

# pieces

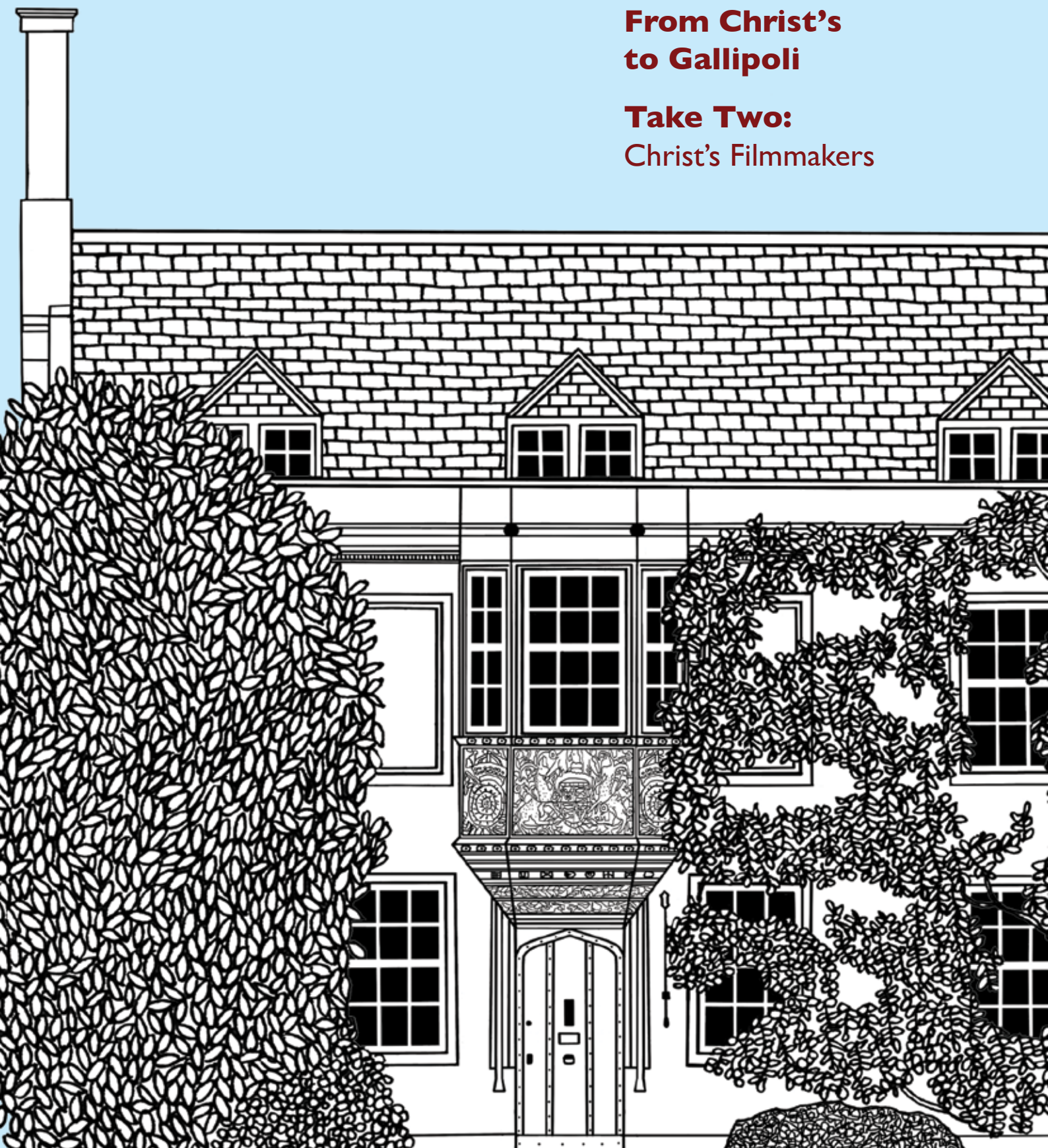
Christ's College Newsletter



Issue 30 Michaelmas Term 2015

**From Christ's  
to Gallipoli**

**Take Two:**  
Christ's Filmmakers







## From the Master

Welcome to this issue of *Pieces*.

By this stage of Michaelmas Term the freshers have well and truly become part of the College community, and we wish them every success in their future studies.

The items featured within this issue of *Pieces* illustrate the wonderfully diverse array of people who share a common ground in Christ's College. Creativity, ambition, loyalty, determination, empathy – these are just some of the words that spring to mind when reading about the activities of members of College, past and present.

We report on academic achievements in the 'Fellows', Alumni and College News' section. Christ's position at the top of the Baxter Tables in Economics is of particular note: our economics students, and their Director of Studies, Dr Julia Shvets, should feel proud of this success.

I was particularly pleased to see in this issue the interview with Sue O'Donnell, who has served the College loyally and effectively over a period of considerable change; also the article by Stephen Harrison on his research – not mentioned here is Stephen's very significant impact on student access through his work with the Admissions Office over his time as an undergraduate and postgraduate.

Amongst other highlights are the accounts of filmmaking, volunteering in Nepal before and after the earthquake in April, the Plumb archive, life as a literary agent, and a rather long cycle ride.

On the back page of this issue are 'Dates for your Diary' for 2016, where you will see the breadth of events on offer over the coming months. I look forward to seeing many of you at these occasions before August 2016, when I shall be stepping down as Master.

Finally, I am delighted to let you know that we have a new College mug, now available to order from the Development Office in time for Christmas (again, details on the back page).

**Professor Frank Kelly CBE FRS**

**Editor:** [publications@christs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:publications@christs.cam.ac.uk)

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Entrants for the 2015 Pumpkin Carving Competition, First Court



# Fellows', Alumni and College News

## Christ's Tops the Baxter Tables in Economics

This year our students have taken Christ's to the top of the Baxter tables in Economics. This makes us the best performing college in Economics at Cambridge in 2015. Perhaps you are worried that this is a 'positive random shock'? Rest assured, Mr Baxter keeps cumulative data on the last five years, and there too Christ's has the highest score of all Cambridge colleges.

A number of Fellows have been promoted in the latest Senior Academic Promotions Exercise: **Dr Susan Bayly**, Fellow (and Director of Studies, Archaeology & Anthropology), has been promoted to Professor, with the title Professor of Historical Anthropology, while **Dr Duncan Bell**, Fellow, has been promoted to Reader in Political Thought and International Relations.

**Dr James Wade** (Lecturer and Fellow Librarian at Christ's from 2012–2015) is now Fellow and Director of Studies at Girton College.

**Dr Bernardo Zacka**, Junior Research Fellow, has been awarded the 2015 Robert Noxon Toppan Prize from Harvard University for his dissertation "When the State Meets the Street: Moral Agency and Discretionary Power at the Frontlines of Public Service."

**Dr Jason Varuhas**, Bye-Fellow (previously Junior Research Fellow), has been appointed an Associate Professor/Reader at the University of Melbourne Law School.

**Dr Anup Patel**, Junior Research Fellow, has been awarded a European Society for Applied Superconductivity prize for his work on magnetic levitation between HTS tape stacks and permanent magnets for rotary bearing applications.

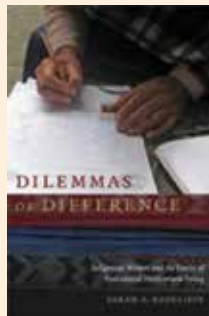
**Professor Martin Johnson**, Fellow, was invited to Pittsburgh in September to give the first Aaron E Szulman Memorial lecture (*Hypotheses About the Origins of Trophoblast: From the 1950s to the Present*) and to give a tribute at a memorial meeting in his memory.

Later in the month around 130 colleagues and students gathered at Christ's for a day-long event, *Inside-Outside: Challenges and Prejudices*, to celebrate Professor Johnson's work in Reproductive Sciences. Talks on related research took place during the day followed by formal dinner in Hall.

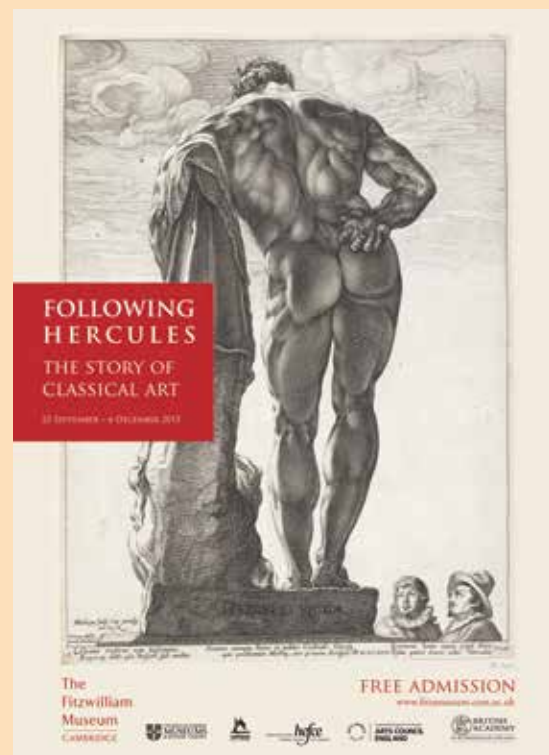
**Professor Sanjeev Goyal**, Fellow and University Professor in the Department of Economics, was elected a Fellow of the British Academy for the humanities and social sciences.

**Professor Sarah Radcliffe's** (Fellow) recent book, *Dilemmas of Difference*, draws on a decade's fieldwork to address the question that development policy has failed to answer; namely how can anti-poverty measures address the intersecting reasons for poverty? Development thinking and policy implementation has usually dealt with discrete social groups

– the rural poor; women, indigenous peoples – whereas the most marginal individuals are found at the crossroads of overlapping disadvantages. Working ethnographically with low income rural women from two of Ecuador's indigenous nationalities, Sarah provides a critique of mainstream policy and fruitful directions for change (published by Duke University Press).



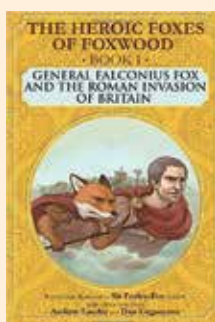
If you are in Cambridge before 6 December, do take the opportunity to visit *Following Hercules: the Story of Classical Art* at the Fitzwilliam Museum. **Dr Carrie Vout**, Fellow and College Lecturer in Classics (and University Reader in Classics), has curated the exhibition, which opened on 25 September.



The Farnese Hercules by Hendrick Goltzius, image courtesy of The Fitzwilliam Museum

**Dr Jamie Gundry, Christ's Bye-Fellow in Zoology** and professional wildlife photographer (when not supervising undergraduates), shares his enthusiasm with others by arranging trips for both amateur and professional photographers in many parts of the UK and further afield. Last summer he took groups to Skomer, Wales, and Flatanger, Norway and has further trips planned for 2016!

To find out more and to see Jamie's spectacular shots, visit his website: [www.jamiegundry.com](http://www.jamiegundry.com).



Christ's alumnus, **Andrew Lauder** (m. 1965), has recently launched a new series of children's books, featuring Sir Foxley-Fox and his ancestors as the leading

protagonists! The books are historically based and aim to show children aged 8–10 how much fun history can be. The first book of the series, '*General Falconius Fox and the Roman Invasion of Britain*' is now available to purchase on Amazon.

The Christ's College **University Challenge** Team, led by **Douglas Morton** (m. 2013) won a resounding victory over Kellogg College, Oxford, in the first round of the competition, beating the Oxford College by 205 points to 60. At the time of writing the team has yet to play in the second round but we are keeping our fingers firmly crossed.

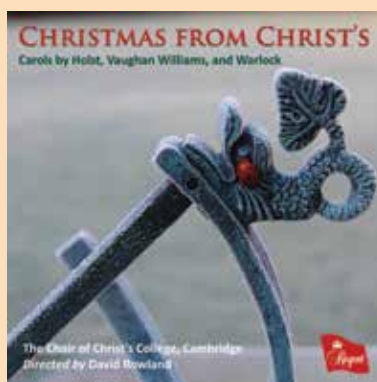
### Professor Simon Schama

(m. 1963 and Honorary Fellow) has been appearing regularly on BBC2 for his series '*Face of Britain*', bringing Britain to life through its portraits. The TV series is a partnership with the National Portrait Gallery where an exhibition of the same name runs until 4 January 2016.

## Choir Tour 2015

Last summer saw Christ's College Choir travel the considerable distance to Singapore and New Zealand for their long-awaited 2015 tour. After three performances in Singapore at the end of June (at the Tanglin Club, the Singapore Island Country Club and the Esplanade Concert Hall), the choir set off for New Zealand, performing at venues in Auckland, Rotorua, Taupo, Napier and Wellington in the North Island and Nelson, Kaikora and Christchurch in the South Island. Highlights of the tour were singing at the Esplanade and whale watching in Kaikora.

The full report of the tour, written by **Max McGinley** (m. 2013), co-organiser of the tour, can be found via the 'Chapel and Choir' page on our website. The choir would like to thank all those who supported them.



Planning for next year's tour has already begun. If you are based in Australia and are able to help with accommodation or concert venues, please contact the Development Office at [alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk).

The choir's Christmas album is now available to order - email [choir.admin@christs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:choir.admin@christs.cam.ac.uk).





Continuing our **Distinguished Speaker Dinner** series, we were delighted that **Sir Nicholas Serota** (m. 1965 and Honorary Fellow) was able to be our guest speaker in October, talking about the Arts in Education. The next Dinner takes place in London on 2 February when **Natalie Livingstone** (m. 1995) will be talking about her new book *'The Mistresses of Cliveden'*, in conjunction with **Professor David Reynolds** and **Harriet Lyon** (m. 2010).



**James McKeon** (m. 1996), Musical Director of *Les Misérables*, generously offered a group of Christ's students and young alumni the opportunity to go on a fascinating backstage tour of *Les Misérables* at the Queen's Theatre in London this October. The group stayed on afterwards to watch the show in the light of their newly acquired 'behind-the-scenes' knowledge. Thank you to James for volunteering this opportunity and organising discounted tickets for our students and young alumni.

## Calverley, Christ's and the 'Ode to Tobacco'



Have you ever noticed the 'Ode to Tobacco' plaque in Rose Crescent (pictured)? If you have, you may not have been aware of its connection to Christ's College. **Dr Robert Hunt**, Senior Tutor, explains the link:

"The funds for the Calverley Prize, which is awarded with special regard to performance in Greek translation, were donated by Sir Walter Sendall GCMG (1832–1904) whose career was in British colonial administration (being Governor-in-Chief of the Windward Islands 1885–89, Governor of Barbados 1889–

91, High Commissioner of Cyprus 1892–98 and Governor of British Guyana 1898–1901). His gift was in memory of his brother-in-law Charles Stuart Calverley (1831–84), a poet and parodist who was born Charles Stuart Blayds. Charles was educated at Harrow School then Balliol College, Oxford, from which he was expelled. After changing his name to Calverley, he moved to Christ's in 1852 where he won one of the Chancellor's Medals in Classics for his Latin verse. He was elected a Fellow of the College in 1857; in 1865 he was called to the Bar but a skating accident in 1866 gave him concussion and he was, physically but not mentally, an invalid for the rest of his life. His major works were "Verses and Translations" (1862) and "Fly-leaves" (1872); one of his poems, "Ode to Tobacco", may be found on a bronze plaque in Rose Crescent. He was renowned as a wit and a humorist "with a strong sense of all the absurdity in the world", and there are many stories of him breaking College rules."

Congratulations to Classics undergraduate **Inigo Barker** (m. 2013) who was awarded the Calverley Prize this year (pictured above).

This is part of an ongoing project of Dr Hunt's to find out more of the history and origins of the College's Prize Funds. Further instalments to follow!

## Homing Blazer and Cup

Two items originating from Christ's College have found their way back home!

First, a blazer donated by **Anthony Perks** (m. 1951, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of British Columbia), which he bought from its previous owner approximately sixty-two years ago, for the grand sum of £2.00. Anthony is confident that the blazer must be at least 104 years old, though possibly even up to 120 years. It is in beautiful condition and we are currently looking into how best to store it.

Second, a cup for Christ's College Trial Eights, 1897, bearing the following names: C A Purton (bow), N D Bower, T Shimwell, P J Firmstone, F H Pim, W W Maxwell, H S Cadman, P A Thompson, H S Cadman (stroke) and E G Wheat (cox), kindly returned by Doreen Darvell, who discovered it amongst her late husband's possessions.



# From Christ's College to Hong Kong

**Nick Codrington** (Christ's m. 2010) completed his cycling expedition from London to Hong Kong on 28 March 2015 after 262 days on the road. He and fellow Cambridge graduate, Laurence Gribble (Trinity m. 2010), raised £17,298 for *Prostate Cancer UK* – £1 per kilometre cycled. Below Nick gives us a sense of the challenges they faced and how his time at Christ's prepared him for the journey.

My beard was frozen to my face again. I dragged my laden bicycle the last few metres to the checkpoint and stars erupted in front of my eyes. I was exhausted. Far below us twirling blocks of ice twinkled in the midday sun, catapulted downstream along the bottom of the Wakhan Valley. My face was drenched in sweat, beads flowing freely from my forehead, down my cheeks, getting lost in my moustache and then trapped in my icy beard. It was winter in Afghanistan, and I was a long way from home.

Over the nine months we were saddle bound, our journey threw us some memorable challenges. Particularly close calls included being attacked by wild dogs, tracked by wolves, held at gunpoint, threatened with arrest, deported and blizzarded upon. We suffered from frostbite in the intense Tibetan cold and sunstroke in the heat of the desert. We travelled through landscapes so vast we would be left to ourselves for days, with only the slow tick of our odometers to remind us we were making any progress at all! But trumping all these challenges – what I'll remember forever – was the stunning kindness we were shown by total strangers: cups of tea in Turkey, meals shared in China, shelter for the night.

My time at Christ's prepared me surprisingly well for the expedition, well beyond my Chinese Studies degree course. At Christ's, everyone is asked to perform in an intense



environment, trusting in a close support network to succeed: meeting dissertation deadlines, getting over Week Five Blues or competing in college sport. That same drive to succeed kept us going during our expedition's lowest moments. After all, a blizzard in the mountains isn't too dissimilar from a disastrous rugby boat outing... (think hail, cold, real potential of death).

Christ's is a unique training ground for what life throws at you after graduation, and prepares you exceptionally well for the unexpected, whatever challenge you choose to take on. Up to you if that is launching up the career ladder, pursuing academia, or starting your own little cycle!

Read more at [www.journey-to-the-east.com](http://www.journey-to-the-east.com)





# How times have changed

**Susan O'Donnell, Conference & Events Manager, is the longest serving College employee currently at Christ's. Here she talks about how the College has changed over the years and the various roles she has been employed in since joining.**

## **When did you start working at Christ's College?**

I started working at Christ's on 3 July 1978 as the Assistant to the Accommodation Secretary. After about four and a half years in the assistant role, I took over as Accommodation Secretary, dealing with graduate accommodation and conferencing, and later, undergraduate accommodation also. Some alumni may recognise my photo from their College days. I find it hard to believe that I've worked here for thirty-seven years!

## **How were things different then, to now?**

Conferencing was much simpler and easier then. Your client's requirements were straightforward – the most technical request you received was for an overhead projector or a slide projector. No one used to say: 'I need a wi-fi ticket'. En-suite accommodation was almost unheard of within a College, so all accommodation was with shared bathrooms. Now people want all the bells and whistles!

## **How has the expansion of student accommodation within the College affected summer conferencing?**

With the completion of 4 staircase in 1994, we were finally able to offer en-suite rooms to conference guests, much to the delight of returning clients. The refurbishment and modernisation of New Court in recent years has also had a major impact on conferencing, enabling us to offer the sought-after facilities that conference organisers and delegates require. These developments have allowed us to maintain our edge and continue generating new business out-of-term – vital in a city like Cambridge, where many Colleges are now competing in this sector.

## **How many conferences does Christ's College host each summer?**

The conferences we host vary in scale from twenty delegates to one hundred and each summer I look after around twenty-five. We have a diverse range of clients and I'm happy to say we have a lot of repeat business. One summer school has been returning to us for forty years (2015 is their 40th anniversary year) and we have some commercial conferences that have been coming back for the past twenty-five years.

## **What do you like best about your role and working at Christ's?**

I enjoy making sure that our clients have the best possible experience here at Christ's. I take pride in the College and the facilities that we have to offer and am delighted to say that we have recently become MIA accredited. This is a Meetings



Industry Association accreditation, an industry recognised standard within the conference, meetings and events sector, representing 'an assurance of excellence.' I couldn't achieve the results I do achieve though without the support of my many colleagues, all of whom contribute to ensuring the success of each and every conference and the happiness of our delegates. This, in turn, provides a vital source of income for the College.

*To find out more about holding a conference at Christ's, contact Susan O'Donnell on: +44 1223 334936, or by email at: [sjc68@cam.ac.uk](mailto:sjc68@cam.ac.uk)*

# Images of Power

PhD student **Stephen Harrison's** research examines how the legitimacy of ancient rulers is connected to their appearance. From the kings of the great Persian Empire, to the present day ruling elite, the construction of a suitable public-facing image is critical for maintaining power.

Cameron, Clegg, Miliband: white, male, Oxbridge-educated. Identikit party leaders in an age of political uniformity. There are numerous social and economic reasons for their homogeneity, but one important factor is that rulers style themselves, at least in part, in response to their understanding of public expectation. Have you ever noticed, for instance, how rarely modern Western politicians are photographed wearing glasses? Perhaps their reticence stems from fear that the electorate might interpret a spectacle-sporting figure as aging, maybe even frail, and thus ill-suited to the rigours of political office. But public expectations are culturally specific and differ from place to place. Imagine a scenario in which a coalition of Western forces invaded, say, Iran, where the bearded, bespectacled image of the President, Hassan Rouhani, could not be more different from that of a Blair or a Cameron. When legitimacy is so bound up in appearance, how could a Western leader possibly develop the authority to exercise influence in the region?

This was precisely the scenario facing Alexander the Great in 330 BC, after his conquest of the Persian Empire, then the largest Empire in history, stretching from India to Turkey. Ruling the Empire by force alone was impossible, but how could Alexander win support from Persians whose understanding of how rulers should appear and behave was very different from his Macedonian subjects? According to Plutarch, Alexander adopted items of Persian royal attire whilst retaining much of his traditional apparel, in a bid to appeal to a wider audience. Unfortunately this strategy proved deeply flawed, and, in trying to please everyone, Alexander pleased nobody. By the time he died in 323, he had succeeded in alienating a number of his supporters, and, even more importantly, failed to leave a securely-established heir.

Twenty years later, after near-continuous civil war, army commander Seleucus won control of the east of Alexander's Empire. Seleucus now faced the problem that had stumped Alexander – how to rule a multi-cultural Empire? But first, he had to justify to the Macedonian soldiers the fact that he had become a king despite lacking blood ties to any established royal house; to do so, he spread a number of propagandistic tales. In one story, Seleucus single-handedly wrestles a bull which threatened to run amok. Beyond emphasising his supernatural strength, the story draws a parallel between Seleucus and Heracles, not just a god, but the figure credited with founding Alexander's royal house. If Heracles could found a royal dynasty, so too could Seleucus. This story was celebrated by placing a bull on coinage that was circulated throughout the Empire. But this coinage was also seen by Seleucus' many Asian subjects, for whom the bull was an important religious symbol; most pertinently, it evoked images of the Persian kings, who had depicted themselves controlling wild bulls, which stood as symbols of disorder. Not only did the story of Seleucus and the bull appeal to the Macedonian solidary, then, it also carried weight in Persian circles, suggesting Seleucus could act like a traditional Persian king. Choosing imagery from the overlap between Greco-Macedonian and Near-Eastern culture was an inspired approach: whereas Alexander had very obviously embraced aspects of Persian culture, Seleucus' engagement with Asian traditions was much more subtle and, consequently, much less divisive. Little wonder then that Alexander's world died with him, but that Seleucus established a dynasty which would flourish for two centuries.

*Check out <http://olympusnews.weebly.com/> for a short film created by Stephen, and the opportunity to get involved in key debates from ancient history.*



Gold stater of Antiochus I from modern-day Afghanistan, c.275 BC. One side shows Antiochus' father, Seleucus I adorned with bull's horns, a reference to the story discussed in this article. The other shows the god Apollo, whom the Seleucids claimed as their ancestor. Apollo carries a bow and arrow, just as the Persian kings had done on their coinage; an iconographical continuity and another way in which the Seleucids adapted Persian imagery.

Photograph by Rani nurmai, distributed under a CC BY-SA 3.0 license





A Palm Tree by a Hotel, South of France, by Lachlan Goudie (m. 1995), awarded the first Levy-Plumb Visual Arts Studentship in 1999 (sold at the auction of Plumb's collections at Cheffins, Tuesday 14 May)

# The Sir John Plumb Archive

Since retiring in 2014 from his role as Head of Official Publications at the University Library (UL) **Bill Noblett** (m. 1968) has been working as a volunteer at the UL, cataloguing Sir John Plumb's personal archive. Here he gives an overview of its contents, revealing Plumb's wide-ranging interests and many talents.

Sir John Plumb was elected to a fellowship at Christ's in 1946 and remained at the College all his life, until his death in 2001. During that time he served as Tutor, Vice-Master, Wine-Steward and finally in 1978 he was elected to the College Mastership, which he held for four years to 1982. Eight years after ceasing to be Master he transferred the older half of his personal archive to the University Library. The second tranche followed after his death. The sheer volume of material is staggering, taking up 321 large archival boxes, and fifty-eight metres of shelving. Manuscripts and proofs of all his published works are contained within, in addition to many thousand letters to and from friends and professional colleagues, and such trivia as laundry books, restaurant bills and menu cards.

Although Plumb is best-known for his career as a historian, he was also a prodigious writer for the non-academic press (indeed, "historical works" – as he himself labelled the boxes – are to be found in just 58 of the 321 boxes). Book reviews and articles flowed from his pen – in 1965 alone he published at least twenty-two book reviews on top of his articles. At the same time, he was acting as editorial advisor to a number of publishers, most notably American Heritage and Penguin. He acted as European editor to America Heritage's Horizon magazine and this brought him into contact with such distinguished authors as Kenneth Clark, Jacob Bronowski and Nancy Mitford. Penguin was equally important to Plumb and a significant aspect of this work was recommending new titles.

Given all this activity, it is surprising that Plumb had time for any leisure. But he did and the archive clearly shows this. There is an extensive section dealing with his famous



The young Swedish couple; a portrait of Rolf and Gun Bolin by Lotte Laserstein (sold at the auction of Plumb's collections at Cheffins, Tuesday 14 May)

porcelain collection – including the lengthy correspondence of the sale to a wealthy American collector – and even more documentation dealing with his equally famous wine collection which he sold at Christies. Here there are his cellar books, his records of what he drank and his correspondence & bills with his wine merchants.

A brief article such as this hardly does justice to what is a remarkable record of a full and active life. There isn't room to expand, for example, on his public duties with such bodies as the Wolfson Foundation, the National Portrait Gallery; his TV series; his early attempts to become a novelist; his work in the University, or for that matter, his work in the College. But it is all there and if anybody wishes to find out more, or indeed come and take a look, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at: [wan1000@cam.ac.uk](mailto:wan1000@cam.ac.uk)

# From Christ's to Gallipoli

**Arthur Beecroft** matriculated at Christ's in 1906 and graduated in 1910. He was in the University Freshers Rugby Team in 1906–7 and was very proud of his Hawks' Club tie, which he wore often. After graduation he was in Chambers at 3 Essex Court, Temple EC4.

**Jane Graham Maw** (m. 1982) founded the **Graham Maw Christie Literary Agency** in 2005 after several years as a publishing director at HarperCollins.



Jane Graham Maw

## **'Dear Ms Graham Maw. Will you find a publisher for my grandfather's book?'**

It is a rainy morning in April 2014 and I'm trying to get a new book proposal out to a dozen editors before leaving for a meeting. Another email pings into my submission inbox. It's only coffee time and it's already getting crowded in there. I do a quick scan of the day's offerings: a tale described by the sender as 'a true story of toxic love'; a self help book on how to become a lorry driver; a title pitched as 'the ultimate diet book' (another one), a diary of life in a call centre, some fiction, a film script...nothing particularly grabs me. This new email has something to do with the Great War. The centenary celebrations have already kicked off and I immediately feel it's going to be a no.

As a literary agent I represent authors, working with them on book proposals, pitching them to publishers, negotiating deals, sorting the 'legals', chasing up money, editing drafts, checking covers and subtitles and press releases and generally making sure publishers are doing what publishers are supposed to do. People often ask how we find our authors, and it's a good question.

Some we approach directly; some come to us via recommendations from other authors or publishers. Others just come, we know not whence, filling our submissions inbox week after week with pleas for representation. It used to be called a slush pile, but it's not a pile – unless you can call a neat list of emails a pile – and it's not slush, as it can contain real gems. Our website states clearly that we only represent non-fiction but that doesn't seem to deter the many hopeful novelists out there. We have our names clearly listed but that doesn't seem to stop people writing to 'Dear Sir', 'Dear Graham' or (my favourite) 'Most esteemed literary agent'. Still, we read every email and if it's not for us, we respond quickly because that is easiest and kindest. It also doesn't necessarily mean the author won't find representation elsewhere. If it's a maybe, we'll discuss it in-house, perhaps meet the author; perhaps seek a reader's report. A few excite us from the start and these we leap on. In a good week, we might follow up one or two possible projects. Of these we take on a few each year:

So when I clicked to open the attachment that morning I wasn't that hopeful. The manuscript had been found in an attic, according to the woman who had written to me. I love this kind of thing, but they usually turn out to be disappointing. I learn that Arthur Beecroft had served, aged 23, as a subaltern in the Royal Engineers in the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign. He had presented his handwritten memoir afterwards to his son, as a sort of explanation, an insight into what it was really like, and perhaps as a warning. He writes about terror and cowardice, honour and duty. He is clear-eyed about the mistakes that were made, and as I read on I can see he writes vividly and poignantly about the conflict: the flies, the disease, the heat, the

lack of preparation and the lack of real direction. His clipped public school idiom is straight out of the 1920s, but he brings to life the men dogged by disease and exhaustion: ordinary soldiers who – even as they suffered the betrayal of incompetent leadership – displayed extraordinary reserves of heroism and bravery. I can almost feel him sitting next to me and telling me how it felt to be there. It is a humane and truthful account and I am astonished.

I stare out of the window. It has stopped raining but I'll take my umbrella to lunch just in case. As I'm getting ready I check the dates: the centenary of the start of the Gallipoli campaign is April 2015, so there is less than a year to go. Even if I can find a publisher who hasn't already thought about commissioning (or republishing) something to tie in with this anniversary then they would need to act quickly. It can take up to a year to get a book out: publishing wheels move surprisingly slowly even in our digital 21st century. I reluctantly decide it's a no.

On the tube on my way to Soho I flick through the attachments on my MacBook again. There's a photo of Arthur in standing by what looks like a cricket pavilion alongside his university pals who are dressed in cricket whites. I wonder idly what happened to the others. Then I take in the caption with a start:

'Christ's College, Cambridge.'



Arthur Beecroft during his time at Christ's (back row, far left)





Arthur Beecroft with fellow tennis players (second from left, standing)

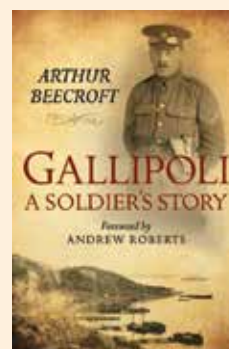
That clinches it. This earnest-looking young man – who had attended Christ's over seventy years before me, who had eaten in the same Hall, listened to evensong in the same Chapel, perhaps sat in the same spot under Milton's mulberry tree where I sometimes sat with a book, this young man who had been prepared to sacrifice everything for his country and for the generations like mine who came after him. I feel I owe it to him to have a go.

I knew I had to move quickly. Within a few days I had put together a really good pitch with the help of the author's granddaughter: Concept, appeal, market, promotion, chapter outline. It's what we do well. I even persuaded a fellow in Middle East history at St John's I met at a dinner that weekend to give it his seal of approval ('Great stuff – fresh, lively and evocative'). As I had suspected, a few editors reported that although they were moved and impressed by the book they had already lined up books to commemorate Gallipoli. That was fine, as an agent I'm used to rejections, and remain hopeful on the basis that no one really knows anything. Nevertheless the book soon found a home at the independent publishing house Robert Hale, and received a glowing foreword from the historian Andrew Roberts:

'In this centenary year, the discovery and release of such an important new

memoir is a major publishing event, providing a significant increase in our knowledge of a generally under-appreciated part of the Great War.'

So even though I took him on for somewhat romantic reasons, I have to admit that Arthur Beecroft is one author I am very proud to represent.



**Gallipoli, A Soldier's Story**, is published by Robert Hale at £12.99.

Jane is contactable via [www.grahammawchristie.com](http://www.grahammawchristie.com)

## Central European University Roma Graduate Program

On joining Christ's College in 2014, **Professor Gábor Betegh** (Fellow), previously based in the Department of Philosophy at the Central European University (2001 – 2010), put forward a proposal for Christ's College to participate in CEU's Roma Access Program. This program aims to support young and promising Roma students, who come from one of the most marginalised groups in Europe, to realise their full academic and professional potential and to become role models and leaders for the Roma community.

Christ's College welcomed students, **Nikola Ludlova** and **Marek Chomanic** last May, to start their academic programme, with the help of their academic and graduate student hosts.

Below, **Nikola Ludlova**, writes about her visit to Christ's College and what it meant to her.

### The warmest embrace – Reflection of my visit to Cambridge

In May 2015, me and my colleague, both students at the Central European University in Budapest, were invited by Christ's College in order to get to know the student life in Cambridge. It was a historical moment, since it was the first time that such a prestigious university institution invited Romani students for an official visit. Considering the fact that segregation of Roma in the educational system and their worsened access to the higher education is the norm in the most of the European states with the significant Romani population, this was indeed a significant event imbued with a huge political statement. Our stay was exciting and meaningful in every aspect. Before coming to Cambridge, I was to

some extent intimidated by the reputation of the institution. Although I was considering British universities as an option for my future education, I was not strongly determined to apply to study there. Thus, the experience has broadened my mental space of prospects, when contemplating my future education. Further, I was granted a unique possibility to consult my thesis project with professors from Christ's and received a valuable advice and encouragement to apply for the study at Cambridge. Having been given an opportunity to attend lectures, a conference, formal and informal events, to meet students and members of the teaching personnel, and thanks to accommodation and board in the college, I grasped a notion what is living and studying in Cambridge like. I appreciate the personal meetings with students and professors and I am very grateful, and delighted by their genuine interests in ourselves and the Romani students in general. As a result, I came home much more confident, and motivated to apply to Cambridge University or an equivalent institution, and to bring my Romani classmates to the realization that our scope of educational choices is much wider.



Marek Chomanic and Nikola Ludlova at the entrance to First Court

# Take Two:

## Christ's Filmmakers

**Kevin Loader** (m. 1976) read English at Christ's and was a member of the Choir and Christ's Amateur Dramatics Society. He is one of the UK's most established film and television producers, and won last year's BAFTA award for Best Mini-Series, having previously been nominated for such films as *In the Loop* and *Nowhere Boy*. He began his career in 1982 at the BBC, producing and directing documentaries, arts programs, and television dramas and has a production company, Free Range Films, with director Roger Michell.

**Mark Danciger** (m. 2013) is a current student at Christ's reading Philosophy. He is heavily involved in the student filmmaking scene in Cambridge.

### Which room were you in at College?

**K:** In my first year I had one in new court, about 4 tiers up with a balcony, then I lived out in Cavendish Avenue in my 2nd year, but in 3rd year I was actually in T2, in the third court. It was a set of rooms – I came about 10th in the ballot, so I did quite well, but I did get quite a number of Japanese tourists looking in at my window!

**M:** In my first year I had room 420, around the back of staircase 4. It had an ensuite bath which I spent quite a lot of time in, as a humanities student! In 2nd year I was in one of the Jesus Lane houses, number 72, which I found out recently was the house in which Douglas Adams was born and lived in his early childhood. Next year I'm going back into staircase 4, one of the rooms with the mezzanine floor, looking out onto King's Street. I also got quite lucky on the ballot this year: It's all about the ballot.

### Kevin, how did your time at Christ's influence you?

**K:** The thing about these colleges is that it's such an educational and social privilege to be in a community where there are lots of people doing lots of different things, with lots of different interests and lots of different skill sets – you're sort of amazed but also kind of take it for granted when you're here. I guess when I got to the BBC I recognised the same thing – it was very collegiate and it felt like an extension of the University / College experience. If you work in TV you're in that similarly intense environment and spend a lot of time with your colleagues: 60 – 70 hours a week. Certainly that was my experience of working at the BBC; it felt kind of like a grownup version of hanging out with your mates at College.

### Mark, can you tell me more about your current project, *Ruling Class*?

**M:** *Ruling Class* is an hour-long kids television pilot about politics, trying to get kids interested in it because of the huge political apathy amongst young people in particular. In *Ruling Class* we presented an election night in a school context – the headmistress has left and the school decides to put a head boy and head girl in charge instead, but they have to be elected by their fellow



Mark Danciger and Kevin Loader



students in an election process that mirrors the British first past the post election system. So it explains the political system, but also throughout there are all sorts of general political and philosophical issues being explored. We are trying to do it in a fun, sitcom style, so that kids can enjoy it.

**K:** I'm about to work on the grown-up version of that – trying to interest the rest of the population in politics! We're developing a television series with a writer called James Graham, who's probably the best writer about politics currently working in the UK. The aim of the show is to not be satirical about politics – so it is the opposite of "In the Loop". We want to examine the minutiae of politics, the real pressures of how decisions are made and how the country is run. It will be a forensic look at the world and what it is actually like to try and effect change of any kind.

### How did you get into producing?

**K:** I did a little bit of theatre when I was at Christ's, and quite a lot of music. I went off to do grad work in America and got some television work while I was there, then came back and got one of those impossible traineeships at the BBC, having been rejected three years previously. But that was one of the very few ways you could get into TV then; it was an inaccessible fortress in those days. Independent TV was completely unionised in the late 70s and early 80s – it was a closed shop. You couldn't go and get a job working on an ITV programme, and Channel 4 didn't exist until 1982. It really was the BBC or nothing.

**M:** When I was 12 my mum got me an old mini DV video camera from Argos. For the next four years I spent most of my weekends just messing about with friends, filming ourselves pretending to be characters from Lord of the Rings, and making silly little parodies of James Bond. Then when I was 16 or 17 I decided to try and make a proper film on Plato as part of my university application. I absolutely loved the experience and went from there. I've spent the last couple of years rebuilding the Cambridge's film making society (CINECAM) with some friends. Our aim is to recreate the theatre scene in Cambridge, but for film.



Maggie Smith as Miss Shepherd and Alex Jennings as Alan Bennett from *The Lady In The Van* (credit: Nicola Dove)



Maggie Smith as Miss Shepherd from *The Lady In The Van* (credit: Nicola Dove)

### What is the most challenging aspect of filming a production?

**K:** Being an independent producer; what I effectively do every year is to start a new business. I have to develop a product, go and attract the investment, get people to come and collaborate on it, then manufacture and market it – that's the cycle of a film, but it's also the cycle of a business.

**M:** I agree, for me, the biggest challenge is working within the limitations of being a student filmmaker and not having much money or resources. We used crowd funding to raise money for *Ruling Class*, about £8,000 in total. But before then, all the other projects I'd worked on had been £500 max.

### What projects are you working on at present?

**M:** I've got a script I've just written which we're in pre-production for at the moment. We're going to try and shoot it in November. It's quite simple and it's all set in a garage. It's a science fiction thing about time travel, about sending messages back and forth through time. My hope is that that will be good enough to enter into some student film festivals in the summer and to use that as a stepping stone and meet some people through that.

**K:** The next film I'm releasing is called, 'The Lady in the Van', which premiered at the London Film Festival in October and will be released in cinemas on November 13th. It's the real story of the woman who lived in a van in Alan Bennett's street opposite his house for three years. Then the council came to paint yellow lines and so she had to move her van. In a moment of charitable impulse he offers her his driveway for a few months and she dies there fifteen years later. Alex Jennings plays Alan Bennett, rather brilliantly, and Maggie Smith plays Miss Shepherd, the pungent lady in the van. Maggie is, well, it's an incredible performance. And it's material she's done before – she did it on the stage about 12 years ago, so she's brought great depth to this performance. It's very funny and very sad and heart breaking.



# Volunteering in Nepal

Since 2009, several Christ's students have taught as volunteers in the rural mountainous community of Helambu, Nepal, with the support of College travel grants. Following the devastating Nepalese earthquake on Saturday 25 April 2015, second year student, **Kim Sorensen**, pictured above, returned to help with the relief effort. Below, he tells us more about the experience.

I have just spent the last two months in Helambu, Nepal, supported by the Norman Sosnow Travel Fund, a College Travel Grant. This was my third time working in the region, following a strong Christ's student tradition of volunteering with Cambridge University Helambu Livelihood and Education Partnership (CUHELP).

CUHELP is a student run charity that works with its local partners in Nepal to supply student teachers to over 25 different schools. This year's earthquake prevented the summer volunteering programme, but as incoming president of CUHELP, it was important that I went out to support and plan with our local partners and to personally assess the future role of volunteers.

For me the most unique part of the experience is becoming integrated into the community. I lived in Tartong village, which has 22 houses and roughly 700 people. My host family consisted of 10 individuals and we all lived together in one room. You eat, sleep, socialise and work together, and as a result, you very quickly become part of the village landscape and start to see your hosts as your second family. The villagers welcome you into their lives and everyone wants to host you at some point, be it through a simple cup of tea or organising a night-long party at their house.

My last trip to Nepal was naturally very different because of the earthquake. Helambu is located in Sindhpulchok, which suffered the highest death toll and level of destruction. In my village not a single house is left standing and the entire village has moved to a temporary camp. Everyone is living in shelters

made from plastic sheets and metal roofing (paid for by fundraising done at Christ's). In general the village seems to be coping surprising well in the circumstances, however due to the daily aftershocks there seems to be a reluctance to begin rebuilding. This is worrying as the shelters will be extremely cold during the winter and they are far away from their fields.

Going back this summer was, in the saddest way, a hugely rewarding experience. At first I worried whether I would be more of a hindrance than a help, but I saw and was told that volunteers can provide a welcomed connection to the outside world and a sense that they have not been forgotten. For the children I was a break from the rhythm of the school and for the teachers I could take some of the burden giving them time to help their own families.

In response to the earthquake, CUHELP raised over £31,000 for relief work in Helambu (including the overwhelming support from Christ's students and staff). These funds helped to set up Temporary Learning Centres to replace damaged schools and to supply immediate relief materials which are now being used for reconstruction. I have seen the difference the donations have made and on the request of the villagers I thank everyone who supported CUHELP's fundraising, especially all the students who donated, the Library for running its charity morning and the master for so generously facilitating my college campaign.

I have learnt that volunteers do still have a role to play and next year CUHELP will be running its full programme again!





# Christ's College Cambridge

## Personal Details

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# Dates for your Diary

For more information and to book a place at any of these events, please go to [www.alumni.christs.cam.ac.uk](http://www.alumni.christs.cam.ac.uk)

2 December

Winter Drinks Reception at the  
Athenaeum, London

8 December

Christ's College Medical Alumni Association  
Winter Meeting in London

10 December

Varsity Rugby Matches at Twickenham

2 February

Distinguished Speaker Dinner

12 March

Marguerites' Alumni Dinner

19 March

JCR Committee Alumni Dinner

2 April

MA Congregation

9 April

Medical Society Alumni Event

11 June

May Bumps Picnic

14 June

May Ball 2016

18 June

Old Members' Reunion Lunch

(those who matriculated 1975–1979 inclusive)

25 June

College Association Dinner

10 July

College Family Day

10 September

First Old Members Dinner

(those who matriculated up to and including 1957 and 1966)

24 September

Second Old Members Dinner

(those who matriculated 1970 – 1974 inclusive)

Our students regularly organise their own dinners for current and former members of College clubs and societies. Please let us know if you were a member of any College club or society so that we can add you to our mailing list and keep you up-to-date with future events that might be of interest to you.

You can email us on [alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk), we would love to hear from you.

We commissioned this beautiful rendition of the Master's Lodge and Hall especially for our Christ's College mug. Produced by Hudsons of England, and made from fine bone china, the mugs are now available to buy from the Development Office at £10.00 each (plus £3.00 for postage), payable by cash, cheque or credit card.

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