

BIN BROOK

MICHAELMAS 2021/LENT 2022

 **ROBINSON COLLEGE**
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

| Are we really being sustainable?
The Cambridge bubble goes green

| On atmospheric chemistry
and air pollution

| Robinson College: unencumbered and agile,
up there with the best, as seen by the Warden



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WELCOME



A big change for Robinson, global pandemics notwithstanding, was the appointment of its third Warden. Sir Richard Heaton's arrival in October

2021, at a time when the College was emerging from nearly two years on a war-footing, happily coincides with this time of renewal. We welcome Richard warmly, and it is interesting to read his initial thoughts on taking up his post at Robinson, both as told to Chris Elliot in our featured interview, and in his own words in the transcript of his Admission Ceremony speech. It's reassuring to know that he has found values such as kindness and inclusivity deeply embedded at Robinson, and that he has rebuilding our community post-pandemic high on his agenda.

Some might argue that climate change is a far bigger threat to our collective future than disease, and this issue of *Bin Brook* throws a spotlight on the work of our alumni and Fellowship in the sustainability space now that there has been some time to reflect on the achievements, or otherwise, of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, better known as COP26. As ever, it's instructive to read the breadth and depth of our alumni's work in the field; from sustainable

tourism to Blockchain, our alumni are energetically engaged in saving the planet. Our Fellowship is also contributing to knowledge in this area, and geographer Steve Trudgill comprehensively sets the scene in his introduction to the themed section below, whilst Paul Griffiths talks us through his work on atmospheric pollution.

Young people have done so much to focus attention on the climate crisis, and second year NatSci Lowena Hull's impressions of COP26 are an essential element of any review of its impact. Although we are a young College, Robinson has sustainability in its bones and routinely makes plans for the next 500 years and beyond. We are conscious that we must play our part by reducing our impact on the climate and will be telling our readers more about our work in this area in a forthcoming edition of *Bin Brook*.

Writing this introduction in the first week of January gives me the opportunity to wish all our readers a very Happy New Year from all of us at Robinson. We look forward to reading your stories in 2022.

Sarah Westwood
Development Director and Fellow



FRONT COVER:
Robinson College Gardens.
Photo: Nic Marchant

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We are always delighted to hear from anyone who has a Robinson-related story to tell. If you would like to contribute an article to *Bin Brook*, please email development-office@robinson.cam.ac.uk.

NEWS in brief

Congratulations to five Robinsonians who were recognised for their work in the 2021 Queen's Birthday Honours List and the 2022 New Year Honours.



Dr Arif Ahmed MBE

Dr Arif Ahmed (Philosophy, 1996), University of Cambridge Reader in Philosophy, a Fellow of Gonville and Caius, Nicholas Sallnow-Smith College Lecturer, was awarded MBE for services to education. Dr Ahmed said at the time, "The MBE is 'For services to Education'. I've been campaigning for free speech in the University for many years. Most recently I've fought the recently launched 'Change the Culture' initiative (now withdrawn), which tried to impose an absurd and possibly racist definition of racism and also to encourage anonymous reporting of

'microaggressions'. Before that, I was involved in a successful campaign to liberalize our Free Speech policy to require tolerance of all views (but respect for none) and to prevent the cancellation or shutting down of visiting speakers.

None of this would have been possible without the support and expertise of David Yates, a truly courageous and principled Head of House. I remember thinking, when I was a PhD student at Robinson, how difficult it would be for the College to find a worthy successor to Lord Lewis. But it certainly did.

It's a tremendous honour for me to be recognised in this way by a country that I love, in the service of a University that I love and in the service of the ideals of free enquiry and independence of mind."



Professor Wendy Barclay CBE

Professor Wendy Barclay (Natural Sciences – Biological, 1982), Action Medical Research Chair Virology, Head of Department, Imperial College London was awarded CBE for services to Virology at the 2022 New Year's Honours List.



Stephen Paul Greene MBE

Stephen Paul Greene (Natural Sciences Chemistry, 2001), Director of Service Operations at BT, was awarded MBE for services to British Telecom and their colleagues' and customers' safety during COVID-19. "I was awarded the MBE for services to colleagues and customers at BT during COVID-19, having led the response of BT's Global business to the pandemic, including ensuring we did everything

possible for the safety of our people whilst maintaining the critical services we operate. It was a completely unexpected honour and reflects a huge amount of teamwork in BT during a time when connectivity has been so important to people, and it's been a privilege to receive the recognition as well as surprise family and friends as I was able to tell them about it!"



Dr Katherine Henderson MBE

Dr Katherine Henderson (Medicine, SPS, 1982) was awarded an MBE for services to Emergency Medicine during the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr Henderson is the President of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine and a consultant in Emergency Medicine at St Thomas' Hospital. In the recent series of posts from Robinson College on the occasion of International Women's Day Dr Henderson

said, "Staff are exhausted from managing Covid-19 but we have been central to the NHS response and delivered an uninterrupted service, which makes me proud. Emergency Medicine is a speciality where you have to know when to make a decision even if you do not have all the information. No decision can sometimes put a patient in more danger than not getting it quite right." Dr Henderson is the first woman President of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine.



Chief Constable Gavin Stephens QPM

Gavin Stephens (Management Studies, 1990), was awarded a Queen's Police Medal (QPM) for his distinguished service and lasting contribution to Neighbourhood Policing. He was nominated for his inspirational leadership and infectious enthusiasm for the job he has been doing with such dedication for 27 years, a job he loves. Gavin told us, "From a personal perspective, one of the best moments was being able to share the news with my mum and dad, and my son, but it was also tinged with sadness that my late wife Sarah (Churchill, 1990) was not around to celebrate with us. Sarah died in 2014 from ovarian cancer and was a huge supporter of my career in policing, and I owe her so much."

In September 2021 Robinson was pleased to announce the appointments of **Dr Emily Price** as Admissions Tutor for Arts and **Dr Elizabeth Rawlinson-Mills** as the Admissions Tutor for Widening Participation. Both Emily and Lizzi will work with **Dr Scott Annett** (Admissions Tutor for Sciences) over the coming years to ensure a positive admissions experience for our applicants. In addition to this, all of them will be working to develop and enhance the College's widening participation initiatives, both in-person and online.

Emily Price is a Fellow and a College Lecturer in Modern and Medieval Languages, with specific interests in Medieval French, Occitan, and Italian song and poetry. At the time of her appointment, Emily said, "I am looking forward to introducing potential applicants to our beautiful and friendly College and showing them everything that Robinson has to offer as a forward-thinking community in which to live and study. Demystifying the admissions process and making Cambridge accessible to all students possessing an intellectual curiosity is my main focus as I start in this role."

Elizabeth Rawlinson-Mills' new role has a specific focus on supporting the activities in improving access to Robinson. She is a Fellow in Education and English, as well as being a University Lecturer, and her

work on the Secondary PGCE course keeps her closely in touch with the schools and sixth-form colleges. Speaking of her appointment, Elizabeth explained, "There are many academically brilliant students who suspect that Cambridge is not for them. To our shame, there are still under-represented groups in Cambridge - and the University is the poorer for it. Part of my role as Admissions Tutor for Widening Participation is to join my voice to the chorus of colleagues and students saying: Cambridge is for you."



Left to right: Dr Elizabeth Rawlinson-Mills, Dr Scott Annett, Dr Emily Price

40 YEARS OF SERVICE



Christine James celebrating with her colleagues and friends

On 1 September, Christine James, Deputy Catering Manager, became the longest-serving member of staff. Friends and colleagues celebrated this incredible milestone in Christine's and the College's life with a glass of sparkling wine, famous Robinson sausage rolls, celebratory cake, hugs, best wishes and some gifts. Congratulations Christine and thank you for years of commitment, hard work and friendship. You are a living history of the red brick fortress of Robinson.

RCSA IS BACK IN ACTION AFTER THE LOCKDOWNS



Max Mason, RCSA
Communications Officer

After a year of restrictions, I am proud to report the RCSA has bounced back, re-energised by the promise of a busy year of College life, and with a large cohort of newly elected members. Small wonder that Michaelmas Term proved so busy: the RCSA helped support drama productions, musical concerts, sports fixtures, and even a cheese and wine evening. I can only provide a cursory glance over the variety of extracurricular pursuits that RCSA members have supported the last term – which, to the College's benefit – are no longer rendered through screens in lockdown.

Our welcome committee held a jam-packed Freshers Week, an informative crash course in all things Robinson. New students were offered thorough introductions to university life, tours of the College and Cambridge all rounded off in style with a signature College bop. Speaking

from personal experience, my initial days at Robinson were warm, with students readily on hand to turn to with any concerns or questions. With Freshers Week under our belts, many College pursuits began in earnest: rehearsals for the two Brickhouse productions, the student-written *Antigone: the Musical* and *Dogfight*, proved an exciting challenge for all those involved, and the end results were nothing short of fantastic. Reviewers from the *Varsity Magazine* reviewed both productions highly – praise indeed!

In music, the RCMS treated us to regular showcases of musical talent on Fridays, whilst the Robinson College Chapel Choir returned to their bi-weekly schedule of evensongs and services. Watch this space as their new CD hits the shelves!

The RCSA continued somewhat of a Robinson tradition, holding our Cheese and Wine event in Formal Hall. With the College's social life returning to its usual excitement, this was a welcome break from the often demanding, mid-term academic schedule. And, despite facing unprecedented weather conditions, our fresh batch of Robinson Rowers took to the river, in an impressive performance in a friendly, intercollegiate tournament.

As for policy, the RCSA is currently looking at the College's own environmental impact and how the College community might reduce CO₂ emissions. Through our new Bike Recycling Initiative, we will be offering free, fully serviced bikes to undergraduates as a part of a rental scheme, allowing students to cut costs whilst reducing their personal carbon footprint.

As the coming year ahead poses all kinds of opportunities (and challenges!) for undergraduates, the RCSA is keen to do all we can to support and enrich student life. With our exciting plans to expand welfare provision, promote climate justice and further our relationships with local charities, the RCSA anticipates another exciting term!



RCSA Committees 2020-2021 at hand over during Formal Hall

IN CONVERSATION WITH...

SIR RICHARD HEATON KCB

Sir Richard Heaton, the Warden. Photo: Nic Marchant



Chris Elliott is a Senior Member at Robinson College and a journalist with 40-years-experience as Managing Editor, Readers' Editor and columnist at *The Guardian*.

A quick glance at the background of Sir Richard Heaton, KCB, shows the classic trajectory of a senior civil servant: Oxford, the law and then a glittering career in Whitehall, where his last job was permanent secretary at the Ministry of Justice.

There are other aspects of his life and career though, both on and off his CV, that suggest the new Warden of Cambridge's youngest college has a more rounded experience of life. For instance, he reached the top 50 of the *Independent on Sunday's* pink list of influential gay people back in 2010 and, while the civil service's race champion, picked up some lumps from Charles Moore in *The Telegraph* last year for blogging in support of anti-racism. He visits India every year to enjoy the culture and buy paintings for his collection.

Both sides of his life appear to sit comfortably on him. As he settles down for our interview – a precursor to a busy day of one-on-ones with College Fellows – there is on the wall a work by Kimathi Donkor, his most recent acquisition. Sir Richard, 56, is friendly and open as he talks of how he came to enter the law and how, at the end of his civil service career, came to Robinson. However, he is more considered in his responses when we discuss the College, aware that he has only been in post for four weeks and that the College is collectively governed and steered.

He read law at university on the advice of his teachers at school, who thought he had the right mind for a lawyer: "I don't think it was a terribly active choice. I read law and found that there were some aspects I found more interesting than others. Law in the pursuit of public policy, the business of changing the law, making it better, working out relationships between the government and citizen – all that was fascinating".

So, a means to an end then?

"It wasn't strategic. But I think it was public service that I was really getting at", he said. When he saw an advertisement in *The Times* for a Home Office lawyer, he went for it. His father was also a civil servant towards the end of his career, but he resists the idea that he 'followed' him into Whitehall.

"I didn't follow my father, but I do now realise – and I've thought about this a lot when we look to improve access into the civil service or Oxbridge – I do realise that the mystery of the civil service wasn't a barrier to me because of my father".

The attraction of the Home Office job was that it brought together two parts of his law degree that he particularly enjoyed: penology and public law. There followed swift progress through the ranks of Whitehall, with stints at the

Attorney General's office, the Cabinet Office and the Lord Chancellor's office, where he headed a team socialising the Human Rights Act within government before it came into force. The HRA was, thereafter, a specialist strength for him. Then on to the DWP where he took a leap outside his comfort zone in a role as the Director General for pensions policy and an ageing society. He says he loved DWP, where he learned to be 'an intelligent customer of analysts and economists' and he "got better at the politics"; "By the time I got to the Ministry of Justice I was better at understanding how to fit political change into large, continuing organisations and to be there for ministers – saying to ministers, 'I understand what you're trying to do, and here is how we might make it happen'".

He took on the role of race champion in 2013 at the instigation of Sir Jeremy Heywood, then Cabinet Secretary. He was one of a number of 'champions', diversity leads in areas such as gender and LGBTQ. And then that support for the 'champions' fell away. "I took on Race because I thought it was where I had most to learn, and I felt it was our most intractable inequality. I still think that". He attracted the ire of Charles Moore towards the end of his time. By then the support for the subject under David Cameron and Theresa May had vanished. "Suddenly if you mentioned race or anti-racism, you were in deep political territory."

He left the civil service last year at the end of his five-year tenure at the Ministry of Justice. "I was pretty clear that it was time to do something else. I had always intended to wrestle myself out of the civil service. In 2020 I thought: when, if not now?"

He credits the Civil Service as being an environment in which he grew as a person – he came out in his first year at the Home Office – having entered as an 'uncertain barrister', unsure of himself or his direction.

For many senior civil servants, a second career beckons; an easier life of non-executive directorships and up-market charity work. But he has chosen the full-time, full-on headship of a Cambridge college. Why?

He wanted to do something substantial. "I enjoyed leadership, and didn't want that muscle to waste away, and a values-driven organisation is a big thing for me. I also enjoyed, in the departments I've been in, and in United St Saviour's [a South London community-based charity], shaping and articulating the purpose of an organisation, redefining it and telling its story in a modern world."

Then there was call from Robinson's headhunter and a degree of soul-searching began. He saw in the description of the role a college that is 'as it approaches its 50 years, proud of its part in an academically brilliant and ancient university but at the same time, proud of its difference'.

"Organisations are sometimes most creative when they're in slight tension with the mainstream", he said.

Now he is here, what are the challenges for Robinson?

"Well, the context, I think, is one of the world's great universities, but one which cannot afford to rest on its laurels. Cambridge can't take pre-eminence for granted. So, Robinson has to be part of teaching and research excellence, to be part of a university that's always looking to raise its game and stay ahead. And as a College, we need the self-confidence to be better known, to be a College of choice. We are past our early days as a start-up College; we are more stable financially than we were, we offer a great, modern, inclusive version of the Cambridge education, in an environment where people thrive. And we, the Fellowship, are ambitious."

He believes part of that will mean improving communications. Although he is wary of the press, he will engage with it.

"Robinson certainly has a story to tell. We need to tell it consistently and clearly. That means first working it out within the College and with our friends and supporters too, and then we will certainly want to raise our profile and engage externally. We've tended to treat external communications with caution... that's a wise starting point, but we will need to do more, and I'm up for that."

His background in the civil service is a natural fit for the administrative side of the role, the depth of which can sometimes be surprising for those who have no experience of modern higher education establishments.

He said: "There's a range of operational functions: chairing the College Council, which is a kind of executive board and also the trustee body. Working alongside the senior tutor on the academic side, and the domestic and financial bursars. And there's a range of chair-type functions, presiding in hall twice a week, chairing Governing Body. Then I think it's my job, and a pleasure, to be at College functions, such as chapel and recitals, or sporting events, or plays... and there's the strategic function, assembling this incomplete narrative about the purpose of Robinson, articulating what sort of a College we are, what we value, why people should come here or support us. And I want to spend time with our alumni community as well."

He is also aware that Robinson still suffers a little in terms of an internal perception in Cambridge and externally as the 'newest' college, occasionally a sense of 'not being worthy'. He is determined to change that.

"We just shouldn't let that infect us. Our students don't tend to worry that their College lacks a baroque library or a medieval courtyard. And there is something invigorating about not apologising for the fact that we're modern. We're a twentieth-century college, with buildings you can actually live in, and with a beautiful park. Who wouldn't want that? If we can remain unencumbered and agile, we're up there with the best of them".

SIR RICHARD HEATON KCB

INAUGURAL SPEECH

Sir Richard Heaton KCB was admitted as the new Warden of Robinson College on 4th October 2021. This is what he told Robinson's Fellows, students and members of staff during his inaugural speech:

'I would like to say a few words to all the friends and colleagues here in this room, and to all those who are watching on the live stream.

To the Fellowship first: may I say that it is a very special honour to have been elected by you as the Warden of Robinson. Thank you for your trust and confidence. And thank you for your warm welcome in recent weeks.

Throughout the selection process, I enjoyed your collective affection and ambition for the College, your desire to move forward from our foundation and our growth phase, and for the radically different, inclusive, brilliant Robinson College to become better known to more people. Robinson's approaching half-century, I sensed, brought your ambition into focus. But I also heard your keenness to keep and foster that spirit of friendliness that was part of the College from the start: truly supportive and collegiate, for anyone studying, teaching, researching or working here. I suspect the quality we are talking about is more than friendliness: I think it is closer to kindness.

Today in that spirit and that ambition, I commit to putting everything I have into leading the College. I will promote its honour and well-being, as the declaration puts it. But I will always remember that Robinson is an institution that is collectively governed. I am told by one Fellow that Jack Lewis would sometimes use the words, "I am in your hands", either in Council or in the Governing Body. If I use those words, you will know where I got them from. I do know that we can do great things together.

Of course, my job as Warden will be immeasurably easier by virtue of the wonderful Professor Anuj Dawar being Deputy Warden: thank you Anuj for being elected to that role and thank you to Professor Melinda Duer for fulfilling the same role before Anuj.

To our fabulous staff: again, thank you. It is you, perhaps more than anyone, who embody the spirit of this place. You look after us and our environment,



*Sir Richard Heaton KCB, the Warden.
Photo: Razvan Danaila*

you keep us nourished, you keep us safe, you keep us connected, and you keep us cheerful. Getting to know you is turning out to be a real privilege. For my part, my intention is that the College should be and remain a great place to work, a good employer, and one always looking to improve what we do and how we do it.

And to our students. You are why we are all here in the first place; you are why this radically different College was founded 40 years ago, and why, here on Grange Road, brick was laid on brick (and on concrete). Robinson is first and foremost an outstanding place of education, and our students, both undergraduate and post-graduate, will always be at the heart of it. Your learning, your research, your happiness, your well-being, your unfolding future... these things are the measures of our success, and we care deeply about them. Happily, I will see roughly a third of you later this evening at the matriculation dinner (I am afraid you will hear me speak again – I promise a different speech). As the term goes on, I hope to meet many more of you. And beyond the academic life of the College, I look forward to working with your Association, and to supporting, championing and sponsoring your teams, your clubs and societies, your performances, and your achievements.

And finally, to all of you. All of you: staff, students, Fellows, friends. We are, let us hope, about to enjoy a term in conditions close to what we used to call "life as normal". There is no doubt that all those months of lockdown and semi-lockdown damaged our community life at Robinson, as they did to families and institutions and workplaces across the world. We've all missed "life as normal". So let us all work hard to repair the damage here at Robinson – coming together, getting to know one another, treating each other with respect, and together doing both amazing things and everyday things. After all, "life as normal", in a place like Robinson, is pretty special.

Thank you for listening. It's an enormous pleasure to be joining you at Robinson.' ■

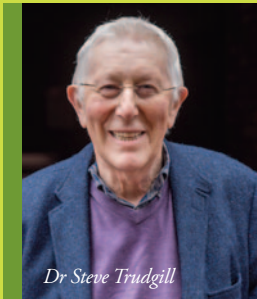


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→ **FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY**

ARE WE REALLY BEING SUSTAINABLE?

DR STEVE TRUDGILL



Dr Steve Trudgill

In his article, Dr Steve Trudgill, Emeritus Fellow in Geography lays out some of the challenges which still face us since sustainability became a much talked about goal in the late 1980s. This issue of Bin Brook shows that the challenges can be met in a positive way and how Robinson College and its alumni have been contributing. This is especially so from participants in the

University of Cambridge Course in Sustainable Leadership (CSIL) who have been providing answers and ways forward. We are also grateful for the way that they have contributed to sustainability in our College through their intellectual inputs, discussion and support.

In 1987 the Brundtland Report attempted to understand the interconnections between social equity, economic growth, and environmental problems, and develop policy solutions that integrated all three areas. Sustainable development was seen as “development that

meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Since that time some good things have been achieved in the name of sustainability, but the concept has also been hijacked and used for many different purpose – even just for the ‘sustainability’ of economic output rather than anything to do with the environment. For example, chopping down the original forest with its diverse organisms and re-planting new timber trees is somehow seen as ‘sustainable’ – well, for timber production, yes; cutting down forests for palm oil plantations can ‘sustain’ palm oil production. OK, so these meet the needs of future generations for timber and palm oil but is this really the original intention?

World wildlife populations ‘fall by 58% in 40 years’ ran the BBC News headline for 26th October 2016 at

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-37775622>.

The assessment from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem

→

ARE WE REALLY BEING SUSTAINABLE?

DR STEVE TRUDGILL

Services (IPBES, meeting 29 April – 4 May 2019 in Paris) showed a widespread global loss of habitats and species (UN, 2019:

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/05/nature-decline-unprecedented-report/). Key conclusions are that current efforts to conserve the Earth's resources are likely to fail without radical action and about 1 million species are at risk of extinction – 1 in 4 of the existing species. Crop security is threatened long-term. Marine pollution has increased tenfold since 1980¹. Many of these points are also endorsed in the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) *Living Planet* Report for 2020².

At the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), meeting 29 April – 4 May 2019 in Paris, the IPBES Chair, Sir Robert Watson, said: “The overwhelming evidence of the IPBES Global Assessment, from a wide range of different fields of knowledge, presents an ominous picture” (UN 2019). At the meeting it was observed that “Nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history – and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world now likely”.

The meeting stressed that this profoundly impacts human well-being: “The health of ecosystems on which we and all other species depend is deteriorating more rapidly than ever. We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide.” However, the report also stresses that it is not too late to make a difference.” While expecting opposition from those who have “interests vested in the status quo” they feel that “such opposition can be overcome for the broader public good” (UN 2019).

The Convention on Biological Diversity was signed by 150 government leaders at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. The Convention recognised that biological diversity is about more than plants, animals and micro-organisms and their ecosystems – it is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live. In 2010 visions

for 2020 were presented. At a conference held on 29 October 2010, in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, a revised and updated Strategic Plan for Biodiversity was adopted, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, for the 2011-2020 period (Convention on Biological Diversity 2020).

When 2020 arrived, it appeared that none of these plans had been met. The assessments of the failure are exemplified in the following – from Earth.Org (2020) ‘World Fails to Meet Single Aichi Biodiversity Target to Stop Destruction of Nature’ and a similar assessment in the *New Scientist* by Vaughan (2020): ‘Massive failure: The world has missed all its biodiversity targets.’

By that time two other threads had also arrived. First, the valuing of nature during lockdowns, exemplified by McCarthy, Mynott and Marren (2020): *The Consolation of Nature. Spring in the time of Coronavirus*. The second was the publication of several more radically thinking articles involving the simultaneous enhancement of biodiversity and the human condition. About 300 experts were consulted for the publication of the paper: Wyborn et al. (2020a), which was agenda for research and action towards diverse and just futures for life on Earth. Their essential stance is that “decades of research and policy interventions on biodiversity have insufficiently addressed the dual issues of biodiversity degradation and social justice”. The ‘failure’ of the Aichi targets above mentioned seems to be notable in this respect. The authors call for “a collective task of ‘revisiting biodiversity’ towards the goal of sustaining diverse and just futures for life on Earth”. Their insight is that “biodiversity research and action is underpinned by choices about how problems are conceptualized”. They recognize “knowledge, action, and ethics as inseparable.”

A further radical revisiting of the conservation narratives is seen in the book by Büscher and Fletcher (2020), *The Conservation Revolution: Radical ideas for saving nature beyond the Anthropocene*. The authors feel that while “many believe conservation requires full integration into capitalist production processes” and call for conservation to “go beyond protected areas and faith in markets”, the phrase

¹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/05/1037941> 6 May 2019

² <https://livingplanet.panda.org/en-gb/>

“convivial conservation” should be used which will “incorporate the needs of humans and non-humans within integrated and just landscapes”. Additionally, the economic value of biodiversity has been emphasised in an encouraging review: *The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review* (2021).

We need the benefits of civilisation – as Wendell Berry (2017) in *The World-Ending Fire* wrote, “people cannot live apart from nature... and yet, people cannot live in nature without changing it. [We] depend upon nature, and [we] change it”, as well as: “Pure nature is not good for humans to live in [we need] basic human amenities – [such as] clothing, shelter, cooked food...”. He also adds that: “It is equally true that a condition that is purely human is not good for people to live in, and people do not want to live for very long in it”.

We also need the drive and inspiration of David Attenborough (2020) who in *A Life on Our planet: My witness statement and vision for the future* wrote: “As a young man, I felt I was out there in the wild, experiencing the untouched natural world - but it was an illusion. The tragedy of our time has been happening all around us, barely noticeable from day to day - the loss of our planet's wild places, its biodiversity. [...] if we act now, we can yet put it right. We have one final chance to create the perfect home for ourselves and restore the wonderful world we inherited. All we need is the will do so.”

I am encouraged by the existence of the charity, People Need Nature³ which promotes the value of nature for people in their everyday lives: nature as a source of inspiration, as a source of solace; and nature enriching people's spiritual lives. It also works to influence public thinking and policy to place a greater value on nature for these things. They have been working with the Young Poets Network on encouraging poetry about people's place in nature, including poems appreciating the trees by the motorway, the river by the factory, the flowers growing in brick⁴. PNN website promotes the idea that: “Nature doesn't need human beings – it will survive without us. We need nature to thrive and survive”. Organisations such as Youth for Nature⁵ are encouragingly active as is Action for Conservation⁶ which stands out in this sense. They believe that all young people should feel moved and empowered to protect the natural world. They feel that if children and

young people lose contact and involvement with nature, they are less likely to fight to protect it as they grow older. Their egalitarian belief is that a passion for conservation can flow through anyone's life. They have five core values that define their approach to creating the next generation of conservationists: Diversity, Wonder, Hope, Action and Change. They aim to effect this by creating a sense of wonder and fostering ongoing engagement through stories of hope and direct involvement with nature.

We need to ask some basic questions if life on earth is actually going to be sustainable.

Do we wish to be the species that protects and cherishes other species or the species which removes other species?

Do we wish to be the species that cherishes the wilder areas of the planet, or do we wish to be the one that makes our artefacts even more pervasive than they already are?

Do we wish to be the species that cherishes the life-support system this planet offers, or do we wish to diminish this system?

Are future peoples going to look back at us and see us as “good ancestors”?

And more than anything, rather than just worthy rhetoric and posturing, we need effective actions - which is what young people, and many others are saying rather loudly and clearly. ■

Stephen Trudgill. His book *Why Conserve Nature? Perspectives on Meanings and Motivations* was published by Cambridge University Press on 24 February 2022.



³ www.peopleneednature.org.uk

⁴ <https://ypn.poetrysociety.org.uk/workshop/people-need-nature-gboyega-odubanjio/>

⁵ <https://youthfornature.uk/>

⁶ www.actionforconservation.org/about-us



→ FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

TIPPING POINTS

PROFESSOR TIM LENTON

Photo: University of Exeter

Professor Tim Lenton (Natural Sciences – Physical, 1991) is Director of the Global Systems Institute and Chair in Climate Change and Earth System Science at the University of Exeter. His research focuses on understanding the behaviour of the Earth as a whole system. He is particularly interested in how life has reshaped the planet in the past, and what lessons we can draw from this as we proceed to reshape the planet now. His award-winning work identifying tipping points in the climate system has led him on to examine positive tipping points within our social systems which could help accelerate progress towards a more sustainable future.

It's been 30 years since I came to Robinson College to read Natural Sciences in autumn 1991. I was already passionate about both science and the environment – and there was plenty to be concerned about at the time. The ozone hole had been discovered¹, the Amazon was being rapidly deforested, and global warming was well underway². The Tripos, alas, was not so switched on to the planet. I found it challenging but detached from ecological reality. I was in the library until 11pm many nights trying to solve abstract physics and mathematics problems (thank you Ian Rudy for helping me through!). The thing that saved me was my Dad giving me Jim Lovelock's books on "Gaia" for Christmas 1991. I was immediately captivated by Lovelock's vision of life on Earth as a single self-regulating system. I could see what I wanted to research when I graduated.

I wrote to Lovelock, and we met in the summer of 1992. Slowly I found some like-minded souls in Cambridge and together we founded a student group called 'Science for the Earth'. Thanks to Tom Wakeford (King's College), the eminent microbiologist Lynn Margulis – Lovelock's key collaborator on the Gaia hypothesis – addressed our first forum. Fast forward three decades and I am still on a gripping scientific adventure, trying to understand how Gaia has evolved, how we are disrupting the biosphere now, and how we can achieve a flourishing future within it. Crucial to this personal scientific quest has been continually learning new subjects and – where the problem demands it – synthesising them.

That process began for me in Cambridge, although with hindsight I wish I could have studied more subjects than I did. We finally started to study ozone depletion and global warming in Part II chemistry. But the biggest inspiration I got was from Simon Schaffer's captivating history of science lectures. These opened my eyes to how the polymath pursuit of natural philosophy had become hopelessly subdivided into jealously guarded scientific disciplines. It was obvious even at the time that this was being confronted by a reality that doesn't know anything about disciplinary boundaries.

Soberingly, since I matriculated greenhouse gas emissions have increased by over 40% and global warming has doubled to over 1 degree centigrade. For the last decade or so I have been researching the climate tipping points we risk crossing because of this³. Hopefully, that has played a small part in increasing international ambitions to try and limit global warming to 1.5C. But as I rapidly learned in Cambridge, ambition is nothing without application. Right now, international action urgently needs to accelerate to avoid a climate crisis. To that end, I have turned my research attention to identifying the positive social tipping points we need to trigger to achieve internationally agreed climate goals⁴.

Looking back, we have lost a generation to inaction, and we have one generation left to transform our societies to a sustainable state. All our institutions must rise to this extraordinary challenge. It's now or never. ■

¹ In 1985, thanks to researchers at the British Antarctic Survey based in Cambridge

² James Hansen had famously testified to the US congress in 1988 on the reality and risks of global warming

³ <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03595-0>

⁴ <https://www.randfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14693062.2020.1870097>

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THE CAMBRIDGE BUBBLE GOES GREEN

KIRSTY MACKINLAY



Kirsty Mackinlay (Natural Sciences – Chemistry, 2017) is in the final year of her BBSRC funded DTP studentship on mammalian stem cell research in the Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience. She currently also volunteers for Neutreeno, a company seeking to develop the world's most comprehensive & inclusive emissions calculator.

As a Cambridge student, one often hears the phrase “Cambridge Bubble” tossed around. To some, this might connote insularity and confinement, and yet, my experiences over the past four years have been nothing but expansive. The breadth and diversity of opportunity present in Cambridge have not only inspired me to pursue a career in sustainability but has provided me with a new skillset to do so.

Beginning my PhD in stem cell research in 2017 signalled the point at which I could finally translate years of learning into something that society could, hopefully, benefit from. Stem cell research not only offers clinical promise but can also be applied to more unexpected avenues. In particular, I was interested in ways that stem cells could be incorporated into environmentally focussed research, such as their use in animal stem cell-derived meat replacements, or the potential of sperm and egg stem cells to revive populations of endangered species. Yet, as my studies progressed, I found myself spending increasingly more of my spare time researching climate change-mitigating technologies more generally, regardless of their relevance to stem cell technology. I felt frustrated by the slow rate of progress and was compelled to support society's transition to net zero in any way that I could. After navigating a lot of internal conflict and self-questioning, I decided that following my PhD I would pursue a career in sustainability full time.

Initially, the prospect of this career pivot felt daunting. With my training in scientific method, I felt well-versed in tackling difficult, multifaceted problems, but plagued with imposter syndrome, I questioned whether I could gain the relevant experience required to enter the sustainability space. I turned to my Robinson College colleagues and friends for support. Over a few informal chats in the Garden Restaurant, I came to appreciate that within my college network lay an untapped source of insight and advice that could support me in my career shift. I was led to local charities and organisations, with whom I undertook internships and worked on methodologies for calculating supply-chain emission, sustainable development in low/middle-income countries, and the carbon finance market, among others. However, the opportunities available within College and University networks go beyond

the purely professional, with many student-led sustainability-focussed initiatives offering experience in grassroots environmental advocacy. For example, I became a Trainer for the Cambridge Carbon Literacy Project, run out of the Cambridge Hub, and, through the Engage for Change programme, I worked on a cross-college project looking at ways to promote biodiversity within college grounds. Such schemes have introduced me to countless inspiring members of the student community, whose passion and drive to achieve a sustainable future only reaffirms my decision to pursue a career in sustainability.

Alongside my PhD, I currently work at a Cambridge-based start-up, called Neutreeno. Our group of research scientists and engineers are changing the way the world measures and neutralises greenhouse gas emissions. Neutreeno's approach is exciting because it tackles the root cause of global warming: the link between commerce and emissions. Firstly, Neutreeno's state-of-the-art carbon calculator gives companies a holistic picture of emissions produced when creating their products. By providing visibility into their supply chain emissions, companies can now understand their impact and create a real action plan for net-zero. Then, to reduce any hard-to-abate emissions, we help match emissions hotspots to low-carbon technological projects within sectors. Instead of propagating carbon offsetting, such as buying a t-shirt and then planting a tree, Neutreeno aims to direct carbon financing circularly to decarbonise the emissive sectors and supply chains themselves. This accelerates the industrial transition to net-zero, equitably. With our new e-commerce API, companies and consumers join forces to actively enable the long-term decarbonisation of their products' supply chains by promoting carbon 'insetting'.

Being Cambridge-based has allowed Neutreeno to collaborate with the world's best climate engineers and scientists. We are only at the start of our journey, but with our grounding within the Cambridge networks, we are confident that the only way is up. Overall, my sustainability journey has taught me that, no matter your background, with the right people and knowledge, positive change is achievable. In Cambridge, both can be found in spades. ■

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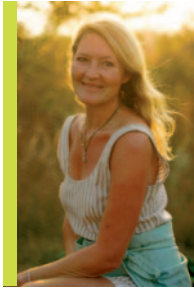
A WILD LIFE

SOPHIE GRANT



BIN BROOK, ROBINSON COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE





Sophie Grant (English, 2000) is a co-founder of award-winning safari lodge El Karama Lodge in Kenya. She is a mother of two, a passionate cook and a trainee wildlife guide. Her work involves creating sustainable adventure tourism experiences with a team of Kenyans dedicated to the long-term success of the diverse, dynamic ecosystems of the region of Laikipia.

Living wild requires resilience and innovation to survive. When you are also operating an adventure safari business off-grid and in the company of wildlife including elephant, lion and buffalo, a liberal dose of *sang froid* and humour are essential tools too.

My home is on El Karama Conservancy, a 14,000-acre private wildlife conservancy located in the heart of Laikipia, one of Kenya's most biodiverse and culturally rich regions. With centuries of human history that include the early footfalls of ancient man, nomadic pastoralism, European settler pioneer history, agriculture and more recently wildlife conservation activities, this unique habitat is fast becoming Kenya's flagship county for sustainable development.

With most of Kenya's iconic mammal species living only now inside protected areas, Laikipia is a showcase region for a more holistic environmental and land management strategy approach and sustainable tourism. Full of incredible wild animals including globally endangered species like the Grevy's zebra, elephant, lion, leopard and cheetah, the region also boasts geological rarities, extensive biodiversity and rich tribal heritage. Laikipia is now one of the most exciting safari destinations in the world.

As people who live inside a wildlife conservancy and who are tasked with its stewardship, we cohabit in an unusual way here, mixing wildlife conservation and habitat protection with agricultural land use that includes raising free-ranging breeding cattle (Sahiwal), sheep, arable and other products and eco system services. The strategy as a big picture is to adopt a multi-platform approach to habitat conservation that must include people and their need for livelihood opportunities and for the derivation of direct benefits from eco systems. The aim: to ensure these unique habitats remain intact for wildlife and communities in the future.

In 2006, my Kenyan husband Murray, a bronze sculptor of African wildlife art, started building a small eco-tourism lodge on the banks of the river where he was born and grew up. He knew that it was essential to generate an additional and important revenue stream to cover the billowing costs of land management and wildlife protection in Kenya. Using raw materials from the land, including fallen Acacia Nilotica tree stumps and quarried feldspar and schist found in the south of the property, he designed and built by hand the

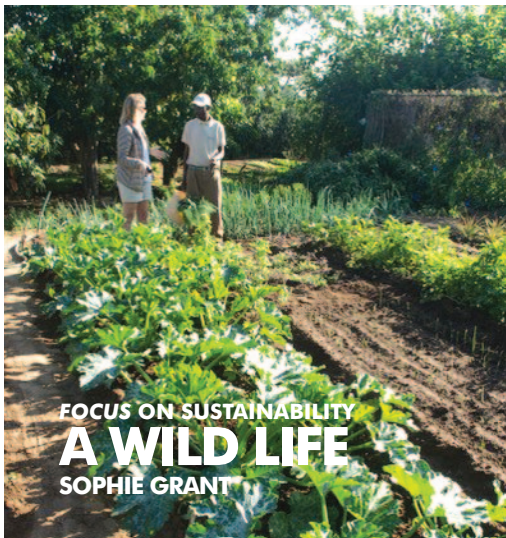
beginnings of what is now, almost 15 years later, an award-winning safari lodge and adventure experience visited by guests from all around the world.

As recognised leaders in sustainable travel and tourism, we have demonstrated the value of this small business as a platform for education, personal development and livelihood improvement within our team and in the local neighbourhood. Using the 'ripple effect' of small business, we harness the revenue from our tourism business and reinvest it into the ecosystem around us. We also host schools, tertiary education students and interns annually, sharing our work, ideas and collaborating on wildlife education, conservation, eco-tourism and renewable energy in action.

Our business employs 24 Kenyans full-time, and we look after clients from all around the world, including many domestic tourists. Creating much-needed access for local Kenyans to experience wildlife areas with their children is as vital as the international tourism revenue that we generate. This holistic model of tourism is something I feel passionate about, a sustainable model supporting domestic and international business, which offers permanency and security to the staff working here. For a business that is contributing to the long-term health of a unique habitat, a local economy and a community, relying on international tourism alone is not a sustainable approach: the pandemic has proved that to many.

Ethical working strategies, where fair pay, continuous training and value is given to your team, are also tremendously valuable for a community, and as a business owner, I would argue that it pays back into your business three-fold. A secure contract and salary allow our team to establish a good home environment and, by their choice, to educate their children, which in turn creates better long-term opportunities for a family as a whole. We have seen our team move from a hand to mouth existence to becoming land owners, community elders and mentors to younger people.

Our lodge has always operated completely off-grid, using renewable energy in the form of large banks of solar panels and batteries for running all our electricity needs, including WIFI, a chemical free-swimming pool, staff rooms and communal area and all our water heating needs. There is no backup generator, we live on solar power alone. We also harvest our rain water for drinking: currently, our tank storage is at 250,000 litres. →



Our working operations are fed by a man-made reservoir at the conservancy HQ, which stores 1.5 million litres of rain water, which is what services our operations year-round. We are not dependent on river water, and we are extremely conscious of our neighbours and their needs downstream

The lodge has seven water metres, separating each department and we report and monitor our water use daily. Our organic garden contains forty raised beds and is fed by drip irrigation. The rest of our produce is bought from mostly organic entrepreneurs within a 70 km radius of our lodge with whom we have worked for over 10 years now. Our lodge kitchen operates on a zero-waste strategy, and we do not accept plastic bottles here. We recycle our waste by reuse including our wine bottles, which are made into glasses and storage jars by hand, and we tap into community projects in our area that focus on recycling.

Our primary purpose outside of the bigger picture is to connect our clients to wild living and the magic of this habitat in all its biodiversity. Having an open-air and isolated, wild environment means we have been able to survive the pandemic, and by pivoting a little we have been able to meet the changing needs of the marketplace. We recognised very early on that these wild spaces were extremely valuable to those who needed an escape hatch during the pandemic and so we transformed it into a retreat from urban environments, creating new elements like safari tented rooms with private WIFI for professionals and families seeking to isolate but with full access to their school and work systems online. With the addition of a new under canvas experience, El Karama Wild, our guest could choose to stay in a lodge environment or indeed to wild camp with us for deeper immersion.

Our favourite thing to do as guides is to take our clients out on foot. We set off early in the morning around 6 am tracing the tracks of zebra and lion in the sandy paths that snake over the ridges. Mount Kenya sits regally, a queen in our midst, her glinting peaks rising sharply in the near distance. We walk up to the giraffe and crouch behind Nilotica stumps as elephant herds move noiselessly out of the lugga and into the sunshine. We can walk all day, with a picnic stop at the river, cooling off in rock pools.

In the evenings, we arrive at a bush camp, all ripstop canvas, lanterns and wood smoke. Guests have a warm shower with an opening up to the sky, hot water boiled on an open fire and poured into canvas buckets that get hoisted above your head leaving you feeling fresh and relaxed for the fireside. The fire is lit, the table starts to fill with homecooked bitings and cold beers, and we put our feet up and listen to the nightjars. It's simple, it's effective, it's just what our clients need.

Outside the romance and adventure of what we do, there is the hard, stark truth of it, and this is where sustainability comes in. The glaciers on Mount Kenya are receding by the year, the water table is getting lower; the main arteries of the country including the Ewaso Nyiro, the river on whose mighty banks we live and work, is dwindling annually, sometimes three times a year. I am fortunate to live and work with people who have known this place over generations and who bear witness to these changes. We are not removed. We see our waste, we live with it. But I can see our sustainable strategies spreading gently into my team and our neighbouring community by a kind of osmosis, succession planning at play already. This awareness of how precious the environment is, how vulnerable these wild spaces are is definitely becoming more understood.

We hope that as consumers become more aware of the power they have to command the marketplace by making travel choices that add to environments rather than detract, that places like this one will continue to thrive and be enhanced through sustainable tourism and other income-generation activities to support this globally unique landscape.

Kenya has been voted the 'World's Best Safari Destination' in 2021 by the World Travel Awards. ■

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→ FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

CLIMATE ACTION: FROM A PUBLISHING PERSPECTIVE

THEA SHERER

Thea Sherer (Social and Political Sciences, 1998) is Director of Sustainability at Springer Nature Group. Since 2017 she has led on sustainability strategy and corporate reporting, driving forward a programme that measures, monitors and works to improve the publishers' environmental and social impacts. She was appointed as the company's Climate Action Officer, a role that is a first in the publishing industry, in the summer of 2021.

It was over 30 degrees Celsius in Heidelberg, and not yet 9am when my train pulled into the station after an overland journey from London during the summer of 2019. On the train and in the office there were complaints about a lack of air conditioning and questions about whether climate change was the cause of the sweltering temperatures. It made an appropriate backdrop for an important conversation with my company's executive team about the part we could play in addressing climate change, as part of a wider aim to help address the challenges set out in the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Later that day, we agreed on an approach to becoming carbon neutral.

Springer Nature is one of the world's largest publishers of research: since 2015 we have published more than 40,000 research articles or book chapters relating to climate action, and these have been collectively downloaded more than 85 million times. It's clear that we cannot ignore what science has been telling us about the need to act faster on climate change when we are the ones publishing it.

My role as Climate Action Officer, and Director of Sustainability, means I'm responsible for making sure we meet the targets we've set. I work with the executive team, and our internal Environment Committee to identify the most significant contributions to the company's carbon and other environmental impacts, identify ways we can minimise or mitigate these, monitor progress and report on it both internally and externally via our annual sustainable business report. We work with a network of more than 120 'green office ambassadors' amongst our staff who help identify changes we can make to reduce emissions at a local level, such as replacing older lightbulbs with LEDs or improving waste collection and recycling. Last year, the pandemic led to an immediate and dramatic reduction in business travel – and in the past flights contributed significantly to our overall carbon footprint given the nature of our business and need to connect with academics and institutions around the globe.

We've learned a lot from recent experience and introduced new policies so that we don't return to the previous level of air travel, with a virtual first approach to meetings and encouraging other forms of travel where possible.

I firmly believe that ambitious global goals will never be reached without a collective will and action from all parts of society, including business. Within Springer Nature, that means every part of the organisation needs to contribute. From the CEO to our green office network of colleagues, together we act to identify the ways we can reduce emissions, be more energy- and resource-efficient, and aid the research community to share the evidence base as widely as possible. As one small example, in October – through a collaboration with Eurostar – we shared solutions-oriented research with delegates and activists travelling to the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow. Through the UK Publishers Association, we also work with peers across the publishing industry (including Cambridge University Press and Assessment) to drive best practices.

We met our initial carbon neutral target for Springer Nature's global operations (covering offices, warehouses, fleet and business flights) by the end of 2020. We now buy green electricity for all our offices worldwide and purchase high-quality socially beneficial carbon offsets. We've committed to becoming net-zero carbon, through our publishing value chain, by 2040 and are setting science-based targets to help us get there. It is a significant undertaking that will require efforts through all parts of our business, and we will need to work with suppliers and customers to succeed. My role is to find the right routes to get there.

I think the climate crisis is the biggest issue facing my generation and I'm encouraged by the passion of the research community and global colleagues as we stand to tackle the challenge head-on. ■



Thea Sherer

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CIRCULAR ECONOMY: A TRANSFORMATIVE AND DISRUPTIVE MODEL IN ACTION

LAMPROS LABROS BOUKLIS



Lampros Labros Bouklis

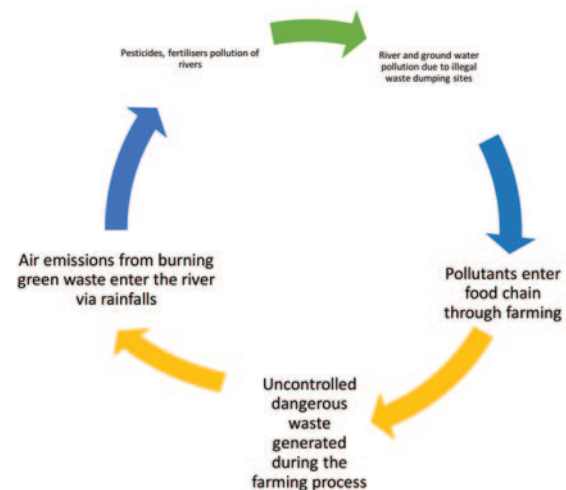
Lampros Labros Bouklis (Sustainability Leadership, 2014) is a Physics graduate of the University of Patras who specialised in Geophysics at the University of Vienna (1990). He holds two Masters degrees in: “Business strategy and environmental management” (University of Bradford, 1996) and “Sustainability Leadership” (Robinson College, 2017); he is also completing doctoral research at Rheinische-Westfälische Technische Hochschule Aachen on solid waste management and circular economy. He has been active as a sustainability consultant since 1997. In 2000 he was one of the first Greek environmental auditors in accredited certification bodies. Since 2006 he has been a member of the Board of the International Network for Environmental Management, based in Hamburg. He has been elected several times as a Board / Executive member of the Hellenic Solid Waste Management Association (HSWMA).

Circular economy (CE) is different from the conventional model “take – make – waste”. In a circular economy, manufacturers design products to be reusable, extend the use of products and materials in the economy, place sustainable products in the market: make value chains more sustainable. For example, electrical devices are designed in such a way that they can be easier to repair. Products and raw materials are also reused as much as possible. It involves decoupling economic activities from the consumption of finite resources. The three main principles of CE are: designing out waste and pollution; keeping products and materials in use; and regenerating natural systems. The pioneering Ellen Mac Arthur Foundation, based in the UK since 2010, has initiated and explored CE and influenced multinational companies, organisations and governments.

The European Union since 2015 has adopted CE and obliged the member states to achieve specific quantitative and qualitative targets, while the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) strategically supports and boosts the shift to a CE globally as an essential action to achieve the climate goals agreed by the international community and to help rebuild the world’s economies stronger, greener and better. During my Master’s degree studies in Sustainability Leadership (2014-16) I focused on the circular economy by investigating the barriers and opportunities in developing models via my dissertation thesis. In 2015 I presented to ABTA (Association of British Travel Agents) members, at their annual conference, the implications of circular economy in the tourism sector and since then I have developed studies for the proper implementation of CE in the Peloponnese region of Greece and other organisations/ companies. In 2015 I was also distinguished, in an international competition organized by VEOLIA, as one of the six best innovative proposals for broader solid waste management. The subject of my personal scientific proposal, called “optimum

resource collection” was the use of IT in a solid waste collection based on circular economy principles (March 2015, Resource – Ecobuild, ExCel Centre, London).

Since August 2020 I have been personally involved in inventing, designing and establishing, together with Prof. G. Vokas, a new course at the University of West Attica (Athens) named “Circular Economy & Sustainable Development: Leadership, Technology, Innovation”. This Masters course will commence in 2022 as the first in Greece that explores in a holistic approach the concept of circular economy and I am now supporting it as the Organizational Development Manager. Since October 2021, I am also endorsed by the Board Members of the HSWMA to act for the proper training, awareness, education and standardisation of the process of CE in Greece.



A genuine circular economy stops the current conventional circularity of negative impacts. L. Bouklis, 2016.



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AT COP26

LOWENA HULL

Lowena Hull is a Second-Year student of Natural Sciences (Physical) with a passion to educate young people on how they can engage in saving their environment, our planet and how to live responsibly.

I was invited to COP26 by a company called OpenUK which focuses on open source technology. Throughout the last year, I have been Creative Director for this year's OpenUK Kid's Camp, a series of ten short video lessons aiming to enhance the programming skills and awareness of the open-source of kids aged 13-15. Each lesson focuses on one of the ten points of the Open Source Definition (OSD) and includes a short coding project to follow. Particular lessons introduce companies with significant involvements to the open-source community and look at how the UN sustainability goals can be addressed with technology.

This year we have distributed 5,000 kits across the UK to digitally excluded groups, an increase from 3000 the year before and we are grateful to our current sponsors, the largest of which is Red Hat. Each kit consists of a pre-sewn glove, a speaker and three leads. For students who are unable to get access to a microbit [Editor: a pocket-sized programmable computer that introduces a user to how software and hardware work together] through their school or local library, we also have kits which include a microbit.

My primary objective at COP26 was to promote the course offered by OpenUK and its benefits in order to secure additional funding as we ran out of the kits very fast, and currently have a waiting list for when more kits become available. As part of this initiative, I was a panellist talking about my work in open source and the importance of collaboration between open source and the UN sustainability goals. I also attended the OpenUK Awards evening as a finalist for the Young Person Award for the under 25 age group, recognised for extraordinary contributions to open source.

I found attending and actively participating in COP26 activities a useful opportunity not only to meet those with the means and drive to make a difference to the younger generations, but to gain insights into how others perceive the future of open source to aid the fight against climate change. Unsurprisingly, there was a lot of tartan kilts and bagpipes, and I very much enjoyed my bonus trip to the oldest whiskey distillery in Scotland.

For those interested in the course you can find out more here: <https://openuk.uk/openkidscamp/>.



Lowena Hull



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FROM ROBINSON COLLEGE RESEARCHERS

CAN THIS WORK?

Dr Paul Griffiths has been a Fellow in Physical Chemistry and Graduate Tutor at Robinson since 2012. He is Deputy Senior Tutor in the current academic year [2021–2022]. His research interests are in atmospheric chemistry and data-driven science'

I became curious about atmospheric chemistry while I was doing my GCSEs. At that time there was growing interest in the stratospheric ozone hole that had recently been discovered by Joe Farman and colleagues at the British Antarctic Survey (BAS). It was fascinating to learn that the chemistry behind these large-scale ozone depletion events had been discovered a decade earlier, in laboratory studies by Sherwood and Molina.

At university, I specialised in physical and theoretical chemistry, which forms the basis of my Fellowship here and my teaching for Robinson and moved into the study of photochemistry on ultra-cold surfaces. I came to Cambridge as a post-doc in 2000 and was delighted to find that Joe Farman had 'retired' to a research position in the Chemistry Department and still attended seminars, although he was no longer allowed to disappear in clouds of pipe smoke if the speaker displeased him.

Over time I've moved from the lab-based studies of atmospheric chemistry into computer simulations of the atmosphere at a global scale. In 2016 I was appointed to a position in the UK's National Centre for Atmospheric Science, a sister institution to BAS, which has enabled me to lead some collaborative projects with researchers in the UK and overseas. Robinson has been very helpful, particularly in enabling me to organize a short conference on atmospheric methane in early 2020 that brought researchers from the UK and Japan together.

My interest is in air pollution and atmospheric chemistry. This summer saw the publication of the IPCC's *Sixth Assessment Report* of climate change and its impacts. I led one of the underpinning studies on tropospheric ozone, which is a pollutant and a greenhouse gas, and was a Contributing Author to the report, providing analysis of changes in ozone levels since 1850 and assessments of ozone changes in future climate scenarios. The IPCC report shows that levels of ozone have increased by about a third since 1850, with anthropogenic emissions of nitrogen oxides playing a key role in this increase. Ozone forms one of the family of 'short-lived' climate pollutants, illustrated in the table below. You can see that the impacts of these pollutants range from 'local' to 'global' and the impacts can last from days to several years. If we can control anthropogenic emissions in the future as part of efforts to limit climate change, ozone levels may well come down, with important benefits for human health and ecosystem function, emphasizing the win-win nature of many climate-change mitigation efforts.

Climate models can ask 'what if?' which is useful when deciding between possible interventions. A recent project, with the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy, has examined the impact of a move to hydrogen as a fuel source, for instance by replacing natural gas in domestic heating systems. For this project, I looked at the resulting changes to the Earth's radiation budget, through which we can estimate global temperature changes. I gave a short overview of this to the Cambridge Zero research centre this year which you can find online. Replacing natural gas combustion with hydrogen has significant benefits, not least that hydrogen does not generate CO₂ when it is burned; but we showed that so-called 'fugitive' emissions (from eg., leaky plumbing) may lead to both more ozone and higher levels of methane, which would warm the climate. Another thing we are currently working on is understanding how atmospheric chemistry processes can modify the reflectivity of clouds, which is an important element in climate processes.

It's an exciting time for the field as improvements to climate models mean we can now consider how humans, the biosphere and physical climate interact, which helps further improve the design of climate change mitigation strategies and helps us in our efforts to live more sustainably. As we look forward, there are many other options open to us. I hope to continue to be involved in new work showing how we may manage and mitigate climate risks. ■

SHORT-LIVED CLIMATE POLLUTANTS

Response to mitigation efforts



Short-lived climate pollutants. Image courtesy of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition

SHAKING UP THE UNDERSTANDING OF PARKINSON'S:

HOW TWO ALUMNI YEARS APART CONNECTED OVER A SHARED CAUSE



Chris Coomber (Economics, 2003) is an Associate Director and Fellow of the Personal Finance Society. At Saunderson House, an independent financial adviser and wealth manager. Having played hockey for the College and University he is a keen sportsman as well as a keen amateur photographer.



Parkinson's...yes I know what you're thinking...it's the shaking disease typified by Muhammad Ali and Michael J Fox. Five years ago, I thought the same. However, since then my family have been thrown into the world of this debilitating disease (the fastest growing neurological condition in the world) and I have discovered there is so much more to it.

When I accepted Neil Mullarkey's invitation in a 2016 edition of *Bin Brook* to meet him and watch his Comedy Store Players, little did we know that despite our times at Robinson being two decades apart, events that year would later unite us again, working together in the fight against Parkinson's.

In 2016, Neil's father passed away from Parkinson's while both my father and father-in-law were diagnosed with it that same year, the latter also dying from it in 2019. Today, we are both supporters of the charity Parkinson's UK, trying to raise awareness as well as funds to further the research into better treatment and ultimately a cure. We are helping organise The Big Comedy Shake-up, the charity's forthcoming flagship gala event at the historic Roundhouse in London.

Parkinson's is often misunderstood and unpredictable; I have witnessed it manifest itself completely differently in my father and father-in-law. In addition to the well-known tremors, the reality is that dyskinesia (involuntary, sudden movements), freezing (where working limbs won't move), dizziness, muscle cramps/pain, difficulty eating/swallowing, speech problems as well as severe mental health issues such as anxiety, dementia, depression and hallucinations are commonplace. Importantly, the impact of these symptoms is felt not only by sufferers, but also their families who often have to provide care, especially as Parkinson's is a degenerative, irreversible condition.



Neil Mullarkey (1980, Social and Political Sciences) was one of the first undergraduates at Robinson and was President of Cambridge Footlights. You may recognise him from his performances in *Whose Line Is it Anyway* and two *Austin Powers* movies. He still performs with the Comedy Store Players, Europe's top improv troupe, which he co-founded in 1985 with Mike Myers. Since 1999 he has travelled the world, bringing the skills of theatre and especially improv to public and private sector organizations large and small. His book, *Seven Steps to Improve Your People Skills* was published in October 2017.

THERE IS NO CURE.

THE MAIN PARKINSON'S DRUG WAS DEVELOPED OVER 50 YEARS AGO AND DOESN'T SLOW OR STOP ITS DEVELOPMENT.

THERE IS A DESPERATE NEED FOR PROGRESS.

Parkinson's UK is determined to change things. They've invested over £100 million in vital research which delivered ground-breaking discoveries and better care. And right now, new treatments are within our grasp.

Projects include a 10-year study to reveal the long-term benefits of DBS (deep brain stimulation). A GDNF (glial cell line-derived neurotrophic factor) clinical trial developed robot surgery to deliver drugs to cells buried deep inside the brain, which may be able to restore the cells damaged in Parkinson's.

Unlocking new treatments also means delving into the causes of Parkinson's, hence the Parkinson's UK Brain Bank – the world's only brain bank dedicated to Parkinson's research. Over 10,000 people have donated their brains to help scientists around the world to help unravel the mysteries of the condition.

They are close to major breakthroughs. In 2017, they set up the Virtual Biotech, fast-tracking the most promising scientific discoveries into life-changing new treatments. ■

TELEPHONE CAMPAIGN 2021

Thank you for your support



2021 HAS BEEN ANOTHER DIFFICULT YEAR AND THE PANDEMIC HAS CONTINUED TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON ROBINSON AND ITS STUDENTS.



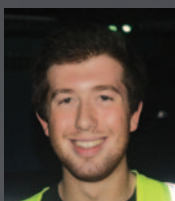


Catherine Biggs is the Deputy Director of Development at Robinson College.

Funds donated to student wellbeing via last year's [2020] Telephone Campaign have already enabled Robinson to better support those students whose mental health has been affected by months of lockdown and family strain. We have been able to double our on-site counselling provision and increase the hours of our College Nurse. This extra funding is also providing additional help for specialist mental health support, often matched with the University's Crane's Fund.

2021 however has been another difficult year and the pandemic has continued to have a significant effect on Robinson and its students. This has resulted in two key areas of funding being clear priorities in this year's Telephone Campaign: The Annual Fund and Student Support.

Over the course of two weeks, a team of 12 of Robinson's finest students and enthusiastic advocates of their College spoke to hundreds of alumni and other supporters and they were bowled over by the friendship, support and generosity they received from those individuals. Anecdotes of Robinson were shared, updates on College news were provided and everyone got behind this year's campaign.



Sam stewarding at a College Bop. Image courtesy of Sam Stern.

Student caller **Sam Stern** (History, 2020) said, "I thoroughly enjoyed working on the Telephone Campaign. My conversations with alumni gave me helpful insights into different careers and how to pursue them. I also listened to many brilliant stories about life in Robinson College a couple of decades ago and found out more about the history of the College. We were provided with excellent training and support, which allowed us to be most effective on the job and has given us skills to use in future work too. It was touching that alumni took the time and effort to speak about their experiences and give advice. It was great that so many decided to generously donate, as a result of these conversations and the brilliant place that is Robinson College".

The Robinson Telephone Campaign is an annual event which not only provides an opportunity for current students and alumni to connect and talk about the College and careers, but also raises funds for priority projects. The donations received over the two weeks of the campaign are always very gratefully received and are put to good use as soon as possible.



Claudia Vyryan. Image courtesy of Claudia Vyryan

Claudia Vyryan (Education, 2020) commented on her telephone campaigning experience, "Not only did the Telephone Campaign provide me with skills and training, but also tons of contacts in the field of work I want to go into after graduation. I spoke to one alum on zoom who worked at the UN who put me in contact with two of their friends who I spoke to after the campaign on the phone. All the alumni are so enthusiastic and willing to help whether it be providing resources or advice. I essentially acquired a network of professionals from the Telephone Campaign which will help in the first stages of my career."

Alumnus Roy Pearce (MML, 1988) is a huge supporter of the Telephone Campaign, and this year (again) very generously provided a matching fund of £5,000. Roy said: "It's great to see that Robinson students have had such a successful campaign this year and I know that the funds that they have raised will make a real difference to the support that Robinson can provide. I particularly endorse this initiative as the benefits of this campaign go beyond the impact the donations can make. The students recruited for the calling all receive comprehensive training, which helps equip them for their future careers and they also benefit from the connections that they make with alumni and other supporters over the two weeks of calling. Being able to provide a match-fund gift to encourage new donors and help increase the impact of other donations has given me the opportunity to support Robinson in a way that is very meaningful to me".

With over £100,000 already pledged, we want to say a huge thanks to all those that took part.

Gifts are still coming in, and there has never been a better time to show your support to Robinson. Every gift counts and will help us to provide the best academic and pastoral support we can for our students. Thank you! ■

SAFE PASSAGE, SAFE HOMES:

WELCOMING REFUGEES IN SCOTLAND



Photo: Paul Chappells



Lowri and
Lord Alf Dubs.
Photo: CJR.



Lowri Richards (Geography, 2008) completed an MA in Community Organising with Queen Mary University of London (2012-2013) before starting a career as a housing professional in the social rented sector. Since 2016 she has volunteered with Welcome Refugees Scotland groups working with MSPs and the Scottish Government as well as Safe Passage International as Co-chair of the Grassroots Campaigns Team influencing the UK Government.



Dan Fisher (Geography, 2008) is a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Glasgow. His work on borders and asylum has been published in journals including *Political Geography* and *Geoforum*. He has also submitted written evidence to the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee inquiry into immigration detention in the UK.

We haven't stayed in touch a great deal since we both graduated from Robinson in 2011 (Geography). Yet we recently discovered that we've both been working and volunteering in the area of migrant rights and refugee integration in Scotland for the last few years – though always in different circles. Our first Zoom chat quickly shifted from general catch-up to refugee housing and the specific issue of refugee homelessness in Glasgow. It was a pleasant surprise to be able to exchange the knowledge that we had gained in our respective areas, to help further our goals and discover issues that we could collaborate on. Given this, we thought we'd share our experiences with our fellow Binsonites and reach out to anyone else who might be working/volunteering in this area.

Dan: So, I see from your WhatsApp profile picture that you're volunteering for Safe Passage, how did that come about?

Lowri: Ha, good spot! I was moved by the tragic images in the media covering the Syrian refugee crisis in 2016. I couldn't comprehend how awful it would be if that was happening to my own family. I just had to find a way to help.

Dan: Yes, I know what you mean. At the time I was researching the use of border control technologies. It was incredibly frustrating as I was encountering narratives of "control" and "constant surveillance" while the lived reality for people fleeing to safety was so dangerous and chaotic. So, what is it that you do as part of Safe Passage?

Lowri: We work to influence the UK government to protect and expand safe and legal routes for unaccompanied child refugees and family reunification. "Safe routes save lives."

Dan: I imagine you end up working with a lot of different people then?

Lowri: Yes, we've done a lot of awareness-raising locally, nationally (including coming together with hundreds of people, including young refugees, outside parliament) as well as devoting time to building good relationships with our MPs who are prepared to speak up on these issues in Parliament and enact real change. The charity also provides advocacy to young refugees in other countries - so that they can access information and understand their rights to reunite with family or seek asylum in the UK. It's a mixture of helping people in European refugee camps and conflict zones, as well as working hard 'at home' to ensure the UK can be a global leader on humanitarian rights, and a place of sanctuary for those who have lost everything. Has your academic career provided opportunities to work with diverse groups of people and gain an appreciation for what it's like at the frontline of the refugee crisis?

Dan: I suppose in my experience the refugee crisis has felt more like a "crisis of hospitality", where asylum seekers and refugees encounter structural barriers that prevent them from accessing safe housing and create real problems integrating in Scotland. I suppose you'll know better than me how difficult the situation is in the UK for both asylum seekers and refugees to access housing.

Lowri: Yes, I've worked in social housing for the last eight years and can appreciate the particular difficulties that asylum seekers face. An asylum application can take years to process, during which time their access to affordable housing is restricted and they are provided with temporary accommodation. Also, if they are granted asylum, it's a quick turnaround, they only have 28 days to find their own accommodation or are at risk of becoming homeless.

Dan: Exactly! My PhD research involved working with two charities in Scotland. For one, the Unity Centre, I assisted asylum seekers who needed to apply for housing support or help those who had been refused support.

This would often involve a lot of letter writing in support of their case, usually to demonstrate to the Home Office that they were eligible for support - which includes a miserable "destitution test". For the second charity, Positive Action in Housing, I acted as a liaison between refugees and asylum seekers who urgently needed a place to stay, and people who were prepared to offer them temporary accommodation in their homes. As you said, 28 days is a quick turnaround, so this work was pretty stressful!

Lowri: Yup, sounds stressful. Does that mean you've been doing a lot of campaigning?

Dan: Well not in the streets in terms of trying to get more volunteers or organising demos. Although in my current work at the University of Glasgow I'm working on a project with the Scottish Government to improve Scotland's "New Scots" integration strategy - which should assist the next iteration of the Scottish Government's integration strategy and is exciting! How about you, have you found useful ways of communicating the need for change in this context?

Lowri: That's great - the support doesn't need to stop once people are here. Helping folks to feel connected, safe and well is so important for their quality of life. What we find useful is to work out what people value and use that to identify common ground on these issues. Creating space for people with lived experience to tell personal stories can be so moving and tends to be more impactful than faceless data. It's not easy though...

Dan: No, it isn't, especially when people are frequently referred to as a "swarm" or as "boat people". But that hasn't deterred people from coming together and trying to make positive change at local and national levels. I mean there are so many amazing initiatives across the UK that have been set up to allow people to share their skills and experiences. There are also loads of ways of finding out how to get involved, including the Scottish Refugee Council's New Scots Connect map of organisations. Are there any other initiatives that you think people might be interested in?

Lowri: Well, there's so many. But perhaps folks in England could start by looking at the Safe Passage website if strategic campaigns for large-scale change excites you, or search for your local Refugees Welcome group on the internet. You can also find out how to resettle a refugee family through Community Sponsorship on the Citizens UK website. ■

If you'd like to get in touch with us about any of the issues we've briefly discussed, you can email us at lowririchards@gmail.com and dan.fisher@glasgow.ac.uk ■

NEWS: ALUMNI

1980

Professor Timothy Luckhurst (History) has been appointed to the Editorial Board of The Conversation UK, the independent publisher of news and views sourced from the research community and delivered directly to the public. <https://theconversation.com/uk/team>.

1981

Helen Birkbeck (Medieval and Modern Languages) announces that 'in the last three years I have had four granddaughters, so would like to think some of them might go to Robinson one day!'

1984

Anthony Toole (Mathematics/Management Studies) has been elected to the Prestbury Parish Council, in order to embrace and enter more fully into community life.

1991

Keith Kahn-Harris (née Harris) (SPS) informs us, 'In November 2021 my seventh book was published: *The Babel Message: A Love Letter to Language*. A celebration of linguistic diversity based around a discussion of the multilingual warning messages inside Kinder Surprise Eggs, of which I also commission translations into languages as diverse as Klingon and Middle Egyptian. Yes, seriously.'



Clare Phillips (Computer Science) is now in her 27th year of service in the British Army and she was delighted to be selected for promotion to Brigadier in July 2021 to take up the post as the Deputy Military Secretary in the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow. After being named in the 2020 New Year's Honours List to receive a CBE, this has been quite an unexpected 18-month period.

Brigadier Clare Phillips. Image courtesy of Guy Butler www.blacksitemedia.co.uk

1992

Talbot A. Stark (Management Studies) in June 2021, dedicated himself full time to Stark Capital, a Family Office & Consulting Firm, after a successful career in Finance spanning over 29 Years. Mr Stark retired from BNP Paribas as Global Head of Sales - Institutions (June 2021) and he previously held roles at Lehman Brothers and JP Morgan.

2000

Ben Jarman (Theology) married Jo Tapp (Newnham, 2003) at Brentford and Isleworth Friends Meeting House on 30 October 2021 – third time lucky, thanks to the pandemic. Robinson friends sadly missing from an intimate, Covid-limited wedding, but Dave Gates (Geography, 2000) provided memories and support as a remote best man. Ben is now back at Robinson as a graduate student and is in the late stages of writing up his PhD in Criminology.



Jo and Ben on their wedding day. Photo: Jo Thorne, www.jothornephotography.com

2005

Stephen Bench-Capon (MML) sent in this announcement: 'I have written, and self-published a children's novel called *Oslo or The Whale Whose Tail Looked a Bit Liked a Wellington Boot*. I'm not sure if it's more influenced by Dostoevsky or Kafka, but I definitely benefitted from having my writing torn apart by my supervisors at Robinson.' Congratulations, we are grateful to Stephen for sending a copy of his novel to the College Library for future generations to enjoy.



Natalie Freeman (Medicine) and her husband Dave would like to announce the birth of their son Oliver Herschel Nicholls on 21 February [2021] in Bath.

Natalie, Dave and Oliver Herschel (in the middle). Image courtesy of Natalie Freeman.



Marie (Mimi) Willcock (Social and Political Sciences) and **Tom Boyd (English)** are delighted to announce the arrival of Lucy Beatrice Willcock Boyd, born July 11th, 2021, at BC Women's Hospital in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, weighing 9 lbs, 2 oz. Lucy joins her brother Will, 2, and both are looking forward to returning to the UK to meet their Robinson alumni family soon.

2007



Barnaby Mollett, Ronke Fadipe and Medha Gupta (Economics) recently met up for an economists' reunion. Following a heated discussion of free-market principles, a heated brunch (not free) was consumed. Barnaby visited the statue of the Father of Economics, Adam Smith, in Edinburgh shortly afterwards.

Barnaby and Adam Smith, Edinburgh. Image courtesy of Barnaby Mollett.

2010

Frank Choi (Law) informs us about a happy arrival: 'My wife, Jennie Lau, gave birth to our son, Ernest Jacob Choi on 9 July 2021.'

2011

Mimi Kyprianou (Law) has joined the Tax team of Latham & Watkins in London, after spending the first five years of her career at Clifford Chance. In what has been an eventful summer, Mimi is also delighted to announce her engagement to Callum McKinnon.

2017

Lampros Labros Bouklis (Sustainability Leadership) sent in his most recent news: 'Following my studies at University of Cambridge (Master's Degree in Sustainability Leadership with a dissertation specialisation in the circular economy, 2017), I have been recently appointed as the Organizational Development Manager for the new Masters course named as "Circular Economy & Sustainable Development: Leadership, Technology, Innovation". This course will commence during 2022 at the University of West Attica (Athens) Greece, and it is the first in Greece that explores in a holistic approach the concept of the circular economy.'

Ronald Tam (Sustainability Leadership) joined XtalPi (global leader in Artificial Intelligence Drug Discovery with its headquarters in China and strategic collaboration partner in Cambridge UK) as Chief Financial Officer December 2020. Ronald has recently relocated the whole family from Hong Kong to China travelling between Shenzhen and Shanghai.



Ronald with his family. Image courtesy of Ronald Tam.

FELLOWS/SENIOR MEMBERS/BYE FELLOWS

Dr Ben Guy, a Fellow of Robinson College and Teaching Associate, Anglo-Saxon Norse and Celtic at the University of Cambridge was awarded The Dillwyn Medal 2021 for Early Career Research Excellence in the Humanities and Creative Arts by the Learned Society of Wales. In his research, Dr Guy explores the written culture of medieval Wales.

On receiving the medal, he said: "It is a great honour indeed for my work to be recognised in this way. Having grown up in Wales, I have always been motivated to learn more about its fascinating history and culture. I hope that I can inspire others to seek a deeper understanding of this beautiful yet complex land." Dr Guy was also awarded The Francis Jones Prize for the joint-best book in Welsh history 2020 by Jesus College, Oxford for his book *Medieval Welsh Genealogy* published by Boydell and Brewer. On receiving the Francis Jones Prize, Dr Guy said: "I'm truly delighted to be awarded the Francis Jones Prize for Welsh History 2020. Not only is this the most prestigious prize in Welsh history, awarded by an Oxford College with a long association with Wales and Celtic Studies, but Francis Jones is a name that I'm only too happy to be associated with my book. As Wales Herald of Arms Extraordinary, Francis Jones had a great interest in medieval Welsh genealogy, the subject of my book, and wrote some important works on the subject. I can only hope that he would have approved of my book being given this award in his name."

Professor Carlos Caldas, Fellow of Robinson College and the University of Cambridge's Professor of Cancer Medicine, has been chosen to receive one of this year's two

prestigious Brinker Awards for Scientific Distinction. Professor Caldas has received the award for Scientific Distinction in Basic Science for his significant contributions in the field of breast cancer genomics. His work has advanced understanding of the DNA and RNA compositions of human breast cancers, the genomic heterogeneity of breast cancers, and the relationships of a tumour's make-up to individual outcomes and responses to breast cancer treatment. This work helped define molecular subtypes (or groups) of breast cancer and identify the genomic changes that drive tumour growth.

Professor Rachel Oliver, a Fellow of Robinson College in Engineering and Materials Science and the Dean, has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering under the Academy's Fit for the Future diversity initiative. Last year The Royal Academy of Engineering admitted into their Fellowship 69 excellent and talented professionals from amongst business people, entrepreneurs, innovators and academics.

Professor Elisabete A Silva, Senior Member of Robinson College, has been elected a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in recognition of her contribution to social science. Elisabete Silva is a Professor of Spatial Planning at the Department of Land Economy, Director of the Lab of Interdisciplinary Spatial Analysis (LISA), University of Cambridge, and a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). She also lectures and is the course coordinator of 'Urban and Environmental Planning I' and 'Spatial Analysis and Modelling.' ■

NEWS: ALUMNI EVENTS

DONOR DAY 2021



On Saturday 25 September, Professor David Yates welcomed donors and their guests to Robinson's Donor Day. Our newly appointed Warden, Sir Richard Heaton, also spoke and thanked Professor Yates for his 20 years of service as Robinson's second Warden. Our guests enjoyed a drinks reception and engaged in conversation with Robinson College members and peers in the gardens of the Crausaz Wordsworth Building (CWB). The four-course lunch was served in the Plenary Room. After lunch, Professor Julie Smith, Baroness Smith of Newnham, talked in an informal session, 'Letting the people decide – referendums in European politics' about the pros and cons of using the tools of direct democracy and the challenges they can pose to European democracies. The wonderful concert by some of Robinson's brilliant musicians opened the afternoon with a programme of C P E Bach, J S Bach, G U Fauré and J Brahms with the performances by Dr Jeremy Thurlow (Fellow Director of Studies in Music), Simon Brown (Director of Chapel Music) and Tilly Mattich Basil Shone Organ Scholar). This glorious late summer day ended with an afternoon tea. We are enormously grateful to our donors and their guests for coming to this very special event and for their continued support of the College. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year.

REUNION 2021



Robinson College was thrilled to welcome back 140 alumni and their guests to the 2021 Reunion on Saturday, 25 September. The evening began with a drinks reception at the Crausaz Wordsworth Building amidst late summer sunshine, followed by a pleasant walk through the gardens to dinner in the

Dining Hall. Alumni from 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010 enjoyed a delicious dinner and continued their conversations into the small hours in the College Bar. It was an enormous pleasure to see everyone after a long break of nearly two years since the last in-person Reunion Dinner and we hope you can join us again soon. We can assure you of another warm welcome.

NEW REUNION DINNERS FOR 2022

We are planning to introduce a new tradition of celebrating the anniversaries of matriculations by hosting Reunion Dinners twice a year, in March and in September. The pandemic and the lockdowns have reinforced our plan to create more opportunities to meet our alumni and to enable them to celebrate their matriculation anniversaries together in great company and enjoying delicious food and wine. Therefore, we are pleased to announce that the first Reunion Dinner of 2022 will take place on 26 March, when we will invite those who matriculated in 1986, 1996 and 2006. On 24 September we will welcome our matriculands of 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011. Look out for your invitations in your email mailboxes. If you have not been in touch with us for a long time, please contact us by email at development-office@robinson.cam.ac.uk to update your contact details. We look forward to seeing you in March or September 2022.

LAW RECRUITMENT EVENING AND DINNER 2021



*Law Recruitment Evening at the Crausaz Wordsworth Building, Robinson College.
Image courtesy of Robinson College Law Society.*

Robinson College is very grateful for the ongoing support of several law firms and alumni working in the legal field. Every year, Robinson students interested in a legal career have the opportunity to meet with city law firms during a networking event hosted by the Robinson College Law Society and sponsored by the firms attending.

Firms in attendance this year included Baker McKenzie, Simmons & Simmons, Slaughter & May and Venner Shipley.

Over 50 students made their way to the event on Monday 22 November which comprised an evening of networking and a panel discussion on legal technology trends, including sub-topics, such as the use of new technology in legal work, data protection and IP law.

The panel session was opened by Robinson's new Warden, Sir Richard Heaton, and chaired by Robinson's Law Society Vice-President, Andrey Ivanov.

Alumni on the panel included Partners Roy Pearce (MML, 1988) Baker McKenzie and Jonathan Hewett (MEng, 1998) Venner Shipley. Completing the panel were Peter Lee, CEO Simmons Wavelength, Dr David Erdos, Co-Director, Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Law, Cambridge and Gayathri Kamalanathan, Partner Slaughter & May (Jesus).

Alumni Oliver Irons (Law, 1998), Partner, Simmons & Simmons and Will Boys-Stones (English, 2015), Trainee Solicitor, Slaughter & May were also on hand during the networking to help answer questions.

Jonathan Hewett said, "I'm proud to be associated with this event, the College and my fellow panellists! It was an excellent event, with great format and content. It was good to be able to meet our new Warden as well".

Roy Pearce said, "this event was a great example of Robinson's ability to organise an evening that was in equal measure informative, practical, and fun. It also felt very much led by students, which is as it should be".

Peter Lee also enjoyed the evening and emailed to say, "I was impressed with the quality of the event. You delivered it with style; the venue and attendees were first class, as were my fellow panellists – great conversation and lots of fun. Chapeau bas!". ■

WELCOME/FAREWELL

NEW MEMBERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Dr Nick Bexfield
Dr Rhiannon McGlade
Dr Caterina Milo
Dr Daniel Knorr
Dr Adam Woodhouse

NEW PROFESSORSHIPS

Professor Alexander Copley Professor of Tectonics
Professor Amy Erickson Professor of Feminist History
Professor David Fairen Jimenez Professor of
Molecular Engineering
Professor Imre Galambos Professor of Chinese
Professor Ying Jin Professor of Architecture and Urbanism
Professor Gabriele Kaminski Schierle Professor of
Molecular Neuroscience
Professor Athina Markaki Professor of Materials and
Biomedical Engineering
Professor Joanna Page Professor of Latin American
Literature and Visual Culture
Professor Paul Schofield Professor of Biomedical Informatics
Professor Julie Smith Professor of European Politics

NEW COLLEGE STAFF MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome to Robinson College Cristina Feliz (Development Office), Clifford van Heerden (Porters), Charles Murray (Porters), Sarah Thomas (the Admissions and Tutorial Office), Kristoff Santha (Housekeeping) and Emma Webb (Catering – Bar).

NEW COLLEGE ARCHIVIST



Jude Brimmer.

Image courtesy of Jude Brimmer.

We are delighted to welcome Jude Brimmer to Robinson College as our new professional Archivist. Jude comes to us following a project to catalogue and digitise the archive of the LEO Computers Society at Cambridge museum the Centre for Computing History. Previously she worked for 11 years at the Britten-Pears Archive at The Red House in Aldeburgh, Suffolk, and also in the college archives at Clare, King's and Churchill.

Having first studied music as an undergraduate, she completed a Masters in documentary film about music of Benjamin Britten at Nottingham, then went on to qualify as an archivist at University College London. While working with Britten's archive, she co-edited *My Beloved Man: the letters of Benjamin Britten* and *Peter Pears*, published in 2016 by Boydell Press.

STAFF MEMBERS WHO LEFT THE COLLEGE

Natasha Andreou (Catering – Bar), Mark Bell (Finance), Peter Blades (Porters), Marry Ferreira da Costa (Housekeeping), Alison Gibbs (Housekeeping), Germain Ludekens (Catering – Food Service), Abraham Miranda (Food Service), Gary Swann (Porters). ■

OBITUARIES AND TRIBUTES



PRUE ADDECOTT

It is with great sadness that we have received the news of the passing of Prue Addecott on October 2021. Many will still remember Prue, our former friend and colleague, who was the Chief Clerk at Robinson from 1989 until her retirement in 2007. We hold very fond memories of Prue, of her friendship and kindness. ■

Prue at her retirement celebration at Robinson College. Image courtesy of Robinson College Archives.

PROFESSOR WILLIAM RICHARD 'TWINK' ALLEN



*Professor 'Twink' Allen.
Image courtesy of Robinson
College Archives.*

With great sadness and regret, the College announces the death of Professor William Richard ('Twink') Allen CBE BVSc (Syd), PhD (Cantab), ScD (Cantab), DSc (h.c.mult), DESM, Dip ECAR, FRAGSE, FSB, FRCVS, CBE, Emeritus Fellow of Robinson College, and formerly the Jim Joel Professor of Equine Reproduction, at the University of Cambridge, from 1996–2007. Twink died on 6 June 2021, aged 80.

Twink was a Veterinary graduate from the University of Sydney, who came to Cambridge in 1966 for his PhD. A Post-doctoral Fellowship at The Animal Research Station, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge followed from 1970–1972, then Director, TBA Equine Fertility Unit, Mertoun Paddocks, Newmarket, Suffolk, from 1988–2007.

Twink was appointed Jim Joel Professor of Equine Reproduction at the University of Cambridge in 1996 (retired in December 2007). He then became the Honorary Director of the Paul Mellon Laboratory of Equine Reproduction, Newmarket, from 2008–2015. His final position was as Director of The Equine Reproduction Laboratory, Sharjah Equine Hospital, Sharjah, the United Arab Emirates since 2015. ■

ELISABETH 'LISY' MCGOUGAN



Lisy McGougan

We were greatly saddened to learn that our dear friend and colleague Elisabeth-Ann Alice McGougan passed away on Sunday, 21 November 2021 after a long and courageous battle with illness. Known by everyone in the College as Lisy, when she retired in 2017, after 36 years and two months in the Catering Department, she was the longest-serving member of the College staff and witnessed this institution grow from its inception to the formidable College it is today.

Lisy joined as a Catering Assistant in October 1980 before the main College building was even constructed. Lisy first started as a Cafeteria Assistant and was fundamental in the setting up and development of the Catering Department.

In those early days, she even helped in the SCR and, although not liking change, accepted and eventually embraced all the many changes that occurred over the course of the following thirty-six years at Robinson. Year after year Lisy saw students coming and then going to start a new life after Robinson. We will miss Lisy's kindness, generosity, and sense of humour. ■

KWEK KOK KWONG

Kwek Kok Kwong (Mathematics, 1986). K3, as he was fondly called amongst his friends, died suddenly at the age of 53 on 14th November 2020. He was the Chief Executive of NTUC (National Trades Union Congress) LearningHub. He is remembered with love and affection by many here in the UK and in Singapore for his generosity, compassion and kindness as well as his dedication in his professional life. ■

DR STEPHEN 'STEVE' TRUDGILL



Steve

Our beloved Emeritus Fellow, Dr Stephen Trudgill, died on 18 January 2022. Steve, as he was known to everyone, was Director of Studies in Geography at Robinson from 1996 until his retirement in 2014, when he became a Fellow Emeritus. Until last month he was also Chair of the Gardens Committee, a member of both the Visual Arts and Bin Brook Editorial Committees and President of our Robinson College Alumni Association (Pegasus). He graduated in Geography with Geology and Sociology from the University of Bristol in 1968 with his PhD on the geomorphology of Aldabra Atoll, Indian Ocean in 1972. He was the first resident Geography Director of Studies at Robinson and built up Geography to be one of the well-established subjects in College. Apart

from College activities, and also was on his local Parish Council where he was on the Wellcome Trust Liaison Committee of the nearby Sanger Centre, his interests included writing, gardening, opera, art and painting, including visiting exhibitions as well as participating in and helping to run several art courses at the Field Studies Council Centres. He recently completed a book for Cambridge University Press: *'Why Conserve Nature? Perspectives on meanings and motivations'*, which was published in October 2021. Our Warden Sir Richard Heaton said: 'We have lost a wonderful and much-loved member of the Robinson community.'

ROBERT 'BOB' WICKETT



Robert 'Bob' Wickett (on the right) with the late Lord Jack Lewis

We spoke to friends and colleagues of Mr Wickett who kindly shared their memories of 'Bob' with us.

Dr Mary Stewart, Life Fellow, Former Deputy Warden

'In the early days of Robinson, each time a new non-academic post was to be filled, one of the few Founding Fellows was drafted onto the interview panel, as the Trustees and Lord Lewis began to build up the staff. Thus, I found myself one day helping to interview potential Catering Managers, alongside Lord Lewis and Professor Brink. I forget how many candidates there were, but two stood out – one from London, and Bob who at that time worked in South Wales, I think at Hoover's. Unlike his "rival" he was fully prepared to move his household, and we chose him because he seemed keen for a new challenge, open-minded and energetic – and that is exactly what he proved to be. My enduring image is of him bounding up the steps to High Court, two at a time, and with a cheerful smile on his face.

It must have been a Herculean task to set up a diverse catering operation from scratch. We had had a very small domestic operation in 5 Adams Road, and the kitchens had already been designed with the help of Geoff Hall from the University Centre and Sheila Gillies, Girton's Steward/Domestic Bursar, but we had virtually no staff or supply chain. Bob managed all that amazingly smoothly – ably helped by Mary Fuller – so that we could cope with the various needs of staff, students and Fellows as the main College began to be peopled and function in its various ways, including our nascent conference trade. We saw Bob about, always in motion, on to the next task, and always cheerful, or so it seemed.

The catering operation settled down well, but Bob was ambitious and had the idea of acquiring a former nursing home at Bottisham which could be turned into a lucrative conference centre run from Robinson. That acquisition did not work out, but the idea had been planted and eventually, we joined with the Potton Group to give our name to a conference centre at Wyboston. It was not a good venture from the Robinson perspective, and we eventually pulled out: Bob had been quite right, that the College needed to retain domestic control of any such satellite. Meanwhile, our in-house conference trade grew and grew under Bob's guidance and has provided vital income to support our prime academic role.

When I last saw Bob at a staff retirement party he was already marked by illness, but he was typically open and frank about that and we had a very enjoyable chat about the early days and changes since. To the last, he radiated good humour and was positive about Robinson.'

Christine James, Deputy Catering Manager

'I came to work at Robinson on 1 September 1981, having applied for the post of Assistant Butler. Bob Wickett was the Catering Manager and Henry Woolston was the Bursar at the time. Bob was a very kind and fair boss, I remember him always being very supportive and encouraging.

The Conference business at Robinson had not started at that time and when Bob and Mary Fuller, the then Conference Manager, gained their first conference booking the whole department was excited and keen to provide the best we could. Bob was always keen on expanding the business and trying new things and it was his dream to have a standalone all-year-round conference centre. In some way came it came to fruition in the form of an accommodation and meeting room building at Wyboston Lakes. The Catering team at the time wanted to impart what had grown at Robinson under Bob's guidance into the new building but in reality, this new location was too far away for there to be feasible interchangeable staffing.

Bob always said, 'We will change it because it's Monday'. Sometimes this was frustrating, but it was more "we will change it because we can" and I believe the team that remained here at Robinson thrived on Bob's attitude in those early years. He had confidence in his team and always said he would give people enough rope to do the job but warned them not to hang themselves. The family feel of Robinson remains to a degree.

Bob's approach was the right one and at the right place as the College grew up and in a lot of ways, the staff grew up and developed with it. As he was my first boss in a full-time job, I always called him Mr Wickett, which was strange as none of the other Department Heads were addressed in this way. Bob once said to call him 'Bob', but I and many others in our Department just felt we couldn't. In some way, it did not seem respectful enough.

I will always be grateful to Mr Wickett for giving me and the young team at the time confidence and trust in our abilities and skills to build on.

Gary Dougan, Head Chef

'I remember attending my interview with Bob after getting a soaking from a heavy downpour of rain. That didn't affect my chances because Bob offered me the position of *chef de partie* and I was always so grateful he gave me that opportunity. 37 and something years later and Head Chef of the greatest College in Cambridge, I owe Bob so much. He was a great listener, motivator, a master at sums but above all a kind and caring person. Robinson was very lucky to employ Bob as the first-ever catering manager and he truly set us on the road to not only producing fantastic food to all our catering outlets for our staff, students and Fellowship but he was also responsible for the huge conference business he helped to develop that set the College up to enjoy the great facilities and superb reputation we have today. He was truly a remarkable man. Bob will always be in my thoughts.'

Jo Truszczyńska, Deputy Head Chef

Mr Wickett was my first boss. I remember him with great fondness for helping my career take off. I was almost immediately out of the catering college, and he gave me a job after I had completed my work experience at Robinson. From that very point, he was pivotal in giving me and my colleagues confidence in the kitchen. When I became Deputy Head Chef Mr Wickett would always enjoy coming into the kitchen office and discussing forthcoming events or just chatting to Gary and me about anything!!! After my maternity leave, I felt a bit out of touch with work and I remember him saying "just carry on the job you left before, and don't worry, all will be fine!" And he was right. I believe he took our conference business and reputation to great heights. Treasured memories. ■

Keeping in touch

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If you think we may not have your current contact details and you would like to update these, please get in touch to keep in touch:
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Dates for the diary

We hope that circumstances will allow us to hold upcoming events in College. Once it is safe to meet in person again, we will welcome you back most warmly to Robinson. In the meantime, we will bring Robinson to you in the form of virtual events you can join from the safety and comfort of your home.

Look out for updates on future events in your email mailbox and the College website.

**5 April 2022 –
The Warden's London Reception**

**21 April 2022 –
In Conversation with the Warden (online),
the Asia Pacific**

**1 May 2022 –
Maths Reunion**

**7 May 2022 –
York Alumni Get-together**

**25 June 2022 –
Donor Day**

**24 September 2022 –
Reunion Dinner and Weekend (Matriculation
years: 1981, 1991, 2001, and 2011)**



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