Special Feature:

**Crime writers of Balliol**
Three successful crime writers talk about their motives

Matthew Lynn on the Euro and writing thrillers
Balliol’s 750th Anniversary
Editorial

Welcome to the latest issue of Floreat Domus. There is a lot to celebrate in the year of 2012: Professor Sir Drummond Bone joining the College as the new Master (page 1), more female faces on the Fellows pages (page 4), and the much-anticipated 2012 Olympics, in honour of which we have our own Balliol Olympians article on page 16. As always, we had a great response from students and Old Members who were not only willing but happy to write articles for this issue. With any luck this is reflected in the variety of content, which ranges from financial articles, such as the interview with Matthew Lynn (financial journalist and thriller writer) and the article on Big Society Capital, to pieces about education – the organisation Teach First and Robert Peston’s Speakers for Schools initiative (on page 26) – and our special feature about the uncanny number of Balliol crime writers (page 30). We’ve also given space to strongly-felt reaction to an article printed last year.

Ideas for articles come to me via many channels: some as suggestions of Fellows and Old Members – such as the article on Balliol’s outreach initiatives (page 13); some are developed from the suggestions of the Senior Tutor, Nicola Trott, such as the new series of Global Balliol articles, the first of which is on page 18; and others are based on news we receive regarding Balliol alumni. I am very grateful to these sources and I am always interested to hear from Old Members and current Members alike, who are working on interesting or inspiring projects. I look forward to hearing from you and, in the meantime, I hope you enjoy this issue.

Sophie Petrou, Editor
From the Master

By Drummond Bone

My first piece for Floreat Domus is being written early in the New Year, and the beginning of my second term as Master does not feel quite so strange as the beginning of my first, only three months ago – in fact, it already feels like home. Coming back to your College as Master may be ‘coming back’ indeed, but it is still a pretty odd feeling, all but 40 years on, and a career lifetime including four other Universities in-between.

Has the College changed much? Not, I think, in its essentials, its commitment to the highest intellectual quality in its teaching and research, and its equal commitment to a broad social responsibility. We have both men and women here now of course, but at least in the 60s there always seemed to be women about in any case, so not much sense of difference there – and indeed we could do with more women at both undergraduate level and on the Fellowship. The graduate body has grown considerably – in my day the MCR was one tiny room off the JCR, painted by our own hands in a truly ferocious yellow I recall – now it represents half of the student body, while Holywell Manor no longer feels like an outpost, but is an integral part of the College. This is a real change driven by a number of factors both intellectual and economic, and unlikely to be reversed.

the next couple of years they will be, which is good news, even if the transitional period from late 2013 on is going to be a little difficult.

One of the reasons behind my return – the main reason of course is simply: ‘who could turn down such a possibility?’ – was to come closer again to a genuine academic community, having for many years as a Vice-Chancellor and President of Universities UK been essentially a business manager or politician, at least in so far as my day-to-day activities went, inevitably in a large organisation at some remove from teaching and research (though I had continued to do just enough of both to be able to look at myself in the mirror of a morning). And I’m pleased to say that that seems to be developing, partly just in the immensely friendly and collegiate atmosphere, but specifically in having been asked to give academic seminars in both Broad Street and Holywell, and even, shortly, to give some undergraduate tutorials. The close integration of all aspects of academic life seems to me to be one of the qualities which make Oxford so distinctive, while the level of attention paid to individual undergraduates is still frankly staggering – and, of course, staggeringly expensive to provide.

Andrew Graham gave generously of his time during the handover, and there is no doubt that he handed over a College in very sound shape. Financially the position is reasonable, thanks to increasingly entrepreneurial use of our buildings for conferences, summer schools and the like, but ‘reasonable’ is not enough, except in the ‘going-concern’ sense. The College must increase its endowment pretty dramatically if it is to stay at the forefront in the range and quality of education it can offer. Perhaps, counterintuitively, the immediate problem is not undergraduate student bursaries – not only is Balliol already a leader in Oxford in financial support for its students, but the University’s provision for the new fee arrangements is generally acknowledged as the most generous in the country, so that it will be actually less expensive to study in Oxford than in most other universities, particularly for those who come from less fortunate backgrounds. Rather, our pressing need is to be able to fund more Fellows, to ensure, as University funding falls, that we as a College can maintain the tutorial system, and maintain our presence in those subjects our students want to take. Our £30 million campaign associated with our 750th Anniversary in 2013 now stands at £25.1 million, but there is still a long way to go, and even that target represents probably about half of what would be needed to be comfortable. We are of course very grateful for all the support alumni have already shown us.

We have been struggling a little in the Norrington table over the last three years, and while statistically this particular league table is certainly no more reliable than many others, and while First Class degrees are not the only measure of a student’s worth, we cannot be satisfied with 18th position, or thereby. The Fellowship has been looking very seriously at what might have been happening, and we will do our best to change what needs to be changed and can be changed (there is an apparent relationship at least between resources and success). But in student satisfaction we have continued to perform strongly – according to the National Student Survey 2012, while 93% of final year students at Oxford agreed that ‘Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of my course’, the equivalent figure for Balliol was 96%. And recent data for graduate destinations show some 38.1% of all students pursuing further study, 46.2% going in to full-time work, and only 3.8% unemployed (a figure that rises in some colleges to 10 or even 11%). Planning for 2013 is now beginning to pick up serious speed – and by then I will no longer be ‘new’. I do hope that if we have not met before then, that 750th anniversary year will provide an opportunity. Floreat Domus!
New Visitor

The Master and Fellows of Balliol elected the Right Honourable Lord Reed, PC, to serve as Visitor from 28 July 2011. Balliol is delighted to have such a distinguished member of the judiciary to follow in the footsteps of Lord Rodger. Lord Rodger was elected Visitor of Balliol on 10 November 2010 and died in office, aged 66, on 26 June 2011.

Lord Reed was educated at George Watson’s College at the University of Edinburgh (graduating with First Class Honours) and at Balliol College, Oxford, where he earned his doctorate. He was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1983. He has been a judge of the Court of Session since 1998 and was appointed to the Inner House in 2008. He is an authority on human rights law in Scotland, and serves as one of the UK’s ad hoc judges at the European Court of Human Rights. Lord Reed was appointed as a Justice of the Supreme Court in December 2011.

When asked his thoughts on becoming the Visitor of Balliol, he responded with genuine pride: ‘I felt honoured and delighted to be made the Visitor – not only because of the prestige attached to the position but also because Balliol has the unique privilege of electing its own Visitor.’ He also said he felt humbled by his predecessors, Lord Rodger and Lord Bingham: ‘both of whom were persons for whom I had the greatest respect’. But, having been a pupil and friend of Alan Rodger, he wished it could have been under different circumstances. And what in his view, would be his role as the Visitor?, I asked. To which he replied that as well as official adjudicator (see FD 2010 for more information on this and other aspects), the position is largely what the Visitor and the college choose to make of it. ‘I am keen to play a meaningful role,’ he told me. ‘Partly because I owe a considerable amount to the College and would like to give something back, and partly because I enjoy participating in an academic community.’ Lord Reed will be available as a source of constructive support to the Master if and when he feels that it might be helpful to discuss any matter with him. He hopes to bring a different experience and perspective to bear on issues affecting the College.

Tenth Anniversary of the Oxford Internet Institute

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Oxford Internet Institute (OII). In 2000 the first seeds of what were to become the OII were planted when Derek Wyatt, a former student, wrote to Colin Lucas, the then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, about how Oxford was slipping behind other universities due to its lack of an internet institute – a place of research where the effects of the internet could be measured and analysed. The Master at the time, Andrew Graham, also agreed that this was essential for Oxford and the stamina and commitment of Graham and Lucas helped to nurture and turn Wyatt’s ideas into a reality, while the constant belief and enthusiasm of Richard Susskind (1993) and Michael Warburg (1949) meant the project received the financial backing it needed and helped to convince Dame Stephanie Shirley of its being worthy of her generous support. Ten years on, it is fair to say that their convictions were well-founded. OII Internet and Society Awards were launched to mark the tenth anniversary and to celebrate the success of the OII. The awards were presented at an Anniversary Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony in September 2011 and provided an opportunity to recognise some of the individuals and organisations who have played a pivotal role in shaping the extraordinary ecosystem that is today’s internet. To find out about the winners go to http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/awards/
The first weekend of October 2011 saw the annual meeting of the Balliol Society. The weather was uncharacteristically warm and sunny, pleasingly allowing the drinks reception to be held in the Fellows’ Garden. The main part of the weekend was of course, the tremendous three course meal, served in Hall.

In total, 206 people attended the Dinner comprising Old Members ranging over 60 years of Balliol history, as well as a handful of current Fellows and staff. College welcomed back the matriculation year of 2004, 71 of whom were present at the dinner. We were also happy to welcome the new College Visitor, Lord Reed, and his wife to the Balliol Society. But there was an additional element of ceremony to be undertaken: Andrew Graham stepped down as Master on 30 September 2011 and so the inauguration of the new Master (Professor Sir Drummond Bone, Balliol 1968) was to take place after dinner. It was therefore a delight to be joined by Sir Drummond and Lady Bone.

Andrew has had a long and distinguished career at Balliol, so it was fitting that the handover of the Mastership would take place at an event where his contribution to Balliol could be recognised by a large number of alumni and friends. Andrew’s Mastership saw many developments at Balliol, perhaps the most notable being the creation of the Oxford Internet Institute (see opposite), the launch of the Balliol Interdisciplinary Institute, and the opening of the College’s Historic Collections Centre at St Cross (a project led by another long-serving member of College, John Jones). While the College was keen to keep Andrew until 2012, he had opted to step down a year early, to allow his successor sufficient time to settle in before the College’s 750th anniversary in 2013.

Naturally, the Balliol Society wished to make a presentation to Andrew, both to thank him and celebrate his time as Master. He was presented with a replica of a bronze bust of Adam Smith, the original of which (by Carlo Marochetti) was in Andrew’s study while he was Master. This bust has a rather interesting history; it is a miniature version of a full sized marble bust made in 1851. Although several casts of this miniature were likely made, the one owned by Balliol is the only listed copy. John Jones discovered this bust lurking at the back of the silver cabinet some 30 years ago. It was a rather fortunate turn of events that led to a replica being created for the Society to present to Andrew. Recently, Andrew was approached by a banker who wished to have some replicas of this bronze bust made (for himself, the Governor of the Bank of England, and the Adam Smith Society). John was asked to undertake the necessary arrangements for commissioning these replicas, which were produced at the workshops of the Royal Academy. It was around this time that John learnt of the intentions of the Balliol Society to make a presentation to Andrew, and he thought that a replica of the Smith bust would be an excellent and appropriate gift for the first economist to be the Master of Balliol. With the agreement of Seamus Perry and Douglas Dupree, an extra replica was created and presented to Andrew (who had absolutely no idea it had been made) after the Society Dinner.

The inauguration of the new Master was led by the Visitor, Lord Reed. The ceremony itself was beautiful both in its simplicity and its symbolism; the handing over of the College keys from Andrew to Sir Drummond. Although his words upon officially taking up the Mastership were few, they were very well received, and we are all looking forward to the continuing success of Balliol College under the leadership of Sir Drummond. From what I have seen of Professor Bone so far, the College is in very safe hands.

Balliol Society Educational Trust

The Balliol Society was founded in 1926 by Kenneth Bell to strengthen the ties between the College and its Old Members. The Educational Trust dates from the same era, and continues to be a practical and very personal means of strengthening those ties. The trustees are drawn from a spread of Balliol years from the 1960s to the 1990s, and are assisted by a Secretary based in the College. The Trust makes grants up to a total of some £12,000 each year towards the educational needs of the children of Balliol men and women. In most cases the need arises as a result of the death of a parent, but occasionally we respond to other forms of hardship. Sometimes grants have been substantial. We once covered, for example, the fees of a refugee student from overseas at a university in this country. More often grants are quite small, funding music lessons or a school trip abroad. Sometimes, where there has been bereavement, there are no financial difficulties but a letter from the Trust offering help if needed has been much appreciated as a sign of the concern of the College. This has led to continuing friendly contact between the Trust and the family. In all cases it is this personal link with the College which counts as much as the financial help.

Thanks to personal networks, and the contact which the College maintains with Old Members, we hope that we manage to pick up most of the cases of need. However, we are always glad to hear from Old Members about friends or contemporaries who might be in need. Please bear the Trust in mind, and if you know of anyone we might help, please write to the Secretary of the Balliol Society Educational Trust at Balliol, Catherine Wilbery at catherine.wilbery@balliol.ox.ac.uk. She will proceed with the utmost discretion.
Michael Bailey
Michael joins Balliol as John G Winant Visiting Professor of American Government. He is the Colonel William J Walsh Professor of American Government in the Georgetown University Department of Government and the Georgetown Public Policy Institute. He is co-author of *The Constrained Court: Law, Politics and the Decisions Justices Make*, which is forthcoming from Princeton University Press in the summer of 2011 (with Forrest Maltzman).

Jan Machielsen
Jan is Junior Research Fellow in the Humanities (History). He is a departmental lecturer in Early Modern European History at Balliol, currently teaching early modern British and General history. He has been awarded a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship, and took up his Junior Research Fellowship on 1 January 2012 to study the role that witchcraft played within the early modern university curriculum.

James Belich
James is Beit Professor of Commonwealth and Imperial History. He has worked as a historian and university lecturer in New Zealand. He held the Inaugural Keith Sinclair Chair in History at the University of Auckland and then became Research Professor of History at the Stout Research Centre, Victoria University of Wellington. He has held visiting positions at the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Georgetown, and Melbourne. He is currently working on the causes of early European expansion.

Luca Guidoni
Luca is Visiting Fellow and Oliver Smithies Lecturer (Physics). Luca holds a CNRS researcher position at the MPQ laboratory of the Denis Diderot University in Paris. His research activity is mainly devoted to the experimental aspects of light-matter interaction with a particular interest in quantum optics and laser cooling of atoms and ions.

William Coleman
William is Visiting Fellow and Oliver Smithies Lecturer (Economics). His principal research interests are in Microeconomic Theory, the History of Economics, and Monetary Economics. William is Editor of *Agenda*, the quarterly journal of the ANU College of Business and Economics, he is a columnist for the Social Affairs Unit web site, London, and he was Convener of the Australian Conference of Economists 2011.

Jane Kershaw
Jane joins the College as Junior Research Fellow in the Humanities (Archaeology). She will also take up a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Institute of Archaeology. Jane’s research focuses on early medieval metalwork, specifically on how its form and style can serve as a historical source for contemporary culture, gender and politics.
Jamie Warner
Jamie joins the College as a Junior Research Fellow in the Sciences (Materials). He is also a Royal Society University Research Fellow in the Department of Materials. During the tenure of the JRF, he will investigate methods to produce synthetic graphene using chemical vapour deposition, and perform atomic resolution imaging using transmission electron microscopy to elucidate the structural details.

Carl Wunsch
Carl is George Eastman Visiting Professor (Physical Oceanography/Climate). He is the Cecil and Ida Green Professor of Physical Oceanography at MIT. Carl has worked on many aspects of physical oceanography and its climate implications, with emphasis on the global scale, including satellites and acoustic tomographic observation methods.

Manuela Zaccolo
Manuela is University Lecturer and Tutor in Biomedical Sciences. She joined the College as a Fellow in Pre-Clinical Medicine and Professor in Cell Biology in January 2012. Her research focuses on how cells sense external stimuli and how these are processed to produce a functional outcome.

Peter Tufano
Peter is Peter Moore’s Dean of Said Business School and Professorial Fellow at Balliol. Peter’s recent research, course development, and engagement with business and policy audiences is primarily focused on topics around consumer finance and is aimed at understanding how this vital sector of the economy works – and how it can be improved. His work is credited with influencing two US policy initiatives and a new class of savings products in the US.

Lisa Walker
Lisa is Fixed-Term Fellow and Tutor in Biomedical Sciences. She has been a lecturer at Balliol College for the last four years. She is a practising clinician, and following training at UCL, Great Ormond Street and Cambridge, is now a Consultant in Clinical Genetics at the Churchill Hospital, Oxford. She is Head of Cancer Genetics for the Oxford Regional Genetics Service, covering a population of 3.5 million.

Andrew Pontzen
Andrew is Henry Siggins Junior Research Fellow in the Sciences (Astrophysics) and joins the University as a James Martin Fellow in Astrophysics. Since finishing his PhD in 2009, he has been a Research Fellow at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Andrew’s research interests are centred on cosmology; he studies aspects of the early Universe and its later evolution, and has written papers on a wide range of topics from general relativity to computer simulations of galaxy formation.
Awards for the College’s St Cross Project

BY JOHN JONES

The restoration of St Cross Church and its conversion into an Historic Collections Centre have been completed on time and within budget. All the costs of the project have been met by a magnificent donation from the Shirley Foundation and generous support from some 150 other benefactors. Environmentally-controlled secure units have been established in the aisles, and the College’s rich archive and manuscript collections have been moved in, releasing space in the Library on the Broad Street site. The first researchers visited the nave study area in October last year.

All Balliol’s aims have thus been achieved without drawing on its basic endowment. But the College and the broader scholarly community the Centre serves are not the only beneficiaries. By the time Floreat readers see this report, the first service will have been held in the refurbished Chancel, which remains available for occasional use. And one of the oldest buildings in the City, with parts nine hundred years old and with spectacular Victorian painted ceilings and stained glass, has been brought back from the brink of irreversible decline and preserved for posterity.

The work has been independently recognised as outstanding: locally by the judges of the Oxford Preservation Trust (equal best of the year’s projects in the conservation section, along with work on the Sheldonian Theatre) and by the judges of the Royal Institute of British Architects (best of the year’s projects in South East England). Robert Montgomery our architect (who has numerous other elegant projects around the city to his credit) and I hope we can be forgiven for looking pleased as we showed off the trophies in the Church for the Oxford Mail.

Yale exchange programme at Balliol College

Starting in Michaelmas Term 2012, first year English majors at Yale will be able to study English literature in a year-long programme at Balliol College. The programme, which is one of only two major-specific study abroad programmes offered at Yale, allows students to explore courses within their field beyond the ones offered at Yale, such as in medieval literature and Old English. Balliol, which, in the Oxford English faculty has access to the largest English department in the UK, will accept three to five English students from Yale in 2012–13. Students will commit to studying here for their first year, but no students from Balliol will study at Yale. John Rogers, director of undergraduate studies for the English Department at Yale, called the Balliol programme an ‘extraordinary opportunity’ for English majors. He said, ‘Balliol places a greater emphasis on historical breadth in its English literature courses than Yale does.’ Plus Yale students at Balliol will also get to experience Oxford’s tutorial system.

Bollywood at Balliol

Oxford was the location for a new Bollywood film and several days of shooting took place at Balliol. Although Oxford is no stranger to the big screen, this is the first time that it has been used as the setting for a major Bollywood film. Desi Boys stars the renowned Akshay Kumar as a new student at Trinity College, Oxford, along with the likes of John Abraham, Deepika Padukone and Anupam Kher in leading roles, with Chitrangada Singh as the main female lead. Over the days of filming, Balliol quad was crowded with ‘students’ wearing uncharacteristically flamboyant blue and gold gowns, while scaffolding and cables covered the lawn, along with suited and booted execs smoking cigars and directing the somewhat sedentary shots. As requested by the crew, the kitchen provided burgers and chips for the filming in Hall. It’s certainly not a meal that has ever been on the menu before, one member of kitchen staff remarked, but the banner said ‘Trinity’, so … !

Desi Boys was released in November 2011 for those who are intrigued.
New Year honours

Four Old Members have been mentioned in the 2012 New Years Honours List for 2012

Dr Andrew Burnett (1970), Deputy Director, the British Museum, was appointed a CBE for services to the British Museum and Numismatics. His area of academic interest and specialisation is the coinage and history of the Roman Republic.

The Hon Dominic Asquith CMG (1975), formerly HM Ambassador, Egypt, was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George (KCMG).

Graham Avery (1961), formerly Director, European Commission, Brussels, was appointed CMG for services to European affairs.

John Barnard Bush OBE (1955), Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire was appointed CVO.

Justice of the Supreme Court

Lord Reed, Balliol’s new Visitor, was sworn in as a Justice of the Supreme Court in February 2012. Lord Reed is the fourth Justice to be sworn in since the Supreme Court was inaugurated in October 2009. His appointment, announced in December 2011, follows the death of Lord Rodger of Earlsferry last year and sees a continuation of the tradition, begun in the House of Lords, that two of the Supreme Court’s Justices have comprehensive experience of the Scottish legal system.

President of The Global Health Programme

Dr Trevor Mundel (1985) has agreed to lead the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s Global Health Programme. Previously global head of development for Novartis Pharma AG, based in Switzerland, he joined the Foundation in December 2011. Both Bill and Melinda Gates were delighted with the new appointment saying that Mundel brings with him tremendous scientific and medical acumen in the lab and clinic and will be a major asset in improving the health of people in the world’s poorest countries.

2011 Prince of Asturias Prize

Bill Drayton (1965), Honorary Fellow of Balliol, was awarded Spain’s prestigious Prince of Asturias Prize for International Cooperation. Drayton is the founder and current chair of the Innovators for Public – a non-profit organisation dedicated to finding and fostering social entrepreneurs worldwide. Drayton’s philosophy is that social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society’s most pressing social problems. The prize foundation described him as a ‘driving force behind the figure of social entrepreneurs, men and women who undertake innovative initiatives for the common good.

Commonwealth Writers’ prize

Rana Dasgupta (1990) won the 2010 Commonwealth Writers’ Prize with his novel of two halves, Solo; it was the first time the Commonwealth Writers’ awards ceremony was held in India. Dasgupta’s first novel, Tokyo Cancelled – a thirteen-part story cycle – was published in 2005 to widespread acclaim and has been translated into nine languages. Solo follows a hundred-year-old Bulgarian chemist, Ulrich, as he embarks on an armchair journey through the violent politics, forbidden music and failed experiments of the 20th century. The second half of Dasgupta’s novel explores Ulrich’s long prophetic daydream of the 21st century in which unique characters – Boris, a gypsy, Khatuna, a gangster’s mistress, and her brother Irakhli, who is a poet and whose poetry makes an appearance through the second half set in New York – live a life beyond utopia. According to the chair of judges, the Honourable Justice Nicholas Hasluck, an Australian author, ‘the format of Dasgupta’s book puts him at the cutting edge of responding to the chaos of our times’.
Her Majesty’s Ambassador to Libya

The Honourable Dominic Asquith (1975), in addition to being awarded a knighthood (see New Year honours on page 7), was appointed her Majesty’s Ambassador to Libya in November 2011. He is taking over from Sir John Jenkins KCMG. Mr Asquith is a career diplomat who joined the FCO in 1983. Over a career of nearly 30 years to date, he has served overseas as Ambassador to Iraq and Egypt and worked throughout the Middle East, South America and the US.

New Chancellor of the University of Canterbury

Pro-Chancellor and former New Zealand ambassador to the United States, Dr John Wood (QSO), will be the next Chancellor of The University of Canterbury, New Zealand, from January 2012. Dr Wood (1966) gained an MA from the University of Canterbury before achieving his MA in Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Balliol, and, in 2006, he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Canterbury Council. He has been Pro- (Deputy) Chancellor of the University since 2008, when he was also made a Companion of the Queen Service Order for Public Service.

Fellows of the Royal Society

In May 2011, Professor Hagen Bayley (1970), Professor of Chemical Biology in the Department of Chemistry, Oxford, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Two former Junior Research Fellows at Balliol were also elected Fellows – Professor Alan Grafen (JRF 1983–1986) currently Professor of Theoretical Biology Department of Zoology, Oxford, and Professor Clare Grey (JRF 1990–1991) currently Geoffrey Moorhouse Gibson Professor and Head of the Inorganic Chemistry Sector at Cambridge.

Fellows of the British Academy

In July 2011, the British Academy elected the following Members of Balliol as Fellows – Professor Timothy Barnes FRSC (1966), Professor Robert Crawford (1981), Professor Simon Frith (1964), together with Professor Andrew Hurrell – current Montague Burton Fellow of International Relations at Balliol, and Professor Lyndal Roper, recently elected Regius Professor of History at Oxford.

Doctoral Research Award

College lecturer Standa Živný’s DPhil thesis, “The Complexity and Expressive Power of Valued Constraints,” was awarded the 2011 ACP Doctoral Research Award. The award is given every year by the Association for Constraint Programming to a promising young researcher working in this field. His thesis is a detailed examination of the expressive power of valued constraints and related complexity questions. It is available to read on the Oxford University Research Archive. http://ora.ox.ac.uk

OxTalent Teaching award

College lecturer in politics Scot Peterson was awarded an OxTalent award for his integration of Oxford’s Virtual Learning Environment into his tutorial teaching. He also won an Oxford University Teaching Award for his use of the system.
What I did with my project grant

Each year a number of students are successful in their application for College Grants for academic-related projects. These project grants, which range from £25-£2,000, are derived from generous bequests and donations from Old Members or people who have often had a connection with Balliol, and are made available via the College Trust Funds. Many grants go towards assisting students attending conferences to aid their studies but some go towards helping students get involved in some interesting and inspirational projects around the world. Here, three students tell us how these grants have made a difference to their time at Balliol.

Volunteering in a school in China

BY BEN ALLEN (2010)

‘How was your trip?’ The impossible question; how can you summarise a month of highs (and lows) into one measured response? The answer, when caught in a fit of adolescent obstinacy, is of course simple … ‘it was alright’. Similarly, the Wikipedia page of my trip might read, ‘Last July I travelled to Sichuan province in China. I volunteered with the charity TravelAid. I taught English in two schools. The students were 14–18 year olds.’ Exciting stuff, but neither truly account for an experience which was both surprising, and entirely extraordinary.

I flew out to China on Sunday 3rd July 2011 having finished my final Prelims examination on Friday afternoon, so stepping off the plane in Chengdu felt as if I had stepped straight out of Balliol’s library. This is usually a pleasant experience but in reality the airport’s air conditioning had masked the sheer heat and humidity of the region which hit me like a physical blow. I was then left reeling by the city in which we had landed, where the squalid and the beautiful blended into one (poverty dressed up in Gucci) while flocks of metal cranes swept over the city urging it upwards; towards what I never figured out.

We soon left the city behind and spent our time in the more rural cities of Mingshan and Nanchong. Here, like my four-year-old self, I was forced to repeat those first few tentative steps into the classroom; only this time as a teacher. Old fears came flooding back: What if the kids are mean? What if I’m not good enough? Where’s my mummy? The most pressing fear was the potentially calamitous language barrier, but despite resigning myself to hour-upon-hour of charades I was saved by pupils who were simply astounding. The students’ hunger to learn was insatiable and allowed us to have a positive, if brief, impact, while their attitude drew constant, and flattering, comparisons with the work ethic of students back in the UK. Meanwhile the 7am to 10pm school day confirmed that, despite a slightly bemusing passion for karaoke, Dolly Parton (’9 to 5’) had never been translated into Mandarin. In the end it was the people whom we met in China and who embraced us so whole-heartedly, that made the trip so special.

There were lows, including a sharp test of my affinity for the humble rat, and being told more than once that I looked like Justin Bieber, but each horror was easily eclipsed by the highs: 2000 feet can feel quite heady for a Norfolk-boy, even without the accompanying pandas, which I had never thought to see without the complement of David Attenborough’s dulcet tones. But whether I was surrounded by skyscrapers, trees or students I felt immersed in a truly astonishing country. I shudder to think that I would use the words ‘life changing’ and ‘I’ve painstakingly tried to avoid any reference to a personal journey’ but sometimes you just have to give in to the power of the cliché, and thanks to freezing showers, mad taxi drivers and great friends, it was an experience that will always stay with me.
Researching urban violence in Guatemala

BY KATHERINE SAUNDERS-HASTINGS (2010)

I had passed the barricades into a region described by one author as ‘Guatemala’s most notorious barrio’. And on the other side, I came across a lively street market, met an engaging group of kids at the church I was visiting, and heard from more than one person I spoke with that they considered their neighbourhood perfectly safe (though they complained of the stigma that came with living there). The local narco-traffickers, at pains to keep residents satisfied enough to avoid police intervention in their affairs, provide strict order and security. Other communities around the city are obviously less satisfied. Rapid depopulation is apparent in a number of marginal neighbourhoods while paramilitary security patrols have arisen in others due to factors such as extortion, street violence, and police abuses. Many Guatemalans describe levels of insecurity and violence as impossible and untenable; yet in striking and moving ways they work tremendously hard to maintain the possibility of the everyday. The disarming juxtaposition of extraordinary insecurity and daily life that I encountered first Saturday morning has become a familiar occurrence. I’ve found small children playing with tiny puppies in a rehabilitation home for hardened gangsters, seen extended families picnicking on the cold floors of a prison, and opened Christmas circulars advertising gifts of bulletproof vests and handguns for loved ones. My experiences here regularly confuse me and force me to question my assumptions and expectations. However, I’ve come to appreciate that the same dissonances that confound me are also crucial to understanding the complexity of living at the intersection of multiple forms of urban violence and insecurity. Now at the mid-point of my fieldwork, I am beginning to look forward to returning to Oxford to work on a dissertation that I hope will contribute to understanding how individuals and communities cope with insecurity in one of the most violent regions of the world. I am continuously grateful for all of the support I receive from the Balliol community that makes this work possible.

Digging the ‘Dark Side’ of Vesuvius

BY JUSTINE POTTS (2006)

Armed with an archaeological trowel and, of course, a wide-brimmed hat to protect against the strength of the Neapolitan sun, last June I left Balliol’s blissful shade for the blistering north slope of Mount Vesuvius to participate in the 2011 excavation campaign of the ‘Apolline Project’. Located on the ‘dark side’ of Vesuvius, in the ancient territories of Nola and Neapolis, this is a multidisciplinary research project, directed by a talented Oxford DPhil candidate, Dr Girolamo Fernando De Simone, who recently received the European Archaeological Heritage Prize for the project’s achievements. The site on which I worked was a post-AD 79 Roman villa with bath complex in the modern town of Pollena Trocchia, discovered in the 1980s, but then spectacularly ignored and buried under tonnes of refuse in an illegal dump. Unfortunately, this meant that much of the context had been mixed up with rubbish from the 70s and 80s (which made for context had been mixed up with rubbish under tonnes of refuse in an illegal dump. Unfortunately, this meant that much of the context had been mixed up with rubbish from the 70s and 80s (which made for interesting archaeology too), and marks from the diggers’ claws could be seen in parts of the Roman masonry.

The excavation, begun in 2004, has significantly increased our understanding of life in Roman Campania, which hitherto had been overshadowed by the opulence of Baiae, Pompei and Herculaneum. Most people are aware of the eruption of Vesuvius, in AD 79, which destroyed these places, but how many know of the eruption of AD 472 which brought an equally disastrous end to settlements to the north, such as the site at Pollena Trocchia? As the site was inhabited very soon after AD 79, there are encapsulated details of life under the high and late Roman Empire, together with the story of cultural development between AD 79 and 472, the growth of Christianity, and indications of the imminent fall of the Western Roman Empire. As we worked, Vesuvius, apparently due for another eruption, loomed over us ominously. I couldn’t help thinking that, if it did erupt, I would be greatly consoled by the idea of future archaeologists digging us all up.

My participation in this dig is wholly thanks to a £250 Classics travel grant from Balliol, which went towards not only flights and the £200 participation fee, but perhaps most significantly, my first, very own trowel. With the trowel came great responsibility that resulted in a steep learning curve. I was hugely surprised at the volume of information that can be ascertained by even the swiftest sweep of trowel and scan of eye. My ability to discern pre-eruption soil from post-eruption soil, and to differentiate the different stages of pyroclastic flow, improved rapidly day-on-day. At the beginning of the dig, I thought it was simply absurd that someone could tell that ‘this soil is clearly darker dark brown than that dark brown’. But by the end of the three weeks my eyes were newly attuned, not to mention sore from all the soil I got in them. I am exceptionally grateful for the funding I received from Balliol for this experience which was of so much academic as well as personal value. It is rare for the participation cost of an excavation to be as small as £200; in fact often the fees are in the thousands, so, as excavation costs increase, the funding of young archaeologists to gain practical experience has never been so important for securing equality of opportunity in the discipline.
BAFTA competition winner

Thomas Phipps (2007) entered the British Academy of Film and Television (BAFTA) competition and came through an intense judging process to become one of three writers to have their work selected. The winning script, ‘Mayflower Investigations’, was co-written with Peter Bowden whom he met while editing *The Oxymoron*, a satirical Oxford-based magazine.

The sitcom script about some graduates who start a private detective agency came from two sources, Mr Phipps reveals. ‘One was our love of detective stories and movies (Raymond Chandler, the Third Man, etc); the second source came from the central character, a rich playboy who represents the worst excesses of the idiotic student hipster: wealth and ill-founded arrogant fashion. Oxford has so many of these that every day offered a new source of inspiration. Combined with a slightly more level-headed and genre-specific straight man, the central duo of the script was born.’ It took them the best part of a year to write Thomas tells me, as they were teaching themselves how to write a coherent script with characters and jokes. By a stroke of luck they heard about the competition later, just as the script was finalised and so they submitted a ten-page extract. The scheme itself is a joint venture organised by BAFTA and the Roccliffe Forums, which put on staged rehearsed readings of as-yet-unpublished writers’ scripts. ‘This was the first year they were taking the scheme to New York and accepting applications from all over the country,’ says Thomas. ‘We were among the top three scripts and so went to the New York TV Festival. There our script extract was performed on stage, by proper professional actors, directed by a professional director, accompanied by purpose-composed music, in front of an audience of more than 150 people.’ That must have been amazing I venture. ‘It was pretty terrifying,’ says Tom. ‘Especially as we then had to go on stage and defend the thing that had just been performed, it was very nerve-racking.’

So what happens now, I ask? ‘We have an agent, the first script is very slowly making its way through the development process, and we’re hard at work on the second!’ he says excitedly. Balliol wishes them good luck and will look out for them in the future.

Arabella Currie’s translation of Clytemnestra on at the Playhouse

Congratulations to Arabella Currie (2008), whose translation of *Clytemnestra* was the 2012 ‘Oxford Greek Play’. This happens every three years or so and is traditionally in the Playhouse, although, there is no official link, so each time the production crew needs to pitch their ideas to the theatre and persuade them that they will sell enough seats. The director, Raymond Blakenhorn – a Queen’s College graduate – chose the play and made the successful pitch to the Playhouse; he also made all the artistic decisions. Arabella met with him last Michaelmas, when he was putting together his production bid, and started working on the translation then so that they could send an extract to the Playhouse. ‘I spent the Christmas vacation ploughing through the Greek and scrutinising every word, trying to understand what Aeschylus, who is quite impenetrable, was getting at,’ says Arabella. ‘It then took the next term to write the translation, and it was ready in time for the actors to use to help them rehearse and learn lines. ‘Was it well received?’, I ask her. ‘I think that what this production did extremely well was to trust in the beauty and rhythm of Aeschylus’ Language, and use that to shape the play and their movements. ‘I hear the Greek used in that way was an important experience,’ she says. ‘Lots of the reviewers seemed slightly baffled by what they had just seen, unsure of what to make of it and unable to relate it to anything else, but, in their bafflement they were also moved. I think it was great that people enjoyed it and were affected by it without really understanding why.’

Vice Chancellor’s civic award

Doireann Lalor (2007) has been granted one of only seven Vice-Chancellor’s Civic Awards for 2011, ‘in recognition of her outstanding individual achievement in and commitment to volunteering in the local community and wider world’. Lalor was nominated because of her involvement in a variety of grassroots climate change initiatives, within both the student body and the wider community. These initiatives all centred on enabling people to cut their carbon footprint in practical, hands-on and creative ways, something Lalor feels strongly about. ‘I am passionate about developing positive, locally-based solutions to the threats posed by climate change – solutions which I believe can also help to bring about more socially inclusive, vibrant and resilient communities,’ she says. The Vice-Chancellor’s Civic Awards are granted in recognition of exceptional and inspirational individual achievement and personal commitment to improving the state of society and our world. A panel made up of representatives from both the University and the community choose the winners and the awards are presented by the Vice-Chancellor at a celebratory dinner as part of the Encaenia ceremony at Rhodes House. Lalor says she felt honoured to win, as the awards ‘draw attention to the importance for students – many of whom will go on to be change-makers in society – to be involved with their community and engaged with social issues whilst they are at University, rather than just burying their heads in text-books!’
**Wild CRU awarded The Queen’s Anniversary Prize**

The Queen's Anniversary Prize has been given to the Wildlife conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), Dept. of Zoology, University of Oxford for the year 2011. Arjun Gopalaswamy (2009), a third year DPhil student featured in last year's Floreat Domus (page 9) for his work studying the conservation of tigers in India, has been invited, together with two other graduate students, the Director of WildCRU, the Vice- Chancellor and the Chancellor of Oxford University, for a reception to be given at Buckingham Palace by the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh later this month. Arjun Gopalaswamy has been studying tigers for about a decade. His DPhil research work focuses on addressing the methodological challenges of studying meta-population dynamics of tigers in the Western Ghats landscape in India.

**University Challenge**

Well done to the Balliol team, Andrew Whitby (2007), Liam Shaw (2009), Simon Wood (2008) and James Kirby (2007), with Tom Arnold (2007) as reserve, who got through to the quarter-finals in the 2011/12 series of University Challenge, presented by Jeremy Paxman. They narrowly beat Homerton College, Cambridge, in the first round, 205 points to 200, and then went on to beat Merton College, Oxford, in the second round. It was fairly even and uncharacteristically calm for a close round of University Challenge, but Balliol came out victorious, beating Merton 170 points to 160 to win a place in the quarter-finals. However, they met their match in Pembroke College, Cambridge, and were beaten by a considerable score of 240 to Balliol's 160. Luckily they got a second-chance to go through to the semi-finals as best runner-up but after beating Homerton, they then lost to UCL who tore away with 235 points to Balliol's 145. Luckily they got a second-chance to go through to the semi-finals as best runner-up but after beating Homerton, they then lost to UCL who tore away with 235 points to Balliol's 145. We congratulate this year's team on a strong performance nonetheless.

**Mastermind of Balliol**

Ian Bayley (1997) won this year's Mastermind competition in April 2011. Recorded as long ago as October 2010, Ian Bayley’s triumph was somewhat overdue, having reached the final in 2008 only to be beaten narrowly to first place by Nancy Dickmann, the first female winner for twelve years. This year he triumphed beating Peter Reilly to win the title. In the final, he answered questions on paintings in the National Gallery. Dr Bayley, who studied for a DPhil in Computation at Balliol, is no stranger to national Quiz titles having won BBC Radio 4’s Brain of Britain competition in 2010.

**Elephant studies success**

Lucy King's (2005) research (featured in last year’s Floreat Domus, page 9) won a coveted environment research prize from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/CMS Thesis Prize) for showing how bees can be used to reduce conflict between elephants and people. Her research proved that beehive 'fences' can keep elephants out of African farmers' fields or compounds as the animals are scared of bees, which can sting them inside their trunks, and flee when they hear buzzing. The chairman of the jury board said it was a unanimous decision among the judges and they enjoyed reading her thesis. As the prize is awarded only every three years Lucy felt lucky to have finished her thesis in time to be eligible. She was invited to the Convention on Migratory Species at the end of November in Norway to receive her prize-cheque and to present a 30-minute talk to the conference. ‘I’m over the moon at this news’, Lucy commented. ‘It is a huge chance for us to present our research on a global stage and to be recognised at a UN level. This is very much an award for Save the Elephants, Balliol College and Fritz Vollrath’s group at the Oxford Zoology department too – a true collaboration for which I am the privileged person to have had the time to pull all our ideas and data together into one document.

Balliol’s outreach initiatives

BY SALLY MURRAY (2009)

If anyone had doubts about the value of Oxford and Balliol’s outreach work, those doubts would quickly be dispelled by conversations with current undergraduates, or by visiting a Balliol Open Day. Oxford and Balliol’s access schemes are crucial in dispelling the misrepresentative myths about Oxbridge, which are off-putting to potential applicants, and replacing these with positive, accurate messages: that Oxford, and Balliol, is a centre for excellent, exciting learning; that most students at Oxford are friendly as well as academically interested, that they are 'human beings just like you'; and that, 'since these students are just like you, you have a chance too, so go for it!'

To so many of us (especially those who, like me, came from state schools with low records of sending students to Oxford or Cambridge), all this makes all the difference: we wouldn’t have applied without it. There are, however, still barriers to Balliol’s capacity to encourage applications from the hardest-to-reach students. Some of the key focuses for Balliol at present are:

1. To change negative perceptions of Oxbridge among teachers and their students.
2. To attract more women to Balliol, and thus address the gender gap in the sciences and PPE.
3. To do all this and more with a relatively small budget.

I was sceptical about the real impact of teachers’ negative stereotypes until I helped at two Balliol Open Days and an interview period. My own experience of applying left me in no doubt about the influence of teachers – but I couldn’t imagine such influence being anything other than encouraging. Sadly, conversations with students from across the country revealed this wasn’t the case, and although many teachers do an excellent job (and I’ve insufficient evidence to speak about what is ‘typical’), again and again, stereotypes learnt from certain teachers (and the media) poured out: ‘Is it right that if you’re from a state school, they’ll try and catch you out by asking about really sophisticated books they know you won’t have read?’ or ‘My teacher said there are lots of private school students here, and that I might feel like I don’t fit in. How do you cope with that?’ or ‘Do you know anyone here from the North?’

Behind the smoke screen
It’s so important that school students, and those influencing them, understand the truth and the lies behind such stereotypes. For example, a truth: the percentage of private school students at Oxford far exceeds the representative proportion of private-to-state school students in the UK as a whole. The lie: this is because Oxford tutors favour students from private schools. The explanation: students from state and private schools have exactly the same success at gaining places at Oxford, once they apply. The discrepancy arises because a smaller proportion of state school students are applying. Investigations
into Balliol’s ‘gender gap’ have revealed a parallel picture: female applicants have the same success rate as men once they apply, but again, in many subjects, fewer women than men are applying.

Given that Oxford and Balliol are treating all applicants with an even hand (and pouring time and money into increasing ‘access’ every year), what is deterring so many promising young women, must be allowed to fall behind. Balliol, nor talented state school students and young women, must be allowed to fall behind. Therefore, we’ll keep pursuing ways to satisfy their dreams and aspirations for access and outreach activities – with a very valuable top-up from a second donor.

We are rightly proud of what we are achieving, through the enthusiasm and thoughtfulness of those on board with Balliol Access, and see Balliol’s ‘success stories’ every Michaelmas term in the new cohort of ‘Freshers.’ But it’s not enough, and neither Balliol, nor talented state school students and young women, must be allowed to fall behind. Therefore, we’ll keep pursuing ways to satisfy our ambitions for Balliol’s outreach work, to ensure that more of the most exceptional students make it to what we know is our rather exceptional College.

Looking at the tangible things we do, we achieve a great deal with our small budget!

As a result of Oxford’s regionalisation policy linking each college with specific UK areas, Balliol has particular responsibility for outreach in Hertfordshire, and in 2011 Balliol visited Hertfordshire schools, held open days in the county, and ran a particularly successful Hertfordshire ‘Women in Science’ day (see Rebecca Bayliss’ account below). We also continue work across the country, maintaining links with Old Members who teach, and responding positively to all schools’ requests for visits to College. When school groups visit Balliol, our current students provide tours of the College, admissions tutors give a short talk, and maths and philosophy tutors have even volunteered free master-classes for the groups! This Easter Balliol will be hosting a ‘UNIQ’ study day for maths, targeting students in schools that currently send few students to Oxbridge, or even university. Several Balliol students already partake in e-mentoring schemes, or have spoken about Oxford and Balliol in their old schools. And all this is not to mention Balliol’s headline access events: the Summer Open Days, which this year saw over 2,000 visitors to the College over three days.

This hubbub of effective activity is sustained by student volunteers and the tutors and staff who work tirelessly to organise opportunities for them to represent Balliol and the University in general. Unlike many Oxford colleges, Balliol, until now, has not been able to source external funding to employ staff to work full or part-time on outreach, and this has meant that almost all outreach work was achieved in the (elusive) ‘spare time’ of tutors and students. However, recently one of our Old Members has generously offered to help fund an access and outreach post and to provide some money for access and outreach activities – with a very valuable top-up from a second donor.

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**Bridging the gender gap**

**BY REBECCA BAYLISS (2009)**

On 16 November 2011, Balliol hosted the inaugural Women in Science Conference in conjunction with hosts St Albans High School for Girls in Hertfordshire. Invitations were sent for every school in Hertfordshire to send delegates, resulting in the participation of close to 20 schools, contributing over 150 high-performing students from both the state and independent sector.

The conference aimed to engage the girls, who are at a critical time for making choices about their future, with the young, enthusiastic science students of Balliol. In holding a women’s only event, presented almost solely by female scientists, Balliol hoped both to inspire the scientific thinkers of tomorrow and give them the confidence to apply to Oxbridge courses. Despite the fact that a similar number of male and female students achieved three A or A* grades at A-level, Oxford received around a third more applications from young men across the sciences as a whole in 2010.

Delegates listened intently to talks from Dr Giovanna Scataglini-Belhitar (Deputy Tutor for Undergraduate Admissions) on the range of science courses available at Oxford, and on the destination of Balliol postgraduates. The famed Oxford tutorial system and the dreaded interview process were discussed to inspire the pupils, and dispel the many myths that surround the dreaming spires.


If you are interested in talking about Balliol to your old school, or you are a teacher who would like to get involved with Balliol’s outreach initiatives, please contact the Tutor for Undergraduate Admissions, Dr Sophie Marnette (sophie.marnette@balliol.ox.ac.uk).
Pick a card

Sean Whitton talks to Nick Trefethen about his recently published *Index Cards.*

The idea of an intellectual carrying around a notebook and filling it with the thoughts that arise in his mind from day-to-day has been capitalised on in recent years by various companies. The market for serious-looking notebooks confronts us in every bookshop. Many people buy notebooks with this purpose in mind but not many have them published. And, historically, famous thinkers whose notebooks have ended up being published, such as Quine, Samuel Butler, and Georg Lichtenberg, have only managed twenty or thirty years worth of notes at best.

These facts make Balliol's Nick Trefethen, University Professor of Numerical Analysis, quite unique. Since 1970 when he was 14, Trefethen has been typing down his thoughts onto index cards, initially at 3 inches by 5 inches, at some point switching to 4 inches by 6 inches, which he has used ever since, now writing roughly two or three per month. After forty years of writing cards, Trefethen has made a selection of them public as *Trefethen's Index Cards,* published by World Scientific this year.

There is a striking consistency of quality throughout the cards: they all show that Trefethen is a master of concise expression. While the index card format was initially just a convenient way to store thoughts, it became a constraint, training the mind in brevity. Trefethen writes, 'Once I've put an idea on a card, it becomes a piece of my mental framework, a principle I will refer to for the rest of my life.' This consistency is also striking. Trefethen characterises the development of his thought as *additive:* there are very few cards containing opinions he has now turned his back on. It is thus that *Trefethen's Index Cards* gives us a unique opportunity to see the complete, systematic structure of a modern scientific mind, a mind that we can all learn something from, and probably all find something with which to disagree.

The book is organised into chapters titled by card topic, beginning with Ego, and moving through Kids, Living with Others, the Meaning of Life and then onto Politics and Society, Education, The Life of the Professor, Writing and Literature, Memory, Science, Mathematics and Computers, and more besides. Within each chapter the cards are arranged in chronological order, so when reading it's interesting to compare the development of thought across chapters.

Trefethen’s initial motivation for the cards came from *The Glass Bead Game* by Hermann Hesse. This work of science fiction is set in a fictional European province dedicated to intellectual pursuits, in which economic and other material pursuits are kept to the minimum necessary. The pinnacle of scholarly pursuit within this country is playing a game with glass beads, through which all the knowledge and belief mankind has gathered through the arts, humanities and sciences is brought together. Deep connections hitherto unknown are uncovered through the process of playing.

Trefethen hoped that he might make a start on collating all knowledge in this way with his cards. He explains that as he grew older he realised that not only is it unfeasible for one man ever to collect all knowledge like this, but also that various philosophical results suggest that the task is impossible even for all humanity banded together. But the inspiration to create a glass bead game remained.

An awareness of the intellectual nature of his project is visible in other places. And the best example of this draws upon Trefethen’s profession, mathematics. On page 24 Trefethen says, 'As the years go by and memory becomes less reliable, I think the habit of writing takes on a special significance. In interacting with the written page, we can edit and adjust and keep on track even at an age when on the hoof, our thoughts would ramble and we'd be at a loss to recall every third name.'

Anyone who does any kind of advanced maths recognises that a lot of work is done by the notation that has taken centuries to develop; without the ease of doing simple, routine moves purely symbolically, our minds would be too cluttered to work on the more interesting things. The thought from this index card is that this seems to apply to all other kinds of thought too, and more as one gets older.

Through his cards Trefethen aims both to construct his world, and keep it safe from the ravages of time. And by publishing some of these cards he has enabled us to engage with that carefully constructed world too.
Balliol Olympians

BY OLIVER MURPHY (2008)

The year 2012 marks the third occasion of the city of London hosting the Olympic Games and, as such, it appears to be an appropriate time to reflect on Balliol’s unique contribution to the rich history of the greatest sporting competition on earth. Right from the start, when the Olympic Games were established in 1896 by the enigmatic Pierre de Coubertin, Balliolites played key roles in both organisation and competition.

Constantine Manou (1894), a Balliol alumnus, was crucial in bringing the first Modern Olympic Games to Greece and his Oxford connections proved invaluable in securing the participation of many of Britain’s best amateurs in a Games contested by a measly 14 nations.

The early Olympics were marked by a prevailing spirit of amateurish chaos from both competitors and organisers, with one of the tennis stars of the Games, a friend of Manou’s from Oxford, being invited to play on the day of the finals while he happened to be holidaying in Athens. There were similarly eccentric ideas of what constituted sport, which would be alien to us today. The Matterhorn on three separate occasions or rowing across the Channel. During his time at Oxford, he rowed twice in the Boat Race, participating in the famous ‘dead-heat’ of 1877. After Oxford he found time to be President of the Marylebone Cricket Club, the Lawn Tennis Association and the Amateur Fencing Association. Somehow among all these responsibilities he found time to be a Member of Parliament for both the Liberals and latterly the Conservative Party before he became Lord Desborough in 1905 and could turn his hand to what really mattered, organising an Olympic Games. That funding proved an issue for Desborough need not surprise us when we think of the wrangling over modern Olympic budgets, but that he applied for, and successfully secured, funding from the Daily Mail of all budgets, but that he applied for, and successfully secured, funding from the Daily Mail of all newspapers seems astonishing. The current London Mayor and fellow Balliol alumnus, Boris Johnson (1983), would surely meet with more hostility if he were to pose the same question today. After securing the budget, Desborough got on with the organisation of what could at times be rancorous Games, in which the American team caused controversy by refusing to tip their flag to the King before complaining about their defeat in the tug-of-war to a team comprised of Liverpudlian policemen wearing their habitually ‘grippy’ boots.

The 1908 Summer Games

Wilfrid Johnson (1904) represented Britain in Lacrosse and won a silver medal, while the brilliant musician Frederick Septimus Kelly (1900) won gold in the single sculls. He was described by Hylton Cleaver as ‘the greatest amateur stylist of his time’ and had represented Oxford in the Boat Race. His last rowing race, fittingly was the triumphant Olympic final, before he turned his prodigious talents to composition. Tragically Kelly fell at the Somme, unable to fulfil truly his potential in so many fields. Many stars of the 1908 Games would meet with similar fates – Desborough lost two sons for whom he had a monument erected by the same man who had designed the medals. But the glory of the 1908 Games was only made possible by Desborough’s titanic efforts. He opened the Games with a curt speech in driving rain, and made an equally curt request of Edward VII to declare it officially opened. He ended it as a champion of organisation, feted on all sides by those who had doubted whether it could ever be possible.

From farcical to professional

The early Olympics are full of examples of this happy amateurism and of OXbridge students taking the weekend off from studying to pick up a gold medal; as the decades progressed the idea of professionalism, more readily termed up a gold medal; as the decades progressed the idea of professionalism, more readily termed the French star player Adolphe Jaureguy was defeated in the tug-of-war to a team comprised of Liverpudlian policemen wearing their habitually ‘grippy’ boots.

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Among this number was Balliol graduate Alan Valentine, who duly received his medal, and, since rugby was eliminated from the Olympics following this farcical tournament in which only the Romanians bothered to send another team, Valentine remains the only ex-Balliol reigning Olympic champion. After this great achievement he took on a less challenging role, aiding the Truman administration in dealing with the economic fallout from World War II, but it is for his triumphs in Paris that he should be fondly remembered by Balliol students, past and present.

**Fewer Balliol Olympians**

Balliol presences become scarcer as the decades go on and professionals begin to enter events previously dominated by Oxbridge graduates, who no longer had the resources to compete in this new era. Nevertheless, Balliol is still represented, particularly by foreign students. Graham Bond (1961) competed for Australia at gymnastics in three separate Games from 1956–1964. His lack of medals should not diminish any admiration for his ability to participate in three Games, for such a physically demanding discipline and, indeed, in a time when the sport was dominated by Soviet gymnasts – who won 11 out of a possible 17 gold medals at the 1956 Games. King Harald V (a Prince when he matriculated in 1960) followed his father Olaf in representing Norway in yachting at the 1964, 1968 and 1972 Games, but perhaps his greatest Olympic moment was his opening the 1994 Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer as a result of his history of involvement in the Olympic movement. Only just out of Balliol in 1964, the Crown Prince was selected to bear Norway’s flag into Tokyo’s Olympic stadium, which was surely a supreme honour for a young man who had not yet even competed for his country!

In recent times, Balliol participation in the Olympics becomes still less common. Matthew Syed (1991), now an award winning sports journalist, represented Great Britain table tennis at the 1992 Games in Barcelona and at Sydney in 2000. His style of defensive play, which Simon Barnes described as involving defensive shots with ‘roof-threatening parabolas’, did not unfortunately secure Olympic medals, but a TV documentary on ‘China and Table Tennis’ did win a bronze medal at the Olympic Gold Rings ceremony in Lausanne. Balliol’s most recent Olympian appears to be Justin Frishberg (1991) who graduated alongside Syed in 2001 and has competed twice for Great Britain in 2004 and 2008 in the wheelchair rugby tournament, where unfortunately he followed David Johnson’s 1924 example and finished fourth on both occasions. His position as Chair of Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby will doubtless mean that he plays a vital role in the organisation of the event in London this year, while the desire to carry on competing following defeat in Beijing has meant his appearance in the finals this year remains a strong probability.

Olympic history is rich with stories of unlikely competitors, personal tragedies and astonishing triumphs and this brief summary has hopefully shown that Balliol graduates have played a vital role in creating and sustaining this heritage. Although Balliol graduates are not as readily found in competition as they were in the glory years of amateurs turning up on the day, the sheer force of a character such as Lord Desborough in managing to piece together such a staggering success from the chaos of the build-up to the 1908 Games is testament to a Balliolite’s importance to the very foundations of the Games as we know them today. We can only hope that 2012 is less chaotic and that any other Balliol graduates involved share his astonishing powers of organisation.
'The world is your oyster' – the ominous slogan banded around by friends and relatives alike when you graduate; and many UK graduates do move away for work or for a fresh start in a new country, but for others it’s a daunting prospect and one that’s not given much thought. There are Balliol alumni living and working all around the world and in this article, the first of a series, Arjuna Mahendran (1978) and Clarence Tang (1993) tell us what it’s like to live and work in Singapore.

Arjuna Mahendran (1978) Managing Director at HSBC Private Bank in Singapore

Describe your career path after leaving Balliol.

Having graduated in PPe with economics as a major in 1981, banking was an interesting option. I went into central banking to deepen my knowledge of monetary economics and its practical applications. Following the ‘big bang’ deregulation of the city of London during the Thatcher years, I was involved in similar deregulation efforts in Asia which resulted in the eventual opening to foreign investment of stock markets in India and China. Eventually I moved over into investment banking as a research analyst and acquired in-depth knowledge of the major banks and corporations listed on Asian bourses. I now advise High-net-worth families in Asia on how to set about fulfilling their investment needs.

What does your current position involve?

Private banking is a specialised area of banking business which offers several services to clients with large investment portfolios. I work with a team of investment professionals who service a large number of Asian High-Net-Worth clients from Singapore.

What do you enjoy about your job? What are the more challenging elements?

Meeting up and hearing the life-stories of the generation that re-awakened Asia from decades of communism and socialist state-controlled economies is a fascinating and rewarding experience. I want to record this time in my memoirs. Travelling across Asia’s numerous time zones and vast distances is the principal challenge. The ancient cartographers who coined the term ‘Asia’ essentially did us a disservice in amalgamating such varied cultures and geographies into one region. Travelling from Jeddah to Jakarta is quite a challenge given the paucity of airlines in the region.

The second challenge is getting adequately qualified and experienced bankers in Asia. Since the growth of the region and its modernised financial architecture is relatively recent, managing manpower resources in a sector which requires intensely personalised service standards and high levels of financial probity and rectitude is a huge challenge.

How have you come to be based in Singapore? What factors have influenced you?

I migrated to Singapore from Sri Lanka in the early 1990s, principally to further my knowledge and outreach in the banking sector. Singapore and Hong Kong had a head-start in Asia’s financial development since they were trading and financial hubs for centuries going back to the time of the British East India Company. They never succumbed to the tide of communism/socialism that swept through Asia after World War II, so they have had the benefit of several decades of smooth evolution of their financial and corporate architecture, including the support structures such as an efficient provision of legal and accounting services etc. A prime example of this is in the area of corporate dispute resolution and arbitration whereby Singapore has evolved into a hub for such activity which cuts across the varied legal and jurisdictional challenges facing firms that seek to do business in several Asian countries.

What do you like about Singapore?

I like Singapore’s multi-culturalism. It is a country that has been a racial and religious melting pot for centuries. From its humble beginnings as a tropical outpost of a minor Malay sultan’s territory, it became a free port under the East India Company and has since attracted traders from across the globe. Today its government trumpets the virtues of its openness to varied cultures and nationalities. Even its political culture is beginning to emerge in a more vibrant form than has been the case until now.

Is there anything you miss about the UK?

The weather; the silence and peacefulness of the Oxford countryside; and fresh air. Singapore has been likened to a ‘swamp at low tide’. In addition to the unremitting humidity, Asia is generally an over-crowded place with too much noise, bustle and increasingly intolerable air pollution.
Singapore is the place to come to. Commitment to material well-being, while continuing to build on a strong political and artistic self-expression to throw off its historic restraints on environment which is just starting innovate and thrive.

Which engenders a will to continually with high population growth rates, because the populations are still young societies of the world. This is mainly that has crept into the more developed lack of the cynicism and self-parody material progress accompanied by a sense of continual wonderment with societies still have that underlying material and spiritual uplift. Asian populations and their craving for in these spaces with their teeming metropolises. The sky is the limit boundless in Asia’s thriving and creativity it entails seems definitely. The sense of optimism working/living in Singapore?

Would you recommend working/living in Singapore?

Definitely. The sense of optimism and creativity it entails seems boundless in Asia’s thriving metropolises. The sky is the limit in these spaces with their teeming populations and their craving for material and spiritual uplift. Asian societies still have that underlying sense of continual wonderment with material progress accompanied by a lack of the cynicism and self-parody that has crept into the more developed societies of the world. This is mainly because the populations are still young with high population growth rates, which engenders a will to continually innovate and thrive.

So, if you want to be in an environment which is just starting to throw off its historic restraints on political and artistic self-expression while continuing to build on a strong commitment to material well-being, Singapore is the place to come to.


Describe your career path after leaving Balliol.

Having been sponsored by the Singaporean Government for my undergraduate studies at Oxford, I returned to complete my military service after graduation and joined the Singapore Civil Service in 1999. I spent my initial years at the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) working on areas such as workforce skills development, employment assistance and regulation of employment standards. This was followed by a year at the University of Michigan where I did a Masters in Public Administration on a Fulbright scholarship. I was subsequently assigned to head the work injury compensation department back at MOM, and was posted to the Ministry of Education in early 2011, where I oversee higher education financing.

What does your job involve?
The higher education portfolio at the Ministry of Education covers Singapore’s publicly funded universities, polytechnics and the institute of technical education, among other things. My two main responsibilities are in institutional financing and student financing. The focus of the former is on sustainable resourcing of institutions to deliver quality education outcomes; the latter focuses on ensuring the accessibility and affordability of higher education.

What do you enjoy about your job? What do you find challenging?

I get to work on issues that I care about and have been blessed with great co-workers through my career who are also keen to make a difference, whether it is through reviewing a policy, implementing a new programme or improving a public service.

As for my current position, it is an exciting time for higher education in Singapore. We have created many more education pathways to cater for a broader range of abilities and interests, and there is currently a review to see if we can do even more. The funding challenge posed by a diverse higher education landscape, is that we need funding policies that are flexible enough to meet the unique needs of programmes, and are equitable. As we think about expanding pathways, funding policies also need to be designed such that growth in the sector is fiscally sustainable.

How have you come to be based in Singapore? What factors have influenced your choice?

This is home for me. My career choice has also played a big part in me being based here.

What do you love about Singapore?

This is a tough question as one tends to take things for granted at home. If I were to pick one thing, it would be how Singapore has combined urban and natural spaces within this small city state. The nature reserves and parks around the island are great retreats if one knows how to avoid the crowds (it is possible!). One of my favourite places is the Botanic Gardens, which is a great place to spend a weekend with friends and family. I am looking forward to more spaces like this as Singapore continues to create more green communal spaces under the City in a Garden initiative.

Is there anything you miss about the UK?

This might actually sound strange but I miss the weather! I enjoyed the seasons marking the passing of a year, which we don’t get in tropical Singapore. Another thing I miss is British humour. I get my fix through BBC programmes on cable TV.

Would you recommend working/living in Singapore?

This is another difficult question to ask of someone who is part of a public service that seeks to build Singapore as a home for talent, without the answer sounding like a sales pitch! The unbiased answer is that it depends on the individual. If safety, cleanliness, green spaces, reliable public services, a well-connected public transport network, multiculturalism and having a good place to raise children rank highly on one’s choice of where to live, then Singapore is a really good match. I should add that there have been many studies on liveable cities, and someone who is considering Singapore but places a greater value on other factors should check out those studies to see how Singapore rates.
Modern day explorer

By Sophie Petrou

If you were asked to draw an ‘explorer’, beige khaki clothes, a monocle, binoculars, heavy boots with white socks pulled up and a pith helmet might come to mind; probably a cartoon-like image – and also a dated one. ‘The Golden Age of Exploration’ has long since ended and who knows what a modern explorer looks like? The words ‘modern’ and ‘explorer’ seem like a paradox. I don’t know any explorers; it’s not a common vocation. And where is there left to explore? So when I read the article in The Independent about Old Member Robert Twigger (1982), it was refreshing and inspiring. Here was an explorer, and more than that, here was a different way of living. But it also filled me with questions – how was it viable? How did he make it work? And how had he escaped the rat race?

Robert Twigger (1982) is an explorer. His most recent trip was walking across the Great Sand Sea of the Sahara, which involved a 27-day crossing and – more to the point – walking where no-one had been for 6,000 years. Previously he has crossed Borneo in search of ancient Menhirs and is planning a circumnavigation of the globe via the great rivers. ‘I’d had no idea that ‘explorers’ existed. To clarify – I assumed explorations today involved large-scale expeditions to the farthest corners of the globe, such as the Poles, and that only a very select few, with the necessary background and scientific skills, would ever be lucky enough to be involved. I’d also assumed that exploration today involved a huge support team based at some isolated research station like the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station. Many graduates today embark on adventurous globe-trotting after they finish university or take a gap year and get involved in a VSO project of some kind, but that’s not really true exploration says Robert: ‘Travelling and tourism isn’t “exploration”, he confirms. ‘To qualify as an explorer, one should bring back news after making a unique, difficult, and dangerous expedition. A war reporter isn’t an explorer because the trip is not unique. A tourist does not bring back news; they merely visit the already visited. But a long-term tourist can get hints of what is out there and then go back as an explorer.’

Travelling is easier now than ever before, so an explorer doesn’t necessarily need to make expeditions with teams of people. ‘Because of easy flights, expeditions can be short now and the ideas of micro-exploration, and DIY exploration, seem fruitful ones to me. You don’t need to be hampered by sponsors and TV gear,’ he says. But surely the main element fundamental to being an explorer is discovery? Are there any places left to ‘explore’, I wonder? And if not, how does one become known as an explorer? ‘I’m actually listed as one of forty modern explorers in a forthcoming Thames and Hudson book – so I must be one,’ says Robert in mocking retort. ‘But the question of “discovery” is a tricky one’, he explains. ‘Many people, wrongly, think the world is all explored. Actually, a third of all peaks over 6,000 metres in Tibet are still unclimbed, much of the Sahara has never been walked over and 6,000 metres in Tibet are still unclimbed, much of the Sahara has never been walked over and the car visits are limited to easy-access areas, and by using another form of transport one changes one’s viewpoint and so one becomes an explorer again. For example, by using a canoe to travel between islands in the Pacific instead of a sailboat you have a completely different experience.’ Here then, is the modern view of exploration. It’s not so much about discovering new places but re-discovering places and seeing them from a new point of view. There are still places left to discover, but they are rare, and for Robert it’s as much about exploring a place in a new way, entering it from a new route, say, and, in doing so, seeing things that previous explorers haven’t seen, as discovering somewhere new altogether. As he argues in his article in The Independent (“The call of the wild”), ‘instead of thinking of exploration in terms of its results – the places found, the species discovered, the trade routes started – I think it is worth looking at exploration as a psychological need, something that makes us human. Exploration is the result of succumbing to the urge to explore, just as books are the result of succumbing to the urge to write, the urge to express yourself. The urge to explore is within all of us and demands an outlet.’ A persuasive argument; Robert believes that being an explorer is more than finding a new place – it is a fundamental need of human nature. Maybe certain people are more tuned-in to this urge. Robert himself seems always to have had an adventurous side. As a boy of 16, his first solo expedition was an attempt to take an aluminium army canoe down the Stour River and into the Avon. ‘The canoe had outriggers and was rather heavy and the river, near the source, only a few inches deep – so it involved a lot of dragging,’ he tells me. ‘The canoe trip meant going through a private forest that was so overgrown it was like a jungle. The feeling of the challenge, of being in a wild spot, that was what I
as i sometimes remind her – if i was in the navy

kids in school: 'my wife knows this is my job and

robert lives in england and has a wife and two

maintain relationships, being away a lot, but

he didn't have a partner or found it hard to

you have no goal then money rules your life. ‘

you have a goal then the money is secondary; if

avoid the trap of materialism. as robert says, 'if

you have to live, at least initially, very humbly and

the usual comforts. ‘

get sponsors. to save money you have to live

trip. to fund trips you have to save money or

the only way i could save money for my next

i was 30 and it felt like a step back but it was

first book i went home for nine

you have to bite the bullet. for my

he says philosophically. 'sometimes

in schools, which he says he loves.

programmes. He also gives talks

robert finances his explorations

crappy office. i realised i’ d rather own all my

both – even those poor old fat cats who bank

be time rich or money rich – very few combine

alternatives to this: 'in this life you can choose to

this lifestyle and is making it work for them.

it’s inspiring to hear of someone who has chosen

make this nice computer i am writing on!'

other – if everyone was like me no one would

and here, at least, robert agrees: ‘you’re either

act as the anchor to stop life being in a constant

me. Our flotation was achieved

good for swimming or sending major waves which

on board. The speed is relaxed – we averaged 2,1

straps. A single sail provided thrust and the east-west

current also helped us on our way. It was, in short,

a doddle.

reverse for two lengthy periods. (We also ran out of

or doing talks, both of which involve regular

routines. You might argue that those

men and women with City jobs that

involve working until late at night, and weekends too, will actually, over

the course of the year, spend less

quality time with their families and

friends than robert who is master of

his own time. On the other hand, to

play devil’s advocate: if we all chose

this way of life then our societies,

our culture, everything about the way we live

today would collapse. We need some stability. All

cultures need some constants – some people who

act as the anchor to stop life being in a constant

flux of comings and goings. We – as a society –

need people who like routine and stay rooted.

And here, at least, Robert agrees: ‘you’re either

a settler or a nomad … and they both need each

other – if everyone was like me no one would

make this nice computer I am writing on!’

so while to some degree one person’s freedom is enabled by another’s anchored routine, which

seems unfair, a part of me, the instinctive part,

can’t help but agree with robert – perhaps it is a

fundamental need of human nature that we are

denying. And in spite of my cynical misgivings,

it’s inspiring to hear of someone who has chosen

this lifestyle and is making it work for them.
Right of reply: Windows on Ramallah

In Floreat Domus 2011, Balliol published the article ‘Windows on Ramallah’ by an anonymous author. A number of Old Members felt that such a politicised article should not have been published. Objections focused mainly on the anonymity of the author, Floreat Domus as an unsuitable forum for this sort of article, and the misleading link between the cover strapline – ‘Three Balliol Old Members talk about aid work’ – and this particular article’s content. On behalf of the editorial board of Floreat Domus, we apologise for any offence caused.

Regarding the issue of anonymity, the author perceived him/herself to be at risk (not from Israel but at risk nonetheless) and, given this, we felt it was not for us to include the name of the author. It was felt that in the circumstances a right of reply was proper. The letter that follows is representative of those received.

Reply from the author of ‘Windows on Ramallah’

I would like to thank the authors of ‘Clean the Windows on Ramallah’ (henceforth, the authors’) for their response to my piece.

Preliminary Comments
In their letter, the authors do an admirable job of trying to remain impartial on an issue they clearly feel passionate about. However, they also make a handful of provocative claims that I believe are inappropriate. These include that I fabricate observations, that I may lie about conversations that have taken place, that I wilfully deceive readers and that I surreptitiously imply that all of Israel is Palestine, in line with terrorist ideology. These claims are all false. I hope that the authors will agree in hindsight that the inflammatory comments cited above are inappropriate. They will not be addressed in my response.

The Occupation
The authors question whether Palestinian territories are occupied by Israel. I follow the International Court of Justice, UN, EU and UK in saying that they are.

17.2% or 2.7%?
The West Bank is currently divided into three administrative zones, known as Areas A, B and C. The Palestinian Authority is responsible for security and civilian-related policies in Area A, while Israel retains partial or full control in the remaining territories. There are different approximations of the relative sizes of Areas A, B and C because there are different calculation methods in use (e.g. should we include land that Israel has annexed in the calculations?). Whatever the differences, all calculations place the overwhelming majority of the West Bank outside of...
Anonymity

The editorial board of Floreat Domus have worked hard to preserve my anonymity ever since they asked me to write for the magazine. The reason is that I am a national of a country where travel to Israel and Palestine is banned, and where my safety would be at risk if it were known that I had defied this rule. Some of the authors of ‘Clhe umn aware of this. Thus, I am unsure why they have persisted with their claim that my real objective is to deceive readers about politics with immunity.

Remaining Questions

For those questions I could not address, I direct interested readers to the dozens of UN General Assembly and Security Council Resolutions on this conflict that set out the international community’s views on how best to move forward. I also recommend the International Court of Justice’s 2004 Advisory Ruling on the illegality of the Separation Wall, and the 2008 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories.

Once again, I would like express my appreciation to the authors for their thoughts, and Floreat Domus for giving space in this edition to broaden the debate.

1. 9 November 2011
As with any new political policy, the Conservative Party’s flagship ‘Big Society’ came under criticism after its launch in the run-up to the 2010 election: some claimed it was simply a gimmick, a utopian vision which sounded good but had small hope of realisation; others accused the party of trying to justify savage spending cuts and stripping back of the state with little more than a ‘figleaf’ of social enterprise. In July 2011, the launch of Big Society Capital took the first steps towards dispelling both arguments with the help of three Balliol Old Members, Ian Davis (1969), Sir Richard Lambert (1963) and Dr Geoff Mulgan (1979), appointed to two expert boards to run it.

An important aspect of Big Society is the endorsement of social enterprises to take over responsibility for the delivery of public services, such as the establishment of alternatives to state schools by local parents. David Cameron championed the Big Society as a move away from top-down projects which he claims sap responsibility, innovation and action: while central government can be clumsy and unresponsive to specific local needs, the thought is that local alternatives to state providers could better react to demand and show true ingenuity. Past evidence is on his side – social ventures of the sort Big Society promotes have contributed 1.5% of GDP and provided 800,000 jobs, especially for those who are vulnerable and find it hard to obtain work, according to a government paper. As well as this economic benefit, the very fact that the schemes are run by locals has a positive benefit on the morale of a community. However, social enterprises are far from taking on the role that the government would like, and so in his speech on 19 July 2011, the Prime Minister outlined three areas in which government must act to cause the change to make Big Society a reality: decentralisation, transparency and providing finance. It is the third of these which the Big Society Capital, and our three Balliol Old Members, are concerned with.

Supporting social ventures

Any firm wishing to start a new project requires capital. Getting a bank loan can be a struggle for any start-up, but since the 1970s much investment has gone into venture capital: early stage high-potential but high-risk business investment in exchange for equity, which the investors hope will generate a return at a later date. Unfortunately, the market for this form of funding is extremely small when it comes to social projects; part of the problem lies in the very nature of social ventures: they must bring a benefit to society, not just an economic return. In effect this creates an externality, or a benefit for which there is no market, as the social return does not create profit for investors. Social enterprises must look elsewhere for capital, predominantly to government grants and charities, and yet these do not provide long-term, sustainable funds. Many initiatives cannot find the capital to get off the ground and very few have sufficient funds to grow to a self-sustainable size.

Although they face different challenges, the link between venture capital and social investment is clear, and the sector is looking to business solutions. This is part of the reason why Sir Ronald Cohen, founder of venture capital firm Apax Partners and social equity firm Social Finance, has become so integral in social investment schemes, including the Big Society Bank, and was the key motivation for Sir Richard Lambert, former editor of the Financial Times, member of the Monetary Policy Committee and Director General of the Confederation of British Industry, to get involved: ‘I’ve known Sir Ronald Cohen for years, and we’ve often talked about the scope for this kind of approach,’ says Lambert. Ian Davis, a long-time managing director of management consultancy McKinsey & Company (until 2009), was similarly influenced by both Cohen and Lambert: ‘I agreed to become a Director of the Big Society Trust; Richard Lambert is a Non-Executive Chairman and is the other Board member from the private/business sector. His and Sir Ronald Cohen’s involvement are a key factor in my participation, although of course the topic is one very close to
Unfortunately, this does not mean that all of this money would be available to the bank immediately: the money in the accounts still belongs to customers and before it can be used there must first be a drive to reunite customers with their accounts. Combined with foot dragging on the part of banks and building societies, there was an accusation from critics that only a tiny fraction of the assets, estimated around £60 million, would actually be available by the time of the launch of the bank, and this simply would not be a big enough pot to start with. However, in February 2011, the Merlin deal provided a solution. Although primarily motivated to encourage greater lending from banks and smaller bonuses for employees in the aftermath of the financial crisis, the banks also agreed to provide £200 million capital to the Big Society Bank, which will bring the eventual total of capital to £600 million.

Capitalisation was not the only hurdle facing the bank. The first and most important next step was obtaining permission from the European Commission – a safeguard to check that the plans abide by EU state aid rules which protect against government providing unfair financial advantages to businesses. Without this approval, the government could play no part in capitalising the bank. Just in time for Christmas, Brussels gave the plan the green light, calling the project ‘innovative’. The final regulatory step will be receiving approval from the Financial Services Authority, which should be ready by the end of the first quarter of 2012. The real factor determining the success of Big Society Capital is the balance that is struck between making a return while still making sure that funding gets directed to social investment. Lambert describes how it is with this that Big Society Trust is concerned: ‘The Trust’s job is to make sure that Big Society Capital stays true to its mission – tracking the progress of BS Capital against its objective of improving the funding available to social entrepreneurs and ultimately helping to establish social investment as a serious asset class. In other words, we on the Trust board are like trustees, and BS Capital is accountable to us.’

**Social investment: dissection**

**Social organisations would need to make a return: the investors are not giving to charity but trying to make a profit**

**Raising capital**

Until those initial investors are attracted to the idea, some capital is going to be necessary to start the bank off. The Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Act 2008 allows the government to collect and distribute funds from accounts where there has been no customer activity for 15 years, with the condition under section 18 that the money is used for a social investment wholesaler, as the bank aims to be. It is estimated that there are around half a million of such accounts worth upwards of £400 million. ‘The idea to use dormant funds originated under the Labour Party administration’ Davis explains, ‘it was an inspired thought to make use of this to provide the backing for Big Society Capital.’

**Business meets social investment**

Is this balance actually possible? Davis certainly thinks so: ‘The business sector and the social sector have to work together to solve some of the pressing social issues of our time. The opportunity of course lies in the fact that the solution to many social problems has a monetary value and this is the gem of the idea behind both social impact bonds and subsequently the Big Society Bank.’ These social impact bonds, created by Sir Ronald Cohen and Social Finance, are outcomes-based contracts which align investor returns with social returns. Many social problems are expensive to the public purse, so the government agrees to make payment for the achievement of a defined social outcome. Investors buy into this bond to provide funding for a social enterprise which aims to achieve this social outcome. The investors do make a return if they have invested wisely in a successful project: they take on the risk instead of the government. Currently the bonds are in practice funding charities aiming to resettle ex-offenders in Peterborough, with investors looking at a future £8 million pay-out from the government if the scheme is successful, from expected savings on the police and welfare budgets. These bonds have now opened up the possibility of money-making social programmes.

There is good news on the investors front as well: new guidance in October from the Charity Commission has allowed charitable funds to make social investments which further the charity’s aims, even if the investment risks below-market returns. Previously, it had been unclear whether charities could make investments which were not expected to maximise profit, but the new guidance makes clear that ‘programme-related’ or ‘mixed-motive’ investments are allowed even if they cannot be justified purely on financial return as long as they help the charity’s intended beneficiaries. This could make hundreds of millions more available to social enterprises.

The future looks promising for Big Society Capital: the motivation, theory and logistics are so nearly in place, and, until it has full approval, the bank is already operating through the interim Big Society Investment Fund. The first investment of £1 million to a social investment fund run by the Private Equity Foundation was made in June, and following the recent EU approval £3.1 million from dormant bank accounts has now been invested in further projects, including the creation of the first ever social stock exchange. There is a while to go before the vision is complete, but within a few years the bank could see the social investment market grow into a billion pound industry.
It’s a tough world out there for kids growing up today; with youth unemployment reaching record levels in the UK they’re at a disadvantage before they even start, and they need all the help they can get. In a world of uncertainties, the development and progress of our children is our only safe investment for the future so we need to ensure that their young minds are nurtured with our time and skills in order to grow. Three Old Members – John Colenut (1981), Chief Operating Officer at Teach First, Caitlin Carmichael-Davis (2008), a graduate on the Teach First programme and journalist Robert Peston (1979), tell us how they are working to inspire young minds.

Chief Operating Officer at Teach First

By John Colenut (1981)

I joined Teach First in the new role of Chief Operating Officer in January 2011, after a 22-year career in investment banking with Cazenove/JPMorgan Cazenove. Joining the charity gave me an exciting and unique opportunity to be part of a fast-growing organisation that is making a big impact on the UK education system. The switch of career from the City wasn’t quite as surprising a move as it might appear, given that I taught for two years when I left Oxford and have been a governor of a Hertfordshire primary school for over 20 years.

Teach First was created to confront one of the most enduring social problems in the UK, that of educational disadvantage. The fact that children’s educational success is limited by their socio-economic background is shameful. Educational disadvantage perpetuates inequality and confines thousands of young people up and down the country to a life of unrealised potential.

The negative correlation between educational attainment and income is stronger in the UK than in almost any other developed country. Indeed, while 96% of children from independent schools progress to university, just 16% of children receiving free school meals will achieve this milestone. This is wrong, wrong for the thousands of individual children who are not fulfilling their potential, and wrong for society as a whole. But it doesn’t have to be this way. There are many examples around the world where the disparity in educational performance between rich and poor has narrowed after successful reforms based on levelling ‘up’ not ‘down’.

Teach First works with schools in low-income communities to break the link between low family income and poor educational attainment by recruiting top graduates with the potential to be inspirational teachers. We equip them with the skills and support to raise the achievement, aspirations and access to opportunity of children from low socio-economic backgrounds, while developing a network of leaders committed to ending educational inequality from both inside and outside the classroom.

After six weeks of intensive teacher training, run in partnership with some of the country’s top teacher training universities, participants begin what will undoubtedly be one of the most challenging periods of their lives, teaching a real classroom of real pupils. Throughout the two years that participants are required to teach, the Teach First ethos of Teach First is maintained; as an independent charity it works towards reducing the impact of the link between family income and educational attainment. It wanted to do something that made a difference, something that looked good on my CV and I really needed to start earning some money.

Some of these motivations now seem to be rather naïve. Worryingly, I believed that I could single-handedly end many of the difficulties my placement school was facing. Deep down I was certain that I would be able show the established teachers where they were going wrong. Of course, the problems experienced by my placement school were much more nuanced, deep seated and intractable than I had appreciated. Walking into classes of anarchic 13-year-olds and disenfranchised 15-year-olds on the verge of expulsion quickly destroyed my arrogance and a good part of my self-confidence. These schools come up against really tough barriers. Easy targets such as ‘better discipline’ and ‘more rigorous academic standards’ mean very little when faced with the harsh and complicated reality. My Year 8 class is made up of twelve and thirteen-year-olds. Many of them...
to commit to the programme, they receive high levels of support, delivered by experienced colleagues in their schools and by university mentors. Although the programme is challenging, over 90% of the participants successfully complete it.

The charity has grown rapidly since being set up 10 years ago. In 2011 we recruited 270 participants to teach in schools in challenging circumstances, making Teach First the fourth largest recruiter of graduates in the country – just behind the big accountancy firms – and the largest recruiter of Oxford and Cambridge graduates. Teach First continues to grow, with 1,000 participants being recruited this year and even larger numbers planned in the years ahead.

There is now a gathering body of evidence that Teach First is having a measurable impact on the lives of pupils. A recent University of Manchester study, for example, found that there are statistically significant differences between the average GCSE results of Teach First and non-Teach First partner schools. The quality of the training offered by Teach First and our university partners has also been praised, with Ofsted rating the provision ‘outstanding’ in all 44 of the categories assessed in a 2011 inspection. The long-term success of Teach First will reflect not just the impact in the classroom of a growing number of teachers in schools in challenging circumstances, but also the thousands of ambassadors (alumni) who have gone through the programme. Almost 60% of participants continue to teach after they have completed their two years, with many being promoted to senior leadership positions in their schools. Others leave teaching to pursue successful careers in business, government and in the third sector (with a growing number of ambassadors setting up their own social enterprises). The great majority of these ambassadors continue to be involved in Teach First’s mission of addressing educational disadvantage by, for example, mentoring sixth-form students to help them progress to university, or coaching the next generation of Teach First participants.

In order to help the many thousands of young people across the country from low socio-economic backgrounds Teach First has to grow, but to grow we require increasing financial resources. Teach First currently receives funding from the Department for Education to bear some of its expansion costs and schools also pay us a fee when they employ a participant (to reflect the investment the charity has made in each teacher). However, the key need in the future is to secure sufficient voluntary sector funding and unlock the other sources of income that will allow us to recruit more participants and help change the lives of more young people.

The last year has been fascinating. Switching careers from investment banking to the Third Sector has been challenging at times but very satisfying. Many of the high spots have been on school visits where I have met participants – a bright, very committed and energetic group – and seen the very real impact that these teachers are making in the classroom. To find out more about the work of Teach First and how you can support the charity visit www.teachfirst.org.uk

Speakers for Schools: a summary

**BY ROBERT PESTON (1979)**

Speakers for Schools is all about getting inspirational speakers into state secondary schools, especially the more disadvantaged schools. All the talks are completely free for the schools. The aim is to inspire students, give them exciting knowledge that’s outside the core curriculum, encourage them to set their sights high and be ambitious for themselves.

**Getting the speakers**

One of the great things about being a journalist for as long as I have been in the trade – almost 30 years – is that I have got to know thousands of fascinating, successful, inspirational people. So in setting up Speakers for Schools I cajoled many of them into becoming speakers, and then some of them recruited great speakers from their respective networks. Today we have around 800 speakers (and rising) – who are leaders in science, the arts, politics, business, the media, engineering and so on. My initial aim is to expand the list to 1,000 speakers. See www.speakers4schools.org for more about us.

**Good question**

The best question I have been asked when on a visit is one that I am often asked: ‘why should I bother to go to university when it has become so expensive?’ To which I answer, perhaps sanctimoniously, that there is no better investment any of us can make than in improving our own skills and in deepening our own knowledge.

**Motivations**

The decision to set up Speakers for Schools stems almost totally from my own educational experience. I went to a comprehensive in North London, which made me what I am today (for better or worse), and I am a great fan of comprehensives. So it was a matter of some concern to me around four years ago that I started receiving invitations to speak in schools but almost all the invitations came from leading independent schools (Eton, Harrow and so on) rather than from the kind of school I attended.

I did a bit of research and discovered that these independent schools take for granted that people like me will go and talk to their students for free, whereas state schools rarely if ever get top people in to talk to their students – because state schools typically lack the networks of contacts and the confidence to issue the invitations.

Speakers for Schools is my attempt to level the playing field a bit in this respect between state sector and independent sector and currently half the schools in the country have applied for talks. All our speakers commit to give at least one talk per year for free in a state school. If nothing else, we are hoping to demonstrate to the students in these schools that they really matter, that they are valued, and that they should aim high – in part because what they make of themselves will determine how the UK emerges from its challenging economic and social circumstances.

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**John Colenutt**

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Anna Camilleri talks to Matthew Lynn (1981) about the state of the economy, his views on the Euro, and his career as a financial columnist and successful author of fiction.

I can see the theory to back it up, but when you get into the detail of it, it’s just catastrophic. It’s kind of an experiment: you don’t really know how it’s going to work out until you’ve tried it. Economics can be very theoretical. You can still have arguments with people who say ‘Well, the theory works. In theory this currency should work’, so they assume it does work, but there’s clear evidence that it’s not working. Countries keep going bust, and at some point you need to pause and say ‘Well, alright, it’s clearly not working’. It’s causing these depressions across Europe. Greece is having a deep recession with a 16% contraction of GDP. I looked up the figures the other day, and the Great Depression in the US was 30% contraction of GDP from 1931–1933. So they’re not quite in that territory yet, but they’re getting into that kind of ballpark in Greece, and the same in Ireland, and in Italy, where they plan a 16-20% contraction of GDP. It’s catastrophic and a big thing to do so I’m pretty gloomy about it. I don’t think the people in charge seem to have any understanding of what they’re doing in these countries so it’s hard to be optimistic about that.

AC: How do you feel London as a global financial centre is faring in all of this?

ML: Not very. I’m very pessimistic about the Euro. I’m a PPEist by background and I think if you’re interested by both politics and economics, then it’s a fascinating saga. I wasn’t that anti-Euro at the start. It’s a very polarised debate in the UK. A lot of people were ideologically opposed to it, but I was perfectly relaxed about it and when it was introduced I thought it was quite a good idea.

AC: In a recent piece for The Spectator you point out that market crashes are becoming an ever more frequent occurrence, with each one being more extreme than the last. What will it take to halt the cycle?

ML: We came off the Gold Standard in 1971... And it’s not a coincidence, that you then had a huge increase in debt and a financialisation of the universe. We came off the last remnant of the gold standard in 1971 to have money that’s purely manufactured by the government. And it’s not a coincidence, that you then had a huge increase in debt and a financialisation of the universe. Everything became very dominated by bankers, but that’s what you get when you have an economic system dominated by finance. You also get an acceleration of financial pressures, and these things didn’t happen when you had more real money. We talk about the effects in politics too. We have a much less equal society, and it’s hard to trace the linkages to that, but on the other hand it’s probably not a coincidence.
If you make a change to the economic system, then things start happening, and you have to start assuming that they’re linked. All kinds of bad stuff has happened since we moved away from more real money, and at some stage we’ll have to go back to that system. Throughout human history, money has always been linked to something real, mostly gold, or the largest economy in the world, which usually links its own currency to gold. But it doesn’t really matter what it is, it could be oil, could be rice, or it could be some other kind of real commodity that has some sort of tangible value, so that the pound, or the euro, or the dollar, represents a little bit of something. But if you don’t have that something, it just represents an imaginary construct by a central bank, which says it’s worth a pound — so it is. Then it all starts to become a bit unhinged and starts to go a bit crazy. It’ll be interesting to know what the process is going to be. It’s very hard to predict. In some ways it’s happening naturally — these things tend to happen naturally — central banks will start to want more gold, and will start buying gold again. They don’t trust the dollar or the euro, they don’t trust the pound, so they’ll start linking future payments to something they do trust. Once we get back to having a more solid basis for money, then I think we might stop the cycle of market crashes, because at the moment they’re just accelerating. I looked up the figures in more detail after that piece for something else I was writing, and really significant movements, like, say, a 15% annual movement in the Dow Jones Index, only happens between 1933 and 1970 around once every 25 years. But now it happens every day. It happens in the morning, it’ll be down 15% in the morning, then up 20% by lunchtime, so it’s much less stable.

AC: Your contributions to financial journals demand rigorous grasp of facts; do you find writing fiction a liberation from that kind of empirical commitment or an extension of it?

ML: They’re not that linked, of course. I started out writing financial thrillers ages ago. I was working as a financial journalist for the Sunday Times and wrote two financial thrillers for Random House. There was a period in the 90s when publishers thought that financial thrillers were the next big thing and they would pay you quite a lot of money to write them, which was good, but they didn’t ever sell that well. People don’t read financial thrillers. They think it’s too complicated. It’s not really what they want to read about. I remember going up to a readers’ group in Solihull. I always think of Solihull as the epitome of middle England. If people like your books in Solihull then you’re doing well; but if they don’t like them you’re dead. I was talking to a woman who said ‘I was glad that you came because I read your book and I enjoyed it, but I wouldn’t have read it if you hadn’t been coming to give this talk.’ So, the two were much more connected when I wrote financial thrillers, but then I started writing military thrillers instead, which aren’t really connected to my financial writing at all. I think these days people tend to be very specialised. People just do one thing, and I think that’s a bit boring. People in Victorian times did lots of stuff. They were much more open to having multiple careers. They might write some fiction and they might also be scientists, or they might run the Post Office like Trollope, but the idea that you can have more than one job was much more accepted in Victorian times. The world slightly disapproves of it these days. Which I think is a mistake, actually. You only get one life, and it’s less interesting to just do one thing. There are all sorts of interesting things one could do, but people now feel you have to be a financial specialist, or you have to be a banker, or you have to be an academic, or you have to be a doctor, rather than allowing you to do two or three things.

AC: You’ve written a series of military thrillers, the ‘Death Force’ series, the latest of which, Ice Force, is coming out this year. What attracted you to the genre?

ML: There was an interlude when I did quite a lot of ghostwriting for a military guy. I wrote five of those books and they did really well — they got to number one in the best-seller list and made quite a lot of money.

What really got me into military writing was working with him. It was a change and an interesting genre to be working in. One of the interesting things about popular fiction is that it’s very reflective of what’s happening in the world, there are quite a lot of wars in our current times. For a long time we had the Cold War and writers like Ian Fleming, who’s a rubbish writer and massively overrated, but there were writers like Len Deighton and John le Carré who really were very good. So for a long time you had spy fiction because the Cold War was all about spies and all the fighting was done by spies — actual soldiers never fought. But the Cold War ended a long time ago and we now do a lot of fighting and have constant wars. We have constant small wars and we also have constant special forces wars, fought by small teams put behind enemy lines. We don’t have big World-War-I-type wars any more with a few 100,000 men on each side; it’s four guys against four guys and I felt there were quite a lot of interesting stories to tell about that. My own fiction is quite reflective. The first book [Death Force] was set in Helmand, and I think it’s remarkable that there are so few novels set in Helmand. Although Afghanistan is a major war and there are a lot of interesting stories, it’s a confusing war for the nation. There’s something very interesting about the number of wars that we fight and the ambivalence we feel about them. Even in popular fiction and spy fiction and thrillers, hardly anyone was writing about Helmand. So that’s how I got into writing military thrillers. I enjoy writing them: they’re interesting stories to write and they’re very contemporary.

AC: You’ve observed elsewhere that Balliol has a longstanding connection with detective fiction. Why do you think this is?

ML: It’s hard to know how much your college influences you. They do have distinct personalities, colleges, and it’s a very unregulated sort of place, Balliol. They’re very hands-off. Colleges attract certain types of people, so to a degree it’s self-selecting. It’s a very non-conformist College, so it’s more likely to attract the kind of people who become writers, because writing itself is non-conformist. It’s not a ‘proper’ job. When I was doing the ghost writing, people would ask what it was like and I’d say ‘it’s better than working’, and it is better than working. It’s fun, you get quite well-paid, but it’s nothing like having a proper job. It’s not like going into an office, and you certainly don’t have to fit in with anyone else’s worldview or toe any kind of party line.
More than 30 published crime writers have either taught or been educated at Balliol: Godfrey Benson (1883), Lord Gorell (1903), Ronald Knox (1906), GDH Cole (1908), Glyn Hardwicke (1940), Anthony Lejeune (1949), WJ Burley (1950), Donald Serrell Thomas (1955), Robert Barnard (1956), Tim Heald (1962), ‘Francis Beeding’ (pen name for two Balliol men – Hilary St George Saunders (1919) and John Palmer (1905)), Martin Walker (1966), Charlie Spencer (1973), Martin Edwards (1974) and Mick Herron (1981), and an honourable mention must be made to Dorothy L Sayers for her creation of Balliol man Lord Peter Wimsey, to name just a few. It’s a Floreat Domus article that has been waiting in the wings (or lurking in the shadows) for the last few years. But what is it about Balliol, and Oxford, that inspires so many crime writers?

Places with a history have an atmosphere – old buildings and their associations have a depth of character that can be created only by the passing of time. Perhaps it’s just that as you walk around these places, there’s so much to trigger the senses – the smells, the sounds, the glimpses of the old mixed with the new – the past mingling with the present. In Oxford it’s the quiet cobbled back-streets, the darkened narrow alleyways leading to crooked pubs, or famous college buildings, such as Balliol, where you know the great and the good have passed through the gates; it awakens the imagination and the characters and stories you create in your mind can take on a life of their own. Creating the right atmosphere and setting the right scene is crucial to the success of any crime novel and Oxford certainly provides plenty of inspiration. But more than this, Oxford is renowned as a place of culture – for academic success and educated debate; for its calming rivers and dreaming spires – but not necessarily as a city of crime. And perhaps this is exactly the draw – the idea that discord lies beneath the veneer of civilised society is a potent premise for a crime novel. Three Old Members of Balliol, whose novels have made a real impact on this genre, tell us what inspired them to write crime fiction.

Tim Heald (1962)

But Tim is also known for his mystery novels featuring Simon Bognor as special investigator and serialised by Thames TV. More recently, he has been the creator of Dr Tudor Cornwall in a new crime trilogy published by Robert Hale Ltd – Death and the Visiting Fellow, Death and the D’Urbervilles, and A Death on the Ocean Wave. He recently returned to the newly-knighted Simon Bognor and has published two new novels, Death in the Opening Chapter and Poison at the Pueblo.

He always wanted to be a writer, although he chose journalism and not crime writing mainly because this was the more obvious option available to him. ‘I tried writing literary fiction when working as a researcher for Randolph Churchill, and wrote a lot (more than 30,000 words at a guess) and showed it to the late Michael Dempsey, then at Hutchinson. Michael said, kindly, that there was enough there to suggest that I was a writer.
Martin Edwards (1974)

Martin Edwards is author of books such as The Coffin Trail, The Cipher Garden and The Arsenic Labyrinth. He has had a love of storytelling for as long as he can remember, he tells me. ‘The urge to write mysteries dates back to my first encounter with Agatha Christie, whom I started reading when I was nine,’ he says. ‘I was fascinated by the puzzles, the clues, the red herrings, and the surprise solutions; and my dream was to write stories that beguiled others as hers beguiled me.’ But Edwards was persuaded to study Law at Balliol – a career his parents deemed to be more suitable. ‘My parents wanted me to have a ‘proper job’ – we knew no writers – and persuaded me to study Law (although we knew no lawyers, either). This is why I was a student of Jurisprudence at Balliol rather than of English, say, or History or German.’ Luckily he enjoyed his time at Balliol and even enjoyed studying law, and once qualified as a solicitor, enjoyed solving legal problems for clients. But writing mysteries has always remained his great passion.

The plot of a good crime novel is often complex and intricate with unexpected twists and turns guaranteed to raise the heart rate; a good crime novel is like watching good magic unfold until the climactic and revelatory finale leaves you amazed and wondering how it was done. So it’s reassuring to discover that crime fiction takes a lot of thought and planning: ‘I relish complex puzzles, so I plot my books (or at least, their solutions) in advance – so as to be sure that I’ll finish up with a story that “works”, Edwards reveals. ‘The starting point for me is the enduring mystery of human character and behaviour – what powerful, and perhaps unusual, motive would cause this particular person to kill that particular victim?’

Human nature is an endless source of inspiration but is there a limit to how many crime novels one person can think up? Not when your inspiration is taken from everyday life, Edwards explains: Anything can spark an idea: anything can be turned into a crime novel. ‘There was a lot of stern and drang but my agent finally sold it to Harold Harris at Hutchinson,’ he says. Since then there have been over a dozen full-length Simon Brett novels, a lot of short stories mainly for Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine and the Tudor Cornwall trilogy. Tim was also chairman of the English Crime Writers Association in the early 80s, and, along with Martin Edwards, is another member of the Detection Club. With so many books under his belt, Tim makes it seem easy, but where does his inspiration come from I ask? ‘I start with an idea – monks, dogs, old Fleet Street, Canada – then I write a description of how a corpse became a stiff and take it from there,’ he says, adding flippantly, but perhaps more revealingly: ‘The ideas tend to be recycled journalism (nothing wasted!).’

There are so many Balliol crime writers – is there something in the air here. I ask Tim? I am, of course, only joking but Tim is quick to dismiss the idea that Balliol is somehow to be singled out by reminding me of the glut of Oxbridge crime writers in general: ‘T.M. Stewart a.k.a. Michael Innes (Christ Church), Bruce Montgomery a.k.a. Edmund Crispin (St Johns), J.C. Masterman (Worcester), Bob Robinson (Magdalen), Gyles Brandreth (New College), Simon Brett (Wadham), Dorothy Sayers (Somerville) and they are just off the top of my head; he responds. ‘More striking is the Oxford win over Cambridge. Even the most successful Cambridge crime writer (Colin Dexter) had to come to Oxford to create Morse,’ he says with a twinkle of humour. Perhaps there is something in the water then; or perhaps it’s just that it takes an astute mind to write a crime novel – to assimilate ideas and themes in an irregular order until they form a unified and revelatory whole at the end – the likes of which can be found aplenty in Oxford.

Favourite crime novel:

‘A Fatal Inversion by Barbara Vine, because it combines a dazzling plot with sophisticated and atmospheric writing. My favourites among Balliolites include Robert Barnard and Tim Heald, who are fellow members of the Detection Club, and the late W.J Burley, creator of Superintendent Wycliffe.’

Favourite crime novel:

‘I was brought up on Dorothy Sayers, especially, The Nine Tailors but anything by Doyle is a treat. I’ve read quite a lot of Balliol crime and particularly admire Bob Barnard (1956) in Oz.’
Martin Walker (1966)

Martin Walker runs Global Policy Council, a US-based think-tank on the global economy. After Balliol he did graduate work at Harvard, then became a speechwriter for US Senator Ed Muskie. He then went on to work for the Guardian for 25 years, mainly as foreign correspondent, after which he moved to the Woodrow Wilson International Center think-tank, then ran United Press International, and only after 2007 took up his current role. He is also author of such books as The Cold War: A History, and Clinton: The President They Deserve. A busy career history, to say the least, but not one that seems conducive to writing fiction. So what inspired Walker to write crime novels? He reveals that one specific person inspired him to write the Bruno books: ‘In my village in France, I came across a wonderful character, my tennis partner and friend, Pierrot, who is also our village policeman, a great cook and hunter. It made me want to write about someone like that and the first Bruno book followed.’

As Director of Global Business Policy, it’s no surprise that Walker has a strategic method of planning his novels: ‘I spend a lot of time writing the synopsis, chapter by chapter, writing notes on the characters and blocking out the action like a stage play. Then, with strict discipline, I write 1,000 words a day for three months.’ In fact, his job also provides some inspiration for his novels: ‘My job helps, since globalisation itself (and its impact on small communities) provides ideas but mainly the plots flow from my life in my French village and my interest in French history to which Richard Cobb introduced me at Balliol.’ Having written so many books, which one did he enjoy writing most? ‘My 2002 novel, The Caves of Perigord, my first attempt at writing about the part of France where I spend as much time as I can, and an attempt to re-create the kind of pre-historic society that might have produced the cave art of Lascaux. Already published in the UK, US and Spain, it also comes out this year in German.’ A First-Class History graduate of Balliol, it is i suppose to be expected that Walker’s novels involve an exploration into fractious French history, but they also flaunt a sense of joie de vivre and an appreciation of good French food. What are his thoughts on how crime writing has changed over time? Walker suggests that crime writing has changed as the nature of crime itself has changed: ‘Just as the cold war gave us the espionage genre, the end of the cold war means that most people experience the power of fear and violence in the context of crime. The threat of crime is these days far more complex with fraud and cyber-crime and technology,’ he says.

Crime fiction has progressed from a ‘locked-room’ style where a crime – almost always a murder – is committed under supposedly impossible circumstances, i.e. at a crime scene that no intruder could have entered or left, hence ‘locked-door’. It progressed to a detective-focussed style of writing – Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot, and Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes, to name two such instrumental detective series. Current crime fiction spends time developing the character analysis and psychological suspense – as Tim Heald says, from a ‘whodunit’ to a ‘how and why’ – Stieg Larsson’s popular cult fiction, the Millennium Trilogy, is a perfect example of this.

However, what all good crime novels share is a ripe location to set the scene. Larsson’s modern-day Sweden is stark and brutal, while Doyle’s ill-lit Victorian London shoulders with mystery. Perhaps this is, in essence, why Oxford has inspired so many crime novels. As Martin Edwards says, ‘It may be because the city has so many possibilities – the unique nature of the mix of town and gown means that there are endless characters, as well as the potential for countless extraordinary incidents. So it is a place that offers the potential for diversity in plot, characterisation and a wonderful setting, the key ingredients for successful crime fiction.’

Favourite crime novel:

‘Sherlock Holmes, a tie between Study in Scarlet and Valley of Fear. They are thoroughly modern tales, involving globalisation, politics, passion and revenge.’
The following titles by Balliol Old Members hit the shelf in 2011/12.

**Exceptional People: How Migration Shaped Our World and Will Define our Future**

Ian Golding (Balliol Professorial Fellow), Geoffrey Cameron and Meera Balarajan (Princeton University Press, 2011)

This insightful book looks at the advantages of increased human migration, challenging the view that dramatic growth in migration is undesirable, and proposing new approaches for governance that will embrace international mobility. The book is divided into three major sections: past, present and future. ‘The past’ describes patterns of human migration, adopting evidence from the most recent genetic research, while ‘the present’ section focuses on the policies and impacts of current migration. It suggests that immigration is largely unpopular in rich countries which overestimate the costs and underestimate the benefits. The authors indicate that most current migration policies are based on misconceptions and fears about migration’s long-term contributions and social dynamics but they show how migrants in today’s world connect markets, fill labour gaps, and enrich social diversity. Finally they suggest that future policies will dramatically determine whether societies can effectively reap the benefits that migration can offer, while managing the risks of the twenty-first century.

‘Exceptional People is packed with surprising insights.’

_The Economist_

**Fifty Fifty**


This is Sarah Loving’s first novel – an exciting thriller about a teenage boy’s fraught relationship with his scientist father. The trouble starts when the teenager, Gil, becomes friends with Jude, a charismatic young animal rights activist, after which, his relationship with his father, who uses animals for scientific testing in his lab, disintegrates further. The story follows Gil as he tries to figure out his feelings about what his father does. Loving negotiates the tricky balance of presenting both sides of the controversial argument by presenting Gil with a stark truth after he attempts to sabotage his Father’s work — that his Mother may be a carrier for Huntington’s disease and that the mice that Jude is about to release are being used to try to find a cure; it’s a simple enough plot but it’s a clever way to deal with what is a complex issue.

**The Crowded Grave**

Martin Walker (1966) (Quercus, 2011)

This is the fourth novel in Martin’s series featuring Bruno Courrèges chief of police, set in the fictional town of Saint Denis in the Dordogne region of France. _The Crowded Grave_ builds on Bruno’s character — honest, calm, fastidious in his planning, and a great cook — and it also involves a love triangle between the policeman, his British lover, and Isabelle, the great love of his life. In this novel, the investigation involves recent human remains found at the site of an archaeological dig, Basque separatists who are threatening the security of a Franco-Spanish summit being held in a local château, and animal rights campaigners targeting producers of _foie gras_. In the Bruno series, Walker has built a charming and civilised world juxtaposed with an odd sense of menace, at the forefront of which lies the French love of the good things in life — traditions, conversation, good clothes, and, above all, fine food.

‘a satisfyingly intriguing, wish-you-were-there read with lashings of gastroporn.’

_The Guardian_

**Rossetti**

J.B. Bullen (1973) (Frances Lincoln Limited, 2011)

Receiving this book to include on the Bookshelf felt like a real treat. It is a big weighty hardback book with a beautiful cover. In fact, it is beautiful throughout. Chapters are arranged in chronological order tracing the development of Rossetti’s painting and poetry in the context of his life. Even if Rossetti isn’t to your taste, this book is no less fascinating. Rossetti led an interesting, scandalous life, replete with passionate love affairs, fame and infamy, and drug addiction. Bullen shows how Rossetti’s developments and affairs are reflected in his works. For example, it’s not difficult to guess that Fannie Cornforth, the subject of the provocative ‘Bocca Baciata,’ which graces the cover of the book, was his paragon of physical desire. There are some stunning pictures of Rossetti’s art throughout the book, which are large enough to display the skill and beauty of his work at its best; this book is a treat for the eye and would make a fabulous present.
The Perfect Man: The Muscular Life and Times of Eugene Sandow, Victorian Strongman

An intriguing title and an even more intriguing biography about Eugene Sandow (1867–1925), the famous Victorian strongman who had what was deemed to be the most perfect male body. His story, fabulously told by David Waller, takes us back to the era of bustling music halls and variety shows—flying girls, performing dogs, and frequently a curly-haired muscleman from Prussia—cue Eugene Sandow. He rose from obscurity to become a music-hall sensation in late Victorian London and went on to achieve great success as a performer in North America and throughout the British Empire. In a cruel twist of fate, he lost his fortune at the time of the First World War and he ended up being buried in an unmarked grave in Putney Vale Cemetery. Written with humour and insight into the popular culture of late Victorian England, Waller’s book shows why Sandow deserves to be resurrected as a significant cultural figure.

‘Waller’s lively, colourful and fascinating book should help restore interest in an unjustly forgotten icon.’ The Telegraph

Finding Poland: From Tavistock to Hruzdowa and back again

Kelly’s forebears came from the Kraków area of south-east Poland near the site of present-day Auschwitz, and were staunch Catholics. His book is about his family trying to find their feet in inter-war Poland and follows their deportation to the USSR after the country is divided between the Nazis and the Soviets. Kelly’s great grandmother and her two daughters were deported to the East and the story takes them, and many thousands like them, from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to Persia, India and—finally—Devon, in England’s lush West Country, while their male relatives endure a parallel journey: arrested, exiled, and held as prisoners of war. The book provides a detailed picture of Poland’s plight under both Stalin and Hitler, which is brought to life by the personal photographs and letters of his family. Finding Poland is part memoir, part history, part travelogue and a profound account of the experience of displacement and exile.

‘A fascinating blend of biography and history, which poignantly evokes the pain and loss attendant on exile ...’ The Telegraph

Saving the World’s Wildlife

This book reveals a story that many people probably do not know. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) was founded in 1961, specialising in conservation, research and environmental restoration, and the non-governmental organisation has accumulated over five million supporters worldwide. Based on previously inaccessible archives and a wide range of interviews with WWF VIPs, this book tells the remarkable story of how the idea of a few British naturalists turned into the world’s largest environmental organisation. Schwarzenbach was granted unrestricted access to the private papers of Prince Philip and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, each of whom served as WWF president for 15 years. The book is sumptuously illustrated throughout with some amazing and endearing photographs by world-famous wildlife and nature photographers. Also included are the earliest photographs taken of pandas in the wild. This is a fantastic book which all animal lovers should own.

Mind-bending puzzles and fascinating facts
Paul Williams (The Book Guild, 2011)

This book is Williams’ personal collection of conundrums and ‘factoids’. It is divided into five sections ranging from easy to fiendish—some of which involve mathematics, while others relate to language, logic problems, science and a collection of ‘miscellaneous’ items. Some of the entries are quite interesting—in the ‘Difficult’ section, for example, I liked the description of Fermat’s theorem, and the page on how to calculate your chance of winning the lottery. But there are other parts of it that feel a little out of place, such as a page-long description about the behaviour of ‘cuckoos and bees’. Nonetheless, thumbing through it is quite entertaining as you never know quite what you’re going to come across—there’s a refreshing range of matter covered and the ‘easy’ section would be fine for children. If you’re going on a car-journey and you want an eclectic mix of puzzles that all the family can dip in and out of, this would do just the trick!
Next year Balliol will celebrate the 750th anniversary of its foundation, in 1263. In addition to a series of events throughout the year, to mark this important anniversary the College is committed to a campaign to raise at least £30 million to begin the process of securing the College’s long-term financial health and independence, and to ensure future generations of students can benefit from the tutorial system.

Since the launch of the Campaign over £25 million has been raised in gifts and pledges thanks to the generosity of our Old Members and other benefactors. Last year, over 1,900 donors made a gift to Balliol, supporting many different aspects of college life.

Earlier this year it was announced that the funding for the Historic Collections Centre at St Cross Church (see page 6) was completed. Balliol’s Annual Fund, which supports current undergraduates and graduates, grows ever stronger (see page 36); other donors have been contributing very generously to the College’s endowment funds which provide annual income for undergraduates and graduates, grows ever stronger (see page 36); other donors have been contributing very generously to the College's endowment funds which provide annual income to support Balliol's educational activities. We are particularly delighted that so many have chosen to support our academic posts by endowing them (see page 37), thereby securing these posts in uncertain financial times. Encouraged by the great warmth and generosity shown by so many to the College, plans are also being developed to endow other core Fellowships at Balliol (see page 37).

That Balliol has flourished in these difficult economic times is, in no small part, down to the financial support the College has received from so many of you. Balliol's endowment is significantly smaller than that of many of the other leading Oxford colleges; there are significant links emerging between academic performance and the size of colleges' endowments. Our endowment must be increased significantly if Balliol College is to remain one of the very best academic institutions in the world. As the College's anniversary approaches we will be asking all of you to contribute to help ensure that Balliol continues to be a first-class place at which to study and to learn.

English at Balliol
Its remarkable history, ongoing success and the current need for support

Balliol people have long made an important contribution to English literary history. John Wyclif, John Evelyn, Adam Smith, Robert Southey, Matthew Arnold, Arthur Hugh Clough, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Hilaire Belloc, A.C. Bradley, Graham Greene, Aldous Huxley, L.P. Hartley, Anthony Powell, Robertson Davies (to name a few) were all members.

When English was established in the University, in the 1920s, Balliol was one of the first colleges to appoint a Fellow in the subject. Previous Fellows include Roger Lonsdale, editor of The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse; and Christopher Ricks, John Carey, and Stanley Wells (editor of the Oxford Shakespeare), who held Research Fellowships. English, either as a single or joint school (usually coupled with History, Classics or Modern Languages), has continued to flourish. On average, 46% of our English undergraduates are awarded Firsts each year.

When Carl Schmidt retired last year, the future of one of our core posts was, however, in doubt. The ongoing cuts to higher education, particularly to the Humanities, have meant that the University has been forced to suspend or, in some cases, abolish its part of the funding for certain Fellowships which it funds jointly with individual colleges. If the University funding is frozen or stopped, colleges must either take on the entire cost of these posts or not reappoint to them. Balliol is very fortunate to have Seamus Perry as one of our English Fellows; since we are committed to having two English posts, last year the College embarked on a fundraising campaign to raise £1.2 million to endow the College cost of the currently vacant post.

Gifts to English will have an additional, long-term benefit. The Teaching Fund was established by the University in 2010 to address this funding shortfall. Using surplus income from the University Press, the Fund is able to ‘match’ donations to endow particular posts. The Fund has agreed to guarantee annual income equivalent to £800,000 of endowment if the College meets its target of £1.2 million. This will effectively mean that the entire cost of the post is endowed. By reaching this goal, the College would also be able to appoint a Junior Research Fellow with greater frequency using income from its existing endowment.

Over £300,000 has so far been donated and pledged by Old Members and we hope that, in the coming months, many more will contribute to secure this important Fellowship at Balliol.

The Oxford English Faculty, the largest in Britain, is ranked second in the world (2011), just behind Harvard, in the latest QS Top Universities World University Rankings.
The Annual Fund: another record year

For the third year running, Balliol’s Annual Fund has broken all previous records – over £650,000 was received in gifts – thanks to the continuing generosity of Old Members and other supporters.

This level of support is of great importance to the College. Given Balliol’s limited endowment, money donated to the Annual Fund, which is mostly used for expenditure, helps us to continue to fund a number of areas of College life which directly benefit current undergraduates and graduates. The College would have needed the equivalent of an additional £16 million in endowment to have generated £650,000 so we are most grateful to the hundreds of donors who contribute each year.

Their generosity allowed the College to make 373 financial awards in 2010/11, ensuring that we continue to attract and retain the most promising students from a wide variety of backgrounds. The Annual Fund also enables Balliol to provide additional tutorial support where there is a particular demand for more teaching; better facilities and an increased level of funding for Balliol’s numerous sports clubs and societies.

Gaudy campaigns

Balliol’s Gaudy campaigns have been running for twelve years and continue to play an important role in this success by encouraging Old Members to make a special contribution in their Gaudy year.

Committees, chaired by Old Members, encourage their Balliol contemporaries to support the College and many choose to do so, often for the first time. Last year, Adam Constable (1991) chaired the 1991–1993 Gaudy Committee which raised £162,400 in gifts and pledges. Matthew Westerman (1983) has agreed to chair the Summer Gaudy Committee (1981–1983) this year and we know that he and those on the committee are looking forward to contacting old friends to ask for their support.

Balliol calling

Last year current Balliol students called Old Members to reconnect them to the College and to ask them to consider a gift to the Annual Fund. Just over 61% of those reached decided to make a gift – which is extremely encouraging – and £247,000 was pledged and given by those called. This year’s appeal took place in March and Old Members have already committed over £200,000 in confirmed gifts and pledges. Some of those called wished to take time to consider their level of support; we hope that these unconfirmed gifts, once finalised, will be sufficient to match last year’s success.

Mystery donation

Last year the Development Office received a very kind gift of £500 to Balliol’s Annual Fund in response to our autumn appeal. All the credit card details were correctly filled in, the form was signed, but it had no further information, just an Irish postmark. Try as we might, we have not been able to match the signature to any we have on file so the card remains uncharged and, more importantly, we have been unable to thank the donor. Are you our mystery Irish donor? Did you happen to take a Balliol gift form with you on a trip to Ireland? Have you made a gift of £500 and not been thanked by us? If so, please contact us – development@balliol.ox.ac.uk
Classics at Balliol

Professor Rosalind Thomas, Tutorial Fellow in Ancient History, and Dr Adrian Kelly, Tutorial Fellow in Ancient Greek Language and Literature, report on how Literae Humaniores continues to flourish at Balliol.

It is with very great pleasure that the college can announce that excellent progress has been made in our efforts to endow Balliol’s Classics posts. A fundraising campaign was launched in 2005, its primary aims being to raise funds to re-establish the post in Ancient Greek Literature, previously held by Jasper Griffin, and to secure any remaining endowment for the Latin Literature post, once held by Oliver Lyne, and the Ancient History post held by Oswyn Murray (until 2004) and now by Rosalind Thomas. These funds were in place the College was to move to securing endowment for the Ancient Philosophy post.

After considerable twists and turns following the financial crisis in 2008, the college received a very significant donation to the Ancient Greek Literature post, given in honour of Jasper Griffin. This enabled the college to bid successfully for ‘matched’ funding from the newly established Teaching Fund, a mechanism put in place by the University to endow the University cost of Tutorial Fellowships once the College costs were secured, which means that the post has turned from being one which was fully funded by the College to a full Lectureship to which the University contributes.

This was a very important development since it freed up funds for the Latin fellowship, which became vacant when Bob Cowan (who held the post after Oliver Lyne’s untimely death) was appointed to a position at Sydney University. When Bob left, the University was compelled to suspend its portion of the funding for the Latin Fellowship, owing to the current cuts to higher education, and the future of the post was in doubt. However, given the strength of support for Classics from our Old Members the College has decided to reappoint to this post.

This will return us to the number and strength of Fellowships which has kept Classics at Balliol at the forefront in the University, and at a time when the subject is thriving: the University continues to have record numbers of applicants to read Classics, even though this is the first cohort to face the new fees structure.

We look forward to having two full Literature Fellows again, and to the next challenging decades. As Balliol’s current Classics Fellows we would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to all the Balliol alumni and other donors who have made this possible, and also to Nicola Trott, who as Senior Tutor discovered and negotiated a difficult course through the University’s labyrinthine procedures, and to Andrew Graham, who as our previous Master did so much to establish and support the Campaign.

Balliol Economics and Andrew Graham

When Andrew Graham stepped down as Master last October, plans were already underway to mark his enormous contribution to the College.

Many Old Members will have got to know Andrew during his years as Master but his connection to Balliol goes back much further; to when, in 1969, he became a Tutorial Fellow in Economics, a position he held until 1997 when he became Acting Master of Balliol. It is fitting therefore, and very pleasing, that we can report that the Andrew Graham Fellowship in Economics has been established at Balliol, to recognise not only everything Andrew has done for the subject but, of course, for the College as well.

Balliol’s distinction in the subject can be traced back to one of the College’s most famous Old Members, Adam Smith, credited with being the leading pioneer in creating modern economics; his book, The Wealth of Nations (1776), is widely regarded as one of the most important and influential books ever written. In the 1920s, it was Balliol which established PPE (Philosophy, Politics and Economics) in Oxford as a modern alternative to Classics or ‘Greats’. Notable alumni who read PPE include Edward Heath, Roy Jenkins and Christopher Hitchens; Robert Peston and Stephanie Flanders are key reporters of the financial issues we continue to face. Today, Balliol remains the pre-eminent college in Oxford at which to read PPE, and is, by a considerable margin, the top choice for undergraduates.

Our ambitious goal is to endow the entire cost of the post for which we need to raise £1.5 million. As Floreat Domus 18 goes to print, thanks to the generosity of many who were taught by Andrew, this target has been very nearly reached; this sum, combined with the funds we currently have, is sufficient to endow fully our Economics posts. The College is most grateful to those who have honoured Andrew in this way.
The College gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the contributors listed here to Balliol's campaign for its 750th anniversary, whose gifts were received between 1 August 2010 and 31 July 2011. The percentage of donors in each matriculation year who have contributed during this period is included. In this and future publications, we shall list donors who have given during the previous academic year; those therefore who have made a donation since August 2011 will be included in a future publication. We have respected the wishes of those who have asked for their gifts to remain anonymous, and we thank them too for their support. We apologise for any omissions.

In this and future publications we shall list donors who have given during the previous academic year; those therefore who have made a donation since August 2011 will be included in a future publication. We have respected the wishes of those who have asked for their gifts to remain anonymous, and we thank them for their support. We apologise for any omissions.

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Leaving a gift to Balliol in your will is an easy and cost-effective way to support the education of future generations of students. Bequests given to the College continue to fund our core activities; over the centuries, such gifts have endowed numerous Fellowships, established enduring scholarships, supported the Library and helped to fund Balliol’s thriving clubs, sports teams and societies.

More than 200 Old Members and friends of the College have already told us they have chosen to remember Balliol in their will; they have been invited to join the Greville Smith Society in recognition of their generous and long-term commitment. Members of the Society and their guests meet for lunch in College each year; it is one of the most special and convivial occasions in our annual events calendar. We hope that you will consider joining them.