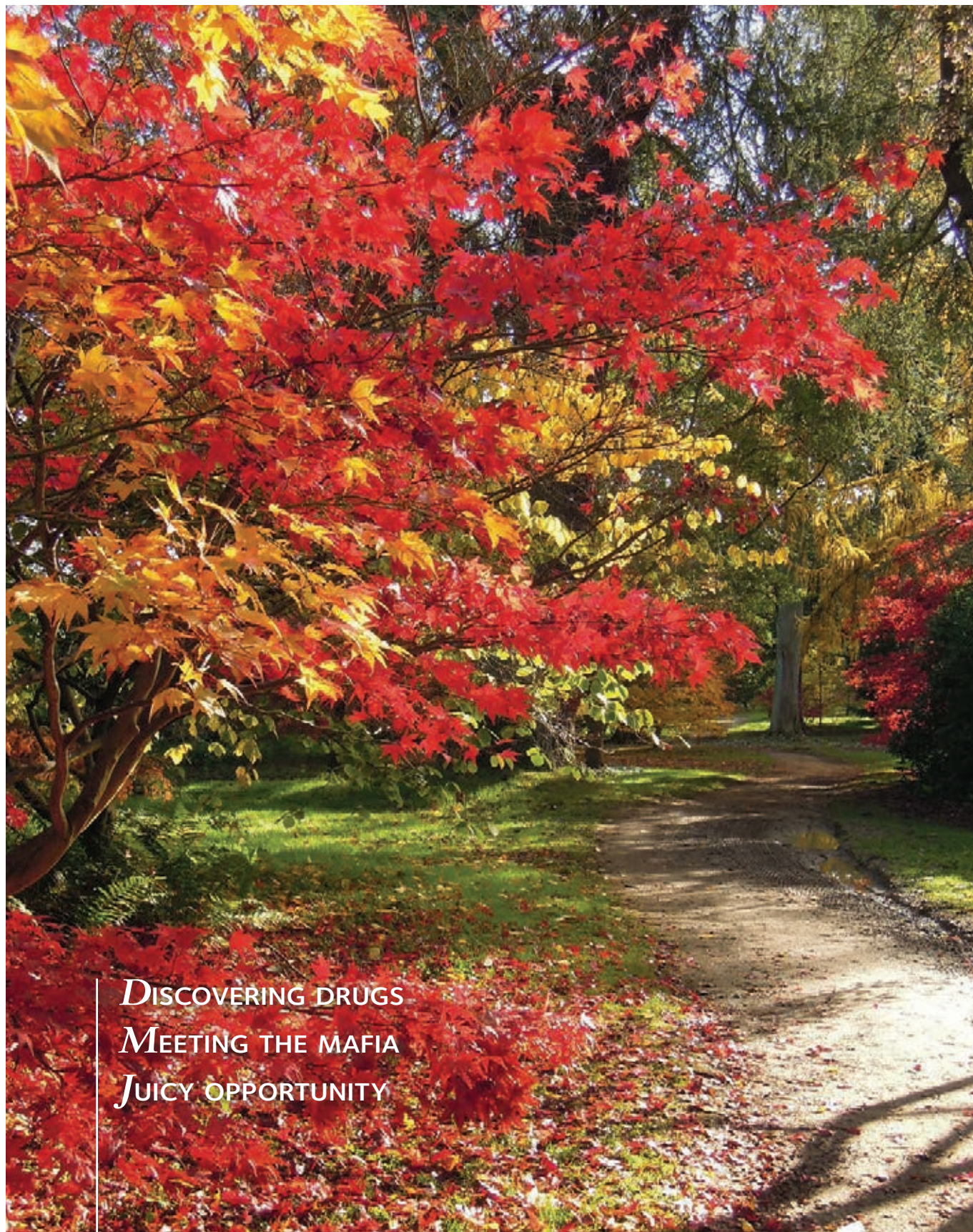


BLUEPRINT

Staff magazine for the University of Oxford | **October 2013**



DISCOVERING DRUGS
MEETING THE MAFIA
JUICY OPPORTUNITY

NEWS IN BRIEF

◆ An online version of the University Strategic Plan is available at www.ox.ac.uk/strategicplan. The plan covers the period 2013–18 and sets a high-level agenda for the University, with new priorities of global reach, networking, communication and interdisciplinarity, and new core strategies in relation to research, education and wider engagement. The plan was developed by a steering group chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and comprising members from Council, the divisions and the colleges, and was revised in the light of comments received from a University-wide consultation in Hilary term 2013.

◆ Development at the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter has reached a new milestone with the formal opening of the Mathematical Institute building on 3 October. Designed by Rafael Viñoly Architects, the building has been named the Andrew Wiles Building in honour of one of Oxford's most distinguished mathematicians. The Maths Institute will move from three separate locations into the new facility, which will accommodate more than 500 academics, researchers, support staff and postgraduate students.

◆ The McCall MacBain Foundation, a grant-making organisation established by John and Marcy McCall MacBain, has announced a lead donation of £75m to the Rhodes Trust towards the future expansion of the international graduate scholarship programme. The gift is the largest since the establishment of the Scholarships in 1903 and enables the Trust to further advance its core mission, which is to send future global leaders to Oxford. The announcement comes at the start of the public launch of the Rhodes Trust campaign, which aims to raise £110m to support the existing Scholarships and plan new strategic initiatives.

◆ Would you like to talk about the impact of your research on policy, health, business or culture? If so, you may be interested in making a video diary about your work to help showcase Oxford's research impact. Research Services is looking for researchers willing to film themselves discussing why their research matters to society and what they've learned through taking their research into the community. Workshops are being held on 11 October and 4 November. Details at www.ox.ac.uk/staff/news/video_diaries.html.

◆ Oxford University Student Union (OUSU) has partnered with the charity Future First for their 'Back to School Week' campaign (12–19 October). Future First aims to build alumni networks in state schools to inform and inspire young people about their futures. As part of the campaign, OUSU is encouraging Oxford staff and students to join the alumni network of their former school. This may involve mentoring students, giving careers talks or becoming a school governor. Details at <https://networks.futurefirst.org.uk/former-student-search?t=ousu>.

◆ Staff can enjoy 15% off First Great Western train tickets for journeys into and returning from Oxford. The discount is available on singles/returns, peak/off-peak and weekly tickets. Monthly, quarterly and six-monthly tickets will be added later this month. The discount has been made possible through a partnership between the University and easitNETWORK, which supports businesses in offering their staff sustainable travel solutions. The discount scheme had initially run on a trial basis – the success of the trial means the offer has now become permanent. Details at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/estates/travel/easitoxford.

◆ The University's finance system, Oracle Financials, is being upgraded to a new version (R12) on 11 November. During the transition period from the end of October until 11 November, no financial transactions can be carried out – this includes expenses, purchases and payments to suppliers.

All expenses and requests for advances must be submitted to the central Payments team by 22 October; all shopping in Marketplace – the University's online purchasing system – must be completed by 29 October; while the University's online recruitment system (HRIS) will be unavailable to job applicants from the afternoon of 8 November to the morning of 11 November. Departments should avoid setting vacancy closing dates for 11 and 12 November to allow candidates time to submit their applications following the downtime.

Information about R12 and key deadlines is at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance. Details about the impact of R12 for HRIS users are at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/corehr/support.



FROM TOP: NEW HOME FOR MATHS; THE McCALL MACBAINS; BECOME A VIDEOSTAR

COVER:
AUTUMN
AT THE
UNIVERSITY'S
HARCOURT
ARBORETUM



Photo by Botanic Garden

RESEARCH ROUND-UP

◆ The earliest modern humans were in Europe and the Middle East at about the same time, suggests a new study led by Dr Katerina Douka from the School of Archaeology. A team of researchers was unable to directly date human fossils found at Ksar Akil, a key archaeological site in Lebanon, but by radiocarbon-dating marine shells from the same section of archaeological layers and taking their relative location into account, the researchers calculate that the earliest human fossil is between 42,400 and 41,700 years old. The age of the earliest fossils, directly or indirectly dated, of the modern humans found in Europe is similar. The shells were either perforated or had bright red pigmentation on the surface, denoting the handiwork of early modern humans rather than Neanderthals. The findings were published in the journal *PLOS ONE*.

◆ A genetic study has identified a biological process that influences whether we are right-handed or left-handed. With around 90% of people being right-handed, humans are the only species to show such a strong bias in handedness, but the cause of this bias has remained largely a mystery. Now British and Dutch scientists have found correlations between handedness and a network of genes involved in embryo development. 'The genes are involved in the biological process through which an early embryo moves on from being a round ball of cells and becomes a growing organism with an established left and right side', explains first author William Brandler, a DPhil student in the MRC Functional Genomics Unit at Oxford. The researchers suggest that the genes may also help establish left-right differences in the brain, which in turn has an influence on handedness.

◆ An Oxford DPhil candidate has translated a 16th-century play from Latin into English as part of a special event held at Christ Church. Elizabeth Sandis, a member of the Early Drama at Oxford research team, translated William Gager's *Dido* for a banquet and drama-staging on 21 September. The play was inspired by Virgil's *Aeneid* and was commissioned to celebrate the official visit of the Polish Ambassador, Alberto Laski, to Oxford University 430 years ago. Elizabeth, who sprinkled a few passages of Latin throughout her translation to give audience members a flavour of the original, also liaised with the head chef at Christ



SHY MALE GREAT TITS FIND FEATHERED FRIENDS WITH SIMILAR PERSONALITIES

Joe Tobias

Church to create an authentic Elizabethan menu for the occasion. Minister-Counsellor Dariusz Laska from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland was in attendance to mark his country's links to the play.

◆ Male great tits that exhibit 'shy' social behaviour are much more likely to join flocks of birds with a similar personality than their 'bold' male counterparts, but shy birds also have fewer social partners than bold birds, a study reported in *Ecology Letters* has found. The research, carried out by scientists from Oxford's Department of Zoology and the Australian National University, used a new way of analysing the social networks that link individual animals to each other – a kind of 'Facebook for birds' – to reveal how differences between individuals underpin the way that social interactions occur across populations. 'We think shy male birds might group together to avoid the more aggressive bold birds', says author Lucy Aplin, a DPhil student at Oxford. The work is part of a long-term project led by Professor Ben Sheldon that involves tracking thousands of wild birds in Wytham Woods.

◆ The number of people in Britain using the internet has risen, reaching 78% of the population aged 14 years and over as compared with 59% in 2003. Yet, according to the latest survey of British attitudes to the internet conducted by the University's Oxford Internet Institute, more than half of those who go online do so without enthusiasm. 14% of users felt the internet

was taking over their lives and invading their privacy. An additional 37% of users had no strong feelings either for or against the internet and were described as 'moderate' in their view, while 17% said it made them more efficient, 12% said they were happy going online and 19% had mixed views, feeling efficient and happier but also frustrated, says the latest Oxford Internet Survey report.



Stockphoto/Wealthographer



Katerina Douka

TOP: HANDEDNESS IS WRITTEN IN THE GENES
BOTTOM: BEADS FROM KSAR AKIL, FOUND CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE SKELETON OF A MODERN GIRL, DATING TO BETWEEN 39,000 AND 41,000 YEARS AGO

► For more information, visit www.ox.ac.uk/news and www.ox.ac.uk/staffnews

PEOPLE AND PRIZES



Dr David Acheson, Emeritus Fellow in Mathematics at Jesus College, has been awarded an Honorary DSc by the University of East Anglia, in recognition of his work on the public

understanding of mathematics.

Dr Justin Benesch, Royal Society University Research Fellow and University Lecturer in Physical Chemistry, has received the Alfred Tissières Young Investigator Award of the Cell Stress Society International for his research into the biophysics underpinning molecular chaperone function.



Dr Susan Brigden, Reader in Early Modern History, has won the 2013 Wolfson History Prize for *Thomas Wyatt: The Heart's Forest*, a biography of the Tudor poet, ambassador and

courtier (Faber & Faber, 2012).



Paul Collier, Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government, has won the A.SK Social Science Award 2013 in recognition of his innovative

contributions to our understanding of development, poverty, democratisation, civil wars, and global justice.

Dr Andrew Goodwin of the Inorganic Chemistry Laboratory has been selected by the New York Academy of Sciences as one of ten 'Future Leaders' in Science to attend the Science and Technology in Society (STS) forum in Kyoto this month. The annual forum discusses the promises and risks of science and technology, and how they impact society.

Nicole Grobert, Professor of Nanomaterials, was one of 40 young scientists selected from 19 countries to participate in the 'Annual Meeting of the New Champions' held at the World Economic Forum in Dalian, People's Republic of China, last month. The award recognises her work in developing new methods of creating, processing and characterising a variety of nanomaterials, including nanoparticles, nanotubes and graphene.

Gus Hancock, Professor of Chemistry and Head of the Physical and Theoretical Chemistry Laboratory, has been awarded an honorary doctorate by the National University of Córdoba, the oldest university in Argentina, where he has lectured regularly for 15 years.

Sir David Hendry, Professor of Economics, has been selected as a 2013 Thomson Reuters Citation Laureate for contributions to the field of economics, based upon the number of times fellow researchers have cited his published papers.



Dr Cecilia Lindgren, Career Development Fellow at the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, has been awarded the first Leena Peltonen Prize for Excellence in Human Genetics,

in recognition of her work on applying genetics and genomics to dissect the aetiology of type 2 diabetes, obesity and fat distribution.

Robert MacLaren, Professor of Ophthalmology in the Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences and Consultant Ophthalmologist at the Oxford Eye Hospital, has won a 2013 Pfizer Ophthalmics Carl Camras Translational Research Award. The annual award for young researchers recognises his pioneering research into novel treatments for retinal degeneration including gene therapy.



Tim Palmer, Royal Society Research Professor in Climate Physics, has been elected to the 2013 class of American Geophysical Union Fellows in recognition of his fundamental

understanding of the predictability of weather and climate, and for pioneering the tools to estimate such predictability.



Andrew Pollard, Professor of Paediatric Infection and Immunity and leader of the Oxford Vaccine Group, has been appointed as Chair of the Department of Health's Joint Committee on

Vaccination and Immunisation, which advises the Department on vaccine policy issues.

Ian Walmsley, Hooke Professor of Experimental Physics and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Academic Services and University Collections) has received an honorary doctorate from the University of Toulouse III – Paul Sabatier.



Sir David Weatherall, Regius Professor of Medicine Emeritus, has been awarded the 2013 Wallace H Coulter Award for Lifetime Achievement in Hematology, the highest honour of the

American Society of Hematology. The award recognises 'his more than 50-year career in hematology combining seminal discoveries, visionary translational research leadership, and a passion for global health initiatives that have together helped improve clinical care for thousands throughout the developing world'.

Bernard Wood, Research Professor in the Department of Earth Sciences, has been awarded the Harry H Hess Medal of the American Geophysical Union for outstanding research on the constitution and evolution of the Earth and other planets.

NEW ENGINEERING FELLOW



Zhanfeng Cui, Donald Pollock Professor of Chemical Engineering and Professorial Fellow of Hertford College, has been elected

a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering.

His research interests include the technologies that will monitor and regulate tissue growth, including micro-membrane probes and micro-sensors, cryo-preservation techniques and membrane filtration processes. He is Director of the Oxford Centre for Tissue Engineering and Bioprocessing, which is involved in the development of bioreactor technologies for the growth of bone, cartilage, tendon and neuron cells, with the longer-term aim of bulky tissue growth from stem cell cultures.

BRITISH ACADEMY FELLOWS

Eight Oxford professors were among 59 academics recently elected into the British Academy. The new Fellows are recognised for their outstanding research across the humanities and social sciences.



Mary Dalrymple, Professor of Syntax and Fellow of Linacre College, researches syntax, semantics and the syntax–semantics interface. She is particularly interested in the syntactic

properties of human languages and how they can guide the process of assembling meanings of words and phrases into meanings of larger phrases and sentences.

John Gardner, Professor of Jurisprudence and Professorial Fellow of University College, works on topics in the philosophy of law and nearby areas of moral and political philosophy. Most recently he has been developing new ideas about private law, especially the law of torts, while bearing out the thought that there is no radical disconnection between law and the rest of human life.



Vincent Gillespie, J R R Tolkien Professor of English and Fellow of Lady Margaret Hall, examines the psychology of literary response: the ways in which writers struggle to express experiences

and acts of imagination, the strategies they use to articulate their understanding of these experiences and imaginative acts, and the codes and conventions that develop between texts and readers to allow communication and understanding to develop and to be manipulated. He analyses texts against the deep background of their contemporary textual, social and intellectual environment and researches the history of the book.

John Hawthorne, Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy and Professorial Fellow of Magdalen College, researches metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind and early modern philosophy. His books include *Metaphysical Essays* – original treatments of fundamental topics in philosophy, including identity, ontology, vagueness and causation – and *Knowledge and Lotteries*, in which he defends a view in epistemology according to which the presence of knowledge is dependent on the subject's interests.

Julia Lee-Thorp, Professor of Archaeological Science and Fellow of St Cross College, is primarily interested in the ecological contexts of major shifts in human biological and cultural evolution. Her main approach is based on the biogeochemistry of fossil teeth and bones, especially stable light isotopes. She pioneered their application to the ecology of ancient fossils, which has led to something of a revolution in people's view of shifts in the ecology of early hominins.

Colin Mayer, Peter Moores Professor of Management Studies at the Saïd Business School and Professorial Fellow of Wadham College, researches in the field of financial economics: specifically on corporate finance, governance and taxation, and the regulation of financial institutions.

Kevin O'Rourke, Chichele Professor of Economic History and Fellow of All Souls College, researches at the intersection of economic history and international economics. He has worked extensively on the history of the international economy, looking at the causes and consequences of globalisation and deglobalisation. Current projects focus on the interwar period and the international spread of industrialisation.

Jenny Ozga, Professor of the Sociology of Education and Green Templeton Senior Research Fellow Professor, examines education policy in international comparative contexts, with a current focus on governance and governing, through investigation of the resources that are being mobilised by new governing forms (networks) and through new policy technologies (data).

ROYAL SOCIETY PRIZES

Three Oxford researchers have been named winners of Royal Society awards and medals.

Professor Sir Walter Bodmer of the Department of Oncology receives a Royal Medal for his seminal contributions to population genetics, gene mapping and understanding of familial genetic disease.



Professor Douglas Higgs, head of the MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, has won the Buchanan Medal for his

outstanding work on the regulation of the human alpha-globin gene cluster. His group uses this model to understand how human genes are switched on and off in cells and hence improve the management of patients with human genetic disease.

Professor Frank Close, Emeritus Fellow of Exeter College, is the winner of the Michael Faraday Prize and Lecture for his work in science communication. A particle physicist, he has been at the forefront of outreach in physics for 35 years, writing for mainstream and scientific media, producing radio scripts and presentations, writing popular science books and organising science exhibitions.

PHYSICISTS HONOURED



Steven Balbus, Savilian Professor of Astronomy, has won the Shaw Prize in Astronomy 2013, sharing with Professor John Hawley of the University of Virginia a \$1m award for work

that explains how astronomical objects form. The award recognises their discovery of the mechanism – magnetorotational instability – that accounts for the process of accretion, a phenomenon which plays a key role in star formation and the growth of supermassive black holes.

Two other Oxford physicists received prizes in the Institute of Physics 2013 awards:

Peter Norreys, Professor of Inertial Fusion Science and Plasma Physics Group Leader of the Central Laser Facility, STFC Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, has won the Payne–Gaposchkin Medal and prize for his pioneering contributions to the physics of fast particle generation and energy transport in relativistic laser–plasma interactions.

Dr Joanna Dunkley, University Lecturer in Astrophysics and James Martin Fellow in the Programme on Computational Cosmology has been awarded the Maxwell Medal and prize for her contributions to determining the structure and history of our universe, particularly her leading role in the analysis of the cosmic microwave background, the relic radiation from the Big Bang.

ORIEL COLLEGE



Moira Wallace OBE became Provost of Oriel College in September, making her the college's first female Provost.

She brings more than 20 years' experience in senior

civil service roles across Whitehall. She began her career in the Treasury, where she served as Economic Affairs Private Secretary to Prime Ministers Major and Blair and was the first director of the government's Social Exclusion Unit. At the Home Office, she was Director General of Criminal Justice and then Director General of Policing. In 2008 she was appointed Permanent Secretary to the newly formed Department of Energy and Climate Change, which she led for four years.

Ms Wallace read French and German at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and then studied Comparative Literature at Harvard as a Kennedy Scholar. From 2000 to 2008 she was a Visiting Fellow at Nuffield College.

PEMBROKE COLLEGE



Dame Lynne Brindley DBE FRSA became Master of Pembroke College in August.

Dame Lynne was the Chief Executive Officer and a board member of the British Library from July

2000 to July 2012. She previously served as Pro-Vice-Chancellor and University Librarian at the University of Leeds, and in senior executive roles in information technology and information management at the London School of Economics and the University of Aston.

Her first degree was in music and she completed an MA in information studies at University College London. She is credited with leading the development of national digital library and networked information and dataset services across UK higher education, and was made a Dame in the 2008 New Year's Honours List for services to the British Library and to education. Her current non-executive roles include membership of the Board of Ofcom and the AHRC.

WYCLIFFE HALL



The Revd Dr Michael Lloyd has taken office as Principal of Wycliffe Hall, a Permanent Private Hall of the University.

He was until recently Chaplain of The Queen's

College, and has nearly a decade of experience teaching in theological colleges. A former Tutor in Theology at St Paul's Theological Centre and Tutor in Doctrine at St Stephen's House, he previously served as Chaplain of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, and earlier as Chaplain and Director of Studies in Theology at Christ's College, Cambridge.

He is the author of *Café Theology*, and regularly contributes to the *Godpod* (a theological podcast).

Dr Lloyd holds degrees in English from Cambridge University and in Theology from St John's College, Durham, and a DPhil in Theology from Oxford, where his doctoral thesis was on the problem of evil.

NOTICEBOARD



◆ **Carolyn Puddicombe** became the University's Director of Asset & Space Management on 1 July. She has overall responsibility for Asset Management, Estates Strategy, Space and

Information Management, Graduate Accommodation, Wytham Woods and the University Parks. A Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, with a degree in Land Management, she has experience with the private and public sectors and came to Oxford from Bath Spa University.



◆ **Suzi Ardley** became Head of Digital Communications, based in the Public Affairs Directorate, on 16 September. She has joined the University from

Monash University, Melbourne, where she was Communications Manager in the Faculty of Business and Economics. She

will be responsible for the planning and delivery of the University's digital media channels, including the top-level pages of the University website and the University's Facebook page.



◆ The Nuffield Department of Population Health has been established in the Medical Sciences Division and combines groups from the Department of Public Health with

the Cancer Epidemiology Unit, Clinical Trial Service Unit and Epidemiological Studies Unit. The head of department is **Professor Sir Rory Collins**, who was appointed Professor of Public Health and a Fellow of St Cross College on 1 July.

◆ **Advanced Research Computing (ARC)** is the new name for the Oxford Supercomputing Centre, a resource of high-performance computers that are free at the point of use for University researchers of any discipline. There is free training to help you get started and a supportive expert team at ARC who can both assist with technical issues and help you

frame your research question to make best use of high-performance computers. Further information is at www.arc.ox.ac.uk or email theteam@arc.ox.ac.uk.

◆ **Professor Gary Ford** has been appointed Chief Executive of the Oxford Academic Health Science Network (AHSN), in which the University is a partner. He joins the AHSN in November from the University of Newcastle where he holds the Jacobson Chair of Clinical Pharmacology, and is Director of the National Institute for Health Research Stroke Research Network and Associate Medical Director for R&D at the Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. He has also maintained a clinical practice as a stroke physician and developed strong links with the life sciences sector.

VIEWFINDER FOUND

The angel (p20) appears on an embroidered altar frontal (decorative covering) in the chapel of St John's College. The frontal is thought to have been made in the 1930s using 15th-century fragments and is one of the Laudian vestments, an important collection of clerical vestments (many pre-Reformation) given to the college by its founder, Sir Thomas White. The collection will be on public display in St John's on Saturday 30 November, 2–5pm.

ARRIVALS BOARD

CHICHELE PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC INTERNATIONAL LAW



Catherine Redgwell, Professor of International Law, University College London, took up this post in the Faculty of Law on 1 September. She is a Fellow of All Souls College.

Professor Redgwell's research is focused on international energy law and international environmental law, particularly the international legal regulation of energy actors and activities, ranging from environmental impact to public participation and corporate accountability issues. With climate change and the pressure to move beyond a strongly carbon-based economy, her research is increasingly at the confluence of international environmental and energy law and, as a member of the 2009 Royal Society working group on geoengineering, her work is increasingly engaged with the current debate on the governance of geoengineering.

HALFORD MACKINDER PROFESSOR OF GEOGRAPHY



Danny Dorling, Professor of Human Geography at the University of Sheffield, Visiting Professor in the Department of Social Medicine at the University of

Bristol, Visiting Professor in Sociology at Goldsmiths, London, and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, took up this post in the School of Geography and the Environment on 1 September. He is also a Fellow of St Peter's College.

Professor Dorling's research seeks to understand and map the changing social, political and medical geographies of Britain and further afield, concentrating on social and spatial inequalities to life chances and how these may be narrowed. His work involves developing new techniques to analyse and popularise quantitative information about Human Geography, including the introduction of novel cartographic techniques.

RAWLINSON AND BOSWORTH PROFESSOR OF ANGLO-SAXON



Andrew Orchard, Professor of English and Medieval Studies, Provost and Vice-Chancellor, Trinity College, and Senior Fellow, Massey College, University of

Toronto, took up this post in the Faculty of English on 1 September. He has also become a Fellow of Pembroke College.

Professor Orchard's chief teaching and research interests lie in the fields of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic languages and literatures. He is particularly known for his scholarship on a range of material spanning more than eight centuries and including such iconic works and authors as Alcuin, Aldhelm, *Beowulf*, Boniface, Cynewulf, the Poetic Edda, Wulfstan, and the Anglo-Saxon riddle tradition. He is the author of *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'* and is a member of the International Advisory Board of the *Dictionary of Old English*. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 2012.

PROFESSOR OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

Ronald Roy, Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Chairman of the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Boston University, took up this post in the Department of Engineering Science on 1



September. He is also a Fellow of Harris Manchester College. Professor Roy's main area of research is physical acoustics – the generation,

propagation and detection of acoustic waves, and the interactions of sound with matter. He is particularly interested in acoustic cavitation and bubble dynamics, especially problems related to sonoluminescence (light from sound), sonochemistry, and the inception and detection of inertial cavitation activity. He also studies the role of bubbles and cavitation microstreaming in diagnostic and high-intensity therapeutic ultrasound, and also ocean ambient noise mechanisms, near-surface scattering from bubble clouds, and the acoustics of ship wakes.

PROFESSOR OF RESPIRATORY MEDICINE



Ian Pavord, Consultant Physician in the Department of Respiratory Medicine, Glenfield Hospital, Leicester; Honorary Professor of Medicine at the University of

Leicester; and NIHR Senior Investigator, took up this post in the Nuffield Department of Clinical Medicine on 23 September. He is a Fellow of St Edmund Hall.

Professor Pavord's chief research interests include airway pharmacology and the development of techniques to assess airway inflammation in asthma and other airway diseases. He has played a lead role in the development of three of the most promising treatments for asthma in the last ten years – bronchial thermoplasty, mepolizumab and CRTH-2 antagonists – and is co-editor of the journal *Thorax*.

ON THE SHORTLIST

A University art project involving lecturer Elizabeth Price – the winner of the 2012 Turner Prize – has been shortlisted for one of the UK's highest-value contemporary art awards.

In partnership with the Pitt Rivers Museum and the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, the Ashmolean Museum is seeking funding to commission a new piece of work by Dr Price to form part of its

permanent collection. She wants to make a new film that explores the photographic archives and collections of the University's museums, focusing particularly on the Ashmolean and Pitt Rivers.

The proposal is one of four to have been shortlisted for this year's £60,000 Contemporary Art Society Annual Award for Museums. The winner will be announced in November.

ACADEMICIANS APPOINTED

The Academy of Social Sciences has conferred the award of Academician on two Oxford researchers: Fran Bennett, Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, and Desmond King, Andrew W Mellon Professor of American Government.

TARGET: DRUG DISCOVERY

Why is it such a struggle to find new medicines, despite huge investment? *Jonathan Wood* talks to Oxford researchers who are spearheading international efforts

'The world urgently needs new medicines for many diseases such as Alzheimer's, depression, diabetes and obesity', says Chas Bountra, Oxford's Professor of Translational Medicine. 'Yet the pharmaceutical industry's success rate for generating truly novel medicines remains low, despite investing tens of billions of dollars.'

What's going wrong? Why can't we depend on the vast commercial pharma industry to deliver the new treatments we need? Professor Bountra is the ideal person to ask. He came from the drug firm GSK to lead the Structural Genomics Consortium (SGC) at the University, a public-private partnership that bridges academia and industry and produces data that are directly relevant for coming up with new drugs.

'What the pharma industry has done is recruit some of the smartest people on the planet, invested tens of billions in technology and infrastructure, and acquired promising companies', he says. 'It's not that industry is doing anything wrong. The problem is that it's so difficult. The fundamental bottleneck is our ability to identify new targets for drug discovery.'

Researchers in this area talk about 'targets'. If you have a biological molecule – most often a protein – that you find is critical in a disease process in the body, this is a target. It's a target because you can throw tens and hundreds of thousands of small chemical compounds at it and see which of these would-be drugs stick. You might come away with a handful of compounds that bind your target protein and block the disease process. Now you have somewhere to start, you have some candidate drugs against this disease.

You will want to optimise the chemical compound and do toxicology checks, and there will be years of clinical trials to determine if it is safe and beneficial. But the starting point turns out to be crucial. If you don't know enough about the target and the disease process it affects, you may waste billions of pounds and years of effort and expose patients to something that may have no medical benefit – or worse, find side effects you didn't know about.

Professor Bountra explains: 'There are around 22,000 different proteins in humans, any of which could be a target for a drug. There are hundreds of diseases and hundreds of subsets of diseases. What we can't do right now is say this protein will work in this subset of Alzheimer's patients. Pharma is extremely good at taking a candidate drug molecule through to market. None of us – and I include the whole

global biomedical community in this – is good at selecting the right target for drug discovery.'

Peter Ratcliffe, the University's Nuffield Professor of Medicine, is of exactly the same mind: 'It's almost self-evident that in starting drug development you need to start in the right place. We need to have the right molecular target.'

Professor Ratcliffe is the director of the new Target Discovery Institute (TDI) at Oxford, an institute whose whole purpose is validating targets for drug discovery. Researchers have just started moving into the TDI's impressive new building on the Old Road Campus. All clean lines, sharp angles and a glass frontage to guide you in, it brings the best biologists and chemists together with the latest genetic and cell biology technologies.

'In the next one to two years, Oxford will be *the* academic drug discovery centre in the UK'

Modern biology research is delivering thousands of potential targets, Professor Ratcliffe says, but it is currently hard or impossible for scientists in pharma to know which are the most promising to pursue for new drugs. He believes that at least a portion of academic research should be more aligned to what industry needs to take things forward.

One of the examples he gives is a set of enzymes called histone demethylases. These are involved in switching genes on and off in cells, and drugs targeting these proteins may be useful in cancer and inflammatory disease. But this work is still at a relatively early stage and there is a lot to be done to determine the range of effects that blocking these enzymes can have, and whether discrete medical benefits can be achieved. That's where the interest of the TDI comes in.

Forging successful partnerships between academia and industry is exactly what Professor Bountra has done at the SGC, which has partners worldwide. This not-for-profit group, which determines the three-dimensional structures of proteins of



importance to human health, places the data in the public domain, open and free to all. Knowing the structure of a protein is important in finding candidate drugs that bind this target.

More recently, the SGC began working further along the drug discovery chain in coming up with novel chemical compounds that block target proteins. Again, the data and reagents are openly available to allow anyone to investigate them. Some novel drug compounds are already being taken forward by new biotech companies.

'We need to pool the strengths of academia and industry', Professor Bountra believes, 'to create a more efficient, more flexible way of discovering new drugs. It is only by pooling resources and by working with the best people that we can hope to reduce costs and reduce risks in this very difficult task.'

Professor Ratcliffe adds: 'The failure of drug candidates at a late stage in large-scale trials is reasonably held to be the thing killing the pharma industry. We have to secure the rationale for developing a drug in the first place, and we have to make sure we don't find untoward aspects at a late stage.'

Both professors believe that target discovery is of wider importance to the British economy, following many drug companies downsizing their research capacity in the UK. By making these projects in Oxford a success, drug company investment can be brought in, new biotechnology companies spun off and highly skilled people retained in this country, they say.

'I honestly think what is happening in Oxford is phenomenal', says Professor Bountra. 'In the next one to two years, Oxford will be *the* academic drug discovery centre in the UK. What distinguishes Oxford is a culture that makes all of this work. We are all pulling in the same direction to help industry develop new medicines because society desperately needs new medicines.'

More information at www.thesgc.org/scientists/groups/oxford and www.tdi.ox.ac.uk

A podcast on drug discovery by Professor Bountra is at www.ndm.ox.ac.uk/chas-bountra-drug-discovery

OXFORD'S NEW TARGET DISCOVERY INSTITUTE
(BELOW) AND STRUCTURAL GENOMICS CONSORTIUM
ARE BRINGING THE BEST RESEARCHERS FROM ACADEMIA
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JUICY AND DELICIOUS —
WORCESTER'S SMALL ORCHARD
WILL PROVIDE ABOUT A
TONNE OF FRUIT THIS YEAR

A TASTE OF WORCESTER

A college orchard is providing a core business, reveals *Sally Croft*



HAND-PICKED BY THE WORCESTER GARDENERS, APPLES AND PEARS ARE JUICED BY CHRIS LANCZAK (LEFT) AND HIS TEAM AT WATERPERRY GARDENS



Situated between Oxford's busy bus and railway stations, Worcester College lies in the heart of the bustling city. But step through its imposing entrance and a surprise is revealed: 26 acres of tranquil gardens, complete with lake and sports field. The explanation is simple: when the College was founded in 1714 (on the site of what started life in 1283 as Gloucester College, a place of study for 13 Benedictine monks), it was on the edge of town and generous grounds were easy to come by.

Today, the grounds are beautifully maintained by a team of six full-time and one part-time gardeners (one of whom is a groundsman), plus an apprentice and a couple of volunteer helpers. Traditional herbaceous borders feature an eclectic mix of contemporary plantings, creating a relaxed and airy style while exhibiting the delights of plants ranging from begonias to bananas. Worcester students have their own vegetable plot and donate surplus produce to the college kitchens, which also benefit (though in a small way) from apples, pears, plums, quince, figs and salad fruits grown in the gardens.

A particular feature of the Worcester landscape is its 600 or so trees. 'We have a strict "one out, one in" replacement policy and try very hard to plant interesting and unusual specimens', explains Simon Bagnall, Head of Gardens and Grounds. 'We recently added an *Emmenopterys henryi* – a tree that the renowned English plant hunter Ernest Wilson declared to be one of the most strikingly beautiful trees of the Chinese forests.'

A much-loved part of the gardens is the College's small orchard, which has for the last

four years provided the College's own-label apple and pear juice. 'The orchard was planted in the early 1900s by Provost Lys', says Simon. 'We currently have 65 trees in the orchard, a mixture of eating and cooking apples and pears, with a wide range of varieties such as Blenheim Orange, Newton Wonder, Lady Sudeley and Darcy Spice. Trees have been replaced over the years but some of them are probably a hundred years old and are quite large. Nowadays, we replace with specimens on root stock, which are much easier to pick and maintain. We recently planted some Pitmarston Pineapple, which is a particularly juicy sweet apple.'

'The juice is delicious – it tastes fantastically clean and crisp'

The orchard is deliberately low-maintenance. In the summer, the grass is allowed to grow up into a meadow (wild flowers encouraged) and the gardeners cut meandering paths through it and create areas for students to sit. Pruning takes place in the winter, with tuition and expert advice provided by Chris Lanczak, Orchard Manager at Waterperry Gardens, which also carries out the juicing process for Worcester.

'The secret of a good juice is to use fruit with a decent flavour and pick when it's just coming up to ripen', says Chris. 'Simon

and his team pick and bring their fruit to Waterperry where we press, bottle and pasteurise it. The sweetness of the juice depends both on the particular varieties and on the balance of the fruit – a greater proportion of cooking versus eating apples makes it slightly sharper, whereas more pears produce a sweeter result. The Worcester juice is always very good because they've got a nice selection of varieties. And this year, thanks to plenty of sunshine in July and August, we're seeing a bumper crop that will be particularly flavoursome.'

Worcester juice is very pure and completely organic, Simon emphasises. The orchard produces about a tonne of fruit a year, two-thirds of which goes for juicing and produces around 400–500 bottles. It's all handpicked and windfalls and fruit growing less than a metre above ground are not included.

The labelled Worcester bottles are sold in College in October and November, with all profits going back to the gardens. 'They're very popular with both students and staff – an ideal Christmas present for parents and friends', says Simon. Other customers include Old Members. Nick King, who read English at Worcester in the mid-1980s, is a keen customer and buys every year. 'I remember hosting drinks parties in the College orchards as a student', he says. 'The juice is delicious – it tastes fantastically clean and crisp. The nostalgic element is obviously there for me, but it really does stack up against the very best. My children love it too.'

► Read the Worcester gardeners' blog at <http://wocogaga.blogspot.co.uk>

INTO THE SHADOWLANDS

Researching organised crime networks has its moments of unpleasantness, Federico Varese tells Maria Coyle

Federico Varese, Professor of Criminology in the Department of Sociology, counts world-famous crime writer John le Carré as one of his friends, and even advises him on the details of some of his storylines. It's something Varese is eminently qualified to do: he is an expert on mafia groups around the world and has written two academic books of his own, *The Russian Mafia* (2001) and *Mafias on the Move* (2011).

Described by le Carré as a 'fearless fact-hunter' and a 'dedicated academic', Varese admits that his research has led to 'moments of unpleasantness'. Once he was invited to the offices of a Russian politician for an interview about the problem of the mafia gangs. He arrived in a windowless basement where the politician revealed he was a mafia member himself – a conversation that took place while surrounded by men with guns. But Professor Varese is, by his own admission, careful as well as fearless, and he always makes it clear that his interest lies in explaining, not uncovering, crime.

Varese's childhood was spent in northern Italy, in a region without obvious mafia links. As a youth, although politically aware, he was not particularly interested in the mafia. After studying Russian as an undergraduate in Bologna, he became curious as a postgraduate student (first at Cambridge and then at Oxford) to see at first hand the effects of the Glasnost reforms in the Soviet Union. He believed (quite rightly) that illegitimate power sources would fill the vacuum created by a weakened state, as had happened in post-feudal Italy.

When Varese turned up in a city bordering Siberia to carry out the research for his DPhil, many locals at first questioned his motives. But in time he was introduced to some of the Russian mafia in the area through contacts in the business community. 'My way is never to lie or try to hide anything and I make it quite clear that I'm totally independent and want to understand and explain their way of life in my academic publications. I reassure them that what they tell me will never go anywhere else and they shouldn't tell me anything that no-one else already knows about', he says.

'I arrived in a windowless basement where the politician revealed he was a mafia member himself'

He discovered that many members of the Russian mafia were keen to explain their lives, in particular their rituals and rules. This period was not only pivotal to the future direction of his academic research, but also his personal life as he met his future wife (although he quickly adds that she never had any links with the mafia!).

Varese's primary interest is in the way the state functions in managing the economy, and he argues that the mafia has similar

functions: to protect business, govern markets and settle disputes. But he points out that the mafia protects, in legal markets, illegitimate business such as illegal cartels, and he believes that the mafia is 'disastrous for the overall economy, driven not by principles of justice but by who pays them the most.'

To build up trust, Varese takes time to persuade his subjects to be interviewed. Crime bosses do not take kindly to being recorded, which means he must transcribe the content of their meetings immediately afterwards. Recently his work has focused on reconstructing the internal structure of crime networks on the basis of judicial evidence, in particular phone-tapped conversations between criminal gang members. 'It is a challenge', agrees Varese, 'which is probably why so few academics are carrying out research in this area.'

Away from real gangs, he likes to indulge his passion for cinema, and aptly his favourite film is *Unforgiven*, an American Western about a gang of ageing outlaws. 'It has an air of authenticity and doesn't glamorise violence. The story is about a wrong never being addressed by the justice system properly, leading to more violence', he explains – a theme that obviously resonates with him. And, true to his friend le Carré, one of his favourite books is *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*.



For more information visit www.sociology.ox.ac.uk/index.php/staff-profiles/federico-varese.html and www.ox.ac.uk/media/books/112803.html

WHAT'S ON

EXHIBITIONS

Francis Bacon/Henry Moore: Flesh and Bone

Until 19 January 2014

Ashmolean Museum

Tickets £8 / £6, under 18s free

www.ashmolean.org/exhibitions

Exhibition of work by two giants of 20th-century western art, designed to bring out the similarities and differences between them.

CONFERENCES

Big Change: sustainable healthcare for the 21st century

Friday 22 to Saturday 23 November

Saïd Business School

www.georgeinstitute.ox.ac.uk/news-and-events/big-change-2013

The challenge of providing affordable healthcare to all who need it is the focus of this event hosted by the George Institute for Global Health and the Entrepreneurship Centre.

SPECIAL EVENTS

LiveFriday: The Art of Theatre

Friday 25 October, 7–10.30pm

Ashmolean Museum

www.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/livefriday

Free late-night event at the Ashmolean showcasing the interaction between theatre and art through the ages. Run in association with the Oxford University Dramatic Society.



LECTURES AND TALKS

Have we justified the faith of our suffragette sisters?

Saturday 26 October, 2–6pm

St Hugh's College

Tickets £35

www.st-hughs.ox.ac.uk/emily

A centenary celebration of St Hugh's alumna Emily Wilding Davison, with a panel discussion chaired by the Rt Hon Dame Elish Anglioni DBE QC, followed by a tea party at 3.30pm. Speakers include Baroness Helena Kennedy QC and Ceri Goddard, Chief Executive of the Fawcett Society.

The future: six drivers of global change

Thursday 31 October, 5.30pm

Examination Schools

www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/events

Former US Vice-President Al Gore discusses the emerging forces that are reshaping our world.

The challenge of feeding 10 billion

Monday 11 November, 7.30pm

Daubeny Lecture Theatre, Botanic Garden

Tickets £8

www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/events

Professor Charles Godfray explores solutions for alleviating the increasing pressure on the food system, focusing on the role of plant science.

CONCERTS

Hugh Masekela and Larry Willis

Sunday 10 November, 7.45pm

S John the Evangelist Church

Tickets £8–£22

www.sje-oxford.org

A rare chance to see this South African jazz legend, playing in an intimate duo with pianist Larry Willis.

FAMILY FRIENDLY

FUNomusica family concert: magic and mystery

Sunday 27 October, 3pm

Oxford Town Hall

Tickets £8 adults / £2 children

www.oxfordphil.com

Join Alasdair Malloy and the Philomusica's musicians as they lead you on a magical tour of ghosts and ghouls, witches and wizards. Most suitable for ages 4–8.

MAKE, DO AND ENGAGE WITH THE IT LEARNING PROGRAMME



Are you keen to expand your digital skills or find out how social media can benefit your work or research? If so, the 'Make', 'Do' and 'Engage' programmes may be for you.

Run by the IT Learning Programme, each is an informal programme of talks run over the course of a term. The first in the series, 'Make', began life in 2010 and offers a forum for people to showcase their creative use of technology. Over the past three years the programme has notched up 60 talks, with subjects ranging from open-source 3D printing to managing your allotment online. A further Make programme is planned for Trinity term.

Following on from the success of Make, 'Engage' launched last year and focuses on the use of social media for networking and public engagement. The programme encourages participants to explore social media tools through workshops and talks, from using Twitter in academia to crowdsourcing digital images. The initial series of talks was accompanied by a self-directed learning programme called '23 Things for Research'. Run in collaboration with the Bodleian Libraries, it introduced participants to a range of digital tools and encouraged them to spend a short period each week developing their skills. The programme, which won the inaugural UCISA Amber

Miro Memorial Award, is running again this term – for details, visit www.it.ox.ac.uk/engage.

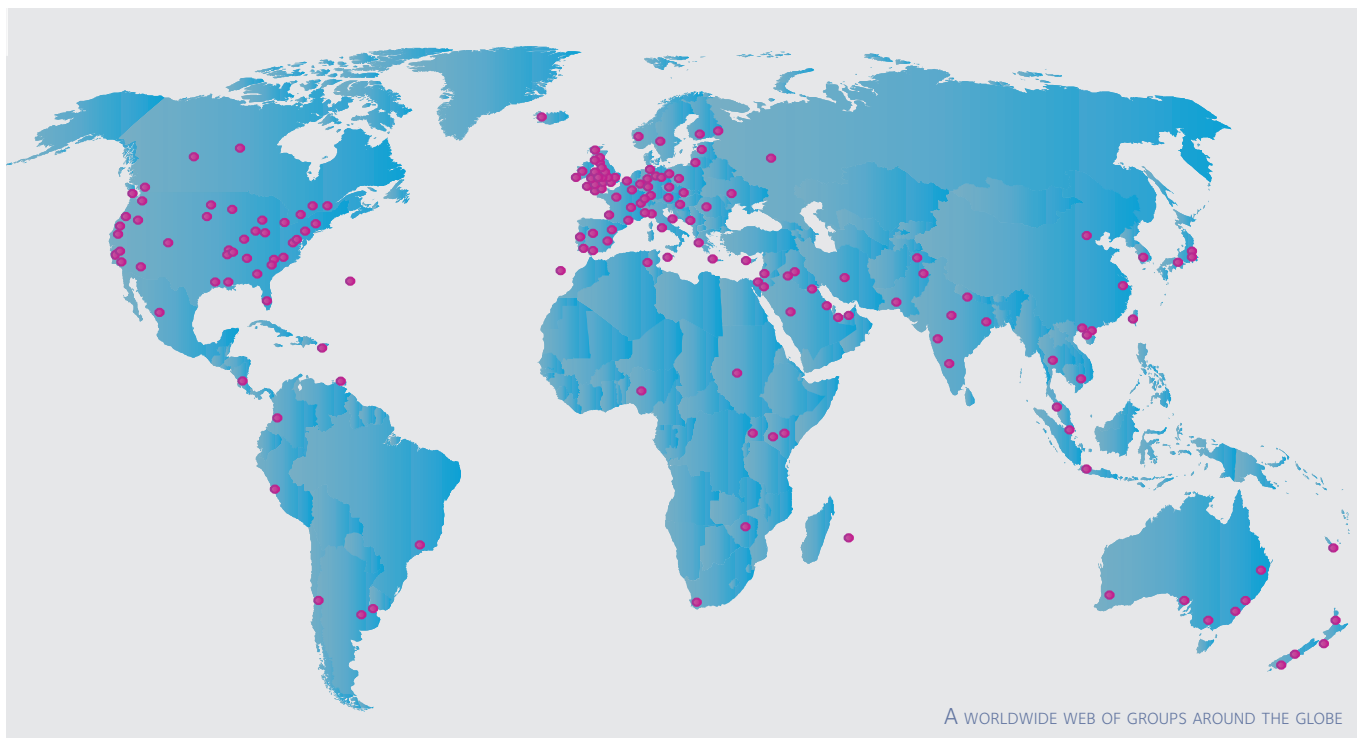
This year sees a new addition to the series with the introduction of 'Do' in Hilary term, a programme focusing on the technology and processes used to support the University's administrative work. The aim is to include demos of the main University systems and provide a forum for people to share ideas.

The talks in all three series are delivered by volunteers – members of the University who are keen to share their experiences. If you would like to give a talk or suggest a topic for discussion, please contact david.baker@it.ox.ac.uk.

A LINK FOR LIFE

The University's alumni groups provide a worldwide network of contacts, as *Alastair Lack* discovers





A WORLDWIDE WEB OF GROUPS AROUND THE GLOBE

Pick up the latest Oxford Alumni Networks Directory and you enter a world that is truly global. In the UK, alumni groups exist from Aberdeen to York. In Africa, they stretch from Algeria to Zimbabwe; in Asia, from China to Vietnam; in Continental Europe, from Armenia to the Ukraine; and in the United States, the list begins with Arizona and ends with Washington. There are also academic groups, ranging from Business through Engineering and History to Medicine.

In all, the University currently has 42 alumni groups in the UK and over 170 international groups (now almost an equal split between Oxford alumni groups and joint Oxford and Cambridge Societies). Groups are constantly forming, with new ones created recently in Colombia and Chile, all part of alumni growth in Central and South America.

The networks effectively began on 1 December 1930, when Lionel Curtis, a fellow of All Souls, proposed the creation of the Oxford Society, a worldwide association of present and former members of the University, formed to forward the interests of the University and to keep its members in touch with each other. This was to be achieved through an international branch organisation and the magazine *Oxford* (which was published for many years). The fostering of alumni interest and goodwill towards the University remains the aim, by encouraging intellectual, emotional and professional ties between members and their University.

Groups run a diverse range of activities for members and act as ambassadors for the University in their region. Earlier this year

alumni groups in South Korea, Singapore and Thailand organised highly successful gatherings, which attracted almost 300 alumni, around the Vice-Chancellor's visit to Asia. The Alumni Office also runs regular regional events – in North America, in Europe and now in Asia (the first alumni weekend in Hong Kong will take place in March 2014). These 'Meeting Minds' events take place every two years, with the most recent being in Madrid last April. A Friday reception at the residence of the British Ambassador was followed by a series of distinguished

'Our alumni groups are a wonderful resource for the University on so many levels'

lectures and tours of Madrid on Saturday, ending on the Sunday with brunch at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts.

Other alumni group activities include bursary award schemes for students from the local area: Cornwall, Dorset, Hertfordshire, East Kent and West Sussex all help fund summer projects. A number of groups also organise 'freshers' and access events, and even – like OUS Luxembourg – mock Oxbridge interviews. Last year alumni groups held over 1,000 events worldwide.

'Our alumni groups are a wonderful resource for the University on so many levels', says Jackie Hruby, the Alumni

Networks Manager. 'They act as our regional ambassadors and trusted advocates, support current and prospective students, and keep Oxonians in touch with their alma mater.' Christine Fairchild, Director of Alumni Relations, agrees: 'They are our most treasured resource – they keep the Oxford alumni network thriving and resonant in all corners of the world.'

Among the most popular events at alumni meetings are lectures, and University academics travel far and wide to give educational and entertaining talks: Mark Damazer, Master of St Peter's, spoke recently on 'Oxford and the BBC: Public Institutions under Pressure' to the Tayside branch, and Jessica Rawson, former Warden of Merton, spoke to the Hampshire branch on 'China: Past and Present, an Oxford Archeologist's view'. Other recent speakers include Sir Neil Chalmers, former Warden of Wadham; Sir Drummond Bone, Master of Balliol; and Mike Nicholson, Director of Undergraduate Admissions. Professor Peter Donnelly addressed the Queensland branch on modern genetics during a recent visit to Australia.

Alumni groups are always keen to attract a visiting Oxford speaker. If you would be willing to talk to a group, either in the UK or overseas, please contact Jackie Hruby, Alumni Networks Manager, at jackie.hruby@alumni.ox.ac.uk (tel 01865 611615). You will be assured of the warmest of welcomes.



More information about alumni activities at www.alumni.ox.ac.uk

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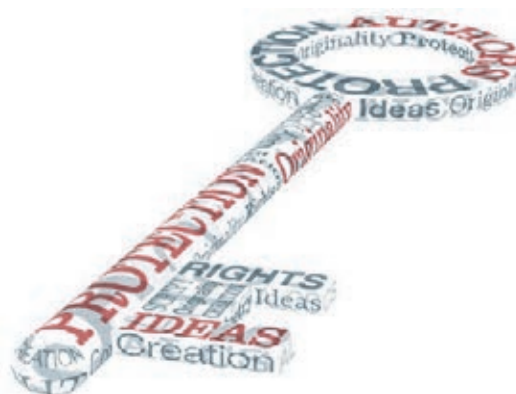
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WHY AM I HERE?

HARRIET WATERS

Head of Environmental Sustainability

In a nutshell, what do you do?

I make the University more environmentally sustainable. With the sustainability team, I work on reducing the University's carbon emissions by, for example, installing insulation and more efficient lighting to reduce its impact on the environment.

We facilitate sustainable transport choices through access to the mobile bike mechanic and discounts on public transport and we're just starting to look at how we could reduce our carbon emissions from our supply chain by implementing a sustainable procurement strategy. Biodiversity is another key area and we're developing a strategy for that.

You've just launched a new initiative, haven't you?

We've just launched 'Green Impact', a supported mechanism for departments to improve their environmental performance (see <http://greenimpact.org.uk/oxford>). Estates Services can do lots of things to help and advise but much of our overall impact is down to individual behaviour. Green Impact looks at how departments can influence colleagues to use resources more efficiently: departments will know what works best in their setting. The competitive element to it – an award scheme for aspects like the most innovative solution and the department that has achieved the most credits – should make it a bit of fun.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

I love the variety and the challenge of making the sustainability agenda relevant to people across the University community. The things we want to achieve (such as lower carbon emissions) have the potential to bring cost savings to departments; finding mutually beneficial opportunities is the most satisfying thing I do.

As a child, what did you want to be? And what actually was your first job?

Depends what phase I was in – I was a very earnest little girl who wanted to be a development worker, then I fancied going into the RAF as a dentist.

In fact, my first job was working in a field centre teaching ecology. I'm still a bit of a freshwater ecology fan and never tire of introducing my family and friends to the wonders of a cased caddis larva or a dragonfly nymph!

So how did you get from there to here?

After teaching ecology for a year I went on to do a Master's degree and since then have always worked in the environmental field. I've been with the University since January but before that spent the best part of a decade at Oxford Brookes in a similar role.

What hobbies and activities do you enjoy outside work?

I do quite a lot of exercise but I'm not sure I'd class that as 'enjoy'. I suppose the thing that takes up most of my time (other than my family) is my music. I play the E flat tuba and sousaphone and any other brass instruments going except the trombone! I play in a great local street band called Horns of Plenty and Oxfordshire's oldest brass band, the City of Oxford Silver Band.

What was your last live cultural event?

I played at Bunkfest in Wallingford and Camp Bestival over the summer, but the last thing I attended as a punter was *James and the Giant Peach* at Oxford Playhouse – it was great!

What's the most unexpected thing you've found yourself doing?

The British Council invited me to speak at a conference aimed at South Korean universities on greening university operations – that was quite unexpected, and leads me to my most embarrassing moment: I realised over breakfast that I'd been put up in a retirement village and was asked by a resident whether I would be moving in!

If we gave you £1,000 right now, what would you spend it on?

I'd put it towards the fibreglass sousaphone of my dreams – a good one costs about £5,000. It would be a lot lighter than the battered 'vintage' one I use at the moment!

If you could do anything on your day off, what would it be?

I'd go back to the Zimbabwean village where I taught during my year out, taking my family so they could see just how beautiful it is.

And finally, your favourite website?

Definitely www.dothegreening.com and also www.informationisbeautiful.net, a site dedicated to distilling the world's data, information and knowledge into beautiful, interesting and useful visualisations and diagrams.



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VIEWFINDER

WHERE'S THIS AMAZING ANGEL? ANSWER ON P6.

