

The Dolphin



Murray Edwards
College

founded as New Hall

ISSUE 53 // SUMMER 2020



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'behind the scenes' experiences.



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on the need to shift mindsets.

From the President



MARTIN BOND PHOTOGRAPHY

Dame Barbara Stocking
President

Dear alumnae and friends

It's hard to imagine all the different circumstances you may be in as we go through this unsettling period. I only hope you are well, and able to cope with any difficulties you may face. In this issue of *The Dolphin*, I am proud our alumnae have contributed items on COVID-19, and I hope you find their perspectives as thought-provoking as I have.

I'm pleased to say the majority of our students went home before Easter, and were able continue their studies remotely. Our Directors of Studies and Tutors worked hard to support them and the students who remained in College. Our finalists felt the upheaval particularly strongly, many leaving for the Easter vacation before they knew they would not be returning this Term. There will be no graduation ceremony at Senate House in June; students will receive their degrees *in absentia* instead. But we do intend to have graduation celebrations with them when can.

The impact of COVID-19 has had serious financial implications for all Colleges, including ours. Now, perhaps more than ever, your support is vital, and I would like to thank everyone who has donated either their time or money to help us work through the unprecedented challenges we face as a College community.

On a final and more positive note, we will celebrate a decade of the Gateway Programme next year. Those of you who took part in Gateway have been invited to complete a survey about your experiences. We look forward to sharing the results of the survey with you, and using the results to encourage more outstanding young women to apply to Murray Edwards College.

With best wishes.

The Dolphin

ISSUE 53 // SUMMER 2020

COVER IMAGE:
MARTIN BOND PHOTOGRAPHY

The Rising Tide: Women at Cambridge

College Fellow, Dr Lucy Delap shares her ‘behind-the-scenes’ experiences of curating this remarkable exhibition.



@ANNAECARRUTHERS (TWITTER)



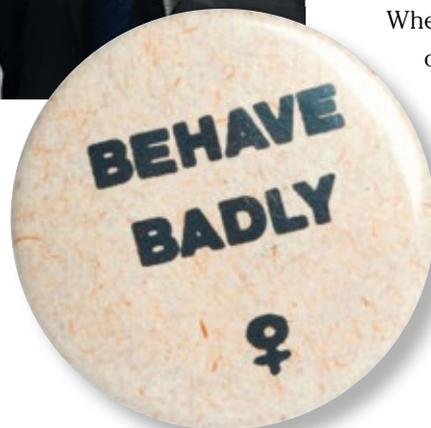
Above: Co-curators of the exhibition - Dr Lucy Delap (Murray Edwards) and Dr Ben Griffin (Girton).

The exhibition brief was simple – present and pay tribute to the history of women at Cambridge University – but putting this into practice was no simple matter.

What about the wives of College Fellows, who had shared their marriages with the University but never had any formal institutional status? How could we uncover the lives of cleaners and secretaries who kept Colleges and departments going, yet had left few archival traces? Current and former students, and the many world-leading researchers and teaching staff were always going to be central but as co-curators, Dr Ben Griffin and I also searched for stories and objects that could convey the breadth and depth of women’s engagement with the University.

Named women

When one College archivist mentioned there was a portrait of an 18th century laundress in the Porters’ Lodge, we were thrilled – but disappointed the College had no details about her. When we took the portrait down, we found the name of the laundress, Elizabeth Briggs, had been written on the back. She joins the small ranks of *named* working class women who feature in the visual record of the 18th century.



Living voices

When I attended a celebration of women’s admission to Trinity College in 2018, I had light-heartedly tweeted a picture of their suffragette colour-themed dessert course.



Someone tweeted that their grandmother would like this – and revealed she had been a cook at Newnham College during the Second World War. Now aged 101, Mrs Gwanwyn Sykes still has plenty to say about her time at Newnham. It was a treat to interview her and hear first-hand about this time period for which there are now so few living witnesses. You can see some of the films associated with the exhibition online, including Jo Cobb (Head Gardener) and I talking about her work and the historic legacies of women gardeners. Search 'Women at Cambridge' on YouTube to view these videos.

Celebrating success, acknowledging slow progress

Our exhibition had to tread a fine line between celebrating women's achievements, and acknowledging the incredibly slow pace at which they were offered membership of the University and its societies. Alison Richard, the University's Vice Chancellor from 2004-2010, described it as 'a scandalous muddle and I think a great blot on the history of Cambridge.'



“ When one College archivist mentioned there was a portrait of an 18th century laundress in the Porters' Lodge, we were thrilled. ”



Above: Lucy and Ben looking at the tiny scale model of the exhibition.

▶▶ Even after they could be formally awarded degrees from 1948, women were still frequently excluded from prestigious sports and arts societies. Their contributions were marginalised in teaching situations, and their research often went unrewarded. New Hall's own Rosemary Murray asked her founding colleague, Robin Murray, at the moment of launching the College: "Are you prepared for the tiresomenesses that will arise? I hope so!" Our exhibition illustrated this with a particular focus on women's rowing, foregrounding the shamefully late

“ Even after they could be formally awarded degrees from 1948, women were still frequently excluded from prestigious sports and arts societies. ”

granting of the right to compete on the same Varsity Boat Race course as men in 2015.

The tough, even hostile environment faced by women academics – particularly those who faced other forms of discrimination – was documented in many ways throughout the exhibition. For example, when we tried to find out about women of colour at the University, we discovered no records had been kept. It took substantial research to be able to figure out that the first woman of colour appointed to a lectureship had been Dr Shailaja Fennell in 1994.

Tensions over gender

I'd have liked to do more in the exhibition for the secretarial staff. One of my sources on this, former secretary and later personnel and policy officer, Jenny Woodhouse, reported enormous tensions over gender and class hierarchies, illustrated by the habit of terming clerical and secretarial staff 'girls', whatever their age. The struggles to get maternity leave and equal treatment for women workers are still very much in living memory, and indeed are ongoing. The existing pay gap, for example, is an injustice that I hope the University will address swiftly.

Presentation and aesthetics

When putting the exhibition together, Ben and I were invited to play with a wonderful tiny scale model of the exhibition space and its stands. We were given very little say over the design elements, and when we saw the Day-Glo greens and yellows the designers had chosen, we were sceptical and disappointed. But when they were set up under the low lighting of the exhibition hall, the colours magically melded into harmony. I learnt a great deal about presentation and aesthetics from the professional team who supported the project at the University Library – they invested so much care and energy into this project, which has been for them the most successful and elaborate exhibition ever mounted. This is testament to the significance of this topic – and a belated honour to all those women who were not given their due while at Cambridge.

The Rising Tide exhibition at the UL closed early due to restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic but if you missed it, readers can see the online exhibition at www.cam.ac.uk/TheRisingTide

COVID-19: alumnae perspectives

Alumnae around the world share their experiences of coronavirus.

MADDELLI PHOTOGRAPHY



Sian Griffiths OBE
(1970, Medical Sciences)
Emeritus Professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong

In 2003 I was invited to co-chair the Hong Kong government's inquiry into the SARS outbreak, which infected at least 1755 people and killed 299 of them. SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) had emerged as an atypical pneumonia and in the initial phase of the epidemic, its causative organism was unknown – including during the first phase when health care workers at a medical school in Hong Kong became infected, signalling both the spread and the seriousness of the situation. In the months that followed, the disease spread into the community. Its causative organism, a coronavirus, was identified mid-epidemic – its origins in the wet markets of Guangdong.

Our inquiry made a series of recommendations about strengthening surveillance, bolstering the public health system and ensuring capacity in the hospital system to respond to future epidemics. We stressed the need for

a global network to ensure information was shared and research was open and collaborative. Subsequently, I moved to the Chinese University of Hong Kong to head the School of Public Health and Primary Care, and play a role in strengthening public health education and research. Returning at the end of 2013 to semi-retirement in the UK, I did not imagine that in 2020 I would once again find myself providing advice on a coronavirus epidemic. Staying in close contact with my colleagues in Hong Kong, where I am Emeritus Professor, has helped my understanding of COVID-19 as there are many similarities between 2003 and 2020. Both SARS and COVID-19 are coronaviruses and both are thought to have arisen from the illegal sale of wild animals in wet markets. Both diseases share some common characteristics, particularly the impact on the lungs. Both are infectious, and carry a mortality rate which is higher in older people and those with pre-existing diseases. Neither have a specific treatment or vaccine and both have wrought economic havoc. But the scale of COVID-19 is far greater than SARS and many countries are struggling to respond through Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs) such as social distancing to ensure health services avoid being overwhelmed while researchers seek an effective vaccine as well as drugs which can mitigate the impact of the disease.

Drawing on my experience as Chair of the public health stream of the Hong Kong inquiry as well as being a Board member of Public Health England enables me to identify comparisons between the two epidemics and comment on both UK events and East Asian experiences. There were definitely lessons learned from SARS – but not everywhere and not well enough. This pandemic has shown greater willingness to share experience and data with the World Health Organisation, who play an important if at ►►

►► times controversial role. There has been impressive collaboration between scientists not only in different countries but different sectors – across public health organisations, academia and industry. Research has provided guidance to the decisions about how the pandemic should be handled. But in many countries, there are glaring problems such as lack of capacity to test and failure to supply protective equipment with unseemly scrabbling to access supplies which have hampered the response. And these problems are potentially far worse in resource poor environments. Once again, governments have failed to heed public health advice to prepare for what many saw was an inevitable global pandemic of an infectious disease.

However, those who had experienced SARS more acutely seem to have been better prepared – particularly Hong Kong which has, at the time of writing, only seen four deaths among 1044 cases. Hong Kong's experience of the second wave of cases provides an idea of why it has been successful. Case numbers started to rise again around the time of the Easter holidays when many students were returning from areas where infection rates were higher. Steps were immediately taken to once more strengthen border control and enable high volume testing, contact tracing and quarantine. Coupled with social distancing measures as well as rigorous point of entry restrictions, the public health system has been very effective at breaking the chain of infection and stopping it spreading.

As we all face the challenges of removing the lockdown, experiences from other countries will provide essential learning. We will not be living in a COVID-19 free world for some time. While scientists work on vaccines and drug treatments, the politicians will be juggling the necessity to get economies working with the need to protect the health of the public. Here in the UK, we can look across to Hong Kong not only for the lessons from SARS but also the more recent lessons of successful control of COVID-19.



Camilla Cheung
(2001, Medical Sciences)
GP in Cambridgeshire

If I had to sum up General Practice in a time of coronavirus in one word, it would be “odd”. In many ways I’m lucky that the practice where I work moved to an online access system around 18 months ago, so we didn’t have to redesign our services in a hurry when lockdown began, and we’re used to the idea of doing the majority of our consulting without the patient in front of us. Previously though, I always had the option of inviting the patient in to be seen face-to-face, for their peace of mind or (often) mine. Now, that is a risk – and I find myself having to make decisions about diagnosis or treatment based on much less information than I’m used to. Things which normally tell me a lot – like being able to read the subtleties of someone’s body language when they’re describing how they’re feeling – are impossible by phone or email. Even when I do see someone in person, they’re often wearing a mask (as am I) and trying to stay two metres away from me, which makes natural communication very difficult. Normally, I might provide a reassuring touch, or hand squeeze, or even occasionally a hug to a distressed or dying patient. I’m afraid to do this now, and it feels strange and wrong.

Since lockdown began, demand for our services has fallen by around 50%. Partly this is because there are fewer infectious diseases going round and fewer people spraining their knees at football training – but I’m worried there are lots of people who don’t want to bother us with their chest pains, or worsening depression, or the blood in their urine. I’d like to encourage people to contact health services if you have symptoms you’re worried about – things might be dealt with differently from usual but we are definitely open for business and keen to help.

There have been some positives to the last six weeks. Because most people are at home, we’ve been able to get hold of some usually difficult-to-reach patients to check up on their asthma or diabetes. Technology has allowed many



Jackie Ong

(1997, Medical Sciences)

Senior Consultant, Paediatric Intensive Care Unit, National University Hospital, Singapore

“Normally, I might provide a reassuring touch, or hand squeeze, or even occasionally a hug to a distressed or dying patient. I’m afraid to do this now.”

of my colleagues to be able to work from home without risking their underlying health conditions. For those of us who have been in the surgery as normal, a real sense of camaraderie has formed, which I hope will continue to grow. We’ve been surprised and humbled by the willingness of our community to support us with deliveries of coffee, cake, pizza and (on one occasion) orchids. And (anecdotal evidence only) I’ve definitely noticed an increase in the number of newly pregnant women in the last couple of weeks!

Like everyone else, I find myself unsure about how, when or whether we will ever return to “normal”, and afraid that a second wave of infections might still overwhelm us. But I’m hopeful of a vaccine and looking forward to being able to spend time again with distant family and friends, perhaps in a sunny pub garden.

Singapore was one of the first countries impacted by COVID-19 outside of China. Our earliest cases were tourists from Wuhan, visiting Singapore during the Chinese New Year holiday. Singapore had been badly affected by SARS in 2003, and the Singapore Government kept a wary eye on the number of cases exponentially increasing in China. Having had that experience with SARS, shaped the healthcare response to COVID-19.

The first step taken by the hospital was to ask all departments to split teams and form clear segregation between groups so that if one team was inadvertently exposed, the other team could swing in and continue clinical service. I work in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit and with the split teams, I no longer regularly saw half of my colleagues. Face-to-face meetings were confined to urgent COVID related protocols and discussions; all other meetings were conducted via teleconference. Eventually, we were not allowed to meet in person at all and could only meet in virtual rooms via cameras and microphones. Medical student and paediatric trainee teaching disappeared overnight and whole curricula had to be revamped. It seemed like my email inbox was a blur of ever-changing protocols, definitions and plans.

On a personal level, what was particularly difficult was the gradual cancellation of vacation plans, conferences and big events. The segregated roster required more people to stay in the country and so one by one, we cancelled trips away. More and more travel restrictions occurred and then it was a matter of fearing that we might get stuck overseas when our hospital colleagues needed us. We could not celebrate nor grieve together – when a friend’s mother passed away suddenly, we could not gather to comfort her. Our extended family separated ►►

▶▶ almost overnight; now my parents see their grandchildren (my nieces and nephew) over a phone link. It has been strange and unsettling at times, but we have adjusted to a new normal.

What has brought the greatest change is the time I am now spending volunteering and working in the migrant worker dormitories in Singapore. Singapore has a large, migrant worker population who provide the majority of the manual labour force and they are housed in enormous, crowded dormitories all over the country. Singapore's early control of the pandemic was thrown into disarray when the virus rapidly spread through the population. In order to limit spread, dormitories have been gazetted as isolation zones but it was vital public healthcare measures and medical help was provided for these men. National resources have been marshalled to look after this vulnerable group with healthcare institutions sending field teams to each dormitory, setting up medical posts, providing primary healthcare as well as monitoring COVID-19 cases. Being part of this effort has been eye-opening and humbling.

It's been more than 100 days since we started with COVID. It seems at times we are overwhelmed by information and yet we are still learning about the disease. My work with migrant workers is far away from my professional training in paediatric intensive care but I do feel it is an important contribution to our current healthcare needs in Singapore. I don't know if we will ever go back to the old way of doing things; I suspect we might have reached a new normal for now. I am just looking forward to being able to eat with my whole family, to hug them and my friends. Until then, we all have to carry on together, hoping for better days ahead.

““ Medical student and paediatric trainee teaching disappeared overnight and whole curricula had to be revamped. ””



We talk to Caroline Jolley, (1992, Natural Sciences), Senior Lecturer in Human Physiology, King's College London.

What's your normal 'day job' - what's a normal week like for you?

In my "day job" I am a Senior Lecturer in Human Physiology in the Centre for Human & Applied Physiological Sciences, King's College London, and an Honorary Consultant in Respiratory Medicine, King's College Hospital (KCH). In a normal week I have Cough Clinic at King's College Hospital every Wednesday afternoon, and the remainder of the week is spent teaching physiology, or in research. My research interest is the physiology of breathlessness and cough – so highly relevant to COVID-19!

What have you been doing since the pandemic started?

When lockdown brought an end to face-to-face teaching and research, I volunteered to be redeployed back to "frontline" respiratory medicine at KCH. I pulled on my scrubs and PPE and joined my clinical colleagues – assessing and admitting patients from KCH A&E, and investigating and treating patients on the COVID wards at KCH. The timing of my redeployment coincided with the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in London hospitals.

What parts of your life have especially changed?

Going back to the wards. It had been six years since my last ward round, and I had never been the consultant in charge before! A switch of roles at home – usually



my husband has fixed clinical duties and my academic job allows more flexibility around the school run and other family activities. When I was on the wards it was me going to work clinically and my husband spent more time at home with the children during lockdown. My research (human respiratory physiology, including a number of potentially “aerosol-generating procedures”) has temporarily come to a pause – our research labs are unique in that they are embedded in the clinical department of Respiratory Medicine, and are patient-facing. This is usually perceived to be an advantage, but not during a respiratory pandemic!

What are your thoughts about those experiences?

Initially I was scared about the possibility of catching COVID-19 and bringing the infection home to my family. Thankfully I have not knowingly been infected, and neither have my husband or children. I was also apprehensive about returning to frontline clinical medicine after six years. I need not have worried – my colleagues were incredibly supportive, the junior doctors helped me to negotiate any unfamiliar practicalities (electronic observation charts, e-noting and e-prescribing – I had been brought up on pen and paper!) and I soon got back into the clinical routine. However, the reality of being faced with a disease for which there is no specific treatment

at all was at times overwhelming. But my main feeling is one of pride in being able to join my clinical colleagues and play a small role in the fight against COVID-19. The feeling that the whole of the NHS, and indeed the wider community, has pulled together at a time of unprecedented need, and that I can be part of that, is incredible. I enjoyed the clinical work, and the banter! It has also in many ways been a privilege to be able to observe a new disease, and to be able to contribute to these observations in the course of providing clinical care and recruitment of patients to clinical trials. King’s is an Academic Health Sciences Centre, and so there continues to be an abundance of daily webinars from non-clinical and clinical colleagues, which, being virtual, are actually easier to access than in pre-COVID times!

What are you most looking forward to when you can get back to ‘normal’?

Being able to jump on a bus or train in rush-hour London without a second thought, and being able to spend time with family and friends in person. Having my hair cut! And being able to go back to my research – but I expect that it will be some time (if indeed ever) before that returns completely to how it was before, and a “new normal” will need to intervene.



Student experience: COVID-19



Allison O'Malley Graham (2018, HSPS) shares her experiences of life during the initial stages of the COVID-19 outbreak.

As a triplet, people often ask me what it's like to live in a different country from my siblings. Usually, despite the fact we only see each other once or twice a year, I don't feel too far from them. We've always been independent and trying to get us on a video call requires active effort. Our shared birthday is an exception, which is why this year I decided to spend the Easter break in Texas, celebrating my birthday with my sisters for the first time in three years.

“ I knew that if all other doors closed to me, Murray Edwards would support me. ”

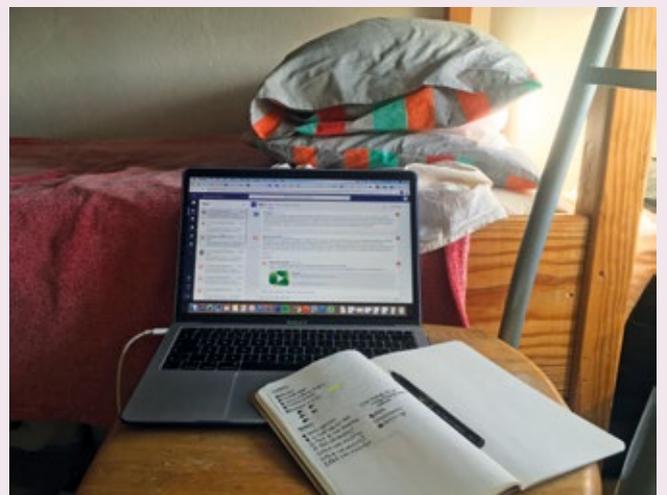
Of course, plans changed drastically. As MECSU President, I'd spent weeks discussing Murray Edwards' approach to COVID-19 and yet I can confidently say I didn't really see it coming. Like many others, I found myself faced with rapid border closures and a concern for vulnerable family members. The end of term was characterised by gut-wrenching phone calls and conversations with friends and family.

I'm lucky in a lot of ways: when I chose not to go to Texas, I could choose to stay in Ireland with my mum. Throughout, I knew that if all other doors closed to me, Murray Edwards would support me. I spent my last full day in Cambridge assuring students of that fact, attending College meetings in-between packing my room, and checking to make sure my local Irish airport was still open.

Ireland required I enter a two-week quarantine on arrival—my mother couldn't even hug me at the airport. This was a good job since I soon started to show symptoms of the virus. I spent my birthday sleeping and coughing. My sisters and I celebrated via video call.

In what might be a more shocking turn of events, Ireland has been breathtakingly sunny. Now symptom free, I can walk through fields of young lambs to the ocean. Still, the sunshine dwarfs in comparison to the care and support of friends and family.

Easter Term is always characterised by student support. Though this support now has a different meaning and takes different shapes, the fundamental idea is unchanged. Students have been quick to find new ways to connect, be it by hosting pub quizzes online or by going old-school and sending letters. To call this a silver lining seems trite, so I won't. It is no replacement for Cambridge, seeing friends in person, or having certainty – it never could be. All the same, it is a welcome comfort and one I have relied on. That is, when my WIFI is up to the task.



Top: “My daily walk by the ocean, where I have a clear view of the entire bay.”

Middle: “Unfortunately, I have no desk. Instead, I've been sitting on the floor and using a chair to prop up my laptop.”

Bottom: “My town. Usually we'd be seeing the first signs of tourist season by now.”



Femfolio

Bringing together the work of 20 women who were influential during the feminist art movement in 1970s America.



On International Women's Day this year, the New Hall Art Collection launched a new exhibition – *Femfolio* – bringing together the work of 20 women who were influential during the feminist art movement of the 1970s in America. The works are part of a portfolio that was commissioned in 2007 by the Brodsky Center at Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia. The collection of works on paper represent a variety of feminist voices and styles – united in their desire to challenge stereotypes, transform cultural attitudes, and redefine what it means to be an artist, exploring themes such as ageing, identity, sexuality, ethnicity, mythology, and the natural world.

The *Femfolio* has been generously donated to the Collection by Marjorie W Martay – an artist, curator, publisher, entrepreneur and founder of ArtW; an organisation committed to promoting women in the creative disciplines through advocacy, curation and education. She explains: “As an advocate for women artists and personally passionate about the New Hall Art Collection, I felt the portfolio would be a significant addition to this collection. *Femfolio* represents an important period of the feminist culture in the 1970s. This portfolio is part of many prestigious institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of

Modern Art in New York...it was time the New Hall Art Collection be included in this list.”

The *Femfolio* features artists Emma Amos, Eleanor Antin, Nancy Azara, Betsy Damon, Mary Beth Edelson, Lauren Ewing, Harmony Hammond, Joyce Kozloff, Diane Neumaier, Faith Ringgold, Miriam Schapiro, Carolee Schneemann, Joan Semmel, Sylvia Sleigh, Joan Snyder, Nancy Spero, May Stevens, Athena Tacha, June Wayne and Martha Wilson.

The exhibition was launched as part of a programme of events and activities organised by Harriet Loffler (Curator, New Hall Art Collection) to celebrate International Women's Day that included a talk by Dr Amy Tobin, Lecturer in History of Art, Curator at Kettle's Yard and Bye Fellow of Murray Edwards College, followed by presentations by students from the History of Art Department, an artist's talk by Perminder Kaur, and a film screening.

For more information on the *Femfolio* exhibition and our previous events do visit the New Hall Art Collection website at www.art.newhall.cam.ac.uk

Ella Halcrow (2018, PhD in Pathology) and Charlotte Manser (2016, Maths) were both in the winning squad.



LEIGH CHATTEN PHOTOGRAPHY

College students shine in Varsity rugby



Ella Halcrow (2018, PhD in Pathology) shares her thoughts on the team's victory with us.

How does it feel to be on the winning side?

Amazing! It is such a wonderful achievement for the whole team. The Varsity Match is a big focus for our overall training and season, so to come together as a team and win feels so rewarding.

As a team, how did you prepare in the build up to the match?

We had a training camp a few weekends before the match, which allowed a lot of focused training and cohesion between the squad. We also trained in the gym to physically prepare ourselves and throughout the process, we had a lot of support from our coaching team.

What keeps you motivated during training?

The goal of beating Oxford. The vision of playing in one of the world's most prestigious and recognised stadiums (Twickenham) with friends and family watching also makes you want to strive to be the best you can be.

How do you manage playing Varsity level sport in conjunction with your studies?

It's a balance between knowing when to put studying first and knowing when training needs to become a priority. The key thing is time management so that I stay organised and on top of work as well as all the training commitments.

Gateway turns 10!



Next academic year we will celebrate 10 years of the Gateway Programme.

In 2010, the College brought together various initiatives into the Programme we know now as Gateway. The Programme's aim, then and now, is to enable women from all backgrounds to make the most of the opportunities at Cambridge. The Programme is part of our commitment to encourage bright young women to apply to Murray Edwards College and to support their progress during their time in Cambridge.

Ten years in, we plan to celebrate the success of the Programme and to thank the students who enthusiastically took part or who were peer supporters. We also want to thank the many alumnae volunteers who created and delivered sessions or who provided career advice or internships.

In June 2020, alumnae who left the College over the last 10 years completed a survey to tell us what they think of Gateway and whether the skills they learned are still helpful in the work place. A report of the survey outcomes will be shared with you later in the year. We will also use the report to promote the College to a new generation of young women. The College has a very important focus on women's learning and careers, and we hope the findings from the survey will be one way of making us better known for that work and commitment.

It was hoped that we might celebrate at Alumnae Weekend in September but an in person thank you is on hold for now. In the meantime, alumna Olympia Onelli (right), who was one of the early cohort of students to take part, shares her reflections on the importance of the Programme.





Olimpia Onelli
(2010-2018, BA and PhD)

“I started attending the Gateway sessions initially just to be able to apply for funding for an internship but later on it became an unmissable appointment. When I was applying for PhD scholarships I remember attending a workshop on how to write applications for academic positions which was run by one of the physics supervisors: it wasn’t just the actual skills that we learnt but we also met a role model who could be an inspiration for us in a male-dominated field. 10 years have passed but I can still remember vividly some of the sessions and the skills I have picked up back then are still useful to me now. I feel really privileged to have had this opportunity which enriched my Cambridge experience.”



Primary school pupils explore College gardens

Earlier this year, we invited children from Mayfield Primary School to explore and be inspired by the College Gardens and New Hall Art Collection.

Along with Girton Glebe Primary School (who visited the grounds of Girton College as part of their research), Mayfield Primary School was commissioned to create a 'Forest of Imagination' for a new production of 'Hansel and Gretel', performed by the Cambridge Youth Opera.

Working with artist Caroline Wendling (from Wysing Arts Centre) who works with arts and wellbeing charity, Cambridge Curiosity and Imagination (CCI), the children were encouraged to delve into ideas about forests, fear and

freedom. As part of the creative experience, CCI asked us if the children could explore our award-winning gardens. Naturally, we were very keen to get involved!

In addition to welcoming the children to College, we were very happy to have been able to provide the school with plant material from our gardens to aid the artistic process.

'Hansel and Gretel' was due to be performed at the Storey's Way Field Centre at Eddington – with the children's work



being installed in the foyer there, creating an atmosphere for audiences before the production. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the performances had to be postponed but the Cambridge Youth Opera are working on finding new dates as soon as hosting events becomes a possibility again.

The project is part of the ArtScapers programme, the education initiative for Eddington, commissioned by the Contemporary Art Society for the North West Development on behalf of the University of Cambridge. The creation of a 'Forest of Imagination' was the first commission of its kind for ArtScapers and the Cambridge Youth Opera, and is an exciting development for how children's inventiveness and imagination can be celebrated and shared.

Many thanks to all the gardeners for their continued hard work over the course of the year, ensuring the displays in College are as magnificent as ever. Following the introduction of lockdown in March, Jo Cobb was the only gardener on site for many weeks so special thanks to her for all efforts in maintaining our beautiful gardens.



“This was the first time we welcomed primary school aged children to the College, and I was intrigued as to how it would spark their imaginations. This project was such an exciting one for the College to be involved with, and it was a delight to watch the children exploring all the sights, smells and textures the garden has to offer.”

Jo Cobb, Head Gardener at Murray Edwards College

Welcome to our new Fellows



Michele Gemelos
Senior Tutor

Dr Michele Gemelos started as Senior Tutor in June 2020, taking over from Dr Kate Peters who has been providing interim cover. Michele was previously Deputy Senior Tutor and Deputy Admissions Tutor at St Edmund's College where she was also Director of Studies in English. After undergraduate study at Skidmore College in New York, Michele completed an MPhil, DPhil and PGCE at the University of Oxford. Between 2005 and 2007 she was Wilkinson Junior Research Fellow and Assistant Dean at Worcester College. Her specialist research area is 19th and 20th century British and American literature. Michele is very excited to be joining Murray Edwards and has actively participated in meetings with College officers to ensure a smooth transition of responsibilities. Michele says "I was attracted to the College's warm and inclusive culture, and I am impressed by the tremendous work it has done to foster a stimulating intellectual environment for students, Fellows and staff." She is looking forward to working with all members of the College community to manage the educational and pastoral challenges presented by the COVID-19 lockdown, while ensuring that Murray Edwards College continues to promote high-quality teaching, dynamic learning and effective welfare support for academically outstanding young women from all backgrounds.



Luana Bulat
College Lecturer in
Computer Science

Over the last few years, the College has raised funds to appoint more teaching posts in STEM subjects. These new role models support the large numbers of scientists in the College – we are home to over 10% of female STEM students – and encourage more women to study science. We have now funded a new post in computer science, which will be taken up by Luana Bulat in October. Luana has been a Bye Fellow at the College in the last year, providing teaching and supervision to computer science students across all years. She is about to complete her PhD research on natural language processing at the University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory, having been awarded the MPhil in Advanced Computer Science in 2013. Luana is already a high profile gender champion and in 2015, she was awarded a *Women Techmakers* scholarship (formerly the Google Anita Borg Scholarship Programme) for her academic performance, leadership, and impact on the community of women in technology. Luana says, "I cherish the opportunity of being part of the College, a place that has felt like home since the very first moment I joined as a Bye Fellow. The College's dedication to women's education and development can be felt in every conversation. I am truly inspired by the bright young women at Murray Edwards and am committed to nurturing their interests and seeing them thrive."

The College Fellowship continues to grow and we are delighted to announce the appointment of the following outstanding academic researchers, teachers and leaders.



Helena Knowles
Owen Saxton Fellow
in Physics

Alumnae gave generously to honour the retirement of Dr Owen Saxton by founding a Fellowship in his name and the College has now appointed Dr Helena Knowles to that position. Helena is starting a new experimental physics lab in the Atomic, Mesoscopic and Optical Physics group at the Cavendish Laboratory. She uses quantum optics tools and atomic defects in diamond to pursue fundamental physics questions and to develop energy-efficient new technologies. Her work focuses on quantum imaging at the nanometre scale and performing nanoscale NMR experiments in biological and solid state systems. Helena joins us from Harvard, where she was a Research Associate on a project investigating single-atom thin materials using defects in diamond. She holds an MSc from ETH Zurich and a PhD from the University of Cambridge. Helena says, "I am delighted to take up the Owen Saxton Fellowship and look forward to working in this unique environment for supporting women in science."



Miranda Griffin
Fellow in French

It is always a pleasure to welcome an alumna back to the College as a Senior Member. Dr Miranda Griffin (1990, MML, BA MPhil and PhD) re-joins the College from St Catharine's College where she has been a Fellow since 2007 and Senior Tutor since 2018. Her research interests are medieval French literature and literary culture. Her first book, *The Object and the Cause in the Vulgate Cycle*, was published by Maney in 2005; her second, *Transforming Tales: Rewriting Metamorphosis in Medieval French Literature*, was published by OUP in 2015. She has also published articles on a wide range of medieval French literature. Miranda adds, "The College and I have both changed quite a bit since 1990, but I'm delighted to be returning to Murray Edwards – exactly thirty years after I first matriculated! I am looking forward to being reunited with the gardens and art collection. Most of all I can't wait to work with the brilliant students and colleagues who make the College such a special place".

We look forward to their admission as Fellows in October.

What kind of future do we want to build?



**By Dr. Didem Gurdur Broo,
Postdoctoral Bye Fellow in
Computer Science.**

I am a computer scientist who cares about creating a sustainable future for our world. And I believe that one of the best ways to do this is for different disciplines to collaborate in cross-disciplinary environments. I also believe we need people who are trans-disciplinary – engineers who have a good understanding of behavioural science; data scientists who can study ethical and moral dilemmas; neuroscientists who are also data-fluent etc.

But perhaps I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's take a step back...

I have a doctorate in mechatronics, and during my PhD I had the chance to work with different types of cyber-physical systems. You might not be aware of cyber-physical systems but suffice to say, they are hugely significant on both an economic and societal level. "But what *are* they?" I hear you ask. They are the robot vacuum cleaners in homes, autonomous vehicles in testbeds, intelligent, automated warehouses used by logistics companies, and the smart cities of the tomorrow. Cyber-physical systems are the future and they are connected, autonomous and intelligent. But they require people who are trans-disciplinary to ensure they operate at their full potential and serve their purpose. Why? Because the systems require different software, communications technologies, sensors/actuators, embedded technologies, and physical systems to work together seamlessly.

The real value of cyber-physical systems is how they integrate things. When we move from an individual system perspective to a bigger picture of the system

of systems, we see numerous opportunities to change the world. For instance, we no longer talk about a personal petrol-powered car, but instead start a new discussion about integrated transport systems with different mobility services where the information is shared between buses, trains, autonomous cars – and even integrated infrastructure that makes our commuting experience easier and faster as well as more comfortable and sustainable.

My research focuses on the data and artificial intelligence applications of cyber-physical systems – how to gather, create, store, analyse and present data, and how to automate decision making. But it also goes further than this by trying to show the value of a system of systems perspective. Why? Because data alone is not enough to create a better world. In addition to data we need to include different perspectives, engage with communities and individuals, think outside the box, innovate – we need to be trans-disciplinary. We also need to stop trying to solve the problems of the present by coming up with 'solutions' that have potentially damaging consequences for our future.

The world is changing and changing fast. If we want to build a sustainable, equal and diverse world, we need to shift our mindsets. To encourage this shift to occur, I suggest employing three thinking models: systems thinking, design thinking and futuristic thinking.

- **Systems thinking** is required because today's world is interconnected, and everything has the potential to affect everything else. We should move from disconnections to



“ If we want to build a sustainable, equal and diverse world, we need to shift our mindsets. ”



interconnections, from linear thinking to circular thinking, from silos to collaborations, from parts to wholes, from analysis to synthesis – you get the idea.

- Design thinking is needed because we should design things with the people who are going to use them truly in mind. We should work on understanding people’s needs and getting to grips with their problems – without being limited to technologies.
- And finally, futuristic thinking is essential. We need this mode of thinking in order to be prepared for the unexpected, and to provide solutions not just for the world we live in today but also for the world we hope to live in tomorrow.

The world may be full of challenges but the questions we have to answer in order to overcome any barriers are also very exciting: what should transportation systems look like? How are we going to work with robots? How can we make the world a better, equal and more diverse place? All of these and more point to one overarching question: what kind of future do we want to build? This may not be a simple question to answer in lots of ways but I feel confident that we need people with a future perspective, who are creative and brave, who care about the world and believe they can change it. In short, we need people who are trans-disciplinary if we are going to create the world we dare to dream of.

Helen Richards Creative Writing Award

Bella Fox (2019, English) wins new award acknowledging literary talent at the College.



Above: Bella Fox at matriculation

Professor Raphael Lyne (Professorial Fellow in English at the College) led the panel of judges composed of Dr Holly Corfield Carr (Fellow in English), Kate Morrison (alumna) and Hazel Tsoi-Wiles (alumna). Kate and Hazel both studied English alongside Helen.

College students were invited to submit a previously unpublished 4000-word story. During the judging process, Kate Morrison commented, “We’re deep in discussion about the entries and we are all very impressed by the standard.”

Isabella “Bella” Fox was announced as the winner in March and has been awarded a prize of £100. An extract from Bella’s winning story is opposite.



College alumna, Helen Richards (1998, English) passed away in 2017 and this award was created and launched this year in her memory by her friends and family.

Beauty: a study in ink and concrete

By Bella Fox

“It was always her face he captured first, or only. She had a solidity to her sketching position like a towering, stationary crane poised above a building site: her hand swung across the paper, but her shoulders, her concrete-stiff back, did not move. Her face, however, was forever shifting in a way which reminded James how human she was (this was sometimes very easy to forget). Once the face was locked in, he would draw her powerful body, its straight lines and surprising curves.

They settled into this happiness. They sat, side-by-side, late into the night making models for their degrees. On free evenings they went to nightclubs and he danced with her, or rather, watched her dance. Sara moved in a manner that betrayed nothing, and the more she drank the more opaque she became, until she was a crystal and not a girl. Sometimes he suspected she had not quite given herself to him, and he was driven mad by the thought that with just one more conversation or intimate secret, he might know her completely.”

Events and conferencing

We understand many of you will have had to postpone special events this year, and how disappointing that will have been. We want you to know the College is looking forward to hosting conferences and events again, and that when the time is right, we will be here to help make them memorable for all the right reasons.

We offer special rates to alumnae who use the College as their venue. Whether it's a conference, family reunion, milestone birthday or a wedding, and we would love to help you celebrate.

You can help the College recover from the financial impact of the global lockdown by choosing us for your event. As an alumna of Murray Edwards, any event brought to us by you – be it a private, personal event or one for your workplace, community group or charity – receives 10% off the total cost of the booking.

**Competitive rates:
Alumnae receive
10% off the total cost
of their booking**



Above: Finger buffet lunch for a high profile tech company in the Kaetsu Conference Centre.

Top right: Guests enjoying a wedding reception in the Fellows' Drawing Room and private garden.



What we can offer:

- **Seasonal fine dining or a bespoke menu** - created in partnership with our Head Chef.
- **The ultimate 'wow' factor of The Dome** - for weddings and large parties.
- **Garden events and celebrations** - including personal celebrations, corporate garden parties, team building days and Christmas parties.
- **Professional standard meeting rooms** with excellent AV facilities and support.
- **On site accommodation** - the College has 159 en suite bedrooms. Singles and twins available during vacations.

**You can email our friendly
events team at
events@murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk
or call us on
01223 762267**



MARTIN BOND PHOTOGRAPHY

Alumnae events

Due to COVID-19, the Alumnae Weekend celebrations in September will be virtual. More information will be sent by email and posted on the website when confirmed. As we cannot gather in person, we will do so online! Please make sure we have your correct email address, and permission to inform you about events, by updating your details via the alumnae pages of the website: www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/updatemydetails

Emails from the Development Office come from newhallsociety@murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk. Please add us to your address book to ensure our messages reach you (or check your promotions or junk mail folder).



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