

The Dolphin



Murray Edwards
College

founded as New Hall

ISSUE 54 // SUMMER 2021



EXPERIENCE p.10

JCR President Freya Watson
on life at College in the last year.



REFLECTIONS p.14

Dame Barbara Stocking reflects
on her time as President.



INSPIRATION p.24

Dr Elizabeth Drayson discusses
her new book about Granada.

We're going digital

In the interests of environmental sustainability, this will be the final printed edition of *The Dolphin* and we will move to a digital publication. We will continue to print a small number for those who request a printed edition or for whom we have no email address. If you would like to continue to receive a printed copy, please contact the Development Office at newhallsociety@murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk or call us on 01223 762288.

From the President



MARTIN BOND PHOTOGRAPHY

Dame Barbara Stocking
President

Dear alumnae and friends

In every way possible it has been a most extraordinary year. But writing to you now, with the sun streaming in the window, it is starting to feel like some semblance of normality is returning. I only hope that you are well and have been able to manage any difficulties you have faced over the course of the last 12 months.

I'm pleased to say the majority of our students returned for Easter Term. It has been lovely to see them back, enjoying each other's company in the gardens at one of the most beautiful times of the year in College.

Our Directors of Studies, Tutors and administrative staff have worked hard to support our students throughout the year – whether they remained in College or continued their studies remotely. In this issue of *The Dolphin*, the JCR and MCR Presidents share their experiences of what life has been like for them, and how they have managed the ups and downs during this unsettling period. I hope you find their perspectives as interesting and uplifting as I have.

At the end of April, we were delighted to announce that the John Browne Charitable Trust made a gift of \$2million to the College (see page 16). This extremely generous gift will allow the College to educate more outstanding young women by increasing the space we have available for teaching and learning, and the amount of accommodation we can provide. We offer our sincerest thanks to the John Browne Charitable Trust for all that they continue to do for the College.

On a final note and as I come to the end of my tenure at Murray Edwards, I have penned some reflections on my time at this remarkable College (see page 14). I leave with some truly wonderful memories and would like to thank all of you who have supported and encouraged me over the years.

With best wishes.

The Dolphin

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COVER IMAGE:
HAUGHTON DRONE PHOTOGRAPHY
@HAUGHTONDRONEPHOTOGRAPHY

Gateway to success

Celebrating 10 years of the Gateway Programme

Over the last 10 years, the Gateway Programme has evolved and grown to meet the needs of current students but the original objective remains the same: to ensure young women from all backgrounds are able to make the most of the opportunities available to them at Cambridge.

Gateway is part of our commitment to encourage bright young women to apply to Murray Edwards and to support them during their time here. Raising awareness of the Programme, particularly among prospective students, remains a real focus for us and what better way to do that than by sharing some success stories?

Below are details of what we've been doing to celebrate Gateway turning 10, and to promote the College and the Programme to the next generation of students.



“I was keen to support the Gateway Programme for two reasons in particular, based on personal experience. Firstly, having worked in learning support, I have seen, time and again, how study skills can help to maximise academic opportunities and increase a student’s overall confidence. Secondly, many years on, I still vividly recall the impact summer travel had on my personal development; broadening my general outlook, encouraging me to step outside my comfort zone and increasing my self-confidence.”

Sarah Canby (1973, Law)

Thank you to all the alumnae who continue to support the Gateway Programme.



'Gateway to success' survey

www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/news/gateway-success

In June 2020, alumnae who left the College over the last 10 years completed a survey to tell us about their experience of Gateway and whether the skills they learned are helpful in the workplace and in their lives more widely. The survey responses provided the valuable insights included in the research report, which is available to download from the College website. A huge thank you to all the alumnae who took part in the survey and shared their views. Highlights from the survey are opposite.

We've been able to share this report across our social media profiles and directly with schools, which has helped to raise the College's profile and further highlight our commitment to women's learning and careers.

The Gateway Programme relies on the goodwill and engagement of students, the generosity of our donors, the commitment of our alumnae volunteers and the support of many others. Sarah Canby (left) shares her reasons for giving to the Programme.

A huge thank you to all the alumnae who took part in the survey and shared their views.



Survey highlights

Of those who graduated since 2017 and therefore benefitted from the way the Programme has developed over time:



70% said they would be likely or very likely to mention the Gateway Programme as a reason to study at Murray Edwards.



75% said their participation greatly helped or helped their study skills and transition to university learning.



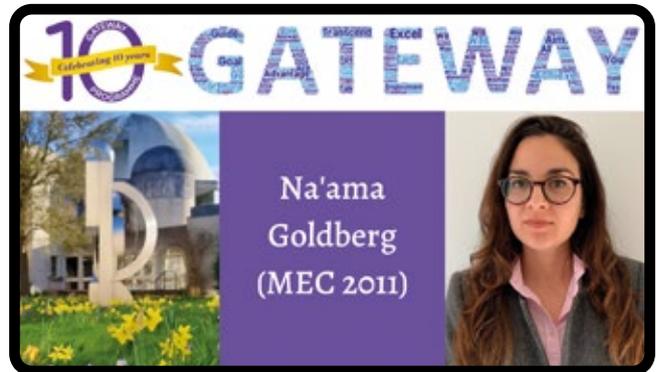
44% said their participation greatly helped or helped in their subsequent careers.

Alumnae share their experiences of Gateway

“The student mentors in each subject (gave) tailored advice about what is expected in supervisions, essays and exams. It was invaluable to talk to someone who had recently been through the same process.”

“A really good workshop of CV writing skills offered excellent advice... that I've been using ever since.”

“I can confidently say that the summer I spent in China funded by Gateway Challenges changed the whole direction of my career.”



Gateway Women

www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/gateway-women

As part of our 10 year anniversary celebrations, we have invited alumnae to share their experiences of Gateway and discuss their careers since leaving Murray Edwards. The videos and written interviews are available to view on our website and across our social media profiles. We will continue to release one a month for the remainder of 2021.



Instagram takeover

Search 'Murray Edwards College Access' on YouTube

Instagram remains an important channel for us to promote the College to younger and older audiences alike. To capitalise on its popularity among prospective applicants, we have hosted a series of 'takeovers' by current students on the College's main Instagram account. A takeover involves sharing posts about what it's like to be a student at Murray Edwards and to invite questions from the audience. In Lent Term, we hosted a 'Gateway Special' takeover, where Rachel (Student Advisor) introduced the Programme and shared her experiences. You can view the takeover on our Murray Edwards College Access YouTube channel.

New Hall Society International Day Event 2021

In March 2021, as lockdown restrictions continued, we held our annual event online to celebrate International Women's Day. Along with speakers from the student community, we were delighted to invite Redbridge Community School in Southampton to take part.



Eight year 10 students created and presented a powerful poem on what it means to them to be a woman in 2021. A transcript of the poem is overleaf and if you weren't able to join us at the event, the recording can be seen on the College's YouTube channel.

You can watch the recording at
www.youtube.com/watch?v=fn9Y13TMopo



More Than A Woman

International Women's Day is upon us once more,
And if there is one thing that we can say for sure, it's that
We've come a long way from where we were before, and
That must be celebrated.

The women who bore us have carved out a path for us
And because of them I can say for sure:

I am woman
I am mother
I am sister
I am daughter
I am freedom
I am speech
I am woman and I am proud,

but I'm also so much more.

I am proud to be a woman
To speak the truth of what I carry
The struggles
The smile
The hurt
The happiness
The pain
The perfection

And what I also carry is the history
of all the women who have been erased from
His story
and those who have forced their way through the narrow
crack in the door

We can vote, we have rights
We can protest, we have a voice

We have come so far in just a hundred years, and because
of this I fear
That carelessness may creep in and some think the end is
near.

But the battle rages on while inequality remains such a
strong
Part of the life we lead today.

Let's start with the implication that
Menstruation is wrong.

A belief that still remains strong
In 2021.

Who taught some men to believe that
A girl bleeding is unclean?

To the men
Who call periods gross,
Is it also gross that you came out
screaming,
covered in your
mother's blood,
Nourished by her blood?

Is it gross that one day your daughter will bleed,
Is it gross that your bride bleeds,
Is it gross that your mother once bled before you?

No,
what is gross is that your attitude
Will make your daughter wish...she was born a boy.

We need to teach her to embrace
Every part of her womanhood
To see she is woman, but see she is more.

Brave young girl
A warrior in the making
A warrior who does not see the pain

But the beauty in her blood.

The ugly truth is that we are living on a beautiful earth
designed to suit the male demand.
The phone you hold : for men
The military uniform you wear : for men
The medical dummies provided : all men
We are fighting these injustices together, as women, in
daily life

The damage isn't deliberate,
the priority of women's care has simply been discarded,
disregarded,
Shoved down the list of 'targets'

By the predominantly male leaders who act out of
convenience but not common sense
Who don't mean to exclude us, but without our intelligence
We will continue to exist in a world that doesn't suit us.

We want understanding leaders to represent us all
and show the world the real potential of women,
We want them to remember...

We are women, but we are more.

We are more than a face, body shape or size,
We are more than a mother, or significant other
We are more than periods and we certainly aren't inferior

Our natural patterns and cycles cannot be prevented but
our troubles,
our wavy lines can be straightened if we are supported.

So we must aim high, forget about what 'should' be and be
accepted for it
or we shall continue
to be seen and
not heard.

But how do you police a system designed to keep us
contained?

That's easy,
plant the seed of hate in our brains
Then sit back and watch as the roots take hold
And we start to believe there isn't enough space for us all
to grow.

See, we've been raised to oppose each other,
And to believe
That her beauty, brain, confidence, success
Means that ours is worth less.
Why has society created and condoned this mess?

You say she's too skinny,
You say she's too fat.
If you dare to scroll below the comment line,
Their remarks are filled with hypocrisy
So don't deny,
That these thoughts have entered your head and mine.

I once saw your words filled with empowerment,
Yet now your actions convey your prejudice

Who has taught you these wicked ways?

The patriarchy confines us,
Yet some women adopt their poisonous ways

And then others give them gratifying praise,
So the cycle continues and our behaviour plays
Right into the hands of those who would keep us down.

If we keep spouting this hatred towards one another,
Then you can be sure that men
will see us as petty women

And nothing more.
But if we ignore the bad and the dumb,
We'll notice how far women have come

It wasn't that long ago that women were perceived as weak,
Or only needed at home
But now there are so many inspirational women who have
shown
That there is space for us all to bloom and grow

Malala, Kamala and Zarah Sultana,
Margaret Thatcher, Cavendish, Atwood and more
These women all got their foot in the door

Helped by Dickinson, Pankhurst, Angelou, Plath and Parks
Who had, for so long been left in the dark, which ignited a
spark

And although it didn't happen overnight, they helped to set
the world alight.

Now on this day,
we rise up as young women,
ready to show the world we are a true phenomena

Ready to show the world that

We are women
We are mothers
We are sisters
We are daughters
We are freedom
We are speech
We are proud,

And united we stand, ready to kick down the door
And show the world that

We are women

But we are also so much more.

Student experience

Our JCR and MCR Presidents (2020-21) share their experiences of what life has been like during the last academic year.



Freya Watson
JCR President

I'm writing from my bedroom in Orchard Court, having just returned to College for Easter Term. It is my first time in Cambridge in the spring, and the gardens are in full bloom, brimming with daffodils and blossoms.

Every day I see another friend lugging their bags across the walkway, moving back in. I've already enjoyed sunbathing on Jesus Green, buying lunch from the market to eat on King's Parade, swimming in the Cam by Grantchester Meadows, and most excitingly, punting! It is all sweeter given the challenging year that has passed, but made all the better by the endless support of the College community.

“Maintaining the College community at a time when many of us were geographically apart, was essential and this remained a priority for the whole year.”

Finding focus amongst uncertainty

I took up the position of JCR President in March 2020 – just as the pandemic started and the University announced all teaching and learning would be online.

Despite being thrown in at the deep end, I was glad to have a focus and direction in amongst all the uncertainty. Coming together as a new JCR Committee, we soon realised that maintaining the College community at a time when many of us were geographically apart, was essential and this remained a priority for the whole year.

From bake offs to bar quizzes

Last summer, the JCR Committee hosted a range of online events including bar quizzes, LGBT+ and allies cocktail night, documentary film screenings and a bake off. In Michaelmas Term, when students were allowed to return to Cambridge, the Committee had more creative freedom: we delivered ingredients for households to make gingerbread, and we held a pamper evening with facemasks and hot chocolate. College even hosted special household formal halls in the Dome – a definite highlight of the Term! For many of us, it was those small treats that really made the difference.

Coping with challenges and looking to the future

Lent Term was certainly the most difficult as like most students, I stayed at home. At a time when it felt impossible to meet new people, the Ents Officers organised online 'Drink and Draw' socials with Jesus College and Selwyn College, which were so fun and refreshing. For me, seeing friends at the weekly JCR meetings kept me going too. I am already excited for the future when students can once again come together and enjoy Cambridge in the sunshine!



Organising the welcome packs for new postgrads with Phoebe and Abi.



Sophie Harbour
MCR President

I came into my role as MCR President in June 2020 – a little after the start of the first lockdown in England. I most certainly didn't expect the consequences for the new academic year but by Michaelmas, we were all finding new ways to connect, to work and to stay sane!

Maintaining our community

Although at first it was challenging to cope – not just with my own uncertainty but with that of other students – it was also incredible to see how quickly people rallied to provide support to one another.

With the help of a wonderful MCR Committee and caring College staff, we managed, in small ways, to maintain

our community. We tried everything from virtual cooking classes and pub quizzes to welfare packs and walks.

In Lent Term, our amazing Welfare Officer developed a pen-pal scheme, and I can happily say there is a remarkable delight to sending and receiving letters. Our postgrad photo competition also showed everyone just how many people were finding joy in the little things.

The true value of friendship

Over the last year, I've been reminded how important friends and family are. The times that have been the most challenging have been those when I've felt isolated or disconnected. Luckily, spending lockdown at home with my mum has meant these times have been far fewer than they might have been. Being able to feel close to my friends, despite the thousands of miles between us, is also something for which I am incredibly grateful.

Over the last year I've realised just how many people at Medwards are always willing to help – even if you've barely met them. From other students (postgrads and undergrads alike) to staff and Fellows, I've truly felt connected. I hope that what I'll remember from this time is how easy it can be to reach out to people and how much difference you can make by simply being there for someone when they reach out to you.

Cambridge Creatives

In 2020, Hannah Collins (2019, English) set up Cambridge Creatives with two other students - Fabienne Marshall (MPhil, Murray Edwards) and Ele Forsdyke (English, Homerton). Below, Hannah tells us more about her inspiration for this project.



Above: Hannah on Matriculation Day.

Opposite page: Tracey Seaward and Jonathan Pryce talk to Hannah and Ele of Cambridge Creatives.

Can you tell us about Cambridge Creatives?

Cambridge Creatives is really a product of the time. During the first lockdown, there was a creative vacuum – with so many film and theatre productions either postponed or cancelled. I wanted to create a society that would inspire people to be creative, provide hope for the future and entertain an audience.

My original idea has now blossomed into a stellar line-up of speakers, a growing community and an ambitious strategy for future series. For example, we recently launched our inaugural screenwriting competition (with the winning screenplay being produced into a short film), we curate film, TV and theatre reviews for our website, and we have run masterclasses in cinematography, editing and directing – all in addition to our regular Q&As!

It's been a bit of a whirlwind but I am so grateful to our guests, who have been so generous with their time, offering advice to students and even sharing contacts from their network for future Q&As.

Who has been your favourite speaker so far, and why?

We have had an incredible line-up, from Jonathan Pryce and Sir Richard Eyre to Sarah Brocklehurst (an alumna of



Murray Edwards) and Armando Iannucci. I don't know if I have a favourite, but our second Q&A was with Ol Parker (Director of *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again!*) and he was the perfect guest to calm us down. It felt like a chat with a friend in a coffee shop. He talked about his time in the creative scene at Cambridge, revealed stories from filmsets and gave some really inspiring advice.

I think the most meaningful conversations have been with female creatives, such as Rienkje Attoh, Nicola Shindler or Josie Rourke (also an alumna). Josie in particular was so generous in her advice and gave such encouragement to underrepresented voices, reminding students to be persistent in following their passions.

What speakers have you been most excited to share on the platform?

I have been excited by all the speakers. Every time I see an email pop into my inbox, I have a surge of adrenaline. We had an incredible response to our Q&A with Mathieu Kassovitz (Director of *La Haine* and actor in *Le Bureau*

and *Amélie*); nearly 300 people registered for the event. I hope even more people will be able to join future Q&As because these speakers are amazing. They are sharing their knowledge and experience in the strangely intimate environment of a Zoom webinar. And if you are unable to watch live, you can always catch up on our YouTube channel.

Are you planning on working in a creative industry when you graduate?

Yes I am. I would love to direct in film and TV. I don't know what the film or theatre industries will look like after coronavirus but I definitely feel buoyed by the advice and stories of our guests, and feel determined to make my dreams a reality.

For more information about Cambridge Creatives, visit www.cambridgecreatives.org

Dame Barbara reflects on her time as President

In July 2021, Dame Barbara Stocking will step down as President of the College after eight years at the helm. Below she shares some of her favourite memories, and why she believes it's still important to have a College focused on women's learning.

What are your favourite memories of your time as President?

My absolute favourite memories are from the graduation days – walking down the hill to Senate House and seeing the smiles on the students' faces. Watching the students go out into the world with confidence has been one of the best things about being President. The encouragement I've received from alumnae has also been fantastic. I've kept all the letters and cards over the years and honestly, it's felt like a real support-force standing behind my back, saying "go for it!"



Above: Dame Barbara with the Boat Club.

How has the College changed during your time as President?

Fundamentally, the College hasn't changed and I think that's a good thing. We're still focused on encouraging outstanding young women from all backgrounds to apply to study here, and we remain as friendly and open as a community as ever. I hope that never changes. What has changed is that Murray Edwards is much more respected in Cambridge these days. We're now seen as a College that has something to say for itself and has something to offer. This has enabled us to have more influence at University level and really be involved in the conversations that affect the wellbeing of our students.

Why is it still important to have a College focused on women's learning?

Despite everything, we are still living in a man's world: only a small number of women are in top leadership roles in government, in business and elsewhere. Additionally, lack of confidence is still a major issue facing young women. A College like ours – that really respects women and their achievements and also understands how women learn and can support their growth – is still very much needed.



Above: Sue Perkins and Dame Barbara Stocking.

What does the College mean to you?

As an alumna as well as the current President, the College means a great deal to me. By the time I graduated, I really felt like the world was my oyster and that I could go on to do anything I wanted to. The world may have changed in some significant ways since then but I still believe the College gives young women a place to really explore who they are and what they want from their lives.

What are you most proud of during your tenure?

I'm proud of playing my part in helping the whole College community to work together to achieve our shared aims. I'm also really proud of the work we did on 'Collaborating with Men' – helping people to understand what women are experiencing in the workplace and identifying the daily challenges to their progression.

What have you learnt about yourself over the last eight years?

Before I read the answers from the 'Collaborating with Men' survey – where alumnae had talked about the challenges in their work lives – I hadn't faced up to the fact that I had experienced a lot of those challenges myself. From being talked over in meetings and having work I'd done being attributed to a man, to being passed over for a job because of concerns that a woman wouldn't be 'strong enough' to handle it. The survey results enabled me to analyse my own experiences in a way I really hadn't done before.



Left: Maggie Budden and Dame Barbara Stocking at graduation in 1972. Below: Dame Barbara's fees during her third year as an undergraduate.



Did you ever imagine being President as a student?

Nothing would have been further from my mind! Even if I had thought about it, I wouldn't have had the faintest idea about how that could have been possible. I just wanted to get out into the world and live the fullest life available to me.

What will you miss most about the College?

All the people of course! I'll really miss meeting young women on a daily basis and hearing more about their lives and experiences. I'll also miss the lunches in College – and I don't just mean the food (although it is delicious – thanks to our marvellous catering team). I mean the conversations that are had over lunch. It's been just fantastic to hear about what Fellows are working on. My goodness there are some exciting developments taking place, particularly in the Sciences and in Engineering. You never know who you're going to sit next to, what they might talk about and what you might learn as a result. That has all been very exciting and I shall miss that tremendously.



Paula Browne and Lord Browne.

Lord Browne honours his mother with £2million gift to the College

The gift from the John Browne Charitable Trust is the largest single gift to the College since 2005.

Increasing support for our students

The gift has provided the funds to acquire a building on the College site which was formerly owned by an international education charity. As a result, we will be able to increase our student accommodation significantly as well as expand our teaching and conference capacity. This will allow the College to achieve its aim of increasing support for all students. In honour of this transformational gift, the building has been renamed Paula Browne House – in memory of Lord Browne's mother.

Paula Browne - an exceptional woman

Paula Browne was a Hungarian Auschwitz survivor who met her husband in post-war Hamburg. In 1955, the

“On behalf of the College, I would like to offer our sincerest thanks to the John Browne Charitable Trust for their extremely generous donation. Murray Edwards is currently limited in the accommodation it can provide students, and the spaces it can offer for teaching and learning. This gift will enable us to change all that.”

Dame Barbara Stocking

Browne family moved to Cambridge after John Browne Sr.'s career in the armed forces had taken the family from Germany to Singapore and then back to civilian life in England. Paula Browne was an exceptional woman: while living in Cambridge, Paula opened up her home to refugees who had fled the Hungarian revolution. She was part of a network of people in the UK who agreed to help these refugees, and the spectacle of a large number of people from the continent coming and going made a big impression on the young John Browne.

A longstanding relationship

An alumnus of St John's College, Cambridge, Lord Browne spearheaded a number of academic and commercial initiatives with the University of Cambridge. Through this work he met Anne Lonsdale, President of New Hall (1996-2008), with whom he forged a close relationship based on a shared concern for gender equality, the environment and climate change. This generous donation will continue the John Browne Charitable Trust's longstanding relationship with the College, to which it has given more than £200,000 since 2005 to fund the Paula Browne Scholarships. These scholarships are typically awarded to women at the College from Eastern European countries who would not otherwise have the opportunity to study at the University of Cambridge.

“The Trustees of the John Browne Charitable Trust and I are delighted to make this gift to Murray Edwards College. It is a special College, part of an extraordinary university to which I owe a great deal. My mother was an uncommon woman who cared enormously about granting women equal access to opportunity – because it was something that was denied to her. She would have been so pleased to be associated in this way with Murray Edwards.”

Lord Browne

“It will give me the greatest pleasure to attend the opening of Paula Browne House. The College community will be enriched by our association with Paula's quick, elegant spirit and deep thoughtfulness.”

Anne Lonsdale
(President of New Hall, 1996-2008)

New Hall Art Collection News

Distinguished art historian, Professor Griselda Pollock, winner of the Holberg Prize 2020, has provided a vital gift to support the New Hall Art Collection Curator role for the next 12 months.



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Griselda Pollock

Pollock is the Professor of Social and Critical Histories of Art at the University of Leeds. She is known for her academic work on feminist, social, queer and postcolonial interventions in the histories of art and cultural studies, and has been one of the most influential scholars in these areas for over 40 years.

Pollock helped to establish 'feminist interventions in art's history' as an academic field in the 1970s. For 48 years she dedicated herself to teaching, researching and expanding the ways art is studied and interpreted by developing new concepts through which to think about the social and historical complexities of gender and of art.

Pollock's donation will support the important work of the Curator to ensure the New Hall Art Collection continues to grow in profile and reputation as one of the world's most important collections of art by women in the world.

Griselda Pollock comments: "I am so delighted to be able to support such an important collection of work dedicated to making visible to the public and part of the students' daily lives the work of so many brilliant contemporary women artists. This gift consolidates the long relationship I have had with the New Hall Art Collection, beginning when I wrote in the very first catalogue published in 1992 and attended the opening celebrations. Watching the Collection evolve over the last 28 years and begin to get



the recognition it deserves has been a true pleasure, and it brings me much joy to be able to support the vital work of the Curator and the development of Collection at a time when women as artists and in the arts need supporting more than ever.”

Dame Barbara Stocking, President, Murray Edwards College comments: “Griselda Pollock has been a long-standing supporter of the New Hall Art Collection and we are very grateful for her generous gift. With this support we will be able to continue our vital work in raising the profile of the Collection and championing women artists within the ethos of a College for women dedicated to gender equality.”

“ I am so delighted to be able to support such an important collection of work.”

We need your support to secure the long-term future for the Curator role. If you would like to give, become a patron or discuss how you can help please contact Claire Cosgrave at claire.cosgrave@murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk

Jo's jottings

Head Gardener, Jo Cobb, shares some notes from her lockdown diary

April 2020

"April is the cruellest month..." (*The Waste Land*, T.S. Eliot). Lockdown in England. Hardly any students here and many staff are working from home. People are missing the best time of year in the garden. We have it all to ourselves at the moment, which completely misses the point as the garden is for the students. Without them here, it's just not the same.

As a gardens team, we've moved out of our bothy in order to maintain social distancing. This means all our break times will be outside – albeit under an awning. We're already dressed for the weather, so I don't suppose it will make much difference.

May 2020

Like everyone else it seems, the gardens team is doing a lot of baking and cooking! So far the gluten free brownies and anything heavy on the garlic seem to be the most popular. My favourite is cherry ice yoghurt. All I have to do is put banana, yoghurt and frozen cherries into a blender and there you go! No cooking required and it works every time.

Joining us for morning break at the moment is the resident robin who flits down from a tree to eat crumbs. David (Deputy Head Gardener), keeps feeding it bits of cheese, which it seems to like. Zach (gardener) has tried feeding it meal worms and suet pellets when David isn't here but apparently this isn't good enough as the robin has disappeared. I was starting to feel anxious about the robin and fearing the worst but when David (and his cheese) came back for a day, so did the robin!

June 2020

Really enjoying having our breaks outside instead of in the bothy. It's turning out to be one of the great joys of lockdown for us. Good to look on the bright side.



July 2020

Met up with Dr Lucy Delap in College and asked her how she was finding working from home. She told me she was working harder than ever and finding new ways of working too. She said, "Everything is changing forever", which I liked.

With Lucy's words swirling around in my head, I'm starting to think about how we could change things in the garden. Zach has suggested we grow wild flowers instead of winter bedding, so we're going to sow oxeye daisies, field poppies, foxgloves and purple sweet rocket. These will be ready for the beginning of Easter Term next year.

November 2020

A student has asked if we can look after her treasured pink geraniums when she returns home to the US. She's asked us to put them with our Pelargonium collection, which we have outside the Rectory in the summer. She's hoping to be able to see them when she returns to College for graduation.

December 2020

Storm Bella has brought down two large trees in the Fellows' Garden. One of the trees – a beech tree – was an experiment in a more sympathetic form of woodland management. The tree died about a decade ago, so we removed all its branches and allowed the trunk to remain as a biodiversity tower block. Woodpeckers, squirrels and jackdaws have all made nests in it. When the tree surgeons cut it up and stacked the wood where it fell (for more wildlife to use), we found the hollow trunk full of nesting material made of paper litter, plastic bags and other flotsam. Nothing is wasted it seems.

The other tree was an interesting hybrid between sycamore and another acer. It fell into the neighbour's garden, so we needed to ask the tree surgeon to remove it quickly. I knew, because we have had others like it in College, that the tree is a 'wave shook' – the grain has a wavy pattern rather than running straight up and down. Wood turners and other decorative wood workers prize this feature highly, but it blunted the tree surgeon's saw and made the whole task much more difficult.

Caitlin (gardener) has made a festive flower arrangement with berries and coloured twigs for students remaining in College over the vacation. I hope they like it.

January 2021

We want to grow more vegetables so the students feel more connected to the College. I think we're going to plant some blonde and bronze-leaved lettuce as well as 'Palco', our favourite spinach. Will be thinking about summer vegetables next.



February 2021

Having enjoyed the birdsong so much last spring, we're starting to think about bird-nesting season again this year. We have many species of small birds in the garden but the most notable are blue tits. Last summer we saw them in flocks with other birds, flitting through the trees and then like free-climbing mountaineers, clinging to the vertical concrete walls to feed on invisible invertebrates there. We're very keen to do something practical to promote the lives of the little birds in the garden.

Last year we put up nine nest boxes and in eight of those, the parents successfully fledged young birds. We also spotted some long-tailed tits, which make little woven nests like pods. Last winter, we found a nest made of wisps of hair with tiny bits of moss and pieces of the soft string we use to secure the climbing roses. It was exquisitely made.

We're going to put up 15 bird boxes for 'Bird Box Sunday'. I've asked the students who are in College if they would like a nest box outside their window. I think the rooms are too high up in some cases or there isn't a tree in the vicinity, but we are going to try to arrange the boxes so everyone who may be interested can see the birds from their window or kitchen and monitor progress throughout the summer.

Welcome to our new Fellows

The College Fellowship continues to grow and we are delighted to announce the appointment of the following outstanding academic researchers and teachers.



Dr David Willer
Henslow Research
Fellow

Dr David Willer is an interdisciplinary scientist aiming to improve the health of our population and planet through innovations in sustainable nutritious seafood production. He is the College's new Henslow Research Fellow, and is delighted to be returning to a familiar setting, having previously undertaken his PhD at Fitzwilliam College.

David's research focusses on developing mechanisms to improve production of and facilitate demand for one of the most sustainable and nutrient-rich foods on the planet – bivalve shellfish (clams, mussels, oysters). One exciting component is work enabling the growth of shell-less clams for food (Teredinidae) – clams that can grow to over a metre in length! His work also aims to identify mechanisms to increase consumer selection of bivalves in place of less sustainable foods.

David enjoys supervising students and seeing them achieve their potential. He believes "effective research culture should promote breakthrough innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, focussed on output with high societal benefit and researcher wellbeing as part of a vibrant scientific community."

David is also a Health Coach and Mountain Leader, competes in multisport and adventure races, and has a passion for wild camping and cooking.



Dr Moataz Assem
Early Career Research
Fellow in Neuroscience

Dr Moataz Assem is a Research Associate at the MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, School of Clinical Medicine at the University of Cambridge. He earned his PhD in Medical Sciences from the same unit in November 2020. He probes the human brain using invasive and non-invasive brain imaging techniques to understand the neurobiological mechanisms supporting human intelligence.

Before arriving in Cambridge, Moataz studied Medicine at Alexandria University (Egypt, MBBCh 2013) and Biomedical Engineering at Bogazici University (Turkey, MSc 2016) with a research stint at MIT's Brain and Cognitive Sciences Department. He is invested in raising awareness about neuroscience in Africa and the Middle East.

In 2010, Moataz co-founded the Alexandria Neuroscience Committee, a student-led NGO branch, which organised popular public-orientated neuroscience events, later supported by the Library of Alexandria. In 2015, he founded the Egyptian Brain Bee, now the go-to neuroscience Olympiad for thousands of high school students from all over Egypt. He has also been nominated as a member of the Academic and Competition Advisory Committee for the International Brain Bee.

Moataz says, "I am honoured to join Murray Edwards as an Early Career Fellow and excited to be part of its community."



Tiarnan Doherty
Early Career Research
Fellow in Physics

Tiarnan Doherty joins the College as an Early Career Research Fellow in Physics. His research focuses on a new class of materials called metal halide-perovskites that have exciting potential applications across a broad range of technologies including Solar Cells, X-ray detectors, and LED's. Tiarnan's main focus is on understanding where performance losses and instabilities originate in these perovskite materials, which are two of the biggest barriers to their commercial adoption.

"The college experience is a special part of Cambridge student life and I benefitted enormously from it during my PhD, finding friends, academic challenges and support. I'm very much looking forward to contributing to the inclusive and diverse community at Murray Edwards in any way I can."

**We look forward to their
admission as Fellows in October.**

Lost Paradise: The Story of Granada



Dr Elizabeth Drayson, Emeritus Fellow in Spanish, talks about the inspiration behind her new book.

In Lost in Paradise: The Story of Granada, Dr Elizabeth Drayson takes the reader on a voyage of discovery that uncovers the many-layered past of Spain's most complex and fascinating city, celebrating and exploring its evolving identity. It is the first narrative history of Granada for English-speaking readers.



Alhambra Palace.

“Granada in southern Andalusia is the most beguiling of Spanish cities. Romantic and exotic, tragic and nostalgic, it is Spain’s top tourist attraction, and its Alhambra palace and the Albaicín district are World Heritage Sites. Yet surprisingly Granada is not a European capital city, nor even the capital city of Andalusia. This modest civic status belies the historical and cultural importance of a site which is a meeting place of Christian and Muslim civilisations, and which has vital significance in the context of Spanish, European and world history.

I first visited Granada many years ago in the sultry late afternoon of a day when the temperature had almost hit 50C, and small birds had fallen dead from the trees with the heat. It was a scorching introduction to a city of intense extremes – fiery sun and snow and ice, blinding light and shade, water and dust. Since I first fell under its spell, I have returned many times in different seasons, and become increasingly intrigued by the paradox of its reputation as an earthly paradise, set against its long history of violence. That fascination led to my new book, a history of Granada, city and province, from prehistoric times to the present, which aims to reveal the distinctive, evolving identity of a city whose dramatic past and enigmatic character are crucial to our understanding of the history of the Iberian Peninsula and of Europe.

For 2000 years, the history of Granada has been the story of its peoples. Archaeology shows that native Iberian tribes were conquered by the Romans, who settled on the hill of the Albaicín in the last centuries before Christ, and soon after, Granada came under Visigothic rule. Jews,



Patio of the Lions in the Palacios Nazaries.

Arabs, Christians and gypsies also made it their home, and from the eleventh century onwards, the Moorish culture of Granada became crucial to its life past and present, culminating in the dramatic fall of the city, capital of the last Arabic-speaking Islamic state in Europe, to the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile in 1492. Granada became a site of religious, racial and political conflict between medieval Muslims and Christians, and between Moriscos and Christians in the early modern era. In the eighteenth century it evolved into a Baroque city with a striking gypsy culture and outspoken women writers, while its romantic decline in the early nineteenth century attracted many travellers mesmerised by its magic. Yet its saga of conflict resumed in the twentieth century during the Spanish Civil War, when many Granadans, including the poet García Lorca, were shot dead by Fascist forces.

Both a living yet lost paradise, the many voices of Granada's history express the complex relationships between rival religions and civilisations, connections that have shaped it as a place that illuminates the vexed issue of Spain's identity, poised between its European Latin past, and its Arab and Jewish heritage."

“ It was a scorching introduction to a city of intense extremes - fiery sun and snow and ice, blinding light and shade, water and dust. ”

Events and conferencing

We understand many of you will have postponed special events over the last year, and how disappointing that will have been. We want you to know the College is looking forward to hosting conferences and events again, and with restrictions now easing, there's never been a better time to book your next event at Murray Edwards College.

You can help the College recover from the financial impact of the global pandemic by choosing us for your event. As an alumna of New Hall/Murray Edwards, any event brought to us by you receives 10% off the total cost of booking (excluding alcohol). Whether it's a family reunion, milestone birthday or a wedding, we would love to help you celebrate. We would also welcome the opportunity to support your workplace, community group or charity host their next conference, meeting, garden party or Christmas party. All you have to do is email us, copying in your organisation's event lead, and they will receive the alumnae discount.

We understand that making a decision to host an event can be a difficult one at the moment. That is why we are giving you the flexibility and peace of mind to cancel, for free, up to 14 days before your event is due to take place if you have to change your plans due to a COVID-related issue (T&Cs available on our website).



What we can offer:

- **Seasonal fine dining or a bespoke menu** - created in partnership with our Head Chef.
- **The ultimate 'wow' factor of The Dome** - for weddings and large parties.
- **Garden events and celebrations** - including personal celebrations, corporate garden parties and Christmas parties.
- **Professional standard meeting rooms** - with excellent AV facilities and support.
- **On site accommodation** - the College has over 100 en suite bedrooms. Singles and twins available during vacations.

Competitive rates: Alumnae receive 10% off the total cost of their booking

You can email our friendly Events Team at
events@murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk
or call us on 01223 762267





Events and exhibitions

We will continue our programme of online events and we are hopeful for some in-person events in the autumn.

**Exhibition: Maud Sulter:
The Centre of the Frame**
4 September 2021 –
2 January 2022

Maud Sulter: The Centre of the Frame will spotlight the work of Scottish-Ghanaian artist Maud Sulter (1960-2008), whose practice is rooted in questioning the representation of Black women in art and literature. The display will bring together public and private loans from across the UK of Sulter's iconic photographic series Zabat (1989), which features portraits of contemporary Black female figures dressed as the Greek Muses. A programme of public events will accompany the exhibition.

Event: Alumnae Weekend
Saturday 26 – Sunday 27
September 2021

Please join us for drinks, dinner and dancing as we celebrate Alumnae Weekend. There will also be the opportunity to hear from the new College President, Dorothy Byrne. At the time of writing we are hopeful that the Alumnae Weekend celebrations will be able to take place without restrictions. Should this not be the case, we will be in touch again. Please visit the Events section of the Alumnae pages on the College website for up-to-date information.

**Alumnae Event
Programme Refresh**

We are using this period as an opportunity to review and refresh our alumnae events programme. Alumnae will soon have the opportunity to complete a survey on the programme so we can gain your feedback and ideas for the future. Please make sure we have your correct email address and that you have given your permission to hear about events by updating your details via the Alumnae pages of the website:
www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/updatemydetails



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