



# WORCESTER

2023 Issue 27



Research at  
Worcester College

Understanding  
the criminal mind

Turbulence and  
human security

A tale of two  
sculptures

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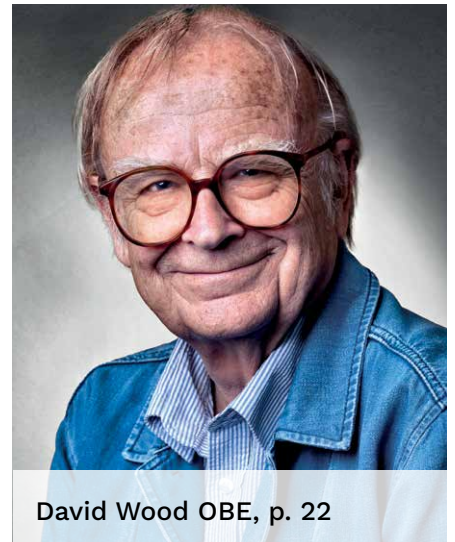


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# Provost's welcome

**It is a pleasure to introduce this edition of the *Worcester Magazine* after three terms packed full of activity this academic year.**

I believe that colleges are all about bringing people together to promote education and research. Some of my most memorable moments in recent months have been my encounters and conversations with people both in and outside College. Whether talking to Old Members in the US or catching up with young alumni at their first Gaudy, I have appreciated all the positive memories of your time at Worcester as well as your wise counsel and support. I'm always keen to seek your views – as well as your support – to establish how we best equip our students to flourish in an increasingly complex world.

We have also heard insights from guests in my 'role model' discussions – from Radio 4's Evan Davis on the importance of compassion, to the views of our new King's biographer, Catherine Mayer. She spoke powerfully about the need to move beyond the often narrow topics that are the focus of party political debate to make space for the causes that really matter to us and help unite us all. From all these discussions and students' reactions to them, I am confident that Worcester continues to produce clever and thoughtful graduates who will make a real difference to the world.

I have also enjoyed learning about what is happening in College through my regular podcast – The Provcast! It's now available for everyone to listen to via the University's podcast service ([podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/provcast](https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/provcast)). During the last year I have talked to staff and students about the part they each play in the Worcester community. I'm struck by the dedication of each interviewee and how everyone

Whether talking to Old Members in the US or catching up with young alumni at their first Gaudy, I have appreciated all the positive memories of your time at Worcester and your wise counsel and support.



helps contribute to the success of Worcester. From interviews with the welfare team, gardener (and wildlife photographer extraordinaire) Allison Leslie, and our new Home Bursar, Harmohinder 'H' Bahl, it's clear that every member of College contributes in their own way to the core task of delivering our educational mission. For more information on the challenges and rewards of the Home Bursar's role, please read H's thoughts on page 8.

The research stories in these pages are another inspiration to us all. It is fascinating to hear from John Parrington about playing the 'talking head' rather than the 'tutor' in a new Amazon Prime documentary (page 9) as well as to read about the diverse and successful work of our undergraduate and graduate students (pages 6-7).

One of my favourite sights this year has been the arrival of our new Henry Moore loan, a mighty bronze which looks right at home outside the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre (read more on pages 14-15). The building itself played host to 'Exhibition 002' in May, a student-organised showcase of artistic creativity featuring work by students, alumni and friends. It was joyful to see so many supporters gathered together to celebrate the hard work and imagination of our students. Talking of creativity, the ever-knowledgeable Emma Goodrum opens the Archive on page 16 to look back at Shakespearean productions in the gardens over the years. Next year we'll celebrate 90 years since the first summer Shakespeare at Worcester and Emma is preparing a special exhibition to mark the occasion – please get in touch with her if you have anything to contribute.

I hope you enjoy reading more about the return of College life and I very much hope to see you back at Worcester soon.

**David Isaac CBE**  
**Provost**



**Viola Kerr, Director  
of Development**

# Generosity at the heart of College life

**I am absolutely delighted to be writing this having just joined Worcester as Development Director and Fellow. Arriving towards the end of Trinity Term, our events programme was in full swing, and I have been struck by the warmth of the community of staff, students and Old Members here at Worcester.**

The incredible generosity of our Old Members and donors is absolutely at the heart of all we can achieve here, and this year contributions from individuals, trusts and foundations have been instrumental in driving the College further forward in its aims to support students and research.

We started the academic year with more graduate students than ever before benefiting from scholarships, including the first student to join Worcester as part of the University of Oxford Black Academic Futures scholarship. Oxford graduate students go on to play important roles in the worldwide economy and society, leading the way in their fields and pushing frontiers of knowledge – yet lack of funding leads many potential students to turn down their Oxford place. Worcester is committed to attracting the very best students from across the world to study and learn at all levels, regardless of background or circumstance. Providing graduate scholarships is key to this aim. To achieve this, we are more dependent upon the support of our alumni, friends and donors than ever before.

Valeria Colunga Lozano (2022, Global Governance and Diplomacy) is one of three graduate students jointly funded by generous donors to Worcester alongside the Weidenfeld-Hoffman Trust:

“The Weidenfeld-Hoffman Trust scholarship not only took away the uncertainty of being able to fund my education here, but has also built a very much needed community for this new chapter in my life.

“I might feel uncertain about what my first job after my studies will be, or what the next decade will look like. But thanks to my scholarship, I am not uncertain about how I will pay for my accommodation, food, and tuition here at Oxford. Taking that uncertainty away allows me and others like me to continue working on making contributions for our world.

“Your donations make real, tangible impacts in each one of our lives and I am sure I speak for other scholars when I say that we do not take your generosity lightly. Thank you.”

Another area that would not be possible without philanthropic support is our work to open up the opportunity of a Worcester education for younger prospective students. In the last six months alone, says Tinsley Outreach and Access Officer Zoe Campbell, Worcester has welcomed 1179 students, ranging in age from 6 to 17:

“There is such an eagerness amongst students of all ages to be a part of Worcester College. We have also had the privilege of hosting 59 students on an Easter residential programme, providing them with a memorable and enriching experience. We are proud to have hosted sessions of Target Oxbridge for Medicine and Experimental Psychology, along with serving as an online host for the Humanities BAME Study Day 2023.

“Next year, we will be offering a teacher residential for the first time at Worcester College. This initiative aims to equip educators with accurate information about the Oxford application process and dispel misconceptions. By collaborating with teachers, we can empower students to pursue their academic goals confidently, and break down barriers together.”



*Tinsley Outreach and Access Officer, Zoe Campbell, with a visiting primary school*



*Scholar Valeria Colunga Lozano at the Worcester Commemoration Ball, June 2023*

This year, contributions from individuals, trusts and foundations have been instrumental in driving the College further forward in its aims to support students and research.

Learning and developing through the tutorial system has a lasting affect on so many Worcester students, and commitment to this system has inspired generous Old Members and friends to fund a number of our Fellowships. We are also pleased that the vision of donors has led to funding for opportunities for academics at the very start of their careers.

Dr Charlotte Terrell has held the Isenberg Junior Research Fellowship at Worcester for the last three years. She says:

“As a Junior Research Fellow I’ve been lucky to have the time and resources to develop as a teacher and researcher in literatures and literary culture spanning the late-twentieth century before my first lectureship. This has included making substantial headway toward two book projects; publishing a handful of articles on fiction and on Toni Morrison; making use of archives at Oxford University Press, travelling to archives in Princeton and Columbia University to expand my research on the work of women editors; and teaching Worcester’s bright community of visiting students about the recent history and politics of literary studies. I will be leaving this post as a confident academic and am so grateful for this time to work meaningfully on my research.”

Many of you will have spoken to a Worcester student over the phone in March as part of our latest Telethon campaign. Our team of students dedicated two weeks of the vacation to share stories of Worcester past and present, hear your



*The team of student callers gather to thank all of you who responded to this year’s Telethon*

news and encourage gifts to make the experience of studying at Worcester the best it can be. Over 300 Old Members generously donated and a fantastic £213,000 was raised, exceeding all our expectations! We are overwhelmed by this generous response, and especially grateful that so many of you were happy for your donation to be used flexibly according to need.

Whether you connected with Worcester this year by sharing advice and memories during the Telethon, coming to an event, volunteering your time, or by donating, you will have made a real impact for our students and have played a part in what the College has been able to achieve this year – thank you.

Your donations make real, tangible impacts in each one of our lives... we do not take your generosity lightly. Thank you.

Valeria Colunga Lozano – 2022 Weidenfeld-Hoffman Trust Scholar

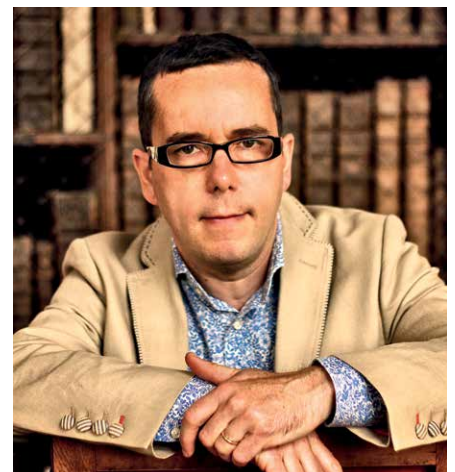
# Research at Worcester

“Worcester is a place of innovative and world-leading research. Our academics come from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds, and have been celebrated for their research achievements, as well as their public engagement and teaching.

We believe that the fostering of intellectual exchange and cross-disciplinary collaborations are essential to ensuring research excellence. As the Heads of Research at Worcester, we are the main points of contact for our research community, from early career scholars to senior colleagues. We aim to support the development of an ideas-rich environment at Worcester, as well as promote and celebrate the College’s vibrant research culture. With this in mind, this section of the Worcester Magazine is dedicated to celebrating the research achievements of members from across the Worcester community.”



**Dr Emanuela Vai** (Humanities)  
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**Professor John Parrington** (Science)  
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## Research Academics



**DR LISA WEDDING**

**Worcester's Fellow and Tutor in Geography is the recipient of the 2023 Royal Geographical Society's (RGS) Cuthbert Peek Award.**

The Cuthbert Peek Award recognises those advancing geographical

knowledge of human impact on the environment through the application of contemporary methods and is part of a series of annual awards from the RGS that recognise extraordinary achievement in the field of geography.

At Oxford's School of Geography and the Environment, Lisa is the Principal Investigator of the Oxford Seascape Ecology Lab and an Associate Professor in Physical Geography. Her research seeks to advance the theoretical foundation in the emerging field of seascape ecology and develop novel techniques to map and model change in the ocean. The Cuthbert Peek Award recognises her significant contributions to advancing contemporary methods for marine environmental remote sensing in the past 15 years.

Her research seeks to advance the theoretical foundation in the emerging field of seascape ecology and develop novel techniques to map and model change in the ocean.

Speaking about this honour, Lisa said: "I am honoured to receive the RGS Cuthbert Peek Award. This recognition is shared with all of my colleagues that have worked towards advancing our research applications to support marine management and conservation. Working together has allowed for us to bring the diverse perspectives needed to develop novel techniques to address complex marine environmental problems."

These prestigious awards and medals recognise excellence in geographical research, fieldwork, teaching and public engagement, and are awarded by the RGS (with the Institute of British Geographers), founded in 1830 for "the advancement of geographical science". They are presented annually to individuals who have made outstanding achievements and recent recipients include Worcester's own Professor Heather Viles, Senior Research Fellow and Associate Head (Research) in the Social Sciences Division. On 5th June, Dr Wedding attended the RGS's annual celebration day in London, where she was presented with this award by the Royal Geographic Society's President alongside 22 other outstanding contributors.



**DR LEILA ULLRICH**

**Leila is an Associate Professor in Criminology and a Fellow at Worcester College.**

She works at the crossroads of international criminal justice, transitional justice, victimology, border criminology and counter-terrorism. She is particularly interested in how global criminal justice institutions create gendered and racialized subjects, and how these subjects (victims, refugees and racialized communities) engage with and resist these processes. She approaches these questions using feminist, decolonial, and critical political economy theories. She is also developing new bottom-up research methods such as qualitative WhatsApp surveying.

Leila is currently pursuing three research projects: 1) building on her doctoral work, she analyses the labouring relationships that make and unmake international criminal justice from a social reproduction perspective. Her first monograph on that topic; *The Blame Cascade: Justice for Victims at the International Criminal Court*, based on extensive fieldwork in The Hague, Kenya and Uganda is forthcoming with Oxford University Press; 2) she continues her research, funded by the British Academy, on the interplay between terrorism, counter-terrorism and gender based on fieldwork in Lebanon, Kenya and the UK; 3) she works on the possibilities and challenges of distant, digital and decolonial knowledge production based on her WhatsApp research with Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

## Research Academics



**PROFESSOR  
PETER  
FRANKOPAN**

Peter is Professor of Global History at the University of Oxford and has been a Senior

Research Fellow at Worcester since 2000.

He works on the histories of change and exchange from antiquity to the present day – with a particular focus on the connections often referred to as the ‘Silk Roads’. His work includes *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World* – a *Sunday Times* Book of the Decade, *New York Times* No. 1 bestseller in China, India, UK and beyond. It was described by *Berliner Zeitung* as “not only the most important history book in years, but the most important in decades”. Its follow-up, *The New Silk Roads: the Present and Future of the World*, won the Carical Prize for Social Sciences in 2018.

His latest book, *The Earth Transformed: An Untold History* focuses on change in the natural world, including natural resource exploitation and climate change from the Big Bang to the Paris Accords and beyond. It went straight to No. 2 in the bestseller lists, behind a book on air-fryers. “Humanity has transformed the Earth,” said the *Financial Times*; “Frankopan transforms our understanding of history.”

Named one of the World’s 50 Top Thinkers (*Prospect*), Peter has been described as a “rockstar don” (*BBC News*) and the “first great historian of the 21st century” by Brazil’s *DCM* magazine.



**DR PAULO  
SAVAGET**

Paulo is Associate Professor of Engineering Entrepreneurship and a Fellow at

Worcester College.

For ages, global corporations have been lecturing small organizations and not-for-profits on how to get things done. As it turns out, it should have been the other way around. In his groundbreaking book, *The Four Workarounds*, Paulo Savaget shows how the most valuable lessons about problem-solving can be learned from the scrappiest groups.

Dr Savaget draws most of his examples from small organizations dedicated to social action that have made an art form out of subverting the status quo and have proved themselves adept at achieving massive wins with minimal resources. Through his research, Paulo identified the four workarounds that these groups commonly employ: the piggyback, the loophole, the roundabout, and the next best.

The *Four Workarounds* shows how seemingly intractable problems – from public urination to the challenges of delivering lifesaving medicine to remote communities – were addressed using unconventional tactics. Some of the world’s biggest and most admired companies are already using workarounds to transform the ways they do business. And these same lessons can also revolutionize the ways we approach the challenges we all encounter every day of our lives.

## Research Students



**MORTEN  
THOMSEN**

Morten is studying a DPhil in Sociology and is the MCR President.

“The public discourse on issues related to gender identity is as heated as it is often uninformed. For my doctoral project, I use data from public registers to examine the lives and demographic characteristics of gender minorities such as trans and intersex individuals. I exploit novel statistical methods to examine outcomes in health, education, and the labour market. The use of population-level data enables me to reliably establish life trajectories and areas of inequality.

“I hope my research will help de-escalate the public debate on gender identity, in which the validity of the disadvantages still faced by many gender minority individuals is often questioned. I hope to inspire more evidence-based policies targeting inequity and potential discrimination.

“At the Leverhulme Centre for Demographic Science in Oxford I am situated in the best possible position to undertake my research, providing me with access to the best resources and world-leading experts in my field. Worcester College has welcomed me into the most inclusive and supportive ‘home away from home’ I could have ever imagined, and I try to give back to our community in my role as MCR President. Beyond my DPhil, I hope to be able to stay at Worcester to continue my research on gender and disadvantaged populations.”





**TINA CHRISTMANN**

**Tina is studying a DPhil in Geography and the Environment.**

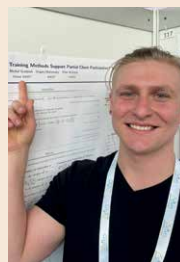
“The 2020s are the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. As an ecologist and biodiversity scientist with a focus on the tropics, my recently

completed DPhil project was motivated by a desire to find out how we can best restore some of the world’s underappreciated ecosystems.

## My multi-method DPhil project combined a big literature review, a satellite data study and stakeholder interviews in the mountains of Peru.

“I am particularly interested in restoration of tropical mountain ecosystems (such as the Andes) which harbour exceptional biodiversity and provide many services to humanity but are also at threat from human encroachment and disturbance. My multi-method DPhil project combined a big literature review, a satellite data study and stakeholder interviews in the mountains of Peru. My aim was to reassess the science and practice of restoration at tropical, national and local scales. The results were striking and showed how many knowledge gaps we still have in restoration science. But my experience also highlighted the many opportunities we have to restore ecosystems, working together with communities to achieve simultaneous objectives including water retention, biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods.

“As a young researcher immersed in the world of ecosystem restoration, my DPhil also provided the wonderful opportunity to edit a special feature in the journal *Restoration Ecology* which was targeted at amplifying the work of early career researchers. As an editor, I co-led the publishing and peer review of 80 papers centred on best-practice and advancing the science in this exciting field. This really complemented my research experience and gave me valuable academic and leadership skills. With my DPhil finished, I am now embarking on a career within the applied world of restoration where I hope to function as a scientific advisor for holistic ecosystem restoration.”



**MICHAL GRUDZIEN**

**Michal is an undergraduate reading Maths and Statistics.**

“In my journey through the fascinating world of machine learning, I made a remarkable breakthrough in the field of federated learning. My research led me to

discover the 5GCS algorithm, a groundbreaking solution that achieves optimal communication complexity and supports partial client participation. This achievement earned me a publication at the esteemed AISTATS 2023 conference in Valencia, where I had the privilege of connecting with numerous like-minded individuals.

“Federated learning has revolutionized the way we approach collaborative machine learning. By allowing multiple devices to train a shared model without centralized data aggregation, it addresses privacy concerns and data security risks. The 5GCS algorithm, which I developed under the guidance of Professor Peter Richtarik from KAUST (Saudi Arabia), takes federated learning to the next level.

“During the AISTATS 2023 conference, I had the opportunity to engage in enriching discussions, exchange ideas, and network with fellow researchers. The interest and enthusiasm my work generated confirmed the significance of the 5GCS algorithm and opened doors to potential collaborations and future research opportunities.

“My discovery of the 5GCS algorithm in federated learning has paved the way for more efficient and privacy-preserving machine learning practices. With the support of Professor Peter Richtarik and the exposure gained at the AISTATS 2023 conference, I am excited to contribute further to the advancements in federated learning and shape the future of this dynamic field.”

Theory

Table 1: Variants of 5GCS (Algorithm 1) depending on the choice of the LT procedure run by clients  $m \in S^t$  in the current cohort.

Algorithm	Local Training via Subroutine $\mathcal{A}$	Communication Complexity (a) Theorem	
5GCS <sub>∞</sub>	$K = \infty$ steps of GD	$\mathcal{O}\left(\left(\frac{M}{C} + \sqrt{\frac{ML}{C\mu}}\right) \log \frac{1}{\epsilon}\right)$	3.1
5GCS <sub>0</sub>	$K = \mathcal{O}\left(\sqrt{\frac{CL}{M\mu}}\right)$ steps of GD	$\mathcal{O}\left(\left(\frac{M}{C} + \sqrt{\frac{ML}{C\mu}}\right) \log \frac{1}{\epsilon}\right)$	3.3
5GCS <sub>ε</sub>	$K = 0$ steps of GD	$\mathcal{O}\left(\frac{ML}{C\mu} \log \frac{1}{\epsilon}\right)$	3.5
5GCS <sub>ε</sub> <sup>(b)</sup>	any method $\mathcal{A}$ (as long as it satisfies Assm 2)	$\mathcal{O}\left(\left(\frac{M}{C} + \sqrt{\frac{ML}{C\mu}}\right) \log \frac{1}{\epsilon}\right)$	3.7

(a)  $M$  = number of clients;  $C$  = cohort size.  
 (b) Let  $\{A_1, \dots, A_M\}$  be any LT subroutines for minimizing functions  $\{\psi_1^*, \dots, \psi_M^*\}$  defined in equation 1, capable of finding points  $\{y_1^k, \dots, y_M^k\}$  in  $K$  steps, from the starting point  $y_m^0 = y^0$  for all  $m \in \{1, \dots, M\}$ , which satisfy the inequality:  $\sum_{m=1}^M \frac{1}{\mu_m} \|y_m^k - y_m^*\|^2 + \sum_{m=1}^M \frac{L_m}{\mu_m} \|\nabla \psi_m^*(y_m^k)\|^2 \leq \sum_{m=1}^M \frac{c_m}{\mu_m} \|y^k - y_m^*\|^2$

**Relation between  $T$  and  $K$**

Consider Algorithm 1 (5GCS) with the LT solver being GD run for  $K \geq K(\alpha) := 2\alpha \log\left(\frac{1}{\alpha}\right)$  iterations, where  $1 < \alpha < \frac{M\mu}{M\mu + \sqrt{\frac{ML}{C\mu}}} + \frac{(\frac{ML}{C\mu})}{\sqrt{\frac{ML}{C\mu}}}$ . Let  $\gamma = \frac{\alpha}{2M}$  and  $\tau = \max\left\{\frac{\alpha}{M\mu}, \frac{1}{M\mu}\right\}$ . Then for the Lyapunov function  $\Psi := \frac{1}{\gamma} \|y^k - x^*\|^2 + \frac{M}{C} \left(\frac{1}{\tau} + \frac{1}{L_c}\right) \|y^k - u^k\|^2$ , the iterates of the method satisfy  $\mathbb{E}[\Psi^k] \leq (1 - \rho)^k \Psi^0$ , where  $\rho := \max\left\{\frac{\alpha}{M\mu}, \frac{\alpha}{M\mu + \sqrt{\frac{ML}{C\mu}}}\right\} < 1$ . Fix any  $0 < \epsilon < 1$ . To have  $\mathbb{E}[\Psi^k] \leq \epsilon \Psi^0$ , it suffices to take  $T \geq \left(1 + \frac{2}{\alpha - 1/\mu}\right) \log \frac{1}{\epsilon} = \mathcal{O}\left(\frac{1}{K(\alpha)} \log \frac{1}{\epsilon}\right)$  communication rounds.

Figure 1: The number of communication rounds of 5GCS as a function of the number of GD steps forming the LT subroutine  $\mathcal{A}$  with  $L_c = 10^4$  and  $c/\mu = 0.1$ .

# A day in the life of the new Home Bursar

**Harmohinder ‘H’ Bahl describes his varied role which has included juggling community events and summer conferences, future planning, and a Commemoration Ball.**

I joined Worcester as Home Bursar in September 2022. Like the freshers who arrived a month after me, this is my first experience of an Oxford college and it’s been fascinating to see a different perspective after living and working elsewhere in the city for many years. I bring nearly three decades of experience in a variety of operational roles in the hospitality and higher education sectors, both in the UK and abroad, but nothing can quite prepare you for the life of an Oxford college.

As Home Bursar, I oversee the day-to-day operations of numerous College departments – Conference & Events, Catering, Accommodation, Housekeeping and the Porters’ Lodge – and it is a pleasure to work closely with our incredibly dedicated staff in these areas. I realised rather early on in my time at Worcester that routine was not something I’d be enjoying in this role. While the three full terms are always busy, it’s actually the vacations that are the trickiest juggling act. From our commercial activities – thankfully reaching pre-pandemic levels and crucially helping us to balance the books – to weddings, garden parties, B&B guests and planned maintenance, I certainly won’t be enjoying a relaxing summer! This flurry of activity is worth it though, as our out-of-term operations ensure that our current and prospective students can benefit from favourable pricing while they’re here.

One of my favourite aspects of the job is getting to know our wonderful students and delivering the domestic services they expect. This year, I have worked particularly closely with them in planning the triennial Commemoration Ball. From fireworks to portaloos – and everything in-between – I’ve been impressed by the professionalism and ideas which the student committee have brought to the table. Another

The beauty of my role as Home Bursar is the diverse nature of where I am required.

key constituency is our neighbours, and so my duties extend to representing the College in its community setting of Jericho. We’re such a key part of the local area and we must continue to fulfil our



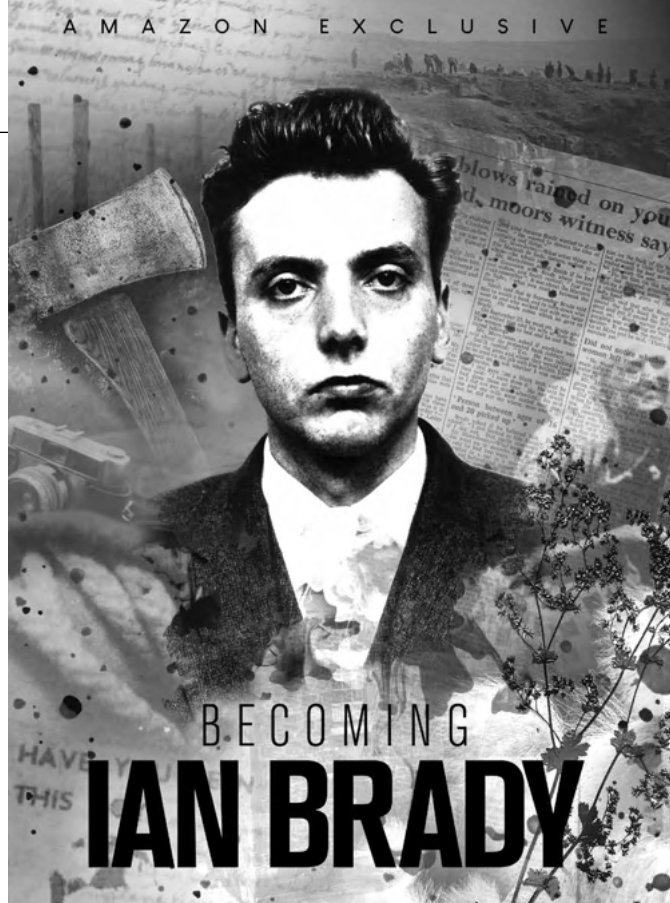
*H at a community event in the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre with Chair of Oxfordshire County Council, Susanna Pressel, and Lord Mayor of Oxford, James Fry.*

civic responsibilities, whether that’s opening the grounds for local residents or hosting meetings and events for local charities (like Tap Social, p.20-21).

I also work closely with our Works department as it’s obvious to me that the College must continue to invest in its buildings if we’re to attract students, visitors and commercial clients. Worcester’s beautiful architecture has weathered centuries but, more often than not, needs a helping hand to last for centuries more. With ambitious plans afoot to make our estate more sustainable and more resilient than ever, I’m looking forward to working with colleagues to safeguard our heritage for the future. Thinking about how the built environment could improve the student experience is an area I really enjoy keeping on top of – it’s such a fast-moving subject that doesn’t stand still from one year’s intake to the next.

The beauty of my role as Home Bursar is the diverse nature of where I’m required. No one day is the same, and I come to work expecting new challenges. As long as I and my team do not fail to remember why we are here, we’ll do well. Looking to the future, I hope to spend enough years at Worcester so that I can see my current students return for soirées of one type or another and recall their time at College as a positive and impactful part of their life. I would likewise welcome spending time with any readers of this article when they visit Worcester – just ask for me at the Lodge.

**Listen to H’s interview with Provost David Isaac**  
<https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/harmohinder-bahl>



## Understanding the criminal mind

**Professor John Parrington, Associate Professor in Cellular and Molecular Pharmacology and Rank Foundation-Netherthorpe Memorial Fellow and Tutor in Medicine**

Serial killers provoke revulsion but also some fascination in the minds of the public. Recently I was asked to take part in a mini-series now streaming on Amazon entitled ‘Becoming Ian Brady’, about the ‘Moors Murderer’ who together with Myra Hindley, tortured and killed children in Manchester in the 1960s. I agreed to take part because despite the horror that serial killers generate in me, as a biologist I am also intrigued by what science might be able to reveal about the minds of such individuals.

Serial killers tend to be highly narcissistic, and they lack emotional empathy, coupled with an apparent absence of guilt about their actions. At the same time, many can be superficially charming, allowing them to lure potential victims into their web of destruction. One explanation for this is that serial killers are individuals in whom two minds co-exist – one a rational self, able to successfully navigate the intricacies

of acceptable social behaviour and even charm and seduce, the other a more sinister self, capable of horrifying and destructive acts. Yet there is little evidence that serial killers suffer from dissociative identity disorder (DID), in which an individual has two or more personalities cohabiting in their mind, apparently unaware of each other.

One interesting aspect of serial killers’ minds is the fact that they appear to lack the emotional responses that in other people allows us to identify the pain and suffering of other humans as similar to our own. A possible explanation of this deficit was identified in a recent brain imaging study. This showed that criminal psychopaths had decreased connectivity between the amygdala – a brain region that processes negative stimuli and those that give rise to fearful reactions – and the prefrontal cortex, which interprets responses from the amygdala. When connectivity between these two regions is low, processing of negative stimuli in the amygdala does not translate into any strongly-felt negative emotions. This may explain why criminal psychopaths do not feel guilty about their actions, or sad when their victims suffer.

Yet serial killers also seem to possess an enhanced emotional drive that leads to an urge to hurt and kill other human beings. This apparent contradiction in emotional responses is likely to have biological roots. At the same time, we should not ignore social influences as important factors in the development of such contradictory impulses. It seems possible that serial killers have somehow learned to view their victims as purely an object to be abused, or even an assembly of unconnected parts. This might explain why some killers have sex with dead victims, or even turn their bodies into objects of utility or decoration, but it does not explain why they seem so emotionally driven to hurt and kill their victims. One explanation for the latter phenomenon is that many serial killers are insecure individuals who feel compelled to kill due to a morbid fear of rejection. In many cases, the fear of rejection seems to result from having been abandoned or abused by a parent. Serial killers may come to believe that by destroying the person they desire, they can eliminate the possibility of being abandoned, humiliated, or otherwise hurt, as they were in childhood.

It remains far from clear why a few people react to abuse or trauma at an earlier stage in their lives by later becoming a serial killer. This seems particularly true of Ian Brady, who although he was an ‘illegitimate’ child whose mother had to offer him up for adoption, seems not to have suffered the sort of traumatic event in his childhood, at least not that we know about, that could have sent him on the path to becoming a torturer and murderer of children. Ultimately, without any access to the DNA or brain of the now deceased and cremated Brady, we may always be left merely speculating about how he turned into such a horrendous individual. But at a more general level, hopefully new insights into the psychological or neurological basis of serial killers and their murderous actions may in the future help us to identify potential future such killers and dissuade them from committing such appalling and despicable crimes.



# Turbulence and human security, 1900-1950

Patricia Clavin FBA, Professor of Modern History at Worcester

In 2004, the United Nations published a widely-cited report entitled *Human Security Now*. It underlined the widening of the notion of security since the end of the Cold War in 1990 to embrace economic, social, political and environmental concerns. At the time, the concept of human security was understood to be new, and centred on two key ideas. The first was that security comprised income, food, health, the environment, identity, and political freedom, and these elements were related to one another.

As a result, human security underlines how economic crises precipitate migration flows that, in turn, imperil environments; or how wars and environmental disasters disrupt agricultural production and the distribution of food, resulting in hunger and malnutrition which subsequently spread disease.

The second key idea that human security evoked was what the UN has called a 'bottom-up' approach. It was centred on people, not states, and recognized a wide range of actors, and the prevalence of conflict within, as much as between, countries. The concept made a big impact on research in the fields of international relations, security studies and anthropology. It shaped defence planning in national, regional and global institutions. Aside from UN organizations, for example, the EU, ASEAN and the British Army all adopted human security as their operational frameworks, anticipating that climate change and conflict over scarce resources were likely to be the cause of future conflicts.

While human security grew in popularity and salience, at the same time, new directions in Russian, Chinese and US international relations revealed that old-fashioned, major power conflict was back. In 2022, the war in Ukraine illustrated the return of war as an instrument of state-policy in Europe. These developments reasserted a more traditional 'top-down' definition of security, classically understood to mean the defence of borders, and the control and use of military force.

The history of the first half of the twentieth century reveals that the 'bottom-up' approach of human security, and the 'top-down' effects of power-political rivalries are not dichotomous. Rather, the key to understanding our turbulent times may lie in recognizing and understanding the inter-play between the bottom-up, and the 'top-down' aspects of conflict.

Many historians writing after 1945 believed the 'twenty-year crisis', as E.H. Carr described it, set the world on a pathway to a second world war immediately after the first. Yet the



period also witnessed major advances in international law, and the theories and practices of international relations. The move was represented in a raft of new international and non-governmental organizations, ranging from the League of Nations, the International Chambers of Commerce and the Save the Children Fund, to the International Federation of University Women, the International Boxing and International Wrestling Federations. The 1920s were redolent with calls, made by groups across the ideological spectrum, for international co-ordination, co-operation, and social justice. In 1919, for example, the Pan-African Congress met in Paris at the same time as national representatives convened to discuss the Treaty of Versailles at the Paris Peace Conference. Its leader, W.E.B. Du Bois, demanded the League of Nations bring the maltreatment of African people to global attention.

The League developed important and unexpected capacities in the realms of economics and finance, transportation, health, children's rights, and the environment. All this was unimaginable when it first opened its doors in 1919. And these capabilities were born of crisis. In the 1920s, shocks of hunger and famine, hyperinflation, tariff wars, epidemic disease (influenza, typhus, and tuberculosis), and large-scale population

displacement generated powerful campaigns for what was then called 'positive security' from below. Increasingly circumvented, if not abandoned, by all the major powers, in the 1930s, the League of Nations repurposed itself as a network of knowledge exchange. The work created pathways that led to a raft of new specialist organizations of global governance after the Second World War that grew out of the League's economic, health and social work. The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, UNICEF and UNESCO all had their origins in the League and the history of the turbulent twenties.

Then, as now, turbulent times can push individuals, institutions and states to their limits. As the 1920s show, it simultaneously fosters creative, pluralistic and dynamic advocacy, generating new ideas and new modes of cooperation. Young people and those excluded from the traditional world of western power politics were – and are – especially important in this story. It's a history that encourages us to remain purposeful (if not always optimistic) as we face the prospect of turbulence in our world for some time to come.

The history of the first half of the twentieth century reveals that the 'bottom-up' approach of human security, and the 'top-down' effects of power-political rivalries are not dichotomous.

# Worcester's biodiverse arboretum and gardens

## Simon Bagnall, Head of Gardens and Grounds

When I was asked to write about biodiversity in Worcester's gardens the first question I had to consider was "what is biodiversity?" For me, in the gardens context, it's the biological diversity of our environment. This is indicated by the number of different species of plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms we have – as well as their interactions with each other.

The good levels of biodiversity we enjoy in Worcester's gardens and grounds are down to a number of factors. From our physical geography to our style of garden management, Worcester is an environment in which many species can flourish.

To expand on this a little – firstly, we are blessed with a large 26-acre estate. The College is flanked by the Oxford Canal, a waterway and green corridor full of life and diversity. The canal not only feeds the lake but links Worcester directly with Port Meadow and, at its eastern edge, Burgess Field. This nature reserve lists muntjac and roe deer as well as foxes and badgers among its larger inhabitants.

Our physical link with the wider local environment means that we naturally

share species and can expand our potential biological footprint. In June a doe was spotted munching through the Provost's rose garden and it's thanks to the canal that she found her way here.

Fortunately, we also have plenty of space this side of the canal. Much of our 26 acres is green space and within the garden we have an outstanding collection of trees. Mavis Batey described the Nuffield Lawn as an 'arboretum' in her 1986 book *Oxford Gardens: University's Influence on Garden History*, highlighting the great (planned) diversity in our tree stock which can still be seen today. Oak, plane, hornbeam, chestnut and ash mix with the more exotic from magnolia, tulip and redwood to the evocatively named 'handkerchief tree' and 'tree of heaven'. Having this rich mix of trees, with a variety of blossom and fruit, encourages a wide range of wildlife to visit the College.

When a tree fails, we leave standing dead wood wherever possible. By retaining the trunk, we can preserve both the memory of the tree and create an incredibly valuable habitat for species which live nowhere else. An example of this can be seen near the lake, where we have reduced a failing ash tree and made coronet cuts to mimic natural decay. This specimen now supports a beautiful climbing rose.

The decomposing wood of these retained trees also performs an essential recycling process whereby nutrients can be used by neighbouring trees for growth, helping to maintain a healthy ecosystem. Plants, fungi and animals then make use of these microhabitats for food as well as nesting, shelter and larval development. Where larvae are present this in turn will encourage birds like

From our physical geography to our style of management, Worcester is an environment in which many species can flourish.

woodpeckers to feed and nest, a species we regularly see in the garden.

We have a one out, one in policy for trees. If a tree needs to be removed we always replace it. I'm pleased to say we have a very good number of young trees growing strongly which will take on the baton for future generations to enjoy.

We must be very grateful to previous generations, not only for planting the magnificent trees we enjoy today, but for being very considerate of the garden when planning new buildings. Building plots have been carefully considered over the years and, where possible, been located on the edge of the site or on previous building sites. Too often across the city we see gardens carved up to allow for new buildings. I always feel a little sad when I visit St Hugh's College, where the garden has been split in two by new buildings and the flow of the garden is lost. Thankfully the natural flow of our gardens at Worcester still exists.

It feels right at this point to also be thankful for the bravery and ingenuity of those responsible for the lake. This is a fantastic feature for biodiversity and an additional habitat which accommodates aquatic wildlife and attracts numerous visiting birds including kingfishers, goosanders and even the exotic-looking Mandarin duck.

I believe the single most important thing we have done to encourage increased biodiversity in the gardens is to enlarge our areas of meadow grass. I'm proud to say we were doing 'No Mow May' long before 'No Mow May' was a thing! Simply by allowing the lawns to grow as nature intended we have created over 6,087m<sup>2</sup> of meadow and long grass areas in College – that's over one and half acres.

The plant diversity in these areas encourages insects, butterflies, bees and arthropods (spiders and millipedes) to visit. It also provides shelter for small mammals and amphibians. Our management of long grass areas is less intensive than what you see on the main quad, with no pesticides used and therefore less fossil fuels consumed. Most recently, we created a new meadow area in the Provost's Garden where we planted over

1,200 wildflowers including; *Primula veris* (cowslip), *Campanula*

*rotundifolia* (harebell), *Leucanthemum vulgare* (oxeye daisy), *Lychnis flos-cuculi* (ragged robin), *Geranium pratense* (meadow cranesbill), *Knautia arvensis* (field scabious), *Ranunculus acris* (meadow buttercup), and *Succisa pratensis* (devil's bit scabious). This space has developed well and the diversity of the planting has naturally increased. We were thrilled to find common spotted orchids in the Orchard and Provost's Garden and delighted to see bee orchids for the first time last summer. We hope they will persist.

Among other successful initiatives has been the introduction of over 70 bird boxes, specially designed for species including tree creepers, swifts, owls and tits. Most of these nest boxes have been made by my indefatigable colleague Allison Leslie who works in the gardens team. We've also made a special effort to not be as tidy as perhaps we were trained to be, leaving leaves to rot naturally and fallen timber to sit in place and decay. We've allowed areas which are more tucked away to do their own thing, letting weeds and wildflowers takeover.

I do feel that there is more to do and more to learn but we're always willing to try different approaches. Through biological control, among other methods, we will strive to further reduce the use of synthetic chemicals on plants and lawn areas; the development of better plant health boosted by organic practices will in turn reduce the need for chemical intervention. We're also planning to grow more native plants which require less intervention and even less water to maintain and grow. Moreover, by growing native plants we will also be helping to provide the kind of food and shelter our resident birds and insects most need.

While there's always more to do, I still believe we are in a good position at Worcester. Of course, we must be careful to preserve the biodiversity which we already enjoy and we need to be conscious of the precious balance in place when planning new buildings. Above all, we must not rest on our laurels but continue to encourage and protect biodiversity where possible.

And, maybe, we should start calling the Nuffield Lawn The Arboretum. I like that!



*Mandarin duck on the Lake*  
*Ophrys apifera* (bee orchid)



# A tale of two sculptures

Nathan Stazicker, Communications Manager

**In the early post-war period, art collections were rather in vogue among Oxford's JCRs and Worcester was no exception.**

In fact, Worcester students established Oxford's second JCR picture fund in 1947 shortly after the first had been started by Pembroke College earlier the same year. JCR members could contribute £1 a year (if they wished) with the object to purchase works by contemporary British artists. This was not only a patriotic gesture in the aftermath of war but a practical one; the students hoped up-and-coming artists' work would prove more affordable than that of old masters.

Arguably the most striking artwork purchased by the nascent picture fund was not a picture at all: it was a sculpture. At just 21cm tall, Henry Moore's bronze *Maquette for Mother and Child* (1952) depicts a highly abstracted baby leering towards its mother's breast for milk. Despite its small size, the sculpture encapsulates the abstract modernist aesthetic which marked Moore's career and saw him become a global star within his own lifetime.

Like many sculptors, Moore used small-scale maquettes to develop ideas which came to fruition in his monumental bronze works. This process would often start with drawing before graduating to table-top maquettes and finally full-scale plaster models used to cast the finished bronzes.

Sometimes Moore also made casts of the smaller maquettes, transforming a transitional working model into a finished work in its own right. It is one of these pieces which is in the Worcester collection.\*

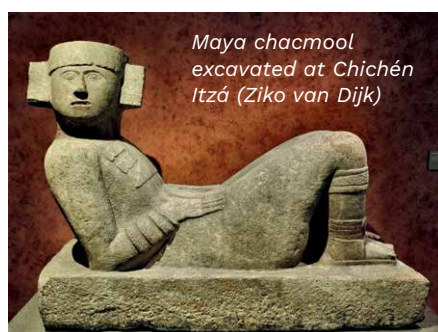
Taking a shine to the JCR members who visited him in 1952, Moore generously sold *Maquette for Mother and Child* to the (poor) picture fund at a heavy discount. The interaction clearly had an impact on the artist as well as the students, for he would later suggest installing one of his full-size sculptures in the College grounds. Moore was a keen advocate for the civic duty of artists and undertook many public commissions during his career – one of the reasons why his work can today be seen everywhere from the United Nations HQ in Manhattan to the rolling hills of his native Yorkshire. The Worcester installation was a plan which was never realised, despite the perfect pastoral setting of the College's gardens, and there remains no permanent installation of Moore's work in Oxford.

Fast forward seven decades and the pieces have finally fallen into place. Thanks to the support of the Barrie and Deedee Wigmore Foundation, Henry Moore's *Reclining Figure* (1982) was installed in the College grounds in March this year and will remain in place until 2025. Situated in the open space between the Sainsbury Building and the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre, with the trees and sports field behind and the lake below, *Reclining Figure* looks as though she's always been there. Worcester is now – unbelievably – the only place in Oxford to see a Henry Moore in the 'wild' and joins

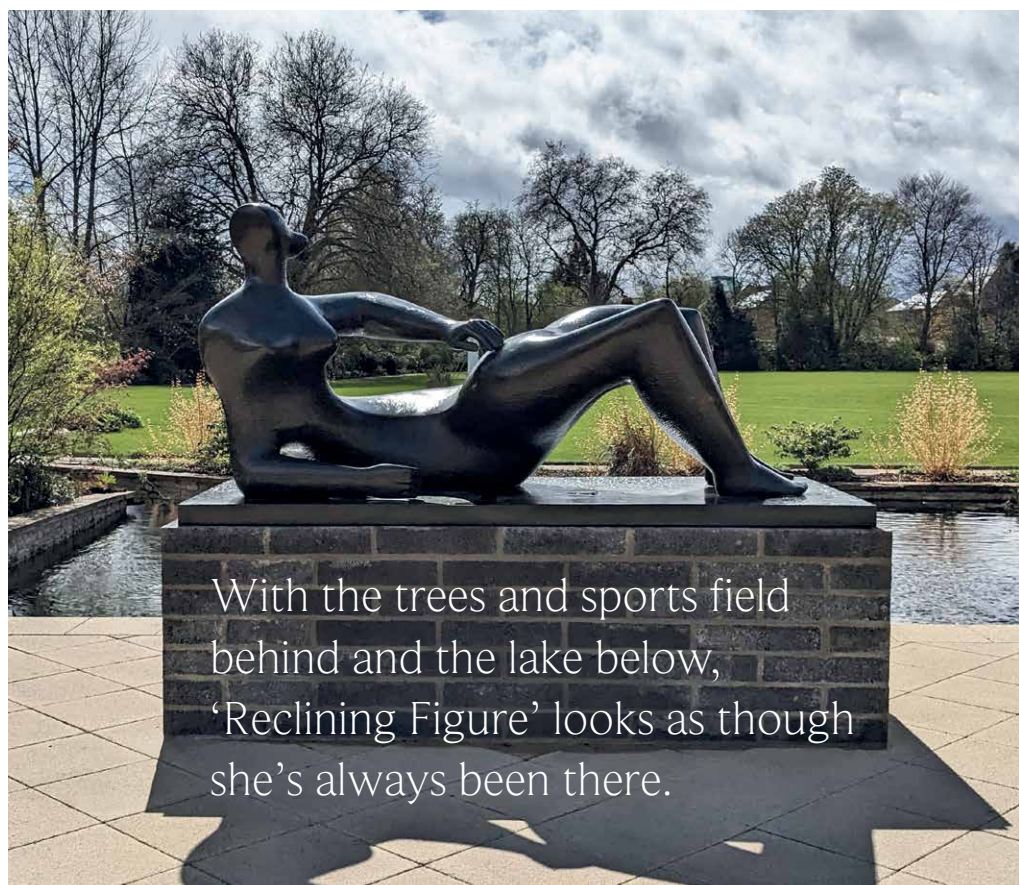




Henry Moore,  
*'Maquette for  
Mother and  
Child'* (1952)



Maya chacmool  
excavated at Chichén  
Itzá (Ziko van Dijk)



With the trees and sports field behind and the lake below, 'Reclining Figure' looks as though she's always been there.

Henry Moore, *'Reclining Figure'* (1982)

St Catherine's which has a Barbara Hepworth and Mansfield and Exeter Colleges which have Antony Gormley installations.

Moore had an extraordinarily long and successful career, making *Reclining Figure* when he was 84. The sculpture is a culmination of the artist's lifelong interest in the abstraction of the human form, a concern which can be evidenced in his work as far back as the 1920s. While the reclining nude is a mainstay of the Western art historical tradition, it was pre-Columbian sculpture from Mesoamerica which particularly captivated Moore. His modernist re-interpretation of the classic pose owes a great deal to the spatial and formal elements of Maya chacmool: stone figures with their legs drawn up from the ground and their heads turned ninety degrees.

Scholars remain unclear about the original purpose of chacmool. While some think they served as sacrificial altars, others argue that their carved iconography references water and rain gods and that they therefore served as boundary markers between the natural and supernatural worlds. If we run with the latter interpretation, the siting of *Reclining Figure* beside the lake at the frontier of Worcester's gardens becomes particularly apt.

Despite waiting more than seventy years for a second Moore sculpture to come to Worcester, we still have just one on the premises. No sooner had *Reclining Figure* been installed under the careful gaze of the Henry Moore Foundation than

*Maquette for Mother and Child* was boxed up and sent away. The striking maquette – which represents the mother and child relationship in an almost aggressive manner with no sentimentality – is currently on loan to the Wellcome Collection in London. The exhibition is called *Milk* and (you guessed it) explores the place of milk in politics, society and culture. The curators argue that far from being a benign feature of a balanced diet, milk is a highly politicised liquid which has been used to exert power as well as provide care. Once the exhibition closes in September, we will finally have two sculptures by Moore at Worcester, as the artist intended.

In the short time that *Reclining Figure* is in College, we're keen to make the most of it. Workshops for local primary schools which supplement their art and design curriculum are in the works and Old Members are of course encouraged to come back to visit our new resident.

*Henry Moore's 'Reclining Figure' (1982) is on loan from the Henry Moore Foundation until 2025 courtesy of the Barrie and Deedee Wigmore Foundation.*

*Henry Moore's 'Maquette for Mother and Child' (1952) is on loan to the exhibition 'Milk' at Wellcome Collection until 10 September 2023.*

*\* When the JCR picture fund was wound up in the 1990s, responsibility for the care of the collection passed to the College's Curator of Pictures.*

# William Shakespeare and the Worcester College Buskins

**Emma Goodrum, College Archivist**

**2023 marks the 400th anniversary of the publication of the First Folio of works by William Shakespeare, a volume of some 950 pages containing 36 plays.**

The First Folio is the only source for eighteen of Shakespeare’s plays, and without it the text of *The Tempest*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *Coriolanus*, *Cymbeline* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (among others) might have been lost. All six of these plays have been produced by the Buskins in their 89 years of summer productions.

The College Library does not hold a First Folio but has copies of the Second (1632), Third (1663/1664) – which is actually rarer than the First Folio – and Fourth Folios (1685); further information about these is available on the Treasures of Worcester College blog at <https://worchestercollegelibrary.wordpress.com/2016/04/23/shakespeare-and-a-trio-of-folios/>. However, to honour the 400th anniversary of the First Folio we reproduce here some of the fabulous posters and programmes for Buskins summer productions that would have been impossible without it.

Over the 121-year history of the club, the Buskins have performed 34 Shakespearean productions, covering 15 different plays of the 36 available from the First Folio. The first was *The Tempest* in 1934, when the Lake was used to great effect, as the entire company (except Ariel and Caliban) departed on a barge into the dusk at the end of the play. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the lakeside setting, *The Tempest* has featured most often (six times), followed by *Much Ado About Nothing* (five times), *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It* (four times each) and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (three times). *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* have appeared twice each, and *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Henry V*, *Coriolanus* and *Cymbeline* only once. Comedies have dominated and this leaves many of the best-known plays still available to the

Buskins of the future to strike new ground.

As next year will be the 90th anniversary of the first Buskins summer Shakespeare in the gardens, we will be celebrating this in Trinity Term 2024 with an in-person and online exhibition. We have some memorabilia in the archival collections but there are gaps, particularly for the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. I would be very grateful for donations or the loan of items such as posters and programmes, photographs, tickets, advertising material and administrative records, from any Buskins production of the last 121 years.

**Contact Emma on [archives@worc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:archives@worc.ox.ac.uk)**

*Below: programmes from Buskins’ performances – left to right: The Tempest 1934, The Merchant of Venice 1935, The Merry Wives 1936, Romeo and Juliet 1946, The Two Gentlemen of Verona 1960, Love’s Labours Lost 1964, As You Like It 1985, The Merchant of Venice 2013, Cymbeline 2022*



# Memories of Buskins in the 90s



Ben



Tom

**Ben Mole (1990, PPE) and Tom Price (1990, Law)**

**Film and TV writer and producer Ben and his friend Tom, who works in investment banking, reminisce about their time as President and Treasurer of the Buskins Society in the 90s.**

**Ben:** The fact that Buskins is one of the oldest and best-established drama societies in Oxford, and that there was a tradition of a grand summer show, would not have been my sole reason for applying to Worcester, but it certainly tipped the balance.

**Tom:** I had no clue about the history of Buskins. I turned up because it was the best college for Law. Olivia McKendrick (1989, Law) asked me to help on the 1990 summer show of *Much Ado About Nothing*. The show was a great success, so when we and Nick Schoenfeld (1990, Mathematics and Computation) took over Buskins from Olivia and her colleagues, we inherited a healthy balance sheet.

**Ben:** The college drama societies worked then as they do now. They put on summer college shows but also the big ones, like Buskins, use their finance and skills to back plays across all the colleges.

**Tom:** So, our first decision was to decide what we wanted to back. We decided to back a mixture – some more artistic or experimental in nature, with less chance of a return; some more commercial. Our intent was to keep the bank balance level through the year and, with our own summer show, eventually grow it.

**Ben:** One of us built a small financial model in a spreadsheet (I think that was Tom) to help assess how much the plays would cost to run and what they could make.

**Tom:** It was me. We ran the money tightly though. Nick was brilliant at this and I also ended up as Treasurer of Oxford University Dramatic Society (OUDS) without much competition. I quickly saw why there was no competition – OUDS was in 'special measures' having gone bust while claiming back VAT on expenses but forgetting to pay VAT on ticket sales.

**Ben:** My thoughts quickly turned to what we might produce when it was 'our turn' to do a summer show.

**Tom:** We did the very proper thing of letting you step down from the committee to pitch *King Arthur*, for which you had written the entire script, all based on the famous myths.

**Ben:** Long before our time, a production of *The Tempest* had become legendary in the lore of Oxford drama. In 1949, the English literary scholar Neville Coghill staged a production in which Ariel ran across the surface of the lake by skipping

across submerged duckboards. Neville went on to produce a successful modern English translation of Chaucer but, to us, he was the guy who made Ariel walk on water. Just as Neville had forty years earlier, we submerged the duckboards, our 'Coghills'. Ours ran from the shore to the middle of the lake but, building on the original idea, we went one step further. We put a Lady in the Lake.

**Tom:** To lift the sword from the lake we recruited two students who were also scuba divers. They had to feel their way around the lake in the dark under the water. And then I had to get permission from the College. Everyone was very worried that we would pierce the bottom of the lake with our scaffolding and duckboards and all the water would disappear into the canal, leaving the ducks and swans without anywhere to swim. I told them that all would be fine, simply by saying I'd already been in (not letting on precisely why) and the mud was so thick there was no way a plank would reach a hard bottom.

**Ben:** So, we built it, and then in the interval, we posted some of Arthur's more junior knights to prevent excited audience members exploring.

**Tom:** I had my first run-in with the city's Health and Safety Inspector. He came to inspect the set-up and was very concerned that there were no emergency exit lights. He was very unamused when I suggested that because we were in the middle of a garden people could run in any direction if there was a fire, so I gave in and asked if he would be happy for us to hang a green emergency exit light in a tree.

**Ben:** Students who helped put together the show went on to work on *University Challenge*, *Harry Potter*, *Band of Brothers*, *Doctor Who*, *Big Brother*, *Frankenstein*, and hundreds of award-winning, and profit-making comedies, dramas and documentaries for film and television. We like to think it all started round the lake at Worcester.

**Tom:** I think it would be great to create a Buskins network which will not only allow us all to have fun remembering what we did but will help the next generation of Buskins students find work and create great shows in the future, as it's a difficult business to navigate!

*If you were involved with Buskins please get in touch by emailing [development@worc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development@worc.ox.ac.uk)*

Why did I do this? I am not sure why other than a compunction to 'do something'.



# Evacuations in Ukraine

## Brooks Newmark (1980, International Relations)

Brooks is currently working on his DPhil on Education Reform in Rwanda. He was a Member of Parliament and Minister for Civil Society in the UK Government before returning to Oxford in 2015. Prior to entering politics Brooks was a Senior Partner at Apollo Management LP, a leading Private Equity Firm.

On 24th February last year, I had just finished my field research for my DPhil in Education – I was in Rwanda at the time – when I saw a post on Instagram by a Latvian friend of mine on the Polish border with Ukraine who was beginning to evacuate civilians away from the war which had just started. I asked if I could help for a few days, flew to Poland, and ended up in Ukraine for most of the next year. Fifteen months on, I have now evacuated over 32,000 women and children away from the war zones in the east and the south of the country.

Why did I do this? I am not sure why other than a compunction to 'do something'. How did I do this? By drawing on my background in business and politics, being incredibly organized and methodical, working with two regional bus companies in Ukraine who knew the roads and most

importantly working closely with various local government authorities in Ukraine. I began in Kyiv and Lviv early in the war, evacuating women and children to the Polish border. I then moved south to Vinnytsia and Zaporizhzhia to help people escape Mariupol, when it was under siege by the Russians. Eventually, I ended up in Kharkiv where I spent most of the rest of the year. From the Kharkiv region, which borders Russia and was partially occupied, I evacuated over 11,000 women and children to the west side of the country. By year-end, I had 10 hubs around Ukraine from which I was either moving people to or from. Currently, I have a partnership agreement with the Ministry of Health evacuating wounded civilians and soldiers from front-line hospitals to civilian hospitals in Ukraine and the EU. Additionally, I am now doing humanitarian aid drops of clothing, medicine, and food to front-line de-occupied villages.

I have been shelled, moved anti-tank mines, witnessed horrendous war crimes almost daily, seen schools and houses flattened and seen the mass grave in Bucha. I have also seen the resilience and fighting spirit of the Ukrainian people. We must do all we can to support the people of Ukraine who are fighting for their freedom and our freedom against a brutal Russian regime set on destroying Ukraine, its people, its heritage, and its very existence. Slava Ukraini!





# Tapping into prisoners' potential

**With Worcester College connections, Tap Social Movement helps turn lives around with craft beer and community spirit.**

The prison statistics on the side of Tap Social Movement's craft beer cans tell a sobering story.

For example, cans of Time Better Spent, the Oxford craft brewery's best-selling IPA, state that a third of prisoners spend at least 22 hours a day locked in their cell; another shares that at £42,000 per year a prison place costs taxpayers about 10 times more than a community sentence of the same length; still another notes that half of all employers wouldn't hire someone with a criminal record.

Beer can labels – all of which feature colourful artwork created by a prisoner at HMP Huntercombe – are just one way this social enterprise and hospitality organisation raises awareness of its mission to enact positive reform in the UK prison system. Started in 2016 by a group of friends with backgrounds in criminal justice, Tap Social Movement has fast become one of Oxfordshire's most recognised and respected small, independent businesses.

Since beginning as a modest 1,000-litre brewery in a Botley Road industrial estate, Tap Social has expanded to six venues in Oxfordshire, including its pub The White House in central Oxford and a bigger and better production brewery in Kidlington that has 22,000 litres of fermentation space – and room for more.

Under the direction of Head Brewer Jason Bolger and Worcester College alumnus and Director Matt Elliott (2005,



*Directors (front row, left to right) Tess Taylor, Co-Founder and Director; Matt Elliott (2005), Director; Paul Humpherson (2005), Co-Founder and Director; Amy Taylor, Co-Founder and Director*

Economics and Management), Tap Social's brewery has earned several awards over the past few years, including back-to-back medals at the highly competitive annual Society of Independent Brewers competition. It has collaborated with some of the biggest names in modern UK craft beer, including Cloudwater Brew Co and Wild Card Brewery, and distributes to a growing number of pubs, beer bars, and restaurants in Oxfordshire and across South East England.

Paul Humpherson (2005, Law), another Worcester College alumnus and Tap Social Director, says that the company's success has had a direct impact on those at the heart of everything for which Tap Social stands.

"I'm most proud of the impact we've been able to have on some of the lives of the members of our team who have joined us whilst still serving prison sentences, many of whom have chosen to stay on with Tap Social after their release," he says. "We know that having stable, dignified employment can have a huge effect on someone's chances of turning their life around and avoiding being drawn back into the cycle of reoffending, not to mention the positive effects on confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to build financial self-sufficiency... and through this, perhaps get a stable home, too."

It hasn't all been smooth sailing, however.

“We’ve certainly had our share of challenges along the way, not least navigating through the very tricky territory of Covid-19 and the ongoing cost of living crisis, which continue to have a huge impact on hospitality organisations and the producers which rely on them,” says Elliott. “In the early part of the first lockdowns we made a big push into online sales, and had a surprising amount of success selling gourmet doughnuts from a converted horsebox. That initiative has somehow now spread its wings into a fully-fledged bakery division!”

That bakery division is Proof Social Bakehouse, which debuted in August 2022 in Tap Social’s former Kennington production brewery. Located in an industrial estate just off Sandford Lock on the River Thames, Proof is a wholesale bakery and community café that was a finalist in the Ox in a Box Food Awards 2023’s ‘Best Café’ competition (Tap Social won the ‘Best Community Food Award’ category.) It’s a bright, sprawling space offering visitors a full view of Head Baker Paul Dickinson and his crew at work in the bakery kitchen.

Though Proof is still a month shy of its one-year anniversary it’s not Tap Social’s latest venture. That distinction goes to The Market Tap, a café, bar, and bottle shop occupying a prime spot in the central courtyard of Oxford’s historic Covered Market. In development for more than three years, The Market Tap finally launched this May with eight draught taps, Tap Social’s full canned beer range, curated wines and cocktails, Proof pastries, barista-made coffee, and toasties.

“We’re so grateful for the opportunity to share our story with more people in our community, and thrilled to join a fantastic group of traders at this iconic Oxford institution,” says Amy Taylor, another of Tap Social’s Directors. Tess Taylor, Amy’s sister, is Tap Social’s fourth Director.

More than anything, Tap Social’s ongoing growth spurt has enabled the company to dedicate more and more resources to its social mission and, importantly, to create jobs for people who face numerous obstacles to getting their lives turned around. As Tap Social approaches its seventh anniversary in November, to date it has created more than 70,000 hours of paid employment for prisoners and prison leavers. Roughly one-third of its employees across the company have come into contact with the UK’s criminal justice system.



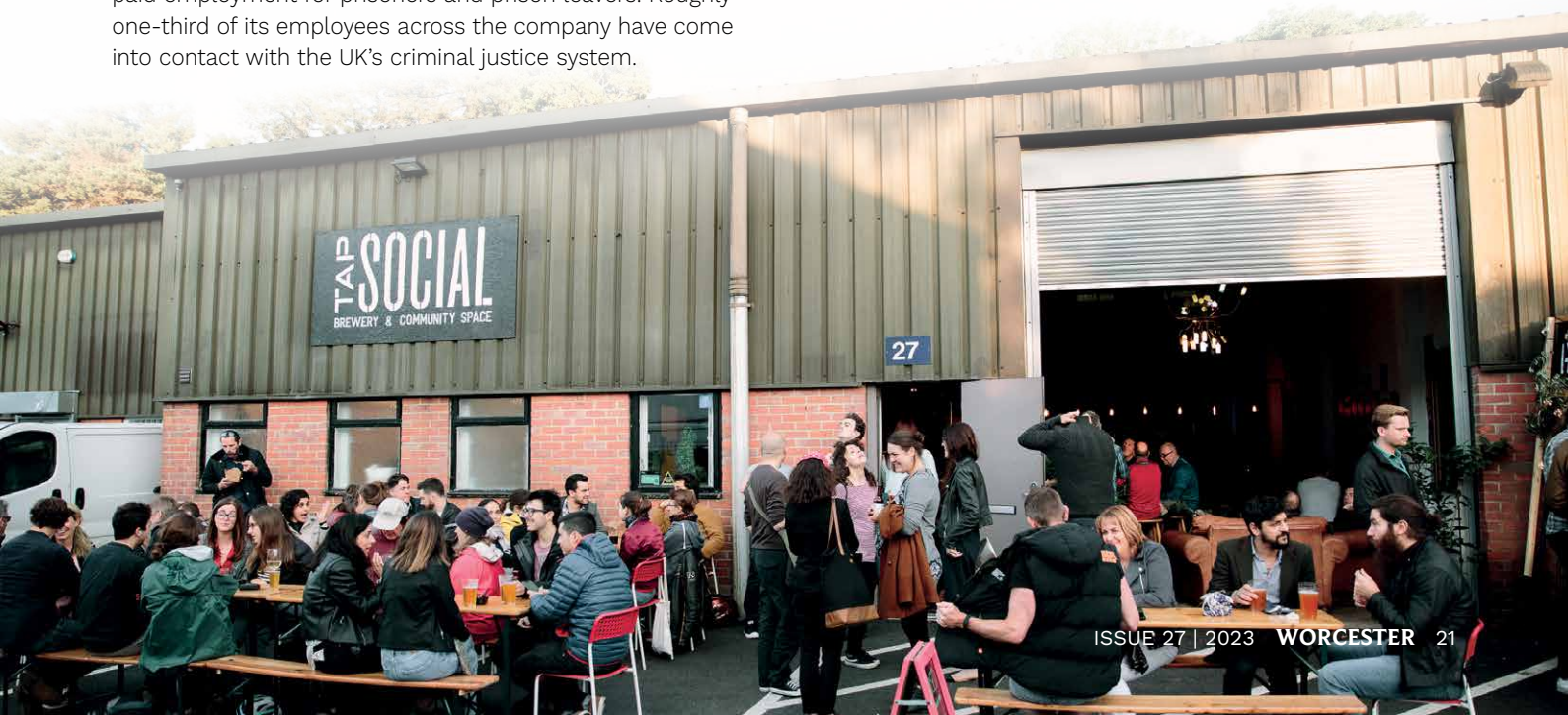
Head Brewer Jason Bolger (on right) and colleague at work

As Humpherson noted, studies show that meaningful employment has a direct correlation to reduced reoffending rates. “Tragically, less than 20% of prison leavers find themselves in a job a year after their release. For the prison leavers who have spent time at Tap Social, however, that number is 93% still in employment, and as a result the reoffending rates for people who have been through our programmes stands at 7%, compared to a national average of more than 50%,” says Humpherson. “To give a human face to these stats, both our current Head Chef and our current shift supervisor at our biggest and busiest venue in central Oxford joined us whilst serving prison sentences with no previous hospitality experience. Both now occupy positions of significant management responsibility, and have become indispensable, well-loved, and highly respected members of the team.”

Well-made craft beer, baked goods, and pub grub are always an easy sell. Tap Social does all of this, with a dedicated social mission behind it.

Worcester’s Cellar Bar stocks the Tap Social beers, so why not try them out at your next Gaudy?

Tap Social Movement manages five venues across Oxfordshire and its beers are available for nationwide home delivery direct from its brewery. **Visit [tapsocialmovement.com](https://tapsocialmovement.com) to learn more.**



# David Wood OBE

(1963, English) Playwright, Director,  
Actor, Magician

## **What did you want to do when you left Worcester College?**

I knew from a very young age that I wanted to work in the theatre as an actor/entertainer, and my ambition never changed.

## **What career did you move into and why?**

I became an actor, director, composer, playwright and magician, and was lucky enough to work in theatre, film, television, radio and books.

## **What highlights would you like to share?**

As an actor, on film I co-starred with Malcolm McDowell in Lindsay's Anderson's *If...* On television, I co-starred with Shelley Winters in *The Vamp*, and on stage I played opposite Michael Redgrave in *A Voyage Round My Father*. I became 'the national children's dramatist' (*The Times*). My adaptation of *Goodnight Mister Tom* won an Olivier Award. In 2004, I received an OBE for services to literature and drama.

## **Have you had any challenges that you would like to share?**

My children's theatre work has always been a challenge, but a very rewarding one when things go well. I adapted HM The King's *The Old Man of Lochnagar*, and wrote *The Queen's Handbag*, a play featuring all the iconic British children's book characters, to celebrate the Queen's 80th birthday. Both these brushes with royalty were challenging, but, to my relief, successful.

## **What do you think you gained from studying at Worcester College?**

I am ever grateful to my tutor, Christopher Ricks, for allowing me to do so much theatre. In my three years at Oxford, I acted in the West End three times, toured Europe in

Shakespeare, performed in plays and revues at the Edinburgh Festival, and played Richard Burton's servant in *Dr Faustus*, when he and Elizabeth Taylor came to perform with OUDS. I may not have been an academic success for Worcester College (I was proud to get a Third!), but my Oxford experience convinced me that my theatrical ambitions were achievable, and gave me a splendid start.

## **What keeps you motivated?**

I still enjoy performing, though writing and directing plays for children has been my main activity for many years. Watching an audience of children reacting with excitement to one of my plays still gives me a big buzz. Children are the most difficult audience, but the best audience if we get it right.

## **Next projects?**

In 2008, I adapted and directed the stage version of Judith Kerr's classic picture book *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*. Fifteen years later, the show is still touring. It has played eight West End seasons and been nominated for an Olivier Award. I will be directing the play again this year and hopefully next. My adaptation of Floella Benjamin's *Coming to England*, first seen at Birmingham Rep last year, will hopefully tour in 2024. My third memoir is about to be published. *Frank Exchanges* is a compilation of letters between my mentor and me spanning fifty years.

## **Have you any advice for our new graduates?**

Grab the opportunities that being at Worcester College offers you and, if you're lucky enough to know what you want to achieve, just go for it!

[www.davidwood.org.uk](http://www.davidwood.org.uk)



I knew from a very young age that I wanted to work in the theatre as an actor/entertainer, and my ambition never changed.

# Highlights of the year at Worcester

## October

We welcomed our new freshers to Worcester and reconnected with alumni at the House of Lords, thanks to our generous host Lord Faulkner. In College, the famed countertenor Iestyn Davies sang to a rapturous audience as part of the Oxford Lieder Festival and we were officially certified as an Oxford Living Wage employer.

## November

It was wonderful to hear of the election of Honorary Fellow Dr Helen-Ann Hartley (1998, Theology) as Bishop of Newcastle, becoming the Church of England's youngest diocesan bishop and taking up the position once occupied by former College Chaplain Alec Graham. In our own Chapel, we enjoyed a unique performance from Jennifer Walshe, Professor of Composition, which featured meteorites from the University's Museum of Natural History.



## December

Continuing the musical theme, it was an honour to welcome the Lucchini Quintet from La Scala Milan to perform on reproduction historical instruments masterminded by Dr Emanuela Vai. We also celebrated the complete refurbishment of the Nuffield Building by renaming it the Asa Briggs Building in the presence of the former Provost's family.

## January

The new year began with a new garden, as we unveiled the refreshed Fellows' Garden following the completion of the Terrace Building refurbishment. We marked Holocaust Memorial Day in College with an insightful event which brought together the descendants of Holocaust survivors and an SS Officer, co-organised by former MCR President Carys Howell.



## February

It was a pleasure to hear from two journalists – Rob Penn on his rewilding project in the Black Mountains and the BBC's Evan Davis – while cellist Vladimir Waltham performed Bach to a sold-out auditorium in the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre. Many College members came out to watch our inaugural pancake race around the quad on Shrove Tuesday and, in further sporting success, the Boat Club rowed to victory as the most successful club on the river during Torpids.



**FTWeekend**  
**OXFORD**  
**LITERARY**  
**FESTIVAL**

## April

The Oxford Literary Festival returned to Worcester and we hosted the BBC World Service for a recording of 'The Arts Hour'. Another important guest was the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Irene Tracey, who joined us for evensong and dinner – cooked by Oxford Junior Chef of the Year finalist Max Fijak. Meanwhile, the Provost enjoyed meeting alumni in New York, Boston and San Francisco.

## March

Alumni from 2011, 2012 and 2013 returned to College for their first Gaudy, while many more Old Members supported us in this year's very successful Telethon. DPhil student Laurel Kaye did us proud in the Boat Race and the MCR football team lifted the inter-collegiate cup. In College we marked International Women's Day with a celebratory photograph of students, fellows and staff.



## May

The month started with the opening of Exhibition 002 organised by Worcester students and featuring artists from the across the University and a local school. We also enjoyed this year's Terra Lectures by Prof. Christopher Reed on the influence of Japanese art on American identity. Dr Lisa Wedding picked up a prestigious award from the Royal Geographical Society and the women's rugby team added another piece of silverware to the trophy cabinet. Meanwhile Lady Phyll, co-founder of UK Black Pride, met with students from Worcester and beyond.



© Mazz Image

## June

President of the Women's Equality Party, Catherine Mayer, shared her insights in a conversation with the Provost. With the gardens at their finest, we enjoyed hosting the annual Donors' Garden Party, the first Commemoration Ball in six years and a dinner for Rhodes Scholars alumni.



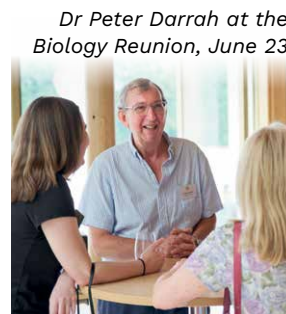
© CoCo



The City of Oxford Silver Band at the Donors' Garden Party, June 23



Gaudy (1980-82)



Dr Peter Darrah at the Biology Reunion, June 23



Donors' Dinner, April 23

# Old Member events

It has been lovely to welcome so many Old Members and supporters back to College this year. Events have included Gaudies, anniversary lunches and sports and subject dinners, as well as gatherings to celebrate the generosity of donors at Worcester.



Donors' Dinner, April 23



Law Society Dinner, March 23



Gaudy (2011-13)



Worcester Commemoration Ball, June 23

*Cottam*



Young Alumni Group leader, Andy Mowll (centre) and friends at the Gaudy (2011-13)

# Worcester Old Member events 2023-24

Please see below for advanced notice of Old Member events for the year ahead. When the bookings are live you will be emailed with an invitation. All open events will appear on [www.worc.ox.ac.uk/alumni/events](http://www.worc.ox.ac.uk/alumni/events) or you can contact the Old Members Events Team on [omevents@worc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:omevents@worc.ox.ac.uk) or +44 (0)1865 278374.

Further events will be added during the year when dates are confirmed.

## November 2023

- 29 Carol Service**  
In the Chapel and Cloisters, 4–5:30pm. Ticketed event, children (under 18) free. Open to all.

## December 2023

- 9 Young Alumni Group Christmas Reunion, London**  
For those who graduated within the last 10 years.

## February 2024

- 3 Tsk Fok Engineering Dinner**  
With a pre-dinner talk and drinks in the the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre, 6pm. By invitation only.

- 10 Winter Garden Tour**  
Linbury Building, 10:30am–2pm. Talk, refreshments, tour and lunch. Open to all.

## March 2024

- 9 Law Society Dinner**  
Open to all who read, or are practising Law. By invitation only.

- 16 Gaudy (1986, 1987, 1988)**  
Open to those who matriculated in the years specified. Includes: Evensong, pre-dinner drinks, dinner in the Hall and a Sunday garden tour. By invitation only.

## May 2024

- 11 Gardens Day**  
11am–2pm. Tours of the Gardens and Grounds by Head Gardener and lunch in Hall. Open to all.

- 18 History Reunion**  
11am–2:30pm. Hosted by Lightbody Fellow and Tutor in History Dr Conrad Leyser and Old Member Roger Ashley. Includes talks and lunch. By invitation only.

- 25 Saturday of Eights Week: Boat Club Dinner**  
Open to all current and former members of the Boat Club. By invitation only.

## June 2024

- 8 Donors' Garden Party**  
2–5:30pm, in the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre. By invitation only.

### Buskins

Performances and exhibition. Dates to be confirmed.

## September 2024

### 20–22 University of Oxford Alumni weekend

- 20 Golden and Diamond (50th and 60th) Reunion Lunches**  
11:30am–2pm. Open to Old Members who matriculated in 1964 and 1974. Hosted by the Provost. By invitation only.

- 21 Gaudy (1989, 1990, 1991)**  
Open to those who matriculated in the years specified. Includes: Evensong, pre-dinner drinks, dinner in the Hall and a Sunday garden tour. By invitation only.

