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ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Lent Term
2018



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Behind Closed Doors:
The Refurbishment of
E Staircase, New Court

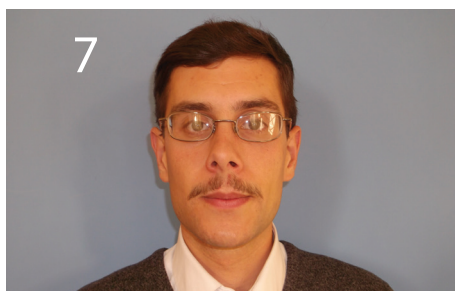
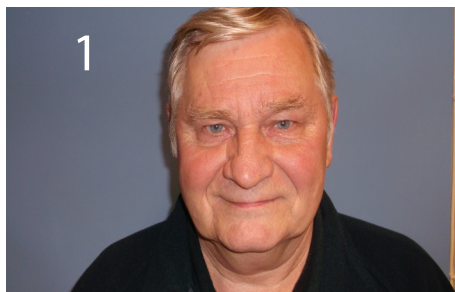
Riotous Parties, Circling Hedgehogs, and
Douglas Adams: 160 years of The Eagle Online

Meet the Cancer Survivor Campaigning for a
Better Deal on PhD Sick Leave

10 Minute Interview with Kate Harvey

Welcome

to our recent
new staff!



► **Image credits: St John's College** 1 **Juris Kudzevics** – Bedmaker 2 **Laura Beskeen** – Executive Assistant to the Director of Education and Senior Tutor (maternity cover) 3 **Amy Leung** – Administration Assistant (IT) 4 **Damien Vermeulen** – Section Chef 5 **Sue Rogers** – IT Director 6 **Mary Lindsell** – Assistant College Nurse 7 **Omar Zein** – Bedmaker 8 **Hazel Lawrence** – Press, Publicity and Communities Officer 9 **David Baker** – Library Projects Assistant (job-share)

If you have any story ideas for future editions of Eagle Eye, or any thoughts about the current edition, please contact the editor, Louise Hanzlik, on lh445@cam.ac.uk – we'd love to hear from you.

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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Cover image: Richard Cousins in the Maintenance workshop. Credit: St John's College

News

Round-up

What's been happening around St John's



Direct genetic evidence of founding population reveals story of first Native Americans

Direct genetic traces of the earliest Native Americans have been identified for the first time in a new study led by St John's College Fellow, Eske Willerslev. The evidence suggests that people may have entered the continent in a single migratory wave, perhaps arriving more than 20,000 years ago.

The findings are published in the journal *Nature* and present possible answers to a series of long-standing questions about how the Americas were first populated. "We were able to show that people probably entered Alaska before 20,000 years ago," Eske said. "It's the first time that we have had direct genomic evidence that all Native Americans can be traced back to one source population, via a single, founding migration event."

Could the squirrel trade with Scandinavia have contributed to England's medieval leprosy outbreak?

Genetic analysis of a pre-Norman skull unearthed in a garden in Hoxne, Suffolk, has added to a growing body of evidence that East Anglia may have been the epicentre of an epidemic of leprosy that spread through medieval England. A strain of the disease may have been brought to East Anglia's coast line through contact with Scandinavia via Anglo-Saxon movement or possibly the later sustained trade in squirrel fur, the new study suggests.

The research was reported in *The Journal of Medical Microbiology*. Sarah Inskip, Research Associate at St John's College, Cambridge, and lead author of the paper, said, "This new evidence coupled with the prevalence of leper hospitals in East Anglia from the 11th century onwards adds weight to the idea that the disease was endemic in this region earlier than in other parts of the country."





Calf's foot jelly and a tankard of ale? Welcome to the 18th century Starbucks

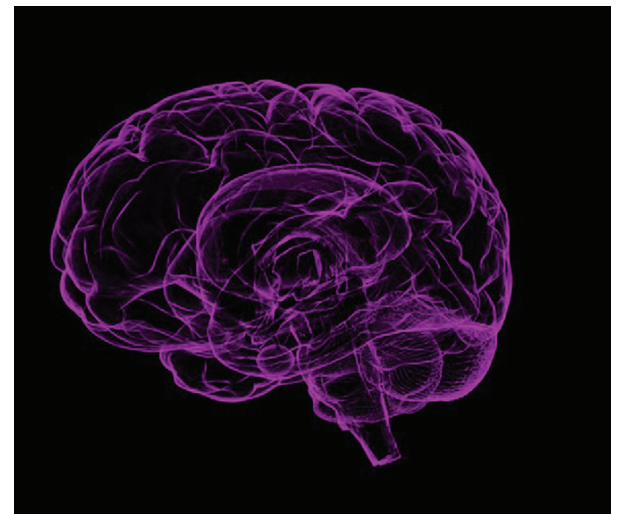
Researchers have published details of the largest collection of artefacts from an early English coffeehouse ever discovered. Described as an 18th century equivalent of Starbucks, the finds nonetheless suggest that it may have been less like a café, and more like an inn. The establishment, called Clapham's, was on a site now owned by St John's College, but in the mid-to-late 1700s it was a bustling coffeehouse.

Researchers from the Cambridge Archaeological Unit uncovered a disused cellar which had been backfilled with hundreds of unwanted items included vessels for drinking tea, coffee and chocolate, serving dishes, and clay pipes, as well as tankards, wine bottles and glasses. Craig Cessford said that Clapham's was perhaps less like a coffee shop, and more like an inn. The discovery of jelly glasses, and feet bones from immature cattle, led the researchers to conclude that calf's foot jelly, a popular dish of that era, might well have been a house speciality.

Johnians at helm of new £50 million research centre

A research centre that will pioneer new approaches to understand and treat neurodegenerative disorders, such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Diseases, motor neurone disease and frontotemporal dementia has been launched in Cambridge, with backing from Stephen Hawking, among others.

Professor Hawking said that the Centre for Misfolding Diseases had his "strongest support", following its establishment to tackle some of the world's most devastating diseases – including his own condition. The Centre is being jointly led by Professor Christopher Dobson, Master of St John's College, Cambridge, Professor Tuomas Knowles, a Fellow of St John's, and Professor Michele Vendruscolo.



St John's undergraduate's opera takes centre stage

Charlotte Eves, third year undergraduate at St John's, brought a reworked version of the Russian Futurist opera *Victory Over the Sun* to the stage with a brand new score that she wrote. The opera originally premiered in 1913, and it was the centre piece of the Russian Futurist movement.

Charlotte discovered that only parts of the libretto and costume designs remained from that era, plus just 24 bars of the original score, so she thought, "I'll write my own!" Charlotte adapted the work, and rewrote the entire musical score. *Victory Over the Sun* was performed in the Round Church, Cambridge, at the end of January.

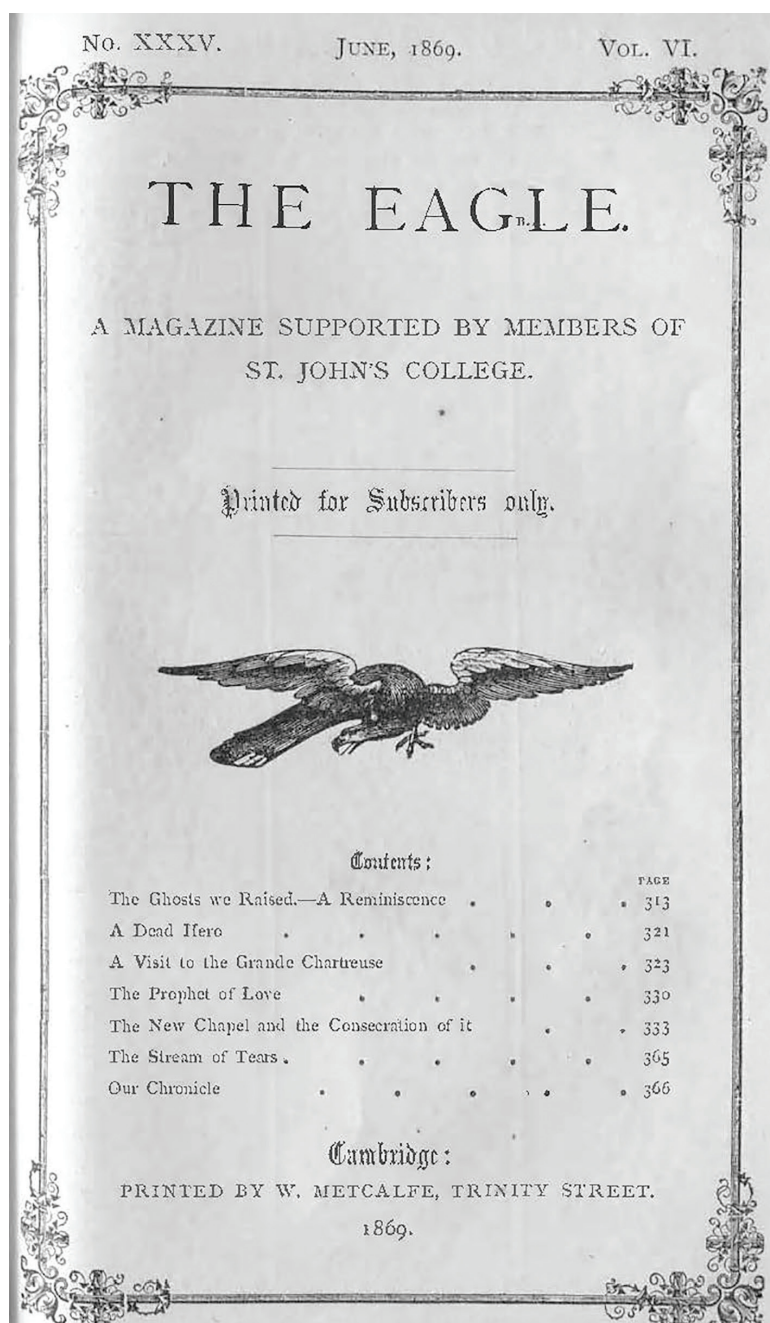
► Image credits: Excavations at the Upward Sun River archaeological site in Alaska. Credit: Ben Potter; Squirrel. Credit: Peter Trimming via Flickr; Teapots, wine glasses and clay pipes. Credit: Cambridge Archaeological Unit; Brain. Credit: Raman Oza; Charlotte Eves. Credit: Charlotte Eves.

Riotous Parties, Circling Hedgehogs, and Douglas Adams:

160 Years of The Eagle Online

When St John's students wanted to start a magazine in the 1850s, there were strong objections from senior members of College who believed it would be a short-lived enterprise that would distract undergraduates from their studies. Nevertheless, the first issue of *The Eagle* was published in 1858, and the editors chose to use the very first article to respond to their critics. "We utterly repudiate the notion that the writing of papers, notes, and poetry is synonymous with wasting of time," they said, going on to point out that, "If a man is disposed to waste his time, innumerable facilities for his doing so have been already thoughtfully provided."

The second critique, that the magazine would "fall through in a term or so," is the one that has been answered most resoundingly. *The Eagle* has been published every year since its first issue and its run currently stands at 160 years. Throughout those years it became a significant part of College life for many students and hundreds of undergraduates, alumni, guest writers, and staff have contributed to its pages. Its scope has widened



The knapsack must not be overloaded, and you will be surprised to find how little you can get on with. I will put the contents in the form of a list :

Extra flannel shirt and knickerbocker stockings.
Alpaca thin coat (black) for dining.
Small sponge bag, containing sponge, toilet brushes, and soap (in box).
*Slippers (strong).
A warm comforter, 3 handkerchiefs, 3 collars.
*Spectacles with wire sides.
*A linen mask for the face.
Zinc ointment and cotton wool for the feet.
Needles and thread.
Medicines, arnica. and chlorodyne.
Bootlaces.
To be strapped outside :
*Gaiters which cover the laces of your boots.
In your pocket you should have a small flask of cognac, a large knife with a corkscrew and a *compass.
The articles marked thus (*) can very conveniently be obtained at Carter's, 245, Oxford Street, "The Tourist's Emporium,"

too, and *The Eagle* has featured everything from cartoons to war lists.

Looking back through the volumes provides fascinating insights into the way the College, and the world, have changed over the last 160 years. Contributors have regularly provided *The Eagle* with personal accounts of major conflicts, Arctic expeditions, and recollections of famous figures, as well as regular commentary on political affairs, and entertaining tales of College life.

Thanks to the efforts of the Library staff, the entire run of *The Eagle* has been digitised and everyone can now access this information on the College website. For those who are unsure of where to start, here are some highlights of what you can find in *The Eagle's* back catalogue.

Pyrotechnic student parties at the turn of the 20th Century

Judging by two letters sent home in the early 1900s, the student parties in the Edwardian era were far more riotous than the better-publicised antics of later generations. Two students writing to their parents, one in 1901 and one in 1909, both describe bumps celebrations featuring huge bonfires in the main courtyards fuelled largely by College furniture. As Stewart Priston put it in 1901, "Fuel was poured on the fire from all directions, all wooden College property which was not very firmly secured being sacrificed along with a good deal of

private furniture." He writes, "Doors and doormats, chairs, tables, boxes, washstands and many other articles made their appearance and there was a splendid blaze." The porters also attended these parties but not for celebratory reasons as they were "busy noting down the names of all engaged in the work of destruction and the damage will be charged for in their College bills." The letters can be viewed in the 1993 and 1995 issues.

Tips from a College mountaineer in 1873

Ever wondered what a mountaineer would carry in his rucksack in the late 1800s? In *Practical Mountaineering*, an article from 1873, an anonymous John's student lists what fellow student mountaineers should take when climbing. Along with bootlaces, medicine, and extra socks he also recommends a thin black coat for dining, a small flask of cognac, and strong slippers. Those interested in acquiring these items were recommended to purchase them at 'The Tourist's Emporium' on Oxford Street.

Changing opinions on women at the University

"One who knows the scenes through which a medical student must necessarily pass would never wish a sister to enter them, or be willing to take to himself as a wife, one who had been their witness." These are the words of an *Eagle*

contributor in 1864, as he argued that women should not be able to acquire degrees from Cambridge. Thankfully, not everyone agreed, and in 1867 a student replied, "Is a pretty girl less pleasing to us because she can understand us when we speak something better than nonsense?" It would be interesting to speculate what these writers would have made of the short Johnian piece over a hundred years later announcing women's entry to the College in 1982, but they would probably agree with the statement that this change was "one of the most profound in our history".

The trauma of World War I

There are several striking articles during the publications in the First World War, and those who are interested in this era will find a lot of stimulating reading material. Articles published about the war include letters from the French front, and first-hand accounts of the Siege of Kut Al Amara and the bombing of Scarborough in 1915. However, it's the *Roll of Honour* that provides the most detailed insight into the personal tragedies of the staff and students who died in the war. Most entries feature details of the soldier's death, his studies, and comments on his character from his superior officer or friends. Mixed in with these particulars are some potent reflections on the conflict itself: "He was buried, practically where he fell, in the first line of trenches."

Sir John Cockcroft remembers Rutherford

The Eagle has had several prominent staff members contribute to its pages, one of whom was the Nobel prize-winner Sir John Cockcroft. In the 1958 article *The Dawn of the Atomic Age*, Cockcroft reminisces about working in the "attics of the Cavendish" during the 1920s and 1930s. He refers to Cambridge during that period as "the Mecca of Physics", and with memories of scientists such as Ernest Rutherford, along with talks from visiting speakers Einstein, Bohr, and Heisenberg it is easy to see why. It's also inspiring to hear that several of the biggest



M.P. Charlesworth addressing troops in First Court.

breakthroughs in Atomic Physics happened with “the experimenter sitting inside a wooden shack with dark curtains”.

The Master’s Hedgehog

When he was Master of the College, John Sandwith Boys Smith observed an unusual night-time visitor in the Master’s garden. In May 1966 a hedgehog was seen visiting the garden, and running in a circle for several hours. Boys Smith decided that his observations were worth recording in a three page article in *The Eagle*, and he probably expected that to be the end of it. However, the hedgehog responded with an article in the following issue outlining the hedgehog’s observations of the

Master, under the name Erinaceus Europaeus. “It has a stature of no less than eighteen hedgehogs,” noted Erinaceus, “My evidence casts doubt on the accepted theory, that members of this species spend the night asleep,” he concluded.

Douglas Adams’ failed sketch show

Budding comedians and writers might do well to take heart from knowing that one of the College’s most successful alumni had to face some harsh reviews early in his career. In 1973 a revue crafted by the writing trio of Adams-Smith-Adams (made up of students Douglas Adams, Martin Smith, and Will Adams) was performed in the School of Pythagoras, under the



title ‘The Patter of Tiny Minds’. *The Eagle* review opens with strong criticism, “Frankly, brothers, the Adams-Smith-Adams Minds are Tiny because they are aristocratic” and does not get kinder, “Their attempts reeked of ‘zanyness’ where ‘zany’ means the pathetic conviction that a few weird sound-effects and dangling conversations can provoke wild hilarity.” The review concludes by harshly singling Douglas Adams out as being the worst performer: “As for Douglas Adams, though he has the largest pose, one is left asking: ‘Has he the Tiniest Mind?’”

All the issues of The Eagle are available to browse on the St John’s website, and can be found at www.joh.cam.ac.uk/eagle-scanning-project

► Image credits: *The Eagle*, reproduced by permission of St John’s College, Cambridge, except the hedgehog image, credited to Tadeusz Lakota.

The front cover of *The Eagle* in 1869; What every good mountaineer should carry in their rucksack; The soldiers billeted to the College in WWII, printed in the 2000 issue of *The Eagle*; Could this be the mysterious author Erinaceus Europaeus?

Meet The Cancer Survivor Campaigning For a Better Deal on PhD Sick Leave

It was an evening in February 2015 when Claudia Pama, standing on a busy street in London, took the call. “I’m very sorry to bring the bad news,” the oncologist told her. Claudia had questions. What stage was it at? Was there any possibility it was terminal? The doctors did not yet have answers. A scan was being arranged, which would enable a clearer prognosis. Claudia was 26 years old, in the first year of a PhD in neuroscience at St John’s, and she had just found out that she had cancer.

In the end, the news was not as bad as it might have been. Claudia’s cancer turned out to have been caught early, and she was able to receive a specific type of surgery that, to date, seems to have been successful. Three years on, she is back at St John’s and progressing with her PhD, although her health is routinely monitored. She was, she says, “positively shocked” by the support she received from her friends at the College and beyond, and even from

“It didn’t feel right that this was happening, but I didn’t know anyone in a similar situation, and at the time I had no idea what to do.”



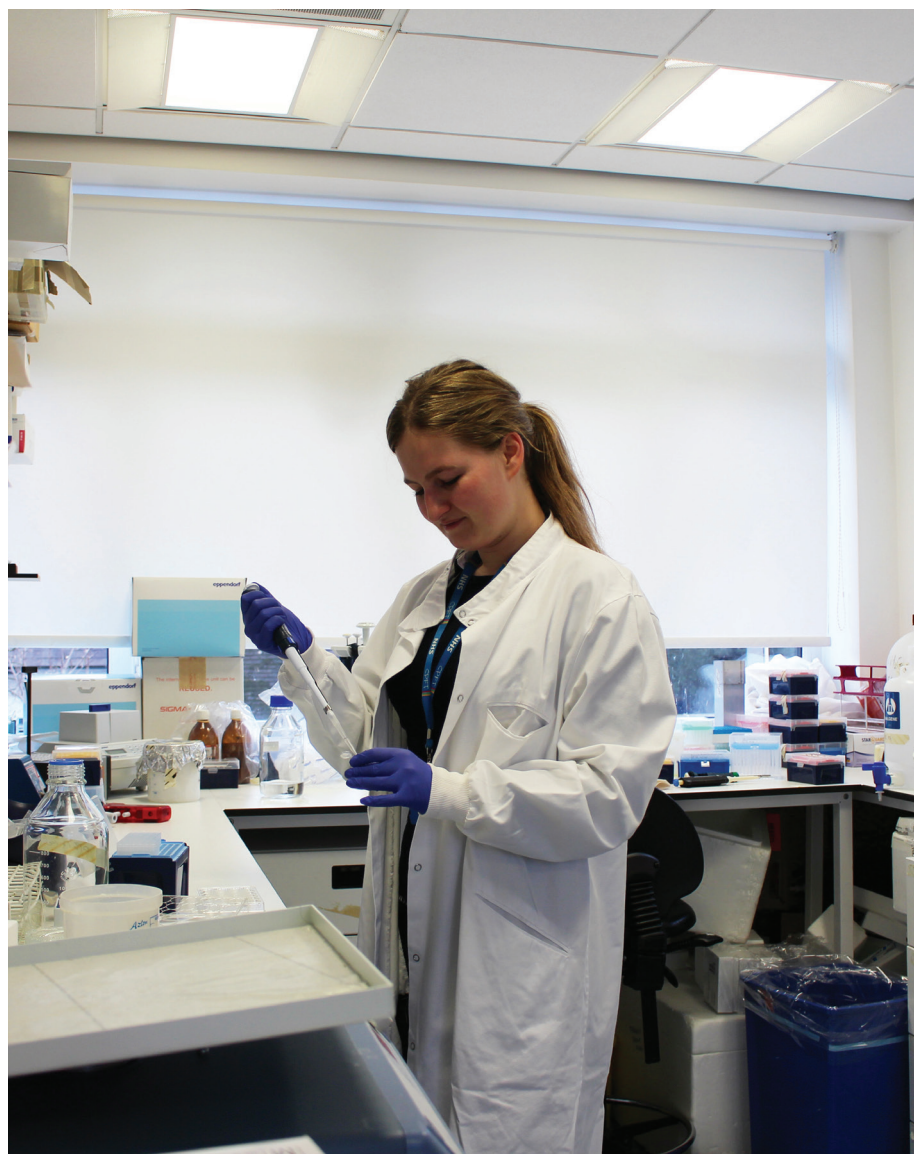
people who did not know her that well. “Cambridge ended up feeling like the best place to get cancer, or, more accurately, the least bad one,” she reflects.

One important, and unexpected, consequence of her diagnosis is, however, still a source of considerable concern. Like most PhD students, Claudia’s research is supported by an external funding body – actually, in her case, by two separate organisations. Through these, she receives a fixed stipend to cover her living costs while she is studying. But immediately after being told that she had cancer, she discovered that there was a danger that some of this funding would automatically be withdrawn because she was unable to work.

At the time, that possibility added an extra layer of stress to what was already a draining experience, both physically and emotionally. Following her diagnosis, Claudia had multiple doctors’ appointments and an MRI scan. There were difficult conversations to be had, and pivotal decisions to be made about the nature of her treatment.

It became clear that for at least 10 weeks, her research would have to go on hold, a process known as intermission, instigating which involved yet more meetings and paperwork. When she finally had time to approach her funders to let them know, one of them told her that her entitlement to a stipend did not include periods of intermission, and that she would have to pay 10 weeks’ worth of the money back.

As this would have left her struggling to cover basic, daily expenses, Claudia attempted to negotiate. Eventually, she secured an arrangement whereby her stipend was maintained during her treatment. In return, however, she stands to lose an equivalent amount of income at the end of her PhD. “It didn’t feel right that this was happening, but I didn’t know anyone in a similar situation, and at the time I had no idea what to do,” she says.



In fact, the problem is far from unusual. While most people in full-time employment are entitled to some sort of statutory sick pay if they unexpectedly fall ill, there is no

“While most people in full-time employment are entitled to some sort of statutory sick pay if they unexpectedly fall ill, there is no equivalent arrangement for PhDs.”

equivalent arrangement for PhDs in the UK. Instead, it is left to the individual funding bodies to decide how to handle students’ pay if they suddenly have to put their studies on hold. And while some, such as the UK Research Councils, do make

arrangements to give students in that situation a certain amount of paid sick leave, others simply cancel the stipend. Students who, like Claudia, are in this position, can potentially find that they have no choice but to intermit, even though they will lose income as a result.

Claudia’s own story took another unexpected twist thanks to the power of online media. One day, she noticed that a friend at Oxford who was also a PhD student, Edwin Dalmaijer, had also been diagnosed with, and treated for, cancer, had encountered similar problems and had written about his experiences in a blog. Although Edwin had not been exposed to a funding cut, he had become aware of the danger through this experience. The two soon discovered that Claudia’s experience was far from uncommon. Together with a third student, Stella Prins, at University College London, Claudia and Edwin decided to try to do something about it.

The three students started a small online campaign, urging funding bodies to adopt a standard model for providing PhD students with sickness cover, and created an online petition to which supporters could sign up. They also published a letter in the leading academic journal, *Nature*, arguing that PhD students who fall ill should receive guaranteed income under a system similar to the statutory sick pay available to people in work.

To their surprise, the petition in particular generated an overwhelming response. Hundreds of academics, not only at their own universities but also beyond, backed the campaign and signed the online document. They included a number of senior researchers, among them Christopher Dobson, the Master of St John's, and a number of other College Fellows. Early-career researchers and postgraduates also enthusiastically added their names. The initiative has also been supported by Chronically Academic, a network of academics with disabilities and chronic conditions, who subsequently invited Claudia to write an article on their website about her experiences.

There was more good news when one of the petition's signatories, College Fellow Professor Richard Gilbertson, put Claudia in touch with contacts at Cancer Research UK, where he has a research group. CRUK is a charity that runs a network of research centres training around 550 PhD students. Claudia spoke to their Head of Research Training and Fellowships, asking her if it might be possible for the organisation to reconsider its position on paid leave entitlement.

In response, CRUK has now published a new, long-term leave policy which entitles all CRUK students to paid parental or long-term leave, including sick leave. Effectively, the organisation has committed to giving students in

“Ask everyone for support; your supervisor, boss, tutor, mentor, Each problem has a solution. Chances are you will find it if you keep searching.”

positions such as Claudia's own a period of four months of fully-paid sick leave, as well as another four of half-pay if required.

“That response was hugely encouraging,” Claudia says. “They took into account the suggestions that we had made and then made a very sensible policy change. My hope is that this will raise awareness of the existing problem and prompt other funding bodies to change their own systems as well.”

Claudia's aim now is to draw attention to the issue more widely still and, if possible, encourage more funding bodies to subscribe to a clear and consistent framework that protects PhD students against loss of income and employment due to illness. Unfortunately, she herself still stands to lose funding for the final term of her PhD, as one of the funding bodies supporting

her continues to lack a policy in this area. “From a list of bad options, that settlement was the one I had to go for because it was the least damaging,” she says. “Discussions about this sort of thing are the last thing you want to have to deal with while worrying about your health, your work and your future.”

As for the cancer itself, her own blog entry on Chronically Academic offers some words of wisdom from a slightly older, and wiser, survivor. “If you are one of the unlucky ones going through something similar right now, don't despair,” she writes. “Ask everyone for support; your supervisor, boss, tutor, mentor, College, friends. There might be help available that you are not aware of until you ask. Each problem as a solution, and chances are you will find it if you keep searching.”

PhD students should have a right to sick leave

May 15 2017 Claudia Like 0 Share



#Education
 Target: Public
 Region: United Kingdom

PhD students are an important part of academia, as they form a large part of the work force. Just like their post-doctoral colleagues, they collect and analyse data, and disseminate their findings in scientific journals and books. However, PhD students' contracts are radically different: Most receive a stipend instead of a salary, and have very little rights to sick leave.

There are upsides to the current situation: It is cheaper than employing PhD candidates with a staff

Sign the petition

First name Last name

Email

Select your country or region

Title

Position (e.g. PhD student, Lecturer)

Affiliation

Comment to target

Hide my comment

Hide my name from public

I'm not a robot

GoPetition respects your privacy

Behind Closed Doors: The Refurbishment of E Staircase, New Court

In hard hat and hi-vis jackets, we wait to be allowed through the access-controlled full height turnstile, eerily similar to an ‘iron maiden’ entry-exit gate at a New York City subway station – one way in, one way out. Once bleeped through, we make our way past the white monoflex currently coating the front and back of the ‘wedding cake’ edifice to enter the building site that is E Staircase, New Court.

We are standing in what used to be the Fitness Centre, which has been relocated to underneath the Fisher Building. The old doorway to the centre is now a wall of bricks, so we have entered via its new door – the former door to the changing rooms – climbing over cabling and uneven flooring. This room is being turned into one of the new accessible Senior Guest Rooms, and the spacious area is already taking shape, with a large feature double door in the centre of the room, and space for a kitchen, or gyp, and bathroom.

“The new double door is a one-off,” says carpenter Richard Cousins, who has been at St John’s for 18 years and is in charge of making all the new doors on E Staircase. “A beam was found in the ceiling in the middle of the room during the refurbishment work, so we had to get over the beam and rework the size of the door afterwards so it fitted. It’s just one of those things!”

“New Court hasn’t had a major refurbishment for over 50 years”



The refurbishment of E Staircase is taking place to create more accessible senior guest rooms and more teaching sets for Fellows, as well as needing a complete makeover. "New Court hasn't had a major refurbishment for over 50 years," Mark Wells, the Domestic Bursar, tells us. "When we looked at the history of New Court as part of the Estates Strategy, the original role of E Staircase was as a Fellows' staircase, along with I and A. So we decided to be consistent with the original purpose and turn it back into just that, with the aim of clustering the Fellows together on certain staircases among student accommodation as an integrated part of the College community."

"The plan is to get 21 Fellows in sets that are accessible for them and their students having supervisions."

When looking at the structure of E Staircase, it became clear that more teaching sets for Fellows could be put in, rather than residential sets, Mark explains. "The plan is to get 21 Fellows in sets that are accessible for them and their students having supervisions. We also wanted to include two accessible ground floor senior guest rooms with en suite bathrooms; some of our visitors are elderly and the previous second floor guest room was not ideal. The old communal bathrooms on the ground floor were no longer being used, so they have been taken out, and now each floor will have its own bathroom or en suite facilities. We are also building a lift servicing all floors to enable ease of access – we will be fully DDA compliant. It's a big job."

Local architects Purcell were employed to design the building – the firm worked on the Chapel and the design of North Court 20 years ago. "The junior architect then is the senior architect now!" says Mark. Planning Manager Ltd, who worked on phase 3 of the Cripps refurbishment, were awarded the

construction project. Building work started on the site at the beginning of the summer holidays – so newer students to St John's won't have seen the striking architecture of New Court as it has been covered in white scaffolding sheeting, or monoflex, for quite a while.

The site is busy with the noise of drilling, hammering, sawing, and shouting voices. Alan Smith, site

manager – who has worked at St John's for 28 years, and worked on the third phase of Cripps – tells us that there are around 50 builders who work on the site. We peer into the new lift shaft, and wind our way up the spiral staircase. Richard and Alan point out some of the new doors that have just been hung, all made by Richard; he had to replicate those that already existed in New Court, and they are



"We are building a lift servicing all floors to enable ease of access - we will be fully DDA compliant."

not all the same size. "I've made 20 new linings, and 31 doors," Richard tells us. "It's the biggest batch of doors we've ever made." Richard also had to make curved linings, which attach to existing frames, as well as making frames for brand new doorways where access was needed for sets that once had adjoining rooms but have now been divided – additional soundproofing was also needed. Many of the sets have double doors – an outer and an inner door so that both can be closed if the person inside the room does not want to be disturbed.

Richard explains that the wood for the doors comes into the Maintenance workshop already sawn. Redwood is used for the actual doors, birch-faced ply for the panels, and waterproof MDF for the lining. Everything from that point is created by Richard. He makes the kits first, and shapes the jigs, or templates, by running them round the spindle moulder. "There are a lot of curves," laughs Richard. Once he has made the kit, he makes the door; it can take up to a week to construct both the kit and the door. "It's a lot of work, but I enjoy doing it – it's what I'm trained to do," he says. The doors are then primed in the workshop, and once they are hanging, they are painted and finished.

Alan shows us an old door hinge and a newer one on the outer door. The new hinge has been replicated so that it looks the same as the old; the pattern will be sent off when they run out so they can retain as many of the original designs as possible.



We make our way to the top of the building – as far as we can go without going up to the roof on the scaffold. During the work, the builders saw that the majority of roof tiles were in good condition, but some needed replacing, so new tiles were blended with the old; new ones were added to the not very visible side sections, but the old tiles were kept on the front and back sections facing the Paddock and Cripps.

When the building work is complete, the next step will be the fixtures and fittings. "Lots of work has gone into the design and furnishings for E Staircase," Mark says. "We have used local interior designers Eve Waldron, her practice is a commercial tenant of St John's, based on Pound Hill. We've thought hard about lighting, curtains and furniture, and the design theme of E Staircase will act as a template for furnishings for the rest of New Court."

"It's the biggest batch of doors we've ever made!"

We enter a lovely large and light top floor room which would have a fantastic view over the Paddock if it wasn't for the white monoflex blocking the panorama. Even though this room is filled with building equipment, it feels like it is almost completed; it has been plastered, it has its new doors hanging, ornate windows, and beautiful decorative plasterwork on the ceiling. The person who ends up with this set should be very happy.

The E Staircase refurbishment is due to be completed by mid-April, and Mark tells us that rooms will be available for use at the start of Easter Term. Standing among building equipment and shells of rooms with missing doors, it's hard to imagine that it will be finished that soon. But the same construction company worked on the Cripps refurbishment and completed the work in time and within budget, so it shouldn't be long before the white icing currently covering the wedding cake will be stripped away, and the doors to E Staircase will be open once more.



► All images credited to St John's College, Cambridge

Richard with one of his doors in the Maintenance workshop;
Double doors on E Staircase;
Top floor set, E Staircase;
Exterior view of the refurbishment

10-Minute Interview

with Kate Harvey

Kate Harvey, Head of Finance, tells us about Cambridge Chorale, performing with her family, and singing in the rain.



So Kate, you are head of Finance at St John's - what does that involve?

I look after the Finance Team and make sure things are running smoothly, and help the departmental heads to manage their budgets. Before St John's I was the Divisional Financial Controller at Cambridge Education Group, looking after boarding schools for international students coming to the UK. I originally trained in audit with Deloitte.

We hear that you are in a choir called Cambridge Chorale - how long have you been singing with the choir?

I've been a member of the choir since 2006, so nearly 12 years. Cambridge Chorale has been going for 23 years, so it will be its 25th anniversary in 2019. Some members have been in the choir for 20 years!

Why did you choose that particular choir?

I had a friend who was in the choir. My husband also sings - he's in the choir too! I've always done a lot of music; I was in the Sidney Sussex Chapel Choir when at University, but then after graduating I had a six-year break.

What singing voice do you have?

I'm an alto, but I've recently been moved to a second alto as my voice has become deeper! I wouldn't be able to sing the soprano notes. Sopranos usually get the melodies, but occasionally the altos do - we sometimes have quite interesting lines.

What type of music does the choir sing?

We sing mainly classical music, but it ranges from early music to contemporary classical, so liturgical to lighter madrigals. We perform new works commissioned for us; we commissioned a piece by Alex Woolf for our 20th anniversary a couple of years ago. I enjoy all different types of music, I like the variety.

Do you have any concerts coming up?

Yes, we are performing a Lent concert at St Michael's Church, Bishop's Stortford, on 24 March, so we will be singing early music - and Estonian lullabies - from Gesualdo, MacMillan, and Tormis. And on 7 July we are back in Cambridge, in Jesus College Chapel, performing works by Marsh, Rautavaara and Park on the theme of 'dusk'. Last summer we performed in St John's College Chapel.

How often do you rehearse?

We rehearse weekly during term time. It takes about 6-8 weeks to prepare for a concert, and we do about four to five concerts a year. My favourites are the family Christmas concerts - we sing traditional carols and lighter Christmas songs, and these concerts have a different atmosphere to the more formal



concerts. The local primary school joins in with the singing; my husband and I sang with our nine-year-old son this Christmas at Great St Mary's! These concerts give us the opportunity to show what we can do, and the opportunity for the audience to see what we do; audiences who wouldn't normally come to one of our concerts.

Are you involved in any other singing groups?

I'm in the Pied Pipers, an amateur musical theatre group which performs at the ADC. Last year I was in the chorus of *Singing in the Rain*, which was a lot of fun, and this year we are doing *Anything Goes*, so hopefully I'll be in that too - auditions are about to take place.

Apart from the concerts, do you have anything else coming up in the near future?

We have a new CD coming out this year, based on a concert that we did last March about the Virgin Mary, called *Hymns to the Mother of Christ*. We recorded it in September and it will be out this summer, so look out for it!

To find out more about Cambridge Chorale and their forthcoming concerts and new release, visit www.cambridgechorale.org.uk. Concert tickets are available from www.adcticketing.com or on 01223 300085.



► Image credits: Kate Harvey: credit - James Harvey; Cambridge Chorale images: credit - Timothy Winn

Awards



National Accreditation for College Archive Centre

The Archive Centre at St John's College has become an Accredited Archive Service - a national standard of excellence which acknowledges significant contributions to the management, preservation and accessibility of historically important collections.

The St John's Archive Centre is just the third to receive National Archives accreditation of this sort within Oxford and Cambridge. The Archive Centre, which opened in the School of Pythagoras in 2015, contains documents and records about St John's dating back to its foundation in 1511, and its many highlights include a copy of Magna Carta, and a signed letter of Elizabeth I.



St John's student wins £500 thesis prize

Katherine Ladd, a third-year English Literature undergraduate, has won a £500 prize for writing the most original and practical thesis on the issue of modern slavery and exploitation, called *95 ways to change the world*. The competition called for individuals from across the world to propose responses to contemporary social issues.

Since coming to Cambridge, Katherine has also started her own baking scheme called 'Treated Right' to fundraise for charities

working against slavery and exploitation, which runs across different Cambridge Colleges.



Dr Andrew Arsan wins Philip Leverhulme Prize

Dr Andrew Arsan, Director of Studies in History at St John's College, has won a 2017 Philip Leverhulme Prize. Dr Arsan is one of five Cambridge researchers among this year's winners.

The Philip Leverhulme Prizes recognise the achievements of outstanding researchers whose work has attracted international recognition and whose future career is exceptionally promising. Every year the prize scheme makes up to thirty awards of £100,000 across a range of academic disciplines.



Professor Graeme Barker wins Field Discovery Award for archaeological research on early rainforest dwellers in Island Southeast Asia

Professor Graeme Barker has received a Field Discovery Award for his work on the ways in which people have shaped the rainforests of Island Southeast Asia through human history. Professor Barker's project was one of 10 winners, chosen from over 130 nominations.

The award focussed in particular on his work in the Niah Caves in Sarawak on Borneo. The team managed to accurately date 'Deep Skull' - a skull found in 1958, estimated to be 40,000 years old - to around 37,000 years ago and showed that modern humans were visiting the cave from at least 50,000

years ago. The new excavations have confirmed the Niah Caves as one of the most important archaeological sites in the world for documenting the behaviours that modern humans had to develop to cope with unfamiliar environments at a time of massive climate change.



St John's Netball team takes top spot in College league table

After a victorious first term, St John's College Netball team maintained their top spot in the College league table. The Netball team are unbeaten after their first seven matches, and successfully hold onto first place in the league, which St John's won last year.

The term started with an 18-18 draw against Fitzwilliam College, and was followed by convincing wins against Sidney Sussex, Murray Edwards, Downing, Robinson, Emmanuel, and Trinity. League matches will continue in Lent term.



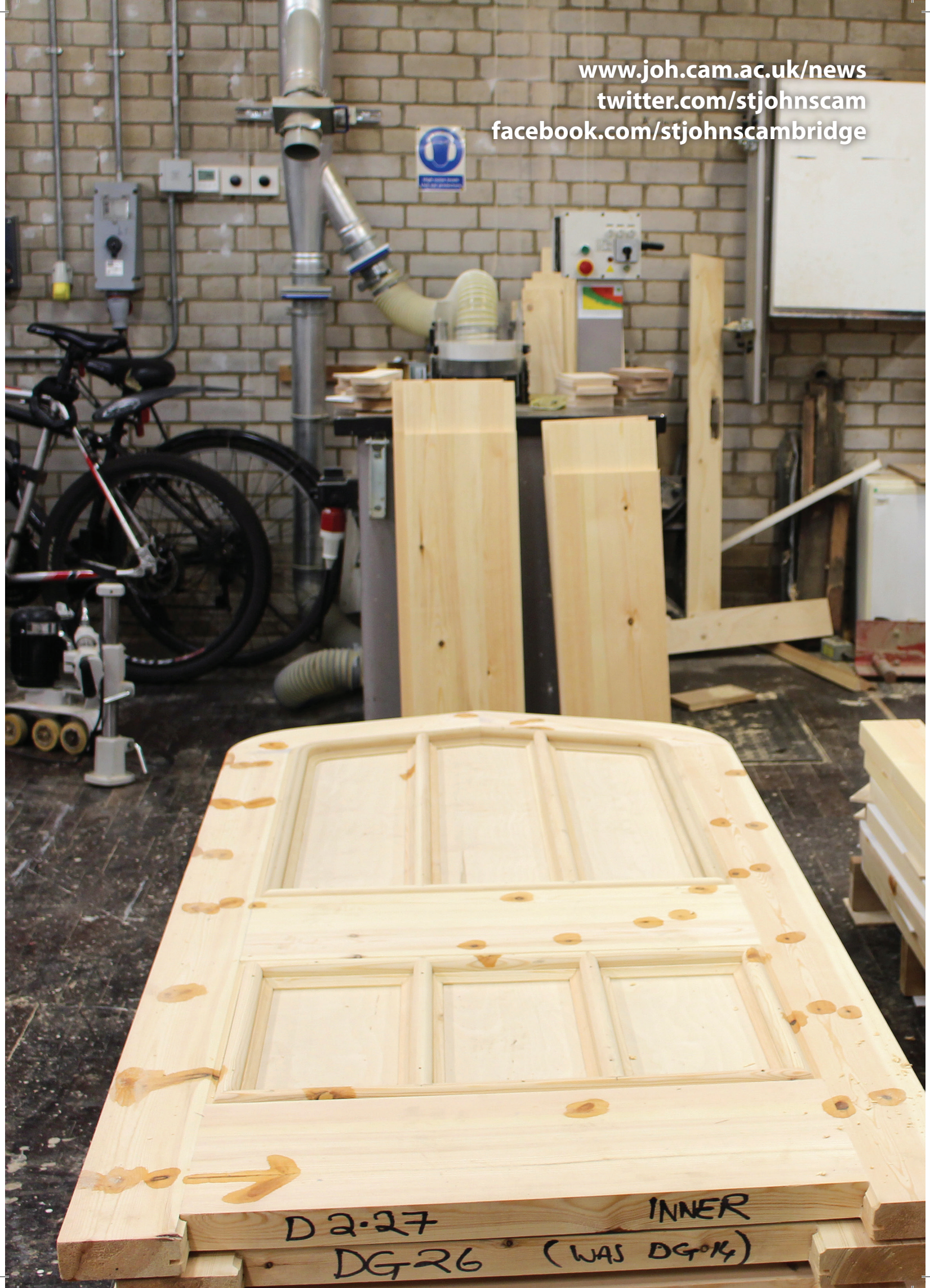
Staff Photography Competition winners announced

An image of bare toes on a deserted beach and a scene of a punt trip with a picnic were the winning entries for the Staff Photography Competition 2017, which took place in November at St John's College.

Louise Hanzlik, Web & Media Officer in the Communications Office, won first prize in the second St John's Staff Photography Competition. Claire Watkins, Assistant to the Fellows' Steward in the Master's and President's Office, took the award for second place. The theme of this year's competition was 'Time Off.'

► **Image credits: School of Pythagoras: Credit: St John's College; Katherine Ladd: Credit - The Jubilee Centre; Dr Andrew Arsan: Credit - St John's College; Professor Graham Barker's book covers: Credit - the McDonald institute; The Netball team celebrating their success at the Netball Christmas dinner: Credit - Chloe Fairston, St John's College Netball Team; Time Off - bare feet in the sand. Credit: Louise Hanzlik**

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DG26 (WAS DG0K)