Ashmolean exhibitions
Communicating climate change
Student mental health
News in brief

Oxford is running a project this term and next to investigate the ways in which we understand and practise learning and teaching in the University today. Called ‘The Idea of a University in the 21st Century’, the project is being run jointly by the Assessor Dr Teresa Morgan and Oxford University Student Union, and comprises a series of seminars as well as an online survey to capture people’s views about approaches and attitudes towards learning and teaching at Oxford. For details and to complete the survey, visit www.ox.ac.uk/staff/news/share_your_views.html.

‘Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust’ is the new name for a single NHS Trust that will run Oxfordshire’s four teaching hospitals. The University of Oxford and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust will remain separate organisations, but the new name and a joint working agreement mark a closer working relationship between the two. There have long been close connections between the hospitals and the University: medical students benefit from the clinical training they receive at the hospitals, while many staff hold both University and NHS roles.

Some 175,000 alumni are being sent the latest Oxford Thinking campaign mailing during Michaelmas term, with a letter from the Vice-Chancellor inviting people to contribute what they can. Included is The Oxford Book of Puzzles, designed to demonstrate how individual gifts can make a collective difference. The booklet profiles the University’s search for solutions to some of the world’s most pressing problems and shows how an interdisciplinary approach has helped pioneer discoveries that make a tangible difference to society. See www.campaign.ox.ac.uk/the_oxford_book_of_puzzles for details.

42 University staff were recognised for the excellence of their teaching at a ceremony on 10 November. The Oxford University Teaching Awards scheme, which is now in its fifth year, recognises different ways to engage students and help them learn, from creating new courses to the innovative use of podcasts. Many of the awards were made following feedback from students and staff, who singled out the special contribution of those involved in promoting the highest standards of teaching and learning.

Politics in Spires (http://politicsinspires.org) is a new online collaboration between the Department of Politics and International Relations at Oxford and the Department of Politics and International Studies at Cambridge. Containing blogs, podcasts, news and a section on open educational resources, Politics in Spires encourages scholars to share ideas on politics and international relations, to engage in debate on current affairs and to promote and disseminate their research to a wide audience. Current topics under discussion include Europe’s political crisis resulting from the eurozone meltdown.

A number of building and restoration projects across the collegiate University have been recognised in the 2011 Oxford Preservation Trust Awards. Plaques have been presented to the Balliol-owned St Cross Historic Collections Centre; the Sheldonian Theatre (left) for its redecoration and relighting project; the new Kendrew Quadrangle at St John’s; and Christ Church for the new lift access to the Great Hall. The scheme recognises projects that have made a significant contribution to the conservation and improvement of the environment of Oxford.

White Paper responses

The University has submitted responses to the Government’s White Paper on higher education, Students at the Heart of the System, and to its technical consultation considering the legislative requirements to implement the proposals therein.

The technical consultation invited discussion on matters such as the implementation of HEFCE’s new role as lead regulator, and approaches to easing the operation within the sector for alternative providers of degree-level study (defined as those which are not currently eligible for HEFCE funding, and are not further education colleges). The University’s response was considered by the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee, Council and the Education Committee.

Copies of the University’s responses are available on the Planning and Resource Allocation website at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/pras/oxonly/whitepaper.

Wolfson wing

Wolfson College has begun construction of a new academic wing. Designed by the architects Berman Guedes Stretton, the building will comprise a lecture hall, seminar rooms, academic offices, an extension to the library and an exhibition and café space. The first phase of the project, a new lecture theatre due to open in 2013, was inaugurated in a ground-breaking ceremony on 5 November. Further information is at www.wolfson.ox.ac.uk/academicwing.
Scientists are excited by the vision that, one day, cells taken from a cancer patient’s own body could be turned into immune cells primed to attack that patient’s tumour. Now, in a proof-of-principle study, scientists in the Sir William Dunn School of Pathology have, in the lab, turned skin cells into stem cells and then into immune cells attacking cancer. The researchers turned skin cells from a healthy adult back into a stem cell state, in which they can renew indefinitely and be coaxed to form any cell type. They then got the stem cells to turn into dendritic cells (key immune cells) and ‘showed’ them a melanoma, which primed them to attack it. Finally, they proved these cells could initiate a full immune response to melanoma markers in cell cultures. ‘We’ve worked out how to generate the particular dendritic cells that are necessary to get a good immune response against tumours,’ says lead researcher Dr Paul Fairchild, who is also co-director of the Oxford Stem Cell Institute at the Oxford Martin School. However, he cautions that moving from proof this is possible in the lab to therapy in patients will be a long and difficult process.

A study by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism has found that newspapers in the UK and US give far more space to the voices of climate sceptics than those in Brazil, France, India and China. Poles Apart – The international reporting of climate scepticism examined 3,327 articles covering climate change issues. Of those, 328 contained sceptical voices – and more than 80% of those came from the UK and US papers. Nearly half the ‘sceptical’ articles were opinion pieces and editorials. The scepticism often came from politicians, with the UK and US showing a particular preference for quoting politicians over climate change scientists: 86% of articles quoting politicians came from the anglophone press.

Professor Peter Franklin of the Music Faculty is arguing in his latest book that Hollywood music should not be seen as merely trivial or populist. Contemporary and modern critics have dismissed the music in films like King Kong, Gone with the Wind and Casablanca as low brow, but Professor Franklin has suggested that they are in fact a continuation of late Romanticism, brought across the Atlantic by European composers escaping World War II, such as Eric Wolfgang Korngold (The Adventures of Robin Hood and Anthony Adverse). The European influx reinforced late Romanticism’s role as the other face of musical modernism in the 1930s and 1940s.

How do you ‘see’ an atom? A tiny diamond containing specific defects at its heart can help. The defects hold electrons that act rather like a compass, lining up with even the extremely weak magnetic field of an atom. Information on location and type of atom can be ‘read’ by shining a pulse of laser light into the diamond, although this only works if the ‘compass’ is buried deep within the diamond – which puts it too far from any given structure to detect an individual atom within it. Scientists in the Department of Materials have now calculated that attaching an ‘amplifier molecule’ to the tip of the diamond, where it can get closer to a structure, would overcome the problem. This molecule passes information to the central ‘compass’, from where it can be read using light. Dr Simon Benjamin, one of the team, says if this can be made to work, it would be ‘rather like moving from black and white photographs of atoms to full colour’.

Researchers in the Health Economics Research Centre have estimated the cost of dementia across 15 western European countries as £165bn in 2007. Over two-thirds, or £112bn, were down to care by family and friends – a figure arrived at by calculating the ‘opportunity cost’ of almost 12 billion hours of unpaid labour. Over a quarter of the costs were down to social care, predominantly in residential and nursing homes. Costs to countries’ healthcare systems made up just 5% of the total burden. Alzheimer’s Research UK said the findings made a strong economic case for investment in dementia research.
People & prizes

Dr Amalia Coldea of the Department of Physics quantum materials group and Somerville College has been awarded the 2011 EuroMagNET prize for her outstanding contribution to the understanding of the electronic structure of iron-based superconductors by using high magnetic fields.

Christopher Fairburn, Professor of Psychiatry and a Wellcome Trust Principal Research Fellow, has been awarded the Aaron T Beck Award by the Academy of Cognitive Therapy for his research on cognitive aspects of eating disorders.

Dr Stephen Golding of the Nuffield Department of Surgical Sciences and Consultant Radiologist at the John Radcliffe Hospital has been awarded a gold medal for lifetime achievement by the European Society of Head and Neck Radiology. The medal is the Society’s leading honour and is awarded for contributions to the field over the duration of a career.

Dr Sudhir Hazareesingh of the Department of Politics and International Relations and Balliol College has received a Prix d’Histoire award from the French Senate for his book *Le mythe gaullien*. The Senate awards up to three prizes annually to the best history books published in the previous year, as judged by a panel of French historians and literary critics.

Jane Humphries, Professor of Economic History and fellow of All Souls, has been awarded the Gyorgi Ranki Biennial Prize of the Economic History Association for her book *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution*.

Professor Andrew Hamilton, the Vice-Chancellor, has been awarded the 2011 International Izatt—Christensen Award in Macrocyclic Chemistry. The award recognises his significant contribution to virtually every aspect of the fields of molecular recognition in both organic and biological chemistry.

Dr Julie Makani, a Clinical Research Fellow in the Nuffield Department of Medicine who is based at Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences in Tanzania, has won a Royal Society Pfizer Award. The £60,000 award will support her research into the molecular, genetic and environmental mechanisms of sickle cell disease.

Professor Dan Robinson of the Faculty of Philosophy and Linacre College has been awarded the 2011 Gittler Award by the American Psychological Association. The award recognises ‘the most scholarly contributions to the philosophical foundations of psychological knowledge’.

Fiona Stafford, Professor of English Language and Literature and fellow of Somerville College, has won the British Academy’s 2011 Rose Mary Crawshay Prize for English Literature for her book *Local Attachments: The Province of Poetry*.

Dr Troy Sternberg of the School of Geography was awarded an Oman—Thesiger International Desert Fellowship by the Royal Geographical Society to study human–hazard interaction (documentation, social exposure and system reliance) in the Gobi desert.

Dr Frances Ashcroft, Royal Society Research Professor in the Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics and fellow of Trinity College, has been named as European Laureate in the L’Oréal–UNESCO 2012 Women in Science awards.

Professor Ashcroft is one of five female scientists from around the world – one from each continent – named as Laureates for their groundbreaking contributions to science. The $100,000 award recognises Professor Ashcroft’s work in advancing understanding of insulin secretion and of neonatal diabetes, which develops in the first months of life.

Medics honoured

Two members of the Nuffield Department of Medicine have been honoured with awards by the Royal College of Physicians. Peter Ratcliffe, Nuffield Professor of Clinical Medicine and Head of Department, was awarded the Baly Medal for distinction in physiology.

Dr Julian Knight, Senior Clinical Research Fellow in Genomic Medicine, was awarded the Graham Bull Prize in clinical science.

New EMBO members

Xin Lu, Professor of Cancer Biology and Director of the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, and Jordan Raff, Milstein Professor of Molecular Cancer Biology, have been elected as members of EMBO, the European organisation promoting excellence in the life sciences. Election recognises both commitment to research excellence and outstanding personal achievements.

Press prize

The University has won an award for its profile in worldwide TV news. Media analysis organisation MediaTenor gives an annual award to the university with the best showing in a list of 24 influential TV news programmes across nine countries and world regions. Analysis criteria include volume, tone, visibility in international outlets, and diversity of topics covered. The award, which has been running for five years, has previously always gone to either Harvard or Columbia, but Oxford has now knocked its US rivals off the top spot.
James Belich, Research Professor of History at the Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, took up this post on 1 October, initially on a part-time basis (full time from October 2012). He is also now a fellow of Balliol College.

James Belich took an MA in History at Victoria University before travelling in 1978 as a Rhodes Scholar to Oxford, where he studied at Wadham and Nuffield Colleges for his DPhil. He has held academic posts at both the University of Auckland and Victoria University of Wellington and has won many awards for his books. His book The New Zealand Wars (1987), based on his DPhil thesis, was turned into an award-winning five-part documentary series which Professor Belich wrote and presented. His latest book, Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-world, was published by OUP in 2009.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand and of the New Zealand Academy of the Humanities and was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2006 Queen’s Birthday Honours List for services to historical research.

Glaxo Professor of Cellular Pathology

Christoph Tang, Professor in Infectious Diseases at the Centre for Molecular Microbiology and Infection, Imperial College London, took up this post in the Sir William Dunn School of Pathology on 1 August.

Christoph Tang trained at the University of Liverpool Medical School and the University of London. He specialises in general medicine and infectious diseases and his career has included two years as a Registrar in general medicine at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Banjul in The Gambia, as well as posts in Oxford in the Nuffield Department of Medicine and the University Department of Paediatrics at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

Professor Tang’s research interests include the pathogenesis of infections caused by Neisseria meningitidis and Shigella flexneri, particularly the interaction of these bacteria with aspects of the innate immune system and especially the complement system which is critical for prevention of meningococcal infections.

Norman Collisson Professor of Musculoskeletal Sciences

Peter Taylor, Professor of Experimental Rheumatology and Honorary Consultant Physician, Head of Clinical Trials, Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology Division in the Faculty of Medicine at Imperial College London, Lead Clinician Rheumatologist and Campus Dean, took up this post in the Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences on 1 October. He is also now a fellow of St Peter’s College.

Peter Taylor was educated at the universities of Cambridge, Oxford and London. His specialist clinical interests are in rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and early inflammatory arthritis. He has considerable expertise in clinical trials, particularly trial design and ‘go/no-go’ signals for further development, and his research interests include using novel imaging to evaluate progress and assess responses to therapy and as an early indicator of inflammation suppression and disease modification. His clinical trials work has included the assessment of biologic therapies and anti-cytokine therapies as probes of pathogenesis.

Cheryl and Reece Scott Professor of Psychiatry

Charles Newton, Professor in Tropical Neurosciences and Paediatrics at the Institute of Child Health, University College London; Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellow at the Wellcome Trust/Kenya Medical Research Institute Collaborative Programme, Kilifi, Kenya; Consultant Paediatric Neurologist at Great Ormond Street Hospital, London; and Visiting Professor in the Nuffield Department of Medicine, University of Oxford, took up this post in the Department of Psychiatry on 1 October. He also became a fellow of St John’s College.

Charles Newton studied medicine at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, and undertook postgraduate training in paediatrics in Manchester and London. He first joined the University of Oxford in 1989 and subsequently went to Kilifi in Kenya to set up a unit to study severe malaria in African children. Following research at Johns Hopkins University in the US and at Great Ormond Street Hospital, he returned to Kilifi in 1998 to study central nervous system infections in children and become Head of Clinical Research. He also took up a post in Paediatric Neurosciences at the Institute of Child Health, University College London.

He is an Honorary Professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and at Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences in Tanzania, and is a Fellow of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

Regius Professor of History

Lyndal Roper, fellow and tutor in History at Balliol College, took up this post on 1 October, following approval of the appointment by Her Majesty the Queen.

Professor Roper, who is the first woman to hold this chair, also became a fellow of Oriel College.

Lyndal Roper has a BA from the University of Melbourne and a PhD from the University of London and has held fellowships at a number of UK, Australian and German universities. She works in the field of gender history and the religious and social history of early modern Germany, and has published a number of ground-breaking works on the history of witchcraft. She is currently working on a biography of Martin Luther.

Jeremy Griffiths Professor of Medieval English Palaeography

Daniel Wakelin, University Lecturer in English at the University of Cambridge, took up this post within the Faculty of English Language and Literature on 1 September. He also became a fellow of St Hilda’s College.

Daniel Wakelin was educated at the University of Cambridge and is an expert on the material remains of English literature between the 14th and early 16th centuries: manuscripts, and some printed books, and what they reveal about writing habits and reading habits. His special interests are scribal corrections, errors and accuracy; marginalia and other ‘genres’ of writing by, for or about readers; humanist reading and scholarship; manuscripts of carols; 15th- and 16th-century courtly poetry; early printing; and interleudes.
Nestling in the tranquil Oxfordshire countryside, this Jacobean retreat is easily accessible without the stress of city traffic and offers ample free parking. Yet it is only 5 miles from the city centre with easy access from the M40 and the Oxford ring road.

- Flexible meeting space for up to 70 delegates
- Cost effective, competitive room rates
- On-site hospitality
- On-site free parking for conference delegates
- Dedicated events team, including IT support
- Minibus service from Oxford city centre
- Excellent road transport links

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For more information call us on: freephone 0800 849 8505 or visit our new website at: www.architect-yourhome.com
Bag a bargain as Christmas approaches

With Christmas just around the corner, bag yourself a bargain by using your University Card. You can enjoy a 10% discount all year round at the University shops, including the Bodleian, Ashmolean, Pitt Rivers, University Museum of Natural History, University of Oxford shop and the OUP Bookshop, but time your visit carefully and you can take advantage of double discount days in early December.

Thursday 1 December is double discount day at the University of Oxford shop on the High Street. Show your University Card to enjoy 10% off purchases (www.bate.ox.ac.uk/christmas-shopping).

For a different kind of gift, why not try a gift certificate from Twenty Ten Unisex Hair & Beauty Salon (www.twentynoxford.com)? Located on New Road opposite the Westgate Shopping Centre, the salon is offering University staff a deluxe gift certificate for some serious relaxation after Christmas. Until the end of January 2012, the Wellbeing Clinic in Headington (www.wellbeingclinic.com) is offering discounts of between £5 and £10 off a series of treatments, including Zen Shiatsu, Reiki, Acupuncture, Health Kinesiology, Orthopathy, Hypnotherapy and Massage. Quote ‘Oxford University Staff Winter Discount’ when booking to take advantage of the discount.

Noticeboard

Michael Sibly, formerly Secretary of the Faculties and Academic Registrar, has assumed the title of Deputy Registrar from 1 October. In addition to his current role and standing in for the Registrar when necessary, he will take on a more active role in representing the University in meetings with the city and county councils and will play a leading role in plans to integrate the delivery of IT services across the University.

Ngaire Woods, Professor of International Political Economy, has been appointed as the inaugural Dean of the Blavatnik School of Government. A recognised world authority on international relations, global economic governance, the challenges of globalisation, and the role of international institutions, she helped lead the creation of the Blavatnik School and was serving as its Academic Director.

Dr Oliver Bakewell and Dr Hein de Haas took over joint directorship of the International Migration Institute (IMI) on 1 October. IMI is a research centre at the Department of International Development and a member of the Oxford Martin School. Dr Bakewell’s research interests include the changing relationship between migration, diasporas and global development; social theory and migration; and examining the boundaries between ‘forced’ and ‘voluntary’ migration. Dr de Haas’s research focuses on the reciprocal links between migration and broader processes of human development and globalisation.

Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre

Meera Syal has been named as the next Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre, based at St Catherine’s College. Professor Syal is a playwright, actress and writer who rose to prominence as one of the team that created Goodness Gracious Me and became one of the UK’s best-known Indian personalities in The Kumars at No. 42. She has appeared on radio, television, film and on stage. Her recent stage roles include Willy Russell’s Shirley Valentine and she is currently appearing in The Killing of Sister George at the Arts Theatre, London. She is the author of two novels, Life Isn’t All Ha Ha Ha and Anita and Me, which won the Betty Trask Award and was shortlisted for the Guardian Fiction Award. She has adapted both these novels for the screen. She also wrote the screenplay for the acclaimed film Bhaji on the Beach.

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We need to talk about climate

The Environmental Change Institute has had a profound influence on both governments and individuals, Jamie Condliffe discovers

When it comes to environmental change, most people have an opinion. Few, however, have answers. But the University’s Environmental Change Institute (ECI) has been trying to change that – a process that has not only involved complex natural and social science, but squaring up to the task of communicating research to the outside world, too. Twenty years on and the world’s environmental problems are far from solved, but the ECI has helped inform government policy and increase public understanding.

‘When the ECI was set up through benefaction in 1991, it was extremely innovative and ambitious,’ explains Professor Andrew Goudie, who led the Institute’s founding task force. ‘It was designed to be problem-led and therefore interdisciplinary, running big research programmes across climate change, ecosystems and energy.’ Those same research areas are just as important today, and so far some 300 research projects have been completed.

Much of the work has been carried out in collaboration with academics from across the University, working with the ECI to address the world’s most pressing environmental problems. From fine-grained social studies in the UK to long-term monitoring in tropical forests and, most recently, the world’s largest climate forecasting experiment, that variety is part of the reason the ECI has achieved such success in influencing national and international policy.

Take, for instance, the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP), funded by the government since 1997. The programme began by working with individual regions of the UK to assess the impact climate change might have. ‘We worked with stakeholders around the country to help them understand how climate change could affect them and what they might want to do in response,’ explains Dr Chris West, Director of UKCIP. As well as geographical regions, UKCIP works closely with service providers like the healthcare sector and utilities companies – a process designed to engage key decision-makers with the risks of climate change. Indeed, UKCIP’s stakeholder-led approach is acknowledged worldwide as pioneering, and is regularly held up as a model for others.

If such a scheme was designed to raise awareness, then more recent work is capitalising upon it. Spearheaded by Professor Myles Allen, climateprediction.net is the world’s biggest climate prediction experiment to date, jointly run by Oxford e-Research Centre’s Volunteer Computing, the Department of Physics and the ECI. ‘Our original experiments were focused on idealised physical science questions,’ explains Professor Allen, ‘but our latest stream of research, the Weather at Home experiment, sponsored by The Guardian, is focused on the immediate impacts of climate change and how it affects extreme weather.’ To help share out the huge computational load, volunteers download software and...
perform climate calculations on their PCs, before the results are sent back to Oxford electronically. ‘It’s proved to be one of our most successful projects to date,’ says Professor Allen. So far, 350,000 people in 150 countries have joined climateprediction.net, a testament to the increasing awareness of environmental issues fostered by projects from within the University.

But it’s not just the public who are increasingly aware of the importance of climate issues. A new breed of researchers are keen to use knowledge from their subject area to explore current environmental concerns – and there’s no better example than Allen himself. ‘Back in 2003 I wrote an article about the attribution of extreme weather events,’ he explains. ‘That was a tentative suggestion of what might be possible some day. Now, these applied questions about extreme examples of climate change are becoming more important.’ As a result, his research emphasis has shifted from purely physical science questions to those concerned with the human impact on climate change. ‘I’m happy to say that this kind of thinking is becoming mainstream across the entire subject of climate change, and needed to do that,’ explains Dr Eyre. ‘But we already know that it’s primarily a “people challenge”, getting everyone from home owners to building firms and local communities to engage with these issues. That’s where some of our more off-the-wall research is coming into play.’

In fact, the ECI is managing to raise public awareness with real innovation. In recent years the Institute has worked with the UK music industry to help it tackle its carbon footprint, and set up an initiative with Oxford United Football Club to drive interest in environmental change. ECI researchers have even been involved with the games company Red Redemption, lending expertise to help create a computer game, Fate of the World, which simulates the real social and environmental impact of global climate change. ‘It was vital that we were based in Oxford and involved with the University during the project,’ says Ian Roberts, Creative Director at Red Redemption. ‘We needed to be immersed in the subject of climate change, and needed to see experts in the field. The ECI really helped us.’ The game has proved to be both a critical and commercial success.

But there’s still a way to go, because ECI staff believe communicating the threat of climate change isn’t enough: people need to see solutions, believe they work and understand they can be part of them, too. That emphasis upon solutions has helped spawn Pilo, the first spin-out company from Isis Innovation’s Software Incubator, and the ECI’s first commercial venture. It provides an online tool enabling small and medium-size businesses to monitor and manage their energy usage – and so far over 400 companies have used it.

With the Institute celebrating its 20th anniversary, and having grown in size to accommodate over 70 staff and 60 students, things continue to develop apace. The ECI’s new director, Professor Jim Hall, is an engineer used to delivering innovative solutions to real-world environmental challenges like flooding, coastal erosion and water scarcity. Now the ECI is leading a multi-partner £5m national programme that aims to create strategies for delivering energy, transport and water in ways that future-proofs them against environmental change.

‘We’re seeing a change in who’s involved in our research,’ explains Professor Hall. ‘A lot of the collaborators in this project are big businesses, working on some big strategic issues, which suggests that the challenge we’ve had in the past surrounding communication might be on the wane. Instead, society’s environmental future – from risk management to entrepreneurial opportunities – is now firmly on the agenda.’

Further information at www.eci.ox.ac.uk
What’s on

Exhibitions
If visiting during the Christmas period, please check opening hours.

Treasures of the Bodleian
Until 23 December
Exhibition Room, Bodleian Library
http://treasures.bodleian.ox.ac.uk
Some of the Bodleian’s rarest, most important and most evocative items are on display, ranging from ancient papyri through medieval manuscripts to 20th-century printed books and ephemera. Exhibits include Magna Carta, Handel’s conducting copy of Messiah and Shakespeare’s First Folio.

Lord of the Flies and beyond
Until 23 December
Proscholium, Bodleian Library
www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley/about/exhibitions
William Golding’s manuscript of his classic novel Lord of the Flies, on loan from the estate of William Golding and on public display for the first time. Curated by his daughter, Judy Carver, the Bodleian exhibition marks the centenary of the author’s birth. The display includes a revised typescript of the novel and correspondence between the author and his editor, Charles Montieth of Faber and Faber.

Special events
Christmas Light Night
Friday 2 December
7–10pm, Pitt Rivers; 6–10pm, Ashmolean; 7–10pm, Museum of the History of Science, University Museum of Natural History
visit the Ashmolean’s new galleries of Ancient Egypt and Nubia. Live music and dancing plus family activities in the Education Centre. Meanwhile, the Museum of the History of Science examines the number 12, in celebration of the 12 days of Christmas.

Chemistry @ the Garden
Until 31 December
University Botanic Garden
www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk
A special exhibition to celebrate the International Year of Chemistry 2011 by the Department of Chemistry and the Botanic Garden. Posters describe compounds derived from plants and the chemistry and methodologies required to discover, extract, mimic and use those compounds. Trails around the Garden to identify the plants and compounds described in the posters, plus models of compounds at the exhibition and around the Garden. (Free event after Garden entrance charges.)

Music
Gallery concert: Exploring the beauty of Japanese music
On Sunday 11 December, 2.30pm
Pitt Rivers Museum
www.prm.ox.ac.uk
Experience close-up one of the oldest yet relatively unknown musical traditions of the world. Featuring pieces for the koto (13-stringed zither), the shamisen (three-stringed lute) and the shakuhachi (five-holed notched bamboo flute) from both traditional and modern repertoires. Free, no need to book.

Handel’s Messiah
On Thursday 15 December, 7.30pm
Sheldonian Theatre
www.oxfordphil.com
A performance by Oxford Philomusica and New College Choir, conducted by Edward Higginbottom. Tickets (£37, £26, £17.50 and £10) from the University Museum of Natural History.

Talks
Lord Foster: Heritage and lessons
On Monday 28 November, 6pm
Said Business School
www.humanities.ox.ac.uk/news
Imagine how differently we might understand the modern world if we could travel back in time. Norman Foster, Humanitas Visiting Professor of Architecture, argues that we need to recapture the foresight and political courage of our 19th-century forebears and revive our traditions of architecture, engineering and landscape design. Free, on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more events, visit www.ox.ac.uk/staff/events

Kabuki: Museum Piece or Living Theatre?
On Tuesday 6 December, 2–4pm
Ashmolean Museum
www.ashmolean.org
Until the mid-19th century, kabuki was dismissed as popular entertainment, but became, just 100 years later, Japan’s best-known dramatic form. Dr Brian Powell, author of Japan’s Modern Theatre, looks at the period during which attitudes changed and considers what kabuki has to offer theatre-goers today.

Family-friendly activities
Big Botanic Christmas Tree
On Saturday 3 December, 10.30am
University Botanic Garden
www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk
Two hours of fun making natural decorations from seeds, leaves and pods. Take them home or hang them on the Botanic Garden’s tree. (Free event after Garden entrance charges.)

Family Fun in the Egypt and Nubia Galleries
On Saturdays 3, 10 & 17 December, 2–4pm
Ashmolean Museum
www.ashmolean.org/events/Families
Discover the new Egypt and Nubia galleries with mini-tours for families, ancient Egyptian object-handling, and a new trail.

Trail: 12 Days of Christmas
On Saturday 17 December – Friday 6 January
(except 24, 25, 26, 27 Dec, 1 and 2 Jan)
Pitt Rivers Museum (with Oxford University Museum of Natural History)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk
On the first day of Christmas the museums gave to me… a very exciting festive trail!

Pitt Stop: Rhythm of Life
On Saturday 7 January, 1–4pm
Pitt Rivers Museum
www.prm.ox.ac.uk
Beat drums and shake rattles! Drop in to make your own musical instrument, or join a free, ticketed workshop at 1.30pm or 3pm to have a go at playing.

Chinese Dragon Fire-clocks
On Saturday 21 January, 2–4pm
Museum of the History of Science
www.mhs.ox.ac.uk
Drop in to celebrate Chinese New Year and make a dazzling fire-clock to try out at home. Age 7+, materials £3.
Armand D’Angour’s career trajectory has not been a typical one. After studying piano and cello at the Royal College of Music, he read Classics as an undergraduate at Merton College, then became a professional cellist before taking the reins in a family-run manufacturing company. In 1994 he returned to academia, studying for a doctorate at University College London before becoming a Classics researcher, lecturer and tutor, first at Oriel in 1998 and then at Jesus College in 2000. ‘It’s rare for someone to have the good fortune to return to Classics as a lecturer after such a long spell in the business sector,’ he says.

Dr D’Angour has used his peculiar background to his advantage. His current research, he believes, has the potential to offer lessons to corporations and treasuries regarding what the world can learn from ancient Greece – as discussed in his new book *The Greeks and the New: Novelty in Ancient Greek Imagination and Experience* (Cambridge University Press). The idea for the book came to him when he was working in the family company in the 1980s. ‘The constant pressure to innovate’, he says, ‘in products, designs and organisational structures aroused in me a mixture of feelings, positive and negative, about the generation and reception of novelty. This experience led me to wonder whether the Greeks in classical times had encountered a similar ambivalence about innovation.’

His findings prompted him to rethink what it means for something to be new. ‘Even in ancient Greece, nothing was wholly new,’ he says. ‘Part of Greece’s success lay in its geographical position between more materially advanced nations such as Egypt and Phoenicia, and its ability to identify their accomplishments and adapt and improve on them. The Greek alphabet, for example, was devised by taking a workable Phoenician script and establishing the vowel signs so as to create what is still the most widespread piece of software in the world,’ he adds. Given the current financial crisis in Greece, economists might do well to turn to their forebears for inspiration and new strategies for dealing with their problems.

Music remains an important part of Dr D’Angour’s life and he still performs as a professional cellist. It is rare for him to be able to combine the two roles, but at a forthcoming conference he has been booked to perform both as an academic speaker and as a musician. ‘Not at the same time,’ he adds.

One of the highlights of Dr D’Angour’s academic career came in 2004, when he was asked to write a Pindaric Ode for the Olympic Games that were returning to Athens for the first time since the inaugural modern Olympics in 1896. The Ode, three verses long and written in ancient Greek in the style of the poet Pindar, was read at the closing session of the International Olympic Committee.

He has subsequently acceded to a request from London’s Mayor, Boris Johnson – himself a classicist – to compose another Ode for the 2012 games. ‘This one has a lighter touch, as befits the character of the man who commissioned it,’ he says. ‘I’ve translated it into rhyming couplets. It would be nice to think that it could turn people on to Classics.’ It took him a fortnight to come up with an initial draft and a few months to refine it. And what can we expect from the new Ode? ‘I can’t reveal too many details,’ he says, ‘but at the Mayor’s request, and building on a tradition of ancient Greek wordplay, the Ode includes a few puns – including, of course, an allusion to the world-beating Jamaican sprinter known as Lightning Bolt.’

More information at www.jesus.ox.ac.uk/fellows-and-staff/fellows/dr-armand-dangour
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unset ships at harbour, classical porticoes in sylvan glades –
the paintings breathe an august air of time stilled, and only the
occasional murmur breaks the silence. Yet like any exhibition
at the Ashmolean Museum, this one could never have been
achieved without the efforts of some 170 museum staff, culminating
in a frenzy of activity.

In 2009, an award-winning transformation of the Ashmolean building
quadrupled the space available for temporary exhibitions to 435 m². These
new Special Exhibitions Galleries have already highlighted important aspects
of the museum’s rich collection of art and antiquities, from the archaeological
Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley 5000–3500 BC to the current
Claude Lorrain: The Enchanted Landscape, which draws on the museum’s
extensive collection of drawings by the 17th–century French artist.

Exhibitions have a long gestation. Claude, curated by senior assistant
keeper of Western Art Dr Jon Whiteley, originated six years ago in
discussions with curators at the Städel Museum in Frankfurt. The curator
draws up a ‘narrative’ for a proposed exhibition for approval by Ashmolean
director Dr Christopher Brown. Exhibitions manager Agnes Valencak then
works out the budget based on a ‘dream list’ of pieces the Ashmolean
would like to borrow from other collections, public and private, national and
international. It covers the costs of transporting artefacts, design, invigilation,
and other necessities such as posters. Each borrowed work is valued for
government indemnity or insurance.

A leading art firm such as Constantine or Momart collects the pieces and
delivers them via the Ashmolean’s new loading bay. The conservation
department records the condition of each piece and makes any necessary
repairs: old frames are prone to shed the occasional curlicue. ‘They’re often
returned in better fashion than when we received them,’ says Dr Whiteley.

The galleries get a facelift for each exhibition. Designers create a layout on
computer; the curator writes labels and information panels; the photography
studio blows up illustrative materials for display. Finally, in a process lasting
from three to six weeks, the walls are painted; where necessary, cabinets are
constructed, false walls erected, and frames provided; and workshop staff
set the light levels to international conservation standards. For Claude and
the other exhibitions since the 2009 redevelopment, says Agnes Valencak,
‘it’s been all hands on deck: everyone working on installation, everyone work-
ing on putting the museum back together’.

With the exhibition contents only finalised in the spring, Dr Whiteley and
Dr Martin Sonnabend of the Städel had scant months to co-write the Claude
catalogue. The museum takes photos of its own holdings but the real challenge
is obtaining high-quality images of each loan item from its lender ahead of
delivery. The Special Exhibitions shop also stocks other appropriate titles: for
Claude, books on the English garden, which the artist greatly influenced. The
Ashmolean retail team sources or commissions other items to complement the
show – printed fabrics, notebooks, postcards – as souvenirs or gifts.

A programme of associated events is also created, involving experts from
the Ashmolean and beyond. For Claude, there have been lectures at the
Taylorian, guided tours, excursions to Blenheim and Rousham, art workshops
and music recitals. And of course there is a ‘private view’ for lenders, donors,
subscribers and Friends of the Ashmolean, with wine and introductory
speeches. The marketing department publicises it all with literature printed
in signature colours for each exhibition – a dark green in the case of
Claude – and carrying the names of the corporate or philanthropic sponsors.

85% of Ashmolean staff are directly involved in developing or
staging each exhibition – the only staff not involved tend to be those in
human resources and the other curators. In January, Claude goes to
Frankfurt for three months. The third floor of the Ashmolean will be
transformed once more, for an exhibition in partnership with Yale University
focusing on art and other artefacts from the Westmorland, a British ship
captured by the French in 1779. It will be all hands on deck again.

The making of an exhibition

John Garth goes behind the scenes at the Ashmolean Museum

Top: The Heracles to Alexander the Great exhibition earlier this year showed more than 500 extraordinary objects, most of them on display for the first time anywhere in the world. Bottom: Claude Lorrain’s Dido and Aeneas is on display until 8 January
Supporting students

What should you do if you think a student may have a mental health problem? Jenny Lunnon highlights sources of help

Something is wrong, but you’re not sure what it is. A student who usually contributes a lot in seminars has been subdued for the past month. Their essays lack their usual liveliness and they have lost the spring in their step. What should you do?

The short answer is: make time to speak to them in private, listen carefully to what they say, and where appropriate encourage them to seek further help. That might mean referring them to see the college doctor or nurse, or a counsellor at the Counselling Service – someone who can assess the situation and advise on the best course of action. Other possible resources include confidential telephone advice lines, online self-help courses, peer support groups, books and podcasts.

The problem is that many members of staff are not aware of what assistance is available. They may feel uncertain about how to broach the subject, or what to do if a student denies they have a problem and declines their offer of help. They might, understandably, wonder whether they should become involved at all, given that they lack professional expertise in mental health.

This is where the Oxford Student Mental Health Network (OSMHN) comes in. It advises University and college staff on how to spot the early signs of student distress and take practical steps to help. Set up in 2000 as a HEFCE-funded research project, the network today brings together over 300 people from Oxford University, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford and Cherwell Valley College, and the NHS, who are all working to improve the mental health and well-being of Oxford’s large student population.

Hertford College nurse Yo Davies, who represents the College Nurses’ Association on OSMHN’s steering committee, explains: ‘Many of us dealing with students in distress are working alone and the opportunity to network and learn from each other is very important. Being part of OSMHN has allowed tutors, welfare deans, chaplains, nurses, NHS staff and others to interact and share ideas and best practice.’

OSMHN runs training courses and workshops on topics that have included bereavement, drug and alcohol misuse, and perceptions of mental health in different cultures. One that participants found especially useful was about dealing with mental health problems out of hours.

Courses are open to all University and college staff – including those in administrative, domestic and residential roles – and to students with welfare responsibilities, such as JCR and Student Union officers.

Alan Percy, Head of the University’s Counselling Service and also a member of OSMHN’s steering committee, emphasises that they are not trying to train up ‘amateur psychotherapists’, but to help staff gain the confidence and knowledge to offer initial assistance, encourage students to seek further support, and understand issues such as confidentiality.

Being able to pool the expertise of many people has been invaluable, he says, especially when doing joint advocacy on student-specific issues, such as the need to provide continuity of care where students are living for part of the year in Oxford and part elsewhere. Sharing information has brought to light many useful resources, such as a Japanese-speaking Samaritans helpline.

Students are more likely to suffer mental ill health than the general population. One explanation is that many are far from home and their established support network. Exam pressure or financial worries may also be factors, whilst arts and humanities graduate students in particular can find the years of independent study required to achieve a higher degree a rather lonely journey.

Most students will overcome their difficulties and go on to achieve academic success and fulfilment in their personal and work lives. The key is helping them to see that there is nothing to be ashamed of in admitting they have a problem, and offering appropriate, timely support before it becomes a crisis.

The University’s Counselling Service offers advice and guidance to students and those supporting students, including University and college staff, health professionals, parents and other students.

See www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/counselling

For more information about OSMHN, including forthcoming events and training and how to join their mailing list, see www.osmhn.org.uk
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Firstly, can you tell us a little about OUP?
The Press is a department of the University and works to further Oxford’s objectives by publishing worldwide.
It employs 5,500 staff in 50 different countries and publishes some 6,300 new titles each year. Our publishing programme includes scholarly works in all academic disciplines, school and college textbooks, materials for teaching English as a foreign language, reference books, and The Oxford English Dictionary. In addition, Oxford has an ever-growing online presence. Almost all our new publications have some kind of digital element, from e-books to online reference works, and we’ve entered the 21st century as the world’s largest university press.

So what do you personally do?
I’m responsible for a small team collecting, cataloguing and making available for research all items connected with Oxford’s printing and publishing activities since the University established its first dedicated print shop in the Sheldonian Theatre in the 1660s. The collection extends over some 12 miles of shelving. Today, most additions are editorial, contract, or administrative records, but we also hold material from the paper mill at Wolvercote which the University owned and from the print shop on site at the Press until 1989: type specimens, printing blocks, engraved copper plates for the Oxford Almanack, staff magazines – and two or three printing presses!

What’s the oddest and oldest things that have survived?
The oddest is perhaps a tallow candle from the Sheldonian Theatre in the late 17th century. Since it’s made from the same tallow used in wax crayons, its scent takes you straight back to junior school. From the same time comes a far more significant collection, the large set of Dutch copper-type moulds obtained for the Press by Dr John Fell, Dean of Christ Church: a unique and beautiful body of objects.

What gets added to the archives nowadays?
Mostly editorial files for titles which have gone out of print, or projects which have reached completion. I think future historians will be fascinated by the ways in which the Press began to move into the digital age: the attempts at working with basic home computers, early CD–ROM work, and the successful launch of The Oxford English Dictionary online in 2000. The publishing world is in the middle of the largest revolution since printed books appeared in Europe 550 years ago, and almost any reaction to that by Oxford will be of huge interest in the coming years.

What’s your own favourite object?
The Press printed the first edition of Alice in Wonderland in 1865. At an auction about five years ago, we obtained the copper printing plate for the winding poem known as The Mouse’s Tail. It’s barely the size of a pocket diary, but it’s a magical object. It’s now on display in the Press museum and it’s always a delight to point it out to visitors.

And the thing you most regret not having been archived?
Again, from the 19th century. The University Printer Thomas Combe and his wife Martha were close friends with Lewis Carroll, Cardinal Newman and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, yet neither left a diary or any personal letters.

Can anyone come and see the archives?
We welcome any academic researcher with an interest in the history of the Press or its authors. More widely, we are responsible for a museum which traces the University’s involvement with printing and publishing from the 15th century onwards, which attracts about 3,000 visitors each year. The museum is open 10am–4pm, Monday–Friday, and there is no charge, but please book in advance! Our contact details are at www.oup.com/uk/archives/10.html.

How did your career evolve to your current job?
As I child, I knew I didn’t want a boring job — and working for the Press is anything but boring. I started work in local government archives and went from there to the Bodleian in the mid-1990s. I’ve been Archivist at the Press since 1998.

And finally, what do you most enjoy about your job?
I love the privilege of being responsible for one of the world’s most important printing archives, the fascination of meeting researchers and visitors from around the world who are interested in Oxford’s history, and the sheer variety of the work — in the end, you know something about almost everything, from bookbinding to the growth of the English language itself.