

# FRONT COURT



TRINITY HALL  
CAMBRIDGE

Highlights:  
Affable Bears

Meet the athletes

Five minutes  
with a Fellow –  
Dr Marcus Tomalin

Issue 31 | Spring 2020



## Message from the Acting Vice-Master

Front Court is a picture of tranquillity, as it usually is; Latham Lawn shows silent signs of blossoming spring; but the College no longer provides its usual contrast with the throbbing streets of Cambridge, now that the city and the nation are in lockdown. The serene demeanour of College masks the fact that the outlook is for an Easter term more disrupted than we have experienced for generations.



Wherever you are reading this, I sincerely hope you and your loved ones are well. Our concern for the continued wellbeing of our students and staff has been a driving force in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students were encouraged to go home at the start of the vacation, if it was possible and safe for them to do so. The 50 or so students who remain have moved to Wychfield, where they can be comfortably housed across the site to achieve a minimum sharing of facilities. Our mental health team continues to offer help, remotely, to students whether in Cambridge or at home, and our nurse provides valuable support. We also rapidly scaled back College operations so that staff could, wherever possible, work from home.

The College is closed to visitors and alumni events are postponed for the time being. Nevertheless, the day-to-day work of the College continues remotely. The senior leadership team meets (online) several times a week and most of the committees will continue to meet next term. However, students will not be coming back to Cambridge for Easter term and there will be no face-to-face teaching. Alternative methods of assessment and teaching are being put in place. I have been impressed by the

fortitude and resolve of students in facing these changes at short notice and in such drastic conditions.

I was appointed Acting Vice-Master in order to provide leadership in the College at a time when an external and independent inquiry into allegations made in recent press coverage needed to be launched. Although the College's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has required urgent attention, the QC-led inquiry is underway. It will be followed by reviews into our procedures for the handling of sexual misconduct and into College governance. I believe these reviews will strengthen our College and help to build trust in the constituencies that make up our community. As with the COVID-19 response, our priority is the welfare of everyone at Trinity Hall.

I would like to record here my thanks to all the staff, students and Fellows who have acted so effectively at a difficult time to make the College's response to the COVID-19 pandemic swift, resourceful and compassionate. I am grateful too for messages of support and offers of help from alumni. It should be no surprise that our College has been able to adapt itself to the requirements of the pandemic response – after all, the College was founded in the aftermath of the Black Death and has provided sanctuary during other times of plague. Endurance and fortitude are in our history!

Again, I wish you and your loved ones good health at this time.

With best wishes,  
Daniel Tyler, Acting Vice-Master



### About *Front Court*

*Front Court* keeps members and friends up-to-date with College and alumni news.

*Front Court* is produced twice a year. If you have any suggestions or articles for the next issue (Autumn 2020), please contact the Editors.

All our publications are available on our website: [www.trinhall.cam.ac.uk/alumni/publications](http://www.trinhall.cam.ac.uk/alumni/publications)

### Editors

Kathryn Martin-Chambers and  
Dr Rachelle Stretch

### The Alumni & Development Office

Trinity Hall, Cambridge CB2 1TJ

Tel: +44 (0)1223 332562

Fax: +44 (0)1223 765157

Email: [publications@trinhall.cam.ac.uk](mailto:publications@trinhall.cam.ac.uk)  
[www.trinhall.cam.ac.uk](http://www.trinhall.cam.ac.uk)

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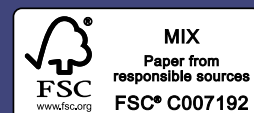
Thank you to all our contributors.

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January 2019.

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# Message from the Development Director

"It's all about organising parties." This is what I was told when I started out on my career in alumni relations and development 16 years ago. I am still yet to be convinced.

Yes, my team organises many events – social events for year groups, subjects and regions; lectures; sporting events; concerts and exhibitions. However, in these times of social distancing and self-isolation, events have had to be cancelled. Virtual connections have become more important and make a positive difference. We produce a variety of publications, in print and digitally, manage the website, our online Trinity Hall community, LinkHall, and the College's social media. We are also here to provide opportunities to those who want to help make a difference to future generations, by enabling them to donate to further the work of the College.

Alumni relations is much more than parties and that is why I do what I do. Not only am I (usually) able to work in historic buildings in an iconic riverside setting, but every day is different. I am blessed to be amongst the brilliant minds of the Fellows and postdocs, the energy of the students and the support of all of the staff, whilst having the opportunity to meet alumni around the world. Working with the whole Trinity Hall community, aged 18 to over 100, and hearing of their experiences and accomplishments is what makes my job so special. We are all Trinity Hall.

We hear from alumni about their memories of their time here: about their interview (which seems to be etched in many people's memories), supervisions, time on the river or on the sports field, in the choir or climbing in over College walls. When this issue of *Front Court* reaches you, we were supposed to be in the midst of our sixteenth telephone campaign. It is always a joy to listen to students hearing these stories and, in turn, updating you on their experience of College today. Our



goal is for alumni, at whatever age and wherever they may be, to feel connected to Trinity Hall. Networking with other alumni in similar industries, expanding knowledge through interactions with our academics and the nostalgia of coming back to College – we are here for you. When the global health situation permits, we hope you will come back to Cambridge to see us.

Over the past 670 years the Trinity Hall community has achieved many things. In this issue, we recognise a Noble Prize-winning scientist and an award-winning architect amongst our alumni, whose portraits have recently been unveiled in College. We celebrate the pioneering research of our Fellows, we meet some Trinity Hall sporting successes and learn more about the important work we are undertaking to widen participation.

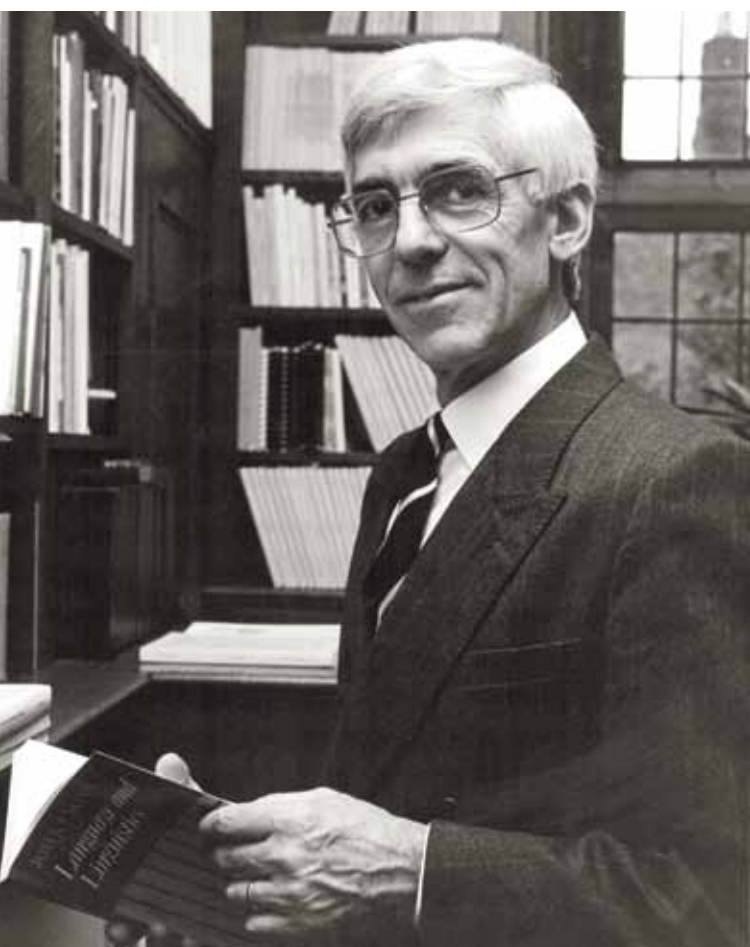
Supporting the Trinity Hall community past, present and future is the reason I go to work every day. But I do also enjoy a good party. I hope we will be able to enjoy them together again soon.

**Dr Rachelle Stretch**  
Development Director

WHEN HE ARRIVED AT TRINITY HALL IN 1984, SIR JOHN LYONS WAS ALREADY A WORLD-CLASS FIGURE IN THE STUDY OF THEORETICAL LINGUISTICS, FOR WHICH HE WOULD SHORTLY BE KNIGHTED.

## Sir John Lyons

### Master 1984–2000: an appreciation



*Sir John Lyons.*

He had achieved this distinction from very modest beginnings. His parents had migrated from Ireland to Stretford in Greater Manchester, where they met and married. His father died when he was 11, leaving the family impoverished. John won a scholarship to St Bede's College, Manchester, and later to Christ's College, Cambridge, where he read Classics. This upbringing and education had an enduring influence on his life. He was a devout Catholic. Religious doctrine and classics saturated his thinking and language, not least his masterly deployment of the subordinate clause.

The third great influence on his life was his marriage to Danielle in 1959. Together, they approached the Mastership of Trinity Hall as a partnership. John, who had a Half Blue in Athletics, led his 'black and white army' on the river and the sports field. Danielle reformed the diet of the Fellowship and provided a welcome role model for the Trinity Hall women, notably through her aerobics class and the Penguins. Both were equally involved in drama and music. Providing stylish leadership to a gifted generation, they were held deservedly in great affection. It was mutual and

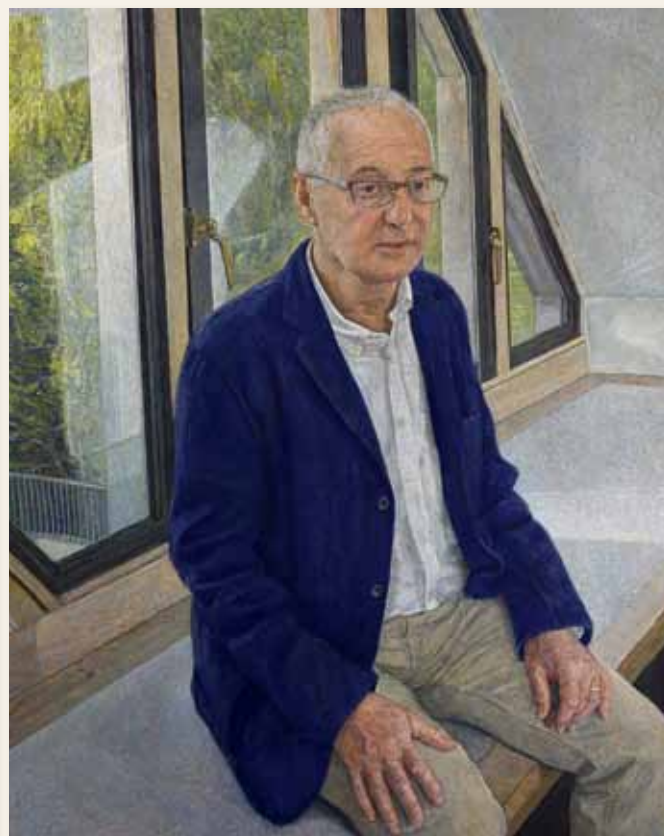
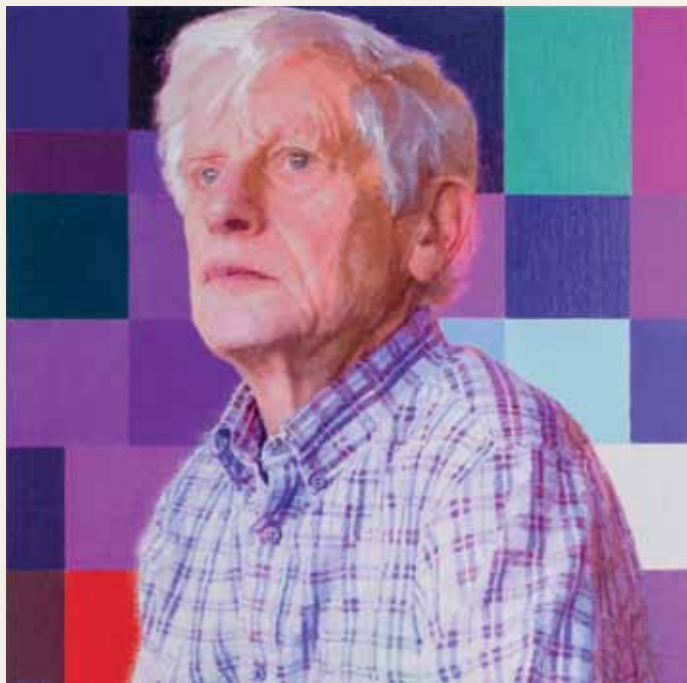
many students subsequently became their friends. They also got to know numerous former students through alumni events, the Aula Club and the Trinity Hall Association, to which they gave themselves unstintingly. The College's 650th anniversary celebrations and successful fundraising appeal marked a triumphant climax to John's Mastership.

Although he maintained that he was not very good at administration, John was nevertheless a pleasure to work with. He wore his authority lightly, but could be relied upon to tackle the difficult issues which inevitably arise from time to time. Diagnosed with lymphoma shortly after he became Master, he never enjoyed robust health. For this reason, he played a relatively limited part in the wider affairs of the University. He had always valued teaching and, indeed, had qualified as a teacher after graduating. He thus concentrated his energies where his strengths lay, in fostering the care of the young. Remembering perhaps his origins, he was also always concerned for the wellbeing of the College staff. For all his eminence – in addition to his knighthood, he was a Fellow of the British Academy and held honorary degrees from the universities of Reading, Edinburgh, Sussex, Antwerp and Toulouse – he remained charmingly diffident and attentive to the feelings of others. Fundamentally a serious person, he also knew how to have fun.

He and Danielle retired to Danielle's home region of France in 2000. Although his last years were overshadowed by serious illness, they enjoyed a long and happy retirement, firstly in Verneuil-en-Bourbonnais and finally in Vichy, where John died on 12 March 2020, aged 87.

**Dr Sandra Raban**  
Senior Tutor 1993–9

Left: Portrait of Professor David Thouless.  
Right: Portrait of Tristan Rees Roberts.



## TWO NEW PORTRAITS

The College's artwork collection has expanded recently with the addition of portraits of two of our most distinguished alumni – Professor David Thouless, 2016 winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics, and Tristan Rees Roberts, architect of the award-winning Jerwood Library.

### Professor David Thouless (1952)

The portrait of Trinity Hall's Nobel Laureate hangs in the Robin Hayes Room. Artist Brendan Kelly said: "I was delighted, and it was a real honour, to be awarded the commission to paint such a brilliant man. One story that particularly struck me, was that he would sometimes pace the garden deep in thought. I used this look of deep thought, a slightly distant look, to paint from."

#### About the artist

Brendan Kelly studied at the Slade School in London for a BA (Hons) in Fine Art. He said: "With this picture I felt from the start that I should use strong colour and pattern. My reason for this was because the painting was to hang in a place full of young people, so colour might bring life and vibrancy to the portrait. I set out to paint a lively portrait that might catch a student's eye one day and inspire them."

### Tristan Rees Roberts (1967)

This portrait of Jerwood architect Tristan Rees Roberts was commissioned to acknowledge the profound impact the Library has had on Trinity Hall students since it first opened its doors in 1999. The portrait hangs in the entrance of the Jerwood Library and has been made possible through the generosity of Nigel Grimshaw.

#### About the artist

Antony Williams trained at Farnham College of Art and Portsmouth University. He created this piece, like most of his work, using egg tempera. This is a permanent, fast-drying painting medium consisting of coloured pigments mixed with egg yolk. This work is based on direct and intense observation, producing a heightened sense of realism, where every surface detail is given almost equal and constant consideration.



# Affable Bears

A very intriguing set of documents was found in College by a member of staff in 2017: a set of cartoons from the late 1920s depicting a society referred to as the 'Affable Bears'.

The Affable Bears was not an official society of the College; rather, the cartoons appear to chronicle the activities of a group of friends. The members are depicted as bears and chose pseudonyms upon joining the society, so it is impossible to discover their identities.

Fortunately, a couple of the drawings provide crucial information. Membership was by invitation only. New members chose a name and were formally inducted into the society.

The purpose of the society was described as being for the "promotion of Whimming and Roman Roadsing," and its motto was "a bear, however hard he tries, grows tubby without exercise." Activities included

regular trips to the Whim pub (found on the corner of Green Street until it closed in the 1980s) and Matthew's Café, dining together, dancing along the Roman Road (a 12-mile Site of Special Scientific Interest stretching from south-east Cambridge to Linton), swimming at Jesus Green Lido, and ice skating. The drawings are silly and lighthearted, in keeping with the exuberance of the roaring '20s.

The five members drew their names from popular culture: Algernon, Baloo, Sylvie, Bruno, and St Edward. Algernon was most likely named after the character from the *Importance of Being Earnest*, first performed in 1895; Baloo from *The Jungle Book*, published in 1894; Sylvie and Bruno from the story of the same

name by Lewis Carroll, published in 1889. St Edward Bear is the one exception; presumably he took his name from St Edward King and Martyr church on Peas Hill. Baloo was the resident artist of the group, producing most or all of the drawings.

In the 1890s cartoons were enormously popular. The democratisation of education following the Education Reform Act of 1870 created a huge appetite for easy reading material. By the turn of the century, however, adult literacy rates were increasing and comics were increasingly marketed to children. In fact, it became shameful for adults to purchase comics. Baloo was undoubtedly influenced by the comics he enjoyed during his childhood and adolescence. It is extremely fortunate that these cartoons survived, as they provide an amusing glimpse into the pastimes of Cambridge students during the interwar period.

**Alexandra Browne**  
Archivist



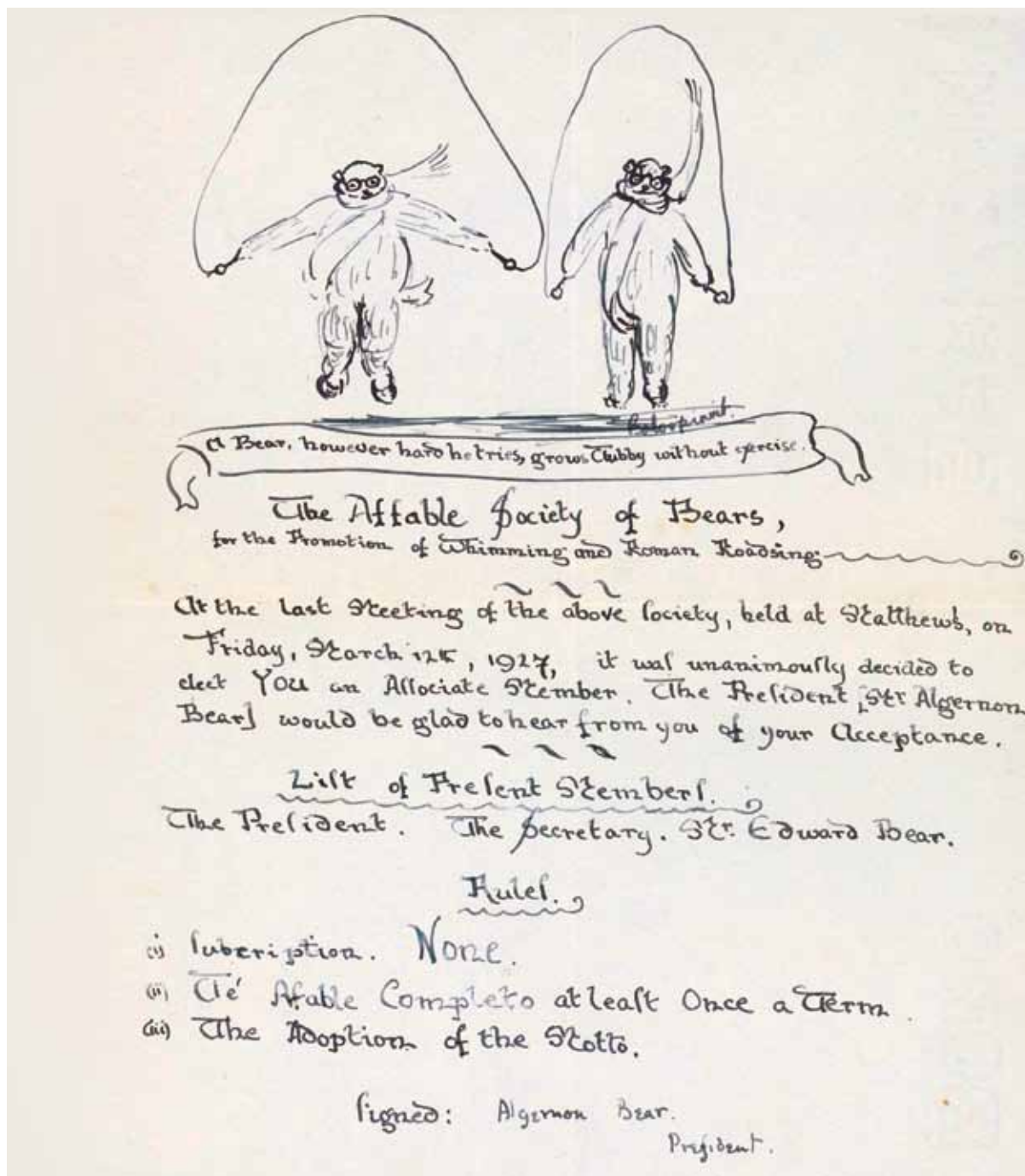
The Storeys Valley Bear

Baloo, you must, where is this fourth chair? It's half-past four!



Time for some Whimming.

Rules of the society,  
1927.



A bear, however hard  
he tries, grows tubby  
without exercise.



# Meet the athletes

When Emma Pooley (2001) and Tom James (2002) became Olympic medallists in 2008, they joined an impressive group of 27 Trinity Hall Olympians since the 1900 Games in Paris.

Trinity Hall Olympians have competed in disciplines ranging from athletics, cycling and skiing to, perhaps unsurprisingly, rowing and, more surprisingly, the bobsleigh.

Bobsleigh champion, Billy Fiske's short life was packed with action. Born in 1911 in New York, Fiske was educated in Europe and, aged 16, captained the US bobsleigh team to win gold at St Moritz in 1928. He repeated the victory at the Lake Placid Olympics in 1932, where he carried the flag, and declined a third opportunity in 1936. In 1928 he arrived at Trinity Hall to read Economics and History, and subsequently joined (by a subterfuge) the RAF in 1939 at the start of World War II as its first American pilot. He died of injuries sustained in battle in 1940, the first American to die in the war.

But Olympic success is only a part of the College's sporting story. Sporting endeavours provide much more than medals: a release from academic pressures, a sense of wellbeing and a lifelong appreciation of cooperation and collaboration. In the following pages, we hear from alumni, students and Fellows for whom sport is an integral part of their life, whether for competition, supporting charities or their own wellbeing.

Will Trinity Hall have someone to cheer on in the Tokyo Games? Paralympic hopeful Jan Helmich (2016) certainly hopes so.

*Article uses text about Billy Fiske written by Bridget Wheeler (1977) from The Hidden Hall.*



## MEET Jan Helmich ...

Trinity Hall and my international sporting career have been closely linked since day one. In fact, if I had not come to Cambridge in the first place, I would have never gotten into rowing at all.

Although I grew up with a physical disability, I have never let that stop me from trying new things. And given the persistence with which THBC manages to acquire novices, it was not long until I became one of them.

After progressing from the third to the first men's boat in my second year of undergraduate studies and trying out lightweight rowing during Cambridge University Lightweight Rowing Club's (CULRC) annual development squad, I decided to get involved with the German Paralympic team. To my surprise, I had my international debut at the World Rowing Championships the same year. Coming in just shy of a bronze medal by under a second, I was hooked. I knew I wanted to do more and see how far rowing could take me.





*Above: Jan Helmich (left) giving a statement at the World Rowing Cup III in Rotterdam, Netherlands (2019).*

*Below left: Even in difficult conditions, you just have to hang on to win.*

*Below right: Made in Cambridge.*

When I came back to Cambridge that fall, I decided to commit to training with CULRC. Despite the many early mornings I spent freezing in Ely, the results were promising. I outperformed many of my able-bodied peers and stayed part of the squad all the way to the end, even racing Oxford on the Tideway as part of the Spare Pair. The training also paid off in international competitions. I managed to accumulate multiple international successes, including a gold medal at the World Cup in Rotterdam and another participation at the World Championships last year.

The training continues with the hope of securing one of the remaining spaces for the Paralympic Games in Tokyo. While this is a big focus in my life, it remains a constant juggle between sport, academic activities and the bits of social life that are left. Either way, for now, the Paralympic dream remains as the result of commitment, persistence and hundreds of hours of hard work. And despite the uncertainty caused by coronavirus and the postponement of the Paralympics to 2021, I will do my best to seize this opportunity!

**Jan Helmich (2016)**



FEATURE

# MEET Natalie Hart ...

In December 2020 I plan to set off from La Gomera to row unsupported across the Atlantic, as part of a team of four women called the One Ocean Crew.

The passage will be a gruelling endeavour. We will row two hours on and two hours off for the entirety of the 3,000 mile journey, facing sleep deprivation, sea sickness, salt sores and whatever the Atlantic Ocean chooses to throw at us. Our aim is to be the first female team to ever win the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge, while raising funds for the Sea Ranger Service.

To be clear, I am not a rower. Although I am embarking upon 'The World's Toughest Row', until recently the last time I sat on a rowing boat was during a very brief flirtation with rowing during my first year at Trinity Hall. That was the extent of my sporting involvement at university, where my time was mostly taken up

with cramming Arabic vocabulary cards and living off large bowls of Sainsbury's Basics pasta.

It wasn't until I spent four years in Iraq and Afghanistan after graduation that I developed a love of exercise. Living in confined conditions under considerable stress, I soon learned from the military personnel around me that lifting heavy stuff over and over again was a very good way to deal with the pressures of the environment. As my body grew stronger, my mind did too and that has served me in a multitude of ways.

So how have I ended up preparing to row an ocean? Primarily because I love a challenge. Rowing is a feat of physical endurance, but it is mental resilience that makes or breaks a passage. Being in a tiny 28ft vessel amid a vast expanse of ocean, potentially being days away from help, knowing there is no way across other than to keep going even when your body is breaking or you are in the midst of a storm – that is the challenge for which we are preparing.

As a female team, we may not have the physical strength of the men who make up the majority of the crews – although we are working on that. We do believe, however, that our emotional resilience, our tactical intelligence and strategic approach can give us an edge. In order for a female crew to ever win the race, the very first step is for one to aim to do so.

If you would like to know more about our crew and campaign please visit us at [www.oneoceancrew.org](http://www.oneoceancrew.org) or find us on social media. It takes a team to get across the Atlantic: we would love for you to be involved!

**Natalie Hart (2006)**

Natalie is a communications consultant and author of Costa-shortlisted novel, *Pieces of Me*. She read Arabic and Spanish at Trinity Hall.

©SEASPORTS SOUTHWEST



Training in a swimming pool.

©JSEAJ



Natalie Hart.





Prep work.





Sport was a huge part of my time at Trinity Hall. Having taken a gap year to horse ride professionally, I naturally joined the Equestrian Team as soon as I started and got my first taste of victory at Varsity! This led to an extremely busy second year as I not only captained the Equestrian Team but was also persuaded to take up Modern Pentathlon.

The following years revolved around sport but I would not have wanted it any other way; I made the best friends (including my current housemate), competed in Varsity for two different sports and qualified for British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) riding nationals!

I soon learnt that competing in a sport consisting of five events (running, swimming, shooting, fencing and horse riding), three of which I had little to no experience in, was even more of a challenge than Tripos! However, this was what made Modern Pentathlon so great as it gave me a perspective on my degree. Whilst Cambridge is full of overachievers, it is hard to overachieve in five disciplines simultaneously. Everyone in the club had their strengths and weaknesses, leading to a culture of true teamwork. Also, if you start your day with an

early morning swim set and finish it running round the athletics track, you forget about that bit of work which did not quite go to plan and the time you have left to do work is certainly used efficiently!

After four years of University sport, six Varsities (half of which were victorious) and a couple of Blues, I can safely say my time at Trinity Hall would not have been the same without this release. Yes, my friends may have laughed whilst I foam rolled on the floor as they drank tea but I was grateful to have great friends both in and out of sport. In fact, if it wasn't for my mission to win a Pentathlon Varsity I would not have stayed for a fourth year, which turned out to be my favourite year at Uni!

**Susannah Boddie (2015)**



Modern Pentathlon team (Susannah second from right).



Success at the Royal Windsor Horse Show (Susannah second from right).



# MEET Stephen Watterson

I have never been much of an 'adrenaline-junkie'. Instead, I am one of those people for whom heart-pounding, lung-bursting, endorphin-pumping, hard aerobic exercise has been a non-negotiable part of my daily routine for all of my adult life. I am also, by build and by disposition, a long-distance runner: lightweight, biomechanically efficient and determined.

I started running when I was eight years old, but it was only once I left university for the first time in 1996 that I started training 'properly'. My first job in London in law reform saw me wondering how to spend my work-free evenings. Very quickly, some kind souls from Serpentine Running Club took me under their wing. They spotted me running in Hyde Park and introduced me to a remarkable coach, Frank Horwill, co-founder of the British Milers' Club, at Battersea Park track. Frank was then almost 70, but he had lost none of his passion for the sport. I learned for the first time what a rigorous, structured training regime looked like.

By the time I returned to Oxford to begin my doctoral studies in 1998, I was hooked. My four years training and racing with the Oxford University Cross-Country Club (OUCCC) brought an incredible sense of joy, belonging and achievement; some of my closest friendships were formed within this group. Despite multiple injuries, I gained two Full Blues for Cross-Country (XC) and a Half Blue for Athletics. My fondest memory – as much for my team as for myself – was my final XC race for Oxford in the 2001 Blues XC Match. At the end of a 7.5-mile slog through the December mud of Wimbledon Common, I narrowly missed out on a medal in a sprint finish, but nevertheless helped the Dark Blues to a long-awaited victory. Back then, I did not fully appreciate how talented a group of runners surrounded me: the runners behind me on that day included Andy Baddeley (later a GB middle-distance international) and Ben Moreau (later a GB marathon international).

Running was never quite the same once I left university: it proved impossible to replicate the dynamic of OUCCC. Too often, in the running clubs I later joined,

I found myself training with school-age runners. Adult life also brought further challenges. As a postgraduate I had the flexibility to run hard midday sessions followed by afternoon recovery naps; full-time working life is much less forgiving. I continued to train daily, and hard, but I quickly lapsed into a pattern of lonely, solo training – finding the most efficient way to fit in sessions on the route to or from work. That has remained the pattern for the last 17 years.

What may make my love affair with running surprising is that despite training hard, I find little joy in racing. I have had

a reasonable amount of success over the years: besides my XC Full Blues at Oxford, I have won senior individual and team XC medals at county level, and had my fair share of victories in local road races. Nevertheless, these modest successes are not, and have never been, my real reasons for hitting the roads and paths. Running is just part of what keeps me ticking, and now that I am a father, I cannot wait for the day when my little boy grows up and I can share the joy with him.

**Dr Stephen Watterson**  
Fellow in Law



*Stephen competing in a triathlon in north Wales.*





Kalymnos,  
Greece 2019.

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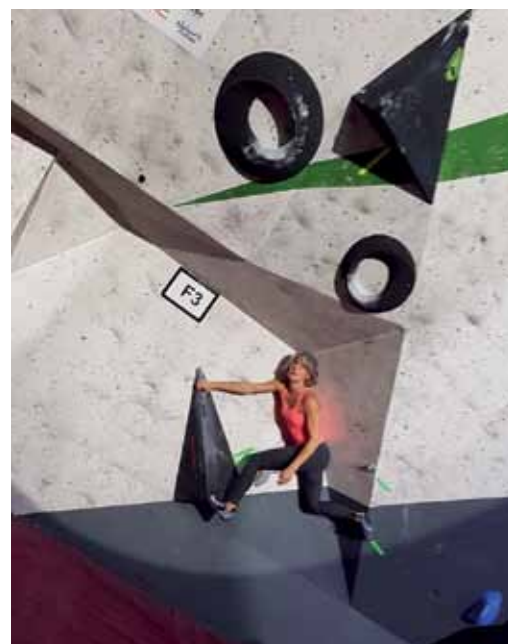
# MEET Ingrid Schröder

About ten years ago I had my first taste of climbing. It was not a glamorous start. I gritted my teeth and made my way around the traverse circuit (moving sideways not up) at a January-cold Mile End climbing wall, and managed not to fall off. It was not an instant obsession, but the excitement of making rapid improvement, and the incentive of leaving the dark noisy gym for real rock gave me significant momentum.

Climbing is a sport that is limited to extraordinary landscapes, from the subtlety of the Peak District to more dramatic Mediterranean crags. After a series of somewhat exhausting climbing trips, I started to wonder how people tolerated normal holidays. I also knew I needed to get significantly stronger to be able to enjoy the best of these climbing areas. Climbing is also a sociable sport, and the more time I committed to it, the more my community of climbers grew. Here in Cambridge we are limited to 'bouldering' – a style of climbing which involves climbing short routes – or 'problems' – without a rope. Safety is provided by crash mats below. Bouldering is both physical and gymnastic, and the harder the problem, the more rest you need. Between attempts you talk, compare notes and work through alternative approaches. And then back on the wall you require such focus, everything else falls away – there is no space for worry.

About three years ago, I joined a few friends at a bouldering competition and while I felt entirely ridiculous being roughly 20 years older than the average competitor, I had an excellent time, held my own, and kept coming back. Two years later I managed to place seventh behind five members of the GB team at the same event, and this past February I took the overall Female Masters (veterans) title for the second year at a London competition series. My competition days are numbered as climbing is a strength-based sport and not easy to maintain as I creep towards 50, but in the meantime, I am working hard to encourage other older climbers to join me, coaching a Masters squad in London. At the very least, I can help expand this exceptionally diverse community and share my secret fantasy of retiring to a bit of rock in the sun one day.

**Ingrid Schröder**  
Fellow in Architecture



Top: Semi-finals, Norwich October 2019.  
Middle: Kalymnos, Greece 2018.  
Bottom: Blokfest, London 2020 podium.

### New Bursar appointed



The College is delighted to announce that Mr Timothy Harvey-Samuel has joined Trinity Hall as Bursar, following the retirement Mr Paul folkes Davis at the end of Lent term 2020. Mr Harvey-Samuel comes to Trinity Hall with significant experience, having previously worked for more than 25 years in investment banking with Schroders and Citigroup and as Bursar at Corpus Christi College.

Mr Harvey-Samuel said: "I am hugely excited at the prospect of getting to know and serve the members of this remarkable community."

### Environmentally conscious meal choices



Carbon footprint label in the cafeteria.

In Lent term, the kitchen introduced carbon footprint labels in the cafeteria that indicate the greenhouse gas emissions per 100g for each of the main course dishes prepared by the kitchen.

The informative labels help the catering team and visitors to the cafeteria assess the environmental impact of their food choices. Feedback from students and staff has been overwhelmingly positive.

## WongAvery Music Gallery taking shape

The landscape of Avery Court continues to change as the WongAvery Music Gallery takes shape.

The initial structural work is now complete and the white paint that covered the exterior of I and H staircases has been removed, revealing the original stone work. By the time you receive the next issue of *Front Court*, the WongAvery Music Gallery should be complete and you will be warmly invited to visit.



The WongAvery Music Gallery – April 2020.



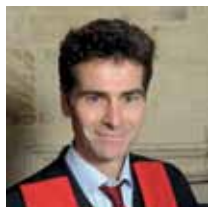
## NEW FELLOWS

This academic year we have welcomed eight academics as new members of the Trinity Hall Fellowship.



**Research Fellow**

Dr Adam Lebovitz,  
WYNG Research Fellow  
in Political Theory  
and Philosophy



**Staff Fellow**

Dr Marcus Tomalin,  
Director of Admissions



**Staff Fellow**

Dr Lee de-Witt,  
Psychology



**Staff Fellow**

Ingrid Schröder,  
Director of Studies  
in Architecture



**Fellow-Commoner**

Professor Alison Liebling,  
specialist in Criminology  
and Criminal Justice



**Visiting Fellow**

Professor Ruth Schilling,  
specialist in Curation



**Honorary Fellow**

The Rt Hon Lord  
(Angus) Glennie QC  
(1969, History)



**Honorary Fellow**

The Rt Hon The Lord  
(Norman) Fowler PC  
(1958, Economics and Law)

© ITV STUDIOS



## Semi-final success

**A TRINITY HALL ALUMNI TEAM EARNED A PLACE IN THE SEMI-FINALS OF UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE, CHRISTMAS 2019.** Academic Philip Dawid (1963), actor Sophie Winkleman (1998), writer Lucy Mangan (1993), and screenwriter and director Tony Palmer (1960) beat St Peter's, Oxford, 180 to 75 to secure their place in the penultimate round. Sadly, their journey to the title came to an end when they met another Oxford college, Wadham, in the semi-final.

## Meet our newest team member



We would like to introduce you to Jackie Boyle, our newest team member and your first point of contact in the office. Jackie joined us at the beginning of the year as our office assistant, helping the team with a variety of projects and the smooth running of the office.

Jackie has come to Trinity Hall with experience of the higher education sector and alumni relations, having previously worked elsewhere in the University.

Jackie works from 9am until 5pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

**Contact Jackie on:**

**E:** [alumnioffice@trinhall.cam.ac.uk](mailto:alumnioffice@trinhall.cam.ac.uk)

**T:** +44 (0)1223 332550

# Trinity Hall Association (THA)

## THA Secretary's Report

THA events in 2019 included, in March, dinner at the Bishop's Palace in Wells, reported to be a very enjoyable occasion in splendid surroundings.

The Cambridge dinner in College in September, preceded by a stimulating lecture and the AGM, was very well attended. Two year groups were especially well represented, presumably due to the efforts of their year reps. This event, particularly for alumni of Trinity Hall, also fits well within the programme of lectures, visits and events organised by CUDAR across the University during the Alumni Weekend.

Our regional events provide a great opportunity to meet old friends, make new ones and to connect with the College. This was certainly the experience at our November event in Liverpool. We met at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, a striking venue in the popular rejuvenated area of the Royal Albert Dock. After a fascinating guided tour of the Museum, which revealed many unexpected Titanic artefacts, we enjoyed an excellent dinner overlooking the Dock area.

In February this year we held an event in Northern Ireland at another notable venue, the Titanic Museum in Belfast. After a private tour, we overlooked the historic slipways during the drinks reception and dinner.

We had hoped to return to Lambeth Palace in May for a drinks reception. However, due to the COVID-19 outbreak we have had to postpone the event. Bookings had proved very popular and we hope to rearrange.

In September we hope to be back in Cambridge for the annual dinner and lecture in College, which we hope will also be well supported.

The final regional event in 2020 is scheduled for 14 November in Edinburgh at Riddle's Court (Scottish Historic Buildings Trust) on the Lawnmarket in the city centre. We're looking forward to a drinks reception, talk and dinner.

On a personal note, I thank all the staff of the Alumni and Development Office for their ongoing support, and my predecessor Dr Chris Angus (1967) for the benefit of his vast experience of the THA. Chris and I both live in the North. On leaving Cambridge in 1971, my wife Sue and I landed in the North East, between Durham University and the chemical industry on Teesside. Since 1983 we have lived in Pickering, North Yorkshire. Chemistry has remained a core discipline of my work – in academic and industrial research, information management, teaching, examining and writing. My varied other interests include the Cambridge Society of North and West Yorkshire (past Chair) and close links with CUDAR in Cambridge.

I hope to meet many more alumni from across the matriculation years and their guests at College events.

**Dr David Billett (1968)**



Lambeth Palace.



Dr David Billett, THA Secretary.





## FIVE MINUTES WITH A FELLOW

# Dr Marcus Tomalin, Director of Admissions

I was delighted to join Trinity Hall as the College's first Director of Admissions in September 2019. I may be new to the Hall but I'm not new to Cambridge, having been here since the early 1990s (with a brief hiatus in Canada).

It was never my plan to go to university, though, so it's something of a surprise that I'm here at all. To be honest, when I was growing up in sunny Northampton, I didn't really know what universities were. It's not that attending one was an unrealistic option for me, it just wasn't an option I considered at all. My first real ambition was to be an Olympic gymnast, and, failing that, I assumed I would be a blues guitarist.

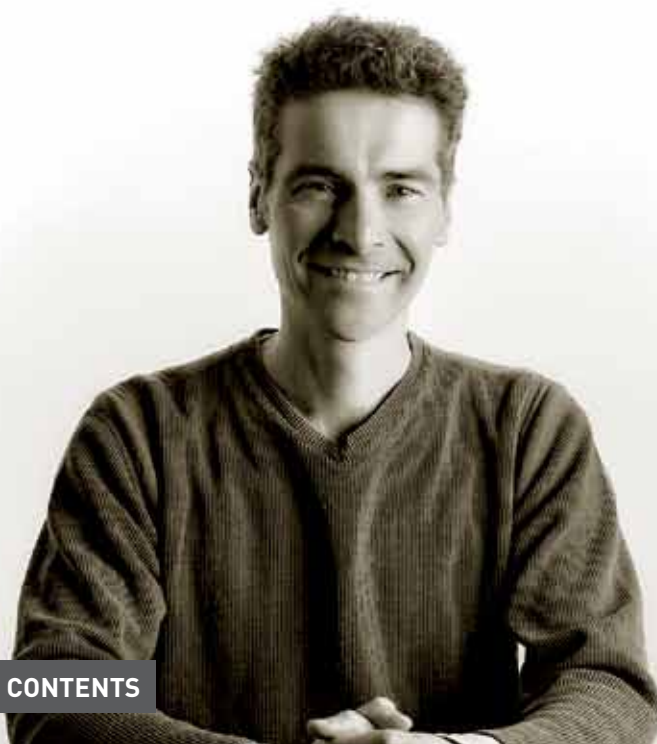
So, it won't come as a shock to learn that I wasn't a very conscientious student at school. I was certainly bright, but I was also restless, and often bored. However, events conspired to alter that. When I was 16 I was diagnosed with a congenital condition (spondylolisthesis, if you like specifics) which required me to have an emergency spinal fusion. Yes, it was every bit as enjoyable as it sounds, and for the best part of a year afterwards I had to spend about eight hours a day lying on my back, recuperating. This was in the pre-internet age, and there was little to do to pass the time. Consequently, rather than merely gaze at the ceiling, I decided (uncharacteristically) to read – and I suddenly became aware, for the first time, of how little I knew about anything. Shame of my own ignorance became a source of motivation, and I explored many different subjects, such as literature, music, mathematics, physics, languages, with an almost pathological intensity. Today these would probably be called 'super-curricular' activities, but that phrase didn't exist back then.

Somehow, bizarrely, I ended up at Cambridge, where I eventually acquired a BA degree, two MPhils, and a PhD. I specialised in theoretical linguistics, but with a strong mathematical component. After a couple of years in Canada, where I studied computer science and mathematics, I returned to Cambridge in 1997 and became a member of the Machine Intelligence Laboratory in the Engineering Department. I've been there ever since, building different kinds of language-related intelligent and autonomous systems, and trying to make those systems more ethical. I've retained my wide-ranging academic interests, though. I regularly supervise and/or examine and/or lecture for the English Faculty, the Philosophy Faculty, the Engineering Department, the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Language and Linguistics, and the Department of Computer Science and Technology. This may sound like a weird mishmash, but it really does all cohere (most of the time, anyway). And at least I'm not bored anymore.

I suspect it was my own strange route to academia that prompted my long-standing interest in University admissions. Before joining Trinity Hall, I'd spent 15 years as a Fellow at

Downing College, where I was also an Admissions Tutor. As I always say, admissions-related activities are amongst the most important things that any College undertakes. We have a solemn responsibility to ensure that we offer our academic places (whether undergraduate or postgraduate) fairly, to those applicants who have the greatest ability and potential. As Director of Admissions at Trinity Hall, I'm closely involved with every aspect of this work – interviewing potential undergraduates, liaising with Directors of Studies, attending the Intercollegiate Pools, ensuring that the College helps the collegiate University meet its Access and Participation Plan targets, writing feedback letters, responding to admissions-related questions, preparing reports for relevant committees, speaking to potential applicants at Open Days, attending Admissions Forum meetings, visiting schools, and so on. In carrying out these duties, I'm superbly aided and abetted by the fabulous staff in the Admissions Office.

Since arriving at Trinity Hall, I've been made to feel extremely welcome, and getting to know the staff, Fellows, students, and alumni has been an enjoyable experience. When in College I can usually be found in my office in Front Court (B1), and if you would like to learn more about our current admissions-related activities, and our plans for the future, then do please contact me and the Admissions Team on [admissions@trinhall.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@trinhall.cam.ac.uk).



## Events 2020

Thank you to those of you who signed up to attend Trinity Hall gatherings this spring/summer. Very sadly, due to the public health risk in connection with COVID-19, we have had to postpone our events scheduled for the first part of the year.

As we write, we are hopeful that events in September will take place as planned, but we will only open booking for these events once we are sure they will happen. Please keep an eye on our website which we will keep updated with information about upcoming events, including those scheduled in July, and any changes to the programme: [www.trinhall.cam.ac.uk/alumni/events/](http://www.trinhall.cam.ac.uk/alumni/events/)

We are sorry to have lost these opportunities to meet with alumni and friends of the College but we hope to see you again soon. In the meantime, we look forward to interacting with you online as we move into a new, temporary, way of working. We wish you and your family and friends good health during these difficult times. Stay well.

**Emma and Liz**

Events Officer and Alumni Officer

[www.trinhall.cam.ac.uk/events](http://www.trinhall.cam.ac.uk/events)  
[alumnioffice@trinhall.cam.ac.uk](mailto:alumnioffice@trinhall.cam.ac.uk)



## Make a difference



### Why support students now?

Our charitable mission is founded on educating and supporting current and future generations of students who will be the thinkers and leaders who can provide ideas to meet future challenges and make inspiring discoveries. Offering generous support is part of our ethos.

- Prospective applicants can be deterred by perceptions of affordability. We should attract the most talented individuals regardless of financial background.
- Even with a loan and a Cambridge Bursary, students can find the cost of undertaking their course to be greater than their means and are unable to play a full part in Cambridge life.
- For postgraduates, financing course fees and living costs is a major burden. They will likely have debt after their first degree and there has been a reduction in funding from research councils. The government loan for Masters courses is less than half the amount required to study and live in Cambridge.

- There has been an exponential increase in the numbers of students disclosing a mental health condition to the University's Disability Resource Centre. Between 2008 and 2018 those requiring help have increased 23-fold.

Only by combining philanthropic support with our long-term investment strategy will we be able to fulfil our perpetual mission to educate and support the research of our College community.

### Supporting students now

We are doing everything we can to offer financial help to students facing difficulties due to the pandemic. We expect this need to grow: there are students who faced unexpected travel costs, those whose household income will be affected, and those for whom remote study will be challenging. Donations to our Telephone Campaign help support students each year, but we have not been able to run a campaign this year due to the pandemic. We are mindful this is a difficult time, but would ask all those who are able, to consider working with us to help provide support for our students.



### The impact of bursaries

The Cambridge Bursary is currently awarded to students from households with an income of less than £42,620 on a sliding scale. A report last year from the Faculty of Education at Cambridge demonstrated the impact of the Bursary on undergraduate recipients:

- 90% said it helped them focus on their studies
- 87% said the financial support made them feel less anxious
- 74% said it helped them achieve a work-life balance

- Many noted that it helped them overcome fears that they would not fit in and alleviated concerns about being a burden on their families

Last year we contributed £105,070 towards Cambridge Bursaries for our students. Forty-six undergraduates (13%) at Trinity Hall were on a full Cambridge Bursary and each received grants of £3,500 per year to help with living costs. A further 24 received smaller grants.

### THANK YOU

Donations are vital in enabling us to offer financial support to our undergraduates and postgraduates. We are very grateful for the generosity of our alumni and friends, which makes a huge difference to the lives of our students. Thank you to everyone who has supported us.

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