



Dear Hertford Community,

I write to you on one of the most exciting days of the Hertford calendar. Our new students are arriving, and there is an air of expectation and potential in the (damp) quad. The team have been working tirelessly to get everything ready. It is wonderful to think of the adventure this group have ahead of them. As a parent who suffers from separation anxiety, I'm dishing out cups of tea to those who are watching their family members wheel those cases towards their new rooms and new friends. **Welcome to them all**, and welcome back to returning students.



A time for hellos and goodbyes

Another reason to be excited: Oxford research has led this week to the announcement of a **breakthrough malaria vaccine**. An incredible story, with huge potential results.

Welcome also to new Fellows, Mark Van der Wilk (Computer Science) and Dylan Gaffney (Arch and Anth). Also to Jane Corrigan, who has arrived to lead our work on student welfare, and to Hannah Towndrow in another new position: Director of Music. These are essential elements of college life that need close attention as we continue to move beyond the period of lockdowns and distancing. We hope to have news to share in the coming days on our next Chaplain.

As you'll know from my last bulletin, this has also been a time of farewells, including to senior Fellows Tony Wilson (Engineering), Charlotte Brewer (English) and Pat Roche (Physics). We had a superb dinner last week, bringing together many Fellows, Emeriti and staff. The photo below gives a sense of the occasion and captures several decades of Fellows. A mystery prize to the reader who can name everyone in it.



Summer was for many a chance to recuperate, but there was also plenty happening at Hertford. Thanks to the teams of staff and students who ran such a successful summer schools programme over the break, a series of energetic open days, and who have worked flat out to prepare for term.

Meanwhile, plenty of great news to share. Mike Wooldridge was announced as this year's presenter of the [Royal Institute Christmas lectures](#). This is well-deserved recognition of his work, and a source of huge collective pride to the college. Mike succeeds Christopher Zeeman, Walter Bodmer and Alison Woollard as Hertford speakers, a feat unmatched by any other college or university. Elsewhere, Pro-Principal Emma Smith has been shortlisted for the prestigious [Wolfson Prize](#) for her wonderful book *Portable Magic*, Hagan Bayley received a [Royal Society medal](#), and Senior Tutor Claire Vallance together with alumnus Dean James received a [Royal Society of Chemistry prize](#). Congratulations to Siddharth Parameswaran, Louise Slater and Dawid Kielak on their success in the [Recognition of Distinction](#) round this year: in non-Oxford language, they become full Professors. And Hertford Fellows are closely engaged in important work on Oxford's future: Kay Davies is leading the university's important review of pay and conditions, while Martin Maiden is leading the overhaul of health and safety.

Continuing our takeover of the media, our [University Challenge](#) team stormed through the first round, no doubt inspired by the celebs vs students contest held here in July. And Honorary Fellow and alumnus Krishnan Guru-Murthy is looking confident as Hertford's third contestant on Strictly Come Dancing, dancing in the footsteps of Jacqui Smith and Natasha Kaplinsky.



As you know, the college faces a two year period of transition and transformation. We are putting into practical action our aspirations to be a frontline for a better society; to do excellent teaching and research; to be a good neighbour and a pioneer of sustainability and opportunity. At the heart of this is our library and OB Quad renovation project. We have emptied the library of books, ready to start work, and are in the final stages of agreeing what the renovation will entail. The lawn remains in place for now, while we work this out. The combination of the tough financial backdrop, frozen student fees, and the impact of the pandemic on our Summer programmes means that this project is even more dependent on support from alumni. More on how to do so, including naming opportunities, [here](#). Thank you to all the Hertford old members I was able to meet last week in California to discuss these plans. I was also at the University Council's away day last week; a reminder that we all need to fix the financial model. I've read recently in the early draft of Christopher Tyerman's new college history that the first major campaign, in 1873, saw the then Principal expected to make up the shortfall: that is not part of the plan this time.

Welcoming friends old and new

It was great to see so many alumni back over the break, including for the 1974-76 and 1994-95 Gaudies. Both evenings were full of nostalgia and camaraderie, and I was glad to come through the dubious milestone of being the first Principal to host their own Gaudy. We also had an excellent subject reunion for PPE. The [Hertford Festival in July](#) was a great success, with speakers including Fiona Bruce, Sarah Brown, Suzanne Heywood, Peter Frankopan, Corin Throsby, Emma Smith, Roberto Trotta and Pat Roche. It was great to see so many alumni, students, tutors and staff involved. We were even joined by actor Kyle Maclachlan. I also enjoyed welcoming in recent weeks this year's Tutu Fellows and cross party politicians from Northern Ireland.



Coming up this term, we have more terrific speakers as part of our [Peace Processes of the Future series](#). The newly introduced termly Principal's Recital, led

by our talented musicians, is on 3rd November. There is a [Warnock Society lunch](#) and a [history reunion](#) on 4th November. [London alumni drinks](#) on 15th November are selling fast, so book your ticket now if you haven't already. We'll host the Kenny Lewis memorial football tournament on 19th November - please save the date and [let us know](#) if you would like to get involved. I'll share more on Christmas events in the next bulletin. We are also preparing for next year's anniversaries of 150 years since our refounding and 50 years of women. Watch this space.

Finally, Hertford alumnus Nick Jefferson's [Wylde Market](#) has committed to making a donation of £15 for each order made in October using the code HERTFORD2030. The online farmers' market is open every Wednesday morning from 7am to 2pm, and nationwide delivery is every Friday morning, via carbon neutral DPD. An easy way to donate and, at the same time, support sustainable producers of amazing artisanal food.

That's it for now. Alumni, please do call in when you're visiting, and [let us know](#) if you'd like to stay or host dinners here. Do also share news and contact details of anyone who would like to get a copy of these updates with our Communications Officer, sophie.carp@hertford.ox.ac.uk. As a community of learners, the relationship does not end when you graduate: you can check out any time you like, but you can never leave. Students, please do share with your parents too. As I've been telling them today, they are also very much part of this collective project.



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