

Queen's newsletter

Issue Fifteen
Michaelmas Term 2009



A letter from the Provost **Page 2** News from the College **Pages 3-5** A letter from the Director of Development **Page 6** Interview **Page 7** The Boat Club **Page 8** An Enigma **Page 9** The College Choir **Page 10** Something completely different **Page 11** A Letter from the Old Members' Officer **Page 12**

A letter from the Provost

Professor Paul Madden FRS FRSE



It looks like tricky times ahead. Spending in the public sector will be very tight for the next few years, at least. It is very hard to imagine any significant increase in the block grants provided by Government in this period, despite the widely publicised need for more money for the universities. Furthermore, the money that does exist is being allocated in ways that are themselves being altered, and this is already putting a lot of strain on the relationships between different parts of the University. Change is in the air, and it is crucial to identify what it is most important to retain and to understand what is required to sustain it. This sounds like the start of a fund-raising letter, but it isn't. What I really want to do is inform the moral support which we so appreciate from our Old Members; I hope it does not become too polemical.

I shall focus, for the present, on the Humanities, where the situation is acute and where the college role in teaching (and research) is particularly marked. Oxford is probably world-leading in Humanities research and certainly provides the best undergraduate education through the emphasis on tutorial teaching by research-engaged staff. Despite comfortably topping the recent Research Assessment Exercise (the six-yearly nationwide assessment of academic research output that determines future funding for research), the amount of research support provided to the Humanities through the block grant was halved, in part as a consequence of a redistribution towards STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). In the component of the block grant associated with teaching, the University receives £3,882 per Humanities undergraduate, compared to £6,768 for a science student (and £16,447 for medics). The per capita income for teaching is this plus the fee, currently £3,225. In Oxford, the average (across all subjects) total cost of educating a student has recently been estimated as £16,000 per annum, and there is no reason to think that this cost is lower than average for Humanities.

There are some Oxford-specific challenges posed by the enormous discrepancy between income received for teaching and the cost of providing it. Firstly, the cost is considerably higher than in other universities, even Cambridge (though the Cambridge estimate did not include college costs). To account for this we would refer to the expense of the tutorial system. However, to justify it it is necessary to argue that the Oxford educational experience is better than elsewhere. At present the orthodoxy is that a first-class degree at Oxford is equivalent to one from another university; it is clear that we need the courage to present an "elitist" message and break away from this. This is where the moral support I referred to above is going to become important. It is certainly the tutorial system which comes under internal scrutiny when cost-cutting is in the air: since the proportion of teaching provided through tutorials varies across the different disciplines there are interdisciplinary tensions which arise whenever the financial problems are discussed. Secondly, academic appointments

in Oxford are made jointly by University departments and the colleges, and both contribute to salaries. In Humanities the majority share is borne by the colleges, as befits the fact that tutorials are organised from a college base. This joint appointment system is unique to Oxford, so we argue for this and its consequences on our own. It means that a large proportion of the income/cost discrepancy in teaching falls on the college and that the college makes a large contribution to research by paying salaries, for which it receives almost no compensating income. The extra income to make up the difference comes from the endowment, running conferences in the vacation, and fund-raising, and where this is insufficient an unsustainable deficit accumulates. This extra contribution to Humanities costs in Oxford is largely invisible to the outside world and not well understood within. In fact, it is this contribution which has enabled Oxford to have the strong Humanities base (in teaching and research) that I have referred to above. Because it is invisible, is unique to Oxford, and also differs from college to college, it is not properly accounted for in centralised schemes which are being proposed to address the deficit at the University level. There is a real danger of making changes which tear away at the elements which sustain the tutorial teaching and research excellence in the Humanities.

So where does hope lie? Well much of it is clearly invested in the opportunity to increase fees, and the Government does have a task force to report on this (after the next general election). A recent paper from Lord Mandelson's office has set out an outline of what will be required to do this. Some elements are encouraging, in particular there is clear scope to overturn the "orthodoxy" I referred to above and argue that universities are different and need to charge differential fees. On the other hand it is clear that an increase in fees would need to go hand-in-hand with a generous provision of bursaries, so that admission to a university is on a "needs-blind" basis, and this is accepted within the university community. As a consequence, the fee raise will only partially address Oxford's Humanities problem. If, for example, the fee was set at £12,000 (which is close to what would be required to meet the income/cost gap if it were paid by all) partial bursaries would have to be provided even to students whose families have gross incomes in excess of £70,000, which is probably a bit higher than the average income of those coming to Oxford now. So, the number of actual net contributors gets to be quite small as the fee gets to be high enough to address the problem. It is clear, then, that the Oxford supplement through the colleges is going to continue to be essential if the Government continues to direct the block grant towards STEM together with a, hopefully well-directed, effort to cut costs. I can almost hear the transatlantic chorus of '...why not privatise...?'. Indeed, given that (on the figures I gave above) less than a quarter of necessary funding for teaching in Humanities now comes from the Government, why not go the whole hog? Well, much of the rest of the University does receive substantial support from Government and the climate of opinion in the country as a whole would be very hostile.

Whatever way one looks at it, there are tricky times ahead.

Paul Madden

Contributors:

**Paul Madden
Owen Rees
Matthew Watson
Greg Petros**

Editors:

**Andrew Timms
& Emily McLeod**

Cover photograph:

showing detail of the
ceiling plasterwork
in the Upper Library
Andrew Timms

Published by:

**The Old Members' Office
The Queen's College
Oxford
OX1 4AW**

**oldmembers@
queens.ox.ac.uk**

news from the College



A History of The Cherwell Newspaper

Book Corner

Pasadena Parade, written by Old Member Bill Kay (PPE, 1965), is a murder mystery set in Pasadena. A very public double murder lifts the lid on a seething web of corruption beneath the placid surface of Pasadena, the legendary sun-drenched city known as the Crown of the Valley, ten miles north-east of downtown Los Angeles.

The Penguin Book of Japanese Verse, edited by Geoffrey Bownas (Literae Humaniores, 1942), is a collection from the third century to the present of some of the most beautiful Japanese verse, with folk songs and lullabies alongside traditional tanka and haiku verse, as well as the “modern style” poems with their sharper satirical flavour.



Professor Geoffrey Bownas is pictured (right) with Dr Phillip Harries, Fellow in Japanese, at the 2009 Old Members' Garden Party

Are you a former editor of **Cherwell**? Did you work for the newspaper when you were a student? If so, we would be grateful if you would consider getting in touch with Chris Baraniuk, who is writing a book about Cherwell's 90-year history. He is looking for interview subjects and is compiling a 'Cherwell alumni' database.

Chris can be reached by email: cherwellhistory@gmail.com, telephone: 07825 294037, or post: Chris Baraniuk, Cherwell, 7 St Aldates, Oxford, OX1 3BS.

Retirement

Dr Martin Edwards has retired after over 40 years of teaching at Queen's. Himself an undergraduate at the College, Martin went on to be Fellow in Mathematics and Dean, not to mention Secretary of the Amalgamated Sports Clubs, and Editor of the College Record. He is now College Lecturer in Mathematics and an Emeritus Fellow.

New Dean

The new College Dean is Professor Jane Mellor, Fellow in Biochemistry.

news from the College



Carol for Queen's

A carol written by Dr Phillip Cooke (Junior Research Fellow in Music) and sung to the words by Old Member and poet Bob Fowler (English, 1952) is being performed by the Pro Nobis Singers of Kendal (13 December), the Lancaster Singers (15 December), and Keswick Choral Society (16 December). The carol is called *Laetemur Animo*.

Phillip is co-founder of London Contemporary Music Group, which was established in 2004 as a platform for his compositions to be performed by professional players. His position at Queen's also means that he has easy access to a very talented group of singers who have performed his choral grace on a number of College occasions. Indeed one of Phillip's upcoming projects will be a new work to be sung by the College Choir, entitled *Four Choral Songs*.

A Fellow in English – at last!

Dr Rebecca Beasley has made history at Queen's by taking up her post as the College's first ever Fellow in English. Her research interests include literature and criticism 1900–1940, visual culture, reception, and translation. Rebecca studied at Cambridge and Berkeley. She is currently working on a book project about the impact of Russian culture on British modernism. This study argues that the British cultural construction of Russia not only fed into, but focused and reformed the defining questions of modernism: the relation between writer and audience (individual vs. mass), the relation between the literary work and lived experience (the nature of realism), and the relation between language and action (abstraction vs. the concrete).

Telethon

Last January the College ran its first telethon, which not only allowed students to help raise money for much-needed projects, but connected students with Old Members in an unprecedented way. All of us who participated had a fantastic experience, sharing stories about Queen's, discovering the different paths Old Members had taken, and receiving welcome first-hand advice on career choices. For me, as an aspiring barrister, it was particularly encouraging, as several Old Members gave advice as well as the opportunity for some first-hand experience. Martin Bowley QC (Jurisprudence, 1957) took me on a tour of Inner Temple, and provided inside advice on getting a foot on the legal ladder. Judge Andrew McDowall (Jurisprudence, 1967) and another Old Member allowed me to sit in court, read case papers, and discuss legal issues, an experience that has been valuable in confirming my commitment to pursuing a legal career. However, more than simply providing friendly career advice, all the Old Members that I spoke to helped remind me that studying at Queen's is a unique and enriching opportunity, the effect of which lasts a lifetime – especially important for a student who, this time next year, will be an Old Member himself.

Matthew Watson

(Modern History & Politics, 2007)

Teaching awards

We are delighted to congratulate Dr Jackie Stedall, Supernumerary Fellow in the History of Mathematics, who has received a University of Oxford Teaching Award in recognition of her excellent teaching and the development of the History of Mathematics course. Jackie also won a project grant, together with Dr Catherine Wilkins, to enable them to develop third-year project work.

We are also pleased to announce that Professor Robert Taylor, Tutor in Physics, was awarded a project grant for his work on the third-year syllabus of the undergraduate course in Physics.

news from the College

What's Cooking?

The construction of the new underground kitchen now has a completion date of Easter 2010, a respectable delay (originally the completion date was Christmas 2009) given the archeological findings and structural surprises which have met the construction team.

Almost every aspect of the project can be described as 'high risk' or 'complicated' due to the confines of the site and the nature of the existing buildings and their foundations. A crucial aspect of the work undertaken recently was the laying of both the basement and ground-floor slabs. Outstanding structural groundwork problems needed to be overcome before this could happen and major structural activity meant that far fewer workers than usual were allowed on site for safety reasons.

And it's not just the 'behind-the-scenes' work that has caused difficulties of late. Even seemingly superficial aspects are not straightforward. The roof beams for the new SCR dining room had to be lifted in from Queen's Lane by crane and maneuvered into place. Of course it didn't actually happen but the photo allows one to visualise the College's very real concerns about this task...



Queen's in the news

The College recently announced that, thanks to two generous gifts, it has established a graduate scholarship in Philosophy in memory of Neda Agha-Soltan, the 27-year-old Iranian philosophy student who was killed in Tehran on 20 June during the protests over the outcome of the 2009 Iranian presidential election.

The decision was condemned by the Iranian Embassy, and the matter attracted a good deal of press coverage. Most notable was a supportive leading article in the Times, which admired the College's decision to accept the donations and name the scholarship according to the wishes of the donors, who are well known to the College.

The first holder of the scholarship is Arianne Shahvisi, who has just joined the College and is studying for an M.St. in the Philosophy of Physics. Arianne writes that 'It is a great honour to be the first student to receive the scholarship in the memory of Neda Agha-Soltan, which is particularly meaningful to me, being a young woman of Iranian descent, also studying philosophy. In accepting the scholarship, I extend my sincere condolences to the Agha-Soltan family, and hope that in succeeding in my studies

at Oxford, I can do justice to the name of their brave and gifted daughter.'

The Provost, Professor Paul Madden, commented that 'Oxford is increasingly losing out to its competitors in the race to recruit top graduate students. Donations such as those that have enabled us to create the Neda Agha-Soltan Scholarship are absolutely vital for us to continue to attract and retain the best young minds.' The scholarship provides the amount of money required to pay the College's graduate fee. All students accepted by the College for the M.St., B.Phil. or D.Phil. in Philosophy are eligible for consideration for the Scholarship, but preference is given to those of Iranian nationality or extraction.

After the press coverage had died down a little, the Tutor in Philosophy, Professor John Hyman, wrote personally to all Old Members of the College who studied philosophy as part of their degree. This letter has generated a substantial response: nearly 50 donors have now donated or pledged money to the scholarship fund, which exceeds £20,000. If we can raise £65,000, then the scholarship will be established in perpetuity. Old Members who wish to contribute are warmly encouraged to do so; you can find a donation form via the news link on the front page of the College's website.

A letter from the Director of Development



Last December, when I wrote my most recent letter, the College's endowment was plunging, and the economic outlook seemed fairly bleak. For some reason I decided that it was a good time to outline the College's asset allocation policies. Having noted that the endowment had fallen from a peak of £147 million to £144

million in the 2007–8 financial year (August–July), I then explained that the College retained large holdings in land and commercial property. Partly, of course, this is the residue of an older investment policy, in which the majority of the College's money was put into property; the past 30 years have seen a gradual but emphatic move away from this position. Nevertheless, the College has kept a significant fraction of its wealth in property (over 35%), and it has viewed this policy as a hedge against volatility in the equity markets. We can argue for the next 100 years over whether this is a good or a bad idea, but the reality is that we have survived the financial turbulence thus far without catastrophic losses. The endowment fell, of course, in 2008–9, but 'only' to £136 million. So in response to the question I am often asked by Old Members—"how is the College faring?"—I think the best answer is "could be worse".

And it is far too easy to forget that money isn't everything. My guess is that when historians of the College consider the past twelve months, they will pay little attention to the fluctuations of the endowment, preferring instead to note the continued academic achievements of the students (10th in the Norrington Table is very respectable), the decision of the Governing Body to proceed with the construction of a lecture theatre, the excellence of the chapel choir, the construction of the underground kitchen, and so on. They may also devote some analysis to a very significant process that the College is undertaking, which is its registration as a charity with the Charity Commission. In recent years the College has been an exempt charity, which has freed it from a great many administrative and regulatory requirements, but the 2006 Charities Act has forced change upon us. The ramifications of this change are profound—I believe that relatively few people understand just how profound—and we have already had to rewrite substantially our Statutes in order to gain the approval of the Charity Commissioners. As Old Members are already aware, we have also had to establish

a committee to oversee the remuneration of Fellows, in order to divorce the trustees of the charity from their own salary arrangements; this committee is comprised of Old Members and has met for the first time.

There is understandable nervousness in Oxford as to quite what the future holds for our charitable status. Some independent schools have already found out the hard way that being a registered charity brings with it obligations that simply have to be met to the satisfaction of the Charity Commission. There is also a certain amount of unease about the differing position of the Colleges from that of the University, which is to be regulated by HEFCE rather than the Charity Commission. One always fears that the flick of a legislator's wrist will remove the wrinkles that keep Oxford beautifully complex. To say that is not to offer an apology for a system that could be replaced with something much more efficient; rather, it is to resist the inexorable centralising logic that gets applied to seemingly everything these days. Whatever happens in the future, we hope that the College will remain an irreducible unit within a broader structure, much as it is now.

I said that money isn't everything, but it certainly helps. One reason we are able to act with a good deal of independence is because we are fortunate to have substantial resources upon which to fall back. You have been helping us augment these resources—nearly £800,000 donated in the past financial year (£1.25 million if you count new pledges as well as cash received)—and we remain very grateful for your support. We are also taking substantial steps to increase revenues from our 'other' activities—principally conference and catering business—although we are very clear that we shall do this (I am tempted to insert 'unlike some other colleges') without turning ourselves into a conference centre. This will be a tricky path to negotiate, but we are confident we can manage.

So we live in interesting times, and I hope that more of you will come back and see things for yourselves. As I have pointed out in other letters, we try to accomplish all of this change without really changing the fundamentals at all. It is a difficult balance to strike, and I certainly wouldn't claim to get it right all of the time. That is why we value so highly your feedback, your involvement, and your friendship. And criticism too—because the flip-side of 'could be worse' is that we could be better.

Interview

Claire Taylor

We interviewed Claire (Mathematics, 1994) in the second edition of the Newsletter back in spring 2003 when she had given up her day job to concentrate on playing cricket full-time. We spoke to her again to find out how this decision paid off.

What was the outcome of your decision to be a full-time cricketer?

The decision to leave my job did pay off but I was not immediately successful on the pitch. I travelled a lot, spending summers in the UK and winters playing in New Zealand. It was ten months of cricket out of every twelve and 8-10 training sessions per week. I was learning a lot. However, my international performances were still not consistent and I wasn't having the impact that I wanted. Having decided to be a full-time cricketer, I had set myself on the pathway to being one of the best players in the world but by the 2005 World Cup, I was still not quite there (England was knocked out in the semi-finals).

What did you decide to do?

After the 2005 World Cup – having made so many sacrifices for apparently little gain, I had some hard decisions to make. Once again I found myself reassessing my life choices and I came close to questioning whether I wanted to carry on playing at all. I held lengthy discussions with those in the cricketing world and decided that I needed more balance in my life. I still wanted to realise my ambitions in cricket but I needed to have other ambitions too.



How did you achieve this?

It became important to have a day job again to support myself financially and to provide a different mental challenge.

I now work for SUMS Consulting, a Management Consultancy firm based at the University of Reading which undertakes projects in the Higher Education sector. I have flexible working arrangements and take on a variety of projects covering areas that include academic timetabling. The job provides a good foundation for me: I get time off for training, it gives me financial independence and a set of separate challenges.

How do you relax?

My new working arrangement also means that I have time to devote to music, a passion which fell by the wayside when I was playing cricket full-time. I play with the Aldworth Philharmonic and we do three or four concerts per year. Again this activity provides me with a focus that is entirely separate from my sport.

What is the most challenging aspect of your career?

The most challenging aspect is yet to come. I am approaching the end of my sporting career and over the next few years, the transition from being a successful international athlete to working full-time and finding new ways to push myself will be tough. I am particularly concerned with giving something back to the game in the right way, in a way that has a positive influence on the new generation of cricketers and gets the best out of them.



You have been named the first ever female Wisden Cricketer of the Year, you have broken records, been ranked top female ODI (One-Day International) batter in the world, and played an integral part in enabling England to retain the Ashes. What is your proudest moment so far?

As a team we played some great cricket in March 2009 leading up to our One-Day World Cup win in Australia. Winning that tournament was important for the team and then coming back to England to play well on home turf and win the Twenty20 World Cup was a great moment. My own personal highlights include finally getting the chance to play at the Oval in the semi-finals of the Twenty20 competition against Australia. And, of course, hitting the winning runs in the test match in 2008 to retain the Ashes.

Who is your greatest role model?

Many individuals have influenced me for different reasons. When I first started playing cricket there was another player with the same name – Clare Taylor – who played two sports for England (cricket and football). She was my teenage heroine; she was competitive but always smiling, a model professional. Once I was on the England team, the kiwi batsman Debbie Hockley became a role model for me because she batted the way I aspired to be able to bat. Looking ahead I would like to have the kind of impact that Ricky Ponting has on the game.

What comes next for you?

I always look for new challenges. At the moment I will carry on playing (and hopefully winning) games for England. I am having 3-4 months out of the game now to rest and won't pick up a bat until January. This allows me to concentrate on work and enjoy other areas in life. I like to be as prepared as possible and have always found it vital to review my progress at the end of a given period of time. The four-year cycle in cricket has allowed me to take stock at regular intervals. In a non-sporting environment there is not always a clear structure in which to do this but I think this approach to life is as much a part of who I am as it is a part of being a successful sportsperson.

A day at the Races



It has been a very promising start to the year for the Boat Club and we wanted to write to our Old Members to let you know what's going on at the moment and perhaps entice you back to Oxford for the races this year.

QCBC was founded in 1827 and had a pivotal role in the modern sport by winning the 3rd Oxford-Cambridge boat race in 1837, which led to the initiation of Henley Royal Regatta, the founding of OUBC and the annual Boat Race tradition. Since then the club has enjoyed many achievements, notably making Head of the River in 1957.

This year we have hit the ground running, with both the men's and women's squads quickly reaching a full complement of returning rowers; training began in earnest during 1st week. The 1st squads currently train 6 days a week, with outings on the Abingdon stretch of river proving very popular. Meanwhile the new Freshers have produced 5 novice boats, 2 men's crews and 3 women's, and they are taking preparation for Christ Church Regatta very seriously.

The main race dates for this year are below, and if you would like to hear more about QCBC Old Member Events we would encourage you to join the 1837 Society. The 1837 Society is a registered charity which was established in 1997 to provide a link between QCBC and its Old Members and to provide a source of funding to the club, which was then very short of quality equipment. Since its foundation, the Society has provided tens of thousands of pounds of financial support for the Boat Club, with its key role being to double the frequency of boat-buying, while at the same time keeping members informed about QCBC news, and arranging social events. Our events include Torpids lunches, Eights garden parties, and black-tie dinners, and they provide an opportunity to reunite with old crewmates and support the current members of the Boat Club. New members are always welcome – for further information please contact 1837@queensrowing.co.uk.

Torpids 3-6 March 2010

Summer Eights 26-29 May 2010

Greg Petros (Clinical Medicine, 2006)

Who was Mr Blackadder?



From left to right:
Jim Lewendon (scout and later Steward), Joe Blackadder (SCR butler),
Frank Parker (senior scout), Jack Guilfoil (JCR Steward), John Smith (Steward),
Arthur Crawte (scout), 'Rissy' Wright (Baths & Boots).

There are a number of old employees who swear that no such person was ever employed by the College. There are Old Members who *insist* that he was the caretaker of the Iffley Road Annexe. There are those who claim he was the butler. There are those who assert he was the Steward. And there are those who claim this gentleman wasn't called Blackadder at all...

Do you remember him?

This picture belongs to former Steward, Nigel Lewendon. It shows 'Mr Blackadder' as the College butler pictured celebrating Frank Parker's 50 years of service.

Stories about the College staff do not feature prominently in our archives and there is a dearth of information on Mr Blackadder. Do contact us with your stories (and pictures) so that we can build up a picture of this enigmatic character and his colleagues through the years.



How did they get on the roof?

This photograph shows Ted Knappet (College plumber) and Nigel Lewendon (then scout, later Steward). It has been kindly supplied by William Timms (Physics, 1961).

Supper and a Song

The choir welcomed five new Choral Scholars at the beginning of this academic year. The Maurice Pearton Choral Scholarship has this year been awarded to James Potter, a countertenor and final-year music student.

On 23 December at 4 pm BBC Radio 3 will broadcast a service of Choral Evening Prayer sung by the choir, recorded (on 10 December) in the Church of St James's, Spanish Place, London, and featuring Advent and Christmas music from Spain, Portugal, and the New World.

During Hilary Term 2010, while Dr Rees is on leave, his role as College Organist will be taken by Edward Whiting (Organ Scholar 1998-2001), who is Director of Music at St Mary's School, Calne.

In April the choir will perform in Portugal at the invitation of the 12th Encontro Internacional de Coros Universitários.

On Sunday 15 August 2010 (the anniversary of Queen Philippa's death) the choir will sing for all three services at Westminster Abbey.

Concert dates

Hilary Term: 6 March, 7.30 pm: Frank Martin, *Mass for double choir*

Trinity Term: 12 June, 7.30 pm: Music for a Summer Evening (in chapel and the Provost's Garden)

Choral Services in term-time

Sundays 6.15 pm

Wednesdays 6.30 pm

Fridays 6.30 pm

All welcome. The music list for each term may be consulted at www.queens.ox.ac.uk

Hilary Term 2010

Sundays:

17, 24, 31 January / 7, 14, 21, 28 February / 7 March

Wednesdays:

20, 27 January / 3, 10, 17, 24 February / 3, 10 March

Fridays:

22, 29, January / 5, 12, 19, 26 February / 5, 12 March

Trinity Term 2010

Sundays:

25 April / 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 May / 6, 13 June

Wednesdays:

28 April / 5, 12, 19, 26 May / 2, 9, 16 June

Fridays:

30 April / 7, 14, 21, 28 May / 4, 11, 18 June

E-Newsletters: February, April, June, September

SAVE THE DATE

13 March 2010 - The Choir Association
Old Members' Evensong and Buffet Dinner



Something completely different



The Eglesfield Candle Extinguisher, by Bronté Porcelain

The idea of a fine porcelain candle extinguisher depicting Robert Eglesfield, founder of The Queen's College, came to me during the Christmas holidays in 2008.

My interest in candle extinguishers had originally been kindled when I attended a local antiques fair several years ago. I had never seen a ceramic candle extinguisher before, but I found there an extensive display of Royal Worcester and other fine extinguishers. I bought three of them and have been an avid collector ever since.

As it happened, the dealer concerned, a Tony Horsley, is perhaps the leading candle extinguisher expert in England. His book, *Distinguished Extinguishers*, contains details and pictures of fine antique and modern examples. The final chapter is devoted to Bronté Porcelain, a specialist porcelain manufacturer situated in Malvern, Worcestershire, with a prolific output of candle extinguishers. What impressed me most about this manufacturer was their attention to detail and the delicacy with which their products are painted. Their range of candle extinguishers includes characters from the Nativity, the Royal Family, the Tudors and The Nutcracker.

They have also made, for Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, a bone china model of her horse, Balmoral Curlew.

With a clear vision of the Eglesfield candle extinguisher firmly set in my mind, I arranged an initial meeting with Bob Price, the Managing Director of Bronté Porcelain, and his daughter, Lucy, who is also a director of the company. Initially, Bob was sceptical, but by the end of the meeting, he and Lucy were as enthusiastic as I was.

The project got underway with the production of a wax mock-up. A number of refinements were made, resulting in the final model of Robert Eglesfield. It is based on a picture in the Bodleian Gallery, prints of which exist today. On the rear of Robert Eglesfield's cloak is a relief view of the ruins of the original

gatehouse and east window of the old chapel, derived from the 1751 engraving by J. Green.

The Eglesfield figure stands on a hexagonal base bearing the College coat-of-arms at the front with a cartouche below entitled "COLLEGIUM REGINENSE". The base includes a candle holder so that, as suggested by the term "candle extinguisher", a candle located in the holder, when lit, will be extinguished when the Eglesfield figure is re-

positioned on its base. The figure is finely painted in rich colours, including burnished antique gold decoration on the front faces of Robert Eglesfield's cloak. The maximum dimensions of the candle extinguisher are height (including its base) 16.0 cm, width at base 7.5 cm and depth at base 6.8 cm.

A description and photographs of Bronté Porcelain's production process can be found on the College website: www.queens.ox.ac.uk/old-members/information/keepsakes

Bronté Porcelain are offering the Eglesfield extinguisher with base for sale in a limited edition of 200. It is supplied in a presentation box, with certificate of authenticity and a DVD showing various stages in production. An order form is provided, below.

The Queen's College Student Support Fund will benefit by £25 for each Robert Eglesfield candle extinguisher sold.

Alan Mitchell
Engineering Science, 1968

Order Form

To reserve your limited edition, English fine bone china Robert Eglesfield Candle Extinguisher please complete this form and send it together with a UK cheque made payable to Bronté Porcelain to:

Bronté Porcelain
Merebrook Business Park
Hanley Road
Malvern
WR13 6NP

Description	Quantity	Price	Order total
Eglesfield Candle Extinguisher		£245	

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____

Please enquire regarding the cost of overseas postage

Telephone: 01684 310888

Fax: 01684 310818

Email: enquiries@bronte-porcelain.com

A letter from the Old Members' Officer



Dear Old Member,

From the hottest day to (what feels like) the coldest day, the past four months have sped past. I shall open my letter to you with the reassurance that the College's year group reunions are safe. Last time I wrote I explained that there were concerns in some quarters that new legislation on age discrimination would mean Colleges that could no longer invite people back in year groups.

This ludicrous possibility will not in fact come to pass, primarily because invitations to our reunions are decided by matriculation year and not by age – it just so happens that the majority of people matriculate at age 18.

The kitchen project is now on the home strait and I hope you will enjoy reading the most recent details on page five. We look forward to inviting you back next year to sample the fruits of this labour. The changes to the College's physical landscape have been matched with some changes in the Fellowship owing to various retirements. It is reassuring, then, to report that the Boar's Head Ceremony at the conclusion of the calendar year will be just as it has always been, albeit a bit of a squeeze in Hall due to the temporary servery.

Changes in Oxford more generally have come in the form of the new Ashmolean Museum and, if you haven't yet done so, then I urge you to come and visit and see the transformation for yourselves. (Please note that the museum is closed on Mondays.)

The New Year will bring a new event for Old Members and invitations to this, the Needle and Thread Gaudy on 9 January, have generated a record response. I shall look forward to welcoming back over 100 Old Members who matriculated in the early 50s for this occasion. I shall look less forward to acquiring over 100 needles for the ceremony itself...

I would like to take this opportunity to ask you for advice. While we welcome general comments and feedback at any time, I thought I'd ask for some specific suggestions for improvement regarding the Newsletter. For example, how do we compare to Oxford Today? Do you read both publications cover to cover? Would you like us to include more news from the College and perhaps some feature-length articles from our academics? What do you like/dislike about the current style and layout? Please email oldmembers@queens.ox.ac.uk or write to me at Queen's by the end of January. Many thanks.

Calendar

Saturday 9 January 2010
Needle and Thread Gaudy (1950-1955)

Saturday 30 January 2010
History and MHP Reunion Lunch

Saturday 20 February 2010
Taberdars' Society Lunch

Saturday 13 March 2010
Choir Association Evensong

Saturday 20 March 2010
Florey Student Reunion

Saturday 27 March 2010
Biologists, Geographers, Psychologists, PPP, Zoology, and Human Sciences Reunion Dinner

Saturday 17 April 2010
North American Reunion, New York City
We also hope to hold events in Washington DC, Toronto, and Boston

Tuesday 4 May 2010★
City of London Reception

Saturday 19 June 2010
Benefactors' Dinner

Saturday 25 September 2010
Old Members' Association Dinner

Saturday 16 October 2010
50th Anniversary Matriculation Gaudy (1960)

Saturday 13 November 2010
'Ten years later' Lunch (2000)

Saturday 18 December 2010
Boar's Head Gaudy (1986 & 1987)

★dates tbc

I would like to close my letter by expressing how sorry I am for those people who have been badly affected by the appalling weather conditions in Cumbria in November. A good many Queensmen and women live in this area and I know of at least one who has been flooded. The College has been thinking of you.

Emily McLeod

Queen's
newsletter