

The
Bridge
Spring 2024



In conversation with
Tom Holland (1986, Honorary Fellow)



From the Lodge

Welcome to the new edition of *The Bridge*, one of the ways we share news about Queens' with our community around the world. We hope you will find this edition informative and interesting. Please, do not hesitate to let us know how to improve our dissemination of information to you.

It's been a busy few months at Queens', with progress made on our five strategic goals of enhancing academic excellence, improving our infrastructure, strengthening our finances, casting our net more widely for brilliant students and streamlining our governance. We continue to go from strength to strength, yet, there is still a lot to do.

Allow me to provide you with a few snippets rather than a comprehensive review.

We recently celebrated impressive achievements within Cambridge with the largest-ever group of Foundation Scholars (students who obtained Firsts in last year's University exams), including those who came top among all colleges. We also celebrated impressive accomplishments outside Cambridge with the admission of ten new Honorary Fellows who bring so much to our community in expertise and inspiration.

Our Fellowship continues to expand with the creation of new posts. Meanwhile, we are in discussion to expand the number of postgraduate scholarships, anchored by the Alexander Crummell initiative, to a total of 33. We had none of these just four years ago.

Since I last wrote to you, and in addition to what is normally offered to our students and wider community, we hosted the Distinguished Lecture



The President at the annual Alumni Carol Service in London in 2023.

in Law, given by Lady Rose of Colmworth. The Thomae Smithi Academia talks, multiple reunions and MA graduations, Angevin Talks with Owen Matthews, Joanna Scanlan and Charlie Siem, weekly organ recitals, and so much more. We celebrated several students winning Blues and cheered on our women's and non-binary football team in their quarter-final Cuppers game against a combined King's/St John's team. They may not have ended up bringing the trophy to Queens', but they inspired many with their performances against teams that combined the best of two and sometimes three colleges.

To help our students deal with the cost of living crisis, we have maintained the £3 meal, which our students appreciate greatly. We are also in the process of setting a new record for financially supporting their travel, research, sports and societies.

Finally, thanks to extremely generous donations, we have initiated the decarbonisation and modernisation of Erasmus while continuing the preparatory work for the Owlstone Croft refurbishment. Our new property on Grange Road will greatly facilitate the accommodation of those who will be temporarily displaced by these initiatives.

Believe it or not, this is far from a complete list. None of it would have been possible without the incredible support that our students, staff and Fellows receive from the wider Queens' community – our Queens' family. We greatly appreciate your guidance and feedback, your good wishes and, of course, your financial support.

As this edition of *The Bridge* goes to press, we will be launching our third annual Giving Day. This is much more than an occasion to raise funds. It is a time when students, Fellows and staff follow on television screens around College the number of people giving to Queens' as a signal of the support we have in the broader community.

Thank you for being part of the wonderful Queens' community. Thank you for all your support.

We wish you and your families all the best,

Mohamed A. El-Erian

Please send your news & photos to
thebridge@queens.cam.ac.uk

To keep up to date with alumni news and events, and what the Alumni and Development Office is currently up to, follow our account on X @QueensAlumni

From our Alumni

Queens' Alumni Honours

Sir Demis Hassabis (1994) for services to Artificial Intelligence.

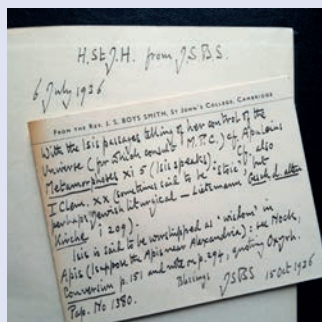
Mr Philip Davies OBE (1969) for services to UK and Commonwealth Heritage.

Professor Deborah Johnston MBE (1985) for services to Stammering Recognition in Higher Education.

Professor Antony Johansen MBE (1982) for services to Older People.

A surprise Queens' discovery

An unexpected piece of correspondence from 1936 between Revd John S. Boys Smith and Queens' longest-serving Fellow, **Revd Henry St John Hart (1936)**, was discovered in January by Timothy Lee, a PhD student in the Faculty of Divinity, Boys Smith, who went on to become the Master of St John's and Vice-Chancellor of the University in the 1960s, discusses the Egyptian goddess Isis and parallels in Latin literature and 1 Clement 20, and makes use of the (then) recently discovered Oxyrhynchus papyri. Timothy said, "I imagine Henry Hart is very well known to many Queens' alumni, since he served as Chaplain, Dean, Hebrew lecturer, and Vice-President!" The eponymous *Henry St John Hart Fund* at Queens' supports Theological and Religious Studies students.



A triple team from Queens'

Three Queens' alumni are working together on an innovative solution to reduce embodied carbon in the built environment. Structural engineer **Andy Coward (2002)** has joined forces with commercial real estate specialist **Sarah Blake (née Outram, 2002)** to take *minimass™* – a patented, 3D-printed family of structural elements with vastly lower carbon and lower cost than traditional concrete and steel – to market. By coincidence, a third Queens' alumnus, **Darran Messem (1985)**, has recently joined the team as Non-Executive Chair.



60th Anniversary Medics Reunion

The medical alumni of 1960 have, together with their wives, met for dinner every year since they graduated in 1963, making their event last year in Cambridge their 60th anniversary. The class of 1960 went on to pursue a diverse range of careers and achievements, including an Egyptologist, a Hockey Olympian, several lecturers, psychiatrists, surgeons, GPs and a Fellow Commoner of Queens'.

The Whitaker Medal

Dr John Heathcote (1973) was awarded the annual Whitaker Medal by The Hydrogeological Group – a specialist group within the Geological Society of London – for outstanding long-term contribution to the hydrogeological community.

Graduating 43 years later

Dr Gordon McFarland (1977) was awarded his PhD in November 2023, 43 years after he had begun it. His thesis on the Greek philosopher Epicurus in 1980 was left unfinished when he took up a job in Hong Kong, and he resumed it on his retirement. Professor James Diggle, his former Director of Studies, came out of retirement to present him for the degree. Gordon was one of a year group of four Classicists who performed so spectacularly in the Tripos that Professor Diggle labelled them the 'Annus Mirabilis'. The other three members of that 'marvellous year' (**John Barclay, Thomas Dillon and Stephen Oakley**) came back to celebrate Gordon's achievement, and the day ended with a Dinner in his honour in the Old SCR.





Dean of College

Dr Tyler Denmead (2007)

Director of Studies in Education

Attended Brown University and studied for an MPhil and PhD at Queens'

Lead Fellow on the DEI Working Group

Named the National PhD Supervisor of the Year for 2023 by FindAPhD.com

Could you explain your research interests?

My primary interest is research that challenges racial inequalities and racial thinking in education. Right now, I'm working on a project with Dr Amina Shareef that examines the stubborn and pernicious idea that White people have a superior capacity to be educated – what we are calling White educability. We examine how this and other racial knowledge circulate in contemporary Britain, particularly in the context of counterterrorism measures on Muslim communities.

Starting in Education

While I was an undergraduate at Brown University, I got heavily involved in a public service centre and volunteered at local public schools. Leaving my college campus and then going into schools made me think about how educational advantages are passed on generation to generation in the United

States. I became concerned with questions of educational justice and equity, even if those weren't my area of concentration as a student. It was an extra-curricular interest at that time, which shaped my career from that point forward.

New Urban Arts

At Brown, I made friends with a few artists also interested in education. We started to think about creating an arts community in Providence for high school students from under-resourced communities. I then received a public service fellowship, called the Royce Fellowship, to start New Urban Arts. Now 27 years old, thousands of high school students have participated in this vital and free arts learning community where they can be intellectually curious and creative. From a professional standpoint, New Urban Arts is certainly what I am most proud of.

“I want the College to be a place where people feel connected to an Education community and are supporting one another in their academic journey.”

The role of Dean in College

Professor Martin Dixon had served as Dean since 2012, and when he stepped into the role of Head of the Department of Land Economy, we needed a new Dean. I had taken up a leadership role within college, working on diversity, equality and inclusion for the last year and a half. I took the role knowing that I could make a further impact on college life.

If you look in the statutes, it says that the role of Dean is to ‘maintain order and discipline.’ As an educationist, ‘maintain’ is not a word that is really in my vocabulary! We’re more interested in growth and development, both of individuals and communities. That’s how I’m thinking about the role. I’ve only been in the post since January, so I’m still learning. But I feel very fortunate to be in the role. I have gained a much better sense of what’s happening in college, what the students are up to, and how they’re building a distinctive culture at Queens’. There are so many exciting student-led activities happening each week in college that I otherwise would not have known about.

Addressing challenges

In this role, I have been thinking about three main challenges facing our community. I think we’re still rebuilding our culture in the aftermath of Covid, including honouring our traditions. In addition, there are intractable political and military conflicts outside of our gates that are affecting individuals within our community. And we have witnessed how student activism on university and college campuses has been divisive. So we must respect freedom of thought and expression while also continuing to build a cohesive community where each person can flourish. A third issue that I often think about is the consumerist attitude that has crept into education with the introduction of tuition fees. Fees can make it easy for students to think about education as a private rather than public good. I want to make sure that students learn to recognise how their education is not merely about personal advancement but also about advancing the common good.

The Joan Whitehead Fund

We named *The Joan Whitehead Fund* after the first external Director of Studies in Education at Queens’. She was a key figure in gender equality on campus. For example, she fought for gender neutral language in the statutes of the university. She was also key in the formation of the Faculty of Education and made sure that Education students, including PGCE students, had a place in the collegiate system. For me, it’s important to honour that legacy.

We received this generous funding, and so far, we’ve been using it to support students’ independent projects. We are also hosting enhanced forums three times a year after a select group of students present their dissertation projects. Undergraduate, Master’s and doctoral students come together for that dinner, and alumni can come back as well. For me, this termly event is important in terms of building a community of educational scholars. I want the College to be a place where people feel connected to an Education community and are supporting one another in their academic journey.



Memories of Queens’

My memories of Queens’ are mainly about balancing being a parent and a student. When we moved here, my daughter was just a baby, and then we had our son here. More often than not, I came to college to drop off my kids at the nursery and go to the library. I was always very grateful to the Porters who took such a kind interest in my kids. They’d talk to them and make them feel like they were part of the community.

PhD Supervisor of the Year

It was an amazing tribute. The award is a testament to the great students that we have in Cambridge. They bring out the best in me as a teacher. My approach with my students is, again, trying to build a community of inquiry. It’s not merely a question of teaching students how to engage in scholarship. It’s also teaching them how to be academic citizens, and citizens more broadly.

A sense of history

What’s interesting about my office (F1 Old Court) is that a building this old makes me feel like I am just passing through. There are people who came before me and there will be people that follow me. I guess it gives me a sense of humility – I’m just here temporarily in the long life of this institution. I try to make the most of it and I enjoy sharing this space with students. Almost every student comments on the fact that they have to hold onto a rope as they climb the spiral staircase and then step into this office with vaulted ceilings and a beautiful view of Old Court. I imagine the room fulfils their expectations for supervision in Cambridge!

Dr Denmead’s office, F1 in Old Court, is located directly above the Gatehouse



President honoured with Great Arab Minds Award

The President, Dr Mohamed El-Erian, was presented with a prestigious Great Arab Minds Award in Economics by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and the Ruler of Dubai, at the Museum of the Future in January.



In his acceptance speech, the President said, "It is a great honour to participate in this initiative that brings together distinguished intellectuals and leading minds from across the Arab world... the Great Arab Minds initiative stands as a beacon of light, a bright, guiding light, especially for the Arab youth whose considerable potential constitutes the hope for our region."

Using prize money from the award, the President has generously endowed a Postgraduate Bursary for a student of Arab origin or citizenship, to be known as *The GAM Bursary*. This will provide a capital sum of £4,500 annually to support the recipient's studies.

The Queens'-Daim Zainuddin Scholarships

The Queens'-Daim Zainuddin Scholarships are top-up scholarships for non-UK postgraduates wishing to study at Queens', with first preference for students from Malaysia. These scholarships are the result of a collaboration between The Ilham Foundation, Trinity College, and Queens'. Hear from two of our Daim Zainuddin Scholars about their current research and why they chose to study at Queens'.

"I work on foundations and philosophy of thermal physics, particularly on questions concerning the potential unification of multiple (and often incompatible) definitions of temperature and entropy in non-equilibrium regimes. Achieving such a unification is important to better understand heat flow in non-equilibrium regimes at various scales of matter (e.g., nano-scale) where the conceptual extensions of temperature and entropy lose their precise and unified meaning.



I am very grateful to the Queens'-Daim Zainuddin Scholarship covering my tuition fees, without which it would not have been possible to join the University of Cambridge to pursue my PhD, considering the astronomical financial cost of the PhD for an overseas candidate. So far, I have benefited substantially from the generous support of the award (along with a Cambridge Trust maintenance award) and the friendly and close-knit academic-social community at Queens' which has supported my continuous academic and personal development."

Dr Aditya Jha (2023)

"When hearing from Queens' that I had been awarded a Queens'-Daim Zainuddin Scholarship, I was still pursuing a second Master's degree at Heidelberg University. The news, coming almost at the end of the scholarship awarding season, was an absolute surprise and delight! It allowed me to go back to Cambridge, where I did my first Master's in Film Studies, and embark on my PhD project, looking at the intersection between film and philosophy and how the dialogue between these two disciplines helps us to rethink some of the perennial questions of humanity.



Specifically, the question I am working on is: 'How to become at home in the world?' It branches out into a number of sub-questions regarding the nature of reality, the experience of time, the relationship between body and mind, the modern alienation from meaning, and the death of God. These metaphysical speculations are firmly grounded in my personal experience of feeling at home in Queens', our wonderful College that is at the centre of Cambridge's intellectual life and provides a cosy niche for research, learning, self-introspection and social life."

Haotian Wu (2023)

Sporting Success

Queens' students continue to excel in their chosen sports, representing the College and the University and being awarded Blues. Here are just a few of the College's Blues this year – all of the following students are beneficiaries of *The Nelson Blues Fund*, which covers the costs of purchasing Blue and Half Blue colours.



Lil Bingham (left) and **Ciara Boaden** (both 2023) (below) won Hockey Blues as Freshers, a first for the College. CUHC women's team beat Oxford 4-0.



Anna Clay (2020) was the strongest woman on the winning Cambridge powerlifting team for the third year in a row, breaking a regional record for her deadlift at Varsity.



Jonathan Pinnell (2020) was awarded his second Golf Blue at Queens'.



Sophie Moody-Stuart (2023) was awarded her Blue for Lacrosse.



Ellie White (2020) led the University to victory in the Squash Varsity matches in February.



Ella Heathfield (2022) was awarded her Blue for Rugby in the Varsity Matches, scoring the opening try and helping her teammates to regain the trophy from Oxford this year by 10-5.

Rosa Humphreys (2020), President of Cambridge University Ladies' Netball Club, was awarded her Blue.



Moritz Przybilla (2020) was selected for CUFC's Kestrels and Blues squads this year, in the 150th anniversary of the Varsity Football Matches.



The Erasmus Project

Starting in July 2024

The Erasmus Building refurbishment is the first phase of an ambitious project to modernise the College's buildings, providing future students, Fellows and staff with a more sustainable and accessible environment in which to live and work, while retaining the essential historic character that makes Queens' so special.

Thanks to the generous support of a couple of donors, the £8.5 million Erasmus Project is now **over 75% funded**, including the largest gift from a UK-based donor in the modern history of the College. This has enabled the College to begin the refurbishment and carbon footprint reduction of our most inefficient building for heat loss, starting in July. This programme of works includes the installation of a disabled access lift and an accessible room, with a scheduled completion of June 2025.

With the purchase of the former Margaret Beaufort Institute on Grange Road in 2023, we have now secured the additional bed space we need to manage student accommodation displacement, allowing us to start the Erasmus project.

Retaining features

Although not formally listed, Erasmus Building is in the National Heritage List for England, and it is a building of local interest due to its important contribution to modernist architecture. The building was designed by Sir Basil Spence and constructed in 1959, with the last major structural update in 1997, when the rooms were remodelled to incorporate ensuite shower rooms.

Where possible, existing features will be retained in keeping with the original designs for the building. The intention is to **refurbish, retain, and upgrade** wherever possible. For example, the dark timber flooring is currently covered by carpet, and is still intact beneath. Much of the joinery in the Erasmus Building is made

of tropical hardwood, which is in excellent condition and cannot easily be replaced in 2024. The solution is to restore the current fitted cabinets and joinery and complement this with a wood such as durable, sustainably farmed bamboo board, stained to colour match. Other sustainable materials such as natural rubber will be used for desktops and bathroom counters.

Restoring original character

Flexibility will be restored to the rooms by using a modular approach, such as box storage beds that lift up to allow for more space underneath, and a storage headboard to make better use of the available space.

The single glazed windows will be replaced with triple glazing, and the vents removed to reduce





A photograph of the newly-furnished rooms in Erasmus Building from the 1960s



An original design for the Erasmus Building with five floors, drawn up in January 1958 by Sir Basil Spence

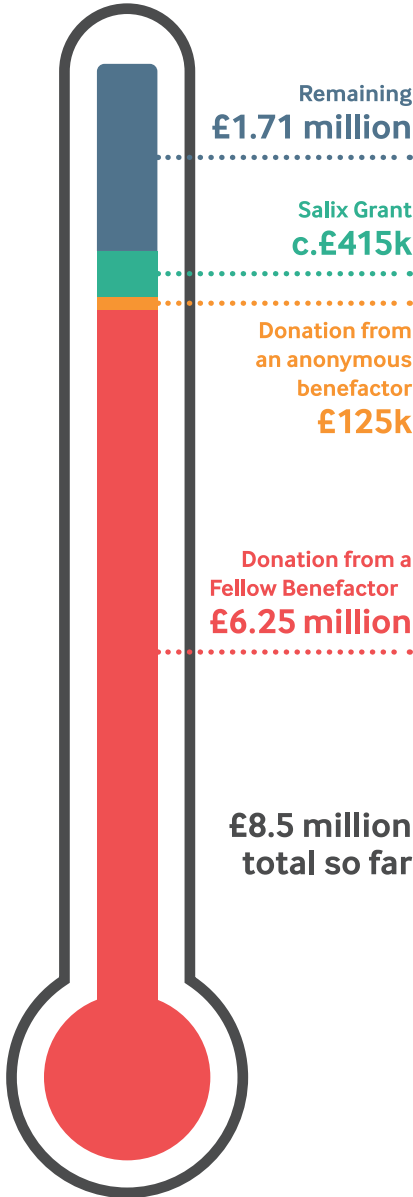
heat loss. A fully integrated heat management system incorporates a light cooling system, with remote-controlled radiators that sense temperature changes and close the window shutters, reducing room heat gains by 60% in the hot summer months.

The ceiling boards will be replaced using woodwool, which is low carbon, non-combustible and has good acoustic performance. Recessed downlighters in the corridors will be motion activated to reduce energy consumption. Lighting will be added to the overhang of Erasmus to subtly highlight its distinctive architectural features from the river.

Addressing sustainability challenges


One of the key challenges with this project is the lack of space on-site for generation. Fortunately, the roof space on Erasmus works in the College’s favour. Two air source heat pumps will be installed on the roof to replace the current gas supply, each generating about 75% of the heating demand required. At a later date, the roof will be used to house up to four air source heat pumps, which will eventually heat Erasmus, Friars, Dokett and the Chapel.

An essential element of the project is the provision for a lift and accessible en-suite room, which will be the first time that students and guests with mobility impairments can reside on the Dark Side of College. Due to the age of many of the buildings at Queens’, it is vital that adjustments are made where possible to make the site more welcoming to all.



Concepts for the refurbished bedrooms and ensuite bathrooms in Erasmus Building

From Colombia to Cambridge & home again

A close-up portrait of Debaye Mornan Barrera, a young Black woman with voluminous, curly black hair. She is smiling warmly at the camera, showing her teeth. She is wearing a blue, white, orange, and yellow patterned knit sweater and a small, bright blue earring. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a brick building and greenery.

Debaye Mornan Barrera (2022)

explains her mission to build a more positive future for disenfranchised people in her home country of Colombia, and reflects on her experience as an Alexander Crummell Scholar at Queens' as she puts her PhD on hold to work for the Colombian Government.

MPhil in Latin American Studies

Recipient of an *Alexander Crummell Scholarship*

Previously worked with La Asociación Casa Cultural el Chontaduro, a non-profit organisation in Cali that supports young people and adults with artistic projects and training programmes in one of the most socially vulnerable sectors of the city

Invited to join the Colombian Government's new Ministry of Equality and Equity as Director of Rights and Opportunities for Youth

Analysing forced disappearances

During my MPhil in Latin American Studies, I developed a deeper understanding of social movements and power, the evolution of the economic model, geopolitics and race, racism and anti-racism. My dissertation focused on the tragic, recurrent and important phenomenon of forced disappearance in Latin American countries, and in Colombia in particular. This study had a gendered and racial perspective that is new in studies of this type in the Colombian context.

There I demonstrated how black communities – and specifically black female inhabitants of Colombia and relatives of forcibly disappeared persons – suffer to a greater extent from this scourge due to the conditions of anti-black racism, systematic impoverishment and the denial of basic rights. At the same time, I analysed how they develop agencies and spatial strategies of resistance to overcome these practices of violence and build another power that can inspire other movements and the state itself to build a politics of life.

Coming to Queens'

I chose to study at Queens' because of its track record of unquestionable commitment to academic quality and student welfare. The constant support the College provides to the academic community, and to students in

particular, encouraged me to choose it as the place to host my research proposal. The welfare offer in terms of mental health, psychosocial support and recreation, as well as the facilities, financial support, and the excellent curricula of the Fellows attracted my attention.

For example, Dr Graham Denyer Willis, who is my tutor, won the prestigious Philip Leverhulme Prize in 2021 for his research and contributions in the field of Politics and International Relations, which was a source of inspiration for me to find a place at the College.

Creating lasting change

The focus of my PhD will be an analysis of the agencies of power constructed by those who have suffered the consequences of unequal structures in Colombia, namely women, racialised, impoverished and diverse communities in the country. This is the first time in 200 years of the Republic that a progressive government has come to power in Colombia with a social and progressive agenda focused on the defence of human rights and reparations for millions of victims of the 70-year internal armed conflict.

In this context, I seek with my PhD research to contribute to the understanding of the role of popular communities, especially the role of black communities, in the historical

transformations experienced by the country and their contributions to the consolidation of a power beyond the political conjuncture.

Building a new Colombia

As Director of Rights and Opportunities for Youth, I will be in charge of the politicisation of young Colombians' welfare. There is an undeniable connection between my research at Cambridge on internally displaced and disappeared war victims and the development of public policies to redress these conditions that my findings uncovered. In other words, I am ensuring that young people who are unprotected, vulnerable and abandoned have access to fundamental rights such as education, health, housing and employment creation, and that they have guarantees for political participation and organisation.

One of the things that I am most looking forward to is having the possibility to create public policies that benefit the majority of impoverished and racialised young people in the country. For decades, inequality and violence have been the only response that young people have received from governments, and having the opportunity to reverse this formula and contribute to the structural changes that my country needs excites me deeply.

Reflecting on Cambridge

What I enjoyed most about Queens' and Cambridge was the possibility to develop a full academic life – the pedagogical resources, the global connections and the social offerings, among other things, have made my experience here one of the most important in my life. The libraries at Queens', the ULC and the POLIS study centres are absolutely integral spaces that I did not have access to before and I will definitely miss spending time there. *The Alexander Crummell Scholarship* provided me with all the financial conditions to develop my studies, and this has meant that I have been able to dedicate myself full time to my academic work.

“I am ensuring that young people who are unprotected, vulnerable and abandoned have access to fundamental rights such as education, health, housing and employment creation, and that they have guarantees for political participation and organisation.”

The Rest is History: Tom Holland (1986)

New Honorary Fellow and Honorary Life Patron of Queens' Cricket Club, **Tom Holland (1986)**, spoke to *The Bridge* about his hit podcast, *The Rest is History*, historical writing, and memories of his time at Queens'. Tom is a respected broadcaster, speaker, and author of books on topics from the Romans to the rise of Islam, including his most recent publication, *Pax: War and Peace in Rome's Golden Age*. He has also written an authoritative translation of Herodotus' *Histories*.

The inception of *The Rest is History*

I hadn't really listened to any podcasts at all apart from one that my brother [James Holland] did, which was on the theme of the Second World War. Off the back of that, they came to me and said, "Would you like to do one?" There was some discussion about what the remit should be, but in the event, we did go insanely overambitious and do the entire sweep of history, which obviously meant that I needed someone who was a specialist in modern history! Dominic [Sandbrook, co-host] and I got on really well. We've known each other ages, so he was the obvious choice.

Selecting the themes

We try and cover as much as we can, in chronological terms and in subject matter. I'd say the balance geographically would be maybe a third British, a third European and a third global. On top of that, the other consideration is how much time we have, because there's no point trying to do, I don't know, the French Revolution, when neither of us have really studied it in depth, and if we only have a day to research it.

This year, neither of us are doing a book so we can focus entirely on the podcast. It's a bit like doing a History degree, I guess – you have to find the time to do your work for your weekly essay. What we've tried not to do is immense, vast, sweeping themes. I remember we were asked why we weren't doing anything on the English Reformation. The answer to that is, it's a huge, huge topic. How would we compress it? And then we thought, well, we could do it through the prism of Lady Jane Grey, because, of course, the whole point of Lady Jane Grey is that she wasn't queen for very long, so it's quite a short story!

Relating to the past

It is really important to realise that the past doesn't exist to be judged in the context of what we think. People in the past are vastly more different to us than perhaps we care to imagine, and they should be treated on their own terms exactly as we would treat people from, say, a different culture or background. So the same is true of the past, and I think the past is much stranger than most people generally like to

think. That, for me, is the fascination of studying it, because it reveals how many ways there are to be human.

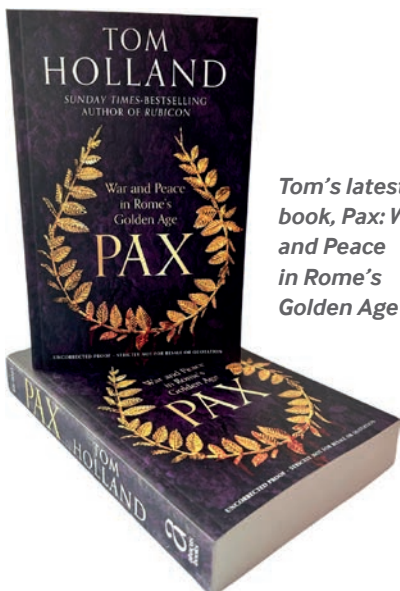
Understanding the supernatural

We don't want to perpetuate things that we think aren't true. One of the things that I have increasingly come to believe over the past ten years, and it's certainly been sharpened for me by doing the podcasts because I'm covering periods and areas of the world that otherwise I wouldn't be researching, is that there's a certain limit in the materialism of history as it's practiced in the modern West. It's a limit because it makes it hard for us to see how people in the past would have understood things in the context of the supernatural.

I think that, say, writing about the Greeks, but not believing in their gods, is a real problem. Because if you don't have a sense of that, then I think you are really missing things. Ditto with Christianity and all kinds of things. So in a sense, that's become my particular hobbyhorse and that's the lead that I particularly like to follow on the podcast – saying, "Well, but what if the gods were true? What if angels did materialise?" Because it always makes it more interesting. And who's to say they don't exist?

Memories of Queens'

I met Sadie on our first day, and I said, "Oh, sexy Sadie." Instead of giving me a slap, she immediately recognised the Beatles allusion. We were best friends all the way through the three years we were there, and then we got a



Tom's latest book, *Pax: War and Peace in Rome's Golden Age*



Tom and Sadie Holland at Queens'

Access to Classics

I think that the study of ancient languages has always been a marker of elites, precisely because they are dead. Studying a dead language has always had that marker. I think that the collapse of Latin and Greek as serving that purpose, which happened after the Second World War, means that it no longer has that quality. There's a charity, Classics For All, which is pushing at that particular door, and it is having incredible success – I think Latin is now the fourth most studied foreign language in secondary schools, which is incredible.

But against that, both my daughters went on to do Latin and Greek at state schools, and it was incredibly difficult. It really did involve a lot of effort from me to get them to do it. Equally, I entirely understand that the demands on the curriculum are enormous. I think also the inherent fascination of the subject is manifest. I mean, the Romans are up there with Hitler and the Tudors as three of the most popular areas of history to study. There is a kind of inherent glamour and fascination about Greece and Rome that means that people will always want to study them.

Lesser-known periods of history

There's always loads of debates about what should be in the History curriculum in schools. I actually don't think it greatly matters what people study, as long as it's interesting and as long as it inspires people in the rest of their life to continue reading it and being interested in it. If that love of history is ignited, then you will go out and there are so many opportunities to discover it.

bit closer after we left, and got married. So we are always a reminder to the other one of the wonderful three years we had at Queens'. For A-level, I did English, History and Latin, and I was really torn, I wanted to do all three [at degree level]. I thought that English stood more at the intersection point, and I thought that doing a degree in English would require me to read things that otherwise I would never read.

I was so honoured and so thrilled to be made Honorary Life Patron of the Cricket Club. I was very involved with the Bats, and I played cricket for the Firsts at Queens'. I was always saying, "But why can't I be in the Roos?" They would never let me, and it became kind of a point of principle. So I swanned off and set up the second XI at Queens' so that I could have complete control over it and I could bat and bowl when I wanted, and that was really great. I loved that as much as anything I did at Queens', but I still wasn't allowed to join! Whenever I meet any of them, I'm still going, "Come on! You've got to give me retrospective membership!" So to be named Honorary Life Patron was just an absolute triumph. I could not be happier about it.

I think, however, if there is one topic that people in Britain should study, it's the Civil Wars in the 17th century. They're so fundamental, they're so important, and they're also quite complicated, so it's something that educators could really help people with. They reverberate so profoundly into the present that if I was dictator of Britain, I would make people study that. And I'm saying that as someone who's never written about it, so I'm being very neutral about it!



“...I think the past is much stranger than most people generally like to think.”



The State of the World in 2024

Opinion Piece

Vuk Jeremić (1994), the former – and youngest ever – President of the United Nations General Assembly, returned to Cambridge to speak at the Union on ‘The State of the World in 2024’. He was the first student from Serbia to matriculate at Queens’, studying Theoretical and Experimental Physics.

Vuk is the President of the Centre for International Relations and Sustainable Development (CIRSD), a global public policy think-tank, and a Professor of Practice at the Sciences Po Paris School of International Affairs. He shared his personal opinions on the current geopolitical climate in a speech to members of the Union covering a range of topics, from which key moments have been extracted below.

These extracts have been recorded verbatim from Vuk Jeremić’s speech to the Cambridge Union, the full recording of which can be viewed on YouTube by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://youtu.be/s6QTA0pPtT>.



‘The End of History’

“I’d like to start off with a bit of time travel to 1994, when I first came to Cambridge. Those were very different times. One of my friends likes to say: ‘Back then, when we said Amazon, we meant the rainforest, and when we said Apple, we meant the fruit.’ It was ages ago, and I remember the world, or the Western world to more precise, celebrating ‘the End of History’. The End of History was a concept famously crafted by the liberal philosopher Francis Fukuyama of Stanford University, and it referred to the aftermath of the Cold War. It was the victory of liberal democracy and capitalism, and the idea was that we were not going to have geopolitical frictions anymore. For us from the Balkans, it sounded ridiculous, because at that time we were going through a devastating civil war. It was probably even more ludicrous to people from Africa, especially in Rwanda and Burundi, because they were witnessing developments at the time that could not really rhyme with the idea of the end of history... The end of the Cold War, which roughly coincided with my coming to Cambridge, was one of those moments where a collective illusion existed that history was going to come to an end, similar to the sentiments prevailing after the Napoleonic Wars, or World Wars I and II. Now it’s clear to our generation too – the history never comes to an end.”

Black swan events

“There are multiple crises going on right now, but I’d denote three which I think are the most consequential. Three and a half, maybe – I’ll explain what I mean by that. But there are

Vuk Jeremić at the Union

for sure three that we do know, and that are unfolding in front of our eyes. I'm going to start off with the biggest one – the United States' domestic politics. The domestic politics of the United States in 2024 is going to influence many other developments in the world. I begin with the United States because I think what will happen there will probably be the most consequential development globally. The second one is presently the most tragic one, the war in the Middle East. The third one is the war in the East of Europe, that is in Ukraine. The reason why I say three and a half, is the possibility of a black swan event in 2024. In geopolitical recessions like the one we have now, the probability of a black swan event is much higher than in good times. Ever since the beginning of this geopolitical recession, we had black swan events happening on an almost annual basis, so I would personally give a 50% probability to a black swan event in 2024. So, these three crises, completely intertwining, and the 50% chance of a black swan makes it three and a half crises to watch. That's what I believe is going to dominate the global headlines in 2024."

The US Election

"We're coming to a situation, impossible to imagine only a few years ago, where the leading democracy and the most powerful country of our times – economically, militarily and in many other ways as well – comes to a situation where one cannot easily imagine transfer of power, or acceptance of the outcome of the election by



whoever loses it... the stakes have never been higher, and the two sides of the American political spectrum are barely talking to each other. There isn't any diplomacy going on between them at this moment, and they have radically different versions of truth. It's very important to understand what truth is in political affairs, and my formula is that truth equals facts plus context. Facts are usually indisputable, but contexts may differ significantly, they are the product of various factors, including access to information and historical narratives. Therefore, you can end up with very different versions of the truth and it's not to say that one truth is more legitimate than the other."

The Middle East

"For those who are following the Middle East, perhaps a bit more closely or over a longer period of time, not everybody would call Hamas's abominable terrorist attack of October 7th, 2023 a black swan event. However, it clearly did contribute in a very significant way to the profound instability of not just the Middle East but the whole world, bringing into question big picture diplomacy, economy, and so many other issues that are high on the list of international leaders. I don't think that the war in the Middle East can come to an end in 2024. There could be pauses, I'm not sure how lengthy those breaks may be, but the fundamental parameters of what led to this devastating conflict, which is so cruel and bloody that it's deeply shocking for everybody, are such that one cannot imagine this coming to an end in 2024. Again, radically different versions of the truth are at stake."

Ukraine

"The third crisis of 2024 that is not going to go in a way that most people here would be prepared to applaud is the war in Ukraine. I fail to see how this situation gets better, at least

from the perspective of Ukraine and its allies in 2024... I'd be exceptionally worried if I were in government in Kiev – not just in terms of if I'd be able to regain the territory that was lost to the Russian military since the beginning of the 2022 invasion and the 2014 annexation of Crimea – but whether the current territory can be held, and what will be the future of that conflict. I fear that 2024 is going to be the year of partition of Ukraine. This is not a matter of personal preference, not something I believe we should want, but I think it is based on the facts on the ground. The question is how we – and when I say 'we', I refer to the collective West – are going to deal with it, so that it doesn't exacerbate suffering and leads to an outcome that in the future may be acceptable for us."

The UN Summit of the Future

"To end on a somewhat brighter note, I'd say not everything is terrible and not everything is pessimistic. I think that there are a lot of things that will be okay in 2024. For instance, the most geopolitically significant relationship in the world, the US-China relationship, is not likely to get worse in 2024. I think that there is a very strong incentive by both sides that things are kept in check. For years, the US-China relationship has been in a managed decline, with an emphasis on 'decline'. I think that in 2024 the emphasis will be on 'managed'. So, that's good news and that's very important for the world's economy. Perhaps that can open up doors for some kind of understanding in September in New York, where the Secretary General of the United Nations has called for a UN Summit of the Future when countries will get together and try to start a process of coming to an agreement on a kind of regulation of issues like artificial intelligence or biotech, that have not been successfully regulated even at the national level, let alone international level."



Graduation Day, June 1967. L-R: David Thorp, Mike James, Nick Darlington, Oliver Kinsey, John Eatwell

If you would like to submit a future *My room (mate)* article, please get in touch at thebridge@queens.cam.ac.uk

My room (mate)

By David Thorp for Oliver Kinsey (both 1964)

Oliver Kinsey and I met on the first day at our supper in the Old Hall at Queens', and have been lifelong friends ever since.

I was not lucky enough to share my lodgings which, ironically, were near the Queens' boathouse. I only ever set foot in punts. Every breakfast and supper, we cycled to Old Hall and sustenance. Three sittings of two courses each were gulped down in about 90 minutes. Being a slow eater, Oliver was almost left behind on several occasions – or was it that extra portion of chips that he craved? The prospect of returning to our gas fires was deflected by the Anchor Pub where we eked out our half pints gossiping about mutual friends and the rare sighting of girls.

Oliver was a first year Economist whereas I was a Natural Scientist. The labs needed frequent visits from me, but from the outset, Oliver had more time, especially to pursue

rowing. My sport was rugby and so the evening get togethers became vital. We had to wear gowns when outside College in the evenings, so we needed to be watchful of meeting the University's bulldogs. They had the power to fine or gate us if not properly attired, a custom that stopped after our first year.

Only scholars had rooms in College, but soon their rooms were filled with War on Want lunches raising charitable funds from our half crown entrance fee. Girtonians quickly found a way not to cycle back up the Huntingdon Road for lunch and latched onto these gatherings, much to the pleasure of us young men. The ratio of thirty men's only colleges to three girls' colleges shows the unequal ratio of the mid-Sixties.

Rag Week was soon upon us, and I was very impressed that Oliver was selected to ride a horse as a highwayman, while my contribution was to row a dustbin just off the King's College

riverbank, subsequently ending up in the sanatorium. Earlier we also took the train to London, staying at Oliver's Hampstead family house, before pushing a bath (on wheels) together with another thirty or so Queens' freshers. We had hoped to push from the City of London to Cambridge to raise money, but the wheels fell off irreparably in Enfield.

In our second year, I paired with Oliver in Fisher's X3. The shared bedroom was tiny and the ablutions were outside, off the staircase. The gas fire was the only source of heat and so we quickly had to learn not to burn the crumpets. We were on the ground floor behind windows with bars so that we could not use the windows as entry, forcing us to learn how best to climb in after hours.

We were fortunate to share in E2 (now centrally heated) in Old Court in our last year. In that era, we were directly above the Porter's Lodge and



L-R: Bob Booth, Patrick O'Brien, Oliver Kinsey, Mike Jackson, Ed Harris and David Thorp

“Rag Week was soon upon us, and I was very impressed that Oliver was selected to ride a horse as a highwayman, while my contribution was to row a dustbin just off the King’s College riverbank, subsequently ending up in the sanatorium.”

very close to the pigeonholes. These were the equivalent of social media in sending and receiving messages; handy for both of us, as we were even more preoccupied with our sports clubs. The photo shows the six members in our E staircase and our redoubtable bedder.

For some inexplicable reason, Oliver was allowed to have his tiny A35 Austin in College into which four of us would squeeze for the occasional sporting and other trips. We overlapped in playing croquet, which could be extremely competitive and resulted in one instance not speaking to each other for more than a day. Oliver was given the tricky task of managing the college punts and ensuring they were safely harboured each evening under the Mathematical Bridge.

Panic set in for our finals and we organised our timetable from the start of the summer term in our shared living room into four, four-hour shifts. We allocated one of these stints for recreation like a cricket match or an outing on the river, but the other three sessions were heads down before slumber set in. It worked as we both gained creditable degrees and subsequently enjoyed several weeks of wall-to-wall partying.

What a blast, as we also had to fit in many cricket matches for me, and Oliver was rowing in the Queens’ 1st VIII in the May Bumps. At the Henley Regatta that year, Oliver was a rower but in later years rose to prominence when he became one of their race commentators.

Oliver took articles with a firm of solicitors and, by the age of 25, had become a partner. We played squash the night of his promotion and he was in shock, worried that his career was then pre-set for decades ahead. Soon he became a partner in City lawyers, Simmons & Simmons.

I spent the night before I married Christine in Oliver’s flat in Marylebone; probably the worse for wear but ok to play tennis next morning in Regent’s Park before rushing off to Chislehurst for the ceremony. I am very grateful to him as my best man in managing me throughout.

We skied before moving on to serious European walking and then opera trips to the south of France. One of Oliver’s traits is that he does take most of these activities quite seriously, so that those peaks in the distance are rarely too far until hauled back by the rest of the group.

Queens’ reunions for Oliver and me and our group of friends have been a source of much joy as we continue to share our friendship over many years.



David Thorp and Oliver Kinsey on one of many walking trips which continue today

College News



Queens' Seventh Distinguished Lecture in Law

The Queens' Distinguished Lecture in Law took place in February, with this year's speaker, Lady Vivien Rose of Colmworth DBE PC, addressing the topic, 'The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council: "relic of empire" or "useful body"?' This annual event brings together the latest thinking on the law, and has been taking place since 2015 in the Fitzpatrick Hall. Previous speakers have included Professor Richard Fentiman KC, Lady Arden of Heswall BE, Lord Justice Newey, and the College Visitor, the Rt Hon. Beverley McLachlin PC. In conjunction with the lecture series, several prizes and studentships are awarded on the night, kindly sponsored by Redress Solutions. *The Redress Solutions Prize in Law* was awarded to **Tamara Boston (2019)** and **Priya Jari (2021)**. Tamara was also the recipient of *The Sternberg LLM Studentship*, kindly gifted by **Michael Sternberg KC (1970)**.



New Honorary Fellows admitted

Professor Richard Rex presented eight new Honorary Fellows at their induction ceremony in December, followed by the annual Sir Thomas Smith Feast. **The Rt Hon. Sir David Latham (1960)**, **Sir John Chisholm (1965)**, **Sir Robin Millar CBE (1970)**, **Joanna Scanlan (1980)**, **Dr Jane Osbourn OBE FMedSci (1984)**, **Tom Holland (1986)**, **Khalid Abdalla (2000)** and **Grace Prendergast MNZM (2021)** all attended the induction ceremony in the Chapel, which is a centuries-old tradition at Queens'. **Trevor Bradley (1989)** was elected as a Fellow Benefactor at the same time in recognition of his support of the College. **Baroness Moyo** and **Professor James Maynard FRS (2005)** were admitted in a ceremony in March.



Alumni Carol Service

Over 250 alumni attended the College's annual Alumni Carol Service in London, held at the beautiful venue of St George's Church, Hanover Square. The choir sang a varied repertoire ranging from *Once In Royal David's City* to Matthew Martin's *Novo Profusi Gaudio*. We are grateful to this year's alumni who gave readings: **Richard Bland (1983)**, **Genevieve Marsh (2022)**, **Nick Morris (2011, Director of Music)**, **Serena Davis (1988)**, and the President, **Dr Mohamed El-Erian (1977)**. The service concluded with an organ voluntary from **Jack McCabe (2021)**, **Aliki Vatikioti Senior Organ Scholar**, along with mince pies and mulled wine.

Take it to the Bridge

Alex Jones (2022) and his bandmates in Quasar were crowned the winners of the University-wide 'Take it to the Bridge' battle of the bands in March. A live public gig determined the victor, and Quasar have earned themselves a spot on the Cambridge Club Festival main stage alongside artists like Jessie Ware and Chaka Khan. Fellow Queens' student **Gabriel Margolis (2021)** also reached the final with the band Soft Crunchy Landing. Alex, who plays the bass and won the College's Tyro Prize in 2023, said, "When Quasar asked me to join them this year, I was super excited because the fusion of jazz, R&B and hip-hop/rap is so much fun to play, and very rare among the kinds of student bands you see around."



The Boat Races

Queens' was represented by four current and former students in this year's Gemini Boat Races, held at the end of March. In a nail-biting series of races, Cambridge beat the odds to triumph over Oxford in both Blue Boats, both Lightweight Boats and the Men's Reserve boat, Goldie. The Women's Reserve crew in Blondie only conceded their race to Osiris by a hard-won five lengths.



Ben Harding (2021) was the cox for the Lightweight Men's crew. He was introduced to rowing by Chris Radbone at Queens' College Boat Club. Ben is currently Coxes' Captain at QCBC.



Also in the Lightweight Boat was **Dr Freddie Markanday (2017)**, now at Magdalene. He was in the Lightweight Boat in 2019 and 2022 and was Men's Captain at QCBC from 2020-21.



Brett Taylor (2020) was in Goldie, having been in the Blue Boat last year. Brett is the QCBC Welfare Officer and has managed to fit in training as a fourth year medic on placement in Ipswich.



Jessica 'Beanie' Spain (2020) earned a spot in Blondie after recovering from a rib fracture earlier this year. Before the Boat Race, her proudest rowing achievement was winning the Fours Head in the Academic 4+ in 2022.

Jessica Man (2022)

Jessica Man (2022) was recently featured in an article by the Department of Computer Science and Technology titled 'A long, hard journey', telling the story of her journey from a small Hong Kong fishing village to a Computer Science PhD.

When asked about Queens', she said, "I first heard that Queens' was described as one of the most friendly colleges in Cambridge at the Postgraduate Induction Day, and now I am using this description whenever people asked me how Queens' is – because it's so true! The "Grad Comp Sci" meetings (Postgraduate Computer Science), the social events and the formal dinners have all been fun and enjoyable. I will never forget the Queens' May Ball, what a night! Towards the end as the sun was rising and the Queen tribute band was playing, I felt a great sense of serenity. What a year it has been that took me to that moment."



Jessica at her MPhil graduation in 2023

Intellectual Society



Queens' new Praelector

Dr Michael Loy (2012) has been appointed as the College's new Praelector, taking over the post from Dr David Butterfield, Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Classics. Dr Loy is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow and Director of Studies in Classics at Queens'. He was formerly Assistant Director at the British School at Athens (2019-22) and collaborates on a number of archaeological field projects in Greece. Professor Richard Rex will remain Deputy Praelector.

Dr Lorena Escudero Sánchez

As part of her Borysiewicz Interdisciplinary Fellowship (Postdoc Academy, University of Cambridge), new Queens' Bye Fellow and former Rokos Postdoctoral Research Associate **Dr Lorena Escudero Sánchez** has designed and carried out an independent project to encourage young girls to study science. She did this by selecting and interviewing female researchers working on different STEM disciplines around the world, in countries such as Peru, Italy, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia and India. Then Dr Escudero Sánchez wrote stories about them, portraying them as heroines of science, each one with her own characteristic scientific superpower. The stories have been illustrated and transformed into a school diary or planner, which is bilingual.



Jennifer Cobbe

Dr Joana Nascimento

Dr Joana Nascimento held a talk and roundtable in Old Hall in November to celebrate the launch of her new book, *Working the Fabric: Resourcefulness, Belonging and Island Life in Scotland's Harris Tweed Industry*. Dr Nascimento is a social anthropologist who joined the College as a Rokos Postdoctoral Research Associate in 2022. Following thirteen months of ethnographic fieldwork in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland, her book focuses on the work, workers and workplaces involved in the production of Harris Tweed – a renowned woollen textile that has been trademark-protected since 1910 and can only be produced in these islands.



The Angevin Talks

The highly successful Angevin Talks series, hosted by Anna El-Erian, continues to invite a range of eminent speakers to discuss their successes and reflections on some of the critical issues facing our society. Owen Matthews, historian of Russia and Ukraine, and Charlie Siem, the renowned classical violinist, spoke to Anna in late 2023 and early 2024 respectively.

Owen Matthews discussed his latest book, *Overreach: The Inside Story of Putin's War on Ukraine* (2022), which won the Pushkin House Books Prize for 2023 and was longlisted for the Orwell Prize. Charlie Siem spoke about his musical journey with some of the world's finest orchestras, conductors and chamber ensembles, and treated the audience to a performance on his unique violin from 1735, known as 'The d'Egville'.

Queens' alumna and BAFTA-winning actress **Joanna Scanlan (1980)** gave the most recent Angevin Talk, reflecting on her career in film, television and theatre. Joanna spoke about her early years in North Wales, coming to acting later in life, her BAFTA-winning role as Mary Hussain in *After Love*, and being a trailblazer as one of the first women to attend Queens'.

Queens' Entrepreneurship Society Competition

Queens' Entrepreneurship Society held its second annual pitching competition for students to compete for prizes to help fund the beginning of their entrepreneurial journey. Three very strong entries made it to the final pitch day, with the prizes going to **James Goh (2021)** for *HiPer Tops*, an optimised spinning top design, and **Luke Johnson (2022)** and Fabien Bryans (Sidney Sussex, 2020) for *MarkMind*, a tool to help teachers grade work using AI. The event included a keynote speech from **Dr Jane Osbourn OBE (Hon Fellow, 1984)** in addition to a panel discussion and a networking drinks reception before the announcement of the winners. **Dr Richard Hargreaves (1964)** and **Qun Yang (2019)** sponsored the prizes and sat on both the panel and judging committee.



Professor James Jackson

Professor James Jackson has been elected a Corresponding Member of the Academy of Athens, the highest research establishment in Greece. His membership recognises the impact of his work in the fields of Geophysics, Geodynamics and Tectonics in the Department of Earth Sciences. It is unusual for one college to have two Members of this select group. **Professor James Diggle CBE**, the College's Praelector for 40 years and Emeritus Professor of Greek and Latin, is the other.

Global Events



Hong Kong

The President and Development Director met with alumni in Hong Kong, hosting a lunch for alumni working in the financial services sector, followed by an event at the American Club organised by **Julie Lim (1997)**, and finished with a dinner for alumni and friends kindly hosted by **Tjun Tang (1991)** and Sylvia Tang.



USA

An alumni event was hosted by Cambridge in America at their offices in New York in January, attended by Development Director Rowan Kitt. We are grateful to our Alumni Ambassador in New York, **Julie Zhang (2009)**, and all Queens' members who joined us for an update on news from College and the opportunity to meet fellow alumni.



Alumni in Singapore self-organised a reunion over pizza in February at DOC.

Athens Day

Queens' new Bye-Fellow and Praelector, **Dr Michael Loy (2012)**, led an exclusive alumni visit to the Athenian Agora and Acropolis Museum in April. Alumni were given a tour of the Agora with Dr Loy, the former Assistant Director at the British School at Athens, in the morning, followed by a tour of the Acropolis Museum in the afternoon. The day ended with a drink on the roof terrace of the museum.

Become a Queens' Global Ambassador!

Would you like to help the College to arrange more events for alumni in your area of the world? As part of the Queens' Global network, we have alumni ambassadors in countries such as the USA, Australia, Greece, Hong Kong, Japan and China. With support from the Alumni & Development Office, ambassadors can coordinate local reunions and receptions to bring the Queens' community closer together. For more information on becoming a Queens' Global Ambassador, please contact global@queens.cam.ac.uk.



Reflections on COP28

By Oliver Rieche (2013)

After COP27 in Sharm-el-Sheikh, I was excited to attend my second Conference of the Parties; this time in Dubai. Having attended the international “half-way” COP traditionally taking place in June in Bonn, Germany, I was ready to make the most of it. Dubai was the largest ever hosted COP with 85,000 attendees spread across two weeks. The arena (the former EXPO grounds) was vast; it took me a few days to find my bearings.

This year, I attended in my capacity as an environmental lawyer of Balance Eco, a UK-based global start-up seeking to disrupt and redefine the outdated carbon credit sector. Believing that carbon credits are no longer serving to protect the climate, with many credits turning out to be worthless and sometimes even damaging the environment and its local population, Balance Eco has come up with a six-point methodology to eradicate greenwashing concerns and ensure that the credits (which we renamed ‘Balance units’) contribute towards the fight against climate change through natural reforestation and afforestation. In addition, for every ton of Balance that we sell, we plant an extra tree near the customer in a non-carbon forest, thereby creating urban forestation corridors.

I was excited to organise our first-ever UN event for Balance Eco at COP28 to spread awareness of our ideas ahead of our launch in February 2024. We had a fantastic panel discussion between our CEO, a university professor, and a barrister who was one of the drafters of the Kyoto Protocol.

Overall, while COP28 was a personal success, having made plenty of new connections, witnessing international negotiations was sometimes filled with despair. The Loss and Damage Fund – a fund to cover the costs of climate-induced natural disasters in the developing world – was quickly agreed upon, and Western countries initially enthusiastically seemed to want to contribute to it. In the end, however, the final figure does not even cover 2% of the money needed. Even the final communiqué, while finally acknowledging that countries needed to “transition away” from fossil fuels, is full of loopholes and lacks clear goals and fixed timelines in this regard. Yet, hopefully, the mere mentioning shall mark the beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era.

Although the COP28 communiqué is non-binding, and there is much to criticise, the



fact that COPs are growing in numbers with more and more media coverage shows that environmental consciousness is trickling down in society; in itself a victory. Now we need to keep pushing for COP29, to be held in Azerbaijan, to build on the achievements of Dubai and raise the bar. As an optimist, I am determined to be there.

Queens’ Climate Goals

The College is committed to reducing its overall carbon footprint from its 2020 level by 2030 and aims to reach Net Zero Carbon by 2045.

Tripes-topping students

Following the publication of the College’s prizes list, which was finalised at the beginning of 2024 following the marking boycott, Queens’ students have once again performed exceptionally well academically throughout the University. Here are just a few of their achievements.



James Morley (2020) topped Tripos in all three years of his undergraduate degree in Linguistics. He also achieved the highest grade attainable in his dissertation, earning the President’s Prize and the Joshua King Prize. He was awarded an ESRC DTP 1+3 studentship to fund his MPhil, which he is studying at Queens’, and a prospective three-year PhD.

Isabelle Brown (2022) and **Josh Todd (2022)** scored first and second in Part 1A of the Medical Sciences Tripos, earning the Max Bull Prize in Anatomy and the Henry Mosseri Prize respectively.

Leo Wilkinson (2021) scored top marks in the University for Chemistry B, Part 1B (Natural Sciences), earning the Paul W. Davies Prize.

Faizan Nawaz (2021) topped Tripos in the first and second years of his BA in Theology, Religion and Philosophy of Religion (TRPR). In his first year, he achieved the only Starred First. He was awarded the Hughes Prize and the Clayton Prize.







Gigi Pezier (2022) topped the TRPR Tripos for Part 1 with the only Starred First in her year, and earned the top mark in each of the five papers she offered. She was awarded the Chase Prize and the Venn Prize.



The MagSoc Orchestra performing at the Michaelmas Concert at West Road.

The Bridge: produced by the Alumni & Development Office at Queens'
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Find out more about the
latest alumni events
at Queens' being held
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