:campaign@christs.cam.ac.uk)

**Front cover picture:** First Court and completed  
demolition of Bradwell's Court (Sept 2007). Photo courtesy  
of SDC Construction.

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# Malcolm Bowie FBA

Born 5 May 1943,  
died 28 January 2007.  
Master of Christ's  
2002–2006.

Malcolm Bowie was, for over three decades, one of Britain's most eminent professors of French. He was appointed Professor at Queen Mary College, London at the age of just thirty-three; he moved to Oxford in 1992 to take up the Marshal Foch Chair of French Literature and a professorial fellowship at All Souls.

It was from Oxford that he moved to Christ's in 2002 to become our 36<sup>th</sup> Master. Malcolm, as he was known to almost everyone, had been appointed in time to lead College during our very special 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in 2005 and to head up the campaign to raise essential funds. It was typical of Malcolm's determination that, despite being diagnosed with an incurable cancer, multiple myeloma, in September 2004, he managed to carry out these daunting tasks, arranging his periods of treatment and stays in hospital around key dates in the Quincentenary Year. It was a frail-looking Master who, in the very middle of his chemotherapy, stood up to address members and guests at the Quincentenary launch event in Guildhall London on 20 January 2005; but as soon as he began to speak it was vintage Bowie. Malcolm's ability to hit just the right note, his clarity of thought and his vision were unimpaired.

After a year spent officially on sick leave from College duties he resumed them in time for the start of the new academic year in the late summer of 2005 and the whole College community was thankful for his period of remission from the cancer. That period was sadly only to last a year.

Malcolm was born in Aldeburgh, Suffolk; an appropriate birthplace for someone with a lifelong passion for music. He attended Woodbridge School and then continued his education at Edinburgh, during which time he spent a year at the University of Caen. He then moved for two years to Sussex University to work on his doctoral thesis about the Belgian writer and painter, Henri Michaux. He completed it in 1970, by which time he had already been assistant lecturer in European Studies at the University of East Anglia for two years and had moved for the first time to Cambridge, where he became university lecturer and Fellow of Clare College until his move to London in

1976. It was during those years in Cambridge that he met his future wife, Alison Finch, a scholar of Proust's manuscripts.

Malcolm's outstanding intellect was beyond question and throughout the academic world he will be remembered for the truly interdisciplinary approach to his work as literary critic and theorist; his work on psychoanalysis, literature and art formed a very significant and effective contribution to critical inquiry. He was involved with a number of research centres and institutes that focus on dialogue between different disciplines and art forms, and indeed founded two of these centres. He realised that this kind of discourse allows people to think outside their regular subject boundaries in new and exciting ways.

His scholarly achievements were universally recognised; he was elected Fellow of the British Academy in 1993 and was awarded numerous honours and, in 2001, the Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism. He was elected to the presidencies of British academic bodies and held visiting professorships and named lectureships at universities in America and Europe.

Despite his achievements, Malcolm was completely lacking in self-importance. He was gentle but firm, charming and courteous to everyone, someone who enjoyed life, who had a lovely sense of humour, a man of principles, a caring friend and mentor to many.

Within College Malcolm's name will always be associated with the Quincentenary but he will be remembered for his approachability and his care for all members of the College. As an undergraduate and former President of the JCR, Rachel Cherry, said:

"All students greatly admired and respected Professor Bowie. He was welcoming, warm and caring, and made students feel at home in Christ's. He treated everyone as equals, thoughtfully listened to students and ensured that their concerns were taken seriously. Despite his illness, he attended many student events in the last few years, sharing the delights of his home with all students and enchanting them with his speeches and stories. He often went out of his way for

students; he provided the May Ball with umbrellas as the rain set in, he re-arranged his diary so he could attend student dinners and got to know many of them well. He always stressed that the College was run from the bottom up and cared deeply for the students of Christ's, providing a presence, even when he was ill, that will not be forgotten. Professor Bowie will be remembered for his generosity, for his humility and for his kindness to students."

Malcolm and Alison welcomed many members of Christ's from across the generations into the Master's Lodge. Alison and their son, Sam, and daughter, Jess, have been grateful for the numerous messages of condolence from members. The family and College have agreed on two memorials for Malcolm:

A memorial celebration, to which all members of College, who knew Malcolm, are warmly invited, will take place in College on Saturday, 30 June 2007. Further details will be circulated and put on the web site when available.

A fund has been set up in Malcolm's honour and memory to endow 'The Malcolm Bowie Distinguished Visiting Scholarship'. This will bring eminent academics across a range of disciplines from universities around the world to Christ's; their presence will enrich the Fellowship, and provide links overseas that will help all members of College. They will give a Lady Margaret Beaufort lecture, to which all members and friends will be invited. It is envisaged that, as far as possible, holders of the Scholarships will be working in an area that brings together different fields of inquiry and of academic endeavour. The fund might sometimes also support Fellows of Christ's who are offered short-term visiting positions overseas. This interaction will develop interdisciplinary and outward-looking academic activity at Christ's College, which was something very close to Malcolm's heart.

If you would like to contribute, please send your donation to the Development Office at Christ's. If you wish, you can use the gift form on page 5 and write 'Malcolm Bowie' at the top. Thank you in advance from Malcolm's family and from Christ's College.

# Master



Professor Frank Kelly FRS, the 37<sup>th</sup> Master of Christ's, has been a Fellow of the College since 1976. He writes: "We were all very sad that Malcolm Bowie had to take early retirement from the Mastership and then shocked and deeply upset by his premature death in January. Malcolm was much admired and respected by members of the College from across all generations. Whilst saddened that the Mastership became vacant, I am honoured to serve as his successor and am looking forward to working with the Fellows, staff, students, alumni and friends of the College to help ensure Christ's future is as successful as its past."

Frank Kelly is known to many alumni as their former mathematics supervisor, Director of Studies or Tutor.

He has held positions in the Faculties of Engineering and Mathematics, served as Director of the Statistical Laboratory, and is currently Professor of the Mathematics of Systems. He has served on the Scientific Board of Hewlett-Packard's Basic Research Institute in Mathematical Sciences, the Conseil Scientifique of France Télécom, and the Council of the Royal Society. His prizes and honours include the Guy Medal in Silver of the Royal Statistical Society, the Naylor Prize of the London Mathematical Society, and the Kobayashi Award of the IEEE.

Frank spent the academic year 2001–2 as a visiting professor at Stanford University. From 2003 to 2006 he was Chief Scientific Adviser to the United Kingdom's Department for Transport, where he advised on the interaction of science and technology with public policy. Amongst other topics, he contributed to work on data access, road pricing, and emissions trading and climate change.

On his research, Frank says: "My research aims to develop a mathematical understanding of the behaviour of large-scale systems, and to apply this understanding to the design and control of networks.

The behaviour of large-scale systems has been of great interest to mathematicians for over a century, with many examples coming from physics. The behaviour of a gas can be described at the microscopic level in terms of the position and velocity of each molecule. At this level of detail a molecule's velocity appears as a random process, with a stationary distribution as found by Maxwell. Consistent with this detailed microscopic description of the system is macroscopic behaviour best described by quantities such as temperature and pressure.

Can we develop a comparable understanding of the large-scale systems we ourselves are constructing, such as the global telephone network, the Internet, or a transportation network? Currently we know how components work, the microscopic rules, but not their macroscopic consequences. On the other hand, we can choose the microscopic rules, an ability that makes it all the more important to learn how to predict consequences."

Asked to give an example, Frank says: "Telephone networks provide fascinating examples of large scale systems where strange effects can occur. For instance, suppose that 'intelligent' exchanges react to blocked routes by rerouting calls along more resource-intensive paths. This in turn may cause later calls to be rerouted, and the cascade effect may lead to a catastrophic change in the network's behaviour. When exchanges strive to be efficient there is a possibility they may overdo it. In some respects the network's behaviour resembles water boiling. Just as a small change in the temperature of a body of water can cause a pronounced macroscopic effect, so a small change in the load on a network can produce an unexpected and massive failure."

Frank concluded: "Throughout my academic career, the College has provided an environment both supportive and challenging. A walk through First Court or the Fellows' Garden takes one's mind off the trivial and ephemeral. Bright young people, with their questions and enthusiasm, keep one fresh. I've enjoyed the challenges of the commercial world, of Silicon Valley, of Whitehall, but it is also a wonderful feeling to come back to the space for thought that the College provides."

# Vice-Master

Professor Martin Johnson became Vice-Master at the beginning of 2007 but his connection to Christ's stretches back over 40 years. He matriculated as an undergraduate, reading Natural Sciences in 1963 with the intention of proceeding to study clinical medicine at Charing Cross Medical School in London. However, in his third year reading Physiology Part 2 he was inspired by one of the lecturers to intermit and do a PhD. It proved to be an eventful three years because that lecturer was Bob Edwards, the 'father of IVF', and so Martin was there for the first successful in-vitro fertilization of a human egg and later the birth of Louise Brown. Research became his burning interest and he abandoned his medical studies to become a Junior Research Fellow of the College in 1969, intermitting to take a Harkness Fellowship in the USA 1970–71. He returned to Cambridge to head a research group focussing on mammalian reproduction and development – following in the footsteps of a previous Vice-Master Tibby Marshall (1939). Martin is committed to innovative teaching of medical students, having been awarded the King's Fund Prize for Innovation in Higher Medical Education in 1994, and also having authored *Essential Reproduction*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition due out this spring, the standard teaching text on reproduction since 1980. He has held visiting Fellowships and Professorships in Australia at La Trobe and Sydney Universities, and since 1992 he has been Professor of Reproductive Sciences at Cambridge. He was a member of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology

Authority from 1993 to 1999, and also Head of the Anatomy Department over the same period.

Martin's life is a busy one, filled by research, teaching and College commitments but he still finds time occasionally to indulge his passion for opera, a passion shared with Malcolm Bowie and other Fellows.

On his research, Martin says: "My current research interests straddle science, law, and the history of medicine. In the lab, in conjunction with others, I am exploring mitochondrial DNA replication during mouse development and the impact on it of maternal diet. I also maintain my long term interest in the cellular and molecular mechanisms underlying cell allocation and commitment in the early mouse embryo." Martin is currently also exploring the ethico-legal issues raised by modern reproductive technologies and their social and political impact, and has been invited by the Cambridge Law School to give the 2007 Baron Ver Heyden De Lancey Lecture on Medico-Legal Studies, entitled "Escaping the tyranny of the embryo? A fresh look at the regulation of assisted reproductive technologies." At the other end of the life cycle, he is co-editing the proceedings of the fifth seminar of the Cambridge Socio-legal Group called *Death Rites and Rights* to be published by Hart Publishing in 2007. Finally, with Nick Hopwood (History and Philosophy of Science) and Sarah Franklin (LSE), he is engaged in a History of Medicine project examining how it was that



the UK became internationally dominant in the study of mammalian development in the post-war years, which has led to the development in the UK of IVF, preimplantation genetic diagnosis, cloning, and embryonic stem cell derivation – truly revolutionising our concepts of family and human identity.

# Dear Silent Majority

I hadn't been back, at all, really, except for a sneaking visit to show my wife. But then I'd had probably one of the less distinguished academic careers at Christ's. It was, to say the least, unorthodox, consisting of reading one subject for the first term, a second for the next five, after which I took a degree (third) in the long vac term, and then a final year of relatively settled reading of a third subject – rural, urban estate management and then law. Cherry picking, it would now be called.

After this inglorious start, I entered the world of consultancy, then in its infancy, and found myself in that curious and at times terrifying position of being regarded as an expert at far too tender an age. I quickly learned that tight corners were interesting, and the art of the well honed bluff had its own charm. But I found the life stimulating and not always a sham; it gradually dawned on me that there really were large questions about the economics of urban life and survival to which there were no obvious answers, particularly in the then developing world. There seemed, as they say, to be possibilities, so I mortgaged my house up to the hilt and set up my own consultancy.

There then ensued twenty-five years of immensely fascinating challenges, which presented intellectual as well as pragmatic issues to be solved, usually in unchartered territory. Challenging the accepted wisdom, if empiricism dictated otherwise, even if it did come from the World Bank; steering government thinking here towards new approaches to urban poverty, violence and alienation if, again, the experience on the ground in the nastier parts of our cities veered away from accepted wisdoms. A continuing life of tilting at windmills, but believing that the answer to a problem probably was out there somewhere, and if empiricism had produced evidence, it was a pretty good defence to the opposition of the establishment.

Along the way, there were divorce, flirtations with near financial catastrophe, and the miserable fees of a

consultant specialising mostly in the low income sector. The end product? A life of undistinguished financial fortunes, utter fascination, a huge, very private, sense of fulfilment... but still the baggage of a career at Christ's that really didn't deserve to be allowed to see the light of day.

So, if you're still with me, what's this rambling leading to, you may ask? Well, last summer I decided to end my self-imposed exile, and I accepted an offer of a lunch party to be given by the Master and Fellows. The Development Director and her very persuasive assistant were there, in the idyllic setting of the Fellows' Garden, together with some other most welcoming hosts. A sense of, 'I shouldn't really be here' overcame me. Yes, I have given an amount to the College, (which I think is why I was invited) but compared to the sumptuous donations of the fat cats, who was I to take lunch with the Master? My paltry donations were surely derisory – I figured out the cost of the lunch, the Master's time, the Fellows' time, the opportunity cost of the Fellows' Garden, etc. and wondered whether I had even paid for my wine! So why was the Development Director being so charming, and her assistant so beguiling?

On the long drive home, I began to wonder if others might have the same feeling of embarrassed inadequacy – or whatever it is that sometimes consigns men, in the eyes of their womenfolk, to the appearance of little children. I am told none of these thoughts enter the heads of women. We may have benefited enormously from our time at Christ's, but we end up by deciding that no giving is better than donating paltry sums that must give rise to a mixture of mildly raised eyebrows and administrative irritation.

The following morning, my wife told me, for the first time that morning, that I was probably being ridiculous and pathetic, so I plunged right in and rang the Development Office – the same beguiling voice. Of course I didn't come straight out with it; it was like visiting the psychiatrist for the first time to tell him

you've had an affair with his wife – is it normal behaviour, you tentatively ask, to...etc.? Becoming bolder, I asked whether the income/wealth distribution curve of old members was fairly flat or very bunched at one end. Of course it is bunched. So what proportion of old members contribute? 14% of the total believed to be alive. Pause. What would be the consequence if every alive non-contributing member, or the 86%, were to give £10 a year – grateful delight, was the answer. £100 a year? – a palpable increase in the financial fortunes of the College. The embarrassment began to fade.

I then thought back to my own career that has given me so much pleasure, and the stark truth is that most of whatever very modest success I may have had, has come from my possession of my degree. And then I remembered that I wasn't given access by the 'University' to the glorious opportunities that a Cambridge degree bestows. No, that entry ticket was issued by Christ's alone. I owe the memories of a wonderful life to that entry ticket. I, who seemed to do his utmost to frustrate what the University had to offer, finally had to admit that if it wasn't for that ticket, and my College,.....I might have gone into the Gas Board, .....and now be a management buy-out multi-millionaire!

That's why I have renewed my direct debit instruction to the College from a lean pension fund – because, it seems, giving small amounts does make a difference.

So I have to tell you, the silent majority membership, that even the most modest contributions are not only welcomed by those who have the future development of the College in their hands, but if we all do it, however modestly, then the future prospects for the College are vastly enhanced. And to me that matters a great deal.

Yours,  
**Roger Tym (1958)**

**UK**

Christ's College welcomes gifts of listed **shares and securities**. Measures which came into force in April 2000 make donations of this kind particularly attractive to donors. Gifts of listed shares and securities by UK taxpayers attract full relief from Capital Gains Tax and, in addition, allow the donor to claim Income Tax relief on the full value of the shares or securities at the time they are transferred to the College – a double tax saving. For further information, please contact the Development Director, who will be pleased to assist.

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I would like my gift to support:

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### Thank you for your support

For further information on any aspect of donating to Christ's please contact  
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Dear Member of Christ's,

Christ's has endured a steady reduction in real terms of fee income for publicly-funded undergraduates and has felt the loss of income following the abolition of Advance Corporation tax. It needs to strengthen its financial position and to reduce its dependence on income sources which it cannot control.

That's just the beginning!

An exciting strategic plan is being formulated to position Christ's for the 21st century, to build on its rich heritage of academic excellence and to enable it to cross new boundaries. The impetus for change is being driven by the Master and the Vice-Master. Consultation is on-going with Fellows, students and, where possible, alumni.

Our aim on the Development Board is to make this emergent vision a reality. First and foremost College's Endowment Fund must be significantly strengthened. A combination of major gifts from those who can afford them and regular giving by alumni will bring this about. The percentage of alumni who have not given to date is over 80%.

People talk about giving something back in recognition of all Christ's gave them. I like to think as well about giving something 'forward' so that future generations may benefit from the 'Christ's experience'. If, like me, the legacy of your time at Christ's was profound, you will want to help craft a similar legacy for others.

I invite you to be part of the challenge and part of the change.

Don't put it off. We need your support today.

Dr Mary Redmond (1978)  
Chairman, Development Board

Board members: Richard Gnodde (1983), Martin Johnson (1963), Dai Jones (1964), Mark Lewisohn (1981), Alan Smith (1964) and Jim Smith (1973).

# Traveller's Tales



**Claire Scobie, journalist and author.** Born 17 March 1972. Studied History at Christ's College, 1991–1994.

**You came up to Cambridge in 1991 to read for a degree in History. What memories did you take away from Christ's?**

My memories are slightly blurry, as if they are shot through an out of focus lens. Perhaps it's because I needed glasses and when I had them, rarely wore them, or I spent too much time holed up in my panelled room reading books and staying up all night to complete the weekly essay. I remember being a lousy cox for the Christ's C-rowing team and nearly causing the boat to capsize in a race. One of the oars snapped and at the end my team didn't know whether to throw me in the icy water or leave me stranded on the bank. I think I worked too hard, certainly in the first two years and probably should have worried less and partied more. My lasting memory is the Christ's College Ball: a nocturnal wonderland ending in dawn over the River Cam.

**When you came to Christ's to start your degree, were you thinking of a career in journalism?**

I'd always wanted to be a writer, ever since I was given a battered typewriter at the age of seven. In my teens I set up a neighbourhood newspaper and when I came to Cambridge, it seemed an obvious step to write for Varsity. I divided my second year between Christ's and the Varsity offices with my co-features editor, the brilliant Cathy Shrank from Downing. My big scoop was interviewing the 'Cambridge Tory Mafia', which included Norman Lamont, Kenneth Clark and Michael Howard, which was later republished in the Guardian.

**It must have been a great honour to win the Catherine Pakenham Award as Best Young Journalist of the Year. How did that come about?**

After graduating I was divided between continuing in academia or trying to get a job as a journalist. Life has a strange way of deciding and the application I sent to Lille University to pursue a Masters in World War One history never arrived. This was particularly odd as it was a registered letter. Shortly after I was offered a job as a researcher/writer at the Saturday Telegraph Magazine. I learned journalism on the hoof and three years later submitted a story about an errant vicar to the Catherine Pakenham Award which I jointly won. Certainly that award was not only a great honour, it also gave me the confidence to branch out and in 1997 I left the Telegraph to work as a freelance journalist in India.

**You seem to have a spirit for adventure. Where does that come from?**

I've always loved travel and my parents are very intrepid. They bought a Land Rover, called Stanley (he became part of the family) to drive from London to Cape Town across Africa. After visiting India on holiday, I decided I wanted to go and write for the Cochin Times. I never made it there but spent 18

months writing stories and sending them back to the UK papers. I loved the freedom that my vocation, rather than career, gave me. I could go anywhere with my trusty laptop and set up an office in a rundown guesthouse and file a story. I lived like that for months, literally following the breadcrumbs from one lead to the next. After that I found it hard settling back in the UK and lived in Kathmandu for a while, in between trips to Tibet, and eventually settled in Australia. I am now based in Sydney.

**Your first book was published by Rider on 1 June 2006 to favourable reviews. Can you tell us the story behind *Last Seen in Lhasa*?**

In 1997 a plant-hunter friend told me he was searching for a rare flower, a red lily, which grows on only two mountain passes in the world, in the Himalayas. He invited me to join the expedition in search of this tiny flower which had never been introduced in the West. I decided it was an opportunity of a lifetime and also a great story, and persuaded my then editor at the Telegraph Magazine to commission an article.

On my first trip we failed to find the lily – thwarted by the Chinese police. So I returned, this time on a commando-style expedition with some American explorers. We were in a remote region called Pemako where few Westerners have set foot and where the myth of Shangri-la originated. It was there that I met a wandering Tibetan nun, Ani, and an unlikely and enduring friendship began. Ani travels on pilgrimage for years at a time, living in caves and covering the vast distances of Tibet – an area the size of western Europe – mostly on foot. As Tibetans, especially nuns are not allowed to travel freely with Westerners, each time she took risks to travel with me. *Last Seen in Lhasa* is the story of our friendship and chronicles my seven journeys to Tibet and the irrevocable changes taking place there. The impact of Chinese secularisation and modernisation means that the old traditions are dying out and Ani is probably the last of a generation.

**Are there any more books on the horizon?**

Yes, several. I am not sure which is coming first – one about India, another about Aboriginal Australia and a biography (too early to say of who yet.)

**What you are doing now?**

I divide my time between writing articles for the Australian and British press, working on the next book and teaching writing workshops. Since *Last Seen in Lhasa* was published, I've been doing the round of Literary Festivals in Australia and Asia, book talks and promotion. I return to the UK at least once a year and continue to travel widely. I want to start doing radio – if anyone has any suggestions, please, get in touch!

[www.clairescobie.com](http://www.clairescobie.com)

# In the Business of Business

**Nils Blythe**, Business Correspondent at BBC News.  
Born 25 February 1956.  
Studied English at Christ's College, 1975–1978.



I have very happy memories of Christ's where I studied English during the time of Professor Christopher Ricks of whom I have fond memories. I think he is one of the cleverest people I have ever met. We were only a small group, 7 or 8 undergraduates but I have not kept in touch very well. I did meet one recently almost by accident. I was in Qatar and rang up the British Ambassador because I thought he would have interesting things to say. Eventually I got hold of him and started introducing myself when he interrupted and said: "Nils, you do not need to explain who you are to me..." It was Simon Collis (1975), my exact contemporary, who also studied English at Christ's. So we had a nice dinner together... Another one that I have not kept in touch with, but have heard of recently, is Richard Sisson who went on to become a part of the cabaret act *Kit and the Widow* with Kit Hesketh-Harvey. So there you are, out of our group one is a BBC journalist, one is a cabaret entertainer and one is an ambassador.

Like with a lot of things in life, I ended up in business journalism largely by accident through a job advertisement. I was lucky enough to catch a wave in the '80s when business reporting was becoming more "fashionable" at the time of the "Big Bang". This wave then hit the BBC when there was a feeling that the BBC was under-reporting the business, the economy and the City. And so they decided that they needed to recruit more people with some experience. In the early '80s the BBC would have had an economics correspondent and somebody called "industry correspondent" which basically meant "strikes correspondent". There was very little reporting of business which was the common situation in those days, also in the newspapers.

Business and economy reporting has become the staple of any news organisation. Since those early days of the late '80s it has grown enormously in importance.

Today the BBC covers business and economic news not only on the main news bulletins, but there are also dedicated slots on programmes like BBC World and BBC News 24. Similarly, around the world there are channels like CNBC and Bloomberg which are exclusively dedicated to business reporting. For most of the time that I have been working in business journalism it has been a constantly expanding area.

And as in any kind of journalism there is always a balance to be struck between simply stating the fact and giving them the narrative and meaning. The more you give of the latter, the more likely you are to stray towards a personal interpretation. It would be naïve to believe that journalism is totally neutral, but every effort has to be made towards neutral reporting, giving both sides of the story wherever possible. It is very satisfying investigating issues and putting the pieces together as we did, for example, with the Dot.Com Bubble where we exposed/named companies and have subsequently been proved right. Very satisfying!

Warren Buffet, the legendary American investor said: "It is only when the tide goes out that you see who has been swimming naked." That is particularly true in economic terms. When the economy turns down you discover all kinds of companies getting into difficulties, all kinds of shenanigans that were hidden by the rising tide. Clearly, the tide has been pretty high for a long time which is why people like me keep looking for the shenanigans. But the other thing that I find really fascinating is that we are looking at forces that shape people's lives, forces that in the long run have most influence on how we live, the way we work etc.

Since the late '80s we have witnessed quite extraordinary changes in the world at a massively increased pace. The forces of change in Eastern Europe and China have transformed the world. The shape of people's lives is also changing much more

rapidly under the influence of those forces, which is probably why we are more interested in them.

Business news interacts with the political agenda today in a different way than it did twenty or thirty years ago. In the '70s and '80s there was a great ideological debate between the command economies and the free market economies. To a certain extent in this country it translated to the Labour Party's commitment to public ownership versus Conservative Party's market drive. Today almost all support the broad principle of the free market economy and the debate is turning more to the consequences of the success of the free market. There is a reasonable consensus between the political parties now that there is a necessity for free markets and free enterprise as a generator of wealth. That level of consensus would have been really surprising twenty years ago, so I think that the attitudes towards business have become much less defining for politicians.

In economic terms I see no reason why the world economy cannot go on growing quite rapidly and there is only one factor, I believe, that could change that and that is climate change. The fundamental problem is that climate change is the direct result of this rising tide of prosperity, not just in Britain but in lots of developing countries like China and India. Their economies are growing very fast using fossil fuels. It is very difficult to say to people who are getting electricity for the first time that they cannot have it "because, I'm afraid we have already exhausted the ability of the planet to absorb the greenhouse gases". We had many years of rising prosperity and now there is a price to pay. The developed world desperately needs to find ways of addressing this and it requires a degree of international cooperation quite unprecedented in history. This is the biggest challenge to the global economy.

# Frogs, marathons, the life of a



# zebrafish, children: Christ's Fellow

**Jim Smith**, John Humphrey Plummer Professor of Developmental Biology and Chairman of the Gurdon Institute, University of Cambridge. Born 31 December 1954. Studied Natural Sciences at Christ's College, 1973–1976.

On 22 April 2007, Professor Jim Smith FRS will be running for Christ's in the 2007 London Marathon.

Jim matriculated at Christ's in 1973 to read Natural Sciences and went on to do his PhD in London before following an exciting and varied career path on both sides of the Atlantic. 20 years on, in 1993, he was awarded the EMBO Medal and became a Fellow of the Royal Society, and he is also a Fellow of the Academia Europaea. His entry in Who's Who makes fascinating reading. He became a Fellow of Christ's in 2001.

Jim is now Chairman of the Wellcome Trust/Cancer Research UK Gurdon Institute and the John Humphrey Plummer Professor of Developmental Biology. His laboratory team is working on understanding the molecular basis of mesoderm formation. In plain English, Jim explains: "My research focusses on the early development of the vertebrate embryo, using the frog *Xenopus* and the zebrafish *Danio rerio*. My lab is investigating how cells of the very early vertebrate embryo become different from each other, such that they go on to form specialised tissues such as muscle, skin, blood and bone. One way in which cells become different involves the establishment of a chemical gradient within a tissue; cells measure the local concentration of the chemical, and this tells them how to behave. We are studying how such gradients are set up, how cells measure the concentration of the chemical, and how this tells them what to do, such as activating a particular gene or moving to a different part of the embryo."

What with running the Institute, his work in the lab, the journal *Development* to edit and three young children, one aged 12 and twins aged 4, you might think Jim was already a very busy man, but he still finds time to run. His first marathon was in New York in 1999 and since then he has run in Paris in 2000, London in 2001, 2002 and 2005, Edinburgh also in 2005 and Boston in 2006. He has always managed to break four hours, with his fastest Marathon being Edinburgh in 2005, at 3 hours 33 minutes. He hopes to continue his sub four hour record this year.

At Christ's, like many, Jim was hugely influenced by Douglas Barker, his Director of Studies. When he arrived at Christ's to read Natural Sciences Jim was determined to read Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Crystallography, but Douglas persuaded him to give Biology of Cells a try, and after just one term there was no going back. One of the great strengths of the Natural Sciences course, then and now, was that it did not require one to specialise early in a particular branch of science, and indeed it allows someone who had never taken a biology course in his or her life to study the subject at degree level. Douglas Barker was a huge influence on Jim in this way, and indeed Douglas can be proud that many of his other students have also gone on to great things. They include Hugh Pelham (EMBO Medal 1989, FRS 1988; Director of the Laboratory of Molecular Biology), Richard Treisman (EMBO Medal 1995, FRS 1994; Director of the Cancer Research UK London Research Institute) and Daniel St Johnston (EMBO Medal 2000, FRS 2005; Wellcome Trust Principal Research Fellow). As Daniel St Johnston wrote in the article that accompanied his award of the EMBO Medal, it is a great pity that awards are not given for excellent teachers who inspire their students to do research, because Douglas would be a very worthy recipient.

The money raised by Jim's participation in the London Marathon will help Christ's continue to provide a diverse, stimulating and exciting education, to open the eyes of its students to new ideas and challenges, and to improve the facilities available to them. If Jim can run 26.2 miles for the College, can we support him? Please sponsor him as he runs for Christ's. From <http://www.justgiving.com/runforchrists> you can do it online (there is also a link from the College web site) or by returning the gift form in this edition of *pieces* and writing 'JIM' clearly at the top of it. If we could all sponsor him £5, £10 or whatever we can afford, he would exceed his target. If you can do more, please do give generously.

# Rugby Kitt



**Rowan Kitt, England rugby referee.** Born 19 November 1968. Studied for a PGCE at Christ's College, 1991–1992.

The toughest job in sport? Over 80 minutes, you run and sprint about 4km talking or shouting most of the time, you are cheered and derided in the same instant by thousands of ardent fans, you have to know tens of über-complicated laws which have hundreds of permutations, you make around 500 instantaneous decisions, you are responsible for the safety of 30 muscle-bound, aggressive men who are knocking lumps out of each other, you have to appear unflustered and fully in command, and you have to smile occasionally whilst doing it.

Refereeing professional rugby is like being in a cauldron, in which you survive on your wits, fitness and adrenalin. Whilst you never feel physically threatened, the modern game means that jobs are on the line and players often feel that winning or losing comes down to your performance. Clubs like NEC Harlequins, Saracens, Bath Rugby and most of the National League One sides are big business. Every trick is employed by coaches and players to get an advantage on the pitch, which means refereeing is a test of character and resolve. You need the skin of an armadillo.

My performance in each match is assessed by an RFU Assessor, my coach, the England referee managers and by the clubs. The DVD of the game is analysed over and over and I am selected for my matches on merit and form. My fitness is ruthlessly assessed at least three times per year, I attend training sessions, participate in conference calls with other referees to swap experiences, and have to watch what I eat and drink very carefully. I spend hours travelling round the country to games, from Plymouth to Leeds. My match fee is well earned, I think!

It's a far cry from my experiences as a very average player, donning the brown and white Christ's College jersey towards the end of the game's amateur era: then, you played for your team mates, for the team's honour, for the love of the game, and nobody's job was on the line. The referee was always right even if he was wrong, there was little training (we coached ourselves), and we believed Cuppers matches to be the most important thing in our lives at that moment. Post-match analysis was limited to a few drinks in the College bar, before heading out for protein-based recovery in the form of a hot meal at the Cambridge Curry Centre. The club dinner was riotous in the best traditions of rugby events, enlivened by the banging on the table by the then President, Dr Doug Barker, during the Captain's report of the season.

There are about 60 national referees in England and I am hoping to be next on to the Elite Referee Unit, the top 12 referees in the country, of which the top 6 are fully professional. If someone asks why I referee, I generally reply that it is better than being a football ref, something I would never do! We earn respect from players by our performance on the field, but there is still a crucial code

of conduct that protects you from the ugly scenes of referee abuse that one sees in soccer. Players always have time for you and so do most coaches, though not necessarily straight after the final whistle. Actually, I do it for the love of the game and it is a challenge that makes you feel very much alive!

My first ever club match was almost my last: I was new to the London Society of Referees and had no official kit, so I used an old, numberless rugby jersey given to me by the Bryanston School coach a couple of years before; I trotted out onto the Old Reendonians pitch to be greeted by funny looks from the home team....I was wearing an Old Reendonians shirt; I got some less funny looks from the opposition as I ran past them to get a spare jersey from my bag. Other strange moments along the way include refereeing HRH Prince William at Eton; getting 8 stitches in a gaping facial wound having been head-butted accidentally during a national league game; and walking in, also accidentally, to the Scotland team's ice-bath where they were all sat after the Scotland v. USA Eagles international. Women's international, that is.

There are great perks: I have toured South Africa twice, officiated in France, Wales, Czechoslovakia, Scotland and even refereed the Calcutta Clubs Cup Final in Calcutta during a monsoon. I have officiated at Twickenham often, including the Middlesex Sevens live on television, and I have had the honour of refereeing some special players like Jonny Wilkinson and Will Greenwood from England's World Cup winning team, and the legendary All Black, Zinzan Brooke. I have met some fantastic people including rugby heroes like Ian McGeechan, Dean Richards, Neil Back, Shaun Edwards and Rob Andrew.

A real highlight, however, was coming to Grange Road to referee Cambridge University v. London Wasps in both 2004 and 2005. I stopped at the Christ's sports ground en route for a trip down memory lane and was reminded just how far it is from College! It was an honour to run out onto the Blues pitch, where I had watched internationals like Adrian Davies and Tony Underwood play in my day. I managed to chat to David Akinluyi of Christ's in the bar afterwards. Unfortunately, I had to red-card a Blues player on the first occasion, but Cambridge won a thrilling match 19 – 17 in 2005, so I was forgiven...I think.

*Taught history at Bryanston, Charterhouse and now at North London Collegiate School.*

*Referees Guinness league, National League One and junior international rugby.*

# The Benefactors

Listed below are new benefactors and those whose ongoing generosity has taken them into a higher giving circle between the last edition of *pieces* and 28 February 2007. Also listed, with apologies, are corrections arising from omissions made in the last edition. We would like to thank all our benefactors for their continuing support.

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# Building Work

Workmen in yellow jackets and hard hats have become a common sight in Christ's of late and will remain a feature for a while to come as major refurbishment projects are undertaken to substantially improve facilities for future students. Virtually at each turn on a walk through College there is evidence of building work.

Indeed, the signs of change are apparent even before the first steps are taken through the Great Gate as the Robert Sayle renovation, part of the new Grand Arcade site on St Andrew's Street, nears completion, and its neighbouring shopping centre, formerly Bradwell's Court, is totally redeveloped by Land Securities (see photograph on the right and <http://www.christslane.co.uk>). The new shopping destination Christ's Lane will feature the reopening of the historical Christ's Lane, running beside College from St Andrew's Street to Christ's Pieces.

Back in First Court, electricians, plumbers and carpenters moved into the Master's Lodge in February to carry out essential re-wiring and re-plumbing work throughout, and it is hoped that the new Master, Professor Frank Kelly, will be able to take up residence as soon as possible after the long overdue refurbishment is finished.

Moving on, this coming July the Kitchens will be entirely refurbished for the first time in forty-seven years. For the curious, the two sheds erected on the lawn in Second Court are the temporary changing rooms for Kitchen staff.

It would have been impossible for anyone to live on C, D and E staircases during the building works next door at Bradwell's Court, so part of the deal with Land Securities is the total refurbishment of the building in Second Court, including en-suite facilities for every room. This perhaps offers a moment of reflection for members of days gone by, who will recall the chilly walk to Fourth Court.

Third Court so far has managed to escape major work, though as the walk progresses past V staircase, there is a clear gap where a tall poplar once stood near the side entrance to the Fellows' Garden. The tree, its wood rotten, was felled by tree surgeons this winter (see photograph).

It is at the back of College, towards King's Street, where another of the more ambitious refurbishment projects is planned. Once students vacate their rooms in the Lasdun Building this summer, builders will take it over for a year to renew all the services, which have reached the end of their life. As part of this refurbishment these study bedrooms will also be converted to en-suite. 'Guinea-pig' students have been living in three trial rooms converted last summer, and so far the feedback has been positive. During the 2007/08 academic year, students will be housed in Anastasia House on East Road. Those of you, who have experienced 'life in the Lasdun' recently, will know all too well how essential this work is.

The Theatre, part of the same 'typewriter' complex, will undergo a much-needed makeover, too, thanks to the generosity of Dr Yusuf Hamied (1954), together with the Fellows' sets and other public rooms such as the JCR. The rather gloomy party room will become a function room with bar facilities and a fitness suite will be incorporated into the design.

