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Benefactors

Including Summary Financial Report, Sources and Use of Funds for the year 2016–17

St John's College, Oxford

From the President

Professor Maggie Snowling CBE, FBA

ollege is in vibrant good form and, as ever, it has been a pleasure to welcome new students and researchers to St John's. A number of Fellows have joined us: Gillian Rose as Professorial Fellow in Geography and Lloyd Pratt as Drue Heinz Professor of American Literature, together with Official Fellows and Tutors in Engineering Science (Professor Luca di Mare), Mathematics (Professor Christopher Beem), Computer Science (Professor Stefan Kiefer) and English (Professor Noël Sugimura).

At St John's we have always welcomed diversity in our student body and we support a balanced and inclusive community. Last year I chaired the University's Equality and Diversity Forum with the objective of tackling a broad range of issues relating to gender, disability and race in a joined-up way across the collegiate University. In College, a particular focus has been to improve the student experience for black and minority ethnic (BAME) students and in 2017 we appointed Professor Philip Maini as Fellow for Ethnic Minorities. One of the joyful expressions of our commitment has been termly international dinners to celebrate the diverse nationalities - and hence cuisines - of College. Amidst many headlines nationally about student welfare in higher education, we have reviewed our welfare provision and increased the number of Junior Deans and of counselling hours available.

In 2014, we launched the '2000 Women' initiative to celebrate women's achievements across the College community and to inspire and sustain the achievements of our current students. Building on this, the Bainton Road Nursery opened in autumn 2016, offering places for the children of St John's staff and students, from six months to the age of five, and I am delighted to report that the nursery is thriving. We have also established a Women's Network that aims to further women's engagement with the College and to support their education, well-being and life opportunities. A new online alumni network has been launched in 2018. I very much hope that this will enable us all to remain closely connected as members of the St John's global community.

A key focus is, of course, on admitting students of the highest academic potential and supporting them to succeed. Our annual range of bursaries and scholarships now amounts to over \pounds I.Im. We are also striving to increase the proportion of UK undergraduates from groups traditionally under-represented at Oxford. The *Inspire* Programme is a new initiative that, through generous donations, will allow the College to make even more impact in its outreach and access work, with a focus on academic enrichment, study skills and a structured programme of information about making a university application to a competitive university.

Collectively, through your philanthropy, and individually through your many offers of support and advice, you make this possible. We are much indebted and I send my heartfelt thanks to you all.



From the Editor of Benefactors

Reverend Professor William Whyte

Il publications directed to benefactors or alumni begin by declaring that this has been a year of change. And of course it's a statement that is always true. How could it not be? Although Oxford colleges look unchanging, each year necessarily brings with it the departure of old students and the arrival of new. The wider world also shapes and reshapes universities with increasingly alarming rapidity. Change, much more than continuity, is the natural condition of a college.

Yet some years do see more – or more important – change than others. Whether it's the uncertainty of a post-Referendum Britain or the questions raised by debates about higher education policy, 2016–17 has surely been one of those years.

If this is true in general, then it's also true in the particular case of Development and Alumni Relations at St John's. It's been a period of real change as we have bid a fond farewell to Amber Bielby and we look forward to welcoming Robert Crow as our new Director of Development. The office he will oversee has been busier than ever, whether that's booking in alumni to our guestrooms, organising events, running telephone campaigns, or the thousand other things that occupy their time.

Together, all the team members have revamped every aspect of their role, not least in creating a number of informal alumni events including Thirsty Tuesday, St John's on the Road, and the 'In Conversation' series. They also took St John's around the UK and across the globe, meeting alumni and other supporters in Hong Kong, Singapore, Brisbane, Vancouver, Toronto, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Palo Alto, Boston, New York and Washington, DC as well as in London, Oxford, Bristol, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Nottingham, Reading, Plymouth, Tiverton and – yes – even Cambridge. The response has been overwhelmingly positive and set a record for event attendance during the year at 1,750 alumni and guests. *Benefactors* is our chance to show off about this work and these achievements and to show you the ways in which the College is changing for good. In this issue we highlight the ways in which your gifts have enabled our students to travel the world, as well as the work we are doing to attract new students from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible.

Along the way, you will find short articles on the transformation of Garden Quad, which has now become the best performance space in any Oxford college, and the restoration of pictures in the Hall, which now look as good as new. We have also instituted some changes in *Benefactors* itself, with pieces from alumni on why they give to the College and an explanation by John Kay, a long-time Fellow and financial advisor, of how St John's manages its money.

Thank you for your support – and do please keep in touch. Better still, come and join us for one of our events. It would be great to see you.

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Summary Financial Report

Sources of and Use of Funds for the year 2016/2017

The College presents its results for the year ended 31 July 2017 in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice on Accounting and Reporting by Charities issued by the Charity Commission in 2014. A summary of the College's consolidated financial activities is as follows:

	2017	2016
L'000	£'000	£'000
Resources from charitable activities	5,700	5,636
Unrestricted revenue legacies and donations	608	794
Restricted revenue legacies and donations	524	3,670
Trading income and other generation of funds	816	860
	7,648	10,960
Funding from the College Endowment		
Investment income and interest	15,690	13,863
Capital gains	2,500	1,950
Capital gains used to fund restricted and designated activity	183	484
	18,373	16,297
Total Incoming Resource	26,021	27,257
College Expenditure		
 Teaching and research	24,062	22,598
Public worship	68	69
Fundraising and alumni relations	648	574
Trading and sundry expenditure	567	560
Total Expenditure	25,345	23,801
Net College Revenue	676	3,456
Actuarial (loss)/gain on pension asset	1,205	2,834
	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000
Summary of Endowment Movements		
Opening Endowments	485,810	442,245
Investment gains	59,840	52,910
New Endowments	120	31
Endowment costs	(6,462)	(5,842)
Gains used to fund operating activity	(2,500)	(1,950)
Gains on restricted and designated endowments used to fund operat	ing activity (183)	(484)
Gains used to fund fixed assets	(10,850)	(1,100)
Closing Endowments	525,775	485,810



The full Annual Report and Financial Statements are now available at: www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/finance-and-funding.

The Alumni Fund: Regular Gifts Transforming Lives

St John's College Development Manager Jacob Ward reports on the progress of the Alumni Fund in 2016–17.

A t St John's we think it is really important to involve all of our alumni in our fundraising activities in order to enable everyone to support our students at whatever level is appropriate for them. To this end, St John's established the Alumni Fund in 2009 as a vehicle for members of the College to support the College's current students. While individual gifts may be modest – even as little as $\pounds 5$ – when added together in the Alumni Fund they are able to achieve much more than they could alone.

The Alumni Fund supports two important and interlinked areas: access and student support. Both are close to the hearts of many of our alumni and tremendously important for the long-term future of the College.

While St John's has long admitted a higher proportion of state school-educated students than the Oxford average, there is much more to do to ensure we attract the brightest applicants, whatever their economic, ethnic, or social background. As you will read elsewhere in this edition of *Benefactors*, the Access and Outreach Office at St John's works with schools in our partner areas to encourage applications to university in general and to Oxford and St John's in particular. Over the 2016–17 academic year alone we held a fantastic 145 access events. Once students arrive at St John's, bursaries and other forms of financial support are essential to enable those from lower-income backgrounds to fund their time at College. With a $f_{I.I}$ million package of bursaries, grants, and scholarships, we are one of the most generous colleges in Oxford. But there is more we need to do – especially in the area of postgraduate scholarships – if we are to continue to attract the very best students, regardless of their financial background.

Over the course of the year a total of 1,146 alumni gave to the College, and between them they have contributed \pounds 554,924 to the Alumni Fund. This will make a tangible difference to the lives of St John's students, and we are immensely grateful to all those who contributed to this fantastic achievement.

Once again, the Telephone Campaign provided a significant proportion of the total gifts received. For the second year, in addition to the main campaign in the spring of 2017, we held a dedicated North America campaign in December 2016. The two campaigns together raised just over £360,000, making this another record-breaking year. We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to all of you who gave during the course of the year.





The 1555 Society

S t John's established the 1555 Society in 2014 to express its gratitude to those donors who have supported the College for a number of years. In order to qualify, alumni must be current donors who have given in at least five years, which do not have to be consecutive.

Members of the 1555 Society are acknowledged separately in the Roll of Benefactors and invited to a special annual event. At St John's we greatly value the support of all our alumni, and we are particularly grateful to those who choose to give year after year.

The first 1555 Society reception took place in July 2017 in the College's Barn Gallery. Guests were treated to Pimm's, prosecco, and canapés and enjoyed a bespoke exhibition of St John's-related art. The President thanked them for their loyal and generous support and highlighted some of the College's recent successes which have been enabled by alumni philanthropy. The next reception will be held on 14 July 2018, and we hope many of the Society's members will be able to join us then.

The Rawlinson Society

Development Manager **Jacob Ward** reports on the progress of the Rawlinson Society

ast year we launched the Rawlinson Society, welcoming over 100 members who have pledged legacies to St John's. In the eighteen months since the launch, alumni have shown tremendous generosity by contacting us to discuss how to leave a legacy that matches their aspirations and ensures that they have a positive impact on St John's and its students. Over $\pounds 3.4$ million has already been pledged in sums both great and small, from alumni across many matriculation years. Every legacy will have an impact and we are enormously grateful for this support.

In recognition of their generosity, members of the Rawlinson Society have enjoyed two delightful events. The first was an afternoon tea in St Giles House hosted by the President. On a bright July day, over tea, coffee, and cakes, Professor Snowling greeted alumni on their return to St John's and provided an update on the College's achievements during the academic year. The second event was a reception and performance of opera scenes at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. From *Die Fledermaus* and *Carmen* to *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Falstaff*, the evening was filled with excerpts from well-loved operas.

Thank you, once again, to all our alumni and friends who have pledged to leave a legacy to St John's. Your gifts provide vital funding for Scholarships, Bursaries, Access & Outreach programmes, and much more.







Garden Quad

Garden Quad has been one of the College's best-kept secrets for several years. Reverend Professor William Whyte reveals its past and its future as a major refurbishment reaches completion.

ew alumni and still fewer of our other benefactors will have experienced the St John's Children's Christmas Party. Imagine, then, if you can, the Garden Quad reception room filled with a hundred or so excitable infants and their exhausted parents or carers. Imagine a conjurer, a member of staff dressed as Father Christmas and others dressed as elves, and a nourishing meal of chicken nuggets and chips. Imagine the balloons and the presents. Imagine – if you dare – the noise.

This annual event is a helpful reminder of both the advantages and disadvantages of Garden Quad, designed by the distinguished architect Sir Richard McCormack in the 1990s. On the one hand, it is a wonderful resource, providing high-end student accommodation, safe storage for books and the Laudian Vestments, as well as an enviable series of public spaces. Its artworks - from the details of Wendy Ramshaw's ornate garden gate to the 60,000 pieces of glass which make up Alexander Beleschenko's screens - are worth a trip in their own right. On the other, a few flaws in the design have been apparent since it opened. Not least of these is the acoustic that makes the Children's Party such an unforgettable event. And whilst this isn't such a problem in the reception room, these issues have severely limited the usefulness of the otherwise exemplary auditorium.



The root cause of these difficulties is the same in both the reception room and the auditorium which it almost exactly mirrors. Inspired by the architectural fantasies of the Italian artist Piranesi and the sublime designs of the British architect John Soane, McCormack sought in these spaces to combine hard and beautifully finished concrete with whimsical, frescoed-plaster domes. The effect is visually delightful. Indeed, the Garden Quad was voted Oxford's best building for 75 years in an *Oxford Times* competition of 2003 precisely because of details like these. But the combination of dome and pillar, concrete and plaster, is nonetheless acoustically trying, to say the least. For performers and their audience, the unpredictable echoes and the extensive reverberation are more than merely unhelpful. They limit the value – and the use – of this space.

After years of battling the auditorium's acoustics, and several attempts to acquire technological fixes to make it more user-friendly, the College thus resolved to face the problem head on, commissioning the architects Berman Gueddes Stretton (BGS) to consider what could be done. They, of course, are old friends of the College, having

designed the neighbouring MCR. Importantly, they also oversaw the deservedly prize-winning restoration of the pioneering modernist tutors' houses in

Blackhall Road, confirming our sense that they could be trusted to oversee the transformation of an important piece of recent architecture. The report from BGS was clear. It was also very illuminating. Although Garden Quad was an immensely impressive edifice, they concluded, it did now need to be restored and refreshed. But this, they counselled, must be done with sensitivity and in keeping with the inspiration of the original design. This meant understanding the formal, rather Roman approach, taken by McCormack in his plans. It also meant, however, undoing some of the mistakes, for 'sadly this Romaninspired design failed where the Romans succeeded, in combining monumental design with exceptional acoustic performance'.

A refurbishment of the auditorium had the additional benefit of enabling the College to rethink such important issues as seating, heating and lighting. In the original plan, for instance, the seats were intended to be retractable – even removable. The auditorium was meant to be a truly multi-functional space: one minute hosting operas; the next minute the venue for student bops. In truth, this had never really happened and we were left with the worst of all possible worlds: uncomfortable

> seats, which never moved. To make matters worse, disabled access was a serious difficulty, with no spaces allocated to wheelchair users and the stage all but inaccessible to

The auditorium will now be truly fit for purpose: looking good and sounding better:

anyone unable or unwilling to mount a vertiginous set of stairs. There was also a need for better kitchen equipment, and improved facilities for hosting social events. The past year has seen these plans put into practice and the end result will be a transformed, reinvigorated and renewed Garden Quad. From the outside, little will seem to have changed. Visitors will benefit from the improved catering facilities, but should never know quite how much work has gone into providing them. Inside the auditorium, however, the change will be plain to see – and to hear. Comfortable new seats, massively improved disabled access, better sight-lines for the stage, and dramatically enhanced technical facilities all transform the place. The old Roman rigour of the design – the inspiration of Piranesi and of Soane – will not be lost. But the auditorium will now be truly fit for purpose: looking good and sounding better.

This is an undeniably exciting moment for the College – and one we hope to celebrate with a grand relaunch in the autumn. Yet it will be the months and years that follow that really count. The auditorium will

be what it was always intended to be: one of the finest performance spaces in Oxford. It's our hope that we will be able to use it more and use it better, hosting new concerts and other events, making it a shop window for the College and the musical and dramatic world of Oxford more generally. With the support of our alumni, benefactors, and other friends we want to endow new series of performances and to attract some of the very best performers to St John's.

None of this will make the Christmas Party any quieter – and probably we wouldn't want it to be. By bringing together the children of all those who work or study at the College, it is one of the very nicest events of the year: one that makes visible (and audible) the whole St John's family. It will, however, mean that the Garden Quad increasingly serves as the home for other, rather sweeter sounds, as it becomes a world-class – and, perhaps, world-famous venue.



Why I Give

The *Benefactors* magazine has always been focused on the impact of philanthropy at St John's and demonstrating how our generous alumni and donors make a difference in College and in the lives of our students. In this new section, *Why I Give*, we turn the spotlight on two alumni benefactors and learn why they believe giving to St John's is a worthwhile and meaningful endeavour. We are grateful to Mark Bedingham and Laura Poots for kindly agreeing to feature in this inaugural showcase.

Mark Bedingham

(Agricultural and Forest Sciences, 1974)

ark is President and Chief Executive Officer of Singapore Myanmar Investco and a member of the Strategic Advisory Board of L Capital, and has been appointed as a Board Director to a couple of their companies. Previously, he served as Regional Managing Director Asia Pacific of Moët Hennessy, part of the LVMH group and was a Director of Jardine Pacific, part of the Jardine Matheson Group. He has also served on the board of DFS, the world's largest travel retailer, and during his time in Japan, he was appointed as a member of the Japanese Prime Minister's Administrative Reform Council and was elected Chairman of the European Business Council in Japan.

Mark is a major benefactor to St John's, making significant contributions to the Library and Study Centre and the Alumni Fund. He is also a member of the Rawlinson Society, having pledged a legacy in his will.

You are a generous benefactor to St John's. What motivated you to support the college? I am in a position to be able to support St John's and so I believe if you can you should.

The situation whereby education is entirely government funded has come to an end; and so it is natural that a college at Oxford should look to the private sector and to its alumni to contribute financial resources that will allow St John's to flourish. Oxford is one of a diminishing number of world-class institutions in England and its colleges are a vital and an integral part of what makes Oxford a special place. I would therefore like to help St John's remain and strengthen itself as a distinguished place where undergraduates and graduates wish to study.



Mark Bedingham (1974)

Why did you decide to leave the college a legacy in your will?

By leaving funds to St John's I have a chance to enhance the educational experience of future students and it seems to me that this is one of the more worthwhile ways in which I can have some impact on the lives of future generations.

I am in a position to be able to support St John's and so I believe if you can you should.

Do you believe it's important for St John's alumni to 'give something back'?

I believe that almost anyone who went to St John's benefited from both the experience and the education. My generation in particular also benefited from a time when university education was affordable and government grants were available. For most of its history, education was privately funded - not least the founding of St John's itself by Sir Thomas White - and we need to recognise that, with tuition fees and maintenance costs, we may be returning to a time when university was only for the young people and their families who could afford it. It should come as neither a shock nor a surprise that St John's is asking its alumni to support its students now and in the future – philanthropy can bridge the widening gap between government support and private financing. There are many 'good causes', but here is an opportunity to make a material contribution to the experience that students will have at St John's, in a direct and immediate way that every member of the alumni community can relate to from their own personal experience.

Laura Poots

Jurisprudence, 2002

aura is a Barrister at Pump Court Tax Chambers. She practises in all areas of taxation, providing advice and appearing in court for both taxpayers and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. She also serves as an Alumni Representative on St John's Development and Alumni Relations Committee.

Laura is a St John's benefactor through our regular giving programme, making monthly donations to the Alumni Fund.

Why did you decide to make St John's part of your charitable giving?

I feel enormously grateful to St John's for the time I spent there. It is such a welcoming college, and I felt very much at home there during my time as a student. I have enjoyed maintaining my connection with St John's after graduating, and making charitable contributions has been just one element of that – along with attending Gaudies, Holdsworth Society Dinners and, more recently, the informal gatherings hosted by the College in London.

What motivated you to help by making regular contributions to the Alumni Fund?

I received a friendly phone call in July 2011 from a student as part of the annual Telephone Campaign. Making a regular contribution is a small way of acknowledging the opportunities and support that the College and previous generations of benefactors gave to me.

Do you believe it's important for St John's alumni to 'give something back'?

It is nice to be able to contribute towards other students benefiting from their time at St John's. I hope the part that alumni play in supporting current students enables those students to enjoy their time at St John's knowing that they have the necessary financial support, and encourages others to apply.



Laura Poots (2002)

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Graduate Scholars



Daniel Slifkin Scholarship Andrew Hanna (BCL, 2017)

The Bachelor of Civil Law has a formidable reputation. It is academically rigorous and very challenging. It is known for attracting some of the brightest law graduates in the common law world who engage with the foremost legal scholars in their field. Given this reputation, I was delighted not only to have been accepted into the BCL, but also to receive a generous full scholarship to support my studies from St John's. I am currently enrolled in options with a litigation focus (Conflict of Laws and Civil Procedure) and a public law focus (Comparative Human Rights and Constitutional Theory). These subjects were chosen based on my ambition of being a practitioner as well as an academic with a particular interest in public law.

I am very grateful for the support provided by St John's as a result of a generous benefaction from an alumnus. Given the outstanding quality of my peers, the excellent college facilities and the opportunity to learn from preeminent legal scholars, it is quite simply the opportunity of a lifetime to study here.

l am very grateful for the support provided by St John's as a result of a generous benefaction from an alumnus.

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Sophie Westenra (BCL, 2017)

As a Kiwi from a school with no links whatsoever to this university, the Oxford experience is practically mythical. In legal spheres, 'the BCL' even more so. Although I had some experience of Oxford, I could not have contemplated studying here without the immense generosity of alumnus and donor, Daniel Slifkin (Jurisprudence, 1984), and St John's College.

With the support of the Daniel Slifkin Scholarship, I now find myself ensconced in Oxford's libraries, reading for the BCL. In line with its fearsome reputation, it is a demanding, and highly rewarding, programme. Undertaking Unjust Enrichment; Conflict of Laws; Children, Families and the State; and Global and Comparative Environmental Law, I have decided to continue to straddle the public–private law divide – my publications and research having so far focused on public law, while my teaching experience is within private law. With this undoubtedly invaluable foundation, I hope, in the future, to continue to explore the limits of what these two branches of law can learn from each other, both academically and in practice.

I have to admit, it is interesting how quickly one adjusts to a new reality. Of course St John's must be given most of the credit – it has been unfailingly welcoming and kind. But I will forever be indebted to Daniel Slifkin and St John's College for financially making this a reality. All I have left to say is, thank you.





Ioan and Rosemary James Scholarship Jan Steinebrunner (DPhil, Mathematics, 2016)

started my university education as a mathematician at the University of Freiburg, where I completed both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in pure Mathematics. As a minor subject, I studied Physics, which to me is one of the most exciting parts of Mathematics.

It was, therefore, a great opportunity to spend the last year reading for a Master's degree in Mathematical Physics here in Oxford. During this time I have been specialising in 'Topological Quantum Field Theory', a topic which studies certain effects in Quantum systems which depend on the geometry of the given system. This is particularly exciting as there is a purely mathematical description of such systems, which itself uses constructions that are the topic of current research in Mathematics. The special focus of my Master's thesis was to understand how the notion of 'positivity of energy' commonly used in Physics can be translated to the mathematical model.

Thanks to the generous support through the Ioan and Rosemary James Scholarship, I am now able to continue this research as part of my DPhil in Mathematics. In trying to give a precise mathematical definition of these positivity conditions, I have discovered several exciting mathematical questions which I'm looking forward to studying in more detail.

I am particularly grateful to Professor Ioan James for creating the scholarship and I am proud to be awarded a scholarship carrying the name of such a great topologist.

I am proud to be awarded a scholarship carrying the name of such a great topologist.

Thank you to all who have given to St John's

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Travel Scholarships

Duveen Travel Scholarship

Benefactor: Mr Peter Loose (Jurisprudence, 1953) and The Mildred Duveen Charitable Trust

Generously supported by the Mildred Duveen Charitable Trust, the travel scholarship is offered annually to a student of St John's to contribute to their intellectual and professional development by visiting alumni in the United States and Canada. Here, Alexandra Hibble (DPhil, Experimental Psychology, 2016) and Jessica Prince (Clinical Medicine, 2014) write about their experiences.

Alexandra Hibble

he Duveen Travel Scholarship offers students the opportunity to experience North America and investigate personal and professional goals, taking advantage of the St John's Alumni Network. With such wide goals, the possibilities of such a trip were endless - and my three weeks certainly proved an intense rollercoaster of experiences, that have most definitely shaped my future, for my DPhil and beyond. St John's alumni inundated me with recommendations and invitations, and I'm immensely grateful to all who contacted me - but primarily to my phenomenal hosts: Peter Jesson (Physical Chemistry, 1954) and Lana Sheer, Adam (Physics, 1993) and Maureen Sandman, and to Nicholas Bratt (PPE, 1967) for assembling a cohort of alumni at the University of Oxford Alumni Office in New York.

The first stop in my American Adventure was the Vision Science Society Conference, held at St Pete's Beach, Florida, bestowing the perfect opportunity to seek out some of the great names in my field, motion perception, and determine whether I was suited to a career in academia. Despite the 6,000 attendees I managed to track down the scientists who had inspired my DPhil project–Howard Hock, Stuart Anstis and Oliver Braddick, formerly head of department here at Oxford. I managed to pressure them all into conversations, having several coffees with Howard, and even ending up at dinner with Professor Braddick. I took away several important lessons from our conversations – and fashion tips, with Professor Anstis showing up every day in a



visual-illusion themed shirt. I also used the opportunity to gather advice from other doctorate students and early career researchers, and to make acquaintances in laboratory groups working in similar fields that could prove useful when looking for postdoctoral work. The days were packed with talks and poster sessions, and it was impossible not to feel inspired by the bombardment of ideas.

With the other aim of the Duveen scholarship in mind – experiencing North America – I also delved deep into Floridian culture, sampling deep-fried alligator and shrimp and grits, and developed quite a dependence on freshly-squeezed orange juice. On a rare afternoon off we ventured into the city and visited the Dali Musuem,



spending the afternoon in sunny Catalonia, feasting on Manchego grilled cheeses in the 'reflection Labyrinth', and posing with the famous moustache. We wandered around downtown St Petersburg, which was unlike any city I'd ever been to before, with their soccer stadium a few blocks from the financial district, and a beachfront of wooden-slatted New England-style shops, serving gelato and iced tea.

From sunny Florida I headed north to the city that never sleeps, where I stayed in Manhattan with Peter and Lana and their two Briards, Hobbit and Louis. My hosts were keen to show off all the city had to offer, and within my first days we were regulars at the Lincoln Centre, visiting the New York Philharmonic and the New York



At the St John's Alumni meeting with Nicholas Bratt

City Ballet. The performances were stunning, and I cannot thank my hosts enough for their foresightedness in planning these incredible opportunities. Whilst in New York I tried to experience as many aspects of the city as possible, visiting the Rei Kawakubo exhibition in the Met, the Silence of the Desert at the Guggenheim, and the Woman in Gold at the Neue Galerie. I saw Old Masters at the Frick, European Church Art at the Cloisters, and viewed JP Morgan's private library, with its first editions of Darwin and Austen and, most excitingly for a vision scientist, Helmholtz. Amongst the ballet, music, art and fashion, I also managed theatre with Julius Caesar in Central Park. Watching 'Trump' being assassinated a few blocks from the real Trump's Tower was disconcerting, as was the audience reaction – some horrified at the reimagining of Shakespeare's work, and some gleefully egging on the conspirators. Having watched the drama of the election from Oxford, it was a stark reminder that the political drama I'd so avidly followed was the reality for the citizens of New York.

New York was everything I'd dreamed of and more – but I'd have missed many of its treasures without the guidance of Peter and Lana. Peter was at Oxford from 1954–61, and it was fascinating to hear how St John's and Oxford have changed since that time. Peter reminisced about drinks in the 'Bird and Baby', when both Tolkein

and Lewis were frequent patrons, and we discussed changes in attitudes towards mental health from then to now. I was incredibly touched when at the end of my visit Peter gifted me a painting of St John's, painted by a contemporary, which now hangs back on college property, after 40 years in the States. Within my New York visit I was fortunate to attend the St John's alumni meeting, organised by alumni Nicholas Bratt (1967), and Daniel Slifkin (1984). It is a testament to St John's that decades later, and 5,500 miles away alumni are still keen to maintain their relationship with the College, and to build relationships with fellow alumni. The network of St John's alumni is vast, and enormously welcoming, and wherever in the world I end up, I look forward to my own alumni events, my appetite whetted by talk of drinks on the balcony of the Met, and dinner at Carnegie Hall.

Following my whirlwind week in New York, I headed to Washington DC to stay with Adam Sandman, his wife Maureen and their children. Adam and Maureen were tireless in their efforts to ensure I had the full DC experience, sending me off on the Friday with a 26-item list of places to visit. I didn't quite manage all 26, but I succeeded in touring the Library of Congress (the most awe-inspiring building of my trip), circled the Capitol, visited both the East and West galleries (via electric waterfall), the Renwick Gallery, and had lunch in the sculpture garden. I managed to glimpse the White House, decided that I preferred the Dwight Eisenhower building, and ended an exhausting day with a lobster grilled cheese at GCDC.

On my final day, Adam and I travelled into the city to cover the concluding items on the list. We wandered around the city centre, visiting Chinatown and the theatre where Lincoln was assassinated, and took in the final museums; Natural History, Air and Space and the Native American Museum, where we had pulled bison and cactus soup for lunch. We discussed our respective experiences of St John's - especially Adam's time as an Entz rep, and mine as social secretary, with Adam showing me pictures of the bops in the Beehive's Basement, and discussing our favourite themes, chuckling at last year's '90s bop'. Our day finished at the Lincoln Memorial, looking down the reflecting pool to the Washington Monument. Standing between monuments to honour the country's first and sixteenth presidents, after a visit unexpectedly shadowed by the 45th, it felt like the most fitting end to my trip; I'd enjoyed the differences between all three cities, but now experienced their common root, all as parts of the whole.

The Duveen scholarship surpassed all my expectations. I thought that through television and films I understood America, yet the three locations I visited could not have been more different. The political differences were especially striking, with Florida's 'Proud to be American' mailboxes, and New York's 'Not my President' subway stickers. DC was bustling with armed police, and I was redirected three times during my stay as different sidewalks were blocked off, around the White House, and around the Trump Hotel. The Julius Caesar production in New York was an experience I will never forget, with the reaction of the crowd, and the media storm that followed. The architectural differences between the cities were also astounding: the skyscrapers of New York, the motels and Don Cesar of St Pete's Beach, and the giant marble monuments of DC, and the differences in transport systems, food culture and the people themselves.

I'd thought that I would return from America with a concrete idea for my future, fuelled by the discussions I'd had throughout the course of the trip. Instead I've returned with more options, and more insight into my previous choices. Before talking to academics at VSS I hadn't fully appreciated the impact of short-term contracts and constant relocation that accompanies an academic career, but I also saw how fulfilling research can be. Talking to Peter and Lana about their time in industry, I've realised that there are other ways to pursue my love of Psychology than directly through academia. Whilst there isn't strictly an 'industry' path, in the way that there is for the basic sciences, Psychology has equipped me with certain techniques that I could apply to other fields. In DC I talked to Adam about his work, which followed a passion developed during his time at St John's unrelated to his subject area. I realised that there may be another path entirely, as yet unknown to me. Whilst the trip hasn't given me a signpost to the future, it's opened my eyes to the vast number of paths that I could follow and ideas about how to pursue these different dreams.

Having experienced just three cities, on one coast of the country, I have a new-found appreciation for the immensity and diversity within North America. I am overwhelmed with gratitude: to the founders of the scholarship, to my incredible hosts, and to St John's College, for providing students with these opportunities. The Duveen Scholarship was a three-week life-changing experience, and I hope that I can take everything that I learned within my trip and use it as a catalyst for my DPhil years and beyond.





Jessica Prince

n 31 July I set off on my solo adventure around North America and on the evening of I August, four flights later, after stopping at Dublin, Providence and Baltimore, I finally arrived in San Diego. I made good use of my layover in Baltimore, travelling to Washington DC to visit the Capitol Building, the Washington Monument and the White House.

Finally in San Diego, I stayed in the beautiful seaside community, LaJolla, with alumnus Stephen Ferruolo (Modern History, 1971) and his family. They kindly took me to downtown San Diego where I learnt about native heritage and was also very fortunate to visit the beautiful Sunset Cliffs. During the day, I shadowed Dr Ben-Heim, an inspirational neurosurgeon and academic, at the University of California, San Diego Hospital and the Salk Institute. I found watching her perform a laser ablation surgery for the treatment of epilepsy particularly fascinating as this is a treatment yet to be introduced in the UK. At the weekend I travelled to Venice, Los Angeles where I stayed with alumnus Will Sentance (PPE, 2007) who kindly took me to Santa Monica pier and Venice beach.



Me with Stephen Ferruolo at their beautiful home in LaJolla, San Diego



The beautiful sunset at Sea Pines Resort, Hilton Head Island

Following on from my week in California I travelled to Vancouver, where I stayed with and shadowed alumnus David Obert (Public Policy, 2012), an A&E registrar currently working at the Royal Columbian hospital. This is a Level One Trauma Centre and therefore, it is not uncommon for people to be rushed into hospital as a result of bear attacks and gang fights, for example! My day on A&E was incredibly exciting and as a result I am considering specialising in this field of medicine in the future. During my time in Vancouver I also stayed with alumnus Derek Atkins (Mathematics, 1963) and his lovely wife Stella, who live in the most idyllic location, overlooking Kitsilano beach and the North Shore mountains. On the weekdays, I shadowed the Neuropathology and Neurology team at Vancouver General Hospital. I found the contrast between health care in Canada and the USA interesting as, for example, I did not realise that private healthcare clinics are illegal in Canada. During my time outside the hospital Derek, Stella and I went on a number of walks and bike rides.

After my two weeks on the West Coast of North America I flew to Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, on the East Coast. There I stayed with alumnus Craig Boatright (Human Sciences, 1989) and his wonderful mother Wanda, who very kindly arranged for me to spend two days at the Sea Pines resort. There I went dolphin watching, kayaking and cycling, as well as relaxing on the beach. Craig and Wanda also took me to a restaurant serving classic Deep South dishes where I tried (and enjoyed) a number of foods such as grits, fried tomatoes and shrimp. Craig, an orthopaedic surgeon, also let me shadow him at Hilton Head Hospital, where I watched him perform a lumbar decompression surgery as well as some epidurals. I was inspired by his thoroughness and empathy towards patients.



Me with Derek Atkins on one of our many walks in Vancouver



My first ever afternoon tea at the Taj, Boston!

My final stop was in Boston, where I stayed at Harvard Square with alumnus Thomas Brown (MPhil English, 1999) and his partner Demetri. On my first evening they arranged a fantastic dinner party and the following day I was very lucky to go for afternoon tea with a friend of theirs at the five-star hotel, the Taj Boston. Ironically, I had my first afternoon tea in America, not England! Whilst in Boston I also visited the Novartis Institute for Biomedical Research where I was fortunate to chat to a number of inspirational scientists about academic medicine. I particularly enjoyed talking to Dr Jang-Ho Cha who serves as the Global Head of Translational Medicine, Neuroscience at Novartis. We discussed the future of neuroscience and he thought that the biggest advances were going to be with mental health awareness and animal model designs using induced pluripotent

stem cells. I was also very fortunate to have a tour around the Radiation Oncology department of Massachusetts General Hospital, one of the first hospitals in the world to use Proton Beam Therapy. This is a cutting-edge cancer treatment; for example, in the UK, the first proton therapy centre was only installed in May 2017 and aims to admit its first patients in August 2018. Proton Beam Therapy reduces the risk of damage to surrounding healthy organs and hence holds huge promise. I was



Me with Craig Boatright's lovely mother, Wanda

also given a tour around Harvard University campus and Harvard's library of medicine, the Countway Library, by an Oxford alumnus, Michael Badman (Wadham, 1989). I found it particularly fascinating seeing Phineas Gage's skull in the library as this individual was referenced in many second-year neurology lectures as a result of his interesting neurological features. I spent my last day in North America walking on the 'Freedom Trail'. This runs through downtown Boston, passing sixteen locations significant to the history of the United States and the American Revolution.

On 21 August I finally arrived home at Gatwick, feeling truly inspired (and exhausted!). Thank you so much to all the alumni I met, doctors I shadowed, and other friends I picked up along my travels. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to alumnus Mr Peter Loose, without

whom, this trip would not have been possible. The trip has been a fantastic insight into the health care system in North America as well as helping me develop a number of invaluable life skills and make lifelong relationships.



The skull of Phineas Gage in the Countway library, Harvard

Enriching the Student Experience with Special Grants



Claire Doyle (Engineering, 2016)

ne of the main reasons I was drawn towards engineering before university was its strong link with the environment. I saw engineering as both a tool to control our use of resources and also as a method of finding new solutions using our surroundings as design inspiration. As a result I am extremely grateful to have received the Special Grant which gave me the opportunity to travel to Nepal this summer to work for a month with Projects Abroad on the Annapurna conservation project.

Upon landing in Kathmandu airport I was first struck by how much we take simple pieces of our infrastructure for granted – such as roads. In order to reach the project base, I had to spend two days travelling across Nepal. This included a nine-hour bus journey from Kathmandu to Pokhara along narrow roads that frequently had to be cleared of rocks and other debris that had fallen due to heavy rain. From Pokhara, I then took a five-hour jeep up into the mountains as far as the path would take us, before trekking the remaining two hours up to Ghandruk where I would be staying. In Ghandruk I stayed in a small guest house, which on clear mornings had a beautiful view of Machapuchare, which in Nepali means 'fishtail'. I lived alongside other volunteers, who came from all over the world, and our two local guides. Each day we would complete a morning and an afternoon or night survey. The different surveys included ones studying birds, botany, reptiles and moths.

I am extremely grateful to have received the Special Grant which gave me the opportunity to travel to Nepal this summer to work for a month with Projects Abroad on the Annapurna conservation project.

Along with these surveys, we also placed and collected camera traps up in the jungle in order to study leopards, barking deer, bear and other animals that are spotted less frequently by people. With the help of our local guides I learnt a great deal about all the various animals and plants that inhabited this mountain region and became adept at identifying different species at speed. The information



Path leading up to local temple.

that we collected on each of the surveys was then sent on to the Annapurna conservation project so that they can track the damage to the local area – using the animals as indicators – and also advise locals on where to build and expand in order to minimise damage.

I also had the opportunity to take several day trips – to see a rhododendron forest and a small village a couple of hours hike away called Little Paradise which is famous for its large population of different species of orchids. During my stay I was also given the chance to attend a festival in the village which involved wearing traditional dress.

I had an incredible stay in Nepal, and cannot wait to return in the near future. Not only did I make some amazing memories and friends, but I also got the chance to witness how, if we remain aware of the environment around us, we can protect biodiversity whilst still allowing tourists access – such as in Ghandruk. I cannot thank the alumni enough for their generosity in supporting my trip: without their funding none of this would have been possible.

Maria Brett (Biological Sciences, 2013)

am currently in my final year studying Biological Sciences. The funds available from College have generously enabled me to fund my attendance on a tropical forest field ecology course in Danum Valley, in the Sabah region of Malaysian Borneo. This course was not only a fantastic opportunity to visit Borneo; it also formed a part of my degree in Biological Sciences.

As part of the course, I studied the insects found in the valley using butterfly nets and rotting bananas as bait to catch some of the reserve's countless species of butterflies and moths. Each was identified and recorded to help to build a more comprehensive record of the moth species present in the area, as well as the health of each population. We also studied Danum's tree species and how they react to deforestation. In this field centre there were several individual plots in which 25 tree species had been planted at regular intervals with random distributions. In tracking these saplings over time, the aim was to discover which species fare the best following reforestation. We contributed to this study by recording the health and diameter of each tree present.

Perhaps the most exciting day was spent setting up mist nets to catch the bird species as they foraged in the dawn light. Each time one flew into a net it was identified, weighed and measured in order to establish its health, before its release back into the forest. After observing the processing of several birds we were lucky enough to



In this way we were able to see some incredible birds, including several species of babbler, some spider hunters and a particularly striking rufous-backed kingfisher.

be able to handle the birds ourselves and to be taught how to take the correct measurements. In this way we were able to see some incredible birds, including several species of babbler, some spider hunters and a particularly striking rufous-backed kingfisher.

During the course we had the opportunity to go on a tour of several sites near to the field centre, including an oil-palm plantation. Oil

palm is extremely economically valuable to Borneans, and so has led to huge amounts of deforestation on the island. Throughout the day we visited other sites that had been heavily deforested, and others that had been only selectively so, in order to compare the different management strategies. We also visited recovering forest and the Sabah Biodiversity Experiment, which is a longterm experiment investigating how different tree species recover following deforestation. The day provided us with a broader context with which to understand the challenges of sustainable management strategies.



As well as the practical field work in Danum Valley, we had lectures and tutorials, making the tropical field ecology an examinable option in our third year. These lectures and tutorials tied together the knowledge we gained during the field work, meaning we each left Danum with an immeasurably improved understanding of tropical forests and their sustainable management.

Of course we also learned a huge amount about Borneo's wildlife – even the walk to the tutorials could be littered with sightings of brightly coloured tropical birds, snakes, red leaf monkeys and occasionally orang-utans!

I could not have experienced this field course without the generous assistance of the Special Grant. The course added to my understanding of the complexity and vulnerability of the rainforests in a way that theory alone cannot achieve. I would like to thank all the generous alumni that donated to the fund, allowing me to learn and experience tropical forest ecology as I would not otherwise have been able to do so.







St John's College Endowment – an Overview

Professor John Kay, FBA

St John's endowment fund is the largest of any Oxford college, valued at £526 million at 31 July 2017. This figure is net of borrowings and excludes property which is used for the College's educational purposes.

Principles

Management of the endowment follows the following principles:

- We are a (very) long-term investor. We have benefited in the past, and expect to continue to benefit in future, from holdings that will realise their full value only over many years.
- We invest on a total return basis there is no income target. We invest for absolute return, because only absolute returns pay the College's bills. We therefore discourage our managers from using benchmarks or reporting to benchmarks.
- Our objective is to achieve a real return of 5% p.a. over each rolling five-year period. We will only hold individual assets which we believe have the potential to realise that objective.
- We make a transfer from the endowment each year to support the College's academic purposes. This transfer is not fixed in monetary or percentage terms but will always be less than our target real rate of return. In this way we aim to ensure that the real value of our endowment will increase over time.

- We believe that diversification across asset types and geographies is the best means of controlling risk. The risk we seek to guard against is failure to meet the College's objective of a 5% real rate of return over the long term. Short-term volatility in the value of individual assets or the portfolio as a whole does not concern us.
- We do not adhere to conventional 'asset allocation' processes. We believe that diversification is best achieved by selecting investments whose likely long-term performance is uncorrelated with other investments we hold and therefore each individual investment should be judged on its individual merits.
- As can be seen from Figure 1 below, our performance has comfortably met our investment objectives since these were adopted.

Figure 1: General Endowment Total Real Return and Drawdown %





30

Figure 2: Asset Allocation across the College's Endowment

The portfolio

Although we do not have targets for asset allocation across broad investment categories, the asset allocation which results from our investment choices is shown in Figure 2.

- We now hold no bonds, other than a small commitment to index-linked securities, which has been maintained for a long time and is illiquid.
- Since the global financial crisis we have established what is in effect a short position in bonds through very cheap long-term borrowing. Because there are few high-quality borrowers with long time horizons we have been able to secure funding for more than thirty years at below 3%. This position is held for the long term.
- Our commitment to real estate is much larger than most comparable endowments. The College's historic land holdings have largely been disposed of although we continue to benefit from our Oxford property. The professional offices of Beaumont Street, the Regency terrace between the College and Oxford rail and bus stations, are our largest single asset.
- We are currently investing in the development site we hold on land at Peartree, (Oxford North) where the Woodstock Road meets the City bypass, and close to the new Oxford Parkway station. This will provide a mix of housing and science-based office accommodation.
- The bulk of our real estate is a managed, modern, portfolio. These properties are predominantly in the UK but well spread by location and sector. In the last ten years we have significantly diversified this portfolio and it includes a retail building near Union Square in San Francisco, development land outside Milton Keynes, and a predominately residential apartment block in Berlin. We believe that over the timescales that interest the College, the likely correlation between the performance of these assets is so low that it is misleading to regard 'real estate' as a single investment category.
- Our mainstream listed equity portfolio makes up about a quarter of the overall value of the endowment. This is a defensive portfolio biased towards the UK although it also contains European and emerging market stocks. We also have two small emerging market portfolios. Annual turnover in this portfolio is below 5%.



- Thanks to the strong performance of the US stock market and the weakness of sterling our US equity portfolio now rivals our main equity portfolio in size. That portfolio is biased towards mid and large cap US growth stocks.
- We have established a 'global fund' which consists of large cap-listed equities which the College expects to hold for the very long run.
- We do not hold hedge funds. We believe that trustees have an obligation to seek transparency and to keep a close eye on fees and charges.
- We have a minimal commitment to private equity which we would like to increase if we can find opportunities which match the College's time horizons and expectations on fees.

Management of the endowment

Responsibility for management of the endowment rests with the Investment Committee, chaired by the President. The Committee consists of the Principal Bursar (Andrew Parker), the Estates Bursar (Walter Mattli), the Finance Bursar (Sally Layburn) and the Investment Officer (John Kay). John Kay has held this position for more than thirty years. The Committee meets formally each term and informal discussions among the membership and meetings with the managers of our various portfolios take place in between these scheduled Committee meetings.

Our portfolio managers have limited or no discretion and are aware of our long time horizons and preference for low turnover. The College does not employ investment consultants.

Comparison

Although it is our firm policy not to use any benchmark other than our target rate of return, the College's return on investment compares favourably with that obtained by the two largest US university endowments, those of Harvard and Yale, and the leading UK endowment, that of the Wellcome Trust (see Figure 3).





Reaching Out and Inspiring New Generations

t's been another busy year in access and admissions at St John's: we have hosted 145 events and had contact with 7,426 pupils from 756 schools and colleges; the Classics and Ancient History Essay Competition attracted 161 entrants; the History Study Day had 138 applications for 55 places; the Study Week for Teachers brought 27 teachers and school staff from state schools across the UK to College to spend time on their own projects.

St John's continues to work closely with our linked schools in Brighton & Hove, East and West Sussex, and the London Boroughs of Ealing and Harrow. Our Access and Outreach team arranges to welcome high-achieving pupils to visit the College throughout the year for a variety of events – from Study Days to tours and information sessions – while they and an expanding team of graduate and undergraduate ambassadors visit schools across the regions. Our most ambitious activities have been related to the pilot phase of our *Inspire* Programme – see overleaf for more details.

In recognition of the scale of what we are aiming to achieve, we have transformed the ground floor of 15 St Giles into a dedicated Office for Access and Admissions. Outward-looking, demonstrably accessible, it is a welcoming space in which we are proud to provide outreach and support. It is the first college admissions office with a frontage onto the streets of Oxford – and it's almost certainly the most attractive access office in the city. It's designed to be an attractive shop window for potential students, their teachers and their families.

In all our outreach work we greatly value the support of our alumni in helping us to realise our goals. A very generous multi-million pound donation has enabled

> St John's is taking on a leading role in ensuring the student body in Oxford becomes an even more diverse and inclusive community.

us to employ additional staff and provide an even better service for more students through exciting initiative such as *Inspire*. It has also funded student scholarships, enabling us to support individuals who might otherwise face financial hardship.



In addition to the College's activities, we have also participated in a variety of University-wide schemes. We hosted students participating in the UNIQ Summer School for Year 12 (ages 16–17) pupils from areas or backgrounds less likely to apply to Oxford, offering them a taste of life here, with tutorials, lectures, social events, and information on the application process. We also contributed to the Sutton Trust Summer Schools, Oxford Pathways, which provides information and advice to teachers and pupils from non-selective state schools, and SEREN, which has been established to encourage the highest-performing students from Wales to apply to leading universities.

We are extremely proud of our achievements over the past year, especially the launch of the *Inspire* Programme in our linked London Boroughs. We are delighted to be engaging talented pupils from backgrounds that historically have had little progression to Oxford and look forward to supporting them in their progression towards university.

We are also aware that there is much work ahead of us: with the experience gained in the pilot phase, we will be expanding the *Inspire* Programme to East and West Sussex. We are working alongside other colleges to develop and deliver initiatives in Luton, the North-East of England, and other under-represented regions; and finally we are engaging with the University to develop outreach initiatives tailored towards raising the participation of female pupils and students in STEM subjects. We hope that we will continue to have the support of our alumni as we reach out to students with significant academic ability, ensuring we support them in their educational journey with us here at St John's. Access and outreach highlights We engaged with **7426 pupils** from 756 schools and colleges and welcomed over **230 pupils** to subject-specific Study Days

During the Teachers Study Week we welcomed **27 teachers** from London and the South-East

> The Physics Live event via Facebook reached over **700 users online**, who could interact with our tutors and students

We now have **150 trained undergraduate ambassadors** who deliver talks and workshops on their experiences at St John's. In July some of these spoke to over **500 pupils in 12 schools** as part of the Student Roadshow

Realising our Potential

The St John's *Inspire* Programme has been designed to support high-achieving pupils from non-selective state schools. The President, Professor Maggie Snowling, explains this new initiative, now in its pilot phase.

s a College we are committed to fair access regardless of social background and we work within a Common Framework with the other colleges to ensure transparency in our admissions process. We are also committed to raising the aspirations of young people from a diverse range of backgrounds. Many of these young people attend schools which do not have the tradition of sending pupils to our 'elite' universities and may not be thinking of somewhere like St John's as an option.

The issue of widening access is important, some may say a moral imperative, but it is also extremely complex. Drawing on available evidence, and with generous philanthropic support, we have developed *Inspire*, the St John's Outreach Project. *Inspire* has been conceived of as a five-year programme, targeting able pupils from Year 9 (ages 13–14) to Year 13 (ages 17–18), selected by their teachers as having the potential to study at Oxford. As well as after-school 'twilight' sessions on study skills, critical thinking, writing and presenting, there is a programme of academic enrichment beyond the curriculum. During the Easter Vacation Year 11 (ages 15–16) pupils were brought on our *Inspire* programme to Oxford for a two-day visit and they will return in Year 12 for a summer school in the Long Vacation when they will present a special project.

A key objective of *Inspire* is to encourage students to think 'outside their comfort zone' and in particular, to explore different subject areas. Alumni are helping us in this endeavour – giving talks which inspire, and also demonstrating that the subject you study does not restrict career options or indeed close the doors to wealth! We also want to co-opt teachers; they are vital cogs in the wheel of widening access and a measure of our success will be that they can continue with the work we are starting. Finally, we will provide information, advice and guidance to parents and hopefully dispel the myth that 'Oxford is elite, posh and expensive' by demonstrating that it is no more expensive than any other institution and the pay-back is huge.

Current research on access initiatives suggests that sustained approaches are the most effective, and summer schools are very important. In addition, anecdotal




evidence suggests that a single teacher who is committed to encouraging Oxbridge entrance can make an enormous difference. It is going to be very important for us to ensure that our evaluation of the Inspire programme is robust. This year it is running as a pilot in our link state schools in Harrow and Ealing. Fellows and Early Career Researchers are devoting much time and energy to teaching on it and our junior members are excelling as ambassadors during open days. Inspire is currently one of the few Oxford projects which is working with pupils earlier in the school system than sixth form, and before they make their final subject choices. Many would say we need to start even earlier; yes, disadvantage sets in before school entry. However, Inspire is an exciting innovation and we are committed to it. Of course, we also know we will need to make adjustments along the way in response to feedback.

A big thank you to all alumni and donors who have supported this project; it makes us proud!



The Lasting Impact of Alumni Philanthropy

Sean W. Robinson (Inorganic Chemistry, 2012)

St John's College is a home away from home for me. From the moment I stepped in the door, I was welcomed and felt a sense of belonging with the people, the ethos and the culture. And that was just the beginning! In the same way that entering through the small door at the Porter's Lodge opened the sprawling, Narnia-like hidden world of quads and history contained within the College grounds, so too did being the recipient of a joint Clarendon Fund–St John's Graduate Scholarship unveil countless opportunities, friendships and a universe to explore. Indeed, this generous financial support made it possible for me to expand my horizon from my homeland of South Africa and pursue my dream to learn from, and work with, the world's best here in Oxford which would not otherwise have been achievable.

> My experiences at St John's have been invaluable and have shaped my mind and sharpened my skills.

I came to Oxford to read for DPhil in Inorganic Chemistry; I focused on synthesising complex molecular architectures that are capable of recognising anions (negatively-charged molecules) in water. This has many applications such as treating cystic fibrosis or purifying natural water systems that are left completely lifeless as the result of eutrophication caused by the overuse of fertilisers in arable farming.

I also benefited from the generous grants available to St John's students: the Special Grant made it possible for me to attend the First Symposium on Halogen Bonding in Porto Cesareo, Italy, where I presented my work to leaders in my field and received valuable feedback as well. Moreover, the Academic Grant helped me purchase a laptop to replace my outdated one as well as important textbooks that helped me deepen my knowledge.

In my spare time, I joined the St John's Chapel Choir where I met some of my dearest friends and was able to sing some of the most beautiful music I have ever heard, let alone sung. I was fortunate to take part in the recording of the Choir's *Song of Wisdom* album in celebration of the 2000 Women Campaign. I also became involved in the MCR Committee, serving as a Social Secretary and organising events to encourage socialising amongst the graduates. Since finishing in 2016 and moving out of St John's, I have not quite been able to tear myself away from Oxford, as I now work for a biotech start-up that specialises in drug discovery and development of pharmaceuticals using AI, and I do still participate in the MCR as an associate member.

My experiences at St John's have been invaluable and have shaped my mind and sharpened my skills. I have been very fortunate to call myself a member of such a fine institution and I hope to make a difference in students' lives in the same way that the many Benefactors have made it possible for me to be here. And while I do miss the African sunshine where my family is, St John's is, and always will be, a home away from home for me.



Natalya Lozovaya (Environmental Change and Management, 2013)

My time studying the MSc in Environmental Change and Management at St John's College was transformational on several different levels, and would not have happened without the generous support of the Dr Yungtai Hsu Scholarship. Prior to coming to St John's, I had already been working for several years in Washington, DC, but I was not sure how to break into the world of sustainability on a global scale. The MSc in Environmental Change and Management course and the supportive environment of St John's served as a very powerful launch pad for my ability to begin building a career that I love and helped me to develop a global network of like-minded friends.

Recently, I joined Corporate Citizenship in London as a sustainability consultant, and I get to work every day with passionate, brilliant people, and global companies like Unilever and Tesco, on setting ambitious, beyondprofit visions and devising strategies to achieve their sustainability goals. Before joining Corporate Citizenship, I worked on corporate social performance in the extractive industries. As part of this work, I conducted human rights-focused audits of companies in Rwanda, helped develop a Responsible Mining Index to hold mining companies to account for their impacts on society, and got to travel to and meet with stakeholders in Mongolia, Namibia, South Africa and Dubai.

> I am very lucky to have gained such diverse, global experience, and have big plans for using it to make a meaningful and positive impact on our world.

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I am very lucky to have gained such diverse, global experience, and have big plans for using it to make a meaningful and positive impact on our world. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Dr Yungtai Hsu (History, 1971) and to St John's administrators for supporting my ambitions and making the path a little bit easier for me, and for many others who have been lucky enough to call themselves SJC alumni.





Alumni Supporting St John's in College and Around the World

We are very grateful to all the alumni supporting St John's in a variety of ways. From leading Alumni Chapters to providing expert advice and speaking at engagements, our alumni are generous in giving their time and knowledge. You will find below a few examples showcasing the impact alumni have made this past year on the College, its students and activities.

Leading Alumni Chapters

Thanks to the efforts of our enthusiastic and industrious alumni, St John's now has established local Alumni Chapters in Hong Kong and New York.

Nicholas Hunsworth (1976) and Michael Lok (2012) lead the Hong Kong Chapter and hosted events throughout the year, including several drinks receptions. There was also one special reception for Professor Charles Newton and we are grateful to all the alumni who welcomed him to Hong Kong. Nick and Michael also hosted dinners for the President and Director of Development and Alumni Relations at the Hong Kong Club and Foreign Correspondents' Club during their visits to China.

Nicholas Bratt (1967) leads the New York Chapter and hosted drinks receptions for alumni in the New York Tri-State area. The first was held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art with St John's alumnus and Museum Curator Christopher Lightfoot (1973) providing special access to the Met's Balcony Bar followed by a private tour of the Roman Galleries.



Hong Kong Chapter



Women's Network

The St John's Women's Network was formally launched on I November 2017. Before this momentous occasion, a tireless group of alumnae, academics, staff and students worked together to develop the vision and structure for the Network. We are grateful for their dedication, insights and support in making the Network a reality. We look forward to many events and activities planned for the future and hope that women across the St John's community will get actively involved.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed and particularly to Robin Gorna (1984) who led the group as Chair, as well as Anita Cooper (1981), Izzy Fewster (2015), Ann Hyams (2008), Rosie Le Voir (2009), Angelika Love (2011), Jenny Oliver (2005), Ashley Orr (2016) and Amelia Wrigley (2015).

In Conversation Series

In February, Sir Keith Lindblom (1975) and Professor Simon Whittaker (1976) delivered St John's inaugural 'In Conversation', event at the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn. A lively discussion took place with an emphasis on Sir Keith's role as a Lord Justice in the Court of Appeal and his advice to legal professionals looking to succeed in the appellate court. This event was followed in July with the second in the series featuring Ben Page (1983) and Dr Kate Doornik. As Chief Executive of Ipsos MORI, one of the research companies best known for polling and analysis, Ben and Kate examined the polls in 2016 and why polling data was unable to accurately predict the results of the Brexit referendum and the US Presidential Election.

Hosting International Engagements

St John's travelled to many international locations this past year and we are tremendously grateful to the alumni hosting engagements and providing a warm welcome and fantastic hospitality to the College, alumni and their guests.

In Singapore, Paul Khoo (1973) kindly offered the use of the Singapore Island Country Club for a drinks reception for the President, alumni and their guests as well as current students. During that same visit, Mark Bedingham (1974) hosted a delightful evening at Crystal Jade restaurant at the Marina Bay Financial Centre.

With the largest alumni community outside the UK, St John's has started to make annual trips to New York City. In April, Daniel Slifkin (1984) generously hosted a reception in his home on the Upper West Side. The President presided over the evening as we watched a stunning sunset over the Hudson River.



Ben Page (1983) In conversation with Dr Kate Doornik



Old Frames Looking New

The portrait of Sir Thomas White which hangs in hall is a monument not just to a benefactor but to his benefactions. The coats of arms in the frame represent all the many places to which he donated. Dr Georgy Kantor, Keeper of the Pictures, explains.

hose members of our college community who have had a meal in Hall this academic year will have noticed that the High Table end now has a changed look. The frames of the portraits of the Founder and three other distinguished figures from the early history of St John's have lost their familiar gilding, with a rather striking – and, it appears, widely appreciated – visual effect for the pictures themselves. This is a result of the ongoing research and conservation work on the College's picture collection, and now allows us to see the portraits as was intended when they were first put on the wall in the seventeenth century. In a wellestablished Oxford fashion, the more radical change is in fact a return to things long forgotten.

Back in 2014, the College was contacted by Timothy Newbery, one of the top world experts on historic picture frames, who had worked for the Ashmolean, for the Metropolitan Museum, for the Mauritshuis in The Hague, and for the National Trust, among many other collections. He was interested in doing surveys of historic frames in Oxford college collections, as he hoped that more original or, at least, historic, frames had been preserved in colleges than in museums or in private collections, where taste or conservation needs often led to their replacement in the era before their value began to be recognised. Timothy captured our interest and in the Easter Vacation of 2015 he duly arrived from Scotland to do his research.

The results lived up to expectations. In the 171 pages of his report there were many discoveries throwing unexpected light on the early history of the College's collections and on the interests of our seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Fellows: an active period of collecting (and framing) in c. 1670-1710, presumably as the College affairs recovered from the days of the Civil War; an original frame by a Venetian master for the portrait of Charles I in the library; several waves of gilding and reframing the pictures in Hall between the 1740s and the late nineteenth century. The most interesting, however, were his findings about several remarkable portraits in Hall: the set of portraits of our Founder, Sir Thomas White (see p. 44), and of Archbishops Laud and Juxon (both Presidents and benefactors of St John's before their election to the See of Canterbury), high above the High Table, and a portrait of our great benefactor Sir William Paddy by the entrance at the High Table end.

None of them was an uncontroversial figure in their own time or since. The religious views of our Founder were hardly in tune with Elizabethan England. Paddy (rather shockingly to us) opposed innovation in medicine and separation of apothecaries from grocers. In the next generation, Laud, after all, lost his head on the scaffold, and Juxon was involved in Civil War politics and took the confession of his royal master when it was Charles I's turn to be executed. They did, however, shape the beginnings of this College in manifold ways and left a lasting legacy, not limited to statutes, buildings and endowments. (Not that the endowments were not generous: to say nothing of Thomas White himself or of the Canterbury Quad, £7,000 left by Juxon for student scholarships amounts to several million in today's money, and the 1,123 works given by William Paddy to the library transformed the collections.) The seventeenth-century Fellows unsurprisingly felt a debt of gratitude and the portraits they acquired and displayed are some of the more artistically distinguished in our collection. Marcus Gheeraerts the younger, who painted Sir William Paddy in 1600, is widely acclaimed as the most important portrait artist working in England before the arrival of Van Dyck, and the portraits of Juxon and Laud are early copies from Van Dyck originals.

The portraits of the Founder, Laud and Juxon have been in their current prominent place since the 1690s, when they came to St John's as gifts of College members: the Founder in 1692 from Thomas Rowney, an alumnus, sheriff of Oxford, and later the first owner of St Giles House; Juxon from William Rollinson, a student matriculating in 1694–5; and Laud, also in 1695, from Bainbrigg Buckeridge, perhaps our first art historian, on the occasion of his graduation. The portrait of William Paddy (which was probably left to St John's by himself) was, appropriately in the light of his support for the library, displayed there until the 1850s, when it was also moved to Hall. And there lies our tale.

As Timothy's careful look at the frames has demonstrated, underneath the gilding, the portrait of Sir William Paddy was still in its original frame from the year 1600, originally painted black with two gold lines, while the three portraits above the High Table retained a matching set of silvered frames commissioned for them in the mid 1690s. Interestingly, the 1690s Fellowship went for the fashions of Laud's and Juxon's age, rather than of their own: the frames appear to be replicas of the styles of the 1640s, and the silver finish may (in the words of his report) be related to 'the fashion which was used to make several famous sets of furniture in solid silver'.

By the Victorian period the tastes changed: in the 1850s all four pictures we are talking about (the portrait of Sir William Paddy too, presumably, as it was moved to Hall) were oil gilt over the original colour scheme, and cartouches in the Louis XV style were applied to them. The result was that the gold, in the relative dark of our Hall, started to dominate visually and, in a way, hide the pictures themselves from view, as the viewer's eye naturally focused on it. By the time we were doing the survey the gilding was becoming very unstable: indeed, as we were taking the pictures off the wall, some of it immediately fell off. The case for restoring the original look of the pictures seemed overwhelming, and Timothy undertook the task for us in two stages, working on the William Paddy portrait in the long vacation of 2016, and on the three portraits over High Table in the summer of 2017. By the time this year's Freshers arrived, the portraits could again be seen in their original glory with invaluable help from Lee Smith and his team at the Works Department in putting them back on the wall safely. We hope that you too can take time to enjoy them when you come back to St John's.





Roll of Benefactors

45

This section contains the names of major benefactors, and all donors who have given between I August 2016 and 31 July 2017.

- △ Member of Chancellor's Court of Benefactors
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- * 1555 Society an individual who has given in at least five non-consecutive years

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1984

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1985

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1987

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2005

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2006

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Miss Fleur Mason Mr Thomas Mayne Mr Jasper Minton-Taylor Mr Anthony Nutt* Mr Ion Phillips* Miss Tabassum Rasheed * Miss Charlotte Roberts Dr Caroline Saunders Miss Marta Szczerba Miss Sarah Turner Mr Hasan Yusuf* Mr Dmitri Zaporozhets* 2009

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2010

..... Mr William Balcombe Mr Brynmor Chapman Miss Jessica Edge * Dr Jessica Fay Ms Emily Fradd Miss Alexis Gorby * Miss Jennifer Hegarty Dr Joseph Larvin * Ms Beth Lazzarato Edwards Miss Sally Le Page Miss Pooja Menon Mr Alexandar Peshev Miss Elizabeth Ryznar

Mr Will Todman * Mr Uchechukwu Ukachi* Miss Madeleine Ward Mr Sam Ward * Mr David Wray

2011

Anonymous (2) Miss Jennifer Appleton * Mr Thomas Beauchamp Miss Ophelia Cai* Mr Hitesh Dhorajiwala Miss Holly Ellis Miss Emily Hinson Mr Marius Kat Mr Harry Kind Mr Alexander Koo Mr Hamaad Mustafa* Mr Tom Ough Miss Giulia Roverato Mr Jake Savile-Tucker Mr Benjamin Scrace Mr Jacob Swain Miss Romilly Tahany

2012

..... Mr M Agrawal Ms Robyn Ashley Mr Sean Cannon Mr Alfred Fabian Mr Stephen Lilico Dr Olli Lupton Ms Tanya McKinlay Miss Lauren Newman Mr Rustin Nourshargh Mr Edward Rarity

2013

Mr Ameen Chekroud Ms Melanie Gruenwald Miss Emma Hine Mr Symeon Hunt Mr Jake Hurfurt Mr Abidine Sakande Miss Victoria Skornia Mr Danny Waldman Mr Christopher Williams

2015

Ms Avantika Kumar Miss Maria Valentina Pena Vivas

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Staff

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Revd Iain Macdonald kindly donates in honour of Dr Peter Hacker and Sir Michael Scholar.

Gifts in Kind

Mr Mark Bedingham 1974 – host of an Alumni Dinner held in Singapore Mr Nicholas Bratt 1967 – organiser of the New York City Chapter and host of Chapter Events Dr Jutta Huesmann 1996 – organiser of the 2016 Oxford and Cambridge Club Dinner Sir Andrew Dilnot 1978 – delivered the 2017 Founder's Lecture Ms Angela Eagle 1980 – featured Alumna at an 'In Conversation' event Mr Nicholas Hunsworth 1976 – co-organiser of the Hong Kong Chapter and hosts of Chapter Events Commissioner Paul Khoo 1973 – host of an Alumni Reception held in Singapore The Rt Hon Lord Justice Keith Lindblom 1975 – featured Alumnus at an 'In Conversation' event Mr Michael Lok 2012 – co-organiser of the Hong Kong Chapter and host of Chapter Events Mr Ben Page 1983 – featured alumnus at an 'In Conversation' event Dr Rashmi Shankar 1980 – delivered a workshop in College Ms Dianah Shaw 1981 – consultancy The Rt Hon Lord Justice Rabinder Singh – speaker at the Holdsworth Society Dinner Mr Daniel Slifkin 1984 – host of the Alumni Reception held in New York City





Our cover image is a banner of the Virgin Mary from the College's Laudian Vestments, a misnomer as the College certainly owned the vestments before Laud entered the College. The banner, which would have hung in the chapel and perhaps been carried in processions, dates to the mid-sixteenth century and was given by Thomas Campion, who was almost certainly the father of Edmund Campion, an early Fellow of the College and later Catholic martyr. The fact that the younger Campion was the founder's protégé links the benefaction with the foundation of the College by Sir Thomas White.

Visit the Alumni and Benefactors pages at **www.sjc.ox.ac.uk**

Find details of Oxford University alumni events at **www.alumni.ox.ac.uk**

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