



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Easter Term 2017

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**Hanging Around St John's:
Discovering the Art on College Walls**

**In Fine Voice: Spotlight on St John's Voices, the
College's Mixed-Voice Choir**

**The Heart of the Community: A Look at the
College's Masterplan**

10-Minute Interview with the new SBR President

Welcome to our new staff!



► **Image credits: All photos - St John's College** 1 **Angie Jewell** –Admissions Office Assistant 2 **Jose Vela** – Section Chef 3 **Jose Perea Romero** – General Kitchen Assistant 4 **Cheryll Newton** – Payroll Assistant 5 **Gary Sinclair** – Night Porter 6 **Mireia Rivera Molina** – Bar Assistant 7 **Ewa Bali** - Accounts Assistant – Operations and Enterprises 8 **Patricia Santana** – Bedmaker 9 **Jude Reeves** – Porter 10 **Agnieszka Krynicka** – Bedmaker

And goodbye and thank you to the following members of staff....

Keith Neal, Painter, who retires on 26 May
Steve Morgan, Porter, who retires on 27 July
Jane Jones, HR Officer, who retires on 31 July

If you would like to contribute to Eagle Eye, or have ideas for future articles, please contact Louise Hanzlik on lh445@cam.ac.uk.

Welcome to Eagle Eye,
the newsletter for staff,
Fellows and students of
St John's College

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Eagle Eye

This newsletter is produced by:
The Communications Office, St
John's College

Editor for Easter Term 2017: Shelley
Hughes, S.V.Hughes@joh.cam.ac.uk
Design and Print: Rosehill Press,
www.rosehill-press.co.uk

Cover image: 'A view of a pond in a
rural landscape near Cambridge' by
John Nash.

News

Round-up

What's been happening around St John's



Founding rules of College Cricket Club return to St John's

A small snippet of St John's sporting history has resurfaced in the form of a list of rules for the College Cricket club, which may date back to its foundation in 1861.

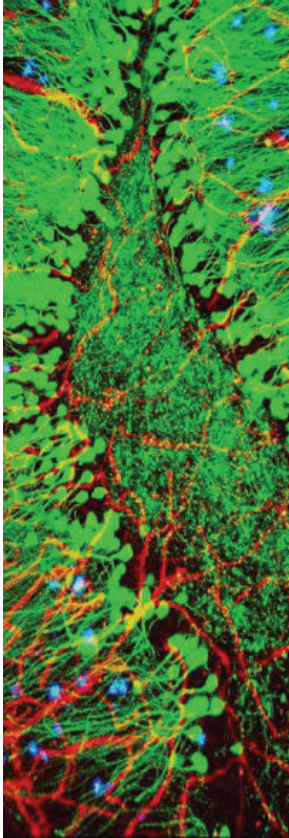
The document contains 16 rules, specifying, among other things, subscription fees, fines for failing to turn up, and a limit on the number of balls during practice. If it is indeed the original list, it marks the beginning of a club which would later help to launch the careers of several famous professionals, including England players such as Trevor Bailey and Mike Brearley.



Redboys secure double with Cuppers victory

The St John's Rugby club have done the double for the second time in three years after winning the inter-college Cuppers competition.

The Redboys secured the title in unseasonably wintry conditions at Grange Road with an emphatic 27-3 win over Gonville and Caius College. Having won Cuppers in 2015, as well as three back-to-back League titles, the victory confirms St John's position as the dominant force in Cambridge College rugby.



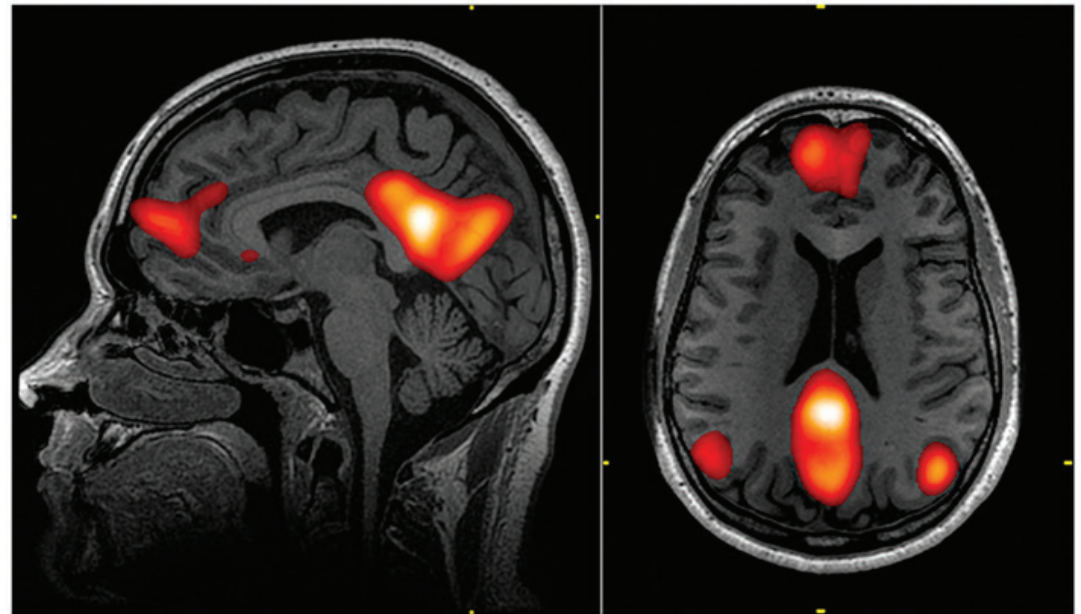
St John's researchers part of new drug discovery company

Researchers at St John's College are involved in a new Cambridge company which will develop possible drugs for numerous protein misfolding diseases, including devastating illnesses such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Diseases. Wren Therapeutics Ltd is a newly-founded spin-out firm, which will focus on discovering new drugs and advancing them into patient trials. The company has been set up following over a decade of foundational research by scientists in Cambridge and elsewhere, including a number at St John's.



Bag-like sea creature was humans' oldest known ancestor

Researchers led by Professor Simon Conway Morris identified traces of what they believe to be the earliest known prehistoric ancestor of humans – a microscopic, bag-like sea creature, which lived about 540 million years ago. Modern humans are, however, unlikely to perceive much by way of a family resemblance. Saccorhytus was about a millimetre in size, and probably lived between grains of sand on the seabed. Its features were spectacularly preserved in the fossil record – and intriguingly, the researchers were unable to find any evidence that the animal had an anus.



We need to talk about brain scans

Rapid advances in brain scanning technology and its capacity to "read" human minds mean that there is a pressing need to plan for how and when we will use it in the future, according to a new book co-authored by a St John's College PhD student. In *Sex, Lies & Brain Scans*, the neuroscientists Professor Barbara Sahakian and Julia Gottwald argue that there needs to be an open, public debate about functional magnetic resonance imaging, or fMRI. This fast-developing brain scanning technology has immense potential to benefit society, they say, but also raises considerable ethical dilemmas.

► Image credits: College Cricket Team in 1886 – St John's College; The Redboys in action – Jacob Heath; Brain showing hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease (plaques in blue) - Zeiss Microscopy; Artist's reconstruction of Saccorhytus coronarius, based on the original fossil finds – *Nature*; Magnetic resonance imaging of areas of the brain in the default mode network - John Graner, via Wikimedia Commons

In Fine Voice: Spotlight on St John's Mixed-Voice Choir

A Far East tour, a sell-out concert, and adventurous plans for the future – we talk to Graham Walker, Director of St John's Voices, about why the College's mixed-voice choir is creating a stir in the music world.



The Choir of St John's may be one of the most famous College choirs in the world with a long choral heritage – it's been involved in College life since the 1670s – but since 2013 there's been a new kid on the block: a choir where females sing alongside males in the Chapel. St John's Voices, the College's mixed-voice choir, has been gaining quite an enviable reputation lately, especially after its recent tour to the Far East.

Graham Walker formed St John's Voices in 2013 and has been its Director since it was established. "It was originally set up at the Master's suggestion – he thought that we should form a choir in order to give female students the opportunity to sing Choral Evensong as well as males," Graham tells us. "I thought it sounded like a great idea. The Voices' main responsibility is to sing Evensong on Mondays – they do the same thing that the other Choir does, but one day a week – and they also give concerts, go on tour, and sing with other College choirs."

This isn't the first time St John's has attempted to set up a mixed-voice choir. "In the 1990s there was a choir called St John's Singers but as the choir didn't have a particular remit it was harder to recruit, and membership eventually dwindled. In 1997 King's College set up King's

Voices, which was a mixed-voice choir that sang Evensong on Mondays, so we borrowed their model and created St John's Voices. And it works really well."

"I wanted to join because I'd sung in choirs before and I was really keen to continue - I love the feeling of singing in a group"

Setting up the Voices meant carrying out lots of auditions. "When we advertised for auditions, there was a huge response – many students in College, and freshers who were arriving, seemed to feel that this was a great thing to do. It was reasonably easy to choose a choir that worked, and we had to turn about a third of students away at the beginning: in order to create the kind of choir we were looking for the singers had to have a good level of control of their voices." There are currently 29 members of the Voices, and they rehearse twice a week – just before Evensong and once more during the week.



Second year English student Clare Cavenagh has been singing with the Voices for two years now. "I wanted to join because I'd sung in choirs before and I was really keen to continue - I love the feeling of singing in a group, and I'd found choirs to be really great socially in the past too. I'd heard a lot about the choral tradition of Cambridge, and I wasn't sure I'd be a good enough singer or musician to be able to keep up. But the audition process was far easier than I'd imagined. We did a few simple things in the audition: a prepared piece, some sight reading, and a few aural exercises, and Graham was very friendly, which put me at ease. I was very pleased to join. I've been challenged, certainly, and I've improved a lot as both a singer and a musician, but I've been able to learn on the job. There's room in the choir for people who are very confident, but it's a great place to gain confidence too."

When it came to setting up the choir, the biggest challenge for Graham – who is also Director of Music at Magdalene College – was establishing a pattern for the students. "The initial set-up was really based on guesswork; we had no idea how it would turn out in the end. But we had to make it feel like it was something the students

would expect, and to develop a routine. Adding extra things on can sometimes feel like an imposition and academic stress can be quite high. Getting to the point where it is what they expect it to be was maybe the biggest challenge. But it was actually remarkably easy, and it's been successful and the students appear to be happy!"



As well as singing Evensong, the Voices are embarking on even more exciting and adventurous projects. They recently undertook their first major tour to Hong Kong and Singapore and received great feedback on their performances. "The Voices performed Handel's Messiah in the Victoria Concert Hall in Singapore with 700 seats, and it was a sell-out," Graham says. "A sell-out concert makes such a difference to the atmosphere." They also performed in Macau Cathedral, Hong Kong City Hall and the Foreign Correspondents Club, and sang carols at corporate dinners and services, showcasing a wide range of repertoire. One of their pieces, *Child*, by Tim Watts, was the first work the Master and Fellows commissioned for the choir.

"The initial set-up was really based on guesswork; we had no idea how it would turn out in the end!"

“The tour was certainly an adventure for all the people who went,” Clare tells us. “It was fantastic in that it provided the opportunity for us to perform Handel’s Messiah with an orchestra, which was a fantastic singing experience. I think it was also really useful, because we got some experience singing in new places, and we often had to deal with unexpected hitches, or things which were different from what we’d expected. Travelling got us out of the familiar space of the Chapel, and I think that’s really useful once in a while. Plus, spending a whole trip together, we all got to know one another much better!”

“The Voices performed Handel’s Messiah in the Victoria Concert Hall in Singapore with 700 seats, and it was a sell-out - a sell-out concert makes such a difference to the atmosphere.”

The Voices have also been busy in the studio, recording a mixture of pieces they have performed in the past. “We are looking to make a video of the choir for promoters and potential students, and record some Christmas carols for alumni – we’re not recording an album just yet though!” Graham says.

Regarding future plans, Graham tells us, “The choir is three and a half years old, and we are now reflecting on how things have developed over that time and are looking to the future, and there is a plan to continue to increase what we do in the Chapel and further afield.”

“We are looking to take the group to Colombia in the near future, working with some links from Colombia from my Latin American group, Classico Latino. Most choirs

tour to Europe, America, Canada, and maybe the Far East, but South America is not so common - it would be a fantastic opportunity. Colombia is such a musical country and they love singing, so it could be a lot of fun.”

So with the success of the Choir of St John’s and the growing achievements of St John’s Voices, has the College considered also setting up a staff and Fellows choir? “I have actually thought about it,” smiles Graham. “I think it’s a great idea. When I worked at Corpus Christi I set up a staff choir and it took off really well. At Magdalene they set up a staff/Fellows choir and I helped out there. They are both small Colleges, and we managed to get a decent amount of singers – and even the full four parts at Magdalene. In a big College like this with a great choral tradition I think there ought to be a staff and Fellows choir; there would be enough people interested. It would



be a great thing to have, and it would be nice for the whole College community to have access to it!”

► **Image credits: Graham Walker conducting St John’s Voices while recording. Credit: St John’s Voices; The Voices performing Handel’s Messiah, Singapore. Credit: St John’s Voices; St John’s Voices performing in Hong Kong. Credit: St John’s Voices; Handel’s Messiah. Credit: St John’s Voices; The Voices on tour, Clare Cavenagh back left. Credit: Clare Cavenagh; St John’s Voices singing in the stalls. Credit: Songyuan Zhao.**



Hanging Around St John's

There's art hanging on pretty much every wall of College, but it tends to blend into the background while we are rushing around for work, play or study. Here we learn about some of the remarkable paintings in College and what they mean to the people who spend the most time with them.

Portrait of W.H.R. Rivers

This oil on wood portrait of College Fellow William Rivers hangs in Dr Sue Colwell's rooms in Second Court. Sue inherited the painting from College lecturer in sociology and former Senior Tutor, Ray Jobling. "When I took over these rooms I wanted to keep the painting because it reminded me of the

times when I talked to Ray with Rivers looking down on us," Sue explains. "In the painting Rivers looks very much like a typical military man, you might even say he comes across as forbidding and stern. However there is a kindness in his face, something that, when I found out more about him, I discovered fits very well with the man he was. Rivers played a fundamental role in the

development of techniques to heal "Shell Shock" during the Great War. In the early 20th century many doctors and members of the public believed that the signs of distress and trauma that characterised what we would now call Post Traumatic Stress Disorder were rooted in cowardice and a lack of discipline. Rivers took a very different approach to the "stiff upper lip" endorsed by society and encouraged his patients to talk about their emotions. His kindness and sympathy were remembered fondly by those he treated and he played a part in revolutionising British perspectives of mental illness and its treatment.

Always interested in the relationship between mind and body, during his time at the College Rivers conducted one of his most famous experiments. A fellow Johnian and friend of Rivers, Henry Head, severed two of the cutaneous nerves in his left forearm and sutured the ends together. He and Rivers then spent the next four years mapping the recovery of sensory perception in Head's arm. "Apparently it took place in this very room," Sue tells us. "It seems rather macabre, but I suppose it wasn't so shocking by the standards of the day."

Portrait of Sir Harry Hinsley

When Domestic Bursar, Mark Wells returned to St John's to join the Fellowship in 2014 he picked out this portrait of Sir Harry Hinsley by Nicholas Wood to decorate his office. The choice was easy, not just because at the age of 21 Hinsley was the leading expert on decryption and analysis of German wireless traffic at Bletchley park during WWII, but also because of his personal memories of Hinsley who was Master of the College when he was an undergraduate here in the 1980s. "As the portrait shows quite well, Hinsley was a very friendly and charming man with a non-threatening appearance, but he was also as sharp as a pin," Wells recalls. "I remember getting into some serious trouble with him in my second year. I'd gone on a swap with the hockey club at Queens' College and they'd just had a tree planted in the grounds by the Duke of Edinburgh. We decided it



would look better at St John's, but unfortunately the tree didn't survive its relocation. We all got quite a dressing down from Harry when the Master of Queens' called to report it missing the next day."

The painting shows Hinsley sitting at his desk in a room that appears to be over the Great Gate. A pipe - the must-have accessory for male members of the Fellowship in the 80s - rests on his desk. While at Cambridge, Hinsley impressed his students with the analytical skills he had honed at Bletchley Park, running weekly seminars on current affairs during which he inspired new ways of thinking from behind a thick cloud of pipe smoke. "I've always had a soft spot for him because of his kindness," says Wells, "My wife Karina and I met while she was working as a waitress in Hall. On one of her first nights on the job she was assigned to high table at a College feast and carried a large trifle over to Hinsley to serve him dessert. As she was standing over him he looked at her and said



calmly "oh dear, we're going to have to clean this up," she looked down and realised that the bottom of the dish she was holding had fallen out, leaving a pile of trifle on Hinsley's lap. She was certain she would be fired, but nothing was ever said about it."

A view of a pond in a rural landscape near Cambridge

College art is not limited to portraits as this landscape by John Nash (1893-1977) shows.

The painting has been hanging for thirty years or more in Professor Patrick Boyde's room, following him in successive moves to its present position in Merton House. It was donated by a President of the College, Professor Briggs, when he retired in 1963, and for many years it hung in a place of honour in the Green Room. It was affectionately known, Boyde recalls, "as The Log at Bay, and it was not greatly admired - partly perhaps because of the original green frame, which was the same colour as the grass in the foreground. Soon after the donor died, it was taken down and put into storage. But now the subtle pallet of pinks, greens and browns has been brought to life by giving the picture a new gold frame and





below. I used to think it was ugly, but I've come to love it more and more."

The artist John Nash was an official First World War artist who experienced the trenches first-hand with the Artists' Rifles. His most famous painting depicts a counter attack he took part in at Welsh Ridge on 30 December 1917. He was one of only 12 men out of a total of 80 to emerge unscathed from the battle; the rest were either killed or injured. After the war Nash stuck to painting natural landscapes, but it has often been said that echoes of the battlefield linger in his paintings.

"It is more like an oil sketch than a finished painting," Boyde continues, "and it reveals something new each time you look at it. Gone are all the clichés of popular landscapes with their blue skies and bright flowers and calm reflections in the still surface of a lake. The ambiguous colours leave you unsure as to whether the time is early morning or dusk, late autumn or early spring. There is a sense of desolation and even of menace: the leafless trees are not matched by their reflections, the foreground log glides forward like a water snake, and the still and muddy pond is reminiscent of a shell hole."

Portrait of Edward Henry Palmer

Finally, next time you are enjoying

the College's silver-service dining experience, look out for this interesting-looking gentleman who will be hanging in Hall for six months from June. Edward Henry Palmer (1840-1882) was a local Cambridge boy who spent a lot of time with Gypsies as a child, acquiring fluency in Romani and a life-long interest in different cultures and ways of life. A gifted linguist, he gained fluency in multiple languages at phenomenal speed and was elected to the Fellowship at St John's for Oriental Studies in 1867.

During his time at the College Palmer took on work surveying the Sinai for the British Government's Palestine Exploration Fund. His expeditions in the deserts of the Middle East brought him into contact with the Bedouin. He learned to speak their language and understand their way of life and made many friends among the sheikhs. Palmer returned to Cambridge, but the taste for adventure he had acquired made him grow restless with academic life. In



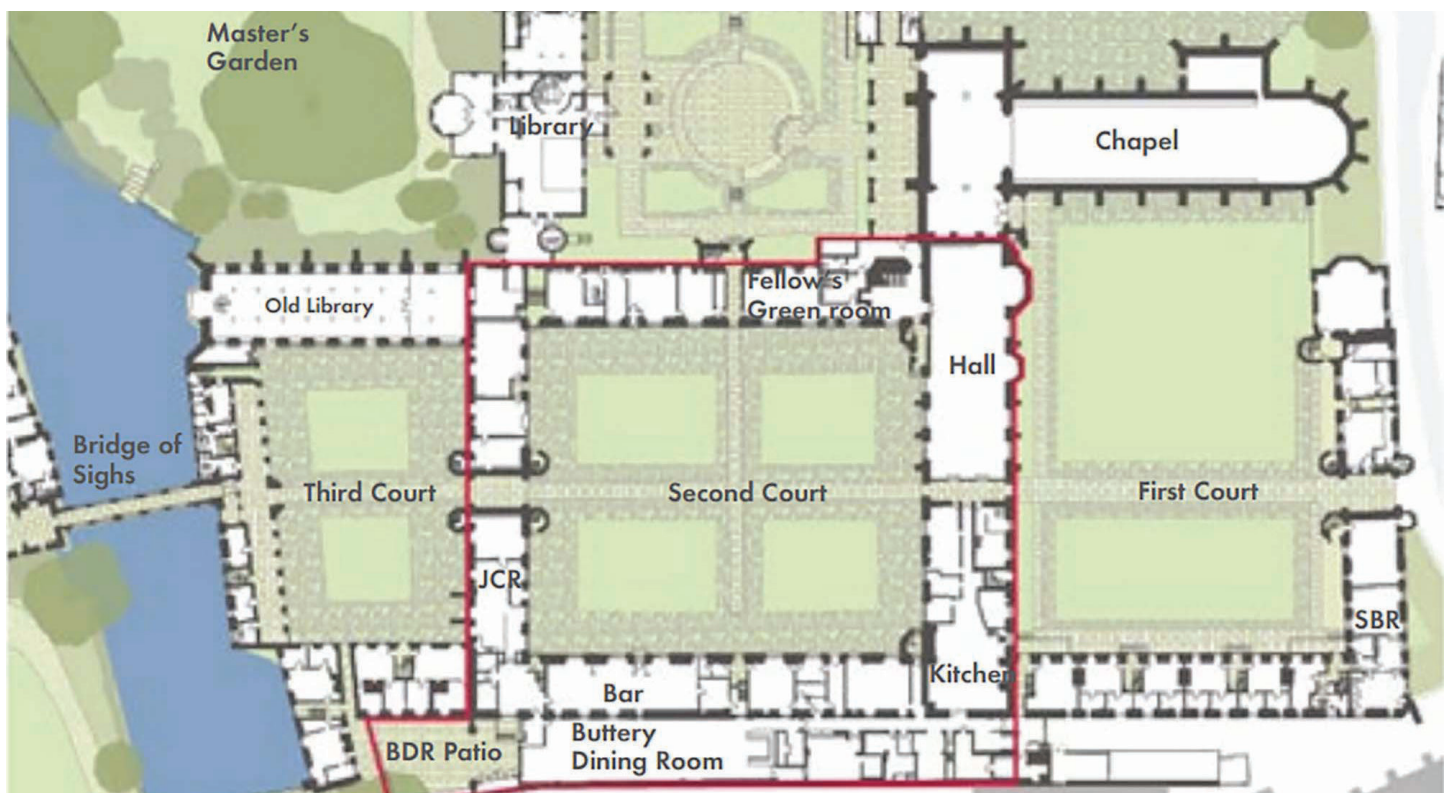
1882 an exciting opportunity in the form of a secret service mission to Egypt arose. Sent off with the backing of English gold, he was tasked with using his influence with the sheikhs of the Bedouin to secure the immunity of the Suez Canal from Arab attack.

On a summer night, Palmer set out into the desert with £3000 of gold to secure the final terms of the allegiance, but he was brutally prevented from completing his mission. His party was ambushed by Bedouin thieves and Palmer and his companions were robbed and shot.

It's interesting that John Collier, the artist behind this posthumous portrait, chose to paint Palmer in fine Bedouin dress with the arid landscape of the Sinai behind him. It is perhaps a reflection of how, despite being the place where Palmer met his brutal death, it is also where his passion for adventure, culture and language was most fulfilled.

The Heart of the Community

From common rooms to bars, the ways in which we interact with social spaces are changing as the College, University and city evolve. New draft proposals, outlined in the College's Masterplan, aim to strengthen the social fabric of St John's by making it a better place for relaxation and conversation for all members of College.



“Change” is not a word that one typically associates with Cambridge, let alone its Colleges.

Despite its historic buildings, however, the ways in which people live and work at St John's are in continual flux. Sometimes, those adjustments are deliberately planned. In other cases, they only become evident once they have happened.

Not so long ago, for example, if you had wandered through Second Court in an afternoon during term time, you would have found the JCR relatively busy with students

playing pool or table tennis, reading the papers and watching TV. “In the 80s and 90s, there would always have been people in there,” the College’s Domestic Bursar, Mark Wells, reflects. “Now it doesn’t work like that. As a space, it has become less important.”

Over the last couple of years, Wells has been overseeing the development of a new Masterplan for St John's – a vision of how the College might evolve over the next 20 years. This is by no means a definitive blueprint, but it aims to stimulate strategic discussions

about the College estate going forward - where it should be preserved and maintained, and where it might need to change.

Top of the list of priorities is the provision of social spaces – something which, Wells says, “isn’t quite working at the moment.” The JCR is one example; another is the College Bar, which, while reasonably well-used, is less popular than it used to be. “There’s definitely been a shift away from the idea of convening there before or after dinner,” he adds. “That’s not unique to John’s. Other Colleges tell us the

The Masterplan envisages developing existing social spaces in Second Court to create a thriving community hub for the College.

same thing.”

The reasons for this are hinted at in the Masterplan itself, which was drawn up by the architects and urban planning firm Allies and Morrison, but was also informed by staff consultations and annual student surveys around St John’s.

Crucially, the University’s own centre of gravity is shifting, away from the city centre and out towards the west. While students used to leave College via the Great Gate in the morning, attend lectures in town and return for lunch, now they often travel to west Cambridge or the Sidgwick site via the Backs, and work in purpose-built faculty buildings which have cafes and social spaces of their own.

Added to this is the fact that St John’s is getting bigger, particularly because of a growing graduate population which cannot be accommodated on the main site. As the community becomes more dispersed, the idea of the College as a hub for social interaction is under pressure.

Is this really a problem? “We’re a community of Fellows, staff, and students, and the magic of that, so far as the pursuit of our aims is concerned, is sharing ideas,” says Wells. “What Colleges do brilliantly, through shared space, is give you the opportunity to rub shoulders with people who have a very different perspective to you. Many of the real breakthroughs in Cambridge have resulted from that. Now there is a tension that could pull the community further apart. If we don’t want that to happen, we need to find a way to keep it together.”

For this reason, the Masterplan features several ideas which together add up to a significant redesign of the corner of Second Court where the Buttery Dining Room and the Bar are located. The aim is to give members a compelling reason to come back to College when they are not working elsewhere.

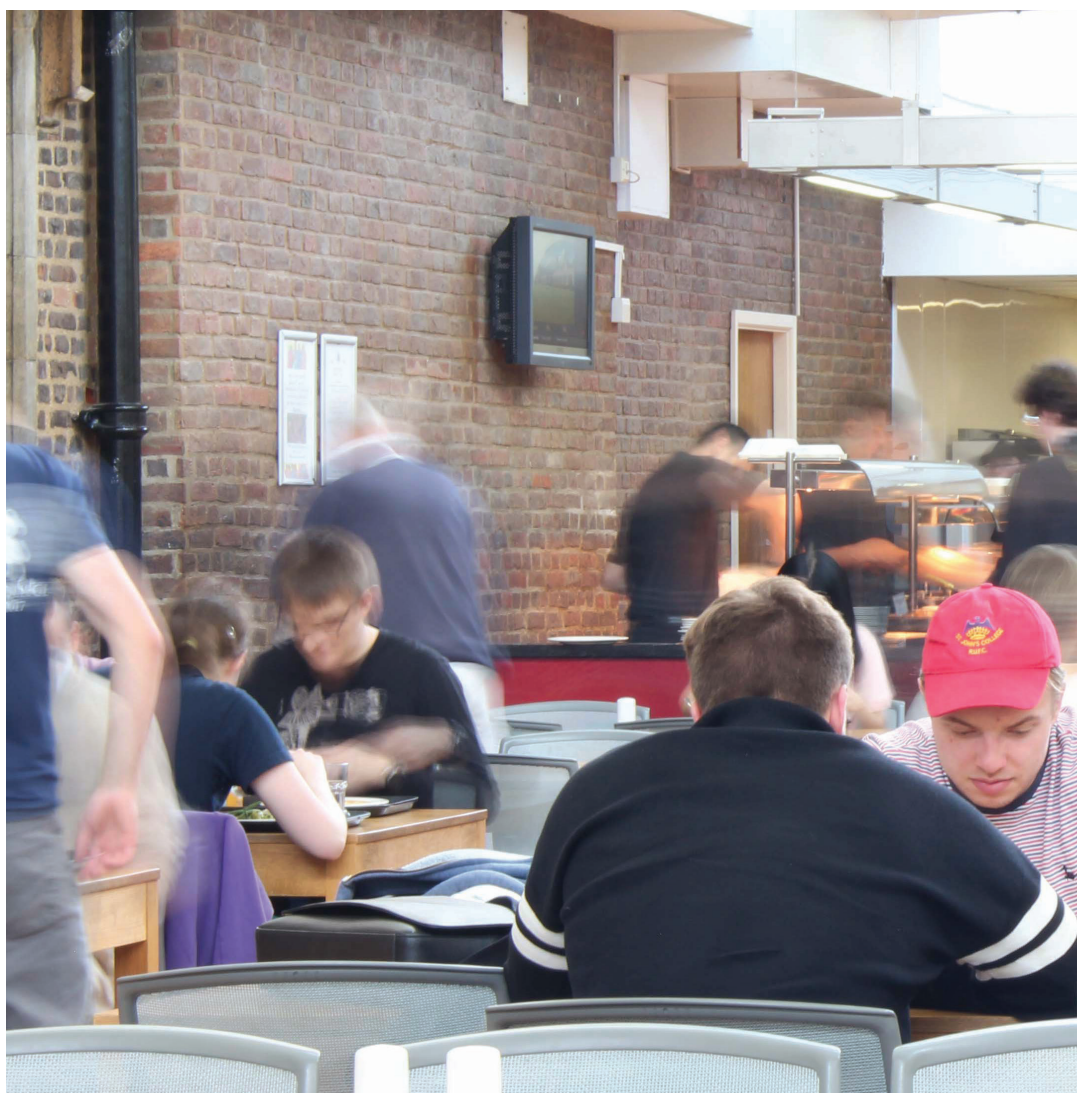
The most striking proposal involves an overhaul of the JCR, Bar and BDR area, developed in consultation with members of the JCR committee themselves. The need for a new approach, Wells thinks, is partly down to another societal transformation which, during the last 20 years, has had a magnetic effect on students; namely, the emergence of innumerable coffee shops all over Cambridge.

These, he suggests, have replaced common rooms as places in which students can work or meet. Recent efforts to convert the Bar into a similar sort of facility during the day have only partially succeeded. “The reason people don’t use the Bar in that capacity is because it is competing with excellent coffee shops around Cambridge,” he observes.

The Masterplan proposes turning the JCR into a student centre with an in-house coffee shop, complete with its own barista and staff. As well as serving first-rate coffee (which Wells, who starts each day with a flat white, considers essential), it would comprise both relaxed communal areas and private corners for work.

Furthermore, it would be open to the whole College community rather than just students. Staff, many of whom live some distance away and tend to go home to their families at the day’s end, have never really warmed to the idea of using the bar. A coffee shop would, it is thought, be a more attractive prospect for them during their morning breaks and after lunch.

Within the bar itself, the Masterplan anticipates a general makeover



which would help to create a more welcoming and relaxed environment for students. One possibility, the document speculates, would involve opening up parts of the wall with the Buttery. This would give the bar more light, but also create a more direct link with the BDR.

Demand for the BDR remains one of the healthiest aspects of Second Court's social life. Two thirds of students have their evening meal there on a regular basis; more than 80%, surveys suggest, use it at least once a week.

However, Wells thinks that some remodelling may be necessary. "We need to change the flow dynamics between the BDR and the Bar," he says. "At the moment it's too easy to walk out and ignore the fact that there is a Bar next door to continue conversations and meet people." Further alterations, to improve the lighting and acoustics within the BDR, and to create a more attractive environment on the patio behind it,

are also included.

None of these ideas is firmly set in stone, and all of them will be subject to further discussion within College before they are put into effect in the next few years. The cost of redesigning these social spaces, Wells suggests, would be significant – perhaps around £2.5 million for the full set of proposals. Raising that sum would almost certainly require a direct contribution from one or more benefactors who are keen to see the ideas become reality.

If the plans are eventually realised, however, Wells believes that they will breathe new life into this corner of the College, by providing it with an almost constant flow of Fellows, students and staff. That should enable more of the conversations, exchanges and chance encounters which are integral to the Cambridge experience.

"What we really want to do is to create a community with all

of these facilities in one place, to increase the chances of that happening," he says. "Some colleges have struggled with that. They either create disparate facilities, which encourage cliques, or they try to combine facilities into a quasi bar/coffee shop, which never quite works. At St John's we have a unique opportunity with the location of the bar, BDR and JCR, to create the best solution to this problem anywhere in Cambridge. The idea is that, in the end, all roads will lead you to the heart of the College."

► **The College Masterplan envisages a new social hub for St John's in Second Court: Allies and Morrison/St John's College; The Buttery at lunchtime: St John's College**



10-Minute Interview

With SBR President Jesse Allardice

With a blonde quiff Trump would kill for, Kiwi physicist Jesse Allardice is our new SBR President. Here he tells us about growing up in the wilderness, the perks of being President and what he's hoping to achieve over the year.

Jesse, tell us a bit about your background...

I come from a small country town in the middle of nowhere in New Zealand – it's a beautiful place. I spent quite a lot of my childhood in Nepal because my parents ran an adventure tourism company. My dad built the first bungee jump in Asia, which at the time was the third highest in the world, and they'd run rafting, trekking and outdoor trips. Then we went back to New Zealand to start a farm with lamb, cattle and blackcurrants.



What do you miss most about home?

Family. My sister's just turned 14 and I'm missing out on seeing her grow up. She does regional dance competitions and I'd love to be around to show my support. I also miss the wilderness in my home country and being able to really get away from it all. We are outside all the time back home.

How would you explain your PhD at a dinner party?



Well, my PhD isn't that dinner party friendly, but I'll give it a go. I look at mechanisms for moving towards the next generation of solar energy materials, so materials that increase the efficiency of solar cells. A lot of my work in the lab involves lasers because they are a great way of examining the interaction between matter and light. I'm working on ways to make that sound more exciting...

What made you run for SBR President?

I just thought it would be really exciting. It's a great way to throw yourself into College life and organise a great time for everyone. It was a chance to have a positive impact on people's experience of St John's. We have a garden party coming up at the end of this term and that event will be the last memory of being at College for some students.

What do you hope to achieve during your presidency?

There are a few things that I've wanted to do from the get go like organising a camping trip and some outdoor team-building for grads – I want to bring a bit of New Zealand to Cambridge over the summer. Next academic year, when new students are arriving it will all be about making them feel as welcome and a part of the community as possible. I want to help people make the most of the friendships and opportunities they will find here. Another priority for me is to make sure people are aware of the channels of support that are in place in College for them. A lot of Cambridge students put a lot of pressure on themselves to do well and although grads are a little

older than undergrads, we often struggle with the same things. We all need to know there are people we can talk to when things get tough.

What are the perks of being President?

There are going to be lots of events throughout the year and the fact that I have to go to most of them probably means I'll be having fun whether I like it or not! I am also learning a lot about the processes in College to get things done and I'm enjoying getting to know members of the Fellowship and administration better. I've also met the presidents of the other Colleges through the graduate union so I'm making lots of new friends.

What are the down-sides to the role?

You could definitely let the job suck up a lot of your time. You have to be really organised and I'm not quite there yet! The downsides will eventually become upsides though; I'm learning important life skills.

Finally, who is your idol?

Sir Edmund Hilary. He was the first man to climb Everest and a national hero of New Zealand. My dad met him once in Nepal. After his mountaineering feat he also did a lot of community work in Nepal – starting schools and improving healthcare systems. He's an iconic Kiwi many people look up to.

► Image credits: Jesse drinking coffee: St John's College; Jesse on his motorbike: Jesse Allardice

Awards



Professor Richard Samworth wins Adams Prize for statistical analysis

Professor Richard Samworth, Fellow of St John's College, has been awarded the Adams Prize 2016-17. The Adams Prize, one of the University of Cambridge's oldest and most prestigious, is awarded jointly each year by the Faculty of Mathematics and St John's College to UK-based researchers under the age of 40 who are carrying out first class international research in the Mathematical Sciences.

Dr Ruth Armstrong wins award for bringing prisoners and academics together

Dr Ruth Armstrong, Institute of Criminology, Cambridge University, and College Research Associate at St John's, has won a Butler Trust award for her pioneering work in Learning Together, a scheme which brings prisoners and academics together to learn from one another.



Choir of St John's scoops unprecedented BBC Music Magazine Award

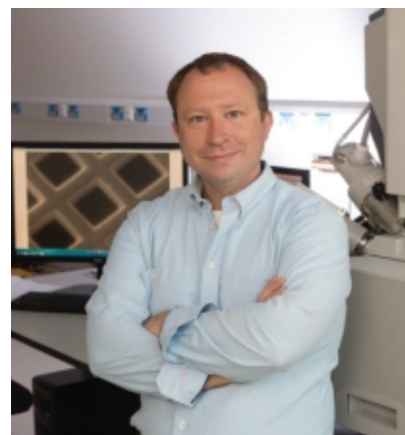
The Choir won a BBC Music Magazine Award for its recording of Deo, a collection of sacred works by the late composer and College Honorary Fellow, Jonathan Harvey.

It is the first time that a collegiate or cathedral choir has won the award for choral music at the prestigious ceremony. Deo was released in May last year, and was the first recording on the College's new label, an imprint on Signum Classics.



Mythical College beasts scoop craftsmanship award

The craftsmanship prize at the Cambridge Design and Construction Awards was awarded to the creator of two stone sculptures at St John's. The winning carvings are of yales - mythical beasts found in European mythology and one of the symbols of the College. The statues, carved by Corin Johnson, took six months to make and are cut from Ketton Stone. The first was installed in November 2015 and the second in February 2016.



College Research Associate wins medal for contribution to the field of microscopy and microanalysis.

Dr Christopher Russo, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, won the Microscopy Society of America Burton Medal for 2017. The medal is awarded annually to an individual under 40 years old who has made distinguished contributions to the field of microscopy and microanalysis. Dr Russo currently studies the physical phenomena that limit resolution in cryo-EM and enable the development of new devices and methods to improve the imaging power of the electron microscope in biology.

M1 went 'Head of the River' in Lent Bumps

Last summer in the May Bumps the Men's first boat at the Lady Margaret Boat Club took the prestigious title of 'Head of the River' after being ranked the fastest Men's boat on the River Cam. They then went on to repeat that success during the Lent bumps - a feat not seen for 27 years.



► Image credits: Richard Samworth – Richard Samworth; Princess Anne presenting Dr Ruth Armstrong (centre) and Dr Amy Ludlow with the Butler Trust award. Credit: Paul Clarke www.paulclarke.com; Deo, a collection of sacred works by Jonathan Harvey – The Choir of St John's College; One of the prize-winning College yales - Paul Everest; Dr Chris Russo - The MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology; Lady Margaret Boat Club Rowers in the Lent Bumps – Laura Day.

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