



Bin Brook

The Magazine of Robinson College, Cambridge

Lent 2008



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Front cover: A view of the College gardens towards Thorneycreek, an entry in the recent College photography competition.

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Lord Lewis at 80



Lord Lewis of Newnham

Dr Mary Stewart, one of the founding Fellows of Robinson College reflects on Lord Lewis' achievements, both at College and in the wider world.

On February 13th 2008 Robinson's founding Warden, Lord Lewis of Newnham, reached the venerable age of 80. Back in 1975 Lord Lewis, or Professor Jack Lewis as he was then, was approached by Trustees appointed by the University to take on the onerous role of overseeing the establishment of what was at the time quite a controversial new institution. Alongside sometimes delicate negotiations with Sir David Robinson and the Trustees he had to hunt out potential Foundation Fellows in all the main subject areas and guide the whole process of developing the inner structures and ethos of what has become our College. What he brought about was remarkable: an institution which rapidly established itself on the Cambridge academic, artistic and sporting

scenes, which had an exemplary gender and social mix at all levels, and also generated a sense of being part of a team which embraced everyone involved in the day-to-day functioning of the College. Throughout his Wardenship Lord Lewis was a great supporter of the College Chapel in all its activities, and on his retirement as Warden in 2001 a much-needed new staircase to the rear gallery was created; the plaque placed by it records for all time that his 'wisdom shaped this College', and no better words could be found to sum up what Robinson owes to him and how much all who know him value him.

Lord Lewis of course does not belong exclusively to us. He has had an extremely distinguished, internationally recognised career as an Inorganic Chemist, and has been involved with many academic, governmental and charitable institutions and bodies both within and outside Cambridge. Since being raised to the Peerage he has played an increasingly active role within the House of Lords too; indeed, retirement has very much meant a shift, not a diminution, in his energies and activities, and it is reassuring to know that his remarkable experience, acuity and calmness are being brought to bear on national issues. That does not mean, however, that he plays no further part in Robinson's history, despite his preference for avoiding the limelight. The handover to his successor as Warden was achieved with great and exemplary dignity, and he remains an immensely valued source of support and good advice. Long may that continue! We wish him a very happy birthday, and health and happiness in the years ahead.

The Lewis Research Scholarship

Research students are absolutely essential to the success of an academic community because they are the future of the profession. At Robinson, they include some in whose education we have already been involved and whom we have encouraged to develop their skills and intellect further in this way, as well as some who have come from other institutions, both within the UK and overseas, to benefit from the support and opportunities offered by a Cambridge College. They enrich the academic life of the community, both in their interactions with Fellows and with undergraduates. They do this through discussion of their own work with their peers, supervisor and Fellows working in related disciplines and, in some cases, through assisting in undergraduate teaching.

In order to attract the best research students based upon academic merit alone and irrespective of their financial circumstances, it is important that Robinson is able to offer research scholarships. This is particularly the case in arts and humanities research, as commercial sponsorship, grants and other scholarships are more widely established for scientific and medical research. To help to meet this need, the College established the Lewis Research Scholarship Fund in 2001. It currently produces an income of around £5,000 per annum. However, we would like to increase this to £20,000 per annum, the cost of a full graduate student scholarship in the humanities. This would enable Robinson to award a full scholarship to a humanities PhD student every three years and the competition for the scholarship should draw Robinson to the attention of other students who may also apply to become members of the College, thus further

widening our pool of applicants.

To produce the income required for this scholarship, we need

to increase the capital value of the fund by £350,000. This is a large sum of money, but it is achievable with the help of our members, and friends, and gifts of every size will all contribute towards meeting this target.



In celebration of Lord Lewis' 80th birthday on 13th February 2008 we asked all our members and friends to mark this special occasion by sending him a birthday message and by making a donation to the Lewis Research Scholarship Fund. Donation forms have been sent out to all alumni who would have been at Robinson during Lord Lewis' Wardenship. Many members of College have already made generous gifts to the fund, both in response to this 80th birthday appeal and earlier appeals for the scholarship. Thank you to you all.

If you have not received a donation form and would like to contribute to the scholarship, please complete the donation form in the centre of this edition of Bin Brook and return it to the Development Office.



Marie Phillips
copyright Neil McDiarmid

Marie Phillips (1995) is the author of *Gods Behaving Badly*, her first novel, in which she examines where the gods of Greek mythology would be now and what they would be doing after the rise of Christianity in Europe. We met Marie and spoke to her about her book, its reception and her time at Robinson reading Archaeology and Anthropology.

Why did you decide to be a writer, and more specifically, what made you choose to write this book?

Well, there was the decision to be a writer and then quite some time after that I started working on this particular book. When I was an undergraduate at Robinson, I wrote for the Christmas Revue, which in those days was a sketch show. In the first two years, I didn't get much control over the writing but the other writers graduated, leaving me and a friend with more control over how it was written. I suppose it was quite successful- there was no one actively booing, so I took that as a good sign!

When I graduated, I worked in television, and did an MA at Manchester in Social Anthropology and Documentary Making. That put me into a story-telling mode because the way in which we made the films made it impossible to insert one's own agenda, which taught me to look outside myself for ideas. It also taught me to really pare down ideas and edit carefully.

When my MA finished, I decided I didn't want to write documentaries, and went back to the BBC working in the Development Department for Current Affairs documentaries. I worked there for about a year and a half, and although I enjoyed my job, I was constantly coming up with ideas for other people. I think that it was inevitable that I would want eventually to go and do my own thing. At the time I found myself thinking so much about ideas for books and realized that I didn't want to work in documentaries. So I quit. I have to say that I have never seen anyone as shocked as my boss was when I told him, because it's a good job that lots of people want to do. My parents, however, were delighted and thought it was fantastic, and have been more supportive than one could imagine.

I spent about a year and a half working on another novel, which didn't really work, but which really improved my writing and was very helpful in that way. The eureka moment for *Gods Behaving Badly* came when a friend of mine asked me to help her out with a documentary she was making in a school near Cambridge. We were filming in a Philosophy class, and the teacher was talking about the gods of the ancient world, and compared them to the modern Judeo-Christian God, and as she was talking I thought "this is a really good idea for a story: what if the Ancient Greeks were right? What if we are wrong?" I started thinking about where the gods would be now and what they would be doing. It is a strange feeling that had I not agreed to help my friend out, I might never have had that idea.

I spent two and a half years turning the idea into a novel. Of course there were times when I thought that it wasn't as good an idea as I had originally thought, and it wasn't going to work, but I think over all it did come together and it does work.

Presumably, the study of religious observance in different societies is quite an important aspect of Anthropology, which you studied at Robinson. Did your time at Cambridge help you to write Gods Behaving Badly?

Definitely. In fact, in my finals it was the papers on religion in which I did best. I found religion very interesting, and this interest has persisted and led to me writing this book. From an anthropological point of view the interesting thing about religion is that you're always looking to see why people hold certain beliefs - not just religious beliefs, but traditions and customs, what constitutes polite behaviour etc. When you look at another society's customs and traditions, it can be relatively easy to see why they do and believe and act in the way that they do. What's so interesting about religion, however, is that some beliefs seem to be so completely strange and it can be almost impossible to see how the society came to hold such beliefs. What's so good about the Greek mythology is that it's a dead religion, and yet it has had a huge impact culturally, and people still know about it. The Greek gods are still implicit in our cultural heritage, even if it's just the Apollo video store or the Athena poster and card shops. So here is this religion that no one believes in any more, and yet people did once, it's like an artefact - a relict - so it's really ready for exploration. It is helpful that no one believes in it, as you won't offend anyone, but also its completeness means that there's a lot of scope to play around.

The setting for the book is London, and is full of local detail. Why did you choose to set a book about the gods of Ancient Greece in the capital of England?

When I first had the idea for the book, I thought that I would have to set it in Greece, but then I realised that, if we are working on the premise that the Greek gods are the gods, then they are the gods of everywhere, not just of Greece, which freed me up. I don't really know much about Greece and I don't like reading novels written by people who are not familiar with the setting of the book; it can really grate. I didn't feel I could write convincingly about Greece, unless I literally moved and lived there for a little while. But the other thing that became more interesting as I thought about it was that the gods were worshipped in Greece and then in Rome under different names, and then with the rise of Christianity,

paganism was deliberately obliterated, and that adds another layer to the story, namely the Greek gods being in exile. There was a danger that in setting this book in Greece, it could seem parochial and only relevant to that place. By completely changing their environment, the gods are totally cut off from their past, which helps to create the impression of exile.

From my point of view, London was a good place to choose as that different setting because I know it very well and there were certain things that I wanted to satirise. It was really fun to put these gods from Greece, which is warm and sunny into a dull, rainy, miserable English winter. The weather in the novel is not very good and that's quite deliberate. I felt it added something to their feeling of dislocation.

The book's out in America now. Do you think that, given all the detail in the book about London, it could lose something in translation?

I really think it will. There was a real debate with my American publishers - they wanted to Americanise it quite a lot, and I didn't want them to. I felt that a lot of the book is about the contrast between the Greek gods and their very English setting, so there are references to "budgies" "boiled sweets" and "digestive biscuits", and this is quite deliberate. The American publishers' feeling was that no one was going to understand any of those things. However, I believe that the English things are a very key part of the book, and that by taking them out, an entire level of the book would be lost. The point of the Greeks being in London is partly because it contrasts the strange with the familiar- for someone unfamiliar with London and English things it will be a contrast of the strange with the strange. I won, and the publishers were very good about it. However, that does mean that there is a sector of American society that won't get all the references, so inevitably part of the audience might be lost. At the same time, there is a healthy proportion of Americans who like Monty Python for example, who might really enjoy the book because it is so English.

There have been some very good reviews in America - in fact my best reviews seem to come from university professors - I know that a professor in Classics at the University of Stanford thought that it was great!

So although the book is light and an easy read, it seems to be impressing those with an interest in the area as well as others

Yes, although I wanted everyone to be able to read it and I took care not to assume any knowledge at all. When each god is introduced in the book, their role and their relation to the other gods is explained, so there's no confusion. Also because all the gods have jobs, it makes it easier to characterise them. So it would be possible for someone with no knowledge of Greek mythology to enjoy this book. At the same time, there are little details that those with a bit of background in the subject would really enjoy. Small things like Aphrodite's bedroom being decorated with roses, roses being a symbol of Aphrodite. Obviously 99% of people who read the book wouldn't pick that up, but those who do would like it. I wanted to make sure that it was layered enough that

it wouldn't alienate people who didn't know about mythology but it wouldn't patronise people who do.

Do you have plans for your next book?

Well, I don't like to talk about a project too early on because I find it's quite fluid in my head, so I'm being very cagey about it. Having said that, I am writing another book and I'm about 20,000 words into the first draft. It's going to be quite different, although the tone should be recognisable. I'm really enjoying it, which I'm pleased about because I worried that perhaps I might not enjoy writing another one, but it's fired up my imagination again.

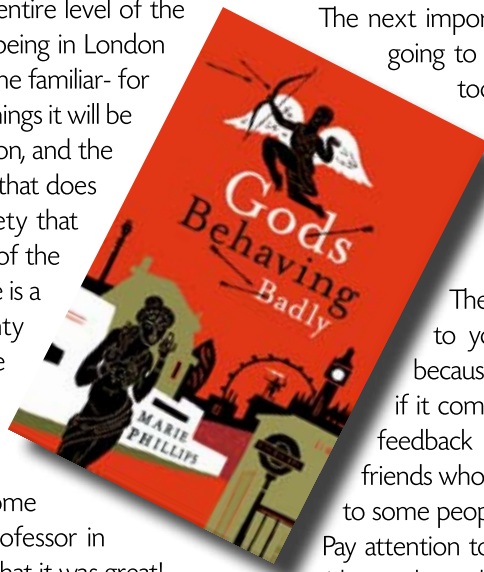
What advice would you give to current Robinson undergraduates or alumni who are thinking of a career as a writer?

The most important thing is that you really need to enjoy it. I read a depressing letter to a newspaper in which someone had asked whether it would be a good idea to write three chapters to submit to a publisher to make sure it was going to be published before he wrote the rest of the book. That is totally the wrong way of going about it- you have to love writing; if that's what you enjoy doing, whether it gets published or not is secondary. The success is the satisfaction of finishing the book.

The next important thing is to think carefully about when you're going to submit your book to the publishers. Don't submit too soon, and don't submit too late - there are so many people who I meet who have been working on a book for nine years, changing tiny details. A good publisher or a good agent will be able to see potential. The fine tuning can come later.

The other thing that I would say is to get the book to your satisfaction before you start showing people because the influence of others can be counterproductive if it comes too soon. But once you are satisfied with it, get feedback and listen to criticism. Don't just show your best friends who'll tell you that you're wonderful - you need to listen to some people who are going to give you constructive criticism. Pay attention to the criticism, ignoring that which doesn't sit right with you, but taking that which does feel right. My general rule of thumb for criticism is "does this person understand what I'm trying to do, or are they trying to change what I'm doing?" If they seem to get what I'm trying to do, I pay them very close attention. If they don't like my intentions for the book, and they are trying to change my project, I tend to find it less useful. It's not a hard and fast rule, but helpful.

So after assessing the criticism, write another draft and submit. Don't worry about being rejected. It's happened to me, it happens to lots of people. The most important thing is that if you get anywhere, then congratulations. If you don't make it, and you still enjoy writing, carry on writing just for you.



John Piper Bequest



A while ago (Lent 2006), *Bin Brook* reported that a legacy had been left to the College by John St Bodfan Gruffydd, who was during his lifetime an Honorary Fellow of Robinson College, and was the man largely responsible for the landscaping design of the College gardens. The bequest was of some 18 artworks, 14 of which are by John Piper, the artist who designed the beautiful stained glass windows in Robinson College's Chapel.

It could be said that this bequest completes a circle: just as John St Bodfan Gruffydd gave a number of works by John Piper to the College in his Will, it was John Piper who recommended that John St Bodfan Gruffydd should be involved with the landscaping of the College gardens. Bodfan (as he was called) had been known to the Piper family for some time, and John Piper's second wife Myfanwy took a special interest in gardens. David Robinson, who had great confidence in Piper's judgement, appointed Bodfan in 1979 to design the gardens.

By the time that Bodfan was asked to work on Robinson's gardens, he already had a wide range and number of previous projects to his credit. He had worked on the landscaping of the new towns at Crawley, Harlow and Telford, and had been landscape architect to the Beaulieu Motor Museum and to the King's Fund. He advised on the Southampton oil refinery site at Fawley, and on a major project to improve the Mole river valley. In addition, he served as the representative of the Landscape Institute, which he did much to found, and of which he was for some time President, on the Department of Transport Advisory Committee for Motorways and Trunk Roads.

The works that Bodfan left to the College are a mixture of silk screen prints, sketches (many of which are artist's proofs), oil paintings and one ceramic bowl. Amongst the works are paintings by Raymond Coxton, one of John Piper's mentors and by Hilda Hecre RBA, one of Piper's students. The collection given to the College has now been hung in various places in the College, including the library, the SCR and the chapel.

Planning your legacy?

In spite of its relative youth, Robinson College has always been fortunate in the support that it has received from Members and Friends. Without that support, the College would not be what it is today. Many older colleges in Cambridge understand very well what a significant part legacies have played in securing their financial stability. Bequests have provided them with invaluable resources including additional student accommodation, maintaining and enhancing College buildings and grounds, hardship bursaries, scholarships and teaching posts.

While all of us hope that legacies to the College from our Members and Friends are some years away from becoming a reality, all of us recognise the need for long-term planning. We all also recognise that thoughts will invariably turn to ensuring that our financial affairs and responsibilities are in order and this should include the preparation of a Will. Robinson has a booklet available to explain how a legacy can help Robinson College in the future and how your support would help future generations of Robinsonians.

The Crausaz-Wordsworth Society was created to recognise the generosity and commitment of those who have pledged legacies to Robinson. Membership of the Society acknowledges those who have informed us of their intention to leave a legacy. Members are invited to return to Robinson annually for the Commemoration of Benefactors' Service and Tea and to attend other Robinson events.

If you would like a copy of the Robinson College legacy information booklet, please contact the Development Office by post, email or telephone. Together we can make a real difference to the opportunities that the College is able to offer to students, teachers and researchers today and in the future.



Clockwise from top: Unnamed glazed ceramic bowl by John Piper, depicting perhaps a Maltese cross or a bird and cross; Death in Venice by John Piper, one of a series of sketches for a set design for the opera by Benjamin Britten; Fawley Bottom farm, a silk screen print depicting Piper's home of the same name; Wymondhan, Norfolk, a silk screen print by John Piper; Death in Venice, another in the series of sketches for a set design for Britten's opera.

Robinson and "ME"



Ashok Gupta

Ashok Gupta (1993) on how an unwelcome illness changed the course of his life.

I was at Robinson studying Economics from 1993-1997, and suffered from a disease called ME (also known as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome), at the end of my second year. Now, most students feel tired some of the time because they often burn the candle at both ends (!), but this really was something extreme:

I assumed it would go away in time, but when it started interfering with my academic work, I began to get really worried. It felt like having severe flu twenty four hours a day, I just couldn't shake off these flu-like symptoms of extreme exhaustion, difficulty thinking and concentrating, temperature fluctuations, sore throat, achy limbs and muscles - and I felt physically and emotionally drained and very weak.

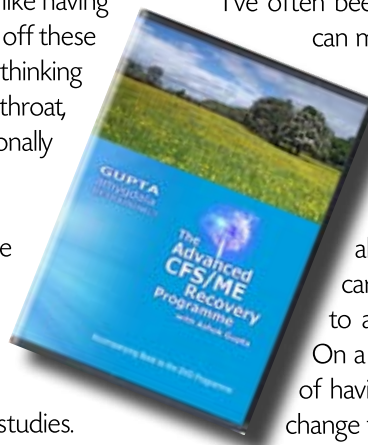
Initially, I tried to pretend to friends and family as if there was nothing wrong continuing to socialise as a way of trying to escape or deny the effects of the condition. Inevitably, this just made me feel much worse. At the time it was all quite a shock, and finally I had to degrade a year because I simply could not continue my studies. Fortunately, the college authorities were very understanding and I had a huge amount of support, which made the experience easier to deal with. I was able to discuss the situation openly and in confidence with my Tutor.

I then spent all of my free time researching the condition to try and get myself back to full health, but frustratingly a lot of the literature was very negative about the chances of recovery. I then turned my attention to the latest developments in brain neurology in relation to subconscious "sensitisation" responses, and that's where it suddenly all started to finally make sense! Although I had no formal medical training, I conducted several years of further research, and managed to get myself 100% healthy. I then wrote a paper which was published in a journal in 2002 (Medical Hypotheses Volume 59, Issue 6, 12 November 2002, Pages 727-735).

There is a lot of controversy about ME, with some doctors believing it is "all in the mind", despite the fact that there is a huge amount of evidence showing that it is a real physical illness, with abnormalities in the nervous system and the immune system. In my hypothesis, I believe that ME is a disease of the nervous system caused by abnormalities in a brain structure called the "amygdala", which is deep in the unconscious brain. My research indicates that this brain structure over-stimulates the body continually, thereby causing chronic symptoms, and affecting every organ and system in the body. Normally the amygdala is out of conscious control, but using some novel techniques derived from the fields of NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) and meditation, this brain structure can be influenced and "retrained".

Subsequently, I established a clinic in Central London, to help people with ME, as well as people suffering from other stress-related disorders, which have almost reached epidemic levels in London! This helped me to understand even more about ME, and to refine my therapies so that they would work for the vast majority of patients. Last year, I began a pilot study with 33 patients on my latest therapies for ME, which is showing very promising initial results, and I am applying for funding for a full independent medical trial this year.

To make my latest treatments easier to access for patients, I recently created a DVD recovery programme with 12 interactive video sessions at my clinic, with an accompanying recovery manual. This has proved very popular, as patients often either can't afford to see therapists, or are too unwell to make the journey.



I've often been asked if I have any advice for people on how they can make sure they avoid conditions such as ME, and I think there are things that people can do. Significantly reducing stress in life is absolutely crucial to reducing the chances of illness, as well as making sure that you have a healthy diet and are getting some exercise. Whilst it might all sound preachy and "we've heard it all before", I still observe that most people will put their careers and "getting ahead" above their health, which leads to a plethora of mental, emotional and physical illnesses. On a positive note, there is more awareness of the benefits of having a healthy lifestyle, so I am sure things will gradually change for the better!

It has been an incredible journey for me over the past 10 years, and I feel a sense of gratitude that I am now better, and can use that experience to help others with this condition.

If you are interested in finding out more, you can visit the website at www.guptaprogramme.com or call 0845 475 1 475.

News from the Fellowship



Dr Isabella Alexander and her husband Matthew are delighted to announce the arrival of Katharine Jean Conaglen at 7.30pm on Saturday, January 19th 2008. She weighed 7 lbs 8 oz (3.4kg). Mother and baby are doing well.

Professor German Berrios was presented by the Republic of Peru with the Order El Sol del Peru. This Order is the highest award bestowed by Peru to commend notable civil and military merit and German has been made a Grand Officer of the Order, which is the highest class awarded for civil merit. El Sol del Peru is the oldest award in America, having first been established in 1821.

An honorary Doctor of Letters degree was conferred upon Visiting Fellow **Professor Leonard Conolly** on February 20th 2008 by the University of Guelph. It was awarded for his "outstanding contribution to the humanities and society".

The Reverend Dr David Cornick writes

In April I will be taking up the post of General Secretary of Churches Together in England (CTE). CTE is one of the successor bodies to the British Council of Churches, which dissolved itself in 1987, so that Cardinal Hume's dream of all the churches in Britain (including the Roman Catholic Church) "...mov[ing] from a situation of co-operation to one of commitment to each other" might become a reality. CTE is part of the structure which is there to enable that to happen. The other nations in the British Isles have their equivalent bodies.

Part of my new work will be to act as secretary to the Presidents of CTE, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Commissioner Betty Matear of the Salvation Army, the Moderator of the Free Churches, and Bishop Nathan Hovhannisian, the Primate of the Armenian Church of Great Britain. Part will be to encourage the work of county and local Churches Together groups. Part will be stimulating theological reflection on issues that both divide and bring churches together. Part will be encouraging the 26 member churches and councils of churches of CTE to discover new ways of co-operating and learning from each other.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu reminded the 9th World Council of Churches Assembly at Porto Alegre that '...a united church is no optional extra, rather it is indispensable for the salvation of God's world.' That the vision can become a reality is proved in its own quiet way by our College chapel, an ecumenical foundation from its first day. Piper's extraordinary wall of light speaks of the wonder of creation, reminding worshippers that the church exists not for itself, but to serve that creation. That is a task the churches do best together, and that is one reason why I am looking forward to my new work.



On the 7th January 2008, **Dr Clemens Kaminski**, Fellow of Robinson College and Reader in the Department of Chemical Engineering at Cambridge was awarded "The young researcher award in advanced optical technologies" by the Erlangen Graduate School. The prize was in recognition of his work on laser diagnostics applied to a broad range of application areas. The photograph shows Dr Kaminski receiving his prize from the mayor of Erlangen.

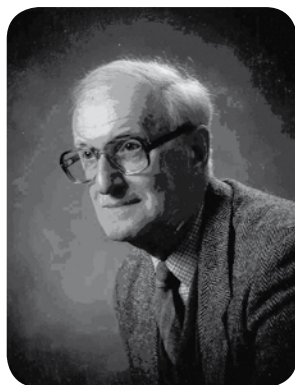


Dr Joanna Page has been awarded a CRASSH (Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities) Early Career Fellowship. The Early Career Fellowship Scheme enables early-career academics to take a term away from teaching in order to start a new project. The Scheme was launched jointly with the Schools of Arts and Humanities (CSAH) and Humanities and Social Sciences (CSHSS) in 2006.



Her Majesty the Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of Senior Member **Richard Plender**, Esquire, Q.C., to be a Justice of the High Court.

The Lord Chief Justice has assigned the Honourable Sir Richard Plender to the Queen's Bench Division.



It was with great regret that the College heard of the death of the Honorary Fellow **Dr Alan Sharpe** on 30th January 2008. Dr Sharp was the founding Senior Tutor and a key figure in shaping the College's academic strategy. An obituary will appear in the next edition of the *Robinson Record*.

Dr Paul Smith (Fellow 2000-2005) married Dr Aileen Fyfe on 7 April 2007 at Jesus College, Cambridge, where they were both students. Afterwards they spent a surprisingly relaxing two weeks on honeymoon in Peru seeing the Amazon and walking the Inca Trail. They are now living in Galway, Ireland, and both work at the National University of Ireland, Galway.



Dr Jeremy Thurlow has been awarded the George Butterworth Award - this is an international award for new compositions, awarded every second year by the Society for the Promotion for New Music. Dr Thurlow writes:

I'm very pleased to have received the George Butterworth Award 2007, together with composer Claudia Molitor. The award is made by the artistic director of the spnm for new compositions which make 'an outstanding contribution to the the year's programme'. Three of my works were cited: *Music for Strings and Hammers* (for six pianos), *Endlessly Enmeshed* composed for the Jai Hind project, combining Indian and Western European instruments and players, and *A Sudden Cartography of Song*, a video-opera composed in collaboration with Alistair Appleton and premiered at this year's Spitalfields Festival. These have all been exciting projects for me and offered valuable experiences, so I'm delighted to have been able to work with the spnm this year and to have been chosen for the award.

Alumni Announcements

Mark Fletcher (1991) and his wife, Yumiko, now have two lovely daughters; Amy (March 2005) and Mia (December 2006).

After 9 years in London, in June of 2007 they moved back up to the North West and are now living in Liverpool. Mark works for a Wealth Management company in Liverpool specialising in dealing with tax and investment planning for Sports and Media personalities.



Mark Fletcher (1991) with his daughters Amy and Mia



Lydia Heilmann (née Breen, 1995)
with her son, Lars

Lars Cameron Heilmann was born December 26th, 2007 at 10.37pm to **Lydia Heilmann** (née Breen, 1995) and Per Heilmann (Downing, 1997) in Connecticut, USA, weighing 7lbs 12 oz.

Annabel Lait (née Sainsbury, 1994) married Ben Lait in March 2006 and gave birth to their first child, Scarlett, in March 2007.

Josh Sherer and Thea Lee (both 1998) were married on 15th December 2007 at Wandsworth Town Hall, London with many Robinson alumni joining them to celebrate the day.



Josh Sherer and Thea Lee (1998)



Emily Rubin

James and **Antonia Rubin** (née Collins, 1996) are delighted to announce the arrival of Emily Sarah on Tuesday 13th November 2007 at 10.15am, an already much loved little sister to Rebecca.

Ola Uduku (1989) is Change Leader and Senior Lecturer in Environmental Design in the School of Architecture at Edinburgh College of Art. She has worked as an Architecture Lecturer at the Universities of Liverpool and Strathclyde, and has research connections with the Architecture Schools in South Africa, Nigeria and Belgium. Her research interests lie in Modernist Movement Architecture in Africa; minorities groups, their sense of identity and space use in urban contexts; and finally management issues within the academic sector.

Student Shadowing at Robinson

This February Robinson is taking part in the Student Union's Shadowing Scheme. Eighteen students over three weekends are coming to the College to see what student life in Cambridge is about. They each "shadow" a current undergraduate member of the College, go to their lectures and supervisions, socialise with them and are able to ask them questions about what life in the University is like.

The Scheme is run by CUSU (Cambridge University Student's Union) and is aimed at sixth-formers who either go to schools with no history of sending pupils to Oxbridge and/or whose family has no history of University education. Many of those who visit on the scheme subsequently apply for and take up places at Cambridge.

Last year's scheme was very successful. Many of the undergraduates were keen to answer the sixth-formers' questions and all the volunteers looking after them worked well ensure they had an enjoyable time. Across Cambridge twenty-three colleges will host 260 sixth-formers. They have been selected by Charlotte Richer (CUSU Access Sabbatical Officer) from recommendations by their school teachers and come from all over the United Kingdom.

The scheme is part of a wider drive by CUSU and the University to increase the number of applications from non-traditional backgrounds. The scheme is mainly aimed at state schools, especially those in deprived areas. In the light of recent publicity indicating that many secondary school students do not consider Oxbridge, the shadowing scheme is more important than ever.

International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) Competition

Congratulations to Robinson College second year Biological Natural Scientist Stefan Milde who, with a team of other Cambridge students, won Gold Prize in the international Genetically Engineered Machine competition for their creation of a system for communication within a single cell. Their genetically engineered machine was designed to increase the flow of information in a DNA-based circuit in a living cell, rather like the flow of current in an electric circuit. For a full article on the competition, go to

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news/dp/2008020103>.

Staff News

In the last few months, Robinson has seen the retirement of two key figures amongst the College Staff. At the end of November, the College said goodbye to Prue Addecott, who for 17 years was the Chief Clerk at the College, and at the end of January, to Dick Bacon, who for 10 years worked at Robinson as the Facilities Manager.

Prue was well-known and much liked amongst members and staff, with a heart of gold despite a somewhat possessive attitude towards the College Office photocopier. I was extremely grateful to her for all the support she gave me in the Development Office during my first five months here when Helen Cornish was on maternity leave. She is much missed, and we wish her a very long and happy retirement.

Dick oversaw many major projects at Robinson from the refurbishment of all the student rooms and the auditorium to the construction of the Maria Björnson Theatre and advising on the new graduate houses currently under construction at 3 Sylvester Road. We wish him all the best for the future.

Prue Addecott is succeeded by Michèle Tumber who was the Deputy Chief Clerk. Dick Bacon's replacement as Facilities Manager is Bill McKim.

CJ



Arrivals

Kate Taylor-Stratton (Accounts Clerk) 12.11.07; Gabor Malik (Food Services Assistant) 1.1.08; Bill McKim (Facilities Manager) 3.1.08

Departures

Prue Addecott (Chief Clerk) 30.11.07; Karina Wilson (Food Services Assistant) 31.12.07; Dick Bacon (Facilities Manager) 31.1.08

Forthcoming Events

March

- 10th Champagne Concert. A showcase of Robinson's musical talent, with champagne and canapés served in the interval.
- 29th Pegasus Society AGM & Dinner. Open to all Pegasus Society members and their guests.

April

- 30th City Leaders. By invitation only. A networking event for members now working in the City. We are very grateful to LG Legal for agreeing to host this event.

May

- 10th MA Congregation and Dinner. By invitation only. If you are due to receive your MA this year, but have not yet had an invitation, please contact Linda Hunns, the Praelector's Assistant at ljh65@cam.ac.uk.

June

- 21st Steinway Concert. A chance to hear Robinson's wonderful Steinway grand piano as a solo instrument and also in a chamber ensemble. Tickets include a light sandwich lunch and beverages.

July

- 3rd Annual Reception. A key College event to which we invite Friends and Members, the Annual Reception will this year be held in the Common Room of the Law Society.

September

- 27th Reunion Weekend. Members who matriculated in 1983, 1988, 1993 & 1998 are invited to join us in celebrating their 25th, 20th, 15th and 10th anniversaries, respectively, since coming up to Cambridge.
- 28th Pegasus Society Brunch. Open to all alumni, the Pegasus Society brunch is the perfect opportunity for alumni attending the University Alumni Weekend to come back to College, and also acts as the conclusion to Robinson's Reunion Weekend.