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ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Easter Term 2016

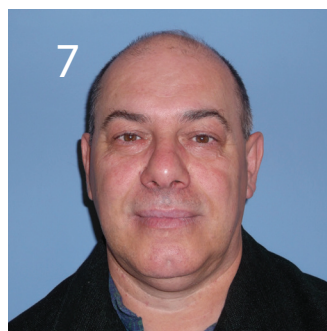
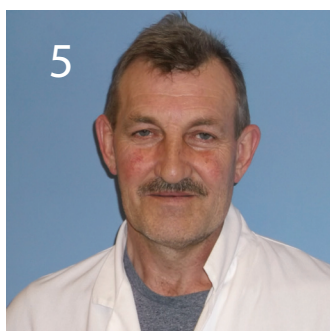


**Keep Calm and Carry On:
Staying Stress-Free at St John's**

**Just the Job: Fellows' First Steps
into the World of Work**

Lifting the Curtain on the College Theatre Scene

Welcome to our new staff!



► All photos St John's College: 1 Cei Whitehouse – Academic Administrator 2 Katy Harrison – Academic Administrator 3 Sarah Jeffs – Alumni Relations Assistant 4 Robert Jones – Custodian 5 Andrzej Kalinowski – Catering Cleaner 6 Marcus Smith – Acting Chapel Clerk 7 Vincenzo Corlito – Gyp 8 Henry Ellis – Assistant Groundsman

Farewell to...

Graham Wainwright, Porter; Peter Rodgers, Head Gyp; and Paul Challinor, Night Porter, who retire at the end of May, and John O'Hannan, Postman, who retires at the end of July.

And another goodbye to...

The Reverend Liz Adekunle, who left St John's to return to Stepney to take up a new office as the Archdeacon of Hackney in April.



If you would like to contribute to *Eagle Eye*, or have ideas for future articles, please contact the Editor, 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

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- credit: Alex Talibudeen

News Round-up

What's been happening around St John's



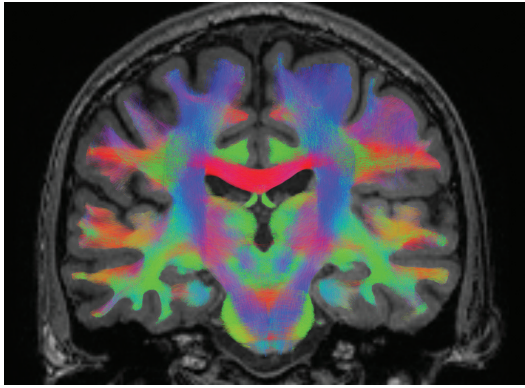
College launches record label

St John's College announced the launch of its own record label, which will be used to release music by its world-famous choir, as well as outstanding musicians who are studying at the College. For the first release on St John's Cambridge, the choir presents *Deo*, a varied recording of sacred works by Jonathan Harvey. The second release, due out in autumn 2016, will feature music for Advent and Christmas. Director of Music, Andrew Nethsingha, said, "We are thrilled to be releasing around three recordings per year on the St John's Cambridge label, and I'm looking forward to presenting a diverse range of ambitious choral and recital repertoire."

College poet releases debut collection to critical acclaim

Adam Crothers, Northern Irish poet and Library Assistant at St John's College, released his debut poetry collection to glowing reviews. *Several Deer*, published by Carcanet, is a collection of over 60 poems on the themes of destruction, consumption, misogyny, gods, sex, failure and music. Three of the poems have a strong Johnian connection: two were written for the Poetry in the Archives competition, and a third was inspired by the Anselm Kiefer painting of Chairman Mao hanging in the Working Library.





Researchers identify 'neurostatin' that may reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease

A team of researchers including the Master of St John's, Professor Chris Dobson, and College Lecturer in Nanoscience, Professor Tuomas Knowles, identified a drug that targets the first step in the toxic chain reaction leading to the death of brain cells. The discovery suggests that treatments could be developed to protect against Alzheimer's disease, in a similar way to how statins are able to reduce the risk of developing heart disease. The drug, which is an approved anti-cancer treatment, has been shown to delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease, both in a test tube and in nematode worms.



Sporting teams triumph in the College Leagues

St John's Ultimate Frisbee Team and the SJC Rugby Team saw recent successes when their respective teams won their College League. The Ultimate Frisbee team came out on top of the College League after beating Downing College in a highly competitive final, and the men's Rugby team won this year's College League First Division, following on from the success of last year's double-winning season.



Ancient history suggests that atheism is as natural to humans as religion

A new book, *Battling the Gods*, by St John's Fellow Professor Tim Whitmarsh, suggests that despite being written out of large parts of history, atheists thrived in the polytheistic societies of the ancient world – raising considerable doubts about whether humans really are 'wired' for religion. In the book he suggests that atheism, which is typically seen as a modern phenomenon, was not just common in ancient Greece and pre-Christian Rome, but probably flourished more in those societies than in most civilisations since. His book surveys one thousand years of ancient history, teasing out the various forms of disbelief expressed by philosophical movements, writers and public figures.



College to provide extra year-round support for lower-income students

The College announced two new major financial support initiatives for students at St John's: 'studentships', which will fund the living costs of students from lower-income families, and 'summer bursaries', which will help a wider range of undergraduates undertake educational activities over the summer vacation. New Home and EU undergraduates at the College whose household income is below £25,000 will automatically receive extra support directly from the College itself to cover living expenses, and students whose household income is below £66,154 will be eligible to receive summer bursaries.

► Image credits: St John's College Record Label: St John's College; Adam Crothers: Anna Kucharczyk; Electric brain: European Space Agency; The Chariot of Zeus: Wikimedia Commons; Studentships: St John's College; Ultimate Frisbee Team: St John's Ultimate Frisbee Team

Keep Calm and Carry On: Staying Stress-Free at St John's

Exam season can bring added stress to the system, but learning how to keep calm and deal with anxiety and stress all year round is beneficial for both the mind and body.



“Relax, chill out, don’t get stressed” is a common thing to say to someone who is feeling anxious or under pressure, but it’s easier said than done sometimes – especially if there is a crucial exam coming up, or if day-to-day life is proving difficult to deal with.

Learning to cope with stress and anxiety is essential for general well-being, not only during exam season but all year round – and it could mean the difference between success or failure. Fortunately, at St John’s there are plenty of resources and facilities available to help deal with stress, and there are also various relaxation techniques you can employ, enabling you to keep calm and carry on with everyday life in College in a stress-free manner.

Get some exercise

Movement and exercise are great ways to help beat stress. If you are tired or run down, anxiety increases, so it’s important to stay hydrated, eat well, and get active to boost your energy levels. There are plenty of opportunities in College to play sports – book a court via the online room booking system to play badminton in the Palmerston Room, have a game of basketball or hockey on the courts on the Playing Fields, play some Frisbee or croquet on the Lower Paddock (the usual rules about staying off the lawns are modified during Easter Term – just stick to these sports as others could damage the lawns!), go for a run along the Backs, or head to the fitness centre for a workout using the ergs, treadmills, cross-trainers and weights machines.

Yoga or Pilates is a perfect stress-busting form of exercise with the added benefits of helping with concentration levels and promoting a sense of well-being and relaxation. Emma Talibudeen, Development Manager (Major Gifts and Legacies), teaches yoga every Tuesday and Thursday in College, with free lessons on Tuesday lunchtimes for members of St John’s – and she is offering free Thursday evening lessons throughout May for students. “There are lots of health and physical benefits with



yoga, particularly stress reduction. It’s a total mind-body workout, and it’s great for improving strength and flexibility,” Emma says. (Read more about Emma and yoga in our 10 Minute Interview on page 18).

Talk to someone

Many members of staff and students are available to talk to if you need to discuss work-related problems, or if you just need to get something off your chest. Susie Renshaw, College Counsellor, is available to talk to if you are feeling unhappy or depressed. “Talking

to someone when you’re stressed is one of the best things you can do – be it a friend, someone in your family, or a counsellor like me,” Susie says. “Bottling things up can just make you feel more stressed. Saying what’s going on in your head out loud can help you clarify what you’re worried about so you can focus on problem-solving; keeping things inside can make them feel much more overwhelming. Share your feelings with someone you trust who can be more objective about your situation – they might help you see things in a different way and come up with



solutions you hadn't thought of." If you want to talk to Susie, drop her a line at s.renshaw@joh.cam.ac.uk.

If you are concerned about health issues, or need urgent advice or medical care, the College Nurse, Rachel Iftikhar, can help – find her in the Health Centre, B2 North Court, or email her at r.iftikhar@joh.cam.ac.uk. For a relaxed chat with a student, meet up with the JCR Welfare Officer, Chantelle Doran, who is happy to talk, no matter how big or small the problem - she can be contacted on cd545@cam.ac.uk.

“Talking to someone when you are stressed is one of the best things you can do”

The Tutors are here to help if you have either academic problems or personal issues, and the Chaplain is always available for a confidential conversation. And if you happen

to be around the Boat House, why not pop in and talk to Lance Badman (and his dogs) over a cup of tea, or have a chat with our Head Groundsman Keith Ellis who can be found at the Pavilion on the Playing Fields.

Fit in some downtime

Constant studying without structured breaks makes you less able to focus and concentrate; take a break, meet up with friends and give your mind a rest for a while. Get some fresh air and take out a

“Yoga is a total mind-body workout, and it is great for improving strength and flexibility.”

punt – hire one from Cripps Porters’ Lodge at just £5 per hour between March and October – or enjoy some outdoor dining and have your lunch or dinner on the Backs. You could also head to the College Bar and meet some friends for Afternoon Tea; coffee, tea and biscuits are free for St John’s students every afternoon from 3 to 3.30pm between Monday 2 May and Friday 10 June. Enjoy some music therapy and catch a Kettle’s Yard chamber concert at the Old Divinity School, a concert in the Master’s Lodge, or attend Choral Evensong in Chapel

– see details about events such as these in the What’s On Guide on the St John’s website or on the posters in the JCR, SBR, BDR, Porters’ Lodges, and many other locations around College.

Learn some relaxation techniques

As part of your daily routine, practice deep breathing, which is a proven way to calm down the nervous system as it slows the heart rate and lowers blood pressure. Breathe in deeply through your nose, counting to four as you breathe in, and feel the breath come into your belly. Exhale gently through your mouth, contracting your abdominal muscles, counting to four as you breathe out. Do this for a few minutes.

Meditation also helps you to relax and eases anxiety. Find a comfortable place – either in your room or a quiet spot on the Backs – and focus on a word, or mantra. Let any thoughts that come into your mind drift away without fighting

them, and return to your point of focus. This practice is said to change how you react to thoughts and emotions, and results in a state of mental calmness and clarity.

So if you are feeling stressed, unwell or depressed, try some of the suggestions or techniques mentioned above. There are many resources around College to help, so whether it’s a yoga class, a game of badminton, or a chat with a friend over some free tea and biscuits in the Bar, make some time for it – you might just feel a whole lot better afterwards and feel ready to take on your next challenge with renewed energy.

► **Images: Photo credits:**
Stressed student: Shiv Mirthyu; Punting on the Cam: St John’s College; Yoga - Tree pose: Emma Talibudeen



Just The Job: Fellows' First Steps into the World of Work



As many of the College's departing students take up new jobs, and others embark on summer internships and placements, we decided to ask a few of our Fellows about their first experiences of paid employment – resulting in some unexpected and intriguing tales about their early adventures in the workplace.

This summer, many students will undertake vacation jobs – some supported, for the first time, by new College bursaries designed to help them spend the summer pursuing an interest or career opportunity. Yet holiday work was not always thus. Back when some of our Fellows were at university, or indeed still at school, the vacation could often involve taking whatever work you could get, however menial and mind-numbing that proved to be.

It was therefore with some trepidation that a few weeks

ago *Eagle Eye* invited resident academics to tell us about their first experiences of paid work. Frankly, we expected to end up editing down accounts of long hours spent filing documents, fixing photocopiers, or flipping burgers, all in return for barely any cash.

Luckily for you, nothing could be further from the truth (except the bit about the cash). In fact, there is barely room to cover the eye-opening stories of just six of our Fellows and their first jobs. In the pages that follow, you can find out who got fired for singing in a bakery, who inadvertently insulted the blind, who was harried by

violent storms in the Indian Ocean, and who drove for eight hours on the motorway accompanied by a trio of mannequins.

We begin with the College's Senior Tutor, Dr Matthias Dörrzapf. While it

“When I got home, I dreamed about lifting doors.”

is often said that the Devil will find work for idle hands to do, following his first day of paid employment,



Dr Dörrzapf was probably lucky to have any hands left at all. Originally from south-west Germany, Dörrzapf managed, in the summer of 1981, to get a job with the local brewery in Bellheim, where his father worked. Weeks before he was due to start, one of the regular employees accidentally had his finger sucked into the brewery's bottle-filling machine, which ripped it clean off.

Clearly yet to evolve anything resembling a policy on the protection of minors, the brewery decided that Dörrzapf, aged just 14, was ideally suited to this unexpected vacancy. He found himself responsible for monitoring a phenomenal piece of equipment which filled and labelled 50,000 bottles an hour. "If the bottles got stuck they would have to stop the machine, which would have been a disaster," he observes, apparently oblivious to the disaster it might also have spelled for his own digits.

The Bellheimer factory sounds to have been fraught with peril. On another occasion, Dörrzapf was stationed on a similar machine

processing bottles of the popular fizzy drink, Orangina. This time the bottles had been pasteurised overnight at temperatures of 90 degrees. "At least the beer bottles were cold; these things were like grenades," he said. "The shape is unstable and 50,000 were zooming past every hour. On my second day one got stuck so I pulled it out, and it just exploded." He still has a scar to prove it.

Later jobs would see Dörrzapf dice variously with death and severe physical impairment in



other assorted ways. In 1986, he undertook national service with the West German Army, as part of a psychological operations unit. The team was responsible for making radio programmes which, in the event of the Cold War turning hot, would be broadcast to the enemy to persuade them that the West was full of peace-loving, benevolent people like Ronald Reagan and Helmut Kohl. Dörrzapf was responsible for putting up the unit's radio mast, which they also tested out by broadcasting the 1986 World Cup for a German station.

The real threat turned out to be less from the Russians than his own side. During a joint exercise with the Americans, Dörrzapf's unit found themselves stuck between American artillery and a target they were using for firing practice. "Going on exercise with the Americans was always an experience because they had a different attitude. If one bullet was unaccounted for in the German army we all had to stay behind to find it. The Americans just fired off as much as they wanted."

His first university years witnessed a return to factory work, this time at the Mercedes factory in Wörth. One year he had to help to make doors for trucks on a production line, lifting roughly one every two minutes ("When I got home, I dreamed about lifting doors").

Perhaps his best assignment, however, came when the factory had him drive a test car in order to check a new automatic gearbox. This involved navigating an eight-hour course on the Autobahn system, after which the drivers switched. "All I had to do was drive the car," Dörrzapf says. That wasn't quite all, however: In order to test the car at full load, he was accompanied by three mannequins filled with water. The weight was supposed to resemble a family of four, but to passing drivers it probably resembled a man hanging out with a plastic harem. Dörrzapf admits that he got one or two funny looks.

Dr Helen Watson, the College's Admissions Tutor, also found herself



cutting her teeth in the food and drink industry when, in Sixth Form, she got a job at the bakery in her home village of Magheragall in Northern Ireland. It was the first time that the firm, run by a brother and sister, had ever taken on an assistant, and the job involved four shifts a week making bread, buns and cakes in return for £40.

The young Watson soon discovered that she and the baker shared a love of music. "He would have preferred to be Sinatra but he was too fat," she recalls. "He was a great singer." Unfortunately, this gift for crooning left the sister cold, particularly when during Watson's second shift she turned up unexpectedly and found the baker teaching his protégé a two-part harmony for *Ain't Misbehavin'*. Watson was fired on the spot. "She didn't investigate; she just decided we were three bakes short of where we were supposed to be. So in a sense it wasn't my first paid job because I never got paid."

The story then took an unusual twist. Riddled with guilt, the baker invited Watson to duet with him

"I spent two nights every week singing for the demented with the local baker."

at a local care home, where he was helping to run a community singing project for the residents. "For the next year I spent two nights every week singing for the demented with the local baker," she says. "It was great. Whatever age people are they love singing."

Coincidentally, one of the residents was also the mother-in-law of a producer working on *The Rocky Horror Show* in Belfast. Impressed with Watson's abilities, he offered her a small part, and she appeared on stage in the city's Arts Theatre in 1983 while studying at Queen's University. The production also starred the future TV and film actor James Nesbitt. More significantly, such work had also fuelled Watson's interest in ethnomusicology, which gradually developed into an enthusiasm for anthropology, which she teaches today. So, in a sense, her academic career really began with Sinatra the baker.

Perhaps the most remarkable story we heard was that of Patrick Boyde, now Fellow Borderer and Emeritus Professor of Italian. Born in 1934 in London's East End, he was just four when war broke out in September 1939. Apparently anticipating the Blitz that would soon follow, his father, a local GP, moved the family to a tiny cottage at Felstead in Essex (though he himself stayed in London). "I went for a summer holiday in 1939, and came back in 1947," Boyde says.

"The great thing is I missed out on the really boring bit of school... I was either ill or doing something far more interesting."

He had barely started at the City of London School in 1947 when he fell ill, with what eventually turned out to be tuberculosis. The following months were spent in and out of hospital and convalescing. Then, a friend of Boyde's father, visiting from Australia in 1949, suggested that he might recover better in New South Wales. His father agreed, and that year, at the age of fourteen, Boyde set off from the Royal docks aboard the *SS Maloja*, a 15,000-ton ship carrying immigrants to Australia.

Arriving in July, Boyde spent nine "idyllic" months at Boat Harbour, which was then a few huts scattered around a bay on the Pacific. He chopped wood, learned spear-fishing and helped to bring in the lobster pots. "It was a healthy, outdoor life," he remembers, "and there was no school."

By April 1950, however, he was ready to return. Unable to find passage home, he took advice to seek work on a cargo ship that was going his way. Within days of walking into the Bank Line office on spec, Boyde was hired as pantry boy aboard the *SS Ivy Bank*, which was leaving from Geelong.

The *Ivy Bank* was a 'tramp steamer' – essentially a merchant ship without a fixed schedule whose crew worked on two year contracts picking up new cargos near where they discharged the previous one. Unbeknownst to him, he had been given the job in place of a man who had been laid off early – albeit on fairly good terms – as Boyde, who was still only 15, was cheaper to

employ at £7 a month plus keep and passage. "For the first few days on board the atmosphere was quite hostile," he remembers. "It didn't last. By the time we got to our next port I had been accepted, and they were kind to me."

The *Ivy Bank* loaded 3000 tons of lead in South Australia and 5000 tons of copra in the Solomon Islands and New Britain, before proceeding via Borneo, Aden, the Red Sea, Suez Canal, and the Mediterranean, arriving at Tilbury Docks four months later. Boyde's job involved washing up, looking after the Mates, and cleaning the 'heads'. He also shared a tiny four-berth cabin with an habitually neat steward called Benny, a "dreamy adolescent" called John, and a Glaswegian hard-man known as "Wee Jock". He has vivid memories of washing his smalls in a ceramic bucket, fishing in clear blue waters around the Solomons, and trading scraps from the kitchen in return for papayas in New Britain. Aged just 15, he drank with his crewmates in brothels, and in the Indian Ocean hung on for dear life as the ship altered course amid gigantic waves during one particularly horrendous storm.

Returning to a different grammar school in 1950, he already had a lifetime of experiences. "Lord knows what they made of me there," he reflects. "I didn't really behave like a typical adolescent, because I never really had an adolescence. It had been illness, isolation, then Australia and the boat. The great thing is I missed out on the really boring bit of school. Third, fourth, fifth form – I never did any of that. I was either ill or doing something far more interesting."

Boyde claims the trip was not as romantic as it sounds – its highlights punctuating long days amid grey seas – but it certainly sounds glamorous compared with the experiences of Professor Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, who was still at school when she knocked on the matron's door at her local orthopaedic hospital in County Limerick, Ireland. "As teenagers, we were expected to earn our pocket money, so I needed to get a job," she says.



Her mother had been a patient at the hospital with a broken ankle, leading Ní Mhaonaigh to believe that there was work available for an enterprising young student such as herself. She wasn't wrong. Long hours and hard, physical work followed in the kitchens and serving food on the ward, but there was the added bonus of triple pay on Christmas Day.

She carried on working there in the holidays while at University. "The most useful thing I learned was how to clean tea stains off the inside of cups," she reflects. "That

and how to spurn, gently but firmly, the attentions of bored, elderly men. The fact that they had broken bones made that part of things easier! More generally, it exposed me to the suffering of others, and I hope made me more empathetic."

Only one Fellow of the six to whom we spoke started paid work in an academic setting, and even then it was unconventional. Dr Isabel Palacios was the first woman, and possibly the first person, from Spain to get into the European Molecular Biology Laboratory's prestigious training programme at Heidelberg.

She was still a PhD student and wonders to this day how she got a place. "My English was not great, but I guess they liked me," she says.

The experience was tough. Palacios lacked the training required and was the only PhD student in her group, which otherwise comprised some very talented postdocs. Staying the course proved a feat of psychological endurance. "I almost crashed in my first year, but then it finally got easier," she says. "It ended up being the most exciting experience I had had; it opened my eyes to a new scientific world, and gave me a network of contacts that I still benefit from today."

Spare a thought, finally, for Mark Wells. As Domestic Bursar, he may now oversee the College gardeners, but back in the 1970s probably wouldn't have been able to tell Virginia Creeper from Boston Ivy even if New Court had fallen on him. This lack of horticultural know-how was woefully exposed at school when a biology teacher asked him to help with a project narrating audiobooks for the blind.

The teacher had been particularly impressed by Wells' recent turn in a production of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, and clearly felt he was the man for the job.

Galvanised by his naturally generous and philanthropic nature, as well as the prospect of better O-Level biology grades and a wad of ready cash, Wells agreed to help the teacher record the favourite books of members of the Royal National Institute for the Blind onto cassette. He was promptly asked to read *Fuchsias, the Complete Guide*, by Edwin Goulding, for the benefit of a member called Agnes.

Despite never having heard of fuchsias before, he dutifully set to. "Over the next four weeks I locked myself in my bedroom each evening with the tape recorder and duly recorded all 175 pages in the allotted time." His reward was not only the princely sum of £20, but the warm glow that came with the sense of a job well done, when Agnes wrote to thank him personally.

There was, however, an unfortunate post-script. "Many years later, when visiting a garden centre with my wife, I pointed out some fuchsias and told her about the recording," Wells recalls. "She looked at me quizzically and asked me to pronounce the plant again. When I did so, she just laughed. Apparently it is pronounced with a soft 'c'. Ah well. At least Agnes enjoyed it."



► Images: Matthias Dorrzapf in the army as part of his national service (pictured centre). His radio mast is in the background; Matthias Dorrzapf, aged about 16; The radio mast used by Dorrzapf and colleagues and intended for psychological warfare in the event of hostilities with the Soviet Union; Helen Watson in about 1981, performing at a local care home; Patrick Boyde with a picture of himself aged 12, shortly before the illness that would ultimately lead to his Australian adventure; and The SS *Ivy Bank*, in which Boyde sailed home in 1950, working as a pantry boy to pay his way.

Lifting the Curtain on the College Theatre Scene

Composing a musical about the gang culture surrounding the 2011 London Riots, treading the boards in professional theatre, and crafting Shakespeare's Globe in miniature for the stage - we find out about the activities of three talented John's undergraduates working in very different aspects of theatre.



The swarm of event posters tied to every inch of the railings opposite the Great Gate gives you some idea of the hub that exists in Cambridge for the performing arts, and it's a well-known fact that many a now-famous actor, presenter and comedian, from Emma Thompson to Mitchell and Webb, cut their theatrical teeth on stage in the city. We caught up with three current John's undergraduates who are active participants in this lively thespian world, either on the stage or behind the scenes.

“I wanted to write about something real, something that has an impact on society.”

Ryan Rodrigues, a third-year Theology student from South London, has drawn on his personal experiences of the 2011 London Riots to write a musical about the gang culture that played a major role in the chaos that erupted in the capital that summer. “I was on the bus home from a school trip and as we went through Tottenham I saw the disturbance on the streets. People were pelting shop windows with stones to break the glass and when I got home I was terrified to find out that a furniture shop about five minutes away from my house had been set ablaze. After this experience I became fascinated with the question of how and why the riots and lootings came about,” said Ryan.

Ryan and co-writer Katie Heath-Whyte, who recently graduated from Cambridge, penned their musical to explore these issues. The plot centres on a 16-year-old boy called Jake who lives with his mum in run-down South London. Jake keeps getting rejected in his pursuit of a career in music and ends up being drawn into gang life. “I went to a state comprehensive in South London and I experienced the impact the riots had on the local



community first-hand as well as the wider social tensions that they were born out of,” Ryan added. “I wanted to write about something real, something that has an impact on society.”

Ryan and Katie showcased extracts of the production at the University's ADC Theatre back in November. The cast, crew and orchestra were made up entirely of Cambridge students and it was produced by the Cambridge University Musical Theatre Society. “The showcase was scary because it was a totally unknown musical at that point and we had no idea how it would be received.”

With just three weeks to get the production stage-ready, the showcase was put together under intense time pressure. “All the hard work was worth it as we were able to find out what resonated with the audience and what needed adjusting. It also really helped to get the word out there about the show.”

In the capital this May, Ryan will be pitching the musical to leading London theatre producers looking to invest in new shows. “I am really excited about this opportunity, but I know that whatever happens it will be a long process – the musical *Wicked* took seven years to get to the West End from the date of its first showcase so these things take time if you want to do them properly.”

Next year Ryan has a place on a Masters course in Musical Theatre Writing at Mount View Performing Arts School. The course is run in partnership with Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, and Ryan will spend his time between placements with top professionals in the West End and in New York. “This is my chance to learn from some of the best people in the theatre industry and get their advice and guidance while writing my own stuff.”

Aspiring actress Kate Reid is in her third year studying English Literature. Kate has been heavily involved in drama since coming to St



John's and has appeared in around five productions a year at theatres including the ADC and Corpus Playroom.

Back in February, Kate beat tough competition in auditions to star in a production of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* at the prestigious Cambridge Arts Theatre. The play was staged by one of the University of Cambridge's leading drama groups, the Marlowe Society, and celebrated the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

"It was very exciting to work in a professional venue with a professional director. Balancing a rehearsal schedule of around 35 hours a week with my full-time studies was tough, but worth it for the incredible opportunity," said Kate.

"The production had a small cast and most people were playing two or three different parts, so we had to be versatile. At one point in the play,

"Balancing a rehearsal schedule of around 35 hours a week with my full-time studies was tough, but worth it for the incredible opportunity."

I switched to a different character and had to change costume in under a minute – practically it was quite a challenge!"

The opening performance of *Measure for Measure* was to an audience of around 600 people, but Kate gained valuable experience of performing to large audiences

last summer by going on tour with a production company. After winning a place with the Cambridge American Stage Tour (CAST), she performed Shakespeare to American audiences across the Eastern United States as part of a troupe made up of some of Cambridge's most talented actors, directors, designers and technicians.

Kate has been offered a place on an MA at the Arts Educational School in London after she graduates, but has also been shortlisted for Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and is currently auditioning for the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. "The drama school audition process goes on for months so I am not sure yet where I will end up next year - the experiences I have gained during my time at Cambridge have opened up wonderful opportunities for me."

Lydia Clark is in her second year studying Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, and, when she's not studying,



► Images : Ryan Rodrigues, credit: St John's College; Kate Reid in rehearsals for *Measure for Measure*, credit: Johannes Hjorth; Kate Reid, credit: Johannes Hjorth, and Lydia Clark, credit: St John's College.

you'll be sure to find her at the ADC. "Before coming up to St John's I had never set foot on a stage, but by my second term I was doing carpentry for various shows. I really enjoy the contrast with my studies of doing something physical, and, being from a small department, it's been a fantastic way to make friends."

Lydia gradually built up her carpentry prowess and has gone on to become a set designer. "I have ended up enjoying something that I'd never previously considered getting involved in – you get the chance to try all sorts of things at uni and you never know who you'll meet and what skills you'll gain."

Some of the highlights of Lydia's theatre work have been creating Shakespeare's Globe in miniature for a production of *Henry IV* and designing the set for a Robin Hood

“Before coming up to St John's I had never set foot on a stage, but by my second term I was doing carpentry for various shows.”

pantomime. "It's hard work and long hours as sometimes the setting up and putting away for a production goes on until four or six in the morning, but there's a real sense of community back stage."

Lydia has just finished her term as Secretary for the Cambridge University Amateur Dramatic Club, which is the resident company and owner of the ADC Theatre. "It has been great to be involved in deciding what shows to put on at the ADC and, as everything is produced, directed, designed and performed exclusively by students, it's been brilliant to play a part in creating as many opportunities for people to take part in theatre as possible."

10-Minute Interview

with Emma Talibudeen

Emma Talibudeen, Development Manager (Major Gifts and Legacies), tells us about her love of yoga, teaching classes at St John's, and her thoughts about trying to achieve that perfect pose.

So Emma, you teach yoga a couple of times a week here at St John's – what made you take up yoga?

A few years ago I felt like I needed to take up some form of exercise, and I have never been a sporty person, so yoga sounded ideal as it's not at all competitive. I'd been interested in it for ages, and I'd read a lot about the health and physical benefits of yoga such as stress reduction, so when friends suggested I should give it a go, I did.



I started doing yoga at home then heard about a studio in town that had a month's special offer, so I signed up and enjoyed it so much that I ended up going at least three times a week, sometimes more. I've been practising regularly for over four years now.

What do you enjoy about yoga?

It's a full mind-body experience.



It's not just about physical practice and exercise; it's about finding a connection with yourself and exploring what you can do with your body.

Why did you decide to become a yoga teacher, and what do you get out of teaching?

I decided that becoming a teacher was a good way to learn more about yoga and myself. I did a year-long course at weekends, and graduated last September, so I've been teaching for about six months. I love yoga so much – it's a huge part of my life, I practise it every day, and I felt that I wanted to share it, so being a teacher was the next natural step. When I teach I hope that yoga can make a difference to somebody's day and that it's something that they can take forward into their everyday lives.

You teach two different classes here at St John's – tell us about them

The class I teach on Thursday evenings is called vinyasa flow yoga and is open to the public. It's suitable for all levels, and it links movement with breath – it's a total mind-body

workout and great for improving strength and flexibility. The class includes sun salutations, and it is a flowing, dynamic moving meditation, with poses running together and progressing to a peak pose. On Tuesday lunchtimes I teach a free Hatha Yoga class for staff, students and Fellows of St John's. This is a shorter, gentler class, which although still a physical challenge, focuses on a handful of poses and is meditative in a different way, with more time spent seated and focusing on breath work and posture. Anyone can come to any of these classes – it doesn't matter about your body type or fitness level.

Are there any difficult yoga poses that you're working on?

I'm working on the splits at the moment! I've always been very inflexible – I could barely touch my knees, let alone my toes when I first started practising yoga – so it's challenging. But yoga isn't about achieving the perfect pose; it's about concentrating on your breath and focusing, and not judging yourself if you can't quite get there. It's about learning to understand what your body can do, and enjoying the journey there.

► Image credits: Emma - Triangle pose: Alex Talibudeen; Group Tree pose: Emma Talibudeen; Emma - Reverse Warrior pose: Alex Talibudeen



Emma's Hatha Yoga classes are exclusively for Fellows, staff and students of St John's and are free; they take place on Tuesday lunchtimes in the Palmerston Room between 12 and 12.45pm during term time.

Vinyasa Flow classes take place on Thursdays between 6 and 7.15pm in the Palmerston Room and cost £6 (£4 students) or £30 for a 6-class pass (£20 students). These classes are free for students throughout May.

Awards



Partha Dasgupta awarded Tyler Prize

Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta, the eminent economist and Fellow of St John's College, was awarded the Tyler Prize – the premier award for work on environmental science, environmental health and energy. The award recognises decades of research that has served society by “illuminating connections between poverty, sustainable development and environmental health”, as well as Dasgupta's recent work with Pope Francis which culminated in the Pope's celebrated encyclical on the environment. It is the first time that the Tyler Prize has been awarded to an economist.



Three Johnnians given major award for teaching excellence

The prestigious Pilkington Prize was awarded to three inspirational academics and members of St John's College for the exceptional quality of their teaching: Dr Noel Rutter, Dr Emma Mawdsley and Dr Sophia Connell. The Pilkington Prize is awarded annually to 12

inspirational academics who are nominated for the award by Schools within the University. The Pilkington Prize awards were inaugurated in 1994 and endowed by Sir Alastair Pilkington to acknowledge excellence in teaching.



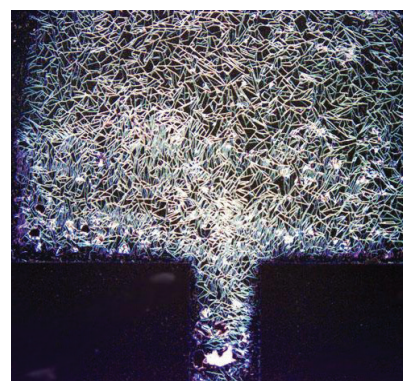
Former Harper-Wood Student wins short story prize

Erin Soros, the 2014 Harper-Wood Student, was awarded the second prize in the Costa Short Story Award 2015. The Norwich-based Canadian writer was announced as runner-up in the competition with her short and powerful story, *Fallen*, a story set in a logging camp told by the only female living there among the men where a logging accident takes a man's arm, and the camp gets together to mark the loss. The Harper-Wood Studentship at St John's funded Erin's travel to research Inuvialuit oral history in the Canadian Arctic.



The Cripps Building scoops two regional awards in annual architectural competition

The Cripps Building at St John's won two awards from the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in recognition of its architectural excellence and contribution to society. The building received a RIBA East Award and a special RIBA East Conservation Award following a ceremony at St John's College. Steve Beeby, Superintendent of Buildings at St John's College said: “I am delighted the work on Cripps has been recognised in this way, the award represents an outstanding effort by the architects and my team.”



Johnnian wins award in EPSRC Science Photography Competition 2015

St John's student Katarzyna Sokol has been awarded second place in her group in the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) Science Photography Competition 2015. The competition allows all EPSRC-supported researchers and EPSRC-supported doctoral students to share their research using images. Katarzyna, in her second year of a PhD in Chemistry, won second place in the Equipment category with her photo Dark field light microscopy picture of a 40 nm thick electrodeposited TiO₂ layer.

► **Image credits: Professor Dasgupta: Jake Dyer; Teaching award: Brigitte Werner; Erin Soros: Erin Soros; Cripps building: Paul Everest; EPSRC photo: Katarzyna Sokol**

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