

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Easter Term 2019

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A beginner's guide to the Bumps

Party planners: the serious side to socialising

Faith, doubt, and Gwen Stefani

Meet Emma Dellar, College Nurse

Welcome to our new staff!



- 1 **Natasha Heighes** – Accounts Assistant (Payments)
- 2 **Safiyya Winter** – Admissions Office Assistant
- 3 **Kayleigh Dunn** – Admissions Office Assistant
- 4 **Storm Stainton** – Porter
- 5 **Daniel Humphreys** – Section Chef
- 6 **Ben Levitt** – Custodian
- 7 **Neven Isayev** – General Kitchen Assistant
- 8 **Concetta Gargiulo** – Bedmaker
- 9 **Jessica Tammaro** – Bedmaker
- 10 **Dan Reed** – Multi-Skilled Building Operative
- 11 **Dora Nyikos** – Deputy Linen Room Supervisor
- 12 **Tamas Felegyhazi** – Section Chef (Stove)
- 13 **David Benton** – Pastry Chef

And goodbye to...

...Philippa Gibbs and Debbie Miles in Admissions!

Philippa Gibbs, Admissions Office Assistant, retired on 17 May after 18 years at St John's.
Debbie Miles, Admissions Tutor's Assistant, also said goodbye to St John's on the same day after 11 years to take on a role in undergraduate admissions in Wolfson College. Happy retirement, Philippa, and best of luck in your new position, Debbie!

Goodbye and good luck also to **Reverend Carol Barrett Ford**, Chaplain, who leaves St John's at the end of July to start a new post as Vicar of St Martin's Gospel Oak, London.



The Admissions team: Kayleigh Dunn, Safiyya Winter, Dr Helen Watson, Philippa Gibbs, and Debbie Miles

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: Louise Hanzlik, lh445@cam.ac.uk

Front cover image: Milly, the boatman's
dog, with Sophie Michalski from LMBC.

Credit: Alan Davidson

Note from the Editor



Welcome to the Easter Term
2019 edition of *Eagle Eye*!

Easter Term means exam term,
with all the pressures that
brings – but it also means
sunny days sitting on the
Backs (hopefully) and all the
festivities of May Week, with
concerts, balls, and just before
that, the Bumps. Don't miss our
beginners' guide to the famous
boat races, brought to you with
help from the Lady Margaret
Boat Club, to explain the
often confusing terminology
(spoons? blades?) so we can
understand what on earth is
going on.

We chat to Keith Ellis, the
outgoing Chair of the Staff
Social Committee, who tells us

what's involved when it comes
to organising events like the
Christmas party, and what the
committee has got planned
for us to look forward to in the
future.

This edition also features the
Reverend Canon Mark Oakley,
Dean of Chapel, who talks to
us about turning down a place
at RADA, being held up at
gunpoint, and why doubt is
normal.

Emma Dellar, our College
Nurse, explains what advice
she offers students on how
to cope with pressure during
exam term, and why she is
organising a fundraising
dinner for The Anaphylaxis
Campaign.

We do hope you enjoy reading
this Easter Term issue of *Eagle
Eye*, and please drop me a line
if there are any stories you
would like to be covered
in future editions.

All the best,

Louise

**Editor and Web and Internal
Communications Officer**

News and awards

St John's marks 150 year anniversary of famous College Chapel

Celebrations to mark the 150th birthday of the famous Victorian Chapel of St John's – an iconic feature of the Cambridge skyline – have been taking place.

Designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, the great Gothic Revival architect, the building replaced a relatively modest Tudor chapel which was itself a

rebuilding of the 13th century Hospital of St John. When it was built, the Chapel was the tallest building in Cambridge as it towered over the city at 164ft high.

A programme of special services took place on Sunday, May 12 – 150 years to the day of the Chapel's official consecration in 1869.



St John's College Chapel



Credit: Faye Thomas

Emma Corrin to play Princess Diana in Netflix smash-hit series *The Crown*

St John's alumna Emma Corrin has been cast as Princess Diana in season four of *The Crown*.

The Netflix drama follows the political rivalries and royal scandals during the reign of The Queen. It has received more than 15 international awards for the cast and crew including the Golden Globe for Best Television Series.

Each season of the drama covers several years of the Queen's life beginning with her father's death and her subsequent Coronation at the age of 25 in 1947. There is a high level of secrecy

surrounding the content of season four, which will be filmed later this year and will air in 2020, but it will cover the marriage of Prince Charles and Princess Diana.

Corrin, who studied Education, English and Drama at St John's and graduated last year, said: "I have been glued to the show since the first episode and to think I'm now joining this incredibly talented acting family is just surreal.

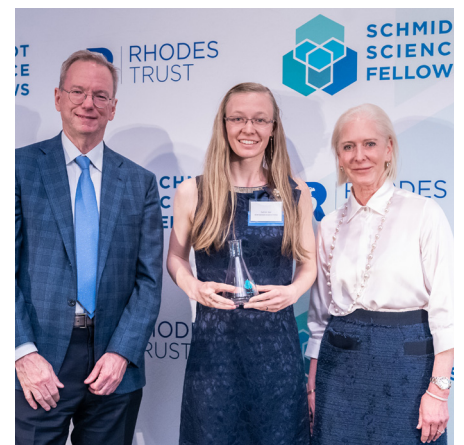
"Princess Diana was an icon, and her effect on the world remains profound and inspiring."

'Truly exceptional' John's academic named as high-profile Schmidt Science Fellow

An incoming Research Fellow at St John's has been named as one of the 2019 class of Schmidt Science Fellows.

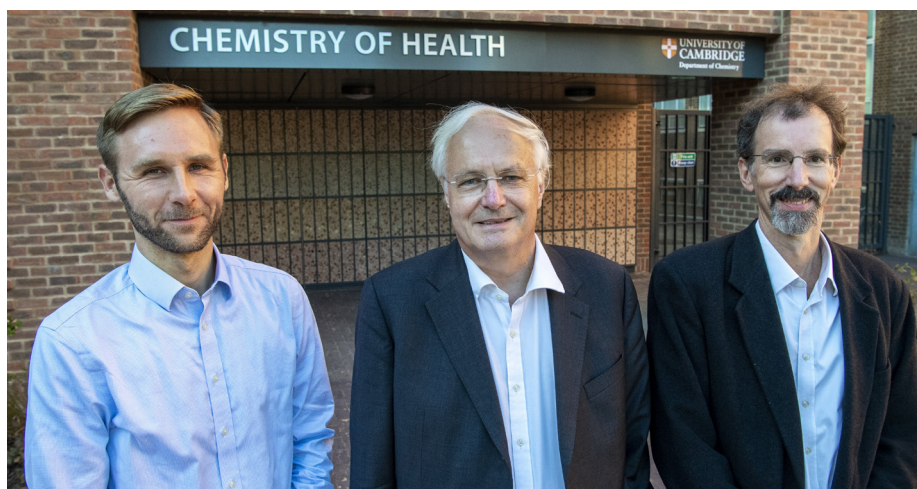
Kadi Liis Saar was elected as one of the five new Research Fellows that will join St John's in October 2019. Her work focuses on developing new physical approaches for probing the behaviour of complex systems of proteins and the proteomic landscapes of single cells.

Now she has been named as a Schmidt Science Fellow – a \$25 million philanthropic initiative that 'bets early on people who will make the world better'. She has been welcomed onto the innovative post-doctoral programme that aims to develop the next generation of science leaders to tackle the world's most significant problems and maximise scientific opportunities for society.



Kadi Liis Saar (centre) with Eric and Wendy Schmidt

Research centre run by Master of St John's wins prestigious Royal Society of Chemistry award



Professor Tuomas Knowles, Professor Sir Christopher Dobson and Professor Michele Vendruscolo outside The Centre for Misfolding Diseases

Academics at The Centre for Misfolding Diseases have been honoured with a Royal Society of Chemistry prize to celebrate their 'inspirational' scientific collaboration.

The Royal Society of Chemistry's annual prizes and awards recognise achievements by individuals, teams and organisations in advancing the chemical sciences. The interdisciplinary research team at The Centre for Misfolding Diseases focuses on the family of human disorders that includes Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, and type-II diabetes,

which are the most rapidly rising cause of illness and death in the developed world.

The centre is directed by Professor Sir Christopher Dobson, Master of St John's, Professor Tuomas Knowles, Fellow of St John's, and Professor Michele Vendruscolo. The trio have been awarded the Rita and John Cornforth Award which aims to highlight scientists working in collaborative research teams with both chemistry and the life sciences.

They have won £2000, a medal, and will complete a UK lecture tour.

Rugby and hockey captains win awards celebrating outstanding sportspeople

St John's students Charlie Smith and Zengani Nyirenda were honoured with prizes for their significant contributions to College sport at this year's Annual General Athletics Club Colours Dinner.

Smith, who captains the men's rugby team, was presented with the Bob Fuller trophy and Nyirenda, captain of the women's hockey team, was awarded the Jim Williams trophy by Dr Helen Watson, Fellow and Treasurer of the Flamingos – the elite women's sports club at St John's.

The Colours Dinner is held every year and recognises exceptional achievements and good character in the sports women and men of St John's.



Charlie Smith, Dr Helen Watson and Zengani Nyirenda at the Annual General Athletics Club Colours Dinner. Photo credit: Nordin Ćatić

Painting of mother of King Henry VII revealed as oldest large-scale portrait of an English woman



A portrait of Lady Margaret Beaufort has been named as the first piece of work identified as being painted by 16th century Dutch artist Meynnart Wewyck – solving a 500-year-old mystery.

Wewyck was an active member of King Henry VII's court during his reign and became his preferred painter. Lady Margaret Beaufort was a philanthropist and the mother of the Tudor king Henry VII. She was one of the wealthiest women in England and used her money to build schools, churches, and two University of Cambridge Colleges – Christ's and St John's.

Research by Dr Andrew Chen, Art Historian and Fellow of St John's, discovered that the painting, which is located in the Master's Lodge, is the earliest large-scale portrait of an English woman, solving a centuries long mystery about its origins. One of the reasons the painting is so important is because paintings of women depicted on their own in a large-scale format are incredibly rare.

Party planners: the serious side of socialising

Keith Ellis, the outgoing Chair of the Staff Social Committee, talks to Louise Hanzlik about organising staff events, doing the Christmas Party booze run, and why he has stepped down after three years at the helm.

Behind every staff Christmas party, Formal Hall, and Bar Quiz, there is a group of people putting in the time to organise the food, the tickets, and the fun...meet the Staff Social Committee!

The group of 13 members of staff meet once a term to organise gatherings to bring colleagues together from across St John's. Its main aims are to provide both a summer and winter event for the 332 members of College staff – and possibly a few ad-hoc gatherings in between.

After three years in the position of Chair of the committee, Keith Ellis, Head Groundsman, has just stepped down and is handing on the responsibility to another committee member.

"I've been Chair for three years, and it's time to hand over the role – I didn't actually intend to take on the position in the first place; I took it on as nobody else put their hand up when Steve Morgan, the previous Chair, retired!" laughs Keith. "I wanted to try to turn things around, as staff numbers were dwindling at events. And I think I've managed to do that – I've got it where I wanted it to be, and I think I've left it in good shape. I'm staying on the committee, but somebody else can run things now!"

Keith has worked at St John's since 1982 – he started work at the College three days after his 16th birthday. He



Keith Ellis, Head Groundsman and outgoing Chair of the Staff Social Committee

works with two other groundsmen to look after the Playing Fields and the team, which includes a Sports Facilities Admin Assistant, work seven days a week between them during term-time to ensure that the students can make full use of the facilities. "I can see myself staying at St John's until I retire – and maybe even longer!" says Keith. "I like the sense of belonging and meeting a wide variety of people."

"I didn't actually intend to take on the position of Chair in the first place; I took it on as nobody else put their hand up!"

The Staff Social Committee has been going for more than 40 years in its current guise, and even more informally for decades prior to that. It is not a formal College Council Standing Committee, so there are no records referring to when social events for staff were first organised – but we do know that a summer trip to the seaside was an annual event for at least as far back as a century ago; a reference to "the annual staff outing to Yarmouth" is mentioned in *St John's College Cambridge: A History*, edited by Dr Peter Linehan (p.485).

Claire Aspinall was the Secretary of the Staff Social Committee about 20 years ago, and she remembers organising three or four events a year, including coach trips, shows in London, meals, and even days out to France. The College

would pay a certain amount for staff, and Fellows were asked if they would like to contribute to the pot. Guests would pay for themselves.

Coach trips to the seaside are now a thing of the past – this changed about eight years ago, and there is now a College Closure Day at the end of August instead when staff members have the day off to spend with their families. There is an official budget for the Staff Social Committee with the two main events paid for by the College and additional events subsidised.

Nowadays, the biggest event on the committee's calendar is the Staff Christmas Party. It takes place in the Hall and Combination Room, and this year the event is on 20 December.

"The Christmas Party is a lot of fun – there's food, drink, a raffle, a full dance floor – what more could you want?!" says Keith. "But it takes a lot of organising. The Chair is responsible for making sure that everything gets done. There is a band to book, which we really have to do a year in advance, and a disco, a photo booth, and music to organise. Last year the committee put together a complete playlist with a variety of music, which was very successful. We also have to speak to Catering to arrange the food menus, and then buy all the alcohol – I always make sure I take on that task! We always over order so we don't run dry and we can return what's not been used. We also have to sort out the tickets, buy raffle prizes...the list goes on."

WWW.THEPROBOOTH.COM

Christmas PARTY

St John's College • 15th Dec 2018

Dan Molden and Mandy Cairns at the Christmas party. Credit: www.thephotobooth.com

In previous years, accompanying guests would have to pay to come to the party, but now, guests go free. "The Senior Bursar came up with this idea – he is keen to provide us with extra funds so staff members don't miss out," explains Keith. "And as the pot is now a bit bigger, we have more funds to buy quality raffle prizes, which often includes May Ball tickets and vouchers."

"The staff Christmas party is a lot of fun – there's food, drink, a raffle, a full dance floor – what more could you want?"



Staff outing by charabanc, 1945, *St John's College Cambridge, Excellence and Diversity*, edited by David Morphet (p.163)

Keith is pleased that the numbers were up last year for the Christmas party. "We are limited to 210 in the Hall, and last year 185 people attended – the year before it was 140. So I'm happy with that, and I do feel that we are turning things around."

successful – we would like to put on more like it," says Keith. "We've got all sorts of ideas in the pipeline so watch this space."

Every other year, the committee organises a Staff Formal Hall, when

events so far, and both have been well attended; more than 130 staff members and guests dined at the last Formal in July 2018.

As the Formal Hall took place last year, there will be a different main event this summer. "We are planning a big garden party for staff and their families on Sunday, August 11. It is still in the early stages but we will let people know what's in store as soon as we can," says Keith.

"We've got all sorts of ideas in the pipeline – watch this space!"

Keith is now handing over the reins to Jo Tynan, who is taking over as Chair of the committee. So what advice does Keith have to give her? "She just has to go in and do what she has to do – I know she wants people to suggest ideas of events they would like, so do track her down or one of the other committee members to pass on your ideas. Jo can tell me what to do now – but I'll still do the booze run at Christmas!"

■ The Staff Summer Party will take place on Sunday, August 11 from 2pm-4pm in the Scholars' Garden. The event is open to staff and their families and there will be food, drinks and fun for all ages.



Members of the Staff Social Committee – Gemma De-Grammont, Vicky Flack, Amy Reeve, Keith Ellis, Sarah Hardy, and Emma Dellar

The committee made it their mission to find out what staff members liked, and what they thought could be improved. "Every year we discuss what needs tweaking, and Audrey Hewson, the Secretary, sends out surveys to members of staff, so we act on the results as much as we can. Audrey is actually the lynchpin of the committee, not me – I can't praise her enough. She minutes everything in detail, and is so well organised. Without her, my job would have been a lot harder."

As well as the Christmas party, the committee also organises the Pensioners' Christmas Party, which takes place in January.

In March, the committee held its first Staff Bar Quiz, in which eight teams competed for cash prizes. Jo Tynan, Head of Communications, was quizmaster, and members of staff battled through seven rounds including a picture round. *'I am Smarticus'* came first place, with *'Bean Boozled'* coming in a close second. "The event was really popular and

staff members get the chance to enjoy a formal dinner in the atmospheric setting of the Hall. Fellows also attend the dinners, and grace is read in Latin; it is designed to be as close as it can be to the student experience – minus the gowns! There have been two of these



'I am Smarticus' – winners of the Staff Bar Quiz: Peter Galley, Jack Glossop, Claire Stroud, David Stroud, and Jim Wocha

“I don’t want the rumour of God disappearing from the face of the earth”

The Reverend Canon Mark Oakley is the new Dean of Chapel at St John’s. He spoke to Jo Tynan about his love of poetry, marrying Gwen Stefani, and why doubt is normal.

My parents divorced when I was two and my father got custody. I have never known my mother and I wasn’t particularly close to my father. I was brought up by my grandmother who is 97. I speak to her every day. When I was 11 I just walked into a country church by myself, there was a service going on and I didn’t understand what on earth it was all about but I was moved by it. It felt like a weird homecoming and I felt at peace, I remember getting quite tearful.

By the time I was 16 I knew what I wanted to do and I’ve never really varied from that. My father thought it was a phase I would grow out of. ‘Meaning making’ has always been important to me. As an only child stuck out in the Shropshire countryside I developed a very rich imaginative inner life so that I didn’t get bored and lonely.

On the whole friends were intrigued by me at school, some thought my faith was bonkers and others respected it. One boy said to me that he was going to come and find me when I was a vicar and ask me to marry him to his future wife. Sure enough when I was 27 there was a knock on the door and there he was. He said “I’ve found her, will you do it?” And I did.



I got offered a place at RADA but I went to King’s College London to read Theology. At 21 I was assessed by the Church of England and recommended for training. We all have un-lived lives. It feels like there was something inevitable about this path and I had to be on it. There was quiet sense of inevitability, no flashing lights.

I’ve had periods of thinking about giving it all up and walking away. Doubt is normal. Before I was ordained I did a placement in a HIV ward and I was

surrounded by people the same age as me dying of AIDS and I couldn’t make any sense of it. I realised that if this world has any meaning it has to be focused on love and that anyone who loves will at some point grieve. All that, of course, is explored by the Christian faith.

‘Advancement of Religion’ is one of the historic statutory aims of St John’s but the big question now is what does that mean? For me it means we are trying to provide religious literacy and exploration, allowing

people an understanding and the potential, if they wish, to have a commitment to religion – whether it is the Christian one or not. I want the Chapel to be a place to examine these things in an open way without fear. How can religion not be thought of as a self-serving dogmatic ideology but as a generous worldview that seeks partnerships in the College for the common good? The Chapel has a vocation to ask questions of its community, I get involved in a lot of social justice campaigning.

The best training is experience and getting older. Chapel offers complementary pastoral care for students, Fellows and staff alongside the tutor system and the nurse. You can't assume trust from people and a good thing about living in a community like St John's is that you build up relationships that can lead to those important pastoral encounters.

We have an uncanny knack for beating ourselves up and of blaming ourselves for being imperfect. People are quite often asking for permission to be who they are. Sometimes the most profound conversations are ones that you don't plan. Some you have in the



The Reverend Canon Mark Oakley with Sir Ian McKellen at a protest in London led by Amnesty International and Stonewall UK

Buttery or walking through the gardens and you suddenly realise you are talking to someone about something that is pivotal to their life and it is not just a chat.

I did the wedding service of Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale when I was rector of St Paul's Covent Garden, known as The Actors' Church. Sadly their marriage didn't work out but



Canon Oakley with Gwen Stefani on her wedding day at The Actors' Church in 2002



Martyrs (Earth, Air, Fire, Water) - the first of two large-scale permanent video installations installed at St Paul's Cathedral in a project led by Canon Oakley

Aled Jones and his wife are still going strong! I also did a lot of funerals and memorial services and it could be anyone from Dame Judi's husband, Michael Williams, to an actor who played the back of a horse in Panto for 20 years in Wolverhampton. I got held up at gunpoint a couple of times too by people after money from the church.

When I was on the underground in London I got spat at by a bloke shouting 'paedophile!' He thought I was a Catholic priest and he'd obviously been watching recent news about some terrible abuse. As a priest people can either have too high a view of you and look up to you, and I don't want that, or the opposite and they want to dismiss you as intellectually inferior or a weirdo member of the God squad. What I try to do, with limited results, is try to level out the encounter because only then you can properly connect.

Working at St Paul's Cathedral was a privilege that made me feel I was contributing in a small way to the cultural life of London as I had responsibility for the Visual Arts policy. It is one of the most famous churches in the world with so many diverse people

passing through. Every time I would preach it would be to 800 people or more and most of them I didn't know and would never see again.

People ask why religion is involved at all in education and I'm sympathetic to those who think it is just adding another problem to the mix. But if you watch the news or think about our world, whether you like it or not, religion is there. It is at the heart of many people's lives and it is part of human identity. If you can model to future generations, leaders and influencers what a good faith looks like in terms of being generous, inclusive and non-judgemental then that I hope might be welcomed as a positive thing.

Faith is poetry in motion. Even at school I remember that poetry was a language I was drawn to. It allowed you to find the meanings for yourself. Religion is immersed in poetry, from hymns which are poems, psalms which are poems, prayers which are poetic. Sometimes poetry has helped me endure life and sometimes it has helped me enjoy it.

I'm in a civil partnership with my partner of 15 years. The Church of

England doesn't recognise same sex marriage yet but I hope it will one day and I do what I can for that cause. I knew I was gay when I was 11. I was lucky because it was around a time when it was getting to be quite ordinary for LGBTQ people to be represented in television shows and so on, so it wasn't as difficult for me as for generations before and my grandmother was always very supportive.

If anyone tries to quote the Bible at you to score points as biblical bullets, remind them that the Devil can do that too. In Matthew's Gospel when Jesus goes into the desert and is tempted the first thing the Devil does before each temptation is quote the Bible at him. The reality is that we are all living shades of faith and doubt and we are all looking for understanding about our universe. If you can't hear the love between the lines when someone is talking about scripture don't trust their interpretation!

People are always intrigued about why someone is doing this job in the 21st Century and I often say to them I don't want the rumour of God to disappear from the face of the earth. For some of us the rumour is true, for some of us it isn't. Some aren't sure. I think something deep in, and resonant to, humanity would be lost if the rumour just disappeared. But I'm open to debate about that!



Canon Oakley in Italy when he was a student

The Bumps are not just about speed – they are about the chase

Easter Term means exams, the May Ball and the Bumps. Hazel Lawrence talks to members of the Lady Margaret Boat Club to find out why no-one wants to get 'spoons'!

Along the banks of the River Cam there are 20 boathouses between Victoria Bridge and the Cambridge Museum of Technology. Most of them belong to Cambridge Colleges, 16 in fact, evidence of an historic sports scene which still thrives today.

The most important fixtures of the student rowing calendar are the biannual intercollegiate races known as the 'Bumps'. The Bumps began on the River Cam during the 1820s because the river was too narrow to accommodate more conventional side-by-side boat races. John's had two crews in the first Bumps to take place in 1827 when they began as a termly race between just four Colleges, but now they only take place in Lent and Easter and all of the 31 Colleges compete.

Every 45 minutes a new set of boats paddle downstream past the Plough at Fen Ditton, line up, and once the starting cannon is fired, they set off as fast as they can one after the other. The aim is to catch up with the boat in front whilst avoiding being caught by the boat behind. Some crews quickly catch up with another boat and then stop (sometimes amid scenes of chaos) but for others the race goes on for 200 metres all the way up to the Pike & Eel. This is what distinguishes the Bumps from other forms of rowing races because it's not just about speed, it's about the chase.



The W1 crew rowing on the River Cam

Aidan Williams, second year English student and men's Captain of the Lady Margaret Boat Club (LMBC), explained: "I've done a lot of racing and the Bumps are my favourite. It can be a very different race depending on who's around you and where you are. You have a single clear focus – the boat ahead of you."

Originally the crew that caught up with another consolidated their victory by bumping into their boat, hence the name. Although this is still common, rules for the modern races don't require a physical 'bump', as overtaking the boat in front also counts. Once a boat has been bumped the day's racing is over for the two crews involved.

The Bumps are races of strength and speed, but also stamina. Crews are organised into divisions of 17 or 18 boats who race against each other over a period of four days. A crew's starting position at the beginning of the Bumps

mirrors their position in the division, so the overall aim of the Bumps is to improve a crew's ranking.

"You have a single clear focus – the boat ahead of you."

The Easter Bumps are the final and most important event in the student rowing schedule. As the finishing position of a crew sets the following year's division position, the pressure is on. Rachel Green had never rowed before she came to Cambridge to study Human, Social, and Political Sciences. The second year student now rows in LMBC's first women's boat (W1), and said: "Bumps racing is the culmination of a year's hard work and that's what makes it exciting but also nerve-wracking because you want to make it worth it."

Green said when she first heard the Bumps being talked about she thought people were joking about the starting cannon, but it is a real brass cannon (although admittedly a rather small one, that measures approximately 40cm long). It fires three times to start each race – once to notify the rowers there are four minutes to go before the start, once for one minute to go and then one final round to start the race.

Geography student Laura Ferrier, LMBC women's captain, said: "I don't think you feel as much adrenaline in a week as you do in the Bumps. But you have to get your head down and tune out all the background noise. You're pumped up the whole time but when the starting cannon goes off a weird calmness comes over you and you know you just have to go for it."

Each boat also has a coxswain – known as the cox – who sits in the stern facing the bow and co-ordinates the power and rhythm of the rowers. Jamie Bailey, cox of W1, explained: "Being the cox is about tactics and the technical details in your head, it's not physical like it is for your crewmates."

The best way to improve your crew's ranking is to bump the boat in front every day because after a boat is bumped the two crews switch places for the next day's racing and those who bumped move up one position in the division. Bumping every day, also known as getting 'blades' or 'oars', will move a crew up four places. The ultimate achievement is to end up top of the first division, making your boat crew and College 'Head of the River'.

"A student has never felt so famous as they do when they row in the Bumps."

Happily for St John's this is the current position of the men's first boat (M1) of LMBC and Aidan Williams intends to hold onto that position, although the fight will be tough as they have strong crews from Clare, Pembroke and Caius behind them. And James Cracknell, double Olympic gold medallist, will be competing in the Peterhouse boat with some of his fellow victorious Oxford v Cambridge Boat Race 2019 rowers.





From left to right: Tom Hasson, Harry Bradshaw, Sebastian Venter, Paddy Mere, and Isaac Webber

Ferrier hopes future women's crews might also get a shot at being Head of the River. They were last Head of the River in 1993 but in the last few years W1 has been steadily rising through the first division to 7th position.

But crews don't have to end up as Head of the River to succeed. Maintaining a starting position or getting a single bump can mean just as much. Green remembers her Easter Bumps experience last year when, being what's known as the 'sandwich' boat at the bottom of a division, W2 had to row the course twice a day – once as the top of division three and once as the bottom of division two.

On the final day they bumped the crew in front meaning they moved up into division two.

"It's hard to beat standing on the lawn roaring 'Yeah Maggie!'"

"We rowed the course seven times in four days and to get the bump on the final day was the most wonderful feeling ever. We were all so happy at what we'd achieved and there was a lot of shouting and crying."

Taking part in the Bumps is filled with these unforgettable moments but there's a bigger historical picture for students.

Anyone who rows or coxes in M1 or W1 in the Bumps has their name painted on the wall of the LMBC clubhouse. "That's quite a reward as well," said Ferrier, "because you realise you're part of something much larger and feel connected to the previous crews and to the club's history."

This history has a strong pull, and alumni often return to join the thousands of spectators who line the riverbank. Mark Wells, an alumnus of John's and former Domestic Bursar, recalls his days as a student in the Bumps. "I felt physically sick as we pushed out from the bank for our first race." According to Wells his first outing in the Bumps, in a wooden boat known as a 'clinker', did not go well, but on his second they got blades. Now the Bumps are an annual must-see for him. He said: "It's hard to beat standing on the lawn of The Plough at Fen Ditton, with a pint in hand, roaring 'Yeah Maggie!' as the red blades go flashing by."

Lance Badman, Boat Club Manager, aptly summed up the atmosphere of the fiercely contested competition saying, "A student has never felt so famous as they do when they row in the Bumps. Unless they get a Nobel prize for something of course."

■ **The May Bumps take place from Wednesday, June 12 to Saturday, June 15.**

■ **Turn to the back cover for our unmissable guide to Bumps lingo.**



Members of the men's and women's boat crews training in the LMBC boathouse gym

10-minute interview



Meet Emma Dellar, College Nurse

So Emma, you are the College Nurse at St John's – how long have you been working here, and why did you originally want to work in a College?

I have been at St John's since June 2017, and before that I worked in another College for almost four years. I came to College nursing by accident – I was looking for a new role and an agency told me about a post in a College in Cambridge. I wasn't sure it was for me but I went along for the interview and that was that! I have now worked directly with more than 3,000 students from all over the world and have seen them on some of their very worst days to their best. That is job satisfaction – when someone graduates and I know what they have been through to complete their studies, to see them achieve success, despite the challenges they have faced. It's a privilege to be part of that journey.

Is working at St John's very different to other places you have worked? Can you give us an idea of your daily routine?

St John's is different in that it is quite spread out and there are more than 900 students, so getting to know people has been a challenge for me – particularly when I am in the health centre most of the day. My routine varies, as I never know what is around the corner, but in the main it begins like most other office-based staff – checking emails, phone messages and the admin duties involved in my role. I hold a clinic, which students can book directly through the Moodle platform and

staff or Fellows can drop in to. I am the College's Disability Liaison Officer and I represent the College and the College Nurses Association on the University's Health & Wellbeing Committee, and I am the advocate for students with anaphylaxis (serious allergies). I attend meetings in-house and externally.

We are in Easter Term, which means exam term – are you dealing with more students suffering from exam stress during this period?

Yes, unfortunately the health centre staff do see an increase in these cases in Easter Term, particularly students with symptoms of stress-insomnia, reduced appetite, panic attacks, anxiety and/or depression. Not everyone has this response, but many do, and we have to remember that up to this point in their lives exams have often been the biggest stress trigger they have faced. We work closely with Tutors and academic staff where we can, to support students whom, for whatever reason, are finding their studies difficult.

Some students require ongoing support through other services – this may include their GP, NHS mental health services, the College counsellor, University Counselling Services and/or private therapy. But others may need time to talk to someone who is non-judgemental and genuinely cares; this can often make all the difference, and health centre staff facilitate and encourage this in a safe space.

What techniques have you been giving to students who are finding the exam term overwhelming?

We assess routine and depleting type activities (such as alcohol, energy drinks and drugs) and discuss the emotions and thoughts regarding their current situation and what they may have already tried. We then discuss the individual's needs and direct them to various self-help methods or resources, such as guided relaxation, mindfulness, exercise, techniques to aid sleep, mood diaries, apps, books, and then the various other support providers as previously mentioned. We arrange follow-up appointments and support for as long as is needed.

You are organising a fundraising dinner in June – can you tell us more about it and how people can attend?

The aim of this event is to bring together different stakeholders to discuss ways to meet the needs of those at risk of anaphylaxis in University and HE/FE settings and is a joint initiative by the Cambridge College Nurses, a leading allergen advisor who works with catering providers and The Anaphylaxis Campaign. On the night there will be a drinks reception, a four course dinner including wine and port, and an opportunity to hear three amazing expert speakers. It has come about because currently schools can purchase and administer adrenaline auto injectors (AAI, such as Epipens) in an emergency. However, the 2017 legislation does not cover this provision in other educational settings despite the evidence that young adults with anaphylaxis are the most vulnerable. In an Anaphylaxis Campaign survey, 44 per cent of young adults admitted to not carrying their lifesaving AAI devices all the time, and around 20 people a year die from anaphylaxis (mainly from reaction to food, although there are other causes). Cambridge Colleges and the University have done a lot of work to support students at risk but there is more to be done and we would like to see a law change so there is national uniformity.

■ **Funds raised will go direct to The Anaphylaxis Campaign charity, and tickets are available through www.tickettailor.com/events/theaward/255862 or by contacting Emma Dellar directly on e.dellar@joh.cam.ac.uk.**



Bumps lingo

Bumping

When a rowing crew catches up with the boat in front. Once this happens they stop rowing and move to the side of the Cam. The next day the crews swap starting positions.

Overbumping

A bump on the boat which started three boats in front, occurring after the boats in between have stopped.

Rowing Over

If a crew neither catches the boat in front nor is bumped by the boat behind. The following day they remain in the same starting position.

Getting Blades/Oars

When a crew manages to bump on every day of racing. Often commemorated with a display oar for the crew's boathouse or College inscribed with the names of the crew members.

Getting Spoons

If a crew is unfortunate enough to be bumped every day they move down four positions in the division and are presented with wooden spoons.

Willow

After a day's racing crews that have bumped wear strips of willow from the riverbank in their hair.

'Lents' and 'Mays'

The name of the Bumps races in Lent and Easter term. 'Mays' dates back to when the races were rowed in May, but now they happen in June.

Maggie

The nickname for the Lady Margaret Boat Club. "Yeah Maggie!" is often heard being shouted from the banks of the river during the Bumps in support of the LMBC crews.



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