



WORCESTER

2024 Issue 28



Highlights of the
Worcester year

Surprises in the
special collections

Buskins memories
past and present

Anne-Marie Slaughter,
CEO of New America

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EDITORS Mollie Ashley, Alumni Relations Manager and Nathan Stazicker, Communications Manager

Development Office
+44 (0)1865 278374
development@worc.ox.ac.uk

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It may seem odd to talk about new beginnings as we come to the end of another academic year but as I hope you will see from this publication, we are currently celebrating the introduction of a raft of new ideas and innovations at Worcester.



Many of these are detailed in this edition of the *Magazine*, which has a brand-new look and updated features; I hope you approve. It is inspired by our revamped website (which went live in January) and showcases a range of exciting and important activities and events at Worcester. If you haven't looked at our website, please follow the links for further information about the matters covered in the text.

You will, I hope, see that we have had a busy year implementing many new initiatives in College – from the first Worcester Energy Day (p. 27) and biodiversity survey (p. 24) to our innovative choral outreach programme (p. 4), the first of its kind in either Oxford or Cambridge. We have also welcomed new fellows to boost our teaching and research (p. 6), benefitted from thriving JCR and MCR activities (p. 8) and celebrated a major birthday for Buskins (p. 28).

Foremost among all these innovations is the unprecedented donation of £30 million we received from Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones in September 2023. Thanks to Sir Lindsay's generosity, future generations will benefit from purpose-built graduate accommodation and a best-in-class library fit for the learning needs of tomorrow's students. We will be sharing regular updates about the progress of this major project in the *Magazine*, the first of which can be found on page 13. While many of the details are still to be decided, one thing I'm certain of is the transformational power of these new buildings to enhance the life of the College and its students.

After three years as Provost, I am delighted with the progress Worcester has made on so many fronts. We have always been a thriving community but as I hope this edition of the *Magazine* demonstrates, we don't stand still. We are a place where everyone is welcome, where we continue to be inspired by our past, and where we prepare our students not just to address the challenges of the twenty-first century – but to embrace them.

David Isaac CBE
Provost

LETTER FROM THE PROVOST

STRIKING A NEW CHORD IN CHORAL OUTREACH

In late June, 35 sixth-formers came to Worcester for a unique residential designed to support the next generation of singers. Devised by Caius Lee, Director of College Music, the Oxford Choral Experience aimed to introduce enthusiastic singers from under-represented backgrounds to the choral opportunities Worcester and Oxford have to offer.

More than half of the participants came from the most socio-economically deprived areas of the UK and those which see the fewest young people progressing into higher education. Worcester has long championed equitable access to education and this programme – the first of its kind in Oxford or Cambridge – seeks to address the diminishing opportunities available to study music in state schools. Recent surveys by the Independent Society of Musicians reported that the mean yearly music budget in maintained schools was less than a fifth of that of independent schools, while more than half of state schools failed to meet

the minimum provision of the National Curriculum for music education.

Across three days, the students benefited from individual singing lessons, learned about the Oxford application process, participated in workshops led by the internationally-renowned composers and conductors Bob Chilcott and Paul McCreesh, and sang a service of evensong in the Chapel. Even if the participants don't become members of the Worcester College Choir, the programme was designed to prepare them for auditions and student life at any university where choral singing flourishes. Another 50 students who missed out on a place benefitted from a shorter day event earlier in term where they sang with the Choir and took part in a personal statement workshop. With over 80 applications and limited spaces, the Oxford Choral Experience is already more competitive than the BA in Music – we hope that it can expand and develop in future years to help bring the beauty of choral music to more students than ever. ♥



A NEW STUDENT SOCIETY FOR VISUAL ARTS

This exciting new student society for visual arts follows in the footsteps of the JCR Art Fund, which was established in 1947 and was active until the late 1990s. Visual Arts Worcester (VAW) was established in Hilary Term 2024 by MSt students Freya Blackwood (History of Art & Visual Culture) and Reuben Micu (French). The society has already organised several events, one that profiled the contemporary 'cameraless' photographer Adam Fuss, another with the editors of *PICPUS* magazine and a half-day conference on 'Art, Allyship & Equity,' inviting both artists and people championing diversity through strategy and policy.



The society is also committed to creating strong links with Old Members and has recently heard from Julius Lumsden (1986, Fine Art), who spoke about his career since leaving Oxford.

VAW aims to provide Worcester members old and new with a space in which to explore pathways into the art world, share experiences and celebrate the importance of diversity and inclusion. It's an exciting time as the society expands in the coming academic year, its programme solidifying Worcester College as a dynamic contributor

to Oxford's cultural scene through partnerships with cultural organisations and local communities. ♥

PROMOTING FREEDOM OF SPEECH AT OXFORD

Amongst the duties of the Provost is ensuring that all members of Worcester feel confident in expressing their views and opinions – without fear or favour. David Isaac has worked closely with colleagues and students from across the University to develop a set of principles which are designed to promote free speech and facilitate 'difficult' discussions and conversations. Launched in Michaelmas Term 2023, these practical 'tips' have proved to be a useful and constructive tool in aiding freedom of speech in Oxford.

The 'tips' were first put to the test in a debate on migration in November and used again to debate assisted dying in March. Titled 'Debating the Difficult,' these events have been transformative in developing a culture which allows views from all sides to be heard – and challenged – in a respectful and constructive way. The guidance was also used to facilitate the successful Massada Annual Lecture in May with Israeli investigative journalist Dr Ilana Dayan. Thanks to the clear framework and conditions for the event, the lecture went ahead without interruption and audience members with a wide variety of opinions and perspectives were able to participate. ♥

Read more about the 'tips' on our website:
www.worc.ox.ac.uk/fos



Everyone knows about our menagerie of carved animals in the Chapel, but do you recognise this chap? Perched on the newel post of the Nuffield Building staircase, this owl has been standing sentry for over 80 years. He is still in situ but now has a new place to call home: the Asa Briggs Building, renamed in honour of The Lord Briggs (Provost 1976-91) following comprehensive refurbishments in 2022.

SPOTLIGHT ON NEW FELLOWS



*Professor
Richard D'Arcy*

Richard is Worcester's Fellow & Tutor in Physics and Associate Professor of Particle Accelerator Physics.

The goal of my research is to develop and demonstrate new techniques for miniaturising particle accelerators, reducing them from the size of a football pitch down to a side of A4 paper. This can be achieved by using plasma – the fourth state of matter alongside solid, liquid and gas – as an accelerating medium as it can generate accelerating fields a thousand times stronger than the technology used in the Large Hadron Collider (LHC). This new type of plasma accelerator could be used to shrink the next generation of particle physics machines but, more notably, to provide thousands more cancer patients per year with the lifesaving radio-/particle-therapy treatment they would otherwise miss due to the handful of large and costly machines currently in use. After eight years developing this technology as Group Leader for Plasma Accelerators at the DESY Laboratory in Hamburg, Germany, I am excited to bring my research to Oxford. The transition back to the UK was made seamless thanks to the amazing community of students and staff here at Worcester. I'm also lucky enough to live in one of the on-site fellows' houses so my wife and I can be seen regularly wandering the beautiful grounds pushing around our ten-month-old twins. Feel free to say hello if you pass us by! I also teach mathematical methods for physicists to our first years and electromagnetism to our second years. ♥



Dr Weston Struwe

Weston is Worcester's Fellow & Tutor in Biochemistry, Associate Professor of Molecular & Cellular Biochemistry, and a UKRI Future Leaders Fellow.

My research focuses on the structure and biophysics of host-virus interactions, specifically HIV, Ebola, and Nipah. I aim to understand how virions attach to and enter cells, as well as how antibodies mediate viral neutralisation. Our goal is to exploit these insights for the rational design of vaccines and new biotherapeutics to treat chronic and emerging viral infections. The methods we use vary and are largely based on chemical biology tools, protein engineering strategies and two mass measurement techniques termed mass spectrometry and mass photometry, the latter of which I co-developed with colleagues in the Department of Chemistry. This technology is the basis of the University of Oxford spin-out Refeyn Ltd., where I served as Chief Scientific Officer prior to joining Worcester. I am also enthusiastic about scientific outreach and, since 2022, I have worked with the local community group African Families in the UK to support STEM education and access to science capital through our program *My Place, My Science*. This work was recognised in the 2024 Vice-Chancellor's Awards (Winner, Community Partnership), as was that of Refeyn (Highly Commended, Innovation and Commercialisation). At Worcester and in the Department of Biochemistry, I teach cellular and molecular biochemistry with a focus on biotechnology, infectious disease and immunology. ♥

Worcester has welcomed several new fellows in the past year, from tutorial fellows who take the lead on teaching their subject in College to junior and senior research fellows focussed on advancing their specific areas of interest.



Dr Anna Guttesen

Anna is the Tilleard-Cole Junior Research Fellow in Psychiatry/Neuroscience.

Originally from the Faroe Islands, I completed my PhD at York before moving to Oxford to continue my research in to how the sleeping brain supports learning and memory. I study the brain (electrophysiological) rhythms during sleep which orchestrate memory consolidation in the healthy human population. I have also begun exploring how sleep quality and brain rhythms change after stroke and, consequently, how this may affect memory consolidation in the context of rehabilitation. As well as employing behavioural and state-of-the-art neuroimaging techniques in a laboratory setting at the Wellcome Centre for Integrative Neuroimaging (WIN), I gather data in participants' own homes using wearable devices. I also use non-invasive methods to enhance memories during sleep, for example where sounds linked to memories during wake are replayed to participants during specific stages of sleep. I hope that this research can shed light on the importance of sleep for cognition, potentially boosting rehabilitation after stroke. I also serve as a WIN Open Science Ambassador to promote transparent and rigorous research practices. I have received a warm welcome at Worcester and thoroughly enjoy meeting new people at lunch or dinner, learning about the wide variety of research supported by the College. I feel privileged to be a member of a college which fosters this kindness and curiosity. ♥



Dr William Aslet

William is the Scott Opler Junior Research Fellow in Renaissance & Baroque Architecture.

I joined Worcester following the completion of my PhD at Cambridge, where I also took my MPhil. I knew Worcester a little as my brother was an undergraduate here, and I would often visit him during the final year of my undergraduate History degree at nearby Somerville College. My research focuses on architecture in eighteenth-century Britain and Europe; I wrote my doctorate on the architect James Gibbs. As the architect of the Radcliffe Camera, Gibbs's work is familiar to all who have lived or worked in Oxford. His work was extremely influential – both in Britain and beyond – thanks to a book that he published of his own designs in 1728: *A Book of Architecture, containing designs of buildings and ornaments*. Through this book, Gibbs's buildings were often copied. This is why buildings modelled on his design for the church of St Martin's-in-the-Fields, for instance, can be seen across the east coast of America to this day. Gibbs was also the first British architect to have trained in Rome, and my research has looked closely at this training to understand him in a European context. By the end of my Junior Research Fellowship, I hope to have made considerable progress towards turning my doctoral research into a book. In the meantime, I enjoy spending time in the Lower Library, where the collection of British architectural drawings is second to none. ♥



Rebecca Garnett

MCR President

2015, Biological Sciences; 2021, DPhil Primary Health Care

For almost six years in total, Worcester College has been a wonderful part of my life. Every time I walk through those front gates, the view across Main Quad and the Cottages reminds me just how lucky I am to be part of such a beautiful college.

I arrived in 2015 to start my BA in Biological Sciences with the inspirational Peter Darrah as my undergraduate tutor. Peter became a valued mentor and friend to me, providing invaluable guidance and support when it was needed. We still talk to this day and I always look forward to my Christmas card from the Darrah household.

After a brief period studying and working in Cambridge (sorry!), I saw the light and headed back to Oxford for my DPhil in the Medical Sciences Division. And, of course, I had to return to my 'home away from home'! As soon as I'm inside the College walls I am immediately transported to another world, thanks in no small part to the best gardens

(and gardeners!) in Oxford. I know I am very biased, but I have heard people from almost every other college acknowledging it as the truth. Whether it's taking a book to the orchard, or spending a quiet moment sitting by the lake, the grounds provide the perfect escape from the hustle and bustle of the city.

But what makes Worcester so special lies deeper than its beautiful exteriors – you couldn't ask for a more inclusive or supportive community, and everywhere you look there are friendly faces (staff and students alike). It's easy to take the incredible facilities we have at our disposal for granted, from the 24/7 library, to the sports grounds and delicious food.

In November 2023, I was elected MCR President and have tried to use this role to strengthen the vibrant postgraduate community at the college. The first step was refurbishing the MCR itself – as anyone who has visited the common room in recent years would know, it needed a little TLC to say the least! College kindly gave us some money for the refurb and, together with Alexis Monks (MCR Treasurer), we have worked hard to make the space more inviting, accessible, and comfortable. The downstairs now has a dedicated tea and coffee area, a cosy corner and an updated bar space – a far cry from the Victorian timber yard office it was originally built to be.

So far, it seems that the refurb is having the effect we had hoped

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for. Now, whenever you go into the MCR, there is always a student working away, making a cup of tea or grabbing a biscuit! It's become much easier for Worcester's MCR students to meet each other, especially if their paths wouldn't otherwise overlap. Our next project is the living room upstairs, where we plan to introduce more seating and comfortable workspaces.

The MCR Committee has also put on a series of events throughout the year, which have further fostered an active postgraduate community. We have enjoyed an energetic céilidh, a garden party and multiple formal exchanges, as well as regular yoga sessions, brunches and bar nights. There are not enough hours in the day!

I am now in the final year of my DPhil, investigating the concept of 'deprescribing' inappropriate prescription medication in older adults. I am not sure what is next, but one thing is for sure – I will miss Worcester College more than I can say and I look forward to coming back to visit whenever I can! 🍷

HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER

Dominic de Vivenot
2021, Music

Over the summer vacation, I spent a month in Mbale, Uganda with the help of a College travel grant, volunteering with another Oxford musician at the Saved By Music Foundation (SBMF). The foundation primarily functions as an orphanage for children who, without a suitable guardian, would be forced to become 'street children' and take extreme risks in order to survive. SBF's founder was a 'street child' himself and, during the seven-hour car journey from the airport, told us how he was given the opportunity to reshape his life by a local teacher who taught him the trumpet and encouraged him to play in a school brass band.

The foundation runs its own brass band and I taught some of its members the clarinet during my stay. This was immensely rewarding but also challenging – the children know very little English and are only fluent in the native language of Luganda –

so explaining concepts of music theory was difficult at first. They were also not used to learning through the traditional methodology of the Western Classical notation system, being far more comfortable instead listening to a melody and repeating it themselves until they got it right – a technique loosely resembling the 'Suzuki method'. Their work ethic was something I had never seen before and it was humbling to see their dedication to getting things right.

In some ways I often feel like I was also 'saved' by music. Never having gelled with the academic parts of the school curriculum, the opportunity to receive a high-quality formal music education gave me a productive outlet in which to invest my time, energy and focus. This was made possible by the countless sacrifices of my family to fund instrumental tuition and the assistance of various scholarships, schemes and opportunities. My trip to Uganda was a sobering reminder of the great extent to which I must attribute my musical development to such support systems, and the fact that for so many children they just don't exist. Being a small part of the Saved By Music Foundation motivated me to contribute to initiatives which can give others the chance to experience the benefits which music has brought to me. 🍷



Dominic with children at the Saved By Music Foundation in Mbale, Uganda

Student travel grants are generously funded by the Worcester College Society.

YOUR JOB, MY JOB



We spoke to Worcester's new Learning Development Officer, **Dr George Webster**, and College Nurse, **Joanna Bowd**, about the different ways in which they support our students to fulfil their potential.

Can you tell us about what you do at Worcester?

GW: As Learning Development Officer it's my job to help students with the transition to higher education from school, and specifically the transition to Oxford, which I feel is a bit more of a significant jump.

JB: As a nurse, I see students for minor illnesses and coughs and colds, for stress management and emotional health, and to support the adjustment to university, especially when they're missing the familiarity of home. I've supported students when they've needed a hospital admission or a more significant long-term piece of treatment too. So, I'm here for anything and everything health-wise.

How did you come to this job and what do you enjoy about it?

JB: I'd previously worked in adult mental health, in public health with families and

as a school nurse, so I brought with me the knowledge that transition is difficult. And actually, if we can help people at those key transition points in their lives, that means they're going to have a more positive experience. But the thing which I love about this job is that young people are really open to new ideas and the possibility of change. I've worked here for three years now and I've really enjoyed having the opportunity to see a whole cohort move through from being freshers to having now completed their finals.

GW: My role is also about supporting those points of transition and how they intersect. I've had my own student career going from a Bachelor's to a Master's and then a DPhil in Philosophy. I've taught undergraduates through lectures and the tutorial system and I've worked as part of welfare systems in colleges. I've also done study skills support, widening participation and access work



I really like the fact that it's a multifaceted role which navigates the relations between all these different hats that students wear through their university careers.

and I feel like this role touches on every one of those elements. I'll have students who might be struggling with academic work, but maybe the source of that is a welfare issue – or it combines with or generates a welfare issue – and these things relate to one another in quite complex ways. So, I really like the fact that it's a multifaceted role which navigates the relations between all these different hats that students wear through their university careers.

JB: Thinking about the uniqueness of this role compared to my other nursing jobs, I think that one of the benefits of having a nurse physically on site is that early intervention. The nature of college life is its intensity so if a student can be supported quite early on that means we can prevent a situation from escalating.

GW: You can save students a whole lot of hassle, can't you Jo?

JB: Absolutely, I can be really proactive. If a new student has a significant health condition, like diabetes say, I meet up with them at the very beginning of term to make sure they've got everything in place. Then they can

be independent and can always pop back as required – that's the proactive, preventative approach.

What has challenged your expectations since working here?

JB: I did my nursing training in Nottingham, so I had a stereotype that Oxford students would be predominantly from very privileged backgrounds. But in fact, what I really enjoy about working at Worcester is the diversity of our students. The outreach team do a fantastic job in widening participation and I think we see a very good representation of society in this college.

GW: I guess my perceptions came from a similar place because it was a bit of a surprise to me that Oxford students suffered with precisely the same problems as students at any university I've encountered before. I think I'm trying to say that there's nothing special about Oxford students, which might sound like a criticism but I don't mean it that way. It seems to me that there's a myth that students try to live up to, and in the process cause themselves a lot of stress and anxiety. Everyone's

just human and I've been struck by the sort of patterns I've recognised from my previous roles. I remember being a student myself and thinking that I was the only one who struggled to wrap my head around this complex text, or to read that academic article, and it's good to realise in retrospect that that's not the case. I wish I could go back and tell my younger self that I wasn't the only one, and that's something I try to impress upon our students here.

How have you found your own transition to Worcester?

GW: I'm relatively new at Worcester and I have to say that I've been really taken aback by how lovely and welcoming all the students and staff have been.

JB: I totally agree. I find that there's a genuine community feel among both the academic fellows and staff and the students. And that makes it a very nice place to come to work. In mental health nursing we call it a systems approach: when the hierarchy of the organisation is warm and welcoming, that trickles down and influences everyone else.

And what do you do when you're not in College?

JB: I am part of a frequently-winning pub quiz team at The Old Bookbinders in Jericho. The other night some undergraduates turned up and won but they reassured me that they don't go very often and were only there to celebrate the end of exams!

GW: I'm an avid film watcher and I like taking part in the local independent cinema club. Once a month or so, there'll be a different cult film showing at a venue around Oxford – sometimes it's a cinema but sometimes it's a pub or somewhere more unconventional.

It sounds like you both just enjoy an excuse to go to the pub...

Both: Can't argue with that! ♥

*Interview by Nathan Stazicker,
Communications Manager*

Viola Kerr

Director of Development

Meeting students past and present is a reminder that studying at Worcester makes an impact that is lifelong. The connections you make through the College run deep and it's a pleasure to provide you with opportunities to interact with your College – and with one another.



THE VIEW FROM DEVELOPMENT

Bringing the wider Worcester community together means we can also give Old Members the chance to give something back to the current student community. Whether you met students at your subject or sports dinner, offered careers advice during the Telethon, or donated what you could to give students new opportunities, we would like to thank you for making Worcester a priority this year.

Support from Old Members comes together to create powerful,

Support from Old Members comes together to create powerful, positive change for students and for Worcester.

positive change for students and for Worcester. We have clarified where we most need to focus this positive change and our aims are ambitious:



- We are working towards stable College finances and safeguarding the tutorial system;
- We want to create research posts to help young academics at the start of their careers and fund more scholarships for students taking on graduate studies;
- We endeavour to make the experience of living at Worcester, in our buildings and gardens, and through a vibrant community, something that encourages academic development.

We hope many of you will share these ambitions and partner with us in achieving them, in whatever way is appropriate for you. Thanks to the involvement of our alumni community, we are already making progress.

Our Telethon in March saw over 300 of you meet students over the phone, raising £176,984 over four years. Crucially for Worcester, most donations were given to help us address where the needs are greatest at any given time.

Worcester is making its mark through a number of special

projects too. Music at Worcester is thriving – do contact us or consult the website for concert dates and to get involved in our new music access programmes. Read more about these initiatives in our recent news highlights (p. 4), year in review (p. 18) and Archives spotlight (p. 22).

Our sustainability research focus includes projects as diverse as a biodiversity assessment led by citizen scientists (p. 24) and the Worcester Energy Day (p. 27), a forum for showcasing cutting-edge ideas. Thanks to donors committed to progress in this area, we are making our buildings more energy efficient. Please get in touch if you would like to see Worcester's estate become even more sustainable.

Home to a huge variety of wildlife, and firm in the memories of so many students, the lake at Worcester College is the most iconic feature of our gardens and grounds. Now over 200 years old, our lake is at risk due to leaks in its banks and poor water health. It is a priority for the College to restore the lake and ensure it can remain at the heart of the Worcester landscape for generations to come.

Your lifelong membership of the Worcester community is something we hope will keep on



inspiring you. Our programme is designed to give you access to what Worcester is best at, whether that be opening up the expertise of our academics, helping you network with others who share your interests, or giving you the chance to enjoy spending time here with old friends. We very much hope to meet you over the coming year. 🍷

Meet the Development & Alumni Relations Team online at
www.worc.ox.ac.uk/dev-team

MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

In September 2023, we were delighted to accept a major donation of £30 million from Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones KBE (1965, Modern Languages). This unprecedented gift marks the start of a transformational period for Worcester as we build much-needed graduate accommodation and a landmark, modern library.

At present, we are in the bottom quartile of all colleges for the number of study spaces available and the reading rooms are inaccessible to anyone who cannot climb the 60-step spiral staircase. By contrast, the Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones Library will offer the accessible workspaces and facilities which our students require to excel, including collaborative spaces which keep abreast of changing work and study patterns – all within a visually stunning, sustainable and state-of-the-art building. Likewise, we are

currently able to house less than half of our graduates but bespoke accommodation will enable us to attract the best students to Worcester, fully integrating them into College life.

We are still in the early stages of the project but significant progress has already been made. We have assembled a committee of fellows and staff to lead the project, consulted with students about what their ideal library would look like and appointed a project manager to oversee the successful delivery of both buildings. We are now commencing a detailed feasibility study to look at the practicalities and potential locations for each building. It's all very exciting so watch this space for more updates as we progress with this unique opportunity to shape the future of Worcester. 🍷

SPOTLIGHT ON THE FRANKS SOCIETY

Head over to the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre of an evening and you might just find a group of varied scholars sharing their ideas and learning from each other. This is the MCR's Franks Society, named for Lord Franks (Provost 1962-76), and once or twice a term they meet to discuss their works in progress. A handful of graduate students deliver short presentations which are followed up by questions and further discussion over drinks. The key thing here is interdisciplinarity – what might a mathematician learn from an economist, or a historian from a psychologist and vice versa? Here, four recent speakers share their research so far.

Iulia-Claudia Bragin

2022, MPhil Economics



As part of my MPhil thesis this year I explored the cultural, social and economic drivers of populism in Romania, my

home country. We are due to have all types of elections this year and with the Alliance for the Union of Romanians – a new (but so far very influential!) far-right party – in the race, it's bound to be a big year for Romanian politics. I found strong evidence that the rise of AUR is likely primarily economically driven and spatially linked with emigration rates. Rather intimidatingly, but also excitingly, my findings contradict the existing literature on AUR which mostly attributes cultural explanations to its rise.

My research topic enabled me to make sense of many parts of the environment I grew up in – from *The Powerpuff Girls* merchandise I would receive from a relative working temporarily in Spain, to my mother's stories about queuing for her family's food rations in the 1980s. At the same time, I feel that I have truly evolved as a student and researcher throughout this project, having used econometric methods I had never worked with before and creating my own large datasets. My course has pushed me to exceed what I previously thought were my limits, while Worcester has helped me grow as a person in a diverse, friendly, and supportive community. 💙

Liam Brennan

2023, MSt Greek and/or Roman History



Within Ancient History, I'm particularly fascinated by transitions that occurred in parallel to the development of

Roman provinces, and particularly on the island of Crete. When thinking about Cretan history, the fascinating Minoans are often called to mind alongside the mystery of the labyrinth and the house of Minos. Yet, equally intriguing for me is the island's often-neglected Roman layer of archaeology.

My study of the coinage minted on the island around the time of the Roman conquest in 66 BCE has identified a series of interesting points. In particular, I found that the Roman officials in charge of commissioning coin designs were choosing types of centuries-old Cretan political alliances. I concluded that political unity between the cities was of primary importance to the new administration, and many of the new religious, political and economic initiatives can be linked back to this aim.

As part of my research, I have been lucky enough to contribute to the Ashmolean's Roman Provincial Coinage (RPC) project, whilst also conducting visits to Crete and examining material in the British Museum. Beyond this, I've found the graduate community at Worcester to be one of a kind. The amazing Franks Society has been

a particular highlight – not only was it enjoyable presenting and engaging with questions related to my research, but also listening to the exciting advances made by my peers, all within a more relaxed and social environment. 🍷

Reuben Micu

2023, MSt Modern Languages



What is obscenity? Many authors and jurors in France, before Molière's famous use of the word, were asking

themselves the same question. In my research, I am trying to understand how obscenity functioned in the pre-modern era using *Audigier*, the anonymous late-twelfth-century parody of a *chanson de geste*, and *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua* written by François Rabelais in the sixteenth century. While a modern imaginary may associate the obscene directly with explicit sexual material, during these two periods authors had to operate in a world where the concept had not yet crystallised. This absent presence allows it to be easily modulated, but I am particularly interested in how obscenity can be located at the juncture of losing control over one's own body as it moves from a private space into a public forum.

I am especially interested in how women negotiate the presence of their intimate bodies in the public sphere. In many cases, their bodies being unveiled represents a source of anxiety regarding the potential loss of control over the social order. This results in representatives of the public law trying to suppress and attenuate this potential disorder. However, instead of the movement from private to public signifying a loss of sovereignty, old women use their naked bodies and lack of sexual currency to their own advantage, especially in moments of uninhibited laughter.

Being a graduate at Worcester means always having the opportunity to get involved in a plethora of projects. From the Franks Society to concerts and cèilidh nights in the Hall, we are very lucky to have a lively MCR which organises a multitude of events every week. 🍷

Benedetta Mussati

2021, DPhil Engineering Science



My DPhil research is in continual meta-learning. I am interested in the open question and challenges of

transferring knowledge in a machine learning system. Much like humans, it is desirable to

develop machine learning models which can leverage the knowledge they have acquired from previous phases: a model that can distinguish between images of different animals should take less time to learn to distinguish between vehicles than a newly instantiated model. I'm equally interested in online adaptation, developing machine learning models that can understand and adapt to dynamic streams of data.

Over the past year I have worked on a project using a neural network architecture known as neural processes to learn the short-term dynamics of weather attributes. The goal was to use machine learning to learn the weather patterns and forecast at short time horizons. This can be useful to detect unexpected weather conditions that may be precursors of extreme events. I presented my research at the workshop on Machine Learning for Climate Change at the renowned International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR 2024). Having presented such work beforehand at the Franks Society made me more confident and I received valuable feedback from fellow students. I appreciate all the opportunities that Worcester College provides to engage with a wider audience for both discussing research and stimulating new ideas. 🍷

SUPPORTING OUR GRADUATE COMMUNITY

Having a robust hardship fund for undergraduates, established entirely through the generosity of our alumni community, has proven vital to students. Now, we are thrilled to be growing the tailored support we offer graduate students, who all too often turn down the chance of further study because they can't meet the cost of living and fees. Thanks to Old Members who recognise how hard it is for bright students to commit financially to graduate study, we are building on the funding we offer through graduate scholarships.

We are delighted that new scholarships in Theology and Mathematical Sciences are now in train, alongside cross-disciplinary scholarships that target under-represented or disadvantaged groups, and we are currently seeking donations towards a new scholarship in Law. We welcome hearing from anyone who wants to help us in our goal to expand our scholarship offering. 🍷

SURPRISES IN THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS



Mark
Bainbridge

Fellow Librarian

Readers may already be familiar with some of the strengths of the Library's special collections: architectural history and seventeenth-century books and manuscripts. If asked to expand on that initial answer, in the former sphere, drawings by Inigo Jones and Nicholas Hawksmoor would be a good reply; in the latter, William Clarke's Civil War manuscripts and pamphlets, and English drama prior to 1750. But what if we were to try to move off the well-worn path and shine some light on 'hidden gems' within the collection? Can we pick an architectural drawing, seventeenth-century book and seventeenth-century manuscript that might surprise? Moreover, can we choose something of appeal

Can we pick an architectural drawing, seventeenth-century book and seventeenth-century manuscript that might surprise?

to the scientists out there, not just the historians and students of literature?

I shall allow myself to be led by our students: an undergraduate in medicine once asked whether we had any works by the physician William Harvey (1578-1657), particularly whether we had his most famous work, *De motu cordis et sanguinis in animalibus anatomica exercitatio*, first published in 1628. The College does

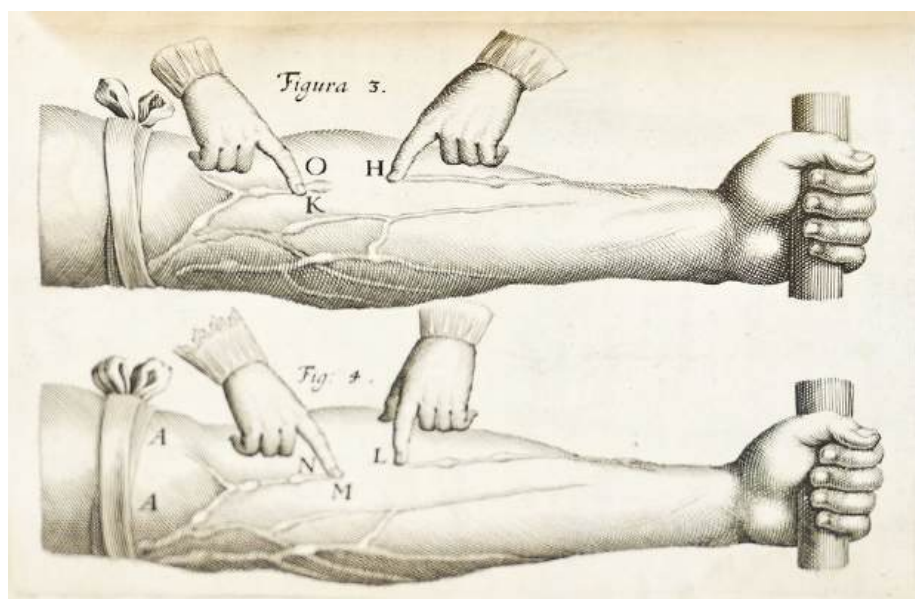
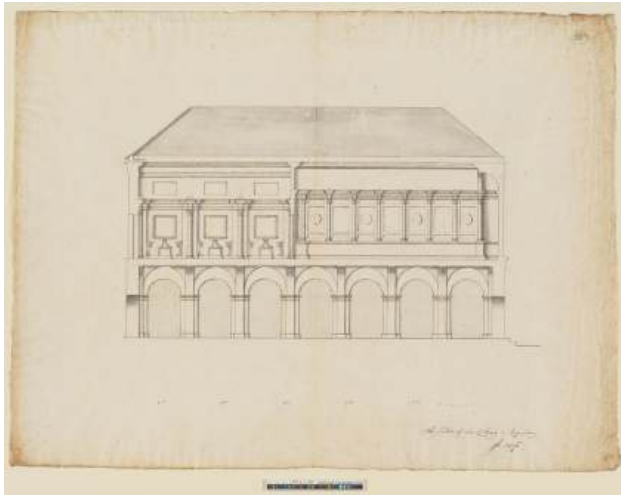
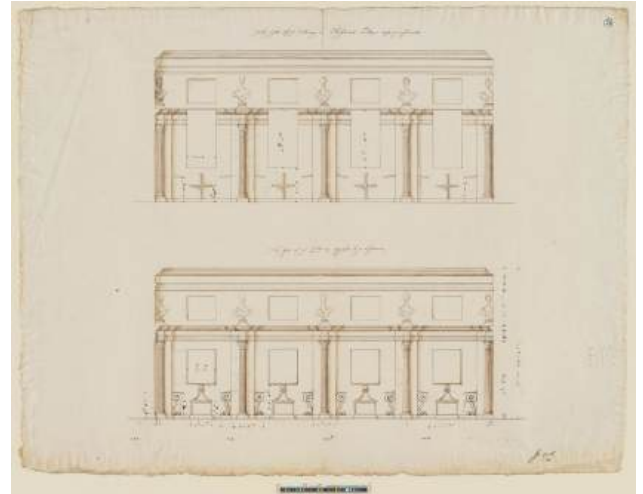


Plate from *De motu cordis*
showing Harvey's experiment



John Webb. Longitudinal section of the Library and Repository, College of Physicians



John Webb. Two longitudinal sections of the Library, College of Physicians, London

have a 1647 Leiden edition, with its famous plates showing that blood flows in a circuit, a vital part of Harvey's scientific proof that the heart circulates blood through the body. This corrected Galen's theory that two different types of blood were created in the liver and the heart, both of which were used up by the organs of the body. Part of the library left to the College by Dr George Clarke in 1736, Harvey's *De motu cordis* was a necessary purchase for anyone interested in the intellectual climate of the seventeenth century.

William Harvey can also be found in six architectural drawings (H&T 75 – 80) for the library of the Royal College of Physicians, also

Harvey's *De motu cordis* was a necessary purchase for anyone interested in the intellectual climate of the seventeenth century.

bequeathed by George Clarke. In the hand of the architect John Webb (1611-1672), these designs show the exterior and interior of the building built between 1651 and 1653, but destroyed by the Great Fire of London in 1666. As the

seventeenth-century antiquary and biographer John Aubrey tells us:

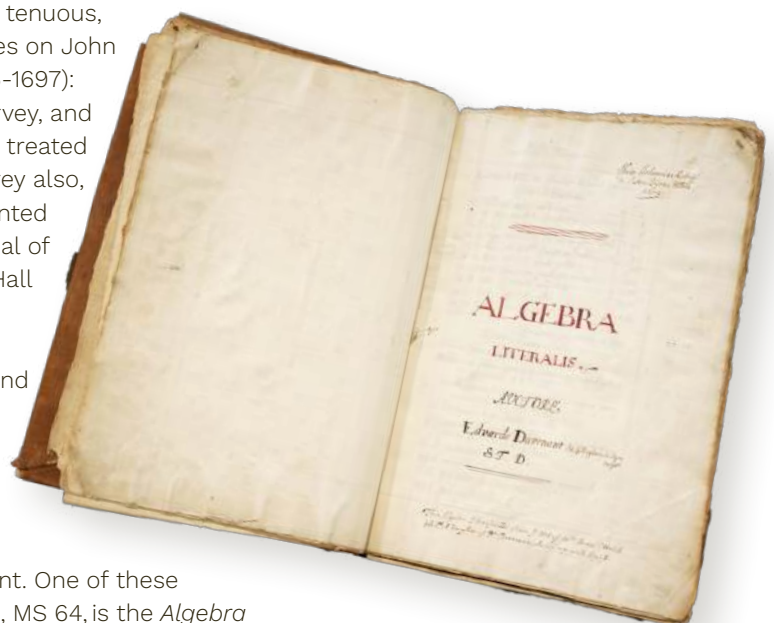
'Dr Harvey added (or was very bountifull in contributing to) a noble building of Roman Architecture at the Physitians' College... viz: a kind of Convocation-house for the Fellows to meet in, belowe; and a Library above.'

Aubrey, *Brief Lives* (ed. Bennett, 2015), vol. 1, p. 197

Having found Harvey within our books and drawings, where can I hunt him down among our manuscripts? Here, I'm afraid, the link is rather tenuous, but also relies on John Aubrey (1626-1697): he knew Harvey, and was actually treated by him. Aubrey also, it is said, wanted to be Principal of Gloucester Hall (Worcester's predecessor institution) and gave around 44 books and three manuscripts to that establishment. One of these manuscripts, MS 64, is the *Algebra literalis* of Edward Davenant, who was described by Sir Christopher Wren as 'the best mathematician

in the world'. A collection of mathematical problems, the manuscript is evidence for the mathematical education of women as well: Aubrey noted on the title page that 'This Algebra I transcribed from y^e MS of M^{rs} Anne Ettrick the eldest daughter of D^r Davenant who is a very good Logist'.

On this brief hunt through the collections, I have (I hope) been able to illustrate our collections with some lesser-known items across three different media: all of a scientific nature and all of which show the vibrancy of seventeenth-century English science. 🍷



The title page of Davenant's *Algebra Literalis* (Worcester College MS 64)



HIGHLIGHTS OF

MICHAELMAS TERM 2023

Alongside our cohort of freshers, we welcomed seven new Junior Research Fellows, two Tutorial Fellows and one Senior Research Fellow to Worcester. Fellow & Director of Graduate Entry Medicine, Dr Robert Watson (2007, Medicine), was awarded the McElwain Award/President's Prize by the Association of Cancer Physicians for his doctoral work on T-cells and medics old and new came together for a 'Meet the Medics' formal. Dr Emanuela Vai, Head of Research

(Humanities), was awarded a UKRI digital innovation research grant for the 'Hybrid Relics' project at the Bate Collection of Musical Instruments, where she is Keeper.



The Teyber Trio

In the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre, this year's Music at Worcester programme started with a sold-out concert by The Teyber Trio who performed an intimate arrangement of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. Three inspirational women shared their

stories as Provost's Role Models – Professor of Shakespeare Studies Emma Smith, top Malaysian executive Datuk Nora Manaf and 'Mother of the House', the Rt Hon. Harriet Harman MP.

In London, Worcester's gardens were seen at the *Thirty Gardens* exhibition by painter Francis Hamel and over 200 young alumni celebrated the Christmas holidays, filling The Conductor pub in Farringdon at an event organised by Andy Mowll (2012, Mathematics & Computer Science). And not forgetting 'The Great

Worcester Bake Off' in which first-years Boroka and Ellie triumphed as star bakers! ❤️



'Meet the Medics' formal

HILARY TERM 2024

The new year began with a brand-new College website developed by The Web Kitchen, a company founded by Rob Stone (2001, PPE). Emeritus Fellow Professor Roger Heath-Brown was awarded an OBE for services to mathematical research. He was joined in the New Year Honours by David Sprackling (1993, MSt Theology), who received an OBE for his public service with the Office

of the Parliamentary Counsel, and Lady Susan Sainsbury, who received a CBE for her charitable and philanthropic work. Assistant Chaplain, the Revd Dr Matthew Cheung Salisbury (2007, History), was awarded The King's Coronation Medal for his involvement in planning last year's Coronation as National Liturgical Adviser to the Church of England.



'Mirrored' (2011), Nigel Hall

Kicking off our season of sustainability-themed research



Matthew Cheung Salisbury with Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE

events, Dr Tundi Agardy joined as a Distinguished Visiting Fellow, working on ocean sustainability with Dr Lisa Wedding. We celebrated LGBT+ History Month in February by hearing from a range of speakers, including



Alumni celebrating Christmas in London



Pancake race competitors



Boat Club training camp on Slovenia's Lake Bled



THE WORCESTER YEAR

Orwell Prize-winning author Tom Crewe, Oxford's new Chair in the History of Sexuality, and Honorary Fellow Russell T Davies (1981, English) who spoke to a packed auditorium with standing room only. We welcomed back Emeritus Professor

Russell T Davies



of Modern History Robert Gildea to discuss his new oral history of the 1984-85 miners' strike and once again hosted the BBC World Service as part of the Oxford Literary Festival.

We enjoyed a rousing concert of Fauré and Vivaldi in the dining hall while, in the grounds, we hosted the sixth annual Touch Rugby Varsity Match (which Oxford won!) and unveiled a new installation by contemporary artist Nigel Hall on the Nuffield Lawn (*Mirrored*, 2011). Director of College Music Caius Lee became the second champion in our newly established Shrove Tuesday pancake

race. Term finished with the 1986-88 Gaudy and the Law Society Dinner, where we heard from Dame Victoria Sharp, first female President of the Queen's (and later King's) Bench Division.

Over the vacation, 13 student callers picked up the phone for this year's Telethon and the Provost met Old Members in New York with Senior Research Fellow Professor Peter Frankopan. Teachers from our link regions experienced Worcester on our first teachers' residential and the Boat Club enjoyed a sunny training camp on Slovenia's Lake Bled. ♥

TRINITY TERM 2024

Now in its third year, Exhibition003 showcased the work of over 50 artists in the Cloisters, Chapel and Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre with paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures, photography, video and even virtual reality. We also enjoyed this year's Terra Lectures by Professor Johanna Gosse, focussing on American art of the Vietnam era.

PPE finalist Rose Henderson picked up a Special Commendation at the Geddes Student Journalism Prizes and Biology lecturer Dr Cait Newport joined the Schmidt AI in Science Fellowship to advance her research on how wild fish navigate visually in 3D through reefs. Two Governing Body fellows were recognised in the King's Birthday Honours list: Dr Xa Sturgis becoming a CBE and Professor Andrew Stephen a Member of the Order of Australia. The Provost was elected to an Honorary Fellowship at St Catharine's College, Cambridge and

Professor Josephine Crawley Quinn at Wadham College, her *alma mater*. And Professor Emmanuel Breuillard, Oxford's Chair of Pure Mathematics, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in recognition of his pioneering work on finite and infinite groups.

Oscar-winning screenwriter Kenneth Lonergan and Emmy-nominated actress J. Smith-Cameron were in residence and spoke to students about writing, directing and acting. Bridget Kendall MBE and Lord Michael Cashman CBE shared their insights as Provost's Role Models, while celebrated choral composer Bob Chilcott conducted a 20th anniversary performance of his *A Little Jazz Mass* in the dining hall. In the gardens, we enjoyed a concert of music by the lake with the College Choir and Allsorts, Debasmitta Bhattacharya and Gurdain



Bob Chilcott with the College Choir

Rayatt brought the sounds of the sarod and tabla to a concert of ragas by sunset on the sports field, and the

Buskins performed *As You Like It* despite the ceaseless rain. Old Members returned for a Buskins gala performance and Archives exhibition, a History reunion and our donors' garden party. The icing on the cake was a phenomenal display of the aurora borealis shining above Worcester. ♥



Installation by Lisha Zhong at Exhibition003



Concert of ragas by sunset



David Isaac & Bridget Kendall



Open Day ambassadors

Jennifer Walshe

Fellow & Tutor in Music and Professor of Composition

I was born and raised in Ireland, and as a small child I never would have dreamed of applying to Oxford, let alone one day working here. On paper I'm a Professor of Composition but that makes my job sound a lot simpler than it is!

MEET THE TUTOR



TIME TIME TIME © Dawid Laskowski
courtesy of LCMF Serpentine Galleries

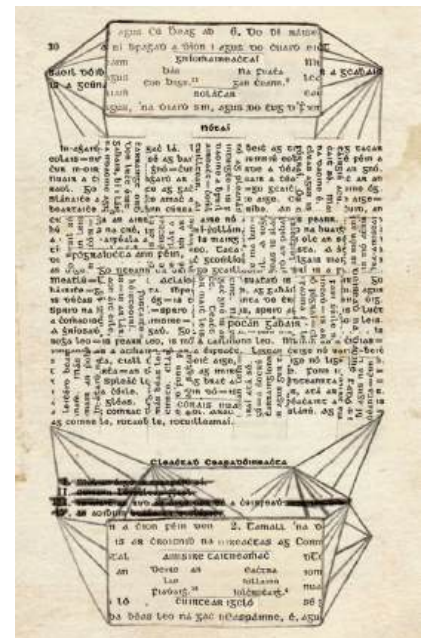


Nowadays composers do a lot more than write music – we might also work with electronics, build instruments, make films, installations and books. This is reflected in the wide range of projects the composition students do – in one tutorial I might be guiding a tutee on how to notate microtones for string quartet, in the next discussing cutting-edge research about how plants make sounds, in the next blacking out the windows so a tutee can demonstrate a holographic illusion they’ve programmed.

This suits me very much as my own work is highly interdisciplinary. Of course, I do write works for standard ensembles such as orchestra or string quartet, often with video and electronics. But I’m very interested in the theatrical

situation of musicians on stage and a lot of my works involve complex staging, lighting and costume – take *PERSONHOOD* (2021), a highly virtuosic piece for Danish accordionist Andreas Borregaard and ensemble, and *Ireland: A Dataset* (2020) for the Tonnta vocal ensemble and saxophonist Nick Roth. I’ve written a lot of operas, from *XXX_LIVE_NUDE_GIRLS!!!* (2003) for Barbie dolls, to *Die Taktik* (2012), an opera which used machinima from video games, and *TIME TIME TIME* (2019), which requires members of the audience to each hold a fossil over 140 million years old in their hand for the duration of the performance. I also do projects which fall outside of traditional genres, such as *Aisteach*, a completely fictional history of Irish avant-garde music and art from the nineteenth century through today, which comprises performance, CDs, essays, installations, films and work in 2D and 3D.

I’m particularly interested in artificial intelligence and have done a lot of projects involving machine learning. In 2018 I collaborated with the Turkish artist and technologist Memo Akten on *ULTRACHUNK*, creating an AI-generated version of myself which I could improvise with in real time. In 2020 my album *A Late Anthology of Early Music, Vol. 1: Ancient to Renaissance* was released. For *Anthology* I used AI to rewrite the history of Western early music, reworking music



Aisteach Sound Poetry by the Guinness Dadaists

by Hildegard Von Bingen, John Dowland and more. Iggy Pop played some tracks from the album on his BBC 6 Music show. Having my AI-generated Palestrina covers played by a former member of The Stooges on national radio gave me a taste for the strangeness that AI has in store for us musically. At Oxford I’ve been giving workshops about AI since I took up the post two years ago. These workshops are open to students from all backgrounds and it’s been a joy to be in the room with students from music, art, psychology, biology and many other subjects, all thinking through what will be one of the defining phenomena of our time.

Having my AI-generated Palestrina covers played by a former member of The Stooges on national radio gave me a taste for the strangeness that AI has in store for us musically.



*Tonnta and Nick Roth perform Ireland A Dataset
Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival*



WDR Musik der Zeit Konzert, 1/12/2023
Photo: Holger Talinski

Last year I wrote a long-form essay called *13 Ways of Looking at AI, Art & Music*, and my workshops with my students were a great place to introduce and experiment with the ideas in the essay.

It's been a wonderful experience teaching at Worcester. The Sultan Nazin Shah Centre has a dance studio with floor to ceiling windows overlooking a pond, and I love teaching Composition and Free Improvisation in that space. The

gardens are a tremendous resource too. Free Improv sessions always begin with physical warm-ups, and I try to use the gardens for these whenever possible. I've started introducing games developed by Forest School teachers into my teaching and the students have responded really well.

Free Improvisation and performance are central to what I do, and I try to instil in my students that every chance to perform in

front of other people is a gift. I've performed as a soloist in some of the most amazing venues in the world to audiences of several thousand – the Royal Albert Hall, the Teatro Farnese in Parma, the Wiener Konzerthaus – and I've also performed in tiny pubs, churches and clubs to audiences in the single digits. It's all important – every performance is a profound opportunity to learn what music is and can be. 💙

SOUNDS FROM THE ARCHIVES

Jack Chambers

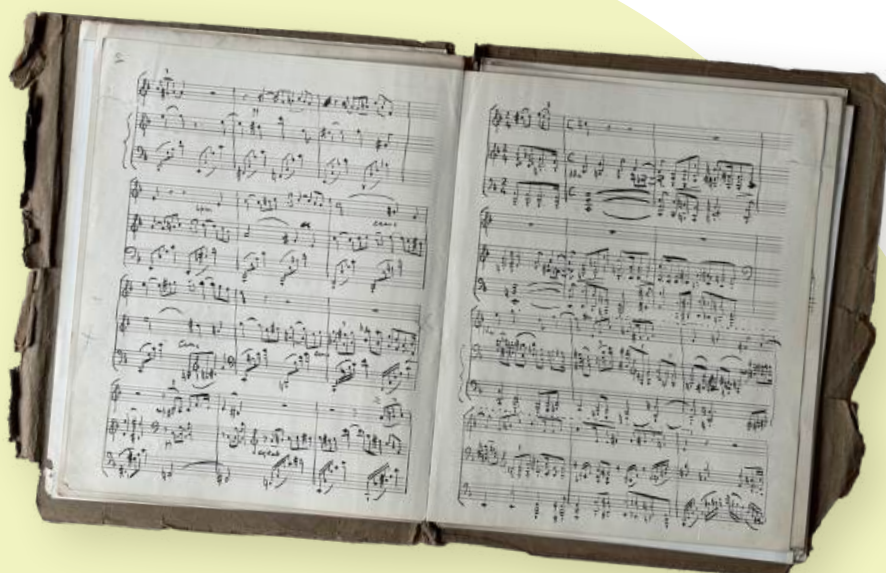
2020, Music; 2023, MSt Music (Composition)



Did you know that, besides deeds and documents, the Worcester College Archives contains a great deal of music? Given the wealth of other material in need of research and cataloguing, the majority of this music has never previously received much attention. I am

currently pursuing an MSt in Composition and first came to the Archives with a personal interest in what past fellows and students at Worcester had composed. At some point, having delved into reams of handwritten scores, the project morphed into research for a unique concert: *Sounds from the Archives*.

Bringing these pieces off the page and back to our ears was an overdue and necessary task.



Sonata manuscript by W. H. Hadow

Working with the College Archivist, Emma Goodrum, who kindly guided me through the materials, I quickly became aware of the range and quantity of music that four composers in particular had donated to the College. My research began in the nineteenth century with Sir William Henry Hadow CBE (Scholar, 1878-82; Fellow, 1888-1909) who is better known as an educational reformer. Two more fellows donated copious original manuscripts to the College: the classicist William Adair Pickard-Cambridge (Fellow, 1919-45) and the historian Henry Vere Fitzroy Somerset (Fellow, 1921-57). Completing my quartet of prolific composers in the Archives was Richard Drakeford who read Music at Worcester and was Organ



Caricature of Henry Vere Fitzroy Somerset

Scholar between 1955 and 1958. Having studied the boxes and piles of music that these people wrote – both during and after their time in Oxford – I realised that bringing these pieces off the page and back to our ears was an overdue and necessary task.

For the concert at the start of June, works by these four composers were performed alongside a piece by Kenneth McLeish (1959, Classics Mods; 1963, BA Music; 1965, BMus). In addition to these archival materials, I also asked two current Worcester composers if we could perform their pieces in the concert: Jennifer Walshe, Fellow & Tutor in Music and Professor of Composition, and Andrew Hamilton (1995, Music) who currently teaches at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. We were lucky enough to have Professor Walshe perform her own piece and both composers agreed to donate the scores/materials of those pieces to the College, broadening the diversity of music in the Archives with the work of contemporary composers. I hope that by bringing these pieces into the Archives it might be possible for future generations of College musicians to mount another concert looking back on the work of Worcester composers today.

Working with original manuscripts written by hand meant making new editions of some of the more illegible pieces so that they could be performed.

Creating editions for five of the pieces has allowed me to better understand their musical language, looking under the hood while I re-notated them for performance. Some of these works – many written by non-professional composers – have a remarkably striking character. The importance of the Archives in keeping these fragile materials for posterity cannot be overstated since they could otherwise have been lost. We can only wonder how many other works by Worcester composers were not preserved and no longer exist.

Alongside the concert, Emma curated a display of the materials with more details about the composers' lives, as well as surviving pictures and even a caricature of Somerset with his music stand. I'm immensely grateful both to Emma and to the Worcester College Music Society committee who have supported me in putting on this concert and bringing these sounds from the Archives back to life. ♡

We can only wonder how many other works by Worcester composers were not preserved and no longer exist.

CITY NATURE CHALLENGE AT WORCESTER



Joseph Boyle

Sustainability Research Assistant

Despite the chill in the air and the threat of rain, College members, nature enthusiasts and citizen scientists gathered at Worcester for the City Nature Challenge at the start of Trinity Term. Established as a competition between Los Angeles and San Francisco in 2016, the City Nature Challenge is now a global attempt to record as much wildlife as possible over a single weekend, documenting and celebrating biodiversity within our urban landscapes. At Worcester, we decided to incorporate this with our own baseline biodiversity survey, aiming to make sure that

our communities feel engaged and represented in how we measure, reflect on and relate to our spectacular grounds.

Almost 90 participants, the majority of whom were not College members, eagerly ventured out to capture the wonders of nature on their phones through iNaturalist, an app which records and identifies wildlife. These citizen scientists logged 238 flora and fauna observations – one in four of all observations made across Oxfordshire during that time. What makes these numbers truly remarkable is the diverse range of participants involved:



Sampling water quality at the lake

This crowdsourced approach not only generates valuable data for scientific research but also fosters a sense of collective stewardship over our natural heritage.



Students and tutors recording flora observations during the City Nature Challenge at Worcester

86 individuals engaged with the event, including 18 enthusiastic children. This underscores the inclusive nature of citizen science, where individuals of all ages can actively contribute to scientific research and environmental stewardship. It also shows our eagerness to integrate the wider community with our grounds – after all, our wildlife, carbon storage, pollination and urban cooling don't just stay within our walls. Among the participants, over half were members of the local community without links to Worcester as staff or students, highlighting the effectiveness of such events in fostering engagement and outreach. By bringing together individuals from different backgrounds and disciplines, the City Nature Challenge not only promotes scientific literacy

but also cultivates a sense of environmental responsibility among participants.

iNaturalist serves as a virtual hub where individuals can upload photos and recordings which are then verified by experts and added to a global database. We found 139 different species in the College grounds, including 108 which hadn't been recorded before. This crowdsourced approach not only generates valuable data for scientific research but also fosters a sense of collective stewardship over our natural heritage. Beyond

the numbers and statistics, events like the City Nature Challenge offer a profound opportunity to connect with the natural world. As participants ventured into green spaces around College, they were greeted by a tapestry of life: from colourful wildflowers to melodious bird calls. Each observation stands as evidence that nature can survive, assemble and inspire in varied environments, including urban spaces where you might least expect.

Moreover, initiatives like the City Nature Challenge underscore

MOST OBSERVED PLANT SPECIES

- Cow Parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*
- Horse Chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*
- Common Ivy *Hedera helix*
- Garlic Mustard *Alliaria petiolata*
- Green Alkanet *Pentaglottis sempervirens*



the importance of preserving and protecting our urban green spaces. Amidst urban development and environmental degradation, documenting urban biodiversity becomes increasingly crucial for conservation efforts. By engaging citizens in the process, we not only raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity but also empower communities to take action in safeguarding their local ecosystems.

As we reflect on Worcester's contributions to the City Nature Challenge, let us be reminded of the transformative power of citizen science. By coming together as stewards of the environment, we have not only enriched our understanding of urban biodiversity but also reaffirmed our commitment to preserving the natural world for generations to come. In the end, it is through collective action and shared

responsibility that we can truly make a difference in protecting the places we care about, and our biodiversity survey is one step in that direction. 🍃

If you'd like to see our iNaturalist records to date, the data are publicly available here:
www.inaturalist.org/projects/worcester-college-oxford

NAVIGATING POLAR CHANGE IN THE SOUTHERN OCEAN

A Distinguished Visiting Fellowship for Dr Tundi Agardy in Hilary Term 2024 has resulted in a *Science* paper co-authored with Worcester's Fellow & Tutor in Geography, Dr Lisa Wedding.

Dr Agardy leads Sound Seas, an independent multi-disciplinary group based in the Washington, D.C. area working at the nexus of science and policy for environmental problem-solving. Building on ideas shared in a sustainable oceans workshop at Worcester, the new paper details how climate-smart Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) can support Antarctic seascapes, with implications for the global ocean and human wellbeing.

The Antarctic region stands as a sentinel for the health of our planet through influencing sea level, regulating climate and driving global ocean circulation.

However, the Southern Ocean is facing rising climate pressures – amplified by increasing human activities such as increased fishing, tourism, science and shipping – and its fate is intertwined with the future of every coastline and community across the globe.

Climate-smart MSP presents a proactive strategy for mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change while ensuring the sustainable use of marine resources. This holistic approach combines scientific expertise with collaborative governance, advocating for a more resilient and sustainable future for this critical ecosystem. 🍃

'Taking climate-smart governance to the high seas',
Science Vol 384, Issue 6697, pp. 734-737
(doi.org/10.1126/science.adp4379).



RESEARCH PROFILE: CLEAN ENERGY

Energy is one of the fundamental needs and rights of humanity in the modern era. Access to affordable, clean energy greatly affects quality of life and is set out as one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It's almost impossible to imagine modern life without electricity, and electrifying places without power remains a major issue, especially in developing economies. Having burnt our way through fossil fuels since the industrial revolution, however, considerable attention is now being paid towards exploring sustainable electricity solutions. In developed economies too, energy transition is under progress and solar photovoltaics (PV) play a huge role in the pursuit of achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

While crystalline silicon (c-Si) technology has been the undisputed market leader for solar PV since the 1950s, their power conversion efficiencies are gradually reaching theoretical limits. Alternative semiconductor technologies capable of delivering higher efficiencies than c-Si could reduce the cost per kilowatt-hour (kWh) of solar electricity and thus expand its adoption to the remote corners of the world. Since 2023, I have been working as a postdoctoral researcher in the group of Professor Henry Snaith, Binks Professor of Renewable Energy at the Department of Physics, and one of the pioneers of this field.

We are working on metal halide perovskites, a new material family with excellent and tuneable optoelectronic properties. Since their first demonstration in 2009, single-junction efficiencies – the same technology used in c-Si cells – have seen an unprecedented surge from 3.9% to 26.1% in just 15 years. Much of this rapid development can be attributed to the compositional engineering of bandgaps, which signify the absorption window of a semiconductor material. This was the focus of my PhD research at the University of Cambridge, where I focussed on understanding

the fundamental properties of low bandgap (<1.3 electronvolts) perovskites using a plethora of photophysical, structural, electrical and chemical characterisations.

My current research involves upscaling the fabrication of perovskite devices using thermal evaporation to demonstrate >30% all-perovskite triple junction solar cells with impressive operational stability. Interestingly, these materials are also excellent emitters of visible and near-infrared light. Therefore, my research also involves investigating these thermally evaporated halide perovskites for pure-red light emitting diodes (LEDs) which are by far the most energy-efficient lighting source.

Since I joined the College as a Junior Research Fellow in October 2023, I have been keen to bring together students and researchers from across the University. I was proud to lead the first interdisciplinary sustainability research event of the year: Worcester Energy Day on 21 February. With more than 90 registrations across Physics, Chemistry, Materials Science, Engineering, Geography and Economics, this event turned out to be a huge success. We invited three leading speakers from within the Oxford faculty who described their research on renewable energy generation, solar-to-fuel energy conversion and energy storage using batteries. In addition, there were 17 oral presentations delivered primarily by graduate students and postdoctoral researchers from different departments. Finally, a poster and networking session gave ample opportunities for making new connections and building collaborations.

Worcester Energy Day provided a unique platform for Oxford researchers to showcase their energy-related research to their peers. The first of its kind in any college or department, the overwhelming response was a desire to see this as an annual event – something I hope to be able to bring to fruition in years to come. 🍀



Dr Krishanu Dey

**Junior Research Fellow in
Sciences**

DRAMATIS PERSONAE



Buskins Founder, Sir Roland Braddell

Ninety years after the first summer Shakespeare play in the Worcester gardens, we look back at some of the Buskins highlights.



Cast of *The Jeweller of St James* 1907

Worcester College Buskins has a strong claim to being the longest-running college drama society in Oxford, having been established in 1902 by Sir Roland Braddell (1901, History) for 'reading plays once a week in various members' rooms'. By 1907, the Buskins had started producing plays, in addition to their weekly readings, and a photograph recently received by the Archives shows the club in costume for *The Jeweller of St James*.

In 1933 the Buskins began a collaboration with Nevill Coghill, a Fellow of Exeter College. This collaboration produced the first summer Shakespeare in the gardens the following year and, fittingly for a setting beside the lake, it was *The Tempest*. Since then, Buskins have mounted 35 Shakespearean



Dave Weeks & Meg Bruton as Silvius & Phoebe, 2024

productions but have only used 16 different plays, with some surprising omissions.

This year marks 90 years of Shakespeare in the gardens and saw the Buskins relaunched after



As You Like It 2024



Archives exhibition at the Buskins gala performance

the pandemic with president and producer Carys Howell (2018, History) and director Nathan Crewe (2020, English) at the helm. Together they brought this year's garden play to life – *As You Like It*, which had to battle with the unseasonable June rain. Carys and Nathan were keen to engage with alumni and set about organising a black-tie gala performance.

'It was amazing to see the outpouring of passion, interest and support from Old Members at our gala performance,' says Carys. 'Performing for such a lovely audience was a delight and the entire cast and crew loved hearing about how Buskins has changed over the years.'

Building on the renewed success of this year's garden play, Buskins is looking to develop a larger programme of events in the next academic year. Ideas so far include new writing evenings, script readings and workshops or interviews with industry figures (alongside the usual summer garden play, of course). Watch this space! ❤️

Archivist Emma Goodrum curated an exhibition on Buskin's history for the Old Members' gala performance. Explore the exhibition and download the commemorative programme online: www.worc.ox.ac.uk/buskins90

Following the callout in the last issue of the *Worcester Magazine*, the Development Team has enjoyed reading the memories and tales submitted by alumni of the Buskins. Here we share a selection of our favourites.

*In 1964 it was the dual anniversary of 400 years since Shakespeare's birth and 250 years since the founding of the College – both were celebrated theatrically! The play was **Love's Labour's Lost**, set against the backdrop of the lake, which was fully utilised. I myself had to steer the princess and her ladies in a punt across the lake to make their entrance, somewhat erratically, I fear. And when the joyful celebrations of the couples in the final scene are interrupted by a messenger announcing bad news, the late Peter Taylor approached as this solemn figure in black from across the lake – an unforgettable moment.*

Michael Symes
(1962, English)

*I co-directed an outdoor production of Aristophanes' **The Birds** with Rachel Allen, in the summer of 1990 if I recall correctly. We had the birds open the play up in the tree by the lake (now gone) and the goddess Iris entered stage left in a boat rowed across the water. Just after curtain up, a brood of ducklings waddled onto stage as the birds opened the scene, wondering what had become of this world...*

Annie Heaton (1988, PPE)

*I was a frog in Aristophanes' **The Frogs** in 1981 which involved jumping in the lake – most unsavoury!*

Philip J Price
(1977, Modern Languages)

*My father was at Worcester in the late 40s and he had an anecdote about the famous production of **The Tempest** in 1949. The coup de théâtre was Ariel running across the duckboards just below the surface of the lake. One night some mischievous students removed a couple of the duckboards under cover of darkness, leading to a big splash as Ariel fell into the gap!*

Mark Pemberton (1981, English)

My memories of Buskins are vivid. For the Cuppers event in my first term, 1967, I played very badly a lead role in a one-act play by John Osborne, **Under Plain Cover**. I was – prophetically – a rather lurid, unkempt journalist exposing an incestuous marriage fuelled by brown envelope pornography. Judging the competition, OUDS President David Marks, a brilliant actor who spurned life on the stage for a career as a barrister, said that I had played the rather opaque final stage direction ('He falls down drunk, dead possibly') to perfection.

The following summer, we were preparing for **Salad Days**, directed by my neighbour in the Besse Building, Andrew Palfreman from Hull. I was busy with an ETC production of Wedekind's **Spring Awakening**, directed by Michael Rosen (later the Children's Laureate), and had recommended a friend of mine with ballet training, Rosalind Erskine of Somerville (later an editor on BBC's Newsnight), to do the choreography. Unfortunately, she had a skiing accident and cried off meaning Palfreman held me responsible – and, as I could read music and played the piano, insisted I do the dance moves. Thus was born, thanks to Buskins, a life-long friendship and a prompt into the theatrical life professionally.

Michael Coveney (1967, English)

I was in the cast of **As You Like It** in 1977 at the end of my first year reading Mods and Greats. I played Oliver but what has proved most memorable about the production over the years has been the extraordinary gathering of talents in the cast and crew. It was directed by Richard Curtis and had Rowan Atkinson as Touchstone. Stephen Pickles was Jaques and Helen Fielding of Bridget Jones fame was, I think, Celia. It was enormous fun and after the run in the garden we took the show to Cliveden House for a few performances. I became President of Buskins the following year and was President of OUDS in 1979–80. On graduating I went on to spend most of my career in the diplomatic service, where acting skills often proved very helpful...

Martin Hatfull (1976, Literae Humaniores)

I was President in 1986 and produced the garden show that summer – **Asterix and the Big Fight**. We had to write to Goscinny and Uderzo, the publishers, for specific approval to produce the show. Costumes and set were made by many Worcester students and I will never forget it.

James Charrington (1984, Modern Languages)

We got together in the Buskins 1998 production of **Alice in Wonderland** – Mad Hatter and Mock Turtle respectively. There was plenty of wildlife-based drama aside from the mock turtle... giant beetles in wigs, picking up 30 pounds of goose droppings before every show, and in **A Midsummer's Night Dream** when Hermia was awoken by an angry gander which had to be shoed away by an unscheduled Bottom while Hermia regained her composure behind a tree.

Husband and wife

**Michael Osborne (1998, Chemistry)
& Becky Yearling (1997, English)**

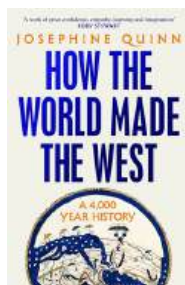
I was at Somerville from 1973 to 1976 and performed in a number of amazing Buskins shows directed by Sir Anthony Seldon. I remember **As You Like It** particularly fondly – we rehearsed on the island of Luing, staying in a converted chapel, and then toured to Oban, Kendal and Oxford, ending in the gardens at Queen's. All the people I met doing plays with the Buskins have remained my life-long friends. I often give thanks to the Buskins for everything they gave me.

**Caroline Friend
(Somerville College, 1973)**



Buskins gala night, performed in the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre due to wet weather

It's always fascinating to read the latest publications by Worcester authors. Enjoy this selection of recent titles and explore many more books by Old Members on our website at www.worc.ox.ac.uk/alumni-bookshelf



How the World Made the West: A 4,000-Year History
Prof. Josephine Crawley Quinn (Professor of Ancient History)

The West, the story goes, was built on the ideas and values of Ancient Greece and Rome, rediscovered by the Renaissance. But what if that isn't true? In a work of immense scope, Quinn argues that the real story is much bigger than this established paradigm leads us to believe.

Proust's Songbook: Songs and Their Uses

Jennifer Rushworth (2005, Modern Languages)

Instead of focusing on the usual instrumental music and large-scale forms such as symphonies and opera, Rushworth argues for the centrality of songs and lyrics in Proust's opus and considers how he drew inspiration from contemporary composers and theorists of song.



The Conservative Effect, 2010–2024: 14 Wasted Years?

Co-edited by Sir Anthony Seldon (1973, PPE)

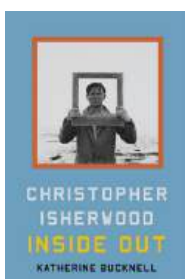
What changed for better or worse during 14 years of Conservative government? With powerful insights and fresh perspectives, this wide-ranging study seeks to understand the immediate lessons which will be pivotal if the country is to rejuvenate and flourish in the future.



The Final Curtain: Obituaries of Fifty Great Actors

Michael Coveney (1967, English)

A vivid history of post-war theatre through the lives of 50 actors. There are happy/sad juxtapositions of shooting stars Robert Stephens and Alan Bates; classical queens Diana Rigg and Barbara Jefford; and versatile showtime hoofers Una Stubbs and Lionel Blair.



Christopher Isherwood Inside Out

Dr Katherine Bucknell (1979, English; JRF, 1986–88)

An engrossing new biography of the man whose writings about 1930s Berlin made him famous. Enriched by unlimited access to Isherwood's partner Don Bachardy, Bucknell shows how Isherwood achieved a uniquely inspiring personal life and effected lasting change in our culture.

A Half-Century Around Europe
John Waygood (1962, Modern Languages)

A light-hearted and illustrated account of the experiences of a British baby-boomer and his family in coping with the cultural differences of living in continental Europe since 1973. The surprises and the joys of life in his adopted Switzerland are recounted with special loving care.



Anne-Marie Slaughter

1980, International Relations

Anne-Marie Slaughter came to Worcester as a Sachs Scholar from Princeton University, where she was later Dean of the School of Public and International Affairs. In 2009, she became first woman to serve as the Director of Policy Planning for the US State Department. Slaughter has authored or edited nine books and is currently CEO of New America, a think and action tank dedicated to renewing the promise and national ideals of the United States. She is an Honorary Fellow of Worcester College.

MEET AN
OLD MEMBER



The camaraderie, hard work and good humour of my crew mates meant that my Oxford experience expanded far beyond the expatriate graduate community.

What memories do you have of Worcester?

So many! I particularly remember Worcester's physical beauty... mist rising off the water, the majesty of the old trees, roses climbing the wall next to the MCR – blooming even in November – and the sense of escaping to a world far from the bustle of Oxford whenever I walked down the garden path toward the tennis courts. I remember time seeming to slow down: the Bodleian closed at noon on Saturdays, I think, and did not reopen until Monday; students communicated through notes in the inter-collegiate post; and we still wrote by hand or typed our papers. I would inevitably be rushing somewhere and see the ancient wall of New College and think about how it had been there since the fourteenth century. Whatever seemed so important that I just *had* to get it done paled in comparison – those walls had stood for centuries and would stand for centuries more. I learned to slow down, breathe, take long walks in the University Parks on Sundays and seek out the fritillaries on Magdalen Walk in February.

What was the highlight of your time at Worcester?

The best part about my time at Worcester was rowing – we had a great boat and regularly bumped ourselves up the river. Indeed, I returned home with two full painted blades, which I still have – one hangs in our recreation room. Crew was where I really met my fellow Worcester students and the camaraderie, hard work and

good humour of my crew mates meant that my Oxford experience expanded far beyond the expatriate graduate community.

What career did you pursue and why?

I spent a summer in a big New York law firm during law school and really did not like the work; I instead stayed at Harvard and worked for a number of law professors while applying to turn my Oxford MPhil into a DPhil. One of my professors eventually asked if I had ever thought about law teaching – I had not, and really didn't have the standard credentials. Still, I went on the law

I often tell my students that while having a plan is good, following it is optional.

teaching market and ended up at the University of Chicago Law School, which I absolutely loved. After four years, I went back to teach at Harvard Law and then later moved to Princeton as Dean of what was then the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. I left academia to go into government in 2009 and then run a think and action tank in 2013. I often tell my students that while having a plan is good, following it is optional.

What challenges have you faced in your career?


I found the four years after law school very hard, when I was

working on my DPhil (in Cambridge, MA – I never went back to Oxford) and was very uncertain about where my path lay. In retrospect, however, those years confirmed my decision to say no to something I didn't want to do even when I wasn't sure about what I *did* want to do. I also didn't think of myself as a leader until my late thirties, even though that is one of the first ways I would describe myself today. I have written a whole book about the challenges I have faced as a leader, entitled *Renewal: From Crisis to Transformation in Our Lives, Work, and Politics*.

Can you tell us about your next projects?

I am working on two large projects that I expect will occupy whatever writing time I have over the next five years. One is on care and capitalism, examining what our economic and social systems would look like if we assumed that all human beings had both a caring and a competitive side (as we can demonstrate both biologically and anthropologically) instead of the caricature of the rational interest maximiser that we currently use. The second is to co-author a textbook that introduces and applies a paradigm of global politics that focuses on people and planet as well as states.

Have you any advice for our new graduates?

Embrace uncertainty (not that you have much choice!) Have the courage to forge your own path. Remember that meaning matters more than money. 



WORCESTER BREAD & BUTTER PUDDING

It's always lovely to receive positive feedback from diners in College, especially after gaudies and reunions. Here's a classic pudding with a Worcester twist which you can try at home. The apricots add a tart note to all the sweetness, while cooking with a low heat and a bain-marie allows us to serve a beautifully set custard without drying out the bread.

Ingredients (Serves approx 12 people)
150g/5oz butter, plus extra for greasing
13 thick slices white bread
50g/2oz sultanas
50g/2oz sliced apricots
2tsp ground cinnamon
100ml/3½fl oz full-fat milk
900ml/32fl oz double cream
10 free-range egg yolks
500g/1lb 2oz caster sugar
Nutmeg, grated, to taste

Method

1. Grease a square or oblong ovenproof dish with butter. Take each slice of bread and spread with butter on both sides.
2. Arrange a layer of bread in the bottom of the dish, add some sultanas and apricots then sprinkle with a little cinnamon. Repeat the layers until you have used all of the ingredients, finishing with a layer of bread cut into triangles. Set aside.
3. Crack the eggs into a bowl, add three-quarters of the sugar and lightly whisk until pale.
4. Gently warm the milk and cream without boiling. Add to the whisked eggs, stir well, then strain the custard into a bowl or jug.
5. Pour the custard over the prepared bread layers, sprinkle with nutmeg and the remaining sugar, and leave to stand for one hour to make sure the custard has soaked through the layers.
6. Preheat the oven to 140°C/Gas 1.
7. Prepare a bain-marie by placing the pudding in a deep tray and filling with water until the dish is two-thirds submerged. Bake for 45 minutes or until the custard has set and the top is golden brown. Serve with extra custard if desired. 🍌



It has been wonderful to welcome you back to College this year. Old Member events have included Gaudies, anniversary lunches and sports and subject dinners, an exciting gala event celebrating the relaunch of Buskins as well as thank you events celebrating the generosity of our donors.



Law Society Dinner



History Reunion



Gaudy (1986–88)



Gaudy (1986–88)



Gaudy (1983–85)



Buskins Gala Performance & Exhibition



Donors' Garden Party



Golden and Diamond Reunion Lunch

OLD MEMBER EVENTS

OLD MEMBER EVENTS 2024 – 2025

Worcester runs a variety of events for alumni at the College, online and in locations around the world. The list below does not reflect all upcoming events so keep an eye on our website at www.worc.ox.ac.uk/alumni/events for new dates. Invitations will be emailed when event bookings go live.

For any events queries, or to ensure we have the correct contact details for you, please contact the Old Member Events Team on omevents@worc.ox.ac.uk or +44 (0)1865 278374.

2024 SEPTEMBER

- 21 GAUDY**
for those who matriculated in 1989, 1990 and 1991.
- 27 GOLDEN AND DIAMOND REUNION LUNCH**
for those who matriculated in 1970, 1971, 1964 and 1974.

NOVEMBER

- 2 HONORARY FELLOWS' CEREMONY & LUNCH**
- 5 LONDON DRINKS RECEPTION**
Inner Temple, London, EC4Y 7HL.
Open to all.
- 16 FOUNDATION CIRCLE**
- 19-20 WORCESTER GIVING DAY**

Did you know that Worcester hosts many other public events, from stimulating talks to concerts and recitals?

View all upcoming events at www.worc.ox.ac.uk/events

2025 MARCH

- 15 LAW SOCIETY DINNER**
- 22 GAUDY**
for those who matriculated in 1992, 1993 and 1994.

APRIL

- 26 1714 SOCIETY LUNCH**

MAY

- 10 GARDENS DAY**
morning or afternoon tours with lunch. Open to all.
- 31 SATURDAY OF EIGHTS WEEK: BOAT CLUB DRINKS & DINNER**

JUNE

- 7 DONORS' GARDEN PARTY**

SEPTEMBER

- 20 GAUDY**
for those who matriculated in 1995, 1996 and 1997.
- 26 GOLDEN & DIAMOND REUNION LUNCH**
for those who matriculated in 1965 and 1975.

INTRODUCING THE 1714 SOCIETY

Leaving a gift in your will allows you to do lasting good in the world. Sir Thomas Cookes's bequest, which led to the founding of Worcester in 1714, shows the enduring impact it is possible to make. This year, we were delighted to recognise everyone who remembers their 'home from home' like this with the launch of the 1714 Society. The society is a way to say thank you, and a way to ensure our legacy pledgers know how immensely valuable their support is for Worcester's future.

Our inaugural lunch was held in April, when the sun was shining on College. Our Fellow Librarian Mark Bainbridge gave a fascinating introduction to the treasures of Worcester's special collections. A particular highlight

was learning more about our unique collection of Civil War papers, received as a bequest in 1736 from Dr George Clarke – not only Worcester's architect but the son of Sir William Clarke, an important political figure during the Civil War and Restoration. Next year, we are looking forward to giving 1714 Society members a special tour of the Worcester gardens just as the wisteria is coming into bloom. 🌸

If you would like more information about legacies or to discuss leaving a gift to your College in your will, please contact Millie Papworth at millie.papworth@worc.ox.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0)1865 278335.